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From Putsch to Purge. A Study of the German Episodes in Richard Hughes's *The Human Predicament* and their Sources

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Ivo Holmqvist

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A Study of the German Episodes
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**For Ingvor, Jytte & Jenny,
and A-L in memoriam.**

FROM PUTSCH TO PURGE

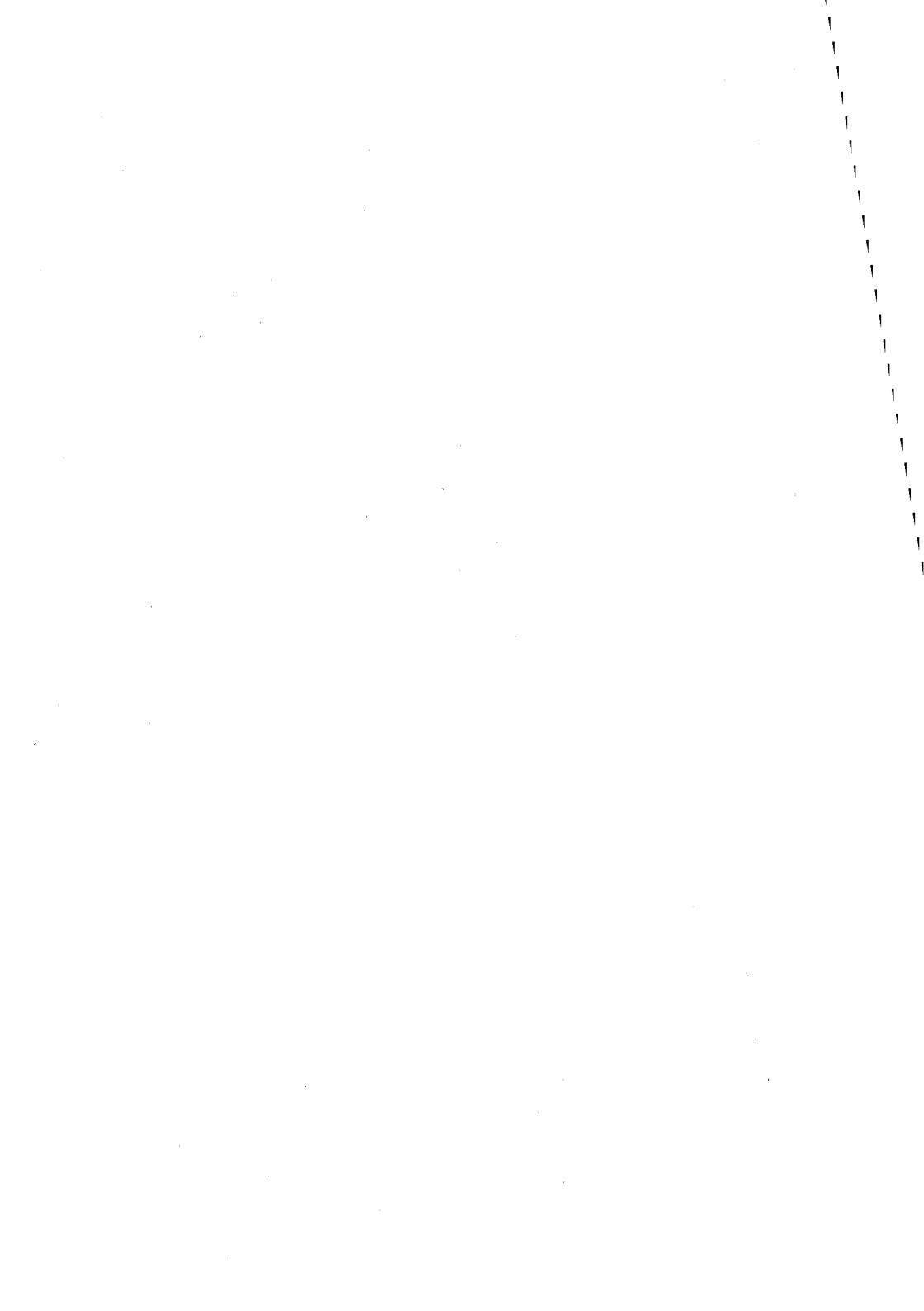
A Study of the German Episodes in
Richard Hughes's *The Human Predicament*
and their Sources

IVO HOLMQVIST



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Acknowledgements

From its conception during the Blitz, *The Human Predicament* was close to thirty-five years in the making. Richard Hughes worked constantly on the project for twenty-one years until his death in 1976. My admiration for this *roman-fleuve* is profound and my reading of it goes far back. While a student at Dartmouth College in 1965 I bought a copy of the first American Edition of *The Fox in the Attic*, signed by the author.

This study has been long under way, though not quite for three decades, and it has been written many times over. During the process, I have felt deep sympathy for Hughes's dogged perseverance at the typewriter while serving what he sometimes felt was an inescapable life sentence.

My thanks are due to a large group of people in different parts of the world. Two professors of English at Lund University have been supportive of my protracted efforts. Claes Schaar and Sven Bäckman have been uncommonly forbearing with a procrastinator. As my supervisor for far too many years, the latter has shown great generosity.

Earlier versions of this study have been discussed at different doctoral seminars at Lund and Helsinki. Little remains of these versions, but I am thankful for all good advice freely given by their members. In particular I single out the late Sven Holmberg whose wide-ranging interests made him a good sparring partner during long discussions.

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In letting me quote from her father's unpublished papers, Mrs. Penelope Minney, as executrix of Richard Hughes's literary estate, has shown more kindness than I could ever have hoped for. Without her and her siblings' generosity this study could, quite literally, never have been written in its present form. Foremost: this book is for Ingvor, Jytte and Jenny, with feelings of gratitude beyond all words; and for A-L in memoriam.

Auckland, New Zealand, September 1999.



"My most recent book, 'The Fox in the Attic', is about Hitler and Germany." This is how Richard Hughes, interviewed by *The New Yorker* in 1969, summarised the first volume in his projected series of novels *The Human Predicament*. Obviously an oversimplification and perhaps intended as a selling line for his American audience eight years after the book had appeared, his summary still contains more than a few grains of truth. The book and its sequel, *The Wooden Shepherdess*, are indeed novels about Hitler and Germany. Despite the array of other characters and other localities that fill the eight hundred published pages, many readers remember the fictionalised Führer and the Bavarian scenes the best.¹ The present study of Richard Hughes's sources takes in the main the same limited view; the non-German characters and chapters are to a large degree deliberately disregarded.

To the best of my knowledge, what follows is the first concerted effort to analyse and comment on the intricate relations between Richard Hughes's *The Human Predicament* project and its sources, as far as its chapters set in Germany or touching on German affairs are concerned. As many of these sources as possible have been listed, after a lengthy search of the two major holdings of his papers, one of them in America, the other one in England. So far, these archives have attracted remarkably little interest from Hughes scholars. In actual fact, only his biographer, Richard Perceval Graves, seems to have made more consistent use of the larger of the two holdings, the American one, and then with his interest focussed more on the author's life than on his work. Another scholar, Paul Morgan, has made excellent use of the more limited British holding. However, neither Morgan nor Graves has consulted both archives, nor has anyone else, as far as I am aware. The German background has not attracted much critical attention either. With the exception of some shorter articles and essays listed below, nothing has been written on the specific topic of Richard Hughes's two last novels in relation to the sources for their German episodes.

¹ Sometimes they have been encouraged to do so by the publishers. The dust-jacket of the original edition of *The Wooden Shepherdess* (Chatto & Windus) has Ree, the American teenage girl, in focus, but Hitler's ghostlike face can be seen in the background. The Penguin paperback edition of both novels (1975) displays German military insignia, including eagles and swastikas, prominently on their front covers, while the Harvill Press edition of *The Wooden Shepherdess* (1995), the only one to include *The Twelve Chapters*, has Paul Herrmann's heroic Nazi painting "The March of 1942" on its cover.

There were many enigmas and paradoxes in the life and work of Richard Hughes, one of them the great discrepancy between what he wrote and what he eventually published. Not many novelists of his high literary status² have written so few novels; even fewer have produced more manuscript pages. The staggering amount of his unpublished and discarded material is evident only to someone who makes a close study of his archive. It was bought by the Lilly Library at Indiana University in 1973, with material concerning Hughes's work-in-progress later added. Well into the next decade it remained unsorted and inaccessible.³ That no longer being the case, it still has not attracted the scholarly attention it deserves.

Anyone prepared to engage in that very time-consuming but rewarding activity will have her or his views of Hughes as an unproductive and procrastinating writer overturned. The present study relies predominantly on research in the unpublished material held in Bloomington, but it is also based on research into the correspondence between Hughes and his British publishers Chatto & Windus, a collection that is now part of the University of Reading Library. The rich manuscript material could give rise to many specialised monographs. In the present one, the focus is set on its relevance for Richard Hughes's German episodes which form part of two novels plus a fragment: *The Fox in the Attic* (1961), *The Wooden Shepherdess* (1973), and the posthumously published torso *The Twelve Chapters* (1995).

*

Richard Arthur Warren Hughes (1900-1976), born in Surrey, was educated at a public school (Charterhouse) and at Oxford (Oriental College).⁴ He was

² His present status in British literature is illustrated by the entry in the *Oxford Companion to English Literature* (1995): "Hughes was a highly original and idiosyncratic writer..." (p. 487). The caption on the first volume of *The Human Predicament in The Reader's Companion to the Twentieth Century Novel* (1994, ed. by Peter Porter) is equally appreciative: "As it stands, *The Fox in the Attic* perhaps lacks in emotional centre, but it showed immense promise as the initial volume of an extended *roman fleuve*. Among other things, it is magnificently written, in a prose style that moves easily from the seemingly casual to the significant, and allows subtle character analysis as well as political and philosophical discussion" (p. 380). The sequel did not fare quite as well, if Ian Ousby is to be believed: "*The Wooden Shepherdess*, the second in the sequence, met with little critical enthusiasm" (*The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English*, 1993, p. 459). This is a somewhat simplified generalisation.

³ "I am sorry to report that the Richard Hughes papers have not been arranged or catalogued as of this date . . . they are in no order and cannot be easily located for microfilming, or even for in-person research purposes" (Saundra Taylor to IH, April 16, 1985).

⁴ Richard Hughes himself gave some autobiographical information in the preface to his *An Omnibus* (1932); Lance Sieveking's autobiography *The Eye of the Beholder* (1957) contains a chapter on Hughes; Penelope Hughes's *Richard Hughes Author, Father* (1984) first sketched the biographical background more fully. The first half of Richard Poole's book

not quite six when his father died; his mother was supportive of his literary activities from when he was even younger. In 1916 he was a Lance-Corporal, in 1917 a Corporal, in the summer of 1918 a cadet officer. The Armistice spared him any direct war experiences, a decisive non-event of importance also for his fiction. His academic studies were no success — he achieved a double Fourth — but his other activities as a critic and playwright while still an undergraduate were. At seventeen he had begun to live in Wales intermittently and he later moved there permanently; his Welsh family roots went far back. From early on he organised his life on a peripatetic pattern that he adhered to throughout his life. His far-ranging travels, however, were not so much a source of literary inspiration as a temporary release from writing, his life-long call; his three journeys to Bavaria were an exception, as will be demonstrated below.

After the success of his first novel, *A High Wind in Jamaica*,⁵ he bought a house in the old inner city of Tangier but went there infrequently. In 1932 he married the painter Frances Bazley who had German relatives, family ties of direct relevance to her husband's two last novels. During World War II, he served in the Admiralty and was posted in Bath during the Blitz.⁶ That term over, he returned to the life of a civilian. He had been offered the governorship of South Georgia and the Falklands, in recognition of the administrative abilities shown in his wartime work. He appreciated the honour but declined the offer. For a number of years he was also a script-writer for the Ealing film studios.

Richard Hughes, the father of five, was a private and a public man, for a brief period of his life a civil servant but mainly an author who kept to his study in the rural family house Mor Edrin ("The Sound of the Sea") in North Wales. A modicum of isolation seems to have been a prerequisite for his literary activities and creativity.⁷ One of the enigmas is how he was

Richard Hughes Novelist (1986) is a "Life and Letters"; Richard Perceval Graves's *Richard Hughes* (1994) is the only full biography. Poole's book has a brief bibliography; the most extensive one to date can be found in Paul Morgan's *The Art of Richard Hughes* (1993).

⁵ Success did not corrupt Richard Hughes. This is Evelyn Waugh's diary entry for Friday 18 July 1930: "Went . . . to A. P. Herbert's cocktail party where I talked all the time to Richard Hughes. I never saw a man with fewer marks of success" (*The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh*, 1995 [1976], p. 323).

⁶ Four foolscap pages in the archive, dated 26 April 1942, tell of Hughes's experiences of the Blitz over Bath. They ought to be published, as this brief extract shows: "Thursday (i. e. four days after the raid) a warden saw a cat run into a crevice in the debris. He put in his hand to try and pull it out. A small hand caught hold of his."

⁷ Hughes's own information on his life and working habits shows a remarkable consistency over the years. What Richard C. Wald (*Herald Tribune*, January 28, 1962), Per Wästberg (*Dagens Nyheter*, April 24, 1966) or John Bradshaw (*Daily Telegraph Magazine*, August

able to sustain a large family through the years on the income from a relatively restricted literary output. Three of his four novels were bestsellers, but they were published years apart. That he managed his literary affairs expertly is evident from the copies of his numerous business letters in the Indiana archive and in his correspondence with his London publisher. A considerable part of this archival material concerns his foreign rights. His dealings with players on the German book market, via the agent A. M. Heath, will be commented on below (see p. 310).

*

His first two books had been slim volumes of poetry, printed in limited editions, followed by several plays. One of them, *Danger*, is reputed to be the world's first radio drama. It makes clever use of the new medium, relying totally on sound: it is set in a coal mine shaft when a power cut suddenly turns out all light. Already at twenty-six, he collected his poems in a volume under a title which was both a youthful declaration and a farewell to poetry: *Confessio Juvenis*. In the same year, 1926, his only collection of short stories for adult readers appeared: *A Moment of Time*. Most of the stories in the book are set in Wales but the longest one in the Balkans, drawing on Hughes's dramatic encounters with warring rebels along the Danube. Then, in 1929, came the resounding success of his first novel, *A High Wind in Jamaica*. It was published in the same year in the United States but under a different title: *The Innocent Voyage*.⁸ It sold well, received much critical acclaim, and was widely translated.⁹ Since its first publication, this minor classic has never been out of print.

As is also the case with his other novels, the starting point for this book was a factual, brief account, this time by an old lady who as a child in 1822 had been brought aboard a pirate ship and fed crystallised candy while her own brig was being ransacked by the pirates. Out of these few handwritten pages grew an unsentimental psychological novel about children

1971, pp. 27-28) were told did not vary all that much from what he had told Louise Morgan decades earlier (*Everyman*, April 9, 1931). Listeners to the BBC 2 heard a similar story in the programme "Born 1900", broadcast in 1975 and subsequently printed in *The Listener* (October 23, 1975).

⁸ The early miscellany of his own writings, *An Omnibus* (1931) referred to in footnote 4 above was published only in America. It contains a lengthy autobiographical introduction.

⁹ It may have been read and admired for the wrong reasons, according to a 1938 Hughes essay: "Perhaps one of the worst misfortunes which can befall a book is a sudden wide success: because that success is often due to something more or less irrelevant which comes to cause the main theme of the book to escape notice. This happened with my first book . . ." ("Fear and In Hazard", reprinted in *Fiction as Truth*, p. 43).

less innocent than they appear. Hughes, a bachelor at the time, showed an unusually high degree of empathetic understanding of children and their meandering thoughts. He never lost that capacity, as demonstrated in his three collections of children stories, many of which were first tried out orally on young listeners.

In Hazard: A Sea Story was published on the brink of the Second World War, in 1938. Then and later it was read as an allegory, which had not been the author's intention. Neither was it meant as a counterpart of Joseph Conrad's *Typhoon*, with which it is constantly compared. The story of how the *Archimedes* survives a hurricane is a novel rich in accurate technical details and meteorological observations, with a keen understanding of how the crew cope under extreme duress, or do not. It is also the story of how one of its members suffers a break-down.¹⁰ It was long the best selling of Hughes's books. He had life-long naval interests: an even more closely documented sea novel, about the *Graf Spee* and *Altmark* incidents in World War II, was never finished. The manuscript and the extensive source material are kept in Bloomington.

Nine years had lapsed between his first and his second novel. It took another twenty-three years before the third appeared, and a further twelve until its sequel was out. Back from the Admiralty in the early fifties, he wrote at a slow but steady pace two-fifths of the five hundred page long official report called *The Administration of War Production* which was published in 1955 and in which he analysed the "Pre-war organisation" and "The Admiralty" (the rest was written by J. D. Scott). Up till that time, he was also a regular literary reviewer in the British press — he was one of the first Britons to appreciate William Faulkner — but then his attention was turned to another matter, his own major novel, for good.

What eventually developed into *The Human Predicament* had engaged him since the days of the Blitz, though he did not start writing it until the mid-fifties. It was a project that he pursued for the remainder of his life, working on it till the very end. The long gestation period and the pub-

¹⁰ The main theme of Hughes's second novel may also largely have escaped notice: "For, so far as I can judge, [it] has been successful because the description of the storm is said to be vivid and the story to be exciting. That has made people say that the book is 'about' a storm, and that the men in it hardly matter . . . but I don't believe that a thoughtful reader would agree altogether with that verdict. He would notice that in the shipload of men exposed to that appalling and prolonged danger almost every possible effect of fear, good and bad, has its expression" (*Ibid.*, pp. 43-44). Paul Morgan has stressed the point in his review of *Fiction as Truth*: "But Hughes is a profoundly serious artist and . . . his interest is not in the meteorological or historical setting, but in the protagonists' reaction to it" (*Powys Review*, 16, 1985, p. 70).

lication of the two volumes twelve years apart caused some problems for the novelist and his publishers, and considerable irritation and consternation among many reviewers and critics.

Since Richard Hughes's death on April 28, 1976, three posthumous books by him have been issued: his collected children stories *The Wonder Dog* (1977), the preface of which was among the very last things he wrote, and two compilations edited by Richard Poole. The first one, *In the Lap of Atlas* (1979), collects his stories about Morocco, and the second one, *Fiction as Truth* (1983), reprints his "Selected Literary Writings", including some theoretical essays, the prefaces to his own books, and many of his reviews.

*

Monographs on Richard Hughes's work are limited in number. The major ones are as many as his novels though published not quite as many years apart. The first comprehensive critical assessment, by Peter Thomas¹¹ in 1973, had the backing of Hughes and his secretary Lucy McEntee. The focus of this sympathetic study is stated in its introductory lines:

There is a remarkable wholeness and consistency to the career of Richard Hughes. The retreat from Ego to knowledge of 'Other' is a long journey of atonement. We die, as ego-personalities, to live, as human beings. Few writers have more lucidly expressed the movement of this conviction from the terms of Freud to those of Sartre — a transition covering two literary generations — and done so with less modishness (pp. 1-2).

Thomas devotes his last two chapters to *The Human Predicament*. In his view, its hero is a classic case of war neurosis (although he, like his creator, did not take an active part in World War I): "Augustine moves largely uncomprehending through the maze of experience, a *Candide* in the thickets of Ego" (p. 78). Hughes's dialectic method is pinpointed, e. g. love as opposed to death, and love that transforms into terror. Peter Thomas emphasizes the preying instincts lurking in the German scenes: "The flow of these predatory animal images acknowledges the theme of violence throughout" (p. 81), and illustrates his point by quoting some lines about the character Wolff. Thomas discerns three major strands in *The Wooden Shepherdess*, published in the same year as his own study: Augustine's transformation from patient to agent; Mitzi's religious development; and Hitler's rise to political power. The authorial attitude in the first two instances differs from that in the last: on the one hand "scenes of a parabolic

¹¹ *Richard Hughes* (University of Wales Press on behalf of the Welsh Art Council).

or fabling nature", on the other of "dramatised historical exposition." He adds: "The passages dealing with Hitler's advance to power have a tense realistic quality, the prose is largely unmetaphorical and understated, while elsewhere Hughes is seeking the authority of more general truth in archetype and fable" (pp. 86-87).

Thomas does not admire Hughes's hero (or anti-hero) Augustine Penry-Herbert much: "Few heroes of comparable intelligence have been slower in the uptake" (p. 89), he writes, but he appreciates the novels' "Tolstoian" moral tone. He is critical of the religious undertones in certain chapters, some of which rely on German sources, although he probably did not know that fact: "Hughes will be questioned for his unashamed use of Christian parallels." When Thomas mentions Dickens, it is not in order to praise Hughes's narration: "Moving from character to character during Christmas,¹² [Hughes] is as patent as Dickens in proclaiming his analogies." Thomas is unimpressed by Augustine also in the hero's role as a go-between; his American and Moroccan experiences are "forlorn when measured against the looming cloud of mass psychology" (p. 92). In conclusion, Thomas states that towards the end of the second novel, Hughes's paradoxes and playful dialectic have given way to more serious matters: "'absurdity' must now contend with mysticism" (p. 93).¹³

Hildegard Kruse's monograph¹⁴ ten years later is a detailed study of narrative elements in all the four novels.¹⁵ As regards *The Human Predicament*, she lists in separate sections comments on "der Erzähler, die Zeitstruktur und die Raumstruktur" (the narrator, and time and space structure), on "Synchronisierungen, Rückwendungen, Vorausdeutungen" (synchronisation, flashbacks, flash-forwards), on "Erzählverfahren" (narra-

¹² In chapters fourteen to nineteen of "the Meistersingers".

¹³ In his review of *The Wooden Shepherdess*, Peter Thomas mentioned the unmodishness of Hughes's approach: "As in *The Fox*, Hughes proclaims authorial presence, offering short commentaries on the foregoing topics, both telling and showing, and behaving as though James, Conrad, and Ford had never existed and the Dear Reader is as ready as ever to follow an omniscient guide" (*The Planet*, 18/19, 1973, p. 154). He saw differences in the way in which two of the main protagonists were presented: "A rhetorical contrast is contrived between the curious isolation and idyll-like quality of Augustine's sexual education and the very swift-moving and urgent passages dealing with German politics. If there is a point of possible weakness in the novel, it is likely to be found in the ellipses and rapidity of change in the Hitler narrative" (p. 155). Still, somewhat grudgingly, he conceded that he had been impressed: "His narrative stance is thus as archaic as his subject is contemporary. Yet Hughes has got away with it, once again" (*Ibid.*).

¹⁴ *Bauformen und Erzählverfahren in den Romanen von Richard Hughes* (Verlag Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main 1983).

¹⁵ It is based on the theories of German narratologists like Eberhard Lämmert (*Bauformen des Erzählens*, 1955), Franz Karl Stanzel (*Typische Formen des Romans*, 1964) and Wolfgang Kayser (*Das Sprachliche Kunstwerk*, 1948).

tive strategies), etc. She also comments on instances of symbolic and real blindness in the novels, on the discrepancy between illusion and reality, and on the Christian symbolism. Her book is an attempt at placing Hughes's novels according to a strict methodological formula, including comments on their tragic, comical and ironical elements.¹⁶ This thorough study has not had the recognition and influence that it deserves, no doubt due to the fact that it was never translated into English.¹⁷

Richard Poole's study from 1986¹⁸ profits from his personal contacts and friendship with Hughes during the last three years of the novelist's life. In his first part, dealing with Hughes's life, Poole states an opinion, the truth of which is difficult to deny: "The relationship between Hughes's sources and the final texts of *Fox* and *Shepherdess* is a fascinating one" (p. 76). Further into the book he exemplifies how Hughes for his fiction drew on memoirs written by Walter Schellenberg, Konrad Heiden and August Kubizek. Poole's analyses in regard to the relevance of these memoirs are commented on in three of the chapters below. Poole, who was later to edit Hughes's theoretical writings, discusses Hughes's views on the limits of the ego, and states a dilemma of central importance to the novelist and to the critic alike: "[how] is the novelist to liberate objects from his own perceiving consciousness?" (p. 178). He mentions the novelist's "perception of the ultimate aloneness of human beings" (pp. 179-180) and notes how literary theory, political philosophy and psychological analysis merge in the novels' portrait of Hitler the solipsist. He also makes a case for reading Hughes's books as political novels, regarding them as not different in kind from those of Arthur Koestler (who was Hughes's friend and sometimes his adversary in political discussions)¹⁹ and George Orwell.

Speaking of the narrative technique of the novels, Richard Poole explains Hughes's own term "multiple contrasts" as a kind of juxtaposition, with a variety of perspectives on different topics, one of them the question of sex. Poole could very well have quoted the American poet Laura Rid-

¹⁶ An early article on a similar topic is Annemari Schöne's "Richard Hughes — ein Meister der tragischen Ironie" (1959).

¹⁷ The series in which it appeared, *Studien zur Englischen und Amerikanischen Literatur*, was edited by Günter Ahrends who had written a long essay on Hughes in 1977, published in *Englische Literatur der Gegenwart 1971-1975* (1977), ed. by Rainer Lengeler (pp. 227-241).

¹⁸ *Richard Hughes Novelist* (Poetry Wales Press, Bridgend 1986).

¹⁹ Penelope Hughes, p. 72 ff.

ing's²⁰ formula "a well-cut prism" in this context. His simile when speaking of Hughes's brief chapters is the same: they "might be compared to the many facets of a large jewel: as you turn the jewel slowly under a steady source of light, different facets reflect it glitteringly and teasingly up at you" (p. 188).²¹

In contrast to many reviewers, Richard Poole is not worried by the fact that Augustine seems much too indecisive to play the role of the central character. In Hughes's previous novels, the narrators had often been "historicized personas, imaginative projections of himself into the nineteenth century . . . and the recent past". This changes in *The Human Predicament*:

But from Fox and Shepherdess [the] embodied narrator has altogether disappeared, to be replaced by an impersonalized voice which, assuming the authority of a traditional omniscient narrator, comments as and when it wishes upon characters and events . . . The authoritative cast of the stance taken by Hughes is indicated by the pronominal form he favours — not the first person singular, but the first person plural: 'we', 'us', 'our' . . . This first person plural draws the reader back into historical time, implicating him or her in its events and motions. The narrative voice assumes an authority for its conceptions and perceptions which is absolute. At such moments, it is as if Hughes were speaking with the impersonal voice of history itself (p. 190).

Wolff and Hitler are, in Poole's view, kindred souls. The former commits suicide, the latter dreams of drowning in the waters of the amnion (a view that will be further commented on in the Kubizek chapter below, p. 124): "The ultimate retreat for the solipsist, then, is a retreat into the womb" (p. 200). Further into his analysis, Poole touches on questions of reader involvement, maintaining that a collusion between Hughes's fictitious character and his real reader exists: "Augustine and the reader (for is not Augustine the reader's 'surrogate' inside the novel?) are first persons brought to consider the implications of 'we' and 'they'" (p. 207).²² Hughes's

²⁰ She was the lover of Hughes's long-time friend Robert Graves. Their fifteen year liaison is the subject of the second part of Richard Perceval Graves's biography of his relative: *Robert Graves: The Years with Laura Riding 1926-1940* (1990).

²¹ Speaking of a genre which Hughes's novels in some respects belong to, Lars Ole Sauerberg has used the same simile: "Documentary realism meets life by a narrative device which seeks to refract diffuse reality through a prism made up of familiar narrative modes. The facets of a prism may well be scratched and in need of polishing now and then, but it is quite capable of rendering the undifferentiated grey into a range of distinct and provocative colours, although sometimes the prism itself, intentionally or unintentionally, attracts all the interest" (Sauerberg, p. 191).

²² Only a few months before his death, Hughes sent Poole an appreciative letter in response to the long essay that Poole had just published in *The Anglo-Welsh Review*, "Fiction as Truth: Richard Hughes's *The Human Predicament*". In his letter, he expressed some of his views on reader participation, stressing the polyphony of meaning

hero may be a passive character but with his help, Hughes encourages the reader to take an active part when reading: "Augustine functions as a species of antenna, a consciousness thrust out into a number of more or less alien environments. He is an experimental 'self' exposed to the probing actions of the 'Other' — or, indeed, to many Others" (p. 206).²³ It had never, according to Poole, been the author's intention to make him overly active: "His whole nature is predicated upon the fact of unpreparedness" (p. 213).²⁴

Paul Morgan's²⁵ is the longest more general analysis of *The Human Predicament* to date. While commenting on the slow gestation of Hughes's novels, he takes to task the reviewers who criticised Hughes for tardiness: their objections were misconceived, he claims. And if they had found the books incoherent and disconnected, then they had missed the point: "Nowhere was there recognition that ellipsis and distortion of viewpoint are crucial, intentional aspects of Hughes's art" (p. 92). The work should be regarded as a continuous and organic whole, which may have been difficult when the novels were originally published but has become easier over the years: "For the contemporary reader — having waited those twelve long years — it must have been near-impossible to read the novel's two volumes as a single text" (p. 93). Morgan followed

and the distinction between conscious and unconscious symbolism. There are: "... two distinct headings under which the 'meaning' of any piece of writing has to be considered: there is its casual meaning, the state of mind which induced the writer to write it, and its effective meaning — the state of mind which reading induces in a reader, which may be very different and yet is surely an equally valid subject for the critic to consider. Resonances woken in the reader's mind by symbolisms of which the writer may be totally unconscious can play an important part in 'meaning' of this latter kind — even if the reader remains unconscious of them too!" (RH to RP, January 22, 1976).

²³ Wallace Martin compares the activity of reading with that going on in daily life: "As a spectator or voyeur looking into a realistic fictional world, the reader interprets what happens much as we do in ordinary life, fitting together the events, characters, and motives" (Martin, p. 155). Hughes sometimes lets Augustine serve as that voyeuristic spectator, hovering between novel and reader. When Martin in the same paragraph states that "in fiction the context does not involve reference to reality", he may not fully have considered the complications of historical novels and documentary realism.

²⁴ A good dozen years earlier, Patrick Swinden had been impressed by Hughes's authorial skill: "Hughes's narrative behaviour is extraordinary. Each character's experience, as it is shown to be taking place, is subjected to methods of cross-comparison and classification which ought to stop it being interesting at all. In fact it is fascinating. Once we have got used to what at first feels like wanton jerkiness — the rapid substitution of longshots for close-ups, the conflation of past and present activities for purposes of comparison, the use of mimetically inappropriate imagery to explain what a character feels like in a new situation — we become aware of a spaciousness, a freedom from confinement in specifically 'novelistic' devices, which confounds our expectations of what can and cannot happen in prose fiction" (Swinden 1973, p. 196).

²⁵ *The Art of Richard Hughes. A Study of the Novels* (University of Wales Press, Cardiff 1993)

how the work progressed in the business correspondence between the novelist and his British publisher but did not consult the manuscripts in The Lilly Library. Neither had he read Hildegard Kruse's study; it does not appear in his appended Hughes bibliography.

Having checked the Chatto & Windus files, he can safely say that even if there was a hiatus of a dozen years between the publication of the first and the second part of the work, there was no corresponding pause during the writing.²⁶ Two important aspects of how the novel may be understood come into focus in Morgan's discussion: the question of whether it is complete or incomplete, and the question of how its narrator is to be defined. If the novel is regarded as 'incomplete', then, in Morgan's opinion, it has been the author's intention to make it so, in order to elicit his readers' active response and participation: "In Hughes's works . . . meaning is dependent upon the process of reading, is enacted by the reader" (p. 97).

As for the nature of the novels' narrator, Paul Morgan's analysis is to the point and clearly expressed; he shies esoteric terminology. He makes a strong case for "a mediating artificial narrator": "The commentary passages by this figure must consequently be read sceptically, as part of the text, and not as *ex cathedra* insertions by the author" (p. 98). The modulation of different viewpoints (Morgan does not mention voices) is Hughes's strategy to force his readers continually to reassess their opinions of the characters, not least that of Augustine. Morgan then lists, illustrates and analyses several of the novelist's tactics of dissemblance, such as withheld information, manipulated time, the offering of choices and the laying of traps (p. 103).

The narration is neither transparent nor reliable, he points out: "On the contrary, [it] is exploited as a rhetorical medium, designed to be ambiguous and to challenge the reader's imagination" (p. 107). Summing up Hughes's strategies for reader involvement, Morgan hints at the overriding title of the two volumes, *The Human Predicament*: ". . . the reader thus enacts a major theme within [the work]: the problem of how to make sense of that most complex relationship, that of human to fellow human, individually and in society" (ibid.). Some of his subsequent observations on the constellation of opposing characters and symbol clusters (e. g. fracture, disintegration, cripples; eyes and windows; water and ice) will be further commented on below.

²⁶ Morgan had made the point already in an earlier review: "[Hughes] never intended to write a trilogy or any other definite number of volumes, only a single novel which would appear in parts" (*Powys Review*, 16, 1985, p. 70).

"From Putsch to Purge" is the title of the present study. It could just as well have been called "Fall '23 and Summer '34". The Munich events of November 8 and 9, 1923, and the killings at Wiessee and elsewhere on June 30, 1934, will figure prominently in it, as they do in Hughes's novels. If the exposition is at times repetitive and the vision sometimes myopic, it is in part due to the method chosen with its biographical focus. A study of Hughes's German chapters and their sources can be organised in several ways; the one preferred has taken its cue from his own "Acknowledgements" and "Historical Note", and their mentioning of names (or failure to do so).

The wealth of biographical details in the following sixteen chapters and in the conclusion is intentional; it reflects a belief that not only are the textual passages as they appear in source and novel worthy of study; also their contexts are of historical and psychological interest. Hughes was, as will be demonstrated below, interested in their debatable reliability, idiosyncrasy and varying degrees of objectivity and subjectivity. The present writer shares his interest. For much the same reasons, the footnotes are sometimes expansive. The discourse contained in them comments on the main body of the study, is parallel to it, or sometimes deviates from it.

For the benefit of the reader, a typographical *Nota bene* should be added. The two novels of *The Human Predicament* are divided into three books each: the first volume into "Polly and Rachel", "The White Crow" and "The Fox in the Attic"; the second into "The Wooden Shepherdess", "The Meistersingers" and "Stille Nacht". Thus, the last book in the first volume and the first in the last carry titles identical with the novels themselves. In order to avoid any possible confusion, in this study the novel is referred to in italics, *The Fox in the Attic* (often abbreviated: *The Fox*), the books contained therein with quotation marks: "The Fox in the Attic", etc. The original Chatto & Windus editions (the American Harper & Row first editions are almost identical) have been used and all page references refer to them. Anyone using other editions would still find the quotes without much difficulty, as in most cases the relevant Chapter (indicated by the capital) and book have also been noted: the Putsch is described in Chapters twenty to twenty-seven in "The White Crow", the Purge in Chapters twenty-six to thirty-three in "Stille Nacht", etc.

In English texts, German names sometimes tend to be written with digraphs instead of with the original umlauts. In quotes from texts where this is the case, the digraphs have been retained: Roehm, Goering, etc.

Otherwise umlauts are used: Röhm, Göring. Richard Hughes wavered in his practice: in the first novel, he used digraphs, in the second umlauts (also for Goebbels whose name normally takes no umlaut in German).

*

The varied ways in which *The Human Predicament* is told makes it a rewarding subject for a close narrative analysis.²⁷ In the present study, the comments on the narrative aspects of the two novels are mainly based on the two chapters dealing with focalization and narration in Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan's *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (1983). Following a terminology suggested by Gérard Genette in his *Figure III* (1972),²⁸ Rimmon-Kenan tries to keep apart perspective and narration: the related questions of "who sees?" and "who speaks?" are interrelated but not interchangeable. A host of narratological terms like "angle of vision", "perspective" and "point of view" are thus substituted by "focalization". The restricted visual connotation of this term is broadened by Rimmon-Kenan to include certain psychological and ideological aspects as well, i. e. its "cognitive, emotional and ideological orientation" (p. 71).

A character in a novel may be both speaking and seeing, but "a person (and, by analogy, a narrative agent) is also capable of undertaking to tell what another person sees or has seen" (p. 72). The person who sees the action (or who perceives it) is "the focalizer", the one who tells about it is "the narrator". Rimmon-Kenan summarizes these clarifications in the five following points: 1) focalization and narration are different activities, 2) in a "third-person centre of consciousness", the focalizer is the centre of consciousness whereas the narrator is the user of the third person, 3) the two activities are kept apart in first-person retrospective narratives, 4) there is no difference in focalization between the persons in 2) and 3): both exist within the represented world, the "diegesis"; 5) the activities of focalization and narration may be combined.

Furthermore, focalization is an activity which has both a subject and an object: it involves both a focalizer and someone or something that is being focalized. It can be external to the story, involving a "narrator-focalizer", but it can also be internal to it, making use of a "character-

²⁷ Wallace Martin's survey *Recent Theories of Narrative* (1986) states what may be a truism, but it has far-reaching narratological implications: "... the reader occupies only one of several interpretative positions, those of characters and narrators being equally important" (Martin, p. 171). — Chapter six in Patrick Swinden's *Unofficial Selves* (1973) and chapter two in his *The English Novel of History and Society, 1940-80* (1984) both show a keen appreciation of Hughes's varied narrative methods.

²⁸ Translated into English as *Narrative Discourse* (1980).

focalizer" (p. 74). In consequence, "the focalized can be seen either from without or from within" (p. 75). The focalization of a narrative can remain fixed, but it can also alternate between two or more focalizers. It has spatial facets. The focalizer may take a panoramic bird's-eye view of the actions: Hughes's description of the Welsh village Newton Llantony early on in *The Fox in the Attic* illustrates this; or he may be a limited observer like Lothar in Chapters twenty-three to twenty-five of "The White Crow". The focalization may change from the panoramic to the limited view, and it can also alternate between different limited observers (as will be shown below). As for time facets, external focalizers may move freely between past, present and future times, whereas internal focalizers of course have to keep themselves to the present of the novel's characters.

The external focalizers' knowledge may be unrestricted and objective, whereas the internal focalizers' knowledge is restricted and their views subjective. The focalized may also be perceived either from without or from within; in the second instance, this can be done either in interior monologues, or "by granting an external focalizer (a narrator-focalizer) the privilege of penetrating the consciousness of the focalized" (p. 81). This is the case with Hughes's portrait of Hitler, though in some chapters of "The White Crow" Hitler himself is his own intradiegetic focalizer of what is going on in his frenzied mind, as will be further explained below (see p. 139).

"The overall language of a text is that of the narrator, but focalization can 'colour' it in a way which makes it appear as a transposition of the perceptions of a separate agent. Thus both the presence of a focalizer other than the narrator and the shift from one focalizer to another may be signalled by language", Rimmon-Kenan writes (p. 82). Many examples of this colouring may be found in Hughes's novels, as will be explained in the discussion of Chapter twenty-three of "The Meistersingers" below.

An instructive "typology of narrators" in *Narrative Fiction* (p. 94 ff) takes into account several distinguishing factors, among them the different narrative levels, the extent of the narrators' participation in the story, their covertness and overtness, the different kinds of comments (interpretative, judgemental and generalized) made by them, and finally the case of reliable and unreliable narrators and different kinds of narratees, "the agent addressed by the narrator".

Resorting to Genette's distinctions, Rimmon-Kenan's typology makes use of the terms extradiegetic and intradiegetic narrators. A narrator of the

first kind "is, as it were, 'above' or superior to the story he narrates" and thus he "is 'extradiegetic', like the level of which he is a part" (p. 94). As for the second kind, "if the narrator is also a diegetic character in the first narrative told by the extradiegetic narrator, then he is a second-degree, or intradiegetic narrator" (p. 94). Some further levels in this hierarchy of narrators suggested by Genette (hypodiegetic and hypo-hypodiegetic ones) have not been taken into account in the present study. On the other hand, Genette's and Rimmon-Kenan's distinction between focalization and narration and their concepts of extradiegetic and intradiegetic focalizers and narrators have.

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Chapter twenty-three of "The Meistersingers" offers a whole range of instructive examples of Hughes's richly varied narrative practice. Much ground is covered by the chapter, both geographically and politically. It opens with a link to the earlier chapters in which life among the rich landowning class has been in focus. A dramatic incident has been the turning-point in them: Mary's riding accident which will leave her almost totally paralyzed.²⁹ The first sentence refers to these and other events on the private and public level, and the wording is perhaps somewhat unfortunate; the irony in it may be too pat: "Yes, the ways of the rich man are known to be full of trouble; but even the poor have their cares" (p. 206).³⁰

After a brief section set in Norah's Coventry, the scene changes to Germany, first with an effect of tentative foreshadowing: "And next year

²⁹ Richard Hughes was as surprised by the sudden tum of events as his readers, as his secretary Lucy McEntee explains: "I had one astonishing morning, when I walked into the study, and there was Diccon sitting quite still at the typewriter, saying, 'Do you know, Mary's just fallen off her horse and broken her neck . . . now what are we going to do about this?' I said, 'What are you going to do — is she dead?' He said, 'No, no, she's broken her neck. I think you can still live and break your neck. I think we'd better get some medical research on this.' And from then on, we started to write to people in Harley Street, and found out that you could live perfectly well in a wheelchair with a broken neck; but he didn't expect Mary, out on this Boxing Day hunt, to break her neck just like that — he probably knew in his subconscious, but he sat there completely astonished" (*The Listener*, May 10, 1979).

³⁰ Auberon Waugh was scathing (and funny) in his review, not only punching Hughes, but also jabbing his fellow critic Martin Seymour Smith: "Mr Penry-Herbert starts taking an interest in his Welsh estates which gives us an opportunity to tickle Mr Seymour-Smith up the right way with a bit of instant radicalism so — WHAM! OOF!! — we're back in Coventry among those perfectly delightful working folk, thinking how disgraceful it is that some people always seem to be so much poorer than others: 'Yes, the ways of the rich man are known to be full of trouble; but even the poor have their cares.' Coo, pretty vitriolic that, innit Martin? One can hear the great 'Ooh!' from the assembled critics, like the noise a pantomime audience makes when the ponies are brought on stage" (*The Spectator*, April 14, 1973).

perhaps, once the Nazi Party had been rebuilt...". But then the narrative immediately returns to the present, in a line which explains the rationale behind Hitler's political actions which will be described more fully further into the chapter: "But meanwhile the first thing Hitler had to do was to get the legal ban on his Party lifted by promising good behaviour" (p. 207). The rest of the chapter deals with the Nazi party rift at this point in time, after the Putsch, the court martial and Hitler's year at Landsberg. Four potentially dangerous contenders for the supreme Nazi power are listed briefly, one by one. Initially, their names are mentioned only in passing by the extradiegetic narrator, in connection with the party reconstruction meeting that Hitler has called for at the Bürgerbräukeller, the same place where the Putsch had started on November 8, 1923: "But almost none of the Nazi big-wigs showed their faces: Ludendorff, Strasser, Röhm and Rosenberg all stayed away, and Göring was still abroad (he was also struck off the rolls)" (p. 208).

To whom would they have shown their faces, had they actually been present? Clearly to the extradiegetic narrator whose voice we hear behind this paragraph, as indicated by the knowledgeable comment in the parenthesis. But in the next paragraph an intradiegetic focalizer appears, the fictional Lothar Scheidemann, who is well-known to the reader from his actions in chapter twenty-one of "The White Crow" in the preceding volume (see below, p. 280). He now acts as a witness of what has happened, and what effect Hitler's words have had on the audience (or at least, on part of the audience, as the continued text will presently make clear). The reader observes the scene through Lothar's eyes at this point: "Lothar was there, in a modest corner, and saw how Hitler's eloquence swayed the faithful: the women sobbed, and disruptive elements stumbled tearfully on to the platform to pump each other's hands" (p. 208).

There is perhaps a movement away from Lothar's focalization already within this sentence. The disapproving "disruptive" can be seen as the extradiegetic narrator's comment just as much as the intradiegetic focalizer's. In the next sentence, the perspective has changed. Now Lothar himself is focalized by someone outside the diegesis, someone who is informed of the earlier parts of the story and who shows an ironic attitude to the characters in the picture, including Lothar, this Hitler-worshipping simpleton: "But after all, who were these 'faithfuls' apart from second-rate scamps like that Carl whom Reinhold delighted to tease, and a handful of dewy-eyed youths like Lothar himself?"

Earlier in the paragraph, the focus had moved away from actual characters to fictional ones. Now the story once more reverts back to being an historical novel with semi-documentary pretensions. Three historical characters are brought to the reader's attention: "The only Nazis present of any importance were Frick and Esser and Streicher — pretty small beer when compared with those others who stopped away." This gives the narrator his cue to the listing of the four possible contenders for a top position in the Nazi hierarchy. They are brought into the spotlight one by one, and then dispatched, often in a telling metaphorical language of dominance and submission: "Rosenberg . . . would lick the hand which laid on the lash", "Röhm and Strasser were rather more difficult nuts to crack", "if Röhm wouldn't come to heel he would have to go".

The narrator's perspective seems to coincide with Hitler's for much of this chapter: "'Exit LUDENDORFF, laughed off the stage.'" Hitler's glee at having rid himself of an opponent rubs off on the extradiegetic narrator's comment. The reason why Gregor Strasser's decency is acknowledged somewhat unwillingly (he "looked like a block of oak") is explained by the perspective in a comment that he was "much too honest to want around", which is once again coloured by Hitler's inimical views of a possible opponent, as is the concluding summary: "Thus 'Exit STRASSER', transferred to Berlin to preach the gospel among the benighted Prussians; and Hitler was free of his somewhat embarrassing eye." Rosenberg is not important enough to warrant the use of capitals (the citation marks around the three other names seem to indicate that Hughes has borrowed directly from a specific source). As for Röhm, several reasons are given for his sudden departure to serve as a mercenary in Bolivia. In a subclause, hinting at the tension between the SA and the regular army, the narrator's perspective once again overlaps with Hitler's: "Moreover the Army were likely to look askance at a private force that was too like themselves — and winning the Army's favour had now become Hitler's lodestar, never again must he find himself facing the Army's guns." This harks back to the disastrous outcome of the Putschist march on Feldherrnhalle on November 9, 1923, but it is also a condensation of several pages in one of Hughes's sources, John Wheeler-Bennett's book on the German Army (see below, p. 225).

Towards the end of the chapter, another foreshadowing effect is inserted: "Thus it was 'Exit RÖHM' — at least for the next five years." The foregoing summary of how these pretenders have left the stage one after the other has obviously been coloured by Hitler's wishful thinking. At the

very end, however, the perspective returns to an extradiegetic narrator who distances himself from Hitler, in an ironic metaphor "Ludendorff, Rosenberg, Strasser and Röhm.... Hitler was left undisputed cock-of-the-dunghill" (p. 209). The three pages (pp. 207-209) have covered much historical and political ground in their exposé of how Hitler once again asserts his dominance over the Party. It is a brief and economic narration, and it is brilliantly done, thanks to Hughes's narrative practice, in this instance his recourse to a well-informed, subjective and opinionated extradiegetic narrator.

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The progression in the following sixteen chapters is essentially a chronological one, moving like the novels through twelve years, from Putsch to Purge. In reconstructing the two events, Hughes drew on a number of different sources that were put to use in several parts of his novels. As a consequence, some overlapping between the different chapters below cannot be avoided. A brief summary of the sixteen chapters follows, and an indication of which corresponding Chapters in the novels are discussed in them.

Chapter one looks at a specific source for Hughes's Bavarian setting, the private papers of Heinrich von Aretin, his distant German relative. These memoirs were written many years after the events that they focus on, and a certain ironic stance is discernible. When Hughes borrowed some of the passages, their tone of irony was preserved; it particularly colours the attitudes of von Aretin's fictive counterpart Walther von Kessen. Another memoir, written by Goronwy Rees, a Welsh friend of Richard Hughes's, dealt with a young Briton's experiences in Silesia. The British naivety shown by the young man in this source is reflected in the sometimes painful simplicity of Hughes's main protagonist, Augustine Penry-Herbert. Both sources supplied material for several chapters in the first novel.

Chapter two is centred on the character of Wolff, a suicidal recluse who is given some symbolic weight in the novel, as a dangerous political misfit. Hughes sketched his Freikorps background in some of the first twenty chapters of "The Fox in the Attic" drawing on *The Outlaws*, an autobiographical novel written by Ernst von Salomon, with a clear intent to *épater le bourgeois*. What seems mostly youthful bragging in the source turns into a sinister portrait of a desperate nihilist in the novel. Hughes's reliance on a later book by von Salomon for a brief scene in Chapter

twenty-seven of "The Wooden Shepherdess" is also discussed. It involves a report by an officer who observed Hitler at close range during the Purge. Hughes obviously had some difficulties incorporating this material into the novel.

Chapter three concerns a letter from 1923 by a Major Götz, describing certain incidents during the Putschists' Munich march on November 9. It caught Hughes's interest and held it for many years. He was aware that it may have been an elaborate piece of political propaganda, and discussed its unreliability with some of his correspondents. Certain scenes in Chapter twenty-one of "The White Crow" rely on this source, complemented by Hughes's own field research in downtown Munich. The virulent anti-semitism of the source, whether faked or not, colours the views of one of the intradiegetic fictional witnesses, adding to the plausibility of Hughes's historical reconstruction.

A memoir by the Austrian August Kubizek, who had been Hitler's friend in youth, played an important role in supplying Hughes with details for Hitler's nightmare in Chapter ten of "The Fox in the Attic", probably the most sensational passage in the novels. Certain German reviewers objected to Hughes's portrait of Adolf Hitler, especially his daring effort at showing what may have gone on in the future Führer's mind during some feverish days of nightmares, frenzy and agony. What could be seen as a total fictionalization was, however, a composite reconstruction based on facts from Kubizek and other sources, as made evident by Richard Poole. A Hughes story from 1953, "To follow a Star", is also brought into the discussion.

Chapters five, six and seven focus on the Hanfstaengl family in Munich. The first scrutinizes what was arguably Hughes's main source, the memoirs of Ernst Hanfstaengl. Hughes's contacts with him resulted in many passages in *The Fox in the Attic* and *The Wooden Shepherdess* in which this former Nazi Foreign Press Officer often plays the role of an intradiegetic (and in this case factual) focalizer. Chapter six summarizes passages from a contemporary diary by his wife, the American-born Helene Hanfstaengl, and discusses their relevance for Chapters nine, ten and eleven of "The Fox in the Attic". This document, which is the only authentic report of the days when Hitler went into hiding immediately after the Putsch, has also been used by John Toland, one of Hitler's biographers. The seventh chapter considers a memoir written by their son which

the novelist drew on for Chapters ten and fourteen of "The Meistersingers", resulting in a convincing portrait of Hitler.

A book by Sir Philip Gibbs proved valuable to Hughes for Chapters eighteen, nineteen and twenty of "Stille Nacht". In some passages, Hughes drew heavily on Gibbs's travelogue of a journey through Germany in 1934. He found this material ready-made (at least in part) for inclusion in his fiction. Possible reasons why he did not acknowledge this source are suggested in chapter nine below. In this instance, Hughes was wary of his own practice of drawing from the work by someone else, and the question of literary borrowings and possible plagiarism is discussed in an excursus.

In chapters nine, ten and eleven three historians and their importance for "Stille Nacht" are discussed: first John Wheeler-Bennett as regards Chapter twenty-nine; then Elizabeth Wiskemann as for Chapter nineteen; and finally William Manchester as for Chapter twenty-two.³¹ The basis for Otto von Kessen's military ideals can be found in Wheeler-Bennett's book on the German army, and Hughes readily acknowledged his debt. He was also indebted to Elizabeth Wiskemann, a friend of his. Some of the pages in her book on the Rome-Berlin Axis set both the scene and the tone of Hughes's fictional rendering of the 1934 Hitler-Mussolini meeting. From Manchester he borrowed a description of Hitler's visit to the Krupps in the same year; a certain fictionalization is apparent already in the source.

Chapter twelve looks at a brief passage in a memoir by Walter Schellenberg which was recycled in Chapter twenty-three of "Stille Nacht", in an illuminating passage in Hughes's ongoing analysis of Hitler. It is an example of Hughes's skilful craft at diversifying his narrative. What was told in the first person in the source turned into an episode seen by several intradiegetic focalizers in the novel. The reader, registering the scene via varying witnesses, is as shocked as the fictive observer when a ghoulish face suddenly appears on the other side of a window: Der Führer as a ghostly apparition.

Chapters thirteen and fourteen discuss two of Hughes's key witnesses, Kurt G. W. Ludecke and Otto Strasser, both of whom had axes to grind with their political opponents. The first name appears on several of the novelist's research cards but was not officially acknowledged as one of his sources, whereas the second was, in a reference to a horrifying episode. Hughes questioned the authenticity of this "Banquo's ghost" episode, but

³¹ The assistance that Richard Hughes received from another historian, Lord Bullock, is acknowledged in the first novel. Some of the letters they exchanged are quoted in my discussions.

he incorporated it into his fiction even if he knew that many historians were doubtful of its veracity. What Ludecke and Strasser, both of them critical of Hitler, had written went into a long series of fictional chapters which mostly concerned the gory history of the Röhm Purge. This brings the source material inventory proper to a close.³²

Chapter fifteen maps how Hughes's novels fared on the German book market, where the passage was less smooth than in most other countries, for reasons connected with the controversial nature — at least for Germans — of some of the topics that Richard Hughes had chosen: the birth of Nazism and Hitler's rise to power. The chapter also discusses Hughes's encounters with the influential German critic Hans Magnus Enzensberger, whom he held in high regard but whose criticism hit him hard.

A line could have been drawn here, limiting the study to the two volumes published by Hughes. Chapter sixteen, however, goes on to discuss the fragments of a third volume by bringing their German subject matter into focus but also by commenting on a discarded first chapter and an unpublished fragment of a thirteenth, both of which relate to the development of the main character, Augustine Penry-Herbert, and fill in his psychological profile. Some remarks are made on how this manuscript grew and how it might have developed, had Richard Hughes lived to finish it. The conclusion, finally, harks back to Hughes's quote at the very outset of this study, "My most recent book, 'The Fox in the Attic', is about Hitler and Germany". It raises some questions about his fictionalised portrait of Adolf Hitler. Many readers of *The Human Predicament* will probably remember the historical figure more vividly than its fictional hero, whether this was the novelist's intention or not. Some explanations for this are suggested in the concluding chapter.

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The following study relies, as already stated, predominant on my research in one particular archive, the Lilly Library research collection in Bloomington, Indiana. A brief summary of its holdings of Hughes's papers in forty-two cardboard archival boxes is called for at this point. The material is divided into four main categories: correspondence, writings, personal papers and miscellanea. The general correspondence in seven boxes is only partly indexed. Boxes 8 and 9 contain Hughes's correspondence and con-

³² Two more sources for Hughes's works, Albert Speer and Hans Bernd Gisevius, are mentioned briefly below (see p. 263 and p. 301). It is highly likely that there were other sources, but these are yet to be identified.

tracts with publishers and literary agents. In the first manilla folders of Box 8 his letters to his literary agent A. M. Heath relate his and their efforts on the German book market.

Copies of Hughes's letters to his London publishers Chatto & Windus make up the most sizeable subgroup; for many years, the originals could be read in their old offices in central London but are now, as has been noted, kept at Reading University, catalogued and easily available. The many letters to Harpers, his American publishers, are as revealing as their British counterparts; his contact persons in the British and the American book publishing business, mainly Ian Parsons and his successor Norah Smallwood in London and Cass Canfield in New York were, as seen in these files, supportive, encouraging and patient.

The second category, manuscripts relating to Hughes's own writings, is the largest in the collection, filling twenty-two boxes in all, a cornucopia for the researcher, even if they do contain much disappointing discarded material. Of particular value to this study has been the material in boxes 14 to 22, all of which relates to *The Human Predicament*. Manilla folders containing research notes are filed, followed by the manuscript material for all three volumes. Nothing was thrown away, everything is kept from the very first draft in 1955 to the very last lines written in the spring of 1976. It is a massive amount of writing. There are sixty-eight manilla folders for the first volume alone, some of them containing up to a hundred items, one hundred and sixty-three for the second novel, and twenty-one for the unfinished third part.

Box 27 contains addresses, lectures and speeches, interviews and the manuscripts of Hughes's introductions to books by himself and others. This box has been consulted, as has the following one, containing his reviews and his untitled and incomplete writings. However, almost nothing in the third category, his personal papers, has been made use of for this study, in contrast to the miscellaneous material in the fourth category. Box 34 contains biographical material, and in the next two boxes a wide range of press clippings are kept — Hughes subscribed to the services of a press cutting agency. Material relating to Travels in Box 39, some of the Calendars in Box 40 and 41, and some Notebooks in Box 42 have also been checked. All unpublished sources that are referred to on the following pages can be found in this archive, unless otherwise stated. The general description above of the different boxes in the holdings should give a clear

indication as to where a particular manuscript can be found in the Lilly Library.

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Placing the German chapters in focus has had the consequence that much else is eclipsed: nothing is said in this study of his Moroccan scenes, and little of his British and American ones. Very little light is shed on two of the six books in the novels, "Polly and Rachel" and "The Wooden Shepherdess." It is doubtful that a similar study of his British, American and Moroccan sources (some parts of these chapters were autobiographical) would be as rewarding and yield as many results as the close search for his German sources has done. If Richard Hughes seems to evoke and provoke much more of his readers' interest when dealing with Germany than with England and the other settings,³³ this reflects a general imbalance in the public interest in the political history of the recent past which Sebastian Haffner, Alvin Rosenfeld and other historians and critics have also commented on, as will be demonstrated in the conclusion below.

That Morocco, Britain and America are wholly or partly left out of focus in the following chapters need not be defended, but another lacuna concerning one of the persons in the novels should be explained and excused: very little is said about Mitzi although she is one of the main characters in the German scenes. There exist a great many notes, letters, annotations, queries and discarded manuscript pages in the Lilly Library relating to her story. Her religious conversion, however, is less particular than universal; it need not necessarily have taken place in a Bavarian convent, and much of the information that went into Hughes's portrait of her came from British friends who shared his deep religious belief and conviction. A specific study of Richard Hughes and religiosity remains to be written.

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What follows is to a large extent a genetic study, answering questions of when and where Richard Hughes got hold of the sources he needed for his scenes set in Germany. Questions relating to the origin of certain episodes and persons are rather easily answered, once the search in the archives is done. Most of the research files that Hughes kept seem to be preserved, in-

³³ Richard Poole sees this as intentional on the part of the novelist: "In neither *Fox* nor *Shepherdess* does he get to grips with English politics and politicians as he does in *Bavaria* . . . The effect of this deliberate imbalance is to suggest that Britain exists 'outside' the stream of history-making, while Germany exists in it: and not only are the Germans making history for themselves, they are making it for Europe and the world" (Poole 1986, p. 216).

dicating what he found important in his vast reading. Copies of his outgoing letters have also been saved, as has a large number of the ones that he received over the years. The correspondence in Bloomington is sorted in chronological order, but is not quite as accessible as desired: it lacks a name-index. On the other hand, the majority of the books that he consulted were not bought but borrowed and eventually were returned to the libraries. Even if the books can be traced, it is not very likely that they contain marginal notes in his hand. The same applies to the journals and the magazines that he searched in for articles on recent European history.³⁴

More important are all the "Hows", the questions raised because of the way in which Richard Hughes made use of his sources. He borrowed, but he invariably changed what he had borrowed, to make it fit into a new context. His narrative devices all aimed at re-creating decisive moments in the recent past, on the public level with the help of historical sources, on the private one by resorting to his own considerable empathy. Perhaps the most important of his narrative strategies is one of swift interchanges. The sources from which he culled useful passages were mostly told in a straightforward way, in the case of memoirs more often than not as first-person narratives.

By making use of both extradiegetic and intradiegetic focalizers, Hughes turned his scenes into a subtle reconstruction of historical events, as seen and heard by a host of real and fictional witnesses. In the process, he made the events appear more multifaceted and enigmatic than in the source, and he invited the reader to take an active part in the analysis of the historical events and in the assessment of their significance. The rapid interplay of primary and secondary narrators gives dramatic life to many of the scenes in the novels. Several examples of this will be given below; one will suffice here to prove the point:

Chapter twenty-five of "The Meistersingers" sketches the background of the north-south friction in the Nazi party, i. e. the tension between Bavaria and Prussia. The basic historical facts, including the many political rumours, are given by an extradiegetic narrator, but they are also stated in the dialogue between two fictive characters, the Munich lawyer Reinhold Steuckel and his Berlin friend Count Lepowski. The latter regards what is

³⁴ Richard Perceval Graves discusses his published and unpublished sources in a brief note on p. 428 of his Richard Hughes biography. He has had access to the private papers of Hughes's daughter Penelope and his secretary Lucy McEntee, as well as to a collection of Graves family mss, some of them relating to Richard Hughes. However, he does not seem to have consulted the Chatto & Windus archive, neither at the publishing house in William IV Street in London nor at its present site at the University of Reading.

going on in Munich with some suspicion. This is his direct speech, as an intradiegetic focalizer: "These Nazis — a so-called 'national' party almost unknown in the North, with only a few thousand members and those at each other's throats..." (p. 215). But the Count is also seen from the outside, by the narrator: "A Prussian himself, at the back of Lepowski's mind remained the undeniable fact that the master-folk were the Prussians." Towards the end of the chapter, the narrator does not seem to give Hitler much chance of success: "A would-be national leader who spent half his life-span frigging about in some potty city like Munich was wasting his time: once he got to Berlin he would have to start again from the bottom" (p. 216).

But the final parenthesis in the paragraph reveals that this is once more Count Lepowski's cocksure opinion, although rendered indirectly: "The politician who didn't know that fact didn't know much; and Bavarian Strasser had done the only sensible thing in removing himself to Berlin as soon as he could, leaving addlepate Hitler to crow in his own backyard (said the Count)" (p. 216). The mentioning of "master-folk" is more ominous to the reader than to the focalizers within the fiction, and the irony of the whole passage is apparent to any knowledgeable reader who knows of the historical outcome of this infighting: Hitler in his Bavarian backyard will prove victorious whereas Strasser — the northerner — will soon be killed in the Purge.

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Answering the question "Why" is equally tantalizing: why did Hughes choose Germany as his setting when he had not been there himself and presumably was not fluent in German? Why did he decide to place his central protagonist Augustine Penry-Herbert in Bavaria? Why did he start the action of his novel precisely in 1923 and not in any other year? Why did he decide to try to make Hitler a probable part of his fiction, in a daring enterprise? Partial answers to these questions are readily given. Germany illustrates the trauma of a defeated nation,³⁵ personal connections in and near Munich gave Hughes access to eye-witness reports; the memoirs de-

³⁵ Richard Humphrey discusses the ambiguous impression of Germany in Hughes's novels. Augustine's views are limited, while the narrator's are expanded via thematic symbols, contrasting parallel actions and conversations (some of which Augustine happens to overhear without understanding them). Humphrey concludes his article by stating that the novel is written by a Freudian, and that it echoes Freud's *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*. ("Der historische Roman und das Feindbild. Zu Richard Hughes' unvollendeter Faschismus-Trilogie *The Human Predicament* (1961-73)", in *Anglistik & Englisch-Unterricht*, 1986, pp. 157-172).

scribing the Prussian experiences of a Welsh friend in the 1920s came handy; 1923 was the year of Germany's most acute inflation and also the year in which Hitler had tried his unsuccessful coup. Much of this will be explored in the following chapters, with some degree of accuracy — only Hughes himself of course knew the full truth of the motives behind his choices.

One crucial question is raised on some of the pages below: how much German did Richard Hughes in actual fact know? Did he speak it? Did he read it with ease? The correct answer is probably negative on both counts, as the documents seem to indicate, but a definite answer can be given only by those who knew him. Virtually all the texts that he consulted were translated. This no doubt affected his views on Germany, but to what degree and in what way is difficult to assess.

On the pages that follow, many examples will be given of texts that were lifted out of one context and placed into another one, moving from source to novel. The extensive catalogue of such instances in this study has not been brought together in order to pillory Richard Hughes by accusing him of excessive literary borrowings. On the contrary, it is intended to make it clear how expertly he used bits from here and there when laying his new mosaic, changing both its colour and its pattern in the process. Assessing how efficient, from a reader's point-of-view, his transformational activities and the strategies behind them were might warrant a separate reader-response study. It will not be attempted here.³⁶

³⁶ As has been briefly shown above, Paul Morgan includes some discussion of these and related questions in his monograph.

Chapter I

Heinrich von Aretin in Bavaria and Goronwy Rees in Prussia

When *The Fox in the Attic* was in press, Richard Hughes for publicity reasons wrote a draft headed "Biography", which he kept in the third person. In it, he recapitulated his life and work in brief columns, many of them covering several years. The entry for 1946-1961 notes that he, starting in 1956, had devoted himself wholeheartedly to *The Human Predicament*, work on which had begun in the previous year: "From then until the first volume . . . was completed in 1960 he worked on this major project continuously — apart from occasional trips abroad, mostly required by the work itself."

One such journey took place in the same year that he had started to devote himself full-time to his project. In chapter XXI of her book *Richard Hughes Author, Father*, Penelope Hughes writes of her father's "Researches in Bavaria". Richard Hughes and his wife Frances stayed with distant cousins of hers at two different castles, Schloss Neuburg and Schloss Heidenburg. They took in the scenery, he as an author, she as a painter. The journey entailed much hard work, and resulted in a high degree of accuracy and authenticity in the novels. Richard Hughes collected much material, though far from all of it went into the novel, according to his daughter, who talks of her father's vast stock of "things to leave out".¹ This is also testified by the number of discarded manuscript pages in his archive. If read alongside the novels, his notes disclose that much in the Bavarian chapters in his novels is based on the oral or written sources that he collected during these weeks in 1956 and on subsequent journeys to and around Munich.² Hughes met with people who had witnessed the turbulent times and actions after the First World War. He asked questions, listened and took notes. In one of her letters, Frances Hughes wrote of their hostess Pia von Aretin, a distant relative of hers: "Pia has been very helpful to us, in getting us to meet people with knowledge of the period Dicon³ needs for his Novel in Bavaria."

¹ Penelope Hughes, p. 161. She also mentions his feeling of *embarras de richesse* when confronted with written sources: "The most useful material was always the first-hand accounts — collections of letters, documents, published diaries. He read and read, and seemed as helpless as the Sorcerer's Apprentice to stem the rising tide of books" (p. 159).

² "Soon he took to going every year to Bavaria" (Penelope Hughes, p. 159). Richard Perceval Graves lists three Bavarian journeys: in 1956, 1958 and 1960 (Graves, pp. 364; 371; 378 ff.).

³ Richard Perceval Graves, whose father and uncle were close friends of Richard Hughes's, explains the Welsh patriotism behind Hughes's nickname: "... from his arrival in Har-

Her husband would acknowledge his debt with gratitude, in due course. Most of what was said in these conversations can no longer be reconstructed, but some informative notes remain among Hughes's papers, and also a few foolscap pages of his impressions of the castles they stayed in, of the scenery and of some of the people they met. Some of the most important local documents placed at his disposal were the memoirs written by the father of their hostess, Count Heinrich von Aretin.

Hughes, a keen traveller, often maintained when interviewed that he did not go abroad in order to write about his impressions. Travelling was his antidote when writing became intolerable, a method to get away from the demands of creativity. He was no reporter, finding his material ready at hand, as he had explained in an article as early as 1931. To witness places that he wanted to write about would have distracted him:

People generally suppose that a writer naturally writes best about what is under his nose . . . But I must confess that I always find it next to impossible to write about what is under my nose . . . When I go to strange places . . . people always seem to assume that I am doing it in search of something to write about. Actually the opposite seems to be the case. I seem to find it far easier to write about places I haven't been to than about places to which I have been.⁴

He had not been to Jamaica when he wrote his first novel *A High Wind in Jamaica*; he went there only later. But while writing the Bavarian chapters in *The Fox in the Attic*, he went to the sites where much of the factual action had taken place to be able to make his fictional reconstruction of it. This time he actually wrote of what was under his nose.⁵ The journey can be reconstructed with a fair degree of accuracy. The material collected during these weeks shows to what extent the novels are rooted in reality, in this instance a German one. Not quite the same wealth of information exists as to the sources for his British, or, in the case of *The Wooden Shepherdess*, his American or Moroccan chapters which can be seen as partly autobiographical.

On January 25, 1956, Frances and Richard Hughes reached Schloss Neuburg in Swabia, not far from Ulm. They stayed there until February 8,

lech [Hughes] abandoned 'Dick' as too English. Instead, he asked the Graveses to call him 'Diccon', the Welsh name (possibly taken from one of the central characters in Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*) by which he would be known for the rest of his life" (Graves, p. 21).

⁴ *The Listener*, June 10, 1931; quoted by Penelope Hughes, p. 158.

⁵ Thus, strictly speaking, Richard Hughes was not quite truthful when, interviewed by Anthony Curtis, he stated: "I always go to places *after* I've written about them. That stops me wanting to write about them any more" (*Sunday Telegraph*, October 1, 1961).

during some cold and snowy days when the temperature went from minus 13 to 30 degrees Centigrade. They visited Ulm, and in the second week of February went on to Munich, where Hughes made himself familiar with the topography of the city centre. The entry in his wife's diary for February 8, 1956, reads like a detailed road map of the route that the putschists had followed thirty-three years earlier: "Odeonplatz, Feldherrnhalle, Residenz, Theatinerkirche, Koenigsplatz". A few days later they took part in the Munich Fasching carnival. A note reveals "things seen in Fasching: A dachshound in red Indian feather headdress pursuing the little cowboy". Is this the model for the little dog that links chapters twenty-five and twenty-seven of "The White Crow" (and who appears once more a hundred pages later), the "funny little dog in a winter waistcoat of Scotch plaid, looking important" (*Fox*, p. 222) which "at last found his master again" (p. 227), one wonders. It has actually merited special mention in the acknowledgements. By stating that the dog was imaginary Hughes implied that the rest of his reconstruction was founded on solid research: "But I have imported almost nothing fictitious except the little dog in the plaid waistcoat" (p. 353).

After a week in Munich the Hugheses went on to Schloss Heidenburg and then on February 19 returned by air via Zurich to London. Two diaries exist. The novelist made note of two particular days, January 26 and February 1, whereas his wife covered several days in her more sketchy notebook. Thanks to these entries, it is possible to follow the genesis of certain pages of the novel in some detail. In a few instances almost nothing was changed when the diary's entries were moved to the novel. When his daughter writes that "Diccon was given access to piles of family papers that had lain in the attics at Schloss Neuburg since the twenties",⁶ Frances' diary tells exactly when this happened. On January 31 — a "very cold" day, she writes — her husband read Baron Aretin's memoirs in manuscript, and then worked on them on February 4, 6 and 7. They then met members of the Hanfstaengl family in Munich, acquaintances which would prove extremely helpful. By then, he had already received information on Bavaria in the twenties from different generations of the von Aretin family, as well as from a Count Mirbach. When these debts were to be acknowledged, a delicate balance had to be struck, as can be seen from the correspondence.

Four years after Richard Hughes's first encounter with Munich, letters were exchanged between Wales and Bavaria on this matter of contempo-

⁶ Penelope Hughes, p. 160.

rary witnesses from the turbulent years in the twenties. In November 1960, Hughes asked Pia von Aretin if she would object if he named her as the person who had given him access to her father's memoirs. Hughes added in brackets: "(though being in no way responsible for anything I have said)". He would not like to risk having her drawn into a controversy, even with this bracketed disclaimer (which reads somewhat differently in its final version). He foresaw that the German public in general would be critical and sensitive when faced with a foreigner writing about their nation, "and this book probes so many old sores." He had sent a copy of his script to a German publisher to sound their reaction; there was still time for changes and deletions as the book would not go to the printer for another two months. He would have liked to thank other members of the von Aretin family as well, he wrote, but added "once you begin multiplying names the reader reads none of them!" He hoped that she would give her approval of what he had proposed: "I should be sorry indeed not to be able to thank you publicly, for without you and Neuburg Books II and III simply couldn't have been written."⁷ This was not written merely out of politeness or courtesy. The sources from southern Bavaria proved indispensable.

In a charming letter Pia von Aretin replied that she had no objections at all: on the contrary, she would feel flattered to be publicly acknowledged: "I have a modest feeling of responsibility towards Augustine and have the impression of being some aunt or godmother of his! I hope you are not jealous."⁸ In his letter to her a good week later, Hughes informed her that he had encountered difficulties with the German publisher, Suhrkamp. The time limit that had been agreed upon had expired but still he had heard nothing and had not even had the manuscript returned.⁹ By April he wrote that it remained doubtful whether the novel would appear on the German market, and thus she need not rush the translation that she had suggested she would do. He also quoted an unfavourable letter of rejection from another German publisher (who was Claus Piper, though Hughes did not reveal his name). Because the book had caused controversy even before it had appeared in print, Hughes felt that it might be wiser after all not to let Pia von Aretin's name figure in the acknowledgements: "The sole point of including it would be to begin paying back

⁷ RH to PvA, Nov. 15, 1960.

⁸ PvA to RH, Nov. 19, 1960.

⁹ RH to PvA Feb. 1, 1961.

just a little of the enormous debt of gratitude I owe you and your Mother¹⁰ — and it's a poor way of paying a debt, to unload some of one's own unpopularity onto a friend's shoulders as this might well be." He would receive the proofs of the novel in three weeks, so there was still time to remove her name should she wish it done. But that was not her wish, she wrote, and she joked about her intimate knowledge of what had gone into the novel's mixture of real and imagined characters and about her insight into its factual background: "It amuses me to find so many of Augustine's friends and relations are people I know too!"¹¹

The readers of the two novels were left with a tantalizing but not very helpful hint as to where Hughes had got some of the background material for his Bavarian scenes: "I cannot leave unnamed Baroness Pia von Aretin: she gave me access to her father's memoirs and in every way she and her family have helped me immeasurably" (*Fox*, p. 353). It is only by a rather exhaustive and exhausting search into Hughes's papers that the full extent of his "enormous debt of gratitude" can be made clear. Such research reveals how justified his acknowledgements were in these as well as in other cases. Much of the information that Richard Hughes had received in conversation and interviews is lost to research, but not all. Some was noted down. The written documents disclose which information Hughes found and where he found it. The novels show how this material was put to literary use.

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Two chapters of Baron Heinrich von Aretin's memoirs are kept with Hughes's papers in the Lilly Library in Bloomington, Indiana, in a type-written version in English. Part VIII covers the period 1918-20, sixteen pages in all, four of them on foolscap. The next chapter deals with the years 1921-25, with its main focus on the inflation and its effects. It fills seven foolscap pages. The 1918-20 chapter has dates glossed in the margin from October 1918 onwards. The individual days of the most momentous stage are marked in the margin: November 7, 8 and 9. Much of this went into the novel, sometimes centred on the three names Adenauer, Toller and Count Arco (which seems a slightly odd combination, at least to German readers), in the chapters where Augustine faces a German world that

¹⁰ "But even more valuable to him than the papers were the vivid memories of the period told him by the eighty-four year old Marie-Lise . . . who passed her days in winter . . . sitting beside the huge porcelain stove . . . Diccon would sit talking to her hour after hour" (*Penelope Hughes*, p. 160).

¹¹ PvA to RH, June 11, 1961.

he is not prepared for and which he does not understand, i. e. Bavaria five years after the 1918 Armistice.

Hughes mentions Heinrich von Aretin¹² in the note at the end of his novel, but he also hinted at his source by including the Baron in his fiction as one of the factual characters mingling with fictitious ones. Von Aretin appears twice, both times as seen by Walther von Kessen (who seems to have borrowed some of Heinrich von Aretin's characteristics). This is one of the incidents: "Another problem they had discussed was the coming demobilisation. But everything was already taped, it seemed: the plans were ready and the men would go straight into jobs, so his friend Heinrich von Aretin assured the company" (p. 144). In his memoirs, von Aretin had written about his efforts to help people find work: "There was much unemployment following demobilisation, and in those days everyone wanted to work on a farm so we had plenty of labour."

In another passage in the novel, Walther von Kessen mentions how Heini von Aretin's wife, assisted by the village priest and an enraged local innkeeper, gets her husband out of a life-threatening situation:

Somehow his wife got news of his danger sent to Haidenburg — smuggled a note to the village priest in a prayerbook. Whereon the Haidenburg innkeeper comes to Munich, barges his way with his big shoulders into the so-called 'Central Council', bangs his fist on the minister's desk and says he can't have his brewer shot or where's he got to get his beer? (pp. 148-149).

If this is based on a family anecdote, Hughes probably would have heard it directly from members of the family, as it does not appear in the two chapters in von Aretin's memoirs. (It has to be kept in mind that von Aretin

¹² In November 1964, Hughes received a letter from Stefan Lorant (1901-1997), an Hungarian-German editor, photographer and film-maker, from 1940 exiled in the United States (obituary in *Der Spiegel* nr. 48, 1997, p. 302). Lorant's *I Was Hitler's Prisoner* (1935) ran into many editions. In his letter, Lorant wrote: "I read with fascination your exciting *The Fox in the Attic*. It brought back many memories. I was at Ettstraße, the police prison, together with Baron Aretin. But you have no doubt seen my diary ... if you need any information for the sequel, I would be happy to serve you." (SL to RH, November 11, 1964). Hughes borrowed the book from the London Library in mid-December. But it was not Heinrich von Aretin that Lorant had been fellow prisoner with, but Freiherr Erwein von Aretin (1887-1952), a monarchist leader of the "Heimat- und Königsbund in Bavaria", a friend of Rilke's, and from 1922 onwards one of the editors at the *Münchner Neuesten Nachrichten*. He was interned in Dachau in 1933, and thereafter forbidden to speak publicly or to publish (see *Deutsche Biografische Enzyklopädie*, Bd. 1 (1995), p. 169). Hughes may have modelled Otto and Walther von Kessen partly on Erwein and Heinrich von Aretin. Lorant's book also contains information on Count Arco as one of Hitler's fellow prisoners in Landsberg.

wrote his memoirs in 1939, almost twenty years after the events he described).

German history after the Second World War has given the von Aretin memoirs an unintentional ironic twist. On one page, the Mayor of Cologne, Konrad Adenauer, is mentioned. At a meeting he had let fall some antiroyalist remarks about the Wittelsbachs. In von Aretin's opinion, he had slighted the royal family as superannuated "rotten trees and falling leaves on German thrones." This evoked von Aretin's rage. As an ardent monarchist, he was happy to state that at the time of writing in 1939 "Adenauer and his comrades — today they are utterly forgotten."

Richard Hughes, on the other hand, was positioned differently: he looked back with hindsight. When he wrote *The Wooden Shepherdess* he may have had plans to use the Bürgermeister of Cologne as his anticipatory device in foreshadowing the German post-war economic wonder, even if he planned to end his novel in 1945: "Look at Herr Bürgomeister Konrad Adenauer, playing Cologne's new Kubla Khan and financing his stately pleasure-domes¹³ with hundreds of millions of borrowed marks that once were dollars and pounds!" (pp. 268-269). On a discarded manuscript page, Hughes emphasized the foreign subsidies even more in connection with Adenauer's autobahn and the green belt of parks around Bonn: "all out of foreign loans . . .".

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As evidenced by his memoirs, von Aretin was a man of strong opinions. One object of his derision was the Socialists, another the Jews. When the two categories merged in the same person, his hatred grew strong. This is the case with Ernst Toller, the Polish Jew who subsequently figured in Hughes's novel. Augustine and his Oxford friends discuss the new Germany, "well worth a visit! A *Weimar* Germany — all Werfels, Thomas Manns, Einsteins, Ernst Tollers . . ." (p. 98).¹⁴ Recently arrived in Bavaria,

¹³ Initially, Hughes thought it appropriate to show that Augustine's German interlocutor was unfamiliar with Coleridge's "In Xanadu did Kubla Khan/ A stately pleasure-dome decree". On the same manuscript page, marked 5 APR 1971, he added this question by hand: "Forgive my ignorance: who do you mean by Kubla Khan?" In 1955, Hughes had lectured on both *The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner* and *Kubla Khan*, and had referred his audience to *The Road to Xanadu* by John Livingston Lowes, for whom he had high praise: "By enthralling processes of detection . . . [Lowes] rediscovered and read for himself practically everything that Coleridge read at that time" (Hughes's Gresham lecture notes "Lent, 1955"). That method, *mutatis mutandis*, would seem ideal for a full appreciation of Hughes's own novels as well.

¹⁴ One of Hughes's discarded manuscript pages, headed "Postscript to Vol I", mentions Toller as one of many published authorities that "the knowledgeable reader will have recognized for himself".

Augustine hears Toller's name mentioned, though he does not register that he is also called a Jewish scribbler. It is on this occasion that Augustine makes his first *faux pas*: "'Ernst Toller?' said the rather fuddled Augustine helpfully: 'Surely one of the greatest German dramatists of all time! — A feather', he added acutely, 'in Munich's crown'" (p. 153). His remark, based not on his own reading of Toller's plays but on Oxford tattle, is met with icy silence.¹⁵ The effect of this scene is twofold: it shows Augustine as a shallow intellectual snob, and hints at political rifts in Germany of which Augustine knows nothing then and of which he learns but little later (see below, p. 68).¹⁶

The reader gets some more information thirty pages further on in the novel, when Toller appears once more, in Franz's free indirect speech: "There had been that day when the Reds counterattacked unexpectedly and for a few hours Franz had found himself Toller's prisoner..." (p. 184) Some reasons for Franz's complicated love-hate feelings for Toller are given in Chapter eighteen of "The White Crow." They are tinged with racial slander: "... Toller had hidden himself, the dirty Jew!" (p. 186); "... Toller had turned all his prisoners scot-free loose — the dirty Jew!" (p. 187). By including racist remarks without any comments other than the implied irony (in Rimmon-Kenan's words a case of "colouring of the narrator's account by a questionable value-scheme"),¹⁷ Hughes anchors his novel in a verifiable historical context. Hughes's portrait of Toller is as accurate as is his depiction of the racial attitudes that the Russian-Jewish agitator would have come across in Bavaria. Toller's communism angered von Aretin even twenty years after the events, as seen by this derogatory remark about Toller in his memoirs, "a Polish Jew on his mother's side — considered himself a great poet. He saw himself as the Poet Laureate of the Revolution."

¹⁵ In a book published fifteen years after Hughes's fictional discussion of the New Germany (in Chapter twenty-five of "Polly and Rachel") is supposed to have happened, Philip Gibbs reports what an English friend in Berlin, "a man whose job it is to study the political and social life of Germany", had told him: "What makes me impatient . . . is the intellectual dishonesty — or shall I say blindness? — of our little intellectuals on the Left . . . They are the champions of men like Toller . . . who would not be tolerated in England. They get their facts all wrong! They have no sense of proportion" (Gibbs 1938, pp. 195-196).

¹⁶ What Rimmon-Kenan writes about narrators who are also characters of the fictional world applies to many of Hughes's narrators, one of them Augustine: "As such, they are subject to limited knowledge, personal involvement, and problematic value-schemes, often giving rise to the possibility of unreliability" (Rimmon-Kenan, p. 103).

¹⁷ Rimmon-Kenan, p. 101.

There is one further twist to the borrowings of this passage from the memoirs into the novel. It involves an unexpected link between Germany and England which Hughes would have taken a special personal interest in when he read von Aretin's memoirs. The Baron remembers that Ernst Toller "like so many of these gentry . . . ultimately found his way to England and appeared as an intellectual in the house of my slightly eccentric cousin, Sir Thomas Bazley, at Hatherop Castle."¹⁸ This must have given Richard Hughes a strange feeling of *déjà-vu* as Sir Thomas Bazley was his wife Frances's cousin. Hughes had married into the Bazley family in 1932. If he had done it a few years earlier he would have had a chance to see Toller for himself at Hatherop. In turn, he could have drawn on that experience by letting Augustine meet the German playwright on English soil before learning about him from Oxford tattlers or Bavarian relatives.

In Heinrich von Aretin's memoirs, Ernst Toller exits on a sombre note which might not have been historically correct, but it shows that Toller had not been forgiven even after his death. The epitaph given Toller in the memoirs is far from the spirit of *De mortuis nil nisi bene*: "He ended, I heard, by getting involved in a vast swindle and committing suicide." This must have been very recent although unreliable news to Baron von Aretin when he was writing his memoirs. Toller had actually hanged himself in New York earlier the same year, i. e. 1939, though possibly not for the reasons stated in von Aretin's spiteful comments. An anonymous American obituary reads differently:

New York, Tuesday. — Ernst Toller, exiled German playwright and author, hanged himself in an hotel here. He left no note, but was apparently driven to suicide by severe heart and stomach ailments. He was 46. A volunteer in the German army in 1914, he was wounded two years later, and thereafter conducted anti-war propaganda, which led to his arrest in 1918. He became a workers' leader and a com-

¹⁸ In the same year that *The Fox in the Attic* appeared, Sir Thomas Bazley sent Hughes a letter in which he ventured on giving some national characteristics of Germans, based on his own observations: "I think one of the things one must always remember is the great lack among the vast majority of Germans — including many who might be or are leaders — of what they call 'civil courage'. . . . what is most significant is the way in which the German Nation-State was born . . . out of aggressive (and successful) warfare . . . this, I think, has had a most profound effect on the way of thinking and the under-lying assumptions of most Germans in all walks of life and practically in all political parties" (TB to RH, Nov. 7, 1961). Although the letter came too late to have any effect on *The Fox in the Attic*, Sir Thomas's views may have influenced Richard Hughes while he was working on *The Wooden Shepherdess*, see for example the summing-up of Hitler's rise to power in Chapters twelve and twenty-five of "The Meistersingers".

mander of revolutionary troops, was again imprisoned, but escaped from Germany upon the establishment of the Hitler regime.¹⁹

Augustine (or his factual counterparts) would have had ample opportunity to read Toller's plays before he went to Germany. But he could not have read Toller's autobiography (if he wanted to read it in English) until 1934, when *I was a German* appeared. There, he could have found what the radical Toller thought of people on the extreme right of the German political spectrum, especially Hitler, whose 1923 Putsch he made fun of: "With a mixed following brandishing sticks and chairs he rushed at the platform and the meeting degenerated into a regular shambles, in which several people were seriously hurt."²⁰ Toller thought Hitler's programme "naive, not to say primitive" and then gave an example of the crude populist Nazi doctrine: "The Jews and the Marxists were the enemies within the camp responsible for all Germany's misfortunes."²¹ The latter statement could have been written by Heinrich von Aretin, in dead earnest and without the slightest trace of irony.

Von Aretin introduces the eighth part of his memoirs by looking back with a certain aversion on the revolutions in the wake of the Armistice:

I come now to a time which no decent man — let alone no German — can recall without disgust. At last the long-heralded revolution arrived, engineered by the scum of humanity — Russian Jews, creatures from God-knows-what countries: directed by Jews and Freemasons: a government of 'profiteers' (as the English call them) and 'sharks' to use the Italian idiom.

The references to Jews in *The Fox in the Attic* sometimes reflect this endemic Bavarian and German anti-Semitism. The "nearer, transient smells of . . . rich Jews" (p. 131) is not Augustine's observation but an anonymous off-hand trivial remark floating about in a predominantly conservative setting.²² The truculent young Jew (p. 134) on the platform at the fictitious

¹⁹ Unidentified newspaper cutting, dated May 24, 1939, pasted in the Indiana University Library copy of Ernst Toller's *I Was a German*.

²⁰ Toller, p. 255. Toller had not witnessed the Putsch: in 1919 he was imprisoned for five years. Carl Zuckmayer had. His memoirs are even more ironical than Toller's: "I heard the rattle of shots as the troops of the Bavarian government fired at the rebels . . . In the course of that rainy day, in spite of the pools of blood near Preysing Palace, the whole affair turned into an entertainment . . . the people continued laughing and finally went off to drink beer. That was the end of the famous Ludendorff-Hitler *Putsch*" (Zuckmayer 1970, pp. 272-273).

²¹ Toller, p. 256.

²² In a careless reading of *The Fox in the Attic*, the American critic J. Mitchell Morse, olfactorily offended, confused the narrative perspective with what he supposed was the novelist's attitude: "Hughes knows what rich Jews smell like. He doesn't tell us, but a

Lorienburg railway station is seen by Augustine but shown by a narrator who refrains from adding any comment, and the same goes for the old Jew peddling laces, on the next page. When Jews are mentioned next time in the novel, it is in Lothar's pornographically coloured dream of Germania, the naked nymph ravished by "the Bolsheviks, the Berlin government, the Jews..." (p. 159). This is a compressed emblem of conservative, nationalistic and racial sentiments prevalent in Bavaria at the time, and of its anti-Prussian separatist provincialism.

*

Count Toni Arco is seen in quite a different light from that shed on Ernst Toller. Von Aretin takes sides, and Arco was clearly a man he could not find faults with. In the novel, Walther von Kessen remembers what had happened four years earlier, in February 1919, when the socialist Eisner had been shot.²³ Franz interrupts him, not wanting his father to reveal political secrets, and talks to Augustine of their "joint eminent kinsman, Count Toni Arco-Valley" (p.146) whom he would like Augustine to meet. Arco has been in prison these four years. Augustine is astonished that Arco did not get killed by the revolutionaries. The von Kessen family gives him a different picture of Arco than the one he might have heard

least we know they have a distinct smell" (*The Hudson Review*, Summer 1962, p. 291). On the other hand, one of Hughes's fellow novelists appreciated that smells play an important part in *The Fox in the Attic*: "... the corrupt world is marvellously symbolized in, for instance, the foyer of the big German hotel, with its subtle odours of dyspepsia" (Anthony Burgess, *Ninety-nine Novels, the Best in English since 1939*, p. 80). In connection with the hotel-foyer episode that Burgess singled out, Paul Morgan has made a distinction concerning the change in focalization that Morse would have been wise to follow: "[The author's] assumption of different narrative viewpoints is even more dis-simulating when it modulates suddenly from one to another, without any overt signal to the reader that it is happening ... Sandwiched between the young man's naive, touristic impressions, the bitter, misanthropic tone of the foyer description reads oddly, like a *Punch* cartoon of *The-Englishman-Abroad* suddenly mutating into a shocking Georg Grosz picture. Surely Augustine's impressions are here alternated with the viewpoint of one of the hotel staff he noticed ... Are not the contemptuous references to luxurious accessories and to 'rich Jews', and that spiteful effective expression on 'careless womanhood', the observations of a resentful young anti-Semite and Fascist, rather than the wide-eyed Augustine? This use of changing narrative perspective forces the reader constantly to reassess the characters and events encountered in the light of how they are conveyed" (Morgan, pp. 99-100).

²³ There is a two-page summary headed "Assassination of Eisner, 23 Feb. 1919" among Hughes's research papers. Frances Hughes noted in a "Spiral-Notizbuch" what she had been told by one of her German relatives who "went into [Toni Arco's] bedroom after the war. And he had left behind a prayer-book. She picked it up. Out fluttered a small bit of paper with GOD HAVE MERCY ON HIS SOUL. That was the date of Eisner's murder". In the novel, Count Arco, as reported by Walther von Kessen, is more callous: "Toni kept saying to himself 'I must be brave, I must not shoot any innocent man — only Eisner!' Then at two meters' range he shot him ..." (p. 148).

from radicals. In their eyes Arco is a hero. Walther and Adèle tell the dramatic story of how Arco was believed to be killed but survived, thanks to "Sauerbruch, the great throat-surgeon" (p. 147).²⁴ In the novel, the von Kessens with great skill orchestrate these scenes from the days of the red scare and the communist terror in Bavaria. Toni Arco is seen as a figure of light against a black background of criminals. Hughes's depiction seems an historically correct reconstruction of feelings rampant among right-wing monarchists in the 1920s. Much of it is reflected in the von Aretin memoirs:

At the beginning of 1920, the Arco trial aroused great excitement, not only in Munich but indeed throughout the world. Toni Arco had been hit by five bullets of Eisner's bodyguard, and left in the street for dead, but a soldier who knew him carried him into a house and that saved his life The brave way in which Toni acknowledged his deed, and conducted his own case, was very impressive. It was a marked contrast to the whinings and mutual accusations of the Heroes of the Revolution, such as Toller.

The corresponding account in the novel has a quicker pace, and a more personal tone is heard in its polyphony of several voices: "'Toni was killed,' Walther said coldly . . . 'Or so they thought: five bullets instantly in his neck and mouth, kicked half across the street . . . "Adèle von Kessen adds some precise details:

One bullet knocked over a wisdom-tooth . . . His throat was full of blood. He was choking, and they were kicking; but he dared not move because if they knew he was not yet dead they would have tore him in pieces and suddenly he very much wanted to live (p. 147).

Arco received a death sentence which was commuted to life imprisonment. In an epilogue von Aretin comments on the irony of history: "[Arco] was taken to the fortress of Landsberg. Quantities of letters, sweets, flowers and other tokens of homage poured in: he had become one of the most popular figures in Bavaria. Now he was a National Hero: only a year ago he had been a Cowardly Assassin!"

Hughes also describes how flowers and parcels flow into Landsberg, though not to the imprisoned Arco but to the most famous of all the inmates in the fortress, Adolf Hitler. The readers would have to wait a

²⁴ A parallel instance is described eighteen chapters later, when one of the prominent marchers, Hermann Göring, has been taken "to a Jewish doctor, who patched him up with infinite kindness . . . and hid him in his own house" (pp. 227-228).

dozen years to get the continued story. The follow-up is recorded in the twelfth chapter of "The Meistersingers". Class differences are pointed out between aristocratic Arco and his fellow prisoners, the proletarian and low-middle-class rabble around Hitler: "So Hitler returned to Landsberg, shattering finally Toni's peace With Hitler allowed all the visits he cared to receive, this formerly quiet retreat was a bedlam indeed in Toni's eyes" (*Shepherdess*, p. 158). In an earlier manuscript version, Toni's aversion was made even more apparent, expressed in a bitter letter that he had sent to Adèle and Walther von Kessen: "Landsberg was filling up with such riff-raff he'd had to complain to the Governor: could Walther do anything?" But Walther had no pull with Gürtner, the Minister of Justice. Toni Arco looks back to the more peaceful times when he "had been received there more or less as a hero — four years ago, when Landsberg had still been a place of retreat for gentlemen, not a clink for the sort of vulgarian rabble the police had dumped in November!" In this passage which never reached the printer, what had been Toni's point-of-view became the narrator's, although still with Toni as an observing eye and ear. His resentment colours the text ("podgy", "unspeakable"). But this jars with the rest, which was presumably the reason why it was discarded. The ridiculous details were perhaps overemphasised. As a result, credibility and balance seem lost in the discard:

The heroic young Count's summer walks in the gardens might still be spoiled by suddenly running into a pack of them, their podgy or scraggy knees emphasised by their very brief leather shorts, their throats bulging out of open shirts and Tyrolese jackets . . .

Somewhat later in the same passage, Toni registers an ominous sound: ". . . far away in their own private wing, the unspeakable Hitler brayed." Further on in the scrapped text some reasons are suggested as to why Hitler started writing *Mein Kampf* while in Landsberg: the "rabble" had just had a fraction too much of his speeches, "and no one on holiday wants nothing but shop. So they formed a small conspiracy . . . why shouldn't he write? To their great relief he liked the idea and retired to his room to begin at once."²⁵ This might have been too anecdotal for the novel, too much like history reduced to gossip. Apart from the first sen-

²⁵ A quote from Sir Kenneth Clark's memoirs *Another Part of the Wood* concerning the British unfamiliarity with Hitler's work can be found among Hughes's research notes: "It turned out that in 1938 no one in the British government had read, or had even contemplated reading, *Mein Kampf*."

tence, it reads slightly differently in the final version. The irony is retained, but Hughes takes the opportunity to give his readers some comprehensive historical facts: "presently some bright lad remarked to the Führer that all this ought to go in a book — and it worked. Thereafter Hitler spent most of his time in his private study, writing *Mein Kampf*" (p. 158).

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Other passages from the memoirs were incorporated in the two novels as well. One of them deals with the way Walther von Kessen had to fight his way through streets filled with Eisner's red rebels, with "lorry-loads of all the hooligans of Munich at his heels." Here Hughes borrowed from von Aretin's impressions. The novel's "They tore off my uniform in the Odeonsplatz", said Walther. "I was lucky to get home safely in borrowed mufti, I can tell you!" (p. 144) should be compared with von Aretin's "A few minutes later a gang of soldiers surrounded me and tried to tear off my badges of rank, but I managed to escape into a barber's shop I knew . . . The barber gave me civilian clothes as going out again in uniform was impossible." The fictitious Walther von Kessen re-lives what had happened when he retells the incident, whereas the factual memoirist Heinrich von Aretin keeps a cool distance to what were, at the time of his writing about them, events long since past.

Most of the 1921-35 entries in von Aretin's memoirs concern inflation. Scapegoats are hinted at, sometimes with an anti-Semitic slur: "It was the heyday of profiteers, and secondclass carriages on the trains were crowded with sinister figures from the nearer or further east." Hughes did not elaborate that particular theme, but he must have taken note of the rest of von Aretin's paragraph: "Conditions were very bad for people who before the war owned large capital sums, but now had nothing. Without a salaried job or a pension, they were face to face with downright nothing." In Chapter two of "The White Crow", Hughes explains the inflation by showing its effects. He quotes words from Haggai the prophet which are singularly appropriate in this context: "he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes" (p. 119), but he also varies lines in von Aretin's memoirs: "The salaried and rentier classes were becoming submerged below the proletariat. Wages could rise . . . but interest and pensions and the like, and even salaries, were fixed. Retired senior officials swept the streets" (p. 119).

As noted in an entry for 1922, von Aretin had attended two Munich discussion clubs, one of them the open club "Gää", where he met the Reichsbank President of the Weimar Republic who was also to make his way into *The Human Predicament*. The proceedings

... began with a lecture, and after that we joined in a repast of White Sausage (veal) and Beer provided by the Löwenbrauerei . . . The lectures were on various subjects, political or economic: once Dr. Hjalmar Schacht (then President of the Reichsbank) lectured us on finance.

Schacht appears in both of Hughes's novels.²⁶ In the scene in *The Fox in the Attic*, the fictive Walther von Kessen has once more taken over the factual von Aretin's role as an eye-witness, but is, unlike him, not the narrator:

... Walther digressed to describe one of the previous season's meetings of 'Gää' (a serious and distinguished circle whose proceedings began with an authoritative lecture on some worth-while subject and continued with brilliant informal discussions over veal sausages and free beer) . . . the lecturer being no less a person than Dr. Schacht himself, the great Dr. Hjalmar Schacht (p. 182).

When Dr. Schacht is mentioned in *The Wooden Shepherdess*, he has successfully fought inflation, although his success has come too suddenly for the Bavarian landed class:

Schacht (the financial dictator) had lately trebled a landowner's troubles by stopping inflation so suddenly: cash was instantly scarce . . . now all capital work on the land had to cease and men be laid off, or stretches of forests be sold — and who, these days, had the money to buy them? (p. 128).

Inflation and the following deflation are only some of Walther von Kessen's worries at the time, the question of Mitz'i's immediate future being more acute. Hughes's brief summing-up of the financial conditions

²⁶ In his review of G. M. Gilbert's *Nuremberg Diary*, Richard Hughes singled out one of the defendants in the dock: "there was only one who remained to the end opaque and utterly dislikeable — and he was acquitted. In intelligence tests he ranked higher than the lot: higher even than Goering. Perhaps it was intelligence rather than cleanness of guilt which secured him acquittal. For Stresemann had long ago remarked, 'there is nothing clean about Schacht except his white collar'" (*Sunday Times*, Aug. 1, 1948). Ten years later, Hughes ordered Schacht's memoirs *My First Seventy-six Years*, from Thomas Thorp, the London and Guildford second hand bookseller (RH to TT, December 1, 1958). In the previous year he had borrowed Schacht's *Accounts Settled* from The Royal Institute of International Affairs in London.

was obviously inspired by observations in Heinrich von Aretin's memoirs, like the following:

1924 was the year of deflation. We were constantly reminded how poor we were. Moreover the price of agricultural produce and timber was low because no one could pay any more . . . In November the miracle came at last. Millions and milliards disappeared, and deflation took the place of inflation. The 'rentenmark' was created by . . . Schacht.

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Conversation with members of the von Aretin family, interviews with witnesses of the events in 1923 and documents like Heinrich von Aretin's memoirs were not the only source and inspiration for Richard Hughes during his research in and around Munich. Much of what went into the novels was based on his own field notes and reconnoitering as is clear from his manuscript file. He jotted down ideas for his work-in-progress while in Bavaria, sometimes whole scenes or episodes that later found their way into the novel. His type-written working notes fill five foolscap pages. A sixth page sums up the contents of a conversation that he had with Count Mirbach-Feldern, one of the many people that were invited to Neuburg castle while the Hugheses were there.

The notes, often almost an outline of some chapters in the novel, make it possible to follow the act of creation. The Schloss Neuburg, owned by the von Aretins, was transformed into the Schloss Lorientburg where Augustine visits his relatives. The Neuburg exterior is described under its fictionalized name at the beginning of Chapter four of "The White Crow": "Schloss Lorientburg was built on a precipitous treeclad mound of the strippling Danube" (p. 126). This is the view of Neuburg that Hughes noted down on January 26, 1956: "The castle overhangs the village, set on a peninsular of hill . . . The castle itself is on a square mound". Some chapters later, Augustine has come close to the castle: "the castle on its mound was approached from the high ground behind it along a raised causeway lined with linden-trees, ending in a wooden bridge" (p. 137). In his notes, Hughes wrote of "the lime-flanked drive" at Neuburg. Had he wished, he could have found a detailed description of "Neuburg and der Donau: Das Schloss" in one of the Baedeker guide books (he would have recourse to some of them later on): "Die Toreinfahrt mit Kassettengewölbe führt in den auf drei Seiten von doppelgeschossigen Lauben umgebenen Hof."²⁷

²⁷ [The gate with a frescoed ceiling leads onto the courtyard surrounded on three sides by a two-storeyed walk-around] Baedeker's *Nordbayern Ostbayern*, 4. Auflage 1962, p. 222.

Many other details make it clear that Neuburg served as a model for Lorientburg: the heavy gates, the dry moat, the courtyards, the skittle alley, etc.

More importantly, an object of devotion forces the fashionably agnostic Augustine to realise that he has ended up in a country of pious Catholics: "But on the other side stood a life-size crucifix, skilfully carved and realistically painted; and this crucifix looked as if it was *brand new* — its newness astonished Augustine more than anything else he had seen here yet" (p. 137). In this case, his surprise had already been felt by his maker Richard Hughes, who had noted at Neuburg:

Now that the roofs are covered there is no colour anywhere, so that the tints of the painted crucifix under the lindens outside the castle gate takes on an unexpected brilliance — the crimson gouts of blood dripping from the snow-covered crown of thorns down the tired face, the glistening pinks and ivories of the emaciated body, the blood again round the great iron spike through the twisted, crossed, riven feet.

This first-hand observation of a crucifix seen outside Schloss Neuburg forms the basis for the description of the crucifix outside Schloss Lorientburg that appears some thirty pages further on in the novel, though this time including a group of children. They make the sight seem less starkly pietistic:

Under the cross but quite unconscious of it stood a group of small mites who had just toiled up there from the village with their toboggans: red caps and yellow curls, shell-pink faces intoxicated with the snow, they stood out against the background colourlessness as rich as butterflies, they and the Christ together (pp. 171-172).

If this scene in the novel seems to have a particular freshness and spontaneity to it, there is a special reason for it. Hughes had observed what went on under his nose. The lines that he jotted down in his note-book, as an eye-witness report, were included in the novel without many changes:

Round the crucifix is a group of small mites who have toiled up here from the village with their skis and toboggans — red caps, dark blue trousers, yellow curls, shell-pink faces intoxicated with the snow — they stand out against the colourlessness rich as butterflies.

The crucifix outside the castle serves a special purpose in the novel. It reveals how shallow Augustine's atheist confession is and how little he

On July 10, 1967, Hughes ordered Badeker's *Southern Germany and Austria* (1891), and *Germany* (1936) from the London Library. He made use of the maps in the 1936 guide-book, according to his research index cards.

knows of the world outside his own limited territory. The theme is further emphasized when Augustine is confronted with the baroque splendours of the castle chapel.²⁸ In Hughes's original notes, the Neuburg chapel was mentioned only briefly: "In a corner of the basement is a simple baroque chapel, with a shrine or two and a more than life-size Deposition, carved fully in the round in painted wood (15th century)." A Baedeker guide is more factual: "Die *Schlosskapelle* ist die älteste evangelische Kapelle Alt-bayerns und zeigt mit ihren Fresken des Salzburger Meisters Bocksberger (1543) das erste Beispiel einer grossen Raumausmalung des Protestantismus."²⁹ Among Richard Hughes's papers can be found some postcards from Bavaria showing the interiors of several baroque churches, and the diary mentions a visit to a "Monastery Church: a late work of the Asam brothers". When the Neuburg chapel is transformed into the Lorienburg of the novel, many precise details are added:

For the little family chapel at Lorienburg was a baroque confection of exceptional splendour. Augustine had been reared in an Anglo-Gothic reverential gloom; but this was all light and colour and swelling curves. There was extravagantly moulded plaster and painted trompe-l'œil, peeping angels, babies submerged in silver soap-suds and gilded glittering rays... (p. 251).

This description, probably incorporating Hughes's impressions from other baroque church interiors as well, has a double function in the novel. Its ornateness adds splendid local colour but it also underlines the fact that the young British observer feels himself a stranger in this setting; he is

²⁸ The French critic J. Bosano has observed how ill-tuned the atheist Augustine is to Catholic Bavaria: "Augustin et sa sœur sont des athées convaincus, dont l'athéisme est une acquisition coûteuse, une victoire remportée sur une éducation protestante traditionnelle . . . Augustin prend surtout conscience de ses convictions quand il se trouve en Bavière où le catholicisme s'étale avec tranquillité sous les formes, pour lui agressives, d'un grand Christ réaliste et d'une chapelle baroque, puis des multiples églises de même style à Munich; il ne comprend pas qu'au XXe siècle des gens qui, par ailleurs, lui paraissent normaux, vivent quotidiennement cette foi" [Augustine and his sister are atheists by conviction; their atheism is a hard-earned acquisition, a victory over a traditional protestant education . . . Augustine is especially conscious of his convictions when he happens to be in Bavaria where catholicism is displayed with ease in the form (which Augustine finds aggressive) of a large realistic figure of Christ and a baroque castle chapel, and then of many Munich churches in the same style; he cannot understand that in the 20th century people who otherwise appear normal to him can live their daily lives in this faith] *Etudes anglaises*, juillet-septembre 1963, p. 265.

²⁹ [The Castle chapel is the oldest evangelical one in Old Bavaria; its frescoes by the Salzburger Master Bocksberger (1543) are the earliest examples of a large Protestant interior decoration] Baedeker's *Nordbayern Ostbayern* 1962, p. 222.

ill at ease. The narrator, on the other hand, does not spare him some mild irony³⁰:

Augustine had *heard* of Baroque — as the very last word in decadence and bad taste; but anything so outrageous as this was incredible in a secular... and this was a *sacred* place! Even the professing atheist could not but be shocked (p. 251).

By placing his agnostic hero in such unfamiliar religious surroundings, the ironic author shows that there is little real understanding in Augustine at this moment. He comprehends nothing when confronted with the expressions of a living faith, not because he has been reared a Protestant and is now moving among devout Catholics, but because his view of the modern world has no room for religion. He discusses modern art theories (“significant form”) and shows that he has adopted some simplified modernist hand-book opinions, like classical austerity being the hall-mark of true art. But when art moves from an aesthetical to an ethical level, he lacks the necessary sensibility. As a result, he turns into a bore and a prig. There is a wide gap between the one who sees (Augustine) and the one who speaks (the narrator) in the following, allowing irony to seep in:

The churches here Augustine was sent to admire, however, really shocked him; for they all . . . were baroque or even rococo. This confirmed what he had already felt at Lorienburg: people who found such things beautiful must be essentially unserious people: their religion (and so, Mitzi’s) *must* be only skin-deep: their culture, a froth and sham . . . The ‘Asam-Kirche’, for instance: where here was the classic austerity (hall-mark of all true art), the truth to nature? The bareness of line, the restraint? (p. 330).³¹

Augustine, not only obtuse but a little foolish, cannot understand how a sensitively cultured man like Dr. Reinhold can appreciate the baroque Bavarian churches and in all seriousness admire what Augustine regards as “sugared monstrosities”. In this passage, the narrator’s irony is not overly subtle with its bracketed comment directed to the slow-witted reader: “‘Baroque isn’t even non-Art, it’s anti-Art,’ he tried to argue with Reinhold, but failed. ‘This must just be a blind spot in old Reinhold,’ he was forced to decide (to Reinhold of course the blindness was all in Augustine).”

³⁰ This may have been a reflection of the real author’s mild derision of the young man he had once been. Richard Hughes was a deeply religious man, but not as a young man at Oxford, as Richard Perceval Graves (p. 54) has explained.

³¹ Richard Hughes might have been inspired not only by churches by the Asam brothers but also by one built by Dominicus Zimmermann in 1746-54: one postcard in his files shows “Die Wies, Wallfahrtskirche des prämonstratenserklösters Steingaden”.

Another part of the Neuburg castle was to prove an important locality in *The Fox in the Attic*, as is signalled already in the title of the novel. This is how Hughes noted down details of the upper regions of the Schloss Neuburg, as he saw them in 1956:

The third floor is mostly open to the roof, like a large barn — one or two bays of which have begun to be turned into rooms, probably in the 18th century, but the work was never finished. The stairs however go up even to a fourth floor, but this has not got beyond a few loose planks laid across the rafters.

The novel's attic and its two inhabitants, the animal fox and the human Wolff, might seem borrowed from a Gothic horror story, but in this as in many other details, the novel was based on keen observation. Hughes's field study of the Schloss Neuburg architecture is made good use of but with a marked change of mood when turned into fiction. The enigmatic, forbidding and threatening character of these upper regions is stressed throughout the novel: "Only in the billowing darkness of the attics above two eyes were open, and staring" (p. 282). The cooped-up Wolff is prowling undetected on his nocturnal raids to the inhabited lower levels of the house, but is then once again enveloped by the darkness of the attic and its sense of security (pp. 288-289).

Both Wolff and Augustine are prone to enjoy the distanced view. In Augustine's case this is linked to the memory of the telescope that he owned as a boy:³² "Vividly Augustine recalled the pleasure he used to get from studying just such distant groups, himself unseen" (p. 247).³³ The fact

³² In this case, Augustine's memory was also his author's, as appears from the "Autobiographical Introduction" to *An Omnibus*, Hughes's American anthology of his own writings: "I then built myself, out of my pocket money, a small astronomical telescope, from inked cardboard tubes, which was powerful enough to show the rings of Saturn . . . or, for terrestrial purposes, one could read a book with it, if the light was good, a hundred yards off" (Hughes 1931, pp. xv-xvi).

³³ This refers to the previous description of Augustine as an emotionally detached observer: "How much Augustine preferred watching people to hearing them talk!" (p. 240) He peeps through a telescope at three girls who "weren't quite gentry children". His scopophilia ends in disgust as explained by the narrator: ". . . he had seen what no boy's eye ever ought to have seen, he had broken the strongest taboo he knew" (p. 241). This experience perhaps partly explains Augustine's subsequent reluctance in dealing with the opposite sex.

The passage also is linked to some of Hitler's sexual predilections as hinted at in the novels, as Paul Morgan has observed: "Regardless of whether the objects of his gaze know or not, this peeping is voyeuristic and a violation of privacy. His attitude is associated with Hitler by the Führer's fondness of pornography . . ." (Morgan 1993, p. 129). Hughes found a voyeuristic Hitler already in Ernst Hanfstaengl's memoirs. Putzi, describing the demi-monde blondes parading by Hitler's *Stammtisch* at the Kaiserhof, was derisive: "Hitler looked up at these women as they walked by with eyes that would have been lecherous if there had been any capacity to back them up" and then re-

that they do not take part but remain passively at a distance is yet another characteristic of their psychological set-up. They both turn into peeping-toms, as shown in Chapter eight of "The Fox in the Attic", in one of the most skilful passages in the novel. In it, a would-be lover blinded by love and an embittered soldier in hiding both spy on the same girl. The girl in turn is oblivious to what is going on, already engulfed by a world different from theirs. "In a kind of one-man unwitnessed ballet" Augustine follows the unsuspecting Mitzi, now blind and in a rapt religious state. But their movements are not unwitnessed: "Thus it was now Augustine's turn to be watched unwitting — from the dormer so mysteriously unboarded — by the truly Invisible Man . . . Nor was that watching eye benevolent — or harmless" (p. 255).³⁴

The peculiar architecture of Neuburg castle came in handy when Hughes wanted to show how Wolff sought out Augustine and Mitzi with an evil eye from high above. Wolff thinks they have fallen in love, not realising that it is very much a one-sided affair.³⁵

The attic architecture serves yet another psychological and philosophical purpose, when Wolff's solipsist mind is illustrated in some enigmatic lines that assume that the reader recalls what is said about dry bones in chapter 37 of Ezekiel,³⁶ and at the same time hint at Wolff's narcissistic solipsism:

In a whole year spent here he had grown into a unity with the very timbers of these attics . . . Look! Like the bones in Ezekiel already these beams were covering themselves with flesh, with skin — and it was *his* flesh and skin they were growing (deliberately Wolff stroked the wood with one affectionate finger, tracing beetle-paths in the thick dust). He would breathe into these dry beams soon, and then these attics would live... (pp. 300-301).

ported what a cabaret artist at the Scala music-hall had told him: "'You know, your Mr. Hitler is just an old *voyeur*,' she said with a grimace" (Hanfstaengl 1957, p. 241).

³⁴ In a review that reveals a rift between American and British attitudes, the southern novelist Walker Percy regards this voyeurism, although present in both Augustine and his German contemporary Wolff, as something typically British: "The profession of spying is an incarnation of a British metaphysic. There is posited an observer who is there, given, but also concealed" (*Sewanee Review*, Summer 1964, p. 490).

³⁵ Hughes's research notes summed up the situation: "His impulse to spring at them from his loft high window, destroying all three . . . (Wolff doesn't know about her blindness, wonders what on earth she is up to)."

³⁶ "The hand of the LORD . . . set me down in the midst of the valley which *was* full of bones . . . And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. Again he said to me, Propheesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD" (Ezekiel 37, v. 1-6).

Hughes was a good reporter, as seen in his newspaper reporting: his sketches from aboard an emigrant ship bound for America,³⁷ his string of reports from a journey down the Danube into civil war Serbia,³⁸ his reports from Morocco.³⁹ When he had turned into a full-time novelist, he still had a reporter's keen eye for what went on under his nose. Another example of this is found in the scene when Walther and Augustine, walking through the village, are almost killed first by Franz whizzing past on skis, and then by the two little sisters on their toboggan (pp. 135-136). Almost all of this was based on the impressions of the moment that Hughes had noted during his visit to Neuburg in January 1956:

Then suddenly down the steep village street like an arrow comes a boy on skis, his skis hissing over the packed snow and twinkling in the lights from the cottage windows. Then another and another, all like arrows — but it is more like a bullet, what comes next, a toboggan with two little girls on it rounded out to packages with extra clothing, the two pair of pigtails standing straight out behind them with speed. They just fail to take the corner at the bottom, and go rolling over and over in the soft snow at the road side.

In the novel, the verbs have been changed from the present into the past tense and the link between the passive spectators (Walther and Augustine) and the active players (Franz and the girls) is more apparent. Except for a few minor details, all of what was noted down went into the novel. Only someone privileged to look into Hughes's notes will know that scenes like these are based on actual events, though fictionalized.

With his coming novel in mind, Hughes wrote in his notes that a good thirty years earlier, at the time when Augustine would have visited Lorient, there were no skis in the village of Neuburg. They were introduced only around 1937, Hughes noted (but someone may have been pulling his leg!). He also went to great length to establish the exact kind of clothes that children in Schwaben in 1923 would have worn.⁴⁰ In the end,

³⁷ "Diary of a Steerage Passenger", *Saturday Westminster Gazette*, Nov. 19, 1921, later published as the last part of *A Moment in Time* (1926).

³⁸ "A Diary in Eastern Europe I-VII", in the *Weekly Westminster Gazette*, September-November 1921.

³⁹ A few were printed, others broadcast, while the majority of the Moroccan articles remained unpublished until Richard Poole edited the posthumous collection *In the Lap of Atlas* in 1979.

⁴⁰ When writing the next novel, Hughes was equally careful in his research, reading novels by Edna Ferber, J. P. Marquand and Scott Fitzgerald and asking his American friends in several letters how teenagers in Connecticut would have dressed: "What sort of bathing-dresses did the young wear hereabouts in 1924 (in 1922 I remember in New Jersey even men had to wear thick wool with little skirts!)".

these added notes did not interfere with the scene. Fritz was allowed to swoosh by on skis, anachronistically. Few readers would have noticed this inconsistency, if there was one, and if some of them did, they did not object. Hughes's notes prove that he recorded incidents while in Bavaria with the express purpose of using them in his novel. Augustine in this and in other respects is his contemporary who shares some of his own experiences both in the past and the present. Augustine sees in Bavaria 1923 what Richard Hughes had observed in the same state thirty-three years later.

On the other hand, a strikingly anachronistic comment breaks the time frame, in the passage where it is said that Augustine had spent his first night on German soil at the old Bayrischer-Hof Hotel in Munich. Here, the text's narrator seems to merge with the real author who had walked about in Munich close to the time of writing and who had most probably visited the hotel in question. The text bridges the time between 1923 when the novel is set, and 1956 or slightly thereafter when the chapter was written: "Since then it has been rebuilt, but Augustine had found it a majestic yet rather worn and despondent hostelry those days" (p. 131).⁴¹ "Since then" is an elastic time concept which can be taken to mean 1961 when the novel appeared or any time afterwards when it is read anew.

Another example of Hughes transforming his own visual experience into Augustine's can be found in a beautifully evocative description in the notes of snow silently sliding down the castle roof: "Then there is a brief flicker of shadow as a cloud of snow slips off the roof — not in a solid lump, as when it melts, but like a cloud of falling smoke: you turn, and through the window see it drifting away like smoke on the almost imperceptible breeze." In the novel the perspective is different. The view of an observing "you" (perhaps less synonymous with Hughes himself than with a general "one") has become the scene that Augustine observes, though it is not he who is the narrator. Nothing else has changed:

Then came a brief flicker of shadow over everything as a cloud of snow slipped silently off the steep roof: not in one heavy lump as when it melts, but more like a slowly falling cloud of smoke. Augustine turned, and through the window saw it drifting away like smoke on the almost imperceptible breeze (p. 165).

⁴¹ Similar deliberate anachronisms also occur in *A High Wind in Jamaica*: "The Dutch Steamer, an old-fashioned craft, had not differed very materially from a sailing-vessel: but this, in form, was already more like the steamers of our own day. Its funnel was still tall and narrow, with a kind of artichoke on top, it is true: but otherwise is was much the same as you and I are used to" (*The Innocent Voyage*, pp. 175-176).

Meteorological details are important in the novels, and snow takes on a symbolical significance as do the frozen waters of the Danube.⁴² Hildegard Kruse in her pages on Hughes's nature symbols sees the snow as a gigantic silencing shroud, a simile that seems obvious in a context where Christ is seen on the cross: "Der Schnee erstickt jedes Geräusch, bedeckt Bäume and Häuser wie ein grosses weisses Leichentuch".⁴³ She contrasts the whiteness of the snow with the redness of the blood on the crucifix. Snow and blood point towards the cataclysmic end, as sun and blood do in the following novel, according to the well-read Germanist Hildegard Kruse who was reminded of the blood drops in Chrétien de Troyes's *Perceval* on Karfreitag, i. e. Good Friday. The pun on Gustav von Kahr in Hughes's intentional misspelling is left unexplained in the novel: "and bitter and windy was the 'Kahr-Freitag' morning which followed" (p. 164).

The reader has already been prepared for the snow and the cold outside the castle. By contrast, the first chapter of "The White Crow" shows Otto's office, steaming hot, and its enormous stove: "This monumental stove was too big: with its stack of wood it more than half filled the room" (p. 115). This is an interior detail that had its counterpart in reality: "A stove which is so powerful that it is hot below but the covered upper part of the room . . . is said to be so hot that if you went up a ladder . . . you might well faint and fall off", Hughes noted from Neuburg, where he also points out that "each room of course has its own stove". As a consequence, at Lorientburg Wolff could secretly observe Augustine asleep, "and by stovelight recognised his English rival" (p. 288).

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Among the material collected during these weeks in 1956 there are also notes from a conversation with Count Mirbach-Feldern, seven years Richard Hughes's junior, who as a schoolboy in 1919 or 1920 had observed Hitler at the Odeon-platz. An entry in Frances Hughes's "Spiral-Notizbuch", which she kept while in Munich, reveals that Count Mirbach was one of her husband's sources: "Sunday — Lato Mirbach Gelden [sic!] to lunch. As a boy in Munich heard Hitler speak in the park. He then seemed a madman everyone turned from him." This sounds like a brief summary of a supposedly more detailed conversation which Richard Hughes then elaborated in his fiction. In Chapter twenty of "The White Crow", Franz

⁴² On so called "Analogous landscape", see Rimmon-Kenan, pp. 69-70.

⁴³ [The snow silences all sound, covers trees and houses like a large white shroud] Kruse, p. 290.

von Kessen tells Dr. Ulrich and others a memory from his boyhood, the first time he saw Hitler. What he says also underlines the scepticism and snobbery within the Bavarian upper classes towards the Austrian upstart Hitler in the early stages of his political career, and their catastrophic misjudgement of him (as it will turn out):

“He was standing on the kerb, haranguing. And nobody in the street was listening; not one. They walked past him as if he was empty air: I was quite embarrassed... I was only a boy, then, really It was all *too* embarrassing. I thought he was someone mad, of course: he looked *quite* mad. In the end, rather than pass him I turned back and went by another street. He'd a torn old macintosh which looked as if he always slept in it yet he wore a high stiff collar like a government clerk. He'd got floppy hair and staring eyes and he looked half-starved...” (pp. 196-197).

In what follows, Hitler the madman is linked to an eccentric boy that Augustine had come across in *his* boyhood, Leighton Minor, the prep-school boy who believed himself to be God. The link is not very far-fetched, considering Hughes's formula for Hitler as the ultimate solipsist. That point is driven home further on in the same chapter when a woman critical of the Führer hears about the British prep-school boys' "twisting the arm of... of Almighty God!" Her reply is tersely critical: "He'd better meet Hitler then" (p. 198).

The Scotsman R. H. Bruce Lockhart, a British diplomat in the inter-war years who recorded his activities in a long series of memoirs, was yet another contemporary witness to the outpourings of Hitler the street-orator. It is not unlikely that Hughes had come across what Bruce Lockhart remembered of a chance meeting in Munich the year before the November Putsch. The similarities between Lockhart's memoirs and Hughes's novel are in any case striking.⁴⁴

Twelve years ago, at the corner of the Kellerstrasse, I saw a little black-haired man in riding-boots and a cheap brown waterproof haranguing a mixed crowd of some two hundred men and women from a soap-box. He was bare-headed. He spoke in short, jerky sentences. The crowd changed every few minutes. Some jeered. Some laughed and moved on. Some stayed to listen. Then a policeman came up and ordered the rabble to move on. There were scowls and curses. But the crowd dispersed. The little man was Herr Hitler.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ R.H. Bruce Lockhart's *Retreat from Glory*, published by Putnam (London) in October 1934, discusses the political situation in the Balkans, a topic Richard Hughes had experienced at first-hand.

⁴⁵ Lockhart, pp. 136-137. Some of his experiences and observations in *Retreat from Glory* are similar to Augustine's movements in Munich and his feelings for Bavarian farmers:

In the novel, Franz von Kessen sees what Count Mirbach had seen; Franz has taken note of Hitler as an unknown but startling street orator.

Less than a year later, in 1924, Count Mirbach had observed Hitler once more, when he was speaking from the upper steps of the Feldherrnhalle, "with Father Rupert Mayer — the one-legged Jesuit war hero — at his side..."⁴⁶ The conversation with Count Mirbach then seems to have centred on a psychological and political question that was to be at the core of the novels: why the Nazi seizure of power had been so strong, swift and sudden. Count Mirbach-Feldern had said, according to the notes, that:

Germany at that time was starved of emotion, and it was an emotion that the Nazis fed the people (by contrast, the Monarchists only offered the sentiment) . . . When Hitler came to power the feeling throughout the country was joy and a profound relief, chiefly at the sudden ending of class hatred . . . Hatred was turned outwards.

This probably influenced Hughes, whose narrator's explanatory voice summed it all up when he tried to explain the emotional and political instability in Germany after the First World War: "[the Germans] could not understand their suffering, and inexplicable suffering turns to hatred. But hatred cannot remain objectless: such hatred precipitates its own THEY, its own someone-to-be-hated" (p. 120). To the same extent, the exposition in the novel continues, love has to have an object, "therefore precipitating its own fictive WE — its myths of Soil and Race, its Heroes, its kaleidoscope of Brotherhoods each grappling its own members with hoops of steel. Its Freikorps, its communist cells: its Kampfbund, with all its component organisms: its Nazi movement" (p. 121).

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The we-they dichotomy had deep roots in Hughes's writing. In a four-page manuscript called "Kura and kurapa"⁴⁷ he challenged Erich Fromm's assertion (in *Fear of Freedom*) that the change-over from group-consciousness to self-consciousness in the Renaissance was a thing of the past. Hughes objected: "the weakness inherent in [Fromm's] historical thesis is self-evident — his assumption that the change-over from group to individual consciousness is an event in the history of mankind that took place once and for all." Hughes suspected that Fromm was driven by an

"I have wasted my money on [Munich's] night-life . . . I have learnt to know and like the Bavarian peasant — with his sturdy legs, his green stockings" (p. 138).

⁴⁶ Did Father Mayer serve as a model for Otto von Kessen, also a one-legged war veteran with a strong Catholic faith?

⁴⁷ Dated April 18, 1950.

unconscious motivation, "his hatred of such 'new bonds' as the Nazi philosophy." In the same manuscript, Hughes paraphrased Sir Arthur Keith's argument in *New Theory of Human Evolution* that "the competitive struggle for survival was primarily between groups, not between individuals. [Keith] shows how this gives rise to a dual code of ethics: the impulse to do good to those who are within the group and harm to those who are outside it." Hughes drew a conclusion that may have been behind his first impulses to portray Hitler as a solipsist and a prisoner inside his own monistic universe; it also seems to indicate that Hughes was familiar with Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*: "Once you conceive of a single cause (consciousness of group) resulting in the apparently opposing impulses to do good and to do harm, the apparent duality of good and evil begins to look superficial. One is on the threshold of a monistic science of ethics." The title of Hughes's article is explained with a reference to a South-American anthropological and linguistic duality: "A remarkable statement of this mental attitude may be deduced from the vocabularies of certain primitive peoples. In the language of the Bakairi of Brazil the word 'kura' means 'we, our, and good', while 'kurapa' means 'Not we, not our, bad, unhealthy.'"

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Hatred of the former enemy had turned into a grudging fascination for Germany among young Englishmen in the postwar period. That is the theme of chapter twenty-five of "Polly and Rachel", which also shows some of Augustine's preconceived ideas of Germany, partly formed by war-time propaganda:

On Augustine's wartime mind of course had once been deeply impressed the concept of Germans as quintessential 'they' — as Evil Absolute, the very soil of Germany being poisoned. Since then, victory had somehow set all one's wartime 'we-they' axes in a flat spin. However, that hadn't made Germany 'ordinary' soil again: the evil magic emanating from it had not been dispelled, it had become good magic (p. 98).

In a scrapped version of the first chapter of "The White Crow", Richard Hughes touched on extremist British attitudes to Germany. Augustine stares at the German landscape whirling past his train window: unfenced fields, compact villages, onion-topped churches, well-kept forests (impressions later incorporated in Chapter five of "The White Crow", p. 130). Everything looks strangely un-British to him: "Yet... the soil itself looked ordinary real soil...". Augustine, who like Hughes would have been four-

teen when the First World War broke out, had been a victim of war propaganda. In due time, his feeling of hatred is replaced by an admiration for Germany and Germans. This is Hughes's discarded version:

First, on his boyhood mind had been impressed a concept of 'Germany' as somewhere magically distinct even from the rest of 'abroad': somewhere whose every inch and detail was evil . . . Then, the pendulum had swung . . . It had only needed a little push from Keynes . . . to turn its world-picture inside out . . . they were ready to love and admire [the 'new' Germany]. The English have mostly concrete imaginations: their personal Utopias are as fictive as any but they like to project them onto some real regions of the earth. For Augustine's generation the new Germany filled the bill . . . Thus Augustine's whole heart went out to what he saw: he was prepared to admire uncritically everything which stamped this 'Germany'.

The real counterpart of these sentiments can be found in memoirs by Hughes's slightly younger colleagues who experienced their own liberation in the Weimar republic, among them Christopher Isherwood, W. H. Auden and Stephen Spender.⁴⁸ It can also be seen in Hughes's older fellow-writer H. R. Bruce Lockhart who mentions that "the recapture of that respect for the German people which I had acquired in my student days in Berlin and which, like most English admirers of Germany, I had lost in 1914" was due to a change of mind caused by specific circumstances:

And, at a time when it was dangerous to raise one's voice on behalf of Germany in the clubs of London, I began to question not only in my own mind but to my friends who had influence in high places the wisdom of the Treaty of Versailles . . . I take no credit for my own altered views. Long before I made my first visit to Munich, there were Englishmen whose feelings had already undergone the same revulsion. The first seeds of Anglo-German post-war friendship were planted by the officers and men of the British Army of Occupation in the Rhineland.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ In contrast to Richard Hughes but like Christopher Isherwood, Stephen Spender had spent some years in Berlin in the twenties. He was not uncritical of *The Fox in the Attic*: "The real trouble is that Mr. Hughes' Germans and castle scenes seem only there, as it were, when Mr. Hughes is controlling them. Look round the corner of the Munich of 1923 and one might stumble into the Berlin of Mr. Issyvoo. But there are no corners . . ." (*Encounter*, December 1961). In his review of the sequel twelve years later, he was not very happy with the dominating Bavarian perspective, and like other critics (one of them John Lehmann) he regarded the absent communists as a major void: "There is very little feeling of the passions of the Berlin street, the *Gemeinheit* of the struggles between Communists and Nazi bands, nor of the fact that Germany at that time was the country in Europe with the most vocal proletariat . . . to leave out the working class element in a study of Germany between the wars is to make the clash between Nazis and aristocrats seem one between demons and puppets — and to leave out a great deal of the human predicament" (*Financial Times*, April 1963).

⁴⁹ Bruce Lockhart, p. 138.

Augustine's Oxford friends — Douglas is one of them — are good at name-dropping, as seen in Chapter twenty-five of "Polly and Rachel", where Douglas mentions his plans to travel to Germany. Douglas's attitude rendered Hughes an inquisitive letter from a researcher at Berkeley soon after the American edition of *The Fox in the Attic* had appeared:

Is Douglas representative of a segment of English population that knew? Were there English writers that were aware of what Mann's *Betrachtungen* stood for? Were there writers . . . who were cynical about the spirit beneath the surface, and is it these that Douglas is to stand for? . . . would it be far fetched to see in amiable Augustine a cousin of Castorp,⁵⁰ and would it be very far amiss to suggest that you are one of the very few English writers on whom Mann may have made a deep impression and who does not find the philosophic interlude . . . detrimental to the progress of the narrative?⁵¹

It is doubtful whether Richard Hughes appreciated the suggestion that he wrote in the Thomas Mann tradition when he digressed from his main narrative by underpinning it in his theorising chapters. His answer to the American scholar was non-committal, but it sheds some light on the question of how well- or ill-informed Augustine and his coevals would have been of Germany in the twenties:

You mustn't try to read too much into my text . . . few undergraduates of literary tastes in 1920 could have read German authors in the original: German wasn't a very popular school subject in 1914-18, when they would have been at school . . . No, the sudden idealisation of the "new" Germany among young students here was a psychological rather than a literary phenomenon . . . Maybe the names of half-a-dozen "new" German authors were accepted and given haloes, but it doesn't necessarily mean they were read.⁵²

Rather than delving deep into the different causes why the Anglo-German hatred turned into friendship, Richard Hughes resorted to a novelist's empathy when he made his hero the novel's focalizer who observes the change of national sentiment but does not understand its causes or effects. Being new to Germany, Augustine feels that its people are different from the Welsh villagers that have ostracized him, believing that he has caused Rachel's death: "How happily Augustine could spend the rest of his days among such simple, friendly people!" (p. 130). But his enthusiasm quickly turns into scepticism, and his love into hatred. At the end of the novel his

⁵⁰ Hans Castorp, the main protagonist of Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*.

⁵¹ Peter F. Neumeyer to RH, Feb. 14, 1962.

⁵² RH to Peter F. Neumeyer, Feb. 20, 1962.

feelings are different, maybe as a foreshadowing of things to come on the public level: "Augustine *hated* Germany: all he wanted now was to get away as quick as he could" (p. 351).

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It very soon developed into an axiom with critics that Augustine was the author's alter ego and that the kaleidoscopic and mosaic effect of the novels was in part due to Hughes's efforts to cram into his novels as much as possible of his own youthful wanderings.⁵³ This may to a large extent be true of the chapters that were set in England, Wales, America and Morocco. The German scenes were not as directly autobiographical. They were founded on a wide array of different sources, some of them autobiographies, but none of them written by Hughes himself. One can be found in the April 1956 issue of *Encounter*, a long reminiscence by one of Hughes's friends, Goronwy Rees. "Innocent in Prussia" is the story of twenty-year old Rees's stay as an English tutor at a Silesian Baron's place near Breslau, present-day Wroclaw, back in 1929. Hughes wrote the first few pages of what was to become *The Fox in the Attic*, at the time only tentatively headed "Town and Country", in Marbella in 1955. If he read Rees's article in the following year, on publication, or later is of little concern; that it proved inspirational and that he made good use of it is fully evident.

Rees's article came in good stead when the novelist wanted to sketch the intellectual climate in Oxford in the twenties, when he wished to describe an innocent Briton's clashes with experienced Germans, and when he desired to size up the generation gap in England and Germany. He also got some hints suggesting Wolff's mottled military career in the bargain.

Like Hughes, Goronwy Rees was Welsh, born in Aberystwyth in 1909 (Hughes was born in Surrey but moved to Wales in his early twenties). Rees started on an academic career at Oxford in 1928. Four years later began his long friendship with Guy Burgess, alongside Kim Philby the most well-known of the leftist intellectuals who later spied for the Soviet Union. The friendship lasted close to twenty years, until Burgess defected to Moscow in 1951. The major part of Rees's second autobiographical volume gives the background both to life in Oxford, and to his links to Burgess.⁵⁴ Rees be-

⁵³ One of them was Anthony Thwaite, who attacked Hughes much more aggressively than was called for: "... is it (as I suspect) a painfully slow struggle by an uncommunicative man to make sense of his own life, in terms of an autobiography totally lacking specifications, blueprint, shape and determined only by chronology?" (*The Observer*, April 8, 1973).

⁵⁴ Goronwy Rees shared publisher with Hughes (Chatto & Windus) for his memoirs *A Bundle of Sensations* (1960) and *A Chapter of Accidents* (1972).

came a Fellow of All Souls at Oxford and then led a busy and varied professional life. He was Principal of the University College of Wales in the city of his birth for four years; he was engaged in the engineering industry; he translated from the German (Büchner's *Danton's Death*, Janouch's *Conversations with Kafka*); he wrote novels; he contributed articles to *Encounter*, *The Guardian* and *The Spectator*. He was among Hughes's most enthusiastic reviewers and among other things wrote: "There are few living writers of whom one would say that they had genius; but somehow it seems the most natural thing in the world to say about Richard Hughes."⁵⁵ He had good cause for his laurels: he had supplied some of the background.

His *Encounter* article tells the story of an impecunious Oxford student with an acute longing to go abroad. Germany had held a special attraction to young Englishmen in the twenties, Rees stated in 1956:

To try and recover the original image of Weimar Germany by which I, and so many others, were attracted is like trying to restore some lost masterpiece which has been painted over by a succession of brutal and clumsy artists; and in this case the task is all the harder because the masterpiece never really existed and the Germany of Weimar in which we believed was really only a country of the imagination (p. 14).

Even if Goronwy Rees was nine years younger than Hughes, much of what he wrote in the article about the generation gap in England would have been shared sentiments. He and his fellows at Oxford felt that the Versailles Treaty had been manifestly unjust to the post-war Germans, "a pure assertion of the rights of the strong over the weak and of the victor over the vanquished", and in a peculiarly inverted sort of guilt-complex they had been convinced that Germany, more than England, deserved their sympathy and understanding. Rees expressed it in a clever aphorism: "The young dislike power, because they do not share it; the middle-aged adore it, because it gives them some assurance that the world will continue to be as they have known it" (p. 14). By taking the German side, this young generation of Britons showed their disgust with the war, with those who had started it, and with the victors: "Germany was for us at the opposite extreme from everything we disliked in the land of our fathers; Germany, indeed, had done her best to kill our fathers, and we were not ungrateful to her for her efforts and sympathized with her failure" (p. 15). Hughes, whose father had died when he was not quite six years old, cannot

⁵⁵ Quoted by Graves, p. 382.

have shared Rees's patricide reasons for loving Germany, but much of what Rees and his colleagues thought of Germany coloured Hughes's novels, like the following sentiment in *The Fox in the Attic*: "Today it was rather one's own country and one's own wartime allies that tended to look black in young English eyes like Augustine's, while Darkest Germany was bathed in a mysterious, a holy light..." (p. 98). Rees had explained why the Weimar Republic was the favoured destination for young British intellectuals. Going to Germany had been an act of freedom and class rebellion:

For politics were only part of our infatuation with Germany. Weimar also represented to us all those experiments, in literature, in the theatre, in music, in education, and not least in sexual morals, which we would have liked to attempt in our own country but [which] were so patently impossible in face of the massive and infuriating stupidity of the British middle classes (p. 15).

Christopher Isherwood went to Berlin a few years after Rees had been to Silesia. Isherwood's alter ego Mr Issyvoo is evoked in Rees's article, if somewhat anachronistically.⁵⁶ Rees, who had applied for a short-term job in Germany during the holidays, envisaged that he would meet Mr Issyvoo among the poets and musicians, the sculptors and painters, the communists and the social democrats. Once he got his position as tutor, the setting turned out to be completely different, but his experiences were to be shared fictionally by Augustine some years later, with no great differences.

Goronwy Rees ended up having the benevolent Herr Baron Franz von Reichendorff, Boguslavitz bei Breslau, Schlesien, as his employer. It was far from what he had expected: "I hardly dared say it to myself as I set out for Germany, but I had a horrid feeling within me that once again I was going to find myself, as so often before and after, *in the wrong set*" (p. 17). After the journey by train from Berlin, Rees had arrived at Breslau and had been met on the platform by a chauffeur who took him to the hotel — in the same make of car that Otto von Kessen owns (Richard Hughes was interested in cars and knew much about them).⁵⁷ "He took my bags and led

⁵⁶ Isherwood also taught English in Germany, from 1930 to 1933, but his books based on these experiences and on his meeting with Gerald Hamilton were published later: *Mr Norris Changes Trains* (1935) and *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939). In *Mr Norris and I*, Hamilton discussed his role as a model for the main character of Isherwood's novel.

⁵⁷ "The passage about Augustine's car in *The Fox in the Attic* was written with real nostalgia and affection, as I drove one of the very earliest 1922 3-litre Bentleys from 1929 to the outbreak of war" (RH to Miss Gill Davie at Chatto & Windus, August 20, 1973). For the car chase in Chapter twenty-four of "The Wooden Shepherdess", he chose a Stutz roadster but had also thought of a Marmon, a Pierce Arrow and a Duesenberg. He got in touch with an expert at the Montagu Motor Museum: "Someone said, though, that

me to the car, an ancient open Adler, and drove me through empty streets to the hotel. There, waiting for me, were Herr Baron and his son Fritz" (p. 19).

Rees had met with a Baron and his son Fritz. Augustine meets with a Baron and his son Franz. The similarities are not coincidental. This is Goronwy Rees's first impressions of Fritz:

He was seventeen, with a lean sunburned horseman's face and thick blond hair that perpetually fell in a heavy lock down his cheek; and I was twenty and therefore looked down on him from the heights of an intellectual superiority which made me dismiss his ideas as childish imaginings. All the more so, because I quickly found that they were in all respects at variance with mine, and indeed seemed to reflect a world which bore no relation to any I had ever known (p. 20).

When Augustine meets Franz for the first time the difference in age between them is exactly the same, as is the British (unfounded, as will be apparent later on) sense of superiority:

Baron Franz . . . was now a lad of twenty. He was very fair . . . His manner towards Augustine was perhaps a little over-formal and polite as coming from one young man to another, but in repose his face wore permanently a slightly contemptuous expression. This the father's face lacked and it made Augustine's hackles rise a little in the face of somebody quite so young, quite so inexperienced in the world as this Franz — his own junior by three years at least (p. 142).

The decrepit Adler had been used by the Silesian Baron to go hunting. He was happy to take his Welsh guest, the English tutor, on forays into the forests to shoot deer, and also stray cats. They had been invited to a neighbouring estate, owned by a Graf Felix:

The Baron and Fritz stood up as we drove, their guns at the ready to annihilate any cats that crossed our path . . . I was fascinated by the way in which the animals seemed to disintegrate completely on the impact of the shot. . . . But these isolated acts of slaughter were as nothing compared with the holocaust of game that took place on our arrival . . . [Graf Felix's friends] seemed intent on blazing away with their guns until every form of animal life in Silesia had been destroyed (p. 29).

[Duesenbergs] were awkward cars to handle: is that the case? would the 'Doosy' give more trouble, once they got into the woods, than the Stutz? (RH to Reg Thompson, August 18, 1966). Hughes was meticulous. A further letter asked how many leads Tony had to take off the plugs of his 1914 Buick "to make it seem more decrepit than it is . . . But I suppose if it was a six or eight cylinder car he might need to take off two leads if it's only to slagger along, which is the effect he wants to produce" (RH to RB, October 19, 1966).

In Hughes's novel, this is abbreviated and toned down, but the hunting paragraph still carries a definitely Teutonic flavour. To Augustine, clearly on foreign soil here, hunting in Germany is a very exotic affair: "But it all sounded very un-English. Indeed he soon jumped to the conclusion that here in Germany people shot wild-boar, roe-deer, foxes and wandering cats indiscriminately . . ." (p. 145).

Augustine is in deep water when he takes for granted that he is well informed of what is happening on the German cultural scene. Unwisely, he brags about his knowledge of modern writers in the Weimar Republic, like Thomas Mann, Georg Kaiser and Franz Werfel (see above, p. 42). When Ernst Toller's name is mentioned, Walther von Kessen does not conceal his disgust. He has not read anything by Toller, neither has he any intention of ever doing so. It turns out that his British guest is even less familiar with the German authors in question: "Augustine had not read them either: he was only repeating Oxford tattle" (p. 153). Some of that tattle can be found in Rees's article, although other writers are involved. The young Oxonian is familiar with Proust, Joyce and Virginia Woolf, but that is of little help when he is confronted with a totally different way of thinking. Via Fritz, he had got to know Nietzsche, but he was also familiarised with a book that happened to be one of Hitler's favoured basic texts:

And what was I to make of the great English writer, Houston Stewart Chamberlain? Fritz was profoundly shocked by my ignorance when I had to confess that I had never even heard of him, but forgave me it as a typical example of British philistinism, and kindly gave me a copy of *Der Mythos des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* to read (p. 22).

Augustine is a product of Oxford rationality. As shown in Chapter nineteen of "Polly and Rachel", his generation believes that Freudian analysis has made both God, guilt and sin obsolete. The narrator sums up what Jeremy and Augustine presumably think: such notions "... are merely a primitive psychological blemish which, once explained, mankind can outgrow ...", and quips: "Conscience is an *operable* cancer ..." (p. 73). The novel sets off that shallow British rationality against the fervent German beliefs of nationality and race, brotherhood and blood which are summed up in Chapter fifteen of "The White Crow". Many of the ingredients in both chapters can be found in Goronwy Rees's article. The clash of ideas that Hughes made Augustine encounter in 1923 is much the same as the one that Goronwy Rees had experienced in 1929:

Fritz was a charming companion and friend, and I was puzzled that I should find him none the less so even though most of his ideas and beliefs were to me both fantastic and repellent . . . I never came to suspect that, in various forms, they were shared by thousands of young men and women all over Germany. It seemed to me that no one could seriously believe in such a farrago of nonsense, and what is more, such brutal and barbarous nonsense; coming from Oxford, I was firmly convinced that the irrational is the unreal (p. 22).

In Chapter ten of "The White Crow", Augustine has had too much wine to drink, and he gives up even trying to understand what the political discussion is about: "indubitably he was now more than a little drunk" (p. 152). Goronwy Rees had also been a tired and drowsy witness to endless political discussions:

The room filled with cigar smoke, I was tired after the long day in the open air, drowsy with food and drink, indeed I suppose half tipsy. I sank into a kind of torpor in which I was only half conscious of the conversation that went on around me until late into the night . . .

I heard the Baron repeat his denunciations of the politicians in Berlin, and his familiar refrain: *We must put an end to all that*. I heard Graf Felix, melancholy and yet passionate, deliver a long soliloquy, which I only half understood, on the necessity for Germany to return to a more simple and primitive way of life Apparently, also, the secret and mysterious life of nature, to which Germany should revert, required a periodical blood-letting of the state (pp. 30-31).

The discussion about the need for a reborn Germany is carried on in Hughes's Chapter fifteen: Franz and his uncle Otto agree on the mission, but not on the means. While Otto von Kessen has realistic ambitions for a reborn German Army, Fritz is the idealist who criticises his uncle: "He forgets that unless a nation has a living soul to dwell in the Army as its body, even an Army is nothing! In present-day Germany an 'Army' would be a mere soul-less zombie..." (p. 174). The logic of that utterance is perhaps not crystal clear; in any case, Augustine and Franz speak at cross purposes for the rest of the chapter. Goronwy Rees had met the same kind of philosophising, as explained in lines that follow immediately after the ones just quoted:

Such thoughts were too deep for me, especially because, for the others, who enthusiastically agreed with them, they seemed to lead to extremely practical conclusions; as for instance, that the salvation of Germany was dependent upon a thorough liquidation of all the existing political parties and a restoration of the Prussian virtues of probity, self-sacrifice, and military efficiency (p. 31).

Echoes of this can be found in the novel, both in Otto's views on the ideals behind the Army, and in Fritz's anarchistic ideas. Wolff is the novel's extreme example of the uncompromising anarchist. His story is a string of violent episodes, of killings both in the Baltic states and in Germany. As explained below, Richard Hughes found the relevant background information in Ernst von Salomon's autobiographical novel, *The Outlaws* (and later he had recourse to yet another book by the same author to which Goronwy Rees had written the introduction). Rees had heard stories, similar to Wolff's, told in a bucolic Silesian setting in 1929:

Then we walked together through the forest to his forester's little hut where he and I and the forester drank beer in great quantities, and he and the forester, who had been his batman during the war, talked of Langemarck and Verdun, and with great gusto and pleasure of their bloodthirsty experiences as *Ostkämpfer* in the Balticum after the war and in the Polish insurrection in Upper Silesia in 1921. And it was there in the hut that I first heard the names, until then unknown to me, of Maercker [sic!], and Schlageter, and Salomon, of Erhardt, *der Kapitän*, and Kern and Fischer and von Pfeffer, who to the Baron were heroes, saints and martyrs, though in fact they were the most depraved, because the most idealistic, of assassins and murderers (p. 26).

Goronwy Rees was also a professional historian; one of his books deals with *The Great Slump: Capitalism in Crisis, 1929-33*. The *Encounter* article moves backwards and forwards on the time axis, although the retrospection outweighs the anticipation, the flashbacks the foreshadowings. The Versailles Treaty had not been further back in time for the Oxonians of the late twenties than the Potsdam Conference was for his contemporary 1956 readers, he stated, emphasising the relativity in historical perspectives. Much of what he wrote in the article made its way into Hughes's novels, although the geography was changed: Otto and Walther von Kessen's Lorientburg replaced Baron Franz von Reichendorff's Boguslavitz. Much of what Rees had seen and heard in Silesia in the summer of 1929 was fictionalised as Augustine's impressions in Bavaria in 1923. Some characteristics of Hughes's twenty-three year old blinkered hero had been carried by twenty-year old Goronwy Rees: "Like many others whose education had been almost exclusively literary, I had a wonderful faculty for ignoring what lay under my nose . . . I lived in a glorious state of euphoria in which facts were only valuable when they proved what one wanted to believe" (p. 33). What Hughes could not transfer from Rees's article into his own fiction was its many passages of hindsight, like this concluding one:

It was only later, when Weimar had been liquidated in shameful defeat and disaster, that I began to think again about my visit to Boguslawitz and wonder whether there I had not stumbled across a secret which might help to explain some of the events which followed Weimar's collapse (p. 33).

The fictitious Augustine is not allowed by his creator to look back on his German debacle with much distance or detachment. He has been a limited observer, and in contrast to Rees in real life, he does not draw any analytical conclusions of the short time that he has spent in Germany. His preferred way of solving problems when faced with difficult decisions is to escape from them. Had his chronicle been brought up to the end of the Second World War as planned, Richard Hughes might have given his hero a chance to share the melancholia that Goronwy Rees expressed when he looked back on the victims of the political upheavals in recent European history:

How could I have known that I would never see any of them again? that their dreams of revenge would be realized in a form that exceeded their most violent imaginings, and that in the realization they would suffer even worse humiliations than those on which they brooded so intensely? . . . I wonder if [the Baron] was fortunate enough to die or be killed, or whether in some Asiatic prison-camp he still lives to discourse the virtues of being a Prussian (p. 32).

Chapter II
Ernst von Salomon

One of the few misprints in the original edition¹ of *The Fox in the Attic* is a surname in the concluding *Acknowledgements* (p. 353): Saloman should read Salomon (it is corrected in subsequent editions). "The knowledgeable reader" to whom Richard Hughes directed his lines may have recognized this particular source even if misspelled and would possibly even have remembered that the name is mentioned by one of Hughes's "published authorities", Sir John Wheeler-Bennett. His book *The Nemesis of Power. The German Army in Politics 1918-1945* contains a footnote on Walther Rathenau, Foreign Secretary in the Weimar Republic, and his murderers. Its brief reference to Ernst von Salomon's novel probably caught Hughes's interest:

In a final speech to the Genoa Conference on May 19, 1922, Rathenau made an impassioned plea for the restoration and preservation of the peace in Europe, ending with the cry of Petrarch: 'Pace — Pace — Pace'. A month later he was assassinated in a suburb of Berlin by Nationalist youths who suspected his patriotism and yet grudgingly admired his courage (June 24, 1922). For the psychological outlook of his murderers, which was in many ways the forerunner of Nazi psychology, see *Die Geächteten*, Berlin 1931 (*The Outlaws*, London 1931), by Ernst von Salomon, who was identified with the assassination.²

Ernst von Salomon, born in Kiel on September 25, 1902, was thus not even twenty at the time of Rathenau's killing.³ His father started out as a police officer and was promoted to be Chief of the *Kriminalpolizei* in Frankfurt. His son Ernst entered the Royal Prussian Cadet School in Karlsruhe when only eleven years of age, and then continued in Berlin-Lichterfelde, in barracks which years later saw some of the killings on the day after The Night of the Long Knives. Von Salomon, too young to experience direct action in the First World War, was caught up in its chaotic aftermath, quickly gain-

¹ The American edition (Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York 1961), is identical to the British one (Chatto & Windus, London 1961), except for an added page "About the Author", for the benefit of American readers.

² Wheeler-Bennett 1953, p. 131. *Die Geächteten* was published by Rowohlt Verlag in 1930, not 1931.

³ On Ernst von Salomon, see Wilfried Barner (hrsg), *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart* (1994), p. 29; Hans Sarkowitz in Walther Killy (hrsg), *Literaturlexikon. Autoren und Werke deutscher Sprache*, Bd. 10 (1991), pp. 121-122; Raymond Furness and Malcolm Humble, *Companion to Twentieth Century German Literature* (1991), p. 243, Robert Wistrich, *Who's Who in Nazi Germany* (1982), pp. 265-266; Franz Lennartz, *Deutsche Dichter und Schriftsteller unserer Zeit* (1969), pp. 589-590.

ing experiences well beyond his years. They were to have far-reaching ideological consequences for him, quickly entrenching him in a position on the extreme right: "The teenage Ernst von Salomon identified himself with the demobilised soldiers, and to compensate for having missed the action, and with no army to join, he enlisted in one of the *Freikorps*, which were to prove a 'Vanguard of Nazism'"⁴

After the Armistice of November 11, 1918 and the uprisings and revolutions in the wake of it, von Salomon took part in irregular warfare against the Spartacists in Berlin early the next year. He then roamed the Baltics and Upper Silesia as a member of different separatist troupes, among them the one led by Captain Erhardt, fighting for their own cause in anarchic camaraderie:⁵

They despised the ordinary forms of military discipline, but were held together by the consciousness of having rejected the normal conventions of civilised life, and by obedience to their chosen leaders, and to no-one else. The fighting in which they took part was characterised by extreme ruthlessness and savagery; they fought in a kind of ecstasy compounded of a patriotism which was akin to nihilism and of a conscious barbarism.⁶

Because of his close involvement as an accomplice in the killing of Rathenau, Ernst von Salomon was sentenced to five years imprisonment. In one of his gaols, the one in Moabit in Berlin, he wrote the second part of his autobiographical trilogy, its composition coinciding more or less with that of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* in another prison, namely Landsberg. Von Salomon's close encounters, while still under age, with political violence went into three semi-autobiographical novels written in the early thirties, when he was in his late twenties: *Die Kadetten* (1933), *Die Geächteten* (1930) and *Die Stadt* (1932).⁷ All three were widely read, especially the middle volume with its sensational story of Rathenau's murder as seen by one of those involved. It ran into a printing of more than one hundred thousand copies in the year of publication alone, proving that it was of acute topical interest. The novels also attracted attention outside Germany and

⁴ Alasdair Stewart in his introduction to the 1983 Kraus Reprint of *The Outlaws* (included in the series "History of Political Violence"), p. vi.

⁵ "Ehrhardt [sic!], of course, was already famous: a veteran of the guerilla fighting that raged for two whole years after the 1918 'armistice' in the lost Baltic provinces..." (*The Fox in the Attic*, pp. 162-163).

⁶ Goronwy Rees in his introduction to *The Answers of Ernst von Salomon* (1954), pp. ix-x.

⁷ The last one translated into English by M. S. Stephens as *It Cannot be Stormed*, London 1935.

were translated almost immediately into French, Italian and Spanish, as well as into English.⁸

In the latter part of the thirties, Ernst von Salomon sided with conservative groups of strong nationalistic conviction, although he stuck to his role as a political outsider. He shied away from party politics during the Nazi period, hibernating and writing film scripts for Ufa in Berlin and Bavaria in Munich.⁹ Despite this political passivity, he was interned and questioned by the American occupation forces for a few months in 1945-46 before being cleared, an experience that gave rise to his book *Der Fragebogen* (1951),¹⁰ which was a bestseller in West Germany, due to its oppositional and controversial nature and its author's ironical stance. When translated into English in 1956 by Constantin Fitzgibbon, with a preface by Richard Hughes's colleague and friend Goronwy Rees, it was published under an explanatory title which indicated the involved bureaucratic process which had been at its roots: *The Answers of Ernst von Salomon to the 131 Questions in the Allied Military Government 'Fragebogen'*. It is the detailed answer to the occupational forces' denazification interrogation, almost six hundred pages long. The 131 items in the questionnaire sought information on personal matters and education, on work, political activities, writing and income, with a certain degree of pedantry that must have offended those under suspicion: "Every question must be answered precisely and conscientiously and no space is to be left blank."

Von Salomon answered them all, elaborately and with a satirical verve. The anonymous introduction to the 1961 Rowohlt paperback reprint stresses that the book demands an historical awareness on the part of its readers. This is formulated in a way which could also be applied to Hughes's novels: "In einer reichen, erregenden Schau von eindrucksvoller Erlebnisfülle öffnen sich Rückblicke und Ausblicke, die den Leser zwingen, sich seiner eigenen Position im Zeitgeschehen bewusst zu werden".¹¹

⁸ On *Die Geächieten*, see *Kindlers Literatur Lexikon* Bd. 9 (1974), pp. 3799-3800.

⁹ Robert Wistrich maintains: "Like other *Edelfaschisten* ... such as Jünger ... von Salomon was a significant forerunner of the Third Reich by virtue of his moral colour-blindness, self-righteous arrogance and irrational nihilism, but was somewhat shocked by the results of the 'National Revolution'. Though he had stirred the hatreds on which National Socialism thrived, he never joined the Nazi Party, despising the 'democracy of the masses' and continuing to prefer his Prussian ideal of a hierarchical, authoritarian State" (Wistrich, pp. 265-266).

¹⁰ On *Der Fragebogen*, see *Kindlers Literatur Lexikon* Bd. 9 (1974), p. 3646.

¹¹ [The past is shown in a rich, exciting display of impressive experiences, forcing the reader to become aware of his own position in regard to contemporary history] Salomon 1984, p. 2.

This extensive Allied questionnaire allowed von Salomon some even more extensive expositions of his activities from 1919 to 1946, i. e. during the Revolution, the Weimar Republic, the Hitler years and the few years of recent occupation by the Allied forces. Contemporary German critics were divided in their views on the book, their responses ranging from the assumption that von Salomon's satire would not benefit the process of political readjustment, to laudatory praise of it as an important *document humain*.¹²

Among his later novels, *Das Schicksal des A.D.* (1960) shows much the same interest in political matters and a deep knowledge of recent German history and its changeability. It is the chronicle of a man living in the "shadow of history" who although innocent is imprisoned for many years, while the fate of Germany is decided by three consecutive governments. Its story-line offers the author ample opportunities to express his sarcastic views on German politics, from the time of the Weimar Republic to the Adenauer era. Von Salomon, who took part in antinuclear demonstrations late in life, died in 1972.¹³

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Richard Hughes could hardly have found a better guide than Ernst von Salomon to the ultra-nationalistic reactionary ideas flourishing within wide sectors of the German youth immediately after the First World War. Von Salomon was only two years Hughes's junior, but he had gained first-hand experience of political violence even when still a teenager. There are some striking similarities between their views on the generation issue, albeit they belonged to different nationalities.¹⁴ In his biography of Richard Hughes, Richard Perceval Graves quotes the following passage from *The Fox in the Attic* as if its main protagonist Augustine Penry-Herbert were the author's alter ego, expressing Hughes's own bewilderment when he was suddenly confronted with a shockingly different post-War world:¹⁵

Augustine had left school and was on the last lap of all — at a training camp for young officers — when the guns stopped.

The war had ended. He was eighteen. The shock was stupendous.

¹² Lennartz, pp. 589-590

¹³ Salomon's brilliant style and analytical acumen appealed to many reviewers, even those who did not share his extreme political stance, according to Hans Sarkowitz. One of them was Robert Musil (Killy, p. 122).

¹⁴ In his book *Krig og generasjon* [War and Generation] (1980), the Norwegian critic Fredrik Wulfsberg discusses generation conflicts in "period-novels" by British writers in between the wars, one of them Richard Hughes (pp. 103-115).

¹⁵ Graves, p. 31.

No one had warned him he might after all find himself with his life to live out: with sixty years still to spend, perhaps, instead of the bare six months he thought was all he had in his pocket. Peace was a condition unknown to him and scarcely imaginable. The whole real-seeming world in which he had grown to manhood had melted round him (p. 111).

If Hughes read *The Outlaws* as more of an autobiographical confession than a novel, he found a kindred soul in Salomon. An expression of a disenchantment similar to Augustine's when he realises that the well-ordered world of yesterday has been irretrievably lost can be found at the very outset of *The Outlaws*. The narrator describes how he loses all sense of direction when there are no more glorious wars to be won though that is what he has been trained for:

Now there were no more victories and the flags had lost their glamour. Now everything seemed to be falling in ruins around me and the road which I should have followed was blocked. I was bewildered by the events which were crowding on me, whose meaning I could not interpret. All I could realise was that the world I had known, of which I was a part, to which my youth had been pledged, had vanished never to return (p. 12).

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Although Ernst von Salomon's name appears only in a few letters in Hughes's vast correspondence, it is still possible to establish a *terminus post quem*, a date after which Hughes must have been at least somewhat familiar with von Salomon's ideas. In the summer of 1956 he received a letter from Goronwy Rees who wrote: "I have asked the publishers to send you a copy of the English translation of *Der Fragebogen*, for which I wrote an introduction."¹⁶

After the publication of *The Fox in the Attic*, a reader in California with a strong interest in the history of the Baltic States sent Richard Hughes a letter in which he expressed his appreciation of the novel. He also mentioned that he believed he had recognized a loan from von Salomon in one of the novel's incidents, the one where Wolff finds his comrades horrifyingly mutilated (pp. 232-233). He was correct in this as-

¹⁶ GR to RH, August 12, 1956. Rees also supplied Hughes with a classic in the literature of anarchy: "I have added Malaparte, because the book had so much influence on everyone who thought or dreamed of revolution by violence between the two wars. I'm sure your hero would have read it". — In his introduction, Rees is highly critical of Salomon's supposed conversion: "The truth is that for a person of Salomon's past, and beliefs, to dissociate himself, as he does in this book, from all responsibility for the triumph, and the crimes, of National Socialism, is a piece of effrontery which only so brilliant a writer could have attempted with success" (p. xi).

sumption, but his knowledge of von Salomon's novel cannot have been very deep as he asked about the two other key players mentioned briefly by Richard Hughes but at length by von Salomon: "Who were Kern and Fischer?"¹⁷ As always courteous in his reply to letters from his readers, Hughes still did not spare this correspondent an ironic twist: "Salomon was imprisoned as the accessory of Kern (the actual assassin) and Fischer in the murder of Rathenau. In fact there is a full account in *Die Geächteten* which I gather you have read. I am glad you liked the Fox."¹⁸

As will be explained below (p. 81), it is obvious that Hughes had read *The Outlaws* much more thoroughly than did his American correspondent.¹⁹ Another source reveals his close familiarity with one of von Salomon's later books as well. In his research files, there is a fifty-three page compendium of *The Answers of Ernst von Salomon*. Its headings disclose Hughes's particular interest in von Salomon's activities in the *Freikorps* and his complicity in the killing of Walther Rathenau; in von Salomon's own information on the Röhm Purge; in von Salomon's description of Ludin's National Socialist experiences, particularly the occasion when Ludin met Hitler on June 30, 1934; in radio reports of the Purge; in Hitler's broadcast after the massacre; and finally in von Salomon's portrait of Hitler "as a man of shadows".

It is evident that Hughes intended, at one of the earlier stages of the composition of *The Fox in the Attic*, to give his readers a more obvious clue to his source than the fleeting appearance that von Salomon makes on page 299 ("even the noble young Saloman [sic!] was in prison"). On one of Hughes's many scrapped manuscript pages, von Salomon is mentioned more fully:

From the first this had proved no ordinary killing. It was in the Octave of the Summer Solstice (surely a most delicate compliment to the Sun!) that Kern and Fischer, the protagonists, shot Rathenau — and vanished. Thereafter not even their most devoted friends, such as Wolff himself and ex-comrades-in-arms of his like young Ernst von Salomon, knew where to find them or how to help them.

¹⁷ Charles L. Sullivan to RH, April 23, 1962. It appears from the "notes, synopses, outlines" kept in the research folder for Book III of *The Fox in the Attic* that Hughes was interested in the contrasting physiognomy of the murderer and his victim: "Kern naval officer: roundly built of middle height, dark eyes. Rathenau thin, aristocratic face with noble brow dark wise eyes."

¹⁸ RH to CLS, July 1, 1962.

¹⁹ In fact, he did not return the London Library copy of *The Outlaws* until June 21, 1965, four years after *The Fox in the Attic* was published.

It would have been up to the inquisitive reader to find out that the partaker of the action, this young Ernst von Salomon, had been included by an author who had based his portrait of him on facts supplied by Salomon himself. This is not the only instance of this kind of indirect acknowledgment of a source in Hughes's manuscript. As shown below (p. 199), Hughes at one stage planned to let another of his informants, Sir Philip Gibbs, take part in the action of his novel in the same oblique way.

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The Outlaws covers a period of ten years, from November 1918 to von Salomon's release from prison in 1928, when President Paul von Hindenburg issued a general amnesty. The book is a peculiar blend of a picaresque novel and a *Bildungsroman*. Its hero experiences an array of violent episodes and confrontations which do not seem to change his views and ideas much. He is as disillusioned with middle-class society at the end as he was at the beginning, and his rigid hatred of the philistine is intact: "When I made up my accounts for the last five years, there was a balance on the credit side. How could I have borne it otherwise? But I must not let myself succumb to the bourgeois point of view; for it is lethargic, flexible perhaps, but not alive" (p. 432).

The novel is divided into three parts. The first, "Exiles", tells of the chaotic warfare following the 1918 revolution, of skirmishes during the Kapp Putsch in March 1920, and of the *Freikorps* campaigns in the Baltic states, mainly Lithuania. There is much highly charged emotion and little cool analysis in these chapters that sometimes remind the reader of the tumultuous battle scenes in Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* with their sensations of feverish strangeness and its absence of any distance between perceiver and what is perceived.

The second part, "Conspirators", shows the confused thinking behind the right-wing extremist attacks on the Weimar Republic, culminating in the pointless killing of Walther Rathenau. The reasons behind the deed remain largely unexplained. The entire third section, "Criminals", is devoted to von Salomon's prison years. Especially the first two parts helped Richard Hughes to fill in the emotional and ideological background of the more immature German nationalists that appear in *The Fox in the Attic*: Franz von Kessen, Lothar Scheidemann, and in particular Lothar's elder brother Wolff.

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Richard Hughes, who favoured a spontaneous approach to his writing and kept his planning in advance to a minimum, still made use of summaries, plans and outlines of his different characters and the role they might play. Five manuscript pages in his archive that seem to have been written fairly late in the creative process delineate the "Situation of the various characters" and centre on a series of physical and psychological disasters for Augustine, Mitzi and her family, Hitler and Wolff.

Augustine is in a quandary, the notes explain, whether he should marry a blind girl or not: "If in the end the answer is 'No', this is less because she is blind than because he is still too much of an egoist, and too immature, for any marriage." He makes his situation more complicated because he misunderstands it: while he believes that he is at the centre of everybody's attention, neither Mitzi nor her family are interested enough even to notice his feelings (and he does not show them anyway): "In the end Augustine finds the situation insoluble, and so runs from it. Phase 1 of his life — the Hermit of Newton — is already over: now Phase 2 — the Lover of Lorientburg — is over too."

The situation of Mitzi's parents, drawn up on half a page, is an ironic one. As a matter of convenience, they plan to place her in a nunnery. They are ashamed, though not admitting it, of her physical disability. At the same time and unknown to her parents, she is becoming a believer, and thus the place she is sent to is the right one. The novelist reminded himself in a parenthesis that Adèle and Walther von Kessen are no heartless monsters and they must not give that impression: "(It is essential to make their attitude seem reasonable to the reader: we must not hate them for it.)"²⁰

Hughes explained why Mitzi's brother accepts her going into a nunnery: "Even Franz concurs: Mitzi is his sacrifice — for the only service she can now do for the New Germany of his dreams is to avoid being a drag on it." In the von Kessen family, her uncle is less interested in what might be privately or politically expedient. He has a deeper understanding of her inner motives: "Otto concurs too; but only because he alone has sufficient insight to realise this may really be the life she is suited to." Hughes added

²⁰ Hughes succeeded in his intention. The moving last page in Chapter four of "The Meistersingers" makes the reader feel acutely sorry for Adèle and Walther in their borrowed bed at the Krelsmann house. Earlier in the day they have yielded Mitzi to the convent, and Walther is now sleepless like Job, "full of tossing to an and fro till the break of day." For once they don't have the comfort of each other: "... Adèle jerked away, and left him only a pillow wet with her tears" (p. 129).

an interesting observation: "As a soldier, he can come nearer than any of the others to understanding nuns."

How Mitzi sees her own situation is also outlined. She is totally unaware of the love that she has aroused in Augustine. After the disaster of sudden and total blindness, she has three options, the notes suggest: "she can pity herself; she can be 'brave', and refuse to pity herself; or she can *congratulate* herself — 'giving thanks to God for *all things*.'" Her way is parallel to that of Job, and Hughes notes the applicable chapters in the *Book of Job* (thirty-eight, forty and forty-two). Then she will follow the third course, which is the way of Teresa of Avila. Mitzi's future role is briefly summed up, also in a parenthesis: "(Later she will come to couple with her mysticism something of Teresa's intensive drive in practical matters: utterly uncompromising, she is destined in middle life to become a Figure in Germany.)"

The notes on Nellie, Gwilym and their son Sylvanus are of no concern in the context of the German chapters, but the ones on Hitler are. His psychological set-up is dominated by an abnormal egoism, with his "I" completely contained within itself: "Thus his disaster cannot find expression in his relationship either with God or with other people — for he is incapable of believing in either as existences. It can only be expressed within himself." Hughes notes that solipsism is a natural state in the newborn infant; gradually it recognizes the independent existence first of its mother and then of others. These are steps that Hitler did not take, even if there is evidence, Hughes writes, that he had loved his mother. But then she died, and he was literally "alone in the world." What Hughes states reads like an alibi for his later chapter about Hitler's frenzied dreams in Uffing: "Hitler's disaster was circumstantial evidence of just what he could not apprehend — that the universe contained other personalities and wills than his own. Thus his mental agony would tend to take the form of half-delirious recollections of the only outside 'existence' he had ever known — his mother."

Hughes also sketched the libido or the lack of it in two of his characters, a topic he then elaborated in his two novels: "The perfect solipsist is of course incapable of normal sexual relations — for these par excellence entail recognition of 'another'. Even in Augustine sexual inhibitions were a little stronger than is usual, and his egoism was the cause."

The outline of Wollf's situation was the longest of them all:

Wolff's 'disaster' had happened five years ago: the incredible defeat of Germany — something all his educators had proved to him conclusively could not happen, for Germany's destiny was to rule the world. Since it was incredible it could not have happened; yet he was immeshed in a world of people pretending it had, a conspiracy of lies. The effect of his disaster, then, was to fix his 'we' on the heroic, victorious Germany the real world could nowhere show him. At the age of sixteen he joined the thousands of like-minded guerillas fighting in the old Eastern Provinces — fighting anyone, Bolsheviks, Lithuanians, British... sometimes each other even... with the beastliest savagery. This suited him for a second reason; for the only real escape from his dilemma lay in death. After three years however the fighting was finished and he had not been killed. Returning to Germany he still carried on the struggle: because Weimar Germany was the negation of the Nietzschean 'Germany' of his dreams, it must be utterly destroyed. He joined a political murder outfit. Because Rathenau seemed the one man capable of making Weimar Germany succeed, *he* had to be destroyed. After being involved in that assassination he had been on the run, finally taking refuge with his old school-friend and disciple Franz. He has been living in the Lorientburg attics for months now; and more than ever knows that the only way out for him is death He has made no attempt to contact his father or brother Lothar: it is actually a comfort to him that they believe him to be already what he wants to be - i. e., *dead*.

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Wolff is partly modelled on the first-person narrator of *The Outlaws*, whether that person be a plausible reflection of young Ernst von Salomon or not, and partly on Kern and Fischer, the Rathenau murderers. In the novel, Wolff Scheidemann is introduced as a schoolfriend of Franz's (p. 121). His younger brother Lothar, attending cadet school, does not believe that Wolff has been killed or is missing in action. Like the fictitious Wolff, the factual first-person narrator of *The Outlaws* has a younger brother: "I only found one person who was ready to help me . . . it was my younger brother, who was also a cadet" (p. 19).

Wolff's fanaticism makes him seem even younger than he is, according to Hughes's analysis which echoes Nietzsche's *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*: "Wolff was the same age as Franz but appeared even younger, for the idealist's generic tendency to moral insanity had left the generic innocent charm quite unaffected — or had even enhanced that youthful magnetism of altruism and singleness of purpose" (p. 299). Wolff's world is one where blood flows, literally and metaphorically, both when he is awake and when is dreaming: "He was having one of his 'red' dreams, when everywhere there was always blood" (p. 231).

This is explained by his having experienced extreme bloodshed, but the novel also hints at a sanguinary mysticism that is dressed in sexual imagery. This expression of an aggressive nationalism borders on collec-

tive moral insanity: "'Chaos,' said Franz, simply and sombrely. 'Germany must be re-born and it is only from the darkness of the hot womb of chaos that such re-birth is possible... the *blood-red* darkness of the hot womb, etc'" (p. 173). Franz's imperfectly learned lesson of peculiar Germanic mythology is backed up by a quotation two pages later, a German General's chilling prophecy. It is followed by Franz's enthusiastic outburst, as un-critical on his part as it is ironic on the narrator's:

Do you know what General Count Haesler said even thirty years ago? . . . It was in an address to the Army: *'It is necessary that our German civilisation shall build its temple upon a mountain of corpses, upon an ocean of tears, upon the death-cries of men without number...'* — Prophetic words, profoundly metaphysical and anti-materialist: an imperative to the whole German race! (p. 175).²¹

These and other paragraphs tie in well with the many examples of red rage in *The Outlaws*, and may have been inspired by them. The following are three of the many instances in von Salomon's novel:

"We were ready to answer the call of our blood; and what was of real importance was not so much that what we did should be the right thing, but that we should take some action to save us from the lethargy of the times" (p. 96);²² "We killed anything that fell into our hands, we set fire to everything that would burn. We saw red; we lost every feeling for humanity" (p. 131); "Future generations will ask us what we did. And we shall answer that we have stirred people's blood. For the soul is the emanation of the blood, and the blood boiled and the stream rose and we stirred it" (p. 138). The links to the lethal and obscure ideas of the Nazi *Blut und Boden* philosophy are obvious.

Franz stands in youthful opposition to his uncle Otto, the Catholic loyalist who hopes for the re-birth of the German Army. It is a confrontation of different generations, one aspiring, the other conspiring, and of differing political attitudes. Franz believes in an anarchic break with the past, as he explains to a puzzled Augustine: "Our uncle has not, I regret, so

²¹ Gottlieb von Haeseler (1836-1919) was a high-ranking officer in the German 1870-71 occupation army in France, responsible for the 16th Army Corps in Lothringen from 1890 to 1902, promoted to the rank of Field Marshal, and still active at the outbreak of the First World War. — Hughes was unfortunate when spelling Haeseler's name. When he makes a reappearance in the next novel, in unflattering circumstances, he is "General Count von Hasler": "it was dancing before his Kaiser in pink ballet-shirt and a wreath of roses that made him drop dead of a heart-attack...." (p. 375).

²² A significant but deeply ironic quote from Rathenau's *Reflexions* introduces Salomon's second section, "Conspirators": "Action is never contemptible, inaction always" (p. 177).

clearly understood the philosophical pre-necessity of chaos before creation . . ." (p. 174). His statement seems coloured by some of von Salomon's stubborn convictions, like this one:

We believed that it was we who were meant to have the power and no one else, for Germany's sake. For we felt that we embodied Germany. We believed that we were entitled to have that power. The people at the head of affairs in Berlin had no such right. For we did not believe that they were working solely for the good of Germany, as we were, who felt that we *were* Germany (p. 141).

In *The Outlaws* the murderers Kern and Fischer hide in Saaleck castle near Bad Kösen, as they had done in real life: "They lived in the top floor of the castle, outlawed, deserted and lost" (p. 290). Richard Hughes includes this piece of information in his novel, but briefly and mainly in order to stress Wolff's utter loneliness: "Now that Kern and Fischer (the protagonists in that sacrificial killing) had died fighting in a deserted tower of Saaleck Castle the whole Noble Army of Martyrs was on the run" (p. 300). Hughes was not quite correct, though, if von Salomon is to be believed. Kern was killed by a police bullet, but the other outlaw, Fischer, committed suicide like Wolff, though in a different manner: "He raised the revolver, put it to the same spot as that at which Kern had been hit and pressed the trigger" (p. 292). Hughes's ironic reference to Rathenau's murder as a "sacrificial killing" makes it a counterpart to Wolff's plans for Mitzi's death. His vision turns into a destructive daydream awash with blood:

Repeating his scene da capo Wolff now dwelt on his teasing point pricking through the thin nightgown to the naked skin so that she half-woke: then the sudden thrust into the throbbing heart itself, the knife pumping in the wound, the withdrawal and the hot blood welling to his elbow (p. 285).

His dream is tinged with pornographic pleasure, as was his younger brother's vision of a naked and ravaged *Germania* chained to the "Rock of Versailles" (p. 159). Blood and ecstatic visions, pornography and political resentment abound in von Salomon's novel as well. Before he glorifies the petty end of two sordid criminals, he gives vent to an effusion of high-strung sentimental bathos:

That ultimate peace had surely spread its wings over them. Strength must have flowed to them from stars, plants and stones, from the great unity which they had served. . . . They were very near a union with the spirit; they were very near to that harmony for which they had battled They welcomed the flame, which

at one time spurred them onto action, and at another time purged their souls of dross, and at last gave them the boon of death. And their death was worthy (p. 290).

Similar sentiments are reflected by those of Hughes's characters who are filled with an idealism which is sometimes but not always misguided: Hitler's "Flame of Life", Wolff's death-wish, Mitzi's renunciation of the world: "under the burning eye of that burning relentless Love she was molten metal that heaved in a crucible . . ." (WS, p. 388). All these attitudes are reminiscent of von Salomon's rambling pantheism.

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Wolff's suicide (p. 302) is preceded by a disquieting description of his deranged mind's expansion in space, in a passage already quoted (p. 55): "In a whole year spent here he had grown into a unity with the very timbers of these attics . . . Look! Like the bones in Ezekiel already these beams were covering themselves with flesh, with skin - and it was *his* flesh and skin they were growing . . ." (pp. 300-301). The Bible allusion as well as the concept of solipsism form part of the background to this unnerving scene. But it seems highly likely that Hughes was also influenced by an equally strange passage in *The Outlaws*, dealing with von Salomon's many years in prison and describing how he has finally reached a point where his mind is on the verge of breaking:

I sat motionless on the low plank bed for a long, long time. I could not think, it was too cold for thought, too silent. Nothing in the room was alive, except myself — and was I alive? I considered my hand which looked pale and bony as it lay on my knee — like the hand of a corpse. There were black edges to my bluish finger nails. I seemed to smell corruption. I was the central point of the room. If I could not manage to irradiate my being to the furthest corners of that wretchedly small space, I should be crushed (p. 352).

Von Salomon is moved in two opposite directions simultaneously, on the one hand there is a distancing away from his own body, and on the other an extension of the body to encompass the whole room. Von Salomon, as the narrator of his novel, believes that the second direction is the only way to move in order to keep his balance of mind. Hughes chooses the same direction for Wolff, but in his novel it is seen as a sign of a mind rapidly going crazy, the mind of an absolute solipsist for whom the asylum doors are agape.

Yet another racing mind in *The Fox in the Attic* is Erich Ludendorff's, in the scene when the Putsch has failed and the insurgent marchers on the Feldherrnhalle are already in disarray. He is a stalwart warrior, or just a steadfast tin-soldier. What keeps him going when his comrades have either fallen or are in full flight is his crazed numerology:

Ludendorff continued his way unhindered across the empty square. As soon as he had added together the digits of this fatal year 1-9-2-3 and registered that their sum was 15 his mind went suddenly blank. . . . all at once he halted, thunderstruck — his brain suddenly springing into action again. But of course! *Fifteen was the same total 1-9-1-4 added up to!* (pp. 225-226).

It is a credible reconstruction of what may have gone on inside Ludendorff's head at the time, made plausible from what we know from his (and his second wife's) books and their notions on freemasonry and theories of world conspiracy. Another possible source for this would be von Salomon's description of how he tries to kill time in prison. The basic numerology is the same, but when Ludendorff lets his mind go as Wolff did, von Salomon checks himself. His rationality sets a limit to his flight of numerological fancy:

I looked up and counted the bars. There were fifty-eight. I got up and counted the planks in the floor — sixteen of them. I put one foot in front of the other — seven times I could do it and then came the grating. I was pleased about the seven. Now I added them all up — $58+16+7=81$. Square root — nine. Did that portend good luck or bad? I was born in the ninth month of the year and the square root of the date of my release was also nine. I smiled and was ashamed of myself — how absurd I was being! (p. 353).

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An example from von Salomon's novel illustrates Hughes's sometimes eclectic use of sources, and how details therein proliferated. Having left his camarilla, von Salomon survives by changing money by not always legal means. The idealistic Kern has told von Salomon that "the men in Mainz were complaining of being hindered in their freedom of action by want of money" (p. 234). Kern is taken aback by von Salomon's malpractice and regards it as criminal, but von Salomon has no qualms: "I assured him that it was indeed cheating; that everything I was doing in this little office was cheating; cheating to order; very honourable cheating; cheating which was the soul of this business" (p. 234). It turns out that his cheating is for a good cause. He carries on talking to Kern while serving his customers:

"It would appear," I said and counted out some money to a Pole with dirty finger nails, "that you are still infected with bourgeois sentiments. It would appear," and cashed a beautiful crackling ten pound note for an elegant silent Englishman "that even if everyone else were playing fair, the fact that the Mainzers are held up for the want of money is enough excuse for me" and flinched somewhat at the cloud of scent which emanated from a no longer young Frenchwoman, who was greedily counting her notes (pp. 234-235).

The nationalistic slander and the slight whiff of misogyny are, of course, intentional. The French were Germany's arch-enemy during the occupation of the Saarland, and Poles were and are still not particularly well tolerated by their German neighbours. However, von Salomon bears no grudge against the English even though only a few years have passed since the war.

Richard Hughes obviously had a good and retentive memory. The crackling ten-pound note in von Salomon's monologue came to good use, although devalued, in *The Fox in the Attic*. The Englishman in the following quote from the novel remains unknown to the German who willingly changes his foreign currency, and vice versa, though the reader knows that they are Augustine and Lothar.²³ Augustine's bill is worth one twentieth of the one that the elegant silent Englishman had handed von Salomon, but it is still astronomical in a society racked by galloping inflation.

This morning at the hotel Lothar had had a windfall: a young Englishman who had spent the night there asked him to change an English ten-shilling note.

Lothar had changed it out of his own pocket: no one would be such a fool as to put good English money in the till. He buckled it safely inside his shirt. He had changed it into marks for Augustine quite fairly at the rate current that morning; but even by midday it was worth ten times as much (p. 122).²⁴

That bill surfaces a hundred pages later. When the police have raided the gymnasium after the Putsch, it causes consternation: "There they found Augustine's ten-shilling note in the till, and showed it to the Press. Once

²³ Hughes had some difficulties interweaving the different threads of his narrative, according to his "notes, synopses, outlines" for Book III: "The link between the Otto and Lothar threads (the Wolff-Franz friendship) is pretty tenuous. The link between the Augustine and Lothar threads (the Bayrischer Hof and the money-changing) is nearly as tenuous. Only the link between Augustine and Otto - Lorienburg seems at all adequate."

²⁴ Hughes's main reason, though not the only one, for including the bill was, of course, to show the effect of the German inflation which peaked in the autumn of 1923, a few months after Augustine's arrival in Munich: "In the extreme case — Germany in 1923 — the currency unit was reduced to one million millionth of its 1913 value, that is to say in practice the value of money was reduced to zero" (Hobsbawm, p. 89).

again that note turned out a windfall; for wasn't it proof positive the Nazis were in foreign pay?" (p. 227).

The cloud of French scent that von Salomon had noticed in the quoted paragraph from *The Outlaws* drifts into *The Fox in the Attic*, not quite pleasant and with a hint of misogyny and moralism, as if noticed by someone with a better hygiene: "the nearer, transient smells of . . . perfumes unsuccessfully overlaid on careless womanhood" (p. 131). When the ten-shilling note was mentioned on an earlier page of the novel, there was a similarly pervasive smell, though that time a more masculine odour. Lothar, who is in the money now, is enjoying the manly odours from the sodality of his gymnasium; the narrator quickly adds a description of the individual components of this composite smell:

So Lothar with Augustine's half-Bradbury still safe inside his shirt betook himself to his gymnasium; and at the first whiff of all the delicious manliness within its echoing portals he snorted like a horse. The abiding smell of men's gymnasiums is a cold composite one, compounded of the sweet strawberry-smell of fresh male sweat, the reek of thumped leather and the dust trampled into the grain of the floor . . . (p. 123).

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The nuclei of three other episodes in *The Fox in the Attic* can be located in von Salomon's novel: the one where Otto recalls the march of decommissioned soldiers (pp. 116-118); where Franz recollects a raid on a tenement-house in Munich (pp. 186-188); and where Wolff remembers a massacre in the Latvian countryside (pp. 232-233).

"The White Crow" opens at Lorient on November 8, 1923. The date on the wall calendar reminds Otto of the events that took place almost exactly five years earlier, after the Armistice. What stands out most clearly in his memory is less what he had seen at the time than what he had heard:

The sound of wind... the bitter Munich wind . . . whipping the muffling rags of the uncertain crowd, wildly flapping the revolutionary red banners on the public buildings and then leaving them pendulous and despondent.

The sound of marching feet... it was in one of the lulls of the wind that Otto had first heard that dead thudding sound, and a sudden stirring and a murmur had passed through the crowd for this could be none of Eisner's 'Red Guard' rabble, only trained Imperial troops marched with such absolute precision. But to Otto's professional ear, keen as a musician's, from the first there was something wrong in the sound of that marching. A hollowness and a deadness. No spring in the step — it sounded... wrong: like the knocking of an engine, which is also a precise and regular sound yet presages a breakdown (p. 116).

Richard Hughes owned a vintage Bentley and was familiar with the machinery of ships. He must have known what an engine on the point of breaking sounds like. But he was no direct ear-witness of the hollow dead sound coming from an army division returning from war, at least not from a defeated one. He found these and other equally precise details in von Salomon's novel which begins in *Chaos, Hope and Homecoming* (the titles of the first three chapters). The processions and marches in Hughes's novel are partly real, partly emblematic. Their function as symbols is apparent already in von Salomon's narrative, whose first few lines deal with the city of a vanquished nation. It is seen by someone who has not much to hope for: "The evening sky showed redder than usual over the town. The November mist reflected the light of the few isolated street lamps, which seemed to make the sodden air and the heavy clouds look even gloomier" (p. 11). Von Salomon as the narrator, still in his cadet uniform, is confronted with crowds marching behind red banners:

A gigantic flag was being carried in front of a vast procession — a red flag. Limp and damp it hung from its pole — then floated like a patch of blood over the crowd which had rapidly collected. I stood and watched. Tired multitudes plodded after the flag; women were in front in voluminous skirts, their grey skins hanging slackly over sharp cheek bones . . . from time to time [the men] fell into step and then immediately did their best to break step again as though detected in some fault (pp. 13-14).

The ambiguity of this text is due to its conflicting emotions. On the one hand, it reads like a description of a Käthe Kollwitz charcoal drawing of the proletariat. Von Salomon's contemporary readers would have recognised its unaffected feeling for the poor. On the other hand, von Salomon shows the superciliousness of an officer looking down on clumsy civilians. Much marching is going on in von Salomon's novel, most smartly by the French when they have invaded the Saar. They are seen in sharp contrast to those defeated: "Lithe figures they were, blue-grey like the twilight which lay between the houses" (p. 22).

The interest in marching soldiers and what their steps reveal comes across in Hughes's novel as well. Otto remembers the field-grey blur of soldiers who have returned from the trenches, "their uniforms were still caked with French mud" (p. 116). Theirs is not the glorious return of heroes. The crowd waiting for them is as tired as the soldiers, and the bunch of flowers that a child hands them is wilted: "no soldier accepted it,

no one even looked at her, not one smiled: they did not even seem to see the crowd" (p. 117).

Impassive marching men and soldiers with unseeing eyes had peopled von Salomon's pages. The third chapter of his novel describes the mid-December homecoming of a division that has been posted near Verdun: "Our troops were coming, our brave army" (p. 26). The soldiers finally come into sight: "There they were: grey figures, a forest of rifles over the round flat helmets" (p. 27). But they are weary and disillusioned, and they behave like automatons:

The soldiers marched quickly, in close formation. They had stony, expressionless faces. They looked neither to right nor left, but straight ahead, fixedly, as though magnetised by some terrible goal, as though they were gazing from dug-outs and trenches over a wounded world. Not a word was spoken by those haggard-faced men. Just once, when someone sprang forward and almost imploringly offered a little box to the soldiers, the lieutenant waved him aside impatiently . . . They marched as though they were envoys of the deadliest, loneliest iciest cold (p. 28).

This may have caused Hughes to make an enigmatic observation in *The Fox in the Attic*, the one that follows immediately after the lines about the soldiers who neither looked nor smiled at the child with the bunch of flowers: "They marched like machines dreaming" (p. 117). It connects with what the novel has to say about collective dreams and nightmares. Depersonalised people figure towards the end of von Salomon's novel in a way which may have inspired Hughes when he devised his surrealist simile. Von Salomon, at long last released from gaol, is confronted with the reality of everyday life on the other side of the prison bars. The following is the warped and disturbing vision of this deeply alienated outsider in society:

What shocked and chilled me were the people. They seemed to have no faces — or rather, all their faces were alike. All these people seemed to be inanimate, they seemed not to be conscious of space and action. They went about dully, joylessly and expressionlessly, almost like machines, like well-tended, throbbing machines, pulsating with energy, but in no sense alive (p. 428).

Von Salomon indicts modern mass civilisation that turns individuals into anonymous machines; he is also a hardened anarchist who refuses to adjust to democracy. However, the arch anarchist of von Salomon's novel is Kern. He targets his victim when Rathenau is speaking in the Municipal

Education Hall. Towards the end of that public talk, the two men's eyes meet, as described by von Salomon:

I saw Kern, leaning forward and not three steps away from Rathenau, drawing him under the spell of his eyes. I saw the paleness of his face. I saw his concentration; the hall vanished, so that nothing remained of it but one small circle, and in that circle two men. . . . from now on he spoke to Kern alone . . . As we elbowed our way towards the exit, Kern passed close by the Minister. Rathenau, surrounded by a chattering mob of people, looked at him questioningly. But Kern pushed past him — unseeing (pp. 241-242).

This scene with a 1920's Brutus hypnotising Caesar is more likely a novelist's fabrication than a factual eyewitness report. Glances that intersect were something that Hughes mastered much better, as proven by his chapter on how Augustine watches an unseeing Mitzi and the two of them are observed by Wolff, the jealous fox in the attic, as explained above (p. 54): "Only in the billowing darkness of the attics above two eyes were open, and staring" (p. 282). Kern's final unseeing glance as observed by von Salomon places him on a par with the two solipsists in Hughes's novel, Wolff and Hitler.²⁵ Hitler is unseeing in more than one sense, but this trait is also a collective malady, as shown in Chapter one of "The White Crow": "Even the officers . . . wore that empty basilisk look . . ." (p. 117).²⁶

The basilisk look is a strange metaphor, as convoluted as the simile that immediately precedes it, soldiers marching like machines dreaming. If the basilisk look has a parallel in von Salomon's novel it is even more likely that Hughes recalled one of his own books when he wrote this. Emily Bas-Thornton in *A High Wind in Jamaica* is a precocious and self-centred child who by chance is turned into a murderess. She quite literally sees eye to eye with soulless animals. Hughes, who had an intuitive understanding of children and their minds, had described a reptilian look long before a basilisk one:

²⁵ One of Hughes's notes suggests that Hitler's obsession with architecture was part of his personality, affecting his way of viewing men as basically not different from machines: "It had been natural for this architect to turn also politician because he saw no distinction between people and other material things. It was indeed as if in relation to him all other 'men' were mere men-resembling things in the same category as machines and stones broken, they were no more to be pitied than a mason's broken stones." Hughes also noted what Julius Streicher had said in interrogations after the war: "Adolf Hitler was a little eccentric in every respect and I believe I can say that friendship between him and other men did not exist" (extract from vol. XII of the Nuremberg Trials Transcripts).

²⁶ Sir John Wheeler-Bennett had met Hitler a few times, prior to the Purge, in the Kaiserhof Hotel in Berlin: "What struck one was his utter lack of humanity or humour. He gave the impression of a self-invented, self-inspired robot" (Wheeler-Bennett 1974, p. 77).

The eye of an alligator is large, protruding, and of a brilliant yellow, with a slit pupil like a cat's. A cat's eye, to the casual observer, is expressionless: though with attention one can distinguish in it many changes of emotion. But the eye of an alligator is infinitely more stony and brilliant — reptilian. What possible meaning could Emily find in such an eye? Yet she lay there, and stared, and stared: and the alligator stared too. If there had been an observer it might have given him a shiver to see them so — well, eye to eye like that (AHW, p. 146).²⁷

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As has already been seen (p. 42), Augustine mentions Ernst Toller as proof that he is familiar with the contemporary literary scene in Germany. He does not realise that his hosts at Lorienburg hold a totally different view of this dramatist turned revolutionary. Franz von Kessen has met Toller in person once, and goes in search of him once more. He recalls how he as a young cadet and member of a patrol tried to round up Toller in unknown parts of Munich. Tenement houses in poverty-stricken suburbs were teeming with life of a kind that was very distanced from Franz's bourgeois existence: "he had scarcely in his life before even seen the urban poor" (p. 186). Franz's acquaintance with life on the far side of the Isar broadens his experience, if not his mind or tolerance. It remains for Augustine, his father's British cousin, to make a similar acquaintance with life among the poor. When it finally comes, it gives him insight into life among those less privileged, in his case in Coventry. Richard Hughes based Norah's life in Slaughterhouse yard on his own field research and on what one of his inlaws had told him. As for the teeming life in a Munich tenement housing around 1920, he had to rely on *The Outlaws*. This is what Franz remembers, in *The Fox in the Attic*:

The doors seldom opened quickly enough, and again and again the sergeant had to kick down these doors. Doors entering on rooms with sagging, gravid ceilings and with lamps hastily lit. Entering on dark rooms filled to the peeling walls with beds. Collapsing rooms, filled with threadbare beds laden with whole bony families — whole families which night after night had bred on them those innumerable bone-thin children now smelling, in the darkness, of urine and of hate (p. 187).

²⁷ In an introduction to a 1963 reissue of the novel, Hughes distances himself from the writer he once was: "But if I am now asked what this book means to me today, I can say absolutely nothing except that I know there was once a time when it fitted me like a glove. I went on growing, however; I had to shed it (to write it, that is to say). There it now lies before you — part of me no longer; and how can a writer's attitude to his own past work ever be other than the strictly 'no comment' one of the growing snake towards the skin he has sloughed?" (*Fiction as Truth*, p. 41)

Franz's social unease is evident when he is faced with this filth and incessant breeding. He feels threatened in an unfamiliar setting; his fear is not unfounded. If his story seems callous, it is partly due to his youth. He is young when he takes part in the search for Toller and not much older when he recalls what happened. Less of fear and more of a sick conscience is seen in Hughes's source. Hughes described the breaking into people's private rooms at one remove, whereas von Salomon, if he had committed that crime himself, had good reasons to feel guilty about it. When he wrote his novel he was closer to thirty than twenty and had fewer reasons than Franz for immature arrogance.²⁸ Von Salomon recalls the scene he saw: "The house we had to search was a tenement house in the north of the town, with four courtyards and hundreds of inhabitants" (p. 44). When the sergeant has kicked in the door, the squalor of one-room apartments is revealed:

... [the] ceilings — and how low the ceilings were — showed bare laths and crumbling plaster. Each door was close beside the next one. If one was opened to us, the others flew open too and in a moment the passage was full of people — men, women and a great many children. Children of all sizes, mostly half naked and unspeakably dirty, their arms and legs so thin that they looked as if they would break if they were touched (p. 46).

The intruder is met with mockery and disgust: "Women pushed by me and laughed and then spat on the floor" (p. 46). Von Salomon observes that a crowd of people share the one room, but unlike in the novel, there is no comment on their coupling: "I passed in with [the others] and examined the place. It was a room not more than twelve feet square and crammed full of beds. Seven people were sleeping in this space — men, women and children" (p. 47).

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If Franz's experiences in the tenement house are more jagged than von Salomon's had been, the reverse seems to be true when Hughes makes use of Wolff as his focalizer, in a retelling of von Salomon's horror stories. The Latvian episode is brief and quickly told in Hughes's novel; there is no wallowing in gory details:

²⁸ There is not much difference in age between von Salomon and his fictional counterparts, according to Hughes's "Character Chronology": Franz and Wolff were born in 1903, Lothar in 1905. Otto is twenty years older, born in 1883.

But soon the pupils of his eyes dilated enough to see that the room was heaped with bodies — their missing friends. The bodies were mutilated in the usual Lettish way; and these men hadn't died fighting, this had been done to them alive (p. 233).

The extradiegetic narrator combines what has been Wolff's remembered version with a horrifying outside view of him as a saturated killer. Wolff and his troop have been "looking for a missing reconnaissance-party of their own men" in the Livonian woods, and happen upon a pleasant house, with "fresh pink English hollyhocks round the door". Its idyllic exterior belies the carnage that they encounter within:

In his rage he had torn the cat to pieces with his bare hand, then slipped in the mess on the floor and twisted his ankle. Meanwhile the others rushed outside to search the buildings; but they found nothing living out there either except one cow. Her they killed too: they'd have killed even the tomtits if they could have caught them (p. 233).

Hughes's narrator's relative reticence and reserve become apparent when the fictitious account is compared to its probable source, von Salomon's chapter ix, "Storm," which is much longer, much more detailed, and much less convincing. It reads like *Greuelpropaganda* of the worst kind, the sort of grisly atrocity stories that any reader aware of the horrors in the real world has difficulties in stomaching. Hughes had the good taste to resort to euphemisms. When Hughes was taken to task by the critic Hans Magnus Enzensberger for being too teutonic (as discussed below, p. 326), he outlined a defence by pointing to his source: "[Enzensberger] need not look any further than von Salomon's *Die Geächteten* for the literary ancestry of the particular facets of the book which I think he has in mind" (in all likelihood, Hughes's rejoinder was neither posted nor published).

Von Salomon in the role of a spell-bound necrophile is more prone to adolescent bravado: "My hand, which I had put out to save myself, sank into a mess of damp, sticky, slippery entrails. I recoiled horror-struck. But the smell of the blood which drenched my hand maddened me and all hesitation left me". He is not totally unprepared for the sight that he meets:

I saw what I had expected to see. — There they lay, on stinking, blood-stained straw; with crushed skulls from which stared glassy, squinting eyes; with ragged clothing stained blackish-red; with stomachs slit; limbs twisted and wrenched off (p. 118).

Many more equally gory details follow. What Hughes had referred to with the euphemism “the usual Lettish way” was more graphic in his source:

We stood there numbly — we looked, with glassy, spell-bound eyes at the dead bodies, in each of which was a ghastly wound — there, among the loathsome confusion of torn clothes — in the middle of each body, between hips and thighs.

All this, this and much more, united to form a single impression which in one second was hammered into my brain for all eternity. Then we all went mad. I saw, as through a red mist, one man seize a sledge-hammer, which lay in the corner covered with blood, and make for the entrance bellowing. . . . The cow in the stable was shot; the butt end of a gun caught the little bristly dog and smashed him to pulp (pp. 118-119).

The similarities between *The Outlaws* and *The Fox in the Attic* raise the question of how much is factual of what von Salomon writes, and how much mere braggadocio. The answer bears on the problem of genre anticipation and of reader reception. Should *The Outlaws* be read as a novel or as an autobiography? Most critics when tackling von Salomon's works seem to favour an easy but vague hybrid term, ‘autobiographical novel’. The problem takes an historian rather than a novelist to solve. As his pre-faced note makes clear (“in no case have I deliberately falsified the record once I could worry it out”), Hughes went to great lengths in his efforts to be as factually precise as possible: using von Salomon's *The Outlaws* as a source certainly caused him some worry. Von Salomon's later *The Answers of Ernst von Salomon* was another and possibly different matter.

*

Some way into Sir John Wheeler-Bennett's book about the German Army in Politics 1918-1945, the name of Hans Ludin appears on several pages dealing with his involvement in the Reichswehr, the SA and the SS. As a twenty-five-year old officer in Ulm in 1930, Hans Ludin and his two fellow Reichswehr lieutenants Wendt and Scheringer made contacts with the Nazis despite the Army Command's express ban on that kind of fraternisation. They were all three accused, prosecuted and sentenced for preparation of High Treason. The court hearings were turned into a propaganda event by Hitler, who had been summoned as a witness by one of the defence counsels, Hans Frank, later appointed Governor-General of occupied Poland and tried and executed in Nuremberg in 1946. Hitler was successful in his attempts to attract public attention to the court proceedings in 1930, helped in his efforts by his newly appointed Press Officer with special responsibilities for the foreign press contacts, Ernst Hanfstaengl. This was the

latter's first major PR task as *Auslandspressechef*. He turned it into a well publicised event which gained good coverage abroad, not least in America.²⁹ Ludin and his colleagues became well-known. Hitler's priorities, however, did not help them during the proceedings. He was more interested in placing his movement in the limelight than in standing by the accused officers. As a consequence, Scheringer shunted his loyalties away from the National Socialists towards the Communists. Four years later, he was noted down on the Nazi killing lists in preparation for the Purge, but he survived the intended liquidation as well as the later upheavals.

In contrast to Scheringer, Ludin remained a loyal Nazi and profited from it. He rose quickly in the SA and the SS ranks. The fact that Ludin was close to losing his life in the Purge is not mentioned in any of the standard works on Nazi history, e. g. those by Bullock and Shirer. Neither does it appear in Wheeler-Bennett's account, the most detailed of the three.³⁰ Wheeler-Bennett summarises Ludin's subsequent career as Germany's Minister to occupied Slovakia from 1940 to 1945, his internment by the Allies in 1945-46, and his arrest by Czech patriots. He was prosecuted by the Czech authorities and hanged by them on January 20, 1948. These facts can be found in *The Nemesis of Power* which appears to have been Richard Hughes's main source of Ludin's antecedents, as they are summed-up in the account of the Wiessee attack in *The Wooden Shepherdess*:

One was a certain Ludin, a former Army Lieutenant cashiered and gaoled four years ago for preaching the Nazi creed in the Officers' Mess. Unlike his fellow-accused he had borne no grudge against a Führer who'd stood in the witness-box and there (for Reasons of State) had disowned him, but stuck to his Nazi guns: since when he had risen fast and far in the Storm Troops (p. 362).³¹

A reader interested in the fuller picture can find most details in the quoted passage by consulting standard authorities. What Hughes mentions in the broader framework of his Ludin passage is more difficult to check against

²⁹ Hanfstaengl (1970), p. 213.

³⁰ Bullock (1965) pp. 164-165; Shirer (1960), pp. 139-142; Wheeler-Bennett (1953), pp. 213-222 *passim*; see also Kershaw, pp. 337-338.

³¹ Hughes was right in mentioning the trial, however briefly. It was a showdown: [Fissures in the Reichswehr "began to show again towards the end of the 1920s. This was surprisingly and dramatically shown in the treason trial of three young Nazi officers of the Ulm Reichswehr, when at times violently divergent attitudes appeared within the officer corps. Particularly among the young officers, a considerable minority clearly opted for the 'activist' NSDAP. This rift between the generations, however, was for a long time bridged by a common antipathy towards the Weimar Republic" (Fest 1985 [1963], p 356).

historical accounts. The facts borrowed from Wheeler-Bennett are inserted in a wider context, in Chapter twenty-seven of "Stille Nacht". The title of Abbé Vogler's Christmas hymn is a heavily sardonic heading to be used for Hughes's reconstruction of the Führer's chance meeting with some of his officers. The following forms part of the middle section of that chapter:

They were stopped in their cars one by one, and the men drawn up by the road in a single line for Hitler to take this strange parade of his ancient comrades-in-arms — the World War heroes, the Freikorps fighters, the men who had marched in his Munich Putsch (p. 362).

The five lines describing Ludin's background ("One was a certain Ludin" etc) which have already been quoted follow after this, and then the text continues, with Lothar's free indirect speech: "Lothar had hoped so much from this Wiessee meeting" (p. 362 — it will be repeated five pages later as one of his last thoughts before he is executed). Then Hitler comes into focus:

Meanwhile the Führer was passing in silence from man to man, pausing to give each face a look which seemed to use each pair of eyes as open peep-holes into the brain behind; and each man suddenly grew afraid. He spoke only once, when "Ludin" he said in a far-away voice before moving on. Whereupon Brückner gestured bewildered Ludin back to his car, and Ludin was free to drive away wherever he liked.... (p. 363).

The details in this paragraph were culled from a more subjective source than either Wheeler-Bennett, Shirer or Bullock. Once more, Ernst von Salomon proved to be useful for Richard Hughes in providing the personal touch, by supplying memoirs ideal for a novelist who wanted to flesh out the bare bones of his reconstruction of the past. In this particular instance, they were the memoirs of another person, Hans Ludin himself. What Hughes wrote about Ludin came from the horse's mouth, although not straight. His account is based on the last few pages of von Salomon's *Der Fragebogen* (1951). Ludin figures on some eighty pages of this book, and in the end the reader has been given a rounded portrait of him, including many of Ludin's (and consequently also von Salomon's) views on the ideas and ideals that sustained him during his career. The reader learns much about Ludin's past, present and of his future which was cut short. It is a controversial portrait, not least in its discussion of the question of the collective as well as the individual guilt of those who had been actively or passively involved in the war.

It is not very difficult to detect von Salomon's sympathies and antipathies. Ludin's death, described on the very last page of the book, forces the reader to admire, however grudgingly, Ludin's stoic stance. Von Salomon was of course familiar with what had happened to the three officers back in 1930, but he had never seen Ludin until they met by chance just after the war, as fellow inmates in an Allied camp in the American occupation zone. Hans Ludin anticipated what would happen to him once the Czechs had tracked him down, and he faced it with equanimity, if von Salomon's rendering of his words is to be believed. The reader may remember an Ernst Jünger quote in the third part of von Salomon's *The Outlaws*, a stoic's maxim: "The ruin of his hopes leaves the steadfast man undismayed". Von Salomon is clearly impressed by Ludin, a man whose hopes are in ruin, and he is in sympathy with most of his ideas.

Before Ludin is forced to make his final exit, he tells von Salomon of his chance meeting with Hitler during the Purge and suggests that his life could have ended in violence already on July 30, 1934. In the following lines he seems to have a premonition of what will shortly happen to him, knowing that the lease of life that he was granted in 1934 has finally drawn to a close in 1946:

I, together with a quantity of other senior SA leaders, was seized on the open road by the Führer's column coming towards us. We were utterly dumbfounded when we learned what had happened. We had to form up in a single rank, and the Führer went from man to man, giving each one a look which now for the first time seemed to me as I had so often heard it described — magical. Hitler said not a word. Only when he reached me did he pronounce the single word, 'Ludin,' without any particular emphasis, sunk in his thoughts — and I did not know whether with this word he had condemned me to die or to live. I was the most senior of the SA leaders there. I was condemned to live (pp. 539-540).

Except for the sombre conclusion which shows a sense of duty but a total lack of zest for life, this entire episode found its way into Hughes's novel, in the passage quoted above (p. 96). The main transformation of von Salomon's text in Hughes's has to do with altered points of view. In von Salomon, Ludin tells his story in the first person, while in Hughes's novel, it is told in the third-person, and the pervading mood is changed in the process. There is no suggestion of betrayal and there is no sense of foreboding in what Ludin recounts in *Der Fragebogen*. He has not met the Führer face to face before, but when he does, he is mesmerised by his glance. Not so in Hughes's novel, with its split between what is seen by an internal fo-

calizer and what is told by the extradiegetic narrator. The latter described the scene disinterestedly, the former notes the fear that Hitler's penetrating glance evokes in the men (whether he is one of them or not) who are waiting in a line to be inspected. In this and other instances, Hughes was no doubt influenced by the following suggestive analysis of Hitler which Ludin gave von Salomon:

I never succeeded in taking his measure. Perhaps I never shall, perhaps history never will either. Sometimes I thought he was a genius, at others I wondered whether he was a madman who was leading us. Sometimes I believed he was daemonic, at others deranged. But all that is incorrect, as is your expressive 'lemur-like.' When I try to find the proper word for him, it is 'remote', a man who could not stand the light, a man of the shadows, emerging from shadow, speaking from shadow, and forcing back into the shadow everything that strove towards the light (p. 540).

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Lothar Scheidemann, not Ludin, personifies unquestioning loyalty in Hughes's novel. Similar to Ludin, he has entertained high hopes for the SA meeting at Wiessee, and like Ludin he is dumbfounded by the turmoil he is drawn into. He dies bewildered, but as long as he lives he is unswervingly loyal to his leader. His idolatry concerns a man turned god, a man whose face is lit by the setting sun, rather than the man in Ludin's analysis who merges with the shadows. This is what Lothar sees, according to the novel:

Lothar glanced at the westering sun: for a moment it darkened into the Führer's face, then blazed once more as a ball of fire. Yes, the Führer was more than mortal: the Führer was Fate incarnate, the power that predetermines all human lives (p. 367).

The next paragraph is ominous in its foreboding: "Lothar had hoped for so much from that Wiessee meeting, but most of all for the chance of seeing the Führer face-to-face . . ." (p. 367).

These semi-religious sentiments have their counterparts in the high-faluting philosophising phrases in von Salomon's earlier account of political idealists in *The Outlaws*. However, they had worshipped a cause, not a person. Ludin remained loyal to his cause, the German nation, to his very last minute, if von Salomon reports his words correctly. Ludin's loyalty as well as that of Kern, Fischer and von Salomon a quarter of a century earlier is centred on an idea, not on the cult of a deified politician. The following declaration by Ludin in von Salomon's *Der Fragebogen* could

have been made by many authors of the conservative revolution, such as Ernst Jünger. Many of them were junker aristocrats who had a disdain for the upstart Austrian corporal.³² If they felt loyalty to their leader, it was not because of the man but in reverence of his office:

I had to identify him with my nation, I could not ignore him, he was there. I could not ignore the nation to which I belonged; it was there with all its failings and its weaknesses, and I had to love it with its failings and weaknesses. If I was guilty, if we were all guilty, then our guilt was based on love (p. 540).

Ludin's *apologia pro patria sua* emotionalises the question of guilt and seems to evade the issue of individual responsibility.³³ Hughes in *The Fox in the Attic* refers to similar feelings when he identifies the emotional forces which were let loose at the outbreak of the First World War: "In 1914, then, there was something of an emotional void in England: and into it war-patriotism poured like Noah's Flood" (p. 106). Paradoxically, love rather than hatred is linked to war later in the same chapter:

After the war, war-emotion was assumed ex hypothesi to be all hatred because men then *wished* to believe war-making something easy to slough off; and hatred is akin to suffering... so what sane man ever positively wishes to hate?

They deliberately forgot the love war stimulates too (pp. 107-108).

Ludin is given the final cue in von Salomon's *Der Fragebogen*. When he is strangulated, his last cry is "Long Live Germany!"

The publisher Ernst Rowohlt, a friend and supporter of Ernst von Salomon, had appended the requested "Certification of Immediate Superior" in which he loyally stands by and endorses his author. His statement vouches for the truth of what von Salomon has written on the preceding pages, including Ludin's tale: "I can verify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief and the information available to me, the answers here given are honest. They are honest — and that alone is sufficient to

³² Despite Jünger's and von Salomon's similar attitudes and ideas, they are hardly on a par, though. It seems an oversimplification when Raymond Furness and Malcolm Humble contend that "Together with Ernst Jünger von Salomon is perhaps the most significant literary representative of the non-Nazi right in the first half of this century" (p. 243). The comparison belittles not only Jünger but also authors not mentioned, among them Gottfried Benn.

³³ *Der Fragebogen* was of topical interest in 1951. Wilfried Barner comments: "Die Mischung aus persönlichem Erleben, flatter Schreibe und Pflege von Ressentiments entsprach bestens weitverbreiteten Bedürfnissen" [The blend of personal experiences, brilliant style and a cultivation of resentments corresponded extremely well to wide-felt needs] (p. 29).

raise simple statements of fact to the level of literature" (p. 546). Rowohlts thus avoided the issue of how much is fact and how much fiction in the book.³⁴

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The Ludin episode caused Hughes great trouble. He wrote several versions of it and had difficulties in deciding which one to keep. When the printer had set the entire manuscript (a process not very computerized in 1973), Hughes excised a long passage out of the galleys and replaced it by a typescript "B". The changes between the discarded and the final version concern the roles of Ludin, Lothar and Hitler. In the discard Hitler plays a more active role, working himself into a hysterical rage, while Ludin shrinks almost into non-existence. In this scrapped version, the Führer takes direct action:

The sun was already high overhead and the morning hot when the Führer strode at last on the prison yard, with Major Buch at his elbow, to take this strange parade of his ancient comrades-in-arms — the World War heroes, the Freikorps fighters...

'Dogs!' he shouted — or rather, croaked: for his voice was so hoarse that it barely carried a couple of yards. 'Traitors!'

Here he saw all the old familiar faces; and Hitler never forgot a face. Peter von Heydebreck, hero of Annaberg... Wilhelm Hayn (Lothar's brother Wolff — the martyr who'd hanged himself in a castle attic rather than fall into the hands of the flics — had fought for him once on the Baltic). Fritz Ritter von Krausser, Röhm's deputy during his sick-leave, wearing his Decorations for Gallantry...

Röhm himself — had Hitler but raised his eyes to those window-bars, but that he studiously didn't do...

He scanned one by one the faces he knew so well: 'Ludin!' he said; and Ludin forthwith was dismissed, with a very few others.

At last, Lothar finds himself face to face with his Führer, but he is dismissed summarily, and returns to the ranks and to his own undoing. Hitler moves on, and Lothar can see him explode in a fit of rage, but he cannot hear him. If the scene had been included in the novel, it would have served as a counterpart to the one in Chapter twenty-three of "Stille Nacht", in which Hitler is seen but not heard, at the Bad Godesberg Hotel Dreesen (see below, p. 262). This is the end of the discard:

³⁴ According to Hans Sarkowitz, Ernst von Salomon's autobiographical novels, which he thinks are of less literary than historical value, have attracted little critical attention: "S.s autobiograph. Romanen, denen weniger literar. als zeitgeschichtl. Bedeutung zukommt, hat die Forschung bisher wenig Beachtung geschenkt" (Killy, p. 122).

Lothar kept wondering what had gone wrong. 'First we are all arrested; and now there is every sign that we're in for a most almighty dressing-down from the Führer himself — if his voice holds out! But what can it all be about?'

He recalled the only other time in his life when he'd seen the Führer so close: in that upper room at the Bürgerbräukeller, with Göring and Ludendorff — years ago, during the Putsch . . . *What was it all about?* For the Führer had backed to the other side of the yard, and seemed in a towering rage: he was shouting his head off, though no one could hear a word...

Suddenly Lothar caught sight of Röhm...

The Purge was an extremely tangled web of events, and Richard Hughes had obvious difficulties in trying to piece together the jigsaw puzzle of The Night of the Long Knives and make its incidents both plausible and coherent. Being a notoriously slow writer, he often taxed his publishers' patience, but this last-minute major excision from the galleys seems to have been unique. It was a wise and well-founded decision, as can be seen when the discard is compared to the text printed in *The Wooden Shepherdess*, i. e. the concluding section of Chapter twenty-eight of "Stille Nacht": there Sepp Dietrich has replaced Hitler, allowing Lothar to put his trust and faith in an absent Führer: "'If only the Führer would come as they say he will,' thought Lothar, 'and clear all this up!'" (p. 367). One reason for the cut may have been that Hughes did not want Hitler to stand out as a raving lunatic, even if partly seen from a distance. That would have disturbed the Messianic spell that the Führer had cast on Lothar. When Hitler, in Ludin's account, inspected the rank and file of the officers, he did so without letting off his rage. Hughes may have been influenced by this when he decided to play down Hitler's role. He would also have been hesitant to include a portrait which was based on conjecture rather than on facts given in an eyewitness report. In the process, Hans Ludin was, much thanks to Ernst von Salomon, allotted more space and given a more prominent role.

Chapter III The Götz letter

Deep into work on the latter chapters of "The White Crow", Richard Hughes complained in a letter to Joseph Brewer, an old friend from his Oxford days, who was librarian at the New York Queens College¹ that he had "come up against a snag or two in the historical research" for the background of his novel. Brewer proved helpful. Not only did he find reports on the events in Munich in early November 1923 in contemporary American newspapers.² He also came across a slightly different and longer account published in the March 1924 issue of the magazine *Living Age*: "There is a piece by one F. Götz, a Nazi officer, who took part in the Feldherrnhalle business, which gives a rather vivid if confused picture of that affair from a curious point of view."³ Richard Hughes was to turn this piece of political writing to good use in Chapters twenty-one to twenty-seven of "The White Crow". The intricacies of the Götz text as well as its context immediately caught his attention and held it for quite a number of years. It is an account which is not only confusing but seems to be deliberately so, in all likelihood written with an intention to deceive. Hughes also had his doubts about the text, as his correspondence shows. However, he would not gain full knowledge of the letter's factual background until long after he had made use of it.

In the year after *The Fox in the Attic* was published, The Götz letter was printed and explained in *Der Hitler-Putsch, Bayerische Dokumente zum 8./9. November 1923*, a collection of Bavarian documents relating to the 1923 Putsch edited and commented by Ernst Deuerlein.⁴ Fritz Götz's first letter (there were two as will be seen below), whether intentionally

¹ They had met in 1921 when Brewer was a Rhodes Scholar: [Brewer's] intellect, his largeness of spirit, his tolerant good-humour and his reluctance to judge were gradually making him Diccon's most reliable and . . . his closet friend and confidant" (Graves, p. 123).

² Richard Hughes was sent negative photocopies (now in his archive) of contemporary reports about the Putsch in the following American newspapers: *Evening Telegram* (New York) November 10, 1923, *Chicago Tribune* November 8 (John Clayton) and 11 (Larry Rue), *The World* November 12, *Daily News* (William E. Nash) November 13, and *New York Times* December 2, 1923. By then, the Putsch had already turned into a funny incident: "Beer Hall Scene Gave Comic Opera Touch to Hitler 'Coup'".

³ JB to RH, Feb. 7, 1958.

⁴ Ernst Deuerlein collected further witness reports of the Putsch in *Der Aufstieg der NSDAP in Augenzeugenberichten* (1968), which contains many conflicting stories. One of them gives a totally different view than Hughes's on what happened to Erich Ludendorff at the Putsch. A secretary at the Nazi paper *Völkischer Beobachter* claimed that a Dr. R. shielded Ludendorff with his body and died from eight bullets, and that Ludendorff himself fell unconscious (Deuerlein 1982 [1968], pp.199-200).

deceptive or not, influenced Richard Hughes thirty-five years after it was written. In 1958 he got hold of an English translation of it from an Edinburgh library: a photostat of the *Living Age* article. Sixteen years after that, Hughes was still preoccupied with the question of the Götz letter's authenticity. That he had put some store in Götz's information is evident from his 1963 "Acknowledgements" in *The Fox in the Attic*:

... the historian may be interested to know that much of the narrative — including the whole episode in the crypt, the crucial briefing in the fencing-school with all that implied, and the correct route of the march — is based on a vivid contemporary account by an actual Nazi participant, a Major Goetz. This account was contained in a letter to a friend dated 26th November, 1923, which some weeks later found its way into the German press. Its very mistakes authenticate it, but it does not seem to be well known (p. 353).

Hughes had found no references to the letter in any of the standard works on the rise of Nazism, he told several of his correspondents. He took this as an indication that the historians either did not know about it, or if they did, that they thought it was spurious and distrusted its value as an historical source. Alan Bullock, one of the experts on the Nazi era that Hughes consulted, found out about the letter's existence only thanks to Hughes, as appears from their correspondence.

Fritz Götz, a "Hitler Officer", did not make much impact in the Nazi annals except for the two letters that he wrote in 1923 which found their way into the Bavarian press. The first and more important one is a private letter directed to one "Lieber Herr Kratzke". It appeared in the radical paper *Vorwärts* introduced by the editor into whose hands it had happened to fall. Neither the Hitler officer Götz nor his comrade Kratzke in Perleberg were unknown to the Nazi movement, according to the socialist editor. In spite of this protestation a reader at first feels inclined to question whether Götz existed at all or if this was simply a decoy and "Fritz Götz" a pseudonym for a political plotter involved (too deeply for his own good) in the 1920s struggle between Nazis and socialists. He did exist but seems to have faded away fast.⁵ The editor emphasized the considerable political and psy-

⁵ Harold J. Gordon's *Hitler and the Beer Hall Putsch* (1972), probably the most exhaustive treatise on the subject, mentions Götz in a footnote: "With malice aforethought Götz apparently fed the 'revelations' to a man whom he believed to be an SPD agent in the NSDAP. He thus hit the foes of the party on both Right and Left with one blow. After the 'revelations' were published in the SPD press, the alleged informant was murdered ... the police, although certain that Götz was the murderer, had no evidence to bring him to book. The incident helped to lead to his social downfall, though, for the police investigation of his background eventually revealed that he had never been commissioned, and

chological interest of the letter: it gave new evidence that the conservative von Kahr was implicated in the high treason committed by Hitler and Luderendorff, and it illustrated the beastly character of the Nazi popular movement (the "viehische Gesinnung, die in der völkischen Bewegung zu Hause ist"). The letter as printed in *Vorwärts* is interspersed with headlines taken from the running text and printed in bold letters, most of them stressing the sensational character of the events.

Götz claims at the outset that his letter is reliable. He assures his readers that he will record only what he has experienced and not what he has not. He will leave out things that he has learnt about from hearsay only. A critical reader soon finds out that he did not keep that promise. It is a lively letter, opening with a fanfare of emotional outbursts: "with flying colours and pomp we march through the city, met by resounding cheering" ("Mit fliegenden Fahnen und schmetternder Musik geht es, umbrandet von tosenden Jubel, durch die Stadt"). The letter is an apologetic defence of the struggling Nazi movement which, it says, is victorious in spite of the setback it has just experienced. Towards the end of the letter, what is reported about Hitler's part in the clash is transformed into a legend.

Fritz Götz, who was at the time commander of a regiment, tells about how he received a sealed order which he was to deliver by hand to the St. Annen monastery. He gives it to the Prior who reads it and who then gives Götz an overwhelmingly warm welcome, in sympathy with the Nazi cause. The Prior directs Götz through endless cellar passages, along tombstones and catacombs and to a bricked-up wall, where he commands: break it open! Götz orders his men to break down this solid wall, one and a half metres thick. Götz is particular with all figures throughout his text, as if his authenticity depended on accurate numbers alone. Having done that, the soldiers find themselves in a gigantic vault, with 8570 rifles in mint condition. To fetch all this is a formidable task even if Götz has 420 men and fourteen trucks at his disposal. From two levels under ground and by way of endless passages, the letter says, all rifles are handed up to people in the street and on to the trucks. It all happened in complete silence: ("Lautlos ging alles!").

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What Götz's article had said about betrayal and disloyalty held a special interest for Hughes, as his novel shows. The marchers, now on their way towards Odeonsplatz, were thrice betrayed, according to Götz. First, because

many doors were thereafter closed to him as a fraud" (Gordon, p. 450).

they had been provided with useless rifles; the firing pins had been removed. Second, by von Kahr, who even if he had supported the Nazi revolution and its triumvirate Ludendorff, Hitler and Göring had turned a double-traitor and gone back on his word. Third, by Hitler, who knew all this but still did not stop the march.

It was all a confused affair and remains so in *The Fox in the Attic*, though Hughes leaves a trail of clues to the real state of affairs in Chapters twenty-three to twenty-five of "The White Crow". Lothar, trying to force his way through to Göring, is bewildered and what he happens to overhear is dangerous knowledge. The perspective is that of an adjutant's, at this point and with his free indirect speech serving as the novel's intradiegetic focalizer: "As for all this about the rifles, the men mustn't *know* they were armed with guns which couldn't be fired: could this lad be trusted to hold his tongue or had he better 'disappear' — be put under arrest for something, perhaps?" (p. 214). On the next page Lothar learns more and starts to understand that the marchers have been tricked: "For what he heard next was even more incredible still. That the whole briefing parade had been one deliberate, colossal lie! . . . The march was on, and they were all going like lambs to the slaughter!" (p. 215). Here, Lothar is made to share Fritz Götz's bitterness. Referring to von Kahr's double-dealing, Götz had maintained in his letter that at this point no one knew of any treachery ("Also kein Mensch wußte von dem zwischenzeitlich erfolgten hundsföttichen Verrat!"). Richard Hughes went one step further. He was convinced that Hitler knew that the march was doomed well before it was launched, and that the revolution had already been betrayed by von Kahr. Hitler could and should have stopped the march which ended in a massacre — but he didn't.⁶

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Götz's letter gradually turns into a Gothic horror story. The hooded Capuchins with their lit torches stand by while Götz and his men work in the magic light, dripping with sweat. It was an unforgettable picture, writes an

⁶ Some historians hold the view that Hitler welcomed the failure, for tactical reasons. One of them is Joachim Fest: "[Hitler] himself later referred to the failure of November 1923, not without reason, as 'perhaps the greatest piece of good fortune in my life'. In complete agreement, Theodor Heuss [later the first Bundespräsident of West Germany] remarked in a study of 'Hitler's way' written in 1932: 'What would all this — the sympathy of the German public, martyrdom as a means of recruiting followers, insurance against having to take concrete decisions, the fight against 'persecution', the fostering of the incipient legend — what would all this have been without November 8, 1923? The Putsch, its outcome, its consequences, were fate's greatest gift to Adolf Hitler'" (Fest 1970, pp. 25-26).

ecstatic Götz ("Am Loch, aus dem die Gewehre geholt wurden, standen Kapuzinermönche mit Pechfeckeln und drinnen arbeiteten schweissüberströmt im magischen Licht meine Leute. Es war ein unvergessliches Bild!"). They work in a frenzy, but it is not until 4.30 in the morning that the last rifle has been loaded on to the trucks. Götz receives a new order, to report to the Dresdner Bank next door. His troops then haul 3200 ammunition chests out of the Bank's steel chambers. The cellar turned out to be a gigantic armoury ("Der ganze Keller war ein riesiges Heerlager"). At 8 o'clock in the morning the whole arsenal had been transported to the Bürgerbrau. Officers from the infantry school and troops from the Reichswehr arm the Beer Hall.

Then follows an episode which shows Götz at his worst, as a virulent anti-Semite. The authenticity of these outbursts against Jews could be questioned, especially as the letter found its way into a socialist newspaper whose readership presumably included many Jewish left-wingers. Once again, the text may well have functioned as a decoy, or as a provocation directed against the Nazis. Even if these unsavoury lines may indirectly have been part of an ongoing propaganda war against the NSDAP (the Nazi enthusiasm displayed in it seems to preclude that, though), the contemporary readers would have had some difficulties to stomach them unless they shared the same latent or open hatred towards the Jews. A post-holocaust reader will find it impossible to read them with any kind of equanimity. There is too much foreshadowing of the horrors to come:

Ich ging hinein und wollte mich halbtot lachen, wer war da drin? 58 Juden, größenteils in Unterhosen und Socken, wie sie aus dem Bett geholt wurden, kein Kleidungsstück durften die Hunde mitnehmen! Ein Geschrei huben sie an sondergleichen! Als sie keine Ruhe gaben, zog ich scherzenshalber die Pistole, worauf Grabesruhe herrschte und nur Herr Josefssohn vom Hotel Königshof ächzte: 'Bitte, Herr Major, lassen Sie mitteilen meiner Frau, daß es mir geht nicht schlecht und daß ich lebe.' Ich lachte ihm ins Gesicht und sagte im Weggehen, daß ich das nicht könne, denn soviel ich wüßte, begannen die Erschießungen in einigen Minuten.⁷

⁷ [I went in and almost bent over from laughter. Who was in there? 58 Jews, for the most part in underwear and socks, as they had been dragged out of bed, no clothes were the dogs allowed to bring along! They shouted mightily like nothing ever heard! As they could not be quietened, I drew my revolver half in joke, and it was quiet as in the grave and only Herr Josefssohn from Hotel Königshof winced: "Herr Major, could you please tell my wife that things are not too bad for me and that I am still alive." "I laughed him straight in the face and said in leaving that I couldn't do that, because as far as I knew the killings would begin in a few minutes] (Deuerlein 1962, p. 622).

Richard Hughes incorporated much of this in his novel but made some significant changes. He merged it with the Ludwigsbrücke scene that follows in Götz's letter, and a well-known historical character, Göring, comes into view, seen by the fictitious Fritz who in this episode serves as the novel's intradiegetic focalizer. Having him as a witness has consequences for the mood of the following paragraph:

Peering over the heads in front, big Fritz could see there was some sort of scuffle going on down at the Ludwig Bridge. It was apparently the police-cordon there making trouble — the wooden-heads! But then a mixed bag of fifty or more leading Munich Jews padded past the waiting column and on down to the bridge at the double. A wave of laughter followed them; for whatever their past dignities (and many were elderly, prominent citizens), today they were all dressed only in underwear and socks: they'd been locked up all night in a back room of the Bürgerbräu like that. Captain Goering himself, with his elfin humour, must be taking the situation in hand. Indeed Goering must have threatened to drop all these hostages in the river to drown if the police didn't show more sense; for almost at once the column began to move forward again, and at last the river was crossed (pp. 217-218).

The anti-Semitic feeling is still obvious, linked to envy ("past dignities"), but the Jews are not the only group derided. Also the police are laughed at or despised, obviously from the focalizer's pro-Nazi point-of-view. By thus changing between different perspectives, and by making a distinction between the perceiver and the extradiegetic narrator, Hughes attained an intended backlash effect. It is the Jews that get the readers' sympathies, not the Nazis, although their cruel practical jokes and cynical pranks met with the approval of the intradiegetic focalizer, big Fritz, Hughes's eye-witness of the 1920s. It is Fritz, in his free indirect speech, who shows admiration for the tactics used by Göring when he threatens to drown the Jews unless the Nazis are granted a free passage-way. His perspective is not the only one in the quoted passage. "Elfin" is very much a double-edged adjective in the context. It mirrors Fritz's uncritical approval and applause (one can almost hear his guffaw) but it also reflects the sardonic stance of the narrator, and perhaps it is an indication of how much the real author abhorred what happened on the political scene in Germany. Not infrequently, Hughes via the extradiegetic narrator disowns some of the characters by means of irony. What in Götz's case was a piece of blatant anti-Semitic writing becomes in Hughes's a multi-faceted reconstruction, with a wealth of varying sympathies and antipathies on different time levels. Alvin Rosenfeld, as will be shown in the conclusion (see below, p. 358), saw Hughes's portrayal of Hitler as flawed: only the relatively innocuous early

phase of a mass-murderer's horrifying career was shown, he argues, with no ghettos or gas-ovens in sight. The criticism was unfair in its anachronism, but also otherwise unjustified: in scenes like the one just quoted, the seeds of virulent antisemitism are sown, in a clear adumbration. A horrible harvest will grow out of them, although Hughes did not live to describe it.

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By 10.45 in the morning Götz and his men have reached the Ludwigsbrücke, and then move on to the Fencing school where they are briefed of the movements of the other rebels. Everything is working perfectly ("alles klappt vollkommen"). Götz is ordered to march with his battalion through the city and gives a detailed topographical description of their progress. They draw to a halt at the Isar-Tor Platz, seeing Police and Military at the Feldherrnhalle ready to fire ("An der Feldherrnhalle stehen Sipo und Reichswehr feuerbereit"). They have come into the city in a jubilant mood, and now they move across the Marienplatz with the Town Hall decked in swastika flags, and further into the Weinstrasse. At this point of his text, when the tumultuous events are about to reach their climax, Götz still finds time to vouch for his own credibility by stating that he was not an actual eye-witness when he learned that Hitler and Ludendorff were at the head of the procession. He had not seen them ("gesehen habe ich sie nicht"). When he and his men have passed Max-Joseph-Platz and have just turned into the Residenzstraße, they hear violent shooting which goes on for fifteen seconds ("ein wahnsinniges Prasseln von Geschossen losgeht").

Once more, Götz is eager to stress his credibility. He reports what he sees but keeps quiet about what he has not witnessed. "What happened up front I know only from rumours and these you are already familiar with", he writes to his correspondent ("Was vorne geschah, weiss ich nur aus Berichten und die kennen Sie ja auch"). He is shattered that German soldiers and German officers should have shot at their War Lord [Erich Ludendorff] and aimed at their own black-white-and-red flags [the old Imperial as well as the new Nazi colours]. Then he faces a horrifying picture, he writes, when man after man lies covered in blood along the whole length of the Residenzstrasse. According to Götz, von Kahr's bloodhounds had attacked the Nazis and Scheubner-Richter had fallen with his chest ripped open ("mit aufgerissener Brust"). With obvious propagandistic fervour he claims that not a single bullet had been fired by the Nazis. A con-

fident Götz assures his reader that even if the revolt was put down this time, its spirit will survive and live on stronger than ever. Today there are no communists or socialists in Munich, he writes in an effort to convince his readers. Everybody shows an iron will in opposing von Kahr, says this Nazi acolyte, and the dissolved Nazi party now has ten times more members than before it had been betrayed, "Gott sei dank!" Götz ends his letter by asking Herr Kratzke to disseminate these facts ("Verbreiten Sie nach Möglichkeit die Tatsachen...").

Should this report be taken at its face value, as a factual account of what had really happened, or was it a piece of wilfully distorted propaganda? Whatever Hughes's position was when he had read the Götz letter, he wrote to Joseph Brewer that this was exactly the kind of text that he had been looking for, but he also mentioned that he had been somewhat suspicious of its authenticity. Why was this account by an SA officer published by a socialist paper and not by the conservative press, as one would have expected? Was it a fake and had it been planted there as a hoax? Some details in it struck Hughes as strange, in view of the traditional anticlerical and anticapitalist stance of socialist papers. That the Nazis had taken their rifles from a monastery and their ammunition from a bank "seemed just a little too pat — for a socialist publication!" he wrote. Hughes still believed that the letter was authentic and that its contradictions could be resolved. It all made sense to Hughes, who also told Brewer of several possible explanations why the reactionary Gustav von Kahr, who was no friend of the Nazis, should have armed them. As for the complicated question of who betrayed whom in this political muddle, Hughes had found the Götz letter revealing. He told Brewer:

One thing particularly revealing about the Goetz account is his insistence that when the police opened fire on them it came as a complete surprise — which he regards as evidence of Kahr's abysmal perfidy. But Hitler and Ludendorff knew very well, long before they embarked on the march, that Kahr, Lossow, and Seisser had declared against them and that if they entered the city they were almost certain to be fired on... And yet at 11.00 A.M. Goetz as an officer is being briefed that 'everything is going like clockwork' and that the army and police are on the side of the Nazis! In short, H. and L. led their own followers right up the garden path, and the 'perfidy' label seems to stick elsewhere than to Kahr!⁸

⁸ RH to JB, March 23, 1958.

Hughes had enjoyed looking into this, he told Joseph Brewer, and he was grateful for an item which neither Bullock nor Wheeler-Bennett had mentioned in their books.

His further correspondence shows that all this would hold Hughes's attention and interest for several years to come and long after the Götz letter had served its purpose as one of many sources for "The White Crow". When Alan Bullock had read *The Fox in the Attic* he wrote to Richard Hughes that its depiction of the German mind at the time was entirely convincing but that he nonetheless stuck to his own version (in *Hitler, a Study in Tyranny*) of the November 8 and 9 events even if it was at variance with Hughes's. He would welcome a chance to see the Götz letter.⁹ Hughes wrote back slightly more than a month later. In the meantime he had dug up the Götz text, which had been stored away two years earlier. In his letter to Bullock, he defended in some detail his own use of it, though he admitted that he had been suspicious of it originally. What finally convinced him of its authenticity were the mistakes he had detected in it. Hughes had checked the topography of downtown Munich on a contemporary street plan (requests for several Baedeker guides can be found in his file) and had discovered that there were barracks next door to the monastery, a fact that Götz might not have known. Thus, when Götz and his men had torn down the wall, they were not in the cloister but in fact in the barracks arms cache: "once you accept Goetz in the main a lot else falls into place".¹⁰

Some months later Bullock told Hughes that he had finally found out the exact date when the Götz letter was published in *Vorwärts*. The letter itself was dated some six weeks earlier. He had also come across a reference in Hitler's *Tabletalks* to arms hidden in monasteries. Götz might after all have told the truth: "This looks like confirmation", he wrote.¹¹ In an answer to Richard Hanser in New York, who had asked about Götz, Hughes passed on the dates that he had received from Bullock, and wrote what he had already told other correspondents, that he had been suspicious of the letter but was now convinced: "Like most eye-witness accounts of chaotic events, it contains a number of mistakes. In fact it is those mistakes which chiefly convinced me of its genuineness." Once again he mentioned points which he had already discussed with Bullock, such as the Capuchin crypt,

⁹ AB to RH, October 27, 1961.

¹⁰ RH to AB, December 19, 1961.

¹¹ AB to RH, March 5, 1962.

the last glimpse of Hitler, and the question of treachery, a point which he now elaborated:

Goetz is at pains to establish the fact of the briefing meeting in the fencing school at which Hitler and Ludendorff told their officers that all was going well and the triumvirs were still on the Nazi side. Goetz stresses this as evidence that Hitler was still in the dark at that late hour about von Kahr's volte face — as evidence, that is, of von Kahr's double-faced treachery: in fact, we know from other sources that Hitler had known the truth for the last few hours and was lying brazenly to his own followers... in other words, that meeting is evidence of Hitler's treachery, not of von Kahr's.¹²

A discarded draft among his papers indicates that Hughes at one stage had wished his acknowledgements to be more extensive than they turned out to be in the printed version. Götz needed some counter-checking, he wrote, but his account was revealing:

But that [counter checking] in itself can prove fruitful. For example I don't think it has been brought out before that the marching men were bamboozled into letting themselves be shot down by a deliberate deception practised on them by their own highest leaders: that it was not Kahr, Lossow and Seisser who 'betrayed' them. But this leaps to the eye once Goetz' timetable — he reports that crucial briefing in the fencing school — is set side by side with (say) Hanfstaengl's.

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That Hughes thus discussed, for a number of years, whether this obscure German letter was telling the truth or not may seem strange. But the view he held on the question of betrayal as raised in the Götz letter was crucial to his own and his readers' understanding of Hitler. If Hitler was prepared as early as 1923 to allow his men to be shot down, his cynicism was nothing new when by the end of July 1934 many of his early followers were murdered in cold blood on his orders. If Hughes's interpretation of Götz's letter on this point was correct, i. e. that Hitler had betrayed his followers by allowing the march to proceed although he knew that the revolution had already failed, then the distance between Nazi rhetoric and reality was considerable even as early as in 1923. From the very beginning Hitler would appear to be an opportunist who let his men be slaughtered.

Hughes mentioned the Götz letter when he approached the German historian Joachim Fest many years later. It had been his "third lucky wind-fall", he wrote, after the assistance he had received from the Hanfstaengl and the von Aretin families: "It dovetailed in marvellously with the other

¹² RH to Richard Hanser, March 16, 1962.

published accounts (e. g. in Putzi's memoirs), unwittingly proving inter alia that the leaders deliberately hoodwinked their followers into believing that the Authorities were still on their side when the march started."¹³

There exists a curious epilogue to this. Hughes got a copy of the first Götz letter, as it had appeared in English in *The Living Age*. It is not likely that he was aware that Fritz Götz sent a second letter to the German press on February 8, 1924, this time to the editors of the conservative *Münchener Zeitung*. If Hughes had known this, he might have treated the Götz letter in the radical *Vorwärts* with yet more suspicion than he did when he drew on it for his novel. Götz's second letter is at least as peculiar as his first one which had appeared five days earlier. As his original letter "Aus dem Brief eines Hitler-Offiziers" had been reprinted many times already, he would like a clarification published in their paper, Götz wrote to the editor of the *Münchener Zeitung*. He came up with a rather fantastic *raison d'être* for his letter. Herr Kratzke, to whom he had sent it, was a member of the SA but was suspected of double-crossing. It seemed that he was heading a left-wing fraction. In order to find out if this really was the case, Götz had set a trap by writing him this letter. Everybody knowing the actual facts of what had happened would recognise that this was a make-believe, written with the sole purpose to track down the man under suspicion. The trap had closed on Herr Kratzke and thus the letter had served its purpose. The fact that it had found its way to the *Vorwärts* and to other radical papers implicated the man under suspicion. That was the only value of the letter:

Jedem Denkenden und Kenner der Vorfälle wird ohne weiteres der Brief als 'Fantasiegebilde' erkennbar gewesen sein, den der 'Parteigenosse' und mit ihm der 'Vorwärts' nebst den Blättern seiner Richtung als welterschütternde Neuigkeit seinen entsetzten Lesern 'serviert'. Der Bericht hat also seinen Zweck erfüllt und einem Lumpen die Maske vom Gesicht gerissen. Irgendwelchen Wert besitzt der Brief als wahllos niedergeschriebene persönliche Dichtung nicht.¹⁴

Who had actually been bamboozled, tricked and fooled in this strange affair? The question is perhaps academic and ultimately inane. But it would be twice ironic if Hughes's source turned out to be wholly fictitious when his novel is not, as a result of his efforts towards historical accuracy. The

¹³ RH to "Anne", 1974/75.

¹⁴ [Every critical reader and those who know the background will immediately understand that the letter is a figment of the imagination, which the party member and the *Vorwärts* and other newspapers of the same inclination dish out as world shaking news. The account thus has fulfilled its purpose and torn the mask off a scoundrel's face. The letter has no value at all as indiscriminate personal fiction] (Deuerlein 1962, p. 625).

Götz letter, unbeknownst to the novelist, may have been pure fiction. Be that as it may, it is more interesting to see how the Götz letter, whether reliable or not, made its imprint on Hughes's narrative. Scene Two in Chapter twenty-one of "The White Crow" (pp. 204-205) is closely based on Götz's account, but it is much more evocative than the source. Hughes turns Lothar into a witness who does not know much of what is really going on around him but who has keen senses. His impressions of what he can see and smell are interlarded with snippets that he happens to overhear, in a mosaic of different voices. All fragments relate to von Kahr, "the old fox . . . a slippery cove". They are dreamlike, nightmarish and surrealistic. There are a few direct borrowings from Götz: "8570 tadellosen Gewehren" becomes "8000 weapons, well greased", while "der schriftliche Befehl, die Gewehre zu holen, war unterzeichnet: Dr. von Kahr!!!" is abbreviated: "Von Kahr himself signed the orders". Another textual and topographic passage in Götz is extended by Hughes. Götz's "Durch endlose Gänge . . . wurden nun die Gewehre durch Ketten von Mann zu Mann gereicht, durch Gänge und Treppen bis auf die Strasse zu den Lastwagen" is transformed into the novel's "a living chain was formed to pass the guns from hand to hand, along the tunnels, up the torch-lit steps, along the corridors and cloisters — all the long way through these dark and silent sacred places out there where Goering's plain vans were waiting in the street . . ." (p. 205). At one point Hughes has Lothar share the novelist's knowledge of the Munich topography: "for this they were entering was no ecclesiastical crypt any more, but the cellars under the barracks next door" (p. 204).¹⁵

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Ostensibly Götz wrote his first letter solely in order to set a trap, if what he states in his second letter is true. But his motives on both occasions can be questioned. Judging from the first letter's enthusiasm for the Nazi cause, Götz may have had as his ulterior motive to propagate the Nazi gospel. One of the last incidents he had mentioned in his first letter, with Hitler heroically rescuing a child, has all the characteristics of a legend in the making: "Rechts am Denkmal sehe ich gerade Hitler, wie er mit einem bewußtlosen, blutenden Kinde auf dem Arm in sein Auto steigt"¹⁶. The canonization of a Hitler legend based on this incident seems to have been instantaneous. There are reasons to question Götz's emblematic picture of

¹⁵ Hughes took great pains when he tried to verify the exact course of events on November 9, 1923: he also sent letters of inquiry to the then Pater in the St. Anne monastery.

¹⁶ [To the right of the monument I see how Hitler enters his car with an unconscious bleeding child in his arms] (Deuerlein 1962, p. 623).

Hitler as a staunch hero on the battle-field, though he tried to convince his readers of his first letter that what he told was the truth.

Did Hitler rescue a child, as Götz claimed, or no one at all? Richard Hughes, after having compared the reports of several witnesses, was more cautious and took no chances. His reconstruction cannot be accused of falsifying the historical records in this instance as he involved three different points-of-view: the limited ones of the intradiegetic focalizers Princess Natascha and Lothar, and that of the well-informed extradiegetic narrator:

Tascha's one object was to get plenty of splashes of blood on her bicycle-wheels (Hitler's if possible: surely she had seen him fall?). But in point of fact even before Tascha had mounted, Hitler, legging it, had reached the Max-Josefs-Platz and been hustled into the waiting yellow car and was gone. Lothar caught a glimpse of him climbing into the car — he held his arm queerly extended, as if carrying something (p. 225).

Whether the wounded Hitler did or did not carry a child was a point which engaged Hughes for some years. When he had just got hold of Götz's account, he commented on the incident in the letter to Joseph Brewer already quoted:

... that picture of Hitler after the shooting climbing into a car with a bleeding child in his arms! He did climb into a waiting car just there. He wasn't carrying a child: in fact he had a dislocated shoulder: he may well have been holding his arm queerly so that from a distance he appeared to be carrying something — as a good transactionalist — no doubt Goetz supplied the rest of the picture!¹⁷

Close to four years later Hughes reiterated this, in a letter to Alan Bullock: "that wounded child Hitler is said to have been carrying as he got into his car . . . with a dislocated shoulder he might well have looked as if his arm was round something — and the eye of the faithful follower saw this as the romantic burden possible."¹⁸ Thirteen years later Hughes was still interested in what had really happened on that November day in 1923:

Herr Fest in his biography refers to the legend of the 'wounded child' Hitler was holding in his arms as he boarded his escape-car. Goetz claims to have seen the episode himself, and this mistake I would attribute to the queer angle at which Hitler was holding his arm (he had a broken collar-bone as well as a dislocated shoulder) as interpreted by the eye of blind devotion.¹⁹

¹⁷ RH to JB, March 23, 1958.

¹⁸ RH to AB, Dec. 19, 1961.

¹⁹ RH to Anne, n.d. (1974/75). According to Fest, "Ludendorff's heroic bearing had cast an unflattering light on Hitler." The concocted legend that Hitler had carried the child

It is possible that Götz was present at the shooting in front of the Feldherrnhalle. His report has a true ring to it, in spite of his own disclaimer. But a good two weeks had passed from the shootings to the day that he dated his letter, time enough for a legend to be born and a myth to take wings. The fictional Lothar Scheidemann was present, but Richard Hughes was undoubtedly right in limiting both Lothar's view and his understanding.

safely out of the firing line did not hold: "the Ludendorff circle demolished this legend before Hitler himself abandoned it" (Fest 1974, p. 190). Fest had touched on the topic already in his *The Face of the Third Reich* ten years earlier: "Hitler then fled, leaving behind a few thousand followers and sixteen dead. The legend, obviously put about later by himself, that he had carried a helpless child out of the firing line — he even produced the child in support of his statement — has been proved false." (Fest 1985 [1963], pp. 48-49). A footnote explains that the brave act was impossible because of "the break in Hitler's upper arm, as well as a painful dislocation of the shoulder joint" (Ibid., p. 468).

Chapter IV

August Kubizek

There are not many witnesses of Hitler's early days, and as few of them seem reliable, the field has been open for conjecture and speculation, psychoanalytical and otherwise. There is one fairly factual account, however, August Kubizek's *Adolf Hitler mein Jugendfreund* (1953), which "fills, as no other book has done, a vital gap in our understanding of Hitler's mental history", according to H. R. Trevor-Roper in his introduction to the English translation, *Young Adolf, the Story of Our Friendship* (1954).¹ When he wrote his introduction more than forty years ago, Trevor-Roper stated that Hitler's public life by then had been fully and almost oppressively documented, at the same time implying that this had not been the case with Hitler's private life, at least not as for its early stages. Trevor-Roper showed this by listing the limited historical sources that exist. They are but a handful: the anti-Nazi writer Konrad Heiden (how unreliable a chronicler he was is apparent to any reader of his books; his many idiosyncrasies and his subjectivity are obvious), Josef Greiner, who knew Hitler from the lodgings at the Men's Home in Meldemannstrasse in Vienna, and a few more.² In this group of writers, Kubizek stands out as the most trustworthy by far. In his book on his teenage friend in Vienna before the First World War we get a picture of Hitler which, still according to Trevor-Roper, has not been tainted by what followed: we get an impression of how Hitler the private man struck someone close to him. A sym-

¹ Werner Maser is more critical: "Kubizek's memoirs are a medley of truth and fiction in which the latter predominates. As documentary evidence they have value only where Kubizek illustrates his book with facsimiles" (*Hitler*, 1973, p. 356). John Toland, on the other hand, based a good twenty pages of his *Adolf Hitler* (1976) very closely on Kubizek's memoirs. Toland was aware that Kubizek's word could not be taken to be the gospel truth: "his recollections . . . are often exaggerated and sometimes even fictionalized" (p. 20). "Kubizek's account of Hitler . . . contains a number of errors, particularly in dates. Kubizek should be read with care; he has a tendency towards exaggeration, over-emphasis and occasional flights of imagination" (p. 928). Still, Toland conceded that "no comrade knew the young Hitler so intimately" (p. 20) and maintained that Kubizek's account "is admittedly the best firsthand source on Hitler as a young man" (p. 928). It is evident that Toland used Kubizek's *Young Adolf* without much critical distance. Ian Kershaw, writing twenty-two years later, is more circumspect: ". . . Kubizek plainly invented a great deal, built some passages around Hitler's own account in *Mein Kampf*, and deployed some near plagiarism to amplify his own limited memory. However, for all his weaknesses, his recollections have been shown to be a more credible source on Hitler's youth than was once thought, in particular where they touch upon experiences related to Kubizek's own interests in music and theatre" (Kershaw, pp. 20-21).

² Franz Jetzinger, in his preface to *Hitler's Youth*, dismisses Greiner: "so many details in his book are demonstrably untrue that I find it impossible to believe anything he says" (Jetzinger 1958, p. 11).

pathetic account like Kubizek's was needed to balance all the antipathetical ones, Trevor-Roper implied: "... although we know that Hitler *became* utterly cynical and inhuman, it is difficult to believe that he was always thus. I do not believe that men are born sour and inhuman: if they are so, it is because they have been made so . . .".

A few lines further on, Trevor-Roper states what is needed for a balanced view on the formative years of Hitler the person, and of his opinions: "What we require, if we are to see Hitler's character and views in process of formation, is a more intimate, more sympathetic portrait of what must have been, even in the most dehumanised man, a human period."³ This sympathetic portrait Kubizek had supplied.⁴ His own foreword in the original edition is apologetic, as appears from its very title: "Entschluss und Rechtfertigung." He had decided, he wrote, not to allow himself any hindsight, and he tried to justify that decision. He had done his best not to falsify his own account by including anything extraneous that was not known to him at the time in question, i. e. the years immediately preceding the First World War. He had tried not to be influenced by what he later learned was typical of the subsequent stages in Hitler's life. What had followed in the years after the time that Kubizek had known Hitler intimately had had no impact on his account, he stated in his preface. His memoirs would not have read differently had Hitler remained unknown or even died in the Great War, Kubizek claimed:

Es wäre falsch, in diese gemeinsamen Jugenderlebnisse Gedanken und Auffassungen hineinzutragen, die für spätere Lebensabschnitte Hitlers typisch sind. Ich habe mich daher von dieser Gefahr mit peinlicher Sorgfalt ferngehalten und meine Erinnerungen ganz aus der damaligen Zeit heraus niedergeschrieben, nicht anders, als wäre dieser Adolf Hitler, mit dem ich so lange innige Freundschaft geschlossen hatte, zeitlebens ein Unbekannter geblieben oder im Weltkrieg gefallen.⁵

It ought to have been a virtually impossible undertaking to disregard world history in this blatant way, but his memoirs are in fact to a large ex-

³ Kubizek 1955, pp. xi.

⁴ Hughes thought well of Kubizek's book, as seen in an entry in his Munich notebook: "Kubizek's a good book. Not out of drawing at all".

⁵ [It would be false, in these mutual experiences of our youth, to include thoughts and opinions which are typical of later periods in Hitler's life. I have, with utmost care, kept aloof from this danger and have written my memoirs from that time, nothing else, as if this Adolf Hitler with whom I entered on such a long and intimate friendship, had remained unknown to me throughout his life or had fallen in the World War] (Kubizek 1953, pp. 9-10). Kubizek's own preface was not included in the British edition (*Young Adolf, The Story of Our Friendship*) or the American one (*The Young Hitler I Knew*).

tent the *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*, to borrow a title from Thomas Mann. Kubizek admitted that he became a late member of the Nazi party in 1942, but he was neither apologetic when he swiftly recapitulated the six war years on his last three pages, nor defensive as regards the early friendship that was to dominate his life. His summing-up was factual and to the point:

The end came; the war was lost. Even though I, a fundamentally unpolitical individual, had always kept aloof from the political events of the period which ended forever in 1945, nevertheless no power on earth could compel me to deny my friendship with Adolf Hitler (p. 297).

Kubizek had been interrogated during the denazification process by the American occupation forces. His memoirs end with the Allied interviewer's contrafactual question about Adolf Hitler. Kubizek answered it in a stubbornly loyal and possibly naive way: "So you could have killed him? — Yes, I could have. — And why didn't you kill him? — Because he was my friend" (p. 298). But the later years only flash by. Kubizek focuses on the four formative years when he and Hitler grew from boys to young men. From 1904, when Kubizek was sixteen and Hitler a year younger, they met regularly, and became close friends. But after 1908, they met only once, in Bayreuth in 1939, one year after the *Anschluss*.

August Kubizek grew up part of the Austrian working class. His father was an upholsterer but the son exemplified the common social mobility of the inter-war years by moving up into middle class life. First he studied music, an interest that had brought him in contact with Hitler originally: they first met when they were queuing at the Linz Opera ticket-office. Kubizek conducted the City Orchestra in Marburg until the 1918 armistice when the Austro-Hungarian boundaries were redrawn and Marburg became the Yugoslavian Maribor. He moved to another city and found new work as a local clerk in the Eferding city administration, in the northern part of Austria. He advanced to become head of the local council, a position he retired from in 1954, when he had just published his book on his infamous friend of some fifty years before.

Particularly two chapters in his memoirs proved useful to Richard Hughes. One deals with Kubizek's and Hitler's mutual interest in the opera, the other with their interest in the opposite sex. Information from these two chapters went into Chapter ten of "The Fox in the Attic", though in the process the episodes were transformed, abbreviated and condensed,

and also viewed from a more complex perspective than in the original. Chapter ten, with its factual basis in Kubizek's memoirs, caused controversy among the critics. In it, Hughes treated Hitler on a par with his fictitious characters by recreating Hitler's thoughts from the inside. That these thoughts were based on factual sources, contrary to what most critics assumed, is evident when one reads Kubizek alongside Hughes. This has been done by Richard Poole, in connection with the topic of Hitler and sexuality. His thoughtful analysis makes it evident how multifaceted Hughes's novel is, and how complicated the question of his many borrowings and adaptations. Poole states that "Hughes's version is clearly the work of a novelist, but a novelist handling his subject with the objectivity of a biographer", and he argues convincingly that Hughes's narrative technique allows the reader, in the passage which recreates Hitler's feverish ramblings (pp. 264-66), "to see Fiction-writer melting into Biographer, and Biographer into Historian."⁶

When Kubizek called his Chapter VIII "In that Hour it began" he made use of precisely that kind of historical hindsight which he had declared he would have no recourse to. Its ominous note, though justified by what is being told, implies a flash forward to someone in the future who looks back. Kubizek tells of the night when he and Adolf Hitler went to a performance of Wagner's *Rienzi*: "now we were in the theatre, burning with enthusiasm, and living breathlessly through *Rienzi*'s rise to be the Tribune of the people of Rome, and his subsequent downfall" (p. 62). Afterwards the friends had climbed up to the top of the Freinberg, overlooking Linz. Kubizek, who wanted to discuss the opera, was brusquely told to keep quiet by Hitler, who was deep in his own inner world. When Hitler finally talked, Kubizek says, he did it in a way as never before or since: "It was as if another being spoke out of his body, and moved him as much as it did me" (p. 65). At this moment when young Hitler fell into "a state of ecstasy and rapture" his ambitions changed, from wanting to be a painter, an artist or an architect, to going into politics; in that hour Hitler's political ambitions were born, Kubizek suggested, and once again broke the time-frame that he had promised to keep himself within, in his cautious "Entschluss und Rechtfertigung."

At a slightly later point in his narrative, which is also linked with the formative *Rienzi* experience, Kubizek moves ahead to 1939, to the time when he visited the Bayreuth festival as Hitler's guest. There he reminded

⁶ Poole 1986, pp. 221-222.

his old friend of the momentous Rienzi night some twenty-five years earlier. Hitler, who quickly saw the possibilities of a ready-made parable in Kubizek's story, retold it to Winifred Wagner at whose house they were. Kubizek's factual account had thus started to turn into a myth already at Bayreuth. Writing about all this, fourteen years and a World War later, he ended his chapter about this meeting as if still thunder-struck by the impact of a historical moment that he had been fortunate enough to witness: "The words with which Hitler concluded his story to Frau Wagner are also unforgettable for me. He said solemnly, 'In that hour it began'" (p. 66).

*

Richard Hughes must have come across Kubizek's memoirs no later than 1953. In one of the December issues of *Picture Post* that year his "To Follow a Star", a short story which was also a Christmas sermon, was printed.⁷ It was a parable of how the Star of Bethlehem has passed into universal imagery: "Each of us, we are told, has a star to follow."⁸ And then Hughes told a true story of three young men who followed a star, each after his own fashion. The scene is "A Little Austrian town. A cold November evening. Two down-at-heels music-struck boys — bosom friends — nobodies — just out of the Opera: Wagner's *Rienzi*":

'The cold damp mist lay oppressively over the narrow streets.' Gustl wants to talk, to criticise: but his friend shuts him up. A skinny, half-starved-looking boy, this one, with his mother's pale protruding eyes but none of her docility. Tonight those eyes are feverish with excitement. Then he begins to speak. 'The words erupted, hoarse and raucous. It was as though another being spoke out of his body, as though he himself listened with astonishment... He was talking of a *mandate* which one day he would receive from the people, to lead them out of servitude to the heights of freedom....' That boy, Gustl's friend Adolf: was it a star *he* followed — to the heights of power which dwindled Rienzi's little dictatorship to a dunghill. Through enormous seas of beastliness and blood it went before him, beckoning, till it came and stood over . . . a bunker in riven Berlin where a shattered suicide was. Vanished, in the smoke of a bungled cremation amid the ruins of *more* than he had built.

All the passages within quotation marks were taken from Kubizek's chapter X although Hughes compressed them somewhat.⁹ This story was writ-

⁷ Dec. 12, 1953, pp. 16-17.

⁸ The same phrase can be found in *The Outlaws*, Ernst von Salomon's account of his political activities and years in prison: "How slowly the day went. What a lot of things one could do in a day. What a lot I had formerly packed into my days. They used never to be long enough. At that time I lived in a whirl — I followed a star" (Salomon 1983 [1931], p. 335).

⁹ Kubizek's memoirs were published by Leopold Stocker Verlag in Graz and Stuttgart in

ten two years before Hughes had an eidetic vision and started on the very first pages of what was to become *The Fox in the Attic*, as he later explained in a comment to his novel:

I sat down at last with a blank sheet in front of me. I was sitting in the sunny garden of a village inn in Southern Spain . . . I saw two figures approaching — I had not the least idea who they were, but as they loomed nearer out of the mist I suddenly saw with a shock what one of them had on his shoulder. And out of that the whole story grew, spreading and ramifying out of those two lonely figures and the burden one of them carried.¹⁰

That was the nucleus and the origin of the novel. But two other figures, Hitler and Kubizek on top of the Freinberg after the *Rienzi* performance, must also have lingered on in the novelist's mind; also out of the scene with these two lonely young men high above Linz did the story grow, spread and ramify. The *Picture Post* story is possibly also indicative of how Hughes thought that he would conclude *The Human Predicament*, with Hitler's suicide on April 30, 1945, in "a bunker in riven Berlin."¹¹

Then the *Picture Post* story continues, showing two Alberts as a contrast to Hitler: "Einstein as well as Hitler arrived at 'power', a great position in the world. But with this difference. Hitler fought for power every minute — power itself was his star. Einstein's star was fundamental truth." The other Albert is Albert Schweizer, of topical interest as he had just been awarded the 1952 Nobel Peace Prize: "They gave the prize not for what he had *done*, but for what he *is* . . . His star is not only the search for fundamental truth, but the embodying of it." There was a marked consistency in Richard Hughes's writings. The final lines of "To Follow a Star" are these: "The star of Bethlehem the wise men followed was not *their* star. It bore no witness to *their* greatness, but to the greatness of something outside themselves." The theme of renouncing the world points towards the final Hitler-Mitzi dichotomy of *The Wooden Shepherdess*, where Mitzi has the final say. Richard Hughes, who was a deeply religious man, here hints at the theme of spiritual resistance against evil: "a time would come when she had to meet and withstand that roaring lion herself" (p. 387). But he

1953, but E. V. Anderson's English translation appeared only in 1954, at Allan Wingate. Thus Richard Hughes must have had access either to the ms. of the translation, or to pre-publication proofs.

¹⁰ "On the Human Predicament" (1961), in *Fiction as Truth*, p. 52. Also quoted by Penelope Hughes, p. 131.

¹¹ Hughes would have found all the necessary details in H. R. Trevor-Roper's highly influential *The Last days of Hitler* (1947).

also sketched the mystic's metaphysical perspective beyond words and the world: "under the burning eye of that burning relentless Love she was molten metal that heaved in a crucible under its scum . . ." (p. 388).

*

Hughes developed the Linz episode into something much more private and personal in "The Fox in the Attic" section. He resorted to free indirect speech when he reconstructed the thoughts of a man in agony. In a plausible but not incontestable manner he reconstructed what was going on in the mind of Hitler, the "tortured, demented creature", delirious and in high fever on the bed at Hanfstaengl's house in Uffing after the failed Putsch in November 1923: "'Rienzi-night', that night on the Freinberg over Linz after the opera: that surely had been the climactic night of his boyhood for it was then he had first confirmed that lonely omnipotence within him" (p. 267). In Hughes's version there is a subtle change in perspectives, which made his rendering quite different from the straightforwardness of Kubizek's account. Hughes's "surely" was a pivot on which his reconstruction swung, from inside Hitler, to an outside view of him, and then once again back into his mind. The fragmented memories of that frenzied mind are retold by an extradiegetic narrator with a full view of then and now, of Freinberg as well as of Uffing.¹²

The Rienzi-episode had an even wider significance for Hughes, as it was part of a consistent Wagnerian leitmotif running through both novels, from the early *Rienzi* via *Die Meistersinger* to the apocalyptic vision in Wagner's late works, as Hildegard Kruse has observed:

Die durch die Parallele zum Schaffen Richard Wagners angedeutete Steigerung erreicht ihren Höhepunkt mit der Weltuntergangsstimmung und der 'Wagnerian scene' (S. 359) in Bad Godesberg sowie mit dem 'Wagnerian blood-red sunset' (S. 378) in Berlin, die an mystische, düstere Szenen im *Ring des Nibelungen* oder im *Parsifal*,

¹² In a discarded early version (he still calls his novel *Fall '23*) of his acknowledgement of sources, Hughes defended his method: "Because it is a historical novel I cannot give the usual affidavit that the characters are all my own inventions. Nevertheless there is a sharp distinction between the fictitious characters in the foreground and the historical characters herein. The former are wholly fictitious: no real person appears here under a false name or any other disguise. But the historical characters are as accurately historical as I can make them even if, because this is a historical novel, I sometimes pretend to see into their minds as freely as if I had invented them myself." A similar unorthodox approach is used by David Irving, controversial also in other ways, in his *The War Path* (1978): "Like [*Hitler's War*], which aroused controversy, *The War Path* also tries to describe events from behind the Führer's desk, and to see and understand each episode through his eyes" (Irving 1978, p. ix).

Wagners letzten Werken, erinnern mögen und die den Hintergrund für die Planung und Durchführung des grausigen Massakers 1934 bilden.¹³

Kubizek, overwhelmed by his own memories, described this early moment of ecstasy and rapture. The two young men had climbed up to the top of the Freinberg, and "only now did I realise that we were no longer in solitude and darkness, for the stars shone brilliantly above us" (p. 65). Hitler, inspired by the Wagner opera, had a vision of how he would receive a mandate "from the people, to lead them out of servitude to the heights of freedom" (p. 66). In Kubizek's biblical allusion Hitler was equated with Moses when he was given the stone tablets and received his mission to lead his people.

Hughes also suggested a biblical point of reference to his reader, but a different one from Kubizek's. He was more sinister when he suggested that Hitler was not a Moses but a tempted Christ who by the end of the next novel would have turned into Anti-Christ: "Impelled to go up there in the darkness into that high place had he not been shown there all earthly kingdoms in a moment of time?" he asks, in the voice of the novel's extradiegetic narrator (p. 267). Then he moves as swiftly in time as he moved in space, from the Bible to Freud, by compressing the fifteen-or-so years that had passed between the climactic night of temptation on top of the mountain and his recent collapse after the disastrous Putsch: "And facing there the ancient gospel question had not his whole being been one assenting Yea? Had he not *struck* the everlasting bargain there on the high mountain under the witnessing November stars?" In the lines that follow this passage, Hughes's imagery when describing a forsaken dreamer's regression is psychoanalytically suggestive:

Yet now... now, when he had seemed to be riding Rienzi-like the crest of the wave, the irresistible wave which with mounting force should have carried him to Berlin, that crest had begun to curl: it had curled and broken and toppled on him, thrusting him down, down in the green thundering water, deep (p. 267)

¹³ [The intensification hinted at by the parallel to Richard Wagner's work reaches a high point in the apocalyptic "Wagnerian scene" (p. 359) in Bad Godesberg as well as in the "Wagnerian blood-red sunset" (p. 378) in Berlin, which echoes the mystical, brooding scenes of *The Ring* or *Parsifal* and which forms the background for the planning and execution of the horrifying 1934 massacre] (Kruse, p. 302). — Hildegard Kruse may have overlooked the fact that "Wagner's room" mentioned on p. 359 has nothing to do with the composer: it is the office of Adolf Wagner, the Nazi leader of Bavaria.

Towards the end of the chapter, his foetal regression is complete: "He drew up his knees to his chin in the primal attitude and lay there, letting himself drown. So Hitler slept at last" (p. 268). This is reminiscent of the nightmarish imagery in "To Follow a Star" as quoted above: "Through enormous seas of beastliness and blood it went before him, beckoning." In the novel, Hitler has finally overcome his "obsessional fear of water" (p. 261). Hughes got his information about Hitler's hydrophobia not from Kubizek but from Ernst Hanfstaengl, who had written "Esser told me afterwards that Hitler had an unreasoning fear of the water. He could not swim and would not learn."¹⁴ Paul Morgan has observed that almost "every significant episode in [Hughes's] narrative occurs by water", and he has commented on the marine metaphors in this instance as well as in others. Morgan contrasts Mitzi's quietist position when accepting the conditions of existence with Hitler's aversion to water, even his antipathetic relation to it: "his hatred of the all-embracing medium of water, of the woman who bore him, of life itself."¹⁵

Kubizek had little to say on the subject of Hitler and water, as one would expect. He and Hitler grew up in the Austrian inland, far from the sea. In one of Kubizek's few episodes where water was actually involved there was no sign of hydrophobia in young Hitler. Adolf's puppy-love for Stefanie, a girl he had watched only at a distance, was not responded. She knew nothing of his feelings; he had not dared tell her:

This brought him to the verge of despair. "I can't stand it any longer!" he exclaimed. "I will make an end of it!" It was the first and, as far as I know, the last time that Adolf contemplated suicide seriously.¹⁶ He would jump into the river from the Danube bridge, he told me, and then it would be over and done with (pp. 63-64).

In the novel, this moment of despair on the bridge over the Danube forms part of a phantasmagoria in Hitler's frenzied mind, some twenty years later. Hughes adds symbolic significance to the triviality of Kubizek's memory. There is also an added sense of unreality in the novel's suggested death-in-life and life-as-a-dream experience:

Tossing desperately on his bed, he gasped — he was drowning (what of all things always Hitler most feared). *Drowning?* Then... then that suicidal boyhood mo-

¹⁴ Hanfstaengl 1957, p. 137.

¹⁵ Morgan 1993, pp. 127-128.

¹⁶ Bearing Hitler's final fate in the Berlin Chancellery in mind, Kubizek's words, written in 1953, seem distinctly odd.

ment's teetering long ago on the Danube bridge at Linz... after all the melancholic boy *had* leaped that long-ago day, and everything since was a dream! Then this noise now was the mighty Danube singing in his dreaming drowning ears (pp. 267-268).¹⁷

This adumbrates what follows during Augustine's sad farewell to Germany, towards the end of the novel; Hitler's desperate mood on the bridge anticipates Augustine's feelings for Mitzi. Augustine stands by the frozen Danube as Hitler had done in another year and another season, but still by the same river (pp. 350-351). Augustine is as love-struck, ill-fated and forlorn as Hitler was, and possibly slightly tragicomic as well: neither of them has revealed his feelings, and neither of them is, thus, even jilted.

On this page in the Uffing chapters (p. 267), Hughes's narrative is more fictional than factual. The novelist made Hitler dream less of the sea and more of the amniotic waters. The reader had already been invited to see things in a psychoanalytical light, from what Augustine had pointed out earlier in the novel: "*The great revelation which was Freud! ... his own generation really was a new creation, a new kind of human being, because of Freud!*" (p. 73). The mocking irony underlying the subsequent comment shows a narrator who is less easily taken in than the novel's main protagonist by the new ideas from Sigmund Freud, yet another and immensely influential Austrian: "For theirs was the first generation in the whole cave-to-cathedral history of the human race completely to disbelieve in sin" (p. 73).

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¹⁷ Cf. Chapter twenty-seven of "Polly and Rachel" and its discussion of German and British public and private dreams and nightmares: "The public dream was now in full pelt: but not yet the public nightmare it was presently to become" (p. 108); and Chapter two of "The White Crow": "In England the ending of the war had come like waking from a bad dream: in defeated Germany, as the signal for deeper levels of nightmare" (p. 119). — Valerie Pitt, while not altogether convinced by Hughes's attempts to "subdue history to the terms of a quasi-philosophical, quasi-psychological notion" (Pitt, p. 67), was impressed by his handling of dreams and nightmares on a realistic and a symbolic level: "What is not merely convincing but compulsive is the imaginative vision of the novel, for the theory of the public dream, the public nightmare, enables Mr Hughes to treat the events in his narrative both as real, solid, historical, and as unreal — a fantasy" (p. 67). This theory is especially successful when applied to "Hitler as the creature of his own dream, dreaming the terrors and the obsessions of his own state which were to become the public dream in which, again, Hitler is a figure. The frontiers of dream and history are confused" (p. 68). She compares the protagonist in one of William Golding's novels with Hughes's Hitler: "The nemesis of [Pincher Martin's] self-centred existence is to find, only more terribly, as Hitler finds in *The Fox in the Attic*, that the whole world is simply an inescapable extension of the self" (p. 69).

The other chapter in Kubizek's memoirs of particular interest in this context dealt with "Adolf's attitude to women." Kubizek enlarged on what he saw as a key concept for understanding Hitler in his late teens: his almost obsessive talk about "Die Flamme des Lebens." It was a turn of speech which Kubizek had some difficulties in defining:

But I think, in the end, I did understand him aright. The "Flame of Life" was the symbol of sacred love which is awakened between man and woman who have kept themselves pure in body and soul and are worthy of a union which would produce healthy children for the nation (p. 233).

Then comes a strangely suggestive episode in Kubizek's memoirs which shows that the two impressionable friends were as influenced by Frank Wedekind's controversial drama *Frühlings Erwachen* as they had been by Wagner's opera *Rienzi*. On their way home when they had seen this play, considered daring and immoral at the time, they walked along the Ring in Vienna. Hitler drew his friend into an alley, the small and ill-lit Sieberngasse, where the prostitutes were exposing themselves in the low one-storeyed houses:

The windows, which were on street level, were lighted so that we could see directly into the rooms. The girls sat there, some behind the windowpane, some at the open window . . . Here and there a man would stop, lean towards the window to look at the girl of his choice; a hasty, whispered interchange would take place. Then, as a sign that the deal was concluded, the light would be turned out. . . . Among the men, it was the accepted convention not to stand before the unlighted windows (p. 235).

August Kubizek added, stressing how innocent and pure at heart they had been in these matters: "We, for our part, did not even stand in front of the lighted windows." They had moved along the alley towards the Burgstraße at the end of Sieberngasse. But Hitler made a turn, and once more the two teenage friends had strolled along the windows. The description suggests that Hitler's interest in the prostitutes was not quite as innocent as the more naive Kubizek's:

Perhaps these girls, too, had noticed the "something special" about Adolf, perhaps they had realised that here they had to deal with men of moral restraint . . . at any rate, they thought it necessary to redouble their efforts. I recall how one of these girls seized just the moment when we were passing her window to take off her chemise, presumably to change it, while another busied herself with her stockings, showing her naked legs (p. 236).

They returned to their lodgings, Hitler having learnt “the customs of the market for commercial love”, as a dead-pan Kubizek adds.

Richard Poole has chosen another incident in Kubizek’s memoirs to illustrate the narrative methods of a fiction writer who “seeks to probe behind the surface which the biographer finds it not within his brief to penetrate.” Kubizek’s episode describes how he and Hitler met a travelling salesman who invited them to supper at the Hotel Kummer, where for once a gullible Adolf Hitler could satisfy his taste for sweet pastries. Afterwards, when they had discussed this, Kubizek innocently had revealed that he had enjoyed the meal in the company of the generous salesman, who surely was both cultured and artistic. Hitler had replied, as a matter-of-fact, that the man was a homosexual. Being the more experienced of the adolescents, he had to put the innocent Kubizek in the picture: “So Adolf explained this phenomenon to me.” Kubizek added, as if influenced by Hitler’s much later crack-down on homosexual practices (which was one of the official reasons behind the Röhm purge): “Naturally this, too, had long been one of his problems and, as an abnormal practice, he wished to see it fought against relentlessly, and he himself scrupulously avoided all personal contact with such men” (p. 237). Richard Poole comments:

In the novel this incident¹⁸ undergoes a radical transformation, demonstrating clearly the difference between, as Hughes defines them, Fiction and Biography. Kubizek is content to present his friend’s response objectively: Adolf is self-possessed and unperturbed; he takes the encounter in his stride. Hughes, reconstructing the event as hallucination, makes the figure lurid and epicene, a tempter both repellent and attractive: “gross” and bestial, he is also “smooth”, “smooth-faced”. Hughes, perhaps, noted the ambiguity in Kubizek’s statement that homosexuality had long been one of Adolf’s “problems”.¹⁹

In the vast literature on Hitler, it is not difficult to find reports on his interest in sexual matters. Most of them tend to be gossipy. One of them, that of Ernst Hanfstaengl, is at times suggestively salacious, while that of another, Konrad Heiden, is quite often outright lascivious. Richard Hughes, not as innocently reticent as Kubizek had been on these matters, had spe-

¹⁸ In Hitler’s feverish frenzy, the flour-barrel “was changing shape: now tall now short, now fat now lean... erect, and swelling... and out of the swelling barrel a remembered figure was rising — smooth, and gross, and swaying and nodding like a tree. It was a man’s figure from his own penurious teen-age in Vienna: it was that smooth-faced beast at the Hotel Kummer, bribing the bright-eyed hard-up boy with cream puffs, promising him all the pastries he could eat and daring to make passes at *him*, at Adolfus Hitler!” (p. 265).

¹⁹ Poole 1986, p. 226.

cial reasons for his interest in the subject: it tied in with his psychological theory of Hitler as a solipsist, as a man completely centred on himself. When Hughes drew on Kubizek's account of the Sieberngasse incident, he not only changed the name of the alley but he also abbreviated, condensed and juxtaposed what he had borrowed from his source. Hughes was more subtle and more dynamic than Kubizek with his limited perspective had been; he allowed himself free access to the minds of his characters.

In the following quote the scene is at first focalized by Hitler (with no traces of Kubizek's account) but then the extradiegetic narrator comments on the character's movements and interpolates an ironic explanation of Hitler's interest in sex. The sexual act, only hinted at by Kubizek ("Then, as a sign that the deal was concluded, the light would be turned out") is ambiguously illuminated by Hughes. The 'it' that is being done behind the dark window is an activity observed by a youth who is excited and frightened, attracted and repelled, when he is thus confronted with the facts of life. The picture of Adolf, the zealous moralist who wants to harden his will, seems ridiculous and smacks of farce; the irony is hammered home by the very last word in the following excerpt:

Now the dark corners of the room were filling with soft naked legs: those young Viennese harlots sitting half-naked in the lighted windows all along the Spittelberggasse (between the dark windows where 'it' was already being done). For once upon a time the young Hitler used to go there, to the Spittelberggasse: to... just to look at them. To harden his will; for except by such tests as these how can a lad with the hair new on him be assured that his will is strong? The boy would stare, and walk on a few yards; then come back as 'strong' as ever — back to the most attractive and most nearly naked and stare her out again, pop-eyed (p. 266).

In his close reading of this passage, Richard Poole has observed how an "... ambiguous position is maintained up to the end of the parenthesis ... at which point the novelist suddenly recovers his distance from his subject (the withdrawal is signalled by the clearly objective 'For once upon a time'). The remainder of [the] paragraph ... might have been written by a biographer."²⁰ One could also add that this is an example of a writer who is in collusion with his readers, an author wishing them to take an active part in recreating the mind of an historical character who at this point in the narrative is interpreted much more subjectively than anywhere else in the two novels. Poole has commented on this: "Here, in fact we see the historical novelist operating at full stretch, for the imagination which pro-

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

duces the Uffing passage is at once fictive and historical: Hitler ceases to be an 'outside', he becomes a person."²¹ The scene that started with Hitler's nightmare widens into a psychoanalytical interpretation, involving the novelist's thoughts of the identity and its penumbra, and the theory of Hitler as the archetypal solipsist. The novel alludes to Hitler's sublimation by using his own formula in terms borrowed from Kubizek:

He called it "the Flame of Life", that holy flame of sex in the centre of a man; and he knew that all his whole life his 'Flame' had to be kept burning without fuel for at the first real touch of human, female fuel it must turn smoky, fill his whole Vessel with soot (p. 266).

In the transition from Kubizek's memoirs to Hughes's novel, this passage underwent significant changes. What had been innocent became portentous, what was light-hearted or insignificant became brooding and soul-searching. The transformation also involved a change of perspective. What was once Kubizek's experience had now turned into Hitler's. But even if Hitler had discussed the strange cliché "the Flame of Life" with some passion, it had been August Kubizek, not Adolf Hitler, who had hardened his will by practising some kind of self-imposed sublimation, when he had met a girl. Though Kubizek had admittedly "smiled inwardly at these bombastic formulae which were in such contrast to our insignificant existence", Hitler's cliché had stuck, "as a thistle clings to one's sleeve with a hundred barbs." Kubizek would walk along the Mariahilferstrasse alone at night when a girl would turn around and look at him invitingly, perhaps a little frivolously:

At least, this time I was sure it was I in whom she was interested! As a matter of fact, she must have been very flighty, because she waved to me invitingly! But then, suddenly, the words "The Flame of Life" would appear before me — one single, thoughtless hour and this holy flame is extinguished forever! (p. 234).

In this comment from a distance of more than forty years, Kubizek looks with some mild irony and derision on the young man that he once was. In contrast, the novel's Hitler in his idealism and twisted sublimation shows no doubt, criticism or deprecation of himself, though Richard Hughes drives home his points with great irony.

²¹ Ibid., p. 223.

Chapter V

Ernst Hanfstaengl

Three members of the Munich Hanfstaengl family played an active and intricate part in Hughes's novels: Ernst, his first wife Helene, née Niemeyer, and their son Egon. All three could read the two novels as a *roman-à-clef* where they had many of the keys. Their contributions to both volumes were significant. Part of their own experiences had gone into the text in a form that they would have recognized as close and at times identical to what they had written in their respective memoirs, Ernst's published, the others unpublished.¹ Hughes also included all three as characters within his fiction. Literary and personal relations between him and the Hanfstaengls resulted in an intriguing case of textual interchange.

Ernst Hanfstaengl makes a delayed entry in *The Fox in the Attic*. When he is first mentioned in the novel, it is only indirectly. Augustine is told that the Steuckels to whose villa he has been invited owns a Munich publishing firm specialising in Fine Art, "like the even more famous Hanfstaengl outfit" (p. 181). Four chapters on, Augustine's German friends mention "Putzi", expecting everybody to recognise the nickname. An explanatory "Putzi Hanfstaengl" is added a few lines later, for the readers' benefit. Then follows a substantial portrait, though not of Putzi but of his protégé Hitler. The page-long paragraph of the Austrian upstart who cuts a strange figure in Munich society did not have Ernst Hanfstaengl as its source, though.²

Three chapters later, Lothar runs into Hanfstaengl, and some more details about him are added: his giant frame, his handsome great jaws, his powerful pianist's fingers, and his quick repartee: "Dr. Hanfstaengl was such a famous tease!" (p. 214). When, after all these preliminaries, he finally appears in person, it is still only briefly. The spotlight leaves him almost at once for other people to come into view: his wife, his son Egon, Alfred Rosenberg, and in particular Adolf Hitler whose touchiness equals the Hanfstaengl generosity. This is Hughes's masterly synthesis of many pages in Ernst Hanfstaengl's memoirs. Deeply ingrained class differences are suggested, Hitler's social unease is hinted at and some of his psychological peculiarities are outlined:

¹ The character of Helene Hanfstaengl's memoirs is explained below, pp. 175-176, that of her son Egon's on pp. 186-187.

² Hughes relied on Konrad Heiden's *Hitler: a Biography* (1936), via Alan Bullock's *Hitler: a Study in Tyranny*, as Richard Poole has shown (Poole 1986, pp. 218-221).

'Putzi' — or Dr. Ernst Hanfstaengl, to give him his proper title — as a half-American had taken no part in the war. Before it broke out he had been a student at Harvard and later he had married a German-American girl in New York. Here in peacetime Germany, naturally this gifted and musical German-American German couple moved in circles more intelligent and civilised than any their park-bench protégé had previously known: yet they didn't seem to see Hitler at all like the nasty caricature Dr. Reinhold and his cronies elected to see. True, when they tried to introduce into those circles of the wealthier Munich intelligentsia this tiresome but vital, this incredibly naïf yet incredibly gifted and indeed sometimes entrancing performing pet of theirs, then things tended to happen which embarrassed and galled Hitler, so that Hitler was never really at ease there and retaliated with an assumed contempt. But on musical weekends here at Uffing, with Putzi and Helene themselves (alone or with only the clammy gloomy young Rosenberg for a foil) he could always entirely uncurl. He could be then all soul and wit: and how they responded! Baby Egon in particular adored his 'Funny Uncle Dolf': for Hitler could always be marvellous with children (which seems to be a common corollary of an addiction to chastity, even so secret and compulsive and perverse a chastity as his) (pp. 258-259).

The quote exemplifies Hughes's kaleidoscopic method and empathetic approach, forcing the readers to take into account a whole series of differing viewpoints and conflicting opinions. The nickname Putzi³ has been left unexplained, but his academic title suggests solid upper middle-class respectability, a point which Dr. Hanfstaengl himself had elaborated in his memoirs: "It was still very much a sign of respectability in Germany to be able to call yourself 'Herr Doktor', and I thought the least I could do was to conform" (p. 140). The epithet "German-American German" points to Hanfstaengl's dual national allegiance. Distinctive differences in a class-conscious society are briefly sketched, with Hitler described as a seedy character on a park bench while the Hanfstaengls move and mingle in the civilised circles of the intelligentsia. Then the text changes from a straightforward presentation of more or less undisputed facts into a jumble of varying subjective opinions, when the extradiegetic narrator intermittently gives room to intradiegetic focalizers. It is not always made clear who thinks what of whom. Who thinks that Dr. Reinhold's and his cronies' description of Hitler is a nasty caricature? Who considers Hitler naïve yet gifted? There is also a hint of patronising pride when the Hanfstaengls show their find, an exotic pet to be marvelled at. The narrative moves in-

³ "A large, amiable man — he was 6 feet 5 inches tall — with a jutting jaw and a bold nose, Dr. Hanfstängl assumed the role of court jester and front man for the Führer. His nickname, the diminutive [sic] Putzi, or small child, acquired in childhood, stuck to him and seemed appropriate, despite his size" (Obituary in *The New York Times*, November 9, 1975).

side Hitler very briefly: who but himself can tell if his contempt was assumed or not? That the negative epithets “clammy” and “gloomy” reflect Ernst Hanfstaengl’s critical view of Rosenberg is something that the reader understands from the parenthesis; Putzi’s jealousy is also implied. His strong hatred of Rosenberg was made quite clear in his memoirs, but it will also surface in the novel.

*

Ernst Hanfstaengl was born in 1887. His mother was an American Sedgwick, and that was also his middle name. The Hanfstaengl family firm was well-known for its art reproductions and had a New York branch to which Ernst was apprenticed. He took his BA at Harvard in 1909 and befriended both presidents Roosevelt, the former Theodore and the future Franklin Delano. After art studies in Switzerland, Austria and Italy, he returned to New York in 1911 and spent ten years as head of the Hanfstaengl & Sons Galleries on the corner of Fifth Avenue and 45th Street. When he returned to Germany, he was married to the American Helene Niemeyer. Their son Egon was born on February 3, 1921.

Seven years later, Ernst Hanfstaengl received his doctorate in Munich, at the Ludwig-Maximilian University. His thesis, *Europa und das belgisch-bairische Tauschprojekt im 18. Jahrhundert*, focussed on European power politics from an Austrian point of view, especially the initiatives to establish links between Belgium and Bavaria.⁴ The brief curriculum vitae that was included explained that the 164 page long thesis had been written between 1924 and 1927. Bearing his political activities in mind, they must have been busy years.⁵ His later book *America and Europe from Marlborough to Mirabeau* attracted Oswald Spengler’s attention and appreciation. Hanfstaengl’s *Hitler: The Missing Years* had a dedication which was posthumous in more than just one sense: “To the Memory of Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) Historian, Philosopher, Patriot and Friend whose unheeded warnings and prophecies about Hitler became such grim reality.”

Hanfstaengl became a member of the Nazi party in 1931, but his first contacts with Hitler had been made as early as 1922. He was soon appointed the party’s liaison officer with the foreign press, a position that he held until 1937. He was not uncritical of the hierarchical structure of the party, and his outspoken criticism made him become increasingly marginalized; his relation to Hitler that had once been warm deteriorated. Ac-

⁴ Hanfstaengl (1928), p. 4.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

ording to his memoirs, an attempt to assassinate him was made in 1937. He was to have been parachuted down on communist lines in Civil War Spain or thrown out of the airplane as target practice.⁶ He escaped to Switzerland (he was by then divorced), and arranged to get his son out of Germany as well. During the Second World War he was involved in American counter-intelligence, and then returned to Munich after an exile of ten years. He died on November 6, 1975.

Readers of *The New York Times* were informed by Robert D. McFadden's obituary three days later, headed "Hanfstaengl, Hitler's Pianist-Aide, Dies", in which his role as unofficial presidential adviser was toned down ("he had no direct contact with the President") and it was stated that what had endeared him to Hitler was his piano rather than his politics: "Often, he amused his boss with little 'piano portraits' of their other cronies — with bass chords evoking the lumbering Hermann Göring, and delicate trills calling forth the sly hustle of Heinrich Himmler".

Ernst Hanfstaengl had not been well-liked by everybody in the hornets' nest of Hitler sycophants. Otto Strasser was highly critical of him:

Each time Putzi comes into the picture, there is a strong temptation to examine him in detail, to try once more to describe the indescribable. But space does not permit — nor his relative unimportance warrant — such special attention, even as a comic relief. Just take it for granted that whenever he enters the story, it is as the Nazi Nonesuch, and that whenever his mood is tragic or gay or mysterious, he is always ridiculous.⁷

⁶ A late memoir, written in 1986 by one of Admiral Canaris' and Walter Schellenberg's counter-intelligence men, Reinhard Spitzzy, gives a totally different picture of this incident: it was just an elaborate practical joke, a prank to amuse Hitler who had set it in motion: "Everything, it seemed, was going swimmingly for Hanfstaengl until, that is, the day his luck ran out." Spitzzy explains: "Hitler had been reminiscing about the war years, especially about the privations and sufferings which he and his colleagues had had to put up with on the Somme. Not wishing to be outdone, Hanfstaengl then began to talk about his own experiences in an American internment camp . . . Hitler listened and grimaced, but said nothing, and, after consulting with Goering, he resolved to teach the impudent Hanfstaengl a lesson he would never forget" (Spitzzy 1997, p. 147). Hanfstaengl was sent on his mission to Spain, but the pilot just circled Northern Germany and set down an unwitting Hanfstaengl safely on a field near Potsdam. But Hanfstaengl had the last laugh. He packed a briefcase with compromising documents, stayed clear of Germany and successfully blackmailed the Nazis into giving him foreign exchange and an overseas pension, according to Spitzzy. Hughes may have wished to include some of this, had he got the chance; what Hitler had told Hanfstaengl about life in the trenches went into Chapter fourteen of "The Meistersingers", in dramatic detail.

⁷ Strasser (1943), p. 229. — The Australian Stephen H. Roberts had stated it more objectively six years earlier: "Probably Hess and Bruckner and the talkative, irrepressible Hanfstaengl know most about [Hitler's] private life" (Roberts 1937, p. 17).

One reason for Strasser's contempt may have been that he sided with Alfred Rosenberg who was Hanfstaengl's main object of antipathy, derision and loathing. Strasser described Hanfstaengl as ridiculous but not totally harmless, and added a prophecy that was almost carried out quite literally from an aeroplane over Spain, if Hanfstaengl's memoirs are to be trusted — which is not always the case:

He was just the type to let the genii of shameless party-strife out of the bottle without knowing or caring if it could be corked up again. Such a man, more frivolous than sinister, would continue to imperil the Party as long as he remained in it. If any one was to be cast out, we must rehearse on Putzi!⁸

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Hanfstaengl's *Hitler: the Missing Years* was published in 1957. Like Anton Kubizek had done in his *Hitler: Mein Jugendfreund* four years earlier, Hanfstaengl shed light on some fairly obscure phases in Hitler's career. His book covers the fifteen years of initial failures and later successes in Hitler's rise to power, from the year before the Putsch to the year before the Anschluss.⁹ It is a lively account, entertaining, garrulous and full of gossip. The way in which it came to be written is explained by Hanfstaengl in a foreword. It is a book by two authors although only one of them appears on the title page: "Our method was this: Mr. Connell spent two months in Bavaria and every day, for hours on end, took tape recordings of my discourse". Initially, Hanfstaengl had been doubtful of the project, but his reluctance had been overcome by the imagination and enthusiasm of the interrogator: "From these recordings and from previously compiled material of my own, he then prepared a draft manuscript, which resulted, after joint revision, in the present text" (p. 9). Like Kurt G. W. Ludecke, Otto Strasser and other memoirists implicated in the early years of Nazism before him, Hanfstaengl concluded his foreword with an emotionally charged tribute to his "friends and comrades of those years — many of them no longer alive — who stuck by me, who hoped, worked and took risks, only to be cruelly disillusioned just as I was" (p. 9).

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

⁹ Of the seven chapters in Sebastian Haffner's *The Meaning of Hitler*, one is devoted to "Successes", another to "Failures". In the first of these, Haffner states that "All Hitler's successes fall within a span of twelve years, 1930 to 1941. Previously, he had been consistently unsuccessful in a political career which, after all, had been going on for ten years. His putsch in 1923 had failed, and his party, newly founded in 1925, had remained an insignificant splinter party until 1929. After 1941, indeed from the autumn of 1941 onwards, there were again no more successes" (Haffner 1979, p. 49).

Brian Connell wrote an introduction to the original edition which was both appreciative and apologetic and no doubt influenced by the person that he had interviewed, who was said to be "a representative of that dwindling human species — a character" (p. 11). Connell was clearly impressed by the man he had taped: "Not only was he one of the best raconteurs of his time, but a superb mimic who could remember the atmosphere and tone of voice of conversations held twenty-five and thirty-five years earlier" (p. 14). This "master of the spoken word" was in Connell's view the only literate person in the inner Nazi circle, and "the only educated man of good family and cultural background at Hitler's elbow" (p. 12). Connell was not unaware that the reader would look at the memoirs' whitewashing manoeuvres with some suspicion, but should Hanfstaengl "appear to protest unduly in his memoirs about his personal resistance and attitudes to the Nazi regime, there were plenty of witnesses, German and foreign, who could testify to every word and more", he wrote (p. 14). Brian Connell added a statement that would make any critically inclined historian suspicious, saying that he had "reconstituted" these memoirs; he had had "the exhilarating task of orchestrating [Hanfstaengl's] flood of reminiscence" (p. 14).

When the book was reissued close to forty years after its original publication, John Toland, an authority on Hitler, supplied a curiously uncritical preface to what he called a "classic memoir". He gave a final note of caution but glossed it over at once: "Some historians have dismissed Hanfstaengl as a mountebank, but, with all his quirks, he was one of the few who ever stood up to the Führer and then lived to write about it in fascinating detail" (p. 7).

In 1970, Hanfstaengl's second book of memoirs, *Zwischen Weissem und Braunem Haus* was published, reiterating for German readers much of what he had already told his British and American ones. Its subtitle, the "Erinnerungen eines politischen Aussenseiters", showed that the writer was fully aware of his own marginal role as a political outsider. When his two books are referred to by historians, for example Werner Maser in his monograph on Hitler, it is mainly in connection with minor factual points, e. g. what was on Hitler's early bookshelf¹⁰ or if Hitler had really

¹⁰ "The upper shelves were those he liked to refer to in front of visitors. They included a history of the Great War by Hermann Stegemann, and Ludendorff's book on the same subject . . . Clausewitz' *Vom Kriege* and the history of Frederick the Great by Kugler, a biography of Wagner by Houston Stewart Chamberlain . . . and the war memories of Svan [sic] Hedin. These were the books which formed Hitler's opinions and knowledge for the years to come. But perhaps more interesting was the bottom shelf, where in an

read von Clausewitz' *On War*. Personal opinions and expressions of sympathy and antipathy in the memoirs have largely been avoided by historians, though not by the novelist Richard Hughes. He made good use of Hanfstaengl's first volume of memoirs in his novels and was then himself mentioned in Hanfstaengl's second volume. It must be one of the very few examples of an author who had incorporated facts from a political memoir into a novel, and then had his novel acknowledged with appreciation in a following volume of memoir by the writer whose first text he had borrowed.

The 1994 reprint of *Hitler: the Missing Years* also has an afterword, this time by Egon Hanfstaengl, written nineteen years after his father's death (and eighteen after Hughes's). It is an informative addition, filled with filial piety. Apart from sketching his father's American years, it also fills in the picture of him as an accomplished pianist who improvised with ease. The pianist Wilhelm Backhaus had once vouched for Putzi's talent: "Some things you play better than any of us: Schubert songs, Strauss waltzes, and military marches" (p. 303). The Afterword maintains that because Ernst Hanfstaengl had not experienced life in the trenches, he was considered an outsider among the Nazis. One of his brothers had been killed in action in 1915, though. Both are pieces of biographical information that Richard Hughes would have appreciated: Augustine feels an outsider for exactly the same reason, and it is because his cousin has been killed in action that he has inherited his estate from his uncles. Egon Hanfstaengl ended his afterword as apologetically as his father had done his: "my father spent the rest of his life enjoying the present and suffering from the past: endlessly lacerating himself about what went wrong and what he might have done to avert the disaster triggered by his erstwhile friend Adolf Hitler" (p. 308).

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When his first memoirs were published in England in 1957, Hanfstaengl was interviewed on the BBC. Richard Hughes kept a copy of the transcript, and some of the matters discussed in the programme touched on things that were of interest to him when he collected source material for his portrait of Hitler. On the radio programme, Hanfstaengl claimed that he had never seen Hitler reading a book, and yet he seemed able to discuss whichever book one happened to mention. There was a single exception: he had

abrupt descent from Mars to Venus, editions of a semi-pornographic nature lay discreetly shrouded in Edgar Wallace thrillers" (Hanfstaengl 1957, pp. 47-48).

seen Hitler read a political book which placed him on a par with G. B. Shaw, whom Hanfstaengl had quoted: "I am the person who should be sent to talk to Hitler, for I am the only other person who has read Wagner's political writings." Putzi also touched on Hitler and animals, a topic which the official propaganda willingly exploited. Hitler's first dog had been an Alsatian, given him by his bodyguard Ulrich Graf: "He needed the friendship of a dog because he was so aloof from human friendships". Some observations about his peculiar party manners and his taste in music later made their way into Hughes's novel. Concerning Hitler's manners, Hanfstaengl said:

[They] were those of an N.C.O. in mufti. He was a great speaker — but he could also be silent for immense stretches, and he had no social small talk. If he had to talk to the ladies, he talked about their children, he told funny stories of his childhood.

And Hanfstaengl told his listeners that Hitler "was a great mimic, very amusing indeed", and that "he was absolutely *dependent* on Wagner." ¹¹ On the radio, Hanfstaengl also discussed Hitler's impotence and his morbid fear of water (see above, p. 124): "I saw this myself, on the Tegernsee — a pleasant little mountain lake . . . the girls were jumping about in the dinghy, as girls will — changing places and all that and I could see that Hitler was *terrified*." The memoirs had mentioned Hitler's "unreasoning fear of the water" and linked it to gossip of a sleazy kind: "A story, probably authentic, was frequently told that Hitler's old army comrades, who had seen him in the wash-house, had noted that his genital organs were almost freakishly underdeveloped . . ." (p. 137).¹² Richard Hughes showed greater reserve. He did not go to such excesses as Hanfstaengl had done, but he made much out of Hitler's obsessional hydrophobia in his novel, both in Hitler's frenzied dreams in the attic of the Hanfstaengl house in Uffing and at his meeting with Mussolini. The later passage is filled with a characteristic blend of surmise and suspicion:

[The venue of the meeting must have] been prompted by malice — the Duce's crazy proposal to hold their talks in a boat on the open lagoon. That knowing smirk on the Duce's face when the Führer flatly refused.... Some spy must have told him the

¹¹ BBC interview broadcast on Dec. 3, 1957.

¹² Hitler's possible monorchidism is discussed by Norman Davies in *Europe: A History* (1996), pp. 972-973. — Ron Rosenbaum, who talks of a "genital-wound school of Hitler interpretation", adds a gender perspective: "Some might say that it's the ultimate act of phallogocentric thinking to insist that whatever was wrong with Adolf Hitler had to originate with his genitalia" (*The New Yorker*, May 1, 1995, p. 53).

Führer's fine-strung nerves couldn't bear bobbing about in boats with all that water below him (*Shepherdess*, p. 335).

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One recurring theme in Hanfstaengl's book is his constant efforts to keep Hitler aloof from his uncultured group of early associates, though this had met with little success. It is also suggested *ad nauseam* that had Hitler only followed Hanfstaengl's good advice in foreign policy and other matters, things would have turned out differently. In addition to contrafactual and hypothetical hindights like these, Hanfstaengl liked to paint pictures in black and white, with the blame and the accusations firmly placed where he thought they belonged. There is no lack of hate objects in his memoirs. Two persons he hated for a special reason, as appears from this quote: "Until Goebbels appeared on the scene, which was some years later, Rosenberg was the principal antagonist in my attempts to make Hitler see reason" (p. 41). Alfred Rosenberg, the antisemitic ideologist, was seen as "intrinsically illiterate, carried along by his ridiculous Nordic race resentments" (p. 123), while Goebbels, who himself was an expert at back-stabbing, was always seen in an unsympathetic light. Yet another unsavoury physical detail was added: Hanfstaengl had seen his clump-foot "looking like a fist, awful", an observation followed by a distasteful pun: Goebbels "was not only schizophrenic but schizopedic, and that was what made him so sinister" (p. 224). Like Hughes, Hanfstaengl had a keen eye for the significant detail, but his taste was more questionable. When he had met Mussolini in Rome, he had observed the carbuncle on top of Mussolini's bare skull, which was always retouched on official photographs.

Hanfstaengl was less penetrating when he looked into himself. There are few traces of self-criticism in his memoirs but many instances of self-aggrandisement, boasting and name-dropping. The memoirs make entertaining reading but their worth as a historical source can be questioned, a fact that Richard Hughes surely was aware of.¹³

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In an analysis of Richard Hughes and the historical imagination, Richard Poole focuses on a significant detail in the Hanfstaengl memoirs that Hughes made part of his fiction, Hitler's whip. Poole quotes from the memoirs: "He used to play the romantic revolutionary for [his landlady's] benefit, stamping round and cracking his rhinoceros-hide whip" (p. 83). Poole also cites what immediately follows in the memoirs, the gossip

¹³ Ian Kershaw corrects Hanfstaengl's memoirs on many factual points, in the footnotes to his chapter "The Drummer" in *Hitler 1889-1936. Hubris* (1998).

Hanfstaengl had from another Hitler adherent, the nationalist poet Dietrich Eckart who died from a heart attack on the day before Christmas Eve, 1923:

“You know, Hanfstaengl,” I remember him saying, “something has gone completely wrong with Adolf. The man is developing an incurable case of *folie de grandeur*. Last week he was striding up and down in the courtyard here with that damned whip of his and shouting, ‘I must enter Berlin like Christ in the Temple of Jerusalem and scourge out the moneylenders’, and more nonsense of that sort” (p. 83).

When the same phrase is recycled as a quote in Hughes’s novel (in Hitler’s delirious frenzy at Uffing), “*Woe to the bloody city! It is full of lies and robbery . . . the noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the prancing horses, and of the jumping chariots...*”, (p. 265), it almost has the sound of the military parade in T. S. Eliot’s Coriolan poem *Triumphal March*. It is an illustration of Hughes’s advanced intertextuality. What Hughes made Hitler dream was borrowed from Hanfstaengl who had it from Eckart who had heard it from Hitler himself! Adding to the density and complexity of his paragraph, the novelist inserted a biblical echo by quoting Nahum, the prophet (3. 1-3).

Richard Poole maintains that what Hanfstaengl’s confidant had reported “as an objective fact about Hitler is transformed in Hughes’s text into a subjective psychological truth.”¹⁴ It is easy to agree with the later part of his statement, but it is debatable if the novelist thought he found objectivity in these memoirs. Hanfstaengl was rather expressing a long series of subjective opinions. Hughes introduced his novel stating that “The historical characters and events are as accurately historical as I can make them: I may have made mistakes but in no case have I deliberately falsified the record once I could worry it out.” Did he take into account that in many cases, not least in connection with Hanfstaengl’s memoirs, he could very well have trusted unreliable sources which may have falsified the record, whether this was intentional or not? The question is worth asking when the many connections between Hanfstaengl’s *Hitler: The Missing Years* and Hughes two last novels come into focus.

The threads are many in this tightly woven web. Much material from the memoirs was incorporated in the first novel’s reconstruction of the Putsch and its chapter about Hitler at Uffing; equally much went into the second novel’s chapters about Hitler in prison, about the Hanfstaengl

¹⁴ Poole 1986, p. 225.

Christmas, and about Geli Raubal, and finally into the reconstruction of the Purge.

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Chapter nineteen of "The White Crow" relies on more sources than Hanfstaengl's memoirs, but the borrowings from that book are numerous and sometimes easy to spot. The novel's "the door burst open and in tumbled young Hermann Goering" (p. 192) varies Hanfstaengl's more expressive "the door behind us which we had come through flew open and in burst Goering, looking like Wallenstein on the march" (p. 97). Hanfstaengl's historical allusion was more likely to be readily understood by Germans than by Britons.

When he mentioned Rütli's oath in Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* two pages later in his memoirs, Hanfstaengl took for granted a certain familiarity with German classics and German history, even if his memoirs were originally published in English. Hughes also assumed that his readers were comparatively well-read, though in the English rather than the German classics. One example is the passage from *The Canterbury Tales* which he quoted without identifying it, in order to convey Wolff's feelings when he has fallen in deep and romantic love with the unknown girl he has looked down on from up in his tower, "in the same knightly way as Palamon in his Athenian tower". Wolff, implicated in the killing of Rathenau, would not very likely have known Chaucer enough to quote him, but the novelist took it for granted that his readers had the necessary knowledge to identify the following: "For Mitz's yellow hair too was 'broyded in a tresse/ Bihinde hir bak, a yerde long I gesse,'¹⁵ and like Palamon, the moment he saw it Wolff too had 'bleynte, and cryde 'A!' / As if he stongen were unto the herte'" (p. 283).¹⁶

When Hughes introduces his historical figures on the scene, as he did in the Bürgerbräu cellar, he often filled in the picture and supplied more information than could be found in a single source. One example is

¹⁵ Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*: "The Knight's Tale", lines 191-192.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, lines 220-221. — This is how Patrick Swinden comments on this: "Wolff is the least likely person to summon these lines to mind. Hughes has put them there to expand the possibilities of the situation. Like so much of the imagery — including the epic similes and the descriptive set pieces — the lines from Chaucer have the effect . . . of an airy expansion, a sense of the continuity of the action with the vast continuum of human life which stretches out beyond the interlocking action of this one book. Hughes's preoccupation with forces lying beneath the level of differentiated character does not involve his readers either in the toils of passion or the thin air of abstracted argument. Instead, there is something Chaucerian in the effect of the novel as a whole. As in the *Troilus*, all is referred to a dominating metaphysical schema, and then back again to the teeming and patterned multiplicity of the world at large" (Swinden 1984, pp. 55-56).

Hanfstaengl's "They all lined up on the platform: Kahr, Lossow and Seisser, Ludendorff, Frick and Poehner, all looking very grave and history-conscious" (p. 100). Hughes split this passage up, adding information for his readers' benefit. One of Dr. Reinhold's listeners interrupts him: "'Poehner?'" said someone incredulously: 'That... long, stuttering policeman?'

'Once — Gaoler of Stadelheim! — Now, Bavaria's new prime minister!' said Reinhold with ceremony . . ." (p. 193). On the other hand, the novel's "young Hermann Goering in all his tinkling medals — all gongs and glamour — is left to keep *us* amused!" (p. 193) is a compression of seven lines in the memoirs:

Goering jumped on to the platform and, with his matchless lack of tact, informed the audience that the leaders had now gone into conference and that everybody else was to remain where they were. "In any case, there is beer to drink," he said in the unmistakable tone of contempt of the northern German for the Bavarian, as if to suggest that as long as they had a stein in their hands there was little else they needed (pp. 98-99).

Hughes's italics summed up an irritation which was more explicitly stated in his source. Bavarian Hanfstaengl clearly disliked being told what to do on home territory by a Prussian outsider and intruder who was conspicuously lacking in manners.

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In Chapter twenty-one, Lothar the befuddled witness remembers that he has been at the Ludwig Bridge, and then in the arsenal. He is dripping wet and thinks he has swum the river but has no memory of it. What follows (pp. 205-207) rests on at least four particular details in the Hanfstaengl memoirs: the orchestra; the clothes; the sardonic voice; Lothar's inner command that he must find Göring.

The memoirs' "the civilian band, which Brückner, Hitlers adjutant, had rustled up from somewhere . . . this morose and resentful band was produced and demanded first breakfast and then prepayment" (p. 104) is slightly changed in the novel as it is perceived by a witness: [a brass band] "were arguing; they looked hungry and obstinate . . . the bandmen were demanding breakfast before they'd play to them — and at that word Lothar's saliva glands stabbed so violently it hurt like toothache" (p. 206).¹⁷

¹⁷ That last sentence, with several others, was selected as particularly objectionable from a stylistic point of view by the highly negative American critic J. Mitchell Morse in his review of *The Fox in the Attic*: "The quality of the prose is suitable to that of the sen-

"The entrance corridor was completely empty, apart from the vast pile of top-hats, uniform-coats and swords in the cloakroom. It was quite clear that the *élite* of the whole capital of Munich was there," Ernst Hanfstaengl observed (p. 96). In the memoirs, this had happened before the Bürgerbräu meeting while the same episode takes place the following day in the novel, where its purpose is more far-reaching. This is what Lothar sees: "The place was still littered with many of last night's top-hats, furs, opera-cloaks, uniform-coats, dress-swords..." (p. 206). Clothes and what they both hide and reveal exemplify Hughes's interest in the fake and imitations, insincerity and double-dealings, his "Diskrepanz zwischen Schein und Sein" that Hildegard Kruse has noted at work in regard to both people and buildings.¹⁸ She exemplifies her observation with Tottersdown Abbey, "a fake-Victorian mansion, though really built in the Middle Ages" (*Shepherdess*, p. 193). It would be possible to group the many characters in the two novels along a scale between the genuine and the fake. Most politicians, German as well as British, would tend towards the latter. Gilbert, Augustine's brother-in-law and a Liberal MP, is one of the least genuine and most insincere characters. Hitler's is a more complicated case, as someone who has more of surface than substance, more of "Schein" than "Sein". This is especially pronounced in Hughes's posthumously published *Twelve Chapters*. The fictive character who ruminates about der Führer is the German businessman Herr Paganuzzi in whom Hitler has confided during a meeting at Haus Wachenfelt, outside Berchtesgaden:

Perhaps it's the same with all Hitler's innermost thoughts: they are always whatever that man imagines his hearers are thinking themselves, so that hearing the Führer confide in you comes to no more than seeing yourself distorted in Hitler's unflattering mirror: in fact, you see nothing of Hitler's own mind at all.

If indeed any such thing exists! For that makes the whole nature of Hitler's "greatness" merely a preternatural empathy, turning him into a caricature of yourself whoever you are — and even, however many you are: an incarnate caricature of the whole German Nation (p. 434).

This speculative interpretation, as well as Hughes's ideas of a "chameleon effect", could very well have been inspired by what Hanfstaengl had suggested in his memoirs, that Hitler was a kind of medium, hypersensitive to his surroundings: "His brain was a sort of primeval jelly or ectoplasm

timent" (*The Hudson Review*, vol. XV, no. 2, Summer 1962, p. 301).

¹⁸ Kruse, p. 298.

which quivered in response to every impulse from its surroundings" (p. 265).

Lothar's imperative "*He must find Captain Goering ... Where are they?*" (p. 206) varies what Hanfstaengl had heard in the newspaper office of the *Völkischer Beobachter*: "We could hear Hitler stomping up and down the corridor and heels clicking as he called out 'Where is Captain Goering?'" (p. 91). Many scattered observations in the memoirs thus found their way into the novel, varied and adapted. Hanfstaengl's "Hitler ... now and again biting a finger-nail" (p. 96) becomes Lothar catching a glimpse of someone he does not recognize, "some nondescript with his back turned, gnawing his fingernails ..." (p. 208). Hughes could have elaborated this point but did not: many contemporary witnesses saw in Hitler's fingernail-biting a warning signal of violent outbursts of fury.

Hanfstaengl also reported in his memoirs what he had heard, or maybe what he maintained that he had heard an over-excited Hitler say: "Tomorrow either we are successful and masters of a united Germany or we shall be hanging from the lamp-posts" (p. 102). The words reappear in the novel but the mood is different, as if the main actors already have had a premonition of an imminent disaster this early. Lothar is the ear-witness for the following: "*Tonight we'll be hanging from the lamp-posts in the Ludwigstrasse!*" (p. 208). In the novel, the narrator has added both concreteness ("*Ludwigstrasse*") and scepticism ("*The interruption had been so brief that these histrionic words seemed still suspended on the stale air*").

Details found far apart in the memoirs were combined, compressed and digested in various ways in the novel. The memoirs' "Roehm and his Reichskriegsflagge could be relied upon. In fact he stormed and held the War Ministry with the officer cadets the following day" (p. 93) was abbreviated into "while Roehm with his Reichskriegsflagge had seized the local War Office" (p. 209) and combined with what the memoirs had reported only at a later stage:

Somehow one sensed that all was not going well with the Putsch plans in the city. We had the news that Roehm had succeeded in taking over the Army headquarters with the officer cadets he had suborned, but elsewhere matters were by no means going so smoothly (p. 101).

The narrator in the novel resorts to historical hindsight even if the narrative at this point is in the very middle and muddle of an ongoing rebel-

lion: "there can seldom have been a would-be coup-d'état so naïvely impromptu and unplanned" (p. 209).

Many details about three historical characters in the novel were taken from Hanfstaengl's portraits of them in his memoirs: Rosenberg, Scheubner-Richter and Göring. Half-way through Chapter twenty-three of "The White Crow", Lothar has reached the offices of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, and its "philosopher-editor" Alfred Rosenberg comes into focus. Lothar notices the garish colour of his clothes, "bright blue trousers and dirty orange socks with clocks" (p. 214-215). Bad taste as well as bad smell are suggested, but still toned down from the source. Alfred Rosenberg was, as stated, one of the chief objects for Hanfstaengl's hatred, and he is seen throughout the memoirs as an uncouth plebeian. Hanfstaengl was not free from a racial slur when he described Rosenberg as a proletarian from the east, with an "unsavoury love life . . . It must have been the Tartar in him". Time had not softened Hanfstaengl's bitterness towards this rival for Hitler's favour: "Rosenberg was such an unappetizing fellow", Hanfstaengl writes, and he exemplifies:

In dress he had the taste of a costermonger's donkey, and on this occasion I remember very well he was wearing a violet shirt with a scarlet tie, with a brown waistcoat and blue suit. He had some theory about it being a waste of money to wash shirts and used to throw them away when they became unwearable even by his standards (p. 91).

There is no need to show the same resentment in the novel, but some of the negative attitude nevertheless has rubbed off. Whenever Rosenberg appears in the fiction, he is shown in a negative light.

As for the man who had been beside Hitler in the march, Max Erwin von Scheubner-Richter, Hanfstaengl mentions him on several pages, and Hughes noted all six instances on a research card. In the novel he compressed this information. Hanfstaengl had written that Scheubner-Richter was a crony of Rosenberg's and a Balt like him, that he and Ludendorff had "concocted a crazy plan" to kidnap Prince Rupprecht, and that he had devised the original plan for the Putsch. Of this mesh of suspicion and half-hidden accusations one thread only was left in the novel, the italicized "He' d see to it the old general wasn't left in the lurch" (p. 221).

The concluding Chapters twenty-six and twenty-seven of "The White Crow" rely partly on Hanfstaengl both for details and mood. The memoirs' "True to their wartime training, all the old soldiers had thrown them-

selves to the ground at the sound of machine-gun fire" (p. 105) is only somewhat expanded in the novel's "Almost all the leaders, their nerves already keyed to snapping-point, had flung themselves down instantly like Hitler, performing the old soldier's instinctive obeisance to the flying bullet" (p. 224). But there is a difference, in that the novel implies that the soldiers that followed behind were less quick in doing this than the leaders marching in front of them. Most casualties actually occurred in the second line. There is a suggestion of cowardice in this: "Thus it was they who chiefly suffered, not the leaders." Some lines further on in his memoirs Hanfstaengl had noted: "The police had mostly fired into the ground and the ricocheting bullets and splinters from the granite setts had caused many nasty wounds" (p. 106). The novel repeated this: "The reluctant police were mostly pointing their carbines at the ground; but that saved no lives, for the flattened bullets bouncing off the granite setts only made the uglier wounds" (p. 224).

Hanfstaengl's "Goering had two bullets in the groin" (p. 105) is elaborated in the novel, no doubt with the help of other sources: "Young Hermann Goering with two bullet-gashes in the groin was trying to drag himself behind one of the stone lions in front of the Residenz palace." Why this insistence on Göring's tender age? In his research file, Hughes had some cardboard sheets with the year of birth of most of his characters, factual as well as fictional. At any time he could check that Hitler was born in 1889 and thus twenty years younger than Chamberlain, Ribbentrop in 1893 and the same age as Gilbert; and Heydrich, born in 1904, would have been Lothar's senior by one year but Wolff's junior, also by one year. But the sheets did not enter the years of birth for Göring and Goebbels. In the year of the Putsch Hermann Göring turned thirty, hardly an age to warrant him the novel's standing epithet "young". Röhm was six years older, Gregor Strasser only one year older, whereas his brother Otto was four years younger (and the novelist at the time of writing was double Göring's age).

The novel leaves Göring behind the stone lion for two pages, and then he is taken to a Jewish doctor "who patched him up with infinite kindness (a kindness Goering never forgot) and hid him in his own house" (p. 227-228). Hanfstaengl had recalled how he had visited Göring after the Putsch at a hospital in Innsbruck. His satirical comments on the official Party line on racial theories sound somewhat hollow, considering that he resorted to an Aryan concept. They were of no immediate use for the novelist, though:

He told me how he had managed to crawl up behind one of the monumental lions in front of the Residenz Palace after he had been hit. Some of the brownshirts had then carried him to the first doctor in the Residenzstrasse, who happened to be a Jew and for many years afterwards Goering spoke warmly of his kindness and skill. Goering was never one of the crazy anti-Semites of the Party, and, as one of the few unmistakably Aryan members of Hitler's entourage, was the least fervent exponent of their racial theories (p. 110).

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Ernst Hanfstaengl's report from the Bürgerbräu cellar was detailed: he had been there. His report from the discussions that took place early the next day covers a good page: he had been there as well. His report from the march is more sketchy: he had been there only at the beginning. When the situation had seemed hopeless, he had returned home and prepared for a get-away. His sister Erna, who had received a phone call from Ferdinand Sauerbruch, the surgeon (see above, p. 45), informed him of the progress of the march. Hanfstaengl tore out of his flat, he wrote, and ran as far as the Pinakothek. There he was told by someone he recognised, "a sort of first-aid man in one of the S. A. brigades", what had happened: "They're all killed. Ludendorff's dead, Hitler's dead, Goering's dead..." (p. 105). In his memoirs, he inserted a short summary of the activities on the Odeonsplatz and corrected what he had learned from the unreliable SA man: "The three leaders were, of course, still alive" (p. 105).

Then the memoirs moved back to the immediate present of November: the ninth. Instead of checking for himself how things stood, Hanfstaengl had hurried back and on his way home he was picked up by four friends in a car: "In the hubbub of mutual inquiry I told them the news as I knew it" (p. 106). But there is no indication in the memoirs of how much he knew and what he knew at that moment. The same evening he made for the border, badly prepared and without a passport, but got across, and kept away from Munich for a while. It is evident that he was not the most accurate of witnesses and his memoirs were not the most reliable of sources. In Hughes's novel, the march takes up much more space and relies on many more sources. But the picture is still almost as patchy as Hanfstaengl's was. The action is seen by many eyes and from many and varying directions.

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Ernst Hanfstaengl was no direct witness to the aftermath of the Putsch as regards the fate of Hitler, its central character, who ended up in a place that Hanfstaengl was familiar with but which he avoided just then: "The last place it would have occurred to me to go was my own home in Uffing,

where I would surely be sought and arrested", he writes (p. 106). Then follows a description of Hitler's two days in hiding in the attic room at the Hanfstaengl house, a report entirely at second remove, which Ernst Hanfstaengl in all honesty admitted: "To my astonishment, I was to learn that Hitler had chosen it as his hiding-place." Ernst Hanfstaengl's memoirs devoted less than two pages to Hitler's hiding in his house, but what he stated came from a witness that he knew well: he was married to her.

He described the attic room, its bed and what was on it, details that were to gain in importance in the novel: "the bed was covered by the two English travelling-rugs I had acquired in my student days, which [Hitler] later took with him to Landsberg prison" (p. 107). Hughes made those rugs carry a heavier symbolic weight in his fiction than they had in real life. When Hitler has been caught and is led downstairs to the waiting open truck, he is "trailing Putzi's prized English rug by one corner like a child who has been playing Indians (but his whip was forgotten)" (p. 272). By zooming in on a seemingly insignificant detail in his source and hinting at emasculation (the forgotten whip) Hughes added to his ongoing analysis of Hitler's mind and character.

Richard Poole singles out this episode to illustrate what he regarded as Hughes's consummate art at suggesting Hitler's childishness, and adds an intriguing linguistic as well as psychological speculation: "Hughes's understanding of Hitler is clearly indebted to his understanding of the child-mind. Hitler, to put it crudely, has failed to grow up . . .". Later on the same page, Poole states:

Taking advantage of the rapport Hitler in actuality established with little Egon Hanfstaengl, Hughes creates an ironic link between the two. The closeness of 'Egon' and 'ego' was surely an historical windfall for Hughes (a gift of Clio herself).¹⁹

Ernst Hanfstaengl's account of the Uffing episode had deviated only twice from his otherwise straight chronology: when he corrected Konrad Heiden's garbled version of the same story, and when he questioned why Hitler had no wish to go into Austrian exile. Apart from these insertions, Hanfstaengl's two pages recapitulated what he had been told by his wife and his mother who both of them were Americans living in Germany.²⁰

¹⁹ Poole 1986, p. 198.

²⁰ His mother was Katherine Sedgwick Heine, "the Connecticut-born daughter of a Union general in the Civil War" (NYT November 9, 1975). The general, who was one of the pall bearers at President Lincoln's funeral, was born in Dresden but had fled to Paris during the 1848 revolution, and later emigrated to America. Ernst Hanfstaengl's family was

Hitler, half-delirious when he arrived at Uffing develops a high fever, and the narrative gradually moves not only in on him but inside him, at first via indirect speech showing Hitler's peevishness: "If only Putzi had been there to play Wagner to him, as David's harp soothed Saul! It was faithless of Putzi to absent himself now just when he was needed; and mentally Hitler chalked a bad mark against him" (p. 261). This last paragraph depended on the many instances in the memoirs where Hanfstaengl had soothed Hitler by playing Wagner and on the two instances where he had mentioned that bad marks had been chalked up against Röhm and Strasser.

The narrative moves swiftly via sound and sight into Hitler's mind: "It sounded like rain... or like a river...". Göring's gardener knocking on the door seems less real in the novel than he was in Hanfstaengl's memoirs. The text is suggestive of biblical betrayal and of premonitions of death: "Outside in the darkness and out of due time a village cock crowed. Then came the knocking... or was it only in a dream that there was a strange man trying to get in . . . a messenger from the shades, then — or a Judas?" (p. 262).

The borrowings from the memoirs were fewer in Chapter ten, most important of them the barrel of flour, which is given a strong sexual connotation when it is transformed by the nightmare. Out of it emerges the homosexual travelling salesman that Hitler had met in Vienna, a detail culled from Kubizek's memoirs (see above, p. 127). In Chapter eleven Hitler is still in a daze and mistakes Helene for Clara, his mother: "[She] took out of his hand something... it was something he didn't really want." (p. 270). Before being disarmed, "he began turning like a top in his efforts to draw his revolver with his one good arm" (p. 270). In the memoirs Hitler had shouted at the top of his voice, in the novel he turns like a top, in an interesting example of a metaphor turned into a concrete simile. It strengthens the suggestion at the end of the preceding chapter that Hitler had reverted back to childhood and to a pre-birth existence (in the passage already quoted above on p. 124): "He drew up his knees to his chin in the primal attitude and lay there, letting himself drown" (p. 268).²¹

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truly, as Hughes had stated, "German-American German".

²¹ This is even more explicit in a discarded manuscript, in which regression and a death-wish are combined: "so his mother *was* this water, the water drowning him, the water of the womb..."

In 1964, Hughes was working on some of the Coventry chapters for *The Wooden Shepherdess*. The scenes that he described would have happened forty years earlier. As usual, he went out of his way in search for written documents from that time but he also travelled to Coventry himself and interviewed people who had experienced that period; one of them happened to be his son's mother-in-law. In a letter he stated the problems that had faced him earlier and that beset him also now:

The problem then is similar to the one which faced me in the German part of the Fox: first, to discover and get access to all the written sources I can, and second, in spite of all the changes that have happened since, to learn all I can of the place and people by personal on-the-spot contact.²²

Similarly, he could have given his imagination free rein when he expanded two pages in the Hanfstaengl memoirs into fifteen in the novel. He could have relied on inventiveness, assumptions and conjectures. But he was too conscientious to choose the easy way out. Instead, he went to see Ernst Hanfstaengl himself. The travel notes that both he and his wife kept as well as his correspondence give the details. During the three weeks that the Hugheses spent in Bavaria in early 1956, they not only stayed with the von Aretin family but also seem to have taken the opportunity to visit Ernst Hanfstaengl, whose address in Preuzermauerstrasse is noted in a diary entry for February 13.

The "Spiral-Notizbuch" that Frances Hughes kept makes probable that, on a day when the Danube was frozen and they had seen thirty dead bats under a tree (a detail that duly ended up in the novel), they were entertained by Hanfstaengl and heard his views of the Putsch, Hitler and Goebbels (including his deformed foot). Hanfstaengl also told them about his hasty departure from Germany in 1937 when he had left the lights on in his house, to which he would not return for many years. He most likely also told them what he would tell his interviewer Brian Connell later the same year or early in the next. Many of Frances Hughes's entries read like a brief summing-up of passages in Ernst Hanfstaengl's memoirs published in 1957. It also seems probable that Ernst on this occasion gave them the addresses of his former wife Helene Hanfstaengl-Niemeyer and their son Egon, with whom Richard Hughes started corresponding in 1958. He would see both of them later and profit from their memories, as will be explained below, in the next two chapters.

²² RH to Robert Hughes, September 15, 1964.

In *The Wooden Shepherdess*, the first one and a half pages of Chapter ten of "The Meistersingers" offer instructive illustrations of Hughes's method of condensation. They rely entirely on the corresponding three opening pages of Hanfstaengl's fourth chapter, "Twilight at Landsberg". The time is immediately after the Putsch. The five short paragraphs of the novel have changed Hanfstaengl's narrative in the first person into one told in the third person, and the original's opinions and grievances are expressed less directly, or only implied. There is also a varied and complex perspective not found in the source. A narrator's point of view is added, and a fictional character's opinion is referred to parenthetically.

This was an economical way of using a source; little material was wasted. The novel made use of three incidents in Hanfstaengl's fourth chapter: his criticism of Göring and his wife; his visit to Hitler's Viennese relatives; and his own return to Munich after the Putsch. The same chapter also supplied Hughes with facts for three episodes in later chapters: Hitler at Landsberg; Hitler at Christmas dinner; Hitler and sexuality.

Hanfstaengl started his "Twilight at Landsberg" by mentioning Göring. Some details appeared in *The Fox in the Attic*, on the final page of "The White Crow", whereas others went into the next novel. Hanfstaengl had summed up what had happened to Göring: "From Munich he had been smuggled over the border, and in Innsbruck had to be operated on. He was suffering severe pain and had to be given two morphia injections a day" (p. 110). In Hanfstaengl's typical way when he mentioned his former rivals for Hitler's attention, there was a marked slur when he slyly suggested that the morphine treatment had turned Göring into a drug addict: "I have no personal and positive proof of this, but . . .". Hanfstaengl had been thirty-six years old in 1923 and thus was sixty-nine when he looked back at these turbulent years of his early years, but old age had not softened his views or made him forget unsettled scores. This was apparent when he touched on the topic of Göring and money: "I went back with Karin [Goering] to her hotel and found to my surprise that she was living in opulent fashion" (p. 110). Hughes's second novel states this in a less slanted way: "his wealthy wife arrived in Vienna and moved him into a decent hotel" (p. 150). The novelist had no cause to elaborate the point to the same degree as the memoirist, who had added, "The rest of us exiles were going around like tramps, but this was never the Goerings' way." Hanfstaengl, who was himself comfortably well off, never missed a chance in his memoirs to display his own generosity to the party; his comments on Karin and Hermann

Göring therefore seem hypocritical. A few lines further on, his readers found one possible reason for his negative opinion: Göring was, he wrote, one of those he had helped financially. He had never got the loan repaid.

The second point in the memoir chapter deals with Hanfstaengl's fretting out of Hitler's Austrian relatives. When that passage was transferred to Chapter ten of "The Meistersingers", Hughes added an ironical observation *en-passant*, that Putzi was hyper-active, an impression one also easily gets from his memoirs. Self-criticism was not Hanfstaengl's strongest point. If any irony hits him, it is hardly of his own making, but in Hughes's novels an ironic sidelight is often cast on him. His "I took advantage of my involuntary stay in Austria to look up Hitler's family in Vienna" became the novel's "Left thereafter with nothing to do, Putzi conceived the plan of seeking out Hitler's widowed sister here in Vienna." The novel suggests that he did this on purpose: "... Putzi'd a hazy idea that she might have her brother's ear, and he wanted her on his side" (p. 150), a plausible hint which had not been mentioned quite that openly in the source. The novelist added a guarded reservation, with some basis in the memoirs, that Hitler's half-sister and niece "hardly seemed likely to have much influence." This corresponded to what Hanfstaengl had stated outright, that he "had no reason to suppose that his family had the slightest influence on him." Both he and later Hughes could afford themselves some irony at this stage. Knowing what would come to pass some years later, they were aware that quite on the contrary, Hitler's niece was to gain a considerable influence on her uncle Alfi.²³ In some of their subsequent chapters, both Hanfstaengl and Hughes linked the Geli-Alfi relationship to an elaborate analysis of Hitler's mind.

The narrator in the novel describes Frau Raubal's quarters as miserable and her daughter as a slut:

However, when Putzi found [Hitler's sister] at last in a rotting tenement, living in squalid poverty, quite such an abject couple as she and her teenage daughter Geli hardly seemed likely to have much influence: still, he had taken them out for a drink. Geli was brassily pretty, and afterwards Putzi carried her off to a music-hall. Pretty — but sentimental and commonplace: Putzi was soon convinced he was wasting his time, in spite of her bubs — and to think that this little piece was the Führer's only niece!" (pp. 150-151).

In his memoirs, Hanfstaengl had been almost as negative:

²³ Waite, p. 225: "Hitler asked Geli to call him 'Uncle Alfi'".

[Frau Raubal was] living in abject poverty on the third or fourth floor of a crumbling tenement block. She would not open the door more than a slit . . . but even through this crack I could see that the place was bare and dirty and that on the floor of the hall there was nothing but a decrepit straw mattress. But she accepted an invitation to come out to a café and brought her not unattractive blonde daughter Geli . . . (pp. 111-112)

Hanfstaengl, who had found Geli "quite bold and pretty", had asked her to come along with him to a music-hall:

This was just the sort of entertainment which appealed to Geli's mediocre mind. Here we have gone through this Feldherrnhalle thing, I thought, and here is Hitler's niece clapping her hands off at this drivel (p. 112).

Both in the memoirs and in the novel, this forms the proletarian backdrop for a presentation of Hitler's niece Geli. A class perspective was present in the memoirs, with an upper middle-class observer who looked down on this working-class girl and without being able to quite make up his mind if he was attracted to or repelled by her. Putzi's perspective is also the novel's. But the crass coarseness does not rub off as much on Hitler's poor relatives as on the snobby bourgeois who looks at sixteen year-old Geli with a clear sexual interest and an equally clear social contempt, and who masks his inquisitiveness as an interest to create a better background for Hitler.²⁴ Hughes's last line condenses Hanfstaengl's despair at ever succeeding in turning Hitler into a cultured, socially acceptable and well-educated man, as expressed in his memoirs.

The third point concerned Putzi's return to Munich after his short Austrian exile, an episode aggrandised in the memoirs. Irony abounds on Hanfstaengl's pages, but it seldom hits himself. In the novel, however, Putzi is not much of a hero; in that sense Hughes was not quite loyal to his source. There is little room for grandiose gestures but some for the narrator's mild mockery. Traversing a single-track railway tunnel was a dangerous affair in the memoirs whereas in the novel, there is no hazard involved. In the memoirs, Putzi's outrageous disguise was meant to be taken seriously. There does not seem to be much irony even in his last line:

²⁴ Robert G. L. Waite quotes yet another of Hanfstaengl's invectives for Geli, in part based on social snobbery: "She was an empty-headed little slut, with the coarse bloom of a servant-girl, without either brains or character." (Hanfstaengl, p. 162) Waite is of the opinion that Hanfstaengl's negative view was the exception, "[T]he one jarring note in this symphony of praise is struck by Hanfstaengl. For some reason he despised her" (*The Psychopathic God Adolf Hitler*, p. 226).

I went back in disguise to spend Christmas with my family. This involved traversing a single-track railway tunnel . . . a somewhat hazardous enterprise, as you had to run between trains alternating in both directions . . .

Hanfstaengl had donned a strange disguise: "I had grown a set of Franz-Josef mutton-chop whiskers, wore dark glasses and walked with a limp. Strangely no one recognized me . . ." (p. 112). In the novel, there is more than a hint of the preposterous and the ridiculous in the corresponding lines: "Moreover he longed to be home for Christmas, so presently took the risk. This time he crossed the frontier on foot, through a railway-tunnel, wearing dark glasses and hiding his famous jaw in mutton-chop whiskers (his height he couldn't disguise)." The heroism has been deflated, the curt statement plays down Hanfstaengl's role, and there is no room for elaborate explanations in the conclusion: "But once he got home nobody seemed very keen to arrest him, and soon he moved about Munich openly" (p. 151).

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All three of the instances above illustrate how the novelist managed to abbreviate his source with little information lost in the process. The novel's next paragraph describes how Ernst and Egon pay a visit to Hitler in his arrest in Blumenbergstrasse. It partly draws on Egon's memoirs, as will be shown below (p. 191), and partly on what his father had written. What he and Uncle Dolf discuss in the novel is beyond Egon's horizon. It concerns the coming trial. Hitler is confident of a successful outcome as he has several cards up his sleeve. What he says fits in with the general distrustful atmosphere of plotting and recriminations. The original at this point used direct speech, the novel indirect, but otherwise the two passages are close. Hanfstaengl remembered Hitler's threats: "What on earth can they do to me? . . . all I have to do is to tell some of the things I know about von Lossow and the whole thing will collapse" (p. 113). This was turned into the novel's more forceful "As for his coming trial, he simply pooh-pooed it: he'd only to tell from the dock just a few of the truths he knew about General Lossow and all his plots to blow the whole prosecution sky-high" (p. 152). What Hanfstaengl added with hindsight, "This was a little over-confident, but in spite of the five-year sentence he received, he turned the trial into a major triumph . . ." (p. 113), the novelist deferred to his next chapter. Instead, he showed his readers that Hitler's listener was less confident of the trial's successful outcome. The novel's Hanfstaengl has his doubts as to how easily the prosecutors can be pooh-pooed: "This

Putzi passed over in silence but inwardly didn't believe it" (p. 152). The materials for the Chapter eleven court proceedings can be found in Hitler's early speeches and in authorities like Bullock and Shirer.

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Details in Chapter twelve, about Hitler in Landsberg prison, were culled from Hanfstaengl, who had written that "The ascendancy [Hitler] gained over the officials and guards at Landsberg was quite extraordinary" and that the prisoner had "received favoured treatment, which included freedom to accept gifts of food from outside, and this again gave him a further hold over his warders" (p. 114). Hanfstaengl had shown a tendency towards ironic hyperboles: "The place looked like a delicatessen store. You could have opened a flower and fruit and a wine shop with all the stuff stacked there. People were sending presents from all over Germany and Hitler had grown visibly fatter on the proceeds" (p. 114).²⁵

When this appears in the novel, Putzi is no longer the witness. All details are still taken from Ernst Hanfstaengl's memoirs, but a fictional witness, Willi, "still limping a bit from the wound he got in the Putsch" has been inserted. He shares Hitler's fairly comfortable life behind bars: "for Willi, like all the rest of the starveling rank and file, life had never before been so easy" (p. 158). Readers unfamiliar with Hughes's source would read this chapter as pure fiction, a reading strengthened by the distancing effect created by the fact that a fictitious character mingles with the historical persons. Hughes resorted to much the same method twelve pages later, in Hitler's sudden resentment against a stuck-up Bavarian Baron, as will be seen below (p. 157).

Further on in the same Landsberg chapter in the novel, two more instances relied on Hanfstaengl's memoirs: when the narrator talks of Hitler and sport, and when he shows him dictating a letter to Rudolf Hess. Hanfstaengl, who had a keen eye for other peoples' follies and a readiness to jump to conclusions, reported what he had advised Hitler:

'You really must take part in some of the gymnastic exercises and prison sports,' I told him. — 'No', he said, and the reply was very typical of his mentality, 'I keep away from them. It would be bad for discipline if I took part in physical training. A leader cannot afford to be beaten at games.' There on the table were Westphalia hams, cakes, brandy and everything one can imagine (p. 114).

²⁵ The same cornucopia was offered his fellow prisoner Count Toni Arco-Valley, according to Heinrich von Aretin's notes (see above, p. 46).

The narrator in the novel kept this information, removed the witness, and added a deprecating comment that deflates the remark: "a Leader must never risk his charisma by being defeated — not even at dominoes" (p. 158). Readers of the memoirs were told directly of Hitler's pomposity. To readers of the novel it was merely implied.

When Ernst Hanfstaengl described Hitler at work on *Mein Kampf*, he included a quick glance at the man who took down the dictation: "At first Hitler used Emil Maurice as his secretary, but Hess soon ousted him, pecking out the pages on a decrepit Remington typewriter" (p. 116). Putzi then told how he had also financed Hitler's publication venture, as printing bills had been left unpaid. Putzi's generous unselfish financial assistance is not mentioned by the novelist, who makes the scene seem almost idyllic: "The rays of the midsummer sun shone in on the rosy cheeks of an almost contented Hitler, dictating to Hess by the hour what Hess took down on a battered old Remington" (p. 158). Willi, free to enjoy his reading of Westerns, then once more briefly comes into focus. Hess however was not lost sight of, neither in the memoirs nor in the novel.

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In Chapter fourteen Hitler dominates the stage as he had done in the Uffing chapters in the earlier novel. If all these chapters have a strong authentic ring, it is to a large extent due to Hughes's use of memoirs written by the Hanfstaengl family. In both novels, Hughes relied on two sets of witness reports: in the first on those written by wife and husband, in the second on those by father and son. The Hanfstaengls' welcoming dinner for Hitler at his early release from prison had been described by both Hanfstaengl senior and junior. Ernst gave the exact date when their guest had come to visit their new home in Pienzenauer Strasse: it was on the day that Hitler had left Landsberg, thus December 20, 1924. Maybe his memory failed him on this point, as his son would hardly have received his gifts on any other day but Christmas Eve.²⁶ The novel wisely gives no

²⁶ A modern Hitler biography is more precise: "Hitlers Haft auf der Festung Landsberg endete bereits gegen 12.15 Uhr des 20. Dezember 1924 . . . Abgeholt wurde er von Hoffman, seinem Leibfotografen, mit einem neuen Auto der Firma Benz . . . Am Weihnachtstag sass der Putschist friedlich feiernd im Hause Hanfstaengl und spielte mit dem Sohn der Familie [Hitler's imprisonment in the fortress at Landsberg ended already around 12.15 noon on December 20, 1924 . . . His court photographer Hoffman came to collect him, in a new car from the Benz company . . . The Putschist celebrated Christmas Eve peacefully in the Hanfstaengl house and played with the family's son] (Pätzgold & Weissbecker, *Adolf Hitler: Eine politische Biographie*, 1995, p. 123).

date. This is what Ernst Hanfstaengl wrote, not without some condescension:

He arrived about half past six, in the little blue serge suit of which he was so proud, straining at the buttons with the weight he had put on in Landsberg. Egon was with me to greet him at the door. 'I am so glad to see you again, Uncle Dolf,' he said and Hitler took his hand as we walked down the corridor. I had a big concert grand in the studio and before I could gather my wits or offer any hospitality, Hitler, who seemed tense and wound up, said, almost pleadingly: 'Hanfstaengl, play me the *Liebestod*' (p. 119).

The novel's perspective on Hitler wavers between that of father and son. At times it withdraws from them, allowing the extradiegetic narrator some degree of mild derision when he observes his two adult characters: "'Hanfstängl,' Hitler declared: 'You are quite the most upper-class person I know!'" Suspecting no irony Putzi was pleased, and preened" (p. 169). Naturally, this concluding ironic remark had no counterpoint in the memoirs. Hanfstaengl reported what Hitler had said without in the least suspecting that the praise for host and house could be anything but sincere: "'You are the most feudal acquaintance I have'. He was most impressed and kept repeating the phrase about the *feine Gegend*, which indeed it was. It was the most fashionable part of Munich" (p. 119). In this as in some other instances the novelist, in his implied mockery, was slightly disloyal to his source.²⁷

This part of the novel is a patchwork of passages culled from Ernst Hanfstaengl's memoirs. Patches like the following were sewn into the novel's quilt: "My wife came in and [Hitler] was charming to her, apologizing again for the scene at Uffing a year earlier and crooning over our new little daughter Hertha"; "First we made small talk"; "[w]e had prepared a real welcome dinner, turkey, followed by the rich Austrian pastries that he loved. I noticed that he was hardly drinking at all . . ." (p. 119).

A much longer and more important extract from *Hitler: The Missing Years* went into the description in Chapter fourteen of how Hitler entertained them with his stories from the Western Front. In the novel, this starts innocently enough, but there is an edge implied already when two of the scenes of action, Lorient and Munich, are linked. It takes a reader as much by surprise as the fictitious Willi's mingling with factual persons in

²⁷ At times, Hughes is much more harshly ironical towards his main protagonist, sometimes almost disowning him, or at least despairing of this block-headed character: "'Heavens!' thought the simpleton Augustine, looking from face to face: 'What hangs over they've all got!'" (Fox, p. 167).

Chapter twelve. Hitler mimics "Colonel von Kessen, a stuck-up Bavarian Baron."²⁸ The fictionalisation seems to encroach on the historical accuracy. The novel's Hitler, here as in most other instances based on factual witness accounts, is meant to be at least semi-factual. He might have had it in for one of the actual models of the baron, but when the fictitious Baron Otto von Kessen is included as a target for Hitler's mimicry, the novelist makes Hitler hover between reality and fiction. It worked both ways, as he had already shown Otto's mixed memories of the young lance-corporal Hitler. When Hitler contrasts the stuffed-up Baron with his own men, Sergeant-Major Amman and Lieutenant Hess, the latter couple are historical characters that happen to people the novel's pages, as were the Hanfstaengls.

Except for the narrator's slightly mocking stance and the presence of fictitious characters, most of Chapter fourteen rests on the Hanfstaengl memoirs. But it would be very difficult to establish the veracity and authenticity of what first Egon and then Ernst had written. Their memories must have gone through a certain process of fictionalization as well. The many similarities between what father and son remembered pose certain questions. Richard Hughes may have brought them up when he talked to the two writers, but no outsider could have answered questions like these: did Ernst at all rely on Egon's account when he told his British interviewer, Brian Connell, what he remembered of this Christmas dinner long ago? Did Egon rely on what his father (or his mother, or both) had told him of the incident? How much of this had become part of the family lore and mythology? Egon's critical comments in the gloss of his own memoirs are surprisingly few in regard to these questions.

Hitler's revanchist tirade had sickened his listeners, according to Ernst's memoirs: "Each time Hitler got into this mood I felt almost physically sick" (p. 120). However, Ernst mostly kept his emotions in check, and there is even a certain degree of equanimity when he relates the following scene in the memoirs:

²⁸ Hildegard Kruse, who quotes this, sees in it a foreshadowing: "Obwohl die Anwesenden sich vor Lachen ausschütten, ist hier für den Leser der drohende Unterton nicht zu überhören" [Although those present were splitting their sides laughing, the ominous overtones cannot be mistaken by the reader] (p. 219) Bearing in mind what happens to Otto, her interpretation makes sense. — "Stuck-up" is well chosen: it shows both Hitler's resentment against the aristocracy, and the baron's scepticism of an upstart. Cf. Hugh Trevor Roper: Hitler "certainly had an extraordinary power. When he wanted to mesmerize, he did have this effect. It didn't work on everyone. It didn't work on — to put it crudely — aristocrats or on people who were sensitive to the vulgarity of his behaviour." *The New Yorker*, May 1, 1995, p. 60.

[Hitler] was describing some recollection of the Western Front and started imitating an artillery barrage. He could reproduce the noise of every imaginable gun, German, French or English, the howitzers, the 75's, the machine-guns, separately and all at once. With that tremendous voice of his we really went through about five minutes of the Battle of the Somme and what the neighbours must have thought I cannot imagine (p. 120).

This was rendered with far more empathy by Hughes, who did not care what Hanfstaengl's upper-middle class neighbours might think in this "feine Gegend". Hitler's histrionic capers take up more room in the novel, and Hughes's collage is far more dramatic than Ernst's level-headed recapitulation had been. The novel registers how the reactions vary, from the little boy's loud guffaw at something he enjoys but does not understand, to his parents' uncertain feelings towards a guest who has suddenly shown sinister aspects of his personality: "They laughed more uncertainly now, no longer sure it was quite so funny — this mimicking voice of the plump little man in a blue serge suit who never forgot a sound: the retching cough of the gassed, the glug of somebody shot through the lungs" (pp. 170-171).

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Other details in the memoirs were split in the novel, to greater effect. As Ernst Hanfstaengl had explained in his memoirs, he had given Hitler an heirloom as a homecoming present, a document signed by Frederick the Great. It was handed over with the host's blessings and admonitions, stressing a lesson of history:

'Don't forget how even *der alte Fritz* sat on a drum chewing his nails after the Battle of Hochkirch, wondering what on earth he was going to do next,' I tried to encourage him. His eyes brightened. You could almost feel the head of steam building up.

Suddenly he launched into a great political tirade 'We shall reach the decision in France,' Hitler screamed. 'We will reduce Paris to rubble' (p. 120).

This is expressed in even more devastating terms in the novel, with the tension built up more systematically to the climax of "Paris shattered to rubble, the French crushed under its ruins like cesspool rats..." (p. 171). In the novel, Putzi's reaction is tinged with a greater sense of horror. When he has played his own "Schlageter March", it has not had the soothing effect of Wagner's "Liebestod" but has called forth an uncontrollable djinn, and Putzi is "aghast at the screaming devil his music had raised in his guest" (p. 171). According to the novel's Putzi, Hitler's revanchist mood

was the result of his time in prison when he had been “penned for a year with only ignorant blockheads like Rudolf Hess with his Clausewitz-Haushofer-Rosenberg nonsense.... Indeed, half in love — so far as he *could* fall in love — with ‘mein Rudi, mein Hessler!’....” (p. 171). Here, Hughes condensed his source in such an elliptical way as to make it almost incomprehensible.

The context had been more lucidly explained by Hanfstaengl, who had been worried by “the way in which Hess had succeeded in pumping his head full of the Haushofer thesis of getting the Russians to be knocked out a second time by the Japanese, who were Germany’s only possible ally in the world and so on” (p. 121), and Hanfstaengl had harked back to two of Hitler’s (in Hanfstaengl’s mind outdated) models in military matters: “As *Mein Kampf* was to show, he was right back in the politico-military conceptions of Frederick the Great and Clausewitz” (p. 121). The German phrase that Hughes quoted without either translation or explanation came from Hanfstaengl who had described their guest as disgustingly maudlin:

The other strong impression he left me with that evening was the emotional quality of the friendship that had developed with Hess. ‘Ach, mein Rudi, mein Hessler,’ he wailed as he stomped up and down. ‘Isn’t it appalling to think he’s still there’ (p. 123).

This raises the question of how fully Hughes wanted his readers to be informed of the historical context in which he placed his characters. Sometimes, like here, the summings-up in the novels are extremely concentrated and not always helpful, and facts are suggested rather than explained. As is clear from many of his statements on reader-response related matters, he expected his readers to take a very active part in the reading process. Fairly well-informed readers would know of Clausewitz’s classic *On War*, and some would also have recollections of Alfred Rosenberg’s *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*. But who except the experts would recall the Munich geography professor Karl Haushofer and associate his geopolitical ideas with Hitler’s expansionist plans for eastern Europe?²⁹ If one wants to read Hughes’s two last novels with a complete comprehension of

²⁹ Rudolf Hess, taken in by Haushofer’s teachings, passed them on to Hitler. He also claimed that his strange flight to Scotland was an idea of Haushofer’s, wanting to bring two Nordic nations together. The title of Hans Grimm’s drama “Volk ohne Raum” developed into a dangerous Nazi catchword, as did “Lebensraum”. Both concepts tied in with Haushofer’s geopolitics (see Snyder, pp. 139-140).

their historical context, a very well-equipped library is a prerequisite. Ernst Hanfstaengl's *Hitler: The Missing Years* is one of the starting points.

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The very short time-span of *The Fox in the Attic* was indicated by its original title "Fall, '23". Its main action unfolds during a few months only and its scenes are limited to just two countries. *The Wooden Shepherdess* covers more time and more space.³⁰ There is a marked speeding up of events in Chapter sixteen of "Stille Nacht", showing the elasticity of history re-told.³¹ It starts with the 1928 elections and ends five pages and five years later with Hitler's *Machtübernahme*, his seizure of power on January 30, 1933. Half of this fast-moving chapter is a survey of the political development of these years, half of it is devoted to the "sole 'romance' in Adolf Hitler's life". Hughes here ventures on a theoretical explanation of Hitler's personality by focussing on his sexuality or lack thereof.³² In his recon-

³⁰ In her chapter on the novels' time structure, Hildegard Kruse includes a chart (1983 p. 195) that graphically shows the growing complexity of time and space, and comments: "Als Hauptunterschied zwischen den beiden Bänden lässt sich aus dem Schema eine zunehmende Komplexität entnehmen, die die zweifache Ursache hat, dass sowohl die behandelte Zeitspanne als auch die Zahl der Schauplätze im zweiten Band ungleich grösser ist als im ersten, was sich wiederum in einer stärkeren Raffung bei der Wiedergabe des Geschehens auswirkt." [The main difference between the two volumes can be recognised in the chart as an ever increasing complexity which has two causes: both the time-frame dealt with and the number of scenes are considerably larger than in the first volume which results in the action being condensed] (p. 196). Later, she writes: "Der Grobbaufbau des Werkes ist durch zunehmende Raffungsintensität gekennzeichnet, doch innerhalb der kleineren Einheiten lösen Dehnung und Raffung einander ständig ab und werden stellenweise sogar direkt kontrastiert. Das wechselnde Erzähltempo erzeugt Spannung, verhindert Monotonie und ermöglicht die Akzentuierung wichtiger Ereignisse, wie es ein historischer Roman dieses Umfangs erfordert" [The basic structure of the work is marked by the increasing intensity to condense the action, yet within the small units condensing and expansion are continually alternated and at times are even directly contrasted. The changing narrative tempo produces tension, hinders monotony and allows the accentuation of important events, as is necessary in a historical novel of this size] (pp. 233-234).

³¹ Penelope Hughes had answered an inquiring letter-writer that her father did not "seem to be a writer much influenced by other writers", but she still mentioned two, none of them very interested in strict chronological progression in their writings: "Lady Murasaki, an XI cent. Japanese novelist, with the same way of progressing sideways rather than forwards that D. has in *Fox*. D. says the book which has most influenced him is probably the *Iliad*. Same sense of a fated tragedy: something that started as a small personal animosity and ended as a catastrophe that affected whole nations" (Penelope Hughes to "Dear Peter", January 18, 1973).

³² Hughes would have found many sordid details of sexual aberration in this affair, in a book that was published the year after his death, Robert G. L. Waite's Freudian analysis *The Psychopathic God Adolf Hitler*, especially its chapter "Perversity?". Both Hanfstaengl and Waite are quoted on this topic at length by Ronald Hayman in his *Hitler and Geli* (1997). In spite of a chapter titillatingly called "The things he makes me do" (a quote from Geli Raubal, see below, p. 166), Hayman does not shed much new light on this sordid affair. He is as convinced of Hitler's sadomasochism as the previous

struction, Hughes keeps very close to Hanfstaengl's memoirs, especially the ninth chapter, "Geli Raubal"; its nine pages are filled with innuendos, gossip and hints at barely hidden scandals, in the story it tells of Hitler and his niece.

In his earlier chapter, dealing with the Christmas dinner in Pienzenauer Strasse, Hanfstaengl had made Hitler's feelings for Hess his springboard for further speculations: "I felt Hitler was a case of a man who was neither fish, flesh nor fowl, neither fully homosexual nor fully heterosexual", he writes, and suggests that both Hitler's capacity to balance a situation and his ability to keep aloof from petty jealousies among his supporters reflected his sexual isolation. Hanfstaengl's irritation at this vague and shifting man was palpable: "You could never pin him down, say that he was this thing or that thing, it was all floating, without roots, intangible and mediumistic" (p. 123). He adds a passage beginning with a nasty play on words:

... his eroticism was purely operatic, never operative. An impotent man with tremendous nervous energy, Hitler had to release this tension somehow. He was in turn sadist and masochist, and in the sexual half-light of his life, he never found the physical release which similar unfortunates can sometimes achieve, often due to some trick of circumstances or the attentions of one particular person The barren hero, I suppose you might call him (p. 124).

It was sufficient for Hughes to include a very compressed "Indeed, half in love — so far as he *could* fall in love . . ." (p. 171) in the passage about Hitler and Hess in "The Meistersingers." The speculative analysis of his sexuality was deferred to the chapter on Hitler and his niece, an enigmatic relationship. Why did Hughes choose to include this sordid affair in his novel? He knew of its importance as a watershed in Hitler's life and career. Alan Bullock was one of the many historians that considered Geli's suicide "a greater blow than any other event in [Hitler's] life",³³ Werner Maser another:

On two occasions, however, [Hitler] was prepared not only to jettison the views he regarded as permanently valid but even to take his own life — a life he believed to be the embodiment of Germany's future. The first occasion was in 1923 with the

writers he musters. See also Ron Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler* (1998), chapters 6-8 ("Geli Raubal and Hitler's 'sexual secret'").

³³ *The New Yorker*, May 1, 1995, p. 64.

failure of his putsch. The second in 1931 when he heard that Geli, the great love of his life, had committed suicide.³⁴

Two accounts written shortly afterwards were equally suggestive. The first was written by Konrad Heiden. In 1956 Goronwy Rees sent him two of Heiden's books, *A History of National Socialism* (1935), and *Der Führer: Hitler's Rise to Power* (1936).³⁵ In the latter, Hughes would have found Heiden's views on Hitler's relations to his niece. They were more lurid than lucid: "So the often expressed conjecture that Hitler's emotional life is not normal, is correct. Only the conjecture has generally taken a wrong direction: Hitler is not homo-sexual or bi-sexual; he is merely subject to sexual enslavement."³⁶ Hanfstaengl's much later views are strangely reminiscent of Heiden's.

Whether Konrad Heiden had any direct importance for Hughes or not is debatable, but some of Otto Strasser's books he had read and profited from, also in connection with Angelica Raubal's death. Otto Strasser had mentioned his brother's efforts to save Hitler from suicide when Geli had killed herself: "Sicher war nur, dass Gregor mehrere Tage und Nächte ununterbrochen in Hitlers Wohnung war, um den völlig ausser Rand und Band geratenen Führer von dem angedrohten Selbstmord abzuhalten."³⁷ The novel shows how Gregor's integrity turns into his own undoing. In the ensuing power struggle Gregor is the loser, Göring the winner:

Schreck drove him back to Munich at breakneck speed; and the Führer seemed so distraught that the faithful Strasser feared he might do himself a mischief and never once left his side, nor closed an eye, for a couple of days and nights.

But one thing Strasser refused to do for his stricken friend: he refused to be party to trying to kid the world that — whatever the coroner said or the papers printed — this death had been accidental. Then Göring at last saw his chance! (p. 321).

Otto Strasser, who had known Geli Raubal since 1927, remembered her in positive terms, as a "neunzehnjähriges, frisches, hübsches, gutgewachsenes Mädchen".³⁸ Like some others writing about the relationship between

³⁴ Maser, p. 108.

³⁵ Goronwy Rees to RH, August 12, 1956.

³⁶ Heiden (1936), p. 353.

³⁷ [The only thing one can be certain of is that Gregor spent many days and night without a break in Hitler's apartment, to keep the completely desperate Führer from committing suicide] (Strasser 1969, p. 71).

³⁸ [a nineteen-year-old, healthy, beautiful girl with good physical features] (Ibid., p. 72). Gisevius is as positive in his characterization: "Anmutig, immer fröhlich, herabfallende blonde Haare, klangvolle Stimme" [charming, always gay, long blond hair, sonorous voice] (Gisevius 1963, p. 124).

uncle and niece, Otto Strasser was not overly outspoken, and his brother Gregor had stuck to a telling silence: "Du glaubst, dass Adolf und Gely...?", fragte ich sehr erstaunt meinen Bruder. Gregor schwieg vielsagend."³⁹ Like Heiden, Gregor had implied that strange practices were going on between Adolf and Geli, but he did not elaborate on the topic when he reported to Otto what the perturbed niece had told him: "Erregt und empört berichtete sie dann, wie unnatürlich und krankhaft die Werbungen ihres Onkels und die Formen seiner Zuneigung sich äusseren" (p. 73).⁴⁰ Eight years later, Otto Strasser was approached by the pater who had granted Geli a Catholic burial, a ritual which he would not have allowed someone who had committed suicide; but his lips were sealed, he told Otto Strasser. The latter's memoirs gave examples of Hitler's abnormal jealousy, whereas Hughes implies the affliction without demonstrating it: "... Hitler making the most God-awful rows if Geli as much as winked at another man ... " (p. 321).

Hughes's novel stuck to the official version by taking her suicide for granted: "One September morning, she locked herself in her room at her uncle's imposing Prinz Regentplatz apartment in Munich, and shot herself dead with her uncle's pistol" (p. 321). Hughes did not suggest any foul play or outright murder, as Strasser had done. Still, sordid details such as Strasser's and Heiden's hint at unnatural inclinations and perverted practices were mentioned in the novel as they dovetailed with Hughes's solipsist formula for Hitler. It seems likely that it was mainly from Ernst Hanfstaengl's memoirs that he had the story. A brief speculative note in them supplied Hughes with a key term: "In addition there was, of course, an unpleasant suggestion of incest about the affair." He had suggested that the genealogical tree of this in-bred farming family had many intertwined branches and twigs: "It was yet another facet of the darker side of his character" (p. 162).

Incest may have been what Ernst Hanfstaengl had had in mind when he talked of "some trick of circumstances or the particular attention of one person." It could be regarded as the only possible form of sexual activity open to a solipsist, if another person were to be involved at all. That was Hughes's psychologising view; the image that he created in this context is singularly off-putting:

³⁹ ['Do you think that Adolf and Geli...?' I asked my brother, quite astonished. Gregor kept a telling silence] (Strasser 1969, p. 73).

⁴⁰ [Infuriated and excited she then told how abnormal and insane her uncle's form of inclinations were] (Ibid.).

Incest (or quasi-incest at least) seems perhaps the obvious theoretical answer in cases of psychological blockage which stem from an overweening solipsism, like Hitler's. This sexy young niece was blood of his blood, so could perhaps in his solipsist mind be envisaged as merely a female organ budding on 'him' — as forming with him a single hermaphrodite 'Hitler', a two-sexed entity able to couple within itself like the garden snail (p. 320).

After Geli's death the simile is repeated, with a sinister effect: "So ended the sole 'romance' in Adolf Hitler's life. Or so the hermaphrodite snail was sundered, the cynic might say . . ." (p. 321).⁴¹

*

The novel's "two-sexed entity able to couple within itself" is an unlikely symbol for human sexual intercourse, but it fits in with the three instances in both novels where sexual acts are described. The first time, the act is shown only obliquely via Hitler in his nightmare in the attic-room in Uffing. He recalls the prostitutes along the Spittelberggasse in Vienna, "between the dark windows where 'it' was already being done" (Fox, p. 266 — see above, p. 128). In a discarded version, Hughes had written "the thing" instead of "it" and had shown a more persistent youth prowling in the street: "Night after night he returned to *look* at them", underlining with his italics the voyeurist attitude of the young man. The Spittelberggasse episode was linked to Hughes's discussion of Hitler and sexuality on the same page: "After all, how could that monistic 'I' of Hitler's ever without forfeit succumb to the entire act of sex, the whole essence of which is recognition of one 'Other'?" The truth of his solipsist formula was hammered home in italics: "*Hitler existed alone. 'I am, none else beside me.'*" The universe contained no other persons than him, only things . . ." (p. 266).

⁴¹ *The Wooden Shepherdess* appeared in 1973. Ernst Hanfstaengl had published his second book of memoirs three years earlier. There are strong reasons to believe that Hughes had read *Zwischen Weißem und Braunem Haus*, not least because he himself figures in it, albeit briefly. The peculiar simile of Hitler as a hermaphrodite was the American journalist Dorothy Thompson's invention, according to Hanfstaengl who was impressed by this disillusioned woman twice divorced: "Es darf nicht übersehen werden, daß Dorothy Thompson eine durch zwei Ehen tiefenttäuschte Frau war. Kein Wunder also, daß die noch immer höchst anziehende Thompson . . . von Hitlers — in ihrem Augen hermaphroditischen — Wesen abgestoßen war [One should not overlook the fact that Dorothy Thompson due to her two failed marriages was a deeply disillusioned woman. Thus no wonder that Thompson, still the most attractive of women . . . was repelled by Hitler's — in her eyes hermaphrodite — nature] (Hanfstaengl 1970, p. 250). She was at one stage married to the novelist Sinclair Lewis. In early 1958, Hughes had requested her book *I Saw Hitler* (1932) from the London Library (RH to Joseph Brewer, Feb. 11, 1958).

Hitler is not the only voyeur in the novels. Augustine happens to share a similar experience though not of his own volition, as shown in Chapter twenty-two of "The Wooden Shepherdess." He and the gang in the Connecticut woods reach a cove in the dense forest, a sylvan paradise. But they are confronted with a shocking sight that the American teenagers, used to petting, have not seen before: "For Ree (and indeed for most of these boys and girls) this was the first time they had seen it although they'd imagined it hundreds of times: the two-backed monster performing" (p. 90). Augustine may be uninitiated, though that is not stated, but the novel shows how sexuality and death are linked in his mind at this point. He is in deep thought of the girl whom he found in the Welsh marshes and whose corpse he had carried on his shoulder. Sexuality and death merge in a similar way in Hitler's dream of death by water, fused with memories of his mother.

The coupling hermaphroditic snail and the two-backed monster both have a hint of a slightly revolting fascination. When Augustine at long last "succumbs to the entire act of sex", he is the passive and Sadie (the pun on the name can not have been unintentional) the active partner. This brief and sorry affair is over and done with on the dot between two sentences: "but because of her onion-and-patchouli breath he kept his face as far as he could from hers. With the cold-porridge parody over, he slept like a log" (p. 113).⁴²

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The novel does not spell it out that Hitler was a voyeur when he gloated over pornographic drawings, but Hanfstaengl did: "They were depraved, intimate sketches of Geli Raubal, with every anatomical detail, the sort of thing only a perverted *voyeur* would commit to paper". He had expressed his amazement that this kind of smut had not been destroyed: "'Heaven help us, man,' I said, 'why don't you tear the filth up?' 'No,' said Schwarz, 'Hitler wants them back. He wants me to keep them in the Brown House safe'" (p. 163). The novel more explicitly exposes the shabby details and adds a shocked exclamation mark: "... all those salacious *billets-doux* he kept sending her, letters adorned with pornographic drawings — depicting her own private parts, and patently drawn from the life!" (p. 320).

If there is a shade of cheap sensationalism in what Geli on the same page tells her friend, "You'd never believe the things which this monster

⁴² Richard Perceval Graves, digging deep into the archive, has come up with some (rather unnecessary) evidence that this may have been an experience that Augustine shared with his creator (Graves, p. 185).

makes me do", then most of it was ready-made in the source. Hanfstaengl, though he admitted that he did not have the story straight from the horse's mouth, freely handed it on, in his worst prattling mood:

I only got the story at third hand, it was not the sort of thing you could expect a young woman to talk to a man about, but she is supposed to have remarked to a girl friend, who passed it on to one of the wives in the Party, that her uncle was a 'monster. You would never believe the things he makes me do' (p. 162).

The novel includes one more rumour, the gossip that Geli "had lately been got with child by an Austrian Jew from Linz" (p. 321). On this subject, Hughes's source had been more detailed. Hanfstaengl readily jumped to conclusions when he explained Hitler's rage. Geli had wanted to leave for Vienna, she had told her uncle, because she had planned to take singing lessons there:

It may well be that Hitler extracted from her the real purpose of her visit. It is not too difficult to reconstruct the reaction of that tortured mind and body. His anti-Semitism would have caused him to accuse her of dishonouring them both and to tell her that the best thing she could do was to shoot herself (p. 168).

Ernst Hanfstaengl did not very often tell where he had got his information from, but in this case he did. Six years after the event he had been told why Geli committed suicide. In 1937, he lived in London as an exile. In that autumn he had been visited by Mrs. Brigid Hitler, the Irish wife of Hitler's half-brother Alois (who was the full brother of Geli's mother Angela and thus more genuinely her uncle than Adolf was): "She maintains that the immediate family knew very well that the cause of Geli's suicide was the fact that she was pregnant by a young Jewish art teacher in Linz, whom she had met in 1928 and wanted to marry at the time of her death" (p. 168).⁴³

The memoirs had questioned Hitler's motives and sincerity in this romance and had stressed the playacting aspect of it: "he hovered at her elbow with a moon-calf look in his eyes in a very plausible imitation of adolescent infatuation" (p. 162). The novelist has a less judgmental attitude, writing "he started behaving towards her in public like any romanti-

⁴³ It is possible that Hughes would have been wary of this particular witness had he been able to read Robert G. L. Waite's appendix "A Note on Spurious Sources". He tells of Brigid Dowling Hitler's 250 page undated manuscript *My Brother-in-Law Adolf*, kept in the manuscript division in the New York Public Library. It was written around 1940 and referred to by at least two Hitler historians, John Toland and Robert Payne. Waite shows with revealing examples how extremely unreliable this source is.

cal juvenile moonstruck lover ..." (p. 320), but his solipsist theory of a lover with "frost-bitten loins" is far more devastating.⁴⁴

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Hanfstaengl had done his best to give the rumours of unspeakable perversions wings. He also described the row between Göring and Gregor Strasser which broke out after Geli's death. When Hitler finally got to hear the news, Hanfstaengl wrote, "Schreck drove him back at breakneck speed" (p. 165). As shown above (p. 162), Hughes describes this with almost identical words, in the novel. Gregor Strasser had had the situation under control, according to Hanfstaengl, while Hitler was hysterical. There were efforts to hush up the affair, but the socialist daily *Münchener Post* had got hold of it and had published a long article with circumstantial details which in turn were denied by Hitler in the Nazi *Völkischer Beobachter* two days later. Göring came to see the Hanfstaengls a fortnight later and told them what Ernst regarded as a romanticized version. In his memoirs, he included the political aftermath of this affair:

Hitler was apparently furious at Strasser for maintaining and publishing the fact that it was a suicide and had fallen on Goering's neck weeping with gratitude when Hermann suggested that it was just as likely to have been an accident. 'Now I know who is my real friend,' Hitler had sobbed. I think it was pure opportunism on Goering's part. He wanted to eliminate Strasser as a rival in Hitler's favour. Circumstances never healed these eternal jealousies in the Party (p. 167).

This takes up roughly as much space in Hughes's novel, but with a difference. What seemed a strangely naive comment in the memoirs ("I think it was pure opportunism on Goering's part") is turned into a fact, ("Then Göring at last saw his chance!", p. 321). The novel's Gregor Strasser is a stalwart friend, but he is too honest for his own good when moving in the company of scheming hypocrites, and he is no match for Göring, who proves the more sharp-witted of the two, psychologically and politically. From then on, Strasser's career is on the decline, Göring's in the ascendant, as the novel makes clear.

Hanfstaengl had ended his chapter with a portentous statement: "I am sure that the death of Geli Raubal marked a turning point in the devel-

⁴⁴ Richard Poole discusses Hughes's solipsist theory in his *Richard Hughes Novelist* (p. 182 ff.). "Even [Hitler's] quasi-incest with his niece is appallingly narcissistic" according to John M. de Jong who looks at solipsism and Cartesian logic in his article "Richard Hughes and the Cartesian World" (in *Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction*, 19, 1977, pp. 13-22). See also D. S. Savage, "Richard Hughes, Solipsist", in *The Anglo-Welsh Review*, 68 (1981), pp. 36-50.

opment of Hitler's character" (p. 168). And he added: "With her death the way was clear for his final development into a demon, with his sex life deteriorating again into a sort of bi-sexual narcissus-like vanity . . ." (p. 169). The opinions he expressed seem to have been shared by Richard Hughes. The similarities are apparent between a Narcissus enthralled by his own reflection, and a solipsist who is his own universe.

In the middle of this tangled web of rumours surrounding Geli Raubal's death, Hanfstaengl seems to have kept a cool head when admitting that in this affair "[t]here are few facts, but much room for conjecture" (p. 167), but he never really questioned his own role. It is no coincidence that his memoirs at times read like a novel. He was not the only German to speculate on Hitler's sexual inclinations and obsessions. Nor was Richard Hughes the only writer who took an interest in these aberrations and tried to inscribe them in a specific psychological and philosophical formula, as will be discussed below, in the concluding chapter.

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Hanfstaengl had made much of his own preparatory unofficial visits to Mussolini in the Palazzo Venezia, and implied that it was mainly thanks to his venture into foreign policy that the two dictators finally met in mid-June 1934. By then he had sailed to his Harvard reunion, and thus he missed Venice and was spared the Purge. He had witnessed another political meeting of some importance once he had returned to Europe, Hitler's with von Hindenburg at Neudeck. He included this report of it in his memoirs:

Our first reception at Neudeck, the President's estate, in the last days of July, was chilling. Only Hitler and Brückner, as his adjutant, were invited into the house and I can remember Otto Dietrich and myself sitting on a bench near the outbuildings without the slightest suggestion of hospitality being offered to us or indeed to anyone else. This, on an East Prussian estate with a feudal tradition of at least formal welcome and refreshment to travellers and visitors, was an indication of the mood in the President's entourage. Hitler was tight-lipped and uninformative as he came out and gave no hint later of what had passed (pp. 262-263).

In the novel, Hanfstaengl the witness is dispensed with: ". . . Hitler decided to fly to Neudeck forthwith and have things out with this senile meddling President. Hindenburg flatly refused to discuss things with him however. Hitler was met at the door by an icy General Blomberg deputed to act as Hindenburg's mouthpiece . . ." (p. 341). At this point, when the political scene has to be clarified, the novelist is factual and has no need to adopt

the personal perspective of his source. But some of the grievances in the memoirs were saved into the novel, although taken over by a more central character: "Hitler was hardly tempted to linger on Hindenburg's doormat: he hadn't even been offered a chair" (p. 342).

In Chapter twenty-nine of "Stille Nacht", the Purge is still going on, but without a vital informant, as stated twice on the page when Putzi the witness last appears: "Even Putzi Hanfstaengl's name had somehow got on to somebody's list, but Putzi was luckier: Putzi was hitting it up with his old college chums at Harvard while all this was going on" (p. 370). The last glimpse of him in the novel sounds like an epitaph of Putzi Hanfstaengl as a man of political influence: "So Putzi survived — which nobody minded much, he was nowadays hardly worth powder and shot so far as political influence went" (p. 370). It may be impossible to ascertain whether Hanfstaengl's name had actually figured on those lists or not, but on this topic, his memoirs have a suspiciously conspiratorial tone. If he was marked down as one of those to be killed in the Purge, this would have strengthened his credibility as an oppositional no-sayer. It was perhaps not quite coincidental that Helldorf, the man who had told him that his name figured on the death lists, was one of those who had plotted against Hitler in 1944:

Helldorf was a good friend of mine and one of the more reasonable Party people, as his tragic rôle ten years later in the July 20 plot was to prove. At this earlier juncture he preferred discretion, and a warning, 'Let me give you some advice, Hanfstaengl,' he said. 'Stop being so confoundedly inquisitive. People are beginning to resent it. I will tell you something more. I saw one of those lists they drew up. Your name was on it!' (p. 256).

In Hughes's next chapter, number thirty, Hitler's adjutant Brückner is busy arranging a garden party in the Chancellery while the killings of the Purge are still going on. Röhm is alive, but only until Himmler has called in his henchmen. The atmosphere is heavy with rumours of homosexuality, and Brückner adds his moralistic comments at the luncheon where he tells the Führer of what has supposedly gone on at Röhm's Berlin headquarters. The interior of the Standartenstrasse headquarters is described in full detail, as if Brückner had seen it with his own eyes. He may have done so, but once again Hanfstaengl's memoirs came to Hughes's assistance. On the night before he departed for America, Hanfstaengl had been waiting for Röhm at his Berlin headquarters and had taken in the dubious taste of its interior: "I stood looking at the opulent *décor*, Gobelin tapestries, valu-

able paintings, superb crystal mirrors, thick pile carpets and gleaming antique furniture. It looked like a millionaire's brothel", he writes (p. 246). The description in the novel is almost identical, but the context is different. It is Hitler's adjutant who adds his bit to the account of orgies and decadence:

Now Brückner chipped in, with shocking accounts of Röhm's Standartenstrasse Berlin headquarters: the opulent tapestries, crystal mirrors and thick pile carpets reminding one more of a millionaire's whorehouse than Army barracks (p. 376).

This interior is both preceded and succeeded by accounts of other signs of decadence. First there are the sinister antics of General Count von Hasler [i. e. von Haeseler] and his untimely death (p. 375, see above, p. 82), then the novel moves on to Röhm and the SA with their sybaritian Petronian tastes: "Menus the searchers had found of Lucullan banquets on frog-legs, shark-fins, nightingale-tongues and the finest vintage champagne: the kinky cabaret-programmes...." (p. 376).

Chapter thirty suddenly cuts from Hitler's ironic harangues on the SA, "these ascetics" (p. 376), to a Berlin garden party: "Hitler was still in full spate when Brückner's welcome summons arrived to tea, and Society ladies, and sweet sticky cakes" (p. 376). Hitler's hypocrisy is further revealed by the next chilling change of scenes, from the garden party to the gory Stadelheim prison: "Tea, and chit-chat, and wonderful summer hats.... That garden-party was still in full swing in Berlin when Eicke reached Stadelheim gaol, fresh from the killing of Strasser and anxious to score a double in twenty-four hours" (p. 376). Hughes expresses in these kaleidoscopic scenes what Hanfstaengl had expressed more prosaically and less evocatively in these terms: "The most extraordinary aspect was Hitler's claim to have been surprised and disgusted by the evidence of Roehm's homosexuality. This I knew to be a flat lie" (p. 247).

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Hughes's dependence on Ernst Hanfstaengl as a source was publicly acknowledged in his "Historical Note" (*Shepherdess*, p. 389), but only concerning a minor point, Dr. Emil Ketterer's report of how he had treated Röhm at Wiessee just before his death: "Hanfstängl credits Röhm's doctor with an eye-witness account of Röhm's last night before his arrest. The knowledgeable will notice that I treat this account as authentic . . ." (p. 389). Hanfstaengl had certified that what the doctor had told him seemed credible although many years had passed since the events: "There is still,

twenty-odd years later, so much conjecture concerning the background to and details of the Roehm purge that a first-hand version I heard quite recently may not be without interest" (p. 257). Dr Ketterer had treated Ernst Röhm for neuralgia, and on June 29, he had given him an evening injection at the Pension Hanslbauer. Ketterer was given a bed on the first floor but had stayed up till one o'clock, when Heines had arrived and had wanted to talk to Röhm. The doctor prevented this as he felt that his patient should be allowed his sleep, he had told Hanfstaengl long afterwards.

Rumours had it that orgies had taken place at Wiessee that night, but Hanfstaengl denied that, referring to the doctor who had been there: "Ketterer also flatly contradicts the stories that the Hanslbauer was the scene that night of a homosexual orgy." The doctor had not got much sleep that night, Hanfstaengl wrote: "About five o'clock in the morning, Ketterer was awakened by general shouting and uproar and shortly afterwards found two civilians by his bed whom he describes as plain-clothes detectives" (p. 258). An adjutant told the detectives that they could leave; on Hitler's orders, Ketterer was released. Hanfstaengl continues:

He got up, put on his uniform, went down the stairs in some agitation and at the bottom saw Hitler and Lutze, who succeeded Roehm after the purge. Ketterer was about to go and speak to Hitler when Lutze took him by the arm on one side, told him that Roehm was being arrested, at which Ketterer protested vigorously, and then accompanied him in a car back to Munich. He never saw his patient again (pp. 258-259).

In the novel, the doctor is allowed to sleep half an hour longer but is then awakened more forcefully by a terrible rumpus, shouting and hammering. The plain-clothes Gestapo men arrest him, and the reader is left in the lurch whether the doctor is to be released or not. The novelist chose not to hand down Ketterer's assurance that no homosexual orgies had taken place. On the contrary, the semi-fictitious Heines shares his bed with his chauffeur, and a pervading smell of sweaty pyjamas and hair-oil lingers in Count Spreti's room. The doctor's exit is expedited summarily by a narrator who tells his story with a predominantly British public in mind:

As for the doctor's protestations that all the effects of his treatment were being undone.... This wasn't England, where even an ailing murderer couldn't be hanged if the doctors considered it bad for his health; and somebody soon shut him up (p. 362).

Why did Richard Hughes bother to mention a specific source only for an isolated item that had taken up so little space in his novel? The reference to Hanfstaengl and Röhm's doctor in the "Historical Note" could be seen as one of his red herrings. But any inquisitive reader who took Hughes's cue would soon see how strongly indebted the novel was to the Hanfstaengl memoirs. The novelist had been lucky in his choice of witness, he later admitted, though only privately:

My first stroke of good luck was my meeting with the Hanfstaengl family. I had a long talk with Putzi in his own home: then his son Egon — who as a small child had adored his 'Uncle Dolf' — took me to see his mother, Helene, the first Mrs. Hanfstaengl . . . and she very kindly allowed me to read an account of the whole episode which she had jotted down not long after the event when her memory was still fresh, as well as answering my questions.⁴⁵

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As Hughes explained in 1961, the idea for his historical novel had first struck him some twenty years earlier:

It was somewhere in the middle of the Second World War that it suddenly struck me with force: here was I, a lifelong writer — indeed from earliest childhood I never dreamt of anything else — here was I, witnessing one of the most important, dramatic and critical periods in human history! I should be false to my "call" unless I took this theme for my work.⁴⁶

A few years before that illumination he had considered the theoretical implications of documentary novels and also trained himself in writing them. In March 1940, a book by Richard Hughes was presented as forthcoming by *The Traveller's Journal* in their press release, which said that *The Navy is Here* was

... a full-length account of the exploits of the Graf Spee, describing her raids on British shipping, her fight with the cruisers Ajax, Exeter and Achilles, and her subsequent scuttling, and finally the rescue of the 299 British seamen from the Altmark in Norwegian waters.

Neither the length of the book nor its publication date or price could be stated at the time, according to the notice which was followed up a fortnight later: "This book, which the author hopes to complete within two or three months, should be a big seller." That was a consummation devoutly to be wished; but the manuscript was never completed and the book never

⁴⁵ RH to "Anne", 1974.

⁴⁶ *Fiction as Truth*, pp. 50-51.

materialised. Four proof chapters ready for publication exist in the files, along with a massive amount of notes, maps, photographs and interviews with officers and crew who had been on board the ships involved. A two-page publicity draft, most likely written by Hughes himself, describes his method when he approached an historical subject in the 1940s: "It tells the story fully and accurately. It is unlikely that any other living person, German or British, knows that story to-day as a whole as Mr. Hughes knows it." He had not been content just to learn the "historian's story", the pamphlet said: "He wanted the 'Novelist's story' too." This is how he set out to get it, emulating Agatha Christie's detective:

Every possible source of information, every personal contact, was explored . . . Each man told him all he knew — even all he had hoped, felt, feared. Again, Hughes was able, by patient investigation, by the methods almost of a Poirot, to work out every important movement . . . Gradually the details dovetailed into place. 'Then came a moment', he says, 'when suddenly the story came alive to me, as a single flowing visible whole.' At that moment he began to write. He writes, moreover, not as a partisan, but with a novelist's integrity, a novelist's absolute impartiality towards his characters.

This statement was visionary, as proved by *The Human Predicament* that he started to work on some fifteen years later. In one of the many discarded drafts to what was eventually printed as his "Historical note", Hughes discussed the problems that he had faced, defended the liberty he had taken when he moved into the minds of historical persons, and stressed the interplay of fictitious and factual parts in his work; it was both a *historical* novel, and a *historical novel*:

[Because 'Fall '23'] is a *historical* novel I cannot give the usual affidavit that the characters are all my invention. Nevertheless there is a sharp distinction between the fictitious characters in the foreground and the historical characters herein. The former are wholly fictitious, no real person appears here under false name or any other disguise. But the historical characters are as accurately historical as I can make them even if, because this is a *historical novel*, I sometime pretend to see into their minds as freely as if I had invented them myself.

He also paid tribute to one of his chief suppliers of historical facts, but he begged to differ if he felt the need:

Sometimes my narratives (and my conclusions too) differ from such . . . memoir-writers as 'Putzi' Hanfstaengl. I hope however this is always only because here and there I have had the luck to find further evidence (some of it still unpublished) and not for any less reputable reasons such as 'poetic licence'.

Chapter VI

Helene Hanfstaengl

The middle section of *The Fox in the Attic* ends with one of its main characters in a limbo: "After this we'll hear no more of Hitler — and that too's a good riddance! I expect when they catch him he'll just be pushed back over the Austrian frontier as an undesirable alien. As a proved incompetent, *Exit the White Crow!*" (p. 228).¹ Earlier on the same page, the novel summed up what had happened to Hitler after the shooting in front of Feldherrnhalle, once he was whisked away in the primrose-yellow car that was waiting for him on Max-Josefs-Platz:

Hitler in a depressed state was driving about Bavaria at top speed without the least idea where to go. Finally he fetched up at Uffing of all places — at the Hanfstaengl country cottage, which was bound to be searched sooner or later — and was hidden in the attic where they kept their emergency barrel of flour (p. 228).

Readers who have come this far into the novel are bound to feel disappointed at how hastily the events are bundled up and how quickly the story-line is dropped. They need not wait more than thirty pages for the tale to be resumed, however, and now in much greater detail. The barrel of flour mysteriously mentioned will of course play a more important role. Like Chekov and Ibsen, Richard Hughes knew that seemingly insignificant props, be they pistols or barrels of flour or both, are not placed without purpose early in a drama or a novel; they will reappear towards the end. In Chapters nine, ten and eleven of "The Fox in the Attic" all the loose threads and ends are tied up. They tell the story of, in Hughes's words, "the only living person in a position to describe to me at first-hand the whole forty-eight hour period when Hitler was in hiding at Uffing", whom Hughes also thanked for her help in his Acknowledgements. That his witness was a woman was not stated but it does not take great detective skills to deduce, as he sets the scene by mentioning its two key players: "Helene [Hanfstaengl] had been alone at this 'villa' except for her two-year old child and the maids when Hitler had himself secretly dumped there . . ." (p. 259).

¹ That it is one of the von Kessens (Walther rather than Otto or Franz) who is here ridiculing "that silly little Hitler" is seen in the lines about Mitzi in eclipse that follow: "Thus it was all soon forgotten. For the Kessen family had now something on their plates even more important than politics: a family problem — what to do with Mitzi now she was stone-blind" (p. 228).

Richard Hughes and his wife Frances visited Munich for the third time in March 1960, striking up new friendships that were to prove invaluable. One was with Helene Hanfstaengl and her son Egon, whom they "not only met but also stayed with", if Graves's biography on Hughes is to be believed.² Already on the second day of their stay, Hughes read Egon's unpublished memoirs, and on the fourth his mother's.³ In a memo, Egon told the Hugheses how his mother's notes had come into being. She was, like her mother-in-law, American. During the war, she had been approached by the New York publishers Lippincott who wanted to print her impressions of the early stages of Nazism. She started writing them, and by the end of 1940, she had got as far as the Putsch but then gave it all up and told Lippincott that she did not want to continue. She had never shown them what she had written.⁴

They had offered her the assistance of a ghost-writer, but she had declined. The manuscript, "a smallish spiral note book", had then been lying around for another twenty years, unread and unfinished.⁵ Egon finally typed it out. At that stage or slightly later Richard Hughes received a transcript of parts of the script. In his files there is a seven-page "Extracts from

² Graves, p. 378. However, he lists her as "Hanfstaengl, Helene (Putzi)" in his index. He is not the only one to be confused by the muddled events at Uffing. In 1957, Ernst Hanfstaengl had taken the opportunity to polemicize against Konrad Heiden who had suggested that Hitler had spent the forty-eight hours in Erna Hanfstaengl's bed. "Nothing could be further from the truth", Hanfstaengl wrote. "It would take a better writer than Heiden to explain how a man with a dislocated shoulder could spend the next two days behaving like Tannhäuser in the Venusberg" (p. 107). It seems a reasonable objection by someone who knew that his sister never was near Uffing but had remained in Munich, but it is also a revealing example of Hanfstaengl's many wilful misreadings and exaggerations. What Heiden had actually written was much less colourful and sensational, although still untrue: "Frau Hanfstaengl, the mother of his subsequent Foreign-Press Chief, and the latter's sister, Erna, nursed him. A romance developed" (p. 171). It is not the only example of subjectivity in the Hanfstaengl memoirs, a tall tale told by "one of the best raconteurs of his time", as Brian Connell dubbed him. Gordon (p. 465) tries to set the record straight.

³ They arrived on a Friday; on the following Monday Hughes got Helene Hanfstaengl-Niemeyer's notes, as explained in a memo dated March 8, which Egon wrote and attached to his own manuscript (Egon Hanfstaengl, *Out of the Strong*, pp. 417-418).

⁴ Some years later, the British historian John Toland made use of the same source and quoted a letter from Egon Hanfstaengl which reads almost identical to Egon's earlier memo to Richard Hughes: "Helene Niemeyer (the former Frau Helene Hanfstaengl) agreed to write a book for Lippincott in 1940. 'Got to the end of the Putsch story,' explained her son Egon, 'and told Lippincott she didn't want to go on. She never showed them what she'd written . . . Today said that, in 1940, she was sick of the whole Nazi business and it also occurred to her that if she published the story, the Nazis might take it out on her relations.' Letter to author, Feb. 16, 1973." (Toland, p. 941). Hughes was not the only person privileged with private Hanfstaengl stories. Toland also interviewed both Ernst and Helene Hanfstaengl, see Toland p. xiii.

⁵ In all probability, her notes have never been published. They deserve to be: they are important as a report of happenings not witnessed by anyone else. In the following they will be briefly paraphrased, the direct quotes kept to a minimum.

mss. notebook of Mrs. Niemeyer (Helene Hanfstaengl)". The first page in A4 tells of an episode in Hitler's childhood, whereas the remaining six pages in foolscap concern happenings in 1923. They are glossed in the margin: "UFFING", "PUTSCH", and also "Saturday" and "Sunday" are marked (and Hughes has added by hand in the margin the two preceding days). It proved to be what he had been looking for, providing "the little day-to-day incidents . . . the atmosphere, the personal background", and filled the lacunae in the reconstruction of the Uffing episode where Hughes had relied on her husband's memoirs so far.

The contexts of Hughes's two sources, written independently by husband and wife, differed considerably. Ernst Hanfstaengl had been actively involved in Nazi party politics. He had left Hitler's inner circle, or been ousted from it, well before the outbreak of the Second World War. When he was interviewed by Brian Connell in 1956, the aim of the many tape-recorded sessions was to have them published, which also happened in the following year. Putzi Hanfstaengl did not shy away from gossip in his efforts to be entertaining, but his book also had a strong apologetic intention, as a whitewashing of his own role and a corresponding blackening of those of others in the Nazi hierarchy. He settled old scores, he belittled his adversaries, and he underscored his own perpetual but unsuccessful efforts to make Hitler see sense. This tendency can be seen on almost every page in his memoirs.

Helene Hanfstaengl, on the other hand, had not been intimately involved in politics. As an unpolitical person she would have had few ulterior motives when she started writing her notes; they were written at the suggestion of a publisher in the United States, a nation which was at the time neutral, the attack on Pearl Harbour being more than a year into the future. Her account, though much shorter, was more accurate and less biased than her husband's, and Richard Hughes will surely have appreciated its greater immediacy. In her case, the Uffing episode had happened less than twenty years before she set it down on paper, in her husband's case almost thirty-five. She wrote her notes just before or at the outbreak of the Second World War and with less hindsight and with no knowledge of the last phase of Nazism; he on the other hand wrote well after the war, with some if not full knowledge of the Nazi atrocities. At the time of the tape-recording and the following writing and revision of his memoirs, it would have been impossible for him not to be influenced by his hindsight knowledge of recent history.

Richard Hughes's background was different from both. He was even further distanced in time, and he wrote not only for his contemporary readers but also with his future ones in mind. They would be looking back at the historical events in his novels over an ever widening time gap and in a more disinterested way. By drawing on several differing witness reports, Hughes tried to reach a delicate balance between contradictory reports in these as in his other chapters. His main difficulty was similar to the one that had faced Ernst Hanfstaengl (though not his wife). In the late fifties both Hughes and Hanfstaengl knew well what had happened in past years, but they tried not to show how much they were influenced by this knowledge at the time of writing. The novelist was more strict than the memoirist, but neither could avoid this hindsight completely; they could not write in a void.

Helene Hanfstaengl's notes are strictly chronological as they retell what had happened to her on four consecutive days in early November, 1923, days that Richard Hughes took a keen interest in. On Thursday, November 8, 1923, she went to Munich, a good hour away, on an early train from Uffing, to do some shopping. As the Hanfstaengls were invited to a party that evening she went to their Munich flat. Her husband telephoned her and excused himself; he would be engaged elsewhere, at the important Bürgerbräu meeting that had been announced in advance. Helene came home to the flat just before midnight, went to bed and was woken up by the telephone. Friends who had been at the meeting called and told her of how a national revolution had been proclaimed. Hitler planned to march on Berlin, and her husband was busy briefing foreign journalists, they said. Other telephone calls that she received during the night filled in her picture of the coup.

Richard Hughes made no direct use of the rendering of that day in her notes, as he started his action in Chapter nine with the muddy Hitler's arrival at the house the next night, on the Black Friday evening. He used a good page to introduce the Hanfstaengls to his readers (as commented on above, p. 131), stressing their superior standing in Munich society; their hospitality to Hitler; and their genuine friendliness to him (in a barbed line): "Putzi and Helene, that young couple who alone perhaps in all Germany seemed to Hitler to be fond of him for his own sweet self" (p. 258). He also described the little house at Uffing with such a wealth of precise details as if he had been there himself — which he had.

Only the next morning, Friday, November 9, did Helene get a fuller account of what had happened the day before from her husband, who had by then returned to the flat. Here she for once resorts to hindsight, when talking of the Putsch events "which since have become History". She tells us how she took the tram through central Munich at noon and rode as far as three blocks from the Odeonsplatz without even noticing any marchers. She waited for a while at the railway station and then took the train back to Uffing. As it was her mother-in-law's birthday, she walked out to Frau Hofrat Hanfstaengl's farm and celebrated the occasion with her. Around six o'clock she walked back, and the maid closed the house and its shutters for the evening. An hour later there was a soft knock on the door. She asked who it was: "To my utter amazement I recognized the weak but unmistakable voice of H. Quickly I opened the door. There he stood, ghastly pale, hatless, his face covered with mud, the left arm hanging down from a strangely slanting shoulder." A doctor and an ambulance orderly accompanied him. They were all admitted into the house, and the door was then locked behind them.

This is where Richard Hughes started his borrowing. He leaned heavily on her notes, but he made them more lively by inserting her at times as the focalizer and by letting her take a direct part in the action. When Hitler is dumped at her door, "muddy and hatless and his shoulder queerly dropping", he is greeted by her amazed and slightly annoyed "Also, doch!" (p. 259). It seems likely that Hughes, with his good ear for idiomatic phrases and manners of speech, had it straight from her. So far in the novel, she knows little of what has really happened: "for Helene herself had been in Munich that very morning yet had heard nothing there of that disastrous march, and only after her return had heard (and till now, disbelieved) the village rumours" (p. 259).

According to her notes, Helene was informed of the march by Hitler himself, who claimed that he had seen both Ludendorff and Graf fall, and who lamented that they were dead. Ulrich Graf had indeed proved that he was Hitler's body guard, in a quite literal sense. His body had been riddled with bullets, and when he fell he had pulled at Hitler's arm, dislocating it at the shoulder. When he was telling this, Hitler grew ever more excited, accusing the government officials and swearing that he would continue the fight for his political ideals. Helene, noticing that he was running a temperature, asked the two men to bring him upstairs where they tried without success to re-set his shoulder. Hitler stayed in one guest room, the

orderly in the other. During a long night's discussion with the doctor Helene was better informed of what had happened. It had been the group's intention to head for Austria as soon as Hitler had been picked up by one of the open cars that followed in the wake of the procession, but the car had broken down in the village closest to Uffing. While the driver remained by the car, the others headed for the woods and then went on a weary walk to the Hanfstaengl house, not following the roads but stealing along footpaths in order not to be seen by the villagers.

Hughes had already compressed some of these facts in his line about Hitler "arriving on foot, through the fields, after dark . . ." (p. 259). He then stressed Helene's anxiety by inserting her worried question "— But Putzi...?" which only draws a perfunctory answer from Hitler who was already at this early stage deep into his own world of thoughts and worries. Hughes now introduces one of his leitmotifs in these three chapters, Bechstein's help which will be eagerly expected but when it eventually comes will be too late.

In her notes, Helene Hanfstaengl does not discuss why Hitler did not try to cross the border, whereas her husband did in his: "There is little doubt that Hitler could have escaped to Austria if he had wanted to, and, although we never talked about it in detail, it is a fair assumption that he had specific reasons for not doing so" (p. 109). Hughes took the hint and followed Ernst Hanfstaengl in this instance. In a parenthesis which was as suggestive as Ernst's surmise had been, he implies that Hitler had avoided Austria intentionally: "All the same, Herr Hitler had to be got away again somehow and smuggled into Austria (yes, why on earth hadn't he already crossed into Austria long ago?)" (p. 260). Without stating it openly, Hughes alludes to the many rumours of shady secrets in Hitler's past that were later suppressed by order from above.⁶ Hughes found suggestive allusions in what followed in Ernst Hanfstaengl's memoirs:

Years later, at the time of the Anschluss, the Gestapo made straight for the Vienna police headquarters and impounded a number of dossiers. One of them, I am con-

⁶ As early as in 1941, a British commentator admitted that there were lacunae in Hitler's biography: "It is not easy to get at the truth of Hitler's origins and early life. The official account is meagre and obviously arranged. Moreover, as in every totalitarian régime where only an expedient rendering of facts is forthcoming, a whole swarm of unofficial 'inside' sources of information press their own especial claim for credence" (H. G. Baynes: *Germany Possessed*, pp. 25). Some pages later, Baynes stated for a fact that "Already the historical truth about Hitler's origin has become inaccessible" (Ibid., p. 29).

vinced, related to Hitler and dated back to his early youth in the city, although what the charges were we shall probably never know (p. 109).⁷

On the Saturday morning of November 10, Hitler was still in a fever after a sleepless night, according to Helene Hanfstaengl's notes. He ordered the two men to go back to Munich: the doctor to call for medical help, and the orderly for Bechstein's closed car. Little Egon had to be kept indoors for fear he should tell the neighbours of Uncle Dolf staying in the house. The doctor returned by car from Munich with a colleague, but Hitler's shoulder could not be set straight this time either, and they left. Helene, in her own words, "sat talking with H., who was impatient at getting no news and at the Bechstein's car not arriving." At eleven o'clock that night, someone knocked, telling her through the closed shutter that he was Göring's gardener and that he had brought a message from Ludendorff for someone who was, according to him, staying in the house. He was told that there was no visitor in the house, but if he stayed the night at the village inn he would be told if "someone" arrived.

Hughes handles the progression of that day's events expertly in his Chapter nine by occasionally speeding up the time, or slowing it down, and by inserting many markers to underline his characters' subjective experience of it: "So, after an immeasurable time without sleep, daylight had at last come again" (p. 261); "Noon . . . at Uffing the unquiet doctor starting for Munich to fetch a confrère" (p. 262); "Dusk again. Why had the Bechstein car not come yet? Hitler had forgotten by now it could do no good if it did come: he had sent for it and so it MUST come" (p. 262); "Midnight, and still no Bechstein car had come" (p. 262). Towards the end of the chapter, Hughes deviates from his source when the narrator looks into the central character's mind and hears what Hitler presumably had heard: "Suddenly Hitler started out of a half-doze, for a calm Sibylline 'voice' was ringing in his ears" (pp. 262-263). At the very end of the novel,

⁷ Norman Davies is more informative on this topic: "Soon after the German Army occupied Austria in March 1938, Adolf Hitler is said to have ordered the commander of Wehrkreis XVII to demolish the village of Dollersheim by 'target practice'. The inhabitants were evacuated, and all the buildings of the village, including the cemetery, were duly reduced to rubble by artillery. The point behind this savage operation seems to have been that both Hitler's father and paternal grandmother, Maria Anna Schicklgruber, were buried at Dollersheim, and that Hitler had recently learned the fact of his father's early life. According to a Gestapo report, the young Fräulein Schicklgruber had conceived Hitler's father when working as an unmarried servant in a rich Jewish household. The implications, from Hitler's point of view, were disturbing" (Davies, *Europe — A History*, p. 972).

a corresponding auditory hallucination, equally heavy in its forebodings, is described, this time Augustine's.

According to Helene Hanfstaengl's notes, on the next morning, which was Armistice Day, Sunday November 11, Hitler recognized the man who had been brought back from the inn, and conferred with him. Hitler then slept till noon, and was later wrapped in Ernst's dark-blue bathrobe, which was wide enough for the sustaining bandage. Mrs. Hanfstaengl noted: "Lunch, Egon cheerful and chatty." Hitler grew more impatient, and when the Bechstein car still had not turned up, she volunteered to call the household plumber. He was one of Hitler's admirers and owned a motor-bike and a sidecar where Hitler could be stowed away on pillows under a tarpaulin: "But H wouldn't hear of this nor would he consider any other suggestions for hiding him in a more secluded spot", she writes. At five o'clock in the afternoon Helene got a phone call from her mother-in-law about the farm fifteen minutes' walk away being searched by the police. One of the police interceded, forbidding Ernst's mother to speak and telling Helene that they would be in her village shortly. When Hitler was told about this, the notes say, "He threw up his hands, completely lost his nerve for the moment, exclaimed 'Now all is lost! No use going on.'"

Two-year-old Egon makes a bouncing appearance in Hughes's Chapter nine. From his own experience, the novelist was well aware of the boundless energy of small children and the worry of parents; he also knew that Hitler knew next to nothing of either:

Hitler wanted to keep [Helene] always with him, talking: but she dared not leave for long the equally excited child: twice she had just caught little Egon outside trying to climb the wall, for he wanted to shout to the whole world the good news that Uncle Dolf had arrived (p. 262).

Then follows the most dramatic incident in Mrs. Hanfstaengl's notes. Hitler picked up a revolver which he had put on the cabinet, but she quickly grabbed his arm and wrenched it away, telling him "How can you give up at the first reverses? Think of all your followers who believe in you and who will lose all faith if you desert them now." He buried his head in his hand while she went upstairs and hid the revolver in the flour-bin, and later she took down on paper what he dictated to her and then signed, as his testament: Putzi would be attending to foreign journalists as before, Frau Bechstein would continue her financial assistance,

Rosenberg would watch the *Völkischer Beobachter*. The details read differently in her husband's account:

Hitler calmed down somewhat and in the few moments left sat down and scribbled out a political testament on a piece of paper. Rosenberg was appointed leader of the party, with Amann as his deputy, and Hermann Esser and Julius Streicher as the other members of the quadrumvirate. Underneath, Hitler wrote, 'Hanfstaengl will be responsible for gathering funds for the party,' although where he thought I was going to get any more from is a mystery to me (p. 108).

Some historians have seen the stroke of a master manoeuvrer in this move of Hitler's. Instead of appointing dangerously capable Nazi members who could rival him for the leadership, he chose more mediocre men who would cause him no trouble while he was serving the prison term that he anticipated. For obvious reasons, Putzi did not mention this possible reason behind Hitler's choice, neither did Hughes, who saw the testament more as Helene's clever decoy to calm Hitler. Not until now did he make use of the barrel: "To give him something to think about she urged Hitler to compose his political testament while there was yet time; and leaving him scribbling she quietly dropped the revolver into that open barrel of flour harmless. It sank in the soft flour without a trace" (pp. 270-271). An attentive reader, familiar with the historical facts, might ask: Was Hitler right or lefthanded? Did Ernst Hanfstaengl or Richard Hughes ever think of which arm was incapacitated after the violent fall, the right or the left one? Did they ever contemplate the likelihood of someone in deep pain from a dislocated shoulder sitting down to write, instead of dictating?

The police then arrived, attracting the neighbours' attention with their rumbling motors and yelping dogs. A diffident army lieutenant and two police were let in. Helene asked them to follow and then stealthily opened the door, as described on the last page of the memoir excerpts intended for Richard Hughes:

There stood H. The unexpected apparition so startled the three men they stepped back a moment. I motioned them in, and when the door was closed H., who had regained his composure, broke out in a tirade against govt, raising his voice more and more particularly when Lieut told him (apologetically) it was High Treason he was being arrested for — which he hotly denied It was a bitter cold night. H. had no hat, no warm coat: so he left still wrapped in bathrobe (he refused offer of a beret).

Richard Hughes allowed the view of the miserable Hitler swathed in Ernst's bathrobe to be shared by quite a crowd: Helene Hanfstaengl, the Lieutenant, the sergeant, the police officer. She opens the door, but who is the one to express disbelief with the astonished "bless me" in the following sentence? It can be interpreted as the extradiegetic narrator's comment, but it also reflects the surprise of the intradiegetic focalizers Helene Hanfstaengl and the Lieutenant. She would not have referred to Hitler as "the blighter", but he would, and the last sentence of the quote below clearly mirrors his thoughts:

As soon as they were quiet again the Lieutenant knocked. It was Frau Hanfstaengl herself who answered, and taking the sergeant and one man with him he followed her up the stairs. She opened a door — and bless me, there the blighter stood, dressed up like one of the Christmas Magi! So he must have been here in the village all the time — not hidden at all! (p. 271).

This happened around seven o'clock in the evening, and thus Hitler had spent — as Hughes writes in his acknowledgements — exactly forty-eight hours in the Hanfstaengl house at Uffing. Ernst Hanfstaengl concludes his chapter "Fiasco at the Feldherrnhalle" with an ironic twist: "In fact, the Bechstein car did finally arrive at the Uffing house — half an hour after [Hitler] had been arrested" (p. 109). In Helene Hanfstaengl's notes, the irony hits even harder. At eight o'clock, an hour after Hitler had been fetched by the lieutenant, Amann finally arrived in the Bechstein car. At nine o'clock, another car sent by the surgeon Dr. Sauerbruch and driven by his chauffeur came to collect Hitler. Hughes changed the point-of-view but kept the irony, implying that the following are the thoughts of Hitler as an intradiegetic focalizer: "It was the Bechstein car in style, or nothing. So now it was — nothing" (p. 270). Even here, Hughes adhered to what his witness had told him.

In a small notebook of his own, he had made a brief summing-up of "Mrs. H's notes". On two pages, dated March 5, he had jotted down facts that seem to have had their origin in his conversation with her. Some of them went into his novel: she had met Hitler for the first time in the early autumn of 1922 and had found him both charming and amusing though somehow lost and pathetic; she had seen no sign at all of unrest in Munich; when Hitler had been furious and threatened to commit suicide she "took away revolver & flung it in [a] barrel of flour"; he told her that he could never marry as his country came first; and when she had offered to

get the motor-cycle with the sidecar "H said no — he must have the Bechstein limousine, however risking the delay."

As noted, the middle section of the novel ends by placing Hitler in limbo. He had proved himself incompetent and was dismissed without further ado, and a good riddance! At the end of Chapter eleven of "The Fox in the Attic", he is once more an abysmal failure. When he is carted off from Uffing on the truck, an array of afflictions beset him. They seem psychosomatically induced by his aggravation at not being able to sway his captors his way. To this solipsist, the soldiers are no longer persons: he is constrained by deaf adders who choose not to listen to him. Hitler is the intradiegetic focalizer in the following brief subjective passage: "He felt in his rage as if he was being assaulted by climbing snakes". The objective narrator hastens to add a trivial explanation: "though these were only the cramps running up and down him from head to foot . . .". In the next few sentences, Hitler is once again the focalizer: "Damn the woman for taking his gun! Even in that he had failed" (p. 273).⁸ In the last paragraph on the page, the extradiegetic narrator limits his bird's eye view by moving the focus from the captive Hitler to his guards; they in turn become the intradiegetic focalizers as far as sight and sound are concerned:

Did Hitler attempt to speak again, in the back of that truck? Who cared? Who possibly knows? For one of them had brought his accordion and they all began to sing. The sergeant had a lovely baritone, and the song was sickly-sweet (p. 273).

⁸ The line bears a curious resemblance, also in its sexual connotation, to the last act of Strindberg's play *The Father*, when the wet-nurse has finally tricked the pistol away from the Cavalry Captain, hypnotising him into believing that it is a dangerous snake. When the British writer Anthony Swerling was at work on his book on Strindberg, he sent Hughes a letter, asking what impact Strindberg might have had on him. The answer was unhelpful. Hughes, busy with his novel, could spare no time answering this query, wrote his secretary.

Chapter VII

Egon Hanfstaengl

Ernst Hanfstaengl's memoirs were printed by a London publisher in 1957. When they were reissued in paperback almost forty years later by a New York publisher, his son Egon supplied an afterword to the book, dated Munich March 1994. It concerns "Ernst Franz Sedgwick Hanfstaengl (February 11, 1887 — November 6, 1975) My father as I see him now — nearly twenty years after his death" (p. 303). It summarised what had happened to Ernst Hanfstaengl after his precipitate forced departure from Germany in 1937 (see above, p. 133), events which had been touched upon only very briefly in the memoirs. In his afterword, Egon also mentions himself, though fleetingly: "I, the boy who had romped on the floor with 'Uncle Dolf' and had loved him as the most imaginative and histrionically potent playmate one could wish for — I, the ex-Hitler youth . . . was shipped off to the U. S., the land of my birth, on September 2, 1939 . . ." (p. 305). He continues:

My father had arranged for me to enter Harvard, his old alma mater. My career there was, to put it kindly, checkered and incomplete. On my twentieth birthday, February 3, 1941, I enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps. But that's *my* story, relevant here only in that my enlistment, widely reported in the press, endangered my father in his internment camps, dominated as they were by Nazis who regarded him as a traitor anyway (p. 305).

Egon Hanfstaengl had in fact written *his* story more than fifty years earlier. A copy of his massive manuscript came into Richard Hughes's hands and proved helpful. Now in Hughes's files, it makes interesting reading. The last dozen pages in it are based on Egon Hanfstaengl's 1943 diary and reveal the circumstances behind it. The manuscript came into being as part of the Allied war effort. As a soldier in the USA at twenty-two, he had been officially asked to note down his memoirs; John Franklin Carter, a member of the President's brain-trust, was behind the request. An order from Franklin D. Roosevelt himself had been added: a memoir written by a former *Hitlerjugend* with first-hand knowledge of the Nazi top hierarchy would be appreciated and might prove valuable. Egon Hanfstaengl expediently complied with the request and the order. He had been in the limelight before, and a later postscript to his manuscript lists a few examples of his "farcical role as a celebrity". He was, as he also revealed in the afterword to his father's book, interviewed by the American press when he enrolled at

Harvard, and when Rudolf Hess had parachuted into Scotland on May 10, 1941, a journalist from the Associated Press had asked for his expert opinion on Hess's enigmatic flight and dubious expedition.

Soon after Christmas 1942, the young soldier was assigned to act as Dr. Sedgwick's body-guard and private secretary. That was the pseudonym his father had taken or had been given in America during the latter part of the war, after he had spent time in some British and Canadian internment camps and been transferred to the United States. Ernst Hanfstaengl was formally a prisoner-of-war but with a privileged status, staying with his son in a villa outside the Capital and involved in a counter-intelligence mission. The "S-project" (S as in Sedgwick) is described in his memoirs although the importance of his involvement is probably somewhat exaggerated: "I used to listen to all the German broadcasts to help me with my reports. Every week six or seven typewritten sheets on the subject of current developments were on the President's desk" (p. 295 — see above, p. 133).¹

Egon Hanfstaengl had started on his memoirs, entitled "Out of the Strong", on the first of January, 1943. Half a year later, when he had advanced to the rank of sergeant, he had reached the end of his manuscript, after no less than 575 handwritten pages. In July, an almost equally long typescript was handed over to Dr. Henry Field, the go-between of the "S-project" and Pentagon. Egon had been busy not only with his script but had also been interrogated about his German experiences by American intelligence who requested inside information on the *Hitlerjugend* mentality. The anthropologist Margaret Mead was one of them. Egon, involved in the Allied propaganda effort, had also met with the film-director Frank Capra, hoping to appear in Capra's series "What are we fighting for", though nothing came of this.

A few ghost-writers were approached in connection with Egon Hanfstaengl's manuscript, one of them Paul Gallico, but it was the Pulitzer-winning biographer John Pringle who pared it down and edited it. The author himself never saw that version, which was sent to Reader's Digest and other publishers. While this happened, he had been posted to the Pa-

¹ Three members of the Hanfstaengl family would eventually make their appearance in fiction thanks to Richard Hughes, but Ernst had done so long before. The "S-project" was fictionalized by John Franklin Carter, the presidential adviser, in his novel *The Catocin Conversation*. Carter's novel is briefly mentioned in Hanfstaengl's *Hitler: The Missing Years*: "In it he puts into my mouth, as my contribution to an imaginary conversation with Roosevelt and Churchill during the height of the war, at a hunting-lodge in the Catocin Mountains, the substance of the reports I wrote over the next two years" (p. 295). *Cosmopolitan*, the American magazine, seems to have entertained plans to make a film on Ernst Hanfstaengl's eventful life but nothing materialised.

cific. When he returned to the United States in 1944, his story had still not been published in spite of promising negotiations. The publishers, he wrote later, seemed to have felt that it either was not sensational enough, or that it was "a particularly insidious form of German propaganda."

About a decade later, Egon typed his handwritten notes from his three voluminous note-books. In the process, he added his critical comments in the margin, a gloss that tried to set the record straight by telling fact apart from fiction. In a postscript dated June 20, 1959, he expressed his relief that the manuscript had never gone to print. He had been too young and much too impressionable at the time, he realized, not resisting the temptation to write what he thought the military and the American public expected of him: "Had it been published, I would either have had to live with my fabrications for the rest of my life or publish a confession — a horrible choice which I am profoundly grateful to have been spared" (p. 412).

*

Some time in 1958, Richard Hughes learned that Egon Hanfstaengl had written an unpublished autobiography. Towards the end of the year, he asked the London bookseller Wolfgang Foges to act as a liaison for him, which he did. When first approached, Egon Hanfstaengl had been hesitant, but a copy of *A High Wind in Jamaica* which Hughes had sent him won him over, though his doubts concerning his own manuscript remained. He wanted to know why Richard Hughes had chosen to write about Nazi Germany and what his intentions were. The fact that Hughes had expressed interest in "Out of the Strong" made Egon read it once again, while adding further comments. In the spring of 1959, when Hughes still had not seen Egon Hanfstaengl's manuscript, he sent Foges a new letter. He would like to read it as soon as possible, he wrote, and he had high hopes for it:

... it is the kind of document which I am quite sure would be absolutely invaluable to me. It is not only for the historical facts: after all I am a novelist and not an historian; no doubt the most important historical facts are already published: rather it is the little day-to-day incidents which the historian does not bother with, the atmosphere, the personal back-ground which is so valuable to a novelist.²

Foges answered that Hughes would be welcome to meet both Egon Hanfstaengl and his mother Helene in Munich and he enclosed their address. Egon thought that his notes were naive and would prefer to show

² RH to WF, May 27, 1959.

them personally instead of sending him them by mail.³ As suggested by Foges, Hughes wrote to Egon Hanfstaengl. The letter varied what he had already written to the bookseller: he hoped that they would be willing to assist him, and he concluded: "I feel sure that your own and your mother's recollections are likely to be of immense value to me."⁴ In his letter he included five pages from his work-in-progress which he wanted their comments on. The first page concerned Mitzi's view of Augustine as a foreigner; the second showed warring paramilitary groups in Munich as observed by Willi, Lothar and Fritz in the Löwenbräukeller; the third was Otto's recollections of Hitler as the "white crow"; the fourth flash-backed to Munich, May 1919, after Toller had been defeated and also contained Dr. Reinhold's satirical view of Hitler as "das arme Kellnerlein". A fictionalised Putzi Hanfstaengl appeared on the last page, which illustrated Hitler's social ineptitude. Some of these manuscript pages were never published, either because his correspondents made objections or for some other reason.

When he was planning his upcoming Bavarian journey in early 1960, Hughes expressed his wish to meet with the Hanfstaengls and asked Egon: "Among the places I want to visit afterwards is Uffing. Does the house where Hitler was arrested still stand?"⁵ Egon assured him that it did, and even if the interior was much redone, the exterior had remained unchanged.⁶ A manuscript page among Hughes's papers, probably the retyped note of what he had jotted down on his visit to the Uffing villa in the spring of that year, describes it with many details, some of which later went into the novel. It was a tiny house surrounded by a stone-wall and with three small windows on the attic floor "opening onto [a] largish balcony under wide overhanging eaves. This attic with the balcony was the room where Hitler spent most of the time, but the arrest took place in the sittingroom on the first floor." The same page notes how "Hitler's party arrived on foot — their car had broken down, they said", a piece of information that was also of use for the novel. The detailed topography of the note makes it clear that Hughes was as meticulous in his research outside Munich as he had been in the city centre, where he had retraced the steps

³ WF to RH, June 4, 1959.

⁴ RH to EH, June 6, 1959.

⁵ RH to EH, Feb. 2, 1960.

⁶ EH to RH, Feb. 19, 1960.

of Hitler's flight from Munich to Uffing on a night in early November almost thirty-seven years earlier.⁷

Richard and Frances Hughes, who had put up at a Pension near the Siegestor, did not waste their time. They arrived on a Friday, and discussed the Putsch with the Hanfstaengls the next day and were told that Helene also had kept notes. Hughes got an opportunity to borrow Egon's diary and read it for the first time that evening, but evidently it was handed back on the Sunday, when all four drove to Oberammergau and Uffing. In April Hughes finally received the copy of Egon's manuscript that Wolfgang Foges sent him, with a note: "This will be the only copy in existence here . . . I would suggest that when you have digested it you should send it back to Egon."⁸ Either this was not done, or Hughes made his own copy with Egon's permission. However that may be, a photo-copy of "Out of the Strong" is now kept in the Hughes collection in the Lilly Library.

Towards the end of 1960, Hughes thanked Egon Hanfstaengl and his mother for their kindness and told Egon that the novel was ready for the press and that he would send him the drafts of the Uffing chapters "for your vetting — since naturally I don't want to say anything in them either your mother or you would not wish to be said."⁹ He sent the chapters three days later, writing that he would welcome any criticism, "however destructive", and that he wanted to make sure that he had not included anything they did not want to see in print. He also brought up the question of the best way to acknowledge his sources, in much the same words that he had used in his simultaneous letters to Pia von Aretin. Since his book might reopen old sores, he did not want them involved in any controversy which might arise in Germany because of his book. He suggested the wording which was included in the novel, in which his witness was not identified by name. He added that he would have liked to express his gratitude in print to Egon as well but that this would be more appropriate in the next volume, where extensive use of his manuscript would be made.

Hughes was considerate and careful. He took the precaution to ask if the doctor who had come to Hitler's assistance and whom Helene

⁷ Richard Perceval Graves mentions the 1960 journey briefly (p. 378), while Penelope Hughes devotes a chapter to it, based in part on her mother's recollections: "Frances described to me a day in midwinter in Munich, with a bitter wind whistling down the Konigstrasse, Diccon and Pia standing together in the Odeonsplatz while Diccon completely oblivious of the cold cross-questioned Pia on every detail of Hitler's march down the Konigstrasse, that fateful night of the Munich *Putsch* in 1923" (p. 161).

⁸ WF to RH, April 13, 1960.

⁹ RH to EH, Nov. 16, 1960.

Hanfstaengl had met years afterwards might still be alive: "If so, do you think he'll consider I have said anything derogatory to his professional skill? I don't want to run into a libel action!" In the most interesting part of his letter, Hughes defended his method of prying into Hitler's mind. For the framework, he wrote, he had based his work on Helene Hanfstaengl's notes, but:

... this is a novel not a history-book and in portraying what I suppose to have been going on in Hitler's mind at the time you'll find I've allowed my imagination a pretty free rein! However the memories of the past I attribute to him are all based on some sort of evidence (mostly Kubizek), and if you feel I have exaggerated the degree of his mental perturbation at the time... well, let us suppose he pulled himself together when he was under your Mother's eye and only let himself lapse into semi-delirium when he was alone.¹⁰

In his answer, Egon Hanfstaengl reassured Hughes that when he and his mother had read the chapters, they had approved of them and now said "*unison: stet*" even if the reading had given rise to a painful discussion: "As you know, we are not fond of seeing ourselves (even though briefly) picked out by any searchlight. But history is history." If their conception of Hitler differed from his, it did not matter. They let Hughes decide as to the best form of acknowledgement. One detail had been changed, Egon noted: the barrel of flour had stood in the hall, not in the attic-room, but he supposed that Hughes had moved it for dramatic unity, with a novelist's poetic licence.¹¹

A year later Egon had read *The Fox in the Attic*, which had just been printed, and his letter to its author was enthusiastic. The novel had kept him up till four in the morning, and he had set down his impressions of it at once: "It's a grand book and the wonderful fairness of your judgement of people and events has soothed even my uneasiness about the parts dealing with or involving our family."¹² Hughes was pleased and relieved, and told Egon that he would like to discuss their different views on Hitler. As for the flour-barrel, he had avoided placing it in the study purely for dramatic reasons, he wrote, and gave his correspondent some insights into his working habits:

¹⁰ RH to EH, Nov. 19, 1960.

¹¹ EH to RH, Nov. 25, 1960.

¹² EH to RH, Nov. 3, 1961. — Alan Bullock, who devotes only a few lines in his *Hitler, a Study in Tyranny* to the aftermath of the Putsch, refers his reader to Hughes's fictional rendering of the events: "For a graphic reconstruction of the whole episode, see the novel by Richard Hughes: *The Fox in the Attic* (London, 1961)" (Bullock 1962, p. 113).

In fact I gained the impression that it was in the room from your father's *Memories*, on the basis of which I had drafted those chapters before ever I met you — or thought I was likely to meet you. I re-wrote the chapters entirely after seeing your mother and you, but that point had not been mentioned between us and it was not till I got your letter that I had any idea of my mistake. By that time this barrel of flour had become such a keystone in the narrative that I would have had to recast the whole thing a third time if I was going to put it in its rightful position.¹³

*

Even if Egon Hanfstaengl was happy that his memoirs remained in manuscript, it seems a waste that they never reached publication. They have the same documentary value as his mother's equally unpublished memoirs. At least two episodes in his manuscript, however, reached print in the new context that Hughes's next novel provided. What Egon remembered of his "Uncle Dolf" in Blumenbergstrasse prison and what he recollected from having seen Hitler after his release from Landsberg, served a good fictional purpose when it turned up with minor changes in Chapters eleven and fourteen of "The Meistersingers". The two chapters were based on memoirs written by both father and son. This is Ernst's description of their visit to the prison:

I even took little Egon along with me to the Blumenburgstrasse and Hitler was delighted. 'Well, it is nice to see you, Hanfstaengl,' he said, 'and there is little Egon,' taking the child on his knee and letting him choose some of the sweets and cakes which had been sent in by sympathizers. He had this extraordinary quality of immediate appeal to children and the boy adored him (p. 113).

When the same instance was fictionalised, Hughes varied the perspective. The narrator tells the story, but the scene is observed by two focalizers: the father with his admonitions when they are going to meet a great man, and the son who looks forward to the dungeon. The two perspectives fuse in the last line. In the process, the text gains in immediacy:

Putzi had brought his little boy with him to see 'Onkel Dolf' as a birthday treat; and had struggled, in spite of the noise of the tram, to impress on the child what a Great Good Man this was. For the nonce the Baddies had locked him up in their dungeons; but one day 'Uncle' would burst his chains and triumph.... (p. 151).

Very little of what the boy in the novel experiences during the prison visit can be found in *Hitler: The Missing Years*. Some of the critics who were impressed by the lively scene drew a seemingly natural conclusion, that

¹³ RH to EH, Nov. 8, 1961.

the scene was yet another example of Hughes's empathetic capacity to understand children and identify with them. However, in this particular instance, he was more of a factual documentarist than a writer of fiction, this time relying on a very young witness who was just about to turn three at the time, or maybe had just celebrated his birthday. The visit took place some time after Hitler's arrest in November but before the high treason trial that started on February 26, 1924; Egon was born on February 3.

On the first three pages of his manuscript, Egon describes some very early memories, first of a Zeppelin hovering over Munich, and then of Hitler. The gloss that he added a dozen years later, otherwise often critical of his own veracity, certified that these memories were eidetic and indeed genuine. Although Hitler was a constant guest at the Hanfstaengl home in these years, Egon's first memory was linked to seeing him in the unaccustomed surroundings of the prison. Egon and his father had gone there by streetcar.¹⁴ The father told him to pay attention, as they were going to visit someone who was locked up in prison. People might not think much of him right now, but in the future he would be the leader of the nation. The gloss states that Ernst's admonition is Egon's later reconstruction.

The gloss for the next paragraph explains that fairy tales had probably inspired the boy when he imagined that the prison would be a dungeon with light coming in through a small high window only, and with the prisoner linked in heavy chains-and-ball. He had found nothing of this in the prison on the Marsplatz which had turned out to be extremely humane: "A kind paunchy blue-coat with a fine handle-bar moustache took us upstairs, and let us into Hitler's room. It was bright, well-furnished, an almost cheery room . . . The prison was a disappointment, but Adolf Hitler was not" (p. 2). Very little of this is changed in the novel, except that Egon's conclusion is deleted as being superfluous, and his naive perspective is emphasized. An extradiegetic narrator is at work in the following passage, but also two focalizers, i. e. the father and his son. The swift and almost seamless transitions between narrator and focalizers are revealed by the qualifying adjectives (sorry, kindly, wonder-moustache, cheerful, lovely):

'Dungeons, and chains....' What a sorry let-down for the child it was when instead of all that a kindly blue-coat — blessed with a wonder-moustache like bicycle-handlebars — led them along to a bright, well-furnished and almost cheerful room overlooking the Marsplatz and filled with the lovely sound of trains! (p 151).

¹⁴ Egon wrote this in America; in the novel, they travel on a tram.

In Egon's manuscript, a little boy's wide-eyed impressions of Adolf Hitler or rather of "Onkel Dolf" come next. Egon, who was by 1954 living in Munich, sometimes fell back into German in his late additions to the manuscript. He could, he wrote, still see the scene in front of him, with optical clarity: "[Ich] kann noch heute die Szene scharf optisch nacherleben und empfinden." Uncle Dolf had made a "capital impression" on him as a three-year-old. His detailed description of the scene was written when he was some twenty years older:

... his fine lively eyes ... the way he used his hands while speaking; and how he raised himself on his toes, and feathered up and down ... his head lowered and tilted to one side, when he listened to father. They had a spirited conversation together, which I couldn't understand, and consequently have forgotten. But one thing has stayed with me to this day, and that is the sound of Hitler's voice. It was a truly magnificent voice: deep and sonorous, and so strong and resonant that I seemed almost to feel the wood of the little table vibrate, as he spoke ... I can still see him jumping up on a chair, and fishing around on top of the huge brown wardrobe, then coming down with a box of cookies, smiling slyly (pp. 2-3).

Egon's sensory impressions were not lost on Hughes, who made the little boy feel with his fingers the resonance of Hitler's voice where Egon had been more general. There is an added ambiguity of implied points-of-view in the passage in the novel which is otherwise almost identical with its source. For much of what follows, Egon is the focalizer of both sight and sound, but what goes on towards the end of the section is beyond his scope. By then, a transition (in the middle of the last sentence) has taken place from the boy's angle of vision to that of his father:

For there stood Uncle Dolf — and there wasn't a chain in sight.... But the child soon forgot his first disappointment, entranced once more by his darling 'Uncle's' lively affectionate eyes and the man-to-manway he spoke to you, using his hands when he spoke and rocking heel-and-toe with his head on one side when he listened. But most of all was the child enslaved by that magical voice: there were notes which set the table vibrating, and tingled the tiny fingers which touched the wood. Then Uncle climbed on a chair to fish about the wardrobe-top for his secret box of sugar-cakes, afterwards setting the child on his knee to share them and talking to Putzi over the little boy's head (p. 151).

The boy's angle of vision has been the dominating one up till this stage, in a lively account that a reader would take to be the fictional and free conjecture of the novelist. Attentive readers would have remembered Hitler's penchant for sticky sweets, from the satirical portrait in Chapter twenty of

"The White Crow": "If anybody speaks to him he fills his mouth with cream puffs and grunts. If they dare to speak a second time he only fills his mouth with cream puffs . . . he stuffs the last cream puff half-eaten into his pocket and begins to orate" (p. 199). In Egon's manuscript, the sweets were taken down from on top the wardrobe for his sake; in Hughes's novel, Uncle Dolf indulges in them at least as much as little Egon does.

Hughes took good care of Egon's witness report, especially its impressions of Hitler's voice. Four pages further on in the novel, he let his fictitious character Franz give a similar view, as one of the listeners in the court room when Hitler the insurgent is accused of high treason and defends himself in the dock: "that ferocious magnificent voice! Deep and sonorous: harsh, or strong, and resonant: sometimes it sounded soft and warm, but only the better a moment later to freeze your spine" (p. 155). The little boy had been impressed by the sound, and what was said went over his head. In this situation, the focus is on the effect of this voice rather than on its sonorous quality. What Hitler says and how he says it has a political purpose: "Franz was carried away by it clean off his feet, like almost everyone there" (p. 155).¹⁵

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Seven of the pages in Egon Hanfstaengl's "Out of the Strong" describe Hitler's spending "Heilig Abend" in the new Hanfstaengl home in Munich just after his release from Landsberg. They constitute the basis for Egon Hanfstaengl's most important contribution to Hughes's novel, where the same episode covers all of Chapter fourteen in "The Meistersingers". The similarities between manuscript and novel are plain to see; the differences are interesting to note. The novel's reconstruction of Egon's Christmas is more evocative than the original. Some of its details were incorporated ready-made into the novel but with much greater concentration.

¹⁵ On the topic of Hitler's histrionics, Richard Hughes would have agreed with Alan Bullock's statement in an interview with Ron Rosenbaum. Bullock was convinced that Hitler "was the great actor who believed in the part. Absolutely. That's the unique thing about him . . . a cynical calculation: that what is important is not to believe but to be seen to believe — that the counterfeiting of belief counts for more than the sincerity of belief . . . the actor-deceiver becomes carried away, becomes a believer in his own deception — possessed by himself . . . The actor who comes to believe in his own act. The mesmerist who mesmerizes himself." And Lord Bullock quotes Nietzsche: "In all great deceivers, a remarkable process is at work to which they owe their power. In the very act of deception with all its preparations — the dreadful voice, the expression, the gestures — they are overcome by their belief in themselves, and it is this belief which then speaks so persuasively, so miracle-like to the audience. Not only does he communicate that to the audience but the audience returns it to him and strengthens his belief." *The New Yorker*, May 1, 1995, p. 67. Cf. Rosenbaum's *Explaining Hitler* (1998), chapter 5.

Egon's perspective of the guest coming to dinner was not much altered in the novel, though there are the ubiquitous changes of focus. This is how Egon had described the event in his memoirs: "Hitler came at about five in the afternoon . . . I heard Father's voice in the hall, and someone stamping the floor to kick the snow off his boots — then Hitler's voice. When he came in, I ran over to him and shouted 'Dass D'nur wieder da bist, Onkel 'Dolf!'" (p. 10). In the novel, three different angles of three separate focalizers follow in swift succession, with the staccato rhythm and the foreshortened perspective underlining the boy's impatience. The narrator sets the place and time, the boy notices the mothball smell, then follows Hitler's free indirect speech, and finally his direct line:

In an elegant house in an elegant quarter of Munich, at half-past six, an impatiently-waiting child hears a visitor kicking the snow off his boots in the hall: then a hop-skip-and-jump, and he's riding high in the visitor's arms while he breathes 'Dass D'nur wieder da bist, Onkel Dolf!' down the mothbally neck of the visitor's blue party-suit. And how that fine little four-year-old hero had grown since the day when they shared those cakes in the Blumenbergstrasse cell! 'But where have you hidden your new baby sister, you rascal?' (p. 168).

The smell of mothballs was Hughes's addition. His most acute private critic, his daughter Penelope, pointed out when she read the novel in manuscript that this detail was incongruous, as mothballs would indicate the presence of a wife. All the same, Hughes did not remove the smell, and quite rightly: it signals that Hitler at an early stage of his career had not been invited to that many parties and that his party-suit had been hanging idle while he was in prison.

Egon's manuscript had mentioned a terracotta life-size bust by Houdon on the family's Steinway. The novelist made it part of the action: "Well, Wagner's music was always the cure — like Saul. So [Putzi] sat himself down then and there and thundered the 'Liebestod' out on his big concert grand, while the bust of Benjamin Franklin danced all over the lid" (p. 168). The dinner that follows is much too drawn-out for the boy, who gets bored, but then he gets Uncle Dolf's attention once again. According to Egon's manuscript, Hitler had reminded him how on an earlier occasion they had punished a naughty wicked chair with carved lions when Egon had banged against it and started to cry. His reaction this time was more balanced: "It was all fairly amazing, and I thought about it for a long while." In the novel, this incident forms part of a new pattern, Egon's growing up. His naive behaviour then is something better forgotten now.

Bringing it up only adds to his discomfort: "Couldn't Uncle see how this three-year-old's babyish stuff embarrassed a four-year-old hero?" (p. 169).

The memoirs made it evident how intimidated the little boy had been when he told his parents what he wanted for Christmas. He was afraid of what grown-ups might think, but "I felt sure, also that the Christchild would understand my wanting a sabre and a cooking-stove — even though nobody else seemed to." The corresponding fictitious passage presents his reactions more directly, stressing his feeling of acute embarrassment. Egon's fictional counterpart is both shyer and touchier:

He had asked for a sabre, first; and he hoped there'd be no hanky-panky, the Christkind would bring him a proper cavalry one. But next on his list of requests was the cooking-stove everyone teased him about... Would the Christkind think him a cissy like everyone else did — a boy who wanted to cook? Would Uncle Dolf think him cissy? That terrible thought made him blush to the roots of his hair, and he couldn't swallow his tart (p. 169).

The memoirs then move on to some scenes that are described separately: "At length the time came for the 'Bescherung', the presentation of gifts" (p. 11) and "Then Father began to play 'Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht' on the Steinway inside" (pp. 11-12). They merge in the novel. Other incidents from the memoirs were reshuffled, the action speeded up, and the swing in mood made more violent. Egon's manuscript told how he had stood in awe in front of the Christmas tree, then had dashed for his gifts on the table: "When I found that I had received both the sabre and the cooking-stove, I threw a regular fit, ran over to the sofa, and bounced up and down on it". The novel adds something else: "Meanwhile the little boy dived head-first in a sofa and lay there blindly slashing — berserk, completely cuckoo. From the tree a tilting candle dripped hot wax on the face of the china doll in the crib" (p. 172).

Richard Poole quotes this paragraph when he discusses the novel's masterful understanding of Hitler's childishness. Poole, most probably unaware that Egon's memoirs existed and that they had been turned into good use in the novel, maintains that "little Egon is driven into a frenzy by one of his adored Uncle Dolf's uncontrollable tirades", and he saw the quote as an adumbration, "an emblem richly suggestive of the cruel power which Hitler and his Party will in the future yield." The two mentions of cuckoos in the novel were linked in Poole's suggestion that "The word 'cuckoo' will be caught up later when, on the Night of the Long Knives, Hitler is described as a 'cuckoo-chick' who 'soon sees all the legitimate nes-

tlings tumbled out' of the nest he occupies."¹⁶ He may be right, at least in regard to what had been going on subconsciously in the novelist's mind.

What above all excited both little Egon and Uncle Dolf during the Christmas party in the memoirs and the novel alike was Ernst Hanfstaengl's stirring military march on the grand piano. The novel only very briefly sketches the explanatory background: "Moreover this was the 'Schlageter March' which Father himself had composed in the martyr's honour (shot by the French, in the Ruhr)" (p. 171). As Egon had explained more helpfully in his memoirs, the march was composed in memory of Albert Leo Schlageter, executed after he had blown up a bridge and wrecked a train when foreign troops occupied the Rhineland:

... above all, there was a wild, aggressive refrain . . . The 'Pfu!' was shouted out loud to express all the resentment we felt about the French, and how they had dealt with Schlageter. As we sang this, Father, Hitler and I got quite fiery, and our blood ran hot. I took my sabre and started marching around the sofa (p. 13).¹⁷

The novel quotes the revanchist text in its original version, thereby making it even more obscure for most readers than it had been for the little boy. The contemptuous refrain is further emphasised by the italics: "Zwanzig Millionen — die sind euch wohl zuviel,/ Frankreich! das sollst Du bereu'n!/ *Pfu!*" (p. 171). These lines, loaded with German hatred of the dastardly French, are linked to what follows, Hitler's ferocious tirades against the nation's arch-enemy. Egon's sabre-swinging is paralleled by Hitler's equally violent torrent of verbal abuse, and his father's rhetorical question "Was this any 'saner and wiser man'?" casts dark shadows into the future. Ernst Hanfstaengl's memoirs add a disillusioned "Each time Hitler got into this mood I felt almost physically sick" (p. 120). Egon had closed the Christmas chapter in his manuscript on a worried note, involving his mother:

¹⁶ Poole 1986, pp.198-199.

¹⁷ At this Christmas dinner, Albert Leo Schlageter would have been of topical interest to Hitler. Hitler mentions him on the first page of *Mein Kampf*, the first part of which had been written in Landsberg. Like Wolff in *Fox in the Attic*, Schlageter had been one of the Free Corps soldiers who roamed the Baltic countryside in 1919. He became a Nazi in 1922 and reached some posthumous fame, not only thanks to Hanfstaengl's march. In 1931 a monument in his memory was erected on Golzheimer Heide outside Düsseldorf where he had been executed eight years earlier, and in 1933 Hanns Johst made him the hero in his play *Schlageter*. A well-known line from that play is often wrongly attributed to Hermann Göring: "Whenever I hear the word culture . . . I release the safety-catch of my Browning!".

I don't know how we ever got from 'Silent Night' to 'Pfui!' Maybe it was because Germans found it hard to think of the 'Christkind' when the acrid powdersmoke of Schlageter's execution still hung in the air. — How that evening ended is not all too clear in my memory. It sounded out on a sad note, expressed in Mother's face. She was very quiet, and looked worried (p. 14).

In one manuscript version that was later discarded, Hughes had shown Helene Hanfstaengl's aversion expressed as a violent physical reaction: "The mother went white as a sheet at the voice of an over-plump little man in a blue serge suit demoniacally possessed whom, little more than a year ago, she had stopped from killing himself." In the final printed version, the chapter ends with the boy's foreboding sinister dream, in a conglomerate of the day's impressions of both sight and sound. Hughes's end-line did not waste the acrid smell of powdersmoke, but he made it carry significant connotations. It is almost impossible for the reader to overlook its suggestion of both the Nazi extermination camps and the coming cataclysm of the Second World War:

He dreamed of the Christus Kind and his Uncle Dolf in identical old blue bath-
robes riding away on a truck together in triumph, while Benjamin Franklin waved a
sabre and danced on the top of that tiny stove you could really-and-truly cook on
(the stove which he prudently hadn't unwrapped till he got it upstairs).

But then, in his dream, that cooking-stove grew and grew till its chimneys hid
the whole horizon in smoke; and Benjamin Franklin vanished like everything else
(p. 172).

Chapter VIII
Sir Philip Gibbs

Richard Hughes acknowledged his sources in different ways. In the first volume of *The Human Predicament*, the "Acknowledgements" in the postscript mention seven of them by name and allude to one more which remained anonymous. In the "Historical Note" appended to the second volume, three sources were named while Hughes also gave vent to his misgivings of ever being able to know the full truth behind the historical events that he had reconstructed. The 1923 Putsch had been more fully documented than the 1934 Purge, where few if any official records existed; Hughes's reconstruction of the latter had to rely on the contemporary sources "which tend to be the work of known liars on both sides", and which ones of these to use was a matter of choice. Thus, close to a dozen names vouched for his thoroughness as a writer of documentary or witness-based historical fiction; but his sources were in fact many more.

The attentive reader might suspect that some factual characters who play their parts in Hughes's fiction were placed there with a double intention. As they in reality had taken part in or witnessed scenes in 1923 and 1934, they moved into the novel with ease, but readers who were knowledgeable about the factual background, those to whom Hughes directed his "Acknowledgements", might also perceive that a few of the characters had supplied some of the facts that Hughes's reconstruction relied on. This was the case with a handful of persons: Helene, Ernst and Egon Hanfstaengl, Walter Schellenberg, Albert Speer. They all appeared in the fictional recreation of their own factual eye-witness reports, but, except for Ernst Hanfstaengl, Hughes did not acknowledge their contributions formally.

Hughes sometimes resorted to a third and potentially more dangerous method when he covered his traces by not mentioning his sources. In at least one case, he seems to have had doubts whether he had done the right thing. In the vast Indiana University holdings of his manuscripts an unassuming piece of paper cut out of a manuscript states:

As they crossed the frontier a car with a French number-plate was crossing the other way. 'That's Sir Philip Gibbs, the war-correspondent', Jeremy said. 'So he's been 'taking a look-see' too; and I'm sure he'll write much better about it than I shall.

If the lines had been inserted in the printed text, as they obviously at one stage were meant to be, they would have appeared in Chapter eighteen of "Stille Nacht" where Ludo and Jeremy, Joan and Anthony (Augustine being in Morocco) leave France in Ludo's Rolls Royce. They drive into Saarland, which gives Hughes the opportunity to insert a condensed summary of the French occupation and of the League of Nation administration of that contested area; a plebiscite of its future political status was to be held in the following year. Why should they have seen Sir Philip Gibbs (whom few of Hughes's readers would have been able to identify anyway), and why did Hughes eventually decide to (quite literally) cut the lines out? Gibbs would have been just one more in the crowd of factual characters who added to the historical credibility of the novel, if anyone at all recognized his name.

Hughes, however, had some reasons for his decision not to mention Sir Philip Gibbs in his text, but by excluding him, he placed himself in a difficult position. As will be explained, Hughes was very much aware of the quandary, and he later made his British publisher aware of it as well. Sir Philip Gibbs was a well-known man of letters on the British literary scene. During and after the First World War he had been Britain's best known war correspondent. But that was many years ago: when Hughes's novel was published in 1973, Philip Gibbs's many works may have started to sink into semi-oblivion, although his last book, *Life's Adventure*, had been brought out only sixteen years earlier. Gibbs came from a highly literate Kensington family, and he covered many other literary fields as well, although he started out as a journalist and remained one for most of his eighty-five years; he was born in 1877 and died in 1962.

His failing eyesight in his later years makes it probable that he did not read the first part of Hughes's novel. But if he did, he would undoubtedly have felt at home in its German chapters; he had visited Germany on many occasions, the first time back in 1913. Gibbs was a Fleet Street man and, before he became a star reporter, maybe also a Grub Street one. In 1902, the Irish newspaper magnate H. S. Harmsworth, the future Lord Northcliffe, appointed him his literary editor on the *Daily Mail*, and he subsequently was attached to a long series of newspapers. He was a man of principles with strong liberal convictions; with his "facile pen and fluent style", he produced not only masses of newsprint but also at least fifty novels, some showing a "strong sentimental bias", according to the entry on him in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, whose author hints that

they may have been mediocre: "although widely read, his fiction rarely warranted critical attention."¹

Gibbs covered the 1912 war in the Balkans in regions which Richard Hughes made himself familiar with ten years later. He was placed in Paris as foreign correspondent at the outbreak of the First World War and reported on it in dispatches for the *Daily Chronicle* and the *Daily Telegraph*; the articles were syndicated in America and later collected in four books. Five correspondents accredited with the Allied Forces were knighted in 1920, one of them was Gibbs. Some of his novels from the early twenties discuss the disenchanted or lost generation of returning soldiers and their difficulties in adjusting to civilian life.²

Gibbs kept himself in the journalistic limelight well into the 1930s. He reported from Geneva, in support of the League of Nations. Even if he devoted much of his considerable energy to the pacifist cause it did not prevent him from being a member of the Royal Commission of Armament in the year of the Abyssinian crisis. The question of German rearmament interested him, as seen in his *European Journey* (1934). It was followed by two books on England and by *Across the Frontiers* in 1938. In the next year he was once more appointed war correspondent in France, followed by propaganda work in the United States in the early 1940s. His experiences went into a long series of non-fiction books, many of them memoirs.

He expressed his journalistic credo in *The Pageant of the Years*, published twelve years after his *European Journey*. The statement, had it not been for its post-war publication, reads like a summary of British appeasement attitudes in the 1930s: "If I have learned anything it is that pity is more intelligent than hatred, that mercy is better even than justice, that if one walks around the world with friendly eyes one makes good friends."³ Written in the year of the Nuremberg Tribunal trials, Gibbs's plea showed a considerable degree of tolerance, and an obvious willingness to forgive if not to forget. Like Richard Hughes, he seems to have been a likeable man. The following lines in one of his son Anthony Gibbs's memoirs could have appeared in Penelope Hughes's empathetic book about her father (although the age gap between herself and her father was nine years wider than between Gibbs senior and junior): "Exactly

¹ Reginald Pound in *DNB* 1961-1970, p. 428.

² Gibbs was one in a crowd. Rebecca West had done it already in her 1918 novel *The Return of the Soldier*, Virginia Woolf did it seven years later in her *Mrs Dalloway*.

³ Gibbs 1946, p. 123.

twenty-five years older than myself, my father had the gift of youth . . . he treated me with an affectionate equality very different from the traditional 'father figure' of the period."⁴

If the eighth chapter of Sir Philip Gibbs's *European Journey* may seem familiar to readers of *The Wooden Shepherdess*, it is not coincidental: it was Hughes's main source for two chapters in the "Stille Nacht" section. No reviewers appear to have detected the similarities, possibly because the topicality of Gibbs's travelogue had by then been long outdated. Hughes still took a risk when he did not acknowledge his extensive loan; critics with good memories could easily have remembered a book that had been published less than forty years before and which had sold well. Was Gibbs's somewhat lowbrow reputation the reason why critics, barely a dozen years after his death, did not recognise the obvious links between Hughes's book and his? *European Journey* is a vivid and engaging chronicle, a summary of the contemporary European scene. Gibbs's voice was a personal one although he kept in the background, as an unbiassed but basically sympathetic witness. His book was widely read; it went into at least two printings, the second a low-priced edition, and was also sold outside England very soon after publication.⁵

In *The Pageant of the Years*, his later autobiographical book already mentioned, Gibbs filled in the background for his *European Journey*. He had been commissioned by William Heinemann to write a book on the European situation and made the tour with two friends, one of them the painter Edgar Lander who illustrated the American edition, the other the novelist Cecil Roberts. During part of the journey, they were joined by Gibbs's wife. In Paris they hired a Daimler and a driver, Gaston, a Russian who had been a naval officer under the Czar and who was now a naturalised Frenchman; his dual nationality played a part in nationalistic squabbles while they drove through Germany.

The eighth chapter of *European Journey* describes "Hitler's Germany", the ninth "The Saar before the Plebiscite". Gibbs's report from Germany starts ominously. In Berlin earlier in the year, he had caught a glimpse of Hindenburg's tired face. Consistently, Gibbs foreshadowed later events, as seen early in the chapter: "On the first day of August [Paul von Hindenburg] raised his hand for the last time and the whole world paid a tribute to this old soldier who had stood like a rock in a sea of trouble" (p. 298).

⁴ Anthony Gibbs, *In My Time* (1969), p. 9.

⁵ My copy has the acquisition date of a bookseller in Malmö, Sweden (A. Edvin Lundgrens Bokhandel): 29/10/34.

Before the book was printed in the autumn of 1934, Gibbs knew more than when he had jotted down his impressions, during the journey. He took advantage of this, breaking the timeframe at the end of many paragraphs, each time pointing forward to the Purge. The June 30 killings are a recurring theme in his text, another is the looming war. Gibbs allowed hindsight views to slip into his exposition. The anticipation of what was to follow was already a retrospection when he wrote his book, and even more so when it reached its readers, as the following passage shows:

It was a day in February of 1934. It was four months from a day in June when many of the men to whom [Hitler] had paid this tribute, to whom he professed eternal gratitude, for whose loyalty, comradeship, and courage his voice broke into emotion, were shot by his order like mad dogs. That was not yet on the programme (pp. 307-308).

When Gibbs had met a friendly and agreeable young man who feared that Germany would be attacked by Russia or France (a fear which Gibbs often met during his journey through Germany and which seems to have been planted by the Nazi propaganda machine) Gibbs added as an afterthought, breaking the now-and-here of his account: "I do not know whether he is still alive." He widened his scope from mere reportage to include thoughts on the German condition and the German dilemma. When he discussed the treatment of the Jews he did not quite know how the threatening signs should be interpreted: "There had been a Jewish persecution carried out in the early days of Hitler's triumph with great brutality, according to many accounts by credible witnesses I saw Jews moving about their business unmolested, though with uneasy eyes" (p. 308). The seeming innocence of his chapter on "The Problem of the Jews" in his *Across the Frontiers* four years later is ghostlike. What Gibbs could not imagine in 1934 turned into a cataclysmic truth within less than a decade:

It is rather too much to massacre 15,000,000 [Jews] in cold blood, or even a few million, or even 500,000. There would be an outcry of public opinion. People would make a "fuss about it!" A nation might be considered uncivilised if it adopted such measures; and all nations now are curiously sensitive to the charge of being uncivilised (p. 265).

The Crystal Night on November 9, 1938, was only some months away when this book was published.⁶

⁶ The new German order was attracting attention in England. Gibbs, and later Hughes, could have found a detailed exposition of the complexities of this issue in *An Eyewitness in*

Already in *European Journey*, Gibbs had reported on the internal opposition against Hitler, the hardships during the inflation, the German Mythos as it was propagated by Rosenberg, and the discontent and friction in a party in which the socialist wing eagerly expected its programme to be fulfilled. The differences between Prussia and Bavaria were summed up by the artist in the group: "Of course, the Bavarians aren't Prussians", and Gibbs added: "the Bavarians, and especially the peasants, seem a good-natured people, and friendly, even to the English who fought with them" (p. 326), words which could have been the fictitious Augustine's when he sits opposite Bavarian peasants in the railway carriage: "How happily Augustine could spend the rest of his days among such simple, friendly people! He had no feeling *here* of being in enemy country" (*Fox*, p. 130). Later in the novel, the resurrected feelings for a Bavarian monarchy and the enmity between Munich and Berlin are spelled out to him by Franz: "You see, Papa is a Bavarian, but I am a German" (p. 172). The differences between Bavaria and Prussia had been witnessed by yet another British observer as early as in the second year of the First World War, though not all Germans would have accepted its conclusion:

Bavarians love to talk of *Gemütlichkeit* (good-natured, easy-going disposition) as their national characteristic. The Prussian prides himself on his *Schneidigkeit* (smartness, effrontery and go). It is interesting to note that the Prussian ideal has supplanted the Bavarian.⁷

Gibbs's German journey had taken place during early summer, but at the end of his eighth chapter he included, as already quoted, the Sunday in August when Germans voted for Hitler as Hindenburg's successor. According to Gibbs, "Four million said *Nein*, and that is a minority not without significance considering the courage needed to register an adverse vote" (p. 386). Gibbs's sympathies and antipathies were clear to his contemporary readers, as was his anti-Nazi stance. He described Hitler as "a simple-looking man with a toothbrush moustache and fanatical eyes" (p. 298), but he acknowledged that Hitler's grip on his people was as strong as that of the Pied Piper of Hamelin: "He was the mesmerist who had put a spell upon the German people so that they followed him blindly" (p. 306). The differing attitudes towards the new regime were also commented on;

Germany, a book of immediate topical interest written by a knowledgeable Swedish germanophile, Fredrik Böök, critic and professor of comparative literature. It was published in 1933 and translated into English in the same year.

⁷ Smith 1916, p. 123.

the enthusiasm among the young was countered by the scepticism among the middle-aged and old, among those who had already experienced one war and who now were aware that they might stand on the brink of another.

At times, Gibbs gave his portraits an ironic twist. He passed on rumours that he had heard, for example the one about "That man Roehm — a soldier of fortune, a man of deep depravity, if one may believe the accusations against him, a lover of banquets and vicious pleasures" (p. 383). There is an almost Shakespearean ring to his often repeated ironical "that simple man, that honest man" referring to Hitler, whose betrayal of old friends in the Purge had opened many eyes in Germany and elsewhere. Gibbs sometimes sounds like a disillusioned idealist himself:

To foreign observers it seemed as though Adolf Hitler had smashed something which, like Humpty Dumpty, could never be put together again by all the King's horses and all the King's men. Had he not smashed a dream — the dream of German youth? (p. 385).

From having been "Das Land der Dichter und Denker" Germany by now had turned into "Das Land der Richter und Henker". Gibbs did not quote that quip, but he cited a distinguished French writer who had predicted, bearing Lady Macbeth in mind, that in the future Hitler, when he attended the League of Nations, was to "be received by a great silence, and all eyes will stare at his hands" (p. 386). Throughout his account, Gibbs compared the British, French and German mentalities, a subject *de rigueur* in a travelogue. At the end of his chapter on his experiences in Germany, he tried to come to terms with the German enigma but confessed that he was baffled, in words that were less biassed than bewildered:

And there is something in German mentality, something in this loyalty to Hitler, which is not to be understood by other peoples. The German mind works differently. It is not subject to the same impulses and instincts. . . .

There are mysteries in the German mind we cannot fathom or understand. It is because of those mysteries that other peoples are uneasy and afraid (pp. 386-387).

The quote, minus its political implications and its foreshadowing conclusion, could have been endorsed by Augustine: "Even at the best of times Augustine's surroundings in Germany never seemed to him quite 'real': they had a picture-book foreignness, down to the smallest detail" (Fox, p. 349). At the end of the first novel, he is at a loss. The reader, more than

Augustine himself, is aware that the symbolic implications of the frozen river and its pent-up forces are more political than personal: "When that ice melted at last it would go thundering down the river grinding to bits everything in its path. No bridge could possibly stand up to it" (p. 351).⁸

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Undoubtedly, Richard Hughes recognised many of his own themes in Gibbs's account, though there is no indication in the archives as to when he had first read it. In *European Journey*, one of Hughes's key witnesses appears during a fleeting moment, not mentioned by name but easily recognised. He was a tall and heavily built man, restless and good-humoured. The mildly mocking David-Saul scene made him easy to spot for readers in the know. The man was not unknown to Gibbs:

He was Hitler's bosom friend, as I knew. When Hitler is tired of good works and noble oratory this big man with big hands sits down to a piano and plays to the *Führer*, soothing him by light music, or selections from Wagner, played magnificently by those big hands (p. 315).

Philip Gibbs, aware of the risks involved for his outspoken informants in Germany, was anxious not to reveal their identity. Another of them was an American lady, long married to a German. She was knowledgeable about German affairs and nourished a deep admiration for Hitler. It does not seem unlikely that the woman could have been Helene Hanfstaengl while the man in the lines just quoted of course was her husband Ernst "Putzi" Hanfstaengl. He was lured away by young friends from Gibbs's restaurant table and disappeared without fulfilling the half-promise that he had given Gibbs: "I've been away in Munich with Hitler. We must certainly have a good talk" (p. 315).

This happened while Gibbs was still in Berlin, but he soon left this city, because he felt that "Berlin is not Germany. I was glad to go into the smaller towns and villages on the motor journey . . ." (p. 325) and thus he travelled north from Garmish-Partenkirchen to Munich, then northwest to Augsburg, Ulm, Stuttgart and Karlsruhe where time had stood still

⁸ Richard Poole quotes this passage and places it in the context of Augustine and his intuition of "otherness": "The description conveys with muscular immediacy the tremendous power imprisoned in post-war Germany. It suggests a country balked and frustrated, a people politically and spiritually disorganized. Beneath the perverse and petrified shapes of ice, the current of tradition still flows, but it is visible only intermittently The problems symbolically embodied in this enormous confusion of ice are unsolvable, but nothing is more certain than an eventual release of pent-up force" (Poole 1986, p. 212).

since Queen Victoria's many visits; it was "not the City of Dreadful Night, but the City of Dreadful Afternoons", where Mark Twain had written that the dogs were too tired to yawn. Gibbs and his fellow travellers then proceeded to Saarbrücken.

When Hughes drew on Gibbs's account some decades later, he knew more about how things had developed, but he was restricted by his self-imposed time frame and could not transgress the immediate moment. He mainly had to rely on his readers' active participation when he wanted them to draw conclusions, although there are a few foreshadowings in the links between some of his chapters.⁹ This is the case with the political panegyrics that are blared forth by the loudspeaker in the bar (p. 331). They prepare the reader for the Hitler-Mussolini meeting in Venice in the following chapter (p. 334).

Chapter twenty of "Stille Nacht" ends on a sinister note. Jeremy is the internal focalizer, an auditory witness with a limited understanding of what is really going on. Through the open window of his railway carriage west of Nuremberg he happens to hear bursts of firing, a sound that he wants to put into his official report, once he is back in London: "'Ah, Saturday rifle-practice' he thought: 'I must put that in'" (p. 340). The extradiegetic narrator corrects him and widens the perspective: "But he wasn't quite right. What he really had heard, that peaceful last day of June, was the sound of a firing-squad in some lonely place; and it wasn't the only one." What Jeremy takes to be innocent bursts of rifle fire from a distance prepares the ground for the extreme violence on the following pages. It will, however, take several chapters until the novel has caught up with Jeremy's Saturday, described by the narrator with an ominous and heavily ironic adjective as "that peaceful last day of June". What Jeremy heard also harks back to what one of Gibbs's outspoken and bitter witnesses had told him about military indoctrination of German children already from a tender age: "Meanwhile even little schoolboys are being taught rifle-shooting — an hour and a half a week — and learning the mechanism of machine guns. A nice education for the young mind!" (p. 353).

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⁹ Hughes was of course, like all novelists, assured of what Jonathan Culler has called the "double reading" and Wallace Martin has explained thus: "But like Janus, the reader is always looking backward as well as forward, actively restructuring the past in light of each new bit of information" (Martin, p. 127).

Another example of fairly general similarities between Gibbs and Hughes is one which involves soldiers returning from the First World War. Gibbs had run into a young and sincere Nazi at a military exhibition along Berlin's Unter den Linden. What were the reasons for the revived German interest in the War, Gibbs asked him:

"It's difficult to explain", he answered. "But it's not at all what foreigners think. You see, in England and France you were proud of your soldiers after the war. It was your victory. You put up war memorials. You had your two minutes' silence. You had your poppy day. But in Germany it was all too painful at first and our returning soldiers were insulted by Communists and Social Democrats. They had their badges torn from their shoulders and their Iron Crosses were grabbed. No one remembered the heroism of the German troops and all their victories and sufferings" (pp. 309-310).

Gibbs also quoted the maudlin bombast of the young man's conviction that "a revival of German pride in heroic achievement" had taken place under Hitler and that the national spirit had been rekindled. An incident in Chapter one of "The White Crow" makes an interesting parallel with Gibbs's text. When the soldiers returned after the armistice, this is what Otto von Kessen remembers:

... someone behind Otto on his new crutches jostled him aside and pressed right forward out of the crowd ... a flaunting hag with a lupus-ridden face ... Deliberately she spat on the ground just where a young major was about to tread. But he seemed to see nothing, not even that. For a moment it looked as if she was going to attack him; but then, as if appalled, she didn't.

If there was any expression at all on any of these wooden military faces it was a potential hatred: a hatred that had found no real object yet to fasten on, but only because nothing in the somersaulted world around them seemed real.

God! That German soldiers should ever have to look like that, marching through a German crowd!" (Fox, pp. 117-118).

Via Otto, Hughes exposes the same despair that Gibbs had heard the young Nazi express. In the novel, however, the conflict is less explicitly class- and party-bound. As has already been shown (see above, p. 87), much of that chapter draws on Ernst von Salomon's novel *The Outlaws*.

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In his next novel, Hughes's was more heavily indebted to Gibbs, as his Chapters eighteen and twenty of "Stille Nacht" exemplify. The borrowed instances acquired another life and a new meaning in the context of the novel, but many of the borrowed details changed little in the process. The

travelling quartet in the novel, Joan, Anthony, Ludo and Jeremy, go southeast from the Saar across the Rhine into Germany proper (Saarland being occupied by the French), and then via Stuttgart (Karlsruhe is not mentioned), Ulm and Augsburg south to Munich. Gibbs and his three travelling companions, who had driven into Germany from the south, stayed in Garmisch and then went north via Starnbergersee:

We were twenty-five kilometres from Munich. The roads were crowded with cyclists, all pedalling furiously in the hot sun to get back to supper after a day's outing. Fat women, in white shirts and shorts, perspired over their handle-bars. Girls with straw-coloured hair and limbs that would not have shocked a Greek sculptor, kept pace with their boy friends. There were motor cycles with pillion riders, but very few cars (p. 329).

Reversing the direction of the route, the novelist used Gibbs's book as a quarry for many details that went into his two chapters. He cut, rearranged and pasted, but in doing so, he kept close to his source, as will be seen in the following catalogue of some of the items borrowed. Listing them may seem pedantic, but it is done for the purpose of trying to establish whether his method was legitimate and defensible. Quite often, the text in his source did not change much when it was fictionalised. This is how the passage just quoted looked when it had made its way into the novel: "There weren't many cars on the dusty road, or even lorries: only occasional motor-cycles ridden two-or-three-up, and a single trio of holiday cyclists sweating over their pedals — including a fat white woman in shorts" (p. 329).

Because of the reversal, what was described early in Gibbs's chapter came late in Hughes's. This is what Gibbs, with his expertise on British disarmament and his keen interest in any sign of a German rearmament, had happened to see through a peep-hole in a plank in central Munich:

... I looked at some works in progress round the Brown House itself. They were surrounded by hoardings, but I could see through some gaps to an open space — houses had been knocked down to make it — in which were some curious dome-like shapes of concrete. They were the domes of an underground building capable of holding forty thousand people — a great crowd. It would be used as a gas and bomb-proof shelter in case of aerial attack. All over Germany there are other shelters of that kind built, or being built, with furious haste (p. 335).

The novel reiterates this, with the difference that Gibbs's straight narrative is partly replaced by Jeremy's indirect speech. What Gibbs, the disarma-

ment expert, had seen being constructed behind the hoardings, Jeremy, the admiralty man, witnessed being built behind the pailings. Jeremy's thought suggests that the Germans deliberately broke the international agreements that had been imposed upon them:

In Munich, Jeremy went by himself to look at the famous 'Brown House', the Nazi headquarters. Some buildings next door had just been torn down, and whatever was being done to the site was securely hidden by ten-foot pailings; but Jeremy found a knot-hole to peep through. 'There's somebody *here* who doesn't set very much store by the Ten Year Rule,' he thought: for those massive concrete domes could be nothing else than underground air-raid shelters (p. 339).

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When Gibbs and his party proceeded to view a number of labour camps, he was not quite sure that they would all be welcomed: "My wife and friends were anxious to see the Labour camps, but I was doubtful whether they would be allowed to join me" (p. 341). Likewise, the woman in Hughes's group has her doubts: "They don't have women: I wonder whether they'd let me in?" (p. 336). Hughes complicates the issue by including a Jew among his travellers, thereby turning Gibbs's fairly disinterested discussion of the Jewish question into a very personal one for Ludo and his companions. Gibbs had reported some of the facts that one of the commandants had told him:

There were, he said, twelve hundred camps in the whole of Germany, with an average of two hundred young men in each camp; that is to say, two hundred and forty thousand men in all. They were all volunteers, with the exception of the University students, who had made a law unto themselves that no one could take a degree without serving six months on the 'Labour Front'. They made roads, cut down timber, drained marshes, cultivated allotments, and did other work of a useful kind not in conflict with work which was being done by the ordinary ranks of Labour (pp. 341-342).

Hughes abbreviated this somewhat, but otherwise his Commandant came up with almost the same figures and roughly the same facts:

'They're all volunteers — except that the students have made their own rule that no one can sit his degree till he's done six months like this on the Labour Front. They come from all walks of life, for we've utterly finished with Class in the Nazi State — and Gott sei Dank!'

'How many camps like this have you got?'

'Twelve hundred. That's nearly a quarter-million of lads all told, kept busy draining marshes and making roads . . . ' (pp. 336-337).

Gibbs had been given the camp's programme of the day by one of its officers: "The young men get up at 5.30. They have six hours of work, for which they are paid twenty-five pfennige" (p. 343). Richard Hughes's Commandant was equally precise: "Reveille is half-past five and they work six hours a day. We feed them and clothe them and pay them twenty-five pfennigs" (p. 336). The two labour camps that Gibbs visited were condensed into one in the novel, and Hughes made a major insertion. When some of the Labour volunteers had told Gibbs that Hitler was a great leader who had saved Germany from despair, Hughes elaborates the point by demonstrating his Commandant's more explicit views: "Yes, I indeed have talked with my Führer face-to-face . . . For only five minutes; and yet he is so transparent I feel I have known him the whole of my life" (p. 337). And he continues:

He's.... Well, to begin with he's what a Christian would call a 'saint' — there's no other word for the manifest supernatural power working through him; and yet he's as simple and unassuming to meet as you and me. And gentle: all children love him at sight. But he has one fault: so pure and honest himself, he's a little gullible — easily hoodwinked by self-seeking rascals hanging on to his coat-tails. But then he's a man so loyal to all his friends that he won't hear a word against one of them . . . (p. 337-338).

The Commandant is, in this instance, the intradiegetic narrator, but what he says will be read as deeply ironic by anyone who has the hindsight of history. It is the Commandant himself, not Hitler, who is hoodwinked. There is a further ironic touch in the Commandant's words about the "self-seeking rascals hanging on to [Hitler's] coat-tails", a turn of phrase which reminds the reader of the sartorial irony in the preceding chapter, only a few pages earlier in the novel. Hitler has met with Mussolini in Venice and cut a ridiculous figure because of "those wretched civvies von Neurath had made him wear . . ." (p. 334 — see below, p. 241) while Il Duce outdid even Göring in uniformal splendour.

The Commandant's awestruck words also connect with a passage in the posthumously published sequel, *The Twelve Chapters*, in which Polly's teenaged girlfriend Janey confesses that she is star-struck by her idol Adolf Hitler even if she is neither a German citizen nor lives in Germany. Janey is too timid to explain the effect der Führer has had on her. Polly, who idolizes Hitler equally fervently, answers in her stead, more cryptically: "You can't be in Germany twenty minutes without [being spell-bound by Hitler's charisma]" (p. 326).

Apart from the Commandant's encounter with Hitler, Hughes relied almost exclusively on Gibbs as his source for his two chapters, as will be evident from the parallel examples listed so far. A few more should be mentioned. As will be shown below (p. 245), Hughes's information on Hitler's visit to the Krupp Steel works in Essen stemmed from William Manchester's book on that industrial dynasty. When Jeremy in Chapter twenty thinks of the steel factory's role in the secret rearmament, some of the facts have been borrowed from Gibbs. Hughes's Commandant brags about the rapid decline in German unemployment. That Krupp alone has created three thousand new jobs lately makes Jeremy's head spin: "Krupp, the Armament King... 'And all making safety-razor blades, I suppose!' thought Jeremy, rather surprised at getting such vital information quite so easily (spying seemed money for jam!)" (p. 337). The original spying had been done by a French businessman who had made the psychology of the Nazi mind his particular field of study and whom Gibbs had met in Berlin. With the same kind of understated irony that is at work in the novel he had given Gibbs the following information:

Thousands of new men have been taken on by Krupps and other armament factories. Their imports of steel and iron have been enormously increased. What are they making? Safety razors? Steel nibs? They are making guns and rifles and every kind of weapon. In two years they will have re-armed (p. 322).

Two of Hughes's characters, Joan and Anthony (who later marry), are more easily taken in by the Nazi propaganda than are Jeremy and Ludo. They show their admiration for the new German regime when they return from their guided tour through the labour camp: "I wish we had something like this in England!" said Joan, her mind on all those desolate dole queues" (p. 337). Her boyfriend is American and his wish is for a strong leader in USA: "'Why can't we have an American Hitler', Anthony burst out at last: 'We sure do need him'" (p. 339).¹⁰ Apart from hinting at pro-German sentiments in England and USA at the time (the reader is reminded of persons like Sir Oswald Mosley and Charles Lindbergh) these lines repeat what Gibbs had been told, first by a man at his side: "There's a lot to be said for this Nazi organisation . . . They have done a good deal al-

¹⁰ Anthony could have found one in Huey Long, the Louisiana Senator, whose bid for dictatorial power was cut short when he was assassinated in the following year. Long made his mark also on fiction, in different guises: he appears in Sinclair Lewis's *It Can't Happen Here* (1935), Hamilton Basso's *Sun in Capricorn* (1942), John Dos Passos's *Number One* (1943), and, most memorably, in Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men* (1946).

ready to lessen unemployment . . . England might learn a lesson from it" (p. 315), and then by the artist who was his travelling companion: "I'd like to see this sort of thing in England among the unemployed . . . I can't think why we don't do it. It's a cure for demoralisation" (p. 346). Four pages later even Gibbs himself seems to have abandoned some of his doubts: "I agreed with my artist friend that it would be good if a similar idea could be adopted in England" (p. 350).

Hughes's Ludo wants to wind up his father's German business interests before an anticipated Nazi appropriation of Jewish enterprises. Some of his scepticism towards the Nazi regime may have been inspired by an English friend of Gibbs's whose business interests had given him insights into the new Germany and who was not much impressed. He had discussed the counterproductive effect that Nazi propaganda had had abroad. Goebbels was not mentioned but implied in the following: "The amazing stupidity of German mentality is shown by the fact that Hitler and his propaganda merchants are attacking the three most powerful institutions in the world . . . The Catholic Church, International Jewry, Freemasonry" (p. 351). Gibbs also showed worried concern about the pagan attitudes propagated within the camps: "I had a few mental reservations about that activity of mind and the kind of lecture which might be given in these camps", and he asked: "Was the philosophy of Alfred Rosenberg expounded? Were the boys taught that the intellect was inferior to instinct? Were they impressed with the tribal spirit and the cult of paganism?" (p. 348). In a discussion with the American lady who had been a resident of Germany for many years, Gibbs gave vent to his deep-rooted distrust:

Men like Rosenberg with his wild, mystical nonsense about the Germanic race and the old paganism, were preaching a cult against intellectualism and proclaiming the coming reign of instinct and biological force. It was a denial of all civilised ideals. It was deliberately a hark-back to barbarism (p. 311).

She had agreed that Rosenberg's muddled ideology was nonsense, but she had expressed her doubts that any German would take it seriously. Philip Gibbs's friend, the French businessman, was more fearful than dismissive: "Blood would call to blood." And he had added: "The old gods were not dead. They were only sleeping" (p. 323).

Hughes condensed much of this in Chapter eighteen, though without incorporating any direct quotes from Gibbs. In that chapter, Jeremy's party have just arrived in Saarland where the many Swastika flags have given

them a clear indication of how the plebiscite that will be held next year will go. Ludo is familiar with Rosenberg's ideas of Blut und Boden, and much of what Gibbs had reported at some length was trimmed down to the essentials in his lines about the unity of the British nation versus the shallowness of the German tribal kinship ties. What he says also sheds some light on the Jewish question (p. 328).

*

Gibbs was obviously an ideal reporter. His book demonstrates his ability to make people talk freely even in a country where one risked being overheard and spied upon; at times he was amazed at how critical of the regime and how outspoken his informants were. Gibbs himself was a well-informed observer with a keen interest in the inflamed question of rearmament. That issue was of topical interest when Gibbs wrote his book. In Parliament Winston Churchill had raised the question of the rapid German build-up of a new air fleet.¹¹ Gibbs could testify to that renewal, or at least to the fact that money was being collected for it:

In Munich the young airmen were out in the streets, collecting for the progress of "civil aviation" in Germany, and holding up the passers-by with insistent but good-natured demand. Although I was, I imagine, obviously English in a German crowd, they advanced upon me at every street corner, and being a weak man on any flag day, I yielded and put something in one of the boxes, being duly decorated with a small metal aeroplane which made me immune from further solicitation (p. 353).

Six pages later, Gibbs describes a slogan that he had come across in a Stuttgart square, and he drew his own conclusions:

In the market place, on a wooden pedestal, was an enormous aerial torpedo, made of tin, and painted red and white, like the colours of the Swastika flag.

I read the legend printed on the pedestal in big letters. It was:

"One People,
One Danger,
One Defence."

¹¹ Three years later, Churchill was as sceptical of British appeasement policy as he was apprehensive of German rearmament: "Recently [Hitler] has offered many words of reassurance, eagerly lapped up by those who have been so tragically wrong about Germany in the past. Only time can show, but, meanwhile, the great wheels revolve; the rifles, the cannon, the tanks, the shot and shell, the air-bombs, the poison-gas cylinders, the aeroplanes, the submarines, and now the beginnings of a fleet flow in ever-broadening streams from the already largely war-mobilized arsenals and factories of Germany" (Churchill 1949 [1937], p. 210).

It did not look very much, in the face of that aerial torpedo, as though this German aviation, for which the collecting boxes were busy, was going to be of a very civil nature (p. 359).

Some days later, a middle-aged newspaper vendor who was critical of the Nazi regime explained the origin of the slogan to Gibbs: "That is a slogan from a speech by General Goering" (p. 368). When Richard Hughes borrowed some of this, he felt no need to tell his readers that it was Göring, the future Commander in Chief of the German Air Force (appointed on March 1, 1935) who had formulated the catchy slogan. Hughes's "GERMANS — A NATION OF AIRMEN!" (p. 329) is a variation of Gibbs's "The German Folk must be Air-minded!" (p. 360). Both slogans smack of translation but were left without comments. Jeremy and his friends are on holiday, even if he is also on a secret mission that the others are unaware of and even if Ludo has to look after his father's business interests. No one in their group has the same need as Gibbs had had of providing an informative and well-balanced picture of German domestic and foreign affairs. It is thus not in their brief to supply the reader with one. If their impressions seem more haphazard, there are psychological reasons for it. Two passages which appear six pages apart in Gibbs's book are merged into one in the novel, and Hughes adds some mild irony:

Just then two Hitler Youths came round, shaking collecting-boxes 'For Aircraft'; and everyone put in a coin in exchange for an aircraft badge, like a charity flag-day. 'That's only for building *civil* aircraft of course' said their Nazi friend . . . [Jeremy] remembered the red-and-white model bomb in the square outside with a slit for similar contributions. A placard on it had read: A SINGLE FOLK A SINGLE DANGER A SINGLE DEFENCE (p. 330).

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As stated already, Hughes reverses the direction of the journey to Munich, and thus his group's entrance into the Reich corresponds to Gibbs's exit, and vice versa. But the experiences of the two groups were essentially identical. This is Gibbs: "It was at Germersheim, where we came to the Rhine and a bridge of boats . . ." (p. 375), and this is Hughes: "They crossed the Rhine on a bridge of boats . . ." (p. 329). This is the description of how Gibbs, his wife, the novelist and the artist left Germany for the Saar, going west: "We were leaving Germany", Gibbs wrote, and continued:

On one side of the pole was a German policeman. On the other side a French soldier. There was an examination of passports, an inquiry into what money we had.

The pole was lifted. We passed through. We were out of the German Reich. This Saar into which we came was beyond the dictatorship of Adolf Hitler (p. 378).

And this is how Joan, Jeremy, Ludo and Anthony enter Germany, crossing the same border but driving east: "But then a Poilu lifted a pole which barred the road: a German policeman saluted with outstretched arm, looked at their passports and smilingly waved them on into Germany proper" (pp. 328-329). The groups made their exits and their entrances in similar ways, but they also met with picturesque rural life of the idyllic kind that most contemporary travel books abound in. Having left sleepy Karlsruhe behind, Gibbs and his party

. . . drove in the direction of the Saar, through a lovely pastoral country with coloured fields like a patchwork quilt. Cloud-shadows lay across the tall growing wheat. Sturdy oxen tramped along the roads, dragging timber from the pine forests which we saw beyond the fields. German peasants stooped over the old earth, not thinking, I imagine, of politics, but intent upon producing the food which Germany will need this winter. We passed a gang of road-makers stripped to the waist . . . (pp. 374-375).

Gibbs was aware of the precarious political situation in Germany but took it for granted that the peasants which he drove past were more worried about how to make ends meet. Jeremy's party are tourists on a holiday, and they have little thought of anything else but the bucolic scenery in front of them:

[They] passed through peaceful country where pine forests skirted the fields. Peasants were carting their hay in ox-drawn wagons, or spraying their fruit; and the gentle breezes of June barely ruffled the growing wheat. Young men stripped to the waist and burned a mahogany-brown were laying pipes (p. 329).

Much of what they see had already been observed by other eyes some forty years earlier, and even the narrator's observation later on the page that "There wasn't much sign of political ferment here" corresponds to Gibbs's original German peasants "not thinking . . . of politics". When they have escaped the pervasive smell of anti-sunburn cream and the Nazi flags and slogans in the village, Jeremy and his friends drive into Stuttgart. A few details give the reliable local touch, as if Hughes had done previous field-work (which he did in Munich). However, many patches of local colour had been borrowed in these two chapters. Hughes's "after they'd toured the partly burnt-out castle the rest of them sat in the Railway Hotel, watch-

ing an S.A. Parade in front of the brand-new station" (p. 329) compares with Gibbs's "But in Stuttgart the railway station itself is a magnificent building, recently finished . . ." (p. 361). On the next page, he added: "The old *Schloss* was partly burned down three years ago" (p. 362). Hughes focuses on the SA parade, letting it foreshadow things to come; Gibbs focuses for once on picturesque views of Stuttgart.¹²

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Possibly more interesting than borrowings like these are the passages where Hughes heightens the concentration of the original in order to express a certain mood. This was the case in the following brief episode, squeezed in between his group's visits to the Labour Camp outside Ulm, and to Munich:

Augsburg they found a blazing sunset of red with its Nazi flags, which vied with the natural sunset behind its steeping gables: banners hung out to welcome some World War Veterans' group. But the party seemed to be over, with veterans filing out of the Rathaus and wandering off in twos and threes. Jeremy couldn't see very much 'hope' in the eyes of these middle-aged men who had fought one war already . . . (p. 339).

This illustrates one of Hughes's preferred narrative devices, the narrator who sometimes identifies with the characters, sometimes keeps a distance to them, gaining, as it were, the status of an authoritative director. The same thing occurs when Jeremy looks at the sad war veterans and finds that (following immediately after the lines just quoted) "beer seemed only to make them sadder". That remark is Jeremy's indirect speech but also the author's way of inducing a certain mood in his readers. The episode reads differently in Gibbs, where it is less concentrated but equally telling. In reality, the meeting had taken place not in Augsburg but in Ulm, as Gibbs's book showed: "Across the narrow streets were long streamers announcing this event: 'The New Germany greets the Old Pioneers! Citizens of Ulm, hang out your banners!' The banners were hung out. The Swas-

¹² This is an exception: Gibbs was too good a reporter to fill a book with bland travel description. How well-informed and perceptive he was can be seen when Robert M. McBride's almost contemporary *Towns and People of Modern Germany* is read alongside. The latter is full of picturesque descriptions, and it is almost totally void of social, economic and political perspectives. What McBride had to say about a new Nazi building is a case in point: "The importance which the present German Government attaches to military and civil aviation is clearly indicated by the immensity of the new Reich Aviation building . . . Of all the Government offices in Berlin this huge structure is probably the largest, as it is certainly the newest" (McBride, p. 238). Hughes would have been left in the lurch by that book.

tika flag was a flaming scarlet all down the streets" (p. 357). On the next page, the returned servicemen have arrived at the inn: "The old Pioneers arrived in lorries. They invaded the Black Eagle, and we sat among a crowd of middle-aged, grizzled, square-shouldered men who, I thought, took their pleasure sadly. At least they were not gay, and not at all in festive mood (p. 358). Hughes underlines the foreboding by turning the flaming scarlet of the flags into a blazing sunset, implying a coming *Götterdämmerung*. The seemingly insignificant 'already' is indicative of a looming war. Gibbs used the incident to illustrate his theme of the generation gap. He added his own comments on old age, experience and disillusion: "They had gone through years of anxiety, hardship and revolution. Perhaps they did not believe much in the Nazi régime and the new adventure of German youth" (p. 358).

Gibbs had retold and summarised life stories that he had heard, in his reporter fashion, while Hughes made his characters speak or think for themselves. As a consequence, where Gibbs's version had often been overstated, the novel is sometimes elliptic; in that way, Hughes gains a stronger sense of authenticity. Gibbs, undoubtedly aghast by the Purge at the time of writing his book in the early autumn of 1934, had not suppressed his critical thoughts of the Nazi leadership in his section about the labour camps: "Above this mass of enthusiastic boys were evil-minded men with sinister designs and a streak of madness" (p. 350). In Hughes's novel, there is no room for that kind of hindsight reflection, but his characters show varying degrees of enthusiasm and scepticism towards Hitler's Third Reich.

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In three of the chapters of "Polly and Rachel", Dr. Brinley, a Welsh GP, makes a memorable appearance. Richard Hughes had fears that the real-life model for the doctor would still be alive and able to recognize himself in the novel's portrait of a local GP: "He saw all these people as he tended to see the whole world — and indeed, as the world too saw him — with a heightening, Hogarthian eye . . ." (p. 27). He had, in fact, passed away some years before, at an old age. Likewise, Sir Philip Gibbs had died eleven years before the publication of the novel to which his book had contributed. But his son Anthony, also a novelist, could easily have detected his father's unwitting contribution to Hughes's novel. Some of Hughes's suppliers of facts that he later turned into fiction, like the Hanfstaengl family, did not object when they found out that they appeared as semi-fictitious characters

in novels that were at least partly based on their own writings. On the contrary, they agreed with the way in which their experiences had been rendered in Hughes's new context. Is it likely that Sir Philip Gibbs would have reacted in the same way, had he lived long enough to be able to read and compare?

The two cases are slightly different. The Hanfstaengls were told beforehand of Hughes's research, had welcomed it and had contributed to it quite willingly. Gibbs senior could not have been told and as far as is known, Gibbs junior was not. What the Hanfstaengl family had written was transformed on its way from memoirs to fiction; what Gibbs had written was sometimes incorporated into the novel more or less verbatim. Richard Hughes was well aware that his borrowing this time was not uncontroversial. He explained his position in a private letter to his London publisher in which he revealed his source:

I am slightly worried about Chapters 18 and 19 [one chapter was later inserted between the two] in Book III (Jeremy's trip to Germany) on the grounds of plagiarism. I think the material is important as providing a contrast to the machinations in high quarters leading up to the Night of the Long Knives, but the trouble is that (with the exception of the smell of sunburn cream, and the cigarette-smoking incident) it comes almost entirely from a single source, Sir Phillip Gibbs's *European Journey*, Chapters 8 and 9 (pp. 297 to 398), a very vivid account of a journey covering the same itinerary *in reverse* made only two or three weeks earlier than Jeremy's journey.¹³

Hughes enjoined his publisher to inform him of another British traveller in Germany in this period, 1933-34, who had reported her or his impressions of the Germans; this would be most welcome: "I would very much like to rewrite that chapter so as to make it less blatantly derived from a single source." But either his publisher did not know of any such traveller, or (which was more likely), he did not want to see any further procrastinations of a manuscript that was already years overdue. Without the chapters in question having been rewritten, Hughes's manuscript went into press the next year.

Hughes seems never to have been accused of plagiarism, which would otherwise have been an expected reaction of any critic who had kept Gibbs's book in living memory. Not one of the many reviewers made the connection; no reader, however well-read, seems to have reacted, at least

¹³ RH to Ian Parsons, June 19, 1972. The original letter was long kept in the vast correspondence files of Chatto & Windus in William IV Street, off Trafalgar Square. Those files have since been transferred to Reading University.

not publicly. The publisher did not break his silence, and Hughes, of course, kept quiet. Neither did he acknowledge his debt to Gibbs in the long letter that he wrote to "Dear Anne" in 1974 or 1975 (already referred to above, on p. 112), in which he was otherwise fairly open about some of his sources.

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A very brief note on Hughes's working habits is appropriate here.¹⁴ When asked about them, he described his usual writing procedure. He immersed himself deep into reading;¹⁵ then he put the books aside; and then he started writing. Much writing, especially in his later years, involved a great amount of revisions.¹⁶ Sometimes the additions were added by hand on the manuscript page, but quite often he simply started on a new page, and the old one was filed away. The number of discarded manuscript pages is staggering, especially for his unfinished sequel; the differences between one version and the next are not seldom minute. It was also his habit that only when he had concluded one chapter did he proceed to the following, and he did not keep any detailed plan of what would happen next. That method may have contributed to the organic growth of the

¹⁴ Richard Hughes's secretary Lucy McEntee wrote me a kind letter two years after his death, explaining his common work procedure: "All his later work was typed by himself and then re-typed again and again before a 'Final Version' was made which he then corrected by hand." I had asked her about his contacts with colleagues: "On the whole, Richard Hughes did not discuss literary matters with other writers unless he was checking facts — such as life in a Carmelite Convent, or historical incidents about which he wrote to the historian Lord Bullock." As for source material for the last two novels, Lucy McEntee had this to say: "He had an extensive working library, and borrowed books of reference from The London Library, and among other journals and magazines he took the *Journal of Contemporary History* and the *Journal of international Affairs*. He did not annotate books in any way, but was accustomed to write on the front of the Journals 'See page 75' or underline a title. These journals have been given to the library of Coleg Harlech" (LMcE to IH, April 16, 1978).

¹⁵ Paul Morgan looks at some of the books that Hughes owned, in his article "Richard Hughes: An Author's Library" (The National Library of Wales Journal, Summer 1988, pp. 341-346). Although interesting, it has little relevance for Hughes's German sources.

¹⁶ Close to the publication of *The Wooden Shepherdess*, Penelope Hughes was asked about her father's work-in-progress in which she had at times been closely involved. This is part of her reply: "You ask about work-methods. I've been fairly close to the writing of the *Fox* at some parts, but still I can't help much. One reads a draft, and says such and such a sentence seems unnecessary or opaque. That evokes from Diccon the reasons why it is there, and usually the same thing is said in a different way. But the web of meaning in his writing is so intricate that all one can do is to help him to bring to the surface of his mind the structure of things, so that he can restructure. Everything he writes goes through a long period of rewriting, as with most writers, I imagine . . . Usually first drafts are much more ponderous, sententious, flowery than the finished result. But when it is a piece that is almost poetry, its drafts are changed little, though a great deal of work goes into grafting them into the general flow of the narrative" (Penelope Hughes to "Dear Peter", January 18, 1973).

novel (see below, p. 330), but it was also an excruciatingly slow and time-consuming routine which maddened his publishers.

There is no reason to suspect that Hughes did not tell the truth about his working habits, but as far as Sir Philip Gibbs's *European Journey* is concerned, Hughes obviously did not put that book down before he started writing his own text; he must have kept it close to his typewriter. The similarities between his two chapters and Gibbs's account are many and close; as has been demonstrated above, some passages in Hughes's novel are quite close to Gibbs's travelogue. To accuse him of plagiarism, the term that he once himself mentioned, therefore may seem neither unfounded nor far-fetched. There are however many mitigating circumstances. Some of the complicated reasons for Hughes's borrowings can be listed, others can be suggested, a few surmised.

He had been long at his manuscript, taxing the patience of many, and he was now pressed for time, as his letter to the publisher shows. That is obviously only part of the answer. He may also have felt that his creative flow did not run quite as freely as it had done, as some critics were later to suggest when *The Wooden Shepherdess* was eventually published. It is also possible that far into his work-in-progress he had developed a crippling fear of not having been factual enough, of not having reconstructed his historical episodes with the sufficient veracity. The standards he set himself in that respect were extremely high and demanding. He may also have felt the need of an eye-witness account to give his chapters a sense of authenticity and presence. What Philip Gibbs had written about his experiences in Germany in the summer leading up to the Purge was ideal in that respect, as Hughes told his publisher.

Speculations of this kind may all be in vain, but one generalisation could also be essayed, to the effect that Hughes was less a writer of imaginative fiction than one of documentary literature.¹⁷ His first novel had been a fictional *tour de force*, but its main story was based on a family chronicle. His second novel described with great imagination a near shipwreck, but the vessel *SS Archimedes* had had its counterpart in reality and Hughes had interviewed dozens of officers and sailors who had survived a typhoon. His projected novel *The Navy is Here*, about the *Altmark* and

¹⁷ Richard Poole holds the same view: "... it is important to recognize a crucial datum — or rather, a series of related data — about his novels: that none of them is 'pure' invention, a construction of unprompted imagination ... that all of them were, in greater or lesser degree, 'given' to him from without; that all are in some sense of a slippery term, 'historical novels'" (Poole 1986, p. 72).

Graf Spee incidents, came to nothing, but the research file for the incomplete manuscript contains a very great number of factual eye-witness accounts. *The Human Predicament*, finally, was praised by many critics for its author's almost uncanny empathy, but both volumes are at least as much a documentary reconstruction of recent history as they are pure fictional invention. In the chapters that were set in Wales and England, America and Morocco, Hughes could fall back on his own experiences, at least in part, and write more or less autobiographical accounts (which some reviewers criticised him for).¹⁸

However, in regard to his German chapters, excepting his three field trips to Bavaria, he was forced to rely on eye-witness reports, reportage, autobiographies (though not his own), and a wealth of other kinds of material, including books by expert historians. He listed the lesser part of them in his acknowledgements and in the historical note; the greater part he kept silent about. If he had included Gibbs in that list, his close dependence on his source would have been plain for all to see and it would have been easy for anyone to accuse him of plagiarism. If Hughes had decided to include his few lines quoted above (p. 199), about how Jeremy sees Sir Philip Gibbs's car crossing the Rhine, he would have given his readers a hint of his source but also a chance to detect how close his borrowings from that particular source were. He could have deleted Chapters eighteen and twenty of "Stille Nacht", which possibly would have been most fair towards Gibbs; but if he had done so, the novel would have suffered in authenticity. Hughes had got himself into a dilemma of his own making.

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An expert on copyright issues could undoubtedly have given him some helpful legal if not literary advice, had he felt the need for it. With some justification, the following definition could perhaps be applied to Hughes's practice when he borrowed texts from Gibbs:

plagi-iar-ize . . . to use (another person's idea or part of their work) and pretend that it is your own. . . . *If you compare the two books side by side, it looks as if the author of the second has plagiarized (from the first).*¹⁹

¹⁸ Richard Poole, discussing the possible autobiographical contents of Hughes's two last novels, maintains that the links between the novelist and his main protagonist are many but not without their qualifications: "In the end, Hughes seems to have attained a workable equilibrium with Augustine: intermittent irony enables him to preserve a necessary detachment from Augustine, while at the same time he is able to graft pieces of his own life and feelings of his own onto the character" (1986, p. 75).

¹⁹ *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*, 1995, p. 1074.

Still, the counsel for the defence would be able to come up with many valid points. The two books belong to different genres and are not quite comparable, and the importance of Hughes's loan practice could be downplayed. Furthermore, few readers would ever compare the two books, as Gibbs's is hard to come by. Literary borrowings are a matter that primarily concerns the two authors involved, as Thomas Mallon has observed: "Plagiarism is a fraternal crime; writers can steal only from other writers."²⁰ If one of them is no longer living, the concern seems already less acute. To regard plagiarism as a theft is also a relatively modern phenomenon, according to Mallon, in whose words "what we call plagiarism was more a matter for laughter than litigation" in Greek and Roman literary practice: "One thing is clear: plagiarism didn't become a truly sore point with writers until they thought of writing as their trade."²¹

Discussing plagiarism, Thomas Mallon quotes some bold and possibly brash statements in T. S. Eliot's essay on the dramatist Philip Massinger: "One of the surest of tests is the way in which a poet borrows. Immature poets imitate; mature poets steal; bad poets deface what they take, and good poets make it into something better, or at least something different."²² Richard Hughes, although not in Eliot's class, was a good poet in his younger days, as seen in his collected poems *Confessio Juvenis* (1926), and he was a superb novelist. If he borrowed texts, he mostly moulded them into something different and often better. He was one of Eliot's early readers, and he may have been familiar with Eliot's essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent."²³ Some of its much-quoted passages seem singularly appropriate and poignant in the case of Richard Hughes, the writer of historical fiction: "No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead."²⁴ This does not do away with the fact that some of Hughes's methods of borrowing texts are debatable and that he laid himself open to accusations of plagiarism in the case of *European Journey*. What he did to his late colleague Sir Philip

²⁰ Mallon, p. 237.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

²² Quoted by Mallon, p. 26.

²³ Hughes had read *The Waste Land* in the first issue of *The Criterion* in 1922 and had ordered copies of the book before publication: "*Waste Land* will not be ready until September but we will reserve 2 copies for you" (Hogarth Press to RH, June 20, 1923). Richard Poole has his doubts as to the essay: "If [Hughes] knew of Eliot's 1919 essay . . . he nowhere reveals that he did" (Poole 1986, p. 26).

²⁴ Eliot 1960 [1920], p. 49.

Gibbs was, however, in at least one sense a good deed, if possibly not quite fair play. It could be argued, though with some sophistry, that Richard Hughes saved Gibbs from total oblivion by inserting excerpts from a book that will find fewer and fewer readers as the years go by (it has never been reprinted; the likelihood that it will is slim), into a novel that seems to have very good chances of being in stock, sold and read for years to come.²⁵

In his *The Journal of a Disappointed Man* (1919) the British biologist W. N. P. Barbellion wrote the following about one of his visits to the library:

The Porter spends his days . . . keeping strict vigil over this catacomb of books, passing along between the shelves and yet never paying heed to the almost audible susurrus of desire — the desire every book has to be taken down and read, to live, to come into being in somebody's mind. He even hands the volumes over the counter, seeks them out in their proper places or returns them there without once realising that a Book is a Person and not a Thing.²⁶

That quote would have gone down well with Richard Hughes. It is also quite possible that Sir Philip Gibbs would have felt more flattered than offended if he had lived to know that Hughes had taken down his book from the shelves and given it new life in a new context, as if his *European Journey* was a person with a living voice and not just a dead thing.²⁷

²⁵ Discussing how a passage from Konrad Heiden's *Hitler, a Biography* unacknowledged entered Chapter twenty of "The White Crow" (presumably via Alan Bullock's Hitler biography), Richard Poole takes the view that the source was there for the taking: "Heiden's account must have cried out to be appropriated, for it is rich with visual effects that any novelist would have been proud to have invented" (Poole 1986, p. 219).

²⁶ Quoted by Mallon, p. 236.

²⁷ The original title of Hughes's essay "Fiction as Truth", when it was published in *Times Saturday Review* in 1970, was "Not Things but Persons".

Chapter IX
Sir John Wheeler-Bennett

One of the “published authorities” mentioned on the last page of *The Fox in the Attic*, Sir John Wheeler-Bennett, received the novel upon publication. It was accompanied by a letter in which Richard Hughes expressed his gratitude:

This beginning of a projected long historical novel of my own times down to the end of the Second World War is largely set in 1923 Germany. The acknowledgements at the end record my obvious debt to your NEMESIS OF POWER, but I would like to thank you privately too and a little less curtly. Your vivid picture of the mind and role of the old Imperial officer has done more for me than help to provide the framework of a historical background: it has helped to shape some of the fictional characters too — and indeed has flavoured the whole pudding.¹

The title of Wheeler-Bennett’s magisterial study of the German army in politics was not mentioned in the *Acknowledgements*, but anyone familiar with that book will have no difficulties in seeing that Hughes was indebted to it, both for the flavour of the whole pudding and for some of the raisins in it, i. e. for some of the individual portraits. The novel’s Otto von Kessen, the old Imperial officer hoping for a resurrection of a strong German army, would have looked different and less authentic without the backing from Wheeler-Bennett. At least five more of the novel’s portraits of politicians involved in the Purge draw partly on the same source.

Sir John Wheeler-Bennett’s name occurs not only in Hughes’s correspondence but also in his work notes. A four-page summary draws up the main contours of the intricate military and political landscape depicted in *The Nemesis of Power*. Over the years, it was a book in frequent use in the novelist’s study in Wales.²

In September 1961, John Wheeler-Bennett wrote back less than a week after having received the novel, thanking Richard Hughes for it and expressing his high hopes for what at the time promised to be a series of three books: “I am deeply grateful . . . I am only too delighted to have proved of assistance in what I am sure will be a most impressive trilogy”.³

While still in his early twenties, John Wheeler-Bennett (1902-1975) had become well-versed in foreign politics, and he soon took

¹ RH to JWB, September 20, 1961.

² Renewal of *The Nemesis of Power*, RH to the London Library, July 24, 1967.

³ JWB to RH, September 25, 1961

part in the Royal Institute of International Affairs and its publishing activities. From 1929 till the Purge he stayed in Germany for extended periods, striking up many acquaintances and friendships with leading officers and politicians of the Weimar Republic. His varying sympathies and antipathies in this period can be seen in his autobiographies. He was impressed by the generals Hans von Seeckt and Wilhelm Gröner, was amused by Franz von Papen, and he despised Kurt von Schleicher. He became a close friend of Heinrich Brüning, the penultimate Weimar Chancellor whose confidant he was in the final hours of the Republic; his admiration for Brüning has been questioned by more distanced and sceptic British observers, however.⁴

Wheeler-Bennett was supported by the Foreign Office and his liaison work between Berlin and London met with the approval of its head, Lord Vansittart.⁵ His monograph on the German-Russian Brest-Litovsk peace treaty was based on interviews with key figures like Bukharin and Trotsky, the latter of whom he visited in his Mexican exile. His *Munich Prologue to Tragedy* analysed the British appeasement policy, which he had been critical of, and the crises that followed after Chamberlain's and Hitler's meeting at Bad Godesberg and their Munich agreement. Hughes made notes on passages in this book concerning the Munich crisis in 1938, for the sequel(s) to *The Wooden Shepherdess*.

His magnum opus on the German army was published in 1953: "It was a literary and historical *tour de force* which aroused indignation as well as admiration", according to A. J. Nicholls, in whose opinion Wheeler-Bennett's best works "were based on rigorous historical scholarship and top level oral evidence. Despite a certain weakness for purple prose, his books attracted the general reader as well as the specialist."⁶ In his final years, Sir John Wheeler-Bennett made a reckoning of his changeable life and his many meetings with people of importance for the contemporary political scene. The first volume of his autobiographical trilogy deals with

⁴ One of them is A. J. Nicholls, who writes: "To the end of his life he retained loyal affection for the ex-chancellor though he may have underestimated the authoritarian, nationalist traits in Brüning's policies." *DNB* (1986), p. 900. Facts on Wheeler-Bennett from this source and from his autobiographical trilogy.

⁵ Lord Vansittart's critical attitude towards the Germans has entered the English language: "Vansittartism ... extreme anti-Germanism. [From the British diplomat Lord Vansittart (1881-1957)]", *The Chambers Dictionary* 1993, p. 1922. — Richard Hughes made notes of Lord Vansittart's autobiography *Mist Procession* (1958), and also approached his widow: "Dear Lady Vansittart, I heard ... that you had been kind enough to say I might study certain papers of your husband's some time" (RH to Lady Vansittart, June 20, 1961).

⁶ A. J. Nicholls in *DNB*, pp. 900-901.

his experiences in the Weimar Republic and his impressions of the early years of Nazi Germany.

When Hughes formulated his note of thanks to Wheeler-Bennett he may have had in mind not only Otto von Kessen but also Field Marshal Erich Ludendorff, the hero (alongside Paul von Hindenburg) from Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes who personified both the positive and the negative ideals within the old Imperial army.⁷ Ludendorff, born in Posen in 1865, headed the Eighth Army on the eastern front, where in tandem with von Hindenburg he vanquished the Russians in 1915. He was Senior Quartermaster General and as such masterminded the 1916 successes on that front. He was instrumental in forcing the harsh Brest-Litovsk treaty on the emerging Russian Bolshevik State in 1917, but was dismissed from his command in October 1918, just before the Armistice. During his brief exile in Sweden he started on his voluminous memoirs, and was then embroiled in the Hitler Putsch. Ludendorff died in 1937, three years after his old comrade-in-arms.⁸ Hughes's portrait of him would have been less assured without the indirect help of Wheeler-Bennett who had devoted many pages to Erich Ludendorff in his books on von Hindenburg, the Brest-Litovsk agreement, and the German Army.⁹

Wheeler-Bennett ended his rendering of the failed 1923 *Putsch* in *Nemesis of Power* on a note suggesting his grudging admiration for Ludendorff's grand though inane gesture:

That same cool courage which had carried him up to the escarpment of the fortress of Liège to hammer on the door with the pommel of his sword, now brought him through this, the last semi-credible episode of his career. He passed between the rifles of the police, on to the Odeonsplatz, and out of glory. It was the one almost redeeming feature of an otherwise thoroughly sordid and disreputable affair. It was the last gesture of the Old Imperial Army (p. 176).

Richard Hughes, although aware of Ludendorff's military antecedents, did not grant him such a grand finale. In the novel, a certain pre-senile rigidity

⁷ Winston Churchill, in his essay on von Hindenburg in *Great Contemporaries*, compared their co-operation to that of other famous military men: "Hindenburg with his astounding Chief Staff Officer, Ludendorff, became the main pillar of German hope. The English military historians have used the cabalistic symbol HL [written as a digraph] to represent this famous combination which during the War and to the outer world at least presented itself as a pendant to the comradeship of Lee and Jackson and farther back to the brotherhood of Marlborough and Eugene" (Churchill 1949 [1937], p. 83).

⁸ Facts on Ludendorff, von Schleicher, von Papen, von Kahr and Ernst in Louis L. Snyder, *Encyclopedia of the Third Reich*, 1998 (1976).

⁹ *Hindenburg, The Wooden Titan* (1936) and *Brest-Litovsk: The Forgotten Peace, March 1918* (1938).

of his mind is hinted at: "General Erich Ludendorff was only fifty-eight: not quite the 'old gentleman' Lothar had taken him for, but nevertheless his mind like his muscles was becoming a little set". His impassive features are said to reveal nothing of his thoughts: "The old order was ended for the old war-lord, and he knew it; but his puffy features were quite without expression, as if their soft surfaces had no organic connection with nerve and muscle and bone and brain within . . ." (p. 210). When the unperturbed Ludendorff makes his exit in the novel, his jerky movements correspond to the ticking clock-work of his mind. There are no grand gestures in Hughes's fictitious episode, which turns the Odeonsplatz into a play-room: "Ludendorff continued his way unhindered across the empty square . . . He continued to march forward like a mechanical toy — quite without object, merely without impediment, *plod, plod...*" (pp. 225-226).

*

Much information on the historical figures that have their exits and their entrances in Hughes's novels can be found in Wheeler-Bennett's book. In five cases, the novelist made particularly good use of the historian's account: in the portraits of Kurt von Schleicher, Franz von Papen, Hermann Göring, Gustav von Kahr, and Karl Ernst. As for von Schleicher's end, it is possible to compare Hughes's version with that of the French writer Max Gallo, who relied on the same source in describing von Schleicher's last minutes and who also made use of an extra witness, i. e. the family governess (as seen below, p. 230).

Kurt von Schleicher (1882-1934), the last Chancellor of the Weimar Republic after he had ousted Heinrich Brüning, gets consistently bad press in John Wheeler-Bennett's books. There is no mincing of words in the following portrait in *The Nemesis of Power*:

If Hans von Seeckt was the Sorcerer of the Reichswehr, it was reserved for Kurt von Schleicher to play the unsavoury and tragic rôle of the Sorcerer's Apprentice. He was, indeed, the evil genius of the later Weimar Period, symbolizing in himself all the worst traits of the General in politics. Vain, he was, and unscrupulous, and unfaithful; but his ambitions were for power rather than responsibility, for influence rather than position (p. 182).

Wheeler-Bennett's distaste did not abate with time, as seen twenty-one years later. This abrasive summing-up of von Schleicher's personality is taken from the first volume of his autobiography:

There was no vestige of loyalty or innate decency in him. He operated in the dusk behind the throne, spying on all and sundry, tapping their telephones, bugging their offices. He betrayed patron after patron, including von Seeckt . . . to whom he owed everything. Friendship with von Schleicher was the Kiss of Death.¹⁰

In his research notes, Richard Hughes listed seven different sources for "The various accounts of Schleicher's death": Ludecke, Strasser, von Papen, Bullock, Wheeler-Bennett, Wiskemann and Shirer, and a further three for the "Official versions of Schleicher's Death": Wheeler-Bennett, Gisevius and Wiskemann. Hughes seems to have relied mainly on Wheeler-Bennett when he reconstructed Kurt von Schleicher's traumatic last moments. The hectic Chapter twenty-nine of "Stille Nacht" opens by mentioning three ex-chancellors, first Brüning, then von Papen:

But the third was ex-Chancellor Schleicher; and here no obstacles stood in the way. Soon after breakfast a friend had been chatting with Schleicher over the phone, and heard him turn to someone behind him saying: 'Yes, I am General von Schleicher...'. The friend then heard three shots ring out in the General's house before the phone went dead (p. 369).

Some of Wheeler-Bennett's adjectives (distant, distinct, piercing) in the following passage were left alone by Hughes. In this instance, *The Nemesis of Power* is more circumstantial and more subjective than the novel:

It was between nine and ten in the golden morning of June 30 when the telephone rang in von Schleicher's villa in Neu-Babelsberg. An old friend, a former fellow-officer, wished to welcome the General back from his recent travels and to congratulate him on his escape from a serious motor accident. They chatted together for a while, when von Schleicher said that there was someone at the door. He must have turned from the telephone, for his friend heard his voice, distant but distinct, saying: 'Jawohl, ich bin General von Schleicher'. Then, with piercing clarity, came the sound of shots: then silence (p. 323).

In a footnote on the same page, Wheeler-Bennett warrants the authenticity of this report by stating its source, although without revealing any names: "The present writer received this account of von Schleicher's death from the friend in question". That friend may well have heard the shots with piercing clarity although telephone technology in 1934 cannot have been all that advanced. That it was a golden morning was an observation at second remove. Wheeler-Bennett had left for Lausanne on the previous day, July 29, as it turned out not to return to Germany for the next eleven

¹⁰ Wheeler-Bennett 1974, p. 36.

years.¹¹ — In this instance, the historian seems to have been even more prone to fictionalize his account than the novelist was.

The French historian Max Gallo went much further in his semi-documentary book on the Purge. Concurrently with Hughes but independently of him, he was at work reconstructing the June 30, 1934 events. Gallo's version, more subjective than Hughes's and Wheeler-Bennett's, is padded with circumstantial details, and the information is presented in a fairly traditional and somewhat pedestrian way. His reconstruction of how von Schleicher and his wife were murdered adds a new point of view, that of a witness whose existence Wheeler-Bennett seems to have been unaware of. If Hughes knew about her, he did not bother to include her in his fiction. This is how Max Gallo's version starts: "This morning, Schleicher is sitting in his study looking out at Griebnitzseestrasse, flooded with hot summer sunlight" (p. 235). And it continues:

At that moment, the telephone rings. It is an old military friend of Schleicher calling to welcome him back from his trip. They talk for several minutes. Schleicher tells his caller of the accident from which he escaped unhurt, as if by a miracle. Then he excuses himself for a moment, explaining that someone is ringing the doorbell Hesitantly, the governess half-opens the door. Then, before Maria Güntel quite realizes what is happening, the door is pushed wide, and she herself backed against the wall by one of the men. The others go straight to Schleicher's study.

At the other end of the telephone wire, Schleicher's caller hears a click, which is undoubtedly the receiver touching the table. Distantly but distinctly, he hears the General's voice: 'Yes, I am General von Schleicher.' Then, immediately, a burst of gunfire before someone replaces the receiver (p. 236).

The adverb "undoubtedly" refers both to von Schleicher's caller at the other end of the telephone line who interprets an action that he has happened to overhear but which he has not seen, and to the author himself who emphasises the veracity of his version. Gallo's and Hughes's different approaches exemplify contrasting ways of constructing historical fiction. By over-dramatising the event, Gallo leaves little to his readers' imagination. On the other hand, by allowing his readers to fill in the background, interpret the action and analyse the protagonists' behaviour, Hughes trusts his readers' willingness to participate actively in the reading process.

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Some fifteen lines in the "Stille Nacht"-section of *The Wooden Shepherdess* that describe the press conference which Hermann Göring gave on the

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

Saturday afternoon immediately after the killings obviously draw on Wheeler-Bennett. Hughes turns what he had found in this source into a mercurial passage in the novel. By referring to the absent Goebbels and Hanfstaengl, he fills in the necessary background. The flow of the narrative, summarising the "potted lecture" of the Prussian Minister of the Interior, is interrupted by a voice from the crowd whose question Göring then answers; after the journalists' collective sigh ("so that was that") the narrator zooms in on the peremptory Göring, and finally the journalists' reaction is registered:

That Saturday afternoon, since Göbbels was not yet back from Munich (and Putzi, whose job was the Foreign Press, was abroad), Göring in person called for the correspondents, outlined his 'Röhm-Strasser Plot' and gave them a potted lecture on S. A. corruption. "And Schleicher?" somebody asked, as Göring was turning to go.

"Schleicher too had been plotting against the State with a Foreign Power: he was foolish enough to resist arrest, and lost his life in the *mêlée*."

So that was that.... But word had arrived that Hitler was shortly expected back, so Göring hadn't got time to answer any more questions and left them — stunned (p. 370).

Once again, Hughes adhered closely to the original but toned it down by leaving out some emotionally charged adjectives. Although he was a historian, Wheeler-Bennett did not restrict himself to a completely objective account when he reported Göring's press conference. His dislike of von Schleicher may have coloured the following passage, in which there is little if any compassion with the victim. The cadence of Göring's parataxis (as related by Wheeler-Bennett) is impressively oratorical:

The first official intimation was made by Göring late on Saturday afternoon (June 30), when, to a gathering of bewildered and horrified foreign journalists hastily called to the Chancellery, he gave a brief and brutal account of the events of the last twelve hours. The name of von Schleicher was mentioned in connection with the Röhm-Strasser 'conspiracy'. 'And what's happened to him?' someone asked. Göring paused and looked around his audience with a wolfish smile, 'Ah yes', he remarked, 'you journalists always like a special "headline" story; well, here it is. General von Schleicher had plotted against the régime. I ordered his arrest. He was foolish enough to resist. He is dead.' And he left the room (p. 323).¹²

¹² Years later, when Wheeler-Bennett described the turmoil in the *Reichstag* during the final phase of the Republic, he recycled his fortunate find. The intimidating and comical "wolfish smile" with its folktale hint reappears in a passage showing how Franz von Papen extracted a decree from the senile von Hindenburg for dissolving the parliament: "Again the cabinet filed into their places, von Papen bringing up the rear with his vulpine grin." (Wheeler-Bennett 1974, p. 62).

Born into an influential aristocratic Westphalian family, Franz von Papen (1879-1969) firmly believed that positions and wealth were his due, as a member of the ruling land-owning class. Belonging to the Catholic Centre, he supported von Hindenburg in the 1932 presidential elections while trying to stave off the Nazis, to little effect. In the same year he was appointed Chancellor, thanks to von Schleicher's support. Towards the end of the year von Schleicher withdrew it, and von Papen was subsequently dismissed from his post as Chancellor by an unwilling von Hindenburg, who had him replaced by von Schleicher himself.¹³ The ensuing power struggle between the two pretenders resulted in the success of Hitler, the third candidate whom von Papen thought he could direct but who very soon reversed the roles and acted independently. With von Papen's connivance, von Hindenburg appointed Adolf Hitler as Chancellor of Germany, on January 4, 1933.

In a speech at the University of Marburg in June of the next year, ghost-written by Edgar Jung who lost his life in the Purge shortly afterwards, von Papen tried to moderate some of the Nazi excesses. It was a courageous display of civil disobedience, well remembered by the Nazis during the Röhm killings shortly afterwards, and even better by von Papen when he defended himself a dozen years later against Allied accusations. Von Papen was under house-arrest for a few days during the Purge, but he bounced back and served as German Ambassador to Vienna prior to the *Anschluss* and then in Ankara. At the Nuremberg Trials he put the blame on his superiors. He was finally acquitted and also won an appeal against a sentence in a denazification court. As the course of his life shows, he was a man of remarkable resilience.

Wheeler-Bennett, though clearly taken in by von Papen's charm, was as little impressed as other observers by this political weathervane: "A man of irresponsible decisions and careless thought, he had considerable charisma . . . His capacity for misjudging a situation was unexcelled," he writes.¹⁴ A tinge of the ridiculous sticks to von Papen as he appears in Hughes's novel. When the Marburg speech is mentioned, it is seen almost

¹³ "Faced with a situation in which both the Army and his own Cabinet colleagues had declared their lack of confidence in von Papen, Hindenburg was forced to resign himself to the loss of his 'Fränzchen'. By the evening Kurt von Schleicher had been appointed Chancellor . . . But his duplicity was neither forgiven nor forgotten by the President or by von Papen, to whom Hindenburg sent his photograph inscribed: 'Ich hatt' einen Kameraden'." (Wheeler-Bennett 1953, pp. 265-266). — The photograph with its sentimental inscription dated December 2, 1932, can be seen in Franz von Papen's *Memoirs*, facing p. 279.

¹⁴ Wheeler-Bennett 1974, p. 34.

from a pro-Nazi perspective: "ten days ago, at Marburg, Vice-Chancellor Papen had made a speech so disloyal towards the Führer the papers had not been allowed to publish it" (p. 347).¹⁵ The same point of view is retained some twenty pages later in a passage where the emotional outburst ("alas!") indicates that the narration is rendered in the free indirect speech of an anonymous Nazi:

Vice-Chancellor Papen also had got to survive (alas!), since Papen was Hindenburg's pet and the Old Bull's approval was needed to cover the whole affair: von Papen's arrest indeed had been partly to guard against accidents. Still, he had to be given a fright: so two of his closest advisers were shot, his offices seized and ransacked.... Having been shot as it were by proxy, Franz von Papen would certainly take the hint: there'd be no more dangerous Marburg speeches from him! (p. 369).

John Wheeler-Bennett had been more matter-of-fact: "The Vice-Chancellor, Franz von Papen himself, was arrested and removed from his office under guard; while two of his adjutants were shot down across their desks" (p. 323). Some pages later, however, an inkling of condescension can be felt: "Hindenburg's own favourite 'Fränzchen' had only escaped a similar fate [i. e. assassination] through the intervention of the *Reichswehr*, who had placed him under their protection" (p. 329).

William Shirer, an authority whose *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (1960) Hughes had frequent recourse to, probably also in this instance, was more elaborate in his reconstruction of the events:

When Papen went to protest to Goering, the latter, who at that moment had no time for idle talk, 'more or less,' he later recalled, threw him out, placing him under house arrest at his villa, which was surrounded by heavily armed S. S. men and where his telephone was cut and he was forbidden to have any contact with the outside world — an added humiliation which the Vice-Chancellor of Germany swallowed remarkably well (p. 223).

Von Papen does not cut a very heroic figure in Shirer's slightly patronising text. Hughes knew of von Papen's own memoirs and could have made use of them in his novel, but their sombre tone would perhaps have jarred in the new context: "During these three days I had one tenuous link with the

¹⁵ This is not quite correct. Von Papen's warning against a "second revolution" found its way to the press. His "speech met with roars of applause within the hall. Outside, Goebbels moved swiftly to have it banned, though not before some extracts were printed in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, one of Germany's most respected newspapers and still able to avoid the tightening Nazi straitjacket on the press. Copies of the speech were run off and circulated, both within Germany and to the foreign press" (Kershaw, pp. 509-510).

outside world. Certain good friends managed to walk past my windows to convince themselves that I was still alive. One of these was the American Ambassador, Mr Dodd."¹⁶ The same scene as it appeared from the other side was recorded by the man that von Papen had detected outside his windows. The American Ambassador to Berlin, William E. Dodd, noted the following in his diary for July 1, 1934:

July 1. Sunday . . . Vice-Chancellor von Papen and his family were imprisoned in their house and his staff were reported to be killed or imprisoned. We drove a little too leisurely, perhaps, by his house this afternoon, but on purpose. It was a strange day, with only ordinary news in the papers.¹⁷

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Paradoxically, Gustav von Kahr (1862-1934) played a decisive role in German politics by just vacillating. His jumping loyalties and indecisions put an end to Hitler's political aspirations in November 1923 — for the time being. Von Kahr was a conservative Munich separatist who worked towards liberating Bavaria from the Weimar Republic and the Prussian shackles of Berlin. He had hopes for a reinstated Wittelsbach monarchy.

In order to secure the repayment of the war damage reparation costs inflicted on Germany in the Versailles treaty, French forces had occupied part of the Ruhr in 1921. When French and Belgian troops extended the occupation to include the entire Ruhr region in January, 1923, widespread unrest followed. Later, when Chancellor Stresemann changed the German policy towards the occupation by calling off the passive resistance and resuming the reparation payments, President Ebert was forced into declaring a state of emergency in Germany. The Bavarian Cabinet declared one of its own, and appointed von Kahr General State Commissioner. A triumvirate headed the state: he, the commander of the armed forces and the Chief of the State Police.

All three of them play a role in Hughes's fictitious reconstruction of the tangled political situation: "... then State-Commissioner Baron von Kahr speaks, then Commanding-General von Lossow, the Chief-of-Police Colonel von Seisser — all licking the ex-corporal's boots!" (*Fox*, p. 194). After having extricated himself from the *Putsch*, von Kahr was made president of the Bavarian supreme court, but he retired after three years, in

¹⁶ Von Papen, p. 317.

¹⁷ Dodd, p. 129. As professor of History at the University of Chicago, Dodd was aware of the value of historical note-taking. His daughter's account has also been published: Martha Dodd, *My Years in Germany* (1939).

1927. It was to be a short reprieve, as he had only a further seven years to live. He had backed down on promises that he had been forced to make when he was held hostage by Hitler in the Bürgerbräukeller, as described in Chapter nineteen of "The White Crow". That part of his story, as reported by Hughes, was to a fair degree based on Ernst Hanfstaengl's account. When von Kahr turns up in the next novel, Wheeler-Bennett and William Shirer supplied many of the details that Hughes needed. A brief passage in *The Wooden Shepherdess* sums up several pages in the preceding novel, giving the facts behind von Kahr's embroilment with the Nazi usurpers:

Gustav von Kahr for example, who'd dared to out-double-cross Hitler himself back in 1923, thus postponing his rise to power for many a weary year.... Kahr was now in his seventies, living in strict retirement; but Kahr couldn't dodge his eventual punishment — not if he lived to be ninety! So Hess took out his notebook, and noted down 'Kahr' (p. 365).

This prepares the reader for worse things to come, the long list a few pages later with comments attached on those killed in the Purge: "And von Kahr, that harmless old has-been: someone had telephoned only this morning to say he'd been dragged from his bed in his nightshirt and taken to Dachau, where no one knew what had become of him" (p. 382). Father Petrus, loyal to the Church and horrified by the Nazi brutality, is the novel's witness. He also finds Otto von Kessen brutally battered to death a couple of pages further on (as commented below, p. 293 and p. 308). When Wheeler-Bennett had written about von Kahr's death in 1953 he had needed to cover the eleven years between Putsch and Purge. Although he preferred to make fate accountable, he knew on whose orders the former Bavarian State Commissioner had been killed: "... the arm of fate stretched far back into the past. That aged reactionary, Hans Ritter von Kahr, whom Hitler had never forgiven for his part in the fiasco of November 1923, was brutally murdered outside Munich" (p. 322).¹⁸

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¹⁸ William Shirer may have added further details to Hughes's picture. He was also forced into making a brief recapitulation. His account is more detailed when he states the exact place of crime, and its brutal nature: "Many were killed out of pure vengeance for having opposed Hitler in the past . . . The body of Gustav von Kahr, whose suppression of the Beer Hall Putsch in 1923 we have already recounted, and who had long since retired from politics, was found in a swamp near Dachau hacked to death, apparently by pickaxes" (p. 279).

The slaying of Karl Ernst (1904-1934), the SA leader of Berlin and Brandenburg, was a sordid affair: "On June 30, 1934, Ernst drove to Bremen with his bride to board a ship for a honeymoon in Madeira. As his automobile was approaching Bremen, he was overtaken by SS gunmen, who fired at the car, wounding his bride and his chauffeur. Knocked unconscious, Ernst was flown back to Berlin and executed in the Blood Purge."¹⁹ Hughes noted the following sources for Ernst's fate: Strasser, Gisevius, Bullock and Shirer, and he copied for his research file Ludecke's statement that "Ernst foresaw a violent death for himself." The whole incident offered Hughes ample opportunity to show the bizarre and absurd horror of the haphazard mass killings:

Göring and Himmler were both on the tarmac to meet their master at Tempelhof Airfield. But Hitler's plane was delayed; and before it a tiny Junkers landed from Bremen. Out of it stepped Karl Ernst.... That made the onlookers rub their eyes: Karl Ernst was arriving late for his own execution — announced three hours ago! This the prisoner didn't know, of course: he took his arrest as some sort of nonsense of Göring's which Röhm and Hitler between them would soon iron out.... Indeed he died convinced that this was the Rightist coup he'd foreseen — an Army coup, which Göring had joined (which is just what it was, in a way); and shouted 'Heil Hitler!' straight in the teeth of the firing-squad.

So what had Ernst really been guilty of (no one believed the official line)? Had Göring, people wondered, wanted him silenced for knowing the truth of the Reichstag Fire? (pp. 370-71).

Ernst obviously knows very little of what is actually going on. He shares both his bafflement and his limited knowledge with Lothar. As for the real reason why Ernst was killed, Wheeler-Bennett had (as Hughes noted down) suggested a plausible explanation: "All those, for example, who were supposed to have been implicated in the *Reichstag* Fire, including Karl Ernst, the SA Leader of Berlin-Brandenburg, were marked for death" (p. 320).

¹⁹ Snyder, p. 86.

Chapter X
Elizabeth Wiskemann

Berlin and Germany in the late 1920s and early 1930s was not only the haunt of British writers of the "Auden generation", like W. H. Auden himself, Christopher Isherwood and Stephen Spender, and of Americans such as Robert McAlmon and Thomas Wolfe.¹ It also housed a remarkably rich assembly of British and American journalists. John Wheeler-Bennett knew many of them well. His mention of them in his autobiography reads like a listing of many of Richard Hughes's sources:

In addition to their generosity of spirit the corps of correspondents were a galaxy of genius Among the Americans I can still see the faces of friends who were to be household names in years to come. Hubert ('Knick') Knickerbocker of the Hearst Press, a gangling red-haired, raw-boned Texan and my special 'buddy'² . . . William Shirer of C. B. S., whose diaries were to become famous . . . and on one or two occasions the meetings were graced by Dorothy Thompson and 'Red' Lewis. Nor must I forget the one regular member of the circle, that gallant lady Elizabeth Wiskemann, who forsook the academic life of Cambridge to become a freelance journalist and also rose to the top of her profession as a historian of the period, despite partial blindness. Few things gave me greater pleasure than when Oxford gave her an honorary degree of Doctor of Letters shortly before she died in 1971.³

Elizabeth Meta Wiskemann (1899-1971) knew Richard Hughes well. He in turn must have been acquainted with Thomas Mann at a fairly early stage, if the following entry from her memoirs *The Europe I Saw* (1968) can be trusted: "It must have been on that occasion [in Munich in July 1929] that Richard Hughes had given me an introduction to Thomas Mann. So I went to the Manns' house where I was received by Klaus, the eldest son,

¹ See e. g. Samuel Hynes, *The Auden generation. Literature and Politics in England in the 1930s* (1976); Christopher Isherwood, *Down There on a Visit* (1962); Stephen Spender, *World Within World* (1951); Otto Friedrich, *Before the Deluge. A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* (1972). — On a note page of "Books worth looking at", Hughes listed *Down There on a Visit*: "Apparently not very good, but it shows the Auden-Spender group in 1939. (All Isherwood's books deserve looking at)."

² In January 1958, Hughes was looking for eye-witness accounts of the Putsch that had taken place in Munich thirty-five years earlier. Contemporary reports were rare, he stated in a letter to the London librarian of The Royal Institute of International Affairs, inquiring whether she knew of the American journalist H. R. Knickerbocker who had been in Munich at the time, and whether he had referred to these experiences in any of his books. The reply stated that the Institute had several of Knickerbocker's books but that they mentioned the Bavarian incidents only in passing (Dorothy Hamerton to RH, January 14, 1958). Knickerbocker (who died in an air crash in 1949) also appears in Ernst Hanfstaengl's and Kurt G. W. Ludecke's memoirs (Hanfstaengl 1970, pp. 130 & 254; Ludecke 1937, p. 613).

³ Wheeler-Bennett 1974, p. 40.

then about 25, who was alone at home with the inevitable boyfriend" (p. 17). She also met two Italians with whom she "became much befriended . . . [one of them] was particularly interested in all I could tell him about my friend, Richard Hughes, whose *High Wind in Jamaica* he admired" (p. 176).

Her father, a merchant from Hessen-Kassel, had emigrated to England well before the turn of the century to avoid prescription into the Imperial army and settled in London. Elizabeth, the youngest of the Wiskemann siblings (born in Sidcup, Kent, in 1899), took up studies at Cambridge where she presented her thesis on "Napoleon III and the Roman Question" in 1927. A professor of Modern History, in her opinion a misogynist, was one of the two assessors for her dissertation. He was not appreciative of her work (whereas his colleague was). His sparing mark prevailed, and she received an M. Litt. instead of the expected Ph. D.: "I have looked at the thesis more recently and I can see it was nothing to be ashamed of and indeed anticipated some valuable books published since on Napoleon III", she stated with possibly more resentment than equanimity in her autobiography forty years later, adding: "At the time . . . I was naturally *boulevardisé*. I decided that a break must be made and went to Berlin instead of to Cambridge in the autumn of 1930."

Maybe it had all been for the best, in the long run, judging from this comment of hers: "If I had remained an academic specializing in the nineteenth century, I suppose my life would have been considerably duller than it became."⁴ The historian James Joll, an acquaintance of hers, is slightly more guarded when commenting on her academic grievance: "She was convinced that this was due to the prejudice of one of her examiners and remained somewhat suspicious of professional academics all her life."⁵

Cambridge's loss was *The New Stateman's* gain. Elizabeth Wiskemann spent much of the first half of the thirties in Berlin, mingling with politicians and journalists alike, gaining insight into and covering German Affairs for that journal. At an early stage, she was aware of the Nazi danger and of the clouds gathering over Europe, and reported accordingly. The Gestapo did not appreciate a critical witness during the Olympic games and expelled her in the summer of 1936. She spent the war years in Switzerland, part of them as the assistant press attaché to the British legation in

⁴ Wiskemann 1968, p. 9.

⁵ *DNB 1971-1980* (1986), p. 918.

Berne, and after the war she was the Rome correspondent of *The Economist*. Her study of the Hitler-Mussolini relations, *The Rome-Berlin Axis*, was published in 1949.

Richard Hughes had received that book in proofs in late 1948, when he had returned from a writers' conference in Poland. His secretary later noted the following, on the well-worn long sheets of galleys that are kept in Hughes's research folder on *The Wooden Shepherdess*: "Very much corrected page proof of Elizabeth Wiskemann's historical work on Fascism. This was sent to RH — see pencilled note to him on p. 319, written after he had been to Wroclaw conference and was at work on the HP". The note in pencil reads: "Dear Diccon, this is the end. Just throw it all away . . . Yours Elizabeth Oct. 10, 1948".

When she was awarded a D. Litt. at Oxford in 1971, the university's public orator called her "a Cassandra who had lived to record the war she had foretold".⁶ She appreciated that phrase. She had been productive in print, with many books and a wealth of articles to her credit. Plagued by her oncoming blindness, she left this world by her own decision: "a small, vivacious woman of great charm and independence, always outspoken in defence of her strongly held opinions, sensitive and quick to reply to criticism, and justly proud of her record."⁷

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On one of his research index cards, Richard Hughes noted as one of his sources for von Schleicher's death "Elizabeth Wiskemann in an article entitled 'The Night of the Long Knives' published in *History Today*, June 1964."⁸ Three years earlier, she had written him an appreciative letter: "My Dear Diccon: I did not know that you had invaded my territory until I read your new book with passionate interest. Alan Bullock always says he took a lot from me, so I'm developing grandmotherly feelings towards you."⁹

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Elizabeth Wiskemann's entry on von Schleicher's death does not mention any governess (see above, p. 230): "At just about 12.30 p. m. on June 30th, [the open reddish-brown car] arrived again; and two of its occupants — they have never been identified — pushed their way past the cook, who unwillingly opened the door, into the room where Schleicher was sitting in an arm-chair, reading; they shot him dead. His wife had been sitting by the wireless in an adjoining room, but evidently tried to reach him, and was shot down too. The reddish-brown car drove away quickly. The Schleicher's housemaid, Otilie, must then have rung up some cousins of his in Potsdam, who sent for the police" (*History Today*, June 1964, p. 378).

⁹ EW to RH Dec. 10, 1961.

(She later dedicated her *Europe of the Dictators 1919-1945* [1966] "TO ALAN BULLOCK").

If Elizabeth Wiskemann liked *The Fox in the Attic*, she had all the more reason to like *The Wooden Shepherdess*: she must have recognized many of the facts; she had written about them. Her 1949 book was of particular value to Richard Hughes as concerned the 1934 meeting of Hitler and Mussolini in Venice, in Chapter nineteen of "Stille Nacht", where Hughes describes a reluctant Hitler: "When first it was mooted, Hitler had been most unwilling. He spoke no language but German, knew nothing of foreign life and wished to know less" (p. 332). Elizabeth Wiskemann had expanded on the topic of a monolingual Führer and a multilingual Duce: "While Hitler spoke no word of any language but German, 'Der Duce', as Schuschnigg says, 'pflegte deutsch zu sprechen — hart, sehr langsam und artikuliert; man merkte es ihm an, dass er es mühsam aber gerne sprach.'"¹⁰

In Hughes's novel, Hitler is seen as an awkward figure who does not feel much at ease in the unfamiliar setting:

Meanwhile Hitler paced the unyielding marble floor of the Royal Suite at Venice's Grand Hotel, profoundly wishing he'd never come As he stepped from his plane in those wretched civvies von Neurath had made him wear he'd been met by a Duce out-Göringing Göring in splendour of uniform. Cheering crowds lined the roads — but cheering their Duce: for them the dim little Charlie Chaplin in porkpie hat and shabby old trench-coat had only shone in their Duce's reflected glory (p. 334).

Almost all the details in Hughes's Venetian scene stem from Elizabeth Wiskemann. This is her description of the unimpressed Italians and of an obsequious underling: "It is difficult to know how much [Hitler] was even aware of the hostility of the Venetian crowd which acclaimed only with 'Duce, Duce', while Starace tried to explain to Hitler that *Duce* meant *Führer*" (pp. 37-38). She had also given other than linguistic reasons why Hitler felt uncomfortable. She mentioned the then prevalent but danger-

¹⁰ She translated the German quote for British readers: "The Duce was accustomed to speak German — it was hard, very slow and carefully articulated; one was aware that it involved an effort which he enjoyed" (Wiskemann 1949, pp. 36-37). — In spite of his linguistic shortcomings, the Führer was at an advantage, according to Elizabeth Wiskemann: Mussolini "could undoubtedly express himself better in French than in German, but his linguistic vanity left him at a disadvantage with which Hitler was never troubled . . . Fascist diplomacy, moreover, was notoriously careless about its linguistic and legal technique; in Fascist Italy's relations with Nazi Germany the interpreters and legal experts were always provided by the Germans" (p. 37).

ously deceptive views of Hitler as a Chaplin figure, but then proceeded to describe him as exactly that:

It developed into one of those ridiculous occasions which deceived the world into not taking [Hitler] seriously. Mussolini came to meet him in superlatively military costume while Hitler arrived in a raincoat (concealing a black jacket and striped trousers) and patent-leather shoes, holding a grey felt hat with which he fidgeted incessantly . . . It was by Neurath's advice that Hitler had descended to civilian clothes on this occasion and it is likely that his resentment against Neurath was permanent (p. 36).¹¹

Hughes speeded up the slapstick comedy with his Mussolini "out-Göringing Göring", and he was more explanatory than his source in the following observation, tinged with Hitler's resentment: "Moreover, he hadn't escaped even here from the problem of Röhm and his Brownshirts: the Duce had had the infernal nerve to read him a lecture on cutting them down to size!" (p. 335). Elizabeth Wiskemann had been less particular when mentioning the topic for Il Duce's peroration: "There is an apocryphal story that at this first meeting Mussolini quoted to Hitler the Tarquin story about cutting down the flowers that grow too high" (p. 37).

All the facts for the mosquito-ridden lunch in the novel were ready-made in the source. Hughes enlarged on them by inserting a few well-chosen adjectives ("giant", "hectoring"), and he turned the scene into something more lively and more engaging by letting the focalizer's perspective both precede and succeed that of the narrator. In the novel, Hitler looks back on his own actions of the day before. His uneasy feelings of failure are superseded by his triumphant last line, recalled with a typical *esprit d'escalier*:

Yesterday's lunch at the Villa Pisani.... What joker had chosen that peeling malarial mausoleum for yesterday's top-level tête-à-tête? For there they'd been eaten alive by giant mosquitoes — two hectoring titans bobbing to scratch an ankle with one hand and slapping their necks with the other (he'd got his own back all right, by wittily pointing out to his hosts that this was the insects' very first taste of a white man's blood)! (pp. 334-335).

¹¹ In his book *Hitler — Mussolini* (1973), Jens Petersen has made note of the many contemporary reports in the British and French press that were coloured by Chaplin: "In der englischen und französischen Presse erschienen damals Berichte von teils chaplinesker Färbung" (Petersen, p. 345). He also mentions Elizabeth Wiskemann and many of her colleagues who had written on Mussolini. Quoting one of them, he comments that it is no excerpt from Chaplin's script for *The Great Dictator* — but it could well be: "Das ist kein Ausschnitt aus dem Drehbuch zu Chaplins Film *Der große Diktator*. Aber er könnte es sein" (Ibid., p. 346).

Elizabeth Wiskemann certainly had reasons to feel grandmotherly: apart from some minor changes, much of the text just quoted was culled from the following lines in *The Rome-Berlin Axis*:

The discussions had been fixed to take place at the royal palace at Stra near Padua on 14 June. The palace had long been out of use and days were devoted to making it habitable, but when the dictators arrived disrespectful mosquitoes teased them to such an extent that the Italian and German parties had to drive back to Venice . . . At last the Great Men's tête-à-tête took place at the Alberoni golf-course in Venice . . . the two roared at one another like bulls . . . Hitler had declaimed to Mussolini about the superiority of the Nordic race (p. 36).

*

There is little reason to believe that Elizabeth Wiskemann felt offended and hurt when seeing what she had written form part of another book. Richard Hughes would hardly have jeopardized their friendship by not letting her know in advance of his intention to incorporate her lines with a new context. There was space enough in his final "Historical note" at the end of the novel for her name to appear. For unknown reasons, maybe simply on her own advice against it, it did not.

She also seems to have played an active role, quite literally, in Hughes's fiction. Archdeacon Dibden's younger sister Joan, once secretly engaged to Augustine's cousin Henry (who was killed in the war), is the woman in the quartet travelling by car through Germany. Behind some of her German encounters can be seen those of two women journalists at work in Germany at the same time, those of the American Dorothy Thompson¹² and the British Elizabeth Wiskemann. Joan travels through Stuttgart and is rebuffed by an uncouth pimply creature who is aware of the new woman ideal in Nazi Germany but overzealous in implementing it:¹³

But then came an awkward moment, when Joan unthinkingly lit a cigarette: whereupon a somewhat pimply creature in S. S. uniform smugly remarked to the world at large: 'No German woman of decent breeding smokes'. Hurriedly Joan stubbed out her fag (p. 330).

¹² Dorothy Thompson's article "Good-By to Germany" in the November-December 1934 issue of *Harper's Magazine* tells of her driving from Innsbruck to Munich, and her meeting with a disillusioned SA man in Berlin, just after the Purge. Many of her details can be found in *The Wooden Shepherdess*: the flags, the banners, the slogans (one of them WE WERE BORN TO DIE FOR GERMANY!), the healthy young people on bicycles, youth camps, the clash between Catholics and Nazis, and the muddled events of the Purge. It is a well-informed and heavily ironic contemporary account.

¹³ On that ideal, see Claudia Koonz's *Mothers in the Fatherland. Women, the Family and Nazi Politics* (1987).

Elizabeth Wiskemann had experienced just that, in an even more brutal and direct confrontation on March 5, 1933, as her memoirs thirty-five years later make clear:

We drove round Berlin all day in small groups, deep into frightened Communist Wedding as well as elsewhere. It was in a Wedding public house, I think, that a Storm Trooper snatched a cigarette I was smoking from my mouth, informing me that the Führer disapproved of women smoking (p. 34).

As has been shown above (on p. 219), Richard Hughes privately acknowledged his debt to Sir Philip Gibbs in regards to his Chapters eighteen and twenty of "Stille Nacht", in a letter to his London publisher. In this letter, he expressly excluded the cigarette incident: it was not part of Gibbs's book: "the trouble is that (with the exception of the smell of sunburn cream, and the cigarette-smoking incident) [the material] comes almost entirely from one source, Sir Philip Gibbs's *European Journey* . . ." However, he did not tell from where he had that particular story.

Maybe he did not even read of Elizabeth Wiskemann's Berlin cigarette-smoking incident in her memoirs; he could have heard it directly from her. If he did, he would no doubt have got a livelier version of her unpleasant Wedding experiences. Talking to her was, according to James Joll, more rewarding than reading her autobiography which, in his opinion, "though full of interest, disappointed some of her friends because her account of the eminent people she had known seemed somewhat bland in comparison with the pungent comments she would pass on them in conversation."¹⁴

*

Neither Elizabeth Wiskemann, John Wheeler-Bennett nor Dorothy Thompson managed to remain *persona grata* for long in Nazi Germany. Their experience of leaving, by their own choice or by force, is curiously similar, in its haste and abruptness. Wheeler-Bennett had dined at the Kaiserhof Hotel with two of von Papen's adjutants in the evening of June 28. Two days later they were both killed, as was Edgard Jung whom he had met with only a few days before. On the following day, Wheeler-Bennett left Germany. It was in the nick of time, as he explained in his memoirs:

How closely I myself escaped I only learned a little later I asked a German friend of mine, who had left the Reich for good but had held an official position

¹⁴ DNB 1971-1980 (1986), p. 918.

which enabled him to have seen my Gestapo file, what would have happened to me. After all, I said, I was a foreigner and not unknown in Berlin, or, for the matter of that, in London. 'Oh,' he said, 'they intended to kill you all right. They had recordings of all your talks with Papen. Then they'd shoot the boys who shot you. All an unfortunate mistake, you know. It would have been too easy.'¹⁵

As Elizabeth Wiskemann made clear in her memoirs, there were specific reasons for her expulsion: "I should add that I heard later that Goebbels had wanted me arrested because of the articles I had written recently" (p. 58). In Hughes's novel some of the SA soldiers die standing, i. e. by being stood up against a wall and shot, in the manner they had been executed in real life. In her memoirs, Elizabeth Wiskemann recalls her own nightmares two years after the Purge:¹⁶

In July 1936, however, for the first and only time in my life I did a little sleep-walking. I woke up more than once in the next week or so to find myself standing in the middle of the night against the wall near my bed, muttering to myself: 'I would rather die standing.' What made me feel ashamed was to think how infinitely more people in the Nazi concentration camps were enduring; it was the rarest thing for one of them to escape and to be able to cross a blessed frontier.

This was the end of my direct experience of Nazi Germany, although I was until 1945 to be constantly on its borders.¹⁷

¹⁵ Wheeler-Bennett 1972, p. 92.

¹⁶ Significantly, the second part of William Shirer's memoirs *20th Century Journey* is called *The Nightmare Years: 1930-40* (1984).

¹⁷ Wiskemann 1968, pp. 59-60.

Chapter XI
William Manchester

Chapter twenty-two of "Stille Nacht" concerns Hitler's impromptu visit to the Krupp steel works in Essen on June 28 and 29, 1934. Hughes's source in this case was an American historian, William Manchester (b. 1922). Like Wheeler-Bennett and Elizabeth Wiskemann, he had started out as a journalist, first covering the local Maryland scene, then the world at large. He was, for a period, the foreign correspondent of the *Baltimore Sun* in New Delhi. His contact with that newspaper dates back to 1947, when he had met H. L. Mencken, whose biography he wrote three years later.¹ Like the two Britons, Manchester later made the gradual transition from one profession, that of a journalist, to another, that of a historian.

He was appointed professor of history at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. After the Mencken biography, others followed of the Rockefellers, John F. Kennedy, General MacArthur and Winston Churchill.² His *Death of a President* (1967) was an instant bestseller, but its conclusions were not uncontested.³ In the preface to that book he explained that before he had launched his exhaustive research in Dallas and elsewhere, he "had been living in the Ruhr, and was writing German History." That effort resulted two years later in a massive chronicle, the one which Hughes profited from: *The Arms of Krupp 1587-1968* (1969).

*

The full reasons for Hitler's visit to Gustav Krupp at the Essen steelworks will probably never be known. Neither will the question be solved whether Gustav Krupp was informed of the coming Purge or not. Some motives are suggested in Hughes's novel, where the background to the meeting between the political leader and the industrial one is sketched in

¹ On Manchester and Mencken, see Dorsey, p. 8. — Hughes incidentally borrowed H. L. Mencken's *The American Language* from the London Library on May 5, 1966, while at work on the American scenes of *The Wooden Shepherdess*. His notes include lists of American 1920's slang which he checked with friends in the United States.

² The first part of Manchester's 1700-page long double-volumed Churchill biography *The Last Lion* (1983 & 1988) received a critical broadside from Stephen Koss, a Columbia professor of history: "Mr. Manchester strives mightily after literary effects, which litter the landscape. His rhetoric puts even Churchill's in the shade." He regarded the book as "curiously bloated" and "lacking in perspective . . . [Manchester's] technique has been to cull anecdotes without determining their relative merit or authenticity" (*New York Times Book Review*, June 5, 1983).

³ "A landmark in reportage, it received mixed reviews and sold in millions, but has subsequently been superseded as new evidence on the assassination of President Kennedy has emerged" (Crystal, p. 615).

Chapter twenty-one, on some compressed pages hinting at the dissent between different fractions within the Nazi Party, all vying for power: the SA versus the Army, the Socialist wing of the Nazi Party against the conservative one, and Röhm and Gregor Strasser on the one hand, the triumvirs Himmler, Göring and Goebbels on the other. All four, excepting Strasser, are courting Hitler and eagerly waiting for his next move.

Hughes also refers to von Papen's speech at Marburg University, though the reader has to find out its precise nature from outside the novel. Hitler is reprimanded by President von Hindenburg at Neudeck in an episode which foreshadows his meeting with Gustav Krupp. Pressure is put on him to curb the SA, and excuses for a general clamp-down are made up. Hughes makes his readers believe that the notion that Röhm plotted against Hitler by planning a coup was false and only an expedient lie. Hitler, on this occasion as on many others indecisive, chooses to believe what he wants to believe. In the following passage, the narrator takes it for granted that his readers are familiar with *Alice in Wonderland*:

... Hitler was morally ambidextrous, with no such distinction between unconscious self-seeking and what he was consciously up to. He *knew* that the plot was a fabrication invented by Göring and Himmler, and perfectly understood why; but what he *believed* was entirely controlled by his will. If the White Queen 'believed two impossible things before breakfast', so could he too if he wanted to (pp. 342-343).

Towards the end of the chapter, Hitler is still a vacillator, which causes the trio intense irritation. Goebbels, in fear of Himmler and Göring, is shown to prepare himself to go the same way as his leader — but his leader has not made up his mind. At the outset of Chapter twenty-two, the Krupp background is swiftly filled in with facts that can be found in Manchester's chronicle, such as the historical importance of the *Konzern* to world affairs in general and to German ones in particular. The dynasty at Villa Hügel in Essen wields an immense power, and Hitler is shown to be aware of it and to feel intimidated by it. The Krupp Works, an independent territory with its own laws, have been intruded upon by the SA. But going to Essen just in order to make amends for SA excesses or to attend a wedding seems only a pretext, and not a very convincing one at that, according to the triumvirs who fear that Hitler has other and more pressing reasons for the visit at this moment, only a few hours before the Purge:

So Hitler still stalled; and on Thursday — with only forty-eight hours to go — he blandly announced his immediate departure for Essen, and watched their faces. The

trio . . . were near despair. 'Terboven's wedding', and 'trouble at Krupp's over one of Röhm's henchmen'.... The Führer's excuses for going were both so flimsy they feared some diabolical trick if they let him out of their sight (p. 343).

Essen-born Josef Terboven, whose wedding Hitler attended, was an elected Nazi member of parliament, appointed *Gauleiter* in his home town, and later the *Reich Commissioner* of Norway, where he committed suicide in 1945. His wedding could hardly have been the main cause for Hitler to go to Essen. Somewhat later the possible reasons have been narrowed down to the trouble that Röhm's henchmen had caused at the Krupp steel factory. Hughes hints that Gustav Krupp's autocratic rule had never been questioned up till that moment, and that no outsider had ever been allowed to enter his plant. Therefore, the SA intrusion, which is tantamount to an invasion by a foreign power, has been all the more notable:

Yet three weeks ago the unheard-of had happened: the Head of Röhm's Political Staff had presented himself at the gates — had forced his way in — had ordered the men to down-tools and harangued them, preaching the Revolution to come!

Whatever other reasons Hitler might have for visiting Krupp there certainly had been 'some trouble with one of Röhm's henchmen which needed ironing-out' (p. 345).

As explained in the novel, Gustav Krupp, who had married into the family, was the firm's Prince Consort while his wife Bertha was "... the Reigning Queen: for she was the Krupp of the Blood" (p. 345). Some pages earlier in the book, in Chapter twenty, the prevailing view of him as an eager Nazi has been expressed by the Camp Commandant: "Krupp alone has provided three thousand new jobs in the last few weeks: he's an ardent Nazi now" (p. 337). Two chapters later, Gustav Krupp's political commitment is hinted at obliquely when his wife Bertha regards the Nazi as "trash", a view obviously not shared by him. Husband and wife have different attitudes to their guest Adolf Hitler.⁴

William Manchester had tried to show that Hitler set himself priorities that may have been unknown to anyone else but himself. The suggestion that the wedding was anything but a pretext was, according to Man-

⁴ Gustav Krupp knew where the wind was blowing from: "Not all German businessmen jumped on the Hitler bandwagon after the Nazi election showing in 1930 . . . Fritz Thyssen in his confessions declares that Krupp was a 'violent opponent' of Hitler and that as late as the day before Hindenburg appointed him Chancellor, Krupp urgently warned the old Field-Marshal against such a folly. However, Krupp soon saw the light and quickly became, in the words of the repentant Thyssen, 'a super Nazi'" (Shirer 1972 [1960], p. 183). See also Fritz Thyssen, *I Paid Hitler* (1941), *passim*.

chester, "patent nonsense. Krupp was more important than a hundred Terbovens" (p. 415). As a historian who wanted a general pattern to appear, Manchester refers back to the Nazi party's power struggle between socialists and conservatives, workers and capitalists, in a brief but concise summary of the conflict:

Throughout its first year in power . . . the National Socialist Party had been an uneasy marriage between nationalists and anti-capitalistic middle-class socialists. Now in the second spring a divorce was imminent. The Nazis were on the brink of civil war, cut-throat against cut-throat. Hitler's racist, imperialistic, oligarchic ideology was threatened by revolt among the socialists in his ranks. The crisis was grave; the cry for a 'second revolution' was being raised by Ernst Röhm (pp. 415-416).

Hughes's account is intentionally more impressionistic and patchy so as to coincide with what the events must have looked like at the time to the majority of those involved. As a consequence, his readers have to draw their own conclusion from the information scattered in the novel. William Manchester continues his survey with some further facts that, as we have seen, went into the novel:

On June 4 four SA men, at Röhm's express orders, had appeared on Altendorferstrasse and forced their way past gate 28. Their leader . . . had insisted upon interrupting a Gusstahlfabrik assembly line and delivering a speech predicting the 'zweite Revolution'. Krupp had complained to Hitler, and the Führer brooded (p. 416).

Another historian, Gordon Young, in a book on Krupp published nine years previous to Manchester's, had suggested that Röhm had sent his Storm Troopers to the Krupp Works because he was vying for broad support in the looming struggle for Party supremacy. Both Manchester and later Hughes described the action as seen from the factory owner's perspective. Young, in contrast, took the Krupp factory workers perspective by showing their sympathy towards Röhm (and he seems to have believed that Röhm was in actual fact plotting against Hitler):

For only three weeks before the purge, the storm troop leader, Ernst Röhm, sent the chief of his political office, Gruppenführer von Detten, and a number of his officers, on an unexpected visit to the Krupp works in Essen. There, they toured the factories and took the occasion to assure the thousands of Kruppworkers who welcomed them, that their welfare was under the constant supervision of the storm troop leadership. This move appears to have been one of the actions of Ernst Röhm in canvassing

for popular support which must have first made Hitler alive to the plot which was being hatched (pp. 46-47).

In hindsight, it may be assumed that Hitler's visit to the Krupps was part of his planned strategy to achieve a strong liaison with the capitalists and industrialists while he distanced himself from Röhm, the SA, and the Strasser socialists. When Hughes mentions the Storm Trooper intrusion, he quotes within citation marks not Manchester but presumably some contemporary voice talking of "some trouble with one of Röhm's henchmen which needed ironing out".

At the end of Chapter twenty-two, after the incidents at Essen, Hitler is still seen to vacillate. Hughes underlines the Führer's acute dilemma by inserting a soul-searching question: "And still he hadn't a clue, if he didn't fall in with Göring's and Himmler's plans. Was his Daemon deserting him?" (p. 346). The last question, put by the narrator, reflects Hitler's anguish at having to reach a decision. Richard Hughes leaves the question in mid-air, tantalising and ambiguous.

*

Hughes was an historical novelist who tried every means to be as factual as possible in his reconstructions. It is difficult and perhaps inane to try to establish whether he believed that Manchester's account was absolutely historically correct or not. He would not have been helped by consulting William Shirer's book; it had nothing to say about Hitler's meeting with Gustav Krupp. Whatever Hughes's opinion of Manchester's reliability, he followed this source at times quite closely and incorporated many of its details into his novel. His method in this instance is one of condensation. This is the version of the novel, hinting that Bertha Krupp knew of Hitler's recent awkward meeting with President von Hindenburg:

... Hitler's impending visit found husband and wife at loggerheads. Bertha flatly refused to invite this upstart Chancellor-Führer to tea, or even allow him inside her house. He deserved no better reception at Essen than Neudeck: if Gustav proposed to hob-nob with trash, he must see the man at his down-town office — and so at the down-town office it had to be, with the minimum fanfare possible (345).

And this is William Manchester's version, suggesting that social snobbery and sheer resentment more than different political attitudes lay behind Bertha Krupp's refusal to meet the Führer when he visited Essen:

Hitler was not received at Villa Hügel. Bertha wouldn't have it. For one thing, she was mortified. The family was still confined to the sixty rooms of the small wing. She refused to have a plebeian politician see the proud dynasty humbled . . . on his first visit, with his conservative credentials still suspect, he wasn't even invited to tea (p. 416).

Bertha Krupp obviously kept herself absent. Her eldest daughter Irmgard acted as her stand-in, as described in the following fast-moving fictitious episode. Irmgard's view is limited, quite naturally as she is mortified by her shyness and does not dare raise her eyes beyond Hitler's shining boots. But in Hughes's novel, the narrator's view takes in the whole scene:

There, at the splendid doors of the marble entrance-hall, not Bertha herself but her dark and shy and far from attractive daughter scarcely lifted her gaze from the Führer's glittering boots to hand him a bouquet (the face she didn't see was wreathed in smiles, but the eyes were a couple of bloodshot pebbles). Somebody tried to raise a 'Heil', and the ominous couple of tons of chandelier over his head tinkled a note or two; but that was all. He slipped on the polished marble as Gustav carried him off to his private office; and there the 'ironing-out' began, behind closed doors (p. 345).

Hughes worked contrapuntally. His central themes, images and symbols resurfaced time and time again throughout both novels. Sometimes he found ready-made parallel instances in his sources, as in the case of the wilted flowers offered by a small child to marching soldiers (*Fox*, p. 117 — see above, p. 88) or the bouquet handed to a Führer by a shy teenager. At other times only minor changes were needed in order to link one scene to another, as in the case of slippery marble floors, whether in Venice (p. 334) or in Essen. His source for the scene just quoted was less farcical, less lively but possibly more reliable as an historical account. Judging from the photos facing page 416 in Manchester's book, Irmgard Krupp was neither unpretty nor "far from attractive". Manchester's and consequently Hughes's comments on her looks seem exaggerated and unfair but can of course be seen as an externalisation of an extremely shy teenager's doubts about herself.

Hughes added an observation that was lacking in his source but which makes sense. The sinister parenthesis that he inserted ("the face she didn't see was wreathed in smiles, but the eyes were a couple of bloodshot pebbles") suggests the Führer's ambiguity at this point. Behind Hitler's civilized exterior, though his eyes are bloodshot from lack of sleep, his ferocious mind is set on a bloodbath. Five chapters later, the Führer will

scrutinize his officers with a "look which seemed to use each pair of eyes as open peep-holes into the brain behind" (p. 363).

In Hughes's source, the Krupp executives cheer out of loyalty to their company, not in enthusiasm for the politician. The historian interprets their feelings: the meeting has been a splendid climax, in their view. As for Irmgard and her embarrassment, she is mostly seen from the outside, but with some sudden empathetic interpolations of how she may have experienced the meeting. In the following passage, there is no tinkling of chandeliers, ominous to someone who feels socially ill at ease. But almost everything else in Hughes's text, including the reconstruction of Irmgard Krupp's feelings, had already been stated by Manchester in his book on the Krupp dynasty which sets the scene thus: "After Terboven and his wife had left on their honeymoon, the Führer was welcomed in the marble reception hall of the Hauptverwaltungsgebäude." Manchester continues:

With his wife pleading a headache, Gustav chose as hostess his oldest daughter, Irmgard. Irmgard had turned twenty-one four weeks before. At that age she should have been pretty. She wasn't, and this was the worst moment of her youth. Dark, shy, and painfully aware of her lack of charm, she was obliged to act as official greeter. She fidgeted in the ornate doorway, intensely embarrassed. Then Hitler stamped up in his glittering boots, took the bouquet she offered, beamed as she curtsied, and swept on to embrace her father. To the cheering, heiling Krupp executives, watching the leader of economy and the leader of the Fatherland withdraw to Gustav's private office that sunny Friday, it seemed that sixteen years of shame had been rolled away. It was, they agreed, a splendid climax (p. 417).

William Manchester demonstrated a dynamic approach to his topic, on this and other pages. His empathy with the historical figures whose lives he recreated is obvious. If Hughes's novel still seems more lively and engaging, the reason may be that he was primarily a novelist, not a historian like Manchester, however much some critics thought the latter lacking in methodological stringency.⁵ Hughes, Young and Manchester all seem to

⁵ Michiko Kutani had been as critical as Stephen Koss of Manchester's *The Last Lion*, calling it "A pedestrian effort to popularize the statesman's life . . . Its effect on the reader is simply that of a very long, and not particularly well-narrated, newsreel of Churchill's life . . . this narrative of events frequently lapses into sentimental and hyperbolic prose" (*NYTBR*, May 25, 1983). Kenneth Harris, a biographer of British politicians, showed an understanding of the fact that professional prejudices may well influence reviewers, when he wrote about Manchester's second volume on Churchill: "Thousands will read this book with great satisfaction. Historians will have criticisms" (*NYTBR*, November 27, 1988). — Richard Hughes who died seven years before the first volume of *The Last Lion* was published was interested in books on and by Churchill: on May 21, 1970, he borrowed Robert Rhodes James's *Churchill: A Study in Failure 1900-1939*, and six years earlier, on October 22, 1964, he had sent for Churchill's *Great Contemporaries* (1937), with its re-

agree on at least one point, that not everything in history, not even that of the relatively recent past, can be fully explained or resolved.

As has been shown, Hughes relied on a large host of witnesses and sources when he later summed up the lugubrious result of the Purge, with all its casualties. There were many victims. Why then did he single out a Bavarian civil servant, a clergyman, and a music critic for special mention? All three of them, in that order and mentioned by their proper names, figure on the same page (already quoted in part above, on p. 235) in his Chapter twenty-eight:

A lot of old scores remained to be settled, and this was an opportunity not to be missed: liquidations discreetly carried out now would hardly be noticed in all the excitement....

Gustav von Kahr for example, who'd dared to out-double-cross Hitler himself back in 1923, thus postponing his rise to power for many a weary year.... Kahr was now in his seventies, living in strict retirement; but Kahr couldn't dodge his eventual punishment — not if he lived to be ninety! So Hess took out his notebook and noted down 'Kahr'.

There were others who had to be silenced simply for knowing too much: such as Father Stempfle (he knew far too much about Hitler's affair with Geli). So Hess noted down 'Stempfle' — without in the least knowing why.

Colonel Otto von Kessen's name is added to the list, the only fictive one so far, and the enumeration continues:

"Oh, and then there is Schmidt."

Hess wrote down 'Schmidt'. But still, which 'Schmidt? He didn't quite like to ask.... But then he remembered how strongly the Führer felt about music: he must mean Willi Schmidt, the musical critic (p. 365).⁶

It does not seem unlikely, finally, that Hughes in this passage took his cue from Manchester's brief summing-up of the Purge casualties. Although no names are mentioned by Manchester and the order is different, the resemblance between what has just been quoted from the novel and the following lines from the Krupp chronicle is obvious. Manchester, prone to quote German words, phrases and quotations in his text, started with a noun that sounds even more ominous in its original German than in translation:

markable portraits of Hindenburg, Ludendorff and Hitler.

⁶ "Dr. Willi Schmid, a music critic, was arrested in his apartment while playing the cello, then murdered under the impression that he was Wilhelm Schmid, the local Brownshirt leader" (Toland, p. 347).

It was a *Schreckenherrschaft*, a reign of terror. An untold number of bystanders were killed out of sheer malice. A priest whom Hitler was known to loathe was shot three times in the heart and thrown in a forest; another man who had crossed the Führer eleven years earlier was hacked to death with pickaxes and left in a swamp near the then obscure town of Dachau; and at least one martyr, an eminent Munich music critic, was butchered by mistake because he and a local SA leader had the same name (p. 417).

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Threads spun by several historians were woven into the fabric of *The Human Predicament*. This raises the question of the differences between historians and novelists, differences which at times seem minimal, especially in the case of historical novels. The lines are not only difficult to draw and define; they are also quite often blurred. The question will be broached only briefly here: it does not fall within the scope of the present study to analyse in detail the differences and similarities between a historian and a novelist, including the hybrid historical novelist.

As seen above, two of the historians of direct relevance for Richard Hughes were taken to task for writing texts that were deemed too literary. John Wheeler-Bennett was mildly criticized for showing "a certain weakness for purple prose" (see above, p. 226), while his colleague William Manchester was more severely attacked for striving "mightily after literary effects" and for lapsing "into sentimental and hyperbolic prose", as quoted above. The third historian, Elizabeth Wiskemann, must have been aware of the demarcation dilemma when she relayed a story about Hitler's and Mussolini's first meeting. Although she admitted that it was an apocryphal story, she still passed it on, not limiting herself only to what was in the strictest sense historically verifiable.

In his note prefacing *The Fox in the Attic*, Richard Hughes had stated that "The historical characters and events are as accurately historical as I can make them: I may have made mistakes but in no case have I deliberately falsified the record once I could worry it out" (p. 7). It is a dictum which is reiterated in his "Historical note" at the end of the following novel (p. 389). That kind of cautious claim (and disclaimer) is not unique to Richard Hughes. Similar statements can be found in novels by other writers of historical fiction. One of them was Mary Renault, who wrote: "I have never, for any reason, in any historical book of mine, falsified anything deliberately which I knew or believed to be true."⁷

⁷ "Notes on *The King Must Die*", in *Afterwords: Novelists on Their Novels*, ed. Thomas McCormack (1989); quoted by Fleishman 1971, p. xii.

A dozen years before Hughes started on his historical project, the British philosopher R. G. Collingwood made some distinctions between historians and novelists in his *The Idea of History* (1946). However, he also found many similarities: "As works of imagination, the historian's work and the novelist's do not differ" (p. 246). A key concept in his treatise is "historical imagination". He suggests that the historian, as opposed to most novelists, has to adhere to three criteria: "his picture must be localized in space and time", his "history must be consistent with itself", and his "picture stands in a peculiar relation to something called evidence" (p. 246). Richard Poole has applied these criteria to one of Hughes's passages, i. e. Hitler's dream at Uffing, and has found that the historical novelist does not differ much from Collingwood's ideal historian: "In satisfying Collingwood's three rules, Hughes's portrayal of Hitler would seem to merit the ascription of 'truth'".⁸

Collingwood talks of "the historical imagination as a self-dependent, self-determining, and self-justifying form of thought" (p. 249). It is a faculty different from mere fantasy:

The historian's picture of his subject, whether that subject be a sequence of events or a past state of things, thus appears as a web of imaginative construction stretched between certain fixed points provided by the statements of his authorities; and if these points are frequent enough and the threads spun from each to the next are constructed with due care, always by the *a priori* imagination and never by merely arbitrary fancy, the whole picture is constantly verified by appeal to these data, and runs little risk of losing touch with the reality which it represents (p. 242).

Collingwood's statements on this topic are not markedly different from some hermeneutic theories (or, for that matter, some of T. S. Eliot's ideas) when he writes: "The living past of history lives in the present; but it lives not in the immediate experience of the present, but only in the self-knowledge of the present" (p. 174). He also emphasises that the historian spans a bridge over time⁹ when analysing the past: "[the historian's knowledge] is knowledge of the past in the present, the self-knowledge of the historian's own mind as the present revival and reliving of past experiences" (p. 175). The historian has to take his own place in history into account, Collingwood states, in words that seem applicable to writers of historical fiction as well:

⁸ Poole (1987), p. 227.

⁹ Fleishman phrases it similarly: "The historical novelist writes trans-temporally; he is rooted in the history of his own time and yet can conceive another" (p. 15).

... the historian himself, together with the here-and-now which forms the total body of evidence available to him, is a part of the process he is studying, has his own place in that process, and can see it only from the point of view which at this present moment he occupies within it (p. 248).¹⁰

Avrom Fleishman, in the introductory chapter to his *The English Historical Novel* (1971), discusses Collingwood's concept of "imaginative sympathy", and finds that it is an empathy which is at work both in the historian and in the writer of historical fiction. The difference between them is not one of kind but only one of degree:

Under this definition of historiography as a reliving of past experience, the historical novelist has a claim to historical truth, on the strength of his habitual exercise of imaginative sympathy, his personalization of history so that it becomes not a mere movement of forces or sequence of events but the thoughts and feelings of men (p. 5).

Fleishman suggests some definitions of the genre. The historical novel is one in which there is "a specific link to history: not merely a real building or a real event but a real person among the fictitious ones", and he maintains that "the reader of historical novels is also likely to demand some sort of truth from them" (p. 4). He refers in passing to hermeneutics while admitting that much in the genre is in flux: "The critical question raised by the historical novel's evocation of the past is the problem of relativism ..." (p. 13).

Furthermore, he agrees with the "widely held view" that this particular literary genre allows for self-reflexion. The past in a historical novel often mirrors the present, for a specific reason: "... the men of the present look back to the men of the past not merely to understand them but to understand themselves" (ibid.).¹¹ He also stresses the role of the reader: "What makes a historical novel historical is the active presence of a concept of history as a shaping force — acting not only upon the characters in

¹⁰ Also quoted by Fleishman (p. 5). — This seems close to the hermeneutics. Cf. the following lines by Hans-Georg Gadamer: "True historical thinking must take account of its own historicity. Only then will it not chase the phantom of an historical object which is the object of progressive research, but learn to see in the object the counterpart of itself and hence understand both" (Gadamer 1982, p. 267). When discussing some of Collingwood's ideas, Gadamer also broaches the changeability of meaning: "Our understanding of written tradition as such is not of a kind that we can simply presuppose that the meaning that we discover in it agrees with that which its author intended ... the sense of a text in general reaches far beyond what its author originally intended" (p. 335).

¹¹ Hans O. Granlid has discussed this "problem of analogy" in his pioneering survey of Swedish historical novels, with the apt formula of its title: *Då som nu* [Then as Now] (1964).

the novel but on the author and readers outside it" (p. 15). It is a view that can readily be applied to Richard Hughes's novels and their reader-oriented poetics.

Undoubtedly, Richard Hughes would also have agreed with the following passage in Hans-Georg Gadamer's *Truth and Method* which underlines the relativity of a text as well as the crucial role of its interpreter:

Every age has to understand a transmitted text in its own way, for the text is part of the whole of the tradition in which the age takes an objective interest and in which it seeks to understand itself. The real meaning of the text, as it speaks to the interpreter, does not depend on the contingencies of the author and whom he originally wrote for. It certainly is not identical with them, for it is always partly determined also by the historical situation of the interpreter and hence by the totality of the objective course of history (p. 263).¹²

Gadamer sums up his argument on the next page: "Not occasionally only, but always, the meaning of a text goes beyond its author. That is why understanding is not merely a reproductive, but always a productive attitude as well" (p. 264).

Similar views can be found in some of Richard Hughes's theoretical writings, especially his 1954-56 lectures at Gresham College, most of them still unpublished. Richard Poole has printed a short selection from the twenty lectures in *Fiction as Truth* (1983), pp. 64-69. In one of them, "Literature and the plastic arts", Hughes talks of the temporal dimensions of the reading experience: "... it is characteristic of that experience that the reader moves through his experience of the novel behind his eyes as he moves through life — a present moment, moving always from a partially-remembered past towards a partially-foreseeable future" (p. 66).

¹² Fleishman makes a useful distinction: "Most novels set in the past — beyond an arbitrary number of years, say 40-60 (two generations) — are liable to be considered historical, while those of the present and preceding generations (of which the reader is more likely to have personal experience) have been called [by Kathleen Tillotson in *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties* (1961)] 'novels of the recent past'" (p. 3). It seems that *The Human Predicament* is now moving from the second category to the first.

Chapter XII
Walter Schellenberg

In a letter written when he was seventy-four, Richard Hughes acknowledged some of the sources that he had drawn on for the two volumes of *The Human Predicament* published so far. The recipient of his letter acted as the go-between for his contacts with Joachim Fest, the head of the Department of Contemporary History at RIAS-Berlin, later the editor-in-chief of TV for Norddeutscher Rundfunk, and an expert on Hitler. Hughes wished to approach Fest in order to have the historical veracity of his own continued work-in-progress ascertained. The letter contains one of his many statements explaining his views on the historical novel:

In the writing of my novel I have bound myself to respect historical truth as strictly as if I were a historian, not a novelist at all. The only novelist's licence I claim is to use different criteria of selection from the historian's, i. e. to choose particular historical events for detailed (but I hope still meticulously accurate) description, without necessarily any regard to their historical importance or unimportance.¹

In his novel Hughes repeatedly demonstrated his ability to place his readers *in medias res*, straight into a context founded on his meticulous research into particular historical events. Chapter twenty-three of "Stille Nacht" was based on Hughes's own field-excursions in and near Bonn for its local detail. The chapter opens with a swift and sweeping movement: "From Cologne that afternoon black truckloads of S. S. guards had thundered along the new Autobahn under a blazing sun to Bonn, then out to Bad Godesberg" (p. 347). Hughes's own notes had been more detailed, as in this description of the SS Barracks in Bonn: "A nineteenth Century barracks taken over by motorised SS. A series of oblong blocks, looking North and South, on the Bonnerstrasse just after passing Green Belt on entry to city. View, looking south: Adenauer's Green Belt. Land everywhere flat."² The novel then follows the truckloads of guards to their destination in nearby Bad Godesberg: "There they pulled up in the grounds of the monumental Dreesen Hotel" (p. 347). Hughes had been conscientious in his research. He followed in the footsteps of his factual characters. His notes prove that he had been at the scene in question: "Dreesen Hotel, Godesberg: a large Victorian Building, view from terrace: the Rhine (about

¹ "To Anne", not dated but written before April 19, 1975 when he turned 75: "I am now 74."

² Konrad Adenauer was Cologne's lord mayor (Burgomeister) from 1917 to 1933, but was then first suspended and later dismissed from his office by the Nazis.

400 yards wide) winding, crowded with tugs and barges: then lower slopes of Siebenbirge Mountains — woods, and above them vineyards and orchards." The name of the mountain range that he had jotted down was corrected, but otherwise his spontaneous observations were mostly unchanged in the novel, with only an added view on ominous skies: "Below them, the winding Rhine with its string of barges: beyond that again were vine-clad mountainous hills — the Siebengebirge, capped by thunderclouds white in the sun." (p. 349). In his notes, Hughes had scribbled down an historical coincidence: "NB: it was at the Dreesen Hotel that Hitler saw Chamberlain in 1939." It is likely that he would have made use of that observation if his continued chronicle had been brought forward to include the appeasement policy and the following Munich crisis.³

Hughes's reconstruction of the Nazi conference at the Dreesen Hotel was thus partly based on his own field research. However, he had also "respected historical truth" by relying on the opening chapter, "The Makings of a Nazi", of Walter Schellenberg's memoirs which had been published posthumously in 1956. In comparison with Schellenberg's straightforward if rather flat memoirs, the novel shows a marked empathy with its characters in this as in other episodes. Schellenberg had had ample time to sort out his memories. In his memoirs, he remembered selectively what he had witnessed long ago; the incidents had taken place almost twenty years before he recorded them. As with most memoirs from the war, there are reasons to believe that they deviate subjectively from the accurate historical truth, though the distortion in this case may not necessarily have been caused by the usual attempts at self-defence, as an exercise in belated white-washing.

Alan Bullock had read a translation of Schellenberg's manuscript in 1955 which the British publisher had sent him. He wrote an introduction for the memoirs the following year in which he stressed that this was an edited and abridged version of what had been a bulky and unwieldy manuscript. He emphasized that its readers had better be cautious of Schellenberg's idiosyncrasies; the authenticity of the memoirs should not be taken for granted: "Nor would it be wise to accept Schellenberg as a trustworthy witness where his evidence cannot be corroborated" (p. 18). At the same time, he made it clear that this was an important document: "What Schellenberg gives us is a picture of the Nazi seen . . . by one of them-

³ One of Hughes's "old index cards of research material", stacked in between "Auschwitz" and "Bavaria", concerns "Appeasement".

selves. This is the value of his book as a piece of historical evidence, for none of those who have so far published their memoirs of this period were in as good a position to know and to have seen at first hand what took place at the centre of power" (p. 10). Unlike many of his German contemporaries, Schellenberg was not really interested in writing an *apologia pro vita sua*, according to Bullock:

For the most part he limits himself to describing events of which he has first-hand knowledge, and he is comparatively free from that passion for tortuous self-justification which disfigures so many German memoirs of these years. What drove him to write was the desire to recapture, not to disown, the sensations of power and importance. It is this lack of self-consciousness, damning as a revelation of character, which makes him the more valuable as an historical witness (p. 18).

Walter Schellenberg was twenty-three years of age in 1934 when, on his father's advice, he joined Himmler's SS with its "better class of people", preferring it to Röhm's SA.⁴ The same move is made by the fictitious Ernst Krebelmann in Hughes's novel.⁵ Schellenberg was an aspiring and successful climber who rose swiftly within the ranks during his thirteen years of service. He ended his career as Head of Hitler's Foreign Intelligence Service. He was, according to Bullock, never one of the top Nazis but rather one of the "'back-room boys', the technicians of dictatorship, and he [was] the only member in that highly important group to have written his memoirs" (p. 12). As such he was anonymous but powerful. His memoirs at times make colourful reading, being the reports of a first-hand witness who moved at ease in the inner Nazi circles. The book abounds in extravagant and fantastic details: when on foreign missions, Schellenberg had, like Göring at Nuremberg, poison hidden in an artificial tooth, and also carried a cyanide capsule in a signet-ring, etc.

He became one of the close associates of Richard Heydrich's at the Main Security Office, and after Heydrich was killed in Prague in 1942, of his successor, Ernst Kaltenbrunner. After the liquidation of the Abwehr, in the wake of its leader Admiral Canaris' entanglement in the 1944 attempt on Hitler, Schellenberg's area of responsibility within intelligence grew.⁶

⁴ Biographical information from Bullock's preface to *The Schellenberg Memoirs*, pp. 9-18, and Wistrich 1982, pp. 270-271.

⁵ "The youngest among them and latest recruit was Ernst the Krebelmann boy, whose father had vetoed his joining Gruppenführer Kettner's S. A. since 'a much better class of people' joined the S. S. and his father could get him accepted" (p. 347).

⁶ Hughes's research cards also included "Admiral Canaris", stacked in between "Churchill" (with a reference to Isaiah Berlin's views on Churchill in 1940) and "Bishop of Chichester" ("[The Bishop's] contacts in Sweden in 1942 with two German pastors who

He deals extensively in his memoirs with three areas in particular: his close association with Heydrich, his activities in occupied Russia, and his missions in the Far East. He also had surreptitious plans of achieving a separate peace treaty with the Allies as early as in 1942 and tried to influence Himmler in this direction. His efforts are mentioned by Count Bernadotte, the Swedish Red Cross official in Germany towards the end of the war, and by the Baltic-German physiotherapist Felix Kersten (who treated Himmler and Hess). Schellenberg figures prominently in Hugh Trevor-Roper's *The Last Days of Hitler*, where his sudden conversion and the supposed conviction behind his underhand contacts with the Allies is questioned: "Schellenberg's motives, in thus saving life, were of course purely opportunist; for he was too 'realistic' to indulge in any humanitarian fancies."⁷

When the Third Reich collapsed, Schellenberg briefly sought refuge in Sweden. At Folke Bernadotte's suggestion, he summed up his efforts at last-minute peace negotiations in his so-called "Trosa Memorandum", written in that town west of Stockholm. Schellenberg returned to Germany in June 1945 to stand trial at Nuremberg. The proceedings were postponed until January 1948. Even if he was acquitted on most counts, he still received a six-year prison sentence. It was commuted because of his ill health, and he was released in December 1950, after having served not quite two years of his term. He settled in Switzerland but was soon expelled, and instead crossed the border to Italy, where he lived for the short remainder of his life. While there, he was approached by a German ghost writer who wanted to explore and exploit his story. It appears that he led a life full of bitterness, delusions, persecution mania and self-aggrandizement in his final years, when he was toiling with his memoirs. He had written close to a thousand pages of them before he died from a liver disease in late March 1952.

Schellenberg's widow met with Werner Best, the former Reich Commissioner of occupied Denmark, who tried to help her find a publisher for the manuscript. The offer was turned down by a Swiss firm. Only a few sensational items appeared in a mangled version in the German weekly *Quick*, though without the author's real identity revealed. When the British publisher André Deutsch had finally bought the rights, he consulted

gave news of movement culminating in 20 July plot").

⁷ Trevor-Roper 1962, p. 76.

with his colleagues at Norstedts in Stockholm where some of the Schellenberg manuscript material was kept.⁸

Schellenberg may have had old scores to settle which could have influenced his view on the affairs that he had been involved in. He was also inclined to place himself in focus, according to Bullock: "Naturally enough he presents his own part in these events in as favourable a light as possible and often with some exaggeration of his own importance" (p. 18). His book was the kind of non-official and unauthorized eye-witness account that Richard Hughes was on the look-out for. The episode that Hughes drew on and inserted as one of several preludes to the June 30, 1934 massacre appears early in Schellenberg's memoirs, as a brief description of his experiences on that particular day. The materials drawn from the original thirty lines extend over several pages in Hughes's Chapter twenty-three of "Stille Nacht". Many facts and impressions in the novel can be found already in the source: the strange and disquieting rumours, Schellenberg's standing guard outside the French windows which led from the terrace to the dining room of Hotel Dreesen, the view of the Rhine and the mountains beyond, and also some meteorological observations. Schellenberg writes:

... black clouds had been gathering over the valley and now the storm broke. As the rain poured down, I pressed myself back into the shelter of the building. Lightning forked across the sky, illuminating the scene with a weird and frightening glow (p. 23).

Richard Hughes takes some liberties with this, adding bay-trees and oleanders etc, but otherwise he does not tamper much with the basic observations in Schellenberg's memoirs. His changes affect some superficial details, but much more importantly, he increases the numbers of witnesses involved and makes use of rapid shifts between his different focalizers' differing points-of-view. The change in weather makes up the glue in his mosaic: steamy air, thunder-clouds, heat-haze, brilliant blue sky clouded over, then a flash, thunder and rain. Hughes neither analyses nor evaluates the importance of what Walter Schellenberg saw: it would have violated the restricted time-frame that the novel had set itself.

⁸ This was also, incidentally, Richard Hughes's Swedish publisher for three of his four novels (excepting *In Hazard* which was published by Allhem, a firm whose head had the appropriate naval background). At the time it was headed by Dr. Ragnar Svanström, of Hughes's generation and an eminent expert on early 20th century European history, especially Germany under the Kaiser and the Weimar Republic. He was probably one of Hughes's most knowledgeable readers as far as the German episodes went.

Schellenberg, who was posted on the terrace outside the French windows, does not mention any fellow guards. This is what he saw, according to his memoirs: "In the dining-room were assembled the highest leaders of the Nazi movement, among them I recognized Hitler, Goebbels and Goering. I could see their changes of expression and the movement of their lips, though I could not hear what they said" (p. 23). After the lines about black clouds and forks of lightning already quoted, Hitler comes into focus: "From time to time Hitler would come to the window and stand staring at the tempest with unseeing eyes." Schellenberg's picture of Hitler as seen through the window might repeat his immediate impression on this day late in June 1934, but what follows seems an afterthought, added at the time of writing and with some apologetic intention (in spite of Bullock's opinion that Schellenberg recaptured his past rather than disowned it): "[Hitler] was clearly labouring under the burden of weighty and difficult decisions." Then Schellenberg sums up the swift progression of events, involving an interpretation ("a decision had been made") that smacks of later rationalisation:

After dinner the meeting was resumed, then finally with a brusque gesture Hitler brought the discussion to an end: a decision had been made. At once the huge black Mercedes cars drove up and Hitler and his companions got in. Trucks arrived for the guards and we clambered inside, then roared after the cars into the night towards the airport at Hangelar near Bonn, where waiting aircraft took off for Munich as soon as the leaders were aboard (p. 23).

Schellenberg allowed himself some hindsight glances, for example when he added this portentous concluding remark: "The great purge of Roehm and his followers in the SA had begun."

As Richard Poole has taken pains to analyse, there are doubts about Schellenberg's veracity on one particular point, i. e. whether Göring took part in this conference or not. Did Schellenberg tell the truth when he claimed that he had seen Göring on the other side of the French windows, or did he misremember? Göring was in Berlin for the purge and had attended Karl Ernst's wedding in Essen with Hitler. Could he have had the time to squeeze in a trip to Bad Godesberg as well? Richard Hughes, after having consulted Alan Bullock on the matter, did not commit himself either way. He avoids the issue by letting the question remain unresolved; his novel is more ambiguous on this point than Schellenberg's memoirs had been. This is how Hughes kept his readers in doubt: "At Hitler's elbow was Göbbels, and... Was that or wasn't it Göring, away at the back there

with all those others? 'Göring was with him at Essen', said Hans: 'After, they said he'd gone back to Berlin...'" (p. 349). Richard Poole has pinpointed this instance in conjunction with the other uncertainties and contradictions that Hughes had stumbled on in the written records. He sums up Hughes's dexterity: "[When the two young S. S. guards] watch Hitler, Göbbels and their party board an aircraft which flies off in the direction of Munich, there is no mention of Göring. Thus does a deft novelist negotiate a somewhat thorny patch of historical ground."⁹

The novel reads differently from the memoirs, due to changes in narrative tempo and technique. Hughes has introduced more eye-witnesses but he also allows the historical Schellenberg, who had just joined the Gestapo, to appear on a fictionalized scene. Hughes drops the knowledgeable reader a subtle hint as to where this Hotel Dreesen scene emanated from. Half-hidden acknowledgements via factual persons who take part in the novel can be found also in other instances. When Albert Speer makes a brief appearance in Chapter thirty of "Stille Nacht" the reader knows where to find the documentary evidence that corroborates fiction with facts.¹⁰

An earlier version of what later became Chapter twenty-three, included among the discarded manuscripts, shows some alterations before the proofs went into print. One concerns Schellenberg's appearance. In the earlier version, his name is mentioned three times. That would perhaps have been too explicit; "this was young Walter Schellenberg" is changed into "this was that bumsucking...." (p. 350), also involving the free indirect speech of the SA-guards who are envious of Schellenberg's higher status as a member of the SS. An underlying homosexual innuendo seems discernible in the derogatory or perhaps plainly envious reference to Heydrich and Schellenberg on p. 349, where Schellenberg's name appears for the first and only time in the novel, in an episode that Hughes built on an exchange between his focalizers, in his typical fashion: "... 'Good!', said

⁹ Poole 1987, p. 81. — There are many omissions and gaps in *The Wooden Shepherdess*, most of them no doubt intentional. Hughes counted on an active reader. He would have agreed with the following observation by Wolfgang Iser: "No tale can be told in its entirety. Indeed, it is only through inevitable omissions that a story will gain its dynamism. Thus whenever the flow is interrupted and we are led off in unexpected directions, the opportunity is given us to bring into play our own faculty for establishing connections — for filling in gaps left by the text itself" (Wolfgang Iser, "The Reading Process: a phenomenological approach", in *New Literary History*, 3 (1971), p. 285 (quoted by Rimmon-Kenan, p. 127).

¹⁰ Page 374 of *The Wooden Shepherdess* is in part based on page 91 of Speer's *Inside the Third Reich* (1970).

Hans, 'We'll be able to see who comes.' 'Nobody so far', said Ernst, glancing sideways but keeping his face to the front in case they were watched: for the next pair of sentries included a swart young fellow — Schellenberg — known to be Heydrich's pet..." (pp. 348-349). A further "Schellenberg" in the manuscript is replaced by "the new arrival" (p. 350).

In his memoir, Schellenberg restricted the reporting to himself, whether in order to make it carry more weight or just because he was the only witness that was posted outside the French windows (which seems unlikely). In any case, he has nothing to say of any colleagues standing guard. When he reconstructed this scene, Hughes inserted Ernst and Hans, two young eye-witnesses, and also some other people seen by them, like Schellenberg, Brückner and Friedrich, Hans's half-brother. In Hughes's discarded manuscript, a Sigismund appears alongside Hans. He has been replaced by Ernst Kriebelmann in the novel. Ernst with his middle to working-class background represents Nazi adherents from lower social strata. Some critics had taken Hughes to task for touching too lightly on this section of the German population when he described the formation and expansion of the Nazi party in *The Fox in the Attic*. The inclusion of young Ernst Kriebelmann from fictitious Kammstadt was perhaps partly made in answer to this.¹¹ The brewing conflict between the SA and the SS, soon to end in the annihilation of the SA leaders, is hinted at when Hughes in the manuscript describes Schellenberg as an "unwelcome" newcomer. In the final version this has been transformed into the more sinister and ominous "the dangerous newcomer" (p. 350).

Hughes often went to painstaking lengths in trying to verify the historical correctness of his sources and his text. On one very minor point, however, he did not take the advice of an acquaintance who had lived in Germany in the early thirties and whom he had sent his manuscript for perusal and comments. In the Dreesen scene, Hans, evidently a keen cinema-goer, finds a ready simile for what he and other sentries on duty can see but not hear. In the manuscript, Hans describes his experiences of watching what is going on behind the dining-room windows as "It's like at a movie". The printed version added an explanatory "an old silent

¹¹ The Kammstadt scenes in Chapters 13 and 15 of "Stille Nacht" serve to show the gradual Nazi take-over of a small town, seen in a sociological perspective similar to the one adopted in a well-known American study of that subject, William Sheridan Allen's *The Nazi Seizure of Power. The Experience of a Single Town, 1930-1935* (1965). Lehrer Faber in the Kammstadt chapters, with his Nazi insignia safely hidden under his lapel, incarnates the early secret Nazi grip on members of the middle classes during the last years of the Weimar Republic.

movie." Schellenberg/the new arrival replies: "Only there aren't any subtitles telling us what's going on" (p. 350). Hughes' informant had assured him that all foreign films were dubbed in Germany (silent films had been subtitled, of course, but they had gone out of fashion some six years before: thus Hughes had to include "silent" and make the newcomer remember outdated films). Hughes retained the heavy emphasis on the episode's character of a dumb-show. Besides, since his British readers were used to subtitled foreign films, not dubbed ones, the simile was immediately understood as intended.

The Schellenberg portrait of Hitler is distanced, at this point in his memoirs almost a cardboard figure. The interesting observation of his "unseeing eyes" does not lead anywhere. It is only followed by the surmise that Hitler was troubled by weighty and difficult decisions. The pomposity of the speculation jars. In Hughes's Chapter twenty-three of "Stille Nacht" (the incident is rounded off in the first paragraph of the next chapter) all this reads differently. The scene borrowed from Schellenberg culminates in a chilling image. Hughes turns the weather mentioned in the memoirs to his own dramatic use. As long as the sun is shining, the plate-glass windows are huge mirrors reflecting what happens outside the hotel, but when it is blocked by clouds, the guards are suddenly able to follow what is going on behind the windows. The shock effect via focalizer to reader is considerable. When the Führer unexpectedly comes into full view, he hits the reader off-guard as much as he hits the fictional sentries in the text. By throwing this apparition without warning at his unprepared reader, Hughes adds a ghoulish shade to this portrait of Hitler who becomes a fleeting phantom without solidity. When the brief Dreesen passage has reached the end of Chapter twenty-three, it works simultaneously as a description and an interpretation. The scene adds new dimensions and complications to Hughes's psychological portrait of the Führer. The image of him grows into an idea, or in Hughes's own terminology (originally applied to his poetry) an eidolon.¹²

In his manuscript, Hughes had originally written that Hitler's gaze was "the gaze of a man bewitched", but he changed it into "the gaze of a man

¹² "To that characteristic product of intellectual imagination, of the felicitous marriage of thing and notion, Hughes gives the name eidolon or . . . 'Idea-image'", according to Richard Poole. It is a concept that Hughes applied both to poetry and prose: he developed (in Poole's opinion) the extended eidolon "into one of the most powerful weapons in his fiction-making armoury" (Poole 1987, p. 122). Poole regards Wolff's and Hitler's dreams as Hughesian eidola (p. 200) and calls Augustine's hallucinatory experiences by the frozen Danube "a kind of epiphany" or eidolon (p. 211).

half-conscious" in his final version. The unexpected appearance of Hitler is already an image half dissolved. Paradoxically, the more historical details Hughes found, the more complicated his task of reconstruction must have been. At a point in time when few historical accounts of this man exist, Hughes was free to construe his own interpretations. He did so liberally, as in Hitler's delirious dreams after the Putsch, though they are based on a few existing sources. Later, the historical sources become more plentiful as Hitler's political career began to be documented in detail, not just day by day but minute by minute. If he wanted to adhere to ascertainable historical facts, the novelist could as a result grant himself less leeway for his fictional conjectures.

The French historian Max Gallo made use of the Bad Godesberg incidents as his starting point in *The Night of the Long Knives* of 1972. But he drew on a different source from Hughes, Walter Breitmann, one of the waiters who had witnessed what was happening at the hotel. It is difficult to know if and to what degree Gallo's account is fictionalized. Richard Hughes was interested in the book, but it took long to reach him in Wales. However, it is likely that Hughes profited from reading Gallo even at this late stage. Gallo's preface could probably have served him well. Both authors observed the June 30 murders in a Shakespearean light, though in Max Gallo's case it was by way of Bertolt Brecht, as seen in the following passage:

What follows is an historical narrative. I have tried to recreate events not only in terms of general clauses and political mechanisms, but also by evoking the attitudes, thoughts and faces of the various actors and by describing the skies and landscapes which set the scene of those tragic days. I have chosen this approach to extend the rigorous and somewhat abstract limits of analysis, and, above all, to recreate a climate, a regime and a time which, as Brecht observed, irresistibly suggest Shakespearean tragedy (p. ix).

*

When the manuscript of *The Fox in the Attic* was almost finished, a young acquaintance of Hughes's (maybe someone in his own family) asked if he could have a look at parts of it. Hughes was interested in the response of a younger generation than his own, but the adolescent reaction turned out to be quite different from what he had expected. He elaborated on the point, not without a trace of pessimism, in a letter to his publisher at Chatto & Windus, though without revealing the name of his guinea-pig reader:

Pure fiction certainly hasn't got the same prestige or even attractiveness for the general public it had twenty-five years ago. For example, a very ordinary young man who asked to read this said afterwards it was 'the Hitler part' which interested him: he said he enjoyed the rest 'but it was only fiction of course' — as if it was axiomatic that fiction wasn't as interesting as fact.¹³

Twelve years later, when *The Wooden Shepherdess* was about to be published, Hughes defended his juggling of fact and fiction in a letter to the same addressee at Chatto & Windus: "I have rather plugged the 'historical' aspect in the hope of winning back some of today's fugitives from fiction, while trying at the same time to stress the 'action' aspect as you asked for."¹⁴ But the publisher was far from satisfied, though on grounds different from the objections once raised by Hughes's young reader:

As it stands, Book 3 struck me (and all other readers here) as far too minutely and continuously concerned with the grim and all too well known story of Hitler's rise to power. It's as if, having written a novel on a very broad scale about characters in various disparate settings — England, America, Germany, Morocco etc. — you suddenly in Book 3 start writing in 'close-up' and in a kind of obsessed, mesmeric, rather than objective way. This, I think, is a pity, because (a) it alters the focus of the novel drastically, and (b) interrupts the main Augustine narrative far too long.¹⁵

Not only did Hughes have to face his own difficulties when he tried to balance fact and fiction in his narrative. He also had to take into consideration readers and publishers who were hard to please. His avowed adherence to historical facts sometimes caused unexpected hurdles. His American publisher Cass Canfield made a seemingly trivial but in real fact astute observation when he read the nearly finished manuscript of *The Wooden Shepherdess* quite literally:

One of Hitler's adjutants, Halsbach, writes dangerous words in his journal, tears it into bits which he throws down the w. c. & flushes it. How, then, could this bit have been preserved? Perhaps I am taking what appears to be a factual account of the Hitler story too literally but I suggest, nevertheless, that this episode is confusing for the reader whom you have convinced of having written a true account.¹⁶

Possibly because of Canfield's objection to that particular scene in the manuscript, Hughes discarded it. Halsbach, who does not appear in any major work on Nazism, may have been Hughes's own invention. Even if

¹³ RH to Ian Parsons, September 30, 1960.

¹⁴ RH to Ian Parsons, July 16, 1972.

¹⁵ Ian Parsons to RH, March 17, 1973.

¹⁶ Cass Canfield to RH, January 30, 1972.

he was not, quoting from a diary that has been flushed down the toilet would have defeated the narrative logic of a novel that purports to be based on documented history, at least in part — the page was scrapped.

The American novelist Storm Jameson, a friend of Hughes's of long standing, also complained of the dominance of fact over fiction, stating in a letter to Hughes's American publisher that "this second volume is not the integrated historical whole it ought to be . . . the bulk of the historical part reads like potted popular history (brilliantly done)."¹⁷ With the passage of time, however, this does not seem to be a particularly relevant kind of criticism. Hughes intended Augustine to be an observer rather than a participant, inactive rather than active, at least in the first two volumes of his series. Augustine withdrew more and more from the action. In the process, the novel became more documentary and less fictional, with its focus on historical events. What the reader tends to remember of the Bad Godesberg episode is not the witness but what was witnessed, not Schellenberg but the fleeting ghoulis face of Hitler suddenly appearing in a window, "vague, shifty, glassy, settling nowhere and seeing nothing" (p. 351).

¹⁷ Storm Jameson to Cass Canfield, April 14, 1973.

Chapter XIII
Kurt G. W. Ludecke

"Concerning the time when the public, both inside Germany and outside, were informed of the events of June 30th" is the headline of five foolscap pages in Richard Hughes's research file. They refer to authorities such as Bullock, Shirer and Wheeler-Bennett, and to contemporary writers like Otto Strasser, Goebbels and Kurt G. W. Ludecke.¹ One of the subheadings on the pages, "The time the news reached America", refers to one source only, i. e. the chapter "A Murderer's Welcome" in Hanfstaengl's *Hitler: The Missing Years*.

The Nazi foreign press officer had sailed for the United States in June 1934 in order to celebrate a Harvard anniversary; he was class of '09. A brief passage in *The Wooden Shepherdess* assumes that he survived the Putsch just because he happened to be absent: "Putzi was hitting it up with his old college chums at Harvard while all this was going on. So Putzi survived" (p. 370). In Boston, Hanfstaengl writes, he explained the National-Socialist ideology to an acquaintance, a former Harvard president, and then on June 30 he attended a socialite wedding in Newport, Rhode Island. He was sitting in the church pew when "a rather scruffy fellow tapped me on the elbow. He had crept up the church on all fours." The fellow, a journalist, or in Hanfstaengl's eyes a rather seedy muck-raker, asked Hanfstaengl to comment on some news that he handed over, in a crumpled AP despatch reporting on the Purge. Transatlantic news travelled fast even in those days; it was only the same morning that Röhm had been executed in the Stadelheim prison. Hanfstaengl had met Röhm the night before he departed for America but was non-committal in his comments. I "almost felt my knees give away," he noted, looking back on the incident, but the account in his memoirs does not indicate that he was much affected at the time. There is no expression of either anger or loss when he got to know that Röhm had been killed.

Another official Nazi representative happened to be close to Newport on the same day. The next morning, he went out to buy a newspaper in

¹ Shirer did not witness any of the action, as is apparent from his diary entry for June 30, 1934, jotted down in Paris: "Berlin was cut off for several hours today, but late this afternoon telephone communication was re-established. And what a story! Hitler and Göring have purged the S.A., shooting many of its leaders. Röhm, arrested by Hitler himself, was allowed to commit suicide in a Munich jail, according to one agency report. The French are pleased. They think this is the beginning of the end of the Nazis. Wish I could get a post in Berlin. It's a story I'd like to cover." (William L. Shirer, *Berlin Diary*, p. 11).

New York, and he was taken by surprise when he read the same news that Hanfstaengl had learned about in a more personal way the night before. Three years later this member of the Nazi party wrote about the moment when the news of Röhm's death hit him, in an account which, contrary to Hanfstaengl's, showed an acute sense of both anger and loss:

The roar, the smell and grime of New York assailed me on that first of July like the menace of some huge monster. I drove straight to the Shelton, parked the car, took a room, then came out and walked to the drugstore across the street, with a copy of the New York Times under my arm. Settling my tired limbs on a stool at the counter, I opened the paper and saw this: "HITLER CRUSHES REVOLT BY NAZI RADICALS. Von Schleicher is slain, Roehm a suicide, Storm Troops Chief dies as Hitler and Goering Strike." I looked through tears and [sic!] the staring eyes of the soda-fountain clerk into the bleakness of this rotten world.²

This passage appeared in *I Knew Hitler* by Kurt G. W. Ludecke, whose name can be found in Hughes's archive but not in his acknowledgements. Hughes relied on Ludecke's book for details in his chapters both on the Putsch and on the Purge. In his research file, he noted down some key-words summing up Ludecke's portrait of Hitler: "inevitable dog-whip, raincoat, Hitler's food fads, sweet tooth, Hitler and suicide after Beer Hall Putsch, attachment to niece Geli Raubal (who committed suicide), suicide threats."

Ludecke's lengthy chronicle of the tumultuous history of the early Nazi movement was published in England in 1937 and in USA the next year. Its subtitle emphasized its topicality: "The Story of a Nazi Who Escaped the Blood Purge." Ludecke was eager to stress that his book was impartial and objective. His readers soon found out that the statement was only a subterfuge: these were the subjective memoirs of a man much disenchanted with the Nazis, and most particularly with Hitler. The dedication gives its anti-Hitler tendency away: "In memory of Captain Ernst Roehm and Gregor Strasser and many other Nazis who were betrayed, murdered, and traduced in their graves."

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Kurt G. W. Ludecke sympathised with the Nazi Party already in its early days.³ He was born in 1890 in Berlin, and thus only a year younger than

² Ludecke, p. 758.

³ Entries on Ludecke are missing from the major standard reference works on Nazism; the information in the following is taken from the opening four chapters of his *I Knew Hitler*, plus his chapter twelve: "Anti-Semitism: Model T".

Adolf Hitler. He grew up in Oranienburg, some thirty kilometres north of the capital, later the site of one of the numerous Nazi concentration camps. His favoured author in these years was Karl May, the prolific producer of German Westerns who also happened to be Hitler's favourite. Ludecke was transferred to a secondary school in Braunschweig, after the director of the Joachimsthalsche Gymnasium in Berlin had found him, in Ludecke's own words, "too intractable, too rebellious against authority, too emotional and full of life" (p. 18).

He also made friends with a Prussian baronial family, a contact which was to serve him well later on when he was in trouble with his military superiors. After his father's death, he worked for a short while as an apprentice at a Hamburg merchant house, and later acquainted himself with trade in London and Manchester, gaining insights into the differing English and German national characteristics. His pre-First-World-War view of his own countrymen was negative and self-deprecating, with the exception of the Junker ideal which he admired. The following could almost have been uttered by Hughes's hero Augustine Penry-Herbert, *mutatis mutandis*:

England, resting the might of its empire on a base of easy liberality, was a revelation to me. The English gentleman seemed rounder in knowledge, character, and outlook than his German equivalent. We had evolved a national character of our own, but it was a stiff affair. Beside one of England's world-citizens, the German was a 'school-master' wherever he went — a man of irrevocable ideas, respected but not greatly liked. I felt that we had produced only one high type that could stand comparison — the German officer. In the war, he was to prove that he was a gentleman — of steel (p. 19).

While still in his early twenties, Ludecke seems to have lived an eventful and changeable life, if his second chapter, characteristically called "Weltbummler" [a world rover], can be trusted. He went to Paris and the Riviera, enjoyed consistently good luck at the gambling-tables, and used his winnings to pay for wide-ranging travels. "There was no passport nuisance in those days", he remembers, somewhat nostalgically. He also became an accomplished chess-player. In the autumn of 1914, after the outbreak of the war, he was posted to a regiment in Lahr in Baden, and he describes how he was harassed by his commanding officer, a typical Himmelstoss type.⁴ In actual fact, Ludecke did not experience life in the trenches. He ended up as a clerk in a mental hospital, and hints that his war record was nothing

⁴ The corporal in Erich Maria Remarque's 1929 novel *Im Westen Nichts Neues*.

to be proud of. He was discharged by 1916, and became a merchant broker between Germany and neutral countries like Denmark. His plans of registering the German merchant fleet under a Mexican flag before the Treaty of Versailles was signed came to nothing, as did his ambition to make money after the war by trading German airplanes to Mexico. He also had a profitable sojourn in Estonian Reval (i. e. Tallinn), mingling with profiteers and once more making money which he was circumspect enough to exchange into dollars and deposit in Amsterdam and Zurich.

During his adventures in South America in 1919 and 1920, he met decimated German noble families whose decline in exile he did not approve of. He talks disapprovingly of their miscegenation, implying *Rassenschande*. His book displays ample examples of his firmly held racial beliefs. He does not conceal his admiration for the Aryan and Nordic ideals: "Examination shows that the Aryan, Caucasian, or Nordic strain, whichever term one prefers, has been primarily responsible for the culture of the Occident" (p. 29). And he continues:

This beginning of reasoning, of biological thinking, however vague at that time, aroused in me not only a latent Teutonic spirit, but a certain attachment to the people — the 'voelkische' or folkic spirit. The inner spectacle of Germany at war helped me to comprehend the Volksseele — the folk-soul. The devotion and courage, the resignation and defenselessness that I saw appealed to my own soul (p. 30).

Nor does he hide his opinionated and ingrained anti-semitism. The Jews of the Weimar Republic are his scapegoats in the following attack, with its slur on international solidarity, and its implied criticism of socialism and communism:

The collapse of German life and the uncertainties of the new order were giving them their opportunity. The Jews who largely animated the republican regime threw open the doors to their compatriots in Galicia and Poland, and Germany had uncared thousands of strangers thrust upon her, alien in language, outlook, and spirit, the political gypsies of the world, giving real allegiance to no nation (p. 33).

Ludecke includes a brief summing-up of the racial theories propagated by Karl Lueger ("a man of genius and later Vienna's great mayor"), by Arthur de Gobineau and by Houston Stewart Chamberlain, i. e. largely the same racial theoreticians that influenced Hitler at about the same time.

By chance, Ludecke happened to be present at one of Hitler's early orations, in Munich on August 11, 1922. He was an immediate convert, to the

point that he also eagerly attended Hitler's second performance on the same day. He quickly joined the fledgling party. He recapitulates, not uncritically, its early history, as well as that of its leader (once Anton Drexler had stepped down), in phrases that remind the reader of Kubizek's memoirs, which were still to be written when Ludecke published his book, and Konrad Heiden's monograph on Hitler, which Ludecke in one of his footnotes refers to as a "brilliant work" (p. 44).

He was soon assigned different tasks by the movement. Some of them, especially the ones involving international contacts, quite often seem to have been suggested by himself. He set up a meeting with Mussolini in Rome some months before the Blackshirt' march on Rome, using a greeting from Ludendorff as a pretext. Like Ernst Hanfstaengl's later meeting with Il Duce, it does not seem to have resulted in much concrete gain for the Nazis, though.

In 1924, Ludecke accompanied Siegfried and Winifred Wagner on their American fund-raising tour for the Bayreuth opera, and on this occasion, he tried to take advantage of the prevalent anti-semitic sentiments in the United States. Thanks to the Wagners, he met with Henry Ford in Detroit, having high hopes that the automobile tycoon would support the struggling Nazi movement. Nothing came of this except for an entertaining chapter in the memoirs: "The more I mentioned [money], the more Henry Ford cooled down from idealist to business man" (p. 200). He was equally unsuccessful among the German-Americans and among members of the Ku Klux Klan. But this early contact with the United States turned him into an ardent lover of America.

Not many historians have made use of the information contained in Ludecke's memoirs. The exceptions are John Toland, in whose index Ludecke is referred to eight times, and Alan Bullock, who mentions him five times. This scarcity of references may indicate a certain professional circumspection as regards Ludecke's reliability as a witness. In several passages, he is quite clearly opinionated and subjective. He had many axes to grind when he wrote this eight hundred-page tome, the preface of which is dated September 1937, in a location far distanced from the German turmoil described in it: "Sea Spray Inn on the Dunes, East Hampton, Long Island". A dozen years earlier, F. Scott Fitzgerald had made fictional use of more or less the same surroundings, as Jay Gatsby's West Egg. A good thirty-five years later, Richard Hughes landed his hero in this vicinity, after Augustine had disembarked the liquor-smuggling schooner from St. Malo that

was bound for Rum Row: "... Alice May had stayed just as clear as she could of all comers while nosing along the low-lying Long Island coast to her final berth off Montauk" (WS, pp. 28-29).⁵

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Hitler had thanked Ludecke for his work on behalf of the party while he had been in Italy and asked him to do the NSDAP the same service in the United States. He wanted Ludecke to canvas for money in support of the German liberation movement ("für die Interessen der deutschen Freiheitsbewegung in Nordamerika zu werben und besonders finanzielle Mittel hierfür zu sammeln")⁶, a mission which failed, as seen above. In September 1932 Ludecke was authorised to represent the Nazi interests in the United States, Canada and Mexico. His letter of credentials ("Legitimation") for Italy was signed by Hitler, the one for USA by the chief party ideologist, the Baltic-German Alfred Rosenberg.

Ludecke opens the tenth chapter of his book, "The Beer Hall Putsch", by mentioning that Hitler had got bad press after the days in early November 1923: "A hostile world press gave the story a great play. Hitler's heroic attempt to keep Germany intact in the crucial hour was ridiculed as the clownish act of a house-painter with a Charlie Chaplin moustache" (p. 161).⁷ On the same page, Ludecke suggested two diverging interpretations of the Putsch by asking himself and his readers a rhetorical question: "Did History wear the mask of Tragedy or Comedy on that night of November 8, 1923?" His opinion of Hitler, neutral or even positive to start with,

⁵ In this instance, Hughes relied on his own experiences, as seen in his article "Rum runners I have known", printed in *Daily Chronicle and Liverpool Mercury*, December 13, 1929. The manuscript of the article, with a slightly different title ("Portrait of a Rum-runner") is kept in the Lilly Library. By a strange coincidence, the name of a yacht mentioned in that text, and the name of the inn where Ludecke wrote his book, are identical. The short story tells of a mechanic taking care of a leak in a propeller-shaft casing. He entertains the boat-owners with his adventures as a rum-runner and does not want to charge them for the last hour, when he has done more talking than repairing: "But I'll have to charge it up to someone, I guess! We went on deck. Through a sudden rift in the fog we caught sight of a large and opulent-looking motor yacht that had just come to anchor. 'There's Colonel Morton's *Sea-spray* in,' said our friend: 'he's a rich man, I'll charge it up to him.'"

⁶ Hitler, *Reden*, p. 1059.

⁷ Contemporary anti-Nazi writers were often equally ironic and derisive in their comments on Hitler: "The man does not really exist — he is only the noise he makes" (Kurt Tucholsky, as quoted by Haffner 1979, p. 25). Some — especially conservative — authors even refrained from mentioning his odious name, "nomina sunt odiosa" (see Scholdt, p. 197). In hindsight, neither method of resistance proved very successful: "There has always been a great temptation to underestimate Hitler because of the shabby and ridiculous sides of his personality ... One should try to resist it" (Haffner 1979, p. 40). Viz. Alvin Rosenfeld, *Imagining Hitler* (1985), esp. chapter V, "Domesticating Hitler". See also the footnote on Chaplin and Hitler, in the Elizabeth Wiskemann chapter (see above, p. 241).

rapidly grew increasingly negative. He sided with the losers although he did not know it until the power struggle had culminated in the summer of 1934.

Like so many of his contemporary commentators of the events of November 8 and 9, 1923, Ludecke assured his readers that his account could be trusted. He had not been present in the Bürgerbräu cellar, he wrote, but he maintained that his chronicle was reliable all the same. He had been suspicious of the written records, but he had had recourse to reports by several eye-witnesses: "Rejecting the published accounts, I made my own careful and thorough investigation of the facts. My knowledge is based on first-hand information gained from detailed conversations with the immediate and chief actors of the drama" (p. 161). Among these witnesses were Hermann Göring, Ernst Hanfstaengl and Hermann Esser, and later Ludecke had discussed the events with several other persons, among them Rosenberg, Röhm and Hitler himself. It had taken him months to assemble the story, he wrote. He would have been prepared to agree with Hughes's Note which is prefaced to the first novel and appended to the second, that "The historical characters and events are as accurately historical as I can make them." He would have had more difficulties with what follows: "I may have made mistakes but in no case have I deliberately falsified the record once I could worry it out." Ludecke's view of the things that had just passed is deliberately biased, if not falsified.

Ludecke's was a dramatic and dramatized account where the opponents were set in stark contrast to each other. He did not suppress the fact that he had been positively inclined towards the emerging Nazi movement at a time when both he and it were young: "On Hitler's side were glowing patriotism, enthusiasm, faith, and the courage to act — Young Germany; on the other side, cold sobriety, self-interest, slipperiness and hypocrisy — the desperate attempts of a dying generation to stay in power" (p. 162). His partiality makes it easy to see in which camp he placed himself, filled with youthful idealism.

Then Ludecke turned his attention to Gustav von Kahr. It is unlikely that Ludecke's British and American readers would have known of von Kahr's background, nor would they have been able to place him correctly on the political scene. It did not take long after November 1923 for these German incidents to sink into oblivion, at home and abroad, as yet another example of the many unsuccessful attempts to disrupt the Weimar Republic. Many local Bavarian uprisings had been tried in the previous

years, among them by Wolfgang Kapp and General Lüttwitz on the right and by Kurt Eisner and Ernst Toller on the left. Among conservatives the aborted revolt in Munich in early November 1923 became known as the Ludendorff or the November Rising rather than the Hitler Putsch, and Adolf Hitler was soon half forgotten. The American consul in Munich at the time, Robert Murphy, informed the State Department in a missive to Washington in March 1924 that "one can predict that Hitler who is no German citizen will be extradited when he has served his term."⁸ When *The Times* mentioned his name four years later, he was called Max Hitler.⁹ Hughes is thus historically correct when, in Chapter nineteen of "The White Crow", people who have just heard about the Putsch have difficulties in remembering Hitler's first name.

Dr. Reinhold's listeners in the novel's next chapter would have been familiar with the volley of names of Bavarian politicians, except for the odd Austrian, but it bewilders Augustine. Just arrived in southern Germany, he cannot possibly have known that von Kahr had become Prime Minister of Bavaria three years earlier and that he had recently been nominated General State Commissioner. While von Kahr advocated that Bavaria liberate herself by secession from Prussia, he held firm monarchist views and would have welcomed a reinstatement of the royal house of the Wittelsbachs. Von Kahr was not the only politician to entertain such separatist aspirations, and he was not unique in plotting against the Republic and its democratically elected government. He is not the only one in the novel either: the same sentiments fill Wolff, who has been involved in the killing of Walther Rathenau, the AEG industrialist and Weimar Minister for Foreign Affairs, in the previous year. The political instability in the country had increased when the passive resistance to the Ruhr occupation was called off in 1923 by Rathenau's successor Gustav Stresemann, who was at that time both Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs. Stresemann's edict united conservative and right-wing extremists of different shades in opposition against him, among others Hitler and his colleague Ernst Röhm who commanded paramilitary groups. In this feverish political climate, von Kahr placed his bet on more than one horse.

Hughes's novel does not explain why von Kahr had called a meeting in the Munich Bürgerbräukeller on the night of November 8, 1923. It is one of many puzzling events in that enigmatic year. What role von Kahr

⁸ ["Es ist damit zu rechnen, daß Hitler, der kein deutscher Staatsangehöriger ist, nach Verbüßung seiner Strafe des Landes verwiesen wird"] (Deuerlein 1982, p. 202).

⁹ De Jong (1978), p. 119.

wanted to play in the Beer Hall was not quite clear to those present either, according to Ludecke and his contemporary witnesses. It remained obscure for many later commentators, too, who did not believe that he had done it just for the benefit of Hitler and his group. Whichever von Kahr's reasons, his actions made him enemies at both extremes of the political spectrum. Nazis and communists alike hated him, as made clear by Joseph Dornberg in *The Putsch That Failed*: "Hitler had long been trying to enlist [von Kahr's] aid in staging a coup d'état, and the extent to which von Kahr equivocated after the events at the beerhall on November 8 has never been fully resolved. His repudiation of the putsch during the night made him 'the most hated man in Bavaria.'"¹⁰

Richard Hughes also hinted at these ill-feelings. Predominantly a novelist, not a historian, he illuminated rather than explained or analysed events. His method of reconstruction was kaleidoscopic; his aim was not encyclopedic, but neither was Kurt Ludecke's. Ludecke had not been overly impressed by von Kahr, the State Commissioner. In his account, von Kahr appeared nervous and ill-at-ease when he delivered his speech. Ludecke's description of "this swarthy, little man, square head stooped between awkward shoulders" (p. 162) had bordered on a caricature. In the novel, this is reflected in Dr. Reinhold's cephalographic classification of von Kahr: "That tiny square head of his — for anthropometrically he's a veritable text-book Alpine, that old boy . . ." (p. 191). On the next page the same satirical point is once more driven home but Dr. Reinhold now refers to Hitler: "'Incidentally you're *another* Alpine, dear boy' . . .". Dr. Reinhold's direct speech is entertaining for his contemporary audience, but possibly less so for readers who know of the later Nazi abuse of eugenics. Hughes and subsequently his readers had the hindsight, and the novel's ironical joke tends to turn sardonic.

In Hughes's novel von Kahr "droned on and on" (p. 191), in a compressed version of Ernst Hanfstaengl's "Kahr was on his feet, droning away at some incomprehensible and boring speech."¹¹ Ludecke, who had not been present, whereas Hanfstaengl had, wrote that von Kahr's decisive pronouncement, although everyone eagerly expected it, never came. The person whose eye-witness report Ludecke based his account on had his or her attention caught by someone else than von Kahr at this point:

¹⁰ Dornberg, p. 349.

¹¹ Hanfstaengl (1957), p. 96.

Hitler was standing with Rosenberg near the entrance, looking not at Kahr, but at a watch in his hand. With unbearable precision, the minute-hand advanced: 8:27-8:28-8:29-*Eight-thirty!* The door was flung open; steel-helmeted men burst through . . . Hitler snapped the watch back into his pocket, seized his revolver, and elbowed his way forward through the crowd behind his heavily armed body-guard. The hall was thrown into the wildest commotion. Only a few of the audience realized the significance of this extraordinary disturbance. Within a few seconds no one could be heard above the uproar (p. 163).

Richard Hughes transformed this passage when he placed it in a new context. It is the fictitious Dr. Reinhold who relates the events shortly after they have happened. He and his audience are sceptical of the Nazi demagogues. When Dr. Reinhold reports what he has seen and heard in the brewery cellar, he adds an ironic touch for the benefit of his listeners. The countdown starts twelve minutes earlier in the novel than in its source, and the striking of the half-hour is deferred in a slow-motion build-up towards the climax, in a deceleration of the action: "*Eight-fifteen — eight-twenty — on and on — eight-twenty-five — still endlessly saying nothing — eight-twenty-eight, twenty-nine*" (pp. 191-192). Kahr comes into focus at the exact moment when the shots are heard: "and then — you should have seen Kahr's look of outrage at the interruption — that inexplicable *Phut! Phut!*" (p. 192). Dr. Reinhold makes a pause, inviting a question, and only then is the reader told how the events unfold, in a rapid summary of sounds and sights:

Silence, at first — a moment of utter silence! But the watch in Hitler's hand was fully as significant as his pistol. On the very stroke of eight-thirty — at the very moment he first pulled the trigger — the door burst open and in tumbled young Hermann Goering with a machine-gun squad! . . . And then Pandemonium broke loose! Shrieks and shouts . . . (p. 192).

The same gradual, almost cinematographic count-down of events is used some pages further on, in Chapter twenty-five of "*The White Crow*", when the marchers face opposition. The distance between rebels and Reichswehr soldiers gradually decreases down to the final moment of impact: "Thirty yards more . . . Twenty yards more . . . Fifteen yards... Ten...", and then there is an abrupt change in perspectives, from the outside view to Hitler's anguished thoughts (in an interpretative interpolation): "*My God I'll give up politics! Never again...*" (p. 220).

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Hitler quickly turned the meeting in the Bürgerbräukeller into a manifestation of his own extreme political ambitions. Some of Ludecke's observations are merged in Hughes's novel. When Hitler has jumped up on a table and fired his two shots an absolute stillness followed, according to Ludecke who added, although he was not there to hear it, that "one could even hear Hitler breathing hard" (p. 163). Some lines further on, he describes how von Kahr was no longer the master of the situation that he had created. Hitler had trapped the trio of von Kahr, Seisser and Lossow: "Hitler, now almost beside himself with excitement, drew his gun, saying that he had four bullets left: three for them and one for himself — if they refused to support him" (p. 164). Hughes took this cue but transformed it, in Dr. Reinhold's ironic and slanted report: "Now in a moment it was so quiet again you could hear Hitler panting — like a dog circling a bitch! He was profoundly excited" (p. 192). Sexual similes were not included in the source, but in this respect Hughes's witness Dr. Reinhold is even more explicit in what follows: "Indeed whenever he faces a crowd it seems to arouse him to a veritable orgasm — he doesn't woo a crowd, he rapes it" (p. 192).

Dr. Reinhold entertains his listeners with satirical verve when he repeats what he has heard Hitler say. His "voice rasped harsher and harsher" (*Fox*, p. 192), he says, in an uncanny imitation. Hughes's readers had to wait another dozen years for the full impression of Hitler as a screeching raucous "Meistersinger". This happens in the scene where Hitler entertains the Hanfstaengls with his evocation of the sound of battle in the trenches: "this mimicking voice of the plump little man in a blue serge suit who never forgot a sound . . ." (*WS*, pp. 170-171).

Dr. Reinhold gives a digest of what Hitler had cried in the beer cellar, with Ludendorff as his parrot. His listeners in 1923 may have remembered Mussolini's successful Fascist march on Rome in the previous year¹² when they hear Hitler crying "On to Berlin! The national revolution has begun — I announce it! The Hakenkreuz is marching! The Army is marching! The Police are marching! *Everybody* is marching!" (p. 192). Partly, this can be found in the transcript of Hitler's speech (which Hughes may not have had access to), partly in Ludecke's summary, from which some significant

¹² Hughes himself remembered it when he wrote his first novel in 1929, with a violently anachronistic comparison (the time is the early decades of the 1800s): "... one can no more think like a baby, in the smallest respect, than one can think like a bee. How then can one begin to describe the inside of Laura, where the child-mind lived in the midst of the familiar relics of the baby-mind, like a Fascist in Rome?" (*The Innocent Voyage*, p. 126).

details were borrowed: the Hakenkreuz, the Hoch!, the reiterations. This is Ludecke's account:

The National Revolution has begun. Six hundred armed men are covering the hall! . . . No one may leave. The barracks of the Reichswehr and the police are occupied; the Reichswehr and the police have joined the Hakenkreuz flag. The Bavarian government is deposed. The Reich government is deposed. The new Reich government — Hitler-Ludendorff-Pohner — Hoch! (p. 163).

In a parenthesis, Ludecke adjusted the number of armed men in the hall to a slightly more realistic figure, in an effort to establish his credibility: ("in reality there were only sixty"). When he had quoted what Hitler had said, he added a sceptical but impressed comment: "It was not true, but it worked". Hughes in turn made Dr. Reinhold add a satirical "God Almighty is deposed" and a sacrilegious "hail to the new Holy Trinity" (p. 193). As was the case with von Kahr's and Hitler's Alpine skulls, hyperboles like these would have seemed harmless to Dr. Reinhold's Munich circle. Their effect on Hughes's readers might be more sombre, in their foreshadowing of things to come. Even if God Almighty was not deposed by this failed Putsch, the Nazis would soon try to replace him by the official idolatry of heathen gods, one of them Der Führer.¹³

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Some pages later in his account, Ludecke describes what had happened between the Beer Hall meeting and the next day's march towards the Feldherrnhalle on the Odeonsplatz. On the morning of November 9, the state police still sided with Hitler and Ludendorff; local papers contained reports about a successful *coup d'état*; the offices of a Marxist paper had been demolished, and the leaders of left wing parties had been arrested. Everything seemed to go ahead as planned for the ultraconservatives. Few people outside the inner circle knew that things were rapidly going downhill for the rebels, wrote Ludecke, who then revealed a secret that was to play a significant role in Hughes's novel: "Even Hitler and two thousand SA men who had received rifles from a secret depot were unaware that the firing-pins, ordinarily removed to prevent misuse of the weapons, had not been replaced; in an encounter they would have been completely useless" (p. 169). This information is revealed only very gradually in the novel (see

¹³ That process had gained momentum by 1934. In the next novel, Ludo suggests that Germans are not a nation but a wandering horde. Joan interrupts: "A bit like you Jews", and Ludo answers: "Except that the German Tribes have focused their kinship ties in a single, godlike Paramount Chief" (p. 328).

above, p. 105). Hughes inserts an eye-witness, Lothar Scheidemann, who observes much of the action during the Putsch. His memory of what has just happened is not complete, and there are several gaps. He has difficulties combining disparate scenes and he cannot make sense of them. What he remembers is not a continuous flow. It is recalled fragmentarily in the three separate episodes of Chapter twenty-one of "The White Crow": "Scene succeeded scene: but what had happened between them, just how one thing led to another, seemed subject to total non-recall" (p. 203). Lothar's comprehension is patchy; the readers are forced to fill in the gaps on their own, as part of Hughes's reader participation strategy.

Lothar wants to pass on some vital information which is crucial to the outcome of the whole Putsch, but it takes a while before the readers get to know what it is, precisely. Hughes builds a tension into his text by deferring the facts for several pages, one of the novel's retardatory devices.¹⁴ He keeps his readers in the dark, whereas Ludecke did not. Hughes reveals Lothar's secret only grudgingly and gradually: "But he had to reach Captain Goering, had to tell him..." (p. 205); "Lothar *must* see Captain Goering — and at once — about those rifles..." (p. 206); "but Lothar was too pre-occupied to notice, for those rifles might have reached God-knows-whose trusting hands by now" (p. 207). Only then does the novelist explain the anguish and anxiety that has held Lothar in a firm grip ever since his feverish participation in the break-in into the subterranean armory next to the monastery: "But Lothar had no time to waste — he *must* find Captain Goering at once and tell him those monastery rifles were useless, they'd all had their firing-pins removed" (p. 208).

At the end of Chapter twenty-two, Lothar still has not had a chance to tell the leaders what he knows, and he is still dazed. He has happened to overhear the strategic discussion of Hitler, Göring and Ludendorff, but he cannot make much sense of it. Neither can, as a consequence, a reader who identifies with him.¹⁵ The information still has not been passed on:

¹⁴ Discussing various ways, like delays or gaps, for novelists not to lose their readers, Rimmon-Kenan maintains that "... the text's very existence depends on maintaining the phase of the 'not yet fully known or intelligible' for as long as possible. Narrative texts implicitly keep promising the reader the great prize of understanding — later. They suggest, with varying degrees of subtlety: 'the best is yet to come, don't stop reading now, thus stimulating interest, curiosity or suspense'" (Rimmon-Kenan, p. 125). It is not likely that *The Human Predicament* loses many readers before the story has come to an end.

¹⁵ The critic Julian Symons, otherwise appreciative, was critical of this point: "Lothar stumbles into a room where Hitler and Ludendorff are talking (one of the very few invented, and false, notes in this part of the book)" *Twentieth Century*, Winter 1962, p. 150.

"Blindly Lothar wandered away, not knowing whether he was mad or sane, awake or dreaming. Goering... he had a message for Captain Goering, something about some guns" (p. 212). Lothar then falls asleep, and does not witness the march. When he finally wakes up and wants to warn his comrades Fritz and Willi as well as Captain Göring, he finds the road to the city cordoned off.

Hughes does not reveal if the leaders of the revolt ever got the message about the firing-pins; on the other hand, he does not state that they did not. The issue remains open: if they knew before the march that the rifles were useless, they would have betrayed their marching men in cold blood. A detailed comparison of several timetables for the march convinced Hughes that Hitler had deceived his men, maybe not in regard to the missing firing-pins but because he knew even before the march that von Kahr had double-crossed him and would not fulfil his promise to back the revolt. Hughes's sources were confusing on this point. Ludecke maintained that not even Hitler knew that the firing-pins were missing. As has been shown, Götz had pointed out that von Kahr had signed the request for the rifles. If von Kahr knew about the missing firing-pins, then giving the rebels free access to the armoury was just a mockery and a play for the gallery. When Götz wrote that the Nazi troops did not fire a single shot in front of the Feldherrnhalle, it seems like whitewashing propaganda but it could actually be the simple truth. Armed with von Kahr's useless rifles, they would not have had a chance of firing a single shot. Hughes left it to his readers to draw the conclusions.

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The marching order as it reads in Ludecke is brief and factual: "Finally Ludendorff's advice prevailed, and it was decided to march into Munich" (p. 170). In the novel, it takes much longer for the conspirators to reach that decision. General Ludendorff, though only fifty-eight years old at the time (a fact stated in the novel) is as immobile as a stone statue when Lothar happens to overhear the General's plotting. The novel implies, by means of Göring's critical glance at his fellow rabble-rouser, that the intellect of Hindenburg's former senior quartermaster general is petrified: "Ludendorff had been slipping — didn't the old boy realise how much he had slipped these last few years?" (p. 211). Ludendorff's hesitant affirmation is taken as an order: "Eh? — We march ... His voice remained firm as a lion's, and this time it was unquestionably a command" (p. 210). At this point in the narrative, the novel deviates from its sources by deliberately

implying a whole series of misunderstandings. What Ludendorff uttered might not have been intended as a military command at all, as he may have understood that the march was doomed even before it started; if Hitler was foolhardy enough to launch such an enterprise without having secured the backing, it may have been for political and not military reasons. All of this strengthens the novel's suggestion that the plotters stood on shaky ground indeed.

When the marchers had come as far as Ludwigstrasse, Julius Streicher had joined them up front, according to Ludecke: "In its front rank marched Hitler, Ludendorff, and the other leaders, directly behind Streicher and a color-bearer with the Hakenkreuz banner" (p. 170). Ludecke reports what Streicher had shouted: "Ludendorff — don't shoot your General! Hitler and Ludendorff..." (p. 170), a cry to no avail. In Ludecke's description, the moment of impact was seen from one perspective only:

It was too late. A volley rent the air, killing fourteen men in the Nazi ranks. Ludendorff, erect and unhurt, marched straight ahead and was arrested. Hitler, who had been at Ludendorff's side, walking arm-in-arm with Scheubner-Richter, was dragged to the ground with a dislocated shoulder when the Doctor crumpled under the hail of lead. Hitler's body-guard threw himself on his master, covering him with his body and instinctively thinking, as he later told me: 'Ulrich Graf, jetzt hat's dich doch erwischt!' He received eleven bullets. . . . At sound of the firing, the crowds in the rear wavered and halted. Then panic seized the street. In a desperate scramble for safety, every one fled. The revolution was finished . . . Hitler had been helped to his car and had escaped into the mountains (p. 171).

Julius Streicher received more attention in the novel than he had got in its source. He is sent on a specific errand of which there is no mention in Ludecke's book. If his mission was Hughes's invention, which it may well have been, it was probably inserted in order to ascribe to Hitler a far-reaching degree of cynicism: "That crowd had just been whipped up by Julius Streicher in his juiciest vein. Indeed that was why Hitler had sent Streicher on down there ahead; for here, potentially — if Streicher had really done his stuff — was the human screen Hitler needed" (p. 218). Hitler in the novel is not only a cynic, he also proves to be a coward. This was suggested on a previous page, when Scheubner-Richter, Ludendorff's aide-de-camp, had spotted Hitler's yellow car parked by the monument and had decided not to let him off easily. He keeps Hitler's arm firmly locked in his own: "He'd see to it that the old general wasn't left in the

lurch" (p. 221). Ironically, Scheubner-Richter pays for this as he is shot dead and falls to the ground.

In the first lines of Chapter twenty-six, three of the front-line marchers are seen stricken: "At the sound of that first shot Hitler dropped so violently to the ground (accelerated moreover by the stricken weight of Ulrich Graf on top of him) that the arm locked in Scheubner-Richter's was dislocated at the shoulder. This saved his life . . ." (p. 224). The sources differ in their views on whether Hitler showed any courage in this instance or not.¹⁶ The novelist remains neutral, but Hitler's cowardliness is stressed towards the end of the same chapter when the scene turns into a farce. The little dog in the plaid waistcoat runs at full speed, "but Hitler — unhit though stumbling from the pain and the awkwardness of his shoulder — lay a good second in the race" (p. 225).¹⁷

Only once in the passage that has been quoted above did Ludecke stray from his outside point-of-view, i. e. when he moved into Ulrich Graf's mind, in indirect speech: "Ulrich Graf, now you have had it". This gave Ludecke a chance once more to assert his own credibility by implying that his source had been Graf himself. Ulrich Graf appears only briefly in Hughes's novel, but the novelist may have had a somewhat larger role for him in mind. Among the papers that he had received from Helene Hanfstaengl, there is a list of five "Characters": Esser, Rosenberg, Göring, Röhm — and Graf. If he had been assigned a more substantial role, he

¹⁶ Harold J. Gordon compares the action of Ludendorff to that of Hitler: "[Ludendorff's] 'courage' has often been praised as a contrast to the 'cowardice' of Hitler and the others, who hit the ground as soon as the firing started. In actual fact, Ludendorff showed merely foolhardiness, pride, or confidence in his destiny" (Gordon, p. 364). Gordon assumes that Hitler's war experiences played a part: "Almost from the beginning the Putschists claimed that Hitler had been pulled down by Scheubner-Richter when the latter was slain. This may well be true, but I suspect that Hitler would have dropped anyway. Such reflexes become automatic in a front soldier. However, some Putschists claimed, on other grounds, that Hitler lost his nerve during the clash" (Ibid.). Ernst Hanfstaengl, who did not witness the shooting at the Feldherrnhalle himself, had made up his mind as to Hitler's behaviour by 1970. According to him, Hitler was made unfit for combat ("kampfuntauglich") when he was hurled to the ground by the dying Scheubner-Richter: "Die Behauptung, daß er feige gekniffen habe, stimmt also nicht" [The assertion that he had backed out as a coward is simply not true] (Hanfstaengl 1970, p. 147).

¹⁷ Seventy-five years after these events, historians still vary in their views of them. Ian Kershaw for one presents differing interpretations as equally possible: "Had the bullet which killed Scheubner-Richter been a foot to the right, history would have taken a different course. As it was, Hitler either took instant evasive action, or was wrenched to the ground by Scheubner-Richter" (Kershaw 1998, p. 211). Kershaw quotes a Lieutenant-Colonel Theodor Endres who, even if he was "critical in every other respect of Hitler's action in the putsch, was certain that he had thrown himself to the ground at the outbreak of gunfire, and thought this action 'absolutely right'" (Ibid., pp. 668-669).

would have served the novel well as one of the early Nazi martyrs. Helene Hanfstaengl's character note stated that Ulrich Graf was

The most faithful and decent comrade and adjutant H ever had (After severe wounding at Feldherrnhalle). Many a week he hovered between life and death, had already received the last sacraments, when he suddenly rallied and very slowly recovered, much to the astonishment of the doctors. A number of bullets in his skull could not be removed and caused him to suffer from serious headaches thereafter (dropped into oblivion). It is my firm conviction that Graf was too decent, honest and upright for many of H's closest followers. They felt uncomfortable.

Ludecke did not devote much more than one page to the November 9 march. Hughes extends it over the last four chapters of "The White Crow", where it covers twelve pages. When he later reconstructed some even more violent events in the following novel, he achieved a perfect balance: the killings at Wiessee and Stadelheim in *The Wooden Shepherdess* were also stretched over four chapters, covering in all twelve pages.

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If the march occupied more space in the novel than in Ludecke's autobiography, this was due to a whole range of narrative devices which cannot be found in the source. Ludecke's straight sequence of events follows a meandering course in Hughes's novel, where the narrator resorts to several flashbacks, one of them at the beginning of Chapter twenty-four: "Five years ago almost to the day Kurt Eisner too had marched into Munich November the Seventh 1918 had been unseasonably warm On November the Ninth 1923 the prospects were chill and grey" (p. 217). Hughes took great care to get all his meteorological details correct, but his main objective was to show that parallels existed between the earlier and the later revolts, whether socialist or right-wing, and that history repeated itself. That circularity is also stressed in the very first chapter of "The White Crow": "'November the Eighth' said the calendar: almost five years to the day since the old world ended" (p. 116).

Hughes's novel is told in much greater (if less perspicuous) detail than Ludecke's revelations about his Nazi entanglement. Hughes took his time, a considerable one for both novels. He drew on many sources, and he had the benefit of many decades of hindsight; he knew what had happened. Ludecke's chronicle, in contrast, was deliberately partial. A balanced view was not its aim and intention. He did not write for posterity but for his contemporaries, on whom he wanted to impress his political opinions and

grievances. His writing verged on propaganda and consistently overstepped the limits of objectivity. Hughes, on the other hand, was faced with some problems which had not troubled Ludecke. He was aware of the many details which could not be used if he wished to avoid anachronisms, which was his aim. This confined him, but he extended his narrative domain based on factual events by including fictive characters, a technique well-known to all practitioners of the historical novel. Princess Natascha and Lothar are fictive and the novelist could at will creep under their skin. Other characters, based on historical models, are shown from the outside and are used mainly as props and time-indicators. The third group in Hughes's gallery is the most interesting one, the characters who have an historical existence but are simultaneously given an active role to play in the fiction, the foremost example being Hitler.

Hughes defended his technique when he was interviewed in 1973. Peter Firchow had asked him if the novel could or should make use of history and received an answer which distinguished between the writing of history, biography and novels. It was also an apology for writing novels, and for reading them:

The novel's attitude to reality is entirely different. History is a diagram of the interaction of objects: biography is a perspective portrait of one such separate object. Thus often both are abstraction from life: the novel is far nearer to life-as-it-is than either of them can get I've tried to get *inside* [Hitler] just as much as I would with a purely fictional character. A biographer who did that would just not be writing biography, he'd be digressing into fiction. In Murasaki's *Tale of Genji* there's a discussion at a point about what the novelist can do that the historian can't . . . the historian sets out events in an abstract diagrammatic form whereas the novelist is moved by a conviction . . . that 'the time must never come when people don't know that this is how things were.' Only the novelist can do this, not the historian.¹⁸

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Hughes's fictional reconstruction proves a point which Ludecke had made when he summed up the 1923 incidents: "The Beer Hall Putsch is indeed

¹⁸ Peter Firchow, pp. 197-198. Earlier in the same interview, Hughes had touched on the I and you-dichotomy, a recurring theme in his essays: "Well, there's one thing which fiction can do, socially and psychologically, which no other form of writing can. That is to get inside somebody else and look out through his eyes. You can't do that in real life — even in married life. You can never become self-conscious with the other partner's own 'I-ness'" (p. 193). He also summed it up in a speech he held at the Foyle's literary luncheon on April 9, 1975: "If a novel is good enough it can place you inside another human being, looking out on the world through other eyes than your own. Thereby it alone can convince you from your own experience — as nothing else can — that the rest of Mankind are not mere 'things'; but 'persons' just as fully as you know yourself to be a Person."

one of the most contradictory events in history" (p. 172). Kurt Ludecke blamed one of the plotters (Hitler) while exonerating another (Röhm) of his guilt. The views expressed in the novel did not differ markedly from what Ludecke had stated, to the effect that "For the débacle of the putsch . . . [Hitler] alone was responsible. The coup was planned without consulting Ludendorff, called in only to lend his name. The General's mentality, his psychology, should have been well known to Hitler"¹⁹ (p. 175). What Ludecke added may have triggered Hughes's conception of Lothar Scheidemann's "Shirt of Nessus": "The severest reproach one can level against Ludendorff is that in an historical moment he appeared in the wrong coat" (p. 176). When Lothar wears the wrong clothes a second time, in the following novel, it is his undoing; he is done in for wearing Gruppenführer Kettner's uniform: "Then the strange coincidence struck him that here was a Lothar once again dressed up in borrowed plumes! Then he'd been accidentally wearing a General's overcoat: now, this Standartenführer's uniform equally didn't belong to him...." (W.S., pp. 367-368).

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Ludecke's thirteenth chapter describes "Hitler in Prison". This time he had been his own eye-witness. He had travelled to Landsberg in 1924 and had found Hitler shifting "from the true north of idealism to the magnetic north of realism"²⁰ (p. 232). Looking back, from his disillusioned perspec-

¹⁹ After the 1918 Armistice, Erich Ludendorff turned to writing his war memoirs, *Meine Kriegserinnerungen 1914-1918*, and later made increasingly odd attacks on Christianity and Freemasonry in which his second wife Dr. Mathilde Spiess Ludendorff, a specialist in mental diseases, was also involved. When Hughes creeps into his feverish mind and constructs his distinctly bizarre thoughts and numerological calculations (p. 226), it probably had some foundation in Ludendorff's own output. Hildegard Kruse has observed that it is not without problems to fictionalise historical characters from within ("daß die Fiktionalisierung historischer Figuren mittels der Innendarstellung nicht immer ganz unproblematisch ist"), especially those who are not one's compatriots. She demonstrates her standpoint in a close-reading of Hughes's Ludendorff-passage: "Solange man dieser Stelle nur die Funktion zumißt, Ludendorff in den Roman zu integrieren und seine engstirnige, von Vorurteilen belastete Denkweise zu demonstrieren, handelt es sich um eine erzählerisch gelungene Passage — für einen englischen Leser. Einem Deutschen müßte hingegen auffallen, daß die Buchstaben- und Zahlenskombinationen innerhalb der englischen Sprache logisch und richtig sein mögen, daß Ludendorff aber, falls er derartige Gedanken hegte, als Deutscher nicht den 'Jews', sondern den 'Juden' die Schuld an Deutschlands Unglück geben mußte" [As long as one understands the function of this passage just to be an integration of Ludendorff in the novel and a demonstration of his thoughts, as narrowminded and full of preconceived ideas as they are, then it is a successful passage — for a British reader. It strikes a German reader, however, that the combinations of letters and numbers are logical and possible in English, but that Ludendorff, if he entertained such thoughts, would have blamed not the 'Jews' but the 'Juden' for Germany's misery] (Kruse, pp. 264-265). With a U instead of an E Ludendorff's elaborate and paranoid construction collapses.

²⁰ Is there a hint of the melancholy Danish Prince here? "I am but mad north-north-west:

tive at the time of writing a good dozen years later, he considered that Hitler had still been much of an idealist while in the Landsberg castle-prison. Describing their meeting, Ludecke resorts to a kind of animal imagery which would most likely have had a particular appeal to Richard Hughes: "Indeed, even today, when hindsight tells me that the fox who greeted me in Landsberg was not quite the same as the lion who had said good-bye in Linz, I believe that the nobler qualities still ruled him" (p. 232). But in the novel, Hitler is not referred to as a fox: Hughes may have felt that the lingering scent of one fox in the Welsh marshlands, and of a domesticated German one in the von Kessen castle was enough, to which was added a human Wolf(f) pent up in the Schloss Lorient attic.

The nickname among his fellow-soldiers for Hitler the over-zealous lance-corporal had neither been lion nor fox but "the white crow," as explained by Konrad Heiden: "We all cursed him and found him intolerable. There was this white crow among us that didn't go along with us when we damned the war."²¹ This is also the nick-name which Otto mutters, with the deprecating phrase "half-baked little back-street runt!" added (p. 203). Hughes even used "The White Crow" as the title for the mid-section of *The Fox in the Attic*. The link to the next novel's corresponding section "The Meistersingers" formed an almost gratuitous pun thanks to Wagner: Hitler the Crow had turned into a Master Singer.

Ludecke had found Hitler in a good mood in Landsberg, which was not much of a penal institution anyway. Hughes borrowed Ludecke's impressions, as seen on of the manuscript pages, though he did it with a difference. Ludecke's "He was wearing leather shorts and a Tyrolean jacket, his shirt open at the throat" (p. 233) perfectly captured how Hitler looked like on some of the photographs which Heinrich Hoffmann had taken at the time. In Hughes's manuscript it was turned into Toni Arco's observation of the Nazi rabble which he did not want to associate himself with, in spite of the fact that he happened to be imprisoned in the same place as they were: "their very brief leather shorts, their throats bulging out of open shirts and Tyrolese jackets." The description, intended for Chapter twelve of "The Meistersingers", was deleted, but the main tenor of Ludecke's pages on Hitler at Landsberg still rubbed off on the novel. The prison term

when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw" (*Hamlet* 2. 2. 405).

²¹ Konrad Heiden, *Der Führer*, p. 74, as quoted by Bullock, who comments: "While not unpopular with his comrades, they felt that [Hitler] did not share their interests or attitude to the war. He received not letters, no parcels from home. He did not care about leave or women. He was silent when the others grumbled about the time they had to spend in the trenches or the hardships" (Bullock 1965, p. 53).

was for Hitler, paradoxically, a respite. He had found peace and enjoyment and had recovered his good health, according to Ludecke who quoted him: "Landsberg had done him a world of good!" And Hitler had added: "This is the first good rest I've ever enjoyed." Ludecke continues: "The guards, he said, treated him with every possible consideration, and every day he received a sheaf of heartening letters from faithful friends" (p. 233). In the novel, this became "parcels had filled some three or four rooms . . . he seemed more relaxed . . . the rosy cheeks of an almost contented Hitler" (p. 158).

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In his Historical Note at the end of *The Wooden Shepherdess*, Hughes touched on some of the difficulties that he had encountered when he had wanted to reconstruct the Purge of 1934:

The Nazis destroyed all official records bearing on the Blood-Purge of 1934: thus surviving contemporary sources tend to be the work of known liars on both sides, so that disproof of one version cannot be taken as establishing any other. This reduces 'belief' at certain points in the narrative of the Night of the Long Knives to a matter of choice (p. 389).

Ludecke had expressed much the same opinion of this confused and bloody affair, as explained in *I Knew Hitler*. The prophecy at the beginning of his forty-second chapter that the bloody Saturday of June 30, 1934, would go down in history "as the most baleful chapter of Hitler's life" (p. 759) was possibly to the point when his book appeared in 1937, but Ludecke already at that time seems to have had a premonition of the much more evil chapters that were to follow.

As early as three years after the 1934 events, he was aware of the difficulties involved for anyone who like himself was trying to give a correct picture of the Purge, adding a sardonic note on silenced witnesses: "Developments leading up to the Blood-Purge are entangled in a hopeless snarl of lies, intrigues and contradictions; it is still impossible to unravel the full truth, for dead men are silent" (ibid.). He also looked ahead in stating that "[t]he precise historian who in some distant future seeks to analyse the purge is likely to have to deal entirely with opinions laid down for propaganda by Hitler's contemporary foes and by admiring beneficiaries of his rights" (ibid.). Ludecke, trying to keep a steady course between Scylla and Charybdis in these stormy waters, was aware that his main source of information for the Purge was an unreliable one. He had partly followed

Otto Strasser's reconstruction in *Die deutsche Bartholomäusnacht*, published two years earlier. He called it brilliant, which was an overstatement, and he considered Strasser, somewhat rashly, the best-informed of all the commentators on this event. He had to concede, however, that even Otto Strasser was subjective: "... he seems at times to shape matters to support his theory and to be guilty of obvious exaggerations" (ibid.). Ludecke less readily admitted his own role as a propagandist.

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Hughes had been interested in how quickly news of the Putsch had travelled in 1923. Eleven years later news moved even faster, in Germany and elsewhere. According to Ludecke, attentive readers of foreign newspapers would have been able to see the writing on the wall well before the June 30 killings. The *London News Chronicle* interviewed Hitler less than a week before the Purge and its readers got more than just an inkling of what was brewing: "the Fuehrer indicated that he might separate himself from old friends 'of the first hour'" (p. 768). On the same day, the Basel *National Zeitung* had reported that new laws had been drafted in Germany, in order to allow Hitler to combine the offices of Chancellor and President after Hindenburg's death, and also that he had decided to eliminate all 'national bolshevists'. Many American journalist witnesses had proved useful when Hughes had reconstructed the Putsch. Reports by their European colleagues in 1934 were of less value when he dealt with the Purge; they did not have the same immediacy.

Ludecke's account of what happened at Wiessee is deceptively detailed. It gives the impression that he had been present, which he had not. It relies mainly on Otto Strasser's idiosyncratic *Die deutsche Bartholomäusnacht* and its many exclamations, outbursts and interpolations. Ludecke toned them down to a more factual but still emotional description:

While his companions 'stormed' the rooms of Heines and other SA leaders, Hitler pounded with the handle of his dog-whip on the door of Roehm's room. 'Open the door!' he yelled. Roehm's sleepy voice answered. 'Yes, but who is it!?' 'It's I — Hitler! Let me in!' 'What! You already? I thought you weren't coming before noon,' — and Roehm opened the door. Hitler met him with a flood of abuse, and Roehm, coming to himself in anger, began to roar back at him. He was being handcuffed when the innkeeper, awakened by the uproar, appeared on the scene with a 'Heil Hitler' on his trembling lips. 'Na ja, Gruess Gott!' said Roehm, and the Fuehrer asked that the disturbance be excused (p. 771).

Many of these details were used in Chapter twenty-seven of "Stille Nacht", but they were expanded and elaborated in the process. In the novel, Hitler does not just pound with the handle of his dog-whip on Röhm's door: "He was using the butt of his fetish — the old rhinoceros-whip . . .", and the reader recalls the whip that appeared in Hitler's nightmare at Uffing, in the earlier volume. The novel describes Röhm as a "swaying pyjamaed figure still heavy with poppied sleep", the landlord is called forth in his nightshirt, and Hitler takes "hold of the trembling publican by the arm . . .". These additions served to fill in Ludecke's contours. Ludecke's bizarre humour, shown in describing how the trembling innkeeper unwittingly greeted the Führer himself with a "Heil Hitler", was not lost on Hughes who added a touch of tragi-comedy with an extra detail: Röhm is saluted by the landlord but cannot possibly return the greeting: "Then [the landlord] caught sight of Röhm his illustrious guest, and 'Heil Hitlered' with lifted arm; but his guest made no move to salute him back — which of course he couldn't, in handcuffs. 'Na, ja — Grüss Gott! ', said Röhm bitterly" (pp. 361-362). This had been witnessed by a third person, as the following line indicates: "'So far, so good!' thought Friedrich, who saw how the Führer almost danced with relief" (p. 362).

When Ludecke informed his readers about Ernst Röhm's last moments, he was less exclamatory than Otto Strasser had been. He tried to put the record straight, he wrote; it was not his intention to make a martyr of Röhm, but compared to Göring and Goebbels, Röhm had been an honest revolutionary: he had "always ranked the idea above the leader, and Germany highest of all. He was incapable of treason" (p. 772). An obituary or a funeral oration full of praise would have been misplaced in Hughes's reconstruction, but he was well served by the following lines in Ludecke's book:

Roehm was locked in a cell with a revolver — a last act of grace on the part of his Fuehrer. The press of the world reported his suicide. But he declined to do Hitler this favour, and on July 1 . . . he was killed. Sepp Dietrich . . . shot Roehm in his cell, to be rewarded a few days later for his heroic deed by promotion to the post of 'Obergruppenfuehrer'. Ernst Roehm had met his end in the very prison where he had been incarcerated eleven years earlier for his valiant efforts in support of Hitler in the Beer Hall Putsch (p. 772).

In addition to Ludecke and Strasser, Hughes had excerpted five more sources for Ernst Röhm's death, i. e. Bullock, Shirer, Gisevius, Sauer and Elizabeth Wiskemann, but also noted that "all accounts seem to agree on the

broad outline". In his novel, Dietrich has been replaced as an executioner by Eicke and Lippert. Sepp Dietrich remains a henchman but "his mission was not with Röhm" (p. 366). The novel also made some changes in Ludecke's straightforward chronology. Röhm's story is told in Chapter twenty-seven but is resumed and concluded fourteen pages and four chapters later. The hiatus is of course a way of building up tension and reader expectation, but it is also explained by the fact that the leader has been absent: "nothing more could be done till Hitler himself arrived" (p. 364). The novel suggests that it was not on Hitler's order that Röhm was finally killed when he had not obliged his henchmen by doing "the decent thing", i. e. committing suicide. Hughes hints that Röhm was executed on Heinrich Himmler's order. Afraid that Hitler might once more vacillate and side with his arch rival Röhm, Himmler takes advantage of Hitler's tirades against homosexuals by phoning Eicke, an expedient executioner. Even if told by an extradiegetic narrator, the novel's brief rendering of Röhm's last minutes registers the intradiegetic exchange of looks and glances of the main two characters involved in this instance, i. e. the victim and his henchman: "Röhm gave him a look of contempt such as even Eicke would never forget, then stood to attention while Eicke and Lippert riddled his body with lead" (p. 376).

That Hitler had turned against an old comrade-in-arms was shocking news to some people in the first days of July 1934 but met with relief by others. Ludecke belonged to the first group, as his reaction in the New York drugstore showed. He was brazenly sentimental as well as unmitigatedly propagandistic on the topic of Röhm's death:

He was sentenced to death, branded as traitor, and traduced in his grave as criminal and beast by the man who only a few months before had appointed him Reichsminister in his cabinet and had praised him for his imperishable services, thanking destiny for permitting him to number such men as Roehm among his friends and comrades-in-arms (p. 772).

Hughes showed the reversal in the Röhm-Hitler relationship in a flashback partly based on this quote. In his novel, the Putsch and the Purge merge in the following passage, forming a link between the middle part of the first novel in the series, and the last part of the sequel. Hughes, working with more subtle nuances, felt no need of overemphasising Hitler's betrayal. An anonymous quote, possibly Hitler's, sufficed to amplify the enormity of the treachery: "Röhm was no stranger to Stadelheim gaol: it

was where he'd been lodged long ago when the Munich Putsch failed. These were familiar walls that recalled the past and those 'ancient emotional ties' which bound him to Hitler's person, their friendship through thick and thin" (p. 363).

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Both Otto Strasser and Kurt G. W. Ludecke were among Hughes's sources of information when he wanted to establish at what time Germans in general got to know about the June 30 killings. As for the international reactions to the Purge, a reference to Alan Bullock can be found among Hughes's notes. He could also have found a clue in Ludecke's *I Knew Hitler*. One passage, dealing with the internal as well as the external reactions on the killings, is heavily ironic but also full of sadness and sorrow:

While the foreign press was almost unanimous in its condemnation of the Blood-Purge, calling Hitler a 'gangster' and a 'monster' and raising an echo of abhorrence and contempt abroad, the German press, Nazi and non-Nazi, was a unit in praising him as the greatest German hero, a man who did not hesitate to sacrifice his best and oldest friends in the interest of the Party and for the glory of Germany (p. 777).

When Ludecke closed his chapter on the Purge, he moved from Hindenburg's death on August 2, 1934, to the Nuremberg *Parteitage* later in the same month. Trumpets were sounded for those in the Sturm Abteilung ranks that had fallen "in the heroic battle of the SA in ten glorious years of fight", but not for the men murdered in the Purge, noted Ludecke, in an indictment of a former idol. He repeated what he had stated in the dedication printed after the title-page of his "Story of a Nazi who Escaped the Blood Purge": "But no one called the roll of the ghosts hovering over the stage. There were no trumpets for the names of Ernst Roehm, Gregor Strasser, and over five hundred SA men murdered in the brief space of thirty-six hours and now traduced in their graves by their leader and comrade, Adolf Hitler" (p. 780). Hughes's novel had no need for the accusations in Ludecke's bitter eulogy.²² Instead, his epilogue exhibited the public

²² Far from everyone on the contemporary scene shared Ludecke's view, quite the reverse, if Sebastian Haffner is to be believed: "On the whole, the German people and the old elite supported the horrifying murder of the SA leadership, perhaps not as unreservedly as they had approved the elimination of the political parties, yet still with a measure of satisfaction and relief. The SA had not been very popular. The upper classes had looked on them as proletarian rabble, and the middle class had feared them because their unpredictable and brutal excesses affected all areas of life, including business. They welcomed the fact that the Führer had put a stop to all of this, that they could now look forward to a return to normalcy, never mind the methods used. And the fact that Hitler used the occasion to rid himself of a number of prominent conservatives, including his

Nazi betrayal of trust and loyalty by exemplifying it on a private level. The horror inflicted on a member of the von Kessen family has wider ramifications. *Pars pro toto*: the violence of a private fictitious incident hints at the savagery of the public factual events that were to follow within and outside Germany: "That's why [Father Petrus had] heard no shot: Otto's own leg had been used to beat him to death" (p. 384).

predecessor, General von Schleicher, and Schleicher's wife, also did not raise too many eye-brows. If one can speak of the collective guilt of the German people, then perhaps this is where it all began" (Haffner 1989 [1987], pp. 191-192).

Chapter XIV

Otto Strasser

The "historical note" at the end of *The Wooden Shepherdess* went through many transformations. This is how part of the final version, relating to the 1934 purge, reads:

The knowledgeable will . . . also see that I tend to credit Otto Strasser's story of Banquo's Ghost on the stairs, a story historians tend to ignore with the rest of Strasser's hearsay about the Purge — but after all Strasser names his 'Banquo' as Ernst Udet, who lived till 1941 and could therefore easily have given Strasser the lie; and the story seems to me strange enough to be true. It fits (p. 389).

This is an ambiguous statement, and perhaps deliberately so. Is Strasser's story true or false? Did Ernst Udet tell Strasser the truth, or did he lie to him? Are the historians, suspicious of their sources, correct in assuming that what Otto Strasser related has little credibility? Or is the novelist's intuitive hunch right: the episode fits, therefore there is an inner truth to it, even if it seems to be a lie?¹ This incident does not appear in Bullock's *Hitler, a Study in Tyranny*, neither did Shirer mention it in his *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* nor Max Gallo in his book about the Purge.

Gregor Strasser, born in 1892, was one of the chief ideologists of the German National Socialist Workers' Party, the NSDAP. He and his brother Otto, five years his junior, organised the party in the North, making Berlin their headquarters. In 1930 Otto Strasser broke away from Hitler however, launching the radical "Schwarze Front", while Gregor remained loyal. After a deep rift with Adolf Hitler, Gregor Strasser "angrily resigned all his Party posts at the end of 1932, a defection which deeply shook Hitler, who feared he was losing his grip on the party. [Gregor] Strasser left politics, living quietly as the Director of a chemical combine."²

After the murder of his brother in 1934, Otto went into exile in Prague, not abandoning his ideals and not abating his propaganda war. Even if unsuccessful as a political propagandist, he still tried his hands at a neo-Nazi party in the mid-1950s, with scant success. Otto Strasser died in 1974 and

¹ Maybe this is yet another example of Leopold von Ranke's "was wahrscheinlich und möglich gewesen wäre" in Hughes's novels. The German critic Günther Ahrends used Ranke's formula when he maintained that Hughes, as a writer of historical fiction, had followed a principle of authenticity which was embedded in probability: factual episodes were enlarged by fictional ones, whereby fiction was placed on the same level as facts. (Lengeler 1977, pp. 227-241).

² Wistrich, p. 303.

thus he could very well have read about his brother in the two volumes of *The Human Predicament*, and, like Ernst Hanfstaengl, check how his own books were put to good use in a new and different context.

When Otto Strasser's subjective and intentionally biased *Die deutsche Bartholomäusnacht* was issued in Switzerland in April 1935, its publisher René Sonderegger of the RESO-Verlag in Zürich stated in his introduction that to overthrow Gods was the goal of the true revolutionary; this book was part of that democratic struggle. Sonderegger assured his readers that "The German Bartholomew-night" was a reliable source of information and that Strasser's former closeness to Hitler guaranteed its veracity: "[es] stempelt das Buch zum unentbehrlichen Nachschlagewerk für den Politiker oder Geschichtsforscher."³ This was obviously an exaggeration, and both politicians and historians (as well as novelists) have to be circumspect when using it as a source. Even the preface is far from neutral and impartial, e. g. when it talks of Hitler's brutality which is said to be unparalleled even by the decadence of Rome: "[Das] Unmenschentum . . . das selbst in der Dekadenzgeschichte Roms nicht ihres gleichen hat."⁴

Sonderegger, who was an ardent anti-Nazi, fought a two-front war in this preface as in his political life, against the Nazis and against the Communists. He attacked a left-wing colleague, the Communist publishing house Carrefour in Paris, for their unreliable pirated copy of Strasser's book which was plagiarized and unauthorised by the author.⁵

Gregor and Otto Strasser, although self-proclaimed socialists, were far from communists. All this has a bearing on Otto Strasser as a witness. He was opinionated and partial, and he bore his own grudges. In the preface to one of Otto Strasser's later books which borrowed its title from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, Gerhard Zwerenz explains how the socialist wing of the Nazi party successfully had managed to destabilise leftist groups in the

³ It [makes the book an indispensable reference work for the politician or the historian] (Strasser 1935, p. 7).

⁴ [The inhumanity . . . which has no counterpart even in the history of Rome in decline].

⁵ Carrefour was only one of many anti-Nazi publishing houses that mushroomed close on German borders, especially after *Die Machtübernahme* on January 30, 1933: La République in Strasbourg, Europa-Verlag and Oprecht und Helbling in Zürich, Buchhandlung Wohler and Universum-Bücherei in Basel, Volksstimme and Uranus-Verlag in Saarbrücken (which published *Die Memoiren des Stabschefs Röhm* in 1934) etc. The exiled radical journalist Willi Münzenberg took part in many of these publishing activities. The most influential book of resistance against the Nazi regime was published in Paris in August 1933: *Braunbuch über Reichtagsbrand und Hitlerterror*. On this and Carrefour, see Claus-Dieter Krohn, "Propaganda als Widerstand? Die Braunbuch-Kampagne zum Reichtagsbrand 1933", in *Exil und Widerstand* (1997).

Weimar Republic.⁶ Otto Strasser held the belief that if he and Gregor had only been able to talk Hitler and others into siding with their brand of National Socialism (with the second half of the party's name regarded as more important than the first), everything would have turned out differently, and for the better. In Gregor's view, capitalism had to be destroyed, if need be with the support of Bolshevik Russia. Gregor refused to acknowledge that Hitler soon comprehended where his future lay, namely in linking with the capitalists and big industry. When Gregor finally understood this, he resigned in dismay from all party positions. Hughes illustrated this by inserting his brief Chapter twenty-two in "Stille Nacht", dealing with Hitler's visit to the steel works in Essen.

The use of the word "socialism" in the naming of the NSDAP was not much more than a demagogic trick, according to Zwerenz, who cites as an example the fact that the SA were soon forbidden to use their slogan "Kampf gegen den Kapitalismus". Supported by the army and industry, Hitler could start his massive rearmament. As for the Purge, it was branded the "Röhm Putsch" by the winning side, who were quickly rewriting history for their propagandistic purposes. In reality it was more of a Hitler Putsch, a chance for the Führer to solidify his position by weeding out the opposition. That Röhm supposedly had planned a coup appeared, at least to those contemporary spectators in 1934 who were not directly involved in the struggle for power, to be only a flimsy pretext propagated by Röhm's foes.⁷

Richard Hughes was well aware that Otto Strasser, who had himself been very much involved in the power struggle within the Nazi party, was an unreliable witness, and for many of the episodes (the killing of his

⁶ Gerhard Zwerenz (b. 1925), a former soldier and policeman in the GDR studied philosophy under Ernst Bloch and defected as an anti-Stalinist to the West in 1957. He became a prolific novelist and supplier of scripts to Rainier Maria Fassbinder. He has written books on Kurt Tucholsky as well as autobiographies but is no *Fachhistoriker*. See Furness & Humble (1991), p. 305.

⁷ Strasser 1969, pp. I-VI. — As early as in October 1937, Stephen H. Roberts, Challis Professor of Modern History at the University of Sydney, published his highly critical and influential *The House that Hitler Built*, which quickly ran into several editions. During his study leave in Germany from November 1935 to March 1937, he was granted almost unlimited access to authorities and archives. His chapter *The Night of the Long Knives* clarifies the muddled motives behind the Putsch: "the events can be explained more simply as a ruthless quelling, if not of an actual plot, at least of tendencies towards mutiny — always assuming that numerous private scores were paid off at the same time" (p. 109). Some pages later, he writes: "One feels that Hitler can never be forgiven for shooting Röhm like a dog. . . . To kill one's oldest friend and then smirch his memory — these are not pleasant topics to dwell upon. The attacks on Gregor Strasser were equally unworthy. The suggestion of his complicity in a plot against Hitler is merely silly — even Hitler had the grace to admit that he was dragged in" (pp. 116-117).

brother was just one of them) not even a first-hand one.⁸ Hughes's correspondence reveals this awareness. When the novelist first approached Alan Bullock, one of the leading British experts on the Nazi era, he admitted that he was faced with a difficult task. He was neither a historian nor an expert, he wrote:

This is a novel of course, but it has caused me to poke an enquiring nose just far enough into research to realise its perils for one who lacks a historian's training. I determined to allow myself *no* poetic licence, never to alter history to suit the needs of my story — in short, I blithely set out to discover and tell the exact historical truth as if all this required was the mere decision to do it! I know now only too well what a naive undertaking this was; but how far it has failed or succeeded only you experts can say.⁹

The Banquo's ghost incident¹⁰ illustrates the many difficulties that Hughes ran into when he wanted to make his characters and events as historically correct as possible. In one of Otto Strasser's books, the massacre at the Bavarian Ministry of the Interior was described in great detail. The report, not quite contemporary with the event, was undoubtedly biased. The key passage for Hughes was the following:

When Hitler arrived at the Ministry the place was a bloody shambles. A stalwart blond-haired man, blood streaming down from an ugly gash on the side of his skull, wandered unsteadily through the corridor, his eyes dazed; the only man to escape the massacre, and he had managed it through sheer physical power, quickness and fighting skill. His name was Ernst Udet, the man who was Germany's Lindbergh and the leader of their SA squadron. As his eyes focused on Hitler a look of relief spread over his face and he leaned weakly against the wall. 'What has happened in there, mein Führer?' he asked, an incredulous note in his voice. 'Have they gone out of their minds? God, it was awful!' Hitler swallowed nervously. 'Nothing is wrong, absolutely nothing,' he assured him quickly. 'Please leave here at once and no harm will come to you. You have my word for it.'¹¹

⁸ Neither were the political actions of his brother easily assessed: "No part is more difficult to trace in this than that played by Gregor Strasser — if indeed he played any part at all other than that of a victim" (Bullock 1969, p. 297).

⁹ RH to Alan Bullock, September 20, 1961.

¹⁰ *Macbeth*, 4.1. 110-122: "Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!/Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs . . . Horrible sight! — Now I see 'tis true;/ For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me". The Shakespearian reference is the narrator's, though Otto Strasser as a Bavarian law student after the First World War, or later as a Landshut apothecary, would have been familiar with the classical German translation of Shakespeare by Schlegel and Tieck, or even the then modern one by Gundolf.

¹¹ Strasser 1943, pp. 246-247.

This is how the same episode turned out in the novel, at once more sinister and more violent, and with a deeper symbolic resonance, thanks to the Shakespearean reference. The focalizer of part of the action, though not all of it, is "Hans's fortunate brother — the granite-faced Friedrich":

... there on the stairs he caught sight of somebody staggering blindly from wall to wall who screamed with fear at the sound of approaching feet.

Then this apparition — his head all covered in blood and his face bashed in — turned and upbraided the Führer

Friedrich had drawn his gun; but Göbbels laid a restraining hand on his arm, for the Führer was stammering out excuses! He seemed completely taken aback by this Banquo's Ghost, and assured him there'd been some ghastly mistake — that he wouldn't have anyone hurting one hair of dear Banquo's head: 'You'd better go straight to the doctor' (pp. 358-359).

The exclamation mark makes it clear that the focalizer in this instance is Friedrich. He is wondrous at and slightly offended by a Führer who deigns to excuse himself. It is unlikely that Friedrich would have come to think of a Shakespearean character at this moment: the extradiegetic narrator obviously takes over. The Chaucerian quotes in the previous novel could be said to offer a parallel instance: even if connected to the novel's characters, they were not bound to them.

Still, Richard Hughes acted wisely when he added Banquo's name and deleted Ernst Udet's. Udet's appearance in Strasser's account, although intriguing, could well turn out to be just one more lie, one of Strasser's many propaganda tricks. Ernst Udet, born in 1896, was one of the flying aces of the First World War — like his colleague Baron Manfred von Richthofen, his senior by four years — with sixty-two enemy planes to his credit. He was awarded the *Pour le Mérite*. In 1935 he was still active in the Air Force and the aviation industry. He was made a Brigadier in that year, and appointed Chief at the Technical Office of the Air Ministry. This appointment alone makes it highly unlikely that he would have been the Banquo's ghost that someone had seen on the stairs only one year earlier, and had told Strasser about.

In 1939 Udet was made Inspector-General of the Luftwaffe, with responsibilities for its swift re-armament.¹² His favour with Hitler and

¹² Two flying aces met at an aviation race in Cleveland in 1930: Ernst Udet and Charles Lindbergh. Udet was present in Berlin six years later when Göring hosted a formal lunch in Lindbergh's honour, on July 28, 1936. In October of that year, Lindbergh was decorated by Göring with the Service Cross of the German Eagle. Anne Morrow Lindbergh immediately called it "The Albatross". It quickly turned into one, in Coleridge's sense: a dead weight around Charles Lindbergh's neck. Udet was present at that occasion as well

Göring declined rapidly after the Luftwaffe's failure during the Battle of Britain and after Rudolf Hess's foolish and aborted mission to Scotland in May 1941. Udet does not seem to have been very good at looking after his own affairs; maybe he was not even particularly interested in them:

An easy-going cosmopolitan by outlook and taste, uninterested in power intrigues, Udet became increasingly depressed by his capricious treatment at Goering's hands and the latter's blindness to reality. Following the failures of the Luftwaffe on the eastern front and a major quarrel with Goering, Udet committed suicide on 17 November 1941. The Nazi régime covered up the affair, attributing his death to an accident which had occurred while he was testing a new air weapon.¹³

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Hughes wrote Alan Bullock another letter in which he acknowledged that he was "of course relying very largely (and gratefully) on [Bullock's] biography of Hitler as [he] did in the previous volume." After these initial laurels, Hughes came to the point: "But in using it I have come on one or two minor conundrums." He expressed his concern and doubts about relying on Strasser's story in yet another respect. Hughes was forced to choose between two conflicting historical witnesses, Otto Strasser and Joseph Goebbels, and did not know which one to trust. Hughes saw that Bullock had chosen the latter while he himself would prefer to put his trust in the former:

Your account of the butchery in the Ministry tallies with Göbbels's, not at all with Otto Strasser's much more melodramatic story . . . which he claims to have heard from a friend of a sole survivor, Udet; so I take it you regard the Strasser version as Popycock. Can you tell me why? He certainly had as much motive for using the tar-brush as Göbbels had for using the whitewash-brush; but liar for liar, doesn't Göbbels normally leave him standing? However, I expect you are relying on some third account I don't know of — which is only too likely! What happened to Otto Strasser in the end? I know of nothing later than Schellenberg's abortive attempt to assassinate him at Lisbon in 1941.¹⁴

Hughes received a diplomatic answer from the historian, probably one that he had expected: it was impossible to determine which report was the correct one in this turmoil of truths, lies, rumours, hearsay and conflicting witnesses. Alan Bullock had brought a third account into consideration,

(Berg, *passim*).

¹³ Wistrich 1982, p. 324.

¹⁴ RH to Alan Bullock, January 14, 1971. Hughes also mentioned a new book that would be of use to him slightly later: "I take it you've seen the account in Manchester's recent *Arms of Krupp* of Hitler's reception by the Krupps on 28 June, after Terboven's wedding?"

one by a certain Bernd Gisevius, which in his opinion tallied better with the Goebbels version.¹⁵

Two months later yet another letter from Hughes to Bullock raised the question of Goebbels's eminent capacity for survival and his mercurial changeability. One day Goebbels had demanded that Hitler be expelled from the party, the next he adored him, as he confessed in his diary; the conflicting views did not seem to bother him. In his letter, Hughes quoted Goebbels's naive and enthusiastic entry for November 23, 1925: "Heil Hitler! I want Hitler to be my friend. His picture is standing on the table. I simply could not bear it if I ever had to despair of this man." Only a few months later Goebbels had once more lost faith in his idol. Hughes also quoted the entry for February 15, 1926, when Goebbels after the Bamberg meeting wrote this: "What sort of a Hitler is this? A reactionary? . . . I would like to cry. Certainly one of the greatest disappointments of my life. I no longer have complete faith in Hitler." Why then did Goebbels side with the nationalist Hitler whom he so often despaired of, and not the radical socialists Gregor and Otto Strasser?

Hughes was bewildered when he read that Goebbels, according to Otto Strasser's *Hitler and I*, had written "passionate denunciations of the Nazi Party." But Hughes was aware that Strasser's memoirs were an unreliable source: "Otto Strasser was certainly not present at Bamberg . . . Writing long after the event, and unable to check his facts with Gregor (already dead), could he *unintentionally* have got his facts entirely wrong?" he asks. Hughes suggests another probability: "Otherwise I can only conclude that Otto made up the whole story deliberately to discredit Goebbels." Hughes obviously had great difficulties in evaluating one source against the other for their reliability: "I can only take them at their face-value — and where they conflict, choose the story which seems to me the more probable as a *novelist!*" he wrote.¹⁶ In his answer a week later Alan Bullock warned Richard Hughes: he should not give too much credence to sources prior to 1933 as regards details of German domestic politics.¹⁷

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¹⁵ Alan Bullock scribbled his comments, as requested by Hughes, in the margins of the letter he had received from Hughes, and returned it to the novelist.

¹⁶ RH to Alan Bullock, March 10, 1971.

¹⁷ Alan Bullock to RH, March 18, 1971. A month later, Hughes thanked Bullock for the loan of *The Early Goebbels Diaries*, Bloch's *La Nuit des Longs Couteaux* and Tobias's *The Reichstag Fire*, and Roger Manvell's and Heinrich Fraenkel's *Dr Goebbels, His Life and Death* (RH to AB, April 13, 1971). Half a year later he sent for a library copy of Manvell's and Fraenkel's Hess monograph (RH to the London Library, October 18, 1971).

For some other instances in the later chapters of his novel, Hughes had recourse to the memoirs by Gisevius that Bullock had mentioned. Hans Bernd Gisevius (1904-74), a conservative with ideals among reactionary Prussian junkers, was involved in the resistance against Hitler but survived the Gestapo clean-up after the assassination attempt on Hitler on July 20, 1944. He served as German Vice-Consul in Zurich during the war and kept Allen Dulles, Chief of the US Office of Strategic Services, informed of German politics. He was one of the witnesses for the prosecution at the Nuremberg trials, and wrote a massive two-volume memoir, *Bis zum bitteren Ende* (1946).¹⁸

His accounts of Röhm's revolt and Goebbels's broadcast in the memoirs figure in Hughes's research files. Gisevius's "The bathos of the scene, the weebegone expressions, the combination of violent fantasy and grim reality, the gratuitously blood-red sky, like a scene out of Wagner — it was really too much for me" (pp. 168-169) may have inspired Hughes's phrase "an almost Wagnerian blood-red sunset" (p. 371), while his description of Hitler's face, "pale, unshaven, sleepless, at once gaunt and puffed" (p. 167) seems to appear shortened, in the novel's "his puffy and pallid features" (p. 371). In another instance, Hughes extended and dramatised his source, keeping Gregor Strasser alive slightly longer than in reality. This is what Gisevius wrote:

From one of his pockets Himmler took a long, tattered list . . . We could see Hitler's finger moving slowly down the sheet of paper. Now and then it paused for a moment at one of the names . . . Suddenly Hitler tossed his head. There was so much violent emotion, so much anger in the gesture, that everyone noticed it . . . Undoubtedly, we thought, they were now informing him of Strasser's suicide (p. 168).

This appears to have been transformed into Hughes's ". . . Himmler pulled out his own list of names — most of them ticked already — a lengthy list, and thoroughly dog-eared by now. Hitler took it and ran his finger down it . . ." (p. 371). The borrowing continues on the next page in the novel:

And Strasser? Now Himmler chipped in: his former patron was lodged under lock and key in Prinz Albrechtstrasse Gaol, awaiting....

What! Strasser was still alive? From fifty yards off folk saw the Führer jerk back his head in a paroxysm of rage: though only Göring and Himmler himself knew why (p. 372).¹⁹

¹⁸ See Wistrich 1982, pp. 92-93.

¹⁹ Bullock (p. 304) quotes the same instances from Gisevius, and so does Max Gallo (p. 260), but in a very free translation.

In October 1972, Hughes told Alan Bullock that he had come across Max Gallo's *Night of the Long Knives*²⁰ too late to allow him more than minor changes in the proofs of *The Wooden Shepherdess*, and that he felt that he

... had clearly given too much credence to Otto Strasser's accounts of events in the small hours at Wagner's Ministry and of Hitler's personal presence at the shooting in the Stadelheim Prison yard: in the end, all I'm keeping from Otto Strasser is his Hitler-Udet confrontation on the Ministry stairs, which Strasser claims to have got from one of Udet's friends. But I wish I could feel even now as confident of the factual truths of my account of these events as I feel about my previous account of the 1923 Putsch!²¹

Some of the many difficult decisions Hughes had to make are apparent in one of his manuscript versions, headed *Godesberg* (2). The changes that the passage had undergone when it was finally printed in Chapter twenty-four of "Stille Nacht" are considerable. As on the immediately preceding pages in the novel (discussed in the Schellenberg chapter above, p. 264), Ernst Krebelsmann has replaced Sigismund. He stands guard on the grass at the Hangelar airfield and observes Hitler go on board, "with Göbbels still at his elbow" (p. 352). Then six lines in the manuscript, summing up Goebbels's vacillation, have been deleted. In them, Ernst is not at all sure of what is really going on. What he observes is far off, the night is dark and the faces can hardly be seen. But his belief in his leader is boosted when he catches a glimpse of Hitler, as described in the manuscript. This is Hughes's discarded description of Hitler:

... but every movement he made showed a man who was changed in an almost miraculous way. Gone were all traces of indecision: this was a man who had made up his mind, and who saw to the end of his road — this once again was their *Führer!*

However, Richard Hughes did not include this passage in his final version. Admittedly, it would have emphasised Ernst's unswerving belief in his leader, but it would also have given the reader the impression that at

²⁰ Hughes's American publisher Cass Canfield had promised in July 1972 to send Hughes a copy of Gallo's book. It still had not arrived in late August: "I suppose it is too much to hope that he will have come to the same conclusions that I did. I'm afraid that what really happened is anybody's guess: as Alan Bullock remarked to me about it: 'It is difficult writing history when you know that all your sources are liars.' My principle has been to choose the source which seemed to have least of an axe to grind" (RH to CC, August 21, 1972). A week later Hughes asked Canfield to send the book by air mail: "I feel considerable anxiety lest its findings tend to invalidate the account of the events which I have given" (RH to CC, September 9, 1972). The air mailed copy arrived on September 11, the one sent by surface mail a few days later.

²¹ RH to Alan Bullock, October 5, 1972.

this point in time everything had been decided. If Hughes wanted to hint that Hitler still had not made up his mind and that Joseph Goebbels, the changeable Realpolitiker par excellence, still kept his options open, the passage just quoted had to be excluded. Instead, the next few lines in the novel follow the departing plane from Ernst's perspective. He tries to figure out where it is heading by checking the stars: "Ernst glanced away at the Plough and the Pole Star to get his bearings: Berlin must be over there.... But no, the plane was steering a steady course towards the south-east. That was where Frankfurt lay, and Stuttgart — and further still, Munich" (p. 352). He is left without any clues as for the aeroplane's final destination, and so is the reader, for another six pages, until the landing: "... the early midsummer dawn was already tinting the spires of Munich with rosy light as their plane touched down" (p. 358).

Another long passage, extending for more than a page in the manuscript, was scrapped as well. It recounts rumours of what had happened in Munich and seems to have been based on Otto Strasser's book. One story on this manuscript page relates how the Bavarian Minister Wagner and the local Gauleiter had invited ten SA leaders to await Hitler's arrival. One of them was Ernst Udet. Some other old friends of Hitler's were also there: Hermann Esser, Christian Weber and Emil Maurice (all three appear in Chapter twenty-six of "Stille Nacht"). This is one of the discarded manuscript passages:

The Minister Wagner himself gave the signal. At least, that was Udet's tale: for when Hitler got to the building the first thing he saw there was Udet staggering blindly about in the passage, his head covered in blood and his face bashed in with a bottle. Inside the office were Hitler's old pals, all looking pleased as Punch like terriers after a rat-hunt. Hitler counted the bodies laid neatly out on the floor... Nine, when there ought to be ten? But of course, the tenth had been Udet and (God knows why!) he had let Udet go...²²

This reads differently in the final version (already quoted above on p. 297): the rhythm has changed, the pace is quickened. Friedrich is the focalizer, and his role is underlined by italics in what follows. His comments are mostly rendered in free indirect speech. He is unreliable as a witness, misunderstanding and misinterpreting much of what is going on. Sometimes he is cut off from the action, which takes place behind closed doors. His re-

²² The simile "terriers after a rat-hunt" is more sinister and less restrictedly British than, say, "hounds after a fox-hunt". But "looking pleased as Punch" underlines the perspective as that of an English observer or a writer directing himself to an English reader.

spect for Hitler (who is at times seen as grotesquely jovial) is wearing thin. In the last glimpse of Hitler in Chapter twenty-six, sweeping from the narrator's view to Friedrich's indirect speech, he does not cut a very heroic figure: "As [Hitler] passed through the door, 'I wonder how Adolf is feeling about it now?' Friedrich asked himself: 'He looks like peeing his breeks....'" (p. 360). Hughes was also careful not to trespass on the historical truth, heeding the historical expert's advice: Udet is never mentioned by name in the text of the novel, only in its appended "historical note." But Hughes was on his guard even in the manuscript which was later discarded. He did not stand by the rumour unequivocally when he passed it on, to judge from a rhetorical question that he inserted after the passage that has just been quoted: "But how could that story be true?"

*

Another episode in "Stille Nacht" is abbreviated in such a way as to make it difficult even for the knowledgeable reader to fit it correctly into this bewildering puzzle of events: "But Göbbels too shook his head: those Bratwurst-Glöckle waiters who'd witnessed his meetings with Röhm, these certainly had to be silenced . . ." (p. 366).²³ The reader has to make the connection with a scene some thirty pages earlier in the novel (p. 333), although the name of the inn is not mentioned there. The puzzling background is partly explained by Bullock,²⁴ but it is much more extensively dealt with in Otto Strasser's *Die Deutsche Bartholomäusnacht* (1935). In his chapter "Das Geheimnis des Bratwurst-Glöckle", Strasser sums up the events in a highly emotional account interlaced with rhetorical questions, spaced sentences and exclamations marks. He explains why Zehntner, the owner of the Weinschenke *Zum Bratwurst-Glöckle* in Munich, as well as his waiter and his wine steward were murdered in the Blood Purge. To their own misfortune, they had happened to overhear snippets of a conversation between Goebbels and Röhm:

Armer Zehnter! Armer Ober! Armer Zapfmeister! . . . Wie konntet Ihr wissen, daß Herr Dr. Göbbels in Sekundenschnelle zum Verrat entschlossen war, um rechtzeitig auf der Seite des Siegers zu erscheinen . . . Denn niemand durfte aussagen können,

²³ In Hughes's handwritten "1934 Time-table" the annotations for June are crammed. June 13 has one entry: "Hitler offers Gregor Ministry of Economy", and the next day two: "Hitler goes to Venice to meet Mussolini. Returns depressed & irritable. Göbbels still [?] meeting Röhm in Bratwurst-Glöckle".

²⁴ "About the same time [mid-June 1934], again according to Otto Strasser, Goebbels had been seeing Röhm secretly in a back room of the Bratwurst-Glöckle tavern in Munich. Immediately on Hitler's return from Venice Goebbels reported to him on his conversations with the S.S. Chief of Staff" (Bullock 1969 [1952], p. 297).

daß Göbbels noch Ende Juni mit Röhm verhandelt hatte, der nunmehr als Hoch- und Landesverräter entlarvt war. Das ist das Geheimnis des "Bratwurst-Glöckle" — das nunmehr kein Geheimnis mehr ist!²⁵

When he drew close to the summer of 1934 in his novel, Richard Hughes ran into many different problems. He had to disentangle threads in the confused web of the German political scene but had only a limited space in which to do it, and he had to explain why the murders of June 30 were pivotal, a water-shed in Hitler's career. Up till that day, Hitler could side either with radicals like Strasser and Röhm, or with the conservatives and capitalists like the press and film tycoon Alfred Hugenberg. According to Bullock, "Hitler was weighing the advantages of going with the radicals against the *Reaktion*, or with the Army and the Right against the radicals."²⁶

In his staccato method of interlocking episodes, hints, rumours and strands of overheard conversation, Richard Hughes made Hitler's dallying before the final decision plausible. He also hinted at Goebbels's even more mercurial moves, and was supported in this both by authoritative historians like Alan Bullock, and by Otto Strasser. Even if Hughes (who had no fluency in German) maybe did not happen to read Strasser's outburst of sympathy towards Zehntner which has just been quoted, he could still have found a footnote referring to the unfortunate witnesses at the Weinschenke in one of Strasser's many subsequent books in English.²⁷

²⁵ [Poor Zehnter! Poor waiter! Poor publican! . . . How could you know that Dr Goebbels had decided in a second to betray you in order to side with the victor in time . . . Because noone must reveal that Goebbels even at the end of June had negotiated with Roehm, who was now unmasked as a traitor of his country. That is the secret of the "Bratwurst-Glöckle" — which is no longer a secret!] (Strasser 1935, p. 90). Strasser's book soon became canonical. As early as 1937, Kurt Ludecke deemed it an important source and derived part of his *I Knew Hitler* from it, though with some reserve: "Otto Strasser I regard as a man of honor, but his hatred of these two [Goebbels and Goering] and of Hitler is now so boundless, so quasi-nihilistic, that I should hesitate to accept his account unreservedly . . . Gregor Strasser I knew for a man of probity" (Ludecke, p. 548). Oswald Spengler, the philosopher, also shared Ludecke's high regard for Gregor Strasser, contrary to Ernst Hanfstaengl: "Spengler sah in Strasser einen geeigneteren Führer der NSDAP als Hitler" [Spengler regarded Strasser a more suitable leader for the Nazi Party than Hitler] (Hanfstaengl 1970, p. 281).

²⁶ Bullock 1969, p. 297. — Otto Strasser had told Hitler in 1930: "You want to strangle the social revolution . . . for the sake of legality and your new collaboration with the bourgeois parties of the Right" (Bullock 1969, p. 157). Bullock relied on an implicated witness: "The only account we possess of the discussion is Otto Strasser's, but there is little doubt that it can be accepted as accurate in substance" (Bullock, 1969, p. 156).

²⁷ From his exile, first in Switzerland and later in Canada, Otto Strasser soon reached English-speaking readers with books like *Hitler and I* (1940), *Germany Tomorrow* (1940), *The Gangsters around Hitler* (1942) and *Flight from Terror* (1943), and he published anti-Nazi articles in *The Spectator* as early as May, 1940. His views were quoted by con-

At the precise moment of the slaughter at the Ministry of the Interior, twelve SS troopers burst into the Bratwurst-Glöckle in another corner of Munich and murdered the landlord, the wine steward and a waiter named August Holt. I can find only one reason for this act, since none of these men was involved in any way in Nazi party activities. This hostelry was the scene of several conferences held by Captain Roehm and Goebbels when this pair schemed to do to the reactionaries what was now being done to the radicals. It seems evident that Goebbels was taking no chances on any word of these meetings or their purpose slipping out from that source.²⁸

Richard Hughes in turn avoided being over-explicit. He preferred to let his readers take part in the gradual process of disentangling and interpreting events, in the case of the Bratwurst-Glöckle killings by way of Hess's free indirect speech (he is also briefly the focalizer), and then by Goebbels's line which has already been quoted in part: "Had Göbbels got names to add [to Hess's death list]? But Göbbels too shook his head: those Bratwurst-Glöckle waiters who'd witnessed his meetings with Röhm, these certainly had to be silenced — but this was a matter he'd rather attend to himself" (p. 366).

*

The final glimpse of Gregor Strasser in "Stille Nacht" is one of extreme violence, a blood-curdling and literally bloody exit scene — and a foreshadowing of the execution of Röhm four pages later in the novel. Heydrich and Eicke finish Strasser off when others have bungled the killing in the Stadelheim prison cell. The blood is not to be mopped up; it "... must remain, a useful exhibit for showing the world what 'GESTAPO' henceforth meant" (p. 372). One of Hughes's chief sources for these lines is Otto Strasser, who quotes an eye-witness, one of the SA-leaders who escaped abroad some weeks later. This is what the witness had told Otto of his brother's last minutes:

Gegen 16.30 Uhr kamen zwei hohe SS-Führer — Ich glaube es waren Heydrich und Eicke — mit zwei Scharführern zur Zelle 16, in der Ihr Bruder lag. Sie zogen Pistolen und schossen durch das Schiebefenster auf den Ahnungslosen. Verwundet sprang er auf und versuchte, sich in der gegenüberliegenden Ecke von den Schüssen zu verbergen. Da öffneten sie die Tür und gaben ihm den Gnadenschuss.²⁹

temporary British writers critical of Germany, e. g. H. G. Baynes in his *Germany Possessed* (1941). Hughes made a note of *Hitler and I* in his research file.

²⁸ Strasser 1943, p. 247.

²⁹ [Around 4.30 pm came two high-ranking SS leaders — I think it was Heydrich and Eicke — with two group leaders to cell sixteen, in which your brother lay. They drew their pistols and shot at the unsuspecting man through the window. He jumped up wounded and tried to hide from the shots in the opposite corner. Then they opened the door and gave him the coup de grâce] (Strasser 1969, p. 97).

Hughes makes the incident even more repulsive by speeding it up and turning it into a cynical murder in cold blood. There is no talk of a *coup de grâce* in the novel, and the biblical allusion in Hughes's apposition, that Gregor Strasser was Hitler's "erstwhile Fisher of Men" (p. 372), makes the following betrayal all the more fundamental. But Hughes shuns all emotional involvement, and the elevated style of Otto Strasser's account is debased by the novel's prosaic, heartless and almost cynical "Strasser had bled like a pig". The account in the novel is far from the hagiography that Otto's story of his brother's violent death clearly is.

Why Gregor Strasser was murdered in cold blood still remains unexplained by Hughes, although he had given hints along the way, for example in Chapter twenty-three of "The Meistersingers" where he introduces Gregor Strasser as "... the ablest leader of those who still believed in the 'Socialist' half of the national-Socialist Programme ... " (p. 208), and in its Chapter twenty-eight: "Both the Strassers were Radicals: that was their reason for serving the Nazi Party at all. But if anyone tried to pin him down about 'Party Policy' Hitler would wriggle away like an eel ... " (p. 225). The immediacy of the July 1934 happenings as they exist in the novel do not allow any detailed explanation of the intricate political manoeuvring then going on in the Nazi party. The rupture between the left and the right wings of the party are only hinted at, in a lapidary style: "The fracas was such that the Party seemed to be splitting. All Hitler did to heal the breach was a suicide-threat; and all Strasser got for his loyalty to his Chief was a tongue-lashing row with Hitler. Thereupon Strasser resigned ... " (p. 322).³⁰

In Chapter nineteen of "Stille Nacht", Hughes brings out Gregor Strasser's attitude of *non serviam* towards Hitler: "At first [Hitler] had thought he could bargain with Röhm by taking into his Cabinet radical Strasser to counterpoise rightwing Göring; but Strasser refused to serve not only with Göbbels his personal Judas but Göring too, he preferred to remain in private life" (pp. 332-333). Hughes could easily have been caught in the web of the almost embarrassing wealth of factual details, but he hinted more than he stated. When he could not paint a complete picture of an ambiguous and complex episode in the struggle for power in early Nazism, between the left and right wings of the Party (only a historian could have done that), he left much unsaid. He could have crammed even

³⁰ Hughes was forced to speed up the action: *The Fox in the Attic* takes place within a few months in late 1923, whereas *The Wooden Shepherdess* covers eleven years. See Kruse, p. 193 ff.

more details into his novel than he did, but he left it to his readers to fill in the background. If one wants to see the larger pattern behind Hughes's deliberately sketchy reconstruction, one has to consult several incongruous sources, as Hughes did.

Hughes was an expert at showing conflicting sides of an issue. In his novel project the generations differ in their views of the Putsch and the following Purge, as they no doubt did in reality. Sixty-year-old Walther von Kessen (born in 1874 though this is never stated in the novel), hopes for a Wittelsbach restoration and welcomes the 1934 events as they have unfolded. This is his sigh of relief: "So Röhm had committed suicide! Frankly, a jolly good riddance.... There wasn't much to be said for the upstart Hitler, but even less for the blackguardly Röhm!" (p. 379). And he continues, on the next page: "Destroying [the S.A.'s] power has weakened no one so much as Hitler himself . . .". Walther von Kessen carries on: "In short, he has bound himself hand-and-foot and delivered himself to the Army: we've got the little man just where we want him, now!" (p. 380).

His son Franz, twenty-nine years younger, is more clear-sighted when he predicts the future: "The fact is . . . that this latest master-stroke is additional proof that you all underrated the Führer right from the start . . . what you failed to observe was the streak of political genius governing every move from his earliest days" (p. 379), and he praises Hitler's cleverness at the game of *divide et impera*. But neither Walther nor Franz get the last word. Richard Hughes exemplifies the repercussions of the Purge in the fictional as well as in the factual world, by making Walther's half-brother Otto meet with as violent an end as that of Hitler's erstwhile friends Ernst Röhm and Gregor Strasser.

Chapter XV

Richard Hughes on the German Book Market

Richard Hughes's London publishers, Chatto & Windus, took care of his foreign rights, with the exception of the German ones. Due to special complications on the German market before, during and after the Second World War, his affairs were handled by the literary agents A. M. Heath & Co Ltd, where C. H. Brooks and later Hester Green were his main contact persons.¹ The correspondence concerning *The Human Predicament* on the book market in Germany is extensive, but only the first of its two volumes was ever translated into German. The exchange of letters, which went on for fifteen years, had started in July 1960. In a letter to his agent in that month, Hughes mentioned for the first time what was then still a work-in-process by using the preliminary title "Fall '23". He was interested in having an advance copy of the German episodes in his manuscript forwarded to the publishing house Suhrkamp. Hughes was convinced, the letter said, that his chapters contained the fullest and most truthful account yet compiled of the Hitler Putsch and the forty-eight hours immediately thereafter; he had tried to give a true account of German affairs in his manuscript. At this early stage, a year before the British publication, he anticipated that German readers would possibly find his reconstruction of the Bavarian events controversial. He was right, as proved by subsequent letters in the file. This is how he broached the matter with his literary agent:

Since this is a novel, naturally fictitious characters — and these are entirely fictitious — occupy the foreground with their private affairs. Historical events are usually (but not always) seen through the eyes of fictitious observers. But I have stuck to the convention that fictitious characters must never directly influence the course of history; and indeed in dealing with such events I have allowed myself *no* romancer's licence; once I have been able to discover the actual detailed facts (by going to original sources wherever I could) I have never consciously falsified them . . . Similarly I have tried to treat all historical characters fairly and without hind-sight. Indeed the only novelist's licence I have allowed myself regarding them is that of pretending to see just as freely into the workings of their minds (even Hitler's) as if they were fictional characters of my own invention... and here admittedly I get on to pretty controversial ground. Similarly the philosophy of history I try to develop

¹ *A High Wind in Jamaica* had three different German publishers: Reiss, 1931; Suhrkamp, 1950, 1973 and 1984; Rowohlt, 1965. *In Hazard* had two: Fischer, 1938, and Suhrkamp, 1948, 1956 and 1977; and *The Fox in the Attic* one: Insel-Verlag, 1963 (Morgan 1993, pp. 152-157).

— a common principle shown acting in private events and public ones equally — is also pretty controversial.²

In his answer to this letter, C. H. Brooks could not tell whether a British writer writing about the Nazi movement in its early days would be advantaged or disadvantaged on a German market. He took it for granted that German readers would tend to be critical towards a foreign writer dealing with their recent history.³ In his reply the next day, Hughes admitted that such touchiness would be natural. He suggested that because of this, Suhrkamp should get an opportunity to have a look at the typescript at this preliminary stage. Their comments might prove immediately useful but would be of no use later, as deadlines had to be met; corrections had to be made by the end of the year. He mentioned one particular episode in his novel that could possibly be seen as contentious and controversial, namely his attempt to apply the stream-of-consciousness technique in his portrait of Hitler: "you'll see I've chanced my arm plenty," is his comment. But he reiterated that he had tried not to falsify the record, and that he had relied on eye-witness reports wherever possible. "Ethically I've tried to be objective too, deriving Nazism from the situation rather than from any peculiarly German double-portion of original sin." Since many of the important characters, the heroine among them, were Bavarian, he felt that it might be wise to find out what Suhrkamp thought of the script and its local colour.⁴

The agent agreed to act as a go-between. In the next few letters to Brooks Hughes raised the question of a possible translator. He suggested baroness Pia von Aretin, who was well qualified, thanks to her family connections: "From before the war she knows that kind of English background pretty intimately as well as the Bavarian one she was born and bred in." Hughes did not mention that the translator he suggested would have been particularly knowledgeable since a significant part of the book relied on her own and her mother's oral accounts, and on her father's written memoirs, a fact which the agent found out once he read the brief acknowledgement at the end of the completed script. In the same letter, Hughes confessed that he did not have the linguistic competence to judge someone's German, let alone how good or bad it might be. His faltering

² RH to C.H. Brooks, July 4, 1960.

³ CHB to RH, November 4, 1960.

⁴ RH to CHB, November 5, 1960.

knowledge of German is a point that is brought up at regular intervals throughout his correspondence.⁵

The typescript was sent off to Suhrkamp. At the same time, that publisher received Pia von Aretin's trial translation of the novel's four opening chapters. She had done them on her own accord and had sent them on her own initiative. In December 1960, another German publishing house, Piper Verlag, were involved in the negotiations. The London agent's contact in Zurich had suggested that it would be a better idea to place the novel with Piper as they had already shown some interest in it.⁶ Two days later, Hughes got the belated news that his old contact Peter Suhrkamp, the head of the firm, had died in the previous year. As a result, matters might not be quite as smooth as they had been previously. Early in 1961, Hans-Magnus Enzensberger's name appeared for the first time in the correspondence between Hughes and his agent. Enzensberger was to play an important but controversial role for Hughes on the German market in the following years. The agent told Hughes that this "new man at Suhrkamp" would like the time for perusal of the manuscript extended from the suggested two weeks to six.⁷

In his answer two days later, Hughes was obviously getting both weary and wary. The comments from Germany that he had expected would come almost too late even if they were sent by air mail. If the printers' deadline was to be kept, there would be no time for any drastic changes in the script. Hughes did not conceal his irritation, in the volley of letters over the next few weeks, when Enzensberger procrastinated. Hughes commented wryly that his publisher in Stockholm, Norstedts,⁸ had bought the Swedish rights to the novel without even having seen the manuscript in advance.

⁵ RH to CHB, November 14, 1960. — On this topic, Richard Perceval Graves quotes the journal Hughes kept as a steerage passenger on an emigrant ship from Tilbury to New York in the summer of 1921: "This is Babel. Except for German and a little French patois, I do not know what languages I am hearing" (Graves 1994, p. 60). Some days later, he had made some progress: "In German I can now make myself fairly comprehensible" (Ibid., p. 63). Maybe it was on that occasion that he started a German-English vocabulary in a black notebook, now kept in his archive. He gave up the attempt after only two pages and ten words, all of them basic. It is more interesting to read the German words that he noted down while at work on *The Human Predicament*: "Menschlich, übermenschlich, unmenschlich, Hetzpropaganda, Rassenschande, Ausgeschlossen, Erschütternd, Furchtbar, Ehrgeiz, Gott im Himmel, Zwei Seelen wohnen, ach, in meiner Brust (Goethe), Hingabe — surrender (as of woman), Generaloberst, Kulturvolk, Luftfahrtsministerium." Das lässt tief blicken.

⁶ CHB to RH, December 7, 1960.

⁷ CHB to RH, January 2, 1961.

⁸ Hughes met Ragnar Svanström of Norstedts in London later that spring.

By the end of January 1961, the agent at A. M. Heath had been informed by its Swiss agent Mohrbooks that a full report from Suhrkamp was due shortly. This had stretched matters far too long, however. At the beginning of February, Hughes wrote with some dismay that the German comments which he had called for would no longer be very useful as they would arrive too late. By this time, the manuscript had been forwarded to Piper Verlag, and the agent was expecting a decision from them, the author was told. By the end of March, a third publishing firm, Sigbert Mohn, had shown some interest as well. However, in the following month, the agents were sorry to have to report that two of the German publishing houses, Piper and Kurt Desch, had rejected the option. A fifth publisher, S. Fischer, was then approached.

By now Hester Green at A. M. Heath had taken over the correspondence with Hughes and would continue to do so as long as the contacts between agent and author lasted, for another fourteen years. A whole string of letters were exchanged in April and May 1961. In early May, Hughes had been informed of Claus Piper's unfavourable decision in a letter of rejection dated February 20. Piper's letter made it clear that both the publisher himself, his wife and their readers had assessed the manuscript. It had baffled them: the British public might be interested in reading about Bavaria when the Nazi party was young and aspiring, but Piper was convinced that German readers who had lived all their lives in Germany and had been forced to take part in the entire tragic development would find the novel's scenes naive. The historical persons, among them Aretin, Putzi Hanfstaengl and Ludendorff, would seem mere cardboard figures ("blosse Schemen"). The love story between Augustine and Mitzi was not convincing, and even if the English scenes had a "schöne poetische Stimmung" there were many weaknesses in the novel, for example its philosophising monologue [in Chapters twenty-six and twenty-seven of "Polly and Rachel"]. Hughes reacted to the criticism in a letter to Hester Green and wondered why his manuscript had provoked such a negative reaction:

It can't just be that the German scenes don't ring true in German ears, that the language jars, that could be remedied by a skilful translator. I suspect that it is something rather deeper: that they don't want old wounds uncovered, particularly by an outsider.

Hughes was disappointed. It is understandable if he felt hurt as well, but he must have anticipated the criticism. He wrote that he had believed that

an outsider's view would be of interest to German readers, and he added that he had received a positive response from Pia von Aretin. A Berlin student who had read the typescript had thought that it clarified things about the Hitler enigma; the Führer was otherwise an unexplained figure in German history of whom little was known to the student's generation of Germans.⁹

In the middle of April Hughes was told that although Germans thought the book "remarkably accurate considering that it was by an Englishman", both Suhrkamp, Piper and Desch had felt that "it is in some respects off beam for the German reader in its narrative of recent German history." The letter in which this was stated must have been a difficult one for Hester Green to formulate. She did it with tact by talking of all the obstacles a foreign author would be bound to encounter if he tried to tackle "what one might call atmospheric values, in a way acceptable to the natives of the country, especially when their recollections are so heavily tinged with feeling." No doubt this was a roundabout way of relaying to Hughes the negative reactions that she had received, as his literary agent, from the different German publishing houses and their readers.¹⁰

In his answer, Hughes patiently suggested that he might prepare an altered version for S. Fischer even though it would be too late to include changes in the original edition, which would soon be out. Hughes defended his novel, but he also suggested changes. The off-beamishness could possibly be rectified, and as for the historical aspect, he had documents that could prove his assertions on almost all points. In the cases where he had departed from the official version, he could, if need be, produce the necessary evidence of the historical accuracy of his views. When he had read parts of his manuscript aloud to Pia von Aretin and her mother, they had raised no objections as to the "atmospheric values", he added.¹¹

However, Claus Piper's letter which Hughes had read with a delay of two months showed that it was not just a case of atmosphere that could be altered easily. The letter's negative comments went deeper. Piper had thought the book, as Hughes summed it up, "mere reportage, utterly phoney and boring." The novelist added masochistically that Piper did not think this was a book for the demanding ("anspruchsvoll") German

⁹ RH to HG, April 6, 1961.

¹⁰ HG to RH, April 13, 1961.

¹¹ RH to HG, April 19, 1961.

reader; Hughes did not recognise his own book in the negative criticism.¹² In May, he welcomed the news that S. Fischer, who had been his first German publisher in 1930, seemed seriously interested in his novel, but by now he had grown tired of this tangled web of negotiations.¹³ He instructed his agent that if S. Fisher should turn the offer down, she should put the negotiations on hold until the book had appeared in England, and only then approach potential German publishers.

Claus Piper, who was living in Munich and thus extra sensitive to the Bavarian local colour, went to considerable length in explaining and justifying his standpoint in his subsequent letter to Chatto & Windus in May. He declined the option to the manuscript and recommended that Suhrkamp in Frankfurt am Main be approached. He did not want to evaluate the literary and stylistic qualities of the novel and stressed that he had no competence to do that. His objections were concerned with the German scenes only. They were, in his opinion, neither original nor convincing, and he doubted that they would hold the German readers' interest. The rendering of life among the aristocrats seemed to him superficial and stagy ("theaterhaft"), and that went for Hughes's efforts to dig down to the roots of Nazism as well. Reality and myths ("Legende") had been mixed too closely in the novel, he felt. Piper's letter was sent to the London publisher, not to the author, but Claus Piper really rubbed in his objections to the German chapters when he mentioned one American and one British author as touchstones. That a foreigner could write a balanced account of life among the Germans had been proved by Thomas Wolfe, whose pages about Berlin and Munich in particular he said were unforgettable ("unvergesslich").¹⁴ The letters of D. H. Lawrence and their impres-

¹² RH to NS, April 26, 1961.

¹³ Hughes misremembered: Reiss had published his first novel in 1931, whereas Fischer stepped in only two years later, with the German translation of *The Spider's Palace and Other Stories* (Morgan 1993, p. 154).

¹⁴ In spite of his short life span — he died not quite 38 years old — Thomas Wolfe made seven trips to Europe, mostly to Paris and London, but also to Munich and Berlin. In 1928, he got himself into a brawl at a Bavarian *Oktoberfest*. He planned a novel called *The October Fair*, a small part of which was published in the magazine *American Mercury* in 1937. During his stay in Freiburg in 1930, he witnessed the Nazi gain of 95 seats in the Reichstag election (from 12 to 107). His weeks in Berlin in 1935 as one of Rowohlts's successful writers confirmed his positive impressions of Germany and Germans who were "the cleanest, the warmest-hearted, and the most honorable people I have met in Europe." Anti-Jewish sentiments did not offend him at the time; he was anti-Semitic himself. Ambassador Dodds, and especially his daughter Martha, tried to show him that there was another side to the coin. Wolfe was back in Berlin during the Olympic summer of 1936 and saw Hitler attend the games, "a little dark man with a comic-opera moustache, erect and standing, moveless and unsmiling, with his hand upraised, palm out-

sions of Germany also proved his point, Claus Piper wrote, and ended on a stern note which showed his obvious irritation. He had not been fair to the novel as a whole, he admitted, but he had had no intention of going into any detailed discussion of it. That would involve reading the whole manuscript again, and he simply could not spare the time.¹⁵

The agents' continued efforts were not crowned with success until many months later. In the meantime, Hughes had got an appreciative letter from Norstedts in Stockholm. He forwarded it to his London agents for them to support his case in Germany. Some time later, in the summer of 1963, he came across an article in *Encounter* by the philosopher Karl Jaspers on the "collective amnesia" of Germany and wrote his agent that he thought this article put "its finger on the root of our difficulties in this market." Bearing the Berlin student's favourable judgement in mind, he felt that he had touched on matters which had been deliberately withheld from a younger generation of Germans, and he thought that it might be a good idea to call upon Karl Jaspers for support.¹⁶ The suggestion does not seem to have been followed up.

In mid-September 1961, S. Fischer had finally declined the offer, but Hughes's indefatigable agent was undeterred. Yet another publisher, Schefler, was approached. Less than two weeks later, Hester Green reported that thanks to the advertising campaign launched by Chatto & Windus she had received further enquiries from a number of German publishers. In late October, she was approached by the London representative of *Der Spiegel*, H. G. Alexander, who sent Richard Hughes a letter the same day: the German magazine would like to publish an article on "your wonderful novel", including a translated extract from it. Alexander also asked Hughes some questions about what would happen to Augustine in the future and how far the chronicle would be brought. He was also interested in Hughes's source for Hitler's stay at Uffing, immediately after the aborted Putsch. In his answer two days later, Hughes intimated that Augustine would cover more ground than just England and Germany in the volumes to follow and that the last in the series would culminate in the Second World War, a war which he would try to describe "from both sides of the hill." As for his source of Hitler's stay at Uffing, he did not want to reveal it, and he added, somewhat dismissively: "Would you very much

ward, not in Nazi-wise salute, but straight up, in a gesture of blessing such as the Buddha or Messiahs use" (See David Herbert Donald, *Look Homeward*, 1987, passim).

¹⁵ CP to Chatto & Windus, May 9, 1961.

¹⁶ RH to HG, August 20, 1961.

mind not guessing about this point?" He had received his information in confidence and out of kindness. Moreover, the facts that stemmed from this witness were mostly concerned with external events only. For the novel's reconstruction of Hitler's thoughts, Hughes wrote, he had relied on his own imagination supported by Kubizek's memoirs.¹⁷ When an article on *The Fox in the Attic* finally appeared in *Der Spiegel*, it was not written by H. G. Alexander, as explained below.

At long last, the agent reported in December 1961 that she had received an offer for the German rights to *The Fox in the Attic* from Insel Verlag in Frankfurt. They would like to know when the following volumes in the projected trilogy would be ready for publication, an optimistic question which Hughes was prudent enough to disregard. In mid-December, he informed his agent that the novel had now "been accepted in every country west of the Iron curtain". This was only a slight exaggeration,¹⁸ as it was eventually translated into twelve languages, among them Danish, Swedish and Norwegian, Dutch, Finnish, French, Italian and Spanish (published in Madrid as well as in Buenos Aires).¹⁹ The contract with the German publisher was signed in mid-January. Insel anticipated difficulties and kept the advance against royalties low. Especially the Swedish advance, but also the Danish one, had been generous in comparison. Hughes told his agent that the American edition would be brought out on the last day of January, surrounded by a burst of advertising activities. This might be of interest to Insel, and also the interviews that had just taken place which would appear in *The New York Times Book Review* and in *Time*.²⁰

Not happy with Pia von Aretin's German sample, Insel had contracted another translator, Maria Wolff. An unsigned article in *Der Spiegel* on the new "Hitler-Roman" reached Hughes soon after. He approached Chatto & Windus for a translation: "It is tantalizing to know so little German", he wrote.²¹ Evidently, Hughes was not the only one of those involved who had scant knowledge of German. Hester Green, who had sent him the article in April, a month after it was published, was happy to tell him that it

¹⁷ RH to HGA, November 1, 1961.

¹⁸ A Hungarian edition of *Fox in the Attic* followed in 1964, and the same publishing house (Europa in Budapest) added *The Wooden Shepherdess* to its list in 1978. Two Soviet publishers (Progress and Lumina) translated both volumes in 1979 and 1981 respectively (Morgan, p. 157). It is a strange fact that no East German publishers seem to have shown any interest in Hughes's books. An Israeli edition of the second volume was published in 1987.

¹⁹ Morgan 1993, pp. 156-157.

²⁰ RH to HG, January 13, 1962.

²¹ RH to Chatto & Windus, March 27, 1962.

was complimentary. Either she had not read it, or she had misinterpreted it. Hughes, who was at the time staying on Rhodes where he had no German dictionary at hand, had his doubts: "I would have said that the object of its deadpan recapitulation of the German scenes was to make them seem ridiculous to German readers by heightening the melodrama." Besides, Hughes wrote, the phrase "von der gleichen unfreiwilligen Komik" (which he understood) gave the writer of the article away.²²

That the article was highly critical was clear from the headline "Mit der Peitsche". The reviewer singled out a whip-lashing Hitler for his ridicule but had missed the allusion to the prophet Nahum: "Woe to the bloody city! It is all full of lies and robbery... the noise of the whip..." (p. 265, see above, p. 139). Hughes had revealed this source to H. G. Alexander of *Der Spiegel*, who explained that his original article had been completely rewritten. In his apologetic letter to Hughes he distanced himself from the article as it had appeared in print. In May, while he was still on Rhodes, Hughes had got the entire article translated. He was convinced, he wrote to his agent, that "Insel Verlag [would] have a pretty tough row to hoe."

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The four-page article in *Der Spiegel* (March 14, 1962) had reached Richard Hughes under the address "Poste Restante, Lindos, Rhodes" in the last week of March. It was maybe not quite as negative as he reported and complained in his letters at the time. His faulty German seems to have left him in the lurch:

I enclose an article on the FOX which has just appeared in *Der Spiegel* (I haven't even got a German dictionary here with me of course): I can just figure out they don't like it much as a picture of Germany in the 'twenties, and that's about all. It would be a very great kindness if you could let me have a translation some time as it may help me over volumes to come.²³

The article informed the German reader factually of Hughes's earlier books. Hughes, enjoying travels, had researched his novel in Sweden and Switzerland, Poland, Germany and Denmark, it stated; he had studied the entire protocol of the proceedings of the Nuremberg international tribunal

²² RH to HG, April 13, 1962.

²³ RH to Peter Calvocoressi, March 27, 1962. — Calvocoressi, a former reader in international Relations at the University of Sussex, undoubtedly proved one of Hughes's invaluable authorities in regard to the European political scene. His many books include *Nuremberg: the facts, the law and the consequences*, *Survey of International Affairs* (five vols. 1947-1953), and *World Politics Since 1945* (in its seventh edition 1996).

for war crimes and had, according to himself ("nach eigener Angabe"), interviewed dozens of Hitler's contemporaries who knew him in the early stage of his career.²⁴ Two British views on the novel were cited, *The Sunday Times* enthusiastically comparing him with Tolstoy,²⁵ and *The Guardian's* more guarded observation that this was an open-ended novel whose action seemed somewhat artificial.²⁶

The reviewer in *Der Spiegel* agreed that this book had made a rather fragmentary impression on her or him (the critic was anonymous). A disillusioned hero at the end of the novel was quoted: "Augustine hated Germany: all he wanted now was to get away as quickly as he could" (p. 351). This set the tenor of the article as far as the German scenes were concerned. Walther is described as a patriarch who puts his children in chains,²⁷ and his brother Otto offers further characteristics of the Teutonic type. The title figure Wolff is said to be full of nationalistic and bloodthirsty ("blutrünstigen") thoughts when hiding among the bats in the attic. A passage from Hitler's monologue was quoted and described as the feverish phantasies of someone half crazy ("Halbirren"). The reviewer linked it to the novel's description of Wolff's psychic constitution: "Von der gleichen unfreiwilligen Komik ist auch die kolportagehafte Beschreibung, die Hughes von der psychischen Verfassung des Rathenau-Mörders Wolff Scheidemann gibt."²⁸ All things considered, the article gave a fairly balanced summary of the events in the book and was negative on two counts only. It referred the reader to the English original, the German translation still to come.

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²⁴ Some years later, the historian John Toland easily outdid him: "I interviewed as many as possible of those who knew Hitler intimately — both worshipers and deriders . . . I conducted more than two hundred and fifty interviews" (Toland 1997 [1976], p. xiii).

²⁵ The reviewer was Goronwy Rees.

²⁶ In actual fact, Patrick Cruttwell was even more critical than the impression given by the summing-up in *Der Spiegel*: "The balancing, so far, seems uneasy, the links artificial . . . [Hughes's] mixture of whimsicality and shock-effect (the opening pages are a splendid example of the latter) will not wear well through many volumes" (*Guardian*, October 6, 1961).

²⁷ As has been shown (see above, p. 35), two Bavarian castles inspired Richard Hughes, Schloss Neuburg and Schloss Heidenburg: "At Neuburg there were no children in the house: in Diccon's book the children . . . were provided by Heidenburg, with one significant alteration, which was to make the children's father angry when he read it — the savage punishment inflicted on the twins in the book was taken from a childhood memory of an English friend, a Brigadier, (and he too was angry at its inclusion)" (Penelope Hughes, p. 160).

²⁸ [unintentionally comical is also Hughes's trashy description of the Rathenau-killer Wolff Scheidemann's psychology]

Mohrbooks, the Swiss literary agents that A. M. Heath had dealt with, assured them that *Der Spiegel* need not be taken too seriously. It was notorious for publishing only negative reviews. Heath passed on this comforting Swiss opinion to Hughes.²⁹ There were further delays in the German translation. By December 1962, Insel Verlag planned to have the book published either in the late summer or early autumn of the following year. The agent suggested that Hughes appear at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 1963. He was wary about doing that, however, he told them, mostly on linguistic grounds. He would not be able to appear without revealing that his knowledge of German was insufficient. This in turn could be used against him and his book, "as proof of my ignorance of Germany."³⁰

Insel did not share his misgivings, they told him: it was a novel they were publishing, not a historical document. In April 1963, Hughes was informed by his agents of changes in the ownership of Insel which was now closely linked to Suhrkamp. After the merger, Dr. Rudolf Hirsch would head the Insel section and Dr. Unseld the Suhrkamp one. According to Hester Green, Unseld was not too keen on Hughes's novel, and even Hirsch was not an unqualified admirer of it. She suggested that as a precaution two more German publishers, Rowohlt and Diogenes, should be approached. She soon sent Hughes the conflicting message that, on the contrary, Rudolf Hirsch was extremely enthusiastic about the novel.

Der Fuchs unterm Dach was finally published in September 1963, "aus dem Englischen übersetzt von Maria Wolff, im Insel Verlag". The full text of the original's Note and Acknowledgements were bundled together in a "Nachwort". In that way, the German reading public learned about some of the sources: the British historians, Ernst Hanfstaengl, August Kubizek, Ernst von Salomon (whose name had been corrected from the misspelling in the original), Baroness Pia von Aretin, and her father's memoirs. The afterword also mentioned, as did the original, that Major Goetz's letter had found its way "in die deutsche Presse", although nothing was said of where or exactly when. German readers, like the English ones, did not

²⁹ The Swiss critic Marta Nowak, reviewing the novel three years later in *Tagesanzeiger* (Zürich) on February 2, 1964, was entirely and overwhelmingly positive. She was impressed by the story as Hughes had made it unfold in his German chapters. He showed an astonishing knowledge of the facts ("Sachkenntnis") and an extreme empathy ("unerhörte Einfühlungsgabe"). She loaded her review with superlatives: this novel would be difficult to surpass in its true picture of life, and its historical figures seemed absolutely natural ("absolut selbstverständlich"). That her review was written not in Germany but in neutral Switzerland may go some way towards explaining the well-nigh total absence of any negative criticism in it.

³⁰ RH to HG, December 28, 1962.

need much detection skill if they wanted to find out the true identity of Hughes's witness at Uffing.

In November, Hughes made a tentative summing up of how well the novel had gone down in different countries. The German reviews had been "almost universally disparaging", he writes (which was not quite true, as will be seen in the following). He was sorry that they were not all outright abusive as that would at least have saved the day by creating a *succès de scandale*. The novel had not fared much better in Holland, he wrote, while it had sold extremely well in Italy, with a printing of 30,000 copies which exceeded even the British one. In France, the book club edition alone ran into 40,000 copies.³¹ In December, Richard Hughes thanked Dr. Hirsch for the German newspaper reviews that he had received, and he singled out one in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Rudolf Hirsch arranged a contact between Hughes and Helene Hentze, the *FAZ* reviewer, whom the novelist later got in direct touch with. Dr. Hirsch had not been surprised by the general tenor of the German reviews, he explained in his reply to Hughes. It was more or less what he had expected: "Die Reaktion der Presse auf Ihren Roman war ungefähr vorauszusehen." He appreciated the critics who were not tied "durch verschiedene Präokkupationen" to the past and who consequently were less opinionated in their assessment.

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Thus ended the long-winded exchange of letters about the appearance of *The Fox in the Attic* on the German market. Some letters remain to be commented upon, the ones dealing with the 1963 literary Prix Formentor³² and its aftermath. When the delegates of the Formentor jury met at Corfu, the different nominations were discussed. There were some strong contenders for the prize: in addition to *The Fox in the Attic* Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, and novels by Alejo Carpenter, Muriel Spark and others.³³

³¹ RH to HG, November 12, 1963.

³² Instigated by a Spanish publisher and named after the place on Majorca where European critics and publishers convened, the Prix Formentor was organized by thirteen publishers from as many countries. All thirteen agreed to publish the winning novel, awarded \$ 10,000. Some of the prizes in the past had gone to Uwe Johnson, Samuel Beckett and J. L. Borges.

³³ *The Fox in the Attic* turned out to be one of the unbacked favourites for the prize. This seems to have surprised some observers. T. R. Fyvel essayed an explanation: "The unexpected internationally popular figure was Richard Hughes, who in the first ballot received as much support, given him by Scandinavian, Italian, and Spanish critics, as the main Anglo-American candidate, Nabokov. *A High Wind in Jamaica* has evidently

(The 1963 prize went to neither: Jorge Semprun was awarded it for his holocaust novel *Le Grand Voyage*). The Italian delegation were in strong support of Richard Hughes, as they made clear in their apology:

We find ourselves faced with a book that, beyond its literary achievement, has assumed the task of judgement, — a high moral purpose which one does not often come across in other works of contemporary fiction . . . In Hughes's narrative range, we find a particular resonance in the way he uses the dangerous strings of the demoniac and the grotesque. He uses them with an irresistible mastery — mixing (with great daring) fictitious characters with historical personages . . . condensing their gestures and utterings into a kind of anguished incubus, a kind of Witches sabbath . . . But the author keeps this *Danse Macabre* in the background with a wonderful sense of measure. . .

The demoniac and grotesque elements of Gothic horror that the Italians praised were objectionable to the German delegation, which was headed by Hans-Magnus Enzensberger.³⁴ The Germans took the opposite standpoint; they were predominantly negative where the Italians had been mainly positive. In late June, Hughes received Enzensberger's summing-up of the German objections, in the following rough translation:

In Corfu I raised some points about the content of the novel. I considered Hughes's presentations of the origin of Nazism to be completely false or misconceived, to the extent that they make it appear more harmless than it was. I do not think that Nazism can be described as a phenomenon from the nineteenth century, rather à la Dracula, it is a sinister phenomenon in a completely different way than the cobweb in the loft of a Bavarian castle. The pretext that the action is seen through the perspective of the main character of the novel, who is himself a figure from the nineteenth century, does not convince me; the author does not distance himself from this perspective. He makes it his own.³⁵

Richard Hughes discussed Enzensberger's criticism publicly in an interview with Barry Sullivan of the BBC German Services, and responded to it.³⁶ The transcript of the programme tapes, twelve foolscap pages, makes it clear that the programme was condensed when it was transmitted in 1963.

through all the years remained such a warmly and nostalgically remembered English novel that it made up for doubts about *The Fox in the Attic*." (*The Listener*, May 16, 1963, p. 834).

³⁴ Julian Symons did not quite know what to make of the Gothic elements in Hughes's novel: "The significance of Wolff, of the girl Mitzi who goes blind, of the child who has been found dead when the story opens, must be decided later — one hopes that they are not merely whims of a Gothic imagination" (*Twentieth Century*, Winter 1962, p. 151).

³⁵ Barry Sullivan to RH, June 25, 1963.

³⁶ Barry Sullivan was still in the same department ten years later, when *The Wooden Shepherdess* was published.

Asked when the idea to write about his own time and its predicament first entered his mind, Hughes stated that the idea had hit him quite suddenly, around 1941. The interviewer then broached issues involving cultural and national differences: a British author who chose to write about "the origin and birth-pang of Nazism" would be audacious or even foolhardy, and the enterprise would surely raise some amazement in Germany. Were the characters in Hughes's novel representative enough? Could the origin of Nazism have been explained differently, as less centred on persons and more on general economic and social conditions like the depression? Hughes had no difficulties in answering that. He had written a novel in which he was bound to keep within the time frame set by the characters that he portrayed. He was no historian and he had carefully avoided writing with any obvious hindsight.

Barry Sullivan mentioned Enzensberger's critical point that Augustine seemed to be rather closely identified with Hughes's own views. The interviewer modified this by suggesting that the German critic may have overlooked Hughes's irony, and besides, the irony could even have got lost in the translation. Hughes agreed, someone "who hasn't absolutely got English at his fingertips to spot where I am writing — if you like — from a God's eye point of view" would be likely to miss the point that in the novel, the misunderstanding of what was happening was more important than the understanding of it. Sullivan suggested that the novel had Tolstoyan influences blended with a stream-of-consciousness technique. The observation enabled Hughes to counter another of Enzensberger's critical points, namely that the novelist as well as his main protagonist were persons out of the last century, not the present one: "I can't frankly think of any nineteenth century novelist who did write in this way. In fact, I don't think [writing in this manner] would be possible except for the changes in the art of novel-writing which have been made in this century." The criticism was unfair: Enzensberger most probably did not know that Hughes was highly aware of narrative theory, but had he read *The Human Predicament* carefully, he would have seen that its author was well-versed in modern narrative technique.

Was Augustine's naive insularity the product of a typically English education, the interviewer asked. Hughes agreed but added that Augustine was also quite specifically the product of his own times. If he had been only a few years older or a few years younger, he would not have developed into the same person. But like the Auden-Spender generation which came

of age in the thirties, Augustine certainly was no product of the last century. The interview then focussed on the philosophical basis of the novel (which had not gone down well with Claus Piper). The philosophical and psychological hypothesis of a penumbra that surrounds the personality was linked to the concepts of "we" and "my", Hughes explained:

Both those words are a way of acknowledging that one's own personality can be inextricably mixed into the personality of another person . . . that the real boundary of personality therefore is not a close fence around the innermost eye, but a rather wider circumference which includes everything — every person that comes within the we, everything which comes within the my and that is the final and important barrier because within it you've got positive emotional charges and outside it you've got negative emotional charges — balancing each other.

Listeners who were already familiar with the novel would have understood what Hughes was driving at, i. e. his explanation of the differences between the German and the British collective experiences. His detailed answer was abbreviated when the talk was broadcast, but it survives in extenso in the transcript. The novel's passages on the issue may have been elliptical. However, he was less restricted when he discussed his concept in the radio programme:

What I was trying to express, was that the appalling experiences of the inflation . . . completely ruined and disorientated the fringe of the personalities of Germans of the day. Their "my" fringe was completely disrupted by the loss of all their property, the "we" fringe was disrupted by the general collapse of the social system . . . [and] the collapse of money as a language of communication . . . Instead of a firm boundary between the "we" and "they", they were left with jagged edges and nothing sure, nothing safe. This suffering which they went through inevitably bred hate. But hatred of whom, hatred of what?

Hughes explained that since 'to hate' as well as 'to love' are transitive verbs, they both must take an object, and he mentioned the irrational objects that had to be conjured up for this hatred, among them the Jews and the Catholics. In normal social circumstances one would both love and hate with moderation, but this was not the case in post-war (i. e. post-World War I) Germany with its extreme political and economic situation and its excess of emotions. This "immoderate supply of hatred, which was, in fact, suffering turned into hatred and . . . therefore had to find a fictive object". Its counterpart, excessive love, also had to find its object.

The interview then turned to Wolff hiding in the attic of Lorientburg castle. Hughes clarified his novel's title: "The fox in the attic", he said, "is

not intended to be Wolff, and the character Wolff is put almost in contrast to Nazism". Neither was the title, changed from the original "Fall '23", intended to refer to Hitler. However, many critics overlooked the title of the volume's second book, "The White Crow", which was the soldiers' nickname for corporal Hitler (see above, p. 288), and instead elaborated the suggestive links between the Führer and the fox.³⁷ Wolff and his fellows in the Freikorps, who had lived in an atmosphere of fear and violence while on their murderous raids in the Baltics in late 1918, would at that time have been even further removed from sanity than the Nazis. Perhaps Lothar Scheidemann more than his brother Wolff was the Nazi prototype, the interviewer suggested, and Hughes agreed: he was younger than Wolff and as naive as Augustine. Needing a "we", he was attracted by the blood-brotherhood of the young Nazis.

When Hitler was brought into the talk, some German listeners may have had difficulties stomaching Hughes's statement that "Hitler after all was a human being and it seemed only fair to apply to him the same kind of treatment as I was giving to the fictional characters in the book."³⁸ When he wrote about Hitler, did the novelist allow himself liberties that a historian would have been forced to abstain from, Sullivan asked. The chapter on Hitler's delirium was a dream or semi-dream, Hughes answered, though it was filled with images drawn from memoirs of Hitler's childhood: "Admittedly, it's going a very long road to reconstruct a dream for historical characters . . . and naturally I don't claim historical accuracy for that dream. All I hoped to do by it was to give a picture of Hitler as seen from within."

An extra foolscap page, headed revised, indicates that Hughes was asked (neither question nor answer seem to have been broadcast) whether his German characters would constitute a fair average sample of Germans

³⁷ One of them was the Danish novelist Klaus Rifbjerg, in his review called "En ræv der hed Adolf" [A Fox called Adolf] (*Politiken*, February 11, 1962).

³⁸ German listeners may have recalled one of Thomas Mann's pre-war essays, provocatively called *Bruder Hitler*. But Mann's was a heavily ironic title. If Hitler was a brother, he was someone to be ashamed of, someone who got on one's nerves: "Ein etwas unangenehmer und beschämender Bruder; er geht einem auf die Nerven, es ist eine reichlich peinlichen Verwandtschaft" (Mann 1960 [1939] p. 849). The essay, originally published in an emigrant magazine in Paris, irritated both Nazis and anti-Nazis (see Scholdt, p. 196). Richard Hughes had had ample opportunities to read it: an English translation followed almost immediately and was published in *Esquire*. It was later included in Mann's 1942 collection of essays and political speeches, *Order of the Day*. "Thomas Mann on Hitler" is actually noted on one of the "old index cards of research material for possible use vol II, III + IV" in Hughes's research files, with a reference to *Journal of Contemporary History* vol. 2 no. 2, 1967 (where Harry Pross's essay "On Thomas Mann's Political Career" was printed).

at the time, and he answered in the negative. That had not been his intention, as little as he had tried to make his English characters constitute a fair average of the British population. The theme that he had chosen had restricted him:

If I set out to depict the growth of Nazism then I had to focus on the sort of German characters in which, whatever their other virtues, its seeds could grow: just as in my English characters I was limited to ones indicative of English behaviour in the coming decade. But if you contrast the German characters fairly with the English ones I don't think I have weighted the dice against the Germans...

He did not think it correct to say that his German characters had been portrayed in a "Dracula-like" way, even if a German critic that he much respected had maintained just that. The critic alluded to, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, at this time published an article on German poets in *Encounter*, where he once more sniped at Hughes's novel:

I find it more amusing to exhibit the picture which the British have formed of what the Germans write. What the Germans have written, are writing, or will write is first of all 'teutonic'. The wealth of associations attached to this word is considerable. They range from the primeval forest to the study of Dr Faustus, from bearskins to Hegel's Phenomenology of spirit. Castles and fortresses are Teutonic, but so are abstract terminologies. Leather shorts, bullnecks, and exaggerated studiousness are teutonic. The Teutons are boring, have sweaty feet, and moreover are most unfairly 'daemonic'. A good example of the Teutonic occurs in Richard Hughes's novel *The Fox in the Attic*, in which I find confirmation of my suspicion that among the literary sources of this notion we must number a famous standard work in Germany, to wit DRACULA.³⁹

Two manuscript pages can be found among Richard Hughes's papers, obviously written in self-defence, which outline his reply to this attack. It is doubtful whether they ever found their way to a printer, although they seem to have been written with publication in mind. The Dracula imagery, Hughes stated, was not his own invention. The German critic need go no further than to his compatriot Ernst von Salomon's book *Die Geächteten* to find the source for that description (see above, p. 81). Hughes objected with even more weight and vehemence to the accusation that he had looked upon the Germans as Teutonic. This would have been an expression of British hostility which the German critic may have taken for granted "but which I think simply does not exist nowadays. Herr Enzensberger is setting up a man of straw to waste his strength on." Hughes re-

³⁹ *Encounter*, September 1963.

frained from accusing Enzensberger of an ingrained German suspicion of foreigners who had dared to write about them; he pointed out that an accusation like that would have been "too easy, because it suggests a self-assurance I do not possess." His main aim had been to ask historical and psychological questions, not to answer them. He would welcome a critic of Enzensberger's calibre to write on these German matters, but he would prefer one old enough to have witnessed the events at first hand.⁴⁰ By talking about "hostility", Enzensberger had missed the irony which was at work in the novel, Hughes argued, and he had also overlooked the fact that many of the passages were not told by an omniscient narrator but seen by different witnesses with limited views: they were "not seen 'author's eye' at all but rather as they appeared at the moment to some other character who palpably misunderstood them (a device for turning even what appears to be an answer back into another question)." Enzensberger's article as a whole, Hughes writes,

... breathes a curiously attractive personality as well as a high level of intelligence. But gibes about Teutonism and Dracula are not very subtle criticism: and I am sure he could teach me a lot if only he would consent to tackle me with a surgeon's scalpel instead of going on belabouring me with a bludgeon.

At the very end of the page, Hughes scribbled: "It won't do to go on for ever regarding Nazism as an isolated cataclysm lacking reason and roots." Hughes did not forget Enzensberger's critical broadside. A good three years later, when he was working on his American chapters and was in need of information on how teenagers in the United States talked and dressed in the early 1920s, he had contacted his friend Joseph Brewer in New York in his efforts to try to avoid possible pitfalls. In the letter which asked for Brewer's assistance, Hughes defended his circumspection which at times, he admitted, was extreme. Augustine would only experience a fragment of the American scene, but even so:

... how do you think today's American reader is going to take all this? The FOX has been popular almost everywhere except Germany (where they actively *hated* it: it was proposed for the Prix Formentor but the German delegation threatened to walk out if it wasn't withdrawn). It would be sad if the next volume were rejected similarly in America and I'd like to guard against that if I can.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Hans Magnus Enzensberger was born in 1929, and thus twenty-nine years younger than Richard Hughes.

⁴¹ RH to JB, November 24, 1966.

Six years later *The Wooden Shepherdess* was almost completed, but the correspondence between Hughes and his agent regarding the German market continued. He hoped that this second volume would fare better than the first had done, in that the reception would be less hostile. He took it for granted that the agent would offer the rights once more to Insel.⁴² Complete copies of the novel were available in February 1973. One of them was earmarked for Insel, but Hughes asked his agent one month later to withhold it. He had made substantial changes in the final proofs, contrary to his usual procedures.⁴³ It would be a sound idea, he thought, to let the German publisher wait until the book was finally published (which happened on April 5, 1973).⁴⁴ Insel got their copy, but by mid-June, Hughes still had not had any reaction from them. In a letter to his agent he suggested that a balanced book review which had been printed in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and which he enclosed⁴⁵ might press Insel into action. The German Service of the BBC would also broadcast a programme on his new book.⁴⁶ A month later, Insel declined the offer of option.

*

However, a positive post-script to the long drawn-out debate on how a British novelist tackled German nationalistic and political ideas exists. It was forwarded to Hughes two years later, in 1975. Joachim Fest, at the time editor at the *FAZ* and an expert on Nazism and Hitler, wrote to one of his colleagues at the *Sunday Times* explaining why the *Fox in the Attic* had received such a mixed and generally not very favourable press in Ger-

⁴² RH to HG, November 6, 1972.

⁴³ These last-minute changes affected the material derived from von Salomon, as explained above (p. 100).

⁴⁴ RH to HG, March 3, 1973.

⁴⁵ Renate Schostack's review had appeared in *FAZ* on April 27, thus a mere three weeks after the novel was published in London.

⁴⁶ It was broadcast by the BBC External Service, Central Talks and Features, on June 6, 1973. Barry Sullivan told the listeners that "*The Fox in the Attic* was probably the first attempt of a novelist to get inside the character of Hitler ... The fictional re-creation of Hitler ... divided the critics. Since then Solzhenitsyn's treatment of Stalin in *The First Circle* provided an interesting justification and comparison. Hughes' portrait is much more in the round". Sullivan had asked Hughes why he had held aloof in the 1930s when political involvement was the normal thing among his contemporaries. Hughes's self-confident answer was in the form of a revealing parable: "I'm not a politician I'm a writer, and [a] writer's influence is wholly different. Listen. Two men were walking by a lake, discussing this very question. One of them heaved a huge rock into the lake: there was a loud splash, rings spread out over the water — out and out, till they died away and disappeared. But his friend had a pocketful of acorns and dropped them one by one on the ground as he walked... Which of the two most changed the appearance of the landscape in the end, do you think?" (The story figured already in Hughes's article "The Writer's Duty", published in *The Listener* on July 22, 1948. It is reprinted in *Fiction as Truth*, p. 63).

many. This had neither to do with the quality of the novel nor with the nationality of its author, even if differences of mentality might play a part. Hughes had simply struck bad luck, Fest stated. By chance, some books happen to pass almost unnoticed, and this had mainly been the case with Maria Wolff's translation of Hughes's novel (which was not strictly true, as explained above). This "imponderability", Fest wrote, had caused the lack of success, and "certainly not the fact, as Mr. Hughes suggests in his letter, that a foreigner dealt with a delicate German period or had got wrong the emotional atmosphere or the historical facts which, by the way, are quite accurate." At long last, Richard Hughes was vindicated. He had finally received full German recognition, an *Anerkennung* from an expert which he might have felt restored his honour and which he may have regarded as a belated *Ehrenrettung*. All this, however, was to no avail for the novel that covered the years from the Putsch to the Purge. German readers interested in Hughes's views on the matter had to read the continuation of the novel in English. A German translation of *The Wooden Shepherdess* never materialized.

Chapter XVI
The Twelve Chapters and beyond

What was to follow? This question came up regularly in interviews and reviews as soon as *The Wooden Shepherdess* had been published. Richard Hughes must have grown weary of it when it was repeated *ad nauseam*. The inquisitiveness turned definitely nasty once, after Hughes's death. Richard Perceval Graves ends his biography on a sinister (foot)note. The funeral service for Richard Hughes in late April, 1976, was held some distance away from his home Mor Edrin in North Wales. On this occasion, his secretary Lucy McEntee had to organize help from the police. They were needed in order to guard "the house while all were out against the press raiding the attic for unpublished MSS."¹ Had these foxes been able to sneak into the attic, they would have been drowned in papers, but they would hardly have found what they were looking for, the manuscript of a third volume in the series.

The post-1973 correspondence in the Hughes archive contains letters from readers eager to know when a follow-up of *The Human Predicament* was to be expected. Their interest in his work-in-progress must have seemed legitimate to Hughes, judging from his conscientious and courteous replies. But in all his answers he avoided the real issue; he gave neither a definite date as to when the sequel(s) would follow, nor details of what would in all likelihood happen to the main characters from the previous novels. He had his good reasons for being secretive, as he most probably knew little of this himself. His writing was one of steady growth, not of a construction according to pre-existing plans. This he had explained as early as 1961 in his article "On *The Human Predicament*":

... it may surprise you to hear that the work is not even now consciously planned. I prepared no synopsis: I just cannot write that way. If you ask what will happen next, I cannot tell you. All the same, nothing I write is haphazard: the planning goes on all right, in minute detail — but out of sight somewhere, under the 'threshold': it only surfaces into consciousness with the pen in my hand. The history, of course, is 'given' — I cannot help knowing how that will turn out: but on the fictive side I know even less, at any given moment, what is going to happen next than I know in my own daily life. Things take me by surprise just as much as the reader: the future is a real future in the sense that it is *hidden*.²

¹ Graves, p. 469.

² *Fiction as Truth*, p. 51 (quoted by Paul Morgan, p. 97). — Hughes's following line: "For me writing can never be, like a piece of carpentry, done from a blueprint: it has to grow — like a tree" gave the Swedish writer Per Wästberg (engaged like Hughes in PEN) a cue for his

There do not seem to be any substantial blueprints for the sequel in the Lilly Library collection, nor are there more than mere hints of what was to follow in his correspondence with his publishers. When I met Norah Smallwood at Chatto and Windus a few years after Hughes's death and asked her if a third novel existed in manuscript, she readily told me that this was the case, and that it was "marvellous stuff".³ She hinted that the manuscript was massive, an enormous number of pages, but she was vague as to its exact nature and length. She revealed that there were plans to publish it either separately or possibly as an appendix, once *The Wooden Shepherdess* was included in the uniform collected edition which had started to appear in April, 1975 (but which to date has not been finished).

Although some secrecy enveloped this torso of a third volume, Richard Hughes's literary agents in London, David Higham Associates, were surprisingly willing to let me have a copy of the manuscript as early as 1984, no questions asked.⁴ Norah Smallwood had been correct, these pages were "marvellous stuff". But the length was disappointing for someone who had been expecting a cornucopia similar to Thomas Wolfe's legendary trunk of unpublished manuscripts. Hughes's final twelve chapters in this typescript contain 16,500 words and fill a mere 50 foolscap pages. It took close to twenty years before these chapters were published. Before finally reaching print, they had been known to at least two Richard Hughes scholars. Richard Graves gave a very brief synopsis of them in his 1994 biography (pp. 419-421), and Paul Morgan appended a four-page summary of the twelve chapters to his 1993 study (pp. 143-146), based on a copy of the typescript deposited with David Higham.

Looking beyond these fifty pages, Poole speculated as to which direction Hughes's further chapters might have taken. He sketched eight possible strands of development. Augustine would have married Norah, because, as Richard Hughes's daughter wrote, "the extremely attractive person Norah . . . seemed to be almost the only character in the whole book

"Ett träd växer i Wales" [A Tree Grows in Wales], a long Dagens Nyheter (Stockholm) article based on a visit to Mor Edrin (reprinted in Wästberg, *Berättarens ögonblick*, 1977).

³ See my article "Hughes' ofullbordade", in *Svenska Dagbladet*, May 25, 1978.

⁴ "The Chimaera Press project to publish the last twelve chapters of 'The Human Predicament' has fallen through and 'The Wooden Shepherdess' has not been successful enough to be reprinted so they have not yet appeared. I would be very glad for you to see them, and I think they contain, small as they are, some of Richard Hughes's finest writing . . . I'm afraid it raises as many new questions about the novel as it answers though" (Bruce Hunter at David Higham Associates Ltd. to IH, July 17, 1984).

whom Diccon liked wholeheartedly"⁵; Jeremy would continue working in the Admiralty and Gilbert would serve as a junior Minister in Ramsay McDonald's National government; the *Graf Spee* and the *Altmark* incidents would in all probability have been included: Hughes had done much basic research for this while working on his commissioned book *The Navy is Coming* (which was left unfinished). Further scenes were planned to take place in Coventry, including the blitz in that city, drawing on the first-hand experiences of his eldest son's father-in-law, and on his own of the Blitz in Bath; the fall of France and the Dunkirk evacuation were planned to conclude the third volume as a parallel to the violent tail pieces of the two preceding volumes, i. e. the Putsch and the Purge; and the Spanish Civil War and the 1944 Stauffenberg plot against Hitler would probably also have figured. Richard Poole ends this hypothetical listing of possibilities on a note of lament:

How would *The Human Predicament* have ended? There is good reason to believe that the final section of the last Book would have focussed on Hitler's final days in his Berlin bunker before cutting to Montgomery's acceptance of the German surrender on Lüneburg heath. It must be a source of abiding regret to Hughes's frustrated readers that he never set his imagination to work upon the last obscure, eventful hours of the senile Chancellor.⁶

Some of the topics that Poole suggests seem to have occupied Hughes's mind even as early as the mid-fifties, at the time when he started writing *The Fox in the Attic*. Four pages in manuscript, undated but filed alongside letters from 1956 and headed "Bits", contain fragments of notes hastily jotted down by hand, no doubt as a reminder of possible directions for the novel to take. The first and the fourth items of the following were actually elaborated upon in the novels, in "The Wooden Shepherdess" and "Polly and Rachel" respectively. The rest of them might have appeared in future volumes:

"Sitting naked in the waterhole in the Catskills, with water-snakes slipping over shoulders" — "The German troops dropping with fatigue as they enter Dunkirk" — "Sheltered aircraft, lining the edges of Polish fields like stranded whitebait" —

⁵ Penelope Mini to Norah Smallwood at Chatto & Windus, September 30, 1980. — Richard Perceval Graves sums up her future role in the novel thus: "Norah becomes a central character: earthy, loving, direct, uncomplicated, she seems destined to show Augustine the unselfish side of human love, and to be a partner who (when he has outgrown his fear of the class division which separates them) will be steadfast and true through whatever difficulties lie ahead" (Graves, p. 420).

⁶ Poole 1986, p. 234.

"Mrs C's story of the two deaf uncles: one dropped his eyeglass, in church, into his eartrumpet, & tried to blow it out" — "Bath blitz" — "Graf Spee & Altmark."

Some indication as to Hughes's research interests of a much later date is given by the titles of books that he requested either from booksellers or from libraries, once the second volume in the series had been published. The following are some of the requisitions, all of them pertaining directly or indirectly to German affairs, that he made during the last three years of his life. In January 1974 he asked for Werner Maser's *Hitler* and André Bussano's *Canaris* as well as for *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1935*. In July of the same year one of his correspondents had recommended him "an astonishing book I recently read which I think you would also find strange and remarkable. It covers, as a medium, the heart of Prussia during the end of the Second World War: *The Earl King* by Michel Tournier".⁷ In August he sent for all three volumes of Sartre's semi-documentary novel *Road to Freedom*. In February the following year he ordered L. Hoare Belisha's *Private Papers* (that he had known this British politician personally is clear from his correspondence). In June he asked for Paul Berben's *Dachau, the official history 1933-45* and Garlianski's *Fighting Auschwitz*; and in January 1976 Maurice Cowling's *The Impact of Hitler and British Policy 1933-1940*. Some tentative conclusions can be drawn from this: the British views on Nazi policies, domestic as well as foreign, would have been included; the resistance against Hitler may have figured; the concentration camps would have come into focus.

Paul Morgan makes a case for reading the two published volumes as one continuous novel. He also stresses that the twelve chapters were left without the author's imprimatur and should not really be taken into account in a discussion of the printed novel: "The never-completed final portion of *The Human Predicament* is a chimera . . . and should not divert attention from the extant text."⁸ In spite of this, Morgan condensed their contents in 1993, by summarising each chapter in a dozen or fewer lines.

In the following year, Richard Perceval Graves also discussed this torso, in the final chapter, "Unfinished Business", of his biography on Hughes. He reiterated facts from Richard Poole and quoted briefly from the actual typescript. But not until 1995 did this manuscript eventually appear in print, when it was added to the Harvill Press reissue of *The Wooden*

⁷ David Clair to RH, July 1974.

⁸ Morgan 1993, p. 96.

Shepherdess. At long last, the twelve chapters were both available and quotable. As will be demonstrated below, more care could have been taken when they were proof-read; the text as printed contains some unfortunate and unnecessary misprints. These forty-eight pages were printed from a different manuscript version from the one that the literary agent kept. There were, admittedly, many manuscript pages to choose from. An astronomical number of variants of these chapters are kept in the Lilly Library archive.

The long and cumbersome writing process, their *Entstehungsgeschichte*, can be followed day by day thanks to Richard Hughes's secretary Lucy McEntee, who kept good track of how the painstaking writing progressed. In 1973, the bulk of Richard Hughes's manuscripts and papers had been bought by the Lilly Library for a total of £ 60,000, with the proviso that works-in-progress were to follow at a later date. With this in mind, Lucy McEntee kept all the manuscript papers, including all discards, in excellent order. The procedure of paginating and dating them seems to have begun some time mid-way through the writing of *The Wooden Shepherdess*: "everything prior to *The Human Predicament* is in the library of the University of Indiana and the early drafts of the Fox in the Attic and *The Wooden Shepherdess* are being kept in as complete a form as possible", she wrote in 1974.⁹

She made notes of both the gestation and of the progression of the work on two explanatory pages which are filed with the extensive manuscript of the twelve chapters, including all variants. The writing of a first chapter which was later discarded had begun on July 12, 1974, and it was completed on September 4. The writing of all twelve chapters ended the following year, as is stated laconically: "no typing done after 29th November 1975". By that time, the right-hand column which kept track of the manuscript had run up to nearly two thousand typed pages,¹⁰ although they resulted, as has already been said, in a mere fifty corrected foolscap pages. Hughes went to Coventry and Birmingham in September 1974, and in November he had "discussed Unity Mitford",¹¹ according to a brief entry in the diary that Lucy McEntee kept. In May of the following year he did research in the BBC archives, presumably mainly concerning the British background.

⁹ Lucy McEntee to Colin Hugget, February 2, 1974.

¹⁰ Not 911, as stated by Poole 1986, p. 83.

¹¹ Frances Hughes had attended the same small private school as the Mitfords (Graves, p. 210).

The first chapter, then, was a false start. It tells of how Augustine, now married to an Englishwoman named Noll, celebrates Polly's twenty-first birthday at Newton Llanthony. 103 pages of this chapter were typed, resulting in the mere three pages of the finished manuscript discussed below. A new start was made on October 12, 1974. It shows Norah in her crammed home in Slaughterhouse yard in Coventry, waking up to her last day in the textile mills from which she has just been sacked, and can be read as the first chapter in the posthumously printed appendix to the 1995 Harvill edition of *The Wooden Shepherdess*. She then becomes the private instructor of tapestry weaving for Augustine's sister Mary.

Five chapters and the revisions of a sixth had been completed by April 1975. At that time, the manuscript totalled 481 pages. In late May seven chapters had been revised. By the end of summer eleven chapters had been rewritten. The twelfth was begun in late August, making a total of 902 pages, written in a fairly steady progress. Then the writing slowed down, with much revision done in October and November. The first (and, as it turned out, final) paragraph of chapter thirteen was typed on November 29, 1975, and the manuscript now totalled 1,911 typed pages. A few of these chapters will be discussed below, mainly with their German connection in focus. The early version of the first chapter as well as the unfinished thirteenth chapter will also be commented on: neither one has been printed, though.

*

In the first chapter that was later scrapped, the time is indicated already in the opening paragraph, which links the text to the preceding volume: "Five years later, another July ...". New readers unfamiliar with *The Wooden Shepherdess* and its cataclysmic end in the summer of 1934 might still have placed the action correctly, as Augustine's age is stated some lines further on: "Flushed, and a bit short of breath (next year he'll be forty) ...". Augustine is as old as the century, and thus the action takes place during the last summer of peace. This is a fact that the reader and the writer with their hindsight are aware of, but also Augustine appears to have a presentiment of storm clouds gathering on the horizon. The war seems unavoidable, in spite of the British Prime Minister triumphantly having waved the signed document about "Peace in Our Time" on the London Airport tarmac in the previous year, after his meeting with the German Chancellor: "[the war] seemed to be coming now however this ghastly Chamberlain government twisted and turned..."

The chapter is set in a changed and modernised Newton-Llantony, Augustine's country estate in South Wales, with a glimpse of the Bristol Channel in the distance. Gone are the moth-eaten trophies in the gun-room, perhaps also his uncles' spittoon with the portrait of William Gladstone, the execrable liberal leader. By now, Gladstone has been replaced by Neville Chamberlain as an object of spite for this class of landed gentry.

Polly, who has now grown into a "hefty young Amazon", celebrates her twenty-first birthday. But she invites one guest only, her uncle, "insisting that anyone else at all being there would spoil it." They have been playing tennis in the afternoon, and the atmosphere is described in great meteorological detail, and perhaps some political implications are also suggested by it: it is a warm day and the sky is overcast, the ground smells of drought, distant thunder is heard, forked lightning is seen, and finally the rain starts pelting down.

They rush indoors to have tea, and are instantly reminded of the past. The raspberries on the cakes have the same synaesthetic impact of bringing back Polly's childhood memories as does the first bite into the madeleine cake for the narrator in Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*: "The taste of them bring it all back". For her, the memories are happy. For her uncle, the middle-aged Augustine, the taste of the berries is more bitter than sweet. It recalls the time when Polly was still a child and she shared secrets with her uncle, as he remembers: "Sponging the tell-tale juice from a magical small face before letting it be seen by Nanny...."

Augustine obviously has some difficulties accepting the fact that Polly by now is an adult, and this is further emphasised by a disillusioned metaphor: "Once the childhood petals have dropped and the seed-boxes swelled..." This reaching of puberty and adolescence is a theme elaborated upon on another page of the manuscript: "You think of it as a prelude, like apple-blossom, but then the childish petals fall. The seed-boxes swell and nothing is left but — deadheads..." Even fifteen years after his Connecticut adventures in *The Wooden Shepherdess* Augustine is still evidently a Peter Pan figure, wary of committing himself emotionally to girls beyond a certain tender age: "For how can the fondest uncle feel for a grown-up niece that utterly reckless affection no sensible man dares risk except with a tiny child?" Another manuscript page varies the same idea: "But how can you love an ordinary grown-up niece however nice with at all the same intensity as you once loved a child?"

The reflection that follows on that sentence would have reminded the readers of the Geli Raubal chapters in *The Wooden Shepherdess*, with their innuendo that Hitler got involved with his niece far beyond the legitimate feelings of an uncle: "For this would mean falling in love with his own flesh-and-blood". Only a solipsist like Hitler would allow himself to get involved in an incestuous affair with his niece; he would regard her as merely an extension of his own self (as commented on above, p. 163). Augustine does not belong to that category; in fact, he long shuns any deeper emotional contact with and commitment to girls once they have reached their late teens and adulthood.

Thinking of the Bavarian children that he had met sixteen years earlier, Augustine, on these unpublished pages, wonders what might have become of the von Kessen twins, Rudi and Heinz: "Unspeakable Nazi storm-troopers busily beating up Jews, all-too-likely!", he suggests. Hughes had had plans to include the Spanish Civil War in his panorama.¹² But it would have been seen from the fascist side, in contrast to other British witness reports from the loyalist camp, the best-known being George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*. The twins would probably have served as his Spanish witnesses, in their roles as pilots in the nationalist air force.¹³

Augustine admits, although somewhat reluctantly, that he feels a vague regret that he did not marry Mitzi, but he wonders what would have been the outcome of such a marriage if the war had come. There is no time for second thoughts, but the last line in this discarded chapter reads as if he has to talk himself into grudgingly accepting his present marital status: "And anyhow, hadn't he got himself married to English Noll in the end?" The impersonal reflexive construction is a telling grammatical feature, hinting that Augustine has not been overly active in the process. But of his wife Noll nothing more is heard or said. She disap-

¹² Hughes was aware of a lacuna that John Lehman, Stephen Spender and other reviewers pointed out: that the role played by international Communism in the 1930's was not taken into account in the novels. Already on March 6, 1962, he had discussed several options with his daughter Penny whose help he acknowledged in both volumes, with affectionate gratitude. In a letter to his publisher, he wrote: "Penny suggests that the second volume should begin with Russia instead of America. So here's a rough picture of the contents of Vol II: First, Jeremy in Russia (he could perhaps meet Augustine in Vienna when on his way out to Russia). Augustine in America. Nellie and the child in Industrial England. Augustine seeing all his friends becoming "politically engaged" without becoming engaged himself; then the Spanish civil war seen (in contrast to the young English intellectuals' ideas of it) first through Franz's fascist eyes, then as it appeared to the Russians — the Russians back at home".

¹³ Poole 1986 p. 233-234.

pears with this aborted first chapter, and is replaced by Norah in later sketches.

A completely different version of a first chapter was started in October 1975. One line only was salvaged from the discarded opening chapter. It is one of the leitmotifs from the two published volumes: "You don't know when you're lucky!". A mocking voice uttering these words is heard each time Augustine is forced to make a decision — or when, as is often the case, he chooses not to make one. Now it appears in a different context, towards the end of what became Chapter eight, when Augustine has come home to his castle in Wales, a week before he realises that he has fallen in love with Norah:

'Will you *never* learn to know when you're lucky at last?' the tree he'd been sitting under remarked.

Augustine jumped: when and where in his life had he heard that oracular voice before? He even turned to look back, though he knew it was only a tree (p. 421).

Now he finally seems to take heed of this voice. He tries to overcome the restrictions of his class, as he has done earlier when he sympathised with the miners who were on strike.

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When Hughes made a fresh start, he went five years back in time, placing the action in 1934. Thus, little or no time has elapsed since what took place at the end of volume two of *The Human Predicament*. Two out of the "Twelve Chapters" are set in Hitler's place of refuge in Berchtesgaden in the Alps southeast of Munich, and another three of them also touch on German matters. Chapter six opens with a quick glance ten years back in time, to 1924 when Jeremy joined the Admiralty. Some pages deal with his few chances of promotion in this jellyfish of an organisation. Quite clearly, Hughes drew on his own navy experiences. During a dinner party given by Augustine's sister and brother-in-law, Jeremy partly by intent offends his conservative host Gilbert Wadamy who has by now attained a small ministerial post. This theme of contrasting personalities would, according to Richard Poole, have played a larger role in volumes to come: "The mutual irritation that Jeremy and Gilbert cause one another will be institutionalized when Gilbert becomes Jeremy's Minister in the wartime Coalition."¹⁴ Jeremy carries the political quarrel further by provocatively talking of the

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 233.

new slack way of dressing. In his opinion, this “new-fangled hybrid fashion launched by the Prince of Wales . . . wearing a double-breasted white waistcoat under his dinner-jacket” is yet another sign presaging the fall of the British Empire, he says, in a somewhat bitter tirade: “. . . no wonder Hitler thought England had gone to the dogs when gentlemen showed no respect for the Laws which their Fathers had graven forever on granite!” (p. 412). Bearing in mind Hitler’s odd dress at the Venice meeting (see above, p. 240), the reader is not quite as certain as Jeremy of the importance of sartorial strictures. It is not much of a joke anyway; Augustine reflects that Jeremy has turned into a different person from the wit that he knew at Oxford ten years ago and recalls his words then about this age involving a flight from freedom.¹⁵ Mussolini, Hitler and other inter-war dictators have proved him right.

In Chapter seven, the dinner conversation carries on and turns into a political squabble, in which Germany is set off against Great Britain. Jeremy ridicules British appeasement and disarmament policies, echoing Winston Churchill at this time: “When we do wake up it may be too late, with the Führer driving in state down a bombed Whitehall” (p. 414).¹⁶ Gilbert of course defends the Government’s position. By referring to British and German defence statistics, collected during his previous European journey, Jeremy tries to prove that the German Navy and Air Force are on a fast track to full re-armament. The Krupp Works are active, as is IG Farben.¹⁷ Gilbert counters that Germany does not want war, only justice and national dignity. Augustine harks back to his overwhelming impression in 1923 of tremendous forces only temporarily harnessed by winter. The political implication of his flash-back is self-evident: “. . . ‘Danube ice, which a thaw must one day release...’ Yet surely Jeremy couldn’t be right — not *another* war!” (p. 416).

¹⁵ In this instance, Hughes’s readers had to remember an early scene in the first novel, in Chapter seventeen of “Polly and Rachel”. The perspective is Jeremy’s until the extradiegetic narrator steps in: “‘Poor old Augustine!’ Jeremy was feeling at the same time, even while he talked: ‘He isn’t believing a word I say! A prophet is not without honour... ah well, never mind... I’m really on to something this time — the flight from freedom...’ If he had read the signs of the times this was only too true...” (p. 66).

¹⁶ This is what happens in Robert Harris’s 1993 novel *Fatherland*.

¹⁷ The printed text is garbled in this instance. What a clear-sighted Jeremy says according to the Higham script is this: “And I. G. Farben, the giant concern which makes synthetic petrol from coal: they’ve stepped up their targets, they aim at a *quarter-Million* tons of oil each year and they’ll soon be producing synthetic rubber as well. So blockading’s no good this time.” Presumably, Richard Hughes knew how the Second World War production at the I G Farben had been sustained by slave workers. This infamous practice is described in detail by Albert Speer in *Der Sklavenstaat* (1981) and is also discussed by Richard L. Rubenstein in the fourth chapter of his *The Cunning of History* (1975).

The 1995 Harvill edition has quite clearly been printed from a mixed-up manuscript at this point, as seen in the following sentence which does not make much sense: "And I. G. Farben, who make synthetic petrol from coal: they've motionless acres of turbulent Danube ice, which a thaw must one day release...." (p. 416). The Higham manuscript contains forty lines, a good foolscap page, in between "they've" and "motionless", which show Gilbert criticising Jeremy for his anti-German stance. He defends what he sees as the German position: "All this assumes a Germany wanting a war, when it stands to reason they don't: all they want is equal treatment. It's simply a matter of national dignity." This conservative politician, aspiring to a post in the cabinet, is sympathetic towards the appeasement policy (and reversely, negligent of Winston Churchill's warnings of a rapid German re-armament): "Baldwin, Chamberlain, Halifax — statesmen like that are worth more than battleships, more than aircraft and tanks." In his opinion, Jeremy would do well to read what is written in the well-balanced and cool-headed *The Times*, instead of relying on biased Naval and Air Force information.

Jeremy, Gilbert and Augustine join the ladies in the next room, but the latter has time to look at what has been said in the light of his own experiences, in the following summing-up of some of his encounters in the previous two novels (before the news of Otto's death has reached him):

Augustine said nothing. A second Great War in the offing — was Jeremy cracked? But walking across to the door those ancient Bavarian ghosts from his past — so long discounted and almost forgotten — were walking with him... Young Franz, with his ghoulish raving for blood-red chaos and mountains of corpses and what-not on which to build his temple to Wotan: that antediluvian monarchist, Walther: Otto, the decent old Army Colonel who'd lost a leg on the Western Front but could still believe in the purgative value of War, and was working in some mysterious way for the Reichswehr... "

In Chapter ten, Mary receives two letters from Geneva. One informs her that her daughter Polly has been expelled after having played truant from the Swiss private boarding school which she is supposed to attend. The other letter, "long and excited and seventh-heavenly incoherent" is written by a moonstruck Polly.¹⁸ By chance she and two of her classmates, one of them British like herself and the daughter of an Earl, have been invited

¹⁸ The manuscript deposited with David Higham is even more explicit in this instance, with an underlined opening sentence that does not appear in the printed text: "The Führer had held both her hands in her own, she had gazed in those wonderful eyes! Polly's own letter was long and excited and seventh-heavenly incoherent", etc.

to tea at Berchtesgaden by the Führer himself. Hitler in shorts and a linen jacket welcomes this opportunity to influence by way of their daughters one Earl in the House of Lords and one minister in His Majesty's Government: "Taking each girl by both her hands he jiggled her a step or two: you must tell your papas how glad he had been to welcome their beautiful daughters, for friendship with England had always been the dearest wish of his heart — and here were its two lovely harbingers!" (428).

Hitler orates about Germany being England's natural ally, not France: "our two great Germanic nations, the allies of Waterloo...."¹⁹ At the tea-party, they are introduced to three young women, two of them secretaries. The third woman is left unexplained, except for her name given as an aside to knowledgeable readers: Fräulein Eva Braun.

Sophie, Polly's German school-mate, is more levelheaded and not at all taken in by Hitler's rhetoric: "And as for his voice, it sounds as if Goebbels had stuffed a microphone up his nose"²⁰ (p. 429). She offends her two British school-mates by commenting on the colour of the Führer's eyes: "The colour of codfishes' eyes on the fishmonger's slab", and she knows what is wrong with them: "They haven't had proper sleep for weeks — and no wonder, after those June-the-thirtieth murders!" (p. 429).²¹ She also has a well-developed feeling for business; she makes a brisk trade by selling the pair of shoes that have trodden on the Führer's carpet, and later she sells all her other pairs as well.

Some of the background for this chapter can be found in Hughes's notes. Two of the Mitford sisters, Unity and Diana (who married Sir Oswald Mosley, the British fascist leader), may have inspired him in the writing of this scene. Their socializing with Hitler was commented on by

¹⁹ At this time, a leading Parisian newspaper published extracts from some of Hitler's more recent speeches to prove his animosity towards the French: "When a Frenchman grasps in friendship the hand of a German that French hand is deadly for Germany. The German people will not recover the world's respect until France shall see in a German statesman the personification of hatred . . . Even Bismarck did not succeed in co-operating with France on a basis of friendship. One refuses to lie down under the same roof with an assassin" (*Le Temps*, January 4, 1935, as quoted in *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler 1922-1939*, vol. II, p. 1195).

²⁰ The Higham script contains one more word in this instance, giving the passage a more obvious allusion to Goebbels's propaganda efforts: "As for [Hitler's] voice, it sounds as if Goebbels had left an amplified microphone stuffed up his nose..."

²¹ This iterates what has been said in Chapter twenty-seven of "Stille Nacht". A fortnight after the June 30 killings, a London newspaper commented on Hitler's looks, though with fewer specific details: "Herr Hitler, the Chancellor, gave his account of the events of 30 June to the Reichstag last night . . . The Reichstag unanimously approved the Government's action and thanked Herr Hitler. Herr Hitler bore the sign of strain on his features" (*The London Times*, June 14, 1934, as quoted in Hitler, *My New Order*, p. 220).

the writer George Ward Price in 1937, i. e. three years after the fictitious Polly's meeting with Der Führer is supposed to have taken place: "There is no more human trait in Hitler's character than the pleasure he takes in the light-hearted company of these typical young Englishwomen of today."²² Yet another source is revealed in one of the entries in the "Spiral-Notizbuch" that Frances Hughes kept while she and her husband were in Bavaria in 1956:

Story of schoolgirls who met Hitler. He went past the school they all cried Heil Hitler to him. Liking the looks of them, he entertained them on his Obersalzberg. Big black Mercedes came to fetch them. On their return road full of people stopping them and begging to buy their shoes even stockings. Mira's friend went into school and got out all her old shoes to sell also.

Chapter eleven flows on from the preceding one. When the girls leave Haus Wachenfeld, they happen to overhear a less genial Führer shouting at someone. He turns out to be Herr Paganuzzi, a successful businessman and Hitler's special envoy to the Ruhr. For the benefit of readers who do not have Jeremy's visit to the Saar in fresh memory (it occurs one hundred pages earlier in the Harvill edition), the background to the imminent Ruhr-plebiscite is sketched: "Nobody doubted which way the voting would go; indeed most observers expected a 90 % majority opting for Hitler's Reich — if it ever came to the vote" (p. 431).²³ Herr Paganuzzi advises Hitler to soft-pedal the overactive Deutsche Front; there is no sense in provoking the French occupation troops and the League of Nations, he points out. An overwhelming majority is expected to vote for a reunification with the Reich anyway. In his oration on power politics, Hitler moves back and forth in time. There is no need to reckon with any one of Germany's former enemies of the First World War, he says as he turns and faces Herr Paganuzzi:

'Remember that this is the decadent France of 1934, not the France of 1914!' And let Paganuzzi make no mistake: the degenerate Jewish democracy masquerading today as Imperial Britain had no more spunk left in it than France or the U.S.A. They knew how defenceless their island was in these days of the bomber and the submarine.... (pp. 431-432).

²² Price, p. 37.

²³ Hughes of course knew the exact outcome of the referendum: "1935, 13 January — Plebiscite in the Saar territory. Out of a total of 528,005 votes cast, 477,119 (90.5 per cent) were for Germany, and the Saar returned to the Reich" (Hitler, *My New Order*, p. 234).

In Hitler's opinion, England has had its day: "With her whole *raison-d'être* in World History gone, a putrescent Great Britain will soon disappear off the map as even a minor power" (p. 432). Herr Paganuzzi agrees that this might be the case some twenty or thirty years later (i. e. close to the time in the future when Hughes was writing this), but at present, England is a world power while German re-armament still has a considerable way to go. He waves his pocket diary and asks: "isn't this still the Year 1934 — or is my little book here mistaken?" Hitler thinks he is joking, but Paganuzzi answers: "Far from it, Mein Führer! I merely point out that what we have to deal with today is the Britain of 1943, still (if she chooses to act) the greatest Power on Earth; and that what we possess today is no more than the fledgeling Wehrmacht of 1934" (p. 432). This seems to be an interesting sweep nine years forward in time, until one checks the David Higham script. There the correct year for Britain's greatness is given, and furthermore underlined: 1934.²⁴

Hitler is seen, possibly somewhat anachronistically, as a megalomaniac already at this early stage of his career: "I, Adolf Hitler, can claim no right to a private conscience which interferes with the greatness of Germany! That is the moral burden I lay on myself...." (p. 433) He gives vent to a cynical and machiavellian kind of "Realpolitik", and Herr Paganuzzi afterwards comments on how easily Hitler has erected dishonesty into a principle.²⁵ But then Hitler is everybody or nobody, according to Paganuzzi's analysis. His idea that there is nothing behind the mask (or the mirror) has been quoted already (see above, p. 142): "Perhaps it's the same with all Hitler's innermost thoughts: they are always whatever that man imagines his hearers are thinking themselves, so that hearing the Führer confide in you comes to no more than seeing yourself distorted in Hitler's

²⁴ Yet another example of careless proof-reading can be found on page 422: "Augustine was spending the morning alone in the leathery smell of the Mellton library, pulling books out of the shelves and pushing them back unread (often upside-down), while he told himself that Cophetua Syndromes are find in fairy-stories but every beggar-maid knows them for hell in actual life." The Higham-manuscript has the correct adjective: "fine".

²⁵ In this instance, the Higham manuscript differs slightly from the printed text. This is what Herr Paganuzzi tells himself in the latter version: "Everyone knows that treaties are seldom kept much longer than keeping them pays; but why attempt to erect dishonesty into a principle? Surely because he assumes that all businessmen are dishonest — and I am a businessman: so that this was bound to find welcoming ears when poured into mine...." (p. 434). The following is the more judgemental Higham version: "It's hardly hot news that treaties and pacts, even when they're sincerely entered into, are seldom kept longer than keeping them pays, but that's a far cry from erecting deliberate perjury into an ethical principle..."

unflattering mirror: in fact, you see nothing of Hitler's own mind at all" (p. 434).

This brings to mind a previous discussion in the novel, that between Count Lepowski and Reinhold in Chapter twenty-five of "The Meistersingers". The year is 1925, in a period that is still a hiatus both for the Nazi party and its leader — but not for long as Reinhold, taking on the role of a Cassandra, declares: "[Hitler] is powerless now; but can't I get you to see he's the very archetype of a Leader — the pure Platonic Idea of 'Leader' with everything normally human left out?" He thinks Hitler's technique leaves Machiavelli's *Il principe*, the classical handbook of power politics, far behind, and he carries on: "But the nub of the matter is this: he is bound in the long run to come to the top because — in the long run — no one will try to stop this uncanny clairvoyant who *knows what Germany wants*" (p. 215). In this instance, Hughes's view of Hitler is close to that given in two German novels, whether he knew it or not: Lion Feuchtwanger's *Die Brüder Lautensack* (1944), and Hermann Broch's posthumous *Die Verzauberung* (1976)²⁶. According to this view, Hitler amplifies the thoughts that his listeners already carry; his greatness lies in the huge effects his actions produce, in the same way as the moon exerts gravitation on the earth.²⁷ In a discarded version of this chapter, Hughes enlarges on his theme: "The Führer's mind a mere cinema-screen, portraying a shadowy shifting caricature of the whole German race which we Germans ourselves project?"²⁸

²⁶ Translated as *The Spell*, 1987. — Broch had started on the novel in 1935; just before his death in May 1951, he had been working on the fifth chapter of a third version.

²⁷ It is possible to pinpoint exactly when this simile took hold of Richard Hughes's imagination. On a manuscript page for this chapter dated September 8, 1975, the moon is not yet mentioned, while he has added a line by hand on a page dated the next day: "One has to admit the gravitative force...". On November 29, the passage is further developed: "As Paganuzzi reached this stage in his ruminations he fixed his eyes on the setting new moon... 'That's it', he exclaimed, 'it's solely that huge insensate gravitational pull he exerts and which we choose to personalize as the Führer's 'will'. Like the moon up there, the greatness of Hitler's mass is revealed in the mighty tides he also can realise on this Earth — among men'". Graves quotes the same passage, with slight variations (Graves, p. 421).

²⁸ Patrick Swinden has commented on Hughes's idea of Hitler as a reflector: "And so Hitler manipulates other people by the force of his rhetoric, the verbal expression of his diseased personality. Yet he imposes on them nothing of himself, no idea or sentiment or policy in which he believes. The point is made over and over again in *The Human Predicament*, and it is corroborated frequently by historians of the Third Reich, that Hitler almost always led from the rear, and always did so where strategy, as distinct from short-term tactical manoeuvres, was concerned. Hence the dithering that precedes the 'Night of the Long Knives,' causing Göbbels in particular to reserve his position for as long as he can" (Swinden 1984, p. 41).

Chapter twelve starts ten days later. Polly is chaperoned to Victoria Station by an adamant escort, "an Indian Civilian's leathery widow" (p. 435). There is, however, no need to worry about her escaping. She is still moonstruck, and behaves like a dazed and crazed zombie. Her lackadaisical manners greatly annoy her uncle, while Mary, less offended, makes a mental note: "'Poor Augustine is jealous-as-hell of Hitler,' she thought. 'No idol takes kindly to being supplanted.'" But Polly is later also struck by the real moon, and in a fashion, she comes to her senses. In her room she gazes out at the night sky and gradually realises that even if the moon has an eternal existence, she herself does not:

No... for as Polly had gazed at the moon she was moved by a deeper thought: the moon's skyline had nothing to do with her! That moon had been there forever, the same and unchanging, whatever might happen on Earth. Since before the Evolution of Man.... Since even before she was born!

That gave rise to a further stupendous thought: it would shine there the same even when Polly was dead. Even when she was no more (that unthinkable kind of time) the moon would be there just the same... (p. 438).

The answers to her existential questions are almost within reach, but when her brother and sister wake her in the morning, she has lost "... the Key to the Universe: somehow that seemed to have taken wings in the night." But even so, because of this intimation of her own mortality, Polly has reached a more mature stage of awareness of her own self in relation to the world. The same motif also appears in Chapter six of *A High Wind in Jamaica*, in which Emily climbs high up in the mast and suddenly understands that she is an individual person separated from other persons: "Once fully convinced of this astonishing fact, that she was now Emily Bas-Thornton (why she inserted the 'now' she did not know, for she certainly imagined no transmigrational nonsense of having been anyone else before), she began seriously to reckon its implications."²⁹ Polly's insight is also linked to Mitzi's mystical experience of being encompassed by God when her own ego has dwindled into insignificance: "... no longer her little 'I am' inside there at all, but only His great 'I AM'" (*The Wooden Shepherdess*, p. 117).

It is possible that Richard Hughes intended Hitler, Polly and Mitzi to exemplify different stages of self-awareness. Hitler is the solipsist in whose warped thinking the world exists only because of him — he is the world.

²⁹ Hughes 1944, p. 108.

Polly now understands that she exists in the world. Mitzi, finally, knows that God is the world in which she exists.³⁰

*

The thirteenth unfinished and unpublished chapter, the first paragraph of which was typed on November 29, 1975, describes Augustine going to bed, moonstruck in quite a different way from either Polly and her girlfriends, or the melancholy and sombre Herr Paganuzzi. The maid has turned down the bed and drawn the curtains, but as he wants fresh air, he pulls the cord, "... and the moonlight flooded the room. The implacable moon, revealing with pitiless light the mess he was making of life... He was verging on middle age with nothing achieved, not even a wife³¹ — and now this hopeless passion for Norah made even that seem remoter still." When it comes to marriage, Augustine is almost neurotically indecisive, as seen already in Chapter eight, where an interesting psychological explanation for his procrastination is suggested:

That marriage [to Joan] had once been a damn-near thing, and now it was plain that in spite of the passing years Joan still felt the tug. It was equally plain that seeing her only a few times more he could all-too-easily find himself feeling it too Could it be that he wanted a child or two of his own without really wanting a wife at all? (pp. 419-420).

Richard Poole, who has observed that there is a tendency in the later parts of *The Human Predicament* for Richard Hughes to include an increasing amount of autobiographical material, sees this as detrimental to the novel. In this connection, he questions the relevance of Augustine's Moroccan adventures to the main action, albeit he edited some texts relating to Hughes's corresponding experiences for a posthumous collection, and even if he admits that they are "freshly-handled". According to Poole, the novel's movement forward in time was slowed down by a novelist who increasingly moved in the other direction, making more and more use of his own memories as flashbacks in his fiction:

Is it too much to suggest that so marked an element of recuperation, an imaginative looking-back within the larger movement forward, implies that Hughes inwardly recognized that he would not carry his serial novel significantly beyond *The Wooden Shepherdess* itself?³²

³⁰ In this case, it would not be too far-fetched to bring in Kierkegaard's three stages in life: the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious.

³¹ "wife" is crossed out in the manuscript and replaced by "child".

³² Poole 1986, p. 231.

This is a keen observation, especially when applied to the very last lines of Richard Hughes's work in progress, which were written less than half a year before his death. Corrections, additions and amendments are marked within brackets. The lines are clearly autobiographical. Here, Augustine serves for the very last time as Richard Hughes's alter ego. The sad finality is stressed by the open-ended last sentence of the manuscript. This is a writer who finally distances himself from his craft, his vocation, and his life-long call:

In the light of the [inescapable] pitiless moon [Augustine] he [reviewed] relived his past. As a boy he had taken for granted his role was a poet's; but how many years was it now since he'd written a single line? He hadn't deserted the muse so much as the muse had deserted him. [For] As a boy he had taken for granted that noone ought write poems who's able to help it (there's quite enough written already by people who can't) in his lyrical youth it had never entered his head that one day this veto would act against *him*... Now all that remained of the poet's vocation

Conclusion

The sixteen chapters of the present study have identified the main sources for the German episodes and characters in Richard Hughes's *The Human Predicament*, many of them for the first time. The investigation has been based on extensive searches into the two main repositories of Richard Hughes's papers, one in Bloomington, the other in Reading. The starting point has been his "Acknowledgements" and his "Historical Note" at the end of the two novels. In them, he singled out a few of his sources, the existence of which he wanted to inform his readers about.

Richard Hughes was an uncommonly honest writer of historical novels. He could have left out all references to his sources but he did not. On the contrary, he invited his readers to share that knowledge, and, if they felt so inclined, to do the same checking of the historical facts of the recent past as he had done. Seven sources were mentioned by name in the "Acknowledgements" of *The Fox in the Attic*: Bullock, Wheeler-Bennett, Hanfstaengl, Kubizek, Saloman [sic!], Pia von Aretin, and Major Goetz. One more name was added in the "Historical Note" at the end of *The Wooden Shepherdess*: Otto Strasser.

His listings were far from complete. Helene Hanfstaengl's name is not included, although she is easily identified. She wished to remain anonymous, as was probably also the case with her son Egon, and with Elizabeth Wiskemann. A small piece of paper found among Hughes's manuscripts shows clearly that another of his sources, Sir Philip Gibbs, was intended to play a part in the fiction, as the object of some intradiegetic focalizers. If that had happened, he would have joined the small group of historical characters who mingled with the fictional ones while also being purveyors of facts to the novelist, among them Walter Schellenberg and Albert Speer.

Many more names that do not appear in the acknowledgements or the historical note can be found in the archive. Some are noted in Hughes's research files or mentioned in his correspondence, like the American journalists who had witnessed the 1923 Munich Putsch and reported back to the United States about the events, among them H. R. Knickerbocker and Larry Rue, and Dorothy Thompson who had met Hitler face to face in 1934 and who had not been very impressed. The historians Elizabeth Wiskemann and William Manchester also appear in his notes, as do Kurt G. W. Ludecke and Hans Bernd Gisevius. Other names can be found in his

stack of "old research index cards", though these are mostly writers of standard works of a general nature.

One supplier of historical facts who did leave a mark on the novels, not as himself but in the guise of its central hero Augustine, was Hughes's friend Goronwy Rees, whose autobiographical article is discussed in chapter one above. The article does not seem to have been kept with Hughes's papers. It has not been found in the Lilly Library. But the copy of *Encounter* in which it appeared may well have been among those magazines on the shelves in his study that were later given to the library of Coleg Harlech in Wales. Internal evidence, as explained above, makes it likely that Hughes profited from that text. Reading it may even have been one of the decisive stimuli for his novel-project.

If Hughes had added more names to the ones that he had already listed at the end of his two novels, it would most likely have been counterproductive, in that it would probably only have discouraged those of his readers who would have been inquisitive enough to begin the lengthy search into the factual basis for the historical novels they had just read. In any case, those who were not only impressed by the novels but also took an active interest in the history of the inter-war years in Germany would have been in a minority. Hughes's invitation to that kind of active reader involvement still stands, and remains valid for every new reader of *The Human Predicament*.

It is interesting to note that it is only some of the sources for his German chapters that were mentioned. No information was given as to what factual material had gone into his other chapters, namely those set in other parts of the world than Germany. Singling out the German chapters for close inspection in the way that has been done in this study unavoidably means disrupting the flow of Hughes's fiction and violating its unity. Judging from the selected view of his sources that Hughes took in his afterwords, it still has the author's blessing, as it were.

Solving the puzzle created by Hughes in the scope of the sixteen chapters of this study has been a time-consuming exercise. The textual detective work, however, has not been an end in itself. The examples of borrowed passages and their original contexts have been displayed and discussed in many instances above. The new contexts in the novels into which they have been incorporated have been commented on and the changes that have occurred during that transition have been duly noted. The technical mastery of Hughes's narrative inventiveness has been assessed. The ques-

tions raised at the end of the study's introduction as to the "when", "where", "why" and "how" of Hughes's recourse to sources for his German matter have been answered, I hope.

The different parts of this study have shown that Hughes held the historical sources for the episodes that he recounted in deep respect, and that he made good use of them. At the very end of these concluding pages, it will be argued that he may very well have intended to have his work scrutinized in the somewhat myopic and pedantic manner in which it has been done here. He could have let the traces of his own lengthy research disappear. He chose not to do that.

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The centenary of Richard Hughes's birth falls on April 19, 2000. Judging by the fact that none of his four books has been out of print for any significant period since publication, if at all, and taking into account the very extensive print runs of their many editions (including all translations), his work has withstood the test of time remarkably well. It is therefore safe to assume that his fiction will be read well into the next millennium, perhaps as long as fiction is considered a worthwhile medium that can hold readers in a firm grip. Hughes did not doubt that fiction would endure. On the contrary, he was convinced that a novelist's activities were essential to the survival of the human race. Two quotes will illustrate this, both of them from the time when he was working on the second instalment of his final project.

As noted at the very beginning of this study he had declared, when he was interviewed in New York in 1969: "My most recent book, 'The Fox in the Attic', is about Hitler and Germany". He had been invited to address the American Academy of Arts and Letters, of which he had been elected a member, and he had made use of that special occasion to air his thoughts on a novelist's moral duties. Afterwards, he met with opposition from some unexpected quarters. He replied by saying:

Novels are the only way we can experience people as people and not things. That was the main theme of my speech here the other day, and, apparently, what I had to say annoyed a historian in my audience very much. He told me that he deeply resented my remarks and that it was impossible to write history without getting inside people. I told him, 'In that case, *you* are writing fiction'.¹

¹ *The New Yorker*, June 28, 1969.

His comparison of historians and novelists will be discussed below, but first the article which developed his views further will be cited. Hughes knew that novels gave readers insights into the thoughts and emotions of their fellow human beings. On March 21, 1970, the *Times Saturday Review* printed his article "Not things but persons" in which he defended his craft and expressed his conviction that reading novels was an all-important activity. There was nothing escapist about it, he maintained; on the contrary, it was necessary in order to understand other people. He also gave a chilling example of a non-reader:

Today an apparently intelligent man can tell you: 'No, I never read *novels*' and plume himself on such proof of his serious-mindedness. Is he totally unaware that he is thereby confessing an unwillingness to face the essential nature of his fellow-men and himself?

For this is no ordinary cloud-cuckoo-land escapism: it masks something much more dire, a solipsist retreat into the fortress of his own 'I am', like that of an autistic child. It is a refusal to face the unpalatable fact about his fellow-men which Fiction might compel him to apprehend, the fact that other people are not 'things' but 'persons'. Not mere machines mass-produced on the genetic assembly line complete with built-in obsolescence, but persons; not things to be studied only from outside and even then in numbers large enough to form categories and classes, not things to be regarded in relation to his own Ego as mere obstacles or raw material or tools — but what Sartre calls the 'Other', just as much persons as he is a person himself.

It was the vast failure to learn that lesson which built the gas-ovens. The archetypal non-reader of Fiction was Hitler.

He amplified his reasons why he believed that novelists are more perceptive than other people of what is going on in the minds of their fellow human beings, and better equipped to express it. Once more he stated his belief that getting inside people was the novelist's prerogative. What he wrote was clearly an apology for his own lifelong creation of believable fictional characters — in the last decades of his writing life including the reconstruction of actual lives. It was not merely a matter of looking into the characters of a novel; it was also a case of looking out from inside them:

Of course the ability to see deeply into men and women from outside is not peculiar to the novelist. Hitler had that; so had Machiavelli; likewise Freud. What is unique in the novelist's vision differs from this perceptiveness in kind, differs from even the acutest penetration into man as an 'object': it is the novelist's ability to station himself inside someone else's innermost 'I am' and to look out on the world through other eyes than his own. Not to peer in but to see out, with a rapid series of changes of identity to *be* someone else.

Where the novelist is of supreme importance to mankind is that he can induce this same ability in his reader.²

This he did with remarkable success in *The Human Predicament*, with his Adolf Hitler hiding away in the Hanfstaengl attic at Uffing as the prime example.

*

In the main, the present study has followed the chronology of *The Human Predicament* and its unfinished sequel. It has isolated fifteen of Hughes's main sources of historical facts (and in some cases, of historical gossip), moving through the twelve year-time span that he allowed for the two novels. The research topic has proved to be somewhat unwieldy. Its primary material, Hughes's manuscripts and letters in the archives, is enormous even when restricted to those pertaining to his German episodes. Its secondary material, all the texts by other authors (writers of memoirs, historians etc) that he had access to and consulted, is large and far-ranging. In order to cover this diverse material, it seemed sensible to make use of the chronological order of the novels.

In conclusion, an alternative reading of the same research topic, i. e. the German chapters of Hughes's novels seen in the light of his sources, will be suggested, albeit by necessity in brief outline only. It will focus on one particular person, though still in relation to the sources used for the novelist's reconstruction of that person's development. It could be argued that the fictional treatment of the Austrian corporal who for twelve years was the German dictator was the most daring attempt and important achievement of all Hughes's efforts to bring the past to life again. A close examination of the figure of Adolf Hitler, an enterprise sanctioned by Hughes himself in his American Academy speech, as it were, will take into account the sources discussed in seven of the preceding sixteen chapters above, for a final consideration. As will also be shown, many critics have singled out Hughes's Hitler portrait for particular praise or protest. Some considerations about genre — *The Human Predicament* as a semi-documentary novel — will follow.

² *Fiction as Truth*, pp. 70-71. — When introducing a quote from the narratologist Gabriel Josipovici in his chapter on "Frames of Reference", Wallace Martin does so as if he had just read Hughes's article, if not his novels: "Gabriel Josipovici looks on the realistic novel as a deviation from traditional and modern narratives which, by including an authorial narrator and referring to literary conventions, acknowledge their fictional status. In his view the best modern novelists use realistic technique only to set the stage for an awakening of consciousness that will jolt us out of our solipsist dreams" (Martin, p. 176).

Hitler appears in person or is referred to in two of the three parts of *The Fox in the Attic*, and likewise in *The Wooden Shepherdess*: he is totally absent from the first part of either novel (as are references to most other things German). Five of the chapters of "The White Crow" show him either obliquely, or in direct action. He is an unknown non-entity when first mentioned, treated as a joke in a dinner conversation (19). The dinner-guests get his first name wrong twice. When they are told of his exploits at the Bürgerbräu in the evening of November 8, this is in part based on Ernst Hanfstaengl's memoirs, Hughes's main source for most of his German chapters. In the next chapter (20), Hitler still has not made a personal appearance, but he is talked of as a street-orator, in lines probably based on what Hughes had heard from one of his contacts in Munich in 1956, and he has also been seen by Dr. Reinhold, who then, as an intradiegetic focalizer, passes on tidbits of gossip about this upstart politician. Hitler gobbles cream puffs and he has no *savoir faire*. In this instance, the irony reflects not only on Hitler but also on those who ridicule him, with the typical Hughesian ambiguity. Konrad Heiden's book on Hitler has been the prime source, by way of Alan Bullock, as Richard Poole has explained.

In chapter 22, Hughes resorts to one of his favourite narrative devices, the use of an intradiegetic fictional character who focalizes on a factual one, in this case for auditory purposes: in this instance Lothar recognizes Hitler's voice (p. 208). In the next sentence (p. 209), Hitler finally makes his entrance, possibly as seen and heard by the intradiegetic witness Lothar, but more probably as rendered by an extradiegetic narrator. Chapters 25 and 26 deal with the Putschist march on central Munich on November 9. The pace is speeded up by swift and sudden changes in the process of narration, sometimes occurring within a sentence. On page 220, Hitler is being observed by an extradiegetic narrator, but then he becomes the intradiegetic focalizer of princess Natascha: "Hitler keeps his eyes fixed sternly ahead, yet out of their corner can't but be acutely aware of the delicately-nurtured schoolgirl wheeling her bicycle at his very elbow."

The clash in front of the Feldherrnhalle in the next chapter (26) is to a large extent based on Hanfstaengl's account, which may seem paradoxical as he was not present but received his information of what had happened from another source. However, Joseph Brewer, a New York librarian and a long-time friend of Richard Hughes's, supplied the novelist with a whole series of contemporary journalistic eye-witness reports on the Putsch that

had appeared in American newspapers in the second week of November 1923 (which were at times as jumbled as the Putsch had been).

Hitler's appearance in the next part of the novel, "The Fox in the Attic", is restricted to chapters 9 to 11, but in them, he comes into focus more fully than before (or after, as the reader will detect). Hughes's reconstruction is based on Helene Hansftaengl's report as the sole witness, and on her husband's indirect one which was based on hers. But the changes are major between sources and novel, particularly in the passages which move inside Hitler's mind. His frenzied outbursts in the Uffing attic are not the novelist's imagined conjectures but a composite picture based on several sources, as Richard Poole has pointed out. A further source is the book by August Kubizek, a friend of Adolf Hitler's from his youth, which shows the same lack of hindsight that Hughes had warned writers of historical fiction against. In a distinctly odd way, Kubizek writes about his former friend as if nothing of importance had happened since they parted long ago.

In *The Wooden Shepherdess*, Hitler appears, directly or indirectly, in at least eight chapters in "The Meistersingers" (10-14, 23, 25 and 28). The first instance is based on the published memoirs of Ernst Hanfstaengl and the unpublished memoirs of his son, Egon, both written long after the event they depict. Hughes makes clever use of their different tones and attitudes when he allows both of them to serve as his intradiegetic focalizers. Consequently, Hitler as a beloved "Onkel Dolf" is seen with wide-eyed wonder. The little boy is full of admiration; a more distanced reader may detect a certain glibness in the picture. This is also the case in the Munich Christmas chapter (14), once more based on the accounts of Hanfstaengl senior and junior, but here Hitler himself adds a streak of horror. His raucous imitation of a grenade barrage in the World War I trenches is taken from Hanfstaengl's memoirs but is dramatized to strong effect in the novel, particularly by the way in which it focuses on the listeners' uneasy reaction to this performance of dubious entertainment value.

In between the two chapters, Hitler has meanwhile appeared in the dock, namely in the courtmartial proceedings after his aborted Putsch. The factual basis for his perorations in the novel can be found in the official transcripts of his speeches. His time as a pampered prisoner at Landsberg also comes into view, based on Ernst Hanfstaengl's ironic account of inter-party Nazi rivalry. In chapter 23, Lothar once again serves as an intradiegetic focalizer, as demonstrated more fully in the introduction to this

study (see p. 24). Having come this far into the tangled early history of the Nazi party, Hughes obviously had difficulties sorting out the mass of historical evidence. His panoramic ambitions at times tend to result in potted history at this stage. One of his preferred solutions to this problem was to set Hitler off against a whole series of adherents and opponents. One of them is Otto Strasser, in a passage (28) drawing on information from Gregor Strasser's memoirs. Hughes took an interest in the relative unreliability of this and some other sources that he made use of: they were all written by persons who had an axe to grind. Kurt G. W. Ludecke, Walter Schellenberg and Ernst von Salomon were all suppliers of opinionated and slightly twisted facts.

In the final part of the final volume, "Stille Nacht", Hitler appears in chapters 13, 15-16, 19-20, 23-24, and 26-30. He is linked to Strasser (13), to Göring (15), and to Hindenburg (21), while Goebbels makes frequent fleeting appearances in these chapters. The chapter on Hitler's tangled relationship with his niece Geli Raubal is based on the reports of at least two known sources, i. e. Gregor Strasser and Ernst Hanfstaengl, both of whom revel in sleaze. In this as well as in other instances, Hughes does not miss the opportunity to gently mock Hanfstaengl although he (who could see himself fictionalized more than once) does not seem to have taken offence at this. Hitler's meeting with Mussolini (19) is based on the more easily verifiable account of Hughes's historian friend Elizabeth Wiskemann, and his visit to the Krupps in Essen on that of one of her colleagues, the American William Manchester. The dramatisation of these events was, as I have already stated, the work almost as much of the historians as of the novelist Hughes himself.

The haunting and lingering image of Hitler when seen through a window at Hotel Dreesen in Bonn (23) draws on Walter Schellenberg's eye-witness account, but Hughes gave the scene a more acute presence by sudden shifts in the focalisation, until the diegetic narrator finally takes over. At times, the fictional Ernst serves the same narrative purpose as Lothar has done; both are used as intradiegetic focalizers. The horrifying "Banquo's Ghost" incident (26) is based on Strasser's quite possibly spurious account of how Ernst Udet in the nick of time was spared from the blood bath of June 30, 1934. Hitler's inspection of the officers (27) is based on a second-hand report, namely Ernst von Salomon's account of what he had been told by a disillusioned Hans Ludin (who himself appears briefly in the novel). Hitler's interaction with a drowsy Röhm at Wannsee is

based in part on Strasser, and his activities with Hess in the next chapter on Gisevius. Both sources are clearly anti-Hitler.

Albert Speer makes a very brief cameo appearance (30), in a condensed version of a page from the first volume of his memoirs, and in the same chapter, Hitler makes his final appearance (if one does not take into account his reappearance in some of the posthumously published twelve chapters). All this provides a line woven into the novel's fabric by an author with an assured sense of symmetry. Hitler was busy gobbling creams puffs twelve years and a good five hundred pages earlier. He is now dismissed somewhat elliptically, looking forward to a similar kind of activity, as if little had happened in the meantime: "Hitler was still in full spate when Brückner's welcome summons arrived to tea, and Society ladies, and sweet sticky cakes" (p. 376). The risk of a trivialised portrait of Hitler is ruled out by what has just been shown on the preceding hectic pages: his running amok during the Night of the Long Knives.

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Hughes's reconstruction of cataclysmic moments in the early history of Nazism, in particular the 1923 Putsch and the 1934 Purge, were admired by several critics and by many readers. His endeavour to make believable one of the most callous of twentieth century political leaders was more controversial. His portrait of Hitler met with a mixed reception, a fact that seems not to have bothered him too much, as if he had anticipated this. The critic and historian J. P. Stern, in his book on Hitler, has praise for Hughes's efforts. He concedes that at least two novelists in their fiction have made Hitler plausible, even if most of their colleagues have failed: "... apart from a few pages by Richard Hughes and Günter Grass, creative literature has failed to illuminate the central figure of German and European history in the first third of the twentieth century."³

³ These colleagues are legion. Günther Scholdt's monograph on German-speaking writers' picture of the Führer is a thousand-page tome, yet it only goes as far as 1945. Nor has there been any paucity of fictionalized Hitlers in England and America, as Alvin Rosenfeld has shown in his short study *Imagining Hitler* (1985). This applies to historians as well. John Lukacs's historiography *The Hitler of History* (1997) deals with a plethora of people who have written factually about Hitler. Eleven such writers have been discussed above. Five of them are noted on Hughes's research cards: Konrad Heiden, H. R. Trevor-Roper, Lord Bullock, Hans Bernd Gisevius and Joachim Fest. — How should this excessive and at times obsessive interest be explained? Ron Rosenbaum has suggested one reason: "Hitler theories are cultural self-portraits in the negative — ways of distancing ourselves from him. And ways of protecting ourselves" (*The New Yorker*, May 1, 1995, p. 52).

In an article on Hughes's novels, the American critic Walter Sullivan⁴ asked himself why Nazism has attracted far more attention and interest than Communism (historians like Sebastian Haffner, Alan Bullock⁵ and Alvin Rosenfeld⁶ have tried to answer the same question). Sullivan's explanation ends in a sanction of Hughes's enterprise: "Why the memory of [Hitler's] evil should horrify us more than the recollections of Stalin's murders and tortures is in some ways obvious. His personality was more flamboyant than Stalin's and being a western European, he was, much more than Stalin, one of us. Consequently he and his movement are central to the world and the time that Hughes is trying to re-create."

Not all critics were as generous with their praise. Some have felt uneasy about Hitler as he appears in *The Human Predicament*. D. S. Savage, for instance, has observed that the author's and the reader's empathy work in both positive and negative ways, and he has detected a flaw in Hughes's overriding solipsist formula as applied to Hitler. It is too simplistic in that it fails to take into account some of the historical facts:

The historical Adolf Hitler exemplified just that egoistic fusion of the 'I' with the 'mine' and the 'we' that is Hughes's definition of normality and sanity The ambiguity of Hughes's portrait lies in its reversibility. According to how you view him, Hitler can be seen as a monster or a normal man. Conventionally cast into the villain's role he could, on Hughes's terms, as well emerge as a kind of hero.⁷

Creating a portrait of Hitler with a certain degree of empathy is a double-edged activity, and not everyone applauded Hughes's labours, especially not in Germany, as has been shown above in the chapter on Hughes and the German Book Market. The critic Helene Henze, reviewing *The Fox in the Attic* in an otherwise laudatory article in the influential *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*⁸, saw no reason why Hughes, who had taken such great pains to make his historical account as factual as possible, should

⁴ In *Sewanee Review* no. 82 (1974)

⁵ In *Hitler and Stalin. Parallel Lives* (1991).

⁶ Rosenfeld writes: "Americans seem to show an unflagging interest in the Nazi era, and American popular culture remains highly receptive to stories and images of the Third Reich. Why is this so? . . . as 'orientals', Stalin and Mao are both exotic to the Western imagination, and their crimes, no matter how extreme, fit some general notion that the West has long had about the inherent barbarism of the East. The decimation of Asiatics by other Asiatics, in other words, is not conceived of as part of a closely shared history . . . Not so the slaughter brought on by Hitler . . . Unlike the silent, hidden, and generally inponderable personalities that masked the sinister sides of Stalin and Mao, Hitler was flamboyant, theatrical, overstated, omnipresent" (*Imagining Hitler*, pp. 14-16).

⁷ *The Anglo-Welsh Review* 68 (1981), p. 45.

⁸ November 27, 1963.

suddenly deviate from this preferred method when the narrative moves into the mind of Hitler and looks out on the world from inside it:⁹

Warum er aber, wenn er auf eine künstlerische Verdichtung dieser Vorgänge verzichtet, sich bei der Figur Hitlers nicht auf das Bezeugte beschränkt, ist unverständlich. Hitlers erdachte Monologe in seinem Versteck, seine sadistischen Delirien, der Griff nach der Peitsche aus Rhinozeroshaut, der Traum von seiner Mutter und anderes mehr — es dünkt uns ein Übergriff der Romanphantasie, den die furchtbare, uns noch so blutig nahe und unfäßliche Realität unerträglich macht.¹⁰

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Alvin Rosenfeld, whose discussion of Hughes's Hitler¹¹ is one of the most worthwhile on that narrow topic, takes a mainly positive stance, dubbing Hughes's "the most ambitious attempt to date to fictionalize Hitler in light of the historical record" (p. 34). However, he also raises some objections, pointing out "the difficulties confronting any writer who sets out to portray in fiction so massive a historical presence as Hitler." The emphasis in Hughes's portrait of the Führer is on psychology, not politics: "Psychology and not history drew [Hughes], and he was more intent on fleshing out Hitler as the quintessential solipsist than the political and national leader that Hitler was grooming himself to become" (p. 36). Hitler as he appears in *The Human Predicament* also runs the risk of becoming too normal and thus an object for the readers' empathetic sympathies. The novel's agonized Hitler in Uffing may cause conflicting emotions in the reader. The response may be positive and commiserating — up to a point:

⁹ Richard Poole approves, however — perhaps with Hughes's 1970 essay in mind: "Hitler ceases to be an 'outside', he becomes a person" (p. 223). He continues, in a discussion of the interplay of history and fiction in Richard Hughes's novels: "Hughes's inner Hitler is ... a product of the *a priori* imagination, a creation at once fictional and historical: *historical* because Hughes, having soaked himself in the "evidence", has thought himself into an historical action and discerned the thought of an historical agent; *fictional* because the thought of that agent consists of more than reflection on the significant public event (the Putsch) which has brought him where he is, and takes the form of an hallucination fed by memory and informed by fear and desire" (Poole 1986, p. 227). — The difference between historical and fictional characters may not be all that distinct. When readers make fictional characters (including actual historical ones) come alive, they draw on strategies from everyday life, according to Wallace Martin: "Fiction is like gossip. I hear verbal reports of the traits and acts of a person who circulates at the edge of my acquaintance. These I piece together with bits of personal observation. From all such fragments, I project a whole: what kind of person is she? A character in fiction or the character of a person in fact is a conjectural configuration" (Martin, pp. 119-120).

¹⁰ [Why he, when he abstains from fictionalizing these events, does not rely on documents as regards Hitler is inexplicable. Hitler's imagined monologue in hiding, his sadistic ravings, his gripping the rhinoceros-skin whip, his dream about his mother and a lot more — seem to us a violation of the novel's imagination, making unbearable the horrifying reality which is so bloodily near and incomprehensible to us]

¹¹ In *Imagining Hitler* (1985).

Such a reader will doubtless also get some idea of how painful a broken collarbone can be and probably will respond in sympathy to the person who suffers so. Until, that is, he realizes that the poor unfortunate is named Hitler, at which point he will either willfully withdraw sympathy or suffer a number of confused and conflicting feelings himself (p. 37).

Had Hughes's portrait covered Hitler's entire career, this problem would have been avoided, Rosenfeld writes. What is totally lacking in the novels, he continues, is what Hitler is infamous for today, namely genocide: "There are no references to the ghettos and extermination camps, and hardly even a hint of the anti-Jewish persecution that preceded them" (p. 40. — Perhaps the visit to the labour camps in "Stille Nacht" should be seen as a preamble). One of Hughes's German critics, Renate Schostack, expressed a similar conviction: that those suffering from the crimes of history, not the perpetrators of the crimes, should be the ones from whose perspective the story was told.¹²

Some of Rosenfeld's objections are easy to dismiss: Hughes's novels take place in what Sebastian Haffner has called "the so-called 'good' Nazi years"¹³ when the violence was mostly confined to internecine squabble within the Nazi party. And the critic himself, as if aware of his shaky argument, readily admits that Hughes's novels are not without some foreboding: "To be sure, the reader knows more about Hitler and his crimes than a given author may be willing to tell him in any single book, and much of the irony of these fictions is a result of the writer's manipulation of such foreknowledge" (p. 40).

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When Hughes received the above review by Helene Hentze, he was impressed by its long and careful assessment of his novel. He was both grateful, he said in a letter to the reviewer, and impressed by her critical fairness. He then explained the difficulties he was facing when reconstructing the past:

A novelist — even a historical novelist — has to set himself to eschew entirely the historian's hindsight: he has to write about events and people as he thinks they appeared at that time: he has to attempt to re-live a particular moment in the way it was lived at that time, when the future was wholly unknown and unguessed. But this "forgetting the future" is hard enough for the writer, and I quite see that for

¹² In her review of *The Wooden Shepherdess* in *FAZ*, April 27, 1973.

¹³ Haffner 1989, p. 192; with the exception of the political upheavals in early 1933 and mid- 1934, the period lasted until the autumn of 1938.

the German reader where Hitler is concerned it must still be impossible, even nearly twenty years after his death.¹⁴

It is an interesting statement. However, is what Hughes suggests really possible? He successfully re-created historical events as seen from a (past) contemporary point in time, often with the help of a host of intradiegetic focalizers. But his readers can hardly suspend their awareness of this as a world gone by, even when they are temporarily shut off from outside reality in the all-engrossing activity of novel-reading. Neither could Hughes. Constructing a novel for him was, in a sense, also writing history. As he explained to the anonymous interviewer of *The New Yorker*, the two activities were sometimes almost identical. Chapters nine, ten and eleven above have shown how some empathetic historians had tackled historical incidents, as if they were novelists in disguise.

In spite of Hughes's insistence that it takes a novelist to make our fellow human beings truly believable, it could thus be argued that he often was as much a historian as a novelist. It has been suggested above that the high standard of historical authenticity that he set for himself may in the end have hampered his creative flow. Readers unaware of Hughes's practice often marvel at his empathy. What seems to be the invention of an imaginative novelist was, however, more often than not based on a painstaking search for authentic facts. Many examples have been given above.

In respect of this meticulous and at times pedantic worry to find the relevant facts for his historical episodes, Hughes's working methods were in essence not all that different from those of an expert historian. That he took on a whole conglomerate of writing roles has been demonstrated by Richard Poole: when discussing Hitler's sexuality Hughes was the historian turned psychologist, and when he described Hitler as a social climber he was a novelist writing with the objectivity of a biographer.¹⁵

The more one is made aware of how close Hughes kept to his sources, the easier it is to regard his novels as semi-documentary works, constituting their own particular hybrid form of fact and fiction. The Danish critic Lars Ole Sauerberg has discussed the difficulties in keeping fact and fiction apart in documentary realism: "In the perspective of the discourse seen as a verbal construct there seems to be very little, if indeed any, difference between the historical account and the work of fiction" (p. 60). Sauerberg also claims that a novelist confronted with a historical subject has recourse to

¹⁴ RH to HH, December 15, 1963.

¹⁵ Poole 1986, p. 216 ff.

the same kinds of material as the historian: "The technique of the historical novelist is precisely to fill the gaps in received knowledge with events and characters absent from but not incompatible with the known records" (p. 61). This Richard Hughes certainly did. The work methods of a novelist and a historian are almost interchangeable, according to Sauerberg:

This qualitative difference [of the historian preoccupied with crucial events and the novelist with events which seem minor or contingent to the historian] does not prevent the novelist from concerning himself with major 'historical' characters, but he has to stick to general lines of historical 'truth' to maintain probability. The historian, on the other hand, trying to reconstruct and 'understand' a chain of events, thinks in terms of the causality and psychology well-known from fiction (p. 61).

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Large tracts of *The Human Predicament* are as already mentioned still unmapped. The many sources for Hughes's British, American and Moroccan chapters have attracted only scant critical interest, and the autobiographical elements in them are still to be fully evaluated. The topic of Hughes on other literary markets than the German one is virtually untouched. The critical response to his books is another subject that has hardly been explored. Detailed studies of the British, American and German reception of his books can be written on the basis of the archival matter in Bloomington; the Chatto & Windus archive also contains a wealth of reviews. The many years of Hughes's close contacts with his literary agents and publishers on both sides of the Atlantic can be followed in Bloomington and Reading. It is an interesting story which has only partly been told. As noted above, Hughes also took an active interest in the question of reader participation. Much remains to be done in this area, both generally, and in regard to his two last novels. As for the sources for his German episodes, however, it seems that not very much more needs to be added to what has already been said.

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Richard Hughes lived in some interesting though not very comfortable castles during his life: at Stiffkey Hall in Norfolk for two years and then for eight at the Castle House at Laugharne in Wales, which was within walking distance of Dylan and Caitlin Thomas's Boat House. From 1942 until the end of his life, however, he lived at Mor Edrin, a manor near Portmeirion in North Wales. When Hughes moved there, he almost certainly brought with him what must already have been a mass of manuscripts —

and this notwithstanding the fact that by far the greatest part of all his papers, i. e. those pertaining to *The Human Predicament*, were still to be written and would only leave his new residence in the 1970s.

The holdings of Hughes's manuscript papers, which were eventually deposited in permanent storage in the Lilly Library in Indiana, are massive, as anyone interested will discover.¹⁶ Their purchase for the Library was successfully negotiated by William R. Cagle in 1973, in a deal that was obviously to the satisfaction of both parties. The sum offered was by no means negligible, and it must also have given the author great satisfaction to know that his papers would be well looked after in a permanent repository. They were bought on the condition that they would form part of a research collection, and with the intention on the part of the Library of making them accessible to future scholars. The sale may have been an unexpected boon for Hughes, but it is highly likely that he had wished for some similar outcome long before he was approached by the director of that prestigious American library.

All his life, Hughes appears to have been an almost compulsive preserver of all his personal papers. As for his manuscripts, less went to the printer than was stored away. He discarded much more than he published; and the number of discarded pages is enormous. He kept them in good order, sometimes with the help of his secretaries, and he never destroyed anything. He discarded much of what he had written, but he did not burn a page that was of no immediate use. Thus, those interested in the genesis of his work and in how it grew and developed are in a unique and privileged position. Everything can be checked and inspected, from his first stray ideas hastily jotted down, to the staggering amount of tentative suggestions and alternative varieties, and to the corrected galley proofs of the final versions. He explained his slow and laborious working method in an interview:

I start by writing page one, but I revise as I go along, I don't start on page two until I've revised page one. That's the big drawback of writing volume by volume. My first drafts are awful. I couldn't possibly leave them. It's almost like a seed, do you see, the first draft? Revising for me isn't mechanical at all. In fact, it's in revising in my case that I do most of my serious writing rather than in my first draft.¹⁷

¹⁶ By Lilly Library standards, Hughes's manuscript holdings are large but not overwhelming. The collected papers of Upton Sinclair and Orson Welles — to give but two examples — are even more extensive than those of Hughes, by far.

¹⁷ Phyllis Meras, "An Iliad of the World Wars Preoccupies Richard Hughes" (photocopy with no indication of the 1973 article's provenance, in The Lilly Library).

If the first drafts were, in his opinion, awful, why did he save them? If he moved from one castle to the next, why did he not get rid of his papers, or at least, why did he not just rid himself of the less important ones? Some answers to these questions can be suggested, the most obvious one being that he was fully aware of their worth. Stacked away was a wealth of manuscripts for articles and short stories which had been published in newspapers and magazines (and some which remained unpublished), waiting to be edited into future books. Hughes's own plans of doing so were never realized, but Richard Poole, his friend in the last few years of his life, later compiled three posthumous collections out of this material in the Welsh attic. To be sure, more could (and perhaps should) follow.

Hughes kept a good record of what he had written at different stages of his life; it was not unusual for him to recycle his scripts. He must have been convinced of the value of his own work, as he indeed had every reason to be. In all probability, he also understood that the writing of *The Human Predicament*, not least the interplay between its two novels and their sources, was a process that would attract scholarly interest in times to come. Richard Hughes never covered up his traces, although he did not publicly acknowledge all of his sources, either. As if by intention, he left behind all the keys and all the clues in his enormous mass of papers, to be sorted out in due course.



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The two last novels by Richard Hughes (1900-1976) are partly set in Germany in the interwar period. Much of the action in *The Fox in the Attic* (1961) takes place in and around Munich, culminating in a fictional reconstruction of the Hitler Putsch on November 8-9, 1923. In the sequel, *The Wooden Shepherdess* (1973), the finale is a reconstruction of the Röhm Purge on June 30, 1934 and the following days. The present study, with its focus on Hughes's German episodes and their sources, is based on extensive research into his unpublished papers in the Lilly Library, Bloomington, Indiana. It singles out fifteen of his providers of historical material, while assessing the impact the borrowings have had on his fiction. The final parts of the study concern Hughes and the German book market, and his unfinished sequel, *The Twelve Chapters*. In conclusion, Hughes's Hitler portrait and the critical response it provoked is discussed. The study quotes liberally from Richard Hughes's manuscript material.

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