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in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Peter Hoffmann. *Stauffenberg: A Family History, 1905-1944.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003. xix + 424 pp. $27.95, paper, ISBN 978-0-7735-2595-5.

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Published on H-German (August, 2006)

These three books approach the topic of resistance in National Socialist Germany in different ways, but all raise questions familiar to historians of modern Germany and relevant to anyone concerned with why and how individuals oppose state-sponsored violence. What enabled some people not only to develop a critical stance toward the Nazi regime but to risk their lives to fight against it? How should such heroes be remembered and commemorated? What particular challenges face scholars who try to write the history of resistance?

Peter Hoffmann's "family history" of Claus, Count Stauffenberg, is the second edition of his book *Stauffenberg* (1995), originally published in German in 1992 under the title *Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg und seine Brüder*. Hoffmann, the dean of studies of the German resistance, uses a traditional biographical approach that locates the roots of Stauffenberg's opposition to National Socialism and his attempt to kill Hitler on July 20, 1944, in his unusual family background, his devotion to the poet Stefan George and the George circle and his experiences in the German military before and during World War II. Informed by decades of research and personal connections with Stauffenberg's family and friends, this book is the product of a mature scholar at the peak of his powers. It is at the same time a moving tribute to an extraordinary man whose intelligence, nobility of spirit and ability to withstand pain set him apart from his peers long before his most famous act of defiance against Nazi evil.

Tatjana Blaha's exploration of Willi Graf and his involvement with the "White Rose" in Munich marks the beginning, rather than the culmination of its author's career. A revised Ph.D. dissertation, Blaha's study seeks to correct the widespread notion that the White Rose was essentially the work of Hans and Sophie Scholl. Graf, too, was an important figure in the group, Blaha argues, and investigation of his involvement draws attention to motivations for resistance that have often been overlooked. In particular, Graf's formation in the Catholic youth movement, his independent nature and his longstanding opposition to National Socialism prepared him to join the Scholls, Alexander Schmorell, Christoph Probst and Professor

Kurt Huber in their resistance activities. Like Hoffmann, Blaha left no stone unturned in her quest for sources, and Graf's diaries, letters and the recollections of his sister add a personal dimension to the scholarship. In contrast to Hoffmann, whose study ends with July 1944, leaving only a seven-page epilogue to address Stauffenberg's legacy, Blaha devotes half her book to the postwar reception of Graf and the White Rose. She examines treatments of the White Rose in selected scholarly and popular works, including press coverage, and looks at public acts of commemoration, for example at the Ludwig-Maximilians Universität in Munich and in Graf's hometown of Saarbrücken. Graf, Blaha concludes, has not received the credit he deserves.

The volume edited by John Michalczyk comes out of a conference on "Resistance in Nazi Germany" held at Boston College in 2002. Its fourteen chapters cover a wide range of topics. There are personal accounts of resistance (by the Jehovah's Witness Rudolf Graichen; Freya von Moltke in conversation with Rachel Freudenburg and others; and George Wittenstein, who was connected with the White Rose); essays by prominent scholars in the field (among them Peter Hoffmann, Nathan Stoltzfus and Dennis Showalter); surveys of German resistance (Paul Bookbinder's overview); and portraits of individual resistors (Ina R. Friedman on Cato Bontjes Van Beek and the Red Orchestra). Like most conference volumes, the book provides a tantalizing sample of issues without developing any themes in depth. The title of the collection and the final chapter, Anna Rosmus's discussion of "Hate Crimes in Germany Today," call on readers to continue the legacy of Nazism's opponents and "confront!" prejudice and xenophobia in our own world. Unfortunately, the volume's editor did not take the opportunity to write an introductory essay that would have tied the contributions together to support this challenge. Instead, Michalczyk offers only a brief foreword (one-and-a-half pages) that leaves readers to find their own connections among the diverse and sometimes conflicting contributions that follow.

All three of these books are valuable and inspiring additions to the literature on resistance to the Third Reich, and each of them merits a place on the reading lists of scholars and students engaged in the study of Nazism and its opponents. But even in combination they leave many questions open and puzzles unresolved. The authors' admiration for their remarkable and heroic subjects is appropriate and well substantiated by careful research, but what does the life and death of an extraordinary person like Claus, Count Stauffenberg really tell us about the possibilities for resistance that were available to less gifted individuals in Nazi Germany? Even within his own family, Claus Stauffenberg was atypical. Hoffmann provides an intriguing look at the childhood of the three Stauffenberg brothers, but never accounts for the fact that two of them--Claus and Berthold--numbered among those who lost their lives in the effort to destroy Hitler's regime, whereas the third, Berthold's twin Alexander, an early and outspoken critic of the Nazi system whose wife was the granddaughter of a Jewish convert to Christianity, does not seem to have been directly involved in the conspiracy.

Blaha gets us closer to the situation of "ordinary Germans" with her focus on Willi Graf, in many ways an unremarkable young man who nevertheless became a determined and active opponent of the Third Reich. But she is more interested in elevating Graf to a hero's status equivalent to that of the Scholl siblings than she is in identifying the factors that led him to move beyond the passive criticism that characterized many of his counterparts in the Catholic youth movement, even its underground association, the Graue Orden. Blaha succeeds in drawing attention to Graf, but ends up giving short shrift to others involved in the White Rose, most notably the student Hans Leipelt, who was denounced for collecting funds to aid Professor Huber's widow and

executed in January 1945. Leipelt is relegated to a footnote in Blaha's work (p. 90), only to appear on the final page as "Konrad Leipelt" (p. 194). Nathan Stolzfus's chapter in Michalczyk, on the women involved in the Rosenstraße protest of 1943, is one of the few examinations of resistance that considers defiance and accommodation together, as they must have functioned for most Germans under Nazi rule. Stoltzfus's category of "civil courage" provides a useful way around the tired debates about defining "resistance" that continue to dominate many discussions of the subject.

Oddly, none of the three books under review has much to say about the particular targeting of Jews for persecution and killing, nor about the central place of antisemitism in Nazi ideology and practice. None of the chapters in Michalczyk's collection addresses Jewish resistance, a gap all the more unfortunate because it ends up reinforcing the old stereotype of Jewish passivity in the Holocaust. With the exception of Stoltzfus's essay, none of the contributions discusses resistors whose efforts focused on saving Jews. Donald Dietrich's piece on "Christianity in the Third Reich" mentions the churches' role in "spawning" antisemitism, but is more concerned with what Dietrich calls Christianity's "death struggle with Nazism." Blaha's study of Graf emphasizes his Christianity and points to his experiences at the front as a crucial turning point in his moral development, but provides no clues as to his own attitudes toward Jews or his encounters with German crimes against them. Blaha indicates only that Graf had no family connections to Jews, unlike Christoph Probst, whose father's second wife was Jewish, and Leipelt, who was deemed a Jewish "Mischling" under Nazi racial law. Like Alexander Schmorell, whose mother was Russian, Probst and especially Leipelt must have experienced Nazi racial hierarchies in ways that Graf and the other members of the White Rose could not have done, but Blaha does not explore this contrast.

Hoffmann makes an effort to link Stauffenberg's resistance to the Holocaust, but his claim that outrage at the murder of the Jews was a central--even the central--motivation for both Claus and Berthold remains open to debate. To support his point, Hoffmann observes that when Claus Stauffenberg tried to recruit certain people for the conspiracy, he pointed to the slaughter of Jews in Eastern Europe as indicative of the evil of Nazism. In other cases, however, Stauffenberg used different arguments, presumably in line with what he deemed most likely to convince reluctant candidates. Hoffmann's assertion is further complicated by evidence he provides of anti-Jewish attitudes on the part of both Claus and Berthold Stauffenberg: for example, their support of measures in the 1930s to limit the place of German Jews in public life, and their approval of the phrase "the thousand-year curse of their blood," referring to Jews, in Rudolf Fahrner's poetic tribute to Stefan George, "Der Tod des Meisters." Hoffmann concedes that the phrase was "intolerable to Jews after the mass murders of Auschwitz," yet dismisses the Stauffenberg brothers' position as merely "lacking in tact" (p. 247). The Stauffenbergs may have been exceptional in many ways, but it appears that at least some members of the family, like many of their European Christian peers, held Jews in vague contempt.

Hoffmann attempts to clinch his case for Claus and Berthold's anti-antisemitism by reminding readers that Gestapo records described opposition to the persecution of the Jews as the main motive for the Stauffenbergs' resistance to National Socialism (a case Hoffmann makes for the July 20 resistors in general in his contribution to the Michalczyk volume, "The German Resistance and the Holocaust"). This claim, it seems to me, rests on a faulty analysis of the sources. Given the centrality of destruction of the Jews to Nazi policy and practice, Nazi officials automatically accused anyone who opposed the regime of being somehow soft on Jews. Such charges in official records reveal much more about the priorities of the

regime and its agents than they do about the actual motivations of those under interrogation. Hoffmann does make a compelling case for Stauffenberg's moral outrage at the corruption, viciousness and destructiveness of National Socialism, but persecution of Jews appears to have been only one part of a horrifically wide picture. In what comes across as an effort to protect Stauffenberg from any criticism and make him be all things to all people, Hoffmann may have overstated the role of the Holocaust in his hero's moral calculations.

The question of motivation points to the particular problems that face historians working on resistance to National Socialism. Precisely those matters of most urgent interest to researchers are not addressed directly in the available sources. It was too dangerous to leave written or even oral traces of one's involvement in illegal activities, and the kind of people most likely to act in opposition to the regime can hardly be expected to have spent hours engaged in psychological or philosophical introspection. Blaha and Hoffmann try to overcome this challenge by turning to personal correspondence and in Graf's case, diaries, and to triangulate those private sources with official records, such as transcripts of interrogations and postwar reflections. Still, much remains in the realm of speculation, an activity from which Hoffmann in particular prefers to refrain. For example, he argues convincingly that Claus Stauffenberg turned against Hitler as early as 1942--while the Germans still held the European continent in firm control. But he does not analyze the impact of Stauffenberg's injuries in North Africa in early 1943--the loss of one eye, his right hand and two fingers of the left hand--in the subsequent, crucial decisions to assume leadership of the conspiracy and to serve as the assassin. Nor does he address the role of Stauffenberg's wife Nina and children in the count's considerations, other than to note that in fall 1943, Stauffenberg showed one potential co-conspirator a photograph of his family and said, "I am doing it for them" (p. 193).

The nature of the sources may also explain why the role of religion in the resistance remains rather murky, not only in these books but in the scholarship in general. Blaha shows Willi Graf to have been deeply committed to his Catholic faith, but many other sincere Catholics, including Graf's friends in the youth movement, did not build active resistance on that same foundation. Stauffenberg, too, Hoffmann reminds us, "remained a faithful Catholic" (p. 285), although it is not clear exactly how that religious identity shaped his opposition to Nazism. His quest for allies within the military establishment certainly does not appear to have included any Wehrmacht chaplains, although as an officer and member of the General Staff, he must have encountered many of them, Catholic and Protestant. Donald Dietrich's piece in the Michalczyk volume concludes that Christianity failed to spark resistance at the level of institutions, although it sometimes succeeded in doing so for individuals. That analysis seems to fit the cases of Graf and Stauffenberg. For outsider groups (for example, the Jehovah's Witnesses, as described in Graichen's personal account and James N. Pellechia's scholarly overview in ***Confront!***), the situation was different, as religious structures and communities of the faithful coordinated and supported resistance activities. It would be instructive to have similar studies of the role of Jewish religious organizations and traditions in motivating and shaping resistance.

Incomplete and nonexistent sources may also explain some discrepancies that exist between and among the accounts of resistance these books present. Readers may be especially bewildered by conflicting information regarding the White Rose. Where Hoffmann describes its members as having "staged a public protest in Munich University" (p. 181), Blaha suggests that Hans and Sophie Scholl distributed the sixth White Rose flyer inside the university building without consulting

other members of the group. It is unclear what they hoped to achieve through this action, Blaha concludes. Wittenstein's account in the Michalczyk volume substantiates many of Blaha's points, but introduces key players--among them, George (Jürgen) Wittenstein himself--who are never mentioned in Blaha's study. Inge Scholl's 1983 publication, ***The White Rose: Munich, 1942-1943***, constitutes the main source for Michalczyk and Franz Josef Müller's chapter, entitled "The White Rose Student Movement in Germany: Its History and Relevance Today." Blaha, however, describes Inge Scholl's version of events as seriously problematic, devoid of any scholarly apparatus and responsible for some significant and persistent errors of fact and interpretation about the White Rose (pp. 110-112). Readers will need to decide for themselves whose lead to follow.

Likewise left on their own will be readers interested in the connections between gender and resistance. Some studies of Jewish resistance have explored this topic (among them Vera Laska's standard work); Stoltzfus raises it in his analysis of the Rosenstraße protest, and Freya von Moltke touches on it with characteristic modesty and insight. Nevertheless, it is not investigated in a systematic way in any of the three books under discussion. Blaha, in particular, misses an opportunity here in accounting for why Sophie Scholl has captured so much public attention and popular affection in postwar Germany. In general, Blaha's discussion of the reception of the White Rose would have benefited from consideration of the influence of movies about the group, especially Michael Verhoeven's 1983 hit, ***The White Rose***. No doubt Verhoeven's film has reached a much wider audience than the literary and press accounts that Blaha analyzes.

The preceding observation, like all of my responses to the books by Blaha, Hoffmann and Michalczyk, is less a criticism of these studies of German resistance than it is a reminder that even in this well-examined field, more remains to be done. Perhaps the best word of guidance for future research comes from Freya von Moltke's admonition not to see things "too simply" (Michalczyk, pp. 135).

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Citation: Doris L. Bergen. Review of Hoffmann, Peter. ***Stauffenberg: A Family History, 1905-1944.*** H-German, H-Net Reviews. August, 2006.

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