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Sieg Heil! War Letters of Tank Gunner Karl Fuchs, 1937-1941

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After a number of shore staff ASW jobs in the early part of the war, Whinney got command of H.M.S. *Wanderer* in March 1943. His detailed and technical descriptions of surface ASW in the North Atlantic are worth reading. Sonar was effective only in an active mode and most detections were made at one or two thousand yards. With no target depth information, attack consisted of running down on the anticipated position of the submarine and dropping large amounts of explosive set to go off at the best-guess depth. It seems to have been a nervy business requiring considerable shrewdness, skill and aggression on the part of the destroyer skipper. Whinney was good at it for he sank three submarines in 18 months—well above the average.

For historians of this period, Whinney includes a good number of personal observations on the characters and abilities of several senior naval officers. He also shows the emergence in small ASW ships of the crucial roles played by the highly skilled technical crew members such as the sonar and radar people. Finally, he includes a touching account of a German Jewish refugee serving in such a capacity in his ship.

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Richardson, Horst Fuchs, comp. *Sieg Heil! War Letters of Tank Gunner Karl Fuchs, 1937-1941*. Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1987. 171pp. \$25

Karl Fuchs was a tank commander and later a platoon leader in the 25th Panzer Regiment, 7th Panzer Division of the 39th Panzer Corps, and as such took part in heavy fighting in the Soviet Union beginning on 22 June 1941; he was killed near Klin on 21 November 1941 during Army Group Center's drive to encircle Moscow from the North. Born in 1917, Fuchs belonged to that generation in which males had but one chance in three to survive beyond the year 1945.

Fuchs' letters, which span his career from entry into the Nazi Labor Service in 1937 to his death near Moscow four years later, are mainly to his parents and to his recent bride, Mädi; they were never intended as a diary or a journal. Their publication is due to the efforts of the son whom Karl Fuchs never saw, Horst Fuchs Richardson, professor of German at Colorado College. Dennis Showalter, professor of history at the same school, has added historical comments, a conclusion, and explanatory footnotes to the letters, thereby enhancing their value by placing them in historical context.

As Showalter states, Karl Fuchs embraced the Third Reich neither from "opportunistic self-interest nor nihilistic delight in destruction, but out of hopes for a better future." Fuchs was a Protestant from the small town of Rosstal near Nürnberg; he is depicted as romantic, as an idealist of the Right. His was not a critical, probing mind. He accepted Hitler and Nazism unquestioningly.

One or two examples from the letters must suffice to impart their

flavor. On 19 May 1940, as German armies raced through France, Fuchs wrote his bride that Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa had arisen. "And this Friedrich Barbarossa is none other than our Führer Adolf Hitler." Just over a year later, Fuchs informed Mädi "that Russia is nothing but misery, poverty and depravity." He had fully endorsed Hitler's views that Russians, Bolsheviks, and Jews were "criminals," "scoundrels," "sub-human beings," "the mere scum of the earth," "murderers of all culture." Adolf Hitler was the keeper of the gate, about to save Europe from this scourge. "One day, many years hence, the world will thank the Germans and our beloved Führer for our victories here in Russia." Ironically, Karl Fuchs' last letter, sent to his mother on 12 November 1941, finally reflects growth: "My plight today is similar to Father's in the Great War. . . . All of us have become serious and mature in this struggle for the future of our people." He died nine days later.

The value of the letters does not lie in their detailed account of the war in the Soviet Union—in fact, there is only one, dated 1 November 1941, that details a battle at Vyazma—but rather in the fact that they show what one might term an average Nazi soldier locked in combat with the perceived mortal, biological-racial enemy in the East. The letters are chilling in their simple, obedient acceptance of the Nazi regime's murderous philosophy.

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Spector, Ronald H., ed. *Listening to the Enemy: Key Documents on the Role of Communications Intelligence in the War with Japan*. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1987. 368pp. \$50

Interest in the intelligence aspect of our Pacific conflict with Japan continues to grow as more documents are declassified by the government. Near the end of 1985, the National Archives received several thousand such documents. Ronald H. Spector, author of the praised *Eagle Against the Sun* and currently Director of Naval History at the Naval Historical Center in Washington, D.C., examined a small portion of that material known as "the histories," a collection of almost 360 monographs which together present a panorama of intelligence activities from its early days after World War I until 1945.

In this book Spector has compiled those which he labels "the most significant and interesting of these monographs." His aim, which is to give readers who are interested in World War II "a useful source" for exploring the intelligence field, has succeeded. He provides a fascinating, often eye-opening view of both the significant contributions made by intelligence as well as some of its problems.

Spector divides the book into five sections: "Prewar Communications Intelligence," "ULTRA in Action,"