

Grand Admiral Dönitz (1891-1980): A Dramatic Key to the Man behind the Mask

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Wär's möglich? Könnt ich nicht mehr, Wie ich wollte?/
Nicht mehr zurück, wie mir's beliebt? Ich musste/
Die Tat *vollbringen*, weil ich sie *gedacht*...
Friedrich Schiller, *Wallensteins Tod*, I, iv.

"A turbulent life with its heights and depths, and hard personal blows of fate, has ended," an editor eulogized on Karl Dönitz's death on 24 December 1980.¹ Thus concluded what an astute German observer called "a tragic slice of German history."² Dönitz had been Germany's last Grand Admiral, a rank that would never again be used in a German navy. A U-boat skipper in the First World War, Dönitz experienced a stellar rise on through the Second: from captain of the light cruiser *Emden* in 1934, to U-boat flotilla commander in 1935, to Commander, Submarines (*Führer der Uboote/Befehlshaber der Uboote*) in 1939, to Supreme Commander of the Navy (*Oberbefehlshaber der Marine*) in 1943, and finally to Germany's head of state in May 1945. He is variously remembered as the father of "wolf-pack tactics" and a master of strategy, as the staunch and wily adversary of the Allies in the Battle of the Atlantic, as a charismatic leader, and as the man who rescued two-and-a-half million German refugees from the clutches of advancing Russian forces. He is also remembered as a war criminal found guilty in the Nuremberg Trials. His life presents an intriguing weave of fact and fiction; its portrayal is a daunting task for any serious biographer. Of course, many portraits of Dönitz survive, both photographic and in prose.³ Yet a nagging question still remains as to whom this man actually was. By application of dramatic theory, and by analogy with Friedrich Schiller's treatment of an equally ambiguous military leader - General Wallenstein in the Thirty Years' War - I suggest an approach that promises new answers.

When prisoner Karl Dönitz left Berlin's Spandau Prison in 1956, nothing about him radiated the aura of the former leader of one of the most powerful naval forces to have ventured onto the high seas. Behind him lay the ten-year sentence meted out by the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, which had found him guilty of "crimes against peace" and "crimes against the laws of war." The justice of his sentence is still being debated. During his incarceration, however, the Germany he had once briefly led as Hitler's successor had undergone radical political and social change. Germany's unconditional

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surrender on 8 May 1945 had been followed by foreign occupation and its division into two countries within a single nation. The West experienced "denazification," "re-education," democratization, the Economic Miracle, rearmament and entry into NATO. The East underwent an equally striking transformation, leading to Soviet-style authoritarianism and entry into the Warsaw Pact. From the early 1950s each Germany began developing its own navy: the *Bundesmarine* in the West and the *Volksmarine* in the East. Each navy would struggle with questions of tradition and reform, a process that continued even after German re-unification had led to the integration of selected *Volksmarine* personnel into the Federal German Navy.⁵ All these events were politically and emotionally charged, and all were fraught with ambiguities and inconsistencies that are still being debated. Yet despite these changes, Dönitz himself had by no means become *passé*. Indeed, he remains one of the great unresolved themes of German naval history.⁶



Figure 1: Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz, 1945.

Source: U-Boot-Archiv, Cuxhaven-Altenbruch.



Figure 2: Karl Dönitz, "The Final Years" [1978?].

Source: See figure 1.

Although Dönitz lived out his final years as a virtual recluse, he continued to be an object of both public fascination and official opprobrium.⁷ Significantly, when he died on 24 December 1980 the Federal German government refused a state funeral and forbade

members of the Armed Forces (*Bundeswehr*) from attending in uniform. As late as 1986, decades after supposedly "left wing" revisionist attacks against Dönitz, the right-wing press still portrayed him as a "role model for modern Germany" and in 1991 anachronistically accused the "Allied puppet governments of the so-called Federal Republic of Germany and the so-called German Democratic Republic" of having illegally suspended Dönitz's "legally constituted government."⁸ In the East, it claimed, the military power of Soviet Russia had straitjacketed the German Democratic Republic. In the West, it charged, German values had been perverted by American cultural hegemony: "coca-cola culture with its hippies, negroid music, militant union organizations, scorn of patriotism and repudiation of race, family and cultural values" had destroyed all for which Dönitz had supposedly once stood.⁹ Like a lightning rod, Dönitz attracted a number of polarized opinions, many of which might have made him decidedly uncomfortable. To his supporters he was still the charismatic Grand Admiral, "the lion," and (to a few diehards at least) the "Reichskanzler" and Germany's legitimate Head of State.¹⁰ To his detractors he was a tired old "Nazi lackey," "the last Führer," and the "devil's admiral." But to the pastor who delivered the funeral oration in January 1981, he had become "one of the most grateful Christians I have ever met."¹¹

Some senior members of the *Bundesmarine* have suggested in private that Dönitz is still "a hot potato" ("ein *heisses Eisen*"). That was the case at least as late as autumn 1996, when a sharp exchange of views in the newsletter of the German Submariners' Association (VDU) underscored the point. When a prominent WW II veteran portrayed Dönitz as an honourable leader victimized by the Military Tribunal's "perversion of law and justice," a postwar officer rejected the view: Dönitz, he asserted, had been "an ardent, fanatical National-Socialist" who had gotten off easy.¹² Thus, where one saw a purely military man who had done his job with distinction, the other saw "a political soldier" who had been faithful to Hitler. The President of the VDU cut off debate by calling on his comrades simply to accept these views as irreconcilable facts of life in Germany. To dispute the matter further, he explained, could only harm the Association. Significantly, no voices in the controversy denied the admiral's charismatic "greatness." Rather, they disputed the moral basis for his style.

In a letter written to former wartime opponents just after Dönitz's death, British historian Patrick Beesly expressed the ambivalence in graphic terms. A former naval officer with Operational Intelligence and at the time an historian of decryption, Beesly put it thus:

Dönitz was a truly great Commander and...has earned a place as such in history, despite the efforts of the left-wingers and your government to treat him as a "non-person." His ability to inspire the German Navy as a whole, and his U-boat men in particular, to carry on the bitter struggle to the end, shows that he, like another controversial war-time commander, Air Marshall Harris of Bomber Command, had a charisma which is hard to define but not so difficult to recognise.¹³

The parallels to Harris are intriguing. Though "Bomber" Harris has subsequently been vilified by many both in Britain and beyond as a murderer of civilians during the great 1000-bomber raids over German cities, he has nonetheless received posthumous national honours for his military leadership and prowess.¹⁴ Those who endorse Harris consider his strategic destruction of German cities to have been effective. Massive air attacks were

responsible, it is argued, both for shortening the war and teaching Nazi Germany a vital lesson; equally valuable was the resultant "demoralization" of the civilian population. The majority of observers, it seems, credits Harris with all that Bomber Command achieved - whether for good or evil; significantly, they largely fail to recognize that the ultimate decision-maker was the British War Cabinet.¹⁵ Yet the moral ambiguity of the "Bomber" Harris case has neither dampened the uncritical support of aging Allied air force veterans, nor prevented his political canonization. His statue, for example, stands in central London before St. Clements Dane, the Central Church of the Royal Air Force. Despite controversy, the statue was unveiled by the Queen Mother. Successive postwar German governments could never have accorded such honours to Dönitz.

The comparison between Harris and Dönitz raises compelling questions about the portrayal of war leaders, as well as about national concepts of duty and military honour. As early as 10 April 1944, for example, Charles Murphy stereotypically defended Harris in the pages of *Life* against those who would impugn the military ethos. "But if Harris has done nothing else," the journalist proclaimed, "this ice-cold, blue-eyed fighting man whom Britain's Bloomsbury intellectuals call 'the Butcher' behind his back, would still be memorable for having taught his generation of statesmen and soldiers the meaning of strategic bombing."¹⁶ And that, we are meant to understand, was a very good thing. For among other things, these intellectuals and others "have always begrudged the Nelsonian ruthlessness and independence with which [Harris] has run his great show." Wartime portraits of Harris and Dönitz are all of a piece with what has been derisively termed the "rambo-zambo" approach to hero worship. Surprisingly, perhaps, even today the Bomber Harris web site still features *Life's* skewed description of Harris as proof of his sterling qualities. It does so in partial defense against criticism from alleged "revisionist historians."¹⁷

In the iconography of battle heroes, Harris' "ice-cold, blue-eyed" virtues, not to mention his "ruthlessness," can still be coin of the realm among apologists. The qualities differ little from the legendary "steely-eyed, fanatic toughness" of Admiral Dönitz. Preferring "men of action" to "effete thinkers," both sides of the battle lines showered disdain on intellectuals. The portraiture of heroic "men of action" seems an echo of Hegel's view that "world-historical" figures are men of stature who rise above common morality. Or at least, as Alan Bullock put it, the portraiture concedes the point that such men felt they "were exempt from the ordinary canons of human conduct."¹⁸ Significantly, most accounts covering Dönitz's life and the fateful years 1933-1945 tend to portray him in the epic manner. Popular documentary novels, biographies and memoirs are salient examples, if only because they appeal to a broad popular market and capture the imagination of a wide readership.¹⁹ One might even argue that they largely determine the popular image of the man. Be that as it may, the narrative structure and technique of such works set the central figure against a panorama of events and personalities. Dönitz emerges from the adventures, derring-do and grand strategy as a mythical *eminence-grise* and tough-minded hero, though sometimes a seriously flawed and opportunistic one.

Dönitz presents the literary portraitist or biographer with a formidable challenge. As a case study, his life serves as an example of what can happen when one makes the operational standards of a profession the sole criteria for ethical behaviour. Having risen to prominence in the Nazi regime, his character seems inseparable from the political and moral context in which he quite obviously thrived. Fascinated by his character, writers have exploited him in their portrayals as a vehicle for non-biographical arguments; some have

even promoted political ends or attempted to redeem him from revisionist histories. In fact, the more one studies the man and his times, the more convinced one becomes that writers have not yet gotten the character quite right. Caught as Dönitz is between praise and vilification, we scarcely grasp the centrality of moral ambiguity. The very nature of the popular narrative seems to preclude that. Though many such accounts contain scenes described by blurb writers as "action-packed" or "dramatic," the narratives themselves rarely exploit what the dramatic genre offers. Admiral Erich Topp, a former U-boat ace who subsequently became one of the severest critics of Germany's wartime naval experience, came closer than most in grasping the distinction as far as U-boat literature was concerned. Writing to the German Naval Officers Association in 1986 he described Lothar-Günther Buchheim's three coffee-table picture histories of the U-boat war in striking terms: "This trilogy is the great epic of the struggle, suffering and demise of the German Submarine Arm of the Second World War." Topp then grasped the nettle: "It has the inevitability and futility of a Greek tragedy."²⁰ In the words of Wolfgang Frank, a pulp writer close to Dönitz, with Nuremberg "the curtain fell on a drama unparalleled in the history of war."²¹



Figure 3: Dönitz in 1939.

Source: See figure 1.

By exploring Dönitz's life as drama, we do in fact gain a rather different insight into the man than epic treatment normally provides. An examination of key decisions in the process of formulation - the *Entscheidungsvorfeld*, to use a vivid German term - sheds light on the quality of decisions and hence on the quality of the man at particular points in his career. It does not suffice merely to pose the general question "who was Dönitz?" One must ask, as one does of other dramatic characters, what sort of person he was and how he functioned and revealed himself at particular crises during the five-act play. Significantly, we must largely ignore the chronological phases of the Battle of the Atlantic which naval historians have determined, and follow instead the psychological phases through which the protagonist passed from the opening curtain to the last. By so doing, we adopt Schiller's approach to his seventeenth-century protagonist, General Wallenstein, in order to better clarify "the reasons that humanly motivate his behaviour, although by no means excuse them."²²

Now, for literary historians "dramatic" means something quite specific. It refers to a mimetic mode which imitates life in a distinct and revealing way. As a genre, drama is concerned with conflict, tension, and the precipitation of crises. Its principal line of action proceeds from an initial state of equilibrium (Act I), through a rising action fomented by impending crises (Act II), to a climax when the heavily charged atmosphere bursts (Act III); then follows the *dénouement* (Act IV) and the return to a state of equilibrium (Act V). Significantly, the equilibrium of Act V is on a different level - usually a higher one - from that of Act I. If we accept Aristotle, the tragic mode leads to catharsis by triggering the emotions of pity and fear. The Battle of the Atlantic (1939-1945), with its distinct phases, lends itself well to dramatic treatment. One could in fact, examine a number of individual operations and personalities according to the five-act pattern. Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz is a case in point.

Central to dramatic portrayal is the interplay of character and event. With regard to Greek tragedy in particular, it has been explained that "characters do not exist except within the plot, that their individual traits are products not only of who they are and what they are like, but also of what happens to them."²³ In tragedy, one confronts the driving forces of necessity, ambition, the tragic flaw, and finally nemesis, or retributive justice. Standing centre stage in a drama of major proportions, Dönitz seems a prime subject for dramatic treatment; he affords insight into the morality - and immorality - of power. In John Barton's felicitous phrase when examining David in the Book of Samuel, "all the characters in the story are gradually drawn into some degree of connivance...whether they choose it or not."²⁴ Dönitz was similarly drawn into "some degree of connivance" with the Hitler regime.

Like all *dramatis personae*, Dönitz appears on stage with a specific character and personal history. Of course, unlike Carl Zuckmayer's "devil's general" in the drama *Des Teufels General* (1946), or General Wallenstein in Schiller's *Wallenstein* trilogy (1798), Dönitz did not operate on the same level of command throughout the drama. He was promoted: from U-Boat Flotilla Commander (FdU) in 1935, to Commander-in-Chief Submarines (BdU) in 1939, to Grand Admiral and Commander-in-Chief, Fleet, in 1943, and finally to Head of State (1945). This point is of dramatic significance. If we visualize his upward mobility as an inverted cone with the apex at the bottom and a circular base at the top, we can grasp his shifting range of jurisdiction and sphere of moral influence. At any given level in his rise through the hierarchy, we may take a cross-section through the cone: the plane surface indicates his breadth of vision, his moral horizon; the area beneath him is

his field of command. Anything either outside the cone, or above the plane of the cross-section, lies beyond his jurisdiction and command. In effect, this excluded much - if not most - of what William L. Shirer has called "the nightmare years" of a whole decade from 1930-1940.²⁵ Politics, according to convention, was not a naval officer's concern.

This tradition of refraining from politics began to be firmly established in the early days of the Weimar Republic, when General von Seeckt and Admiral Zenker committed its armed forces (*Reichswehr*) to abstinence from politics. The tradition prevailed until 1945. Duty meant commitment to a finely focussed professional aim: seafaring, soldiering, wargaming, training for any eventual military enterprise in the nation's cause. In this light Dönitz could claim in all good conscience that it was not his duty to react to, or even know, anything outside his field of vision. With perhaps few exceptions - for example, when protesting to his superior, Grand Admiral Erich Raeder, against the infamous *Kristallnacht* attacks on Jewish citizens in 1938 - Dönitz maintained this stance. This *Ressortdenken*, or what I call blinkered concern, was the tragic flaw Dönitz bore with him all the way to Nuremberg. In fact, a recent major study identified "narrow-minded focus" (*engstirniges Ressortdenken*) as a major cause of the failure of German naval strategy.²⁶ As has been argued elsewhere, "the very claim that there were such things as 'purely naval questions' - questions devoid of political ramifications - laid a moral trap" for those who boxed themselves in.²⁷ Being "only a soldier" was perhaps sufficient to get a job done, but it imposed moral restrictions - perhaps even comforting ones.

The hierarchical thinking and deference to authority visible in Dönitz differed little, if at all, from civic custom and administrative practice in large sectors of the civilian population of the day. In naval parlance, a fo'csleman might object that "it's not my part of ship," when told to scrub down the quarterdeck or top. We might not like the way Dönitz and others thought; but that was nonetheless the way they construed their professional responsibilities. Yet in the naval context, this stance may have been more exaggerated than elsewhere. Navies, after all, are societies within a society. They are closed societies with their own laws and customs. Navies have their own schools, colleges, and courts of law (courts martial), as well as their own hierarchies of deference and control. New recruits are nurtured in special traditions and taboos. Particular rites of passage mark their inculcation into the profession of the sea. Navies are grounded on the principles of comradeship, personal loyalty, order, and clearly understood, if sometimes tacit, principles of leadership. In naval culture, commitment to duty is a paramount virtue. Admiral Lord Nelson had said as much.

Dönitz's "iron resolve," "toughness," "combative spirit" (*kampfgeist*), and "fanatic devotion" (*fanatische Hingabe*), to choose but a few terms from the thesaurus of Dönitz descriptors, determined his responses to his world. Indeed, as his daughter once explained, "fulfilment of duty was his life."²⁸ Endowed with religious fervour, the mystique of "duty" was an article of political faith whichever the party in power. The events and crises to which he responded wove a pattern of forces graphically portrayed by the concept of dramatic necessity: the irrevocable thrust with which decisions and actions work themselves out, often with unavoidable results. Add to this his charismatic leadership, resolute determination, and unswerving commitment to sinking as much enemy merchant tonnage as possible, and the dramatic stage is set.

Dramatic necessity in the Dönitz story pivots on the potential conflict between professional competence and personal integrity.²⁹ Born as we all are into political states and

moral contexts, we are as much a result of what we undergo as what we undertake. We are a mix of such factors as social determinism, personal ambition, and well-exploited opportunity.³⁰ As has been said, characters in the story exist only within the plot. What is at issue is not merely professional expertise but one's ethical grasp of the implications of professional judgement and action. The depth of ethical commitment to the task is paramount. In other words, "It is one thing to understand what is ethically appropriate - to separate emotion from tradition, to distinguish reflective moral understanding from law, custom and belief. It is another to *act* on what is thus understood."³¹



Figure 4: Grand Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of the *Kriegsmarine*, 1943.

Source: See figure 1.



Figure 5: Karl Dönitz (centre), with Hitler (left) and Göring (right).

Source: See figure 1.

Whether the poor players who strut and fret their time upon the stage of real life realize it or not, they are ultimately measured not only against cultural values but also against certain fundamental ethical and moral principles. Three of them are of dramatic importance: the principles of utility, fidelity (or best action), and impossibility. The principle of utility insists that one always act in such a way as to maximize the greatest amount of good for the greatest number of people; the principle of fidelity explains that those who have a duty also have the corresponding requirement to fulfill that obligation to the best of their ability; and the principle of impossibility stresses that no one can have a duty to do what is impossible under the circumstances that prevail. If, as many historians argue, Dönitz knew with graphic certainty in 1943 that Germany could not win the war, why did he see it as his duty to fight to the end in 1945? Why did he insist on ordering his men to do the impossible? In terms of the universal conscience, so the principle of impossibility asserts, he had no moral obligation to do so. This is but one of many examples of ambiguity, an existential predicament he

shared with others. Conflicts between characters are clashes between individuals with personal histories and with a potentially unique grasp of events; each may have a different moral horizon and sense of duty, and each may be driven by differing ethical priorities. The fact that crossed monologues arise both on stage and in life should surprise no one.

Will, of course, constitutes the driving force of drama, just as for the classical dramatist Friedrich Schiller it was the driving force of life: "Der Mensch ist das Wesen, welches will."³² In Schiller's trilogy on General Wallenstein, for example, we gain the sense that "the consequences of an action for good or ill are somehow bound up with the action itself."³³ Expressed differently, it is like the Buddhist law of Karma whereby at any given moment I am the result of my own deeds. In other words, I grow out of all I have both thought and done. My character emerges necessarily from my life. In a particularly revealing monologue, quoted in part at the head of this study, Wallenstein ponders whether he was actually guilty of fomenting a plot to assassinate the Emperor simply by having conceived the idea.³⁴ "Could I no longer step back as I wish?" he asks. "Must I carry out the deed because I thought it?" In other words, to borrow Barton once again, "there is hardly a gap between willing an act and willing its consequences." This too, seems a key to understanding Dönitz.

A scriptwriter's shorthand notes for a dramatic biography might read in part as follows:

Act I (1933-1939). This was an exhilarating time for an ambitious senior naval officer, for the government of the day provided both a fleet and a faith. Speeches, parades and pageantry articulated dreams of national destiny and purpose. All the dramatic elements were played out on the national stage: a new political vision that galvanized the national will to power; a long-awaited rejuvenation of industrial and military forces that had once been crushed by the "*Diktat*" of Versailles; the signing of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935, which Hitler would abrogate four years later on 26 April 1939, promised a new fleet; and general mobilization in March 1935 began to provide what he would later call "human material." That same year the first flotilla of combat submarines in the new national order was created. Named after WW I ace Otto Weddigen, the flotilla evoked a proud tradition of Great War submarining. In short, the stage was set of which Dönitz would later write: "For me it was obvious that I would commit all my powers to the success of building up this new Submarine Service [and] with body and soul I again became a U-boat man."³⁵ Later he would write of the 1930s that "I wanted to fill the crews with enthusiasm for their Service and confidence in it, and train them for selfless commitment."³⁶ Yet even by July 1939 Dönitz and his officers were sufficiently concerned about the dangers of courting war with Britain that he asked Grand Admiral Raeder to express this view to Hitler himself. Hitler's reply seemed reassuring: he would not let events lead to war with Britain, for war with Britain meant "*Finis Germaniae*."³⁷ Yet Dönitz prepared for battle. The die was cast.

Act II (1939-1942). The rising action of the drama opens with spectacular U-boat successes against Britain and its Allies, such as the sinking of the liner *Athenia* and the aircraft carrier HMS *Courageous*. Dönitz doubtless experienced a bracing sense of invincibility in commanding an elite unit of the navy. Despite equipment crises and daunting leadership challenges, Dönitz expanded his flotillas, trained and motivated his crews, built morale and shaped the U-Boat Arm in his own image. The cult of the personality underscored the naval ethos of duty, honour, dedication and commitment. The "U-boat spirit" was extolled in training and in the media. The opening of the first French bases in the

Biscay in August 1940, after the German occupation of France, was followed by unrestricted submarine warfare and the first effective Wolf Pack actions. Despite equipment problems and tactical shifts, and the loss of three "aces" in 1941, Dönitz experienced the magisterial deployment of his forces. Indeed, the "Happy Time" of January-May 1942 in which U-boats seemed able to attack with impunity and at will suggested an unparalleled degree of invincibility.

Yet the scenes of this Act contained all the makings of hubris. A case in point was the "*Laconia Incident*" of September 1942 in the South Atlantic, in which *U-156* (Hartenstein) sank the 19,695-ton Cunard Liner *Laconia* carrying some 3000 passengers, including 1800 Italian prisoners of war, their Polish guards, Allied military personnel, and women and children. In a scenario unique in nautical lore, the submarine commander unilaterally declared a neutral zone; he radioed for assistance from ships of any nation, and in a final courageous act, remained exposed on the surface while towing boatloads of survivors despite a low-level pass by an American bomber. Described in an early German work as "the song of songs" of U-boat honour - and in a recent English work as "a tragedy" - the rescue action placed Dönitz in a situation where he had to balance the conflicting issues of humanitarian action against those of operational necessity and international politics.³⁸ In a sequence of events that involved both political, strategic and humanitarian considerations, Hartenstein commenced one of the most astonishing rescue operations in maritime history. He did so in close radio liaison with Dönitz, who balanced the demands of international politics, long-range strategy, internal staff conflict and loyalty to trusted subordinates. The operation forced Dönitz's hand to forego long-range strategic and tactical objectives; it also forced him to risk crossing the very boundaries which *Ressortdenken*, or blinkered concern, prescribed. Ultimately, the US returned for a low-level bombing attack that killed many survivors of *Laconia* as they were being towed in crowded lifeboats behind *U-156*. The attack forced the U-boat to cut the lines and dive to escape even while other survivors huddled on the submarine's upper deck. Significantly, in this final encounter both the Americans and the Germans acted out of operational necessity. For the Germans, however, the risk was too great.

Strikingly, the solution to the "*Laconia Affair*" grew out of deliberations on a range of issues that skilfully prioritized a scale of values. Each value - duty, loyalty, humanitarianism, accountability, tactics - was fraught with potential conflict. Having accepted the duty of naval leadership and the conduct of naval warfare, Dönitz had to pursue war goals while preserving the maximum number of his own human and material resources. These involved moral choices - survival of the maximum number of his own people, empowering his people to make difficult decisions and live with them, maintaining morale in the face of adversity, and securing for himself some citadel of private probity.

Overshadowing this cool act of bravado, as Dönitz all too readily recognized, lurked the threat of Allied air superiority. This superiority would ultimately expel German submarines from the seas - and destroy them. Here, dramatic necessity is not simply a vortex into which he was being drawn, but a thrusting power energized by seemingly incontrovertible evidence. Dönitz's "*Laconia Order*" forbidding the rescue of survivors of subsequent sinkings - hence seeming to order their death - would ultimately lead to a courtroom scenario in Nuremberg.

Act III (1943). The threat foreshadowed by the "*Laconia Incident*" crystallized in the "turn" of the Battle of the Atlantic in May 1943 when Dönitz withdrew his U-boats from

the North Atlantic. This "turn" had been presaged by the loss of almost 100 U-boats in the first five months of that year. Now promoted to C-in-C, Fleet, the protagonist faced some of his most major decisions and revealed himself as an ideologue. Few witnesses were certain whether he truly believed in the myths of Führer and Fatherland, or whether he was enacting a psychodrama out of a sense of duty. It is as though when all else seemed to be failing, he took refuge in the metapolitical faith of National-Socialism. This was the period of political rhetoric.

By December 1943 Dönitz was describing himself to senior officers as "an adherent of ideological training."³⁹ He insisted that his men stand behind "duty with all their powers of mind, soul and will." In the language of the day, now recognized as Nazi Germany's "abuse of language," Dönitz exhorted his men at various times to be "tough" and "fanatic;" this meant unwavering commitment to the nation's cause.⁴⁰ Despite his later assertions about his political neutrality, he had become political. Politics, it would seem, were now deemed part of the job of senior command. In mid-stride during the war he clearly articulated a vision of his navy as an extension of the nation's political will. Addressing senior officers, he explained that "it is nonsense to say, for example, that the soldier or officer must be unpolitical. The soldier embodies the [political] state in which he lives, he is the representative, the explicit exponent of this state. He must therefore put all his weight behind it." He insisted on the will to victory. Dönitz's allegedly "unpolitical" desire for a powerful, efficient fleet was the first step towards complicity. Like Schiller's Wallenstein, he could not turn back. "It's my ambition to have as many warships as possible for the navy in order to fight and win; I couldn't care less who builds them."⁴¹ Raeder had expressed similar thoughts in 1935.⁴² In Dönitz's case, however, the prosecution at Nuremberg understood the assertion as meaning "that the defendant was not above employing slave labor for this purpose."⁴³

Act IV (1944-1945): With the *dénouement* or "unravelling" of the plot after abandoning wolfpack tactics in January, Dönitz retreated while exhorting a "backs-to-the-wall" devotion to duty and patriotism. The rout from France after the Normandy landings in June 1944 shrunk the German field of operations, forcing Dönitz to intensify the U-boat campaign in British coastal waters. Psychologically, by appropriating all the party-political rhetoric, he seemed to be changing. His motivational address on 25 January 1944 to a new class of junior officers dramatically emphasized that "the fate of Germany depends first and foremost" on them; they must expect to be promoted "into leading positions very soon and while still very young." Nothing less was required of them than "fanatic devotion," "iron composure," and "tough tenacity."⁴⁴ Again, on Memorial Day (*Heldengedenktag*), 31 March 1944, Dönitz conjured up the image of the "fateful" decisive battle (*Schicksalskampf*) of a beleaguered nation; he preached about the country's indebtedness both to divine Providence and to the "Führer and his vision, his decisiveness and boldness" in the face of enemies "who forced this war upon us." The real reason for the Allies' "fear of a unified Germany is the knowledge that our social community is the greatest ideological threat to their materialism and their demeaning enslavement to Jewry."⁴⁵ Dönitz's upward mobility moved him to assume the assigned political role of a C-in-C, Fleet, for his stance differed scarcely at all from that of Grand Admiral Erich Raeder in 1939. On Memorial Day that year Raeder had railed against "Bolshevism and international Jewry, of whose pernicious carryings-on we have already felt more than enough in the body politic."⁴⁶ Years later, Dönitz's Chief of Operations would ascribe his posturing to the "demonic influence" (*magischer Einfluss*) of Hitler. Dönitz's response to the failed assassination attempt on Hitler on 20 July 1944

defined his new character equally well. In his widely disseminated address to the navy on 21 July 1944, Dönitz evoked the "Holy wrath and unlimited anger [that] fill our hearts because of the criminal attempt which was to have cost the life of our beloved Führer."⁴⁷ When on 24 August 1944 he outlined to all naval commands scathing investigative evidence of the assassination plot, he insisted that Germany had no other option but to "fight on fanatically." Continuing the myth of the non-political military, he preached an intractable gospel. The military man is only a soldier, and must restrict himself to the business of waging war: "The profession, the calling, the task of the soldier is to fight. He has no right whatever to give any thought to the purposefulness of it all; when he has the order to fight, it's not his damn business whether he considers the struggle purposeful or not."⁴⁸ Carrying this view to its logical conclusion, in April 1945 he contemplated dying a hero's death as an act of expiation to absolve the navy from the dishonour of defeat.⁴⁹

Act V (April-May 1945). The reward of fidelity falls upon Dönitz. By unswerving devotion to duty, he had played himself into the hands of Hitler's legacy. The Führer appointed him Head of State before committing suicide. As one historian put it, "the unpolitical Dönitz was to be flanked by the Archangels of the [Nazi] Party, Goebbels and Bormann;" but Dönitz alone enjoyed Hitler's trust.⁵⁰ The Führer believed that of all the military and paramilitary leaders Dönitz alone maintained the confidence of his subordinates; and he alone would be respected by the Allies. For his Chief of Operations, however, Dönitz now at long last felt himself "liberated from a nightmare" and - perhaps for the first time in his life - felt free to act independently. Veterans recalled his changed vision; the time for continuing the battle at all costs was now past; it was now "time to save people's lives." Only now, so his memoirs inform us, did he "learn about the conditions in the concentration camps;" only now did he recognize it as Germany's responsibility to prosecute the culprits on its own initiative.⁵¹ No less an observer than Martin Niemöller was persuaded that Dönitz knew nothing until then of the conditions in the camps.⁵² The Dönitz government lasted but twenty-three days. For one historian of the period, Dönitz now had the courage to put paid to his unconditional battle rhetoric and to act according to the demands of the situation and the urging of his conscience.⁵³ The Prosecution at Nuremberg would target Dönitz's "masterly understanding in adjusting himself to the changing fortunes of war."⁵⁴ But in his final statement to the International Military Tribunal, Dönitz insisted on the legality of the war he had waged. Indeed, throughout the war "I acted according to my conscience; I would have to do so exactly the same way again."⁵⁵

Epilogue (1946-1947). A quiet cell in which prisoner Dönitz pondered his past and what he termed "the insufficiency and inadequacy of all human endeavour." When writing his memoirs he claimed no abiding faith that history might judge favourably the "deliberations and actions" of his life; nor did he think history might regard his responses as having been the correct ones under the circumstances.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, as he had stated in July 1946, "I believe we have fulfilled our task in the trial as well as we could. I won't kowtow. With pride and composure I will accept my fate."⁵⁷ Writing to a colleague once sentence had been passed two months later he confessed: "I believe we have represented the navy [during the War Crimes Trial] the best way possible; let them do what they want, I have nothing to apologize for."⁵⁸ The drama had ended.

Each of the scenes impressionistically sketched here contains volatile elements. Each element - instability of action, chance, fate, crossed monologues, and the clash of wills - could take the protagonist in quite different directions toward an entirely different final

resolution. In common with other dramatic characters Dönitz not infrequently faced "a choice of evils."⁵⁹ These included calling for more shipyard workers when he knew they could only come from forced labour; refusing to condone the rescue of survivors of U-boat sinkings when he knew they would die; sending his sailors into the Atlantic in 1944 when he knew few would return; motivating and deploying youthful and inexperienced replacement crews when he knew their likely fate; and continuing the war in April-May 1945 to rescue refugees from the East when he knew the consequences for the men who trusted him. Stereotypes can give us easy explanations for his choices: he was a "fanatic Nazi;" or he was "a mindless cog in the German war machine," to mention but two.

By narrowing the focus, however, dramatic analysis suggests the inadequacy of these responses by revealing a deeper complexity. Here, the principle of dramatic necessity is central. Interwoven of conflict and crisis, ambiguity and complicity, the complete drama that unfolded during the years 1935-1945 provides the key to the whole man. U-boat ace Erich Topp may have been expressing much more than he realized when he recognized through Buchheim's photographic history that Germany's U-boat warfare had "the inevitability and futility of a Greek tragedy." For, in the style of Aeschylus and Sophocles, Greek tragedy explores great religious and philosophical themes in terms of psychology. The key to Dönitz does not lie, as has been argued of German generals, in the personality of Hitler; it lies in a special kind of theatre.⁶⁰ It is, perhaps, significant that a volume of historical "portraits" of some sixteen leaders of the Nazi era excludes the navy entirely.⁶¹ In terms of officership, admirals seem to have been fighting a different war.

But what of Dönitz's postwar character that seems to stand outside the dramatic action? What meaning attaches to his pastor's view that Dönitz had become "one of the most grateful Christians I have ever met?" With the exception of occasional wartime references to the salutary role of eternal Providence in keeping Hitler's hand on the helm of state, there seems no evidence of piety or spirituality prior to his release from Spandau prison. Officers who worked closely with him during the war have recalled no hints of such religious virtues. Nor do we have any record of personal reflections or eyewitness reports on these themes. Grateful he may well have been, for he had, after all, survived the war, the Third Reich and Allied justice, and had been granted many years for reflection. It is more than can be claimed by the two sons he lost in the war at sea, or by the thousands of German submariners who died in the war - eighty percent of the total force. Discussions with Pastor Arp suggest, however, that the admiral had indeed undergone a genuine inner "sea-change;" in theological terms, he had repented. Arp has wistfully evoked the image of a frail and proud old man sitting silently in his habitual corner of the pew of the small village church Sunday after Sunday, his legs wrapped in a blanket. His final years, Arp has explained, were entirely focussed on the inner man. Indeed, Arp has spoken of Dönitz's deference and respect towards his pastor's "cure of souls" - Dönitz saw Arp as "Pastor und Seelsorger." "Yours is a wonderful profession," Dönitz confessed; it is "a healing profession. There is so much in the world that needs healing."⁶²

Dönitz seems to have found closure when seeking his pastor's permission to have a large wooden cross erected over his grave by the headstone. As to why he would wish such an unusual grave marker, Dönitz replied, "Because in the final analysis He [Christ] is the Only One to whom I can cleave."⁶³ Among former serving officers this line has become a keynote in the Dönitz legend. As far as one can judge, this newfound inner state or conversion remained on the level of private piety. Nowhere do we encounter any public

statement - such as is found in the memoirs of Hitler's armaments minister, Albert Speer - that he ever regretted his service to Hitler's regime. For Dönitz, duty would seem to have been an end in itself. Quite clearly, he had confused the fulfilment of duty with unconditional loyalty to his superiors; he had confused obedience with patriotism by regarding National Socialism less as a criminal party than as a programme for German renewal.⁶⁴ When vandals later smeared the cross and headstone with red paint, their attempted desecration turned to irony: Dönitz sympathisers interpreted the red paint running down the tall and austere wooden cross as symbolizing the martyrdom of Christ which the Grand Admiral was now deemed to share. That too became part of the Dönitz legend.

The many ambiguities in Dönitz's life raise the question as to whether we can ever know him outside the roles he played. That there is such a device as "the mask of command" has been amply demonstrated by military historians. In an important book by that title, John Keegan has elucidated roleplaying and theatre in military leadership.⁶⁵ Totalitarian leaders, so one of his many appealing arguments runs, can no longer practise heroic leadership as they did, for example, in the days of Alexander the Great. This is simply because large-scale modern warfare precludes the kind of exemplary risk-taking in which the commander thrusts himself heroically into mortal danger as a role model for his men. No longer able to lead the charge into the enemy's guns like the Charge of the Light Brigade, he must simulate the act. In this sense, commanders, like players on the ancient Greek stage, wear a mask. Keegan's *The Mask of Command*, though a book about generals and generalship, and not about admirals, nonetheless helps shed important light on Dönitz. "Heroic leadership - any leadership - is, like priesthood, statesmanship, even genius, a matter of externals almost as much as internalities," Keegan explains. "The exceptional are both shown to and hidden from the mass of humankind, revealed by artifice, presented by theatre."⁶⁶ Leadership, in other words, is a performance in which the actor plays the character. Charisma, it follows, is associated with what Keegan calls mystification, which "provides the medium through which love and fear, neither ever precisely defined, cajole the subordinate to follow, often to anticipate, the commander's will. But mystification is a function of distance, real or illusory, which the commander must impose or contrive."⁶⁷ The drama and decision in Dönitz's life story may well tell us more about the characters he portrayed than about the actor who portrayed them.

In writing his *History of the Thirty-Years War* (1791-1793), a study that preceded the dramatic trilogy *Wallenstein* (1798-1799), Germany's pre-eminent classical dramatist Friedrich Schiller attempted to address the many ambiguities surrounding his own fascinating protagonist. Schiller sought understanding rather than vindication.⁶⁸ Ultimately, it was not Schiller's prose history but his historical drama that is remembered today as having created a protagonist who perhaps most closely approaches the historical personality. But in his stirring prologue to the dramatic trilogy, Schiller recognized that Wallenstein's character (not unlike that of Dönitz, one might add) had been the "victim of entrenched opinions and had vacillated throughout history."⁶⁹ It was, Schiller reminds us, "a misfortune for the living that he made the winning side his enemy; a misfortune for the dead that this enemy survived him and wrote his history."⁷⁰ So it is for Dönitz. The already fragmentary and incomplete portrait of historical personalities, as a modern biographer of Wallenstein has reminded us, is most seriously threatened by the shifting perspectives of posterity.⁷¹ Despite numerous popular and scholarly studies, it might be argued, Wallenstein's "real" identity has still not been discovered.⁷² If Wallenstein's historical image had been rendered "uncertain

and confused by the hate and favour" of those taking sides, as Schiller expressed it in the prologue to his dramas, then drama showed potential for defining pathways into ambiguity. In words taken from the young Goethe's essay on Shakespeare, Schiller's drama "pivots around the mysterious point which no philosopher has seen or determined, in which the distinctive character of our ego, the presumed freedom of our will, clashes with the necessary course of the totality" of events and personalities.⁷³ A competent dramatic biography of Dönitz would doubtless render similar insights.

Wallenstein and Dönitz share a virtually forgotten nautical kinship. Caught up in the politics of quite diverse empires, both built up and lost an "imperial" German fleet.⁷⁴ Driven by ambition, Wallenstein, the Imperial Sea Lord ("der kaiserliche Generalissimus zur See"), as Schiller called him at one point, was cut down by the network of intrigue he had created.⁷⁵ Dönitz, the last Grand Admiral, created a similarly charismatic network - if not of intrigue, then of fealty and implicit trust. If he foreswore party politics, he nonetheless wedded naval culture to National Socialist political strategy and ideals. Armed forces, he had told his officers in 1943, embody the nation's ethos and must commit themselves to it unflinchingly.

Appropriately for tragedy, both Wallenstein and Dönitz fell from grace at the height of their careers: one as a victim of political murder, the other in a War Crimes' trial. For Schiller the dramatist, Wallenstein "fell, not because he was a rebel [against his Emperor], but he rebelled because he had fallen" from moral principle.⁷⁶ It remained to a literary scholar almost two hundred years later to analyse the drama and find Wallenstein both guilty *and* innocent of all he had done to set the stage for his demise.⁷⁷ Dönitz might be judged in similar terms. By all accounts a charismatic leader who could navigate the labyrinths of power, he was not so much a Devil's Admiral as a bedevilled one. He fell - from U-boat's deck to prisoner's dock - not because he was a master of Nazi policy; rather, he was mastered *by* it because he had already fallen to uncritical acceptance of the religion of duty and to the allure of a criminal regime. Yet, like Schiller's Wallenstein, Dönitz too might also be found both guilty *and* innocent of all that he had contrived. If such judgements offend the historian, they rest lightly in a dramatist's hands.

NOTES

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1. Walter Frank (éd.), *Dönitz: Dokumentation zur Zeitgeschichte - Großadmiral Karl Dönitz* (Wilhelmshaven, 1981), 5.

2. Thilo Bode, "Der Großadmiral ohne Widerspruchsgeist," in Frank (éd.), *Dönitz*, 46.

3. The most accessible historical accounts of

Dönitz are Peter Padfield, *Dönitz, The Last Führer: Portrait of a Nazi War Leader* (London, 1984); Padfield, *Dönitz: Des Teufels Admiral* (Berlin, 1984); Walter Ludde-Neurath, *Regierung Dönitz: Die Letzten Tage des Dritten Reiches* (Leoni, 1980); Walter Görlitz, *Karl Dönitz* (Göttingen, 1972); and Marlies G. Steinert, *Die 23 Tage der Regierung Dönitz: Die Agonie des Dritten Reiches* (München, 1967).

4. For a survey of the issues, see James McMillan, *Five Men At Nuremberg* (London, 1985). The complete published record is in International Military Tribunal, *Trial of the Major War Criminals* (Nuremberg, 1947) (hereinafter *IMT*).

5. See, for example, Hans-Joachim Harder and Norbert Wiggershaus, *Tradition und Reform in den Aufbaujahren der Bundeswehr* (Herford, 1985); Dieter Stockfisch, "Vom schwierigen Umgang mit der Tradition," *Marine Forum*, No. 4 (1987), 120-122; and "Fragen an Dieter Wellershoff, Admiral und Generalinspekteur der Bundeswehr," Information für die Truppe, hrsgg. vom Bundesministerium für Verteidigung, Heft 6/90, 25-46. See also U-Boot-Archiv, Cuxhaven-Altenbruch (UB), draft of a proposed "Traditionserlaß" [Directive on Tradition], "Richtlinien für die Traditionspflege bei Umgliederung in die Heeresstruktur 5."
6. For a brief survey, see Jörg Duppler, "Kontinuität und Diskontinuität im Selbstverständnis der Marine," in Marine-Offizier-Vereinigung (MOV), *Festschrift: 80Jahre Marine-Offizier-Vereinigung 1918-1998* (NP, n.d.), 5-18.
7. See, for example, Walther Hubatsch, "Großadmiral Karl Dönitz und die Nemesis der Geschichte," *Schiff und Zeit*, XIII (1981), 1-4.
8. "Dönitz - Vorbild für Deutschland" [With portrait, celebrating the late Grand Admiral's 95th birthday], *Deutsche National Zeitung*, 19 September 1986; and K. Keith Thompson [pseud.?], "Karl Dönitz - der letzte Reichskanzler des Deutschen Reiches," *Code*, No. 7 (1991), 48-63.
9. Thompson, "Karl Dönitz," 62-63.
10. The uncatalogued Dönitz Nachlaß (DN) in the Bibliothek für Zeitgeschichte, Stuttgart (BfZ), has restricted access and permits limited citation of names and dates in correspondence. I gratefully acknowledge having been granted full access by the trustees.
11. Pastor Hans-Jochen Arp, "Trauergottesdienst," *Schaltung-Küste*, No. 75 [Januar 1981], 20.
12. Kurt Diggins, "Vor 50 Jahren: das Siegertribunal 1945/6 - Ein Rückblick zum 30. September 1996," *Schaltung-Küste*, No. 164 (September/October 1996), 7-9; and Raimund Wallner, "Großadmiral Dönitz und der Nürnberger Prozeß: Die Sicht eines Nachgeborenen," *Schaltung-Küste*, No. 165 (December 1996), 7-9.
13. BfZ, DN, Patrick Beesly to Jürgen Rohwer and Hans Meckel, 29 December 1980. See also Beesly, *Very Special Intelligence: The Story of Admiralty's Operational Intelligence Centre in World War II* (London, 1977); and Beesly, *Room 40: British Naval Intelligence 1914-1918* (London, 1982).
14. See, for example, Dudley Sayward, *"Bomber" Harris: The Story of Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir Arthur Harris* (London, 1984); and Charles Messenger, *Bomber Harris and the Strategic Bombing Offensive 1939-1945* (London, 1984).
15. For a brief and graphic examination, see David C. Bercuson and S.F. Wise (eds.), *The "Valour and the Horror" Revisited* (Montréal, 1994), esp. 181-185.
16. Charles J.V. Murphy, "The Airmen and the Invasion," *Life*, 10 April 1944, 95-100 and 103-106. The whole front page of this edition featured a portrait of the man, whom the article dubbed "Berlin's Bomber: Air Marshal Harris."
17. See the Bomber Harris Home Page and related hypertext at <http://www.blv/igs.net/rjlynch/index.htm>.
18. Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives* (London, 1991), 348. Like Bullock, I refer here to G.W.L. Hegel's "Lectures on the Philosophy of History."
19. See Michael L. Hadley, *Count Not the Dead: the Popular Image of the German Submarine* (Montréal, 1995).
20. Erich Topp, "Gegen Glorifizierung wie Verdammung," *Marine Forum*, No. 11 (1986), 399-400, cited in Hadley, *Count Not the Dead*, 183. Topp was discussing Buchheim's *U-Boot-Krieg* (München, 1976); *Die U-Boot-Fahrer* (Stuttgart, 1985); and *Zu Tode Gesiegt* (Stuttgart, 1988).
21. Wolfgang Frank, *The Sea Wolves* (London, 1955), 220. This was originally published as *Die Wolfe und der Admiral: Triumph und Tragik der U-Boote* (Oldenburg, 1953).
22. Schiller to August von Kotzebue, 16 November 1798, in *Briefs*, in Lieselotte Blumenthal (ed.), *Schillers Werke* (Weimar, 1961), 4-5: "und obgleich schon das poetische Interesse es mit sich brachte, das Criminelle in Wallensteins Handeln mit den lebhaftesten Farben abzuschildern und Abscheu dagegen zu erwecken, doch natürlicherweise die Gesinnung, die ihn dazu

bewogen, und die Gründe, die sein Betragen menschlich motivieren, obgleich keineswegs entschuldigen, ins Licht gesetzt werden mußten."

23. Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Love and Ethics in Greek Tragedy* (London, 1986), cited and discussed in John Barton, *Ethics and the Old Testament* (Harrisburg, PA, 1998), 24 ff.

24. Barton, *Ethics and the Old Testament*, 26. Though Barton was elucidating the drama of David in the Book of Samuel, his insight into the morality of power seems especially useful here.

25. William L. Shirer, *The Nightmare Years, 1930-1940: A Memoir of A Life and The Times* (Boston, 1984).

26. Knut Stang, *Das zerbrechende Schiff: Seekriegsstrategien- und Rüstungsplanung der deutschen Reichs- und Kriegsmarine 1918-1939* (Berlin, 1995), 394.

27. See, for example, Hadley, *Count Not the Dead*, 44.

28. Ursula Dönitz, "Sein Leben war ihm Pflichterfüllung," cited by Captain Addi Schnee, "Abscheid vom Grossadmiral," *Schaltung-Kiiste*, No. 75 [Januar 1981], 7.

29. For a clear discussion of such conflicts see, for example, Eike-Henner Kluge, "Professional Standing v. Personal Integrity," in Michael L. Hadley (ed.), *The Price of Service: Civic Values in Conflict* (Victoria, BC, 1997), 69-94.

30. See Hadley, "Truth, Duty, Valour: Culture or Conscience, Relative or Absolute?" in *ibid.*, 1-23.

31. Kluge, "Professional Standing," 86.

32. Schiller, "Über das Erhabene" (1802), in *Schillers Werke*, XXI, 38.

33. Barton, *Ethics and the Old Testament*, 86. Barton is here discussing the view of Wisdom literature.

34. Friedrich von Schiller, *Wallensteins Tod*, I, iv, in *Schillers Werke*, VIII, 183. For the passage, see the title page. For an example of staging, see Regie Solter, *Schillers "Wallenstein"* (Berlin, 1981).

35. Karl Dönitz, *Zehn Jahre und Zwanzig Tage: Erinnerungen 1935-1945* (Koblenz, [1958]), 9.

"Für mich war es selbstverständlich, daß ich nun alle meine Kräfte für das Gelingen des Aufbaues dieser neuen U-Waffe einsetzte. Ich wurde mit Leib und Seele wieder U-Boot-Mann."

36. *Ibid.*, 18: "Ich wollte die Besatzungen mit Begeisterung für ihre Waffe und Zutrauen zu ihr erfüllen und sie zu selbstloser Einsatzbereitschaft erziehen."

37. *Ibid.*, 44.

38. See Frederick Grossmith, *The Sinking of the Laconia: A Tragedy in the Battle of the Atlantic* (Stamford, CT, 1994); Léonce Peillard, *Affäre Laconia 12. September 1942* (Wien, 1963); and Jochen Brennecke, *Der Fall Laconia: Ein Hohes Lied der U-Boot-Waffe* (Biberach an der Riss, 1959). For the context of Brennecke, see Hadley, *Count Not the Dead*, 124-125.

39. Grossadmiral Dönitz, Schlussansprache auf der Tagung für Befehlshaber der Kriegsmarine, in Weimar, am Freitag, den 17. Dezember 1943. Dokument Nr. D443, Anlage z. Mar.Gr. West-O.Q, Gkdos. 545/44 Chef, as cited in *IMT*, V, 204.

40. Siegfried Bork, *Missbrauch der Sprache: Tendenzen nationalsozialistischer Sprachregelung* (Bern, 1970).

41. *IMT*, V, 204: "Ich habe den Ehrgeiz, für die Kriegsmarine möglichst viele Kriegsfahrzeuge zu haben, um kämpfen und schlagen zu können. Wer sie baut, ist mir gleich."

42. "Es ist mir égal, wer mir die großen Schiffe bewilligt." Raeder, in conversation with Admiral Hermann Boehme, cited in Rolf Giith, "Die Ära Raeder: Charakter geht über Leistung," *Schiff und Zeit*, XXVI (1987), 42.

43. *IMT*, V, 204.

44. BfZ, DN, Ansprache Ob.d.M an den Offziernachwuchs in Miirwik am 25. Januar 1944. The expressions are: "fanatische Hingabe," "eiserne Haltung," and "hartes Durchschlagen."

45. See, for example, *Marine Rundschau*, May 1944, 320.

46. Erich Raeder, *Marine Rundschau*, No. 4 (1939), 371-375: "Darum die klare und schonungslose Kampfansage an Bolschewismus und das internationale Judentum, deren

volkervernichtendes Treiben wir zur Genüge am eigenen Volkskörper zu spüren bekommen haben."

47. *IMT*, V, 205.

48. Bundes- und Militärarchiv Freiburg i.B. Ausgewählte Dokumente, S. 645, PG 48609, Ansprache Dönitz vom 24.8.1944: "wenn er Befehl zum Kämpfen hat, so geht es ihn einen Dreck an, ob er den Kampf für zweckvoll hält oder nicht."

49. Steinert, *Die 23 Tage*, 76, reports this from an interview with Dönitz's son-in-law, Günther Hebler.

50. *Ibid.*, 339.

51. Dönitz, *Zehn Jahre und Zwanzig Tage*, 461: "Als ich in den Maitagen 1945 von den KZ-Zuständen erfuhr, legte ich mir die Frage vor, was von mir aus in dieser Sache getan werden konnte."

52. BfZ, DN, Niemoeller to Kranzbuhler, 4 April 1946.

53. Steinert, *Die 23 Tage*, 342.

54. *IMT*, V, 203.

55. UB, Uncatalogued Dönitz Collection, "Schlusswort des Grossadmiral Dönitz vor dem Internationalen Militärtribunal."

56. Dönitz, *Zehn Jahre und Zwanzig Tage*, 466: "bin ich mir der Unzulänglichkeit alien menschlichen Tuns bewußt."

57. BfZ, DN: "Unsere Aufgabe im Prozeß haben wir so gut wie es konnten, glaube ich, erfüllt. Ich mache keinen Kotau. Ich werde nun, mit Stolz und Haltung, mein Schicksal auf mich nehmen."

58. UB, Uncatalogued Dönitz Collection, Leitz-Ordner "Grossadmiral Dönitz: Berichte, Reden, Befehle," Dönitz to Heinrich Waas, 17 September 1946, Prisoner of War Postcard, Nurnberg: "Hier haben wir die Kriegsmarine, ich glaube, bestmöglich vertreten. Nun sollen sie tun, was sie wollen. Ich habe nichts zu entschuldigen."

59. The expression is from Martin Esslin, *Brecht: A Choice of Evils. A Critical Study of the Man, His Work and His Opinions* (London, 1959).

60. Corelli Barnett (ed.), *Hitler's Generals* (New York, 1989, 2: "It is in Hitler's personality that

there lies the key to how, where, when and under what handicaps his generals would practise their professional skills."

61. Joachim C. Fest, *Das Gesicht des Dritten Reiches: Profile einer totalitären Herrschaft* (München, 1963).

62. Arp, "Trauergottesdienst," 19.

63. *Ibid.*, 17-18: "Weil Er der Einzige ist, an den ich mich letzten Endes halten kann." The cross was created by artist Heinz Schröteler in Bochum, a former U-boat commander and Knight's Cross winner.

64. Cf. Steinert, *Die 23 Tage*, 71.

65. John Keegan, *The Mask of Command* (London, 1987).

66. *Ibid.*, 11.

67. *Ibid.*, 316.

68. In his *Geschichte des dreissigjährigen Kriegs*, in *Schillers Werke*, XVIII, 247, Schiller wrote explicitly of his protagonist's ambiguous character ("der zweydeutige Charakter Wallensteins") which was prone to misinterpretation.

69. *Ibid.*, VIII, 5: "Von der Parteien Gunst und Haß verwirrt/Schwankt sein Charakterbild in der Geschichte."

70. Schiller, *Geschichte des dreissigjährigen Kriegs*, in *ibid.*, XVIII, 329: "Ein Unglück für den Lebenden, daß er eine siegende Parley sich zum Feinde gemacht hatte - und Unglück für den Todten, daß ihn dieser Feind überlebte und seine Geschichte schreib."

71. Hellmut Diwald, *Wallenstein: eine Biographie* (Esslingen 1969), 548: "Das Fragmentarische einer historischen Persönlichkeit wird am stärksten bedroht vom Wechslicht der Perspektiven, mit denen sich die Nachfahren ihre Vergangenheit verständlich machen und verdüstern."

72. See, for example, Francis Watson, *Wallenstein, Soldier under Saturn. A Biography*. (London, 1938); John Mitchell, *Life of Wallenstein, Duke of Friedland* (New York, 1968); Golo Mann, *Wallenstein, sein Leben, erzählt von Golo Mann*, (Frankfurt, 1971); Mann und Ruedi Bliggenstorfer, *Wallenstein: Bilder zu seinem Leben* (Frankfurt,

1973); and Diwald, *Wallenstein*.

73. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Zum Shakespeares-Tag," [1773], in Erich Trunz (éd.), *Werke* (Hamburg, 1949), XII, 226: "aber seine Stücke drehen sich aile um den geheimen Punkt (den noch kein Philosoph gesehen und bestimmt hat), in dem das Eigentumliche unseres Ichs, die prätendierte Freiheit unseres Wollens, mit dem notwendigen Gang des Ganzen zusammenstößt."

74. For a concise examination of this period, see Günther Meyer, "Die Wallensteinsche Flotte in der Ostsee 1627 bis 1632," *Schiff und Zeit*, XXXVI (1992), 38-45; and XXXVII (1993), 6-12. Schiller explains at one point in his *Geschichte des dreissigjährigen Kriegs* that Wallenstein "der

kaiserliche Generalissimus zur See nicht einmal Schiffe genug [hatte], den Hafen einer einzigen Stadt einzuschließen."

75. Schiller, *Geschichte des dreissigjährigen Kriegs*, in *Schillers Werke*, XVIII, 121.

76. *Ibid.*, 329: "so fiel Wallenstein, nicht weil er Rebell war, sondern er rebellierte, weil er fiel." Diwald, *Wallenstein*, 548-549, cites the passage approvingly, though typically without providing the exact source.

77. Eugene Moutoux, "Wallenstein: Guilty and Innocent," *The Germanic Review*, LVII, No. 1 (Winter 1982), 23-27.