

THE WHITE ROSE. Die Weiße Rose was a non-violent resistance group in Nazi Germany, consisting of a number of students from the University of Munich and their professor. The group became known for an anonymous leaflet campaign that lasted from June 1942 until February 1943. It called for active opposition to German dictator Adolf Hitler's regime. The six core members of the group were arrested by the Gestapo on 18 Feb 1943 - three of them tried, convicted and executed by beheading on 22 Feb 1943. All were noted for the courage with which they faced their deaths, particularly Sophie. At the time their actions were dismissed as anti-national. Today The White Rose are honoured as great heroes.

Die Weiße Rose were students Sophie Scholl, Hans Scholl, Alex Schmorell, Willi Graf, Christoph Probst, Inge Scholl and professor of philosophy, Kurt Huber. They had witnessed the atrocities of the war, rejected militarism and believed in a tolerant, federated Europe.

'It is certain that today every honest person is ashamed of this government. Who among us has any concept of the dimensions of shame that will befall us and our children when one day the veil falls from our eyes and the most horrible of crimes reach the light of day?'

Adapted from the first leaflet of The White Rose

Sophie's final words were either: "Your heads will fall as well" or: "God, you are my refuge into eternity." In the film Sofie Scholl, The Last Days her last words were: "The sun still shines". The last words of Hans Scholl were: "Es lebe die Freiheit!" (Long live freedom!)

Leaflet 4's concluding phrase, which became the motto of The White Rose resistance, was: 'We will not be silent. We are your bad conscience. The White Rose will not leave you in peace!' 'We will not be silent' is a T-shirt in many languages - in protest of the Iraq war.