
XI: DIE 'GOLDENE' ZWANZIGER? 1924-1929

Politically the relatively stable middle 1920s could be said to have lasted from 1924 until 1929.¹ Urbanisation and modernisation were the key trends. Women gained confidence as they earned their own money, cut their hair into the fashionable bob and dressed in modern, casual styles. They even grew independent of their families.² Cigarettes projected nonconformity and social and political equality with men – an implicit rejection of gender ideals stressing motherhood. The *Bubikopf* haircut “became the most potent symbol of the masculinisation of German women in the print media,”³ and was “a shocking statement of independence.”⁴ By the mid-1920s the style was the dominant female look in the Western world and was popularized on the silver screen. Hundreds of thousands subsequently took on the qualities of this new woman.⁵

The economic situation also stabilized after 1923. Although war reparations had bitten deeply into the German economy, under strong American influence, the 1924 ‘Dawes Plan’ provided cheap loans to German firms and opened the country up to international financiers. The Weimar years that followed brought forth a cultural explosion. The period known as the ‘Golden Twenties’ saw film and radio gain importance while cabaret captured the public imagination. “At the same time a virtual cult of advertising” resulted in colourful street window displays, display boxes and self-lit advertising columns, standing billboards on the streets, posters in windows and texts and images posted onto marquees and the walls above entertainment venues’ entrances. Tabloids and dailies too exploded in popularity: In Berlin alone, they enjoyed a readership of around one million by the end of the 1920s.⁶ From 1923, Germany also saw the beginning of regular radio programming⁷ and on March 1st, 1924 *Sender Leipzig* began broadcasting, its opening words being: “Hallo, hallo, hier ist Leipzig!” Radio became a valued source of information and by October, *Sender Leipzig* was accompanied by the Leipzig Symphony Orchestra.⁸

During the period Germany also witnessed the literary flowering of the likes of *Thomas Mann* and *Bertholt Brecht* and the creative outpourings of the *Bauhaus* and *Dada* art movements. Nevertheless, the roots of this cultural revival and the modern ideas and creations which furthered it mostly originated around the turn of the century.⁹

¹ Richard Bodek's Introduction in Claire Bergmann's: *What Will Become of the Children? A Novel of a German Family* (1932). Camden House, 2010. Pg. xv

² *Ibid.*

³ Katie Sutton. *The Masculine Woman in Weimar Germany*. 2011. Reviewed by Helen Boak in *German History*, Vol. 31, No. 2, June 2013. Pg. 306

⁴ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_haircut

⁵ Andrew Donson. *Youth in the Fatherless Land...1914-1918*. Harvard, 2010. Pg. 232

⁶ M.J.Schmidt. *Visual Music: Jazz, Synaesthesia and the History of the Senses in the Weimar Republic*. *German History*, Vol. 31, No. 2, June 2014. Pg. 208.

⁷ Wolfhard Weber: *Science, Technology, and Society in Germany from 1800 to the Present*, in *Germany: A New Social and Economic History Vol. III. Since 1800*. Edited by S.Ogilve and R.Overy, 2003. Pg. 341

⁸ Martina Güldemann in 1999 in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert in LEIPZIG*. Pg. 30

⁹ *Questions on German History*. Pg. 235

My grandmother, having seen plenty of the modern world in the USA, reached continental Europe in the second week of June 1927.¹⁰ Now almost 20 years old, she and her fellow acrobats from Leipzig, Dresden and Breslau rode the train to Berlin, the capital and the centre of political and social life in Germany. That was where her journey would end for now. She eagerly anticipated being with her mother and sister again, not least because there was much to catch up on. She'd have had to wait a little longer though before she could see Theo, since he was back in Leipzig.

The years corresponding to *Little Nannij's* absence had seen a number of changes on the domestic front and the next ten pages or so relate the most important among those. In May 1923, Theo, then 14, had been offered an apprenticeship as a jockey at *Berlin-Hoppegarten*.¹¹ Come The Great War's outbreak, it had already grown into the most important German race track as well as a center of Berlin's social and political life. It often drew up to 40,000 spectators, while as many as 1,000 horses were kept at the stables and raced at the 3.4 km practice course nearby at *Neuenhagen*.¹²

(Lehrmeister Ende der Lehrzeit)
Tyralla, Th. A. Winkler, Hoppegarten-Berlin. 30./4. 1928.

According to the racing calendar of 1923, Theo was

under the tutelage of master trainer *Anton Winkler*. The *Jahresrennkalendar für Deutschland* reveals he was scheduled to complete his apprenticeship in April 1928.¹³ However, his training didn't entirely proceed as planned.

Herr Winkler hailed from Bohemia, although his career had seen him criss-cross Germany, first as a jockey before moving on to train owners' horses from 1904 in Frankfurt. In 1912 he moved to *Hoppegarten*, where many other trainers and owners lived and four years later was appointed as the private trainer for *Heinrich von Opel*, son of the founder of the famous car brand. *Kai Hildebrandt*, archivist for the racetrack and a former race day assistant told me in August 2013 just how tough an apprentice's routine had been at that time.

Barnyard Blues:
Anton Winkler
(with cane and
dog) together
with Theo's
fellow
apprentices at
Berlin
Hoppegarten in
1922. Source: *K.*
Hildebrandt



Every year, usually one or two new apprentices were added (as one or two completed their training). That will have meant Theo started alongside a couple of other lads, but also that there were apprentices of various ages at the stable. They lived above the stables (alongside *Herr Winkler*) in two rooms, each with five beds.

¹⁰ With departure on May 31st, counting a ten day voyage, her arrival in Hamburg should have been cca. June 10th.

¹¹ "Apprenticeships were usually awarded based on a lad's physical appearance and sporting aptitude," writes *Hoppegarten* archivist, [Kai Hildebrandt](#), on June 18th, 2014, "although a reasonable and courteous manner were also important. From their hands one could quickly tell whether they would make it as a jockey or finish up a trainer. Often lads whose home was far away were preferred, since there was greater certainty that they would not run home all that often, since a five year apprenticeship was naturally a long time."

¹² See: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galopprennbahn_Hoppegarten. After the First World War the *Hoppegarten* grandstand was reconstructed so races moved to *Rennbahn Grunewald*. Grunewald had originally opened in 1909 and lay southwest of Charlottenburg, amid fir forests. See: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rennbahn_Grunewald

¹³ *Jahresrennkalendar für Deutschland 1923. Teil II, S. 19*

Herr Winkler will have been responsible for the riders' and the apprentices' education while the so-called equine nutritionist took care of the lads' general supervision and discipline. The latter tended to be very strict and physical discipline was commonplace, although it was not unusual for the trainer to dish out a hiding once in a while too, Hildebrandt told me.

During the first two years the trainees were expected to undertake all kinds of work and responsibilities on site, so it wasn't even until completing the first year that they actually got to sit on the horses they cared for.

According to Hildebrandt, the daily routine involved rising at around 5AM (in winter around six) to imbue and saddle up the horses. Since the stables typically accommodated between 40 and 60 horses, they were divided into smaller groups of 5-10 horses. Thus while some of the horses were training their stalls were cleaned, while the next lot were prepared for riding. Then as those in training returned they were rubbed dry and fed. Once the horses had been tended to, breakfast followed at around 8 or 9AM. Saddle and bridle maintenance followed, while the yard was raked and the stables swept.

Sometimes the lads were sent out on shopping errands or to walk the master's dog. At around 12PM the apprentices had lunch and come the afternoon they went to Hoppegarten to attend the '*Landwirtschaftliche Pflichtfortbildungsschule*,' i.e. the 'continuation' school for agriculture. Subjects taught included horse trading and dealing, discipline and deportment, physical education, bookkeeping, arithmetic and writing. School finished around 4PM and so it was back to the stables where the horses were exercised and given water and food. The day came to an end between 6 and 7PM with bed at 9PM.

This schedule was routine from Monday through to Thursday while on Fridays the apprentices often accompanied the horses by rail to those racetracks where they would perform on Saturdays. At that time the journey took much longer than today. For example, a trip from Hoppegarten to Köln took about 12 hours. On Sunday, the apprentices mostly returned to the stable before the work began on Monday.

One such trip might have been made to Mannheim, given that a suite of portrait photos of Theo were produced bearing a stamp with the city's name. He may have been in town for instance to visit the *Badischen Rennverein Mannheim-Seckenheim*, one of the oldest racing clubs in Germany.¹⁴ The photo bears the text: "*Schneider* [the photographer], *Mannheim, H1*" on the reverse. The city, nicknamed the '*Quadratstadt*' (or 'city of squares') is rather unusual in Germany and the address reveals why. The streets and avenues of its central area are laid out in a grid-like pattern, just like most in North America and Australia.



Theo at 16, 1924: One of his elder sister's treasured portraits

¹⁴ See: www.badischer-rennverein.de/badischer_rennverein/geschichte_badischer_rennverein.html

During their first year, trainees earned a weekly salary of 1.15 *marks*, while in the second that doubled to 2.30 (in the third it was 5.56 and in the fourth year, 9 *marks*). Food and lodging were free while the boys were expected to purchase their clothes themselves (only the breeches and boots were provided). To visit the cinema during one's freetime, an apprentice had to be granted leave by the master, a privilege given only if one had worked hard during the day. For comparison, in the 1930s an all day cinema ticket would cost between 40-60 *pfennigs*.¹⁵ This sum (which excludes inflationary adjustments) suggests the jockey's wage wouldn't have stretched very far.

Nevertheless, Theo may still have enjoyed a taste of the movies since in 1923, Neuenhagen served as the filming location for several scenes of '*Lord Reginalds Derbyritt*.' According to Hildebrandt, three of Hoppegarten's coaches were involved and should have appeared in the film alongside a handful of extras. I wonder if that included Theo? Despite numerous attempts to locate the film or some of its stills, *Stefan Drössler*, Head of the Munich Film Museum told me in June 2014, "More than 90 percent of the German silents are lost, so it is not very likely that the film... survive[d]." Unperturbed, I submitted enquiries to a wealth of European film archives. None, however, have turned up this feature.¹⁶ The movie was released on January 17th, 1924.¹⁷ I wonder if Theo's mother went along to see it once it premiered.



Theo's riding trophy
(seeking a polish)

Theo continued his second year of training from 1924 but would only have gotten to ride a horse if he was diligent enough with his morning chores. Strictly speaking the opportunity to race only tended to occur from an apprentice's third year, unless one was particularly talented (and even then the risks were high since a fall would be a major set back to one's training). Yet according to one of Theo's nieces, Irene, he went as far as to pick up a prize for his racing; a silver cup that bore his name. Kai Hildebrandt doubts though it was won in competition, since prizes with the winner's name embossed were never awarded.

Only a handful of the 500 apprentices who learned at Hoppegarten and Neuenhagen between 1925 and 1945 ever cultivated careers as successful jockeys. Acquiring a jockey's rank only occurred after winning 50 races and a race prize of 800 marks. And that could only be attempted after passing the apprentice's examination and collecting the master's certification. Failure was allowed but once, and if repeated, the jockey's dream was over. Many of Hoppegarten's apprentices eventually became either too heavy or remained without the requisite number of victories and instead went on to become equine nutritionists. One of Theo's stablemates and Anton Winkler's trainees, however, went on to great success. His name was *Kurt Narr* and he apprenticed from 1921-26. He can be seen in the photo on page 342 standing on the steps at the far right.

¹⁵ Richard Bodek's Introduction in Claire Bergmann's: *What Will Become of the Children? A Novel of a German Family* (1932). Camden House, 2010. Pg. xvi

¹⁶ In Germany; the *Filmarchiv/Bundesarchiv*; the *Deutsches Filminstitut*, the Munich Film Museum/*Filmmuseums München* and the *Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek*. More info: www.filmportal.de/film/lord-reginalds-derbyritt_f9b8a8d43d234bf5ab5ded6476be0012

¹⁷ www.imdb.com/title/tt0015081/?ref=fn_al_tt_1; de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neuenhagen_bei_Berlin#Bauwerke

Many jockeys' careers typically came to an end through accident and such fate struck Theo that year when in autumn 1924 he fell from his horse. Falling can often result in permanent, debilitating, or even life-threatening injuries, chief among them trampling and paralysis, while concussion, bone fractures and arthritis can also result. According to Hildebrandt, "riders at that time did not yet wear the helmets required today," and even though Theo was not likely yet to have been race riding, family lore recalls his fall left a bone splinter pressed against his brain which caused him cramps and seizures.¹⁸



A race rider and his horse take a tumble
Source: Leipziginfo.de

Curiously, Hoppegarten's records continue to list him as an apprentice in the *Rennkalender* right up until 1928, the year he would have graduated, which leaves the impression he may have returned to Berlin. It's most likely, however, his apprentice's contract was simply never terminated, especially since from the trainer's perspective it made no difference whether Theo was registered or not. Kai Hildebrandt tends to agree. Theo may in fact have remained on Hoppegarten's books as long as his healthy return was anticipated. It's unlikely Theo would ever have been re-admitted though unless he was fully fit, adds Hildebrandt. High health standards had to be adhered to, especially since racing an unfit rider put other riders at risk too during competition, not to mention their horses.

Following the incident, Theo returned to his mother in Leipzig with whom he lived with for a "long time," according to statements she later made in court. In December of that year, he sent a copy of the earlier shown portrait photo to Little Nanny, with the text: „Zur Erinnerung an deiner Bruder. Leipzig-Berlin, den 3. XII. 24.“ Heading back home also meant he was reunited with his younger sister, Margot, now in her final year at school.

And what of the youngest Tjyralla? Not many months after her brother returned from Berlin, she graduated, aged 14 and a half, presumably with her *Confirmation* in the bag too. On May 30th, 1925 she was then packed off some 1,000 km northeast of Leipzig to Protestant *Insterburg*. The town (which today belongs to Russia's *Kaliningrad Oblast* and is known as *Chernyakhovsk*) lay far away in *Ostpreussen*. In no small thanks to the Treaty of Versailles, it had become a German exclave (see the map within the text box overleaf).¹⁹ Insterburg was almost therefore the Weimar Republic's easternmost point, while East Prussia's capital, *Königsberg* lay about 90 kilometres west. The spiritual centre of Prussia for centuries, in 1925 Königsberg was home to a population that exceeded a quarter of a million.²⁰

¹⁸ See: www.simillimum.com/education/first-aid-room/contents/head_injuries.php

¹⁹ Its population at the time Margot arrived was cca. 40,000. See: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tschernjachowsk

²⁰ See: [de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Königsberg_\(Preußen\)#Bevölkerung](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Königsberg_(Preußen)#Bevölkerung)

11.1: The Road to Insterburg

Travelling to Insterburg will have been quite an adventure for Margot, since she probably traversed the ‘Polish Corridor.’ That slither of land or “territorial eccentricity”¹ west of the ‘Free City of Danzig,’ however, gave the new state of Poland important access to the sea. In order to get to *Königsberg*, she likely travelled first to Berlin.

Margot could be forgiven, however, for journeying with a degree of trepidation, since barely three weeks before she departed, on May 11, 1925, a train that passed through the corridor ran off its rails! *Time* magazine recalls: “In the unseeing night, a train steamed across the Polish Corridor on its way from Berlin to East Prussia. Between the German town of *Stargard* and the Polish town of *Dirschau*, the engine ran off the tracks, the two front coaches telescoped, the remainder of the train, except the last two coaches, toppled over a 20-ft. embankment, 25 persons, including 12 women and 2 children, were killed, some 30 others were injured. The accident occurred in exactly the same place as a similar wreck in 1920.”²

Typically the connection to East Prussia by train was made possible by ‘sealing’ the carriages, i.e. passengers were not forced to apply for an official Polish visa in their passport. However, the rigorous inspections by the Polish authorities before and after sealing were (understandably so) strongly feared by the passengers.

An alternative mode of transport to East Prussia became available when the German Ministry for Transport established the *Seediens Ostpreußen* (‘East Prussian Sea Service’) in 1922, which provided a ferry connection (see map above).³ Should Margot have travelled by ferry, she would have likely departed from *Swinemünde*, the very place her elder sister had spent the summers a few years previously and where Onkel Albert once had strong ties to. Ships from there departed daily during the summertime.⁴



Sources:

1. As described by the editor of *Das Programm*, Max Berol Konorah, in the October 9th, 1927 issue.
2. See: content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,728448,00.html
3. See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_Corridor
4. See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seediens_Ostpreußen (including map)

Insterburg's Alter Markt and Lutherkirche, at some time between 1920-1930
Source: bildarchiv-ostpreussen.de



As with her forefathers, siblings and cousins before her, Margot hit the road in true *Wandervoogel* style. However, her sojourn to *Insterburg* saw her travel farther than any of them at such a tender age. The impression left by period postcards is that of a pretty spot which graced the river *Inster* and three photo-friendly lakes.²¹ Sheltering the town to its northeast lay the *Eichwalder Forest*.

²¹ Destroyed during the Second World War first by the Allies then stormed by the Red Army, today one finds typically socialist housing and rather unkempt public spaces.

However, a little over ten years earlier this once important garrison town of the Prussian Army had been overrun by Russians during the *Battle of Gumbinnen*, after which the Germans repelled their attackers during the *Gorlice-Tarnów Offensive* nine months later, between May and October 1915.²² In a curious twist of history, that offensive was supported by none other than Uncle Fritz, Margot's mother's elder brother. He may well have chuckled at that thought before she departed.

Researching citizen data for German lands that were lost over sixty years ago now is challenging because many of the archives that existed were destroyed (or if they survived, relocated). In Insterburg's case, its former residents set up an online community and a physical presence north of *Düsseldorf* in a town called *Krefeld*.²³ I approached representatives in the hope of answers as to what Margot may have been up to in East Prussia. *Reiner Buslaps*, Chairman of the *Kreisgemeinschaft Insterburg Stadt und Land e.V.* regretted, however, that he could not fill any of my blanks.²⁴

We only know Margot went on to become an *Artistin* and since her death certificate discloses (rightfully or otherwise) that she completed 12 years of education, besides the eight gained in elementary school (6-14), the other four she presumably accumulated either side of that period. Was she in Insterburg then to attend *Fortbildungsschule*, perhaps a theatre, dance or acrobat school? A look at a 1923 *Pharus* town map reveals plenty of girls' schools, however, none strike me as being concerned with dance *per se*.²⁵ Furthermore, in Marline Otte's period assessment of German theatre, come 1930 the situation was far from favourable. "East Prussia lacked places for individual artists to perform in cabaret or variety shows"²⁶ she reported, while according to an article published in entertainment weekly, *Das Programm*, three years earlier in 1927, "Königsberg had no variety theatre but some cabaret bars. Only the *Urania* plays pictures and variety."²⁷

Perhaps then she was there for recreation alone? Margot's mother "didn't want the children at home" niece, Tina, told me in April 2000. "They were always sent somewhere." Had she been bandying around then with lasses from one or other youth movement? Considering what Joseph Roth, a renowned social commentator, saw, I would hardly think so:

*"You see them at railway stations, the blooming, wheat-blond girls, born to be mothers, but turning into political Furies. They wear shapeless windbreakers, full skirts, and short haircuts. They have unnaturally long strides and absurdly mannish gestures...In the woods [with sandals, walking sticks and knives] they do round dances, they rave about nature and have big brawls with each other. It's a strange, baffling young generation."*²⁸

²² See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gorlice-Tarnow_Offensive

²³ See: www.insterburger.de

²⁴ Personal correspondence from R.Buslaps@t-online.de on 24 June, 2014 after enquiry to info@insterburger.de.

²⁵ See: http://www.chernyahovsk.com/maps/insterburg_1923.jpg

²⁶ Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 101 citing *Das Programm*, June 22, 1930. Pg 28

²⁷ *Das Programm* Oct. 9th, 1927 (Issue: 1331).

²⁸ Joseph Roth. *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin. 1920-1933*. Pg. 192

According to *Elke Hack* of the German youth organizations' archives at *Burg Ludwigstein* in *Hesse*, central Germany, not only was Margot never a member but to the best of her knowledge, *Insterburg* was neither used as a location for *Wandervogel* or German youth movements' excursions or camps.²⁹



Above:
Left to their own
devices: 'Theo' and
Co. gather hay

Right:
From Prussian to
modern: *Frau*
Tjyralla
25. XI. 25



My best bet then is that Margot visited the '*Landerholungsheim für Kinder*,' the existence of which is confirmed by photographs. Margot's absence from Leipzig probably therefore lasted no longer than the summer and when she returned, she found that Theo had been hired out as a farmhand. It was hardly a success, since according to family lore Theo was often found among the haystacks suffering from or sleeping off his convulsive fits.

Several months later, on December 1st, 1925 the youngsters' mother, *Nannj Tjyralla*, left Leipzig for Frankfurt. Officially she went "*mit den Kindern*." However, it appears she took Margot alone, while Theo was returned to his 'beloved' grandparents in *Wenigmachern*. Could the poor lad, having already endured so many trials and tribulations at their hands, have fared any worse? A few days before she left, their mother went 'modern' and as many other 'girls,' cut her hair into the fashionable bob. Her dress too switched to a more modern, casual style. She even found time to nip down to the photo *atelier* too before she left!

Theo's grandmother, however, was not into all things modern and was not the kind to allow for idle hands. Recognising he required adult supervision, *Oma Hinsch* lined him up a baker's apprenticeship. Not with his aunt, *Tante Hedy's* father, however, (whose enterprise had since closed according to Leipzig's address books) but with a *Backermeister* named *Oskar Barthel* whose premises were at *Zillerstrasse 4* in *Leipzig Thonberg*, southeast of the city centre.

The apprenticeship, however, was shortlived. Theo and the baker's sons did not get along and once when he was agitated, hurled a bowl of poppy seeds at one of them before wrestling him and smothering him with dough. Behavioural problems would go on to characterize the second half of the Twenties for Theo, making them less than 'Golden'. To have him spend time among his peers, he joined a variety of excursions or '*Ausflüge*', most likely around spring or summer 1926. Different cramps ("*verschiedentlich Krämpfe*"), however, continued to trouble him and as a result he was operated on. He spent the best part of a year, alone, in hospital. His mother's lament? The fact that she bore his not insignificant costs: such was the price for not having taken out health insurance when Theo initially was signed up to be a jockey!

²⁹ Personal correspondence with [Elke Hack](#), *Archiv der deutschen Jugendbewegung* on May 12th, 2014.

Shortly before Little Nannÿ arrived home, *Oma Hinsch* set Theo up with another baker's apprenticeship around mid-1927, with master *Riedel*, south of Leipzig in *Zwenkauer str. 36 (Leipzig–Connewitz)*. Despite his hardships, Theo kept his spirit and one of his favourite distractions with his spare cash was Leipzig's dance bars, a known haven of 'fashionable society.'

The principal cabarets and dance houses in the city then were the *Blumensaele*, *Faun* and *Eden* as well as the *Panorama café* at the family's former haunt, *Rosßplatz*.³⁰ In comparison to the rest of Germany (where bars stayed open longer), however, Leipzigers had it 'rough.' According to *Das Programm's Fremdsprachigerteil* in early 1928: "Saxony's bars close at 0100...because the Socialists are in the majority and think that "making a night of it" is a habit of the rich bourgeoisie³¹ that must be curbed, besides the cooks and waiters must be protected from unnecessary night work and long hours."³²

According to *Isa Partsch-Bergsohn* writes: "It was the realm of dance...which, perhaps better than any other art form, fulfilled the needs of enthusiastic young people striving to express themselves in a direct and unconventional manner."³³ Thanks in part to the closer body contact it permitted,³⁴ "The 'new dance' or '*Ausdruckstanz*' (expressive dance) of the 1920s broke away from the formalism of classical dance, branching out instead into exuberant explorations of personal experience." In short it led to a public dance craze.

While Theo sought comfort and perhaps a degree of intimacy in Leipzig's clubs, the Free State of Saxony's second city was fast becoming his 'step-father's' least preferred place to do business. Although the Leipzig fairs (*Messe*) continued to grow in popularity, Saxony as a whole "remained something of an economic backwater and never shared in the economic benefits of Germany's short-lived 'return to normalcy' in the second half of the 1920s."³⁵ Partly hampered by the dire consequences of the war, Saxony's economy failed to modernize its traditional industries (particularly textiles) following early industrialization, and during the Weimar Republic its export-oriented industries suffered from increasing competition and restrictions on trade.³⁶

³⁰ According to *Das Programm* on Sept 25th, 1927.

³¹ According to M.J.Schmidt in *Visual Music: Jazz, Synaesthesia and the History of the Senses in the Weimar Republic*. German History, Vol. 32, No. 2, June 2014. Pg. 205-6; "most workers could not afford to visit these venues, even at Weimar's economic peak." Rather, "workers associated with the SPD or KPD spent much of their leisure time outside the home playing sports or in the workers' theatre...or at home with their families or reading." Note also that "dance venues were completely absent from the countryside and villages."

³² *Das Programm*. Feb. 5th, 1928.

³³ *Isa Partsch-Bergsohn. Modern Dance in Germany and the United States: Crosscurrents and Influences. Volume 1.* Routledge, 1997. Pg. 26. In Google Books [here](#).

³⁴ According to M.J.Schmidt in *Visual Music: Jazz, Synaesthesia and the History of the Senses in the Weimar Republic*. German History, Vol. 32, No. 2, June 2014. Pg. 218; "Dancers would be aware of the feel of another's hand and back or shoulder, other bodies bumping against oneself and/or the movement of one's own legs and torso with the sound of the music."

³⁵ L. Jones: *Saxony, 1924-1930 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Retallack. Pg. 338

³⁶ C-C.W Szejnmann in *The Development of Nazism...1918-1933 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Edited by J. N. Retallack. Pg. 358

Looking at 'Onkel Albert's' entries in Leipzig's fair directories, the importance of his enterprise (which till then had manufactured food supplements) appears to have dwindled. Although "Germany was unquestionably dominant in global terms" in the chemicals' industry and related technologies,³⁷ the Magdeburger's presence reveal a shift towards his interests in technical novelties. At the 1924 *Herbstmesse* for instance, his listing reveals: "*Fabrik pat. Neuheiten* (manufacturer of patented novelties), *Massenartikel* (mass produced articles), *kl. Gebrauchs-gegenstände* (small commodities), *Sicherheits-Flaschenausgiesser* (securely spouted bottles)," while his spring 1926 appearance saw him merely participate and not exhibit at all.³⁸

Yet if we cast our minds back to Albert's 1923 inventions which included gramophone accessories, it's worth keeping in mind that "In 1925, only 196,000 gramophones were sold in Germany and even at its decade peak, record player sales remained well below half a million." According to *Michael Schmidt* writing in *German History*; "the price of gramophones and records ensured class-based ownership." Even in 1929, the most basic turntable cost 50 RM, while the average worker's weekly salary was just below 39 RM. I suppose Albert may not have made much profit from those inventions, and so he filed several more utility models from his and Frau Tjyralla's home in *Springerstraße* in Leipzig: in late 1924 a wallet which included a mirror (*Brieftasche mit Spiegel*) and in early 1925, two varieties of salt and pepper shakers (*Gewürzstreuer*).

Notwithstanding the collapse of his piece of the 'war industry' (see *Chapter VIII*), the supposed decline of his enterprise may also have been connected to the credit crisis which arose following the stabilisation of the mark from 1924. The scarcity of capital which resulted combined with the considerable demand for it meant many smaller industrial enterprises had to take out bank loans on very unfavourable terms in order to survive³⁹ (although the August 1924 Dawes Plan provided something of a respite which, after adjusting Germany's reparations payments, enabled many of its firms to take out loans abroad, especially the US). I daresay till then, Little Nanny's US dollars received by her mother may well have been a boon to Albert too.

Saxony also continued to be dogged during the Weimar period by the legacies of political confrontation and the persistence of authoritarian mentalities (conversely, the State of Prussia became a haven of political stability under *Otto Braun*, its Prime Minister from 1920 to 1932).⁴⁰ Cooperation between the left and right proved extremely difficult and democratic principles struggled to gain a foothold (see text box opposite). While the majority of Saxony's labour movement embraced the new Republican environment, a large part of the bourgeoisie had enormous problems adapting to it,⁴¹ such that by the time of federal elections on May 4th, 1924, the Business Party of the German Middle Class had grown so popular that it fared better in Saxony than in any other German state.⁴²

³⁷ Wolfhard Weber: *Science, Technology, and Society in Germany from 1800 to the Present*, in *Germany since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* Vol. III. Edited by S. Ogilve and R. Overy, 2003. Pg. 339

³⁸ Michael J. Schmidt. *Visual Music: Jazz, Synaesthesia and the History of the Senses in the Weimar Republic* in *German History*, Vol. 32, No. 2, June 2014. Pg. 206

³⁹ V.Wellhöner & H.Wixforth in *Finance and Industry in Germany: A New Social and Economic History* Vol. III. Since 1800. Edited by S.Ogilve and R.Overy, 2003. Pg. 171

⁴⁰ See: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goldene_Zwanziger

⁴¹ Pg. 358/Szejnmann.

⁴² L. Jones: *Saxony, 1924-1930* in *Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Retallack. Pg. 339

It's fair to say then that 'Red Saxony' was no longer the attractive place it had once been for a small-scale industrialist like Albert. Growing disaffected, it's reasonable to assume it was he who ultimately 'led' Frau Tjyralla on to Prussia and Frankfurt in late 1925.⁴³ In departing, the couple left behind a Gohlis now home to almost 50,000 Leipzigers.⁴⁴ Albert's 'curtain call' in the city's *Adressbuecher* was that same year.

11.2: Spoilt for Choice: Saxony's Political Landscape, 1923-1926

By the time of *Herr Petzold* and *Frau Tjyralla's* departure from 'Red Saxony,' its politics had calmed, relatively speaking. The Majority Socialists' coalition government that had been introduced in November 1922 and was so despised by the bourgeois parties and their constituencies was "illegally and brutally smashed by the *Reich*" during the *Reichsexekution* of October 1923. That overthrow, however, according to C-C. Szejnmann writing in 'Saxony in German History' left "little hope for political compromise or stability." Urged on and applauded by large sectors of Saxony's bourgeoisie, the *Reichsexekution* saw the construction of a new state government from early 1924 under social democrat *Max Heldt*, albeit in coalition with the two liberal parties, the German Democratic Party (DDP) and the German People's Party (DVP).

Anti-Marxism by itself, however, was not enough of a platform for the political parties on the right to maintain popular support among the *Mittelstand* (the shopkeepers, artisans and master craftsmen), while the emergence of special-interest parties constituted a direct threat to the tenuous grip on power held by Saxony's bourgeois parties (see Larry Jones in 'Saxony in German History'.) With the DDP and the DVP finding themselves increasingly torn by internal conflicts and growing immobilized during a period of deepening economic crisis, the likes of the Business Party of the German Middle Class and patriotic associations such as 'Fritz Hinsch's' *Stahlhelm* and the Young German Order grew in popularity.

On October 31st, 1926, Saxony's electorate returned to the polls. Fearful that the *Landtag* elections would produce an even greater fragmentation of Germany's bourgeois forces, in the run up to polling day the leaders of Saxony's paramilitary organisations called upon the so-called patriotic parties to set aside their differences and unite in a crusade to free Saxony – and by extension, Germany – from the insidious yoke of Marxism. Benjamin Lapp recalls that a DVP electoral pamphlet announced that a revival of the 'Zeigner system' would lead to the dissolution of Saxony's political and cultural structure, the 'collapse of the Saxon economy,' and the politicisation of the administration, while a socialist victory would mean 'terroristic conditions' leading to second invasion by the *Reichswehr* and the 'total collapse of Saxony.' Their tactics failed and the social democrats' *Heldt* resumed his coalition with the DDP and DVP, but now alongside the Business Party of the German Middle Class too. In July 1927 the government was then forced to take on board the opposition party too, the German National People's Party (DNVP) plus the Reich Party for Civil Rights and Deflation (*Volksrechtspartei*). The coalition lasted until 1929.

The outcome of the 1926 election showed that among Saxony's increasingly disaffected middle-class voters, the more established bourgeois parties were being effectively eliminated as alternatives to the increasingly popular Nazi Party. In effect, Saxony was giving the Weimar Republic a taste of what was to come for the rest of Germany...

Sources: B. Lapp: *Remembering the Year: 1923* (Pg. 322-335); L. Jones: *Saxony, 1924-1930: A Study in the Dissolution of the Bourgeois Party System in Weimar Germany*, (Pg. 338-339, 341) and C-C. Szejnmann: *The Development of Nazism in the Landscape of Socialism and Nationalis: The Case of Saxony, 1918-1933* (Pg. 359), both in *Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed.

See also: sachsen.de/en/274.htm; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saxony_Landtag_elections_in_the_Weimar_Republic; and de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Wilhelm_August_Heldt

⁴³ Strictly speaking we know only that *Frau Tjyralla* moved to Frankfurt in late 1925. However, having been with *Herr Petzold* for a decade (and considering she spent another 20 years alongside him), one can be fairly certain she followed him. In a bid to ascertain their residence in Frankfurt, *Manuela Rhein* at the *Institut für Stadtgeschichte* told me there was no documentation for either of them in the city's residential records. By way of a disclaimer she adds that some 50 percent of the records were destroyed in the Second World War. To be certain, she checked the address books between 1925 and 1927 and identified a similar result. NB: The *Adressbücher* for 1868/69 until 2002/2003 are available on microfiche. See also: www.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/wertvoll/adressbuch.html

⁴⁴ Martina Gùldenmann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert*, 1999. Pg. 30

Nationally, things were only marginally better, one of the hallmarks of the era being the impossibility of building a national ruling coalition that would stretch from the Social Democrats (SPD) on the left to the German National Peoples Party (DNVP) on the right.⁴⁵ Following Saxony's *Reichsexekution*, the Weimar Coalition collapsed and with the withdrawal of the Social Democrats, the Chancellorship was handed over from *Gustav Stresemann* (of the German People's Party's or DVP) to *Wilhelm Marx* of the *Zentrum Party*. He went on to preside over four separate cabinets until June 1928.⁴⁶ Despite its own upheavals, in the May 1924 elections the SPD still won 100 of the 472 seats,⁴⁷ followed in December by 131 of the 493 seats,⁴⁸ which on both occasions rendered it the largest party in the *Reichstag*.

Over on the right, however, any semblance of until was in reality disintegrating. The paramilitary right lamented the fragmentation of Germany's political culture and bourgeois forces while themselves seeking to rebaptise German political life in the spirit of the so-called front experience. The death then of *Reichspräsident* Friedrich Ebert on February 28th, 1925 brought opportunity which in turn saw war veteran, *Paul von Hindenburg* snatch the position from the social democrats.⁴⁹ The election of the 78 year old, a conservative and gritty monarchist may have appealed to both *Herr Petzold* and the *Hinschs*,⁵⁰ but it would prove disastrous to the republic.

Already prior to Ebert's death, diplomat and social commentator *Count Harry Kessler* remarked in his diary: "Astounding the free and easy way the monarchists are picking up the threads and taking over again." Prior to Hindenburg's victory Kessler wrote on April 18th of how he feared; "A foreign policy disaster" and following it, on May 15th: "Farewell progress, farewell vision of a new world."⁵¹ Under Hindenburg, Germany endured a further series of fragile coalitions which came to an end when the Nazis seized control in 1933.

The socio-political issues of the Hindenburg era specifically revolved around labour relations and personal rights, writes Richard Bodek. It is not much of an exaggeration to say that the political situation boiled down to the left's attempt to hold onto the improvements in wages, working hours and working conditions that it had gained during the revolution, and leftists and liberals demanding that women should have the right to control their own bodies, against a reactionary right that wanted to roll back the gains of the left, send women back into very traditional roles, and water down, if not entirely eliminate, parliamentary government as a whole.⁵²

⁴⁵ Richard Bodek's Introduction in Claire Bergmann's: *What Will Become of the Children? A Novel of a German Family* (1932). Camden House, 2010. Pg. xv

⁴⁶ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm_Marx

⁴⁷ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_federal_election,_May_1924

⁴⁸ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_federal_election,_December_1924

⁴⁹ In the first election round, candidates who supported democracy held a clear majority, but no one of them had enough votes to win the office. In the second round, the right chose a new candidate, Paul von Hindenburg, military hero of the First World War, who was subsequently elected. Richard Bodek's Introduction in Claire Bergmann's: *What Will Become of the Children? A Novel of a German Family* (1932). Camden House, 2010. pg. xv-xvi

⁵⁰ The *Stahlhelm*, of which Fritz was a member, cooperated in Hindenburg's presidential campaign, besides the Young German Order.

⁵¹ *Berlin in Lights. The Diaries of Count Harry Kessler (1918-1937)*. Transl. by C. Kessler. Grove Press. 1999. Pg. 263, 267

⁵² Richard Bodek's Introduction in Claire Bergmann's: *What Will Become of the Children? A Novel of a German Family* (1932). Camden House, 2010. Pg. xv-xvi

More positively speaking, however, in strengthening European security, Germany accepted its western borders with France and Belgium when it concluded the 'Locarno Pact' on October 16th, 1925. As might be expected, the war veterans' organization, the *Stahlhelm* and others responded by leading a parade of 100,000 in Leipzig from October 17-19th, during the so-called *Reichskriegerstag* or War Veterans Day.⁵³ Still, in 1926, Germany further underlined its international goodwill by joining the 'League of Nations,' an international assembly of political leaders from the world's most important nations, for which the former Chancellor and now Foreign Minister, *Gustav Stresemann* co-won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1926.⁵⁴

Frankfurt was not to be *Herr Petzold* and *Frau Tjyralla's* final destination, however. Around mid-1926, the couple moved on to the still relatively young capital, Berlin (having fulfilled that function since 1871). That means the Hinsch's attraction to leading urban centres and 'foreign' states had begun to transcend generations (even if Berlin was the heart of her native Prussian 'fatherland'). The city had first perhaps come into view thanks to Theo's jockey training, and to *Frau Tjyralla*, that should have been her entry ticket to Berlin's high society – at least the kind that frequented the races at Hoppegarten or Grunewald.

It was likely to have been Albert though who introduced

Tjyralla, Nanny. Fabrikbesitzer, Charlottenbg.

her and over the next couple of years, the city's *Adressbücher* listed my great grandmother (somewhat surprisingly) a widowed 'factory owner' or *Fabrikbesitzer-witwe*. By 1929 she had even graduated to *Frau Direktor!*⁵⁵ Clearly her earlier 1922 appointment to one or other *Angestellte Ausschuss* had been Albert's doing (even if then, as now, it was likely no more than a sinecure). Was Albert's factory perhaps Berlin-based and had this prompted their move to the Prussian capital? In looking for answers, I turned to the relevant district court's company archives for possible details on his firm or its registration there on May 1st, 2013. The reply was candid; "If it wasn't detailed at: www.handelsregister.de, then no data existed" (and it wasn't).

If we recall *Chapter VIII*, however, we already know that Albert's own links to Berlin stretched back many more years than Nanny's, a dozen or more.⁵⁶ Via files on the sale of his father's company⁵⁷ retrieved from Bernburg in 2013 I learned that his home had previously been upmarket *Charlottenburg* at a time when it was still an independent settlement west of the boundaries of old Berlin's capital.⁵⁸ Ever since the 1860s, it had been a popular residential area among the city's wealthy bourgeoisie, and it was here in the western and southwestern neighbourhoods that a number of its already established Jewish community was concentrated too.⁵⁹

⁵³ Martina Güldenmann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert*, 1999. Pg. 31

⁵⁴ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_Stresemann

⁵⁵ Assuming they married in Charlottenburg, in July 2011, I enquired to Marion Berg of the *Landesarchiv Berlin* and learned that until the archives were transferred there in Sept. 2011. A request to standesamt@charlottenburg-wilmersdorf.de was not eventually submitted, while a futile search continued for Albert Petzold's death certificate, in the hope of learning about any possible ,wife.'

⁵⁶ We know thanks to Thomas Brunnler of the *Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt* that from December 1912, Albert owned a department store in Berlin which was sold in October 1914 shortly after the war broke out (see textbox 8.4).

⁵⁷ The *Gröna*-based brickyard and quarry "*Hermann Korn*" was sold on Oct. 19th, 1910 after Albert's father's death.

⁵⁸ Named after Queen consort, Sophia Charlotte (1668-1705) and best known for *Schloss Charlottenburg*, the largest surviving royal palace in Berlin, and the adjacent museums. See also: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlottenburg

⁵⁹ Poorer Jewish newcomers congregated in the East End of Berlin, according to Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 208

As usual though, Albert left no evidence as to the whereabouts of his 1910 home, despite *Charlottenburgers* having long been included in the capital's *Adressbücher*.⁶⁰ His father's company's sale did reveal, however, that he was one of nine children and besides elder sister Frieda⁶¹ and younger brother Walter⁶² there were six more siblings, all elder, including: *Oskar Max Bernhard*⁶³ (born 1868-9), *Arthur Gustav* (born 1870), *Elisa*,⁶⁴ *Minna*,⁶⁵ *Adele*⁶⁶ and *Paula*.

After learning Paula had also once been a resident of Berlin (see text box overleaf), I began to wonder whether Albert's return to the capital had anything to do with the fact it might once have been the family's home? The address books reveal many Petzolds with identical forenames to Albert's father and in turn his siblings⁶⁷ had lived about the city from the advent of the *Kaiserreich* (when we know Albert's father, Oskar, aged 32, no longer lived in his birthplace, *Halberstadt*⁶⁸) until his family arrived in *Magdeburg* (a decade or so later). However, only detailed research into each might prove a useful link.⁶⁹

Herr Petzold and *Frau Tjyralla* arrived in the district of Charlottenburg some six years or so after its 1920 incorporation into Greater Berlin.⁷⁰ Not many months later, in October 1926, the inventor filed his next utility model; a *Kamm- und Bürstenreiniger* (comb and brush cleaner). The address from which it was registered, *Neue Winterfeldt str. 35 (W30)* – see '2' on the map on pg. 356 – would remain in his use until 1933.⁷¹ Judging by the environs' appearance then as well as now, it has remained an elegant area.

⁶⁰ Despite extensive searches into the livelihoods of the many Albert Petzolds listed in Berlin's *Adressbücher* as far back as 1900, none of them appear to be that which was eventually linked with Frau Tjyralla.

⁶¹ Albert's nearest known sibling, Magdeburg-born *Frieda* had married *Hermann Arndt*, a *Kaufmann* and by 1910 had returned to the town of her birth, *Magdeburg-Friedrichstadt* (east of the town centre) and *Kirchstrasse 9/10*.

⁶² *Walter* was, like his brothers, a *Kaufmann* who travelled far from home. In 1909 (aged 22) he married *Freda Ettie Wilson* in New South Wales: Sydney, Australia. It appears their marriage collapsed after Walter deserted them around 1916 according to Police Gazettes, despite becoming a father around the same time!

⁶³ His father's company sale fiels reveals he lived in Bernburg in 1909, while his residence, albeit his mother's address, in 1911 is confirmed on Albert's marriage certificate: #255 of Dec. 15, 1911. In a March 19, 2013 reply, Marcel Fromme of *Stadt Bernburg* confirmed there was no death certificate in Bernburg for Oskar, which should have revealed where he was born. He was neither listed in the address books between 1911 and 1913, which means he likely departed the city. According to address books at *ancestry.com*, an *O. Petzold* and *Einzelhandeler* (retail trader) lived in *Burg (bezirk Magdeburg)* in 1935. Assuming Walter never returned from Australia, Oskar then was the only other son and thus brother to Albert left living in Germany.

⁶⁴ Elisa married *Carl Oehlmann*, an editor or *Chefredakteur*. By 1910 they lived in *Gera*, 60km south of Leipzig.

⁶⁵ Minna married medical doctor, *Fritz Engelhardt* moving to *Marienberg/Westerwald*, between *Düsseldorf* and *Frankfurt*.

⁶⁶ Adele married the *Kaufmann*, *Alfred Schaller* and settled in *Gröna* (Bernburg). From the 1912 *Bernburg Adressbuch* (pg. 61), it appears *Schaller* bought/ inherited the *Grönaer Oolith-Steinbrüche* company, which is listed in the *Handelsregister des Amtsgerichts Bernburg* on Januar 14, 1911 as entry Nr. 804. On April 17, 1914 the firm had ceased to exist, according to Thomas Brännler on August 19, 2013. From the 1927 *Adressbuch* their residence could not be confirmed.

⁶⁷ Albert's father, Oskar, was the second eldest among four boys. Their mother, *Wilhelmine Wilke* (born in 1812), died on 18 April 1848 when Oskar was just nine, after which his father, *Christian* (born 1813 in nearby *Schildau*), a *Schönfärber-meister* (textile dyer) and later *Kaufmann*, married *Elise Siebert* (born in *Dardesheim* in 1828) on 3 Jan 1849. They had three more children, including two daughters, according to the 3 March, 2013 research findings of *Annett Bartl* at *Halberstadt's Historisches Archiv*. *Christian's* full brood after he first married on 1 Dec. 1836 included: *Hermann*, born 29 June 1837; *Oscar* on 7 Sept. 1838; *Emil* on 5 Dec. 1841 and *Adolph* on 1 July 1844, while among the second cohort, *Minna* arrived on 9 May 1849, *Wilhelmine* on 25 Nov. 1852, and *Albert* on 19 March, 1854.

⁶⁸ Thanks in part to the 1866 Austro-Prussian war? According to *Annett Bartl* (see footnote above), neither Oskar nor his siblings were in Halberstadt from 1868-1880 nor from 1911-1930. Oskar's children, i.e. Albert's siblings, were neither born there, nor did Oskar wed his *Bernburg*-born wife, *Elisa Schubert*, there either.

⁶⁹ Even if all children born in this period were born in Berlin, why then were all bar Albert and Paula living in locations beyond the capital by 1910? (for details on their homes at that time, see Footnotes 62-67)

⁷⁰ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1920s_Berlin

⁷¹ According to the 1933 *Berlin Adressbücher*.

11.3: Paula Petzold, Berlin...and Brazil?!

Albert's elder sister, Paula, is of particular interest because Berlin was a magnet for her too. According to her father Oskar's company sale files, she and her husband, *Paul Gregorius* lived at the time in *Wittstockerstrasse*, 3 in *Berlin-Moabit* (*Postbezirk* NW87). It was in fact a street which neighbored Charlottenburg (see '1' on the map overleaf) while according to the 1910 address book, Gregorius was the owner of a *Schokoladenhandlung* or chocolate and sugar wholesalers.

Less than a century earlier, sugar had been one of Brazil's three main exports,¹ so it was perhaps no coincidence that others among Albert's siblings were trading with Brazil too. Although by 1888, Brazilian sugar production had stagnated (shortly after the century's turn it constituted just 2.4 percent of its commodity exports),² between 1905-1910 the country had grown into the world's leading producer of cocoa.³ Cocoa, being the basis of chocolate, suggests Gregorius might well have been overseeing a Brazilian trade too.

The Petzolds' fondness for Brazil stretched back prior to the family's acquisition of the "*Hermann Korn*" brickyard and quarry in 1885, when in early 1881, Albert's father, a *Kaufmann*, then aged 42, travelled to Rio de Janeiro.⁴ That visit was followed six and a half years later in mid-1887 by Albert's 19 year old eldest brother, also named Oskar.⁵ Although he travelled just the once (probably due to the political instability in the country at the time),⁶ six years later it was second eldest, 23 year old Arthur Gustav (also a *Kaufmann*) who went in mid-1893 to Rio.⁷

Brazil also happened to be a popular destination for emigrating Germans between 1847-1914 (alongside Argentina, Australia and Canada while the majority went to the USA).⁸ Between 1819 and 1947, some 235,846 migrated there⁹ (amidst a wave that saw an influx of almost 71,000 foreigners per year and almost two million in total from around the world between 1877 and 1903).¹⁰ Arthur too chose to stay there and in spring 1896 he married Fernandina Rocha.¹¹ Their first daughter, Olga was born in October that year while Frieda followed in April 1898. Those milestones tied Arthur to South America and I wonder, was he then Paul Gregorius's trade partner? It may certainly be no coincidence that his business, a *Delikatess* and *Kolonialwarenhandlung* in SW Berlin was founded in 1893, the same year Arthur first visited Brazil.¹² Was then Gregorius actually Arthur Petzold's business associate and was he 'married' into the Petzold's family enterprise?¹³

In December 1898, Arthur returned to Europe, being listed in the ship's manifest a *Handlungsgehilfe*. He repeated the journey several times, in mid-1900 and early 1902 (now via *Antwerp*), suggesting he remained an important intermediary. Arthur died, however, in early 1906 in Rio, aged 36.¹⁴ Did his passing away affect his sister and her husband's business? Four years later the couple divorced,¹⁵ after which all trace of Paula is lost.¹⁶

Albert and Paula's father remained responsible for Arthur's children and wife, since the girls were listed as Oskar's beneficiaries. It may only be happenstance but five years after Oskar's death, in 1915 an 'Olga Petzold' is listed in the Berlin address books as an employee of a beverage wholesale company in the southern district of *Neukölln*. She periodically appears until 1924.¹⁷ Was it Arthur's daughter, she'd have been 19 in 1915 and 28 years old come 1924. Later on, between 1938 and 1943 (the last year a *Berlin Adressbuch* was produced), a language teacher named 'Frieda' appears within the same district.¹⁸ That may again be down to chance but if they were both Albert's nieces,¹⁹ who then were their hosts? Neither Albert nor Paula (nor any other known Petzold family member) was registered at those addresses between 1880 and 1943. Perhaps most curiously, among all the Petzolds, Albert never had anything apparently to do with Brazil himself.

Sources: For footnotes see text box at this chapter's end

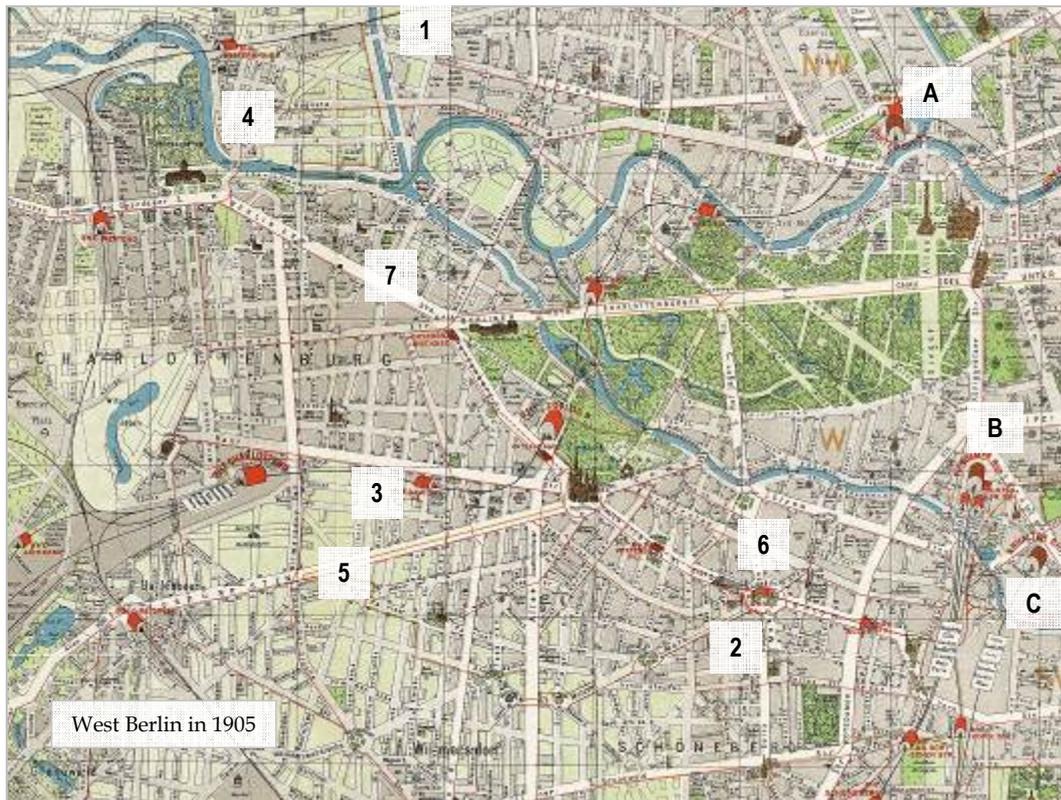
For all intents and purposes it looks then as if Albert handed over corporate responsibility for his factory to Frau Tjyralla while he concentrated on the more creative aspects of his industry. Even if it was its premises that lured Albert back to Berlin, he may well have opted to stay there after his mother passed away the following year.⁷² Berlin after all, was where 'it' was happening, as we shall see in the coming pages in what is effectively 'part 2' of this chapter. I suppose then it offered no greater source of inspiration (and potential market) for a would-be inventor.

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⁷² Elise Petzold died in 1927. She was buried in Bernburg's Cemetery II at 18 Park Street (LITRA H 43rd).

Guide to Annotations: 1-2: Paula Petzold's Berlin of 1910 and Albert's of 1926-33 (respectively); 3; *Frau Tjyralla's* Berlin home until 1935 4: *Frau Direktor Tjyralla's* official residence, 1927-1929; 5: *Ku'damm*; 6-7: Addresses from which Petzold registered utility models in late 1928 and mid-1929 (respectively) A: *Lehrter Bhnf*; B: *Potsdamer Platz*; and C: *Anhalter Bhnf*.

Map Source: commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Berlin_Pharus-Plan_c1905.jpg



Nine months on from her mother and Onkel Albert's arrival, Little Nannÿ, now herself a woman of the world (and I daresay laden with gifts), sped towards Berlin Moabit's *Lehrter Bahnhof* ('A' on the map above). As the blurred vision from her train window became the capital, I bet she found its appearance more than familiar. While her new home, much like Leipzig, was full of majestic stony splendour, at the same time it was as cosmopolitan as any large US city.⁷³ Indeed *Mark Twain* who stayed in Berlin, likened it to Chicago, while *Joseph Roth*, who was a resident during the twenties called it "half-Americanised."⁷⁴ Playwright *Gerhard Hauptmann*, a critic of social inequality and injustice, was even noted for saying; "Berlin is splendid...Berlin is the most wonderful city in the world. Berlin is life."⁷⁵ To *Pola Negri*, *Königen* of the German and Hollywood silver screen and a former resident herself, it was, however, "a city intent upon losing itself."⁷⁶ In her autobiography she recalls:

*"Paris was the overtly publicized capital of the madness that gave birth to the Roaring Twenties. But it was to Berlin that the connoisseurs with the most refined tastes in abandon came to carouse through the nights and sleep through the days ignoring at all times the daily struggles of ordinary people trying to stave off starvation and eke out some meager livelihood. After dark, the city blazed with a thousand lights and spoke with myriad tongues, but with dawn, sunlight illuminated the shabbiness, and Berlin spoke in the single tongue of the beggars on the corners."*⁷⁷

⁷³ Otto Friedrich felt Berlin's bleakly rectangular houses and apartment buildings, with white walls and horizontal windows connected the Prussian capital to the suburbs of Los Angeles! *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s*. 1972. Pg. 164

⁷⁴ Joseph Roth. *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin. 1920-1933*. Pg. 190

⁷⁵ Alexandra Richie. *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin*. London, 1998. Pg. 188

⁷⁶ Pola Negri. *Memoirs of a Star*. Doubleday and Company, 1970. Pg. 164

⁷⁷ Pola Negri. *Memoirs of a Star*. Doubleday and Company, 1970. Pg. 162

By the middle of the 1920s, the city's four million residents could find amusement and distraction among a staggering 49 theatres, three opera houses, three large variety theatres and 75 cabarets. In addition, live entertainment increasingly competed with 363 movie theatres (for which 37 film companies produced 250 movies annually). This abundance of entertainment venues was complemented by an equally impressive expansion of Berlin's gastronomy. Some 16,000 restaurants, including 550 cafes and 220 bars and dancehalls made certain that in Berlin the live performances were not limited to the stage.⁷⁸

Obviously it was not only the US that was buzzing in 1927. Yet, the rhythms of American big business were to be heard orchestrating the theatre scene, too, and the local 1927 production of *Broadway*, a musical play about its gangsters, chorus girls, bootleggers and jazz musicians, will have added a note that was exotic yet familiar to Little Nannÿ. In the words of one of Marlene Dietrich's biographers, "Times Square had come to the *Ku'damm*"⁷⁹ (short for *Kurfürstendamm*, a broad, long boulevard considered by some to be the 'Champs-Élysées of Berlin') Had Little Nannÿ caught the show (which was hugely successful and enjoyed a long run), she might just have seen *Frau Dietrich* perform as one of the Paradise Club's chorines (see also the text box overleaf).⁸⁰

There is a joke, however, that says, ask any true Berliner where his or her family comes from, and there is a good chance that the answer, accompanied by a broad grin, will be: "Silesia of course!"⁸¹ Ironically, with the young Tÿrallas' hub fast becoming Berlin, nothing could have been closer to the truth.⁸² But realistically Berlin represented a city made up of a melee of Germans, Slavs, Scots, Jews and more. By 1925, Jews represented approximately nine percent of Charlottenburg's population and as much as 13 percent of neighbouring *Wilmersdorf* to its south.

The presence of their well-established families left its mark on the street life and ambience of these quarters too, writes Marlene Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*.⁸³ On their High Holidays, for instance, they could be seen along the *Kurfürstendamm*, streaming in great numbers, and in close proximity to other Berliners, towards the great synagogue on *Fasanenstraße*, whilst admiring the displays in the windows of West Berlin's exclusive shops. "These neighbourhoods were not characterized by the usual anonymity of a big city," continues Otte. "Instead their inhabitants were integrated into rich social networks."

⁷⁸ Marlene Otte, *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 201

⁷⁹ Alexander Walker. *Dietrich*. Harper and Row. 1984. Pg. 30

⁸⁰ In mid-1927, the musical went on tour. It was performed in Vienna throughout August and September, where Dietrich played one of the leading roles; Pearl. NB: A film version of the same name was released in 1929. For more, see: Richard Barrios. *A Song in the Dark: The Birth of the Musical Film*. 1995. Pg. 95-98. Online [here](#).

⁸¹ Anthony Read and David Fisher. *Berlin Rising. Biography of a City*. W. W. Norton & Company, 1994.

⁸² I did wonder, however, whether, when their mother arrived, she had spoken with a Saxon accent, or perhaps inherited a touch of Low German from her father? "No," said her eldest granddaughter unequivocally; "she only spoke High German."

⁸³ Marlene Otte, *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 201

11.4 Dietrich's Star Rises

Throughout this chronicle I've often looked at how my grandmother's life and career paralleled Marlene Dietrich's. By mid-1927, when Little Nanny returned from the US, she was well-known to impresarios while her face and figure were greeted with impatient appreciation by the Berlin public, according to Alexander Walker.

Throughout the 1920s, Dietrich successfully combined work on stage and in film in both Berlin and Vienna. On stage, she had roles of varying importance, for instance, in Frank Wedekind's *Pandora's Box*, William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as well as George Bernard Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* and *Misalliance*. It was in musicals and revues, however, such as *Broadway*, *Es Liegt in der Luft* and *Zwei Krawatten*, that she attracted the most attention.

By the late 1920s, she was also playing sizable parts on screen, including *Café Electric* (1927), *Ich küsse Ihre Hand, Madame* (1928) and *Das Schiff der verlorenen Menschen* (1929). But it was not

until the second half of 1929, that Dietrich landed the breakthrough role of *Lola-Lola*, a cabaret singer who causes the downfall of a hitherto respected schoolmaster, in the UFA (*Universum Film Aktien Gesellschaft*) production, *The Blue Angel*. The film, Germany's first talkie, was released on April 1st, 1930 when it screened at the *Gloria-Palast* in Berlin. Directed by *Josef von Sternberg*, it was he who took most of the credit for having 'discovered' Dietrich. Writes Otto Friedrich: "The decadent eroticism of the film seems to express perfectly the mood of Berlin in the late 1920s" while it also grew noteworthy for introducing Dietrich's signature song 'Falling in Love Again,' which along with other 'lusty' numbers in the film were composed by Friedrich Hollaender.

Between 1919 and 1930, the era of German film set in and according to Richard Bodek "going to the movies was one of the most important leisure activities available to Berliners." Directors like Fritz Lang produced the 1927 release, *Metropolis*, in which a robot becomes the star of the silver screen, while some ninety percent of all German feature films at the time were produced in Berlin and Babelsberg, close to Potsdam. Thus the city became a melting pot for everybody who was anybody on the German stage and screen, writes *Bjoern Weigel* in the 2013 issue of the *Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz Magazine*. *The Blue Angel*, however, was one of UFA's last great film productions, and afterwards many of its major talents left Germany, including von Sternberg and Dietrich in April 1930 for Paramount Pictures. "Marlene Dietrich has left for Hollywood" wrote *Hans Sahl* in *Der Montag Morgen* on April 7th, 1930, two days before she arrived in New York en route to Hollywood. "The German cinema is poorer by an artist."

"It was quite a journey, to have come from the ranks of the extra girls" writes biographer, Alexander Walker, "and, within five years, to be departing one's homeland with such plaudits ringing in the ears." Still, by mid-1928 Dietrich had yet to set foot on the US stage (and by her own admission, until *The Blue Angel* was released, she was an 'unknown'), while the door was already open for a return to America for not one but two Tÿrallas'!

Sources: Alexander Walker. *Dietrich*. Harper and Row. 1984. Pg. 68;

Otto Friedrich; *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s*. 1972. Pg. 286;

Richard Bodek's Introduction in *Claire Bergmann's: What Will Become of the Children? A Novel of a German Family* (1932). Camden House, 2010. Pg. xvi; *Diversity Destroyed* by Bjoern Weigel, SPK-Magazine, 2013. Pg. 15

Marlene Dietrich. *My Life*. Translated by Salvator Attanasio. Weidenfeld and Nicholson. 1987. Pg. 41.

and en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marlene_Dietrich; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Der_blaue_Angel; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cinema_of_Germany;

Photo: Dietrich leaving Germany via the Lehrter Bahnhof on April 1st, 1930.

Online at: marlene-dietrich.livejournal.com/profile



This sense of belonging and identification was captured in the first verse of a song from a Berlin *revue* named 'Das muss man sehen,' which ran at its *Metropol Theater* in 1907,⁸⁴ while the second verse relates West Berliners' leisure activities:

<i>The people of the Kufürstendamm</i>	<i>Who is at dinners, at soupers</i>
<i>There is in Berlin a small circle</i>	<i>One meets again and again?</i>
<i>Which calls itself Tout Berlin⁸⁵</i>	<i>Who shines in all committees</i>
<i>Where everybody knows something</i>	<i>With their signatures?</i>
<i>about the other</i>	<i>Who can be found at the Tatternsaal</i>
<i>Where everybody knows everybody else</i>	<i>And at the five o'clocks?⁸⁶</i>
<i>Whoever has, whoever can</i>	<i>Who can one greet at the ball of the press,</i>
<i>Who call himself, comme il faut,</i>	<i>At Nikisch, at Siegfried Ochs⁸⁷?</i>
<i>From the Tiergarten district</i>	<i>And who promenades cozy and happy</i>
<i>From around the Zoo</i>	<i>At a summer's evening out at the "Zoo"</i>
<i>And the people from Kufürstendamm</i>	<i>In the gossip-avenue with hullabaloo and tantara?</i>
<i>All together, all together!</i>	<i>Yes, all all all all all are there!</i>

Little Nanny's eldest daughter once told me that Frau Tÿralla loved Berlin because; "It was all modern and offered a good life." The nightlife was especially spectacular, recalls Pola Negri: "Jazz was becoming a rage in all the little chic clubs.⁸⁸ I was mad about its exhilarating syncopation and loved all the new dances making their way across the Atlantic from America.⁸⁹ Champagne was our water and laughter our philosophy," she continues in her autobiography.⁹⁰

Nevertheless, according to Micheal J. Schmidt, writing in a recent issue of the *Journal of the German History Society*; "The entertainment and nightlife of Berlin...remained the culture of a small minority... An extremely tight household budget tended to exclude even the families of average wage earners from cultural activities." As a result, "Cultural consumption [was] luxury consumption."⁹¹

⁸⁴ Come 1927 the once dominant *revue* and quintessential Berlin theatre had fallen upon hard times. It had been taken over by Jewish Leipzigers, Alfred and Fritz Rotter, who were not much younger than Frau Tÿralla and at a time when the entertainment industry had undergone dramatic changes. The *Berliner Tagesblatt* already joked, however, in 1924 that its punch line had been replaced by the kick line. Continues Marline Otte, its mediocrity combined with the deterioration in the working conditions of actors and artists was only one aspect of the large-scale decline in the German economy. See: *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 246

⁸⁵ By 1907, the term *Tout Berlin* had permanently established itself in Berlin's public discourse. Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 210

⁸⁶ Namely grand hotels

⁸⁷ *Nikisch and Siegfried Ochs* were venues for popular concerts

⁸⁸ Jazz groups primarily played at the higher end of the dance locales. According to Michael Schmidt; expensive hotels, casinos, theatres, wine bars, dance cafes, dance salons, coffee houses and afternoon teas. *Visual Music: Jazz, Synaesthesia and the History of the Senses in the Weimar Republic*. German History, Vol. 32, No. 2, June 2014. Pg. 204

⁸⁹ Among them the foxtrot, one-step, castlewalk and shimmy (see M.J.Schmidt in *Visual Music: Jazz, Synaesthesia and the History of the Senses in the Weimar Republic*. German History, Vol. 32, No. 2, June 2014. Pg. 204)

⁹⁰ Pola Negri. *Memoirs of a Star*. Doubleday and Company, 1970. Pg. 164

⁹¹ M.J.Schmidt in *Visual Music: Jazz, Synaesthesia and the History of the Senses in the Weimar Republic*. German History, Vol. 32, No. 2, June 2014. Pg. 206



Above:
The entrance to *Frau Tyralla's* west Berlin home
Source: amoplan.com

Below:
Sweet 16:
Margot Tyralla,
Berlin



After being met by her mother at the *Lehrter Bahnhof*, Little Nannö and she rode the *Berliner Stadt-, Ring- und Vorortbahnen*⁹² four stops west to *Savignyplatz* before finally arriving at *Niebuhrstraße 1* (see '3' on the map on pg. 356). A handsome stucco building (shown left) that had been built in 1900, it was decorated similarly to other houses at the time. Situated in the heart of Charlottenburg, it lay just 300m north of the *Ku-damm* (see '5'), the neon-lit heart of the city's leisure and nightlife.⁹³ Its *Dance Palace Columbia*, for instance, was one of the most notable venues among the many cabaret bars and dance palaces.⁹⁴ West Berlin would be Frau Tyralla's home until roughly 1935.⁹⁵

Her returning daughter would soon find that Margot was rapidly growing up!⁹⁶ Recently photographed, the portrait below left makes clear she was preparing to follow in her big sister's footsteps! She too was fond of Berlin. In the twenties the city counted as the most tolerant in Europe with an increasing emergence of visible homosexuality to boot. Between 1900 and 1933, around 30 lesbian clubs existed, which in the Weimar years became more explicit and rather popular venues for all walks of life.⁹⁷ To a young teenager, especially after those trials at her grandparents, I imagine Berlin's libertine mood was paradise. No wonder Margot was nostalgic to return in the mid-1980s. But she would be disappointed, to the extent that she cut short her visit. By that time "Berlin had all changed" her big sister recalled. Indeed, on January 8th, 2014 the BBC ran a feature which captured this sense of loss: "So much of Berlin a century ago has gone, destroyed in the wave of catastrophes that followed that first Great War," its author wrote.⁹⁸

In the 1920s, though, the area around the *Ku-damm* had evolved into the 'New West,' thanks to development that got underway from 1900 and after the opening of the *Theater des Westens*, the *Café des Westens* and the *Kaufhaus des Westens*, followed by further theatres, cinemas, bars and restaurants.⁹⁹ Artists such as *Otto Dix* (who would later tutor Heinz Hinsch), *Bertolt Brecht* and operatta composer and musical director *Friedrich Hollaender* (whose father, *Victor*, wrote *Das muss man sehen*) socialized in the legendary *Romanisches Café* at the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, dubbed by well-known writer and author, *Erich Kästner*, (and recent arrival from Leipzig too, as it happens); "A waiting room of talents."¹⁰⁰

⁹² Berlin cross-city, circular, and suburban railways (from 1930, *S-Bahn*): en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berlin_S-Bahn

⁹³ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurfürstendamm

⁹⁴ *Das Programm. Fremdsprachigerteil.* Sept. 18th, 1927.

⁹⁵ Curiously *Frau Tyralla* is rather listed in the *Berlin Adressbücher* in 1927 and 1928 at another address: *Königen Luise Str. 14* (see '4' on the map on Pg. 356). It was a building that overlooked the river Spree and *Schloss Charlottenburg* and I just wonder, was that Albert's own exclusive apartment in which she came and went as she pleased? Curiously, in 1938 a *Kurt Petzold* lived at *Königen Luise Str. 13*.

⁹⁶ According to Axel Schröder of the *Berlin Landesarchiv* on 24th May, 2013, no residential record was kept by Margot Tyralla in Berlin during the 1920s. Therefore, it is not possible to put a precise date on her arrival.

⁹⁷ Charlotte Luise Fechner. *The Berlin Cabaret & The Neue Frau.* 1918-1933. Pg.13. Online [here](#).

⁹⁸ See: www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-25635311

⁹⁹ See also: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_West

¹⁰⁰ See also: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erich_Kästner

High society lifestyle not only excited Frau Tÿralla. Joseph Roth reflected on it during those years via his numerous newspaper columns: Along the 'damm "a restaurant is a little piece of America," while "In the French café, they sit out on the terrace feeling chilly but ever so Parisien."¹⁰¹ In another from 1921 he talks of "colourful ladies, waiting to be plucked."¹⁰² Berlin's cafes were also "the intellectual and artistic centres of Berlin."¹⁰³ Many featured racks of newspapers, domestic and foreign, that were available at a patron's request. 'Serving' them was the job of a specific "newspaper waiter," wrote Roth in 1923.¹⁰⁴

Consumers too loved the opportunity to rest awhile in cafés and in the roof top gardens of large department stores, the latter growing in popularity during the twenties. "Following successful purchasing, the shopper should feel the need to drink coffee, eat cake and listen to music [while] their eyes take in distant steeples, gas-holders and horizons," Roth reflected in 1929.¹⁰⁵



Im Café by Lesser Ury
Source: kunstkoepie.de

Despite the enduring popularity of Weimar artists such as Dix, Grosz and Moholy Nagy, my period favourite is *Lesser Ury*, an impressionist painter and Jewish emigrant born in Posen (east of Berlin, now Poland). He'd resided in the capital since 1872,¹⁰⁶ and was especially noted for his paintings of nocturnal cafe and rainy street scenes. His painting, *Im Café*, is shown above right.¹⁰⁷ Herr Petzold and Frau Tÿralla could even be those in the foreground on the right!

Musically too the twenties were a golden era, with the number of world-class solo performers living and working in the city almost endless, including *Yehudi Menuhin* and *Albert Einstein*, who when not playing his violin was maintaining Berlin's tradition of scientific and academic research. The capital had also become something of a fashion centre alongside London and Paris early in the second decade of the century, an aspect which was picked up in another *Metropol* revue from 1911 by *Victor Hollaender* entitled *Die Nacht von Berlin*. For certain segments of society, fashion was considered an "entry ticket into bourgeois society."¹⁰⁸ I bet Frau Tÿralla felt right up there with it. I expect Little Nannÿ didn't mind Berlin one bit either!

¹⁰¹ Wrote Joseph Roth in the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* on Sept. 29, 1929. Cited from *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin. 1920-1933*. Pg. 147-8

¹⁰² J.Roth in the *Berliner Börsen-Courier* on May 24, 1921. Cited from *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin. 1920-1933*. Pg. 24

¹⁰³ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 148

¹⁰⁴ Joseph Roth. *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin. 1920-1933*. Pg. 135

¹⁰⁵ Joseph Roth. *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin. 1920-1933*. Pg. 122

¹⁰⁶ See also: www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesser_Ury

¹⁰⁷ See also: www.kunstkoepie.de/a/ury-lesser/naechtliche-berliner-stra.html

¹⁰⁸ Marline Otte, *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 271



You've Got Mail:
 „...Viel Glück in Ihrer Heimat.“
 Onkel Albert , June 14, 1927

Shortly after her arrival, my grandmother received a hearty welcome from *Onkel Albert*. On June 14th, a telegram arrived, which read:

“Meine lieber kleinen Nannypuppe wünscht nach Ihre erfolgreichen vierjährigen amerikanischen Tournee viel Glück in Ihrer Heimat.”

“My dear little Nannÿ Doll, warm wishes and success in your homeland after your four years American tour.”

The address from which it was sent was Berlin 30, corresponding to Albert's *Neue Winterfeldtstrasse* address.



Potsdamer Platz ('B' on map on Pg. 356) described by Joseph Roth as a 'suppurating wound,' despite being graced by the world's first ever traffic light (shown). Cca. 1925

The city's sights and sounds will no doubt have reminded Little Nannÿ of New York, especially the emerging phenomenon of congestion! In another of his commentaries published in *'What I Saw,'* Roth reflected how: "Strips of asphalt run parallel to the streetcar lines and lawns, and down these omnibuses and cars clatter, causing traffic jams. Cars are proliferating and with the tax on them cut, taxi cabs are becoming cheaper. Often they enlist the help of traffic lights, which alternate automatically among red, yellow and green without any visible cause. They are suspended from wires in the air wherever there is a crossroads - eyes that shine but are sightless."¹⁰⁹

Roth continues his lament: Berlin has few trained traffic policeman and in the dark they are hard to make out. Some proper streetlighting would be welcome since "even some populous and quite central parts of Berlin still look like the deepest provinces after nightfall. In a positive note towards public transport however, he recognises; "The subway is Berlin's most important traffic artery."

Besides transport infrastructure, there were other characteristics of the capital Little Nannÿ may have recognized as familiar. "Real and fake cripples sat around on corners and turned their heads to one side when anyone passed by, quivering, quaking, pretending war injuries."¹¹⁰

But much of the trouble and irritation in daily public life was the fault of the public, according to Roth in November 1924: "the undisciplined character of the postwar generation is responsible for the bitterness that erupts out of people... Everyone is fed up on the bus. No one offers his seat to a woman. Everyone is at odds with everyone else. People send one another furious looks. This one is taken for a Jew, that one for a 'Bolshie.' This lady's fur is provocatively expensive. The woman sitting next to her is not only furious - which one could understand - she makes no secret of her fury. If a woman is wearing a hat, they will stare her in the face. If she has a male escort, so much the better! At last a long-desired pretext for a quarrel or a fight."

¹⁰⁹ Joseph Roth. *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin. 1920-1933.* Pg. 101-103

¹¹⁰ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 149

No wonder Roth called Berlin a 'city so heartless in its bustle, so cold in its evident urge to utility and so often teetering on the edge of kitsch!'¹¹¹

With the 'Nitty Sisters' reunited and Little Nannÿ enjoying a break from work, it was soon time for them to visit family in Leipzig. Departing now from Berlin's *Anhalter Bahnhof*, the so-called 'Gateway to the South'¹¹² (about 600 metres southeast of *Potsdamer Platz* and marked as 'C' and 'B' respectively on the map on pg. 356), they rode the few hours' train ride to Leipzig. Little Nannÿ was finally heading 'home.'

I've often wondered what this homecoming was like, now that my grandmother was Leipzig's 'American star.' While reading Pola Negri's autobiography, I came across the following passage, which recalls her own return from the US via Paris to Berlin. Having been born in Poland, Berlin was not her true home. However, the German capital had served as such between 1917 and 1922. I have taken the liberty of substituting Paris for Berlin, and Berlin in turn for Leipzig, in the following extract from her book:

"After Berlin we journeyed to Leipzig. It was like coming home. I had been expecting a warm welcome, but what I got was a staggering, more like a triumphal re-entry. We stepped onto the station platform to be engulfed by thousands of people throwing flowers, with bands playing and the explosions of a myriad of flashbulbs."¹¹³

Well, Little Nannÿ's return was not quite as glamorous as that, and while the sight which greeted her and Margot as they stepped off the platform was perhaps not dissimilar to New York's Grand Central Station (see right), someone special indeed came to welcome the pair: Theo! Now 18, the photo below right suggests he caught up with the pair somewhere along the *Leipzig Ring*, given that the garden fence is typical along the medieval town's greenbelt. The three will have had much to catch up on, including Theo's career change from jockey to baker!



Above right:
"Hey Margot: This looks just like New York's Grand Central!"
Leipzig Bahnhof, late 1920s/early 1930s.
Source: Roman Vishniac Archive

Right:
The 'Nitty Sisters' welcoming party.
Theo 'di Caprio,' almost 19

¹¹¹ Joseph Roth. *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin. 1920-1933.* Pg. 199

¹¹² Rail services from here ran to Dresden, Wien, Basel, Munchen and beyond to Prague, Rome, Naples and Athens according to Pharus-Plan Berlin 1936, and: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berlin_Anhalter_Bahnhof

¹¹³ Pola Negri. *Memoirs of a Star.* Doubleday and Company, 1970. Pg. 253

As the three siblings stepped out into Leipzig's bustle, I wonder whether Theo pointed out some of the city's new landmarks, or whether their babble simply prevented any such discourse. If he had succeeded, he may well have mentioned that the *Altmarkt* now had an underground *Messehalle* that since spring 1925 had enough room to accommodate 200 exhibitors. Over at the zoo work had begun on a *Planetarium* that would double up as a cinema, while the pre-war *Kraftomnibus* was back in service after eleven years absence. *Mockau* airport, north of the city, having already expanded its daytime as well as night-time services to some 42 different destinations (including London, Vienna/Budapest and Warsaw/Riga) relocated to *Schkeuditz* (amid protest) that April,¹¹⁴ and in the meantime a public swimming pool called the *Süd-Ost-Bad* had been opened, part of a great socialization of services.¹¹⁵

Might the Nitty Systems have even noticed the city was hosting the first international book fair, I wonder? Leipzig was of course the undisputed mecca of book production with its 410 publishers, although I doubt they barely registered that fact. But in case Little Nannj fancied updating her literature collection, the fair ran all summer in the town centre, from the beginning of June until the end of Sept.¹¹⁶

Curiosity leads me to wonder where did the sisters stay while in Leipzig? With Theo? At the *Büttners*? Over at *Gertrud Tafel's*? Or with their cousins or even uncle? The only place they could really call home (and I daresay were expected to) was that of their grandparents. Opa Hinsch by now had passed his jubilee year while Marie still had a spring in her step at 68.



Above:
"Classic Holstein calm."
Friedrich and Marie Hinsch with Nanny -
and designer chihuahua!

From Little Nannj's perspective, time will have all but stood still for them. "In general there remained a significant gap between those living in cities and those in rural areas in terms of access to mass culture," writes Micheal Schmidt.¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, I am sure the Hinsch elders won't have failed to notice that change was all around them. And I bet even if in their eyes Little Nannj was now grown up, she was still very much a part of their former world: albeit one in which they were too old to bear much influence, perhaps rather like their aging bourgeois Hanseatic counterparts at the heart of *Thomas Mann's* 1929 Nobel prize winning novel, *Buddenbrooks*. Essential reading for Little Nannj I bet and not only for her cousin, Heinz!

¹¹⁴ See: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flughafen_Leipzig/Halle

¹¹⁵ In addition to the healthier financial climate created by the new currency and adjustments to reparations payments under the Dawes Plan, welfare expenditure by the state increased by 25 percent between 1925 and 1928, real wages went up appreciably, and whole range of new and improved civic and social amenities was established. Peter Stachura in *Germany since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg 237

¹¹⁶ Less obvious will have been the results of the November 14, 1926 city elections which saw the SPD&KPD reclaim the majority from the *völkisch* (nationalist) parties when it took 41 of the 75 seats available, while in a foretaste of things to come, the first National Socialist (Nazi) took his place in the town parliament. Martina Gildenmann. *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert*, 1999. Pg. 30-33, and Michael Schäfer. *Bürgertum in der Krise: städtische Mittelklassen in Edinburgh und Leipzig*. Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht. 2003. Pg. 256. Online [here](#).

¹¹⁷ M.J.Schmidt in *Visual Music: Jazz, Synaesthesia and the History of the Senses in the Weimar Republic*. German History, Vol. 32, No. 2, June 2014. Pg. 207

Clearly the elders relished their granddaughters' visit, as did Little Nannÿ, who will have regaled tales and adventures of seafaring to the US. How fascinating passage to and across America can have sounded to the former *Schneidermeister*, who had once journeyed himself from Holstein up near the coast, albeit with his back to the sea whilst en route to Leipzig!



Still commanding authority, on the back of one photograph he left my grandmother a special message, the words of which are transcribed and translated in the text box on the right. His philosophy resounds a little like the old adage: "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder," albeit the word beauty being substituted for happiness. I've tried looking to see whether those words were written by a particular author, in the hope it might give an insight to Friedrich's preferred writers. I must conclude, however, it was probably his own piece of poetry.

Zufriedenheit macht glücklich und Selig
Zufriedenheit macht arm und macht Reich
Zufriedenheit macht Bettler zum König
Zufriedenheit macht alles gleich

Zum Andenken an deinen Grossvater, F.Hinsch

Happiness can make one content and blessed
Happiness can make one poor and yet rich
Happiness can make a beggar feel like a king
Happiness makes everything right

In memory of your grandfather, F. Hinsch

I've already mentioned Little Nannÿ and Margot's Hinsch cousins, so I wonder whether while in Leipzig they found the opportunity to meet? If so, did the boys venture up to Machern to learn of the girls' adventures in East Prussia or New England? Or had the girls to seek them out themselves? The absence of any photographs suggests they may not have met at all although I find that hard to believe. Even if they didn't, they will have certainly learnt that the eldest among the four boys, Frits Egon, had also been continuously on the move since his departure from Leipzig (see '1' on the map overleaf) in March 1922, when he set off for *Wurzen* (see '2').

Two years later, at the very end of February 1924, he was then to be found some 100 km southeast of Leipzig in *Hainichen* (see '3'), mid-way between *Dresden* and *Chemnitz*. Hainichen was a small town with fewer than 10,000 residents,¹¹⁸ and which at the time was home to a technical school hosting some 400 mechanical or electrical engineering students. But as early as 1859, it had also been referred to as an 'Office and Factory City' because of its wool, cotton and linen mills, plaster goods' factories, and tannery. As a consequence it grew famous in Europe for the quality of its flannel and frieze.

Among the trades we know Frits learned during his 'journeyman' years were *Arbeiter*, *Lohnarbeiter* (wage worker¹¹⁹), *Gärtnerlehr(ing)* (apprentice gardener) and *Markthilfer* (market labourer). I am not sure, however, which of these he'll have practiced most in Hainichen. It's neither clear how long he was away from home, but by *Sylvester* 1925 he briefly passed through Leipzig on his way to *Crottendorf im Erzgebirge*, that is, Czech borderland.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hainichen,_Saxony

¹¹⁹ See: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lohnarbeit and in English: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wage_labour

¹²⁰ From December 30th until January 3rd, 1926. See also: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crottendorf



Saxony -
Districts and
Urban
Boundaries
1900-1932

Source: [wiki.de/
Geschichte_
Sachsens](http://wiki.de/Geschichte_Sachsens)

There were plenty of comings and goings at Frits's mother's that late 1925, and besides cousin Frits, youngest brother Hans, now almost 11 (and the apple in his mother's eye according to Heinz's daughter), received his own travel pass on December 3rd. Elder brother Martin (whose own journeying is described overleaf), too stopped at *Wintergartenstraße* that month more than once. Then in early February the following year, *Walther Martin*, the lads' step-father declared his shoe business bankrupt (later rescinded in December, although according to the address books, from 1927 onwards he was thereafter listed simply a *Kaufmann*).

But back to Frits, following his new year's soiree, his next *Auf der Waltz* spell began in mid-February, 1926, when he arrived at another of Saxony's towns, *Penig* (see '4' on the map above), about 25km west of *Hainichen*.¹²¹ The town was renowned for paper making and iron forgery while another of its important industries was textiles. Frits spent almost a year there before briefly returning to *Wintergartenstraße* in mid-January 1927.

Two weeks later he was off again, this time towards *Dresden* and *Klein Zschachwitz* (see '5')¹²² in the Elbe valley, in the vicinity of the beautiful *Schloss Pillnitz*. It seems most likely that by the time Little Nannj and Margot stepped off the train in Leipzig, he was based in *Cröbern bei Gaschwitz* (see '6').¹²³ Lying just 10km south of Leipzig, nearby to where Frau Tjyralla had lived briefly in *Oetzsch* in 1909 and in close proximity to the nearby lignite mines, distance was clearly no obstacle to his and his cousins' reunion.

The one conclusion Little Nannj and Margot might have drawn from an encounter (or otherwise) with Frits, will have been that he'd spent his 'journeyman' years (bar the visit to Dresden) not just within Saxony but within the district of Leipzig (indicated as the yellow shaded area on the map above). I'm curious therefore as to why he stayed so close to home, especially in comparison with his brother Martin.

¹²¹ See: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penig. Incidentally, it was also the homestead of the writer, Erich Kästner's forefathers

¹²² See: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kleinzschachwitz

¹²³ See: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cröbern

When cousin Nannj left for the US in July 1923, one year younger Martin had already ventured farther from home than Frits when he journeyed to *Siebenlehn*, in the district of Dresden. His next waystation, was the small Baltic town of *Rügenwalde* (now *Darłowo*, Poland) in Eastern Pomerania (*Hinterpommern*)¹²⁴ on the coast.

I suppose his passage there may well have had something to do with the town's best-known product, *Rügenwalder Teewurst*; a sausage made from two parts raw pork (and sometimes beef) and one part bacon. It is special because after being minced, seasoned and packed, it is smoked over beech wood. Production of *Teewurst* likely originated in *Rügenwalde* during the middle of the nineteenth century. The name, which means 'tea sausage,' is said to derive from the habit of serving sandwiches at tea time, according to Wikipedia.¹²⁵ In 1927, the term *Rügenwalder Teewurst* was declared a protected designation of origin, and thanks to *Teewurst*, the sausage industry remained well established there until 1945.

Martin returned to Leipzig for the 1925 New Year celebrations and was at his mother's until mid-April that year. He then set off for Munich, Bavaria. It turns out to have been a short trip, since six weeks later and in early June he was back in Leipzig. Bavaria's pull must have been strong, since he was to return many more times throughout his lifetime, beginning at the end of September when he arrived in *Königsee Oberbayern*, a stunningly beautiful fjord not far from the border with Austria.¹²⁶

That might well have been a late holiday, since he was there all but a week, however, three weeks later he returned for a month. Two weeks after arriving back at home, on December 3rd, 1925, he recorded an unspecified *Fortbildungsschein*, while his residential record reveals he'd trained as a *Kaufmannslehrling*, *Bäcker*, *Kaufmann Angestellter* (salesman), *Vertreter* (representative salesman) as well as *Händler* (tradesman or retailer), and then later *Textilwarenhändler* (textile goods trader). Home for just ten days he then moved 'down the road' no more than a kilometer to *Langestraße 32a*, where he shared a groundfloor flat with a chap named *Grüner*. That was home until early December 1928, suggesting that as a 20 year old he too lived and worked close by his mother's and father's. So neither Martin had an excuse not to *rendezvous* with his Tjyralla cousins, and since in later years he'd recall they worked farther afield, I daresay they found the time to get together.

Third among the cousins was of course, Heinz, who was 17 by the time Little Nannj set foot in Germany once more. He'd now completed seven of his nine years at Leipzig's *Thomasschule Gymnasium* and among the Hinsch boys was the real academic. He was especially beginning to appreciate the writings of *Thomas Mann*; who I've already mentioned was a popular German novelist, short story writer and social critic, not to mention philanthropist.¹²⁷ Mann was also a firm supporter of the Weimar Republic, and an ardent admirer of *Richard Wagner*, whom Heinz also developed a passion for and who like Wagner, was of bourgeois descent and dedicated himself to art too.

¹²⁴ In 1910 it had 5978 residents. See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darlowo

¹²⁵ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rügenwalder_Teewurst

¹²⁶ See: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Königssee

¹²⁷ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Mann



In short then, there was no real barrier to the Nitty Sisters hanging out, however, briefly, with all their cousins. Yet among my grandmother's photo scrapbooks, the one man she carried a photo of remains unidentified. He is shown left. He's not a Hinsch, according to the sons and daughters of Frits, Martin and Heinz. So who was he? It was almost certainly picked up around this time.

Mystery Man: an unidentified Leipziger

Aside from their cousins, what about the boys' father, *Onkel Fritz*, now in his late 40s? Might they have popped in to say 'Hello' to him, and if so, where would they find him and how delighted would he have been to see them?

Lisa Pine in her contribution to *Germany since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* remarks that "Attitudes in Weimar Germany towards women were still, in many cases, conservative and reactionary. Women who aspired to a modern lifestyle were chastised for failing to meet their obligations to their families and to the nation."¹²⁸ Therefore, it wouldn't surprise me in case they did make an appointment, that they'll have approached him with some trepidation! Even if they were far from becoming mothers of their own families, a more traditional attitude like that (which clearly fitted him) could well have helped distanced him from their mother, given her preferred lifestyle.



According to the *Leipzig Adressbücher*, from 1925 Fritz was listed a *Kunst- und Antiquitätenhandler* or art and antiques dealer. That's some change from those days when he was a *Zigarrenhandler*, but he obviously remained in retail trade. Like his sons, Fritz Hinsch was probably on the move himself, especially since he was granted a travel pass in June 1926. Home, however, remained Leipzig's *Musikviertel*.¹²⁹

His musical talents and connections meant he still periodically performed at the city's *Gewandhaus* too. In a bid to make its *Orchestra's* concerts accessible to all, in that same year the ruling socialists introduced special discounted concerts that went on to become popular among the working classes.¹³⁰

Herr Hinsch may not have relished those 'cheap' nights with the proletariat, but his new lady friend, *Anna Martha Rennfranz (nee Hesse)*, surely brightened his day. Approximately two years older and a pretty Leipziger according to granddaughter, *Vera*, she hailed from the tiny village of *Tanna*, some 40 km southwest of Leipzig within the Prussian Province of Saxony.¹³¹ Curiously, their relationship looks to have grown out of the fact that she was his landlady! That is, according to registered mail she collected on his behalf in 1928 (she was otherwise a widow *ohne Beruf*). Son Martin despised her, and from what I learned, had few good things to say of her!

¹²⁸ Lisa Pine in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overly. Pg. 365

¹²⁹ See: www.musikviertel.de/

¹³⁰ Leipzig: *Geschichte der Stadt in Wort und Bild*. VEB, Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, Berlin, 1978. Pg. 73

¹³¹ *Tanna* in the district of *Zeitz* had just 89 residents in 1925: See: www.verwaltungsgeschichte.de/zeit.html. Until 1901 it was part of *Regierungsbezirk Merseburg*, between *Leipzig* and *Querfurt*.

Finally, apart from considering the obvious family members, it's worth sparing a thought for the Tjyrallas' younger brother nestled away somewhere within one of Leipzig's suburbs. *Johannes Nagler* was barely ten months younger than little cousin, Hans, although I guess as far as the girls' mother was concerned, out of sight firmly meant out of mind. Little Nannÿ, Margot and Theo probably never had an inkling then that another 'piece' of their father was probably living so nearby.

I daresay while in Leipzig, Little Nannÿ will have hoped to sip a coffee with fellow rockets', *Gertrud Tafel* (whose home was *Leipzig Lindenau*) and *Melanie Geidel* (of *Volkmarsdorf*). The remainder of the troupe was surely back in their home towns (*Erna Prokop* in *Breslau*, *Miss Lissi Hübner* in *Dresden*). It was during the writing of this chapter, that Elisabeth Hübner's son found me via the book's webpage (www.wandervogel.org), and told me what *Miss Lissi* did next. In short, she settled down with a district shoe sales representative named *Friedrich Marenbach* from *Chemnitz*, wrote Harald in early 2014, before marrying him that year on December 17th, 1927, not far from *Köln* in a place called *Hilgen-Neuenhaus* (from where Friedrich was originally from). Their first daughter, *Ingeborg*, arrived on October 7th, 1928 while *Hilgen-Neuhaus* served as home for the next few years. Time reveals, however, that Elisabeth, who was a headstrong, determined lass and who picked up more than a good command of English while touring the US, maintained a close relationship with *Gertrud Tafel* after the girls had disbanded. That may well have been because *Gertrud* (or *Gerda* as she was also known) was an only child and perhaps also because she lost her mother not many months later in early April, 1928.

There were other rockets though that Little Nannÿ and Margot surely will have met while back in Leipzig: Mr. and Mrs. Arno Büttner (nee *Annedore Frenkel*), of course! I can just imagine then that they and Arno's father, Oswald and his wife, Anna, invited Nannÿ and Margot for a coffee, perhaps even lunch at the shoppers' paradise that was *Kaufhaus Bruhl*. Its newly ehanced cafeteria was one of several features added alongside its first escalator which captured the attention of the media,¹³² while Nannÿ may just have had a vague recollection of her father's workplace within the vicinity.

By the time of their meeting, Oswald had been given green light to inform both girls they were going to be heading to the US to be part of the next incarnation of the Six Rockets. Margot couldn't wait to be off although my grandmother never gave much away right then as to how she felt about returning, so Margot never gave it a second thought, but later on when her big sister grumbled about those many years there, she would quiz her; "Well why did you return?" "Because mother insisted" was my grandmother's reply. Not only did their mother want neither of the children at home, but she conveniently doubled her revenues, which helped cover her rent and haughty lifestyle (lest we fail to notice, while in Leipzig *Frau Tjyralla* and *Herr Petzold* had shared a home, yet while in Berlin they were each ostensibly on their own grounds). Still, even if inadvertently, *Frau Tjyralla* fostered a bond between her up and coming sirens which would not only last a lifetime, but eventually span continents too.

¹³² Martina Güldemann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert in LEIPZIG*. 1999. Pg. 33

It was during the Tÿrallas' meeting with the Büttners that they learned who were the four girls selected alongside themselves as well as where they were from. Like former rocket, Erna Prokop, *Helena Seifert* and *Ilse Wassman* were both from *Breslau* in *Silesia*, while *Margarethe Bathon* was from *Coblense* (the older German spelling of *Koblenz*, which sits on the *Rhein*), with *Rosa Heidrich* being from *Küstrin*¹³³ (east of Berlin along the *Oder* river, which today straddles the border with Poland).¹³⁴

Having completed the rounds, the Tÿrallas bid their farewells to Theo and Leipzig and sped back to the capital, knowing they had to make the most of their free time, eating out, enjoying a movie in the city or dance club perhaps before they got back into training. Arno and Annedore were due back in the US in September and popped in to see them after they collected their visas in Berlin on July 7th, reminding them that they were expected back in Leipzig come the middle of August.¹³⁵

A month later, on August 7th, Little Nannÿ reached another milestone when she celebrated her twentieth birthday. That meant she could now formally be deemed a 'Zwanziger,' which generally only those born around 1900 could claim 'Ja' to, when Berliners during the Golden Twenties greeted one another with: "*Bist Du auch ein Zwanziger?*" I daresay it felt good to be home.



Could be Nannÿ and Margot.
Lesser Ury's
Berlin Street Scene, 1921

Another of Lesser Ury's gorgeous paintings, left, reflects how I imagine the Tÿralla girls might have been seen on a damp summer's day while shopping along East Berlin's major thoroughfare, *Unter den Linden*.

When the weather was better, however, the pair probably took in a few nature trips or lazed on a beach. Southwest of Charlottenburg, beyond the Grunewald forest close to *Potsdam* lay the *Wannsee*, prized by southwestern 'middle-class' Berliners west for its bathing, sandy beaches and recreational opportunities.

¹³³ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Küstrin

¹³⁴ Helena Seifert was 19 and 5'4; Margarethe Bathon was 20 and 5'2, thus one of the shortest in the group next to the two Tÿrallas; Ilse Wassman was the tallest at 5'6 and 18 while Rosa Heidrich was 5'5 and at 21, the eldest.

¹³⁵ A week later, on July 14th, the Büttners were en route to Rochester via Bremerhaven.

In Louise Bergmann's 1932 book; *What Will Become of the Children*, she described the Wannsee through one of the *Deutsch* sibling's eyes, Susi, as a place where "you'll see girls who are sweet, pretty nothings. Their hair looks terrific. Their makeup is perfect. They have long eyelashes. And everything else is just right, too."¹³⁶

It's somewhat amusing who this description is uttered by, since Susi herself tends to remind me of Margot. She is the cute and sassy type, who in turn is depicted by her elder brother (conceivably Theo) as "one of those...people always on the move" who "looks more like some movie star than like a normal person with two legs."¹³⁷

At the other end of Berlin and on its southeast side within the district of *Köpenick*, lay the city's largest lake, the *Müggelsee* with its 'tent city' nestling among the *Brandenburg* woods. Its abundance of greenery, water and fresh air were ideal for a picnic of cake and coffee, and was naturally more popular with Berlin's eastern residents.¹³⁸ Farther afield and if they could afford the time, Little Nanny could always return to *Usedom* and finally take Margot along too!

Oswald Büttner had no time for fun and frolics, however. He was back in Leipzig, readying his next generation of acrobats. Just when would the 60 year old settle down? Certainly not while there was money to be made in America, and much more than at home in Germany! In the May 16th, 1926 issue of *Das Programm*, for instance, its English language editorial advised any acts based in the US who may be thinking of returning that "salaries in America must...be...at least three or four times as high as in Germany," while local "salaries have come down on an average from forty to sixty percent within the last two years."

At the same time the issue illustrates how domestic acts were "virtually confined" to performing in Germany because "of the difference in exchange [and] the inflated currency" in France, Italy, Belgium and Czechoslovakia. England too was out of bounds, because it rarely relied on continental acts, while to make matters worse, local acts "bear the brunt of the full competition of foreign acts, especially from British, French and Belgian performers who are trying to get away from bad vaudeville conditions in their own countries and glad to earn the standard stable mark of Germany." The paper's editor goes on to observe that "German managers prefer the 'new and novel' foreign acts to the German acts known so well to them. "New faces is their cry."

Clearly those conditions alone will have had Büttner beating a hasty retreat back to the US, but as if that outlook wasn't pessimistic enough, according to an article which appeared in *Variety* magazine on April 21st, 1926, there were just nine first class houses left in Germany that offered vaudeville shows - occasionally!

¹³⁶ Claire Bergmann: *What Will Become of the Children? A Novel of a German Family* (1932). Camden House, 2010. Pg. 44

¹³⁷ Amusingly enough she also happened to be tended to by small firm owner, "Uncle Otto" (as opposed to Albert)!

¹³⁸ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s*. 1972. Pg. 279

Ahead of the new season's opening, *Das Programm's* August 1st, 1926 issue tells us just who they were. "In Hamburg, the *Hansa* will stick to its old policy of decades" where "foreigners have a good chance..."

In Leipzig, however, the *Krystall Palast* is lost to Vaudeville where expensive foreign acts "hardly have any chance...even if vaudeville is played. The fate of its *Drei Linden*, which is bankrupt and in the hands of a receiver, is more than problematical [while] the *Battenberg*, an old fashioned priced house in Leipzig which has tried the cinema policy lately, will return to Vaudeville [such that] a few imported acts might from time to time find work here at reasonable salaries."

Moving on to Breslau's *Liebich Theatre*, *Das Programm* reports that it will stick to variety, but that the bill will be changed every fortnight, instead of every month, thus cutting engagements in half. *Düsseldorf*, *Nurnburg* and *Berlin* offer the other notable destinations, although the latter with only limited opportunity for foreign acts, bar the *Scala*.

In the towns of *Hannover*, *Bremen*, *Magdeburg*, *Halle*, *Essen*, *Elberfeld* and *Stettin*, "Cabarets or 'cinema varieties' are all that's left of the old glory," wrote *Max Berol Konorah*, leading the paper's editor to conclude "Prospects are anything but bright for vaudeville performers here and it is with pessimism, if not despair that most of them look into the future." Konorah goes on to attribute vaudeville's decline to the ascendancy of cinema, the spread of broadcasting¹³⁹...the vogue of revue, the jazz and dancing craze, as well as the excessive amusement tax.

While it would appear there was little to tempt home-grown domestic acts back to vaudevilling in Germany, Oswald Büttner remained resolute in having the rockets pick up some experience and references on home ground (even if it was no more than a rehearsal for the troupe's new personnel ahead of their American shows).¹⁴⁰

I'd have thought then that in Leipzig at least, a fanfare of sorts would be made over the rockets' 'triumphant' return from the US, much as Frank Cullen, manager of the American Museum of Vaudeville had earlier foreseen. After all, the act, which was no longer just a 'Belgian' or even 'European' act but an all girl act 'renowned the world over,' was still local. It surprises me though that not more positive press was generated – I guess the Büttners focused their energies simply on securing the troupe some dates, rather than glowing press, regardless of how useful that may have been.

¹³⁹ According to Michael J. Schmidt, however, "In the mid-1920s, [radio] ownership was quite limited...[Even] by 1930, there were still only 3,509,509 receivers, which for a total population of 65.1 million, could only offer a minority of Germans access to the ariwaves, even taking into account collective listening by households and workers' groups such as the *Arbeiter-Radio-Bund*. For most, a set [at a cost of 300 RM, a month's salary for a skilled worker or white-collar clerk] was financially out of reach." Throughout the 1920s then, radio listenership remained an almost entirely urban phenomenon. Source: *Visual Music: Jazz, Synaesthesia and the History of the Senses in the Weimar Republic*. German History, Vol. 31, No. 2, June 2014. Pg. 207

¹⁴⁰ I bet he will have ruled out a trip to East Prussia, since "No artist liked to sign a contract in these regions because he feared to remain without subsequent employment in addition to the high travelling expenses," noted *Das Programm* on June 22nd, 1930. Pg 28

Das Programm already makes it clear, however, that great things should not have been expected in Leipzig. The only real vaudeville house, the *Krystall Palast* variete, received a bad rap in the September 25th, 1927 issue for falling into arrears during late spring and not paying salaries (although by August 12th and once under new management, improvements – timed to coincide with Leipzig's autumn fair – were to be noted, even if the institution was still operating from a shoestring budget). The *Drei Linden* too, despite bankruptcy in 1925, was on the road to recovery with modest bills featuring native acts. *The Battenberg* though contented itself with playing cheap vaudeville and had not been a real money earner for years.

In addition, there was a certain ambivalence among Germans towards America and its culture during the days of the Weimar Republic.¹⁴¹ As they understood, it represented "advanced technology and unprecedented economic prosperity...high wages and [a] brisk work pace ...dizzying consumption patterns and emergent mass culture ...new women and disturbing family life." German circuses were quick to demonstrate this 'xenophobia,' denouncing American dishonesty and false advertising once the ambitions of American circuses extended towards the European continent.¹⁴²



Girl
Power:
The Six
Rockets'
reborn.
August,
1927

As requested, however, the *Nitty Sisters* returned to Leipzig towards the end of summer and after making acquaintances with their new bandmates, got to grips with their routines, moments that were also captured by Little Nannÿ's well-travelled box brownie! Being back in Leipzig also meant the girls could celebrate Theo's nineteenth birthday on September, 12th and bid farewell to Arno and Annedore who sailed on September 14th.

The 1927-28 entertainment season got underway a few days later and not surprisingly, the theatres the troupe went on to perform at were in those 'stronghold' cities listed above: Leipzig, Hamburg and Breslau. The rockets' first stop could well have been the '*Das Internationale Varieté*' expo in Leipzig's *Haus Battenberg*, however, which ran from October 8th. Especially since according to the October 2nd issue of *Das Programm*, it was a great opportunity to present photos of budding acts *gratis*!

¹⁴¹ Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 72

¹⁴² Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 73

Curiously, that same October date, *Das Programm* carried an announcement regarding the silver wedding anniversary of a *Bertha Büttner* and *Gerard Blumenfeld*, where the latter is referred to as the son of the deceased Circus Director, *Leopold Blumenfeld*.¹⁴³ Was Bertha related to Oswald and was Gerard therefore the missing link to Herman, that Blumenfeld who had played such an instrumental role in their US success? And if so, were Oswald and the rockets part of the celebrations then too?



Das Programm. November 13th, 1927



Krystall Palast program from 16 November. *Leipziger Neuste Nachrichten*. November 16th, 1927



Leipziger Stadtrundfahrt pulls up at the *Krystall Palast's* main entrance
Source: leipziginfo.

Herr Büttner had been expected to spend just two months in Germany according to the press release that ran in *Das Programm* that June, which means his departure for the US should have occurred around mid-August. We already know, however, that he sent his son in his place, so that he could stay in Germany to supervise the rockets, who were due on stage at the *Krystall Palast* from mid-November!

Ads ran in the *Leipziger Neuste Nachrichten* that week (on both November 16th and 19th) as well as in the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* (on November 19th) besides the November 13th issue of *Das Programm*. The bill reveals the rockets performed alongside six other acts; *Miss Hartley*, *Mia and Gerti*, the *Carré Sisters*, *Mary Evelyn* besides the *Franklin Truppe* and *Teatro dei Piccoli*. Their performances were characterized by the usual two shows a day, a matinee at 4PM and an evening show at 8PM, with the show repeated twice on Sunday too.

With all the Hinsch family and perhaps even Frau Tÿralla in town, surely they went along to see her daughters perform, especially considering *Tante Hedwig* and her youngest, Hans, lived just across the road! I wonder too whether for Margot's sixteenth birthday (November 24th), they celebrated the occasion with an arrival in style: the palace was a popular stop for the *Leipziger Stadtrundfahrt* (see left). Perhaps they even splashed out and took her to its restaurant too!

¹⁴³ There is no mention in Marline Otte's book (*Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*) of a Gerard nor Leopold Blumenfeld. However, according to: www.magdeburg.de/media/custom/698_6210_1.PDF, Leopold was the husband of Caroline Hirsch, and a half brother of Louis Blumenfeld (son of Emanuel Blumenfeld, born 1811, died 1885, himself the third son of Moritz Blumenfeld, who inherited the family's famous circus in 1834, according to Otte, Pg. 48). That source also reveals that Leopold and Caroline led a popular circus between 1885-1920. They had eight children including Lisetta, the youngest, born 1 June 1871 in *Lüchow*, besides Willy and Gerhard. Circus was Lisetta's life, after which the family enterprise was taken over by Willy and Gerhard, the latter having likely been the one and the same chap who married Bertha Büttner in October 1902.

It's already been noted about how the industry was trimming engagements to a fortnight rather than a month (although they could still average as long as a month in the big houses) and in the cinemas from three days to a week.¹⁴⁴ Nevertheless, at the *Krystall Palast*, the same ad shown previously, reappeared on November 27th in the *Leipziger Neuste Nachrichten*, while on that date *Das Programm* reported the repertoire also included 'Fely Poly' and 'Dorian & Paquitta.' That sounds like a month's engagement to me.

It's worth reflecting, however, on the significance of cinema to variety acts. We've already seen in *Chapter X* how vaudeville acts increasingly preceded the screening of several movie features in the US and according to the January 30th, 1927 issue of *Das Programm*, the 'kine-variety' was "one branch of the business which is...not only prospering but growing and spreading."

At least 160-170 movie houses were licensed for vaudeville in Greater Berlin at that time (with as many as 8-10 licenses being granted per month by May 1927). Some, it reported, have even given up altogether what they call the "stage show."¹⁴⁵ Generally though that means they play vaudeville, for instance, two or three acts, or short one-act dramatic productions alongside a film, with variety artists' usually being engaged for four days; Friday to Monday, or three days; Tuesday to Thursday. With the change of the film, the stage show also changes while routines included two shows a day, or three on Sundays (with an additional 50 percent of salary paid for the second and third show). A 'split-week' routine then that was all too familiar to the rockets and Herr Büttner.

Kine-varieties were increasingly common in *Königsberg*, *Magdeburg* and *Kiel*, but nowhere near to the same extent as in Berlin. Leipzig's licensing authorities on the other hand obstructed or retarded the movement by sticking to either variety theatres or picture houses (thereby shirking the cost of the additional programme feature and stoking competition).¹⁴⁶

Having launched the German leg of the rockets tour in the Nitty Systers' home town, it was on to Hamburg next. An uncanny choice since *Das Programm* happened to remark: "Suppose you are to open at Leipzig on December 1st and at Hamburg on January 1st."¹⁴⁷ Was it coincidence that the troupe's route virtually paralleled that itinerary and those dates?

Upon the troupe's arrival in Hamburg, they will have met up once more with some familiar faces, when Arno and Annedore Büttner disembarked from the New York sailing around November 30th.¹⁴⁸ I suspect the couple returned to Leipzig and to his mother's home (Annedore's next of kin being her uncle in Gohlis). Whilst there I suspect Arno got to grips with screening applicants responding to their US representatives call via *Das Programm's* June 19th, 1927 issue "to take on another troupe of women or a family act under ...Herr Oswald Büttner."

¹⁴⁴ *Das Programm*. Fremdsprachiger Teil. July 18th, 1926.

¹⁴⁵ *Das Programm*. Fremdsprachiger Teil. Jan. 30th, 1927. Issue #1290. Pg. 10-11

¹⁴⁶ On Sept. 25th, 1927 *Das Programm* cited Hamburg, Munich, Dresden and Hannover as towns without *kine-varieties*.

¹⁴⁷ *Das Programm*. Fremdsprachiger Teil. December 12th, 1926.

¹⁴⁸ *Variety* magazine, November 30th, 1927. NB: In some respects it's almost comical that a US industry magazine rather than the port of New York can tell us that Arno and Annedore Büttner departed the US on November 24th.



Above:
Das Programm, December 11th, 1927
 while from January 22nd – February 26th,
 the rockets' address became
 'Std.Adr: *Das Programm*'

Below:
 The Flora Theatre in Altona
 Source: *stadtteilgeschichten.net*

Bottom:
 Venus in Furs:
 Nanny Tijralla, Hamburg, 1928



"Next to Berlin, Hamburg is the most important city in Germany and with its big shipping and tourist's interests it is also one of the best show towns," wrote *Das Programm* editor, Max Berol Konorah barely two months earlier in the September 25th, 1927 issue. "Along the *Reeperbahn* there is nothing but places of amusement and entertainment, including the *Eden Theatre*, a variety theatre with 'very fair bills,' while two miles from the *Reeperbahn* lies the *Hansa* variety hall.

Not surprisingly, the ad above left, which was posted in *Das Programm* on December 11th, reveals the rockets' holding address lay in a street which ran parallel to that infamous drag, while the January 8th, 1928 issue bears witness to the fact they played the *Flora Variete* theatre, alongside a dozen other acts. The *Flora* was situated in *Altona* on the right bank of the river *Elbe*, Hamburg's sister city, also known as the 'Prussian part of Hamburg' (it remained independent until 1937). It is a mystery though why they didn't play, for instance, *The Alcazar*, which received special attention in *Das Programm*'s issues of September 25th and December 25th, 1927, given its penchant for vaudeville acts, acrobats, risley acts and dancing troupes. Perhaps they did or perhaps they skipped it because it was considered one of the new breed of variety theatres (its dance floors stayed open until 3 or 4AM) while its "success seems to lie in the fact that a large majority of the public does not merely wish to be amused passively, but also wants to amuse itself actively." Perhaps they were booked instead to perform at the *Hansa* or Hamburg's *Eden Theatre*.¹⁴⁹

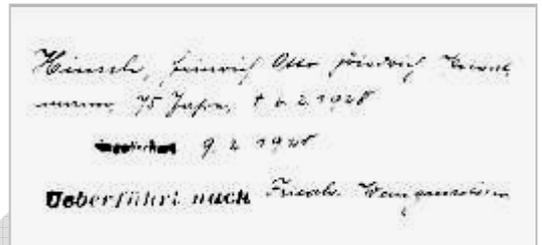
From Hamburg the rockets transited Berlin once more and via the *Schlesischer Bahnhof*, headed east on to *Breslau* in Silesia; Týralla 'homeland' no less. I can just imagine the troupe hauling along its equipment, with Joseph Roth reminding us in '*What I saw*' that "Passengers with heavy loads take their place in the very last cars of our endless trains, alongside 'Passengers with Dogs' and 'War Invalids.' The last car is the one that rattles around the most; its doors close badly, and its windows are not sealed, and are sometimes broken and stuffed with brown paper."¹⁵⁰ A far cry from trains in the US no doubt although I wonder if Little Nannÿ was already dreading returning?

¹⁴⁹ Dec. and Jan. 1928 issues of Hamburg and Altona's local newspapers may reveal further programme schedules.

¹⁵⁰ Joseph Roth. *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin. 1920-1933*. Pg. 93

No sooner had they arrived, however, and I suspect the girls were called back to Leipzig, when on February 6th Opa Hinsch passed away at the villa in *Wenigmachern*. His funeral and cremation three days later in Leipzig on Thursday 9th surely reunited the majority of the Hinsch family. But for his funeral music I bet Mozart's 'Masonic Funeral Music K.477,' wasn't played (despite its beauty) since it was notably used for socialist President Ebert's funeral in March, 1925!

Grandfather Hinsch's ashes were transferred to *Wenigmachern's* 'cemetery.' Mysteriously, however, research revealed no such graveyard ever existed, while a rumour long since shared via his Hinsch grandchildren was that his (and later his wife's) urns were placed side by side to the left side of their villa's gate.



Thanks to *Professor Dr. Heinz Mielke*, the rumour was confirmed. On May 21st, 2014 he confirmed all the details (thanks to *Manfred Richter*, a resident of *Wenigmachern* since his birth in 1937). He related that the urns of both Friedrich and Marie were placed in the garden in front of the Hinsch villa, within a small stone grave. However, the permit for this 'private' grave site was overturned in 1952, when the villa changed owners, which explains why it can't be found today. They were subsequently brought to a new resting place, the location of which is now trying to be determined.

Once back in Breslau, the rockets performed at the *Liebich Theater* in *Gartenstraße 53/55*. Curiously, the ad right, published in *Das Programm* on February 12th, reveals they were billed as 'Amerikanische Jugend beim Sport-Training,' that is, sport-performing American youths, which suggests the American 'label' carried greater value. The popularity of Breslau on the touring circuit may also explain why both Helena Seifert and Ilse Wassman became part of the rockets, not to mention Erna Prokop before them. Perhaps they'd all 'grown up' in its theatre?



Das Programm. February 12th, 1928

The *Liebich* was described in October 1927 by *Das Programm* as one of the oldest theatres in central Europe that was still "holding its own, though the house and stage are badly in need of being modernized."¹⁵¹ Given half a chance, might the Nitty Sisters have nipped the 150 km or so over to *Radstein* to meet (for the first and probably last time) their Týralla grandmother, *Marianna Hupka*, now 86? Or did they make do with a coffee or perhaps supper with Erna Prokop alone? Knowing they enjoyed at least a two week stint there too, time surely permitted them to squeeze in both.

¹⁵¹ *Das Programm*. Fremdsprachiger Teil. October 9, 1927. Issue #1331. Pg. 11

The *Liebich's* advertisement reveals the rockets left Germany at the end of February to continue their engagements overseas in the UK. Given the absence of any references to shows in Berlin during their short 1927-8 German tour, I can only conclude that if they spent any time in the capital they made do with a handful of *kine-varieties* performances perhaps sometime during September and October, obviously without major billing. According to the March 20th, 1927 issue of *Das Programm*,¹⁵² for instance, there were “many foreign acts playing cinema houses in Berlin,” while UFA (*Universum Film Aktien Gesellschaft*) offered from 14-28 days work across its many houses and affiliations.¹⁵³

On the other hand, there had been variety opportunities in Berlin. The *Scala* and *Wintergarten* for instance played straight variety, while there were houses of lesser importance too; the *Triumph Palast* and the *Dönhoff Brettl*.¹⁵⁴ However, each tended to book independently while most of the independent halls were in the hands of about five to six agents.¹⁵⁵ One would've thought that with Büttner's connections to the *International Artists Loge*, something would have been possible. However, as in the US, it all rather depended on having the right agent. The fact that the rockets shows were not advertised in the same way as they were in Leipzig, Breslau and Hamburg suggests Berlin was not after all key to their German 'tour.'

Before leaving Leipzig in February, I imagine the troupe said their farewells to Oma Hinsch, Theo and their cousins, while I suspect Arno took over the reins from Oswald. Before the Tjyrallas left Berlin, they surely returned to Charlottenburg long enough to say farewell to their mother and Onkel Albert. So with the Nitty Systems departing Germany, we'll leave them now and continue their vaudeville experiences once again in *Chapter XII*.

Let's meanwhile return to the lives of those more immediately affected by the passing away of grandfather Hinsch, and simply just add that the world the girls' left behind in late winter 1928 would never look the same again by the time they eventually returned to continental Europe.

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Had *Opa Hinsch* lived almost another year, he and Marie would have had cause to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. But instead, besides that legacy, *Oma Hinsch* inherited all he left behind in accordance with his *Testament*, which was prepared long before on February 1st, 1912.¹⁵⁶ Three weeks after his death, however, she renounced it all in a handwritten letter to *Amtsgericht Wurzen*. Of course she didn't give it all away: she handed it over to her children as legal heirs.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵² *Das Programm. Fremdsprachiger Teil*. February 20, 1927. Issue #1302. Pg. 10-11.

¹⁵³ UFA was Germany's leading film production company. Its connections with MGM and Paramount meant it also distributed their films in Germany too, according to a *Michael Hoffman* footnote in Joseph Roth's *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin. 1920-1933*. Pg. 167

¹⁵⁴ *Das Programm. Fremdsprachiger Teil*. Sept. 18, 1927. Issue #1290

¹⁵⁵ *Das Programm. Fremdsprachiger Teil*. Feb. 20, 1927. Issue #1302. Pg. 10-11.

¹⁵⁶ Around about the time the Hinschs returned to *Salzgäufchen* from *Wenigmachern* after their first spell there.

¹⁵⁷ In line with www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_bgb/englisch_bgb.html#p6588 (in English [here](#))

Both Fritz and his sister formally accepted but in their replies went on to declare it worthless – presumably to deter the taxman! In fact Fritz writes that his mother's finances were in arrears by as much as 1000 RM! Both siblings requested their own children be deemed heirs too, although strictly speaking only Frits qualified, since he'd turned 21 the previous October. In a slightly amusing twist, Frau Tÿralla, when asked by *Amtsgericht Wurzen* for the particulars of her own children (i.e. names, dates of births, careers, addresses, etc.) she complained in her response over the cost (“*Das kostet doch alles unnützes Geld*”) and owing to the fact that her children were travelling abroad at the time and could not be reached because of address changes every 3-4 days (strictly speaking the same could not be said of Theo).¹⁵⁸

Poor Theo meanwhile was not enjoying much of his own fortune in his bid to become a baker, after he lost his latest apprenticeship at master Riedel's. The reason being, he hit a fellow *Lehrling*, a journeyman, with a broom. As a result he found himself grandmother-bound once more. That no doubt suited her since his war orphan's benefit (normally concluded once turning 18, but extended until the end of 1928 upon exception) was transferred directly to her for his 'keep,' (although Theo would later claim he saw little of it).

The date of Opa Hinsch's passing was also the date that cousin Frits officially returned to Leipzig from *Cröbern bei Gaschwitz*. According to his residential record he returned to his mother and step-father¹⁵⁹ in *Wintergartenstraße* although the correspondence between *Amtsgericht Wurzen* and his father shows he initially lived with him in *Beethovenstrasse*. Fortunately that lends us an insight into his professional status at that time, since his father refers to him as a *Gartner* (although in later exchanges he proclaimed himself a *Markthilfer*). His grounds for returning to Leipzig could well have been a young *Fraulein* who had probably been part of his life since around about the time of Little Nannÿ's own return to Leipzig, if perhaps not even sooner.

Veronika Krause was a pretty 20 year old from Halle, some 30km northeast of Leipzig.¹⁶⁰ Her father, *Johann*, was a boiler or kiln loader (*Kesselheizer*, shown in the postage stamp, right). For all intents and purposes that meant he was a 'blue collar' worker. It was hardly a relationship to excite Frits's father, knowing how Leipzig's *Mittelstand* stood politically opposed to the workers. Not surprisingly then, family lore recalls *Herr Hinsch* looked down on Veronika for being a 'poor' woman while I suspect her Prussian heritage won't even have counted for much since she was a Roman Catholic (and we know what that meant for the Tÿralla siblings' father when he married into the Hinsch family). I daresay those factors therefore had something to do with Frits's relocation to his mother's from his father's that spring of 1928. That rift between them unfortunately only grew.



Veronika Krause:
Frits Hinsch one
true love

¹⁵⁸ Mailed from her home in *Niebuhrstraße*

¹⁵⁹ From 1928-1932, *Herr Martin's* business premises according to the *Adressbücher* was *Wurzner Strasse 11, (Reudnitz)*.

¹⁶⁰ Born 4th July, 1907

Fraulein Krause appears to have been by herself in Leipzig,¹⁶¹ although she was in all likelihood accompanied by a son, *Konrad Franz*, born almost a year earlier in May 1927, shortly before she'd turned 20.¹⁶² We know the lad was not Frits's, which I daresay further distanced them from his father's generation for whom 'modernisation' tended to mean "sexual promiscuity, rising divorce and abortion rates, falling birth rates, and higher numbers of illegitimate children."¹⁶³

The results of the federal elections on May 20th, 1928, won't have allayed their parents' generation's fears for social decline after the SPD won 153 of the 491 seats which again left it the largest party in the *Reichstag*. Another coalition government followed, which under the leadership of *Hermann Müller* encompassed members of the SPD, the German Democratic Party (DDP), the Centre (*Zentrum*) Party and the German People's Party (DVP) in a 'Grand Coalition.'¹⁶⁴

Frits was nevertheless enchanted by Veronika and once it became obvious she was expectant again, in early August¹⁶⁵ they moved together to *Reitzenhainer Str.33 I* in *Leipzig Reudnitz*.¹⁶⁶ A month later the couple was married in Leipzig on September 8th (shortly after Veronika turned 21).¹⁶⁷

I imagine Theo was probably in attendance while his sisters will have eventually gotten wind of their cousin's surprise wedding too (their mother feigned illness that autumn so I suspect she probably excused herself). Frits's marriage to Veronika won't have been the only news they received, however. Days after the occasion, on September 13th, 1928, Frits was sent into a panic when his newly wed wife attempted suicide. As a result it was his blood that was transfused to save her and their child, with the result being that *Vera Eugenie Karola* was safely delivered one month early. Yet despite his gallant gesture, Vera's mother remained troubled, she told me in May 2011, while his father practically disowned him.

In mid-October, the young family moved to new accommodation in *Seitenstr.9 II* in southeast Leipzig, after which Veronika fell pregnant again. Somewhat surprising, since average child numbers in 'proletarian' families typically declined during the Weimar Republic, while according to Benninghaus, Haupt and Requate only 35 percent of marriages formed between 1922 and 1925 resulted in three or more children.¹⁶⁸ Lest we forget, however, the 1920s, saw crude birth rates decline faster than at any other time in Germany history,¹⁶⁹ a fact which was largely attributable to the country's 'modernisation.'

¹⁶¹ Neither her father, *Johann Franz Theodor* nor her mother, *Anna Blacha*, are listed in the 1927-1930 Leipzig address books, despite the appearance of many Annas, Franz's and Johann's. Neither are their residential records available in the city's archives.

¹⁶² Born 3rd May, 1927. NB: His birth certificate has never been requested although it would confirm his place of birth and Veronika's home mid-1927.

¹⁶³ Lisa Pine. *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 365

¹⁶⁴ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_federal_election,_1928

¹⁶⁵ From August 4th, 1928

¹⁶⁶ His landlord was *Max Weber*, a *Ratsarbeiter* or city hall employee according to the 1930 addressbook. Coincidentally this was the same street (but not same house) where Margot spent summer 1919. Furthermore, her host back then, Richard Krause (no apparent relative of Veronika Krause) still lived at *Reitzenhainer str.87 IV* as confirmed by the 1930 *Leipzig Adressbuch*.

¹⁶⁷ NB: Their marriage certificate has never been requested.

¹⁶⁸ Benninghaus et al. *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* ed. by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 294, 310

¹⁶⁹ Lisa Pine in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 365

In many ways, however, the mid-1920s were years of comparative stability for mothers, fathers, sons and daughters. After a troublesome decade, most sought an ordered home and a sense of peace and security where the family was a place of refuge. Furthermore, the Weimar era supported families through housing (both by rent subsidies and through the construction of low-income housing) as well as improved health services.

Household appliances, such as vacuum cleaners, electric irons and washing machines were new additions in middle-class homes that heralded new norms of greater efficiency and organisation of the household with more exacting standards of hygiene and comfort. Women's time and effort on basic chores was saved by their introduction, although in reality they did not lessen the burdens for housewives and mothers, according to Lisa Pine.¹⁷⁰ Indeed, as if to reflect this, Vera told me it was her father who occupied himself more with the family than her mother, she said, recalling fond memories of him.

The year, 1928, proved to be a busy one for the Hinsch's. Two months after Frits married, his father wed Martha on November 19th.¹⁷¹ His second eldest, Martin, then returned to his mother's home on December 1st, in a sense 'replacing' Frits at home I suppose, after which *Wintergarten Str. 4 III* remained his and his younger brothers' abode for the next nine months.¹⁷²

While all about Theo moved forward, he could well have been forgiven for starting to feel abandoned with his sisters away and his mother for all intents and purposes 'living it up' in West Berlin. Increasingly stigmatized by his now confirmed epilepsy,¹⁷³ he was also under doctor's orders to avoid dance bars (which enabled him to socialise). To make matters worse, Frau Týralla began voicing concerns early the following year over his gambling the little money he had on horse racing. In truth, however, she appears to have done little to care for him herself, even preventing him from returning under her wing "to Berlin and amuse himself," she wrote in a statement dated January 18th, 1929 that was retrieved from Theo's father's *Nachlassakte*. Clearly cognizant he was not well, all Theo really wanted was someone to care for him. And so he turned to Leipzig's *Amtsgericht* (welfare court) and requested the appointment of a carer.

What County Harry Kessler described in his diary as an '*Année terrible*' for the country,¹⁷⁴ so 1929 could have been similarly described for the Týrallas. Although "In Berlin, as in most of the Western world, 1929 was the year of euphoric prosperity," wrote Otto Friedrich in *Before the Deluge*,¹⁷⁵ there had also been signs of trouble from the very start of the year. A new inflation was threatening, and in a fierce dispute over wages within the iron industry, the manufacturers abruptly

¹⁷⁰ Lisa Pine in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 366

¹⁷¹ NB: *Their marriage certificate has never been requested.*

¹⁷² He also received a travel pass on 22.12.1928, which suggests he may well have taken off for Christmas.

¹⁷³ According to a study expected to be financed towards the end of 2014 to the tune of almost 2m by the European Commission's DG SANCO (Directorate General for Health and Consumers) on the burden and care of epilepsy, even in 2014 the need for better care across Europe has been recognized. Its recommendations are expected to "close the treatment gap, prevent its devastating consequences, reduce unemployment, stigma, and isolation, and secure improved quality of life," in line with the the European Parliament's *Written Declaration on Epilepsy*.

¹⁷⁴ *Berlin in Lights. The Diaries of Count Harry Kessler (1918-1937)*. Transl. by C. Kessler. Grove Press. 1999. Pg. 368

¹⁷⁵ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 278

closed their factories, locking out some 200,000 workers. Among the peasants (who had never benefited very much from the period of foreign loans), there was an increasing amount of poverty and unemployment. Indeed, unemployment throughout the country rose dangerously during the early spring of 1929.¹⁷⁶

Leipzig was no exception. While unemployment had stood at 60,471 at the end of 1926, after falling in 1928 to a low of 53,591, by the end of 1929 it literally soared to 82,295 (even during the worst periods of civil unrest following the war, the unemployment rate had been no higher than 51,700 at the end of 1919).¹⁷⁷ Unemployment in the *Kaiserreich* had typically been less than 3 per cent, but in the 1920s and 1930s it became a mass experience,¹⁷⁸ in no small part thanks to population growth, the process of rationalisation within industry and the expansion of cheap female labour.¹⁷⁹

Any young man with work could therefore be thankful, and it was Theo's grandmother who had him apprenticing again when in the beginning of October 1928 he was assigned to master baker *Hartisch* in the small village of *Lützschena*, some 25km from *Machern* in northwest Leipzig (close to the airport at *Schkeuditz*).¹⁸⁰ However, the fact that his employment contract had not been signed by his mother also seems to have been high among his (and probably his master's) concerns come early 1929, when on January 3rd (and under oath) he informed the welfare court:

"I don't yet receive a salary because I receive a war orphan's benefit. However it is my mother residing in Berlin W. Niebuhr Str.1 who receives it. I was told to claim accident benefit. My mother has not paid any attention to this possibility. She does not take care of me at all."

Not surprisingly, as a result of Theo's complaint, Frau Tÿralla appeared in Leipzig's court on January 18th. What follows is her slightly abridged statement:

"My son Theodor is a very hot-tempered...and violent...man. He does not like to work¹⁸¹...How long he will stay there [at master baker Hartisch's] I can not imagine...My mother cares for his needs – laundry and clothing – since I can not do it from here. [Therefore] his orphan's benefit is sent by me to that address and is still being sent there at present.¹⁸² I have explored the possibility of claiming accident benefit in his name. However, there were no witnesses when he fell from the horse, his trainer is unreachable,¹⁸³ while the doctor would not acknowledge that his suffering is a result of his fall. My son wants to get the money in his own pocket so he can squander it. But as my mother puts it, the money is spent for his interests."

¹⁷⁶ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 298

¹⁷⁷ Leipzig: *Geschichte der Stadt in Wort und Bild*. VEB, Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, Berlin, 1978. Pg. 71, 76. NB: Three years later and by April 1st, 1932 it had risen to 185,392

¹⁷⁸ Benninghaus, Haupt and Requate. *Germany since 1800: A New Social and Economic History*. Ogilvie and Overy, Eds. Pg. 308

¹⁷⁹ Peter Stachura in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 237

¹⁸⁰ See: hov.isgv.de/Lützschena

¹⁸¹ Consider Theo had been forced into a profession he had not originally desired (he had wanted to be a *Kaufmann*).

¹⁸² Although strictly speaking it had already expired at the end of 1928.

¹⁸³ Anton Winkler resigned in 1926, according to Kai Hildebrandt, and afterwards left for Bremen. However, he adds, it is a nonsense that he could not be found. The governing body and address books would have ensured his location could be identified, besides the various trainers knew where each other worked.

Theo's concerns not only appear to stem from his desire for proper care and for a standard employment contract, but was also pre-emptive towards his mother's bid for any further extension of his war orphan's benefit, the success of which would effectively maintain the status quo.¹⁸⁴

In short his aim appears then to have been full control over his finances (i.e. salary), a bid which may even have been encouraged by his master. Theo, rather like Little Nannö I suspect, had had enough of *Mama* helping herself to their money. He, however, was going to do something about it and therefore returned to court on January 30th and testified:

"My mother's information is not entirely correct...Whether my mother has sought accident benefit, I do not know, however she once mentioned it. If my grandmother truly got the war orphan's benefit, as stated by her, I can only say that what she received was very little. I have a few old shirts from my grandfather. The shoes I resoled myself. No one does my washing or laundry. She ought to have taken better care of me. From my current masters I receive a weekly wage of 1.80 RM, from which I must manage my expenses. My grandmother was ready to sign my employment contract.¹⁸⁵ I would like a nurse to be appointed to take care of me."

Frau Töralla's written reply only sought to exonerate her of any wrongdoing while again pointing the finger at her son. Besides being unwell, she claimed not to have signed his working contract because he was offered a temporary apprenticeship, an appointment she then claims to have been terminated because Theo "misbehaved himself again." The outcome of Theo's move for financial independence is not well documented within his father's *Nachlassakte*, although we know that within the month he had informed the *Amtsgericht* the following:

"My current teacher has given me a certificate regarding my service in his apprenticeship and mentioned therein that there was nothing wrong with my exam."Therefore he was going to seek the Bakers' guild's approval [so I could] begin..."journeyman tests prematurely, since I am more than 20 years old."

Clearly Theo was not waiting for the outcome of his mother's benefit claims. What he still really needed, however, was a carer. Of particular interest is the aforementioned doctor's remark that his suffering may not have been a result of his horseriding accident.

Were then Theo's behavioural problems due to his rough upbringing? In *Chapter IX* (see text box 9.10) I summarized the consequences of authoritarian parenting, in which it was also noted that "most children remain intimidated, some become rebellious, defiant and more verbal as they grow older" and that "either way, these children suffer low self-esteem as adults and lack interpersonal confidence."¹⁸⁶ One would be inclined to think it was Theo's authoritarian rearing that had left him emotionally unstable. Goodness knows what damage his physical beatings caused.

¹⁸⁴ Frau Töralla indeed requested an extension to his war orphan's benefit on January 30, 1929, although no information as to the claim's success is available.

¹⁸⁵ Suggesting Oma Hinsch was more prepared to give Theo his independence than perhaps his mother.

¹⁸⁶ Edward Teyber. *Helping Children Cope with Divorce*. Jossey-Bass. 2001. Pg. 210-211

I can well imagine Frau Tÿralla meanwhile unfairly compared Theo to his sisters, who were succeeding in glamorous professions (while most working class women were typically pressed into the electrical, chemical and metallurgical industries or exploited as sales and office girls). Not only had he failed to 'honour his mother' in the profession she had elected for him, but in her eyes he was still burdening her financially too. Something he clearly wished to change.

Sadly, his mother's cavalier attitude was of course symbolic of the era. According to *Charlotte Fechner* in *The Berlin Cabaret & The Neue Frau*, women between 1918 and 1933 demonstrated 'boundless egoism,' betraying 'their natural vocation' while 'striving for greater personal freedom and independence.' "What was lacking above all was 'motherliness,' " she adds, "that great inexhaustible gift of feminine love and devotion, unrewarded yet infinitely valuable to both family and society."¹⁸⁷

Besides this cultural context, *Edward Teyber* adds that formerly authoritarian parents, having lost their authority, tend to give up on their 'impossible' children and become dismissive and disengaged, which results in the disaffected child growing at risk of peer influences such as drugs, delinquency and early sexual contacts.¹⁸⁸ It strikes me then Theo's doctor had learned enough as regards her upbringing to know it was not just a fall from a horse that was causing his ill-health.

With Theo beginning to take charge of his own life, in early May he 'journeyed' to *Leipzig Paunsdorf*, mid-way between the city centre and Machern. He moved to *Am Bauernteich 4*, I suspect to work with a father and son team of master bakers named *Schneider* who resided at No.10.¹⁸⁹ Perhaps things after all were looking up.

His 'departure' from *Wenigmachern* likely coincided with his eldest cousin's arrival there, who together with his expectant wife and their two children 'replaced' him at the Hinsch villa on March 4th.¹⁹⁰ Obviously the countryside better suited an up and coming gardener than the city, but what was his interest in gardening inspired by? Had it been anything to do with the *Wandervogel*, I wondered?

At the end of the nineteenth century, writes *Tomomi Hotoka*, cities like Leipzig had seen gardeners' associations boom in conjunction with the 'Life Reform' and 'Garden City' movements. By the early twentieth it enjoyed an international trade in flowers and plants, with greenhouses becoming popular, while gardening symbolized the nostalgic world which the modern city had lost. Forward-looking schoolteachers encouraged children to enjoy nature via city allotments, and so the countryside in turn became the model of this nostalgic world, while gardening also became a modern healthy activity promoted by the middle class.¹⁹¹ Wartime too probably enhanced youngsters' appreciation for what sustenance could be grown with meager resources to hand when it came to basic survival. But more simply, perhaps growing up in a town centre flat with three brothers was also too close for comfort.

¹⁸⁷ Charlotte Luise Fechner. *The Berlin Cabaret & The Neue Frau*. 1918-1933. Pg.15. Online [here](#)

¹⁸⁸ Edward Teyber. *Helping Children Cope with Divorce*. Jossey-Bass. 2001. Pg. 213

¹⁸⁹ According to the 1930 *Adressbuch*. Curiously today there is *Der Stadtbäcker GmbH* at Am Bauernteich 2.

¹⁹⁰ An assumption since the precise address to where Fritz moved is not indicated - only Wenigmachern.

¹⁹¹ Tomomi Hotoka. *Contact with Nature as Urban Culture in the Modern Age: The Gardening Movement in the Second Imperial Age in Germany*. In *New Directions in Urban History. Aspects of European Art, Health, Tourism and Leisure since the Enlightenment*. Borsay, Hirschfelder and Mohrmann (Eds). 2000. Pg. 127-145

It seems likely then that Frits's father's slice of nature beyond the suburbs rubbed off on his eldest. Hotoka adds that gardening activities were undertaken by a cross-section of society without any political or ideological conflict. However, Frits's career choice was not supported by his father. By the end of the 1920s there was a clear and continuing rise in the proportion of sons of the educated upper bourgeoisie in the German economic elite.¹⁹² Yet all Fritz senior could tell was that he'd put his son through *Realschule* so as to become a nursery attendant, market gardener or florist (when he should have been enjoying a career in trade or the civil service). The only consolation I suppose was that Frits junior could usefully keep an eye on his 70 year old grandmother.

Around about the same time, 19 year old Heinz, armed with his *Abitur* upon finishing the *Thomas Schule*, moved to the 'countryside' too after joining the *Wandervögel* movement. Not that that became his full time occupation, since his next step was the *Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden* (Dresden Academy of Fine Arts). In other words, he was an 'inbetweener' or so-called *Muhle*.

Bearing witness to the Hinsch boys' father's support for their further education, Heinz's was said to have been funded from his father's lottery winnings (implying he still had change leftover from the villa's purchase in 1903 as well as surviving the hyperinflation of the early 1920s). According to his daughter he enjoyed his time at the academy, where he grew acquainted with Weimar artist, Otto Dix, and as a result developed an ambition to be an artist, a painter, as well as an interest in natural medicines (homeopathy). Irene recalls how he was literally 'possessed' with the idea to paint and her home today is decorated with his paintings.

As for the second eldest son, Martin remained at his mother's home until September 9th, 1929, when he moved (shortly before his 21st birthday), all of 200m to *Czermaksgarten 3. I*,¹⁹³ from where he continued to 'honour his father,' learning the various trades that were eventually listed on his residential record (and previously noted).

The youngest Hinsch, Hans, meanwhile began his apprenticeship that spring at one of Leipzig's most renowned Jewish department stores, the family-owned men's clothing and textile business, *Bamberger und Hertz*. Barely 14, he alone remained at his mother's home now. Looking from *Augustusplatz* into *Grimmische Straße* (today a pedestrian zone), at its entrance and on the right hand corner is a solid stone building. At its quoin and at eye level, a plaque can be seen commemorating its original purpose. "Later in life," Irene told me in September 2012, "Hans would often mention how much he'd learned from Mr. Bamberger."



Commemorating Bamberger & Hertz, where Hans Hinsch began his working life.

Source: jonathanschorr.wordpress.com/2012/09/14/remembering-henry-bamberger/

¹⁹² Benninghaus, Haupt and Requate. *Germany since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 296

¹⁹³ bei Hohnemann

With the Hinsch cousins all in paid employment, their respective parents' must have felt cautiously optimistic regarding their futures. What's more, *Oma Hinsch* could look back on a slew of accomplishments between her and her late husband. Her son Fritz had remarried and was close by and although Frau Tjyralla was now in Berlin, her *beau* at least continued to work, inventing and filing utility models throughout late 1928 and mid-1929 in his quest to be part of the craze for new inventions that bore the label 'Made in Germany.'

The addresses from which he registered those arouse more than a passing interest since by late 1928 he had moved on to a residence in *Nettelbeckstraße 7* in *Berlin W62* (nearby *Neue Winterfeldstr. 35* – see '6' on the map on pg. 356).¹⁹⁴ His first registration since October 1926, the utility model turned out to be none other than a tongue scraper (*Zungen-schaber*)! *Herr Petzold* followed this in May 1929 with another comb and brush cleaner, only this time the address he used was *Berliner Straße 15* in the heart of Charlottenburg (see '7'). The address bore an uncanny resemblance to that for him which (finally) appears in the 1930 city *Adressbuch* where he is listed as a 'Patente' residing at *Berliner Str., 136, III*. As the editor of *Das Programm* wrote on January 15th, 1928, "The landlords are...raising the rents to exorbitant heights," so I just wonder whether *Onkel Albert* was feeling their pinch? If so, it didn't last long, since from 1930 his models were again being registered from *Neue Winterfeldstr. 35*.

Might Albert ever have been tempted back to Leipzig or its fairs? During the autumn 1928 event, for instance, sales of German firms were estimated at some 350-400 million RM, which corresponded to as much as a sixth of the total German finished goods exports.¹⁹⁵ Attendance lists reveal, however, that he never returned. Berlin was the magnet to which he was drawn and presumably serviced his needs adequately enough.

By 1929, the *Sozialstaat* had made impressive advances, which helped the republic put down firmer roots. The SPD, its principal driving force, was able to consolidate its status as the leading party as a result of the *Reichstag* elections of 1928. Ominously, however, employers and other groups on the conservative right deeply resented its development because it exemplified the anti-capitalist and pro-working class ethos of the republic. They claimed it was mainly their money, in the form of high taxes and profits, which financed welfare.¹⁹⁶

Kessler in his diaries is something of a bellwether of things to come when he reflects on the situation in Berlin a couple of summers previous. On August 11th, 1927, Constitution Day (around about the time Little Nanny was back in Berlin and just after her 20th birthday), he noted that republican flags flew on all Government buildings, buses, trams and underground, but very few were to be found on big business houses, department stores, hotels and banks while only a moderate display was to be seen among private houses. Three days later he concluded that while an increasing proportion of the nation, right into the circles of the People's Party regard the republic for the time being an incontestable fact, the great majority of the

¹⁹⁴ Curiously, a store called *Das Bücher-Kabinett* was established on Januar 22, 1926 at *Nettelbeckstr. 7/8* (Berlin W62). More [here](#). From 1935, a *Kunsthändler/Kunsthandlungen* was there by the name of *Hans Krenz* (at least until 1942).

This information via the [Gesamtaufnahme Kunsthandel in Berlin 1928 - Verein Aktives ...](#)

¹⁹⁵ Leipzig: *Geschichte der Stadt in Wort und Bild*. VEB, Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, Berlin, 1978. Pg. 73, 76

¹⁹⁶ Source unknown!

'captains of industry,' the powerful financiers, the civil service, the *Reichswehr*, the bench, the large and medium-sized landowners (*Junkers*), and university professors and students remain hostile to it.¹⁹⁷ In addition, an increasingly large segment of Germany's middle-class electorate actually began to feel frustration over the terms of Germany's political and economic stabilization in the second half of the 1920s.

Although Saxon society too had entered a tranquil period in the years 1925-1928, dark clouds loomed. The central German state was hit harder for instance by the growing economic crisis than any other. The number of bankruptcies per capita in Saxony was far above the *Reich's* average between 1926-1932 (recalling Walther Martin's own enterprise went bankrupt during this period) while by mid-1929 Saxony's unemployment rate had shot far above those of other states. This is especially interesting given Saxony's background as the most industrialized and urbanized region in Germany not to mention cradle of Germany's working class movement. As a result, the state became one of the earliest strongholds of the Nazi movement, and was thus crucial for the rise of its party on the national level from the late 1920s.¹⁹⁸

But before the Nazis genuinely ran rampant (note that as early as March 20th, 1927 they had instigated a riot at the *Romanisches Café* on the *Kurfürstendamm* where the left-wing intellectuals they hated used to meet), let's consider how they achieved this.¹⁹⁹ Saxon state elections were scheduled to take place in mid-May, ahead of which the bourgeois parties followed what C-C Szejnmann calls an "irresponsible strategy" of defending political majorities against the left by exaggerating the (unrealistic) threat of a 'Soviet Saxony.'²⁰⁰ They warned of "the terror of the red hundreds in the city and in the country, the plundering of shops, the forced requisition of food from farmers...and an amnesty for thieves,"²⁰¹ while the use of an increasingly aggressive language to pull together the fragmented *Bürgertum* heightened tensions and polarized society. Furthermore, their hostility toward the SPD, remarks Benjamin Lapp, precluded any possibility of a Great Coalition there.

Although the election results saw no major change over those of 1926, the German National People's Party (DNVP) suffered defeat, losing six percent of its share of seats within the *Landtag* while the National Socialists increased its share from 1.6 to 5 percent.²⁰² Those results were therefore an important watershed for the *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (NSDAP or *Nazis*). For Hitler meanwhile, tactical cooperation with the bourgeois government in Saxony opened up the chance for the Nazis to gain the ministry of interior and hence was a crucial step toward power in Berlin. In Leipzig too, following the November 1929 city elections there were now three Nazis in Leipzig's *Stadtparlament*.²⁰³

¹⁹⁷ *Berlin in Lights. The Diaries of Count Harry Kessler (1918-1937)*. Transl. by C. Kessler. Grove Press. 1999. Pg. 325-6

¹⁹⁸ C-C. Szejnmann in *The Development of Nazism...1918-1933 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Edited by J. N. Retallack. Pg. 362, 363, 356

¹⁹⁹ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romanisches_Café and the *Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz Magazine*, 2013. Pg. 15

²⁰⁰ C-C. Szejnmann in *The Development of Nazism...1918-1933 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Edited by J. N. Retallack. Pg. 366

²⁰¹ B.Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 322

²⁰² See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saxony_Landtag_elections_in_the_Weimar_Republic#1929 and sachsen.de/en/274.htm

²⁰³ Martina Güldemann in 1999 in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert in LEIPZIG*. Pg. 35. See also footnote 116 on Pg. 364

Matters in Saxony were not helped by the fact that the state was dominated by small and medium-scale business (much like Fritz Hinsch's), as a result of which the Saxon middle and working classes felt particularly threatened by unrestricted large scale capitalism and were both desperate for some kind of protection.²⁰⁴

The Weimar Republic, however, adopted a unique attitude towards the *Mittelstand* as politics began to be determined by the alliance between large industry and the workers' movement. Subsidies to maintain *Mittelstand* interests became much less central and with both shopkeepers and craftsmen belonging to *Mittelstand* associations, one can understand their vulnerability to National Socialism, writes Benninghaus, *Haupt and Requate*.²⁰⁵

Crafts, agriculture and the increasingly concentrated commercial sector regarded themselves as the main losers in the process of industrialisation and modernisation. Social distress and fear of social decline gave rise to fundamental opposition to all things modern. This opposition went hand-in-hand with a pronounced rejection of the new lifestyles and behavioural patterns and an often fanatical crusade against all modern cultural and artistic trends. During the Weimar years then, all modern phenomena subsequently became the subject of sharp controversy – a fundamental divergence of views which added considerably to the already serious political differences.²⁰⁶

The Nazis thus seized their chances by using anti-capitalist rhetoric, promises of change, and nationalism to manipulate for their own ends what *Theodor Geiger* has termed the 'panic of the *Mittelstand*.'²⁰⁷ In other words, deep-seated confusion within the ranks of Germany's middle-class voters rendered them all vulnerable to Nazi penetration in the 1930s whose fresh imaged and determined appearance, coupled with their espousal of familiar values – nationalism, authoritarianism and anti-Marxism – made them not only respectable in the eyes of many, but also the legitimate leaders of the nationalist milieu in Saxony.²⁰⁸

From the late 1920s, as elsewhere in Germany, the majority of the Saxon middle classes turned their back on the "stuffy and elitist politics of patronage and personality." Either they turned to Nazism directly or they affiliated themselves with it via special interest groups.²⁰⁹ For Fritz Hinsch, that meant the *Stahlhelm*.

²⁰⁴ C-C. Szejnmann in *The Development of Nazism...1918-1933 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Edited by J. N. Retallack. Pg. 371

²⁰⁵ Benninghaus et al. *Germany since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* ed. by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 301-2
NB: The one that attracted the most interest was the *Mittelstand* Association of the German Empire or *Reichsdeutsche Mittelstandverband* which had been founded in nearby Magdeburg in 1913 with the specific aim of opposing the 'gold and red internationals' – i.e. Jews and Social Democrats.

²⁰⁶ *Questions on German History*. Pg. 238-9

²⁰⁷ Benninghaus et al. *Germany since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* ed. by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg.303

²⁰⁸ C-C. Szejnmann in *The Development of Nazism...1918-1933 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Edited by J. N. Retallack. Pg. 366

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*.

Young Theo meanwhile was not quite sure where his politics lay, so following the elections that July, he took himself off to the photographers, much like his mother used to do. He sent the resulting portrait off to his elder sister and on the back wrote: "My dear sister, Nannj, to remember your only brother, Theo." I daresay he included a note containing a fair few words about his mother's attitude over his income and welfare, while highlighting that he was finally *Auf der Waltz* too. A similar note was scribbled on the back of a second photograph he 'kindly' sent to his mother in Berlin while probably a third was addressed to Margot. Yet despite his current employment, he remained alone and without a carer.

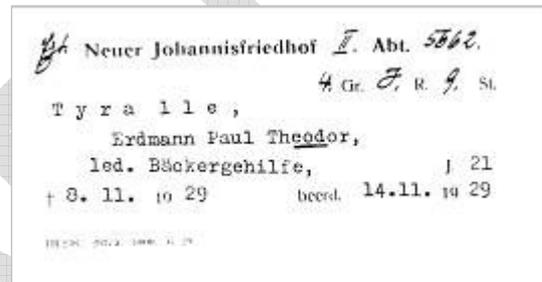


Two months before and two months after Theo's 21st birthday...

Left: All gussied up and nowhere to go

Below: Laid to rest

Less than two months later, on September 1st, 1929, his cousin's second child, a son, also named *Frits Lothar Egon*, was safely delivered.²¹⁰ Eleven days later, on September 12th, Theo turned 21. His adulthood experience, however, was shortlived. On the morning of Friday November 8th, Theo's life's journey came to an unnecessary and premature end, when he lost his senses at the public town bath (*Städtischen Volksbad*), just east of *Augustusplatz* on *Johannisplatz* 8/10. Household bathrooms were still rare at this time and while taking a wash he suffered an epileptic seizure. Because he was behind closed doors, the incident went undetected until water began seeping under the door. He was found drowned at around 1130 that morning. It was a tragic demise for a lad that deserved a better future.²¹¹ He'd died 12 years younger than his father had.



Theo's death certificate, unlike his sister, Eva's, was not undersigned by a single family member, not even his mother. He was subsequently laid to rest almost a week later on Thursday November 14th (presumably to allow his mother time to make the necessary arrangements from Berlin) in the *Neuer Johannisfriedhof* southeast of the old town centre and close to the Russian Orthodox church. He was placed just four rows in front nearby of his younger sister.²¹²

²¹⁰ Part of the 'second 'war-youth generation', born around 1929, socialized completely within the framework of the Third Reich and again too young to join the slightly older generation in the even more brutal war on Europe and the Jews that Germany started in 1939: Mary Fulbrook. *Dissonant Lives: Generations and Violence through the German Dictatorships*. 2011. Reviewed by Thomas Kühne in *German History*, Vol. 30, No. 2. June 2012. Pg. 324

²¹¹ NB: It would be worth seeking Leipzig newspaper reports of this incident, since this is essentially his mother's version of events.

²¹² According to: [de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedenspark_\(Leipzig\)](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedenspark_(Leipzig)), at the end of 1950 the cemetery was closed for further burials, however the public could continue to visit till the end of 1970. Between 1973 and 1975 the graves were secularized, and cleared. On July 20, 1983, the 'Peace Park' was offered to the public – a further break with the past.

The greatest injustice, however, was that the family kept Theo's death hidden from Little Nannj and Margot, at least until they returned from the US some 18 months later. Why? Because as family lore goes, *Frau Týralla* feared the girls would return home prematurely and she would lose out on their income. I rather suspect she also feared the same backlash from them that she'd gotten from Theo regarding whose right it was to their future salary earnings.

How did *Frau Týralla* live with herself following that loss? Is this how the new modern woman typically behaved? It's almost as if Theo was disregarded after failing at becoming a jockey. But when he needed her most, she was not there to support him. Was that simply because she expected him to support her?

In *Chapter V*, I observed that Leipzig was something of a nexus for *Paul Týralla* and *Nannj Hinsch* in 1900. Yet barely 30 years later, none of their own family remained behind in that city. Not the greatest record for a town that had been one of Germany's most attractive (not to mention wealthiest) at the turn of the century. Rather it had become simply a waystation in my family's recurring migration. Furthermore, with grandfather Hinsch, the original *Wandervoogel* having now also departed, the city was beginning to look like a Hinsch backwater. A sorrowful end for a decade dubbed 'The Golden Twenties.'

It's peculiarly fitting that in *Kurban Said's* novel; *The Girl from the Golden Horn* (originally published in 1938 and set in Berlin and elsewhere from 1928) a character ominously utters at a house party late the following year; "The woman of today will tomorrow be the woman of yesterday."²¹³ It's a statement which portrays a foreboding and apprehension within society which happens to reflect a period when *Frau Týralla* might have been wiser to recognise that the world about her was again changing.

Especially because a real crisis indeed lay just around the corner: in the newspapers, Berliners heard of the sudden crash in the Wall Street stock market, although it was hard to believe that this distant event would soon ruin everything they now enjoyed. But, says Otto Friedrich, they went about their ways, "ignoring the portents... sunbathing and picnicking and drinking schnapps."²¹⁴

Actress, Pola Negri, was no different. In her autobiography she reflects: "How easy it was to fall back into the extravagant ways of days gone by. How foolish it was to permit myself the indulgence."²¹⁵

Frau Týralla should have known better, especially with her stage sirens based in the US. The pretext was already there for another important chapter in our Prussian family saga to draw to a close.

²¹³ Kurban Said. *The Girl from the Golden Horn*. English translation of 2003 by Jenia Graman. Anchor Books. Pg. 196

²¹⁴ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 298

²¹⁵ Pola Negri. *Memoirs of a Star*. Doubleday and Company, 1970. Pg. 355

Footnotes to 11.3: Paula Petzold, Berlin...and Brazil?!

1. Between 1821 and 1823, sugar, cotton and coffee was among Brazil's three main exports, according to the "Brazilian Development Experience from 1500-1929" by Angus Maddison. Online at: http://www.ggd.net/maddison/ARTICLES/Brazil_1500-1929.pdf
2. Alongside cocoa's 2.5 percent share of commodity exports, coffee output had doubled since the 1890s and by 1901-3, it made up the majority share (55.7 percent). The remaining percentages in those years was made up by rubber (22.5%) and cotton (2.6%). Brazilian Development Experience from 1500-1929 by Angus Maddison. Online at: http://www.ggd.net/maddison/ARTICLES/Brazil_1500-1929.pdf
3. <http://www.abicab.org.br/en/associado-chocolate-e-cacau/historia/>
4. According to information retrieved from *Ancestry.com*, which means he travelled a couple of months after seventh child, Frieda was born in Magdeburg and 18 months before Albert.
5. Via Hamburg, like his father, according to *Ancestry.com*, although unfortunately there is no indication as to where Oskar was born. He travelled not long after his father's family had settled in Bernburg.
6. The Brazilian Emperor was deposed in 1889 and the resulting oligarchic Republic affected control over customs duties, showed favouritism towards cronies and relatives, and semmi-bandit gentry at the local level who built up their landholdings by means not always legal while exercising seigneurial type power over the less prosperous citizenry. Brazilian Development Experience from 1500-1929 by Angus Maddison. Online at: http://www.ggd.net/maddison/ARTICLES/Brazil_1500-1929.pdf
7. According to shipping manifests retrieved via *Ancestry.com*, he like his brother and father travelled via Hamburg although again there is no indication as to where he was born.
8. Timothy W. Guinnane in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 48
9. Sergio Odilon Nadalin. "German Immigration in Brazil: Two Problems." In: *Studies Colloquium III Teuto-Brazilians*. Porto Alegre: Publisher of URGs, 1980, pp. 297-303 (referred to at: www.tonijochem.com.br/imigrantes_alemaes.htm)
10. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration_to_Brazil#Second_Period:_1877-1903
11. She was born in 1875 according to: "Brasil, Registro Civil, 1870-2012," index and images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/KFSZ-7B6>; accessed 11 May 2013), which reports on the marriage of *Arthur Gustavo Petzola* and *Fernandina Rocha* in 1896. Again, there is no indication as to where Arthur was born, nor his specific trade.
12. According to an advert placed in the 1905 Berlin Adress book. NB: *The Amtsgericht's website at www.handelsregister.de/rp_web/mask.do?Typ=e* conversely holds nothing useful on Gregorius, nor does *Ancestry.com*.
13. Regarding the origins of *Paul Gregorius*, according to *Axel Schröder* of the *Landesarchiv Berlin*, we know only he was born July 20th, 1875 in *Frankfurt/Oder* – hardly within Bernburg's neighbourhood. Berlin, nevertheless, could well have been their nexus.
14. A request for Arthur Petzold's death certificate (which might have shown his profession) was sent in Portuguese on May 21st 2013 to cartorio7@hotmail.com (having been disclosed at: [cartorionobrasil.com.br/cartorio-no-rio-de-janeiro/cartorio-em-rio-de-janeiro-7-circunscricao-de-civil-e-notas/](http://cartorionobrasil.com.br/cartorio-no-rio-de-janeiro/cartorio-em-rio-de-janeiro-rio-de-janeiro-7-circunscricao-de-civil-e-notas/)). A response was not received.
15. After divorcing Paula Petzold in 1910, a year later he married 'Anna Paragenings' (born October 10th, 1872 in Danzig). He then moved his enterprise to *Kaiser Friedrich Str. 10* in Charlottenburg until 1914, by which time his trade shifted into bananas besides cocoa, while from 1915 he was trading books. (This abrupt change in business practice was likely a result of Great Britain targeting Germany's trade relations with Latin American partners following the onset of the war, which made its free trade of products such as coffee and sugar on European markets increasingly difficult. As a consequence, Europe, one of the main Latin American commodities' buyers before the war, was unable to uphold its trade. Sourced from: *SPK Magazine*. Shock waves of a faraway war. S.Rinke; K.Kriegesmann; C.Ross. *Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz*. 2014. Pg. 18). His profession as a *Buchhalter* however, was shortlived. He died on October 5th, 1916 in *Guminsky* (Belarus).
16. Did Paula return to Bernburg to care for her mother? On 21st April, 2013 I asked Marcel Fromme whether she was listed in the address books around that time as Paula Gregorius, however, no answer was forthcoming. It's also possible she may have gone on to Leipzig and collaborated with Albert, however, there is no mention of either a Paula Petzold or Paula Gregorius in the *Leipzig Adressbücher* either
17. Listed as 'Frau Olga Petzold' in 1917 and by 1923 and 1924, a *Fabrikarbeiterin*. She first lived in *Wassmandorferstrasse* (today *Wafsmansdorfer Chaussee*) in *Neukölln* while her home from 1917-1924 was *Ziet(henstr.71, III* (today *Werbellingstrasse*) also *Neukölln*.
18. Frieda's home was *Weserstr. 87*. NB: In 1917 an *Adolf Petzold*, a *Sculptor* and *Hilfsregisseur*, lived at *Weserstrasse 2* while a *Kurt Petzold*, a *Reisend.* (traveler) lived at *Ziet(henstr.7 III* in 1921.
19. It's not implausible that Petzold's nieces returned to Germany. The economic consequences of world war one were quick to hit Latin America. Global market prices fell sharply for its products such as coffee, sugar and rubber, which had grave consequences for those economies dependent upon their export. There was a steep rise in unemployment, severe social tensions resulted, prices soared for almost all commercial goods while fuel and even food shortages followed. Since most Brazilians were on the side of the Allies, violent demonstrations and riots aimed at ethnic Germans broke out. Brazil then entered the war after its ships were repeatedly attacked and sunk by German submarines. Sourced from: *SPK Magazine*. Shock waves of a faraway war. S.Rinke; K.Kriegesmann; C.Ross. *Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz*. 2014. Pg. 18

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