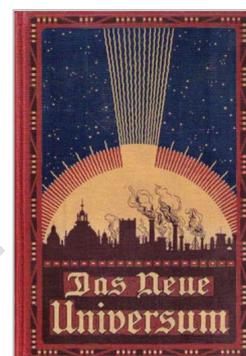


IX: WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE CHILDREN? (Pt.2): 1920-1923

A day after true normality returned for a second time to the streets of Leipzig and a day before the Easter holidays, Walther Martin moved in with Hedwig and her four sons. Eight months later the pair married in Leipzig on Thursday November 18th. He was 28 years old, she was two weeks after her 35th birthday. With that Hedwig married a 'Saxon.'

She devoted herself to supporting what now became their family enterprise and together they maintained its storefront in *Salzgässchen* until 1926. That meant, however, the Hinsch lads (rather like the Týralla trio) were frequently 'shortchanged' when it came to attention or 'quality time.' They were relied on to 'do their bit' and typically spent many a waking hour ferrying about boxes of shoes, second eldest Martin Hinsch would tell his youngest later in life. In between school and labour, however, the lads enjoyed the annuals published under the series title '*Das Neue Universum*' (the 'New Universe'). The series addressed exploration, adventure and entertainment, while it also included fictional short stories. Set in the context of an exciting, science-based future, it was popular among pre- and early-teen boys at the time, Heinz Hinsch's daughter, Irene, told me in September 2012.¹



The New Universe:
A hit among pre-
and early teens
Source: Flickr

Barely ten days after Walther's arrival, Martin (now 11 and a half) was packed off to a town called *Zerbst*. He'd never been away from home until that point according to his residential record, but he was gone until June 23rd. The town of about 20,000 residents lay some 70km north of Leipzig in Saxony-Anhalt up the *Dessau-Leipzig* line.² Although it had many notable manufacturers (for example, beer, silk, leather, machinery and musical instruments), I suspect he was not there to learn their trade. *Zerbst* had become a Calvinist centre following the Reformation (1517-1648), while its chief educational institution was the *Francisceum*, a gymnasium of high repute and once an important Calvinist college.³ Therefore education appears the most likely explanation for his journey.⁴ Perhaps he was making up for poor grades.

Martin's prompt departure so shortly after his step-father's arrival was maybe coincidence alone, however, the Hinsch boys had few fond memories to savour from those years. The second-eldest quickly grew fed up and ran off 500km or so to *Garmisch-Patenkirchen* in Bavaria while Heinz, now 10, recalled (through his daughter) bearing the brunt of some severe disciplinary measures which did little for his self-esteem in subsequent years. But Heinz and Martin remained close, while Frits the eldest always remained well-respected by his brothers, she recalled. Only Hans stood out, for he was nurtured as Walther's son.

¹ See: http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Das_Neue_Universum

² See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zerbst

³ See: [en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Encyclopedia_Americana_\(1920\)/Zerbst](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Encyclopedia_Americana_(1920)/Zerbst)

⁴ [Invite Rüdiger's view to enhance this story.](#)

The lads saw increasingly little of their natural father. His involvement in their upbringing appears to have been marginal. They were neither alone, as over one million German children suffered the same fate. Their mother's marriage to Mr. Martin will have done little to help that. The large numbers of young people who grew up without the supposed benefits of the 'stern hand of the father' "fed the fears of people anxious about a decline in discipline and moral standards after the war."⁵

Andrew Donson reflects on middle-class male youths in his book, *Youth in the Fatherless Land*, who in turn held little respect for authority.⁶ Disenfranchised and alienated by the lost war, tens of thousands joined autonomous organizations that admitted no adults and rejected the democratic politics of the new republic, developed an intense hatred of internationalists and pacifists and eventually radical nationalism and militarism.⁷ There the concept of comradeship was ingrained, loyalty was to those groups above family and gender relations were firmly grounded in the framework of militarisation. The text box overleaf summarises one such movement and the involvement of a Hirsch lad and possibly that of their eldest cousin, my grandmother, Nannj Tjyralla.⁸



Not long after Martin returned to Leipzig, Little Nannj was back from *Querfurt* in early July sans Margot (who arrived in October). She was fortunate enough to join her mother and her partner once more in *Bad Swinemunde*. Mama had a soft spot for her, so the story goes, probably because she was so well-behaved. *Onkel Albert* clearly had time on his hands, but was there a specific reason for his interest in the Baltic Coast, besides perhaps the *Ahlbecker* flounder?! It turns out his former wife was born on *Usedom* in neighbouring *Westwime*,⁹ but could it also have had something to do with '*Liselotte Petzold*' - his ten year old daughter?¹⁰ If so, was Little Nannj unknowingly building sandcastles alongside her?¹¹

Odd Tjyralla out: "*Bad Swinemunde an der Ostsee, 1920*," where Little Nannj mingled among elites like her mother and Albert Petzold.

⁵ Richard Bessel. *Germany after the First World War*. 1995. Pg. 227

⁶ Andrew Donson. *Youth in the Fatherless Land...1914-1918*. Harvard, 2010. Pg. 228

⁷ Donson considers it doubtful they would have maintained their anger had Germany won the war. But defeat and revolution crystallized their hatred, turning a broad cohort of Allied victory onlookers into right-wing radicals.

⁸ Ask Rudiger to confirm which it was.

⁹ Meta Petzold, like her parents, remained in Albert's 'hometown' of Bernburg in *Auguststrasse 17* after their divorce.

¹⁰ A *Fraulein* named Liselotte Petzold appears at the same address as her mother's in Bernburg from 1927 until 1932. However, attempts to confirm she was Albert's daughter through [Martina Storch](#) at [Stadt Bernburg](#) have been thwarted by a February 2007 law which prevents non-family members accessing personal historical data within fixed periods (see the Annex for more details).

¹¹ Based on Albert and Meta's respective ages at the time of marriage in 1911 (he was about 30, she not even 18), had Liselotte been Meta and Albert's daughter, her birth date ought to have been between 1908 and 1912 (which in turn implies he left her with her mother between the age of three and seven). I had hopes that the Liselotte Petzold who lived in Leipzig in 1949 according to online addressbook and whose residential record reveals she was born Sept. 11th, 1910 would be Albert's daughter. However, she was born in *Leipzig Plagwitz*. A third Liselotte Petzold was reportedly living in *Schilda* in *Amt Elsterland* in *Brandenburg* (about 90km east of Leipzig) according to this [page](#). She celebrated her 83rd birthday on Sept. 16th 2012 which means she was born in 1929, which certainly means she was not Albert's daughter (in that year the *Lieselotte* in the *Bernburg Adressbuch* was aged between 21 and 17). Albert's granddaughter perhaps then? An Email sent to: amt@elsterland.de on 26th July regrettably remains unanswered.

9.4: The Wandervogel: A Nature-loving Movement with a Clouded Future

Among my grandmother's photo albums was the picture of the lad on the right. In another, the same boy appears to have aged a good few years. Who was he and more importantly, what did he represent? Could it have been one of the Hinsch boys? Heinz's daughter confirmed in 2012 that her father was a *Wandervogel*, while Rüdiger noted his own, Martin, joined a similar youth movement from the age of 12 (Heinz joined aged 19).

I suspect the lad in the picture was a *Wandervogel* and part of that middle-class youth movement founded in the decade before the war in Berlin as a network of hiking groups composed of some Catholic and primarily Protestant secondary school children aged 14-20. The boys and girls championed naturalism and German folklore, took oaths to abstain from alcohol and tobacco, repudiated materialism and industrialism as sores of modernity, and dressed in the folkloric German dress of decorated shirtfronts, flamboyant hats, and leather shorts or flowery skirts. Their *sine qua non* was to challenge adult authority in the belief that modern society could be rejuvenated only when youths led youths. Through their actions they escaped the sordid urban world of their elders by exploring the countryside – that is, their *Heimat*. During these trips, they cooked their own food and sang traditional folk songs to the tune of lutes. They met in barns or around campfires for so-called 'nest' evenings and in doing so, cultivated simplicity, modesty and spirituality, often in place of their 'absent' fathers.



When its more senior members joined the wartime frontline, however, female members took on a more prominent role. Traditionally they had not been entitled to join in on hikes for instance, but they then boldly asserted the right to participate, arguing that this developed their bodies and purified their souls to be future companions of *Wandervogel* men as wives and mothers. Indeed, it was thanks to their female members that the *Wandervogel* journal continued to be published until the end of the war.

After the war, the National Socialists began to see an opportunity to hijack various methods and symbols of the German youth movement (which included the Scouts besides the *Wandervogel*) and to absorb it within the Hitler Youth so as to influence the young. Following their sacrifices, the Nazis outlawed the *Wandervogel* from 1933. Nevertheless, some authors have seen its ethos and activities as an influence on later social movements, in particular the hippie movement which developed in the USA during the 1960s.

But back to my grandmother's photos. Although I had hoped they revealed one or more of her cousins, none could confirm the lad in the picture, which leads me to conclude my grandmother was in some way affiliated with the movement and that either she was fond of one of its members – or one of them were fond of her!¹

Sources: Donson, pg. 35, 37, 219, 217 and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wandervogel>

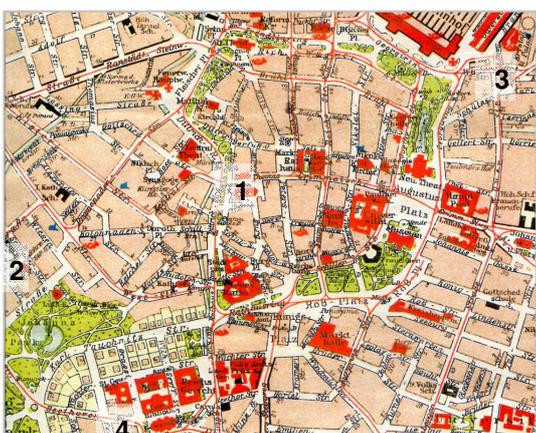
1. Enquiry in early January 2013 to the Archiv der deutschen Jugendbewegung in fact confirmed my grandmother as well as her cousins and siblings were neither members of the *Wandervogel* nor any other German youth movement at the time.

The two Nannys were home by August 20th. Among the seven cousins, the elder cohort consisting of Frits (14), Nanny (13), Theo, and Martin (both 12) all should have been well into their respective secondary schools by 1920 while among the younger lot, Margot, approaching her ninth birthday in November, still had another year to go before completing elementary school. Younger cousin Hans, six, was just about to start.

Following primary school at the age of ten, youngsters typically moved on to a *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* or *Gymnasium*, where they'd spend the rest of their education. The *Hauptschule* led to the basic school-leaving certificate awarded at age 15-16, while the *Realschule* led to certification at 16-17, necessary for admission to technical schools and higher vocational education. Completing the *Gymnasium*

resulted in qualification around the age of 19-20 (the so-called *Abitur*) which served as an entry card to university. Alongside these options, however, there was also the *Fortbildungsschule* or continuation school which had become mandatory in Prussia from 1910 and occupied 14-18 yr olds 'between school and the barracks.'

Given the eventual school leaving ages of the youngsters, almost all the cousins appear to have finished with only the basic certificate, in some cases supplemented by *Fortbildungsscheinen*. There were some exceptions. Theo, for instance, had already been sent back to Machern in September 1919 where he learned at a private boarding school under the tutelage of one *Dr. Haller*. He did relatively well in his first year, in spring 1920 finishing 16th place among 29 students. But instead of returning home that summer to join his big sister and a grander school, it was younger sister, Margot, who joined him that autumn, living nearby at the Hinsch grandparents. Theo thus never went beyond private tutelage and neither picked up a *Fortbildungsschein*.



Heinz Hinsch's Hotspots, 1920:

- 1: The Thomaskirche; 2: The Thomasschule;
3: Home; 4: Father Fritz's home.

Musically talented Heinz was set on a different educational path to his brothers. Upon his father's insistence (who at least still carried some influence in regard to this sons' education), he joined the *Thomasschule Gymnasium* in September 1920 (see photo inset and text box opposite).¹² Its linguistic profile meant he learnt French, Latin and Ancient Greek (something he would later bemoan for its lack of value next to its modern counterpart). The school also included a musical focus and probably thanks to his father's talent, *Heinz* also sang in the *Thomanerchor*.¹³

If authoritarian attitudes were notably dying out in homes across the country, they were disappearing from classrooms too. As early as 1917 the Prussian education minister remarked that: "The war had permanently changed how schools taught and managed pupils." An American scholar who visited Germany both before and after the war observed the greatest change to education was the end of the "old relationship of authority on the one side and respect on the other," a relationship replaced by "new bonds of natural comradeship." The old learn-school became a life-school and an activity-school.

Andrew Donson remarks that after the war, teachers were no longer closed-off government educators while from the early part of 1920, many elementary school teachers believed that despite the lost war, the *Burgfrieden* had paid social and political dividends. Secondary schoolteachers, however, rejected their calls to reform the *Gymnasium* and *Oberrealschulen*, which meant few altered their staid curriculum and methods.¹⁴

¹² See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomasschule_zu_Leipzig

¹³ See: <http://www.leipzig-online.de/thomanerchor/kontakt.html>

¹⁴ Andrew Donson. *Youth in the Fatherless Land...1914-1918*. Harvard, 2010. Pg. 67, 75, 135, 226-7

9.5: Germany's Most-famous:

The Thomasschule and Thomaner Chor

The humanistic *Gymnasium*, the *Thomasschule* is known for its art, language and music education. It enjoys a long list of distinguished former students, including Richard Wagner and many members of the Bach family. It was founded in 1212 and is one of the oldest schools in the world.

The school's first building was situated in the present courtyard of the *Thomaskirche* (that church where both Fritz and Nannj Hinsch were married - see #1 on the previous map). To overcome a shortage of space, however, a new building was erected in *Schreiberstraße* (see #2) in 1877 and it was here that Heinz travelled as a day student from home on the northeast side of Leipzig (see #3) alongside others typically aged between 10-18.

Around 90 or so boarders are typically members of the *Thomanerchor*, whose routine has remained essentially unchanged over the course of its 800 year history: the students wake at 0615 and school until 1515, before undergoing rehearsals, individual music lessons and vocal training. At the end of the nineteenth century the choir moved to Leipzig's 'Music Quarter,' which was home of course to Heinz father, and a larger venue in *Hillerstraße* (see also #2 on the map).

The choir publicly sings three times a week in the *Thomaskirche* (on Friday evenings, Saturday afternoons and during services on Sundays) and as in the past when the "*Thomasser*" sang at funerals, family events and public celebrations throughout the city, it also offers concerts across Germany at least two times per year, as well as abroad. Some 100,000 people hear the *Thomanerchor* live each year, whose musical form of worship has been described as an "uplifting, unforgettable experience for Christians and non-Christians alike."

NB: The photo inset shows the 1877 *Neue Thomasschule* in *Schreiberstraße* 9, photographed cca. 1900 by Hermann Walter



Sources: Stadtgeschichtliches Museum Leipzig; Leipzig. Reise Taschenbuch. Dumont, 2000. Pg. 92-93; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomasschule_zu_Leipzig; and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomanerchor>

Not long after the youngsters returned to school for the 1920-21 academic year, elections to the *Sächsische Landtag* took place in mid-October.¹⁵ As a result, the Majority Socialists led a coalition government with the Independent Socialists from November, which according to Benjamin Lapp in *Saxony in German History* made remarkable progress during 1921-22 in the areas of educational policy, the democratization of the civil service, the police and the judiciary, as well as the struggle against counter-revolutionary organisations and in fighting chronic unemployment.¹⁶

But their policies met with the resolute hostility of the bourgeois parties and their constituencies, aggravating middle-class fears throughout the state. Measures such as those intended to limit the influence of the church on education were alleged to represent a "modern persecution of Christendom." Committed democrats were ridiculed as "a dictatorship of the proletariat" and the Saxon government's rigorous attempts to prohibit nationalist and rightist organizations such as the *Stahlhelm* were viewed as yet another example of a class-based infringement. According to the bourgeois view, the state had become allied with "the street."¹⁷

¹⁵ SPD 27, USPD 16, KPD 6, Civic 47 seats. See: <http://sachsen.de/en/274.htm>

¹⁶ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 324

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

The bourgeoisie had further reason to grumble when inflation soared. It went from 4.2 marks to the dollar in 1918 to 75 by mid-1921. Shopkeepers changed their prices everyday¹⁸ and together with their *Mittelstand* brethren, the artisans, saw their livelihoods shrink as their clientele's purchasing power dropped.¹⁹ By now, white collar worker's salaries hardly covered their essential needs, falling between 25 and 50 percent in value, while inflation wiped out the life savings of many average and hard working Germans.²⁰ German society was gradually being transformed by fear and despair, wrote Otto Friedrich in his 1920's Berlin portrait: *Before the Deluge*, with two of the most popular songs that year being: 'Yes, we have no bananas' and 'Tomorrow's the end of the world.'²¹

Despite its progress, the Weimar Republic failed to restore the social insurance system and pensions, whose financial bases had been destroyed by the enormous costs and inflationary pressures following the war.²² 'War parents,' now dependent upon state welfare payments, saw their value diminish during the period of rapid inflation which followed.²³ Frau Tÿralla was one who eagerly awaited a new 1921 military survivor's law (*Militär-hinterbliebenengesetz*) that ought to have doubled her benefits. Adding insult to injury though, bourgeois losses were greater than those of the working classes and rather than count on *Herr Petzold* to assist, she relied on her parents (again) to host Margot, plus Theo between schooling.

According to a survey of some 60 middle-class Germans born around the same time as the Tÿralla and Hinsch siblings, a visit to the grandparents' estate was most typically "the loveliest thing imaginable" where nearly "every holiday" spawned "lovely memories."²⁴ For the two younger Tÿrallas things were never further from the truth, something the *Hausleute* (tenants) would eventually confirm too.



Lord and Lady of the Manor: Friedrich and Marie Hinsch with one of their collies.

Friedrich Hinsch, the former *Schneidermeister* of what was now the Prussian Province of Schleswig-Holstein was growing old. Nearing 70, he was winding down. His wife, Marie Lieberoth, six years his junior and from the Prussian Province of Saxony still had plenty of gumption about her, however. Together they had rented out rooms in their villa besides land, enabling the estate they managed to pay its way as well as feed their family. But Marie now 'wore the trousers', and although she and her husband didn't always see eye to eye, as head of the household, he still had her conduct matters according to his preferences, just as it had been in the old days. Consequently, a quarrel between the pair was never amiss.

¹⁸ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 82

¹⁹ Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 88

²⁰ 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. xiii

²¹ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 82

²² Peter Stachura in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 236

²³ Germany after the First World War. Richard Bessel, 1995; Pg. 228

²⁴ *A German Generation*. T.A. Kohut. Yale University Press. 2012. Pg. 42-3

The Hinsch's landscape, however, had dramatically changed over the last decade. The world they'd reared their own kids in following the founding of the *Kaiserreich* forty years earlier, was no more. Authoritarian attitudes were becoming 'old school,' even if those senior kin who helped out during the war, especially the male fraternity, had reprised paternal roles. But old habits died hard among the Hinsch's. The locals had once spoken ill of our Prussian *Junkers* back in 1917, perhaps in part because they remained too aloof of their neighbours. So imagine what happened when two orphaned youngsters, already short on love and affection, were returned to a world they'd not long before escaped.

One tenant who arrived in January 1921 (several months after Margot) was the accountant Karl Steppan. He'd understood the kids were hardly there, or so it seemed, since Margot and her brother were kept out of sight. Admittedly, Theo was only home from boarding school on holidays while *Herr Steppan* readily admitted he didn't go out of his way to talk to Margot (she anyway lived on the first floor while he occupied the ground). Yet despite spending most of his time in the garden rearing poultry or in the neighbouring villages trading eggs, he still saw enough of the pair to be able to pass opinion two years later: "From the manner in which Frau Hinsch spoke," he recognised "their upbringing must have been quite strict."

Although Herr Steppan couldn't confirm rumours they were badly treated for stepping out of line (i.e. beaten), in their grandmother's opinion, bad behaviour was no less reproachable then, than it had been when she'd reared Fritz and Nannj. Carelessness was not to be tolerated and she readily confessed a willingness to dispense "clips around the ears," despite her age. That was just the tip of the iceberg.

When not in school Margot was counted on to assist her grandmother around the home too, washing dishes and weeding the fields. Yet for her efforts to fulfill expectations she and Theo (when 'home') were neither allowed out to socialise nor let off steam. "I have no girlfriends in Machern" Margot remarked. "We do not consort with other children. They are too naughty and misbehaved."

Since when does a child deem another unlawful? The youngest Tjyralla, like Theo, was known for her mischief so one can only imagine the adventures the pair ought to have been having when together. Evidently she was being indoctrinated, which implies she had little say of her own in matters regarding her childhood.

But Steppan also recognised something else. "Margot looked weak and fragile," he said, eventually prompting suspicions that she and her brother were "on a poor diet" and their labour was being "unduly exploited." Marie was all too ready to admit that they were not only expected to be well-behaved, but hard-working too.

Her attitudes isolated her from her neighbours, Steppan going as far as to say; "Mrs. Hinsch had few friends." Even those she thought were friends, like *Püchau's Pastor Magirius*, later claimed "no knowledge of children being raised there." Only Berta Politz by that time was a regular at the villa, and only because she'd lost her husband. Up until then, she and the Hinsch's had been "deepest enemies," noted another pillar of their community.

Margot (and often Theo) were stuck in a time warp, in an environment in which their grandparents preferred discipline to democracy. Separated from their mother, displaced once more to the countryside, deprived of true warmth and affection, they surely envied their big sister who enjoyed a more privileged existence in the city.



Kleine Nannj, now a young adult following her confirmation, 1921

One bright spot in an otherwise dull rural landscape that spring was her visit together with cousin Frits and their wider family to mark the occasion of his and her 'Confirmations' – that religious hallmark of the 'old' authoritarian order. It was obviously a meaningful ceremony since it took place on Palm Sunday (early that year since it fell on March 20th) and was an event she never failed to mention to her youngest daughter. Looking at period photos of young *Frauleins* at their confirmations, it appears likely that the portrait left commemorated the occasion.

Confirmation marks the personal and public, that is, ceremonial, profession of one's Lutheran faith. It represents a lifelong pledge to Christ, prepared for by long and careful instruction.²⁵ Classes began around the age of 12 with individuals usually confirmed at 14, whereafter they became adults in the Lutheran church. That the pair's ceremonies occurred at the villa highlights the importance it continued

to have for the family, which I referred to in previous chapters as *Bodenständigkeit*. Perhaps it was one of the last occasions all the cousins were together, alongside Aunt Hedwig and Uncle Fritz. But if photos of them all were made, sadly none survived.

Beyond the youngsters' immediate world, peace in the region remained available at a premium. Wildcat strikes and pillaging continued across *Mitteldeutschland* following the *Kapp Putsch* and weapons remained in the hands of radical workers. On March 17th, the Social Democrat *Oberpräsident* in the neighbouring Province of Saxony announced he would send units of the reorganized Prussian police into the central German industrial area to quell any potential uprising.

His efforts, however, had the reverse effect and another 'spring uprising' looked on the cards when a workers' revolt known as the *Märzkämpfe* (March Campaign) led by the Communist Party and other radical left-wing organizations gripped the industrial regions of *Halle, Leuna, Merseburg and Mansfeld*.²⁶ Saxony's *Landespolizei* were put on a high state of alert and on March 27th (Easter Sunday) trouble erupted in Leipzig *Mölkau*. The uprising of the so-called: '1. *Hundertschaft*,' (communist, social democrat and trade union paramilitaries) ended in defeat for the workers, however, and ultimately left one dead and four injured, two seriously.²⁷

Its failure led to a further weakening of contemporary communist influence in Germany,²⁸ while a random sample of men that were subsequently prosecuted showed approximately half of the several hundred sentenced belonged to the war youth generation.²⁹ I wonder what impressions, if any, the events left on Frits, Theo or Martin as they finished up their school studies for the year?

²⁵ See: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confirmation_\(Lutheran_Church\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confirmation_(Lutheran_Church))

²⁶ See: http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Märzkämpfe_in_Mitteldeutschland

²⁷ Dieter Kürschner's *Geschichte der Leipziger Garnison* at: home.arcor.de/command3rk33n/Chronik/1921/1921.htm

²⁸ See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/March_Action

²⁹ Andrew Donson. *Youth in the Fatherless Land...1914-1918*. Harvard, 2010. Pg. 235

Frits probably didn't care very much since a few days later he left Leipzig and his mother's home to begin his vocational education. His *Einwohnermeldekarte* tells us he moved from one small industrial Saxon town to another right up until early 1929, with only short spells at home throughout (e.g in early 1926, 1927 and 1928), suggesting he was "auf der Waltz."

His first stop was close enough, 25km up the railway line in *Wurzen*. While there, his views of the *Märzkämpfe* might have changed, since the town's rapid industrialisation during the second half of the nineteenth century had resulted in a strong labour movement and social democrat representation. It had even hosted one of the first workers' and soldiers' councils in Saxony³⁰ (no wonder Mittig had had the railway track pulled up two years earlier)! But did Frits leave Leipzig with his father's blessing, given the sorry state of affairs the country found itself in? Surely the elder of the two would have preferred it if he had been preparing for university.

While Frits took to the road, the rest of his family, sans Heinz (whose own absence may best be explained on account of a *Thomanerchor* tour of Germany that summer) holidayed in Bavaria,³¹ visiting an old salt mine at *Bad Reichenhall*.³² Despite being half Martin's age, little Hans in the photo right illustrates the dramatic increase seen in average heights after the war. In large industrial towns such as Leipzig, scientists observed pre-war levels had not only recovered by 1921 but that they continued to grow strongly until 1931 (despite continued food rationing)! Between 1919 and 1930, for instance, the average height of a seven year old child in Leipzig increased by 6.7 cm!³³



Would-be Wandervogels? Martin, almost 13 and Hans, six and a half, in Bavarian costume. Summer 1921.

With career starts on the horizon for Martin, Theo and Little Nannÿ, *Frau Tjyralla* wasted no time in telling her two that a working life followed. She only had to point to her depreciating war widows' pension and at the same time remind them it was usual for older children to contribute to the family's material situation.³⁴ There was certainly no room for university, unlike Herr Deutsch's kids in Claire Bergmann's *What Will Become of the Children?* Without a father's financing there would be no dowry for her girls' marriage either!

³⁰ See: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wurzen>

³¹ Mr. Martin: *Paßerhalten*, June 7th, 1921

³² The photo's subjects were confirmed by holder, Rüdiger. A copy was also passed by Hans Martin's spouse to Heinz daughter, Irene who assures: "the taller one is definitely Martin. Regarding the shorter, Hans always was a tall man" and so "this [photo] would confirm his size." In musing whether it might have been Heinz and not Hans, who was just 15 months younger than Martin he would then have to be 11 ½. She notes "Martin ... and Heinz looked very similar," but she adds: "I can't swear this is my father... [He]...wasn't the tallest person ever."

³³ Research attributes this growth in height to increased consumption of protein-rich meat and of sugar, in comparison with starches, especially potatoes, which decreased between 1907 and 1927/8. Jörg Baten in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overly. Pg. 405

³⁴ Namely the first half of the 20th century. Benninghaus et al in *Germany Since 1800*. Ogilvie&Overly (Eds). Pg. 311

Money was in increasingly short supply and was hardly helped by an economy that was about to get worse, before it got better: Allied demands following Versailles called for USD 5 billion in gold reparations plus coal, chemicals and shipping,³⁵ while the plebiscite in Upper Silesia (see part one) was going to cost Germany 62 of its mines, almost 60m tons of *Steinkohlen-Vorkommen* (coal) and annual revenues of 90 million *Reichsmarks*.

I suspect Frits benefitted from the so-called *Duales Ausbildungssystem* (dual education system) which combined in a single course, apprenticeships within a company and education at a *Fortbildungsschule*.³⁶ Instrumental to their growth was the *Reichsjugendwohlfahrtsgesetz* (RJWG for short or the National Youth Welfare Act) which recognised young people had their own specific needs and interests. Adopted a year later in 1922, it was the result of a state which felt a growing responsibility to protect and advance youngsters' interests³⁷ – crucial considering those born 1900-1914 now made up the largest birth cohort in Germany and competed viciously for jobs.³⁸

Under the Weimar Republic the dual system was extended to girls, with the textile and clothing industries offering most employment for women in the first half of the century.³⁹ Office and retail jobs became plentiful too and were increasingly filled by young females,⁴⁰ (Pitt Deutsch's daughters being counted among them) which conversely provoked concerns they were becoming libertine new women.⁴¹ Many young *Fräuleins* moved to the cities for seemingly glamorous jobs as secretaries, shorthand typists, shop assistants and waitresses.⁴²

But the Weimar Republic was also a time of ambivalence in attitudes⁴³ – the breaking of old taboos and a simultaneous conservative backlash.⁴⁴ Modernization saw a boom in the leisure industry, with many cinemas, theatres, clubs and cafés springing up in cities which in turn grew larger and larger thanks to rural-urban migration. Almost immediately after the war, male and female youths also began doing new dances imported from the US like the foxtrot and one-step.⁴⁵

Mother was quickly becoming a fan of all that was 'modern' and recognised the opportunities post-war Germany offered. But she was also prepared to seize the chance of something less than conventional for her children. She'd grown fond of the movies and began considering a future for her daughter in the film industry.⁴⁶

³⁵ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 121

³⁶ See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dual_education_system

³⁷ Stachura in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History*. Ogilvie and Overy (eds). Pg. 235

³⁸ Andrew Donson. *Youth in the Fatherless Land...1914-1918*. Harvard, 2010. Pg. 228

³⁹ Even if the extent of the training of female workers on the whole remained lower than that of males, says Benninghaus et al in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 307

⁴⁰ The proportion of women in employment remained broadly constant during the Weimar era at about one third, rising slightly to 35.6 percent in 1925, while the number in white collar jobs doubled, according to Lisa Pine in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 364

⁴¹ Andrew Donson. *Youth in the Fatherless Land...1914-1918*. Harvard, 2010. Pg. 150

⁴² Lisa Pine in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 364

⁴³ Lisa Pine in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 355.

⁴⁴ *Das Programm* reports in a byline article published on January 1, 1923 entitled: '*Tanzverboten*' that dancing was outlawed from January 15th in Berlin's and Köln's cabarets and bars until after 2100hrs.

⁴⁵ Andrew Donson. *Youth in the Fatherless Land...1914-1918*. Harvard, 2010. Pg. 232

⁴⁶ In a 1922 memo, Frau Tÿralla actually states: "My oldest daughter... would like to be a film actress." It is a claim her granddaughters' dispute and circumstances eventually suggest it was more likely Frau Tÿralla's personal wish.

Little Nanný's fortuitous start began that summer of 1921, when Albert took her mother along to the *Drei Linden Varieté* theatre for a slice of operetta.⁴⁷ Regular visits were an integral part of the theatre season in every larger German city and since 1918 the *Drei Linden* had ran *Variététheater*, after expanding from its 1912 remit as a *Konzert- und Ballsaal*. Also known as *Revue*, it was directed at the most affluent section of society, according to Marline Otte.



*Das Varieté Drei Linden:
Leipzig-Lindenau, 1920.
Source: Wiki/Musikalische_Komödie*

During the show's interval Nanný bumped into a former acquaintance of her father; impresario, Oswald Büttner (see text box overleaf). Oswald asked after *Herr Hinsch*, who decades earlier had worked for him. She brought him up to date, adding that her parents were now permanently based in the countryside (she decided against mentioning her younger daughter and son's whereabouts). Her eyes positively lit up, however, when Oswald soliloquized about taking his *ensemble* to the US before the war and that he was looking forward to returning in the coming weeks with a group of acrobats, especially given the limited work opportunities available in Germany at the time. If all worked out, he hoped to repeat his success over the following years. He might well be over 50, he joked, but there's life in the old dog yet!

Nanný was intrigued, recalling she'd always appreciated the beauty of the circus and its acrobats and asked: "What opportunities were there to penetrate that line of work nowadays?" She knew for instance many circuses were struggling after the war with attracting visitors who couldn't afford to pay the door prices while many traditional venues were no longer in reach.⁴⁸ She'd heard on the grapevine, however, that *Magdeburg*⁴⁹ had formally just granted residence to the well-known circus family, the *Blumenfelds*.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Operettas were originally intended as parodies of opera, but during the 19th century they ceased to be considered part of counter culture. High-society embraced them as did ordinary men and women, who sang their tunes on city streets, according to Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 92

⁴⁸ Otte adds (see Pgs. 83 and 173) that "after the war, hyperinflation was so severe and mobility so constrained as a result of Versailles that the existence of many German circuses hung by a thread. Those that had rarely run into visa problems crossing borders in prewar central Europe were suddenly confined within the smaller postwar territory. Furthermore, the impoverished German population was hardly able to provide a reliable audience for the numerous circuses. Increasing competition from variety shows and moving pictures further endangered the market. Thus Germany's entertainment scene was economically and artistically impoverished by the war, and the employment opportunities drastically reduced.

⁴⁹ Although the Petzolds (including Albert, his older siblings, his parents and grandparents) left *Magdeburg* in about 1887 (when Albert was five), his 18 month elder *Magdeburg*-born sister, Frieda returned to *Magdeburg-Friedrichstadt* following her marriage to local *Kaufmann*, Hermann Arndt.

⁵⁰ According to Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 98-101, travelling circuses had visited *Magdeburg* regularly since 1878, especially during the autumn trade fairs. In 1894 the city opened a permanent circus arena funded by local investors that included a restaurant, a variety theatre and a mobile stage for concerts and large assemblies of up to 3000 spectators. From 1914 it was occupied by the *Gebrüder Blumenfeld Jr.* (fourth generation *Blumenfelds* who first visited *Magdeburg* in 1896 from their Silesian base dating back to 1885), a move made permanent from April 1920, once back "on top of the world" after a six year hiatus.

9.6: Oswald Büttner and the Work of the Impresario

Oswald Büttner had been plying the entertainment circuit for a good many years before his path crossed with that of Little Nanný's mother. He was an impresario, which means he was a manager, financier and producer within the entertainment industry. In his case, he combined both music and theatre.¹

Büttner was born in 1867 in a small Saxon town called Radeburg, about 20km north of Dresden. A series of promotional postcards from 1902 and 1903 reveal that Leipzig became home to him and his wife, Anna and his son, Arno, born in late 1899. By his early thirties Oswald was the Director of the *I. Mitteldeutschen Variété-Theater-Truppe* - a group of six girls called the *Dornfels Ensemble*, a musical dance act of *Tänzmädchen*. His commercial base was *Wintergartenstrasse 7* (see image on pg. 241), close to where the *Weisse Wand* cinema and the *Krystallpalast* theatre jostled for clients - and he of course for tomorrow's stars. His home later became *Eutritzsch* just north of Gohlis, in the vicinity of the local circus venue frequented for example by *Germania*.



In 1911, Büttner completed his third seasonal (40 week) tour of US variety vaudeville houses with another ensemble of girls.² By 1914 he was back in Germany, with his old act, appealing to patriotic instinct by performing in military uniform under the flag of the Empire! Following the war, Büttner became responsible for a group of six female acrobats (aged between 15 and 19 and from as far afield as Berlin, Breslau and Hamburg) called the "Six Stellas." He and his wife were now preparing to chaperone them to the US in July at the behest of the New York-based booking office: "*Wirth-Blumenfeld Co.*"³

The company was newly formed⁴ and was now scheduling acts to perform on US entertainment circuits. Its office at 1579 Broadway within the Strand Theatre was perfectly situated while Blumenfeld was "directly related to hundreds of circus and other outdoor performers."⁵ According to Marline Otte's *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*,⁶ his name had long been associated with the well-known German-Jewish travelling circus that was "based on acrobatic and animal acts" and provided "traditional circus entertainment for suburbs and rural areas."

That 1921 tour must've promised potential, despite a start which saw 54 year old Oswald interned in hospital with diphtheria for some time after his arrival (ten days in steerage was tough on most passengers!)³ Far from retiring, however, Oswald returned in the summer of 1923 with another group of female acrobats eventually helping to fulfil Keith's dream of "purifying vaudeville" and offering "stage shows with something for everyone."⁷

Sources:

¹ <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/impresario>

² *Ships manifest of 5 Aug 1921, sourced from ellisland.org and Variety magazine, May 30, 1908.*

³ According to the 1921 ship's manifest retrieved from ellisland.org, all aliens' next of kin was Elisabeth Beyer of Chemnitz, Barbarossastr. 73. Chemnitz was the third largest city in Saxony and a popular circus venue for the Blumenfelds according to Otte. It lies 65km east of Leipzig. It also hosted the Admiralpalast, Zentraltheater, Wintergarten, Linde, Rosenhof, Familienlokal Burghalle and Metropoltheater. Beyer could well be a forebearer of [Beyer Finanz](#), today an insurance agent in Chemnitz that declined to answer my enquiries of 28 Jan. and 26 Feb. '13.

⁴ <http://businessprofiles.com/details/wirth-blumenfeld-and-co-inc/NY-18062>

⁵ *Billboard Magazine, issue of 29th March, 1952 via Google books [here](#)*

⁶ *Marline Otte's Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933, Pg.47*

⁷ *Alison Kibler. Rank Ladies. Gender and Cultural Hierarchy in American Vaudeville. Pg. 30 and 37*

Büttner responded with a startled look but quipped: "Typically acrobats start very young... 14 or less ...!" Nannÿ whooped and explained she was rather thinking of her daughters, whose existence was news to Büttner. As it happened, however, Büttner had a well-read copy of the entertainment industry trade journal 'Das Programm' in his pocket, which he promptly pulled out and drew Nannÿ's attention to the various ads. Many sought young female performers aged 14-15, and invited photos alongside descriptions of height, weight and so on in exchange for an apprenticeship on the stage.

Ads also typically mentioned the importance of 'qualifications' such as "pleasant appearance, lust and a predisposition for gymnastics, a good figure and solid school reports" besides the ability to do handstands, headstands and acrobatics. Büttner suggested Nannÿ followed the instructions in one particular ad and to mention their meeting in her response.

From a look through *Das Programm*, Frau Tÿralla noted the many classifieds from talent offices stretching from Leipzig to London calling for acrobats in an attempt to lure its girls to the US, while banking agents offered moneygram services from America. This could be too good to be true! In its editorial she read how working abroad in America offered a potential contract of 200 dollars a week for just 14 weeks work!⁵¹ In those days of inflation, hard currency was especially valuable⁵² and 200 dollars at today's rates equaled 15,000 marks!

Professionals had long recognized the opportunity the US stage offered: "Salaries... frankly... is Vaudeville's chief charm" it was said in 1904, while in 1910, one English stage actress named Mrs Patrick Campbell (or simply 'Mrs Pat') admitted her high salary was the primary inducement for her to leave Great Britain and go "vaudevilling" in the US. "I was stony broke. So I came over here," she said.⁵³

Little Nannÿ was rushed off to the studio and a photo shoot promptly arranged which yielded a gorgeous portfolio of pictures, two of which are shown right. Her mother mailed the application together with the portraits, notified Büttner and eagerly awaited news. In the meantime, Little Nannÿ knuckled down to her final year at school in Leipzig.



Above: One of many calls for acrobats appearing in *Das Programm* in the early 1920's

Below: Have Bubikopf, will travel; Little Nannÿ heading for the stage at 13



⁵¹ Strictly speaking, the *Das Programm* issue is from 26th October, 1924

⁵² Bergmann. *What Will Become of the Children? A Novel of a German Family* (1932). Camden House. 2010. Pg.29

⁵³ Alison Kibler. *Rank Ladies. Gender and Cultural Hierarchy in American Vaudeville*. 1999. Pg. 86

While the eldest Tjralla was put on course for a career on the stage and the Hinsch boys benefitted a change of scenery, Theo and Margot endured the same old sights in Machern that summer, bar *Herr Steppan's* departure in early August and his replacement by two new faces, those of an engineer and a merchant. Neither *Hermann Knoll* nor *August Portmann* stayed very long though, and shortly before leaving the following month, Margot entered secondary school while Theo kicked off his penultimate year of private education.

In October 1921, *Hanns Fischer*, a writer, chemist and naturalist from Prussian Lower Silesia moved in to Villa 17 together with his wife. His arrival was in no small part thanks to Machern's very own rich and famous; *Robert Voigtländer*, whose publishing house, *R. Voigtländers Verlag* (see Chapter VI) printed a number of Fischer's books from the mid-1920s onwards. As the short introduction to him in the textbox below reveals, he was no ordinary writer.

9.7: Hanns Fischer: Naturalist who Popularised World Ice Theory (and 'saved' the young Tjrallas)

Hanns Fischer was born on January 25th 1888 in Carolath, Lower Silesia (today *Siedlisko* in Poland), a rural community that had been part of Prussia since 1742. The township lay about 150km north of Waldenburg, where Paul Tjralla apprenticed in 1900. He was Frau Tjralla's junior by a little over four years.

After departing his birthplace, Fischer spent his formative years travelling and studying chemistry as well as lecturing in neighbouring *Thuringia*. He travelled to India too and returned shortly before the outbreak of the first world war, whereafter he served as a chemist at the Western Front.

His life's work seems largely to have been dedicated to popularising the lively, scientific world view of an Austrian engineer and inventor named *Hans Hörbiger* who proposed a cosmological concept called world ice theory (*Welteislehre*) or glacial cosmogony. According to Hörbiger's ideas, ice was the basic substance of all cosmic processes, and ice moons, ice planets, and the "global ether" (also made of ice) determined the entire development of the universe.

Following World War I, Hörbiger pitched his new 'cosmic truth' to the general public, believing that if 'the masses' accepted his ideas, they might put enough pressure on the academic establishment to force his ideas into the mainstream. In October 1921, Hanns Fischer moved to Machern during which time he became a committed advocate and whereafter: "He spoke for hours of his amazement for Hanns Hörbiger and cosmic ice theory." A local Leipzig publisher was one of those that contributed to the dozens of scientific journals, books, and even novels that were published on the topic, including Fischer's works.

As a researcher of ancient nature, Fischer was tireless in his search for truth. Owing to his 'faith' he preferred to live close to it because it enabled him to better understand its mystical processes and deepest secrets. He considered townfolk underprivileged for being penned in by the stone casts of the big cities. They could not enjoy a pristine and vast habitat, such as that which the countryside offered.

In 1923, Fischer moved to *Münden* near Hanover, after which he published the first layperson's book on world ice theory: '*Rätsel der Tiefe*' or 'Riddle of the Deep.' "No book has contributed so much to spread the cosmic ice theory," claimed *Voigtländers-Verlag Leipzig* in 1930. But before he published that tome, being a writer he penned a letter to the Welfare Office in neighbouring *Grimma*, reflecting his more humanitarian nature. Can you imagine what it said?



Sources: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Welteislehre; www.wfg-gk.de/glacialkosmos57.html; Hanns Hörbiger - ein Schicksal. HW Behm, 1930, v. Hase & Koehler Publishers, Leipzig (image); „Acht Jahre WEL-Verleger“ von Otto Voigtländer / Leipzig; „Schlüssel zum Weltgeschehen,“ Heft 11/12, S. 450-451, 1930, Voigtländers Verlag-Leipzig; and Deutsches Literatur-Lexikon. Das 20. Jahrhundert. Band 8. Erni – Fischer. K. G. Saur Verlag GmbH & Company, Walter De Gruyter Incorporated. Wilhelm Kosch (Ed) et. Al. Online [here](#). 2005.

Despite the humdrum of country life that Margot and Theo weathered that winter, they were seldom out of trouble when together. That February, however, Theo's thoughts drifted towards his elder sister after receiving a letter from her that included a photo commemorating her confirmation. On its reverse was written:

"Nannj, Ihren lieben Theo zur eurigen Erinnerung. Leipzig, den 29. I. 2 "

"Nannj, to dearly loved Theo. In Memory. Leipzig, 29th January, (19)2_ "

Those few words offered clues as to my grandmother's comings and goings but none I could quite resolve – at least until I read her father's *Nachlassakte* in 2013.

The text hints, for instance, that Nannj and Theo were separated, she obviously in Leipzig while he was stationed elsewhere (a fact confirmed by the abovementioned estate record). Also, it appears to reflect on an event the pair both enjoyed, since she writes 'In Memory,' while it is also noteworthy that the words' appearance gives the impression Theo's name was later added. Since there was several identical photographs, it seems likely my grandmother had a set for distribution to family and friends. And as we suspect, they marked a special event, i.e. her Confirmation.

A third clue is the sense of occasion captured in her sentences, almost as if Little Nannj was departing Leipzig and wished not to be forgotten. The last digit of the date for instance was 'lost' when the photo, having been pasted into a scrapbook, was removed, although I suspect it said 1922. According to her residential record she moved on February 1st to the pretty and peaceful town of *Lützen* (numbering no more than 4,000 inhabitants in 1900) some 20km southwest of Leipzig.

Lützen though struck me as an odd destination for rounding out one's final year of education, given that it lay in the heart of the region's coal mining zone.⁵⁴ Just in case it offered a specialist *Fortbildungsschule*, I enquired at the *Historisches Stadtarchiv*. Although such a school had existed,⁵⁵ Little Nannj collected no reference to a 'Fortbildungsschein' on her residential record (unlike her cousins). The *Stadtarchiv* could shed no light either.⁵⁶

Having got this far without Paul Tyralla's *Nachlassakte*, what extra could I therefore determine from it? Far from being a momentous departure, in her mother's own words; "since" Little Nannj "was very ill, I sent her to a well-known family of doctors in *Lützen* for recuperation."⁵⁷

Little Nannj had sent her brother the photo because she was poorly. Oddly enough, however, none of her daughters recall her having been so ill as a child that she required what would become five months convalescence! Which begs the question, was it another of *Frau Tyralla's* ploys to admonish responsibility, even cash in on their welfare benefits and the charitable nature of others? Not many other explanations spring to mind.

⁵⁴ See: <http://www.stadt-luetzen.de/de/geschichtekurzchronik.html> and <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luetzen>

⁵⁵ See: <http://www.jale-online.de/Schulwesen/>

⁵⁶ Enquiries sent on January 15th, 2013 via <http://www.stadt-luetzen.de/de/kontakt.html>, an email to Museum@Luetzen-info.de and to Museum.Luetzen@gmx.de garnered no response. Interest from christine.schunke@stadt-luetzen.de was followed up on February 23rd, 2013, again without response.

⁵⁷ Paul Tyralla's *NachlasseAkte*: 8 NReg. 1494/16 held at the *Sächsisches Staatsarchiv*.

While Herr Fischer put the finishing touches to *'The Wonders of the World's Ice: A Comprehensive Introduction to the World Ice Theory of Hans Hörbiger'*,⁵⁸ his landlady's rearing of Margot, much less her constant bickering with Friedrich grew to become more than just a distraction. In fact, he found himself so put out by Marie's behaviour that he was all for visiting Margot's school and taking issue with her teachers. His poor wife had her work cut out preventing him from interfering in other peoples' business, which meant they quarrelled too - even fight, according to Marie.

The kids completed their schooling by Easter and upon Theo's return to Machern matters came to a head in late April when Frau Hinsch saw; "Mr. Fischer beat Theodor for no reason at all" and "then hit me and my husband." Without hesitation Marie evicted the couple.

Of course there's no smoke without fire and Hanns Fischer's riposte was to write a letter to the *Amthauptmannschaft Grimma* (the neighbouring town council) over the Hinsch's rearing of their grandchildren, citing verbal and physical abuse besides crude beatings, which Margot eventually illustrated as follows:

"I was punished almost daily, typically for little things. For example, I'd use too much water for washing myself. I was not allowed to use soap every day. In the absence of my grandmother, Theo and I once spoke to the Hausleute and asked them to explain the return dates on a train ticket.⁵⁹ When I mentioned this later to my grandmother, I received a near deadly beating. I ended up with bumps on my head, while Theo was soon beaten blue."

According to historian Elisabeth Domansky, the social interventionist state that emerged during the war was further developed during the Weimar Republic.⁶⁰ "Welfare organisations even interfered in domestic matters, with social workers forcibly removing children from their families to place them in foster homes if their parents failed to function according to standards defined by society and the state."

Never mind parents, this was her grandparents we were talking of. However, while the rural administration's welfare office wasted no time in picking up on Herr Fischer's statement, sending in *Gendarmeriehauptwachtmeister Schulz* to investigate Herr Fischer's allegations, by comparison, the city authorities in Leipzig spent a woefully long time proving the concerns which had been raised. And that even after Leipzig reassigned the same case officer who had dealt with the kids' mistreatment at the hands of the Hinsch's back in 1917!

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⁵⁸ *Die Wunder des Welteises. Eine gemeinverständliche Einführung in die Welteislehre Hanns Hörbigers,* published in 1922.

⁵⁹ The train ticket heralded Margot and Theo's 'release' from Machern, which in no uncertain terms disgraced the Hinsch's in front of the Fischers' replacement, *Privatmann Fauer*, who moved in mid-May. Yet even without the kids' innocent enquiry, it was too late for their grandparents to conceal the writing that was already on the wall, and there is every indication their rough handling of the kids on that occasion was by no means the first and only one.

⁶⁰ Elisabeth Domansky. *Militarisation and Reproduction in World War I Germany in Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870-1930.* University of Michigan Press (30 Nov 1997). Pg. 461 (in Google Books [here](#))

Around about the same time as tempers frayed in Machern, news came through that Little Nannj's talent office application had been accepted. She was invited to apprentice as a *Tänzerin* (dancer) in the industrial town of *Düsseldorf* in Prussia's westernmost province: the *Rhineland*. She returned to Leipzig that April to collect her travel pass for the journey slated for June, but encountered an unexpected delay when the now almost 'annual' spring revolt reoccurred.

Continental Europe today is well accustomed to International Workers' Day which takes place on May 1st, a celebration of the global labour movement, that is, the working classes. A month beforehand, however, the Saxon government stirred controversy among its bourgeois electorate when it suggested that date – and November 9th (the anniversary of the 1918 revolution and the day on which Germany was declared a Republic) – serve as state holidays.⁶¹

The bourgeois parties were unanimous in their rejection of the two memorial days, especially that of November 9th. German Democratic Party (DDP) deputy, Peter Reinhold, argued it was the occasion in which the German people, in an hour of spiritual and physical collapse, threw down their weapons, and which by such a cowardly deed, led Germany to the miserable abyss it now found itself in. Declaring November 9th a national holiday then was an act of national indignity.

His remarks resonated with the bourgeoisie and the parties of the right, who saw November 9th as an act of treachery, cowardice and national disgrace – in short, the stab-in-the-back legend in its entirety. Even Leipzig's mayor recognized that if the date were to be celebrated as a public holiday, it would lead to outbreaks of violence with its middle-classes.⁶²

That very first attempt at a May Day holiday therefore saw as many as 80,000 demonstrators gather to protest on *Augustusplatz*. Rioting ensued against a backdrop of black and yellow flags (that of the fallen *Wettin* monarchy), stirring the police into action.⁶³ In parallel, a petition to initiate a referendum on the matter of the holidays received almost three times the minimum vote required to put the question to a ballot, further highlighting the hostility to the policies of the socialist government. That in turn led to the dissolution of the Saxon parliament, followed by new elections.⁶⁴

The following day (presumably once public services re-opened or at least could safely be reached) *Fräulein Tjyralla* collected her travel pass, accompanied by her mother who planned to travel herself that month. To celebrate her eldest's promising career start, I wonder if they dropped into *Café Bauer* close to her former home on *Rosßplatz*, now also a movie theatre known as the '*Gloria Palast*.' While sipping coffee I'll wager Frau Tjyralla's hopes grew that her daughter would become more than just a star of the stage. Cinema was just beginning to spawn household names like *Pola Negri* and she longed to boast, once *Kleine Nannij's* name appeared in lights too.

⁶¹ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 325

⁶² Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 325

⁶³ See: <http://home.arcor.de/command3rk33n/Chronik/1922/1922.htm>

⁶⁴ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 325

9.8: Race to the Stage?

Had Little Nannÿ heard Marlene Dietrich speak of her time in dance school, she might well have been put off for a lifetime. "I was having dancing lessons" she once remarked "and had to dance with everyone in the room, including a young man whom I did not like, nor his dancing either. I made a long face. Mother saw it and slapped me as soon as we were alone. "You must not show your feelings," she said "it is bad manners!"

Prussian discipline and duty was a common thread in both girls' lives. Like Dietrich, Little Nannÿ had little choice but to do as she was told by her mother. Yet unlike the would-be siren, her passage to the stage, while not one she longed for, turned out to be far swifter!

When Berlin's theatre life and performing arts schools began to boom in the early 1920s, Dietrich took her chance in drama. She applied for an apprenticeship at impresario Max Reinhard's drama school in Berlin's *Schumannstrasse* theatre. Reinhard, however, didn't feel she was ready and so one of his assistant directors took her for private lessons. For a time Dietrich found herself working as a chorus girl and playing small roles in dramas. Up until the winter of 1921 therefore she worked as a showgirl in the touring companies of *Guido Thielscher*, whose shows provided the larger provincial German cities with the illusion of metropolitan titillation. Who knows, maybe Little Nannÿ's mother saw the then unknown Dietrich on the stage at the *Drei Linden*?

In the summer of 1922, around the same time as Frau Tÿralla learned that her daughter was to become a dancer, Dietrich earned her first screen test. It wasn't a big success, the jury attributing her "no talent whatsoever." She persevered and that of 1923 (see inset above, not at all dissimilar to Little Nannÿ's test pictures shown on Pg. 265) turned heads. That landed her her first film: *Der Kleine Napoleon* and on the set of the next, *Tragödie der Liebe*, she met her future husband, the assistant director, Rudolf Sieber.

Dietrich's career subsequently took off. She was admitted into Reinhard's company and appeared on both the Berlin stage and in silent films, until her 1930 movie *The Blue Angel* launched her international career. Yet by that time, six years younger Little Nannÿ was already a veteran of the international stage, having graced England, Germany and America's best since autumn 1923, sharing the bill and marquee with countless big names, including Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, Gypsy Rose Lee and Sophie Tucker to name but a few!

Sources: Dietrich, Alexander Walker, Pg.11-18; and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marlene_Dietrich



Despite her clean bill of health and imminent departure, Little Nannÿ was sent back to *Lützen* for a second spell that lasted right up until she left for *Düsseldorf*. She was filled with trepidation that no ordinary career lay ahead of her, and although her forthcoming journey across Germany did not mean she was off to America just yet, *Frau Tÿralla* was more optimistic. Little Nannÿ couldn't stand the thought of traveling away from home again, never mind so far, although she was getting used to it.

In being kept at a safe distance by her mother alongside her siblings, *Onkel Albert* continued to tinker with his cigarette/cigar and now razorblade holders while peddling *Nahrungsmittel* at the *Leipziger Messe* (in both spring and autumn, 1922). That May, however, the couple took off for a holiday – perhaps the *Ostsee* again.

Weeks later, however, the world turned topsy turvy when 'Frau Petzold,' was called to appear at Saxony's family court (*Vormundschaftsgericht*). Although she didn't yet know it, she was to be questioned in regards to her marriage to Albert; her children's tutelage and their separation from her; and to whom she'd assigned guardianship in her place. Grimma's Welfare Office, having instigated proceedings, set its sights on nothing less than the kids' transfer from her parents.

Frau Týralla was still away when the court's second summons came through, but after her mother learned of it (most likely thanks to *Sergeant Schulz's* enquiries), she voluntarily appeared in her daughter's place. She wasted no time in reporting; "The information about the poor treatment of my grandchildren is based on defamation." Obviously riled by the writer's indictments and his willingness to repeat them in court, she named four persons that would testify she and her husband behaved properly and had "not caused the children any suffering." For good measure, she adds the name of a *Dögnitz* parish councillor who would also affirm "how we have been backstabbed and slandered."

Frau Týralla was due to return the following day and so Marie suggested the court admit Theo and Margot for questioning besides her daughter. Her intent was to ensure they said what she wanted them to say, and although the request was granted, welfare officers voiced concerns that the youngsters "would not give a truthful account of the situation as long as they under their grandmother's control and cannot truthfully disclose any opinion for fear of being hit." Frau Hinsch, however, assured the court she would not pre-empt their interventions, adding that her daughter shall arrive 45 minutes beforehand to assuage them.

Disregarding her empty promises, all four appeared on June 7th together. When individually questioned, Theo, after stating he came down to Leipzig together with Margot and his grandmother, later admits to taking an earlier train to "ensure his mother appeared." That, however, was not in his script leaving his grandmother furious, who asserted he twisted the facts. "I have told him already, simply to tell only the truth!" she told the court excitedly. "That really made me want to give him a clip around the ears!"

The court was dismayed, reflecting in their post-hearing report that her "lack of restraint and expression implied her handling of the children was probably less than delicate." Whatsmore, Theo and Margot's statements; "We enjoy being at our grandmother's. We always get enough to eat. We were only hit when we were naughty," lead it to conclude "no great value" can be placed upon their opinions which "are not typically child-like." I bet Grimma's Welfare Officer, Emma Hallbauer could be heard saying "I told you so."

However, the court had little else negative to say about Frau Hinsch. "The first impression... is not unfavourable" it reported while the youngsters' "outer appearance and cleanliness speaks in the grandmother's favour. Theodor is a fresh, healthy boy, Margot something of a shy and intimidated little girl."

The court took less of a liking to *Frau Týralla* after she responded to her three questions. She first of all clarifies she is not married to *Herr Petzold* but has rather been obliged to 'cede' her apartment to him "due to the severe housing shortage" thereby justifying why she is "often mistakenly referred to in the neighbourhood as *Frau Petzold*." She then informs the court that Theo and Margot "are only at their grandmother's when I travel" and verifies that Theo's tuition is paid for from her own pocket, despite not having any profession of her own; the meagre (and as yet unchanged) government support; and while sub-letting two rooms. She has sold most of her furniture and at best enjoys only the occasional support of her brother.

In other words, she was a poor woman, while Theo and Margot's sojourns at their grandparents not only ensured they were well educated, but enabled her to weather the economic crisis.

As to the children's guardianship, *Frau Tjyralla* informs the court that her eldest lives with her (albeit presently in Lützen) and will attend *Fortbildungsschule* to study trade (even if Little Nannj was about to become a dancer). But, she almost whimpers: "I am willing, if need be, to take the children back from the grandparents. However, due to the lack of space that would absolutely cause trouble," and with tongue in cheek, she suggests Theo and Margot choose their preferred home. She follows this by denying any wrongdoing by her parents, stating that her children "would surely have complained to me, if things were not good." She neither "remember[s] any such instance when complaints were made about them being noisy."

Both 'iron' ladies likely received legal counsel prior to making their statements, however, it was not fooled. Frau Tjyralla was (too) "modestly dressed and strongly perfumed (unpleasantly so) to accept her sole source of income to have been based upon a war widow's pension and orphans' allowances." It took a dislike to her refusal to detail the purpose and meaning of her trips, while recognising Theo had "been ordered how to behave," following his arrival with his mother. Considering how many women at the time were obliged to work, manage a household and be mother, behind closed doors I imagine Frau Tjyralla was despised for doing 'none of the above.'

Despite acknowledging the kids' rough treatment at the hands of their grandmother, instead of putting the mother 'in her place,' the judge and jury simply concluded an upbringing in Machern was the only way forward. Citing Frau Tjyralla's "morally unacceptable" lifestyle, "her appearance" and "the ambiguity of her relationship with *Kaufmann Petzold*" (which rendered the youngsters only informally patronized), the 'morality police' considered these sufficient grounds for keeping them at their grandparents.

Grimma's Welfare Office's concerns had been rejected. Nevertheless, ten days later it came to their defence, informing the court that Theo and Margot would be separately moved to a *Kinderheim* in Bavaria, each for a period of six weeks in the belief that it would lend the necessary space for them to speak more freely regarding their upbringing.⁶⁵ Passage to safety, however, hardly lay around the corner as Saxony's family court proceeded to call up each of the Hinsch's favoured witnesses to hear their views, who, despite their resignation, would not speak negatively of Marie and her husband, Friedrich, making the job of the welfare officers all the more difficult.

But why wasn't the court looking beyond the Hinsch's neighbours? According to *Sergeant Schulz's* conclusions, Frau Hinsch was "an evil and scheming individual" well-known in the entire area, such that no one dares cross her path, let alone testify against her. Shouldn't they have been talking to *Herr Steppan* for instance, or even *Herr Fischer*? Grimma's Welfare Office was asking the same questions come December 1922, but by that time it was almost too late.

⁶⁵ Where the cost was to be covered by the war welfare fund.

Just as it was decided Theo and Margot would go to Bavaria, Little Nannÿ returned to Leipzig. Her departure to *Düsseldorf* was overshadowed by resurgent crowds on *Augustusplatz* on June 27th, 1922,⁶⁶ when as many as 200,000 demonstrated against counter-revolutionary terrorism. Their protest was triggered by the assassination of the German-Jewish foreign minister, German Democratic Party founder and nationalist Walther Rathenau.⁶⁷ His death in Berlin on June 24th (at the hands of extreme German nationalists) shook what little faith remained in Germany's economic recovery and that summer the mark fell to 400 per dollar.⁶⁸

A few days later, on June 30th, Little Nannÿ travelled 500km across central Germany by train, stopping 50km short of the Dutch border. *Düsseldorf*, nestled on the mighty river *Rhine* within the *Ruhr* region, had then a population marginally smaller than Leipzig's at 420,000. It was not the first time she'd travelled of course, but it was the farthest from home so far. Like her father, she began her working life at 14.

Fräulein Tjyralla's residential record reveals she was gone for almost six months. Its reference to 'Tänzerin' might have suggested dance school lay ahead – the word literally translating as 'female dancer,' which in turn intimates she learnt choreographed elements of ballet, revue, chorus girl or cabaret. However, since we know Little Nannÿ performed on stage chiefly as an acrobat, it is with Frank Cullen's help (he being the author of '*Vaudeville, Old and New: An Encyclopedia of Variety Performers in America Vol.1*'), that we can appreciate that definition: "Some acrobat troupes incorporated dance moves, and it was a moot decision to peg them as acrobatic dance acts or as dancing acrobats." The genre, known as 'Acro Dance' today, "seamlessly blends dance and acrobatics, and its use of acrobatics in a dance context," adds Wikipedia.⁶⁹

According to the same source, acrobatic dance emerged in the United States and Canada in the early 1900s as one of the types of acts performed in vaudeville. Although individual dance and acrobatic acts had been performed for several decades prior to 1900, it was not until the early 1900s that it became popular to perform acts combining dance and acrobatic movements. Look closely at the *Das Programm* ad on page 265 and you will see it actually says 'Akr. Tänzerin.'

Neither Little Nannÿ's *Einwohnermeldekarte* nor *Düsseldorf's* archives leave any clues as to where she stayed, although according to its *StadtArchivist*, Patrick Fijalkowski, "she probably didn't register due to her stay's short duration." That would certainly explain why, when she returned 35 years later, she barely mentioned the town's significance to her accompanying daughters. Another reason volunteered Fijalkowski is that "she worked/trained for a private and not a public institution/facility." The local archives neither have any documents or resources on acrobat or dance schools within the vicinity,⁷⁰ therefore I'm inclined to think my grandmother trained with a community that was typically on the move; a circus, for instance. Was then her journey there timed to coincide with her hosts' own passage through *Düsseldorf*?

⁶⁶ Martina Güldemann in 1999 in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert in LEIPZIG*. Pg. 28

⁶⁷ See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walther_Rathenau#Assassination_and_aftermath

⁶⁸ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 122

⁶⁹ See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acro_dance

⁷⁰ An email sent for her EWMK to: stadtarchiv@duesseldorf.de on February 6th, 2013 in turn came up negative.

“Acrobats were among the royalty of the circus,” Frank Cullen continues, while the *Rhineland* had once been the backyard of the famous *Blumenfelds*, renowned since the early 1800s for their acrobatic and strong arm acts.⁷¹ Since circuses were typically in transit from April until October,⁷² that meant Little Nannÿ could catch up with one or other midway through its tour. In joining, she would accustom herself to its live shows besides train at the same time.

As it happens, *gebr. Blumenfeld Jnr. of Magdeburg* was in the vicinity that July, 75km northwest in *Dortmund*.⁷³ Accounting for this, Oswald Büttner’s connections to the family and that the impresario was back in Germany that summer following his US tour, it appears not only likely that Little Nannÿ apprenticed within the circus, but that she joined *that* famous circus family.⁷⁴

My grandmother could perhaps count herself fortunate. For most acrobats an apprenticeship began at the age of four or five, their graceful light-footed appearance the result of years hard and disciplined training that included contortionist gymnastics too. Writes Marline Otte; “Young unmarried women who were part of the circus were submitted to a strict regime. They had to sleep in a special wagon where they were chaperoned by an older woman. Their daily routines were strictly regulated rounds of training sessions, communal meals, traveling preparations, performances and sleep.”⁷⁵ Apprentices had to do their fair share of manual labour too, assisting experienced acrobats prepare for their stage shows, helping get them into costume, applying make-up, performing massage, cleaning and so on.



It was a regime Little Nannÿ would endure throughout the following years as an acrobat herself. She was going to be on a fast learning curve in order to perform at the highest levels, therefore I think she can be forgiven for having missed the celebrations that occurred when the *Deutschlandlied* became the national anthem on August 11th.

Adopted shortly after the assassination of Rathenau, it was in fact one element of a complex political negotiation. In essence, the political right was granted the very nationalistic anthem, „*Deutschland Deutschland über alles*” while the left had its way in the selection of the national colors – those of the nineteenth century liberal revolutionaries (the right had wanted the colours of the Bismarckian empire; black, white and red).

⁷¹ *Palatinate* (which lies southeast of the *Rhineland*) was a notable home to circus artists too, while neighbouring French/German speaking region Alsace was known as the circus world’s heartland in the early nineteenth century. Another well-known circus family was the *Strassburgers*, named after the capital of Palatinate-neighbour, Alsace

⁷² From November until March (ie. the winter break), the circus enjoyed permanent residency, a time when it trained together and worked out new stunts etc. Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment*. Pg. 50, 54

⁷³ *Die Blumenfelds. Schicksale einer jüdischen Zirkusfamilie*. Winkler, D/Winkler, G. Edition Schwarzdruk. 2012. Pg. 396

⁷⁴ An investigation of the *Blumenfeld* archives in *Magdeburg* might ultimately confirm this.

⁷⁵ Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 53, 68

Literally the anthem's wording translates as "Germany Germany above all others." The music was written in 1797 by Joseph Haydn and in 1841 benefitted the lyrics (considered revolutionary at the time) of the German linguist and poet *August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben*.⁷⁶ Little Nannÿ's mother, uncle and grandparents probably reveled in its adoption although at the same time bemoaned the flag as another nail in the coffin for Germany. I bet that still didn't stop the elderly Hinsch's from hanging the flag of the imperial monarchy from their villa on Sundays, despite the embarrassment it may have caused their Saxon neighbours – or even Margot.⁷⁷

Around about the time the touring circus typically breaks for winter, Little Nannÿ returned home in mid-November.⁷⁸ Was it any coincidence that the *gebr. Blumenfeld Jnr.* returned to their living quarters in Magdeburg at the same time?⁷⁹ Could she conceivably have been met there by Albert and her mother, and at the same time visited his sister there?

That November meanwhile, Oswald Büttner was busy responding to an invitation he'd received from two successful variety show producers; Henry C. Jacobs and John G. Jermon. They had tentatively accepted Büttner's offer for an acrobat set within a revue show they were preparing and planning to tour the eastern US with called the '*Queens of Paris.*' They asked him, however, to revise his 1921 routines, to adapt and improve them.⁸⁰ That affirmed his ideas for changing the act's personnel and branding. His selection therefore would be based on reports filed by his apprentices' respective circus hosts.

He eventually plummed for six local girls, including Little Nannÿ. Those selected to be part of her cohort were all older than she and were aged between 17 and 19. What a chance of a lifetime, even if to Little Nannÿ this was still part and parcel of meeting her mother's expectations. To aid the marketing and booking of the act beyond its variety show commitments, a portfolio of promotional pictures was made for the troupe that was to be known as; '*The Six Rockets.*' Little Nannÿ's portraits, taken not far from her home in *Hallesche Str. 91-93*, reveal a prim young woman. Surrounded by an auro of glamour, as performers so often were, she must've made her mother very proud. I wonder what Uncle Fritz thought. Glamorous occupations were not for cast-in-the-mould Prussians. Whatever next from his sister, I bet! Neither of Pitt Deutsche's girls frolicked in show business either.



Shot in *Leipzig Gohlis*,
Little Nannÿ at 15 (1922)

⁷⁶ See: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deutschlandlied>

⁷⁷ According to one of Thomas Kohut's interviewees, the German flag was typically hung out on Sundays. *A German Generation* Yale University Press. 2012. Pg. 25

⁷⁸ Am 30.6.22 n. *Düsseldorf*. Am 15.11.22 zurück, which suggest she did not return from Düsseldorf.

⁷⁹ Winkler, D/Winkler, G. *Die Blumenfelds. Schicksale einer jüdischen Zirkusfamilie. Edition Schwarzdruck*. Pg. 396

⁸⁰ *Das Programm*, No. 1220, August 23rd, 1925

A month after Little Nannÿ had gone to *Düsseldorf*, Theo left for *Sachsenhauses Kinderheims Wöllershof* in *Neustadt an der Waldnaab*. With a population of roughly 3000 in 1920,⁸¹ the Bavarian village lay on the far side of newly formed Czechoslovakia's western tip. Although only about 125km south of Leipzig, the journey was no mere hop from *Wurzen*, taking over half a day by train.



Safe House: *Kinderheims Wöllershof*.
Margot and Theo's summertime getaway

My first thought was to wonder why Theo wasn't accompanied by Margot. Considering he knew no one at the orphanage and had spent much of his childhood without his sisters, it surely would have done the pair the world of good to be together. Instead Margot remained alone in *Machern*, waiting impatiently for her turn to travel, where the only change was *Herr Fischer's* replacement by *Privatmann Fauer*.

Ahead of Theo's arrival, *Herr Ritschel* of Saxony's family court wrote to his counterpart in *Neustadt* introducing the lad and his sister while declaring the alleged reasons for their transfers, namely that the "elderly grandparents... rear the children with strict discipline and a poor diet whilst unduly exploiting their labour." The court was therefore requested to "pay close attention to the children's claims" since their earlier "statements appear to have been influenced."

Midway into his stay, Theo was summoned to court upon which he issued an almost identical statement to that he'd tendered in Leipzig, i.e. he and his sister fared well at their grandparents and that any blame for his suffering was his alone. Caregivers in *Wöllershof* though noticed a different side to the 13 year old, who they saw as "extremely shaken... very timid, quiet and [who] hardly laughed once." Fortunately, Theo found the courage to express himself more honestly in a confidential letter to the orphanage's *Fräulein Domsch* in which he refuted his statements (although it was many weeks before this information reached the family court in Leipzig).

On September 11th, ten year old Margot took Theo's place.⁸² She never made it into court, however, although a nun at the orphanage reflected that she spoke of her time at the grandparents in much the same way Theo formally had. Reviewing both reactions, Saxony's court officer informed Grimma on October 6th there was no reason to intervene, nor change matters regarding custody.

The reason Margot hadn't made it into court was because she had been sent back to Leipzig, allegedly "because of her bed-wetting problem." Now if ever there were grounds to monitor a child more closely, those were surely among them.⁸³

⁸¹ http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neustadt_an_der_Waldnaab

⁸² Noteworthy is the fact that the event, not insignificant, wasn't recorded on Margot's residential record.

⁸³ *Nocturnal enuresis* is frequently associated with a family history of the condition but can also be connected to emotional or physical trauma, e.g., extreme bullying, moving to a new town, parental conflict or divorce. Only a small percentage is caused by a specific medical condition such as a bladder infection. Treatment plans are therefore aimed at protecting or improving self-esteem. See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nocturnal_enuresis

Kinderheims Wöllershof was, however, an orphanage, not a hospital and in returning her on September 27th it brought about a blessing in disguise. The journey home was reported as follows by a volunteer named *Frau Gentsch*, who escorted Margot:

"The train conductor assured me an empty compartment...to which the sick Tjyralla child was immediately brought, wrapped in a woolen blanket which by chance we were returning to another child in Leipzig. We laid her on the bench, using a parcel for a pillow.⁸⁴ The two other youngsters [I escorted home] were also dead tired. They lay on the opposite bench using their coats as pillows and mine to cover them. They all slept until Altenburg [50km south of Leipzig]. Only the sick child moaned and whined. As the children woke up, the little girl from Borsdorf⁸⁵ said that Margot cried out of fear of her grandmother, since she is so strict. I asked the child if that was true. She trembled, held me with both hands and said: "Oh, please, don't say anything to my grandmother. She is so strict. Otherwise I will be beaten." I calmed the child down and told her we'd soon be in Horstsee⁸⁶ and asked whether she'd like to go there.

Lighting up she said: "Yes" and then was quiet for a while. But the closer we got to Leipzig, she cried and trembled again. In Leipzig, a widowed mother of seven children offered us a warm welcome as she collected her child. Then all was quiet again as there was no one to pick up [Margot]. In Borsdorf the other child was collected, leaving only the small Tjyralla unclaimed, who should have been picked up...[too]. She began to cry since she had been completely forgotten. Her grandmother had been notified, however, did not show up. So I took the poor child to Grimma. She seemed very happy with this solution. I would have gladly taken the poor thing home and taken care of her until arriving at Horstsee. However the tonsillitis and the whole appearance of the child left me in fear of the worst. Therefore I took the child immediately after my arrival at 2130 to the city hospital, where she received the proper care and immediate assistance. The Welfare Office in Grimma was informed the following morning of September 28th. At the same time my suspicion of scarlet fever was confirmed,⁸⁷ therefore it seemed a good idea to inform Wöllershof so the other children could be observed.

In the child's interest I hope she is never returned to her grandmother. Nevertheless, the child has not further spoken suggesting the fear is so great, that it seems advisable to me to accommodate the child elsewhere and not be returned to her grandmother."

With Margot still interred in hospital come October 9th, *Frau Gentsch's* report was transmitted to Saxony's family court, at which point Grimma's Welfare Office urged that following her recovery she be moved to *Kinderheim Horstsee*, followed by placement within a family (the costs, it added, were already under negotiation with the District Office for War Benefits).⁸⁸

⁸⁴ According to one of Thomas Kohut's interviewees, fourth class railway carriages at the time had "wooden benches and a large open space in the middle where the market women used to put their baskets." *A German Generation*. T.A. Kohut. Yale University Press. 2012. Pg. 32

⁸⁵ Midway between Macher and Leipzig

⁸⁶ *Horstsee* is a small settlement that sits on one of several small lakes just south of *Wermisdorf*, which itself lies about 15km from Grimma and about the same distance from *Wurzen*. I suspect *Frau Gentsch* was in fact referring to *Kinderheim Horstsee*.

⁸⁷ Before the availability of antibiotics (first used from 1924 and later treated by penicillin in the 1940s), scarlet fever was a major cause of death. Today it most commonly affects 4-8 year old children. More info: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scarlet_fever.

⁸⁸ These measures were fully in line with the German Civil Code. Adopted in 1896, §1666 stated that: "Where the physical or mental well-being of the child is endangered, or the father has abused, neglected or is guilty of dishonorable conduct, the family court must take measures necessary to avert the danger. In particular the family court can move the endangered child to a suitable family for education or to an educational institution or reformatory." See: de.wikisource.org/wiki/Bürgerliches_Gesetzbuch._Viertes_Buch._Familienrecht#.C2.A7._1666. (1896 version)

Ten days later Margot's mother was called into court to gauge her response and approval. According to Margot, she had been travelling for the last three months, yet *Frau Tjyralla's* response was less than nothing one would have come to expect:

"I admit that my mother has strict procedures for the children, however, I do not think that it is so bad that my children could fear her. It can also be put down to their great sensitivity. It is not entirely my mother's fault for not picking Margot up at that time in Borsdorf. Most likely she was belatedly informed. I agree that Margot stays at Kinderheim Horstsee for a while to rest since this can restore her health. I do, however, retain the right to take the child at any time I so wish. Currently Margot remains hospitalised in Grimma. However, she seems to have recovered. I will go to Grimma tomorrow and enquire regarding her state."

Two days later the court decided: "As long as her mother leaves Margot at *Horstsee* there is no reason to take away her responsibility for the child, unless she wishes to determine the future residence of the child in an inappropriate way." It only asked that immediate notice be given in case any attempt was made to claim Margot.

Reading *Frau Tjyralla's* statement carefully, it would appear her position had softened. Now she was more defensive, acknowledging for example her children's circumstances, even if she pinned the blame on them for their sensitivities, rather than on her parents. Recognising Margot was better off in *Horstsee* though was a breakthrough. To my mind it was an admission of guilt, one I suspect to have been provoked by the kids' earlier removal to *Wöllershof*.

If *Frau Tjyralla's* was alarmed by Margot's situation, to what extent was she concerned by Theo's? Having gotten wind of his confidential letter to *Fräulein Domsch*, Grimma's welfare officer wrote the family court again on October 23rd informing it that during his court appearance in *Wöllershof* "the lad had been affected by the same fear of his grandmother" and that he had subsequently refuted his claims. At the same time it had learned from Sister Elizabeth Märker, the nurse responsible for Margot at Grimma's hospital, the following:

"When [Margot] heard of the unexpected visit of her grandmother to the hospital she was visibly frightened and anxious. She said to the sister: "What does she want here, can she also come in? If so then you need to accompany me." She also made it clear she would much rather stay with her mother and wishes to return there. She longed for her mother's visit. She kept on asking: "Can I stay here longer?" "Ach, if only I could stay here longer."



Kinderheim Horstsee today: Margot's fourth home in as many months in 1922

On November 14th, Margot was moved to *Horstsee*.⁸⁹ A few days later, Sister Erika Werner reported she "seems to be very well educated, is funny and jolly" and "can not be taken for a naughty girl." She also asked her whether she preferred to return to her mother or to her grandparents: "'To Mother,'" was Margot's reply, but she would also quite like to return to the grandparents. When I asked considering how badly things turned out the last time she was there, she replied "that's only what the people in the house said.""

⁸⁹ See: <http://www.gaudichsroda.de/>

Yet Frau Hinsch had already begun to reassert her influence. Later that same day Margot spoke in court, this time in neighbouring *Mügeln*. Her statement read as if it had been scripted by her forebears with the same phrases, conviction and stoicism that she and Theo had shown in June. Because of this, a day later Saxony's family court replied to Grimma maintaining that it "refrains from any intervention regarding custody."

Perhaps *Frau Tyralla* had realized enough was enough. A second breakthrough occurred when she brought Theo back to Leipzig that November. According to the welfare office it was "a result of the court hearings," and perhaps sensing opportunity was at hand to secure Margot's safe passage home, on December 12th, *Frau Hallbauer* wrote *Herr Ritschel* reminding him that she, like Theo, lives in fear for her threatened life and is instructed "before the court to say nothing."

In a strongly worded letter *Frau Hallbauer* criticized his office for rejecting *Hanns Fischer's* testimony owing to "his quarrel with the grandmother... as leasee..." even "after he reported the incident out of humane reasons." It added that "it's not Herr Fischer's fault that he was not able to get along with her [Frau Hinsch]," considering her reputation in the neighbourhood. *Frau Hallbauer* therefore implored the court to call *Herr Fischer* as a witness, alongside Karl Steppan. It was a proposal the court was now ready to accept.

It took until February 16th, 1923 to track down *Herr Steppan* and gather his statement, but by the time Herr Fischer's whereabouts were known, he'd left Leipzig for *Münden*. Did Herr Steppan's statement (effectively reported on Pg. 259) make the difference? On February 22nd, *Frau Hallbauer* laconically wrote *Herr Ritschel*; "Margot Tyralla has been returned to her mother in Leipzig." As far it was concerned, her job was done and the supervision of both children lay with the child care headquarters in Leipzig's *Peterssteinweg*.

Although it took almost a year to 'free' the youngsters from their Hinsch grandparents, their being moved to *Wöllershof* had paid dividends. It was just as Elisabeth Domansky had reported in that the Weimar Republic's social workers showed real commitment towards youngsters' welfare. Indeed, it's largely thanks to *Frau Hallbauer* for her tenacity in seeing the case successfully concluded, Herr Fischer for his convictions in bringing the kids' circumstances to light and *Herr Steppan* for being the only acquaintance willing to speak honestly upon request about the Hinsch's, that Margot's most prized wish: "to return to mother," was realized.

Being back home afforded Theo and Margot time to catch up with big sister, who was now dedicating herself to the rehearsal of many specifically devised stage routines. Being the least heavy, least muscular and the youngest in her acrobatic act meant she was going to be one of the 'performers,' known as the tumbler or flier, while two others were 'throwers.' As a team of six, the girls would perform a dazzling and multiple array of rapid combinations of moves – tossing, catching and balancing each other in an overlapping series of tricks.⁹⁰ That could only have meant one thing: Little Nannj will have returned home every day fraught with bumps and bruises! Margot looked on in admiration and dreamt one day she'd join *Little Nannj*.

⁹⁰ Frank Cullen. *Vaudeville Old & New. An Encyclopedia of Variety Performers in America, Vol.1: 'Acrobats'*

The year, 1923, was a significant turning point, not only for the Tyrallas but also for the Weimar Republic.⁹¹ Hyperinflation destroyed the German currency and with that, the savings of the middle-classes. According to Benjamin Lapp writing in *Saxony in German History*, the year also came to signify the hegemony of the left for Saxon bourgeois elites.



Above: French troops march into the Ruhr, January 11th, 1923.

Source: Questions

From an exchange rate of 400 to the dollar in mid-1922, the mark tumbled to 7000 by January 1st. Every week it sank further and during that 'dismal winter' of 1923, the crisis became a disaster.⁹² After defaulting on its war reparations, including timber and coal, French and Belgian military forces occupied the *Ruhr* region, barely weeks after Little Nannÿ had left it the previous year. Their aim had been to push Germany into fulfilling reparations' agreements. However, the occupation aroused a wave of national outrage.

The Germans had gone from being 'colonisers to colonized,'⁹³ and during the coming months Chancellor Cuno's government financially supported *Ruhr* workers in a policy of passive resistance, while recouping some of the costs from the employers. However, combined with the aforementioned production losses, the economy plunged deeper into financial crisis, pushing inflation to a peak. Within a few months, the mark lost virtually all of its value, so quickly in fact that the bills would often have the old value crossed out and printed over with a newer, significantly higher denomination.⁹⁴

Banknotes became popular as wallpaper or in Hungarian painter and photographer, László Moholy-Nagy's case, as the only affordable medium (see image opposite). Loss of faith in one's money was, according to Marlene Dietrich's biographer, Alexander Walker, the material corollary of a loss of faith in one's way of life. Old values became as worthless as the "old" currency. And "if all money becomes worthless" noted Otto Friedrich, "then so does all government," who went on to conclude "The real revolution in Germany was the inflation."⁹⁵

⁹¹ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 322

⁹² Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 122

⁹³ Shelly Baranowski. *Nazi Empire: German Colonialism from Bismark to Hitler*. 2011. Reviewed by Matthew Fitzpatrick in *Journal of the German Historical Society*, Vol.29/No.4. Pg. 671

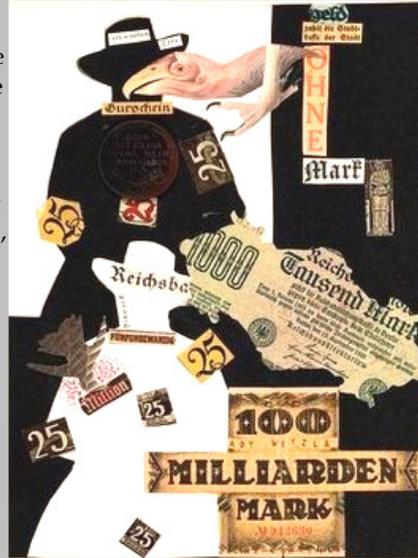
⁹⁴ Bergmann. *What Will Become of the Children? A Novel of a German Family* (1932). Camden House. 2010. Pg. 28, 32

⁹⁵ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 126

9.9: Inflation by Design?

What caused the inflation in the first place? Germans of a nationalist persuasion most typically place the blame on Allied demands for reparations.¹ But more hostile observers (and it should be added, current historical consensus²) accuse the German government itself of perpetrating a gigantic fraud. "Goaded by the big industrialists and landlords, the government deliberately let the mark tumble in order to free the state of its public debts, to escape from paying reparations... Moreover the destruction of the currency enabled German heavy industry to wipe out its indebtedness by refunding its obligations in worthless marks."³

As a result the German economy attracted considerable investment from abroad, exports revived, and re-employment was rapidly achieved, which helped to spread the cost of inflation. Industry could re-equip with depreciating marks, and the productive economy expanded faster than might have been expected given the disastrous conditions of 1919.⁴



Take for example the motorcycle boom of the Weimar Republic: the inflation years were surprisingly prosperous for the motorcycle industry. Producers sprang up overnight alongside BMW, Zündapp and Wanderer. Thousands of Germans bought motorcycles, even at the astonishing price of 1.2 trillion marks in Nov. 1923. "In every farm house...everyone has a motorcycle" remarked Bavarian writer, Oskar Maria Graf. Not everyone of course. The average motorcyclist was male, under 30, and likely to be a salaried employee or civil servant, although workers were increasingly able to afford one too. For society as a whole, the motorcycle was seen as a move away from the bicycle and thus a sign of upward mobility.⁵

I wonder if Little Nannÿ took much notice of the inflation? Writing in her autobiography, *My Life*, Marlene Dietrich would later recall: "Even as inflation hit the country [and] prices could fluctuate wildly...like all the young girls and women of my generation, I simply took note of the fact and didn't worry about it further. With the lightheartedness of youth, we thought all these sweeping changes were transitory and would soon disappear."

Little Nannÿ's uncle, Fritz Hinsch, like so many middle-class Germans, likely fared worse. Notwithstanding his villa, inflation wiped out the paper wealth he and others (like Pitt Deutsch in *What became of the Children*) had accumulated since 1871. Those who held their credit in banks rather than in the form of substantial material assets particularly suffered.⁶ "My father had left a fortune of 800,000 marks" says a Harvard Professor, recalling those days, "but by the summer of 1922, the value of the mark had dropped to 400 per dollar. Every month it got worse. My mother finally used her last 65,000 marks to buy a typewriter, and she began typing students' theses to support the youngest children."⁷ Little wonder bank deposits stood at 19 billion in 1913 and totaled just 608 million by 1925.⁸

NB: The photo inset shows the "The Bankruptcy Vultures" by Moholy-Nagy, which is sourced from: www.mutualart.com

Sources:

- ¹ Otto Friedrich, *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s*. 1972. Pg. 133-4
- ² Richard Overy writing in his essay on *Economy and State in Germany in the Twentieth Century in Germany Since 1800: A New Social And Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 255.
- ³ Referencing William Shirer; "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich." Otto Friedrich, pg. 133-4
- ⁴ Richard Overy writing in his essay on *Economy and State in Germany in the Twentieth Century in Germany Since 1800: A New Social And Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 256.
- ⁵ Frank Steinbeck. *Das Motorrad: Ein Deutsche Sonderweg in die Automobile Gesellschaft*. Franz Steiner, 2012.
- ⁶ Overy, Pg. 256.
- ⁷ Otto Friedrich, *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s*. 1972. Pg. 122
- ⁸ Benninghaus et al in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 296

While the economic difficulties further alienated the middle-classes,⁹⁶ in Peter Stachura's view, writing in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History*, one of the principal factors in 1923 which allowed the republic to stay afloat in the midst of such adversity was the continuing support of most of the working class. For them, the republic was still perceived to be on their side, not least because of its welfare provision.⁹⁷

The fact that the Majority and Independent Socialists held on to power in the *Sächsische Landtag's* November 5th, 1922 elections did little to allay middle-class fears for their own interests there, fears that were exacerbated by local communist gains.⁹⁸ In January 1923, however, the Communist Party upped the ante by withdrawing their support for the minority socialist government, forcing its cabinet to resign. It took until March to elect a new government, eventually headed by idealistic Social Democrat, prime minister, Erich Zeigner, who subsequently bowed to communist demands including profit monitoring.⁹⁹

It was a rough time to take over government. In no other part of Germany (barring Bavaria perhaps) did the "specter of communism" loom more menacingly than in Saxony.¹⁰⁰ German hyperinflation had particularly disastrous implications for the state, since the rapid currency depreciation was accompanied by unemployment rates more than twice the national average. By April, there were 70,000 unemployed and up to 200,000 underemployed.¹⁰¹

Was Nannj Tjyralla or Albert Petzold being counted among them? Probably not, since during the second half of 1922 and again in the first half of 1923, she signed up as a member of two lower white collar employee committees or *Angestellten Ausschuss*.¹⁰² Why? In the years since the war's end, such committees (together with *blue collar* worker committees or *Arbeiter Ausschuss*) had come to represent shop floor workers and were later known as works' councils. However, as committees they only ever received consultative powers in relation to management and already by 1920 were increasingly powerless.¹⁰³

Was Nannj then part of Albert's workforce as a trusted 'management consultant,' milking what was perhaps a sinecure i.e. a no-show job? Considering the timing of her admission, which occurred around the same time she presumably lost her tenants, it would certainly have benefitted her pocket. She might even have gained some credibility before the court and welfare officers as a 'working' mother. Being female, she certainly would have fitted into Albert's predominantly female factory's employee committee, were that the case.

⁹⁶ Martina Güldemann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert*, 1999

⁹⁷ Peter Stachura in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social and Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 236

⁹⁸ According to Benjamin Lapp, the bourgeois parties lost one seat, while the Communist Party gained four in *Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Edited by J. N. Retallack. Pg.325. The Majority and Independent Socialists meanwhile held on to power following their unification in September caused by the referendum on the matter of the controversial public holidays, according to Larry Eugene Jones in the same book. Pg. 337

⁹⁹ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 326

¹⁰⁰ L.Jones: *Saxony, 1924-1930 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Retallack. Pg. 337

¹⁰¹ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 327

¹⁰² In Sept. 1922 and on March 1st, 1923 according to her *Einwohnermeldekarte*, something her husband never did!

¹⁰³ Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. Pg. 242, 229

Whilst the crisis worsened, Albert registered a handful more household gadgets, including a razor blade holder in January 1923. His inventiveness, however, took on a new direction that year, one that was surely spawned by his visit to the 1922 spring fair.¹⁰⁴ Despite the unemployment, the city was fast becoming a technological hub: not only was it playing host to the largest telephone exchange in Europe, but from 1923 it offered regular radio programming too.¹⁰⁵ This gave rise to an early wave of consumer goods, since listeners required the necessary equipment to enjoy what they were hearing. Long-playing records, for example, had made their debut thanks to new electromechanical recording processes that permitted closer grooves.¹⁰⁶ Following the VOX gramophone's exhibition at the spring 1922 fair,¹⁰⁷ it was probably no small coincidence that during the summer of 1923 Albert registered a utility model that isolated the noise emitted by a record player's stylus cartridge, followed in turn by a tone switch mechanism!¹⁰⁸



Vox Advertisement from 1925.
Source: Thomas Fehlmann, Picasa.

Clearly he took his cue from what he saw about him, however, no more inventions followed until 1925. That means he was either making a tidy packet from his hobby, or he was successfully selling foodstuffs, perhaps abroad (or both). "With foreign currency," wrote Otto Friedrich in his *Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* "one needed only daring and ruthlessness to build an empire." Any businessman with good credit could buy supplies with borrowed money, pay his workers minimal wages, and then settle both his debts and his taxes with depreciated currency."¹⁰⁹ How ever he managed it, Albert was making ends meet, and I daresay supporting a family of five.

While Frau Tŷralla played industrialist, her younger namesake was preparing to set sail for America. Little Nannŷ's booking was set for late July and on May 9th, together with Herr Bŷttner and the other girls in the troupe, she travelled to Berlin to get her US visa.¹¹⁰ Typically this was issued based on a certified medical statement (important since a further inspection was conducted upon arrival in the US),¹¹¹ plus a valid booking, critical since ships filled early on. The visa cost ten dollars while each traveler also had to present a minimum of 25 upon arrival.¹¹²



American Line shipping ad, Aug. 1922
Source: Leipziger Messeadressbuch

¹⁰⁴ Amtliches Leipziger Messadressbuch, Bd. II. 1922. s. 230

¹⁰⁵ Martina Güldemann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert*, 1999. Pg.29

¹⁰⁶ 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

¹⁰⁷ Vox-Schallplatten- und Sprechmaschinen-AG was a brand of record player as well as a record label that traded throughout the 1920s. Its headquarters was in Potsdamerstrasse in Berlin while across the city it hosted a recording studio, factory, shops and so on. See: http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vox-Schallplatten-_und_Sprechmaschinen-AG

¹⁰⁸ Dämpfer für Sprech-maschinen schalldosen; Tonregler für Sprech-maschinenschalldosen

¹⁰⁹ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 133, 132

¹¹⁰ Less than two weeks earlier, on 28th April 1923 Little Nannŷ was re-registered in Leipzig (even if she'd been 'home' since mid-Nov.) Probably the registration was necessary to request another travel pass, received on 7th May.

¹¹¹ See: <http://www.ohranger.com/ellis-island/immigration-journey>

¹¹² *Das Programm*: April 3rd, 1924. NB: The mark had fallen to 160,000 to the dollar by July. Otto Friedrich Pg. 124



Leipzig's Scheibenholtz racetrack (1912), whose course was modified from 1921, plus emblems.

Sources: Foerster and
wiki/Galopprennbahn_Scheibenholtz

As Little Nannÿ prepared to leave behind Germany, what future lay ahead for Theo, who alongside cousin Martin, had completed school? Frau Tÿralla had been busy readying her son to join the ranks of the working world for years now and as his June 1922 court statement revealed, he had wanted to become a *Kaufmann*. However, Little Nannÿ's eldest daughter believes it was mother's pride once more that saw Theo's move instead into the world of horse racing, "because it was fashionable." Her kids were fast becoming show children.

Races were playfully combative where the jockeys were athletic and graceful, whilst the track offered an informal space for romantic encounters.¹¹³ For those with money, it was a popular pastime¹¹⁴ - in 1920 Leipzig's Scheibenholtz had put up a million marks as prize money.¹¹⁵

The good wages it promised were no doubt part of the attraction, and should Theo not succeed in becoming a champion, riders were always useful to the circus (see textbox overleaf) or could go on to become trainers, breeders or in the worst case, stablekeepers.¹¹⁶ As a lightweight, however, he was the ideal frame for championship horseracing.¹¹⁷ I just wonder how the young lad felt being forced into a profession he had not desired? Probably much like his big sister I suppose.

As an apprentice Theo prepared to study the care, health, upkeep and breeding of a horse, besides their physique. He would accompany horses to the races, take care of their presentation at the course and feed them, while also learning the necessary theoretical knowledge in the relevant vocational schools across the country.¹¹⁸ He began his career at the *Leipziger Rennklub* in May 1923.¹¹⁹ His apprenticeship was to last five years which meant he would graduate a professional racer in April 1928. He was to be taught by master *Herr A. Winkler*¹²⁰ of the *Berlin-Hoppegarten* racecourse. According to Kai Hildebrandt, archivist at the *Hoppegarten*, Theo will therefore have undertaken his apprenticeship east of Berlin.¹²¹ Like his big sister then, he too flew the nest and within months of being together with his sisters, their mother had packed them off once more. Now only eleven year old Margot remained, which conveniently meant *Frau Tÿralla* could sub-let her rooms once more.

¹¹³ Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 90/1

¹¹⁴ Bergmann. *What Will Become of the Children? A Novel of a German Family (1932)*. Camden House. 2010. Pg. 29

¹¹⁵ Martina Güldemann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert*, 1999.

¹¹⁶ Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg.91

¹¹⁷ Amateur jockeys usually tend to be larger and heavier. Nevertheless the target weight of 60kg should not be exceeded, according to: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jockey>

¹¹⁸ See: <http://www.jockeyschule.de/de/karriere-jockey/karriere-jockey.php>

¹¹⁹ Paul Tÿralla's *NachlasseAkte*: 8 NReg. 1494/16 held at the *Sächsisches Staatsarchiv* and the *Jahresrenn-kalender für Deutschland 1923, Teil II, S. 19*, received courtesy of Birgit Dombeck, *Leipziger Reit- und Rennverein Scheibenholtz e.V.*

¹²⁰ Absent from the *Leipzig Adressbücher* up to 1922

¹²¹ Personal correspondence with Kai via: khtml@gmx.de on 5th Aug. 2013

9.10: Elite Germany's Love Affair with the Horse

According to Marline Otte writing in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*, most Germans acknowledged the value and importance of the horse. In Imperial Germany, the horse had symbolized three social factions – the landowners, the nobility and the military. It suggested socially exclusive values, such as quality and prosperity.

Visiting Berlin's fashionable park, the *Tiergarten* on any morning in the week one saw countless gentlemen parading their thoroughbreds while women of distinction charmed the occasional 'flaneur' on horseback. A central cultural symbol, the horse had traditionally been a familiar sight on the streets, harnessed to streetcars and beer lorries or to the carriages of Germans from the upper reaches of society. The horse emphasized luxury and exclusivity.

Horses were a central feature of elite military culture too. For elites as well as the general public, the military rider represented the incarnation of "the gentleman." He rejuvenated the concept of the "chivalresque warrior."

At the same time the romance of the horse was assured through its place in the circus. "The nobility appreciated the *Pferdezirkus* as a form of entertainment that propagated their norms and values to a wider audience...it represented a vehicle for the legitimization of the noble concepts of chivalry, militarism, and glamour." Equestrian acts dominated circus shows well into the twentieth century. The *Blumenfelds* for example, imitated dressage (*Hohe Schule*) and horse races (*Jockeyreiten*) within the arena, reflecting the popular activities of large estate owners and a popular pastime of the rich and idle. Mock tournaments especially *Ritterspiele* were always a special treat for the eye, wrote *Willi Janeck* in a February 1957 issue of the *Deutsche Circus-Zeitung* in his article: "*Erinnerungen an Circus Blumenfeld.*"

A fascination with horses was shared by performers and audiences alike. Until the eve of the First World War, it captured and informed the dreams and aspiration of the masses. Traditional horse shows, however, began to appear anachronistic and inadequate during the reality of the war. The increasing impoverishment of their prewar middle-class clientele exacerbated the economic troubles German-Jewish circuses experienced afterwards, because the critical audience for such distinguished rider- and horse-shows was no longer present, observed *M.de Kloot* in an article entitled "*Gluck auf dem Weg*" which appeared in *Das Programm* in 1933. The love affair then was all but over.

Source: Marline Otte: *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. Pgs. 33, 81, 85, 87-92

Cousin Martin's career also took off a little later in July, when aged 14 and a half he left Leipzig for *Siebenlehn*, a village about 20km west of Dresden.¹²² According to his niece Vera, he too had shot up in the years following the war, growing so tall he couldn't fit through the door at *Wintergartenstraße*. Notwithstanding *Siebenlehn's* size (it had a little over 2000 inhabitants at the time),¹²³ ever since the middle-ages it was reputed for its bakers, butchers and shoemakers. It was here for instance that the well-known Christmas speciality, *Stollen* was first crafted. The town was also an important center of Saxony's wax trade, with '*Wraas*' (wax residue and old honeycomb) processed here into golden wax.



School graduation (with a quiff)
Martin Hinsch, cca. 1923

¹²² Can Rüdiger shed any light on this particular excursion?

¹²³ Some 2,305 inhabitants in 1925 according to: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siebenlehn>

I suspect the location had rather more to do with his mother and step-father's career aspirations for him than his own father's, since among the trades Martin learnt were those of a baker (the profession of his maternal grandparents), besides that of a merchant and a salesman, according to his residential record.¹²⁴ From this point on, much like his elder brother, he 'wandered', learning his trades and skills almost continuously until he married in 1932. His father no doubt regretted another 'lost' university student.



Below: Bread shortages in the year of hyperinflation. Source: Questions

The timing perhaps couldn't have been worse, however, since "by the middle of 1923, the whole of Germany was becoming delirious," wrote Otto Friedrich. "Food... became both a currency and an obsession. And if food was a currency, a new kind of banker inevitably appeared – the hoarder."¹²⁵ At least Martin was headed to a town renowned for its pastries! Speaking of bakers, how were his maternal grandparents, whose bakery, now in *Eutritzs*, was presumably a target?

That year the 'annual' spring revolt was late, arriving instead in summer, just as riots and plundering became common occurrences in all of Saxony's cities and across Germany.¹²⁶ On June 6th for instance a crowd of 2,500 angry unemployed demonstrated, where else, but on Leipzig's *Augustusplatz*. The *Landespolizei* in turn left seven dead (including one of their own) and twenty injured.¹²⁷ On July 4th, unemployed demonstrators reappeared storming and devastating parts of the square's *Kaffeehaus Felsche*.¹²⁸

Artisans and shopkeepers of small stores with food stocks felt victimized and unprotected while the local police force was overwhelmed and incapable of protecting them. At the same time, small businesses were subjected to unrelenting interference by Saxony's profit control committees. While industrialists were forced to negotiate higher wages, shopkeepers were forced to sell at low prices, and in ways they perceived to be disrespectful and demeaning: "They come into the shoe-repair shop... and force the artisan to relinquish a piece of his work at a price that barely pays for the time spent at labour," stated one report.¹²⁹ Was this becoming Walther and Hedwig's story too? In case it was, it was probably a good thing that Heinz joined the *Thomaners* that summer, touring altogether safer Switzerland.¹³⁰ As with the *Tyrallas* that summer then, the *Hinsch's* were left with just the youngest at home: Hans, now 8.

¹²⁴ That is, a *Kaufmannslehrling*, *Bäcker*, *Vertreter* and *Händler* (all undated)

¹²⁵ *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972. Pg. 124-5

¹²⁶ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 327

¹²⁷ See: <http://home.arcor.de/command3rk33n/Chronik/1923/1923.htm>

¹²⁸ Martina Güldemann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert*, 1999. Pg.29

¹²⁹ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 329

¹³⁰ According to Martina Güldemann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert*, 1999. Pg. 28, while a year earlier they had been guests in Sweden although Heinz daughter, Irene noted that since he didn't live with the choir's community (ie. he schooled from home), it is not sure whether he was integrated within the choir. An enquiry submitted to the *Thomasschule* in autumn 2010 went unanswered

A peculiarity of economic violence in Saxony at the time was the spontaneous development of popular forms of justice. Employers in small and medium-sized firms, like Albert's, were subjected to well-patterned degradation rituals because they were viewed as profiting unethically from currency depreciation and unemployment. The choreography of the ceremony followed a predictable pattern: The employer would be forced to march in a demonstration, often carrying either a red flag or a sign on which was inscribed the words: "I am a scoundrel." A variation was to sit them on a cart and lead them through town while being taunted. As a result, employers were often forced to negotiate new wage agreements with their workforces.¹³¹

Not surprisingly, the prevailing sentiment among Saxony's employers was one of helplessness and rage at the state government for providing inadequate protection. At the Saxon artisans' congress, speaker after speaker condemned the policies of the Socialist government while Saxony's *Burghers'* bitterness was intensified immeasurably by the political rhetoric of a government that placed its loyalties firmly on the side of the working-class victims of the inflation. Over the next months the cycle of violence resulting from the misery engendered by the combination of hyperinflation and unemployment spiraled out of control.¹³²

Did Nannÿ Tÿralla or Fritz Hinsch begin to consider leaving Saxony? With despair taking its toll, there was also a dramatic rise in conflict between unemployed workers and the rural *Mittelstand* in the countryside. While in the cities, food shops were the first to be plundered, outside Leipzig, the farmers were subjected to the widespread confiscation of their food products. The authorities' attempts to protect farms, however, proved unable to stop the "well-organised bands that usually arrive[d] at night by bicycle."

Attempts at resistance brought equally poor results. Just 12km southeast of Machern, in Trebsen for instance (almost a part of Grimma), a farmer fired his pistol so as to frighten a group of men gathering crops from his field. Instead he was disarmed, beaten up and forced into the town to be paraded in front of the townspeople. In his traumatized state he surrendered two pigs for the benefit of the town's unemployed. In another example from the district of Stollberg (80km south of Leipzig), the angry mob went as far as to humiliate a farmer and his wife by tearing their clothes off.¹³³

It was surely a good thing that the grandchildren were beginning to spread their wings. Even Margot and Theo were no longer stuck in Machern. Nevertheless, their grandparents were not getting any younger, Friedrich, now 71, and Marie, 65. Since their son Fritz's residential record leaves no suggestion that he occasionally resided with them, I imagine for Marie it was rather business as usual. She ruled the roost, just as she had done up to the summer of 1922, and that despite the 'bankruptcy' that was now all about them, their own war bonds now discounted, a thing of the past.

¹³¹ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 328

¹³² Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 327

¹³³ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 330



Above: The *Mongolia* awaits Little Nanný in Hamburg's harbour (pictured in 1918-19)

Below: That's Livin' Alright! Nanný Týralla in 1923. (The necklace she then wore later became Little Nanný's).



A little less than a month later and not yet sixteen, on July 28th, Little Nanný headed for Hamburg. She was about to become a *Wandervogel*, like her father, grandfather and great grandmother before her. From Hamburg it was on to New York!¹³⁵ Did she have any inkling of the world to which she was headed? The United States of America: land of baseball heroes, gangsters, prohibition, automats and *Broadway*? Perhaps she spent that last month in Leipzig, not only training but also reading and hearing all about *Herr* and *Frau Büttner's* experiences there.

Not many months later, Little Nanný's mother celebrated her 40th, marking 'middle age' with a visit to a photographer located but a stone's throw from where she once married in downtown *Leipzig's Thomasmassage*. Benjamin Franklin, well known for having a saying for every situation, remarked; "At twenty years of age, the will reigns; at thirty, the wit; and at forty, the judgment."

I wonder what among these ruled Nanný Týralla's, mind having steered her daughter's career towards the stage? If it were judgment, we could not only say she gave her the opportunity of a lifetime but also played an important part in contributing to those hallmarks of Weimar's cultural history: gender equality and self-expression. Born into the patriarchal *Kaiserreich* Little Nanný was now at the vanguard of the movement for the emancipation and empowerment of the new woman. At the same time she served as role model to young Margot.

Due to the June riots, Little Nanný was speedily shipped out of harms way (and ahead of schedule) to Herr Büttner's home in *Mockau* on July 2nd.¹³⁴ The suburb, which played host to Leipzig's airship hangars and airfield northeast of *Eutritzsch*, was safely outside the city centre (where more trouble was imminently expected). But as Büttner welcomed her ahead of her long voyage, he received a stern message from *Frau Týralla*: "Don't let my daughter out of your sight - not even when she visits the toilet!" she mused. "And don't forget to wire her salary back, bar a little pocket money!" Little Nanný forced a smile and tried to see the funny side.

¹³⁴ According to her residential record

¹³⁵ Paradoxically, her residential record reveals Little Nanný 'resided' with her mother on November 15th, in *Springerstrasse*. Recalling, however, that residential records are not wholly legitimate records, we may suppose Nanný's presence on paper enabled her mother to continue to also claim certain welfare benefits in her name. Indeed, 'war orphans' formed the single largest group of recipients of war-related state benefits during the early 1920s. Even as late as 1930 they remained a major category of state-welfare recipients, according to Richard Bessel in *Germany after the First World War*. 1995. Pg. 227

Yet I am sure Little Nannÿ would argue that she herself contributed little to Weimar culture. Her departure was for all intents and purposes a goodbye, because from that point on 'home' (if there ever really was one) ceased practically to be Germany. For the next ten years she would criss-cross America and head from one hotel to another, living out of suitcases. While the next chapter in *Wandervoögel* history was being written, it would be fairer to say Nannÿ Tÿralla helped her daughter contribute to American history. In that sense, it was her mother's will rather than her judgment that ruled her mind. All Weimar Germany really benefited was her hard-earned salary.

I'm not sure though the gratitude was ever returned, despite the fact that every dollar Little Nannÿ sent home was worth a million marks to her mother from August 1st. Invaluable since Leipzig was considered Germany's most expensive town in 1923.¹³⁶ Later that month the city was in the news again, when 50,000 of its residents called for another general strike¹³⁷ under the protection of the proletarian 'red hundreds' or *Hundertschaften*, this time in protest at Chancellor Cuno's government.¹³⁸ Cuno was then replaced by Gustav Stresemann after it became impossible to go on financing the Ruhr struggle and within the month, national policy finally began to change tack.

Yet the number of unemployed in Saxony continued to rise throughout the summer, standing at 112,000 by October, while those under-employed reached 350,000. On the 10th of that month the Saxon Premier, Erich Zeigner took the law into his own hands by forming a "popular front," taking two Communists into his cabinet, ostensibly "to preclude the danger of a plutocratic military dictatorship," much like that which was last seen in spring 1920 or attempted even during the Spartacists uprising in January that same year. A few days later similar moves followed elsewhere, in Thuringia and Hamburg.¹³⁹

Although food rationing was finally lifted on October 15th,¹⁴⁰ the communists were not appeased and redoubled their efforts to foment revolution in central Germany and Hamburg, while Bavaria became a hotbed of reactionary conservative and right-wing extremist activity.¹⁴¹ On October 21st, they repeated their call for an immediate general strike in protest at the state of emergency that was declared *Reich*-wide on September 27th.¹⁴²

The next day the *Reichswehr* was ordered back into Saxony to offset the brewing confrontation between left and right as well as to depose Zeigner's Popular Front government and restore federal authority – if a solution were not quickly found.¹⁴³ Its military occupation was accompanied by violence against demonstrators and on October 27th, as many as 23 were killed and scores wounded in *Freiberg*, 30km west of Dresden.

¹³⁶ Martina Gldenmann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert*, 1999. Pg. 29

¹³⁷ Martina Gldenmann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert*, 1999. Pg. 29

¹³⁸ See: http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proletarische_Hundertschaften

¹³⁹ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s*. 1972. Pg. 138

¹⁴⁰ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 327

¹⁴¹ *Questions on German History*. Pg. 221

¹⁴² See: <http://sachsen.de/en/274.htm>

¹⁴³ Jones. *Saxony, 1924-1930 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Retallack. Pg. 338



The *Reichswehr* marches into Dresden.
Oct. 29th, 1923. Source: *Questions*

Chancellor Stresemann presented Zeigner with an ultimatum, demanding the withdrawal of his cabinet and the construction of a new government less communist participation. Zeigner refused and on October 29th, *Reichswehr* troops occupied the government ministries in Dresden in what came to be known as the *Reichsexekution*. Zeigner was replaced by *Reichskommissar* Rudolf Heinze. According to Lapp, the event represented the culmination of a political and cultural conflict between Saxon Social Democracy and the bourgeois electorate - one that had been simmering since the revolution of 1918-19.

Much of Stresemann's move was not, however, a bow to the pleas of angry and intimidated *mittelständler* and entrepreneurs, but was rather a signal in Bavaria's direction to eliminate its excuse for mobilizing troops against the "red" threat on its own borders. Nevertheless, the propertied classes welcomed his intervention, where archive reports noted "life in towns suddenly took on a different aspect. The shops which had previously closed their show-windows throughout the day, again displayed their goods... The streets became more cheerful and crowded. The reintroduction of the change of *Reichswehr* guard was cheered by thousands, throwing flowers on the soldiers, who seemed as protection to them and a guarantee for the discontinuance of the frequent riots which had occurred."¹⁴⁴

For Leipzig workers though it must have felt like spring 1919 all over again. Indeed, it left a legacy of intense bitterness on the part of Saxony's working class activists, says Lapp, who adds there was not; "a more telling witness to the gulf that separated the Zeigner government from its bourgeois constituents." Following the *Reichsexekution*, the social democrats (SPD) withdrew from the national government, which in turn meant the collapse of the Weimar Coalition. The SPD split into two factions, with the majority of members continuing to reject coalitions with the middle-class parties.¹⁴⁵

Despite the left's disintegration, anti-Marxism by itself was not enough of a platform for political parties on the right to maintain popular support among the *Mittelstand*, which gradually grew convinced that their traditional parties were dominated by big industry and big agriculture and hence was unresponsive to middle-class interests. As a result the three parties that claimed to represent the bourgeois voter¹⁴⁶ found themselves losing their constituencies to a variety of special-interest parties by the mid-1920s. Without a currency and following the trauma of inflation,¹⁴⁷ large sections of the middle-classes lost faith in the republican and democratic system.¹⁴⁸ Ultimately it was the Nazi Party who benefited most from the "dissolution of the bourgeois party system."¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack Pg. 323, 331-2

¹⁴⁵ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 323

¹⁴⁶ German Democratic Party (DPP); German People's Party (DVP); German National People's Party (DNVP)

¹⁴⁷ A single dollar of Litty Nann's by November 1st was worth 130 billion marks. Two weeks later; 1.3 trillion.

¹⁴⁸ *Questions on German History*. Pg. 223.

¹⁴⁹ Lapp. *Remembering the Year: 1923 in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Retallack, Ed. Pg. 333

Although less vigorous action was taken ten days later against the anti-Republican 'tendencies' of the Bavarian right, the situation grew more stable there too in the months that followed Adolf Hitler's abortive Beer Hall putsch of November 8-9th in which he and his party attempted to overthrow the republic. Their hope had been to occupy Munich and then march on Berlin. Their putsch failed quite quickly. However, Hitler's subsequent trial vaulted him and his movement to fame. He became a national figure, even if he was imprisoned between 1923 and 1924 while the Nazis were banned throughout Germany. Momentarily, the movement, which had grown active in Leipzig and Dresden in late 1922,¹⁵⁰ having successfully recruited members from all social classes, including workers and an over-representation of middle-class men, fell apart in Saxony.¹⁵¹

Upon Stresemann's appointment, radical measures were taken to rehabilitate the German currency. Rescue came in an unlikely form when the mark was revalued and pegged to a 'mortgage' on the nation's gold supplies. This in turn was backed by a mortgage on all of Germany's land and assets. In an instant, the *Rentenmark* helped stabilize the economy, at a point when the dollar had reached 4.2 trillion marks.¹⁵²

It was too late, however, to rescue the seriously disrupted social structure of the *Reich*. Bourgeois society had collapsed with the end of the war, and the patriarchal balance, unlike in England or France was destroyed.¹⁵³ Indeed, contemporary witnesses note that the war altered Germany's political, social, economic and cultural fabric beyond recognition, and observe that the difference between the old pre-war society and the new one that emerged out of World War I as having been so fundamental that it has been described as the "death of the nineteenth century." Marline Otte puts this into a generational context; "Whereas the parents' generation had spent its youth in a peaceful and prospering country, the younger generation had a world view shaped by inflation and individual and collective violence."¹⁵⁴

So what would become of the children, that is, the Hinsch grandchildren? For the Týrallas, my grandmother got off relatively lightly in comparison with Theo and Margot, whom I daresay they envied. She alone had pleasant memories of Machern, which confirms she not only found favour there (much as we had been told) but also spent less time than her siblings there. As the photo right shows, another from Little Nanný's 1920 trip to *Bad Swinemunde*, she was relatively lucky in terms of her mother's company and benefitted luxuries like holidays. That didn't mean her mother was any more engaged, however, since she still palmed her off on others when opportunity arose. Margot and Theo on the other hand were reared by their 'nineteenth century' elders, the potential longer term consequences of which are summarized overleaf.



¹⁵⁰ Despite being outlawed in Saxony on Nov. 18, 1922 (revoked, 1925). See: <http://sachsen.de/en/274.htm>

¹⁵¹ 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. 360-3

¹⁵² See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I

¹⁵³ *Questions on German History*. Pg. 203

¹⁵⁴ Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg. 120

9.10 Authoritarian (grand)Parenting: A Psychologist's View

Authoritarian parents have high expectations toward their children who should behave in a responsible and mature manner. They are expected to perform up to their abilities and to be competent and contributing family members. Rules are clearly explained and the consequences for violating them are consistently enforced.

However, authoritarian parents do not give their children reasons, explanations or affection in return for their demands. Neither is there any room for dialogue, compromise or verbal give and take. Parents therefore come across as cold, distant and intimidating. Often the threat of parental power and fear of rejection keep them in line, especially while they are young. Although most children remain intimidated, some become rebellious, defiant and more verbal as they grow older. Either way, these children suffer low self-esteem as adults and lack interpersonal confidence.

An authoritarian approach also limits the growth of a child's intellectual abilities, owing to the lack of dialogue. Therefore, they score lower on verbal tests of intelligence. Ultimately they trade the ability to act on their own wishes with those of meeting their parents' approval. Whilst obedient, they are also anxious because they comply out of fear. Behaved but insecure, they become harsh, critical and demanding towards themselves, just as their parents were towards them.

As adults, many struggle with excessive guilt, depression, unassertiveness, anxiety and low self-esteem. These personal and emotional problems remain present, even though they are typically responsible, hard-working and successful adults.

In case it appears only Margot and Theo suffered at the hands of their grandparents, Heinz's daughter confirmed her father and his brothers endured the same. In January 2014 she wrote: "Everything is true... Rüdiger [Martin's son] and my father both told us the same awful stories about their parents/grandparents' behaviour."

That certainly contrasts with those members of *A German Generation* as well as *Pitt Deutsch's* kids, whose time with their parents and grandparents was usually one of emotional and physical sustenance. Only during the aftermath of the war did Kohut's interviewees, like the *Deutsch's*, recall the Weimar Republic as a time of disorder, characterized by conflict, chaos and deprivation. I am not sure Little Nannö, Margot or Theo would agree. They could neither look back on wartime as a lost childhood idyll and had been kept out of 'harms way' during its aftermath. In other words, their respective forebears' attitudes towards childrearing had nothing to do with the nation's defeat, its humiliation and disintegration, but were based upon deeply ingrained (and soon to be outdated) Prussian and Lutheran principles that imbibed stoicism, thrift, discipline, obedience etc.

Among Nannö and Fritz's generation, she was more fortunate than he in finding a second chance for love in her life. With Albert she found a 'sponsor' who helped avert a decline into economic hardship. Like Walther Martin, he could have provided her kids with a secure family life, but instead he became a distraction, seldom present even as step-father. Maybe that's why he resisted marriage, although ultimately this 'tweede man' rendered Theo and Margot motherless and Little Nannö benefitting marginally at best. Still, their cousins fared little better under Mr. Martin.

Come the end of 1923, Germany had averted further political crises while inflation was under control. As the national madness ended, the republic entered its second phase, a relatively stable period in which the economy seemed to right itself, politics took on a more normal appearance, and Berlin at least entered the so-called 'Golden Twenties' (Bodek; pg. xiv). Given their foundations, where would it lead the once bourgeois cousins other than beyond convention and spread out beyond Leipzig?