

Harold in Germany, Vita in Love: Stories from Sissinghurst's Library

Working Paper

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Introduction

by Kathryn Batchelor

Books formed a major part of Harold Nicolson and Vita Sackville-West's lives, a crossing point between their professional careers as successful writers and the haven that they created for themselves at home. Multilingual and extremely well travelled, Vita and Harold formed part of a cosmopolitan network of writers, translators and publishers. Traces of that network remain inside the Sissinghurst library, springing to life in the many dedications, inscriptions and annotations. Included in the collection are almost 500 German-language books, many of which belonged to Harold. Harold read and wrote German fluently and served as a diplomat in Berlin in 1927-29. After his return to England, he became known as an authority on Germany, speaking powerfully against appeasement. Vita read German with less ease, but nevertheless used the opportunity of Harold's posting to Berlin – and an affair with the American-German writer Margaret Goldsmith – to translate the poetry of Austrian-born Rainer Maria Rilke. Published by Leonard and Virginia Woolf's Hogarth Press in 1931, Vita's translation of the *Duino Elegies* has recently been reprinted by Pushkin Press.

"I suppose that I have read several hundred books on Germany in the last five years"
Harold Nicolson, 1939.¹

Vita and Harold as German speakers

by Kathryn Batchelor

During Harold and Vita's childhoods, access to foreign language learning varied according to class and gender. For boys in public schools, Latin and Greek still dominated, but French and German had been added to the syllabus of schools such as Rugby and Shrewsbury in the 1830s and 40s. Higher grade schools, catering for boys 'from well-off families, the rest from the ranks of skilled workers, minor professionals, and tradesmen',² also prioritised the classics but had begun offering French in the 1870s and some had also added German from 1880.

During this period, girls from the upper and aspiring middle classes were in fact more likely than boys to learn modern foreign languages because they were not expected to study Latin and Greek.³ Seen as a prestigious language of culture since the late eighteenth century, the German language had been deemed particularly beneficial for 'the ladies', allowing them access to 'a great variety of works' that were more suitable for 'Christian women of the nineteenth century' than those in Greek and Latin.⁴ In Vita's day, girls from aristocratic families were expected to acquire modern foreign languages as one of their feminine 'accomplishments', and were typically taught at home by governesses, often native speakers. Girls' schools, catering to the middle as well as upper classes, taught French and sometimes also German.⁵

Vita

Vita grew up bilingual in French and English and learnt German as part of her schooling at home with governesses. By the time she was ten, she was writing essays on history and geography in all three languages,⁶ but was most at ease in French and English. As a child she wrote several plays and a full-length novel in French; she also corresponded with her school friend, Violet Keppel, in a mixture of the two languages.⁷ As a teenager, Vita added Italian to her repertoire, quickly growing fluent and keeping her diary in Italian for five years to keep its contents secret from her mother. The earliest German language book belonging to Vita in the Sissinghurst holdings is a novel by Wilhelmine Heimburg, a successful female author. The book was given to Vita for Christmas by her governess, Hermine Hall, presumably to foster Vita's German language skills. It was probably no accident, though, that the author was a woman: the gift suggests that the governess was encouraging Vita in her literary aspirations, in the face of the disapproval that often came from her parents. It was at

around this time that Vita noted in her diary: 'mother scolded me this morning because she says I write too much, and Dada said he did not approve of my writing'.⁸

As an adult, Vita was never as comfortable in German as she was in French or Italian. Whilst in Berlin she told Virginia Woolf that she was reading Erich Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* in German, saying 'this Teutonic language tramples like an elephant on my brain'.⁹ This didn't prevent her from becoming enthralled by Rilke's intensely lyrical poetry, though for the translation itself she was helped by her lover Margaret Goldsmith, her cousin Eddy Sackville-West, and an unnamed student¹⁰ who was tutoring Ben and Nigel in German whilst in Potsdam in the summer of 1928, and who – as Vita told Virginia Woolf – 'happens to love Rilke and has devoted the past two years to studying him'.¹¹

Harold

Insofar as Harold's semi-fictional *Some People* can be taken as a biographical record, Harold learnt some German as a very young child whilst under the care of a much-loved German nanny: 'when I think of that period,' he wrote, 'my memory adjusts itself to German – strange Teutonic endearments rise slumberously to the surface like old white fish'.¹² However, like all schoolboys of his generation, Harold's secondary schooling focussed on classical rather than modern languages, and it wasn't until after he left school that he became fluent in German and French. This he achieved by spending extended periods of time abroad. Aged 17, he spent six months in Weimar learning German and continuing his studies of Latin and Greek prior to taking up his place at Balliol.¹³ After university, he spent a further two years abroad (1907-1909), staying with foreign families or at the renowned cramming school in Paris, preparing for the rigorous Diplomatic Service exams. By the time he passed these in September 1909, he 'was master of French and German and had a good smattering of Italian and Spanish'.¹⁴

Harold retained his mastery of German throughout his life. He read widely in German, as the 500-odd books in German in the Sissinghurst library show. He also wrote his own preface in German to the German translation of his own book *Sir Arthur Nicolson, Bart, First Lord Carnock: A Study in the Old Diplomacy* (*Die Verschwörung der Diplomaten : aus Sir Arthur Nicolson's Leben 1849-1928*).

Whilst in Berlin in 1927-29, Harold's proficiency in German led to him being called on as an interpreter on at least two high-profile occasions. The first was in July 1928, while Harold was acting as Chargé d'Affaires, and the Maharaja of Patiala visited Berlin. It fell to Harold to present the Maharaja to President Hindenburg, and to interpret between them. As always, Harold had an eye on the humour of the situation, writing to Vita about the confusion that arose when President Hindenburg confused 'Gurkhas' with the German word for cucumber, *Gurke*.¹⁵ The second was in April 1929, at a dinner given for H.G. Wells at the Hotel Adlon, following Wells's lecture in the Reichstag. Harold wrote in a letter to Vita that 'Einstein made a little speech for Wells which I then translated. I began by saying, "I have been asked to translate Professor Einstein's speech. I may add that it is the first thing of his that I have ever understood." They thought that a funny joke'.¹⁶

In the 1930s, Harold's facility with German gave him a degree of insight into German politics that many other British politicians did not have. In *Why Britain is at War* (1939), he reflected: 'It was perhaps unfortunate that so few British politicians had studied *Mein Kampf* in the unexpurgated edition: the original English translation of that work omitted any passages which might cause offence to British Conservatives. Until March 15th, 1939, the British public remained convinced that Herr Hitler was, in spite of his extremely comic appearance, a "bulwark against bolshevism." They had not, I repeat, really read *Mein Kampf*'.¹⁷

Harold's diplomatic career

Background: Anglo-German relations before 1914 – From Victoria and Albert to the Great War

by Lesley Chamberlain

From Edinburgh to London, Germans of all social classes flocked to British cities in the mid nineteenth century. There were 28,644 Germans in England alone in 1861 and 55,324 in 1911. Britain's prosperity attracted German bankers – Barings, Schroeders and Rothschilds -- and there were jobs for sugar-bakers and dockers, butchers and hairdressers, tailors and clerks. German education was evidently good, people said, because the waiters were civil, the clerks were bi-lingual and the professors geniuses. German music tutors and governesses were especially prized. Typically, around 1900, the German-speaking Hermine Hall was engaged as governess to the young Vita Sackville-West.

The British upper classes took their inspiration from Queen Victoria, herself of German descent as the last British sovereign of the House of Hanover. In 1840 she had married Prince Albert von Saxe Coburg- Gotha, an incomparably astute and intelligent figure in royal and public life, who, when he died in 1861 left a rich Anglo-German cultural legacy. Harold Nicolson's father Arthur recalled this historic time with affection: 'Germany was delightful and related to us dynastically.'¹⁸

The relationship became more unsettled when a united Germany emerged in 1871. Prince Otto von Bismarck was building up Germany as a new Great Power and envisaged a German Empire. A great rivalry sprang up, such that in 1899 Victoria called the Iron Chancellor 'a bitter enemy to England.'¹⁹

Sir Arthur Nicolson, diplomat and author of the first book on the German Constitution, came to refer to Germany as a growing menace.²⁰ Movingly, Harold wrote in his biography of his father: 'He was personally identified with almost every phase in that slow, and at the time unrealised, process, by which England and Germany were gradually impelled towards their mutual destruction.'²¹

Away from the carnage of the battlefields the Great War disrupted many lives. While Germans in Britain found themselves shunned and interned, the British were forced to deny old friendships. German classical music had captivated music-lovers. But now London's Bechstein Hall became The Wigmore Hall, to disguise the past. The British royal family changed its name from Saxe-Coburg-Gotha to Windsor. The British composer and suffragette Ethel Smyth, who studied music in Leipzig, was still mourning the loss of the 'old culture' of Beethoven and Brahms when she visited Harold at the British Embassy in Berlin nearly three decades later.²²

Harold and Vita's Germany, which especially Harold came to know well, would be a different country.

4 August 1914

by Lesley Chamberlain

Harold was not an academic success. Three years at Balliol, the most prestigious Oxford college for men of his class, resulted in a third class degree. But like his father he was an excellent linguist, which soothed his path into the Diplomatic Service in 1909. He'd forged his language skills in Germany, and in his book *Good Behaviour* (1955) he fondly recalled the four families from Hanover to Frankfurt, Hildesheim to Blankenburg, with whom he stayed.²³ He loved about German life its kindness, placidness and regularity – qualities which helped form the idea of *Gemütlichkeit*, and which the violent decades to come would almost erase from the British mind.

Quite by chance he was called upon, as the Foreign Office's most junior Second Secretary on duty on the evening of 4 August 1914, to deliver to the German Embassy Britain's declaration of war. Harold had been serving in the British Embassy in Tehran and had come home on leave. Vita was pregnant and wanted to have their first child in England.

It was a revised declaration, after a day of confused signals between the two countries, and the German ambassador in London, Prince Max von Lichnowsky, had already retired. With an air of great sadness, and wearing silk pyjamas, he motioned to the table where Harold should replace the old message with the new. 'Remember me to your father,' said the Prince, for these diplomats of the old school had been friends far beyond the demands of their official roles. Years later Harold recalled how, humble and terrified, he underwent 'perhaps the most unpleasant and certainly the most significant experience of my life.'

1927-29 Harold represents Britain in Germany

by Lesley Chamberlain and Kathryn Batchelor

Harold was posted to the British Embassy in Berlin in October 1927. He hadn't wanted to go, and was unhappy for Vita. But, once arrived, the task as Counsellor, 'a excellent job', delighted him. 'I love foreign politics, and I get them here in a really enthralling form.' In mid-1928 he had sole charge of the Embassy during a change of ambassadors.

The young Harold had been markedly un-jingoistic. Indeed he was inclined, irrationally, to blame Austria and Russia, as much as Germany, for the outbreak of the First World War. Viewing the Versailles agreement as profoundly unfair, he struck his German counterparts as a friend of their country, and they welcomed him.

Germany changed rapidly as the century progressed. By 1927 it had become a left-leaning republic, though in Harold's view it still struggled with wounded pride. Gustav Stresemann, the German Foreign Minister from 1923-29, projected the image of a peaceful, reasonable country. Yet Stresemann was dying, and Harold knew 'nothing could be taken for granted'. Rampant inflation and fear of a Communist takeover were still recent Berlin memories. Stresemann's predecessor at the Foreign Ministry Walther Rathenau had been assassinated.

Many of Harold's despatches focussed on Germany's economic and political recovery and the direction of its political future. Back in 1919, Harold had expressed his grave concerns about the harshness of the Treaty of Versailles, writing to Vita from the Versailles negotiations that 'it will be too awful if, after winning the war, we are to lose the peace'.²⁴ Despatches in 1927-8 repeated that sentiment, stressing that severe economic depression would ensue if reparations liability payments were not reduced.²⁵ At the same time, in 1929, Harold was warning the Foreign Office that the German government had not fulfilled their demilitarizing agreements and cautioning that 'it would take but a slightly turn of the tide to set the current (of pacifism) swinging in the other direction, and carrying with it all the flotsam and jetsam of the very third-rate Social-Democratic politicians'.²⁶ Harold anticipated that peace might not last; like his very many German contacts and friends, he did foresee how the Weimar Republic would end, or how soon. In his 1932 novel *Public Faces*, about the balance of power in Europe after 1918 and how British diplomacy handled it, Harold conjured with a resurgent Germany provoking a world crisis around 1939. Yet in any new theatre of war he imagined the most heinous player would be Britain.

Life at the embassy was as much about social obligations as it was about politics. Thanks to Berlin's popularity as both destination and travel stopover, there was no shortage of guests for Harold to entertain, in both official and unofficial capacity; his diary from the Berlin years reads like a who's who of the early 20th century. Visitors included the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth; still later Elizabeth, the Queen Mother), who stayed in Berlin en route to a

royal wedding in Oslo;²⁷ Noel Coward, who went with Harold to a music hall to 'pick up something original' for his own show in London;²⁸ Ivor Novello, the Welsh composer and playwright;²⁹ Ethel Smyth, the composer, who was in Berlin to conduct an orchestra playing her own music.³⁰

The Germans appreciated Harold because he knew German and valued their culture. Harold admired Goethe, the greatest of historic German writers, and shared the German cultural passion for the opera. He loved, as he said, 'many Germanies'. Perhaps deep down, though, this Germany in political transition puzzled him, for while at the embassy the project he devoted all his free time to was a biography of his father. In First Lord Carnock, he studied how diplomacy too was changing: from what he perceived as the honourable pursuit of mutually beneficial alliances among the Great Powers into something more hostile and devious. Deeply attached to the memory of his father, Harold may have felt Alfred too should have served in Berlin. But the Germans had rejected him as an enemy.³¹

Harold's political career

Harold: A German Expert in England 1930-39

by Lesley Chamberlain

Under pressure from Vita, and with business advice from the writer and publisher Leonard Woolf, Harold resigned from the Foreign Office at the end of December 1929. 'I am presented with a cactus. The end of my diplomatic career.'³² An offer from the newspaper magnate Lord Beaverbrook promised to end the Nicolson's painful financial dependence on Vita's mother. Harold would now write his own books and a column *The Evening Standard*, though he was determined 'not to voice Tory opinions or attack my own radical tenets'.³³ A hankering for a public life nevertheless propelled him into politics. He flirted with Oswald Mosley's pre-fascist New Party, was rejected as a Conservative candidate for Sevenoaks, and won a parliamentary seat for the National Labour Party in 1935. Avowedly neither a socialist nor a Tory, Harold was above all anti-war, with a project that 'must not be built of the lath and plaster of nationalism but in the firm marble of internationalism. I must write like a European and not like a member of the Junior Carlton [an ultra-conservative gentlemen's club in London].'³⁴

His views outside any recognized party were too unusual for him to prosper at Westminster. But he was quickly recognized as an authority on Germany, on everything from literature to politics to the very smell of Berlin, and was often heard on the wireless. 'Berlin...has a smell all of its own, and the main constituent is anthracite. The smell of those little soft-coal bricks which they burn in the Berlin stoves always takes me back ... Munich and Frankfurt smell quite different,'³⁵ he told listeners to the BBC in 1930. Early in 1932 he was back in Berlin as a visitor, appalled by the rise of Hitler. 'Hitlerism is a doctrine of despair. I have the impression the whole Nazi movement has been a catastrophe for this country... The Ambassador feels that anything may happen.'³⁶ In Munich in 1934 he saw 'many ugly uniforms'. 'Germany is again the Germany of before the war but with a new fanatical look in its eye.'³⁷ In 1937 in contrast to King Edward VIII and Mrs Simpson he refused to travel there.³⁸

In a string of books and articles Harold published his views on Germany. As vice-chairman he told the House of Common Foreign Affairs Committee of German aggression. 'We almost heard the tramp-tramp of the troops,' said one awed listener to Harold's brilliant speech. Harold understood Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden who wished 'to prevent another German war'³⁹ but came to see the attitude as based on fear. Harold took a prominent stand against appeasement. 'So far as I can see Hitler gets everything he wants,' he noted in September 1938, after British Prime Minister Joseph

Chamberlain met Hitler in Munich and declared 'peace with honour'. Harold made his name campaigning against appeasement and was proud of it. 'I know that I have done some good on this. And when I feel that I have done nothing in life, I shall always remember this quiet but resolute agitation.'⁴⁰

Harold and Thomas Mann: mutual respect

by Lesley Chamberlain

Harold's friendship with Thomas Mann (1875-1955), whom Harold called 'one of the greatest of modern German writers', began when the two writers met in Munich in 1929 during Harold's lecture tour. Mann's reputation as a novelist was already established and he would be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature later that same year.⁴¹ Reflecting on that moment some twenty years later, Harold observed:

*'It was a time when the German people were just beginning to recover from the horrors of inflation, when they were beginning even to forget their defeat in the first war and the humiliations of the Treaty of Versailles, and when it seemed as if the Weimar Republic, guided by Stresemann and assisted by a rich inflow of American loans, would after all be able to establish itself as a calm and not inefficient Social Democracy... It seemed even at that date that the decay of liberal bourgeoisie, which Mann himself had foreshadowed in his first novel, Buddenbrooks, was not now an inevitable development; and that Germany herself might settle down to a contented small-town existence, blessed with a modest but expanding economy, and enriched by a revival of music, architecture and poetry. We could not foresee that within a handful of months a wave of madness would sweep the country, that Mann himself would be driven into self-imposed exile, and that the whole of Europe would be riven by fire and slaughter.'*⁴²

Mann fled Nazi Germany in 1933 and emerged as the soul of literary opposition to Hitler.⁴³ In Harold's words, Mann 'tried to convince the world of the menace underlying this insane, unscrupulous, and terribly dynamic force'.⁴⁴ Mann followed Harold's speeches and articles closely, approving of Harold's outspoken stance against appeasement and his analyses of the political situation. Mann sought Harold's help directly when friends and family were in political danger, and when Mann lent his name in 1944 to a collection of writers' essays on the Nazi destruction of the Czechoslovak town of Lidice, Harold wrote a moving introduction.

Mann also valued Harold as a writer: of all the English books he'd read recently, he wrote in 1949, 'Nicolson is my favourite – a true gentleman'.⁴⁵ Mann thought of Harold as his 'British friend' and remembered Harold warning him off a certain common German anti-Americanism [probably in the McCarthy era]. 'In America one has to distinguish between weather and climate. The weather is bad at the moment, but the climate is a good one.'⁴⁶

Harold's own admiration for Mann and his family – 'that amazing family'⁴⁷ – only deepened as the years went by: Harold admired Mann's achievements as a writer and humanist as well as his 'dual temperament' (and that of his children Klaus and Erica). Harold perhaps even saw Mann as a role model for how to deal with his own unusual nature: 'As so many of the men and women who figure in his novels and short stories, Thomas Mann possesses a dual temperament.... There remained within him the conflict – which he has himself so brilliantly analysed – between the artist and the man of action, between the passive and the active, between acceptance and revolt, between conformity and eccentricity, between the tang of the Baltic winds and the sedative languors of the south.... How often did Thomas Mann... experience this isolation of the intellectual, this severance of the half-exotic from its kind'.⁴⁸

Harold and the Wagenseils: allegiance in the face of Nazi persecution

by Kathryn Batchelor

Hans Wagenseil (1894-1975) and Harold became friends during Harold's posting to Berlin. Both Hans and his younger brother Kurt (1904-1988) were prolific translators and played a key role in bringing contemporary English and French literature – including fiction by Harold and Vita – to the attention of the German public. Kurt Wagenseil was arrested in 1935 after bringing a copy of an anti-Nazi book back to Germany from a visit to Paris.⁴⁹ The book - *The Brown Book of the Hitler Terror and the Burning of the Reichstag* - was published in Paris in August 1933 simultaneously in 17 different languages and detailed Nazi atrocities. As a homosexual and a translator of works labelled 'degenerate' by the Nazis, Kurt was an obvious target for Nazi oppression, and was sent to Dachau concentration camp without trial.⁵⁰ When he heard about Kurt's internment, Harold 'stormed off to the German Embassy and demanded to see Bismarck. They should either put Kurt on trial, he told him, or else release him immediately'.⁵¹ Thanks to Harold's intervention, Kurt was released: his letter to Harold, with its carefully veiled thanks, is a moving record of the debt that Kurt owed to his well connected friend.

Harold, German celebrity and friend of Germany

by Kathryn Batchelor

During and after Harold's time at the embassy, Harold was something of a celebrity in Germany. *Some People* had been published simultaneously in Britain and America in 1927, and was an immediate success.⁵² It was read by diplomats and politicians all over the world: when Harold visited the dying German foreign minister, Gustav Stresemann in 1929, Stresemann told him 'that the Chancellor (Hermann Müller) had spent his time when in bed recently reading *Some People*, and that he [Stresemann] had read it twice'.⁵³ The book was published in German in 1929 and is in the Sissinghurst library (*Miss Plimsoll und andere Leute*).

Whilst in Berlin, Harold was invited to give lectures and contribute to magazines. In 1929, he toured Germany giving lectures on contemporary English literature. The first stop was Frankfurt, where he 'saw in every... bookshop window a picture of himself prominently displayed,' and visited Goethe's house.⁵⁴ In Cologne, he was hosted by the future German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, and in Munich he had tea with the great German novelist Thomas Mann. His final stop was Hamburg, where he lectured at the Overseas Club to 500 people. The German Ambassador, Sir Horace Rumbold, was delighted by the success of the lecture tour.⁵⁵

Throughout the 30s and 40s, German translations of Harold's books followed swiftly after their publication in English. One of the most widely reviewed was *Peacemaking 1919*, translated into German in 1934, just one year after its publication in the US. An abridged English version of the book was produced by a Leipzig-based publishing house in 1935 for use as a textbook in German secondary schools, and the book featured in several articles in the Berlin satirical magazine *Kladderadatsch*.⁵⁶

In the late 20s and early 30s, Harold worked to promote rapprochement between Germany and Great Britain. He was a member of the Anglo-German Association,⁵⁷ and also belonged to the elite Anglo-German club, a social club next to the German Embassy in London, whose president was the former Ambassador to Germany, Viscount D'Abernon.⁵⁸ More significant, perhaps, in the story of Harold's friendship with Germany, were his friendships with like-minded Germans, sustained over many years and through times of peace and war. One of the most notable of these was with Thomas Mann (see next section). After 1933, Harold joined with Mann and other German friends to sound

the alarm about Hitler, using what leverage he had to support friends who found themselves the target of Nazi violence (see Wagenseil section below).

Harold's celebrity status in Germany endured throughout his life. On a visit to Munich in 1955, for example, Harold was 'greeted by a bevy of Bavarian dignitaries', given a banquet by the Bavarian government, and lectured at the Bavarian State Bank to an audience of 600 people.⁵⁹ On 3 December 1958, shortly after his 70th birthday, Harold was presented with the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (Das Verdienstkreuz mit Stern).⁶⁰ Established in 1951, the Order recognised those whose achievements served the rebuilding of the country and the 'peaceful rise' of the Federal Republic of Germany. It is apt that the medal was awarded to Harold by Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, whom Nicolson had met as a diplomat in 1929, when Adenauer was Mayor of Cologne.

Travel in the 1920s: movement and modernity

by Kathryn Batchelor

The 1920s was a golden age of travel. Long-distance trains put most European destinations within a day or two's reach. Overnight routes and train ferries made travel quick and easy, and train travel was no longer solely the preserve of the elite. The decade also saw the beginning of passenger air travel, with the German airline Lufthansa being founded in 1926. Berlin was a hub for international travel, a stopover on routes to Moscow and further afield. Vita herself had passed through Berlin on an adventurous trip home from visiting Harold in Tehran in 1926. During Harold's posting to Berlin in 1927-29, Vita made the journey from London to Berlin by train four or five times. From Berlin, Harold and Vita made train trips together to Copenhagen and down to Italy. They also travelled around Germany by car. Vita didn't trust aeroplanes and made Harold promise not to fly.

"It exhausts the nerves so much less to travel from London to Teheran than from London to Sevenoaks, or from Tavistock Square to Heal's in the Tottenham Court Road"
Vita to Virginia, 28 February 1926

"The truants were exuberantly happy. It is a great thing, Virginia, to be mobile; to take advantage of trains and not to say that a week's truancy is not worth a 30-hours journey. It is... The effect of coming down on this blue sea and sunny headlands, after the snow and hideousness of the German plain, is simply extraordinary."
Vita to Virginia Woolf, 11 February 1929, after travelling from Berlin to Rapallo by train with Harold.

"I have so much to say that it would fill several volumes. Don't be alarmed: I'll leave most of it out. The train is put on to a ferry, several ferries, because Denmark is split up by the sea..."
Vita to Virginia Woolf, 3 April 1928, describing the journey from Berlin to Copenhagen, where she and Harold both gave public lectures (he on Byron, she on English poetry).

"I didn't count just going up over the aerodrome as flying. But I do want terribly one day to do the flight Berlin-Vienna-Venice. But I promise absolutely padlock not to do any such thing without your permission"
Harold to Vita, 28 June 1928, after receiving a telegram from Vita saying 'don't fly!'

Traces of travel in the library: Tauchnitz books

Tauchnitz was a German publisher that published English language paperbound books for distribution outside Britain. The books were sold in railway station bookstalls and at bookshops across Europe. British and American expatriates and travellers formed a core part of Tauchnitz's target market.⁶¹ There are 44 Tauchnitz books in the Sissinghurst collection, each one a tangible trace of Vita and Harold's travels across Europe, Russia, and the Middle East. Writing to Virginia Woolf from Berlin, Vita told her: 'Tauchnitz has come out strong with your works: Mrs Dalloway and Orlando rub elbows with The Squeaker [Edgar Wallace] in all countries, - Germany, Switzerland, and

Italy. Truly. At all the stations along the line I saw them, and waved a friendly hand.'⁶² Vita was shortly to become a Tauchnitz author herself: five of her books were published by Tauchnitz between 1931 and 1939.⁶³ Three of them are in the Sissinghurst library (*The Dark Island*, *Thirty Clocks Strike the Hour*, *The Edwardians*).

Shopping for books abroad

Travelling and shopping for books often went together for Harold and Vita. The Sissinghurst library contains an attractive collection of German books published by Insel-Verlag. The inscriptions show that they were purchased at a book store in Munich in 1921, when Harold and Vita were on the way back from a long holiday in Italy with their friends Gerald and Dorothy Wellesley.⁶⁴ Inscriptions inside some of the other German books in the library show that they were purchased in Berlin in 1927-29 and given as gifts: for Christmas in 1928, Eddy Sackville-West gave Harold a copy of *Die November Revolution: Erinnerungen* by Hermann Müller-Franke, and Harold gave Vita a copy of *Auf Persiens Karawanenstrassen* by Bernhard Kellerman. On 8 March 1928, Ben and Nigel gave Harold a copy of Goethe's play *Iphigenie auf Tauris*.

Berlin in the 1920s: the 'new Paris'

Startling Modernity

by Kathryn Batchelor

1920s Berlin was a place of striking and startling modernity. New buildings sprang up rapidly, opening up a dazzling range of venues in bold architectural styles, and making light into its own spectacle at night. Visitors could take the ultra modern lifts inside the nine-floor department store Karstadt, the largest in Europe, or up to the restaurant or observation deck within the Funkturm (radio tower). They could visit art galleries, opera, cinema, theatre, cabarets, cafés, bars, nightclubs; they could dive into the artificial waves at the indoor Wellenbad (wave pool), ride rollercoasters at the Luna Park, skate at the EisPalast (Ice Palace), ski at the world's first indoor ski slope, watch bike racing at the velodrome.

Berlin was the 'new Paris'⁶⁵ and was at the heart of European cultural life. Writers and intellectuals gathered in the city's literary cafes and published their work in literary magazines that were highly experimental and international in their outlook. With its huge film studio (Filmstadt),⁶⁶ over 300 cinemas, and lack of political censorship, Berlin's vibrant cinema culture attracted directors and audiences from around the world, and was formative for many, including Alfred Hitchcock. Berlin's numerous theatres were places for bold social criticism and were acclaimed for their 'startling modern stage technique'.⁶⁷

For many young British travellers, choosing Berlin over Paris was an act of revolt against the strongly Francophile older generation. Berlin was a place of relative freedom from social expectations and constraints, where sexuality could be explored and discussed far more openly than it could in Britain. It also had the advantage of being cheap, the favourable exchange rates for the pound or dollar giving British and American visitors a huge amount of buying power.

A City and its Sexuality

by Lesley Chamberlain

Berlin's status as the most modern and sexually liberated city in Europe gave it a brash image -- but important developments in psychology and medicine gave the culture a deeper significance. As a

result homosexuality became more visible in Harold and Vita's lifetime. German thinking made a space for these new freedoms to happen on the streets of the city.

From 1919 Magnus Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science gave an air of propriety and solidity to a subject long hushed up. It encouraged frankness. The first Freudian psychoanalytical clinic also opened in Berlin the following year, not an elite establishment but offering subsidized help to all kinds of people with sexual problems.⁶⁸

Christopher Isherwood still felt a better sex education could be had in the city's bars, but at least psychology provided a new terminology.

The psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud explained how people coped with unconventional desires. In a strict Victorian society they repressed them. 'Suppressed randiness', as Vita jokingly diagnosed, was Virginia Woolf's case.⁶⁹

Another pioneer writing about same-sex relations was the Viennese Otto Weininger. Vita had enthusiastically underlined a decade earlier passages in Weininger's *On Race and Sexuality* (1903). In 1919 she took the book on holiday with her lover Violet Trefusis in a bid to understand her own feelings. Others passages from Weininger she fiercely rejected, for his negativity about women.

Harold also had books on psychoanalysis, and on homosexuality, in his library, including by Havelock Ellis whose then unique English medical textbook on homosexuality was first published in German in 1896.

Both Vita and Harold insisted on discretion in their love affairs. In 1933 Vita noted how much she minded that homosexuals like herself and Harold should be seen as 'outcasts of the human race'.⁷⁰

Private Lives: Harold and Vita in Berlin

by Lesley Chamberlain and Kathryn Batchelor

Unlike many of the intellectuals who deliberately chose to visit Berlin, Harold and Vita went reluctantly. Harold had been hoping for a posting to Rome, and Vita had been hoping he wouldn't go anywhere at all: she couldn't stand the diplomatic life and only visited him for short periods during his postings, yet both she and Harold hated these long separations. Harold's previous posting, to Tehran, had been particularly painful in this respect. Nevertheless, Harold quickly felt in his element, writing to Vita on 3 November 1927: 'I love foreign politics and I get them here in a really enthralling form. Berlin is not *intolerable*, and I can't pretend that it is.' And although Vita described Berlin as 'dreary'⁷¹ and told Harold she was 'plunged into despair' when he told her he might have to stay in Berlin until 1930,⁷² she made friends with other independent, sexually liberated female writers and artists during her intermittent visits and entered a deeply creative period of her own, starting work on the novel that was to become *The Edwardians*.⁷³ As a prize-winning English writer, this was an exciting time for Vita to be in Germany: there was keen interest in contemporary British literature, and many works were appearing in German translation, including Vita's own: her short story 'Seducers in Ecuador', was published in German in the leading literary magazine *Die Neue Rundschau* in 1929.⁷⁴ Meanwhile Virginia Woolf had just signed a contract with German publisher Insel Verlag to bring out translations of *Mrs Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse*.⁷⁵ 'You are the idol of the Berlin intelligentsia', Vita wrote to Virginia from Berlin in February 1928.⁷⁶

The most important of Vita's new Berlin friends was Margaret Goldsmith, with whom Vita fell in love. Formerly acting US Trade Commissioner in Berlin, Margaret was a novelist, translator, and literary agent, and was married at the time to the Berlin correspondent of *The Manchester Guardian*, Frederick Voigt. A woman 'whose morals I strongly suspect'⁷⁷ – Vita's code for instantly recognizing a fellow lesbian – the talented and glamorous Margaret first came into their lives as a diplomatic

contact of Harold's. Margaret and Vita shared a passion for literature. Margaret introduced Vita to the exciting Modernist painter Martel Schwichtenberg. Vita also made friends with Else Lasker-Schüler, an expressionist writer who campaigned for equal rights for homosexuals and who has been described as 'a Lady Gaga of the early 20th century'.⁷⁸ Vita wrote to Virginia that Else was 'for sheer fantasy of nationality and temperament ... my one amusement in this dreary city.'⁷⁹ The exceptional German-French writer and peace campaigner Annette Kolb, whom the Nicolsons first met in London, probably also passed through their Berlin lives. As liberated sex was inseparable from experimental art, Vita had her photograph taken by 'Frau Riess'. Yet that didn't go well. 'She leered at me...she fair gives me the creeps.'⁸⁰

Away from the austere façade of the British Embassy Harold and Vita led lives that the novelist Virginia Woolf, paying a visit in January 1929, could only call 'rackety'. When Vita took her to the Funkturm for dinner they talked sex. Vita accused her former lover of 'suppressed randiness', as the searchlight on the radio tower went round and round.⁸¹ For the sickly Virginia it was all a bit much.

Their gay club scene was on the doorstep of Harold's flat at 24 Brückenallee. The Eldorado was already a tourist trap. Harold preferred the Nürnberger Diele frequented by well-known homosexuals Erica and Klaus Mann. Young gay men from England like the poets Auden and Isherwood went to yet different clubs again. Together the Nicolsons went to 'the sodomites' ball', noted Vita.⁸² Then there was the revue 'where two ravishing young women sing a frankly Lesbian song'.⁸³ Puritanical and private in her ways, Vita was at least half-appalled. 'If I wanted to describe what I felt about Berlin I should have to enlarge my vocabulary.'⁸⁴ 'I have discovered a bookstall which deals entirely in homosexual literature.' But at least the culture was liberated. Back in England Marguerite Radclyffe Hall's lesbian novel *The Well of Loneliness* had just been banned as obscene, despite the willingness of the Nicolsons' gay friend, the novelist Sir Hugh Walpole, to testify in its favour. 'I should like to renounce my nationality, as a gesture,'⁸⁵ Vita wrote, disgusted, between one Berlin visit and the next.

Vita in Berlin: Translating Rilke

An Escape and a Solace

by Kathryn Batchelor and Lesley Chamberlain

In early 1928, on her first extended stay in Berlin, Vita discovered the poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke, and began translating his *Duino Elegies* into English.⁸⁶ The Austrian-born Rilke, when he died in 1926, was the most famous poet in Germany. Leonard, who admired his work, and Virginia Woolf, who tried to like it, accepted Vita's project for their Hogarth Press to make Rilke better-known in Britain.

For Vita, who was a 'fish out of water'⁸⁷ in the diplomatic circles in which she was obliged to move, the translation work was something of an oasis. On her winter visit (February-March 1928), Vita holed herself up in the warm Berlin flat, away from the freezing east winds: 'I give standing order to the servants that I am always out if anybody calls; and I make myself happy with Rilke, who is a damned fine poet'.⁸⁸ On her summer visit (August 1928), she took the translation with her to Potsdam, where Harold had rented an apartment overlooking the Holy Lake [Heiliger See]. Vita would see Ben and Nigel 'dwindling in size' as their tutor rowed them out to the middle of the lake, watching as 'two naked white bodies' splashed into the water before returning to Rilke: 'I live entirely in the company of angels and of obscure but tragic figures from the Italian Renaissance'.

Rilke's *Duino Elegies* may well have provided solace as well as escape: Vita's father died shortly before her first extended stay in Berlin, and with his passing Vita also lost Knole. Rilke's words on death and desire clearly resonated for Vita, who copied out a long passage from her draft translation of the first elegy in a letter to Virginia:

How strange it is to live no more on earth;
To make no further use of customs learnt;
No longer to attribute to the rose
Or anything of fair especial promise,
A metaphor of human destiny;
To be no longer that which once we were,
In ever terrible hands; to throw aside
Even our personal name, a broken toy!
Strange, to desire no more the consummation
Of our desires! How strange to see all things
Related to this earth, float free in space!
Death is a weariness so void of meaning
That slowly we conceive eternity.⁸⁹

Collaboration and an Affair

by Lesley Chamberlain

Though a prizewinning poet in her own right, Vita was not fully at ease in German and alone probably wasn't up to the task of translating Rilke. But Margaret Goldsmith, born of an English mother and German father, was bi-lingual. Their three-month affair was intertwined with Vita's discovery of Rilke. Margaret helped Vita with the translation in Berlin and during visits to Vita at Long Barn. But Margaret found Vita a cold and inconstant lover. A year later Margaret prefaced *Belated Adventure*, the novel she dedicated to Vita,⁹⁰ with verses that expressed her romantic disappointment. They were by Germany's other great contemporary poet Stefan George:

*Du teuer uns, doch rätsel, das uns martert.
Dein lächeln spielt: die klüfte zwischen uns
Erkennt wie ich als unergründbar an
Und haltet ihr geheimnis hoch — ja jubelt
Es nie zu fassen ... und wir suchen schmerzlich
Mit unserer liebe sie zu überbrücken
Und folgen deinem wandel ohne furcht:
Aus deinem antlitz dringt der blick der sieger.*

*[So dear to us and enigma still that makes of us a martyr
Your smile plays a game; just like me
It knows the gulf between us is unfathomable
And delights in its secret — even glories
Never to grasp it and we seek in sorrow
To bridge it with our love
And follow your changing path without fear
Your face presses a look of victory upon us.]*

Many of Vita's lovers found her distant.

Vita's main collaborator on the translation was her cousin, Eddy Sackville-West. As a young writer Eddy spent most of 1928 in Dresden learning German and immersing himself in German literature

and music. 'His conversation consists almost entirely of the most idiomatic German exclamations and interjections,' Vita noted.⁹¹ Clearly his command of the language was masterful. He joined the Nicolsons for Christmas 1928 in Berlin and Vita declared the project finished two months later.⁹²

Eddy, never in good health, was a pianist and musicologist who had great literary talent and sensitivity. The three novels he published as a young man after he abandoned his Oxford studies reflected the refined aestheticism he brought to *The Duino Elegies*. 'They are horribly difficult to do; but the more I go into them the more spellbound I become.'⁹³ Being gay tormented him and affected his complex experience of Germany aged 27. A man of high culture, he tried a German cure for homosexuality before abandoning himself to the sexual high jinks of Berlin.⁹⁴ Vita and he were emotionally close.

Publication and Reception

by Lesley Chamberlain

Vita and Eddy each signed five of the Elegies for the Rilke book, produced in a special arts and crafts edition in Germany and distributed in England by the Hogarth Press. The Woolfs' publishing partner was Count Harry Kessler. A diplomat, aristocrat, internationalist, aesthete and homosexual, Kessler's chosen mission was to promote a modern German culture. An Anglo-German, educated in England, he saw Britain and Germany as mainstays of an enlightened new Europe and was particularly keen to draw the two literatures closer. *Elegies from The Castle at Duino*, the original non-standard title, was printed by Kessler's Cranach press in Weimar in 1931 and distributed in England by Leonard and Virginia Woolf.

As a business venture it failed. The cover price was high for the deluxe signed copies and only seventy were sold in the first year.⁹⁵ But it was a remarkable exercise in bookmaking, with the Cranach Press paying tribute to the ideas of William Morris,⁹⁶ and it transformed British awareness of Rilke, still today probably the most loved of German poets in English. In 1942, Vita wrote to Harold: 'Darling, I listened to a talk on Rilke at the very odd hour of 9.20 this morning, and it said that Edward and Victoria Sackville-West had been the means of starting Rilke's vogue in England'.⁹⁷

Writers, Castles and Snobs

by Lesley Chamberlain

Rilke wrote his *Duino Elegies* in a castle high over the Adriatic Sea belonging to the Princess Marie Thurn und Taxis. He had neither home nor wealth of his own, and sought refuge in aristocratic houses. It was therefore both fitting and ironic that as they worked on Rilke's masterpiece Eddy inherited the family estate at Knole and Vita was poised to buy Sissinghurst Castle. The coincidence reminds us of a now vanished world where diplomats were aristocrats and cosmopolitans and many were writers, or associated with writers. Across Europe they knew each other. As representatives of that class Harold and his father believed it their task to unite nations across cultures, and so they were fluent in German and French, and mixed with Europeans who spoke English.

The library at Sissinghurst is full of books either written or gifted by their aristocratic friends. There is history written by the onetime German ambassador to London Prince Karl Lichnowsky, novels by his wife Mechtild, and novels too by Mechtild's friend Annette Kolb, who was also close to Dorothy Heneage, an old friend of the Nicolsons and, with her castle at East Coker, one of the great landowners of England. Richard Kühlmann – for Vita 'my very good friend' – is another presence in the library and the letters. He had represented Prussia at the Bavarian royal court before 1914, and with Count Kessler secured a passport for Kolb out of first world war Germany, where she was unwelcome for her internationalist views.

Snobbery went with the role. Margaret Goldsmith, less privileged, found Vita intensely snobbish, with her 'grande-dame manner'.⁹⁸ (Harold was too).⁹⁹ But perhaps the whole of upper-class England was snobbish at the time. The German language borrowed from English the very idea of 'Der Snob(b)'.¹⁰⁰ Kolb's novels, taking place in English castles and European drawing rooms, were pictures of high society, and she used the word too. Vita's hugely successful novel *The Edwardians* was meanwhile a castle in prose, not so much about snobbery but about a disappearing English landowning world, of heraldry and heritage and history. She began work on it while still in Berlin, 'in the intervals of Rilke'.¹⁰¹

Vita's upbringing, privileged and solitary, was shaped above all by the romantic associations of Knole, the Tudor palace and park in Kent of her childhood. By coincidence her literary taste was created by just that aristocratic and historical backcloth which in Europe also fascinated Rilke. And so, unexpectedly, the pathbreaking Austrian modernist and the already old-fashioned English 'poet of the land' were made for each other, despite the different strength of their talent.

...Maybe

*We keep the image of some tree that hangs
Above a slope, that daily we behold;
Or we recall the path of yesterday,
And our indulgence to the constancy
Of some dear habit, that remained with us
So well-contented with our company
That it went not away.
And night, too, -- ah the night, when winds from space
Ravage our brows, -- the gently disenchanting,
Much-longed-for night, wearily imminent
For lonely hearts, -- this must remain for all.*

Vita's Berlin friendships: cosmopolitan women of letters

by Kathryn Batchelor

Vita and Harold were part of an international network of writers who translated and prefaced each other's works in addition to writing their own. Many of the writers were women. Many were homosexual, often concealing this aspect of themselves from the wider public.

Selma Lagerlöf (1858-1940)

Selma Lagerlöf was a successful Swedish author and the first woman to win the Nobel Prize for Literature (in 1909). Vita wrote the preface to an English translation of a biography of the Lagerlöf, published in 1931. The book is in the Sissinghurst library with an inscription by the author: '*Inscribed for the fellow countrymen of Sir Walter Scott and Charles Dickens, whose works were the delight of my youth / Selma Lagerlöf.*' This dedication is particularly touching in view of Selma's childhood: she contracted polio at the age of three and didn't learn to walk again until she was nine. She spent much of her childhood as an invalid with only books for entertainment.¹⁰² Lagerlöf had long term close relationships with two women (Sophie Elkan and Valborg Olander) but took care to conceal her homosexuality owing to its illegality in Sweden at the time. A book of love letters between Lagerlöf and Elkan was not published until fifty years after Lagerlöf's death, in line with her wishes.

Hermynia Zur Mühlen (1883-1951)

Hermynia zur Mühlen translated Harold's biography of his father (*Die Verschwörung der Diplomaten : aus Sir Arthur Nicolson's Leben 1849-1928*) into German in 1930. Hermynia was the daughter of an Austrian aristocrat and diplomat. She became known as the Red Countess when she left her husband

and aligned herself with the Russian revolution. Hermynia had met Harold's father on two occasions whilst accompanying her own father on his diplomatic missions, first in Morocco and later in St Petersburg:

Until dinner all went well, and then, sitting between the French and English ministers I discovered to my horror that I had to blow my nose – and I had no handkerchief. What was I to do? This was a fine way for me to make my debut. I sniffled violently and lost the thread of the conversation. Father was not within reach. My nose began to run; I looked around at my neighbours: which of them would be the first to understand my need? The Frenchman was grave and solemn, like a priest celebrating mass. I had been warned against the Englishman, but his blue eyes had a smile in them. I whispered to him: "Can you slip me a handkerchief under the table?" He looked at me astonished, and I began to feel dreadfully embarrassed. Then he laughed, father cast me an approving glance, because I was evidently not boring my dinner partner, and Sir Arthur Nicholson passed the handkerchief to me under the table.¹⁰³

Sir Arthur Nicholson had changed very little. He was still the good diplomat to whom no one was too insignificant to be pumped for information. After dinner he led me into a corner and began a regular cross-examination about the Germans in the Baltic provinces. Were they loyal subjects of the Czar or were their sympathies entirely with Germany? In case of war should Russia fear treachery in the Baltic provinces? What were the relations between the population and the barons?¹⁰⁴

After renouncing her aristocratic title and wealth, Hermynia earned her living by writing and translating. Her works include bestselling socialist fairy tales for children, over 70 translations from English, French and Russian into German, a series of detective novels written under a male American-sounding pseudonym and seven other novels written in her own name. One of these (*Das Riesenrad/The Wheel of Life*, 1933) was translated into English by Margaret Goldsmith. Hermynia was outspoken in her opposition to National Socialism, and returned to Austria from a visit to Germany in 1933 desperate to warn people about the 'frightful truth' of National Socialism.¹⁰⁵ But her anti-Nazi satire, *Unsere Töchter die Nazinnen* [*Our Daughters the Nazis*] struggled to find a publisher and was banned just two weeks after its eventual publication. Hermynia fled to England with her Jewish partner, Stefan Klein, in 1938.

Margaret Goldsmith (1894-1971)

Margaret Goldsmith (also known as Margaret Voigt) was a writer, journalist, translator and literary agent. Amongst her twenty-odd works of historical non-fiction are many biographies of women, including Sappho of Lesbos, Florence Nightingale, and the 17th century Christina of Sweden. As a translator she was most well-known for translating the bestselling German children's stories, *Emil and the Detectives*. She also translated Hermynia zur Mühlen's *Das Riesenrad/The Wheel of Life* in 1933. Goldsmith wrote four novels in quick succession in 1928-1931, inspired in part by her short-lived affair with Vita. Following the end of that affair, Goldsmith is rumoured to have had an affair – or possibly a ménage à trois together with her husband Frederick Voigt – with Norah James, another largely forgotten writer from this era. James's novel *Sleeveless Errand* was banned in 1929, just three months after the banning of *The Well of Loneliness* by Radclyffe Hall.¹⁰⁶ The library contains several novels by Margaret (all of which are inscribed to Vita), a study of Frederick the Great, for which Harold wrote the introduction, as well as several other non-fiction books and one translation. The library also contains a copy of the German translation of Virginia Woolf's *Eine Frau von fünfzig Jahren*, given to Vita by Margaret.

Annette Kolb (1870-1967)

Annette Kolb was one of the most important authors of the Weimar period. Born to a German father and a French mother, she won the prestigious Fontane prize for her first novel, *Das Exemplar*, in 1913, and would go on to win the Goethe prize in 1955. Kolb was an outspoken advocate of pacifist causes and was forced into exile from Germany during both world wars. Kolb was friends with Harold and Vita, moving in high society circles which overlapped with theirs in both England and Germany. The Sissinghurst library holds several of her novels (inscribed to Vita or to both Harold and Vita) as well as a number of works of German literature given by Annette to Harold and Vita on the occasion of their first wedding anniversary on 1 October 1914. Kolb was also friends with Rilke prior to his death in 1926 and Rilke held her novels in high regard.

Else Lasker-Schüler (1869-1945)

Writing to Virginia Woolf from Berlin in February 1928, Vita reported that she had a 'new friend here, who for sheer fantasy and nationality of temperament is not unworthy to be a denizen of Virginia's world'.¹⁰⁷ That friend was Else Lasker-Schüler, a poet, playwright, artist and novelist who played a leading role in the Expressionist movement in Berlin. Else would go on to win the Kleist Prize in 1932 and by the time she fled Berlin in 1933 – she was a Jew – she 'stood at the centre of the artistic community'.¹⁰⁸ When she and Vita struck up friendship in early 1928, Else, like Vita, was in mourning: her only son had died in December 1927 at the age of 28, just one month before Vita's father. But Else and Vita had more than grief in common: like Vita, Else had a male alter-ego; like Orlando, the alter ego was from another time and place: 'I was born in Thebes, Egypt,' Lasker-Schüler famously wrote, 'although I came into the world in Elberfeld in the Rhineland'. Lasker-Schüler is referring to her alternative identity as Prince Yussuf, as whom she often dressed up and who appeared in her writings and drawings. The frontispiece of Lasker-Schüler's 1912 novel, *Mein Herz*, shows a photograph of Lasker-Schüler dressed as Prince Yussuf, anticipating the photographs of Vita that would appear in *Orlando*. In an earlier short story, anticipating *Orlando* even more closely, the female protagonist Tino Princess of Baghdad changes into the male Yussuf Prince of Thebes.¹⁰⁹

Vita's Writing and Germany

Gottfried Künstler by Vita Sackville-West

by Lesley Chamberlain

In January 1929, Harold and Vita escaped from a freezing Berlin to holiday in Rapallo, Italy, and it was there that Vita, interrupting her Rilke, wrote a story with a German title: *Gottfried Künstler*. It meant 'Gottfried the Artist' and was a unique record of her attitude to love.

'Künstler' means an artistic creator and can be a man or woman. Vita used it to evoke the mystery of a fabulous and tragic love affair set in sixteenth-century Germany. Half fairy tale, half like the animation of a Breughel painting, her story was of a woman outsider, Anna Rothe, and the mysterious stranger she cared for after an accident on the ice. Gottfried was a superb skater and together they danced, a magnificent pair. But then the village gossips slandered them, the ice melted and the magic vanished.

Neglected by critics, this was one of Vita's most beautiful creations, as she took the 'icy-ness' about which many of her lovers complained, and turned it into an allegory of what brief and intense love affairs meant to her, and how, evidently in her love of women, she felt vulnerable to that malicious whispering.¹¹⁰

Gottfried Künstler was Vita's contribution to the German 'Artist's Novel' or *Künstlerroman*, a fashion in inter-war Britain. For many English writers Germany was the home of fiction about how artistic individuals led their lives. Often the stories were about troubled outsiders. Harold cherished the secretly gay Thomas Mann's novella *Tonio Kröger* (1903) and had the German copy in his library. Vita and Harold were meanwhile friends with the gay novelist Hugh Walpole whose central character in *Hans Frost* (1927) was an Anglo-German writer. Walpole had lived in Germany and loved German literature and music.

In 1928 Virginia Woolf had moulded the German Romantic form into something brilliantly new with *Orlando*, featuring a man/woman changing gender through the ages. It was an artist's story, a love story, and a hymn to love and art. It embodied everything Vita was -- but was more than she could herself create. That more modest tale, *Gottfried Künstler*, though dedicated to yet another lover, Hilda Matheson, may have been her deeper response to her always beloved Virginia.

Translations of Vita's works into German

by Alison E. Martin

Although Vita was a fluent speaker of French and Italian, and even wrote parts of her early diaries in these languages, her reception in Europe during her lifetime was greatest in the German-speaking countries. Earliest translations date back to the late 1920s, when a short story was published in German in the Berlin literary magazine *Die Neue Rundschau* [The New Review]. Harold's two-year diplomatic posting to Berlin in 1927 coincided with this initial awakening of interest in her work by German readers. Harold was also influential in acquainting Hans Beppo Wagenseil (1894-1975) and his brother Kurt (1904-1988) with her work. The brothers lived near Munich and specialised in literary translation from French and English. As her dedicated translators in the interwar and immediate post-war period, the Wagenseils ensured that eight of Vita's main works, including her highly successful novel *The Edwardians* (1930), were put into German. These appeared with major publishing houses like Wegner in Hamburg and Fischer in Frankfurt.

Through the 1950s, translators tackled the backlog of work that had accrued during the war years, and on Vita's death in 1962 most of her fictional prose had appeared in German. A resurgence of interest in the 1980s, stimulated by the feminist turn in literary scholarship, highlighted the relevance of her work for gender studies. Twenty-first-century new editions, still based on the early translations, are now appearing with major paperback publishers and more niche women's presses in Germany. Her poetry, which twice won her the Hawthornden Prize, still remains untranslated into German.

Translations on display at the exhibition:

Karussell

Karussell [Merry-Go-Round] was a monthly journal published in the West German city of Kassel between 1946 and 1948. Although short-lived, it was a pioneering publication that contained artwork by contemporary illustrators and designers forbidden from exhibiting during the Nazi period. It was also extremely international in outlook and presented short stories and poetry by English, French and Russian authors. Both these issues feature translations by Hans Beppo Wagenseil of works by Vita and by Harold. They demonstrate how Wagenseil energetically used all possible avenues to relaunch Vita and Harold's work on the post-war German publishing market.

Pepita

This translation of Vita's biographical work *Pepita* appeared in German in 1938, barely a year after the English original. A reviewer for a Cologne newspaper was fascinated by the "fantastical, funny, adventurous and extravagant" scenes it painted of life among the English aristocracy. The cover

image shows Knole, Vita's spiritual home, and her grandmother, the Spanish dancer Pepita. This illustration was by Hans Hermann Hagedorn, a Hamburg artist, who would go on to work for Curtis Brown, the London-based literary agency representing many famous writers in the 20th century.

Erloschenes Feuer / Unerwartete Leidenschaft

These are three German editions of Vita's immensely popular novel *All Passion Spent* (1931), in the same translation. However, their cover illustrations are strikingly different. So too are their titles. The oldest, from 1949, gestures to lost love as heart-shaped petals fall from a faded rose. The simple two-tone printing on the now rather fragile wrapper indicates how difficult it was for publishers to get ink and good quality paper at the end of the war. The 1953 edition, also titled *Erloschenes Feuer* [Extinguished Fire], carries a brighter image of the story's central figure, Lady Slane, in the company of her husband. In the latest edition, from 2015, the book has been retitled as *Unerwartete Leidenschaft* [Unexpected Passion]. Its cover image confronts us with a woman of the modern age, visually very similar to William Strang's 1918 portrait of Vita.

¹ Harold Nicolson, 'The Nazi Mentality Studied in Three New Works', *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 April 1939, p.12.

² Aldous Huxley's lecture to Queen's College, 1848, cited in Nicola McLelland, *German Through English Eyes: A History of Language Teaching and Learning in Britain 1500-2000*, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015, p.79.

³ Nicola McLelland 'French and German in British Schools (1850-1945)', in *Documents pour l'histoire du français langue étrangère ou seconde [En ligne]*, 53, 2014, p.5.

⁴ 'Every one knows [...] what a powerful instrument for the training of the minds of boys is the study of the classical languages. Every faculty is called into play: especially memory and judgement, [...] Now the German language may be used in the same manner, as a formative vehicle with the ladies; with the particular advantage for them, that we have a great variety of works, in every branch of literature, which we may read with them with safety, profit, and pleasure, and any more they may afterwards read for themselves; while the Greek and the Latin languages contain but few works suitable for Christian women of the nineteenth century.' (Bernays 1849: 107-8, cited in McLelland *German through English Eyes*, p. 83)

⁵ It is difficult to find information about the syllabi at the various girls' schools including the one that Vita attended in London. However, William Shawcross's biography *Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother* (2009) shows that German formed part of the curriculum, at least in Miss Goff's school in Marylebone, which Elizabeth attended in circa 1908-9: Elizabeth recalled performing plays in French and German there. Elizabeth later attended the same school attended by Vita, Miss Woolf's in South Audley Street (ibid. p.39). Like Vita, though, Elizabeth learnt most of her German through a German governess (ibid.p.40).

⁶ Matthew Dennison, *Behind the Mask: The Life of Vita Sackville-West*, Harper Collins Publishers, 2015.

⁷ Victoria Glendinning, *Vita: The Life of Vita Sackville-West*, Penguin, 1984, p.25: 'Between 1906 and 1908 she also wrote three plays in French, one of them, 'Le Masque de Fer', a full-length five-act drama in alexandrines. A novel in French, 'Richelieu', as neat and well organised as all her others, exactly fills and fits the 370 pages of a folio manuscript book.'

⁸ Vita's diary, July 1907, cited in Victoria Glendinning, *Vita* p.26.

⁹ Letter from Vita Sackville-West to Virginia Woolf, 6 February 1929, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, Cleis Press, 1985, p. 318.

¹⁰ Probably John Sparrow, later to become Warden of All Souls, Oxford. See James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson: A Biography. Volume 1 1886-1929*, Chatto & Windus, 1980, p.345-6.

¹¹ Vita to Virginia, 21 August 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p.277.

¹² Harold Nicolson, *Some People*, Faber Finds, p.4. While the sketches of the 'people' are fictionalised versions of individuals Harold encountered in real life, much of what Harold writes in *Some People* about his own life is assumed by Harold's biographer, Lees-Milne, to be true. Later in *Some People*, Harold describes an argument that he had with a school friend about the pronunciation of a German word, in which he insisted that he 'learnt [German] as a kid in Buda Pesth' (p.42), corroborating the account of his early childhood in the first chapter of the book.

¹³ James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson* p.13-14.

¹⁴ James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson*, p.38.

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- ¹⁵ This account is found in Lees-Milne p.338 and is taken from a letter written by Harold to Vita on 3 July 1928. This letter is not included in either *Vita and Harold. The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson 1910-1962*, edited by Nigel Nicolson, Phoenix, 1992 or *The Harold Nicolson Diaries 1907-1963*, edited by Nigel Nicolson, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2004.
- ¹⁶ Harold to Vita April 16 1929, in *The Harold Nicolson Diaries 1907-1963*.
- ¹⁷ Harold Nicolson, *Why Britain is at War*, Penguin, 1939, p.15.
- ¹⁸ Harold Nicolson, *First Lord Carnock: a Study in the Old Diplomacy*, p.8
- ¹⁹ Queen Victoria in a letter to her grandson William II, June 12, 1899, George Earle Buckle, ed., *The Letters of Queen Victoria, Third Series*, Longmans, Green and Company, 1932.
- ²⁰ Norman Rose, *Harold Nicolson* p.34, p.56, p.159.
- ²¹ Harold Nicolson, *First Lord Carnock*, p.8
- ²² Norman Rose, *Harold Nicolson* p.158 (Harold to Vita 8 Dec 1928)
- ²³ Harold Nicolson, *Good Behaviour*, Constable, 1955, p.221. His actual words on Gemütlichkeit (p.205) were: 'The English words that best define it are...'intimate and cosy'...As a code of behaviour it is benevolent and protective; it mitigates the German tendency to become suspicious, envious or enraged...it is comforting...when they experience spiritual loneliness and self-distrust'.
- ²⁴ Harold to Vita, 24 March 1919, in *The Harold Nicolson Diaries 1907-1963*, p.20.
- ²⁵ James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson*, p.321.
- ²⁶ James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson*, p. 374.
- ²⁷ Harold to Vita, 25 May 1929, in *The Harold Nicolson Diaries 1907-1963*, p. 62.
- ²⁸ Harold to Vita, 3 November 1927, in *The Harold Nicolson Diaries 1907-1963*, p.53.
- ²⁹ Harold to Vita, 14 April 1927, in *The Harold Nicolson Diaries 1907-1963*, p.55.
- ³⁰ James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson*, p.356-7.
- ³¹ Harold Nicolson, *First Lord Carnock* p.6 'The old diplomatist has not been fairly treated by his posterity.' The Germans never forgave Sir Arthur for his work at the 1906 conference in Algeciras, Morocco, at which they were diplomatically outmanoeuvred by Britain and France. Harold in his book congratulated his father on standing up to German bullying (*Lord Carnock*, p.325). See also Onslow, 'Lord Carnock', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 1929, 7(21) pp. 540-553 (548): 'Some years later there was a question of sending him as Ambassador to Berlin, and indeed he would have been glad to go there, but Count Metternich said quite openly that he had not the confidence of German diplomacy; events at Algeciras having given him the reputation of an "intriguer" and foe to Germany. No one who knew Sir Arthur would ever accuse him of being an intriguer, nor indeed was he a "foe to Germany." He thought of only one country and that was his own; he had no prejudices in particular for or against other countries, but he knew the Germans, he understood their ambitions and he realised the dangers of those ambitions to England. It was at Algeciras that the Anglo-Franco-Russian combination first crystallised - a combination which eventually was to bring German ambitions to the ground'.
- ³² Harold Nicolson Diary December 19, 1929, in *The Harold Nicolson Diaries 1907-1963*, p.66.
- ³³ Harold Nicolson Diary July 22, 1929, in *The Harold Nicolson Diaries 1907-1963*, p.64.
- ³⁴ Letter from Harold to his mother July 7, 1929, describing how he would write the tribute to his father 'a man whom I loved and admired more than I have or ever shall admire any man.' See *The Harold Nicolson Diaries 1907-1963*, p.63.
- ³⁵ Harold Nicolson, 'Smells', a wireless talk given on 21 November 1930. In Harold Nicolson, *People and Things*, 1931, p.83.
- ³⁶ Harold Nicolson Diary January 27, 1932, in *The Harold Nicolson Diaries 1907-1963*, p.89.
- ³⁷ Norman Rose, *Harold Nicolson*, p.195
- ³⁸ Norman Rose, *Harold Nicolson*, p.205.
- ³⁹ Harold Nicolson Diary Feb 13, 1936, in *The Harold Nicolson Diaries 1907-1963*, p.137.
- ⁴⁰ Harold to Vita, December 21, 1938, Quoted in Lawrence Wolff 'The Public Faces of Harold Nicolson: The Thirties', *Biography*, 1982, 5(3), pp. 240-252 (244).
- ⁴¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/1929/11/13/archives/thomas-mann-wins-nobel-prize-for-1929-german-author-of-buddenbrooks.html>
- ⁴² Harold Nicolson, *The Spectator* 30 May 1947, cited in Joachim Lilla, 'Mehr als „that amazing family“: Harold Nicolson und Thomas Mann', in *Thomas Mann Jahrbuch* 2006, Vol. 19, pp. 23-49 (36).

- ⁴³ Although he fled Germany in 1933, it was not until 1936 that Thomas Mann made his first public statement of opposition; his son Klaus took a stand much earlier on. See Colm Toibin, 'I could sleep with all of them', *London Review of Books* 6 November 2008, 30(21).
- ⁴⁴ Harold Nicolson, *The Spectator* 30 May 1947, cited in Joachim Lilla 'Mehr als „that amazing family“', p.37.
- ⁴⁵ Joachim Lilla, 'Mehr als „that amazing family“', p.28.
- ⁴⁶ See Joachim Lilla, 'Mehr als „that amazing family“', note 31.
- ⁴⁷ Mann liked this description so much he noted it in his own diary (29.4.1939) und quoted it in his letters. See Joachim Lilla, 'Mehr als „that amazing family“', note 1.
- ⁴⁸ Harold Nicolson: Tribute to Thomas Mann Broadcast on June 6, the seventy-fifth anniversary of Thomas Mann's birthday, Third Programme. Druck: The Listener, London, Nr. 43 (1930), 13.6.1930, cited in Joachim Lilla, 'Mehr als „that amazing family“', p.42.
- ⁴⁹ <https://www.angelfire.com/wa2/wagenseil/kurt.htm>
- ⁵⁰ The 'degenerate' writers included Jean Cocteau and André Gide. See Chris Bryant, *The Glamour Boys: The Secret Story of the Rebels who Fought for Britain to Defeat Hitler*, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020, p.167.
- ⁵¹ Chris Bryant, *Glamour Boys*, p.167.
- ⁵² James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson*, p. 310.
- ⁵³ James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson*, p.370.
- ⁵⁴ James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson*, p.362.
- ⁵⁵ James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson*, p. 365.
- ⁵⁶ <https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/kla>
- ⁵⁷ The AGA's president was Rufus Isaacs, Marquess of Reading, the first practising Jew to hold a Cabinet position in the UK. The AGA is often presented as the anti-Nazi counterpart to the pro-Nazi Anglo-German Fellowship, but its membership encompassed a range of opinions about Hitler, eventually leading in 1935 to 'tensions so extreme that the only solution was to dissolve'. See Charles Spicer, 'Ambulant amateurs': the rise and fade of the Anglo-German Fellowship', PhD thesis 2018, p. 31.
- ⁵⁸ Charles Spicer, 'Ambulant amateurs', p. 32.
- ⁵⁹ James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson Volume II : A Biography, 1930-1968*, pp.284-5.
- ⁶⁰ https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProjekt_Bundesverdienstkreuz/1958#3._Dezember_1958
- ⁶¹ <https://paperbackrevolution.wordpress.com/tag/bernhard-tauchnitz/>
- ⁶² Vita to Virginia, 21 February 1929, from Berlin after returning from Rapallo, Italy. (Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p.327.) Although Vita was rude about *The Squeaker* in the part of the letter that immediately follows this, the holdings at Sissinghurst indicate that she probably purchased a copy of *The Squeaker* from one of these bookstalls.
- ⁶³ An image of *The Edwardians* in Tauchnitz edition can be viewed at: <https://www.publishinghistory.com/collection-of-british-and-american-authors-tauchnitz.html>
- ⁶⁴ Victoria Glendinning, *Vita* p.122; James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson* p.170-171.
- ⁶⁵ James Lees-Milne, *Harold Nicolson*, p.321.
- ⁶⁶ The Filmstadt is in Babelsberg, Potsdam, some 25 kilometres south of Berlin.
- ⁶⁷ C. Hooper Trask, 'A NEW ERNST TOLLER TRAGEDY; "Hoppla, Wir Leben!" Made Effective Through Use of Startling Modern Stage Technique', *New York Times* Dec. 11, 1927 <https://www.nytimes.com/1927/12/11/archives/a-new-ernst-toller-tragedy-hoppla-wir-leben-made-effective-through.html>
- ⁶⁸ The director was Max Eitingon.
- ⁶⁹ Vita to Virginia, 6 February 1929, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p.318.
- ⁷⁰ Vita to Virginia, 5 June 1933, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 374.
- ⁷¹ Vita to Virginia, 29 Feb 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 258.
- ⁷² Vita to Harold, 12 July 1928, *Vita and Harold: The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson 1910-1962*, edited by Nigel Nicolson, p.198.
- ⁷³ Vita to Virginia, 21 August 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 278: 'In the intervals of Rilke I think about my novel, and a sort of patch-work counterpane is beginning to form, but so far the patches are only laid side-by-side and I have not begun to stitch at them'.

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- ⁷⁴ Alison E. Martin, 'Bloomsbury in Berlin: Vita Sackville-West's Seducers in Ecuador on the German Literary Marketplace', *Modernist Cultures*, 2018, 13(1), pp. 77–95 (78).
- ⁷⁵ Virginia to Vita, 20 March 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 264.
- ⁷⁶ Vita to Virginia, 29 February, 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 258.
- ⁷⁷ Vita to Virginia, 29 February, 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 258.
- ⁷⁸ <https://www.dw.com/de/else-lasker-sch%C3%BCler-mein-herz/a-45427549>.
- ⁷⁹ Vita to Virginia, 29 February, 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 258.
- ⁸⁰ Vita to Virginia, 31 January, 1929, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 312. Frieda Gertrud Riess (1890-c1955) was a renowned German portrait photographer who ran a studio on Berlin's central Kurfürstendamm. She portrayed many artistic celebrities and was invited to photograph Mussolini, Italy's fascist leader. See Frieda Riess *Die Riess: fotografisches Atelier und Salon in Berlin 1918-1932*, Wasmuth, 2008, p.83, p.198. Vita sat for her on 1 February, 1929.
- ⁸¹ Vita to Virginia, 6 February 1929, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 318.
- ⁸² Vita to Virginia, 12 January, 1929, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 306.
- ⁸³ Vita to Virginia, 31 August, 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 280.
- ⁸⁴ Vita to Virginia, 23 February, 1929, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 328.
- ⁸⁵ Vita to Virginia, 31 August 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 280.
- ⁸⁶ Vita to Virginia, 29 February, 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 258.
- ⁸⁷ Vita to Virginia, 29 February, 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 259.
- ⁸⁸ Vita to Virginia, 14 March, 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 263.
- ⁸⁹ Vita to Virginia, 21 August, 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 277.
- ⁹⁰ According to Victoria Glendinning (p.212), Vita appears in *Belated Adventure* as Hestor Drummond. Vita wrote to Virginia Woolf on 7 February 1929 that 'on no account' was Leonard to send her *Belated Adventure* to review 'as it's partly about me and so I couldn't possibly do it'. See Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 319.
- ⁹¹ Vita to Virginia, 26 December, 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p.301
- ⁹² Vita to Virginia, 6 February, 1929, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 318.
- ⁹³ Eddy Sackville West to Virginia Woolf, quoted in Michael de-la-Noy, *Eddy: The Life of Edward Sackville West*, London, 1988, p.142
- ⁹⁴ Michael de-la-Noy, *Eddy: The Life of Edward Sackville West*, chapter 7.
- ⁹⁵ Helen Southworth, ed., *Leonard and Virginia Woolf, The Hogarth Press and the Networks of Modernism*, Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
- ⁹⁶ See Laird M. Easton, *The Red Count: The Life and Times of Harry Kessler*, *Weimar & Now: German Cultural Criticism* 30, 2006, p.500 with reference to Jane Block, 'The Insel-Verlag *Zarathustra*: an Untold Tale of Art and Printing', *Pantheon* 45 (1987), pp. 129-37. Kessler's partner was Henry van de Velde, a Belgian designer and architect strongly influenced by the British Arts and Crafts Movement.
- ⁹⁷ Vita to Harold, 24 November 1942 (Box 6 of Vita's Correspondence, Lilly Library, Indiana).
- ⁹⁸ Margaret Goldsmith, *Belated Adventure*, p. 29, p.110. Goldsmith portrayed her as Hester Drummond.
- ⁹⁹ See his novel *Public Faces* (1932) Appendix I, p.345 in which he imagined his descendants looking back upon him as 'hemd in bi relidjus, klas, "good taste"'. His snobbery extended to imagining the complete collapse of English orthography after his time.

¹⁰⁰ In Germany-Austria a kind of bohemian snobbery, of languid characters on the edge of the artistic sphere, but without actual talent, was modelled on English versions of the same, and took over the same word, as in Carl Einstein's essay *Der Snobb* in 1909. Carl Sternheim's play *Der Snob* was first performed in Berlin in 1914. 'Die Eigenart des Snobbismus [besteht in] demonstrativer Zurückgezogenheit, müdem Verwerfen und dem innengefühlten Tod.' See Peter Sprengel *Geschichte der deutschsprachigen Literatur, 1900-1918: von der Jahrhundertwende bis zum Ende des Ersten Weltkriegs* (2004) p.20 and pp.407-8. Peter Gay *The Cultivation of Hatred: The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud* pp14-16, p.76 suggests snobbery was militarized in Wilhelmine Germany and bordered on racism.

¹⁰¹ Vita to Virginia, 21 August 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p.278

¹⁰² <https://epgn.com/2021/11/02/from-nils-to-a-nobel-prize-the-legacy-of-author-selma-lagerlof/>

¹⁰³ Hermynia zur Mühlen, *The End and the Beginning*, translated by Lionel Gossman, Open Book Publishers, 2010, p.54.

¹⁰⁴ Hermynia zur Mühlen, *The End and the Beginning*, p.119.

¹⁰⁵ Hermynia zur Mühlen, *The End and the Beginning*, p.161.

¹⁰⁶ <https://jebounford.net/a-case-of-official-pecksniffery/>

¹⁰⁷ Vita to Virginia, 29 February 1928, Louise A. DeSalvo and Mitchell A. Leaska, eds, *The Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, p. 257-8.

¹⁰⁸ <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/lasker-schueler-else>

¹⁰⁹ <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/lasker-schueler-else>

¹¹⁰ Just as Woolf (1928) dedicated *Orland* to Vita, so Vita (1929) dedicated *Gottfried Künstler* to the BBC producer Hilda Matheson, with whom she had a brief affair after Margaret Goldsmith. Vita had written to Hilda that 'the physical side is the only magical part of love' and Hilda had spoken of 'this legend that you are so detached about people'. Others complained of Vita's coldness and her 'experimenting'. See Victoria Glendinning, *Vita* pp. 211-213.