The Troubled Years

1948 - 1956

1. Kreuzriehe and Wunstorf 1948-49

Letters to Brigitte, Father in Bad Nenndorf, Father's Flute, The Währungsreform, Father's new Job in Rodenberg, Move to Kreuzriehe, Aufbauschule Wunstorf, Gritta, Music with Frau Gewecke

Brigitte became my "Schutzengel", my guardian angel during the following seven difficult years. She was my cousin and the question of marrying her never applied to her. Our love became an intense exchange of letters. We saw each other only four or five times during those years. Unfortunately I burnt our correspondence when I left for America.

I did not understand then, that our reunion with father would mean the end of my intimate closeness with my mother. He did not realize it, but father took my beloved mother away from me, and a previously unknown estrangement crept into my relationship with her. In addition mother was completely worn out after those terrible years.

Every time father came home during that year, full of worries about our future, I would have a collision with him. The more mother pressed him to accept the secure civil service position at the Landwirtschaftsschule in Rodenberg, the less able he became to make any decision. The work with Prof. Obst had turned surreal and was rapidly coming to an end. There was not going to be a peace conference where their White Paper could be presented. The Cold War had broken out, and the Americans were flying coal over the Luftbrücke into Berlin.

It must have been in November 1947 that I enjoyed a last happy visit with father in Bad Nenndorf. - The times I have been alone with father, have always been happy. When mother was not around a special comradeship happened between us, he was even able to laugh.

In Habelschwerdt father had owned a wooden Schwerdtler-Flute, a traverse flute of the kind Frederick the Great used to play, which he took out once a year on Christmas Eve to play Christmas songs for us - his singing ability was as poor as mine. I had picked up an old recorder and had taught myself to read music from a book of children songs. When I got to Bad Nenndorf I found that father had just bought another traverse flute, in a pawnshop. During the day, when he was at work, I tried to play it. It took me several days before I could tease a tone out of the heavy instrument. Father was visibly moved - and made me a present of his flute when I left for home! It became the other close friend, - but my practicing in our narrow quarters quickly caused much serious friction with mother....

In the Spring of 1948 the "Währungsreform", the long expected currency reform happened to us. Everyone was given 300 new Marks, and an opportunity to exchange a limited amount of old marks two-to-one into the new currency. Suddenly we were all equally poor, but equally suddenly the black market disappeared: Father was able to buy mother an iron to press her laundry and for himself a bicycle, but more important was that mother could now buy food for us. We didn't have to

go hamstern any longer.

The Winter of 1948-49 was much easier. We had the "Torf", the peat Gerhard and I had helped dig, carted to Brinkmann's still unfinished house and that kept us warm. In exchange Brinkmann and father came to blows after the irate man broke a window and pummeled a helpless father. Father had a black eye for a while and his glasses were broken. On the urging of the refugee office he took Brinkmann to court, which condemned him to pay a fine to a refugee organization.

So it was a blessing in disguise that in the Spring of 1949 the Obst Project finally collapsed, and father took the hated teaching job at the Farmer's College in Rodenberg, a few kilometers south of Bad Nenndorf. Mother, aided by fate, had won her argument for security: father was reinstated as a civil servant with his seniority and all pension rights restored, and the job came with the allocation of an apartment for all of us in the village of Kreuzriehe near Bad Nenndorf.

We moved in May of 1949. Mother and I rode on the truck that carried all our pitiful belongings, a few aluminum pots, the kitchen stove, the beds, three bare wooden stools, only our old straw palliasses mother had thrown out... The younger three went with father by train. He traveled at a reduced price, it was cheaper that way.

Our new place was in the last house in Kreuzriehe on the road to Bad Nenndorf. The apartment was the second floor of the former service house belonging to a small villa in a large neglected garden owned by a crusty old Englishman and his German wife. They had a Union Jack flapping in front of the house to show that they were under special protection by the British Occupying Forces.

It seemed huge after Nordlohne. A staircase climbed to an upper landing from where doors lead into a small, primitive kitchen, a large living room, and the room we boys slept in. My parents' bedroom and an alcove under the eaves for Christine were hidden behind the living room. The apartment was light and airy with many windows. Our room had two that opened on the fields towards Bad Nenndorf and the Süntel mountains. In the foreground a row of poplars along a small brook meandered into the distance. I loved this view. Oh, I longed so much for beauty, and this place was so much better, lighter, and more beautiful than the cold house in Nordlohne. Who was to complain that there was only one faucet with running water in the kitchen, there was no bath, and the waterless toilet was a smelly metal can in a wooden box in a storage room under the eves next to our room. Father had put a pail with peat moss next to it, which we had to shovel into the can after each use. Every few days we had to carry the full can into the garden, where father constituted a compost pile for the cabbages and tomatoes he wanted to plant.

The furniture was a gift from Tante Magda's attic. Mother sneered: "Schutt abladen verboten!", No dumping!, but we were happy to once again have enough chairs and a table big enough for all of us to sit around for dinner. Our bunk beds were still the same, but somewhere mother had found real mattresses for us, the first mattresses since Habelschwerdt. Father and mother continued to use a new straw palliasse, there was not enough money left after the move to buy a mattress for their bed.

The village of Kreuzriehe was just a Northern German "Strassendorf," but Hohnhorst, a village some three kilometers West, had a big 18th-century village church. This was where father took us all on the first Sunday to give thanks for our final reunion. For the first time we lived in an area where everyone was Lutheran, and the church was crowded on Sundays. Because we were new, we were stared at by the villagers. It was most embarrassing. They all made remarks about us behind their hands, but pretended not to see us. In church men and women sat segregated, and because father refused to be separated from us, we sat on the balcony next to the organist. It was hot and sticky up there, but one had a good view of the collected congregation below. This was

Schaumburg-Lippe and in the villages the women still wore their "Tracht," their native costumes on Sunday. Father was impressed by this display of so much "Volkstum," national tradition, while I was reminded of Adolf Hitler, who loved to be photographed being kissed by the Schaumburg-Lippe maidens among huge bouquets of flowers...

On the right of the nave sat the men in black vests, on the left a sea of stiff starched white collars above the red "Mieder", the skirts of the women. And then the organ went off. Two boys behind us walked the bellows, and the organist danced on the pedals. The congregation took a deep breath and sang, "Christus ist mein Bräutigam..." After each line the organ made a pause, the congregation caught another breath and dived into the next line with renewed fervor. And so it went on, all ten verses of the hymn. I hated church outings. Later, during the sermon father regularly fell asleep and snored softly until mother gave him a nudge. Church was one of the few places where he was at peace.

Very soon mother sent us to an "Aufbauschule" in Wunstorf about ten kilometers East. It was my eighth and last school. I dreaded to have to conquer new teachers, new students, and new rules two years before the Abitur - and school was co-educational! I prayed every evening not to fall for the first girl in my class, - but it was inevitable.

There were three in my class: Hilde, Vera, and Gritta. Hilde was a gray mouse and neither bright nor interesting. Vera, round and self conscious, destined to become a teacher, had an aura of raised-finger-rightousness about her. And Gritta, the most intelligent of the three - was petite and perky, a tomboy, with a freckled nose that turned into wrinkles when she laughed. She also had eyes of startlingly unequal color. It was no love at first sight. She was the only choice and a mistake.

Gritta lived on my way home, so I walked home with her after school. I still see myself on a gray September day, pushing my bike under the Bubikopf-cut plane trees along Lange Strasse. I had put her school bag on my bike and talked all the way about God, religion, and my ideas of the afterlife. I had invented the theory, that transcendence could be achieved simply in "biological" terms. She listened, but the subject was strange to her. Her parents had left the church in the thirties, her father considered himself an "agnostic", and Gritta was simply "nothing."

At the end of our walk home we always got stuck in front of her door for another hour. She told me about her parents' Wandervogel years, and the books her father had read to her, when she was small - the same books had also been read to us. On one such afternoon her mother called us to come upstairs, instead of standing on the street in the cold. Her mother had prepared a large pile of thick Pfannkuchen with spinach between them, which I devoured - and Gritta ate little.

Thus, I met Frau Gewecke, and many years later Gritta would reproachfully quip: "But you were really in love with my mother, not with me!" There is some truth to that. Frau Gewecke, her first name was Käthe like that of my mother, did assume part of my dear, lost mother, and she was a "better" more elegant version too. She had all those qualities that I missed so much in Mother. She was not constantly at the end of her nerves and patience, she could talk about literature, her house had warmth and grace, - and comfortable easy chairs. She made the best coffee I had ever smelled, taught me how to smoke cigarettes and made me feel socially at ease. Her children had all been girls. She loved me dearly - but most important, she played the piano.

Nearly every weekend during that first winter in Wunstorf we "made music" at Gritta's house. Gritta and I played recorders and Hartwig Fritze, a lanky, shy, and sensitive schoolmate of ours, the violin. But it was Gritta's mother who, from her piano, kept us three dilettantes together. We mostly played Baroque music, Händel's and Corelli's trio sonatas, sonatas by the Bach sons, some simple Mozart.

It was serious work, which gave me an unknown high. But I had a crucial handicap, I could not "count." Gritta would quip: "Rolf, you are tactless. We are two bars ahead of you. Eins, zwei, drei, und Eins,... these are eights!" and then shift her attention to Hartwig. Tears all too often blurred my vision. These meetings went on from the afternoon into the wee hours of the night, and then I would have to stay overnight - carefully separated in the guest room. How often did I hope, Gritta would come and wake me up in the morning, but she never did.

Music became the discovery of those years. The old Romanesque church in Wunstorf had a splendid organ, on which an old-maid organist gave concerts twice a month. I never missed one, and I soon learned how to follow the linear mathematics of Bach's counterpoint through its intricate inversions, contractions, expansions, and reversals. This music could be "read," understood and enjoyed with head and ears, a miracle. Bach's music really talked to me.

Frau Gewecke's house became my refuge from the inclemency of home. Fritz, Gritta's father, a rotund, well-read, intelligent man full of energy and a teasing, often biting humor, became my scientific mentor and hero. He had a doctorate in physical chemistry and had been the technical director of an aluminum plant near Cologne. Because he had been a member of the Party, he lost his job after the war. Yet contrary to my depressed father, he had rebuilt his career by giving freelance technical advice to a dozen small cement factories in the area. Their owners paid him percentages of the improvements he brought to their productions. He had become "rich," owned an old Mercedes, and loved to eat well.

Gritta was the apple of his eye. Her two older sisters, Lore and Suse were badly at odds with him: Fritz Gewecke had one serious flaw, he would loose control of himself, when he got seriously angry. In one such fit, he had struck the 23-year old Lore in an argument over a boy friend. Equally hard-headed as he, she walked out of the house. She never got married. And Suse was simply not sharp enough to really interest him. She had been sent to a school to learn gardening. Gritta, on the other hand, could wind him around her little finger!

So, whenever I dreaded the chores that awaited me at home, I stayed at Gritta's house overnight. We had no telephone at home. Early on I would call the local village store in Kreuzriehe and ask to deliver a message at home, but later I just stayed. All was eased somewhat by our parents becoming close friends. They found much common ground in their Wandervogel past.

I was lucky, I was able to flee the tense situation at home. My three siblings were not, and Christine still has agonizing nightmares about her mother, which have their origin in those years.

During the winter 1949-50 Christine came down with a blinding headache and a high temperature. The doctor came and diagnosed a bad head flu. Mother resorted to an old remedy, gave Christine a hot bath and buried her under as many blankets as she could find to have her "sweat it out." Christine nearly died that evening, her heart rate went sky high. The doctor now concluded that she had meningitis - and Christine spent 10 days in bed until it was over.

Coincidental with this experience my parents decided that supporting three boys through school and university was going to exceed their financial resources. Christine did not need an abitur. They took her out of school after the tenth grade and sent her to a school for kindergarten teachers in Hildesheim. The same education mother had had. A hard let-down for Christine.

As it were the tension at home had its origin between my parents. Mother was hovering close to a nervous breakdown. Frau Gewecke recommended an "alternative" doctor in Wunstorf, who had helped her. He diagnosed his patients by examining their eyes. He took one look at my dear mother and asked how often she had intercourse with her husband.... A confounded mother confessed that they hadn't made love for ten years. - After this diagnosis she got better.

The deeper reason mother explained to me only at the Seiser Alm in 1977. I had begged

father in to help me fathom those critical years. He got angry, this was none of my business, all I wanted to know was what their sex life had been, and to that question he owed me no explanations. - I was 46 and had been married ten years then - and both of my brothers were deadly sick. - That night mother came to my room and told me that after Dieter's birth father had decided to abstain from intercourse. He felt that he had done his procreative duty and that making love for any other purpose was frivolous. - My poor sensuous mother....

2. The Summer of 1949

Sommerfahrt 1949 with Helmut and Hermann, The Barths, Maulbronn

The first "Sommerfahrt, the expedition I had dreamed of with sleeping bags, an aluminum cook pot, and a rucksack, finally came about in the hot, dry summer of 1949. For four weeks I hiked with Helmut, Hermann, and Jack through Southern Germany, from Frankfurt a/M into the Black Forrest, and back to Gelnhausen, on foot. We slept in youth hostels, haylofts, and under the open sky, I cooked our meals, and we saw churches, monasteries, and medieval towns, all the beauty I was longing for.

Helmut Barth and Hermann Müller were school friends from Vechta, whom I had met during the last year there, and Jack Williams a "pen pal" from Rode Island. We made an unlikely foursome. Helmut was tall, slow, and philosophically inclined, the son of an old patrician family from Bremen. Hermann, the oldest of the six children of a grade-school teacher with socialist leanings, was his complete opposite: fast, talkative, short, and dark haired. He spoke embarrassingly Sächsisch. They were united in aspiring to become Protestant ministers. Appropriately we had met in the weekly "Religionsstunde" in Vechta, taught by a young vicar just home from the War. The vicar had the habit of hiding behind the upturned collar of an old army coat stripped of its insignia and limped from a war injury, but he was so serious that we never dared making fun of him. He was supposed to teach us hymns and the New Testament, and when we went into a strike against being asked to learn such nonsense by rote, he asked us to each write down our most pressing religious questions. Not surprisingly I had two: "What is Sin?" and "What is Glauben, faith?" The vicar was moved by the last - quite obviously being plagued by similar questions - and so we discussed Faith and Sin for several weeks. I loved it.

Jack fell from the sky, almost literally. One day a small barrel had arrived at school full of assorted underwear, shawls, soap bars, and worn socks, collected for the poor, starving children in Germany by the students of a private high school (The Hill School) in Virginia. With it came a number of letters requesting "pen pals." I was one of the poorer English students in my class, but that did not deter me from applying for one of the "pal-ships." I worked for weeks on my letters to Jack that winter, translating German Christmas carols in exchange for instructions in baseball... When we finally decided to walk through Southern Germany, Jack suggested to fly to Frankfurt to join us on our trip. He lasted four days. Worn out and choking on our staple food, Oldenburger Schwarzbrot, he deserted us in Heidelberg and instead joined his mother on a cruise through the West Indies. My first failure in cross-cultural understanding.

The trip began with three unforgettable days with Helmut's parents who picked me up in Kreuzriehe. His father, a lean, aristocratic, but thoroughly modern man, who had just been made undersecretary in the ministry of transportation in Bonn, together with his wife, drove us three boys

to Frankfurt. They still had only a Volkswagen then and the three of us had to squeeze into the rear seat, but the ride and the freedom from home was intoxicating.

On the first evening we visited friends of the Barth's by the name of von Amelungsen in the Sauerland. The Amelungsens lived in an unpretentious elegance and splendor, the like I had not seen before: original art on the walls, service personnel, old silverware and beautiful china on a white table cloth, two wine glasses for each setting, and an excellent dinner that included us and their four children. Everything was produced with a most charming ease, including an invitation to wash the dishes after dinner, while the adults discussed common friends, literature, and music. That night we slept in a local pension, each in his private room, compliments of our gracious hosts. - Much later I learned that Herr von Amelungsen was the director of one of the large steel concerns on the Ruhr....

Next morning Father Barth offered us the choice of either visiting the Edertalsperre, a large water reservoir in a beautiful mountain setting, or the Art Gallery in Kassel. I voted for Kassel. It was the first collection of paintings I saw and a most important event.

The museum goes back to good King Jerome, who had been installed as King of Hessen-Waldeck by his brother Napoleon after the defeat of Germany. Its great treasure was a room full of Rembrandts, - God knows where he had acquired them.

Father Barth gave us a lecture on how to *see* a museum: "First, walk through the entire collection as fast as you can, looking only cursorily at everything. Some paintings will surprise you, catch your eye. Then ask yourself, 'Why is this painting so exciting?' Try to find the most important ones on that walk. Then, on a second tour through the rooms, select from among these "the crown of the collection" and look only at that one for the rest of the time. You will learn as much about yourself, as you will about painting."

This thoroughly subjective method suited me so much, that I have used it ever since, and never have I failed to discover something entirely unexpected. On that day it was Rembrandt, of course. I have not seen the collection again and cannot say which Rembrandt it was that interested me most. I do, however, remember how impressed I was - by father Barth's choice, who, to his own surprise, "discovered" an austere, but brilliantly fresh, Flemish crucifixion. Of all paintings in Kassel I still see his painting before my eyes. Heightened by the surprise, in a flash, it burned itself into my memory.

In the years that followed, I soon learned that the preferences changed and rarely remained the same, even in the same museum. In Wiesbaden, a year later, it was still Rembrandt, but already others encroached and today Rembrandt's paintings leave me cold. And again and again it would be those paintings that I had seen in the flash of surprise that would stay longest in my mind.

Somewhere in Frankfurt we picked up Jack and took the tram through town to the Autobahn intersection. The ride through the inner city I have not forgotten. I had seen other burnt out cities before, like Cologne or Osnabrück, none looked like Frankfurt. In Cologne the American bombs had razed the inner city to the level of the hills on which the Roman army camp had been erected 2000 years ago. Except for the Dom and the railroad station there was nothing left standing. Frankfurt had been destroyed by incendiary bombs. The blackened, burnt out shells of the houses were still standing, like the backdrop to a cheap post-war movie. It was a horrible sight, and poor, innocent Jack turned as white as a sheet.

For four hours we stood on the Autobahn trying unsuccessfully to thumb a ride south. Eventually we gave up and took a train to Weinheim where we found beds in the Youth Hostel. Next day we got up very early and hiked through the Odenwald to Neckargmünd, just east of Heidelberg. I tried my best to talk to Jack, but it was difficult to understand his American mumbling. It was not

encouraging. In Neckargmünd we crossed the Neckar on a ferry like in old times and clambered up the steep hillside to Dilsberg, which offered besides another Youth Hostel, a beautiful view of the valley and the traffic on the river.

Heidelberg, crowded with Americans, made Jack homesick. We visited a Gothic church - it was Sunday and my two companions wished to attend the morning service - and the famous castle and decided to take a train across the Rhine to Speyer. It was then that Jack declared that he was going to remain in Heidelberg with some friends in the American army. Maybe, this had been his plan all along, and I had just not understood him. His decision came suddenly, and we felt hurt and deserted. Later I received a picture postcard from Nassau in the West Indies, where he went on a cruise with his mother. He thanked me for the valuable experience in Germany...

The imperial cathedral in Speyer was a disappointment. The nave had been renovated in the early 1900s on Kaiser Wilhelm's orders, which left the walls covered with heroic murals of Wagnerian emperors in winged helmets carrying bare busomed, blond women through chaotic battle scenes. Only the crypt, where the graves of the Frankish Emperors are, was austere and beautiful. - It had been cleaned up during the Third Reich!

Long after dark we arrived by train in Karlsruhe. Hermann stayed with some relatives while Helmut and I headed for the Black Forrest. A narrow gauge train took us as far as Ettlingen, but the woods were no where to be seen. It was after midnight. Without an idea where to go, we erred through town towards the hills, when we ran into a pair of policemen. At first they were suspicious, but finally escorted us to the local Pfarrhaus, where the motherly wife of the minister took pity on us and put us up in empty beds. I recall the delicious feeling of waking up and brushing my teeth under a hand pump in the garden in the early morning sun. This memory is intricately connected with the taste of black currant jam, which they call "Wanzlebeeren," aphid-berries, in Baden, which the good woman served us with coffee and buns for breakfast.

Two days I rested in Burg Haueneberstein above Baden-Baden, where to Hermann and Helmut had gone to visit another relative. I painted a watercolor of the waves upon waves of blue mountains and gorged myself on choke cherries from the trees that grew plentiful and wild in the woods. Never had I seen such "tropical" woods before full of exotic trees.

Hermann had brought a mouth harmonica along. I still see the mountains and hear his harmonica on our way down into the Enz valley. Just before Pforzheim we spent the night in a hay loft.

I cannot remember who had told me about Maulbronn, the former Cistercensian monastery just north of Pforzheim, where we arrived that evening. It came as a complete surprise, the great discovery of this summer.

The monastic complex has survived intact. The Cistercensian monks saw their salvation in quietude and farming. Inside the old walls that surround the unassuming church, crowd half-timbered service buildings, an enormous, high-roofed grain storage, a mill, and the quarters for the lay farmhands and pilgrims. A charming mixture of the sacred and the practical. The oldest parts of the church are Romanesque, but in the adjoining cloisters the Gothic begins to bud, to finally explode into full flower in the windows and ceilings of the refectory. Above the Gothic cloisters roosts in disarming innocence a homely, half-timbered second story, once the quarters of the monks, and since secularization a school for boys. Schiller was educated here and so was Hölderlin.

The great surprise, however, was a fountain in a small chapel that is part of the cloisters. Its lilting music echoes from the high ceilings to fill every space, hinting at some mystic secret, which only the monks knew. Sometimes I still hear this fountain in my dreams. Many summers later I found a similar fountain in the Great Mosque of Bursa in Turkey, and I still wonder which Christian

Sufi brought this charming secret home from the Orient.

Two days later we reached, the venerable, old town of Wimpfen stretched along the rim of the precipitous edge above the Neckar. Its towers, churches and steep-roofed houses formed a fantastic silhouette against the evening sky. We found the Youth Hostel in the old "Kaiserpfalz," the 12th-century rest house of the Hohenstaufen emperors. We spent the evening on its balcony with other travelers suspended high above the Neckar valley.

After Wimpfen we dawdled through the Spessart. We got slower and slower, until one noon we emerged from the woods across from Gelnhausen. Tired and happy I cooked for the last time thick pancakes with blueberries, which we had gathered along our way. I spent a few days at Brigitte's house.

3. School in Wunstorf 1949-1951

Gritta's Father, Professor v. Fragstein

For the first time I truly enjoyed school. The teachers were exciting. An older Studienrat, an excellent teacher, who was well organized and knew his subject, taught chemistry. Encouraged by Gritta's father, I became interested in chemistry. Two hours every week we experimented in a laboratory, and a competition for the first place in chemistry began between Gritta and me. Unjustly the teacher favored Gritta.

In physics I had no such problem, there I was the unchallenged head of the class and even Gritta asked me to give her an occasional hour of tutoring. I don't know, was it because of nasty Dr. Kimmel's excellent physics course in Vechta, or because I had tinkered with electronics for so long, most of what the young physics teacher was trying to teach us, I already knew.

There were not only science classes which I enjoyed, they were easy. Herr Musehold, the art teacher - no pun this was his real name, something like "Favorite of the Muses" - taught an occasional class of art appreciation, but also a method of drawing with a simple, angular-cut sharpened twig. Dipped in black drawing ink the tip of the stick made fine lines and with the broad angle-cut one could "paint" like with a brush. The method used a lot of ink but was fast and gave striking results, softer than a pen and more accentuated than a brush.

English and Latin were my Achilles' heels. There was nothing to be done about it either. My Latin teacher was a lady in her late thirties, loved me, but despite her gentle hints, I still had to resort to guessing when translating Caesar's Bellum Gallicum. English was the other disaster. Nobody not even I could understand, why I was so poor in English, if needed I could make myself well understood in that language. - But to this day I have occasional nightmares about English tests.

Above all other subjects, German and history were the classes which I worked the hardest for and found most exciting. They were taught by Dr. Paul von Fragstein, who was also our "Klassenlehrer,".home-room teacher At forty-five he was young, verbal, irreverent, and unusually sharp for a "Studienrat." During his former life he had taught psychology and literature at a teacher's college, from which he had been suspended because of his Party affiliation. The rumor had it, that he descended from "old" Austrian nobility - and that he had a Jewish grandmother. With his aristocratic posture in front of the class - in the manner of Napoleon he had the habit of hiding his left hand in his shabby German Air Force jacket - his chin raised, slightly graying dark hair slicked back, his prominent nose crowned by a pair of rimless glasses, he did look like a minor, impoverished Austrian nobleman. He always wore a pair of house slippers, a last vestige of Austrian

sloppiness, because he lived with his undistinguished wife and their two children in an apartment under the roof of the school. He did not have to walk far. Everybody called him Paulchen or in his presence "Professor," a title he was not embarrassed to accept.

Fragstein used literature to enliven history and history to illuminate literature. He turned the usually dry subject of historical dates a into an intellectual history of Europe on a level close to the course of Western Civilization that Cornelius took at Berkeley. Fragstein used a set of history books written during the end of the war by a group of German emigrant historians in Sweden. They were the most exciting text books, an encyclopedic, well edited collection of essays on philosophy, architecture, art, politics, and literature in Europe since the beginning of the Renaissance.

Every two weeks we had to read a new novel or play, which was later discussed and analyzed in class. Our reading list covered such vastly disparate texts as the description of the ascent of Mount Ventoux by Petrarca, Shakespeare and Voltaire, the philosophy and critical writings of Leibniz - my favorite, although Fragstein never left the slightest doubt that he considered Leibniz "mystical" and a "fuzzy" thinker - from the writers of the German Romantic, especially Novalis, to the writers of the last fifty years like Hesse - who, under her father's influence, became Gritta's research subject - and Thomas Mann, whom Vera diligently appropriated.

Fragstein had an often merciless way of cutting up the works of these venerated writers using a psychological-analytical method. My parents were aghast at the "revolutionary" ideas I brought home. Mother, urged by Father, ran to Fragstein to make sure that my "immature ideas would not jeopardize my Abitur!" He did not reassure her, but laughed at her. Mother never forgave him this humiliation.

We feared Fragstein's German tests. Every month we had to write a five-hours long closed-book essay on a subject related to the material we had recently discussed. He gave us a choice of three or four subjects, and very rarely offered a theme that permitted us to let fantasy free reign; most of the subjects called for critical discussions requiring a sizable measure of analytical thinking. I usually spent three hours in collecting and outlining my material before writing anything down. By that time I had transported myself into such a state of visionary excitement that the multitude of subjects and angles, which I saw, entirely overwhelmed my linear logic. As a result I often had to endure Fragstein's dreaded criticism, when he returned the papers. My "nonlinear logic" and the disgrace of spelling errors were my constant nemesis.

Not always did Fragstein enjoy the last laugh. Emboldened by his irreverence, we occasionally delighted in pulling the rug from under his arrogance. His thin-skinned vanity helped greatly. One such memorable occasion occurred when Fragstein steered us into a lively discussion of marriage, "Ehe" in German. He was enjoying himself, sarcastically analyzing our silly remarks, when, his left hand in his jacket he pointed at Walter Fuest, one of the oldest in the class, and condescendingly snarled: "Now Fuest, you have a vastly superior experience than most of the others here, what can you contribute to the subject of Ehe?" Walter got up and very quietly said: "Ehe is an abbreviation of the Latin phrase '*Errare Humanum Est*'." - Everyone knew that von Fragstein's marriage was far from happy. The Professor first blanched then went purple. Everybody held their breath. We could barely hide our giggles: It served him right. Cutting us up was too easy for him. - But von Fragstein caught himself and without effort diverted the subject to a different question. I admired Fragstein as much for his cool as I admired Walter for his audacity.

4. 1950 Summer with Brigitte

Southern Germany, Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Wiesbaden, Bach Festival in Göttingen

I longed to see Brigitte again. Taking the train was too expensive. I had worked out a bicycle route for us two from Gelnhausen along the Main and Tauber Valleys to Maulbronn. Father bought me a simple pup-tent and a sleeping bag, both from US Army surplus.

It was early July, and school was over, when mother saw me off with one of her embarrassed smiles and good wishes tempered by worries and admonitions. It was a hot day. Shirtless, I flew south through Hameln and up the Wesertal with its slowly undulating hills on both sides, fields and villages, whose names I knew well from Hanns Grimm's "Volk ohne Raum."

Shivering from exertion and too much sun, I collapsed late in the afternoon at a spring by the road near Schlitz on the Fulda. I set up my tent in a meadow above the fountain.

It was a lovely, quiet place with a view across the Fulda river. A blue line of hills on the other side of the river was interrupted only by a few single fir trees standing out against the sky. On three sides the meadow was bordered by dense forest, at its lower end stood the lilting fountain in the shade of two lindens. Occasional waves of warm air carried the heavy smell of their bloom up into the cool clearing. A thunderstorm was brewing over the hills in the distance, and the farmers worked late into the evening to bring in their hay before the storm would break.

I cooked supper over an open fire, and then sat at the fountain talking to the passing farmers, who told me that the spring had been struck by St. Bonifacius, the missionary who converted the German Saxons to Christianity in the eighth century.

By nightfall the lightening storm had completely encircled the valley, yet there was still no rain. It was my first night alone in a tent, and I did feel uneasy. Frightening thunder followed the lightening strokes until towards midnight a blinding stroke hit one of the trees on the hill across the Fulda setting it afire, and while it was burning like a huge torch the clouds broke.

There was no thought of sleep. I sat in my tent, carefully avoiding touching the roof and praying that it would survive the down-pour. The roof held, but the water invaded the tent from below. I had missed to notice that the meadow held the springs that fed the fountain. Naked I crawled into the inferno outside to dig a moat above the tent. But it was of no avail, within half an hour my sleeping bag, my clothes, everything was soaked.

Around two the rain stopped, leaving me uncomfortably crouched in the driest corner of the tent. Just when I was trying to catch my first sleep, I was awakened by the grunts of a wild sow and her piglets somewhere very close in the darkness. Now I became really frightened. Because wild pigs had become the plague of the land, and if irritated they were dangerous. It was pitch dark, and the excited animal seemed to be coming closer and closer. I scrambled out of the tent again and tried to rekindle my fire. It only seemed to be irritating the animal. The sow stayed near for what seemed like an eternity, and only next morning did I discover that she had been held back by a fence that cut through the woods less than a hundred feet above my tent. On the other side of the fence I found a large patch of ground turned up by the frenzied animal.

In the afternoon, still wet I arrived in Gelnhausen full of excited anticipation, tired and exhausted. Brigitte was not home, when I reached the house. She worked at the library of the American Army Base on the other side of town, a summer job she had taken to make some money to pay for her studies.

When we finally met after so many months of expectation, shyness befell us. Looking past me, she held out your hand across the distance and said with a short laugh, "So, here you are!" Only then did she look at me.

Later, after supper we walked up the mountain and sat on a bench overlooking the Kinzig valley and the lights of the town. I do not remember what we talked about. What does one, in love for the first time, talk about anyway? So much remained unsaid, so much was in gestures, in inflections, imagined. We did not kiss each other or hold hands. To listen to her alto voice that curled up into unexpected laughs at the end of a sentence, to be near her and watch the passing trains in the dark valley below, was more than enough.

The day we left Gelnhausen was sunny and warm. Brigitte wore a white dress with large mother-of-pearl buttons down the front. I remember it distinctly, because it matched the joy of this early morning. Yet underneath remained, ever present, the subtle tension of your closeness.

I still see her laugh, pushing her bike up the steep road through the thinning woods of the Spessart above Bad Orb. Then on the long ride down to the Main valley, flying at breakneck speed, I would run away from her only to have a reason to have to wait anxiously at some crossroad or village fountain for her to reappear. Yet in playing this game of catch, of being close and letting go, I was vaguely aware that it was not a game children play.

We camped on a meadow high above the Main river south of the small town of Neustadt. Choosing a spot to camp became a ritual: the perfect place had to have a beautiful view, face east to catch the sun in the cold morning, and if possible have water near by. This one had all of these, and in addition it bordered on the village cemetery and its neglected chapel.

I have always liked southern German village cemeteries with their pictures of the deceased on the grave stones and colorful paper flowers in hideous vases. The iron gate was locked, and we had to climb over the wall. For a while we wandered among the graves and read the sentimental inscriptions on the stones and crosses until Brigitte discovered that the door to the chapel was open. She had disappeared inside, and a few minutes later she called from the belfry that the view from up there was incomparable....

I was in no hurry to climb after you up the rickety ladder behind the broken organ. The interior of the chapel was full of fascinating junk. A few pews were still standing, and a series of naive pictures of the stations of the cross decorated the walls. On the altar lay among dust and plaster the broken limbs of a fallen Baroque angel. An ingenious mechanical contraption at the altar's center showed, if rotated, alternating a painted figure of Christ crucified, the Virgin Mary, and a saint mutilated beyond recognition. In a pile of junk on top of the deflated bellows I had discovered the pipes of the organ and was trying in vain to coax a sound from one of the smaller flutes when you, high up in the tower, called for help.

I do not remember, how I climbed up to you so fast. I found you wedged in the jumble of beams inside the belfry, face to face with a small, irate owl, its plumage blown up to double its size, making the most ferocious noises. Apparently you had stuck your hand right into its nest.

While I diverted the bird's attention from below, you carefully retreated past me. Oh, I don't think you were really frightened. Once out of the bird's reach, you began imitating its preening and hissing with a disarming laugh, but when I, relieved that the scare was over, tried to hold you and kiss you, you wriggled out of my arms and slid through the maze of beams to the platform under the bell. You must have pulled the bell's frayed rope, because it began to make a tremendous noise just when I was making ready to jump down to you from its cross arm. You laughed at my being startled, and the tender moment passed.

Dusty as we were, you suggested to go for a swim in the river, but I still could not swim and feared the water. You ran down the hill to the river by yourself and splashed in the dark waters, while I made a fire to cook our supper. I had secretly hoped that you would do the cooking on our trip, but you adamantly refused, pretending not to know anything of that art. I don't recall what I

prepared that evening, but my specialties were thick pancakes with marmalade and fried potatoes with onions and tomatoes.

It was completely dark when we crept into our tent. Bundled into our separate sleeping bags, we lay next to each other, you very still, and when I, with a beating heart, put my arms around you and kissed you, your forehead, your mouth, your eyes, I found you crying.... What had I done? I tried to kiss your tears away. I asked you, why you were crying, but got no answer. I cradled your head in my arms and slowly stroked your hair. You lay unmoving until, and after a long time, we fell asleep....

We were both innocents. Neither of us had any practical experience with love making, and - God forgive my father. - I was in addition overly conscious that Brigitte was my cousin, who was not marriageable....

When I woke Brigitte was still asleep. The sun was already beating on our tent . It quickly became too hot inside. I opened the entry flap and found the river below shrouded in fog. A row of spindly poplars along the water's edge rose above the mist, and when the sun finally reached the valley, they threw long, dark shadows on the white cloud. A few minutes later the fog bank lit up, and the band of the river emerged as pure silver. It was so quiet that one could hear the splashing of the oars of a fisherman as he rowed across the water.

These solitary minutes were like oil on my confused heart and mind. With the fog receded the shadows of the night. Breakfast was ready when she finally appeared. We spoke little, but the gaiety of the previous day refused to return. It had become late and hot before we were back on the road.

The country we passed was beautiful, the red-roofed houses of Marktheidenfeld climbing the hillside amid vineyards, the narrow streets of Wertheim, and all along the placid river.

Behind Wertheim we were riding along the Tauber, which there meanders slowly through meadows and orchards. It was Brigitte, who finally rescued us from the mood of this morning, and who found the abandoned mill under old trees. There was nobody around. Under billowing clouds the noon hour hovered in the meadow beyond the trees. Bashfulness was not her problem, without a second thought she stripped completely and soon swam in the cool, willow-lined mill race, beckoning me to join her.

The water was not deep. I could see that the water did not reach to her full breasts. Still, it took a long time before I ventured into the dark flood. "Its simple," Brigitte said, "you must learn how to swim. I don't like to walk in an unknown river either." And trying to put confidence into me, supporting the small of my back with her hand, holding me dangerously close to her, she tried to teach me how to float on water. The water was wonderfully cool, and we ended up splashing each other, and she laughed again and even kissed me, but overwhelmed by her feminine beauty, I was too shy to touch her.

Later in the afternoon a farmer, whom we had asked for the way near Mergentheim, excitedly told us of the Stuppacher Madonna. "It is the most beautiful Madonna you have ever seen, and every year miracles happen in her chapel. You must visit her." It was out of our way, but we pedaled to the tiny village and discovered in a most unpretentious chapel the otherworldly painting by Matthias Grünewald. It came as a complete surprise. The diaphanous beauty of the madonna and the freshness of the colors deeply moved me.

It had become late and we had to find a camp site quickly. A cold wind had sprung up and clouds threatened rain for the night. It was a dismal place on a strip of grass at the edge of an empty field. A row of trees behind the tent afforded some protection from the wind. When night fell, a flock of black crows descended into the trees and cawed for hours. I discovered that I feared the

night....

Lying quietly next to you, I begged you to tell me what made you cry the night before. For a while you lay with averted face saying nothing. I could hear that you were crying again, but did not move, and then between sobs you whispered: "I am homosexual."

I was thunder-struck. Memories spiraled through my mind of a night with father in the men's dormitory of a railway mission in Oldenburg, where in the middle of the night someone had screamed "You swine leave me alone. I shall drown you in the canal, if you ever come near me again!" Next morning, father had found it difficult to explain to me what a homosexual was.

Eventually I caught myself and tried to consider her plight: a woman homosexual? I had never heard of that and could not imagine what it meant. Between sobs you told me a confusing tale about a distant male relative, whom you somehow held responsible for your condition, but you were unable to explain anything else to me....

Fortunately, Brigitte lead us away from these agonizing nights into a string of happy days exploring the beauty of the country and Riemenschneider's altars. .

With all my senses tuned to their highest pitch I suddenly *saw* with a new intensity. Later, in Greece I learned how to *see* at will, but it was then that I first experienced it. I discovered that my most lasting memories were made of images seen only for fractions of a second, an entire room of paintings or a minute detail, a view, a face, in full colors. No prolonged staring could produce the same effect, the same intense retention. I often agonized over not being able to remember her beloved face seen so close, so many times, but a movement, an unexpected stance, her standing in the water by the mill, or sitting on a bench before Riemenschneider's altar in Creglingen, have remained.

It was only an hour and a half to Creglingen, but we dawdled, so it became once again noon before we arrived at the simple cemetery chapel there. The woman with the key was making ready to go for lunch. There would not be much time, she was in a hurry.

Riemenschneider had been Brigitte's special subject in high school. I had only seen photographs of his altar, but was not prepared for the presence of three other Gothic altars in the small nave, which, had they not been in the shadow of Riemenschneider's sculptures, would have been worth a visit alone. With closed eyes, I walked past the main altar to first look at them, a small Rhenish piece on the left, an elaborate crucifixion by a student of Veit Stoss in the choir apse, and a glowing, three-leaved annunciation panel on the right.

When I finally returned to face the main altar, Brigitte was sitting in a pew in front of it, completely absorbed - and that is how I remember Creglingen.

I slid into the bench next to her and she began pointing out the sculptures to me: angels carry Mary to heaven from among the perplexed twelve apostles, each a separate character study. High up, encased in rich late-Gothic tracery reappears Mary enthroned between God Father and Christ.

Looking for the unexpected, for parts of the altar that were less famous, less well known, looking for "my discovery," I found the four panels in the wings. In half-relief they show scenes in the life of Mother and Child: Mary and Magdalene, the annunciation, the birth, and the presentation in the temple. Little, intimate scenes in exquisite detail. But perhaps the most unexpected was the smell of the bare linden wood. Usually Southern German Gothic altars are painted. The wood is covered with gold leaf and paint to make the figures glow in the darkness of the churches. This one is bare and exudes a warm smell of wood.

The caretaker was angrily rattling her keys. We had to leave. To take home a few tangible memories and to pay for the caretaker's overtime I was buying a few postcards, when a well

dressed lady, who had apparently watched us, smilingly presented me with an enlarged photograph of the altar. This picture is still with me, I have carried it as far as California.

In the evening we reached Rothenburg. Brigitte pleaded that we stay at the youth hostel. It turned out to be the old town-hospital, an etching of which had, I now recognized, hung over my mother's bed in Habelschwerdt. The separate dormitories for boys and girls allowed us both a peaceful night of sleep.

For an entire day we walked through Rothenburg, rediscovering the fountains, houses, lanes, and corners, that had long been familiar to me from pictures my parents had brought home from their Wandervogel years. Brigitte took me to two other altars by Riemenschneider, his last supper in the church of St. Jacob - which, because of its massive composition, I liked least - and my favorite, the exquisitely minimal crucifixion in the church of Dettwang in the valley below town, where we went late in the evening.

Dinkelsbühl, next day, had none of the romantic location of Rothenburg. Situated in the center of a shallow pan shaped depression, surrounded by low hills and fields, Dinkelsbühl was still very much a living town with horse-drawn hay wains, a working smithy, horses being scrubbed in the mill race, and few tourists. We liked the town so much that we stayed overnight, once again in the Youth Hostel, a huge barn-like, half-timbered, medieval granary under an enormous, steep roof. We spent the evening in the company of many other travelers from all over Germany. I remember a tall, blond girl waling into the room, who was so strikingly beautiful that everybody fell silent. We discussed her beauty for the next day, Brigitte insisting that such beauty must be a cross to bear.

We went west towards Schwäbisch Hall and Maulbronn. A new found serenity now hid our subterranean tensions. Somehow we had reached a balance between the desire to be close and the distance each of us needed to be himself, between seeing only the other and seeing the world around us, between exuberance and sadness. Brigitte seemed to walk on air. I was happy, and when we camped in an apple orchard behind a village with the silly name of Strümpflebach, it became the first night without demands, frustrations, or tears.

Maulbronn was as magical, as I had remembered it: the church, the cloisters, the Renaissance farm buildings, the peals of the fountain. We asked the custodian to lock us into the monastery and spent a most happy morning there. Absentmindedly I tripped over the threshold to the refectory and sprained my ankle. Brigitte massaged and bandaged my foot with great tenderness and even cooked supper that night: pan-fried potatoes with scrambled eggs.

At the Youth Hostel in Wimpfen a few days later, we emptied a whole cantine of new Appelwein, fresh cider. It made us sufficiently tipsy, that we felt too dazed to pedal through the hot day. This brought up the idea of hitching a ride down the Neckar on an empty barge. It turned out to be easy. The people on the boat were unexpectedly friendly. We heaved the bicycles into the hold and spent the day sunning ourselves on deck, dangling our feet in the river. Slowly we drifted past hills, villages, medieval towns, and castles: Zwingenberg, Eberbach, Hirschhorn. Effortless we reached the locks near Neckargmünd before nightfall. I persuaded Brigitte to push or bikes up the steep hill to Dilsberg, and we put up our tent on the same meadow overlooking the river and Neckarsteinach where Helmut, Hermann, and I had sat a year earlier. Like a toy the ferry shuttled back and forth across the river loaded with people and wagons. The meadow however turned out to be much steeper than remembered, and all through the night I continued to slowly slip down and crowd you into the lowest corner of the tent.

When we reached Gelnhausen a few days later, Tante Magda surprised us with the news of an exhibition in Wiesbaden of paintings from the Berlin Kaiser-Friedrich Museum. The paintings had just returned from the US, where they had been taken by the Americans after their discovery in a

salt mine near Magdeburg at the end of the war.

We rode there a few days later. It was my first confrontation with a large collection of paintings and made a deep impression on me. The exhibition contained an extraordinary selection of 220 paintings, every one a special gem of its time.

Never again have I seen an equally large collection of classical paintings so concentrated to the essentials. Nothing was superfluous, every painting was beautiful in its own rights. Together, yet separate, tied to each other by invisible strings, we wandered through the rooms, fast at first to see everything quickly and find "the reason for being there," in the manner that Helmut's father had taught me, and then once more slowly to show our finds to the other.

Today, having gained a much greater familiarity with paintings, likes and dislikes have formed, which resulted in an emotional separation from the viewed objects.- then I only had my new-found eyes, unprotected by much art-historical knowledge. The paintings literally exploded in my mind. To this day I see Rembrandts - in the same room with the famous head of Nofretete. On a faded, claret-red brocade, gently illuminated by a skylight, hung the "Man with the Gold Helmet", two different Saskias, and a self-portrait. But now I recognize that other paintings had vied with Rembrandt for the "first place": A sweet Virgin and Child, Angels, and God Father overhead, by Fra Filippo Lippi, which Brigitte liked, the hard contours of a peasant woman with a child sitting at a table illuminated by a single candle by George Latour, and a small panel of "Saint John on Patmos" by Hieronymus Bosch.

For Christmas Brigitte gave me a large-sized picture book with color reproductions of the most famous paintings from museums around the world, - which she had stolen from the American Army Library! It was a paperback, part of a correspondence college course for American G. Is. I rebound it in a linen cover, and it has traveled with me for forty years.

Not enough, high on beauty, I stopped in Göttingen on my way home, and spent five days at a music festival celebrating Bach's 200th birthday. From my leftover money I bought cheap student tickets to as many concerts as I could afford. I had persuaded the owners of a house, selected at random on Lotze Strasse, to let me camp in their garden, and every evening I went to another concert. For the first time I heard Helmut Walcha, the blind organist, play Bach's "Trio-sonatas," the "Art of the Fugue," and the entire "Well-tempered Clavichord". One evening was taken up by "Saint Matthew's Passion," and two by an exuberant performance of all six "Brandenburg Concerti". It was my first discovery of Göttingen and it's wonderful music, in which I was to get absorbed a year later.

5. The Abitur 1951

"My Life," written and oral Abitur examinations, The Abi-Ball

The Abitur, the maturité, the final deliverance from the un-freedom of school, the feared rite of passage to the university and a new life, took place in February. The pressures leading up to the three weeks of examinations are hard to describe and today difficult to imagine. Everything, the chance of attending university, my future, and self respect was hanging at stake. Every test during that last year was a fateful contribution to the final grades, and to the school-board's absurd, certificate of the student's "maturity," the official certificate to call oneself an "educated person."

Since November we worked on a take-home essay with the simple title "My Life." We had been told in all seriousness that it should contain a complete resume of our experiences and understanding of who we were, and what we aspired for in life. On the basis of this paper we would

be rejected or admitted to the final examinations. Fragstein tried to play down this preposterous presumption, but he also warned us that for this one time, he would not be the judge, that the school's principal - an old, embittered, intellectual communist - and a ministerial commission from Hannover would have the final say. Obviously Fragstein was as concerned about the outcome of these essays as we were.

I took this essay most seriously, and rewriting it three times I put all the philosophical ideas into it that had occurred to me by then. Fortunately no copy survives, but surprisingly, several ideas, which I first put into words at that time, have remained valid. My central paradigm was "Man as a Pendulum," susceptible and open to all outside sensory and intellectual forces, but firmly suspended from a point in the center of his personality.

Mother, proof-reading the text for the inevitable orthographic errors, was aghast by its content. Father did not say anything until a few weeks later, when - I was playing my flute to soothe my nerves - he stormed into our room in blind anger, ripped the flute out of my hands and screamed at me, that I was worthless, arrogant, and lazy, and that I would fail the Abitur and ruin my life, unless I would buckle down and finally get to work seriously. It was not so much this horrible pronouncement that touched all my ever present fears, as his completely uncontrolled anger that remains in my memory. I had never seen him in such a state before. He left the room slamming the door so hard that the whole house shook. I am afraid, I have never forgiven Father this scene. It was never again mentioned between us, and only after many years, when I had gained sufficient self respect, was I able to put its memory to rest.

I have never been at my best in examinations. Invariably I would work myself into such an excitement that both my memory and my critical faculties were seriously impaired. There were four written tests in German, mathematics, English, and Latin. Each took a six-hour morning. I passed all of them but Latin and English with an "A". In the first two I had enough earlier credit, but in Latin my teacher's "love" proved fatal. She wanted to push my grade to "B", and I was condemned to "clarify my standing" before the commission three weeks later. The half-hour aural translation exercise turned into a farce. Everyone but my dear teacher laughed about my guesswork. Finally the superintendent of schools took pity on me and ended the session with a rebuke for my red-faced lady to not overextend her ambitions. I was most grateful, received a passing "C" and was dismissed.

At the day of the orals we all sat around waiting in some classroom. Now and then Fragstein would come in to call someone before the commission or tell another that he could go home.

By noon most of the students had been dismissed, I was still there. Looking out the window at the bare trees under a gray sky, I brooded over the fickleness of fate. Was this the longed for freedom, the new life? I knew that I would pass, but I could not find any feeling of accomplishment, not the slightest excitement or relief, there was only emptiness and exhaustion.

And then, in the afternoon, I was called in once more to defend an "A" in chemistry. This was completely unexpected, which proved to be my saving. There was no time to get nervous. I was given a subject, equipment, and half an hour to prepare. Within minutes I had the entire commission under my spell. One by one they paraded past the experiment I had set up, looking through a microscope. The superintendent, recalling with a chuckle my Latin debacle, congratulated me personally and our good, old chemistry teacher was beaming. I was dismissed.

Gritta had waited for me, and we went to her house, where her mother fell around my neck, brewed us a strong coffee, and fed us a cake she had baked especially for the occasion. I arrived in Kreuzriehe for dinner. Mother gave me a hug and a kiss and kept repeating, "Mein Junge, mein Junge!" Father with the look of one of his migraines on his face, mumbled something not

understandable and walked out of the room. There was no sign of pride or happiness from him, no celebration, no acknowledgment, no gesture, nothing...

On a night two weeks later the traditional Abiturball took place, a sordid fete in some dreary beer garden, where everybody was supposed to get drunk. Of course, I remained stone sober and full of forebodings. Suddenly, Gritta, already slightly tipsy, had vanished, and so had Horst and the others of our circle. My heart stopped. Someone told me that they had left with our Latin teacher to continue celebrating at her apartment. Half blind I walked after them. With all my senses at full alarm I stumbled into the apartment on the third floor of the school building. Everyone was sprawled on the floor. Alfons Kettner held the Latin Lady on his lap. Vera was on the floor with her red-haired beau, and on the sofa lay Gritta in Horst's arms, who caressed and kissed her without restraint. The place was full of smoke and reeked for beer and alcohol. I was greeted with much hello - but collapsed disgusted into a corner with a splitting headache. I could not look at Horst and Gritta, but at the same time I did not have the courage to just leave, telling myself as an excuse my bike was locked in Gritta's house to which she had the key. To make things worse, the Latin teacher abandoned Alfons to devote herself to me and feed me coffee - as if I needed any clearer vision of my surroundings.

I do not remember how it ended. Did I really walk all the way home to Kreuzriehe at three in the morning as my foggy memory suggests? More likely is that Gritta finally consented to go home and unlocked my bike. It does not matter much. For many years I was unable to erase the pictures of that night. And neither did Horst relinquish the advantage he had gained.

Gritta saw Horst more often than ever - or did I only imagine it? Whenever I could not find her at home on one of my spontaneous visits, I assumed as a matter of fact, that she was with him. It did not help to know that her parents continued to object to her relationship with Horst. One day, when I had come to see her on my way home from work at the salt mine and nobody was home, I left a note under their door - which, of course, her mother found first. On the following weekend her father loaded her into his car and drove her to Kreuzriehe - to apologize for her treating me unkindly. I still see the embarrassed girl standing in our living room. Neither of us knew what to do or say.

A few weeks later, on a long walk, she suggested that we should separate - and I, in tears, begged her to stay with me... There followed a few feverish outings together, but our relationship was dead - though far from over.

6. The Salt-Works of Bokeloh 1951

Making money in the salt-works, admission examination at Göttingen

Father had told me that I he expected me to contribute to the expenses of studying in Göttingen. He finally agreed that he would give me the money to pay for my living expenses, while I would pay for tuition and books and could use any left over earnings to do whatever I wished during the three months of summer vacation. Gritta's father had found me the job in Bokeloh, one of the salt mines east of Wunstorf. The entire Northern German Plain sits on a huge dried out seabed, the salt deposits of which are mined for potassium chloride. Thus I spent two months during spring vacation working in the salt-works of Bokeloh.

Before starting to work there, I applied for admission to study physics in Göttingen, my great dream. Since years there had never been any doubt in my mind that I would study physics.

Gritta's father had disturbed my certainty for a while by trying to persuade me to change to chemistry. In the sciences Göttingen had more applicants than open spaces and therefore required an entrance examination.

I spent the night in the Youth Hostel, had breakfast in a Volksküche, and full of excited expectations decided to begin the day by attending the famous eight-o'clock physics lecture of Prof. Robert Wichard Pohl. This morning, purely be accident, Pohl demonstrated Foucault's experiment measuring the speed of light. No one who ever attended one of Pohl's lectures, will forget that day. It was the physics course to end all physics courses, and the Foucault experiment was surely the pinnacle of his showmanship: every detail was projected over life-size on the wall of the auditorium. At the end of a long hallway stood a huge astronomical lens and Pohl's factotum operated a fiercely noisy gas turbine that drove the deflection mirror. Everything seemed to work completely at will, and in the end, the huge crowd in the auditorium broke out in wild applause.

Nothing could have fired up my resolve to study physics more than this lecture. An hour later, absolutely sure of myself, I asked to be examined by Prof. Pohl. The professor in charge of the examinations inquired with raised eyebrows, why I insisted on being seen by that "dragon." Little did I know then, how everyone feared Pohl's temperamental examinations. But my mind was set on this test and in full control of the situation, I passed with flying colors.

Two days after this glorious success, I found myself in the pits of Bokeloh. Because of the inherent dangers the miners' union had strict regulations against non-members working underground, and I was assigned to the "salt-works" above ground.

This was an old fashioned operation. The mined rock salt was crushed and then dissolved in boiling water in two-stories-high wooden vats, in which the brine sat for a day and a night. As the solution cooled the calcium and magnesium salts crystallized out first, covered by the potassium chloride. The sodium salts remained in solution and were drawn off with the brine. A huge rake scraped the valuable potassium chloride into a hole in the bottom of the vat and on to a conveyor belt, which carried it into a drying shack, where it lay for several weeks to cool. Eventually it was shipped, mostly to America, where the salt was used as fertilizer or made into gun powder.

In the bottom of the vat remained the magnesium salts, baked hard as stone that could only be removed by hand with a pick-ax and shovel, the perfect job for the ignorant newcomer. The salt was still 100 degree-F hot. I had to strip down completely, wind my legs and lower parts with old sackcloth and through a small door near the bottom of the vat crawl into the inferno. After about half an hour of hacking and shoveling at the salt, sweat running down my back in rivers, I was allowed to come out and have half an hour's rest, while another apprentice took over.

I worked as hard as I could. After the second turn, the foreman, who supervised the operation from the cool outside, took me aside and said: "You are working too hard at it. Let me show you how to use a shovel." So, I learned how to use my knee instead of my arms to push the shovel into the salt. Later they told me, that the chief engineer, who had hired me, had gone around and told the salt crew to show this "cocky student" what real work was like. "One day he might be your director and order you around. This is his last chance to understand what you do!" They were honest people though, and after a day at this grueling job, they told me, that I had proven my worth, and that from now on I did not have to work any harder than anyone else, maybe even a little less on account of my poor physical strength.

After this introduction to "real" work, I was sent to the chemical laboratory to make routine analysis. This occupation was a disaster, I could never get the same quantitative results twice, and after two weeks I was happy to be sent back at manual labor.

This time I was put into the railway maintenance crew, where I learned to carry, with twelve

other guys, heavy, twenty-meter-long steel rails and not contract a hernia - by letting the other eleven carry most of the load - and how to jump at the right moment, when the load was to be dropped. All very valuable things to know.

Less easy was the job of stuffing stones under the rail ties with a huge cross pick, the back bent ninety degrees. Like forging in the smithy, this was done by several people hitting the same area in a frighteningly rapid rhythm. There was no way to escape the round without having the pick land on one's foot. The paunchy, former master Sargent, who ran the crew with Prussian precision, finally took pity on me, and because of "the danger of a stone hitting my glasses," took me off this exercise and sent me to unload coal from boxcars. This job was physically much easier, but the coal dust got into every pore of one's skin, where, dissolved in sweat, it ran, bit, chafed, and itched like hell.

Good Dante never described the communal shower in his "Inferno". Oh, what a blessing it was, to go to the "Kaue," as mine-showers are called in a German, and let the hot water run over me. And yet, when in full operation, this place reminded me more of the "Inferno" than the hot salt vats: Hundreds of naked men standing in the sweaty steam in a vast, greasy, black shower hall, bragging of their prowess, and cracking jokes about their variously sized organs. I had to learn fast.

Every time I worked in Bokeloh, on the last day, one of the younger foremen took me on his rounds through the underground. Despite the fact, that we had to walk some fifteen kilometers in the hot, dry darkness, I was looking forward to this day. A salt mine is a most fantastic world of unimaginable beauty. The white, red, and brown salt layers are often hundreds of feet thick, and one walks through spaces as high as cathedrals and hundreds of yards long. Often the layers are folded, so that these "rooms" rise at an angle, and in the darkness, visible only by their tiny lights, people hang on scaffolds drilling holes into the salt, scenes reminiscent of Piranesi's "Carceri". At the end of the shift the holes were loaded with explosives to "shoot down" the salt. At noon everyone retreated to the upper world, the heavy steel doors banged close, and a few minutes later the explosions bellowed through the mine.

Since 1951 I kept a diary. This had been Fragstein's suggestion, to keep our writing skills from getting rusty. My notes were cryptic, but in reading them now, many forgotten details come back to mind. For instance, I faithfully recorded every Pfennig earned in Bokeloh, an appalling pittance: 300 marks in two months, less than 150 dollars at the time. But the work meant freedom: I told myself, that every whack at the hard salt was one hour in Southern Germany, in Italy or in Greece.

7. First Semester in Göttingen 1951

Alfons Kettner, Concerts every second day. the AOV, Disappointing academic success.

I arrived in Göttingen on Saturday the 5th of May 1951. On my way I had stayed a day in Hannover-Waldheim, where the Geweckes had built a house and had moved in a month earlier. There, from my first money, I bought a new pair of shoes, a pair of pants, and a shirt - with Gritta's help. It must have been one of the happier days of our relationship, because in my diary I found a note that I had missed the last train to Göttingen and stayed overnight in the room under the roof,

where I would spend many a night in the years to come.

I rented a room in Göttingen with Alfons Kettner, the most unlikely of my classmates. We had never been particularly close. Alfons studied Law. The son of a middle-class civil servant, he tried to affect an air of jaded elegance, sported a well-trimmed mustache and expensive, fashionable clothes. I guess he tried to imitate von Fragstein's arrogance, but he was much too good natured for this role. Ours was an arrangement of convenience, but Alfons promised to be an unemotional room mate.

The room was in the apartment of an elderly couple with a strong suburban Frankfurt accent. They were a little weird, she an easily frightened housewife, he, now gray, sagging, and balding, had been a fanatic member of the "FKK," the Frei-Körper-Kultur Verein (for once not a Nazi organization!) the "official" German association of nudists. The house rules were accordingly austere: "No cooking in the room! No partying after 8 PM! No smoking or drinking! No women after 10 PM!" The room, right off their kitchen, though pleasant enough was adorned by several framed, high-Kitsch pictures. Over my bed hung a print of an athletic, male nude who, to hide his shame, was sitting with crossed legs in a landscape filled with antique Greek ruins. When I slipped a print of the Count of Montefeltre from the Uffici over this swoony picture, the master of the house threatened us with expulsion.

I had completely forgotten that in this first semester I spent more time in concerts and making music than working for my five classes. I find that I can recall every concert, every play, and many evenings at the AOV, the Academic Orchestra Association that I joined in the first week. In the beginning I sang in the choir - I guess, to prove my Mother wrong - but soon found that I had to stay quiet too often not to be thrown out by Mr. Fuchs, the charming, young conductor-director. Later Füchs'chen, as we called him, allowed me to play the flute in the orchestra under the condition, that I would stop fluting, whenever he gave me a wink.

On the evening of my arrival I went to a concert by Günther Ramin and the Thomaner Chor from Leipzig at Saint John's Cathedral, a day later to a lecture on Brecht-Weill's "Dreigroschen Oper" at the "Brücke," the Anglo-German Cultural Center. Weill's music was a real shock. Closer to my heart was Helmut Walcha playing Bach fugues and trio-sonatas on the old organ of St. Mary's. I stole in free, sitting in the mezzanine just behind the organist to watch his hands and feet. During the first three weeks these concert were followed by Richter playing Bach's "Goldberg Variations", then his "Musical Offering". Two nights later a small chamber orchestra from Berlin performed the entire "Kunst der Fuge". This concert took place in St. John's, and to this day the memory of the up-strokes which started the Art of the Fugue give me shudders of pleasure.

The AOV, the Academic Orchestra Vereinigung played since 200 years at all official University occasions: Händel's g-Minor Suite for Cello at a meeting of the Königsberger Medical Society, a Händel concerto-grosso at the matriculation celebration, or Bach's h-Minor Suite for Flute - I had to remain silent throughout the piece - Mozart's "Kleine Nachtmusik," and the "Serenade für Pauken und Streicher" at the annual faculty ball. Sometimes we also played modern music like Hindemith or the "Gesänge vom Tage," but most pieces were as conservative as the occasions solemn.

The high point of each season was the annual faculty ball in June at the "KWP", the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Palast, a modest, 19th-century, open-air dance-café on the Hainberg, high above town, where the AOV traditionally provided the music. The warm June nights, fireflies roaming the bushes, the elegantly dressed faculty and their wives remain some of the more charming memories of Göttingen. After we had played and had been generously applauded, we were invited to eat the leftovers from the buffet and dance to our heart's delight until the early morning hours. Once my

sister Christine was there. On another such night I danced with Hannelore Ludewig and Maibi Beyerle. They were still in high school but played in the orchestra. Both were as poor dancers as I.

It was mostly Baroque music, which I heard. Not only because I knew this music well, but tickets for concerts of the acclaimed classical soloists of the day were too expensive for one, who lived of 120 DM a month, rent and food included.

The plays at the Göttinger Staatstheater, which was directed by Heinz Hilpert, were equally out of reach except on special occasions, a formal date, or the visit of someone from out of town. There I saw "Much Ado About Nothing" with Gwendolyn, a girl from Wales, who had a beautiful voice and spoke most charming German. Or "Lysistrata", when my sister Christine visited us, and the "Magic Flute", my first opera, to which Father invited me on a visit to Göttingen. The most magical of these performances, "A Birthday Party" by Shaw, I saw with an unhappy, older, female astronomer, whom we called "Sternchen"...

Unbelievable, but before coming to Göttingen I had been to no more than three or four movies! So, it was not surprising that the films I now saw left such lasting impressions. Movies became also one of the few interests I shared with Alfons. We joined a Film Club with weekly midnight showings of such startling classics as de Sica's "Bicycle Thieves," "Die Sünderin," a contemporary German "sex shocker" that would play a unexpected role in my life with Alfons. There was "Sunset Boulevard," which I am reminded of every time I drive through Beverly Hills, but above all the French films of the forties: "Les Enfants du Paradies," "Le Diable au Corps," "Sur Les Touts de Paris," "Rififi," "Joies Interdits," and so on... Some I saw several times, like "Orphee," the meaning of which we argued over for months.

On the weekends or in the evenings I often escaped on my bike into the hills east of Göttingen or west into the Weser Valley. - And on the second weekend in Göttingen I rode to Gelnhausen, some 200 km south! Luckily I caught a truck in Bebra that gave me a ride, so that I reached the city of my dreams at midnight of the same day. - Brigitte was not home... - I can no longer imagine, how it was possible to live without a telephone. Only few people had telephones in those days, and one simply had to go to their houses to find out, whether they were there or not. - But Tante Irmgard Hammer was visiting Tante Magda, and I spent two beautiful days with her, whom I had not seen since 1942. We walked all over the Mountain, collected wild raspberries, and talked for hours. The bicycle ride back took two days.

When did I study? I took six classes every morning Monday to Saturday "Introduction to Experimental Physics" with Pohl - which turned out to be such a perfected "Circus" that I learned less than expected - then Inorganic Chemistry, two classes in Mathematics, Theoretical Physics with Prof. Becker - a great physicist but a miserable teacher - who was so old that he could only mumble - and Art History of the Baroque for fun.

Alfons, though bored by the subject, joined me at art history class one day, and it was then that we met Renate. She had a pudgy nose, long, blond hair and looked like Hildegard Kneef, the famous movie star of "Die Sünderin." Alfons fell for her on first sight. He turned into an ardent student of the Baroque in order to pursued Renate. Eventually she became the reason for Alfons' and my separation. During the winter, the two would all too often occupy our room for extended evenings, and I was politely asked to stay away until ten o'clock, to go for a walk in the cold, or work at the library... Eventually, at the semester's end I decided to move out.

Later Renate emigrated to America, ending their affair. And quite by chance, I met her there as the wife of an American friend and mathematician ten years later, a strange coincidence.

Serious and naive as I was, I was not very successful with girls. "Love" among students was awkward at best, and not only because of the rigid morals and the rules of the landladies of the

small town, - true affairs were virtually nonexistent. The few that did exist were famous like those of Peter Toennies, an American Fulbright student. Running about town in a beat-up Porsche, he held the top honors for a long time.

I worked at the library of the Mathematical Institute on Bunsen Strasse and later at that of the Max-Planck-Institute for Physics across from the street. They were pleasant and quiet places, where all the books I needed were readily available. - Throughout my student years, I never bought a text book, saving a lot of money.

After years of excitement about and a singular preoccupation with physics and mathematics during high school, I found science dull and difficult to comprehend in Göttingen. The few brilliant teachers had fled to America in 1936. In addition I had often real troubles staying awake during the lectures that I had so much wanted to attend. Was it the poorly balanced food we ate, tea, milk, dark bread with margarine, and beet syrup for breakfast and a starchy meal in the Mensa, the student cafeteria, for lunch, too few vitamins? Were the late hours we kept at night responsible, or the uninspiring teachers? Probably all of these.

In hindsight the greatest tragedy of my years in Göttingen was this loss of enthusiasm. Studying had turned out to be unexciting. I felt that I had to submit to the ordeal in order to get a degree that would finally free me from school. Unfortunately, this dislike for conventional learning remained with me and grew ever stronger in the years that were to come. I see now that this was partially connected with my hidden dyslexia. My left half of the brain was and still is much stronger than the linear logical right. I still *see* everything in pictures and am slow in verbal arguments.

The German university system knew of virtually no examinations. There were only two extensive orals in four major subjects after two years (Vordiplom) and another set of oral examinations after four years (Diplom) by which a student's success were officially judged. There were homework exercises in mathematics and laboratories in chemistry and physics to pass during the year. The last I loved dearly and did very well in. The chemistry lab, analysis that lasted days and sometimes weeks, I hated but passed, and the math exercises, I only passed a year later, when Gerhard arrived and helped me. But the pass-fail grades in these exercises mattered little to the faculty, as long as one could pass the orals.

Perhaps then, as Barbara feels, the hours spent on music, art, reading, traveling, stilling the hunger for beauty and general knowledge were the real fruits of those years rather than my professional education, in which Göttingen failed me or I failed Göttingen thoroughly.

And so it came that my first semester ended in July without the "Fleissprüfungen," diligence-tests, oral examinations in two subjects which would have gained me a waiver of tuition for the winter semester. Although tuition was "only" 140 DM per semester, I had promised father to pay it from my self-earned money, and that had "real" value: two weeks in the salt-works. I shrugged it off and decided to make up for the missing money by working in Bokeloh after we returned.

7. Summer 1951, Discovering the Baroque

Alone on bicycle through Southern Germany. Reichenau, the Birnau and the Wies, with the Barth's in Mittenwald, with Brigitte in the Eifel, Marianne Daeg in Göttingen

Once on my bicycle it was easy to forget this defeat. Two days after the semester had ended, I was camped with my tent far away from Göttingen in the meadow by the cemetery above

the Main, where Brigitte and I had camped the year before....

The next few days I rode through equally nostalgic country, tying together the routes of the earlier two years: Michelstadt, Amorbach, the Neckar Valley, Wimpfen, and Maulbronn. From there I headed south, through the heart of Schwaben, up lovely Nagold Valley and past the ruins of the monastery of Hirsau, the twin-sister of Maulbronn, into the Black Forrest near Donaueschingen.

I traveled alone, but occasionally I shared a couple of days with some other wanderer. Near Titisee in the Black Forrest, I rescued a physics student from Heidelberg from the rain. We sat in my tent for almost two days. - Only once, in 1949 did I see the Black Forrest in sunshine, this summer and on three later visits it rained. - We fled the mountains at its southern tip near Schaffhausen to see the Rhine Fall and found it overrated. It was my first visit to Switzerland, and the impressions then gained of a land of flawless roads, postcard-painted houses, chocolate-cows chewing immaculately green meadows, and suspicious, xenophobic people, seem to have lingered.

Alone again I reached Lake Konstanz and fell in love with it on first sight. On the island of Reichenau kind people allowed me to put up my tent in their backyard under a pair of old beech trees, at the very edge of the water. A place for dreaming. Across the Untersee, the Lower Lake, the doll houses of a Swiss village were visible backed by low green hills. There was a rowboat to take out on the Lake, to drift and read in.

On the island I "discovered" three beautiful churches, the oldest, in Oberzell, sits like a gray duck in the middle of vegetable fields. Once part of a thriving monastery, it had been the great center of Carolingian painting and book illumination. The second church in Mittelzell still houses monks. It is younger, much larger, and richer and boasts a high, late-Gothic choir with stained glass windows. The forgotten marvel, however, I found in Unterzell at the edge of the water, looking quietly west across the lake. It's Romanesque interior is covered with late Baroque stucco, underneath of which, hidden behind the Baroque altar for centuries, a large, 11th-century fresco of Christ in Majesty had recently been uncovered. How well the dark earth-red of its stern, abstract, Romanesque Christ harmonized with the light green of the Baroque frivolities surrounding it. Had the Baroque painter selected his colors to match the old fresco? Was there a continuity of artistic sensitivity spanning 500 years, or was all this only in my mind? I did not know, but it was there that my eyes were opened for the Baroque, a period, which Father, for whom only the imperial Romanesque had any meaning, had always considered decadent, Catholic, and unworthy of serious attention.

Any remaining doubt in my mind was swept away a few days later by the Birnau, an exquisite late-Rococo church east of Meersburg on the northern shore of the Lake. There the architecture, the stucco, the figures, and the frescoes are all one with each other and - what a discovery - with the surrounding meadows, the lake, and the mountains in the blue distance. Someone played Mozart on the organ. What a sacrilege to the protestant ears of a North German, Mozart on a church organ! But I soon realized that it is Mozart that makes the Baroque spaces sing not Bach. Since then each of the great South-German Baroque churches evokes a certain musical key and a piece by Mozart in my mind: in Ottobeuren I hear the bright, majestic sounds of the Messe in C-dur, Zwiefalten is filled with elegiac sadness, the presence of death and the g-moll of the Requiem. In the Wies A-dur and the intimate serenity of his late quartetts triumph over man's suffering. The Birnau is the happiest of all, worldly and playful like Mozart's serenades.

I camped almost a week on the Reichenau, going on short expeditions with the son of a charmingly vague mother who was renting the manor house on the property. The boy's name was Anselm Maler, his father was the director of the Musikakademie in Detmold.

Eventually I tore myself away from this lovely spot and pedaled on to the northern shore of

the peninsula which separates the Obersee from the Untersee. Someone had told me that there was a footpath along the shore between Litzelstetten near the island of Mainau and Bodman at the north-western end of the Obersee. I found the path and disregarding a stern warning of "No Bicycling!" pushed my bike along it. It turned out to be one of the most beautiful paths I ever walked. Southern Germany at its most lovely, trees overhanging the edge of the peaceful Lake, the early morning sun on the houses of Überlingen and Meersburg on the opposite shore, a landscape of human proportions. And as if to complete this romantic tableau, a group of girls, drifting in one of the heavy, old-fashioned row boats far out on the lake, singing: "Ich fahr auf einer goldenen Wurzel wohl über den See." A song in the lydian mode from the 12th century: I float on a golden root neigh over the lake...

At noon I reached Lindau on its island in the Lake. Extravagantly I decided to treat myself to a real Mittagessen in a restaurant: parsley potatoes with "Bodensee Fellchen", a small whitefish only found in the Lake. The night I spent in Weingarten, where I was befriended by the local school teacher, who in the morning gave me an enthusiastic tour of the huge, monstrous "Italianate" church, which put my new found love for the Baroque to a severe test. From here the road east climbed into the Algäuer Alps, through fat green meadows and small villages up steep grades into the blue mountains. It was a hot day and hard work.

It was my first time in the Alps, and I was eager to embrace and discover them. Late in the evening I pedaled and pushed my bike over the steep glacial moraine into the upper Walsertal, and did not rest until I had reached its end above Mittelberg. In the morning, after a cold night spent in my tent in a meadow there, I left my bike behind and hiked further up into the mountains in bright clear sunshine. An hour later it began to rain, and before I could reach shelter in the crowded Youth Hostel in Hindelang, I was soaked and dispirited. I had intended to cross the mountains into Austria to reach Mittenwald, where Helmut Barth and his family expected me. As the rain turned to snow on the high passes my ambition faded. After sitting around in the Youth Hostel for most of the day, waiting for the weather to change, I admitted defeat and retreated from the inhospitable mountains into warmer climates.

This detour took two days. I had to give up all the altitude I had gained, drive all the way back to Füssen and Garmisch, and then climb back once more to Mittenwald. However, on the way I passed the Church in the Wies. I had seen so many pictures and heard mother's friends rave about this pilgrimage church, that it was only my curiosity about the new-found Baroque architecture that drove me up the narrow winding road through woods and meadows to this jewel of jewels.

Since then I have made several pilgrimages to this place. It is the landscape that gives rise to this marvel: the line of the blue mountains in the background is echoed by the high Gothic roof of the church. A few single firs stand tall in the meadow, an old farmstead on one side of the church, the house that the architect built to spend his old age in on the other. The red tiles of the roof, the yellow and white of the buildings, all reflect each other. Even the interior takes its clues and colors from this setting: the light greens and a thin pink in the columns, the blue of the ceiling above the organ. There is gold, but very sparingly, the old pews of bare fir, plain white walls dissolving in light. This exuberance is tempered by the primitive, realistic, peasant-image of a Gothic Christ-in-Suffering on the altar.

The fine line between sentimental Kitsch, and exquisite finesse, which is always in danger in this period, is held not by courtly jadedness as in France or by cool, dramatic statements as in Italy, but by the honest naivete of the Bavarian architects, who were but local builders and peasants themselves.

"Hoc Loco Habitat Fortuna, Hic Quiescet Cor" - In this place lives happiness, here rests the

heart, one of its abbots scratched into a window of the choir.

The Barths had rented an entire apartment in one of the stately farm houses on the eastern edge of Mittenwald. They were all there, Helmut, his brother, Tamina his reckless, charming little sister, his worldly, intelligent father, and, of course, his elegant, but down-to-earth mother. I was received with slightly condescending warmth: Helmut's "stud. phys." friend. I was not swallowed by their family life, but was admitted to all their activities, if I wanted to join. An unusual, adult relationship, I had not experienced before. I put up my tent in the meadow that belonged to the house, and as often as I liked, I went my own ways.

But there were two memorable communal mountain hikes, one to the top of the Karwendel, overlooking Mittenwald, the other to the Kaiserhaus am Schachen. In those days the cabin-lift from Mittenwald to the top of the Karwendel did not exist, and we had to climb the steep, twelve-hundred-meter high wall on foot. We started out before sunrise and slowly zing-zagged up the precipitous path for some four hours. The day was sunny and clear, and the view from the crag with the Gipfelkreuz swept over many peaks and the plains to haze-covered Munich. While everyone was exhilarated by having reached the top of the world, I felt strangely disappointed. The counting of distant peaks did nothing for me, the mountains were in no proportion to my emotions. They were impressive, yes, but were they really beautiful? I would have gladly given the view from the Karwendel for an hour on the Bodman path. We ate our lunch cooling-off on a small snow field and on the way down learned the art of skidding down rock filled ravines. It was dark when, very tired, we reached home again.

The outing to the Schachenhaus was really a long walk rather than a climb. The neglected wooden house, built as a "hunting lodge" by the last Bavarian king, overlooks an exceptionally dramatic valley that ends in the Pasterze "glacier" behind the Zugspitze. Once more it was a real summer day, not blue and clear, but with the faintly blue shadows of clouds drifting across the landscape and wafts of mist rising from the cold ice fall to cling to the rocky spires surrounding the mountain. The fog gave the mountains and their glistening snow fields a muted color and an atmospheric depth that was much more to my liking. I have always wanted to go back to that spot, but either the limited time or the weather forbade it.

Eventually these carefree days came to an end. Helmut joined me for part of the way on my ride north: Munich, Augsburg, Nördlingen, Dinkelsbhl, Rothenburg. In Mergentheim we parted, and I went alone to Stuppach to see the Grünewald Madonna again. I was getting tired of traveling and longed to see my cousin-friend. I began to race, down the Jagsttal and past Wimpfen, Heidelberg, Worms, and finally in a mad tour along the Rhine to Honnef, where I stayed at the Barth's house for a day to recover. A day later, in Köln, I fell into her arms.

We rode back together to Honnef and spent the night dancing at the annual Honnef Wine Festival. It was the middle of September and the last year's wine had to be drunk to empty the barrels.

We spent three beautiful September days in the Eifel, swam in the Schwammenauel, a large reservoir lake in the mountains, all alone and unabashedly in the nude. We were happy to be with each other. It was to be our last trip together.

During the summer of 1952 Brigitte met Hans Heinrich, a physicist at the University in Köln. Her letters became shorter and fewer.

Two days after my return I was back in the salt works of Bokeloh. I worked only the three weeks needed to make the money for my tuition and for - a real, though used Boehm-Flute. which I bought in the first week back in Göttingen! For a while I took flute lessons with a charming, young,

and married flutist. She taught me the right breathing by asking me to hold my hand on her belly to feel how she did it....

Gritta was attending the Technische Hochschule in Hannover. She was surrounded by serious suitors, the last remnants of our relationship was rapidly falling apart.

There were girls in Göttingen playing the viola or the harpsichord, whom I met mostly through the AOV. They were all for some reason or other non-nubile. One, who has remained my faithful friend for 60 years, was Marianne Daeg. I met her in a mathematics lecture. A big woman, who occasionally ran around in male leather shorts and hiking boots , but she possessed a loyalty, which one only finds among the Masurian people of East-Prussia - where she came from. Her father was the director of a copper smelter in Goslar. Appropriately she studied mineralogy. During the preceding summer she had explored the far-north of Sweden, alone, armed only with a ten-inch hunting knife – impressive! In the Spring of 1952 she moved to Stuttgart, but often surfaced in Göttingen, always per auto-stop.

I made many male friends, the Hertweck brothers Friedrich, who played cello, and Günther, Karl Götz, the dreamer among us, Helmut Reeh, who would marry Etta-Ute and eventually become a well-regarded professor of physics in Göttingen. With some of them I am still in contact - through our mutual love for Barbara....

During Christmas in Kreuzriehe Gerhard, whom father had bought a violin, and I played duets as best as we could. Gerhard would pass his Abitur in the Spring. We made plans for his joining me in Göttingen. This was also the time when the idea surfaced that we would ride our bicycles through Italy in the summer.

8. 1952 Summer in Italy with Gerhard

Gerhard's abitur and admission in Göttingen, Baurat Gerber Strasse 19, On Bicycles to south of Naples.

Gerhard made his Abitur in February and passed the admission examination to the physics faculty in Göttingen soon after. The relationship with Alfons Kettner - and his "Sünderin" - having become "impossible," I went out in search for a new place for Gerhard and me. I found a wonderful large room with a balcony on the second floor of an older house on Baurat-Gerber Strasse 19. A locked sliding door separated us from the room of the fifty-sh son of 70-year old Frau Philipps, who owned the apartment. He had a medical degree, was a lover of old opera records - which he liked to play at full volume - was unmarried and a troop leader in the Boy Scouts. I suspected him of being gay.... Anyway, his dear mother was like a grandmother to us.

Christine was in school in Hildesheim, and in June visited us with her friend Inge. We had a good time attended a theater performance of "Lysistrata" and danced at the annual faculty bash at the KWP on the Hainberg. In 1954 she took an Au-pair-position with a family in Harpenden in England, where two of our Hammer cousins had previously worked

Nothing really happened during this semester. A lonely and confused time. For months I worked every day at the chemical practicum on the required analytical analysis, waited for a letter from Gritta or Brigitte, met with friends, and tried in vain to interest one of the eligible female co students. Yes, there were memorable movies and concerts - all Baroque music - and the evenings playing in the AOV, after which the entire orchestra went to some wine cellar until after midnight. Every evening I practiced my flute, until I could not pay Eva Stelling, my flute teacher, any longer.

On two weekends I took the reduced-fare ski-train into the Harz. Once I met a young organ builder, at the other I skied by myself, arriving totally exhausted ate at night in Göttingen. All my free time was spent in the preparation for the Italy trip.

At the end I passed the "Fleißprüfungen" required to get a *reduction* in tuition for the fall, and worked March and April in the salt works. I brought home 500 DM. Together with the reduced tuition it would make a reasonable foundation for our Italy plans. Father promised to add 100 DM. For some 20 DM I bought myself a camera, a simple box , which, however, in bright sunshine produced unexpectedly sharp 6x6-cm pictures, which you can admire on my website.

When Gerhard arrived in May 1952 we moved to Frau Philipps' apartment. Gerhard worked conscientiously on his math exercises, and I with his help succeeded to get this requirement out of my way on the second try.

In early July the Italian Visa arrived and the foreign exchange letters for Switzerland and Italy - one had to make a formal application through the Deutsche Bank in those days.

On August 4, two days after the end of courses, we set out on our "Drahteseln," wire-donkeys. south towards the Bodensee and Switzerland. We would be back on October 12, completely emaciated.

I will not describe this tour in detail. You can find a report, illustrated with maps, a *Google-Earth file with a detailed route*, and the photos from my box-camera, on my website.

It was a heroic adventure. We pedaled 2000 km from Göttingen to Castellamare di Stabia south of Naples, where I lay sick with dysentery for 3 days. Physically unable to ride the bikes back we tried auto stop and on the Neckar we hitched a ride on a boat, another 1960 km.... 38 days at less than 10 DM per day for the two of us. Only once did we eat in a legitimate restaurant, otherwise I invented all kinds of concoctions of pasta, eggs, and tomatoes and grapes stolen from the fields along our way. In the cities we stayed at youth hostels, if for no better reason than to meet people: Herbert Press, a metal sculptor from Berlin, Brian Knight from London, a couple from Australia, who had just come from Greece and who encouraged us to our 1953 Greece adventure, and Boni and Tilda from Istanbul, whom we would visit in 1954. But it was the paintings in the museums of Florence and Rome, the architecture and churches we saw, which left the deepest impression - they and the landscape.

Coming home in October was a great letdown. I don't remember what tensions destroyed our enthusiasm. After Christmas I fled with Gerhard and Christine to a week of skiing with Marianne Daeg in the Harz - and then Göttingen claimed me again. The "Vordiplom" orals were threatening on the horizon.

9. 1953 Greece at Last

Edda-Ute and Helmut, Vordiplom, Salt works at Reyershall, Gerhard at copper smelter in Oker, 3 months in Greece, Rodenberg

She wore two blond braids framing a round face and was dressed in a Russian costume, when I met her at the Chemists' Faschingball at the Mensa. A decidedly unique costume among the Farouks and cowgirls. Her name was Etta-Ute. Her getup proved to be authentic. Her father Prof. Trommsdorf, a gasdynamicist, and his entire family had been deported from Berlin to a secret

laboratory in the Soviet Union in 1945 to design gas turbines for isotope separation. Edda-Ute and her sister had been allowed to study mathematics and physics at Moscow University. After 8 years in the Gulag, they had just returned. Their mother had died in Russia, and they lived with their grandparents. - I was intrigued.

Down-to-earth Edda-Ute and her blue-eyed, romantic sister Roswitha - all of the Trommsdorf siblings had names that had been fashionable during the good old thirties - quickly became attached to our circle of friends. Günther Hertweck fell in love with Roswitha, and Helmut Reeh "stole" Edda-Ute from me - the are still married. Not that I was in love with her, we went on an occasional walk, I invited her to a theater performance, and once brought her a bouquet of flowers. I was too busy with my preparations for the Vordiplom, and she was not really interested. Still for a while Edda-Ute was the only girl in Göttingen.

Gerhard and I had decided that we were going to Greece in the summer. We needed more money than the previous year. I don't remember, how I found the salt-works Königshall in Reyhershausen, 80 minutes by bike north of Göttingen. They offered me much the same work as in Bokeloh with better pay. Through Marianne Daeg's father Gerhard found a job at a smelter in Oker/Harz. We both worked there from the beginning of March to May.

I was lucky, whenever the work/sleep shifts at Reyershausen threatened to do me in, I fled to our room on Baurat-Gerber Strasse, which Mrs. Philipps let me use for 38 DM a month. It didn't matter that I had to leave Göttingen at 4 AM to be at work in time. One weekend father stayed with me and invited me to a performance of the Magic Flute.

Then Gerhard had an accident at Oker. Somehow a copper ingot dropped on his toe. He was confined to the hospital for 2 weeks. The insurance of the miners union paid the expenses and a work compensation. - After deducting taxes, upkeep, and incidentals we made some 1100 DM together! - I immediately bought a real 35-mm camera, a Diax-Ia, a light meter, 10 Agfacolor slide and another 10 black-and-white films, the best investment I ever made.

This time we would go by auto stop: all the way to Brindisi at the toe of Italy. From there Georgios Stathakopoulos, a Greek student I had met at the library, told us, one could take a Greek boat to Athens, steerage to make it cheaper: both ways 193 DM for two! I still have the detailed accounting for this trip in my notebook.

In July I passed my Vordiplom orals with grades not worse than I deserved and on a week later we stood at the Göttingen Autobahn entrance trying to flag-down a kind driver.

As before I send you back to my for the story and the photos from this trip. If you like maps with pictures go to the corresponding Google Earth file, it is more compact and illustrated.

This nearly 3-months trip has remained the single most important experience in my life. Eight subsequent visits to Greece, with Gerhard, alone, and with Barbara have not erased the memories of this first long hike through the Peloponnese. When I get depressed or are in danger I resort to the insights and impressions of that year. They have never failed me.

This time we went from a side excursion to Lake Garda directly to Ravenna, and reveled two days in the splendors of its mosaics. At the youth hostel we met with Marianne, who wanted to travel with us for a few days. With her Lederhosen and her Finnish knife she became a sensation among the Italian truck drivers, as you can imagine. My photographs show her in Reccanati south of Ancona. On the following day we separated and caught a truck, which we rode for a day and a night to Brindisi!

There we unexpectedly ran into Georgios Stathakopoulos hand-in-hand with a visibly pregnant woman named Maggi, whom he had met at the same Faschingsball at which I had discovered Edda-Ute! Georg was taking her home to Patras to marry her. We ended up sharing the

same cargo hatch on the boat with them....

The Aegean on the aging "M. S. Kyklades", was quiet, the clear night sky a riot of never before seen stars. At noon we lay in the harbor of Korfu. During the evening a heavy earthquake shook the island of Kefalonia. Half of a village sank into the sea, and the boat was redirected during the second night to pick up dozens of hapless refugees, who had lost everything. They disembarked with Georg and his wife in Patras.

Very early next morning, when the "rose-fingered dawn" touched the hills of the Peloponnese we lay before Corinth and the entrance to the canal.

In Athens a kind gentleman picked us up and took us from one student hostel to another, paying our tram fare every time. At the third hostel a young man stuck his head out of a window and cried, "Where do you come from? I know you from Göttingen. I study there." His mother, the owner of the place, let us in and gave us a separate room with two beds and a balcony - entirely free of charge! I was overwhelmed by so much spontaneous hospitality - it would not be the last time.

We roamed Athens for 3 weeks fascinated by the streets of craftsmen in the Monastiraki district, especially the smithies on Odos Hephaistou, where everything was handmade from coffee mills and large brass bowls to garden fences, the flying vendors of sponges, gypsies wanting to read our fortune, icons for sale - a crowded oriental bazaar of unimagined sights. Only after week did we spend a whole day on the Acropolis. The photos on my website speak for themselves. We also went by bus to Daphni, an abandoned monastery on the old Panhellenic road to Eleusis with beautiful 11th-century Byzantine mosaics.

Georg had invited us to his wedding. We spent a day in the bureaucratic maze of the ministry of education of get a student reduction for the train to Patras. Ten hours on the train among people who insisted on sharing their provisions with us, chaotic stops on every small station. It was an eye-opener. They taught us Greek. We got off at Corinth and spent 5 hours exploring Old Korinth and Akrokorinth with an older Englishman in sandals. In search of the path to Akrokorinth a peasant taught us a new word "apanu," upwards accompanied by an explanatory movement of his hand: paths in Greece always lead apanu!. By now we knew four words: "nero," water, "okhi" with an apologetic upward movement of the head and a click of the tongue, "ne," no, *nodding* one's head and apanu.

The wedding was a disaster - for us. Georg's mother resented not only his bride Maggi but all Germans. We had to sleep on a rocky beach and except for a bag of traditional sugar-coated almonds, she gave us nothing to eat. We stood hungry in the background at the ceremony among a group of Georg's male friends who cracked unholy jokes throughout the service. We returned to Athens by motor-treno - in only 8 hours....

I had had the idea to hike through Attika to Sounion, the Poseidon temple overlooking the sea at its southern tip, but Mount Hymettos was in the way. One evening we hiked to the monastery of Kaiseriani at its foot, and scaled to the top of the mountains early next morning. In those days there existed no road and no radar station there, we had to clamber from rock to rock, cross-county for 3 hours, a humongous task. Late in the afternoon we collapsed for the night under an oak tree near Vari. Gerhard had a sore throat and ran a temperature. We abandoned the hike and returned by bus to Athens.

While Gerhard lay in bed with a miserable tonsillitis for a week, a group of students from Cambridge, England arrived at the hostel, a cantankerous guy and two girls, Diana and Janet. Diana gave herself reserved, but Janet was up to anything. I took her to Kaiseriani one evening, where she collected exotic moss for her botany course - and at another night to the Philopappos Hill across

from the Acropolis, from where we admired the *son-e-lumiere* show.... By the end of the week they left by boat for Istanbul, and Gerhard got better, so that we could take the automotrice to Laurion and walk to the temple of Sounion along the southern coast.

Our plan was to take a boat to Aigina, from where we would go to Poros and begin our hike into the Peloponnese. That plan was substantially changed by a well-situated gentleman on the boat, who addressed us in fluent German. Nonda Spiliotopoulos had a German mother and was the heir of a minor shipping agency. Single and well-educated in Germany and Cambridge he involved us in a discussion of our experiences and ideas. He rented a house in Poros with his sister Daisy, and invited us to stay with them. There would be other friends around. "See you in two days. Polish up your French and English!" he said, when we got off the boat at Aigina.

We hiked to the Aphaia temple, bought a just-caught fish and cooked a sumptuous meal at the beach. It was my twenty-second birthday.

The way back to the harbor took an entire day, our first real hike in Greece. It lead across many hills and ravines, through prickly macchia, and into several dead ends. A young man rescued us from of one of these side paths and took us home to his parents' house. Simple fishermen, seven children! The photos show the patriarchal setting. We had to stay for their noon meal, after which the third-oldest girl was sent to take us onto the right path - barefoot. The shows, if one blows up the resolution of Aigina, the fine details of this march through the center of the island

A thunderstorm was brewing when we reached the boat to Poros. Anxious, I inquired with a Athenian lady for Nonda Spiliotopoulos. Yes, she knew him, but he lived on the mainland side, and we would have to take a row boat. There was no need, Nonda and Daisy were already waiting with their small motor boat for us.

Nonda with a sailor's cap was in the highest spirits, dark-haired Daisy her most charming. Our reunion was exuberant, as if we had known each other for years. We found them ensconced in a small, rented, unpretentious villa. We were given the two sofas in the living room. The dry toilet - soiled paper into a wooden chest - doubled as shower, provided someone had filled the big tank on the roof with water. Water came from a cistern under the house: Greece at its most beguiling.

Nonda did most of the cooking on a spirit stove. The discussions on literature, Nonda's experiences in England, our life - he considered it boring - in Göttingen lasted into the early morning hours. Nonda spoke four languages fluently, but considered German his mother tongue, which he would use to write a novel. I was named the "Kuckusei," cuckoo-egg - he was really interested in innocent Gerhard, but never said so....

After a week Nonda bought us cigarettes and provisions for a couple of days and dropped us quite unceremoniously at the road head on the mainland. During the weekend he expected some business partners, among them a serious suitor of Daisy - we were in the way.

We hiked for two days to Epidauros and then had to take the bus to Nauplion, an Englishman declined to take us the short distance. We walked to Tiryns and Mykenai, where we arrived at night.

An unforgettable night on the roof of the archeologists' hut. The entire Argolis lay before us in full-moonshine. An English archeologist, who had joined us there, recited the old tales from the Orestia: Klytemnestra lusting for revenge of her rape and abduction. The hideous murder of Agamemnon in the bath tub and the deaths of his companions, twenty eight men and women including Cassandra and her two children - all of whom Heinrich Schliemann excavated in the great tomb at our feet. A wildly romantic night....

Hitch-hiking proved difficult, there was simply not enough traffic. Once again we decided to take the train to Megalopolis, a whole day's adventure (you find all this on Google-Earth).

The moon was still full. We walked out of town in search for a place to spend the night. A

stand of trees seemed beckoned. It turned out to be the cemetery. Flickering red lights on the graves, a wooded hill behind it. We found a soft spot there and rolled out our sleeping bags. A flock of sheep, their bells tinkling grazed in the moon-flooded plain. Suddenly the mass of sheep began moving towards us. The laughter of the shepherds, who had noticed us!

Next morning we discovered that the hill was the backside of the ancient theater of Megalopolis. The ruins of the once nouveau-rich town lay hidden in the swamps by the Alpheios river.

In those days the Alpheios Valley between Megalopolis and Karytena was an idyllic landscape. The power plant, which now smokes up the center of the Peloponnese (clearly seen on GE-6.0.2.-2011), did not exist. Karytena, which today is a ghost town, was full of life, wildly romantic at the center of Arkadia. We walked all day and found a place to sleep at the foot of its Frankish castle, built by Geoffrey de Villehardouin after the conquest of Constantinople as part of his principality of *Achaeia and Morea*.

We learned how to walk at great speed on the way to Andritsena and Bassai during the following two days. By pulling the knees up as high as possible in a kind of rapid canter, one can overcome valleys and hills and the rocks on the path. Many years later I discovered that this mode of fast walking was the secret of the American Indian messengers and the Tibetan *lung*-runners. I once tried it on my children in the High Sierras of California, they were horrified - and now I cannot do it any longer. There was a bulldozed road bare of traffic besides a once a day bus. We ran every shortcut footpath cross-country.

A German student whom we met on our way drew us a sketch map of the footpath to Bassai. For a day we walked through idyllic countryside, oak woods, springs, shepherds, and people riding to Andritsena's market or home to Phigalia. We reached the temple of Apollo in its magnificent mountain loneliness by nightfall and slept in its southern cella. Only early next morning appeared a shepherd's daughter from nowhere and brought us a bowl of goat milk. For two days we were entirely by ourselves.

The GE map of 2011 shows the area under a thick smog cloud from the Megalopolis power station, I had placed the markers accurately on a previous GE map. After a second visit with Barbara in 1991, I wrote an essay on Bassai which sums up my observations and conclusions.

Pausanias tells us that around 420-400 BC the temple was built by Iktinos, who was the architect of the Parthenon, the Great Telesterion of Eleusis, and *I* believe of the Demeter Sanctuary in Naxos. It is a masterful architectural puzzle: different from most Greek temples it is directed north-south and has an eastern door to bring light to the Apollo statue, which stood *off center* at the southern end of the cella. In the usual place of the main image Iktinos placed a single, non-bearing C*orinthian* column, the first of its kind.... How all of this fits together and why Iktinos designed it in that strange way, I only understood on my second visit with Barbara.

From Bassai we hiked east towards Olympia. Tired of the stony road we crossed the Alpheios near Tripotamias stripped to our underpants, holding the backpacks above our heads. Two boys cheered us on from the river's northern bank. They insisted to take us to their parent's "spiti," house in the village. The night became our Homeric experience - read up Ulysse's arrival at Nausicaa's house in the Odyssey. We were formally introduced to "pateras" and "materas," and then to a large number of children. Father retreated to the kitchen to prepare a supper of fried eggs for the "xenoi," the guests, and every one watched us eat.

The house had two stories. The ground level housed the animals, three donkeys, two cows, and gale pen for sheep. The second story consisted of one large room under a slate covered, open roof, a bed for the parents, a large chest with bedding, two Greek chairs for the guests, a chest of

drawers with their valuables and a mirror, to which postcards and pictures had been attached. In one corner flickered the eternal lamp under an icon of the Panaghia, the virgin with child. Except for us they sat and slept on carpets. The kitchen, an open fireplace with a tripod, hid behind a wooden partition.

One of the boys had been sent to get the school teacher, who spoke some English. Till late at night we had to answer all the old questions: where are you from? Who are your father and mother? How can you leave them alone for such a long time? Do you have brothers and sisters? How did you get here? On foot? All the way from Athens?

No excuses were accepted, the parents took their bedding onto the outside balcony, and Gerhard and I had to sleep in their bed. Everyone spread their bedding on the floor, the oldest girl extinguished the kerosine light and after another half hour of whispers we all fell asleep....

In the morning one of the younger girls took us to the road, where we soon found a truck to Olympia!

It had become October and in the trees of the altis at Olympia roosted flocks of migrant birds from Northern Europe singing. For half a day we lay on a stretch of sandy beach by the Alpheios. - In five days the Kyklades would leave from Patras.

The last days were nostalgic. Kostas, who spoke a little German and proudly owned an old German Büssing truck took us to Kato Achaia. Once again we were invited by his slender wife for supper and the night. The evening ended in a heart-wrenching disaster. Gerhard got part of an undiluted ouzo into his windpipe and for 2 hours coughed his life out. Kosta's wife ended up kneeling by his side praying for recovery. And finally, unused to so much food vomited the entire dinner into their toilet. We were a bad omen. They had a 4-year-old daughter, at Christmas we sent a pretty German "koukla," doll - it must have been the last Greek word I learned that year - for her.

Surrounded by the curious, calling us "iparxistis," existentialist, - I cooked eggs with tomatoes and two Greek coffees on our spirit burner at the mole of Patras on the evening of our departure. The boat was late, a sharp wind blew from the northwest that night, and the waves on the open sea were disconcertingly long.

During the first night among the trulli houses outside Brindisi it began to rain. We counted our lire and in Bari resolved to take the train to Naples, they were cheap in Italy.

In Naples our spirits revived, and we went by train to Paestum. I had wanted to see the best of *Magna Graecia* and compare them with the temples of Greece.

Paestum became a revelation. Its three temples from the same period as those in Athens and better preserved, are of heavy, "colonial" construction compared to the Parthenon. Go to the end of my website photos. The impression is immediate. The lush landscape and the romantic, late-afternoon October light helped too.

Not enough, next morning we took a 6-o'clock train and spent the whole day in Pompeii. The night we passed on a train to Rome and on to Florence. From Florence to Bologna we hitch-hiked, but the rain made life difficult. Our money began to run out. I went around the waiting room at the station in Bologna trying to borrow money from some German tourists. I must have looked unreliable and finally had to change a few loose Swiss franks to buy us tickets to Innsbruck. Our small resource of Austrian shillings barely got us to Mittenwald. We succeeded to catch an Edeka-truck to München, where we had a real meal at the Hofbräuhaus and slept in the youth hostel....

How important it is to look rested and well fed when hitch-hiking! At the München Autobahn we caught an English consular officer, Mr Newhouse. He eyed our Greek wicker-bottle: What was in it? - Greek retsina. - He became very maudlin, could he have a sip? It turned out that he had been stationed in Athens during the terrible years after the war. We separated from him with Greek hugs

in Stuttgart. An officer of the French army, who spoke fluently German. - he had been born in the Elsass - took us to Frankfurt. Five days we recuperated in Gelnhausen. Brigitte was home. Then we separated to make hitch-hiking easier. Gerhard reached home a day before me. I arrived in Rodenberg on Sunday, October 25, 1953....

In the interim my parents had moved to a small, comfortable house in Rodenberg, where they lived until father's retirement in 1967 and their move to Gelnhausen.

10. 1954 England, Turkey, and Greece

Arthur Kuckes, Cosmopolitan Club, Volkswagenwerk, Brigtte's Wedding, Visit to England, Moved to Schiller Strasse, Turkey-Greece-Yugoslavia, Father's Meningitis

During the winter semester of 1953 a group of American Fulbright students had arrived, they became most welcome new friends. Art Kuckes, his parents came from the Rhineland, became our close friend. He would eventually put the idea into my head to go to America. Together with Art and Peter Toennies we founded the "Cosmopolitan Club," which for the next two years produced slideshows, films, singing evenings, and lectures on foreign countries at the "Nansenhaus," the international student house at the university. I handled most of the organization, and showed our Greek slides on one of the first evenings.

The slave labor at the salt works had run its course - meanwhile I knew all the corny jokes by heart. We found another occupation: Gerhard and I spent the Spring vacation in Wolfsburg at the Volkswagenwerk riveting seats into minibuses. The work on the assembly line was physically much lighter and more boring, but the environment was healthier and cleaner. We slept at a nearby youth hostel in the old "Wasserburg Neuhaus," a water-castle, where we were the only guests. The VW "Werksküche," the mess, took care of cooking, our bicycles served as transportation. - From the 2 months we took home almost 1500 DM together!

Brigitte and Hans Heinrich were getting married on 15. March. For the first time in years I went by train to Gelnhausen - a nostalgic and sad visit. Brigitte and Hans moved back to Cologne, where Hans studied physics - coincidentally under Paulchen von Fragstein's brother Karl - and Brigitte continued her medical assistant program. After Hans had finished his doctorate he found a job at Siemens in Erlangen. They had 5 children and still live there. Once a year I get a letter from my old love.

Christine was in Harpenden, England. My relationship with her was dear and very close, she wrote often. She appeared lonely and unhappy: too much work with 2 little children in a small, cagey English town, one hour from London by bus. I felt that a visit might cheer her up. An additional "invitation" to Cambridge came from Janet, it decided the matter. I got myself a British visa, which required a personal interview with the consul in Hamburg, and went by train and ferry across the Channel to Dover and from there on by auto stop.

London was a new experience for me: the civil behavior of the people on the street, the discipline with which they queued up for the bus, the absence of damage from the war were in palpable contrast to the restlessness and anger in Germany. I liked Mrs. Fletcher, Christine's employer, who on the second day took me aside pleading that I should find another job for her, where there would be more life and possibilities to meet other people: Tine had buried herself in housework, never went out, and her only contacts were other *Au-pair* girls, - among them her cousin Barbara Stölzel, who was about to marry an English Buddhist....

I spent three days in London, one with Brian Knight, whom we had met 1952 in Italy, visiting the National Gallery and a special exhibition of Goya's "Caprichos" prints, another visiting an effusive, elegant Daisy Spiliotopoulos in an apartment in plush, snobby Hampstead, and a third with Christine at the British Museum. Afterward, at 10 pm we played badminton in Harpenden. The light lasted so much longer than in Göttingen

Hitch-hiking to Cambridge in a luxurious, wood-paneled Bentley with external headlights and a sedate gentleman, was another experience. I was pointedly lectured on the unfortunate differences between the German and English views of the world.

Cambridge became a whirl-wind tour of invitations - Janet surrounded by suitors had only an afternoon for me, rowing a canoe on the Cham. Instead Diana, her quiet friend from their trip to Athens, and Mrs. Burkill, her mother, took me under their wings. Mrs. Burkill, the wife of the mathematician J. C. Burkill, a sparkling lady in her late fifties - why are older English ladies so much more interesting? - knew how to charm Germans. She was the international house mother at Peterhouse and had hosted Willy Brandt during a visit to Cambridge. She showed me Cambridge, and twice invited me for dinner. It was she who introduced me to Prof. and Mrs Schlossmann - emigrants from Hitler's Germany - who involved me in a still remembered, graceful, highly intelligent discussion of the former and the new Germany over lunch at their elegant home on Latham Rd.

Full of these thought-provoking encounters, I ran into a noisy group of arrogant Oxford students on my way back to Calais. Gwen Rowlands, a most beguiling Welsh girl, whom I took to the theater in Göttingen a few weeks later, could not quite smother my contradictory impressions. I am afraid these notions have never been normalized. I never again spent a longer time in England.

In Göttingen a bizarre situation had developed: "Phipps," Mrs. Philipps son was getting married, and we were asked to vacate our room. During the winter Phipps had several times come to our room in the late evening and sitting on Gerhard's bed had in installments told us of "his newest acquisition," an aging head nurse at the hospital he worked in. We had found a new place at Mrs. Küchemann's on Schiller Strasse. But before we could move, Phipps and his nurse got married and celebrated their wedding night on the other side of the sliding door. All evening he played Mozart's "Abduction from the Serail" at full volume: "Wer ein Liebchen hat gefunden, die es treu und redlich meint..." etc..... - We gladly moved out. A few months later our spies on Baurat-Gerber-Strasse reported that the nurse had divorced Phipps for reasons of - non-consummation...

The new apartment on Schiller Strasse 5 had a living room with a sofa, which we used for guests, and a small second room, where we slept. Frau Küchemann was more formal than Frau Philipps, but her rooms were far enough from ours that she didn't interfere with us and the friends who visited us. She had one tick though, she would clean the toilet every time one of our Indian friends had used it....There was once again a blocked sliding door, but the young family of Dr. Eggeling, another medical man who lived on the other side were most congenial and understanding.

We had mastered auto stop to perfection. Each carried a blackboard, on which we wrote our destination with chalk, e.g., "Student München," and soon we found a smiling ride: in one long day with Swedes to Munich. I sat in the waiting room at the Hauptbahnhof through most of that night and half asleep watched the drama of an older man getting drunk under the watchful eyes of his wife. When he began to make wild Hitler-like speeches she packed him home. - Bavarian Munich! Gerhard made it only next morning. We met at the youth hostel.

Thus began our trip to Istanbul on 1 August 1954. Two days later we hit it really big. We had slept the night in a "Heustadel," a hay barn near Trieben in Austria when a German Ford with a big, cigar-stomping Bavarian stopped for us. Yes, he could take us to Graz, but what did we want in

Graz? Reluctantly I confessed that we were on the way to Istanbul. The man stopped his car, lit another cigar, and shaking his head looked suspiciously at me and said, "That's where I am going. Then we can travel together...." I couldn't believe my ears, 2300 km in one ride? He introduced himself as Dr. Hackl. He was a "Studienrat," with a degree in Near Eastern languages. "My wife wanted more security, and that is why I am teaching English and French at a high school, but during vacations I pursue my passion for the export-import business." He was a grumpy man who talked little, only slowly did he volunteer more about himself during the long hours of the next six days and nights we kept him company.

Hackl dropped us off at the main station in Graz, where he said he would meet us at six in the morning. We spent the night in a crowded youth hostel in Gradwein. I had my doubts that we would ever see him again, but there he was next morning.

After a day's drive down the Yugoslavian Autoput Hackl dropped us off in Belgrade. He said he would stay at Hotel Prague. We had arranged to meet relatives of a Göttingen friend, who would give us Yugoslavian dinars for German Marks we had given him - an obviously illegal exchange. Long last we found the address.

Next morning we waited two hours for Hackl to pick us up. I had foreseen it. We took our luggage to the youth hostel and undaunted walked to the official Putnik, the travel office to inquire about a train to Salonica. On our way we had suddenly come across Hackl's Ford - he was still around - and whom should we find at Putnik, our embarrassed friend! "Get out! I'll explain everything later," he snarled at us. It turned out that he had had second thoughts about driving through southern Yugoslavia, a murderous route with barely a road. However, Putnik's sleeping cars were booked out for the next week - would we chip in for some gas, if he took us by car? Of course, we would.

He invited us for lunch at the Hotel Majestic, and after filling the cars tank at a number of gas stations we left Belgrade in the afternoon. For the next 200 km there existed an asphalted road with deep potholes, then the road dwindled to two deep ruts and the night overtook us. Hackl found an eatery in some village, where a not even bad woman singer entertained us for an hour. He drove the car off the road, threw us out, stretched out on the back seat, his feet sticking out the open window, was snoring ten minutes later.... We rolled out our sleeping bags next to the car and slept undisturbed.

Around 4 am he woke us. After Niŝ the road became soft and very bad, the ruts made by trucks too deep for the car's clearance. At noon we had passed Skopje, then Vardar, Titov Veles. Down the Varda River Valley the Yugoslavians were building a new autoput, at least the road was now bulldozed hard rocks. Amazing how calmly Hackl patiently negotiated the biggest boulders. One minor mechanical mishap to the car would have stranded us for good.

At the Greek border the Yugoslavians searched all our luggage and the entire car. Fortunately, Hackl had advised me to put my illegal dinars into my shirt pocket. We were not body-searched and escaped with a few minutes of heart-pounding anxiety.

Almost suddenly we were in Greece! I collected all our passports and descended on the guard house stuttering in my demotic Greek. I got the documents stamped, we were cleared in half an hour and on our way to Thessaloniki....

Night was falling quickly. I remember having tears in my eyes. With a choked voice I read the signs to Hackl. Three hours later he dropped us at the beach in Kalamaki and promised to pick us up next morning. We spent the rest of the evening in a beach shack drinking retsina with the students of a German high school class, who competed in reciting Homer in ancient Greek....

Hackl did not appear. Around 3 pm he briefly showed up to tell us that he had met the only

woman from Munich among a busload of tourists from Hamburg. She felt so lonely that he was going to take her on a tour of Thessaloniki. He would pick us up tomorrow morning, meanwhile we should have a good time on the beach. Which we did.

On the last day with Hackl he drove 23 hours from 5 am to 2 am from Thessaloniki to Istanbul! There were two interruptions in the borderland between Greece and Turkey and at Turkish customs just before Edirne. I don't know how he stayed awake.

Behind Didimotikon, still in Greece, there was a sign pointing to London in one and to Istanbul in the other direction, but the road was missing. Numerous spur tracks crossed a vast empty country - and to make it worse, we were surprised by thunderous downpour. Within minutes the ground had turned into an ankle-deep morass. "Oh,"said Hackle, "in an hour it will have dried up," and stopped the car on a dry mound. Before us a bus and a French Renault were spinning up to their axles in mud. I asked and found that Hackl had two simple rubber snow-chains in his trunk. We stripped to our underpants and mounted them on the rear wheels. Throwing mud in two arcs behind us he plowed the car around the stalled vehicles! We had saved precious time.

This time Hackl solved the impasse at the border check-point. The sun had set and the customs people were about to go home, when he found an officer, who wanted to see his mother for the Bairam holiday. Hackl took him on board, and suddenly there was no customs control.

I dozed most of the six-hour ride that night and remember only a stop, where we drank incredibly strong, sweet tea from small glasses. Fortunately, the customs officer talked to Hackl without interruption. Hackl dropped him off at the train station in Yesilkoy, stopped the car in an open field and dropped dead in the rear seat. It was 2 am. We slept on the ground next to the car again.

In the morning we discovered that we were close to a beach club on the blue Sea of Marmara. Hackl gave us a few lira, told us to take the train, and vanished in the beach club. We have never heard from or have seen him again. I don't know how he made his way back....

Istanbul was an unimaginable cauldron of races, colors, smells, credible filth, bazaars, and other-worldly mosques. We stayed two weeks, saw Boni and Tilda several times, toured all bazaars and met Gisela Gross and Frau Ruff. The first night we slept in the dormitory of the French high school. I could not see, why we could not stay for free at the Alman Lisesi in Galata its German counter part and brow-beat the cultural attache at the German consulate into making an "exception." The caretaker dragged a gymnasts' mattress into a classroom, which we had all to ourselves. We ate in open street kitchens or at the cafeteria of the university.

For days we roamed the bazaars, which in those years occupied most of lower Stambul down to the banks of the Golden Horn, where among all the detritus of Istanbul swam whole bloated sheep cadavers....(for photos see here)

Among the mosques - at that time I knew nothing of Minmar Sinan or Islamic architecture - the Süleymaniye became our favorite, far more than the celebrated Blue Mosque. Its delicate colors and the huge dome offered a peaceful space in the chaotic bustle of the city. As a matter of course, we visited the Hagia Sofia, but the discovery of the architecture of Constantinople-Istanbul would be left to a later visit with Barbara in 1990.

Boni and Tilda Ilel, who turned out to be Sephardic Jews, devoted themselves most affectionately to us, taught me how to smoke a narghile at a night café - it ended in an excruciating cough attack - took us to visit German speaking relatives, and drove us in their red Studebaker to Sile on the Black Sea. Boni made his living by importing American and European cars, the red Studebaker was his "poster" car.

Christine's plight was much on my mind. I had tutored a high school student in math in

Göttingen, whose sister Gisela worked as an *Au-pair* girl in Istanbul. Coincidentally their name was Gross. We tracked Gisela down in Bebek, a suburb on the Bosphorus, and found her a clear-headed, independent young woman: It would be easy to find a place for Christine. I should talk to Frau Ruff. A mutual interview at Frau Ruff's "Kontor," office in Galata was arranged. The Ruffs had lived in Istanbul for over 25 years. They operated another export-import business, had no children, instead she had adopted the half-dozen German *Au-pair* girls in town. Gray-haired at fifty-five, with glasses and a somewhat fuzzy demeanor, she was not particularly confidence inspiring. She talked very rapidly, examining me, our family, and Christine's credentials: She would find a suitable employer for her and promised to watch and advise Tine whenever needed. Her house, an old Sufi tekke on the Asian side of the Bosphorus, would always be open to her.

And so I "sold" Christine in Istanbul without any misgivings. At one of the Ruffs' sojourns in Bavaria my parents met and became good friends with them. Eventually Christine and Derek got married at their tekke, and for many years I received a Christmas card from Hede Ruff, always a reproduction of an Iznik tile.

We left Istanbul by boat to the Heybeli Adalar, the Princes Islands in the Sea of Marmara, where we spent two days with Gisela, before taking another boat to Yalova. (You find an illustrated Google-Earth map here.) After a wild full-moon night in the outskirts of Yalova - all dogs howling - we took the bus to Bursa, the old capital of the Ottomans before the fall of Constantinople 1453.

Bursa was then a lovely town at the foot of Ulu Dag, the Great Mountain, with many tranquil medresses and hot baths. The surprise was the lilting fountain at center of Ulu Camii, the Great Mosque (1396). It reminded me of the fountains in Maulbronn and Hirsau, all three are from the same time. Who borrowed this Sufi idea from whom, eighty years after the Fourth Crusade?

I cannot remember who told us to take a bus to the top of Ulu Dag, where we met 17-year-old Aydin, who spoke German and invited us to a camp, where a group of army officers spent the hot summer in tents with their families. German was the prevailing foreign language among the older officers, a leftover from the close military liaison between Kaiser and Sultan.... The three days at the camp were a special experience because of Yülmaz, a tall, bald, itinerant story teller. Every night a huge bonfire was lit, and Yülmaz recited sometimes for our benefit impromptu stories, at other times age-old tales going back as far as the Gilgamesh. He spoke, of course, Turkish, but he was a superb actor and his singing, which he accompanied with a "Saz," a deep bellied six-string instrument, made translating almost unnecessary. I can still sing "Üsküdara gideriken aldida bir yagmur," When I walked to Üsküdar..., which everybody knew, but he patiently taught us. He had learned his trade from his father. A last glimpse of the oral tradition of classical times.

A day-long, crowded bus journey, clouds of red-brown dust trailing, took us to Izmir. We had hoped to find a cheap boat from there to Athens, but the Turkish-Greek rivalry forbade that. Some good soul told us that an enterprising Greek sailed everyday between Çeşme and the island of Chios.

After a disappointing visit to Ephesus' late Hellenistic-Roman rubble, we made our way to Çeşme and found the caique to Chios. I had to borrow some Greek money from a German couple for the fare. We immediately continued on another boat to Athens. It became one of the worst nights on the Aegean I can remember, a fierce North-Eastern blew towering breakers over the deck where we slept. Wet, cold, and tired we arrived at 9:00 am in the Piraeus, but we were "home" again.

Six days with Nonda at Poros could not recapture the euphoric experiences of 1953. We went to Sounion on the "rear-seats" of Helmut Barth's and a friend's motorbikes, which they had ridden from Germany to Athens, helped a seriously ill Austrian to be admitted to a hospital, and finally cast off again by auto stop to Delphi.

The two days in Delphi in late September were glorious. The French lady archeologist at the museum allowed us to take photographs of the Charioteer. Henceforth an enlargement of his bronze feet would grace our apartment in Göttingen.

The rains and cold of the late season and the miserable traffic further north made hitch-hiking difficult, we walked a lot especially across the mountains between Karpenissi and Agrinion in Epiros. Gerhard's feet were so sore that we had to accept the offer of the driver of the public bus to take us to Agrinion without charge.

But as in 1953 we were invited over-night twice by most graceful local people. Once by a young dentist and his wife, who had dedicated his skills to the people of the remote village of Anatoli Franghista. He pedaled his drill with his foot, like a sewing machine. Hearing that we studied physics, we spent the evening designing an electrical generator to be driven by the local brook. He seriously asked me to find suitable equipment in Germany. It turned out to be much too expensive, and a few years later an Italian company installed electricity in the valley.

The other was a night with a family of "kapnos," tobacco farmers near Agrinion. During September they lived literally in a tunnel underneath the drying tobacco leaves in a two-story high barn in the fields. The entire family worked and slept there. The parents and older children did the harvesting, and the smaller ones neatly strung the leaves into packages to be hung from the rafters. The Epirot tobacco makes the best "Oriental" cigarettes, which used to be sold in Central Europe at a high price - but since it "stinks" the tasteless Virginia tobacco has all but replaced it. Like in Tripotamias in 1953 we were asked all the questions put before the Xenos since Odysseus' times. There were no beds, everyone slept on the ground, and a million mosquitoes turned the night into hell.

Hitch-hiking through the Epiros to Ioannina proved surprisingly fast and easy. Gerhard's feet were finally healing. We even made it up to the mountain pass near Metsovo in the back of a tuck of another Kosta. Somewhere in the wild mountains, during the night, Kosta picked up a pair of shepherds. It turned out that they came from a village, the male population of which had been wiped out by the Germans in 1943 - everyone over 18. Despite our rudimentary Greek a serious, almost philosophical conversation ensued between us on war, partisans, and the Germans. They showed no hatred and in the end shared their bread and feta cheese with us. A most poignant memory.

Kosta dropped us off after midnight in Larissa. We were headed towards the Yugoslavian border. The nights had become cold and off and on it rained, but an examination of our finances revealed that we couldn't take the bus, we would need our last lepta for the train across the border. So we struggled on through the mountains west of Mt. Olympus as far as the small town of Florina, where we were sucked into the Saturday-night "Volta" or "Corso", in which the inhabitants, five abreast circle up and down main street, talking and flirting. Three girls captured us for an hour.... Their cheer and an inquiry at the railroad station persuaded us that we had enough money left to afford a hotel room: what comfort! Our last night in Greece.

The following five days in Yogoslavia are a blur in my memory. This was socialist Moslem Kosovo: Empty stores, long bread lines at the bakeries, no beds for non-Moslems in the cheap hotels. We were not destitute, we had enough illegal dinars left to make it home. People were suspicious and unfriendly. On the night train to Skopje everybody was curious where we came from, but shut up whenever the uniformed Serbian militia-man passed the compartment in the corridor.

From Pec we took the bus through the Çerna Gora, the Black Mountains along the Albanian border. The countryside was wildly beautiful, the villages extremely poor. Two days we slept on the roof of a beach shack in Kotor waiting for the boat to Rijeka. The boat never arrived, I made a royal

scene and got the tickets refunded. We had to take another expensive bus to Dubrovnik. Our finances began to dwindle again.

In 1936 my father had been in Dalmatia with his father. Father's color slides, the first I ever saw, had left indelible impressions in my mind. Now I searched a day-long for his views in Ragusa-Dubrovnik.

The boat ride through the Dalmatian archipelago became a sunny, most pleasant, relaxing day. The many karst islands are as bare a those of the Aegean, but the Greek gods and nymphs are missing. I had fried some potatoes for lunch, and clandestinely brewed us a Greek coffee hidden between two lifeboats. A couple of ladies watched us discreetly, "You know," said the one to the other in German, "these two guys haven't washed for two weeks." I felt tempted to reply, "Gnädige Frau, you are wrong, we haven't had a bath in three months!" - Did we stink?

At Rijeka we had to spend another night on a park bench. We were awakened by a gaggle of giggling school girls speculating that we were Montenegrini, decidedly an honor in Serbia. I could not convince them that we were from Germany. Our money and our food supply had come to an end. Gerhard went to buy some bread from our last dinars - and the baker gave him a whole loaf...!

A confusion of missed and recovered trains, among them a "Liegewagen," a train with reclining seats, delivered us in Salzburg in the still dark morning hours. We were lucky, an excursion bus filled with half-drunk Austrians on the way to the Oktoberfest in Munich picked us up. In exchange we had to look at a plethora of pornographic photographs the men were handing around.

In Munich we found a package from mother with something to eat, some money, and the message that father was ill.

When we arrived in Rodenberg two days later (October 5, 1954), mother had just taken father to the county hospital in Rinteln. He had a serious meningitis infection. I borrowed his moped and rode to Rinteln. He was in critical condition, barely conscious, he didn't recognize me. Mother had moved to a bed in his room to care for him. We alternately rode to Rinteln to console mother and sit by his side. I had to go back to Göttingen my Diplom thesis was hanging in the balance. - After three weeks mother wrote that father was slowly getting better. It had been worse than his typhoid in Glatz in 1945, mother had saved his life for the fourth time....

11. 1955

Diplom thesis, Art Kuckes in Paris, Applications to US Universities, Paris and Cote d'Azure, Gertrud, Herbert Press, Documenta, Gerhard in Turkey, Geneva and Provence, Paris with Manohar

After New Year in Rodenberg Christine came to Göttingen. Frau Ruff had found her a job, one child in a well-to-do Turkish family in Bebek right by the Bosphorus. On 19 January she left on the "Orient Express" with Gisela Gross for Istanbul....

I had to find a professor to give me a diplom thesis. After several tries I persuaded Prof. Albert Betz, the successor of Ludwig Prandtl as director of the legendary Aerodynamische Versuchs Anstalt (AVA), to accept me with a suitable thesis subject. The diplom in physics (dipl. phys) is a professional degree akin to a masters, not a research degree like the PhD. It marks the end of a physicist's university education. Its thesis did not require original research, or substantial results. Still it was a mountain to cross.

Prof. Betz was in his 60s. I liked him at first, he displayed none of the academic arrogance of

his younger colleagues. Most of the good scientists of the AVA and much of the research equipment had 1945-48 been dismantled and extradited to England by the British. Betz, too old to join the exodus, assigned me to one of the remaining lesser lights. However, during the year it turned out that neither Betz nor the assistant were of any help as scientific adviser to my work. I had made a mistake in choosing him and ended up entirely on my own. The experimental part posed no problems to me, but its theoretical explanation was beyond my grasp. I worked feverishly on collecting data. In the end Betz showed himself deeply disappointed, and called me a "Hochstapler," a con-man, who could talk well, but was not a remarkable scientist.... This happened after I had been accepted at Harvard and had met Barbara.

Art Kuckes, infected by my fantasy of going to Tibet, had conceived of the grandiose idea, that he would ask his father to warrant my emigration to America. At first this was an expediency which would make it possible to work in the USA, later when Barbara appeared, it would become the *sine-qua-non* of marrying her and starting a new life there. But at this time all of that was still in the unpredictable future. During the Spring term he made a list of eleven notable universities in the US and urged me to write them postcards(!) asking for admission and a possible assistantship. The response was heady: Six institutions offered to accept me, if I would submit a formal application. Before I wrote those, Art won another Fulbright scholarship for an additional year at the Ecole Superieur in Paris and left Göttingen.

During the summer I scrambled to collect my credentials and letters of recommendation, which, of course, I never saw, but Prof. Betz, the good man, wrote one too. The process took its time - in February 1956 I got a letter from Harvard offering me a scholarship, which I accepted. Much happened in the interim.

I needed a vacation from the diplom drudgery and in April hitch-hiked to Paris to visit Art. I stayed there only for a week, but I met Gertrud, who would occupy my heart for much of 1955. Gertrud was already tentatively engaged, and eventually the insight prevailed between us that we didn't really fit each other. Still the days with Gertrud were *the* real Paris experience....

After Gertrud had left for home, Art and I hitch-hiked to Nice for Easter and spend another 2 weeks slowly wandering along the Cote d'Azure - to finally skipper down the Rhine in a Klepper fold boat....

Art was set on buying a Klepper folding kayak to take home. We found it in Freiburg. To try it out, Art asked the Klepper dealer to drive us to Breisach, where we assembled the boat and launched it on the Rhine. We had hoped to be able to drift down-river as far as Strasbourg. A cold wind blew into our face, and frozen blue we abandoned the expedition after an hour. Carefully avoiding the border patrols Art landed the boat on the French side, where we found ourselves in a dense jungle. We carried the sacks with the disassembled boat for an hour through the thicket and eventually made it to the train station in Colmar. At midnight Art with this immense baggage took a train to Paris and left me to my own devices. Someone found me a bed in a cheap hotel in Colmar, and next morning I walked the 10 km to the border in Neuf Breisach. I don't remember, how I got back to Göttingen, it doesn't matter.

Gerhard was making plans to visit Christine in Istanbul and explore Anatolia, eastern Turkey, with her. I don't recall how he got Herbert Press, the metal sculptor and architecture student from Berlin, whom we had met in Florence in 1952, interested to join him. I was out this year. With all my America plans in suspense and my thesis work around my neck I simply could not disappear for two months.

We did not know Herbert well. He was a charming, if somewhat cranky loner whose professorial father was a famous designer of reservoir dams all over the world. His father insisted

that Herbert, the dreamer, have solid education as architect. Italy had qualified, but Sardegna, where he had been in 54, had not. Herbert's passion was drawing, copperplate etchings, and metal sculpture. He had brought back a collection of wonderful etchings from Sardegna.

Herbert appeared in Göttingen a few days before they were to leave and persuaded me to an excursion to the first Documenta in Kassel, which had just opened. It became a most overwhelming experience. I had heard about but not seen *any* modern art at the time, and here were dozens of paintings by Picasso, Kandinsky, Marc, Kokoschka, Ernst... and sculptures by Moore, Calder, Marini, Claes Oldenburg, - to just name a few, whom I still see in my mind. An entire, new continent of impressions. I went back to Kassel two more times in the following months, and it is no exaggeration that my visual foundation, my judgments and likes of contemporary art all date back to these visits.

Gerhard and Herbert left on July 30. Somehow they got to Istanbul without Hackl and from there went with Christine through the Black Sea to Samsun. The adventures of this sea voyage Christine has to tell you. At the end of August a letter from Istanbul reached me: Herbert had collapsed with a liver seizure in Samsun - it had been unbearably hot, they had taken a swim and Herbert had nearly drowned when it happened. Christine wrote that they had made it back by train to Istanbul, and Herbert was in the hospital in bad condition. His father had to fly in to take him home to Berlin. Later it turned out that Herbert drank out of control. The forced Islamic abstinence and the heat had done the rest. His damaged liver remained a constant threat to his life. - Gerhard and Christine went back to Cappadocia and Konya - a trip which remained a challenge to me until in 1990 Barbara and I explored Cappadocia in the last snowstorm of the season.

Alone with my problems I was itching to have a break and there and then decided to elope to Geneva and the Provence. At the Cosmopolitan Club I had met Harry Medved - his grandfather Medvedev had fled the Russian revolution for Geneva. I spent a couple of evenings with Harry exploring the seedy underbelly of this cosmopolitan city populated by UN officials and their mistresses and a small core of Calvinist Ur-inhabitants.

I went on to discover Tarascon, Avignon, and Les Baux, was eaten by mosquitoes at the beach at Stes. Maries de la Mer, slept a full moon night in one of the empty rock graves at the Abbey Montmajour, walked on foot to Arles following the tracks of van Gogh, - and finally ended in Sauve du Gard northwest of Nimes.

Harry had given me the address of friends, Andre and Lucienne Snyder in Sauve. I found them in the local café. Andre also drank more than was good for him, preferably Pernod. His hands were trembling spasmodically and at times he couldn't talk coherently. Lucienne closely watched his bouts. She was a phenomenon, in her fifties, possibly the unsightliest woman I have met - but highly engaging with a rare charm and intelligence. We talked into the nights. They lived in an overgrown, ramshackle house in the vineyards, and I was accommodated in a similar house of absent friends all by myself. Eventually during the third night Andre drove us and his mother-in-law back to Geneve. We were lucky, he could barely see, but we had no accident....

Manohar came from India, a fine-boned, intelligent, exceptionally sensitive and perceptive friend of Gerhard. He was working on his doctorate with Prof. Tollmien at the Max-Planck-Institute of Fluid Dynamics, the same professor Gerhard would start his diplom thesis with. Manohar had left his wife and child in India, an unimaginable sacrifice by our thinking. Twice we took him home to Rodenberg, which we rarely did with our Göttingen friends, and eventually when he left Göttingen, Gerhard gave him his violin.

In Early October - Gerhard was not yet back from Turkey - I took Manohar to Paris. Art had left Paris for Harvard. Manohar had some Indian friends in Paris, and I wanted to explore the

museums and churches, which had on my last visit been forgotten because of Gertrud. Auto stop was dismal at this time of year, and we spent half of the ten days traveling there and back. When we returned, we found Gerhard in our place on Schiller Strasse.

There is not much to report from the last three months of 1955 in Göttingen. I worked frantically attempting to make a theoretical model for the flow in my experiment, but Betz didn't like it. There were a few Cosmopolitan evenings, Gerhard showed his photos from Anatolia. For new loves was no time. Gertrud only wrote once. For Christmas Gerhard took Manohar home to Rodenberg.

In February 1956 Barbara suddenly burst on the scene.

Pacific Palisades, 12 May, 2011