



Christian Bommarius

# The Fever of Unrest

The most turbulent and exciting year  
of the Weimar Republic

Original title: Im Rausch des Aufruhrs

March 2022

352 pages

**A plethora of perspectives, characters and themes linked by a year frantically accelerated by dramatic events make this book an exciting and astonishing read.**

1923 is the year of boundless hyperinflation, the year of the occupation of the Ruhr area by the French and Belgians, and the year of a bitter German national strike. 1923 is the year of violently suppressed Communist and Nazi uprisings, and it is the year of radical contrasts between abject poverty and an orchid-like flourishing of the entertainment culture. In its ambivalence, 1923 marks the end of the post-war period and the prelude to the Golden Twenties of the Weimar Republic.

*"Once again, Christian Bommarius draws from his abundant knowledge and resources, and unfolds before us, in bits and pieces, a fateful year in German history.*

*He maps out the big concepts through small details, making it clear, with seeming nonchalance, the ways in which 1923 was linked to 1933."*

Volker Kutscher, author of the Babylon Berlin Series

**Christian Bommarius**, born in 1958, studied German and Law. He is a journalist and author. Bommarius worked for several German newspapers, including *Berliner Zeitung* and *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. He published several books about political and historical topics. In 2018, he was awarded with the *Heinrich-Mann-Preis*.

Sample Translation  
By Marielle Sutherland

## January

*This month marks the beginning of the most tumultuous year in the Weimar Republic. Germany has defaulted on its reparation payments. France and Belgium are retaliating by occupying the Ruhr Valley. The Reich government in turn is retaliating with a call for passive resistance. Mine owners are banned from supplying coal and coke to France and Belgium. Protest rallies by Germans, a sabotage and a general strike here; draconian punishments by the French and Belgians and expulsions of stubborn mayors there. The Germans are bemoaning the severity of the occupying powers – they’ve clearly forgotten the brutality they displayed in the occupied territories during the war. The French are complaining about the violation of the Treaty of Versailles but are remaining tight-lipped on their actual intention – retribution for the Germans’ brutality.*

*The Ruhr Crisis is exacerbating the economic situation of the German Reich. Due to its war bonds, it’s heavily in debt to its own people; the reparation obligations are exorbitant, and in return for their passive resistance, the government must continue paying the workers’ wages. It’s putting more and more money into circulation, and prices are exploding. Inflation had already set in at the start of the war. Since the end of the war, there’s been an accelerated fall in the value of the Reichsmark. It’s now in free fall: in January 1917, a kilo of rye bread had cost 34 Pfennigs; in December 1920, the price rose to 2 Marks, and in December 1922 to 163 Marks 15 Pfennigs. At the beginning of this year, the price of bread jumps to 250 Marks.<sup>1</sup>*

The New Man has arrived. His production had been announced. But the Soviet Union, which has undertaken to produce the New Man, has only existed for a few hours – since the end of the year just gone –, and in this short space of time, not even the most determined leaders of the world revolution have been able to fulfil the plan. They would have been too late anyway.

The New Man was born a while ago. He’s been roving about in Western Europe and the United States for some time now; a bogeyman – at least for the men. Because the New Man is a woman. She’s young and confident; she drives a car, smokes in public, styles her hair in a bob, wears a tuxedo and a monocle, ridicules the bourgeoisie (of which she herself is part), and amuses herself with both male and female lovers: “Chacun à son goût. Each to his own.”

A few months ago, the French writer Victor Margueritte helped her find a way into literature: the young Monique Lerbier, daughter of a factory owner, bursts the bonds of the corrupt bourgeois society in which she lives, breaks with her family, and throws herself into the bohemian life with opium, coke, free love and all the trimmings. At the same time, she excels as a judicious businesswoman. The title of the novel lends its name to the New Man –, at any rate, the New Woman – of the era: *La Garçonne*. Is it pornography? A way of seducing young people? An instruction manual on how to be immoral? At all events, *La Garçonne* is a scandalous novel. And it’s also the biggest bestseller of the decade, translated into twelve languages – this year also into German.

Of course, the Germans! They love the French even more dearly than the French love them. That’s why the Germans love the novel that apparently besmirches France’s honour like no other book before. And it was even written by a French writer, the son of a general who died for France’s honour in the Battle of Sedan in 1870. Victor Margueritte is not only an advocate of equal rights; he’s also a pacifist and – even though it’s only a few years after France’s triumph over the German empire – an advocate of a united Europe. There is no place for such a person in the Légion d’honneur. On 1 January 1923, Victor Margueritte is excluded from the Legion of Honour “pour grave faute contre l’honneur, for grave breaches of honour”.<sup>2</sup>

On New Year’s Eve, the Goetheanum – the centre of anthroposophy in Dornach, near Basel – is on fire. At midnight, as all the bells are ringing out the New Year, flames erupt between the two domes. An artist heard a mysterious noise earlier in the evening; it sounded like a heavy gale between the walls. People just laughed at her, for the weather is very calm this evening. But later on, everyone who was present reported sensing something heavy in the air for hours. During her performance, the artist says, she had the feeling that all her efforts to fight against the dark, oppressive force were in vain.

The organ resounds through the sea of fire; each of the various metals used in the timber building glows a different colour as it burns up. The pillars supporting the

domes burn like torches. The coloured glass in the windows explodes and melts. Ten years after its foundation stone was laid, unknown arsonists – presumably critics of the doctrine of its designer, Rudolf Steiner – have reduced the Goetheanum to ash. All that remains is the plinth, which had been cast in concrete at the builder’s request. Kurt Tucholsky scoffs, “In Switzerland, they set his ‘Steineranum’ on fire; an absolutely repulsive act. It’s supposed to have been a noble, domed building that looked like it was made of stone. But it was made of wood and plaster, just like the entire doctrine.” Tucholsky, of course, has no idea how much fire and flame is still to come this year.<sup>3</sup>

Back to New Year, this time in Berlin. The year is only a few hours old, but Marcellus Schiffer already thinks he’s finished. His résumé from the past few years: a few – so what? – successes with chanson texts in Trude Hesterberg’s cabaret, the Wilde Bühne in the basement of the Theater des Westens. A few novellas, a few plays, a few portfolios of drawings, a few new acquaintances. C’est tout! Otherwise: faith in people who have turned out to be nothing but anaemic, morbidly distorted puppets; faith in a friend who has now mocked their friendship behind his back; and on top of that, his domineering mother, who threw him out several times on the last day of the year.

But above all, Marguerite Lion – Margo – a hysterical flapper girl with no self-control. The jealousy with which she pursues him, ranting and raving at him almost daily, threatening to commit suicide – unbearable. People say Schiffer met her, the daughter of a French businessman, in a fashion house. Since then, she’s been like his shadow, following him everywhere, trembling with jealousy.

Marcellus Schiffer can’t take any more. He writes to her that he’s still fond of her, but there’s no question of them meeting. And what about the Wilde Bühne? Trude Hesterberg’s latest fee – 75,000 marks – was only enough to buy a few pairs of stockings and a woollen gilet. It’s not worth the effort. And how does Hesterberg, this whore with a literary air, show her gratitude? She exploits you, writes Marcellus Schiffer, for as long as she needs you. His motto for the coming year, in any case, is: “Let’s try it again. Perhaps it’ll be better this time.” He doesn’t believe it, of course. He only believes in disappointments; a hardened melancholic who sees life as tedious and wearisome. But not even this will protect him from disappointments in the coming year. Marcellus Schiffer is soon to become one of the most celebrated authors of the Berlin Cabaret thanks to a chanson that will catapult him to fame, and above all thanks to a French singer, Margo Lion – the song will make her a star.<sup>4</sup>

On 2 January, the 25-year-old Dr Joseph Goebbels starts work at a branch of the Dresdener Bank in Cologne. But under protest. With his doctorate in philology, he doesn’t see a future for himself behind a bank counter, surrounded by desperate small-time savers who have lost their savings due to the inflation, and by

unscrupulous speculators who have made a fortune through foreign exchange dealings. The young man from the town of Rheydt, who’s still living with his parents, has always wanted to make a career for himself as a writer or journalist. For years without success.

Because he’s a cripple with a limp, the army had no use for him in the First World War. Because there are more gifted writers and journalists than the third son of a factory clerk at the Vereinigten Dochtfabriken GmbH (Rheydt), he has to find a different way to earn a living. So now, he takes the train every morning at half-past-five from Rheydt to Cologne, and comes back in the evening around eight-o’-clock.

After a short while, he does find a room. But his “pathetic wage” barely covers the rent; without the food parcels and postal orders from Rheydt, Dr Goebbels wouldn’t be able to make ends meet. He has studied and obtained a doctorate – no one should forget this, which is why he never writes his name without his title –, and yet he’s still a poor devil. People mustn’t get depressed by these things. Dr Goebbels is depressed. And now he’s also beginning to betray his ideals. For among his acquaintances in Rheydt, Dr Goebbels has always vehemently stood up for the “German soul” and for the renunciation of the “wild dance around the golden calf”. But where has Dr Goebbels ended up? In the middle of the “temple of materialism” in the Dresdener Bank, on the dance floor before the golden calf. His girlfriend, Else Janke, a Jewish teacher from Rheydt, had meant well when she got the job for him through a distant relative.<sup>5</sup>

Joseph Roth can’t believe his eyes. He’s sitting in the Romanisches Café by the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, the most happening bohemian coffee house in Berlin – in fact in Germany – ever since the Café des Westens on Kurfürstendamm (also known as Café Größenwahn – Delusions of Grandeur) moved and was increasingly spurned by bohemian society. If Gottfried Benn came through the door here, Otto Dix, Alfred Döblin, Max Liebermann or Franz Werfel, Roth would probably not even look up from his ineluctable wine glass: old acquaintances, some of them regular guests like himself. Yet who should appear but Red Richard! Richard – who just a few years ago was a “newspaper waiter” at the Café des Westens and “the absolute ruler over all printed words, domestic and foreign” – takes a seat at a table in the Romanisches Café and is handed, as a matter of course, the *Wiener Journal*, the *Prager Tagblatt*, and even the *La-Plata* gazette by another newspaper waiter.

But who is this waiter supposed to be? No comparison with the red-haired Richard when he still had the newspapers at his command at the Café des Westens. “His physical defect had the effect of leveling social distinctions, and raised the *waiter* at least into the ranks of the straight-backed newspaper *writers*”. Roth’s gaze “slithers down” the “boring vertiginous back” of the newspaper waiter in the Romanisches Café: “His existence as a literature bearer is not justified in every

regard.”

How different Red Richard was! He saw “generations of writers come and go”. Saw them “wind up in prison or on ministerial chairs. Become revolutionaries and private secretaries. And all of them left owing him money” (Joseph Roth too, no doubt). Richard knew “where their pieces had been reprinted, and kept them posted”. “And, if they were obscure or struggling – he helped them.” Roth recalls that night when the old Café des Westens closed its doors forever and Richard went around collecting signatures from the guests. “That sampling of immortality for his autograph book”, writes Roth, “was the last service he was able to perform for literature”.

Not quite. On Saturday 24 June last year, Richard had performed one more service. That morning, Foreign Minister Walther Rathenau had joined his chauffeur in his convertible. He was about to be driven from his villa in Berlin Grunewald to the Foreign Office on Wilhelmstraße. Two members of the right-wing extremist, anti-Semitic Organisation Consul had fired five shots at Rathenau and thrown a hand grenade from their car. Rathenau died at the scene – it was one of 354 political assassinations by right-wing extremists by the end of 1922, but none of the others shook up the Weimar Republic quite so much as this one did. The perpetrators had fled. Ten minutes after the assassination, Red Richard was passing by the scene of the crime. He knew what should be done in such circumstances. Richard informed the newspapers. If the former newspaper waiter had not been there, the public would have had to wait one hour longer for the special editions, says Roth, mocking the dailies’ lust for a topical story. Later in the year, Roth – who has just begun working as a features correspondent for the *Frankfurter Zeitung* – will publish a novel of unparalleled topicality in the history of German literature.<sup>6</sup>

Apropos Walther Rathenau: on 3 January at 10.30pm, Maximilian Harden steps on stage at the Großes Schauspielhaus in Berlin, wearing his usual tuxedo and white silk waistcoat. Harden – who up until a quarter of a year ago was the editor of the internationally famous periodical *Die Zukunft*, and, up until they had a falling out, a friend of Rathenau – had written to an American acquaintance a few days after the murder of the foreign minister and told him that the murderous gang would now likely turn their bestiality on him. He was proved right. On the afternoon of 3 July 1922, Harden had posted the letter at the pillar box in Grünewald and bought himself a copy of the daily newspaper *Le Temps*. As he walked away, skim-reading an editorial piece, members of the Organisation Consul had attempted, nine days after the murder of Rathenau, to fulfil Harden’s prophecy. They had attacked him and hit him on the head with an iron barbell once, twice ... eight times altogether.

To the amazement of the victim and the assassins, Harden had survived. The trial was presided over by a young judge, the son of a rabbi from Glogau in Silesia, who did not wish to be reminded of his background. He was an affable man, who

treated the accused politely and full of the understanding that should have been due to the victim – except that he had no sympathy for the victim. In only three days of hearings, the court managed to turn the attempted murder into a charge of aiding and abetting an act of grievous bodily harm, express respect for the failed murderers, and prove that Harden, the Jew, was to blame for the attack.

Despite the fact Harden defended himself by pointing out that he had converted to Christianity as a young man, this made no impression on either the accused or the judges. Neither could he expect any sympathy for his assertion that solidarity with the murderers would be the ruin of the Germans, since this was not a murder trial but a trial for aiding and abetting something akin to grievous bodily harm. Kurt Tucholsky, who was in the gallery, had commented on the unsurprisingly mild judgement thus: “Tear this false blindfold from the eyes of justice! We have no justice anymore. Il y avait des juges à Berlin.”

Why all the fuss? Harden’s a broken man. He’s had his day. Before Wilhelm II fled to Holland and hunkered down in Doorn, i.e. when he was still in Berlin, Harden was his arch enemy. His *Zukunft* [Future], which appeared week by week with a circulation of 24,000, was the dangerous weapon with which he had relentlessly clobbered the Kaiser for 30 years. When Wilhelm abdicated, Harden’s time was up, too. The *Zukunft*’s circulation had rapidly shrunk. When Harden had printed the final edition on 30 September 1922, it had 343 subscribers. Harden’s a has-been, talking in the Großes Schauspielhaus about a future he himself doesn’t have, a dreamer with a vision of a united Europe. Harden’s already forgotten, remembered only by a few right-wing extremists.<sup>7</sup>

Hope is always the last thing to die, yet its survival skills in House Doorn in Holland are nonetheless remarkable. In any case, it’s lasted longer than the innumerable trees felled and sawn to pieces by Wilhelm II after prayers and breakfast every morning since his escape into Dutch exile in November 1919. Wilhelm saws away, filled with hope that the German people will bring him back as their emperor. So far, no summons has reached him in Doorn.

A few months ago, Wilhelm gave the Germans his memoirs to read, *Ereignisse und Gestalten 1878–1918* [People and Events 1878–1918], in which he absolves himself of any blame for the First World War. The book is selling splendidly, but still no summons has reached Doorn for His Majesty to take up his place on the throne again; perhaps because Wilhelm’s self-acquittal is based on whim more than anything else. One claim is that the Austrian foreign minister, Graf Berchthold, instigated the war with the aim of working together with the Vatican, the Bavarian Wittelsbach dynasty, the Jesuits, the Freemasons and World Jewry to overthrow the Protestant Hohenzollern empire. Another is that it was the Anglo-Americans – controlled by Jews – who had decided to destroy Germany. Not forgetting that scheming British uncle, King Edward VII, who died in 1910, but who brought the French, the

Russians, the Italians, the Japanese and the Americans together with his Englishmen to annihilate Germany through war and revolution.

The Germans buy and read Wilhelm’s memoirs – 260,000 copies sold in the first few months –, but they don’t listen to him. Only a second attempt will help. For the past few days, the Pan-German journalist Eugen Zimmermann has been meeting with Wilhelm. He is an influential representative of the Hugenberg empire, which has given this Hohenzollern’s memoirs a stylistic polish. The two of them are planning their next literary coup. The former Chief of the Reich Chancellery groans: Wilhelm’s poetry, he says, will “certainly delight all opponents of the Hohenzollern monarchy”. The royal household trembles with trepidation.<sup>8</sup>

Let’s go back to Alfred Hugenberg. Almost thirty years ago, he founded the Pan-German League alongside colonial hero Carl Peters, whose reputation as “Hangman Peters” still strikes fear in the hearts of Africa’s inhabitants even years after the loss of the German colonies. The league’s manifesto is distinctly nationalist, militarist, Pan-German, expansionist, anti-Semitic and racist, and Hugenberg is intent on making it heard through his media corporation. A few years ago, he bought the nationalist-conservative publishing house Scherl-Verlag and the second largest German news agency, thereby creating a media conglomerate of publishing houses, news services, advertising agencies, correspondence services, film companies and numerous newspaper holdings; through these, Hugenberg – a member of the Reichstag in the German National People’s Party – controls half the German press.

The corporation makes a particularly attractive offer to the customers of the provincial press: it will supply editorial pieces, news, novels and sports reports, pressed in strips of cardboard and ready to print. All the provincial presses have to do is use the usual metal casting machines to turn these into finished printing plates. This flong service saves the publisher lots of money and saves the editors of the provincial press having their own opinion. The service provided by the Hugenberg corporation is unbeatably cheap: 350 newspapers across the whole of the Republic take it up on its offer.

Among the 500 permanent employees and 90 editors of the corporation, Major a. D. Adolf Stein stands out. As the general editor and therefore chief of the corporation’s own Deutscher Pressedienst, he’s in charge of steering Hugenberg’s defamation campaigns against the Republic and its president, Friedrich Ebert. Adolf Stein delivers character assassinations. Sometimes he commissions them, sometimes he writes them himself. Week by week, he publishes, under the name of “Rumpelstiltskin”, his “Chitchat Below the Line” in as many as 30 newspapers: humorous articles on daily life in Berlin – from the weekly market to the red-light district –, reports from the world of theatre, news on the crowning of a beauty queen, sometimes bawdy, sometimes titillating, always with the fervour of a monarchist, always against the corrupt Berlin politicians and against the dictatorship of opinion



exercised by the democratic, the Jewish and the “establishment” press – all enemies of the people. Adolf Stein does it perfectly; he earns twice as much as an editor-in-chief at the Hugenberg corporation. The intellectuals have their Tucholskys, Jacobsohns, Kerrs, Roths and Ossietzkys; they have the *Berliner Tageblatt*, the *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, the *Weltbühne*, the *Frankfurter* and the *Vossische Zeitung*. But Alfred Hugenberg has Adolf Stein, and a few others, and every day he has millions of readers from Glücksburg to Sonthofen – Germany’s northernmost and southernmost towns. Tucholsky reflects on the future of Germany and Europe; Stein says what’s what.

**Joseph Goebbels** (1897–1945) began his career in the National Socialist German Workers’ Party in 1924 in Mönchengladbach with the founding of a local branch of the National Socialist Freedom Movement, an underground organisation within the Nazi Party that had been banned ever since Hitler’s Beer Hall Putsch. In autumn 1926, Hitler appointed him Gauleiter – head of the administrative district – of Berlin-Brandenburg. In this period, Goebbels ended his five-year relationship with Else Janke, who had a Jewish mother and a Christian father. After the Nazis seized power in 1933, he became the head of the newly established Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, where, due to the “Gleichschaltung” – a system of totalitarian control and coordination over all aspects of society –, he had almost unlimited control over all areas of cultural life and the media. In 1937, he forced Hugenberg to sell the Universum-Film AG (Ufa), thereby bringing one of the largest film companies under state ownership. On 9 November 1938, in a speech to the party leadership, Goebbels gave the green light for acts of violence against the Jewish population in the pogrom on the Night of Broken Glass. In 1943, he called for “total war” in a speech at the Berlin Sportpalast. In April 1945, the infamous demagogue proceeded with his family to the bunker under the Reich Chancellery so he could be at Hitler’s side. It was there that the Goebbels murdered their six children and then committed suicide on 1 May 1945.

**Maximilian Harden**, originally Witkowski (1861–1927), was the founder (1892), publisher and editor-in-chief of the political weekly periodical *Die Zukunft*, one of the most important media organs in the empire. Harden was also known internationally as a harsh critic of the politics of Wilhelm II. After the First World War, he became almost as harsh a critic of the Weimar Republic, however with ever-decreasing relevance. Harden suspended his periodical in 1922 and withdrew from political life. He moved to Switzerland in 1923.

**Alfred Hugenberg** (1865–1951) was a mining and armaments industrialist and a media entrepreneur; his media corporation’s nationalist and anti-democratic propaganda contributed significantly to the destruction of the Weimar Republic. From 1920, he was a member of the Reichstag in the German National People’s Party; he also kept his mandate as a guest of the Nazi party after his party was dissolved (1933). In 1931, Hugenberg formed the Harzburger Front political alliance with, among others, the Nazi party, with the intention of combining nationalist forces in order to present a unified opposition to the cabinet of Heinrich Brüning. His aim was to establish anti-republican policies in coalition with the Nazi party. In January 1933, he entered Hitler’s cabinet as the Minister for Economics, Agriculture and Food, but he resigned after only six months. In the years that followed, the Nazis forced Hugenberg to sell his press corporation (1933–1935), the Ufa (1937) and the Scherl-Verlag (1944); he did, however, receive extensive compensation for these. After the war, he was classified initially as a “lesser offender” and later, after several appeals procedures, as “exonerated”.

**Margo Lion** (1899–1989), “supple as a giraffe”, was one of the stars of cabaret in the Roaring Twenties. She had a long career. In 1928, she and Marlene Dietrich became the talk of Berlin when they performed the suggestive song *Wenn die beste Freundin mit der besten Freundin* [When the Best Friend with The Best Friend]. Between 1926 and 1932, she appeared in ten feature films. After the death of her husband, Marcellus Schiffer, and the Nazis’ rise to power, she went back to Paris, appeared in French films, and became famous for her interpretations of Brecht songs. After the Second World War, she continued her career in film and on the stage. She returned to Berlin once again, but much later in life: in 1977, she gave a guest performance at the Renaissance-Theater as part of the Berliner Festwochen, accompanied, as before, by Mischa Spoliansky on piano.

**Victor Margueritte** (1866–1942) had already made a name for himself as a pacifist and committed advocate of equal rights by the time he published his scandalous novel *La Garçonne* in 1922. The novel, the first in the trilogy *La femme en chemin*, was a worldwide success, bringing its author popularity on an international scale – but not among his colleagues. In the storm of protest *La Garçonne* unleashed, only Anatole France leapt to his defence.

In the twenties, **Joseph Roth** (1894–1939) was not only one of the best-known German-speaking journalists; as a novelist, this son of a timber and corn merchant from the small town of Brody in East Galicia became a rigorous chronicler of the

Imperial and Royal monarchy of Austria-Hungary. In 1925, Roth became a correspondent for the *Frankfurter Zeitung* in Paris, however he had to cede this position only a year later to Friedrich Sieburg; the newspaper compensated him for this with a reportage trip to the Soviet Union. His wife, Friederike, fell ill with schizophrenia in 1928 (she was murdered by the Nazis in 1940), and it was presumably in this period that Roth started to become dependent on alcohol. 1930 saw the publication of his most successful work, *Hiob. Roman eines einfachen Mannes* [Job. The Story of a Simple Man], about a Jewish man called Mendel Singer and his search for God. Two years later, he published his masterpiece *Radetzky marsch* [Radetzky March]. It tells the story of the decline of the Habsburg Empire through the history of the Trotta family. In January 1933, he emigrated to Paris with his then partner, Andrea Manga Bell – whose mother was from Hamburg and whose father was from Cuba –, where he wrote for exile newspapers and periodicals. On 23 May 1939, after hearing of Ernst Toller’s suicide, Roth collapsed in Café Tournon – his local bar and place of residence. A few days later, he died of double pneumonia at a hospital for the poor. Ostensibly, his abrupt withdrawal from alcohol contributed to the lethal progression of the disease.

**Marcellus Schiffer** (1892–1932) has gone down in the annals of cabaret history as the great unfinished project of the debauched Berlin of the twenties. He worked as a chanson writer for Friedrich Hollaender and Rudolf Nelson, as a librettist for Paul Hindemith, with whom he composed the “Zeitoper” [opera of the time] *Neues vom Tage* [News of the Day], but he celebrated his greatest successes with the Russian composer Mischa Spoliansky. Together they produced a reliable supply of hits such as the *Alles Schwindel* [It’s All a Swindle], the cabaret opera *Rufen Sie Herrn Plim!* [Call Mr Plim!] and “Schlager” songs – sentimental ballads – such as *Heute Nacht oder nie* [Tonight or Never], which made the famous Polish opera singer Jan Kiepura a worldwide success. In August 1932, Marcellus Schiffer committed suicide by taking an overdose of sleeping pills in his flat on Rüdeshheimer Platz in Berlin. He died, however, as it said in an obituary, of a “despairing weariness with the world and with life”.

**Kurt Tucholsky** (1890–1935) was one of the best-known political journalists of the Weimar Republic. As an author and temporary co-editor of the *Weltbühne*, he emerged as a pacifist, anti-militarist and left-wing democrat who employed pointed social criticism. As a satirist, cabaret writer, lyricist, novelist and film and theatre critic, he was both celebrated and hated – it was, above all, the Nazis whose hatred he courted. After the Nazis seized power, his books were burned and he himself was expatriated from Germany. He died from an overdose of sleeping pills in exile in Sweden.

**Wilhelm II** (1859–1941) never set foot in Germany again. For many years, he still hoped he would return to Germany. In 1931/32, he received Hermann Göring in Doorn, his intention being to secure the pertinent support of the Nazi party. He congratulated Hitler on the Wehrmacht’s victory over France in 1940: “I am profoundly moved by the capitulation of France, and I congratulate you and the entire German Wehrmacht on this tremendous victory, a gift from God ...” When Wilhelm died in Doorn, former members of the old army and delegates from the new Wehrmacht took part in the funeral service; memorial services in the Reich, however, were forbidden by the Nazi party. It is striking how committed the former **Crown Prince Wilhelm** was in his support for Hitler’s rise to dictatorial power. He too hoped to achieve the restoration of the monarchy by openly supporting the Nazis; but he never joined the Nazi party. In 1926, during a visit to Schloss Cecilienhof, accompanied by Göring and Röhm, Hitler ostensibly gave Wilhelm assurances that he alone was seeking, by political means, the restoration of the monarchy and the reign of the House of Hohenzollern. As is well known, Hitler did not keep this promise. Wilhelm Prince of Prussia died in 1951 in Hechingen, Swabia, in circumstances befitting his reduced social status.

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<sup>1</sup> *The information in the introduction to each respective month follows: Manfred Overesch/Friedrich Wilhelm Saal, Die Weimarer Republik – Eine Tageschronik der Politik – Wirtschaft – Kultur, Augsburg 1992; Hanna Vollmer, Chronik 1923 – Bibliothek des 20. Jahrhunderts. Tag für Tag in Wort und Bild, Dortmund 1987*

<sup>2</sup> *Victor Margueritte, La Garçonne. Die Aussteigerin, Berlin 2020; Julia Drost, La Garçonne. Wandlungen einer literarischen Figur, Göttingen 2003*

<sup>3</sup> *Margarita Woloschin, Die grüne Schlange. Lebenserinnerungen, Stuttgart 2009; Ignaz Wrobel (i.e. Kurt Tucholsky, in: Die Weltbühne, 3 July 1924, no. 27, p. 26*

<sup>4</sup> *Marcellus Schiffer, Tagebuch 1923, estate archive, Akademie der Künste; Victor Rothaler (ed.), Marcellus Schiffer, Heute nacht oder nie. Tagebücher, Erzählungen, Gedichte, Zeichnungen, Bonn 2003*

<sup>5</sup> *Ralf Georg Reuth, Goebbels, Munich/Zürich 1990*

<sup>6</sup> *Joseph Roth, Werke I, Das journalistische Werk 1915–1923, Cologne 2009, pp. 909 ff.*

<sup>7</sup> *Helga Neumann/Manfred Neumann, Maximilian Harden (1861–1927), Würzburg 2003*

<sup>8</sup> *Sigurd von Ilseman, Amerongen und Doorn (1918–1923), Munich 1967*