

Note on an Interview with Frau Wilhelma Wagner at her home, Bayreuth, Richard-Wagner Str. 45, from 11 am to 1 pm, 13. März 1971.

1. Hitle's eating habits. He was not a stickler about his vegetarianism. He had ceased eating meat as such in the 30's, but he readily succumbed to the temptation of keber-  
keissel-suppe. Once when Brona Wagner went to lunch with  
 him in a Bayreuth hotel, they studied the Speisekarte  
zusammen; when she proposed zunge, he replied, "Ich, ich  
 möchte nicht etwas nehmen, was andere schon im Mühl  
 gehabt haben." He rejected anything that was too hot.  
 When his Hausintendant Kannenberg (†), who arranged  
 the meals at Walmfried, served a hot-soup once, and Hitle  
 asked why, Kannenberg replied, "es wurde eben mit Feuer  
gekocht." He liked Süßigkeiten, like all Austrians, especially  
Kuchen, but he fought back temptation valiantly, eating only  
 an apple, etc, after a meal; he did not expect others to  
 emulate his frugality. Göring was pardoned his sumptuous  
 meals. He drank <sup>almost</sup> no alcohol, but made exceptions - particularly  
 enjoying Austrian schnapps a Stamperl\* - um.

2. He has positive impressions of Schmundt and Bodenschätz, but very  
 negative of Prof. Moll, who had nie hier in Staura gewohnt.  
 His daughter Verena, born in 1920 said in about 1939, "Ich  
 würde mich nie von dem Schwein umfassen lassen." Hitle was  
 sufficiently ferisfähig to arrange for Prof. Moll to be accommodated  
 elsewhere as soon as he noted that M was persona non grata at  
Walmfried.

\* - "ein Gläschen schnapps"

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3. Hitler and music, was in a dilettante, I understand. Frau Wagner cited some examples:

- (a.) In 1936 würde Lohengrin im Festspielhaus gespielt. Normally, the tenor had always followed a Stich (cut) proposed by R. Wagner on his manuscript, to short-cut the Gralsgeschichte, which was too long for most tenors to sing. This time, however, they decided on the full text. Hitler sat next Frau W in the loge; as the tenor reached the place where the Stich was normally made, but the tenor sang on, she he gripped his arm in involuntary Schock at the novelty.
- (b.) In July 1939, (?) he sat in front of the Kammermusikhaus Wilmersdorf, - im heissensten Sommer hat er Kammer gemacht, weil er gerne haben wollte - in Feld Frau Wagner he would never "allow" Karajan to conduct at the Festspiele. Recently [on .. 6. 1939?] Karajan had visited Berlin - a state occasion. A high point of the visit was the performance of Die Meistersinger in Berlin, but the Baritone Rudolf Bockelmann (t) hatte sich versungen in A. Pledararia; Karajan, unfortunately, was conducting without the notes (absentmindedly). Thus he was unable to call out the appropriate bar-number for the orchestra to restart immediately, the voices and music led ignominiously to a halt and the curtains were ring down. Hitler ascribed the painful calamity solely to Karajan, and ordered that he was never to conduct at Bayreuth. (After the war he died.)

4. Bayreuth hatte einen prachtvollen Heldentenor - Max Lorenz (geb. 10.5.1891.) Unfortunately, he became involved with 575 allegations; in July (year unknown) Hitler erklärte Frau Wagner, Lorenz könne nicht mehr in Bayreuth singen. Das war vor dem Krieg. He noticed however that Lorenz was the only great Siegfried they had at that time, and in September he telephoned Frau W to appoint Lorenz as singer at Bayreuth again. Lorenz's wife, Lotte war Jüdin, but Göring had an Arierpass issued to her. Übrigens: wenn Leo Blech visited Berlin, at the end of his performance Göring was in his box and applauded most ostentatiously.
5. Hitler selbst spielte ganz gut Klavier (although Hauptkängel says differently.) The Bechstein's presented a piano to him. The son of Bechstein could say when:  
Edwin Bechstein, Karlsruhe, - Moltkestraße.
6. In the summer of 1939, when Hitler was staying with her, Paul Hauptkängel telephoned from London, and asked for Hitler's assurance that nothing would happen to him if he returned from London. Hitler replied, "Ach Gott, selbstverständlich kann er kommen." She dictated this reply to Hauptkängel, who said he must have the assurance in writing from Hitler. Hitler's reaction to this was, "Wenn es mir mündlich nicht glaubt, geht es ja auch mit einem Schreiben nicht."

7. Hilke - Wagner relationship.

Hilke liked visiting the Wagner family, as she preferred to  
 could relax (ausrühen) and deal about menscheits with  
 human being. There was no talk of politics, and little even  
 of music. He had known the 4 Wagner children since they  
 were small. From 1925 to 1933, to spare them embarrassment,  
 he had deliberately kept away from Bayreuth, and when he saw  
 the children again after coming to power in 1933, with Verena W  
 was 13, he was entranced by their beauty. Überhaupt hat  
 Hilke gem schön mädchen um sich gesammelt, she remarked.  
 He once told her he would never marry: er müsste für alle da  
 sein, nicht nur für eine. She believes that his particular  
 liking for her children was inspired largely by the Wagner  
 blood in their veins. In Weihnachten 1944 waren 3 Kinder  
 (Willand [?], Wolfgang and Verena) noch einmal bei Hilke in  
 die Buchhändler. Willand said later that he was an  
 valiscent, but not well; as for his manner, Willand  
 said: "Man kann nur sagen, wenn es möglich ist noch  
 zukaufschet, noch lieber uns zu sein so war er so."  
 Verena was a Rote Kreuz Schwester and said Hilke (?) at his  
 ordnans offensivi FHQ4 also. - In June or July 1944  
 Frau Wagner herself saw him for the last time as he passed  
 briefly through Bayreuth. (Whenever he telephoned her,  
 he used to begin in jest: "Hier ist Kapellmeister Wolf"  
 "Wolf" being his nickname among intimats.) She  
 herself was verpflichtet als Luftschutzwart in Bayreuth  
 zu bleiben.

8. The architect Professor Troost was a close friend of Hitler. Hitler attended (?) the Grundsteinlegung des Hauses der Kunst in München: at the ceremony, an orgy of feasting by all the traditionally superstitious architects appeared. The hammer broke in the Führer's (?) hand as he laid the stone - an omen of the architect's approaching death. Troost himself had a weak heart; the symbol upset him terribly, and he died very shortly afterwards. Frau Gertrud Troost, who now lives at Marzoll, bei Bad Reichenhall is "nervösintelligent".
9. Hitler was not "unbeeinflussbar." Frau Troost successfully interceded with him for the removal of several artists' names from the list of "entartete Kunst."
10. Otherwise Hitler interfered only very rarely. When ever broken out, he asked Frau W to draw list names of artists, suggest etc whom the Reich could ill afford to lose. He himself selected the son of Alfred Roller, but when the latter heard he begged Frau W to remove his name, as he wanted to fight for the fatherland; he died in action in Poland some weeks later. Hitler's anger towards Frau W knew no bounds, "er war richtig böse". Among those also persecuted in this way was Peter Anders: they were given safe work jobs in the Reich. Wieland was selected (persecuted) in this way, but not Wolfgang.

11. She expressed strong disappointment at Albert Speer's books. In this connection she quoted WHOM?  
"Kannst du den Freund nicht mehr verstehen,  
da fängt der <sup>das?</sup> Freundschaft frommer Gläubiger an."
12. Er mischte sich in Bayreuther Inzenerungsprobleme fast nie ein - which does just mean he did not occasionally sketch Bühnenbilde himself. He expressed only one wish, that the bekannte Wiener Bühnenbildner Alfred Roller, den er aus seiner Wiener Zeit verkehrte, should be allowed to design the Bühnenbild on one occasion. The year was 1934 and the opera Parsifal. By this time Roller was dying of Kehlkehlkrebs and nourished himself almost solely with cognac. Die Inzenerung ist misglückt, and ~~fast~~ his own volition Hitler verfügte that from now on Wieland Wagner should design the Bühnenbild.
13. Frau Wagner was never auf dem Berghof. Before it was redesigned Hitler visited Walpurgis and complimented her, "Seitdem ich hier bin gefällt mir mein Haus nicht mehr."
14. In 1930 her husband died, and she engaged a girl to act as governess to the 4 children. After a time, hearing an excellent knowledge of music, languages etc, this girl Ed. Hirschlotte Schwardt (+) acted as her personal assistant. Her letters to her mother, believed to be of value, are in the Wagner Familienarchiv and will be loaned briefly to me by Frau Wagner shortly.