

# The Fruitbearing Society

## and its memorable member emblems



A reader from Germany here, with one large fun fact. One day, while tracking the name “Levin” from the Nazi era into the current German aristocratic families Marschall and Schulenburg, I happened upon the 17<sup>th</sup> century [Fruitbearing Society](#), where several Levins were assembled. The [full member list](#) contained, it seemed, every aristocrat and his brother. Among the names were 7 Levin, 2 Achaz, 2 Achatz, 1 Achatius, 1 Job, 5 Jobst, 1 Moscherosch. So I looked closer.

It was a so-called literary society, the German name “Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft” being more fitting, as they were “bringing” their fruit to others rather than simply bearing it, as we shall see. The society’s logo was a **coconut palm tree** (see above), and its slogan was to “utilize all”. Its stated goal was the refinement of the German language by purging foreign words, but they had very little to show for it in that regard. This setup was suspicious at first glance, because a society wishing to shield a language from foreign influences would not pick an exotic foreign tree as a logo. Except if the tree wasn’t foreign to *them*. Let us think: where would such trees grow? Jerusalem, maybe?

According to official lore, the society was founded by Ludwig von **Anhalt**-Köthen (see above, note the cap), who had brought the concept from Italy on August 24<sup>th</sup> 1617 during the funeral festivities

for his sister. With them were his son of the same name, his two entourage courtiers Albrecht Christof and Bernhard von Krosigk, his sister's three sons Johann Ernst, Friedrich and Wilhelm IV von **Sachsen-Weimar** (4 more brothers would join later), plus the man who had been the private tutor and entourage to these brothers, Caspar von Teutleben.

A few hints to decoding those names: The dynasty behind the houses Anhalt and Sachsen is called **Ascanians** (Askanier). Their 10<sup>th</sup> century progenitor is called **Hesicho** / Esichos / Esico / Esiko, with a sister called **Hazecha** / Hacecha. German Wikipedia says the names of his parents were made up, and the king's certificate allowing his construction of a secular canonry (Stift) was likely a forgery. The Ascanians built several of these canonries, where aristocrats could live in religiously shielded communities, but without inconveniences like permanent vows, manual work or renouncement of their wealth. The deceased sister, Dorothea Maria von Anhalt, had been abbess of such a canonry, as had Hazecha. When you see the name Hesicho or Hazecha, you should think of Hezekiah, 13<sup>th</sup> King of Judah. Miles mentioned him in his paper on the Crusades. He is the one that was conquered by Sennacherib, King of Assyria, in 701BC.

But what was this Fruitbearing Society about? A later encyclopedia, the [Rheinisches Conversations-Lexicon](#) from 1825, looks back contemptuously on the society's non-achievements:

It had as its goal the perfection of the German language, primarily to purge from it the large amount of absorbed foreign words; but it accomplished little, because most members degenerated into pedantic purists, and some of the rituals introduced into the society gave occasion to ridicule and laughter, so that many a bright head would be deterred from joining.

There's a similar entry in the similar [Volks-Conversations-Lexicon](#) from 1846:

The entire institution degenerated into ridiculousness and finally dissolved itself in 1680.

Not what you'd guess from today's sources. Here's the [English Wikipedia](#) intro:

The Fruitbearing Society was a German literary society founded in 1617 in Weimar by German scholars and nobility. Its aim was to standardize vernacular German and promote it as both a scholarly and literary language, after the pattern of the *Accademia della Crusca* in Florence and similar groups already thriving in Italy, followed in later years also in France (1635) and Britain.

So they are following a weird global trend here. And the rich & famous flock to it for some reason not stated.

The society counted a king, 153 Germanic princes, and over 60 barons, nobles, and distinguished scholars among its members. It disbanded in 1668.

Quite a prominent crowd, and then a sudden dissolution without a stated reason. Makes you wonder what it was really about. [German Wikipedia](#) emphasizes right at the start that the society was NOT established as "a politically motivated assembly movement" and that it was NOT intentionally founded on the anniversary of the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre. So there must be a door No. 3?

The English text is rather short, so I'll translate snippets from German Wikipedia. We'll see that members were numbered in order of their admission and given special societal names.

To prevent the then common squabbles about rank, to shield the academic work from social differences and to serve only the "utility", members would only use their societal names in discussions, letters and publications.

They had some ridiculous rituals, as quoted in the Lexicon.

The admission rituals included drinking from a tazza-shaped chalice called Mount of Olives cup, teasing new members on a rotating chair, and having them hold a speech in exemplary German.

It was a male-only club.

Women were not admitted as autonomous members, but were called by the female form of their husband's name [...] Just as in life at court, the academy encouraged and honoured women as practical helpers, or as learned and artistic helpers to the Fruitbearing enterprise. Anna Sophia von Anhalt, who was [another] sister of founding member Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen, wife of member Graf Carl Günther and sponsor of Wolfgang Ratke, in 1619 founded the "Virtuous Society" for women [...] this order was not aimed scholarly or literary work specifically, but just generally a cult of the virtues.

So, while the men form a literary society and don't have much to show for it, the women are even less specific about what they do. Unimpressive, yet mysterious. What the text doesn't tell us is that Anna's marriage was childless. She founded her society *after* her husband's death and only then gave asylum to Ratke, who was a Rosicrucian education reformer spreading ideas of Francis Bacon.

Now to the main feature: Following the society's "plant" theme, each member was given his own **emblem** (Imprese) of a plant or plant product, plus a description, a corresponding **motto** (Wort), a societal **name** (Gesellschaftsname) and a short **poem** (Reimgesetz), all interpreting a certain virtue for that member to model his conduct after. Members would wear oval medals around their necks (Gesellschaftspfennig), with their own emblem, name and motto, plus those of the society.

As we shall see, these emblems, names and mottoes are the key to understanding what the nobles were really up to here, perhaps even to understanding how the aristocratic caste connects internally in general, **even to this day**. For example, the Florentine Society *Accademia della Crusca*, where Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen had become a member on his Grand Tour through Europe, is still active!

Some of the societal plant-related names sound quite silly and humiliating, and would indeed give rise to ridicule and laughter, as stated in the Lexicon. Here are the examples for names, mottoes and emblems from German Wikipedia: a flour bag, a victory onion, and a pear tree.



*Herein it is – The Flour-Rich One    In due course – The Victorious One    Recognized kindness – The Tasty One*

The flour is supposed to be about pureness. Interestingly, when I looked up the poem, its last lines were:

Unsullied and pure should be a valiant heart /  
And avoid / like the plague / the false pretense of virtue.

Do they mean you should avoid to falsely pretend to be virtuous? Or that virtue itself is a pretense?

You'll also notice that the picture of the gathering has likely been intentionally blackened, via increased contrast and lowered brightness. We have seen this before with other historic images, whenever our current crypto-rulers wish to conceal the hoaxes of their ancestors. What are they hiding here? We will see below.

The society has a special [website](#) dedicated to its commemoration. They have a searchable [member list](#) with some more background details there. Overall, the society is made to appear Protestant-aristocratic. I counted only 37 Catholics, some converted to (or from!) Protestantism, and only 36 non-nobles out of 890, most from military or court. Member 668 is listed as Catholic from a Jewish background. Member 464 is mentioned to be Rosicrucian.



That website also has some better images: few commoners will see them there. Above is the emblem, name, motto and poem of member 10, Johann Casimir von Anhalt-Dessau: *burdening yet arming – The Penetrating One*. Mark that. **Penetrating**. If you aren't yet on my little train here, that should get you onboard. With that Aha in your head, now return to the **coconuts**. Are you starting to see the light? This society at first seems exalted, so perhaps you were looking too high for your clues. Lower your vision a bit.

I'll spare you the force-rhymed poem, because I couldn't find any revelation in it, except that it would be a shame for a real literary society. But if you look closely at his plant, the again *oriental* date palm, you'll see that it has a wooden tree house on top, barely visible. Weird. Palm trees don't have real branches, so real palm tree houses would be fastened to the trunk, not put on top, if at all. This is clearly a pun of sorts.

The most revealing picture on the site is the one they blackened at Wikipedia though. It's a special engraving of a Fruitbearer gathering, with the plant and motto of Wilhelm IV. von Sachsen-Weimar, member 005, one of those 7 Sachsen brothers. Here's his charming portrait, just for comparison.



And here's the gathering. Several society members are having an outdoor dinner. Above them is a pear with a wasp (a stinger!), which is Wilhelm's emblematic virtuous plant. Each member is denoted by his weird societal name. Wilhelm is the top-right guy here, less black-haired and more stereotype Germanoid than on his portrait, but hey, guess they all are. Maybe the Wikipedia blackening was in part to correct the peroxidizing. But what they wanted to hide is very likely the tiny scene with the two guys in the background behind him, which looks like an inside joke.



There's two figures, one kneeling, the other seeming to stumble over him, no clue to their identity. Their caption reads "Wälzt recht" (waltz right), but I haven't found out what it means. The German root for waltzing means "forcefully rolling around". We will see that it was likely a slang for something very specific, though I am not aware that it is still in use. The nobles are peeking at them.

This has puzzled the historians too. Or rather, as we've seen before, there have likely never been any honest historians doing research on the rich & powerful, and the paid cubicle agents that write up these false explanations are giggling themselves silly while on it. This is from [Ars et amicitia](#), a book about "friendship" in art & history:

Next to it [the circle of Fruitbearing members], a strange, unfamiliar detail in the background attracts the attention: two figures, seeming to jump, stumble over one another, or, as has been construed, brawling, labeled with "waltz right". There are – friendly conduit or not – records of (rare) fights between Fruitbearers, still the little background scene remains cryptic. It is not to be deciphered as brawling at closer look. Even the true polyhistorian Beckmann could not make anything of it: "... what meaning the other two persons lying over one another / and the word waltz right written next to them / have / or if this was a kind of regalement at the meeting / that question needs to be suspended until further consideration". F. W. Barthold postponed this further consideration as well: "inexplicable is a pair of peasant figures, which in the distance fall upon each other"

The author drones on for another 40 pages and concludes that the "right to waltz" was probably the customary right of the two pictured commoners to dance and celebrate, contrasted in the picture with the hypocritically restrained aristocrats. Most readers will have bailed out by then, so he did his job well.

Some of you may have guessed the secret already. For me, the revelation came when I looked up the names, plant descriptions and mottoes of the assembled members from the picture in the [full member list](#). Some mottoes are just unintelligible, cut-off parts of the respective poem, but many others can be read together with the plant's description. In one case, this hints at one of the present Sachsen brothers being Jewish, confirming the suspicion about the origins of that dynasty. I list them here in descending order of obscurity, saving the straightforward giveaways for the end:

No.	Real Name	Societal Name	Plant Description   Motto
055	Friedrich von Kospoth	The Helping One	the herb Poley   in trouble
013	Heinrich (von) Krage	The Fattened One	a bushel of beans   herewith
002	Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen	The <b>Nourishing</b> One	a well baked out wheat bread in a bowl   nothing better
007	(Albrecht) Christof von Krosigk	The <b>Well-Digestible</b> One	six barley spikes grown from one grain   in the good land
030	Bernhard von <b>Sachsen-Weimar</b>	The <b>Drying-up</b> One	a <b>ripe</b> quince   in its effect
031	Diederich von dem Werder	The Many-Grained One	a <b>ripe</b> pomegranate broken up in which you see the grains   cooling down <b>strengthening</b>
005	Wilhelm IV. von <b>Sachsen-Weimar</b>	The <b>Tasty</b> One	a pear <b>hanging</b> on a tree with the wasp and its <b>sting</b>   recognized kindness
021	Friedrich von Schilling	The <b>Slow</b> One	a <b>budding</b> or greening mulberry tree   in good season
025	Tobias Hübner	The Usable One	a beet seed <b>stem</b> with <b>ripe</b> fruit   in manifoldness
010	Johann Casimir von Anhalt-Dessau	The <b>Penetrating</b> One	a date tree / on top of it a timberlog which burdens it   burdening yet <b>arming</b>
014	Hans Heinrich von Wuthenau	The <b>Straight</b> One	a <b>long / strong / straight</b> spruce   winter and summer green
017	Albrecht von <b>Sachsen-Eisenach</b>	The <b>Unsightly</b> One	a <b>clipped grapevine</b>   <b>brings the finest juice</b>

The last one, he's one of the 7 Sachsen brothers, works better in German, since the German term for clipped, "beschnitten", is exactly the same for plants and *members*.

I'll give you another brother, just for laughs: Ernst I. von Sachsen-Gotha, **The Bittersweet One – a Jewish cherry with its little house opened.**

You can now again look at those member pictures with the flour-filled bag, the burdened date tree, the hanging pear with the wasp stinger, and the two guys who are waltzing it just right. I'd rather not speculate here about the specifics, but if they all knew about each *member's* looks (and taste!), they must've gotten to know each other very well during those gatherings. And we have to wonder what had been going on inside their gender-segregated canonries in the centuries before, and on their Grand Tours, and if these and similar institutions are part of a larger system. This intimate connectedness might be one secret of how they've been holding their secret global empire together over the ages. [Miles: it also reminds us of Bohemian Grove, where all the males like to run around naked together.]

As for the Fruitbearing Society, it now becomes clear why the women, naturally, would not be regarded as members on their own, and were only admitted as "practical helpers", as the text tells us, for a male member. We can now see why the women would want to found a club for their *own* "literary" activities, the [Tugendliche Gesellschaft](#).

There were apparently literary societies for everyone's preferences. Another one, the [Pegnesischer Blumenorden](#), was founded by one Johann Klaj (an alcoholic **schoolteacher**) and Fruitbearer 368 Georg Philipp Harsdörffer (The **Playing One** | the **little** colorful English or Welsh beans | in **many a way**). A few women were later admitted under the next president, Fruitbearer 681 Sigmund von Birken (The **Adult One** | white double violets | to greater honors), who as a young private tutor at aristocratic courts had taught both **princes and princesses** less than 10 years his minor, and had been **fired** thereafter. I have not found any member portraits, but the society is still active today.

Another literary society with activities for both genders in union was the [Deutschgesinnte Genossenschaft](#), founded by Fruitbearing member 521 Philipp von Zesen (The **Well-Seating One** | the cudweeds | **according to nature**). This one is even more obscure than the others. Zesen is said to have baited newcomers by proclaiming prominent aristocrats to be members of his society without them knowing of this honor. Again, no member portraits.

And if we want to get a glance at the private characteristics of today's crypto-rulers, we might look at the [Accademia della Crusca](#), once sponsored by the **Medici** and still active, which is "bran"-themed (crusca), has its accademici seated on **bread baskets**, and their emblems painted on little bread shovels, many of which are listed at [Wikimedia Commons](#). I'd need the help of an Italian speaker to do a proper translation though. But don't they look juicy?



There is, of course, nothing wrong with aristocrats having a little fun among themselves. But while this is an admirable, rare display of creativity and non-malevolent activity on the part of our hidden rulers, the historic context is not entirely a laughing matter. The foundation and dissolution of the Fruitbearing Society coincides with the Thirty Years' war, which introduced the “need” for modern standing armies and their “budgets”, many Fruitbearers being very active in it. That period also had heightened witch hunt activity, also connected to some Fruitbearers. I am ashamed to say that I have not yet found out what either one was really about, but we can be sure that our rulers were screwing us over in some way there, while screwing each other. [Miles: as far as witch hunt activity, you can see my paper on the [Salem Witch hoax](#).]

The Fruitbearing Society and the *Accademia della Crusca* did also, amidst all their bustle, include some “literally literary” activity, i.e. the writing of actual texts. I have found nothing really interesting in their shallow blather so far, but insofar as they were concerned with shaping language, there might be precursors to today’s linguistic mind-screwing that I have not yet discovered.

So, even though I was quite exhilarated by my accidental findings about this mysterious society, it serves as a reminder that a) Virtually all of what we are told about historical persons and institutions is false, yet b) Anyone who looks at the records with the right mindset can glimpse the truth, because c) our rulers love to dangle even their ugliest and most private secrets right in front our faces.

So here’s to more revealing research! From now on, whenever we research German aristocrats, we can not only analyze their portraits, but also their *member* portraits, by looking up their societal number in the [member list](#), and then browse to that number in the [book of member emblems](#).



*The Unsightly One*

Ugh! Just ugh.

And to end this text on a lighter note, I may inform you that a “New Fruitbearing Society” was again founded in 2007 to continue the traditions of the old one, this time having women in prominent roles, and headed by a female computer linguist. So if you meet a computer linguist at your next party, and want to decline because you think these folks are dull... think again! But don't ask to see her member portrait. She might have an unsightly one.