

Tracing the Threads of a Relationship Through Archival Artefacts: Perspectives on Otti Berger and Ludwig Hilberseimer

Matz, Alexandra

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Tracing the Threads of a Relationship Through Archival Artefacts: Perspectives on Otti Berger and Ludwig Hilberseimer

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INTRODUCTION

Picture a woman in her mid-30's in today's Europe. She speaks several languages, has a degree from a respected, innovative design school, international work experience with renowned designers, and even holding patents on her work. Such a woman could anticipate a successful and sustained career. Indeed, Otti Berger (Fig. 1)—Bauhaus graduate and teacher, innovative textile designer, researcher, and author—had achieved all this by the age of 35, yet pivotal circumstances meant she was unable to maintain career momentum. She was obliged to emigrate from National Socialist Germany due to the fact that she was Jewish, a “foreign non-Aryan”¹ and her life was forcefully cut short by the National Socialists when she was about 46 years old. Unlike other Bauhaus students or teachers, she was not able to create a full body of work, accomplish publications, or achieve renown. In attempting to shed light on different facets of her life, researchers are limited by the amount of historical data and documentation available.

An important archival source, including original photography, letters, printed articles, and images or drawings, has been saved and made available to scholars by Ludwig Hilberseimer (Fig. 2). Hilberseimer started lecturing at the Bauhaus Dessau in 1929, first on the theory of building and later on urban planning and human settlement as well.² He and Berger became acquainted at the Bauhaus and, as this research will propose, from c. 1932 onwards, started forming a closer relationship. This relationship will last until Otti Berger's deportation and subsequent death in 1944, even though the couple were separated from the beginning of WWII.

1 Weltge-Wortmann and Gockel, *Bauhaus-Textilien*, 122.

2 Strob, “Introduction”.

The fact that Hilberseimer and Berger were a couple is well documented, while several scholars and authors highlight that he was Berger's "fiancé".³ For the years between 1938 and her deportation and murder by the Nazis in 1944, little to no documentation or research is available to lend insight into Hilberseimer's perspective of their relationship. The body of available archival artefacts concerning Otti Berger, therefore, predominately documents Berger's own perspective. This is because it is mainly her letters to Hilberseimer and photographs of her that have been uncovered and made available for research in archives and collections, by Hilberseimer donating those to the institutions. To date, only one written correspondence from the period is available, written by Hilberseimer and addressed to Berger, while his letters (and those of others, such as other Bauhaus members) to Berger in Zmajevac, which could have helped reconstruct a detailed and holistic portrait of this special relationship, are still considered lost.

WEAVING PERSPECTIVES, PRINCIPLES, AND GOALS

This research uses existing fragments of written correspondence, combining these with archival imagery and artefacts, in order to broaden the dialogue about this relationship. The objective is to determine the extent to which archival artefacts and imagery can help clarify Otti Berger and Ludwig Hilberseimer's relationship in literature, the latter being referred to alternately as "partner", "boyfriend" and "fiancé". Among other archival artefacts, the visual analysis of photographs has been applied as a key research tool. Employing visual imagery to acquire and generate knowledge, this research aims to provide "communication bridges [...] for discussions of the familiar or the unknown".⁴

This analysis also goes on to explore how archival imagery (especially photographs / photographic handprints) and artefacts can extend our understanding of Otti Berger and Ludwig Hilberseimer's joint travel in South-Eastern Europe in 1936. The goal is to approach meaning and coherence through context, by using, for instance, photographic images that "can show us how people and things relate to each other".⁵

Lastly, the paper aims to discuss what the impact of combining seemingly unrelated artefacts might be, even when discovered serendipitously. To go beyond vision and the visible, this paper explores the research material utilising multiple senses, just as Germaine Krull has been attributed to having an eye for the non-visible in her photography, capturing "everything that can be smelled, tasted or touched".⁶ In this respect, this work also follows the guidance of Bauhaus master László Moholy-Nagy, on how to weave together

3 Mlikota, "Otti Berger", 279; Halén, "The Bauhaus Weaver and Textile Designer Otti Berger", 136.

4 J. Collier and M. Collier, *Visual Anthropology*, 99.

5 Cleland and MacLeod, "The Visual Vernacular", 231.

6 Jeffrey, *Photographie: Sehen, betrachten, deuten*, 146.

different perspectives to reach a holistic understanding, in this case of the analysed archival objects using a "simultaneous grasp": "[...] seeing, feeling and thinking in relationship and not as a series of isolated phenomena. It instantaneously integrates and transmutes single elements into a coherent whole".⁷

In relation to those sensory aspects when analysing archival artefacts, this research will also highlight Otti Berger's work and her approach to creating textiles and designs, in order to contextualise the importance of her work within a historical narrative. By doing so, it will, therefore, draw attention to one of her main themes: the importance of the human sensory experience in textile craftsmanship, and the ways these textiles can be applied to objects of use (e.g., furniture, such as chairs and sofas) or architectural objects (private or public rooms, houses or buildings). Berger linked elements from various disciplines, such as architecture, textile design and craft, by highlighting the purpose of a fabric in the interplay with (interior) architecture: "to meet the demands of [*a new*,] vivid construction, we must be clear about what fabric is, and, what is more: what fabric is in a space".⁸

In the art and the craft of weaving, one of the most essential principles is also that of, "seeing and non-seeing". In simple terms, this means that without the interplay of the visibility and invisibility of the warp thread (horizontal running), and thus the visibility or invisibility of the weft thread (vertical running) and vice versa, the weave—and ultimately the fabric—cannot develop. In addition to the binding system and the more technical aspects of weaving, Berger went on to emphasise and manifest—beyond the primary visual sense—the importance of the other human senses when designing, creating, and using textiles, for wear and for use in objects, rooms and structures.

This sentiment was also shared by Anni Albers, who worked closely with Berger at the Bauhaus. She stated in 1965 that "we are apt today to overcharge our gray [*grey*] matter with words and pictures".⁹ This statement is even more true in today's world of streaming services and the ubiquitous smartphone and demonstrates the relevance of Berger's work and approach even today, with a highly pronounced emphasis on the visual sense.¹⁰ Nevertheless, from the time Berger was at the Bauhaus, photography might be regarded as one of the key media-techniques that supported the staging of textiles by closely and intimately capturing the qualities of fabrics. In advertisements and magazines, for example, we see how photography captures its "swellings, recesses, and shadows".¹¹

7 Moholy-Nagy, *Vision in Motion*, 12.

8 Otti Berger, "Stoffe Im Raum", 143. This quotation, as all quotations translated from German into English, by the author, unless stated otherwise.

9 Albers, *On Weaving*, 62.

10 Lupton and Lipps, *The Senses*.

11 T. L. Smith, *Bauhaus Weaving Theory*, 79-81.

Otti (Ottilia) Berger was born on 4 October 1898, near the Danube River in Zmajevac (present-day Republic of Croatia; at the time of her birth known as Vörösmart, Austro-Hungarian Monarchy). Berger first attended the local elementary school, then a school for girls in Vienna, Austria. Between 1921 and 1926, she studied at the Royal Academy of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb, Croatia, an institution she will later refer to as a “a mindless sanctuary of passed-down traditions”.¹²

Her studies at the Bauhaus in Dessau, Germany, began with the preliminary course in January 1927, followed by full enrolment in the weaving class for the 1927 winter semester.¹³ The preliminary course was of eminent importance for her development as a textile designer and materials researcher.

It was artist/designer László Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946) who taught this class and showed her the importance of fully experiencing the material and its sensorial aspects. The tasks he gave the students were “[...] aimed toward self-discovery [...] the awakening of [*the student's*] own abilities [...] built upon sensory experience”. Berger’s lecture notes show that artist Paul Klee was another teacher who made an impact on her. Klee observed that “human senses, both sensible and sensitive, are usually accustomed to focus solely on [...] finished forms”,¹⁴ a view Berger will later reiterate in her article “Stoffe im Raum” (“Fabrics in Space” as per T’ai Smith’s translation, 2014). That “[...] a fabric needs to be grasped [...], for one must listen to the fabric’s secrets, track down the sounds of materials”,¹⁵ is advice Berger gives to textile designers when considering the choice of material, its colour, or its function (in a space such as a room). She embraces the multisensory aspects of seeing, feeling, and listening. She even references Wassily Kandinsky’s synesthetic abilities when she argues that when “you grasp the ruggedness of the hemp or the wool. The colour begins to sound in the material.”¹⁶

Berger continues to emphasise and manifest sentiments like this throughout her career, such as in her article “webtechnik und lehrmethoden” (‘weaving techniques and teaching methods’). This article was requested by Walter Gropius (but did not get published) and was sent to him by Ludwig Hilberseimer in September 1938. Here she writes, “a true weaver does not think in terms of materials, nor in weave, but feels the textile in his hands, inspects it as a soft, colourful figment, even before it comes into

12 Varga, *Ég És Föld Között*; Meyer, *Bauhaus*, 24.

13 Varga *Ég És Föld Között*.

14 Ricca, “Klee’s Cognitive Legacy and Human Rights as Intercultural Transducers”, 1.

15 Berger, “Stoffe Im Raum”, 145.

16 Ibid.

being and, in this way, he applies the respective material and weave”.¹⁷ In the letter accompanying the article she indicates how unhappy she is with the article itself, deeming its importance as “nonsense that I put together in this small essay”¹⁸—an indication of diminishing self-esteem and confidence that will be discussed further on.

Berger’s focus on the sensory experience likely has several origins. Otti Berger had a hearing impairment since she childhood. This is documented in her 1922 Royal Academy of Arts and Crafts enrolment document, in which she requests to be allowed to take exams in German, as she has little command of Croatian and cannot hear well.¹⁹ The hearing impairment was caused by an “operation with an unfortunate outcome”, as reported by Serbian writer Stanislav Vinaver who interviewed Berger in Dessau in 1930.²⁰ He conducted the interview with Berger writing notes, using pen and paper.²¹ Vinaver’s article captures several important aspects that characterise Berger’s focus on the sensorial. He writes that she possessed an almost spiritual sense for the materiality of the fabric and was able to “experience a sense of delight when searching for graspable comprehension through the fabric, and thus to gain a more subtle, tactile understanding of life”.²² This is reminiscent of elements of Johannes Itten’s soma-aesthetic philosophies which he taught at the Bauhaus Weimar (though not to Otti Berger). Itten, for example, emphasised the connection between “the stirring of emotion and bodily movement”,²³ which one can only comprehend when a person has the urge to “make the body capable of perceiving [...]”.²⁴ This is what Otti Berger aimed to achieve despite, or even because of, her hearing impairment.

In 1929, motivated by Hannes Meyer, the then director of the Bauhaus, Berger did an internship semester at the ‘Praktiska Vävnskolan’, a Stockholm-based weaving school founded in 1876 by Johanna Brunsson. There, Berger also worked as a teacher and organised an exhibition of Bauhaus textiles, which opened in Stockholm in January 1930.²⁵

Before Berger set off for Sweden, Meyer hired Ludwig Hilberseimer to work at the Bauhaus in 1929. His engagement was seen as a vital nomination for the architectural faculty²⁶ and he quickly became a highly

17 Berger (1938b).

18 Berger (1938b).

19 Varga, *Ég És Föld Között*; Mlikota, “Otti Berger”.

20 Vinaver, “Dom gradnje u Desau”.

21 Košćević, “Jugoslavische Bauhausschüler”, 329.

22 Ibid.

23 Hirsch and Wagner, *Johannes Itten und Thun*, 63.

24 Ibid., quoting Itten 1990.

25 Halén, “The Bauhaus Weaver and Textile Designer Otti Berger”, 2019.

26 Galison, “Aufbau/Bauhaus”, 734.

respected and supported lecturer²⁷. Hilberseimer was already a renowned architect before starting at the Bauhaus, mainly thanks to his prolific publications. In the 1920s, he was also “among Germany’s most penetrating art critics” as Howard Dearstyne writes in the introduction to his translation of a text by Hilberseimer from the period.²⁸

In autumn 1930, Ottilie Berger received her Bauhaus Diploma and continued to teach at the Bauhaus Dessau and produce innovative textiles (Fig. 3). Although Gunta Stölzl and Wassily Kandinsky had highly praised Berger’s work in 1929, it was Lilly Reich who was appointed to lead the weaving workshop after Stölzl’s resignation in 1931.²⁹ Berger, already working freelance on industry assignments, was offered a part-time teaching position instead, to help “create a smooth transition” for Lilly Reich as the workshop head³⁰ (Droste 1988, 296, quoting from (Beirat Bauhaus Dessau 1931)).

Upon the closure of the Bauhaus Dessau in 1932, Berger founded her own studio in Berlin, the “ottli berger atelier for textiles” (in German: “ottli berger atelier für textilien (stoffe für kleidung und wohnung möbel- vorhangwandstoffe bodenbelag”,³¹ and continued to meet with members of her Bauhaus network, such as Ise Gropius (Fig. 4). She exhibited some of her work at the “Gestaltende Arbeiten der Frau in Jena”, which was remarked on by a newspaper critic: “In this sense, remarkable [is] [...] a delicate, very brightly coloured grand piano cover by O. Berger.”³²

Berger did not continue to teach at the Bauhaus in Berlin, which opened in autumn 1932, while Ludwig Hilberseimer followed the Bauhaus director Mies van der Rohe to teach urban planning and human settlement.³³

It is in 1932 when postcards between Berger and Hilberseimer seem to indicate that their acquaintance is becoming closer. On a postcard, stamped 28 July 1932, which Ottilie Berger sent from Prague to Ludwig who was in Berlin at the time, she writes:

“dear hilb, my brother is in karlsbad, had a telephone call with him [and I] will now travel there today. warm regards. o. berger”³⁴

27 Hoffmann, “Erinnerungen eines Architekturstudenten”; Strob, “Introduction”.

28 Hilberseimer and Dearstyne, “Observations on the New Art”, 349.

29 Halén, “The Bauhaus Weaver and Textile Designer Ottilie Berger”.

30 Droste, *Das Bauhaus Webt*, 296. Quoting from Beirat Bauhaus Dessau 1931

31 Berger 1933b.

32 Jenaer Volksblatt.

33 Hahn and Wolsdorff, *Bauhaus Berlin*.

34 Berger 1932a. “hilb” is a nickname used for Hilberseimer Berger; other Bauhaus members used “Hilbs”.

In the following postcard from Carlsbad (Karlovy Vary), she reports on how beautiful the city is. The rather formal signature “o. berger” is now replaced with “ottli”. Further, her brother, Otto Berger, who worked in Prague, also signs with “many warm greetings and regards”.³⁵

We can then assume that from the early 1930s onwards, Ludwig Hilberseimer was Ottilie Berger’s only documented partner, although their relationship might be regarded as not overtly public, one reason being that Hilberseimer was officially still married. The divorce from his wife was settled only on 3 October 1938.³⁶ Nonetheless, and perhaps because he was Berger’s only known companion during her residence in Germany, this narrative must also account for Ludwig Hilberseimer.

In Berlin, Ottilie Berger continued on her innovation journey: she researched, prototyped samples, and patented new yarns and weaves, such as her ‘Möbelstoff—Doppelgewebe’³⁷ (upholstering fabric double weave, as discussed, e.g., by T’ai Smith³⁸ or Regina Lösel³⁹). Her work assignments led her to work with high-profile companies such as Wohnbedarf AG in Zurich, Switzerland, during which time she collaborated with designers such as Marcel Breuer and Alvar Aalto, and with the Dutch company Weverij De Ploeg.⁴⁰

Claiming the same rights as architects and product designers, Ottilie Berger fought for equal recognition of her work. From the start of her studies at the Bauhaus, she made her stubbornness and drive to succeed known. In an interview for the Bauhaus journal made during her study years, she stated she felt “unable to cope with disappointments”.⁴¹ She insisted on companies referencing the textiles designed by her, either with her full name or her initials “o.b.”—a form of branding, hitherto unprecedented for textile designers. However, she was not always successful in obtaining adequate recognition (especially economically), as can be seen, for example, in her communication with the company Wohnbedarf AG. In it, she complains about the contractual offer resulting in a “5% net revenue”⁴² for her. To her, this hardly seemed worth the amount of her effort and cost. This must have been particularly disheartening knowing that Gunta Sharon (formerly Stölzl) was taking an alleged 15% net revenue for her work for Wohnbedarf AG.⁴³

35 Berger 1932b.

36 Civil Registry Office Berlin-Charlottenburg 1938.

37 Reichspatentamt 1932.

38 Smith, “The Identity of Design as Intellectual Property”.

39 Lösel, “Textile Elastizität”

40 Varga, *Ég És Föld Között*.

41 Meyer, *Bauhaus*, 24.

42 Berger 1933c.

43 Berger 1933a.

Continued pressure by the National Socialists and restrictions imposed on the Bauhaus in 1933 led not only to the closure of the Berlin Bauhaus, but also to Hilberseimer losing his permission to teach and publish writings.⁴⁴ His work ban stems from the Secret State Police's ('Gestapo') assessment that Hilberseimer did not "have both feet planted firmly on the ground of the national-socialist mindscape",⁴⁵ as written by the Gestapo to director Mies van der Rohe in July 1933. While Jewish citizens were already targeted by the Gestapo's actions, this shows that non-Jewish citizens like Hilberseimer, born Catholic with Protestant and Catholic parents, were also subject to persecution. He therefore experienced pressure from the new German government and their executive forces before Otti Berger did.

Banned from teaching, Hilberseimer focussed on theoretical writing and worked on architectural commissions for private homes.⁴⁶ Otti Berger continued to expand her professional client base. Berger's collaboration with the Dutch company De Ploeg lasted longer, from 1933 until 1936, and may be considered successful since it strengthened Berger's reputation as a high-quality textile designer, a reputation that endures to this day. While the fabrics did not sell well, they were essential for the presentation of De Ploeg's collection and brand.⁴⁷ In 1965, in a letter to Hilberseimer, P. Blijenburg of the Weverij De Ploeg offered that Berger had done work for them for the exhibition 'Arbeiten aus der Weberei des Bauhaus'⁴⁸ which was located in Darmstadt, Germany, at the time. He also requested information about the work Berger did for Helios Ltd., where "she should have been making very fine things".⁴⁹ In 1972/73, Berger's 'Carré' design for De Ploeg was posthumously reissued by the company Storck—Van Boussov in Krefeld, Germany.⁵⁰ They supplied the Italian furniture brand Cassina with the Carré textiles, whose large-scale industrial production, at the time of Berger's creation, had been deemed impossible. Unfortunately, this edition only ran for one series until the Storck—Van Boussov company shut down.⁵¹

On Ludwig Hilberseimer's fiftieth birthday in September 1935, Otti Berger gave him a present that clearly indicates what Berger felt for him and how she envisioned a possible joint future. The present was a 151-cm-long woven wall hanging onto which Berger collaged photographs of her and Hilberseimer, along with hearts. She arranged a timeline of their relationship from top to bottom, with photographs of either of them further apart at first, and then getting progressively closer. It ends with a collage

44 Strob, "Introduction".

45 Hahn and Wolsdorff, *Bauhaus Berlin*, 143.

46 Strob, "Introduction".

47 Boterenbrood, *Weverij De Ploeg*, 29.

48 Blijenburg, P. weverij de ploeg nv 1965.

49 Ibid.

50 Olgers and Boot, *Bauhaus*, 24.

51 Ibid.

in which they are arranged together as a couple, very close to each other, with a possible hint of Otti Berger's wish for a family represented by the number "5" along with a series of stickers showing children's faces.⁵²

The continued pressure put on foreigners by the Nazi regime, especially on Jewish citizens, did not spare Berger. In spring 1936 she received an occupational ban from work.⁵³ This, paired with Walter Gropius' plea for her to leave Germany, finally led her to emigrate to England in September 1937.⁵⁴ In order to evaluate the changes that come with migrating to a new country and following a carefully devised emigration plan, Otti Berger visited England on two occasions, in February and June 1937, before actually emigrating, while also exploring work opportunities with various textile companies.⁵⁵

JOINT PRE-WAR TRAVELS IN CENTRAL-SOUTHERN AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

One year before this, in August and September 1936, the passport stamps in Ludwig Hilberseimer's passport (Table 1) reveal an—until now undocumented—month-long trip to Berger's home region of Baranja in the border region between present-day Croatia, Hungary and Serbia, then on to Belgrade in the Kingdom of Serbia, as well as to the city of Zagreb. Based on the available archival artefacts, the exact purpose of the travel, apart from visiting Berger's relatives, is unclear and would require further research, but we may assume that Hilberseimer undertook the travel together with Otti Berger, since he entered (the Kingdom of) Yugoslavia via Beli Manastir, 20 km away from Berger's hometown of Zmajevac. The passport shows that Hilberseimer visited Belgrade, followed by Zagreb, with almost a month in between. The visit to Zagreb is documented by a stamp of the German embassy which allowed travelling back to Germany via Austria, which Hilberseimer did a fortnight later, as evidenced by the customs stamp at the Slovenian-Austrian border in Jesenice.

Images of the couple as well as other archival artefacts indicate their joint travel of that year. During their journey they visited relatives (see figure 6, bottom left and bottom middle), but also visited Zagreb to meet Berger's former fellow Bauhaus student and friend, the photographer Ivana Tomljenović and Croatian painter Kamilo Tompa, before heading down to the Adriatic⁵⁶ and visiting Dubrovnik or Split. This is documented by archi-

52 Berger 1935. Also presented in Mlikota "Otti Berger", 279; Bajkay et al., *Von Kunst zu Leben*, 308.

53 Präsident der Reichskammer der bildenen Künste 1936. Also presented in Rader "Provenance Research, Case 4.", p. 4.

54 Varga, *Ég És Föld Között*.

55 Nungesser, "Künstlerbiografien", 113.

56 Košćević, "Jugoslawische Bauhausschüler", 329.

val artefacts such as a general tourist information leaflet for travellers in Yugoslavia, with Otti Berger's handwritten notes about embassy opening hours, as well as Dubrovnik tourist guide leaflets⁵⁷ and a flyer for guided tours in and around Split.⁵⁸ The documents also reveal that the couple must have stayed in Sarajevo as well as Mostar (today Bosnia and Herzegovina). A leaflet for tourists visiting Sarajevo with a city map, which also includes the location of a carpet weaving workshop near the Austrian Square [*Trg Austrije*], contains a handwritten note, most likely by Ludwig Hilberseimer. The note indicates the places for overnight stay, "Hotel De Europa" (the French name of the hotel; at the time it was called Hotel Evropa) in Sarajevo, and "Hotel Narenta" (later called Hotel Neretva) in Mostar.⁵⁹ While these artefacts are undated, based on the handwriting and the fact that Hilberseimer's passport only bears stamps from Southeastern European countries for the years 1936 or 1938 (for 1938 in the months in which Otti Berger resided in England), it can be assumed that they belong to the couple's joint travel in 1936.

The photographic images presented here are a key indicator that—despite the clearly changing political situation—the couple enjoyed their travel in the region and the Mediterranean. Particularly, the photographs of Berger and Hilberseimer reveal a closeness to each other that goes far beyond acquaintances. Usually rarely pictured in photographs, Ludwig Hilberseimer is depicted flashing a smile and sitting on a beach, certainly in Dalmatia (today Southwestern Croatia, as indicated by the karst landscape), possibly in Orebić, with a view towards the island of Korčula (Fig. 6, top left and top right).

The archival records also reveal a larger selection of blank, unsent postcards from Southeastern Europe, including Korčula, Split, the serpentine from/to Lovćen (today Montenegro) or the city of Belgrade (Serbia)⁶⁰ which would have acted as substitutes for taking their own photographs.

EMIGRATION: BERLIN—LONDON—MANCHESTER

In emigrating to England in 1937, Otti Berger followed several other students and teachers from the Bauhaus, such as the Gropius family and Moholy-Nagy. By the time Berger arrived in England, however, most of them were about to—or had already moved—to the United States. Berger, bereft without her Bauhaus colleagues, reported feeling "terribly sad"⁶¹ and alone. Marcel Breuer was the only Bauhaus member who Berger felt close to and who still lived in London when she arrived. She described him as her

57 Putnik 5 n.d.

58 Behördlich Konzessioniertes Büro für Fremdenführungen Split - Peristyl Josef Frank n.d.

59 Putnik Sarajevo n.d.

60 Unknown publishers of postcards n.d.

61 Berger 1937b.

"patron saint".⁶² Not being able to speak English at first, Berger started learning the language, despite her hearing impairment. Even though she enjoyed the support of Breuer and his network, Berger found it impossible to get work assignments, despite trying with textile companies located in Bristol and Edinburgh: "bristol has completely fallen through [...] and there is also no way ahead with the edinburgers, they came up with one bad suggestion after another."⁶³ It would have been a welcome highlight for Berger, that Hilberseimer travelled to United Kingdom in July 1937, most probably to visit her and test the ground for work opportunities, as suggested by another stamp in his passport, having passed customs in Harwich on 5 July 1937 (Table 1). Looking for new opportunities in the country to which one migrates reflects an attempt to integrate both socially and professionally, here also paired with uncertainty about the possible future on Berger's and Hilberseimer's emigration journey.

The only professional collaboration that worked out for Berger was with Helios Ltd. in Bolton near Manchester in the summer of 1938. This commission had been arranged by Marianne Straub, the Swiss-born textile lead for Helios. At the time, Helios was a rather newly established company, founded as "Helios, Ltd., textile merchants" by "Directors: Sir Thomas D. Barlow and F. [*Felix*] Loewenstein" in October 1937.⁶⁴ Although the assignment lasted only five weeks, Berger created an impressive number of editions for upholstery fabrics with several variations of colour in the weave (of those, 'Ascot', 'Reigate', 'Burdale' and 'Eldrig' (Fig. 5) went into production, but most likely Berger designed several more sample patterns). Later on, she repeatedly regretted this liberal approach, as companies "[...] could work for years with the many patterns I provided them! a real shame!"⁶⁵ In hindsight, and overall, Otti Berger did not consider her time in England particularly fruitful or positive. In September 1938, she writes to Ludwig Hilberseimer, who had by then already emigrated to Chicago, that she will cease any activities in England "[...] now that I know the people thoroughly and I am full of hatred and contempt".⁶⁶

LUDWIG HILBERSEIMER'S PREPARATIONS FOR EMIGRATION

Archival artefacts reveal insights into the couple's relationship in reflecting that they both—in parallel to each other—prepared to move on to the United States together. It can be stated with certainty that the couple prepared for their emigration together, paying final visits to relatives and friends, and—especially in the case of Hilberseimer—possibly visiting

62 Berger 1937a.

63 Ibid.

64 Manchester City News, "Local Companies Registered this Week: Textile Company Helios, Ltd.", 2.

65 Berger 1938b.

66 Berger 1938d.

business partners and preparing legal matters, such as his divorce proceedings and arranging alimony payments to his wife. Hilberseimer managed to set up an agreement [*“Abtretungsurkunde”, deed of assignation*] to channel license revenues from Otti Berger’s contracts with the company Schriever & Co in Dresden to him, for a loan that he allegedly granted her.⁶⁷ Berger was not allowed to earn or receive money anymore, especially not since she had emigrated to England. So, the setup secured a flow of money, first to his wife, as Hilberseimer would also not have been able to receive any money, since he would soon emigrate to the United States.

In late June and early July 1938, Ludwig Hilberseimer undertook a final trip to Southeastern Europe. His passport (Table 2) indicates that he travelled to Bulgaria and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. While further research is required to analyse the reasons for his journey, a letter dated 2 November 1938, sent to Hilberseimer, by then already in Chicago, indicates business related reasons, since it discusses drawing up a draft for a personal residence in Sofia.⁶⁸

Hilberseimer was set to leave for Chicago via England but his travels and preparations for emigration obviously delayed his planned arrival in England in July “for a short visit”.⁶⁹ Certainly, he and Otti Berger planned to meet up before his departure, but Otti Berger also arranged a meeting for him with Leonard Knight Elmhirst at the Dartington Hall Trust Arts Department in Devon,⁷⁰ before sending him off to the United States at Southampton.

Ludwig Hilberseimer sailed as a cabin passenger on the *RMS Britannic*, a Cunard White Star ship leaving from Southampton, U.K., on 20 August 1938,⁷¹ and arriving in the United States on Ellis Island, New York City, on 28 August 1938, indicated by the “LIST OF [...] ALIEN PASSENGERS” issued for the U.S. Department of Labor.⁷² The list also recorded his marital status, still as “M” for married, as the divorce from his wife only became legally valid on 25 September 1938, and certified on 4 November 1938.⁷³ Soon after this arrival, on 13 October 1938, Ludwig Hilberseimer filed a “Declaration of Intention” to become a U.S. Citizen⁷⁴ and was awarded US citizenship (through naturalisation) on 18 April 1944.⁷⁵

67 Hilberseimer 1938.

68 Mengin 1986, 88.

69 Berger 1938a.

70 Berger n.d., most probably July 1938.

71 Cunard White Star Shipping Company 1938.

72 U.S. Department of Labor 1938.

73 Civil Registry Office Berlin-Charlottenburg 1938.

74 Clerk of the U.S. District Court and Hilberseimer 1938.

75 U.S. District Court at Chicago, Illinois and Hilberseimer 1944.

WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE PRIOR TO AND DURING WORLD WAR II

Following Hilberseimer’s departure to the United States, in August 1938 Otti Berger returned from England to her former home in Zmajevac, Croatia, to care for her sick mother, travelling from England to Prague by airplane and further on via train.

In her first letter to Hilberseimer in Chicago, she writes about the pre-war situation becoming more and more tense and shares an emotion that might have been a warning signal for her: “it was a strange feeling, flying high up over the IIIrd reich”.⁷⁶ At this point Otti Berger was still hopeful that she would be able to join Hilberseimer in the USA. In autumn 1938, Berger travels with her mother to Prague to visit relatives, with a stop in Vienna, and writes to Hilberseimer about their experience in dramatic words. She greets him with very intimate words, “my dear dear hilb” and signs “in love always yours, o.” but writes that they have seen and heard unbelievable things during their trip: that Prague was full of refugees and that Vienna seemed deserted, with furniture and other personal belongings lined up in front of houses,⁷⁷ indicating that (Jewish) residents had been evicted from their homes. She also writes that she cannot wait for her to leave the country, in view of joining Hilberseimer in the USA, and later bring her family over as well: “my only thought is to get out of here and on to you, the sooner, the better [...]”.⁷⁸

From this letter onwards, Berger’s tone changes. In her first letters from Zmajevac, her writing still reflects a confident attitude about her situation, partially even distancing herself from the dangers of war and Nazi regime persecution, and offering very close and supportive statements towards Ludwig Hilberseimer. Towards 1941, Berger’s tone changes, reflecting her gloomy and despondent mood, then being very realistic about her situation, but trying to preserve some hope of emigration.

In September 1939, the invasion of Poland by the German army marked the official begin of the Second World War in Europe. Many citizens in a growing number of countries, especially Jews, were persecuted by the Nazis. Regimes collaborating with the Nazis changed the political landscape in Europe, and this impact also reached the remote Baranya region of Berger’s hometown.

Over the next four years, Otti Berger repeatedly tries to obtain an emigration visa, but to no avail, at least not for the time she would have been allowed to leave the country. Several former members of the Bauhaus try

76 Berger 1938c.

77 Berger 1938e.

78 Berger 1938e.

to help her to emigrate. Walter Gropius attempts to support her by writing to the American Embassy in Belgrade and László Moholy-Nagy, who had offered Berger the weaving workshop's lead at the 'New Bauhaus' in Chicago before, urges the Department of Labor in Washington to at least issue a short-term visa for her. In his letter he praises Berger's work, writing: "We hope, through her excellent knowledge of the trade, thru [through] her practice in great workshops, factories and through her experience in teaching, we shall have the best direction available for our purposes."⁷⁹ Moholy-Nagy even claimed that Berger was "the head of the Weaving Workshop"⁸⁰ at Bauhaus in Dessau, even though this was not fully true (Lilly Reich was the official head). It is a short, yet highly appreciative recognition of Berger's practice, work and achievements.

Hilberseimer and Berger continue to write to each other. The couple also discuss whether, as recommended by a relative, a marriage would be "of advantage", and Berger writes to Hilberseimer, "if he is willing to do so" and whether he would sort out his divorce, since he was officially still married to his wife in Berlin.⁸¹

Only one handwritten letter by Hilberseimer from this time is available, obviously a prescript of a letter that was sent later. Hilberseimer wrote it in English, most likely due to the war and intelligence interferences—letters written in German and letters from/to Germany or the countries occupied by or collaborating with Germany were censored or at least read. Hilberseimer starts the letter offering a very personal greeting, with "My dear Otti", yet the rest of the letter remains rather shallow, mentioning the weather and politics in Britain.⁸² In contrast to Berger's writing, the tone of this letter is friendly and kind, and there are still a few emotions reflecting their close relationship. Generally, at this time, the couple seemed to still be hopeful about a future together. Berger's writing is still filled with hope and positive aspects, despite the reality of war clearly drawing closer. Initially, she even dismisses the first reports of imprisonment of Jews in the Baranya region as speculation.⁸³ Over the course of the war years, Berger's tone of voice becomes more and more pessimistic and dejected.

All attempts to arrange for emigration fail and the noose of war slowly tightens on the Berger family and many other families in Southeastern and Eastern Europe. The last known written communication from or to Otti Berger dates from 1941. After this date, it must be assumed that letters and postal items from and to the Baranya region were delayed, stopped due to war activities, or redacted. In her last known letter to Ludwig Hilberseim-

79 Moholy-Nagy 1939.

80 Ibid.

81 Berger 1939.

82 Hilberseimer 1939.

83 Berger 1938f.

er, dated 4 September 1941,⁸⁴ handwritten from Budapest and no longer in her usual style of using lower case only, Berger remarks that she has not heard from Hilberseimer in a long time (Fig. 7). Writing how much she and her family care about him, she adds a forlorn "when will we be together once again?",⁸⁵ stating the stark situation in the occupied regions, especially for Jewish people. She also entices him to preserve her belongings and her work stored in England, because it is worth it: "my things in L [London,] please further preserve them. It is worth it [the effort]."⁸⁶ Her last obtained letter to Hilberseimer is dated 29 September 1941.⁸⁷ Berger writes in a dejected tone, missing the direction-setting of her father who passed away earlier in the year. She again writes that she has not heard from Hilberseimer, that she will visit the consulate one more time, and that she, and her family, send him the very best wishes.

DEPORTATION OF THE BERGER FAMILY

In March and April 1944, the German Wehrmacht and the collaborating Hungarian government under Miklós Horthy installed ghettos and concentration camps across Hungary, including the Baranya region.⁸⁸ In the Yad Vashem archives, a witness confirmed that the Berger family was "arrested [on] 27 April 1944" and further noted "Auschwitz" in the section for the place and circumstances of death⁸⁹, indicating that Otti Berger was killed in Auschwitz. Most probably, the family was brought to the city of Mohács, to which Zmajevac belonged administratively, following their arrest.

Otti Berger's brother, Otto Berger, was the only member of the Berger family to survive the Holocaust. Otto returned to Zmajevac from Auschwitz, and in August 1945 wrote to Ludwig Hilberseimer about his own fate and that of the family (Fig. 8). He writes about the fate of his sister: "I am very afraid that my sister Oti [Otti] was killed by the Germans with gas because she was deff [deaf]."⁹⁰ Earlier in the letter, he recalls that they "were taken away [...] in a concentration logor in Hungary where we were 5 weeks when they took us to Aushits-Birkenau [*Auschwitz-Birkenau*] in 29 May 1944, when we were separated from each other [...]."⁹¹ Otto Berger had a friend translate the letters, they contain some errors, and some statements leave open questions, such as the kind of camp the family was deported to first. "Logor" is the Croatian word for 'camp' which could be a concentration or a labour camp. It can be assumed that the family was first

84 Berger 1941a.

85 Ibid. See also Varga, *Ég És Föld Között*, 122.

86 Berger 1941a.

87 Berger 1941b.

88 White and Hecker, *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos*.

89 Vanuša, "Page of Testimony".

90 Berger 1945.

91 Ibid.

deported from Mohács to Pécs, the regional capital of the Baranya region and a railway hub for deportation.⁹² To date, the author of this research has not uncovered proof of a deportation train from Pécs to Auschwitz at the date mentioned by Otto Berger, however, there was one 5 weeks after 29 May 1944. Further research is required to investigate the Berger family's fate and exact deportation dates and route. The letter is also a testament to the cruelty people experienced in the concentration camps. Otto Berger testifies what he had to go through and that he "worked very heavy for only 9 weeks, but I will never forget those weeks and that job was not for human beings [...] I lost 42 kilograms from my weight and I look like a 75-year-old man".⁹³

Otto Berger erected a 'mazwa', a gravestone at the Jewish cemetery above Zmajevac, for Otti Berger, their sibling brothers and their mother, all killed in Auschwitz. In 2018, the mazwa was moved to the site of the honourable citizens of Zmajevac.

A BAUHAUS NETWORK REACTIVATED: SECURING OTTI BERGER'S ESTATE

In the 1950s and supported by Otti Berger's friends and acquaintances in London, as well as Bauhaus members such as Walter Gropius and his wife Ise ("Pia"), Ludwig Hilberseimer arranged for Berger's legacy to be sent to the United States, in order to be distributed between the Busch-Reisinger Museum in Harvard and the Art Institute of Chicago. This was initiated by Hilberseimer following a letter from Ellen Otten in London. Otti had stored her belongings in trunks at a carrier / shipping agent's (Otten writes, in German, about a "Spediteur", including an "extensive amount" of work samples, legal documents and private items.⁹⁴ They were most probably prepared and ready for shipment to the United States as soon as Berger returned from her family visit to emigrate to the United States, as well as pending a valid immigration visa for the United States.

Walter Gropius and his wife Ise were also involved, and Gropius got his former assistant Hanna Lindemann on board who was still living in the UK. The Bauhaus network around Hilberseimer and Otti Berger was thus instrumental in securing Berger's remaining correspondence as well as her estate. Her work that was sent to the Busch-Reisinger Museum in Harvard has been documented in a two-page list, categorising the work from her "D U T C H period", including fabrics such as "Curvo", "Gardenia" or "Heliotrop" as well as other work, such as for the German company Schriever.⁹⁵ The list was put together most probably by Hanna Lindemann

92 Gilbert 2009; White and Hecker 2018.

93 Berger 1945.

94 Otten 1951.

95 No author 1951/1952 n.d.

and/or Ellen Otten, as they were "sorting out the samples and, insofar as possible, putting it into a correct order".⁹⁶

It is in this communication that the term "fiancé" is mentioned. Hilberseimer writes to Hanna Lindemann in October 1951 and shares that Berger transferred her patent rights to him. Further, he asks to receive Otti Berger's jewellery, explaining the reason "because I gave it to Otti",⁹⁷ which reconfirms the close relationship between the two. In a typewritten letter sent to Lindemann on 23 November 1951, he writes: "I felt entitled to do so, as during her life time Miss Berger entrusted me as her closest friend (fiancé) to look after her own interests."⁹⁸ But it is not Hilberseimer as Berger's fiancé, who initiated the introduction to Hanna Lindemann (and thus, the British authorities with whom Lindemann dealt), but Lindemann herself, who pre-writes a letter for Hilberseimer to send to the authorities, to be sure that he may receive Berger's estate. It is a recommendation by Lindemann, a "Suggestion for statement to be sent to me by Prof. Hilberseimer", in which she explains to Hilberseimer that "The word "fiancé" means a lot here in England, nearly as much as a husband, by law."⁹⁹ Hanna Lindemann undertook a similar process of preformulating a letter for Hilberseimer that he was supposed to send to the Busch-Reisinger Museum in Harvard. It was an attempt—a successful one—to secure Otti Berger's belongings because Hilberseimer could not certify his relationship with her since he lacked official, legal documentation to prove it.

CONCLUSION

Archival artefacts play a significant role in generating new knowledge, even though a challenge often lies in creating meaningful connections across various artefacts and pieces of literature. In this research a breakthrough moment in understanding the contextual nuances was facilitated by the integration of diverse forms of visual evidence during in-depth archival research. Evidence included travel images, brochures, or passport photographs, which were enhanced by the exchanged letters between Otti Berger and Ludwig Hilberseimer and other sources. The necessity to engage with a variety of forms and modalities of visual evidence and to integrate them into research thus becomes evident. The approach not only helped to draw more robust conclusions but also provoked new lines of inquiry, highlighted gaps and underscored the need for further research, such as the absence of most of Ludwig Hilberseimer's responses to Otti Berger or her passport.

96 Otten 1951.

97 Hilberseimer 1951a.

98 Hilberseimer 1951b.

99 Lindemann ca. 1951 n.d.

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ADDENDUM: RECENT RESEARCH FINDINGS (ADDED DECEMBER, 2024)

Since the preparation of this article, notable new findings have been uncovered, related to the discussed deportation routes of the Berger family (pp. 291–292).

Following the kind and valuable research exchange with Dr. Widar Halén and Boris Hajdinjak, the author was directed to the city of Barcs as a possible location of the assembly camp to which the Berger family was taken to after their arrest in their hometown, before being deported to Auschwitz.

Further research revealed that the southern Baranja districts, including Vörösmart (Zmajevac), were declared a special “Operational Area” in early April 1944 (Braham, 2013; Braham, 2000). Braham (2013, p. 98) states that the Jewish citizens of Vörösmart (Zmajevac) were first arrested and brought to the town of Darda during a police raid in the special area between April 26–28, 1944.

They were then taken to the Union Mill in Barcs (Braham, 2013, pp. 66–67), a roller mill for grains that served as an assembly camp for about 1580 people. Vanuša (2005), in her Yad Vashem testimony, stated that the Berger family was arrested on April 27, 1944, which aligns with Braham's research. Braham further documents that the Jews in the Barcs camp were subsequently transported to Auschwitz via Sopron on May 27, 1944. In his letter to Hilberseimer (Berger, 1945), Otto Berger noted that they were taken to Auschwitz on May 29, 1944. If the deportation train took two days, these dates would match. It is possible that the Bergers were not routed through the deportation train hub of Kassa (Košice, present-day Slovakia), but instead via Sopron and Vienna (Strasshof) and through Czechia to Poland and Auschwitz. Further research is still required to fully understand the route.

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[3]



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[6]

Bruxelles 1941

4. sept.

lieber Hilde, heute bekam ich endlich einen Brief von Dir nach langer Zeit. Der vom 15. sept. schnell eingekommen. wir sind mit meine Mutter da, deren Krankheit sich wieder erneut hatte. Sie bekommt wieder Nodium u. Mönigen. Hoffen wir das es dies mal nicht so schwer sein wird wie vor 2 Jahren. Es ist aber doch fürchtbar, dass es allem

und noch dies kommen müsste. mein älterer Bruder ist noch nicht zuhause. alles ist von sich Triste und man muss sich noch zusammennehmen alles auszuhalten. meine Sachen in 2 Kisten sollt ihr weiter aufbewahren lassen. Bitte meldet. Es kommt sich. und bitte schreib mir nur bold wieder. Vielleicht sehen wir uns noch einmal. ich werde aufs konsulat gehen + Dir bald schreiben. Herzlichst mit

[7]

Berger Otto Zmajevac
Baranja, Jugoslavia.

Zmajevac 10 th of aug. 1945.

D e a r H i l b !

At last I can write to you and I am sure you are going to be surprised because if you expected a letter you didnt expected from me. But after all I can only write about myself because of my family I nothin know to this time. First of all I want to write to you that we were taken away with my sister Otti my brother Oskar and with Elsa in a concentration logor in Hungary where we were 5 weeks when they took us to Aushits-Birkenan in 1944 29 th of may when we were separated from each other and from that time I didnt received anything from them and to this date I dont know where they are. I was freed by the Russians in 1945 27 th of january in Aushits were I was at that time. In march I arrived at home in the town of Zmajevac-fortunately. At home I am wating to here something from them and in one time that they will probably unsuspectedly arrive at home, but I am very afraid that they will knot. Many of us came home we who were consentrated in all kinds of logors, but those whom I suspect yet did not arrived. Many of them are wating in Germany to be transported home, but things are quite sloly going on. I am very ^{afraid} that my sister Oti was killed by the Germans with gas because she was deff. Brother Oscar was sugar sick and he ate very little and Elsa was also sick and she was the older between us and for this reason I am very afraid for them that they will never return. It is a very big question where were they taken to if they had luck to be in Austria I think that they will probably come home, but if they were taken to Germany I think they will never return.

Dear Hilb it would be a quit a long story to write down what we suffered in those places it is true that I only 9 weeks worked ~~xx~~ very heavy, but I will never forget those weeks and that job was knot for human beins. What we received to eat it is better that I dont write anything about it you can think when I lost 42 kilograms from my weight and I look like a man 75 years

[8]

1. Otti Berger, ca. 1932-1933. Photographer unknown, possibly Ludwig Hilberseimer, who's pipe Berger might be smoking. Bauhaus Archiv Berlin, Inv.nr.: 2017/708.2
2. Portrait of Ludwig Hilberseimer, 1933, most probably on May 8, 1933, during the farewell excursion of the Bauhaus Berlin on the river Havel, one day after the closure of the school. Photographer unknown. Bauhaus Archiv Berlin, Inv.nr.: F6542
3. Otti Berger's work from the Bauhaus weaving workshop, a shiny, light-reflecting fabric of cellophane and cotton. weave: double woven plain weave. Installation view of the 2019 exhibition "Weaving beyond the Bauhaus" at The Art Institute of Chicago. Photo: Alexandra Matz
4. Otti Berger and Ise Gropius in Berlin. Date and original photographer unknown. Otti Berger was well connected with other members of the Bauhaus – both fellow students such as Anni Albers and Gertrud Arndt (who shot many portrait photos of Otti Berger) and the Gropius family. Ludwig Karl Hilberseimer Papers, Ryerson and Burnham Art and Architecture Archives, the Art Institute of Chicago. Photo: Alexandra Matz
5. Sample Book of Helios Ltd., with designs by Otti Berger 1938. The Whitworth Art Gallery, The University of Manchester. Photos: Alexandra Matz, 2019. Top left: sample overview of ASCOT fadeless fabrics, designed by Otti Berger 1938, weave: shaft twill. E.g., version G: warp in green, weft in yellow/gold colour creating a three-dimensional effect. Top right: BURDALE fabric (close-up), weave: jacquard. Lower left: ELDRIG fabric (close-up), weave: bouclé with two different natural tones. Lower right: REIGATE, weave: shaft twill.
6. Artefacts from the Ludwig Karl Hilberseimer Papers, Ryerson and Burnham Art and Architecture Archives, The Art Institute of Chicago. (a) Top left: Ludwig Hilberseimer in Dalmatia, today Croatia (1936, original photographer unknown, probably Otti Berger. Photo: Alexandra Matz); (b) Top right: Otti Berger in Dalmatia (1936, photographer unknown, probably Ludwig Hilberseimer. Photo: Alexandra Matz); (c) Bottom left: Otti Berger and Ludwig Hilberseimer in the Baranja region, (1936, photographer unknown. Photo: Alexandra Matz); (d) Bottom middle: Backside of aforementioned photography, addressed to Oskar Berger, brother of Otti Berger (1936. Photo: Alexandra Matz); (e) Bottom right: one page of Ludwig Hilberseimer's passport indicating border crossings in 1938 (photograph of passport: Dr. Anke Blümm).
7. Letter of Otti Berger (in Zmajevac / Vörösmart, written from a visit in Budapest) to Ludwig Hilberseimer (Chicago), 1941. Photo: Alexandra Matz. Karl Ludwig Hilberseimer Papers, The Ryerson and Burnham Art and Architecture Archives, The Art Institute of Chicago
8. Letter of Otto Berger to Ludwig Hilberseimer, August 8, 1945, who highlighted the probable death of his sister, Otti Berger, and deportation dates. Karl Ludwig Hilberseimer Papers, Ryerson and Burnham Archives, The Art Institute of Chicago. Photo: Alexandra Matz

Ludwig Hilberseimer's Travel in 1936
(Reconstruction of dates based on passport stamps)

- 05.08.36 Magyarboly (Hungary)
- 05.08.36 Beli Manastir (Kingdom of Yugoslavia)
- 06.08.36 Batina (Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Serbia)
- 15.08.36 Belgrade
- 12.09.36 Zagreb. Permission to travel through Austria in-between 21st and 28th September 1936. Issued by the German Embassy, Zagreb
- 26.09.36 Jesenice (Border crossing to Austria)
- 26.09.36 Salzburg (Border crossing to Germany)
- 05.07.37 Haarwich (UK). Most probably visiting Otti Berger in London

Table 1: Reconstruction of travel destinations and border crossings by Ludwig Hilberseimer in the years 1936 and 1937 based on customs stamps and other entries in his personal passport (Stellvertretender Vorsteher des 152. Polizeireviers, Berlin 1934).

Ludwig Hilberseimer's Travel in 1938
(Reconstruction of dates based on passport stamps)

- 25.06.38 Passport control at Szob (Czechoslovakia)
- 25.06.38 Dragoman (Bulgaria, entering the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Serbia))
- 28.06.38
- 02.07.38 Komárno (Czechoslovakia, border crossing to Hungary)
- 02.07.38 Magyarboly (Hungary)
- 02.07.38 Beli Manastir (Kingdom of Yugoslavia)
- 12.07.38 Berlin, the US Embassy issues a Quota Immigration Visa for Hilberseimer
- 30.07.38 Oldenzaar (The Netherlands)
- 05.07.37 Haarwich (UK).
- 20.08.38 Southampton (UK)
- 28.08.38 Ellis Island, New York City (USA)

Table 2: Reconstruction of travel destinations and border crossings by Ludwig Hilberseimer in the year 1938, based on customs stamps and other entries in his personal passport (Stellvertretender Vorsteher des 152. Polizeireviers, Berlin 1934).