

Contents:

- *Basic biographical data*
- *Biographical sketch*
- *Selective bibliography*
- *Sidelines, notes on archives*

<i>Basic biographical data</i>	
Name:	Fritz Belleville
Other names (by-names, pseud. etc.):	Fritz Belleville-Jünger ; Fritz Merz ; Werner
Date and place of birth:	December 30, 1903, Berlin (Germany)
Date and place of death:	May 3, 1994, Basel (Switzerland)
Nationality:	German, Swiss, German
Occupations, careers, etc.:	Proofreader
Time of activity in Trotskyist movement:	(1928) 1932 - 1934

Biographical sketch

Fritz Belleville was born in Berlin on December 30, 1903 as son of Maria Amalie Belleville who later became Maria Jünger by marriage.

When studying law at the universities of Berlin and Frankfurt am Main he joined the ranks of the *KJVD (Kommunistischer Jugendverband Deutschlands, Communist Youth League of Germany)* and later became a member of the *KPD (Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands, Communist Party of Germany)*, editing its student paper *Rote Studentenfahne*. Within the *KPD* which during the 1920s was almost permanently shaken by sharp factional struggles and vitriolic personal rivalries, Belleville first endorsed the Fischer-Maslow leadership, and after their inner-party defeat he sided with one of the leftist minority groups within the party, *Entschiedene Linke (Determined Left)*, which was inspired and led by Karl Korsch, a distinguished Marxist theoretician and lawyer who had a strong influence on Belleville.

After Korsch had been purged from the *KPD* in 1926 and the *Entschiedene Linke* eventually dissolved, Belleville in 1928 participated in the formation of the *Leninbund (Lenin League)*, a party which could be called a reservoir for most of those communists who had been excluded from the *KPD* as (ultra)leftist, Zinovievist, or Trotskyist deviators etc. during a longer period of party 'cleansing'; the most prominent leader of the *Leninbund* was Hugo Urbahns, a determined adherent and spokesman of Zinoviev who lost all his power in the *CPSU* and in the *Communist International* apparatus in 1926/27. Belleville was elected a member of the *Reichsleitung* [national leading body] of the *Leninbund* and remained one of its leaders until September 1932 when together with other members of the Frankfurt branch he decided to leave the *Leninbund* and to join the ranks of the *LO (Linke Opposition der KPD, Left Opposition of the KPD)* which at that time was the official denomination of the German section of the *International Left Opposition* headed and inspired by Leon Trotsky and his son Lev Sedov. Belleville was co-opted to the national leadership body of the *LO*, but he soon left Frankfurt - where for several years he had been a collaborator of the famous *Institut für Sozialforschung (Institute*

of *Social Research*) - and went to Basel (Switzerland) where he was helpful in launching the *MSG* (*Marxistische Studentengruppe, Marxist Students Group*) and at the same time began to study economics, history and philosophy, specializing in research on problems of the economic reconstruction of the USSR.

In January 1933 Belleville together with Leo Wohler and members of the *Marxistische Studentengruppe* founded the Basel-based *Linke Opposition der KPS* (*Left Opposition of the KPS*) which some months later joined forces with the *MAS* (*Marxistische Aktion der Schweiz, Marxist Action of Switzerland*), the Swiss section of the international Trotskyist network which in the meanwhile had been re-named *International Communist League, Bolshevik-Leninists (ICL)*. Because of differences with Walter Nelz and other leaders of the *MAS* concerning the correct assessment of social democracy and of national defence, Belleville already in 1934 left this group and remained unorganized since then.

It seems that he remained a Marxist; he engaged as a lecturer in workers' educational work as well as in the free-thinker movement earning his life as a proofreader at the *National-Zeitung* (Basel), one of the leading Swiss dailies.

After Hitler's seizure of power in Germany, Belleville got the status of a German refugee in Switzerland. During the Second World War, however, he had to spend some time in Swiss detention camps. Expatriated from Germany in 1938 it was only in 1954 that he got Swiss citizenship - although he was married with a Swiss woman since 1946. In 1977 Belleville regained the German citizenship.

Aged 90, Fritz Belleville died in Basel (Switzerland) on May 3, 1994.

*Selective bibliography*¹

- ***Selective bibliography: Books, collections, journals, bulletins to which Belleville contributed***

Radek, Karl: *Les voies de la révolution russe / Karl Radek*. Trad. de Jean-Marie Brohm. Préf. de Fritz Belleville. - *Les forces motrices de la révolution russe / Karl Radek*. - Paris : Etudes et Documentation Internationales, 1972. - 93 pp.

- ***Selective bibliography: Articles about Belleville***

Alles, Wolfgang: Fritz Belleville (1903-1994), in: *Alles, Wolfgang: Einheitsfront gegen Faschismus*, Köln, 2022, p. 264. [Biographical sketch]

Belleville, Fritz: [Interview mit Fritz Belleville am 29. März 1972 in Basel](#) [Autobiographical notes] [Interview by Wolfgang Jean Stock, available as PDF file, 13 pp. (2.8 MB), copy preserved at IfZ, Munich]

Huber, Peter: Belleville Fritz (*1903), in: *Huber, Peter: Stalins Schatten in die Schweiz : Schweizer Kommunisten in Moskau*, Zürich, 1994, p. 412. [Short biographical sketch]

Vogelsanger, David: Belleville, Fritz ("Fritz Merz", geboren 1903), in: *Vogelsanger, David: Trotzkismus in der Schweiz*, Zürich, Univ., Diss., 1986, pp. 218-219. [Short biographical sketch]

Wichers, Hermann: Belleville, Fritz, in: *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz / hrsg. von der Stiftung Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz (HLS). Chefred.: Marco Jorio*, Bd. 2, Basel, 2003, p. 179. [Short biographical sketch]

Note: Some more information about Belleville is likely to be found in some of the books, pamphlets, university works and articles listed in the relevant chapters of the [Lubitz' Leon Trotsky Bibliography \[ISSN 2190-0183\]](#), chiefly chapters [7.5.08](#) and [7.5.17](#).

1) TSB item numbers (e.g. <TSB 0716>) refer to Lubitz' *Trotskyist Serials Bibliography*, München [etc.] : Saur, 1993, which is out of print but [available as PDF file](#) within the framework of the *Lubitz' TrotskyanaNet* website. In TSB you can find detailed descriptions of the respective Trotskyist journals, newsletters, bulletins and the like.

Sidelines, notes on archives

— A small *Fritz Belleville-Jünger archive* (call no. PA 959) is preserved at the *Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt*, containing primarily personal papers such as his correspondence with German and Swiss authorities regarding the question of his citizenship etc.

— Some archival pieces are to be found in the *Schweizerisches Sozialarchiv (SSA)* at Zürich.

— A few pieces of his letter exchange with Leon Trotsky are contained in the *Exile papers of Leon Trotsky* (bMS Russ 13.1) at *Houghton Library* (Cambridge, Mass.)²

*Wolfgang and Petra Lubitz, 2006
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² For some details about public archives preserving collections relevant to Trotsky(ism) research see the *Archives : America* and *Archives : Europe* chapters within the framework of our Lubitz' *TrotskyanaNet* website.