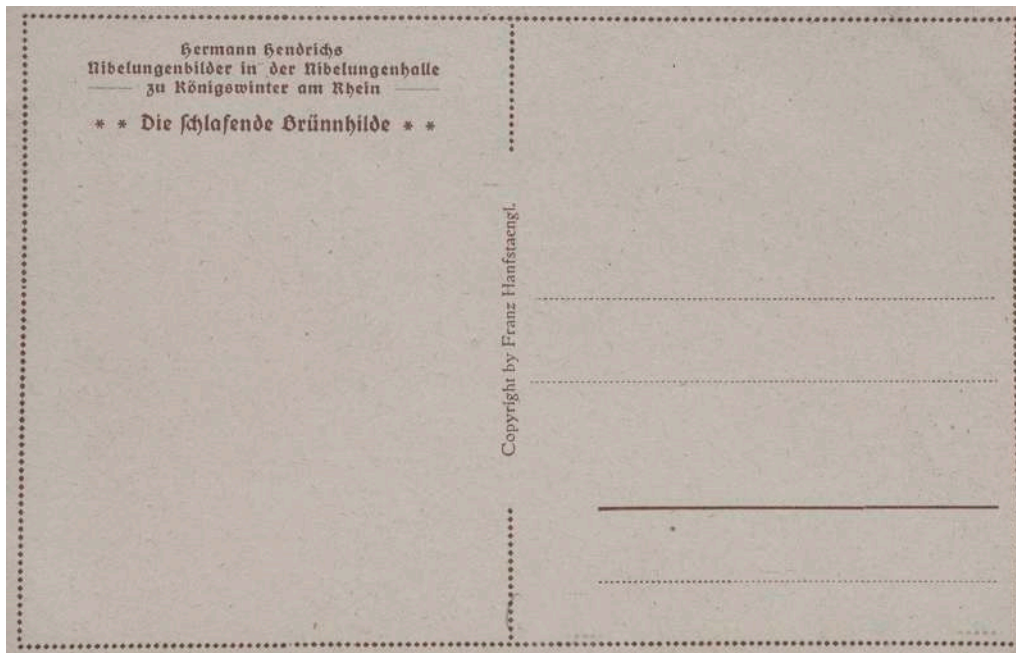


DIE NIBELUNGEN

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AimA Lichtblau

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1. Hermann Hendrich (1854-1931) Nibelungenbilder in der Nibelungenhalle.
Die schlafende Brünnhilde.

Hermann Hendrich was a painter active between the XIX-XX century. He was the author of the 12 paintings present in the Nibelungenhalle, a building born in Königswinter dedicated to the work of Richard Wagner. The postcard above is taken from the serie of 12 postcards (enveloped in a little folder) edited by Franz Hanfstaengl. "Die schlafende Brünnhilde" shows a typical romantic landscape where the voltage is in the use of colors, in the deep blacks and in the wildness of nature. As often happens in the nordic culture, the landscape is the expression of the human soul: in this case Brunilde is sleeping as a wild nature can do. Many paintings of Hendrich (not only from the serie of The Nibelungen) evidently inspired a lot of scenographies of the movie Die Nibelungen (Fritz Lang 1924).

ROSS VERLAG

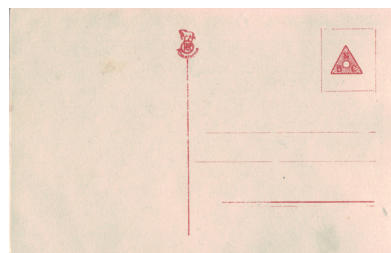
Ross Verlag was first known as "Ross" Bromsilber Vertriebs G.m.b.H (Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung), which means "silver bromide (the photographic postcard process) selling company Ltd." Originally, Ross operated as a distributor of postcards, but soon became a publisher (verlag). The Ross name first appeared on card number #225 in a continuation of the numbering of the Film Sterne line. These transitional cards had both the Ross Verlag name and the RPH symbol with a horse on the front of the card.



The more familiar Ross Verlag logo first appeared in the early 1920's. On the front of the card were the words: Verlag "Ross" Berlin SW68. Verlag is the German word for publishing company. SW stands for Southwest and 68 is an area code in that region of Berlin.

Verlag „Ross“ Berlin SW 68.

At first, these cards also had the Film Sterne logo printed on the back of the cards. It did not appear on all the cards and it did not last past around #400. Then the Film Sterne/Rotophot logo was dropped completely. Many of the earlier cards had an NBC logo in the stampbox. NBC stood for "Neue Bromsilber Convention" -- this was a group of postcard publishers joining together in an attempt to reach an agreement on the pricing of cards.



Around card number 1930/1 (in the year 1928), the Verlag "Ross" Berlin SW68 on the cards changed to simply "Ross" Verlag.

„Ross“ Verlag

At around A 3427/1 in 1941, The Ross-Verlag name changed to Film-Foto-Verlag, which it remained for the rest of the run. The cards stopped being published around 1944.

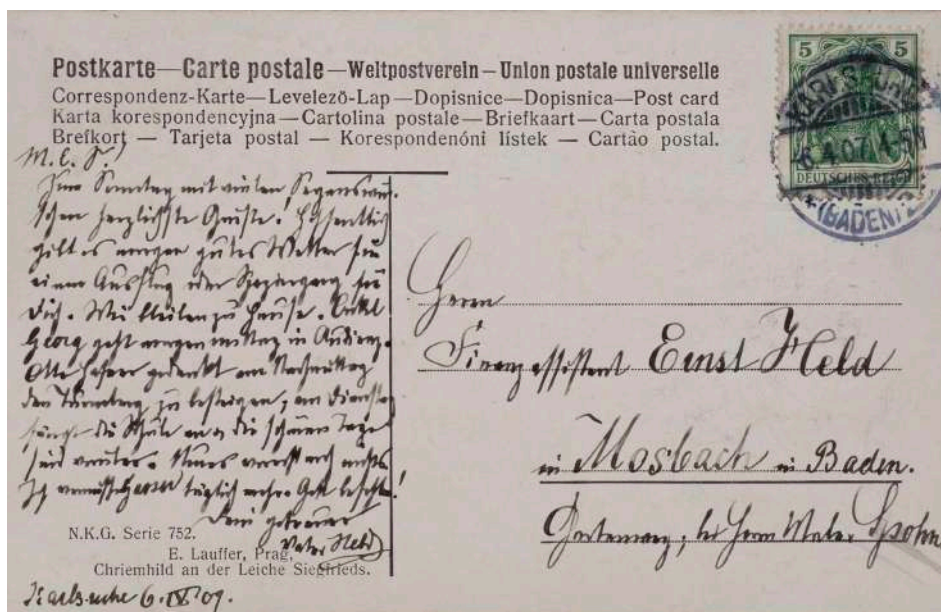
Film • Foto • Verlag

Around the 5500 to 5900 series, about 1931, the card stock changed from a white or browntone color to yellow or chamois. Some of the non-yellow, browntone stock postcards end up with a bluish tint to the cards. This seems to be a defect of the paper stock, or the chemical process of developing the photos. There are various degrees of how much of the bluish tint shows up on the card. Perhaps this was one of the reasons Ross changed to the yellow card stock.

Note:

All the following Ross postcard present in this collection (representing the scenes coming from the film "Die Nibelungen, Fritz Lang 1924) have on the back just the red triangle without the horse in the middle.





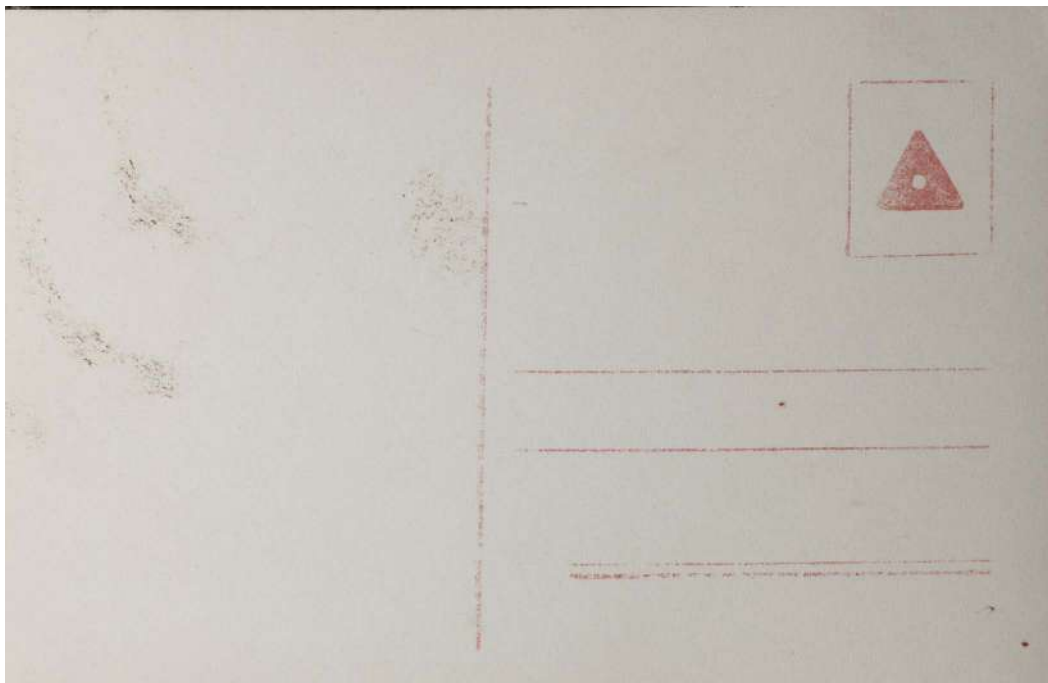
2. Emil Jan Lauffer (1837-1909) Prag.
Chriemhild an der Leiche Siegfrieds.

This postcard shows an epic composition that is originally three meters long. It is the scene taken from Chapter XVII of the epic, in which Kriemhild accuses Gunther and Hagen of having murdered her husband Siegfried, incited by the jealous Brunhild.

The postcard has been edited by Nordwestdeutscher Kunstverlag (NKG) from Carl Hermann and Adolf Wiechmann).



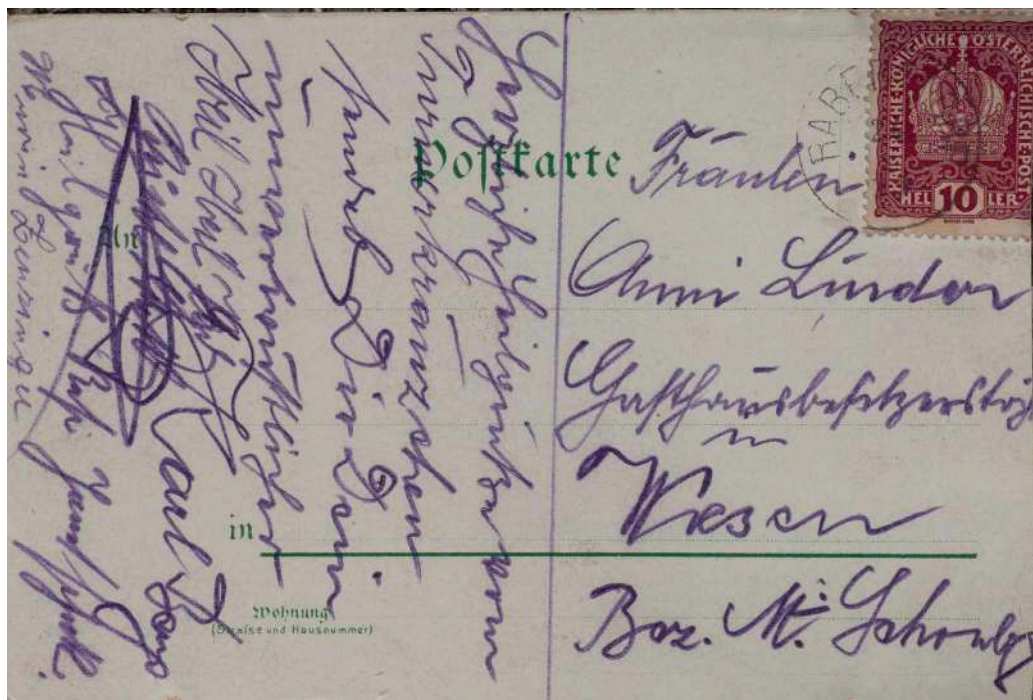
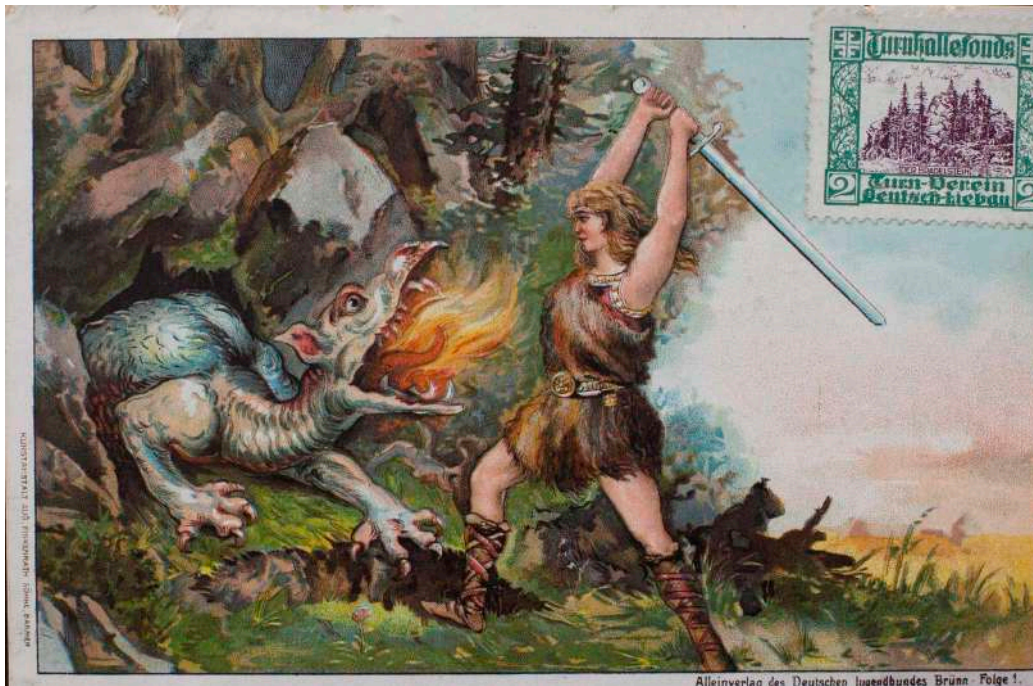
This painting is based on a picture of the same scene painted in 1835 by Carl Rahl, but reflected and much less plastic figures.



3. Verlag "Ross" Berlin SW68 | 673/6

Still frame from the movie Die Nibelungen, Fritz Lang 1924

This is a frame from Siegfried the first part of the movie The Nibelungen, a film made by Fritz Lang and his wife Thea Von Harbou. As we can easily see, the frame is clearly inspired by the past iconography of the scene (postcard nr.2). The construction in fact complies with the same compositional balance except for the ascetic space and the geometrical constructions typical of the "European" period of Lang's cinema and contemplative film like Metropolis (F. Lang, 1927).

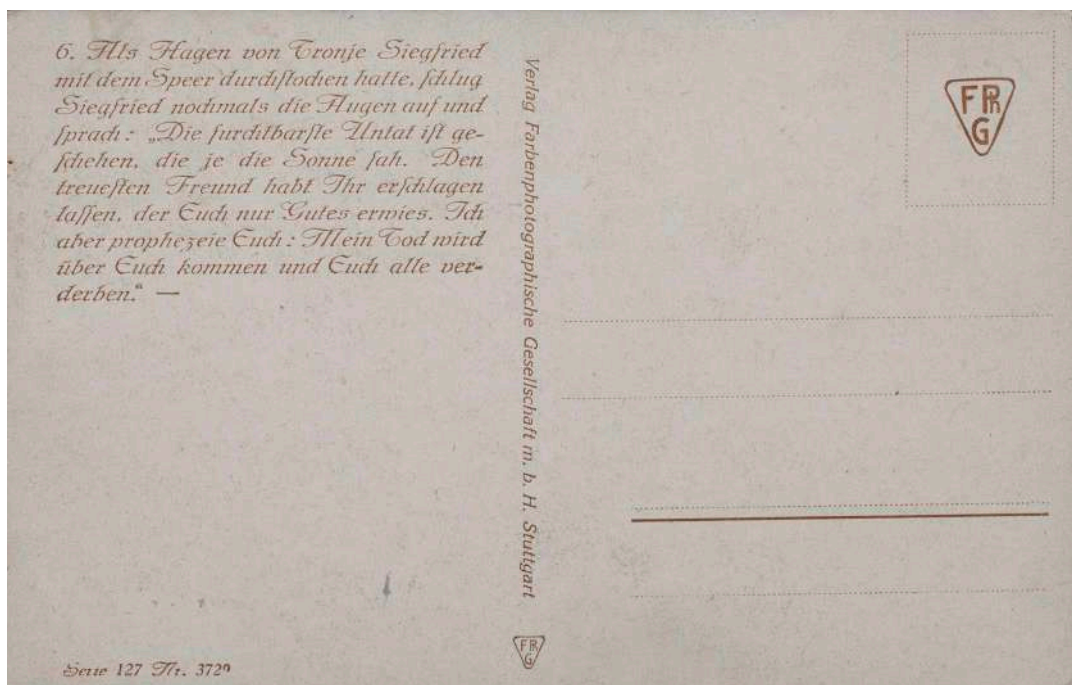


4. Alleinverlag des Deutschen Jugendbundes

The postcard edited by the Alleinverlag des Deutschen Jugendbundes shows the defining moment of Siegfried slaying the dragon.

It has on the front a Cinderella of the Turn-Verein Deutsch-Liebau.

Siegfried is often calm and smiling; he's the hero dealing with the proofs in a wagnerian mood. This is in opposition with the way of representation made by Fritz Lang. It's clear even in the following postcard (Nr. 6)

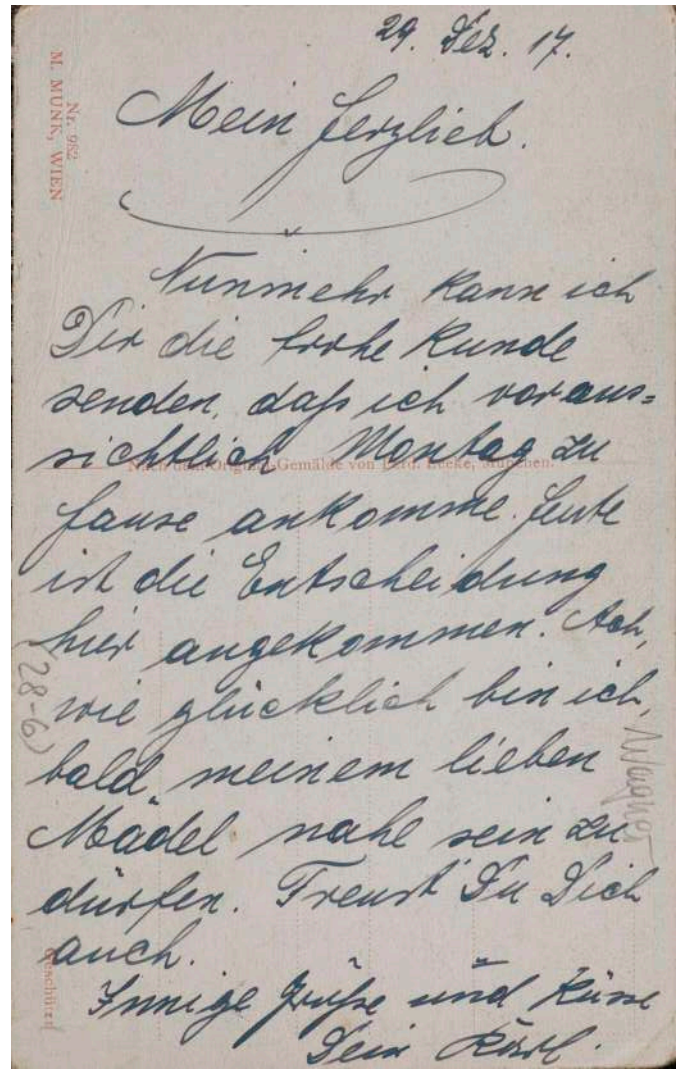
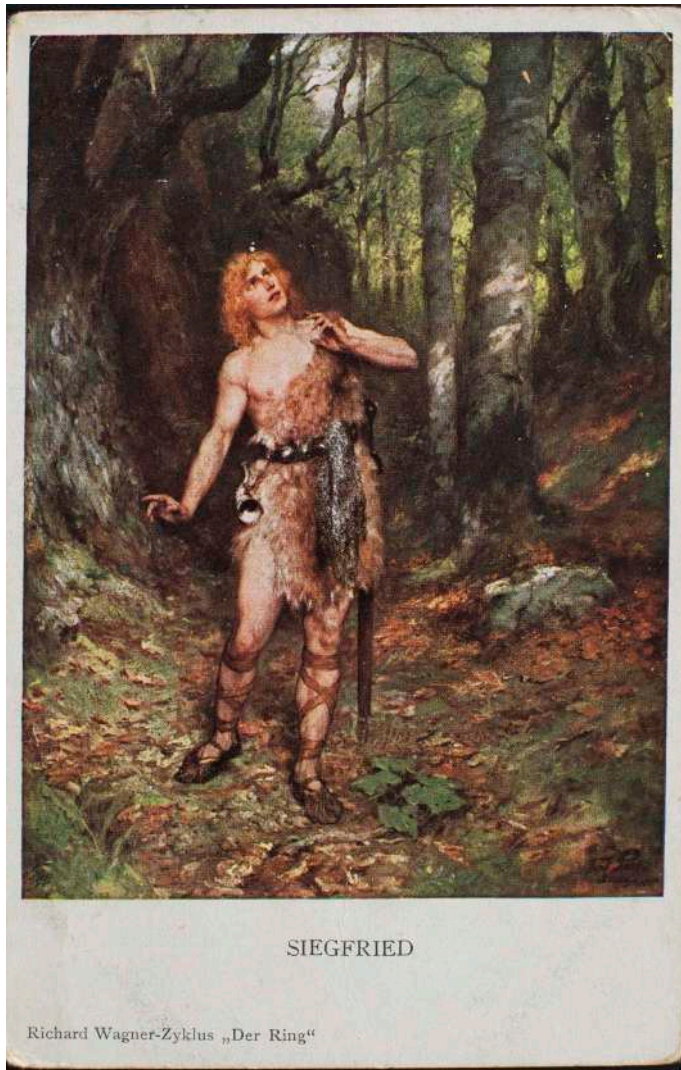


5. Verlag Farbenphotographische Gesellschaft m.b.H., in Stuttgart.
Serie 127, Nr. 3729.

The Verlag Farbenphotographische Gesellschaft m.b.H was founded in September 1911 in Stuttgart as a limited company. Shareholders were the Stuttgart Hermann Schober, booksellers, the owner of Belser Verlag Karl and Alfred Wacker, and August Schuler, owner of the eponymous the Graphic Arts Institute. There were the following changes from the fourth series changed the serial number from Roman to Arabic numerals, the number of continuous series was reduced from twelve to six.

The postcard represents the death of Siegfried and the prophecy: "My death will come over you and destroy you all".

http://www.stereoskopie.com/Raumbildaende/Chromoplast-Verlag/body_chromoplast-verlag.html



6. Richard Wagner-Zyklus "Der Ring"
 Nr. 982. | edited by M.Munk, Wien

The postcard is the reproduction of the Original-Gemälde von Ferdinand Leeke, Munchen.

Leeke, a graduate of the Royal Academy of Arts in Munich, worked as a painter and illustrator in the state capital and created magnificent genre paintings and portraits mainly representations Germanic legends. His illustrations of Wagner's music dramas are not only a reflection of the then realistic and pathetic performance style, but also the image of the political zeitgeist who put the "German Art" and the "German spirit" above everything else and as an expression of the "German character" misunderstood where supposedly "heal the world" should.

The illustrations of Ferdinand Leeke represent the Wagner iconography during the 20th century. Enormous spread and thus solidifying learned the image of a "Germanic" Wagner in the gouaches of the painter Ferdinand Leeke August (1859 -1937), which gave Siegfried Wagner late 19th century in memory of his father the artist in order. They served as templates for complex portfolios and countless postcards.



7. Verlag "Ross" Berlin SW68 | 673/2
 Still frame from the movie Die Nibelungen,
 Fritz Lang 1924

The postcard is part of the browntone stock postcards with the bluish tint on the back of the card. It means it has been produced before 1931.

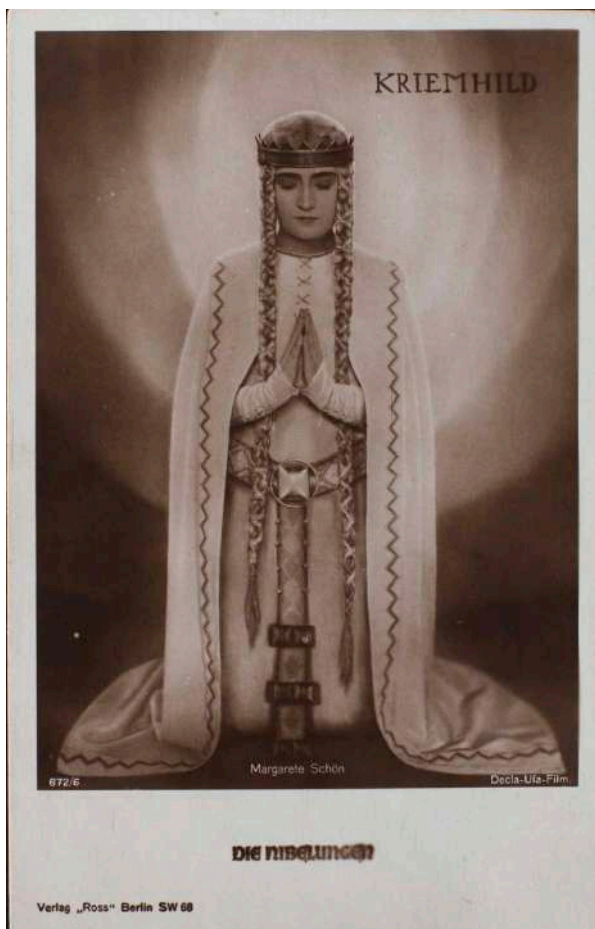
As we can see from the images on the right, the influence by the paintings made by Hermann Hendrich is considerable.

The representation of Siegfried made by Fritz Lang evidently belongs to a new way of looking at the character. The relation between photography and its referent (the actor) involves the choice of a figure that is distant from the epic hero of the XIX century and more close to the German ideal of the new hero of the XX century.



*Hermann Hendrich.
 Saint Grail Legend, Parsifal
 brings the Saint Spear to the
 Grail Castle*

*The painting and the b/w
 reproduction of the painting
 made to edit a postcard.*



8. Verlag "Ross" Berlin SW68 | 672/6
 "Kriemhild". Still frame from the movie Die Nibelungen, Fritz Lang 1924

9. Verlag "Ross" Berlin SW68 | 672/8
 "Brunhild". Still frame from the movie Die Nibelungen, Fritz Lang 1924

These two postcards are part of the browntone stock postcards with the bluish tint back to the cards. It means they have been produced before 1931. The first one on the left shows Kriemhild, the wife of Siegfried and the one on the right represents Brunhild, her antagonist. They are the two heroines of the version of The Nibelungen made by Fritz Lang where Brunhild is a negative character that in the original story she's not.

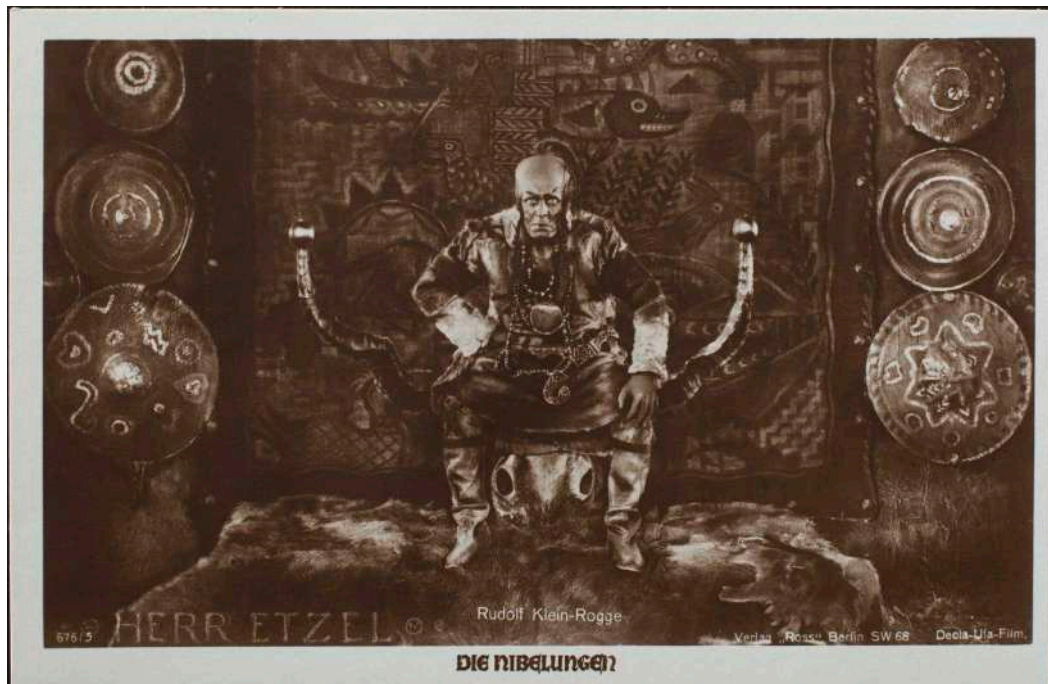


10. Verlag "Ross" Berlin SW68 | 673/4

"Kriemhild und Siegfried". Still frame from the movie Die Nibelungen, Fritz Lang 1924

This postcard representing Kriemhild and Siegfried comes from the brown tinted stock, but it has not the bluish tint on the back of the card. Then it could be produced after 1931.

Differently the thesis saying that Ross probably stop to make the brown serie in favor of the yellow serie (because of this problem of the blue on the back of the cards) is not the right reason he started to do it.



11. Verlag "Ross" Berlin SW68 | 676/5
"Etzel". Still frame from the movie Die Nibelungen, Fritz Lang 1924

This postcard representing the Etzel, (the king of the Huns) comes from the brown tinted stock (with the bluish tint on the back of the card). Then it could be produced after 1931.

It's a scene coming from the second part of Die Nibelungen: Kriemhilds Rache (Kriemhild's Revenge). The geometric construction of the scene with oriental elements around the throne is a typical style of the scenographies of Fritz Lang, but the pose of the character comes always from the style of Hermann Hendrich's paintings.