

**Hans Blüher. / Oosterhuis, Harry. Who's who in gay and lesbian history: From antiquity to World War II. ed. / R Alderich; G Wotherspoon. London [etc.]: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2000. p. 56-57.**

Blüher, Hans (1888-1955), German writer and psychoanalyst. As a young man of 24, Blüher caused a sensation in 1912 with his book *Die deutsche Wandervogelbewegung als erotisches Phänomen*, in which he asserted that homoerotic friendships, fostered by the sex-segregated education in Wilhelmine Germany, were essential for the cohesion and popularity of the German youth movement of the *Wandervogel*. In his autobiography Blüher wrote that between the age of 14 and 20, he was an adept of the 'love of friends'. He was one of the pioneers of the *Wandervogel*, which emerged around 1900 and which grew out of a romantic form of protest against modern industrialized and urbanized society as well as against the authority of parents and school. Youths set off together in pursuit of unspoiled nature, and their shared experiences on such hiking expeditions facilitated close bonds of friendship. Blüher introduced to the movement Wilhelm Jansen, a wealthy landowner and supporter of Adolf Brand's *Gemeinschaft der Eigenen*, who became the center of a more or less homoerotically oriented circle within the *Wandervogel*, until he was accused of 'pederasty' and he had to resign his position in 1910. Thereupon he, Blüher and other founded a new group, the *Jung-Wandervogel*, which in contrast to the rest of the youth movement never admitted girls as members.

Blüher grew up in a middle-class family in Berlin and studied philosophy, literature, biology and theology, but he completed none of these studies. He read the work of Freud closely and established himself as a psychoanalyst and writer of cultural and philosophical essays. Following Freud, Blüher elaborated a theory according to which sublimated homosexual feeling was an important factor in binding groups of males together, from the sanctity of religious orders to the youthful spirit of the *Wandervogel* and the masculine ethos of military organizations. He projected himself as an independent and revolutionary thinker who courageously raised his voice against the lethargic bourgeoisie. He was undoubtedly intelligent, but also conceited, arrogant and self-centered. Moreover, quite soon his youthful anti-bourgeois attitude developed into dubious political views.

With his two-volume *Die Rolle der Erotik in der männlichen Gesellschaft* (1917/1919) Blüher became one of the right-wing ideologues of the nationalist Männerbund, propagating a purification of German society under the guidance of all-male brotherhoods, in which members would be devoted to each other on the basis of homoerotic attraction and charismatic leadership. From a cultural perspective he considered male homoeroticism superior to heterosexual relations. Women, according to Blüher, were completely at the mercy of their sexual drive, which is inherently aimed at procreation and care, and intellectually they had nothing to offer to men. He was

vehemently against equal rights for men and women; in his view women's emancipation implied a fatal infringement on masculinity and the autonomy of an exclusive male world, which constituted the foundation of culture and politics. Blüher saw feminization and cultural levelling as the dominant characteristics of the Weimar Republic and these were diametrically opposed to his ideal of exclusive male brotherhood. He called himself a Prussian monarchist and corresponded with former Emperor Wilhelm II, whom he visited in Dutch exile. In 1933 Blüher welcomed the Nazi rise to power, not only because it put an end to the 'Jewish spirit' of the Weimar Republic, but also because he expected that the Third Reich would realize his ideal of a state based on an elitist male brotherhood. This hope evaporated with the liquidation of the homosexual SA-leader Ernst Röhm in 1934. Blüher was obviously not acceptable to the Nazis because of his plea for homoerotic bonds. Yet, although his work was forbidden under the Nazi regime, he was not persecuted for his views. The remaining years of his life he devoted primarily to philosophical study. He tried but failed to win acclaim with his main work, *Die Achse der Natur* (1949). Right before his death in 1955, Blüher made some of his admirers solemnly promise to fight for a 'rehabilitation of homoeroticism'.

H. Blüher, *Die deutsche Wandervogelbewegung als erotisches Phänomen: Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der sexuellen Inversion*. Berlin, 1912.

H. Blüher, *Die Rolle der Erotik in der männlichen Gesellschaft: Eine Theorie der menschlichen Staatsbildung nach Wesen und Wert*. Jena, 1917/1919.

H. Blüher, *Werke und Tage*. Jena 1920/1953.