1996

"Young Germans, not Young Greeks and Romans": Art, Culture and Educational Reform in Wilhelmine Germany

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[Conference paper later published in Françoise Forster-Hahn (ed.), *Imagining Modern German Culture, 1889-1910*, Special Issue *of Studies in the History of Art* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1996), 37-51.]

The demand to inculcate young Germans in a modern and German-nationalist spirit rather than the traditional reverence for classical antiquity emanated from no lesser person than Wilhelm II in 1890, the same year in which the young Emperor dismissed Bismarck and began his long and erratic "personal rule." It was made to a body called into life by the Kaiser, a conference of civil servants and educators charged with the reform of German schools (the Reichsschulkonferenz).

This conscious attempt to reshape cultural values was symptomatic of a larger ferment in German and European intellectual, artistic and scholarly circles, variously described as a "crisis," a time of "paradigm shifts," and the "cradle of modernism". Specialization and

professionalization accompanied the maturation of an educational and training system (including in the arts) that had paradoxically developed far away from the humanistic ideals enunciated at its baptism at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Discounting contradictory tendencies and erratic developments inevitable in such a large, federalized and diverse system, what trends can one perceive in the parallel evolution of educational change and cultural sensibilities in Wilhelmine Germany? How can one reconcile apparent contradictions, such as the drive to produce "modern" citizens (among them Kulturschaffende and Kulturträger) who were also expected to be unquestioningly loyal subjects, future-oriented masters of destiny who were also burdened with staggering demands to respect historicity? Can one make generalizations about the effect (or lack of it) of intentional reform of educational institutions by political and cultural elites on Wilhelmine German Kultur (a term which itself formed the center of a loud academic dispute at the time)[i]?

Following the title of this volume, how were citizens of the Hohenzollern Empire "imagining" their culture in the decades that hindsight has taught us to think of as the Empire's last? (We must keep firmly in mind that few contemporaries expected, even if some feared, the collapse of the new and dynamic Kaiserreich). Not only is there no single answer to this question; there is no single accepted definition of "Modernism," "modern culture," or "the Modern" (itself a German coinage)[ii], either. Indeed, the utility of the term comes into doubt when one sees it being stretched to include, merely in the German-speaking world, such diverse cultural works as the dead-serious naturalist plays of Arno Holz and the send-ups of Dadaism, or the philosophy of Nietzsche and that of Josef Goebbels (dubbed "reactionary modernism" by Jeffrey Herf).[iii] Not all "modernists" were "progressives" (one

may think of the futuristi), nor was the reverse any truer. While few "modernist" figures appear to have been schizophrenic enough to be traditionalists, it seems traditionalists could also harbor a bit of modernism in their souls, or at least realize they must come to terms with "the Modern" and all its associations with urban, industrial, technological and psychological change.

Thus is was possible for Wilhelm II himself to accept and even encourage descriptions of him as a modern and future-oriented ruler while at the same time employing the considerable power of his office to discourage innovation in the arts. As King of Prussia, the largest of the German federal states, Wilhelm presided over important innovations in educational and other cultural institutions which, in turn, drove on the prestige and international rank of German science and scholarship to a triumphal apogee which, in the eyes of many historians, it has never again approached. At the same time, in the words of the Emperor's most recent psychointerpreter, he had a "craving for reassurance, recognition and approval"[iv] that was shared by his subjects. What better way to satisfy this craving than by patronizing grandiose historicizing and "edifying" works of art? The same King-Emperor who gave his name (although ostensibly his grandfather's) and backing to the magnificent research foundation now renamed for Max Planck (and whose patronage brought Einstein to Berlin) could not, perhaps, also patronize a George Grosz or even Thomas Theodor Heine (Simplicissimus) view of himself and his entourage.

We should not attempt to revive the bygone fashion of attributing too much influence to a ruler, however, even if that ruler can be blamed for dubious and even fateful statements and actions. It is perfectly possible to imagine a "modernizing" and even a "modernist" Germany with a different ruler between 1888 and 1914, just as a different (if perhaps no more

"progressive") policy toward the arts can be found at the other courts of Germany, notably the Bavarian or Badenese. The various "secessions" in German-speaking cities were not, as Peter Paret has reminded us, so much revolutions against royal patronage as rebellions against dying guild traditions whose thrust was, if anything, more democratic than elitist.[v] We should also bear in mind that the role of royal patronage was in relative decline during the last decades of the German Empire, because of the rising importance of rich businessmen (both as private purchasers and donors to public collections) and even of state and local governments to outweigh the monarchs' personal patronage.[vi]

With or without Wilhelm II, Germany was also undergoing the experience of professionalization of its educated elites. While the traditional university faculties were busily transforming and modernizing their curricula under pressures both academic and professional, the newer technical colleges (Technische Hochschulen) were being raised to the level of doctorate-granting institutions and given the trappings -- if not the functions --of hallowed medieval universities. Enrollments in German universities grew dramatically over the life of the Empire. After stagnating at a total of about twelve to thirteen thousand annually from the mid-1830s until the mid-1860s, the average enrollment crossed the level of fourteen thousand in 1870, thirty-four thousand in 1900, sixty--three thousand in 1910 and seventy thousand in 1914. Growth in the technical college enrollments was more sporadic until the age of Wilhelm II, from under five thousand at the beginning of his reign to nearly 17,000 in 1914. Furthermore, these enormous increases in student numbers do not merely reflect the doubling of the population from 1870 to 1914: on a per-capita basis, there were twice as many German students per million citizens as at the beginning of the period.[vii] Virtually all university and technical college graduates intended to pursue careers in the learned and technical professions (law, including the higher civil service, medicine, the clergy, university

and secondary teaching, engineering, chemistry, etc.). Thus this dramatic increase in students also signaled a dramatic increase in the perceived opportunities for young Germans to enter the professions.

No small part of the debate about "cultural values" around the turn of the century derived from this opening of higher education to a vastly expanded student population. As Fritz Ringer has convincingly argued, Imperial Germany had perhaps the most "inclusive" (not to use the difficult and misleading word "democratic") educational system in the world by 1914.[viii] Any male (and, in small numbers and with important restrictions, female) with the appropriate secondary schooling certification (such as the Abitur) could enter higher educational institutions. State-subsidized education was inexpensive enough to come within the reach even of children of the lower middle class. One result was increasing competition within the various professional groups and increasingly vocal worries about the "proletarianization" of many of their practitioners.

As I have argued elsewhere, this flood of officially qualified graduates led to successful demands by professional organizations to raise educational standards as a means of regulating supply. This professional pressure was not entirely successful in achieving what the "power school" of professionalization theory requires from the "professionalization project,"[ix] that is, an extraordinary degree of control by practitioners over the market for their services. But the professionals' mounting pressure-tactics were more effective than no demands at all and had a greater impact than has been realized by historians until recently. These same forces also accompanied greater specialization, scientification and other strategies to enhance competitiveness both during and after the transition of educated men (and incipiently, women) through the higher educational process.

Perhaps most importantly for this volume, these professionalizing strategies accompanied and intensified the innovations in German culture that we are calling "modernism." They embraced the dynamics of "modern" Wissenschaft or scientific and scholarly research (undoubtedly in part as a strategy for demonstrating their superiority over non-professional or less specialized competitors). In terms of German signifiers, the words Wissenschaft and wissenschaftlich indeed conjured up not so much the sharp image of natural science and "positivistic" determinism[x] as a more softly-focused, humanistically-derived cognitive method that could still claim the status of "theory." The promotion of Wissenschaft as an "state interest" inside and outside educational institutions coincided with its acceptance by private (including professional) groups in German society, although it should be noted that this promotion did not involve all sectors of the art world (and certainly not of art education and professional preparation) as sweepingly as is did the worlds of university and technical-school graduates. The market for "artists' services" also underwent a significant transformation in these decades, consistent with similar developments for other professions; yet many important differences remained. Finally, in one area where the art market and "state interest" overlapped, in the "foreign cultural policy of the Reich," some of the conflicts between the desire to be "modernizing" and to be "German" --which also undoubtedly characterized this period to a high degree -- may be reviewed briefly.

I.

The raising of educational standards -- part of a larger process of ongoing professionalization and scientifization of schools and higher educational institutions -- was thus also accompanied by a "modernizing" reform in the oldest sense of that term. Not only did technical secondary and tertiary education receive an enormous boost during the

Wilhelmine era, in the form of Realschulen and Technische Hochschulen; reforms of the traditional university curricula also weakened the hold of antiquity even there. To give but one example: ten years after Wilhelm II's first national school conference, a second one finally conceded the official equality of all three types of higher secondary schools -- traditional Gymnasium, technically-oriented Oberrealschule and hybrid Realgymnasium. Shortly thereafter, the Prussian government decreed that graduates of non-Gymnasium high schools could for the first time be admitted to the university faculties of law and philosophy if they could demonstrate remedial removal of deficiencies in Latin by the late stages of professional study. After this, even the medical profession gave up its objections to admitting candidates not possessing the traditional Greco-Latin education to the medical faculties. This "surrender" to modernization of the curriculum (and greater access to medical careers to young people of lower socioeconomic station) by physicians was important for two reasons. First, it was clearly status anxiety that drove the doctors' decades-long resistance to reducing barriers of classical scholarity: they did not want to be regarded as less gentlemanly than their fellow university graduates in other fields! Second, they were at the same time awarded significant increases in the length and difficulty of medical study and qualification, which were expected to dampen down somewhat anticipated floods of young competitors.[xi]

A somewhat analogous process was taking place in the education of artists, not so much on the plane of German art academies (which generally had by 1914 the rank of universities), but between them and the artistic equivalent of technical secondary schools, the Kunstgewerbeschulen (arts-and-crafts schools). And, as we shall see in the next section, control over the training and "certification" of artists was increasingly complicated by the unrestricted growth of a private sector of art schools, something absent from the professional-education scene of traditional and emerging technical professions.

The state interest regarding reform of arts and crafts education was comparable to that in technical and professional education. State ministries, in cooperation with German engineering professional groups (such as the Verein Deutscher Ingenieure) and industry, were moving already in the last decade of the nineteenth century toward the reform of secondary technical education, recognizing that Germany's world competitiveness would be enhanced by a well-trained technical work-force, a sort of non-commissioned-officer class to co-design, implement and oversee the practical application of new technology in industry.[xii] A somewhat comparable state interest began to stir regarding the revival of Kunsthandwerk. By the turn of the century, "in a number of small private schools, but also here and there in state or municipal art and crafts schools, one sees the beginnings of a pressing attempt to reform educational methods and pedagogical goals."[xiii] The "practical and spiritual program of the Bauhaus was already articulated in its germ" by such critics as Peter Jessen, the library director of the Berlin Kunstgewerbemuseum, in 1901.[xiv] Characteristically, such reform efforts were not marked by attempts to return to the outworn and essentially failed old techniques of guild-like training, but rather called for new approaches and theories, including educational psychology. Here, rather than around the traditional art academies, one feels the winds of the modern blowing increasingly strongly, although some limited curricular reforms in the last years before the war show that even the academies were not completely immune to criticism of their hidebound ways.

II.

There was not only pressure from growing and strengthening professional organizations, ranging from the German Medical Association to the Association of German Engineers, but also a conscious "state interest" in pursuing modernizing reforms in both

traditional and technical-scientific schools and colleges. This is a complex issue that can only be explored briefly here, but the reason for mentioning it is that the "state interest" in the fine (as opposed to applied) arts was still of a qualitatively different type. These arts were, in a word, still more clearly associated with the traditional patronage systems of court and aristocracy than quasi-autonomous or even dominant over lay opinion. To put this another way, the Prince Regent of Bavaria did not make it his custom to drop in on and criticize lectures at the University of Munich or suggest improvements in theoretical physics or surgical technique; he did, however, regularly drop in on artists and chat about their work.

This monarchical interest , being more traditional, personal, and symbolic, did not, I am suggesting, conflate as much with Weber's drive to the "demystification of the world" as the bureaucratically-driven "state interest" involving scientifization and professionalization of administration, law, science, medicine etc. Consequently, it did not unleash reform efforts comparable in intensity to those in other educational sectors: art academies did not ask for many changes and did not have them imposed by the state. The academies' canon was held to be classical and static, and its preservation in face of the dynamics of socioeconomic change was regarded as a holy obligation by most of its high priests, the art professors.

The handful of fascinating new state-supported arts-and-crafts schools, it is true, and quite a few private art schools founded or reformed in the Wilhelmine Empire reflect a growing demand for the overhaul of professional art education. But the very fact that a state monopoly over all art education was not considered important, or that this competition to such state institutions as art academies was not regarded as fatal, stands in stark contrast to the "state interest" in monopoly over humanistic, scientific and professional education.)[xv] Nevertheless, by the first decade of the twentieth century, the "workshop" (Werkstätte) idea of training and the art nouveau style had definitely come to dominate many state arts-and-

crafts schools as a matter of conscious government decision, even in such Prussian institutions as the Breslau Academy.

Yet most traditional sites of higher education for artists (if we mean primarily painters and sculptors) managed to escape serious reform during Wilhelm II's reign, although criticism mounted already in the first years of it. "The measure of training that our academies have up to now regarded as sufficient," Alfred Lichtwark wrote in the first editorial in the new art journal Pan in 1895, "had in the end reduced them to being a kind of prep school for the ateliers of Paris," a warning that combined an appeal to German patriotism with a demand to modernize education, exactly in the terms of Wilhelm II's words, if not exact intent.[xvi] True, the traditional art academies also experienced surges in enrollments comparable to those in the contemporary universities. Enrollments at the Berlin Academy leaped from 77 in 1875 to 284 in 1881/2, but had not expanded permanently thereafter: in 1908/9, the number was 218. Munich had a less dramatic increase, but also consistently more students: from 240 in 1872/3 to 552 in 1884, and back to 518 in 1908/9.[xvii] Although the Berlin Academy was officially equated with Prussian universities, the Munich Academy was not raised to university rank until 1911 -- a decade after Technische Hochschulen had been accorded this honor. One of the reasons for both the high enrollment and frequent criticisms of the qualifications of entering students lay in the relatively lax admission standards of the academies. Berlin, which had an unambiguous definition of minimum required prior schooling, required the same standard as did the Prussian army to grant Einjährigen-Freiwillig cadet status, that is, all but the last year of a Gymnasium or equivalent curriculum, but not the Abitur required to enroll in a university. Ironically, while the one-year-volunteer privilege (usually resulting in a socially desirable reserve officer commission) also guaranteed that German academic painters would be able to call themselves "gentlemen," it was just a bit short of the requirement to enter the

traditional professional paths. Academy study was leisurely (lasting between four and seven years) and probably cost as much as university study, even though it promised no career prospects comparable to those of university graduates.[xviii] Although it is hard to find comprehensive and trustworthy statistics for all of Germany, it would even appear that the enrollment increases for art academies had begun to stagnate in the decade or so before World War I. The number of students remained virtually unchanged between 1910 and 1914, at about 3,000; all that changed is that women academy students increased from seventeen to twenty percent of the total.[xix] Women were still not being admitted to the Prussian Academy as late as 1904, when a debate on the issue broke out on the floor of the parliament; women were allowed to study art, to be sure, but only in private schools costing several times the tuition fees charged by the state-subsidized Academy.

Rather than restrict the admissions, which would have also meant a loss of professors' supplemental income from lecture and similar fees, the academies had been encouraging the expansion of the "lesser" art-training institutions such as the Kunstgewerbeschulen and suggested to aspiring students that they consider attending these, rather than the academy. These "rump-academies," viewed during most of the nineteenth century as propaedeutic schools for those who wished to enroll in the academies later or merely as training institutes for a higher class of artisans, were also growing rapidly in enrollments and quality.[xx] Of course, the official art professors at the academies thought they had little to fear by encouring this diversion of students to the "rump academies": as long as the academy professors controlled access to the "real" art market (via jury selection and other mechanisms to the highly regulated salon exhibitions), they did not even dream of professional competition from such "artisanal" quarters.

Perhaps even more important for stylistic experimentation, the new arts and crafts schools departed from the centuries-old academic focus on traditional oil painting and

sculpture, with which the market was oversaturated, and stressed instead media that were more consistent with recent developments in technology, such as graphics and photography. Although the trend was perhaps not readily apparent, the encouragement of reform in these newer-type schools ultimately not only increased Germany's competitiveness in a global market for arts and crafts; it also enhanced the ability of artists and craftsmen exploring new genres to compete with the canvas-and-marble traditionalists of the academies. Thus indirectly the climate favorable to the modernization of education also extended some warmth and nurture to part of the art-education establishment, and the most dynamic part, at that. It might even be said that the relatively weak "state interest" in maintaining a monopoly over professional art education, which combined policies of near-complacency vis-a-vis academies, tolerance toward "free" schools and encouragement for the Kunstgewerbeschulen, was a significant factor in encouraging innovation on one level while stylistic novelties were being decried on other levels, including by the Kaiser himself.

It is also worth noting that reform of art education often began in the private sphere -- not seldom out of frustration with traditional "academic" methods -- but soon obtained support from elements of the state or municipal government. Albert Reimann's school in Berlin began, according to the founder's memoirs, in a "new time" against which, initially only "one place remained reserved, even hostile: the schools, academies and educational institutions where they taught art."[xxi] The Debschitz School, in Munich in 1902, the same year as the Reimann School, began to receive subsidies from the Bavarian educational authorities and the city of Munich only three years later, just as Reimann's did from Prussia.[xxii] Such growing interest by public education authorities often resulted in the massive adoption of the "workshop" methods and ideals of private and semi-private "teaching ateliers," often to the detriment of the latter, as when the Munich Städtische Kunstgewerbeschule reformed its curriculum under Richard Riemerschmidt in 1912.[xxiii] A

similar rapid transformation of private initiatives into public reformed art schools can be found in the case of Henry van de Velde's Weimar "Kunstgewerbliches Seminar" (1902), which became the official Grossherzogliche Kunstgewerbeschule in 1906.

It would of course be misleading to give the impression that most sectors of the German states' bureaucracies involved in education, commerce and industry rushed to embrace "interdisciplinary," experimental and self-consciously workshop-oriented art education reform before 1914 (or even necessarily later). But some sectors of it did. This should not surprise us, for several reasons. First, the history of education in nineteenth-century Germany is rich in examples of parallel bureaucratic competition, as in the case of rivalries between "scholarly" Gymnasia and universities vs. "practical" technical schools and, ultimately, colleges. Often different bureaucracies (e.g. the actual ministry of education vs. the ministry of commerce) influenced the reform and growth of the different types of educational institutions. In Prussia, the Kunstgewerbeschulen were at first placed under the Handelsministerium, then assigned to the education ministry in 1879, only to be reassigned to the former in 1885. The decision that training in the "decorative arts" was important to economic revival dictated this administrative allocation, and it incidentally also initiated a great expansion of state expenditure on this kind of art education (for example, tripling just in the crucial period 1897-1905).[xxiv]

Second, the federal nature of cultural affairs meant a long-standing tradition of competition and rivalry which long preceded and produced (rather than just followed) Article Four of the 1871 Reich Constitution, making art and cultural policy a matter of states' rights. An impetuous emperor like Wilhelm II could attempt to assert cultural leadership for all Germans, but he had no legal power to enforce cultural uniformity. By the same token, rivalries produced innovations that often wound up being emulated by other states: Prussia could not long hold out against a successful educational innovation in Bavaria, and vice-

versa.

Third, the civil service itself was become markedly more differentiated, self-assertive and even professionally self-conscious in the years just after the turn of the century.[xxv] Under the cover of the somewhat ambiguous encouragement to modernize education that came out of the Wilhelm II's Reich School Conferences of 1890 and 1900, but particularly after the second one, some of these civil servants did begin to agree with the views of Reimann (cited above) and other critics of traditional art education.

How, indeed, were painters and sculptors educated in traditional, pre-reformed art academies? This is not as easy a question to answer in detail as historians of education would like: major research incorporating questions and perspectives of our end of the century still needs to be done on German art academies at its beginning, especially the royal academies in Berlin, Munich, and Dresden.

As far as older accounts run, the royal academies of art functioned qua educational institutions (they also had important other functions) as places where students learned an elevated kind of Handwerk but were told their raison d'etre was the service of the pure and sublime. To press the point, set up originally as guild-schools under state patronage, they had become transformed by the mid-nineteenth century into quasi-professional schools for gentlemanly painters and sculptors of "high" official art. Even contemporary criticisms of them stressed the general usefulness of their pedagogical approach, but found wanting their thoughtless inattention to new technical possibilities or their snobbish rejection of applied art and their clinging to a narrow range of expressive forms. As we have already seen, such criticism did not have much measurable effect on their openness to reform, except just before 1914, partly because the unreformed academies shared in common with the burgeoning

reformed universities and raised-by-royal-decree technical colleges: they experienced enrollment booms and were quite satisfied with the expansion of "lesser" art-and-crafts schools to absorb student demand.

Unlike the universities and technical colleges, however, except insofar as the faculty members of those functioned in an informal old-boy network (which they certainly did), the academies also held an official mortmain over the appointment of art juries, against which the "secessions" rebelled. Which doctor or lawyer or industrial manager a German Bürger chose was left to the taste and pocketbook of the citizen (with some qualifications concerning the insured of the working class): which artist that same citizen saw at officially-sponsored exhibits depended on juries. These juries were chosen to some degree or another by the faculty of the art academies and/or their former students in the leadership of Künstlergenossenschaften. The latter were themselves combinations of artists trying to overcome the lack of guilds (abolished in German lands nearly a century before this time). They and the academies worked together in an increasingly unsuccessful bid to manage the market for the academies' graduated "products".

It is always difficult to compare developments in one professionalization occupation to another. But what artists were undergoing in the Wilhelmine period had its parallels elsewhere, as in the shift from a largely officially-controlled type of medicine that one still might describe as an "art" or even "craft" before 1848 to the "free" profession of medicine based on science by 1900. Just as specialization accompanied the professionalization of medicine, marginalizing somewhat the traditional family doctor, so one might see the appearance of new styles, forms and materials as breaches with the traditional dominance of large oil paintings and statuary. As with consumers of medicine, the market for art had also begun to change rapidly, with private dealers, "secession" shows, and the rise of such

industries as modern printing, design, photography and household consumer goods offering vastly wider opportunities for artists. At the same time academies, juries and the older artists' associations were losing some of their "gatekeeping" functions, however, artists of all kinds were unable to establish effective new professional organizations aiming at controlling the new kind of "market for services." Even highly innovative artists shared with many members of another emerging modern professional group, the engineers, an inability to force clients to use only highly certified skills. Just as anybody could call himself an "engineer," so could art-school rejects and self-taught painters list themselves as "artists" -- as Adolf Hitler continued to do in the Munich city address book until 1929.

Historians of professionalization have mostly ignored artists, architects, writers, journalists, musicians, military officers and even clergy, for which there is an analytical reason: they did not succeed in organizing themselves professionally in the manner of doctors, lawyers, Gymnasium teachers, engineers, chemists etc. before Wilhelm II's empire was shut down by the outcome of World War I. Nevertheless they all underwent to some degree a process of professionalization, particularly after the period under discussion here. Because of the special conditions of their occupations (e.g. submission to church hierarchies in the case of clergy or to a chain of command with military officers), these are groups about which there are far more questions than answers. Just a few of these questions include the following.

How many pre-professionalized culture-creators were there in 1889? In 1909? How did the market for their productions change? What affect did these changes have on the very "field of discourse" (as Pierre Bourdieu has called it)?[xxvi] Can we even make any careful judgments without leaping ahead to 1919, 1929, or 1939? Should we quote the "reactionary modernist" Goebbels, as Herf does, citing the "steel-like romanticism" of Goebbels' mental world, without pointing out that Dr. Goebbels himself (a "proletarized" PhD) was a classic

case of the world of professional hopes smashed to rubble in the wreckage of the Wilhelmine Empire? Were reforms of the educational system affecting these professions initiated or resisted by them?

Historians have only begun to answer these questions. One of the simplest, most quantifiable ones -- how many artists were there? -- can only be approximated. Contemporary accounts, based on official census statistics, claimed there were a little fewer than 9,400 painters and sculptors in the German Empire in 1895 and just over 14,600 in 1907. (Of these, about 8,900 and nearly 14,000 actually worked in art as their principal occupation in 1895 and 1907, respectively.) By 1907 thirteen percent of these working painters and sculptors were women, many of them products of private art schools because of lingering discrimination against them at the academies.[xxvii] In comparison to other professions in Wilhelmine Germany, the number of physicians was larger (over 30,000 in 1911), but had increased considerably under socialized medical insurance; yet the number of practicing lawyers was actually less (nearly 7,000 in 1900 and 12,000 in 1913).[xxviii]

But even when we have better figures on artists, we still will need to know more about the structure of the occupation. For example, the difference between physicians acting as specialists may have been smaller than that dividing painters and sculptors from even other art academy graduates who made their living as photographic retouchers. One would also have to consider carefully whether the appeal to "talent" and other elitist markers that were stressed by many spokesmen for modernism in the arts might be compared to specializations in some other professions, such as medicine. Differences in the patterns of consumption of medical treatment and art products, for example, are obvious enough but have never been carefully studied. What is clear is that going to a specialist (even for a non-specific malady) had a fashionable cachet around 1900, just as interest in the avant-garde did;

a sure sign of the parallel was the anti-semitic utterances that targeted both new subgroups in their respective professions.

III.

This point brings us to a glance at market forces. The successful fight by Gymnasium professors to get their salaries adjusted to the level of judges did not go unnoticed in the press which the thousands of "artists" in Germany read in 1909.[xxix] When one reads that literature and understands also that officially-graduated alumni of art academies had to face an increasingly difficult market for their work, without any kind of recourse to the old system sustained by the art academies and quasi-official old Artists' Co-operatives, one can understand why they were increasingly willing to try something different. No less than Wilhelm Bode estimated in the mid-1890s that only five to seven percent of graduates of the Berlin Royal Academy actually went on to become "artists" in the traditional sense (meaning chiefly painters and sculptors)." The rest," he claimed, "are illustrators, draftsmen, photographers or photographic retouchers; the majority disappear into the proletariat and, precisely because of the imaginary [status] demands that their state education has endowed them with, they feed class hatred."[xxx] Bode's references to "proletarianization" and class resentment were a standard part of discourse about learned professions by then, and probably to be taken cum grano salis; what is more revealing is the reference to what all those extra students crowding the art schools were really doing. All these fields, being largely in the private sector, were much more open to imagic innovation than the highly conservative specialties of oil painting and sculpture, traditionally still dependent to a significant degree on official patronage.

But even traditional patronage and previously effective marketing systems had begun to break down by 1900, accompanied by overproduction of artists (and by tendency all other professionalizing occupations) and the growing incapacity of traditional "pre-professionalized" organizations for market control such as the Künstlergenossenschaften that had worked with academies to control art exhibitions. These were all important factors producing a crisis mentality. Specific reactions ranged from a rhetoric of "proletarianization" already cited above (and in isolated cases, no doubt, a genuine identification of artists with the real proletariat) through the creation of such new methods of managing markets as secessions and private theater companies and on to mostly unsuccessful attempts to transcend the old semi-guild organizations and create new and effective professional bodies.

The steep decline of the Munich Art Association (Kunstverein) may serve as an illustration of the effect of new kinds of marketing on what had been until the 1890s a reasonably effective organization dedicated to bringing together artist and consumer. Founded in 1824, it was a private organization of "friends of art" which used dues to hold exhibitions and even buy works of art, which were then raffled off to members. It grew from a membership of over 3,000 in the middle decades of the nineteenth century to nearly 6,000 in 1894. But its membership and income from exhibits declined markedly in the next decade.[xxxi] The kind of "trivial room decoration" that the older public had sought in genre painting, for example, could now be provided better and cheaper by the flourishing graphic-reproduction industry, and avant-garde art was better marketed by private dealers or new types of shows.[xxxii] At the same time, the decline of art associations also spelled a decline in the possibilities for marketing traditional art, at which these groups had done remarkably well for several decades.

If German artists found it difficult if not impossible to reassert traditional market control through professional organization, they had only to look around them to see how a

new art market was working, often with eye-catching economic benefits for those willing to enter it. Most contemporary and historical accounts encourage the conclusion that the various secessions were incomparably more successful at marketing the works of art shown at their shows or by sympathetic private dealers than was the case with the traditional official and semi-official salons. It is hard today to walk down the Prince Regent Street in Munich, past the opulent villa built by Franz Stuck with his fortune made on the art market of Wilhelmine Germany, without thinking of the cold and miserable flats of the hundreds of painters starving in Munich's art-suburb Schwabing (Let alone the shabbiness of van Gogh's rooms or the way le douanier Rousseau made his living.) The fortunes that were made were no longer likely to be made only by officially-sanctioned artists, however, but with increasingly likelihood by secessionists such as Stuck, not the run-of-the-mill graduates of the art academies. Yet those graduates were not expecting fortunes: they were expecting a decent living, precisely by painting and sculpting in the accepted genres. These included historical, landscape, genre and religious subjects -- just as they still do at art fairs in regional America to this day. There were just too many artists (many of mediocre talent) exhibiting far too many works, at least by the standards of today's New York or Paris galleries.

It is worth mentioning in this context that a drive toward "professionalization" in the arts around 1900 did not necessarily mean copying the successful strategies of doctors or teachers in linking higher educational and certification standards to better incomes or market control. The Bund Deutscher Architekten (BDA), founded in 1904, for example, argued for more "artistic" and less "technical" training, in effect upholding talent and imagination against even more thorough drilling in the manner of traditional architects.[xxxiii] The perceived antagonism of "genius" and "masses" was not only a leitmotif of the whole Wilhemine era; it also infused discussions about professionalization, including among architects and artists. The appeal to talent and personal vision had been a part of a certain German romantic idea

about artists in the early nineteenth century, and the neo-romantic restatement of this idea around 1900 may have in fact conditioned both the difficulties faced by the masses of artists trying to professionalize as well as the development of secessions, the latter certainly including elite (if not necessarily avant-gardist) self-assumptions. It is therefore highly ironic that the more accessible and "democratic" Kunstgewerbeschulen should become increasingly the home of the new artistic theories of modernism.

If the secessionists struck out toward a new kind of art market and, perhaps more importantly, a new kind of art arbitration system in Germany, they did so out of frustration. They were not able to organize artists toward collective market-domination in the way the German Medical Association managed with physicians before 1914. Nor can anyone maintain any more that they had a unifying style or even an "innovative" impulse. They were following drives that affected most other segments of the Bildungsbürgertum -- the drive to differentiate professionally between the merely qualified and practitioners of new and rewarding "specializations." Significantly, the German physicians' leaders (and most other university-trained professionals) still resisted artificial limitations on the market in services (e.g. limiting the number of students in medical schools), partly because they believed their "school" medicine was so superior to old-fashioned "quackery" that it would eventually win over the public in free competition. German artists had even more reason to sense a "professionalizing crisis" setting upon them than contemporary doctors or chemists: there was not yet a body of "theory" available for the artists upon which to build distinctions in their professional world. And of course, then as now, nobody could think how to manage a fit among talent, training and market.

It is tempting to recast the ferment in the Wilhemine art world concerning light, line, color, media, materials, direct experience of nature, emotion, audience or clientele, canonical limits and many other issues as the most profound and consequence-laden search for a new

"theory" of art since the end of the eighteenth century. Such a view has multiple explanatory power. It relates the struggle of artists with their changing market to that of other emerging modern professional groups in the same place and time. It explains also the coincidence of heightened concern about art education and its immediate reform with the rapid decay of traditional professional organizations that had attempted theretofore to help artists market their work and control the markets where they did so. It explains why artists who demanded or were involved in modern educational reform were not necessarily members of the avant-garde stylistically. And it helps reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable differences between the taste for public art and expressions of "state interest" in its rigidly conventional continuation expressed by Wilhelm II. and the more open, frequently even encouraging attitudes of different levels of the civil service in Imperial Germany.

These last differences were not minor, and they point to the dialectical outcome of contradictory motives and goals so characteristic of the Wilhelmine era. A final section of reflections on the external cultural policies of the German Empire may serve to illuminate this point.

IV.

Not nearly enough research has been done on the "official cultural policy" (or more significantly, policies) of Wilhelmine Germany and the relationship between these policies, on the one hand, and the cultural views and contributions of such perceived enemies of those policies (Reichskulturfeinde, to coin a term), as Jews and Catholics, women and socialists, or even secessionists. It can be argued that the Wilhelmine record is not as one-sided as many believe, since actions intended to serve the image of the imperial nation-state created ferment

as well as ossification and embarrassment. Even when the emperor personally had his way and his outbursts concerning "gutter art" were acted on to reverse the basically rational and reconciling intentions of his own cultural bureaucracy, the unintended outcome was often a notable leap forward for modernism.

Thus the debacle of the German art exhibition at the St. Louis International Exposition of 1904 showed more than the power Wilhelm II. could still summon to impose his narrow aesthetic views (and those of some of his major allies in the bureaucracy, such as Anton von Werner). It also showed how little the leading cultural bureaucrats of the Reich, Prussia and the other federal states involved in the negotiations completely shared their emperor's reflexive hatred of modern art. Indeed, if the emperor's bullying tactics achieved anything permanent, it was welding together a rare consensus of all political parties against his artistic views and tactics in the Reichstag, as well as leading to the founding of the Deutscher Künstlerbund, another step toward the debility of the traditional bastion of guild-like mediocrity in German art, the Künstlergenossenschaft.[xxxiv]

Much of the literature that historians read and write (I refer back to Thomas Kohut here) revolves around the Ausländerfeindlichkeit -- hostility to the foreign or alien --that they find in Wilhelmine Germany. Aside from the fact that "integral nationalism" or at least an overheated chauvinism was a part of the mental furniture in most European countries and North America at the time, one might note that German artists were especially prone to fear of the foreign for reasons of self-interest. Since many of them depended heavily on exhibitions for their sales and income, it was logical, in an overcrowded market, to seek ways of excluding competition. Denouncing "foreign" (especially French) art was merely a variant on the long-standing practice of trying to exclude or limit even displays of works by artists from other German locales at exhibitions. At the same time, German artists were most eager

to expand foreign markets for their work.

The cultural bureaucracy, called upon to wave the flag abroad (and, inter alia, improve the competitive chances for German artists in world markets), was quite aware of the need to include modern art, when it could escape the emperor's attention, along with the achievements of science, scholarship and industry, in the "assortment" offered to the outside world. German culture, so presented, found acceptance and respect abroad, and was actively promoted by Wilhelm II's "eminence grise de Wissenschaft" Ministerialdirektor Friedrich Althoff of the Pruussian Culture Ministry and the official art establishment rounding up funds and personnel (including the leading academics, whatever their quarrels among themselves) to send German cultural flying squads to places like Saint Louis. This auswärtige Kulturpolitik des deutschen Reiches, as Rüdiger vom Bruch has dubbed it, was not unsuccessful, even though it might have been more so with more avant-garde artists among those exhibited abroad.[xxxv] We also tend to ignore the fact that Imperial Germany, while having a kind of "balance of payments problem" with France, nevertheless sold its art there, and not just vice-versa. It had a definite balance-of-payments plus with young America. Despite the power of William Morris's imagination over German artists, the exchange between the British and German empires was more reciprocal than one-way. The export of German paintings was on the rise during the first years of the century, nearly tripling, for example, to France and almost matching the value of French art imports.[xxxvi]

Openness to new ideas meant openness to foreign ideas, in the view of the many progressive cultural leaders of Wilhelmine Germany, including quite a few senior civil servants. They rarely defied the emperor's temper tantrums about art, as the incidents connected with the St. Louis Exposition and the Tschudi Affair show. But the fact that the civil service had to be reprimanded also shows where, left to its own devices, it was headed. It seems tragic (if not also a bit farcical) in retrospect that the monarch's impressive patronage

was also marred by a phobia regarding modern art, but it may seem that way more because of the similar views of Hitler and the great damage done under his tyranny than because of any effective suppression of modernism under Wilhelm. The very monarch who wanted to de-emphasize the ancient classics in school curricula also heavily patronized the collection of ancient antiquities in his museums. Within the confines of a would-be "personal rule" that led in contradictory directions all at once, die Moderne could struggle and also flourish under growing private patronage, which reached new heights of importance. One can also agree with Robin Lenman's assessment: "Germany ... had an acceptably tolerant atmosphere, and the legal and political threats to artistic freedom were probably, on balance, a stimulus to experimentation rather than an obstacle."[xxxvii]

If on the other hand, the German people had a "narcissistic relationship" with their insecure boy-emperor, who never grew up, and sustained him in his view that all art must serve the glorification of the dynasty and the nation's triumphant historical moments under its leadership (rather than the community, the church, the city council, or even the regional kings and princes), as Kohut argues, it could afford to do so because of the growing counterweight of private interests and even the German bureaucracy. Even an erratic emperor could no longer thwart Germany's powerful and respected professional civil service, which often allowed and sheltered progressive change, and built not only the world's best scientific, scholarly, and technology-related higher educational system of the time, but did so in a mostly successful (if often stressful) interchange with Germany's professional classes and captains of industry and finance.

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To point to the conjunction of a professional crisis in the arts and a dynamic of reform of the way professionals (including producers of art) were trained is not to deny other forces active in creating a sense of cultural crisis or change during decades when Nietzsche, Einstein, Freud, Weber, Luxemburg and Roentgen were doing some of their most significant work. But equally we must consider that a principled questioning of traditional paradigms and placing an increasingly positive cultural value on innovation were also concomitants of the drive to professionalization in what one might call the non-artistic Bildungsbürgertum. If the way to "raise the estate" of physicians, teachers, engineers, chemists, and even the notoriously lazy lawyers lay in raising the educational standards and overturning old canons in the name of "modern science," why should not similar efforts work for artists and writers? First, however, the latter had to emulate what doctors and engineers had -- a successful means of questioning past practices and validating new ones, partly as a means of dominating the market in their services and crowding out quacks and amateurs. If one is willing to leave open the question of how effective such innovation was objectively and see how effective it could be merely as a market strategy (a view prevalent among more recent theorists of professionalization), one can wonder why its uses have not occurred to more cultural historians attempting to analyze the roots of modernism.

It must also be said that reactions to a professionalization crisis can also be retaurationist: many German artists dug themselves even more deeply into the guild-mentality and mindlessly uncritical apotheosis of ossified styles, under the leadership of such anti-modernists as the head of the Prussian Academy of Arts, Anton von Werner. Like Werner, they propagated an "idea" (one might even say "dogma") of the beautiful rather than a "feeling for the beautiful." As Count Kessler acidly quoted Werner's own words in 1903, the academician and his allies envisioned a state that would enforce an "idea of art ... similarly to the way an international commission watches over the certainty and indubitability of the

modern meter-measure."[xxxviii] The fact that Werner had never been able to articulate the components of this standard art, Kessler went on, was a sign of the knee-jerk protectionism toward dead styles and the mediocrities who clung to them. In the absence of such an articulation, however, Kessler suggested that Werner's own paintings would have to do: "The best criticism of Werner's art policy is in reality Werner's achievements. For no dogma, no matter how prettily baptized, can stand up to the dictatorship of such works as 'The Proclamation of the Emperor,' the frieze on the Berlin Victory Column or [the portrait of] General Alvensleben."[xxxix]

More significant perhaps than Werner's outworn "dictatorship," especially for the future was the fact that it was being undermined by very different approaches to art, not only in the thriving non-official circles of German artists and patrons, but also by other civil servants who perceived the ossified arguments of Werner and his allies as harmful to Germany's competitiveness and who acted quietly in favor of the arguments of reformers in art education. Just as innovations in technical training had preceded Germany's emergence as a world power in technology and industry, all carried out incidentally against the wishes of the Gymnasium-teacher element of the teaching profession, comparable innovations in art training preceded the full flowering of German modernism in the Weimar era. In both cases competing professional interests vied for state intervention in their sense but wound up achieving support for both the traditional approach (mildly "modernized" from time to time) and the innovative ones.

The fact that the emperor, in his showy and melodramatic way, as well as the established generation of academy professors, art association officers and others with a stake in trying to preserve the dying old art market vocally resisted modernism has made its rise in Germany more dramatic than it otherwise might have seemed.

In the end, no amount of imperial patronage and interference could save the world of

Anton von Werner. The dynamics of reform and change seized not only the occupation of artist, but most others as well. It may even be fortunate that Wilhelm's attention (which was notoriously prone to wander) was distracted by Werner and other advisors to the level of imposing Hohenzollern-sustaining historical canvases and statuary. Otherwise, he might have had more time to follow up his initiatives regarding the reform of education, as launched with the Reichschulkonferenz of 1890. Certainly few comparably short periods in German history have witnessed more significant innovations in secondary and tertiary education than under this reign. Yet Wilhelm was not particularly interested in education and would presumably not have liked what was happening, if he had understood it well. He was able to urge German officialdom to dismantle rigid classicism in education while deploring the same process in official art --not the only contradiction of his reign.

The way to gain access to the roots of modernism in Germany is therefore bound to lead past such elaborately-costumed stage-figures as Wilhelm II, into the previously little-examined backstage of professional education and decision-making in lesser civil-service offices, private schools and impersonal art markets. Driving forces for change, including the embrace of what we call modernism, emanated from such sources as an increasingly evident and many-sided professional crisis among artists as well as from a widespread perception that Germany must break with old ways in order to compete better and survive in a Darwinian world.

NOTES

i . For a stimulating introduction to the complex world of "cultural concepts" in Germany at the turn of the century, see Rüdiger vom Bruch, Friedrich Wilhelm Graf and Gangolf Hübinger (eds.), Kultur und Kulturwissenschaften um 1900 (Stuttgart, 1989), especially the editors' introduction.

ii . According to James McFarlane, die Moderne -- the Modern -- first appeared in Zehn Thesen drawn up Eugen Wolff for the Naturalist group Durch in Berlin in 1887. James McFarlane, "Berlin and the Rise of Modernism 1886-96," in Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane (eds.), Modernism (New York, 1976), p. 109 f.

iii . Jeffrey Herf, Reactionary Modernism (Cambridge, 1984).

iv . Thomas Kohut, Wilhelm II and the Germans (New York, 1991), p. 5. This author incidentally prefers to call William Wilhelm in an English-language title, and he also prefers "Wilhelmian" as an adjective (not the "Wilhelmine" of this volume). The -ian approach is clearly based on British usage (Georgian, Edwardian etc.), whereas the -ine approach is derived from the German, which grammatically must distinguish between the simple possessive adjective ("wilhelm'sch") and the more global designation of a ruler's age ("wilhelminisch"). Perhaps the world of journalism could sort this out with some ignorant neologisms such as "the Baltics" and "the Germanys".

v . Peter Paret, The Berlin Secession. Modernism and its Enemies in Imperial Germany (Cambridge, MA,, 1980). "Problems created by the greatly expanded membership of the /guild-like/ art associations, and by changing patterns of patronage and exhibitions, lent impetus to the secessions; far from reacting to conditions unique to Germany, they formed part of a European phenomenon." (p. 29)

vi . Robin Lenman, "Painters, Patronage and the Art Market in Germany 1850-1914", Past and Present, No. 123 (1986), p. 120.

vii . Charles E. McClelland, State, Society and University in Germany, 1700-1914 (Cambridge, 1980), pp. 239-242. Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich (Berlin, 1880 ff.), 32 (1911), pp. 330-1; 35 (1914), pp. 316-19.

viii . See Fritz Ringer, Education and Society in Modern Europe (Bloomington, 1979), passim.

ix . See the stimulating work by Margali Sarfatti Larson, The Rise of Professionalism. A Sociological Analysis (Berkeley, 1977).

x . For an excellent example of the German scholarly community's aversion to so-called "French" ideas about reducing social and human psychic phenomena -- including culture -- to behaviorist laws at the time of William II's reign, see Roger Chickering, Karl Lamprecht. A German Academic Life, 1856-1915 (Atlantic Highlands, NJ, 1993), esp. chapters 4-8.

xi . Charles E. McClelland, The German Experience of Professionalization. Modern Learned Professions and their Organizations from the Early Nineteenth Century to the Hitler Era (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 111-113.

xii . See Cornelis W. R. Gispen, New Profession, Old Order. Engineers in German Society, 1815-1914 (Cambridge, 1989), chap. 8.

xiii . Hans M. Wingler, "Vorstufen zur Kunstschulreform," in Hans M. Wingler et al. (ed.), Kunstschulreform 1900-1933 (Berlin, 1977), p. 53.

xiv . Otto Stelzer, "Erziehung durch manuelles Tun," in Wingler (ed.), Kunstschulreform, p. 52.

xv . See Wingler (ed.), Kunstschulreform for details about new schools and changes in established ones.

xvi . Alfred Lichtwark, "Rundschau," Pan, 1 (1895/6), p. 97. In the same article, Lichtwark also praised the English for developing a living artistic style -- the reference is clearly to William Morris -- and breaking with the encrustations of classicism: Germany should emulate this search for its own modern style (but of course not the English style itself).

xvii . Ekkehard Mai, "Kunstakademien im Wandel. Zur Reform der Künstlerausbildung im 19. Jahrhundert," in Wingler (ed.), Kunstschulreform , pp. 32-36.

xviii . Paul Drey, Die wirtschaftlichen Grundlagen der Malkunst (Stuttgart/Berlin, 1910), p. 67.

xix . Statistisches Jahrbuch, 32 (1911), p. 335; 35 (1914), p.321.

xx . Mai, "Kunstakademien im Wandel," pp. 36-7.

xxi . Albert Reimann, Die Reimann-Schule in Berlin (Berlin, 1966), (as quoted in Wingler (ed.), Kunstschulreform, p. 61.

xxii . Ibid., p. 66.

xxiii . Helga Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, "Die Münchner Debschitz-Schule," in Wingler (ed.), Kunstschulreform, p. 80.

xxiv . Gisela Moeller, "Die preussischen Kunstgewerbeschulen," in Ekkehart Mai, Hans Pohl and Stephan Waetzoldt (eds.), Kunstpolitik und Kunstförderung im Kaiserreich (Berlin, 1982), p. 126, n. 5 and p. 116. Significantly, the percentage of budget funds allocated to the Prussian Royal Museums remained

fairly constant from the 1870s to 1913. But the percentage allocated to the National Gallery had already been halved by 1900, with the difference going to sustain the Kunstgewerbemuseum -- one of the highest-level new arts-and-crafts training centers. Between 1900 and 1913, further percentage shifts increased its share of the arts budget -- to the detriment of the various Prussian art academies. See Wilfried Feldkirchen, "Staatliche Kunstfinanzierung im 19. Jahrhundert," in Mai et al., Kunstpolitik, chart, p. 36.

xxv . For a discussion of this phenomenon of professionalization, see McClelland, German Experience, pp. 162-4.

xxvi . Pierre Bourdieu, "Intellectual Field and Creative Project," Social Science Information, 8 (1969), pp. 89-119; and "The Genesis of the Concepts of Habitus and of Field," Sociocriticism, 2 (1985), pp. 11-24.

xxvii . Drey, Die wirtschaftlichen Grundlagen, p. 71 and 309; Statistik des Deutschen Reiches, ccxi (Berlin, 1913), Appendix, p. 59. As Robin Lenman has pointed out, private ladies' art classes constituted a significant extra source of income for established male painters. Lenman, "Painters, Patronage and the Art Market," p. 132.

xxviii . McClelland, German Experience, pp. 140 and 155.

xxix . Ibid., p. 166.

xxx . Bode, "Die Berliner Akademie," Pan, 1 (1895-6), p. 48.

xxxi . York Langenstein, Der Münchner Kunstverein im 19. Jahrhundert. Ein Beitrag zur Entwicklung des Kunstmarkts und des Ausstellungswesens /Miscellanea Bavarica Monacensia, v. 122/ (Munich, 1983), p. 318.

xxxii . Ibid., p. 218.

xxxiii . Wilhelm Kulemann, Die Berufsvereine, 2nd ed. (Jena, 1908-13), I, 179-80.

xxxiv . See Peter Paret, The Berlin Secession, pp. 134-55.

xxxv . See Rüdiger vom Bruch, Weltpolitik als Kulturmission: auswärtige Kulturpolitik und Bildungsbürgertum in Deutschland am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkrieges (Paderborn, 1982).

xxxvi . Frey, Die wirtschaftlichen Grundlagen, p. 310.

xxxvii . Lenman, "Painters, Patronage and the Art Market," p. 111.

xxxviii . Harry Graf Kessler, "Herr von Werner," Kunst und Künstler (1903/4), reprinted in Günther Feist (ed.), Kunst und Künstler. Aus 32 Jahren einer deutschen Kunstzeitschrift (Mainz, 1971), p. 61. The original statement about meter-measures is in Anton von Werner, Ansprachen und Reden (Berlin, 1896), p. 42.

xxxix . Ibid.