

**Buildings, Spaces, Politics:  
Munich City Council and the Management of Modernity,  
1900-1930**

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester  
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ABSTRACT OF THESIS submitted by **Leif Jerram** for the Degree of Ph.D., and entitled *Buildings, Spaces, Politics: Munich City Council and the Management of Modernity, 1900-1930*. Month and Year of Submission: **January 2001**.

This work is an attempt to de-theorize the historical city, de-theorize modernity, and open up the built environment to historical enquiry. It is an investigation of the buildings and building policies and activities of the municipality of Munich between approximately 1900 and 1930, in order to assess attitudes towards significant tropes in the understanding of modern society at the beginning of the twentieth century in Germany. Schools, hospitals, factories, town planning, orphanages, exhibition halls, old people's homes, office blocks and social housing are its main focuses. It rejects approaches to examining the historical city which rely on 'floating' artistic representation, and regards the city as a specific material artifact. It wishes to enrich social history through presenting experiences and visual horizons to supplement statistical approaches. It analyzes conceptualizations of, and responses to, the economic, cultural and social phenomena of advanced modernization without relying on a canon of sociological or cultural criticism to which contemporaries could have had no access, but instead through investigating the spatial and visual management of the urban environment, and the opinions of the governors, experts and citizens of the city of Munich who produced it. It rejects the direct association of modernity and Modernism. Viewing a reliance on works included in cultural canons as being unrepresentative of the overwhelming majority of cultural production, this piece looks at the generation of urban environments without any regard to the art-historical quality of the buildings or spaces encountered.

The conclusions are that there was an ambivalent approach towards the metropolis, and by extension, modernity, which sought to emphasize the positive features of modern society which would enable the negative ones to be eradicated. Cities were regarded as both symptom and cause of modernity; if one could manipulate them, the problems produced by modern life could be minimized, and the advantages harnessed. The corporation proposed to tackle loneliness, alienation, 'nerves', the 'deceptive' nature of modern cultural production, the fracturing of experience and the deindividuation produced by the rise of capitalist, mass society using essentially modern means: public building, planning regulations, bureaucracy, education, and popular exhibitions about the built environment. This ambivalence has been under-represented in the historiography of Germany and German cultural criticism, as has been the qualified celebration of aspects of modern life. This thesis emphasizes the potential for city dwellers to embrace modernity as a whole, while sustaining reformatory ambitions regarding some of its features. The corporation used its building department to encourage citizens to engage positively with industry, urban growth, science, technology and an expanding bureaucracy at the expense of rural, craft and religious allegiances. Through revolutionizing town planning, the corporation succeeded in bringing order to a socio-economic form they regarded as potentially threatening and chaotic, thereby neutralizing it. By increasing their power to manipulate the interior spaces of buildings, the corporation tried to reconcile modern statistics-based administration with individuality by introducing domestic spaces into institutions and rationally planned spaces into homes. A detailed micro study of domestic interiors in social housing demonstrates the objective of reducing the vulnerability of women to the effects of rational industrial processes, and emphasize their more personal and social role as mothers over their more impersonal ones as domestic managers. Finally, why culture was such a significant political arena in early 20<sup>th</sup> century Germany is examined, by demonstrating the interdependence of politics, art criticism and design in solving the housing problem, perhaps the country's most pressing domestic political issue.

### **Declaration**

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### **A Note on Illustrations and Translations**

All illustrations are from photographs taken by the author, unless stated otherwise. Likewise, all translations from German and French are by the author, unless stated otherwise.

### Acknowledgments

I would like to mention the contributions of many people to this project. My supervisors, Stuart Jones of the Department of History, and Matthew Jefferies of the Department of German Studies, deserve thanks, as does Harry Cocks, also of the History Department, for his willingness to read, re-read, suggest and consider. His assistance in this project went above and beyond the call of duty, certainly as a colleague, but also as a friend. The Stadtarchiv München is the most pleasant archive I have ever been in, and the staff could not do enough to help. I thank them for their gentle suggestion, in about week six of my visit, that 'Maybe der Herr Jerram might like to look at the *Nachlaß* catalogue of the city's most important building bureaucrat between 1900 and 1928?', which they keep on some sort of archivists' 'top shelf'. Their willingness to help with little favours and suggestions never wavered, except for a brief period after Manchester United's victory over Bayern München in the Noucamp during injury time in the 1999 Champions' League cup final.

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**For  
my mum, Christine  
my sister, Georgia  
and  
my nanna, Ella**

## Introduction

*Man lebt in einer großen Stadt,  
Und ist doch so allein.  
Der Mann, nachdem man Sehnsucht hat,  
Scheint noch nicht da zu sein.  
Man kennt ihn nicht,  
Und kennt ihn doch genau,  
Und man hat Angst,  
Daß er vorüber geht.<sup>1</sup>*

The opening lines of Marlene Dietrich's 1933 smash hit, *Allein in einer großen Stadt*, give an impression of life in a big town which many would have been familiar with in the first decades of the last century. Yearning, desire, the frisson of contact and the potential for love and adventure are coupled with *Angst* and a fear of the unknown, and a sense that life is passing one by; everything is pervaded by the paradox that one has never been so physically close to so many people, and yet so distant and detached. The quality of life in the city – quality in both its senses, that of the qualities that city life has, and also its standard of living – was a subject of immense general interest before and after 1900. Yet it concerned none more greatly than those whose job it was to ensure that this quality, in both its senses, was as rewarding as possible. The governors and administrators of the city had an interest in every aspect of city life: economy, social relations, cultural life, the physical and emotional well-being of the citizens. It is primarily the emotional well-being of the citizens which is under investigation here, and

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<sup>1</sup> 'You live in a big city,/ And yet you're so alone./ The man you yearn for,/ seems not to have come yet./ You don't know him at all,/ And yet know him very well,/ And you live in angst,/ That he will pass you by.' Lyrics by Max Kolpe, music by Franz Wachsmann, written some time between 1928 and 1930. Dietrich began singing the song c. 1930, and had her hit with it in 1933. I am grateful to the encyclopaedic knowledge of Dietrich's discography of Meik Streif, who can be contacted through his website at: <http://www.ivnet.co.at/streif/>.

how the Magistrat, the executive of the corporation, and its Hochbauamt, the municipal building department, engaged in the task of improving the quality of life for the citizens of the town. This thesis is about attempts by the Munich corporation to do two things: firstly, to describe their world to themselves and convey their feelings about it to others; and secondly, to manipulate the opinions, conscious and unconscious, of their fellow citizens by shaping their visual and spatial experience of the town they lived in. The subjects of investigation are governors and experts, structures and the spaces in between structures, and the people who had to use the buildings which surrounded them.

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Much has been written on the history of 'the city', from a variety of perspectives, and the first half of the thesis is about responses to the *Großstadt*. There is what might be called the city of 'theory', the city of social history, the city of architectural history, yet there is a problem with each of these 'cities', and it is worth briefly outlining what some of those problems might be and how this thesis aims to address them. The 'city of theory's' main difficulty is that it sometimes posits almost a Platonic city of pure form, assuming that certain viewpoints or mentalities will be shared in urban agglomerations across cultures, regions, languages and continents. Thus James Donald, relating the experience of the city to modernity, can write:

The point I am making is... that 'the city' does not just refer to a set of buildings in a particular place. To put it polemically, there is no such *thing* as a city. Rather, *the city* designates the space produced by the interaction of historically and geographically specific institutions, social relations of production and reproduction, practices of government, forms and media of communication, and so forth... *The city*, then, is above all a representation... I would argue that the city constitutes an *imagined environment*.<sup>2</sup>

The problem with this approach is that, although we might choose to regard the city as a representation, people in Munich did not think of it like that. They certainly ascribed to it representational qualities, and much of the work that follows is about the how the council represented the city both to themselves and to others. But that is not *all* the city was. It was also a real thing to them, bricks and mortar, sewage, business, society: in a word, an artifact. Donald cites Dickens, Engels, Simmel, Foucault, Chadwick, Le Corbusier, Baudelaire and Eliot, and by doing so feels he has 're-captured' what people saw, felt and experienced when they walked out of their houses and into Birmingham or Berlin in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Bermann is more specific, confining his analysis to St. Petersburg, but relying on Dostoevsky, Turgenev, Pushkin,

<sup>2</sup> Emphasis in original. James Donald, 'Metropolis: the City as Text' in *Social and Cultural Forms of Modernity* ed. by Robert Boccock and Kenneth Thompson (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 418-470 (p. 422).

Gogol, Chernyshevsky and lesser literary luminaries.<sup>3</sup> This sort of treatment is not uncommon; it is what Anke Gleber and Bart Keunen do in their essays on cities, modernism and modernity in a collection on the *fin-de-siècle*, for example.<sup>4</sup> This approach can diminish the imperative to reconstruct a mentality or an ambition or the ideologies underpinning the creation of a specific environment through the intentions of real actors. What can also be overlooked is that very often these novels and paintings stress not just universals, but what is *distinctive* about a certain place, by evoking it: Feuchtwanger's Munich is deliberately different from Dickens' London, Zola's Paris, Elizabeth Gaskell's 'Milltown Northern, Darkshire', or Tolstoy's Moscow. Feuchtwanger's Munich of *spießig* racism is even very different from Mann's Munich of erudite liberals. Too often, we deal with 'the city' as a pure form, existing almost in the minds of the gods, as it were; we rely on the works of geniuses, when trying to recapture the experience and mentalities of unspectacular people. The objective here is to approach not 'the' city, but 'a' city, brought from the ethereal world of literary or artistic representation into the real one of bricks and mortar.

David Feldman's and Gareth Stedman Jones' approach to images and histories of London in the 1989 volume they edited is better at relating mental images to actual mentalities in actual places, even though the representations remain mostly verbal.<sup>5</sup> However, with the background which these two historians have in detailed empirical investigations of, respectively, ethnic political and cultural relations and the history of poverty in the city, the work evinces little of the 'floating' quality which pervades some writing about 'the' city. An example of a successful comparative approach, which allows both similarities and differences to emerge, is Andrew Lees' very useful work, *Cities Perceived*, and it is from him that I have borrowed the contrastive structure of the first two chapters. The division of his analysis into 'Perspectives on Urban Ills, 1880-1918' and 'Positive Views of City Life, 1880-1918' are the most useful parts of his work, and the positive views of the city which he relates are largely taken up with what he calls 'the city as a natural artifact', a 'technological and aesthetic spectacle', 'the emancipatory city', and lastly, the dominant sub-section on 'the sense of communal

<sup>3</sup> Marshall Bermann, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London, 1999 [1983]), pp. 173-286.

<sup>4</sup> Anke Gleber, 'The Secret Cities of Modernity: Topographies of Perception in Georges Rodenbach, Robert Walser and Franz Hessel'; Bart Keunen, 'The Aestheticization of the City in Modernism' in *The Turn of the Century: Modernism and Modernity in Literature and the Arts* ed. by Christian Berg, Frank Durieux and Geert Lernout (New York, 1995), pp.380-390, 392-408.

<sup>5</sup> David Feldman and Gareth Stedman Jones (eds.), *Metropolis – London: Histories and Representations since 1800* (London, 1989).

achievement'.<sup>6</sup> It is these senses of the city as artifact, and of communal achievement which are of such great interest. Some of the themes which he highlights in respect to Germany in both of these sections recur here, but there are some notable omissions, and differing emphases. The most notable absence is discussion of race or physical degeneration. Despite it being significant in Germany at this time, I have never found a single comment on the issue by anyone concerned with the Magistrat or the Hochbauamt. The only degeneration they ever fretted about was cultural, spiritual and psychological. The significant addition is an emphasis on the assumed effects on the emotional life of the citizen of modernity; just what is meant by that term is something I shall come back to.

The 'city of social history' certainly could not have the same accusation of a certain 'légereté' thrown at it. The work is painstaking, and has proved invaluable in providing a background to this project. But what social history sometimes fails to capture is the visual and experiential element: how the world looked, what it was like to walk around in it. For example, in an outstanding piece of detailed social history, Gerhard Neumeier differentiates between life in the 20 districts (*Bezirke*) in Munich, between different types of employment, and various other factors.<sup>7</sup> Yet we are left ignorant as to what people thought of their various *Stadtviertel*; we know only what their jobs were, how much they earned or whether they used the municipal showers. There is useful work in this field – for example, Richard Evans' *Kneipengespräche im Kaiserreich* is a collection of overheard conversations in Hamburg pubs which gives real insight into the ways some people viewed their world, rather than the ways they measured it.<sup>8</sup> They might have loved their jobs, and hated their homes, or *vice versa*. As we shall see in chapter four, they may have been relatively poor yet unwilling to move into 'better' housing for some reason; they may have been relatively wealthy and keen to move into a poorer area to secure a corporation flat. Likewise, Alan Mayne gives us an interesting position from which to judge how slum housing was understood from outside the 'ghetto' in Britain, the USA and Australia, but does not provide illustration. Describing the 'imagined slum', his imagination remains almost exclusively verbal, not visual,

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Lees, *Cities Perceived: Urban Society in European and American Thought, 1820-1940* (Manchester, 1985); 'Perspectives on Urban Ills, 1880-1918', pp. 104-188; 'Positive Views of Urban Life, 1880-1918', pp. 189-255.

<sup>7</sup> Gerhard Neumeier, *München um 1900: Wohnen und Arbeiten, Familie und Haushalt, Stadtteile und Sozialstrukturen, Hausbesitzer und Fabrikarbeiter, Demographie und Mobilität – Studien zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte einer deutschen Großstadt vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (Frankfurt, 1995).

<sup>8</sup> Richard Evans (ed.), *Kneipengespräche im Kaiserreich: Die Stimmungsberichte der Hamburger Politischen Polizei, 1892-1914* (Hamburg, 1989).



which is not how people imagine at all.<sup>9</sup> This thesis aims to take social factors into account, but also to try to recapture what people saw when they experienced the world, and how what they saw and the spaces they moved through influenced what they felt and thought. Thus, in the case of the Heiliggeistspital old people's home discussed in chapter three, we find that general opinion was that the design of the building changed the whole experience of institutionalization for the elderly, transforming them from inmates into guests without necessarily making them a penny richer, or prolonging their life by a single day. In this way, it is hoped to provide another dimension to more conventional studies of social history.

The 'city of architectural history' suffers from the inverse problem; the focus on how

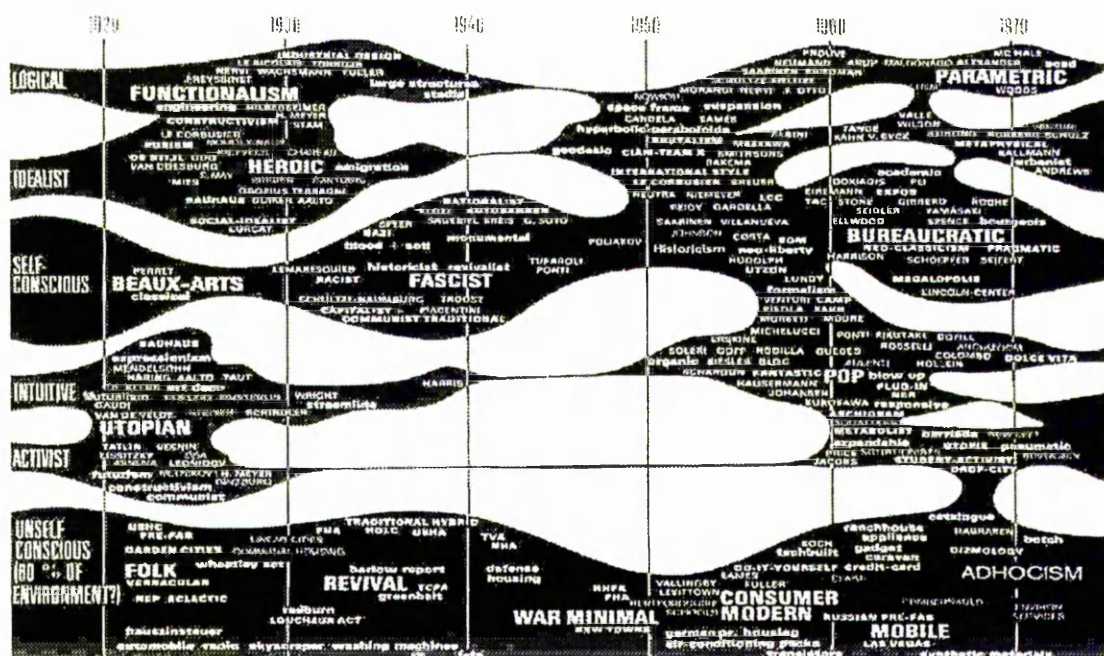


Figure 1: 'Evolutionary Tree', based on categories devised by Claude Lévi-Strauss. Jencks, *Modern Movements in Architecture*, p. 28.

something looked too often excludes the mundane, day-to-day use of the structures, and can dwell on the creative processes behind a building, privileging the narrative of the architect over both those of the patrons and the users. Baudelaire told an anecdote about Balzac being shown an exceptionally beautiful painting of peasants walking to their cottage in winter. Balzac's remark was:

'How beautiful it is!' he cried, 'But what are they doing in that cottage? What are their thoughts? What are their sorrows? Has it been a good harvest? *No doubt they have bills to pay?*'<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Alan Mayne, *The Imagined Slum: Newspaper Representations in Three Cities* (Leicester, 1993).

<sup>10</sup> Baudelaire's emphasis. From 'On the Modern Idea of Progress as Applied to the Fine Arts' (1855), cited in Bermann, *All that is Solid Melts into Air*, p. 141.

The painting was beautiful, and the artist great, but there were many more questions to ask than that; Balzac's questions are the subject of this analysis. The usual approach means emphasizing an individual with a brief relationship to the building at the expense of the many who have a long relationship with it; as we will see in chapter three, the councillors who had been working on the new Schwabing hospital had been doing so for five years before the architect, Schachner, got involved, and continued their involvement long after he had discharged his duty. There is a major additional difficulty, as well, in that historians tend to focus on buildings from an art-historical canon, which means that only a very small proportion of the structures erected are examined. Charles Jencks, a leading architectural historian, draws attention to this very well (though does not remedy it) in *Modern Movements in Architecture*. In a diagram (figure 1), Jencks outlines what he considers to be the significant historical strands, the ones he discusses in his book. Only the last category, 'Unself-Conscious' architecture need concern us. He suggests, almost sheepishly, that this constitutes '80%(?)' of the environment – surely a conservative estimate. But he includes here garden cities, *Hauszinssteuer* (spelt *hauszinssteuer*), Soviet pre-fabs, Loucheur act housing and many more, which absolutely were not 'unself-conscious'. It was the *Hauszinssteuer* tax on the pre- and post-war rent differentials which paid for Ernst May's estates in Frankfurt,<sup>11</sup> found in the Heroic Idealist section; how can the tax, hugely controversial, be unself-conscious, while the things it paid for are Heroic and Idealist? Equally, garden cities did not take their builders and investors by surprise. In this schematic, usual for much cultural history, 80% (at least) of cultural production is relegated to 20% of one particular explanatory opportunity. In the remainder of the work, this 80% of the environment is not discussed at all. Elsewhere, John Willett centres on the Bauhaus, a handful of well-known architects, and Frankfurt;<sup>12</sup> Detlev Peukert mostly mentions Americanism, Meyer, the Frankfurt Kitchen, and Ehn's later work in Vienna, but concludes that 'older, established styles were still generally favoured for public buildings.'<sup>13</sup> Architecture is not usually placed in the specific social or cultural circumstances in which a particular solution was actually generated, and it is rarely described as a complex social and economic activity. A large part of existing historiography approaches architecture as the generation and application of a set of

<sup>11</sup> Ernst May was municipal director of building in Frankfurt, and a leading Modernist, from the end of the war until 1929. He comes up regularly with regard to housing.

<sup>12</sup> John Willett, *The New Sobriety: Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 1917-1933* (London, 1987 [1978]), pp. 118-132.

<sup>13</sup> Detlev Peukert, *The Weimar Republic: The Crisis of Classical Modernity* (London, 1993), pp. 178-184.



styles and motifs, rather than activities, processes and dialogues; it is often the artifact of building, not the activity of building, which is the focus of investigation.

It is the objective here to reproduce the approaches of Dolores Hayden, in her discussion of women, building and urban organization,<sup>14</sup> and Eve Blau, both in her general survey of housing in Vienna between the wars, and in the volume she edited



**Figure 2:** Architecture seen as an activity, rather than a style; something people do. One of three similar murals at the entrance of the Großsiedlung Neuhausen, 1929.

with Monika Platzer on building design and urban environment at the turn of the last century.<sup>15</sup> Hayden's work is admirable for its insistence on contextualizing the designs women have produced for buildings and cities in the ideologies and ambitions of the patrons, designers, users, and those women responsible for presenting architecture to a female public, without relying on the 'self-sufficiency' of the artifact. This contrasts with the approaches often taken in the collections edited by Agrest *et al*, and to a lesser extent Coleman *et al*, which invoke a variety of theories to explain the relationship of women to the built environment in a historical context, virtually none of which come from patrons, designers or users of particular

spaces or structures, and many of which rely on present-day interpretations of the appearance of a structure or space.<sup>16</sup> Blau is an art and architectural historian, and has moved outside the canon to consider the broad thrust of what it meant to build in Vienna after the First World War. In another book she has co-edited, she looks at the relationship between building and the experience of life in Central European cities,

<sup>14</sup> Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods and Cities* (London, 1981).

<sup>15</sup> Eve Blau, *The Architecture of Red Vienna, 1919-1934* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999); Eve Blau and Monika Platzer, *Shaping the Great City: Modern Architecture in Europe, 1890-1937* (London, 2000).

<sup>16</sup> Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway, Leslie Kanes Weisman (eds.), *The Sex of Architecture* (New York, 1996); Deborah Coleman, Elizabeth Danze, Carol Henderson (eds.), *Architecture and Feminism* (New York, 1996). The exceptions are both in Coleman *et al*: Susan Henderson's discussion of the woman's sphere and the kitchen, discussed in chapter three, and Vanessa Chase's essay on Edith Warton and domestic interiors.

touching on several of the themes (for instance, the *Stilfrage* and the variety of modernisms available) which arise in this work, and linking many of them to systems for conceptualizing and describing the modern world via the structures found in a city. Both Hayden and Blau regard architecture as something which people do, not a set of aesthetic criteria.

Instead of offering the balanced approach of Blau or Hayden, the context of some architectural history is a triumphalist narrative of the rise of Modernism, which underestimates the variety of modernisms available, and privileges a certain style of architecture over other, more common, ones. This focus on a narrative of change also potentially underplays any underlying ideological stability behind decisions to build. It exaggerates a rather 'Whig' vision of art history, describing the evolution of a canonically recognized Modernism, generally taking examples from different patrons, different architects, or buildings of diverse purpose and built in different places, and holding them up together, implying a certain unity through the buildings' contributions to the evolution of the Heroic Modern Style. Loos' Postbank, Gropius' Faguswerk or Bauhaus, van de Velde's Werkbund Theatre of 1914, Le Corbusier's *Ville Radieuse*, Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona pavilion, a May *Siedlung*, often find themselves together. This is apparently because, when viewed retrospectively, they belong so, as they have all achieved a comfortable and unthreatened membership of a canon. As Charles Jencks writes:

The historian of recent architecture has, for the most part, followed the same line of argument by implicitly becoming either an apologist for a single tradition, say the International Style, or the prophet of inevitable development, say technology and structural determinism... However, ... this may be as due to the historian's methodology as to his ideology. Trained to look for links between architects he assumes they always exist. As the very basis of his work, he looks for links between contemporaries or across time, as if there were either one all pervasive world tradition which everyone was in touch with, or only one possible moral and logical development.<sup>17</sup>

This is a habit which could be attributed to much cultural history; the temptation to refer to a canon is too great, but yet when we do so, we exclude perhaps 99% of the cultural production of a certain period. Carl Schorske, for example, when writing about Viennese culture at the turn of the century in what is usually acknowledged as a classic of cultural history, relies largely on Otto Wagner, Schnitzler, Hofmannsthal, Freud,

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<sup>17</sup> Charles Jencks, *Modern Movements in Architecture* (London, 1987 [1973]), pp. 12-13.

Klimt, Kokoschka and Schoenberg as his case studies.<sup>18</sup> However, in this thesis the emphasis is entirely on quantity, not quality. Most people, then as now, were born in mediocre buildings, went to school in them, returned home to them through streets defined by them, worked in them, got sick in them and eventually died in structures totally unspectacular from the viewpoint of an art-historical canon. It seemed inappropriate when planning this work, then, to focus on anything but this mediocre building, for it was in qualitatively unremarkable surroundings that the most qualitatively remarkable features of people's lives were usually enacted. Furthermore, it was these buildings and architects which were sometimes *most* remarkable to contemporaries: Theodor Fischer, Richard Schachner and Hans Grässer, some of the corporation's most important building bureaucrats, were very well known in their profession before the war. Grässer, perhaps the city's most influential architect between the turn of the century and 1928, earned just under 7,000 M in 1900; a year later, the city of Frankfurt offered him 16,000 M if he would take over its building and planning department. In 1906, Cologne made a similar offer, in 1908, Berlin, and in 1909, Hamburg offered him the job for 20,600 M *per annum*, such was the respect in which Munich's Hochbauamt was held.<sup>19</sup> Not only that, but hospitals, schools, old people's homes, gasworks, electricity substations, social housing, office blocks and such like were all startlingly new and interesting to contemporaries in their modern, bureaucratic shape, irrespective of the form they took. The form which they in fact did take, however, deepened the interest contemporaries had in them by furnishing them with a vocabulary in which these features could be described, understood and presented.

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Discussions of modernity, too, refer to a canon: Marx, Nietzsche, Weber, Simmel, Benjamin, Kracauer, Lukács or Baudelaire can be found across a variety of works on the subject.<sup>20</sup> Although each of these offers useful theorizations of both the phenomena of modernity, and their effects on the individual and society, they have a certain a-historical quality. Karl Scharnagl, for example, master baker, leader of the Centre/BVP in the council from 1917, and first mayor of Munich between 1923 and 1933, would

<sup>18</sup> Carl Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (London, 1981).

<sup>19</sup> Stefan Fisch, *Stadtplanung im 19. Jahrhundert: Das Beispiel Münchens bis zur Ära Theodor Fischer* (Munich, 1988), pp. 56-57.

<sup>20</sup> Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism* (Durham, NC., 1999 [1987]); Marshall Bermann, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air*; David Frisby and Mike Featherstone (eds.), *Simmel on Culture* (London, 1997); David Frisby, *The Alienated Mind: The Sociology of Knowledge in Germany, 1918-1933* (London, 1983), *Fragments of Modernity: Theories of Modernity in the Work of Simmel, Kracauer and Benjamin* (Cambridge, 1985); Mark Jarzombek, *The Psychologizing of Modernity: Art, Architecture and History* (Cambridge, 2000).

only definitely have heard of one of them, Marx, though Nietzsche, Weber and Simmel may just about have been familiar names. However, Max Weber, as a resident of Munich in the late 1910s, was far more likely to know who Scharnagl was and what he stood for, than *vice versa*. It is clear, then, that much of what a man like Scharnagl thought about 'modernity' (and what that might be will be discussed shortly) did not come from those sources, at least, not directly. In fact, throughout this thesis, we find examples of people describing the effects of the organization of modern society on the interior lives of individuals which they had derived from a variety of sources, very few of them academic. Some of them drew on popular psychology; sometimes, a tradition of Catholic social reform, or their personal experience, or newspaper reports, or popular aesthetic ideas, or campaigns for environmental improvement and so on. Indeed, when one becomes familiar with the theories of Munich's bureaucrats, one begins to wonder whether the 'canonically recognized' authors describing the effects of modernity on the individual are not most remarkable as synthesizers with a good prose style accessible to academics. Discussions of the contingent and the fleeting, of alienation and capitalist structures, of the city and mass society, of technology and expertise, of observation, statistical compilation and regulation, of rootlessness, nervousness and chaos pepper the writings of the town's governors and experts, but in a de-theorized, pragmatic context.

Modernity itself can be a problematic term, fusing (or perhaps, confusing) potentially distinct themes of historical investigation. Calinescu presents two modernities, and he is right to do so:

[A]t some point during the first half of the nineteenth century an irreversible split occurred between modernity as a stage in the history of Western civilization – a product of scientific and technological progress, of the industrial revolution, of the sweeping economic and social changes brought about by capitalism – and modernity as an aesthetic concept. Since then, the two modernities have been irreducibly hostile, but not without allowing and even stimulating a variety of mutual influences in their rage for each other's destruction.<sup>21</sup>

Yet having gone to the effort of making the distinction, he does not resolve to stick to it and allow it to inform the rest of his discussion. In a recent major, four-volume anthology on modernity, Malcolm Waters distinguished in the different volumes between *Modernization*, *Cultural Modernity*, *Modern Systems* and *After-Modernity*.<sup>22</sup> There is no need to have this confusion, and we should perhaps question any association

<sup>21</sup> Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity*, p. 41.

<sup>22</sup> Malcolm Waters, *Modernity* (London, 1999).

between Modernism in art and modernity, and pursue Calinescu's analysis that they were in fact hostile to each other. For the purposes of this project, modernity is taken to mean a stage in the history of Western civilization. With Peukert, I

...take the term 'modernity' to refer to the form of fully-fledged industrialized society that has been with us since the turn of the century until the present day. In an economic sense, highly rationalized industrial production, complex technological infrastructures and a substantial degree of bureaucratic administrative and service activity...characterize modernity. Socially speaking, its typical features include the division of labour, wage and salary discipline, an urbanized environment, extensive educational opportunities and a demand for skills and training.... In intellectual terms, modernity marks the triumph of western rationality, whether in social planning, the expansion of the sciences or the self-replicating dynamism of technology...<sup>23</sup>

I would disagree with Peukert, though, that '[a]s far as culture is concerned, ... continuity with traditional aesthetic principles and practices in architecture and the visual and other creative arts is broken, and is replaced by unrestricted formal experimentation,' for several reasons, to which I would like to return.

Initially, it may be useful to elucidate some of the reasons why the confusion between modernity and what is essentially Modernism has arisen. Although Calinescu can occasionally dwell too long on the etymological theme,<sup>24</sup> there is some significance to it. The intersection of aesthetics and attempts to describe modern society stems ostensibly from Baudelaire's much-cited work, published in 1863, 'The Painter of Modern Life', in which Baudelaire used the word *la modernité* to refer to distinctive features of modern, capitalist, urban society, and also desirable aesthetic qualities in painting. At the beginning of the twentieth century, when artistic and literary modernism was assuming the character of a corpus, the tendency amongst French intellectuals was to refer to the conditions of modern-day Western civilization as *la modernité*, and avant-garde cultural artifacts as *le modernisme*. However, as discussion of such cultural products became more generalized and moved outside the avant-garde itself, the term *le modernisme* became impossible to use, as *les modernistes* and *le modernisme* were already applied to a significant portion of the French Catholic church interested in finding ways of reconciling rational *modernité* (phase of Western civilization) with the teachings of the Church. This attempt was made particularly controversial by the publication of the reactionary encyclical, *On the Errors of Modernists* by Pius X in 1907, calling these 'Modernists, as they are popularly known',

<sup>23</sup> Peukert, *The Weimar Republic*, pp. 81-82.

<sup>24</sup> For example, 'Modernity, Modernism, Modernization: Variations on Modern Themes', in *The Turn of the Century* (ed. by Berg *et al*), pp. 33-52.

'the most pernicious enemies of the Church', and defining modernism as 'the synthesis of all errors'.<sup>25</sup> *Modernisme* did not come to refer to art or architecture in French until well after the CIAM congress and charter of Athens in 1933.<sup>26</sup> Before then, one would have referred to the *modernité* of a building or painting, but without implying any link to Baudelaire's fusion of those things which Calinescu describes as being so contradictory. Lacking the knowledge of why the term *modernisme* was avoided and *modernité* chosen, an association has been allowed to stand between the artistic avant-garde and modernity through French usage, which was not necessarily there. The German term *die Moderne* is also now understood to encompass both modernity, the historical category, and modernity, the aestheticization of distinctive features of modern life. Yet that is a recent development; at the turn of the century, *die Moderne*, on the infrequent occasions it was used, generally referred to a trendy, possibly avant-garde, smart set in Berlin, Vienna and Munich, perhaps because the term *Modernismus* could also apply to the Church, according to Duden.<sup>27</sup> Others, such as Simmel or Sitte, who is discussed in chapter one, used the term *Modernität* to describe the features of modern society. In English, we can avoid this confusing situation, referring to the stage of Western civilization as modernity, and referring to the cutting edge of art from the mid-nineteenth-century as modernism, and the art-historical category as Modernism. Thereby one can work towards a 'de-theorization' of the concept of modernity, and of its effects, by rooting it in more mundane affairs. However, a few more words need to be said on the theoretical dimension, to deal with another factor in the confusion of modernity with Modernism.

Returning to the earlier rejection of Peukert's assessment of cultural aspects of modernity, there is a general difficulty underpinning this association of modernity and Modernism. The conflation of the two, which is also evidenced by Hilde Heynen in *Architecture and Modernity* and Peter Rowe's history of housing, *Modernity and Housing*, is seemingly common. Although Heynen draws attention to the split which Calinescu elucidates above, she explains it away as the objective and subjective dimensions respectively of the same phenomenon of 'modernization'. She then immediately argues, '[t]he discussion of modernity is inseparably bound up with this

<sup>25</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_x/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-x\\_enc\\_19070908\\_pascendi-dominici-gregis\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_x/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_19070908_pascendi-dominici-gregis_en.html).

<sup>26</sup> Yves Vadé, 'Modernisme ou Modernité?', in *The Turn of the Century* (ed. by Berg *et al*), pp. 53-65.

<sup>27</sup> Although, according to Duden, Hermann Bahr, the man who coined the term, meant it in its dual form.



problem of the relation between capitalist civilization and modernist culture.'<sup>28</sup> This would only be the case if one assumed an *a priori* congruity between the narrative of the structures of Western civilization, and that of 'modernist culture', rather than 'modern culture'. She devotes a large part of the work – which in other respects is immensely valuable – to the narratives of Heroic Modernism and the canon of analyses of modernity: Loos, May, Giedion, Benjamin, Bloch, Adorno. She argues from Baudrillard that modernity establishes change and crisis as values, which in some respects only the constant scandal and challenges of avant-gardism can fulfill. Given that Heynen, Habermas, Calinescu *et al*, all stress that a permanent, managerial, expert bureaucracy and a stable capitalist system are key features of the rise of modernity, this constant cultural crisis and change manifested in avant-gardism would not seem to fit well with a society characterized by stable (though exploitative and potentially harmful) economic systems expert at virus-like self-reproduction, and by a stable bureaucracy obsessed with partial reform not ultimate redemption. Rowe uses as his examples Sunnyside, a garden city in New York, Kiefhoek by JJP Oud in Rotterdam and May's Frankfurt, talking about 'the clear modernity of the plans', while at the same time insisting, correctly, that

...almost all the activities involved [a search for rational production methods] and a simultaneous belief in a perfectible world. There was ... an inherent optimism and confidence in the modern technical temperament.<sup>29</sup>

There is a difficulty in aligning this belief in a perfectible world with any theory of modernity, as any perfected world would not have, for example, the social problems and psychic trauma which are the inevitable products (so the theory according to Marx, Weber, Simmel and Benjamin goes) of the alienation caused by capitalist modes of production and urban forms of sociation. It was these modes of production and urban sociation upon which modernity was predicated. The one would eradicate, rather than compliment, the other, as Modernism was a fundamentally redemptive position.

Another dimension of this readiness to assume an equivalence between modernity and Modernism comes from an over-emphasis on just one part of Baudelaire's description of an art that would be both beautiful, and reconciled with the present time. The most often cited part of his essay, 'The Painter of Modern Life', is this:

Modernity is the transitory, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art of which the other half is the immutable.... As for this transitory fleeting element whose

<sup>28</sup> Hilde Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity: A Critique* (London, 1999), p. 12.

<sup>29</sup> Peter Rowe, *Housing and Modernity* (London, 1993), pp. 161, 164.

metamorphoses are so frequent, you have no right either to scorn it or ignore it.... Woe unto him who seeks in antiquity anything other than pure art, logic and general method.<sup>30</sup>

Usually, the emphasis is on his description of the transitory, the fugitive and the contingent – as in Heynen and Calinescu. However, it seems that what Baudelaire is actually arguing for is a recognition of the qualities of the transitory, while also a recognition of ‘the half of art which ... is immutable’, and which can provide, ‘pure art, logic and general method.’ Proponents of Modernist architecture, however, tended to suggest that their work would offer a remedy to a culture which was regarded as visually, and therefore psychologically, fractured. In some ways analogous to Marx’s post-Apocalyptic society, many in the aesthetic avant-garde posited a ‘home-coming’ in which man’s striving would open out into the great, flat plains of cultural stability. Modernists argued that it was possible to create a unified cultural system the likes of which had not been seen since some often undefined *Urzeit*, in which every cultural artifact would be imbued with meaning and significance, and in which cultural production would not cloak the unwholesome aspects of social life, but first expose them, and then eradicate them. Theirs was not a fleeting solution, but an immutable one.

It is in the development of this theme that Heynen’s work has proved most useful, stressing, as has already been highlighted by Rowe, some of the Utopian underpinnings of Modernism, and suggesting ‘Modernism as a breaking point within the capitalist system’.<sup>31</sup> Heynen analyses at length May’s own particular version of this yearning for completion, wholeness and cultural stability, which focused on replicating the cultural stability and homogeneity which he saw as characterizing ‘Babylon, Thebes and Byzantium’. In a French context, Garnier described his ‘*ville industrielle*’ as a ‘new Hellas’ – ‘For him, the future was anchored in a past fondly pictured as a Golden Age, as an ideal equilibrium to be won again.’<sup>32</sup> However, by arguing that their work offered this sort of stability, and an end to fashion, meaninglessness and vacuity, their emphasis shifted formally to the half of art which is immutable. Modernism in its Heroic architectural mode, especially in Germany, did not reflect modernity, but sought to replace it, despite its apparent fêting of the banal functionalism of day-to-day domestic life, and despite its rhetorical appeal to the logic of rational industrial production. It

<sup>30</sup> Cited in Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity*, p. 48.

<sup>31</sup> Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity*, pp. 43-71, 118-121.

<sup>32</sup> Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity*, pp. 44-50; Manfredo Tafuri and Francesco Dal Co, *Modern Architecture* (New York, 1979), p. 110.

sought an end to the 'phantasmagoria' of everyday life, in which Frisby, discussing Simmel, and quoting from Marx, argues:

... though this world of commodities appears to be permanently transitory, it goes together with 'the continuous reproduction of the same relations – the relations which postulate capitalist production.' ... In other words, that which appears as arbitrary and fleeting hides the ever same.<sup>33</sup>

This is a theme which is addressed in chapter four, when discussing both architectural design and modes of production. It was precisely this stable, permanent underpinning of modernity which Munich city council accepted when they decided against garden city solutions discussed in chapter one; through the purchase of and management of industrial land and facilities in chapter two; in the emphasis on the 'rational' *Wohnküche* discussed in chapter three; and in the decision to use the incidental standardization generated by capitalism's emphasis on rational production to minimize costs of housing discussed in chapter four. Precisely because of this single-minded elevation by the Modernists of their version of the mundane, the functional became reified and ossified, a self-sufficient aesthetic imperative, stripped of its quotidian, worthless quality. It no longer represented the incidental ephemera of everyday existence, but had acquired the property of formal aesthetic and intellectual discourse. It had become the 'eternal and immutable' part of art, the 'pure art, logic and general method', not the other 'fugitive', 'transitory' or 'contingent'. Thus it would seem that a move away from the canon is imperative if we are to gain a deeper understanding of the rather ambivalent, historical relationship between culture and representations on one side, and social and economic organization on the other.

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The structure of the thesis is thematic, rather than following a familiar chronology of political development, or divisions into building typology. The reasons for this are several. Firstly, the narrative of political, social and economic change in Germany has been well told, and many times. A thematic arrangement also avoids approaching 1933 as a *dénouement*; the themes under discussion here of an ambivalent response to modernity could be pursued profitably into the 1930s, or back into the nineteenth century. Secondly, cultural and social history does not sit comfortably with periodizations derived from political history, periodizations to which German historiography is particularly susceptible between 1870 and 1945. They can mask continuities and exaggerate diachronic narratives; a problem to which history, with its emphasis on

<sup>33</sup> Frisby, *Fragments of Modernity*, p. 24. Frisby's citation is from Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value*, part III, London, 1972, p. 541.

change, progress and reform, is particularly vulnerable. This work covers a period of particularly intense building activity for the corporation of Munich, from roughly the late 1890s until the completion of their housing programme in around 1931. The city did not build that much again until it had to repair the damage of the war after 1945. Thirdly, as responses to modernity were a primary concern of the project, it was felt that as the features of modernity as defined by Peukert above were fairly stable, in that, for instance, capitalism, urban life and an expert bureaucracy neither came nor went in this period, there was no reason to assume *a priori* that underlying attitudes towards them would change either. The validity of this approach was reinforced by the underlying stability and continuity of personnel in the Hochbauamt and the Magistrat throughout this period, of which more below. Each of the chapters examines a central theme of responses to modernity which was consistent throughout the period; the outward forms those responses might take certainly changed over time, but the stimulus to comment or act tended to remain the same. For example, in chapter one, the unease which the design and organization of the city caused was revealed in an emphasis on *Heimat* before the war, but on *Zusammenballung* and *Zersplitterung* afterwards. The underlying worry, however, remained very similar. Fear of the city, exaltation in the city, the role of the individual personality in modern society, and the relationship between design, society and politics form the major divisions.

Cities were the arenas of modernity; few of the features of that particular phase in the development of Western civilization could have existed on such a scale without them. To contemporaries, cities were the most conspicuous visual and geographical signifier of the features of modern society, emphasizing not just where modernity happened, but how it happened, and even, what it was. As such, they aroused huge comment. This comment, in relation to the built environment, forms the subject of the first two chapters. While the purely organizational dichotomy established here may suggest two 'camps', opponents and proponents of modern urban life, the intention is actually to show an underlying ambivalence towards it. The city's governors and experts stressed both its positive and negative aspects, often simultaneously, and thus the first chapter, on *Großstadtangst*, considers the refusal of the Magistratsräte and the corporation's experts to reach for pre-modern means to achieve potentially significant revisions of the experience of modernity. It underlines their determination to assert some sort of control over the material fabric of the city. It finishes by stressing a certain *Zukunftsfreude* – exaltation in the future – even when expressing what might be called a *Gegenwartskritik*

– critique of the present. This section also shows the propagandistic intentions which often came to the fore when the council had an opportunity to build; two huge exhibitions organized twenty years apart demonstrate the ways in which the corporation conceived of its mission, and how it characterized itself as having a particular cultural expertise. Chapter two, emphasizing *Freude* over *Angst*, is given over to examining the ways in which the corporation sought to do three things: enlarge the city; manage that enlargement; and associate themselves with both enlargement and other key features of modern society through manipulation of the built environment. The projection of positive images of industry, industrial production, bureaucracy and science are explored through looking at the development of industrial estates, the design of municipal industrial installations, the prominent construction of municipal administrative buildings, and the celebrations of medical science that were revealed in the city's novel designs for hospitals throughout the period.

The third chapter moves away from the exteriors of buildings, and examines how the corporation formulated interior spaces in order simultaneously to emphasize the advantages of modern society, and also 'design out' its problematic aspects. The theme underpinning the chapter is the damage to personality and character which contemporaries argued the circumstances of modernity had engendered on the one hand, and how the corporation could rescue personality and emphasize character in an increasingly anonymous urban environment on the other. The municipality could address the alienation of the citizen brought about by the operation of the capitalist system, the establishment of bureaucracy, and urban social organization, contemporaries thought, through the organization and design of the buildings in which the effects of that exploitation were played out. Furthermore, the sense of 'vulnerability' to a controlling sort of help by the social state which might impress the citizen through contact with institutions such as orphanages, hospitals, old people's homes and schools was to be managed through a restructuring and re-presentation of the interiors of such buildings. By reformulating the organization and appearance of the internal spaces of such structures, it was felt that the citizen could be 'befriended', and that the hostility engendered by certain forms of 'help' could be overcome. The organization of the planning and design process was intended to reinforce the personal qualities of building; a fundamentally bureaucratic process managed largely (but not entirely) by experts, the planning procedure was perhaps an archetypally modern activity, and untempered may have become simply a display of bureaucracy or expertise. The corporation's

organization of the municipal building department, the Hochbauamt, was designed to tackle that by emphasizing personal responsibility. The corporation also employed a corps of architects and planners who were particularly keen to make the products of bureaucracy appear as the products of personality, and thereby reconcile the two. However, by far the largest section of the chapter is given over to a 'micro' study, as it were, of the domestic kitchen in the corporation's social housing. The effect of the division of labour, of industrial efficiency and statistical compilation on the domestic life of women was something that the city was very keen to comment upon, and if possible, control. They evidenced a desire to reduce the vulnerability of women to the effects of rational industrial processes, and to stress their more personal and social role as mothers over their more impersonal one as domestic managers.

The final chapter deals with the relationship between society and politics on one hand, and the world of design on the other. Contemporaries frequently sought solutions to social problems in what might be called 'extra-political' spaces. By that I mean they sought to exercise influence through areas outside formal political structures and party-political groupings. Instead, they frequently equated politics with culture and culture with politics, understanding each with the vocabulary of the other. Kevin Repp's recent work, *Reformers, Critics and the Paths of German Modernity*, emphasizes the potential at that time in Germany to regard formal politics as a remote and ineffective means of securing change in a modern society. He argues that significant dimensions of political activity took anti-political forms; his examples are drawn from nationalism, feminism and aesthetics.<sup>34</sup> While abandoning the formal political sphere and adopting what might be called a broadly cultural, extra-parliamentary approach, may appear to us to be quite a dilettantish approach to significant social, political or economic questions, this chapter shows why contemporaries were so interested in linking areas of design and aesthetics to specific social problems. By following the challenge to architectural historicism and the emergence of housing as a primary political issue, a link between aesthetic principle and political necessity becomes explicit. In part, the housing question was also one of architectural design, and an examination of this theme illuminates the *Realpolitik* involved in the obsession with viewing a whole variety of issues – social, economic, political – in essentially cultural terms in this period. In turn, the changes in the aesthetic conception of a dwelling also reflected a politicization of style, and the chapter

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<sup>34</sup> Kevin Repp, *Reformers, Critics and the Paths of German Modernity: Anti-Politics and the Search for Alternatives, 1890-1914* (London, 2000).

takes as its overall framework a process outlined by Clemens Zimmermann; namely, the transformation from a *Wohnungsfrage* to a *Wohnungspolitik*, and offers a parallel, reflected one, of a change from a vague *Stilfrage* in the nineteenth century, characterized by the oft repeated question, 'In what style should we build?', to a *Stilpolitik*, in which the fusion of aesthetics and politics came to the fore.

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Lastly, it would help to set the scene a little, and think about why Munich is a suitable subject for study. The choice of Munich was deliberate, and followed from the observation that much had been written on the 'star turns' of urban history – Berlin, Vienna, New York, London, Paris – and more recently, Los Angeles. These cities were in many cases by their very nature exceptional, and cannot support cultural generalizations derived from them unless they are only understood to apply to capital cities, whether their governing power is political, economic or cultural. Munich, on the other hand, was a thoroughly banal town in almost every respect. Its only present-day legendary or iconic dimension is its role as a 'backdrop' for the unfolding drama of National Socialism – a role it shares with much German history of the pre-war period. Munich was a middle-sized city viewed in European terms; it was, however, the third largest town in Germany, with a population of approximately 500,000 in 1900, rising to nearly 700,000 by 1932. It was like many other towns in Germany, in terms of population size, economic make-up, and also history, in that it was the capital of a formerly-independent kingdom which lost some of its autonomy in 1871. It had a slightly lower percentage of the population working in industry compared with Berlin, Leipzig and Dresden, and a slightly above average proportion working in commerce and administration. The reason that Munich is interesting is that almost nothing famous or distinctive commends it as an interesting object of study.

It does, however, have an iconographic place in the history of Nazism. Munich can stand as a symbolic shorthand for the progress and petty bourgeois nature of the phenomenon. It was in Munich that Hitler chose to live before and after the First World War, and in Munich that his first, crass attempts to destabilize Germany by force were almost comedically enacted. After that, it was Munich which was made the '*Hauptstadt der Bewegung*', associating the unfolding tragedy for ever with the rather dull, provincial town near the southern border. However, the National Socialist party was not particularly successful either in Bavaria or Munich, almost invariably getting below their average national vote. In Bavaria as a whole the BVP (the Bavarian branch of the

Centre Party) remained dominant, and it was their resolve which made the authoritarian posturings of Kahr, Ludendorff and Hitler so implausible in 1923. Arguably, in late 1932, the earnest plans of BVP Ministerpräsident Held, up until then a constant supporter of the republic, to secede from the Reich and reconstitute the kingdom of Bavaria under the popular (and liberal) war hero Prince Rupprecht were perhaps the only serious threat to the formation of the Hitler government in January 1933.<sup>35</sup> The plan failed initially because Rupprecht refused to act unconstitutionally, and because the SPD, KPD and Farmers' League refused to support it. However, the Bavarian SPD pledged its support to the plan, but only the day before the Reichstag fire, just too late to save Bavaria or destabilize the Nazi government. Hitler summoned Held to Berlin, and in a violent personal confrontation, Hitler threatened Held with military action if Rupprecht were mentioned again in public; Held, for his part, threatened immediate secession if the independence of the Reichspräsident was in any way threatened. Indeed, in 1933, Bavaria was the only *Land* in which the NSDAP was not the largest party in the Landtag, and the NSDAP never achieved any better than parity (and then only on one occasion) in Bavaria and Munich during elections to the Reichstag in 1932.<sup>36</sup> A similar situation prevailed in the city council, in which they had only seven out of sixty seats at the time of the *Machtergreifung*.<sup>37</sup> Bürgermeister Scharnagl distinguished himself by his opposition to what he regarded as barbarous and inhumane Nazism, announcing bravely in spring 1933 his intention to stand for the municipal elections, constitutionally scheduled for December; it was an opposition which would entitle him to a stay in Dachau in the second half of World War Two, and which would, along with social-democratic Wohnungsreferent Preis who suffered a similar fate, allow him to take the reins of power in the city again in 1945. Hitler gave the city an image from which it profited through tourism, cultural investment, '*grand geste*' building plans and governmental and party employment opportunities, but as we shall see, not one which genuinely reflected the mentality of the place. Before the war, as Repp, Lees, Jelavich, Makela and perhaps above all Manuel Gasser have shown, the city had been famous for art, beer and luxury goods, a relatively progressive cultural liberalism and sense of un-

<sup>35</sup> Rupprecht was an interesting character; demoted and removed from power in the First World War for his anti-annexionist position from 1915 onwards, and banished from Berlin for his pleas to sue for peace on Allied terms in 1917, his distinguished service on the front, his forthright criticism of the prosecution of the conflict and his rejection of the '*Dolchstoßlegende*' would have made an interesting challenge to Hitler.

<sup>36</sup> Manfred Treml, *Geschichte des modernen Bayern: Königreich und Freistaat* (Munich, 1994), pp. 152-242.

<sup>37</sup> Wilfried Rudloff, 'Notjahre – Stadtpolitik in Krieg, Inflation und Weltwirtschaftskrise, 1914 bis 1933', in *Geschichte der Stadt München*, ed. by Richard Bauer (Munich, 1992), pp. 336-368.



stuffy freedom alongside a supposed dim-witted, blunt fair-mindedness.<sup>38</sup> After it, six years of extreme political volatility marked the city and the state out as what Held called an '*Unordnungszone*'; the resolve of the council was to restore calm and prosperity through collaborative government, a rejection of all extremism, a focus on the achievable, not the ideal, and a broad adherence to a middle path in most matters. This formula proved popular with the electorate.

The weight of influence within the council in terms of the management and design of the city lay with the Magistrat, the executive 'cabinet' of the council, and the architects and designers of the Stadtbauamt, the municipal building department.<sup>39</sup> The Stadtbauamt had only six directors for the entire period, 1831 until 1936, such was the level of continuity amongst the council's employees. In 1876 the Stadtbauamt had four technical employees to manage its affairs; by 1899, this figure had risen to 225. Approximately half of these were in the Hochbauamt, the section which concerns this work, responsible as it was for designing the city's buildings, planning its streets, and devising its building regulations.

Members of the Magistrat were appointed by the crown on the suggestion of the first mayor in the pre-revolutionary period, and on the authority of the first mayor afterwards; in both cases, they required the approval of the council, which they always got. Munich politics was a very co-operative affair, especially before the war. Some were essentially civil servants, in the German governmental tradition, such as second mayor Hans Kufner. Others were semi-political appointments who could vote on any area of policy while either being without portfolio or being responsible for one particular *Referat*; for example, Borscht (first mayor) was loosely affiliated to the Centre Party, Schoener (*Referent* for Municipal Land) was member of the left-liberal Progress Party, Schmid (without portfolio) and Preis (Housing) were from the SPD. The third category was entirely technical, and could only vote in the Magistratsrat on issues concerning their area of expertise; for example, the directors of building, trams, gas, electricity and schools. They all had extensive autonomous executive powers within their departments, as their expertise was very highly respected. Before World War One,

<sup>38</sup> Repp, *Reformers, Critics and Paths of German Modernity*, pp. 238-242; Lees, *Cities Perceived*, pp. 205, 207-9; Manuel Gasser, *München um 1900* (Munich, 1977); Maria Makela, *The Munich Secession: Art and Artists in Turn-of-the-Century Munich* (London, 1990); Peter Jelavich, *Munich and Theatrical Modernism: Politics, Playwriting and Performance, 1890-1914* (London, 1985).

<sup>39</sup> The following description of the structure of the council is taken from Fisch, *Stadtplanung im 19. Jahrhundert*, pp. 36-50, and Peter Steinborn, *Grundlage und Grundzüge Münchener Kommunalpolitik in den Jahren der Weimarer Republik* (Munich, 1968), throughout.

there was a fourth class of Magistratsrat, which occupied a position similar to aldermen in Britain. They were six year appointees for services to the town, crown, or economic development and usually had no office within the council, instead sitting on the boards of charitable institutions and such like. They had the right to vote in the Magistrat, but tended to exercise it rarely. The Magistrat completely dominated the sixty-member council chamber. The council chamber was massively gerrymandered in favour of the Liberals before the war; with 36% of a vote designed to exclude the working classes almost entirely, they had 55% of the seats in 1902. Only close collaboration in elections between the SPD and the Centre could break their absolute majority by 1908; it was at that time that the council opted for massive subsidies to social housing. After the war, the SPD was always the largest party. The SPD and the Centre, rhetoric aside, worked together well in the city government throughout this period, and only the perennial issue of schooling caused serious conflict between the secular and the religious parties.

There were always two mayors, of equal authority. One was a political appointment, and required the trust of the council chamber. The other was essentially a bureaucrat, not expected to have a party political line. First mayor from 1893 until June 1919 was Wilhelm Borscht, loosely affiliated to the Centre party, elected unanimously, and the first Catholic mayor since 1870. Second mayor was Liberal-leaning Philipp Brunner, who died in office in 1917. I have not encountered mentions of him at all in relation to the themes of this thesis, and so he does not feature, unlike his successor as second mayor, Hans Kufner. He was a vigorous interventionist and non-party technocrat, whose sarcastic quips at the expense of the egos of prominent town councillors often brought the house down, and who features regularly in this work. He continued in office until April 1934. The first mayoralty was taken over by Eduard Schmid in the summer of 1919, and he had been representing the SPD in the Magistrat since 1899. He was a difficult, argumentative, obstructive personality, and was replaced to everyone's relief – even members of the SPD – by Karl Scharnagl of the BVP. He served as Mayor from January 1925 until March 1933, and again from May 1945 until May 1949. These were the men and the institutions responsible for managing the affairs of the *Großstadt München*.

# **Chapter 1:**

## ***Großstadtangst:***

### **disorder and discomfort in the Metropolis**

The phenomenon of urbanization – ‘one of the most distinctive features of the industrial age’<sup>1</sup> – challenged a sense of belonging to place; urban populations were either migrant, or the product of that migration, and they existed in a landscape novel both in its forms, functions and scale. In Germany, as elsewhere, these changes caused extensive comment, and proved to be the focus of much discussion – both on a technical level, and a more emotional and spiritual one. Some saw the agglomeration of the city in the light of an economic dynamic and a growth in personal freedom. Others saw in it a menace, in which (to use a very loose analogy) a sort of inversion of a Newtonian law took place: the closer human beings came to each other, the greater the mass of humans living together, the weaker the attraction and bond between them were.<sup>2</sup> The urban individual had become separated from his or her political system, from his or her culture and from other individuals. Moral and physical disease was the result. Under the rather uncomfortable heading *Großstadtangst*, I want to posit some ways in which these problems could be translated into, and also read from, the material fabric of the urban environment.

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<sup>1</sup>Wolfgang Krabbe, ‘Die Anfänge des sozialen Wohnungsbaus vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg’, *Vierteljahresschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 71 (1984), pp. 30-58 (30).

<sup>2</sup>Interestingly, this does have some scientific justification. A study published in 1994 by four US psychologists found that in a study of 36 American cities of varying size, the strongest predictor of whether people would help strangers with small favours (typically, automatically responding to a disabled person who had dropped something and could not reach it) was not population size but population density. The higher it was, the less likely an unprompted act of assistance would be. The two causes suggested for this are firstly, heightened sensory stimulation in dense areas, or secondly, diffusion of responsibility when many people are present. Robert Levine, Todd Martinez, Gary Brase, Kerry Sorenson, ‘Helping in 36 US cities’, in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67 (1994), pp. 69-82.

The word *Großstadtangst* is uncomfortable because it is not a German word, and nor do the two halves of it sit together particularly easily as a compound. Yet it describes a situation very well, without aligning itself with some of the better-known German critiques of modernity. The situation which needs to be outlined in the case of Munich (and perhaps by extension the rest of Germany) is significant, because it allows a revision of models suggested by Langbehn, Lagarde, Spengler, Tönnies, Nietzsche, Chamberlain and others to a more nuanced position, reflected by the mainstream of German culture. Fritz Stern's classic study of this phenomenon is of immense value, but is in need of constant revision as the historiographical imperative to provide an aetiology for Nazism diminishes.<sup>3</sup> Assumed binary opposites such as 'cultural pessimism' and 'faith in progress' such as those suggested by Arthur Herman in his popular study designed to discredit 'declinism',<sup>4</sup> or by Stern in his 1961 classic, or by Walter Laqueur in his 1996 article on the *fin-de-siècle* mentality,<sup>5</sup> do not help in identifying the real and highly subtle picture of *Großstadtkritik* within German society, and nor do they assist in tackling the sometimes teleological underpinnings of German historiography, moving away from regarding Germany as a 'special case' because of events which took place thirty or forty years later. The fact that Langbehn became implausible and unpopular amongst reviewers and the buying public when he included criticisms of the Jews in his post-1892 editions of *Rembrandt als Erzieher* is relegated to the footnotes by Stern, yet it was a central factor in stimulating Langbehn's increasing vitriol in subsequent, and ever more marginalized, editions, obscuring some of the moderation of the first, highly successful, one in 1890.<sup>6</sup> This chapter will focus on the difficulties which the modern *Großstadt* posed the members of Munich's government and their experts, but also seek to reinforce the view that it did not cause panic. There was no pessimistic response, in that these men never lost their faith in their ability to intervene in the difficulties which they identified. They retained the belief that, although modern social, economic and cultural phenomena – made conspicuous and thrown into sharp relief by their intersection in the *Großstadt* – were distressing in some ways, the distress could be relieved.

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<sup>3</sup> Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of German Ideology* (Berkeley, Cal., 1961), esp. pp. 27-34, 116-136, 153-182.

<sup>4</sup> Arthur Herman, *The Idea of Decline in Western History* (New York, 1997).

<sup>5</sup> Laqueur describes views of the coming century as focusing on modernism, sophistication and optimism on the one hand, and despair and foreboding on the other. Walter Laqueur, 'Fin-de-Siècle: Once More with Feeling', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1 (1996), pp. 5-47.

<sup>6</sup> Stern, *Politics of Cultural Despair*, p. 157.

This distress was felt in an intellectual sense by the governors and experts, which was extended to a very real, day-to-day unease which they attributed to the citizens of the town, and was so generalized as to qualify for the category of *Angst*. It fed into, and in turn fed from, an obsession with 'nervousness' identified in some of the key texts of discussions of modernity, most notably Simmel's essay, 'Metropolis and Mental Life.' But the idea that this formed a general *Angst* is even more strongly born out by Radkau's work, which interprets the decades either side of the turn of the century as a '*nervöses Zeitalter*', obsessed with neurasthenia, hysteria, worry, nerves, panic, agoraphobia, insanity and *Angst*, particularly in relation to popular psychology and the nascent discipline of evidence-based mass psychology.<sup>7</sup> In some of its aspects, this *Angst* proved exceptionally difficult to name, but it had several features, all of which were regarded as distinctive characteristics of life in the big city. It seems that it could be relieved in part by developing interpretative or ideological methods to apply to describing the *Großstadt* which made the city less nervousness-inducing, strange and chaotic, and in part by adopting specific strategies in the management of the appearance and structure of the material *Großstadt*.

One ideological reformulation which could render the *Großstadt* unthreatening without requiring a massive challenge to it as an irreversible inevitability of modern life was the conceptual transformation of the *Großstadt* into a *Heimat*, and that is the first subject of consideration in his chapter. To give the citizen the experience of *Heimat* in the *Großstadt* operated both to relieve the ideological and intellectual *Angst* felt by some of the city's governors and experts, and also (they felt) act as a restorative tonic for those citizens who perhaps had least stake in some of the possible economic advantages of life in the *Großstadt* – the poor, disadvantaged children, orphans, the sick, the elderly in need of care. The ideology of *Heimat* would not suffice alone, though, and with this in mind the council promoted means which would allow them to control the shape and also the uses of the *Großstadt* in a much more solid and real sense through town planning. Agoraphobia, loneliness and fear underpinned their actions, derived as they were from Camillo Sitte's work on town planning. Challenging the fractured and disjointed nature

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<sup>7</sup> Joachim Radkau, 'Die wilhelminische Ära als nervöses Zeitalter, oder: die Nerven als Netz zwischen Tempo- und Körpergeschichte', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 2 (1994), pp. 211-241, and *Das Zeitalter der Nervosität: Deutschland zwischen Bismarck und Hitler* (Munich, 1998), which tends to emphasize the role of this nervousness in producing the mentalities which underpinned the Hitler phenomenon.

*Großstadttangst*: disorder and discomfort in the metropolis. 33

of modern city design was, it was thought, a way of addressing the fractured nature of individual experience, of restoring wholeness to the human mind and soul. Expanding on Radkau's thesis, it is perhaps possible to identify a parallel between the references to *Zersplitterung* in the city and the distress felt when certain aspects of the self fracture in mental illness; such nerve-related metaphors and ideas of psychiatric disorder were linked by Sitte explicitly to the planning of the city, and others in the council and its agencies frequently made this connection.

It was not enough for the corporation to tackle these issues; they also wanted to be seen to be tackling them, and they felt a missionary drive to persuade others of their ideological convictions. The two large exhibitions which the city government organized twenty years apart in 1908 and 1928 offered the perfect opportunity for the municipality both to clarify its own objectives, and also publicize them. The two exhibitions proved massively popular, and each focused on the built environment and the ideologies the municipality was interested in promoting as underpinning it. In 1908, municipal facilities provided the centre-point, and in 1928 it was housing, yet in each the council demonstrated its obsession with providing a reasoned account of their worries about the modern world, rejecting any notion that either they were powerless to reform it, or that it should be destroyed in its entirety. These exhibitions were so significant because they offered the means of developing both a critique and a solution in parallel, without veering off into extreme, pessimist positions, and while remaining firmly in the cultural mainstream. *Heimat*, town planning and the exhibitions will form useful strands in analyzing this moderate critique, before moving on in chapter two to look at the ways the city promoted and developed their solutions to some of the phenomena which made them most nervous.

### **Metropolis as *Heimat***

Munich city council as a collective entity was compelled to address the issue of place and belonging to place by a desire and a responsibility to ensure the physical, spiritual and economic well-being of the citizens of the town. Across Germany, a popular movement emerged which posited improvements in these areas which lay in an attempt to restructure the individual's experience of, and relationship to, place: the Bund

Heimatschutz. The origins of the organization need not concern us here,<sup>8</sup> but it is important to stress that *Heimat* is a central concept in any German discussion of place. It is normally translated as 'homeland', but in German it means much more than that. It represents one's emotional homeland, the geographical place in which one might see one's character reflected, the landscape to which one might look for one's own cultural and spatial conditioning. It also has a second dimension, with mythical and mystical qualities. '[It] is seen as the place where utopia is achieved, the homeland where human beings and the world are reconciled and where the dream of a better life is finally realized. This *Heimat* does not yet exist – nobody dwells there – but as children, we have all had a glimpse of it: an existence without deprivation, without alienation, and without appropriation.'<sup>9</sup> Lastly, worry about the *Heimat* or lack of it was as prevalent amongst leading Modernists as amongst more conservative or progressive reformers. Karl Scheffler, an important Modernist architect and author of *Architektur der Großstadt*, wrote in the avant-garde journal *Die Neue Rundschau*:

To [*Großstadtmenschen*] the places where they work or live are almost accidental; therefore, the city offers them no home [*nichts Heimatliches*], nothing symbolic, and no morally elevating sense of community can take root in them.<sup>10</sup>

As Lees concludes, 'a conservative could not have said it better.' One of the founders of the Bavarian Bund Heimatschutz was Hans Grässel, an important figure in the Munich Municipal Building Office, the Hochbauamt. He was the city's most prolific and popular architect in the first twenty years of the last century, and will serve as the main example in this section. Particularly through him and his buildings the council constructed a discourse about *Heimat* and identity, about belonging to, and affection for, place, which shows two phenomena of interest. Firstly, the council and its expert employees were sometimes deeply concerned about the *Großstadt*; of what effects it had on the physical, spiritual and economic life of the individual and the community. And secondly, that they were not so afraid that they were paralyzed with fear. They felt they had the power and the ability either to re-structure the experience of the city as an existing *Heimat*, or to create from scratch an emotional homeland for its people. In this section, just a few examples of how they exercised this belief in their own power will be examined. The

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<sup>8</sup>For a full introduction and discussion of the origins and character of the Bund Heimatschutz, see the collection of essays *Antimodernismus und Reform: Zur Geschichte der deutschen Heimatbewegung*, ed. by Edeltraud Klueting (Darmstadt, 1991).

<sup>9</sup>Hilde Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity*, p. 119. It is not clear if these are her own words or if she is précising Ernst Bloch, *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*.

<sup>10</sup>Cited in Lees, *Cities Perceived*, pp. 162-3.

work of Grässer will be the focus, to assess both the ideological ambitions of his buildings intended for use by children, and how they might have affected the individual on a practical level. The 'disenchantment' of the *Heimat*, both as a place and an idea, during and after the First World War meant that, rhetorically, it became a less significant concept until resurrected by those on the extreme right at the very end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s. Yet despite the disappearance of *Heimat* as a dominant rhetorical trope, the underlying critique of the metropolis and modernity which had expressed itself in the *Heimat* programme remained a constant right up to the National Socialist seizure of power.<sup>11</sup>

It is worth stating now that *Heimat* should not be viewed as an essentially nostalgic concept, although it does have nostalgic dimensions. Faced with a barrage of intellectual postulations developed both within and outside the Bund Heimatschutz, it seems plausible to suggest that responses which characterized the Bund Heimatschutz as backward-looking organization, as *volkstümlich* as opposed to *modern*,<sup>12</sup> were perhaps due to a fundamental miscomprehension, and one which has been well addressed by the recent work on the national Bund Heimatschutz by William Rollins in particular, but also Celia Applegate.<sup>13</sup> The notion of *Heimat* is so significant in German and to Germans, and is assumed to represent a sort of organic and irresistible force, that attempts to reinterpret it, manage it and import it into the *Großstadt* would always produce confusion. *Heimatbündler* (members of the Bund Heimatschutz) themselves pointed out again and again that they approved of many modern building techniques, and provided some of the earliest formulations of a programmatic application of the 'form follows function' aphorism so dear to many of the most famous Modernist architects from the Heroic Period of Modernism.<sup>14</sup> Their repeated insistence, however, on linking the final product both to a place and to the people that lived there meant that often their

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<sup>11</sup>The National Socialist concept of *Heimat* as linked to racial purity and an emotional belonging to and veneration of the 'German earth' would always have been alien to the municipal leaders of the period. Even Paul Schultze-Naumburg's journey down this path was slow, as was the National Socialists' adoption of nostalgic architectural solutions. For the career of Paul Schultze-Naumburg, see Norbert Bormann, *Paul Schultze-Naumburg, 1869-194: Maler, Publizist, Architekt, vom Kulturreformer der Jahrhundertwende zum Kulturpolitiker im Dritten Reich* (Essen, 1989).

<sup>12</sup>This bi-polar position is taken from the article, 'Bayerische Gewerbeschau 1912: die feierliche Eröffnung', *Augsburger Abendzeitung*, 18 May 1912. SAM-NLG-374.

<sup>13</sup>Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley, Ca., 1990); William Rollins, *A Greener Vision of Home: Cultural Politics and Environmental Reform in the German Heimatschutz Movement, 1904-1918* (Ann Arbor, Mi., 1997).

<sup>14</sup>This term, 'Heroic Period', is taken from Charles Jencks, *Modern Movements in Architecture*, throughout.



structures were seemingly 'folksy', when compared with the buildings one might find in the canon of Modernism, which today might be called 'object buildings.'<sup>15</sup>

Broadly representative of many of these trends before the First World War might be the Implersstraße school, built by Grässer between 1910 and 1911. It represents the culmination of many strands of thinking about the role of the built environment by councillors, educationalists and architects. It was one of the schools of which Grässer himself was most proud, and, coincidentally, is one of the very few schools in which the original interior decoration and room usage has survived renovation, war and educational reform. It was one of eleven schools designed by him between 1898 and 1914, and his contribution represents a third of the thirty-three new schools built in Munich in this period. First of all, it is worth commenting on what makes this school atypical. Most conspicuously, it is not on a corner site, as were about two-thirds of the schools built in this period. They were built on corners to maximize their profile (they were often placed on projected or existing main road junctions); this school is built as part of a 'terrace', though is constructed to face down another street; it is at a junction rather than a corner. Secondly, it does not share the usual plan of two wings, articulated in an 'L'-shape around sports-halls, often with flat roofs (the sports halls in this case are built as an extension to the rear with a pitched roof). However, while it is in these ways not absolutely typical of the schools of this period, in others it fulfilled the cultural agenda for the school building and child welfare programme in general.

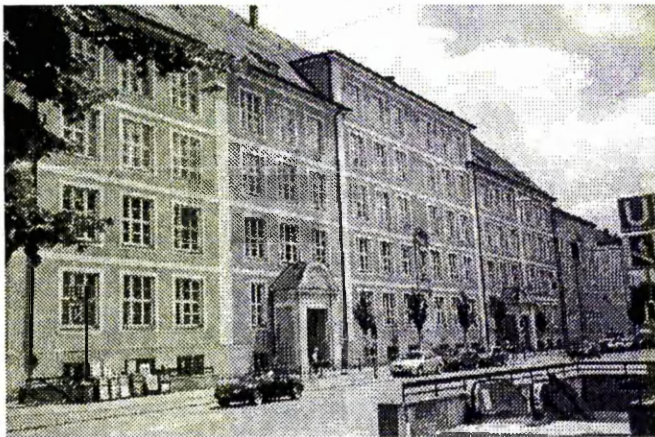
The school lies in the heart of what was Munich's poorest, most industrial quarter, the Sendlinger Unterfeld. It stands between the central goods railway terminus, the southern power station, the municipal wholesale market and the municipal abattoir. This was unremittingly urban; precisely the sort of landscape characterized by poverty, industry and urban squalor which generated most fear and *Angst* in contemporary critiques. This was the environment which many wanted to transform into *Heimat*; by filling that void of good taste and wholesomeness, one need have no fear either of being sucked into it, or

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<sup>15</sup> 'Object buildings' is a slightly anachronistic term in this context, though reflects a practice with which contemporaries would have been familiar. The expression refers to the practice in recent architecture of engaging high-profile architects to design prestige buildings which are then just 'plopped' into position; for example, Richard Rogers and the new offices for the Greater London mayor at Tower Bridge. In this context, the term is used to describe the attempt to express universality and design 'universally true' buildings in the Modernist canon, without necessarily knowing the site, surroundings and traditions of the area in which the building would be built.

of what terrifying phenomena and tumults might come out of it. The municipality seems to have believed it could do that architecturally by intervening in a discourse about nostalgia *and* modernity (not nostalgia *instead of* modernity), by re-structuring the relationship between the individual and other individuals, the individual and culture and between the individual and the council itself.

The discourse involving nostalgia *and*, rather than *versus*, modernity, and the essentially moderate position of the city can perhaps best be reflected by contrasting the exterior with the interior of the school. When Münchener talked in terms of cultural-political or socio-economic criticism, modernity (they only very rarely used that word, often replacing it with less conceptual formulations such as *die Neuzeit*, *unsere heutigen Zustände*, *unser Zeitalter*, *die neueste Zeit*, *die moderne Weltordnung* etc.) implied any of the following themes: haste, nervousness, alienation, unrootedness, impermanence, fashion, mass-production, fear, luxury, placelessness, meaninglessness, speed,



**Figure 1:** Implersstraße school, Hans Grässer, 1910-11.

shallowness, novelty, greed, mean-spiritedness, loneliness, exploitation. More could be added here, but these are key tropes culled from police chiefs' writings, mayors' speeches, tourist guides, council debates, doctors' reports, educational programmes, newspaper articles and the like. Grässer, as were many others, was

clear in aligning this sort of criticism with the *Großstadt*, lamenting that 'after all this artistic decay and the general degeneration of taste finally came the effect of the rapid growth of the *Großstadt*', characterized by financial speculation, bad taste, fashion and a mobile population.<sup>16</sup> The exterior of the Implersstraße school, it will be remembered, was displayed to an industrial area: Grässer would have to formulate a response which both expressed his critique of this particular form of urban environment, while also fulfilling his commitment to making structures belong to, rather than contradict, their surroundings.

<sup>16</sup>Hans Grässer, 'Kultur und Schönheit des Bauens und Lebens', 1913, p. 13a. SAM-NLG-373.

That he succeeded, as figure 1 shows, is seemingly clear. Grässel's solutions were, as we shall see, sometimes deeply nostalgic, but at other times they could be accepting of modern city life. He believed that every building should reflect the functions for which it was designed; its interior life should clearly define its exterior form. He wrote:

Only in the most recent period have people finally begun to grasp that every decorative form must proceed from the very nature and function of the thing, and that when we are building, we must create from the interior outwards to the exterior, not the other way around as previously, from a pre-determined external style inwards to the interior.<sup>17</sup>

Put conversely, he believed that form followed function. He was not committed to that other Modernist dogma, 'truth to materials', though he was interested in the most economic and thorough applications of technological advances.<sup>18</sup> His greatest quarrel with 'Heroic' Modernism, as Jencks calls it, was that he felt a building should reflect the character of the place; if we think back to the discussion of *Heimat* above, this meant that the building should reflect the characteristic features of the landscape, in which landscape was very broadly defined. In turn, this would mean the building would also reflect the characteristics of the people, as both would be functions of their interaction with the landscape or environment. If the surroundings were semi-rural and dominated by an extant eighteenth century palace, then that would be reflected in his work, as in the Municipal Orphanage and Heiliggeistspital old people's home in Neuhausen; if the surroundings were industrial, unadorned and spartan as here in the Sendlinger Unterfeld, his response would be in keeping with that landscape. 'All buildings must be subordinated to the demands of functionalism,' he argued, '...and that includes the demands of the positioning and surroundings of the school building, and of the obligatory example of the past.'<sup>19</sup> The past was seen by Grässel as very much the *Heimat* or landscape from which the present was derived; as the present was undeniably the product of the past, to assert any absolute break would be to deny the principle of environmental influence on which he pinned his entire world view.

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<sup>17</sup>Hans Grässel, 'Kultur und Schönheit des Bauens und Lebens', 1913, pp. 13a-14. SAM-NLG-373.

<sup>18</sup>He had little interest in displaying the high-tech methods used to build his buildings, covering almost all of them in white plaster scrim. However, he had a huge interest in *using* high-tech methods, unlike Theodor Fischer, who has received more attention as a respected architectural reformer of the pre-war years. Whereas Fischer built most of his schools with bricks and wooden beams, Grässel was a great exponent of more technologically advanced materials. In the Implersstraße school, the construction was specified as follows: 'Unsupported concrete floors carried on a rolled iron framework. Automatic temperature regulation with electrically controlled heat distribution.' None of Fischer's schools catalogued have either of these advanced features [BAIVn. (ed.), *München und seine Bauten*, pp. 612, 619, 621, 630].

<sup>19</sup>Hans Grässel, 'Ästhetik des Schulhauses', 16 June 1915. SAM-NLG-367.

This school has a clarity of organization in its exterior form unusual in a building of this period, and its stripped down character matches both the 'functional' nature of the suburb it serves, and seems to compliment the outstanding municipal wholesale market, built entirely in reinforced concrete, which was its contemporary and stood immediately behind it. Most non-municipal buildings in Munich and elsewhere in the 1900s were either in an exaggerated Baroque variation,<sup>20</sup> a Jugendstil or Art Nouveau idiom,<sup>21</sup> or an exaggerated reference to a specific art-historical period,<sup>22</sup> or they were 'unconsciously' functional.<sup>23</sup> Significantly, this intentional clarity of form in the Implersstraße school was regarded by Grässer as appropriate, as it fitted in with the 'character' of its surroundings, and shows (along with the municipal wholesale market) that the municipality was prepared to countenance the development of quite an 'industrial' aesthetic for this area. It is worth expanding on Grässer's previous comment to emphasize how important this sense of continuity of character was:

Every school building should not have an alienating effect but instead should be attractive in a *heimatlich* way. The historical uniqueness and the earlier buildings of a place or a town should find union and evolution in all public buildings of the present, especially school buildings, as they, along with churches, most often form the focal points of any particular part of town.

A school building will be all the less alienating the less it deviates from the usual type [*Art*] of the place. Therefore it should be built with particular attention to the native [*heimischen*] building materials, local roof forms and local types and customs, and by doing this it will be most attractive in general, and through its matter-of-fact [*sachliche*] beauty, build up the pride of the citizens.<sup>24</sup>

Grässer's focus on alienating effects illustrates a very day-to-day concern with principles often referred to in the 'canon' of theories of modernity, particularly Marxian ones,

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<sup>20</sup>e.g. Palace of Justice in Munich, or the Krankenhaus Links der Isar – a state teaching hospital. See Wend Fischer, *Die andere Tradition: Architektur in München von 1800 bis Heute* (Munich, 1982); Bayerischer Architekten- und Ingenieur Verein. (ed.), *München und seine Bauten* (Munich, 1912).

<sup>21</sup>See Heinrich Hutet, Klaus Merten, Michael Petzet and Siegfried von Quast, *Münchener Fassaden: Bürgerhäuser des Historismus und des Jugendstils* (Munich, 1974).

<sup>22</sup>For example, the Münchener Künstlerhaus. See Heinrich Habel, 'Späte Phasen und Nachwirken des Historismus' in *Bauen in München 1890-1950*, ed. by Bayerisches Amt für Denkmalpflege (Munich, 1980), pp. 26-40.

<sup>23</sup>Such as many breweries in Munich. For a thorough, but somewhat descriptive and lifeless discussion of this type of building in Munich, see Hans Knauss, *Zweckbau-Architektur zwischen Repräsentation und Nutzen: Konzeption und Ästhetik ausgewählter Zweckbauten in der Zeit von ca. 1850 bis 1930 in Bayern* (Munich, 1983); for a much more lively but much less thorough discussion, see Barbara Hartmann, 'Zweckbau als öffentliche Aufgabe. Die Stadt als Bauherr', and Uli Walter, 'Zwischen Heimatstil und Funktionalismus. Fabrikbau in München', both in *Musenstadt mit Hinterhöfen: Die Prinzregentenzeit 1886-1912*, ed. by Friedrich Prinz and Marita Krauss (Munich, 1988), pp. 107-113, 114-118.

<sup>24</sup>Hans Grässer, 'Ästhetik des Schulhauses', June 1915. SAM-NLG-367.

*Großstadtangst*: disorder and discomfort in the metropolis. 40 though the solution he posits is not economic but no less ideological. This school exterior, in following these rules, should be viewed as an accommodation with the metropolis as *Heimat*. However, if we turn to the interior a different, and contradictory, set of preoccupations becomes visible.

The contrast is stark. One of the key requirements of all municipal buildings was that the interiors should not be 'cold' or 'scientific', a theme which is enlarged upon in chapter three. This was particularly important in schools, hospitals, old people's homes and the orphanage. In the case of the orphanage, for example, it was felt the building could challenge this massively depersonalizing experience (the loss of a parent) and mitigate it into something *Heimatliches*, and thereby rescue the personality and the individual from the growing, impersonal, bureaucratic but caring state apparatus.<sup>25</sup> One commentator wrote of his orphanage that it altered the whole *Stimmung* (mood, atmosphere, opinion) of the individual:

In the rooms, halls and corridors the builder [*Erbauer*] constantly set himself the task of avoiding all cold, barrack-like sobriety; all spaces should be a beloved *Heimat* to their occupants, and remain as such for them in happy memory for the whole of their lives.<sup>26</sup>

The same author concluded that the building and the fittings within it could lift children out of anonymity and give them something personal to belong to: children 'that had lost their home, lost everything, would be rewarded and consoled with a *Heimat*.'<sup>27</sup> While the children of the typical *Volksschule* could not be described as having '...lost their home, lost everything...', they would be rewarded with a *Heimat* nonetheless. Grässel's main technique for inspiring this mood-altering atmosphere in building interiors had two prongs: firstly, to buy very cheap, mass-produced furniture and get unemployed local artists/craftsmen to decorate it in the folk tradition at a low price; and secondly, to paint the walls with frescos.

The frescos in the Implerstraße school covered many themes: protection of plants, protection of songbirds, care of patriotic sentiment, respect for the ruling house, care of

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<sup>25</sup>This process of 're-personalization' can be observed in the new Schwabing Hospital by Richard Schachner, 1904-1910 (SAM-NLG-399), and the municipal orphanage and old people's home by Grässel. This process is dealt with more fully in chapter three.

<sup>26</sup>Lothar Meilinger, *Das Münchener Waisenhaus: Eine Studie* (Munich, n.d.[c. 1905-1910]), p. 34. SAM-HBA-727.

<sup>27</sup>Lothar Meilinger, *Das Münchener Waisenhaus: Eine Studie* (Munich, n.d.[c. 1905-1910]), p. 34. SAM-HBA-727.



religious folk traditions, care of the folk song, care of those who like rambling ('Pfleger der Wanderschaft'), care of a sense of *Heimat*.<sup>28</sup> On an abstract level, one might think that these themes might have had little or no relevance to the children of this smoky suburb. Of course, there is no concrete way of knowing, but the number of children who would have belonged to the *Wanderschaft* in this area would have been low; it is absolutely certain that their exposure to the 24 species of songbirds which they were supposed to protect and the same number of wild flowers would have been next to none. This area of Munich does not impress for its birdsong, even despite a massive tree-planting programme over the last few years. On a more practical level, figure 2 shows how relevant these illustrations must have been to the children of this area. The base of the paintings – in this case 'Schützt die Singvögel' ('Protect the Songbirds') and 'Schützt die Pflanzen' ('Protect the Plants') on either side of the main boys' entrance –



**Figure 2:** Child by the main boys' entrance of the Implersstraße school.

are at approximately the same height as the tops of the door – about 6'6" up the wall. They reach their completion near the ceiling, around 13' high. Children would have left this school at around the age of 14, so before they would ever have been big enough to truly appreciate these images, and as already stressed, one might reasonably question whether their response would have been positive anyway. The images are textually and visually dense, not offering easy access at a distance. Metaphorically and literally, these images must have passed over many of the children's heads.

In this particular example, it would be tempting to view the contrast between the interior and exterior experiences of this municipal building as negating one another. This is how one of the most prominent historians of building between the wars in Germany, Barbara Miller Lane, approached the question of contrasts in a structure or set of structures. She argued that, in the case of National Socialist-approved architecture, the contrasts between its different elements, Modernist one minute, bland the next, bombastic

<sup>28</sup>Hans Grässel, 'Ästhetik des Schulhauses', June 1915. SAM-NLG-367.

somewhere else, *völkisch* in the next place meant that it was meaningless and contradictory, and could not function for the transmission of ideas; specifically, for the transmission of an ideology.<sup>29</sup> This is an error of judgment as it ignores the subtlety inherent in any dialogue; it underplays the awareness that the person with the message has of the person who has yet to hear it, and vice versa. This school shows that two messages could be simultaneously projected, though with varying degrees of success: the first, that buildings should embody ideas of visual and emotional continuity with their surroundings, the second that urban residents should re-appraise their relationship to wildlife, nature, the country and tradition. Meanwhile, it indirectly embodies a third idea, namely that the city corporation was both able to suggest this reappraisal and justified in attempting to do so.

In the period during and after the First World War, the debate about the nature and locus of *Heimat* seems to have changed. It was absent from the debates about the big public building projects of this period (Krankenhaus an der Talkirchenerstraße, Technisches Rathaus, Altersheim St. Joseph, housing plans, the one or two schools which were built). It is true that an interest in it (the nature and locus of *Heimat*) outside Bavaria in the rebuilding programme of areas of East Prussia devastated by the war – the so-called ‘Ostwiederaufbauprogramm’ – was briefly very significant, and could well have shaped post war responses in Munich. Little has been written on this, but what has been shows a desire projected by the Prussian government to resettle out of cities and towns, to repatriate the *Bürger* with the countryside. In stylistic terms, it operated in an essentially classicist or Biedermayer idiom, and thereby earned itself the name of the ‘Um 1800 Strömung’. Munich’s post-war landscape is notable for its non-engagement with this phenomenon.<sup>30</sup>

However, because the council apparently gave up on some of the rhetoric of the *Heimat* does not mean to say they gave up on their ambition to create one. The *Heimat* had, it

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<sup>29</sup>Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany 1918-1945* (London, 1968), pp. 185-215.

<sup>30</sup>This is development, focusing on what has been called the ‘Um-1800 Strömung’, has received little attention in existing historiography. For an introduction to it, see Bormann, *Paul Schulze-Naumburg*. For contemporary sources, see: G. Jobst and G. Langen, *Die halbländische Vorstadtsiedlung* (Munich, 1918); W. Kuhn, *Kleinbürgerliche Siedlungen in Stadt und Land* (Munich, 1921), *Kleinsiedlungen aus Friderizianischer Zeit* (Stuttgart, 1918); For limited discussions of why the city of Munich did not feel these were useful, see August Blössner, *Fünfundzwanzig Jahre Münchener Stadterweiterung* (Munich, 1918); for garden city, semi-rural and rural suggestions of which the Munich municipality must have been aware but rejected, see the many documents in the large file, ‘Massnahmen gegen eine Wohnungsnot nach dem Kriege’, SAM-WA-18.

*Großstadtangst*: disorder and discomfort in the metropolis. 43 seemed, become an unlovely thing. Perhaps it had disgraced itself in the war; maybe Münchener could not identify the *Heimat* clearly. Bavaria had done badly in what was seen as a Prussian war, yet both were nominally (and increasingly controversially) part of the same Germany, so a German *Heimat* may have seemed undesirable. And yet for Münchener, the Bavarian government became increasingly and outrightly hostile to the municipal, and *vice versa*, and with Munich's role as 'Königliche Haupt- und Residenzstadt' gone, the bonds between the town and the state became increasingly formal and historical.<sup>31</sup> For the first time in Bavaria, city and country became irreconcilable opposites, culturally and economically, a theme which is dealt with in chapter two. Before the war, housing for the municipality had had in part an explicitly *heimatliche* imperative. Mayor Borscht, when applying to the Bavarian government for subsidies in 1900, outlined the plan he had for the municipality's early venture into housing provision:

We intend that through safer and more comfortable housing, especially amongst the growing youth of this city, the feeling for the *Heimat* will be won back and strengthened, and that thereby the growing youth criminality problems will be most effectively tackled.<sup>32</sup>

In the period after the war, the word *Heimat* was hardly heard at all in Munich politics. It was not until the National Socialists and those on the cultural and political far right resurrected the discourse at the beginning of the 1930s that the concept of *Heimat* had an explicit part to play in the construction of a discourse about the built environment.<sup>33</sup> However, much of the underlying nervousness and fear which engendered the *Heimat*

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<sup>31</sup>Much of this difficulty centred on the Bavarian government's heavy taxation on the city, but poor returns. For example, a constant and major political conflict in the 1920s was over the *Mietzinssteuer*, a tax on rents to finance new housing. According to Reich law, the *Land* collected the money, and redistributed it. Every other *Land* returned at least 80% of the money to the areas it had collected it from except Bavaria, which re-directed the money to rural areas. In the period 1924-1927, the city of Munich had paid RM 195,000,000 to the Bavarian government in rental taxes, but had received back in housing construction subsidies RM 27,742,900, only 14.2%. This issue did more than any other to engender political hatred between the city government and the *Land*. (BM Scharnagl an das Staatsministerium für Soziale Fürsorge, 13 June 1928. SAM-WA-64.)

<sup>32</sup> An die hohe Kammer der Abgeordneten. Betreff: Bitte des Vereins für Verbesserung der Wohnungsverhältnisse in München (a. Verein) um Gewährung staatlicher Unterstützung, 5 January 1900. See also Vorschlag zur Beschaffung unkündbarer und unsteigbarer Wohnungen für Angestellte und Arbeiter in Münchener Großunternehmen, 19 January 1900, which appealed to businessmen to build housing because *Heimatgefühl* would be good for labour relations and the economy of the city. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>33</sup>Which is not to claim that nostalgia or rural motifs or pre-modern goals disappeared from the *products* and *subjects* of municipal architectural discourse; Grässel produced two major works in this period, the Fröttmaninger-Straße school in the Siedlung Alte Heide and the Altersheim St. Joseph, both making extensive use of an essentially pre-war aesthetic vocabulary, and both being criticized for it in the press. As I found in my Master's dissertation, National Socialist building was also not nearly as preoccupied with nostalgic motifs or discourse as has often been suggested (*Building an Idea: Nazi Propagandists and the Built Environment*, MA dissertation, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1996).



yearning remained, and as we shall see in the case of the housing programme of the 1920s, the municipality's determination to shape the city to tackle some of the problems of 'modernity' did not diminish, though the word *Heimat* lost its potency.

Before that, the exact nature of the link between the buildings which the council put up and the body of the council itself needs to be assessed, between the beginning of the century and the First World War. These architects and engineers were not acting as 'rogue agents', pursuing a private agenda, and would be better cast as servants of the municipality, both experts informing and agents executing the ideology of the very top level of the municipal government. It is certainly true that there was a varying institutional dynamic in the city government throughout the period, operating in a triangular fashion, the three elements of which were as follows: the Magistrat, the council chamber and the Hochbauamt. However, at different times and on different issues, each element might the lead in developing the differing agendas in the period in question, although overall the weight of initiative lay within the Hochbauamt, the mayoralty and the 'building' *Referate* (Hygiene, Schools, Welfare) in the Magistrat. Whichever element led, however, the other two would soon catch up, and there was no period of sustained discord between the differing institutional elements of the Munich corporation. For example, as the school building programme will show, some councillors were shocked by the new buildings proposed by the Hochbauamt but soon became very supportive; on the question of placing towers on municipal buildings, the situation was reversed when the council chamber insisted that they should be there against the will of the Hochbauamt, sometimes sending plans back to be re-done, and the Hochbauamt caught up. The town planning preoccupations of the Magistrat regarding housing policy was something which the Hochbauamt only subsequently became engaged in, and the Magistrat had to invest considerable resources in convincing the council chamber of the worth of its controversial housing plans. It was always the case, however, that the institutional divisions outlined here did not represent constituencies or cultural interest groups following a distinct, stable and separate agenda from the other two parts. For example, as has been mentioned, Fischer's schools met with a lot of opposition from within the council chamber, mostly to do with the personality of Fischer himself and the fact that he was busy drawing up unpopular building regulations aimed at limiting the speculative rights of the Liberal majority in the chamber. The Haimhauserstraße school (figure 3), for example, was criticized in the council chamber '...for having the character

of a factory, a cotton mill [...] or even a zoo,<sup>34</sup> and councillors found the façade of his



**Figure 2:** Part of the façade of the Haimhauserstraße school. Theodor Fischer, 1897-98.

Higher School for Girls too simple.<sup>35</sup> However, another of Fischer's schools, that on Guldeinstraße, met with opposition because '...namely the façade has nothing at all to do with the internal plan of the building' – a near-cardinal sin for any architect hoping to be regarded as progressive and modern.<sup>36</sup>

Fischer was criticized on the one hand for being too modern and simple in surface decoration, and on the other for committing the same 'crime' as many historicists, that he had not expressed the inner functions and organization of the school in the exterior form of the building. Opposition to building projects tended to be fitful and inconsistent.

However, while there is no evidence of any consistent opposition, there were clear examples of deliberate and consistent alignment of the council with the broad thrust of the ideology underpinning its buildings, particularly in the exhibitions the council organized.

### *Ausstellung 'München 1908'*

The exhibition 'München 1908' marked the corporation's entry into a field of both cultural manipulation and economic activity which was relatively novel for municipalities at that time: *Ausstellungswesen*, or the exhibition industry. Key figures in the municipality regarded the phenomenon as an element of the town's 'cultural mission', and throughout this period it presented the council with a special opportunity, firstly for the generation and presentation of a cultural summary or précis, and, secondly, for the corporation to mark its own place in relation to that summary. The municipality would provide a 'digest' of recent cultural, visual, social and economic 'progress' for the citizen; and it would cast itself as the cipher and oracle of that very progress. It would not just be the referee, it would also write the rules and select the players. At two key

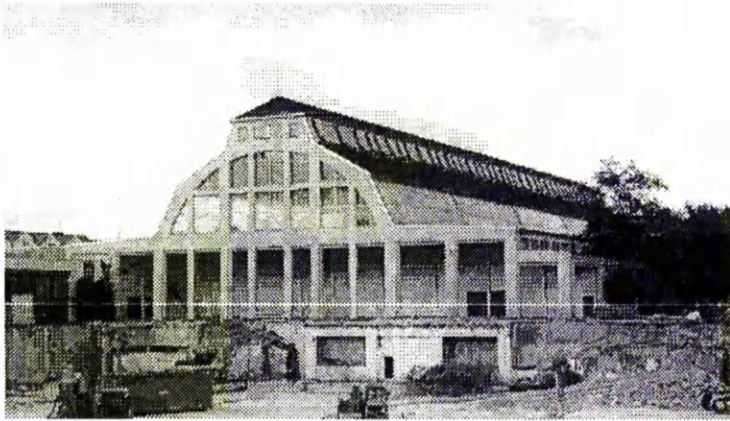
<sup>34</sup>Heinrich Steinbach, 'Zur Geschichte des Münchener Volksschulhauses', part 3, in *Süddeutsche Bauzeitung*, 30 July 1910.

<sup>35</sup>Heinrich Steinbach, 'Zur Geschichte des Münchener Volksschulhauses', part 4, *Süddeutsche Bauzeitung*, 26 November 1910.

<sup>36</sup>Heinrich Steinbach, 'Zur Geschichte des Münchener Volksschulhauses', part 3, *Süddeutsche Bauzeitung*, 30 July 1910.

stages in the first few decades of the last century, 1908 and 1928, the corporation used this medium to position itself *vis à vis* the broader cultural trends at the time; in this instance, we will look at the Ausstellung 'München 1908'.

First of all, it is worth stressing that both exhibitions were products, to a large degree, of



**Figure 3:** Main entrance to the Ausstellung 'München 1908'. Wilhelm Bertsch, 1907-8.

the Hochbauamt. Its architects and engineers were in charge of both buildings, goals, advertising and exhibits, and the office for exhibitions (*Ausstellungsamt*) was a subsection of the Hochbauamt. But the council as a whole, and the Magistrat and the mayors in particular,

took a close interest in the smallest details of the exhibitions, and every exhibit and exhibitor had to be approved by the body of the council, the Magistrat and the Hochbauamt. What would be in these exhibitions was not rubber-stamped; it was debated in several institutional contexts exactly which presentations would reach the public. The emphasis was to be on *Schlichtheit* and *guten Geschmack*: simplicity and good taste, in contrast to the complexity and bad taste of modern culture, and its vehicle, the *Großstadt*. The exhibition was conceived as part of the city's cultural mission, and at the centre of the whole exhibition stood building, in the form of both the structures of the exhibition area itself, and the exhibits within them. The exhibition as a whole was to feature the achievements of the municipality, though trade and industry and clubs and associations (*Vereinswesen*) also took part. Bauamtman Wilhelm Bertsch, one of the municipality's most forward-looking, progressive and influential architects, was responsible for the planning of the exhibition, and outlined the following programme:

This exhibition is intended to give an overview of the good facilities which Munich has, of everything good and unique which the city of Munich has created, and of developments taken up elsewhere which have been fostered by this city.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup>Wilhelm Bertsch, 'Ausstellung München 1908. Programm Entwurf.', n.d. [before January 1907]. SAM-NLG-407.

The intention seems to have been that all exhibits in the exhibition were to be related in some way back to the municipality which, if it had not been responsible for the exhibit itself, then was at least responsible for the context in which the exhibit was displayed.

All exhibits, whether municipal or not, were to be subordinated to a set of aesthetic principles developed and defined by the Hochbauamt. The exhibition was to be a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in which every detail from the toilets to the uniforms to the programmes to the buildings to the exhibits would conform to a set of principles which would develop a sense of *Schlichtheit*, *Nüchternheit*, *Sachlichkeit* and *guten Geschmack* – simplicity, sobriety, plainness and good taste; ‘Thus the whole should serve to enlighten in an economic as well as an art-political [*kunstpolitischer*] regard, [...] because the whole exhibition in all its parts should be nothing short of one piece of applied art.’<sup>38</sup> It has already been noted that Grässel associated the decay in taste and the degeneration of art with the *Großstadt*, and the association of a sick urban society requiring a cultural cure was at the heart of the exhibition. The organizing principle behind this propagandistic or enlightening mission would be *Baukunst* – not élitist architecture, but the far more accessible art of building. Bauamtman Rehlen – another member of Munich’s school-building team – was responsible for the selection, order and layout of the exhibits, and he arranged that the entire main hall (and approximately some 30% of the remaining exhibition space) would be given over to the built environment. Six Munich architects would be profiled in the first hall, three municipal and three non-municipal. Of those six, the first three as one entered the hall were Theodor Fischer, Hans Grässel and Karl Hocheder.<sup>39</sup> The chain of representation was completed: architecture was brought to a public both through its lived existence in the streets of Munich and through its more mediatized life in the exhibition, and the municipality fully aligned itself with its architects and their drives to address the themes thrown up by ‘modernity’. For example, describing the role of sport at the exhibition, Hans Uebel wrote:

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<sup>38</sup>Wilhelm Bertsch, ‘Ausstellung München 1908. Programm Entwurf.’, n.d. [before January 1907]. SAM-NLG-407.

<sup>39</sup>Robert Rehlen, ‘Die Anordnung der Ausstellung’, *Ausstellung ‘München 1908’*, 6, April 1908. SAM-NLG-408. Karl Hocheder was coming to the end of his career at the beginning of the period of this work, so does not feature highly. He was most well known for devising the forms of the Munich school building; the ‘L’-shape, organized on a corner around the sport halls, rejecting Hausmannian Renaissance styling. He was essentially a historicist, preferring the influences of the Bavarian tradition over French and Italian forms. He is chiefly remembered today as the architect of the Müllersches Volksbad, a palatial Jugendstil swimming baths in the middle of Munich, built at the turn of the last century.



Our age sickens with hurry and body and soul-rotting nervousness. Superficiality and lust for pleasure are the signature of everyday life. [...] This is a universal: in commerce, in industry, in art. The same goes for the care of the soul and the body.<sup>40</sup>

Mayor Borscht, at the opening speech, said that the only way problems like these could be tackled was through the approach the Hochbauamt had taken of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*; transforming the life of the *Großstadtmensch* so that the individual saw him or herself as part of a wider, (and here I paraphrase) more organic whole. City corporations were uniquely placed to return the individual back to this sort of wholeness through the fulfillment of their immense '*kulturellen Aufgabe*' – cultural mission – he maintained, and that was how the exhibition should be viewed.<sup>41</sup>

One of the problems that the municipality had which both architecture and the exhibition could address was that many of the council's services and achievements – electricity, education, social care – were in fact intangible. But they took on a tangible and experiential life in the buildings in which they took place. *Schulwesen* – the whole educational system – was essentially invisible, Kerschensteiner, director of the city's schools argued, until buildings called it forth into three dimensions and stamped its presence into the *Stadtbild*. Therefore it was essential that figures such as Grässel, Theodor Fischer and Carl Hocheder took pride of place in the main hall of the exhibition.<sup>42</sup> It seems he was arguing building was a way of asserting control where there had been none, of making a firm social and cultural statement of order, imposed on a worrying city of uncontrolled chaos. Through displaying the municipal architects' work, it was intended that the exhibition would doubly educate the citizen in the virtues of simplicity, sobriety, plainness and good taste, love of the *Vaterland*, the city, art and each other. 3,000,000 people visited the exhibition; it was estimated that about 500,000 of these were tourists, which means that there were around five visits to the exhibition for each citizen of the town.<sup>43</sup> All the local press coverage confirms that the show was a huge success, and that it led to the city government, cultural developments and thinking

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<sup>40</sup>Hans Uebel, 'Der Sport auf der Ausstellung "München 1908"', *Ausstellung 'München 1908'*, 3, January 1908, p. 17. SAM-NLG-408.

<sup>41</sup>Wilhelm Borscht, 'Festreten bei der Eröffnungsfeier der Ausstellung', *Ausstellung 'München 1908'*, 7, May 1908, p. 49. SAM-NLG-408.

<sup>42</sup>Georg Kerschensteiner, 'Das Schulwesen Münchens in der Ausstellung', *Ausstellung 'München 1908'*, 7, May 1908, pp. 53-55. SAM-NLG-408.

<sup>43</sup>'Der Erfolg der Ausstellung 'München 1908'', *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, 30 January 1909. SAM-NLG-408.

*Großstadtangst*: disorder and discomfort in the metropolis. 49 on the built environment to be tied tightly together for the journalists of the town.<sup>44</sup> Some papers occasionally objected to the over-historicism of some of Grässel's works, but most revelled in the work of the architects on show, particularly Theodor Fischer: 'Munich's saviour', 'Munich's innovator',<sup>45</sup> 'victor over the style-question' was how he was variously referred to.<sup>46</sup> An unknown paper summed up in an article:

On these broad cultural foundations the Magistrat has raised up a culture for the likes of which we all yearn, and which this Ausstellung 'München 1908' portends. Here we encounter the spirit of an epoch exalting in the future.<sup>47</sup>

It was, however, a future of a calm antidote to the 'soul-rotting nervousness' of everyday modern life. This entire process of the fulfillment of this yearning was ordered in and around municipal building projects. The modern *Großstadt* was described, criticized and analyzed, and *Stadtverwaltung* in the form of building was, at least in part, the solution.

### Städtebau

The idea that the town was fractured and uncontrollable has already been touched on. I would like to develop this idea further by moving outwards from municipal buildings to include new possibilities for the city government to control the layout and uses of the city. I would like to propose that the activity and discourses of *Städtebau* in general could be symptomatic of a discomfort when confronted with the *Großstadt*. It would be simplistic to regard it as just that; there were many instances when the municipality seemed to promote the expansion of the city, and sought to act as catalyst to that process, and these are discussed in the following chapter. But the discourses of *Städtebau* on its own were essentially discourses about seeking to regulate the unruly *Großstadt*. They were the product of nervousness and discomfort, not confidence and ease, as an examination of the ideological underpinnings of the regulatory framework will show.

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<sup>44</sup> There are many positive and effusive articles from newspapers from Munich and Augsburg in SAM-NLG-408, and only one negative one, written in the SPD-controlled *Münchener Post*. The editor of the *Post* was Magistratrat Eduard Schmid, who would be mayor after the revolution, who proved to be Munich's most conservative and philistine mayor in architectural matters during his period of office. Nevertheless, by the end of the exhibition even the *Post*'s coverage was positive.

<sup>45</sup> Both in 'Die Kunst auf die Ausstellung', *Augsburger Abendzeitung*, 23 July 1908. SAM-NLG-408.

<sup>46</sup> 'Ausstellung 'München 1908'', *Münchener Post*, 20 September 1908. SAM-NLG-408.

<sup>47</sup> Unknown newspaper, unknown date, SAM-NLG-408.

There are several points which need to be cleared up before we can proceed. Firstly, the terminology. The term *Städtebau* will be used throughout this discussion. The closest English term would be 'town planning'. However, this carries few of the positive connotations inherent in the German word, which literally translated would be 'city building'. In German the word has a sort of organic quality which makes it somehow grander than 'town planning', while at the same time encompassing all the same bureaucratic, technocratic and administrative connotations of a Stevenage, a Welwyn or a Milton Keynes. Perhaps most crucially, the word can be transformed into an adjective (*städtebaulich*) and into a noun denoting the quality or nature of a thing: *das Städtebauliche*. These all militate to remove some of the stigma of bureaucratic jargon from the concept, and allowed it to operate in a very vibrant and involved way in discourse about the management of cities.

Secondly, despite making a claim for the 'organic' nature of the concept, the starting point for this discussion will be a set of criticisms that *Städtebau* was not organic, but instead that it was bureaucratic, mathematical and soul-destroying – just like modern life. Between the 1870s and the 1890s there was a shift in the nature of the debate around *Städtebau*. It changed from being a debate focused on the physical well being of the *Bürger* to one focused on his or her emotional, spiritual and cultural health.<sup>48</sup> The chief agent of that shift was Austrian architect, Camillo Sitte, and his ideas influenced the Munich municipality deeply; so deeply, in fact, that they first offered him a job as town planner, and when he refused, employed him as a judge for the competition to decide on the *Stadterweiterungsplan*, 1891-93. As his role was so central, some time will have to be spent examining just what it meant to accept his hermeneutic. Thirdly, the municipality (and it was not unique in this, but it was first to do this comprehensively in the world) showed an interest in controlling not just the topography of the *Großstadt*,

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<sup>48</sup>That is not to say that physical factors – access to light, heat, clean air and water etc. – were no longer important. This contention is a response to a reading of the following: Anthony Sutcliffe, 'Urban Planning in Europe and North America before 1914: International Aspects of a Prophetic Movement', in *Urbanisierung im 19. & 20. Jahrhundert: Historische & geographische Aspekte*, ed. by Hans Jürgen Teuteberg (Cologne, 1983), pp. 441-474; Peter Breitling, 'The role of the competition in the genesis of urban planning: Germany and Austria in the nineteenth century', in *The Rise of Modern Urban Planning*, ed. by Anthony Sutcliffe (Oxford, 1980), pp. 31-54; Stefan Fisch, 'Neue Aspekte der Münchener Stadtplanung zur Zeit Theodor Fischers (1893-1901) im interurbanen Vergleich', and Wolfgang Hardtwig, 'Soziale Räume und politische Herrschaft. Leistungsverwaltung, Stadterweiterung und Architektur in München, 1870 bis 1914', both in *Soziale Räume in der Urbanisierung: Studien zur Geschichte Münchens im Vergleich 1850 bis 1933*, ed. by Wolfgang Hardtwig and Klaus Tenfelde (Munich, 1990), pp. 174-191, and pp. 60-151; Stefan Fisch, *Stadtplanung im 19. Jahrhundert: Das Beispiel München bis zur Ära Theodor Fischer* (München, 1988).

but what occurred above that: the appearance and uses of the material city. It sought, in short, to control the material city in three, and not just two dimensions. Fourthly, the council (primarily the Magistrat before 1919, but the whole corporation after that), sought to tackle the visual 'self-created chaos'<sup>49</sup> which the unplanned city represented; they endeavoured to rein in something which it was feared was splitting apart. The act of planning would be a comfort to them.

Sitte represented, in Bavaria at the end of the nineteenth century, only one of many possible interpretative methods with which a council might approach the regulatory framework of urban topography and management. His book, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, appeared first in 1889, and by 1891 the municipality of Munich had decided to plan the city, both those parts which already existed and those which would exist in the future, according to his principles. They enrolled him as a judge for their competition, which ran between 1891-1893.<sup>50</sup> In doing so, they rejected the dominant threads of nineteenth century town planning, be they French, German, Austrian, British or American. The profession of town planning in the nineteenth century was peopled with engineers, who saw themselves primarily as solving engineering problems. The municipality of Munich, through Mayors Widenmayer and Borscht, and Oberbaurat Rettig, decided they wanted an artist to plan the town, believing apparently that only an artist could master the ethical ambitions which they harboured for the development of the city. What those ethical ambitions were is revealed in the work of Sitte.

Sitte's work does not exist in an accessible or worthy English translation, and has aroused minimal comment in English-language historiography. Indeed, it has hardly merited serious discussion in the German. The exact nature of his ideas remains largely undiscussed in any significant historical or theoretical literature, though he occasionally earns a 'nod' as the father of modern town planning in Germany. Schorske deals with him in *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, but somewhat misrepresents him as a nostalgic craft obsessive.<sup>51</sup> Therefore it will be worthwhile to examine his principal work here.<sup>52</sup> His

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<sup>49</sup>These words were used in a municipal debate about the *Staffelbauordnung* in 1902. Fisch, *Stadtplanung im 19. Jahrhundert*, p. 260.

<sup>50</sup>Little is known about the origins of this competition and why the new mayor, Borscht, the new municipal building director, Rettig, and the Magistrat as a whole felt so moved by Sitte to do all this, but for what is known, see the outstanding work by Fisch, *Stadtplanung im 19. Jahrhundert*, pp. 201-220.

<sup>51</sup> Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, pp. 63-72.



German is lively and fascinating, and draws the reader into a novel world in which the structures which constitute the city are presented as a unique and powerful set of tools to influence the spirit and emotions – the *Geist* – of the citizen at the most fundamental of levels. It opens by developing a critique of the way that cities were then being approached by those responsible for the governance and well-being of the citizens. The 1876 standard text-book of Reinhard Baumeister, professor of engineering at Karlsruhe Polytechnic and one time designer of railway line placement, *Stadt-Erweiterungen in technischer, baupolizeilicher und wirtschaftlicher Beziehung*, would have been typical for the sort of text which informed the conceptualization of the administered and planned city, and Sitte mocked Baumeister in *Der Städtebau*, as Baumeister had come from a railway engineering background. Subjects such as health, light and traffic flow dominated; the engineer was the relevant ‘expert’, and his expertise was purely technical. This had had devastating effects on the material city and the mental life of the citizen according to Sitte: ‘...our mathematically defined life, in which man becomes formally a machine’ was the result of this ‘failure in artistic penetration.’<sup>53</sup> He complained:

No-one cares any more to approach town planning as an artistic problem; instead, the question is seen as a technical one. When subsequently the artistic effects do not fulfill expectations, we stand there astounded and bewildered, but at the next opportunity everything will be handled in just the same way: only from the technical stand-point, as if it was nothing more than a question of laying out a railway line, in which art has no role.<sup>54</sup>

This had meant that *Städtebau* had lost all concept of tradition, and that the ‘engineer mentality’ – in short, untempered modern materialism and science – had robbed the urban population of so much, although he stressed they had profited in material terms from running water and the like. Art had moved from the street into the museum as a direct result of the progress of technology – for example, the fountain had been rendered functionally redundant and transformed into an artistic curiosity through the introduction of domestic plumbing.<sup>55</sup> Although man had been separated from art through technical developments in the town, he stressed the incredible achievements of this ‘scientific’ mentality, but at the same time echoed the writings of many when he described how it had occurred at a terrible spiritual, artistic and psychological cost, which was not at all inevitable. This was indeed a common trope of cultural discourse at the turn of the

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<sup>52</sup>For the purposes of this examination, I have used Camillo Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen* (Vienna, 1972 [1889]).

<sup>53</sup>Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, p. 113.

<sup>54</sup>Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, p. 90.

<sup>55</sup>Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, p. 113.

twentieth century, and the reconciliation of art and science, of the spiritual with the material, was a prime concern of many thinkers and practitioners operating both inside classic Modernist discourse and out, and is discussed in more detail in chapter three.

This was the operation of the problem, and indeed this discourse about technical progress always being related back to the personal, the artistic, the spiritual and the mental was a theme which informed municipal discussion in every project I have encountered from school building at the turn of the century to housing estates thirty years later. As Grässel wrote, speaking of school buildings:

No flowering of art will ever be achieved through commissioned work on easels or through the hoarding of pictures in great collections, where they, isolated from any real relationship with a particular space, are condemned to while away an orphaned existence.<sup>56</sup>

In this schema, art was as alienated and orphaned as any *Großstadt mensch* by its exclusion from the ideology of the layout of the city. The key feature of this approach was that it was exemplary of a certain genre of *Großstadtkritik* – of *Großstadtangst* – which has received scant attention. It is more sophisticated than the so-called ‘cultural-pessimist’ approach which has been mentioned already, because it accepted the fundamental and inevitable reality of life in the *Großstadt* (the eventual winner of Munich’s town planning competition was called *Realist*), at the same time as highlighting the problems which that implied. The *Großstadt* was the locus of the problem in the Sittesque/Munich-municipal framework, but it was also the home of the solution.

The nature of the problem was, to Sitte, clear. New towns and new areas of towns were described variously by him in his work as: vapid, shallow, boring, endless, impractical, tasteless, torturing, fracturing, empty, artless, deadening, demeaning, and inducing loneliness, nervousness and agoraphobia. ‘Of course, I concede...’, he wrote,

that the gentle power of accustomization numbs us, but one need only mention the impression which assails our senses upon our return from Florence or Venice, to gauge how painful the attack of this vapid, empty modernity [*schalen Modernität*] is.<sup>57</sup>

The effects of this were terrible on the inhabitant of the city. They reached down into his soul, and the loneliness and agoraphobia which modern town planning engendered had

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<sup>56</sup>Haus Grässel, ‘Ästhetik des Schulhauses’, 16 June 1915, p. 13.

<sup>57</sup>Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, p. 153.

terrible social, economic and personal consequences. No technical considerations required this to be the case:

It is not true that modern traffic forces us into this situation; it is not true that hygienic requirements demand this of us; it is simply thoughtlessness, complacency and a lack of good will which condemn us modern urbanites to a life-sentence in formless quarters for the masses, to living with soul-destroying views of an infinity of tenement blocks and infinitely uniform street formations.<sup>58</sup>

Worst of all, the geometrical layout of towns in which roads were planned either axially or radially led to the sense of infinity in the cityscape. The citizen could see to the end of these long straight streets. It made him *platzscheu* and *einsam* – agoraphobic (literally ‘shy of space’) and lonely. The citizen clung to the walls of buildings, dreading the moment when he or she would have to leave these peripheries and enter into the storm of human and vehicular traffic to cross a road at the regular junctions classical town planning produced. The desire to be uniform irrespective of the layout of the land, of traditional patterns of land ownership and usage, killed *Heimatgefühl* – a sense of affinity with the *Heimat* – because it destroyed the links of the chain of belonging between the individual and the landscape in which they existed. Straight streets entirely contradict our *Naturgefühl* – our feeling for nature – because straight lines and uniform infinities do not exist in nature. Their effect was that, ‘...one, spiritually weary, can hardly await the end.’<sup>59</sup> Tantalizingly, he left open exactly what sort of end, whether to the street or to something more serious, the individual might hope for.

His solution was to provide variation through planning; specifically, artistic planning, and the generation of an artistic framework to solve the technical problems which the city posed. Perhaps paradoxically, he argued that through the application of tighter planning controls, exercised by one artist with vision and power, a new freedom could be secured for the individual. Specifically, one could give him or her what he or she craved: enclosure. The spaces between buildings were crucial in this endeavour. One could make the city like a series of rooms through which the citizen could move, never feeling exposed or naked or nervous. Through the creation of a *Gesamtbild* – one image of the town uniformly applied through all its manifestations – one would end the fractured nature of the city, a nature which the individual must reflect in his or her own character. The *de facto* status of the city as *Heimat* would mean the individual would have to take

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<sup>58</sup> Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, p. 153.

<sup>59</sup> Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, p. 92.

his or her references from it, and in doing so would experience the city as either a unifying or a divisive influence. Buildings existing without reference to and integration with those around them emphasized isolation and it became difficult for humans to respond to them. They operated thus:

The sensibilities excited [by buildings which do not fit in] are exactly the same as that rudeness called forth in some people, which consists of approaching the person they are talking to closer and closer, until they almost touch them. One tries to evade them, dodging backwards, but the torturer follows, until his nose almost touches yours. One breathes freely again only when one is rid of the intruder.<sup>60</sup>

As has already been seen in the work of Grässer, this integrative principle would always be observed by those involved in planning Munich's spaces, and not just before 1914; for example, the chief objection to the most dynamic and subsequently 'art-historically' respected forms of Modernism in the 1920s was that they rejected all links to the context or place of their construction. They were 'object' buildings, designed and placed according to the universal considerations of what might be called Platonic forms, orientating themselves towards the objective or universal factory worker or housewife or city, not the expectations, hopes and fears of the distinct or unique individuals who would use and experience them. 'A free-standing building stands forever like a cake on a plate', he quipped.<sup>61</sup>

But crucially, although Sitte individually and the council collectively were happy with this metaphor of pursuit and flight, and linked it explicitly to the evils of the *Großstadt* as currently planned, they did not ever consider leaving, diminishing or destroying the *Großstadt*. They had a fear or *Angst* of the *Großstadt*, not an outright hate or contempt, and the administrators and governors implied time and time again that were the city brought under cultural control and ordered, that *Angst* would be curtailed. They never posited a return to the countryside. They never gave serious encouragement to the garden city supporters; they never seriously entertained the styles used in Prussia in the 'Ostwiederaufbau' reconstructions of the 400 towns and villages destroyed in the Russian campaigns of the First World War. One of the municipality's specific reasons for rejecting the way that May built in Frankfurt in the late 1920s was that his work was effectively rural, being situated in green-field sites well outside the city. Councillors felt

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<sup>60</sup>Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, p. 166.

<sup>61</sup>Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, p. 170.

May offered *ländliche* solutions to *großstädtischen* problems.<sup>62</sup> The rejection of large-scale rural, extra-urban solutions echoed Sitte's argument that garden suburbs, and even parks, introduced the rural ideal into the urban reality, and thereby created conflict and tension, heightening the sense of nervousness and incomprehension in the citizen.<sup>63</sup> The crucial point is that the council, when it approached *Städtebau*, was not *großstadtfeindlich*; it viewed the city with fear, not loathing. To control the city was to control the fear.

The crucial change which the council made in its approach to the city was, again, based on the writings of Sitte. He had argued that cities were being conceived of fundamentally as problems of geometry. They were viewed as essentially planar, and operated only in two dimensions. Once the municipality had laid out the surface of the city, it neglected to define then how that surface would express itself spatially, visually and functionally. The Munich Magistrat clearly resolved that it was not suitable to conceive of the three dimensional life of the individual in the two dimensional framework of the map. They became decreasingly interested in *Grundriß* – the two dimensional representation, and increasingly interested in the *Bebauungsplan* (plan of how the land would be built up) and *Staffelung* (the layers and heights of structures in a particular area, also their uses) – descriptions of how the city would operate in three dimensions. As soon as the *Stadterweiterungsbüro* (Office for Planning Urban Extension) was established in Munich in 1893, with Theodor Fischer at its head, it began to develop what would ultimately come to be called the 'Staffelbauordnung' (Scaled Building Regulations), which covered not only the ground plan of buildings, specifying factors such as the size of internal courtyards, thickness of fire-walls and so on, but also how high and deep any building could be constructed, what their relationship to surrounding buildings should be, and what the spaces within should be used for.<sup>64</sup> In 1894 the then director of municipal building, Rettig, as one of his final acts in the job, laid before the council the three-dimensional 'Kubische Bauordnung'. This plan was only partially successful, offending as

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<sup>62</sup>They objected to his use of 'virgin' lands outside the town, offering nothing to the '*Gesamtstadtbild*', and they objected to the focus on *Flachbau* over *Hochbau* – low-rise over high-rise. Bericht über die Reise der Mitglieder der Stadtratskommission beim Wohnungsamt nach Nürnberg und Frankfurt a.M. vom 22.-24. November 1926. SAM-WA-63.

<sup>63</sup>In the period before the First World War, the city built no large parks for this reason.

<sup>64</sup>It was not finally accepted as a universal municipal regulation until 1904, but had been first presented to the council in 1899. Consultations with much of the municipal executives had helped create the regulation; culture, education, health, building, and legal departments had all had extensive roles in its development. See Fisch, *Stadtplanung im 19. Jahrhundert*, pp. 222-270.

it did the liberal sensibilities of many in the council chamber, yet it made the concept of a zoned city in which the interior design and spaces of buildings were regulated a live one; Rettig's transformative contribution was recognized in subsequent revisions of Baumeister's 1876 standard text book. Despite explicit support from many of Munich's cultural and economic luminaries and the Magistrat, he paid for his proposal with his job. The same fate would befall Fischer in 1902, though the compromise for his dismissal was the acceptance of his *Staffelbauordnung*.<sup>65</sup> The impetus of this shift towards deepening and extending control lasted in the municipality throughout the period in question, until the municipality could finally structure the private spaces of the domestic flat in the late 1920s. Fritz Beblo, head of the Hochbauamt in the mid and late 1920s, described the self-conscious progress of the city administration from the nineteenth century conception of town planning as a technical problem, then to an intermediary stage wherein the municipality controlled certain aspects of the exteriors, gradually moving inwards throughout the 1900s and 1910s until the 1920s when they could determine the entire interior life of the building, even domestic buildings, emphasizing one continuing process of growing municipal control over the spatial and visual experiences of the citizen.<sup>66</sup>

Parallel to this development, there emerged in international discourses amongst municipalities, architects, and other interested groups, the concept of zoning; that particular functions of the city should be confined to particular areas. The earliest distinctions were between residential and traffic streets, but this soon extended to distinctions between areas of industry, leisure, commerce, sport, 'high' and 'low' culture, and so on. These developments were incorporated into the *Staffelbauordnung*, and Munich became the first city in the world to zone itself in its entirety, with the determined aim of *re-locating* industry into the south-east (Berg-am-Laim), south-west (Sendlinger Ober- and Unterfeld), and the north (Freimann and Milbertshofen). Other cities had zoned new areas,<sup>67</sup> but they did not retrospectively apply zoning to existing areas. It was the comprehensiveness of the Munich approach which was unique. Many other cities, both inside Germany and out, followed suit.

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<sup>65</sup> Fisch, *Stadtplanung im 19. Jahrhundert*, pp. 219-221. Rettig made a fortune, however, from the success of his patented school bench system, which was displayed to great acclaim at the 1893 World Exposition in Chicago.

<sup>66</sup> Fritz Beblo, 'Der Einfluß des Krieges und der Nachkriegszeit auf das Stadtbild Münchens', in *Das Bayerland*, 6 (1925), pp. 180-184.

<sup>67</sup> For example, Frankfurt in 1891 [Anthony Sutcliffe, *Towards the Planned City: Germany, Britain, the United States and France, 1780-1914* (Oxford, 1981), p. 32.]

Although this discourse of reining in the chaotic city was not explicitly conducted in terms of *Heimat*, it can reasonably be linked to it because essentially Sitte prescribed a re-integration of concepts of nature and landscape into the urban. Nevertheless, the most 'obvious' associations of nature (flora and fauna) were downplayed – for example, the urban park and the garden suburb were always regarded as '*fremdartig*' intrusions into the urban fabric – and instead *Heimat* was transformed into a sort of inner organic force which visual and spatial culture might embody. It referred to an organic consistency of the whole.<sup>68</sup> The discourse also claimed to derive unity and character from the act of planning, a sense of which would be given to the citizen. The plan would take something which is inherently chaotic – the city – and submit it to the creative jurisdiction of, if possible, just one man. Stadtbaudirektor Fritz Beblo wrote in the late 1920s:

To create artistic wholeness in *Städtebau* is only possible when individual architects are responsible for the artistic development of whole streets and quarters, and when they are supported by the citizenry, and if they are allowed to exercise a unified authority in their particular sphere. It is not important if they are involved directly in the work of creation or whether they influence others through the weight of their personality.<sup>69</sup>

Many others (Fischer and Grässer included) had outlined this principle in the 1900s and 1910s.<sup>70</sup> The planning of Munich before the First World War has received extensive analysis by Stefan Fisch, and it would simply duplicate his work to dwell on it here.<sup>71</sup> However, after the First World War, the situation was very different. I would like to focus now on practice in the 1920s to demonstrate that the fears which Sitte outlined remained central, even though his solutions were no longer found to be suitable.

The inherent weaknesses of the German economy in the years after the First World War meant that the pre-war mode of economic management in the building sector became even more conspicuously unacceptable. In the first fifteen years of the twentieth century,

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<sup>68</sup>George Collins and Christine Crasemann Collins, *Camillo Sitte and the Birth of Modern City Planning* (London, 1965), p. 49. This appeal to the organic side of design was particularly important in the production and justifications of the Jugendstil.

<sup>69</sup>Fritz Beblo, 'Der Einfluß des Krieges und der Nachkriegszeit auf das Stadtbild Münchens', in *Das Bayerland*, 6 (1925), 180-184 (p. 182).

<sup>70</sup>All of these works by Theodor Fischer develop this theme of the necessity of one artistic 'dictator': 'Münchens Zukunft im Bauen. Kritik und Ausdruck, von Theodor Fischer', *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, 15 October 1927 [SAM-B&R-1638]; 'Der Stil im Städtebau', *Das Bayerland*, 6, 2 March 1925; 'Der Bauherr' (lecture given to Münchener Bund, c. November 1925) [SAM-NLG-397]; *Die Stadt* (Munich, 1928); *Sechs Vorträge über Stadtbaukunst* (Munich, 1922); *Für die deutsche Baukunst* (Munich, 1917); *Stadterweiterungsfragen mit Besonderer Rücksicht auf Stuttgart* (Stuttgart, 1903).

<sup>71</sup>Fisch, *Stadtplanung im 19. Jahrhundert*.

the economy was such that the town could lay out streets and areas as it saw fit, and be reasonably confident that private sector builders would fill them out with mixed-use and residential buildings of some form or another, as is discussed in chapter four. Towards the end of the war, it became clear that this would not be possible in the future.<sup>72</sup> The town would have to fund much building, especially if it was going to fend off the social and political catastrophes of a more severe housing shortage.<sup>73</sup> Yet the way this priority was expressed was dual: of course, there was a socio-political priority. But central as well was an idea that housing could be used as a tool of *städtebauliche* organization. The municipality did not develop a coherent, universal housing policy until 1925,<sup>74</sup> and then only unfolded it gradually. The focus here will be on the *städtebauliche* dimensions of it, and an exploration of how city governors foresaw the policy intervening in the organization of the *Großstadt* to make it less frightening, less alienating, more culturally 'warm', more social without being socialist, and more legible.

The key feature of housing policy – in fact, of all municipal policy and activity in the 1920s – was the attempt to generate, from 1925 onwards, a unified, large-scale housing programme. On a social-political level, the '12,000-Programme', under development from 1926 onwards, was an attempt to end once and for all the housing shortage in the city. As Wohnungsreferent Preis rather grandiosely stated in a speech to the council's housing committee:

Gentlemen! I remind you all, these proposals mean primarily, in their housing policy aspects, that in 2½ to 3 years time, we will have absolutely no housing crisis in Munich in the current sense of the word.<sup>75</sup>

There were about 12,000 families and individuals on the priority housing waiting lists; if the corporation could build 12,000 flats, that would be a final end to the housing problem in its current form, and the '*Schreckgespenst*' – the terrifying spectre – of social unrest which it could cause. Although demand increased too fast for the council to fulfil

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<sup>72</sup>See the contents of the mammoth file, 'Maßnahmen gegen eine Wohnungsnot nach dem Kriege' – SAM-WA-18, and of the more modestly sized 'Gemeinnützige Wohnstättengesellschaft' – SAM-B&R-305/8a.

<sup>73</sup>Wohnungsreferent Mayr, 'Warum brauchen wir in München eine städtische Siedlungsgesellschaft?', dated 'im vierten Kriegsjahr'. SAM-WA-18.

<sup>74</sup>The key event was the departure from power of the SPD mayor, Eduard Schmid. The new mayor, Karl Scharnagl of the BVP (Bayerische Volkspartei, the Bavarian branch of the Centre party), was far more committed to getting things done than his socialist predecessor.

<sup>75</sup>Sitzung des Wohnungsausschusses, 14 March 1928, in the *Münchener Gemeinde-Zeitung*, 24 March 1928. SAM-WA-64.



*Großstadtangst*: disorder and discomfort in the metropolis. 60 their dream,<sup>76</sup> the corporation was successful in their target of building 12,000 extra flats over and above their standard provision within three years, even despite the economic disaster of 1929. In the finalized plans, the municipality itself was scheduled to build 6,000 of the dwellings. A further 4,000 would be built by housing associations (*Baugenossenschaften*) and the remaining 2,000 by private contractors. The city council would not be directly responsible for the housing it erected; it was in fact managed through the establishment of a company, with the corporation as the majority shareholder (with the Bavarian state and a bank holding 20% of the shares between them). This was the *Münchener Gemeinnützige Wohnungsfürsorge Aktien-Gesellschaft*,<sup>77</sup> in common parlance this was shortened, mercifully, to the GeWoFAG.

Although the social policy elements were always important, *städtebaulich* and architectural considerations were always mentioned alongside them, and sometimes even before them. In part, this would have been because of the novelty of the type of project. The city council did its research well, and visited a variety of projects in Germany and Austria, and knew in detail of plans both in Germany and abroad. They had a wide range of models to choose from, ranging from Britain's fairly suburban approach (which they never showed anything other than a fleeting interest in), to the major settlements of Frankfurt, Berlin and Vienna – which they showed considerable interest in, but in some ways ultimately rejected, either because of *Zusammenballung* (clumping together of individuals into deindividuated masses) or because of *Stadtbildzersplitterung* (the fracturing of the overall impression of the town). Two key strands of the fear of modernity and the big city were played out in the planning metaphor: de-individuation and the mass society, and the fracturing and incomprehensibility of experience. Their mission, as identified by Theodor Fischer in 1928, was to come up with a solution which did not have the appearance of being an '*Angsterzeugnis*' – a product of fear – while at the same time conquering that anxiety about the effects of modernity and the *Großstadt* which were very clearly there.<sup>78</sup> They rejected British models indirectly; they visited Dresden, Chemnitz, Leipzig and Halle in 1925, and noted that most of these towns favoured *Flachbau* – low rise, low density housing, consisting of terraces, semi-detached

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<sup>76</sup>Notably after the economic collapse of 1929; high unemployment caused a new influx from the countryside of unemployed, unskilled labour.

<sup>77</sup>Roughly, this translates as the Munich Communal Housing Provision Co, PLC.

<sup>78</sup>'Münchens Zukunft im Bauen. Kritik und Ausdruck, von Theodor Fischer', *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, 15 October 1927. SAM-B&R-1638.

*Großstadtangst*: disorder and discomfort in the metropolis. 61 and small, three-storey blocks of dwellings. In Germany as a whole that year, 48% of homes were *Flachbau* and 52% *Hochbau*; in Dresden, 55% were *Flachbau*. It was noted that there was nothing to learn from these buildings as they were 'unsuitable for conditions in Munich.'<sup>79</sup> This is significant in two ways. Firstly, it shows the Munich municipality's continued rejection of rural, semi-rural, garden city and low-density solutions to urban development, a decisive rejection, it could be argued, of a certain brand of *Großstadtkritik* which regarded the city as reformable only through a complete transformation of existing urban economic, social, spatial and cultural structures into something quite unrecognizable. But, secondly, it also implies the formulation of a *Großstadtkritik* based on disjointedness, fracture and *Zersplitterung*, because these judgments would eventually three years later coalesce into a rejection of *Flachbau* on *städtebaulich* grounds.

They developed this critique further when they went to visit May's housing estates in Frankfurt-am-Main. They saw several estates (Praunheim and Niederrad amongst them), and they were given a guided tour by the great May himself. May receives little criticism in historical writing about twentieth century architecture; he is as canonically accepted and venerated as one can be, and in some respects justly so. Yet the councillors, building technicians and housing officials who went to Frankfurt were unimpressed. They either liked or were neutral towards the '*neuzeitliche Form- und Farbgebung*' – modern sense of form and colour – and thoroughly expected it to be there, regarding its presence as obvious and self-explanatory.<sup>80</sup> They were unhappy, though, that the buildings were all low-rise. May explained that this was essential because of public health reasons, and argued that if Britain could build 632,400 dwellings – 93% of its total – in low-rise developments, Germany could too. One other interpretation that is possible is that the '*volksgesundheitlichen Gründen*' which May mentioned were in fact to do with the *Volk* in its rather more sinister sense, and that he was arguing from a viewpoint of racial degeneration commonly expressed in more extreme brands of *Großstadtkritik*, but never once mentioned in Munich. Munich's housing provision in 1927 was 86% *Hochbau*,<sup>81</sup> well above the German average, which shows they were obviously not overly impressed

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<sup>79</sup>Bericht über die Dienstreise nach Dresden, Chemnitz, Leipzig und Halle vom 13.-17. September 1925. SAM-WA-63.

<sup>80</sup>Bericht über die Reise der Mitglieder der Stadtratskommission beim Wohnungsamt nach Nürnberg und Frankfurt a.M. vom 22.-24. November 1926. SAM-WA-63.

<sup>81</sup>Bauprogramm 1927, I. Teil. SAM-WA-64.

with May's arguments, and nor were the people of Munich either. They showed no interest in low-rise, low-density developments, and such developments as were constructed in this manner at the insistence of the Bavarian Ministry of Social Care proved impossible to fill.<sup>82</sup> The southern visitors to Frankfurt noted that the developments were in the country, offering no opportunity to influence the *Stadtbild* or the world of the *Großstadtmensch*, and requiring a long and expensive journey to work for the residents (apparently a source of grumbling, as many worked on the other side of Frankfurt). The leaders of the Munich municipality wanted to address the fabric, the substance, the very organization of the city directly – admittedly, as they felt it was disjointed and, in turn, disjointing – and create unity and control in the visual perception of the metropolis; they did not want to retreat from it to Utopian settlements on green-field sites as modernist 'guru' May advocated. They did not share Heynen's analysis that these green-field sites 'certainly attest to an attempt to plan Frankfurt as a single whole',<sup>83</sup> and seem instead to reinforce Tafuri's position that development in this way offered 'islands' in an 'anti-urban utopia', floating isolated in space and linked with the city in only a haphazard fashion.<sup>84</sup>

Subsequently, the Munich municipality calculated that building according to the 'System May', with large, pre-fabricated elements was 24.6% more expensive than traditional building methods; was not weather-proof; cost RM 8.20/m<sup>3</sup> more; that there were already ample standardized building components, and May's simply added to the confusion; that a three-roomed flat in Frankfurt required fifteen as opposed to Munich's nine doors in total.<sup>85</sup> All of this combined to make a pragmatic, not just programmatic, rejection of Heroic Modernism inevitable.

While they rejected the Frankfurt model in part because it was not *großstädtisch* enough and because it therefore did not offer them the opportunities for reforming the existing metropolis which they sought, they rejected the more urban Viennese model because

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<sup>82</sup>The conservative Bavarian government had insisted on some low density housing of not more than two floors, plus built out attic. However, those built in the *Großsiedlung Neuharlaching* in 1928 still stood partially empty at the end of 1929 as they had proved unpopular with those requiring rehousing. *Jahresbericht des Vorstandes. Gemeinnützige Wohnungsfürsorge Aktiengesellschaft München*, 1928. SAM-B&R-1458.

<sup>83</sup> Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity*, p. 53.

<sup>84</sup> Manfredo Tafuri, 'Sozialpolitik and the City in Weimar Germany', in *The Sphere and the Labyrinth* ed. by Tafuri (Cambridge, Mass., 1987), pp. 197-233.

<sup>85</sup>Karl Preis, *Die Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot in München: Denkschrift und Anträge des städt. Wohnungsreferenten vom 24. Dezember 1927* (Munich, 1927), pp. 101-102.

they felt it threw humans together in an undifferentiated way. In the general debate about the '12,000-Programme', the first mayor, Scharnagl, explained the programme in terms of a continuation of a great Munich building tradition thus:

I am happy that on the building side, the local way of doing things will still be followed. The execution of this project in Munich will distance itself just as much from the clumping together into one mass [*Zusammenballung*] of many hundreds of households in the smallest dwellings in one block, as is the practice in Vienna, as from as the expansion – the luxurious tendency – at this time of low-rise housing estates.<sup>86</sup>

Yet he must have known that the projects which would be deployed would actually be a radical departure from Munich's traditional building practices. He would have understood the need for standardization, rational planning and building on a large scale in great simplicity. Indeed, the town had organized the huge Ausstellung 'Heim und Technik' 1928 around this very principle, and the introduction of this idea to the exhibition programme shadowed exactly the development by the two mayors, Scharnagl and Kufner, the Wohnungsreferent, Preis, and the Hochbauamt of the '12,000-



**Figure 3:** a) dense *Kleinwohnungen*, and b) larger *bürgerliche* flats, with artists studios on the upper floors. Siedlung Neuhausen, architects unknown (prob. a) Hans Döllgast, b) Uli Seeck), 1928-30.

Programme'. When the plans were accepted in the spring/summer of 1928, the short time between announcement of the project and the acceptance of the plans shows that they must have been in development for some time,<sup>87</sup> and that Scharnagl, Kufner and Preis could not have

been unaware of what they would look like. The solution was to mix social groups in housing projects. For example, figures 5a and 5b show the Großsiedlung Neuhausen designed by a team led by Hans Döllgast. It combines high density housing in small

<sup>86</sup>Sitzung des Wohnungsausschusses, 14 March 1928. *Münchener Gemeinde-Zeitung*, 24 March 1928. SAM-WA-64.

<sup>87</sup>Certainly Bauamtmann Meitinger was able to present the four basic flat types in plan in Preis's *Denkschrift* in December 1927.

*Großstadtangst*: disorder and discomfort in the metropolis. 64 apartments (figure 5a), artists' studios and more luxurious flats for middle class residents (5b). By these means, the council saw itself as repairing the damage which modern capitalist structures did to social cohesion and contact. In 1930 a study group from Birmingham was making a tour of Germany and Austria looking for solutions to the working class housing problem. The municipality stressed that they had no such solutions, and they rejected the label 'working class housing'. The Wohnungsreferat prepared a document, in English, to greet the Midlanders, explaining that

No real dwellings for workmen have [...] been built, which would crowd people together into a narrow space and furthermore which would unite them in various dwelling blocks. The endeavour of the City Council and the responsible board of dwelling was to build lodgings which may at the same time be used by an industrial worker as well as a lower official or employee or a small trader. [...] So the city of Munich has no real artisans' dwellings as they are usual in manufacturing districts. [...] If here big buildings with several floors are predominant and the so-called flat settlement [*Flachbausiedlung*] only partly was used, it is due to the habits and desires of the population, which had to be considered. The experiences up to this time have shown that this principal is right and answers the local wants.<sup>88</sup>

Nevertheless, the visitors were shown three *Großsiedlungen*, or large housing estates, in most of which only the smallest of flats were built.

The key document at the heart of all debates about the '12,000-Programme' was the lavishly produced *Denkschrift* by the SPD housing director in December 1927, though it bears the marks throughout of the two mayors, Scharnagl and Kufner. It pulled together into one document these two threads of nervousness: fear that the city is splintering and out of control, and anxiousness that people be clumped together without any regard for their personality and individuality, and set out how the council's leaders proposed to tackle both through a new type of building strategy. Acutely aware of the potency of a catchword like *Neuzeit* (the new era), they sought to embrace its more neutral dimensions but reject the '...blandness and mad rush of everyday life.'<sup>89</sup> Ultimately, the municipality resolved to build 'Modern-Münchenerisches',<sup>90</sup> and maintained that the city's success had always lain in its ability, '...to find the good middle ground between moving forwards with developments and insisting on keeping traditional basics.'<sup>91</sup>

<sup>88</sup>Referat VII [Wohnungsreferat], 'Principles for Judging the Housing Question', in response to Scharnagl, 29 July 1930, letter requesting the housing department to explain why the town had no working-class housing as Vienna had. SAM-B&R-993

<sup>89</sup>Preis, *Die Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot*, p. 99.

<sup>90</sup>Preis, *Die Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot*, p. 100.

<sup>91</sup>Preis, *Die Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot*, p. 103.

A key section of the document was spent demonstrating the need for one, large-scale set of projects, rather than continuing in past, piecemeal methods. These methods had, after all, produced 3,641 dwellings in 1927,<sup>92</sup> which reinforces the idea that it was not the quantity of housing which was the key issue behind the '12,000-Programme' but its unity and effect on the *Stadtbild*. The section 'On the Necessity of a Unified Building Programme' was divided into five subsections: economic and productivity reasons; municipal political and fiscal reasons; social welfare reasons; hygienic and *wohnungskulturelle* reasons; but first and foremost of all the reasons for adopting this unified, centralized approach were *städtebauliche* reasons – reasons of organizing and planning the city. In a hierarchy of priorities, controlling and planning the material fabric of the city was presented explicitly as being more significant than politics, cost, health and welfare. Since 1926, first mayor Scharnagl, second mayor Kufner (who was also, it will be remembered, *ex officio* head of the Lokalbaukommission) and the housing department had been stressing the need for some sense of unity in the *Stadtbild*.<sup>93</sup> Scharnagl had reinforced the theme of imposing visual unity, and ending *Zersplitterung* and *Zusammenballung*, saying in the December of that year,

It has been repeatedly stressed by Stadtratsdirektorium B<sup>94</sup> (Mayor Dr. Kufner), that in the creation of new residential possibilities according to the current building programmes we have here that the *städtebaulichen* idea has not been allowed its full scope. Therefore we dare to hope that out of the building programme for 1927 will come a project which might have the effect of being a discreet, *städtebaulich* thoroughly well thought-through estate, capable of standing up and being counted. The estates should not be made up of individual buildings, but appear as one, distinct block [...]. It should consciously oppose the Viennese block-creations with a totally different conception of housing politics.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>92</sup>Preis, *Die Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot*, Statistical Appendix, p.47.

<sup>93</sup>Scharnagl an die Referate III [Finance] und VII [Housing], 23 April 1926; RR. Helmreich [Wohnungsreferent] an die sämtlichen Stadtratsfraktionen, 2 June 1926; Referat VII an die Stadtratsfraktion der Nationalsozialistischen Arbeiterpartei, 12 June 1926. SAM-WA-64.

<sup>94</sup>The municipal administration was divided into two; Scharnagl was in charge of Stadtratsdirektorium A, and Kufner of B. The division of labour was fairly arbitrary, although Scharnagl had say over appointments, but administrative matters (what those appointments would actually do and be responsible for) were Kufner's responsibility. For a fuller explanation of the immensely complicated nature of Munich municipal organization, and all its parallel structures (for example, *Referenten* were often also deputies and even quite minor figures in other *Referaten*), see Steinborn, *Grundlagen und Grundzüge Münchener Kommunalpolitik*.

<sup>95</sup>Preis, *Die Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot*, p. 79.

Thereby he ruled out the quasi-*Gartenstadt*, quasi-rural May solutions, as well as the 'clumping' Viennese ones. It is worth quoting Küfner at some length as he developed these themes further:

In the development of housing estates, Munich leaves a lot to be desired. The unity and the aesthetic functional appearance of the blocks must be improved [...].

Before the war, Munich was recognized as paradigmatic [in the shaping of buildings and the city (*Bau- und Stadtgestaltung*)]; whether it still could claim this leadership today is another question.

A study commission of the council has seen many buildings worthy of note in its travels to London, Amsterdam, Hamburg, Berlin, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Essen, Mülheim-a.-Ruhr etc.

Unfortunately, Munich after the war sadly fell prey to a certain splintering and fragmentation; we built in too many places, on too small a scale, and the *Stadtbild* has not profited from it; in the exteriors of our buildings, too much diversity has left a lot to be desired.<sup>96</sup>

Yet all was not bleak and disjointed; he praised the arrival of the idea of the planned housing estate as offering a way out, which allowed unity to be restored better than ever before as it allowed the plan to work out systematically from the interior layout of the flat, to the layout of the block, to the arrangement of the blocks themselves all the way up to organizing a whole section of the town, thus restoring the sense of control they felt they had had before the Great War. Perhaps he anticipated that such a design and building process would offer a parallel re-structuring of the individual's view of the world, working on a broad front from the private, domestic and internal up to the public persona, the urban citizen and the urban itself.

Scharnagl, in the general council debate on the programme, argued that the city government had made tentative steps in the past few years, but came to the conclusion that if this measure of control, this drive to end *Zersplitterung* in the *Großstadt* was to be successful,

...that the whole process will be all the easier, the bigger the building programme is, the bigger the blocks and estates are; that is obvious.<sup>97</sup>

Ultimately, Scharnagl was arguing that the scale of the solution should match the scale of the problem, not in any metaphorical way, but directly. If the *Großstadt* was becoming

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<sup>96</sup>Preis, *Die Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>97</sup>Generalbebatte um die 12.000 Wohnungen, Sitzung des Wohnungsausschusses, 14 March 1928, *Münchener Gemeinde-Zeitung*, 24 March 1928.



*Großstadtangst*: disorder and discomfort in the metropolis. 67  
unwieldy and fragmented, only large-scale projects would provide a unifying gesture or motif of sufficient scale to defeat it.

### Ausstellung 'Heim und Technik' München 1928

The full ideological underpinnings of the '12,000-Programme' can only be understood in the light of the criticism offered of modern urban life at the huge exhibition organized by the council in 1928. This demonstrates the way the municipality aligned their housing policy, a moderate *Großstadtkritik* and themselves together with regard to the '12,000-Programme'. They did this through taking control over the Ausstellung 'Heim und Technik' in Munich in 1928 – the year the housing programme was pushed through the council. The internal politicking of the exhibition was highly complex. The exhibition was controlled initially by Oskar von Miller, a famous electrical engineer and Munich and national cultural luminary who had been responsible for calling the mammoth German Museum of Science and Technology into existence in the city. He had won the exhibition for Munich against fierce competition from Dresden. He wanted an essentially craft-oriented exhibition, in which *Heim* would very much dominate *Technik*. However, this did not suit the mayors' purposes at all; whether engineered by the municipality or not remains unclear, but the local group of the Bund Deutscher Architekten (the German professional association for architects), the Münchener Bund (the major cultural grouping in the city, and heavily involved with the council at every level), and the exhibition building committee wrote to the council just before December 1927 – exactly the time when Preis published his *Denkschrift* – threatening to resign, and argued for von Miller's replacement, saying, 'We send the *Stadtrat* the urgent request not to sacrifice the good of Munich to the will of one man.'<sup>98</sup> His intentions for the exhibition were too 'multi-coloured' and 'old-fashioned.' The leadership of the council listened, sacked Miller, installed their own people and set about re-engineering the exhibition into a piece of astute propaganda for the '12,000-Programme'.

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<sup>98</sup>Münchener Bund, Bund Deutscher Architekten, Landesbezirk Bayern, der zurückgetretene Bauausschuß der Ausstellung 'Heim und Technik' an den Stadtrat der Landeshauptstadt München, 26 November, 1927. SAM-KA-618/1. There is plenty of other evidence in this file to suggest that this situation was, if not engineered by Preis, Kufner and Scharnagl, then it certainly happened on their nod. Kufner, for example, definitely wanted the central issue of decoration to be 'oriented towards the modern era and technology', in express contradiction to Miller [Kufner to ?, 24 November 1927, SAM-KA-618/1].



The chief documents which remain regarding what was in the exhibition are in some ways disappointing to the historian as they do not show visually how the exhibition looked. But the remaining catalogues and newspaper articles do reveal several themes which show how the corporation regarded modernity as a whole and the city in particular, and how they set about putting housing to work to repair the damage to the individual which both caused. The entire exhibition was founded on what were regarded as two binary opposites: *Heim* – the elemental home or dwelling, and *Technik* – technology and science. *Heim* operated as a shorthand symbol for a pre-modern world, and shared many of the emotive connotations (and linguistic roots) with *Heimat*; *Technik* was modern, cold, inhuman and impersonal. As Mayor Scharnagl wrote in the introduction to the catalogue:

‘Home’ and ‘Technology’ – two words, two fundamentally different worlds. Fundamentally different in their basic meaning, in their significance for each and every one of us, and in the effects they have on human society. But they are also synonymous in the following sense: they reach out and touch every modern human, they grasp him and force him to take a position.<sup>99</sup>

He continued, linking this to the housing debate at large:

What technology can bring to the ultimate completion of the home must be constantly displayed to each and every one of us, especially to women, who are the soul of the family home. This city enthusiastically recognizes the importance of this process. We have undertaken the tricky task of showing how to make technological successes contribute successfully to the perfection of the home, and to do so in a way which does justice to the circumstances of our own varied forms of social life.<sup>100</sup>

Others continued this theme, that the city must take the lead in reconciling these two strands. The thrust was, however, constantly that the theme of *Technik* must be made to serve that of *Heim*. It was not an equal partnership; the one was deployed not to defeat, but to manage or neutralize the other. Karl Mantel, the police chief of Munich, echoed a rhetoric familiar to many, and repeating the critiques presented in the 1908 exhibition, when he allied the municipality’s exhibition to the combatting of the exact same elements identified as characteristic of ‘modern life’ which have already been sketched out in the section on Camillo Sitte:

In these days of hustle and bustle, agitated hurry and the constant pressure of dreadful demands and expectations which attack the health and the nerves of each

<sup>99</sup>Karl Scharnagl in *Amtlicher Katalog: Ausstellung ‘München 1928: Heim und Technik’*, p. 42. SAM-A&M-648.

<sup>100</sup>Karl Scharnagl in *Amtlicher Katalog: Ausstellung ‘München 1928: Heim und Technik’*, p. 42. SAM-A&M-648.

individual, whoever wants to refresh his vigour and joy in creation must have one thing above all: Refreshment in a comfortable home.<sup>101</sup>



**Figure 4:** Block of socially integrated housing built opposite the entrance of the Ausstellung 'Heim und Technik'. Theodor Fischer, 1927-8.

It was this sort of home which the leaders of the council tried to display here, commissioning a huge block of flats to stand at the entrance of the exhibition, a block of flats which remains today (figure 6). The block was designed by Theodor Fischer, no longer in the employ of the corporation, but as is discussed in chapter four, by this

stage an architect of international repute, neither laughably out-of-touch with, nor shockingly committed to, the Modernist agenda. Again and again the catalogue drew the attention of the visitor to the practical applications of the technologies they saw at the exhibition in the resolution of the city's own housing emergency. The documentation surrounding the exhibition as a whole repeatedly dwelt on how the Munich municipality would reject the extremist Modernist positions of May, Weißenhof, Vienna, Martin Wagner and Le Corbusier, but would build to restore a sense of wholeness to the individual and the city in its housing policies and thereby end the attack on 'the health and nerves of each individual' caused by 'hustle and bustle, agitated hurry and the constant pressure of dreadful demands and expectations.'

The high point of the whole summer of the exhibition year was the firework show, 'The End of the World', which received much national press coverage; the description here is taken from a syndicated article. In this firework show, with 69,612 paying spectators (10% of the city's population), and hundreds of thousands more throughout the city, the following scenario was played out on wires above the crowd's heads: the Earth appeared, geographically accurate, flanked by Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and Venus, surrounded by thousands of firework stars. Martians and Moon-men flew past. In the middle of the Milky Way, 'fliers' (*Flieger*) and rocket ships passed each other, one of which collided with a huge comet. This technological intervention caused the calamity on

<sup>101</sup>Karl Mantel in *Amtlicher Katalog: Ausstellung 'München 1928: Heim und Technik'*, p. 45. SAM-A&M-648.

Earth below. The explosion led to a meteor shower on Earth, and an army of stars hurtled towards our planet causing a '*Welteinsturz*' – a collapse of the world, or Armageddon. Chaos ensued, and the *Großstädte* of the earth were paraded across the sky on wires; Paris, London and New York burnt. The collapsing Eiffel Tower 'characterizes the chaos on our planet.' Trumpets of doom sounded, alongside thunder and lightning, as fire rained down from the sky and destroyed the cities, causing the very Earth to fragment. As the Earth exploded, rockets were released all round the spectators, and water-bombs were exploded over their heads to simulate the weather catastrophe as the elements of Earth, Wind, Fire and Water entered into their final conflict which would destroy all humanity. Not unsurprisingly, this caused a panic, and there were many injuries.<sup>102</sup>

However, the message seems distinguishable, if not altogether clear. I do not wish to suggest that anyone in the municipality devised this display to conduct an explicit debate about the destruction of cities, the fragmentation of the earth and the annihilation of mankind. They neither yearned for, nor anticipated either. There is no evidence that anyone interpreted the display so simplistically. But it does demonstrate that the municipality could be viewed as engaged in a set of diverse media – expressed through building, exhibitions and firework displays to name but a few – characterizing the city as being in some way essentially problematic, volatile, unstable and liable to disintegration or implosion. The council which mounted this show and the exhibition which gave its context were demonstrating an awareness of the problems of the city and technology, and a sympathy with those who regarded these developments with some trepidation; they were displaying, in the case of the exhibition, a carefully presented solution to these problems; they allied this display in time with the development and adoption of a massive building programme to restructure the city and bring it together again, ending its fragmentation but without creating an anonymous, indistinct and impersonal mass.

The exhibition was a resounding success; with 1½ million visitors, it attracted over twice as many visitors as the Werkbund's Weißenhof exhibition in Stuttgart of the previous year. Scharnagl's pique at Stuttgart's fame<sup>103</sup> and his and Küfner's sense of Munich's

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<sup>102</sup>This version of events comes from a syndicated story, in this case appearing in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, 5 August 1928, which Jelinek felt best represented the reporting of the show; cited in the *Schlußbericht. Ausstellung 'München 1928: Heim und Technik'* in SAM-A&M-648.

<sup>103</sup>See Scharnagl an das Referat XIII [Hochbauamt], 20 December 1926. SAM-KA-618/1.

*Großstadtangst*: disorder and discomfort in the metropolis. 71 decline and fragmentation caused them to try to secure funds for the construction of large estates, with varying degrees of success.<sup>104</sup> The exhibition transformed the widespread worries in the council chamber that the building programme and the exhibition would be ‘...an architectural exhibition like the one in Stuttgart...’,<sup>105</sup> into unanimous support in the council chamber for the ‘12,000-Programme’, thereby reconciling the councillors with a moderate Modernism and a largely unreformed modernity.

### Conclusion

We have seen that while it would be too much to claim that there existed in Munich only one view of the city, and further, that that view was negative, there was an underlying discomfort with many of the city’s accompanying phenomena. So generalized was this discomfort and so much did it interest the city’s governors and experts, that I feel it is worthy of the name *Angst*. Spatial and cultural politics in the city – the desire to control buildings and the spaces between them – was informed in many instances by a sense of trepidation. This trepidation was caused by many factors; the loss of a sense of place and the alienation of citizens from an élite culture and from each other was significant in the motif of *Heimat*; the ‘mis’-application of geometric and technocratic conceptions of the spaces in which humans lived in the theme of *Städtebau*; and nervousness about *Zusammenballung* and *Zersplitterung* in the housing projects of the 1920s.

As we saw in the comments on the Ausstellung ‘München 1908’, and shall see in the next chapter, there could be also a certain ‘*Zukunftsfreude*’ – ‘exaltation in the future’ – which operated parallel to that fear. Indeed, this faith in a modern future (for it will be remembered, no influential Münchener proposed abandoning the *Großstadt*) was in many ways essential to the *Angst* many felt about the urban and the modern, for it was this which led them to believe, not that the West was doomed and its culture dead, but that that very modernity which threatened so much also offered the tools for its own redemption. The town plan, the housing estate, the municipal school; these are all

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<sup>104</sup>He managed to secure funds from the Reichsforschungsgesellschaft für Wirtschaftlichkeit im Bau- und Wohnungswesen to build the Fischer experimental block at the entrance to the exhibition; this was the same organization which had funded part of Weißenhof. He had failed, however, in securing meaningful assistance from the Bavarian government. See Scharnagl to Ministerialrat Dr. Lohner, 2 February 1927. SAM-KA-618/1.

<sup>105</sup>Bund deutscher Architekten, Landesbezirk Bayern: An alle Mitglieder des Landesbezirkes, 22 December 1927. SAM-KA-618/2.

features of an age of intervention and control, of technocracy and experts, and it was to methods such as these that the municipality first and instinctively turned to tackle haste, nervousness and meaninglessness. For all their *Angst* about the city and its dispiriting, soul-destroying and de-socializing effects, it should not surprise us that it was to urban solutions to which the municipality first turned to tackle them.

## Chapter 2:

### Großstadtfreude:

### joy in the Metropolis

We saw in the preceding chapter that despite the deep discomfort that certain aspects of urban life engendered in the administrators, designers and governors of the city of Munich, they never seriously posited a flight from the *Großstadt*. They sought to adapt the city, sometimes to transform it into *Heimat*, always to make it a comfort and a consolation to the residents. This chapter will take this further, turning the focus away from the city viewed and treated as the embodiment of some of the most threatening characteristics of modernity, and towards a focus on how the municipality and its experts fêted the urban, sought to enlarge it, attempted to map into it symbols of technological advance, of bureaucratic expertise and cultural Modernism. We will see how their *Angst* should be seen as a dimension of a certain *Freude* – joy; a pride in the city, what it could offer, and their place as managers and ‘service providers’.

The city government expressed this joy in many ways. Firstly, it envisioned itself as one part of a community of *Großstädte*, communing with them, discussing problems and sharing advice, and distinguishing themselves from that which was not urban. The town fathers identified increasingly with other metropolitan centres, and sought both to compete and co-operate with them, distancing themselves from the rural state surrounding them. This process did not happen without substantial trauma and self-questioning, as several deeply held identities had to be questioned and contested. The town’s governors and administrators had to ‘take possession’ of the city, make it their own, and this entailed a revision of the city’s self-conception. Munich’s status as a royal

city had to be re-worked, not just in the post-revolutionary, republican period, but also before, as Munich's 'task' was altered from being oriented towards the *Residenzstadt* of one person, to being the *Residenzstadt* of many hundreds of thousands. This shift away from a focus on being a royal capital, an administrative centre of a quasi-independent kingdom, and a market place for a rural state is reflected in the increasing identification with other urban centres facing, not similar political problems, but similar social and conceptual ones about the management of a mass, urban society. The first two sections of this chapter discuss some features of this reformulation, by examining the way the city council integrated itself into what it came to see as a community of *Großstädte*, and also revising its relationship to the state which surrounded it, and the cultural associations which up until then had been the clearest cultural signifiers of what it meant 'to be Munich.'

This positive re-formulation of the *Großstadt* would have meant little if it could not be reflected in the tissue of the urban fabric so, secondly, they endeavoured to expand the *Großstadt* outwards, and to encourage the *Großstädtische*. The opportunities available to them for seriously manipulating the Altstadt were highly limited, but those opportunities that existed, they took, particularly through the demolition of the royal grain markets and the construction of the Technisches Rathaus. They peppered the skyline with technical facilities; they transformed their conception of the city as something walled and self-contained, and sought to push outwards into the countryside by a process of 'colonization'. This again was not a painless change. While Munich had been one of the first European capitals to order the demolition of its city walls and the redevelopment of the land, in the mid-eighteenth century, there was still very much a living concept of the city as having an edge or a frontier. At that frontier, the city (having no walls) built the traditional symbols of urban peripheries in the pre-modern world, toll houses and cemeteries. Yet no sooner had these been completed than they were spatially superceded. At first, this process happened reluctantly, but as the planning, and then construction, of the gasworks near Moosach will show, the 'peripheral' symbolism of the cemetery and toll house was deliberately replaced with the 'expansionist' iconography of the new plant. Even men like Grässel, who were not fans of the *Großstadt per se*, seized the opportunities available to them to condition the expansion they had come to regard as inevitable.

The fourth section continues with this theme of manipulating the fabric of the city to discuss two projects from the 1920s which allowed the corporation to map itself not just into the expanding city and the new suburbs which that created, but also into the old city. Two tower blocks constructed by the administration in the south of the Altstadt meant that the local government could plant potent architectural symbols of progress, service provision and technology in the middle of the city, by which they could express their faith in a technological, expertise-oriented and bureaucratic future, and also challenge the visual hegemony of the Church in the skyline. The two sections on an evolving identity, followed by two more on how that identity was translated into the structures and planning of the city demonstrate that, however tentative and anxious their activities were, they fundamentally fostered the idea and the material reality of the *Großstadt*.

### *Liberal mentality and the community of Großstädte*

Bavaria was an agricultural state at the turn of the century. It was not necessarily backwards or conservative, despite what was, and is, its popular image, but this mythmaking was a powerful force, and disguises the true picture. Sometimes Munich tended to get caught up in the 'myth' of Bavaria; one newspaper report from Trier, near the northern end of the French border, characterized Munich as being a different world from the rest of Germany; its pace of life was leisurely, its streets were 'artistic', it was human and full of character.<sup>1</sup> A Berliner contrasted the regional with the imperial capital, drawing attention to Munich's freedom, calm and liberalism:

How often have you heard the following words in the streets of Berlin: 'Shut Up! Some peace and quiet!', or, 'Anything but this Jewish muck!?' Once or twice? Or more often! These words are just veiled yearnings for something unattainable for the Berliner. The *Friedrichsstadt* without 'Jewish muck'!? You need a completely different set of circumstances when you think of Nietzsche and Liliencron, the opposite of all of that – and that is what this city fulfills.<sup>2</sup>

The sleepier Münchener regarded the person who opened their shop before quarter to nine as a '*Streber*' – a pushy social climber – but in Berlin they were all open at seven o'clock.<sup>3</sup> The reality was, however, that Bavaria was not the placid idyll these men, along with countless tourist guides, painted it to be, any more than British people had an

<sup>1</sup> 'Erinnerungen an die Studienreise der Berliner staatswissenschaftlichen Vereinigung nach Oberbayern und Schwaben', front page, *Trierische Zeitung*, 17 November 1911. SAM-NLG-360.

<sup>2</sup> 'Durch Oberbayern und Schwaben. Studienfahrt der Vereinigung für staatswissenschaftliche Fortbildung', *Tägliche Rundschau*, 20 June 1911, front page. SAM-NLG-360.

<sup>3</sup> 'Durch Oberbayern und Schwaben. Studienfahrt der Vereinigung für staatswissenschaftliche Fortbildung', *Tägliche Rundschau*, 20 June 1911, front page. SAM-NLG-360.



obsession with tea at four o'clock or French people wore onions round their necks. For example, Bavarian political Catholicism could hide some deeply radical elements, as Farr and Schilling have pointed out.<sup>4</sup> Bavaria's and Munich's vanguard revolutionary role in 1918 and election results for both Landtag and Stadtrat at the end of the First World War also show a state quite willing and able to take a radical lead when conditions were right, and Tenfelde has shown that it was precisely the mythologized rural populations which came under most official suspicion for treachery, disaffection and radicalism at times of greatest stress.<sup>5</sup>

Dispelling the myth of a docile rural population is significant, because it makes the tendency – informed in part by National Socialist image-making, tourist literature, and more recent political developments – to assume that Munich belongs to an equally sepia-coloured world seem all the more inappropriate, and hopefully leads us to reappraise the genuine circumstances of the situation in the Bavarian capital. Munich's politics was, despite its status as a *Großstadt*, if anything, less radical than those of the land surrounding it in the period up to about 1916 were. They were dominated throughout by an essentially liberal impetus – not to be confused with either of the Liberal parties which dominated the council chamber in the years up to 1918 – whereas politics on a Bavarian level was distinguished by rural political and religious radicalism, including a strong strand of principled pacifism.

The political strands woven into the city council throughout the period were, as elsewhere in western and southern Germany, the Liberal parties (which co-operated closely, and were barely distinguishable one from another<sup>6</sup>), the Centre Party, and the SPD. The significance of this here is not so much a 'high'-political one; it is not proposed that any particular party allied itself to any particular agenda regarding the deployment of architectural Modernism, or describing its relationship to modernity. In

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<sup>4</sup>Ian Farr, 'Populism in the Countryside: the Peasant Leagues in Bavaria', in *Society and Politics in Wilhelmine Germany*, ed. by Richard Evans (London 1978), pp. 136-159; 'From Anti-Catholics to Anti-Clericalism: Catholic Politics and the Peasantry in Bavaria, 1860-1900', in *Social Studies Review*, 13 (1983), pp. 249-269; Donald Schilling, 'Politics in a New Key: the Late Nineteenth Century Transformation of Politics in Northern Bavaria', *German Studies Review*, 1 (1994), pp. 33-57.

<sup>5</sup>Klaus Tenfelde, 'Stadt und Land in Krisenzeiten. München und das Münchener Umland zwischen Revolution und Inflation, 1918 bis 1923', in *Soziale Räume in der Urbanisierung: Studien zur Geschichte Münchens im Vergleich 1850 bis 1933*, ed. by Wolfgang Hardtwig and Klaus Tenfelde (Munich, 1990), pp. 37-59.

<sup>6</sup>Elisabeth Angermair, 'Münchener Kommunalpolitik. Die Residenzstadt als expansive Metropole', in *Musenstadt mit Hinterhöfen: Die Prinzregentenzeit, 1886-1912* (Munich, 1988), pp. 36-43; Steinborn, *Grundlagen und Grundzüge Münchener Kommunalpolitik*, pp. 41-59.

fact, Pommer and Otto have shown quite conclusively with the volatility of the SPD and Nationalist votes in the Stuttgart city council that even at 'defining' moments of the progress of Modernism, such as the Weißenhof Siedlung, no stable political/cultural allegiances at all can be discerned.<sup>7</sup> It is more significant in the sense that two of the party political groupings involved – the Liberals and the SPD – very much saw themselves as representing of one member of a community of big cities across Europe – and perhaps even the western world. Having few political ties with the countryside around them which, however radically, conducted its affairs in a fundamentally Christian, if not Roman Catholic idiom, they looked elsewhere and formed their identity through a sense of belonging to a wider community of urban landscapes. This is, of course, not to say they were not immensely proud to be both Münchener and Bavarian – they were, and Munich's status as Bavarian capital in a notional 'league table' of capitals obsessed them constantly. But by their very conception of Munich as a 'league' player, they posited a context in which the 'game' they were playing took place, and that context had several features. It was certainly extra-Bavarian. Although municipal governors and experts might look first to Bavaria, they would not be content with looking *only* at Bavaria. Secondly, it was international. Again, their first points of reference would be German, but they would look beyond. Peculiarly considering events at Weißenhof,<sup>8</sup> international references were rarely at the centre of debate: although councillors, mayors, health officials, housing architects, city planners and the like would often display an awareness of the world beyond German-speaking Europe, that would not usually be moved to the centre of their rhetoric – either negatively or positively. Their response to international phenomena was most often characterized by a sort of bureaucratic *Sachlichkeit*,<sup>9</sup> although most governors and experts would claim that they posited a broadly *Münchenerisch* solution to a problem, be that problem a local, regional, national or international phenomenon. This should be seen not as signifying an underlying parochialism but rather a certain rhetorical convention.

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<sup>7</sup>If, indeed, 'defining moments' ever exist. Richard Pommer and Christian Otto, *Weißenhof and the Modern Movement in Architecture* (London, 1991), pp. 27-34. The final vote on whether to proceed with the Weißenhof project was as follows (p. 34):

For: 25	9 SPD, 8 Liberal parties, 3 Nationalists, 4 Centre Party
Against: 11	4 Communists, 5 Nationalists, 2 Other
Abstentions: 20	6 SPD, 3 Liberal parties, 2 Members of Municipal Administration 1 Centre Party, 9 DNVP (another nationalist grouping)

<sup>8</sup>For the controversy over the inclusion of non-German architects at Weißenhof, see Pommer and Otto, *Weißenhof 1927*, pp. 21-23.

<sup>9</sup>Sobriety, matter-of-fact-ness.

The politico-cultural grouping that was the Zentrum/BVP is more difficult to position.<sup>10</sup> It certainly did not conceive of itself as a 'liberal' party, in the rational, progressive sense that the National Liberal and Progress parties,<sup>11</sup> or the highly revisionist Bavarian SPD did. Yet the pragmatism of the Centre party and its ability to be all things to all (Catholic) people – in a word, its catholicity – meant that when confronted with a problem, be it poverty, alienation, filth, or cultural fragmentation, it was rarely dogmatic about solutions. Throughout this period, the Centre, while expressing a contempt for both unfettered democracy and authoritarianism,<sup>12</sup> took a most pragmatic attitude towards all matters concerning the city, its design and government. On a day-to-day level, that meant embracing the idea of at least a pan-German, and more often an international, community of *Großstädte*.

In this section, rather than focusing on the self-declared 'liberal' credentials (or lack thereof) of any particular party, I want to focus on the extent to which urban governors and experts saw themselves as embedded in a network of men (for they were almost all men) all dealing with a set of similar problems *vis à vis* the city irrespective of party alignment.<sup>13</sup> This should demonstrate that they saw themselves as urban creatures, and, inasmuch as the city and its associated problematization is a key feature of modernity, that they were constituent parts of the phenomenon of modernity, and understood themselves as such. They were not just *in* this urban world, they were *of* it. They integrated themselves into this problematization and looked for and to others who had done the same, and in doing so, allied themselves strongly with the *Großstadt* and its fortunes. In short, they saw themselves and the *Großstadt* as inseparable, and they were happy with this union.

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<sup>10</sup>The Centre party changed its name in Bavaria at the beginning of the Weimar period to 'Bayerische Volkspartei' - the Bavarian People's Party, providing the basis for the post-Second World War division of CDU/CSU. The two groupings were almost indistinguishable at national level, however.

<sup>11</sup>Or their post-war successors, the DVP and the DDP.

<sup>12</sup>Karl Scharnagl, *Wir und der Städtebau* (Munich, 1948), pp. 9, 10 and most strongly on p. 16: "In literature, in art of every sort, in the propagation of theories for spiritual life, strands become ever more visible which can only be rooted in spiritual and cultural liberalism; rooted, therefore, in exactly that mentality which, in the decades before and after the turn of the century, laid the foundations for that materialistic spirit which developed into the greatest of tragedies for our people and for the whole world." Scharnagl was mayor from 1924 until 1933, and was re-instated as mayor by the Americans after the war, after they had liberated him from KZ Dachau. He wrote this pamphlet outlining how he would set forth his principles from the 1920s in the reconstruction of Munich.

<sup>13</sup>For a detailed case study of party political liberalism (as opposed to a general liberal, urbane mentality) in a German city in the *Kaiserreich*, with which this thesis is not primarily concerned, see: Jan Palmowski, *Urban Liberalism in Imperial Germany: Frankfurt am Main, 1866-1914* (Oxford, 1999). Many of the models of the development of the Liberal parties in relation to urban government are transferable between Frankfurt and Munich.

The most striking aspect of this orientation towards a community of *Großstädte* which impresses the historian from the archival record is the quantity of correspondence between cities, their governors and experts. Whenever one was faced with a problem, the expert's and governor's first instinct was to enter into correspondence with other governors and experts in other cities, both inside and outside Germany. This was a significant trend throughout the period in question, with one notable exception. It has already been mentioned that the Zentrum/BVP was not a liberal party in the classic pluralistic, individualistic, secular sense, but it nevertheless belongs, in a Munich context, to a framework of liberal city governments. The Zentrum/BVP occupied the political mayoralty in Munich from 1893 until 1919, and again from 1924 until 1933, despite at no time being the largest party in the council. It was Zentrum/BVP mayors who engaged in this communication which shows their urban and urbane identity for most of the period in question. The exception was the 'revolutionary' interlude, when the SPD occupied the mayoralty, and it was this period when the city became perhaps most insular, most disinclined to view itself as part of a community, and when it came closest to flirting with solutions such as the *Gartenstadt*.<sup>14</sup> Paradoxically, this period of insularity with regard to other *Großstädte* was also the time of the municipality's greatest counter-definition against the rural. Two example behaviours should illustrate this point: communication with other cities over the housing question; and the reception of visits by 'foreign' officials to Munich.

An example of this tendency in general to ally with distant urban solutions rather than local rural ones can be seen in the housing debate before and after the First World War. The earliest evidence of such contact dates from the beginning of the 1890s, when there seems to have been a flurry of activity in the area of housing intervention and reform.<sup>15</sup> This was before these inter-urban links were formalized in Germany in the Deutscher Städtetag in 1905. Two surveys were carried out, in which the activities of other German towns were examined, but at this stage, the nature of the examinations was somewhat

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<sup>14</sup>Though it should be stressed that the municipality never seriously committed itself to such anti-urban discourses; in the SPD period of control, this was because of financial constraints, in the BVP era, because of principled opposition.

<sup>15</sup>This growth in the 1890s of interest in housing in Munich ties in well with developments elsewhere in Germany; see Brian Ladd, *City Planning and Social Reform in Cologne, Frankfurt and Düsseldorf 1866-1914* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Yale University, 1986), pp. 142-191.

dry and statistical.<sup>16</sup> Their style has the nature of a series of unpoliticized remarks written by a disinterested observer, with little expectation that much would come of them. We find out that, 'Bremen, which at this time has already built 258 workers' houses with a sale value of 950,000 M and 50 provisional barrack-flats, has been able to cope with sudden growth in demand, while Braunschweig has built nothing, but is prepared to lend money at 4%. In Frankfurt, they have built 25 buildings in a *Blocksistem* [*sic*] with 251 identical flats along with 248 other flats.'<sup>17</sup> The reports both continue in this tone, and it is difficult to imagine that anyone reading them might have been inspired to ally themselves with Bremen and its *Barrackenwohnungen* or Frankfurt and its *Blocksistem*. The reports reflect an interest in, but not at this stage an allegiance with or a sense of a community of, *Großstädte*.

However, with the foundation of the Verein für die Verbesserung der Wohnungsverhältnisse in München (VVWM, of which more in chapter four) in July 1899, to which the municipality actually gave institutional existence, a new phase was entered into.<sup>18</sup> This part-municipal, part-voluntary compromise typical of German social, economic and political organizations stressed that a certain set of solutions would have to be found to the horrific living conditions in Munich at that time, and seems to have been at the heart of a shift in focus over the next ten years away from a neutral, superficial interest in what other *Großstädte* were doing, towards a more committed attitude, and a sense of interest, identity and allegiance.<sup>19</sup> The establishment of the VVWM came after a year-long campaign by reformers both within and outside the council, and seemed, at least in part, to be the result of the development of an urban, rather than Bavarian or Münchener problematic. The campaign was led by the head of the municipal office of statistics, Karl Singer; his membership of an expert, scientific community interested in statistics and mathematics points to a crossover of a distinctly universalist set of academic discourses

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<sup>16</sup>Bericht an das Comité zur Errichtung von Arbeiter- und billigen Beamten-Wohnungen, 29 December 1890, and Bericht zur Frage der Arbeiterwohnungen, April 1891. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>17</sup>Bericht zur Frage der Arbeiterwohnungen, April 1891. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>18</sup>Antrag, betreffend die Wohnungsfrage in München, 12 July 1899. SAM-WA-23. The name of the organization translates approximately as, 'Association for the Improvement of Living Conditions in Munich'.

<sup>19</sup>There were, of course, other factors involved. For example, a growth of interest in hospital building elsewhere emerged over exactly the same period. Initially, this was due to the municipality's commitment to building a new hospital in the north of the city in Schwabing, but an emergent sense of unity of purpose as service-providers seems to have emerged from this. For communication between Düsseldorf, Munich, Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden, Hamburg, Bremen and Frankfurt and several other cities on administrative, architectural, financial and health matters to do with hospitals, 1900-1914, see SAM-KrAnst-200.

with a recognition of the need and the possibility of social intervention. The minutes exist of a meeting about the housing crisis in January 1899 in which Mayor Borscht argued

F R A N K F U R T

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1) Bestehen für die Arbeiter der  
nützlichen Betriebe (Bau, Elek-  
trizität) Arbeiterwohnhäuser?

2) Sind die Arbeiterwohnhäuser von  
der Stadtgemeinde aus Mitteln der  
betreffenden Betriebe oder von  
Privaten, Bauvereinigungen  
etc. errichtet?

3) Wie viele Arbeiterwohnungen sind  
für jeden der Betriebe vorhanden?

4) Wie viele Wohnungen befinden sich  
in einem Hause und gehören zu den-  
selben auch Gärten etc.?

5) Welche Räume enthalten die einzel-  
nen Wohnungen und in welcher Größe?

6) Wie hoch stellen sich die Miet-  
preise?

7) Wie durch die Mieten das aufge-  
wendete Kapital verzinst oder amor-  
tisiert?

8) Welche Erfahrungen haben Sie im  
allgemeinen mit der praktischen  
Einrichtung gemacht?

**Figure 1:** Reply by the Berlin satellite city of Charlottenburg to a housing questionnaire prepared by the city of Munich. SAM-WA-23.

that the city was obliged by 'moderner Auffassung' – a modern understanding of the world – to introduce urgent measures to deal with the '...in Großstädten bestehenden Mißständen' – problems existing in big cities (my emphasis) – and these minutes indicate that the 'inter-city' perspective and sense of allegiance were growing.<sup>20</sup> The housing question – which is on one level an architectural question, as will be seen in chapter four – was linked through a change in modern opinion to an obligation to understand a set of problems in the context of a key feature of modernity: the growth, proliferation and management of the metropolis.

This had practical effects throughout the period in question. As the first decade of the century went by, the municipality became more and more

interested in the *Wohnungsnot* – the housing crisis – and turned increasingly to an understanding of the problem in a European context. The major impetus came in the spring of 1908, when the city had resolved to take a much more pro-active interest in the building of small flats, partly to resolve the housing question, and partly to re-vivify the building sector which had suffered (along with the Munich economy in general) a stark recession since around 1900. The municipality sent out a questionnaire to German cities, a copy of which can be seen in figure 1. The replies were highly varied, showing little of the inter-urban similarity in response and understanding of the problem which would become visible in the later 1920s, but illustrating an eagerness on Munich's part to work

<sup>20</sup>Besprechung über die Förderung des Baus kleiner Wohnungen, 30 January 1899. SAM-WA-23.

towards it. They ranged from long essays about the two flats for the Gasmeister of the Bamberg Gasworks to the City of Berlin, which wrote that it had only recently given a million Marks to small flat building, so it was too soon to reach any conclusions about housing provision,<sup>21</sup> to the wealthy city of Charlottenburg (institutionally independent, but in effect a suburb of Berlin), which had done nothing at all, and had to fill in an embarrassing set of blanks (see figure 1). Other cities – Cologne and Nuremberg – sent detailed pictures and plans of the flats they had built, and proudly explained the features of each, detailing the contributions they made to the solution of the ‘social question’.<sup>22</sup>

It is interesting to note that both sides in the housing debate used their awareness of other cities to bolster their cases. Wohnungsreferent Schoener allied himself with French and German land reformers, and knew in detail the policies of a variety of German cities.<sup>23</sup> Not only that, but he – like other architectural and housing reformers, such as Hermann Muthesius – had been to Britain (specifically to London, Birmingham and Manchester) to see what progress had been made there.<sup>24</sup> Equally, Liberal free marketeers and conservative anti-socialist opponents of municipal intervention in the housing field recognized, though sometimes agitated against, an ‘inter-urban’ expertise. Josef Humar, an opponent of all intervention in housing throughout the period and a significant figure in debates, even if only for his extremism,<sup>25</sup> always argued from a perspective of comparison and expertise from other cities, even when rejecting their solutions. He wrote that building from public means might well have taken place in ‘ausserbayerischen Städten’, but it was not appropriate here. Such building was not foreseen in the Bavarian rules governing municipal government, and so should not be

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<sup>21</sup>Magistrat der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt Berlin to the Magistrat der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München, 15 May 1908. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>22</sup>Ober-Bürgermeister, Cöln to the Magistrat der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München, 16 June 1908; Stadtmagistrat Nürnberg to the Magistrat der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München, 12 May 1908. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>23</sup>Stadtkämmerei, Frankfurt-am-Main to the Magistrat der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München, 29 December 1908. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>24</sup>Sitzung der städtischen Wohnungskommission, 4 November 1908, p. 13. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>25</sup>Initially as president of the Münchener Grund- und Besitzer-Verein, and then subsequently also as town councillor from 1914-1933, Humar never failed to take positions *à propos* the housing question, the nature of poverty and the desires of the poor which bordered on the surreal and hilarious, arguing frequently that the corporation had been the dupe of sophisticated, work-shy fraudsters, who were quite happy sharing twelve people or two families to a room because they had never known any better, and whose alleged homelessness was entirely the product of the gullibility of social reformers and anyone prepared to listen to those hirelings of the lazy, the SPD. His favourite expression to infuriate his colleagues with regard to poverty and the housing crisis was the dismissive ‘sogenannte’ – ‘so-called.’

adopted.<sup>26</sup> However, national trade organizations accepted the loosely comparative standpoint, embracing council expertise and authority, and stressing that where action took place, the agent of it was far more likely to be municipal than national. One opened its criticism of public intervention with, 'In einer Reihe von Großstädten...' – 'in a whole row of big cities...' – and went on to analyze several of these.<sup>27</sup>

Two final examples should suffice to show an emerging consciousness of a distinct urban identity in the period before the First World War. Firstly, parallel to many of these developments in housing – almost exactly contemporary – was the preparation of the Ausstellung 'München 1908', which has been partially described in the previous chapter, in which an equivalent, growing awareness of the nature of what I have called the 'community of *Großstädte*' seems clearly to be distinguishable. The initial impetus for the exhibition was rooted in two different impulses, and it is something of a 'chicken and egg' question to distinguish which came first. One was the desire to celebrate 750 years since the foundation of the city and to fête municipal achievements. There was another rationale, however, and that was to enter into a competition between cities which was perceived to be raging at the time. An early proposal for the exhibition spelt out that:

A project should be brought to completion in 1908 [the Ausstellung 'München 1908'], a project which is intended to secure for our city her rightful place in the struggle with other cities, which from day-to-day becomes more serious and more difficult...<sup>28</sup>

There is a recognition of the new form of competition between cities, and implicit in that is an accommodation with this idea of an emergent community, facing common problems, and possibly finding common solutions. And this view of a peculiarly urban mission in which cities competed with each other, while all playing the same game in the same league, seems to have been shared by Mayor Borscht. In fact, he made this conception central to his speech opening the exhibition, beginning with the words:

In the competition – as peaceful as it is strong and determined – between the big cities for the prize of the best possible fulfillment of their cultural mission, a new

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<sup>26</sup>Grund- und Besitzer-Verein München an die hohen Kollegien der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München. Betreff: Antrag zur Erbauung von Kleinwohnungen durch die Stadtgemeinde München und Verwendung gemeindlicher Mittel zu diesem Zwecke, 13 June 1908. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>27</sup>Innungs-Verband Deutscher Baugewerksmeister an die Staats- und städtischen Behörden in Deutschland. Eingabe betreffend die Beschaffung billiger gesunder Arbeiterwohnungen, 30 August 1902. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>28</sup>Anon., '1. Lesung. "Aufruf!" - als Entwurf aufzufassen.' SAM-NLG-407.



and significant phenomenon has emerged in the last decade...[:] *Ausstellungswesen*.<sup>29</sup>

While he does not, as the previous author did, stress the novelty of the inter-urban relationships as such, he does underline an emergent set of phenomena with which these 'big cities' operate. Here it is *Ausstellungswesen*, but his involvement in the debate about the housing crisis shows that he was aware of how these factors would act together to form a new whole.

Secondly, one final piece of documentary evidence (from a mass of information on this subject in the archives) might demonstrate the point conclusively in the pre-war context: the publication of *Wohnungsüberfüllung und ihre Bekämpfung in deutschen Städten* by the director of the municipal statistical office and mathematics chair at the university, Professor Morgenroth, successor in the municipal position to Singer, the co-founder of the VVWM.<sup>30</sup> It was both a product of a broad, inter-urban perspective, and a contribution to it. The stimulus for the publication was Munich's participation in the tenth international housing congress, which took place in The Hague in September, 1913, and it contextualized all of Munich's activities as part of a modern, international, urban phenomenon – the growth of the city. It seems clear that, whether resented or embraced, when Münchener looked out to their horizons, they did not see the Alps and the Danube, fields of corn and grazing cows, but Berlin, Cologne, Vienna, London, Manchester and Paris. The process of some sort of intellectual commitment in Munich to investigate the *Großstadt* as a broad phenomenon seems to have been parallel to a general German one, as Andrew Lees describes; for example, the publication between 1905 and 1908 of the fifty-volume panorama of urban life edited by Hans Ostwald, *Großstadt Dokumente*, or the collation of workers' biographies by Paul Göhre or Adolf Levenstein.<sup>31</sup>

The situation did not change after the First World War – or, at least, it did not change when the period 1918-1933 is looked at as a whole. If anything, the sense of connection to other cities and alienation from any pre-modern, specifically rural Bavarian association grew in this period, and this will be examined in the section on the country vs. city,

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<sup>29</sup>'Festrede bei der Eröffnungsfeier der Ausstellung', *Ausstellung "München 1908"*, 7, May 1908, pp. 49-50. SAM-NLG-408

<sup>30</sup>No. 11 of the series 'Einzelschriften des Statistischen Amtes der Stadt München', 1914. SAM-WA-18.

<sup>31</sup>Lees, *Cities Perceived*, pp. 119-124.

*Industriestadt* vs. *Kunststadt*. The level of awareness of other cities amongst councillors and municipal employees, and the sense of connectedness to them, grew, and a significant part of that change may well have been linked to the rise in the level of 'expertise', and its a-local, a-regional and a-national character. In the housing debate in the 1920s, chapter one touched on how Viennese models were universally held to be negative, and that from the mid-1920s, there were detailed reports of housing solutions gained during visits to Frankfurt, Nuremberg, Dresden, Chemnitz, Leipzig, Vienna, London, Amsterdam, Hamburg, Berlin, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Essen and Mülheim-an-der-Ruhr.<sup>32</sup> Second Bürgermeister Küfner, responsible for economic development in the city, presented economic reports throughout the period 1924-1933 on his trips to Paris, Brussels, London, Amsterdam, Hamburg and Berlin.<sup>33</sup> The key development in the years after the war was that the exploration of the relationship between other cities and Munich became far more active. In the earlier period, although the municipality regularly sent representations to congresses and conferences, they did not automatically think of visiting other cities themselves, or at least, not in their capacity as governors or experts. Schoener's trip to London, Manchester and Birmingham in the early 1900s was something of an exception, rather than the rule. Far more common had been the collation of information from elsewhere. But after the war, although there was an initial teething problem, municipal governors and experts proved eager travellers, while still keeping up the more passive, written correspondence with other cities.

That teething problem is worthy of some comment, because there was opposition to this interest in other cities after the Great War. It came not from the right in the council, but the left. In the post-revolutionary elections of 1919, social democratic parties of one form or another did very well, and captured the political mayoralty and the council with 26 of the sixty seats. Fifteen seats went to the BVP, and eight to the liberal parties.<sup>34</sup> One might expect that the Roman Catholic BVP would interest itself most in a rejection of the essentially materialist underpinnings of a technocratic world view, but in fact it was

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<sup>32</sup>Bericht über die Reise der Mitglieder der Stadtratskommission beim Wohnungsamt nach Nürnberg und Frankfurt a.M. vom 22.-24. November 1926; Bericht über die Dienstreise nach Dresden, Chemnitz, Leipzig und Halle vom 13.-17. September 1925. SAM-WA-63; Preis, *Die Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>33</sup>Pressebesprechung am Mittwoch, 13.II.24 nachm. 3<sup>h</sup> über Grundlagen f. Münchens wirtsch. Zukunft; 'Eine Erklärung des Bürgermeisters Küfner', *Münchener Zeitung*, 306, 8.11.27; exchange of correspondence between BM Scharnagl, BM Küfner, *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, *München-Augsburger Abendzeitung*, November 1927. B&R 1638.

<sup>34</sup>Steinborn, *Grundlagen und Grundzüge Münchener Kommunalpolitik*, p. 551.

the MSPD (ten seats) and USPD (sixteen seats) which, during this period, rejected the inter-regional, inter-urban and inter-national implications of envisioning the city as a universal set of modern phenomena, common to the whole industrialized western world, and requiring a common set of solutions. The BVP, on the other hand, proved keen to involve itself in this 'universalist' approach.

The municipality may have felt itself embattled and embittered in the years immediately after the collapse of the revolutionary Bavarian Republic in 1919. The government of Bavaria became increasingly conservative and authoritarian, while, up to 1923, the city council, with the pacifist, anti-revisionist USPD the largest party, always had the potential for radical politics – a potential it never fulfilled. The main reason for this was probably Bürgermeister Schmid, the MSPD mayor of Munich from 1919 until January, 1924. His attitude of implacable opposition to the tendency to travel outside Munich characterized all architectural questions during this period. For example, in January 1920, the Wohnungsreferent, Helmreich, wanted to take employees from the housing office and the municipal building department to Augsburg, Nuremberg, Ulm, Frankfurt and Essen to see what solutions, both architectural and administrative, had been found to the problems there. They were particularly interested in 'die weltberühmte Ulmer Siedlung'<sup>35</sup> – an estate which was probably one of those by Mayor Wagner referred to in chapter four. Schmid's reaction in the council meeting was this:

I am completely against this. [The men involved] could look at plans and reports rather than travel around. It is just the same with the estate in Ulm.<sup>36</sup> One can inform oneself about these things quite well through words and publications, pictures and drawings. I mean, making journeys now is hardly the most important thing. In any case, Baurat Rehlen has just been to Hamburg, Frankfurt and Charlottenburg, and he should be able to fully instruct the others about what he has seen.<sup>37</sup>

This attitude seemed to draw support from others. One, Liberal (DDP) Stadtrat Strauß, immediately followed on:

We should free ourselves from the example of other cities, and create things on our own initiative. The examples of other cities are by and large useless for us, because we have such different climatic conditions. One must create from the circumstances of place and area, and should not so lightly rely on templates.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>'the world-famous Ulm housing estate'.

<sup>36</sup>Even though Ulm is only about 90 minutes on a slow train from Munich.

<sup>37</sup>Minutes of Verwaltungsausschuß, 8 January 1920. SAM-RSP-693/4.

<sup>38</sup>Minutes of Verwaltungsausschuß, 8 January 1920. SAM-RSP-693/4.

Second Bürgermeister Kufner, at that time developing plans for the technical town hall tower block and later Scharnagl's team-mate in the development and promotion of the building programmes encompassing mass housing and the Thalkirchenerstraße hospital, saw things very differently. 'Travelling educates,' (*'Reisen bildet.'*) he stated tersely.

Without it, one ages without maturing. [Municipal employees] should travel just as they should go to congresses, however problematic the results they bring back. The definitive issue of whether we are to remain on a high plateau is: speaking to others.<sup>39</sup>

His approach to the foreign and to the problematic was entirely differently cast to those of the other mayor, and implicit in them is an understanding expressed in terms of risk, not danger. Not only that, but he seems to be implying that the real reason for the objections to the travel plans were not pecuniary, but cultural; namely that challenging and problematic 'foreign' solutions might be imported back to Munich.

Later in the year, a similar proposition was again laid before the council in a stormy, argumentative meeting, this time regarding the Congress of the German Association of Housing Departments in Berlin.<sup>40</sup> The slightly surprising right/left divide about Munich's place in a community of either *Großstädte* or experts was fully played out here. The USPD and the MSPD both thought that the national meeting was no place for either Helmreich, the Wohnungsreferent or anyone from the building department to be – maybe they feared that they would return, as Kufner warned and perhaps hoped, with problematic solutions. The BVP and this time the Liberals argued they should be sent. Eventually, a compromise was reached, supported by all but the USPD, that one person – but not Helmreich – should travel outside Munich. Helmreich was outraged, and in an astounding piece of drama for a German bureaucrat, threatened to resign; he claimed it was short-sighted and narrow-minded of the city not to look elsewhere for solutions to shared problems. He promised, in a fit of pique, possibly sarcasm, certainly comedy, never to be so daft as ever to ask to leave Munich again, a tone which drew Schmid's censure and '*Heiterkeit*' from the council.

Weiß (Liberal/DDP) suggested that maybe he and the others should go, as the cities all shared common problems. The appropriately named Kämpfer (USPD) shouted, 'Sure! If

<sup>39</sup>Minutes of Verwaltungsausschuß, 8 January 1920. SAM-RSP-693/4.

<sup>40</sup>Tagung der Vereinigung deutscher Wohnungsämter. This debate comes from the Minutes of the Verwaltungsausschuß, 20 June 1920. SAM-RSP-693/4.

he can bring some flats back with him!’ Scharnagl – later mayor, but at this stage only a councillor – concluded for the BVP with their, and his, characteristic pragmatism:

It is essential that our experts are well informed, not just about the conclusions reached in Berlin, but throughout the Reich and beyond – I only voice the concern that they do not bring back too many impressions from Berlin, and that they do not want to adapt our circumstances too closely to those of Berlin. But they should go.<sup>41</sup>

All of the worries about the modern *Großstadt* which were discussed in the last chapter clearly inform Scharnagl’s nervousness about the influence Berlin might have. He seems to be suggesting that the *Erzgroßstadt*, Berlin, had a peculiarly seductive property, and might insinuate itself into Helmreich’s and the experts’ consciousnesses, giving them the zeal of the convert and bringing Berlin’s haste, nervousness and alienation back with them. He nevertheless insisted that there was a community of cities, that there were common problems faced by all urban governments and a common system of dealing with them – the rationalist, liberal intervention – to which he subscribed.

It is worth concluding this section by noting that this sense of a community of *Großstädte* all committed to a series of liberal governmental interventions, to the idea of the city as constituting a particular identity and problematic, was not unique to Munich. Munich was not a nervous wallflower in the community of *Großstädte*, tentatively asking others better or more qualified than itself how to resolve the problems of the modern city, but happily and by choice an integral part of a network. Many official visits are recorded to Munich, and the municipality proudly showed off its facilities to other city governors and experts. Similarly, officials were often harried to fill out the questionnaires sent by other corporations regarding the municipality. For example, before the First World War, the Prussian government sent a collection of its civil servants to Munich (municipal government in Prussia was far more closely controlled by central government in this period than in Bavaria, and it was staffed by central government employees<sup>42</sup>), an event which received substantial press coverage throughout Prussia.<sup>43</sup> The first installment of a four-part piece about the visit on the front page of a Berlin newspaper started with the arrival of the group of 119 civil servants, and the *Großstädter* amongst

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<sup>41</sup>Minutes of Verwaltungsausschuß, 17 June 1920. SAM-RSP-693/4.

<sup>42</sup>For example, the group included *Magistratsräte* from Hamburg, Berlin, Charlottenburg, Breslau, Dortmund and Dresden, as well as visitors from the cities of Vienna, Milan and Rome. Attendance lists-SAM-NLG-360.

<sup>43</sup>See the many reports and serializations, mostly from the front pages of newspapers, describing the impression which Munich made on the visiting *Beamten* in SAM-NLG-360.

them wondering if they were in Munich or Dorado, as they saw sewage works, orphanages, hospitals, an old people's home, a cemetery and crematorium, and a school.<sup>44</sup> After the war, the exchange between cities grew greater, peaking in 1930 when the municipality prepared a tour for the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Martin Lancaster, and his entourage of architects, town planners and councillors. They were looking at housing solutions and wanted to visit Munich's estates, as well as some other municipal facilities. They were coming from Vienna, and stopping in Munich before going on to other German cities. Scharnagl proposed showing them the municipal aerodrome with its 'hall of the most up-to-date construction in Germany', the Technical Town Hall, two municipal hospitals, the Ramersdorf and Neuhausen housing estates, a new gasometer and the new tram depot.<sup>45</sup> The visits were not always this high profile, but throughout the period it seems fairly clear that the corporation in both its political and technical guises saw itself firmly anchored in a broad network of metropoli. It rejoiced in this position, and that acceptance of the urban, the rational, the technocratic, the liberal intervention, the international and the universal is a statement of *Großstadtfreude*, and can only be viewed as *Modernitätsfreundlich*.

### Country vs. City, Industry vs. Art

This growing awareness of being one city amongst many was reinforced by the revision of the conurbation's relationship to two of its most dearly held identities: Munich as capital of Bavaria, and Munich as a city of art. Munich was a big city in the heart of a rural state, well out of the immediate cultural and economic orbit of any other city. It stood alone as a giant in Bavaria. It prided itself, as the century turned, on being a *Kunststadt*, a city of art. It had little or no heavy industry, but instead an economy geared towards craft and luxury goods, beer, tourism and bureaucracy. It had no coal, mineral or metal deposits nearby, and stood on no navigable waterway. Yet the council resolved, gradually and sometimes tentatively, over the course of the thirty or so years in question, to question the pre-industrial model, and embrace the urban, and to try to re-structure its economy, transforming itself from a *Kunststadt* into an *Industriestadt*. This effort, in everything but rhetoric, was largely a failure, and Munich had proportionally fewer people living from industry in 1927 than in 1907.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>*Tägliche Rundschau*, 258, 3 June 1911. SAM-NLG-360.

<sup>45</sup>Itinerary [in English]. SAM-B&R-993.

<sup>46</sup>Wilfried Rudloff, 'Notjahre: Stadtpolitik in Krieg, Inflation und Weltwirtschaftskrise, 1914-1933', in *Geschichte der Stadt München*, ed. by Richard Bauer (Munich, 1992) pp. 336-369 (p. 356).

Rather than chart this process in detail, a quick sketch of the city's development and self-questioning will be given, before I go on to examine the crucial years 1916-1924, and the major interventions on the part of the council to restructure both *Stadt* and *Stadtbild*. Munich had a reputation, in the last decades of the nineteenth century, as the most liberal big city in Germany, and styled itself as Germany's *Kunststadt* – 'city of art'. It had, through the Bavarian government, a generous system of artistic patronage, a flourishing art market, and a fairly *laissez faire* attitude to the 'culture industry', in stark contrast to Prussia and Berlin. Whereas the Bavarian Kultusminister declared in 1879, 'The government cannot function as a super-jury,'<sup>47</sup> Prussian king and German emperor Wilhelm II declared publicly at the opening of the Siegesallee in December 1901:

An art which oversteps the laws and boundaries which I have established is no longer art at all. It is factory production, craft, and art cannot be allowed to become that. With the much-misused word 'freedom', and under 'freedom's' banner, one often simply decays into a world of no limits, no standards, no boundaries and self-aggrandizement.<sup>48</sup>

Further, Teeuwisse and Lenman have shown how the Prussian government interfered regularly with artistic culture in Berlin, and always with a conservative or bombastic influence.<sup>49</sup> This meant that Munich had a significance in the cultural life of German-speaking Europe which outstripped its economic or political class, and Munich tended to sparkle more brightly than Vienna or Berlin in the 1890s, and even into the 1900s;<sup>50</sup> as Thomas Mann famously opened his 1900 short story, *Gladius Dei*, 'München leuchtet.'<sup>51</sup> For example, between 1890 and 1918, Munich was at some time the permanent home of Peter Behrens, JJP Oud, Ernst May, Frank Wedekind, Bertolt Brecht, Henrik Ibsen, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Franz Marc, Heinrich Wölfflin, Richard Riemerschmid, Thomas Mann, Ludwig Thoma, Lion Feuchtwanger, Max Slevogt, Lovis Corinth, Richard Strauss, Rainer Maria Rilke, Lujo Brentano, Max Weber, Georg Simmel, Oswald Spengler, Albert Einstein, Wilhelm Röntgen, Rudolf von Diesel, Adolf Hitler, VI

<sup>47</sup>Johann von Lutz, Bavarian Kultusminister in the Landtag in 1879, in Maria Makela, *The Munich Secession: Arts and Artists in Turn-of-the-Century Munich* (Oxford, 1990), p. 9.

<sup>48</sup>Jürgen Schutte and Peter Sprengel (eds.), *Die Berliner Moderne* (Stuttgart, 1987), p. 573.

<sup>49</sup>Nicolas Teeuwisse, *Vom Salon zur Sezession: Berliner Kunstleben zwischen Tradition und Aufbruch zur Moderne, 1871-1900* (Berlin, 1985), esp. pp. 155-159 on the government's interference in state building projects, and pp. 217-220 on the government's intervention in gallery buying and display policies.

<sup>50</sup>For example, in the world of theatre, see Peter Jelavich, *Munich and Theatrical Modernism: Politics, Playwriting and Performance, 1890-1914* (London, 1985); for visual art see Hans Roethel, *The Blue Rider* (London, 1971).

<sup>51</sup>'Munich sparkles.'

Lenin and Josef Stalin (inasmuch as these last two had permanent homes; it was certainly a place of refuge) – it cannot be dismissed as a backwater.

However, in a very short period at the end of the 1890s, this pre-eminence seemed to slip. Berlin became the sparkling centre of Germany's cultural life – perhaps the best known commentator on this phenomenon was Alfred Lichtwark, director of Hamburg's municipal galleries and part-time Berlin resident, and Teeuwisse shows well how Berlin, with its confident, erudite Jewish and industrialist patrons, developed into a dynamic art market, and locus of resistance to 'cultural barbarism' for committed modernists.<sup>52</sup> This change did not go unnoticed in Munich, and two factors rammed the message home. The first was the anonymous publication of a much discussed essay, 'Münchens Niedergang als Kunststadt' ('Munich's Decline as a City of Art') in 1901, which outlined Berlin's rise relative to a moribund, slow and slightly provincial Munich,<sup>53</sup> and secondly, a deep economic recession in the city from around the same period. Both imprinted the word *Niedergang* into the Munich 'collective consciousness' for the next thirty years.

While the theme of Munich's decline as an artistic city seems to have been regretted, but broadly accepted by Münchener, the deep economic recession accompanying it was something they resolved that they could do something about. Prussian visitors in 1911 heard a lecture, 'Die Bedeutung Münchens für die Kunstentwicklung Deutschlands', from a Dr. Braun of the Pinakothek (Munich's biggest royal gallery), who confessed that Munich had once been important, but the '...noticeable migration of talent, mostly to Berlin, has shown just how true the old saying is, that real talent can only be found where money is on offer. So it was in the time of Munich's great patrons, so is it now with the Kurfürstendamm-snobs.'<sup>54</sup> He concluded that Munich had no real way out, but could at

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<sup>52</sup>Teeuwisse, *Vom Salon zur Sezession*, pp. 184-257.

<sup>53</sup>The essay appeared in the *Berliner Zeitung*. It occurred just as several prominent artists such as Corinth and Slevogt had moved to Berlin, as conservatives were gaining the upper hand in Munich, as the Sezession had ossified into a new academism, and as the rural and occasionally anti-Semitic elements inside and outside the Centre Party gained increasing power in Bavaria. The same process is thrillingly charted in the great 1930 novel by Lion Feuchtwanger, *Erfolg: Drei Jahre Geschichte einer Provinz*, in which a Jewish director of the Bavarian state collection, Martin Krüger, eventually dies in prison because of the emergence of anti-Semitic persecution amongst the organs of the Bavarian state, particularly Klenk, the Justice Minister. Many characters from Bavarian political and cultural life at the time are easy to recognize. It is the emergence of the industrial age into the consciousness of an agricultural land which the novel describes as generating the insecurity of the population, and encouraging a (for Bavaria) novel anti-Semitism.

<sup>54</sup>'Durch Oberbayern und Schwaben. Studienfahrt der Vereinigung für staatswissenschaftliche Fortbildung - Streifzüge durch die Isarstadt', *Tägliche Rundschau*, 22 June 1911. SAM-NLG-360; in the later 1920s, there were many attempts to reverse the decline, and *Jugend* magazine applied for a



least derive an income from its 'artistic, but mostly mediocre' hand-made, craft products. Nevertheless, some saw this 'decline' as a positive opportunity for transformation. Wolfgang Hardtwig has described a growing discourse of *Großstadtleben* focusing on the economic dimensions of the urban emerging in the 1890s,<sup>55</sup> and which would offer a type of expert understanding upon which intervention might be based. He also defines the Munich's economic development initially as taking place against the will of the council, who before the turn of the century were keen to define Munich closely as a Hof-, Residenz-, and Kunststadt, and align it with an essentially 'zünftig' – guild – view of the world.<sup>56</sup> It was clear that by this period, however, this view was discrepant with reality, and that such an understanding did not correspond with Munich's actual economic development. While Munich's economy prospered in the 1890s, this rhetorical discrepancy could be ignored, but in 1900 the building economy of the city collapsed nearly completely, and a cycle of bankruptcies leading outwards from that industry led to a period of deep recession.<sup>57</sup> As a response to this, and parallel to the *Niedergang* furore, a debate arose about Munich's economic character, the council's contribution to which was to set up the (largely ineffectual) Committee for the Development of Industry in Munich in 1904. This marked the initial stages of the development of a debate in which Münchener cast industry and art, city and country as binary opposites, and increasingly aligned themselves with industry and city against art and country.

Carl Fritz published a work in 1913, *München als Industriestadt*, which started off by acknowledging the situation as it stood, conceptually at least, at the end of the nineteenth century in the title of the introduction: 'The *Großstadt* Munich, its Character as a Royal City, a City of Art and a Tourist City.'<sup>58</sup> Fritz then went on to outline why it was essential that Munich become an industrial city, if it was to avoid the problems of the previous ten years. He outlined why the municipality thought it essential to contest this

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subsidy, claiming that if it went under 'that talk of Munich's *Niedergang* will be fanned and encouraged' [Board of G. Hirth Verlag to Scharnagl, 21 June 1929. SAM-B&R-306/2a]; Scharnagl refused to discuss a subsidy, and addressing a separate application, wrote, 'The prospects for [the restoration of Munich as a *Kunststadt*] are not good.' [Scharnagl to Emmy Dill, 1 June 1929. SAM-B&R-306/2a]; one *Denkschrift* which the council did act on, opened, 'Munich's *Niedergang* in artistic matters is totally incontrovertible...' [Ernst Iros, *Denkschrift* (n.d. [c. 1928-9]). SAM-B&R-306/2a].

<sup>55</sup>Wolfgang Hardtwig, 'Soziale Räume und politische Herrschaft. Leistungsverwaltung, Stadterweiterung und Architektur in München, 1870 bis 1914', in *Soziale Räume in der Urbanisierung: Studien zur Geschichte Münchens im Vergleich, 1850 bis 1933*, ed. by Wolfgang Hardtwig and Klaus Tenfelde (Munich, 1990), pp. 60-151 (pp. 61-66).

<sup>56</sup>Courtly, royal residential and artistic city.

<sup>57</sup>Hardtwig, 'Soziale Räume und politische Herrschaft', p. 76.

<sup>58</sup>Carl Fritz, *München als Industriestadt* (Berlin, 1913).

conception of the city, and how it had done so through the use of zoning, subsidies and construction of power stations and what would today be called industrial estates with rail links.<sup>59</sup> The municipal archives and libraries show a large number of works with this theme from about 1904 until the end of the period in question.<sup>60</sup> This sort of work was only one side of the argument however, and other works, such as *München als Kunststadt* by E.W. Bredt, opened with an uncompromising refusal to adopt the 'progressive' industrial model:

Munich is not a *Weltstadt*. There is nothing more perverse than to want to compare Bavaria's capital city and royal city with even the smallest of the *Weltstädte*. At most, Munich is the most worldly of the country towns. [...] Munich lacks the hurried works which make town-dwellers such bundles of nerves, which make their faces so bitten, and transform their smiles into grimaces. [...] The strongest types of trade and industry in Munich group themselves at two poles of pleasure: *Art and Beer*. The axis which binds them, and around which everything in Munich turns, is the age-old desire and demand for a calm enjoyment of life. A fevered pressure towards industrial activity and quick work is alien to the Bavarian, and especially foreign to the Münchener. [Italics in original]<sup>61</sup>

This work (now in the municipal central reference library) was originally in the library of the Hochbauamt, so presumably some of the people working there would have been familiar with this vision, as they planned industrial zones into the urban fabric. It is certainly an image which the city council wanted to overcome, and one which they wanted to expel from the spatial organization of Munich. They encouraged industry through practical measures, and by planning it into the city.

Parallel to this modernity-affirming shift of emphasis away from art and towards industry was a shift away from any identification with the rural state. This process was concentrated in the years 1918 to 1924, though had been ongoing since the resurgence of radical rural political Catholicism in the 1890s. It has been particularly well described by Klaus Tenfelde, and so does not need to be gone into here in too much detail.<sup>62</sup> He outlines a set of evolving binary opposites which constituted an emerging city/country

<sup>59</sup> Fritz, *München als Industriestadt*, pp. 23-45.

<sup>60</sup> The many sources in the file 'Grundlagen für Münchens wirtschaftl. Zukunft', SAM-B&R-1638; the file 'Krupp'sche Grundstückankäufe', SAM-SLG-400; sources cited in Hardtwig, 'Soziale Räume und politische Herrschaft', pp. 61-66; Julius Kahn *Münchens Großindustrie und Großhandel* (Munich, n.d. [before World War One]), H.W. Mayer, *München und Stuttgart als Industrie-Standorte* (Munich, 1905), A.F. Rohmeder, *München als Handelsstadt in Vergangenheit, Neuzeit und Gegenwart* (Munich, 1905), Edmund Simon, 'München als Industrie und Handelsstadt', in *Deutsche Städte: München*, ed. by Anon. (Stuttgart, 1922), pp. 127-131.

<sup>61</sup> W.E. Bredt, *München als Kunststadt* (n.p., 1907), pp. 1, 3.

<sup>62</sup> Klaus Tenfelde, 'Stadt und Land in Krisenzeiten'.

confrontation, and which can arguably be tied to a parallel industry vs. arts and craft discourse:

particularism	unitarism
monarchy	republic
agricultural economy	capitalism
<i>Ständetum</i>	socialism
tradition	progress <sup>63</sup>

By the late 1920s the situation was such that the damage seemed irreparable, and the agricultural state could only be viewed as a looming, evil entity, surrounding and threatening to destroy the city. One relatively conservative BVP councillor, Liebergesell, himself an architect, erupted angrily in a council meeting on the '12,000-Programme', and I leave his words in German to highlight his interesting Anglicism. Referring to the fact that the city was a massive net loser in terms of property and rental tax contributions, he shouted, 'Das ist eine unerträgliche Auspowerung der Großstadt zugunsten des flachen Landes!'<sup>64</sup> The response was an apparently approving uproar and prolonged cries of, 'Hear! Hear!' as Scharnagl and Küfner tried to calm the angry councillors, though Küfner not particularly helping with his sarcastic remarks. Liebergesell's identification of Munich as a *Großstadt* in opposition to the countryside was complete, unquestioned and aroused substantial rowdy support in the debate. The significant trend was a growing cultural antipathy between Munich and its surroundings in the years before the war, which entered into a period of crisis with the beginning of the war, and a search by municipal leaders both during the conflict and in its aftermath for symbols of rupture with the rural state in which the city stood. These symbols were found in, for example, the town planning measures to the north with the conversion of agricultural into industrial land, and the demolition of the grain and produce markets to build the Technisches Rathaus. The following section will focus on the first of these features: the conversion of agricultural into industrial land and the sense of joy the coming of the Krupp concern brought, and the town planning implications that it had.

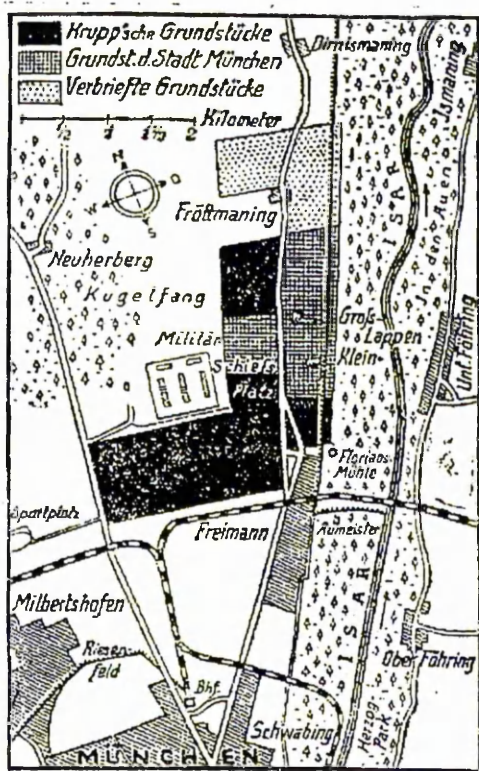
The war was not good for Munich, and hit its economy hard. Tourism stopped, beer consumption dropped, luxury goods – like furniture, gloves, hats and leather – were no longer purchased, so key elements in the Munich economy suffered greatly. The joy at

<sup>63</sup>Tenfelde, 'Stadt und Land in Krisenzeiten', p. 56.

<sup>64</sup>'That is an insupportable drain on the energy of the *Großstadt* to the benefit of the open country!' Generaldebatte um die 12.000 Wohnungen, Sitzung des Wohnungsausschusses, *Münchener Gemeinde-Zeitung*, 14 March 1928. SAM-WA-64.

the decision in May 1916 to build a Krupp ordnance works in the north of Munich was not, however, primarily an economic one. When the Krupp concern announced its intentions, it provoked a flurry of activity on the part of the municipality, as they bought up the land around the works. They did this for several reasons. Firstly, their impulse to control was aroused. Secondly, they saw the potential to expand the city and they wanted to seize it. Thirdly, they wanted to condition this expansion.

When Krupp announced they would buy land to the north of the city, the municipality's immediate response was to buy land there too. As figure 2 shows, the city bought its



**Figure 2:** Krupp and municipal land purchases to the north of Munich, 1916. *Münchener Zeitung*, 2 June 1916. SAM-NLG-400.

plots strategically (and many newspaper reports confirm this strategic consciousness<sup>65</sup>), so that the city's land divided the Krupp land, which would compel Krupp to negotiate with the corporation in the use of the area. It also allowed the municipality to develop what might today be called an industrial estate. To encourage such development there, the municipal government announced the immediate commencement of the construction of express tram links to the sites, and the transfer of housing from the VVWM to the first foremen who were coming from the Ruhr. The public response to this developing industry was ecstatic, if press reports are reliable evidence. There was not a single negative reaction. Munich's largest circulation daily, the *Münchner Neueste*

*Nachrichten*, led on the front page with a description of the transformation from the rural and the idyllic to the industrial and urban. The article, entitled 'A Tour Round the Munich Krupp area of the Future', started by describing a bounded city; the Jewish cemetery by Grässel, and his toll house – two potent symbols of urban frontiers. Beyond them lay '...an idyllic fantasy, open fields, lush greenery, all a long way from the war,

<sup>65</sup>See the many cuttings in the file, 'Krupp'sche Grundstückankäufe'. SAM-NLG-400.

where we can enjoy the poetry of the country lane.'<sup>66</sup> But if one carries on to Alt Freimann, the article exalted:

...you stand in the crucible of the future world of Munich [*im Brennpunkt des Münchener Zukunftslandes*], which is suddenly, along with the name Krupp, on everyone's lips. Now you stand in the Munich-Freimann Industrial Estate!<sup>67</sup>

The author went on to emphasize the healthy contrast between the developments which were taking place there – the roads and railways which were being laid out – with the private garden suburb which had been built adjacent to this land before the war. From these houses, there was a view which would have been the same in an eighteenth century landscape, and lists all the Elysian details of the picturesque landscape, and concludes:

This is the land that the City of Munich has bought to secure the future development of the city. Here it will sow a special seed, from which we anticipate a distant, rich harvest, rich enough perhaps to transform the entire structure of our city from the very bottom up.<sup>68</sup>

The overall tone in this article is that the countryside is pretty, but redundant. The municipality, through its town planning policies, would colonize it and make it useful.

In a later article in the same paper, an article which Hans Grässel cut out, underlined, glued in his scrap-book and surrounded with (unfortunately) illegible shorthand notes, one journalist pointed out another type of restructuring which was hoped for from the plant and the municipal land purchases:

Alongside the economic significance to Munich of the industrial plans for the land around Freimann, there is a greater, but perhaps slower, influence we can expect, namely on the architectural formation and re-formation of the city.<sup>69</sup>

The article celebrated the booming industry of the north of Munich, mentioning the Rapp Motorenwerke, which was doubling its work-force, and was about to change its name to the one we are more familiar with: BMW. Furthermore, the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* offered a prognosis for the future, and placed an industrial vision at the heart of it:

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<sup>66</sup> 'Ein Rundgang im künftigen Münchner Krupp-Gebiet', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 20 May 1916. SAM-NLG-400.

<sup>67</sup> 'Ein Rundgang im künftigen Münchner Krupp-Gebiet', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 20 May 1916. SAM-NLG-400.

<sup>68</sup> 'Ein Rundgang im künftigen Münchner Krupp-Gebiet', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 20 May 1916. SAM-NLG-400.

<sup>69</sup> 'Das Krupp-Projekt und das Münchener Stadtbild', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 10 June 1916. SAM-NLG-400.

[F]urthermore, in the course of following decades, this development of the north should lead to a not too nerve-wracking revision [*nicht zu ängstlichen Umgestaltung*] of the *Stadtbild*, with Munich moving towards the ideal image of the city, which would have been so easy to organize earlier, but is now exceptionally difficult, and will never again be fully attainable.<sup>70</sup>

So it seems that general press opinion was that the development, by including industry in the *Stadtbild*, brought the city closer to an urban ideal, that the lack of such a visual and economic presence in the fabric of the Bavarian metropolis was a failure of some sort.<sup>71</sup> This way of envisioning the city, more specifically, the city of Munich, seems to be a significant statement of affection or acceptance of the phenomena of modernity – in this case, the manufacture of *Millionenartikel*.<sup>72</sup> The municipality's complicity in this plan aligns it firmly in this schema, although as a footnote to the development it should be noted that the plant closed at the end of the war, and there was never a productive industry there again, only a railway repair workshop.

### *The Frontier Mentality: Colonization and Stadterweiterung*

As has just been seen with the expansion of the industrial estate into the north, the city of Munich was clearly growing. Over the period in question, the municipality moved from a conception of the city as a geographically homogeneous entity, which would have to be contained if it was going to be understood or managed, to a point of view in which the city, and their role in shaping it, should be grown as far and as fast as possible. This transformation will be dealt with in three parts: firstly, the sense of a bordered entity, something to be limited and controlled; secondly, the attempt to overcome that, and grow the city outwards; and lastly, the attempt to order that growth around symbols of municipal authority, to align the municipality with the enlargement of the city.

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<sup>70</sup>‘Das Krupp-Project und das Münchener Stadtbild’, *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, 10 June 1916. SAM-NLG-400.

<sup>71</sup>There were many articles pursuing a similar theme: ‘Krupp und die Stadt München’, *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, 17 May 1916; ‘Die Krupp’sche Geschütz- und Munitionsfabrik in München’, *Münchener Zeitung*, 17 May 1916; ‘Die bayerischen Geschußwerke bei München’, *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, 20 October 1916; ‘Die erste Arbeiteransiedlung des Kruppwerkes’, *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, 4 April 1917; ‘Von der Bauhütte des Münchener Kruppwerkes’, unknown paper, 12 May 1917; ‘Vom Neuland bei Freimann’, *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, 15 May 1917; ‘Bankunst und Großindustrie’, *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, 10 November 1917. SAM-NLG-400.

<sup>72</sup>Munich’s industry was not especially underdeveloped relative to other capitals, such as Paris and London, but it focused on quality goods – even in the heavy industrial sectors; aircraft engines, scientific instruments, glass and lenses, quality printing and steam locomotives dominated, to the exclusion of genuine ‘mass’ products. Nothing, apart from litres of beer, was previously manufactured by the million in Munich.

The clearest symbol of the bordered conception of the city was perhaps the programme of ringing the city with *Pflaster-Zollhäuser* – toll-booths. The municipality had the right to levy tolls on vehicles from outside the city using municipal streets for both private and commercial purposes. Hans Grässel started working for the City of Munich in 1890, and his first commission as architect-in-charge was to build a ring of toll booths around the city starting in 1892. He would go on to build 14 such booths, at all the main entrance points to the city, over the course of the 1890s, and even into the 1900s.<sup>73</sup> The buildings were very small, typical of the sort; one work room, and a large bay to observe the comings and goings of traffic in both directions, and an attic room, as some were intended as homes for the toll-collectors. They were highly decorated, with steeply pitched roofs, and the walls were highly coloured and decorated in a slightly kitsch interpretation of Bavarian rococo wall decorations; their character was distinctly ‘gingerbread house’.<sup>74</sup>

Nothing is known, judging by the historiography, about these buildings. Voglmaier’s Ph.D. on Grässel is the only place I have found them mentioned, and even there only briefly. He does not comment on whether this was a typical exercise for municipal governors to have engaged in. It could be that Munich was part of a general trend of building these structures. Clearly they were put up for a fairly specific *primary* purpose – the collection of money – but one should also recognize the mentality which underpinned them. To build a ring like this is to define a boundary, to mark the point of entry and thereby to contrast that which is without with that which is within. It is erecting a sort of fence which hems the city economically and visually, posits a permanent ‘frontier territory’ and a stable boundary for the urban by placing buildings of some substance and permanence at that periphery. The style which Grässel chose – nostalgic, full of historical, rural allusions – shows that the city was being limited, and aligned in mood and style as the partner to a countryside mentality. There was a neat division between the two complementary elements.

This frontier mentality was certainly a conscious aspect of municipal policy. As has already been mentioned, the Munich economy, and particularly the building sector,

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<sup>73</sup>Edelgard Voglmaier, *Hans Grässel: Architekt und städtischer Baubeamter in München* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Technische Universität München, 1992), p. 24.

<sup>74</sup>Voglmaier, *Hans Grässel*, p. 24. None of these buildings survive, and the quality of the reproductions of images in Voglmaier’s thesis is so poor that they cannot be reproduced here.



underwent a period of deep economic recession in the 1900s. Parallel to that emerged a growing awareness on the part of the municipality of their responsibility to ensure higher quality housing for its citizens. There was a desire to revivify the economy through a sort of *avant la lettre* Keynesian public building programme, a new awareness of the typical living conditions of the citizen, a particular deepening of the crisis in the winter of 1907-8, and a general wish to ensure better housing led to the establishment of the Wohnungskommission in 1908. At one meeting of the commission, Wohnungsreferent Schoener explained exactly how municipal policy had, in the past, been oriented towards retarding the growth of the city, to containing and limiting it. He pointed out that the city had acquired substantial amounts of land surrounding it in the fifteen years before 1908. It had been done, he explained, as a measure to control development, contain the town, and to stop the city drifting out unchecked into the countryside. He went on to argue that the time had come to use this land, and that although Munich was poor relative to Cologne, Leipzig, and Frankfurt, it could do a lot to further the building of cheaper housing through its ownership of this 'border' land. He challenged his colleagues with the following observation:

I feel as if with this approach [using land ownership to control and stop development] we were stuck too firmly in the old conception of a city and city government with regard to land acquisition in the corporation. The council chambers behave all too much as if they had bought to fulfill their own needs.<sup>75</sup>

He was right; they had. They had wanted to define and control the city, at an earlier stage, and surround it by a green belt. Yet at the same time that Grässel was building watchful huts at the border of the city, and Schoener was berating his colleagues for hemming the city in, a change was afoot. The town was enlarging itself, deliberately, self-consciously and methodically enlarging the urban, making the *Großstadt* ever *größer*.

The possible forms which this enlargement could take were radically altering. Up until 1893, the enlargement of Munich had been an essentially passive affair. Property speculators, industrialists, tram companies, or the migrant poor in shanty towns would use land outside the city boundaries. Alternatively, towns near to Munich, such as Schwabing in the north or Haidhausen and Rammersdorf in the south-east, would grow until there was little or no green land between them and the municipality of Munich. In either case, when this occurred the Bavarian state would incorporate the area into the

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<sup>75</sup>Sitzung der weiteren städtischen Wohnungskommission, 4 November 1908. SAM-WA-23.



municipality. This was usually against the fierce opposition of the city, which would then have to provide them with water, schools, gas, hospitals, poor provision and the like – an expensive business when incorporating a shanty town of huts populated by those at the very edge of society.<sup>76</sup>

However, around 1890-1895, a shift seems to have begun. At the same time as the city was building the ring of toll booths, in 1893 it also established the *Stadterweiterungsbüro* (SEB), the Office for Planning Urban Extension, discussed in chapter one. The very existence of such an office does not itself posit any distinct *Großstadtfreude*, as its purpose was to control and regulate the city, much in the same way that Schoener said land ownership did. Not only that, but its ideological agenda was based, as seen in the previous chapter, on enclosure, comfort and the neutralization of the *Großstadt*. Its establishment did, however, give institutional recognition to the fact that the city was growing and that it would continue to do so. The big rupture came in the 1900s, around the time Schoener was pleading for change. Just before his speech, projects started to be put in place by the City of Munich which not only anticipated, but encouraged the growth of the city, and by 1913 the municipality was actively seeking the *Eingemeindung* – incorporation – of the industrial districts of Berg-am-Laim, Oberföhring, Milbersthofer and Moosach, and the wealthier residential area of Forstenried.<sup>77</sup> The growth of the gasworks is a useful case study of how this process might take place.

In 1902 it was clear that the city's old gasworks on Thalkirchnerstraße were no longer up to the job. They had been built in the 1870s, and Munich was suffering badly from a restricted gas production. Whereas the average production in the 15 largest German cities per inhabitant was 75.4m<sup>3</sup> p.a., in Munich it was a mere 35.3m<sup>3</sup>.<sup>78</sup> This was clearly a problem already, and would only get worse. Ries, director of the municipal gasworks, projected a growth in the population of Munich over the coming years of an unspecified amount, and, maybe more importantly, demanded a gasworks 'im neuen Stil' to cater for it, which would contribute to the existing *Stadtbild* and be 'organically bound to it' and the *Stadterweiterungsplan*, and at the same time which would form a respectable focal

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<sup>76</sup>Dagmar Bäuml-Stosiek, 'Großstadt看stum und Eingemeindungen. Städtische Siedlungspolitik zwischen Vorsicht und Vorausschau', in *Musenstadt mit Hinterhöfen*, ed. by Prinz and Krauss, pp. 60-68 (p.64).

<sup>77</sup>Bäuml-Stosiek, 'Großstadt看stum und Eingemeindungen', p.65.

<sup>78</sup>Programm für den Neubau eines Gaswerkes in München, 1903. SAM-GW-278.

point in the suburb he foresaw springing up around the works.<sup>79</sup> He anticipated that, although the plant was to be built on what was then a green field site, the city would naturally expand around it. We will return to this idea shortly, when we discuss how the municipality organized its presence in these 'colonial' outposts.

More significant to the current theme was the creeping method of acquisition. In April 1897, the city had bought land to build a cemetery by Grässel in the parish of Moosach bordering its own boundaries, adjacent to its toll booth (also by Grässel) on the Dachauerstraße. As it had bought the cemetery land, and as it was contiguous with the city boundaries, the Bavarian government had incorporated the 10,445ha in question into the municipality, unasked, from the parish of Moosach. In August 1906, the corporation bought 17,392ha further out on the Dachauerstraße in Moosach for the gasworks. The problem was that, naturally, the parish of Moosach did not want a gasworks for a city of half a million people built on its land; they refused planning permission to the City of Munich. The city requested that the area in question be taken away from Moosach by the Bavarian government, and given to it, so its own planning regulations would apply, and this was done. The corporation duly granted itself permission to build its gasworks on someone else's doorstep. In 1912, the city requested the incorporation of the entire parish of Moosach, along with several others, and by the middle of 1913, this process was complete.<sup>80</sup> The city had gone from regarding enlargement as a danger and an expense, to viewing it as a necessity – especially if its modernizing, industrializing project were to be brought to completion. This phenomenon happened elsewhere around Munich, and while there is no documentary proof that this stealthy expansion was a willful act coordinated by individuals within the council, either governors or experts, the net effect of this process was a creeping enlargement and a colonial mentality. That it was so becomes especially clear in the way buildings constructed under these circumstances were designed.

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<sup>79</sup>Ries, Direktor der städtischen Gasanstalt to the Stadtbauamt and Stadterweiterungsbüro, 19 April 1904. SAM-GW-278.

<sup>80</sup>This information comes from an astounding piece of self-published scholarly research: Max Megele, *Baugeschichtlicher Atlas der Landeshauptstadt München* (Munich, 1951), p. 47. Megele shows in painstaking detail how this process was repeated with schools, HEP stations on the Isar and the Schwabing hospital. Few copies of his book exist, and they are highly damaged. This means they cannot be photocopied, and the many maps showing the street-by-street, house-by-house development of the city are impossible to use.

The key feature of the design of the buildings was the pervasive idea that each should visually constitute the focal point of a new suburb not yet existing. The municipality would project itself into the centre of an as yet hypothetical urban enlargement. Two



**Figure 3:** The Municipal Gasworks, Moosach. Städtischer Gasdirektor H. Ries and Hochbauamt, 1906-09. (BAIVn, *München und Seine Bauten*, p. 772; demolished 1999 except for water tower).

projects will serve as examples here; the gasworks just mentioned, and the school building projects. Ries, director of the city's gas department, and the Hochbauamt worked together closely on the design for the new gasworks, sharing the assumption that they would attract settlement around them which would initially become the 'Gaswerkviertel' in the same way that the abattoir had unintentionally given rise to the Schlachthofviertel (a name the area still has today) on the Sendlinger Unterfeld, and after that to an organic addition to the town.<sup>81</sup> Ries specified that 'the objective [is] more a reasonable architectonic set of circumstances, and other advantages,' and concluded:

[T]he external forms of these factory buildings should be carried out in the utmost simplicity and clarity, and because of this we do not plan any great elaborateness in the architectonic details, as can be seen at many other cities' gasworks being built now. Of course, this in no way excludes any harmonization [*Zusammenstimmung*] of the complex with the ideal of a friendly impression and an organic *Stadtbild*.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup>Direktion der städt. Gasanstalt, 'Städtische Gasanstalt München. Gaswerk bei Moosach', 31 December 1903; Bauamtmann Bertsch to Stadtbaudirektor Schwiening, 8 February 1904. SAM-GW-278.

<sup>82</sup>Ries and Hollweck, städtische Gasanstalt to Referat Xa [Stadtbauamt], 17 June 1903. SAM-GW-278.

The intention seems to have been to create an aesthetically pleasing ensemble, different from those in other cities in its architectural qualities, and with the potential visually to organize a new suburb as both something distinct from the main part of the city, and at the same time organically joined to it.

This industrial symbolism did not go uncontested. The whole complex was only 600m or so away from the Westfriedhof, the western cemetery built by Grässel between 1900-1904. The buildings for this were low-lying, and cannot have been intended to provide a significant visual focal point for a heavily built-up city. They were visible only from the surrounding countryside, or from the Dachauerstraße itself. Nevertheless, some tensions can be observed in the correspondence between the Hochbauamt (especially Grässel's Abteilung I), the Lokalbaukommission<sup>83</sup> and the gasworks directors. Grässel was at two heated meetings called in the spring of 1904 to discuss whether the gasometers should be moved away from the cemetery, or whether they could be hidden by trees, and it seems that only he could have wanted either solution.<sup>84</sup> Bauamtman Bertsch took the gasworks directors' side, however, and his position as second in charge at the SEB and resident 'expert' at the Lokalbaukommission seem to have carried the day. He agreed that the model of the project

seems to prove that the whole picture [*Gesamtbild*] of the establishment is a friendly one. Even the gasometers, with their lightly constructed, modern execution, make an interesting, and in no way un-beautiful, set of objects.<sup>85</sup>

In fact, Bertsch's proposal was to make the gasometers more visible, to refuse to hide them behind trees, and attach a clock to the water-tower in the project, so that the

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<sup>83</sup>The *Lokalbaukommission* had been set up in the early nineteenth century, and reformed in 1888. Theoretically, it was there to represent the interests of the crown and good taste in the building decisions taken in the 'Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München', and was nominally independent from the town council. However, this independence largely theoretical, due to its composition. It was chaired *ex officio* by the second mayor, and also consisted of a Rechtsrat (a legally qualified member of the municipal administration), a Magistratsrat, a representative of the Bavarian government and a municipal Baurat. It is clear from this constitution that it was in no way independent of the council as a whole, as only one member came from outside it. In the period of the gasworks construction, the Baurat - as a specialist, by far the most influential member of the commission - was Wilhelm Bertsch, one of Munich's most progressive and daring municipal architects. This information comes from the foreword of the SAM catalogue of *Lokalbaukommission* files.

<sup>84</sup>Städt. Gasanstalt, Zeichnung C, No 2, 'Städtische Gasanstalt München. Gasbehälter nach Osten gelegt' December 1903; Sitzung vom 11. Febr., signed Schwiening, Bertsch; Grässel, Bertsch and Schwiening to the Direktion der städt. Gasanstalt, 26 April 1904; Bertsch to Schwiening [*Stadtbaudirektor*], 8 February 1904. SAM-GW-278.

<sup>85</sup>Ries and Hollweck to Referat Xa [*Hochbauamt*] and Verwaltungsreferat Lipp [*Verwaltungsausschuß*], 8 June 1904. SAM-GW-278.

industrial development would become *more*, not less, visible in the area.<sup>86</sup> This solution was the one which was finally adopted. The city planted an outpost in the countryside outside it; then ensured that it would be visible through the clock and the absence of trees; and designed it to be a symbol of the city's *Leistungsverwaltung*<sup>87</sup> which would visually organize a projected new suburb.

This contest, in which the genteel semi-rural architecture of a cemetery was pitched against the potent urban, industrial and technical symbol of the gasworks in a dispute about what the visual emphases of the expanding city should be, shows a clear commitment on the part of the Hochbauamt at least that Grässel's occasionally anti-modern, industry-shy agenda was not being followed in full. Where he proposed stressing the cemetery over the gasworks, the time-honoured symbol of the urban frontier over the new symbol of an expansive metropolis, Bertsch argued that the symbol of industry should be the organizing element; whereas Grässel suggested hiding the gasometers with trees, Ries, Hollweck and Bertsch argued that their modern construction would make interesting buildings in their own right, and that they did not need to be hidden. Despite suffering a personal setback in this instance, Grässel was not at all marginalized in the wider process of colonization. Through his school buildings, he engaged complicitly in the impetus to grow the city outwards.

Grässel's opinions about the role of the school as the organizing visual element in a new or developing suburb show that he was in basic agreement with Ries and Bertsch about method, at least. In an essay of 1915, he stressed:

The city should be very careful about how it builds schools, because, by and large, settlements will grow up around them. Once the city has laid gas, water and sewage pipes, the value of the land around will rise, and in the subsequent building, the school should be the orchestrating [*bildende*] point. Building regulations should be in place to control the inevitable development, because the most beautiful appearance of a school-house will be of no use to the city at all, if the surroundings are not harmonized with it.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Bertsch to Schwiening [*Stadtbaudirektor*], 8 February 1904. SAM-GW-278.

<sup>87</sup>*Leistungsverwaltung* means roughly the administration of services to the community, but also has a symbolically potent, dynamic connotation beyond this rather dry meaning. For an elaboration of its meaning in the municipal context, see Wolfgang Krabbe, *Kommunalpolitik und Industrialisierung: Die Entfaltung der städtischen Leistungsverwaltung im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert: Fallstudien zu Dortmund und Münster* (Stuttgart, 1985).

<sup>88</sup>Grässel, 'Ästhetik des Schulhauses', pp. 4-5. SAM-NLG-367.



He went on to stress how significant schools and churches were in forming the central visual motifs in emerging areas of the city. This theme had already been picked up, with respect to Grässer's work, by a national journal, *Das Schulhaus*. Discussing the school



**Figure 4:** Fürstenriederstraße school, Hans Grässer, 1901-1904.

on Fürstenriederstraße, built by Grässer between 1901 and 1904 and shown in figure 4, the journal described the placement of the school as being in open countryside, and *München und seine Bauten* agreed.<sup>89</sup> As the *Schulhaus* article explained, the parish of Laim had been incorporated into the municipality of Munich in 1900, as some of its area had been settled by industry on the Munich borders. However, the parish was a large one, and the whole area had been transferred to Munich's governance, including large stretches of agricultural land.

Grässer was faced with a complicated situation. He was compelled by his ideology

of '*Gliederung*' – the idea that every building should form a continuous link with the environment in which it stood, and which was explored with regard to the Implerstraße school in chapter one – to reflect the rural nature of the site in the building. He chose to do this through an elaborate (both for him, and for Munich at the time) Bavarian baroque historicism in the roof, atop a much more simple building, and through abandoning the 'L'-shape usual in Munich schools; after all, there was no corner or street to articulate the building around. But as the *Schulhaus* article acknowledged, the nature of the site was dual:

With regard to the layout of the site, far outside the periphery of the City of Munich, and the overwhelmingly rural character of the surroundings, a solution had to be found based on significantly different factors than are pertinent for the schools built in the city.

Not only that, but the road on which the school lies is planned by the City of Munich to be a traffic artery. However, at the moment there is next to no traffic to speak of, and as the street has not yet been hemmed in by rows of buildings, it has not yet forfeited any of its rural character.

<sup>89</sup> 'Ein neues Münchener Schulhaus', *Das Schulhaus*, 7. Jg. nr. 11 [no date], pp. 403-414. SAM-NLG-367; BAIvN, *München und seine Bauten*, p. 617.

Due to the absence of surrounding buildings, the architect [*Erbauer*] had to be sure that the work would be sufficient standing on its own, as much as later, when it will have to exert its influence on the *Stadtbild* standing in the middle of the rows of buildings due to be dispatched to accompany it.<sup>90</sup>

One wonders why the city built this school at all, given there was no settlement around it to use it. The only satisfactory answer is that the municipality predicted a future demand, and built, as it were, to encourage and manage it as Grässer described above. The Fürstenriederstraße school was a staging post for urban expansion, and, just like the gasworks, it was intended to place the municipality as visually and functionally central to that growth. First, the municipality would plan for and encourage enlargement; secondly, the corporation would design itself into that extension, to become a visual still point in the turning world of urban expansion. Thirdly, and in some ways, incidentally, these staging posts were all potent institutional and architectural symbols for key features of the modern state and modern society – not in any metaphorical way, but a literal one. Schools, gasworks, old people's homes, housing estates, tram depots and welfare offices do not *allude* to the key features of governmental modernity or urban administration; they *are* those features. The municipality's leaders and technocrats aligned themselves with the enlargement of the *Großstadt*, and agitated for a dynamic municipal commitment to it, to be evidenced within it.

### *Technological Symbolism in the Stadtbild*

This symbolic presence was not just reflective of social modernity – schools, for example – but was also had the effect of celebrating technology and science. Two key projects demonstrate this will to place architectural Modernism (or at least, a rather mediocre version of it) right at the heart of the visual appearance of the city: the Technisches Rathaus, or 'technical town hall', and the dermatological hospital on Thalkirchnerstraße. They were both constructed in the second part of the 1920s, although the Technisches Rathaus had been designed and planned in the immediate aftermath of the war. It was not just architectural Modernism which these projects hoped to project onto the city, however, and a brief discussion of these highly prominent plans should reveal just how ideologically laden these buildings were. More importantly, to examine them is to examine the council's faith in *Leistungsverwaltung* and to show how

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<sup>90</sup> 'Ein neues Münchener Schulhaus', *Das Schulhaus*, 7. Jg, nr. 11 [no date], pp. 403-414 (pp. 404-405). SAM-NLG-367.



it attempted to make this mediocre architectural Modernism function as a shorthand for that success.

The Technisches Rathaus complex, comprising the Technisches Hochhaus, the Elektrizitätsverwaltung and the Gas Board, sought to elevate municipal government to the dominant feature of the urban horizon, and make the corporation the only architectural feature of the skyline which could compete with the church. It sought to do more than that; the idea of a specifically technical town hall detaches the political (and traditional) dimensions of the urban government from the technical (and novel) ones:



**Figure 5:** Technisches Hochhaus. Bauamtmann Hermann Leitensdorfer, designed c. 1918-19, built 1926-29.

from this ensemble, the corporation's electricity, gas, water, engineering and building services would be directed. In short, the technical town hall glorified technology, and aligned the municipality with it. As figure 5 shows, the Hochhaus does not impress now for what might be called its Modernism. In part, this is because of the development of a canon of modern architecture which has privileged those architects not working predominantly in brick. However, as Walter Mueller Wulckow's influential studies in the late 1920s show, to contemporaries, working with brick was a perfectly 'Modernist' solution, just as white or coloured plaster scrim could be used to disguise a multitude of historicist

sins.<sup>91</sup> Not only does the historiography of European Modernism neglect to show brick building as essential to the Modernist project as fully as they might, it tends to privilege the plastered buildings of particular architects over their brick work – much as it privileges May's, Oud's and Wagner's flat-roofed projects over their pitched-roofed ones, although both used these two solutions interchangeably, as photographs of Oud-

<sup>91</sup> Walter Müller-Wulckow, 'Deutsche Baukunst der Gegenwart' series: *Bauten der Arbeit und des Verkehrs* (Berlin, 1929); *Wohnbauten und Siedlungen* (Berlin, 1929); *Bauten der Gemeinschaft* (Berlin, 1929); *Die deutsche Wohnung* (Berlin, 1932).



Matthenesse in Rotterdam, Bornheimer Hang in Frankfurt or the Hufeisensiedlung in Berlin will show.<sup>92</sup> The plastered walls of Weißenhof (a commercial failure, and arguably on balance a negative contribution to the 'cheap housing' question) are always shown, while the neighbouring housing project by a trade union housing association in brick (a successful solution to the 'cheap housing' question) is ignored.<sup>93</sup> Even a seminal Modernist text, *Der Sieg des neuen Baustils* by Walter Curt Behrendt of 1928, shows more buildings relying on visible bricks than not, but more recent architectural literature has proved reluctant to redress the balance.<sup>94</sup>

The Technisches Rathaus complex certainly represented a bold and committed statement of engagement with modernity. As such, the building should be seen as part of a redevelopment of the Unterer Anger, an area of the mediaeval city centre which had traditionally been the corn exchange and produce market of the city. The grain halls were demolished at the end of the war, and a competition was held to build an office structure capable of uniting all the technical and service elements of the city in one building. The project was the pet of the city's second mayor, the apolitical Hans Kufner, who (along with the Post Office) was to be decisive in bringing much of Munich's most progressive architecture into existence. He was a well-travelled man, and a technocrat *par excellence*, running most of the technical aspects of the municipality, and perfectly positioned to influence Munich's built environment as *ex officio* head of the Lokalbaukommission. His influence is probably discernible in the choice of project winner – the designs by Munich municipal Bauamtmann Leitensdorfer, who had previously been involved in the development of municipal hydro-electric power stations on the River Isar. These projects – the plan was a three stage development, not one massive one – were designed in 1919, and put into immediate effect. It is worth pausing for a moment to reflect on what the Munich corporation was actually pledging itself to in 1919: a flat-fronted, entirely unadorned, plaster-faced white building, fitted out entirely with 'normed' fixtures and components, ending in what was to be Germany's first *Hochhaus* – tower block – built with curtain walls on a reinforced concrete frame.

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<sup>92</sup>For Oud-Matthenesse near Rotterdam, see Walter Curt Behrendt, *Der Sieg des neuen Baustils* (Stuttgart, 1927), pp. 12-13; for Bornheimer Hang, see DW Dreyse, *May Siedlungen: Architekturführer durch Acht Siedlungen des neuen Frankfurt 1926-1930* (Frankfurt, 1987) pp. 23-26; for a view of the whole Hufeisensiedlung (only the Hufeisen itself had a flat roof), see Jan Gynpel, *Geschichte der Architektur von der Antike bis Heute* (Cologne, 1996), p. 90.

<sup>93</sup>Pommer and Otto, *Weißenhof and the Modern Movement in Architecture*, throughout.

<sup>94</sup>Behrendt, *Der Sieg des neuen Baustils*.

Besides the long-standing historiographical prejudices which mean that mediocre buildings gain little attention, a more circumstantial factor has disguised their rightful recognition as impassioned statements of modernist, if not 'M'odernist, intent. Having already embarked on the world's first ever *Zeilenbau* housing estate in 1918, it was all the corporation could manage in the collapsing economy and society of Germany in the early 1920s to finish that. This project did not make visible progress until 1924. Other projects, designed in other cities around the time of the economic recovery, naturally made use of a different architectural vocabulary, more modern-seeming, though actually involving far less in the way of vision and commitment on the part of municipal leaders. That this project was selected in January 1919, and stuck by throughout the 1920s shows the city dealing with a backlog of architectural Modernism, rather than a tardy acceptance of it in the later 1920s.



**Figure 6:** Elektrizitätsverwaltung. Hermann Leitensdorfer, designed c. 1918-19, built 1920-1926.

The project, shown in figure 6, had some considerable impact. Considered as a whole, it seems to have overcome substantial opposition to the electricity headquarters, begun in 1920, put on hold in 1922 and the first part of the project to be completed in 1926. The initial response to that was varied. As the electricity headquarters was nearing completion in the summer of

1926, the *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten* praised a 'significant and courageous modesty' in the building, and said that it would 'surely constitute a *städtebauliche* focal point.' It noted in passing the uniformity of the windows and the internal fittings, and then went on gently to praise the building:

Whoever can free themselves from the long-cultivated habituation to decorated architectural styles, and who really takes on board the Munich spirit of building [*Münchener Baugeist*] as it was before the beginning of the reign of the first King Ludwig [r. 1825-1848 (abdicated)] will find here, in new

materials, masses and functions, something of the old Munich spiritual quest, without 'Olde Worlde' touches, in the sense of regularity and unity.<sup>95</sup>

However, before the completion of the entire project, support was not universal. The *Allgemeine Zeitung* led with the headline '223 identical windows in one façade!' as the competition was decided just 2 months after the armistice, and went on to establish the general character of criticism for Modernist building in the next seven (if not seventy) years. The sub-headline was: 'A piece of Munich architecture. Insipidness cannot be white-washed away! Poor Blumenstraße. And a tower block still to come?'<sup>96</sup> The parameters of international criticisms of Modernism were firmly staked out: 'This building will be boring, factory-like, devoted to over-functionalism [*Nur-Nützlichkeit*], and painfully bleak.'<sup>97</sup> The *Völkischer Beobachter* – not in the late 1920s a conservative newspaper in cultural terms, and representing the more radical, left-wing elements of the NSDAP – wrote of the building's official opening (it was occupied in August 1926) in 1927:

One could not really claim that the new headquarters of the Munich municipal electricity works ... makes what one might call an elevating impression. The famous lack of decoration – which, according to Bürgermeister Dr. Kufner, corresponds to the modern demands of strict *Sachlichkeit* – did not need to be so odiously and exaggeratedly brought to the eye, just to create a giant barracks with six floors to disgrace the entire area for the next hundred years.<sup>98</sup>

Many other journals agreed.

However, by the time the tower block was nearing completion, these views had entirely disappeared. The 14-storey concrete frame which towered over the entire city attracted substantial comment and many visitors, and when the tower was completed both national and local press were ecstatic. The *Völkischer Beobachter* – just two years after its complaint about the project – led with the headline: 'A Tower Block in the Munich Style!'. It went on to say that the whole plan of articulating the two lower elements

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<sup>95</sup>*Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, 6 June 1926. SAM-HBA-502. Ludwig I was known as the 'Baukönig', planning (amongst many other things) the Königsplatz, the university (which he brought to Munich in 1826), the immense, eight lane Leopoldstraße, the Feldherrenhalle, the Ruhmeshalle and enormous 'Bavaria' overlooking the Wiese, the Siegestor, the ministries between the Residenz and the Maximilianaum, the Botanic gardens and the Ludwigsvorstadt. He and his son, Maximilian II, and their preferred architects von Klenze and Gärtner, were responsible for much of the ring surrounding the mediaeval core of the town. Preferred styles were a very austere Greek classicism, brightly painted Venetian gothic, and High Renaissance.

<sup>96</sup>*Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27 January 1919. SAM-HBA-502.

<sup>97</sup>*Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27 January 1919. SAM-HBA-502.

<sup>98</sup>*Völkischer Beobachter*, 17 April 1927. SAM-HBA-502.

through the tower was, '...incontrovertibly the greatest of inspirations on the part of the architect.'<sup>99</sup> All the Munich and Bavarian newspapers had pull-out picture specials, and so did significant national ones – many Berlin papers, the *Kölnische Zeitung*, the national edition of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, the *Welt am Sonntag*, and it was featured in national and even international trade journals.<sup>100</sup> The *Vossische Zeitung* had a picture special entitled, 'Der Kampf um den Wolkenkratzer', detailing the various projects recently brought to completion in Germany using tower blocks. Munich's is one of the least Modernist (in the sense of a stripped down, whitewashed experiment in mass and right-angles to achieve its aesthetic qualities) – but as already mentioned, it was planned in the last few months of 1918, and so did not have a familiar vocabulary of Heroic Modernism to draw on. However, it was singled out for especial praise by the newspaper in comparison to the other tower blocks, because of its sense of contribution to and continuity with the rest of the *Stadtbild*. The caption read, 'The Technical Town Hall in Munich, whose link to the older buildings to which it is joined can only be called a complete success,' whereas the far more 'Heroically Modernist' Newspaper Tower in Frankfurt was described as 'interesting', but 'lacking any meaningful link with its surroundings.'<sup>101</sup> Martin Wagner, a well known Modernist architect famous for his Berlin housing estates, gave a speech in Munich in 1930, reported in the *Münchener Zeitung*, which dealt with the tower block – and praising Munich as the model to which all aspired. The newspaper summarized Wagner's speech, concluding that he was not fundamentally opposed to the tower block as such, but that architects were far too keen and uncritical about them. They caused *städtebauliche* problems, they drove up land prices, caused difficulties for car parking and traffic – however, 'only in Munich was the *Hochhaus* in the right hands: public hands.'<sup>102</sup> His admiration for this brick-clad structure would seem to show that he certainly was not aware of a 'lax' or 'half-hearted' modernism on the part of the corporation.

Opposition to the proposed tower did not just come from the press; some records survive of opposition from the people in the area which would be affected. The

<sup>99</sup> *Völkischer Beobachter*, 27/28 October 1929. SAM-HBA-502.

<sup>100</sup> This is a small selection from the huge file of press cuttings on the collection of buildings in SAM-HBA-502.

<sup>101</sup> 'Der Kampf um den Wolkenkratzer', *Vossische Zeitung*, n.d. SAM-HBA-502.

<sup>102</sup> 'Moderne Städtebau', *Münchener Zeitung*, 27 January 1930. SAM-HBA-502.

Lokalbaukommission invited objections, and received four (which survive). Carl Gerber, a printer and publisher with a works in the vicinity of the proposed tower, complained:

In our opinion, the new construction in the currently planned height constitutes a damaging blow to the beauty of this part of town, without the City, or the general public, obtaining any advantage therefrom. The imitation of American conditions at every opportunity seems to us totally inappropriate for Munich, which has, up to now, so praiseworthily striven for the preservation and creation of a good, unified *Stadtbild*.<sup>103</sup>

This was the only of the four recorded criticisms which the Hochbauamt chose to answer in words rather than statistics – perhaps because it was the only one which involved ethical and aesthetic criticisms. The municipal building department answered firmly:

It should not go un-remarked that there exists a manifest prejudice in this question, which will not face the facts: the idea that the tower is an imitation of American circumstances does not match with the truth that the plan comes from a time [1918-9] in which we knew nothing of American tower-block ideas, and pursues the objective of nothing more than, firstly, the elevation and promotion of the administration building of the City according to ancient German tradition, and, secondly, the building of a landmark in this significant portion of 'Old Munich', which has become completely smudged, vague, meaningless and incomprehensible. [The Unterer Anger] will become, through the construction of the tower, greatly elevated; the tower will be a landmark of its significance far and wide, and develops and symbolizes the new orientation of the City of Munich.<sup>104</sup>

The assumption of Americanism was doubly false, as American skyscrapers were constructed on riveted steel frames, not reinforced concrete ones. It should be noted that even though there was some initial opposition in the press and amongst the public, it was minimal – especially once construction of the tower was started in 1926, eight years after its planning. Even within the council, there were no major objections. The municipal *Kunstausschuß* (Artistic Committee) had passed the project unanimously, and the Bavarian interior ministry had also approved the development.<sup>105</sup> When the *Künstlerratsausschuß* (Artists' Committee) of the Lokalbaukommission came to discuss the roof of the tower, only one objection was heard – and that was only regarding the positioning of the tower. They concluded that the project as a whole was 'spirited and

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<sup>103</sup>Buchdruckerei und Verlagsgesellschaft Carl Gerber to the Lokalbaukommission, 1 June 1927. SAM-HBA-489.

<sup>104</sup>Stadtbauamt to the Lokalbaukommission, n.d. [c. End of June, 1927]. SAM-HBA-489.

<sup>105</sup>Beschluß im Hauptausschuß als Senat, 14 July 1927. SAM-HBA-489.

decisive', and concluded unanimously that the block should have a flat roof – 'If anywhere, it will be at home here.'<sup>106</sup>

This near Damascene conversion of the Münchener to the tower block did not escape newspaper comment either. The *Bayerische Staatszeitung* wrote:

Well, the Berliners have at last managed to build a tower block themselves, and they rant and rave about how everyone should go and see it, and they praise its architect, Bruno Paul. And us Münchener? The municipal building department has been ensconced on the 14th floor of our tower block for well over a year! At the time there were plenty of critics. Not one Bürger was proud. They say we Münchener do not like new fangled things, but we got used to it, and now we love it – it is our house on the Unteren Anger. Now the Münchener sees the joy of the Berliner at his tower, and says, 'Ja, mei. Dös ha'm wir scho lang!'<sup>107</sup>

Nationally, the *Welt am Sonntag* also noticed the conversion, and like the Bavarian paper, caricatured the supposed insularity of the Bavarian as in fact being more of myth than a reality, something of a comedic affectation.<sup>108</sup> Two men talk about their new 'Häuserl', one of whom pretends not to like it, 'but in reality, he's quite fond of the little Häuserl, with all its functional simplicity. "In Amerika..."

-Schneid ab mit Amerika, sag i dir. Du redst daher, wia a Mo ohne Kopf. Is net amerikanisch – is Bajuwarisch.

-Hätt's jetza dös eigentli braucht?

-Wenn i di net a so guat a kenna tat, nacha tat i sogn, du bist a Depp. D'Stadt wachst, d'Leut wern mehra, alles wird grösser, d'Verwaltung wachst natürl aa und nacha woäßt as scho.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>106</sup>Niederschrift über die Sitzung des Künstlerrates der Lokalbaukommission, 6 May 1927. The committee consisted of: Oberbaudirektor Fritz Beblo, German Bestelmeyer (who would go on to be a leading architect under the National Socialists), Oberbaurat Blössner (who was most interested in town planning), Theodor Fischer (earlier a municipal architect, now a professor of international repute, and about to be invited to build a model block of flats at the entrance of the 1928 Ausstellung 'Heim und Technik'), Baurat Leitensdorfer, and the private architects Otto Delisle, Eugen Hönig, Otto Kurz (whom the council would subsequently make president of the Ausstellung 'Heim und Technik' when they sacked Oskar von Miller), and Josef Rank (one of Germany's biggest building contractors). SAN-HBA-489.

<sup>107</sup>'Unser Hochhaus', *Bayerische Staatszeitung*, 20 July 1930. SAM-HBA-502.

<sup>108</sup>This is a highly accurate perception. At the risk of anachronism, the 'Laptop and Lederhosen' rhetoric of the current Bavarian government sums up this deep commitment to technology with a slightly 'Olde Worlde' gloss.

<sup>109</sup>'Das Mammuthhaus', *Welt am Sonntag*, 3 November 1929. SAM-HBA-502. The German (or rather, Bajuwarisches) original has been preserved to convey the humour of the piece, which is in a strong Munich accent. An approximate translation would be:

'In America....'

'Oh, shut up with your America. You're talking like a man without a brain. It isn't American - it's Bavarian!'

'Well, did we really need it?'

'If I didn't know you so well, I'd have said you were a complete moron. The city is growing, the population expanding, everything's getting bigger, so the municipal administration is growing too - which you know full well.'



Indeed, the Münchener did seem to know full well what the reality of the modern *Großstadt* was, and accepted it accordingly once they had been taught what to expect and how to understand it by the corporation.

The dermatological hospital on Thalkirchenerstraße, shown in figure 7, was also a particularly urban solution, and illustrates how any assumed conservatism, alluded to in the opening pages of this chapter, of the Münchener is deeply misplaced if the image remains unquestioned. It too was constructed in a tower block style – the first hospital in Germany (and possibly Europe) to be so, and stands approximately half a mile from the Technisches Rathaus, although the technologies involved were very different. It was built by Richard Schachner, the municipal architect behind the very technically and visually



**Figure 7:** Krankenhaus an der Thalkirchenerstraße. Richard Schachner, 1925-28.

advanced Schwabinger hospital and Municipal Wholesale Market. Whereas the Technisches Rathaus by Leitensdorfer was a reinforced concrete frame structure with curtain walling, the Dermatologisches Krankenhaus an der Thalkirchenerstraße used load-bearing walls throughout its eight floors. Even though newspapers often referred to it as '*Eisenbetonbau*', it was not a

reinforced concrete structure, but a brick one.<sup>110</sup> The plans of the building show clearly that the construction

techniques were quite traditional, and the walls of this eight storey building were therefore 77cm thick, versus the 38cm of the fourteen floor Technisches Rathaus.<sup>111</sup> All the newspapers stressed that it was a controversial design, and noted that this practice of the tower-block hospital followed practice in the USA and, surprisingly, Britain. In a syndicated article, it was argued:

<sup>110</sup>'Sachlichkeit im Krankenhausbau', *München-Augsburg Abendzeitung*, 16 June 1929; "...the building extensively uses reinforced concrete technology", 'Der moderne Krankenhausbau', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 20 June 1929. SAM-ZA-KH-UK-DK.

<sup>111</sup>Bau 104, Plan 14, 21 July 1926. SAM-HBA-645/i.

When it comes to the building itself, without doubt it will excite a great deal of criticism from the public, as it is the first tower block to be built for public purposes in Germany. Perhaps from this standpoint, it might have been articulated and decorated a little more richly – although one should always keep in mind that this is a purely functional building [*Zweckbau*].<sup>112</sup>

It did not seem to excite much criticism at all, however; in fact, just the reverse. The building was begun in 1925, and completed in 1928, but not handed over to the city sanitary department until mid 1929 because it had had to be used for the huge flu crisis of 1928-9. When it was complete, the press coverage was entirely positive, and celebrated its 'modernist-cubist character,'<sup>113</sup> and dwelt at length on the 'Sachlichkeit und Zweckmässigkeit' of the construction.<sup>114</sup>

The name 'Dermatological Clinic' is somewhat deceptive, however. What the city was actually building was a sexually transmitted diseases hospital – a function which it still has (and which made photographing the entrance and interior problematic) and a quasi-prison for prostitutes, and it took a bold city government indeed to give either of these things such a high profile.<sup>115</sup> The hospital was to take about 430 in-patients and provide accommodation for 120-130 nurses and other staff entirely within one building, eight storeys high and 112 metres long. Two of its eight floors were for 'venereally sick men and female patients transferred in by the police.'<sup>116</sup> Commenting on the flat roof, to serve as a garden, one prominent newspaper wrote:

Its function is to keep the unruly elements – particularly the women placed there by the police – as far as possible from the surrounding courtyards, because it can be assumed that their singing, commotion and caterwauling on the roof of the eighth floor will cause the minimum possible disruption.<sup>117</sup>

The relationship between the prison and the hospital is explored in a more detail in chapter three, focusing on the hospital as a place of help but also social separation and

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<sup>112</sup> *Bayerischer Kurier*, 13 September 1925; *Bayerische Staatszeitung*, 11 September 1925; *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 12 September 1925; *München-Augsburg Abendzeitung*, 12 September 1925; *Völkischer Kurier*, 12 September 1925; *Völkischer Beobachter*, 16 September 1925. SAM-ZA-KH-Ver.

<sup>113</sup> 'Das neue Krankenhaus in der Südstadt', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 1 May 1929. SAM-ZA-KH-UK-DK.

<sup>114</sup> 'Matter-of-factness and Functionalism'; 'Das neue Krankenhaus in der Südstadt', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 1 May 1929; 'Sachlichkeit im Krankenhausbau', *München-Augsburg Abendzeitung*, 16 June 1929; 'Der moderne Krankenhausbau', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 20 June 1929. SAM-ZA-KH-UK-DK.

<sup>115</sup> The beds were shared thus: 240 beds for venereal patients and 'die von der Polizei eingewiesenen Frauen'; 96 for general skin ailments; 40 children's beds; 27 private beds [*Bayerische Staatszeitung*, 11 September 1925. SAM-ZA-KH-Ver].

<sup>116</sup> *Bayerischer Kurier*, 13 September 1925. SAM-ZA-KH-Ver-KHTK.

<sup>117</sup> *München-Augsburger Abendzeitung*, 12 September 1925. SAM-ZA-KH-Ver-KHTK.



exclusion. Indeed, our whole conception of what a hospital was in this period should be detached thoroughly from what a hospital is now. Hospitals then were far more akin to prisons, as they were designed to limit contagion, not to treat it. The possibility of communication with the outside world was a constant worry to hospital planners – and to the citizens of cities, who went to great lengths to avoid being sent to hospitals. One of the major priorities when building the much bigger Schwabinger hospital for the municipality was to wall and fence it ‘to prevent a forbidden traffic with the outside world.’<sup>118</sup> The walls were built a long way out from the building to create a sort of healthy moat. This commitment to a visual presence of *Leistungsverwaltung*, of the city government as the provider of technical and scientific services, was stretched ‘above and beyond the call of duty’ by the city in building the two towers of the Technisches Rathaus and the Thalkirchenerstraße hospital. The city was not content, as it had been with the Moosach gasworks, to place these symbols as organizing features of a particular quarter; they wanted to use them to order the entire city around symbols of technology, scientific intervention and municipal governance.

### Conclusion

It seems clear that although underlying discomforts about the *Großstadt* existed, the partnership between the metropolis, its governors and its experts was one of affection and trust. Even when they built to control and modify the effects of the urban on the city dweller – to end alienation, de-individuation, fragmentation – they still supposed an urban future and modern techniques of influence and intervention. They built this supposition into the city through an eager participation in a mode of understanding of the phenomena they sought to manage, in that they took part, alternately passively and actively, in the establishment of a framework for describing society, culture and the city which appealed to a universal set of experiences, positioned firmly in the economic, social and geographic forms of the metropolis. They promoted this supposition through the attempts to re-form the orientation of Munich from the rural and artistic to the urban and industrial, promoting the settlement of heavy industry in the city and developing rural land into industrial estates. They nurtured this supposition through growing the city outwards, proactively increasing its size and scope, and by conditioning this growth through organizing it around symbols of municipal life and government. They developed this supposition after the war by searching for, and finding, potent signifiers of

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<sup>118</sup> *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 6 October 1910, front page. SAM-KrAnst-200.

technology and science to push into the Munich skyline, thereby competing visually with the church spires which had traditionally been the distinctive feature of city horizons, not just in Munich, but in many cities across Europe. Even Hans Grässel took part in these processes, outlining his philosophy of how to organize the growing city, and planting schools as the vanguards of an urban future in green field sites.

All of this shows that, the nervousness and fear described in chapter one notwithstanding, even nostalgic and backwards looking visual solutions, such as the Fürstenriederstraße school, were underpinned by a mentality which was fundamentally at home with the city, which regarded it as a given, and which accepted it rather than tolerated it. Add to this the commitment the municipality showed to highly progressive solutions in its hospitals (both in Schwabing and Thalkirchenerstraße), gasworks, and administration buildings, and a picture emerges of a city and a culture not entirely concordant with the image which the National Socialists and the municipal tourist office might display – then or now. The readjustment is only complete when we reject not only the image-making of which Munich has been the object for the last one hundred years, but when we tackle the prejudiced expectations we might have about a city with no heavy industry, at the heart of a rural state, governed by Centre Party and BVP mayors, and the approach it might take to modernity. Even under these circumstances, it seemed the city's governors and experts resolved to stick by modernity and a cautious architectural modernism, and that – as the experience with the Technisches Rathaus showed – by doing so, they brought the citizenry with them.

## Chapter 3:

### The interior world of modernity

Thus far the focus has been on how the Munich municipality problematized the *Großstadt*, and it has been argued that in developing the *Großstadt* as a whole into an artifact, members and employees of the city council could thereby make a hook on which they could hang important debates about significant strands of modern society. Opinions *à propos* the historical phenomenon of the big city have thus far provided a valuable hermeneutic for an approach to the historical category, modernity. Yet the analysis so far has been on a fairly 'macro' level. That is to say, the city of Munich has been considered as a whole, as a broad topographical sweep, which the municipality felt particularly qualified and entitled to manipulate. With fluctuating confidence, perhaps, they also felt *able* to do so, and the archives show repeated references to the city as always threatening to slip beyond their control or beyond their realm of understanding. It is time now to focus more on the 'micro' level of management, and particularly on the interior spaces of buildings, for it is here that we find new avenues to explore regarding key features of the debate about modernity in Germany at this time: alienation, personality, character, *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. Interiors do not form a conspicuously obvious part of the *Großstadt*, but yet were perceived by the municipality and its experts as a projection and continuation of the phenomena that they wished both to describe and manipulate.

The municipality showed, in its architectural and spatial politics, a repeated interest in fostering a notional 'personality' or 'character' both in the practical administration of its

building department, and in the final products of the Hochbauamt and *Stadterweiterungsbüro*, while at the same time seeking to integrate the impersonal advantages which an approach to social administration based on statistics, planning and expertise might bring. Their constant mission was to demonstrate to themselves and to the rest of Germany (and perhaps even the world) that the great early twentieth century quest for a reconciliation between head and heart was possible. They sought to bring to the products of rational, 'social scientific' projects a certain transcendental quality, and thereby rescue the individual city dweller from threatening, universalizing doctrines which belittled them. They sought to do this in several ways.

Firstly, in the actual buildings they built, the architects of the Hochbauamt tried to integrate features which, while allowing the advantages of scientific planning, negated the visual coldness to which they felt that could sometimes lead. They designed the institutional and the scientific out of buildings with institutional and scientific purposes, and replaced them with an emphasis on either colour and excitement, or warmth and coziness. It was assumed that this would address not just the material needs of the citizen in schools, hospitals, old people's homes, orphanages and the like, but also speak to them spiritually and help to bring an end to a certain sort of alienation, whereby the more the benevolent social state sought to do for its citizens, the less affection those citizens seemed to show for either the state or for each other.

Secondly, they devised bureaucratic structures within the building and planning process which they hoped would instill the cityscape with products of character and personality. They often called for organizational policies which emphasized the need for an artistic *Führer*, an oft-heard idea at the time, and which attempted to reduce the somewhat 'committee' nature of much building, which they felt led to indistinct buildings and spaces and a loss of personality and character. Their success in this area was limited, as various bodies could not help but contest the visions of what *Führer* there were, but the intention was often floated that a certain form of artistic 'dictatorship' was needed. Where this could not be achieved, or was not tried, other strategies were evolved. The most common of these was an insistence on only using local architects for major projects (not normally out of local patriotism or a parochial mentality), who would be committed to remaining near their buildings until well after their completion. That way it was felt that whatever the outcome of the building, it would inherently reflect the needs and

character of the Münchener because it sprang from those needs and that character. It is the theoretical level that will interest us most here, but it is also worth stressing the huge practical advantages this offered. There are few municipalities in the western world who have not been badly stung because they employed 'star' architects, who drop in, provide the city with the 'benefits' of their vision, expertise and wisdom, only for the city to find that they are long gone before the buildings are even complete, let alone falling apart, leaking or subsiding. In this period in Germany, May in Frankfurt was perhaps the most notorious example of this, leaving in 1929 to go to Magnetogorsk, and becoming chief town planner there. In pursuit of this goal of sturdy, competent buildings over good or headline-grabbing structures, the municipality consistently rejected *Architektur* in favour of *Baukunst*, and *Architekten* in favour of *Erbauer* and *Baukünstler*.

Thirdly, and lastly, the city government identified certain economic structures as particularly offensive. They disliked any rhetorical emphasis on mass-production, and instead focused on a rhetoric of a craft tradition, in which the alienation of worker from work, worker from worker and worker from employer was minimized through both the design of buildings and spaces and their use. How successful they were in securing this end to alienation is not absolutely clear, but as the next chapter will discuss, it seems fairly certain that they in many ways failed to find practical ways to address this issue, as the city always proved unwilling to challenge the structures of industrialized capitalism on which building production was based. The development of the '12,000-Programme' was predicated on two, possibly irreconcilable, strands: the rhetorical stress on the craft tradition and the elimination of alienation, and the practical stress on the division of labour, the awarding of contracts to building contracting giants, and the sourcing of materials from wherever they were cheapest, be they German or not. For the purposes of this investigation, and to focus on as 'micro' a level as possible, the politics of the kitchens in the '12,000-Programme' will be examined, and held up for comparison against the other major model in Germany at the time, those of the Frankfurt municipality's building programme. But first, the rescue of personality in the city's social care institutions.

### *The Social State and the Ungrateful Citizen*

It seemed to many in Germany that the more the state did for its citizens, the more the citizens felt distant from it, and from each other. This process of estrangement caused

some perplexity throughout ruling circles in Germany, and measures were taken to bring an end to it. The Prussian government's educational trip for some of its civil servants to Bavaria, for example, was intended to look at ways that Bavarian municipalities and state authorities had found of filling this void. One participant described the goal of the course as tackling the spiritual discontent of the time, which was such that:

...in our time of the highest technical achievements, of refined luxury and the greatest possible material wealth, that is to say, a time which appears to offer, like no other has done before, a happy and carefree life, a deep swathe of disaffection is clearly visible, that our deepest yearning finds no consolation in this time; in short, we have been made aware, as perhaps no generation has been before, that man shall not live by bread alone. He wants more from life than from day-to-day to receive all his bodily needs; the individual must again be made to feel one with the great connectivities of existence, and harmony must rule again between head and heart, reason and emotion, body and soul. That is the fundamental principle of this course.<sup>1</sup>

He went on to elaborate that the state was primarily responsible for ensuring this void was filled, arguing as a good Hegelian that it would protect its people, and that it was the embodiment of their ideals. The state '...arches over its people like the protective vaults of a cathedral, so that each and every one of them can erect his altar undisturbed...', and should help its citizens achieve '...the most beautiful possibilities for fulfilling the universal striving towards personality.'<sup>2</sup>

However, something was not right in this equation, something remained mystifying. These stately activities and this stately provision were not producing the desired effect. Klihm, the author cited above, described the facilities which the city of Munich had built, ending with the truly impressive Müller'sches Volksbad, a palatial Jugendstil swimming pool complex, with fountains, steam rooms, and painted domed ceilings, built in the heart of Munich, and popular haunt of both the bathing public and Wittelsbach princes and princesses. Yet despite facilities like these across Germany, despite the provision of culture, leisure, education and the like, the population was disaffected:

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<sup>1</sup>Hans Klihm, 'Erinnerungen an die Studienreise der Berliner staatswissenschaftlichen Vereinigung nach Oberbayern und Schwaben (1)', *Trierischer Zeitung*, 17 June 1911. SAM-NLG-360.

<sup>2</sup>Hans Klihm, 'Erinnerungen an die Studienreise der Berliner staatswissenschaftlichen Vereinigung nach Oberbayern und Schwaben (1)', *Trierischer Zeitung*, 17 June 1911. SAM-NLG-360. It is worth stressing that this author was not advocating too much personality, or democracy in any sense of the word. He qualified his comments about the striving for personality by emphasizing that this was a process very much under the direction of the state. He said it was essential for smaller personalities and the state to make it possible for '... the greatest too to live out their mighty lives under its protection, that is a royal activity...'.

What is not done today by the state and municipalities for the good of the people [*Volkswohl*] and their health? More than ever before! It must ultimately be the fault of the people itself, when, despite the best of conditions, it cannot find any joy or satisfaction in life.<sup>3</sup>

It seems he was not talking about Munich people or Bavarians either, for he had nothing but praise for them and their *Gemut*.<sup>4</sup> He suggested that the organizers of the tour must have had a training in drama, for when the 130 or so civil servants alighted at the Hauptbahnhof in Munich, there they saw (or heard, to follow Klihm's metaphor) a stunning city informed in every detail by '...the *Leitmotiv* of a tremendous symphony of personality, which struck us as soon as the beat of the city had started.'<sup>5</sup>

Other participants in the course concurred, arguing that Bavaria had neutralized, not the Social Democratic Party itself - the SPD occupied one or both of the city's Reichstag delegates, elected through universal suffrage, throughout the period, and other cities in Bavaria were absolute red strongholds. Instead, it had neutralized the threatening most aspects of social democracy, perhaps the most coherent political voice of this disaffection. One participant commented on the fact that Bavaria had developed a 'royal Bavarian social democracy', characterized by Vollmar and Müller, rather than the Berlin troika of Stadthagen, Lebedour and Rosa Luxemburg. The colours of Bavarian socialism were blue and white, not red. In the next breath, he went on to sum up the architecture of the city and the contribution of Hans Grässer to this: 'And then we saw the effects of a modern system of building [*einer modernen Bauordnung*]<sup>6</sup> stretched out over the whole city, a proud monument with no posturing.'<sup>7</sup> While this commentator did not explicitly say that the buildings and planning of the city were responsible for the fundamentally non-confrontational nature of Bavarian social democracy, he associated them in his description of the city landscape and the political landscape.

<sup>3</sup>Hans Klihm, 'Erinnerungen an die Studienreise der Berliner staatswissenschaftlichen Vereinigung nach Oberbayern und Schwaben (2)', *Trierischer Zeitung*, 19 June 1911. SAM-NLG-360.

<sup>4</sup>*Gemut* is a difficult word to translate, and so it will be left in German. It signifies a variety of things in a variety of contexts: mind, disposition, nature, feeling, mood, spirit, soul, warmth, heartiness; it normally involves a constellation of two or more of these features.

<sup>5</sup>Hans Klihm, 'Erinnerungen an die Studienreise der Berliner staatswissenschaftlichen Vereinigung nach Oberbayern und Schwaben (1)', *Trierischer Zeitung*, 17 June 1911. SAM-NLG-360.

<sup>6</sup>Other possible translations would be 'a modern set of building regulations' or 'a new order of building'.

<sup>7</sup>'Durch Oberbayern und Schwaben. Studienfahrt der Vereinigung für staatswissenschaftliche Fortbildung. 2) München', *Tägliche Rundschau* (Berlin), 20 June 1911. SAM-NLG-360.

Recognition, then, of both the problem that Munich's governors and architects were trying to solve, and of their success in doing so. Hans Grässel, one of Munich's most prominent architectural civil servants, collected stories about this sort of political and social disaffection, reinforcing the thesis that there was a conscious connection between them and the built environment in the solutions of the city of Munich; newspaper clippings about it litter the 400 or so files left in the municipal archives documenting almost every detail of this man's adult life.<sup>8</sup> One newspaper clipping he took from the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* in 1912 records the paper's outrage at the way certain aspects of modern culture encouraged this alienation, and in turn the SPD. In a front-page article, the paper (Munich's, and Bavaria's, largest) attacked the Centre Party Ministerpräsident, Georg von Hertling,<sup>9</sup> for a willful naiveté in the face of the rise of social democracy, and the disaffection which it implied:

You would have to laugh, if it was not so sad, when we read about things like this [disaffection and alienation] while statesmen, professors and philanthropists rip their hair out trying to work out how on earth to explain the immense growth of social democracy, and how we can most effectively cure this 'sickness' – to use the words of Herr v. Hertling. Herr v. Hertling and his ilk recognize only the symptoms of the sickness, which do not have their origins in the hovels of the proletariat alone, but in the fancy palaces of Monaco, Aix-les-Bains and so on, or in the wildly luxurious fittings of the latest ocean liner...<sup>10</sup>

Grässel underlined the conclusions of the article: disaffection and alienation lay in the 'effortless fulfillment of wishes', and von Hertling should acknowledge the 'great and terrible secret' that the cause of social democracy did not lie in the proletariat, but 'in the hearts of very many of the best men which the *Volk* possesses.'<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>All the way down to theatre tickets and invitations to cocktail parties, the man was an obsessive collector and hoarder of documents relating to his own life and the architectural management of Munich. What Grässel's own position was *vis à vis* the SPD is difficult to ascertain. He certainly approved of the socialization of certain communal facilities (the tramways and electricity generation, for example), and had nothing but contempt for private capitalists when they, for example as landowners, threatened the greater good of the commonality. He was, however, a somewhat uncritical proponent of *Vaterlandsliebe* and opponent of unadulterated democracy, and often nostalgic about the past. The only distinct political position which can be derived from the archival record is a convinced pacifism. He collected photographs and reports of pacifist conferences both before and after the First World War, and remained utterly neutral regarding the prosecution of it, prefacing speeches and texts with, 'in this terrible war in which we seem to find ourselves...' and similar, pointedly disjointed and uncommitted, phrases.

<sup>9</sup>In 1912, with the death of the Prinzregent and the accession of his son, Bavarian government was transformed as Hertling became the first party political prime minister. Up until then, Bavaria, like every other large state in the Reich, and the Reich itself, had had Ministerpräsidenten appointed on a civil-servant-like basis by monarchs (incidentally, this is how Bürgermeister were appointed in Prussia, but not Bavaria, where they were appointed by the crown, but on the approval of the council chamber). Hertling took office as leader of largest party in the Landtag, however.

<sup>10</sup>'Memento!', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 25 April 1912. SAM-NLG-374.

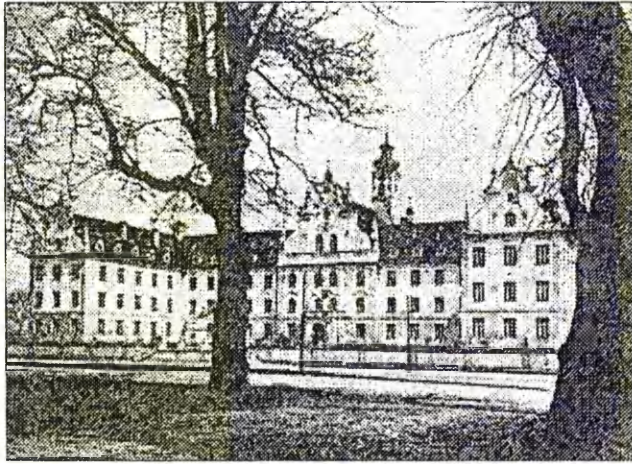
<sup>11</sup>'Memento!', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 25 April 1912. SAM-NLG-374.



From this, Grässel and others in the Hochbauamt developed visual and spatial solutions which they thought would challenge the 'effortless fulfillment of wishes', and alter the nature and interpretation of social services. For all that the novel institutions of the social state which the city of Munich built so enthusiastically in this period were created *for* the citizens of the town, it was difficult to convince the *Bürger* (if the analyses above are credible) that it was done in any sense *by* them and not *to* them. They felt external to these processes, and alienated from them. Whether the fault lay, as the Prussian civil servant argued, in the people themselves, or, as the Bavarian civil servant implied through his selective underlining, in the habits of their rulers, both argued that the built environment could improve the situation. To paraphrase and summarize Grässel's arguments taken from his writings as a whole, the building was a place of encounter between the citizen (an individual), the social state (impersonal authority), and rational scientific and social-scientific processes (impersonal discourse) – the product of the mid- and late-nineteenth century 'discovery' of statistics on health, mortality, income and the like. As such a place of encounter, the building could reconcile the three. It could humanize and individualize the state and the achievements of modern society and science. It could provide a point of access or exchange for the individual and personal with the universal, statistical and impersonal. While Grässel was a pivotal figure in the understanding and management of the built environment in this period, the city council also showed an interest across the board in infusing their projects with personality and character, especially in the period before the First World War. We will look first at Grässel's institutional work, before moving on to look at the Schwabing hospital, all in the period between 1895 and 1914, returning to the theme of interior organization and design.

Three types of project dominated Hans Grässel's oeuvre: the cemetery, the school and the residential care home, either for children or the elderly. It is the care home which will be the subject under investigation here, his schools having been at least in part addressed in the first and second chapter, and the cemeteries lying largely outside the scope of this thesis. In the case both of his orphanage and his several old people's homes, the buildings had to find ways to address a group of people who were in a highly paradoxical situation: they were in need, and the municipality wanted to help them. However, they had also lost their homes and whatever independence they had had, and were compelled

to adapt to an un-wished-for institutional existence. This meant that the social state, at the moment of its greatest generosity, could also be greatly resented. Grässel felt that this called for an architectural response.



**Figure 1:** Municipal Orphanage, Neuhausen. Hans Grässel, 1896-99 (BAIVn, *München und seine Bauten*, p. 642; largely destroyed during the war).

The orphanage, largely destroyed in the Second World War, shown in figure 1, attempted to do just this. It was opened in 1900 at the opposite end of the Nymphenburg canal from the royal Wittelsbach summer residence of Schloß Nymphenburg in a rapidly growing new suburb, and was part of a complex of buildings that the corporation had commissioned by Grässel around the Dom Pedro Platz, the other two

being the Heiliggeistspital – the Holy Ghost Old People's Home – and his first school. The square, onto which the orphanage backed, was completed by a reinforced concrete Protestant church by the engineering-cum-architecture partnership of Max Heilmann and Josef Littmann. Grässel's aim was to develop an interior and exterior which would encourage the orphans to develop a sense of belonging, which would banish any institutional character. The original interior no longer survives (the wing which managed to make it through the war was damaged by fire, and none of Grässel's interior features were preserved), but the effect of the whole building was summed up in the *Deutsche Bauzeitung* in 1903, in an issue entirely devoted to the structure:

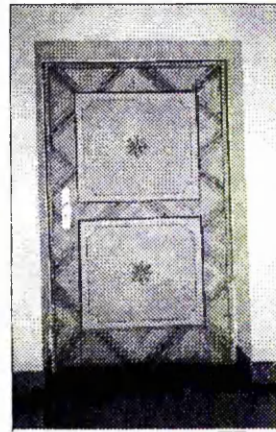
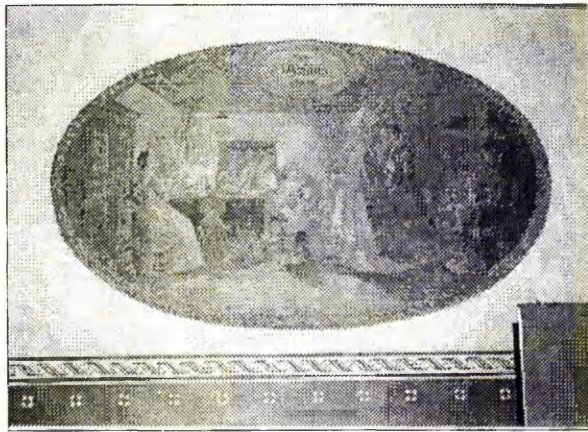
It is indeed a noble thought to give sunny days to children denied a father or a mother, at least during their stay in the institution [*Anstalt*], instead of robbing them for ever of the magic of cozy homeliness through accommodating them in barrack-like rooms. It must be said, such an urban conception<sup>12</sup> corresponds to real artistic and real human sensibility. The feeling of pure joy which clearly enthused the creator [*Verfasser*] of the institution does the same to every visitor.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup>'eine solche städtische Auffassung': this could be translated as an urban conception or a municipal conception; I have translated it as urban, but the author could have been referring to a special understanding of the Munich city government.

<sup>13</sup>'Das städtische Waisenhaus zu München', *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 23 December 1903. SAM-HBA-727.



The techniques that Grässel used here were the same as he did in many of his buildings, and constantly impressed contemporaries into thinking the city had spent a lot more on its projects than it in fact had. He would paint the walls of all the major circulation spaces with frescos; the rest of the walls he would paint in reasonably bright (but not



**Figure 2:** a) 'St. Nikolaus Kommt' ('Santa Claus Comes'), fresco, Implersstraße school, 1910-11; b) doorway, Altersheim St. Joseph, 1925-27.

strong) colours, typically yellow and green. A stripe of geometric designs or organic swirls would be painted at dado-rail height, and the doors would also receive some treatment, either a false marbling, or a geometric formation. For furnishings, he would buy sturdy, but mass-produced and cheap, items, and paint them with folk designs of flowers and bright colours. All this would be done by out-of-work or newly qualified artists, who could be employed cheaply. Figures 2a and 2b show how this would work. The first shows a wall painting in the stairway of the Implersstraße school, built 1910-1911, and the second shows a door in the Altersheim St. Joseph, built in the late 1920s. The frescos could be of various subjects: wildlife scenes; the countryside; themes from the history of Bavaria, Munich or the Wittelsbachs; religious imagery; or fairy tales and popular folk stories – some even traced Munich's urban expansion over 800 years.

It was not just the trade press that noted Grässel's, and the City of Munich's, success in this area. A Roman Catholic devotional pamphlet, the *Seraphischer Kinderfreund*, ran a regular column called 'Brother Marianus' social chit-chat'.<sup>14</sup> As a whole, the weekly journal, costing 10Pf., was dedicated to a sort of twee, pious appreciation of children and their angelic nature, and a general exposition of the Roman Catholic view of the world. Its standpoint (judging from this one issue) was conservative in many ways – most conspicuously in religious matters – but also espoused a reformist and sometimes radical conservatism of the type often to be found in the politics of the more leftist wing of the Centre Party and the Catholic trade unions. This particular article starts off, 'Whoever

<sup>14</sup> 'Soziale Plauderei des Bruder Marianus'.

wants to see a little bit of the social question solved should go and stand on the Schloß Nymphenburg canal', and argues that there, if the viewer looks both ways, he or she will see the reconciliation of wealth with poverty, the royal palace with the municipal orphanage. The theme of the social question was handled, for this paper, more in terms of reconciliation and peace-making than conflict and tension, and this approach was bound to appeal to Grässel, and Grässel's approach was bound to appeal to them. The paper (or 'Bruder Marianus') wrote:

We must praise the Munich municipal councillors and governors, and their Baurat, Hans Grässel, and say: 'You [*Ihr*] have created for the poor children a home the likes of which is not to be seen anywhere else in the world.'<sup>15</sup>

'Marianus' said that he had travelled widely through Germany, Austria and France, and had not seen the like for friendliness and warmth in design, yet it was all done '...in artistic accord with the progress of modern art and technology.' A contemporary pamphlet about the building also praised the sobriety and simplicity of the building – its *Schlichtheit* – but went on to say that this sobriety was not a cold, institutional one:

In the rooms, halls and corridors, the architect [*Erbauer*] constantly tried to avoid all cold, barrack-like blandness [*kasernenmäßige Nüchternheit*]. All of the spaces in the building should be a dear *Heimat* to their young inhabitants, and as such, they should remain in their memories for the rest of their lives.<sup>16</sup>

By being such, 'the young lad is shown the goodness and solidity that the craftsman can achieve, and the girl will become conscious of what a clean, orderly, light and friendly home should look like.'<sup>17</sup>

At the opposite end of the 'care spectrum' the city government invested substantial amounts of money in old people's homes, building four major ones between 1900 and 1927, all of which were designed by Grässel. Just one will serve as an example here, the Heiliggeistspital. It was built on the Dom Pedro Platz, behind his already complete orphanage, and was begun in 1904, and opened in May 1907. The building was designed for 600 poor elderly people, and impressed contemporaries primarily for its facilities and interior design. They marvelled at the central heating, the beautiful (electric) lighting, the quantity of running hot water, the kitchen facilities, the fire protection measures, the lifts and the internal telephones. The building was the subject of many postcards at the time,

<sup>15</sup>'Ein altes Schloß und ein modernes Waisenhaus', *Seraphischer Kinderfreund*, April 1901. SAM-HBA-727.

<sup>16</sup>Lothar Meilinger, *Das Münchener Waisenhaus*, (n.p. [Munich], n.d. [c.1902-4]). SAM-HBA-727.

<sup>17</sup>Lothar Meilinger, *Das Münchener Waisenhaus*, (n.p. [Munich], n.d. [c.1902-4]). SAM-HBA-727.

and of course, Grässel collected them all. One description of the building from the time of its opening described the frescos in the entrance hall and staircase: up the staircase were painted angels symbolizing the human virtues essential to the completion of the building – social care, hard work, good governance. They lead up to the centre of the painting, and across the ceiling of the entrance vestibule was a painting of a model of the project. Above the model hovered the Holy Ghost, and the anonymous author of a document of unknown purpose (the author was not Grässel, for it was sent to him for comments) concluded with an astounding analysis of this image: ‘One could almost imagine that here [in the Holy Ghost] the deliberations of both council chambers are symbolized.’ The hyperbole aside, the planning of the building is important to this thesis, because it demonstrates the alignment of the city government with the ideology of the personal and the character-full, using the mechanisms and possibilities offered by subscribing to the activities of the impersonal, social state to restore, or at least venerate and acknowledge, personality and individuality.

The interior decoration of the building was exactly as one would expect from Grässel, and it is quite possible (though unlikely) that the municipality simply left him up to his own devices.<sup>18</sup> But the interior organization of the building – of any building – was something which would have been extensively debated by the council, because this determined both its functional success and its cost. The city council opted for internal solutions in this building (and in the Schwabing hospital, which will be looked at next) which substantially increased the cost of the project, but which concomitantly allowed what they called ‘personality’ and ‘character’ to flourish throughout. For example, an unknown newspaper drew attention to the fact that this building demonstrated a totally new conception of organizing care for the poor, in that they would no longer be separated by sex. The city had taken the expensive measure of making most of the rooms twin rooms, getting away from the ward or dormitory customs followed in other towns. Naturally, this was expensive, but it allowed the city to challenge the usual practice ‘which often separates half or a whole lifetime of joy and sorrow because of bureaucratic reasons.’<sup>19</sup> Married couples, brothers and sisters, and even friends would be allowed to

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<sup>18</sup>This is unlikely because every commentary on any of Grässel’s buildings, or on Munich’s architecture in general at this time, describe Grässel’s practices in detail, and are normally highly praising. It is difficult to imagine that the council itself, therefore, could have been ignorant of them or neutral towards them - especially as they would have to pay for these designs to be executed.

<sup>19</sup>Unknown newspaper, 20 May 1907. SAM-NLG-51.

stay together. Here the elderly would find privacy and dignity, and it also enabled them to bring one or two of their own possessions with them, which other cities' solutions did not do. The whole impression was '*charaktervoll*' – full of character. Another newspaper remarked that mostly the elderly resented going into homes, but this one 'will not have the effect of alienating them, and making them mistrustful of the people who were providing for them.'<sup>20</sup> It seems that contemporaries recognized both Munich's ambitions and success in fulfilling them at devising schemes which focused on a rhetoric of reconciliation – a rhetoric common in German political and public discourse at the time.

Commenting on another, later, old people's home, this strategy of devising accommodation was described in greater detail by Grässel. He said that to give value and dignity to age was the difficult part of a commission like this, as institutions usually had a 'barrack-like form', and that old people's homes were sometimes seen as places for the old to go to die off. He said that the city of Munich had always impressed upon him the belief that it did not view such elderly people as 'burdensome poor', and that this viewpoint had caused so much tension and conflict between the poor and those who sought to govern them. The city government was the real force behind the overall ideology of the building, and had contributed to the smallest details: '...these rooms will be the witnesses for hundreds of years,' he explained, 'which will speak of the high conception of the mission on the part of Munich Council.'<sup>21</sup> It was they who had, right until the late 1920s, insisted that old people's homes should be built in styles and materials which the residents would understand and with which they would feel at home. He concluded that all his institutional buildings (*Anstalten*) should be understood in terms of reconciliation and unity:

So, when you are asked, as usual, in what style a new municipal institution has been built, do not answer, in a baroque style or a renaissance style, but in a Munich style, which is characterized by speaking clearly, in the exterior as well as interior, not just the language of reason, function and usefulness, but also that of the heart and *Gemut*, and thereby becomes attractive.<sup>22</sup>

This attempt to allow the heart, the *Gemut*, personality and character to permeate the buildings the city built was conspicuous not just in Grässel's residential buildings of

<sup>20</sup>Unknown newspaper, unknown date. SAM-NLG-51.

<sup>21</sup>Stadtbaudirektor Hans Grässel, 'Besichtigung des neuen städtischen Altersheims an der Waldfriedhofstraße in München, Montag den 16; April 1928'. SAM-NLG-60.

<sup>22</sup>Stadtbaudirektor Hans Grässel, 'Besichtigung des neuen städtischen Altersheims an der Waldfriedhofstraße in München, Montag den 16; April 1928'. SAM-NLG-60.

(especially) the years before the First World War, but also in others – unemployment offices, welfare offices, de-lousing stations and bathhouses, and hospitals.

The hospital was perhaps the closest encounter which most people had then with pure science. While hospitals at that time were not the shrines to scientific investigation which they have subsequently become, they were the sites of cold, rational interventions in people's lives. As was alluded to in the last chapter, they could quite easily be highly resented interventions, and while the municipality received nothing but praise for building humane psychiatric institutions, paediatric units, maternity hospitals and tuberculosis sanatoria, the politics of normal hospital construction were more problematic. Before the First World War, hospitals were conceived of primarily as places of enforced isolation and containment. This is evidenced in the usual plan of the buildings: they have a wide, patrollable perimeter, with a high fence or wall. As already mentioned in chapter two, one contemporary journal commented that the broad, grassed perimeter and the high fence of the Schwabing Hospital was designed 'to prevent a forbidden traffic with the outside world.'<sup>23</sup> Even by the mid 1920s, the average stay in Schwabing Hospital was 44 days,<sup>24</sup> and in a period of limited or non-existent social security, this could easily take a poorer, or even a moderately well off, family into destitution. It was no wonder that people resisted going into them, and that the police had responsibility for ensuring that when someone had a contagious disease, he or she would be taken to the requisite institutions. Sometimes the pattern would be that neighbours, fearing contamination themselves, would inform the police of people secretly kept at home, who would remove them with force if necessary to the hospital, for their – or everybody else's – own good.

The municipality had identified the need for a new, large hospital in 1898-9, and set about visiting other cities in Germany to view their installations.<sup>25</sup> Baurat Eggers was responsible for the designs, but died shortly before their completion. The city cannot have been overly impressed with his proposals, as they were immediately and completely dropped on his death, and the project was started entirely anew by Baurat Richard Schachner, who would go on to become one of Munich's most daring and inventive

<sup>23</sup>'Das Krankenhaus Schwabing München', *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 6 October 1906.

<sup>24</sup>'Das Krankenhaus Schwabing', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 11 May 1926. SAM-ZA-KH-KHS.

<sup>25</sup>All of the information in this immediate section comes from a booklet written by the Direktion des städtischen Krankenhauses München-Schwabing, entitled 'Das städtische Krankenhaus München-Schwabing', n.d. [1910 or after]. SAM-NLG-399.

architects. His plans were approved on 1 July 1904.<sup>26</sup> The principles which underpinned the building were explained in a report the council produced in May of that year. As one would expect in a report of this nature, the aesthetic considerations did not take prime position. First, the report established the need for a new, large hospital for the rapidly growing city; then, it outlined the practical requirements of such a building, and discussed whether to use a pavilion or a corridor system; penultimately, it pin-pointed the defects of the Links der Isar and Rechts der Isar hospitals which would have to be remedied if Munich was to develop a high-profile, modern health-care system: psychiatry, alcoholism, pathology, gynaecology, venereal disease and paediatrics were all outlined as areas of weakness in Munich. Lastly in the 40-page report came 'Fundamental Principles for the Architectural Formation of the Buildings',<sup>27</sup> the considerations about how the building would have to look; although last in order of priority in the report, perhaps it is a measure of its importance that it was included at all.

The committee of Magistratsräte, town councillors and doctors required that the building's form should spring from its functions, and that all decoration in the old style should be avoided; that is to say, they demanded a piece of modern architecture:

Completely apart from financial considerations, artistic reasons and the functional purpose of the building demand that there should be no bays, turrets and the like, which are not required for functional reasons. On the same grounds, all gables, fancy decoration, overly high roofs etc. must be rejected.

It is intended that the entire hospital facility including grounds, which will fulfill all the requirements of the most up-to-date technologies and be built in the most modern building techniques available, should be, in both its interior and exterior, completely modern in the best sense of the word. There will be no room for the application of no-longer-justifiable architectural motifs from earlier stylistic periods, or the application of frilly bits and bobs.<sup>28</sup>

The building fulfilled its aesthetic brief absolutely, as can be seen in chapter four, figures 6a, 6b and 7. Schachner succeeded in creating a work of outstanding clarity and simplicity, which impresses for these qualities nearly 100 years after it was designed. Yet the committee clearly worried that this would create a 'cold' environment – and coldness has always been one of the accusations thrown at modern architecture (the accusations

<sup>26</sup>Direktion des städtischen Krankenhauses München-Schwabing, 'Das städtische Krankenhaus München-Schwabing', n.d. [1910 or after]. SAM-NLG-399.

<sup>27</sup>'Grundsätze für die architektonische Ausgestaltung der Gebaeude', Bericht der mit der Vorberatung des Projektes der Erbauung eines III. grossen Krankenhausbauens im Norden der Stadt betrauten Kommission, May 1904. SAM-KH-44.

<sup>28</sup>Bericht der mit der Vorberatung des Projektes der Erbauung eines III. grossen Krankenhausbauens im Norden der Stadt betrauten Kommission, May 1904, p. 39. SAM-KH-44.



against the Electricity Board Headquarters were discussed in the last chapter). It was an accusation levelled at the designs for the hospital by Councillor Stiersdorfer, who seemed intent on making trouble not just about the design of the hospital, but about any other features he could possibly criticize. Alongside complaining about the '*Kahlheit*' (bleakness, blandness or starkness) of the building, he also had problems with the awarding of contracts, the standards of the water boilers in the kitchens, the types of trees to be planted in the gardens, the contract for the levelling of the grounds, the type of wood used for the doors, and the quality of the gravel dug up to make room for the foundations and whether it could be sold.<sup>29</sup> The planning committee specified that lively colours should be used throughout 'to banish the notorious hospital or barracks character from the complex'. The individual rooms 'should not have the icy cold character of most hospitals, simply warehouses for the sick... [They are] boring, repulsive and depressing.'

A hospital should not be the site or symbol of terror or horror for a suffering humanity, but a place of refuge, sought out gladly by our people, a sanatorium for body and soul. Therefore the traditional practice of dull colours and institutional corridors will be avoided, and the consultation rooms will not – as they usually are – be built like greenhouses and fitted out as disconsolate glass boxes, but the fitting out of these rooms will be in a homely character. ... We must, in this sense of the whole thing, take a step nearer.<sup>30</sup>

They neglected to specify to what or whom they must step nearer, but it seems they probably meant the citizen-patient. To what extent did the municipality succeed in creating this new, 'anti-institutional' ambiance in its hospital? They succeeded to a great degree, if contemporary assessments are to be believed.

The *Deutsche Bauzeitung* had a two part special on the project in the autumn of 1906, showing in detail the model and the building plans. They commented that the hospital had been divided up into individual buildings, in each of which approximately 150 sick could be tended. Within the buildings themselves, large wards had been rejected, partly on hygienic grounds, but mostly on humanitarian ones. This ensured that '...the

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<sup>29</sup> See exchange of letters Stadtbaudirektor Schwiening, Magistrat der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München; Stadtbaudirektor Schwiening, Gemeindebevollmächtigte Stiersdorfer, March 1908 - October 1910. SAM-KHS-15/1.

<sup>30</sup> 'Man muss nur in diesem Sinne der ganzen Sache etwas naeher treten.' There is a possible alternative translation, which depends on interpreting 'der ganzen Sache' as a dative, not a genitive: 'We must, in this sense, take a step nearer to the whole thing.' Bericht der mit der Vorberatung des Projektes der Erbauung eines III. grossen Krankenhausbaues im Norden der Stadt betrauten Kommission, May 1904, p. 40. SAM-KH-44.

individuality of the individual patient can be allowed far more scope than in most hospitals in other big cities.<sup>31</sup> They went on to argue that the interior of the building had banished the 'frosty coldness which plagues most modern hospital buildings.' The rooms were light and airy, but

friendly, airy, light rooms in the sense an artist might mean it, not according to the meanings that doctors might have, which seem all too often to be encountered in modern hospitals. They measure lightness according to the square-metre area of the windows, airiness according to the quantity of cubic metres encompassed, and friendliness according to how light the paint is.<sup>32</sup>

Clearly this trade journal felt that the city had been successful in reconciling science and social intervention with the more personable qualities of friendliness and personality. This was a quality which the city had developed as a whole, and as one of the Berlin civil servants already cited wrote:

This city seems to be like a weightlifter's barbell, with the two weights of beer and art joined together through the joining bar of personality and *Gemütlichkeit*.<sup>33</sup>

The same author described seeing Schwabing Hospital as the highlight of the whole tour, regarding it as the 'most strongly impressive sight there is to see in the city', offering a quality of architecture and care not to be found in Berlin, even in the new Birchow Hospital. He described with a witty anecdote how he had felt humbled before this particular movement of the 'symphony of personality'. The hospital director explained that patients in Munich's hospitals were provided with beer (as Bavarian regiments in the *Bundeswehr* still are):

One wit exclaimed, 'What, even the drunkards? Do they get beer too?' The director almost jumped out of his skin, and said, 'Drunkards? We don't have any of them here.' Then he explained passionately that the patients were not allowed any spirits, and there was no delirium. He did have a few alcoholics on his wards, but he thought one could be fairly sure of one thing – 'Norddeutsche.' Once again a slight knowing smile crept across our faces, and one stood corrected as a '*Schnapspreuß*' before this Eldorado of solidity and individuality.<sup>34</sup>

In the period before 1914, then, it seems that the city government attempted, through its architectural patronage, to bring warmth and personality to cold and impersonal

<sup>31</sup>'Das Krankenhaus Schwabing München', *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 22 September 1906.

<sup>32</sup>'Das Krankenhaus Schwabing München', *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 6 October 1906.

<sup>33</sup>'Durch Oberbayern und Schwaben. Studienfahrt der Vereinigung für staatswissenschaftliche Fortbildung. 2) München', *Tägliche Rundschau* (Berlin), 20 June 1911. SAM-NLG-360.

<sup>34</sup>'*Schnapspreuß*' is a term difficult to translate in one word. It means 'hard-liquor-drinking Prussian'. 'Durch Oberbayern und Schwaben. Studienfahrt der Vereinigung für staatswissenschaftliche Fortbildung. 3) Streifzüge durch die Isarstadt', *Tägliche Rundschau* (Berlin), 22 June 1911. SAM-NLG-360.

processes. Whereas the first two chapters posited that the fortunes of the city-as-idea are usable to diagnose a position *vis à vis* modernity, this and the next show a much more balanced picture, and demonstrates that the city of Munich was in the mainstream of the modernist attempt to infuse the modern – technology, cities, bureaucracy, expertise – with more transcendental values – warmth, emotional attachment, spiritual meaning – and thereby eliminate the conflicts of modern, bureaucratic, capitalist society; in short, they wanted both to exploit and embrace modernity, and control and ‘cure’ it. I have focused here on the buildings themselves, but throughout the period under investigation in this thesis, there was another strand of thought in the city which emphasized organizational features in the administration of the city’s building programme, rather than visual or spatial features in the products of those processes. In the orphanage, old people’s home and hospital, it was the buildings themselves which carried the torch for personality and reconciliation, for technology and administration. It was also argued, however, that the buildings could be in some ways secondary to this process, and that by reorganizing the procedures underpinning their production, one would automatically alter the final product in such a way as to reform the processes of their reception. We will briefly examine this administrative ideology.

### *The Planning Process and the Restoration of Personality*

Theodor Fischer, the only individual that could rival Grässer for both determining and explaining the ideologies of space and buildings in Munich in the pre-war period, argued throughout his writings that there had been in the past a ‘time of personality’,<sup>35</sup> which he placed before the Renaissance, and that now we lived in a time of bureaucracy, and art-by-committee. He described the ‘emasculatation’ of art through its ‘socialization’,<sup>36</sup> and argued that its ‘nationalization’ had led to the ‘death of personality.’<sup>37</sup> This was attributable to two political causes: firstly, the centralization of power (and therefore taste and planning) as French governmental methods spread across Europe in the second half of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century; and secondly the essential committee-nature of the planning which underlay many of the buildings of the period

<sup>35</sup> ‘die Zeiten der Persönlichkeit’. Theodor Fischer, *Die Stadt* (Munich, 1928), p. 12.

<sup>36</sup> Theodor Fischer, ‘Münchens Zukunft im Bauen. Kritik und Ausblick’, *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 15 October 1927. SAM-B&R-1638.

<sup>37</sup> Theodor Fischer, ‘Der Bauherr’, Lecture to the Münchener Bund, 24 November 1925. SAM-NLG-397. These sentiments ring through all of his writings, however. See also: ‘Der Stil im Städtebau’, *Das Bayerland*, 2 March 1925, 168-175; *Sechs Vorträge über Stadtbaukunst* (Munich, 1922); ‘Für die Deutsche Baukunst’, *Flugschriften des Münchener Bundes*, October 1917; *Stadterweiterungsfragen mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Stuttgart* (Stuttgart, 1903).

after 1880 – municipal schools, unemployment offices, delousing stations, fire stations, tram stops and depots, hospitals, prisons etc. Artistically, the reason was the retreat into classical and romantic styles, which meant that buildings were increasingly designed in the modes of one or other of two competing cultural languages, both problematic. One of those languages, the classical, was entirely foreign in place – it was (in its modern forms) imported from France or Italy. The other, the romantic (by which he meant historicist trends) was foreign in time, and did not relate to or accommodate people's experiences – they were irrelevant to a machine age, or to vast cities. The effect of all of this – political and stylistic pedigree, social and cultural methodology – was alienating. The stylistic problems are dealt with in the next chapter when the theme of the *Stilfrage* (the question of which style to use in a modern world) is discussed; for now, we will dwell on the political-organizational features of his analysis, for they informed the way that much of rhetoric surrounding the practice of the Hochbauamt was determined.

The city of Munich was notoriously cagey about employing private architects and about holding national or international competitions. It would be easy to attribute the former to penny-pinching miserliness, and the latter to a certain parochialism. This was not entirely the case, however. The policy of keeping things 'in house', which was usual in Munich especially in the period before the First World War, had a specific ideological purpose. By insisting that the city's architects worked across a broad range of projects, it was hoped that the city, peppered as it was by the corporation's structures, which were (it will be remembered from chapter two) supposed to determine the way that entire quarters were seen and experienced by the population, would develop a sort of artistic unity, a visual homogeneity, based around the practices of a few creative minds. Richard Schachner designed hospitals, municipal wholesale markets and tram stops; Grässel, schools, tram stops, fire stations, old people's homes and cemeteries; Fischer, schools, housing estates, bridges, town squares and street layouts; Leitensdorfer, hydro-electric power stations and office blocks. All stressed the ideas of *Gliederung* and *Zweckmäßigkeit* in their buildings – the idea that a building should fit, not necessarily inconspicuously, but ideologically neatly into its surroundings, rather than challenge or condemn them, and that the form should stem from the functional requirements of the building.

There was some tension between the city and the body of private architects throughout the period, based on the city's refusal to employ them. This remained steadfastly the case until the '12,000-Programme'. The reasons for this were several. The municipality feared a loss of control over the ideological underpinnings of the buildings and spaces that they were developing. Grässel wrote to the Association of Munich Private Architects in 1911 explaining that firstly, their ideological and intellectual diversity and '*Streitigkeit*' (readiness to resort to quarrels and arguments), and secondly, their unwillingness to follow the writings of Sitte explained, in part, the difficulties they experienced in obtaining commissions from the town.<sup>38</sup> It would be a fair criticism (and one which the city made) that private architects are more likely to problematize on a building-by-building basis, rather than fulfill any larger ethical obligation to consider the city as a whole. It was this building-by-building nature which led the city government to worry so much about *Stadtbildzersplitterung*, and decide to take the construction of housing into its own hands, for aesthetic reasons as much as socio-political ones. Private architects would not necessarily share similar visions, whereas municipal architects in Munich formed a corps, as it were, and that engendered its own *esprit*; all of them borrowed extensively from each other.

Barbara Hartmann has suggested the following original cause for the conflict between private and public architects.<sup>39</sup> In common with most other fast-growing cities in Germany in the 1860s and 1870s, with rapid growth of the city, more and more powers were handed over to the corporation from the royal government, as the city's function as 'Hof- und Residenzstadt' began to be swamped by industry and commerce, and near Malthusian population growth. Combined with a rapid transformation in the commissions required of public building, and the peculiarly urban nature of these commissions (rural tram-stops, gasworks, teaching hospitals, sewage works and the like are in some ways a contradiction in terms), it was city governments which took up the tasks emerging so quickly and place-specifically that more remote state and national governments could no longer build (or understand) rapidly enough to fulfill new needs. Unusually, in Munich, the Hochbauamt undertook the management of *all* the building projects of the corporation, under one roof as it were, including all the quasi-autonomous charitable and religious foundations and social organizations in the city. The Hochbauamt became

<sup>38</sup>Grässel to the Vereinigung Münchener Privatarchitekten e.V., 28 April 1911. SAM-NLG-403.

<sup>39</sup>Barbara Hartmann, 'Zweckbau als öffentliche Aufgabe. Die Stadt als Bauherr', in *München - Musenstadt mit Hinterhöfen*, ed. by Prinz and Krauss, pp. 107-113.

uniquely powerful, and frequently conflicts emerged between the office and the councillors, who complained that they were viewed as a 'cash cow' or 'money giving machine' (*Geldbewilligungsmaschine*). However, the Hochbauamt received unconditional support from the *Magistrat*, the executive branch of the city government. Containing as it did the *Referenten*, or 'cabinet ministers' of the administration, this support was crucial, as the various *Referenten* could liaise directly with the directors of the Hochbauamt and Tiefbauamt, equal to them in status as members of the municipal cabinet. It is also worth remembering that the *Magistrat* in no way corresponded to the political make up of the council chamber, and that SPD and Centre Party men had an influence here outweighing their distorted, gerrymandered under-representation in the council. Whereas the (usually Liberal) councillors, supported by associations of private architects, frequently called for competitions, which they felt would allow them an influence in the choice of projects and attract more fame to Munich, the *Magistrat* and the Hochbauamt strongly resisted these moves, and they were apparently unique in Germany for doing so. Hartmann cites much correspondence demonstrating this to be the case, for example, a complaint to the *Magistrat* from a group of private architects read:

In other big cities, the plans for architectural commissions mostly are put out to public competition. In Munich, the exact opposite has virtually become the absolute principle.<sup>40</sup>

Hartmann musters other evidence to show that that was the situation. She says that only in two cases – for the new town hall in the 1870s and for the exhibition buildings for the 'München 1908' exhibition discussed at greater length in chapter one – was the competition broadened (her analysis confines itself to the pre-war period); in both cases, the winner came from within the Hochbauamt. The *Stadterweiterungsplan* competition of 1892-3 was also an open competition (though Hartmann may not have included it because it was not strictly a building project), and that was won by a non-Münchener, Karl Henrici. Hartmann suggests, quite plausibly, that this policy of 'in house' design led to the mediocritization (in art-historical terms) of Munich's architecture in the long term, and she may well be right. She also states, however, that from the turn of the century, the councillors were increasingly won round to the Magistrat's position, as Munich's buildings – particularly school buildings, hospitals and cemeteries – gained national and international recognition. Only the private architects remained implacably opposed.

<sup>40</sup>Cited in Hartmann, 'Zweckbau als öffentliche Aufgabe', p. 107.

After the First World War, the use of competitions was accepted in two major projects, but entry was limited to those living in Munich, for reasons which we will come to. The Technisches Rathaus, discussed in the previous chapter, was open to competition, as was the '12,000-Programme'. The new town hall competition was eventually won by a municipal architect, Hermann Leitensdorfer, while the '12,000-Programme' was remarkable for the fact that none of the architects working on it were from the municipality's employ. In the case of the town-hall, this caused some outrage in the press, but only due to the fact that the design chosen was, initially, hugely unpopular.<sup>41</sup> The '12,000-Programme' allows us the best access into the reasons for this procedural phenomenon, to which the council had so firmly stuck since the 1880s. In a 1917 lecture, 'Preserving the Character of the City of Munich', Grässel (municipal building director since 1916, and the death of Schwiening) told the city's Association of Architects and Engineers, that the ideal mode for designing buildings was thus:

We must fully accommodate the individual interests of the individual quarters of the city in cultural and architectural regards, as I have already discussed, under the leadership of experienced men; they [the interests of the individual quarters] must be processed and pursued. ... The artists and architects living in that part of the town must be represented, because they, through their perpetual interaction with the city, will give due recognition to the emerging artistic and cultural needs of the particular quarter – their own little *Heimat*, if you like. That would be the perfect form of *Heimatschutz* in the *Großstadt*.<sup>42</sup>

While it proved administratively impossible to divide the city up in this ideal way, it would have been completely unrealistic even to attempt such a link between creators and created had the designers, architects and artists not been from Munich. It was not a Münchener parochialism which allowed this, either: the competition for the '12,000-Programme' was closed to anyone resident outside Munich yet encouraged those for whom Munich was an 'adopted *Heimat*' to apply, and the municipality's two most-beloved architects (Grässel and Fischer – although Fischer's apotheosis was only after he left the city's service in 1902) were both Protestants from Franconia. The theme of using local and municipal architects was one which Grässel had already elaborated in his lecture given as part of a training course for Bavarian civil servants, and thereby given

<sup>41</sup>The *Allgemeine Zeitung* wrote, of the competition decision, that many architects had exhibited their ideas, but were any of these finally chosen?: 'No, and again, no. In the Hochbauamt they knew better, and this better stands now stands at Blumenstraße, number 28a.' '223 gleiche Fenster in einer Front', *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27 January 1929. SAM-HBA-502.

<sup>42</sup>Hans Grässel, *Die Erhaltung des Charakters der Stadt München: Vortrag gehalten Donnerstag den 17. Januar im Münchener Architekten- und Ingenieur-Verein* (Munich, 1917), p. 7.

some form of official sanction, and Voglmaier draws attention to the substantial correspondence and bitterness which this caused.<sup>43</sup> The division of municipal and private architecture (in which state commissions were counted as private) at the Ausstellung 'München 1908' reinforced this distinction. It could only have been achieved with the full support and understanding of the *Magistrat*, and the council as a whole went along with it, as the majorities necessary to overturn it were never achieved.

It seems that it was generally believed that by doing this, although the 'flair' of the works produced would well be lessened (not that that would have been any bad thing in the minds of the majority of municipal governors and experts), the outcome would be that the buildings would be representative of the needs of Münchener, and embody the very essence of social and cultural life in the city; this planning methodology would reinforce the link between the individual and the more 'rational' impersonal processes which took place around her or him. It was another strand in the policy of reconciliation, in which the council felt obliged, using the phrase from the discussion of the design of the hospital, 'in this sense of the whole thing, to take a step nearer.' The May Siedlungen in Frankfurt, the huge *Höfe* of Vienna, and the Weißenhofsiedlung in Stuttgart were the negative examples which Münchener wanted to avoid in later periods, as it seemed to represent to them all the problems associated with hiring 'star' architects to do the work; they designed more for themselves than for the particular city in question, their designs were 'arbitrary', they were not there to supervise the construction of technically complex and novel projects, and they could not subsequently be held to account.<sup>44</sup>

Scharnagl had suggested the idea of a competition for the '12,000-Programme' right from the start,<sup>45</sup> perhaps (and this is pure conjecture) because he had already fixed on large, fairly modern housing estates, and wanted to bypass Grässel's (by then Municipal Director of building) potentially negative response. Karl Preis, the Social Democratic housing director, appealed in the initial stages for an open competition 'to promote the

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<sup>43</sup>Hans Grässel, 'Kultur und Schönheit des Bauens und Lebens', lecture given to the Fortbildungskurs für höhere Staatsverwaltungsbeamte, 3. und 4. Juli 1913, pp. 32-34. SAM-NLG-373; Edelgard Voglmaier, *Hans Grässel: Architekt und städtischer Baubeamter in München* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Technische Universität München, 1992), pp. 21-22.

<sup>44</sup>Preis, *Denkschrift*, pp. 101-104.

<sup>45</sup>Karl Scharnagl, Rundschreiben: Zum Direktorium B, Referat II, III, VII, XV. An die Stadtratsfraktion der BVP, SPD, DDP, DNP, NSDAP, Fr.A., KPD; Stadtrat Humar, Stadtrat Jodlbauer, Stadtrat Gasteiger als Korreferent, 3 February 1927. SAM-WA-64.



artistic development of Munich',<sup>46</sup> but technocratic Second Mayor Kufner outlined what were probably the fundamental ideological reasons for limiting the project to Munich architects. It was they, he argued, who would have the greatest understanding of the place, the climate and the people, and what their particular aesthetic, emotional and material needs were. He also insisted that only architects who were permanently resident in Munich would be acceptable, as they would have to remain with their creations until the projects were completed in 1931. This would ensure the same measure of project responsibility which the city had achieved with its own architects, and would tie the builder to the built, the designer to the designed, thereby guaranteeing a serious and obvious measure of moderation and responsibility. Kufner, taking perhaps a sideways swipe at Weißenhof, argued that so doing would mean that 'these oh-so-beautiful things that we see half built at the exhibitions, now really are executed.'<sup>47</sup> He stressed that Munich would not make the mistakes of other competitions, where architects were designing for places they had never been to, or for places where they would not hang around long enough for their over-enthusiasm to hurt them. If the architects were in the city, working with the city government, they would be reminded 'not to set too high a demand in terms of materials or ideals, the likes of which we (in my opinion) wouldn't really be able to work with.'<sup>48</sup> On a practical level, to ensure a level of personal expression in each, he argued successfully that one person had to take overall artistic responsibility for each of the estates, presumably to avoid the dangers of emasculation and de-personalization inherent in design by committee which Fischer was outlining at the time. The municipality would design the interiors of all the flats, and it is to those interiors which we now turn. The ideological underpinnings of the building bureaucracy in Munich were as significant as the production, use and appearance of the buildings themselves, because the one followed from the other.

### *Women, Domestic Interiors, Scientific Management and Modernity*

Few but the most radical feminists would have disagreed that, in post-World War One Germany, on some level a woman's place was in the kitchen. If this were so, to reposition the kitchen would be to reposition the woman in society. Once the woman's world had been circumscribed, on however conceptual a level, by the walls of the kitchen, it followed that to alter the perimeters of the kitchen was to alter the boundaries

<sup>46</sup>Sitzung des Wohnungsausschusses, 14 March 1928. SAM-WA-64.

<sup>47</sup>Sitzung des Wohnungsausschusses, 14 March 1928. SAM-WA-64.

<sup>48</sup>Sitzung des Wohnungsausschusses, 14 March 1928. SAM-WA-64.

of the woman's world, of what it meant to be a woman. More recently, architectural critics and theorists have subjected the plan to increasing analysis, regarding it as at the same time an abstraction of architectural ideas, and also an abstraction of social relations.<sup>49</sup> The large scale boom in the construction of social housing in Germany in the 1920s offered municipal governors and architects unprecedented opportunities to structure the kitchen as the assumed theatre in which women performed the rituals necessary for determining their gender position. Yet to leave the model defined in such a binary way – women as determined, male experts as determiners – would underplay the complexity of the situation. Contemporaries would have accepted the idea that certain men designed kitchens in social housing as a formulation of, and intervention in, what it meant to be a woman, as partly true. However, there was no neat gender divide in which men attempted to determine how they wanted women to experience the world, domestically or socially. Kitchen organization – and we will discuss in detail one model designed by a woman, and one by a man – was as much about men as about women, as much about economics as gender, and as much about modernity as economics. Gender is an important element, but more central is the possibility that a room might function as a way of structuring a response to particular, named economic and cultural phenomena – and that in some ways, the women who happened to be in the kitchen were trampled on by accident.

It needs to be stated here that cultural, economic and women's history have been separate sub-disciplines for good reasons, and that each requires a high level of specialism. This is a level which would be difficult for anyone to reach across 'borders', and so a certain 'naiveté' must be accommodated when dealing with areas outside one's primary competence; this naiveté should not be used, however, as an excuse not to look beyond one's own expertise, or to relegate other sub-disciplines to footnotes. The first part of this section will be to a degree an effort to synthesize certain strands of women's history, economic history and cultural history, and the emphasis will shift gradually towards presenting the politics of the kitchen in the light of more primary information. Several themes in the thesis need to be identified, and when they are set out we will see an alignment of a certain set of economic discourses (Marxian and consumerist-capitalist) with attempts to manage and describe what it meant to be a working class woman in 1920s urban Germany, through two highly ideologically laden kitchen

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<sup>49</sup> Iain Borden, 'The Politics of the Plan', p. 215.

prototypes. It is worth adding that on this 'micro' scale a wider debate was entered into by city governors and municipal experts about modernity, and their relationship to it – attitudes which were reflected at the 'macro' level of the city as a whole.

These factors are, firstly, efforts on the part of nineteenth and early twentieth century American feminists to secure two objectives: the professionalization of women's domestic work with a concomitant rise in status, and simplification and lightening of their previously unrecognized labour in the domestic realm through the use of rational planning and the application of technology. The second factor we need to examine is the evolution of certain expert economic discourses, and how these related to issues of a perceived commodification of the worker, division of labour, and the rise of consumerism; and how they both contributed to and reflected a new culture of space and time in the early twentieth century. Thirdly, we will discuss how these two discourses – feminist and economic – came together in a very short time after World War One in Germany in the *cultural* – but highly economically determined and gendered – sphere of building and spatial arrangements, with the express objective of regulating the nature of womanhood and compelling a certain solution to some of the discomforts of modernity.

In Judith Butler's model, gender is predicated on certain performances,<sup>50</sup> and architecture has the peculiar ability to structure stages and scenery which can condition any performance, both its enactment and perception. However, this section will not be a critique of Butler, or other Foucauldian or psychoanalytic interpretations of culture and gender. Instead, it will explore the act of building seen also as economic performance too, reflecting the economic paradigms of any society at one time. In fact, the relationship between built spaces, economic paradigm and ideal gender constructs is a tripartite one, and was, in 1920s Germany, explicitly debated as such. It had no hierarchy, and its formulation was triangular. There is no great need to call on the hermeneutic back-up of Foucault or psychoanalysis,<sup>51</sup> because these are both tools for discovering the hidden assumptions behind a building or particular spatial arrangement, whereas the assumptions in play here – gender, economic, aesthetic – were all given full

<sup>50</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London, 1990), pp. 134-141.

<sup>51</sup> As does Butler and as do, for example, Mary McLeod, Ann Bergren and Esther da Costa Meyer in their essays in *The Sex of Architecture* (New York, 1996), ed. by Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway and Leslie Kanes Weisman.

expression in public. Each of these frameworks can add a useful and interesting gloss on any particular process, but each can overlay the unconscious elements of human actions at the expense of quite explicitly stated intentions.

There was a theoretical realm, however, which would have been very familiar to many of the members of any city council in Germany in the 1920s. Few issues were more central to an understanding of the world in Germany in the first half of the last century than the way one related oneself to the idea of materialism. For example, Munich city council in the 1920s was dominated by two parties: the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Roman Catholic Bavarian People's Party (BVP).<sup>52</sup> At the centre of the publicly stated ideologies of both lay a fundamental acceptance or rejection of a materialist view of the world, and a corresponding interest in succumbing to or overcoming that dialectic. It is important to bear in mind, however, that this theoretical standpoint often broke down when translated into practice, and that SPD members could appeal to the transcendental as much as the BVP could to the material. This materialist principle as it applied to women is well set out in the great *Ur*-document of the materialist standpoint, the *Communist Manifesto*. In it Marx (and to a lesser extent, Engels) wrote:

The bourgeois claptrap about the family and education, about the hallowed correlation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the action of Modern Industry, all family ties among proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labour. ... The bourgeois sees in his wife a mere instrument of production.<sup>53</sup>

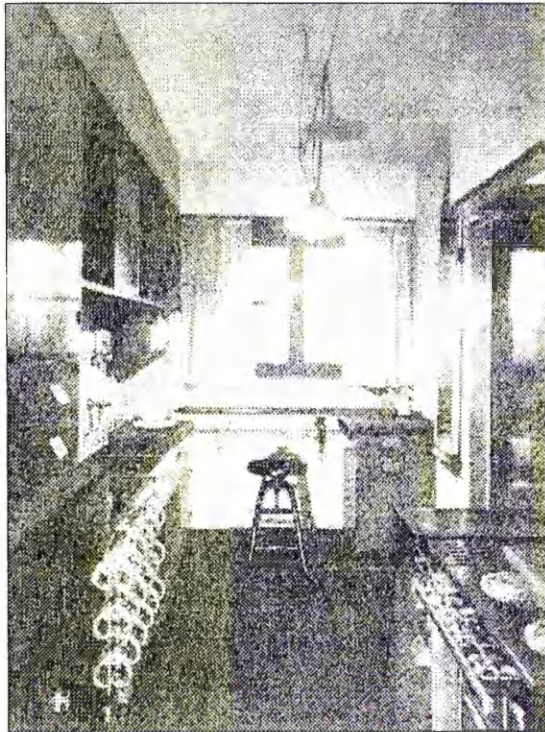
Engels elaborated this vision of the position of women in the materialist analysis of modern economic and social structures with devastating rhetorical effect in *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*. Central to this commodification and instrumentalization of, in this case, women and domestic work, was the idea of the division of labour, and we need to turn now to a particular mode of understanding the division of labour of central significance to the particular chronological, social and spatial moment under investigation here: the woman in the kitchen in the 1920s.

The whole debate about the kitchen – and hence our ability to use the kitchen as a diagnostic tool for the culture standing behind it – arose because of the decision by the

<sup>52</sup> Peter Steinborn, *Grundlagen und Grundzüge Münchener Kommunalpolitik*, pp. 551-552. The BVP was the Bavarian branch of the Zentrumsparlei, and split from that party – though remained broadly indistinguishable from it – in the revolutionary aftermath of the First World War. This division forms the basis of the present day CDU/CSU parties.

<sup>53</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Oxford, 1998 [1848]), p. 22.

chief municipal architect of Frankfurt, Ernst May, to devise a cheap, universal housing system that could be thrown up quickly to resolve the housing crisis in Germany after the First World War. The system was also intended to be a contribution both to an ethical debate about the way space and economic activity should be structured, and to a 'high'



**Figure 3:** Frankfurt Kitchen. Grete Lihotzky, c. 1925 (Dreyse, *May-Siedlungen*, p. 4).

cultural debate about the future of form and visual culture in general. He defined an *Existenzminimum* – a minimum set of standards and requirements for a decent life based on scientific (some might claim pseudo-scientific, some over-scientific and others completely unscientific) principles. He commissioned Austrian architect, Grete Lihotzky (who died in January 2000 aged 102 after a lifetime committed to highly socially and politically engaged architecture), to come up with the kitchen arrangements: her plan and his official position led to this solution becoming famous throughout Germany as the 'Frankfurt kitchen.' Figure 3 shows the

kitchen she designed. The level of planning which went into this kitchen was immense, and in the foreground of the kitchen can be seen the ready-labelled glass food drawers, which were supposed to encourage the housewife in what to buy, and in what quantities, for ideal nutrition and food preservation. The equipment is electric, built-in and rationally planned. All of these features link back to an American feminist tradition of 'home economics' – a theme to which we will return. The sliding door into the living room of the flat can be seen on the left, half way down the wall. The key feature of the kitchen – and the one which marked it off from all previous kitchens in poorer households – is that it is a separate room, spatially distinct from the social areas of the home, where the family would spend time with each other.

At a time of booming women's journals and the expansion in Germany of picture printing in newspapers, and especially illustrated magazines, few could have been unaware of its

novelty.<sup>54</sup> Combined with its origins in the housing politics of the post war period, it is this highly mediatized existence of these kitchens – although designed to allow only one person at a time to be in them – which made them so very public. They were the subjects of substantial political debate, and their media life was vibrant. These kitchens, the rooms deepest in the private home, were public property, public politics.<sup>55</sup> This new formulation of the separate kitchen demonstrates the abandonment of the organizational principle behind the traditional German kitchen, the *Wohnküche*, or ‘living kitchen.’ This would have been organized around a large table, at which the food would be both prepared *and* consumed. Here in the Frankfurt kitchen, the functional, economic, ‘instrument of production’ aspects of the woman’s role have been spatially hived off, and defined as purely productive. The social, familial activity of eating takes place in a different space, defined by experts and politicians of a different class and gender, in a neighbouring room. That definition attempted to increase the instrumentalization of the woman in the home (on the Marxist model), and to define her ever more closely as a productive unit, with a place of work, and to remove any social and any elemental, familial, ‘home and hearth’ quality to her working life; this was done while also promoting this productive metaphor as a proletarian phenomenon, not a bourgeois one. To compensate, May and Lihotzky stressed the professionalisation of womanhood with a concomitant rise in status, and the simplification and lightening of their work through rational planning and communal facilities. The momentum behind this particular form of intervention had several origins: firstly, the American feminist movement, and secondly, what David Gross recently – and Bergson and Lukacs at the time – have identified as a certain ‘collapse’ in the distinction between time and space in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the reformulation of the former in terms of the latter;<sup>56</sup> thirdly, the subjection of women in their domestic lives (indeed, the whole domestic sphere) to a type of analysis and scrutiny previously only found in public and/or work spaces; and lastly, a socio-political drive to develop social housing.

<sup>54</sup> There is a real ‘historiographical gap’ in this area, identified by Karen Heinze in her article, “‘Schick, selbst mit beschränkten Mitteln!’ Die Anleitung zur alltäglichen Distinktion in einer Modezeitschrift der Weimarer Republik’, *WerkstattGeschichte*, 7 (1994) pp. 9-17. There was a significance analogous to that described in: Charles Swift, ‘The ideal home: 1900-1920’, *Journal of American History*, 81 (1994), pp. 1247-1251; Jean Gordon, Jan McArthur, ‘Popular culture, magazines and American domestic interiors, 1898-1940’, *Journal of Popular Culture*, 22 (1989), pp. 35-60.

<sup>55</sup> For a discussion on the significance of a progression of spaces in domestic structures, and the possible meanings of ‘terminal’ spaces in them, see Julianne Hanson, *Decoding Homes and Houses* (Cambridge, 1998); Bill Hillier and Julianne Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 143-175.

<sup>56</sup> David Gross, ‘Space, Time and Modern Culture’, *Telos*, 50 (1981-2), pp. 59-78.

Lore Kramer has briefly identified some elements in the feminist discourse side of the process in one of the few discussions of the Frankfurt kitchen which have been written, and the inspiration for the immediate section which follows is her work.<sup>57</sup> Kramer identifies a crossover between the work of Christine Frederick, a figure I will return to, and a longer tradition of American, patrician middle-class feminism dating back to Catharine Beecher in the mid-nineteenth century. Beecher, a remarkable figure in the history of the women's movement, is credited with being at the intellectual and ideological core of the trend known as 'the cult of domesticity,' a trend first outlined by Barbara Welter in the 1960s.<sup>58</sup> Beecher is remarkable not just for her formulations of what it meant to be a woman and the rights and obligations it implied, but for her linkage of these to what it meant to be a housewife in an ill-planned kitchen – indeed, her suggested interventions on the latter underpinned her entire ideology of the former.<sup>59</sup> Her

<sup>57</sup>Lore Kramer, 'Rationalisierung des Haushaltes und Frauenfrage – Die Frankfurter Küche und Zeitgenössische Kritik', in *Ernst May und das neue Frankfurt, 1925-1930*, ed. by Heinrich Klotz (Berlin, 1986), pp. 77-84. It is worth mentioning here that given the subject matter and the way it would lend itself to women's history, Foucauldian interpretations and histories of material culture, I had anticipated finding a lively historiography on this area, but could find next to nothing dealing with this kitchen phenomenon outside Kramer's work. The only other focused discussions of it which I have identified (and that only three pages long) is Iain Borden, 'The Politics of the Plan', in *Architecture and the Sites of History*, ed. by Iain Borden and David Dunster (Oxford, 1995), pp. 214-226 (pp. 217-220), and an essay by Susan Henderson entitled 'A Revolution in the Woman's Sphere: Grete Lihotzky and the Frankfurt Kitchen', in *Architecture and Feminism* ed. by Debra Coleman, Elisabeth Danze, and Carol Henderson, (New York, 1996) pp. 221-253. Henderson does have useful information, particularly excerpts of writings by Lihotzky herself. However, it mostly recovers ground which Kramer deals with (though does not footnote her until near the end of the piece), and is full of shocking inaccuracies. For example, the Reichsforschungsgesellschaft für Wirtschaftlichkeit in Bau- und Wohnungswesen is described as a newspaper; there are numerous fundamental errors of German grammar (*Haus der [sic] Ring [sic] der Frauen*, *Das [sic] neue Haushalt* shown next to a facsimile of the cover page of the original, *Der neue Haushalt*); appalling translations (*Das Wohnhaus von Heute* translated as *The Dwelling of Tomorrow*); and factual errors (she describes Stuttgart as being twenty miles from Frankfurt, and May organizing quick coach trips from the Weißenhof exhibition to Frankfurt; in fact, the distance is nearer 100 miles, and the cities lie in different states, though incredibly the work of May in Frankfurt formed the subject for her Ph.D. dissertation).

<sup>58</sup> Barbara Welter, 'The Cult of True Womanhood,' *American Quarterly*, 18 (1966), pp. 151-174; she enlarges her thesis in *Dimity Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (Athens Ohio, 1976), pp. 21-41. For further elaborations on this theme, see: Josephine Donovan, *Feminist Theory: The Intellectual Traditions of American Feminism* (New York, 1985), pp. 31-63; Catherine Clinton, *The Other Civil War: American Women in the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1984), pp. 40-54 are on the domestic ideal, and pp. 166-202 on how it was challenged in the post-bellum period; Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: 'Woman's Sphere' in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven, Conn., 1977); Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York, 1985).

<sup>59</sup>Catharine Beecher, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy for the Use of Young Ladies at Home and at School* (New York, 1989 [Boston, 1841]), pp. 121-134, 268-298, and especially 366-370, 'On the Importance of a Convenient Kitchen'. The standard biography of Beecher, which fully elaborates on the theme of domesticity and kitchen life, is Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Catharine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity* (New Haven, Conn., 1973). Further analysis and contextualization of Catharine with her equally influential sisters, Harriet and Isabella, along with outstanding documentary material explaining the beliefs of all three can be found in Jeanne Boydston, Mary Kelly, Ann Margolis, *The Limits of Sisterhood: The Beecher Sisters on Women's Rights and Woman's Sphere* (London, 1988).



formulations of what a kitchen should be were intimately bound to her attempts to establish a discourse of home economics, the female, domestic and private version of that great nineteenth century male, public theme of political economy. Beecher saw in housework the most terrible, confining drudgery for women and sought to find relief for it. Her two great works (in this context – she was also in her time a pedagogue and moralist of great repute) were *A Treatise on Domestic Economy, for the Use of Young Ladies at Home and at School* of 1841, and *The American Woman's Home*, written with her more famous sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe, in 1869. In them she showed that in kitchens where men worked – her favourite examples were the Mississippi paddle steamer and the mobile military camp kitchen – the organization was rational, the kitchen was small, and the equipment was to hand. But in kitchens where women worked, either as servants or as housewives (and Marx, Engels, and Beecher herself at her most critical, would barely have distinguished between the two), the equipment was spaced so that the sink might quite possibly be in a different room to the stove, and the preparation areas of food tended to be a long way from storage, cooking and waste-disposal areas; in brief, kitchens designed by men for women were irrational and maximized work thereby imprisoning women, and kitchens designed by men for men were highly rational and did not burden them. Based on the ship's galley kitchen, she came up with the idea of the 'workshop kitchen'. Her designs add up to the first conception of the domestic fitted kitchen, planned and installed in one step.<sup>60</sup> Beecher's campaigning had considerable impact in the United States, and her attempts to establish a discourse of 'home' economy parallel to the great nineteenth century one of 'political' economy were ultimately successful.

Although it had already had some impact in Germany in the 1900s,<sup>61</sup> this American rational approach to work came to Germany most noticeably in the immediate aftermath of the Great War; and here we see the so-called 'collapse of time' merge with the feminist and cultural trends. Germany had just lost the war, and its economy slipped towards the meltdown of the inflation; the USA had, in part, just won it, and its economy boomed. As Mark Peach has demonstrated, the rage in Germany was to emulate

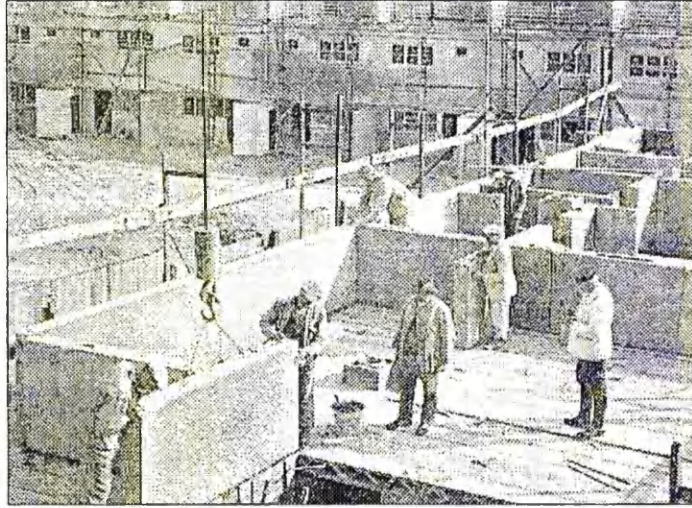
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<sup>60</sup> Her designs and some elucidation of them can be found in: Valerie Gill, 'Catharine Beecher and Charlotte Perkins Gilman: architects of female power' *Journal of American Culture*, 21 (1998), pp. 17-24; and the outstanding work by Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities* (London, 1981), esp. pp. 55-63.

<sup>61</sup> Matthew Jefferies, *Politics and Culture in Wilhelmine Germany: The Case of Industrial Architecture* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 221-243.



American production and organization methods to which victory and economic boom were attributed – especially in the architectural profession.<sup>62</sup> The theories of Frederick Taylor, deployed to such profitable effect by Henry Ford, of a scientific analysis of manufacture, underlay some of the housing programme in Frankfurt, which centred (rhetorically at least) on standardization, production line techniques, the division of



**Figure 4:** Attempts at 'industrialized' building on ten experimental dwellings at Praunheim, Frankfurt. Ernst May, c. 1927 (Dreyse, *May-Siedlungen*, p. 5).

labour and the de-skilling of workers. The different trades of the traditional building site were all done away with as far as possible. As figure 4 shows, instead, a large crane in the middle of the site delivered precast reinforced concrete elements to workers waiting in each unit, who simply bolted the slabs together. These working techniques were strongly resented by bricklayers, joiners,

plumbers, plasterers and the like, and the theories which the avowed Marxist, May, was putting into practice here paradoxically represent perhaps the apotheosis of the commodification and instrumentalization of the modern worker, the most complete division of labour possible.<sup>63</sup>

David Gross, referring primarily to Lukács and Bergson, has added a useful theoretical underpinning to this phenomenon. He describes a nineteenth century analytical mode which was fundamentally historical, firmly attached to the idea of time as a linear, continuous, all-encompassing idea.<sup>64</sup> One might add, the theories of Darwin and Marx typified this, and the genre of the novel – the nineteenth century cultural form *par excellence* – with its emphasis on the developmental and the gradual seem to reinforce Gross's thesis. The fundamental precept which had underpinned western European

<sup>62</sup> Mark Peach, 'Wohnfonds, or German Modern Architecture and the Appeal of Americanism', *Utopian Studies*, 2 (1997), pp. 48-65.

<sup>63</sup> This industrial model was dear to May, and prompted him to leave Germany in 1930, and go to Siberia to plan the new industrial city of Magnetogorsk foreseen under the Five Year Plan.

<sup>64</sup> David Gross, *The Past in Ruins: Tradition and the Critique of Modernity* (Amherst, Mass, 1992); 'Space, Time and Modern Culture'.

understandings of the world were all diachronic; objects existed within linear time, not time within objects. Yet,

[b]y the end of the nineteenth century, however, things began to turn the other way around. Now some individuals began to argue ... that space was the dominant category after all. It seemed to them that the most glaring aspect of modern life was the almost universal subordination of time relations to space relations.<sup>65</sup>

Gross uses Bergson to illustrate his more general point. Bergson argued in *Matter and Memory*, first published in 1889, that the true reality of the world and our consciousness was flow; this fluid duration cannot be broken up, measured, categorized, or 'artificially decomposed'. It is an indivisible continuity. The modern mind, however, reduces the continuous stream of experiential life to separate, discrete units measurable by number and spatial dimension. The intellect fragments all that it touches. Bergson's influence in the 1920s was not vast, though he was known, but his significance to the current thesis lies in that he indicates a trend. Lukacs (again borrowing from Gross), argued in the early 1920s from a Marxist perspective that the bourgeois, capitalist society also had this effect, particularly in terms of its means of production and he saw it as essential that the proletariat be given back continuity and a sense of the *longue durée* of linear, experiential time. He argued that modes of production had caused time to 'shed its qualitative, variable, flowing nature.' Instead, time had become reduced to a series of synchronic events, thereby robbing the proletariat of the historical continuity and inevitability on which his or her liberation depended.<sup>66</sup> It is worth adding that it was around this time that scientific ideas relativizing both time and space, and finding new ways of conflating both together in numerical form, become important: I refer to Einstein, and the space-time which underpins relativity.

These two theorists are not significant because they were read by the governors or experts of either Munich or Frankfurt. It is probable that none of them had heard of Bergson, and certain they were not aware of Lukács. Rather, their opinions are important here because they refer back to the May method of housing construction, and an entire economic mode of thought and social operation. The first decades of the twentieth century saw the birth of a new science – or perhaps, pseudo-science – the time and motion study, sometimes called the efficiency movement. Its gods were Frederick

<sup>65</sup> Gross, 'Space, Time and Modern Culture', p. 62.

<sup>66</sup> Gross, 'Space, Time and Modern Culture', p. 64.

Taylor, Henry Ford, Frank Gilbreth and Lillian Gilbreth. They sought to break down every action into its component parts, to deny any continuity whatsoever to the most mundane of actions, to divide labour into its irreducible synchronous elements – these elements were called therbligs, or Gilbreth spelled backwards. Little historiography exists on this subject area, but the books and pamphlets surrounding this phenomenon are easily to be found in public and university libraries in Britain.<sup>67</sup> At exactly the same time that the housing debate was raging in Germany, this ‘time and motion’ discourse, essentially an economic structure allied with mass production and industrial systems, united with a new set of technologies to produce the ultimate flattening of time into space; the experiential time of human life, lived out in cycles of growth and seasons was transformed into a set of spatial measurements and manipulable data. This new system of economic and industrial analysis did not just devalue time, it conflated it into space just as Gross describes.

One such new technology was the chronocyclegraph, invented by Frank and Lillian Gilbreth in the closing months of the war. It worked to deploy new technologies to increase this collapse/conflation of the space-time distinction, and allowed a rapid growth in possible subjects of the whole Taylorist-Fordist plan. Its functioning is described by a 1940 book on the subject:

It is possible to record the path of motion of an operator in three dimensions by attaching a small electric light bulb to the fingers, hand or any other part of the body, and photographing, with a stereoscopic camera, the path of light as it moves through space. [With the introduction of variably flashing lights and time-lapse stereoscopic photography] it is possible to measure accurately time, speed, acceleration and retardation, and to show the path of motion in three dimensions.<sup>68</sup>

The individual’s time and space are mapped onto a grid, where the operations can be transformed into a series of time-space statistics and subjected to intense analysis. The working life of the individual was broken down spatially and temporally into a series of statistics and matrices. As Lillian wrote in her work, *The Homemaker and Her Job*, ‘We divide a process into operations, and these operations into cycles of motions, and these cycles of motions into elements of motions.’<sup>69</sup> The key feature of these motions as

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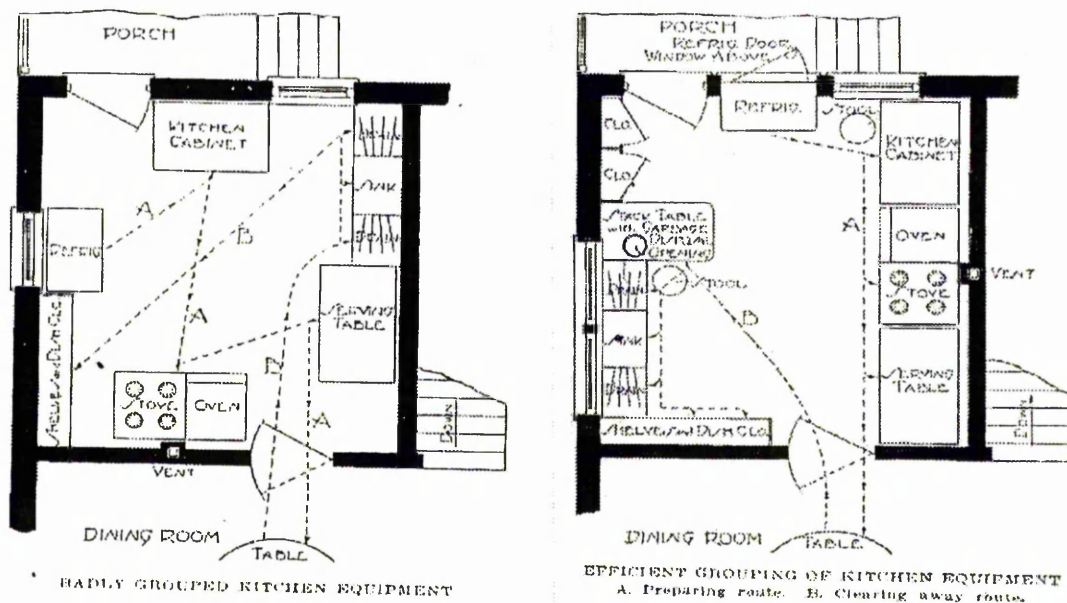
<sup>67</sup> A good introduction to all the basic principles can be found in Frank Gilbreth and Lillian Gilbreth, *Applied Motion Study: A Collection of Papers on the Efficient Method to Industrial Preparedness* (London, 1919).

<sup>68</sup> Ralph Barnes, *Motion and Time Study* (New York, 1940), p.15.

<sup>69</sup> Cited in Gross, ‘Space, Time and Modern Culture’, p. 65.

regards Gross's discussion of Bergson and Lukacs is that once broken down like this, they become, in a sense, synchronic. They can be rearranged in any order to suit the productive needs of the situation under examination, and lose all parallels with the way that humans experience time. In effect, one arrives at a situation of a stack of synchronic moments, the order of which is irrelevant, rather than a row of unbroken diachronic experience. Labour has not only been divided between members of society, but the divided labour of individuals has itself been scrutinized and divided – and not just once – in the service of capitalist modes of production.

Up until the 1920s, women, at least in their domestic roles, had not been the traditional



**Figure 5:** Christine Frederick's analysis of inefficient and efficient kitchen spaces. Frederick, *Scientific Management in the Home*, pp. 22-23.

subjects of this reductive analytical, observational, statistical process. However, in 1920, Christine Frederick, an American of dubious feminist credentials but huge influence, published *Scientific Management in the Home: Household Engineering*, translated into German in 1922 with the title *Rational Household Management: Scientific Workshop Studies*. This book (actually a twelve part self-improvement course in how to be an efficient, productive housewife) quickly became the bible of avant-garde German architects – May and Lihotzky in particular. In the book Frederick, as Beecher had done before her, posited a way out of the 'treadmill' of domestic chores. Her solution was the end of the traditional *Wohnküche*, the usual spatial arrangement in poorer homes which fused the social space of the dining and living area with the productive one of the



cooking and food preparation area. Frederick described the near suicide-inducing drudgery of housework, and how the threat of this looming over women might make them fear to enter – and hope to leave – the domestic sphere which was rightfully theirs; she viewed this as a threat to all civilization, and particularly the American way of life.<sup>70</sup> The key was the division of the home into a kitchen, where work was done, and the rest of the house, which was for the enjoyment of that new commodity, leisure.<sup>71</sup> She provided a worked-out model of how the rational kitchen could introduce the woman to scientific management, and figure 5 shows how this would function to reduce the walking time a woman would do in the course of her work. The model for the newly divided kitchen was to be the man's world of industry: 'The bench of the mechanic can serve as a model for the kitchen.... The kitchen must follow this workshop ideal.'<sup>72</sup> Just as the man left the home to go to his workshop, so the woman must leave it to go to hers. Her production-based rhetoric appealed to the communists May and Lihotzky, and they eagerly set about trying to transform Frederick's theories into social reality.

Yet May and Lihotzky's understanding of Frederick was faulty. Despite the fact that in Frederick the woman is (almost) never referred to as anything but the worker, despite the fact that the whole rhetorical emphasis is one of liberation and production, on the housewife becoming 'a productive citizen of the State, not a social debtor',<sup>73</sup> the real clue to what Frederick was arguing lay in one subsection of one chapter – but it was a theme to which she would return and dedicate the rest of her professional life. Frederick was a conservative trying to 'rescue' the women's movement in the USA from the 'Red Web' hysteria which threatened to obliterate it in the early 1920s.<sup>74</sup> Whereas the book is dominated as a whole by talk of the woman as worker, as urban, as productive – all words guaranteed to draw in the most avant garde, Heroic Modernist architects – there is a brief section called 'The Housekeeper as Trained Consumer', in which Frederick argued:

Never before in the history of the family have the burdens of purchasing been placed so heavily on woman's shoulders. This is because today the modern woman is *chiefly a consumer, and not a producer*. ... *To become a trained*

<sup>70</sup> Christine Frederick, *Scientific Management in the Home: Household Engineering* (London, 1920), p. 7.

<sup>71</sup> Frederick, *Scientific Management in the Home*, p. 19.

<sup>72</sup> Frederick, *Scientific Management in the Home*, p. 34.

<sup>73</sup> Frederick, *Scientific Management in the Home*, p. 381.

<sup>74</sup> For an outstanding analysis of this phenomenon, see Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution*, chapter thirteen: 'Madame Kollontai and Mrs. Consumer', pp. 280-289.

*consumer is therefore one of the most important demands made on the housekeeper today. ... Also it may be said here, that every woman should be a trained consumer, whether she has a family (i.e., husband or children) or not.*<sup>75</sup>

In this astute analysis she revealed her true colours, ones which would have appalled May and Lihotzky. Frederick did not actually conceive of the woman in the kitchen as a unit of production, but of consumption, marking out the transition between the industrial and monopolistic phase of capitalism.<sup>76</sup> Her major work of 1929, *Selling Mrs. Consumer*, was dedicated to Herbert Hoover, the 'do nothing' president of America's late twenties boom and bust, and the work was targeted at advertisers and marketing managers.<sup>77</sup> It sketched the psyche of the woman as Frederick saw it, replete with theories of suggestibility, passivity and inferiority complexes. Re-reading *Scientific Management in the Home* in the light of this work, and Dolores Hayden's analysis of it, transforms the 1920 book into an advertising catalogue; indeed, both she and Lillian Gilbreth made their fortunes in the 1920s through promoting certain products in their books and magazine articles while feigning scientific detachment. Frederick summed up in 1929:

Consumptionism... is the greatest idea that America has to give to the world; the idea that workmen and the masses be looked on not simply as worker or producers but as *consumers*. Pay them more, sell them more, prosper more is the equation.<sup>78</sup>

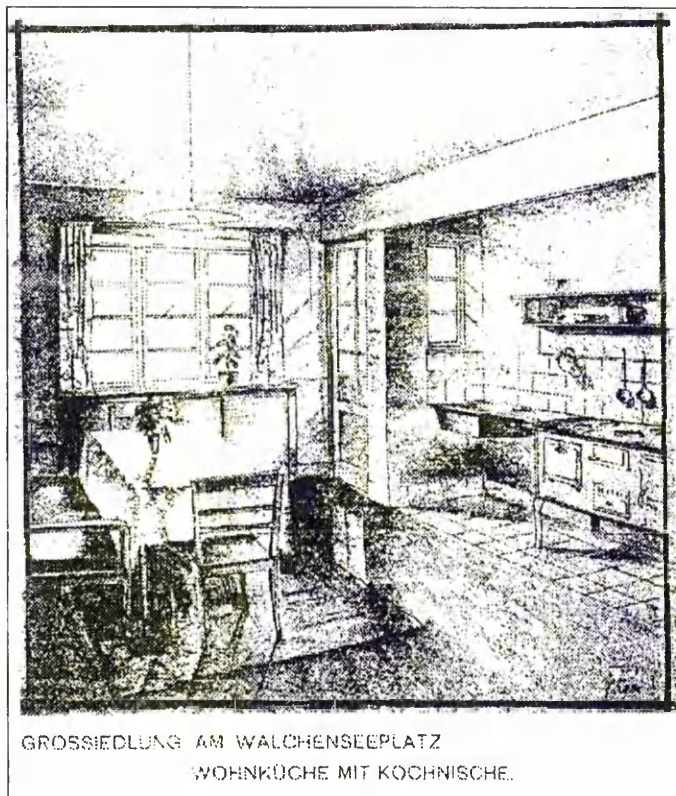
May and Lihotzky would have been outraged, but their misreading of Frederick went deeper than their glossing over that one sub-section, or their obliviousness to the lists of approved brand names. Frederick wanted her planned kitchen to be a bare shell – a space the woman planned herself, so she might fill it with products she had bought; she never envisioned it as a ready made socially provided unit, over which she had no say. It was to be a repository of and assistant to consumer capitalism, not the symbol of the social state. If a municipality installed the whole thing, there would be no room to buy the gadgets – electrical gadgets in particular – on which she felt the whole future of the American economy, and actually therefore all of civilization, rested.

<sup>75</sup> Frederick, *Scientific Management in the Home*, p. 316-7, italics in original.

<sup>76</sup> 'The years when material feminists favouring [reform] of domestic work were most active span the rise and decline of the dense, industrial capitalist city. This era was one of increased concentration of urban population and constant technological innovation, as compared to the subsequent period of monopoly capitalism, which was characterized by decreased residential densities and mass production of earlier technological inventions.' Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution*, p. 8.

<sup>77</sup> Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution*, pp. 281-7.

<sup>78</sup> Cited in Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution*, p. 286.



**Figure 6:** Munich Kitchen, developed by Bauamtmann Meitinger, in the Walchenseeplatz Siedlung by Johanna Loev. GeWoFAG, *Die Siedlungen der Gemeinnützigen Wohnungsfürsorge AG München* (Munich, 1928), p. 28.

The municipality of Munich was not happy with either of these discourses; whether a consumer or a producer, the woman in this model is conceived of in the framework of a Marxian, materialist dialectic. Munich, like Frankfurt, was committed to a massive housing programme, but unlike May, they had deep fears about the features of modernity which mass housing might possibly imply. They rejected, fundamentally, any idea that the worker, or the woman-as-worker, were commodities or instruments; they rejected the May system of prefabricated

building (though mostly on pragmatic, not dogmatic, grounds) and they rejected the idea of women as productive units in the Lihotzky-May-Frederick model of the kitchen. In answer to the Frankfurt kitchen, they posited the Munich kitchen, joined onto the living room, but at the same time offering many of the facilities of the fitted variety. This kitchen can be seen in figure 6; in fact, it is not really a kitchen at all. In German it is called a *Kochnische*, or a 'cooking niche'. The kitchen is simply an extension of the living room, and there is no separation. This feature – designed by municipal employee Bauamtmann Meitinger, and seen here in a mass housing project designed and built by Johanna Loev – is to be found in all of Munich's social housing projects of the 1920s. It offered several advantages, both practical and ideological; most notably it took up less space than a discrete room, and saved considerable amounts of money in installation and furnishing. But it also allowed a challenge to the commodification of women through a spatial elucidation of their central, spiritual place in the home, a spiritual significance which demanded spatial organization.

Contemporary critiques of the Frankfurt kitchen were diverse, but the end effect of each was to tend to align itself with the Munich solution. Some alluded to a theme in architectural debate which has been recurrent in the twentieth century, namely that functionalism can sometimes be very unfunctional, predicated as it is by and large on middle-class, educated men interpreting, in this case, the functions of working class, uneducated women. For example, contemporary sociologist Ludwig Neundörfer outlined these considerations when he criticized the Frankfurt kitchen in 1931 because it made the supervision of children impossible, it meant that people could not organize the space as they saw fit, and it meant only one person could be in the space at a time. He concluded:

The main objection to this sort of kitchen is that people mostly manage their affairs differently from the ways that are foreseen here. Children cannot really be with their mother while she cooks, and if she has to keep the door of the kitchen open, then all the benefits of keeping cooking smells out of the living room are lost.<sup>79</sup>

Functionalism as an architectural genre usually evades this problem; ultimately, its goal was never to design a response to functional requirements. It was, as Gropius and Le Corbusier defined it, to determine the functions of the people it enclosed, not to formulate a response to pre-existing structures. One prominent architect and architectural critic, Josef Frank (who designed flats and interiors for the Weißenhofsiedlung), drew attention to this in his work *Architektur als Symbol: Elemente deutschen neuen Bauens* in 1931, stressing that the real functionalism of a building – or any piece produced by mankind – was being lost in the polarization of debate between a view of the *Großstadt* either as salvation (through an emphasis on the ‘*Wohnmaschine*’), or as damnation (with an emphasis on a tasteless kitsch quasi-rural fantasy which had never existed).<sup>80</sup> Yet Frank had been offering reasoned critiques of the determining ambitions of functionalism since the war, forming a particularly focused critique of Modernist stress on *Einheitlichkeit*; while it made sense for the outside of a building to be shaped roughly like a cube, and for rooms within to be therefore also shaped in this way, it made no sense for a chair within it to be shaped like a cube in order to achieve aesthetic unity. Rooms were designed to fit into houses; chairs were designed to fit onto bottoms, so any assumed *Einheitlichkeit* would be defeated by *Zweckmäßigkeit*.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Cited in Kramer, ‘Rationalisierung des Haushaltes’, p. 82.

<sup>80</sup> Josef Frank, *Architektur als Symbol: Elemente neuen deutschen Bauens* (Vienna, 1931).

<sup>81</sup> Blau, *Architecture of Red Vienna*, p. 196. Blau gives over several pages to contemporary critiques of the trend towards a so-called functionalism. Frank is by far the most interesting figure, because he should in theory belong to the modern canon, designing as he did for the Weißenhofsiedlung. Yet his critique of the Modernists for defending themselves against a perceived right wing, while all the time



Munich town councillors and newspapers, as did others right across Germany, drew attention to the criticisms Neundörfer and Frank made here. But what vision – economic, cultural, gender – did it put in its place?

To answer this, we need to turn to the huge exhibition organized by the municipality of Munich to promote its housing policies, and which should be seen as an adjunct to its housing programme. The exhibition, *Ausstellung 'Heim und Technik'* – the 'Home and Technology' Exhibition – was put on to promote the city's new mass housing policy amongst its own councillors and citizens, and its programme was announced in the spring of 1928. It was a huge success, attracting three times as many visitors as the far more famous Weißenhof housing exhibition in Stuttgart of 1927. Unlike Stuttgart's primacy of aesthetics and exteriors, the Munich exhibition explicitly intended to formulate clearly how the flat should function internally, and what its relationship to technology, science and industry should be. The exhibition was organized with walkways above, around and through thirty flat interiors, including five designed for the 'new' single woman. Overall, it was a huge financial and technological success. The exhibition was entirely planned and directed by the municipal building department, and in planning it, key figures in the council gave clues as to what their intentions might be for placing women in the context of the wider housing project. There were, it is true, appeals to a sort of 'elemental' home and an essentialist view of women, but they were always accompanied by an attempt to integrate that vision into an idea of the modern, the new era, the new human being which modernists were so keen on engineering. In short, they liked the idea of engineering futures, but disliked the models which Frankfurt, and the focus on productivity behind it, implied.

One of Munich's mayors, Karl Scharnagl, wrote in the introduction to the exhibition catalogue:

Home and technology – two words which encompass two fundamentally different worlds. Fundamentally different in the meaning of their very nature, in their significance for each and every one of us, in the effects which they have on human society. But they are also synonymous in this sense: they reach out to every modern person, they grasp him, and force him to take a position. [...] What

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actually being themselves on the right, is, if true, devastating. He was also invited to join CIAM, which he did – only to resign on ideological grounds. Frank's obsession with the idea of provision for an individual, a process of empowering individual freedom and choices irrespective of the laws of taste or time led him to become an isolated figure in relation to the 'Modern Movement', though gave him widespread credibility outside it.

technology can achieve in the completion of the home must be constantly shown to us, and most especially to women, the very soul of the home. The City of Munich is fully aware of this, and is currently engaging itself in the tricky task of showing how to use technology for the completion of the home, and at the same time do justice to the diverse relationships inherent in the social organization of this city.<sup>82</sup>

He seemed to recognize that home and technology might be interpreted as binary opposites – perhaps, say, tradition vs. modernity, the warm vs. the cold, the threatening vs. the comforting, the kitchen versus, rather than integrated with, the living room. He also suggested – as did Frederick – that the residential unit is a place of encounter for the woman between what Frederick called ‘unfeminine’ technology and the traditional home, and as such it was worthy of particularly close governmental supervision.<sup>83</sup> This was an encounter which was not to take place unchaperoned. The council had an obligation, in his analysis, to make sure that she remain the soul of the home, and this was reflected spatially in the Munich kitchen, in the efforts of the council to place the soul at the heart of the body, rather than topographically removed. It acknowledged the ambition of a governmental intervention to secure this goal, but, unlike the functionalist approach, admitted of a level of diversity of social arrangements not foreseen in the Frankfurt model. This appeal to reflecting and empowering social diversity was a consistent feature of all of Scharnagl’s speeches and writings on architecture, and diverged sharply from the classic Heroic Modernist idiom. Whereas May and other modernists predicated their vision on typification – building for ‘the’ worker, ‘the’ mother – Munich city council built homes for different types of workers existing in different social contexts.<sup>84</sup>

One might question whether Munich’s mass housing programmes genuinely accommodated this desire, but major parts of the plans were designed by women, the only major projects in Germany in this period I have come across that were so. In Frankfurt, Grete Lihotzky designed the kitchen for May’s projects; in Munich, a man, Meitinger produced the Kitchen for Johanna Loev’s Walchenseeplatz housing estate. In that respect, the processes of Munich’s housing production certainly reflect more social diversity and novelty than elsewhere. On balance, however, Bauamtman Jelinek, the exhibition organizer, and himself a municipal architect best summed up the overall

<sup>82</sup>Karl Scharnagl, ‘Geleitwort’, in *Amtlicher Katalog: Ausstellung “München 1928: Heim und Technik”* (Munich, 1928), p. 13.

<sup>83</sup> Frederick, *Scientific Management and the Home*, p. 84.

<sup>84</sup> This position was most fully elaborated in Referat VII [Wohnungsreferat], *Principles for Judging the Housing Question* [in English], 1930, SAM-B&R-993.

municipal attitude. He described a *Vernunftelhe*, a 'marriage of reason' between home and technology. He started by arguing that technological progress and rational planning in housing might mean the end of slavery for women – just as Catharine Beecher, Christine Frederick, Ernst May and Grete Lihotzky did – but he also asserted, as did Beecher and Frederick, that 'the strongest cradle of the soul [*Gemutes*] is the home. The woman is its protector.'<sup>85</sup> She could not be commodified or instrumentalized in a modern sense; her labour was not divisible. The elemental mother would be freed by technology and the Fordist, capitalist, rational planning paradigm to stand watch over the home as a whole organism, not be separated from it. He appealed to a sense of freedom; he announced through the introduction of science and technology into the home the emancipation of women, and trumpeted the end of their slavery – but then backtracked significantly:

The housewife still has a lot to do – potatoes will never peel and boil themselves. We haven't come that far – and we never will, and we never want to. Because it is the joy of the housewife to create in the home, to organize her home herself, to make it homely and cozy. [...] The housewife loves to have flowers at the window, not just because they are beautiful, because they decorate the home, but because she is related to their female nature. In the life of flowers, natural laws reign. The world of technology is also ruled by natural laws. Both, then, flowers and technology, have the same basics. In the flower, however, lies something else, something outside the laws of nature, something unattainable, a something which will always defy definition, call it life force, soul, spirit, feeling or what you will. And it is this something which is related to the nature of woman, this something which distinguishes flower and woman from the grandest and smartest gadgets which technology has produced.<sup>86</sup>

Here, the woman is firmly contextualized as an elemental force which cannot be separated from the rest of the home, although technology and capitalist analytical structures – cold modernity, perhaps – can assist her in her mission to protect the domestic world. She is, in Scharnagl's analysis, the soul of the home, and in Jelinek's vision she is the fulcrum of a material world of technology and science on the one hand, and an un-namable, irreducible realm of deep meaning and significance on the other. The great modernist quest for some sort of unity between – as Fritz Lang's 1926 film masterpiece *Metropolis* has it, and as the Prussian civil servant quoted on page 121 described – head and heart is played out here, and the Münchener, like Lang, like the

<sup>85</sup> Josef Jelinek, 'Die Vernunftelhe Heim & Technik', in *Amtlicher Katalog: Ausstellung "München 1928: Heim und Technik"*, p.75.

<sup>86</sup> Jelinek, 'Die Vernunftelhe Heim & Technik', in *Amtlicher Katalog: Ausstellung "München 1928: Heim und Technik"*, p. 75. It is worth noting that an emphasis on the related female nature of flowers and women does not sound quite as ridiculous in German as in English, as the word for flower is strongly feminine in German.

civil servant, but unlike the Frankfurter, seem to have been committed to finding a reconciliation and a solution, rather than new ways of expressing and enforcing a delineation.

Through resisting the Frankfurt model, the Münchener hoped to find a synthesis which would reconcile modernity and a hankering after semblances of tradition found in *traditionalism*.<sup>87</sup> It was to be a rationally planned, technologically competent traditionalism, if that is not too great a paradox. In Munich, the woman was spatially defined as primarily social and familial, not productive and functional. Her work environment was inseparable from her role as a mother, and was not to be described symbolically in terms of advanced capitalism, in the materialist productive/consumptionist discourses of corporate America (Frederick) or Soviet Russia (May). Munich city council wanted to define the best of the factory, and put into the service of an idealized, elemental home and an essentialist view of woman. In attempting to do so, they met with some success in propagating their model themselves, though no-one has ever attempted any sort of quantitative assessment of how each spatial model fared in the long run. They, like Beecher, Frederick, May and Lihotzky, were informed by their beliefs on the nature of a built cultural artefact, the determining possibilities of space and architecture, their basic assumptions about what it meant and did not mean to be a poor woman, and their underlying assumptions about advanced capitalist modes of production and division of labour. To remove any one of these struts would be to weaken the entire structure within which the elements exist, and impoverish the analysis.

### Conclusion

Personality was a valued commodity in Munich at the beginning of the twentieth century – as it was elsewhere in Germany and Europe. As such, it was cared for, cultivated, protected and encouraged. The promotion and cultivation of the idea of personality lay in its value as a means to secure for the individual both the benefits of ‘progress’ – a hospital, school, efficient kitchen – without necessarily making that individual feel vulnerable or negated before it. By emphasizing the warm and the personal in the interior spaces of the buildings, it was hoped that the spaces of *Gesellschaft* – goal oriented, built for specific purposes, the product of analysis and observation, not sentiment and

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<sup>87</sup> A useful theory of tradition as exterior to modernity, and *traditionalism* as product of it, are elucidated in Gross, *The Past in Ruins*, pp. 78-91.

conviction – could be infused with the character of *Gemeinschaft*. Although no-one in the city council actually used these words, it seems clear from contemporary newspaper reports that Germans at the time did have a perfectly operable concept of disaffection and alienation, though they did not cast it in terms of the classical, Marxian analyses of these phenomena; indeed, they were unsure who to blame, the ‘people themselves’, or ‘some of the best men the *Volk* possesses.’ It seems that, in the case of the orphanage, the old people’s home and the hospital, part of that disaffection was to do with the experience of the *Anstalt* – the institution. Particularly significant in the encounter with *Anstalten* was the feeling that, although the institution was ostensibly a helping one, it was also emotionally void, cold and unaffectionate; it may have been ‘caring’ but it was not humane. The old people’s home was usually viewed as a place for the old to go off and die; the hospital had had a ‘notorious’ character, and had been the ‘site and symbol of terror or horror for a suffering population.’ The manipulation of space and of spatial experience could challenge that, and by borrowing from a vocabulary of the home, of traditionalist motifs and also of Modernism (in the case of the hospital) recast the encounter with the institutional as a warmer and more positive experience, one full of emotion, personality and *Gemut*.

The housing crisis following the First World War compelled the city to intervene not just in the provision of housing but also in its design. Here the situation was slightly different; whereas in the *Anstalt* the corporation had borrowed from a domestic vocabulary – particularly in the division of wards and halls into small rooms emphasizing personal contact – and integrated it into public structures, in housing the municipality was confronted with the choice of how much of a recognizably scientific and rationalist vocabulary they wanted to allow into the domestic environment. Not only that, but they had to confront the issue of just how public the domestic space was meant to be; exactly what level of public intervention and organization of domestic spaces could be justified, and how much autonomy the occupier of the domestic space should have was a complicated issue facing governments of all levels and types throughout Europe in the period between the First World War and the 1960s. The city council negotiated all of these themes, those identified before and after the war, by stressing a rhetoric of compromise and reconciliation, and by seeking ways of winning support for the *gesellschaftliche* ambitions they had through allowing their expression only in *gemeinschaftliche* visual and spatial forms. This attempt to speak *Gemeinschaft* and to

do *Gesellschaft* shows in many ways a highly nuanced and complicated conception of modernity, both its benefits and disadvantages, and it is this nuanced conception which the next chapter will explore, in relation to the issue of artistic style.

## Chapter 4:

### Social policy and architectural style

The housing question and the style question – in German, the *Wohnungsfrage* and the *Stilfrage* – share a common place in the chronology of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century history. They are, however, usually split apart, the one being the subject of social history and the other of architectural history. Even when architectural history deals with housing (as it is compelled to do in any discussion of the first part of the last century), its preoccupation is still the ‘look’ of the building, the ‘creative processes’ which lie behind it, and an attempt to relate its ‘look’ and those processes to an established canon of Modern architecture. When social historians discuss housing, the emphasis is on legislation, health, mortality rates and such like, and rarely engages fully with the visual and experiential impact of a particular structure, or the ideologies which lie behind it.<sup>1</sup> One of the purposes of this chapter is to address this; a central proposition will be that the move from a *Wohnungsfrage* to a *Wohnungspolitik* means nothing without an understanding of a parallel transformation of the *Stilfrage* into a *Stilpolitik*.

It will be the goal of this chapter to remedy this situation by focusing on these two areas – housing and style – to provide a more themed and realistic portrait of the preoccupations of the time, aesthetic, visual, ideological and social, using the building

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Mayne, *The Slum Imagined*; Michael Harloe, *The People's Home? Social Rented Housing in Europe and America* (Oxford, 1995), which does not have a single picture in its six hundred pages; Martin Daunt (ed.), *Councillors and Tenants: Local Authority Housing in English Cities, 1919-1939* (Leicester, 1984) does have images, but is still primarily statistical and political in a formal sense; and Zimmermann's *Von der Wohnungsfrage zur Wohnungspolitik: die Reformbewegung in Deutschland, 1845-1914* (Göttingen, 1991), though he does make up for this in the volume he edited in 1997, *Europäische Wohnungspolitik in vergleichender Perspektive 1900-1939* (Stuttgart).



activities of the municipality of Munich as a still point, a constant of measurement and comparison. This will allow a more complete investigation of both the general trends in architecture, as described in the mass of literature on this area, and the relationship of the municipality's buildings to those trends. By adding in theories of modernity, it will be possible to show that, in certain circumstances, an uncritical association of Modernism with modernity is fundamentally misplaced. Modernity as a social, cultural, historical phenomenon had no more implacable foe than Modernism, and it was the 'mediocre' architects, the 'philistine' cultural élites, which showed the greatest commitment to it; small 'c' conservatives were the greatest friends that 'alienating modernity' had, consistently arguing for the perpetuation of the methods of cultural production which cloaked historical economic development and generated the 'false consciousness' of liberal historical progress, and helped reproduce the capitalist structures which so often alienated, fractured and commodified modern man.

We will start with a look at the rise of the housing question, the shift identified by Zimmermann as a passage from a *Frage* to a *Politik*,<sup>2</sup> as this sets up the hypothesis that the social question of housing can be seen in fact as an architectural question, one of building. It was not a problem of production or political will which made housing such a difficult issue to resolve, but one of poverty of design alternatives. This will be followed up by examining selected aspects of the aesthetic crisis in building at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, as the visual and design critiques generated outside the housing debate came to be applied to structures – mass housing – which had not normally been the greatest focus of bourgeois aesthetic discourses. It was the intersection of a crisis in aesthetics with a crisis in society which brought the world of design and social provision so closely together. The last two sections of the chapter will chart the course of that intersection on the architectural, stylistic policies of the council before and after the First World War.

### *Wohnungsfrage to Wohnungspolitik*

The title of this section follows the work of Clemens Zimmermann, who has posited – and successfully charted – the transformation of the conceptualization of housing from a general question or worry to being a central plank in the governmental understanding of the world; the shift from a question to an answer. Although his focus is almost

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<sup>2</sup>Zimmermann, *Von der Wohnungsfrage zur Wohnungspolitik*.

exclusively on Prussia, the process he charts can be observed in the municipal government of Munich. His narrative, stretching from the middle of the nineteenth century until the eve of the First World War, does nod towards the reformulation of the problem of housing, building and cities in architectural, aesthetic and experiential terms, most notably in the subsection on the contribution of architects to the solution of the *Wohnungsfrage*,<sup>3</sup> but despite the strengths of the book, a nod is all it is and he refuses to draw any significant conclusions from it. Similarly, works dealing mostly with housing construction and design acknowledge the issues which have traditionally been of most concern to authors like Zimmermann – health, mortality, price of accommodation, permanence of tenancy, inhabited surface areas – but their preoccupations do not address the interdependency of social policy and artistic developments with sufficient commitment.<sup>4</sup> However, there was a remarkable interdependency between the two, as housing was in dire need of a redefinition in both architectural and social-political terms, and the one could not function without the other.

The reason for this is that, technically speaking, there was no housing shortage in the most abstract sense in Germany in the late nineteenth century. There was, however, a terrible shortage of small flats in the big cities, units which the poorer sectors of society could rent with any degree of permanence, and without threat to their physical safety – to leave perceptions of their mental health to one side. The huge influx of population into the cities had completely altered the modes of building for people in Germany. Whereas previously, for a broadly static population houses had been built quite often by the people (or for the people) who lived in them, the influx of people into the cities created a sudden demand for housing, while suggesting no new models for providing it. Both a spatial-stylistic model was lacking, as well as a way of integrating housing of this type into governmental and capitalistic systems. An inability to generate political, architectural and capital reformulations led to a stall in small-housing production which was to have deep political, social and stylistic consequences.

Between 1885 and 1900, the population of Munich grew from 261,981 by 90.1% to 499,932.<sup>5</sup> Crudely envisioned, production of flats met this demand fully, and in 1900

<sup>3</sup>Zimmermann, *Von der Wohnungsfrage zur Wohnungspolitik*, pp. 138-151.

<sup>4</sup>For example, the collection of essays edited by Heinrich Klotz, *Ernst May und das neue Frankfurt, 1925-1930* (Berlin, 1986).

<sup>5</sup>Preis, *Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot*, appendixes, p. 5.

there was a 5% unoccupancy rate in Munich's apartments – a cause of some worry to the city council.<sup>6</sup> However, it was at precisely this juncture (1899-1900) that the city government instituted widespread subsidies for housing construction. This is a paradox to which contemporaries drew attention – why was the city subsidizing housing, when empty flats were everywhere to be seen? The answer was, in part, architectural. The forms of housing which were built in the 1880s and 1890s were typified by the grand new Munich suburb of Haidhausen, lying between the right (south) bank of the Isar and the Ostbahnhof. The area was known at the time as the Franzosenviertel, its streets being named after battles of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, before the council became more 'pacifist', and decided to construct the Friedensengel – the Angel of Peace – as an answer to the Berliner Siegessäule – Victory Column – in the mid to late 1890s. The area comprised grand apartment blocks, like those built in the Ludwigsvorstadt, the Maxvorstadt and Mariahilfsplatz in the Münchener Au in the 1870s and early 1880s. The problem was the same in the Gärtnerplatzviertel (now more frequently called the Glockenbachviertel), laid out in extreme geometric classical forms in this period. The houses in all these areas were designed to attract the highest and most secure rents, namely those of the prosperous middle classes. They were built in a bombastic 'palace' style modelled primarily on the forms of post-Hausmannian Paris. They were the product of capital speculation – the Franzosenviertel for example was developed entirely by one man, Baron Carl von Eichtal, and it was (describes Hardtwig) 'a typical liberal project of the *Gründerzeit*; functional, oriented towards high rent, obsessed with traffic – all done through private means.' Stylistically, they were all Renaissance and Baroque facades, 'a suggestion of orderliness of social life which did not correspond to reality... in fact, these buildings portray to us a fiction of harmony and pleasant living,'<sup>7</sup> for inside there were no middle classes. They moved outwards to Grünwald, Bogenhausen, Schwabing and Neuhausen. The history of the Ludwigsvorstadt, the first of the new suburbs to be developed, was repeated again and again: flats were left unoccupied, and therefore subdivided to reduce the rent, frequently with each room being let as a separate flat. The shifting, rootless urban poor occupied them, house prices slumped, speculators went bankrupt and left, and these 'palaces' were left as rabbit warrens of grimy, crumbling, unsafe houses and cardboard rooms.

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<sup>6</sup>Preis, *Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot*, appendixes, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>Hardtwig, 'Soziale Räume und politische Herrschaft', pp. 88-99.

The speculators – as, for example, Carl von Eichthal in the 1880s and 1890s – did not seem to learn, however. As some workers in Hamburg, overheard by the Political Police, commented in 1895:

Three workers were overheard to make the following remarks: that the building type of the larger flats has really got out of hand in the last few years, even though the owners can see the damage it causes. There are always more and more of those sorts of palaces being built, in which no-one can ever live given the current employment conditions. They [the three workers] want to build different flats, namely housing designed to suit the circumstances of the working classes, and as near as possible to the city. The current workers' housing lies an hour-and-a-half or two hours from their workshops, and if one wants to live there more cheaply, one has to pay for the horse omnibus. If one does not want to do that, one has to take a beautiful house in the Steinstraße or Niedernstraße palaces, which are popularly referred to as 'hell on earth', and which are notorious for cholera.<sup>8</sup>

Having no other *architectural* model, Eichthal and others repeated the follies of the Gärtnerplatz and the Au, building houses which, no sooner were they completed than they were redundant and full of industrial workers living in rooms with four metre high, plaster-moulded ceilings, but no water, no access to toilets (Munich did not follow the Berlin model of a quasi-public toilet on each landing), no cooking facilities, often no windows, no heat source (big rooms were often subdivided, cutting out both window and fireplace), no fire protection and so on.<sup>9</sup> The investigation into every *Wohnung* in the city which the corporation commissioned between 1904 and 1907 discovered that 25.1% of all flats were subdivisions of larger ones – not whole houses broken up, but divisions within spaces already conceived of as apartments.<sup>10</sup> Mazes were being constructed inside mazes.

The Verein für die Verbesserung der Wohnungsverhältnisse in München (hereon VVWM), estimated in 1899 that most flats were built with five rooms, excluding kitchen. Highly insecure tenancies meant that poorer families were being evicted in order to charge higher rents in an uncontrolled market system.<sup>11</sup> According to their analysis, a

<sup>8</sup> Evans, *Kneipengespräche im Kaiserreich*, pp. 65-6.

<sup>9</sup> As perhaps might be expected, flats in these areas were bought up by young professionals in the 1970s and 1980s, renovated, and now constitute Munich's most fashionable, expensive and sought-after areas.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Rehlen, 'Kleinwohnungsbauten', *München und seine Bauten* ed. by BAIvN, pp. 427-431 (p. 427).

<sup>11</sup> The major *Wohnungsuntersuchung* of 1904-1907 found that 40% of Munich families with two children under 14 years old had changed residence in the previous year [Gerhard Neumeier, 'Königlich-bayerisch Wohnen?', in *München - Residenzstadt mit Hinterhöfen: Die Prinzregentenzeit, 1886-1912*, ed. Friedrich Prinz and Marita Krauss (Munich, 1988), pp. 119-123 (p. 122)]. The scale of this compulsorily peripatetic existence should not be underestimated. For a full investigation of this, see Dieter

flat of two rooms in total with a window in each could not be had for under 200 Marks a year – well beyond the means of most workers. A flat with two rooms each with a window and access to a toilet was over 300 Marks.<sup>12</sup> It seems that their assessment was not inaccurate. In the *Wohnungs-Zeitung* for the week of the 16 December 1908, at the height of a desperately hard winter, there were only two flats with two rooms or less advertised for the whole of Munich (compared to whole rows of flats with four, five and six rooms), priced at 25 Marks and 30 Marks respectively. Neither had heating in both rooms, neither had running water in them at all. This would mean between 300 and 360 Marks a year.<sup>13</sup> A couple of months later, the situation was worse still. The *Wohnungs-Anzeiger* of 1 February 1909 again had only two such small flats, priced at 28 and 40 Marks per month (336 or an incredible 480 Marks a year), and in April, only one (a different one), at 40 Marks. Alongside them were 29 flats with five or six rooms.<sup>14</sup>

A paper close to the Centre Party, the *Neue Bayerische Zeitung*, along with the VVWM (which had many members of the Munich municipal Magistrat on its founding board) called for a solution, both political and architectural. They wanted municipal housing, and the development of the *Kleinwohnung*, the small flat. Only this could remedy the ratio of toilets to citizens of 1:41, which made Munich, according to the *Neue Bayerische Zeitung*, 'the filthiest city in Germany'. '*Dreckhauptstadt Deutschlands*' was one way they referred to it: 'Muck capital of Germany'.<sup>15</sup> The municipality itself ordered an inspection of all its own properties in March 1904,<sup>16</sup> and discovered that in the 18th Stadtbezirk (the industrial area of Giesing), for example, it owned 15 properties, all residential blocks. Seven of these had no toilets in them at all. The report admitted bemusement openly about where the several hundred residents of these buildings got rid of their urine and faeces.<sup>17</sup>

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Langewiesche, 'Wanderungsbewegungen in der Hochindustrialisierung. Regionale, interstädtische und innerstädtische mobilität in Deutschland', *Vierteljahresschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 64 (1977), pp. 1-40.

<sup>12</sup>VVWM, Antrag, betreffend die Wohnungsfrage in München, n.d. [c. September 1898- July 1899]. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>13</sup>*Wohnungs-Zeitung*, 14 December 1908. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>14</sup>*Wohnungs-Anzeiger*, 1 February 1909, 1 April 1909. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>15</sup>'Münchener Wohnungsbilder', *Neue Bayerische Zeitung*, 29 December 1898, front page. SAM-WA-23. Indeed, this figure, being an average, must have covered huge extremes, from middle class homes with one or more toilets per household to poorer ones, in which whole blocks of flats had not one single access point to running (and therefore, flushing) water.

<sup>16</sup>Cities in Germany could be as guilty of *Terrainspekulation* as private landlords. See Zimmermann, *Von der Wohnungsfrage zur Wohnungspolitik*, pp. 167-175.

<sup>17</sup>Bezirks-Inspektor des 18. Stadtbezirks an den Magistrat der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München, 1 Juni 1904, Betreff: Wohnungsaufsicht. Mit einem Verzeichnis. SAM-WA-39/1.

The real horror of housing in Munich at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries is best quantified in experiential descriptions, rather than, for example, cold mortality rates – which often hide wide variations, moderating the lived-out devastation which engulfed so many people's lives by including the richer quarters.<sup>18</sup> No statistic could capture the distress felt by the Bezirks-Inspektor of the 16th Bezirk (Untere Au), who reported – apparently unprompted – in 1909 that sometimes he felt unable to go on with his job, so great was the suffering which he had to confront every day. He wrote:

The terrible suffering of the housing emergency has been growing – insofar as I can tell – for some time on a terrible scale. Hardly a day has gone by since November in which families have not come to me after days of desperate searching. Families are daily broken up, and compelled to live in stables and under bridges with up to ten children, sleeping on the floor in the hay amongst the horse droppings. Another man whose wife is dead is forced to live in a cellar with no light or heating with his six children, and he is about to be evicted from what I hesitate to call this *Wohnung*. He is preparing to move to a lumber yard and sleep under the planks, and hopes to be allowed to make himself a shack. At any rate, it is so urgently to be wished that even these people of low worth [*minderwertigen Menschen*] should be given accommodation which matches their worth as people.<sup>19</sup>

Strong words, conveying beautifully and very personally just some of the potential horror of life in the town of art and *Gemütlichkeit*.

The question was, what sort of housing should be built for these people (if any)? Who should build it? How should it be financed? How could it be made affordable? The answer, in general, was that the ideal form of housing was the British terrace or short row of terraced houses, called in Germany *Cottage-Anlagen* or *-Kolonien*. Housing reformers across Europe tended to envision the housing solutions necessary as lying *outside* the city as presently constituted, and an incomplete understanding of the problems that British housing had failed to solve, combined with an almost complete absence of knowledge about the socio-economic origins of the British housing 'type', led the stress to be placed on very expensive solutions, financed largely by those who would

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<sup>18</sup> For this sort of analysis, see: Gerhard Neumeier, *München um 1900: Wohnen und Arbeiten, Familie und Haushalt, Stadtteile und Sozialstrukturen, Hausbesitzer und Fabrikarbeiter, Demographie und Mobilität: Studien zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte einer deutschen Großstadt vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (Frankfurt, 1995).

<sup>19</sup> Bezirks-Inspektor des 16. Stadtbezirkes an den Magistrat der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München, 8 July 1909. SAM-WA-23.

benefit from them: the poor were to pay for their own rehousing. The individual one-house-per-family schematic prevalent in Britain, as well as a re-worked model of the building society, were most common. Early solutions – such as the housing developed by the Krupp concern – did not have primarily aesthetic goals, but later ones – such as the Gartenstadt Hellerau or the housing by Theodor Fischer at Gmindersdorf – did. The constitution of the *Genossenschaft* convened to build and manage Hellerau in Dresden announced in its first clause:

A *Gartenstadt* is a carefully planned and created *Siedlung*<sup>20</sup> on inexpensive land, which is perpetually held in the hands of the community in such a way that speculation of land is always impossible. It is a new form of city [*Stadttypus*], which allows a thorough-going reform of ways of living [*Wohnreform*], a set of conditions for production to the advantage of both industry and craft, and which ensures a large part of the area will be given over to gardens and agriculture [*Ackerbau*].<sup>21</sup>

It was to be a ‘new form of city’, not an adaptation of existing ones. Most housing for workers was planned this way, oriented away from the city and towards private finance, but it was deeply flawed: financially, socially and architecturally.

Financially, it was flawed because there was no satisfactory means of paying for it. Governing elites were not yet conceptually prepared to pay for housing of this sort. Objections to paying for it ranged from a legalistic argument, that this would mean that governments and municipalities were acting *ultra vires*; to one of natural justice, that it was inappropriate to direct help towards one sector of society only (namely, the poor) as that would actually privilege them and end the so-called ‘level’ playing field of the liberal economy; to economic, that it would distort the market and rob people of the profits and rents they had a right to expect from their capital investment in land.<sup>22</sup> That the land remained in communal ownership meant that banks were unwilling to mortgage it, as they had no prospect of recovering the money they had risked should problems with repayments arise. Socially, this solution was flawed for two reasons: firstly, because it relied, in its early stages, on the funding either of employers, thus offering them political leverage over their work-force, or on the ability of *Genossenschaften* to raise the money

<sup>20</sup>The German word has been used here to preserve its dual meaning of both housing estate and settlement.

<sup>21</sup>Corona Hepp, *Avantgarde: Moderne Kunst, Kulturkritik und Reformbewegungen nach der Jahrhundertwende* (Munich, 2nd ed., 1992), p. 167.

<sup>22</sup>For a summary of these arguments, and an analysis of how they affected debate at the municipal, *Land* and state levels, see Zimmermann, *Von der Wohnungsfrage zur Wohnungspolitik*, pp. 179-217.

privately. For them to do this, the members they had to attract were not those in primary housing need, but the very top sections of the working class, and the *Kleinmittelstand* (often, in Germany, indistinguishable one from the other). This was a common problem in all (to use a slightly *avant la lettre* term) social housing in the pre-war period.<sup>23</sup>

Not only this, but because no architectural solutions to the problem were being suggested beyond *Cottage-Anlagen*, *Kolonien* and garden cities, the sites chosen had to be on the outskirts of towns. This meant that workers were unhappy to go to them, as firstly, unless they were works based, their entire social network (and possibly therefore their means of securing a livelihood) stood little or no chance of surviving such a move.<sup>24</sup> Secondly, as the workers in Hamburg noted above, and the municipal councillors of Munich observed in 1926 and 1927, it made going to work very difficult.<sup>25</sup> This would have been particularly the case before the First World War, when tram travel in Germany was the preserve of the middle classes.<sup>26</sup> Thirdly, in housing like this, there was nothing to stop the practice of subletting and *Schlafgänger*, the custom whereby a room would

<sup>23</sup>For example, in housing financed by the city of Ulm (one of the most active cities in Germany in terms of housing development) in 1913, the residents' occupational background out of 233 homes included only 44.7% manual workers, and 4.7% with heads of household as women, all widows of former male tenants-in-chief. [Zimmermann, *Von der Wohnungspolitik zur Wohnungsfrage*, p. 181]. In Munich, slightly more of the poorer sectors were represented in subsidized housing; there were fewer independent tradesmen (4% instead of Ulm's 10.7%), fewer people from stable salaried jobs in the transport sector (4.4% vs. 33%), and many more women, whom the VVWM specifically aimed to help. From a total of 1,289 flats subsidized through the VVWM, there were 55% manual workers, with 11.6% with women as head of the household. Munich would also let to women without them being widows of male tenants. [Verein für die Verbesserung der Wohnungsverhältnisse in München (e.V.), *XX. Jahresbericht 1918*. SAM-WA-18.]

<sup>24</sup>Only in Ulm were such settlements successful, because Bürgermeister Wagner insisted they be built near the middle of the city. However, the estate at Wildau just outside Berlin remained 25% empty until the War, and Munich had the same problem in Neuharlaching in the late 1920s. [Zimmermann, *Von der Wohnungsfrage zur Wohnungspolitik*, pp. 157, 180-181]

<sup>25</sup>They observed this in their reports from Frankfurt and in the difficulties of renting *Einfamilienhäuser* in Harlaching am Hohen Weg [Bericht über die Reise der Mitglieder der Stadtratskommission beim Wohnungsamt nach Nürnberg und Frankfurt a.M. vom 22.-24. November 1926. SAM-WA-63; Jahresbericht des Vorstandes. Gemeinnützige Wohnungsfürsorge Aktiengesellschaft München 1929, p. 8. SAM-B&R-1458.]

<sup>26</sup>Hardtwig argues that the pricing structure of tram travel was completely prohibitive to the working classes. There were repeated protests from trade unions about this, for example, this petition to the Magistrat to introduce discounted return tickets on the trams in 1911:

The perpetually accelerating growth of the city frontiers as well as the pushing of the working classes to the peripheries of the city through the housing crisis means that it should be made easier for workers to travel between home and work.

Like most German cities, Munich did not act until the war, preferring to encourage the construction of factories and housing in the same vicinities, and passenger figures stagnated until 1914. [Hardtwig, 'Soziale Räume und politische Herrschaft', pp. 84-88]. Fisch sites a refusal of the Trambahn Gesellschaft in 1895 (at that stage in transition from a private to a public company) to build lines along Arnulfstraße, 'because the people from the working class quarters there would not use them.' [Fisch, *Stadtplanung im 19. Jahrhundert*, p. 243].



be let out to single men sharing often four to the room, two of whom would work night-shifts, and two, day. This was precisely one of the habits that social reformers wanted to eradicate and make impossible. All of this points back to an insistence on a holistic approach to the social and architectural considerations which the historiography has not recognized. While only *Cottage-Anlagen* and *Kolonien* were being proposed, only expensive *Einfamilienhäuser*-style (houses containing only one family, or built on those architectural principles and then divided into flats) were being built. A good example of this is the estate/settlement for the textile firm Ulrich Gminder, near Reutlingen in the Schwäbisch Alb, just south of Stuttgart, built by Theodor Fischer from 1903 onwards, after he had left the service of Munich council. Although these were not *Einfamilienhäuser*, that is to say, houses each with just one family in, and were in fact houses containing smaller flats, they were built as if they were *Einfamilienhäuser*. They are low density, highly finished, richly decorated, and modelled on the supposed spiritual benefits of the '*ländliche Bauernhaus*'.<sup>27</sup> This pushed the price up inordinately, underlining the financial weaknesses of this method, and distancing housing built this way ever more from the unskilled, the sick, the migrant and women.<sup>28</sup> Project after project modelled this way failed in Munich in the period before the war.<sup>29</sup> One project which succeeded in being built – by pitching itself at precisely those *mittelständische* groups which could afford it – was the Stadtlohnnerstraße *Kleinwohnung* development, built between 1909-1911 by the Terraingesellschaft Neuwestend, to designs by Theodor Fischer. As discussed below, the rent here was on average twice that of similar sized municipal flats built on high-rise principles at the same time. Architectural culture was only beginning to address these issues, however, and it is to these which we must now turn.

### Stilfrage to Stilpolitik

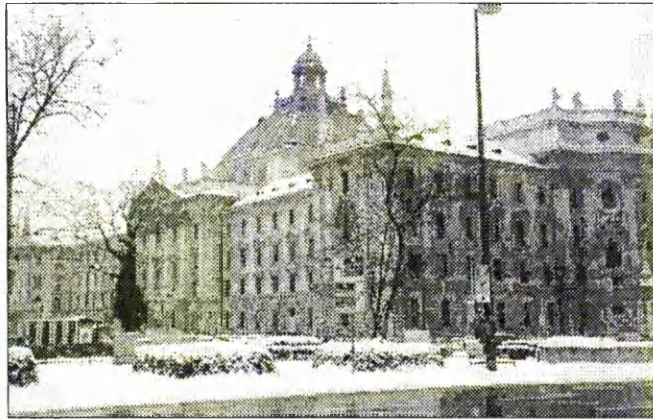
The dominant 'style', if one can call it that, of the second half of the nineteenth century in Germany and across Europe was historicism, by which is meant a stylistic eclecticism, in which decorative features and stylistic schemes from previous periods were applied somewhat manneristically to buildings of different functions and scales than those to

<sup>27</sup>'The rural farmhouse'. Winfried Nerdinger, *Theodor Fischer: Architekt und Städtebauer* (Berlin, 1988), pp. 114-121.

<sup>28</sup>Zimmermann, *Von der Wohnungspolitik zur Wohnungsfrage*, pp. 138-150, 160-190.

<sup>29</sup>Ruth Dörschel, Martin Kornacher, Ursula Stiglbrunner, Sabine Stäbe, 'Wohnreform - mehr als Licht, Luft und Sonne. Die ersten Baugenossenschaften in München', in *Musenstadt mit Hinterhöfen*, pp. 124-131, (p. 128).

which they initially belonged.<sup>30</sup> In part, this was because architects, baffled by a bewildering array of new building functions and building materials, seemed unable to master both the new functions, the engineering revolution which they implied, and the aesthetic possibilities of newer materials. There were sometimes, however, ideological reasons underpinning the stylistic variation,<sup>31</sup> especially before about 1870, such as an attempt to represent a certain philosophy *vis à vis* the modern world, or a particular



**Figure 1:** a) Justizpalast, 1890-1897, b) Justizpalast extension, 1906-1908. Friedrich von Thiersch.

nationalist or religious standpoint.<sup>32</sup> In an era of the emerging nation state, 'national'-historical models offered a greater potential for didacticism than any homogeneous style might.

Most often, though, these principled positions did not preoccupy architects; their ideologically neutral position was typified by the Munich architectural brothers, Gabriel and Emmanuel von Seidl, and by Friedrich von Thiersch. Thiersch's Justizpalast, which stands opposite Carlsplatz-Stachus, is the perfect example (figure 1a). Technologically

<sup>30</sup>For an assortment of examples of what is meant by this in the Munich context, see: Habel et al, *Münchener Fassaden* (Munich, 1974); Habel, 'Späte Phasen und Nachwirken des Historismus', pp. 26-40. For a good discussion of the philosophical underpinnings of the phenomenon, see Mitchell Schwarzer, *German Architectural Theory and the Search for Modern Identity* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 10-24, and for its more practical applications, pp. 33-112. For a discussion of its significance in a very free style (without any practical examples), see Robert van Pelt and Carroll William Westfall, *Architectural Principles in the Age of Historicism* (London, 1993). The main disadvantages of this book are as its hugely pretentious and self-aggrandizing style ('in *Architectural Principles*... the future of architecture is at stake...'), p. 3, and the fact that it has not one single illustration nor does it refer in detail to any actual buildings.

<sup>31</sup>A stylistic variation which it is easy to overestimate. In the last decades of the nineteenth century in Germany, the major stylistic imitation was 'New Renaissance' and Baroque, and areas built in this style can have a visual remarkable homogeneity.

<sup>32</sup>See, for example, the study by Michael Lewis, *The Politics of the Gothic Revival: August Reichensperger* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993).



innovative in its use of iron and glass to construct the dome and the interior spaces, functionally complex and diverse, the building was constructed in a high Baroque style between 1890 and 1897. While the dome hints at the materials in use, the building in general hides them, as it does the diverse functions within. Just behind it stands an extension to the court complex, also built by Thiersch, and fulfilling all of the same functions (figure 1b). Built by the same architect between 1906 and 1908, that is to say, less than ten years later, there is no sense of continuity between the buildings. One would not recognize them as having been built at the same time, for the same purpose, by the same architect, or on the same street. Gabriel von Seidl's Nationalmuseum, on the emerging Prinzregentenstraße, Munich's new *Prachtstraße*<sup>33</sup> between the Friedensengel



**Figure 2:** The Bayerisches Nationalmuseum. Emanuel von Seidl, 1894-1900. With thanks to Tanja Schmidt of the BNM for sending this image electronically.

and the Residenzgarten and the Englischer Garten, was built between 1894 and 1900. It is articulated into four parts, each one representing a different stylistic and historic epoch. This building (figure 2) was in fact an attempt to be 'modern', as the styles on the outside were intended to reflect the periodization of the museum

collections on the inside, and the building's asymmetry is a nod towards trends moving away from the weighty symmetry of the Neu Renaissance and Neu Barock styles, and towards the principle of the grouping of masses for aesthetic effect which would be so important for Modern architecture. Yet the overall impression is of confusion and meaninglessness: one would not know what this building was for or who had built it unless one was told.

One of the reasons for this was that architects were not as common as one might expect; they frequently had little input into buildings in the middle to late nineteenth century. Seidl was actually a mechanical engineer, and Grässer was trained as a civil engineering

<sup>33</sup> A street designed to reflect the pomp and might of the state or monarch which built it.

inspector.<sup>34</sup> Thiersch was an architect, but underachievement and a lack of commissions characterized his career. It was a point of some concern, celebration and debate that Theodor Fischer was appointed to develop the *Stadterweiterungsplan* in 1893, because he was an architect – it was increasingly felt that one had to develop buildings and spaces with a real artistic sensitivity, and overcome the technical preoccupations which had predominated until then; all according to the principles elaborated by Camillo Sitte. It was essential to master both the technical and artistic elements – and bring them some sort of harmony.

Having resolved many of the technical questions posed by urban development in the preceding one hundred years, artistic ones remained in some senses unanswered, or even, unasked at the end of the nineteenth century. People talked of the '*Stilverwirrung*' – the stylistic confusion or chaos – and an increasing emphasis came to be placed on devising recognizable building types which would end this visual disjointedness. This was based on the assumption that if buildings were a visual reflection of their function, that as buildings clearly shared functions, they would achieve visual homogeneity and stability if function was made the underlying aesthetic and organizational principle. It was for this reason that the so-called Münchener Schulhaus proved so successful; in it, Karl Hocheder, and then Fischer, Grässel, Bertsch and Rehlen, devised a shape which became instantly recognizable as a municipal school from any distance. The evolution of the Münchener Schulhaus form was perhaps the most distinctive collective achievement of the Hochbauamt before the First World War, but it is worth looking at how the obsession with the *Stilfrage* worked itself out in some of the other buildings the city commissioned, before concluding the first part of this section by moving on to the nascent housing programmes of the pre-war years.

An obsession with the *Stilfrage* in the municipal building department in the twenty years before the First World War was immense – there exist in the archives several hundred references to it that I have recorded. The interest in it, however, went way beyond the technical considerations of architects, and permeated the entire public cultural sphere. Indeed, without it, the agendas and activities of both the Bund Heimatschutz and the Deutscher Werkbund would have lacked one of the major ideological stimuli which

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<sup>34</sup>Oscar Doering, 'Zwei Münchener Baukünstler: Gabriel von Seidl, Georg von Hauberisser', *Die Kunst dem Volke*, 51/2 (1924), pp. 2-32; Anon., *Hans Grässel: Eine biographische Übersicht* (Munich, 1930).

called them into being. Interest was expressed in the press, and in the period of booming construction outside the private sector,<sup>35</sup> these factors meant that the *Stilfrage* was a lively public issue in this period. That it existed at all as a distinct question was intimately linked to people's understandings of their experience of modernity. Several key themes in describing this understanding emerged in the last years of the nineteenth century, which when translated into the field of the built environment demanded a dramatic reappraisal and reformulation of *Stilsprache* – its stylistic vocabulary. Contemporaries observed, firstly, a fragmentation of culture and society (the two were usually equated, evidenced both by the strength and the goals of so many of the *Lebensreformbewegungen*). They could identify no distinctive unifying spirit or thread in the cultural products of their age, no healthy *Zeitgeist*, and they referred again and again to a *Stilverwirrung* or a *Stilvielfalt*.<sup>36</sup> This meant that the structures constituting the material fabric of the city and society were disordered, meaningless, incomprehensible and smudged, and that if one assumed a certain correspondence between the material and social world, then society and ultimately humanity itself was disordered, meaningless, etc. too. Secondly, they perceived that culture in general, and the built environment in particular, was dishonest and deceptive, stylistically and materially. Stylistically, because it had become acceptable to build a structure for any purpose in any particular style (see the two adjacent court buildings by Thiersch above). Style had come to mean nothing, and meaninglessness was a constant theme in critiques of modernity. Materially, because although the methods and materials of construction had been revolutionized over the course of the century, this revolution was not reflected in the appearance of buildings. Visually, they remained deceitful curtains draped round unknown and unseen structural realities, with no direct relationship of style, place or ideology to the people around and in them, or to the structural principles underpinning them. Describing a school of the *Gründerzeit*, one contemporary journal summed up an entire strand of cultural criticism:

So, all that which we want to bring to light today and make people aware of and put into every street was then hidden away shamefully in the back courtyard. ... No-one had the confidence to show off the matter-of-fact [*Das rein Sachliche zu zeigen, getraute man sich nicht*].<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup>The *Gründerzeit* period was characterized by the boom of the building of factories and housing in private hands, but the period from the 1890s onwards is better characterized by the construction of social, communal and administrative buildings, as well as housing in the co-operative sector.

<sup>36</sup>Respectively, a bewildering confusion of styles, and a wide variety of styles.

<sup>37</sup> Heinrich Steinbach, 'Zur Geschichte des Münchener Volksschulhauses', *Süddeutsche Bauzeitung*, 25 December 1909.

The architecture commissioned by the municipality of Munich in this period was an attempt to address this, and it placed the municipality precisely in the middle of the emergent currents of reform in the turn-of-the-century German-speaking cultural world. In fact, in several instances Munich was right in the van of these trends – evidenced by the fact that it was in Munich that the significant psychological break of artistic secession from academic tradition took place in 1892, leading Vienna and Berlin by several years, when the alternative exhibition of the *Münchener Sezession* took place.<sup>38</sup> Key projects for the city's commercial and social well-being evidenced the clear desire to set visual culture on a new footing. The process began with the appointment in 1895 of Georg Kerschensteiner, who would become an active member of the *Deutscher Werkbund*, as the city's director of education.<sup>39</sup> The reforms which he introduced, themselves evidence of a rejection of past models (particularly the Enlightenment-liberal-Classical model of the 'humane' education), demanded a huge school building programme. He introduced universal voluntary nursery school provision, introduced *Kinderhorte*, a sort of after-school day-care centre for children, a compulsory eighth school year, abolished Sunday schooling, compulsory classics and 'impractical' subjects, making woodwork, metalwork, cooking and home hygiene compulsory, and revolutionized first the Munich, then the German, curriculum into its present day form, inventing the *Berufsschule*.<sup>40</sup> He challenged, first for Germany and then increasingly for the world, the Humboldt liberal conception of education, stating clearly that 'Educated humanity does not rest alone on what one knows, but what one can do.'<sup>41</sup> Children of both sexes could stay on at school free until 16, and studied applied subjects of their free choice, from cooking and hairdressing for girls, to motor mechanics and carpentry for boys.<sup>42</sup> They would be

<sup>38</sup>A secession which the city council quickly adopted as its own, and with which it aligned itself. For a fuller discussion of Munich's place in the German-speaking proto-avant garde, and the secession in particular, see: Maria Makela, *The Munich Secession*; Peter Jelavich, *Munich and Theatrical Modernism*; Michael Patterson, *The Revolution in German Theatre, 1900-1933* (London, 1981).

<sup>39</sup>Munich had a special dispensation to run its educational system entirely separately from that of the rest of the Kingdom of Bavaria, and, crucially, from the Catholic church, and Kerschensteiner was also Royal Schools Commissioner for the *Kreis* of Munich.

<sup>40</sup>The list does not stop there. Through experiment and investigation he introduced classes in mainstream schools designed for children whose first language was not German, for children who were intellectually weak, for children who were disabled; he introduced free breakfasts and school meals for children who were poor, malnourished or sickly, and started medical inspections which not only looked for disease but also signs of abuse. He secured the professionalization of nursery teachers, and the founding of holiday day-schemes. He was the first to do most of these things in the world, and as yet, according to Bock, no study exists of him or his reforms. Irmgard Bock, 'Pädagogik und Schule: Stadtschulrat Kerschensteiner', *Musenstadt mit Hinterhöfen*, pp. 213-219.

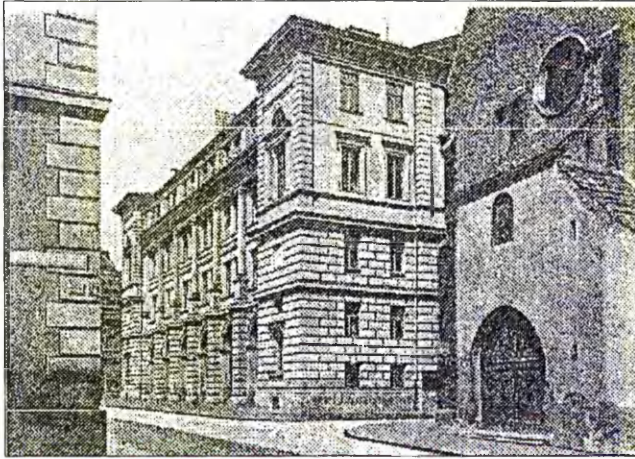
<sup>41</sup>Baurat Robert Rehlen, 'Gebäude für Erziehung und Bildung', *München und seine Bauten*, ed. by BAIvN., pp. 603-606; Irmgard Bock, 'Pädagogik und Schule: Stadtschulrat Kerschensteiner'.

<sup>42</sup>Obviously, the 'free' choice was based on somewhat essentialist gender divisions!



taught in smaller classes of 25-30 for practical subjects (instead of 60), and would cease to learn by wrote. This system would apply to all children from every class and religion.<sup>43</sup> Such reforms demanded a huge school building programme, and led to a troika of municipal architects, led by Karl Hocheder, and joined by Hans Grässel and Theodor Fischer, to evolve the Münchener schoolhouse, which became famous all over Germany.

The usual schoolhouse design in Germany was a densely packed block, stylistically modelled on Hausmannian-Parisian lines. Figure 3 shows a typical Munich school of the



**Figure 3:** School on the Salvatorplatz. Friedrich Löwel, 1887. BAIvN, *München und seine Bauten*, p. 607 (destroyed during the War).

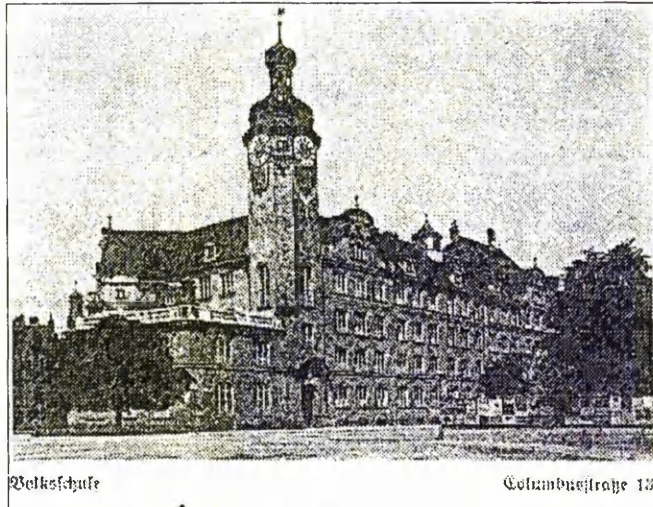
*Gründerzeit*; it is a compact, symmetrical, solid unit, which give no external indication of the internal functions. A school building contained (and contains) many functions: studying, eating, playing, sport, craft activities, circulation, washing, representation of the authority which built them, and so on. In the case of Munich (and quite possibly other cities too) they might

contain a market (as did the ground floor of Bauamtmann Friedrich Löwel's school on the Salvatorplatz), a welfare/paupers' office, a delousing centre, a shower house, a soup kitchen or a fire station. None of these functions are discernible in the exteriors of these schools, as can be seen in figure three, showing a combined school and market. The buildings, being largely indistinguishable from the buildings surrounding them, do not even succeed in representing 'school' or the modern project of education, nor do they succeed in demonstrating the beneficence or authority of the corporation which built them. Yet starting with the superficially historicist school on the Columbusstraße (first phase completed 1894; figure 4), Karl Hocheder created a new building type which soon came to be fêted all over Germany as the Münchener Schulhaus. Seemingly historicist, the building in fact followed a revolutionary new schema, separating out different

<sup>43</sup> Apart from the *Gymnasien*, which remained in central government control, but which catered only for those from classes rich enough to expect a university education or place in the officer corps. The Bayerische Staatsbibliothek shows that his books were in constant use as pedagogical training materials until the 1960s, and were deployed across the world, from Sweden to Brazil. 'Munich became a Mecca for all those interested in education around the world.' [Bock, 'Pädagogik und Schule', p. 216.]



functions and making them recognizable in the exterior organization of the structure; Munich's school builders would eradicate what remained of the historical allusions in the



**Figure 4:** Columbusstraße school. Karl Hocheder, 1894-96. BAIvN, *München und seine Bauten*, p. 610.

building. It is articulated around a corner site, as almost all schools subsequently built in Munich would be. Usually, one wing would be for boys, one for girls; sometimes, one for Protestants and one for Catholics; others, one for workshops and one for classrooms; here, one for the main school, and one for the free Kindergarten. Already external features indicate distinctions in internal functions

and organization. At the corner is what would become the usual articulating feature for the wings of Munich schoolhouses, the *Turnsaal*, or sports hall. It is lower than the rest of the building, and capped by a flat, reinforced concrete roof, which the children could play on or dine on in summer. It is crowned by a tower, placed to mark the school out in



**Figure 5:** Simmernstraße school. Wilhelm Bertsch, 1910-1911.

the surrounding quarter, and serving the functional purpose of providing a convection pipe to suck a regulated supply of fresh air through the school. Altogether, the building achieves its effect through the variation and group-

ing of mass and representation of internal function, not through symmetry and adherence to inherited stylistic precepts.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup>What style there is, is a loose interpretation of a Bavarian Rococo.



The form went through great simplification as it was taken over, first by Grässer and Fischer and later by Bauamtänner Wilhelm Bertsch and Robert Rehlen. Grässer's first school, on the Dom Pedro Platz behind his orphanage, was far simpler, and painted entirely in white. This simplification reached its pre-war peak in the schools on the Implertstraße in the industrial Schlachthofviertel by Grässer (1910-1911; see figure 1, ch.1), which marked out its concrete frame on the front it presented to the street, and Simmernstraße, in Schwabing, by Wilhelm Bertsch (1910-1911), which is a bold white building shown in figure 5. The structural shapes of the concrete support work are revealed in the exterior supports for the large windows on the south and north sides, and which has naked, untreated, poured concrete columns and vaulted ceilings in its principal circulation spaces, making a point of displaying the materials used in the structure. It has already been mentioned in chapter two that the city designed a clear, bold, white, simplified gasworks, in contrast to the other, more 'fancy' ones being constructed in Germany, and that it demanded an absence of historicism in the Krankenhaus Schwabing by Richard Schachner. This building both internally and externally constitutes one of the most striking examples of linear clarity, use of mass, truth to materials and absence of ornament which I have seen for a building designed in 1904, when it was originally painted white.<sup>45</sup> For example, the staircases of the ward pavilions protrude from the body



**Figure 6:** Schwabinger Krankenhaus: a) staircase on ward building; b) naked concrete entrance to pathology building. Richard Schachner, 1904-1911.

of the building, separating them functionally and visually, and allowing the former to determine the latter (figure 6a). Completely unadorned windows are not 'presented' in them in the way they would be in a more historically conscious building, but cut directly

<sup>45</sup>Now it is a dull, unflattering beige.



into the surface of the structure without architectural comment. They trace the line of the stairs, indicating clearly what the protuberance is for. The doorway to the pathology building (figure 6b) is made in visible, unpainted, reinforced concrete, and opposite it



**Figure 7:** Krankenhaus Schwabing: Electricity Substation. Richard Schachner, 1911-12.

stands the hospital's electricity substation, built in 1912 (figure 7). Its bold, almost confrontational, simplicity and nearly flat roof mean that, painted its original white, it could pass almost unnoticed into any essay on the 1920s Heroic Modernist canon.

### *Wohnungsfrage to Stilpolitik: 1900-1918*

The city was as interested in finding progressive solutions to the housing problems too, which would address the increasingly widespread critiques of modernity, and which would address the architectural and financial problems implicit in the cul-de-sac of the *Cottage-Anlage*. Its success was more modest in this area than in that of its public buildings. This was primarily because, along with municipalities in the rest of Germany, it did not feel empowered to commit itself wholeheartedly to a solution to this problem. Its approach to it was always, therefore, tentative, and the city itself built only two housing projects in the pre-war years, though funded many more. Alongside that, Mayor Borscht and others also founded a quasi-independent body, the Verein für die Verbesserung der Wohnungsverhältnisse in München (VWWM)<sup>46</sup> in 1899-1900, which the municipality largely financed. Although it was not an organ of the corporation, its board was made up mostly of Magistratsräte and Gemeindebevollmächtigten,<sup>47</sup> and most of its funding came from the city. It should be viewed as a sort of municipal quango, juridically separate from the corporation, but operationally, conceptually and politically entirely at one with it; the city provided almost all its money, and the Bezirks-Inspektoren of the municipality had 50% of its flats at their disposal, for distribution to the most needy.

<sup>46</sup>The Association for the Improvement of Housing Conditions in Munich.

<sup>47</sup>Members of the Magistrat and members of the elected council respectively.

Of the two pre-war housing projects embarked upon solely by the city itself without intermediary, it has only been possible to identify one of them as still extant. Two housing projects were developed in the 1900s, primarily for municipal employees. It will be useful to identify some of the key conceptual and aesthetic principles underpinning these, to integrate them into the theme of housing as a central strand in any understanding of the origins of architectural Modernism, for it was in the fusion of the housing question and the style question that Modernism gained its political edge; and it was through acquiring this political edge that a spirit of a coherent aesthetic-social-political movement was fostered in the pre-war period, to solidify in the 1920s into the canon of Modernism. Both were designed, not primarily for the public at large, but for employees of the town. They were frequently amongst the poorest sectors of society, comprising jobs such as dung collectors, ticket collectors, and other poorly paid municipal employees.<sup>48</sup> Relative to the solutions proposed in other cities, they were clearly at the fore of housing design. Indeed, this is what one would expect, as it was in Munich that those who are most often recognized as bringing the Heroic Modernist fusion of housing and aesthetics together in the 1920s studied. As Nerdinger writes:

In architectural histories one often encounters the claim that the bureau of Peter Behrens in Berlin ... was the cradle of modern architecture, because Gropius, Mies and Le Corbusier studied there. In reality, Gropius left the office because of a row with Behrens in 1909, Le Corbusier came a year later and stayed only a few months, partly because Behrens was so tyrannical with his employees, and Mies later could hardly even remember working with him.<sup>49</sup>

However, Theodor Fischer had as his students Martin Wagner (the Hufeisensiedlung was taken almost directly in layout from Gmindersdorf by Fischer), Ernst May (who always referred to him as '*Lehrer und Meister*'), Bruno Taut, Hugo Häring, Erich Mendelsohn, J.J.P. Oud, Paul Bonatz, and Paul Schmitthenner. Le Corbusier came to him in Munich to study concrete techniques such as those used in the Garnisonkirche in Ulm, and to look at the iron and concrete frames of Munich's schools after having worked with

<sup>48</sup> Although they did undoubtedly belong to the poorest classes, they at least had the advantage of job stability. Many unskilled jobs in the private sector were paid daily, however, and these workers led a much more hand-to-mouth existence, as Schoener, the pre-war Wohnungsreferent, complained in 1908, when he attacked the *Baugenossenschaften* for catering to the 'Kleinmittelstand' - which would equate closest to the petty bourgeoisie in Marxist terms - and 'qualified workers', and complained that 'the huge class beneath them are not heard.' [Sitzung der weiteren städtischen Wohnungskommission, 4 November 1908.]

<sup>49</sup> Nerdinger, *Theodor Fischer*, p. 86.

Auguste Perret. He stayed three months and wrote to Fischer on his seventieth birthday in 1932:

I am not lucky enough to have been one of those who heard your lectures at the university, but I remember with especial pleasure the reception I received in Munich and at Agnes-Bernauer-Straße [Fischer's studio] in 1910... When one is young, and seeks to make his fortune, these things have a deep impact. The cleanliness, the nobility, the health of your architectonic style enchanted me. I had been in Paris, and had worked with Auguste Perret, I sought in Germany healthy and constructive architectural materials. Your work was a real education for me [*Ihr Werk war für mich eine Lehre*]. From this time around 1910 it is you I remember, and not others who were more conspicuous and famous.<sup>50</sup>

Fischer's housing itself was most significant in art-historical terms in the post-war period, when the city embarked on the world's first ever *Zeilenbau* housing estate, but the city itself was producing interesting work before 1914.

Of the two housing plans discussed in the records, only one is now identifiable as standing; the *Kleinwohnung* complex by Robert Rehlen on Thalkirchenerstraße, built at break-neck speed between November 1909 and November 1910. The other, the accommodation for the workers at the new gasworks discussed in chapter two, has not proved traceable – perhaps it was never built.<sup>51</sup> The director of the municipal gasworks, Lipp, received the plans for the flats developed by the Vereinigten Handwerker practice without charge, in 1908. However, he was deeply unhappy with them. He felt that, although the interiors were admirable, the exteriors were fussy and not at all in keeping with the new gasworks (see chapter two). They were not built 'in the new spirit', as the city had designed the new gasworks.<sup>52</sup> He sent them to the Hochbauamt in the hope that they would redesign the exteriors to be as clear and modern as the new gasworks, which they apparently did. Six weeks later he wrote enthusiastically that now they totally lacked the character of *Mietskasernen*, that they embodied 'the new spirit and progress', and recommended them wholeheartedly to the council.<sup>53</sup> The scheme, it seems, went ahead,

<sup>50</sup>Cited in Nerdinger, *Theodor Fischer*, p.90.

<sup>51</sup>The records dealing with it simply end without explanation. There are plausible candidates within the vicinity of the works, but the records dealing with these buildings are missing from the Lokalbaukommission, which should have records of all the structures in Munich constructed since 1818 listed by address. However, the records of the Lokalbaukommission – erratic at the best of times – become most erratic when it comes to municipal structures, implying perhaps that they had a sort of *de facto* exemption (for they certainly had no *de jure* one), although there are also whole streets of private structures which fail to appear in apparently intact and undisturbed records for no known reason.

<sup>52</sup>Lipp to Referat X und Referat II, 2 March 1908. SAM-WA-23.

<sup>53</sup>Lipp to the Magistrat der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München and Referat X, 18 April 1908.



as Borscht had given a press release about ordering the construction of 80 flats in January of that year, for which the private landlords' association attacked him in June, and for which gas-workers thanked him in August.<sup>54</sup> From that point onwards, there is no further mention of the scheme.

The scheme which was definitely completed is shown in figure 8, designed by Bauamtmann Robert Rehlen, and commenced in 1909. It may well be profitable to compare it with some of the accommodation designed by other big cities in Germany for



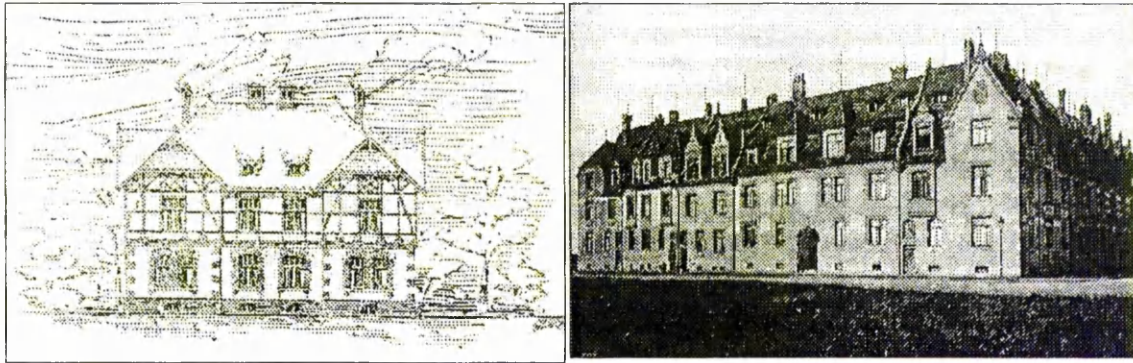
**Figure 8:** Municipal flats, Thalkirchnerstraße. Robert Rehlen, 1910.

the same purpose. As mentioned in chapter two, the city's first instinct when planning to do something novel was to ask around. The Hochbauamt conducted a survey in the spring of 1908 of all German *Großstädte*, apparently in preparation for this project. Many cities answered, but only two cities, Nürnberg and Cologne, sent diagrams and pictures of their projects, and they can be seen in figures 9a and 9b. It is perhaps unfair to compare them too directly, for the buildings in Nürnberg were completed in 1902, and those in Cologne designed in 1901, whereas those in Munich some seven or so years later. Yet these styles reflect in some ways the patterns

of building which would dominate a substantial proportion housing construction in German speaking lands until the early 1920s. While it would have been improbable that any city would opt for the half-timbered dream of the Kölner *Arbeiter-Kolonie* Ehrenfeld much after 1901 when it was designed, it was standard practice to perpetuate its architectural/organizational principles – those of the *Kolonie* or *Cottage-Anlage* – until

<sup>54</sup>Notiz zur Presse: Bedarf an Arbeiterwohnungen, followed by word-for-word articles in *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 30 January 1908, and *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, n.d.; Grund- und Besitzerverein München, An die hohen Kollegien der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München. Betreff: Antrag zur Erbauung von Kleinwohnungen durch die Stadtgemeinde München und Verwendung gemeindlicher Mittel zu diesem Zwecke, 13 June 1908; Resolution der Versammlung der Gasarbeiter der Stadt München an Hohen Magistrat der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München, 7 August 1908. SAM-WA-23.

well after the war, a practice which was always resisted in Munich.<sup>55</sup> The style and the organization of the Nürnberger housing were ones which were repeated until the war, and sometimes afterwards. It is a restrained style, referring to local traditions while trying to provide modern facilities. It offers flats built in units of an *Einfamilienhaus* style. Both solutions were very roomy inside compared to the Munich solution, and this roominess brought with it its own problems. The Cologne flats were typically a large *Wohnküche* and two large rooms; the Nürnberg ones were typically a smaller kitchen, a living room and two decent sized bedrooms.<sup>56</sup> This would have made the flats expensive to build, and therefore rent.



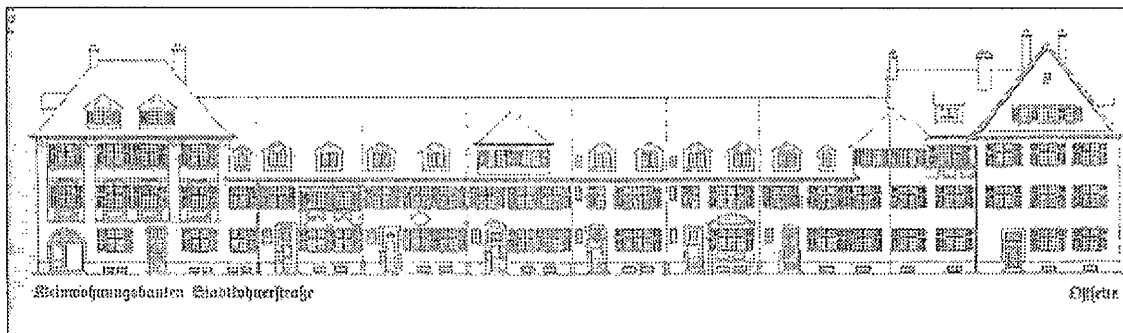
**Figure 9:** Municipal housing on the English model from a) Cologne, 1901, and b) Nuremberg, 1902. SAM-WA-23.

The Thalkirchenerstraße project was, however, entirely differently conceived. The flats were designed to be either two or three rooms plus kitchen and toilet, but on a smaller scale and to a standard plan. The facilities were standardized, as were all the fittings, and the ground usage was denser, this one small square offering 177 flats. Toilets were in each flat, but showers and baths were in the basement, and there was a communal laundry for the entire block, and a playground installed in the middle, all foreshadowing the communal provision of social, personal and domestic facilities which are usually stressed as being distinctive features of 1920s planned housing. Decoration was kept to a minimum, and only enough variation was introduced into the shape and masses to keep away any *kasernenmäßiger* character. This meant that rent could be kept to a minimum

<sup>55</sup>Eve Blau explains the weight of this influence very well in her survey of housing in Vienna in the early 1920s, when the city of Vienna (as did most other big cities) planned *Heimatsiedlungen* and *Heimstätten*, whereas Munich planned Alte Heide and the Siedlung für die Kriegsbeschädigten. Eve Blau, *The Architecture of Red Vienna*, pp. 88-133.

<sup>56</sup>See plans 'Arbeiter-Kolonie am Ehrenfeld der Stadt Köln' and the *Verwaltungsbericht 1902 der Stadt Nürnberg*, SAM-WA-23.

too – in 1910, it was 22.80M for a two room, and 34.20 for a three room flat.<sup>57</sup> If one compares that to the project subsidized by the city and designed by Theodor Fischer in the Westend, a much more expensive solution can be found. The Stadtlohnerstraße project was largely paid for by the city, and built on land owned by the Terraingesellschaft Neuwestend between 1909 and 1911. As Fischer decided to build on *Einfamilienhaus*, *Flachbau* principles, as shown in figure 10 (though with internal subdivisions into flats), the cheapest flats were 30M a month for two rooms with kitchen, though only a very few of these were built. Most of them were 45M a month for two rooms and a kitchen, rising to 60M a month for three rooms. The rooms themselves were of a similar size to the Thalkirchnerstraße project, but land use was much less dense, the interior fittings were not standardized throughout and external features were prominent, and therefore expensive.<sup>58</sup> The success and cheapness of the



**Figure 10:** Subsidized housing on the English model, Stadtlohnerstraße. Theodor Fischer, 1910-11. BAIvN, *München und seine Bauten*, p. 434.

Thalkirchnerstraße project could not have gone unnoticed, because Munich showed itself more committed to what it came to call the *Kleinstwohnung* than any other European city in the immediate post-war period.

### *Wohnungsfrage to Stilpolitik: 1918-1930*

If reactions to difficult housing conditions in the period before the First World War were characterized by a humane concern for human suffering, during and afterwards the situation was very different. Social fear and architectural boldness were perhaps the key features of the immediate aftermath. The production of small flats had increased in two stages: in 1899, the city had started small subsidies and founded the VVWM; and in 1908, prompted by a very bad winter, a sudden housing shortage, and a new awareness brought about by their three year study of every home in the city, a much larger scale of

<sup>57</sup> BAIvN, *München und seine Bauten*, pp. 652-653.

<sup>58</sup> BAIvN, *München und seine Bauten*, pp. 432-436.



subsidy and intervention followed.<sup>59</sup> Production rose from an average of 405 *Kleinwohnungen* per annum, 1906-1909, to a peak of 4,210 per annum in 1912, when it started to fall quickly.<sup>60</sup> In the unusually heavy winter of 1908/9, when the council had opened its properties to the homeless, the justifications were all humane. Works such as *Elend* – sorrow, misery, distress – and *Scham, tief beschämend* – shame, disgraceful (to the city of Munich) – were used. The unhappiness that people felt was personal, it was sympathetic; it was not preoccupied (though it was underpinned) by impersonal statistics or worries of social upheaval. Never was it mentioned that the architectural-financial-social failures of house design would threaten the existence of orderly society; hinder, yes – threaten, no.

But as the First World War drew to a close it was realized that political, architectural, financial and social reformulations of this policy were essential if society were to be preserved at all. Perhaps in some ways this is a distinct sign that modernity was indeed threatening, as it had lost the ability to accommodate huge technological and social changes while providing relative stability in socio-political structures. It seems that Münchener knew full well what the outcome of the war would be from as early as spring 1917,<sup>61</sup> and they – and others all across western Europe – came to equate a solution to the housing problem with social calm. The Wohnungsreferent at the end of the war, Mayr, said he foresaw a new '*Schreckgespenst*' – terrifying spectre – of *Wohnungsnot*

<sup>59</sup>By November 1908 the housing crisis was so severe in Munich that Oberbürgermeister Borscht ordered that all store-rooms and buildings belonging to the *Stadtbauamt* (this would include tram depots, turbine halls - in fact, most municipal properties and services came under the purview of the *Stadtbauamt*) would be opened; Borscht issued instructions to the Königlichen Bezirksarzt for Munich and the *Stadtbauamt* to outline exactly which rooms were fit for human habitation. [Borscht to the K. Bezirksarzt der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München, 13 November 1908. SAM-WA-39/1.]

<sup>60</sup>

1906-1909	1622 <i>Kleinwohnungen</i>	1914	1411
1910	3901	1915	492
1911	4108	1916	60
1912	4210	1917	56
1913	3056		

It should be noted that the construction had begun to fall sharply before the outbreak of war. [Magistrat der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt München an das K. Staatsministerium des Innern. Betreff: Vorarbeiten für den Wohnungsbau im Kriege und nach dem Kriege. SAM-WA-18.]

<sup>61</sup>The use of phrases such as 'Whatever may be the outcome of the present conflict, we certainly do not have to fear any boom in construction similar to that in 1870' seem to indicate a certain pointed neutrality towards the possibility of German victory. [Grund- und Hausbesitzer-Verein München, e.V., *Denkschrift zur Übergangswirtschaft im Wohnungswesen*, March 1917. SAM-WA-18.] There were also many discussions of the *Übergangswirtschaft* in the press and public administration from the summer of 1917, none of which offer any positive prognoses, all of which mention the war ending, though none of which mention victory. [See press cuttings and communications in SAM-WA-18.]



threatening all hope of building a society again after the war.<sup>62</sup> He said that without good housing the population would be dissatisfied and unhealthy, there would be domestic strife, violence and drunkenness – and that every society reflected the families which made it up: where there was domestic strife and unrest, there would be social strife and unrest. The disorder of internal domestic spaces would be inverted and projected out into the public realm. He felt the solution was a total commitment to the *Kleinwohnung* as an architectural form, ‘ugly though it may be’, and a financial-social-political boldness.<sup>63</sup>

We have agreed a new goal of *Wohnungspolitik*: every citizen should have a healthy, sufficiently big home, corresponding in price to his financial position. I hear straight away the objection, that this ideal solution is a Utopian demand, which stands no better chance of being solved than the social question as a whole. This objection is, of course, very comforting, and is most often heard from those who thereby relieve their consciences, put their hands in their laps, and quite happily let everything drift on.<sup>64</sup>

Gut, deputy director at that stage of the Wohnungsamt, wrote a *Denkschrift* in September of 1918 warning of the terrible consequences housing shortages would bring in the immediate post-war period, and prophesied that housing would be the dominant socio-political question of the next decade.<sup>65</sup> This explosive and pessimistic *Denkschrift*, marked ‘Streng Vertraulich!’ (Highly Confidential!) seems to have had a deep effect on the Mayor, Borscht, who issued instructions based on

...the escalation of this crisis to be expected especially because of the imminent demobilization of our troops and the most terrifying dangers to the public peace which we can expect from this...<sup>66</sup>

In the same letter he also ordered the Hochbauamt to convert all military properties in the city into housing, a surprisingly revolutionary act for Borscht to take a month before the truce. The transition from a *Frage* to a *Politik* that Zimmermann takes as the theme for his whole book is brought to light beautifully here, as Mayr tried to compel a new architectural, political, economic and social solution on an audience that perhaps did not really want to hear.<sup>67</sup> The top levels of the council were increasingly predicating social

<sup>62</sup>Wohnungsreferat Mayr, *Warum brauchen wir in München eine städtische Siedlungs-Gesellschaft?*, ‘Im 4. Kriegsjahr [1918]’. SAM-WA-18.

<sup>63</sup>Mayr, Referat VII [Wohnungswesen], *Denkschrift zur Neugestaltung des staedt. Wohnungsamtes*, October 1917, pp. 2, 4, 7, 15. SAM-WA-18.

<sup>64</sup>Mayr, Referat VII [Wohnungswesen], *Denkschrift zur Neugestaltung des staedt. Wohnungsamtes*, October 1917, pp. 1-2. SAM-WA-18.

<sup>65</sup>Albert Gut, *Wohnungsfrage und Demobilmachung*, 18 September 1918. SAM-WA-18.

<sup>66</sup>Borscht an das Referat II, Betreff: Wohnungsfrage und Demobilmachung, 8 October 1918. SAM-WA-18.

<sup>67</sup>The great disadvantage of Zimmermann’s book is, however, stops in 1914. [Zimmermann, *Von der Wohnungsfrage zur Wohnungspolitik*.]

stability on the built environment; the type of socio-political stability which the cultural, spatial, economic and social structures modernity had brought about was being seriously challenged by an inability to formulate architectural solutions.

Mayr was apparently gradually sidelined towards the end of the war. The city founded the Gemeinnützige Wohnstättengesellschaft in the spring of 1918 (clearly planning for an imminent end to the conflict), and Mayr had as his deputy on its board a certain Schlicht, who came to play an increasingly important role in the planning of the future. Schlicht's interests were architectural as well as socio-political, and he was also a member of the Lokalbaukommission. Schlicht became actively involved in assessing possible new building types which might be suitable for building *Kleinwohnungen*, specifically the use of concrete. He and Bauamtmann Robert Rehlen ordered the construction in June 1918 of two experimental houses, one framed with wood, supporting 'Poroebeton' – porous concrete. The other would be framed with wood with metal plating – a sort of low budget, low-technology reinforced concrete structure. It was designed by an architect named Philip Gelius to be made either of pre-cast concrete slabs or of concrete poured into shuttering.<sup>68</sup> Also in the closing days of the war Borscht ordered the construction of ten *Probekhäuser*, to be designed to last between ten and twenty years. He requested that the Hochbauamt and the departments of housing and municipal property management cooperate on this project. The Hochbauamt or private architects were to come up with a *Sparbauweise* – a money-saving method of building – which would provide housing for returning soldiers and their families and thereby stave off the inevitable social conflict which Mayr and Gut warned of.<sup>69</sup> The city set its sights on *Sparbauten* despite heavy opposition from architects, property owners and the Bavarian government, which refused to fund such projects.<sup>70</sup> The municipal Gemeinnützige Wohnstättengesellschaft promoted similar projects in the summer of 1918: one, for example, was by a certain architect called Böttge:

Architect Böttge wants to try a new process for constructing *Kleinwohnungen*, a so-called 'poured concrete process' [*Betongussverfahren*]. The building authorities have just permitted this. About the execution, suitability for

<sup>68</sup>Schlicht and Rehlen, Lokalbaukommission, an das Referat II, Betreff: Zulassung eines neuen Kleinwohnungsbausystems im Rahmen der baupolizeilichen Verordnungen, 28 August 1918. SAM-WA-18.

<sup>69</sup>Borscht an das Referat II, Betreff: Wohnungsfrage und Demobilmachung, 8 October 1918. SAM-WA-18.

<sup>70</sup>Niederschirft über die 1te öffentliche Sitzung des Wohnungsausschusses der Landeshauptstadt München vom 15. Oktober 1919. SAM-RSP-692/7.

accommodation [*Bewohnbarkeit*] and costs of such houses, nothing is known; it is a totally new method we are trying here in Munich.

Therefore, we must construct some experimental models. To enable this, the municipal Gemeinnützige Wohnstättengesellschaft has applied to the Deutschen Zementbund to ask for supplies of cement in these difficult times. This approach was entirely justified, as the Zementbund would have a great interest in this should poured concrete building become practicable, were our novel methods to be used across Germany. As yet, we have had no answer from them.<sup>71</sup>

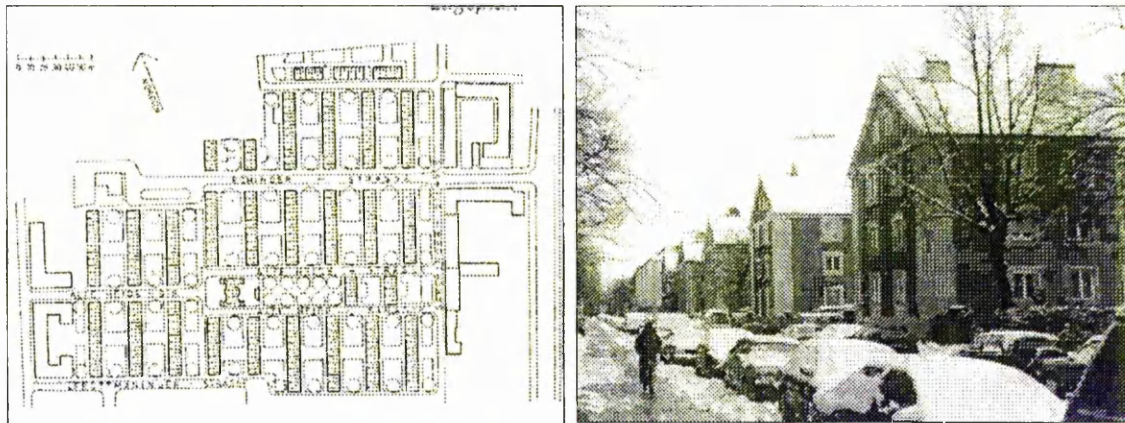
As with all of these experimental projects, it has not been possible to trace them further. Particularly disappointing is the lack of surviving designs for these buildings. Quite possibly none were constructed, but the intention was there to reformulate both the construction and the appearance of housing.

So in its attempts to seek out technologized, mass-produceable and normed housing methods, the city council was not at all holding back. The same sort of commitment to key themes of cultural, economic and political modernity are evidenced here as in later, more famous, examples: the plan, mass production, the experiment, uniformity, engineering social stability. However, what lacks is the grand vision; this is not a *coup de grace* for a dying modernity, but an essential readjustment in order to allow it to continue. It is quite possible that many in Germany were doing this at the time, and therefore it would be inappropriate to make any claim to uniqueness on Munich's part. Usually, mentions of techniques like this have to wait until May in Frankfurt or Oud in Rotterdam in the mid to late 1920s are discussed, but the city council was in fact eager to invest in these areas. It is probable that Munich was not alone, and other cities may well show the results of such experimentation, either in the archives or in the fabric of the city. Until historians are prepared to detach themselves from the canon, this will not be known. That Munich did this, however, sits very comfortably with what is known about the architectural patronage of the corporation. The Technisches Hochhaus tower-block and electricity board projects developed at the close of the war for the Unteren Anger were discussed in chapter two, but in housing too the city took a cutting edge position.

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<sup>71</sup>Bericht über die Sitzung des Aufsichtsrates der Gemeinnützigen Wohnstätten-Gesellschaft München m-b.H. vom 24. Juli 1918. SAM-B&R-305/8a.

The key project which *was* realized is the Alte Heide housing estate (figure 11). It was funded by the Gemeinnützige Wohnstättengesellschaft (GNWG),<sup>72</sup> founded by the city council in April 1918. Beyond that, little is known of the GNWG; the minutes of its meetings have proved impossible to trace, and only occasional reports of its activities crop up. It seems to have ceased to have been effective around 1922, and was clearly defunct in 1928 when the municipality established the Gemeinnützige Wohnungsfürsorge.<sup>73</sup> The GNWG built approximately 2,700 flats in difficult economic circumstances before the beginning of the financial meltdown which stopped all building projects in 1921-2,<sup>74</sup> and by far the most significant single project which it funded was



**Figure 11:** Alte Heide Siedlung. Theodor Fischer, 1918-1922. Plan from BAIvD, *München und seine Bauten nach 1912*, p. 269.

Alte Heide.<sup>75</sup> Comprising 795 flats in its finished state, 600 were completed by December 1920.<sup>76</sup> The distinctive features of this project were: the flats were small, and absolutely uniform throughout; fittings were standardized; and they were laid out in a *Zeilenbau* system. That is to say, traffic circulation and pedestrian circulation were entirely separated, as the plan in figure 11 shows – a phenomenon that would be in many plans for cities in this period from Hilbersheimer to Le Corbusier – and the flats were not built on streets, but in rows oriented to maximize sun intake, minimize traffic noise and also to

<sup>72</sup>The Munich Communal Housing Company.

<sup>73</sup>The yearly general report of the GNWG for 1922 was only half of one A4 sheet, and a letter of May 1928 discussed the possibility of using it as a holding firm for the GeWoFAG. [Geschäftsbericht der Gemeinnützigen Wohnstättengesellschaft 1922; Feichtmaier to Scharnagl, 19 May 1928. SAM-B&R-305/8a.]

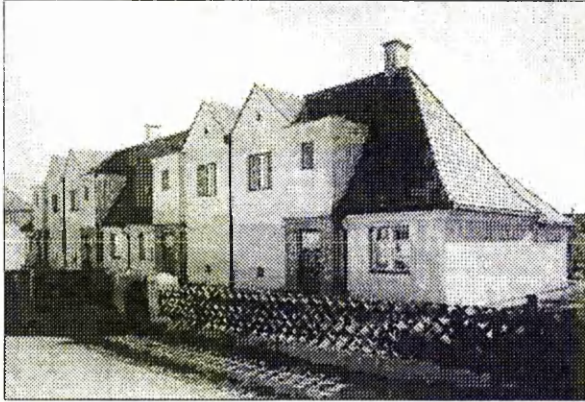
<sup>74</sup>Wohnungsreferent Karl Preis an Herrn OB Scharnagl, Herrn rechtsk. BM Kufner, die Mitglieder des Wohnungsausschusses, sämtliche Stadtratsfraktionen, die Mitglieder des Haushaltsausschusses, Herrn Korreferenten Gasteiger, das Finanzreferat, die Direktion der staedt. Spar- und Girokasse, 20 December 1931. SAM-B&R-1455.

<sup>75</sup>There was a nominal autonomy for the project under the Baugenossenschaft Alte Heide, but the file SAM-B&R-305/8a makes it clear that there was no functional autonomy of the Baugenossenschaft from the Gesellschaft, and nor was there any practical separation between the Gesellschaft and the council.

<sup>76</sup>Geschäftsbericht für das Jahr 1920. SAM-B&R-305/8a.



fundamentally recast the whole 'flavour' of the urban form, eradicating the hustle and hurry (and pollution) of traffic, and restoring calm tranquility to residential areas. They had communal facilities similar to those built by Rehlen on the Thalkirchnerstraße; that is to say, baths were provided in the cellars of the buildings, there was a central laundry, but additionally, the entire project was ordered around a central nursery school and social welfare centre. These principles – separation of circulation spaces, standardization, provision of communal facilities – would be the central features of all modernist housing in the 1920s, and would remain so until the 1970s.<sup>77</sup> Although the estate is not striking



**Figure 12:** Hermeswiese, a typical Viennese social housing unit from the immediate post-War period. Karl Ehn, 1923. Blau, *Architecture of Red Vienna*, p. 130.

for its use of a familiar vocabulary of Modernism, it should be borne in mind here just as with the Technisches Hochhaus that this was the creation of the final year of the war, not the post-inflationary years when American and other European influences were more easily drawn upon. In comparison with housing built in France, Britain, Austria and the rest of Germany, this was a huge development, of deep social-

political-cultural significance for the formation of housing policy and housing estates in general.

Eve Blau documents extensively the styles preferred by the 'Red' city council in Vienna in the immediate post war years, and as figure 12 suggests, they would remain characterized by the garden city mentality which underpinned the *Cottage-Anlage*.<sup>78</sup> Britain and France both followed suit and did not experiment with planned high-density

<sup>77</sup>The notable exception to this was the May developments in Frankfurt. These were built on traditional English lines, with houses and flats facing onto a street.

<sup>78</sup>Blau, *The Architecture of Red Vienna*, pp. 88-133. The one notable exception to this was Adolf Loos' Siedlung Am Heuberg, which was stylistically a taste of things to come; whitewashed walls and flat roofs. However, Loos was director of the city's building department, and it was he who came up with the entirely garden-city inspired general plan, the Kleingarten und Siedlungszone im Generalregulierungsplan für Wien, which asserted, 'To become settlers, we have to learn to live as settlers. What should a settlement house look like? ... We must start with the garden. The garden is primary, the house is secondary.' [Pp. 99-101]. While Alte Heide did have allotments, they were entirely secondary to planning the economy and construction of the estate, in contrast to the Frankfurt estates of the late 1920s and the Vienna estate of the immediate post-war period, which were an attempt at creating a certain near-rural or pre-industrial autarky within a semi-urban context.

communal housing until substantially later, although France did continue to build tenement blocks on the late Victorian and Edwardian model (figure 13).<sup>79</sup> Harlander and Mengin provide German (and French) examples to complement Blau's discussion of Vienna, showing that few in western Europe seem to have had any genuine grasp of the changes needed architecturally in order to enable financial support to be viable, as well as envisioning new ways of living and organizing space.<sup>80</sup> Often referred to in architectural and cultural histories of the period are the estates designed by May in Frankfurt, yet it is



**Figure 13:** rue Ménilmontant. Typical Parisian housing of the 1920s, based on the late 19th century tenement model. Office d'Habitations à Bon Marché de la Ville de Paris, 1925-6.

rarely reported that these estates were particularly *unsuccessful*. It is not usual to describe the estates as often comprising mostly *Cottage-Anlagen*, terraces with flat roofs. The *Versuchshäuser in Plattenbauweise*<sup>81</sup> comprised only a small part of the entire programme. If we take the Siedlung Praunheim, May's first, and one of the ones which Munich's city councillors visited while preparing their plans for the '12,000-Programme', the famous flats designed with external walkways comprised only the smallest part of the estate, that part along Ludwig-Landmann-Straße; these 203 *Kleinstwohnungen* were not designed by May at all, but were entirely the work of Bauamtmann

Becker. The rest was built using terraced houses which were to be mortgaged to their inhabitants. The names the Frankfurter Hochbauamt chose for the streets reflect the origins and aspirations of their layout: Theodor-Fischer-Weg, Camillo-Sitte-Weg, Heinrich-Tessenow-Weg, Olbrichstraße. Of the 1,441 *Wohnungen* on the estate, 414

<sup>79</sup>And particularly in France, they continued to do so until well into the 1930s. See, for example, the work done by the Agence d'Architecture de l'Office d'Habitations à Bon Marché at rue André Messager (1931), rue Brillat-Savarin (1924), rue Fécamp (1924). When tenements were not used, much work in France was conducted under the spirit of the Loucheur housing legislation of 1928, which demanded low density, garden city solutions. See Martin Pawley, *Architecture versus Housing* (London, 1971), pp. 20-28. For examples of the British response in Bristol, Leeds and Durham, see Dauntton, *Councillors and Tenants*, esp. the illustrations on pp. 16-19, 124-5, 129-33, 187.

<sup>80</sup>Tilman Harlander, 'Notwohnen und Selbsthilfe in der Großstadtperipherie der 20er Jahre. Beispiele aus Österreich, Deutschland, Italien und Griechenland'; Christine Mengin, 'H.B.M. et "Siedlungen": étude comparative du logement social en France et en Allemagne (des débuts à la crise de 1929)', in *Europäische Wohnungspolitik in vergleichender Perspektive 1900-1939*, ed. by Clemens Zimmermann (Stuttgart, 1997), pp. 60-84, 130-152.

<sup>81</sup>Experimental houses constructed with pre-fabricated slabs of concrete lowered into place.



were built in *Plattenbauweise*, all of which were houses to be sold, not rented *Kleinwohnungen*. The rest were all traditional brick structures with wooden flat roofs, and just over 1,100 of them were *Einfamilienhäuser*.<sup>82</sup> They did not have central heating, but *Kachelöfen*.<sup>83</sup> Many of the houses were still unoccupied in the 1930s, and had to be split into flats to reduce costs and make them affordable, which alongside the private ownership did huge damage to the aesthetic integrity of the project, as no sooner were the houses transferred to the market place than the decoration of the exteriors became something of a free-for-all. It also meant a return to the problems of the 1880s and 1890s outlined in earlier in the chapter, of over-occupancy and *Schlafgänger*. The programme was largely unsuccessful as an instrument of social policy, too, as it intended that the houses would be bought; this meant that those in need of housing would pay for it themselves. The first inhabitants were one-third civil servants, one-quarter workers and salaried employees and one-quarter small businessmen. Many were compelled to leave in the late 1920s and early 1930s as they could no longer afford mortgage payments, and yet wealthier residents moved in.<sup>84</sup> Römerstadt was a similar story, though had no structures at all in *Plattenbauweise*. Westhausen, although a *Cottage-Anlage*, was more successful as the houses were built to be divided into apartments from the outset, against May's will.

The situation in Munich was very different. Alte Heide committed the city to what it came to call the *Kleinstwohnung* early on, and the corporation strongly resisted any attempts to pressurize them into building garden city influenced projects. As a precondition of financial help, the *Land* government insisted that some of the '12,000-Programme' houses should be constructed on garden city principles; the town acquiesced in the first year, but soon rejected the policy absolutely and cancelled all projects involving *Einfamilienhäuser* when they found that Munich was no exception and the houses proved unrentable to the poorest sectors of society, standing empty months after completion. By the mid-1920s, however, the *Kleinstwohnung* was attracting considerable opposition, and the *Kleinwohnung* became the norm. To achieve economies of scale, and to tackle the tensions engendered in the minds of the councillors by the politically volatile

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<sup>82</sup> This is a feature glossed over in many discussions of the 'founding fathers' of Modernism; the Rietveld-Schroeder house was, for example, a traditional brick and wood structure; the De la Warr pavilion was a steel framed structure of the sort common in late nineteenth century industrial installations, given the trappings of a reinforced concrete one for the sake of appearing 'modern'.

<sup>83</sup> Tiled coal, coke or wood burning ovens.

<sup>84</sup> Dreyse, *May-Siedlungen*, pp. 7-12, Appendix: Praunheim Plan.



*Großstadt* (they were aware that the German revolutions of 1918 had started in Munich, and understood that the city was at least as vulnerable to right wing volatility from the nascent NSDAP as from the left), Munich embarked on a programme of planned housing construction, as did many other cities across Germany. The overall effect of these was to embrace the most cutting edge town planning principle of Hilbersheimer, Garnier and Le Corbusier sometimes slightly *avant la lettre* by enforcing a strict and uncompromising separation of pedestrian and vehicular circulation spaces. The social, rather than spatial, planning of May was also fully mastered, with central laundries (though unlike in Frankfurt, the Münchener had the choice of whether to use them), schools, milk storage facilities and shops. Unlike May, however, the council opted for very high-density land use, multi-storey units, and entirely communally owned accommodation.

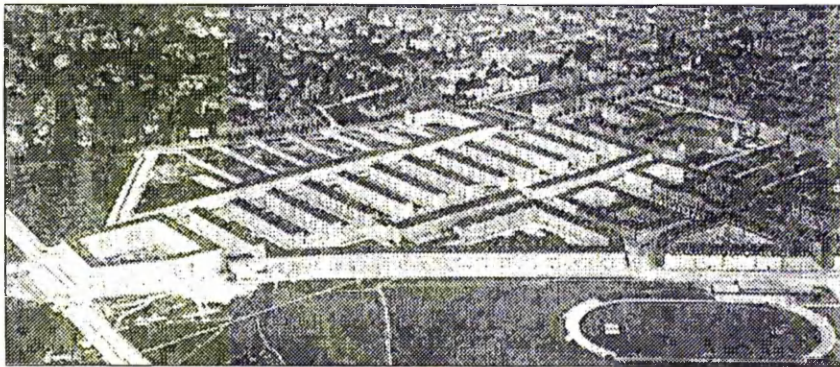
The visual impact was not the same as Frankfurt; there was no ideological Modernism in Munich's housing projects. It is worth stressing, however, that many of Frankfurt's projects were not as Modernist as may be thought. Few had any real sense of progress in town planning terms from the garden city movement; many had pitched roofs. However, throughout the Munich corporation's building programme there was something of a mannerist borrowing from cutting edge Modernist building. There were numerous local examples of outstanding 'Heroic Modernist' structures, on which they could have drawn, most notably the post offices and experimental housing of Robert Vorhoelzer, the work of Heilmann & Littmann GmbH, the luxury apartments of Theresienhöhe behind Bavaria and the Wiese, and the municipal housing constructed by the nearby city of Augsburg by Thomas Wechs, pushed through by the Second Bürgermeister Friedrich Ackermann, in impeccable Heroic Modernist style.<sup>85</sup> Munich's housing remained, however, fairly banal.

The focus here will be on a very brief examination of the three largest, most coherent housing estates planned in the period from 1927 onwards, and leaving out the two estates which were smaller and only built through compulsion.<sup>86</sup> They are the

<sup>85</sup> Vorhoelzer's post offices can be seen in Fischer, *Die andere Tradition*. For pictures of the Schubertshof, by Wechs 1928-9, and the Lessinghof, 1930-1, and the Weidenau/Donauwörthstraße Siedlung by Holzer, 1930, see Architekturmuseum Schwaben (ed.), *Wohnarchitektur der 20er Jahre* [Catalogue to an exhibition held at the Architekturmuseum Schwaben, 14 April – 30 May 1999] (Augsburg, 1999).

<sup>86</sup> Namely, the Siedlung Harlaching am Hohen Weg, originally planned for 2,000 units, but reduced and altered after it was found that the *Einfamilienhäuser* which the Bavarian government insisted on were unlettable, and the Siedlung Friedenheim, which became one of the National Socialists' preferred plans from this period; it too was foisted on an unwilling city by the government.

Großsiedlung Neuhausen in the west, by a team led by Hans Döllgast (chapter 1, figures 5a and 5b, and figure 14), the Großsiedlung Neu Ramersdorf in the east, by a team led by Delisle, Ingwersen and Berndt, and the Großsiedlung am Walchenseeplatz in the south, presided over by Johanna Loev (figure 15). Each of the main entrance points of the city was thus covered by one cemetery by Hans Grässel and by a housing estate built after the war, the northern one being constructed by Theodor Fischer at Alte Heide.<sup>87</sup> The key point of interest is that Munich, in its own way, did import several distinctive elements of formal Modernism into its plans, while retaining a certain reluctance to embrace it wholeheartedly. The only exception to this is possibly the Großsiedlung Neuhausen, which is in places (it has nearly 1,500 flats in it) almost exemplary in its Modernism, as seen in figure 5a, chapter 1. Two of the estates were built broadly on a north/ south alignment, to make the most of the sunlight, according to the principles established by Fischer at Alte Heide, and also by health reformers in the late nineteenth



**Figure 14:** Aerial view of Großsiedlung Neuhausen. Architect in charge: Hans Döllgast, 1928-1930. BAIvD, *München und seine Bauten nach 1912*, p. 278.

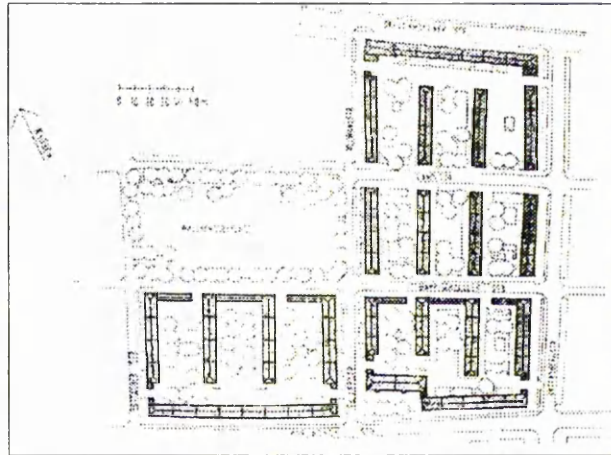
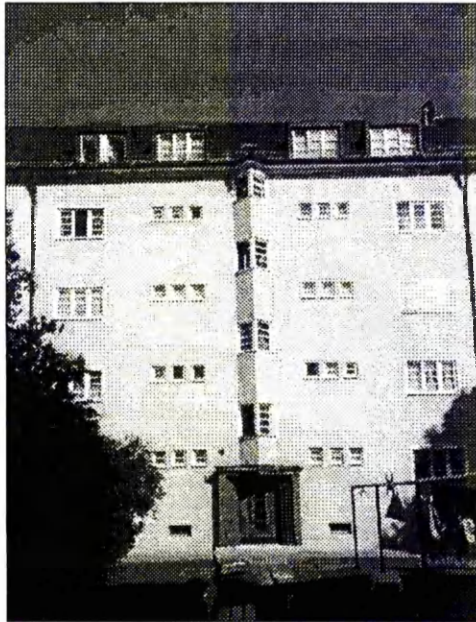
century. The third, Neu Ramersdorf, was a freer interpretation, of broadly north/south strips inside long arms, used to define the estate and provide enclosure to what were essentially three smaller sites rather than one big one.

Of primary interest here will be the areas in which the estates just somehow failed to be Modernist; for it is in these failures that the city's nuanced relationship to modernity is most clearly demonstrated, and contrasted with the fundamentally antithetical position of figures such as May and Gropius. For example, none of the estates use flat roofs, as it was considered pointless given the unsuitability to climate which they evidenced, the storage space which was lost, the lack of insulation, the unavailability of standardized parts, the lack of expertise in laying them and their expense. In that sense, the buildings were destined to lack perhaps *the* distinctive feature of classic Modernism – one which

<sup>87</sup> And those entrances to the city not covered by such a housing project would almost certainly have something else there – for example, the Stadion der Münchener Jugend on the Dachauer Straße, or the Altesheim St Joseph to the west.



some of the experimental housing in Munich by the city's one Modernist architect of note, Robert Vorhoelzer of the Post Office, managed to include. In some ways, this is unfair; as has already been discussed, most of the modernist architects who get most of the attention did in fact also use pitched roofs in many, sometimes even most of their buildings. They tend not to be shown, however; the Hufeisen at Berlin Britz is flat



**Figure 15:** Großsiedlung am Walchenseeplatz. Johanna Loev, 1928-31. Plan from BAIVd, *München und seine Bauten nach 1912*, p. 277.

roofed, but the estate surrounding it is pitched;<sup>88</sup> the *Einfamilienhäuser* estates by May were also flat roofed, but his largest estate, and the only one which makes any compromises with the concept of high-density housing, Bornheimer Hang, has pitched roofs throughout. Reyner Banham has drawn attention to this phenomenon of selective illustration with regard to Gropius' and Meyer's Faguswerk, saying of the building's subsequent assessment:

There can be little doubt that it owes this high esteem in part to Gropius' personal relationship to the historians of the Modern Movement, and also, in part, to the accidents of photography – it is possible, by a hostile selection of photographs, to make it appear no more 'Modern' than, say, Behrens' Eppenhäuser development of 1907. The modernity [he actually means Modernism] of this group of buildings is visible, indeed, only on parts of two sides, where the machine-shop and power-house present glazed walls to the south. These two blocks are in such strong contrast to the unadventurous neo-Classical regularity of the buildings that one may suspect that... they must have been an unsought consequence of the *innerste Wesen* of the functional programme.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>88</sup> This can be seen in aerial photographs, such as that on p. 167, William Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900* (Oxford, 1982).

<sup>89</sup> Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (Oxford, 1994 [1960]), p. 79.

Such a showing of the Faguswerk might be conceived of as hostile; but it also might be thought of as honest, in terms of the way the building was experienced by those coming to work in it. This would depend on whether one's objective was to describe the way the building was experienced, or the way the building has subsequently been used in cultural, art or architectural history. At any rate, whether hostile or honest, such views are not usually given by the cultural or architectural historian, who have, in general, told the truth by showing one particular angle, but not the whole truth.

The fenestration of Munich's housing too proved to be more 'banal' than one might have hoped for in the Heroic Modernist tradition, in that long bands of windows tended to be avoided. In fact, the conclusions in Munich were that smaller windows would firstly make the buildings look more domestic, a compromise with the past, and that it would also allow the use of the standardized frame sizes already provided in Germany – a significant compromise with the existing structures of industrial capitalism. However, they wanted to appear modern, so standard window sizes were chosen which emphasized horizontality, and the very act of standardization gives the estates an air of planned regularity. They copied, in some cases, features from modernist models; for example, the protruding triangular rising windows above the doorways at Bornheimer Hang were used by Loev at Walchenseeplatz (see figure 16); we should, however, be wary of assuming a link between the two as this was a common motif at the time. This seems to show a balanced ambition to have some of the styles of modern architecture (although Bornheimer Hang is the least 'Modernist' but most *großstädtisch* of Mays *Siedlungen*), while showing no ambition to buy into a vision of a totally new society to be produced by it. Munich's basically mannerist attitude towards Modernism may earn it contempt or simply disinterest in art-historical terms, but therein lies its modernity.

Perhaps most significantly, the estates in Munich were designed to reflect the social composition of an *extant* social order, not engineer the uniformity of a future one. Naturally, the demographics of the city meant that most of the flats fell into the category of small flats for cheap rent to average sized families. Yet some of them were designed to be rented to more middle class elements, some were intended for families with many children, and others were designed to be artists' studios. Social facilities were included, but in the case of laundries, they were optional; it caused some resentment in other projects in Germany and Austria that the laundry bills were added to the rent whether

they were wished for or not. This uniform application of laundry charges assumed that women would do their own washing, whereas in fact many women grouped their laundry together to allow them to work or, having only few clothes, it was simply unnecessary for them to wash sufficiently often to justify the fees charged to them.<sup>90</sup> The city of Munich's rejection of the ideologies of a normified way of living was evidenced in the writings of Mayor Scharnagl regarding the way the corporation was striving to overcome the difficulties in designing modern housing, when he stressed that,

The City of Munich is fully aware of this [problem], and is currently engaging itself in the tricky task of showing how to use technology for the completion of the home, and at the same time do justice to the diverse relationships inherent in the social organization of this city.<sup>91</sup>

This has already been discussed in relation to the kitchens in the *Großsiedlungen*, and his remarks here were more completely contextualized in chapter three. The city's repeated stress – for example, in a letter to the research party from Birmingham discussed in chapter one – was on a refusal to typify, a refusal to engineer socially:

The endeavour of the City Council and the responsible board of dwelling was to build lodgings which may at the same time be used by an industrial worker as well as a lower official or employee or a small trader. [...] So the city of Munich has no real artisans' dwellings as they are usual in manufacturing districts.<sup>92</sup>

The table below shows the variety of sizes of flats in the different GeWoFAG estates in the city, as of 1930:

Siedlung	<45m <sup>2</sup>	45-60m <sup>2</sup>	61-70m <sup>2</sup>	71-80m <sup>2</sup>	81-100m <sup>2</sup>	>100m <sup>2</sup>	Total
Friedenheim	-	157	51	102	92	2	404
Neuhausen	36	333	355	507	285	66	1582
Neu Harlaching	1	648	81	60	21	52	863
Neu Ramersdorf	40	1090	259	159	141	29	1718
Walchenseeplatz	2	569	194	69	17	11	862
Total	79	2797	940	897	556	160	5429 <sup>93</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Some women complained to Munich councillors about this on their visit to Frankfurt, that they did not feel that they got their 3M per month's worth out of the laundry, but had to pay for it anyway. The centrally heated blocks incurred a charge of 8M per month, which the residents did not like as they felt it removed control of their budgets, and meant that they could not save money in hard times by turning the heating off and sleeping in the same bed, which was their custom in difficult periods [Bericht über die Reise der Mitglieder der Stadtratskommission beim Wohnungsamt nach Nürnberg und Frankfurt a.M. vom 22.-24. November 1926. SAM-WA-63].

<sup>91</sup> Karl Scharnagl, 'Geleitwort', in *Ämtlicher Katalog. Ausstellung 'München 1928: Heim und Technik'* (Munich, 1928), p. 13.

<sup>92</sup> Referat VII [Wohnungsreferat], 'Principles for Judging the Housing Question', in response to Scharnagl, 29 July 1930, letter requesting the housing department to explain why the town had no working-class housing as Vienna had. SAM-B&R-993

<sup>93</sup> Jahresbericht des Vorstandes der Gemeinnützigen Wohnungsfürsorge Aktiengesellschaft München 1930, p. 5. SAM-B&R-1458.

This shows that, while the weight of the production was in the small flat, the council always tried to balance this production to reflect the diversity of the city. This is particularly conspicuous in the even distribution of flat size in the Siedlung Neuhausen. This was the estate of which the council was most proud, and with justice. It is beautiful, and has proved a very successful housing project up to this time. The relatively even spread of floor areas of the flats demonstrates an interest in using housing policy for the purposes of integration and social cohesion, as opposed to, for example, Alte Heide, where all the apartments are under 55m<sup>2</sup>.

Another good example of this emphasis on diversity is the block of housing which the council ordered to stand outside the entrance of the Ausstellung 'Heim und Technik' in 1928 (chapter 1, figure 6). Designed by Fischer, it was to provide housing within it of sufficient variety to replicate the social relations of the city of Munich, not radically reconfigure them, having within it flats of between two and six rooms. At about the same time as he was commissioned to build this experimental block, Fischer wrote an article for the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, which appeared on the front page. Entitled, 'Munich's future in building', he outlined what was probably a close approximation of the city government's position, most significantly when he described his position as 'at once radical and reactionary':

The building plans, which I prepared for Munich thirty years ago, are already somewhat obsolete. Who could have foreseen then the shape and influence of the development of traffic which we have seen. From before the war, and especially since, fundamentally new points of view have emerged in the process of planning housing [*Siedlungswesen*]. A new conception of space [*Raumgefühl*], a sense of wide horizons and big assemblies of buildings slowly dissolve the lone forms – sufficient only unto themselves – which we have seen in the recent past. So, let us start again from the beginning! The hopelessly depressing power [*Das hoffnungslos Niederdrückende*] of the closed centripetal *Großstadt* is being dissolved, but will this viewpoint, which determines the future of the city, find the right forces to apply in the right places? ... We do not need any Ideal Programme, nor the stacking up of suggestions for assembling town halls, museums and institutes.<sup>94</sup>

Here he acknowledged the functional impracticability of the mono-centred *Großstadt*, which the council itself recognized, but went on to argue against the dissolution of the urban form which others had tried elsewhere. The answer would prove to be complex,

<sup>94</sup> 'Münchens Zukunft im Bauen. Kritik und Ausdruck, von Theodor Fischer', *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 15 October 1927. SAM-B&R-1638.

and lie in the fusion of ideas, not the delineation of an 'ideal programme'. The problem certainly was not a lack of talent; Munich could always find that if it wanted. The problem was getting a clear conception of what was required from the patron – in this case, the municipal government. Many people simply wanted a return to the old, to have traditional decoration, traditional forms, and that had mercifully been forbidden in Munich; such desires marked the 'beginning of the end,' and were, he argued, an '*Angsterzeugnis*': a product of fear. There was, however, another *Angst*: 'Die Angst vor dem Charakteristischen'.<sup>95</sup> The key was, how was Munich to reconcile the product of fear – the clinging to the past – with its fear of seeming old-fashioned, which may well compel it to give in to the '...inclination to let others on different banks – the Rhine, the Main or the Spree – burn their fingers...', without ever producing anything useful or decisive itself. The solution was to reject ideal or dream-like solutions, to understand that one had to build *for* a society, not try to build the society itself.

In this respect the council is seen to be rejecting the normifying ambitions of the ideologies underpinning most Modernist housing projects; it rejected the ambition to create a 'new man' or a 'new humanity', and instead evidenced a desire to reform the experience of the old one. For example, the city never considered manufacturing some building elements itself – as May had done, thereby creating yet another level of normed building elements which were actually only usable in one particular project. May had insisted on public production, but had allowed private ownership; Munich demanded public ownership, but private production. Instead, despite campaigns from small businesses' organizations, some members of the BVP, and Stadtrat Fiehler, NSDAP leader in the council and Mayor of Munich from April 1933, the city resolutely stuck by its intention to employ only big building and manufacturing firms of the likes of Stöhr, Moll and Gebrüder Rank, and fittings which were already standardized, and which could be used in all of the estates.<sup>96</sup> This policy had in fact underpinned the entire programme:

With the planned new *Großsiedlungen* we aim to achieve the utmost economies of scale and reductions in costs through the thorough typification of the buildings and the flats within them, through the application of normified fittings throughout the entire project, and through securing as contractual partners large companies, and placing large scale orders with big firms and manufacturers. Only by these methods can we achieve the necessary cheapening of the means of production

<sup>95</sup> 'The fear of the characteristic' or 'traditional.'

<sup>96</sup> See exchange of correspondence between the Handwerkskammer von Oberbayern, the Stadtrat, the Magistrat and Stadtrat Fiehler, March and April 1930. SAM-B&R-1458.



themselves, while guaranteeing that the solidity of the buildings is not compromised.<sup>97</sup>

They did however have huge reservations about this method of proceeding:

The ultimate goal of the creation of housing must be some sort of industrialization of the building process... We are not, however, of the opinion that the industrialization should be so complete as, for example, in America, where entire buildings can just be ordered from a catalogue. Where in Germany the way of the industrialization of the entire building process has been trodden, as for example in Frankfurt am Main or in Berlin with the *Occidentbauweise*, or where houses according to the Wagner or Frank system have been built on a large scale, they have not achieved the intended reduction in costs or economies of scale, because they have involved their own norms, and have not taken advantage of the typification already in existence.<sup>98</sup>

Given the way the city had constituted the board of the GeWoFAG, this almost had to be: three of its sixteen members were directors of banks, and three more were directors from southern Germany's biggest construction companies.<sup>99</sup> Significantly, the parts were standardized according to the coincidental and profitable manufacturing imperatives of advanced capitalism, not according to the socially idealistic ones of a restructured, made-to-measure modernity. It is in the fundamentally banal, almost mannerist application of modernist styles to its housing projects that the city revealed its willingness to accept modernity, to work with the everyday, the transient, the fleeting, and, significantly, to accept the existing geographic location of the city and the dynamics of production of advanced capitalism. Thereby the corporation displayed its willingness to work with modernity rather than an uncompromising desire to destroy it.

### Conclusion

When the city of Munich built, it evidenced a desire not for revolution, but evolution. It sought to adapt the governmental, economic and architectural paradigms which were available to it, and stretch them as far as they would go in order to enrich the lives of the citizen. The city council never assumed, however, that it could completely buck the trend or set an agenda entirely on their own terms, and they seem to have regarded those who thought that they could as impractical and naïve. Before the war, they explored the

<sup>97</sup> Preis, *Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot*, p. 98.

<sup>98</sup> Preis, *Beseitigung der Wohnungsnot*, p. 99.

<sup>99</sup> Jahresbericht des Vorstandes. Gemeinnützige Wohnungsfürsorge Aktiengesellschaft München 1929, p. 5. SAM-B&R-1458.

possibilities which a departure from the dominant aesthetic mode might offer them in terms of furthering their image. Particularly in at the 1908 exhibition and the Schwabinger hospital, they guaranteed that high profile projects clearly aligned the city government with a rejection of historicism. Their social policy was explored in housing in a way which never once at any stage mentioned any concepts of degeneration or worries about the racial health of the population, but before the First World War always focussed on a humane imperative, and afterwards on a socio-political one. It was an area in which they demonstrated they were ready to experiment, challenging the *laissez faire* liberal ethos without providing revolutionary alternatives. The re-interpretations of the domestic form which were built on the Thalkirchnerstraße proved to the council that its interventions were effective, and apparently stiffened their resolve to build densely, using standardization and with the provision of social facilities. This was a habit which they perpetuated after the war, offering Germany's first housing estate on the most modern town planning principles, and planning the country's first reinforced concrete tower block at the war's close.

Yet while displaying constant innovation and repeatedly asserting their right to be considered as credible aesthetic, cultural and social reformers, they never had an ambition beyond reform. Even their revolutions were quiet ones: the social funding of housing in 1900; their rejection of historicism; the adoption of the 'form follows function' credo; the revolutionary school plans; their occupation of military buildings before the war's end; their principled insistence on *Hochbau* in housing; their separation of vehicular and pedestrian circulation spaces; their adoption of large scale standardization; their experimentation with poured and reinforced concrete; all of this was done with a quiet, though public, resolution, and in a spirit of compromise with the social, cultural and economic structures which they felt would best help them realize their ambitions. The focus was always on being at the cutting edge of the achievable, and they avoided problems requiring long term systematic restructuring for completion. Preis's assertion that 'we want to keep our distance from all experimentation' was aimed directly at the ceaseless and seemingly unending innovation which seemed to emerge from America, France, Frankfurt and Berlin. He summed up a theme for the whole period when he said to the council:

The *Denkschrift* also takes a position à propos the economic and modern building technique, and comes to the conclusion, that the efforts to find a more economic way of building must be supported, but only in a step-by-step way, with a

constant and cautious evaluation of the experiences elsewhere, and with constant regard to local peculiarities which may influence the outcome.<sup>100</sup>

When they found that standardization was useful, they accepted it, but on the terms of corporate capitalism not socialized production. Theirs was a borrowed or adopted standardization, not the product of their own idealism or political agenda. One BVP councillor asserted that the question of normification was not one for the council chamber, but for experts,<sup>101</sup> and the council ignored all the pleas to reject the new emphasis on division of labour, standardization, large corporations and large contracts.<sup>102</sup> Throughout the period, the city's governors and experts showed a resolution to innovate, sometimes dramatically, but only as far as was necessary to fulfil their reforming ambitions, and not a step further. They were prepared to explore, and even generate, unusual housing solutions and architectural answers if they could see a use and a measurable, balance-sheet gain from doing so. An aesthetic not linked directly to a namable and achievable short and medium term social objective did not, however, interest them.

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<sup>100</sup> Generaldebatte um die '12.000 Wohnungen'. Sitzung des Wohnungsausschusses, 14 March 1928. SAM-WA-64.

<sup>101</sup> Stadtrat Gasteiger, Generaldebatte um die '12.000 Wohnungen' Sitzung des Wohnungsausschusses, 14 March 1928. SAM-WA-64.

<sup>102</sup> J. Würz, Dr Knoblauch and Dr Etzel, Handwerkskammer von Oberbayern and A Wagner, Allgemeine Gewerbeverein München to the Magistrat der Landeshauptstadt München, 22 May 1928; Handwerkskammer von Oberbayern, 'Durchführung der mit oeffentlichen Darlehen finanzierten Wohnungsbauten, insbesondere des Sonderbauprogramms München 1927 [sic], hier Vergebungswesen; Handelskammer von Oberbayern an das Direktorium A und B des Stadtrates München, betrifft: Wohnungsbauprogramm der Stadt München. SAM-WA-64.

## Conclusion

Whatever the difficulties which the city of Munich's governors and experts had with modernity, and more specifically, with modernity's effects on the interior and social life of the individual, they never suggested leaving behind the locus of those difficulties: the city. Not only did they refuse to leave, but they refused to challenge its modern *modus operandi*, industrial capitalism and bureaucratic expertise. That is not to say that the corporation did not have criticisms of modern life, modern society, modern cultural production, but it does deny any assumptions that they wove those together into a fundamentally antithetical position. The history of the *Hauptstadt der Bewegung* and its built environment will be of little use to the investigation of the intellectual origins or appeal of the *Bewegung* itself. But it does have a vast amount to add to a more profound understanding of responses to the phenomena of modernity in Germany at the beginning of the twentieth century. A view of modernity, the city, and modernism needs to engage with the simultaneous pluralism of responses which characterized the majority of Germans in this period.

There was not just one modernity, threatening alienation, fear and loneliness to an urban population simultaneously fractured and grouped into the crowd. There was another, of clean water, old people's homes, personal liberty and education. Most significantly, the dichotomy presented here was not reflected in a division into supporters or critics of the modern world, but was played out in individuals, and also types of knowledge, which were fundamentally committed to a holistic approach to modern society. Responses to urbanization were equally polyvalent, and highly determined by the individual factors involved. What emerges very strongly from discussions of town planning and urban enlargement is a sense that urbanization was acceptable provided that, firstly, it was comprehensible, and secondly, that it could be controlled. This meant that ways of

describing, understanding and managing urban change, and the industrial capitalism which underpinned it, had to be developed to make the shocking, dirty and unknown processes taking place psychologically manageable, not just on the peripheries of the new city, but also at its old heart. Importantly, it was the forms of government most closely associated with modern societies, in which the divisions of pluralist democracy are given wholeness through the shared subscription to the privileged expertise of a professional bureaucracy, which could generate the knowledge, devise solutions and harness the positive potential in order to enhance the lives of individuals in the city. This could be by using the designs of municipal schools, orphanages and social housing to engender a sense of *Heimat* in the growing population with few roots in the city, or by developing planning regulations to ensure that the spatial organization of the city was psychologically comfortable and economically advantageous to the citizens. Or it could be by enlarging the town, giving careful aesthetic consideration to ways in which industrial development could be made attractive and aestheticized, thereby making it a positive rather than negative feature of the urban landscape. Whichever path was chosen, the underlying features of a distinctively modern social organization lay at its core.

Likewise, there was not one universal city. Cities themselves were felt to contain highly diverse experiential possibilities. Contrasting, for example, the Frankfurt Kitchen with the Munich Kitchen can draw out for the historian the different ways of envisioning the relationships of the citizen to rational thought and industrial production in modern society, and these possibilities were not lost on the technocrats of either city. Such was the range and variation of urban environment even *within* a big city, ranging economically and visually from *bürgerliche Villen-Viertel* of Grünwald and Bogenhausen to the horror of the *Mietskasernen* in Haidhausen and the Schlachthofviertel, from the 700-year-old stinking, decrepit town centre to the Jugendstil excesses of the spanking-new suburb of Schwabing, that Münchener sometimes found the pressure to generalize about their own city difficult. The ease with which some historians talk about 'the' city and 'the urban' would have seemed very controversial to them. Of course, they acknowledged that cities had things in common, but they did not assume, as some of the more extreme cultural critics of the time, that all cities shared all negative characteristics in common. They recognized that there were economic differences, for example: Munich was relatively under-industrialized compared to other German towns. On the level of personal experience, they regarded

Berlin as more hurried, nervous and *großstädtisch*, and considered that Munich was more comfortable and gentle, characteristics which they wanted to foster while they industrialized. They also saw that cities in general all across Western Europe had no suitable way of providing housing which did not cause physical harm to its occupants, though never believed that a common problem implied a common solution, irrespective of local conditions. They thought that modern cities tended to be more or less soul destroying, and more or less free, whereas older cities they regarded as more spiritually satisfying, but dirty, diseased and uncomfortable. They believed these things simultaneously, acknowledging to a degree the existence of 'the' city, but regarded conclusions drawn from 'the' city as being useful only if they could be profitably applied to 'a' city.

Lastly, they had an ambivalent relationship towards the cutting edge of Modernism. They refused to accept that it was in any sense an aesthetic 'fulfillment' of modernity, and tended to regard it as rather idealist, expensive and remote from the phenomena they wished to address. Parallel chronological narratives of the development of modernity and modernism in its broadest sense have perhaps encouraged a viewpoint which emphasizes a 'special relationship' between the two, but quantitatively marginal cultural phenomena should not be allowed to obscure those lying in the heart of the mainstream. Municipal governors and experts did, however, share the same critiques of visual culture, particularly of architecture, as the avant-garde at the end of the nineteenth century, which acted as a common stimulus to many strands of aesthetic theory at the beginning of the twentieth century. Municipal responses, while obvious candidates for inclusion in the broad and ill-defined canon of reforming, progressive, or even modern, architecture of the pre-war period, do not qualify for the much narrower and carefully controlled list of masterworks of the inter-war period, although they represented much more significant strands of building practice.

This focus on the ambivalence of, in this case, municipal responses to modern society, the stress on both the universal and the particular features of the city by the administration, and on a compromise form of modern architecture should reinforce a view of German culture of this period which emphasizes the 'safe' middle ground over the 'dangerous' peripheries of social and cultural discourse. While there clearly were pathological and dramatic aspects to German history in this period, it is worthwhile stressing their marginal qualities, and not allowing a teleological approach to inflate

their importance, projecting the concerns of what would have been Munich's future onto Borscht, Scharnagl, Preis, Grässel, Fischer, Schachner *et al.* Most cultural production was average and unremarkable; most world-views lacked both illuminating insight and catastrophic misunderstanding; most aesthetic trends were moderate and dilute.



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B&R	Bürgermeister und Rat: 305/8a, 306/2a, 993, 1455, 1638
GW	Gaswerke: 278
HBA	Hochbauamt: 489, 502, 645/i, 727
KA	Kulturamt: 618/1, 618/2
KH	Krankenhäuser: 44
KHS	Krankenhaus Schwabing: 15/1
KrAnst	Kranken-Anstalten: 200
NLG	Nachlaß Grässel: 51, 60, 360, 367, 373, 374, 397, 399, 400, 403, 407, 408
RSP	Ratsitzungsprotokolle: 692/7, 693/4
SAM	Stadtarchiv München
WA	Wohnungsamt: 18, 23, 39/1, 63, 64
ZA-KH-KHS	Zeitungsausschnitte-Krankenhäuser-Krankenhaus Schwabing
ZA-KH-UK-DK	Zeitungsausschnitte-Krankenhäuser-Universitätskliniken-Dermatologische Klinik
ZA-KH-Ver	Zeitungsausschnitte-Krankenhäuser-Verschiedenes
ZA-KH-Ver-KHTK	Zeitungsausschnitte-Krankenhäuser-Verschiedenes-Krankenhaus an der Thalkirchenerstraße

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