

**“THE LABORATORY OF A NEW HUMANITY”:  
THE CONCEPT OF TYPE, LIFE REFORM, AND MODERN ARCHITECTURE  
IN HELLERAU GARDEN CITY, 1900-1914**

by

**Didem Ekici**

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**Doctoral Committee**

**Associate Professor Lydia M. Soo, Co-Chair  
Assistant Professor Andrew Herscher, Co-Chair  
Associate Professor Scott Spector  
Assistant Professor Claire Zimmerman**

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PREVIEW

To Seher, Ekrem, Taylan, and Nevin Ekici

PREVIEW

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

What is Hellerau? A small place at the edge of the woods, the so-called Dresdener Heide approximately half-an-hour tram ride from Dresden, located on a hilly site one hundred meters above the city, so that on clear nights one could admire the lights of the metropolis that lie beneath... One certainly should not imagine Hellerau as a rural bliss in an atmosphere of quietness and content confinement. It was rather a battlefield of minds and ideas, an experimental formation, which allowed many to try out and realize reform ideas that were in the air at the time, an evolving experiment.<sup>1</sup>

Elfriede Feudel, 1960

“What is Hellerau?” This simple question that pedagogue and rhythmic gymnastics teacher Elfriede Feudel asked many years after she lived there is the starting point of a multi-layered history of the first German garden city. As Feudel observed, Hellerau, which was founded in 1908, was much more than an idyllic garden city. During the two years she lived there from 1911 to 1913, it manifested the convergence of the often contradictory reformist aspirations of the generation of the 1890s, which believed that it was up to its members to shape modernity and emerging mass society.

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<sup>1</sup> “Was ist Hellerau? Ein kleiner Ort am Rand eines grossen Waldgebietes, der sogenannten Dresdener Heide, etwa in einer halben Stunde mit der Elektrischen von Dresden aus zu erreichen, auf welligem Gelände, hundert Meter über der Stadt, so dass man an klaren Abenden von den Anhöhen das Lichtmeer der Grossstadt in einem riesigen Bogen unter sich bewundern konnte... Freilich darf man sich Hellerau nicht als ein Bild dörflichen Friedens in einer Atmosphäre von Geruhsamkeit und zufriedener Beschränkung vorstellen. Es war vielmehr ein Kampfplatz der Geister und Meinungen, eine Art Versuchsfeld, auf dem sich die vielen, das in der Luft schwebenden Reformideen begegneten und auf ihre praktische Verwirklichung hin ausprobiert werden konnten, ein Experiment schon in seinem Entstehen.” Elfriede Feudel, “Schule der Rhythmische Erziehung,” in *Hellerau leuchtete: Zeitzeugenberichte und Erinnerungen*, ed. Ehrhardt Heinold and Günther Grosser (Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 2007), 154.

As historian Kevin Repp has shown, 1890 was a turning point for the German reform milieu.<sup>2</sup> Kaiser William II issued two social reform decrees on the labor question in February. Major reform institutions were founded in 1890 and many of the others that emerged later also traced their theoretical origins to that crucial year. The term *Lebensreform* (Life Reform) was first used in the 1890s for a wide array of reforms that originated in nineteenth-century Europe.<sup>3</sup> The educated bourgeoisie initiated these reforms, which included naturopathy, clothing reform, nudism, temperance, vegetarianism, land reform, and the garden city movement, in order to heal modern man from the adverse effects of modernization. Their goal was to create the “new man” by fostering a healthy way of living.

At the heart of the Life Reform movement lies the complex juxtaposition of cultural optimism and pessimism in Wilhelmine Germany, signified by a widespread pride in technological progress and yet also yearnings for a more harmonious and organic society.<sup>4</sup> The critique of contemporary civilization in Germany was conjoined with a continuing affirmation of many features of urban mechanical life with all its attendant artifacts and cultural forms. In contrast to historians’ earlier focus on the anti-modernism

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<sup>2</sup> Kevin Repp, *Reformers, Critics, and the Paths of German Modernity: Anti-politics and the Search for Alternatives, 1890-1914* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), 25.

1890 was also a political turning point. The emperor William I died and the new one, Wilhelm II dismissed Bismarck, who united German states under Prussian rule in 1871. With Wilhelm I, they were seen as the twin founding fathers of the nation.

<sup>3</sup> On the Life Reform Movement see Kai Buchholz and Institut Mathildenhöhe, eds., *Die Lebensreform: Entwürfe zur Neugestaltung von Leben und Kunst um 1900* (Darmstadt: Institut Mathildenhöhe: Häusser, 2001), Janos Frecot, Johann Friedrich Geist, and Diethart Kerbs, *Fidus, 1868-1948; zur ästhetischen Praxis bürgerlicher Fluchtbewegungen* (München: Rogner & Bernhard, 1972), Matthew Jefferies, “Lebensreform: A Middle-Class Antidote to Wilhelminism?,” in *Wilhelminism and its Legacies: German Modernities, Imperialism, and the Meanings of Reform, 1890-1930*, ed. Geoff Eley and James N. Retallack (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), Wolfgang R. Krabbe, “Lebensreform/Selbstreform,” in *Handbuch der deutschen Reformbewegungen: 1880-1933*, ed. Diethart Kerbs and Jürgen Reulecke (Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Verlag, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-century Germany* (Oxford Oxfordshire; New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

of the German bourgeoisie—which, they claimed, eventually culminated in the rise of National Socialism<sup>5</sup>—starting from the 1980s, a growing scholarship has analyzed the complexities and richness of Wilhelmine modernity in all realms of cultural production.<sup>6</sup>

Hellerau, which had 1,931 inhabitants by the end of 1912, brought together many ideas that were part of the Life Reform movement.<sup>7</sup> Although there were older life reformist communities such as the vegetarian colony Eden (founded in 1893 near Oranienburg, Berlin), as the first garden city, Hellerau integrated, as never before, architecture and applied arts into its holistic vision. Industrialist Karl Schmidt founded Hellerau mainly for the workers in his furniture factory, the German Workshops for Handcrafted Art, in order to create a healthy and efficient working class. In addition to the factory and the housing section, it had an institute dedicated to rhythmic gymnastics, a gymnastics and sport club, a school, and a market. Hellerau, however, quickly gained a reputation for its middle-class, life reformist inhabitants rather than for its reformed workers. In fact, the image of Hellerau was so much identified with the non-conformist practices of the Life Reform advocates that the contemporary propaganda booklets on behalf of the garden city took pains to remind visitors that the garden city was not a

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<sup>5</sup> The dominant paradigm in German historiography during the 1960 and 70s was known as the *Sonderweg* thesis, which claimed that the failures of the bourgeois liberalism starting from the unsuccessful 1848 bourgeoisie revolution constituted a “special path” leading to the rise of National Socialism in the 1930s. See Fritz Richard Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), Hans Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire, 1871-1918*, trans. Kim Traynor (Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, UK ; Dover, N.H.: Berg Publishers, 1985), George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964).

<sup>6</sup> David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley were among the first historians who criticized the *Sonderweg* thesis. See Blackbourn and Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History*.

<sup>7</sup> 581 of the inhabitants were children under age 14. The statistics are taken from “Hellerau” in *Gartenstadt, Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 7:3 (1913): 56.

community of eccentrics. Rather, people with any political, religious views and lifestyles could live in Hellerau as long as they did not lack basic moral values.<sup>8</sup>

As a garden city, Hellerau emerged from the German garden city movement formed around the turn of the century, which incorporated ideas from the land reform, *Körperkultur*, housing reform, and the Applied Arts movement. In fact, all these reforms were interconnected, because in imperial Germany reformist aspirations and the mission to create a powerful nation-state went hand in hand. In other words, many reformers conceived improving the health and living conditions of the middle (Mittelstand) and working classes—which formed mass society in their eyes—as a means to increase the quality of industrial production and thus increase Germany's competitiveness in international markets.<sup>9</sup>

Ultimately, the founders of Hellerau wanted to reconcile industrial capitalist society with a perceived social cohesion of an ordered past. This basic ambivalence was reflected in numerous juxtapositions—the individual and the collective, technology and nature, as well as industry and crafts—that together would fuse into an organic unity in modern society. Moreover, the founders' vision of the garden city was paradoxical. On the one hand, it was to be instrumental in increasing the quality of industrial production. On the other hand, it was to prevent the instrumentalization of workers by the capitalist system by restoring their autonomy. Given its ambivalences and contradictions, Hellerau became a true representative of Wilhelmine modernity.

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<sup>8</sup> *Etagenwohnung in der Grossstadt oder Einfamilienhaus in der Gartenstadt?*, (1913), 15.

<sup>9</sup> See Kenneth D. Barkin, "The Crisis of Modernity, 1887-1902," in *Imagining Modern German Culture, 1889-1910*, ed. Françoise Forster-Hahn and Corp Author Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (Washington : National Gallery of Art ; Hanover, N.H. : Distributed by the University Press of New England, 1996).

This dissertation examines the roles played by the garden city and modern architecture in realizing the founders' vision of mass society in Hellerau. It focuses on the initial years of the garden city movement and Hellerau from 1900 until 1914 in order to display the complex intertwining of the reformist discourses on the mass subject, organic society, and a new architecture that incorporated industrial production. But how were these ideas intertwined? To map their relationship, a brief historical context on the garden city movement, *Körperkultur*, the new domestic culture, and Wilhelmine design reform is in order.

The German Garden City Society, founded in 1902, considered land reform as its core. The first discussions of this issue in Germany go back to the 1850s.<sup>10</sup> Even though the movement imported theories from abroad, the land reform movement essentially emerged as a response to poor living conditions in German cities. There rapid urbanization led to overcrowding and land speculation. Developers bought large tracts of land on urban peripheries with the hope of future profit. The Society for Land Reform (Verein für Bodenreform) founded in 1894 and the League of German Land Reformers (Bund Deutscher Bodenreformer) founded in 1898, sought to bring an end to the treatment of land as a speculative commercial commodity. Members argued that the housing shortage in big cities could not be solved otherwise. Some, such as industrialist Michael Flürscheim (1844-1912), advocated the nationalization of all land and its ensuing leasing to the highest bidder. More moderate ones, such as Adolf Damaschke (1865-1935), the long-term president of the League of German Land Reformers, called for a tax on profits gained from land, which should be re-invested in cooperative housing

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<sup>10</sup> On the German land reform movement see Repp, *Reformers, Critics, and the Paths of German Modernity*, Elisabeth Meyer-Renschhausen and Hartwig Berger, "Bodenreform," in *Handbuch der deutschen Reformbewegungen 1880-1933* (Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Verlag, 1998).

schemes. Damaschke's ideas represented the concept of a "third way" between capitalism and communism, which appealed to broad segments of the middle class.

Damaschke was among the members of the Wilhelmine reform milieu who transferred the laws of biology to the social realm. Reformers conceived the vitalistic conceptions of the organic along with Darwinism as a way to reform capitalist society. In fact, nowhere in Europe did the ideas of Darwinism become as popular as in Germany.<sup>11</sup> The nation, society, and the metropolis were all considered as living organisms that were sick or degenerate. Reform-minded critics believed their degeneration could be cured only by restoring the harmony that they claimed had existed until the nineteenth century. Harmony was perceived as an antidote to the chaos and eclecticism found in modern society. It signified an organic unity, which would regulate mass society in all its aspects.

A central claim of this dissertation is that organicism was translated into architecture through an assumed relationship between built form and physiognomy: the degeneration of the German people resulted in the degeneration of the built environment and vice versa. The remedy for degeneration was seen in the imitation of the purposive unity of living organisms in the built environment.<sup>12</sup> In other words, an organic built environment was identified with an organic society.

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<sup>11</sup> As early as the 1860s, biologists Ernst Haeckel and Friedrich Ratzel, among other German scientists, advocated Darwinism for social reform. On Darwinism in Germany see Daniel Gasman, *The Scientific Origins of National Socialism: Social Darwinism in Ernst Haeckel and the German Monist League* (London, New York: Macdonald & Co.; American Elsevier, 1971), Woodruff D. Smith, *Politics and the Sciences of Culture in Germany 1840-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 91-94.

<sup>12</sup> This idea laid the ground for the twentieth-century organic architecture represented by such architects as Frank Lloyd Wright. Historian Caroline van Eck differentiates the twentieth-century organicism in architecture from its predecessor in the nineteenth-century. She argues that in the twentieth century, organic architecture was based on a social idea, expressed primarily in the total structure and spatial conception of a building. It was used in a programmatic way to develop a style of building; whereas in the nineteenth century, organicism was part of the theoretical apparatus used in order to reflect on style and meaning in

Franz Oppenheimer, the leader of the settlement movement (Siedlungsbewegung) and a prominent figure in the garden city movement, was among the reformers who conceived society as an organism. Having studied both medicine and economics, Oppenheimer argued for transferring the terms of scientific medicine to the sick organism of the economy. In 1896, he published his book *Die Siedlungsgenossenschaft* (The Settlement Cooperative) on the “social organism.”<sup>13</sup> He held the capitalist system responsible for its sickness. A healthy organism, for Oppenheimer, represented the harmonious functioning of organs so that both the whole and individual parts were equally empowered. The disharmony of functions or the disruption of the power equilibrium was the root cause of the social illness. It revealed itself in “the atrophy of the most important organ of the economic body, the so-called productive middle classes” as opposed to “the hypertrophy of a much less important organ, the small group of *Grosskapitalisten* (big capitalists).”<sup>14</sup> His recommended therapy was settlement cooperatives in the countryside, which would balance “the dull and uneducated farmer” with “the overstimulated city dweller,” the two “races” that represent respectively the health and peace of country life and the vibrancy of city life.<sup>15</sup> His remarks summarize how later garden city advocates would envision the garden city dweller.

Not only Oppenheimer, but many other reformers diagnosed German society with a degeneration resulting from the rampant industrialization, urbanization,

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architecture on a more general and abstract level; it did not lead to the development of a specifically ‘organic’ style of architecture. Caroline van Eck, *Organicism in Nineteenth-Century Architecture : An Inquiry into its Theoretical and Philosophical Background* (Amsterdam: Architectura & Natura Press, 1994), 35.

<sup>13</sup> Franz Oppenheimer, *Die Siedlungsgenossenschaft : Versuch einer positiven Überwindung des Kommunismus durch Lösung des Genossenschaftsproblems und der Agrarfrage* (Leipzig : Duncker & Humblot, 1896).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 418.

commercialization, exclusive scientific thinking, and instrumental reason that dominated the nineteenth century. In this intellectual climate, health and aesthetic discourses converged in particular ways, whereby a new understanding of the healthy body found new forms of expression associated with *Körperkultur*. Founded in Germanic racial ideals, *Körperkultur* aspired to regenerate German people by re-establishing the harmony of the body and mind and advancing the body to an equal standing with the mind in a culture perceived to be “one-sidedly intellectual.”<sup>16</sup> Such life reforms as nudism, the clothing reform, and naturopathy, which were concerned with health, constituted *Körperkultur*.<sup>17</sup> Turn-of-the-century reformers advocated a physical revival through the promotion of exercise, sports, and gymnastics. It was inspired in part by a burgeoning popular interest in health and the new science of hygiene.

The health discourse infiltrated all areas of Wilhelmine social and cultural life. *Körperkultur* corresponded to the principles of social hygiene, which were closely related to industrial expansion and the concomitant scientific management of bodies. As Michel Foucault has shown, from the eighteenth century onwards, the health and physical well-being of the population became one of the essential objectives of political power as a means of preserving the labor force.<sup>18</sup> The working capacity of the human body was considered as the “state capital which bears the highest interest” and progress towards

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<sup>16</sup> The split of body and mind has been a prominent theme in Western thought since the seventeenth-century philosopher Rene Descartes (1596-1650) conceptualized the “mind” as completely separable from the “body.”

<sup>17</sup> On *Körperkultur*, see Christopher Derek Kenway, “Kraft und Schönheit: Regeneration and Racial Theory in the German Physical Culture Movement, 1895-1920” (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 1996), Uwe Schneider, “Nacktkultur im Kaiserreich,” in *Handbuch zur “Völkischen Bewegung” 1871-1918*, ed. Uwe Puschner, Walter Schmitz, and Justus H. Ulbricht (München: K. G. Saur, 1999), Michael Hau, *The Cult of Health and Beauty in Germany: A Social History, 1890-1930* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), Diethart Kerbs and Jürgen Reulecke, eds., *Handbuch der deutschen Reformbewegungen 1880-1933* (Wuppertal: P. Hammer, 1998).

<sup>18</sup> Michel Foucault, “The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century,” in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).



restoration of health was seen as synonymous with economic gain.<sup>19</sup> Foucault dubbed the administration of bodies and the calculated management of life starting from the seventeenth century as the era of “bio-power.”<sup>20</sup> This “bio-power” was intimately linked to the development of capitalism, the growth of which “would not have been possible without the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic processes.”<sup>21</sup> In other words, the healthy body of the worker guaranteed his successful incorporation into capitalist production.

Foucault used the notion of docility to demonstrate how bodies can be molded, transformed, and improved as a vehicle of technologies of domination. The disciplinary techniques employed in modern institutions focused on the body as the object and target of power. The operation of bodies with the desired “techniques, the speed and the efficiency” would result in “subjected and practiced bodies, 'docile' bodies.”<sup>22</sup> In order to have a productive work force and an efficient economy, capitalism required a healthy,

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<sup>19</sup> *International Exposition St. Louis 1904. Official Catalogue. Exhibition of the German Empire*, (Berlin: G. Stilke, 1904), 345.

<sup>20</sup> Foucault wrote that the bio-power had two poles of development. First is “centered on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic control, all this was ensured by the procedures of power that characterized the *disciplines: an anatomo-politics of the human body*. The second, formed somewhat later, focused on the species body, the body imbued with the mechanics of life serving as the basis of the biological processes: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that can cause these to vary. Their supervision was effected through an entire series of interventions and *regulatory controls: a bio-politics of the population*. The disciplines of the body and the regulations of the population constituted the two poles around which the organization of power over life was deployed. ———, “Right of Death and Power over Life,” in *The Foucault reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 261-62.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 263. Cited by Pirkko Markula and Richard Pringle, *Foucault, Sport and Exercise : Power, Knowledge and Transforming the Self* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2006), 47.

<sup>22</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish : the Birth of the Prison*, 1st American ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), 138.

skilled, educated, but also docile population.<sup>23</sup> Wilhelmine reformers aimed to create just such a working class by propagating health discourse as a form of social control.

Furthermore, the healthy body became a metaphor for the body of the nation. The state considered the healthy body as a precondition for the maintenance of the larger “national body.” In order to regulate public health, the Imperial Board of Health (Reichsgesundheitsamt) was founded in April 1876.<sup>24</sup> Reform movements and the mission to create a powerful nation-state went hand in hand in imperial Germany. The Life Reform movement not only defined a new *bürgerlich* culture, but also extended the norms and values of the educated-middle class to the lower classes, a process which reformers considered essential for cultural and economic progress. Therefore, *Körperkultur* was a national project, which aimed to improve not only the health of the individual, but that of the entire nation, whose *Volk* body was threatened with degeneration. In 1904, Heberlin, a contemporary critic, wrote “If things continue as they have, our race will degenerate, nay, it is already deep in the process of degeneration, and we must say that if things continue so, salvation will be impossible.”<sup>25</sup>

*Körperkultur* was an important component of the garden city movement because it also took up the fight against the ills of the metropolis. One such urban defect was being one-sidedly intellectual. Heberlin went on in his essay to object against to the fin-de-siècle decadence caused by modern forms of urban life: women who can neither stretch upward nor bend down, as well as the dandy who uses only cars and elevators

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<sup>23</sup> Markula and Pringle, *Foucault, Sport and Exercise*, 47.

<sup>24</sup> *International Exposition St. Louis.*, 346.

<sup>25</sup> “Geht es so weiter, so entartet unser Geschlecht, nein, es ist schon tief im Entarten darin, und wir müssen sagen: geht es so weiter, so wird die Rettung unmöglich.” Heberlin, “Körper-Kultur,” *Kunstwart* 17, no. 22 (1904): 414.

instead of his legs.<sup>26</sup> He railed against people's view of *Bildung* (self cultivation) as an excuse to neglect their bodies. The external form of the body was the holistic expression of a healthy physical and mental state. Heberlin warned readers that one-sided training of either the mind or the body could never be considered beautiful and healthy.<sup>27</sup> Similar ideas were put forward in other European countries. Progressive English architect-designer E. W. Godwin (1833-1886) claimed in his opening speech at the hygienic dress section of the International Health Exhibition of 1884: "Science and art must walk hand in hand if life is to be worth living. Beauty without health is incomplete. Health can never be perfect for you so long as your eye is troubled with ugliness."<sup>28</sup> Therefore health was a precondition of beauty.

The turn-of-the-twentieth century habitat encouraged a fusion of aesthetics, morality, and health. Life reformers considered beauty to be the expression of a healthy body and ugliness the sign of physical and mental disease. The degenerate body was considered a sign of immorality. By identifying themselves with a healthy way of living, middle classes everywhere in Europe created a positive identity in opposition to the decadent aristocracy and "immoral, irresponsible, and filthy lower classes."<sup>29</sup> In 1903, architect and Garden City Society member Paul Schultze-Naumburg wrote:

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.: 410.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> E. W. Godwin, *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate*, International Health Exhibiton, London 1884 (London: William Clowes and Sons, Limited, 1884), 2. Cited in Stella Mary Newton, *Health, Art and Reason : Dress Reformers of the 19th century* (London: J. Murray, 1974), 94.

<sup>29</sup> In his book *Healthy Life and Healthy Dwellings* (1880) G. Wilson wrote: "But it is astonishing what a very strong objection many of the poorer classes have to the use of clean water. Their skins are filthy, their clothes are filthy, and it is needless to say they have an utter disregard for cleanliness of the dwelling and its surroundings. Hence it is that those who have made themselves acquainted with the habits and home-life of the "great unwashed," cannot help associating foul skins with moral degradation, as well as bodily ill health; and, after a little experience are forced to the conclusion that mendicant filth and moral depravity generally go hand-in-hand." George Wilson, *Healthy Life and Healthy Dwellings. A Guide to Personal and Domestic Hygiene* (London: J. & A. Churchill, 1880), 157.

One has to look at the type of those unfortunates, whose crumpled, disjointed, odd, twisted, swollen, wrinkled, prematurely deteriorated bodies scarcely remind one of a human body in its outer appearance, in order to understand, how crumpled, disjointed, odd, twisted, swollen, and tricky the thoughts produced by such bodies must be.<sup>30</sup>

Elsewhere, he claimed that a beautiful face must also suggest a good human.<sup>31</sup> Schultze-Naumburg argued that all morality was based on the conscience of the body, and true culture would lead to the unfolding of beauty and happiness, even though not all individuals and races were able to participate in this process. For Schultze-Naumburg, one's eyes had to be trained in order to realize that beauty and ugliness were not different from good and evil.<sup>32</sup>

The perceived degeneration of German bodies corresponded to the degeneration of German culture as a whole. Modern architects and critics conceived the built environment in its relation to the degenerate and healthy body. This idea led to the inscription of the built space in the bodies of both the architect and the inhabitants. Accordingly, the eclectic and extravagant styles of commodities and buildings were emblematic of the degeneration of the inhabitants. In his popular book, *Degeneration* (Entartung, 1890), physician Max Nordau diagnosed the desire for collecting and piling up in fin-de-siècle bourgeois interiors as a stigma of degeneration:

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<sup>30</sup> "Man sehe sich doch nur einmal den Typus jener jener Unglücklichen an, deren verdrückter, verschobener, verschrobener, verbogener, angeschwollener, knifflicher, zu früh verfallener Leib in seiner Hülle kaum noch an einen Menschenleib erinnert, um zu verstehen, wie verdrückt, verschoben, verschoben, verbogen, angeschwollen und knifflich auch die Gedanken dieses Leibes sein müssen." Paul Schultze-Naumburg, *Die Kultur des weiblichen Körpers als Grundlage der Frauenkleidung*. (Jena: E. Diederichs, 1910), 147.

<sup>31</sup> ———, *Häusliche Kunstpflege* (Leipzig: Eugen Diederichs, 1903), 125.

<sup>32</sup> "Wir müssen unsere Augen eben so erziehen, daß ihnen Schön und Hässlich nichts anderes mehr ist, als Gut und Böse. Schultze-Naumburg, *Die Kultur des weiblichen Körpers*, 150.

Let's follow these folk in masquerade... to their dwellings. Here at once stage properties and lumber-rooms, rag-shops and museums. The study of the master of the house is a Gothic hall of chivalry with cuirasses, shields and crusading banners on the walls; or the shop of an Oriental bazaar with Kurd carpets, Bedouin chests, Circassian narghilehs and Indian lacquered caskets. By the mirror on the mantelpiece are fierce or funny Japanese masks. Between the windows are staring trophies of swords, daggers, clubs and old wheel-trigger pistols.....Everything in these houses aims at exciting the nerves and dazzling the senses. There must be no sentiment of repose... nor of the comfort attending a prompt comprehension of all the details of one's environment. He, who enters here must not doze, but be thrilled.<sup>33</sup>

Nordau diagnosed this desire for collecting and piling up in dwellings “of aimless bric-à-brac” as a stigma of degeneration, which was dubbed as “oniomania,” or “buying craze.”<sup>34</sup> Buying craze was the outcome of the new commodity culture, in which people perceived commodities as a medium to express themselves. The degenerates, for Nordau, lacked harmony and balance.

Similarly, Schultze-Naumburg also applied the same bodily aesthetic principles with which he defined immorality to architecture. In the introduction to the second volume in his cultural series, *House-Building* (Hausbau, 1901), he wrote that the aesthetic qualities “beautiful and ugly” were inseparable from “morally good and bad.”<sup>35</sup>

Therefore, urban houses, which were both ugly and unhealthy, increased the risk of immoral behavior. Physicians argued that besides the “physical climate,” the “spiritual climate” of the house could affect the inhabitants in a negative way. In his 1926 book, *Der Mensch und die Wohnung* (Human and Dwelling, 1926), Dr. Rudolf Neubert wrote that “The average, well-kept big city dwelling alienates from nature, but the rental

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<sup>33</sup> Max Simon Nordau, *Degeneration* (New York: D. Appleton and company, 1895), 10.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>35</sup> Paul Schultze-Naumburg, *Hausbau*, ed. Kunstwart, *Kulturarbeiten* (München: Georg D. W. Callwey, Kunstwart Verlag, 1901), Vorwort.

barrack or the bad dwelling breaks away from all mental values.”<sup>36</sup> The city dweller, according to Neubert, does not feel at home in these prison-like houses, and loses his sense of belonging to his *Heimat*, as well as his sense of joy in his body and existence. He indulges himself in absurdity, prurience, and malignity. In short, the big city dwelling caused one not only to lose his or her health, but also encouraged immoral behavior. In a sanitary house, the breadwinner would be economically more capable, the housework would be less tiring. The moral benefit of a clean dwelling was to keep the head of the household from going out to drink in a pub.

Architecture signified not only the physical and mental health of the inhabitant, but also that of the architect. In 1910, the Viennese architect Adolf Loos dubbed the architect of his time who applied historicist styles and ornament in his designs, as “the rootless man, the warped man.”<sup>37</sup> If degenerate architecture was inscribed in the warped mind—and body—of the architect, *sachlich* (objective) architecture was inscribed in the ideal Germanic body of the architect. Praising architect Heinrich Tessonow, who was involved in the design process of Hellerau, architectural critic Karl Scheffler wrote in 1912 that it was not a coincidence that “such a *sachlich*, cultivated and at the same time naive talent,” was found in a “strong, blond Mecklenburger.”<sup>38</sup>

Starting from the 1890s, reform-minded critics, physicians, artists, and architects called for a new healthy domestic culture that would cultivate a healthy and moral way of

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<sup>36</sup> „Die durchschnittliche, gut gehaltene Grossstadtwohnung entfremdet von der Natur, die Mietkasernenwohnung aber, oder gar die unternormale, schlechte Wohnung sperrt ein, reisst los von allen seelischen Werten.“ Robert Jütte, "Naturheilkunde," in *Die Lebensreform: Entwürfe zur Neugestaltung von Leben und Kunst um 1900*, ed. Kai Buchholz, et al. (Darmstadt: haeusser-media/Verlag Häusser, 2001), Karl E. Rothschuh, *Naturheilmovement, Reformbewegung, Alternativbewegung* (Stuttgart: Hippokrates Verlag, 1983).

<sup>37</sup> Adolf Loos, "Architecture," in *On Architecture* (Riverside, California: Ariadne Press, 2002), 76.

<sup>38</sup> Karl Scheffler, "Das Haus," in *Die Schulfeste der Bildungsanstalt Jaques-Dalcroze* ed. Der Bildungsanstalt Jaques-Dalcroze (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1912), 8. Tessonow was from Mecklenburg, a region in northern Germany.

living. The new domestic culture had a distinct aesthetic that dictated the use of light colors and simple, plain forms stripped of ornament. In his 1904 book *The English House*, architect Heinrich Muthesius defined this new aesthetics that would replace luxury in the middle-class house:

And it is interesting to note here again that hygiene is nowadays everywhere preferred to the sumptuousness and coziness of the old style. Our whole culture aspires to the healthful and our aesthetic sensibility in all spheres, but especially in that of house building, will soon conform closely *that the concepts of health and beauty may become identical*. [my italics]<sup>39</sup>

Muthesius's remarks translates the contemporary fusion of health and aesthetics in *Körperkultur* to house design. Indeed *Körperkultur* was significant for house design, because of the centrality of body care to the modern house. As one Wilhelmine reformer, Friedrich Landmann, put it: "The Life Reform is above all reform of the self; it has to begin with one's own body and in one's own home."<sup>40</sup> The criteria for the healthy dwelling emerged from the contemporary understanding of disease. These criteria included cleanliness, fanatical insistence on ventilation, avoidance of dampness, and the germ-killing effects of sunlight. The late nineteenth century bore witness to a proliferation of publications on the healthy dwelling, which examined such themes as ventilation, water supply, drainage, heating, furniture, and the garden.<sup>41</sup> In these publications, body care is at the center of the issues discussed at length: the orientation of

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<sup>39</sup> Hermann Muthesius, *The English House*, ed. Dennis Sharp, trans. Janet Seligman (New York: Rizzoli, 1979), 213.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in Jefferies, "Lebensreform," 93.

<sup>41</sup> See Jozsef von Fodor, *Das gesunde Haus und die gesunde Wohnung* (Braunschweig: F. Vieweg und Sohn, 1878), *The Health Exhibition Literature: Health in the Dwelling*, vol. 1-3, International Health Exhibition (London: W. Clowes & Sons, 1884), Wilson, *Healthy Life and Healthy Dwellings*, Otto Kröhnke and H. Müllenbach, *Das gesunde Haus. Als Führer und Berater bei der Wahl und Errichtung der Wohnstätte nach den Grundsätzen der modernen Gesundheitspflege* (Stuttgart: Enke, 1902).

the house towards the sun, construction techniques to prevent dampness, devices to let in fresh air, sanitary systems for clean water, drainage for water closets, light-colored surfaces and simple furniture to prevent the accumulation of dust.

As historian John Maciuka has observed, the new domestic culture was inseparable from the extensive consumer culture that came out of the Wilhelmine era's remarkable economic and industrial growth during the last decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>42</sup> Starting from 1900, under the influence of the British Arts and Crafts movement, many art journals, applied-arts institutions, and artists' associations promoted the design reform known as the Applied Arts movement (Kunstgewerbebewegung). It differed, however, from the Arts and Crafts movement for it did not advocate a return to handicrafts. In a 1912 book published by the German Workshops in Hellerau, liberal politician Friedrich Naumann stressed this difference: "We are not looking for a lost paradise, but building a new society with all the weapons of modern times, with the best machines, with an open mind about today's living requirements."<sup>43</sup> The German Workshops became a leading factory promoting the Applied Arts movement.

This movement brought together many future Werkbund members, such as Naumann, architects Hermann Muthesius and Richard Riemerschmid, industrialist Karl Schmidt, and architectural critics Karl Scheffler and Joseph August Lux. Artists and architects affiliated with the movement rejected the use of historical styles in applied arts, and instead advocated the use of new forms, materials and new modes of production.

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<sup>42</sup> Maciuka analyzes the design reform in Wilhelmine Germany in John V. Maciuka, *Before the Bauhaus: Architecture, Politics and the German State, 1890-1919* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>43</sup> "Mit allen Waffen der Neuzeit, mit den besten Maschinen, mit offenem Blick auf die heutigen Lebensbedürfnisse suchen wir nicht nach einem verlorenen Paradiese, sondern bauen an einer neuen Gesellschaft." Friedrich Naumann, *Der deutsche Stil* (Hellerau : Deutsche Werkstätten, 1912), 21.