MODERNITY, SANITATION AND THE PUBLIC BATH

BERLIN, 1896-1930, AS ARCHETYPE

by

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Art and Art History in the Graduate School of Duke University

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This dissertation documents and analyzes the architecture of the working-class bathhouse – its emergence in the nineteenth-century and elaboration in the twentieth. It is a case study that examines how social ideas about modernity, health and the body were translated into the built environment at a formative moment in Western industrialization. Beginning with a survey of the hygiene reform movement and its architectural theory, the first two chapters explore the creation of bathhouse types in dialogue with historical and cultural prototypes. After focusing on specific urban centers (London, New York, Montreal), the discussion moves to Berlin as the central case study.

The hygiene movement was deeply concerned with the built environment from its inception, and its solutions were authorized by prevailing theories of disease. Concepts of circulation and order were imbued with powerful health values, producing designs for the bathhouse that emphasized separation, regulation and a radically simplified space. Changing concepts of public life and the civic body shaped architectures of hygiene and inflected their decorative programs. A historical, spatial narrative of architecture and the body politic is opened up by a history of the bathhouse, which crosses Old World-New World, Historicist-Modernist, and Wilhelmine-Weimar boundaries.
The substance of this research is drawn from previously unexamined archival and archaeological evidence from city bathhouses constructed in Berlin during the Wilhelmine period (Turmstrasse, Schillingsbrücke, Baerwaldstrasse, Dennowitzstrasse, Oderbergerstrasse and Gerichtstrasse Volksbadeanstalten), as well as the Weimar period (Mitte and Lichtenberg). The discussion of Weimar bathhouses includes a reading of Strandbad Wannsee (Martin Wagner, Richard Ermisch), Stoedieck and Poelzig’s plans for the Thermenpalast (1929), and the graphic record of Heinrich Zille’s Rund um’s Freibad (1926). Critical perspectives rooted in the spatial politics of Lefebvre, Bourdieu, Benjamin, and Althusser help evaluate bathhouse architecture as a representational medium, a productive gadget, and a medical technology. The resulting history argues not only that social hygiene played different kinds of roles in the development of modern architecture, but also that changing concepts of the hygienic body generated diverse modes of interaction between the individual and the public sphere.
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Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

Nineteenth-century reform movements produced ways of thinking about architecture that became central themes in 1920s modernism and which became the basis for linking architecture and social emancipation. The projection of the medicalized social body onto the environment in the early reform movement was initially viewed as a purely pragmatic act. The “science of hygiene” was formed on the association of morality with the material world. It was lauded precisely for its rational exposition of the body/environment relationship. In attempts to define a healthy relationship between the body and its built spaces, reformers invariably came to base many of their ideas on those intangible virtues inhering in architecture of the social sphere, which they subsequently linked to the development of the spiritually and physically healthy citizen.

Nowhere was this more visible than in the public bath. The public bath was an experimental institution of the sanitary movement that emerged in the 1840s. It tells a story of the development of sanitation from a practical goal into fetish. The analysis of hygiene reform architecture presented here is predicated on the recognition that solutions proposed for the space of the public bath – especially those promoted by German architects, planners and reformers of the Wilhelmine and Weimar periods -- embody identifiable notions of the city and the body of the citizen. These notions encompassed aesthetic, medical and cultural values as well as expressing national
ambitions that were articulated through the body of the citizen. After an initial 
exploration of the international hygiene movement and the development of specific 
ar琉璃ctural types, this project focuses in on Berlin in order to consider in greater depth 
the social relation between the body and bath.

The impact of hygiene reform on modern architecture has been largely 
overlooked. When it is noticed, it has typically been perceived as an idiosyncratic 
concern of a few modernists. In Vers une architecture, for example, Corbusier gave 
careful instructions to homebuyers not only about bathroom design but also regarding 
their sanitary habits:

Demand a bathroom looking south, one of the largest rooms in the 
house or flat, the old drawing room for instance. One wall to be 
entirely glazed, opening if possible on to a balcony for sun baths; 
the most up-to-date fittings with a shower bath and gymnastic 
appliances. An adjoining room to be a dressing room… Never 
undress in your bedroom. It is not a clean thing to do.¹

The clean surfaces and clinical aesthetic of Le Corbusier’s villas do indeed 
suggest a conscious integration of hygiene and the body into the aesthetics of residential 
design. A few scholars have recently begun to document and explore the hygienic as a 
significant goal established within the New Architecture of the 1920s. This is a change 
from earlier scholarship that tended to interpret the presence of hygienic concerns in 
Modern design as an expression of technological advance, or a rejection of historical

¹. Le Corbusier. Towards a New Architecture (Vers une architecture, 1923), (1931: repr., New York: 
Dover, 1986), 122.
precedent and ornament. David Watkin’s classic 1977 essay on the dogmatism of modern architects, for instance, attributes Corbusier’s obsession with cleanliness to a metaphor, “a general argument for purity, [which] seems to reflect a hatred of tradition as essentially ‘unnatural.’” That is, dirt and disorder (i.e. the untidy surfaces of architectural eclecticism) were linked in the minds of the avant-garde with the clutter and weight of history. As the study and critique of Modernism has expanded over the past twenty years it has become possible to recognize more expansive and diverse themes and questions operating in nineteenth- and twentieth-century architecture. Even contemporary scholars, however, tend to assume that the hygienic was a merely symbolic theme. Francesco Passanti’s essay on Corbusier, for example, analyzes the presence of a washbasin in the entry foyer of the Villa Savoye as a sign of the “industrially produced object.” Passanti adds that the function of the washbasin is to create a “poetic evocation… of a ritual entry, for example, in a mosque or a church.”

This reading of the washbasin is representative of the focus on mass-production as the


telos of Modern design mentality. The outcome of this compelling, but incomplete reading, is that the telos of Modern design appears fully summed up in the fusion of archaic ritual with industrial standardization.5 Insight into this important dialectic, however, requires a consideration of simultaneously existing discourses of cleanliness, health and the body, with which Corbusier was not only familiar, but which contributed a practical status and social function to the ritual of ablution and the concept of the body as it enters the house. I argue in this project that the practices of the Modern Movement need to be considered in light of larger conceptions of the body and the built environment, which led outside the isolated domicile and monument, out into the streets, the cities, the public institutions and public spaces of the Modern city.

The hygiene movement produced an ethical imperative for health and cleanliness at all levels of government that penetrated architectural practice by infusing the built environment with new medical, moral, and social obligations. Recuperating these discourses of hygienic architecture provides the basis for evaluating the concerns common to nineteenth-century eclecticism and historicism and also to the architecture of twentieth-century Classical Modernism. These common obligations fed nourished the social-utopian claims of Modernism, bringing with them the central role of the body and purity within a project of social-emancipation. The focus in this study is, therefore, not on the architecture of “High Modernism,” but on the competing architectural proposals

for public health and the civic body generated by way of the hygienic throughout a period associated with emergent modernity. This diverse history suggests a variety of ways that the body/architecture relationship was posited, and reinstates aspects of nineteenth-century social space that have been overlooked with regard to this theme.

Beginning in the 1830s, cholera epidemics began to sweep through Europe, and recurred until late in the century. This event launched the nineteenth-century hygiene movement and defined many elements that became fundamental the character of the modern bathhouse - in contrast to earlier models of communal bathing. The crisis engendered by epidemic quickly produced awareness of the urban crowd, the lack of clean water, and the problem of waste and sewage. In the 1840s, pioneering legislation was passed in England that authorized municipalities to finance bathing structures using existing sources of public money. By the turn of the century, the bathhouse had an established place on the standard menu of a progressive, industrial city throughout Europe and North America. Although building codes and improved water supplies enabled many cities to require new residential buildings to furnish baths for individual households by World War I, the public bath grew more elaborate and complex both architecturally and as an institution between 1900 and 1930. Despite this, the public bath was superseded by the athletic center and the swimming pool as a building type after World War II. In many poor neighborhoods, however, bath facilities continued to serve an important cleanliness function into the 1960s.
I became interested in the public bathhouse as a document of the symbolic and spatial languages of social hygiene. As a new building type in the nineteenth century, the public bath initially lacked a clearly defined architectural arrangement, status, and function. The subsequent development of standard design types for the bath was accompanied by continuous debates around how a building could enforce and promote the goal of purifying and strengthening the population, and what kind of architecture would provide the proper armature for the bath as a personal and public practice. The process of design for the public bathhouse was inevitably contentious, characterized by number of claims and inner conflicts. Familiarity with these debates sheds light on the promise and limitations of new democracies as they defined themselves through their representative cities and the life enabled within the new metropolis. Indeed, it was precisely the typological instability of the bath that makes it so illustrative of the otherwise intangible processes that transform ideas into urban forms.

Each chapter in this project focuses on a particular phase in bath design and each relates a specific and empirical story. Each also demonstrates the theoretical and or ethical positions embedded in the artifacts of the baths and bathhouses. Chapter Two, “Figuration: Hygiene for Public Life” introduces the architectural thinking of the hygiene movement and the central role that architecture came to play in public health reform. This phenomenon is explored via the German hygiene exhibition – a public fair devoted to public health. I look closely at one of the earliest exhibition in Berlin in 1883
as well as the highly influential 1911 International Health Exhibition in Dresden. The traveling Gesolei Exhibition in 1926 and the International Congress of Hygiene and Demography in Dresden in 1930 provide the endpoints of this discussion. The structure and symbolism of these events illustrate a cultural trajectory within which several goals were pursued: First, hygiene was related to specific architectural and body figurations. Second, Germany both laid claim to cutting-edge hygienic research as part of its national character, and eventually began to link this scientific achievement with innovative strategies of popularizing and aestheticizing scientific and social ideals. Finally, the hygiene exhibition functioned as a clearinghouse of new ideas about the city and architecture.

Chapter Three explores the historical precedents that dominated late nineteenth-century thinking about public bath architecture, and examines how specific models were received and interpreted in Western Europe during the period. The bathhouses of Ancient Greece and Rome were recognized as markers of advanced civilization. Alternatively, I discuss the ambivalent attitude toward Islamic and Russian bathhouses, which were valued as traditional, living institutions of public health, but regarded as morally inferior to the Classical tradition. After reconstructing this reception context, this chapter examines the types of bath architecture that emerged for use in modern urban contexts, in London, New York and Montreal. This section allows a comparison
of the principles and artifacts promoted at the hygiene exhibition with the actual installation of bath buildings in specific local contexts.

Chapter Four analyzes the development of bathhouse architecture in Berlin. The focus is on archival evidence of the structures, their physical documentation, and how designs for the public bath functioned within a larger concept of public space. I argue that the Wilhelmine public bath was understood as an extension of working-class domestic space and compensation for its inadequacies. The four bathhouses designed by Ludwig Hoffmann in Berlin between 1896 and 1908 were heavy masonry structures with elaborate Neo-Renaissance swimming halls. They were situated in the urban fabric as an antithesis of the working-class residence, the infamous Berliner Mietskaserne, or “rental barracks” associated with uncontrolled speculation in the capital city. Hoffmann, like his contemporaries, considered physical cleanliness a crucial aspect of moral hygiene, which was rooted in family life and its hierarchies. His architectural models for the bath, therefore, attempted to translate the intimacy and regulation of the bourgeois family within the space of a public building. The architectural expression of moral hygiene is significant in this history, for it is often underrepresented in favor of a simple notion of architectural purity represented by familiar Modernist metaphors of the clinic and technology, an issue that is raised by the materials in this chapter.

Chapter Five examines the expansion of public bath culture during the Weimar period by assessing its central monuments. Amidst radical changes to the economy and
organization of architectural production in the city during the Weimar Republic, and in concert with a range of avant-garde approaches to architectural design, the institution of the public bath in the 1920s began to accommodate a larger and more social definition of the public body. This section traces the development of three themes that dominate theories of hygienic architecture into the Weimar era – Circulation, Nature and “Light and Air.” The new architectural aspirations of the bathhouse announced the reconciliation of nature, technology and the city under the aegis of health and vitality. The conclusion of this study will discuss the afterlife of the public bathhouse and suggest possible directions for future research.

Why Berlin? As the traditional center of Prussian and Hohenzollern power, and the capital city of united Germany since 1871, Berlin was (and continues to be) notorious for its repeated and self-conscious processes of architectural self-fashioning. It was viewed by the older urban centers of Germany as a young city, and was universally regarded as emblematic of the worst dangers of modernization, as well as its most impressive feats. Frequently described as “American” because of the rapid growth of its industry, population and economy, it was also marked thusly because of its historical inadequacy -- a lack that expressed itself in the absence of an architectural tradition. In a 1906 illustrated portrait of the city, Berlin: Ein Rundgang in Bildern, Peter Osborn expressed the anxiety that arose from its development and expansion, which was
regarded as unprecedented and seen as a contrast to “organic” urban palimpsests of traditional German cities:

[T]he amazing surge in trade, the egoism and brutality of its material struggle and its success, by which means, however a mighty polity (Gemeinwesen) has arisen as if out of nothing, without cultural connection to the past, without any connection even to the conditions of its own becoming, Berlin is a kind of enterprise whose growth is not a product of logical, organic and natural process, but rather is artificially produced with excessive demands…

Long before its Weimar reputation as a nexus of the avant-garde, Berlin was viewed as the quintessential modern metropolis. Not only within Germany, but internationally, Berlin held a significant position in a cross-Atlantic network of communication, and, by 1910, particularly Americans viewed it as the center of new thinking about urban planning and modern design. Although German nationalism is often associated with a romantic embrace of nature, the city itself, this Gemeinwesen, was a key site for the formation of a representative national identity. By the 1880s, German advances in hygiene reform, medical science and, somewhat later, urban planning, became areas of national distinction. These advances were promoted both within Germany and without, particularly in national rivalries with England and France. The hygiene reform movement provided clear standards for evaluating the success and failure of modern life in the capital.

A. Contribution of the Project

There have been remarkably few scholarly writings on the architecture of the bathhouse, although individual structures have been the subject of interest for numerous local heritage societies and preservationist groups. This gap in scholarship seems due, in part, to the success of the reform movement itself, which developed such a powerful discourse of social engineering that the bathhouse has been subsumed within an already established critical scholarship on this period of social progressivism, and has not emerged from this genre. Many studies around reform architecture of this era, like the bathhouse, read the architectures exclusively through the language of hygiene reform. They then accurately conclude that the bathhouse was an instrument of manipulation and social control. Yet many smaller, local publications make different assumptions about the bathhouse. Namely, many heritage publications focus on the public bath as a monument of working-class history, which framed collective rituals of


daily life. Local groups often attempt to record individual recollections of the bathhouse, and portray the institution not only as a monument to a bygone industrial era, but also as a site belonging to form of urban social life, where working-class communities formed around shared material conditions. These two themes – social control and community life – are not contradictory. They work dialectically to illustrate the social body as the basis for building and defining different kinds of communities.

The only book length art historical publication on the public bath is Barbara Hartmann’s study of the *Müller’sche Volksbad* (Müller People’s Bath) in Munich. In this work, Hartmann explores the evolution of architect Carl Hocheder’s plan for the bath into a fully realized “architectonic mastery” of space. Hartmann’s study is aligned with the goals of this investigation, although her discussion remains narrowly focused on Munich and the individual authors of that project. Her work attempts to map out and understand the emergence of a lavish and monumental public building from the pragmatic issues and individuals involved with the construction. This history draws from turn-of-the-century accounts of the bathhouse, especially those of Alfred Martin, Leo Vetter, and Wilhelm Schleyer, and looks minimally at the larger archives of hygiene reform in Bavaria or elsewhere. Because Hartmann’s work emphasizes the uniqueness of the Munich bath, it is difficult to connect it to ongoing issues around hygiene and

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public design. Her study does illuminate the powerful tension between the opulence and sensuality associated with bathhouses and the cultures of economy and austerity that were associated with the working class of the period.

Two monographs in social history focus on the English and American bath movements and these have also provided useful documentation for this project. Despite the fame of the English bathhouse, renowned for its innovation and monumentality, Joseph Skoski’s dissertation for the Department of History (Indiana University, 2000) is the only book-length study of its history and development. Skoski’s investigation is not object-based, but is attentive to ongoing changes in the design of the baths, particularly as they relate to attracting a middle-class clientele. Skoski argues that the English bathhouse failed to create a truly working-class institution because was it required substantial middle-class patronage to subsidize the cheaper baths. He attributes the costliness and lavishness of the English model to this quasi-commercial character and suggests that the ability to maintain an effective institution was compromised by its architectural outfitting and expense. Skoski’s argument is an echo of one commonly voiced at the time; it views the architectural scale and grandeur of the British bath as excessive and unnecessary for a working-class institution. Indeed, contemporaries of the bath voiced a range of arguments, including the assertion that architectural monumentality was intimidating and unpleasant for the poorer classes.

The broader geographical scope of this study will add to Skoski’s insights into the British bath, and will contribute additional reflections on the function of architectural monumentality and beauty in the creation of public spaces. The analysis of public bath architecture as a civic emblem in England needs to take into account, for example, attempts to position England as the heir to ancient Rome in the construction of English national identity or the ways that creation of impressive public health monuments in England may have reflected or described the public body to itself.

Marilyn Thornton Williams’s social history of the American public bath Washing ‘the Great Unwashed’ is a historical study of the hygiene movement in the Progressive Era and the different ways that public bath programs were implemented in the largest American cities of the period. Her case-study approach is comprised of a general description of architectural types produced in specific localities. Williams’ assemblage of local histories offers a solid portrait of both the diversity of American bath movements of the period, as well as the networks established between them. In the end, however, many compelling points of comparison between various cities go unanalyzed. Regardless, her documentation reveals the powerful, almost exclusive, themes of the bath movement in the United States: The focus on immigrant populations and the shower bath. The connection between these two distinctive characteristics will be further explored in Chapter 2.

Even more glamorous than the hygienic bathhouse, the more expansive history of bathing and bathhouses has been widely explored by historians and theorists. The historiographical approach to the public bathhouse largely ignores the phenomenological experience of these public spaces, which is represented more fully in cultural histories of bathing. Studies like *Book of the Bath*, by Françoise de Bonneville, *Badetempel: Volksbäder aus der Gründerzeit und Jugendstil*, edited by Kirstin Feiress, and Thomas A. P. van Leeuwen’s history of the outdoor swimming pool, *The Springboard in the Pond*, for instance, pay important attention to the subjective experience of the bather and the cultural values of water and communal bathing than do the scholarly studies named above. Bonneville’s acknowledgement of the historical role of science, magic, and religion in bathing history, and Dieter Leistner’s compelling large-scale photographs of extant interiors from public swimming halls in *Badetempel* both draw out important aspects of the architectural context that are not found in reform discourses. Leeuwen is similarly successful at eliciting an awareness of the swimming pool as a distinct form of space while he explores its historical and typological development.


Neither the monuments in Berlin nor those in Montreal has been the subject of critical histories. Montreal historian Paul Labonne has been involved in their preservation and documentation of Montreal’s bains publics, an interest focused on contributing to the industrial heritage of the city through its working-class architecture. In Berlin, the lack of scholarship on local bathhouses is part of a former disregard for Wilhelmine public architecture, which has beginning to change. Recent publications on the Berlin city architect of the period, Ludwig Hoffmann, is one indication that German architectural history is following up on new scholarship on nineteenth-century German culture and the bourgeois culture of the city. Although the avant-garde culture of the Weimar Republic has long been canonized for its contributions to the politics and aesthetics of Modernism, scholarship on Berlin’s Weimar architecture is surprisingly limited and the baths offer very little exception to this.

**B. Methodology**

The materials and areas of inquiry in this dissertation encompass a number of theoretical and disciplinary frameworks. In addition to scholarship in art and

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established to consider the impact of changing scientific perspectives on their design.

In working with these structures, it became clear to me that it is still difficult to wrench nineteenth-century historiography away from the stylistic terminology of architectural historicism and eclecticism, despite widespread consensus that these categories in themselves are not particularly evocative. Yet, unless one ignores these strategies of design and chooses to focus on social context, they continue to act reductively on an understanding of practices of organizing and conceiving of public structures. Henry-Russell Hitchcock’s survey of nineteenth-century architecture from 1958, with its inchoate categories of style and its unstoppable parade of descriptions, is a particularly extreme example of the tendency to empty these terms of any historical content. Anthony Alofsin’s concept of “contextual formalism,” has helped me to think about the productive and critical tension between social history and formalism, by asserting that:

19. Architectural historians have been grappling with the terminology of “historicism” and “eclecticism” for decades. Very productive thinking along these lines, however, has not penetrated the broader discourse in the field. In the German context, Klaus Döhmer’s critical study from the mid-1970s, In welchem Style sollen wir bauen? Architekturtheorie zwischen Klassizismus und Jugendstil (Munich: Prestel, 1976) and Valentin Hammerschmidt’s Anspruch und Ausdruck in der Architektur des späten Historismus in Deutschland,1860 – 1914 (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1985) examined the architectural theory and practice of the nineteenth-century architecture. Julius Posener’s work similarly encouraged a new consideration of turn of the century architecture in Berlin. Posener forged a historical bridge between the Wilhelmine culture of building and the Modern in his careful analysis of Hermann Muthesius, Frederick Naumann and the official architectures of the period.
The social and political forces of architecture are transmitted through its physical form and that the two inextricably create a dialectic realism. In other words, the visual manifestation of architecture—its space, light, color, texture, and pattern—and its social and historical context must be considered inseparable if we, as receptors, are to grasp the message of building.

Besides the work of Alofsin, Stanford Anderson, Eve Blau, Matthew Jefferies, and John Maciuika, and Maiken Umbauch have offered signposts to this project for a new body of critical studies on turn of the century architecture that reflects an awareness of diverse geographies, emergent forms of modernism, and the political and social stakes of design during the period—all of which avoid the monolithic and reductive pitfalls of Modernist historiography.

This project examines several foundational theoretical perspectives to situate and interpret the way that the architecture of the bath was seen as an agent in the formation of society and the citizen. For several decades, this question has been associated with the work of Michel Foucault, who outlines the coercive, structuring impact of reform architecture by examining its new spatial logic. Foucault has been the standard point of reference for thinking about the hygiene movement as a mechanism of social control.


The *Birth of the Clinic* and *Discipline and Punish* delineate changes in the way that power has been represented, reproduced and executed itself through disciplinary knowledge and its definition of healthy and moral social practices.\(^\text{22}\) Foucault’s work pointed to ways that institutions function not only as literal servants of the state, but also as sites for the performance and consolidation of power relationships. Attention to the process of medicalization in society – the application of body images and physiological categories to the city and social life throughout the nineteenth-century – is part of a Foucault’s biopolitical perspective. The bathhouse is a biopolitical institution not only in that it promoted a particular construction of the body, authorized and defined by medical professionals, but also because it implemented social practices derived from medically and biologically informed concepts of social production in general.\(^\text{23}\)

Contemporary scholarship on the culture of reform and the hygiene movement continues to draw from Foucault’s genealogies of power, but has tended to nuance the homogeneity of his social categories and to expand on the areas that allow for appropriation and ambiguity. In Michael Hau’s study of the life reform movement he defines medicalization as “subjective experience mediated by medical language,” a definition that leaves room for deviations and diverse social positions. Hau reads


\(^\text{23}\) I am thinking of the concept of biopower as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri define this term in *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), a power which “commands by becoming an integral part of the productive power of life, life reproducing life gains control over it.” (23)
medicalization as part of many attempts to accommodate and gain control over the processes of modernity, which had varying results. Hau’s study, the *Cult of Health and Beauty*, explores how normative ideals of beauty and health in Wilhelmine Germany existed among very different social groups, while maintaining common themes and concerns. Similarly, Annmarie Adams’ study of the role of women in the hygiene movement and their involvement in the reform of domestic architecture is one that refutes the assumption that all social power worked unilaterally from the authorities of the public sphere onto a disempowered private sphere. Rather, she is interested in “how interior space worked outwardly to form the social environment of Victorian period.” Adams presents a more fundamental critique of Foucault, by insisting that power and authority might well be exerted from social positions traditionally considered marginal and ineffectual. Adams argues that the hygiene movement sanctioned women’s intervention in engineering and architecture by appointing them managers and experts of the hygienic household. While this new role was partially designed to curtail other types of public involvement, Adams argues that women were able to use its new forms of competence to direct their influence into the public sphere through their activities at home. Hau and Adams both acknowledge the structures and interests of power that


were operating within the hygiene movement, while exploring the potentials opened up to its diverse advocates by themes of liberation, science and body care.

This history of the public bath elicits questions about the impact of external codes embedded in public design and their regulation of the social body. Implicit in this question is a reflection on the nature of this type of regulation on subjective experience and the cultivation of life in the city. Theorists like Foucault, Althusser and Pierre Bourdieu emphasize the powerful impact of knowledge and ideology as forces structuring individual experience. Henri Lefebvre and Walter Benjamin, although they share a general Marxist orientation seem to work toward an understanding of space that is more complex and multi-dimensional.26 Benjamin’s “anthropocentric” topography of Paris adopts a view of history that reads the life of the people through its buildings, streets, practices and open spaces.27 Benjamin’s materialist ethos asserts that history is not comprised of greater and lesser moments; history is, rather a fabric in which all moments exist equally, each with the potential to politically animate the present. His description of history as an “awakening” is based on a loose concept of collective historical and political consciousness in which contact with minor artifacts and materials presents the possibility of a revolutionary rupture with the dominant march of history.


In grappling with the world of things, Benjamin draws from Marxist materialism, the Freudian unconscious and Surrealism to identify and explore the lost, obsolete and primitive materials embedded in the everyday experiences of the past. It is appropriate that Benjamin’s historical structure is also based on a physiological metaphor – the historian performs an autopsy on the past.28

In working toward this exposition of bathhouse history, my own writing has tended to swing between these theoretical positions – Foucault’s genealogy and Benjamin’s dialectical materialism. The shortcoming of this methodology is that it often lacks the illumination that Benjamin brought to his reading of materiality, as well as the clear historical trajectory offered by Foucault, resulting in a narrative that appears merely empirical. However, if as Benjamin writes, history is meant to teach “us to pass in spirit…through what has been, in order to experience the present as a waking world,” the present study forms the bedrock for a developing project of historical criticism and illumination.

In his exploration of spatial perception in modernity, Anthony Vidler reminds us of the work of August Schmarsow and his definition of space as an active creation of physical and spatial perception.29 In the late 1800s, Schmarsow developed a psychological characterization of space based on “intuited form,” built up from traces of


sensory experiences - from the sensations gained by the limbs, from movement, the skin, and the coordinated structures of our body. The sense of space (*Raumgefühl*) and spatial imagination (*Raumphantasie*) seek out representation through architecture, which Schmarsow defined as spatial creation, or *Raumgestaltung*. The bathhouse resonates uniquely with this type of phenomenological sense of spatial perception and architecture because its design is in dialogue with contemporary definitions and scales of the body, the advocacy of movement and physical care, and a concern with how physical experience has an impact on larger social identities.

In 2001, Montreal artist Marie Schuinard rented a turn of the century public bathhouse in what used to be the northern end of the city. The building, whose small, central swimming pool had been closed in the early 1990s, was up for sale, but was made available in the interim for public and cultural uses for a modest fee. Visitors were alerted the presence of an artwork through a small sign next to the door on the sidewalk, and a monitor sitting outside the door, who welcomed passers-by, but did not enter or participate in the work. Entering the building, the viewers found the way to the central pool area, where a series of fine-spray shower heads operated, creating a misty atmosphere over and around the empty basin. Large black umbrellas were opened inside the basin, and visitor was able to go into the pool and walk underneath the spray with or without their protection. A guest book near the entrance contained exclamations of surprise and recognition experienced by visitors who had entered the bath-work.
Several guests recalled having bathed there as children, and others affectionately recorded more recent memories of coming to swim and play in the small pool. Many of the written impressions also captured the feeling of exhilaration and fascination at being allowed to walk freely into the building without restraint or surveillance. The installation was open as long as someone was available to sit outside the door. “I got naked,” wrote one visitor. “This is exciting and makes me like art,” wrote another.

The public bath occupies a unique position in the history of public architecture, whose designs form the preventative counterpart to Benthamite penal institutions. An inoculation against crime, mental and physical disease, the bath was enjoyed and appropriated by the subjects it was intended to regulate, define and control. To be sure, normative standards of body and behavior were enforced in the bath through surveillance as well as through the program of the bathhouse itself, an arbiter of private and public areas. However, my own understanding of the space of the bathhouse includes a recognition that the political and architectural imagination of the bathhouse frequently expressed a tension between these themes of control and elements of fantasy, allegory and bodily freedom which were contained and sometimes repressed, but which were never fully separated from its structure. Part of this aspect of the baths entered bath discourse through the idea of architecture as a healing power, based on laws of hygiene. Architects could claim a powerful medicinal, quasi-shamanic role because of their ability to manifest and promote health through architecture. The buried promise to
liberate human potential and physical experience through health and vitality continues to exert an imaginative power even in the abandoned monuments of the contemporary city.
Chapter 2. FIGURATION: HYGIENE FOR PUBLIC LIFE

In 1883, the German newspaper, Über Land und See, published a series of illustrations of one of the first international hygiene exhibitions in Europe, the *Allgemeine Deutsche Ausstellung auf dem Gebiete der Hygiene und des Rettungs wesens* (Pan-German Exhibition of Hygiene and Safety) that was currently being staged in Berlin. (Figure 2.1) The largest of the published images portrayed a lively social atmosphere of the bourgeoisie who gather around a large fountain and congregate around numerous eclectic pavilions in the background. To the right, a semi-nude sculpture with a bowler hat and cane adds a slightly risqué element to café in the foreground, where guests are enjoy a respite from the crowd at an outdoor café. Behind the wall of the raised railway tracks, the iron and glass dome of the new exhibition building rises in the background. A number of smaller sketches show some of the most engaging parts of the exhibition - a drawing of the sculptural grouping of “Hygiene” on the pediment of the entrance to the main exhibition building; another reproduces the wax figure of a miner in a dark, threatening looking, diorama.

Although it may not seem so, the images from Über Land und See did indeed present some of the important themes at this exhibition. The emphasis placed on urban infrastructure in the image – the railway tracks, the fountain and the arriving train – were accurate representations of the liberal affirmation of the city and its society, which
were asserted despite shocking statistics on mortality rates and poverty in the urban setting. The pond and fountain show a city that is not merely in control of its natural sources, but one that literally overflows with them. The image foregrounds the German Bürgertum, who comprised the culture of reform, suggesting that the healthful effects of modern sanitary infrastructures can support the stability and enjoyment of urban life. The images produced in the context of twentieth-century hygiene exhibitions, however, took much greater control over their image. Rather than relying on illustrated weeklies like Über Land und See for public exposure, the 1911 International Hygiene Exhibition advertised itself with posters like Franz von Stuck’s “Hygiene Eye” (Figure 2.2) and the 1926 health exhibition in Düsseldorf represented itself by appropriating a figure found on a 5th century Greek vase, in Ludwig ten Hompel’s Gesolei poster. (Figure 2.3). These images were directed at a broad audience and were less concerned with reporting on the actual appearance of the exhibition then they were with promoting the imaginary and conceptual meanings of the event.

Joseph Rykwert once issued a reminder that architecture is never a private act, but a gesture, that in public architecture in particular, seeks to persuade. A structure is not a passive observer then, but a form of intervention. The public bathhouse is a complex example of the rhetorical and active function of architecture in the public sphere. As the most literal monument to social hygiene and one of the most highly regarded and publicized welfare institutions of the period, the public bathhouse
integrated diverse social discourses and took a stand. \(^1\) This chapter begins to sort the social fields of the bathhouse through the study of the visual rhetoric of the hygiene movement. I present a series of portraits from hygiene congresses in Germany between 1883 and 1930 in order to explore the range of visual representations of the body and hygiene over the period covered by this study. The hygiene exhibition was seen as a vehicle for the dissemination of social, medical and technological ideas within a broad public context. The propagandistic function of the event was fulfilled through the installation of allegorical settings for the body expressed in a range of media. In the context of each exhibition, the public body was given a new meaning. A reading of these events helps to understand the full range of models created for an architecture of public hygiene.

### A. **Hygienic Architecture: The City and Sanitary Reform**

Significant scholarship has accrued on the subject of the world industrial exhibitions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.\(^2\) In this literature, the

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international, or “universal” exhibitions have often been seen as manifestations of emerging modernity in its heterogeneous technological, ideological and economic forms. As sites of international exchange and the construction of nationalities, they have been studied as networks, as metaphors, as representations and as architectures. Cultural historians have probed the function of international exhibitions as engines of national identity and ethnic construction. These studies support the notion that the World’s Fair was a significant form of mass media that had a far-reaching and distinctive influence on twentieth-century consumer culture. Scholarship on the exhibition has focused attention on the materiality of their settings, distinguished by new forms of interactivity and visual engagement. The discussions of design and ornament provoked in the context of the nineteenth-century exhibition were important aspects of a discourse that, as Mitchell Schwarzer points out, was the precursor to cultural theory.3

The hygiene exhibition, which had a narrower thematic focus than the world’s fair, was an intensively biopolitical project. It began with a concentration on technologies and reforms relating to the improvement of public health and urban sanitation, although its scope became much larger throughout the early decades of the

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twentieth-century. It was preoccupied with material culture, and its physical effects. Its goal was to educate experts and laymen in the rules of hygiene and thus contribute to the improvement of society. Exhibition techniques were used to represent complex medical thinking in a simple way and, it was hoped, to promote and market a range of sanitary apparatuses at the same time. For the past decade, increased attention has been paid to the German hygiene exhibitions in part because of the public intellectual orientation of the German Hygiene Museum in Dresden.4 This scholarship has tended to focus on twentieth-century cultural developments, although dissertations by Walter Mattäi and Gunter Schaible in social history have made important contributions an understanding of events leading up to this period and the 1883 exhibition in particular.5 One of my interests in examining this broader period is to understand the continuity and development of body culture and the role of the hygienic. I argue that the ideas which gained a talismanic visual expression in the twentieth century Modern


Movement did not only originate in an earlier period but that they were similarly involved in the development of earlier forms of public space and architecture.

1. England and Chadwick’s Sanitary Report

The hygiene movement was an urban-based reform initiative, which had galvanized in response to worldwide Cholera epidemics that began to make rounds in Europe in the 1830s. Repeated outbreaks of the disease occurred for four decades as populations within industrial cities increased and living conditions within their boundaries worsened. High rates of illness and mortality were part of life in the industrial city. The global reality of epidemic, however, meant that even relatively undeveloped localities suffered from morbidity and economic losses. The formation of


7. Thomas Beames and Erwin Chadwick each produced major statistical studies documenting a relationship between working-class areas of the city and dramatically higher mortality rates. These established a standard for the use of statistics by reformers as a means of arguing for the negative effects of the physical environment on resident populations, called the “demographic” or “statistical” method. Two influential studies associated with this methodology are: Thomas Beams. The Rookeries of London: Past, Present and Prospective. (London: Bosworth, 1850) and Erwin Chadwick, Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Laboring Classes of Great Britain (1842).

8. Scholarship on hygiene reform gives it a central position within a larger urban reform movement associated with the rise of the industrial city in the second half of the nineteenth-century. The work of Alfons Labisch, Wolfgang Krabbe, Jürgen Reulecke and Jörg Vögele represent the core of recent literature on public health conditions and municipal politics in the nineteenth-century German city.
international medical and hygiene associations, with yearly congresses and publications, created an important network of knowledge and social ideology throughout this period, spurred on by the urgency of public health concerns.

The built environment occupied a central place in the hygiene reform movement from its inception. In the 1830s, London medical officer Thomas Southwood Smith defined hygiene as the “interchange between living organisms and their physical environment.” This definition was based on decades of medical research that documented the correlation of ill health and the city. In 1770, Dr. J.C. Lettsom, wrote forebodingly about the dangerous physical reality of the city, which was visible only to the medical eye: “Great cities are like painted sepulchers; their public avenues, and stately edifices seem to preclude the very possibility of distress and poverty; but if we pass beyond this superficial veil, the scene will be reversed.” In earlier periods, mistrust of the grand ornaments of urban life and their visual pleasures might have been expressed as a censure of worldliness or materialism. In the context of social hygiene, a

9 "Of the many aspects of poverty, inadequate diet, heating, clothing, and housing, it was housing which aroused the most widespread concern.” Anthony S. Wohl, Endangered Lives: Public Health in Victorian Britain (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1983), 47.

10. Ibid, 22.

suspicion of the city once based on vanitas was redirected into warnings of illnesses and death.

The most dramatic evidence of the “urban penalty” was found in England, where industrialization had reached a more advanced phase than elsewhere. Accounts of the English city even in the early decades of the nineteenth-century register admiration at the technological advances of industry and horror at the visible social misery it produced. The experience of the English city and its urban underclass was often expressed as a kind of shock: In the eyes of many commentators, the new industrial working class scarcely looked human. Astonishment at the extreme contrast between grandeur and squalor characterize contemporary descriptions of these bustling, mechanical urban spaces, fraught with unanswerable questions about the future. In Friedrich Engels’ 1844 study, The Condition of the Working Class in England, he observed, “the workers’ dwellings of Manchester are dirty, miserable and wholly lacking in comforts. In such houses only inhuman, degraded and unhealthy creatures would feel at home.” Indeed, by the mid-nineteenth-century insalubrities of the working-class body and household was an established metaphor for the loss of human values in the

12. For more on the continental reaction to English cities see Lees, Chapter 3.

13. Again, this characterization of the city is widely documented. Chadwick’s Sanitary Report (1842) gives ample evidence of this view. In Perceiving Cities, Lees likewise sums up the range of literature portraying the English city as “relentless” in its display of human suffering.

14. Lees, 68.
modern city - a theme that echoed throughout Europe. Belgian architect Wynand Janssens observed in 1855 that the living conditions of the worker “extinguish the last light of his intelligence, and drive him through discouragement and despair, and finally, as far as the negation of all his human faculties.” While its boosters continue to praise the energy and vitality, the spectacle and diversity of the city, doctors and social critics simultaneously condemned it as a death trap, a polluted “Moloch” (Rousseau) that fed on the pure hinterland.

Architecture, the structuring and enclosing landscape of the city, became highlighted in the quest to name and understand the urban pathogens. In 1782, John Heysham wrote, “Disease is the offspring of filth, nastiness and confined air, in rooms crowded with many inhabitants… I think we may without much hesitation pronounce that the occasional cause of it is human effluvia, which has been generated in some little dirty confined place, of which there are great numbers in …every large manufacturing town.” Although there was no clear understanding on how exactly disease was transmitted, there was an assumption that it must somehow occur through airborne

15. Even before most European cities saw the same degree of industrial pollution and squalor that marked infamous industrial centers like London and Manchester, observers anticipated these conditions within their own localities.


18. Flinn, 25.
pollutants. This became known as the Miasma Theory, which attributed disease 
transmission to substances carried in the air from decaying organic material, 
concentrated in poorly ventilated streets and houses.\textsuperscript{19} John Heysham, for examples, 
lists areas of particular health concern as: poor sewage, fetid standing water, and 
crowded domestic interiors. In the early 1800s, doctors began to count deaths in specific 
localities and observed that poverty and high mortality rates were closely related. This 
correlation was further reinforced by the formation of the Office of the Registrar-General 
in England in 1837, which collected statistics on births and deaths in England and Wales. 
This “demographic” approach to expressing social problems emphasized the geographic 
factors determining health. This analysis of numbers distinguishes preexisting concepts 
of miasma, dating from as far back as classical antiquity, from its application in 
industrial contexts. The statistical method was viewed as a legitimizing means of 
scientific validation. The state sponsorship of statistics gathering and analysis implied it 
was prepared to take responsibility for the social conditions they revealed.

Beginning in 1832, Edwin Chadwick, chairman of the Poor Law Commission and 
former secretary to Jeremy Bentham, conducted a study of poverty, sickness and dirt in 
the lives of the industrial working class. Three commissioned medical officers gathered 
extensive information across the country, which resulted in the \textit{Report on the Sanitary 
}\textsuperscript{19}, Miasma: Infected or noxious exhalations from putrescent organic matter; poisonous particles 
or germs floating in polluting the atmosphere; noxious emanations. \textit{(Oxford English Dictionary, 1998)}
Report was a decisive document, retrospectively viewed as the catalyst for the international hygiene reform movement. The Sanitary Report declared that “noxious physical agencies…produce a young, inexperienced, ignorant, credulous, irritable, passionate, and dangerous” population. On the basis of this national threat, Chadwick advocated for massive state intervention and investment in sanitary infrastructures of water and sewage. These recommendations were criticized by those who disputed Chadwick’s claim that only a centralized government initiative was capable of instituting an adequate response to the severity of working-class health problems. Opponents rejected the unprecedented degree of state intervention into daily life that would result from such an effort. The consequences of a debilitated population on the creation of a national military and its economic life, countered Chadwick, justified such an intervention.

Chadwick’s Sanitary Report, proposed the construction of new urban infrastructure, and emphasized running water and proper waste disposal. These urban

20. Chadwick’s study established several arguments that became standard within the hygiene reform movement: It illustrated the correlation of high mortality rates in poor districts with crowded and substandard housing and bad water. It argued that low standards of domestic hygiene resulted in devastating moral consequences that has clear negative economic affects. Finally, it argued that the present condition required a coordinated, centralized administration of public health in order to organize and direct the needed quantity of resources appropriate to the scale of the problem. Widely read and translated, Chadwick set the tone for hygiene reform not only in England, but also in North America and Europe. Edwin Chadwick, Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Laboring Population of Great Britain (1842; reprint Edinburgh: University Press, 1965), 262.


systems were seen as analogous to those systems of the body that were effected in an unhealthy environment. Contributing medical officer, Southwood Smith, believed that the prerequisites for a healthy city and a healthy human organism were in fact the same: the free circulation of air, fluids and waste.²³ Annmarie Adams explores this impact of this analogy between the body and the city as well as the body and architecture in her research on English domestic housing reform. Adams notes that Victorian literature on hygiene reform makes it clear that “the house was an extension of the body and the body a reduction of the house in the Victorian mind.”²⁴ The hygiene movement thus produced an archive of medical and social documents recording the impact of the environment on the body, which had practical consequences for architectural design and its evaluation. The concept that bodies communicate to their environments by “extension,” as Adams describes, corresponds to the definition of Miasma itself. In this way, the Vitruvian metaphor of architecture as a kind of body was medicalized; healthy architecture was seen as having the same internal functions as a biological entity. Reciprocally, the rationalization of the body and its systems was aided by imagining the body as a house with systems of internal circulation, storage etc.. This nexus of spatial, physical and medical metaphors accumulated and solidified within the hygienic discourses. Architectural surfaces, materials, conditions, and spaces were collectively

²³. Adams, 37.

²⁴. Ibid, 3.
understood as elements permeated by organic substances that moved throughout the environment. The difference between the body and architecture was occasionally suspended altogether by the overarching medicalization of each, a process that encouraged the concept of hygiene to become vast and all encompassing. Thus, Anthony Wohl describes the hygiene movement as a “fundamental reform” and “an underpinning and *sine qua non* for all other reforms…”

Mark Neocleous has observed that the “the incorporation of medical ideas into politics via the notion of the social body is far from being an entirely fascist trope. Rather it follows (logically and politically) from the corporeal model of social order and a political imagination which reads the state through the idea of the body” Neocleous suggests that the entire range of hygienic responses in the nineteenth-century can be seen as part of the “political imagination of a disorderly state,” which results in the state imposition of order onto the body. The state sanitation of the population provides the context for understanding different proposals for what Richard Sennett has called a new “Master-Image” of the body. Though the mobilization of the body within a compelling and unified image, argues Bennett, the state works to promote and consolidate its own


interests. A “master image” of the body needs to be powerful enough to organize individuals within a symbolic and spatial order that can contribute to the maintenance social order in general.29 Historical examples of this include the undressed male figure as a sign in Athenian democracy, or the suffering body in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The image also effects architecture and urban space, which take their form on the basis of the different ways the body can be experienced by the inhabitants.30 The development of visual representations for the encompassing structure of the hygienic was a long-term project of the nineteenth-century political imagination.

2. German Hygiene Reform and Sozialhygiene

Because of its early industrialization and progressive reform legislation, England was viewed as the undisputed leader of the sanitary movement into the early twentieth-century. However, by 1870 Germany had established its own international reputation and was considered to have the most advanced medical training in the Western world. The work of prominent medical researchers and hygiene reformers such as Max von Pettenkofer, Rudolf Virchow and Robert Koch during the second half of the nineteenth-century became associated with the significant German contribution to the science of hygiene. Max von Pettenkofer, the first professor of Hygiene in Germany, produced an


influential body of writings he called the *Physiologie der Umwelt*, or the “physiology of the environment.”31 In clinical studies, Pettenkofer explored building materials, housing, clothing, and air quality, in order to provide a map of the causal relationships that operate between architecture and the individual. By 1850, Pettenkofer was a well-established authority on space and sanitation and was even commissioned to test the air in the Bavarian royal palace, an investigation that involved a full consideration of how rooms were used, where they were located, and what elements from the exterior site permeated the space.32 Pettenkofer’s novel and interdisciplinary scientific method of mapping everyday environments formed the basis for the new “science of hygiene” which was legitimated by his university position.33 Pettenkofer scrutinized the relationship between the body and structure materially, conducting experiments to demonstrate that the house functioned like clothing, protecting the skin but also allowing for the transmission of smells, gasses, and other substances he believed to cause illness.34 “Everything that contributes to improving the condition of the skin is of

32. Ibid, 33.
34. Ibid, 34-37. Beyer notes that the experiments Pettenkofer designed to bring about this conclusion were still being practiced during his own medical training in the early twentieth-century.
the greatest importance,“ he concluded, “because a vigorous skin stands atmospheric
changes much better and protects against many diseases.”35

Pettenkofer, like Chadwick, believed that cleanliness had an independent and
necessary function in promoting health and was adamant that no socialist redistribution
of wealth could take the place of hygiene reform: “We do not solve the problem by
providing the poor with the most necessary food, housing and clothing unless we at the
same time educate them to painstaking cleanliness.”36 On the other hand, unlike
Chadwick, he was willing to acknowledge a broader set of factors in the creation of poor
health. He recognized poverty, for example, as partial cause of poor health, as well as
including aesthetic experience and intangible practices of place-making as factors
effecting well-being and health. “From the domicilium necessarium, a place where he is
compelled to stay out of necessity, only the human being makes a domicilium
voluntarium, a freely chosen residence, in order that he may eventually have a domicilium
originis, a genuine homeland, a fatherland or, in other cases, a motherland.”37

Pettenkofer’s scientific methodologies gave credibility and weight to his architectural
perspectives which produced a detailed picture of the body it its setting. His term,
Sozialhygiene, reflects this attention to the everyday spaces as constituent factors in the
creation of public health.

35. Max von Pettenkofer, The Value of Health to a City: Two Lectures Delivered in 1873, trans. Henry
    E. Sigerist, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1941), 46.
    36. Ibid, 47.
    37. Beyer, 34-36. On the healthful effects of beauty, see page 46

41
3. **Hygiene as Infrastructure: the Berlin Bürgertum**

Although Germany had never made much of a showing in the larger, international industrial exhibitions, it became an important impetus behind the development and planning of the international hygiene exhibition, beginning with the significant financial and scientific support of the first 1876 Hygiene Exhibition in Brussels. 38 Germany was awarded some of the most prestigious prizes and the event was considered a great national success there.39 The same year, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Öffentliche Gesundheit* (German Society for Public Health) began to promote the idea of their own exhibition to be staged in 1882. The German Bürgertum, the emerging middle-class, undertook the coordination, realization, and promotion of hygiene exhibitions.40 Supported by the Prussian establishment, but realized by the bourgeoisie, the German Hygiene Exhibition illustrates the complementary interests existing between a conservative state and the activities and investments of a liberal middle class. Committees were populated by medical professionals, architects, engineers, civic officials, and industrialists. Moreover, individuals involved with planning the exhibition were those whose personal careers were often directly involved with the


40. This is an observation corroborated by Gunther Schaible in his dissertation on the German *Sozialausstellungen* (see Schaible, 65.)

42
development of the technological infrastructure of Berlin. The organizers of the exhibition were a successful and interconnected group of academically and scientifically trained members of the cultural establishment, the university, and the polytechnic school. The concept of hygiene they promoted was inseparable from its manifestation through urban infrastructure, technology, social progress, and a stable class structure.

The most renowned member of the executive committee of the German Hygiene Exhibition was Berlin pathologist, politician, and hygiene reformer, Rudolf Virchow, who had served on the central committee for the first hygiene exhibition in Brussels. Virchow was a leading figure in German medical reform and one of the primary figures responsible for installing and designing a sewage system for the city in the 1870s. 41 His impressive range of studies culminated in a groundbreaking theory of cellular pathology, which asserted that cells are building blocks of the body, and their failure can explain the origins and nature of disease. 42 Virchow’s social perspectives were formed

41. Recent publications on Virchow illustrate not only the dynamic state of nineteenth-century studies on Germany in recent decades, but also the role of these studies in a reexamination of the Sonderweg theory. The Sonderweg view of German society suggests that the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie failed to claim and sustain a strong political role after 1848, which resulted in a weak middle-class who retreated from political life. The outcome of this has been seen as a strong anti-modernist position among the German middle-class, which led to its readiness to submit to authoritarian forms of government, the attack modern technology and mass culture. New scholarship on the German middle class and liberalism generally questions this homogeneous view. Constantin Goschler’s biography of Virchow - Rudolf Virchow: Mediziner – Anthropologe – Politiker (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Bohlau Verlag, 2002.) – for example, considers Virchow a remarkable but representative figure of the period, whose political views were indicative of a growing middle-class during the Wilhelmine period. For an overview of scholarship with similar conclusions, see Arleen Marcia Tuchman, "Institutions and Disciplines: Recent Work in the History of German Science," The Journal of Modern History 69, no. 2 (1997), 305-309.

by his experiences as a young intern in the revolutionary social movements leading up to 1848 in Berlin. He was appointed to study a typhus outbreak in Upper Silesia and the consequent condemnation of the Prussian government for negligence was a public declaration of support for the left. During the uprisings of 1848, Virchow co-founded the political medical journal, *Die medizinische Reform* (1848 – 1850), as well as the more specialized *Archiv für pathologische Anatomie und Physiologie und für klinische Medizin*. In the former, he wrote scathingly about Prussian hypocrisy, indifference and waste. “The revolution of the old state is not even finished,” he wrote, “yet we already see on all sides, that the plans and stones of the new state are being brought forward.” Virchow never espoused, however, an unambiguous support for direct democracy. Rather, he disagreed with the basis of Prussian authority and believed that medical science offered a more rational set of concepts on which to solve social problems. His famous maxim, “Politics is nothing other than medicine writ large,” was a rallying cry in an international hygiene movement that asserted the universal applicability of medical knowledge to all spheres of life.

Virchow’s belief that the doctor had a significant role to play in politics and society was a common theme in German Sozialmedizin.44 Indeed, scholars from numerous perspectives have pointed out that the popularization of natural science made discourses available that did not overtly challenge the status quo, but which tacitly acknowledged social fragmentation and tension.45 Goschler notes that the doctor became a master at the operations of the public sphere. “He learned to operate its most essential instruments – the organization and financing of political associations, the production of publicity through flyers and newspapers, as well as the struggle to gain political majorities through events and voting – with great mastery.”46 Virchow was a member of the Berlin Stadtverordnetenversammlung (City Council) from 1852–1902; a member of the Prussian Abgeordnetenhaus (House of Representatives) between 1861–1902, and a member of the Reichstag between 1880–1893.

Although Virchow was the most internationally renowned member of the organizing committee, other active members were influential in a local context. Arthur Hobrecht, chairman of the Executive Committee, was a former mayor of Berlin (1872–1878) and a retired minister of state. During his tenure as mayor, he consolidated the

44. Goschler, 21.


46. Goschler, 68.
power of the Berlin Kommune, acquiring important rights to self-government from the imperial authorities under the aegis of hygiene reform. \(47\) Hobrecht had declared in his opening speech as mayor that he would make Berlin the cleanest city in Europe. With the support and technical assistance of Virchow, the mayor initiated the construction of a comprehensive sewage and drainage system for the city, designed and implemented by his brother, James Hobrecht, a city architect in Berlin. \(48\) Hobrecht’s mayoralty illustrates the long political grasp of hygiene reform – its ability to promote changes in the organization of space and property. In 1878, a conflict with Bismarck resulted in Hobrecht’s exile from federal politics, but he continued to be active in the city. At the time of the Berlin Hygiene Exhibition, he was on the supervisory board of the Gesellschaft für die elektrische Hochbahn (Society for the Electric Railway) in Berlin.

Members of the committee included designers, entrepreneurs, engineers and architects. Committee member Herman Rietschel founded the faculty of “Ventilation

\[47\] As Brian Ladd points out in his study of urban reform, the 1808 reform legislation, the Städteordnung, had given cities the right to self-governance, which provided the legal framework for German citizens to participate in municipal affairs, if not national politics. (Ladd, Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany, 1860-1914 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 1990), 17. Berlin, however, had always been an exception to this law, because local officials there were required to report directly to the state, rather than local, authorities. During Arthur Hobrecht’s mayoralty, he was able to gain these powers of self-government for Berlin specifically on the basis of the stated need for the city to regulate and improve its sanitation.

\[48\] James Hobrecht was the author of the infamous 1862 “Hobrecht Plan” for the city of Berlin, the first attempt to establish an urban grid for the developing sections of the city. The plan was subsequently blamed for the rise of the Mietskaserne, or “Rental Barracks”, a housing type that became an icon of industrial working-class misery in Hauptstadt Berlin. James Hobrecht also contributed to the design of systems for drainage and sewage infrastructure and was the founder and editor of the Deutsche Vierteljahrrschrift für öffentliche Gesundheitspflege (1869). Moreover, he was a founding member of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für öffentliche Gesundheit (1872), the year his brother was elected mayor of the city.
and Heating Technology” at the Technical University in Berlin and developed technology that exploited warmth produced by industry for use in long-distance heating. Rietschel’s heating and ventilation systems were installed in the Reichstag, the Deutsches Theatre, and the Schauspielhaus – the major political and cultural institutions of the Bürgertum. With his former partner, engineer Rudolf Henneberg and Henneberg’s new associate, A. Herzberg, Rietschel formed the exhibition’s engineering advisory committee. At the time of the exhibition, Henneberg and Herzberg had themselves recently signed a contract with the German branch of the Edison Company to introduce the light bulb into Germany. 49 These brief individual career summaries offer a portrait of the German hygiene movement, and illustrate the tangible processes of modernization that were ongoing in Berlin during this period. The Berlin middle class was active in the installation of technologies of climate control, waste treatment and lighting. The affiliation with these industries and hygiene reform can be traced to the focus on the technological interface between the body and its environment, a space Dr. Southwood Smith in England had identified in the 1830s as the basis for the science of hygiene - the “interchange between living organisms and their physical environment.”

49. Rietschel and Henneberg’s company manufactured the steam and water machinery for public baths throughout Germany. (Dampfkessel und Wasserbecken) Leo Vetter, Das Bad der Neuzeit und seine historische Entwicklung (Stuttgart: 1904), 47.


The German Hygiene Exhibition was a product of the energies and interests of the Bürgertum, provocatively situated between a dense topography of Prussian disciplinary institutions and the leisure areas of the bourgeoisie. The fair was installed in a space between pleasure gardens and military training grounds. To the north were two parade grounds and a barracks, to the south was the Tiergarten. The grounds were adjacent to Lehrter Bahnhof and the site as a whole was bisected by the raised tracks of the city S-Bahn, which extended to the east and west from the station.

The grounds were flanked by a Panopticon prison structure, the Zellengefängnis (1842 – 1849, arch. Carl Ferdinand Busse) on one side and a large holding facility for those awaiting judgment, the Untersuchungshaftanstalt (1877 – 1882) on the other. These incarceration facilities adjoined a courthouse, forming a massive juridical complex in one of the most rapidly growing industrial sectors of the city, Moabit. To the east of the docking area is the sprawling campus of the Charité, the oldest hospital in Berlin, where Virchow had begun his auspicious career and where many doctors had worked.

50. The interaction of industrialists, researchers and administrators at the hygiene exhibition is more evidence of a dynamic interest in modernization among the Bürgerum in the late industrial period. There is a compelling tension; it seems to me, between the development of modern infrastructures by a liberal bourgeoisie and the continued control of land and resources by the conservative establishment.

51. Early 20th century Berlin slang has “sitting in Moabit” as an expression for being in prison.
as they supported the Revolution of 1848. To the west, pavilions for the Moabit hospital are visible, the second oldest hospital built in the city.\(^{52}\) Amidst this rather grim chessboard of institutions, the proximity of the Spree river and Tiergarten, together with the lavish gardens installed at great expense by the city of Berlin for the exhibition, presented the possibility for an entertaining and socially edifying, afternoon (see Figure 2.1).

Squeezed between railway tracks, the exhibition building for the event was the newest structure of this assemblage. (Figure 2.5) A year before, the hygiene exhibition had been fully installed in temporary wooden structures when the buildings and most of their contents were destroyed by fire four days before the scheduled opening.\(^{53}\) The construction of a permanent edifice, explained the official catalogue, was a decision in keeping with the standards of a safe and hygienic infrastructure.\(^{54}\) The building was only the second major exhibition building constructed in Germany, and a national competition was organized for its design. Plans seem to have been submitted by engineers, rather than architects, and the winning firm was Pröll & Scharowsky from Dresden. With the exception of the winning design, all entries from the competition had

\(^{52}\) One of the first bathhouses constructed by the city of Berlin was located directly south of the Moabit Krankenhaus, in the Kleine Tiergarten.

\(^{53}\) The official title of the exhibition, “Die Allgemeine Deutsche Ausstellung auf dem Gebiete der Hygiene und des Rettungswesens 1882/1883” makes reference to this event by listing both years.

\(^{54}\) Officieller Katalog für die Allgemeine Deutsche Ausstellung auf dem Gebiete der Hygiene und des Rettungswesens 1882/1883, (Berlin: Julius Springer & Kassel: Theodor Fischer), 1883, 4-5.
been composed of a high central hall flanked by lower side aisles. The Dresden firm proposed a hall comprised of twenty-five structurally-independent units, each measuring 19 x 19 meters, which were enclosed and unified by a surrounding half-masonry wall.\textsuperscript{55} The main building was comprised of three transverse halls and three intersecting halls that ran the length of the building and which enclosed four interior courtyards. The most imposing section of the structure was the central entry pavilion, which included four hydraulic lifts and towered above the exhibition at a height of forty-five meters.\textsuperscript{56} The space was flexible enough to be used for a variety of future events.

Pröll & Scharowsky won the competition for the design of the structure, but the creation of its “artistic and architectural aspect” was assigned to royal architects, Walter Kyllmann and Alfred Heyden. Kyllmann was the chair of the Berlin Architekturverein (1878-1888), the local architectural association, and was a strong supporter of Bismarck. He had been in charge of the German pavilions at the World’s Fairs in 1867 (Paris) and 1876 (Vienna) and had designed some of the most important commercial structures in Berlin, including the arcades Kaisergalerie (1873) and the Passagen on Voßstrasse (1871). Kyllmann was also the architect for the most celebrated private bathhouse in the city, the

\textsuperscript{55} Pröll & Scharowsky’s exhibition building resembles \textit{Les Halles} in Paris (Victor Baltard, 1853-1855). Both are comprised of an assemblage of individual and identical pavilions that are integrated by internal corridors.

Admiralsgartenbad (Admiral’s Garden Baths) on Friedrichstrasse. The design of a major exhibition structure for the capital city was thus consistent with Kyllmann’s opus, which included the creation of new architectural spaces associated with iron and glass structures. Kyllmann & Heyden’s façade provided the solidity and historicism lacking in the engineering structures. A stone enclosure at ground level that ensured control and security, with a iron and glass wall above, which took advantage of flexible interior spaces and the improved illumination permitted by newer building materials. The appearance of the building was described as “prächtig,” or splendid, in contemporary accounts, and its massive dome resonated with Schlüter’s 1853 massive dome on the Berliner Schloß at the far end of Unter den Linden. (Figure 2.6). The oversized doorway was flanked by heavy, banded stone piers, which supported a stacked composition of dark stone under the iron and glass dome, with its series of stepped turrets. The composition presaged the weighty national monuments of the Wilhelmine period (1888-1914), such as the Reichstag or the Völkerschlachtdenkmal.

The structure of the exhibition building was divided between modern materials and engineering structures and the official architectural styles of the state. Similarly, in the visual program for the exhibition, the monarchy occupied an eminent place, but the exhibition was aimed at the educated Bürger. In the area above the main portal, a large-

57. See Chapter Four

scale sculptural group designed by professor Adolf Brütt included a female figure with arms extended whose robes sheltered a mother and baby on one side and an outstretched male figure on the other. (Figure 2.7) The figure in the grouping is identified in some sources on the exhibition as Hygieia, the daughter of Asclepius, a semi-divine healer from ancient Greek legend. 59 Both Hygieia and Asclepius were central figures in classical iconography of health and healing; however, the sculptural group resembles the Christian figure of Charity far more than the snake-wielding female figure typical of the classical Hygieia. These works were directed at the classically-aware Bürger, to whom images of an elevated past as well as Christian charity and social engagement would have been most effectively addressed. In the spacious foyer of the main building, a mural depicting St. Elizabeth and the Good Samaritan was painted on one side of the hall, and the shrine to Asclepius at Epidaurus was depicted on the other. 60 A bust of empress Augusta was is set against the backdrop of both.

The hygiene exhibition framed the body of the worker, the Arbeiter, for the edification of the middle-class. The body of the workers was shown to be in need of assistance from the impact of the violent and polluted industrial environment. I have used the term “safety” for Rettungswesen in the title of the exhibition, which is one translation of the term, but it might also be literally be translated as “emergency care.”

59. Schaible, 68.

60. Wagner, 83., Offizieller Katalog für die Allgemeine Deutsche Ausstellung auf dem Gebiete der Hygiene und des Rettungswesens 1882/1883.
The intended audience of the exhibition was not expected to inhabit the dangerous environments in which the worker was situated. Among the highlights of the exhibition illustrated by Über Land und Meer was the wax figure of a miner in the dark environment of his daily labor that formed part of a promotion for protective equipment. Referring to sections of the exhibition showing plans for new Berlin prisons Plötzensee and Moabit, Oscar Lassar praised their level of cleanliness, which would “arouse the envy of any housewife.”61 At the Berlin asylum for the homeless, he went on, a vacuous rogue was transformed through the bath into a purified man. And yet, he notes suggestively, “our workers don’t bathe, so you have to ask where do our servant girls bathe?”62 The exhibition and its visual lessons demonstrate a pragmatic awareness that the members of different social classes inhabit different spaces, facing very different threats. A rare exception to the exclusive attention on the working-class body was, for example, the wax figure of a middle class woman shown in elaborate evening clothes who sits in a comfortable, well-furnished room, and has fallen asleep by the fire. As depicted in Über Land und Meer, her fireproof clothing saves her from being consumed by the flames of a fallen lamp.

Considering the overall context within which new architecture was exhibited at the hygiene exhibition, it is important to understand that viewers of the exhibits were


62. Ibid, 12.
not assumed to be future bathers, but rather donors to and supporters of the cause. Some new designs for bathtubs and showers probably were aimed at homebuilders for the middle class; however, the emphasis in the exhibit was on models for the poorer-classes. Bath technologies and architectural plans were not exhibited in the category of Public Architecture (Öffentliche Architektur) but under the heading, “Skin Care.” Öffentliche was a word that qualified buildings for theatres, churches or other imposing cultural institutions. The prestige and importance implied by the öffentliche, was that of the Repräsentationsbau, an architecture of representations, which stood in contrast to the Nützbau, implying a merely purposive architecture sometimes intended for the people, which was indicated by the word, Volk. The concept of public as a euphemism for poverty (i.e. the contemporary implication of public housing, public assistance, etc.) was not yet associated with this word. Within ten years, however, the term “Volk” as it has been used for example in Volksbad, quickly acquired the stigma of the social underclass and planners distanced themselves from this term, preferring to use the term “Stadtbad.” The term Öffentliche at the 1883 hygiene exhibition corresponded to the concept of public suggested by Habermas in his discussion of the bourgeois public sphere, a discursive space of politics and culture. The evolution of these terms and their different points of reference illustrates an ongoing process of fragmentation and self-identification in the public sphere, in a virtual as well as a geographical sense.
The category of “Skin Care” underscored the fact that the human body was the ultimate subject of the bathhouse; the bath functioned at the boundary of the body, the skin, and was introduced as a medical technology. The architectural models were demonstrations of social hygiene realized in physical, social environments. The baths exhibited included plans and descriptions of the first baths constructed in Germany and Austria during the period, including the Barmen Badeanstalt, the Baths and Washhouses in Hamburg-Altona, and the Esterhazybad in Vienna. In addition to these municipal examples there was information about and models of workers’ baths constructed by industrial philanthropists or parishes. Interspersed with the buildings and drawings were patented technologies being promoted by manufacturers relevant to the construction of baths and showers.

The most widely discussed exhibit in the section, and one of the most popular in the event at large, was the full scale functioning model for a Volksbrausebad (People’s Shower), presented by chairman of the Berlin Verein für Volksbäder (Berlin Association for the People’s Baths), Dr. Oscar Lassar. His model was derived from earlier designs created by engineer David Grove for the Prussian military. It was the antithesis of the large-scale, monumental English public bathhouse, a lavish institution often associated

63. Barmen Badeanstalt, 1881-1882
with British imperial wealth.65 Installed in the gardens around the exhibition buildings, the showers were open to the public and ten thousand visitors bathed there during the course of the exhibition. (Figure 2.8) The design was a rectangular corrugated iron shed with a cash entrance and ten bathing cells, divided into men’s showers along on one side and women’s on the other. Each cell was further divided into a small corner dressing area and shower stall separated by a waterproof curtain. (Figure 2.9) The drawings and plans exhibited by Lassar in the interior exhibition, however, were somewhat different from the functioning model. (Figure 2.10) The exhibited plans described a centrally planned iron structure with 14 cells arranged around a central space for water storage and heating equipment. (Figure 2.11) The octagonal building seems to make reference to street furniture, resembling the public restrooms, urinals and cylindrical posts familiar from Haussmann’s Paris. In the exhibited drawings the roof is tipped up, which allows the viewer to peer inside the workings of the bathing machine. This bird’s eye view into the iron cells –available for the planner and patron –make a reassuring statement that the cells can be regulated and supervised. But more than this, the drawings indicated that the baths are– like exhibition architectures –able to be assembled, disassembled and reassembled elsewhere. They are flexible and modern.

65. This sentiment is reflected in many contexts. In a speech at the 61st Versammlung deutsche Naturforscher und Ärzte in Cologne, Oscar Lassar, dermatologist and chairman of the Berliner Verein für Volksbäder (Berlin Society for People’s Baths), made allusion to the greater virtue of a nation (Germany) not drawing its riches off imperial sources (like England), but imbued with a common civic project: “We do not have, as the ancient Romans did, the goldmines of a subjugated world for our extravagant use, and for those works which were once carried out by slaves, we may all now take a proud share.” Lassar (1889).
No extra ornament or cost would slow the production of these monadic and reproducible types. The virtues of the People’s Shower and its imagined transparency are expressed in its gadget-like efficiency.

Lassar’s Volksbrausebad was an argument and an intervention in a larger public discussion. Its introduction at the 1883 exhibition asserted that showers were the appropriate form of bath for a working class bathhouses. Not the large bathhouses of Hamburg or Vienna, and not buildings with individual bathing bathtubs. The Lassar-Grove became a prototype for the most zealous individuals in the bath movement. Part of the reason for this was practical: the shower was less expensive. It seemed the only conceivable way to address the inadequacy of existing bath facilities on a large scale. But beyond this apparently simple logic, many believed that the shower was simply more appropriate for the working class than the Wannebad or tub bath (whose name was slang in German for the police car, “get into the Wanne”). Showers rinsed away dirt, grease and pollution from the factory, in contrast to the bathtub, where the dirty water would need to be drained and the body rinsed before it would be truly clean. Showers used less water and required less maintenance. In addition, the bath put the body in a supine position, submerged in warm water. This was seen as debilitating to the spirit, and sleep-inducing. The shower, on the other hand, was invigorating, it left body upright, alert and in motion. Lassar, the dermatologist, argued that the “the innumerable fine streams of water which touch the skin have an exciting and
revitalizing effect." Some advocates also suggested that when the worker saw his body in the shower, this would nurture a new awareness of the physical self, thus promoting greater care in avoiding industrial accidents.67

Lassar’s Volksbrausebad benefited from its introduction to the public at the hygiene exhibition. Matching its ideology of progress and prosperity, the inhospitable even harsh materials used and the resulting coldness of the interior were recast in light of progress and modern sanitation. The Volksbrausebad resembles the same machines that seemed, in other parts of the exhibition, to endanger the body at work. In the 1940s, Sigfried Giedion mused:

Dr. Lassar’s efforts were doubtless promoted by an ethical purpose, yet the spectacle also has its pitiful side: a century of mechanization able to offer nothing better than iron huts for the regeneration of the masses. No small gap lies between the outlook that produced the thermae of Rome and that for which iron huts seemed a solution.68

It is ironic that Giedion does not consider the regenerative powers attributed to Volksbrausebad precisely on the basis of the technological solutions it advanced. In an era that had great hope for mechanical forms, the fusing of regenerative medical power with technology was intuitive. Lassar was not speaking as an engineer, but as a doctor. The


hygiene exhibition in 1883 was not a denunciation of the machine or the city. Rather, it underscored the potential felt to exist for medical technologies to unify and confront physical difficulties and dangers faced by the working-class body. The Brausebad was internationally heralded and viewed as exemplary by the leading figures in the international hygiene movement.

Twenty years later, the 1883 German Exhibition of Hygiene and Safety was still credited with having launched the first truly popular solution to the working-class bathhouse. Moreover, the event was viewed as a culminating moment a formative era of German medicine, when Berlin, Vienna and German Strasbourg rose as centers of a new “scientific ethos” based on rigorous clinical study and new methodologies.69 Director of the Hygienisches Institut in Berlin, Robert Koch, had announced his discovery of the tubercle bacillus a year before and became one of the first scientific celebrities of the age.70 At the exhibition, Koch gave a live demonstration of laboratory techniques in a room decorated with large-scale photographs of microscopic life. The event and its attempt to present science to a popular audience was a predecessor of the elaborate installations that would become the center of later German hygiene exhibitions discussed below. Indeed, the figure of Robert Koch was pivotal in the promotion and solidification of germ theory, which became thereafter the medical basis for social


70. Ibid, 120.
hygiene. As Germany began to pursue its imperial ambitions during the 1880s, social medicine became a way of asserting its right to compete with the British empire – its legacy as well as its expensive public structures – and thus to redefine the terms of modernity and progress.

In 1885, the American journal Science reflected on the exhibition:

A study of the German exhibition of 1883 and of that at London in 1884 shows once more that the Germans may fairly lay claim to the leadership in the scientific investigation of questions that belong to hygiene, while to the English still belongs the credit for the technical execution that brings the results of these investigations to the protection of public health.71

Contemporary media reports indicate that this view was not restricted to outside observers. Even within Germany, some commentators found the exhibition too technical and dry for the non-specialist.72 Über Land und See, for example, gave the event a mixed review. Although the published drawings of the event emphasized entertainment and popular attractions, the reporter indicated there was not much for the layperson to find there. The exhibition would have been better off as a Fachausstellung, an event for specialists, he concludes, “only the experts will be satisfied.”73


72. Über Land und Meer, np.

73. Ibid, np.
2. The International Hygienische Ausstellung, Dresden, 1911

Between 1890 and 1920, the culture of hygiene reform in Germany was the site of significant developments that substantially revised its goals. In terms of mainstream or official venues for medical research, Germany remained a leading center of scientific authority well into the Weimar period.74 Medical professors, for example, continued to possess an exceptional level of prestige and political influence.75 At the same time, another branch of hygiene reform, associated with the term Lebensreform, or “Life Reform” were disenchanted by modern medicine and what they perceived as its incomplete and arrogant solutions to the problem of national health. A multitude of heterogeneous groups comprised the Lebensreform movement. These groups emerged between 1890 and 1930, during a period associated the “medicalization” of German society. In historical discourse, the term medicalization often refers to a form of social compromise made by the elites, on the basis of which a portion of money and energy was appropriated to raise the public health among the working class specifically to the goals of sustaining a strong labor force and to discipline the workers. I follow the work of Michael Hau, for example, in defining the term more broadly, to describe the way that subjective and social experiences were mediated and interpreted through medical

74. Tuchman, 300.

categories. By exploring this broader cultural definition, Hau’s work underscores the continuity of responses among conventional doctors and life reformers, which is characterized by a conflation of social problems with public health issues. This created the basis for a common discursive space to exist, although the practical solutions sought by both groups were often in explicit conflict with each other.

The Life Reform movement refers to both broader and narrower groups and movements. While the term was used to specifically refer to vegetarianism, nudism and natural healing, it was used inclusively to describe a range of alternative therapeutic practices and health regimes. Under this larger definition, Lebensreform included a diverse cluster of unaffiliated organizations and orientations concerned with social practices and health – the excessive use of alcohol, immunization programs, vivisection, and clothing. Included under this category were advocates for Bodenreform, natural medicine, nudism, housing reform and physical exercise regimes. Members came from diverse class, educational and social backgrounds, which broadened further during the Weimar period. In many cases, life reformers were critical of, or antagonistic toward, the authority of university-trained specialists and Schulmedizin, or conventional

76. Hau,2.

Indeed, significant attention has been paid to the bitter accusations of Kurpfuscherei (Quackery) on the side of conventional doctors, and the mutual disdain with which life reformers viewed the science of the Schulmediziner. Thus, the discourses of life reform tended to reject not only the unhealthy habits of city life but also what they considered to be the equally ineffective means of recovering from them as practiced by the medicines and procedures associated with conventional medical practice. Wolfgang Krabbe characterizes the Lebensreform movement as essentially apolitical, a “privatization of the social question.” Individuals felt that political parties and social revolutions were simply not agents of real change. The powerful controversy that arose from this conflict reveals the powerful political and social stakes being contested on the field of social medicine. Groups associated with natural healing, for example, were officially excluded from the hygiene exhibition in Dresden in 1911. Nevertheless if, as Krabbe observes, life reform never became mainstream, it undoubtedly played a significant role in the shaping of the hygiene movement, which came to share many of its values during the 1920s. This is manifest in the 1911 exhibition.

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78. Louis Kuhne, for example, was a successful and well-known figure who supposedly left his unhealthy life as a factory owner to preach his own form of hydraphy and natural healing under the auspices of his, Internationales Etablissement für arzneilose und operationslose Heilkunst (International Establishment for Healing without Drugs and Surgery) See Hau, 20

79. Krabbe, 15.

80. Schaible, 123.
Literature on the medical history of this period is substantial and evolving. The following discussion of the 1911 International Hygiene Exhibition in Dresden will traces some of these discourses in this period through in their spatial expression at the exhibition and will analyze how they informed and shaped public space and architecture.

Its organizers saw the 1911 International Hygienische Ausstellung (IAH) in Dresden as the heir to the German Hygiene Exhibition in 1883. “Since that time [1883],” reported one committee member, “the imperial Ministry of Health has taken every opportunity to introduce to the public the advances made in Germany in the area of public health care under the leadership of its great hygienists v. Pettenkofer and Robert Koch, as they did at the World Exhibition in Paris in 1900 and in 1904 in St. Louis.” The hygiene movement had recognized the power of the exhibition to promote their cause


and the national government recognized its ability for hygiene reforms to contribute to the national identity.

In 1883, Robert Koch had demonstrated the science of bacteriology, performing the laboratory experiments that had led to his groundbreaking conclusions “before the very eyes of a broad public.”83 The remarkable success of the 1911 exhibition was linked to its expansion of this effort to present scientific ideas to a broad public in a popular, interactive, mode. The credit for the exhibition has often been given to chief organizer of the Dresden IHA, entrepreneur and druggist Karl Friedrich Lingner. An exceptionally innovative publicist, Lingner’s patented mouthwash, Odol, had been one of the first products in Germany to develop a strategy of brand recognition on the marketplace. 84 Lingner became involved with hygiene reform in the 1890s and organized the successful exhibition, Volkskrankheiten und ihre Bekämpfung (The Fight against Infectious Diseases) 85

83. Ibid.

84. Lingner made a fortune on the hygiene movement. “Following the important bacteriological discoveries of Robert Koch and Louis Pasteur…there was an overwhelming need in broad sections of society for protection from the omnipresent and fearsome Bacteria. Recognizing this situation (Lingner) financed the development of the antiseptic mouthwash, Odol.” From the exhibition on the Deutsches Hygiene Museum, “International Hygiene-Ausstellung Dresden 1911 und die Rolle Karl August Lingners.” In Sonderausstellung Vortrag der Festveranstaltung, 19. und 20. November 1986, ed. Deutsches Hygiene Museum in der DDR. Dresden, Germany, 1986, 4.

85. Volkskrankheiten, literally “People’s Sicknesses”. There is no equivalent for this term in English, although the term “infectious disease” is conventionally used to translate original 19th century meaning of the term. In the middle nineteenth-century, however, the term was used by reform doctors to underscore that people living in poverty (i.e. the Volks) were more vulnerable to epidemics and infectious outbreaks and therefore to agitate for resources to improve their health. Thus, the term initially advanced a political perspective on health. After 1900, the term became less specific, and apparently implied that all people, regardless of class (i.e. not just the folk Volks) were vulnerable to illness, and thus creating a kind of counter term to the popular Volksgesundheit (People’s Health). By 1911, Volksgesundheit as an important term in the
at the *Deutsche Städteausstellung* (German Cities Exhibition) in 1904. The exhibit was distinguished by the use of diverse media, which Lingner referred to as “didactic objects.” These objects were meant to engage the lay audience in an elaborate medicalized environment, including cellular models, microscopes, preparations, graphs, body parts and statistics - each intended to have a particular effect on the viewer. Lingner argued repeatedly that the tasks of Social Hygiene could not be undertaken by the cultivated, educated and powerful members of society alone, but required the voluntary participation of the Volk. Lingner’s *Volkskrankheiten* exhibition was restaged for the national exhibit of the German Imperial Board of Health at the 1904 World’s Fair in St. Louis, and thereafter toured in Frankfurt am Main (1904), Munich (1905), and Kiel (1906).

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public health rhetoric, that indicated health as the precondition for producing healthy soldiers, citizens and nation. The term often carried with it a sense of obligation that each member of society should keep healthy and to contribute to a wholesome national stock. For a more detailed discussion see Christine Brecht and Sybilla Nikolow, "Displaying the Invisible: Volkskrankheiten on Exhibition in Imperial Germany," *Studies in the History of Philosophy, Biology and Biomedical Science* 31, no. 4 (2000).

86. Also called the *Städtebauaustellung*, which was, confusingly, the title of a separate city planning exhibition held in Berlin in 1910. (eg. Weber, 3.)


88. Brecht and Nikolow,3.


90. Brecht and Nikolow.
Lingner was responsible for promoting and organizing the IHA in Dresden and donated a significant amount of his personal fortune to the endeavor. In considering his curatorial work, he spoke a year later of the *Ausstellungstechnik* and described it as part of an overarching philosophy of Organization.\(^9\) He argued that the body was the basis for all forms of social organization and that it could be thought of as a kind of ultimately successful business. Its endurance as an organism qualified it to serve as a model system. In reality, Lingner’s understanding of the body was less based on medical science than it was on his understanding of a good business model:

In the human organism…we see individual factors melt into a harmonious unity as they simultaneously realize their greatest productive potential. Each organ of work is set up and arranged according to its ability and its function in reaching a communal goal. But above them all stands a central management, a central will (*Zentralwille*), to whom each working element must absolutely submit. That is an absolute necessity in the outside world too. Great successes can only be achieved where an outstanding will drives the whole mechanism and where all members, each according to his function and his abilities, are in the right position to submit to the will of the leadership. \(^\)\(^2\)

The 1883 exhibition had been divided between the target audience of the exhibition, the Bürger, and the imagined class of people who were the target audience of their reform, the *Arbeiter*. The organization of the 1911 exhibition, however, defined social groups not explicitly by social classes but rather by the different interests of the mass audience and the expert. The core of the layman’s section was Lingner’s exhibit


\(^2\) Ibid, 11.
Der Mensch, the physical center of the exhibition and its main attraction. It was enormously successful, drawing 30,000 visitors daily during the first two months. A correspondent from the British journal, The Lancet, praised the exhibit for giving the ordinary citizen “a magnificent opportunity to see with his own eyes how attention to the laws of health can improve the physique of the individual and consequently the nation.”93 Authoritative charts and graphs presented compelling statistics, and many other visual aides illustrated the benefits of public health to the population.

More than any scientific conventions of presenting information visually, Lingner believed that representational and tactile exhibits had a more powerful effect on the mass audience. To illustrate information about the body, real and fabricated body parts were displayed, offering a view normally available only to the doctor or undertaker. Some of the most scintillating parts of Der Mensch were the displays of damaged bodies. As the reporter from The Lancet described:

In a section on care of the teeth are two pictures, one a slightly altered replica of the other. In the first a charming lady with a friendly smile and beautiful teeth wins your regard; the other is like unto it, but, alas! two of her front teeth are black, and the charm is gone...

Then we see the damage that may be done by wearing badly devised clothing, and here the exhibition of the corset was a specially thronged subsection, containing plaster casts of a woman who has worn no stays, of another who tight laces, and of others with the anterior thoraces and abdominal walls removed. In this section the contraction of the toes by tight boots, and varicose veins from garters are shown on models. Next

come houses – how to build, warm, light and ventilate them; and beds how to make and not to make them, all in models… Alcohol and tobacco and the harm they do are illustrated by pictures of drunkards from the great painters, while the reduction of offspring, the families of drunkards and the higher proportion of epileptics among them are all illustrated.

Then come important diseases…There is a room for tubercle, where one can find statistical statement of death-rates, pictures of the bacillus and massive cultures thereof, spitting pots, preparations of tuberculosis organs, and pictures of sanitarium life; another room is used to illustrate small-pox and vaccination; another shows venereal diseases with many wax models of specific skin eruptions. Then follows plague, typhoid, and other acute infectious diseases…  

The correspondent also noted with approval that the exhibition offered the visitors an opportunity to see themselves as healthy and productive, and also to see the benefits of this to the nation. He concluded: “What did these masses learn? …For the first time in their lives, the uninitiated found themselves face to face with themselves. It would be too much to expect that they learned even elementary physiology…but the great mass saw and began to think.”

The 1911 hygiene exhibition constructed a very different definition of the public and of the object of hygiene reform. The imagined social body was summed up in the figure of “Der Mensch” a full-sized bronze nude, standing in an orant position with arms raised, a gesture somewhere between triumph and prayer. Der Mensch was adorned with an Adamic fig leaf and wore the beard of a mature man. Raising his arms

94. Ibid, 547.

and face to the heavens, the figure strikes an ecstatic pose of affirmation and gratitude.  
(Figure 2.11) He seems to utter the words that were carved in the pedestal: “No riches can compare to you, O health!”96 Moving from the damaged and polluted tissues of illness and degeneration, the exhibit offers the unified, vital figure of a man celebrating the irreplaceable treasure of health as its conclusion. The pose and the figure of “Der Mensch” evolved into a central motif in the hygiene reform movement. Konrad Wünsche has traced the orant pose of Der Mensch to its presence in a print cycle by Jugendstil artist Max Klinger, entitled “Vom Tode.” However, it is best known from its appropriation by life reform artist, Fidus (Hugo Höppener), and the well-known work, 
*Lichtgebet*, or prayer to the light. (Figure 2.13) Unlike the wax figure of the worker imperiled in his work that was shown in the 1883 hygiene exhibition, the representation of the Der Mensch shows the common man stripped of class or social identity. It is a figure identified with universal humanity, expressed with the classical, naked figure. It is an image in which the visitor is encouraged to recognize himself.

These qualities in “Der Mensch” are further expressed in the schematic classicism that integrates the main exhibition pavilions. These central structures included the administrative and presentation buildings, the national pavilions of England and Austria, a café and beer hall, a series of themed exhibition halls dedication to the machine, safety, housing, and a small model crematorium. shared motifs of light-
colored, planar surfaces. The hall for Ansiedlung und Wohnung (Development and Housing) hall, by Dresden architect Rudolf Bitzan, was the most “modern” of the designs, drawing elements from Jugendstil and budding expressionist forms to create in the dynamic projecting foyer fronting a monumental, stylized pylon, whose austerity contrasted with the dramatic crowning frieze. The exhibition structures were largely designed by Dresden architects, and many betray a lingering feeling for baroque formality. On the interior of the pavilions, however, a regular program of painted oversized dentils, coffers and tunnel vaults repeatedly rehearse the theme of Classical architecture. Besides England and Austria, however, the national pavilions were executed in a variety of national styles, and thus were situated to the far side of the main axis of the exhibition so they would not interrupt the effort to establish a classical unity of the main axis.

The Populäre Halle was the focal point of the grounds and was the location of Lingner’s exhibition, Der Mensch. (Figure 2.14) It was the primary monument encountered upon entry to the event, distinguished by six colossal Doric columns that marked the semi-circular porch and supported the entablature, engraved with the words, “Der Mensch.” This signpost turned the building itself into a body that stood in the center of the exhibition and integrated all of the outlying parts. The façade of the Populäre Halle was an important image from the exhibition, reproduced on numerous renderings of the structure that were applied to diverse souvenirs, from glassware to
tapestries. Typically, views of the building were recorded from behind the entry colonnade, a screen of columns was visible between the imagined eye of the viewer and the rotunda. (Figure 2.15) These representations reproduced the elaborately staged entrance to the exhibition, which brought the visitor through a central courtyard, to approach the massive columnar porch of the Popular Hall. One example emphasizes darkened columns giving way to a bright and ordered world behind. Another print dresses up the colonnade with as a vividly decorated festoon. (Figure 2.16) Other perspectives on the Popular hall emphasized the small human figures at the base of the staircase leading up into the main rotunda. (Figure 2.17) Images of bodies moving from the periphery up into the hall give the viewer a sense of its powerful attraction.

For the official promotional poster for the 1911 IHA, an image called “Hygiene Eye,” by Max van Stuck, a gray Ionic colonnade stands for the physical grounds of the exhibition, below the a larger, clear eye. (Figure 2.2) Stuck, a Munich symbolist painter, may have been aware of Ledoux’s drawing entitled, “The Eye Reflecting the Interior of the Theatre of Besancon” from 1804, in which the viewing public looks back on itself. Unlike the image by Ledoux, in which the eye reflects an architectural space, the eye in Stuck’s poster set in a mystical heaven of starlight and electric blue, levitating above the portico. Rather than setting the viewer in a bright image of “Light and Air,” the familiar hygienic space, he dramatized and aestheticized the space of the viewer at the exhibition. This sense of drama and mysticism was typical of the life reform movement
and its preference for Jugendstil motifs. In this culture of alternative medicine, the
inward journey to health was often portrayed as a path to illumination, as in the 1897
*Lichtgebet*, by Fidus (Figure 2.13) Indeed, in 1912, Fidus produced a poster for an
alternative health conference, the 1912 Congress for Biological Hygiene in Hamburg.
(Figure 2.18) Here, the artist seems to have drawn from Stuck’s darkened sky and its
stylized firmament, placing them behind a crouching male figure. The figure is chained
to the ground but turns and looks up and over his shoulder. Both images take place in
an abstract, darkened space. The muscular body and clenched fist of Fidus’s male figure,
however, imply physical power and a suppressed will for freedom. Hygiene is
conceived as a dramatic struggle to break free and live upright. It is thus a catalyst for
individuality and liberation. Stuck’s poster, by contrast, is static and disembodied. The
eye is the recipient of knowledge and insight imparted through the gates of the
exhibition.

In reading these images and the reformist iconography of the period, it is useful
to return to Michael Hau’s observations on the conflict between life reform and
conventional medicine. Hau suggests that aspects of the opposition between these
groups plays out a larger conflict between an older culture of *Bildungsbürgertum* - a class
with access to the traditional German humanist education and its attendant social status
- and those for whom these educational and social institutions were unavailable. Hau’s
research indicates that the classical figure functioned as an ideal for both groups,
offering a normative image of perfect health and beauty on both sides of this divide. Classical sculpture thus served another function: a means of appropriating the cultural status of antiquity and its image of the citizen into the visual program of each group.

In a feature article for Dekorative Kunst, Dresden art and architectural historian, Erich Haenel, wrote a glowing report on the exhibition and its buildings. The hope that technology would point the way to a new modern monumentality was long dead and had been naïve, he reflected. Considering the architectural designs for the Dresden exhibition, Haenel argued that the hygienic itself was the source of a new direction:

The war against sickness and degeneration is a serious thing, and the solidarity of nations in the war against the exposed and the hidden enemies which circle around humanity will not be called to arms by a gaudy façade (Prunkgewand). The world exhibition of hygiene must make its entrance calmly and pragmatically (sachlich), if it wishes to do justice to the high ethical values that it seeks to embody.

In the concluding paragraph of the essay, he writes:

Will the Dresden Hygiene Exhibition open the way to a new epoch in the growing physical health of the people, as many already claim?...If the greatness of the principle shows itself and has this broader effect, the Dresden architects can share credit for it. For they used the most high-minded artistic means, that which can only be fostered in a progressive, forward looking culture of taste (Geschmackskultur), and presented this idea in a selfless and cultivated unity.

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97. See Chapter Two in Hau, “Gender and Aesthetic Norms in Popular Hygienic Culture.”


99. Ibid, 484.

100. Ibid, 496.
In the period after 1900, the German Art Education Movement to cultivated the development of Geschmackskultur (cultural taste) as it had been theorized by Hamburg curator, Alfred Lichtwark. The approach to the construction of classical themes and the deliberate positioning of free-standing sculpture at the 1911 exhibition suggests a plan to integrate moments of aesthetic experience into the social pedagogy of the exhibition. In the history section of the 1911 IHA, plaster reproductions of a Knidian Aphrodite and Doryphoros, figures considered objective standards of female and male beauty, were positioned in a central area overlooking a model of the baths of Caracalla in Rome. (Figure 2.19) Another significant visual focus of the complex was dominated by the monumental nude, Ballwerfer, by Richard Daniel Fabricius, which stood 4.5 meters high at the intersection of the central boulevard and entrance the Sportplatz. (Figure 2.20) This figure physically and conceptually marked the integration of physical culture into the central framework of the hygiene exhibition for the first time.

An appreciation for the social and psychological benefits of physical purity and training through activity and movement (themes of Abhärting, Ertüchtigung) opened the hygiene movement up to a new realm of social and cultural interventions which addressed the spiritual, aesthetic experiences of the modern citizen. Many advocates of

physical culture did not approve of “sport” per se – which they associated with competitiveness and limited physical movement. Instead, they advocated athletics and activity as practices of Erholung – aimed at physical and spiritual rejuvenation. The focus on Erholung was later heralded as one of the great “social-political” contributions of the event. The 1911 IHA contained areas for resting and finding tranquility, or “seelische Hygiene,” amidst the busy crowds. (Figure 2.21) A stadium for sport, swimming and exercise was constructed in the Sportplatz and the positive effects of exercise of the body were measured in the Sportlaboratorium. In a building the colossal Ballwerfer (above), scientists in white coats tested, measured and sampled the bodies of athletes before, during, and after training. (Figure 2.22) The exhibition inserted the classicized body, with its high cultural seriousness, into the image of modern hygienic research – similarly clad in white.

Bathing architecture reflected the new themes in the movement. Adjacent to the stadium was the Undosa-Wellenbad, or Undosabad, an outdoor swimming pool with artificial waves that kept the water constantly in motion. Theorists of the Brausebad had theorized that constantly running water was a sign of purity – the body did not come into further contact with its own dirt. The concept that moving water was cleaner and more vital certainly informed the critical reception of the Undosabad. In addition, writers

102. Weber lists a number of publications inspired by this aspect of the exhibition, including Volkskraft und Sozialpolitik. Kritische Betrachtungen und Lehren der Dresdner Hygiene-Ausstellung (Ehrenberg, 1912) and Die Sozialpolitische Bedeutung der Internationalen Hygiene-Ausstellung in Dresden (Alfons Fischer. 1912), publications which documented the impact of the exhibition on social hygiene movement. Weber, 33-37.
claimed that the *Wellenbad*, “wave-bath, also kept the body in motion, which increased the hygienic benefits. In addition to this functioning model, existing municipal bathhouses in Germany were exhibited in the fourth *Wissenschaftliche Abteilung* (Scientific Department), the “Physical Culture” section. This section displayed photographs, plans, drawings and models of many new large-scale buildings that had been constructed since 1900. Among these, the architectural type of the *Hallenbad* a bathing structure that included a central swimming hall, was the dominant model. These institutions included saunas and steam baths, medicinal baths, exercise rooms and even dog baths in the *Hallenbäder.*103 The scale of these bathing structures expressed the range of physical experiences and activities that the hygiene movement had begun to consider part of their social program. “Physical Culture” was not considered merely recreational, but included Alcoholism, Clothing, and Eugenics among its subcategories. The British correspondent from *The Lancet* noted with approval that this section effectively illustrated the “advantage of cleanliness for the general health of the population.”104 The transfer of concepts of cleanliness and public health to urban design was a rapid one. The exhibition on Eugenics at the 1911 IHA was the first public of racial hygiene as a legitimate field of health inquiry. Already by 1915 the Canadian

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103. The monumental Müller’sche Volksbad in Munich (1897 – 1901), arch. Carl Hocheder, was a prominent exhibit in this section. The 1.7 million DM project included a laundry, massage rooms, light baths and residences for the employees.

planner Noulan Couchon defined town planning in general as the science of “race improvement through the regulation of environment.” Eugenics became an official public health policy during the Weimar period. The intersection between race, health and environment continued the fundamental association between public space and the body that had been explored since Chadwick’s *Sanitary Report* in 1842.

3. *Weimar-era Sozialhygiene: The “Gesolei” (1926) and the Dresden Hygiene Congress (ICHD) (1930)*

When the successful 1911 International Hygiene Exhibition closed, Karl Lingner turned his energy to the establishment of a museum in order to manage and display the remaining materials. The German Hygiene Museum was founded, therefore, after the tremendous success of the IHE, and it attempted to continue in the idiom of social reform that had struck a popular chord. The Hygiene Museum that he initiated was a mini-movement in itself; with an international impact on public health instruction. The institution was involved in the production of teaching materials, and the organization of numerous public health venues for the scientist and layman alike. The war interrupted these activities considerably, but also contributed to the development of a new *Körpermärkultur* in the 1920s. The image of a strong and vibrant body was given added force by its expression of victory over the experience of helplessness and suffering caused by the war.
In the 1920s, the German Hygiene Museum supported exhibitions that were large, practical, engaging, and popular. In 1930, architect Paul Wolf credited the museum with having an “enlightening” effect on humanity through its continuous practical activites. In 1930, as it inaugurated its new permanent museum building, the director claimed that the Museum had sponsored exhibitions in over 750 localities worldwide. The Museum also supplied objects for other collections and exhibitions through its Aktiengesellschaft für hygienische Lehrbedarf, a workshop dedicated to the production of diverse wax models, posters and other promotional materials, photographs, slides and films for public hygiene exhibitions. With its new emphasis on Erholung, the institution contributed to the strong emphasis placed on public exhibitions to advance the theme of physical culture and the body during the 1920s. In 1925, the “Volkskraft” exhibition in Berlin and the “Deutsche Sportschau’ in Nürnberg celebrated and promoted the cultures of German athleticism and outdoor activity. In 1926, with the support and participation of the Hygiene Museum, the “Gesolei,” the Düsseldorf Großausstellung zu Gesundheitspflege, sozial Fürsorge and Leibesübungen (The Great


Düsseldorf Exhibition of Hygiene, Social Assistance and Sport) became one of the the largest and most successful events of the Weimar Era.

The name of the exhibition itself, the “Ge-so-Lei,” implied the unity of different social projects, which essentially reflected the same mission as that set down at 1883 German Hygiene Exhibition in Berlin – to present a “comprehensive picture” of hygiene in all its forms. The concept of hygiene had always been animated by its unity of disparate sciences and parts of social life, aspects of Western culture and knowledge united by their insight onto the human body. The potential for this as a promotional strategy had been realized in 1911, when the sculptural nude figure was placed at the center of the exhibition. The clarity and solidity of this visual theme reflected in its architectural design gave coherence to the exhibition.

The role of the human figure was exponentially expanded at the Gesolei. The official poster of the exhibition was a Greek athlete leaping alongside a serpent. (Figure 2.23) The composition of the Gesolei medal showed a figure with only a loincloth, arms raised, standing at the end of a diving board with the buildings of the exhibition behind him. (Figure 2.24) The hygienic nexus of concerns was developed into a Gesamtkunstwerk of the New German. Participatory exhibitions, like Leibesübungen

(physical exercises) that took place in the open stadia, showed how to make existing human bodies appear more like their aesthetic prototypes.\[109\]

The architect responsible for framing the event was Wilhelm Kreis. (1873-1955). Kreis was the director of the Kunstgewerbeschule in Düsseldorf, a post he took over from Peter Behrens in 1908. He became associated with the office of the Stadtbaurat in Düsseldorf, which was the basis for his involvement in the Gesolei. A successful Wilhelmine designer of memorials and exhibition buildings, Kreis was a founding member of the German Werkbund, and later designed the building for the German Hygiene Museum, which opened in Dresden in 1930. For the Gesolei, Kreis designed a series of permanent cultural buildings for the city – an art museum, planetarium, and the Museum of Commercial and Social Studies, as well as directing the larger grounds. The permanent buildings were arranged around a central court, the Ehrenhof. The temporary individual pavilions and exhibition sheds extended in an arc along the banks of the Rhine, culminating in a pleasure park. (Figure 2.25). Like the architectural director of the Dresden exhibition in 1911, William Lossow, Wilhelm Kreis designed the most important buildings and assigned temporary pavilions to a number of local

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109. The idea of Leibesübungen includes more that traditional sports but was included various numerous gymnastic and dance schools in Germany. A goal of these forms of movement was the to train the body to avoid bad postures, and other bad habits that resulted in unaesthetic physical form. See for example Gabrele Genge, in Hans Körner and Angela Stercken, eds., Gesolei: Kunst, Sport und Körper, 3 vols. (Ostfildern - Ruit: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2002), 150-1.
colleagues and students, mandating that they follow a some general aesthetic criteria.\(^{110}\) In Dresden, the buildings had drawn from a menu of modern styles, but were connected through their light plaster surfaces and largely classical allusions. The temporary pavilions in Düsseldorf were united by a similar emphasis on clean light, planar surfaces, characterized Bauhaus-inflected ethos of the modern, which was a practical use for temporary building materials. The white walls, flat roofs, and abstract cubic compositions were common themes throughout, with few exceptions. (Figure 2.26) Their bright clean shapes express the unity of cleanliness and modernity, which was one of the themes of the event.

Like the 1911 exhibition, the organizers of the Gesolei emphasized a balance of symbolic, informative and experiential spaces. The 1926 event dramatically expanded the space dedicated to consumer activities and popular entertainment. Exhibition buildings were woven together with countless snacks, refreshment stands and promotional booths. At the northern end of the grounds an “amusement park” featured a water slide, music stand, sports hall, sports fields, roller-skating hall and the “Planschetarium” a bathing pool whose name played on Kreis’s monumental Planetarium in the Ehrenhof. (Figure 2.27) The Planschetarium (“Splash-eteria”) was an artificial wave pool designed by architect Hans Schaffrath and engineer C.A. Rambke. The Planschetarium (Figure 2.28) was a “Licht- Luft- und Wellenbad.” Its perceived

medical benefits have already been discussed in the context of the 1911 IHA. The Planschetarium, however, made a popular appeal to users with its witty name and by increasing its resemblance to a beach. The central hall was arranged around a 40 x 18m basin with areas around the pool for sunbathing and resting. Upper galleries accommodated interested, sometimes alarmed, spectators.\textsuperscript{111} The constantly moving water was conceived as a reproduction of the effect of the ocean. Photographs of the bathers show a group of children and adults facing the source of the waves in anticipation, with the whitecaps heading toward them from the far end of the pool. On pleasant days, the canvas roof could be removed to let in sunlight and fresh air. The \textit{Wellenbad} promised the benefits of traveling to the ocean to the person without the means to get there and offered the specific health benefits of swimming in moving water.

In a lecture series from 1903, “\textit{Unsere Verhältnis zu den bildenden Künsten},” (Our relationship to fine art) August Schmarsow had argued that the awakening of aesthetic sense was only possible through physical movement:

\begin{quote}
Not our school rooms, but our public baths, not our lecture halls, but our fencing rooms, not even in our art classes but rather in the break that we take for rejuvenation in the courtyard, outside and on the green grass, or skating on the brilliant ice, or from the high-spirited play under open skies – these are the important places of aesthetic experience.\textsuperscript{112}
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[112] August Schmarsow, \textit{Unsere Verhältnis zu den bildenden Künsten}. Leipzig 1903 Cited in Körner and Stercken, eds.
\end{footnotes}
At the 1930 International Exhibition of Hygiene and Demography, the German Hygiene Museum inaugurated its new museum structure, designed by Wilhelm Kreis. The building was located at one end of the historic grounds of the 1911 IHA, and included a park. The entire complex was 47 hectares and included the Georg Arnhold Bad. (Figure 2.29) The designation of the building as a “museum,” an institution conventionally associated with objects of aesthetic apperception, expressed a sentiment related to Schmarsow’s revised hierarchy of cultural spaces. If hygiene and physical culture provide the new point of departure for higher forms of culture, the new “museum” was a midwife in this process. Sabine Schulte’s dissertation on the German Hygiene Museum, notes however, that the museum represented a conservative form of the exhibition, instantiated by the implacable white walls denoting rationality, science and purity.113 In contrast to the traveling exhibitions and temporary events, the Hygiene Museum asserted the eternal values of the art museum in the unchanging face of its classical Modern façade.

In The Birth of the Museum, Bennett reflects on Foucault’s emphasis on forms of surveillance and visual control in nineteenth-century public institutions and observes a parallel proliferation of spectacular visual pleasures. In many ways, the hygiene

museum appears to be a literal translation of the phenomenon described by Tony Bennett as the “exhibitionary complex,” a process marked by the transference of objects and bodies “from enclosed and private domains…into progressively more open and public arenas.” This is a process whose dialectic demands interpretation. In presenting these brief portraits of these exhibitions, I have tried to establish the development of visual codes for the hygienic that were tied to medical and social categories. What needs were satisfied by these images and how did they contribute to the development of public design and the social space of the city? The development of bathhouse architecture in the following chapters should be understood against the larger visual field of the hygienic.

The bath also serves to disinfect, in a way, wounds which the skin received while the toilers are at work.1

Chapter Two provided an overview of the hygiene reform movement and its concern with architecture and public space. Through the hygiene exhibition, a mainstream, official, trajectory of this movement, reformers developed a broad cultural landscape for social hygiene, which included the promotion of specific aesthetic, cultural, and technological principles for building. A variety of new types of architecture were required to accommodate new programs in public health; the public bath is the most literal monument to the movement’s aspirations to cleanliness and preventative health care. This chapter moves from the ideal landscape of the exhibition to the lived topography of the city. If Chapter Two outlined the “medicalized” view of society promoted by the hygiene movement, the present chapter will explore the impact this had on the actual construction of the modern public sphere. Part one of this chapter studies how nineteenth-century bath advocates engaged historic and cultural prototypes of bathing structures to develop, justify, and distinguish their own architectural

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program. Part two further concretizes the discussion of establishing hygienic space by examining specific civic baths in London, New York and Montreal. What was the type of social space was produced in these architectures of hygiene? What was the body projected for that space?

To explore these questions is to investigate relationship between form and ideas as one that can be repressive as well as creative. This relationship has been explored from different theoretical perspectives informed by the work of Althusser, Bourdieu and Foucault. In Althusser’s Marxist topography, for example, the pubic bath fits comfortably within his concept of the “Ideological State Apparatus,” which functions to create the conditions necessary for the reproduction of the relations of production. A necessary part of this reproduction is the availability of competent labor power. Through the maintenance of a healthy population, a society ensures a population willing to invest their energy in production. The significance of the ISA is not that it is ideological, but that is is not orchestrated with a clear central chain of command - like an army or a police force - but operates relatively independently in the construction of social subjectivity. The success of Althusser’s ISAs is measured by the saturation of with the “correct” ideas and motivations – such that it requires no special effort on their parts to follow rules – they seem natural to them. Foucault’s concept of the disciplinary society

2. In future references, I will use Althusser’s abbreviation, the ISA.

likewise traces an logic of social self-regulation. In his analysis, normative values are reproduced within the structure of knowledge itself – in the disciplines. Althusser and Foucault turn to the social practices of daily life as the site where society is constructed through subjective experience. These concepts allow for a reading of architecture as a kind of material substrate that gives rise to knowledge, subjectivities, and a sense of place within a larger field of social relations:

Where only a single subject…is concerned, the existence of the ideas of his belief is material in that his ideas are his material actions inserted into material practices governed by material rituals which are themselves defined by the material ideological apparatus from which derive the ideas of that subject.4

Another significant concept in the exploration of public architecture and social ideology has been Bourdieus’s concepts of the habitus, which is considers the multiple factors at work in the phenomenological and social experiences of the public bathhouse.5

The habitus, which I discuss in more detail below, is a deeply internalized set of social “dispositions,” that are activated within the individual to locate herself within a given environment (or field). In an unfamiliar situation, the individual understands and locates himself, feels a “sense of the game,” with reference to the habitus. This term,

which originated in the discourse of art history, is fundamentally concerned with material culture, social class, and subjectivity as they are activated by public spaces.6

Bourdieu, Foucault, and Althusser continue to inform contemporary approaches to studying architecture and society, although their basic suppositions are not often revisited as such. This section will investigate them, apply them to different nineteenth-century contexts, and query whether they offer productive descriptions of the how planning and design function in the urban fabric and social field.7

A. Imagining the Bath: Historical and Social Models

Among the new building types required by the nineteenth-century city, the public bath was unique in that there it had a long institutional history associated with significant typological precedents. Granted, this history had been ruptured by the Church and the plague in the late medieval period. However, its history was imbued with powerful cultural associations that informed attitudes toward the design, scale and social meaning of public baths as they reemerged in the nineteenth-century. For the vast body of literature on bathing and sanitation produced throughout the nineteenth-century in Europe, the bathing structures, rituals, and cultures of the ancient world were


an important point of departure. Evidence for highly developed cultures of bathing and sanitation was found in Jewish, Christian, Hindi and Zoroastrian religious teachings. Archaeological evidence confirmed the existence of baths in the earliest human civilizations. The history of great civilizations became an important argument for the public bath by suggesting that modern life had fallen far below the sanitary standards of ancient humanity.\textsuperscript{8} The ancient Greek and Roman world, not surprisingly, provided the most significant architectural and cultural precedents. The undisputed sense that the ancient world was culturally superior to the present made the absence of bathhouses in the modern city all the more conspicuous. Reformers assumed that the lesser cultural and political achievements of the modern world must somehow be related to inferior individual body care. Even where the classical bathhouse was not explicitly mentioned in a discussion, it exerted a force as an absent presence, revealing the anxiety of the modern in the face of the ancient world.

As a historical precedent, the classical bathhouse provided a vision for the public bath in a modern context, but there were problems with its use as a workable model for nineteenth-century Europe. The Greek bathhouse was virtuous, but lacked grandeur and sensuality. There was not as much architectural evidence to inspire and mobilize

broad public support. In 1888, the entry for “bains publics” in the *Encyclopédie de l’architecture et de la construction* lamented the lack of archaeological information about the Greek public baths.\(^9\) Despite this, the Greek ideal – the cultivation of body and mind was a constant point of reference for hygiene enthusiasts. This concept of Greek bathing was closely associated the baths of the *palaestra*, or public gymnasium.\(^10\) The *palaestra* was described by Vitruvius in Book Five of *De Architectura*. In this section, he detailed the disposition of baths in relation to other functions in the gymnasium, and clarified the technical and functional character of the Greek gymnasium.\(^11\) Other important representations of Greek bathing were encountered on pottery and sculptural relief, which provided visual evidence of the social context of Greek bathing and its rituals. Common themes of bathing included small groups of men or women standing around a *louterion*, a basin resting waist-high on a pedestal; the depiction of bathers using a *strigil*, a curved metal implement for scraping the skin of oil; and a bather or bathers standing under a shower-like spray of water in the gymnasium. The Greek ideal (healthy body = healthy mind) thus became associated with cold shower-baths and sponge baths.

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9. Planat, ed, 217. The author, Pierre Benouville, concludes the section on Greek baths saying, “One can only suppose that, at least until more is discovered to shed new light on this question, we are condemned to make simple hypothesis on what the baths of the Greeks might have been like.”

10. Separate buildings for public bathing were also constructed in throughout the Greek world, often containing a semicircular or informal arrangement of shallow hipbaths located in a fairly simple interior space. These types of facilities are not widely discussed in nineteenth-century sources.

standing upright in the open air. These positions were associated with Greek values of discipline, rationality, and citizenship.

In contrast to the elusive Greek bathhouse, the Roman bath was a well-known architectural type consisting of a sequence of interlocking rooms characterized by distinct temperatures (*frigidarium* = cold room, *tepidarium* = warm room, *caldarium* = hot room). These corresponded to an elaborate bathing ritual, in which bathers moved from hot, to warm to cold rooms, often in addition to processes of scraping, exercising, sweating and washing the body. Water and interior spaces were heated by an underground furnace (*praefurnium*), which sent heated air through a unique channeling system called the *hypocaust* running inside the walls and under the floors. After the 1st century AD the thermal core of the bath building was increasingly arranged along one central axis, with one or more smaller domed *laconica* - heated rooms like saunas - pushing off to one side from the *caldarium*. The *laconicum* was the hottest room in the bathhouse, recognizable in plan by a vaulted, conical roof and deep niches in the four corners. In contrast to the hot, dry, *laconicum*, the *sudatoria* were steam baths.

The Roman bath possessed scale, technological sophistication and opulence. Roman bathhouses associated with lavish and expensive materials and ornament: colored stones, marbles, wall paintings, both relief and free-standing statuary, and colossal architectural orders were imagined as typical for the Roman bathhouse. The interior program of statuary and mosaics portrayed the pleasures and health of the
body, the gift of water, and the power of the emperor. Typical allegorical motifs associated with health and healing included figures of Asclepius, his daughter Hygieia, and Herakles. The bath’s scale, costly materials, and the central position it occupied in the city were all expressions of social significance. The vast interior spaces, with their massive vaults and superior concrete construction, were striking not only for their engineering sophistication but because they were devoted to an institution that did not exist in the mid-nineteenth-century. The confluence of Roman engineering and resources - aqueduct, the hypocaust, the quantities of labor and fuel - poured into the bathhouse made it fascinating simply as the social focus for so much infrastructure, wealth, and building art.

In addition to their importance in a cultural history of bathing and sanitation, the baths symbolized the architectural achievements of a vanished world power. Many scholars have noted the influence exerted by the imperial baths of Rome on the Western architectural imagination. (Figure 3.1) Spiro Kostof noted that the baths of Caracalla


14. Among other associations, the architecture of baths has a powerful presence in a political imaginary of empire. It is impossible to parse out distinctions between this fantasy of imperial power and the image of urban sociality. “It has long been an axiom of architectural history that the great public bath-buildings which constituted the social rendezvous of the Roman world were a leading stimulus in the development of spatial and ornate interiors.” Mortimer Wheeler, “Size and Baalbek,” Antiquity XXXVI (1962). On Roman baths and bathing, see Janet DeLaine, The Baths of Caracalla: a study in the design, construction and economies of a large-scale building project in imperial Rome (1997); Hazel Dodge, “Amusing the
and Diocletian, were the “origin of forms and moods that would transfigure the environment of primitive Christianity into a world of state.” Since the Renaissance, European and North American architects studied and sketched the baths, inspired by their massive interior spaces. Palladio produced extensive drawings of the Roman bathhouses in the sixteenth-century, which were purchased by Lord Burlington and published in 1730. The sketches were used as models for nineteenth-century religious and secular buildings. Blouet and Viollet-le-Duc also published reconstruction drawings of the imperial baths in the nineteenth-century, which were widely disseminated in a proliferating print culture. (Figure 3.2) The monumentality of these nearly two-thousand year-old structures, even as ruins, spoke to a century concerned with their own flimsy cultural products. Robert Owen Allsop, a prominent bath reformer in England, expressed a commonly shared feeling about the legacy of the

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17. Nicholas Pevsner traces common features of English and French Neo-Classicism in the 18th century to Palladian studies of the Roman Baths. (A History of Building Types, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 35, 38.) Viollet-le-Duc’s reconstructions of the baths of Caracalla were the model for the railroad terminal at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition (arch. Charles B. Atwood), which was the prototype for the “Roman Baths” terminals constructed around the turn of the century, the most famous of which being the Pennsylvania Station in New York by McKim, Mead and White (1906-1910) Donald Hoffmann, "Frank Lloyd Wright and Viollet-le-Duc," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 28, no. 3 (1969), 173.
Roman bath, when he pressed architects to reflect on the future of today’s public monuments: “When we build, let us build as if we build forever.”

The colossal scale and costly materials associated with the Roman public bath were unquestionably impediments to the adoption of this model in a contemporary context. The evocation of the Roman Empire suited the imperial ambitions of nations like France and England, but the decadent late-Roman society associated with the bathhouse presented a less flattering image. However, a study of the documents from the public bath movement emphasizes how much the discussion of the Classical bathhouse in the nineteenth-century created a mirror image of itself. In the feats of engineering and architectural splendor, bath reformers could recognize their own ideology of progress. The movement of bodies through and within the Roman bathhouse and the Greek Palaestra reinforced their own work ethic, and cultural values placed on productivity and self-regulation. As they were presented in reconstruction renderings, the massive interiors of the Roman bath are flooded with light and air. All the questionable or ambiguous aspects of classical bathing were overshadowed by the familiarity reformers imposed on it. This feeling of familiarity is a sign of collective habitus, a posture taken in an unknown space that feels like the right one. The structuring power of this image of the classical becomes very evident when it is contrasted with alternative bathing traditions.

Russian and Turkish baths presented Western European visitors with a radically different type of social space and communal behavior. An encounter with these unfamiliar environments provoked a strong response from many foreign observers. This “dialectical confrontation” (Bourdieu) between habitus and objective structure is the occasion for the individual to improvise based on the activation of past experiences or “schemes of perception.” 19 What was the outcome of these encounters? In some cases the unfamiliar social context was experienced as liberation. This sense is expressed in a rapturous 1768 engraving by Jean-Baptiste Le Prince, the Bain Public de Russe, from published narrative of the Abbé de Autreroche’s trip to Siberia in 1761. (Figure 3.3) The setting for the image is a traditional Russian bath, populated by a mixed-gender collection of naked figures that all are actively engaged in the rituals of the bath. The idealized bodies signifies the health of the bathers, and the bathhouse itself is set in an unreal, elysian space an impression created by the dissolution of the roof into clouds of steam and light. At the same time, the figures illustrate a social process that is “realistic.” An anthropological eye records the rituals of the Russian baths: its stepped benches, the steaming furnace, the clusters of branches for striking the skin and buckets of water.

Alternatively, a visitor to a popular steam bath might leave the observer feeling physical ill. Compare Dr. Richard Bright’s description of a visit to a seventeenth-century Ottoman bath in Buda, as an illustrative example:

On entering from the open air, the room, filled with steam, was so insufferably hot as almost to oblige us to retire. In addition to this, it appeared dark… The apartment was spacious, the center being occupied by a circular basin under a dome supported by pillars, the decent into this by two steps ranging round the whole of its circumference. Here we beheld ten or twenty persons of each sex, partially covered with linen drawers and long tresses which fell loosely from their heads, amusing themselves by splashing in the hot sulphureous water. Disgusting as this was, it formed the least disagreeable part of the scene. On the outside of the pillars the floor was paved and there lay at full length, numerous human creatures indulging, among the fumes, a kind of lethargic slumber. Others lay upon the steps and submitted to the kneading practices upon them by old women employed for the purpose. Some…lay stretched upon benches and in different corners were groups of naked families enjoying their midday meal, sour crout [sic] and sausages, amidst all the luxury of a profuse perspiration. 20

The absence of atmospheric clarity and the temperature of the room almost prohibited Bright from entering the bath at all. Once entering, the unpleasant smells in the environment (sulfur, sauerkraut, perspiration), the disorder of bodies (their number and gender is indistinguishable), and what he perceives as inappropriate social behavior (naked families, elderly masseuses, contentment in lethargy) fill him with anxiety. These spatial qualities were the antithesis of the illuminated, open, ordered space of the

classical bathhouse. Evidence suggests that the lack of visibility in the steam baths was a common objection and Julian Marcuse noted in 1907 that the Kastendamfbad, a steam box that allowed the head to stick out on one side, often replaced the steam bath proper in Germany. One 1908 handbook recommended reducing the pressure of the steam bath to make the air less cloudy, “which is preferable to many.” Continuing on the subject of the Turkish or Russian baths, the author stated that:

It has become such an institution in the land as to call for a few words of mention. While it has certain utilities, its name or names are fairly significant. It is an excellent bath for the man who never takes any more exercise than he can help and who seldom washes otherwise…. But for popular use it is best adapted to the peoples who invented it and whose names it bears, the lazy Turk and the seldom-washed Russian.

The Turkish bath also had its promoters in Europe. One of the most effective proponents of this type of bathhouse was David Urquhart, the British envoy to Turkey in the 1850s. In the book, Pillars of Hercules, Urquhart provided an extensive account of the Turkish bathhouse and its social benefits, which was later excerpted and reprinted as, The Turkish Bath, with a View to Its Introduction into the British Dominions (1856). In addition to its health benefits, Urquhart advocated the Turkish bath as a space where social classes could have contact with each other and counter the rigid class segregation


he saw in England at that time. Like Edwin Chadwick, Urquhart was a friend and student of Jeremy Bentham, and believed that habits and disciplines in daily life were the basis for ideas and opinions.\textsuperscript{24} Urquhart’s writings inspired doctor Richard Barter in Ireland to establish the “People’s Turkish Bath” in Cork in 1856, the first Turkish public bath in the British Isles.\textsuperscript{25} A short time after their inauguration, legend has it, structural problems in the building deriving water and humidity damage led Barter to a study of Roman baths. On the basis of what he discovered from this investigation, he revised the design of the bath to use a drier heat and rebuilt his business in a setting inspired by the classical \textit{laconicum}, thus expunging the eastern origins of the Turkish bath – as well as its excessive moisture – from the design.\textsuperscript{26} The “Roman-Irish” bath, as came to be called, became a standard type in private and public establishments throughout Europe.

Without the tools to navigate, however, one could respond with angry rejection or by imposing the structure of more familiar spaces on the new terrain and evaluate it accordingly.

Another perplexing and influential bathing type was the Islamic bathhouse, or \textit{hammam}. Although Islamic bathhouses were known in Europe since the Crusades, the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{24} On Urquhart’s attempt to build this ideal bath in London, see Nebahat Avcioglu, “Constructions of Turkish Baths as a Social Reform for Victorian Society: The Case of the Jermyn Street Hammam,” in The Hidden Iceberg of Architectural History: Papers from the Annual Symposium of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain (27th:1998),61.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Marcuse, 90.
\item \textsuperscript{26} Ibid, 91.
\end{itemize}
type became particularly distorted in the nineteenth-century through popular fantasies about the *harem*. The conflation of the harem and the hammam produced an imaginary type of public bath that provided the setting for many popular works in French academic painting during the nineteenth-century, particularly the *baigneuses* of Jean-Auguste-Domenique Ingres. (Figure 3.4) Although the Islamic tradition prohibits mixed bathing, the concept of unclothed women sharing a common space was frequently eroticized and nakedness was equated with sexual availability. Images like those produced by Ingres portrayed the public bath not as a civic institution but as a place of voyeurism and secrecy. 27 The Orientalist motif was a frequent them in commercial bathhouses in the second half of the nineteenth-century. Already in 1844, journalist Eugène Briffault described the attitude of a bourgeois bather in one a private facility on the Seine: “In his bath, the Parisian bourgeois dreams of the Orient, of its sensual delights, its scents, the voluptuous beauties of the seraglio, of opium and its ecstasies, while at the same time he could simply take a bite to eat.” 28

Elizabeth Collingham has written that the hygiene movement gave colonial Britons a way to redress a power imbalance in India in which the native Brahmins considered them impure. She argues that the concept of hygiene was strong and coherent enough to replace the earlier strategy of using prestige to assert cultural


dominance, and gave the British a framework in which to conceive of their bodies as cleaner and safer than their Indian counterparts. 29 Attention to the reception context for bathhouse models and precedents illustrates how culturally charged public spaces are – not simply as place of symbolic representation, but because of the habits and practices they install, promote and reproduce. Great Britain was credited with being the builder of the first modern public bathhouses. The models they developed were emulated by other nations for several decades. 30 As Nebahat Avcioglu has pointed out, the development of the public bath there coincided with the construction of a national identity in which Britons increasingly sought to identify themselves as the descendents of Rome. 31 Eager to clarify the true, un tarnished vision of the classical bathhouse and interested in staking its claim on Rome, the British recreation of the public bath defined itself in opposition to the Turkish or Islamic bathhouse.

B. Growing the Public Bath

The bath has an immediate and seemingly transparent relationship to the body. The body is at the center of its architectural program, both positively (the bath serves the body) and negatively (the building impedes exposure and regulates behavior). The interior of the bathhouse is complex: it incorporates areas of privacy, organized activity


31. Avcioglu, 68.
and circulation; it infers processes of looking, being looked at, inhibiting and initiating activity. The development of public structures devoted to the body and its purity, however, break the body down into categories and parts - class, gender, age, health, and citizenship. These categories and definitions structure the bath and often, although not always, effectivley correspond to its rules. The design works to establish the possibility or prevention of improvised or spontaneous activity. In this way, design participates in the lived reality of a world, which according to Bourdieu, is one “of already realized ends – procedures to follow, paths to take – and of objects endowed with a ‘permanent teleological character.” In constructing these procedures and defining the social goals for the public bath, the rationalization of the bathing ritual was the first order of business.

The bath began to develop as a public institution in the 1840s and by 1900 it had become a standard item on the menu of the progressive industrial city. As I discussed above, the reception and interpretation of cultural and building histories of the bathhouse were an important part of the ideology of the bathhouse and its reinvention for the industrial working-class. However, these concepts were always placed in the service of the present. The public bath was active in the spatial politics of the industrial city, as a study of specific localities clearly demonstrates.

Between 1800 and 1850, after several decades of the “water craze,” an enthusiasm for hydropathy and the culture of the spa, the provision of baths for the poorer classes became a topic of attention and discussion. In 1802, Prussian doctor Konrad Zwierlein noted that more had been published and discussed on the subject of baths and bathing during the last 15 years than in the previous fifty. Archives throughout Europe and North America are indeed well populated with pamphlets and treatises from this period, which tell about the virtues of bathing, the chemical composition of international springs and waters, and which outlining exotic, fashionable, and miraculous bathing regimes. In Berlin, Geheimrat Christoph Wilhelm Hufeland, author of The Art of Prolonging Life, wrote that the bathing fashion among the wealthy could play a helpful role persuading a broad spectrum of society to adopt healthy habits. The construction of private bathhouses in the city certainly did have this effect. In the major cities of Europe, a few of the new commercial baths offered cheaper facilities for the lower middle classes, although these were probably not accessible for the poorest social


Wealthy patrons sponsored some outdoor, charitable baths called “public baths” in the first decades of the nineteenth-century.

With reference to these new “public baths,” Dr. Johann Karl Ackerman in Prussia wrote that more police involvement was needed, although “many will accuse me,” he wrote, “of exceeding the bounds of medical policing.” Strategies supervising and regulating the bathhouse focused not only on the maintenance of social order and morality, but also on medically appropriate behavior. Improper and irresponsible bathing habits were proscribed on the basis that they could cause physical injury. The bath could apparently be hazardous if the bather did not have appropriate, trained supervision:

Many stay too long, too deeply in the bath without having their upper bodies continually rubbed and stimulated. They stay quietly and calmly sitting in the water. They abandon their chest and lower body to extreme pressure, which does the utmost violence to the flexibility of the chest and stomach muscles. [...] Yet there is an attitude that the bath is an innocent remedy that could never cause any harm.

The communal bathing establishment, therefore, was just beginning to come under surveillance of medical authorities when it was given a new momentum by the hygiene movement. After the rise cholera in the 1830s, the hygienic public bath began to


take shape as a fundamentally different institution from these earlier models of public bathing. Central Europe had been a focus for the European spa culture; the industrial cities of England were the setting for these new working class baths with their exclusive focus on the purification of the working-class, rather than the provision of water therapies. The decisive document in the later development of the public bath was the “Public Baths and Washhouses Act,” passed in 1846, a piece of legislation which marked the assumption of state responsibility for building and maintaining bathing facilities.

The “Public Baths and Washhouses Act” was developed by the London philanthropy group, the “Committee for Promoting the Establishment of Baths and Washhouses for the Labouring Classes” between 1842 and 1850.” This committee had been founded to study an innovative set of public bathing structures built in Liverpool and to formulate recommendations for similar baths in London. The Liverpool baths originated in the volunteer efforts of a Liverpool woman, Kitty Wilkerson, to organize a neighborhood washhouse during the 1832 epidemic. The well-visited story of a resourceful Samaritan was legendary in bathing literature; it established an opening-shot for the public bath movement that highlighting values of individual agency and creative initiative. The baths produced in Liverpool combined washhouses (laundries) with full-baths or “slipper baths.” The Frederick Street bathhouse, the first of these

38. For a historical account see Skoski.
projects, provided ten bathtubs, a laundry area, and an upstairs reading room.39 (Figure 3.5) Two first-class baths were installed in small, private cells and eight second-class bathtubs were grouped collectively in semi-closed cubicles. The baths were open for men in the mornings and evenings, with hours for women in the middle of the day. The provision of baths and books in the same building provided for the cultivation of the mind and the body, evidence of the Greek ideal, which is expressed in the simple temple-front composition of the building’s facade. (Figure 3.6)

Several additional baths followed, including the Liverpool Public Baths and Washhouse in 1844. (Figure 3.7) The facility offered baths similar to those at Frederick Street, including a number of semi-enclosed second-class baths combined with first-class private cells. Small swimming pools, or “plunge-pools,” and steam baths were added to the new bath complex. The building contained both men’s and women’s sections with separate entrances that led bathers of each sex to their respective areas. The only difference between the two areas was that the women’s side had fewer cells as the men’s side and the pool was smaller. Statistics taken on bath use in Liverpool during the first few years indicated that women used them less than men, and it became the norm to provide fewer women’s baths and smaller swimming-baths for women. The English model of the bath was so strong that this disparity in number and scale between men’s and women’s bathhouses was universally adopted, although it sometimes resulted in

39. This is not indicated on the plan, but is noted by its author, Thomas A. Markus, Buildings and Power: Freedom and Control in the Origin of Modern Buildings Types (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).
inadequate facilities or did not fit the particular patterns of use in that country or locality. In the mid 1850s, for example, Belgian architect Wynand Janssens used these British statistics in his design for the first public bathhouse in Brussels, and erred so far in this direction, that it was deemed inadequate to meet the local needs for women’s baths after three months in operation.40 The gender division of the public bath and this disparity in size tended to reinforce the visual sense that women occupied a smaller space in public, and to situate women’s areas in a lesser position of the architectural hierarchy.

The first baths constructed in London were called the “Model Establishment” for the Committee for Promoting the Establishment of Baths and Washhouses. While they worked on developing national legislation for funding the public bath, they held a competition for the design of a representative model and constructed it in the east London neighborhood of Whitechapel. (Figure 3.8) The “Model Establishment” (1845-1847) was designed by Price Pritchard Baly, an engineer who had studied with I. K. Brunel and later worked on his Hungerford and Clifton suspension bridges.41 Baly’s design for the “Model Establishment” conceptualized of the Liverpool model with an emphasis on efficiency and numbers. The building contains a symmetrical pattern of passages leading to two classes of bathing rooms (the rear section is the Washhouse.

40. Janssens, 3.

With a greatly expanded number of bathing cells, the Model Establishment packs the space full with individual bathing cubicles in a dense, cellular arrangement. There are no significant voids apart from the shallow lobbies along the façade. The building increases the disparity between the number of men’s and women’s baths, and bisects the bath by class, rather than gender. To do so enabled Baly to include many more men’s baths (38 first/38 second class cubicles) than women’s baths (10/10). The increased numbers of patrons required clearly laid out circulation patterns, which are pointed out in Thomas Marksus’ plan in Figure 3.8. The arrows indicate the intended point of entry for each group of bathers and extend to the destination. Male patrons enter two class-distinct portals in the center of the building and are issued into the rear, divided into first and second-class groups to the left and right. Entrances for different classes of women’s baths are positioned on the outer edges of the building’s façade - to the right and left of the men’s entrances respectively.

The space of the bathhouse had to be extremely legible, both literally, in terms of signage, and spatially, the bather had to plot a course through a new interior. To accomplish this, the design of the bath relied on the internal rules provided by the bather himself or herself. This began at the entry, as bather selected the correct door and then agreed to wait in a small waiting room, without wandering into other areas of the building. The patron was led to their bathing cubicle by an attendant who filled the bathtub and started the timer. The bather had 30 minutes to use the cubicle, which was
then washed for the next patron. As the plan of the Model Establishment indicates, the distinction between first and second-class cells was not based on larger or different cells, but on their separation from the second class cells and through qualitative differences, not visible in plan. First-class baths in England were defined by the details: more or higher quality luxurious towels, the provision of cosmetics, brushes, carpeting, soap, or the right to control the water taps.\footnote{William Thompson, Glasgow corporation baths and wash-houses (Glasgow: J. Crawford, 1892); Skoski, 7. Julian Marcuse’s 1907 monograph on the public bath, explained the existence of different classes of Wannenbäder, or full-baths, as an outcome of the widely differing demands for comfort made by the different social classes.} Besides the economic choice of which class bath was affordable, the bather could identify the level of body care he or she felt was appropriate. The function of the bath was therefore an interaction between the objective structures (i.e. Althusser’s IAS) with their teleological structure, and individual habitus, which needed to find its distinct place in the larger system.

The stakes for this working were very high. Public nudity, sexual transgression, cross-class or homosexual relationships were not minor infractions in Victorian society. Documents on bathhouses from the point of view of its users are, regrettably, extremely difficult to find. However, the degree of surveillance in the bathing cells by the attendant and the limited duration of the baths seems to have discouraged most people from using the bath cubicles as a place for deviant or sexual activity.\footnote{This doesn’t mean that the baths weren’t used for cruising or making social contacts to be continued elsewhere. More research on the use of public baths needs to be done to formulate any conclusions about this. George Chauncey’s well-documented history of gay culture in New York City...} Despite this, an...
anxiety about the possibility of inappropriate forms of physical contact in the bathhouse is apparent. The enclosed, atomized, cellular interior of the English public bathhouse was unprecedented. It was the antithesis of traditional bathing cultures, which were fundamentally sociable, even where division between the sexes was instituted. In contrast to David Urquhart’s ideal of the Turkish bath as a place of contact between the social classes where they come to “know each other,” the new model for the public bath was about separation and division. Even where people were fully clothed in the laundry, contact between users was discouraged. Slate barriers were often installed between the washing cubicles to prohibit casual conversation and socializing. Early in its conceptualization, opponents of the bathhouse expressed concern that the new social context of such an institution would lure the vulnerable female head of household away from her proper domestic environment, and expose her to immoral influences:

Could it be supposed that the wives and mothers who were to be subjected to such contamination would long continue pure and virtuous? …Many a poor woman was there would not be seen within a gin-ship, but if wash-houses were to be established, the objection would soon be destroyed by the gossip of three or four companions of the wash-house…

makes it clear that the gay subculture was far less repressed and culturally closeted than might be assumed. See, especially chapter 8, “The Social World of the Baths,” George Chauncey, Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture and the Makings of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940 (1994), 208-225.

44. Schleyer, 277.

The bathhouse served as a model for the hygienic organization of space and appropriate physical boundaries. The domestic environments of the working-class were frequently characterized as places utterly lacking in safe and proper physical segregation. Reformers were uneasy about the mixed gender and generational sleeping arrangements in the crowded apartments of the under classes. The fear of sexual immorality and incest was foremost among their concerns, but these fears of sexual taboo existed alongside a separate conviction that productivity was simply hindered by a confusion of domestic activities. Wynand Janssens, for example, the designer of the first public bath in Brussels, observed that the living areas of the poor that had too many and too diverse functions were dirty and disorderly, which made it difficult for workers to develop good judgment about their own behavior. In light of this, he argued “the intellectual emancipation of the laboring class would consist of a complete reform of the life of its interiors, the material conditions upon which his moral regeneration depends.” This statement predates the Modern Movement by almost seventy-five years, but it expresses some of its central themes: housing reform, the impact of space on moral and physical life, regeneration through the creation of defined spatial zones. These themes entered architectural discourses through the mid-nineteenth-century hygiene movement.

46. This strikes the researcher almost immediately in looking over the documents from the period and is often noted in secondary literature. see Skoski, Elizabeth Wilson, The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder and Women (1991), 35; Wohl, 299.

47. Janssens,1.
The only negative reaction to the Model Establishment came from architects. Perhaps partly because it had been designed by an engineer, its simple red brick exterior, with white brick dressing and a stone cornice, apparently erred too much on the side of pragmatism.\textsuperscript{48} In 1847, The Builder, a leading architectural journal, offered this critique:

The building is apparently a sound and honest piece of construction, fitted up scientifically, with every convenience for washing and for bathing...but its appearance both externally and internally, is not simply plain and unpretending, but downright ugly. Should any foreign architect go there, with their minds full of remembrance of the baths of the antique time (the rendezvous of men of letters, the galleries for sculpture and panting, the nurseries of taste) the fall will be sudden one – the revulsion of feeling most complete.\textsuperscript{49}

The perspective expressed by The Builder must have reflected a significant constituency, for subsequent bathhouses in London were constructed on scale that went appreciably beyond “sound and honest” construction. Indeed, although the interior arrangements and technologies were widely studied by international engineers and architects, the English model was most famous for its architectural monumentality. Here, we see the desire to emulate the spirit of the Roman model and to harmonize modern self-regulation and discipline with a proud and patriotic national identity.

\textsuperscript{48} The Builder 3 (1846).

\textsuperscript{49} The Builder 5, no. 225 (1847).
The Roman Road baths of St. Mary Stratford Bow in the east of London (1892) was considered a representative turn of the century English bathhouse.  

The Roman Road baths offered first and second class swimming baths, hot and cold water bathing cells for men, and a steam bath. Situated at a busy intersection next to a public library (left), the façade of bath is clad in a generous portion of stone dressing for use in the construction of Elizabethan motifs, horizontal bands, fenestration, and an ornate bay window projection with an ornamental balcony. The façade incorporates the same four entrances as Baly’s Model Establishment. A central portal is set into a compact arrangement of engaged Ionic columns that support a classical entablature inscribed with the words “Public Bath.” On the fourth story, a complex stone composition of linking scrolls, turrets and a terminating gable motif. The height of the building extends above those of the surrounding area, allowing the upper Board room and the residences on the third floor a view over the neighborhood.

The English experiments in constructing the bathhouse had led to continuous improvements and experiments with building technologies and materials. The use of high quality materials on the façade of the Roman Road baths was continued in the interior. The bathing halls were brightened by the use of enameled brick and tile. Slate was used for the walls of the private cubicles because of its ability to withstand


51. Ibid, 11-12.
humidity and water. It was painted with a pale green enamel coat to increase the brightness of the interior space. Bathing cells were outfitted with porcelain bathtubs with wooden rims rather than the enameled zinc or iron bathtubs found in lesser establishments. These latter materials did a poor job of retaining heat and had a tendency to chip and rust, besides being cold to the skin.52

In 1878, new legislation officially incorporated the swimming pool into the national model for the public bath. By 1900, the swimming pool occupied the central position in most English bathhouses, but it usually closed during the winter and covered over to create space for public gatherings and events. The plans for Bethnal Green Baths and Washhouses, constructed in 1926 (Figure 3.10), illustrate hybrid forms of public architecture, as it merges a theatre with the bathhouse. The imposing vestibule and domes staircases create an imposing set of entry spaces that leading to the upper galleries, which were used during public events.53 Section drawings of the building place strong emphasis on these elaborate entry pavilions with their flow of staircases leading into the complex interior program. In plan, a massive respiratory system is visible, comprised of immense, inverted funnels hanging over the main bathing hall, removing the moist and polluted air of the pool in summer, and ventilating a crowded hall in winter, directing polluted air outside the building. To the left on the lower

52. Ibid,11-12.

section drawing, a neat grid of light and air wells perforate the roof above the bathing cells and Turkish bath, with further ventilation ducts indicated between the floors and in the basement story.

The Bethnal Green Baths indicate the continued importance of the Roman model in the social imagination that went into the English bathhouse. By the time it was constructed, however, the English model was no longer considered cutting edge. Indeed, from its inception, most nations felt they could not support such an expensive building program. As early as 1849, Alphonse Pinède expressed his reservations about the cost of the English examples in the following recommendation to the French Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce:

Most of [the English bathing] establishments are constructed with a certain luxury. There is no doubt that if one wished to create the same kinds of institutions here - in the same proportions and in the same conditions - we would be obliging our communes and corporations to go into considerable debt, which would be difficult to balance later on from the revenue of these enterprises. The important thing of course is not to have grand or beautiful edifices, but to facilitate the use of these institutions among the laboring population for whom they are intended.54

As late as 1901, Edward Hartwell reported to the United States Department of Labor, “In Great Britain, the characteristic public bath is of monumental character, being large, handsome and costly.”55 Most of the analysis that has been done about the

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55. Hartwell, 8.
English bathhouse has focused on the betrayal of its social goals through its accommodation of middle-class taste. Joseph Skoski’s analysis of the English bathhouse attributes its costly scale and lavishness to the need to attract a middle-class clientele for the first-class sections. The two-class structure of the bathhouse was intrinsic to the English model as it was laid out in the Public Baths and Washhouses Act of 1846/1847 and subsequent revisions. Indeed, opposition to passing the Public Baths Act was largely overcome on the basis of this provision, which was thought to make the bath self-sustaining. However, because it relied on the more expensive first-class baths to subsidize the second-class baths, argues Skoski, the architectural program erred on the side of commercial splendor.

According to Claire Parker, the financial model of the English bathhouse never worked at all and that even the first Liverpool baths to initiate this supposedly self-sufficient structure lost money after a brief period of stability. Parker and Skoski conclude that the two–class structure of the institution compromised its sustainability and wasted resources pandering to the middle classes through the lofty status of fine buildings. The implication here is that a more modestly scaled institution would have

56. Skoski, 56.

57. Gibson, 495. The act included a minimum ratio of second to first class baths in order to prohibit the municipality from just trying to make money on the baths. For example, the original act limited the first class baths to no more than one half as many as second-class baths. Skoski notes, however, that these ratios were seldom followed and no penalties were issued when the transgression was noted. See Skoski, 49-50.

served the working-class population better. Perhaps, however, the perception that this functioned, in the face of empirical evidence to the contrary, sheds some light on the development of the English model and the nature of public architecture during this period. To be sure, the installation of class divisions within the public bathhouse might have appeared necessary, natural and fitting because it corresponded so well to the structuring forces in British society. Furthermore, there may have been some resistance to creating an exclusively working-class institution. Even liberal reformers in the Victorian era often viewed the inhabitants of slums as fundamentally different “human types” whose animal-like bodies revealed their crude if not bestial natures.59 Although the goal of the bathhouse was to humanize these bodies through cleaning, it may have seemed unlikely that they would consent to normative rituals of the interior, without the pressure and the presence of their superiors. In any case, the case study of English bath architecture reveals how carefully public institutions are designed in order to reflect and reproduce, even promote, social norms and hierarchies. Moreover, it is indicative of ways that the public sphere often displays an underlying irrationality, despite the deliberate goals of the planners. The hierarchies and atomized structures of the bathhouse interior stood in an articulate relationship to the prestige and monumentality

59. See Chapter 3 in Wohl. “It was in this physical, as well as in the broader, social sense that there were “two Englands” of the rich and poor. Clothing, physique, accents, smell, breathing, bone structure, posture, skin colouring – everything conspired to accentuate the differences, to exaggerate the gulf, between classes and to make contact and understanding more difficult.” (79)
of the facade, providing an image of the social subject, whose purified, rational, and socially inscribed body is invited to partake in a national and imperial identity.

C. Situating the Bath: Social Design in North America

In response to the first bathhouses being constructed in England, many European and North American municipalities rushed to construct their own institutions of public hygiene, based on the English model. In France, a law was signed in 1849 approving a credit of 600,000 francs to support the construction public baths. The first working-class bathhouses in Germany were built in Berlin and Hamburg in 1855, both following the basic lines of English bathhouses. In the New World, the People’s Bathing and Washing establishment was opened in New York in 1852 on the lower east side, which included a laundry, plunge pool and bathing cells. In Montreal, Canada, the city council financed an investigation into building a bathing establishment and sites for selected, but the plans were never realized. After the 1850s, though most


61. The baths were run by the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, and closed in 1861 owing to a lack of public interest. The AICP stated later that “the enterprise was too far in advance of the habits of the people.” cited in Williams.16

62. The report was the work of Regnaud and Tate, who suggested sites near the Lachine Railroad Terminus, Viger Square and Campeau Street in Montreal for future institutions. They authors are looking at baths in England, France and New York City. The report was accompanied by a petition from the Montreal Sanitary Association. Urquhart, The Turkish Bath, with a view to its introduction into the British dominions (London: D. Bryce, 1856).
municipalities focus their attention on the construction of river-baths, and did not move significantly inland. There were multiple reasons for this: Few cities had central water supply and the quality of what they had was difficult to maintain. Furthermore, most cities outside England were in an earlier stage of urbanization and the need may not have been as acute. Finally, even where the need did exist, most cities simply did not have the fiscal infrastructure to undertake significant construction for public welfare programs until later in the century. The social need for these institutions was recognized, but few cities could support them. These baths failed to establish a pattern and many were defunct by the mid 1860s.

1. American Public Baths and William Paul Gerhard

Like all countries in Europe and North America, the United States gave rise to dynamic movements of urban and hygiene reform in the middle of the nineteenth-century. The initial generation of reformers, including Florence Nightingale and Catherine Beecher, advocated daily bathing for healing and the preservation of health. Nightingale was a convinced advocate of the miasma theory. Her influential designs for hospitals and recovery rooms were informed by the focus on cleanliness and ventilation outlined in Chapter One, the mainstay of hygienic architectures. In the 1880s and 1890s, a second generation of hygiene reformers began to emerge with a particular focus on the creation of the public bath. If the perspective of first-generation American reformers

63. Williams, 12-13.
had been shaped by the English public health movement, prominent reformers like Simon Baruch and William Gerhard were oriented toward Germany. By the 1890s, German municipal bathhouses were at least as widely discussed and studied in the United States as those of Great Britain. In particular, the introduction of the Volksbrausebad at the Pan-German Hygiene Exhibition in 1883, served as a model for a significant number of American cities. Germany’s reputation as a modern industrial nation with innovative public programs steadily increased during the last decades of the nineteenth-century. German cities began to be seen as models by many American and British reformers, who were especially impressed by the “municipal socialism,” that allowed the “benefits of socialism without the drawbacks.”

Around the same time, the United States also emerged as a modern nation, seeking to position itself on the cutting edge of science, planning and industry. As a fellow newcomer to industrial and imperial power, many Americans seem to have felt an affiliation with German progressives.

In her social history of the American bath movement, Washing the Great Unwashed, Marilyn Thornton Williams argues that while Americans talked a lot about hygiene reform, their actions suggest that their primary concern was with


65. Ladd, Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany, 1860-1914, 8.
Americanization and cultural integration. Baths in the United States were constructed almost exclusively in areas with a high percentage of immigrants and were viewed as a training ground for new citizens. This motivation was translated into a hygienic-patriotic discourse, as seen in the arguments of bath reformer Charles Sprague-Smith, who evoked the model of the Greek gymnasium as a form of public bathing connected with democratic responsibility: “With physical and mental health renewed with cleaned bodies, the people will more intelligently consider the great problems of democracy – which is theirs to solve.” 66 Another distinguishing feature of the American bath movement was the emphasis on providing free baths. Although the origin of this position is unclear, it was a widely held value in the American context and had significant consequences for the design of bathhouses.

A leading figure in the American reform movement was Simon Baruch, the “father of the American public bath.” 67 Baruch had encountered the Lassar-Grove model of the Volkbrausebad while traveling in Germany in the early 1880s. 68 Baruch, a physician and practitioner of hydropathy, was so impressed by his experience of the German public baths that he devoted a large part of his professional life thereafter to the

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66. Charles Sprague-Smith, Cited in Williams

67. Williams, 41-45.

68. Sources do not specify whether Baruch was in Germany during the Pan-German Hygiene Exhibition in 1883 or whether this was the occasion for his introduction to the Lassar-Grove Model. Ibid, 43. Other American bath reformers like
cause of bath reform. He was a passionate advocate of the shower-bath and wrote a series of editorials to newspapers and professional journals in 1889 promoting describing the Lassar-Grove model and agitating for its construction in American urban contexts. These letters set into motion a process that culminated in legislation passed for the establishment of free public baths throughout New York State in 1895. It took a decade, however, for the realization of any baths in the area where it was most needed, New York City. The charitable organization, the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP), reacted more quickly to Baruch’s call. In 1891, it opened the “People’s Baths.” (Figure 3.11) These simple structures were erected in poor neighborhoods containing an average of 60 individual shower cells. Like the Lassar-Grove model, the standard cell in the People’s Baths measured 7’ x 8’ and was divided in half by a hanging curtain in order to create a changing area and shower cell. The People’s Baths were an extremely influential prototype, viewed and studied by planners and reformers throughout the United States ready to produce their own civic programs.

The first state-sponsored communal showers were established New York mental and penal institutions. The New York City Juvenile Asylum and the New York State

69. Ibid, 42-43.


72. Williams. 32.
Lunacy Commission both experimented with shower baths beginning in 1890. In 1893, engineer William Paul Gerhard was commissioned to convert a bakery at the Utica State Hospital for the mentally ill into a shower bath, a project completed in August 1894. (Figure 3.12) Describing the project in an article published by the *American Journal for Insanity*, Gerhard claims to have been “connected with the planning and construction of the majority of rain-baths built in the United States.” This is not difficult to believe, Gerhard’s article is a eulogy to the elegance and innovation of shower-design, in all its minute parts. Every detail has been worked out, every material question and gadget function to Gerhard’s satisfaction. A feeling of contentment permeates his steady, factual prose:

The needle bath is a combination needle, shower, liver-spray, and bidet jet bath, intended for special use. It has a large open plated brass floor strainer, two marble partitions six feet high, and in front a white rubber curtain hung on a nickel-plated brass pole. The needle bath is supplied with warm water of about 100 degrees Fahrenheit, from the nearest warm-water apparatus, but it also has combination valves, with a thermometer, enabling the bather to temper the water by opening the cold-water valve. Four separate labeled valves control the overhead shower, the side-sprays, the liver-sprays and the ascending bidet jet, at the pleasure of the bather.74

Gerhard was a consulting engineer for the American Public Health Association and the Brooklyn Health Department. The author of a 1908 monograph, *Modern Baths*

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74. Ibid, 30.
and Bath Houses, Gerhard made a clear distinction between what he called "People’s Baths" and "Municipal Bath houses". People’s Baths, he contended, like those in New York City, "are intended principally for the working classes of both sexes, and as a rule, they are made free to the public. The people’s baths should be devoted exclusively to the maintenance of health through cleanliness, hence such bath houses should contain only the cleansing shower baths." The architecture should be "unpretentious, quiet, yet active-looking in character. Their insides should be simple and sanitary. Monumental buildings, from an architectural standpoint, are decidedly out of place…" Gerhard disdained the presence of bathtubs except for women and children, and for him the swimming bath was "entirely out of the question." His antipathy toward the swimming pool was so pronounced that in a 1914 lecture he expressed public satisfaction with the fact that the new local public bath did not contain one.

In 1901, Edward Mussey Hartwell published a report commissioned by the United States Department of Labor entitled, The Public Baths of Europe. The


76. William Paul Gerhard, "Public Bath Houses: A Paper read on May 12th 1914 at the Third Annual Meeting of the American Association for Promoting Hygiene and Public Baths, held at Newark, N.J". (Reprinted in Holland: 1914), 3.

77. Ibid, 4.

78. Ibid, 5.

investigation was commissioned in response to a spate of civic appropriations for public bathhouses in American cities during the late 1890s, including New York, Chicago, and Boston. Hartwell was the directory of physical training in the public schools of Boston and had worked with Josiah Quincy developing the programs for the public bath at the turn of the century. Hartwell’s discussion is ostensibly aimed at the “Social Economics,” of the bath, or how funds are handled and in which parts of the bathhouse the money is invested. However, his primary goal seems to be to form some conclusions about what types of public baths are appropriate for an American context based on existing precedents. He concludes:

At the present juncture it is believed that the various forms of People’s Baths to be found in Germany and Austria will best repay careful study by American sanitarians, philanthropists and architects since the resources of modern technology appear to have been more completely employed in those countries in the construction and management of such establishments. 80

Gerhard and Hartwell agree that People’s Baths are to be emulated. Both of their monographs, however, include extensive descriptions and illustrations of the larger, Municipal Bath House type. The German Municipal Bath Houses in Gerhard’s Modern Baths and Bath Houses, are state-sponsored public baths, which offer diverse baths and complex internal spaces, including medicinal baths, massages, hot springs, and

hairdressing establishments and refreshment rooms. He refers to them as “magnificent,” but in the United States they are reserved for the private sector. Williams observes that, “[American] bath advocates almost never mentioned the pleasurable and sensual aspects of bathing, such as rejuvenation, invigoration, or relaxation. They wanted the poor to be clean but seemingly did not want them to enjoy it too much.”

No concept similar to that of Erholung took root in the American bath movement.

Although the cities of Boston and New York eventually did construct quite elaborate public bathhouses, the New York People’s Baths from 1890-1900 provided the inspiration for public shower baths in many American cities, including St. Louis, Philadelphia and Baltimore. Moreover, these baths represented perhaps the most extensively realized vision of Lassar’s Volksbrausebad during the time of their operation. In contrast to the English bathhouse, the People’s Baths were public buildings that not only lacked monumentality, but which possessed no connection to other public spaces or symbols of public space. The focus on immigrant populations as the intended users of the bath indicates that race and ethnicity were factors at the forefront of American health concerns. Perhaps, American reformers believed that the relatively homogeneous urban populations in Europe were more deserving of elaborate civic bathhouses. American baths were often free, which released organizers from the obligation to

81. Gerhard, Modern Baths and Bath Houses, 56.
82. Williams, 135.
83. See Ibid.
provide all but the most minimal services, while ensuring that no one other than the poorest members of society would use them.

At the same time, Gerhard’s enthusiasm for the shower is a great illustration of the aesthetics of the machine in American public life. In a study of what he calls “American technological sublime,” David Nye points out that “The machine tended to be seen as an organic outgrowth of society that could flourish in a laissez-faire economic system, to the benefit of all.” This was not, of course, a view shared by most of the laborers in factories, but Nye argues that the middle class preoccupation with machine aesthetics distracted them from the difficulties of the American worker. From this perspective, the People’s Baths, might have been acceptable public space within an existing visual culture of technology and public life that already functioned to obviate awareness of the actual social conditions within the American democracy.

2. Social Design: The “bains publics” of Montreal

After a harsh day of labor, under a burning sun, or in the suffocating and noxious atmosphere of a factory, how good it is to plunge into the fresh and limpid waters, among happy companions, who all share the same desire for the vital well being! In this valuable play, one forgets the sweat that is shed all day, strength returns, and one becomes aware of suddenly having more strength to take up the tasks of the next day. The bath – it is health, it is life. 85


Montreal was the only city in Canada to make a long-term commitment to building public baths. Although isolated bathhouses and river baths in other Canadian cities occasionally raised the specter of civic rivalry, it pursued its program relatively autonomously. Between 1881 and 1933, the city built approximately twenty public bathhouses, each focused around a rectangular swimming hall with changing areas. The impetus for the development of a consistent program was the successful election of a Reform Party mayor to Montreal in 1902 after the fifteen-year political machine led by French-Canadian politician Raymond Préfontaine. The Reform Party was a group of predominantly English Canadian businessmen and philanthropists whose platform consisted of hygiene reform and the fight against municipal excess and corruption. The early public baths, through their simplicity, economy, and support for self-improvement, were intended to embody the Reform agenda.

Yet, Montreal was a city with a complex political and cultural fabric divided by language and religious lines. This situation challenges the homogeneity of concepts like Althusser’s “Ideological State Apparatus” and underscores its reliance on a centralized and unified concept of state power. In Montreal, a wealthy English-Protestant elite controlled the economic life of the city, while the Catholic Church controlled the majority of the working-class, French or Irish Catholic population. The rising French-Canadian bourgeoisie was excluded from the highest positions in business and politics, and actively sought a place of their own in the new structure of the a diverse economy.
The Church administered and controlled the schools for Catholic population in the city and benefited from class conflict while repressing the formation of unions. During the golden age of hygiene and statistics, the Montreal Herald could publish the different mortality rates for each group from the previous decade: English Protestants, 17.97/1000, English Catholics, 24.70/1000, and French Catholics 38.96/1000. The city was geographically divided into French (east) and English (west) with a central business, banking and newspaper district in the center. No one political or religious power integrated the entire city. The church and the state competed for the claim to the public body. Perhaps this accounts for the lack of focused design in the baths, which animated the idea of the “model,” a powerful preoccupation we have seen in other cities. After studying the careful spatial structuring of the English and American baths, the Montreal bain public appears to lack a theory of hygiene.

The municipal bathing program grew out of the activities of the Montreal Sanitary Association (est.1866), the main hygiene reform organization in the city. Beginning in 1868, they sponsored two free public baths during the summer. One of these was constructed in the poor Irish-Catholic neighborhood of St. Anne, where the neglected “sanitary condition” was said to fill the air with the smell of manure, decaying

corpses of animals, sewage and garbage. Numerous local reports, however, described the free baths as a additional public nuisance and an affront to public decency. In 1870 the chief of police complained to the Health Committee that the baths were used by “idle boys,” so that “those for whom they were actually built are altogether prevented from enjoying the healthful results. Besides preventing respectable persons from bathing in the daytime; they break and damage the baths at night.” In 1871, locals protested that the design of the baths failed to create a visual barrier between the bathers and the public eye. One letter signed “Modesty” complained that the presence of the bath, where “everything going on in the bath is plainly seen” had made it impossible for her to use the nearby park, a place where women and children had once felt free to spend time. The chief constable to the Mayor authored a letter to the Montreal Witness explaining that the design of the baths left the north side - the public face - completely exposed and several persons had been arrested for exhibitionist acts when they had only been swimming. Although it is difficult to surmise exactly what was going on at the St. Anne’s baths, there was was an unusual problem engendered by their design. In an era that has been exhaustively theorized solely on the basis of its concern with controlling and manipulating visuality – from the panopticon to the exhibition – the


91. Montreal Witness 12 June 1871
design of these early public baths is marked by an unusual lack of planning on behalf of the builders. They seem not to have anticipated these problems with bodily exposure, especially across gender or class boundaries. The Griffintown baths, rather than easing social conflict by providing public health amenities, seem to have possibly intensified social conflict in the area by bringing the “undisciplined” working-class body into a highly visible, extroverted, social space.

Between 1900 and 1902, the Reform party came to power in Montreal. The city councilors elected included Herbert Brown Ames, the leading hygiene reformer in the city, popularly known as “Water-Closet Ames” for his crusade against open privy pits in the city. In the 1890s, Ames financed a study of working class health in Montreal modeled on Chadwick’s Sanitary Report. Entitled, The City Below the Hill, the report was published serially in the daily newspaper, the Montreal Star throughout 1897. Ames became the chairman of the Committee of Hygiene and Statistics in 1902, which immediately concerned itself with developing a nascent public bath program. Despite its apparent concern with health and poverty, the Reform agenda was looked on with suspicion as a group of privileged Anglo-Canadians. One “Mr. McNamara” of St. Antoine Ward, for example, accused the Reform party of opposing Préfontaine because he was Catholic and French. “Who wants [Reform candidate] Mr. Doran, and who

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opposes Préfontaine? Only Mr. Ames and the little clique of bigots that surround him. The Irish Catholics will not be duped by these men. Not even the Protestants have been consulted by this little clique of blue blooded bigots.” 93

Under the leadership of Herbert Ames, the Hygiene and Statistic Committee prepared to build its first permanent buildings for the bath which were to be constructed in the east, west and center sections of the city. This rational distribution of buildings across the abstract city map was a expression of the neutral, fair-minded, and scientific approach to reform that the party wished to represent. Although the buildings were permanent, the first baths were seasonal, open only in the summer months. The same design was used for the construction of each: Bain Gallery (1901) Bain St. Louis (1904) and Bain St. Gabriel (1904).94 (Figure 3.13) All three plans of the bath, by Saxe and Archibald,95 were identical; the had been the only designs submitted that were able to meet the budgetary limits of $5000, a figure strictly adhered to the new Finance Committee.96 Each building was scrupulously planned and supervised to spare unnecessary expense.


94. “Ouverture des bains” La Presse. 22 May 1904

95. John Archibald and Charles Saxe both worked in the office of Edmond Maxwell until 1897 when they established a partnership, which endured until 1915. They produced numerous designs for public buildings, including prestigious commissions, such as the Montreal Masonic Memorial Temple (1928), and the Engineer’s Club (1907)

All the bathhouses constructed in Montreal were swimming-baths, modeled after the French piscines. The new Reform buildings were simple brick structures comprised of a small entry portal, showers, and a swimming hall with changing cabins arranged along one side. The exterior of the bath, shown here in a photograph of the Gallery Bath from 1931, was consistent with its industrial environment, intended as an extension of the factory. (Figure 3.14) I have argued that the Brausebad was developed as a minimal form of public space based on a fusion of hygiene and technology. These bains publics are minimal in that they also reduce the function of the swimming-bath to its most austere components, but their design was neither technological nor particularly hygienic. Themes of light and air, dominant in every hygiene handbook of the time, are distinctly lacking in the interior of the baths. Little emphasis was placed on internal circulation within the baths. For instance, the location of the changing rooms was such that bathers walked in with street shoes and out into the pool using the same passageway area. In most baths of the period, there were distinct passages in and out from the changing rooms which prevented the considerable dirt from the streets and sidewalks from mixing with the watery passage-way around the basin, and prevented mud from entering the swimming poor. This frequently discussed design element is absent in the early bath.

The reform-era baths emphasized expenditure and paid little attention to themes of circulation, separation, and order that characterized the bath in other cities. It is here
that we can see, negatively, that the function of the “model” corresponds to the existence of the “apparatus.” The first bathhouses constructed, although internally consistent, do not participate the same abstract spatial logic that drove the models of the Brausebad or complex social institutions of the Bath in England. This abstract quality, however, is intrinsic to the way the bath functions as an ISA. Without this, the public bath becomes something different, its mission is less defined.

In period of 1909-1910, the end of the Reform era in the city, a series of six permanent, year-round baths were planned and constructed. They maintained the same basic services as the Reform structures, with alternations that increased the scale and architectural importance of the buildings. (Figure 3.15) The new buildings possessed a larger frontal block with a more elaborate façade. (Figure 3.16) This more imposing public face directed toward the street distinguished the bath from the surrounding industrial architecture. The baths were heated and wired with electricity, which substantially extended their periods of use.97 Finally, a residence for the person employed as Guardian and his wife was integrated into the main block.

In the absence of the architectural or technological structures for directing and controlling behavior, the bath guardian served this function. As gatekeeper of the Montreal baths the bath guardian was the administrator, lifeguard and inspector of the baths. His wife was an assistant and supervised to the women. The guardians were

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97. The early bathhouses were outfitted with minimal electric lighting in 1904.
required to keep extensive records of everything that happened at the baths and to record patterns of use. That it was a desirable position is suggested by the nepotism often practiced in appointing guardians to the baths. The Lessards had at least three generations of males in charge of Montreal baths (Georges, Henri, Honoré), with three brothers in charge of the baths in 1905 alone. Alderman Dagenais, who had instigated the construction of the Dagenais-Turner bath in his district, appointed his own son, Amable to the position of the bath guardian there. The selection of guardians seems to have been based on the ongoing, unofficial, machinations of political power characteristic of the political machine, even during a brief period of reform. Neither the bath guardians nor the Reform Party were responsible for the morals of the people, but rather members of the church, who were allowed to parole the baths and to inspect the bathing suits. The Church’s authority over the purity of the public body thus prevented the intrusion of competing state, medical or civic authorities to define the body in the public sphere.

A final comment on the Montreal baths is offered from the perspective of Maisonneuve on Montreal’s eastern boundary. The area was founded in 1883 at the request of several prominent factory owners in the area, unwilling to incorporate into the city of Montreal. The eastern area was associated with some of the poorest working-class populations, where the housing was described in 1889 as “dwellings not fit for human habitation, where the countless workers in mill and machine shop, in factory and

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foundry [live], their wages reduced year by year...” 98 A vision for the municipality was cultivated by local Quebecois industrialists who saw the chance to develop their own urban culture and economic life outside the constraints of Montreal politics. They attempted to lure investment to the area by promising a tax-free operation and constructed a series of elaborate public buildings that countered the reputation of the eastern landscape as impoverished and epidemic laden. Bain Maisonneuve was the most monumental piece in this public ensemble. Mayor Alexandre Michaud, city councilor Oscar Dufresne, and his brother, municipal engineer Marius Dufresne, planned the building in 1910.99 In 1916, the new bathhouse was inaugurated.

Bain Maisonneuve is the most literal homage to the Roman bath that will be discussed in this project. The interior pool was three times larger than any of the Montreal swimming pools, flanked by rooms containing 40 showers each, clad in white marble. It was completely out of scale with the environment and with the financial situation of the growing municipality. Yet, it was a fascinating attempt to respond to the enforced meagerness of domestic and pubic dwelling places in the city of Montreal. For the working-class of Maisonneuve, the monumental building with its gleaming stone and tile interiors and the bright colonnade around the swimming basin promised a new standard of living. (Figure 3.17) In 1918, the municipality was bankrupt and joined the

98. Montreal by Gaslight. Published for the Trade, 1889.

corporation of greater Montreal. Two years later, the bath became a police training school.

3. Conclusion

The image of Bain Maisonneuve from 1916 is a reminder that public architecture is always part fantasy, part wish fulfillment, even where it appears to preclude the possibility of the imagination. But the social is made manifest in the everyday practices belonging to that setting. Architectures of the body shape those practices and simultaneously, according to Althusser and Foucault, situate the subject in a larger field of social, historical, and economic relations - the public sphere. For Althusser, underlying all these layers of inference and cultural meanings, class conflict is the fundamental “truth” of an institution. The creation of mid nineteenth-century bathhouses seem to model this Base-Superstructure analysis well, whether it constructs class hierarchies as an explicit structuring of the public sphere (Britain), or whether it elides them by glossing over the deprivation of the working-poor through attention to technological achievement (US). The design of the public bathhouse illustrates the powerful structuring forces of class during the period discussed in this chapter.

Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus clarifies and expands the concept of “class” by emphasizing the complexity of individual motivations, instincts and impressions and suggesting the role that architecture plays in shaping these complex behaviors. The architectural apparatus, in this sense, is about awakening motivations and desires,
speaking in a familiar language of belonging and public-ness. Although the institution may have predetermined ends, it is up to the individual to pursue them, to relate to them, and even seek them out.
Chapter 4. THE WILHELMINE VOLKSBADEANSTALT IN BERLIN: AN ARCHITECTURE OF COMPENSATION

I have only one program to fulfill, and that is to get into the soul of those who will occupy the buildings I make and to ask myself whether the students, the firemen, the judges or the sick and suffering will feel happy and content in these walls.1

Ludwig Hoffmann, *Berliner Tageblatt*, 1895

At the turn of the century, municipal architecture in Berlin underwent a dramatic change. Throughout the 1890s, the local press registers a growing public dissatisfaction with what they saw as repetitive, ugly and officious civic buildings produced by city architect, Hermann Blankenstein.2 Blankenstein had occupied the position of *Stadtbaurat* for twenty-four years and under his leadership the office had produced a seemingly endless series of late Schinkel-school monuments, characterized by the use of light, ochre-glazed brick with terra cotta ornament. Thirty-five year old architect Ludwig Hoffmann was recruited for the job of *Stadtbaurat* in 1896 following national success designing the new Reichsgericht (Federal Courthouse) in Leipzig. Hoffmann’s artist-architect identity corresponded to a new identity of the urban middle class and his arrival was hailed with enthusiasm. The urban liberal elite identified with Hoffmann’s optimistic vision of the metropolis as dwelling place, comfortable, prosperous, cultured,

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and modern. These shifts in the civic culture of the city coincided with a changing definition of hygiene through which a large section of the reform movement expanded its formerly stringent definition of Reinigung and began to explore broader, more complex experiences of the body in modern life. The introduction of Erholung into the hygiene movement – a word that incorporated ideas of refreshment, rejuvenation, recovery, and rest - paralleled the new interest in subjectivity and empathy as constituent parts of civic architecture.

This chapter is a case study of Berlin’s public baths and their architecture from the 1860s to World War I. Significant revisions to bathhouse design during this period reflect international and national discussions surrounding hygiene, citizenship and class. This section, however, focuses more narrowly on the specific program undertaken in Berlin as an outline of state intervention in and definition of the social spaces of the city. Beginning with the construction of municipal river-baths, I argue that the early models for public bathing reflect the effort to grasp the modern crowd, the masses, in an architecturally effective way. The Massenbad (bath for the masses) had been developed for the military and became the model for the Lassar-Grove Volksbrausebad. Although

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3. Debates about the German middle class have long been at the center of theories of modernity and the rise of National Socialism. In recent years, studies of the metropolis have been highlighted in these discussion. The city is viewed as an image of the modern, whose social geography provides the means of understanding distinctions within the middle class and the class and social structure in general as it performed in spatial practices. See, Alexa Geisthövel and Habbo Knoch, eds., Orte der Moderne. Erfahrungswelten des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts (Frankfurt/New York, 2005), Rebekka Habermas, Frauen und Männer im Bürgertum. Eine Familiengeschichte 1750-1850 (Göttingen, 2000), Theodor Kohlmann and Hermann Bausinger, eds. Großstadt. Aspekte empirischer Kulturforschung. (Berlin, 1985).
many advocated for this model in its abstract form, it presented an excessively stark vision of the public sphere. When the city finally committed to a public bath program in 1888, it moved in a different direction. In the decade before 1900 and the years just after, the bath was reconceived in the context of Ludwig Hoffmann’s particular theories of architectural empathy and his liberal conception of the social family. Within this context the working class was framed not so much as wild animals or barbarians as they were children to be educated, entertained and nurtured. For the liberal Bürger, the Wilhelmine public bath represented a form of political-spatial compensation - to supplement the inadequate domestic spaces of the working-class with an extended form of domesticity in the public sphere, and reparation for the loss of tradition and nature in the city.

A. Berlin Public Bathhouses: Development of a Civic Program

1. From Flußbad to Brausebad

The transition of Berlin from Residenzstadt to Hauptstadt in January 1871 brought new sources of wealth to the city in the form of French war reparations and also focused national attention on Berlin as a representation of the Reich. The importance of architectural monuments to the image of the city is evident from nineteenth-century plans and tourist materials. (Figure 4.1) Initially, however, public baths were not counted among those structures destined to represent the city to the nation and the
outside world. The assumption of state responsibility for civic hygiene and public health, for which the British movement was a catalyst, was not immediately given an aesthetic or symbolic role in the city. Chapters 1 and 2 of this project have illustrated the processes through which discourses of hygiene and the body were figured in architectures of bathing and how these forms began to establish their own terms in the early twentieth-century, generating new kinds of civic space. These issues form the backdrop for a detailed study of the bathhouse within the social and political setting of Berlin, analyzing the bath as a social institution within the urban fabric and social space.

Long before the state became involved in the sanitation of the population, it regulated access to the natural resources necessary for hygiene. The body of water that ran through the city, the river Spree, formed Berlin’s original urban infrastructure. In the eighteenth-century, it was made illegal in Prussia to swim in the rivers or lakes.4 Control over the river intensified as industry and shipping grew in scale. It was a central artery for shipping and transportation before the advent of the railway, and served many nearby neighborhoods with water for daily use. It is appropriate, perhaps, that the establishment of Berlin’s first municipally constructed bath was occasioned by the first large-scale intervention in and reshaping of the existing natural infrastructure - the construction of the Landwehrkanal in 1847. (Figure 4.2) During excavations for the new canal, the Studentenbad was constructed near the intersection of the canal and the Spree.

at the southeastern mouth. In the 1850s, several more river-baths, or Flußbäder, were added for men in the area between the Studentenbad and the central Schloßplatz.

Flußbäder, or river baths, were seasonal facilities in operation from April 1 to October 31, which were installed directly in the running water of the Spree. Plans for a river-bath in Upper Spree from 1873 include first and second-class swimming baths, or communal basins, and an additional pavilion projecting further out into the water where individual bathtubs offered a more private, probably warm or hot water bathing experience. The low-cost baths were square basins surrounded by narrow, covered, gangplanks, with small staircases on all sides leading into the water. This type of communal river bath is visible in a 1907 photograph of the Waisenbrücke (Orphan’s Bridge) baths in Berlin. (Figure 4.3) The photograph shows two bathing structures: In the foreground the rectangular open pools are visible, while the smaller bath located in the distance, represents an older structure whose roof extended further out into the water, with less access to light and air. A “Schiffbad” or “boat-bath” was a river-bath was named for its simple boat-like structure, planted in the riverbed with heavy wooden piers – such as those visible in plans from 1873. 5 (Figure 4.5) The earliest river-baths were for men only, and women only received accommodation in 1862-63, when a facility

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was planned for the “poorer female inhabitants.” The simple structure therefore provided one communal tank with no individual cells. 6

By the middle of the 1880s, there were five city-operated men’s baths and three women’s baths in the Spree. By 1899, the number had increased to eight men’s and six women’s baths, with three Doppelbadeanstalten containing facilities for both men and women. As these structures expanded, river baths developed an elaborate slate of prices, which included first and second class bathing cells, swimming baths, and extra charges for the use of private changing cells. The baths were open daily, from 5am until sundown, and on Sundays and holidays from 5am until noon. The patron could be charged per bath, or pay for monthly or seasonal cards.7 Patrons were charged for

6. Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep 000-02-01 no. 1530 (Die Errichtung und Verwaltung der Flüßbadeanstalt für die ärmeren weiblichen Einwohner ). SPSV 27 November 1862. The first women’s prison in Berlin (Barnimstrasse) was also opened in 1863. See Dettbarn, 3.

7. Gemeindeblatt 18 May 1890. n 20. From: 5 May 1890, Magistrat der Haupt- und Residenzstadt, Berlin). The public announcement for the opening of the municipal baths was a complex list of types and classes of bathing: The newly erected Swimming and Bathing Facility for female persons next to Lessingbrücke (Moabit) contains first and second class pools:

Prices for 1st class:
1 swimming-bath for adults. 30 pf.
1 swimming-bath for child up to 14 years. 20 pf.
1 monthly pass for adult. 6 Marks
1 monthly pass for child 4 Marks
1 seasonal card for the whole bathing season, 15/10 Marks
1 bath in individual cell (per person) 50pf
1 swimming lesson card, 6M

For second class
1 swimming bath, adult/child, 10/5 pf.
Group A: Includes the swimming and bathing facilities for male persons next on the Waisenbrücke and the Schleusebrücke
Group B: swimming baths on Schillingsbrücke (different times for each sex)
Prices:
1 bath without changing room, 10/6pf
entry, but individuals registered with the Armen-Verwaltung (Administration for the Poor) or who were otherwise determined to be eligible by the Armen-Kommission (Poor Commission) were not required to pay.8

River baths continued to be used in Berlin well into the twentieth-century, but were moved gradually away from the crowded, heavily trafficked areas of the Spree as water quality declined and increasing stress was placed on the waterway by the rapid growth of industry. Conflicts arose as river authorities negotiated the needs of shipping and planning – the complex functions of the urban core. The “Burgstrasse” public bath, for example, which had long been located adjacent to the Berliner Schloss, was one of several baths removed in 1892 to make room for a new monument to Kaiser Wilhelm I.

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1 bath with changing room 15pf
monthly pass, 3 Marks
card for bathing season, 10 Marks
swimming lesson card, 3M
Group C: All Bath Facilities : 5 pf
Men: Waisenbrücke, Schillingsbrücke, Scheusenbrücke, Burgstrasse, am Nordhafen
Women: Waisenbrücke, Schillingsbrücke, Am Nordhafen
A, B, and C are open on weekdays from sunrise to sunset, however not before 5am in the morning and on Sundays and holidays, only from 5am-12pm
C is open for men from 5-8:30 in the morning and from 4-9pm in the afternoon. Women are allowed in the morning from 9:30, no time for women on Sundays and holidays
Those in possession of a free pass are excluded from first class pools of the new facility on Lessingbrücke, as well as Swimming and Bathing Facilities B and C. In these last facilities only people over 14 years old are allowed.

and to open up the waterway.\textsuperscript{9} Plans to replace the \textit{Flüßbäder} were obstructed by private ownership of the shoreline.\textsuperscript{10}

The river-bath structures like the Oberspree bath from 1873 in Figure 4.4, and the Cuvrystrasse bathhouse from 1894-95 (\textbf{Figure 4.5}) appear as light-hearted and merry as exhibition buildings. Sharing the same timber frame and internal arrangement as its predecessors, (\textbf{Figure 4.6}) the Cuvrystrasse bathhouse (1894-1895) was realized in a Scandinavian-Russian theme, complete with cross-braces and steep turrets. These porous and delicate gazebos, however, were in a constant state of disrepair. The yearly bouts of ice and cold weather; together with heavy use during the swimming season, wore down the wooden structures. By the end of the nineteenth-century the \textit{Flüßbäder} were notoriously dirty, crowded and sometimes were viewed as places of contagion. Recalling his impressions of turn of the century examples of the river baths, the “Magistrat-Schwemme” (The “Watering Holes of the Magistrate”), Heinrich Zille wrote,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[9.] Landesarchiv Berlin. A Rep 000-02-01 no. 1530 (\textit{Die Errichtung und Verwaltung der Flußbadeanstalt für weibliche Einwohner}) Vorlage 13 June 1894. No. 509
\item[10.] Plans to relocate the displaced river-baths with new structures in the vicinity were set into motion, but were obstructed by private landowners. In one case, landowners prevented the construction of the bathhouse by appealing to outdated property laws pertaining to the rights of landowners to levy taxes on goods unloaded on their shores. This legal loophole (which would apparently have forced the city to share the money collected in the baths), demonstrates the use of old property laws in the new economic development of the Berlin’s city center.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
“The few bathhouses in the Spree were dismal, narrow boxes, without light, air or sun, overcrowded and filled with contagion.”

The introduction of river-baths was an early municipal response to the loss of nature in the city. The “Watering Holes,” on one hand, made the river standardized and artificial. The rectilinear basins and modular ground plans (see Figure 4.6) of the baths transformed the variety and sensuality of the natural environment into a place of control and regulation. In a very real sense, however, the bath’s purpose was to enable the use of the river as it had always been used historically - for swimming and bathing – but for which it was no longer suited. Special lattices and screens were installed to prevent large objects (industrial waste, garbage, etc.) from flowing into the bath and to strain impurities from the surface of the water as it moved through the bath structure. The high surrounding walls protected the swimmers from the lack of privacy inherent in the crowded urban core. The festive and pastoral appearance of their wooden frameworks, at least on paper, promised a release from the chaos and squalor surrounding them.

Earlier, I referred to the public bath as an “experiment.” Shifting through the various structures used to accommodate public bathing, it is possible to gain a strong appreciation for processes of improvisation and conceptualization that characterized the


response to urban problems in the emerging industrial city. The Flußbäder appropriated and revised elements of bathing from earlier bathhouses. It was intuitive and traditional to construct baths along the banks of a river. Towns and resorts grew up around mineral and thermal springs, and had for centuries installed structures next to these sources to accommodate the bathing ritual. Since the late eighteenth-century, private bathhouses had been constructed on the Spree in Berlin. The ancestor of the public baths was the “billige Bäder,” a lukewarm or unheated bath, at the cheapest price it was taken communally, within these private enterprises. The rate for the “billige” bath was apparently still higher than the poorest social groups could afford, however, and there weren’t sufficient numbers of them to accommodate the broad public need.

There was ongoing dialogue private and public bathhouses in which the former served as both a source of inspiration and public propaganda for the latter. While the Flußbäder were being hammered up on the banks of the Spree, a series of influential private bathhouses was constructed inland. The new baths were constructed for the Verein der Wasserfreunde (Friends of the Water) in 1868 and the fashionable Verein der Wasserfreunde, occupied the site on Kommandantenstrasse since 1842-43. The association was established in 1838 by a wealthy practitioner of homeopathy, Dr. Beck, and its establishment included a renowned garden, cure-house and diverse first and second class baths. In 1868-69 a new bathhouse and in 1907, Julian Marcuse described the swimming hall of the Wasserfreunde as among the most beautiful built in Europe. (Bäder und Badewesen, 102.) The Admiralsgartenbad, near Friedrichstrasse, was a very prominent commercial bath that similarly evolved and expanded in several phases (1889, 1913). It was considered one of the representative buildings of the Kaiserzeit in Berlin by the local Architekten-Verein in 1877 and contained over one hundred first and second class private bathing cells, showers, Russian and Roman-Irish baths, medicinal baths, massage rooms, a hairdresser, and an iron and glass


14. The Verein der Wasserfreunde, occupied the site on Kommandantenstrasse since 1842-43. The association was established in 1838 by a wealthy practitioner of homeopathy, Dr. Beck, and its establishment included a renowned garden, cure-house and diverse first and second class baths. In 1868-69 a new bathhouse and in 1907, Julian Marcuse described the swimming hall of the Wasserfreunde as among the most beautiful built in Europe. (Bäder und Badewesen, 102.) The Admiralsgartenbad, near Friedrichstrasse, was a very prominent commercial bath that similarly evolved and expanded in several phases (1889, 1913). It was considered one of the representative buildings of the Kaiserzeit in Berlin by the local Architekten-Verein in 1877 and contained over one hundred first and second class private bathing cells, showers, Russian and Roman-Irish baths, medicinal baths, massage rooms, a hairdresser, and an iron and glass
Admiralsgartenbad (Admiral’s Garden Bath) was an elegant private bathhouse built in 1873. Both of these became well-known commercial establishments that entered quickly into the local imagination of the bath, as evidenced by their continued evocation in city documents and reform organizations. The Admiralsgartenbad presented the “luxury” bathhouse, which stood at the far end of a continuum whose polar opposite was the minimal bathhouses of pure “Reinigung.” In 1877, the Architekten-Verein zu Berlin (Architects Association of Berlin), published a monograph on the state of architecture in the city, and pointed to the Admiralsgartenbad as evidence for growing Geschmacksbildung, and the new desire for luxury and comfort among the citizens of the Hauptstadt. According to the authors, the new bathhouses, arcades, and winter gardens in the city were signs that the urban population was searching for monumentality, architectural quality and new leisure spaces.\(^{15}\) All these structures were associated with a new feeling for urban space and experience by the Architekten-Verein, and all were commissioned by private capital, constituting a new type of “öffentliche” space.

Once again, the complexity of the term “public” arises from its different definitions overlapping on the geography of the city. Buildings produced by the city for “public use”, and buildings produced for new commercial uses, but whose program includes degrees of exclusion and different forms of access reflect the a broad spectrum

\(^{15}\) Architekturverein zu Berlin, ed., Berlin und Seine Bauten, 1st ed. (Berlin: Ernst & Korn, 1877).
of views and discourses surrounding public space in its broadest sense. This chapter will discuss a “public” architecture, which Julius Posener refers to as “official architecture” of the Wilhelmine period. This architecture is produced by the state or civic authorities, rather than “public” places created by new commercial forms of recreation.16 This use of the term “official” points to processes of architectural production and also is suggestive of the special status of these spaces in relation to the local government. As this discussion develops, I will suggest that, at the turn of the century, Hoffmann’s work as Stadtbaurat was partially attempting to integrate these official spaces with a middle class “socio-spatial geography” modeled on the domestic interior. It is worth noting that, in Habermas’ classic formulation of the Public Sphere, the “Sphere of Public Authority” is occupied by the state, but the “Private Realm,” contains both civil society and the bourgeois family.17 This simplified summary of Habermas does help to clarify some rudimentary ways that space overlaps as both “official” and “private” and “public.” I hope to avoid making a simple binary between public and private, but also to consider how the body itself problematizes these boundaries in a dialectic between Habermasian Public Authority and the Public Sphere.

These categories offer a starting point for thinking about the topography of the nineteenth-century city. Earlier bathing traditions, from the spa to the pilgrimage site


were places of social or spiritual gathering. The transfer of the bathhouse to the Sphere of Public Authority, supervised and administered by the police, marked a shift in its socio-spatial character. In 1830, when an appeal was made to the city of Berlin to construct baths for the poor the Polizeipräsidium responded, issuing a warning that bathhouses of a public character would require extensive surveillance. A public bath was constructed in the 1850s, however, by the Aktiengesellschaft Wasch- und Bade-Anstalten, financed by the sale of shares in the enterprise. This solicitation was conceived and organized by the General Polizei Direktor von Hinkeldey. For Hinkeldey, the mission of the baths was “to counteract the negative health effects of poor housing on the population.” As an official response to the damage inflicted on the body by its urban environment, this early bathhouse introduces an important aspect of its social and spatial character: the overlapping of Public Authority and the Private Realm. This gave the bath a layered spatial quality, where the bath was structured on a continuum of social disciplining and social compensation.

The purpose and methods of social discipline are familiar from Foucault and Althusser, but what about those of social compensation? By using this term, I do not mean to suggest that the public bath was involved with a radical restructuring of social wealth. Rather, it was created as a supplement to what was viewed as the inadequate

domestic spaces of the working class, and to the absence of nature in the industrial city. The dialogue between discipline and compensation was expressed in models for the bathhouse and their engagement with the public body.

At first, social hygiene depended only on the development of new sanitary technologies to improve water quality and supply to the city, but it was soon challenged to conceive of the social spaces within which these technologies could be applied more directly to the population. The river-baths were a crude first step, which did not provide a solution to the year-round problem of social hygiene, and were also limited by the decreasing water quality of the Spree. Efforts were made to develop appropriate alternatives. In conceiving of these alternatives, reformers and civic authorities came to terms with the booming civic population. This was a problem in itself, for any gathering of the urban population evoked a sense of disorder and crowdedness that seemed unsanitary. The military model for the shower, or the Brausebad, offered one of the solutions to these problems.

The fact that the Brausebad came from the military needs to be emphasized, not simply because the design underscored Prussian military values of discipline and physical “hardening” - these values were already in evidence in the larger discourses of hygiene reform and bathing. Rather, the use of a military model reflects the need to find some conception of the masses through existing concepts. In order to comprehend and administer the new population scale of a major city, reformers and architects imagined
the working-class as an enormous army. In 1900, Major Hoffmann of the War Ministry spoke to the newly formed *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volksbäder* (German Society for the People’s Bath), describing the army as the great “Volkserziehungsanstalt” (institution for training the people) in which the highest value of all was the “prosperity (Gedeihung) of the body.” 20 Hoffmann’s use of the term “prosperity” is an echo of the Marxist reminder that the only wealth a worker is allowed to have is his own labor power, a fact exploited by a military organization that also stood to benefit from the health of the worker. The slogan from the 1911 International Hygiene Exhibition, “No Riches can compare to You, O Health!” is a testament to the continued attempt to pair self-improvement and exploitation.

The army had experimented with diverse forms of bathhouse adapted from the models circulating in mid-century. The first exemplar of the *Brausebad* was designed by engineer David Grove and constructed in Berlin in the barracks of the Kaiser Franz Grenadier Regiment of the Guard. The Brausebad was designed to maximize efficiency and speed. As Major Hoffmann reported, few variations in interior arrangement or the ritual of the bathhouse existed in military barracks by 1900. He described this standard ritual.21 The bathers arrived at the building and were divided into groups whose number corresponded to the number of showers in the main bathing room. The first


21. Ibid. 24., April 1899, 60.
three groups enter a changing area at one time and while one group goes immediately into the shower, the second undresses and waits, and the third simply waits. At this point, the shower machine is fully stoked and bathing can begin. The shower room itself often consisted of two parallel rows of pipes; each with a double row of individual showerheads spaced one meter apart and located on either side of the pipe. The flow of water is controlled by a bath attendant, who turns on the valve briefly for the bathers to get an initial rinse before scrubbing and then rinsing. The showerheads are angled so that the spray hits the body quickly from head to foot. The water is then turned off while soldiers soaped the body, “during which time the company generally pair up...and give each other mutual assistance.” The water is then turn on for a rinse.

Hoffmann emphasized that the entrance and exit to the shower space must be clearly marked, and arranged in such a way that the flow of bathers is not obstructed.

The showers are designed around the idea of standardization and a constant flow of bodies with identical needs. The design of the Brausebad was initially internally divided into private shower compartments, Hoffmann explained, but these had been abandoned after it was determined that the soldiers using the showers had no issue with modesty and the private chambers impeded the supervision of the bathers. Private showers were made available to higher-ranking officers who were also allowed to

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22. Ibid, 61.
control their own water taps. These cells were only accessible with a “square-section key,” so they could not be “misused” by the Massen.23

The model of the military shower became the prototype for the Massenbad. The name emphasized the uniformity and quantity of bathers. To apply the Massenbad to a broad public context thus depended on a social group understood as a homogenous crowd, without internal differences to complicate the bathing ritual. Engineer David Grove designed many of the first showers for the Prussian military and provided specifications for a number of later models, including the Volksbrausebad exhibited and promoted by Oscar Lassar at the German Hygiene exhibition in 1883.24 Grove’s engineering firm was responsible for building showers in nearly forty barracks for the German army between 1878 and 1900, in addition to those designed for numerous prisons and factories.25 Like the Panopticon, the Massenbad was easily translatable to diverse disciplinary institutions. However, the most popular application of the shower bad as Massenbad was for the other great Volkserziehungsanstalt - the public school.

In 1885, the mayor of Göttingen initiated the construction of showers in public schools, a practice taken up in Berlin after 1890.26 There was an exceptional quantity of

24. See Chapter Two
new school buildings produced in Berlin between 1880 and 1926. Ludwig Hoffmann alone designed over thirty in his tenure as Stadtbaurat. The introduction of so many new public institutions in the residential quarters of the city provided an unprecedented opportunity to intervene in the daily life of those districts. Although the Berlin Stadtverordnetenversammlung (City Council) refused to pass legislation that required schools to construct Schulbäder, by 1900 school shower baths were considered an integral part of the city program for providing bathing structures.27 Schulbäder were a form of shower bath typically installed in the cellar of a school building and occupying a low, vaulted, space. (Figure 4.7) The bathing room was typically illuminated by the deeply set windows of thick foundation walls, sometimes supplemented with electric lighting. In the city of Berlin, parental permission was mandatory for schoolchildren to take a school-bath, an activity that took place during the school day between the hours of 8am and 12pm (9am – 1pm during Winter).28

The participation of the children cannot be forced, but must be voluntary. There are not a few parents who for various and flimsy reasons do not allow their children to bathe, either because they are afraid of them taking cold or some other negative consequence - perhaps they are afraid of some excessive stimulation of the brain that has been observed after extremely cold bathing, or the belief,


particularly in the case of girls, that bathing inevitably results in the loss of shame.29

The baths followed a ritual derived from the military showers: The children undressed and entered a central enclosure surrounded by a low railing, with showerheads hung from the ceiling of the room. The water was turned on for two minutes. One-third of that time was dedicated to soaping and rubbing the skin, one-third for rinsing with warm water, and one-third for a cold-water rinse to close the pores. The bath attendants were technicians who did not supervise the children during the bath. Rather, the children’s teachers were responsible for ensuring that each step was correctly followed.30 The Schulbad was scheduled so that it required 15 –30 minutes to undress, bathe and dress again, although in practice it seems to have taken longer.31

Advocates of the Schulbad liked to compare its place within the larger building to an organ performing an essential cleansing function in the body of the school.32 This was, as we have seen, a familiar theme in hygienic thinking about buildings, and it was a useful way to discuss the shower, whose structure only really became visible when the water was turned on and a body was depicted in the space. The physiological rhetoric must have appealed to contemporaries. By conceiving of school buildings themselves as


32. Geheimer Regierungsrath Schulrat Dr. Bertram, DGV Publications, Vol 1, 55.
bodies, the workings of the school were made to seem more organic and natural. “In a healthy body dwells a healthy mind, that’s what the school teaches,” affirmed state councilor Bertram. However, the organic metaphor does not seem to fit the shower very well. In an age before organ transplants, its design seems more similar to machine technology; it could be inserted easily and flexibly into the larger operations of myriad enterprises.

The fusing of the mechanical and the natural was common in discourses of social hygiene and was an important quality that the public bath brought to the urban fabric. However, the bulk of the interest was on the technological end of the scale. The “art of the engineer” one document reported, “will establish a “systematic and well-trained tradition” that would endure beyond the school years.34 The continuity between tradition and engineering was asserted as part of a progressive national culture, which sought new paths to a renewed and revitalized tradition. The rationalization of the Brausebad was part of its popularity, a quality in which the Bürgertum felt it was responsible to invest. As one architect and city councilor expressed it: “My thoughts are quite typical in that I believe that all technological proposals are good and fitting.”35 The shower bath was promoted to the public by the Berliner Verein für Volksbäder (BVV), the

33 Ibid, 55.


35. SV Herzberg. Landesarchive Berlin, Berlin, A Rep 000-02-01 no. 1519 (Volksbadeanstalt Turmstrasse 82), ASB. 21 April 1911.
Berlin Association for People’s Baths, an advocacy group established in the 1870s.

Under the auspices of the BVV, chairman Oscar Lassar published and spoke widely in support of the *Brausebad*, campaigning on it as an image of architectural hygiene: controlled, technologically advanced, free from ornament, and economically reliable. In practice, deviations from the severe minimalist and functionalist program of the Brausebad were more the rule than the exception. However, in the discourse of bathhouse design, any broader or more lavish conceptions of the public bath were viewed as bombastic. In Oscar Lassar’s publication, *Über Volksbäder*, from 1888, he praised the architectural character of the first *Brausebad* constructed in Vienna the previous year: 36

In an old city house…on Mondschein Alley 9, in the middle of an area with a large population of workers (VII Stadtbezirk), a bath was constructed. In terms of simplicity one would seek in vain for its equal. But this simplicity, the renunciation of any unnecessary accessories or attachments, is a sign of a focused line of action. The workingman’s bath must keep success in its sight and diligently ensure that the building is free from decoration and kept within the bounds of real interests and routine lifestyles.37

Lassar’s lectures on the *Brausebad* throughout the late 1880s and early 1890s elaborated on his vision for a sanitary future, with *Brausebäder* attached to post offices, schools, and railroad stations. Factories could use excess water and heating power to

36. Author unknown, "Public baths in Germany and Austria" (1888-1892).

supply shower baths at places of work and open them up to the neighborhood. In 1900, the newly established Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volksbäder organized a competition for the best design for a Volksbad in which the Brausebad was the mandated type. The author describing the program wrote:

Brausebäder are for good reason known as the real People’s baths. Because the Brausebad is the form of bathing that requires the least time and money… and therefore it is easily accessible for all social groups. – The Volksbrausebäder can be distinguished from the Massenbäder – and here we mean the military, workers, and school shower baths – all of which share the disadvantage of the swimming pool, that they can cause contagion. When the Volksbad is able to offer the population cheap physical cleanliness (Reinigung) that is not damaging to the morals but which is refreshing to the body, you know that you’re not talking about the Massenbad. And we should not be quiet about the fact that there is a small-minded disposition in the Massenbad and in the swimming bath that can be damaging to morality – especially as it pertains to the common changing rooms.

The Berliner Verein, like all reform organizations, expressed its views under the banner of fiscal responsibility and hygiene reform. However, they were aware that their views fostered and defined distinct social spaces through their proposed models. The Brausebad were not just a model for the Volk, it was a model of the Volk. In an essay from 1902 entitled, “Zur Volksbäder Frage,” Dr. Dumont from Eisenach protested that the Volksbäder being proposed were not at all for the “Volk:” “These bath are for a certain


section of the population, let’s just say it outright, for the Proletariat.”40 The speed and economy of the Brausebad design, derived from the need to move large numbers of male soldiers through the building quickly, was reinterpreted as an essential feature for Volk-design, for people who had neither time nor money. It was a fitting form for a people without leisure.41 Appropriately, the greatest success for the Volksbrausebad was in the factory. Of all those public and private sponsors of the public bath, the Brausebad appealed most to employers. Immediately following the 1883 German Hygiene Exhibition, Lassar’s structure was sold to the owner of a factory in Neusalz for the use of his employees, and other industrialists quickly followed. The same year, the Gebrüder Heyl & Co. of Charlottenburg constructed a Lassar-Grove bathhouse for workmen and their children, which was reported to “excite a sensibly favorable influence upon the health of those who frequented it.”42 By 1896, Edward Hartwell counted over 200 Arbeiterbäder operating in Germany. These were communal baths provided by owners of industry, the majority of them were shower baths.43

It was evident to planners, politicians, and even reformers that the shower did not provide a particularly high quality experience for the user compared to either the

42. Hartwell, ed., Public Baths in Europe,49.
43. Ibid,47.
Wannenbad or the Schwimmbad. In 1893, the rate of shower use in existing bathhouses in Berlin was so low that the continued inclusion of showers in future projects was justified only as an investment in the future, “because their use and the goal of strengthening the nerves and purifying the body is all too unknown among the population.” In 1894, city councilor Eßmann reported that the new public bath in Moabit was having “terrible experiences” with their shower baths, and that they were not at all popular. He advised against their continued construction in public schools. City architect, Hermann Blankenstein countered: “It’s natural that they don’t like showers as much as Wannenbäder. A bathtub is far more comfortable than a simple Brausebad, and when Wannenbäder are offered at such a low rate, more people will be drawn to take them and will prefer them. But if they don’t have a choice, they will take a shower just as well as bath.”

The Berliner Verein responded to this problem by trying to make the Brausebad more comfortable and more palatable to the users. At the 1896 Berlin Gewerbeausstellung (Trade Exhibition) in 1896, they presented an alternative to the Lassar-Grove model. In place of a single showerhead installed above the cell, the winning design installed

44. Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep 000-02-01 no. 1524 (Volksbadeanstalt Dennowitzstrasse 42). Vorlage 842. 21 Nov 1893. In 1893, the number of public Wannenbäder to Brausebäder in the city of Berlin was 74,000 to 14,000. Vorlage 881, 5 Dec 1893.

45. Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep 000-02-01 no. 1519 (Volksbadeanstalt Turmstrasse 82). Gemeinde-Blatt: 30 Oct 1894

46. Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep 000-02-01 no. 1519 (Volksbadeanstalt Turmstrasse 82) (1888-1917). ASB 22 February 1894
multiple showerheads, which sprayed from above the head, from the sides, and up towards the body from below. Marble was even used for the walls between bathing cells –which was the antithesis of the austere corrugated iron used in the original Lassar-Grove model. “The future of the Brausebad lies in its Perfection!” exclaimed technophile architect Herzberg to the city council.47

The idea of establishing a prototype for the public bath was a major focus of the Berliner Verein and the dominant framework in which architectural form was discussed and evaluated at the level of city government. The idea that one universal design for the Proletariat could work in all contexts in an identical manner is reflective of this mechanistic phase of bath building. The preoccupation of the BVV with defining appropriate typological categories, between Massenbad and Volksbrausebad, for instance, or between “public baths that serve the goals of social welfare, commercial enterprises, and industrial baths,” was indicative of this preoccupation.48 In contemporary discourses, successful designs for the bath are described as mustergültig – exemplary, or like a model. On the other hand, imagining the consequences of a flawed model and its negative social consequences created enormous anxiety.49 As Chapter Two also


49. Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep 000-02-01 no. 1519 (Volksbadeanstalt Turmstrasse 82). ASB 27 Nov 1890
illustrated, a bad model was not only viewed as a waste of money, but had the potential to create serious moral and social consequences.

The Brausebad was very successful in Central European cities during the decade after its introduction at the 1883 German Hygiene Exhibition. Vienna, Budapest, Frankfurt, Berlin, Breslau, and Munich – all constructed Brausebäder inspired on the Lassar-Grove design. The fundamental character of the Brausebad was a rejection of porous architecture, like the house with its miasmic flows, in favor of the machine. Its purity was expressed through the technological, typological, and reproducible. The corresponding materials and machinery produced a modern form that developed alongside the infrastructure of the industrial city and fitted into its formal language. However, it was not the destiny of the Brausebad, to be inserted in all the nooks and crannies of public space, as Lassar had once conceived it.

2. 1890s: Brausebad to Badeanstalt

The city of Berlin did not develop a definite commitment to an architectural program for the public bathhouses until end of the 1880s. This process of making this commitment occurred tentatively and was comprised of several stages. The first step toward building bathhouse was made through collaboration with the Berliner Verein für Volksbäder in which the city donated land and water for the construction of two
experimental bathhouses, which were then planned and administered by the BVV and opened to the public in 1888.

The resulting structures, the Gartenstrasse and Wallstrasse Volksbäder, were designed by prominent Berlin architects Ende and Böckmann. They were solid, red brick buildings that accommodated both Wannenbäder and Brausebäder. (Figure 4.8) The buildings had a strong horizontal emphasis, with the original façades organized by the rhythmic placement of relieving arches and round-arched windows, with the wall terminating in a lively acorn motif. The taller, central pavilion established a prominent entry and created a sense of importance, balance and pragmatism.\(^{50}\)

Although relatively modest buildings, the Volksbäder were conspicuously not consistent with recommendation that the Berliner Verein had been making over the past ten years. A spokes person from the group commented retrospectively on this: “You can see that a concession has been made here to the desire for tub-bathing (Wannenbäder), since many still have shyness in about the shower-bath. And the division of baths into first and second-classes, which you see here, that was introduced also in response to public desire for them.”\(^{51}\) Another writer reported the decision this way:

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The scale of this problem has become so much larger that people realized the solution has to be of larger dimensions. For this reason, one wouldn’t want to proceed with the creation of very primitive institutions, or build in small proportions. Rather, it was considered more worthy of the ideal goal behind this endeavor to erect simple but pleasing buildings which would be impossible for the surrounding population to overlook and which should be inviting to them.\textsuperscript{52}

Both authors admit that public demand and public opinion have a role to play in the success of the project. The architecture of the bath has to speak at least partially to its users and even to the broader project of civic self-representation. Brausebad propagandists had oriented their ideas exclusively toward other reformers and designers, for whom the hygienic ideal was embodied in economy and modern technology. Apparently, this was not the most popular choice. Moreover, when it came down to it, this spare model of civic hygiene may not have been a comfortable choice for Berlin city councilors, who did not want to advertise the meagerness of the bath, but its generosity.

The buildings possessed a distinctly English-industrial character, which the architects described as “worthy, friendly, and inviting.”\textsuperscript{53} They were also constructed next to public parks, although these were located in very different neighborhoods.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{52} Author unknown, (1888-1892), 22.


\textsuperscript{54} The Gartenstrasse bath was built in the former courtyard of the Sophienkirche and the Wallstrasse establishment in the “old Logengarten.”
Gartenstrasse Volksbad, in the center-north of the city, was set in a highly industrialized area populated largely by working class residents. Volksbad Wallstrasse, shown in Figure 4.8, was constructed in “an established middle class neighborhood.”

The baths were arranged on the ground floor, with a residence for the Bademeister and his wife an upper story visible on the facades. Each facility contained 28 Wannenbäder and 18 Brause divided into sections for men and women on the left and right of the plan respectively. (Figure 4.9) The patron enters the building and confronts a cash area; male and female bathers are then led to separate waiting rooms. The designation of these areas on opposite sides of the building prevented moral indiscretion, and it allowed for each section to extrude into the surrounding space, each was illuminated on three sides by large windows. The ratio of first to second class baths is approximately one-third. There are fewer baths for women, in the same ratio. The smaller women’s section contains both baths and showers together in a large communal room, separated partially by panels 2.2m high.56 For men, a central shower in the rear contains first-class cells with individual changing sections and second-class showers without a private changing section. An attendant supervised the filling of each bath,


56. Marcuse, 127.
and showers were designed to turn off automatically after three minutes of warm water.  

3. The Rise of the Volksbadeanstalt, 1888-1893

The last decade of the nineteenth-century was a period of intense class conflict and social agitation in Berlin. Changes in the goals and strategies of the German public bath movement reflect the role the baths were seen to play in preventing strife and civil unrest. The city council, satisfied with the success of the bathhouses produced with the BVV, soon began the process of planning their own two preliminary structures - Turmstrasse and Schillingstrasse Volksbadeanstalten (1888-1892). Designed by the office of the Berlin Stadtbaurat, Hermann Blankenstein, the preliminary municipal bath buildings established a basic interior arrangement for public bathhouses in Berlin, which incorporated the latest thinking about circulation, cleanliness, and social engineering in the public bath, derived from an international discourse that was discussed in Chapter Three. The planning process for these early baths and the retrospective discussion of their effectiveness gave rise to complex discussions of society and social space that were beginning to take shape as the century came to a close.

During this same period, over 40,000 Berlin workers from thirty branches of industry went on strike for higher wages and for the ten-hour workday. In 1890, the Social Democrats won a majority of votes in the Reichstag (20 Feb. 1890) and the first

57. Ibid. 113; “Public Baths of Germany and Austria,” 29.
May Day gathering was held in Berlin celebrating worker’s rights, solidarity and socialism. The following year, the Sozialistengesetz was lifted which had banned all working-class organizations – political, athletic, and literary - since 1878. The Verein for the Freie Volksbühne was one of many working-class cultural organizations that were now legally established to support and promote the culture of the Arbeiter.\textsuperscript{58} In making decisions about where public bathhouses were located, city representatives hoped that this institution would have an ameliorating effect on the social unrest among the Berlin proletariat. The first bathhouse in Berlin was constructed in Moabit, a notoriously “red” section of the city. When the question later arose of whether to expand the bath or build another one further north, one city councilor argued that the bath was no longer needed in that particular site, because the population had cooled down: “The workers’ movement doesn’t live near Turmstrasse anymore; it’s moved to Beusselstrasse.”\textsuperscript{59}

\textbf{a) Changes in Hygiene Reform and Social Medicine}

Extensive research has been done on the diverse public health and hygiene movements at the turn of the century in Germany. A frequent observation that has been made in this literature is a universal emphasis on the preservation and development of \textit{Volkskraft}, the vitality of the people. The diverse, sometimes interconnected social

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{58} Ingo Materna, Wolfgang Ribbe, and et al, \textit{Geschichte in Daten Berlin} (Wiesbaden: Fourier Verlag, 2003), 134-35.
\item \textsuperscript{59} Beusselstrasse is a street to the north of Turmstrasse in Moabit. Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep 000-02-01 no. 1519 (Volksbadeanstalt Turmstrasse 82). ASB 21 April 1911.
\end{itemize}
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perspectives on reform included social Darwinism, neo-Malthusianism, racial-eugenics theory, and civilization critique - theories integrated medical theory with social theory. As Jürgen Reulecke has argued, for example, the science of bacteriology was used to create the rational for greater political force to be concentrated in the domain of public health. The use of medical theories to establish control and regulate social spaces began long before bacteriology; however, concepts of social hygiene derived from germ theory were fueled by the liberal enthusiasm for technology and progress. The first Berlin public bathhouses reflect a range of hygiene reform initiatives and ideas that were just coming into public view around the 1900. The shift from *Reinigung* to *Erholung* discussed in Chapter Three reappears as this change occurred in the Berlin context. In morphological terms, it was registered through a greater interest in architectural aesthetics, the emergence of the swimming hall and the national bathing customs, or *Badewesen*.

\textit{b) Erholung and the German Bath Movement}

Leo Vetter was a theorist of the bath who became a representative voice for social Erholung and a return to Germanic forms of bathing. He was involved in the construction of an elaborate bathhouse in Stuttgart in 1887 and participated in planning its expansion in 1893. Vetter argued that the aesthetic values of the bathhouse formed a part of its therapeutic value.\footnote{Hartmann, 19-20.} He shifted the discussion away from English statistics and hygiene, and toward an abstract population of German bath users, the Volk not the Proletariat. In his 1894 treatise on the design of public bathhouses, \textit{Moderne Bäder}, Vetter argued that the swimming was a form of bathing that was intrinsic to the German body. The swimming bath, he wrote, “[W]hich allows for free, independent physical activity, is the form of bathing which above any other corresponds to the German Volk, as well as the German race, insofar as it is, praise God, still strong and healthy and wants to remain so.”\footnote{Leo Vetter and H Fetzer, \textit{Moderne Bäder, erläutert am Stuttgarter schwimmbad} / von Leo Vetter, mit fünf Plänen, einer Abbildung und zwei Tabellen. Medizinischer Teil von Dr. H. Fetzer. (Stuttgart: G.J. Göschchen, 1894), 34.} Drawing from the historical discourses of bathing, he continued:

\begin{quote}
Every time a swimming pool opens up in Germanic lands (Germany, England, Norway, Denmark, Sweden), it finds quick and eager acceptance. This energetic striving forward does not have any noteworthy influence in the Romance or Slavic countries... In France, there was an attempt made to build swimming baths but it met with so little response that the beautiful halls built for this purpose closed down.... [There] we find only warm water baths, and hot air or steam baths in operation. And we find private concerns which focus on peripheral functions, which are distinguished by their excellence and
\end{quote}
their great elegance. The people, however, have no share in these baths.63

If Oscar Lassar was scientific, business-minded and minimal, Leo Vetter was nationalist, idealist and physical. Although aware of the realities of economic restraint and limitation, Vetter argued that misplaced frugality in bath architecture was often a pretext for the profit motive and ambition “which seek to insinuate themselves into every human undertaking.”64 A mere Reinigungsbad was acceptable for very small towns, but not for larger municipalities.65 These larger communities needed a true Volksbad to provide facilities that would serve another key function, that of Erholung. The term Erholung is used with increasing frequency throughout the 1890s. It is foregrounded too in the documents of the Arbeiter-Wohlfahrtsinrichtungen (later, Zentralstelle für Volkswohlfahrt) a state-cultural organization with the mission of “harmonizing the classes.”66 In the documents of the AW, Erholung describes the time needed by the worker to recover after a hard day in the factory. As an alternative to the disruption of social democracy or socialism, the Zentralstelle suggested that the population cultivate a “Naïve, natural and harmless love of the fatherland, the inborn

63. Ibid. 34-35.

64. LeoVetter, Das Bad der Neuzeit und seine historische Entwicklung, 52.

65. Ibid, 57.

love of homeland, the Volksgefühl, the emotional life of the nation (Gemütsleben) historical consciousness, and the joyful pride in a unique Germanness."67 Proponents of the swimming bath like Leo Vetter were very interested in the descriptions of early Germanic tribes found in Tacitus, who was impressed by their alleged love of cold-water swimming. Vetter tied this inborn love of swimming to the Germanic enjoyment in actively exploring nature:

> It holds for us the highest charms, like the joyful hiking through hills and valleys, which gives us precisely that identical sense that pleasure must be purchased through exertion. And, in our own northern and Germanic way, we have always placed great value on this ethical moment that is at the root of the motto, so fitting to our swimming baths: In the exertion, lies the pleasure.68

Leo Vetter’s theorization of public bathing thus forged a set of connections between love of nature, national character, swimming and recovery from labor. The nexus of these themes was located in the institution of the bathhouse. Yet, despite Vetter’s emphasis on the northern and Germanic, the Stuttgart public bath with which he was closely associated was designed in a sumptuous Orientalist idiom. (Figure 4.10) The elaborate men’s and women’s swimming halls and quasi-Turkish sweat baths located in the Stuttgart bathhouse was the other extreme from the frugal Lassar-Grove

67. Ibid, 51.

68. Vetter, Das Bad der Neuzeit und seine historische Entwicklung, 40-41.
Brausebad in terms of ornament, sensuality and imaginative play.\textsuperscript{69} A nationalist approach to physical culture could be cultivated within a range of aesthetic contexts.

The new hygiene of Erholung can be cynically interpreted as yet another strategy to pacify or comfort the working class into accepting their lot; however, it was also an attempt to respond to the intensifying experience of the modern city. To be cleaned was not enough, the body needed to be healed and cultivated in a broader way. The swimming bath became the architectural element that fulfilled this need and that reinstated an allegedly beloved form of national physical “hardening” (Abhärtung) of the body. But the transition from older forms of social hygiene that were profoundly class-oriented and entrenched in the continuity of the industrial landscape and the body of the worker, to a full-body conception of national purification through toning, nature and community, was not unconflicted.

c) Turmstrasse and Schillingstrasse, 1888-1892

A year after the opening of the two bathhouses constructed by the Berliner Verein, the city council passed legislation committing to the construction of two municipally sponsored public bathhouses, which opened in 1892 and contained large central swimming baths. The nearly identical Volksbadeanstalten, Turmstrasse (Figure 4.11) and Schillingsbrücke (Figure 4.12), were designed by Fridolin Zekeli, an architect

\textsuperscript{69} More research on German orientalism would help clarify the fascinating reception context for this building.
in the office of Stadtbaurat Blankenstein. The Turmstrasse bathhouse was consistent with the output of Blankenstein’s office. As seen in Figure 4.11, the bath was a block structure of distinguished proportions with a focus on the terminating frieze motif, and a strong roof projecting supported by a series of corbelled arches. The delicate terracotta frieze forms a pattern of shells, which relate to the building’s function. Like the baths planned by the Berliner Verein, the new municipal bathhouses offered two classes of Wannenbäder and Brausebäder, with the number of first class baths equal to approximately one-third of all units. The new buildings were much larger, with twice as many baths in each facility as the earlier structures, and each offered a limited range of “medicinal baths.”

The most controversial part of the designs for the new city baths, however, was their inclusion of Schwimmhalle. Covered by an iron and glass roof, the rectangular swimming basins measured 18m x 9m, and faced with tiles and surrounded above by a narrow gangway. Wooden changing booths were arranged along the lengths of the pool. An upper gallery was reached by two spiral, cast-iron staircases at either side of the pool. The gallery contained a row narrow lockers and a common changing space for the use of children. Original documents on the plans for the swimming halls describe a plaster wall covering painted with fake-marble and stucco patterns, although it is not

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clear whether these were part of the final design. A photograph from 1950 shows the original apsidal end of the pool, with a lively pattern of glazed brick – a feature typical of Blankenstein-era public architecture.

The arrival of swimming baths in *Kommunale* Berlin was not greeted universally with the enthusiastic recognition of native Germans reunited with their ancient customs. There was, as I have already noted, significant opposition to the swimming bath. The view of the *Berliner Verein*, like that of William Gerhard in Brooklyn, Simon Baruch in New York, and many members of the international hygiene movement, was that small-scale public showers were the most effective way to promote social hygiene. Many city representatives in Berlin expressed opposition to the construction of the swimming pools because they required large interior spaces that were expensive to construct and maintain. It is also clear that most early hygiene reformers of this camp were unhappy about any combination of purification and pleasure. This was a common objection in Berlin: that pleasure and play were experiences that belonged to the commercial bath, not in a municipal institution.71

There were also strong feelings about the physical space of the bathhouse. In fact, the pairing of a large communal tank of water and a large population of dirty working-class bodies seemed to some like a bad idea. An attendant cleaned enclosed bathing cells or showers after each use, and this seemed to ensure that polluted

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71. SV Leo See Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep 000-02-01 no. 1524 (*Volksbadeanstalt Demnowitzstrasse 24a*) (1893-1914), ASB 9 April 1896.
individuals would be contained. The swimming pool appeared, on the other hand, like a well of contagion. In 1897, renowned pediatrician Adolf Baginsky testified before the Board of Health that cases of fever were believed to have been transmitted by impure water in public swimming baths. His testimony gave a platform to concerns that had previously been repressed since the decisions to construct the swimming baths in the 1880s. How can water be purifying if it comes into contact with so many bodies? “It is in no way pleasant to imagine that the water you have been forced to swallow has already been in the mouth of another, who has spit it out,” complained one city councilor. A city inquiry concluded that health dangers would be avoided if baths were well lighted and well ventilated, if spittoons were placed around the pool, and if the bath was under the “continuous control of the sanitary police.” Yet, the perception persisted that the swimming bath was a health risk. In response, the city published the following detailed cleaning schedule for the Schillingsbrücke bath:

[T]he entire hall, including the changing cells are sprayed down every evening. The soap-room is sprayed down every night, the glass walls, the spittoons and the overflow gutters are scoured with sand and soap. The wood lattices are rinsed off and changed three times a week, every evening the windows of the soap rooms are opened and the air is released and replaced by fresh air. The swimming basin is washed with sand and soap, soda and a solution of hydrochloric acid. This is performed four times each week in summer, three times in


73. SV Spinoza. Ibid., Auszug der SPSV. 10 Sept 1896.

74. Seifräume=Soap rooms. These were rooms at one end of the pool in which mandatory showers (with soap) were taken before entering the swimming pool.
spring and fall, and twice in winter. All corners as well as wooden stairs and wood members are particularly cleaned. No one can use the pool without having visited the soap rooms, which has a special attendant assigned to it. To spit, one must use the special porcelain overflow channels.75

The schedule emphasized the multiple sections, corners, materials and areas of risk within the bathhouses. This realm of surfaces with its numerous areas of physical contact seemed to present innumerable grounds for contagion. A bacteriological view of the body had uncovered the pathogens of disease, and it was found that they existed everywhere. This anxious view of public architecture assumed the presence of a filthy and infections public body as the imaginary subject of the swimming bath. Vetter’s vision for the swimming bath had romanticized a the swimming activities of the German Volk, but Representative Spinoza recoiled in the face of contact with the contagious masses, making a final plea for the Brausebad. The body was the political center of these issues of public and private space, of contact and separation, group identity and individual responsibility.

I have pointed out that reformers and city representatives alike struggled with the question of what this public building should be, grappling with social convention and public representation, and also with abstract questions about what access the city should provide to physical experiences and leisure activities. What constitutes the

75. Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep 000-02-01 no. 1524 (Volksbadeanstalt Dennowitzerstrasse 24a). AST 25 November 1897. ref. to Vorlage 850
specifically public function of a bathhouse when it is contrasted to the Massenbad? What does public space mean and what are its larger responsibilities? Even more important, what are the political implications if one acknowledges that public and private are different for different classes? These questions arose repeatedly in city politics. In 1893, the first two public bathhouses were judged successful and city council voted to construct four additional baths in developing parts of the city. These questions were again posed. During the planning process for the second round of baths, Representative Meyer expressed his reserve about what he felt were the excessive funds being sunk into the public bathhouses, saying:

It makes a difference whether one supports something as a citizen (Bürger) and gives his personal resources to it, or whether the city builds something itself just because everything now must become part of the Kommune!

To which representative Borgmann replied:

By now almost every large residence has its own bathing equipment and I believe that Herr Meyer would think twice before renting a house without it. Now the vast majority of the people are not able to rent an apartment with a bath, and so the public must intervene on their behalf. (für sie muß die Öffentlichkeit eintreten)\(^\text{76}\)

In this dialogue, the city representatives mobilize different definitions of public and private. Meyer uses concepts of private and public to denote state responsibility

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and intervention versus private desire and whimsy. A public swimming bath, for example, is as good as socialism, because it appropriates what is otherwise a private (capitalist) enterprise. Borgmann’s response revises the terms: Wealthier individuals can afford the “private” sphere; they choose their own “private” space (domestic space). The spaces of the private household that are out of reach for the working-class, Borgmann argues, can be afforded by the municipality in a mass context – in the public spaces of the city. Moreover, the stability and sense of social justice that the public sphere can create, was modeled on the domestic sphere. Or, as the Zentralstelle für Volkswohlfahrt imagined it, the institutions of society should create interactions so that “the different Volksklassen really interact with each other like sister and brother and mutually support one another.”

B. Ludwig Hoffmann and the Wilhelmine Stadtbad

All of the Volksbadeanstalten produced from the 1893 legislation were designed by the new Stadtbaurat Ludwig Hoffmann, who came to office in 1896. Ludwig Ernst Emil Hoffmann (1852 – 1932) was born and raised in Darmstadt in a solidly middle-class environment. He studied architecture at the Kunstillademie in Kassel with his childhood friend, Alfred Messel and they both moved to Berlin in 1874 to pursue their studies further at the Bauakademie. In 1879, Hoffmann worked with Franz Schwechten on the Kriegsakademie in Berlin and became a Regierungsbaumeister in February, 1884. The

77. Wendschuh and Reich, eds, 51.
following year, Hoffmann and colleague Peter Dwybad won first prize in the
cOMPETITION for the Reichsgericht (Federal courthouse) building in Leipzig, a project that
Hoffmann later commented provided his real architectural education. Between 1887
and 1895, Hoffmann worked as the architect during of the federal courthouse in Leipzig.
At the close of that project he was chosen as Stadtbaurat in Berlin.78

Hoffmann was not a Berliner and did not identify with the local architectural
culture. Rather, with his closest friend Alfred Messel, Hoffmann portrayed himself as a
reformer of Berlin’s architectural landscape, whose work aroused the criticism of the
lesser architects and the affection of the people.79 Hoffmann’s simplified historical
modalities at times seem to meet up with the simplified baroque and classical manner of
Hermann Muthesius, Peter Behrens, or even Heinrich Tessenow. At the same time,
Hoffmann produced some of the most elaborately designed designs of the Wilhelmine
period, including the Berlin Stadthaus (1902-1911) and the Märkisches Museum (1896–
1908). In Berlin, Hoffman’s work largely falls somewhere between these two extremes

und aus dem Nachlass herausgeben von Wolfgang Schäche mit einem Vorwort von Julius Posener, Ludwig Hoffmann
and Alfred Messel; "Ludwig Hoffmann und Alfred Messel: Briefwechsel zwischen zwei befreundeten
Architekten,“ Bauwelt, July 26 2002, Ludwig Hoffmann and Wolfgang Schäche, Lebenserinnerungen eines
Architekten, ed. Senator f. Stadtentwicklung und Umweltschutz, Die Bauwerke und Kunstdenkmäler von Berlin,
vol. Beihfet 10 (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1983), Julius Posener, " Vorlesungen zur Geschichte der Neuen
Architektur II: Die Geschichte der Reform (1900-1924),“ Arch + 53, no. September (1980), Hans J. Reichhardt
and Wolfgang Schäche, Ludwig Hoffmann in Berlin: Die Wiederentdeckung eines Architekten. Eine Ausstellung
(Berlin: Transit, 1987), Hartwig Schmidt, "Das "Wilhelminische" Athen: Ludwig Hoffmans
Generalbebauungsplan für Athen,” Architectura; Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Baukunst 9, no. 1 (1979).

Lebenserinnerungen eines Architekten.

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and is a constant presence in the hospitals, schools, bathhouses, administrative buildings and street cleaning depots that occupied his twenty-eight years as Stadtbaurat.

Contemporary critics and writers participated in an ongoing discussion of the mysterious qualities that characterized this extremely eclectic city architect, but most of them concluded, in any case, that the results were successful. Surveying the results of his first five years in office, Munich architect Gabriel von Seidl wrote in 1901, “Strange how your buildings speak in totally different languages, and yet one sees even from afar, that it could only be Ludwig Hoffmann.” Historian Julius Posener once claimed that Ludwig Hoffmann created a “new type of social architecture in Berlin and…in the world,” and this is not far from what many supporters said at the time. In his public identity as Stadtbaurat and though his architectural plans for the city, Hoffmann attempted to configure social, aesthetic, and hygienic concerns in a manner unique to the Wilhelmine period.

Hoffmann’s bathhouses embody a mode of thinking about architecture and the public body, in which the political and medical mandates of hygiene reform are translated into an architecture of empathy and compensation. Portrayed in the media as an artist-architect, Hoffmann was lauded for making buildings not merely accessible to the public, but opening up a positive social interaction between the building and its

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users through on empathy and allegory. Hoffmann’s architecture is very frequently described liebevoll - loving, affectionate, even tender. In a 1901 review of an exhibition surveying Hoffmann’s work by Fritz Wolf, the author explained:

There have always been architects in Berlin who could create imposing public buildings, and those who translated the modest terms of the family house into that of the imposing villa...These architects were working to build the well-to-do, bourgeois, private citizen his home, a house that corresponded to his comfortable circumstances. But to create a building that fills the requirements of the public, a house in which every day many hundred people come in and out, which is not intended as a dwelling place for a few souls, but for the temporary accommodation of innumerable strangers, that is where their abilities break down...The drop of social oil is lacking in all of them. They can put themselves in the shoes of the individual, but for them the general public is nothing other than an abstract idea. A private commission generates excitement, they invest everything in it, and what does the public commission receive? An unbearable, soulless and heartless style of the military servant that evokes nothing. But Hoffmann possesses this social oil. His work possesses spirit and heart; he is the first social architect of the city of Berlin. His tools are not only a ruler, T-square, a compass and smooth paper, but above all, love. 82

Reflecting on the definition of public architecture, Wolf compares it to a “a house in which every day many hundred people come in and out.” This way of imagining public space, as crowded house, is consistent with what Crystal Bartolovich has referred to as the “bourgeois socio-spatial geography” in turn of the century Berlin.83 It is not surprising then to learn that “an inclination for a cozy homeliness” is listed as part of the


German national character. And it is in the context of this cozy and home-like national life that Geheimrat Dr. Rubner described German society as “a big family, whose members all have to be healthy for the well being of the whole, a concept which is constantly gaining ground.”

Ludwig Hoffmann himself frequently alluded to his happy domestic life with his wife and children, even in public speeches before the city council. In his memoirs, Hoffmann wrote:

In the company of my fellow colleagues, with my childhood friends, or even better yet in the evenings at home with my wife and my children, and even while I was at work I felt an extraordinary sense of well-being. I kept my distance from the courtly society of Potsdam.

These images of domestic life were signs of middle class life, independent from courtly approval and with the freedom to work and cultivate the self. But the interior realm of the Bürger, and its Gemütlichkeit, was also projected onto the city as a strategy for creating spatial and social unity in a developing state. This “socio-spatial geography” is a useful vantage point from which to consider the architecture in its concrete forms and as a part of a broader public landscape.

84. H. Mayer, ed. Das Deutsche Volkstum. (Leipzig, 1903). (cited by Fullbrook, 27)


There is a large body of writing that explores the status of the domestic interior in the late nineteenth-century as an essential site in which the bourgeois individual creates identity and from which he or she creates a sense of self and otherness. The bourgeois living room, the interior, was theorized extensively by Frankfurt School writers as a dialectical image of the commodity itself – one that provides an imaginary point of contrast: the constant flux and brutality of the changing modern world embodied in the commodity is counterpoised to the natural and authentic constantly of the family circle. In Kierkegaard, for example, Adorno observed that the abundant objects and collections in the nineteenth-century living room were “historically illusory objects arranged in it as the semblance of unchangeable nature.”

In Benjamin’s often cited “Éxposé of 1935,” he frames his entire project on the Paris arcades with reference to the interior, as the “etui of the private individual… The phantasmagorias of the interior – which, for the private man, represents his universe. In the interior, he brings together the far away and the long ago.

While Adorno and Benjamin are hardly authorities on public space and architecture, they represent a theme in critical historiography that has focused on how private, bourgeois, living spaces was associated with a fundamental set of spatial preconditions for the creation of an authentic self. I am merely pointing in a cursory to


this literature, to observe that the absence of adequate domestic space among the Berlin working-class was not simply a problem of public hygiene, but also one of a projected spatial imagination. That is, there was an evident gap in the subjective spatial geographies of the period, one that, I suggest, needed to be filled via the creation of public architectures of homeliness. In a practical way, such an architecture would provide an image of public space reflective of bürgerlich values and interests. Furthermore, an architecture that recreates the values of intimacy and fantasy suggests that the realm of authenticity, naturalness and freedom associated with the private domicile is available, more or less, to everyone.

The response to Hoffmann in the news media of the time confirms that many members of the liberal Berlin Bürgerum were deeply moved by his work and by its approximation of tenderness and play. This culminated in the nearly sycophantic reviews of a 1901 exhibition staged by Hoffmann showing the results of his first five years in office. In a review of the new Baerwaldstrasse Volksbad (1901), a reporter from the Hamburger Correspondent wrote:

Hoffmann had a difficult job (i.e. when he became Stadtbaurat). Into the sea of sober and mass-produced forms that go for public buildings in this town, he had to introduce an artistic and rich, that is, inward looking (innerlich) form of architecture. His job was hard because many people have no idea at all about these things, but he has triumphed because there is hardly another city that can be said to have dedicated such lovingly executed, unique, and generous forms, to their buildings.89

89. May 1901. Hamburg Correspondent. (Landesarchiv Berlin, Ludwig Hoffmann Archiv, Folio 6, 6

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Hoffmann’s work negotiated the transfer of quasi-private interiority into the public realm by creating contexts in which one could feel at home. He expressed a maternal attention to the body through his ornamental programs, which often depicted the users of a given public building—children, the sick, and the aging. He developed languages of comfort and fantasy in places of bodily care. He shifted the municipal architectural language in Berlin from one informed by the architectonics of the Berlin School (i.e. Blankenstein) to the inward-driven theories of Einfühlung. In writing about his public health architecture, Hoffmann did not assume the language of the doctor, but discussed them in terms of comfort and compassion: “I didn’t have much experience dealing with hospitals,” he noted in discussing designs for a hospital complex, “I only knew that in many parts of our society there was a strong aversion to going to the hospital for treatment. … It is hard for a sick person to leave their home and family, so it is important that when they first enter the hospital that they have the feeling of being received as an intimate guest.” 90

Between 1897 and 1908, Hoffmann designed, revised and supervised the construction of four Stadtbäder: Baerwaldstrasse in the south of the city was constructed between 1896 – 1901 (Figure 4.13), Dennewitzstrasse (1901) in the southwest (Figure 4.14), Oderbergerstrasse (1902) in Schönhauser Vorstadt, and Gerichtstrasse

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(1908) in Wedding. \textbf{(Figure 4.15)} The designs for the first of these bathhouses were characterized by the use of Renaissance palace architecture. Baerwaldstrasse Volksbadeanstalt (1896-1901) to the south of the city was modeled after Palladio’s Palazzo Thiene in Vicenza, and Oderbergerstrasse Volksbadeanstalt to the North was built as a German palace. \textsuperscript{91}

The Baerwaldstrasse bath was Hoffmann’s calling card to the city. The site for the new building was a large plot of public land in an area just beginning to be developed to the south. Baerwaldstrasse itself was a new, broad allée, divided in two one-way streets by a planted area and lined with public buildings. Hoffmann’s nearly unlimited powers of the Stadtbaurat did not include any control over city development or urban planning. He sought to shape the image of the city through “the strategic occupation of important points in the... every-day, experienced, public city.”\textsuperscript{92} To this end, Hoffmann fully exploited the visual possibilities offered by this prominent site by giving the bathhouse a dramatic rusticated \textit{piano nobile} along the length of the street. The dramatic use of massive, rusticated ashlar blocks for the façade must created an impressive effect after decades of brick-faced civic architecture. The large scale and rough texture of the quarry-faced stone calls attention to the material aspect of the building, which take on a mannerist quality through exaggerated keystones and

\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Lebenserinnerungen eines Architekten}, 129., Reichhardt and Schäche, 19.

\textsuperscript{92} Reichhardt and Schäche, 19.
voussoirs over the windows of the façade. (Figure 4.16) A feeling of extreme mass and solidity is established in the horizontal composition, punctuated by a row of small, deeply set window openings corresponding to the bathing cells on the second floor. In his memoirs, Hoffmann wrote fondly of these little windows, and used them in each subsequent bathhouse.93

The Baerwaldstrasse façade was a message not just to the city authorities, but also to the inhabitants of the district. The visibility of the bathing cells on the façade registered the activity of even the lowliest bather. Hoffmann envisioned his bathhouse in opposition to the infamous residential housing type of the urban poor, the Mietskaserne, or “rental barracks,” which were quickly rising up around the new city quarter.94 (Figure 4.17) The Mietskaserne had become an icon for the vicious and uncaring face of industrialism and capitalism by the end of the nineteenth-century, showing the city in its most brutal light. Berlin was notorious for the densely built residential blocks that characterized its sprawling industrial quarters, comprised of this type of structure. The average building of this type was a five-story walk up apartment with middle-class residences occupying the front and poorer residences arranged in back. The façade of the Mietskaserne was elaborately dressed with plaster and stucco ornamentation, a surface elegance that only added to its bad reputation. In a city driven

93. Ibid, 162.

94. Ibid, 122.
by speculation, the greatest number of rental units possible was packed into Berlin’s deep urban blocks. The front-facing apartments might receive adequate light and ventilation, but these amenities decreased as deeper rows of apartments were layered around narrow Hinterhöfe in the rear courtyards. In the most extreme cases, internal rows of apartments lay far from the healthful requirements of Licht und Luft. Although the typical Mietskaserne reached only three or four courtyards back from the street, some blocked were constructed as many as six layers deep. The hygiene movement had been instrumental in establishing and promoting the values of ventilation and sunlight for good health, and therefore the Mietskaserne became an embodiment of the physical degradation of the working-class under unregulated capitalism. It was a type of architecture so closely associated with class struggle and poverty, that the slight changes to building code in 1897 that revised the system were hailed in the city as a “great progressive movement.”

Ludwig Hoffmann arranged the interior of the Baerwaldstrasse bath into areas analogous to private bathrooms of the bourgeois domicile and to the more elaborate and public space of the swimming hall. On this point, he noted:

It would seem hardly justified to exceed the strictly functional apparatus in the individual bathing cells (i.e. in the public bath) that must suffice for the bourgeois home. But such a restricted approach for the swimming hall- for the social bath (Gesellschaftsbad), which is not only a need but also a pleasure, and a place where one spends more time, is not very advisable. The space where the basin is must, on the contrary, be a pleasant and relaxing place in which to spend some time, as compensation for a lack of fresh air.96

The construction of these different types of space within the bathhouse resulted in a complex internal program, which was divided into zones of circulation, communal activity, and areas of privacy and enclosure. In 1916, an American architect studying the German models for the bathhouse commented that the construction of a modern public baths seemed to be “one of the most exacting and difficult problems which the architect has to solve, (owing to) the difficulty of controlling and containing water, the necessity of a clear, uncomplicated plan, the need to avoid dark passages, twisting staircases, and back passages.97 There is a fear of the labyrinth suggested by the emphasis on symmetry, long straight corridors, and an axial emphasis, and therefore a regimented and rationally conceived series of spaces for the public bath were adopted by bath builders. Men’s and women’s sections are not only separated, but occupy separate sides of the building - left and right hand wings of the building respectively, distributed over two floors and extending along the central building block on the second floor. On the third floor, residences for the bath administrator and other civil servants are accessible


97. American Association for Promoting Hygiene and Public Baths, 49.
from the central staircase. There are men’s showers were arranged on the ground floor and men’s baths on the second floor. The women’s side offered a combination of showers and baths.

The entrance, foyer, and waiting rooms, although open and generously scaled, were intended as channels leading to focused activities, not areas for congregation or socialization. There was no loud noise, singing, whistling, standing on benches, smoking, or jumping into the water. Even in the open and communal the swimming hall, the space was carefully planned: It was forbidden to walk in the corridor around the pool with shoes on, as it was to walk in the corridor behind the changing cubicles - either naked or with a bathing suit. If the bather needed to use the bathroom, she or he could only use it in between changing into a bathing suit and heading to the shower. Individuals with wounds or skin rashes were not allowed in the bath, or people whose bathing suit was not clear or color fast. It was forbidden to wring out bathing suits in the pool or on the floor. The bather was allowed 45 minutes in the swimming pool. Other rules were so fundamental to the bathhouse design that they were not mentioned: Gender segregation for adults was assumed, but male children over the age of ten were forbidden from entering the pool area during women’s hours.98

Hoffmann’s swimming halls in the Berlin public baths redirected attention from the discipline and order mandated by the medicalized and disciplinary approach to the

98. Deputation für das städtische Turn- und Badewesen, "Bestimmungen für die Benutzung der Schwimmhallen der städtischen Volksbadeanstalten. 7 December 1901," 1901.
body and redirected it toward images of nature, myth, and play. Working extensively with architectural sculptors Otto Lessing, Ignatius Taschner, and Georg Wrba, Hoffmann’s baths developed an unusual series of aquatic or mythic themes, many of which are intended to be humorous and mischievous, with only a few elements of official pomp, which nonetheless grounded the bathhouse in the “official” realm of the city. Hoffmann’s study of the Renaissance convinced him that simplified architectural masses were most effective when they spoke directly to the public through sculptural forms.99 He found ample opportunity for this in the open space of the swimming halls (Figure 4.18), which were a combination of cathedral, theatre and medieval hall. This was the public focus of the bath, a combination of cathedral and jousting hall, oriented not toward the aspirations of athleticism but a kind of informal pageant, a friendly, and somewhat fantastical, social space. Writing about the Schwimmnhallen, Hoffmann wrote that when a space was given a unique character it became something intimate, creating an emotional bond for the user.100 In Baerwaldstrasse, posts between the changing cabins were topped by a series of carved animated capitals including the figure of a young girl, a standing frog, a diving duck and a droll bearded Neptune. (Figure 4.19) Passing from the cabin into the main hall was a threshold marked by the grotesque heads of monkeys, lions and unidentified creatures. The semi-circular stone arches over

99. Reichhardt and Schäche, 92-95, 103-105.

100. Stadt Berlin, 10.
the changing rooms were ornamented with panels of low arabesque relief. Squat piers faced with a deep-sea green tile resonated with the green tile of the pool. The changing rooms supported a narrow, ornamental gallery. At the rear wall of the Schwimmhalle, almost as an extension of the gallery, a small balcony set into a niche was elaborately framed with stone carving, the supporting corbel forming an elaborate cartouche, and the doorframe crowned with aquatic reeds and mythic creatures.

In 1907, Hoffmann’s architecture was the sole object featured in the honorary book published by the city of Berlin on the occasion of 14th International Congress for Hygiene and Demography. The book consisted of over one hundred full-page photographs of Hoffmann’s public buildings and a brief introductory essay, almost certainly written by the architect himself. The text acknowledges that, in the past, volumes such as this would have contained scientific writing or statistical data on the city. However, this volume concentrates only on architectural images, because, “the fundamental character of the present lies in the new perspectives that have emerged to define public buildings and spaces.”

It may seem at first glance... that the beauty of a construction is praiseworthy, perhaps, but that it hardly furthers the goals of hygiene. In the opinion of city authorities, this is a false perspective.... For it is precisely with those things toward which the soul turns that specific ends can be achieved, and neither the doctor nor the educator should underestimate them.


102. Ibid,6.
Baerwaldstrasse bathhouse is considered one of the key works from Hoffmann’s early years as Stadtbaurat. His authorship of the official Berlin publications for the Hygiene Exhibition in 1907 is a statement of some form of civic consensus that aesthetic experience was healthy, and that architecture could foster intimate relationships between the individual and the state that would strengthen them both. The Baerwaldstrasse bathhouse, through its elaborate sculptural program and architectural eclecticism, its evocation of fantasy and play, reproduced aspects of the bourgeois interior that invited the user to step out of the political present. There was a tension between the promise of full participation in society, represented by the occupation of the Renaissance palace by the proletariat and the disciplinary substructure of the bathhouse. After several years in office, the Magistrat began to limit Hoffmann’s budget, and increasingly directed him to cut down these narrative fancies and concentrate on the unadorned technology of the bath.

The planning process for the Gerichtstrasse bath, the final bath in the series, endured for eight years, as the two houses in city council fought Hoffmann’s designs repeatedly, demanding that he strip them of any architectural excess. Although the building was the largest bath yet constructed, and the only one to include individual swimming baths for men and women, the Gerichtstrasse bathhouse was the least

elaborate of any of those constructed. The building was a formidable brick mass whose somberness was not softened by the overhanging red roof with its hint of the vernacular. A comparison of the facades for the Oderbergerstrasse and Gerichtstrasse Stadtbäder shows this extreme shift in public presentation. The former bath, with its crow-stepped gables and light, plaster-covered façade, is animated by the diverse fenestration that corresponds to the different parts of the interior. Complemented by fanciful sandstone elements, the sculpture of Georg Wrba, the bath becomes a story of legibly aquatic themes – mermen, turtles, snails and frogs are inscribed even on the high gable stairs. (Figure 4.19) The Gerichtstrasse bathhouse began with a more elaborate façade, but the decorative elements were reduced and minimized as the city council repeatedly requested that the cost of the building be reduced.104 Indeed, it is not clear from the discussion whether the cost of the façade substantially contributes to the allegedly excessive cost of the building, or whether the concept of architectural ornament itself is placed fundamentally into question. As it was executed, the brick façade of Gerichtstrasse overwhelmed the small sandstone panels that are set into the dark colored walls like spolia. The scale of the building was so massive that the Hoffman’s photographs published in the volumes Neue Bauten der Stadt Berlins for once did not have children showing scale. Rather, figures only appear next to the building in the detail photograph, where the focus frames the sandstone portals and relief panel in a

more flattering composition. (Figure 4.20) The men’s and women’s Schwimmhallen possessed the same basilica shape as their predecessors, but were devoid of the ornamental themes through which Hoffmann had hoped the neighborhood bather would develop a relationship to the institution.

Although Hoffmann took pride in the fact that he designed every building in Berlin with his own hand, he abandoned the bath on Gerichtstrasse, ultimately leaving it in the hands of engineer Matzdorff, who negotiated the final stages of its design with the city council.105 In discussions of the bath, Social Democrat Borgmann complained:

We have unfortunately found that the newly projected public buildings being planned for the working class quarters are being fought on the basis of their façade development, precisely because they are bound for the worker’s districts!" 106

The Gerichtstrasse Stadtbad was completed in 1908 and was the last bathhouses to be produced in Berlin until the mid 1920s.

Conclusion

Writing about the architecture of Adolf Loos, Beatriz Colomina refers to the silenced “recognition of a schizophrenia in metropolitan life: the inside has nothing to

105. Traditionally, the office of the Stadtbaurat employed many architects and the head architect worked on more important projects, and had oversight responsibility over his employees. Part of the legend that grew up around Hoffmann as Stadtbaurat was that he did not discriminate between lowly street cleaning stations and the city hall, but gave personal attention to every single project, each one unique, in the city of Berlin.

106. 4 February 1904. SV Borgmann. Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep 003-03, Sig. 19-23 (Errichtung der städtischen Volksbadeanstalt Gerichtstrasse, 65-69)
tell the outside because our intimate being has split from our social being.” The historical concerns of hygiene, class, and the construction subjectivity help to deepen and clarify the architectural assumptions regarding the development of urban architecture and style that are inherent in terms like eclecticism and historicism. The development of public bathing structures in Berlin is one thread in the spatial politics of a modernist city that runs against the grain of the metropolitan “schizophrenia” Colomina describes, by aiming at the public body by drawing and defining the emotional and bodily needs of the urban dweller from the outside.

Chapter 5: WEIMAR PUBLIC BATHS: ARCHITECTURE AND SOCIAL REGENERATION

What is the spirit of our time? Not peacefulness and romance, with walls covered with ivy and the *kleinbürgerlich* marketplace. It is the spirit of the large lines and wide open spaces, the curve that the airplane makes in flight, the path of the automobile, the clear neat forms that the machine demonstrates, that frees the limbs and movements of the human body.¹

*Introduction*

Concepts of regeneration and revitalization are conventionally used in contemporary planning discourses to refer to a range of social, economic, and structural processes that strive to change troubled urban zones into stable, attractive and functional neighborhoods. These terms imply both spiritual and physical processes of renewal, reconstitution, and restored growth; both are directed at spaces that are seen as deadened or enervated. The use of these terms with regard to social groups during the Weimar Period in Berlin was based on an analogous belief that specific interventions into the social body could restore and renew its depleted energies, resulting in a stable, attractive and productive public body. An understanding of this belief helps to interpret some of the changes that occurred in the design of bathing structures in Weimar Berlin, and how these changes were related to evolving concepts of public

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hygiene as a form of social regeneration. These new designs are physical evidence of how emerging notions of the public body and cleanliness were integrated into the urban landscape in the 1920s.

Public spaces were conceived and constructed very differently during the Weimar period than they had been at the turn of the century. Besides having a fundamentally different financial and governmental structure after 1918, the office of the Berlin Stadtbaurat after WWI was characterized by new perspectives on public architecture that linked hygiene reform to its larger project of social emancipation. More specifically, as I show in this chapter, the radicalization of “official” architectural culture in the city was enacted through experiments in social hygiene, health and social revitalization. The bathing structures produced in Berlin illustrate contemporary perspectives on social medicine and public health, the politicization of architectural theory, and the new national and political identities being shaped within the first German democracy. ²

At the beginning of the 1920s, architects were rooted in Wilhelmine architectural types and their conventional functions but they also defined themselves against this earlier period and struggled to break out of its conceptual framework. Previous

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chapters have shown that the concern with social hygiene was expressed through widely varying and disparate architectural solutions, structures, and aesthetic priorities in the period leading up to 1900. This chapter describes some of the basic tenets that emerged over the history of the bathhouse design between 1840 – 1914, themes that became fundamental tectonic expressions of hygienic architecture. Among these, I consider circulation and order, sunlight and nature as primary ways that the hygienic was spatially indicated. These tenets evolved into central sections of the public bathhouse, but their meaning and significance were revised and redirected in light of the distinctive social and architectural concerns of the 1920s.

This chapter centers on two permanent bathhouse structures realized in Berlin during this period, Stadtbad Mitte (1930) and Stadtbad Lichtenberg (1928). 3 I also consider the development of the public open-air bath, or Freibad, and unrealized plans for the Thermenpalast (1929-1930), a spectacular public forum for communal bathing intended as part of a new exhibition context. The architectural styling of these Weimar-era expresses a radical departure from Wilhelmine-era public iconography. They structures present a range of avant-garde idioms – including Functionalist and Expressionist themes conventionally viewed as Modernist aporia. These overdetermined keywords of art historical style should not be allowed to obscure the

3. A third permanent, year-round bathhouses was constructed in Weimar Berlin. This facility, the Stadtbad Schöneberg, (Hauptstrasse 38/39) was designed by city architect Heinrich (Heinz) Lassen and constructed between 1929-1930. Some aspects of this design will be pertinent to later sections of the discussion, but it will not be handled in detail. For an overview of the original design, see the article by the architect in Bauwelt, Volume 47, 1930.
deep structure of hygienic discourses being explored through spatial and aesthetic languages. Indeed, new designs for preventative health architecture in Weimar Berlin illustrate the use of new formal and material languages to create a new spatial symbolism of nature, health, and modernity.

A. Social Hygiene and the Weimar Republic

The public bath was a reform institution, and thus was solidly organized around a particular vision of society and its vision of the public body. The reformed body was originally a fundamentally working-class entity, to be regulated and directed in the service of greater national productivity. Measurable goals for public hygiene included cleanliness, fitness, and reduction in disease. As I outlined in Chapter Four, city planners and councilors also perceived the bathhouse as a strategy that would help integrate the working class peaceably within the larger social structure, and would encourage the population to accept its current social horizons. This real, if conventional, assessment of the bath as an ideological “apparatus,” however, should not preclude the recognition of more diverse goals and more intricate perspectives that played a role in shaping the public bath and its body-concept.

From its inception the hygiene movement seems to have been fascinated by its primary object of attention - the purified, healthy body. It was an object so compelling that it drove the claims of hygiene far beyond its immediate and tangible proposals and led it to inquire extravagantly into the larger role and meaning of the body in social and
national life. It did so via the *Reinheitsfrage*, the “question of purity,” which was seen as the interrogative center of a new approach to medical and social knowledge. In the words of Oscar Lassar, “From this one word an entire impetus in new scientific thinking and intellectual life has sprung forth.” While this grandiosity seems at odds with Lassar’s minimalist aesthetic approach (i.e. the Lassar-Grove *Brausebad*), it was typical of the passionate language of hygiene reform generally, and reveals a belief in the powerful social impact of cleanliness and purity. Like his contemporaries, Lassar believed that the public environment was contaminated by the presence of bacteria, a perspective on public space grounded in the triumph of Germ Theory (Chapter Two).

“All our surroundings,” wrote Lassar, “even when we keep them clean, are playgrounds for organic life. Innumerable germs of undreamt of viciousness, parasites that thrive of our life, in the dirt under our fingernails alone there are seventy-eight different forms of bacteria, in skin, hair, boots and clothes.”

As chair of the *Berliner Verein für Volksbäder*, Lassar can be seen as a representative figure of a movement which, in the last quarter of the nineteenth-century, was relatively unified through its focus on a bacteriological enemy. The social hygiene of the 1910s and 1920s, however, increasingly reflected more diverse scientific perspectives. New views on disease, genetics, social reproduction, and constitutionalism contributed to a greater number of pathogens responsible for ill health.

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4. Lassar (1889).
and insalubrity. The official expansion of social hygiene to include these concerns is suggested by the name of the 1926 Gesolei hygiene exhibition in Düsseldorf, which conflates the first two letters of its three major themes - Gesundheit, Sozialfürsorge, and Leibesübungen. The Gesolei thus promoted the concept of hygiene as a full social perspective: abstract, political and concrete. Theoretically, each of these aspects had equal importance and focus at the exhibition. The Weimar public baths in Berlin, too, exemplify this framing of social hygiene that included medical services, holistic and genetic views on individual and national health, physical fitness and movement, and the importance of sunlight and open space for the health of the social body.

1. Medizinische Bäder and Life Reform Philosophy

How did developments within the hygiene movement of the Weimar period become integrated into the architecture of the bath? What channels and procedures characterized this process? The addition of medizinsiche Bäder to the Berlin public bathhouses is a significant illustration of this process, tracing path from Lebensreform – a

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The radical wing of the hygiene movement discussed in Chapter Two – to the municipal bathhouse and its social spaces.

*Lebensreform* refers to a wide variety of unaffiliated groups that began to develop after 1900, and which gained rapidly in popularity and scale in the late 1910s. “Life Reform” groups were dedicated to an array of varied health regimes, including dietary changes (especially vegetarianism), gymnastics, light and air baths, and natural medicines. A hallmark of these groups in the early twentieth century was their critique of standard forms of medical intervention, which they regarded as excessive, arrogant and blind to a plethora of environmental and spiritual causes of ill health and physical distress. In return, as discussed in Chapter Two, many Life Reform groups were officially excluded from the 1911 International Hygiene Exhibition in Dresden, and the medical establishment supposedly shunned doctors who flirted with natural medicines. Despite this opposition, the 1920s witnessed an increasing focus on preventative health in Germany, which meant that conventional doctors began to advocate some therapies that originated in the Life Reform movement.7 Mainstream doctors evidenced a growing interest in alternative and natural therapies during this time that had formerly been the domain of life reformers. Anti-establishment reformers reacted to this

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mainstream acceptance of alternative medicine with skepticism, while others believed that it represented significant social progress.\(^8\)

For the city, the new emphasis on preventative health and natural medicine resulted in support for an expanded array of services in the public bathhouse. In 1924, the city voted to provide medizinische Bäder, also called Hellbender or Crusader (healing or therapeutic baths), in public bathhouses.\(^9\) Medizinische baths included saunas, thermal baths, light baths, and resting areas, some requiring specialized supervision or physical therapy. Existing public baths in Berlin were retrofitted with specialized areas of this kind, and the city simultaneously committed to the construction of several new bathhouses that would also be equipped these state of the art facilities, three of which were built between 1927-1930.

Among the many Life Reform groups in the 1920s that had an impact on the design of the bath was the movement for a Freikörperkultur (FKK), literally, the “free body culture.”\(^10\) The FKK promoted the value of communal nudism in the open air,

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10. This is a literal translation. The second part of the word, Körperkultur, is conventionally translated as “Physical Culture.”
largely in natural settings.¹¹ FKK advocates argued that nudism worked against social artifice and class barriers, encouraging free association between individuals, much like David Urquhart had argued in his support of Turkish-style bathhouses for England.¹² Furthermore, the practice of nudism, FKK proponents argued, fostered healthy bodies and wholesome male-female relationships. The production of stable families with healthy, vigorous offspring was a strong argument for the importance of nudism to the nation.

The Weimar-era bathhouses, while they continued to follow most of the internal conventions of the Wilhelmine model, show a correspondingly lesser emphasis on personal privacy and modesty. There are fewer and less significant visual and spatial barriers, which are discussed in more detail below. One example of this is the revision of the dressing rooms for the swimming pool. Weimar bathhouses contain dressing areas with a larger space for communal dressing, and few private cells. This arrangement replaced the row of individual cells that had formerly lined the central swimming hall where they could be carefully monitored. While it would be simplistic to suggest that

¹¹ According to Michael Hau, there were already advocates of nudism during the Wilhelmine era, who had tended toward reactionary, often racist views of the body and German racialism. A more popular and liberal variation of nudism arose during the Weimar period, Hau contends, characterized by an emphasis on pleasure and sociality.

the FKK was the only factor leading to such changes in how nudity was handled in the public bath, it was nonetheless a movement that actively promoted and gave new significance to the nude body in a public context, linking this practice with the same concerns that drove bathhouse design, and influencing mainstream attitudes toward the body.

The celebration of the body, expressed though its exposure and visibility in the Freikörperkultur, both poignantly expresses and simultaneously obscures the shattered state of the German population after the war. The Berlin public baths were equipped with thermal baths, plunge pools, electrical baths, hot and warm rooms and medicinal massage areas. Such expensive facilities and their intensive services seem aimed at a wounded or suffering body, one not described in the literature surrounding the baths. The fact that these areas were constructed at all during an economically difficult period suggests a demand for the physical therapy and pain relief offered in the medizinische Bäder. However, this disabled body is omitted from media images and public discussions around bathing. Most information that exists about the Berlin public baths comes from city records that contain little detail regarding the users of the baths. The experience of the space from the perspective of the bather is chronically underrepresented in the history of public bathhouses, which complicates an assessment of their design and use.
On the periphery of official documentation, however, there are some details that provide criteria that give a sense of how the body actually functioned within these medical sections, as well as other parts of the bathhouse. **Figure 5.1**, for example, is a photograph of the interior of a *medizinische Bäder* in the Turmstrasse Volksbadeanstalt (1893) in Berlin-Moabit. In it, the figure of a masseur – clad in the white gear worn by bath attendants– sits on a chair in the central corridor while he attends to a client, whose full body is blocked by the intermediary wall. Two rows of full baths are installed in the open stalls separated by shallow visual barriers. A timer is mounted on the interior wall of each cell, with a small light is installed at the top – both are used to keep track of individual baths. The photographer has recorded the full dimensions of the space, from floor to ceiling. Exposed air ducts, rubber hoses, pressure gauges, and plumbing hardware define the tall rooms, with their tiled walls and floors. The two human figures occupy the middle ground. The calm, detached expression of the masseur seems suited to the clinical, mechanical environment. In this context, the segment of flesh that protrudes from the bathing cell is only visible as a soft mass, squeezed between the masseur and his glossy reflection. The headless figure crouches out of sight, lacking gender, feet, and hands. Only the fullness of the abdomen is visible, along with a pair of discarded wooden clogs.

Although a carefully posed scene, the photograph is unusual in its portrayal of real bodies in the space, especially the malleable, partial, and vulnerable body that
populated their interiors. Here, the person receiving the massage is visually suppressed; the body is an object of therapy, or a prop to illustrate the function of the space. Weak, pale, and fragile, it is acted upon by the bath attendant. Who is this participant? How did that particular body, and others like it and different from it, determine the direction of hygienic planning and public space? For the moment, photographs like this one provide only a point of departure for an inquiry into the social acceptance and integration of physical disability and fragility in the public bath. It serves as a reminder that there was a disparity between ideal body represented in hygiene literature and the actual state of the post-war population in Berlin. The radiant body of Life Reform and the vulnerable one of post-war Berlin offer evidence of a dialectic within the hygiene movement. The architecture of the Weimar public bath can be read in this light, because it too participated in the process of accommodating and denying various states of physical disability and fragility within the Berlin population.

2. The Berlin Stadtbaurat, Martin Wagner (1926-1933)

Chapter Four analyzed Hoffmann’s public bathhouses as projections of bourgeois spatial geography onto the public sphere. In this view, the natural, healthy body was identified with domesticity and family structures. Hoffmann responded to the task of introducing the body into a public space by creating a hybrid form of domestic space that included aspects of public regulation and surveillance. Hoffmann’s designs were intended to simultaneously stabilize and define the social space and to
elicit feelings of intimacy, attachment, and trust in the users of that space. The allegorical and imaginative elements of the interior created a subjective experience of fantasy and imagination that approximated the effects of the bourgeois interior of the period described in Chapter Four. The Wilhelmine public bath withheld the promise of bourgeois individuation, such as the right to leave traces, which Benjamin stresses in his discussion of bourgeois interiority. If Hoffmann’s tenure as Stadtbaurat, therefore, advanced a concept of public space figured as a “large house,” the Neues Berlin of Weimar Stadtbaurat Martin Wagner brought this benevolent image into question. In 1929, Wagner wrote,

The mentality of 1908 Berlin under the rule of the old politics of the liberal Kommune had very little understanding of the physical Berlin. It almost seemed as if the need for an entire lifetime of physical culture and bodily care in every servant of Prussia was to be fulfilled in two years of military service. This extreme restriction in bodily freedom for the modern city dweller (Großstädtler) must inevitably lead to the depletion of all the natural powers. It leads to a revolution of the body against the spiritual bankruptcy (Ungeist) of narrow-minded city planning, driven by the power of land speculation.13

The Weimar constitution made a commitment to ensuring healthy housing for all German citizens.14 To make good on this promise, the state assumed new control and responsibility for urban planning, development, and the housing market, putting


14. In 1919, new laws were passed governing the use of land and appropriating control over development by city government. Ronald Wiedenhoeft Articles 153 and 155 from the Weimar Constitution sections that enabled the new republic to use of land for the common good. Wiedenhoeft, 4.
an end to the free market speculation that had produced the Berlin Mietskaserne described in Chapter Four. While this was technically a national policy, it was implemented locally by city architects and planners. In Berlin, the fulfillment of these new responsibilities was placed under the supervision of architect Martin Wagner, appointed Stadtbaurat in 1926.

Wagner had been a leader of the movement to rationalize the building trade in Berlin during the early 1920s. “Rationalization” referred to a process of reorganizing building materials, labor, and methods to increase production, cut costs, and ensures good quality design.\textsuperscript{15} In the mid 1920s, Wagner was active in the design of Siedlungen, residential colonies or developments on the periphery of the city, often seen as the defining monuments of Berlin Modernism.\textsuperscript{16} Throughout the 1920s, therefore, Wagner had focused on projects that fused the traditions of the German Garden City, such as Hellerau, with the exploitation of new technologies and Modern designs, in particular the standardized housing prototypes associated with the Neues Bauen.

The appointment of Wagner to the position of Stadtbaurat in 1926 took place two years after Hoffmann had been unexpectedly forced out of office. Although the older architect had technically been appointed to a third 12-year term in 1920, he was required to leave in 1924. Both Schäche and Posener have commented on the rapid change in

\textsuperscript{15} For more on Martin Wagner see Julius Posener, \textit{Berlin auf dem Wege zu einer neuen Architektur. Das Zeitalter Wilhelms II} (1985), and Wendschuh and Reich (1985).

\textsuperscript{16} Not all (or perhaps even most) of the Siedlungen were constructed by the Bauhütte, worker’s guilds established as part of this new “rationalized” building industry.
public valuation of Hoffmann’s work between 1920 and 1925, when a generation of younger architects actively disparaged the cozy historicism of his public aesthetic. Replacing Hoffmann was Martin Wagner, who had studied with Hermann Muthesius and Fritz Schumacher, but whose professional life had focused primarily on urban planning. Wagner’s dissertation, *Das sanitäre Grün der Städte* (The Sanitary Green of Cities) was a study devoted to the importance of integrating natural or open spaces into the urban fabric. Between 1911-1914, Wagner worked as the director of urban planning in Rüstringen, and after the war he served in the same capacity for Berlin-Schöneberg.

Ludwig Hoffmann had conceived of himself as an artist-architect, whose commitment to the people would be demonstrated in the personal and individualized attention he gave to each design produced for the city. Wagner, by contrast, likened his role to that of an orchestral conductor who coordinated the talents of individual experts. Among the “experts” he recruited for diverse city projects were members of *Der Ring*, the *Gläserne Kette*, and included well-known architects and artists such as Bruno Taut, Hans Poelzig, Heinrich Tessenow, Hugo Häring, and Hans Scharoun. Wagner founded the journal *Das neue Berlin* in 1929 (modeled after *Das neue Frankfurt*, 1926-1932. edited by city architect Ernst May), a promotional mouthpiece for the diverse perspectives and activities taking place in the city. The Berlin publication lasted only one year, but included articles by Walter Gropius, Adolf Behne, Walter Behrendt, Marcel Breuer, Alfred Döblin, Erwin Barth, Erich Mendelsohn, Ernst Reuter, and Henry van de Velde.
Published artworks included those by Moholy-Nagy, Paul Scheerbart, Emil Nolde, Heinrich Zille, and August Wilhelm Dressler, with photographs by Lucia Moholy, Erich Comeriner, and Sasha Stone. Das neue Berlin thus modeled Wagner’s conception his role as the coordinator of a joint effort, driven by diverse creative energies that participated in the creation of a modern Weltstadt.\textsuperscript{17} Despite the social-utopianism and socialist-orientation of Wagner’s writings, typical of the post WWI avant-garde, Wagner reprimanded architects and reformers who did not force ideas to confront the economic realities of their proposals. In a lecture series on planning in Berlin from 1929, for example, Wagner described the work of Le Corbusier as “spiritually rich” but observed that absence of calculations regarding the cost of his suggestions for the new Paris marked the work as dilettantish.\textsuperscript{18}

The writings of Martin as Stadtbaurat embody the confluence of architecture, Körperkultur, and public space in the official culture of 1920s Berlin. He regularly attributes forces of social stagnation to the physical effects of dead and restrictive spaces, and associates the liberation of the body through newly conceived space as a force of social emancipation. In the passage that opened this chapter, for instance, Wagner argues that the “clear, neat forms that the machine demonstrates…free the limbs and

\textsuperscript{17} Das Neue Berlin: Grosstadtprobleme, (Berlin: 1929).

movements of the human body.”19 This emphasis on movement was integral to Wagner’s understanding of Freiflächenpolitik, literally the “politics of free space.”

**Freiflächenpolitik** opened up the city through the protection of undeveloped areas, the laying out of sport fields or parks, and the state stewardship of natural settings, and integrating these into the urban fabric. Wagner considered the promotion of physical culture a social responsibility, derived from a medical knowledge of bodily needs and the appropriate response to that knowledge by civic authorities. The fulfillment of these needs resulted in the regeneration of a tired and depleted urban population.

### 3. Hygienic Architecture and the Avant-Garde

Wagner was not the only architect to draw from the vocabulary of hygiene reform and its concept of regeneration to promoting his ideas about design and health. The writings of Chadwick, Pettenkofer, Virchow, and Koch had remained in wide usage during the 1920s, providing the language for describing the perils faced by the modern body in its urban environment.20 Christina Flötotto’s research on Weimar avant-garde architects suggests that they were not just familiar with, but embraced some of the fundamental concepts of environmental health that had originated in nineteenth-century reform movements. Flötotto’s essay on “Building the New, Hygienic Health Man” focuses on popular Weimar hygienist, Friedrich Wolf, who


believed that illness was a response to environmental influences and that treatment required a holistic of the body in its immediate spatial context.21

In keeping with his belief that a house could “kill the human being like an axe,”22 Wolf corresponded with significant architects and teachers of the period, including Oscar Schlemmer, Hannes Meyer, and Adolf Behne, some of whom became close friends. In his role as director of the Dessau Bauhaus, Hannes Meyer invited several social hygienists from the German Hygiene Museum to speak at the school on a range of topics pertaining to hygiene. According to Flötotto, Oscar Schlemmer, Wolf’s close friend and student, initiated and guided the establishment of a department of biology at the Dessau Bauhaus during the early 1920s.23

Current scholarship brings increasing clarity and solidity to the dynamic interaction between activist sanitarians and members of progressive architectural circles during the 1920s. The following section discusses evidence for this interaction provided by the architectural artifacts themselves.

**B. The Public Bathhouse in Weimar Berlin: Mitte and Lichtenberg**

Stadtbad Lichtenberg and Stadtbad Mitte were both year-round, city bathhouses constructed in Berlin during the Weimar period. They were opened within two years of

21. Ibid, 89.
22. Ibid, 89.
23. Ibid, 89.
each other, 1928 and 1930 respectively, but were built under very different conditions. The construction of the large bathhouse in the municipality of Lichtenberg between 1919-1928 (Figure 5.2) was a lengthy and interrupted process, subject to the vicissitudes of political and economic life in the city during that period. Stadtbad Mitte, on the other hand, with its vast swimming hall of unprecedented size, went from design to completed construction in just over two years and was considered a “model of functional and technological building.” (Figure 5.3) As such, it was one of the few structures to participate in the fleeting confidence and economic optimism in the office of the Berlin Stadtbaurat between 1928-1929, coinciding its self-edited periodical, Das neue Berlin.

Lichtenberg was an autonomous industrial city to the east of Berlin when the construction of its first public bath was initiated in 1919. The program for the large facility included separate men’s and women’s swimming halls probably designed to accommodate diverse therapeutic services for a large population of wounded veterans. Indeed, the site chosen for the bath was located across from a large hospital complex, the Hubertus-Krankenhaus, which had opened in 1911. A walkway connecting the two facilities was envisioned ostensibly to facilitate the use of the bath by recovering patients. When the neighboring Hubertus Hospital had been inaugurated in 1911 it had
been celebrated as a sign of liberal prosperity in the industrial municipality. The contrast between the triumphant realization of the hospital and the seemingly interminable delays in completing the Lichtenberg bathhouse illustrates the dramatic changes in fortune between the pre- and post-war periods in Berlin. In the period after 1918, such a large project as a public bathhouse proved to be excessively optimistic. Lack of funds and available building materials for the public bath first halted construction immediately after the foundation was poured in 1919. In 1921, the city of Lichtenberg was no longer sustainable as an independent municipality and joined Greater Berlin. The bath project was reopened briefly at this point, only to falter under continued scarcity of building materials, which were rationed in the post-war period and directed exclusively toward the production of housing. Between 1921-1925 a citywide assessment of public bathing sites in Berlin was undertaken by the municipal administration. In 1925, the construction resumed on the Lichtenberg bath project. The building was finished and open to the public in 1928.

A glimpse at the ground plan of Stadtbad Lichtenberg demonstrates that this building has been generated from the same architectural type that was established and accepted during the Wilhelmine period. (Figure 4.12) The basic elements of this plan had been standard in standard permanent bath structures for decades, offering a

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combination of swimming bath, full-baths, and shower baths. The ground plan and structural system of Stadtbad Lichtenberg were literally “set in stone” in 1919 when the foundations were poured. These already-poured foundations limited the ability of architects to revise the original 1919 plans when it was finally realized. City architect Preindl, for example, writing for the Deutsche Bauzeitung in 1929, noted that effort had been made to modernize the 1919 plan to reflect changes that had occurred during the intervening years. The original architect, an engineer from the Lichtenberg Hochbauamt, Rudolf Gleye, died before 1921 and the Berlin government reassigned the project to a city architect, Otto Weis. Between 1925-1928, several other municipal architects seem to have modified the design.26 By the time the project was ready for completion, therefore, its plan had been reworked several times.

A lack of documentation makes it impossible to determine the exact nature of the changes made to the design of Stadtbad Lichtenberg during these years. It is particularly difficult to discern for example whether the Expressionist interior was an original aspect of the plan. The year 1919, when the foundation of the bath was poured, was the founding year of the “Gläserne Kette,” a radical architectural group in Berlin organized by Bruno Taut, Walter Gropius, and Hans Scharoun. The group generated a body of fantastical and utopian Expressionist drawings of prismatic, alpine, and

26. See Preindl, “Das städtische Volksbad in Berlin-Lichtenberg,” Deutsche Bauzeitung (January, 1929): 19-26, 65-72. Although technically still in office, Ludwig Hoffmann seems to have been uninvolved with individual projects as Stadtbaurat by this point.
imaginary social architectures. In the body of writings that accompanied these drawings, the members imagine the proliferation of *Volkshäuser* – houses of the people – utopian structures for a new society that would embody energy, vitality and dynamism. It is not inconceivable that Gleye, the original architect, sympathized with these goals and integrated their visual language into the public bath as a type of *Volkshaus*. However, the overall regimentation and compartmentalization of the bath’s interior, its strict attention to typology and social arrangement (*Figure 5.4*), as well as the basic features of its façade, do not support this view. Nevertheless, an elaborate Expressionist interior marks the bathhouse as a monument belonging to the relatively short-lived Expressionist moment in Berlin’s Weimar architectural culture.

The façade, plan, and decorative program of Stadtbad Lichtenberg, therefore, seem to be involved in a puzzling conversation. The façade marches in a sober, steady, rhythm while the interior erupts in a diffusion of textures and non-orthogonal forms. In *Figure 5.5*, a contemporary detail of the façade, the gray-brown, stucco-faced, brick surface is viewed from the street level, where the effect is one of strict control and discipline, underscored by the strict patterns of fenestration. The building is a simple and symmetrical composition marked on the façade by a central mass flanked by two projecting wings, which correspond to the bathing block and swimming halls respectively. The stable horizontal structure faces the rear of the site, where an elevated
street-like platform seen in Figure 5.1 provides access to the building as well as a truncated view of the façade.

An unexpected sculptural program emerges from this grave composition. Above three broad entry doors, four cubist sculptures representing divers spring from the surface. (Figure 5.6) The dynamic, prismatic forms stand on small projecting consoles, each underneath an individual pyramidal hood. With their arms closely tucked to their sides, they appear ready to leap from the building’s facade. When viewed in their position between the façade divers, the square window openings that penetrate the wall suddenly appear energized by a similarly chiseled angularity. Two unusual open colonnades are situated along the top of the façade walls at the level of the second story, standing out in front of the swimming halls. (Figure 5.7) Seen from the 1929 photo in Figure 5.1, the sword-like columns carry a thin cornice and pierce the plinth that supposedly supports them. They thin upper cornice disengages from the wall and extends separately from one side of the swimming block to the other. The pierced wall surface that results allows light to enter the recessed swimming hall, but maintains a theatrically unified frontage. All these ornamental elements are made of Kunststein, an artificial concrete stone used for façade figures in Germany since the late
nineteenth-century, in contrast to the sculptural stone that was so hard-won by Hoffmann from the city council.  

The Lichtenberg Stadtbad had a history of being passed over when it came to distributing building materials, but attention and labor were eventually lavished on it to create a dramatic and complex interior. Clinker brick, a dark-reddish blue facing brick, was dominant in areas of the bath traditionally associated with architectural elaboration and prestige, especially in the swimming halls and the entry hall. The rough clinker surfaces were set in eccentric, non-orthogonal openings for passageways, foyers and galleries. (Figure 5.8) Uneven surfaces, textures, and complex patterns of rustication accentuated the uneven tonalities of clinker and the waterproof tile used around the basin. The use of clinker in the city bathhouse seems to create a link between the building and the strong, politicized working-class associated with the city of Lichtenberg. In 1936, historian Ernst Kaeber described the quarter as a “striking proletarian quarter in Berlin, an often-cited place of menacing class struggle,” and significant working-class monuments in and around Lichtenberg were notable for their Expressionist use of clinker, including the Klingenberg power plant (1925-1926) and the Knorr-Bremse factory (1925), a building the journal of brick manufacturing referred to as a “Monument to Labor.” 


in the vicinity to commemorate the graves of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemberg, made extensive use of clinker for the non-figurative memorial. In these various structures, the joint connotations of medieval guild tradition and the industrial city was part of a “material iconography” of the Weimar period.29

As the name implies, Stadtbad Mitte (1927-1930), unlike the Lichtenberg bath, was located in the center of the city. **(Figure 5.9)** It was the first indoor swimming bath constructed in the quarter and the largest indoor pool in Europe when it opened in 1930. **(Figure 5.10)** Self-consciously planned to be a cutting-edge institution of its type, the bath integrated innovative technologies for climate control and ventilation. The façade of Stadtbad Mitte is integrated into a residential street and faced with a pale, golden-yellow brick laid in Flemish-bond coursing. **(Figure 5.11)** The warm tonality and elegant surface pattern contrast with both the rough stucco skin of the Lichtenberg façade and its interior of dark red clinker brick. The four-story street façade of the Mitte bathhouse exudes an opaque steadiness, divided into three equal sections, with an entrance in the central block designated by a simple cantilever. On either side, the flanking sections project slightly, with the stable, tripartite structure of a public monument, emphasizing balance, order and stability. An ethos of Sachlichkeit pervades the façade, which is nonetheless elevated through the use of high quality materials: limestone frames the square window-openings and brass is used for the letters publicizing the building’s

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29. See Fuhrmeister.
function above the fourth story. Carlo Jelkmann, head architect of the Central Berlin district (Mitte), is credited with the design of the building and Heinrich Tessenow (1876-1950) acted as the “artistic director.”

Despite its simple façade, there is a sense of status and cultural importance expressed in the interior of Stadtbad Mitte, especially in its large and elegant swimming hall. (See Figure 5.3) Fifty meters long and fifteen meters wide, the pool was more than twice the length of any other public swimming bath in Berlin. The length of the pool accommodated and encouraged the use of the water for physical training, rather than the static immersion associated with simply playing or relaxing in the water. The scale of the hall, too, was spectacular. It was constructed with a double-wall system comprised of steel piers, which ran up to the ceiling and continued over the pool. Between the piers, windowpanes grouped in a 3:4 arrangement were framed in teak from a height of 2.5 meters, creating a fenestrated grid. The windows could be opened in the summer to ventilate the hall with fresh breezes from outside. An innovative climate control system made use of the parallel glazed walls, separated by a continuous space for ventilation, dehumidification, and temperature control. Like the Roman hypocaust, regular cutouts in the steel beams and piers allowed heated air to circulate throughout the interior chamber. The glazed swimming hall in Stadtbad Mitte was dramatic interior space, which even today is described as “astonishing” and “surreal.”
Although the monumental hall is particularly striking, the interior of the bath is elegantly conceived and spatially impressive. This was the work of Heinrich Tessenow, a figure whose career had already bridged Modern architectural debates with the design of spaces for social hygiene. One of Tessenow’s most widely discussed works was the Dalcroze Institute of Rhythmic Gymnastics in Hellerau (1914). A brief discussion of this building clarifies the significance of his work on the Stadtbad Mitte and offers a basis for considering the relationship between life reform and the Weimar bathhouse. (Figure 5.12)

The Dalcroze Institute was located in the Garden City project of Hellerau near Dresden, discussed briefly in Chapter 1. Hellerau was one of the first Garden Cities in Germany, a project initiated and financed by Karl Schmidt, the owner of the Deutsche Werkstätten (German Workshops for Handcrafted Art).30 To support and direct the architectural design for the settlement, Schmidt recruited Hermann Muthesius, Richard Riemerschmidt and Theodor Fischer. Collectively, these leading men imagined Hellerau as a model community for the integration of good design principles with a healthy and productive social fabric of living and working.31

The Hellerau Garden City involved the energies of some of the most influential architects and designers of emerging German Modernism. As Marco de Micheli points

out, this was the same group of individuals active in the creation of the German Werkbund in 1911. Heinrich Tessenow received the commission to produce one of the central monuments in the town center, a flagship building for the Dalcroze Institute. The Swiss pedagogue, Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, who regarded the body as an intermediary between external sound and internal response, founded the school of musical education and “rhythmic gymnastics”. This education offered at the Institute thus resonated with was the larger program of social revitalization at Hellerau, which foregrounded good design as the precondition for healthy community life, a life that included the deliberate revival of community festivals and celebrations.

The original site for the Dalcroze Institute was very central, and would have exerted a significant presence. Tessenow’s design proved to be extremely controversial - Muthesius, Riemerschmidt and Fischer were appalled and threatened to leave the project if it was constructed - and it was ultimately located on a site further on the periphery. Tessenow’s plans emphasized a sense of monumentality, especially through the creation of a strikingly austere Greek temple front façade. The severe linearity of the stone piers is unbroken by a steeply pitched pediment, whose flat surface is marked only by a large yin-yang in the center. Most of the objection was related to the perception the


33. Ibid, 151.
building’s harsh classicism, which seemed antagonistic to the vernacular-inspired Landhausstil of the larger colony and its social goals.

Supporters of the building included Dalcroze himself, who was enthusiastic about Tessenow’s design and found it the perfect setting for the activities of his school:

What joy, what harmony, what a delicious impression of harmony and of stimulating quiet, if I may put it that way... The dressing rooms are spacious, the bath and shower halls, with their beautiful baths and beautiful white walls that one would say are porcelain, are truly of an atmosphere of repose. As for the great hall, I do not want to speak of it. One cannot enter without a shiver of happiness and... of apprehension... I wonder if we can take advantage of this suggestive space, as one ought, where human respect is gathered, the emotion of the things that one awaits and desires and the sureness of the almost ultimate rhythms, which patiently await their completion. Will we know how to complete them? Will we know how to give life to these virgin spaces? to animate these lines? to reawaken these echoes?\(^\text{34}\)

To what extent can Tessenow’s work in Hellerau be related to this work as “artistic designer” for the Stadtbad Mitte? What conception of hygienic space is mapped out onto these architectural designs? For Muthesius and the other planners of Hellerau, Tessenow’s design for the Dalcroze Institute produced an undesirable and harsh affect, while Life Reform pedagogue, Dalcroze, celebrated it as an affect of contemplation and Erholung. For him, the space expressed immanence and potentiality. This perspective on the design of the Dalcroze Institute is an example of how spatial values were discussed and evaluated within the culture of Life Reform movement and illustrates the

\[^{34}\text{From a letter from Dalcroze to Adophe Appia ca. 1911, cited in Ibid, 168.}\]

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importance of the reformed body as a mediator between architecture and its affect. Dalcroze describes the interiors of the Institute as “virgin spaces,” a phrase suggesting innocence and purity. Yet, his reference to “reawakening the echoes,” also points to something lost or inaccessible within it, which is recovered when the body occupies the space in a specific way.

The controversy over Tessenow’s design for the Dalcroze Institut makes it likely that his appointment to the role of “artistic director” for the Berlin bathhouse represented approbation of this plan. The Berlin Stadbaurat must have believed he could effectively represent public health for the architecture of the capital city. The Hellerau building seems to have been an effective icon of hygiene; architect Wilhelm Kreis, architect of the 1926 Gesolei, seems to have been partly inspired by its façade in his plans for the German Hygiene Museum in Dresden, completed in 1930. Tessenow’s interior for the Mitte bathhouse, the use of light colored tiles, stone dressing, and brightly illuminated interiors complemented by austere geometric forms, is consistent with his designs for the Dalcroze Institute. Through Tessenow’s work in Hellerau, the Mitte public bathhouse enters into a dialogue with Life Reform, city planning, public aesthetics, and the integration of radical design with social hygiene.

C. Purity and Style: The Building Blocks of Hygiene

In considering the question of hygienic architecture, one is drawn to focus narrowly on concepts of purification and cleanliness. It is easy to understand why the
assumption might be made that the hygienic is materially expressed through sterility, whiteness, and natural light. Concepts of purity and cleanliness, however, were multivalent: they explored a broad, sometimes competing, variety of designs for the hygienic environment. Building for a purified, revitalized society was never encapsulated in the literal definition of hygiene as cleanliness, just as cleanliness and purity were not reducible to a quick wipe of the sponge. The architectural values associated with the hygienic encompassed notions of spiritual and physical purity, moral and racial health, and the ideal of a fully developed individual as a measure of a strong civilization. These themes were activated in the design of bathhouses.

Between 1880 and 1930, operative concepts of hygienization were present in bathhouse architecture through its core functions and arrangements. Something like a “hygienic core” of the structure consisted of standard rules of order and patterns of circulation within the bathhouse, as well as in the attempts made to establish new symbolic languages of social hygiene. These latter design concerns focused on the way that bathhouse connected the body to the natural world. The following section describes the main areas in which the hygienic was given a built form in bathhouse design, and refers to them as “building blocks of hygiene.” To think through this, I consider the new diversity of architectural images for the public bathhouse, including the public Freibad, or “open-air bath” and the spectacular although unrealized designs for a massive,
Expressionist public bathhouse to be constructed in the new exhibition grounds in the late 1920s.

1. Order and Circulation

An architecture of circulation had been developed for the nineteenth-century bathhouse and it was adopted wholesale in the next century. The plan for the first and second stories of Stadtbad Lichtenberg (the top section of Figure 5.3) exemplifies this core structure. In Chapter two, I discussed the physiological analogies between the healthy city, the healthy building and the healthy body. These analogies were grounded in the circulatory system as a primary metaphor for the positive benefits to the body and society produced by effective organization of the diverse body functions, parts and their interaction. These analogies implied that through the proper functioning of this system, the body disposed of wastes, received oxygen and vitality, and distributed its resources to the parts of the body that required it. Good circulation produced good skin tone, a healthy appearance, and abundant energy. On a metaphorical level, the idea of circulation denoted the proper respect shown by different bodily systems, which relied on social and anatomical hierarchies. Not every organ tries to be the brain or the heart. Rather, the body is comprised of elements that perform diverse and mostly modest functions, all of which are visited by the circulatory system in its path through the organism. Karl Lingner, the director of the Dresden Hygiene Exhibition in 1911 discussed circulation in his theory of “Organization,” (Chapter Two) using it to describe
the productive, cleansing, mobile, orderly, and regenerating qualities of hygienic social spaces.\(^{35}\)

The movement of the bather through Stadtbad Lichtenberg follows the established pattern of circulation that had evolved as a central feature of the architectural type by 1900. Its first rule is division and separation. Entering the main doors, the bather, if she is a woman, states her purpose to the cashier, pays for the service she requires, and heads to the left, which is the women’s side of the building. The first two stories of Stadtbad Lichtenberg supply the shower baths and full baths traditionally associated with *Reinigung* (Purification). Separate staircases are used for movement over these two floors, which divide men’s and women’s areas. The separation of sexes, social classes, and bathing functions were intrinsic to the rituals of cleanliness proscribed in the bathhouse.

According to Mary Douglas, author of *Purity and Danger*, (1966), a standard work on hygiene in cultural anthropology, mandating forms of separation is a common way that a culture handles the fear of dirt and contamination.\(^{36}\) She notes that reactions to cleanliness and dirt are not rational, because these concepts are rooted in irrational often abstract beliefs about the world. The forms of separation visible in the public


bathhouse, therefore, might be read in this light, as a form of proscribed ritualistic behavior around pollution and cleanliness. Douglas notes:

Dirt, then, is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements. This idea of dirt takes us straight into the field of symbolism and promises a link-up with more obvious symbolic systems of purity. We can recognize in our own notions of dirt that we are using a kind of omnibus compendium, which includes all the rejected elements of ordered systems.37

The complex systems of circulation and ordering within the bathhouse, which direct movement, separate social groups, and organize time, all shed light on modern rituals of cleanliness.

Evidence of a “system” is not only indicative of the presence of dirt and pollution, although according to Douglas, these concepts point out the presence of such a system. Thomas Markus’s analysis of space and power in public buildings, for example, suggests that different kinds of access to the interior of a public structure also inscribe the building with its social character.38 Like Stadtbad Lichtenberg, the entrances to the Wilhelmine bath buildings in Berlin were defined by a shallow space where the visitor confronts a cash booth and further progress into the interior is impeded until the visitor pays for a specific bath type. Proceeding into the appropriate

37. Ibid, 44.

waiting room, the bather is admitted only after the guard ensures that space is available. The entrance hall in Stadtbad Lichtenberg follows the same basic pattern although the dimensions of the foyer are considerably larger and the architectural elements more dynamic.

In Stadtbad Mitte these forms of internal circulation are broadened and revised. In this structure, the visitor was issued into a well-lit lobby and confronted by a life-size statue, Ernst Hermann Grämer’s the Bathing Girl, before meeting the cash booth. (Figure 5.13) The athletic bronze figure holds a long, narrow towel. The form of this object, in addition to her impassive expression, gives the figure a formal similarity to depictions of Hygieia, a common figure in the public baths of classical antiquity associated with healing powers. (Figure 5.14) To the left - seen in Figure 5.12 - and the view to the right (Figure 5.15) of the entry, sash windows allow light to enter the hall and offer a view into two of the four internal courtyards. The walls of the entry space are faced with warm cream-colored tiles, evoking the feel of travertine. The size and coloring of the walls extend into a cooler gray, terrazzo floor. An angled architectural promenade opens up to the visitor from the entry hall, leading into the bath’s interior. The two cash booths are located at the far end of the room rather than immediately by the entrance. (Figure 5.16) Michael Hays and Marco di Michelis have commented on this bend in the axis between the main entrance and the swimming hall and have argued that the unusual passage through the building provides evidence for the participation of
Tessenow in early stages of the bath’s design.\textsuperscript{39} Tessenow’s writings on residential architecture explore the visceral potential of the axis to stimulate the user into full participation in the aesthetics of space:

If we side-step the demands of the axis slightly, and propose new images to the side of the axis…then our interest in the axis remains alive, but it is divided into interest in the axis, and interest in the new elements of the image, with the effect that our eyes will oscillate, so to speak, between the axis and the new elements, so that the overall plane is set into motion and becomes alive. … Symmetry is the better the greater the difficulty in finding its axis.\textsuperscript{40}

Grämer’s “Bathing Girl” announces the function of the building and marks a transitional point from which the diverse functions of the building extend into the depths of its structure. The passage from the entrance to the swimming hall appears to flow downhill in a series of low, subtly angled, staircases. In the middle ground, one staircase opens to the right, leading to gymnasium on the upper levels and the solarium located on the roof. Once the visitor passes the aberration in the axis, however, the back section of the building is symmetrical. It is devoted to the swimming block and its ancillary rooms. In balancing out to the left and right, the broad hallway also becomes a place for waiting, talking, and even peering into the pool. A glazed doorway at the culmination of this passage creates a brightly illuminated endpoint. (Figure 5.17)


\textsuperscript{40} Cited in Burdett and Wang, eds., 58.
Both Lichtenberg and Mitte bathhouses follow the Wilhelmine prototypes in organizing their individual bathing services - full-baths and showers. These are distributed along the front façade of the building. The interior of these small bathing cells is remarkably consistent with late-nineteenth century models and the simple rituals of Reinigung; these are unaltered. The swimming halls in Stadtbad Lichtenberg also contain individual cabins for changing clothes along either side of the pool. This is, however, where the design of Stadtbad Mitte departs from the Wilhelmine model. In Stadtbad Mitte, two spacious rooms on either side of the building are devoted to communal changing rooms for men and women respectively. These common areas are illuminated by natural light that enters the building across several stories through an elongated glass roof. (Figure 5.18) This is the first evidence of the changed norms of privacy and nudity in the public bathhouse that contributes to the more communal character of its rituals.

The removal of the changing cells from the area around the Mitte swimming pool had the additional effect of reducing the visual confusion of the swimming hall, which had been crowded with doors, galleries and locker spaces. This change was used to great effect by Tessenow, who faced the lower walls and paved the flooring of the swimming hall in small, uniform stone-gray tiles that extended from periphery of the wrapped pool over a wide built-in bench and up to the steel and glass windows. (Figure 41.

41. Groups changing areas with smaller lockers were available for children in the upper galleries, also a typical feature of the Wilhelmine type.
5.19) The visual expansion of this area around the swimming pool was matched by expanded social possibilities for use: it accommodated activities of resting and socialization previously prohibited by the narrowness of the gangways around the pool’s edge. Through these apparently small revisions in the design of a bathhouse, the building in Mitte provided new kinds of internal circulation that opened up social exchange and interaction in a significant way. It also incorporated areas for resting and reflection in the passages through the building and areas devoted to movement (i.e. the central axis and the swimming hall).

Plans for another public bath in Berlin, the Thermenpalast, were produced by Hans Poelzig, Karl Studies, and J. Goldmerstein as part of proposed designs for a new exhibition complex.42 (Figure 5.20) The massive public bathing structure discarded the conventions of the standard bathhouse type to explore the range of practical and utopian functions associated with the public bath since its nineteenth-century inception. In particular, the architects rejected the emphasis on division, privacy, and barriers that formerly had defined the bathhouse as a type. This rejection is visible in several areas: The conventional bathhouse structure was divided into a frontal block containing individual bathing cells, and an anterior block enclosing the swimming hall. The Thermenpalast was conceived as a centrally planned structure with social interaction and play at its center. In published sketches of the building, there are no internal divisions of

42. Plans for the elaborate Ausstellungsplatz were produced by Martin Wagner and Hans Poelzig and published in Das neue Berlin in 1929.
the massive interior space. The swimming basin is a large ring flowing around a series of sunbathing terraces. The Thermenpalast literally “circulates,” breaking with the dominant paradigm of linear hierarchies and strict interior divisions of the conventional type. It creates a “free space” within the bathhouse that can be used for social exchange, improvisation and play. The plans for the Thermenpalast, in keeping with its context in an exhibition forum, are exaggerated and spectacular. The grand scale and symbolic character of the plans make give them a heightened representational quality, which refers only to itself, rather than to an institutional identity. However, they are thus uniquely expressively of a shift in the ritual character of the hygienic bathhouse, which is displaced from earlier concepts of cleanliness through separation and moving toward the reinvention of rituals surrounding natural environments and abstract Nature.

2. Nature and Sunlight

To take a therapeutic light bath in a Berlin city bathhouse in 1930, one might expose the body fully to sunlight and air on the rooftop of Stadtbad Mitte, or be encased in a box filled with electric light bulbs in the half-basement of Baerwaldstrasse, or perhaps be issued out of the city altogether and lie on the sandy beaches of the Wannsee. During the Weimar era, an array of public bathing sites was funded by the municipality that placed the bather in different types of physical settings. Were these all considered equally effective ways of administering light as therapy? How were the differences in space and its quality understood and theorized? How was the understanding of a
technologically mediated nature different from the presence of nature experienced in a non-urban setting?

In a literal and symbolic way, the urban bathhouse had always been associated with the loss of nature in the city. In providing clean water to the industrial city, it was a response to the distance of the population from natural resources. By overcoming scarcity and pollution, the city bathhouse proclaimed the ability of the state to reduce the negative consequences of that distance. Moreover, as bathhouse designs framed hygienic practice and reinforced values of cleanliness and order, they frequently relied on themes from nature to intensify and elevate the experience. Wilhelmine swimming halls were often tied to natural water landscapes through the installation of fountains, mythic figures, abstract patterns on the walls or ceilings, and through diverse plant and aquatic motifs represented in relief.

Among the city architects designing for the public baths during the Wilhelmine period, Ludwig Hoffmann was perhaps the most intent on figuring the bathhouse as a natural space. For his first bathhouse in Berlin, the Baerwaldstrasse Volksbadeanstalt, he made use of eighteenth-century grotto architecture on the main façade to introduce this theme. A long street façade was faced with deeply rusticated stone, and salt-encrusted columns flanked the entry portal. (Figure 5.21) Hoffmann experimented with various colors for the tiles on walls around the swimming basin and for the basin itself
in order to find the right tonalities to enhance the effect of water. “The Schwimhalle,” he wrote, “is all about the observation of water.”

One underlying theme in the installation of the bathhouse relates to what Gaston Bachelard has called “phenomenological ethics,” intuitive responses to the environment in which the sensory qualities an element are attributed with moral values. That is, the way that water is present in particular installations allows users to experience its properties (refreshment, fluidity, brightness and clarity) as qualities intuitively constituent of vitality, health and purity. When present, the theme of Nature can be regarded as part of the attempt to orchestrate contact between the bather and water such that these moral qualities are heightened. These design criteria can be considered separately from conventionally “symbolic” or “allegorical” functions of architectural design.

In nineteenth-century hygiene reform, nature had been generally constructed as an origin, a condition from which human societies had departed and out of which the city developed as an entity fundamentally antagonistic to the natural order. Yet hygiene reformers were by no means universally anti-urban or in favor of returning to a state of nature. In fact, the early hygiene reform was characterized by its technological and scientific solutions, like vaccination and sewage systems. Hygiene was associated with the progressive benefits of modern life and technology. Even as the Brausebad expressed
a confident utilitarianism in its approach to public hygiene, however, the shower was compared to gently falling rain.

Thus, although the bathing experience was celebrated as something essential and natural, the expensive treatment and purification of water that was required for its use in swimming pools and baths of the Stadtbad relied on technological intervention. The public bath was an apparatus, an artificial interior lake in the city. It was a structure that replaced nature, but which to a large extent was built to defy natural forces. The building was in constant battle with the element of water. Humidity was devastating to building surfaces and joints. It undermined the sanitary quality of the interior as well as the structural integrity of the building. There was a contradictory message sent by advocates of the bath: They celebrated the relationship with water as natural and human, but simultaneously proclaimed the victory of human institutions over nature’s ordinary limits.

During the 1920s, the theme of Nature took a more central role in discourses around public bathing. New reflections on nature as hygienic were undoubtedly informed by widespread anxieties that modernity was undermining the natural order of human relationships and the structure of organic communities.43 The broad cultural concern with the loss of nature contributed to ongoing discussion about the

43. This is expressed in a number of common binaries between Culture and Civilization, Community and Society, (See Ferdinand Tönnies, Community and Society (Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft) (1897).
requirements of the body and how construction of healthful and hygienic public spaces. As the opening citation from Martin Wagner suggests, modern design was charged with providing support for the “natural” movements of the body and their attendant hygienic benefits. The following section investigates how the architecture of the bath was designed to serve as an intermediary between nature and the body, a mediation tied to definitions of health and purity colored by Lebensreform. The function and the definitions of nature mobilized within architectural structures were not, however, without internal contradictions and ambiguities.  

One of the most dramatic and self-conscious ways of presenting within the bathhouse itself can be found in the fantastical Thermenpalast. While unrealized, it offers evidence of the expanded social imaginary of the public bathhouse and its new focus on the natural world. Had it been executed, the facility would have accommodated 17,800 bathers a day. The interior was organized into concentric rings including a circular swimming basin (280 x 20m) that reached a depth of 4.5m. A swimming track was inserted between two “shores” covered with heated sand. The 12-meter high walls around the periphery were to be outfitted with staging technologies that would create elaborate light shows imitating sunrises and sunsets. Underneath these scenic displays, elaborate gardens planted with trees and flowers were planned. As detailed in, Thermenpalast – Kur-, Erholungs-, Sport-, Schwimm- und Badeanlage, areas not detailed on

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44. Thanks to Peter McIsaac for pointing out the centrality of this theme as it emerged in earlier drafts.
the plans include areas for public sporting events, rhythmic gymnastics, and diverse physical education programs. At the peak of the central “hill,” an elevated restaurant accommodated 700 people, who could enjoy the view of the external grounds and the surrounding bathers within the complex, afforded by a lofty vantage point. Instead of the forty-five minutes generally allotted for one trip to the public swimming pool, the visitor in the *Thermenpalast* was admitted for four hours. The proposed designs for the *Thermenpalast* are lavish; space and resources were to be poured into the bathhouse in order to create an elaborate landscape and that vividly captures the experience of nature. The autonomous climate and landscape, the cultivation of real foliage, the artificially warmed sand and elaborately conceived solar phenomena, culminate in a spectacular recreation of the natural world.

If the *Thermenpalast* presented nature as spectacle, the *Freibad*, or open-air bath, orchestrated an opposite encounter. In the outdoor setting of the *Freibad*, nature existed as the alternative to the mediated, technological framework of urban life. The *Freibad* was a form of large-scale public bathing funded by the city to accommodate outdoor swimming in several locations at the periphery of the city. The organization of public beaches dates to 1907, the year that the prohibition of bathing in Prussian rivers and

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46. Ibid, 28-29.
lakes was repealed. Between 1908 and 1921, a lively, apparently ad hoc, organization of bathing sites installed themselves on the Wannsee and Müggelsee.\textsuperscript{47} The freedom to gather around lakes and waterways opened up new spaces for working-class societies for sport and leisure, groups otherwise carefully controlled and monitored.\textsuperscript{48}

The first Freibäder seem to have been sanctioned by the city, but were organized and controlled by individual groups for a fee. As these small beaches multiplied, a popular culture of swimming and social associations grew up around these outposts. Individual organizations leasing parts of the beach were required to enforce city regulations on behavior and morality within their areas. Regulations defined appropriate bathing attire, mandated the creation of barriers to prevent outsiders from looking at the bathers, and made suggestions about creating family bathing zones. The liminal spaces of the Freibad were associated with deviant behaviors. “Friedrichstrasse looks like a cloister of purity compared to the Freibad” reported the Berliner Tageszeitung in 1906.\textsuperscript{49} At the same time, opinion was divided on the strict regulations of the Freibad.

\textsuperscript{47} See Jürgen Dettbarn-Reggentin, Strandbad Wannsee: Badegeschichte aus achtzig Jahren (Berlin - Kreuzberg: Dirk Nischen Verlag, 1987).

\textsuperscript{48} Working class associations of all kinds were forbidden under Bismarck’s Sozialistengesetz. Only after its repeal in 1890 were working-class Berliners able to form their own sport associations. According to Jürgen Dettbarn, the worker’s sport associations that followed the lifting of the Sozialistengesetz were not simply athletic groups but included a strong social, cultural and political component, generally strongly in support of the Social Democrats. As a result, these groups were under surveillance throughout the 1890s and into the early twentieth century. In 1908, the German law of associations (Reichsvereingesetze) of the Polizeipräsidium declared workers’ sport associations political associations, which meant that members had to be registered with the police. Dettbarn-Reggentin, 4-5.

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid, 12.
In the 1920s, a lively public debate existed around punishments on nudity. Hermann Muthesius, among others, wrote in protest over the hysteria engendered by people swimming without clothes and urged the state to allow individuals to regulate their own behavior.50

After the establishment of Greater Berlin in 1921, the city purchased the beaches from individual landowners who had formerly leased the shoreline in increments to individual groups.51 Hoffmann and Hermann Clajus, city councilor and commissioner of the open air baths, together designed a series of simple structures for the area on the Strandbad Wannsee, including two small cafés, a bike shed, and an administrative building which accommodated the Bademeister, medical offices, and the sale of drinks. Individual groups were still able to lease sections of the beach from the city. They had permission to erect changing tents and put up small cottages (Lauben) of restricted proportions. According to Dettbarn, limited financial resources from the public coffers prompted Clajus to seek voluntary help at the baths from working-class swim and sports associations. Members of the Social Democratic associations of Schöneberg and Charlottenberg, together with the workers’ choir association, the “Sängeraue,” and the workers’ rowing club, “Vorwärts,” were among those who required their members to volunteer at the Strandbad Wannsee. High unemployment and the eight-hour working

50. Ibid, 12.

51. Ibid, 15-17.
day drove attendance numbers to ever increasing heights throughout the decade and into the 1930s.

Hoffmann’s small pavilions burned down in the mid 1920s, and Martin Wagner and Richard Ermisch designed a larger complex to replace them in 1926-1927 (Figure 5.22). The model included here was one of few designs authored by Wagner himself as Stadtbaurat, an architectural expression of Wagner’s Freiflächenpolitik. The proposed complex was to accommodate and shelter diverse public bathing activities along the lakeshore and to facilitate the full use of the beach. The main building was set into a forested shoreline flanked with wings that opened out to the beach. Each wing was comprised of broad descending stepped terraces which faced the water and which created a series of decks for sun and air baths. This central structure issued the bather out onto the open shore through split-level walkways connecting the wings to a central axis. Wagner and Ermisch envisioned an extended boardwalk leading from the central building out into the water, where a restaurant formed the midpoint between the shore and a small port for watercraft at the far end.52 The plan incorporated venues for entertainment and leisure, although many of these amenities were not included in the final realization, a more austere and economical building.

Insight into Wagner’s conception of Freiflächenpolitik can be gained from a 1915 essay on this theme, in which he specified that a fundamental goal of planning the

52. See Scarpa, in Burdett and Wang, eds.,19.
Freifläche was the provision for körperliche Inbesitznahme or “physical occupation” of a given space. In this sense, the focus of a public design was not on the creation of an architectural artifact, but on the facilitation of its appropriation through physical presence and activity. The space should invite and enable the participation of the urban population. Sport fields, community gardens, parks and forests, and areas for hiking and exploration, all presented the possibility for engagement in the open terrain.53 The special responsibility of the architect and planner lay in the creation of a framework for this appropriation of space, which Wagner linked, as stated above, to the full development of the individual as a citizen.54

The Thermenpalast and the Strandbad Wannsee gained structural form from the contour of a natural landscape. The former is centered on an artificial hill; the latter is set against a terraced slope that echoes the natural elevation of land. Unlike the elaborate technological staging of nature in the Thermenpalast, the white surfaces of the Wannsee structure make no pretense to belonging to the natural order in themselves, but rather evoke sympathy between the bright structures and the light colored sand. The curved biomorophic terraces and central pavilion expand the number of square meters of space available to visitors. An 800m long beach is additionally opened up for

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human use by the construction of a continuous string of light-colored changing cabins that stretch out in either direction along the shore, creating a white boundary.

If Wannsee bathhouse frames and enables the body to use the natural setting, it simultaneously separates the body from its environment and reduces its phenomenological affects. The terraces and elevated walkways remove the bather from the messiness of nature as they simplify passage through the space. These elements, that determine so much of the movement through the site, however, are not technological innovations, but new strategies for division and separation. That is, it is not the social group itself that is directed, divided and labeled, as early bath interiors had proposed to do. Rather the elements structuring space in Freibad separated the body from the inconvenient physical features of the site. Wagner’s Freibad thus simultaneously opened up a natural setting for human use and reduced the diversity and scope of contact with this setting.

One perspective on the social appropriation and experience of these areas can be found in the work Berlin graphic artist Heinrich Zille, who published a series of sketches entitled Rund um’s Freibad, in 1924. This work centers on the outdoor bathing culture of Berlin, and makes affectionate, sometimes raunchy, fun of the locals as they set out for the bucolic bathing sites around the city. Zille’s documentation of the Freibäder offers an unofficial evaluation on the culture of public bathing in the city, one derived from an assessment of the Berliner Volk than that of city planners. The bathers
depicted in Zille’s drawings do not sport the classical earth-bronzed bodies shown in reform propaganda, but are comprised of an assemblage of shapes, sizes, ages and personalities. They are often half undressed or naked, urinating behind trees or out in the open, they display their bodies unselfconsciously to their families as well as to passers-by. Breast-feeding mothers, groping couples, and crowds of people walking, eating, wading, diving, and shouting, fill the pages. Zille laughs at the scientific seriousness of hygiene propaganda, and his joke reveals how widespread the mottos of social hygiene had become: “Bathing!” he writes, “Now people call it ‘the way to strength and beauty!’ It’s considered the most healthy sport there is, they say it’s a necessary part of physical care (Körperpflege) for the worker.” 55 Zille makes it clear that he is not one of those moralizing hygienists who preach to the Berliners about health. His captions make jocular reference to health and physical fitness fads: “Aller Sport wird getrieben,” (All sports practiced here!) and “Zurück zur Natur!” (Back to nature!) translate the official Körperkultur into double entendre. (Figure 5.23)

The bathing areas along the rivers and lakes of Berlin provided Zille with the settings in which he pursued his preoccupation with recording the Berliner body as an expression of communal life and working-class culture. A woman in a bathing suit peeks through a hole in the gates of the “Naked Sport Association,” muttering, “Well - that’s nothing to write home about!” A child, carried by her mother into an animated

55. Zille, n.p..
crowds of bathers, observes: “People are happier in the water.” To which the mother replies, “Yeah sure, they have to hold their heads higher in here.” Zille’s work registers changes in physical culture among the working-class through the observation of popular characters and their daily life. He recounts some old stories from the milieu of his childhood: Two women stand in the crowded shores of the Spree with their skirts pulled up high, washing their feet. “Your legs are filthy!” says one. “So, are yours!” the other retorts. To which the first woman retorts, “Yes, but I’m much older than you!” Another story relates to an old woman who visits a doctor and is asked to undress, whereupon she exclaims, “Oh but Mr. Doctor! I still have on my winter feet (Winterfüße)!” referring to the fact that she has not taken her yearly summer bath. Through these recollections of the working class from his youth, Zille suggests that absence of personal hygiene distanced the poor from their own bodies, a distance that could be measured in seasons or even years of accumulated dirt, neglect, and obliviousness.

Yet although Zille’s portrayal of the popular body comes across as vulgar and sometimes even disturbing, it consistently rejects the classical ideal that was elsewhere embraced as the proper expression of healthy physicality. His sketches embrace the unclean and marginally deviant city dweller. Zille’s graphic output, therefore, did not

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56. Ibid, 14, 42, 71.
57. Ibid, 6.
cooperate with the normative values of hygiene and the denial of physical defects. In this way, these illustration point out that social spaces could be invented and elaborated from within the culture of hygiene reform. Appropriation, improvisation, and individuality seem to be at the basis of the pleasure found in the Freibad. In as much as Zille was irreverent about social hygiene and the lofty terms of national Körperkultur, he praised the Freibad for bringing the Berliner working-class back to nature. Specifically, he credits them with a force of revitalization, an outcome of contact with the full range of polymorphous phenomena available in the hinterland. The smell of pine, he recollects, could only be found arising from the wooden crates along the industrial dockyards on the Spree. At first when you smelled it, he recounts, it seemed like a forest. But in truth, this forest was already dead: “Now we have in all of Germany this Heilmittel, the Freibad. Sun, air, and water, fragrant meadows and forests, the return of the physical and spiritual strength to the people after the hard work of the day.”

3. **Second Nature: Art and Technics in the Weimar Baths**

The Freibad was associated with free nature, subject to vicissitudes but charged with the immediacy and the liminal status of the natural space it occupied. The permanent, year-round city bathhouse, however, was inherently removed from those settings and remained conceptually tied to the densest residential neighborhoods in the

58. Ibid,9.
The bathhouse structures of Lichtenberg and Mitte were embedded in the Berlin city fabric. How did these structures attempt revitalize the dormant energies of the body public? Each building explored natural and technological languages through materials and the creation of spatial narratives concerning the body, natural life, and processes of purification.

As current scholarship on German Modernism establishes, the architectural values of the *Neue Sachlichkeit* and Expressionism were not originally viewed as antagonistic. In a fundamental sense, both perspectives were predicated on architectural form generated through natural languages of matter and space. The interior program of the Lichtenberg bathhouse used applied ornament to develop visual and haptic zones, analogous to a geological environment. Particularly in the swimming halls for men and women, the interior enacts a narrative of elemental transformation - from the earth to the sky. This narrative draws from the political iconography of brick discussed above and from a sense of earthly struggle that strives toward spiritual purification through illumination and color.

Reading the material themes of the Lichtenberg swimming hall as a symbolic landscape that strives upward, visual references to energy and metamorphosis take on a clear significance. The bather moves from the red-brown, “quarry-rough” surfaces at

59. Building a public bath within densely developed residential working-class quarters was one of the consistent recommendations for its design, even after the advent of public transportation.

the ground level, navigating the catacomb-like corridors at the periphery of the hall, and eventually moving through the wooden changing cabins to an illuminated central space around the swimming basin. Cast-iron railings at the middle-level of the space, located along the galleries and on balconies, contain zigzag lightening patterns. This space culminates at the upper-most clerestory level with light and color. Theoretically, the building itself culminates in an open-air solarium. A phenomenological drama is thus played out through the visceral experience with the space. The space resonates with the iconic pose that was by then ubiquitous in hygiene propaganda – the orant, a figure that stands with arms and face raised to the light. (Figure 5.25)

In a different way, the Roman-Irish baths in Stadtbad Mitte possess special narration through use of the stained glass. Die Brücke artist Max Pechstein was commissioned to create a series of six stained-glass windows on the theme of the Four Seasons for an area described as the “hypo-thermal immersion room” in the thermal baths of the Stadtbad.61 (Figure 5.26) The colored glass is functional; it serves as a visual screen between the bodies in the sauna and the surrounding buildings, seen in Figure 5.27. Yet, they are also conceived as artworks and function autonomously, linking the activity of bathing to philosophical or spiritual reflection. The windows establish a connection between rituals of washing and body care and the human and natural lifecycles. In “Summer” (Figure 5.26), three women watch over two small children.

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Signs of bathing are integrated into the scene - plumes of steam rise behind the figures and a child reaches up to feel water falling from a shower above. In the “Winter” pane, (Figure 5.27), an elderly man is enveloped in robes, while a youth cares for him and tends a central fire. Cold air and crystals of ice surround them. The association of stained glass with medieval society is reinforced by the costuming of the figures, which are robust, colorful, and peaceful. The division of men and women in separate compositions figure the separation of men and women in the bath, and in different social spheres. The women have bared breasts, demonstrating fertility, youth, and indicating the “natural” functions of the female body. The figures in each pane communicate through using gestures of gentle support, which tell a story of community and cross-generational solidarity. The theme of the “four seasons” underscores the cyclical pacing of organic societies. Idealized and ahistorical, the artwork is an allegory for the activities within the bathhouse, which complements the message of abstract space of the “functionalist” interior.

The stained-glass windows are explicitly aestheticized features in an otherwise spare and abstract room, dominated by the central, steel basin of the plunge pool. In earlier city baths, the swimming hall had been the sole interior space to receive ornament and thematic treatment, so the architectural elaboration of the Weimar saunas establishes these areas as places of social significance. While no “artistic director” was deemed necessary for medical sections added in the 1920s to the Baerwaldstrasse
bathhouse. These areas were clad in standard sanitary tiling, with an asymmetrical and utilitarian arrangement of pools, added bathing cells, massage tables, and showers.

Tessenow’s treatment of the interior room of the thermal baths in the Stadtbad Mitte, in contrast, was powerfully symmetrical and abstract. The symmetry of elements arranged along the walls of this space is visually emphasized by the presence of a square immersion pool fixed at the absolute center of the room. Uniform gray, matte tiles cover all the surfaces – walls, floor and ceiling. With its slight tonal irregularity, and cool, unglazed surface, the tiling offers the feel of stone or clay. The impression of this uniformity is not one of institutional bleakness or monotony, but of unity and serenity.

Ferdinand Tönnies, in *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (1897) formulated the idea that societies follow patterns of change that begin with Community, “a substance by which individuals are mystically supported,” develop into Society, “a purposive and rational contractual relationship of sovereign individuals,” and then, through internal conflict and tensions, evolve into Socialism.62 This conception of community and history can be projected onto the social space of the thermal baths in Mitte and their invocation of nature as both allegorical state and a hygienic force. The suggestion austere, stone-like surface and stained glass gain meaning from a long-established sociological and historical association of medieval culture with strong communities. The stained glass works signal the presence of community, the *synthesis* of art and production (the craft of

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the artwork within a rationalized interior) points to a future socialist resolution. The stained glass illustrates the life cycle of human communities, figured through the care of the body. The thermal baths thus suggest the reinstatement of power of community in the modern age.

Stained glass is a medium only fully realized with the addition of light. Light moves through the picture plane and infuses the room with its presence. The inflection of space through color explored light as an expressive medium, although light also possessed an independent meaning in the spatial rhetoric of the hygiene movement. There is are distinct values that exist in light explored through color – color as part of a natural landscape – as opposed to light that exists as an autonomous element of purification. In the Lichtenberg bathhouse, color and light were integrated into the material themes of the architecture. The glass panes of the upper clerestory windows along the length of the Männerhalle und Frauenhalle in Lichtenberg are interspersed with panes of color. (Figures 5.29 and 5.30) On the entry doors and in the saunas, green and white herringbone patterns of nested, upward-moving, diamond-shaped panes (Figures 5.31 and 5.32) established a vitalist rhythm with references to sacred architecture that participated in the Expressionist development of what Barbara Miller Lane described as the “spiritual and ecstatic language of revolution.” 63 Color was used in the swimming halls to define the gender character of the men’s and women’s spaces. The walls in the

63. Lane, 53.
women’s hall are faced with clinker brick up to level of the upper gallery, above which the plaster covered walls and ceilings are painted a warm yellow tone.\textsuperscript{64} (Figure 5.33) The impact of this tonal theme is increased by the expansive space of the upper walls and ceiling, which appears recessed and steeply pitched due to the use of convex hipped ends that accentuate the enclosing slope of the roof.\textsuperscript{65} In the men’s hall, by contrast, narrow clinker piers extend fully to the architrave, terminating in rough, corbelled capitals, which support a shallower, cool-green painted barrel ceiling.\textsuperscript{66} (Figure 5.34) The men’s and women’s hall share a basic brick vocabulary and are both organized around a central basin with changing cells arranged along the sides. Their similarities emphasize the contrasting elements in their design. In a 1929 article published in the \textit{Deutsche Bauzeitung}, architect Preindl outlined the color themes in the two swimming halls in detail article, noting that, “from one there breathes a warm comfort, from the other, a cool, athletic severity.”\textsuperscript{67} The attribution of specific color schema to the character of each gender created a separate landscape for men and women.

Color is absent from the swimming hall of Stadtbad Mitte, where the surrounding fenestration places visual emphasis on the presence of “pure”

\textsuperscript{64} The photographs included here are taken in 2007 and may not represent the original colors. They correspond, however, to some contemporary descriptions of the colors used.

\textsuperscript{65} This type of barrel roof became the object of significant debates in the 1920s, when architects like Schultze-Naumburg and Albrecht were among those who referred to the sloped roof as part of the German “racial physiognomy.” See Lane, 137.

\textsuperscript{66} See Preindl.

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.
unadulterated light and air passing through the steel and glass frame. The Schwimmhalle in Stadtbad Mitte develops the theme of light as autonomous and give it an unprecedented scale. The double-glazed framework of Tessenow’s swimming hall creates the possibility of free circulation of air, breeze, and sound in the summer months. The individual can escape the earthy material iconographies of political life and the city, those meanings that define the interior of the Lichtenberg bathhouse, and the is body set free. The bath in Mitte becomes a nude structure, stripped of clothing and bathed in the sun. The status of light in the context of hygienic architecture is fundamentally different from the light entering nineteenth-century iron and glass architecture. The Mitte Schwimmhalle is not interested in an engineer’s aesthetic, like the Lassar’s Brausebad, which celebrated the use of factory technology in the realization of hygienic standards. Rather, the Mitte bathhouse uses new materials and structural systems that transform the swimming hall into a Freifläche, with all the light and air of the Freibad. The building shifts the meaning of the technological apparatus, toward the creation of urban space that takes part in the creation of a second nature.

**Conclusion**

The concept of the hygienic during the 1920s became implicated in the production of new spatial values, which allowed architecture to claim a power of social transformation through its power to regenerate of the public body. Throughout the 1920s, a range of bathing structures were dedicated to social hygiene in Berlin, each of
which explored new architectural and spatial attitudes toward nature, health, vitality and purity in the public sphere. How do these artifacts shed light on architecture as an agent of social thought and experience? One perspective on the Weimar bathhouses is provided by Walter Benjamin, who observed in the Passagenwerk, “There is no more insipid and shabby antithesis than that which reactionary thinkers like Klages try to set up between the symbol space of nature and that of technology. To each truly new configuration of nature – and, at bottom, technology is just such a configuration – there correspond new ‘images.’” 68 The heterogeneous structures produced in Weimar Berlin were engaged in this creation of a new “symbol space of nature” which found its moral and medical justification the liberation of the body. The suggestive, phenomenological, and symbolic moments installed within these architectures as part of their modern rituals offer a new perspective on early-twentieth century urbanism and design.

For Sigfried Giedion, baths represent an aspect of the unwritten history of societies, pointing to ways that the body is integrated and honored, or, alternatively, ways that the physical, bodily dimensions of life are impoverished in a given society. He wrote, “A culture that rejects life in stunted form voices a natural demand for the restoring of the bodily equilibrium of its members through institutions open to all.” 69 How different do the words from a 1926 Hygiene Fair in Berlin sound to contemporary


69. Giedion, Mechanization Takes Command (1948), 712.
ears when they stress the importance of physical culture to the fate of the nation: “The health of our people,” proclaims the text, “is the only treasure that is left to us… The right to health stands below the duty to be healthy.”

The legacy of the hygiene movement, in the few contexts where it has been considered art historically at all, has largely been viewed as either a predecessor to the “purist” values of High Modernism or to the racist pseudo-scientific discourses of German fascism. In both cases, the fundamental legacy hygiene has largely been seen as an authoritarian one: normative, racist, in opposition to the diversity and complexity of life. It has been characterized as an affirmation of strength and power over imperfection and fragility, a rejection of heterogeneity in favor of a purified monolithic Germanness. However, the continued innovation, diversity, and variation in the social institution of the bath during this period suggest a dynamic range of meanings and practices imagined under the rubric of social hygiene. Far more than conforming to a single path from social hygiene to ethnic cleansing, the history of bathing structures in Berlin complicates any single view of German biopolitics in the public culture of the Weltstadt during the Weimar Republic.

Chapter 6. CONCLUSION

In assessing the development of hygienic architectures in the period leading up to 1933, I traced a series of body-architecture relationships developed in the context of the international sanitary reform movement of the late nineteenth-century which were applied to public architecture and which addressed a variety of social and aesthetic fields. The concept of hygiene was broadly interpreted and applied throughout its history. At the beginning of this period, it was almost exclusively applied to the working-class body and the social spaces it occupied. By the end of the 1920s, the concept of social hygiene had become an analytical tool that was used to assess the cultural and physical spaces of modern society—from the microcosmic level of urban planning to the macrocosm of racial health and nationhood. It may seem peculiar then that this analysis of hygienic architecture stops at the very moment when the political role of hygiene under National Socialism in Germany was intensified and used to fashion and promote policies of social expurgation and ethnic “cleansing” based on an overtly racist medical paradigm. I would like to address this point briefly and suggest some preliminary conclusions.

The history of the period from 1900-1933 can obviously not be seen only as the prehistory of the Holocaust. Fascism is neither the telos of the hygiene movement nor of the public bath. On the other hand, to the extent that the holocaust has come to occupy
the space of the “unthinkable” - the event that divides all things that came before from everything that comes after - the fundamental relationship between social hygiene and Auschwitz demands some reflection.1 The existence of a social movement devoted to the purification of society played a supportive role to the fashioning of ideological discourses on racial purity in the 1920s and 1930s. Yet, this is not an unproblematic historical trajectory. Recent scholarship on nineteenth century Germany has countered earlier conclusions that something exceptional and fundamentally stunted in the German society can explain the rise of fascism in the 1930s. This new scholarship on the German Bürgertum has implications for the assessment of hygiene reform and its consequences. Most centrally, it cannot be assumed that German hygiene reform was fundamentally racist or distinct from the international movement. Medical and cultural histories of the period uniformly illustrate the popularity and proliferation of racial theories and eugenics throughout North America and Europe between 1900-1930 and emphasize the similarity between German reform movements in the early twentieth century and those in democratic nations, disarming the notion that a concern with race biology uniquely contributed to German fascism. As Mark Neocleous outlined in Imagining the State, the body has served as a central figure of the state since its inception; the body does not identify a fascist political imaginary. He writes:

[R]ethinking the emergence of bourgeois democracy as a new form of sovereign body rather than as an abandonment of it...enables us to note what turns out to be a remarkable consistency between the fascist and non-fascist political imaginations concerning the social body, its ‘diseases’ and ‘waste products,’ a consistency rooted in the dialectic of modernity out of which fascism develops and in the statist political imaginary which it ultimately shares with certain strands of non-fascist ideology.²

The framework of the present study is not intended to elide the question of racial hygiene after 1933 but rather to articulate and document its role in the larger history of modernity and to contribute to scholarship on the cultures of early twentieth-century Germany. Nevertheless, if the use of the body as a political metaphor does not in itself distinguish fascism from other bourgeois democracies, the character of fascist bodies and social spaces reflect changes in the structure and function of the state that need to be more concretely analyzed and understood.

The architectural types developed for the bathhouse by the 1920s included some areas notable for their typological stability and consistency and others that were subject to revision. The former areas dated from the earliest Reinigungsbäder –isolated cells for full baths, as well as individual shower stalls. These spaces reflected early functions of the public bath, functions that were indisputably connected to hygienic Reinigung. It was precisely during the middle 1930s and 1940s that these areas for Reinigung in the bathhouse disappeared as autonomous sections, the architecture of the bathhouse began to be superseded by that of the swimming pool. The status of the building changed with

this shift in its identity. The loss of its hygienic function corresponded with a shift in architectural status. No longer were swimming pools constructed as cathedrals or great jousting halls. The sense of spatial and material magnificence that had distinguished even the *sachliche* interior of Tessenow and Jelkmann’s Stadtbad Mitte (1930) was not incorporated into the program for the public swimming pool.

The application of racial hygienic discourses to daily life contexts in Nazi Germany might suggest that the public bathhouse would attain a higher status or a more central role in the symbolic life of the city. This was not the case. The Nazis did not construct additional bathhouses in Berlin; but rather they shifted the focus of public bathing toward the construction of large-scale national spas for the working-class. The construction of five massive bathing resorts was announced in 1935 but only one of these projects was even partially realized. This was the *Kraft durch Freude* (KdF) *Seebad* on the island of Rügen in northern Germany.\(^3\) The plans for the Seebad adopted and expanded the Weimar emphasis on public leisure but withdrew the rhetoric of social and individual liberation. These recreational sites were not integrated into the city, but were located predominantly at sites along the Baltic. The public bath was thus removed from the urban cosmos that had been its inspiration. This is reflected in the absence of any significant monument to public bathing in Albert Speer’s plans for “Germania.” Unlike the proposed plans for the Berlin *Thermenpalast* in 1929, or the civic baths located

in the Institute for Rhythmic Music and Dance at Hellerau, or even the Roman bains publics constructed in Maisonneuve, Canada - all of which presented social hygiene a central cultural value of communal life in the city – there were no additional bathhouses planned in Berlin after 1933.

The Kraft durch Freude program was, however, an extension of the goals associated with Erholung in the late nineteenth-century hygiene movement. It was an organization within the Arbeitsfront, a NS-controlled “union” formed after the dissolution of working-class associations in 1933. The Kraft durch Freude had goals consistent with those of hygiene reform: to strengthen the workforce and ensure a strong military. The KdF codified and summarized these long-held goals, and strengthened the apparatus of surveillance and regulation by incorporating them into a highly centralized tourist agency that offered access to vacation experiences otherwise unavailable to the poorer classes. The structure of the KdF program reflected the ways that social hygiene had become immersed in the impact of leisure on the productive and reproductive ability of the nation. Its department included hiking, beauty, the work ethic, physical fitness, spiritual development, culture and “folkways”. The Seebad on Rügen was


5. Wolff, Leser, and Steinberg, 3, 7. Albert Speer was the leader of the department “Schönheit der Arbeit.”
publicized as a “gift from the Führer to “his” workers,” in the form of a “spa for 20,000.”

The plans for the Seebad show the complex architectural structuring of social hygiene. Architect Clemens Klotz, a one-time member of the Werkbund and close friend of the director of the Kraft durch Freude program, was the author of plans for the resort. (Figure 6.1) Klotz’s plans indicate some familiarity with Corbusier’s sketches for a 12-kilometer long residential strip in Algiers, shown here in the 1930 photomontage for the “Plan Orbus.” (Figure 6.2) Klotz’s model creates a gently curved structure formed by the long rows of residential buildings and a central series of communal buildings reflecting the shape of the shore. That these initial sketches were not unequivocally accepted is suggested by the organization in 1936 of an architectural competition headed by Albert Speer for an alternate scheme. Eleven selected architects, including Heinrich Tessenow, were invited to participate; however, the plans by Klotz, which had not been submitted to the official competition, were ultimately selected after a few modifications had been made to the plan. The main thrust of these changes was the expanded scale of the complex overall, reaching “as yet unknown and unrealized” proportions. Its new length was 4.5 kilometers and also included the addition of a large communal

7. Wernicke and Schwartz, 35.
8. Ibid, 35.
hall - the Festplatz – an addition specifically requested by Hitler and designed by one of his favored architects, Erich zu Putlitz. A model for the finished complex was exhibited in the 1937 world exhibition in Paris where it was awarded the Grand Prix.\(^\text{10}\)

In comparison with earlier types of bathing structure, the Prora Seebad replaced the cellular arrangement of private bathing cells typical of the hygienic bathhouse with the cellular structure of dormitory accommodation. The resort consisted of a central Festplatz flanked by two wings that extended out and along the shoreline. Each section of these wings was comprised of four, six-story dormitory buildings, each 500 meters long. Within these residential blocks there were “cell units” measuring 2.2 x 4.75m for family accommodations, each unit faced the sea.\(^\text{11}\) The rooms were equipped with furnishings, linens and dishes especially designed for the KdF Seebäder by the “Schönheit der Arbeit” department supervised by Speer. Two narrow beds, a washstand, couch, table and chairs fitted into the minimal space allotted for the private family. The greater portion of space was given over to communal facilities such as the buildings for dining that projected out to the ocean’s edge. Their sleek rounded contours formed five perpendicularly oriented structures that divided the white sand beach into five “home areas,” for the guests in each block of dormitories.\(^\text{12}\) The central

\(^{10}\) Wernicke and Schwartz, 36.


\(^{12}\) Ibid, 139.
Festplatz contained indoor sea-baths with wave machines, theatres, cinemas and bowling alleys. The building was begun in 1936 and proceeded in stages until 1940 when construction was suspended to direct resources to the “Blitzkrieg.” The existing buildings were used for administrative and training purposes, but the complex was never fully operational.

Hasso Spode has likened the Prora Seebad to Corbusier’s “dwelling machine,” and attributed its elaborate forms of rationalization to cultural Fordism. Sprode points out that the Charter of Athens committed to an architecture that functioned as a form of social hygiene. This view reflects the state of current scholarship as the author pauses in the face of a profound ambiguity concerning the nexus of modernism, fascism, hygiene and rationalism at the Seebad, in which few consistent patterns of affinity or fundamental contrast emerge. What seems significant to me, in reflecting on the fascist Seebad as a point just beyond where this project stops, is its lack of connection to any existing social life. The public bath had always displayed the “Fordist” character Sprode finds in the Klotz’s Seebad. The earliest models for the public bath were shaped by the Massenbad, with its anonymous multitudes of workers, soldiers, or students. Significant aspects of bathhouse typology were conceived as stages in the Taylorist ritual of mass purification. These aspects were, however, in conflict with, or in dialogue with other images of civic culture and the public body, provided by concept of paternalism, the

family or the human interaction with nature. By relocating the program for public bathing outside the city, the KdF program changed access to the bath and therefore changed the terms in which the public was defined, in keeping with broader policies of social control and exclusion. Thus, the “public” at the Nazi bathhouse was much more carefully defined and limited that its urban predecessors. Focusing the building program on the shores of the Baltic, the emphasis at the Seebäder was not on personal rituals of daily hygiene but on a leisure program and its social propaganda. Perhaps the accommodation of daily practices of health and hygiene had been subsumed by the larger Nazi political program and were funneled into different aspects of its public policy, which made the public bathhouse an irrelevant format for social hygiene.

The plans for Seebad on Prora reinterpreted the elements of the Freibad on a gargantuan scale and removed it from any connection to the daily life of city dwellers or urban culture in general. Its scale itself negates both Hoffmann’s belief that public spaces for the body should cultivate intimacy and trust between the state and population, and makes Martin Wagner’s interest in individual physical appropriation wholly unthinkable. Existing outside the spatial framework of an urban society, the social life of the spa is exceptional and apolitical, rather than a reformed vision of the city.

It is in the dialogue between public life and public architecture that clues to the processes of shaping the public body are found, processes which this project on public
baths architecture materially foregrounds and help to theorize. By participating in an ongoing process of figuration - a term that refers to both a conceptual process (giving form to ideas) as well as a material process (through experiences that shape use and interaction) - the architectural artifacts take an active role in the social life of the city. The history of the bathhouse perfectly exemplifies such architectural agency.

This thesis focuses on the German context because of the compelling historical issues raised by late nineteenth and early twentieth Germany in the construction of Modernism and in the politics of the urban body. Far from being relevant to the particular concerns of a prefascist state, however, the preoccupation with health care was seen by many societies as part of a genuine political commitment to democracy and social equality. Even today, the rights of the individual to medical treatment and preventative care are often viewed as analogous to natural rights, to freedom of speech or religion. The role of the state in insuring the health of the population will be a major political issue in the 2008 Presidential campaign in the United States, where it has become threaded with a variety of civic populism otherwise rare in American political discourses. In concluding this study, I suggest that it be placed within the longer history - from Aristotle and Augustine to Hobbes and Carlyle- of the “body politic” analogy in thinking about the state as a political community. This concept was redefined in the machine age and acquired a new materiality in structures of public health, urban sanitation, and a range of new technologies of urban life focused on safety, cleanliness,
and comfort. The emergence of health and hygiene as a public obsession in the city is a register of a modern concept of the body politic, a medicalized concept of the self and society that informed the rise of urban planning at the turn of the century. This concept played a key role in shaping a vision of urban life that sought to maintain and restore the connection between the individual and the natural world within the political and social structures of the city. The history of hygiene and architecture opens up questions about ways that the body has been understood in the political imagination of Western societies. The attempts to revitalize and sanitize the public through civic architecture between 1880-1930 continue to exert an influence on the potentials and limitations of real and imagined spaces of the city.
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OUVERTURE DES BAINS

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LE BAIN ST LOUIS
Le dernier construit, mais non le moindre, est le bain St Louis, situé

Leau dans le bain variera entre 3 et 8
pieds et demi. Soixante-douze cabines,
très bien finies, seront à la disposition
des baigneurs, ainsi que sept bains à
douches.

L'établissement sera éclairé par la
lumière électrique.

M. Dagenais, le gardien, nous dit que
les femmes seront mises à
la disposition des baigneurs dès la date
de l'ouverture.

LE BAIN D'HOCHELAGA
Il y a encore le bain d'Hochelaga,
situé près du square Désert. Celui-ci
est dans un état pitoyable et c'est justement
pour cette raison que l'on désire en construire un autre, sur la
rive, entre le square Sainte-Marie et
Hochelaga. Quoi qu'il en soit, il est ou-
vert, mais l'eau n'y a pas encore été
mise, à cause des réparations qu'il faut
y faire. M. Henri Masson, le gardien,
qui en a moins de peine ni de dévoue-
ment dans l'exercice de ses devoirs, en
attendant qu'il y ait à sa disposition
un meilleur établissement.

A L'ILE STE-HELENE
Ce bain est le plus ancien et son his-
toire est intéressante. Nous la publie-
rons bientôt.

On est à réparer le bain de l'Ile Sainte-Hélène sous la direction du gardien,
M. Georges Lessard, j., et attendant
que les bateaux-passeurs commencent
leur service.

M. N. LESSARD, gardien du bain Saint-
Louis.

INTERIEUR DU BAIN DE LA RUE DESB.
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