

ENTFESSELTES BAUEN

BUILDING UNLEASHED: HOLISTIC EDUCATION IN HANNES MEYER'S BAUHAUS: 1927-1930

by

DARA KIESE

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
The City University of New York
2013

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Art History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

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The prevalent view of the Bauhaus is based on Gropius' tenure from 1919 to 1928. This dissertation examines the school under second director Hannes Meyer (1928-1930) in terms of pedagogy, production and presentation to the public. Discussion about Meyer's political views and Gropius' own well-publicized version of the history have overshadowed his accomplishments. This dissertation widens the purview of his project to encompass pressing contemporary cultural and philosophical currents. Rooted in late 19th century ideals of mutual cooperation and holism, Meyer's Bauhaus marked a pivotal moment for architectural and design education. Stressing the individual's complex needs, community, egalitarianism and financial self-sufficiency, he created a model for a more open design process. Inspired by interdisciplinary and sometimes conflicting methodologies—from Gestalt theory to social sciences and biology to anarchism and ecology—Meyer's contributions were innovative in focus and methodology to discover how best to meet the needs of the contemporary user or consumer. Chapter One, “‘New World,’ New Hire: Meyer's ‘Functional, Collectivist-Constructive’ Teaching Philosophy in 1927,” gives an account of Meyer's first year at the Bauhaus as the head of the architecture department to show how disagreements with other faculty members and ongoing debates have shaped the prevalent understanding of his subsequent directorship. Chapter Two, “*Der Mensch*

als Einheit. Meyer's Guest Lectures as theoretical humanism" details how he changed the focus of attention from Bauhaus "style" to serving the needs of man by better understanding him through study of the humanities, social sciences, philosophy and applied, holistic and Gestalt psychology. Chapter Three "Meyer's New Building Theory: 'the architect is dead,' but the building lives" investigates the theoretical bases of Meyer's approach and then considers its practical manifestations in the pedagogical components of the architecture program. Finally, Chapter Four "*Bauhaus Wanderausstellung*: Discursive Space and DIY Design" examines Meyer's public presentation of Bauhaus pedagogy and production in the 1929-30 traveling exhibition and public lectures. He employed the same approach to the public sphere by equipping people with the discursive and practical tools necessary to imagine and create their own suitable and sustainable environments, leading to many aspects of contemporary architecture and design practice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is a great pleasure to thank the Graduate Center at the City University of New York and everyone who has supported me in writing my dissertation. I am sincerely thankful to my adviser Rose-Carol Washton Long for her fundamental role in my graduate studies and for her ongoing discussions, knowledge and encouragement throughout this entire process. Her seminars on the Weimar Republic led me to the Bauhaus via Alma Siedhoff-Buscher's toy ship. I am thankful to Rosemarie Bletter for supporting me throughout my graduate work and offering her time and valuable insights on my subject over the years and in this dissertation. I wish to thank my dissertation committee: Rose-Carol Washton Long, Rosemarie Bletter, John Maciuika, and Barry Bergdoll for generously offering their time, expertise and encouragement.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to delve deeply into my subject with the guidance and insights of an extraordinary team of curators working on *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity* at the Museum of Modern Art. Barry Bergdoll, Leah Dickerman and Adrian Sudhalter showed by example how rigorous scholarship could be transformed into a tangible historical record. The experience was pivotal for my own research interests in Bauhaus communication and publicity.

I would also like to acknowledge the many scholars over the years who shared their work with me and led me to valuable archival resources: Klaus Weber and Christian Wolsdorff (Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin); Klaus-Jürgen Winkler (Bauhaus-Universität Weimar); and a special thanks to Magdalena Droste (TU Cottbus) who has helped me many times over the years. I wish to express gratitude to Oliver Botar and the late Detlef Mertins for their perspectives on Meyer's biologism and their collegiality. And a warm thanks to Juliet Kinchin, Joan Ockmann, Jean-Louis Cohen and Dietrich Neumann for their encouragement, advice and enlightening

conversations about the history of design and architecture. I appreciate the opportunities I have had to work through new ideas at conferences and symposia and would especially like to thank Patrick Rößler, Enrique Ramirez and Claire Zimmerman. I wish to thank Sarah Richardson for her editing help over the years. I also appreciate the correspondence and conversations that I have had with Joost Siedhoff, Hans Jakob Wittwer and Yael Aloni.

This dissertation would not have been possible without archival research. I appreciate the Rewald Fellowship for Dissertation Research from the CUNY Graduate Center Art History Department. I would also like to thank the Fulbright Commission for funding my initial research in Berlin and the Getty Research Institute for a library research grant. I am also grateful to the many archives and individuals who pulled literally thousands of documents for me: Staatsarchiv Dessau-Roßlau; Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau; ETH Zürich, GTA Archives (Daniel Weiß); Busch-Reisinger Museum Archive, Getty Research Institute; Harvard Art Museums (Laura Muir); Houghton Library, Harvard University; Kunsthalle Mannheim; Deutsches Architektur Museum (Inge Wolf); Archives of Scientific Philosophy, Special Collections Department, University of Pittsburgh (Brigitta Arden); University of Minnesota Archives; Science Archives at the Noord-Hollands Archief (Godelieve Bolten); Grassi Museum (Leipzig); and special thanks to Jennifer Tobias at the Museum of Modern Art Library, Paul Galloway at the Architecture and Design Study Center (Paul Galloway), and Elke Eckart at the Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

Finally, I would like to thank my family whose intellectual curiosity and devotion to educational pursuits have been both formative and inspirational. A special thanks to my mother, Lorraine Blake, for her late-night discussions on everything from Nietzsche to kindergarten and her tireless proof-reading and to my father, Jörn Commers, for his help with translations. Thank you Barbara, Seth, Torben, Martin, Bevan, Björn and Nadia for your unfailing encouragement

and for putting up with me. I dedicate this dissertation to the oldest and youngest family members: my grandfather, Professor George R. Blake and my son, Arlo.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	iv
Acknowledgements	vi
List of Illustrations	x
Introduction	1
Chapter 1. ‘New World,’ New Hire: Meyer’s ‘Functional, Collectivist-Constructive’ Teaching Philosophy in 1927	25
Chapter 2. The Unity of Man: Meyer’s Guest Lectures as Theoretical Humanism	71
Vienna Circle at the Bauhaus	79
“Psychologist-Engineer” – Applied Psychology	101
Guest lectures listed in the 1929 Bauhaus prospectus <i>junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!</i>	108
Chapter 3. Meyer’s New Building Theory: ‘The Architect is Dead,’ But the Building Lives	110
First Tenet—Sociology as a System of Collective Power	133
Second Tenet—Psychology and Mind-Body Unity	142
Third Tenet—Geopsychology	154
Curricular Periphery to Center of Design Research and Public Discourse	157
Fourth Tenet—Duality of Emotion and Logic	171
Chapter 4. Bauhaus Wanderausstellung: Discursive Space and DIY Design	179
Neutrality	187
‘Pedagogy’	201
User Interaction	206
Architecture	217
Painting	225
Conclusion	244
Archival Bibliography	256
Bibliography (Sources Cited)	263
Illustrations	Appendix

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1

Section allemande, catalogue, *Exposition de la Société des Artistes décorateurs*, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930

Figure 2

Section allemande, *Exposition de la Société des Artistes décorateurs*, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930

Figure 3

bauhaus wanderschau, Kunstgewerbemuseum der Stadt Zürich, 17 July – 13 August 1930

Figure 4

Bauhaus 1919-1928, Museum of Modern Art, 7 December 1938- 30 January 1939

Figure 5

“Man as Unity: Mind/Soul, Body/Soul” Double-page spread from the Bauhaus prospectus *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!*

(young people come to the bauhaus!) 1929, conception and design by Hannes Meyer. Drawing by Oscar Schlemmer and photograph by Lux Feininger

Figure 6

Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer, *Wettbewerbsentwurf der Petersschule Basel* (Competition entry for the Petersschule in Basel) as published in *bauhaus* 2, no. 2 (1927): 5

Figure 7

Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer, *Wettbewerbsentwurf dem Völkerbundgebäude für Genf* (Competition entry for the League of Nations in Geneva) as published in *bauhaus* 2, no. 4 (1927): 5

Figure 8

Hannes Meyer, Co-op Konstruktion 1926/4 In *ABC: Beiträge zum Bauen* 2, no. 2 (1926)

Figure 9

Sketch performance by the Bauhaus Stage, 1929

Figure 10

Hannes Meyer, “das propagandatheater co-op” (co-op propaganda theater) in *bauhaus* 3 (1927)

Figure 11

Exposition internationale de la coopération et de œuvres sociales (EICOS, International

Exhibition of Cooperatives and the Social Welfare Services), Ghent, Belgium, 15 June – 15 September 1924

Figure 12 a

Hannes Meyer, Site plan, Siedlung Freidorf, 1920

Figure 12 b

Hannes Meyer, Siedlung Freidorf, c. 1925

Figure 13

Hannes Meyer and Jean Bard, “Theater Co-op,” *Exposition internationale de la coopération et de œuvres sociales* (EICOS, International Exhibition of Cooperatives and the Social Welfare Services), Ghent, Belgium, 15 June – 15 September 1924

Figure 14

Hannes Meyer and Jean Bard, “Das Theater Co-op,” *Das Werk* 12, no. 11 (1924)

Figure 15

Exposition internationale de la coopération et de œuvres sociales (EICOS, International Exhibition of Cooperatives and the Social Welfare Services), Ghent, Belgium, 15 June – 15 September 1924

Figure 16

Hannes Meyer, “Vitrine Co-op,” *Exposition internationale de la coopération et de œuvres sociales* (EICOS, International Exhibition of Cooperatives and the Social Welfare Services). Photo from the installation at the Siedlung Freidorf, c. October 1924

Figure 17

Hannes Meyer, Advertisement from the *Exposition internationale de la coopération et de œuvres sociales* (EICOS, International Exhibition of Cooperatives and the Social Welfare Services), Ghent, Belgium, 15 June – 15 September 1924

Figure 18

Hannes Meyer, “Junge Kunst in Belgien,” *Das Werk* 12, no. 9 (1925)

Figure 19

Victor Bourgeois, “La Cité *Moderne*” in Berchem-sur-Brussels, 1922 in “Junge Kunst in Belgien,” *Das Werk* 12, no. 9 (1925)

Figure 20

Walter Gropius. Bauhaus building, Dessau. 1925–26. Photograph: Lucia Moholy, 1926

Figure 21

Walter Gropius. Masters’ houses, Dessau. 1926. Photograph: Lucia Moholy, 1926

Figure 22

Hannes Meyer, Curricular Diagram 1929. Original served as a demonstration board for the Bauhaus Traveling Exhibition 1929-30 (original destroyed)

Figure 23

Walter Gropius. Diagram of the Bauhaus curriculum, published in the *Satzungen Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar (Statutes of the state Bauhaus in Weimar)*, July 1922

Figure 24

Herbert Bayer, Curricular Diagram, 1926/27

Figure 25

Example of Otto Neurath's Isotype pictogram. Leaflet on insurance statistics by the Museum of Society and Economy, Vienna. c. 1927-28

Figure 26

Herbert Bayer, design for "universal" lettering, 1927

Figure 27

Josef Albers, *Kombinations-Schrift* (Combinatory letters), designed 1926. Made for Albers by Metallglas A.G., Offenburg/Baden, c. 1928

Figure 28

Patrick Geddes, survey, 1911. Source: Volker Welter, *Biopolis: Patrick Geddes and the City of Life* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), 110

Figure 29

Hannes Meyer, Bauhaus Organizational Diagram, 1929

Figure 30

Edmund Collein, Study of the periodization of living space, 1928- 29

Figure 31

Siegfried Giesenschlag, Relationships to the neighborhood and environment in a housing estate, 1930

Figure 32

Klaus Meumann, Project for Meyer's building theory course, "The Growing House—Haus Caravagno Mentone" (*Das gewachsene Haus*. 1929)
(Reproduced with key by Klaus-Jürgen Winkler in his *Baulehre und Entwerfen am Bauhaus 1919-1933*. Weimar: Bauhaus-Universität, 2003)

Figure 33a

Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer, Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes (Federal school of the German trade union federation), Bernau. 1928–30. Postcard showing aerial view from southwest. Photograph: Junkers Luftbild

Figure 33 b-e

Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer, Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes (Federal school of the German trade union federation), Bernau. 1928–30. Competition drawings

Figure 34

Heiner Knaub, garden as extension of living space, 1929-30

Figure 35

Phillip Tolziner and Tibor Wiener, der grundris errechnet sich aus folgenden faktoren, 1930

Figure 36

Ernst Göhl, Study for an eight class housing estate school, published in *bauhaus* 2, no. 4 (1928)

Figure 37

Oscar Schlemmer, maquette from the *Wanderausstellung*, as published in Hannes Meyer, ed, *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!* (1929)

Figure 38

das bauhaus dessau, exhibition catalogue for the Gewerbemuseum Basel, 20 April – 9 May 1929

Figure 39

bauhaus dessau: j. albers, l. feininge, w. kandinsky, p. klee, o. schlemmer, exhibition catalogue for the Kunsthalle Basel, 20 April – 9 May 1929

Figures 40 a and b

Franz Ehrlich from sketches by head of the Advertising Department, Joost Schmidt, poster for *das bauhaus dessau* at the Gewerbemuseum Basel, 21 April – 20 May 1929

Figure 41

Joost Schmidt, poster for the Weimar Bauhaus exhibition, 1923

Figure 42

Lászlo Moholy-Nagy, dust jackets for Bauhaus book series, 1924 - 30

Figure 43

Herbert Bayer, Poster for *Kandinsky Jubiläums-Ausstellung zum 60. Geburtstag* (Exhibition celebrating Kandinsky's sixtieth birthday), 1926

Figure 44

El Lissitzky, Poster for *Russische Ausstellung*, Zurich, 1929

Figures 45 a-c

Junkers & Co., *Gas und Wasser* (Gas and Water), exhibition Berlin, 1928. Illustrations from *bauhaus* 3, no. 3 (1929)

Figure 46

El Lissitzky, Soviet Pavilion, *Pressa* exhibition, Cologne, 1926

Figure 47

Pedagogy section, *das bauhaus dessau*, Gewerbemuseum Basel, 21 April – 20 May 1929

Figure 48

Pedagogy section, *das bauhaus dessau*, Gewerbemuseum Basel, 21 April – 20 May 1929

Figure 49

volkswohnung bauhaus, exhibition at the Grassimuseum, Leipzig. In Hubert Hoffmann, “kein schmuckes heim, glück allein” *bauhaus* 2, no. 4 (1929): 22-23

Figure 50

Gentleman’s room, *Section allemande, Exposition de la Société des Artistes décorateurs, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930*

Figure 51

Theodor Bogler, plaster models for ceramics casting, 1923. As reproduced in *Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar, 1923*

Figure 52

bauhaus dessau wanderschau 1930, Kunsthalle Mannheim, 14 May – 22 June 1930

Figure 53

Josef Albers, ti 244 Bauhaus Wanderausstellung demonstration board 1929-30

Figure 54

Work stool me 1002, Bauhaus Wanderausstellung demonstration board, 1929-30

Figure 55 a

das bauhaus dessau, Gewerbemuseum Basel, 21 April – 20 May 1929

Figure 55 b

Advertisement in *bauhaus* 3, no. 2 (1929)

Figure 56 a

Section allemande, catalogue, Exposition de la Société des Artistes décorateurs, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930

Figure 56 b

Herbert Bayer gallery installation. *Section allemande, Exposition de la Société des Artistes décorateurs, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930*

Figure 57

das bauhaus dessau, Gewerbemuseum Basel, 21 April – 20 May 1929

Figure 58

Oscar Schlemmer, murals in fresco and relief, Weimar Bauhaus exhibition, 1923

Figure 59

Heinrich Koch, Wall-painting schemes for the studio and living room of Oskar Schlemmer's Master House, Dessau, 1926

Figure 60

bauhaus wanderschau, Kunstgewerbemuseum der Stadt Zürich, 17 July – 13 August 1930

Figure 61

Hinnerk Scheper, Color scheme for the exterior of the Bauhaus building, Dessau, 1926

Figure 62

bauhaus wanderschau, Kunstgewerbemuseum der Stadt Zürich, 17 July – 13 August 1930

Figure 63

Architecture and photography installation. *bauhaus wanderschau*, Kunstgewerbemuseum der Stadt Zürich, 17 July – 13 August 1930

Figure 64

Competition drawing for the ADGB Arbeiter Bank, 1929

Figure 65

Siedlung Törten housing extension, Dessau, 1930

Figures 66 a-c

Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer, Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes (Federal school of the German trade union federation), Bernau, 1928–30

Figure 67

Georg Mucho and Adolf Meyer. Haus am Horn, Weimar. Alma Buscher and László Moholy-Nagy seen at left, c. 1923

Figure 68

Walter Gropius, *Baukasten im großen (Large-Scale Building Blocks)*, 1923. Reproduced in Adolf Meyer, *Ein Versuchshaus des Bauhauses in Weimar. Haus am Horn* (1925)

Figure 69

Ausstellung Internationaler Architekten, Bauhaus, Weimar, Summer 1923

Figure 70

Section allemande, Exposition de la Société des Artistes décorateurs, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930

Figure 71

Section allemande, catalogue, Exposition de la Société des Artistes décorateurs, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930

Figure 72

Opening pages in the school prospectus, Hannes Meyer, ed. *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!* (1929)

INTRODUCTION

Spiritually the Bauhaus is a true beehive. It attracts teaching and teaching powers from everywhere that teach there for a while and either take up residence and settle in, or fly away again. And every head brings along its ideas, and every hand its special skills. In this way, the face of the Bauhaus as an institution is continually changing. It is not about establishing a theoretical label. The Bauhaus of today is not what the Bauhaus was yesterday. Contradictions act with each other and in opposition to each other. The most extreme encounters itself. The very real and the very abstruse. The most commonplace and the most fantastic. The best aspect of the Bauhaus is the passion to try everything, to dare everything and to question everything. This accounts for the vivacious, exciting energy that emanates from the Bauhaus.¹
Basler Nationalzeitung (26 April 1929)

On 16 February 1930, Hannes Meyer opened the third venue of the Bauhaus traveling exhibition at the Folkwang Museum in Essen with a public lecture, “Building Unleashed” (*Entfesselt Bauen*).² The “unleashing” of building was Meyer’s metaphor for his pedagogical approach as a Bauhaus instructor in 1927—when the school’s founder and first director Walter Gropius hired him to develop and lead the school’s first sustained architecture program— and subsequently as the school’s director from 1928-1930. To “unleash” meant to set free or to be without owner, no longer bound to the singular vision of artist, designer, or architect.³

¹ “Geistig ist das Bauhaus ein wahres Bienenhaus. Von überall her werden lehrende und lehrende Kräfte angezogen, wirken dort eine Weile, werden sesshaft oder springen wieder ab. Und jeder Kopf bringt seine Ideen mit, und jede Hand ihre besonderen Fertigkeiten. So wandelt sich das Gesicht des Bauhausständig. Es ist nicht auf einen theoretischen Nenner zu bringen. Das Bauhaus von heute ist nicht, was das Bauhaus von gestern war. Widersprechendes wirkt nebeneinander und widereinander. Extremstes begegnet sich. Sehr reales und sehr Abstruses. Nüchternes und Phantastisches. Das Beste des Bauhaus ist die Begeisterung, alles zu erproben, alles zu wagen, alles zu fragen. Darauf beruht die lebendige, anregende Kraft, die vom Bauhaus ausgeht.” dt., “Das Bauhaus Dessau, I.,” *Basler Nationalzeitung*, 26 April 1929. Archive, Gewerbemuseum Basel.

² Anonymous, “Bauhaus-Ausstellung im Museum Folkwang,” *Essener Allgemeine Zeitung* 15 February 1930. [exhibition review, Folkwang Museum, Essen (16 February – 6 April 1930)] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museum, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

³ K. Michael Hays discussed Meyer within the context of critical theory, describing the post-humanist subject as “no longer viewed as an originating agent of meaning, but as a variable and dispersed entity whose very identity and place are constituted in social practice.” K. Michael Hays, *Modernism and the Posthumanist Subject: the Architecture of Hannes Meyer* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 5.

“Unleashed Building” drew inspiration from the institutional critique of Dada as well as the Weimar housing reform movement and its international contemporaries within Russian Constructivism and Dutch De Stijl. But Meyer’s Bauhaus tenure and the metaphor extended beyond the 1920s vanguard movements. Countering the prescriptive dogmatism that characterizes his Bauhaus legacy, Meyer’s “unleashing” provides a new framework to reconsider late Bauhaus pedagogical reforms, design processes, production and presentation.

“Unleashed” described the radical scientific breakthroughs that were taking place in the early twentieth-century, including wider acceptance in the early 1920s of Albert Einstein’s relativity theory that shattered scientific knowledge. Einstein posited that time and space were not finite, but unbounded or “unleashed.” Meyer’s new buildings and designs were neither absolute, nor limited by the vision of a single, autonomous creator, but rather predicated on interactive concepts of fluidity, contingency and adaptability. He articulated this connection in another public lecture: “New building instruction does not exist as theory: no work (*Werk*) is an individual work....Our building instruction is only an experiment: technically and mechanically unfixed/not rigid/flexible (*festigkeitslos*).”⁴

Inspired by Gestalt theory, my dissertation will emphasize how Meyer’s “unleashing” was a quest for wholeness. Its ideas were explosive, untamed, and elastic, reaching out to everything around it because he viewed everything as interconnected and interdependent. Building projects and design production became organisms that remained alive long after their initial creation, to be continuously adapted and reconfigured according to the changing needs of the user. I will point to statements that underscore Meyer’s position, for example, when he

⁴ Hannes Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929” (Notes for lectures Meyer presented on 22 April at the Werkbund in Vienna and 3 May in Basel) in Lena Meyer-Bergner, ed. *Bauen und Gesellschaft: Schriften, Briefe, Projekte*, Fundus-Bücher (Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1980).

continued, “This building instruction needs critical knowledge to tackle the entire complex of life....always returning to the ultimate goal: to study society in order to provide a service to society.”⁵

Statements like “provide a service to society” have been narrowly interpreted within a Marxist rubric. Although prominent Meyer scholars Klaus-Jürgen Winkler and K. Michael Hays, for example, contribute different perspectives to the scholarship, they share the same conclusion: that Meyer sought to build a Marxist society in accordance with his own determinist vision.⁶ But “tackling the entire complex of life” was indeed more expansive than cheap housing, labor issues or controlling means of production, as was Meyer’s Bauhaus pedagogy. Adding humanities-based learning to the curriculum through lectures and courses would produce designers attuned to the needs of the consumer in the specific societal conditions at hand in a society undergoing massive social, economic, political and geographical flux.

Meyer believed that in order to understand how a building would best serve its users, a student needed to consider a whole constellation of fluctuating factors spanning daily routines to

⁵ “die neue baulehre existiert nicht als theorie: kann kein werk einzelner sein. (vitruv. u. blondel waren es auch nicht.) [technische mechanik. festigkeitslos] unsere bauhaus-lehre nur ein versuch: rationalisierung u. mechanische konstruktivität sind untergeordnete notwendigkeiten. diese baulehre muss erkenntniskritisch den gesamten lebenskomplex anpacken.... immer wieder ein ziel: absuche die gesellschaft zu studieren, um der gesellschaft dienst zu leisten.” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929” in Meyer-Bergner, ed., *Bauen und Gesellschaft*, 62. All texts that were originally printed in lower case letters are reprinted as such here along with the original German spelling, which is sometimes old-fashioned.

⁶ Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, *Der Architekt Hannes Meyer: Anschauungen und Werk* (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1989), 80-81. Hays writes, “For, indeed, Meyer’s revision of the terms of architectural practice is made in an effort to anticipate the classic Marxist movement toward workers’ control of production as part of the transition from the dynamic capitalist state to socialism.” Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*, 144. Hays reinforces his assertion that Meyer’s ultimate goal was to establish a Marxist society throughout his texts on Meyer. In a 1999 essay, for example, he writes: “Proportional harmony and the repetitive cellular structure are for Meyer the architecturalization of the harmony of socialism.” Or in another passage, he writes, “The concrete experience of the visual products of science and technology, when understood as affording a symbolic and psychological mapping of the now vivid and tractable consequences of modernity, may be conceived as a functional diagram for the kind of mental retooling the human subject must undergo to divest itself of its historically conditioned defects and failures of development and begin its journey toward the classless future.” K. Michael Hays, “Diagraming the New World, or Hannes Meyer’s ‘Scientization’ of Architecture,” in *The Architecture of Science*, Peter Galison and Emily Ann Thompson, eds. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), 240, 243.

socio-ecology. But Meyer highlighted the key to his thinking when he proclaimed to Bauhaus student representatives on the occasion of his appointment as director in 1928 that "...We must approach everything with a little better grasp of psychology. Psychology is everything. But the primary factor we have to deal with is the activity of the mind."⁷ Psychology was not only the conceptual framework for complex user analyses, but also served to equip students with a functional tool for making sense amidst chaotic, undefined and ever-changing parameters. My dissertation will explain how Meyer's Bauhaus became a prototype of user-centered design research.

My dissertation will also explain how Einstein's theory of relativity as well as psychology fused together with Raoul Francé's *Lebensphilosophie* (Life Philosophy) in Meyer's 1926 essay, "Die neue Welt" (The New World):

The simultaneity of events enormously extends our concept of 'space and time,' it enriches our life. We live faster and therefore longer...Biology, psychoanalysis, relativity theory, and entomology are becoming the common intellectual property of all: Francé, Einstein, Freud and Fabre are the saints of recent times.⁸

Their influences permeated new ways of thinking in mainstream culture. Einstein's theory of relativity introduced probability and fallibility into traditional scientific methods, calling into question all absolutes and accepted truths, and the nascent field of psychology provided the means for scientifically-minded intellectuals to consider subjective notions of the

⁷ Hannes Meyer, "Address to the Student Representatives on the Occasion of his Appointment as Director" (1928) in Hans Maria Wingler, *The Bauhaus. Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago* (M.I.T. Press: Cambridge, 1969; 1986), 141.

⁸ Hannes Meyer, "Die neue Welt," *Das Werk* 13, 7 (1926). Translated and reprinted in Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg, *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 445-449. This excerpted translation is better than others, except that the editors mistakenly referred to Anatole France instead of Raoul Francé. For full-text German and English translation, see Meyer-Bergner, ed., *Bauen und Gesellschaft*, 89-95. For a reprint of the original German, see Werner Kleinerüschkamp, ed. *Hannes Meyer, 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1989), 70-73.

psyche or spirit in their examination of the human experience. “Unleashed” referred to modernity: a society in flux, a population in flux, a building profession in flux. With an underlying drive to holism implicit in Francé’s Life Philosophy (*Lebensphilosophie*), Meyer responded to these contemporary uncertainties by developing a fluid theoretical framework through which to explore boundless possible solutions rather than the Marxist determinism that has inaccurately defined his legacy.

The basics of Meyer’s narrative at the Bauhaus are well known. In August 1930, forty months after arriving in April 1927, Dessau’s Mayor Fritz Hesse sacked Meyer without notice for allegedly politicizing the school. After a failed attempt to regain his directorship, Meyer relocated to Moscow with eight students, where he worked for six years before moving to Mexico via Switzerland. Nazism, the Second World War and the Cold War ensued before he died in 1954, fifteen years earlier than either Gropius or the school’s third and final director, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. It was not until Claude Schnaidt’s 1965 monograph—with primary source documents and biography published in German and English—that Meyer or his tenure received more than a cursory mention. Schnaidt challenged misconceptions about Meyer’s Bauhaus years, marking just a first step in reevaluating his legacy. For example, the book included a 1963 letter from Gropius to Tomas Maldonado with disparaging remarks about Meyer’s character (“Meyer’s insincerity and his breaches of confidence detract from the general picture of the man.”), his alleged politicization of the school (With his outlook of political materialism, which he had concealed from us, he undermined the idea of the Bauhaus ...and brought himself to ruin.”) and downplayed his successes as having been based on principles that were “already established before Meyer took over the Bauhaus.”⁹

⁹ The book’s publisher, Arthur Niggli, chose to include the letter to counter what he described as Schnait’s “subjective picture” of Meyer because he knew him personally. Claude Schnaidt, ed. *Hannes Meyer: Bauten*,

Schnaidt, a professor at the Ulm School of Design (Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm), published his seminal biography during a period of retrospection celebrating the school's 50th anniversary that was spearheaded by Gropius. Lending his support and resources, Gropius assisted in establishing the Bauhaus Archiv in Darmstadt with its founder and first director, Hans Maria Wingler, in 1961 as well as Wingler's canonical publication *Das Bauhaus* in 1962.¹⁰ In multiple English edition reprints, *Bauhaus* has yet to be surpassed in its scope as a compendium of Bauhaus primary documents and detailed overview of the school's history, important themes and prominent figures. Although a valuable resource, it also perpetuates Gropius' biases and antipathy toward Meyer and his accomplishments in both its editorial positioning and through translation choices. Reliance on translations of primary documents in sourcebooks including Wingler's and Schnaidt's, has perpetuated entrenched ideological biases that this dissertation hopes to rectify. The collaboration between Wingler and Gropius culminated in a Bauhaus travelling exhibition that visited nine cities internationally in 1968-69, introducing a new generation to the Gropius Bauhaus.

Twenty years would pass before two groundbreaking studies were published about Meyer's career, adding depth to the historical understanding of the late Bauhaus: Klaus-Jürgen Winkler's monograph *Der Architekt Hannes Meyer: Anschauungen und Werk* (The Architect Hannes Meyer: Outlook and Work) and a second book comprised of essays penned by multiple

Projekte und Schriften. Buildings, Projects, and Writings (Teufen: A. Niggli, 1965), 121-123. Ute Poerschke discusses this in her conference paper "Hannes Meyer - Connecting Poetics and Ethics," *Reconciling Poetics and Ethics in Architecture*, at the Canadian Centre for Architecture CCA and McGill University, Montreal. Accessed online on 25 April 2013:

http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CDkQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.arch.mcgill.ca%2Ftheory%2Fconference%2Fpapers%2FPoerschke_Ute_revised_July7_07.doc&ei=r4B5Ua_bG4bZ0wHMkoGQAQ&usq=AFQjCNH6mPX7vGnay9wXO99OLp1vN3Wn2A&sig2=s6EsEZoz2EB4vHvKUn3LPw&bvm=bv.45645796,d.dmQ

¹⁰ In 1976, the Bauhaus-Archive moved to its current building in Berlin which Gropius helped to design before his death in 1969. Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, ix.

authors and primary documents, *Hannes Meyer 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer* (Hannes Meyer 1889-1954: Architect, Urbanist, Teacher) published in conjunction with an exhibition celebrating the centennial of his birth in 1989.¹¹

Discussion about Meyer's politics coupled with Gropius' own well-publicized version of the history have overshadowed Meyer's accomplishments since the beginning, particularly in the United States. Gropius eclipsed Meyer's legacy while it was still in the making in 1930 with the *Exposition de la Société des Artistes décorateurs* at the Grand Palais in Paris (14 May – 13 July 1930).¹² (fig. 1) The German Werkbund chose Gropius to organize the German section of the exhibition, which was meant to display the latest in German design. Entire galleries were devoted to the pedagogy and production from the Weimar and Dessau eras of Gropius and his co-organizers—former *Bauhäusler* Herbert Bayer, Marcel Breuer and László Moholy-Nagy, yet curiously very little from the post-1928 Bauhaus was included.¹³ In his 2004 article, “Visions of the Future and the Immediate Past: The Werkbund Exhibition, Paris 1930,” Paul Overy contextualized model rooms showcasing Breuer's tubular steel furniture within the debate on social housing models in Germany and France. (fig. 2) Overy rightly noted the instrumental role of the exhibition in mythologizing the so-called “mature Bauhaus idea” of the late Gropius era in Dessau from 1926-1928 and the blatant exclusion of Meyer-era production.¹⁴

¹¹ Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*; Werner Kleinerüschkamp, *Hannes Meyer, 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1989).

¹² Walter Gropius and Deutscher Werkbund, *Section allemande: exposition de la Société des Artistes décorateurs*, Grand Palais, 14. mai-13. juillet 1930 (Berlin: Verlag H. Reckendorf, 1930).

¹³ According to Ise Gropius, Meyer fought to oversee the publication of the Bauhaus books when he became director, but Gropius insisted on allowing Moholy-Nagy to edit the final two volumes of the series in 1929 and 1930 when they were no longer affiliated with the Bauhaus. *Von Material zu Architektur* (München: A. Langen, 1929); Walter Gropius, *Bauhausbauten Dessau* (München: A. Langen, 1930); Ise Gropius, *Tagebuch*, [Nachlass Gropius, Inv.-Nr. 1998/55] Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

¹⁴ Paul Overy, “Visions of the Future and the Immediate Past: The Werkbund Exhibition, Paris 1930,” *Journal of Design History* 17, No. 4 (2004): 337-357. For more on the Paris Werkbund exhibition, see Robin

While Gropius was organizing the Paris exhibition, Meyer's own Bauhaus exhibition was appearing in venues throughout Germany and Switzerland with a radically different portrayal of Bauhaus production. (fig. 3) He sought to take the exhibition to Paris, but without success.¹⁵ Gropius' access to the international audience—or Meyer's exclusion—attest to the obstacles encountered by the young director who, regardless of his position at the helm of a famous progressive school, was too radical for the older generation of reformers who had become part of “the establishment.” The concurrent portrayals of the school's production—one semi-mythical and one unnoticed—offer a tangible material record of Meyer's divergence from his predecessor and exemplify the fight to control the message of what the Bauhaus was, what it represented, and what actual contributions it made.

The Grand Palais exhibition served as the basis for the first major retrospective of the school, “Bauhaus: 1919-1928,” which took place at The Museum of Modern Art, New York from 7 December 1938- 30 January 1939.¹⁶ (fig. 4) The same *Bauhäusler* (Gropius, Bayer, Breuer and Moholy-Nagy) organized the first introduction of the Bauhaus to an American audience and its enduring perspectives have only recently undergone reevaluation by scholars

Kinross, “Die Ausstellung des Deutschen Werkbundes von Walter Gropius im '20e Salon des Artistes Décorateurs Français,” in *Das Bauhaus und Frankreich 1919-1940 = Le Bauhaus et la France 1919-1940 Passagen / Deutsches Forum für Kunstgeschichte = Passages / Centre Allemand d'Histore de l'Art*, Isabelle Ewig, Thomas W. Gaehtgens, and Matthias Noell, eds. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002) and Ute Brüning, Jeannine Fiedler, and Ben Buschfeld, *Das A und O des Bauhauses: Bauhauswerbung: Schriftbilder, Drucksachen, Ausstellungsdesign* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1995).

¹⁵ For more about Meyer's correspondence with Will Grohmann about organizing an exhibition in Paris as well as Grohmann's positive assessment of Meyer's accomplishments in Grohmann's correspondence with Christian Zervos, see Christian Derouet, “Le Bauhaus des peintres contre Walter Gropius ou le silence des 'Cahiers d'Art' sur le Werkbund au 'Salon des Artistes décorateurs français' en 1930,” in *Das Bauhaus und Frankreich 1919-1940 = Le Bauhaus et la France 1919-1940 Passagen / Deutsches Forum für Kunstgeschichte = Passages / Centre Allemand d'Histore de l'Art*, Isabelle Ewig, Thomas W. Gaehtgens, and Matthias Noell, eds. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002), 299- 309. Spanning a year and a half from April 1929 to August 1930, Meyer's Bauhaus traveling exhibition (Wanderausstellung or Wanderschau) appeared in Basel, Breslau, Dessau, Essen, Mannheim and Zurich as an overview of the Meyer era of Bauhaus pedagogy and production (1928-1930). See Chapter IV, “*Bauhaus Wanderausstellung: Discursive Space and DIY Design.*”

¹⁶ Gropius and Werkbund, *Section allemande: Exposition de la Société des Artistes décorateurs.*

and museums, including MoMA itself with its exhibition *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity*.¹⁷ Karen Koehler's essay, "The Bauhaus: 1919-1928: Gropius in Exile and the Museum of Modern Art, N.Y., 1938," provides the most detailed account and analysis of the 1938 MoMA show.¹⁸ The historical conditions in Germany and the United States—political persecution by the National Socialists, many former Bauhaus artists, architects and designers scattered in exile, problems in communication, and growing national and international animosities—produced significant obstacles to planning and implementing such an exhibition.¹⁹

The almost complete omission of the final five years of school production—more than a third of its lifespan—required explanation. Alfred Barr outlined the circumstances and reasoning in the preface to the book published in conjunction with the exhibition:

For reasons beyond the control of any of the individuals involved, the last five years of the Bauhaus could not be represented. During these five years much excellent work was done and the international reputation of the Bauhaus increased rapidly, but, fortunately for the purposes of this book, the fundamental character of the Bauhaus had already been

¹⁷ Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman, *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009).

¹⁸ Karen Koehler, "The Bauhaus: 1919-1928: Gropius in Exile and the Museum of Modern Art, N.Y., 1938," in *Art, Culture, and Media under the Third Reich*, Richard A. Etlin, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

¹⁹ Barr wrote in a letter to Gropius 10 December 1938: "We must expect a certain amount of hostile criticism from four main sources: (1) Pro-Nazi anti-modern sources; (2) Pro-French anti-German sources; (3) American anti-foreign sources; (4) People who feel that the Bauhaus is too old fashioned to be worth the trouble." Barr went on to suggest adding a statement to explain why the Nazis disliked the Bauhaus, along with a clarification that there were not any (or many) Jewish faculty members. Gropius responded with a letter dated 15 December 1938 that highlighted the tenuous political situations. He wrote: "We think, also, that it might be well to make a statement as to the Nazi Government of today, but we should try to make it somewhat less aggressive against the Nazis so that it will look like a very objective statement. I think that we should not, in any case, defend ourselves against the Jewish question. I decline to give any arguments with them about this matter. As a fact, we have had only one Jew among seventeen artists on the Bauhaus faculty throughout the years, and not one on the technical staff, which comprised about twelve people all together. The case is pretty clear, therefore, but I see no reason why we should have to defend ourselves, nevertheless, against the foolish point of view of Hitler's." Both letters are typewritten transcripts from file: "Walter Gropius, Bauhaus Ausstellung im Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1938," Bauhaus-Archive Berlin.

established under Gropius' leadership. Nevertheless, this book...is by far the most complete and authoritative account of the Bauhaus so far attempted.²⁰

Editors Walter and Ise Gropius and Herbert Bayer presented their version in *Bauhaus: 1919-1928* as a definitive chronicle of historical fact which omitted the school's final five years and downplayed the early "Expressionist" years.²¹ The difficult circumstances, coupled with the views of the organizers, shaped Bauhaus discourse long after the exhibition itself. Lingering distortions about the late Bauhaus are understandable, especially within English-language literature, as they have relied on numerous retrospective accounts by former students and teachers who immigrated to the United States.

Margret Kentgens-Craig pointed out in *The Bauhaus and America: First Contacts 1919-1936* (1999), the anti-communist fervor in this country tainted Bauhaus colleagues' memories.²² The Red Scare reached its pinnacle in the 1950s, and some cold-war notions that labeled some people and things as "communist" or "socialist" that did not apply in the 1920s or early 1930s continue today. Growing anti-German and anti-communist sentiments in the United States compounded the impact of the MoMA exhibition on Meyer's legacy. Removing the work from its socio-political context had a two-fold impact on Meyer's legacy. First Gropius and his collaborators at MoMA, Bayer and Moholy-Nagy, may have exaggerated a mythical rupture in 1928 to distance themselves from Meyer's so-called "leftist" politics and the ultimate failure of

²⁰ Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius, and Ise Gropius, *Bauhaus, 1919-1928* (New York: Published for the Museum of Modern Art by Arno Press, 1972), 6-7.

²¹ *Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar 1919-1923*, the only comprehensive book published about the school during its lifetime, appeared in conjunction with the first major public exhibition of the Weimar Bauhaus in 1923. Walter Gropius, *Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar 1919-1923* (Weimar and Munich: Bauhausverlag, 1923).

²² Margret Kentgens-Craig, *The Bauhaus and America: First Contacts, 1919-1936* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999).

the school to remain open. Secondly, the curatorial exclusion of the social aspects of Gropius' Bauhaus accentuated differences between the directors instead of highlighting their many similarities that Magdalena Droste highlighted in her 2009 essay "The Successor's Disinheritance: The Conflict between Hannes Meyer and Walter Gropius."²³

A second consequence of separating the work from the socio-political context helped usher in the art and architectural history of the post-war era, which was dominated and distorted by the formalism of high modernism—art and architecture appreciated for its form and generally separated from its cultural context.

Aesthetics shaped the discussion of Meyer's architecture as well. The Museum of Modern Art relegated Meyer to the fringes of the modernist canon again in 1932 when Alfred Barr decried him as a "fanatical functionalist."²⁴ Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson's introduction to European modernism in their 1932 *The International Style: Architecture since 1922* was published in conjunction with MoMA's first architecture show "Modern Architecture—International Exhibition" (10 February – 23 March 1932). The seminal text established the modernist linear trajectory that remains prevalent in today's architectural surveys. The authors' narrow interpretation of Meyer's functionalism also laid the foundation for continuing misunderstandings about his work.

Rosemarie Haag Bletter addresses the problem in her introduction to the English translation of Adolf Behne's *The Functionalist Building*:

²³ Magdalena Droste, "The Successor's Disinheritance: The Conflict between Hannes Meyer and Walter Gropius," in *Bauhaus Conflicts, 1919-2009: Controversies and Counterparts*, Philipp Oswalt, ed. (Ostfildern: Hatje-Cantz, 2009).

²⁴ Alfred Barr Jr., preface, Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, *The International Style: Architecture since 1922* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995), 30.

The present-day misunderstanding of modernist functionalism does not in fact spring from either Taut's or Hannes Meyer's conception; it is based on an overly narrow definition of function as a single issue that is presumed to be a practical design response within a specific building, one that does not seem to embrace environmental, social or economic factors. In this later, simplistic notion of functionalism, biological and utilitarian ideas have become abbreviated, frozen and canonical and also meaningless.²⁵

Although such reductive notions of functionalism have been widely discredited, questions remain about Meyer's writing, buildings, Bauhaus pedagogy and production that led critics such as Johnson and Hitchcock to disparage him as a "fanatical functionalist." Bletter's reassessment of Behne's functionalism provides a springboard to reconsider Meyer's Bauhaus project and to expand the scope of early modernism.

Meyer's functionalism had already caused controversy before his official appointment in 1927 when he joined the school's ongoing debate regarding its goals and direction pivoting on the foundational premise to unify art and crafts or art and design for serial production. Gropius' decision to hire Meyer did not go over well with everyone on the faculty, especially the painters, including Wassily Kandinsky and Moholy-Nagy. Meyer's Constructivist rhetoric of "The New World," may have gone too far in renouncing individuality, even for *sachlich*-oriented Bauhaus students and faculty. Situating himself within the contemporary discourse of the international artistic avant-garde—notably Russian Constructivism and Dutch De Stijl—Meyer regarded the new art not as decoration, but as a necessary, useful and integral part of everyday life:

Art's right to exist is uncontested, so long as the speculative spirit of the individual continues to need a graphic-colored, plastic-constructivist, musical-kinetic expression of his worldview....New form can only come on the foundation of our time and happen with the means of our time. Yesterday is dead: dead, the bohemian; dead, the state of mind, value, metal burr, flash and brushstrokes of chance. Dead, the novel: we lack belief and time to read. Dead, painting and sculpture as a likeness of the real world: in the age of

²⁵ Rosemarie Haag Bletter, introduction to *The Modern Functional Building* by Adolf Behne (Santa Monica: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1996), 12.

film and photography they seem to us a waste of effort, and the continual ‘embellishment’ of our real surroundings with the interpretations by the ‘artist’ is arrogance. Dead, the artwork as a ‘thing in itself,’ as ‘*L’art pour l’art*:’ our collective consciousness does not tolerate individualistic excesses. (Meyer, “Die Neue Welt,” 233)²⁶

Even though the sentiments expressed were generally consistent with Bauhaus production in the mid-1920s, Meyer’s implicit redefinition of the role of art vis-à-vis design was naturally disconcerting to painters.

Yet Meyer’s proclamation that “*l’art pour l’art* was dead” did not kill art at the Bauhaus. Quite the opposite, in fact. Master painters exhibited more often as a group of “Bauhaus painters” between 1928 and 1930 than they had during the entire Gropius era, with shows in Dessau, Halle, Braunschweig, Erfurt, Krefeld and Berlin, among others.²⁷ Even Meyer touted the painters and their students’ theoretical studies as major selling points when he pitched his Bauhaus traveling exhibition (*Wanderausstellung*) to Gustav Hartlaub, the Director of the Kunsthalle Mannheim.²⁸

²⁶ Die Existenzberechtigung der Kunst ist unbestritten, solange der spekulative Geist des Menschen nach einem graphisch-farbigem, plastisch-konstruktiven, musikalisch-kinetischen Niederschlag seiner Weltanschauung noch Bedarf hat. ...Die neue Gestaltung kann nur auf dem Boden unserer Zeit und mit den Mitteln unserer Zeit geschehen. Das Gestern ist tot: Tot die Bohème. Tot Stimmung, Valeur, Grat, Schmelz und die Pinselstriche des Zufalls. Tot der Roman: es fehlen uns Glaube und Lesezeit. Tot Bild und Skulptur als Abbild der realen Welt: im Zeitalter von Film und Foto sind sie uns Arbeitsverschwendung, und Anmassung ist die dauernde ‘Verschönerung’ unserer realen Umgebung mit deren Interpretationen durch den ‘Künstler.’ Tot das Kunstwerk als ‘Ding an sich,’ als ‘*L’art pour l’art*:’ unser Gemeinschaftsbewusstsein erträgt keine individualistischen Ausschreiten. Meyer, “Die Neue Welt,” 233.

²⁷ Eva Badura-Triska, “Free Painting at the Bauhaus,” in *Bauhaus*, Jeannine Fiedler and Peter Feierabend, ed. (Cologne: Könemann Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000), 171. I included Badura-Triska’s list of exhibitions, however the Halle exhibition took place in 1929 instead of 1928 as she wrote. Magdalena Droste explained that the artists chose to exhibit in group shows at the end of the decade because they believed that it brought them more financial and critical success in *Bauhaus, 1919-1933* (Cologne: B. Taschen, 1998), 188.

²⁸ Meyer, Dessau, to Gustav Hartlaub, Mannheim, 5 July 1929: The show consists of a complete overview of the institute’s educational structure, i.e. Professors Kandinsky, [Paul] Klee, [Josef] Albers, [Oscar] Schlemmer, Joost Schmidt, etc., have each compiled a selection of representative student assignments, along with the latest design production from the workshops and lastly, experiments pertaining to the people’s dwelling (*Volkswohnung*). “die schau besteht aus einer vollständigen darlegung des schulischen aufbaues unseres instituts, d.h. es sind von den

The important issue was not Meyer's opinion about fine arts per se, but rather his supposed functionalist view that fine arts or aesthetic concerns had no place in design or architectural production. This distinction, often elided by the painters themselves and in the secondary literature, has contributed to a general misconception that Meyer reviled all fine art. "Building," wrote Meyer in "The New World," "is a technical, not an aesthetic process, and the purposeful function of a house contradicts artistic composition."²⁹ His 1926 rhetoric reinforced the distortion, but should be understood within the context of avant-garde artistic practice shared by many of his contemporaries, notably Alexander Rodchenko and Varvara Stepanova's "Program of the First Working Group of the Constructivists" from 1921.³⁰

Still, the initial apprehensions expressed by some *Bauhäusler* about Meyer's functionalism would indeed be proven correct. Curricular changes he implemented as director in 1928 cleaved fine arts from the design process, dismantling the very core of Gropius' 1923 pronouncement: "Art and Technology: A New Unity." Meyer's complicated position in relation to wider artistic discourse has been discussed by Wolfgang Kersten in his essay "Hannes Meyer und die Kunst der Moderne" (Hannes Meyer and the Art of the Moderns), but the questions deserve their own full-length study.³¹

kursen der herren professoren kandinsky, klee, albers, schlemmer, joost schmidt usw. je eine folge charakteristischer unterrichtsblätter zusammengestellt, dazu praktische erzeugnisse der bauhauswerkstätten aus der neusten zeit, letzteres versuches aus den gebieten der volkswohnung. Quoted from Karoline Hille, *Spuren der Moderne: die Mannheimer Kunsthalle von 1918 bis 1933* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1994); Wolfgang Kersten, "Hannes Meyer und die Kunst der Moderne," in *Hannes Meyer 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist Lehrer*, Werner Kleinerüschkamp, ed. (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1989), note 220, 371.

²⁹ Meyer, "Die Neue Welt," 223.

³⁰ Translated and published in Michael Bierut, ed. *Looking Closer 3: Classic Writings on Graphic Design* (New York: Allworth Press, 1999), 12-13.

³¹ Wolfgang Kersten, "Hannes Meyer und die Kunst der Moderne," in *Hannes Meyer 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1989).

Many critics felt that if fine arts were removed from the equation, then only technology remained. Sibyl Moholy-Nagy asserted in 1949 that Meyer dismantled the foundational Bauhaus ideal of generalized education:

This contrast between the humanist who thinks in terms of relationships, and the specialist who thinks in terms of isolated problems, emerged slowly in the late 1920's. The synthesis of art and technology on which rested the Bauhaus program was slowly destroyed by a cancerous growth of the technological cells. Political reaction joined forces with technocratic utilitarianism, demanding that state-endowed education serve no other purpose than the training of specialists. Under the leadership of Hannes Meyer, an architect, a group of Bauhaus masters denounced the original concept of an integrated education where process and experiment ranked supreme over specialized skill.³²

The exaggerated focus on the role of technology for Meyer's work that persists today is another example of Gropius' impact on the discussion. Dating back to his Bauhaus days, Meyer's status as a technocrat was the common denominator that united his detractors and supporters. Such attempts to remove aesthetic formalism from the design process were viewed as attacks on nothing less than the essence of humanity. The associations persist. For example, Wingler's caption for Meyer's 1928 essay "Building" equates aesthetics and the psyche:

In the scurrilous overstatement of his theses, Meyer demonstrates his special qualities and also his weakness, which lay in his disavowal of esthetic aspects (hence, also a psychic value) and in his reduction of all problems to practical, functional formulas.³³

Although underpinning these charges against Meyer for technocratic utilitarianism as well as Hitchcock and Johnson's condemnation of "fanatical functionalism," the perception that Meyer embraced technology was championed by Schnaidt and others at the so-called "Ulm Bauhaus."

Within that context, it might seem ironic that Meyer did not dwell on technology during his Bauhaus period. Misconceptions based on his career and writing before 1927—namely his

³² Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy: Experiment in Totality*, [1st ed] ed. (New York: Harper, 1950), 45.

³³ Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, 153.

affiliation with *ABC: Beiträge zum Bauen* (ABC: Contributions to Building) in 1924-25—and after his move to Moscow after being sacked are perpetuated in the secondary literature.³⁴ In *Modernism and the Posthumanist Subject: the Architecture of Hannes Meyer*, Hays concentrates on Meyer's writing and production just prior to his Bauhaus appointment which becomes evidential for Hays' conclusions about his subsequent Bauhaus career and characterization as a Marxist technocrat. Hays cites Meyer's writing from his years in Moscow and Mexico with their entirely different socio-economic and political circumstances to retroactively explain the Bauhaus era.³⁵ Conflations of time, place and context regarding Meyer's career are commonplace and have led to misunderstandings about the late Bauhaus, particularly through associations with Soviet Constructivism.³⁶

Meyer was not an architect-engineer. A close reading of his writing and lectures reveals that his approach at the Bauhaus was just as critical of technologically-driven architecture and design as he was of aesthetics. Like his fellow intellectuals, Meyer grappled with questions of technology, science, objectivity and art that were deeply embedded in modernist cultural discourse and intersected with the realm of politics during the Weimar Republic. This dissertation examines the record of his work and begins to disentangle clichéd rhetoric in order to widen the purview of Meyer's project beyond the narrow confines of politics to encompass

³⁴ *ABC. Beiträge zum Bauen* was a journal published in Basel from 1924 – 1928 by a small group of reform-minded architects—Meyer, Mart Stam, Wittwer and Hans Schmidt among them—who sought a new platform to address the problem of affordable housing through functionalist design solutions.

³⁵ Hays, "Diagramming the New World, or Hannes Meyer's 'Scientization' of Architecture," 246.

³⁶ William Curtis described Meyer in his architectural survey with statements such as: "[he] defined architecture laconically as the result of the equation 'function x economics'. It might be thought that this was a proclamation of the purest capitalist instrumentalism; in fact, it betokened a socialist puritanism which (despite Meyer's protests to the contrary) was expressed in an architectural style made eloquent by its lack of pretensions... To gain some idea of what Meyer's 'Marxist-materialist' position meant when translated into forms, one need only turn to his and Hans Wittwer's project for the Peterschule in Basel of 1926..." William J. R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900*, 3rd ed. (London: Phaidon Press, 1996), 199.

pressing contemporary cultural and philosophical currents. Rejecting Gropius' impetus to unite art and technology changes the parameters of the discussion that are still defined by his 1923 declaration. Meyer clearly answered the call for unity in 1929 with his own declaration "Man as Unity: Body/Soul, Mind/Soul." (fig. 5)

Meyer's legacy followed a different trajectory in Germany, though Cold-War politics and formalism shaped the discourse there as well. It took fifteen years after Schnaidt's monograph for another book on Meyer to appear. Lena Meyer-Bergner, a former Bauhaus student and Meyer's widow, published Meyer's own texts in German and English in *Bauen und Gesellschaft: Schriften, Briefe, Projekte* (Building and Society: Writing, Letters, Projects, 1980).³⁷ Although Meyer-Bergner presented another useful collection of primary documents, the English translations tended to perpetuate a distorted view of his ideas. References to Meyer's early career involvement in the Swiss cooperative movement, for example, were translated more generally with Communist rhetoric—*Volksgemeinschaft* (cooperative) became the generic "community" in English. To an American audience less conversant in the widespread influences of British and European cooperative movements, specific wording needs to be retained in the translations to distinguish the social, economic and political implications of cooperatives from Marxist rhetoric and the two are often conflated.³⁸

Although the German Bauhaus literature sometimes suffers from the same reductivist short-hand, it has generally presented a more complete picture of cooperativism and contemporary philosophical discourse than English-language scholars. That the name "Bauhaus" was itself derived from the German medieval guild "Bauhütte," for example, is often cited in the

³⁷ Meyer-Bergner, ed., *Bauen und Gesellschaft*.

³⁸ Kentgens-Craig's book is just one example.

generalist literature, but the socio-economic implications on the school's cooperativism (in both the Gropius and Meyer eras) or the contemporary Weimar context of the *Bauhütte* movement are less understood. Founded on ideals of mutual-aid and self-determination, the cooperative movements described themselves as “the third way between capitalism and communism.” Meyer viewed the cooperative paradigm as a promising business model with great potential in the democratic movements of the late-1920s—a belief that underscored his approach.³⁹ Stressing community, egalitarianism, and financial and judicial self-sufficiency, he espoused a model in the ideological tradition of anarchist Peter Kropotkin—a distinction ignored by many contemporary critics and lost on many historians, particularly in the English-speaking world.⁴⁰

A reductivist framework that melds a broad range of leftist ideologies into a single idea of “Marxism” have not only distorted Meyer's legacy, but has been routinely applied to his accomplishments at the Bauhaus. The left-right divide in the politicized press that either embraced or condemned the school's production without nuance began during the politicized climate of the Weimar Republic, was perpetuated by the ideological divide of the Cold War, and remains entrenched to this day. Meyer's discussion of *Gemeinschaft* (community) became short hand for Bolshevism in the right-wing press as they avoided attending to the complexities of the cooperative movement that informed his actions.⁴¹ Though scholars have acknowledged the

³⁹ In a letter to Adolf Behne (8 January 1928), for example, Meyer wrote of his interest in the Scandinavian cooperative movement and its influence on his work. Bletter, introduction to *The Modern Functional Building*, 32.

⁴⁰ Martin Kieren provides a good explanation of cooperative movements in his discussion of Meyer's early career in his book *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit, Architektur- und Gestaltungsversuche, 1919-1927* (Heiden: Verlag Arthur Niggli, 1990).

⁴¹ In her dissertation, Jeanette Redensek provides a meticulous analysis of the philosophical, historical and sociological distinctions between *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society). Chapter two, “Past and Present: through history toward a sociology of community (69-131), discusses the pertinent sociological writings on community echoing Ferdinand Tönnies' writing. While the discussion is outside the scope of my study, Meyer's rhetoric parallels Redensek's characterization of Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft* (as romantic and intuitive, and associated with family, village and town) and *Gesellschaft* (as rational, city, and state). (91) Moreover, Redensek's discussion of biological metaphors in Wilhelmine- and Weimar-era architecture informs my thinking on Meyer's turn away

significance of the cooperative movement in his formative years, the association has served mainly to justify Meyer's leftist politics and emphasis on social reform.

Broader implications of cooperativism have been taken up by Winfried Nerdinger, Winkler, Martin Kieren, Detlef Mertins and others, yet little has been done to explore the manifestations of these secondary themes on Meyer's approach at the Bauhaus.⁴² The strong anti-authoritarianism—integral to his entire Bauhaus work in terms of pedagogy, design process and public presentation—has not received the analysis it deserves. Relying on Droste's essay about Meyer's Bauhaus curriculum and workshop structure, "Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit am Bauhaus unter Hannes Meyer," (Course Structure and Workshop Production at the Bauhaus under Hannes Meyer) this dissertation brings fresh perspectives to Meyer's internalization of cooperative values and how they played out in his Bauhaus thinking as it was "unleashed" from top-down authority on all levels including the curriculum, student exercises and expectations for the user/consumer.⁴³

While widely accepted that Meyer's Bauhaus accomplishments have been subject to a reductivist interpretive lens critical of "dogmatic communism," questions remain about whether Meyer failed to convey the social and philosophical undercurrents of his project in the public discourse. Less clear is the way that politics have distracted from paying proper attention to other intriguing story lines, themes and perspectives dealing with Meyer's Bauhaus . Building on

from mechanical and toward biological metaphors. Jeannette Redensek, "Manufacturing Gemeinschaft: Architecture, Tradition, and the Sociology of Community in Germany, 1890-1920" (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2007).

⁴²Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, *Baulehre und Entwerfen am Bauhaus 1919-1933* (Weimar: Bauhaus-Universität, 2003); Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*; Detlef Mertins, "Hannes Meyer. German Trade Unions School, Bernau. 1928-30," in *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 256-261.

⁴³Magdalena Droste, "Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit am Bauhaus unter Hannes Meyer," in *Hannes Meyer 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1989).

recent scholarship that has tangentially mentioned these broad themes, I will delve into deeper discussions by analyzing the specifics.

Clearly, Meyer's pedagogical intentions were not effectively communicated to scholar Rainer Wick, whose book *Teaching at the Bauhaus* is the standard source for English speakers for its detailed analysis of pedagogy at the Bauhaus. Wick perpetuates many of the stereotypes of Meyer as a dehumanizing force who lacked a clear pedagogy:

This development, which had already begun under Gropius, was continued...the establishment of so-called free painting classes—separated from the actual coursework and on the basis of the voluntary—in which it was still possible to cultivate individuality as a designer. Everything else, by contrast, in the form of instruction and especially in the areas of architecture and design, was dominated by teaching 'objective' solutions to form. Thus the dream of the 'homo totus' was all but over, less than a decade after the founding of the Bauhaus. Only Oscar Schlemmer made another attempt, in his ambitious, wide-ranging class 'The Human Being' in 1928-29, to work toward the totality that had been evoked often enough in Bauhaus programs. But it was in vain, for functionalist thinking and instrumentalist goals increasingly gained the upper hand under Hannes Meyer.

In comparison with Walter Gropius's more complex pedagogical thinking, which built on the maxims of the Werkbund, categories from utopian socialism, ideas from the debate over art school reform, Grunow's theory of harmonization, the neo-humanist ideals of education were rather modest. In any case, they were not permeated with reflections on pedagogy in general as Gropius's were; even the educational euphoria borne by the spirit of utopia represented by Gropius during the founding phase of the Bauhaus is not found in Meyer. Admittedly, the historical situation of 1928 provided no opportunity for this. Meyer's pedagogical thoughts and deeds were, however, imbedded in an all-embracing, socially-motivated general concept that sought to improve the living conditions of the wider public, especially the working classes.⁴⁴

Close analysis of Bauhaus publications, public and private lectures, exhibitions and the critical press suggest an incongruity between the school's contemporaneous public face and the assertion in the historiography that Meyer overtly politicized the school, and according to Wick,

⁴⁴ Rainer Wick, *Teaching at the Bauhaus* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2000), 77.

killed “the dream of *homo totus*.” But Wick failed to mention that Meyer had in fact instigated Schlemmer’s course *Der Mensch* (Man).

Meyer’s approach fit somewhere into a complex philosophical, scientific, and cultural movement of the early 20th century that strove for what historian Anne Harrington described as a “science of Wholeness” in her book *Reenchanted Science: Holism in German Culture from Wilhelm II to Hitler*. An underlying theme throughout the dissertation, Harrington’s definitions and insights provide a useful framework for reconsidering Meyer on his own terms, which were outside the purview of dialectical materialism. As she explained in her introduction:

This book tells the story of a group of German-speaking scientists who, in the early decades of the 20th century, effectively agreed with [Max] Weber’s conclusion that a certain kind of mechanistic science had “disenchanted” the world. They did not, however, believe that the process of disenchantment through science was inevitably destined to continue. Instead, these men—biologists, neurologists, and psychologists—argued that a continuing commitment to responsible science *was* compatible with an ethically and existentially meaningful picture of human existence; but only *if* one were prepared to rethink prejudices about what constituted appropriate epistemological and methodological standards for science. Under the banner of Wholeness, these scientists argued, in varying ways, that a transformed biology and psychology—one that viewed phenomena less atomistically and more “holistically,” less mechanistically and more “intuitively” –could lead to a rediscovery of a nurturing relationship with the natural world. What the old science of the Machine had wrought, a new science of Wholeness would heal.⁴⁵

Meyer’s holistic impulses ally his thinking with many of his generation who espoused *Lebensphilosophie* (Life Philosophy) and its anti-technological stance. My assertion contests the standard interpretation that Paul Betts advanced that Meyer “was also responsible for cleansing Bauhaus pedagogy of any lingering artisan ethos and/or expressionist mysticism in favor of a more ‘secularized’ design philosophy ground in the scientific principles of rational

⁴⁵ Anne Harrington, *Reenchanted Science: Holism in German Culture from Wilhelm II to Hitler* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), xvi.

production.”⁴⁶ Viewing Meyer’s Bauhaus through the lens of holism does not come completely out of the blue. A select few Meyer scholars have alluded to his “romanticism” or “poetic” approach.

In his essay “‘Anstößiges Rot.’ Hannes Meyer und der linke Baufunktionalismus—ein verdrängtes Kapitel Architekturgeschichte” (“Shocking Red: Hannes Meyer and Architectural Functionalism of the Left: a Repressed Chapter of Architectural History”), Nerdinger expands the label of “fanatical functionalist” by adding a more nuanced view of his project in terms of poetics, psychology and the cooperative.⁴⁷ Nerdinger’s perspective was shared by Martin Kieren, whose *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit, Architektur- und Gestaltungsversuche, 1919-1927* called Meyer a “Romantic” in his important account of Meyer’s early career in the Swiss cooperative movement and with the journal *ABC*.⁴⁸ Most relevant to my aims in this dissertation is Ute Poerschke’s conference paper “Hannes Meyer - Connecting Poetics and Ethics,” which began to expand the understanding of Meyer’s architecture in humanistic terms.⁴⁹

More recently, the work of others has opened up potential new avenues for rethinking Meyer’s approach. In his dissertation, “Prolegomena to the Study of Biomorphic Modernism: Biocentrism László Moholy-Nagy’s ‘New Vision’ and Ernő Kállai’s Bioromantik,” Oliver Botar adds Meyer to the *Lebensphilosophie* tradition of Moholy-Nagy and Kállai, the school’s

⁴⁶ Paul Betts, *The Authority of Everyday Objects: a Cultural History of West German Industrial Design, Weimar and Now* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 77.

⁴⁷ Winfried Nerdinger, “‘Anstößiges Rot.’ Hannes Meyer und der linke Baufunktionalismus—ein verdrängtes Kapitel Architekturgeschichte,” in *Hannes Meyer 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer*, Werner Kleinerüschkamp, ed. (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1989), 12-29.

⁴⁸ The Introduction to Kieren’s book is subtitled: “Hannes Meyer. Nachgeordneter Rettungsversuch für einen ‘verschollenen’ Romantiker.” Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*, 8-10.

⁴⁹ Poerschke, “Hannes Meyer - Connecting Poetics and Ethics.”

spokesman.⁵⁰ Mertins' concise, insightful catalogue essay "Hannes Meyer. German Trade Unions School, Bernau. 1928–30" also situates Meyer within a holistic tradition.⁵¹ These scholars have touched upon an aspect of Meyer's project that has been obscured by reductivist interpretations, raising questions about continuities and ruptures between directorships that I will examine in more depth.

Chapter One, "'New World,' New Hire: Meyer's 'Functional, Collectivist-Constructive' Teaching Philosophy in 1927," will elaborate on Meyer's background in the Swiss Cooperative movement and the art and architectural avant-gardes to explain why Gropius not only hired, but promoted Meyer to continue with the functionalist trajectory he set into place before his departure. Discussions among *Bauhäusler* about Meyer's appointment elucidate internal debates about the school's aims and lay the foundation for many enduring misconceptions about his tenure.

Meyer's turn toward holism is borne out by the guest lecturers who visited the Bauhaus between 1928 and 1930, a hallmark of Meyer's pedagogy and the subject of Chapter Two, "'Man as Unity:' Pedagogical Aims of Bauhaus Guest Lectures." The lecture series introduced students to a broad range of contemporary thought as an important component of a humanities-based education with emphases on social sciences, psychology and philosophy that distinguished it from a standard poly-technical model of education.

Meyer's theoretical building courses, the focus of Chapter Three, "Design Research and the Architectural Process," expand the purview of the school's pedagogical, curricular and

⁵⁰ Oliver Botar, "Prolegomena to the Study of Biomorphic Modernism: Biocentrism László Moholy-Nagy's 'New Vision' and Ernő Kállai's Bioromantik" (University of Toronto, 1998) Also see Oliver Botar and Isabel Wünsche, *Biocentrism and Modernism* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011).

⁵¹ Mertins, "Hannes Meyer," 256-261.

production, which were implemented to include fundamental philosophical underpinnings that Meyer outlined in a 1930 public lecture about the new architecture program. The themes of his lectures—notably holism, Gestalt and social psychology, and the eco-anarchic underpinnings of the cooperative housing movement—repudiate his legacy as a “strict functionalist.”

Finally Chapter Four, “*Bauhaus Wanderausstellung: Discursive Space as DIY Design*” considers the lectures in conjunction with the Bauhaus traveling exhibition, catalogues and press coverage to examine the exhibition as both a new marketplace and a springboard for public discourse. Presenting a synthesis of Meyer’s pedagogy and its basis in design research grounded in the cooperative movement and Gestalt principles, the exhibition, like the school, was “a station in life”—a slice of life that continues to undergo transformation, not an “end all and be all.”

Although inspired by interdisciplinary and sometimes conflicting methodologies—from biology to social sciences and psychology to anarchism and ecology—Meyer’s contributions were singular in focus and methodology. Rooted in late 19th century ideals of mutual cooperation and holism, yet foreshadowing socially-minded integrated design programs that developed in the decades to come, Meyer’s Bauhaus program marked a pivotal moment for architectural and design education. Meyer sought to instill in Bauhaus students and the wider public a new framework of theoretical inquiry about design, architecture and urbanism to prepare them for the uncertainties to come in a period of massive flux—both in society and within the architectural and design professions. Meyer called this “Unleashed Building” (*Entfesseltes Bauen*).

CHAPTER I

‘NEW WORLD,’ NEW HIRE: MEYER’S ‘FUNCTIONAL, COLLECTIVIST-CONSTRUCTIVE’
TEACHING PHILOSOPHY IN 1927

Hannes Meyer arrived in Dessau without great fanfare. Director Walter Gropius appointed him on 1 April 1927 to establish a new architecture department for the fall semester. The school’s quarterly *Bauhaus* did not explicitly announce his arrival, but introduced Meyer by way of his 1926 competition entry drawing for the Petersschule in Basel. *Bauhaus* 2 (24 April 1927) reproduced the Petersschule entry within the context of Bauhaus architectural thinking that included essays by Gropius and Bauhaus Master Georg Muche about the Törten housing estate in Dessau (1926-1928).⁵² (fig. 6) Six months later, *Bauhaus* 4 (24 October 1927) published a drawing from a second significant project—the design for the headquarters of the League of Nations in Geneva (1927)—that Meyer and his partner Hans Wittwer had just finished as Meyer left Basel for his new position in Dessau. (fig. 7) Without again mentioning his faculty appointment, the journal showcased Meyer as a rising talent within international architecture circles who would be well-suited to develop the school’s architectural ambitions.

Finally in February 1928, Gropius named Meyer as his proposed successor while quietly announcing his own resignation. The ensuing press release provided a brief overview of Meyer’s education and early career up to his initial Bauhaus appointment just ten months prior.

The current director of the Architecture Department, Hannes Meyer, upon my recommendation and that of the Masters' Council of the Bauhaus, is the proposed successor to lead the institute. Born in 1889 in Basel into a well-established family of architects, he quickly passed from an apprenticeship as a brick-layer through all stages of

⁵² See Barry Bergdoll, “Bauhaus Multiplied: Paradoxes of Architecture and Design in and after the Bauhaus,” in *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity* Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman, eds. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), fig. 30, 53.

construction site practice to senior positions and theoretical studies at technical and art schools. Active in the design firms of renowned architects in Germany and Switzerland, he founded his own architecture firm after the war. He designed and built a number of industrial and residential buildings, among which his work in the development of small housing settlements is especially noteworthy. He received an award in the design competition for the League of Nations headquarters in Geneva. In April 1927, after also becoming known for his work in the field of fine arts and modern theater, and various publications, he followed the call to come to the Bauhaus. (*Das neue Frankfurt: Monatsschrift für die Probleme moderner Gestaltung*, V. 2, No. 2 (February 1928). [Presse Folder 6510] Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin)⁵³

Daily newspapers and specialized journals reprinted the press release verbatim all over Germany.

The most significant change at the Bauhaus since its move from Weimar to Dessau in 1925-26, yet the announcement of Meyer's qualifications read like a generic list of experience.

Gropius presented his proposed successor as a natural-born architect who had worked on all facets of building and design from bricklayer to theoretician. More akin to *Bauhäusler* than builder, Meyer's experiences also included avant-garde performance, painting exhibitions, and printmaking. Though his appointment was not without detractors, Meyer's early career made him a perfect candidate to continue in the same direction that Gropius had established for the Bauhaus by 1925. Moreover, he was poised to lead the school into its next phase, characterized by both theoretical and practical architectural and design solutions for a population undergoing rapid modernization. Gropius highlighted Meyer's professional ties with industry, and the cooperative housing movement had prepared him to train students for careers in the burgeoning professionalized fields as contemporary architects and designers. Finally, having established his

⁵³ "Der gegenwärtige Leiter Bauabteilung des Instituts Hannes Meyer, ist auf Vorschlag von mir und dem Meisterrat des Bauhauses als Nachfolger in Aussicht genommen. 1889 in Basel geboren, einer alten Architektenfamilie entstammend, durchlief er, zuerst die handwerkliche Lehre als Maurer, alle Stadien der Bauplatzpraxis bis zu leitenden Stellen und das theoretische Studium an Fach- und Kunstschulen. Auf Entwurfbüros namhafter Architekten in Deutschland und der Schweiz tätig, gründete er nach dem Kriege ein eigenes Architekturbüro. Er entwarf und baute eine Reihe von Industrie- und Wohnbauten, unter denen Kleinsiedlungen besondere Beachtung fanden. Bei dem Wettbewerb für den Völkerbundpalast in Genf erhielt er einen Preis. Auch durch Arbeiten auf dem Gebiet der freien Kunst und des modernen Theaters sowie durch verschiedene Publikationen bekannt geworden, folgte er im Frühjahr 1927 einem Ruf an das Bauhaus."

reputation through publications including the Swiss *ABC: Beiträge zum Bauen* (ABC: Contributions to Building) and *Das Werk* (Work), Gropius inferred that Meyer would be a good spokesman and publicist for the school. The press release outlines Gropius' values and intentions as much as it introduces Meyer to the public. While the change in directorship had been seen as a rupture or change of direction in the history of the Bauhaus, this chapter will build on more recent scholarship that stresses the continuities between Gropius and Meyer, particularly those discussed by Droste in her essay "The Successor's Disinheritance: The Conflict between Hannes Meyer and Walter Gropius."⁵⁴

Ise Gropius, Walter Gropius' wife whose diary (*Tagebuch*) chronicles the institution from within, described the restrained tone of the inauguration as a publicity strategy to minimize public doubts about the school's stability, cohesiveness and future.⁵⁵ Meanwhile, Ise's diary and another insider account—Oskar Schlemmer's published correspondence and diary—reveal that quite a different story was unfolding behind closed doors during this particularly tumultuous year for the school.⁵⁶ Along with internal strife among both faculty and students and some reluctance to accept Meyer in his new position, Gropius had become tired of managing conflicts with the local government officials and negative criticism in the press. Within this contentious environment, Meyer jumped into the fray of ongoing discussions about contemporary visual and architectural culture as well as the school's position and role in a society grappling with rapid

⁵⁴ Hitchcock and Johnson's *International Style* and Gropius' recollections reinforced the notion of a rupture between the Gropius and Meyer eras. Also see Droste, "Successor's Disinheritance."

⁵⁵ "die mitteilung an die presse ist in sehr ruhigem ton gehalten, damit nicht aus der sache wieder eine sensation werde, was für die ruhige entwicklung des bauhauses sehr nachteilig wäre." Entry dated 4 February 1928 in Gropius, *Tagebuch*. English citations come from an unpublished translation by Ise Gropius in the Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin and German citations come from an original German-language copy in the Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*; Oskar Schlemmer, *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, trans., Krishna Winston (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1972).

transformation. An exploration of the faculty discussion of Meyer's hire and promotion sheds light on the way in which interpersonal relationships and philosophical differences have shaped Meyer's legacy. This leads to a line of inquiry that has not yet been developed in the scholarship, namely the impact of the school's collaborative nature on Meyer's intellectual development and the role of collaboration in realizing important pedagogical and curricular reforms under Meyer's directorship.

Rife with historical misunderstandings that shape the standard account of Meyer's Bauhaus-era legacy, the crucial interval between Meyer's invitation to Dessau in December 1926 and his promotion to the directorship in April 1928 deserves thorough analysis. Although scholars have begun to look more closely at this period, a synthetic account of the period has yet to be published. Droste drew from Ise's unpublished diary in her work, Wolfgang Kersten analyzed Meyer's relationship with Bauhaus painters, and Stefan Kraus and others have noted Meyer's rhetorical shift away from technological and toward biological metaphors, but they did not view the shift as evidence of Meyer's attempt to move beyond technology in architectural and design thinking as I will assert.⁵⁷

One main objective of this chapter is to lay a foundation for the discussion of Meyer's directorship in subsequent chapters. By engaging with the secondary literature, particularly the work of Martin Kieren, Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, and K. Michael Hays, I plan to start disentangling persistent storylines that took root as they unfolded.⁵⁸ Detailed examination of the evidence

⁵⁷ Wulf Herzogenrath, and Stefan Kraus, *Bauhaus Utopien: Arbeiten auf Papier* (Stuttgart: Cantz, 1988), 279-284, Botar, "Prolegomena;" Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*; Mertins, "Hannes Meyer;" Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*, 81. Martin Kieren, "From the Bauhaus to Housebuilding—Architecture and Teaching of Architecture at the Bauhaus," in *Bauhaus*, Jeannine Fiedler and Peter Feierabend, ed. (Cologne: Könemann, 2000), 560-561.

⁵⁸ Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*; Winkler, "Am Bauhaus in Dessau 1927-1930," *Architekt Hannes Meyer*, 73-80.

reveals a complex narrative of collegial discourse and collaboration that has been eclipsed by historical assumptions about Meyer's entrée into the Bauhaus.

Who was Hannes Meyer when he arrived at the Bauhaus in 1927 and what was expected of him at the time of his appointment?⁵⁹ Returning to the press release that publicized Gropius' transfer of the helm, one notable project stands out in his synopsis of Meyer's career. The League of Nations submission (Völkerbundpalast), for which Meyer and Wittwer received an honorable mention in 1927, was the only accomplishment Gropius cited by name. While it makes perfect sense that Gropius highlighted Meyer's most recent work, the 1926-27 period during his involvement with the Basel architectural circle *ABC* has come to be seen in general architectural historical studies, as well as in some Meyer literature, as the zenith of his career.

ABC. Beiträge zum Bauen was a journal published in Basel from 1924 – 1928 by a small group of reform-minded architects—Meyer, Mart Stam, Wittwer and Hans Schmidt among them—who sought a new platform to address the problem of affordable housing through functionalist design solutions.⁶⁰ In her book *ABC International Constructivist Architecture 1922-1939*, Sima Ingberman recounted how the group of leftist-leaning architects, having been marginalized by the Swiss reformist journal *Schweizerische Bauzeitung* in 1924, solicited the

⁵⁹ In his preface, Kieren posed the question about what was it about Meyer in the years 1926-27 that caught Gropius's eye. Secondly, he inquired about what happened between the Siedlung Freidorf in 1919-21 and *Petersschule* projects in 1926 to make him explore new languages of form. See Introduction, Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*, 10.

⁶⁰ Sima Ingberman, *ABC: International Constructivist Architecture, 1922-1939* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), x-xii. Detlef Mertins and Michael Jennings provide a succinct, but informative overview of the important position that journals held within the international avant-garde to promote an international dialogue about visual culture, architecture and social issues in their comprehensive examination, *G: An Avant-Garde Journal of Art, Architecture, Design, and Film, 1923-1926* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010). The introduction by Mertins and Jennings and Maria Gough's essay, "Graphic Material: El Lissitzky and the Topography of G" were useful for contextualizing *ABC* within the broader context of the international avant-garde. For Meyer's involvement with *ABC*, see Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*, 130-135.

help of Soviet architect and designer El Lissitzky to publish its own organ.⁶¹ An enthusiastic proselytizer of Constructivism in western Europe, Lissitzky had already fostered international collaborations that resulted in several periodical projects—*Veshch–Objet–Gegenstand* (Object, with writer Il’ya Ehrenburg, 1922 in Berlin), *Merz* (with Schwitters, late 1923-early 1924 in Hannover), *The Story of Two Squares* (1922 in Berlin), a narrative published in the Dutch journal *De Stijl* (1922 in Delft) and *G: Material zur elementaren Gestaltung* (G: Materials for Elemental Form-Creation, 1923-26 in Berlin).⁶² Lissitzky’s publications served as models both for ABC and Meyer’s theoretical writing through the 1920s, particularly his internationalist call to social action and emphasis on functionalism.⁶³

The ABC group played a significant role in shaping Meyer’s vision during the mid-twenties and would lead him to the Bauhaus. ABC propelled him into the contemporary international art and architecture discussions and helped establish his reputation as an up-and-comer. Meyer’s ABC colleague Stam introduced him to Gropius at the opening of the Dessau Bauhaus which quickly led to a faculty invitation. Once in Dessau, Meyer would bring several ABC collaborators to the school to teach or lecture, notably Wittwer, Stam, Schmidt and Lissitzky. Meyer defined his intentions in a letter to Gropius dated 16 February 1927, just weeks before arriving in Dessau: “The fundamental premise of my teaching will be functional,

⁶¹ Stam worked in Switzerland and Lissitzky was recuperating from tuberculosis in a Swiss sanatorium. Ingberman, *ABC*, 16.

⁶² El Lissitzky and Il’ya Ehrenburg, eds., *Veshch = Objct = Gegenstand* (Berlin: Verlag Skythen, 1922); Kurt Schwitters, ed. *Merz* (Hannover: Merzverlag, [1923] - 1932); El Lissitzky, ed. *G. Material zur elementaren Gestaltung* (Berlin-Friedenau: H. Richter, 1923 - 1926); Theo van Doesburg, ed. *De Stijl; Maandblad voor nieuwe kunst, wetenschap en kultuur* (Delft, Leiden: 1917-1932).

⁶³ Mertins and Jennings articulate an important distinction between Lissitzky’s *G* and Stam’s *ABC*, namely that *ABC* was “more strictly materialist” than *G*, which attempted to bring together spiritual (*Geistigkeit*) and material concerns that characterized German humanism since the Enlightenment in *G: An Avant-Garde Journal*, 12. Their distinction supports my argument that Meyer underwent a profound change after joining the Bauhaus faculty, as his rhetoric broke from *ABC* and became increasingly aligned with *G* when he embraced process, *Geist* and humanism.

collectivist-constructive in the vein of *ABC* and [my manifesto] ‘The New World.’”⁶⁴ This oft-repeated quotation helped plant the seed of a narrow and misleading historical narrative about Meyer that took root at that time and has subsequently been perpetuated and taken for granted. Meyer’s *ABC* reputation would linger long after his own vision evolved away from the model of functionalism that characterized the Swiss group with its Constructivist notion of architect/engineer and a focus on new materials and ease of production.

In retrospect, however, his Bauhaus years have been viewed through the lens of his 1926-27 projects and writing—the “pinnacle” of his Constructivist phase—which has led to misunderstandings about his approach at the Bauhaus. The Meyer literature shares the focus on this pivotal moment as well, but it is not presented as the singular accomplishment of his career as it is in architectural surveys. Rather, 1926-27 is viewed as the culmination of his early career (in Kieren and Hays, for example). My view is that while “The New World” and the Petersschule and the League of Nations projects represent the apex of his *ABC* affiliation from about 1924-1927, he began to reject some of its important tenets when he entered the Bauhaus community.

Meyer’s most significant contribution to *ABC* was as guest editor of the second issue in 1926 (*ABC* 2:2), which excluded any direct references to architecture or urban planning in spite of the journal’s subject. Instead of essays on building, Meyer’s issue brought together an international sampling of innovative contemporary artistic practices through short essays by several artists and designers such as Willy Baumeister, El Lissitzky, Georges Vantongerloo, Piet

⁶⁴ “die grundtendenz meines unterrichts wird absolute eine funktionell-kollektivistisch-konstruktive sein im sinne von ‘abc’ und von ‘die neue welt.’” Hannes Meyer to Walter Gropius 16 February 1927. [Bauhaus correspondence, 1923-1933, 870570-Series I] Getty Research Institute; Wolfgang Kersten included this quote in his essay “Hannes Meyer und die Kunst der Moderne, 126; Originally reprinted in Meyer-Bergner, ed., *Bauen und Gesellschaft*, 44.

Mondrian, László Moholy-Nagy and graphic designer Jan Tschichold.⁶⁵ Illustrations presented a culmination of Meyer’s experiences traveling throughout Europe and Great Britain in the years prior to this project, including painting, sculpture, textiles, photography, film, furniture, exhibition design, theater, stained glass, and graphic design—as “objects” in an expanded field of arts production.

ABC 2:2 embodied a synthetic approach to visual culture that would align Meyer with the Bauhaus and other avant-garde artist groups. Gropius took note. Indeed, through its own publications the Bauhaus participated in the international dialogue with Meyer and the *ABC* contributors.⁶⁶ In 1925 alone, the Bauhaus book series published Piet Mondrian’s *Neue Gestaltung: Neoplastizismus = Nieuwe Beelding* (Bauhausbuch 5, New Form: Neoplasticism = New Building) and Moholy-Nagy’s *Malerei Fotografie Film* (Bauhausbuch 8, Painting, Photography, Film), with excerpts also appearing in Meyer’s issue of *ABC*.

Many of these same artists and designers also found their way into “The New World,” Meyer’s 1926 essay/manifesto first published in the journal *Das Werk* (Work) as a companion piece to his *ABC* issue.⁶⁷ “The New World” embraced the promise of new technologies and production methods to reshape modern living.⁶⁸ Along with *ABC*, Meyer’s 1926 manifesto has

⁶⁵ Hannes Meyer, ed, *ABC: Beiträge für Bauen* 2, 2 (1926) included in Martin Kieren, ed. *Hannes Meyer, Architekt, 1889-1954. Schriften der zwanziger Jahre im Reprint: ABC, Bauhaus, Das Werk* (Baden, Switzerland: Verlag Lars Müller auf Anregung des Museums für Gestaltung Zürich, 1990).

⁶⁶ And the school would continue to explore the close relationship between art and architectural practices with books including J. J. P. Oud’s *Holländische Architektur* (Bauhausbuch 10, 1926) and Moholy-Nagy’s, *Von Material zu Architektur* (Bauhausbuch 14, 1929).

⁶⁷ Editors of *Das Werk* 13, no. 6 (1926) explained in a notice at the end of Meyer’s “The New World:” “To complement the theoretical views expressed in this volume, we refer you to the recent issue of the magazine *ABC*...” “Zur theoretischen Ergänzung der in diesem Sonderhefte vertretenen Anschauung verweisen wir auf die kürzlich erschienene Nummer 2 1926 der Zeitschrift *ABC*...” Meyer, “Die Neue Welt,” 236.

⁶⁸ Kieren shows similarities between Meyer’s “Die Neue Welt” and earlier manifestos, including Filippo Tommaso Marinetti’s “Futurist Manifesto” (1909) and Theo van Doesburg’s “De Stijl Manifesto” (1918) in his “Bauhaus to Housebuilding,” 143-147.

often been cited in general architectural histories as the definitive, enduring treatise of his architectural practice and philosophy. However, as Winkler, Botar, and other Meyer scholars have shown, the text was just one point along the evolutionary trajectory of his thinking—a subject upon which I will expand in subsequent chapters.⁶⁹

Meyer did not flatly reject his outlook or positions presented in *ABC* or “The New World.” His departure was more subtle. He and his *ABC* colleagues would continue in their shared commitment to examine the social, political and economic processes underlying the built environment. Meyer diverged from *ABC*’s emphasis on the use of new materials and technologies in production as the crux of affordable housing solutions by going beyond those ideas and changing the parameters of the problem to focus on a holistic study of their users in theoretical and practical Bauhaus architecture courses.

Meyer was not alone. Evidence suggests that his partner Hans Wittwer also moved beyond a preoccupation with technology-driven design advocated in *ABC*. Though Wittwer’s contribution has yet to be studied in depth and scholars have only recently begun to explore his position and influence at the Bauhaus, my initial research into his writing reveals many parallels with Meyer in both architectural background and thinking during their *ABC* period as well. For instance, Wittwer’s personal correspondence and notes from 1925 prove that he had already begun to question many tenets put forward by the *ABC* group before ever working with Meyer.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ “Die neue Welt” is rarely translated in full. A complete translation appears in Schnaidt, ed., *Hannes Meyer. The Weimar Republic Sourcebook* provides a more accurate translation, but it is an excerpt. Winkler explains in his appendix that his German text is a conflation of two versions of Meyer’s text: the 1926 text from *Das Werk* and the 1928 version published in *Bauhaus*. Winkler claims that there are only minor differences between the two versions, but I am unable to corroborate that claim without further study. Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*, 229-233.

⁷⁰ Several archival documents were published in Hans-Jakob Wittwer, *Hans Wittwer* (Zürich: GTA, 1985).

After collaborating on their seminal Petersschule and League of Nations projects between August 1926 and January 1927, Meyer brought Wittwer to the Bauhaus in the fall of 1927 to teach technical architectural courses. The following year Wittwer became head of the Bauhaus' building office (Baubüro) and would go on to oversee the construction of the Bundesschule des ADGB (Federal school of the Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, or German Trade Union Federation) in Bernau, the last building they designed in collaboration. Wittwer left the Bauhaus in 1929 to teach at the Kunstgewerbeschule Burg Giebichenstein (School of Arts and Crafts), in Halle, Germany, after falling out with Meyer over credit for his design contribution on the ADGB school.⁷¹ The fact that his architectural involvement has been overshadowed by Meyer also raises questions about his pedagogical contributions as well as his and Meyer's relationship to the *ABC* group.

While Meyer would continue to be defined by his Constructivist roots, others at the Bauhaus would not. Meyer remains a special case based on a false dichotomy between Constructivism (or material) and holism (or spiritual, *geistigkeit*). Constructivist and holistic impulses were not mutually exclusive, but were subjects of ongoing discussion among *Bauhäusler*. It is well-known that Schlemmer and Moholy-Nagy, for example, explored the intersection of these issues throughout their careers. Meyer's affinity with these two *Bauhäusler* will benefit from further scholarship, in part because their personal animosity has shaped—and possibly distorted—the historical record. A look at their brief time as Bauhaus colleagues from April 1927 (with Moholy-Nagy to March 1928 and with Schlemmer until October 1929) brings their philosophical and pedagogical kinship to the fore.

⁷¹ See *ibid.* I would like to thank Hans-Jakob Wittwer for his ongoing correspondence regarding his father's career.

In a letter to Otto Meyer dated 17 April 1927, Schlemmer highlighted this spiritual/material opposition in his account of Hannes Meyer's initial visits to the school, describing his appreciation of painting as well as his affinity with Moholy-Nagy, Hungarian painter and head of the metal workshop that was complicated by personality conflicts:

[Meyer] presented a small exhibition of his works, among them a very interesting project for the League of Nations in Geneva.

One motto of his work as an architect is: 'the organization of needs.' But this is to be understood in the broadest sense, and certainly does not exclude spiritual needs. He said that what impressed him most here were the pictures (mine and Moholy's), not the rooms in which they were hung. He especially liked some of my abstract ones, at least much more whole-heartedly than the more recent ones. He was not interested in Klee...nor Feininger..., [but was interested in] Kandinsky because of the theoretical underpinnings. In terms of character he feels closest to Moholy, although he is very critical toward much about him—his manner (officious), his false teachings (which the students also see as such and reject).⁷²

Constructivist affinities between Meyer and Moholy-Nagy were evident in *ABC* 2:2 before Meyer's Bauhaus appointment and have been widely discussed in the literature.⁷³ Not only did Meyer include Moholy-Nagy's text "Ismus oder Kunst," (Isms or Art), but he also included a photograph of his own creation that was reminiscent of Moholy-Nagy's work with photograms—*Co-op Construction 1926/I*, a glass and an egg as objects in their own right, with translucent forms in space. (fig. 8) Meyer's photographic experimentation at this time shared formal similarities with the Petersschule and League of Nations projects— elementary forms, both overlapping and transparent, set in relation to one another as forms in space. Pervious boundaries among various media make this formative exploration in *ABC* particularly intriguing and align Meyer's interests with his future colleague. By amplifying tensions between them, scholarship addressing the year spent as Bauhaus colleagues in 1927-28 eclipsed their

⁷² Oskar Schlemmer to Otto Meyer 17 April 1927, translated in Schlemmer, *Letters and Diary*, 202.

⁷³ Kieren, Hannes Meyer: *Dokumente zur Frühzeit*; Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*; Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*.

similarities, which has led to distortions in the historical understanding of Meyer's Bauhaus.⁷⁴ Hays' treatment in his 1992 book *Modernism and the Post-Humanist Subject: The Architecture of Hannes Meyer* provides a good case in point, when he focused on tensions between Moholy-Nagy and Meyer at the pivotal moment of Meyer's appointment in order to shed light on "Meyer's thinking" as a "technocratic Marxist."⁷⁵ Hays included an insightful quote from Moholy-Nagy's letter to the Masters' Council (Meisterrat) in January 1928 regarding his resignation:

As soon as creating an object becomes a specialty, and work becomes a trade, the process of education loses all vitality. There must be room for teaching the basic ideas which keep humans content, alert and vital. For this we fought and for this we exhausted ourselves. I can no longer keep up with the stronger and stronger tendency toward trade specialization in the workshops....The spirit of construction for which I and others gave all we had—and gave it gladly—has been replaced by a tendency towards application. My realm was the construction of the school and man. (Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*, 128).⁷⁶

Hays claimed that Moholy-Nagy's critique was "no doubt" directed "at Meyer's negation of traditional artistic practice and the subjectivities it engenders."⁷⁷ But art was not the subject of Moholy-Nagy's complaint. This quotation, written months before Meyer's directorship, referred to the school's emphasis on producing prototypes for mass production and an increasingly specialized curriculum that Gropius himself initiated in Weimar.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Botar's "Prolegomena" is a notable exception that will be discussed in subsequent chapters within the context of Meyer's curriculum.

⁷⁵ Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*, 129.

⁷⁶ Hays took this quotation second-hand from Sibyl Moholy-Nagy's *Moholy-Nagy: Experiments in Totality* rev. 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969), 46, 47, 46, 47. Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*, 128. Sibyl Moholy-Nagy is often cited, but she is perhaps not the most reliable source. She was not present at the Bauhaus, having married László after he left the school, yet her name confers unwarranted authority.

⁷⁷ Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*.

⁷⁸ Kenneth Frampton cites the same letter of resignation to show that Moholy-Nagy "disliked Meyer's immediate insistence on the adoption of a rigorous design method" in his *Modern Architecture: a Critical History*, 4th ed., World of Art (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2007), 129.

Hays went on to reinforce stereotypes as he continued with his analysis of their relationship:

Moholy's stress on man rather than the social-material product, his preoccupation with forms that bore no real relationship to either the actual techniques of production or the actual demands of mass consumption, and his pseudoscientific teaching methods of a 'master' all entailed a sublimationist, humanist conception of art that Meyer could not countenance. And Meyer's stress on the collectivity of the 'design brigade,' and his recasting of design practice within the categories of labor and material production, implied an undermining of artistic institutions that Moholy could not tolerate. (Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*, 129)

Hays' use of sweeping terms in this passage elide distinctions in Meyer's thinking and career. For instance as far as I know, Meyer did not adopt the term "design brigade," until after he was dismissed from the Bauhaus in August 1930 and was in Moscow under new circumstances. Moreover, Hays' choice of phrasing ignored the Pestalozzian and cooperative references to "working circles," which Meyer mentioned by name in a *Bauhaus* article in Spring of 1928.⁷⁹ Though these appear to be simple semantic distinctions, the ramifications of Hays' broad strokes gain significance in political, artistic, and philosophical arenas.

This decontextualization of Meyer's writing and sentiments leads to some general misunderstandings and questionable historical assumptions. Hays' assertion that Meyer recast "design practice within the categories of labor and material production" in the vein of the *ABC* group would be appropriate in a discussion of his 1926 text "The New World," but not in the context of Meyer's writing at the time of Moholy-Nagy's resignation two years later. Indeed, Meyer's published writing did not apply a Marxian framework of labor and means of production during his tenure at the Bauhaus. In his first essay to appear in *Bauhaus* as director, "Remarks on

⁷⁹ Pestalozzi's influences will be discussed below.

a School Project,” Meyer ignored questions of production or labor altogether.⁸⁰ Instead Meyer focused on the psychological well-being of the ADGB students vis-à-vis their relationships to one another, to the building and to their ecological surroundings.⁸¹

The only mention of construction or production appeared in the article’s concluding sentences under the subheading “Building Costs.” Meyer explained that “the demonstrative basis of construction costs is the coefficient in terms of the building’s function over the course of its lifetime. ‘Life opportunities’ of the ADGB cannot be calculated in terms of cubic meters of space (CBM).”⁸² With affordable materials and the standardized mass production advocated by Gropius and *ABC* as starting points, Meyer began to factor in humanistic aspects of building based on recent ideas in social sciences and psychology. This was a position that he would articulate more and more in subsequent texts and lectures. In his 1929 essay “Bauhaus and Society” (*Bauhaus und Gesellschaft*), for example, Meyer wrote:

This building instruction is not a theory of style. It is not a Constructivist system, and it is not a miracle of technology. It is a systemization of a living configuration, and at the same time, it clarifies physical, psychological, material and economic concerns.⁸³

⁸⁰ Hannes Meyer, “erläuterungen zum schulprojekt: grundsätze der gestaltung,” *bauhaus: zeitschrift für gestaltung* 2, 2/3 (1928): 14.

⁸¹ “die größtmögliche einwirkung auf den gewerkschaftlichen kursteilnehmer muß in einem monat erzielt werden. seine psyché muß bewußt stetigem einfluß ausgesetzt sein durch landschaft, gemeinschaft, einzelwohnraum usw. das nicht geahnte eines gemeinschaftslebens in natürlicher umgebung muß ihm wirklichkeit werden.” Translation (by DK): “The student’s psyché must consciously and steadily be influenced by the landscape, community, individual housing, etc. Unconscious cooperative life requires natural surroundings to become a reality.” *Ibid.*

⁸² “die mustergültige vergleichsbasis für die baukosten ist der leistungs-koeffizient des schulbaues zur zeit des schullebens. die lebensmöglichkeiten dieser ersten bundesschule des adgb lassen sich nicht aus den ‘cbm umbauten raumes’ errechnen.” *Ibid.*

⁸³ “diese baulehre ist keine stil-lehre. sie ist kein konstruktivistisches system, und sie ist keine mirakellehre der technik. sie ist eine systematik des lebensaufbaues, und sie klärt gleicherweise die belange des physischen, psychischen, materielle, ökonomischen.” Hannes Meyer, “bauhaus und gesellschaft,” *bauhaus: vierteljahr-zeitschrift für gestaltung* 3, 1 (1929): 2

Conjecture and assumptions about the divergent opinions of Meyer and Moholy-Nagy have overshadowed their shared desire and interest in providing students with a holistic education—a common goal that had already emerged by January 1928.⁸⁴ At the same time that Moholy-Nagy notified the Masters' Council of his forthcoming resignation because the school had drifted from his “realm,...the construction of school and man,” Meyer had begun preparing for his upcoming directorship by soliciting Schlemmer to teach a course *Der Mensch* (Man).⁸⁵ In a letter to his wife Tut dated 14 January 1928, Schlemmer recounted the first of several meetings that took place to discuss the school's “new beginning” under Meyer's direction which foregrounded a renewed emphasis on holistic humanism:

Hannes Meyer has his program ready in his pocket....The emphasis on spiritual values and related matters of course plays right into the hands of the theater group, giving it great relevance.... The human, spiritual element is supposed to be placed in the foreground once more; in fact it was almost comical to see how everyone insisted on these things, probably out of the realization that we could not continue much longer on our present course.”⁸⁶

Whether discussion of the “human, spiritual element” was instigated by Meyer or other *Bauhäusler* remains unanswered. Regardless, the curricular changes Meyer enacted reflected holistic thinking in which philosophy, psychology and science were inextricably linked and counter claims by Hays, Wick and others that technocratic dogmatism characterized Meyer's

⁸⁴ A closer investigation of Meyer's and Moholy-Nagy's relationship, as well as their pedagogical and artistic interests at the Bauhaus and after will be a subject of my future research.

⁸⁵ See Chapter II: “*Der Mensch als Einheit*. Meyer's Guest Lectures as Theoretical Humanism.”

⁸⁶ The extended entry reads: “Now plans are to be laid for the new building, just as though nothing had happened, utopian plans, but formulated in such a way that they could be carried out within the existing budget. Hannes Meyer has his program ready in his pocket. He would tell me only that he set aside plenty of room for the Theater. My negative analysis of the situation still stands, however; the theater workshop carries no weight at all. I have to hear what Meyer et. al. have in mind. The human, spiritual element is supposed to be placed in the foreground once more; in fact it was almost comical to see how everyone insisted on these things, probably out of the realization that we could not continue much longer on our present course. All Gropius said, summarizing the results of the first discussion, was that we had to set up an architecture department with a budget and some flair to it and appoint Hannes Meyer...The emphasis on spiritual values and related matters of course plays right into the hands of the theater group, giving it great relevance. I shall listen to all the debate and then say my piece. Explain what I had hoped to accomplish and why it has turned out to be impossible.” Schlemmer, *Letters and Diary*, 219-220.

tenure⁸⁷ Refuting Hays' overemphasis on *ABC* during Meyer's Bauhaus years, historian Oliver Botar's dissertation "Prolegomena to the Study of Biomorphic Modernism: Biocentrism László Moholy-Nagy's 'New Vision' and Ernő Kállai's Bioromantik" addressed affinities between Meyer and others, particularly Moholy-Nagy and Schlemmer in questions of psychology, metaphysics and a holistic, humanist pedagogical approach characterized by *Lebensphilosophie*.⁸⁸

Schlemmer described the challenges and scope of his new course and its position in the curriculum in a letter to his wife:

How does this strike you: my future subject of instruction will be "Man." I must lay in all kinds of books on the topic. It is an enormous area, and I shall have to make it worthwhile for me, treating everything from the point of view of what I find interesting. I shall also have to keep the third-semester students excited and busy: [Wassily] Kandinsky has the first semester, [Paul] Klee the second, I the third. Heredity, racial theory, reproductive biology, ethics, and so on; at least that is how I picture it. That will form a nice totality: supplemented by nude and figural drawing and anthropology. And theater! And painting! oh, oh. And publishing! no!! (Oskar Schlemmer to Tut 1 March 1929, translated in Schlemmer, *Letters and Diary*, 229)

Schlemmer also referred to some of the problematic characteristics of *Lebensphilosophie* that would become increasingly sinister when National Socialists adopted them to perpetrate the Holocaust—heredity, racial theory, and reproductive biology. These racist "scientific theories" could explain why this course has not garnered much attention in the literature. For the purposes of my argument, Schlemmer's phrasing suggests that the course was solicited and also that he

⁸⁷ When Rainer Wick describes Schlemmer's new 1928 course, *Man*, he omits any spiritual connotations to the above Schlemmer quote. He writes that the "revision in the curriculum of the coursework...in early 1928, which sought to place more emphasis on science and training—a trend Schlemmer regarded with discomfort." Wick, *Teaching at the Bauhaus*, 276. But "science," in this case, is the conflation of physiology, philosophy and psychology. Not only does Wick fail to credit Meyer for championing Schlemmer's course, but he consistently polarizes the two figures. Also see *ibid*, 279.

⁸⁸ Botar describes these holistic (or *Lebensphilosophisch*) principles as "Bio-Organicism," a subject taken up in Chapter II: "*Der Mensch als Einheit*. Meyer's Guest Lectures as Theoretical Humanism," in Botar, "Prolegomena." Schlemmer has been treated in oppositional positions by scholars including Rainer Wick and Arnd Wesemann in his essay "The Bauhaus Theater Group," in *Bauhaus*, Jeannine Fiedler and Peter Feierabend, eds. (Cologne: Konemann, 2000), 532-548.

had some leeway in its development. He explained that his “duties are to include publishing, public relations, and unfortunately also pedagogy-demagogy. With ‘great trepidation,’ for that is not my sort of thing. I don’t like playing the school master.”⁸⁹

In the months leading to Schlemmer’s departure in October 1929 to teach at the Art Academy in Breslau, his expressed disillusionment with Meyer has contributed to some misunderstandings about this stage during Meyer’s tenure. Schlemmer described the situation to Willi Baumeister in a letter dated 6 March 1929:

Then to Breslau on 24 March for a lecture. This in confidence: they are interested in me there.

All in all, it looks as though my days at the Bauhaus are numbered! I am ready to leave. People—the students and I, too—are dissatisfied with Hannes because of his boorish behavior and tactlessness. The atmosphere in the house is not good. Add to that the fact that the whole Bauhaus question will soon come up before the *Landtag* (state parliament). But don’t breathe a word to anyone!⁹⁰

Schlemmer’s account points to the extent that individual decisions became entwined with general circumstances—in this case, Meyer’s “boorishness” is bracketed by a job offer and the threat of losing state support. Yet Botar concluded that Meyer’s dogmatism led to Schlemmer’s resignation.⁹¹

More questions remain. Meyer has been charged with politicizing Bauhaus theater, for example, and widely reproduced photographs of the Bauhaus sketch group reinforce the association. (fig. 9) Arnd Wesemann’s “Bauhaus Theater Group” concluded with a misleading contradiction of the success and failure of the theater:

⁸⁹ Oskar Schlemmer to Willi Baumeister 15 February 1928, translated in Schlemmer, *Letters and Diary*, 226-227.

⁹⁰ Oskar Schlemmer to Willi Baumeister 6 March 1929, translated in *ibid.*, 240.

⁹¹ Botar, “Prolegomena,” 567.

The Bauhaus Theater Group became a familiar name, at exactly the same time that it was being politically vilified under Hannes Meyer in Dessau. Schlemmer, who in frustration accepted an appointment in Breslau, invited both Kandinsky and Klee to take over the direction of the theater. Both refused. By 1930 Meyer had led it, as an internal agitprop stage, into complete insignificance.⁹²

While the Bauhaus sketch group (*bauhaus-revue*) Wesemann referred to did indeed adopt agitprop tactics that Schlemmer criticized, Droste informs us that it was the students who formed the group, not the director.⁹³

Granted, though Schlemmer may have been frustrated with the Bauhaus when he left, it was nothing new. Since its inception in Weimar, the Bauhaus stage had been “dangling by a thread” for budgetary reasons, the question of its relevance, and the quality of its productions had also been under scrutiny.⁹⁴ Schlemmer’s diary and letters narrate his dissatisfaction at the Bauhaus and how close he came to leaving his post many times before he finally did. And despite the theater’s precarious position at the school, Meyer advocated for Schlemmer during the curricular reconfiguration in 1928. Not only did he assure Schlemmer of his position within

⁹² Wesemann, “The Bauhaus Theater Group,” 547.

⁹³ Droste, “Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit am Bauhaus unter Hannes Meyer,” 151.

⁹⁴ Ise Gropius diary entry, 19 March 1925: “Oskar Schlemmer has withdrawn his participation for the 28th since he is, understandably, not in the mood. His plan for Stuttgart has fallen flat because a local minister of the *Deutsch Nationalen* party has opposed it. For the Bauhaus a theater workshop is at the moment not supportable and the position of an artistic collaborator in Dessau is already filled. He is in a very bad situation, particularly since his wife expects her third baby.” Entry, 20 March 1925: “Visited Frau Schlemmer. The situation is really abysmal for them. The prospects in Berlin are also very feeble. Schlemmer is as always without firm decision and plan about what he is going to do. G. advised him to try to see the former Dessau intendant at the theater in Lübeck to discuss with him how he can be inserted in the planning for the theater but Schlemmer can’t pull himself together and he is going to delay everything so long until everything becomes a closed avenue for him. He had hoped for sure to be able to stay with the Bauhaus though G. had not given him sure promises as he had to others.” Entry, 28 March 1925: “...There is a new lease on life for Schlemmer. He will get a *fixum* of M. 3000.—from the city and a new house.” Entry, 22 September 1927: “Klee and Schlemmer haven’t returned to their posts after summer holiday.” Entry, 24 September 1927: “Schlemmer will return on 1 October which is embarrassing in view of his obligations to the city.” Entry, 7 September 1927: “Schlemmer theater not very good.” Ise Gropius, *Diary, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin*. Schlemmer to Willi Baumeister 15 February 1928: “I am dangling by a thread, but am dangling. new arch dept will take funds. My duties are to include publishing, public relations, and unfortunately also pedagogy-demagogy. With ‘great trepidation,’ for that is not my sort of thing. I don’t like playing the school master.” Published in Schlemmer, *Letters and Diary*, 226-227.

his new program, Meyer also increased his salary to the level of Kandinsky and Klee.⁹⁵ Moreover, Meyer would showcase diagrams and maquettes from Schlemmer's *Man* course in publicity material, including the 1929 school prospectus *Junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!* and in the Bauhaus traveling exhibition in 1929-30.

The circumstances of Schlemmer's departure are open to speculation about interpersonal relationships, funding, outside pressures and even student preferences. Schlemmer's diary and letters suggest that he liked Meyer personally and approved of his curricular changes at the time of Meyer's promotion to director. He wrote to Otto Meyer at the end of February 1928: "Hannes Meyer, himself no uncontroversial figure, will keep things going in his realistic, calm, sensible way. When Gropius leaves, there will be a mite less aristocratic atmosphere, a mite less élan."⁹⁶ A few months later he praised Meyer's "slow and cautious" approach to repair the school's relationship to the city government and the public, as well as a "valuable innovation" in the new curriculum that replaced the "hodge-podge of subjects" with two days devoted to art and theory, three days for workshops and classes and a free day on Saturday for sports and excursions.⁹⁷

Parallels went beyond collegiality. They shared a common basis in holistic thought which is especially evident in their writings from 1928-29. Appearing in the magazine *Bauhaus 2/3* (1928), Schlemmer's course description for *Man* expressed sentiments similar to Meyer's own architectural and pedagogical thinking mentioned above in "Remarks on a School Project" and in other writing from the time such as "Building" (Bauen, 1928) and "Bauhaus and Society" (1929). The description read:

⁹⁵ "[Meyer] would tell me only that he set aside plenty of room for the Theater." Oskar Schlemmer to Tut Schlemmer 14 January 1928, translated in Schlemmer, *Letters and Diary*, 219-220.

⁹⁶ Oskar Schlemmer to Otto Meyer 27 February 1928, *ibid.*, 228.

⁹⁷ Oskar Schlemmer to Otto Meyer 13 April 1928, *ibid.*, 231.

For the ‘new life’—representing a modern world and attitude toward living—the acknowledgment of man as a cosmic being is indispensable. Man’s conditions for existence, his relationship to the natural and constructed synthetic environments, his mechanism and organism, the manifestations of his material, spiritual and intellectual presence—in short, man as a physical and spiritual being is an area of instruction and study that is just as necessary as it is significant. It is organized into three parts: the formal, the biological and the philosophical, corresponding with the graphic representation, the scientific domain and the transcendental world of ideas. In the instructional mode the three parts alternate then coalesce with each other so that a unified understanding of the totality of the concept of man may at last be achieved. (Oskar Schlemmer, "unterrichtsgebiete: der mensch," *bauhaus: zeitschrift für gestaltung* 2, 3/4 (1928): 23)⁹⁸

Before Meyer joined the Bauhaus faculty and these holistic philosophical parallels emerged in terms spanning individual, social, and environmental psychology, Meyer and Schlemmer both explored their ideas in the realm of experimental theater. Meyer’s early career with the Swiss cooperative housing movement coalesced with the modernist stage in his play, “Das Propagandatheater Co-op” (“Co-op Propaganda Theater”). Schlemmer introduced readers to the newest faculty member’s plays in *Bauhaus* 3 (10 July 1927) when he served as guest editor.⁹⁹ (fig.10) “Co-op Propaganda Theater” appeared (originally published in 1923 and again in 1924) within the context of short essays by Kandinsky and Moholy-Nagy relating their work to theater.

Meyer’s foray into theater was just one component of a larger exhibition he curated for the United Swiss Cooperative Union (VSK) in the Swiss hall of the *Exposition internationale de la coopération et des œuvres sociales* (EICOS; International Exhibition of Cooperatives and

⁹⁸ “seine existenzbedingungen seine beziehungen zur natürlichen und künstlichen umwelt, sein mechanismus und organismus, seine materielle, spirituelle und intellektuelle erscheinungsform, kurz: der mensch als körperliches und geistliches wesen ist als unterrichtsgebiet ebenso notwendig als bedeutsam. es gliedert sich, entsprechend der grafischen darstellung, dem naturwissenschaftlichen aufbau und der transzendenten ideenwelt in drei teile, den formalen, den biologischen und den filosofischen teil. im unterricht laufen die drei teile wechselweise nebeneinander, um sich zuletzt zur totalität des begriffes mensch zu vereinen.”

⁹⁹ Schlemmer’s issue of *bauhaus* drew mainly from a lecture he gave to the *Kreis der Freunde des Bauhauses* (Circle of Friends of the Bauhaus) on 16 March 1927 in which he outlined the current state of the Bauhaus theater.

Social Work). The exhibition first took place in Ghent, Belgium from June 15th – September 15, 1924 and then traveled to the Siedlung Freidorf (Basel) the following month.¹⁰⁰ (fig. 11) Freidorf (built 1919-1924), Meyer’s first major architectural commission, was his home from late 1921-early 1926 and main employer until 1925.¹⁰¹ The experience played a formative role in his development as an architect, educator and urban planner.

As Gropius mentioned in the public announcement of Meyer’s appointment quoted above, Meyer came from a family of Basel architects and builders. Although architecture was a natural career choice, his bourgeois background afforded him opportunities to experiment with other related lines of work. Forays into the visual arts, design, town planning and theater prepared him for his Bauhaus leadership roles. Meyer himself highlighted his development and accomplishments in an autobiographical timeline that was published in Claude Schnaidt’s 1965 ground-breaking monograph *Hannes Meyer: Bauten, Projekte und Schriften*. (Buildings, Projects, and Writings).¹⁰²

Meyer rarely mentioned that he spent six years in a Basel orphanage after his father’s suicide in 1899. Biographer and historian Martin Kieren discussed the impact of first-hand experience with pedagogical reform and communal living during these formative years in the “Christian-bourgeois collective.”¹⁰³ During his studies from 1905 to 1909 at the Gewerbeschule Basel (ages 14 to 18), Meyer gained practical training as an apprentice mason, a draughtsman

¹⁰⁰ Martin Kieren, “The Bauhaus on the Road to Production Cooperative: the Director Hannes Meyer,” in *Bauhaus*, Jeannine Fiedler and Peter Feierabend, eds. (Cologne: Könemann, 1999), 204-215.

¹⁰¹ Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*, 32.

¹⁰² Hannes Meyer, “Autobiographical Notes,” in Schnaidt, ed., *Hannes Meyer*, 9-12.

¹⁰³ Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*, 16-19.

and a site superintendent with the building and architectural firm Gebrüder Stamm—experiences that would inform his life-long empathy and respect for skilled labor.

Upon completion of formal education, Meyer embarked on his career in Berlin (1905-12) where he worked in the architecture studio of Emil Schaudt while attending night classes at the Kunstgewerbeschule (School of Applied Arts [no further detail given in his autobiographical notes]) and the Landwirtschafts-Akademie (Agricultural Academy), including course work in “aesthetics, economics and land reform, designing housing estates...and an advanced course in urban planning.”¹⁰⁴ Meyer became deeply absorbed in the issues of land reform and urban planning—life-long preoccupations that were also vital within his Berlin academic and professional circles. Like many progressive architects from all over Europe, Meyer traveled to the United Kingdom in 1912-13, where the housing reform, the garden city, and cooperative movements first took hold before spreading to the rest of Europe and the United States.

By the mid- nineteenth century, there were more than 1,000 cooperative societies in the United Kingdom ranging from trade unions to agricultural and housing cooperatives. In the broadest sense, cooperatives were democratically owned and operated by their members and represented a so-called “third way” between capitalism and communism. Meyer visited and studied the garden cities in Bourneville, Letchworth and the Hampstead Garden Suburb which had a tremendous impact on him, both in terms of architectural ideals and in his socio-political outlook and regarding community-based self-sufficiency, egalitarianism, and the integration of buildings and ecology.

Meyer brought his ideas about the garden city model back to the continent with a commission from the Swiss Co-operative Union (VSK) to build the Siedlung Freidorf (Freidorf

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 9.

housing development) in the town Muttensz bei Basel, which was built 1919-21.¹⁰⁵ The men behind Freidorf—Bernard Jäggi, Henry Faucherre (professor of political economy, University of Zurich),¹⁰⁶ Karl Mündig and Rudolf Kündig –were developers and intellectuals who sought practical solutions to the widespread destruction and social, political and economic upheavals in Switzerland caused by the First World War. Expressing their idealism in a 12-page pamphlet called *Die Siedlung Freidorf (1919 -1921)*, they explained logistics of the project along with its inspiration and philosophical motivations.¹⁰⁷ As Kieren, Winkler and Hays have written, Freidorf’s founders looked to Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), the Swiss educational reformer whose ideas bridged pedagogy and the cooperative movement. It was this intersection of ideas that would also have a profound impact on Gropius and the masters of the early Bauhaus, as well as on Meyer himself.¹⁰⁸

Pestalozzi is best known as one of the founders of modern progressive education. He pioneered the idea that children learned best through their own active exploration rather than through the traditional methods of rote memorization in a rigid formal classroom structure—fundamental notions to Bauhaus pedagogy throughout the life of the school. Meyer expanded on Pestalozzi’s methods in the development of his Bauhaus curriculum and pedagogy to include

¹⁰⁵ For more on the Siedlung Freidorf, see *ibid.*, 31-72; Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*, 32-45; Michael Koch, “Vom Siedlungsbau zum Lebensbau: Hannes Meyers städtebauliche Arbeiten im Kontext der Diskussion in dem zwanziger Jahren,” in *Hannes Meyer 1889-1954: Architect, Urbanist, Lehrer*, Werner Kleinerüschkamp, ed. (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1989), 34-58; Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*, 47-48, 85-90.

¹⁰⁶ According to Hays, Faucherre was a professor of political economy, a field now more generally called economics. Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*, 47.

¹⁰⁷ Johann Friedrich Schär, Henri Faucherre, and Hannes Meyer, *Die Siedlung Freidorf* (Basel: Buchhandlung der Verband der Schweizerischen Konsumvereine, 1921).

¹⁰⁸ Bauhaus scholarship would benefit from deeper analysis of the relationship between educational reform and the cooperative movement.

group (“cooperative”) learning that capitalized on each individual’s abilities to contribute to the whole.

Less commonly known was the application of Pestalozzi’s educational ideas to greater societal issues: for example, the tenet that individualized learning through doing carried over to a broader context of self-determination. In his novel *Leonard and Gertrude* (1781), for example, Pestalozzi’s “good society” began at home with the mother and expanded into ever-larger contexts—from home, to town, to state. As J.F. Schär explained in the Foreword to *Die Freidorf Siedlung*, Pestalozzi taught:

When a family that is led by a good mother who is endowed with the virtues of domesticity and thrift, of doing good and expressing gratitude, develops and practices quiet piety and charity, its influence spreads to ennoble the circles of neighbors and finally the whole community.¹⁰⁹

From home to neighborhood to community, Pestalozzi’s basic principles are cited at length in the form of a detailed, narrative outline as the foundation of the “Guidelines and Educational Principles for the Freidorf Cooperative Housing Estate” and appear in Meyer’s architecture student Arie Scharon’s notes from class.¹¹⁰

Self-sufficiency and neighborly mutual assistance on the local level point to some of the political ramifications of cooperative movements. By working together, a local community could create a society that functioned as a counterweight to both the “anti-social” aspects of capitalism

¹⁰⁹ “Wo von der durch eine gute Mutter geleiteten Familie aus die Tugenden der Häuslichkeit und Sparsamkeit, des Wohltuns und der Dankbarkeit, der stillen Frömmigkeit und Nächstenliebe entwicht und geübt werden, und wie diese Tugenden auf die nachbarlichen Kreise und schließlich auf die ganze Gemeinde veredelnd einwirken.” J.F.Schär, Foreword, *Die Siedlung Freidorf*, 13. This quote also appears in Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*, 36.

¹¹⁰ Schär, Faucherre, and Meyer, *Die Siedlung Freidorf*, 85-89; Meyer student Arie Scharon, Lecture notes from Hannes Meyer's architecture course, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin [4 handwritten pages about "Genossenschaft" dated 14 November 1927].

and the “dictatorship of political socialism.”¹¹¹ Although the *Freidorf* authors described their party politics as neutral, this socio-political position satisfied few.¹¹² Meyer pointed out the absurdity of the contradictory criticism from all sides with an irreverent attitude akin to that espoused by proponents of Dada or Futurism, when he wrote in 1925:

Oh, the horror of this new place: for the bourgeois, a red nest; for the Soviets, not red enough; for the aesthete, the barracks; for the believers, life without religion; for the loner, a reformatory; for the business man, attempted homicide of his business model; and for the members of the first full Swiss cooperative and a rarity in Europe: it is the Freidorf Cooperative Housing Estate.¹¹³

Meyer’s comment was especially ironic in light of the housing cooperative’s design. The overall scheme at Freidorf was centered around a communal hall with symmetrical buildings punctuated by individual gardens with a public green influenced by English garden city. In retrospect in 1933, Meyer described the design of the community as follows:

By means of [a modular system of an architectural order], all of the external spaces (squares, streets, gardens) and all of the public internal spaces (school, restaurant, shop, meeting rooms) were laid out in an artistic pattern which would be perceived by those living there as the spatial harmony of proportion.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Bernard Jaeggi, “Aufbau und Entwicklung,” Henry Faucherre and Hannes Meyer, *Siedlungsgenossenschaft Freidorf* (Basel: Buchdruckerei des Verbandes schweiz. Konsumvereine, 1922): 10-12. Quoted in Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*, 34. Jaeggi was the president of the business commission of the United Swiss Cooperative Union (Verband der Schweizerischen Konsumvereine or VSK).

¹¹² “Ausser durch die ökonomischen Anstalten und Einrichtungen der Genossenschaft sucht sie ihre Zwecke auch auf ideellem Wege zu erreichen und um ihr hierfür die unbedingt erforderliche Selbstständigkeit und Unabhängigkeit zu sichern, ist...erklärt: Die Genossenschaft ist parteipolitisch und konfessionell neutral und schliesst agitorische Bestrebungen dieser Art in ihrem Kreise und auf ihrem Boden aus.“ Schär, Faucherre, and Meyer, *Die Siedlung Freidorf*, 85.

¹¹³ “Dem Erdkundigen ein neuer Ort auf der Siegfried-karte, dem Bourgeois rotes Nest, dem Sowjetstern nicht rot genug, dem Ästheten Kaserne, dem Gläubigen Stätte der Religionslosigkeit, dem Eigenbrötler Zwangserziehungsanstalt, dem Privathändler Totschlagsversuch an seiner Wirtschaftsform, und dem Genossenschafter die erste schweizerische Vollgenossenschaft und eine kooperative Rarität Europas: Das ist die Siedlungsgenossenschaft Freidorf.” {Meyer, 1925 #366}.

¹¹⁴ Hannes Meyer, “How I work,” in *Architektura CCCP* Nr. 6 (1933). Moscow. Translated in Schnaidt, ed., *Hannes Meyer*, 20-21.

By the time he began teaching at the Bauhaus, Meyer had already rejected the rhetoric of “artistic patterning,” although its modularity appealed to Gropius when considering Meyer for the job.¹¹⁵ Limiting the design to three standardized housing types kept down costs, but practical and symbolic meanings were married to accommodate lifestyles of different social strata without losing a more egalitarian uniformity of appearance or concept. Moreover, Palladian symmetry symbolized the Coop’s social harmony and red paint was a gesture of protest.¹¹⁶ Meyer extolled the experience of “living together in a truly co-operative community in the *Wabebau* (honeycomb cells) of an estate.”¹¹⁷ This symbolic and pragmatic organizational principle of the honeycomb would be discussed in Meyer’s theoretical architecture courses and also inform his design of the ADGB building six years later. (figs. 12 a-b)¹¹⁸

Contrary to Meyer’s reputation as a “radical functionalist,” several scholars, including Rosemarie Bletter and Nerdinger, have argued that his work retained elements of poetic symbolism throughout his career.¹¹⁹ Kieren went so far as to label Meyer a “hidden romantic,” positioning him right alongside Gropius in the early 1920s.¹²⁰ Although both men downplayed their symbolic tendencies as reactions against the chaotic aftermath of the First World War, this

¹¹⁵ Meyer was already critical of this project by 1925. See Meyer, “Die Siedlung Freidorf.”

¹¹⁶ Hays refers to these poetics as “applied psychology” in *Posthumanist Subject*, 85-88. Meyer wrote about the red paint in 1921 (Schär, Faucherre, and Meyer, *Die Siedlung Freidorf*) and in 1925 when he wrote: “Ein Zellenbau in stumpfern Rot. Zwar vor Anstrich schon verblaßt im demokratischen Scheine protestierender Siedlerversammlung. Immerhin ein Rot.” Meyer, “Siedlung Freidorf,” 47-48; 85-90. Also quoted in Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*, 43.

¹¹⁷ Hannes Meyer, “Der Baugedanke,” *Siedlungsgenossenschaft Freidorf*, 1922. Translated in Schnaidt, ed., *Hannes Meyer*, 57.

¹¹⁸ Scharon, Lecture notes from Hannes Meyer's architecture course.

¹¹⁹ Rosemarie Haag Bletter, Introduction to Behne, *The Modern Functional Building*; Nerdinger, “Anstößiges Rot.”

¹²⁰ The Introduction to Kieren’s book is subtitled: “Hannes Meyer. Nachgeordneter Rettungsversuch für einen ‘verschollenen’ Romantiker.” Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*, 8-10.

shared lineage broadens our understanding of Gropius' decision to hire Meyer.¹²¹ Moreover, symbolic elements in Meyer's Bauhaus work supports the notion that there are many continuities at the school between the early and later periods rather than an abrupt rupture in 1928 as some historians have suggested.

Meyer's penchant for symbolism and the Pestalozzian ideal of active engagement shaped his 1924 VSK exhibition in Ghent as well. Meyer imagined a synthesis of performance, critical distance, art, and didactics that brought a new Swiss model of society to life. The theatrical performances, for example, were entertaining and helped to draw an international audience to the exhibition itself. Meyer succeeded in creating a "living representation of the state' instead of a 'dead exhibition stand'" with approximately 100 performances over the three-month period that drew 15,000 "working people" (*Arbeitsvolk*).¹²²

In "Theater Co-op," Meyer and his collaborator Jean Bard staged a series of six short "gesture plays" (*Gebärdenspiele*) espousing the virtues of "Swiss cooperative living" that addressed the "core issues of work, family, clothing and commerce."¹²³ Though their message was not new, the means of expression situated the project within the context of contemporary vanguard theatrical practices. Meyer and Bard structured the plays with simple oppositions: the co-op was represented as an emotional, intellectual man as opposed to the soulless artificiality of a doll (*Puppe*), representing "anti-co-op." With loud music blaring from a record player, traditional portrayals of hardship and woe were accompanied by military marches, juxtaposed with episodes of joyful respite, accompanied by jazz and traditional folk songs. (fig. 13)

¹²¹ Meyer himself expressed his own critique of symbolic aspects in 1925 in "Siedlung Freidorf."

¹²² "Versuch einer 'lebendigen Landesvertretung' statt eines 'toten Ausstellungsstandes.'" Hannes Meyer and Jean Bard, *Das Theater CO-OP*, Verband der Schweizerischen Konsumvereine (Baden: Verlag Lars Müller, 1924). Reprinted in Kieren, ed., *Meyer Schriften*.

¹²³ Ibid.

These dichotomies did more than espouse the virtues of cooperative living. Employing strategies rooted in Russian formalism that look forward to the epic theater in the tradition of Erwin Piscator or Berthold Brecht, Meyer sought to shock or activate the audience into critical thinking about the plight of everyman rather than allow the audience to remain passive observers who lose themselves within the emotional drama of the story.¹²⁴ The playbill explained that the gesture plays were “pictures without words” or “snippets from life without introduction, without climax, without apotheosis—only descriptions of the present without beginning and without end.” Intentionally anti-literary or narrative, the stilted mannerisms of the actors and life-sized marionettes echoed the mechanized rhythm of popular music that was amplified from a phonograph. The record player, a symbol of modern technology, became an important actor in its own right by virtue of its prominent position on an embedded wall shelf at the side of the stage. Although didactic in subject and purposes, these were not dour morality plays. The body, light, color, noise, and movement “shook the human soul” and entertained audiences.¹²⁵

One of the first examples from Meyer’s career introduced to the Bauhaus community via *Bauhaus*, the theatrical piece encompassed aspects of his background that would go on to shape the Bauhaus during his tenure: the intersection of avant-gardist practices with the socio-political, economic and pedagogical underpinnings of the co-operative movement. The various incarnations of the exhibition—as object, in performance and in print—offer a unique historical

¹²⁴ Brecht was developing his epic theater during this time and Meyer’s techniques bring to mind his distanciation (*Verfremdungseffekt*) and Viktor Schlovsky’s description of “making strange” in his 1917 essay “Art as Device.” See Douglas Robinson, *Estrangement and the Somatics of Literature: Tolstoy, Shklovsky, Brecht*, Parallax (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

¹²⁵ “So entstanden als ‘Bilder ohne Worte’ die vier Gebärdenspiele; Ausschnitte aus dem Leben, ohne Einleitung, ohne Steigerung zum Spielschluss, ohne Apotheose, —nur Zustandsschilderungen, ohne Anfang und ohne Ende....Freudiges Bekenntnis zur Synthese des absoluten Propagandatheaters mit dem Ziel: Menschenseelen durch das Schau-Spiel von Körper, Licht, Farbe, Geräusch und Bewegung zu erschüttern.” Meyer and Bard, *Das Theater CO-OP*.

perspective into Meyer's conceptual forays into further developments in commodity culture, theatricality, art and design.

In conjunction with a second run of the performance series and exhibition at the Siedlung Freidorf in October 1924, Meyer produced a brochure that would subsequently appear in the Swiss periodical *Das Werk* and later in *Bauhaus*.¹²⁶ (fig. 14) Meyer adapted some of the same theater techniques to the printed page to provoke the reader into critical analysis. Dialogue and photographs of two plays in situ were reproduced in *Bauhaus*: “Die Arbeit Co-op” (Work Co-op) and “Das Kleid Co-op” (Clothing Co-op). First, the didactic aim was stated explicitly: “Theme: contrast piece-meal work of the private business with the wage labor of the cooperative association.” Then, staccato sentences described the action: “A work day! A factory worker in the dark of the rear stage. She yawns. She is doing piecework. Piecework is death...” And finally, a symbolic reawakening: “In the light at stage front, a worker's co-op. He reads and smokes a pipe. She awakens. She sees in a world—lightness [holiness].”¹²⁷

Dissemination of the message to a wider audience was just one of the benefits of transposing the performances to print. Hindsight and editing also served Meyer well. “Our artistic cooperation” (Unsere künstlerische Cooperation) in the initial 1924 pamphlet became “work cooperative” (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft*) in *Bauhaus*—replacing “art” with the “worker.” And “theater” became “agit-prop theater” (*Propagandatheater*). According to Martin Kieren, this shift was not merely semantic, but articulated Meyer's conceptual progression from fine arts to

¹²⁶ After its initial publication in the program (cited above) accompanying the second series of performances and vitrine exhibition at the Siedlung Freidorf in October, 1924, the text appeared in Hannes Meyer and Jean Bard, “Das Theater Co-op,” *Das Werk* 12, 11 (1924).

¹²⁷ “die arbeit co-op. thema: gegensatz der akkordarbeit im privatbetrieb und der lohnarbeit im genossenschaftsbetrieb ...ein arbeitstag! im dunkel der hinterbühne eine fabriklerin. sie gähnt. sie schafft akkord. akkord ist tot.... in der helle der vorderbühne ein arbeiter co-op. er liest und pfeift....sie ist wach. sie blickt in eine welt—heiligkeit.” Hannes Meyer and Jean Bard, “das propagandatheater co-op,” *bauhaus*, 3 (1927): 5.

Constructivism/Productivism.¹²⁸ Like his contemporaries in avant-garde artistic and architectural circles, Dutch graphic designer Piet Zwart, Russian Constructivists Varvara Stepanova and Alexander Rodchenko, and German playwright Brecht among them, Meyer was rethinking how to make artistic production relevant to contemporary society.

The theater occupied just a portion of a larger exhibition hall promoting the VSK. (fig. 15) It was an all-encompassing environment in which information was conveyed through multiple disciplines that operated on several levels: symbolic, didactic and abstract. Meyer described the exhibition hall in *Das Werk*:

The hall itself was painted ‘signal-red’ to convey all over warmth as agit-prop and became a provocateur for propaganda: signal-red floor, signal-red benches, signal-red mountings on the walls.... At the end of the room, signal-red letters ‘le théâtre co-op’ appear over the rectangular recess of the stage and the pavilion holding the mechanical, wind-up phonograph.”¹²⁹

Red was the primary visual unifying characteristic of the motley assortment of objects lining the hall’s perimeter with the performing stage and record player along the far wall. The exhibition was meant to debunk stereotypical Swiss products, such as “cow, chalet, chocolate and young women in traditional costume.”¹³⁰ Representational depictions of residents at work, home and play extended out along the side walls, and finally charts and diagrams containing factual information about Swiss cooperative economies filled the final wall.

¹²⁸ Kieren describes Theater-Co-op as Meyer’s first adaptation of Constructivist principles of Productivism and the “absolute” in which the object embodies rather than represents. Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*, 96-98.

¹²⁹ “signalisierte allüberall Wärme: signalrote Decke, signalrote Sitzbänke, signalrote Einfassung der Bilderbogen an den Saalwänden. In der Saalmitte ein übergrosser Glas-Schaukasten: signalrotes Aquarium der Co-op-Artikel genossenschaftlicher Produktion. Am Saalende über Rechtecksausschnitt der Bühne und musikdosenhaftem Phonopavillon in signalroten Lettern: LE THEÄTRE CO-OP.“ Meyer and Bard, “Das Theater Co-op (*Das Werk*), 329.

¹³⁰ Meyer and Bard, “das propagandatheater co-op,” 5.

Surrounded by didactic text and social-realist images, a large glass showcase (vitrine) stood in the center of the room containing Meyer's "Co-op Vitrine"—an unusual display of packaged co-op goods that were piled, aligned and arranged in a formal installation. Transcending the quotidian, daily bread became simultaneously an art object and a social critique.¹³¹ (fig. 16)

The same everyday co-op goods included in the exhibition were sold in *Siedlung* stores where residents did their shopping.¹³² A contemporaneous advertisement, which promised the highest quality and affordable prices, offered some thirty different products packaged under the direction of the VSK including spices, honey, olive oil, steel wool, shoe polish, soap and stationery. (fig. 17) The size, shape and material of the containers gave clues about the contents, but the labels shared a generic co-op label that Meyer had designed for Freidorf. The cooperative's standardized cornucopia of bounty promoted the ideal that the good life could be had by all. Meyer's installation gave visual representation to the cooperative ideals of autonomy and self-sufficiency that would become central to his reforms at the Bauhaus in curriculum and production.

The vitrine was as much an experiment with modernist practices as it was about Meyer's socio-political concerns. Placing the formal arrangement under glass removed the products from their original everyday uses and transformed them into something entirely new and original—an aestheticized object. Instead of presenting a traditional illusionary representation of the world, these everyday objects operated on two levels: as mundane objects and as works of art. Meyer toyed with this distinction by allowing one line of goods to seep over the edge of the vitrine. The

¹³¹ See "Co-op 3. Vitrine Co-op," Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*, 99-103.

¹³² *Bedarfsdeckung* (every day goods or fulfilling everyday needs)

contemplative object behind glass enters the viewer's real space, literally blurring the boundaries between the two, and finite space becomes infinite—an aestheticized gesture of “art into life.” The vitrine display's formal qualities—its asymmetry, the combination of various sizes and shapes and the rhythmic seriality of the display —evoked the tension and dynamism of modern life and actively engaged the viewer.

The vitrine can also be understood in architectural terms: as Kieren described it, the objects become like a city with diverse buildings, streets and bridges, through which the viewer's eye strolls.¹³³ It can be read as a three-dimensional isometric projection—a sculptural architectural rendering—that blurs the boundaries between the object and the spectator's space or between art and life.

In addition to a platform for Meyer's experimentation with creative and didactic goals, the VSK exhibition also served as Meyer's entrée into the international scene. He expanded his circle of colleagues, along with his own reputation. During several tours to study contemporary art and cooperative movements in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Scandinavia, he met artists, designers and architects: Theo van Doesburg, Gerrit Rietveld and George Vantongerloo in the Netherlands, Russian Constructivist El Lissitzky, and architects associated with the French journal *L'Esprit Nouveau*, including Pierre Jeanneret and Le Corbusier. These connections were invaluable to his creative development and led to two noteworthy projects in Meyer's early career. First, stemming from his time in Ghent, he organized a show for the Kunsthalle Basel: *Ausstellung belgischer Kunst* (Exhibition of Belgian Art, 15 March - 5 April 1925); and secondly, he became involved with the *ABC* group in Basel.

¹³³ Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*, 101-102.

Meyer's exhibition at the Kunsthalle Basel presented a survey of modern Belgian painting and sculpture ranging from 19th century artists (such as Constantin Meunier and James Ensor) alongside established, turn-of-the-century artists (including George Minne), and finally art work that exemplified various movements including Expressionism and Purism (Fritz van den Berghe, Gustave de Smet and Floris Jaspers).¹³⁴ The exhibition catalogue only included a checklist and few reproductions, but Meyer's article "Junge Kunst in Belgien" (Young Art in Belgium) published in *Das Werk* a few months later shed light on Meyer's thinking about modern art and architecture.¹³⁵

In the article, despite its new focus on abstraction exemplified by black and white linocuts by Marc Lemans and Karel Maes, painting and sculpture took a subordinate position to urban planning, architecture and design. (fig. 18) Predicated on his belief that Belgian culture had been radically transformed by the First World War, Meyer advocated a fresh break from history and historical styles by championing internationalism, abstraction and standardized building methods. With language and imagery typical of reformers and the artistic vanguard in the early 1920s, he wrote:¹³⁶

The postwar period comes rushing in with the retreating enemy: with reparation and reconstruction; with standardization and air service and propaganda films and abstract art; with Henry Ford and Handley-Page and Charlie Chaplin and Fernand Léger; with Bolshevism and Dadaism and Surrealism and Zenithism and Superidealism. The new International comes through the young Belgium.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Hannes Meyer, *Ausstellung Belgischer Kunst* (Basel: Kunsthalle Basel, 1925). Library, Kunsthalle Basel.

¹³⁵ Hannes Meyer, "Junge Kunst in Belgien," *Das Werk* 12, No. 9 (1925): 257-276

¹³⁶ An artist, architect, typographer, exhibition designer and committed Communist, Lissitzky was pivotal in propagating Constructivist artistic and theoretical practices throughout Europe. His exhibition and catalogue for the *Erste Russische Kunstausstellung* at the Galerie Van Diemen introduced the latest Russian art to the west in December 1922 and at the same time, his collaborations resulted in several periodical projects, including *Veshch—Objet—Gegenstand* (with writer Il'ya Ehrenburg, 1922), *Merz* (with Schwitters, 1924) and his children's book *The Story of Two Squares* (Berlin, 1922), which was also published in *De Stijl* (1922).

¹³⁷ "Mit abziehenden Feinde bricht die Nachkriegszeit herein. Mit Wiedergutmachung und Wiederaufbau. Mit Standardisierung und Flugdienst und Propagandafilm und abstrakter Kunst. Mit Henry Ford und Handley-Page

Meyer's 1925 article continued with this line of reasoning and marked his turn toward technological functionalism as an expression of modernity and modernism. Foreshadowing his 1926 manifesto, "The New World," Meyer listed other "traditionless children of [the current] epoch" including "the neon sign, airplane, film, and the women's bicycle." Beauty in a car, motorcycle and phonograph would be expressed in their function because they show "a new form for a new time...unaffected and unadorned."¹³⁸ The catalogue celebrated modernity in all its forms, and Meyer showcased "La Cité *Moderne*" in Berchem-sur-Brussels on the title page as the "crown jewel." (fig. 19) Designed by the influential Belgian architect Victor Bourgeois, this 1922 housing development signaled Meyer's ongoing engagement with cooperative projects and new international architecture that would lead him to the Bauhaus via *ABC*.¹³⁹

Gropius and Meyer met at the opening ceremonies for the Dessau building on 4-5 December 1926 thanks to their mutual acquaintance associated with *ABC*, dutch architect Mart Stam. The Dessau opening ceremonies marked a new era after a very difficult phase for the Bauhaus and for Gropius as its director—first losing public support and state funding in Weimar in 1924, then the search for a new host city, and finally the construction of the new Bauhaus buildings in 1925-26. Significant accomplishments in their own right, the iconic Bauhaus building and masters' houses represented a fresh start. (figs. 20 and 21) Modern, industrial and forward-looking—just what Mayor Fritz Hesse wanted for his city when he fought hard to

und Charlie Chaplin und Fernand Léger. Mit Bolschewismus und Dadaismus und Surrealismus und Zenitismus und Superidealismus. Die neue Internationale zieht ins junge Belgien." Meyer, "Junge Kunst in Belgien," 269.

¹³⁸ "Sie zeugen, ungeziert und unverziert, für einer neuen Zeit neue Art." Ibid., 305.

¹³⁹ Meyer and Bourgeois would both attend the first CIAM (*Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne*) meeting in La Sarraz in 1928.

procure the Bauhaus for Dessau. Critic Edith Schulze reported in the architectural journal *Die Wohnung*:

This small, central German city not only invited the school as a guest, but gave it the opportunity and the means to accomplish its new goals. This was all thanks to the broad-minded mayor and the progressive administration, despite the fact that the unique school was quite unpopular in the broadest circles and not really taken seriously.¹⁴⁰

The building's iconic status served as a publicity tool for the city of Dessau as much as for the school itself, which is one reason Mayor Fritz Hesse succeeded in persuading the city council to fund such an expensive project. Convincing detractors that the investment would pay for itself over time proved more difficult. One local newspaper expressed resentment about modernist aesthetics and cost:

We have no resources to waste on living machines (*Wohnmaschine*) when every local architect and builder could provide projects that are much more worthy in style and execution. We don't need the Bauhaus which consumes millions—no master houses, no new theater buildings—when the housing shortage cries out to heaven.¹⁴¹

Despite the opposition to it, the construction of the Bauhaus went ahead. The building was not merely a symbol of a modernized Dessau, it fulfilled practical functions as well.¹⁴² Its

¹⁴⁰ “Diese kleine mitteldeutsche Stadt, an deren Spitze ein großzügiger Bürgermeister und eine fortschrittliche Verwaltung stehen, faßte im April 1925 den Entschluß, das einzigartige und gänzlich unpopulär, in weitesten Kreisen nicht einmal ernst genommene Institut nicht nur gastlich aufzunehmen, sondern ihm Mittel und Gelegenheit zu geben, seine neuartigen Bestrebungen zu verwirklichen.” Edith Schulze, “Das Bauhaus in Dessau,” *Die Wohnung: Monatsschrift für Bau und Wohnungswesen* 1, 9 (1926). [Folder 151, 22/149-152] Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

¹⁴¹ “Wir haben keine Mittel zu verschwenden für Wohnmaschinen, die uns jeder einheitliche Architekt und Bauunternehmer viel würdiger in Stil und Durchführung hinsetzt. Wir brauchen kein Bauhaus, was Millionen verschlingt, keine Musterhäuser, keine Theaterneubauten, wo die Wohnungsnot zum Himmel schreit. Anonymous, “Hoch die Schule für Gestaltungskunst,” *Anhalter Anzeiger*, [November] 1926 [Presse 6510 #12] Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

¹⁴² In return for the municipal funding for the buildings as well as the ongoing school budget, Mayor Hesse stipulated that the Bauhaus would include a separate crafts school and develop solutions for the city's extreme housing shortage. Ise Gropius lamented in her diary, however, that the mayor had been reluctant to award the Bauhaus with the Törten commission because of public sentiment about the school's lack of practical experience. The section that follows relies on her chronicle of the discussions and concerns among faculty and students about

large size provided space necessary for expansion that made architecture as a formal course of study possible. Amidst this antagonistic atmosphere and just two weeks after unveiling the new building in December 1926, Gropius asked Meyer to develop the Bauhaus architecture program.¹⁴³ Along with his international reputation, the new hire would bring his knowledge of affordable housing from his work on the Freidorf housing settlement, commitment to social issues and interest in urban planning.

In June 1926, while the Bauhaus buildings were still under construction, the city commissioned Gropius' private architectural firm (with the involvement of Bauhaus students) to build sixty residential units for working class occupants in the Törten section of Dessau.¹⁴⁴ In a city whose population had skyrocketed from 50,000 inhabitants in 1925 to 80,000 just three years later in 1928, a mere sixty units drew strong criticism, especially in the local conservative newspapers.¹⁴⁵

The project would prove to be a public relations fiasco. Gropius experimented with new building methods and materials, producing concrete blocks, slabs, and beams onsite and the row houses were built assembly-line fashion. Problems with the concrete resulted in cost escalations and negative publicity for the Bauhaus and for Gropius professionally. Indeed, the controversy

Meyer's hiring and promotion. Ise Gropius' Diary is an invaluable resource for historians. Entry, 26 April 1926. Gropius, Diary.

¹⁴³ According to Ise Gropius's Diary, 17 December 1926, Gropius invited either Meyer or his partner, Hans Wittwer. Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ This collaboration between Gropius's private firm and Bauhaus students spanned from the school's inception until Gropius's resignation, with some changes when he and Meyer established the architecture department as a course of study beginning in the fall semester of 1927. In addition to the architecture students, Bauhaus workshops were involved in fitting out two model interiors, including furniture designed and produced in the cabinet-making workshop and lamps from the metal workshop.

¹⁴⁵ Numerous negative articles appear in the regional right-wing *Anhalter Woche*, which published about 200 articles about the Bauhaus between 1925-32 with tax funding as the predominant issue. The paper, which would later endorse the NSDAP, would add anti-foreign, anti-Jewish, and anti-communist propaganda to justify its critique. The Stadtarchiv Dessau-Roßlau houses the full run.

would be the final straw for Gropius who in 1928, after nine years building the Bauhaus program and solidifying its reputation, decided to focus instead on his own architectural career. Public criticism coupled with escalating budgetary and directional conflicts with the mayor had worn him down, according to a press release issued by Gropius. Ise's diary also details the months prior to his resignation, revealing his confidence in the school's current course and in Meyer's abilities.¹⁴⁶ Given the controversies, Gropius believed that some distance would put him into a better position to promote the school.¹⁴⁷ And this turned out to be true in many respects. One of Meyer's successes over the next two years, for example, was to build five additional apartment buildings for the Törten development that the public accepted and deemed successful.

As Gropius prepared for his departure in early 1928, concern over Meyer's possible shortcomings as a replacement continued to fuel anxiety in many *Bauhäusler* despite Gropius' efforts to foster solidarity among *Bauhäusler* for a smooth transition. Ad hominem attacks ensued, for example when Fritz Kuhr, a student and painter who would go on to teach in the late Bauhaus, accused Meyer of pushing Gropius out.¹⁴⁸ Most of the discussions about Meyer, however, were tied to the larger issues facing the school, its aims and how best to move forward amidst fundamental ideological, pedagogical and artistic differences among the faculty. The increasing prominence of architecture within the curriculum was a strong point of contention,

¹⁴⁶ Ise Gropius diary entries between November 1927 and March 1928 detail Gropius' discontentment.

¹⁴⁷ The official press release stated: "I intend to leave the present scene of my activities, in order to exert my powers more freely in a sphere where they will not be cramped by official duties and considerations. The Bauhaus, which I founded nine years ago, is now firmly established. This is indicated by the growing recognition it receives and the steady increase in the number of its students. It is therefore my conviction (especially since my public duties are steadily becoming more onerous) that the time has now come for me to turn over the direction of the Bauhaus to co-workers to whom I am united by close personal ties and common interests..." Bayer, Gropius, and Gropius, *Bauhaus 1919-1928*, 204.

¹⁴⁸ Kuhr's outcry incited Moholy-Nagy to defend Meyer. Gropius diary entry, 4 February 1928.

especially among the painters. Schlemmer touched on it in a letter to Otto Meyer on 23 January 1928:

There have been changes in the City Council, which is less favorably inclined toward us since the elections. The budget is not sufficient, simply too small. Hannes Meyer will fill his post well...The Bauhaus will reorient itself in the direction of architecture, industrial production, and the intellectual aspect of technology. The painters are merely tolerated as a necessary evil now...I have now pronounced the death sentence for theater at the Bauhaus. And in fact the City Council has issued a publicly read degree forbidding parties at the Bauhaus.¹⁴⁹

According to Ise's diary, Wassily Kandinsky was the only faculty member who openly declared an objection to Meyer's appointment when Gropius announced his invitation a year before. He had reservations about Meyer's qualifications as a teacher and an architect, deeming him to be a theoretician with very little practical experience. Gropius shared this apprehension, but doubted that any architect with a proven record of built projects would even consider a teaching position.¹⁵⁰ He had already been disappointed by Dutch architect Mart Stam who declined Gropius' offer to hire him in part because of his firm's many recent architectural commissions. Ise explained that Gropius was swiftly reassured when Meyer visited Dessau a second time just weeks later at the end of January 1927, instilling confidence in a lecture about his broad practical experience as well as his passion for teaching.¹⁵¹

Kandinsky was also the first to raise the issue that has surrounded Meyer ever since: how his "outspoken communistic tendencies" might affect the school.¹⁵² Kandinsky's sensitivity to political issues is unsurprising given the impact that politics had on his life. When the First

¹⁴⁹ Oskar Schlemmer to Otto Meyer 23 January 1928, 220-221, translated in Schlemmer, *Letters and Diary*, 220-221.

¹⁵⁰ Entry, 14 January 1927. Gropius, *Diary*.

¹⁵¹ Entry, 1 February 1927. *Ibid.*

¹⁵² Entry, 14 January 1927. *Ibid.*

World War broke out, he was forced to return to his native Russia from Germany. Then after the Bolshevik Revolution, his teaching was deemed too “spiritual” at Moscow’s Vhutemas (Higher Art and Technical Studios) at a time when Constructivists were the predominant force there and he returned to Germany in 1921. He would experience further discrimination in 1927 when he was denied German citizenship because of anonymous accusations of communist loyalties and ties to the USSR.¹⁵³ Meyer was not the first to incite reproach in the elder *Bauhäusler*, however. Ise’s diary documented an incident in November 1926 in which Kandinsky complained to Mayor Hesse, much to Gropius’ chagrin, that the “Young Masters” had been inciting Bolshevism among the students in the canteen.

Moholy-Nagy shared Kandinsky’s concern over Meyer’s potential of politicizing the school after having lived through the tumult of the Hungarian revolution and subsequent sectarian power struggle before he emigrated to Germany via Vienna in 1919. Exacerbating the initial distance, the two men did not get along well on a personal level. Their relationship became increasingly acrimonious prior to Moholy-Nagy’s departure from Dessau with Gropius in March 1928.¹⁵⁴ Ise noted in her diary that Meyer had been critical of Moholy-Nagy’s work on a number of occasions, calling it “too romantic.”¹⁵⁵

Moholy-Nagy had abruptly threatened to quit the Bauhaus after he and Meyer had a major disagreement in a Masters’ Council meeting.

¹⁵³ See a letter from Gropius to Ludwig Justi dated 9 September 1927. Gropius asked Justi to be a character witness for Kandinsky whose application for German citizenship was rejected on the basis of an anonymous accusation of communist tendencies and alleged ties to the Soviet Union. Copy of the letter at the Getty Research Center. [Bauhaus Correspondence I] Special Collections.

¹⁵⁴ Entries dated 20 January 1927; 26 September 1927; and 17 and 18 January 1928. Gropius, *Diary*. Also see Oskar Schlemmer to Tut Schlemmer 27 January 1928, translated in Schlemmer, *Letters and Diary*, 222.

¹⁵⁵ Entry, 20 January 1927. Gropius, *Diary*.

Masters' Council meeting resulted in a sharp dispute between Meyer and Moholy, which Gropius had been expecting. Meyer, as the more restrained, remained very calm, but made the whole matter so unpleasant that Gropius came to Moholy's aid. Later that afternoon Moholy came to us still very upset and complained about the way in which Meyer had confronted him. He wants to leave the Bauhaus immediately. Gropius advised him to be cautious with respect to his financial prospects so that it doesn't spoil all his opportunities with the city.¹⁵⁶

But Meyer was not the only cause of Moholy-Nagy's frustration within these contentious years at the Bauhaus. Much like Schlemmer's theater, Moholy-Nagy's position at the Bauhaus had been under scrutiny long before Meyer's arrival. Ise explained that in January 1927, for example, Gropius had proposed closing the metal workshop as a cost-saving measure.¹⁵⁷ And Dessau's Mayor Hesse had already been trying to let Moholy-Nagy go for at least several months before it finally went public through the press. Ise's diary recounted newspaper articles reporting that the mayor blamed his support of the Bauhaus for his party's losses in the local elections held on 27 November 1927 and he believed that firing Moholy-Nagy, one of the most widely-criticized teachers, would appease right-wing parties.¹⁵⁸ Gropius, to his credit, refused to scapegoat Moholy-Nagy for the sake of public relations and local politics and kept him on, calling him his "nearest collaborator in the Bauhaus." Schlemmer's characterization was more cynical as he described Moholy-Nagy as "Gropius' faithful drummer boy and teeth-chatterer."¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ "meisterratssitzung, in der es zu einer heftigen auseinandersetzung zwischen h. meyer und moholy kam, die gr.[Gropius] immer schon erwartete. meyer, als der beherrscher blieb sehr ruhig, machte das ganze aber so unsympathisch, dass gr. moholy beisprang. nachmittags kam moholy noch ganz erregt zu uns und beklagte sich über die art und weise meyers ihn anzugreifen. er will schleunigst herausspringen aus dem bauhaus, gr. rät ihm, aber vorsichtig zu sein, damit er in geldlicher hinsicht nicht alle chancen bei der stadt verdirbt." Entry, 18 January 1928. Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Entry, 19 January 1927. Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Entries, 5 December 1927 and 6 February 1928. Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Schlemmer to Otto Meyer 27 February 1928, translated in Schlemmer, *Letters and Diary*, 228.

The resignations of Moholy-Nagy, Marcel Breuer, and Herbert Bayer at the time of Gropius's departure in March 1928 are often viewed as acts of protest, but their tales are not as straightforward as they might seem.¹⁶⁰ Ise's diary tells us that Breuer gave a formal notice of resignation in April 1927 and that he and Gropius were in conflict over authorship rights before he finally did resign in March of 1928.¹⁶¹ In January 1928, he and Bayer announced their intentions to resign to the Masters' Council (*Meisterrat*) in the upcoming fall.¹⁶² History bears out that they changed their plans to correspond with Gropius' resignation at the March meeting of the Masters Council before Meyer's official start date.¹⁶³ Regardless of any disagreements they had with Meyer about the school's trajectory, their affinity with Gropius was lifelong and they went on to work together on and off in London and then in the United States where by 1938 they had all emigrated.¹⁶⁴

Paul Klee objected to Meyer's promotion to Bauhaus director in early 1928 when he and others, including painter Dirk Scheper, "objected to his overly dogmatic, inelastic manner and feared a narrowing down of their horizons."¹⁶⁵ Yet Meyer and Klee managed to maintain a good relationship. Klee wrote Meyer one of the few letters of support he received from *Bauhäusler*

¹⁶⁰ Hays wrote, for example: "Perhaps in anticipation of imminent marginalization under the new regime, or perhaps in principle, Marcel Breuer, Herbert Bayer, and Moholy-Nagy had already resigned before Gropius's decision to leave was officially announced." Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*, 128.

¹⁶¹ Entry, 6 April 1927. Gropius, *Diary*.

¹⁶² Entry, 13 January 1928. *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ Entry, 18 January 1928. *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ Ise Gropius confirmed Moholy-Nagy's bond with Gropius in a letter to Dr. Osborn of the *Vossische Zeitung* on 20 February 1928. She wrote "Moholy's resignation has the same reasons as those of Gropius. In addition, there is his strong bond to Gropius without whom he does not want to work at the Bauhaus." Ise included the letter in full in her diary as an insert on page 291. This excerpt is from the English-language translation. *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ "alle stossen sich an seiner zu dogmatischen und unelastischen wesenart und fürchten sich vor einer verengung des horizontes." Entry, 11 January 1928. *Ibid.*

after his abrupt dismissal on 1 August 1930. And according to Ise's diary, Meyer's early skepticism about the roles of painters Klee and Kandinsky at the school gave way to strong support for them, surprising even Gropius and running counter to the charge that Meyer disdained the fine arts.¹⁶⁶

The initial reluctance of the so-called younger masters (masters who came to the Bauhaus as students) to embrace Meyer's directorship evaporated and grew to strong support at the time of his sacking two years later. Without disregarding documented accounts of their initial antagonism toward Meyer, Joost Schmidt and Dirk Scheper had been disgruntled with the Bauhaus before Meyer's arrival, complaining of being overworked, underpaid and more than once being "on the verge of nervous breakdown."¹⁶⁷ Even though Scheper became more optimistic about Meyer's plans once they discussed the future of the wall-painting workshop, his leave of absence from the Bauhaus for about a year in 1928 to study and work in the Soviet Union has been wrongly described as a response to and rejection of Meyer's promotion. Scheper's sabbatical plans predated Gropius' resignation.¹⁶⁸ And according to Ise, Schmidt suffered a nervous breakdown in 1928 at the prospect of losing Gropius because he did not "feel rooted in Meyer's ideas," yet would go on to play a central role in shaping the late Bauhaus as head of the plastic arts and printing workshops as well as the advertising course of study.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ "erstaunlich ist dagegen seine haltung kandinsky und klee gegenüber. als er ans Bauhaus kam war es ihm überhaupt unverständlich, dass sie am Bauhaus unterricht erteilten und er äusserte das auch unverhohlen. jetzt steht er mit ihnen geradezu intim und unterstützt sie in jeder richtung." Entry, 27 January 1928. Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Entry, 16 February 1928. Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ "schmidtschen nervenzusammenbruch, der sich in einem stundenlangen weinkrampf äusserte. er leidet eben doch mehr wie er sagen kann unter dem weggang von gr. es scheint dass die haupttriebkraft für seine arbeit die liebe zu gr. und zum bauhaus war und er fühlt sich eben mit einem bauhaus unter hannes meyer nicht so verwachsen." Entry, 21 February 1928. Ibid. From 1925-1932, Schmidt taught the Vorkurs (Form, Lettering); 1928-1932 (Plastic Arts Workshop); 1928-1932 (Typography, Advertising).

A heated discussion arose in October 1927 about the *Weissenhof Siedlung*—the Werkbund exhibition in Stuttgart which brought together several architects to design and build model homes. Opposing viewpoints represented a rift within the Bauhaus itself between those who were “more aesthetically inclined” and found Corbusier’s houses the most successful, and “the others,” with Hannes Meyer among them. Meyer, though he admired Dutch architect J.J.P. Oud’s project, admonished the rest for failing to provide real housing solutions for working people (*Volkswohnungen*, people’s dwellings). According to Ise, some viewed Meyer’s critique as a boorish public criticism of Gropius, who “did not defend himself against the charge because he was exhausted.”¹⁷⁰ Regardless of Meyer’s apparent lack of tact, these proposals and varying viewpoints illustrate that tensions regarding housing solutions already existed within the school when Meyer was hired as a new member of the faculty.

Meyer’s socially-directed mandate for the school was another major point of contention. Breuer felt that Meyer’s work in the architecture department had fostered an “overemphasis on political and social topics” that detracted from the “objective, laboratory-like spirit of the workshops,” resulting in lost productivity.¹⁷¹ He had raised the issue privately with Meyer who acknowledged having made some mistakes. The Gropiuses agreed with Breuer that even though these topics should be included in the Bauhaus courses, Meyer took it too far. The school was “not planning to establish a new world order, after all.”¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Entry, 13 November 1927. Ibid.

¹⁷¹ “Breuers zu tisch. B[reuer] sprach sich über einiges im Bauhaus aus, was ihm nicht recht fruchtbar erscheint: nämlich die überbetonung des politischen und sozialen, was hauptsächlich von h. meyer ausgeht. er hat auch mit meyer selbst ein gespräch darüber gehabt und m. hat ihm einige fehler zugegeben. es wird dadurch die rein sachliche, laboratoriumsartige arbeit gestört und es warden themen zu ausführlich behandelt die der volkswirtschaftler bearbeiten muss. das alle diese probleme mit einbezogen warden müssen, ist selbstverständlich, aber es kann sich nicht darum handeln, im Bauhaus eine neue weltordnung herzustellen.” Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

This discussion chronicled in Ise's diary affirms a fundamental misunderstanding about Meyer's pedagogical approach to the design process that my dissertation seeks to rectify. At the time, Meyer's socially-driven design process—or his privileging of consumer demands over formal design concerns as the basis of architectural and design thinking—was broadly categorized as “political” or “establishing a new world order,” hence some trepidation about the anticipated direction that Meyer would take the school. Regardless, Ise noted Gropius' reiteration that Meyer was the best man for the task, even going so far as to say that there was no one else in Germany who could shoulder such work.¹⁷³

Despite the anxieties and disagreements among *Bauhäusler*, Gropius went through with hiring and then promoting Meyer though not without reservations of his own. Even after discussing the directorship with Meyer, who was himself initially reluctant to take it on, Gropius approached Stam about the position.¹⁷⁴ Many of his concerns, at least as they were recorded by Ise, focused on Meyer's interpersonal skills and ability to manage a diverse group of strong-minded individuals, decrying Meyer as “dogmatic,” “one-sided” and that he “strikes with the delicacy of a hammer.”¹⁷⁵ In fact, the young Breuer was Gropius' first choice. As early as 1925, Ise wrote that Gropius wanted to groom him for the directorship and she lamented more than once that they wished he were older and had enough experience to take over despite their conflict over authorship rights.¹⁷⁶ Coincidentally, Breuer wound up reassuring the Gropiuses of Meyer's

¹⁷³ Entry, 13 January 1928. Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Entries, 24 January and 27 January 1928. Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Entry, 10 November 1927 and further concerns on 27 January 1928. Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Entries, 12 July 1925 and 5 February 1928. Ibid.

abilities when he described Meyer as fundamentally “bourgeois with bourgeois values and tact.”¹⁷⁷

Indeed, as Droste and other Meyer scholars have noted, many of the changes in pedagogy, curriculum and aims that Meyer followed through with were already in place when he took over the directorship.¹⁷⁸ Ise noted, for example, that Gropius and Meyer agreed that the school should focus more on design for off-site mass production rather than developing the skills required to produce the objects by hand. Gropius’ own recent curricular changes bore this out when he pared down the number of workshops (architecture, advertising, stage, and free painting) to reduce costs and streamline production.¹⁷⁹ Meyer proved to be very successful in production and sales, nearly doubling the school’s profits over a two-year period.¹⁸⁰

Significant differences between the two directorships existed, to be sure, and will be addressed in the coming chapters. Yet some of the distortions and myths about Meyer’s Bauhaus stem from the faulty historical foundation laid during the complex transitional period discussed here. Though this seventeen-month span merits its own full-scale study—from Meyer’s invitation to the faculty in December 1926 to the start of his directorship in April 1928—this chapter began to shed new light on a few major problems with the historical record. Foremost is

¹⁷⁷ “abends breuer. sprachen über h. meyer. breuer ist der ansicht, dass meyer mit grossem geschick menschen behandeln kann, was uns einigermassen überraschte. er glaubt, dass meyer es besser wie gr. verstehen wird, andere leute zu seiner entlastung heranzuholen und ein gewisses mass taktischer schauheit besitzt. im grunde hält er ihn für einen seht bürgerlichen menschen mit allen vorzügen des bürgers.” Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ See Droste, “Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit;” and Droste, “Successor’s Disinheritance.”

¹⁷⁹ Walter Gropius, *Bauhaus Dessau Hochschule für Gestaltung: Prospekt* (Hannover: Fachverlag Artur Bodenthal, c. 1927).

¹⁸⁰ Hannes Meyer, My dismissal from the Bauhaus; open letter to Mayor Hesse, Dessau, translated in Schnaidt, ed., *Hannes Meyer*, 103. According to Droste, Meyer’s letter, published on 16 August 1930 in the radical left newspaper *Das Tagebuch*, both delineated his accomplishments and countered the charges that led to his dismissal. Meyer’s message was clear: he wanted his job back. See Éva Forgács, “Between the Town and the Gown: On Hannes Meyer’s Dismissal from the Bauhaus,” *Journal of Design History* 23, 3 (2010).

the assertion that Meyer began to distance himself from *ABC* (one subject of Chapter II). His Bauhaus years should not be viewed under its umbrella after 1926. Secondly, even though Meyer was not always warmly welcomed by fellow *Bauhäusler*, it would be wrong to blame him for every disgruntled complaint. He was thrown into long-standing discussions among strong-headed personalities about the school's best way forward regarding fine arts, pedagogy, and the design process. Third, Meyer's background in the cooperative movement and within international art and architecture circles prepared him for the Bauhaus, and Gropius understood who he was getting when he hired Meyer. What will emerge in the coming chapters is that Meyer's evolution from 1927-30, though still rooted in his early experiences, diverges from the Constructivist architect-engineer model of his *ABC* years. While his projects from 1926-27 are still viewed as Meyer's "creative apex," his subsequent impact on architectural and design education would far outweigh their significance.

CHAPTER II

DER MENSCH ALS EINHEIT. MEYER'S GUEST LECTURES AS THEORETICAL HUMANISM

Oskar Schlemmer's diagram "Man" (*Der Mensch*) illustrated his course of the same name in Hannes Meyer's revamped curriculum of Spring 1928.¹⁸¹ (fig. 5) "Man" also embodied Meyer's pedagogical vision and a conception of humanity shared by Schlemmer and many of their contemporaries encompassing philosophy, ethics, psychology and scientific analysis. Meyer foregrounded the diagram in the 1929 school prospectus *young people come to the bauhaus!* (*junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!*) to announce a rich and varied guest lecture series that engaged students and the wider public with the latest intellectual and cultural currents.¹⁸² This pairing of lectures and diagram—and therefore of mutual ideals of Meyer and Schlemmer—calls for closer consideration because it establishes the holistic tenor of Meyer's Bauhaus that has long been overshadowed by politics and a limited interpretation of his architectural and pedagogical aims.

Meyer infused Bauhaus theory with interdisciplinary humanistic cultural studies that transcended contemporary debates among art, design and architecture institutions about competing pedagogical traditions. Anticipating trends in research-based university programs that would develop in subsequent decades, the lecture series drew from disciplines such as

¹⁸¹ The course was obligatory for all third semester Bauhaus students, 1928-29.

¹⁸² A reproduction of the demonstration board also appears in the 1929 school prospectus *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus*; in the school's magazine *Bauhaus* 2/3 (1928); and as a demonstration board in the Bauhaus traveling exhibition of 1929-30.

psychology, philosophy and urban planning to expand conceptual frameworks for architectural and design practices beyond the scope of Beaux-Arts aesthetics or polytechnic engineering.¹⁸³ Moreover, Meyer's model of education was based on the belief that only a well-rounded designer or architect versed in sociological, psychological and philosophical complexities could conceive of and contextualize complex sets of quantitative and qualitative data. As Meyer explained in a public lecture in 1930: "The cultivation and enrichment of the developing person stands at the center of the Bauhaus work—not labor, the factory or production."¹⁸⁴ The lectures reveal a whole dimension of Meyer's Bauhaus that has been largely overlooked or minimized, contributing to the mischaracterization of his legacy as one of technocratic determinism.

What little attention has been paid to the guest lecture series has given an incomplete story.¹⁸⁵ For example, some secondary literature has perpetuated the limited view of Meyer as a politicizing figure advocating a leftist-leaning agenda. Klaus-Jürgen Winkler's 1989 monograph on Meyer, for example, highlighted the Marxist-leaning speakers who comprised only a small

¹⁸³ Although primarily focused on North America, Ockman's new study of the history of architecture education coupled with pertinent thematic discussions is insightful. Joan Ockman and Rebecca Williamson, *Architecture School: Three Centuries of Educating Architects in North America* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2012).

¹⁸⁴ A critic known as "W" is quoting from Hannes Meyer's public lecture from January 1930: "Instead of demonstrating our ten years' stability with a celebration, we'd like to show how we are even more alive now after ten years' work than we were then, more adaptable to existence, as well as richer and more diverse. Our house should be a crossroads of the intellectual abilities of all possible peoples and classes. The cultivation and enrichment of the developing person stands at the center of the work of the Bauhaus, not labor, the factory or production. [big applause.]" "Deshalb wollen wir unsern zehnjährigen Bestand nicht durch eine Feier demonstrieren, sondern zeigen, daß wir nach zehnjähriger Arbeit lebendiger sind als je, anpassungsfähiger an das Dasein als je, also reicher und vielfältiger. Unser Haus soll ein Kreuzungspunkt geistiger Kräfte aller möglichen Völker und Klassen sein. Nicht das Werk, die Fabrik, die Produktion, sondern der Mensch, die Auflockerung und Veredelung des werdenden Menschen steht im Mittelpunkt der Bauhaus-Arbeit. [grossen Applaus.]" W., "Zehn-Jahre Bauhaus: Bauhaus Wanderschau" *Anhalter Anzeiger*, 28 January 1930. Josef Albers scrapbook of press clippings. Busch-Reisinger Museum Archive, Harvard Art Museums, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

¹⁸⁵ A brief discussion about the lectures during Meyer's tenure appears in Droste, "Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit," 134-165. Although the main focus of Bernard's essay is the Gropius era, it still offers valuable insights into Meyer's lecture series. Peter Bernhard, "Die Gastvorträge am Bauhaus--Einblicke in den 'zweiten Lehrkörper'," in *Mythos Bauhaus: Zwischen Selbsterfindung Und Enthistorisierung*, Anja Baumhoff and Magdalena Droste, eds. (Berlin: Reimer, 2009), 90-111. And see Botar, "Prolegomena."

percentage of the lecturers at the expense of more prevalent subjects and viewpoints.¹⁸⁶ Leftist social theorists were indeed included, yet they were far outnumbered by non-partisan speakers and subjects.¹⁸⁷

Peter Galison's 1990 essay "Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism," looked specifically at guest lecturers affiliated with the 1920's Vienna Circle (Wiener Kreis), a group of philosophers, scientists and mathematicians that espoused scientifically-based philosophical empiricism. Crucial to his discussion is the notion of "Aufbau"—logical construction from distilled elements—a term that applied more to Gropius' architectural leitmotif, "Art and Technology: a New Unity," than to Meyer's Bauhaus theories or practice.

Although the Vienna Circle was prominent within the overall lecture series, Galison's investigation revealed more about the Circle members than their impact on the Bauhaus. Galison's narrow focus, which naturally excluded other guest speakers, has perpetuated some problematic conclusions about Meyer's directorship, including the stereotypes that Meyer held "technocratic ambitions" and his directorship marked a "radical shift toward the rational and

¹⁸⁶ "Der weltanschaulichen und politischen Bildung und fachtheoretischen Positionsbestimmung dienen mehrere Vortragsveranstaltungen." Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*, 123-124.

¹⁸⁷ Even the communist or Marxist subjects were not as straightforward in their political point of view as they appear in announcements. Granted, some visiting lecturers focused specifically on Marxist themes. Lu Märten, for example, presented her work on "historical materialism and new design" on 12 October 1928, and the essay, which was extraordinarily long by the publication's own standards, appeared in the subsequent issue of *Bauhaus* (3, no. 1, 1929): 4-8. J. Schor, a Russian émigré and Hebrew-Christian missionary who was expelled from Russia after the revolution, presented "The Idea and Reality of the Russian Revolution" on 13 June 1928. While the specifics of the talk are unknown, the lecture seemed to exemplify Meyer's broader interest in Russian and Hungarian Constructivism as well as Marxism in practice. A closer look at Schor's biography and publications suggests that he was most likely very critical of the revolution. For example in 1934, Schor translated the work of fellow exiled Soviet religious philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev's *Truth and Lies of Communism, with an addendum Man and Technology* into German. Nikolai Berdiajew, *Wahrheit und Lüge des Kommunismus, mit einem anhang Der Mensch und die Technik*, trans., J. Schor (Luzern: Vita Nova Verlag, 1934).

scientific.”¹⁸⁸ Separating the Vienna Circle lectures from the context of the other speakers has led to a one-sided view of the entire program. Two scholars, Peter Bernhard and Oliver Botar, have begun to rectify this imbalance.

Peter Bernhard’s “Guest Lectures at the Bauhaus: Glimpses into the ‘Adjunct Faculty’” (“Die Gastvorträge am Bauhaus—Einblicke in den ‘zweiten Lehrkörper’”) is the sole essay devoted to the lectures themselves.¹⁸⁹ An excellent overview of the lecture program during the school’s thirteen years, Bernhard’s perspective as a professor at the Institut für Philosophie at the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg has contributed to his analysis of Bauhaus discourse by situating the lecturers within their historical, philosophical, and cultural contexts. Bernhard’s examination of lectures on typography, for example, went beyond formal aspects of type design to delve into philosophical questions about the nature of language and meaning and technical aspects of standardization, along with the aesthetics of New Typography.¹⁹⁰ Although he focused on the Gropius years, Bernhard shed light on Meyer’s holistic enterprise and pointed to thematic continuities between the directorships of Meyer and Mies through their lecture series.

Bernhard’s section on *Biophilosophie* (Bio-philosophy) is especially pertinent to my dissertation in recasting Meyer’s pedagogical agenda in the worldview of life philosophy (*Lebensphilosophische Weltanschauung*), grounded in philosophy, natural sciences and psychology as opposed to a technological agenda associated with either the analytical philosophy

¹⁸⁸ Peter Galison, “Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism,” *Critical Inquiry* 16, 4 (1990): 717-718.

¹⁸⁹ Bernhard, “Gastvorträge.”

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 93-94.

of the Vienna Circle or with dialectical materialism.¹⁹¹ For Bernard and Botar, the lectures helped contextualize, both historically and intellectually, a multifaceted set of ideas that were percolating in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries under the rubric of “life philosophy” (*Lebensphilosophie*). Botar’s definition informs this chapter:

In defining "nature-centrism" or "Biocentrism," what we have done is to identify a series of discourses which, while differing from each other in certain respects, shared a set of themes, attitudes, and topoi relating to nature, biology and epistemology. While distinguishable from each other, these discourses held in common a set of tenets that included a belief in the primacy of life and life processes, of biology as the paradigmatic science of the age, as well as an anti-anthropocentric worldview, and an implied or expressed environmentalism. Indeed, the turn of the nineteenth-twentieth centuries was characterized by a revival of aspects of Romanticism, among them an intuitive, idealistic, holistic, or even metaphysical attitude towards the idea of "nature" and the experience of the unity of all life. (Botar and Wünsche, *Biocentrism and Modernism*, 2.)

Architectural historian Detlef Mertins wrote extensively on science and modernism, and his interest in their intersection paralleled Botar’s. Mertins coined the term “bioconstructivism” to describe a generative model of architecture.¹⁹² His most recent publication is an in-depth study of the architectural journal “G: Material zur elementaren Gestaltung” (G: Materials for Elemental Form-Creation, 1923-26 in Berlin).¹⁹³ Co-edited with Michael Jennings, the authors have provided a succinct, but informative overview of the important position that journals held within avant-garde circles to promote an international dialogue about visual culture, architecture and social issues. In their study, Mertins and Jennings distinguished El Lissitzky’s *G* from Mart Stam’s *ABC*, namely that *ABC* was “more strictly materialist” than *G*, which attempted to bring

¹⁹¹ For more on mystical tendencies at the Bauhaus more generally, see Christoph Wagner, ed. *Esoterik am Bauhaus: eine Revision der Moderne?* (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2009).

¹⁹² Detlef Mertins, “Bioconstructivism,” in *NOX: Machining Architecture*, Lars Spuybroek, ed. (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2004).

¹⁹³ Mertins and Jennings, *G: An Avant-Garde Journal*.

together both spiritual (*Geistigkeit*) and material concerns that characterized German humanism since the Enlightenment.¹⁹⁴ Mertins wrote:

Yet in grounding the culture of *elementare Gestaltung* in the epistemic regime of modernization, the protagonists of *G* did not intend to reduce design to technocratic or logical construction (*Aufbau*). That was more the case with scientifically oriented historical materialists such as Hannes Meyer, although even he remained committed to producing psychological effects. Rather, rationalizing the means of expression in the various fields of endeavor was taken as precondition for works to perform on the higher plane of spirit, producing effects traditionally associated with art, even if they were now derived from technology. The audience to which *G* was addressed was still looking for the spiritual qualities of art, albeit under the ‘disenchanted’ conditions of the modern world.¹⁹⁵

While acknowledging Meyer’s commitment to psychology, Mertins’ characterization of Meyer as a “technocratic historical materialist” is too limiting. Meyer underwent a profound shift after joining the Bauhaus faculty when his rhetoric broke from *ABC* and became increasingly aligned with *G* as he embraced process, *Geist* and humanism. The guest lectures provide some evidence that Meyer was philosophically closer to the protagonists around *G* than is assumed. Along with those involved with *G*, Meyer explored both metaphysical and material aspects in his designs, his approach to Bauhaus production and his pedagogy. Meyer’s theoretical architectural pedagogy was founded on principles of contingencies, interdependencies, and unknowns that could only be analyzed with an interdisciplinary, humanities-steeped education.

After the school’s founder and first director Walter Gropius privately announced his resignation in January 1928, the faculty had already begun deliberating changes for the curriculum, including the new course “Man,” (noted by Schlemmer in his diary in Chapter 1), and other plans for the directional shift needed to reinvigorate the school: “Meyer has his

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 12.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

program ready in his pocket....The emphasis on spiritual values and related matters of course plays right into the hands of the theater group, giving it great relevance.”¹⁹⁶

“Spiritual values” hearkened back to the earliest Bauhaus period associated with Johannes Itten and Lothar Schreyer before Gropius’s 1923 emphasis on mechanization and mass production with “Art and Technology: a New Unity.” Uncharacteristic of a so-called “strict” or “radical” functionalist, Meyer’s 1929 school prospectus *young people come to the bauhaus!* (*junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!*) announcement proclaimed a key tenet for his pedagogical thinking: “Man as Unity. Mind/Soul, Body/Soul” (*Mensch als Einheit. Geist/Seele, Leib/Seele*). Meyer extended the discussion beyond production—“the unity of art and technology”—to a more human-centric “man as unity.”

Although the Meyer’s project shared surprising parallels with Itten’s spiritualism vis-à-vis Schlemmer’s course “Man,” the school had nevertheless become a very different place in the intervening years. Ideological and artistic tensions associated with the Expressionist/*Sachlichkeit* dichotomy—spiritual, aesthetic, and subjective as opposed to scientific, objective and materialist—were present throughout the school’s lifespan and played out in the diverse lecture series. Meyer’s espousal of this materialist/spiritualist dualism emerged in the scant secondary literature on the guest lectures as polar opposites, particularly in Galison’s claim for the primacy of the Vienna Circle and Botar’s refutation.

Just as new knowledge and scientific understanding constantly replace outmoded theories, “scientific” implied, for Meyer, a stripping away of historical baggage, preconceptions, and expectations. This expansive view of “scientization” allowed Meyer to find parallels in the

¹⁹⁶ “Schlemmer diary entry, 14 January 1928. Schlemmer, *Letters and Diary*, 219-220.

Logical Positivism of the Vienna Circle. At the same time, Meyer's scientific conceptions can be traced to philosophical tenets that the Vienna Circle would find antithetical to empiricism, including psychology and the biological holism of Ernst Haeckel, Raoul Francé and Ludwig Klages. Meyer drew from a variety of disparate sources, as his essay "The New World" (1926) attests: "Biology, psychoanalysis, relativity theory, and entomology are becoming the common intellectual property of all: [Raoul] Francé, Einstein, Freud and [Alfred] Fabre are the saints of recent times."¹⁹⁷

One of Schlemmer's diary entries on his course "Man" indicates how wide-ranging this intersection of science and philosophy was, as well as his own commitment to exploring new ideas, not the inculcation of his own firmly-held theories and knowledge:

I am dealing with areas which may not be absolutely essential but which fascinate me: internal anatomy, physiology, and especially psychology, not to forget philosophy in general. I have to dig all this out for myself; some of it is hard to get at, due to the complexity of the various branches. I am curious to see where it leads, what picture of the world will emerge by the end of the semester, and whether anything both personal and universal can be extracted from the contradictory opinions of the scientists and philosophers. (Schlemmer diary entry, end of May 1928.)

Bauhäusler grappled with the changing conceptions of the world through exploration of science, philosophy and psychology. Schlemmer described the tension between scientists and philosophers as "contradictory," indicating a perceived dichotomy between the fields during this era. This tension between science (the measurable, material world) and philosophy (at least branches associated with metaphysics) is usually associated with the early Bauhaus and its

¹⁹⁷ Meyer, "Die Neue Welt." Translated and reprinted in Kaes, Jay, and Dimendberg, *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, pp. 445-449. This excerpted translation is better than others. (Though the editors mistakenly named Anatole France instead of Raoul Francé.) For full-text German and English translation, see Meyer-Bergner, ed., *Bauen und Gesellschaft*, pp. 89-95. For a reprint of the original German, see Kleinerüschkamp, ed., *Hannes Meyer, 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer*, 70-73.

Expressionist origins, but the variety of subjects in Meyer's lecture series along with Schlemmer's new course on "Man" show that the dichotomy remained vital and relevant throughout Meyer's tenure. In addition to traditional scientific disciplines such as biology and physiology, Schlemmer expanded the field to include the burgeoning "soft sciences"—psychology and sociology along with philosophy. Like Meyer's own writing and his lecture series, Schlemmer's "totality of the concept of man" encompassed three parts: formal (as in representational form), biological, natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*) and philosophical, all falling under the rubric of "science."

Meyer's attempt to reconcile spirit and material concerns remains misunderstood. While emphasizing a scientific-based analysis, Meyer also expounded on many of the same neo-romantic or mystical traditions and influences as some of his Bauhaus colleagues. Indeed, the two were not antithetical. Meyer's notion of a unified being—his synthesis of spiritual and material—is emblematic of the holistic philosophical position that forms the basis of his didactics and differentiates him from the standard architect/engineering paradigm that has typically been ascribed to him. It forms the basis of his humanistic-based curricular reforms and gestalt-based design research that stressed interconnectedness, eco-awareness and environmental psychology.

Vienna Circle at the Bauhaus

Thinkers associated with the Vienna Circle had already visited the Bauhaus during the Gropius years. Philosopher and social scientist Otto Neurath, for example, attended the Dessau Building inauguration in December 1926 and wrote about it for the journal *Der Aufbau*.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁸ Otto Neurath, "Das Neue Bauhaus in Dessau," *Der Aufbau* 1, 11/12 (1926): 210-211. Cited in Galison, "Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism," 713.

Neurath and Josef Frank—an architect and designer whose brother Philipp was a theoretical physicist involved with the Vienna Circle—were not impressed when they heard Gropius speak in Vienna two years before, but their interest began to grow as the Gropius Bauhaus turned increasingly toward the rhetoric of technology, science and serial production.¹⁹⁹

Meyer's lecture at the Werkbund in Vienna on 22 April 1929 was well received by members of the Vienna Circle. Otto Neurath and Josef Frank were among them, and Meyer invited them to lecture at the Bauhaus.²⁰⁰ After his dismissal, Neurath and Josef Frank wrote an article in Meyer's defense in the leftist periodical *Der Klassenkampf* (The Class Struggle). The authors recognized the importance of Meyer's incorporation of principles drawn from social sciences into the curriculum, as well as for modern building more generally. They wrote:

From the seriousness of such sentiments, he sought out a biological and sociological foundation of the building industry. Again and again he referred his students to science generally, not only the technical biological and sociological disciplines, but also generally to a modern scientific world view. He took care to bring the scientific world into closer contact with the Bauhaus, isolated in Dessau, through guest lectures. In Meyer's view, only those people with a basic understanding of social phenomena and science have the ability to become modern architects. In this way he establishes the realistic bases for modern building. 201

¹⁹⁹ Galison, "Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism," 715.

²⁰⁰ Dahms, "Neue Sachlichkeit," 357.

²⁰¹ Neurath and Frank, "Hannes Meyer," *Der Klassenkampf* 4, 18 (1930): 573-575. [Mappe 59 Inv. Nr. 8133] Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

Aus dem Ernst solcher Gesinnung heraus bemühte er sich um eine biologische und soziologische Fundierung des Bauwesens. Immer wieder verwies er seine Schüler auf die Wissenschaft, nicht nur auf die technischen biologischen und soziologischen Disziplinen, sondern auch auf moderne wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung überhaupt. Er bemühte sich, das in Dessau isolierte Bauhaus mit der wissenschaftlichen Welt durch Gastvortragende in engeren Kontakt zu bringen. Nach Meyers Anschauung können nur solche Menschen moderne Architekten werden, die für gesellschaftliche Erscheinungen, für Wissenschaft grundsätzlich Verständnis haben. So schafft er die realistischen Grundlagen modernen Bauens.

Carnap gave another lecture at the Bauhaus under Mies' directorship and the two groups would become more integrated in the United States, notably at Moholy-Nagy's New Bauhaus in Chicago where Viennese logical positivists Carl Eckart (physics), Ralph Gerard (biology), and others taught courses.²⁰²

The relationship between the Dessau Bauhaus and the Vienna Circle reached its zenith in 1929. In May, Otto Neurath, Director of the Social and Economic Museum in Vienna, presented "Picture Statistics and the Present." Neurath was deeply involved in affordable housing estates around Vienna but is best known for his development, with graphic designer Gerd Arntz, of the "Vienna Method" (or Isotype—International System of Typographic Picture Education, as it would later be called), employing pictographic images to synthesize complex information on charts to illustrate social and economic patterns.²⁰³ (fig. 25) Amidst discussions on language and meaning, Neurath stressed the universal legibility and neutrality of the pictographic image; a Bauhaus ideal exemplified by Herbert Bayer's *Universal Typography*, Albers' *Kombinationsschrift* (Combination Type) (figs. 26 and 27) or Meyer's espousal of the international language *Esperanto* in "The New World" (1926) and in "Bauhaus and Society" (1929). Graphic symbols like Neurath's formed the visual basis of the Bauhaus architectural student's initial research, which is just one example of how guest lectures had a direct impact on Bauhaus thinking and student production.²⁰⁴

²⁰² Galison, "Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism," 747.

²⁰³ For more on Neurath's career and the development of the Isotype, see Nader Vossoughian, *Otto Neurath: The Language of the Global Polis* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2008).

²⁰⁴ Chapter III will discuss the student architectural studies in more depth.

After Neurath's visit to the Bauhaus, he recommended that Circle affiliate Herbert Feigl visit Dessau. Feigl had studied physics and philosophy under Schlick, earning his doctorate in 1927 with a thesis that combined both interests: "Chance and Law: An Epistemological Analysis of the Roles of Probability and Induction in the Natural Sciences."²⁰⁵ A young scholar at the time, his influence would impact American philosophical discourse when he brought his logical positivism to universities in the United States during the post-war period. Although a philosophical physicist seems an unlikely candidate for teaching design students, his tangential and overlapping themes and methodologies provide insights into Meyer's pedagogy and humanistic theoretical impetus. The extensive archival record of his experience offers an interesting glimpse at the logistical aspects and atmosphere of the lectures more generally.

Feigl's account of his time in Dessau brings the atmosphere and students to life. After the cancellation of two lectures, Meyer invited him on very short notice to visit between 3 – 10 July 1929. The presentation format was left open—lectures, discussions or a seminar, but Meyer made a specific request for Feigl to explain his work on "Physical Theories" (*physikalischen Theorien*). In the invitation letter dated 29 June 1929, Meyer wrote that the school was particularly interested in learning about the "philosophical side" of Feigl's knowledge based on the last section of his first book *Theory and Experience in Physics* (1929).²⁰⁶

Received with warm hospitality and lively debate, Feigl engaged the students in philosophical inquiry ranging from quantum physics to ethics to metaphysics in the series of

²⁰⁵ Herbert Feigl, "Zufall und Gesetz" (Ph.D. diss., Universität Wien, 1927).

²⁰⁶ "wir legen besonderen wert darauf, die philosophische seite ihres wissens kennen zu lernen, wie diese im letzten teil ihres buches "theorie und erfahrung in der physik" angedeutet ist." "We place particular value on studying the philosophical side of your knowledge, like that articulated in the last part of your book *Theory and Experience in Physics*." Hannes Meyer to Herbert Feigl 27 June 1929. [HF 03.99.01] University of Minnesota Archives.

seven lectures: “The New Science. Worldview;” “Natural Law and Free Will;” “Chance and Law;” “Meaning of Life and Problems of Ethics;” “Space and Time;” “What is Material?” and “Body and Soul.”²⁰⁷ Meyer advised Feigl before the first lecture to immediately engage with the students or he would lose their interest for the whole series. According to Feigl, he succeeded. Each evening drew audiences of about 120 people for two-hour long lectures and his improvisational, lively air drew “enormous applause” that according to Feigl echoed into the highest floors of the building.²⁰⁸ Discussions continued into the evening at dinner, at dance parties and then into the morning at breakfast. Calling his time spent at the Bauhaus one of the best experiences of his life, Feigl wrote:

...despite all of their serious limitations [in educational background], they succeeded in posing questions that got to the heart of the matter...I must say that for me, the Dessau Bauhaus—with its warmly-lit rooms, its clarity, the joyful, cheerful engagement—in a few days, it felt like an adoptive home and I have seldom felt as well anywhere else as I did there.²⁰⁹

Feigl’s impressions of the Bauhaus ethos reflected the values he and socially-engaged Vienna Circle colleagues including Neurath and Carnap shared with the school at that time: “The strongest impression...concerns the whole attitude to life and conduct of living at the Bauhaus: very activist, radical, communistic, absolutely unprejudiced, uninhibited and unencumbered.”²¹⁰

²⁰⁷ “Die neue Wissenschaft. Weltauffassung” “Zufall und Gesetz;” “Naturgesetz und Willensfreiheit;” “Sinn des Lebens und Probleme der Ethik;” “Raum und Zeit;” “Was ist Materie?;” and “Leib und Seele.” Herbert Feigl to Moritz Schlick 21 July 1929. [Vienna Circle Archive, inv. nr. 099/Fei 13] Noord-Hollands Archief, Haarlem (NL), 12-13.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ “Ich muß sagen, daß wir das Dessauer Bauhaus mit seinem herzlich-lichten Räumen, seiner Klarheit, mit all seiner ernst geringsten und doch so freudig-fröhlichen Zusassen schon in den wenigen Tagen zu einer Art Wahlheimat wurde, ich habe mich selten irgendwo so wohl gefühlt wie dort.” Ibid.

²¹⁰ “Den stärksten Eindruck [ist] die gesamte Lebensstimmung und Lebensführung ans Bauhaus: sehr aktivistisch, radikal, kommunistisch, absolut vorurteilslos, ungehemmt und unbelastet.” Ibid., 14.

He described the communal setting—with student amenities including studios, living spaces and latest modern furniture and lamps—as ideal for experimentation and a healthy exchange of ideas. Feigl was taken with the level of freedom and intellectual curiosity in Bauhaus culture—both inside and outside of the classroom—and attributed it, in part, to Meyer’s egalitarian attitude, noting that Meyer took his meals with the students in the canteen every day.

Despite the open-mindedness of the students, Feigl’s “anti-metaphysical” position met strong resistance from some students whom he called “very artistic.”²¹¹ Over several days, however, Feigl claimed that he was able to persuade many students to come to “a better understanding of metaphysics,” implying that they began to agree with his materialist position. The tension he described between idealism and *Sachlichkeit* (“Thing-ness” or “concreteness”) had been an ongoing dialectic in the school since the early Weimar period. Less controversial, but no less germane to a well-rounded education were Feigl’s evenings devoted to philosophical areas of enquiry that dated back to ancient Greece: ethics and the psychophysical question (or mind/body problem).

Feigl felt that his presentation of the atom theory was a failure because, according to him, it was too complicated by the minutiae of details and facts. Epitomizing the intersection of cultural and scientific discourse at the Bauhaus, Feigl’s overall aim was philosophical and he used the language and framework of physics to investigate it.²¹² A good example is “Space-Time,” which Feigl described as the week’s most successful lecture without going into detail about the content. It is likely that he addressed Einstein’s Theory of Relativity, which had

²¹¹ Ibid., 12.

²¹² Ibid., 13.

impacted the creative world when it called into question the notion of an objective, constant truth, subjectivity and conditional relationships.

Feigl described the greatest affinity between the Bauhaus and the Vienna Circle in the Architecture Department, with its “struggle against the superfluous, sentimentality and kitsch.” In his letter to Schlick, he judged that “the common sense, *Sachlichkeit*, rectilinearity, honest functionality of *neues Bauen* is notably positivist (as Carnap so often pointed out) and would have resonated with Ludwig Wittgenstein’s ideals for building.”²¹³ Parallels went beyond the formal qualities of building. Feigl noted, for example, that the cooperative nature of the design process operated along the same lines as philosophical discussion. Like Meyer, Feigl espoused balancing individuality amidst cooperation. Just as Bauhaus students were required to master a specific trade before entering the formal architecture program, Circle members learned a specific branch of science before approaching it together as one unified field.²¹⁴

Philosophy professor Rudolf Carnap, one of the most prominent and influential members of the Vienna Circle, was invited to Dessau to present a series of five lectures stemming from his recently published work, *The Logical Structure of the World* (*Der logische Aufbau der Welt*, 1928): “Science and Life;” “Function and Content of Science;” “The Logical Structure of the

²¹³ “Dies war am Bauhaus ja eigentlich vorauszusehen, den der neue Geist der Architekten ist ja: wie schon Carnap oft hervorhob, dem der neuer Philosophie sehr verwandt: Der Kampf gegen die überflüssig Wesenheiten (sentimental-kitschige Zierarten), die Nüchternheit, Sachlichkeit, Geradlinigkeit, Zweckangepaßtheit des neuen Bauen ist ja ausgesprochen positivistisch. Charakteristisch übrigens, daß Wittgensteins Bauideen im idealen Programm wenigstens sind der neuen Dessauer Prinzipien übereinstimmen.” Wittgenstein was a trained engineer who, in 1928, helped design his own home in Vienna that made Loos’s buildings look ornate. *Ibid.*, 12-13.

²¹⁴ “Auch will man dort den Künstler-individualismus zugunsten der Kollektivarbeit am sozial-Notwendigen nach. Möglichkeit weitgehend überstanden (So wie es auch in unserem philosophischen Kreis Kollektivarbeit gibt!) Und so wie bei uns jeder eine Einzelwissenschaft beherrscht, muß dort jedes Architekt ein Handwerk können.” *Ibid.*, 13.

World;” “The Four-Dimensional World of Modern Physics;” and “The Misuse of Language.”²¹⁵

He argued that all scientific concepts were built up from the most elementary concepts and that science and epistemology (the nature of knowledge) should be empirically based instead of metaphysical in nature. ²¹⁶ Forging relationships around Europe with like-minded people from different fields, including many at the Bauhaus, Carnap aimed for nothing less than to build a new society around an empirical worldview:

Whence then our confidence that our call for clarity, for a science that is free from metaphysics, will be heard? It stems from the knowledge or, to put it somewhat more carefully, from the belief that these opposing powers belong to the past. We feel that there is an inner kinship between the attitude on which our philosophical work is founded and the intellectual attitude which presently manifests itself in entirely different walks of life; we feel this orientation in artistic movements, especially in architecture, and in movements which strive for a meaningful form of human life (*Gestaltung des menschlichen Lebens*), of personal and collective life, of education, and of external organization in general. We feel all around us the same basic orientation, the same style of thinking and doing... Our work is carried on by the faith that the future belongs to this attitude. (Carnap, *The Logical Structure of the World*, 1928)²¹⁷

This same message opened Carnap’s Bauhaus lectures: “I work in science and you in visible form; both are only different sides of one life.” He then went on to outline the propositions that he sought to explore: “What position does science have in life? Can it be a guide? Give direction? (The answer will be: no!) Or does it kill the spirit of living? (Also:

²¹⁶ Uljana Feest, “Science and Experience/Science of Experience: Gestalt Psychology and the Anti-Metaphysica Project of the *Aufbau*,” *Perspectives on Science* 15, 1 (2007): p. 38.

²¹⁷ Carnap as quoted in Galison, “Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism,” 772-773.

no.)”²¹⁸ Carnap seemed to share with Meyer the belief that scientific analysis—in service to society—was not a mechanistic, dehumanizing force ushering in modernity. Rather, a scientific worldview, as he called it, could emancipate people from historical prejudices and preconceived notions—including the weight of the western philosophical tradition—and serve as a foundation upon which to structure modern society.

Meyer sought to free the Bauhaus from the weight of historicism, including the aesthetics of new formal and technological innovations of the early 1920s, which he viewed to be a mechanically-driven style. Following this logic, as ironic as it may seem, Meyer turned the expected tropes upside down in terms of “humanizing” design and scientific methods. Meyer’s scientific methodology analyzed human and environmental needs in every unique situation. The expression of humanity then, was not only the traditional view of universal artistic expression through aesthetic beauty, but could be found in the analytical design process itself.

Meyer’s rejection of aesthetics as the basis of design research—i.e., Gropius’ unity of art and technology—was analogous to Vienna Circle thinking about previous schools of philosophy as having become outmoded. As Otto Neurath explained Vienna Circle principles in a letter to Berlin physics and philosophy professor Hans Reichenbach: “...In philosophy, one searches somehow from inside oneself to understand the world, but scientific inquiry begins with the outer shells.”²¹⁹ These forward thinkers, as well as other philosophers of the twentieth century,

²¹⁸ “Ich arbeite in Wissenschaft, Sie in (sichtbarer) Form->gestaltung; beides nur Seiten des einen Lebens.” Rudolf Carnap, Lecture notes for his Bauhaus lecture, “Wissenschaft und Leben,” prepared 1 October 1929 and delivered 15 October 1929 [RC 110-07-49]. Transcription from shorthand by Gerald Heverly, Carnap Papers in the Archives of Scientific Philosophy. University of Pittsburgh Libraries, University of Pittsburgh. Quoted by permission of the University of Pittsburgh. All rights reserved (hereafter abbreviated CP, PASP) [RC 110-07-49].

²¹⁹ “Bei den Philosophen ist es umgekehrt, da sucht man irgendwie von ‘Innen her’ sich der Welt oder der Erkenntnisse zu bemächtigen, das Wissenschaftliche wird zur äusseren Schale!” Otto Neurath, Letter to Hans Reichenbach 22 July 1929, [Document 029-15-15] CP, PASP. Quoted by permission of the University of Pittsburgh. All rights reserved. According to Galison, Reichenbach lectured at the Bauhaus just after Carnap in October, 1929,

rejected Kant's notion of *a priori* knowledge in favor of the discovery of knowledge based on experience and the scientific method. Another illustration of this concept is found in Carnap's lecture "Function and Content of Science" (Aufgabe und Gehalt der Wissenschaft on 16 October 1929), which introduced students to philosophical protocol statements and connectives from logic (i.e. if/then) to differentiate foundational, empirically provable sentences or observations from descriptive, subjective language.²²⁰

Carnap's determination to distinguish subjective from objective perceptions (the "higher thinking" that is factual, empirical, and scientifically verifiable) led him to Gestalt psychology, a key component of the Bauhaus lecture series and of the school's pedagogical and architectural practices to be discussed below.²²¹ Yet Carnap was entering into contentious territory. Many of his Vienna Circle colleagues dismissed psychology as a tool for examining experience because they regarded it as too subjective and unverifiable. And even though psychology was still very much tied to philosophy during the Weimar era—both institutionally and conceptually—Gestalt theorists were likewise critical of positivists such as those in the Vienna Circle that had dominated natural sciences and philosophy since the mid-nineteenth century, challenging their claims to verifiable truths without consideration of emotional or psychological experiences.²²²

but I have yet to find primary documentation to confirm it. Galison, "Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism," 740.

²²⁰ Rudolf Carnap, Lecture notes for his Bauhaus lecture, "Aufgabe und Gehalt der Wissenschaft," prepared 9 October 1929 and delivered 16 October 1929 [RC 110-07-47]. Transcription from shorthand by Gerald Heverly, CP, PASP. Quoted by permission of the University of Pittsburgh. All rights reserved.

²²¹ In her essay, Feest lays out an argument that Carnap's use of Gestalt psychology served to define basic elements of his constitutional system is compatible with his anti-metaphysical project. She also outlines several ties between Carnap and the Berlin/Frankfurt school of Gestalt psychologists including Reichenbach. The essay's bibliography provides a strong starting point for further research. Galison excluded these lectures from his essay.

²²² Mitchell G. Ash, *Gestalt Psychology in German Culture, 1890-1967: Holism and the Quest for Objectivity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 68-69.

This mutual skepticism is understandable given the rapid transformations that were occurring within the respective disciplines. Questions of psychology permeated early twentieth-century discourse from Freud's psychoanalysis to social psychology to applied psychology in the workplace or living space and in 1929 Meyer invited three psychologists to survey these areas in his lecture series.²²³

Although the “study of the mind” had long been integrated into philosophy, scholars began to approach it as its own distinct field in the late nineteenth century when analysis of “the mind” was taken out of the realms of philosophy and religion and was subjected to scientific scrutiny. The oppositional dichotomy between these shifting paradigms, according to science historian Mitchell Ash, is reductivist and ripe for reevaluation.²²⁴ He made a strong case for “empirical psychology,” a middle way between scientific/non-scientific fields and positivism/psychology, a path shared by Carnap and Meyer. They relied on empirical study based on scientific analytical methods to quantify or analyze a person's experience within a given environment in order to develop structures—whether epistemological, psychological or architectural—that could be more generally applicable to larger groups of people. As Carnap explained in his Dessau lecture:

The mission of science is knowledge of empirical facts and the mission of psychology is to express the facts of the inner life. Both are contingent upon specific circumstances

²²³ Frederic J. Schwartz, “The Eye of the Expert: Walter Benjamin and the Avant Garde,” *Art History* 24, 3 (2001): 430.

²²⁴ Ash details the complexities involved in breaking from traditional academic departments, including some scholars' condemnation of applied psychology as the degradation of a university education by focusing on practical rather than intellectual matters in his “Academic Politics in the History of Science: Experimental Psychology in Germany, 1879-1941,” *Central European History* 13, 3 (1980). Meyer's lecture series represents the professionalization of the field that had taken hold in experimental and applied psychology departments established within technical and traditional universities where philosophers, psychologists, spiritual advisors, and natural and social scientists were grappling with questions regarding the nature of the mind, what it represented, and what it could and could not do.

such as geography and history, as well as on the conditional relationships among natural, psychological and social laws.²²⁵

The philosophical distinction between Cartesian dualism whereby mental functions are viewed as non-physical, and Monism, which grounds the mind's activity in empirical experience, was present within Bauhaus discourse from start to finish, not just during its early Weimar phase.²²⁶ As Botar has shown, a wide range of Bauhaus faculty including Itten, Kandinsky, Moholy and Meyer, sought to unify the mind and body under the influence of the life philosophy (*Lebensphilosophie*) traditions of Ludwig Klages, Ernst Haeckel and others.²²⁷ The impulse, whether Monist or holistic, was not simply a question of the nature of humanity or the soul, but held wider implications for *every* aspect of Bauhaus thinking and practice.

Many of these wide-reaching discussions centered on the mind/body paradigm—the so-called “psychophysical” question. Psychology provided a modern discursive framework for scientists and philosophers who attempted to strip spiritual or metaphysical associations from “the mind.”²²⁸ The German word for mind (*Geist*), also refers to spirit, psyche, soul, and intellect

²²⁵ Carnap, [RC 110-07-49] Lecture 15 October 1929. CP, PASP. Quoted by permission of the University of Pittsburgh. All rights reserved.

²²⁶ The Cartesian subject—based on René Descartes' dictum: *cognito ergo sum*, or “I think, therefore I am”—implies a dualistic split between mind and body and, by extension, subject and object/external world. Within this paradigm, the individual is autonomous—distinct or separate from all and everyone else.

²²⁷ Oliver Botar delves into Monism and in his discussion of *Lebensphilosophie* and Biocentrism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including Bauhaus figures. A thorough, yet concise, overview is found in his chapter, “Defining Biocentrism,” in Botar and Wünsche, *Biocentrism and Modernism*, 15-45. Meyer's Bauhaus student Herbert Hoffmann mentions Haeckel's importance for Meyer in his 1989 colloquium talk: Hoffmann, “Hannes Meyer: Ökologische Aspekte seiner Lehre und deren Auswirkung,” 100.

²²⁸ Disassociating the spiritual connotations from the mind proved all but impossible for most. Epiphenomenalists like zoologist T.H. Huxley were an exception. “Epiphenomenalism is the view that mental events are caused by physical events in the brain, but have no effects upon any physical events. Behavior is caused by muscles that contract upon receiving neural impulses, and neural impulses are generated by input from other neurons or from sense organs. On the epiphenomenalist view, mental events play no causal role in this process.”

and had been integral to the Bauhaus from the beginning. There, and within the art historical discourse in general, the mind has been intertwined with creativity, subjectivity, the soul, perception of experiences, interpretation, along with countless other possibilities.²²⁹ Meyer semantically recast the notion of “spirit,” (*Geist*) meaning the essence of humanity, into the preferred scientific language of the day: “psyche” or “mind.”

This is important because it counters claims by contemporary critics that Meyer was “dehumanizing” the field of design by removing art from it. *Geist* remained fundamental to Meyer’s work and educational outlook, as did fine art. Initiating Schlemmer’s course was just one example where these connections among philosophy, science, psychology and art became explicit. On September 13, 1928 for a lecture on *Man*, Schlemmer noted:

Two courses for treating experience: one is through natural science: it examines the object of the experience in its character of supposed independence of the subject. The other is with psychology: it examines the total content of the experience in its relation with the subject and in the qualities directly attached to it. Old concepts: ‘science of the soul,’ ‘science of the inner experience,’ ‘self-knowledge of the subject.’²³⁰

The often contradictory, even oppositional, intersection of philosophy and psychology played out in the Bauhaus lectures as they grappled with prominent themes of contemporary discourse, including the mind/body problem that Meyer’s *junge menschen* prospectus and Schlemmer’s *Man* course cast as a holistic unity.

William Robinson, "Epiphenomenalism," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta, ed. <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/epiphenomenalism> (accessed 1 July 2012).

²²⁹ *Geist* and creativity are central to the discussion of the painters at the Bauhaus and the role of the fine arts in design and architectural production.

²³⁰ Oskar Schlemmer, *Man: Teaching Notes from the Bauhaus* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971), 146.

The psychophysical question was addressed most directly in Hans Prinzhorn's lectures: "Unity of Body and Mind" ("*Leib-Seele-Einheit*") and "Foundations of the New Psychology of Character" ("*Grundlagen der neuen Persönlichkeitspsychologie*") on 15-16 March 1929. They emphasized the unity of both, as presented in his latest books on psychology: *The Unity of Body and Mind. A Central Problem in Modern Psychology (Leib-Seele-Einheit. Ein Kernproblem der neuen Psychologie, 1927)*, and *Psychotherapy: its Nature its Assumptions its Limitations. A Search for Essentials (Psychotherapie: Voraussetzungen, Wesen, Grenzen. Ein Versuch zur Klärung der Grundlagen, 1929)*.²³¹

An art historian and medical doctor, Prinzhorn first received his doctorate in philosophy in 1909 after studying art history and philosophy at the University of Vienna. He went on to train in medicine and psychiatry during and after the First World War. At the University of Heidelberg, he combined his interests by studying the artwork of the mentally ill and advanced the notion of the unconscious as pure creativity, culminating in his influential 1922 publication, *Artistry of the Mentally Ill (Bildnerei der Geisteskranken)*, the largest collection of its type.²³²

Although Prinzhorn is best known for his collection, his interests in psychology and art extended to all forms of creativity. He thought that creativity was based in the unconscious mind, unencumbered by the intellect.²³³ Ernst Kállai, Hungarian critic, Bauhaus publicity spokesman and editor of *Bauhaus* from 1928-1929, contextualized Prinzhorn's lectures in his article "Building and Living" (bauen und leben) in reference to *Sachlichkeit* and architecture. He

²³¹ For more on Prinzhorn, see Thomas Röske, *Der Arzt als Künstler. Ästhetik und Psychotherapie bei Hans Prinzhorn* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis 1995).

²³² The Prinzhorn Collection is comprised of over 5,000 works collected in the early 1920s. Some were included in Hitler's "Degenerate" Art Exhibition in 1937-38.

²³³ Botar has an in-depth discussion of Prinzhorn in the context of Klages's *Lebensphilosophie* and negative biocentrism in Chapter Three. Botar, "Prolegomena."

expounded on Prinzhorn's belief that the rejection of historical models—cultural, political, social and finally architectural—left a void that could not be filled by dehumanizing, mechanized, industrial building:

In his outstanding book...., Hans Prinzhorn speaks of the need to complete the framework for a world view that 'would offer salvation from the nightmare of Western intellectualism.' He... claims with Klages that all the real life processes in nature are unconscious, without purpose and self-contained....Prinzhorn emphasized the necessity of a new "life teaching" (*Lebenslehre*) to lead people to find a secure place in the world that is 'consistent with the great rhythms of nature and all living systems.'²³⁴

Embracing the neo-romantic or life philosophy (*Lebensphilosophisch*) criticism of society's disintegration into disparate parts, Kállai adopted Prinzhorn's Monist quest in *Geist und Leben* to urge reintegration of humanity and architecture vis-à-vis the psyche or unconscious. Implicit in their critique is the condemnation of the conscious intellect as an atomizing force that rendered the world over-mechanized and inauthentic.²³⁵ Kállai wrote:

As a departure from the emptiness of old socio-political ideas, the only remaining building is designed not by an architect, but by the engineer who has displaced him for the industrialized building. But this building is now almost exclusively controlled by mechanistic notions....creating housing, that from Prinzhorn's point of view of the mind-

²³⁴ hans prinzhorn spricht... von der notwendigen vollendung des gerüstes für ein weltbild, das 'die erlösung vom alldruck des abendländischen intellektualismus böte.' er gebraucht den begriff des 'bewußtlos bildenden lebens' und behauptet mit klages, daß 'alle echten lebensvorgänge ihrem wesen nach unbewußt, zweckfrei, zwangsläufig, in sich geschlossen' seien. er sieht den menschlichen geist in feindlicher spannung zu solchen lebensvorgängen. 'alle verzerrungen des daseins aus ressentiment, aus falscher vergeistigung, aus übermaß von bewußtem zweckdenken, aus schieferm moralischen zwang, aus willensüberspannung in mächtiger der selbstquälerischer askese—kurzem alle schwächungen des lebens von unschuld und fülle zu schlechtem gewissen und kargheit' sind auswirken jener großen gegenmacht, des geistes, der uns in die sie der französischen revolution währende kultur- und menschenheitskrise gestoßen hat. prinzhorn betont die notwendigkeit einer neuen lebenslehre, um den menschen zur einer weltsicherheit zur führen, die sich 'im einklang mit der großen rhythmien des naturlaufs und mit allem lebenden gebilde' fände. die neue lebenslehre hätte 'trotz aller bis zum anarchischen gehenden skepsis gegen die scheinwerte der zivilisations, den menschlichen kultur gebilden wieder die ihnen zukommende achtung zu erweisen, aber nicht in schwärmerischer absolutierung, sondern in kritischer sachlichkeit.' Ernst Kállai, "bauen und leben," *bauhaus: vierteljahr-zeitschrift für gestaltung* 3, 1 (1929): 12.

²³⁵ Harrington, *Reenchanted Science*, 154.

body unity, can only be seen as overbred intellectualism. We encounter the realization that building is not only technical and economic but also psychological organization.²³⁶

Kállai's analysis echoed what Meyer expressed in his essay "Building" written the year prior to Prinzhorn's visit, which implicated contemporary architectural practice as mechanistic formalism: "This building instruction is not a lesson in style. It is not a constructivist system, and it is not a miracle of technology. It is a system of a living structure, and at the same time, it clarifies physical, psychological, material and economic requirements."²³⁷ Meyer would go on to cite both Prinzhorn and his mentor Ludwig Klages—along with physiologist and painter Carl Carus, social psychologist Alfred Adler and philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche—as the intellectual lineage for "the studies of the mind" (*Seelenkunde*), a fundamental component, according to Meyer, of his Bauhaus pedagogy.²³⁸ This intellectual/psychological lineage was woven into the curriculum through guest lectures and through Schlemmer's course, *Man*. It was also expressed in the organizational innovations and in Meyer's theoretical architectural courses to be discussed in the next chapter.

²³⁶ "als abkehr von der hohlheit alter kulturpolitischer ideale bleibt nur das bauen übrig, in dem der architekt zugunsten des ingenieurs verdrängt wird: das industrialisierte bauen. dieses bauen aber wird heute fast ausschließlich von mechanistischen vorstellungen, von rein zivilisatorischen idealen beherrscht. es schafft häuser, die von dem prinzhornschen standpunkt der leib-seele-einheit aus gesehen nur als scheinwerte einer überzüchteten intellektualistischen nutzbetriebsamkeit gelten können. nur ausnahmsweise begegnen wir der erkenntnis, daß bauen nicht nur technische und ökonomische, sondern auch psychische organisation sein müsse." Kállai, "bauen und leben," 12.

²³⁷ "diese baulehre ist keine stil-lehre. sie ist kein konstruktivistisches system, und sie ist keine mirakellehre der technik. sie ist eine systematik des lebensaufbaues, und sie klärt gleicherweise die belange des physischen, psychischen, materiellen, ökonomischen." Hannes Meyer, "bauen," *bauhaus* 2, No. 4 (1928).

²³⁸ Meyer, "Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929." Bernhard discusses Meyer's interest in *Lebensphilosophie* and proponents who lectured in 1929 in Bernhard, "Gastvorträge," 110-111.

Meyer was neither first nor last at the Bauhaus to show interest in Prinzhorn. All three directors invited him to lecture.²³⁹ In Weimar, Itten, Klee, Kandinsky and Gropius were engaged with his writing and Mies, whose library held books by Prinzhorn, also maintained a lengthy correspondence with the author.²⁴⁰ Still, Meyer's own participation and promotion of figures like Prinzhorn reinforce a new understanding of his tenure grounded in holistic psychology.

Psychology, predominantly Gestalt theory, had been integral for pedagogical and theoretical practices from the school's beginning. The theory courses of Itten, Klee, and Kandinsky, for instance, investigated physiological and psychological perceptions of formal properties in art, such as color and line.²⁴¹ During Meyer's tenure, Kandinsky's course description included "psychological necessities and their consideration" as one component of "artistic form" in the fourth semester of the free painting program.²⁴² And before his departure in 1928, Moholy-Nagy had also engaged in issues of art and psychology within the realm of "New Vision" photography, film and typography, all of which mediated the new, modern modes of perception as well as questioned the status of the art object.

Psychology during Meyer's tenure extended beyond perception theory in individual courses to occupy a foundational position in both pedagogical and theoretical realms. Gestalt theory, in particular, informed Meyer's vision for the school. Before discussing how Gestalt

²³⁹ Ibid., 101; 109.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 110-111; Botar, "Prolegomena," 228.

²⁴¹ On Klee's use of Gestalt in his courses, see Teuber, "Blue Night by Klee," in *Vision and Artefact*, Henle, ed. (New York: Springer, 1976). Van Campen contextualizes Gestalt and avant-garde art within a common background in 19th Century thought in Crétien van Campen, "Early Abstract Art and Experimental Gestalt Psychology," *Leonardo* 30, 2 (1997). For a brief overview in terms of architectural interiors, see Marco de Michelis, "Color Plans for Architecture. 1925-26," in *Bauhaus: Workshops for Modernity, 1919-1932*, Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman, eds. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 184-188.

²⁴² "unterricht kandinsky," *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus*, student prospectus compiled by Hannes Meyer in August 1929. For more on Kandinsky and Gestalt theory, see Wick, *Teaching at the Bauhaus*, 200, and Paul Overy, *Kandinsky: The Language of the Eye* (New York: Praeger, 1970).

played out in the guest lectures, a brief introduction to its theory is in order, along with an outline of a few theoretical principles that were pertinent to the pedagogy and practice in the Meyer Bauhaus.

Gestalt is a branch of psychology founded by Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Köhler and Kurt Koffka in the early 1910s. They reacted against the analytical methods that dominated scientific discourse since the nineteenth century that were predicated on elementarist principles: the process of breaking down constructs—physical or intellectual—into their most basic elements for individualized investigations from which they would draw broad conclusions about totality. This so-called atomistic approach was as applicable to Logical Positivism as it was for chemistry or biology. Instead, the foci of Gestalt inquiry—whether psychological, biological, epistemological or whatever they may be—are predicated on the fundamental premise that all things, behaviors or situations are comprised of a totality, and furthermore, that this totality cannot be broken down into constituent parts without changing the meaning of either the parts or the whole. Gestalt, meaning “form” or “configuration,” is holistic and dynamic in nature with each part contingent upon context and relationships to others. In a lecture to the Berlin Kant Society in 1924, Max Wertheimer described both this principle and its reaction against historical scientific methods:

What is Gestalt theory and what does it intend? [It] was the outcome of concrete investigations in psychology, logic, and epistemology....[It]will not be satisfied with sham solutions suggested by a simple dichotomy of science and life. Instead, Gestalt theory is resolved to penetrate the problem itself by examining the fundamental assumptions of science. It has long seemed obvious—and is, in fact, the characteristic tone of European science—that ‘science’ means breaking up complexes into their component elements. Isolate the elements, discover their laws, then reassemble them, and the problem is solved. All wholes are reduced to pieces and piecewise relations between pieces....

The fundamental ‘formula’ of Gestalt theory might be expressed in this way. There are wholes, the behavior of which is not determined by that of their individual

elements, but where the part-processes are themselves determined by the intrinsic nature of the whole. It is the hope of Gestalt theory to determine the nature of such wholes. (Max Wertheimer, *Gestalt Theory*, trans., Willis D. Ellis (Raleigh, NC: Hayes Barton Press, 1924)

The tenets of Gestalt theory—interdependence, dynamism and a scientific framework, albeit a skeptical one—provide another foundation for Meyer’s project at the Bauhaus in terms of organizational structure, student assignments, and the design process. Philosophical implications of Gestalt theory also underscored Meyer’s conception of the relationship between designer and user. According to Ash, Gestalt theorists’ assertion that the subject was integral to, rather than separated from the world, resulted in “self-organizing systems” that were in a perpetual state of flux.²⁴³ Ash explained further that Köhler distinguished the Gestalt conception of self-organizing systems from “machine theory” and its associations with manipulation and control.²⁴⁴ This distinction sheds light on an often expressed criticism of Meyer’s work at the Bauhaus as “technocratic;” not only was there an erroneously perceived imposition of a “Communist” worldview, but Meyer has been accused of attempting to control and manipulate behavior. As will become clear in the next chapters, Meyer’s creative process demanded that architect/designer and user remained active agents in the process, thereby distinguishing Meyer’s approach from pure systems theory or the analogous architectural/biological notion of “autopoiesis.”²⁴⁵

An important guest lecturer and practitioner of Gestalt experimental psychology was Professor Karlfried Graf Dürckheim, who was affiliated with the esteemed Institute of

²⁴³ Ash, *Gestalt Psychology in German Culture*, 2.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Mertins discusses autopoiesis in architecture in “Bioconstructivism.”

Psychology founded by Wilhelm Wundt at the University of Leipzig. Considered by some to be the “father of experimental psychology,” Wundt’s theories on psycho-sensory perception were influential for avant-garde artists, Kandinsky among them, and served as a springboard for later Gestalt theorists such as Wertheimer and Köhler. Dürckheim studied *Ganzheitspsychologie* (holistic psychology) under Felix Krueger in the Department of Applied Psychology and Experimental Pedagogy, which stressed the roles of intuition and feelings in perceptual experience as well as the importance of community.²⁴⁶ In her book *Reenchanted Science: Holism in German Culture from Wilhelm I to Hitler*, Anne Harrington described their shared belief that holistic insights could root science in intuition and reason and that science could then be united with art and religion—a unity that was echoed at the Bauhaus, even under Meyer.²⁴⁷

Meyer invited Dürckheim to lecture in 1930, forging personal and professional ties to the Institute that endured beyond his Bauhaus time.²⁴⁸ On 4 June, Dürckheim presented “Gestalt Psychology,” two weeks later a lecture “On Experiential Space and Objective Space,” and on 2 July, a discourse “On Social Psychology.”²⁴⁹ Student Howard Dearstyne’s lecture notes summarize Dürckheim’s definition of Gestalt:

Gestalt psychology. Standing out (of the Gestalt) from the background, coherence, arrangement, qualities of wholeness.

²⁴⁶ Ash, “Academic Politics in the History of Science: Experimental Psychology in Germany, 1879-1941,” 12. The other three departments were Measurement Methods and Perceptual Psychology; Psychology of Higher Functions; and Developmental Psychology, including Child Psychology.

²⁴⁷ Harrington, *Reenchanted Science*, 29.

²⁴⁸ Hannes Meyer to Graf Dürckheim 18 August 1930. [Meyer Correspondence 1926-30, 870570-Series I] Getty Research Institute.

²⁴⁹ “Über den Erlebnisraum und den objektiven Raum,” and “Über soziale Psychologie.” After Meyer’s dismissal, Mies invited Dürckheim to speak again: 12 and 19 October 1931 “Fundamental Problems of Aesthetics” (*Grundprobleme der Ästhetik*), and on 28 October 28 1931 “Functionality and Value” (*Zweckmässigkeit und Wert*).

Physiologically equal parts change when the environment and the arrangement change. The part changes when the Gestalt changes. The changing of one part changes the whole [example: A changed attitude of the mouth changes the whole expression of the face]. The magnitude of the change affecting the whole through the change of the part depends on the importance of that part to the whole.²⁵⁰

Dürckheim's focus in these 1930 lectures was perception, outlining aspects of Gestalt theory such as a definition of experiential space, arrangement, coherence, proportion and dynamics, which can still be seen in design schools today in "Perception Theory" courses.

Under Mies's tenure the following year, Dürckheim expanded the purview of Gestalt principles from experiential space to holistic (*Lebensphilosophisch*) ideals that were integral to the Bauhaus thinking of both Mies and Meyer. Referring to Klages, social psychologist Alfred Adler and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, Dürckheim delved into the unconscious, social psychology, ethics and spirituality.²⁵¹ Meyer voiced his affinity to the Leipzig Institute and a striving toward holism in a letter written to Dürckheim soon after his dismissal in 1930:

We are in agreement; I too do not want to miss the future personal connection with you and with the whole [Leipzig] circle, including the highly-revered Professor [Felix] Krueger. My first request of you and your colleagues is for us to be able to continue to work together. As you know, the incorporation of applied psychology, among other things, to our design practice is very close to my heart.²⁵²

²⁵⁰ Dürckheim lecture quote from Howard Dearstyne appears in Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, 159.

²⁵¹ The lectures touched upon many of the same issues discussed in this chapter and would be a rich topic for future scholarship.

²⁵² "Es geht mir wie ihnen, auch ich möchte die Verbindung mit ihnen persönlich und mit dem ganzen Kreis um den von mir so hochverehrten Professor Felix Krüger auch in Zukunft nicht missen. Meine erste Bitte geht daher an Sie und Ihre Herren Kollegen, mir auch in Zukunft die Zusammenarbeit mit Ihnen allen zu ermöglichen. Sie wissen, wie sehr mir ganz besonders am Herzen liegt, Gestaltung u.a. als angewandte Psychologie betrieben zu wissen." Meyer to Graf Dürckheim 18 August 1930.

Meyer had already publicly expressed this partiality in a seminal lecture he presented in Basel and Zurich in conjunction with the Bauhaus traveling exhibition in 1929, when he explained that the new architecture school "...must include psychology, along with the question of mind-body unity, as foundational knowledge from which to build..." His lecture notes went on to list important influences: "(Carus-Nietzsche-Klages Prinzhorn) Adler-Freud (Consciousness as a fatality. Seidel) Experimental Psychology (rhythm [Felix] Krueger)." ²⁵³

The association of Dürckheim's Leipzig Circle colleague Felix Krueger with the Nazi Party in the 1920s and eventually in the 1930's, Dürckheim himself, has tarnished the Leipzig Institute's reputation. Even during the Bauhaus years, members of some of the Leipzig Circle's possible connections with National Socialism were issues of discussion. In 1932, the Bauhaus Communist student group—KOSTUFRA—identified Krueger, Prinzhorn and Riedel, among others, as Nazi sympathizers in their mimeographed pamphlet *Bauhaus: Sprachrohr der Studierenden*. ²⁵⁴ Meyer acknowledged their "cultural" differences in the same 1930 letter to Dürckheim:

With all of the oppositions in our *Weltanschauungen*, discussions with you and the Leipzig Circle have become an absolute necessity for me and you may not realize the degree of satisfaction I have derived from you all. In light of the fact that escalation of cultural opposites in our society renders few opportunities for a harmonious debate, I appreciate our own even more. I would therefore like to make use of your invitation to speak in Leipzig after the semester begins. ²⁵⁵

²⁵³ Meyer, "Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929."

²⁵⁴ Bernhard, "Gastvorträge," 100. Botar pointed out that Prinzhorn was a Nazi sympathizer from 1930 until his suicide in 1933, but he never officially joined the party. "Prolegomena," fn. 254, 277.

²⁵⁵ "bei allem gegensätzlichen in unserer werltanschauung ist mir die auseinandersetzung mit ihnen und ihrem leipziger kreis ein wahres bedürfnis geworden, und sie wissen vielleicht nicht, welche genugtuung mir der verkehr mit ihnen allen je und je geboten hat. ich bedauere, dass die zuspitzung der kulturellen gegensätze in unserer gesellschaft so selten gelegenheit zu derartig harmonischer auseinandersetzung gibt; umsomehr schätze ich die unsrige. gerne werde ich daher von ihrer einladung gebrauch machen und nach semesterbeginn in leipzig vorsprechen." Meyer to Graf Dürckheim 18 August 1930.

“Cultural opposites” suggests political polarity, but it is possible that Meyer was referring to questions that were more philosophical in nature. Dürckheim would not only go on to become affiliated with the National Socialist Party, but he also imbued psychology with mysticism and many ideas from Eastern philosophy, Zen Buddhism in particular. Inviting these lecturers to speak despite the wide chasm between their political leanings illustrates how Meyer set out to introduce students to a variety of viewpoints, regardless of politics. The presence of these figures at the Bauhaus underscores Meyer’s attempt to expose students to complex dialogues that were taking place in Weimar Germany—a stance for which he would be chastised from both ends of the political spectrum—and further invalidates the claim that Meyer imposed a programmatic political agenda on those at the Bauhaus.

“Psychologist-Engineer”—Applied Psychology

“We must approach everything with a little better grasp of psychology. Psychology is everything,” according to Meyer, and the Bauhaus was at the forefront in putting the ideas into practice in the lecture hall, the studio and on the building site.²⁵⁶ Hans (Johannes) Riedel, who was both a lecturer of applied psychology and an academic engineer, was one of the few instructors included as one of the “adjunct teaching faculty” (*nebenamtliche Lehrkräfte*) in Meyer’s 1929 curricular diagram. Riedel’s educational training began in psychology, philosophy and economics, eventually leading to his engineering degree. His varied background was evident in his first Bauhaus lecture on 12 February 1929, “Organization of Work.” In the school’s 1929 prospectus *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus*, Meyer included a synopsis of Riedel’s lecture

²⁵⁶ Meyer, “Address to the Student Representatives on the Occasion of his Appointment as Director.” Translated in Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, 141.

coupled with his ringing endorsement of the school itself, noting the students' originality, freedom and potential: "Dr. Eng. Hanns[sic] Riedel talks about: 1. Physiology and Psychology of Free or Affiliated Creative People (Technique); 2. Social Organization Associated with Creativity (Labor Organizations); 3. Operational Economics; and 4. Business Psychology."²⁵⁷

The course notes of architecture student J. Cornelieus van der Linden noted Riedel's emphasis on the practical application of Gestalt holistic principles:

What is business all about? People co-operating, creating. Using business or organizational theory. The situation now is very different: production did not used to be based on rational concepts. The type of industry now emerging consists of specific activities based on business theory. [...] It's not only the costs and technology that are important but also the psychological factor....Business is subject to its own natural laws, like a body [...] It can only be organized on the basis of living people—we have to see in it a piece of culture, in other words of totality. *All life tends towards breadth, depth and unity.*²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ "dr. ing. hanns riedel spricht über: 1. physiologie und psychologie des frei oder gebunden schaffenden menschen (arbeitstechnik). 2. ordnung gesellschaftlich verbundenen schaffens (arbeitsorganisation). 3. wirtschaftslehre des betriebes. 4. wirtschaftspsychologie....so sehr diese haltung, der auch die ganze form des lehrbetriebes rechnung trägt, ernstesstreben und echte originalität begünstigt, so sehr bedroht sie andererseits aber auch die entfaltung derer, die nicht selbständig sein können. um ein bauhäusler zu werden, der seinen platz ausfüllt, genügt deshalb begabung allein nicht, sondern es muss auch ein charakter vorhanden sein, der die begabung zusammenhält und so für den einzelnen selbst wir für die gesamtheit fruchtbar werden lässt. Meyer, *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus*."

"...To a great degree this attitude, for which the entire form of teaching enterprise also has accountability, fosters serious effort and genuine originality, the lack of which on the other hand, jeopardizes development and without which, one cannot be self-reliant. Talent alone is insufficient to become a member of the Bauhaus who satisfies the requirements. What must also be present is character that holds the talent together, so that for ourselves as individuals, we can become fruitful as a whole."

²⁵⁸ Marty Bax and J. J. van der Linden, Bauhaus lecture notes, 1930-1933: ideal and practice of architectural training at the Bauhaus, based on the lecture notes made by the Dutch ex-Bauhaus student and architect J.J. van der Linden of the Mies van der Rohe curriculum (Amsterdam: Architectura & Natura Press: Distribution outside the Netherlands, Idea Books, 1991), 70. Translated and quoted by Bax from the van der Linden papers, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin. Although this is an excerpt of a later Bauhaus lecture, his message is consistent with what he presented on February 12, 1929 at Meyer's invitation, and in his writings.

Riedel couched his discussion of applied psychology in ergonomics, engineering and in the work sphere—“psychotechnics” (*Psychotechnik*).²⁵⁹ In his essay, “The Eye of the Expert: Walter Benjamin and the Avant Garde,” art historian Frederic J. Schwartz described psychotechnics as a branch within the broader field of the “science of work” (*Arbeitswissenschaft*). Psychotechnicians—or industrial and organizational psychologists as they are now called—considered a person’s experience within the workplace in everything from ergonomic design, to employee job satisfaction, to healthy working conditions.

Riedel’s lecture counters stereotypes about Meyer’s Bauhaus as a bastion of technocratic Marxism. Given the context of Meyer’s Bauhaus and the lecture entitled, “Organization of Work,” it is worth noting that Riedel’s work had absolutely nothing to do with Marxist thought. Not only did Riedel’s holistic emphasis differentiate him from the standard trope of engineer as technocrat, but it put him in the vanguard of environmental psychology. Riedel’s approach signifies a paradigm shift from rationalist standardized building and means of production to an emphasis on the intended users, based on multifaceted design research.

Riedel returned to the Bauhaus two years later to present additional lectures, “Introduction to General Design Theory” and “Business and Psychology,” but then he ended his relationship with the school in 1932, citing political conflicts.²⁶⁰ His resignation was documented in Mies’s official diary (*Tagebuch*): “Dr. Riedel declined to continue teaching at the Bauhaus

²⁵⁹ For more background on Riedel, see Bernhard, “Gastvorträge,” 101-102 and Schwartz, “Eye of the Expert.”

²⁶⁰ 25 November 25 1931: “Einführung in die allgemeine Gestaltungslehre” and 27 November: “Wirtschaft und Psychologie.”

because longstanding trust had been broken.”²⁶¹ The breach of trust may have occurred when Riedel was publically quoted by the communist student group, KOSTUFRA, in its pamphlet *Bauhaus: Sprachrohr der Studierenden* (Mouthpiece of the Students). As KOSTUFRA was a hot-button organization for center and right-wing newspapers from its first publication date of 1 May 1930 (May Day), this association put Riedel in an uncomfortable position. According to historian Martin Kipp, Riedel simultaneously was affiliated with the German Institute for Technical Vocational Education (Deutsches Institut für technische Arbeitsschulung or DINTA), a school founded by a right-leaning engineer with politically conservative industrial ties.²⁶² Meyer hired Riedel despite his right-wing affiliations.

Meyer brought in another engineer who, like Riedel, expanded the purview beyond the nuts and bolts of the latest machinery to discuss engineering within a broader context of multifaceted social systems.²⁶³ Konrad von Meyenburg, an agricultural engineer based in Basel who invented a type of motorized rototiller, presented “Work Fundamentals and Work Analysis” on 6 June 1929. According to architecture student Hubert Hoffmann, his lecture was well received and characterized Meyer’s “total teaching” (*Gesamtlehre*) through its emphasis on complex ecological systems:

One of the most interesting encounters within the framework of the study of urban/land use planning was von Meyerberg’s lecture arranged by Hannes Meyer. The agricultural engineer was a proponent of substantiated ecological theories and had already produced a demonstrative example of “soft” technology with his invention of the “Meyenburg

²⁶¹ Mies van der Rohe diary entry 28 January 1932: “Dr. Riedel lehnt ab, weiterhin am Bauhaus zu unterrichten, da er das erforderliche und jahrelang vorhanden gewesene Vertrauen gestört sieht.” Archive, Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau.

²⁶² Schwartz, “Eye of the Expert,” n. 51, 439-440.

²⁶³ Another guest who discussed occupational therapy was Dr. Med. R. Neubert of the Deutsches Hygiene-Museum Dresden—with its focus on health education—spoke on 29 November 1929 about “versatile and technical organization.” (*lebendige und technische Organization*) Anonymous, “veranstaltungen am bauhaus.”

rototiller." In addition, Meyenburg was a fascinating personality who inspired universal enthusiasm among the critical members of the Bauhaus. The truly creative impulses emanating outward from him completed Hannes Meyer's holistic teachings in a tangible way, especially since it did not happen at the lectern, but on field trips, with first hand experience with the objects of study in the countryside. (Hoffmann, "Hannes Meyer: Ökologische Aspekte seiner Lehre und deren Auswirkung," 101. Courtesy Barry Bergdoll.)

Von Meyenburg and Meyer had met in Basel in 1919-20 when they were both involved with the Swiss cooperative movement—a reform tradition that would inform his lecture.²⁶⁴ After Meyer invited him to Dessau in January 1927, von Meyenburg became a public Bauhaus supporter and collaborator.²⁶⁵ Ise Gropius described their first meeting in a diary entry dated 28 January 1927:

Ebbo Osthaus and Herr von Meyenburg visited—one of the most stimulating days we have had! Meyenburg, inventor of the rototiller, is a tremendously vivid and creatively thinking person. He is very interested in all problems of rationalization, though he is skeptical whether the problem of overpopulation will not in the end dash all plans for improvement....They discussed a housing plan with G[ropius] which is in the development stage and would need closer collaboration between them.²⁶⁶

In October of that year, a lecture excerpt entitled "Culture of Plants, Animals, People" ("kultur von pflanzen, tieren, menschen.") was published in *Bauhaus* while Meyer was guest editor.²⁶⁷ Von Meyenburg's talk had been given in conjunction with *The Great Exhibition for*

²⁶⁴ Meyer mentions von Meyenburg in his 1925 article in *Das Werk*, "Siedlung Freidorf," included in full in Kieren, *Hannes Meyer: Dokumente zur Frühzeit*.

²⁶⁵ Peter Bernhard explained that Meyer invited von Meyenburg to the Bauhaus and he also links von Meyenburg to the biotechnology of Raoul Francé and monism of Wilhelm Ostwald in his essay. "Gastvorträge," 99.

²⁶⁶ Gropius, Diary.

²⁶⁷ K. von Meyenburg, "Kultur von Pflanzen, Tieren, Menschen," *bauhaus: zeitschrift für gestaltung* 1, 4 (1927): 5 The editors list the source thus: "aus eine rede, gehalten auf der 'gesolei', abgedruckt aus 'fortschritte der landwirtschaft', 1926/18, mit erlaubnis des verlagel julius springer, berlin-wien."

Health Care, Public Welfare and Physical Exercises (Die Große Ausstellung für Gesundheitspflege, soziale Fürsorge und Leibesübungen or GeSoLei) that took place in Düsseldorf from May 8th – October 15th 1926. A testament to an interdisciplinary cultural dialogue that spanned science, hygiene and health, sociology, psychology as well as the reform movements, von Meyenburg elaborated on the built environment—architecture, design, transportation and technology—as integrated biological processes. Though expressed in the language of the day, von Meyenburg’s interdisciplinary approach emphasized a new direction in architectural education to include ecologically sustainable design. Sustainability is just one of the incipient themes that would gain prominence later in architecture and design programs including human geography and environmental psychology.

At the vanguard of cultural thought, the lecture series addressed broad socio-humanistic questions specifically within the context of modern Weimar Germany. Discussions with experts in a variety of fields sought answers to how society comes to terms with the world after the First World War, and the incorporation of industrial mass production, and modern scientific advancements. Only after contextualizing these questions within contemporary conditions and engaging in the dialogue of modernity would students be prepared to consider more tangible aspects of design and building, practical training, and to be ready to enter the workforce in “the New World.”

Currents in contemporary philosophical and theoretical discourse were integrated into their coursework. Meyer’s curriculum differed from the more traditional route of preparatory courses followed by apprenticeships in architectural offices after graduation and foreshadowed the shift from the polytechnical model of architectural education to a more liberal arts based model that typifies an important trend in post-war American architectural pedagogy. According

to Meyer, only the pairing of theory and practice could prepare students to implement what they had learned while working within modern commercial production. Chapter Three will examine how these far-reaching theories made their way into Bauhaus student work—how Meyer took aspects of analytical logic, Gestalt psychology, social studies and the humanities to teach students to design for contemporary society undergoing a crisis of modernity.

Guest lectures listed in the 1929 Bauhaus prospectus *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!*

1928

- June 5 Prof. Walter Gropius, Berlin “America”
- June 11 Dr. Phil. Schorr, Freiburg i.b. “Dostoyevsky and the Russian Idea”
- July 10 Dr. Max Hodann, Berlin “Bett und Sofa”
- October 1 El Lissitzky, Moscow “Architecture and Factory Work”
- October 5 Ignaz Jezower, Berlin “Sociological and Artistic Elements of Film”
- October 12 Lu Märten, Berlin “Historical Dialectic and Experiment”
- November 2 Naum Gabo, Berlin-Moscow, “Introduction to My Work”
- November 3 Naum Gabo, “On the Worth of People and the Worth of Things”
- November 5 “Content and Form in Designed Art” (*gestaltenden Kunst*)
- November 29 Dr. Med. R. Neubert, Dresden “Living and Technical Organization”
- December 7 Paul Forgo-Fröhlich, Budapest “Neues Bauen in Hungary”
- December 14 Otto Heßler, ADGB Berlin “The Nature and Objectives of Free Trade Unions”

1929

- February 12 Dr. of Engineering Hanns Riedel, Dresden “Organization of Work”
- February 22 Prof. Dr. Sachsenberg, Dresden “Advertising”
- March 15 Dr. Hanns Prinzhorn, Frankfurt “Body-Spirit-Unity”
- March 16 “Foundations of the new Personality Psychology”
- April 18 City Planner Max Berg, Berlin “City Planning and Today’s Intellectual Culture”
- April 20 Henry Cowell, San Francisco “Unique Compositions for Piano”
- April 27 Director Dr. Neurath, Vienna “Picture Statistics Today”

June 6	K. von Meyenburg, Engineer, "Foundations of Labor and Labor Research"
June 10	Dziga Vertov, Moscow "'Cinema Eye:' Methods and Techniques of Russian Film"
July 4	Dr. Herbert Feigl, Vienna "The New Science. Worldview"
July 5	"Natural Law and Free Will"
July 6	"Chance and Law"
July 7	"Body and Soul"
July 8	"Space and Time"
October 15	Dr. Rudolf Carnap, member of the Verein Ernst Mach, Vienna "Science and Life" ²⁶⁸
October 16	"Function and Content of Science"
October 17	"The Logical Structure of the World"
October 18	"The Four-Dimensional World of Modern Physics"
October 19	"The Misuse of Language"

²⁶⁸ The Carnap lectures occurred after the publication of Meyer's student prospectus *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus*. These lectures are listed in *Bauhaus* 4 (1929): 29.

CHAPTER III

MEYER'S NEW BUILDING THEORY: 'THE ARCHITECT IS DEAD,' BUT THE BUILDING LIVES

Architectura, the mother of the arts—some say that it has been ill of late, others say it is in a process of healing. It's the same! ... Then architecture has been set free; it no longer contains a recognizable unity within itself, but is the culmination of a thousand-fold functions—not just technical, but affected by economic, social and psychological factors. One must turn to technology, to macroeconomics, the social sciences, medicine, psychiatry, and derive from them what architecture has to be about. Architecture itself is not only no longer an art form, it has unloaded its burdens onto the other sciences and must fulfill their demands in order to be a useful product.²⁶⁹

(Review of Hannes Meyer public lecture, [Dr Walter Ueber-Wasser], "Das Bauhaus Dessau. IV. Der Architekt," *Basler Nachrichten*, 8 May 1929. [Archive, Gewerbemuseum Basel])

After joining the Bauhaus faculty in 1927 to develop the school's first sustained architecture program, Meyer announced to the students that "the architect is dead."²⁷⁰ Along with the architect's untimely passing went notions of the autonomous individual, artistic genius, and internally-driven design, rejecting Gropius's conception of authorship and its manifestation in the school's foundational premises and pedagogy. According to Meyer, it was time to expand beyond Gropius' approach to building. With its focus on new materials and technological advances in construction methods, the Bauhaus approach was no longer innovative and had

²⁶⁹ "*Architectura*, die Mutter der Künste, macht eine Krankheitszeit durch, sagen die einen, macht einen Gesundungsvorgang durch, sagen die andern. Es ist dasselbe!...Sodann entlastet man die Architektur; man anerkennt nicht mehr ihre Einheit in sich selbst, sondern sieht sie als Ausfluß tausendfacher Abhängigkeiten nicht nur technischer, auch ökonomischer, sozialogischer und psychologischer Natur. Man wendet sich an die Technik, die Nationalökonomie, die Sozialwissenschaft, die Medizin, die Psychiatrie, und von dort aus abzuleiten, was Architektur zu sein habe. Sie selbst ist nicht nur keine Kunst auch keine Einheit mehr, sie wirkt ihre Last ab auf die andern Wissenschaften, deren Forderungen sie zu erfüllen hat, um brauchbares Erzeugnis zu sein. Damit geht auch der Architektur jene eine, persönliche, mehr als materielle Seite verloren, die jetzt überall auf dem Spiele steht."

²⁷⁰ Meyer, "Address to the Student Representatives on the Occasion of his Appointment as Director," in Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, 141.

become another banal historical style.²⁷¹ Declaring the architect's "death" was a call for a radical rethinking of the entire creative process of architecture and design at the Bauhaus. Meyer articulated his ideas in public lectures given in conjunction with the Bauhaus traveling exhibition of 1929-30, which provide a thematic structure for exploration of the theoretical underpinnings and exercises in Meyer's teaching.²⁷²

Though Meyer had continued with the functionalist trajectory that Gropius set out in his 1923 pronouncement "Art and Technology: A New Unity," he both enlarged the relevant discourse and took it in a new direction—a direction that remains misunderstood. Chapter One discussed the lasting impact of his 1926 essay "The New World" on Meyer's technocratic legacy, in which he declared that "[b]uilding is a technical, not an aesthetic process, and the purposeful function of a house always contradicts artistic composition."²⁷³ Meyer's removal of art from Gropius's equation appeared to leave only technology as the means to usher in modernity, but technology per se did not retain its privileged position for very long after Meyer joined the Bauhaus faculty. By 1928 in his essay "building," he had begun to overshadow technological considerations by using biological analogies to redefine the building process:

Building is a biological operation. Building is not an aesthetic process. In the basic design process, the new dwelling becomes not only a machine for living, but also a biological apparatus to serve spiritual and physical necessities... This functional-biological conception of building as a design of living processes lead to logical guidelines for pure construction. Building is the deliberate organization of the processes of living. Building as a technical operation is subsequently only a part of the process. The functional diagram

²⁷¹ Meyer (and his spokespeople Kállai and Georg Schmidt) were part of a broad trend in the late 1920s reacting against a perceived reification of modernist tendencies. Bruno Taut refers to "modernist tropes," for example.

²⁷² Even though there are many references to Meyer's lecture notes, there has yet to be an English translation.

²⁷³ See Chapter I, 'New World,' New Hire: Meyer's 'Functional, Collectivist-Constructive' Teaching Philosophy in 1927. "bauen ist ein technischer, kein ästhetischer prozess, und der zweckmässigen funktion eines hauses widerspricht je und je die künstlerische komposition." Meyer, "Die Neue Welt."

and the economic program are the decisive guidelines of the building project. (Meyer, “bauen”)²⁷⁴

This effort to include more complex ideas in a wider context using functionalist rhetoric elicited a staunch defensive backlash. The “death” of Meyer’s architect implied to contemporary critics a disdain or antipathy for creative agency coupled with the imposition of impersonal mechanized, deterministic designs. Critics responded with these notions and some historians have perpetuated them. Even recent scholarship that has begun to reevaluate the definition and import of Meyer’s functionalism to include “poetic” treatment of form (Nerdinger, Poerschke), bioconstructivism (Botar) and eco-social tendencies (Mertins), nonetheless maintain a predominantly technocratic view of Meyer’s contribution, namely that technology was Meyer’s primary concern.²⁷⁵

Meyer’s transcendence of Gropius’ dictum was complete by 1929, when neither art nor technology were foundational for his architectural or design thinking. Soon Meyer would characterize the unity of technology and art, not as the bedrock of the creative process, but as historical remnants of Werkbund ideals. He reiterated his more expansive redefinition when he wrote in “Bauhaus and Society” (1929):

Building theory or instruction (*Baulehre*) is not a lesson in style. It is not a constructivist system, and it is not a miracle of technology. It is a systemization of a living structure,

²⁷⁴ “bauen ist ein biologischer vorgang. bauen ist kein aesthetischer prozeß. elementar gestaltet wird das neue wohnhaus nicht nur eine wohnmaschinerie, sondern ein biologischer apparat für seelische und körperliche bedürfnisse... diese funktionell-biologische auffassung des bauens als einer gestaltung des lebensprozesses führt mit folgerichtigkeit zur reinen konstruktion...bauen heißt die überlegte organisation von lebensvorgängen. bauen als technischer vorgang ist daher nur ein teilprozess. das funktionelle diagramm und das ökonomische programm sind die ausschlaggebenden richtlinien des bauvorhabens.” Poerschke refers to this shift in terminology in her useful paper, “Hannes Meyer - Connecting Poetics and Ethics.” Winkler refers to the shift toward biological metaphors, but not in detail in his *Architekt Hannes Meyer*, 81-82. Winkler reprints the texts in his appendix, but combines “The New World” with “Building” into a single text as they were published in *Kritisk Revue—Sundvaenget* 4 (1928): 14-20, which is confusing. Ibid., 229-233.

²⁷⁵ Nerdinger, “Anstößiges Rot;” Poerschke, “Hannes Meyer - Connecting Poetics and Ethics;” Botar, “Prolegomena;” Mertins, “Hannes Meyer.”

and at the same time, it clarifies physical, psychological, material and economic requirements.²⁷⁶

Meyer continued to employ modern technology in his building and teaching, however he treated it as just one of many practical tools. He believed that its reverential treatment by architects, including Gropius, tended to dehumanize design by favoring efficiency and standardization over people, the users. He ascribed the same view to art: formalist designs that foregrounded the architect's creativity without regard for the user.

Meyer's ideal architect was not an "architect." In a 1929 lecture, Meyer asserted that an effective architect should be equipped with conceptual models to analyze every aspect of a building's uses within the wider environment. The results would reveal "living building" (*lebendiges Bauen*) [where] "building [is the] examination [of] life."²⁷⁷ This biologicistic notion operated on multiple levels. First, the dynamic and intersecting activities of living beings—psychological, ecological, sociological—would determine the building's form. The building itself would "come to life" in its use, as it was integrated into the existing ecology with the elasticity and transformative qualities of a living creature or a sustainable system. It was the "architectural idea of organically-grown forms," as one critic reported in 1929 after attending Meyer's lecture.²⁷⁸ Though the rhetoric was typical of the functionalist discourse of the day, its manifestations at the school were unique to the Bauhaus. Meyer's Bauhaus architect had become more of a sociologist, ecologist or psychologist than an artist, craftsman or engineer. Meyer's

²⁷⁶ "diese baulehre ist keine stil-lehre. sie ist kein konstruktivistisches system, und sie ist keine mirakellehre der technik. sie ist eine systematik des lebensaufbaues, und sie klärt gleicherweise die belange des physischen, materielle, ökonomischen." Meyer, "bauhaus und gesellschaft."

²⁷⁷ Meyer, "Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929."

²⁷⁸ "...Architekturidee der biologisch gewachsenen Formen..." Crs., "Aus dem rheinisch-westfälischen Kunstleben: "Die Dessauer Bauhaus" Ausstellung im Folkwangmuseum," [*Rheinische illegible title*], 18 February 1930. [exhibition review, Folkwang Museum, Essen (16 February – 6 April 1930)] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

ideal architect was not merely an architect, but an “organizer of life’s processes”—or, in current parlance, a designer.²⁷⁹

From the beginning, architecture had played a central role at the Bauhaus even in the absence of a formal architectural program. (fig. 23) Apart from a handful of individual architectural drawing courses and theoretical lectures, the curriculum did not include an architecture program until 1927. Building opportunities were rare, but architectural experimentation could be found within the context of competitions, exhibitions and publications. A select few students and graduates worked in Gropius’s private architectural office, just as Gropius had done for his own apprenticeship under Peter Behrens.

Gropius’ pedagogical model began with a broad foundational curriculum followed by incremental steps toward specialization that culminated in “Building” (*Bau*). The requisite preliminary courses (*Vorlehre*) make up the largest and only unbroken concentric circle. First taught by Johannes Itten and later by László Moholy-Nagy and Josef Albers, these courses introduced students to the fundamentals of form, color and materials. This elementarist approach, stemming from the ideas of the early nineteenth century pedagogical reformer Friedrich Fröbel, was based on methods involving the breaking down of complex structures in order to identify their essential characteristics and then building new forms free of historicist decoration and meaning.

Theoretical courses taught by Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky followed in the second semester. Students then moved on to specialized workshop training designated in the diagram by material such as wood, metal and textiles. Finally, “Building” was prominently placed in the

²⁷⁹ Wallis Miller described how the architect’s role shifted from creative visionary to “overseer of building technicians.” While I agree with Miller in theory, “building technicians” perpetuates a technocratic myth given Meyer’s humanistic goals. For more on the distinction between architecture and building at the Bauhaus, see Miller’s essay “Architecture, Building and the Bauhaus,” 83.

center with its subheadings emphasizing its practical aspects: “Construction site” (*Bauplatz*) “Experimental site” (*Versuchsplatz*), “Design” (*Entwurf*), and “Building and Engineering Sciences” (*Bau und Ingenieur Wissen*). Despite its privileged position, “Building” was only an aspiration—a centerpiece providing the framework and intended goals for design training in the workshops.²⁸⁰ Even though Gropius believed that the role of the Bauhaus was to instill in students the fundamental background needed to embark on architectural training elsewhere—either through apprenticeships or in specialized technical schools—practical training as indicated with the diagram’s subheadings took time to implement.²⁸¹

Gropius saw the potential to break with tradition with the move to Dessau. He implemented significant changes to the school’s curriculum and overall structure in late 1926 and hired Hannes Meyer to teach architecture in April 1927. Gropius’ new semester plan illustrated the new orientation away from crafts and toward industry that had become more evident with the move to the new Bauhaus building in Dessau.²⁸² (fig. 24) Designed by Herbert Bayer, the plan took the form of a grid with content again conforming to the form. Instruction in stained glass, pottery and stone were gone. Instead the plan listed architecture as one of the four courses of study along with advertising, stage and a “seminar for sculpture and painting.” The architecture course was broken down into two sections: building (*Bau*) and interior fittings (*Inneneinrichtung*), in which the metal, cabinetry, and weaving workshops were combined.

Gropius placed a new emphasis on practical training here, a trajectory that would become a hallmark of Meyer’s pedagogical vision whereby students would receive practical architectural

²⁸⁰ Subheadings delineating its practical aspects: “Construction site,” “Experimental site,” “Design,” and “Building and Engineering Sciences.”

²⁸¹ Miller, “Architecture, Building and the Bauhaus,” 67-69

²⁸² The chart was published in *Bauhaus Dessau Hochschule für Gestaltung: Prospekt* (Bauhaus Dessau college of design: prospectus) in late 1926 or early 1927.

training (planning and construction) along with theoretical instruction instead of the more traditional system of preparatory courses followed by apprenticeships in architectural offices upon graduation. Only this pairing of theory and practice, according to Meyer, would prepare students to implement what they had learned while working within modern commercial production. This chapter will show, however, that this pairing was not as straightforward as it seemed. Meyer considered a theoretical foundation in practical terms, as a tool for architects in the workplace.

Meyer's curricular diagram of 1929 gives graphic representation to the reconfigured workshop structure and insights into his pedagogical thinking. (fig. 22) More complex and dynamic than Gropius' perfectly self-contained circle of 1923 or grid from 1926-27, its elasticity and fluidity embody Meyer's approach to building and teaching as "a living process." His diagram became a creature of sorts, with a life of its own. On the far left, *Kunst* (art)—composed of heart and intuition—stands at the top of the vertical axis opposite *Wissenschaft* (science)—grounded as brain and intellect at the bottom. The horizontal axis spans theory, practice and *Werk*, with work as the final product on the far right, while the left of the diagram features four areas of specialized instruction: *Weberlei* (weaving), *Reklame* (advertising), *Ausbau* (interior finishing) and finally *Bau* (building), as Meyer called the architecture department in accordance with terms such as "neues Bauen" to refer to modern architecture and to remove aesthetic connotations.²⁸³ For its part, building education spanned three distinct phases: *Bau* ("building" for the first two semesters), *Baulehre* ("building theory" for three semesters) and *Baubüro* ("building office" or on-site experience for the final semesters). With circles demarcating individual workshop practices, the courses of study have evolved from the 1926/27 Gropius

²⁸³ Wallis Miller discusses the distinction between "architecture" and "building" in her essay "Architecture, Building and the Bauhaus," 63-89.

curriculum in three ways: (1) construction theory has become separate from building; (2) the Bauabteilung becomes the only department that remains detached from fine arts—the so-called “free painting” courses (*freie Malklassen*) taught by Klee and Kandinsky beginning in 1927; and (3) painting and sculpture was no longer be offered as one of the four courses of study.

Meyer’s impetus to remove fine arts from the design process stemmed, in part, from his opinion that structuring the school on the elementarist principles taught in the preliminary courses was based on a philosophically flawed model for understanding the world. This was just one example of a broad reassessment of reductivism that led Meyer and others to seek alternative holistic, non-linear models in cultural, scientific and philosophical spheres ranging from experimental social psychology and Gestalt theory to ecology, and even the nascent general systems theory of theorist and physicist Ludwig von Bertalanffy.²⁸⁴

Though to the best of my knowledge Bertalanffy was never a guest at the Bauhaus, there is a high likelihood that his ideas were circulating at the Bauhaus during Meyer’s tenure.

Theoretical biologist and philosopher Bertalanffy associated at this time with Viennese logical positivists, Berlin philosopher Hans Reichenbach and Gestalt theorists, all of whom presented

²⁸⁴ Meyer drew from contradictory influences that nonetheless fell under the umbrella term of *Lebensphilosophie*, as discussed in Chapter 2. Schwartz’s broad definition serves the argument of this chapter as well:

Lebensphilosophie or the 'philosophy of life' is an ill-defined but nonetheless pervasive tendency on the German intellectual scene in the early part of the twentieth century. Emerging out of the work of Dilthey and Nietzsche, finding confirmation in Bergson, then later Simmel and to a certain extent Husserl, it posited the relativity of truth and sought to identify the reality of things exclusively as they are experienced or lived. With the perceived failure of abstract concepts to represent the nature of the world, Life became a basic, if shaky, criterion of truth and morals and indeed an end in itself. To those who responded to it, *Lebensphilosophie* represented a rebellion against the aridity of academic philosophy's abstract speculation and the stranglehold of Neo-Kantianism; it posited the existence of unmediated experience, one not suppressed by institutions, concepts, and the moral codes of a seemingly bankrupt bourgeois order. It raised the possibility of a 'wholeness' of life in an age widely experienced as characterized by alienation. It was the philosophical underpinning of Behne's generation in its youth.

Frederic J. Schwartz, “Form Follows Fetish: Adolf Behne and the Problem of Sachlichkeit,” *Oxford Art Journal* 21, 2 (1998): 66.

lectures at the Bauhaus.²⁸⁵ In the 2007 essay, “On the Making of a System Theory of Life: Paul A. Weiss and Ludwig von Bertalanffy’s Conceptual Connection,” Manfred Drack, et al. outline Bertalanffy’s integrative, holistic principles for biological organizations and general systems theory. Bertalanffy, who coined the term “General Systems Theory,” serves here to raise some themes and concepts that were prevalent in Weimar during the late 1920s with which Meyer was also grappling. Bertalanffy integrated ideas and methodologies from biology, psychology and sociology to develop theories that describe “organismic” biology. Predicated on notions of wholeness and dynamics, an organism was understood as a system in relation to others whose whole was the sum of its parts. Importantly, it was not merely passively reactive to the outside world but was an active agent.²⁸⁶ This idea of perpetual interaction is crucial to Meyer’s conception of design, community and education.

Drack noted that these principles were not new, but had been advanced by *Lebensphilosophie* researchers since the turn of the century.²⁸⁷ Like his predecessors, Bertalanffy’s “systems biology” tried to overcome what he saw as a “mechanistic” approach in biology much as Meyer sought to transcend Gropius’ elementarist analysis of parts.²⁸⁸ Unlike a closed mechanical system, a biological organism was part of an open system that was perpetually

²⁸⁵ Studying in Vienna with Moritz Schlick, the founder of the Vienna Circle, Bertalanffy’s 1926 doctoral dissertation integrated biology, psychology and sociology. By 1928, he began associating with Berlin Gestalt psychologists as well as the Berlin Society for Scientific Philosophy and Hans Reichenbach, who presented a lecture at the Bauhaus. In Bertalanffy’s work in theoretical biology, he wrote that “wholeness [*Ganzheit*] Gestalt, is the primary attribute of life,” using the terms as synonyms. For more background, see M. Drack, W. Apfalter, and D. Pouvreau, “On the Making of a System Theory of Life: Paul A. Weiss and Ludwig von Bertalanffy’s Conceptual Connection,” *The Quarterly Review of Biology* 82, 4 (2007): 349-373. [PMC2874664] All citations are from the author’s manuscript in PMC, which is available online with its own pagination, 14.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

²⁸⁷ Drack mentions a longer lineage going back to Aristotle, post-Kantian idealists, and Romantic thinkers. In his public lectures, Meyer outlined the same intellectual heritage for his new building theory (*Bau-Lehre*).

²⁸⁸ For more explanation, see Drack, Apfalter, and Pouvreau, “Making of a System Theory of Life,” 3.

in flux and always striving toward equilibrium.²⁸⁹

Though mechanical and biological metaphors were often used interchangeably in functionalist discourse, Bertalanffy's distinction between closed mechanical systems and open biological systems supports my assertion that Meyer's rhetorical shift between his 1926 essay, "The New World," and his pronouncements in 1929 reflected a change in his architectural and pedagogical thinking associated with the ideas of "living building." Meyer's biological analogies symbolize recurring themes throughout his tenure as director described in this chapter, such as open, active systems, integrative approaches, relational, non-linear Gestalts, interactivity, and a desire to humanize architecture and its design process.

Although Meyer scholars, particularly Nerdinger and Kieren, have discussed his holistic outlook, they have not explored the topic in depth. The work of historian Oliver Botar provided an alternative context to the Constructivist, functionalist, architect/engineer paradigm into which Meyer and his Bauhaus agenda have been relegated. Botar's dissertation included Meyer in his examination of several contemporaries through the lens of holism.²⁹⁰

Meyer conceived of an expanded architectural field made up of complex, overlapping and interrelated whole systems drawn from the realms of both the humanities and sciences. Rooted in the late 19th century ideal of mutual cooperation, Meyer's expansion and redefinition of architecture marked a pivotal moment for architectural and design education that foreshadowed the socially-minded, integrated design programs that developed in the decades to come. Building was no longer constructed on the twin pillars of art and technology, but had been

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 18.

²⁹⁰ See Chapter II: "*Der Mensch als Einheit*. Meyer's Guest Lectures as Theoretical Humanism" for a more detailed discussion of Botar's Biocentrism. Also see Botar and Wünsche, *Biocentrism and Modernism* and Botar, "Prolegomena."

rehumanized and made more relevant as it came to life as a “living structure” intertwined with society at large.

Meyer was not the only socially-minded architect in Germany who experimented with “living building,” or “growing houses”—notable compatriots who embraced the same ideals and language were Bruno Taut and Martin Wagner.²⁹¹ Responsible for building thousands of dwellings in Berlin (and elsewhere) during the 1920s, their practical impact far surpassed Meyer’s theoretical and experimental teaching and built projects at the time. They also played central positions in the *Deutsche Bauhüttenbewegung* (German building guild movement). While serving as city planner (*Stadtbaurat*) in Berlin-Schöneberg, Wagner felt that the numerous cooperative organizations that sprang up before the war were unable to adequately address new realities of modern production and helped found Berlin’s first *Bauhütte* (building association of workers’ unions) in Berlin in 1919 (Bauhütte Berlin GmbH) as “a building society based on social principles.”²⁹² A significant force in the early Weimar Republic and allied with the rise of the worker movement, by 1922 there were 207 separate *Bauhütten* united under an umbrella organization, the Verband sozialer Baubetriebe, which had built 50,800 dwellings by 1929.²⁹³

One year before becoming chief city planner for Berlin in 1925, Wagner helped to found one of the most important national cooperative organizations, the Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, which served to finance union enterprises with Gehag (Gemeinnützige

²⁹¹ Bruno Taut, *Alpine Architektur* (Hagen: Folkwang-Verlag, 1919); Martin Wagner, *Das wachsende Haus: ein Beitrag zur Lösung der städtischen Wohnungsfrage*. (Berlin: Bong & Co., 1932).

²⁹² This was a cooperative effort between the *Bauarbeiterverband* (building workers’ union) with the Märkische Heimstätte, Siedlungsbank für Berlin and the Provinz Brandenburg. William T. Ham, “The German Building Guilds,” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 43, 2 (1929): 279.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 279-280.

Heimstätten Spar- u. Baugesellschaft) as the local Berlin branch.²⁹⁴ Local cells were self-administered and independent, but could work together nationally to reduce overhead costs and wield more control in the market while attending to individualized local needs and circumstances. With Wagner at the helm and Taut as its chief architect, Gehag built housing developments (*Siedlungen*) in Berlin including Hufeisen-Britz and Onkel-Toms-Hütte in Zehlendorf.²⁹⁵

Tangible links between *Bauhütten* organizations and the Bauhaus existed. For example, Gropius, Moholy-Nagy and Bayer would design an exhibition pavilion for Gehag/Dehag in Berlin in 1928. And Meyer and Wittwer's ADGB school in Bernau, as well as the Bauhaus students' unrealized project for the ADGB bank in Berlin, were both for a major worker cooperative—the ADGB was the umbrella organization for over 200 unions. Meyer's experimentation with cooperativism situates him and the Bauhaus among the prevalent housing and building reform movements in Germany rather than on the radicalized fringe. Even though Meyer found tangible successes in cooperativism, the Bauhaus as an educational institution fostered theoretical experimentation and also aligns Meyer's project with more esoteric ideas and thinkers.

Meyer's Bauhaus idea in diagram, for example, brings to mind the methods of another social reformer, Patrick Geddes (1834-1932), whose diagrams were also holistic in conception and didactic in purpose.²⁹⁶ Recollections of Bauhaus student Herbert Hoffmann show that

²⁹⁴ The Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund was first called Rewog (Reichs-Wohnungsfuersorge AG) and later Dewog (Deutsche Wohnungsfuersorge AG). Ludovica Scarpa, *Martin Wagner und Berlin: Architektur und Städtebau in der Weimarer Republik*, Schriften des Deutschen Architekturmuseums zur Architekturgeschichte und Architekturtheorie (Braunschweig: F. Vieweg & Sohn, 1986), 33-34.

²⁹⁵ Manfred Speidel, *Bruno Taut: Natur und Fantasie, 1880-1938* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1995), 209.

²⁹⁶ For more on Geddes, see Helen Meller, *Patrick Geddes: Social Evolutionist and City Planner*, Geography, Environment, and Planning Series (London; New York: Routledge, 1990); Volker Welter, *Biopolis:*

Geddes' work was included as assigned reading:

Hannes Meyer recommended we read the book by (Lewis) Mumford *Sticks and Stones (Vom Blockhaus zum Wolkenkratzer-From Log Cabin to Skyscraper)* which had just been published [in 1924]. He also pointed out the very important writings and urban planning accomplishments of his teacher, the Scottish organic chemist Patrick Geddes, who also exerted a strong influence on Hugo Häring at that time.²⁹⁷

A holistic educator and self-proclaimed generalist whose impact on early twentieth century intellectuals crossed disciplinary boundaries, Geddes's left a legacy as an urban planner and innovative thinker, however eccentric or utopian he may have seemed to some during his time.²⁹⁸ Although evidence of his direct engagement with Geddes is scant, Meyer would likely have become familiar with his writings on sociology and urbanism either while in Britain to study garden city development in 1912-1913 or in the early 1920s, while working and living in the Siedlung Freidorf. Because of his interest in the subject, Meyer may have also read Geddes' "Cooperation versus Socialism" (1889), an essay espousing the notion of mutual aid as an evolutionary agent for societal improvement.²⁹⁹ As Geddes biographer Volker Welter explains, Geddes' focus on the individual's interaction with his or her environment and to the larger social group transcends a class-based socio-political model—an idea similar to Meyer's conception of

Patrick Geddes and the City of Life (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002); Michiel Dehaene, "Survey and the Assimilation of a Modernist Narrative in Urbanism," *The Journal of Architecture* 7, Summer (2002); and Alessandra Ponte and Jessica Levine, "Building the Stair Spiral of Evolution: The Index Museum of Sir Patrick Geddes," *Assemblage*, 10 (1989): 46-64.

²⁹⁷ "Hannes Meyer empfahl uns auch das Buch von Mumford 'Vom Blockhaus zum Wolkenkratzer,' das damals gerade erschienen war. Er wies ebenso auf die sehr wichtigen Schriften und städtebaulichen Leistungen von dessen Lehrer hin, dem schottischen Organiker Patrick Geddes, der damals auch einen starken Einfluß auf Hugo Häring ausgeübt hat. Hoffmann, "Hannes Meyer: Ökologische Aspekte seiner Lehre und deren Auswirkung."

²⁹⁸ Geddes remained a generalist at a time when Scottish education was becoming increasingly specialized. For more on Geddes as an educator, see Douglas Sunderland, "Education as an Agent of Social Evolution: the Educational Projects of Patrick Geddes in Late-Victorian Scotland," *History of Education* 38, 3 (2009): 349-365.

²⁹⁹ Welter mentions Kropotkin's influence on Geddes from this time. Welter, *Biopolis: Patrick Geddes and the City of Life*, 44.

society, borne out in his Bauhaus architectural courses.³⁰⁰

The philosophical commonalities do not stop there. Geddes merits mention within this context for a number of reasons. Based in the rhetoric of science, sociology and psychology, both men sought new means of conceiving and expressing holistic concepts for society as well as for a model of education in the light of increased specialization in training. They both opted for diagrammatic representation of these interdisciplinary concepts as the preliminary phase in their design processes, and more importantly, for the purposes of educating the non-student public and instigating social action and civic virtue through exhibitions, writings and lectures. Finally, they shared an outlook that was influenced by *Lebensphilosophie*.³⁰¹

Integral to Geddes' own theoretical work as well as his far-reaching pedagogical agenda was the education of the public at large by prompting each person to take notice his or her environs and moreover, to envision and act on improving his or her own living conditions.³⁰² For that purpose, he developed a system of diagrams—he called them “thinking machines”—to synthesize, visually organize and present his ideas. The earliest and most famous example was a variation of social economist (Pierre Guillaume) Frédéric Le Play's triad of *Lieu, Travail, Famille* (Place, Work, Family), whereby Geddes (after substituting “Folk” for Family) created a graph of nine squares showing various interconnections among the three.³⁰³

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ Botar, “Prolegomena.” Also see Welter's chapters, “The Metaphysical Imperative in Urban Design around 1900,” and “The City as Spirituality,” in *Biopolis: Patrick Geddes and the City of Life*.

³⁰² Dehaene, “Survey and the Assimilation of a Modernist Narrative in Urbanism,” 40-43.

³⁰³ Theodor M. Porter explains that Le Play considered the basic task of social science was to create a form of observation that was appropriate to the new social and economic conditions of the 19th century as well as identifying authorities who could promote social change. Theodor M. Porter, “Reforming Vision: The Engineer Le Play Learns to Observe Society Sagely,” in *Histories of Scientific Observation*, Lorraine Daston and Elizabeth Lunbeck, eds. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 299.

An early career in biological studies served as a prism through which Geddes approached urban planning. Concepts and methodologies derived from natural sciences were applied to sociological analysis which Geddes, like the influential French sociologist August Comte, believed encompassed all other disciplines.³⁰⁴ This analysis became the crux of his planning. In a 1919 lecture, Geddes described his synthetic view of the sciences through a metaphor of the body:

The main conceptions of the sciences are not only ordering their sub-specialisms but are themselves the unifying specialisms of the cosmodrama. Yet these are not only products of human development; but each and all necessary organs of its activity and thinking man can dispense with, without injury even greater than physical mutilation or blinding. For he is mathematician, physicist, biologist, psychologist, sociologist, moralist—i.e. with all these elements of thought and activity of men, and not merely in serial order, but in organic unity also like the fingers of the hand. Whereas our existing curricula—still so often mathematical, even distinct from physical, or too often these in insufficient clearness for any of the above remaining three—are thus comparable to old rituals of mutilation, rather than to education proper...So for dealing with the social and economic world in its complexity we need the complete and unamputated grasp.³⁰⁵

Meyer's own "cosmodrama" of architectural education is as difficult to pin down as Geddes,' for it too drew from interdisciplinary sources that Meyer views as necessary for a sound education. Along with diagrams, Geddes adopted a second apparatus serving both preliminary design studies and larger pedagogical aims—the regional survey, described in an announcement for the Edinburgh Summer Meeting:³⁰⁶

³⁰⁴ Meller, Patrick, *Geddes: Social Evolutionist and City Planner*, 43-45.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

³⁰⁶ Dehaene discusses the dual aim of the Geddesian survey as a pedagogical tool in the classroom as well as part of a larger philanthropic-pedagogical project in "Survey and the Assimilation of a Modernist Narrative in Urbanism," 8.

It will include the discussion of such contemporary movements as are actually exemplified in the civic and educational world around, and therefore form part of the actual or possible life of student or citizen. Beginning with and constantly returning to a survey of the actual life around us, the student will be accustomed to observe and analyze its various activities, to consider the history and tendencies of these, and to bring the conceptions and methods of the various sciences, especially those of life and society, to bear upon their fullest interpretation. But since every individual is not only a product of social evolution, but a factor in it, intellectual progress involves a corresponding moral and practical development, the student so becoming more of a philosopher and more of a man; not only interpreting the social evolution around him, but aiding it. (83 82 'Edinburgh Summer Meeting, University Hall, Eighth Session, 1894')³⁰⁷

Geddes put forward the notion of self-determination, that people were not only shaped by their environment, but could change it as well (as opposed to biological or environmental determinism), forming a reciprocal relationship that supported self-determination of the participants.³⁰⁸ The task of his survey was to engage a town's citizenry in its own history and planning: they would gather and interpret the data to shape its future.³⁰⁹ (fig. 28) Meyer also relied on reciprocal relationships and interactions between the architect and user to guide planning.

Beyond the shared objective to educate the public through an interdisciplinary approach to building and planning, both educators worked outside the parameters of traditional institutions in order to engage the public in dialogue about the built environment. For example, the lengthy description of the regional survey is quoted from an announcement for Geddes summer programs, designed to educate the broader public outside the standard university curriculum.³¹⁰ Like Meyer, he drew international thinkers from multiple fields, including Ernst Haeckel and

³⁰⁷ 83 82 'Edinburgh Summer Meeting, University Hall, Eighth Session, 1894,' 1: SUA T-GED 7/8/21.83 Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Dehaene, "Survey and the Assimilation of a Modernist Narrative in Urbanism," 33.

³⁰⁹ Welter, *Biopolis: Patrick Geddes and the City of Life*, 110.

³¹⁰ Sunderland, "Education as an Agent of Social Evolution: the Educational Projects of Patrick Geddes in Late-Victorian Scotland."

Peter Kropotkin. Finally, Geddes' Outlook Tower in Edinburgh and the sociological-based public exhibitions that Geddes conceived of in the 1890s are precursors to the 1929 Bauhaus travelling exhibition, the subject of the next chapter.

Their shared grounding in neo-Romantic tendencies toward holism drove both men to pursue their reforms in education and building. Their shared intellectual openness to many disciplines, experimentation, and the ideas of and collaborations with other people to solve problems characterized their work and made them stand out.

In his inaugural speech as director in 1928, Meyer challenged his students to expand their range of vision and expertise in their design research into society:

Do we want to be guided by the requirements of the world around us, do we want to help in the shaping of new forms of life, or do we want to be an island which [promotes the development of the individual] but whose positive productivity...is questionable?"³¹¹

Along with new staff appointments— among them architects and planners Ludwig Hilberseimer (Berlin) and Anton Brenner (Vienna), and structural engineer Alcar Rudelt (Dresden)—Meyer engaged a variety of guest lecturers who were specialists in their fields. As discussed in depth in the last chapter, the so-called “artistic” fields according to the curricular diagram (fig. 22) included philosophy, psychology, film, painting and sculpture and literature; and the so-called “scientific” subjects included hygiene, anatomy, acoustics, physics, sociology and lighting. There were also faculty appointments for operational and building engineers (*Betriebsingenieur* and *Bauingenieur*) who were involved in every aspect of the curriculum. The expanded staff reflected Meyer's intellectual and philosophical development to that point and provided the theoretical scaffolding for his pedagogical agenda and working process.

Despite the paucity of extant material about Meyer's classroom teaching, three scholars

³¹¹ Meyer, “Address to the Student Representatives on the Occasion of his Appointment as Director,” in Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, 141.

in particular have made valuable contributions regarding Meyer's pedagogical practices.³¹² Droste's 1989 essay "Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit am Bauhaus unter Hannes Meyer" (Course Structure and Workshop Production at the Bauhaus under Hannes Meyer) provides the most detailed account of Meyer's impact on the Bauhaus, including organizational and curricular shifts, the 1929-30 traveling exhibition, and Meyer's dismissal as director and subsequent move to Moscow.³¹³ Among Klaus-Jürgen Winkler's work on Meyer, his 2003 *Baulehre und Entwerfen am Bauhaus 1919-1933* (Building Instruction and Designs at the Bauhaus 1919-1933) is especially useful because it reproduces a number of architectural student assignments.³¹⁴ Wallis Miller's essay "Architecture, Building and the Bauhaus" provides a valuable synopsis of architecture over the course of the school's life including a brief but accurate account of Meyer's innovations and approach.³¹⁵

Meyer clarified his conception of the building department (*Bauabteilung*) in a series of lectures presented in at least seven cities in conjunction with the Bauhaus *Wanderausstellung* (traveling exhibition), the school's largest public showcasing of its work.³¹⁶ Elaborating on his recent theoretical writing, "Bauhaus and Society" (1929), lecture titles included "Building and Education" (*Bauen und Erziehung*), "Building Unleashed" (*Entfesselt Bauen*), "Living

³¹² Winkler explained in his *Baulehre und Entwerfen am Bauhaus 1919-1933*, 11 that there is little material from the Dessau period because the Dessau Archive was bombed during the war.

³¹³ Droste, "Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit," 134-165.

³¹⁴ Winkler, *Baulehre und Entwerfen am Bauhaus 1919-1933*.

³¹⁵ And in English, Wallis Miller's essay "Architecture, Building and the Bauhaus" is an excellent overview of the innovations of Bauhaus architecture in general from an architectural historian's perspective. "Architecture, Building and the Bauhaus," 63-89; and Barry Bergdoll adds depth to pertinent thematic issues in his Bergdoll, "Bauhaus Multiplied: Paradoxes of Architecture and Design in and after the Bauhaus," 40-61.

³¹⁶ The cities mentioned were Mannheim, Breslau, Essen, Basel, Zurich, Vienna, and Dessau. Hannes Meyer to Reichskunstwart Dr. Redslob 11 August 1930. Printed in full in Kleinerüschkamp, ed., *Hannes Meyer, 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer*, 173-176.

Building” (*Lebendiges Bauen*), and “Ten Years Bauhaus” (*Zehn Jahre Bauhaus*). Meyer’s theoretical focus and somewhat abstruse presentation help to explain why Meyer was, and continues to be so widely misunderstood.

As Droste and Winkler have observed, Meyer’s pedagogical theories were never written in a concise, clear way, but notes from the Vienna and Basel lectures, coupled with the curricular and organizational charts (all dated 1929) convey valuable insight into Meyer’s thinking in early 1929 after his first two years at the Bauhaus. The modest size and form of Meyer’s pedagogical *magnum opus*—personal lecture notes comprised of typed and hand-written sentence fragments—belie the grand philosophical and cultural narratives into which Meyer wove his vision.

A close reading of the notes is essential for this dissertation. First, they contain the only document from the Bauhaus period with a comprehensive outline of Meyer’s pedagogical lineage and program. The focus is the building department, but Meyer extrapolates from there the school’s relevance to the changing conditions of contemporary society as well as to the architectural and design professions. Secondly, because Meyer’s lectures garnered far and away the most critical attention during this period, the notes convey the substance of Meyer’s extensive publicity campaign. Most importantly, the notes reveal key philosophical and theoretical nuances that would benefit from broader scholarly analysis for the Meyer-era Bauhaus discourse.

On 22 April 1929, Meyer presented his ideas at the Werkbund in Vienna to an audience that included members of the *Wiener Kreis* (Vienna Circle) who would go on to lecture at the Bauhaus. Hand-written additions show Meyer’s tailoring of the material for specific audiences. Declaring in “Bauhaus and Society” that “the new theory of building is an epistemology of

existence,” the lectures gave Meyer the platform to elaborate on this philosophical assertion. Itself structured as a philosophical treatise with logical arguments laid out as a series of postulates and conclusions, the lecture outline will help direct the analysis of Meyer’s project as it unfolded for his audience.

Instead of concrete answers or formulaic proclamations, Meyer proposed an open model for theoretical inquiry about design, architecture and urbanism in his lecture notes:

The new building instruction does not exist as theory: no work (*Werk*) is an individual work....Our building instruction is only an experiment: technically and mechanically unfixed/not rigid/flexible (*festigkeitslos*). Rationalization and mechanical constructiveness are ancillary necessities. This building instruction needs critical knowledge to tackle the entire complex of life....the ultimate goal: seek to study society in order to provide a service to society.³¹⁷

Meyer freed architectural thinking from practical or mechanical constraints in favor of open-ended multidisciplinary experimentation. Meyer’s pedagogy did not adhere to a fixed system or formula but sought a conceptual framework that was adaptable to any circumstances—a Gestalt or “living building.” Contemporary conditions precluded a solid foundation to build on, rendering a static entity or final product as outdated as Gropius’ formula: art + technology = the modern built environment. Great need and opportunity demanded more. The focus of Meyer’s theoretical work was, like Heidegger’s *Dasein* (Being), a process that is itself in a perpetual state of becoming.

Meyer employed a “formula” in “Bauhaus and Society” that has been misconstrued as evidence of Meyer’s radical materialist Bauhaus project. He wrote:

³¹⁷ “die neue baulehre existiert nicht als theorie: kann kein werk einzelner sein. (vitruv. u. blondel waren es auch nicht.) [technische mechanik. festigkeitslos] unsere bauhaus-lehre nur ein versuch: rationalisierung u. mechanische konstruktivität sind untergeordnete notwendigkeiten. diese baulehre muss erkenntniskritisch den gesamten lebenskomplex anpacken.... immer wieder ein ziel: absuche die gesellschaft zu studieren, um der gesellschaft dienst zu leisten.” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929,” in Meyer-Bergner, ed., *Bauen und Gesellschaft*, 62.

All life is the drive toward harmony. To grow means striving for the harmonious enjoyment of oxygen + carbon + sugar + starch + protein. To work means our search for a harmonious form of existence. We are not searching for a Bauhaus style or Bauhaus fashion.³¹⁸

Gropius paraphrased the text in the published 1963 letter to Maldonado, implying that it represented Meyer's philosophy of life:

I cannot allot to [Meyer] the importance with which you credit him during the years of the Bauhaus. His strategy and tactics were too petty; he was a radical petit bourgeois. His philosophy culminates in the assertion that 'life is oxygen plus sugar plus starch plus protein,' to which Mies promptly retorted: 'Try stirring all that together; it stinks.'"³¹⁹

Misquoting Meyer out of context changed its meaning entirely. Meyer's philosophy did not "culminate" in any such "formula", that "life = oxygen + carbon + sugar + starch + protein." Rather, Meyer lists essential elements of living things as the most basic sense of existence and then invoked the Hegelian notion of sublation (*Aufhebung*) to suggest that creativity enables human beings to transcend mundane existence to attain something greater.³²⁰ When read in context, Meyer's simple analogy functioned to reiterate his disavowal of singular, simplistic solutions as style and fashion in the uncertain cultural and economic landscape of 1929 and as a springboard for more idealistic aspirations.

Meyer communicated this to the public. Operating in conjunction with the traveling

³¹⁸ "Alles Leben ist Drang zur Harmonie. Wachsen heisst das Streben nach harmonischem Genuss von Sauerstoff + Kohlenstoff + Zucker + Stärke + Eiweiss. Arbeiten heisst unser Suchen nach der harmonischen Daseinsform. Wir suchen keinen Bauhausstil und keine Bauhausmode." Meyer, "bauhaus und gesellschaft."

³¹⁹ Gropius letter to Maldonado in Schnaidt, ed., *Hannes Meyer*, 123.

³²⁰ Schnaidt's translation of the passage is a word for word translation that fails to convey the idealistic implications: "All life is an urge toward harmony. Growing means striving after the harmonious enjoyment of oxygen + carbon + sugar + starch + protein. Work means our search for the harmonious form of existence. We are not seeking a Bauhaus style or a Bauhaus fashion." I argue that Gropius perpetuated another fallacy in this short passage when he dated Mies' statement as a contemporaneous pithy retort. Mies did not make that statement until [the 1950/60s in Chicago]. Misquotes and taking statements out of context reinforce a reductivist view of Meyer's work.

exhibition and the journal *Bauhaus*, Meyer's lecture provided an excellent forum for elaborating on the ideas behind the work, their significance to the school's pedagogy and the role of the Bauhaus within society as a whole. He dwelt less on a description of what was taking place at the school or the final product and instead offered grander proclamations of philosophical intention and the design process. Meyer did not detail specifics about the preliminary course, the workshops and the building courses. Instead, course descriptions in the lecture notes read: "building" (*bauen*) and "building theory" (*baulehre*). "Building" was a symbiotic development that stressed community "in harmony with all of life's enhancing forces," while "building theory" provided "instruction in the harmony of existence – form" in which "existence without the soul is unthinkable."³²¹

Presumably, there would be practical training involved in attaining harmony and soul, but Meyer couched the pragmatic in philosophical and even spiritual terms.³²² The critic from the *Basler Nachrichten* picked up on this when he observed: "We heard very little about architecture, which is for Meyer not art. Architecture for him is a form for the processes of living in technical, economic, sociological and psychological aspects..., the entire symbiosis of humanity as an epistemology of existence/being (*Dasein*)."³²³ Meyer's drive to holism, coupled with an emphasis on experiential observation, locate Meyer squarely within the realm of

³²¹ "bauen: daher gestaltung einer symbiose. lebensgemeinschaft unserer gesellschaft. harmonische organization aller lebenbildenden kräfte. baulehre: harmonielehre zur daseins—gestaltung. dasein ohne seele undenkbar. daher: bauen nicht nur technische/ökonomische/soziologisch. sondern auch psychologische organization." Meyer, "Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929."

³²² It would not be far-fetched to suggest that Meyer was familiar with Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* (*Dasein und Zeit*), published just two years prior in 1927—a subject for further scholarship.

³²³ "Von Architektur hörten wir wenig, sie ist für Hannes Meyer keine Kunst. Architektur für ihm eine Gestaltung der Lebensvorgänge 1. in technischer, 2. in ökonomischer, 3. in soziologischer, 4. in psychischer Hinsicht, ist ihm eine Gestaltung der gesamten menschlichen Symbiose, ist ihm eine Erkenntnislehre vom Dasein überhaupt." [Dr. Walter Ueber-Wasser], "Das Bauhaus Dessau im Gewerbemuseum. I," *Basler Nachrichten* [27/28] April 1929, Basel, [exhibition review, 21 April - 20 May 1929]. [Archive, Basel Gewerbemuseum].

twentieth century intellectual traditions. The question is whether he was able to turn ideas into practice or intellectuals into designers. In a 1929 public lecture, Meyer described his synthetic, cooperative view of the school that stressed the process instead of the product:

The Bauhaus is not a school of arts and crafts, nor is it an art academy. It is a way station to life—and, more and more, would like to become an integral part of life itself! The individual is disappearing more and more into the combined value of the whole. Our goal is not the product, but rather man himself.³²⁴ ...Let's have an account of 'building and education.' Let's talk about 'living building' ...[B]uilding is the examination of life.³²⁵

Meyer's aim was to reinvigorate the school by directly engaging the challenges and needs of contemporary society amidst unstable circumstances. He laid out a set of philosophical and theoretical propositions about architecture as it related to his views of society and human nature that were fundamental in shaping ongoing discussions at the Bauhaus about pedagogy, subjectivity, creativity, and art and design. First, Meyer encapsulated his pedagogical and reformist projects within contexts of school, building and society. Then he put forward his vision of the “new building program” as an ongoing experiment—“free of technical and mechanical constraints”—constructed on an interdisciplinary scaffolding of philosophy, sociology, ecology, and psychology. Using the language of the day, Meyer concluded the lecture with four sources for his building theory, namely: 1. sociology; 2. psychology and mind-body unity; 3. geopsychology [the relationship between the geophysical and geochemical variables within a locality and human behavior]; and 4. duality of emotional and logical building process (Dualismus gefühlsbetonter u. logischer Bauweise).

³²⁴ “Das Bauhaus ist also keine Kunstgewerbeschule und keine Akademie. Es ist eine Durchgangsstation zum Leben—and möchte immer mehr ein Stück Leben selber werden! Der Einzelne verschwindet immer mehr im gemeinsamen Wert Aller. Unser Ziel ist nicht das Produkt, sondern der Mensch.” DT, “Bauen und Erziehen. Vortrag von Hannes Meyer, Direktor des Bauhaus Dessau,” *Nationalzeitung Basel*, 7 May 1929, Basel.

³²⁵ “sprechen wir über ‘lebendiges bauen’: keine architektur in gausefressen. bauen = auseinandersetzung: leben.” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929.” “ausefressen“ refers to Carl Gause, a renowned Berlin architect whose highly-decorative turn-of-the-century buildings include the Hotel Adlon and the Kurfürstenhaus.

These broad categories will serve as the framework for the following discussion of theoretical underpinnings guiding the school's preliminary architectural studies, its revamped organizational structure, and its place within society at large. I will discuss each theme separately while exploring some of the overlapping threads, such as the notion of the social organism based on a biological model derived from evolutionary and anarcho-social theories, Meyer's emphases on holism, interdependence and dynamic flux, and an expansive notion of architecture with its relationship to social and ecological surroundings. Influences as disparate as Ludwig Klages and Herbert Spencer support my claim that Meyer was a synthesist—that he sought knowledge and insight from many fields to inform his thinking, design, and his pedagogical approach at the Bauhaus. What is important in this context is Meyer's inspiration and adaptation of those ideas, not the correctness or consistency of his interpretations. And this synthetic, integrated or holistic view of social sciences, psychology and philosophy did not simply inform his thinking, but was embodied in classroom methodologies and in student production.

First Tenet: Sociology as a System of Collective Power

The first principle of building theory must communicate or impart (*vermitteln*) its basis in social studies and sociology as a system of collective power and the relationship between collective or cooperative and individual forces as delineated by the likes of (Heinrich) Pestalozzi, (Vladimir) Lenin, (Pierre) Proudhon, (Charles) Fourier, (Karl) Munding and (Peter) Kropotkin.³²⁶

Although sociological issues were a primary underlying force for his architectural process, in this context Meyer defined sociology primarily in terms of the cooperative movement. As historian Martin Kieren and others have shown, Meyer applied its ideals of mutual aid, egalitarianism and self-sufficiency to practical ends in his conception of Bauhaus

³²⁶ “[Die neue Baulehre] muss gesellschaftslehre (soziologie) vermitteln. system der kollektivkraft u. cooperativkraft/individualekraft (Pestalozzi-lenin, Proudhon-pourier, mundig: Kropotkin).” Ibid. Munding was one of the developers of the Siedlung Freidorf.

organization, particularly to workshop production and sales.³²⁷ Indeed, cooperative underpinnings fundamentally shaped Meyer’s directorship in less apparent ways than labor organization and economic cycles, many of which have been decried as Marxist, staunch anti-aestheticist or dogmatic. When Meyer’s decisions as an administrator or teacher are contextualized through the ideals of the cooperative precedents he cited, particularly Pestalozzi and Kropotkin, his choices can be viewed as consistently undogmatic, anti-authoritarian and egalitarian. His role as a director was more as a facilitator than a determinist, resulting in an experimental atmosphere that some critics decried as out of control. Secondly, building upon innovations begun under Gropius’ tenure, Meyer’s cooperative ideals provided the impetus to leave tradition behind. They functioned as a springboard for transforming the school of arts and crafts into a training ground for modern/contemporary architectural and design studio practices. Finally, the same cooperative ethos drove new thinking about adaptable, affordable architectural and design solutions providing choice to an empowered consumer—or in Meyer’s parlance, “a balance of collective and individual forces.”

The intellectual lineage Meyer referred to in his lecture harkens back to his stint studying garden cities in England and his deep involvement with the Swiss cooperative movement. As discussed in Chapter One, Meyer spent his career in the late 1910s and early 1920s working on residential developments—the Siedlung Margaretehöhe in Essen under Georg Metzendorf (1916-18)— and the cooperative Freidorf housing development outside Basel (1919-24). During a period of almost five years when he called it his home, Meyer’s active participation within the Freidorf administration profoundly influenced his socio-political outlook. He wrote in his 1927 autobiographical recollections: “Working with the Association of Swiss Consumers' Societies

³²⁷ Kieren, “The Bauhaus on the Road to Production Cooperative: the Director Hannes Meyer;” Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*; Droste, “Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit.”

and with their press, I busied myself with all of the important cooperative issues because I view the structure of the Cooperative Confederation of Switzerland as the basis for our political system.”³²⁸ For example, a direct connection was established in the developer’s brochure (*Siedlungsgenossenschaft Freidorf*, 1922) by citing Pestalozzi’s influence in terms of self-sufficiency, self-determination in governance, and the oft-cited reference to structuring the community into ever-expansive cells or circles (*Zellen*).³²⁹

An emphasis on mutual aid advocated by early nineteenth century intellectuals associated with anarchism, including Fourier, Proudhon and Kropotkin, distinguished Freidorf among cooperative housing projects, as opposed to others across the micro-economic spectrum. Meyer’s role models were drawn from a broad ideological spectrum of anarchist ideals, as their opinions varied about issues such as land ownership, the use of money, and centralized authority.³³⁰

Mutual cooperation communities have a long history across Britain, Europe and the United States but expanded in the late nineteenth century in response to nation-building and industrialization. In Germany, there were two periods of popular reaction against centralized authority on the federal level, when the country unified as a modern state in 1871 and again after

³²⁸ Meyer-Bergner, ed., *Bauen und Gesellschaft*, 12.

³²⁹ Faucherre and Meyer, *Siedlungsgenossenschaft Freidorf*.

³³⁰ A detailed study of Meyer’s anarchistic influences would need to be undertaken to dissect his overarching socio-economic philosophy as there are many competing economic ideologies here regarding labor, money and sales, and property: communist anarchism; anarcho-syndicalism; and individualist anarchism, to name a few. Anarchic-synthesis is self-explanatory: a synthesis of different tendencies in anarchism. I have not found a specific reference by Meyer that could situate him within this tradition, but the listing of anarchists into a sociological framework for the Bauhaus suggests a synthetic reading on his part. I maintain that as Meyer was not an economic or political thinker per se; he was a generalist who drew from a variety of sources and adapted them to his work. This sort of synthesis was common among reform-minded artists and architects. Bruno Taut, for example, cited Kropotkin, Friedrich Engels, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Walt Whitman, H.G. Wells, Lenin, Leo Tolstoy, among others, in his *Die Auflösung der Städte; oder, Die Erde eine gute Wohnung; oder auch: Der Weg zur Alpinen Architektur; in 30 Zeichnungen* (Hagen in West: Erschienen im Folkwang, 1920). See Kurt Junghanns, *Bruno Taut, 1880-1938*, 2nd revised ed., Schriften des Instituts für Städtebau und Architektur, Bauakademie der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (Berlin: Elefant Press, 1983), 44-45.

the formation of the Weimar Republic in 1919. Meyer's cooperative leanings did not relegate him to the radical fringe, but were quite common at that time. Indeed, Kropotkin was widely read among artists and intellectuals, but misunderstandings were rampant. Just as now, anarchist independence from the state was equated with chaos by many. In 1901, for example, Kropotkin countered the claim that anarchistic belief in freedom from government implied lawlessness by speaking in favor of localized authority and requirements contingent upon their unique circumstances:

The anarchists conceive a society in which all the mutual relations of its members are regulated, not by laws, not by authorities, whether self-imposed or regulated, but by *mutual agreements* between the members of that society and by a sum of social customs and habits—not petrified by law, routine, or superstition, but *continually developing and continually readjusted* in accordance with the ever-growing requirements of a free life stimulated by the *progress* of science, invention, and the steady growth of *higher ideals*. (emphasis added)

Kropotkin's emphasis on mutual agreements distinguished him, and therefore Meyer, from those who favored top-down authority of centralized governments or state and city planners. Parallels did not end there. Sharing the same rhetoric, Meyer and Kropotkin stressed society's perpetual state of flux and a belief in progress based on interactions of groups of individuals—freedom for organic development.³³¹

Kropotkin and Meyer's advocacy of mutual aid was grounded in 19th century biological thinking as a rebuttal to Herbert Spencer's alleged social application of Darwin's theory of evolution, "the survival of the fittest."³³² Instead of competition and domination producing

³³¹ That Kropotkin, although a geographer and socio-political theorist, was particularly influential among artistic and cultural circles of the late 19th and early 20th century has been discussed extensively in the art historical literature. For a succinct overview of many of the pertinent issues, see Rose-Carol Washton Long, "Occultism, Anarchism and Abstraction: Kandinsky's Art of the Future," *Art Journal* 46, No. 1, *Mysticism and Occultism in Modern Art* (1987), pp. 38-45.

³³² It should be noted that Spencer's dictum "survival of the fittest" has been hotly contested since he wrote it. Scholars have convincingly argued that Spencer himself never advocated a social application and it has been misunderstood and wrongly adapted to describe human interaction. Chris Renwick cites further reading in Chris

societal change, as many social Darwinists posited, Kropotkin argued that groups thrive due to mutual cooperation in both the natural worlds of animals and plants as well as in human relationships. His early training as a geographer is evidenced in his adoption of scientific rhetoric and methods and in his integrative view of society within the natural environment—both common in early twentieth century architectural thinking. Onetime architecture student Herbert Hoffmann, recalled:

In addition to social studies, Hannes Meyer understandably concerned himself with the natural sciences. Darwin's theory of evolution and natural selection have been mentioned in this context, but Meyer was already critical of the extreme individualism that he associated with bourgeois ideology. In contrast, Meyer believed that cooperative tendencies are a prerequisite to survival.³³³

Meyer was not the first to introduce cooperative ideals to the Bauhaus. The early Bauhaus had cooperative origins as well. In a letter to Gropius regarding the position to open a new architecture department, Meyer pointed to the collective nature of the workshops as what attracted him most, along with working with young people.³³⁴ Believing that contemporary Weimar society increasingly tended toward a cooperative model, Meyer explained that the character of the school was a natural product of a society that both created it and whose needs it

Renwick, "The Practice of Spencerian Science: Patrick Geddes's Biosocial Program, 1876–1889," *Isis* 100, 1 (2009): fn. 3, 37. Regardless of the scientific accuracy, cooperative thinkers reacted against Spencer's emphasis on competition as the best means for survival.

³³³ "Bei Hannes Meyer waren es verständlicherweise außer Gesellschaftslehre die neuen Naturwissenschaften, die ihn beschäftigten. So wurde auch die Theorie der Entwicklung und Auslese nach Darwin zwar erwähnt, aber schon mit der Kritik verbunden, daß diese Lehre einer Ideologie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft entspräche, d.h. Ausdruck eines extremen Individualismus ist. Ihm sollte eine kooperative Tendenz, die eine erste Voraussetzung zum Überleben ist, entgegengestellt werden." Hoffmann, "Hannes Meyer: Ökologische Aspekte seiner Lehre und deren Auswirkung," 98. The theory of natural selection should be credited to Gregor Mendel's groundbreaking genetic research, but has often been mistakenly attributed to Darwin.

³³⁴ "Bei der Übernahme einer neuen Aufgabe ist mir in meiner jetzigen Lebensperiode ausschließlic maßgebend, ob sie auf meiner Entwicklungslinie liegt. An Ihrem Angebot lockt mich vor allem das Zusammensein und arbeiten mit jungen Menschen. Ferner lockt mich als ausgesprochenen 'kollektivisten' die Mitarbeit innerhalb einer Arbeitsgemeinschaft." Meyer letter to Gropius 3 January 1927 in Meyer-Bergner, ed., *Bauen und Gesellschaft*, 42.

would serve. “The new building school,” he wrote, “. . . is not a confectionary for architectural fashions. If today’s society creates the school, . . . then the result would have a collective character.”³³⁵

Meyer’s 1929 organizational diagram created for display in the Bauhaus traveling exhibition graphically represented the school as a cooperative endeavor embraced within Dessau’s wider political and commercial community. (fig. 29) It looks somewhat like a samovar, with the students rendered as a cloud hovering over a giant funnel through which they pass the round table of the board of directors (*Meisterrat*), down through the teachers, to be dropped into one of twelve departmental slots for learning and production. With a little heat and pressure, the students’ work percolated upwards and the distilled products traveled through the faucet to customer sales on the right and to the local government via industrial manufacture on the left. Administrative decisions were made by the school’s Masters’ Council (*Meisterrat*), comprised of professors, the director, two student representatives and the business office (*Geschäftsführung*). Egalitarianism was denoted by similar graphic circles representing each participant, regardless of hierarchical rank.

The whole enterprise was intricately linked to and supported by the local and regional governments and the school’s Circle of Friends, whose members are represented like the students—as free-floating and scattered—and hover above government and industry. They are an amorphous, international force to be tailored and guided by the school.³³⁶ Underscoring Meyer’s

³³⁵ “Die neue Bauschule. kein Konfektionshaus für Architekturmoden. Wenn die heutige Gesellschaft selbst Schule macht = Schule mit kollektivism Charakter.” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929.”

³³⁶ This schemata is a typical example of how Meyer’s notion of ‘bauhaus’ worked its way into the public realm. First, he codified his essays on the social aspects of Bauhaus pedagogy and the Bauhaus role for society as a whole into a visual abstraction—thousands of words reduced to a single-page diagram. After the chart was used as a demonstration board for a press preview at the Mannheimer Kunsthalle given by Alfred Arndt, the head of the Wall Painting Workshop and the exhibition’s curator (or installer), it was probably included in the exhibition itself. Droste, “Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit,” 136-137. The local newspapers referred specifically to the chart;

drive for financial self-sufficiency and freedom from state oversight and obligations, the apparatuses for production and sales held prominence in the schema. During his tenure, Meyer succeeded in doubling the school's earnings through sales. Touting his accomplishments in an open letter to Dessau's Mayor Hesse after his dismissal in 1930, Meyer articulated his goals for financial independence:

The external success of this two-year period of Bauhaus work is well known to you, Mayor Hesse. The annual production of about RM 128,000.- (1928) has been almost doubled.... The international 'Circle of Friends of the Bauhaus' increased its membership from 318 to over 500. In the last business year, RM 32,000.- was paid out to students by way of wages and this enabled those who were less well-off to study there. A Bauhaus travelling exhibition publicized our ideas.... Industrial firms came along with urgent requests, engaged Bauhaus students on their staffs, and concluded license agreements for Bauhaus [products].... There was thus every prospect of our finances being improved in the future in the only really sound way, namely through self-help. (Hannes Meyer, My dismissal from the Bauhaus; open letter to Mayor Hesse, Dessau)

Even with his expansive growth in sales and licensing arrangements with manufacturers—a cooperative, if not outright capitalist venture—the Bauhaus still relied partially on public support from the city of Dessau. Self-help for Meyer entailed independence from the state and a skeptical stance toward centralized authority—an anarchistic position that explicitly contradicted a communist, state-based paradigm. Meyer's insistence on the integration of the Bauhaus into society at large represented his attempt to break free of state financial support and oversight and should be understood as one manifestation of his anarchistic or cooperative goals of self-sufficiency, self-determination and societal usefulness on a macro-level.

Cooperative ideals also informed Meyer's reform of the workshop hierarchical and teaching structures which continued the transformation from traditional workshops to modern

critics praised it for its clarity in explaining what made the Bauhaus unique and furthermore, how Meyer's school differed from that of the Gropius era. Anonymous, "Das 'Bauhaus' in der Kunsthalle," *Mannheimer Tageblatt*, 6 May 1930, Mannheim. [exhibition review (14 May – 22 June 1930)] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum; Anonymous, "Das 'Bauhaus' in der Kunsthalle," *Neue Badische Landeszeitung Mannheim*, 4 May 1930. [exhibition review (14 May – 22 June 1930)] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

studio practices, operating in conjunction with persistent Bauhaus themes such as authorship and the roles of fine arts and crafts,. Although the workshops never reached Meyer's anti-authoritarian epitome of egalitarianism, he did succeed in streamlining the faculty as a cost-saving measure that also brought it more in line with the demands of industrial production. Whereas in Gropius' workshop model two instructors taught in tandem to integrate art and craft—one teaching theory and one offering technical oversight—Meyer pared it down to a single instructor to oversee the whole process.

Workshop restructuring altered the early Bauhaus art/craft paradigm, but not completely. To gain a broader perspective on a variety of design problems, architecture students completed training in a design workshop and earned a journeyman's certificate in a trade of their choice before entrance into the architecture program for specialized training. The hands-on training required for a journeyman's certificate, coupled with multi-disciplinary guest lectures and Schlemmer's course *Man*, reinforced Meyer's holistic drive to provide a broad, generalized background for architecture students.³³⁷

Cooperative ideals were reflected in a shifting and complicated notion of authorship at the school. Although Gropius era architectural projects retained an individual attribution, the craft and industrial design production varied. The 1923 catalogue published in conjunction with the 1923 Weimar Bauhaus exhibition, for instance, cited each designer's name in part to elevate the status of handicrafts to the level of fine arts. Along with the turn to industrial manufacture, however, the 1925 *Katalog der Muster* (Catalogue of Samples) attributed the newly established Bauhaus GbmH in an effort to promote the school as a brand. Meyer added Bauhaus "Co-op" in advertisements, exhibitions and elsewhere to make the lineage explicit while at the same time

³³⁷ There was a maximum of only twelve architecture students in a given semester—a very small number of the student body which averaged some 170 students.

naively promoting what could be called an “anti-brand.”

More than an ideological stance, the “co-op” designation also reflected a more collaborative and egalitarian approach to workshop structure and production. Inherently anti-authoritarian on a micro-level, Meyer’s ideal workshop would not have had instructors at all because he thought they might stifle creativity and learning. Meyer’s proposition was driven more by cooperative ideals than a mandate to remove painters from the school completely, but it understandably irked many instructors, including Oskar Schlemmer and Joseph Albers.³³⁸ Akin to Pestalozzi’s pedagogical model of small groups or “cells” engaged in “active learning,” Meyer believed that the principle of “teaching” in the workshops was outdated and he advocated for “fields of experimentation.”³³⁹ Unlike Gropius’ architectural projects, Meyer relinquished acknowledging personal authorship in order to credit school-wide effort. He chastised critic Adolf Behne for crediting himself (Meyer) alone with the design of the ADGB school in Bernau (Federal School of the Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, or German Trade Union Federation) rather than acknowledging it as the collective work of the Bauhaus as a school.³⁴⁰

The impact of Meyer’s workshop reforms was most pronounced in the building department because it both lengthened the course of study and separated theoretical and practical training. After completing a journeyman’s certificate in any of the industrial design workshops,

³³⁸ Schlemmer to Otto Meyer Amden 8 September 1929: “The students are supposed to do something on their own, fulfill a commission ‘with the maximum feasible minimum of direction:’ even if the results are unsatisfactory, the sociological factor is considered an asset. something *new*. (I always think involuntarily of the joke: ‘Master, the trousers are finished, should I mend them now?’) The goal of these attempts: a (Masterless) Republic of Students. (‘With the salary of one Master I can give happiness to *x* number of students!’ Hannes Meyer)...” Frank Whitford, *The Bauhaus: Masters & Students by Themselves* (London: Conran Octopus, 1992), 259. At the same time, Albers complained about Meyer’s reforms in a letter to a friend and colleague Otti Berger (26 March 1930) in reference to the “elimination of the painters” and “exclusively materialist teaching.” Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919-1933*, 172.

³³⁹ Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929.”

³⁴⁰ Hannes Meyer to Adolf Behne 8 January 1928 in Kleinerüschkamp, *Hannes Meyer, 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer*, 216.

architecture students were required to take theoretical courses in the 4th - 5th semesters in which they conceptualized the functional requirements of a building project. The longest program of study within the Bauhaus, practical training and on-site building experience followed in the 7th - 9th semesters.³⁴¹

Meyer's ideas were not just theoretical inquiries, but were put into practice in student studies. Meyer took students out of the classroom and into the field to analyze the daily lives of the people for whom they were designing. Oftentimes a team effort, individual students would analyze a singular aspect of a project's conceptualization from charting the sunlight to chronicling the inhabitants' daily activities. The resulting data were collated and analyzed before students, working in pairs, drew up building plans.³⁴² A significant part of student training, design research through data visualization or "diagrammatic representation of the building program," comprised the first of four stages of the building process.³⁴³ Embarking on the design without preconceived ideas for the building—an approach Gropius had followed as well—Meyer's students began by analyzing the behavior of individual occupants and expanded the

³⁴¹ The 1929 school prospectus describes the program: "4th Semester, 5th Semester, 6th Semester: Instruction in Architecture (baulehre). It gives the trained journeymen a deeper understanding of the knowledge of the driving forces of all creation. Its purpose is not only to educate architects but the journeyman is taught through the study of the essence of all life to extend his professional knowledge for unilateral inclusion of his actions in today's society. The teaching of a scientific way of thinking regarding building influences embodies the principle: 'organization of all life processes.'

("4. Semester, 5. Semester, 6. Semester: Baulehre. Sie vermittelt dem ausgebildeten Gesellen eine vertieftes Wissen um der Erkenntnis der Triebkräfte aller Gestaltung. Ihr Zweck ist nicht ausschließlich, Architekten auszubilden: auch den Gesellen vermittelt sie durch das Studium des Wesens aller Lebensgestaltung eine Erweiterung seines beruflichen Wissens und die einseitige Eingliederung seines Tuns in die heutige Gesellschaft. – Dem Baubeeinflussenden lehrt sie eine Bauwissenschaftliche Denkweise nach dem Grundsatz: bauen heißt: 'Gestaltung aller Lebensvorgänge.'") Hannes Meyer, ed. *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!* (Dessau: Bauhausdruck Co-op, 1929).

³⁴² This spirit of cooperation would continue into the practical on-site training with students assigned to specific roles at the ADGB or the Dessau Törten extension. This is beyond the scope of my chapter. For more information, see Winkler, *Baulehre und Entwerfen am Bauhaus 1919-1933* and Miller, "Architecture, Building and the Bauhaus."

³⁴³ Meyer, "How I Work," 1933, translated in Schnaidt, ed., *Hannes Meyer*, 27.

purview from home, to garden, to neighbor, to community to city, deriving their analytical methods from the natural and social sciences. This holistic approach allowed psychological and subjective considerations to become integrated with a myriad of physical factors from materials to ecology.

The studies undertaken by Bauhaus faculty and students are not expressions of biological determinism nor can they be attributable to ideas of strict functionalism. Rather, they embody and express a fundamental and radical belief that the world is in constant flux. Donning the scientist's laboratory coat, the architect conceived a plan and collected and analyzed data in order to develop and design buildings and objects that best suited the circumstances and changing requirements over time. This was not an exercise in objective determination because it required experience, judgment and interpretation and therefore retained some fundamental similarities with the architectural traditions that Meyer transcended. The finished products operated on a second level in that they allowed for a continuing state of flux, depending on the changing needs and uses of the inhabitants long after construction was finished.

While few preliminary studies are still extant, a small selection of studies illustrates the process. An example is found in student Edmund Colleijn's study for Meyer's architecture course from 1928-29, "Periodization of Living Space," which charts the behavior of the seven occupants of a Dessau house. (fig. 30) On the left we meet people numbered 1 through 7 and learn their gender, age, occupation, income and relationship to one another. The three charts in the center use graphic images to detail their activities both inside and outside the home on a daily basis in summer, winter and on Sundays. We learn of sleeping, eating, doing laundry, gardening, reading, attending movies, going to cafes and on walks in the park. On the upper right-hand side we see the variations to their seasonal routines in an annual diagram, including trips to Leipzig to

visit a son. Below are visitors to the house, who come for both daily and extended visits. And finally, tucked into the bottom right side is the floor plan for the third level. The only specifications are that each familial subgroup gets its own floor, and the direction “north.” A process study rather than a final product, this diagrammatic exercise in data visualization exemplifies the inherent fluctuations of a family’s time and activities on a daily, weekly and annual basis.

Expanding the site under consideration from a single house to a network of houses, Siegfried Giesenschlag’s 1930 study “Relationships to the Neighborhood and Environment in a Housing Estate” (*Beziehungen zur Nachbarschaft und Außenwelt in einer Siedlung*) mapped the acoustic, olfactory and optical relationships of a neighborhood. (fig. 31) Concentric circles marked the distance reached by noises like music, children playing and traffic, as well as odors such as smoke, cooking, and domestic animals. Finally, straight diagonals indicated sightlines from the interior and the back-yard gardens. Although the diagram alluded to or derived from scientific analysis, Giesenschlag did not include data or calculations.

The study’s second section, “Relationships to the Outside World,” identified the roles of people who came into the neighborhood—postal carrier, chimney sweep, houseguests, and children, and even unwanted visitors: beggar, thief and vermin, representing the ebb and flow of contingencies that the architect needed to consider in the design process. These preliminary studies exemplify the conceptual shift to the socio-humanistic exploration of the user and environment that characterized Meyer’s approach. Meyer explained in his 1928 essay “Building:”

Building is no longer an individual task in which one’s architectural ambition is realized. Building is a joint undertaking of craftsmen and inventors, only he who can himself master the living process in working jointly with others...is a master builder. Building

has grown from being an individual affair of individuals (promoted through unemployment and housing shortage) to a collective affair of the nation.³⁴⁴

Klaus Meumann's project for Meyer's building instruction course, "The Growing House - Haus Caravagno Mentone" (*Das gewachsene Haus*, 1929), also embodied cooperative ideals in its research thinking and implementation.³⁴⁵ (fig. 32) The assignment was predicated on a cooperative model of self-sufficiency for a multi-generational family, and included a small home-based business. It was highly adaptable to a family's changing circumstances. Built with the future in mind, the house had the potential for adding on an expansion to the initial design. The rooms' layout could accommodate multi-generational changes, for example, when the children's room became the grandparent's room. Characteristically attuned to the natural surroundings, the house was integrated into a hillside and a large swath of land adjacent the house was reserved for the family's garden.

Meyer's cooperative model distinguished him and the Bauhaus from most other architectural reformers around Europe. For example, reinforcing Meyer's desire to balance individual and collective forces and the central position of the family unit in Pestalozzi's expanding cell model, Bauhaus projects did not focus on community centers or communal living space. Anarcho-cooperative principles shaped the Bauhaus during Meyer's tenure from individual student studies such as Meumann's, all the way to the school's production, sales and promotion. Building on this concept, Meyer's educational model modernized anarcho-

³⁴⁴ Meyer, "bauen," translated in Schnaidt, ed., *Hannes Meyer*, 97.

³⁴⁵ Recollections by a Bauhaus student, Phillip Tolziner, who went to Moscow to work with Meyer in 1930, provide valuable insights into his architectural program. According to Tolziner, Meyer taught fundamentals courses seven times over a three year period, and the growing house project was a staple. Tolziner's papers are held at the Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin and the Getty Research Institute also has a copy in its special collections. Phillip Tolziner, "Mit Hannes Meyer am Bauhaus und in der Sowjetunion (1927-1936)," in *Hannes Meyer 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer*, Werner Kleinerüschkamp, ed. (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1989), 238.

cooperative principles to reflect and shape new professional studios.

Less measurable were the effects of Meyer's internalization of values exemplified in his intellectual lineage, particularly the strong anti-authoritarianism that was so crucial to his own directorship, to his expectations of students and consumers. As will be discussed in the remaining tenets—all questions of psychology—the fundamental basis of Meyer's agenda was to allow the greatest freedom possible given the existing state of the art and prevalent conditions, namely, standardization of mass production and the onset of a pervasive worldwide economic depression following the October 1929 stock market crash.

Second Tenet: Psychology and Mind-Body Unity

[The new building theory] must include psychology, along with the question of mind-body unity, as foundational knowledge from which to build. ([Carl] Carus, [Friedrich] - Nietzsche-[Ludwig] Klages, [Hans] Prinzhorn) [Alfred] Adler-[Sigmund] Freud (*Consciousness as Doom* by [Alfred] Seidel), Experimental Psychology (rhythm Paul Krüger).³⁴⁶

The concept of mind/body unity—contextualized previously in terms of Schlemmer's course *Man* and the guest lecture series—appeared again as a foundational tenet of Meyer's building theory. The psychophysical question served as a key aspect linking Nietzsche to experimental psychology and situating his project within the holistic tradition of *Lebensphilosophie*, whereby, recalling Schwartz's synopsis, the desire to overcome the sense of modern alienation could be achieved through immediate, unmediated experiences.³⁴⁷

In his broader discussion of biocentrism at the Bauhaus, Oliver Botar contends that

³⁴⁶ “2—Muß Seelenkunde vermitteln, und auf der Leib-Seele-Einheit (Carus-Nietzsche-Klages-Prinzhorn) Adler-Freud; psychologische Unterlage zur Erkenntnis vorbereiten. (*Bewusstsein als Verhängnis*. Seidel. Experimentalpsychologie (Rhythmus Paul Krüger).” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929.”

³⁴⁷ See note 319.

Nietzsche provides an important key to understanding holistic impulses at the Bauhaus.³⁴⁸

Within a Nietzschean philosophical framework, Meyer's "living building" (*lebendiges bauen*) takes on added dimensions concerning the natural world, relativism and subjectivity and the parameters of scientific analysis.³⁴⁹

Meyer grouped Nietzsche with other figures who shared a skeptical view of scientific analysis as the singular means of explaining reality and truth based in 19th century positivism: the painter Ludwig Klages, physiologist Carl Carus (1789-1869), and psychiatrist and art historian Hans Prinzhorn. The conception of the mind-body unity underpinned Meyer's attempt to rehumanize building processes and the buildings themselves into more holistic incarnations of "living buildings." Fundamental to Meyer's idea of "living building," and his project more broadly, was his belief that the perpetual unfolding of an ever-changing truth could never be universal, but was always contingent upon specific circumstances. Elastic and adaptable, Meyer's Bauhaus pedagogy and production embodied notions of interactive, experiential, and myriad possibilities. Grounding pedagogical reforms in terms of Nietzschean philosophy and mind-body unity led Meyer to new discursive modes of inquiry, most importantly, holistic psychology. Consider the distance between Meyer's League of Nations project (1926-27) and the ADGB building (designed 1928). (figs. 7 and 33 a-e) Both functionalist, to be sure, but Meyer at once de-emphasized the importance of aesthetics for the ADGB and focused more on the physical and psychological interaction among individuals and small groups who were to study

³⁴⁸ Oliver Botar, "Defining Biocentrism," in *Biocentrism and Modernism*, Oliver Botar and Isabel Wünsche, eds. (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 15-46.

³⁴⁹ Meyer's alignment of a new building program with the likes of Friedrich Nietzsche—whose influence was omnipresent in the Weimar era—is fraught with philosophical contradictions for Meyer's stated agenda, such as nostalgia and Nietzsche's embrace of technological advancement. For more on Nietzsche's influence on architecture in early 20th century Germany, see "The Werkbund: Architecture Faces the Metropolis," Manfredo Tafuri and Francesco Dal Co, *Modern Architecture* (New York: Electa/Rizzoli, 1986), 93-103.

together during month-long trade union courses. Meyer then integrated the building more fully into its surrounding ecology, harkening back to Nietzsche's romantic view of man's integration into nature as a fundamental principle of "wholeness" that was becoming more prevalent in Weimar culture, from primitivism in painting to the *Wandervogel* movement, as reactions against modern urban alienation.

As Anne Harrington has shown, holistic thinkers believed that they could reinvigorate scientific inquiry by including intangibles such as intuition, emotion and the unconscious in the analysis, to create a more complete cultural and sociological understanding.³⁵⁰ Alfred Adler was a Viennese physician, psychotherapist and a founder, along with Sigmund Freud and others, of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. After breaking with Freud, he pioneered a holistic concept of social psychology. He is best known for his concept of "social interest" (*Gemeinschaftsgefühl*), in which an individual benefits from helping others and for promoting the cooperative idea that collaboration among individuals and communities (i.e. "constellations" of family, workplace, neighborhood and beyond) was mutually interdependent and constructive. Just as Meyer's directorship maintained an anti-hierarchical tenor, Adler was one of the first psychotherapists to adopt a more egalitarian relationship between client and analyst by, among other things, replacing the couch with chairs.³⁵¹

Alfred Seidel's *Consciousness as Destiny* (*Bewußtsein als Verhängnis*, Hans Prinzhorn, Ed., 1927)—the only title specifically mentioned in Meyer's lecture notes—connected Meyer's exemplars of psychology with "nihilism of the nihilists," as one critic described the book's thesis in a 1929 book review. The reviewer went on: "[T]he conceptual world stems from the circle of

³⁵⁰ Harrington, *Reenchanted Science*, xiv.

³⁵¹ Chicago Adler School of Professional Psychology, IL, "About Alfred Adler" <http://www.adler.edu/page/about/history/about-alfred-adler> (accessed 1 July 2012).

Nietzsche, Max Weber, Ludwig Klages and psychoanalysis. The anti-analytical tendency will lead the fight against the shameless self-affirmation of our time for the sake of purity of spirit and true culture.”³⁵² Meyer was drawn to their shared holistic worldview that, with psychology at its center, sought to find meaning outside the positivist rubric of analytical science.

Such references to Seidel and Klages, who had both been involved in Stefan George’s literary circle, situate Meyer within the pessimistic *Kulturkritik*. Although best known for its cultural and political conservatism and association with Nazism, the George-Circle and *Kulturkritik* spanned Weimar’s political spectrum. While admitting that the ramifications of Seidel’s conservative perspective—espousing “true culture” and its downfall due to cultural relativism he discussed in another passage—could shed a totally different light on Meyer’s project. My intention here is to stress the importance of holism or *Lebensphilosophie* on Meyer’s Bauhaus pedagogy, not to dissect the etymology or implications of assigning students to read what may have been a nationalistic *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil) return to order.³⁵³ And Botar has argued that while figures like Meyer represent the *Kulturkritik*, they simultaneously promoted a more optimistic stance about the future through their biocentric worldview because of its inherent evolutionary basis.³⁵⁴

Seidel, Adler and Prinzhorn shared an integrative approach to psychology as a basis for

³⁵² “Die These des Werkes ist “Nihilisierung des Nihilismus.” Begriffs- und Problemwelt entstammt dem Umkreis von Nietzsche, Max Weber, Ludwig Klages und der Psychoanalyse. Die Tendenz ist antianalytisch. Es gilt den Kampf zu führen gegen die schamlose Selbstbejahung unserer Zeit um der Reinheit des Geistes und der wahren Kultur willen.” M, “Bewußtsein als Verhängnis by Alfred Seidel. Hans Prinzhorn, ed.,” *Annalen der Philosophie und philosophischen Kritik* 6 (1927): 41.

³⁵³ Subsequently in the lecture, Meyer stated outright that his position was not related to the *Heimatschutz* (homeland preservation) movement. Although the *Heimatschutz* movement was not conservative at the outset in the 1890s, it had become increasingly so in the mid-1920s with the writings of Paul Schultze-Naumberg. See Christian F. Otto, “Modern Environment and Historical Continuity: The *Heimatschutz* Discourse in Germany,” *Art Journal* 43, 2 (1983).

³⁵⁴ Botar, “Prolegomena,” 167-174.

cultural studies, drawing on several theoretical psychological practices to examine problems. Such principles were formalized into a concept of holistic psychology (*Ganzheitspsychologie*) in the Department of Applied Psychology and Experimental Pedagogy at the University of Leipzig (The Leipzig School). Chapter Two addressed the way that the Leipzig School *Ganzheitspsychologie* put forward by Dürckheim and Felix Krüger (not Paul Krüger discussed above) differentiated itself from the eminent Gestalt theorists in Berlin—Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Köhler and Kurt Koffka. They argued that the Berliners did not assign enough importance to the roles played by emotion and intuition when discussing the nature of experience.³⁵⁵

Leipzig School theories on social psychology (or psychology of community) were just as important to Meyer's pedagogy as the cooperative movement and provided the foundation of student preliminary architectural studies in his architecture program.³⁵⁶ Psychologists including Felix Krüger did not view people as autonomous individuals who together create the whole community. Instead, according to psychologist and professor Ulfried Geuter, the individual functions *within* the context of community (or, in language invoked by both Meyer and nationalists, *Volk* and *Volksgemeinschaft*).³⁵⁷

Another concept that was essential to Leipziger holistic psychologists was termed

³⁵⁵ Ash, *Gestalt Psychology in German Culture, 1890-1967*, 12. Distinctions between the Leipzig and Berlin schools are outlined by Leipzig proponent Albert Wellek in Harrington, *Reenchanted Science*, 125.

³⁵⁶ See Ulfried Geuter, "The Whole and the Community: Scientific and Political Reasoning in the Holistic Psychology of Felix Krueger," in *Science, Technology, and National Socialism*, Monika Renneberg and Mark Walker, eds. (Cambridge England; New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Geuter's essay explains the complexities of National Socialist cooption of Krueger's social psychology and his own complicity with the regime in the 1930s.

³⁵⁷ This longing (Nietzsche's *Sehnsucht*) for holism, which is more typically associated with both Expressionism and Nazism, marked a Return to Order or at least, a negative view of the current state of society and its building. However, Botar distinguishes biocentric thinkers (with whom I would include Meyer) from the pessimism characterizing the *Kulturkritik* because they found potential solutions to current problems through biocentrism. Also see *ibid*, 206.

“Structure,” which Anne Harrington described as “the unconscious force that actually created all the subjective phenomena experienced (but not necessarily produced) by consciousness itself.” Geuter used the word “structure” in Heideggerian terms as “not just an explanatory model, but [as] direct Being.”³⁵⁸ The supposition that society and social relations reflect *existing* dynamic structures which require organization and experience to *become* a Gestalt was reflected in Section II of Meyer’s lecture.³⁵⁹

Neues Bauen reflects a heterogeneous societal structure and results in confused building...Building is a demonstration of a worldview and its spiritual expression...The best master builder had the greatest possible overview about people’s lives; the greatest possible insight into the people’s soul; and the greatest possible understanding of being (*Dasein*)...therefore building instruction also includes the teaching of organizational processes.³⁶⁰

Like many proponents of holism during this period, including Ludwig Klages and Wilhelm Dilthey, Felix Krüger discussed his psychological theories in terms of typologies whereby he diagnosed generalities about character types instead of experimental methods to analyze individuals—a practice that would become increasingly racist during the Weimar years until it was taken to the most horrific extremes by the National Socialists.³⁶¹ In the case of Leipzig practitioners, Harrington described the process of sorting people along a spectrum of rational, “analytic” types on one end and “feeling-holistic” types on the other, with rare

³⁵⁸ Harrington, *Reenchanted Science*, 127. Harrington quotes Geuter from his “Das Ganze und die Gemeinschaft--Wissenschaftliches und politisches Denken in der Ganzheitspsychologie Felix Kruegers,” in *Psychologie im Nationalsozialismus*, Carl Graumann, ed. (New York: Springer Verlag, 1985), 56. Geuter’s essay was published in translation in 1994 as “The Whole and the Community: Scientific and Political Reasoning in the Holistic Psychology of Felix Krueger.”

³⁵⁹ Mitchell Ash explained that “Gestalt theorists asserted that dynamic structures in experience *determine* what will be wholes and parts, figure and background, in particular situations.” Ash, *Gestalt Psychology in German Culture, 1890-1967*, 1.

³⁶⁰ “bester baumeister: größmögliche übersicht über das volksleben; größmögliche einsicht in die volksseele; größmögliche erkenntnis des daseins...daher baulehre: = enthält auch die lehre von den ordnungsprozessen.” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929.”

³⁶¹ Ash, *Gestalt Psychology in German Culture*, 12; and Harrington, *Reenchanted Science*, 127.

“synthesizers” who could transcend the extremes into new “creative Gestalts.”³⁶²

These notions of structure, typologies and synthesizers provide a useful framework for Meyer’s lecture. Under the heading knowledge of “living space” (*Lebensraum*) in his lecture notes, Meyer set out to individualize the building process to suit the user’s specific needs and environment. On the microeconomic level, activities of a Swiss mountain farmer, Norwegian fisherman or a coal miner could be analyzed by daily and yearly schedules.³⁶³ These examples are not necessarily typologies per se, but case studies referring to specific examples of living conditions. Local or small-scale community thinking reinforced Meyer’s cooperative underpinnings. But when Meyer develops the discussion of formal properties of interior fittings (“the ordering of building elements”), he ascribed traits to ethnic, cultural or regional groups derived from “‘psychologically-aware’ design,” as he called it.³⁶⁴ For instance, the bed of a farmer in the Swiss mountains should be higher off the floor, while the bed of an Asian should be cool and lower to the floor. Materials such as plywood were given psychological associations—camwood was foreign, exotic and the stuff of children’s dreams; maple plywood suggested silky, open, home and cheerful; and pine was mottled and passionate. Raw materials were again consigned to different “types” of people based on the abundance within their respective environments: “wood people: iron people; forest people: water people.”³⁶⁵ Meyer

³⁶² Ibid. Harrington goes onto mention a reference to Nietzsche that is germane to Meyer’s lecture. Welleck described the synthesizers “Super types.”

³⁶³ “die neue baulehre = erkenntnislehre vom dasein. ihre grundlagen: 1) die erkenntnis vom lebensraum 2) die erkenntnis von der periodizität des lebensaufbaues...” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929.”

³⁶⁴ “‘bewusst psychologisch’ gestaltet.” Ibid.

³⁶⁵ “ahorn = (seidig/offen/heimat/heiter) kiefer = geflammt/leidenschaftlich. holzmenschen: eisenmenschen. waldmenschen: wassermenschen.” Ibid.

assigned traits to wall color despite his renunciation of any “artistic effects or mimicry.”³⁶⁶ His emphasis in this context was the changeability of color and light and their effects on a person’s state of being, for example leading to “nervousness” or a “thirst for charm.”³⁶⁷ Referring again to differences between Sweden and Asia, a house’s color should not be coincidental, but “organic,” meaning context and material dependent.

In a similar vein, student Heiner Knaub’s assignment—which was exhibited in Meyer’s traveling Bauhaus exhibition of 1929-30—analyzed the garden as an extension of the living space.³⁶⁸ (fig. 34) Rather than solving specific design problems, Knaub outlined a broad overview of garden types as stratified social spaces—from a tenement backyard in Berlin to a Japanese garden to a manor house. The text described a garden’s spatial and functional properties—with a children’s play area, a site for sunbathing and growing of carbon dioxide producing herbs—as well as detailed observations about the user’s sensory perceptions of vision, scent, sound and touch. Photographic images illustrate symbolic associations, with a pond representing the sea and cacti evoking “overseas.” Finally, diagrams give visual form and psychological insight into a garden’s role in “intensifying the experience of the seasonal periodicity of our life cycle” with the centrifuge of spring indicating growing excitement, eccentric summer—external life, centripetal fall—increasing rest, and concentric winter—inner life. Such studies bring to mind Kandinsky’s color theories and their psychological and spiritual attributes as well as Taut’s use of color in architecture as a psychological ordering principle.

³⁶⁶ “kein mimikry für künstl. effekte.” Ibid.

³⁶⁷ “rasche veränderbarkeit = folge der nervösen rezdurst.” Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Winkler, *Baulehre und Entwerfen am Bauhaus 1919-1933*, 67. The student works included in this discussion were used by Meyer for publicity purposes in exhibitions and/or publications (and curricular diagram was created as a demonstration board for the *Wanderausstellung* of 1929-30). They operate on an entirely different level in that context. It’s also striking that Meyer emphasizes the importance of these preliminary studies in particular as a means to communicate Bauhaus pedagogy with the public.

Third Tenet: Geopsychology

[New building theory] must clarify the “geo-psychic” phenomena—the climatic and regional phenomena of psychic and physical distance! The region’s capacity for solar radiation (irradiationsvermögen) (emotional values, etc.);³⁶⁹ the regenerative values of the landscape. Not homeland security (Heimatschutz).³⁷⁰

Meyer’s interest in “geopsychology” put him in the forefront of fields such as environmental psychology, urbanism and integrated ecology.³⁷¹ Michael Zimmerman, a professor of both Philosophy and Environmental Studies and psychologist Sean Esbjörn-Hargens have defined geopsychology as “the study of the influence of geographical realities on human psychology, culture and behavior.”³⁷² As another example of the importance of ecology and holism in Meyer’s design thinking was his belief that a building was integrated into a complex network of external factors that not only helped to define the user’s relationship to his/her surroundings, but also considered the impact that the environment had on a person’s psyche.

Holism, organicism and the cooperative movement find common ground in eco-social design (or cultural geography). The subject of the Meyer years has been largely overlooked with the exceptions of Botar, who included Meyer in the broader discussion of “biocentricism” that spanned the entire life of the school, and Mertins, who directly addressed Meyer’s organicism in a concise analysis of the ADGB building in MoMA’s exhibition catalogue *Bauhaus 1919-1933*:

³⁶⁹ Radiation in this context meant the penetration of energy through space or the spreading of organisms into new habitats.

³⁷⁰ “muss geopsychischen erscheinungen abklären—die klimatischen u. landschaftlichen phänomene psychische u. physische distanz! die irradiationsvermögen der landschaft (gefühlswerte...); die erholungswerte der landschaft. kein heimatschutz.” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929.”

³⁷¹ According to Hoffmann, Meyer was open to experimental theorists including controversial psychologist Otto Weininger, the biorhythms of von Flies (Dresden) and Haeckel. Hoffmann, “Hannes Meyer: Ökologische Aspekte seiner Lehre und deren Auswirkung,” 99.

³⁷² Sean Esbjörn-Hargens and Michael E. Zimmerman, *Integral Ecology: Uniting Multiple Perspectives on the Natural World*, 1st ed. (Boston: Integral Books, 2009), 514.

*Workshops for Modernity.*³⁷³

Peter Anker—a professor in the field of Environmental Studies whose work centers on the history of science and philosophy—included the New Bauhaus in Chicago in a broader discussion of human ecology and design in his book, *From Bauhaus to Ecohouse: A History of Ecological Design*. Anker followed Gropius, Moholy-Nagy and Bayer to the United States in the 1930s with Gropius at Harvard, Moholy-Nagy at the New Bauhaus in Chicago and Bayer in Colorado—acknowledging an ongoing engagement with ecological concerns that began with the school’s inception to its presence in Chicago. Despite a lack of historical depth about the early Bauhaus, recent interdisciplinary scholarship such as Anker’s infused the Bauhaus canon with new perspectives.³⁷⁴ A closer study of Meyer points to a theoretical basis and intellectual lineage for eco-anarcho cooperative movements and their initiatives to empower the public to shape society, not any predetermined, top-down plan. Reflecting a widespread anti-technological position of the late 1920s, Meyer’s organicism became analogous with his methodology and worldview and revealed an incipient eco-social architectural vision of sustainable design.

Meyer dispensed with direct references to psychology in his lecture for the “physical findings as co-determinates for building theory.”³⁷⁵ Addressing the latest scientific and technological advances in architecture and design, Meyer cited Clement Wallace Sabine’s well-

³⁷³ Mertins, “Hannes Meyer.”

³⁷⁴ I take issue with Anker’s justification for focusing on exiled *Bauhäusler* in London and the United States in the 1930s when he writes, for example: “Though some were inspired by biology while the school was active in Germany, I argue that the fusion of biological reasoning in Bauhaus design took place during the process of trying to reestablish the school in London. This London interlude is largely ignored by art historians, yet the period was important for the school’s development in terms of ecological reasoning. Since the fusion of ecological thinking and design is the focus of this study, the life and world of some key Bauhaus faculty members, including Hannes Mayer (sic), Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Josef Albers, are not covered.” Peder Anker, *From Bauhaus to Ecohouse: A History of Ecological Design* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010), 4.

³⁷⁵ “die physikalischen erkenntnisse; mitbestimmend für die baulehre” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929.”

known work in architectural acoustics, the PH lamp, and Carl Dorno's research on the sun's radiation in Davos.³⁷⁶ The best-known designs that resulted from this research were Anni Albers' acoustic wall textiles designed for the ADGB building auditorium. This sort of analysis is more typically associated with Meyer's approach and found in many of his and his students' architectural drawings.

Philip Tolziner and Tibor Wiener's 1930 study, for example, shows the mathematical calculations that were involved in designing a ground plan that allowed for the most air flow and sunlight in each room. (fig. 35)³⁷⁷ The position of the sun and the amount of sunshine radiating into various interior spaces helped the architect to situate the building or housing development to take advantage of this energy source without its becoming a primary determinant as it would be for Ludwig Hilberseimer. Rather, Meyer described in his lecture that a building would be organically situated within the "conditionality of or relative to its natural surroundings" (*Landschaftsbedingtheit*). As an interactive and integrative experience, Meyer accorded the ecological site with the ability to impact the user's psyche or well-being."³⁷⁸

A hallmark of Meyer's project, he repeatedly stressed the notion of conditionality and the

³⁷⁶ "The "Physikalisch-Meteorologisches Observatorium Davos" (PMOD) was founded in 1907 by Carl Dorno as a privately operated institute with the objective of finding out why tuberculosis patients were curing better in Davos than elsewhere. The most obvious climatic difference of an alpine station compared with one at lower elevations, e.g. the Baltic sea shore where Dorno originated from, is obviously the radiation environment: the direct solar radiation is much more intense whereas the sky radiance of the dark-blue sky is of lower intensity. With this in mind, Dorno began operational measurements of the direct solar irradiance in 1909, initiating the world's longest and still continuing time series of this kind. In addition, he began investigating the biological influences of ultra-violet radiation - then known as Dorno Radiation, and today as UV-B. With his world famous solar and UV radiation measurements he set the corner-stone of the PMOD which has continued his work as an internationally recognized center for research in radiation measurements and instrumentation. Since 1926, PMOD has been part of the SFI private foundation ("Schweizerisches Forschungsinstitut für Hochgebirgsklima und Medizin")." Physikalisch Meteorologisches Observatorium Davos, <http://www.pmodwrc.ch/pmod.php?topic=description> (accessed 27 June 2012).

³⁷⁷ This was a side project for the students and not done in class.

³⁷⁸ "überleitung zur landschaftsbedingtheit des bauens. bauen = auseinandersetzung mit der landschaft. bewusstes erleben der landschaft." Meyer, "Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929."

relationship of a building to its occupants and the surrounding environment. “Build without preconceptions: no framed building if it must be painstakingly eked out. No concrete if brick or stone is layered on top. No trendy flat roof if a pitched roof is better suited.” After providing the audience a long list of suitable modern materials, Meyer followed a standard functionalist line but with a twist: “economy of materials with optimal (*material and mystical*) effectiveness.”³⁷⁹ This mystical twist brings this discussion full circle—back to Meyer’s holism. Recalling the Leipzig school’s *Ganzheitspsychologie*, Meyer synthesized dichotomous notions of logic and emotion—his fourth and final tenet.

Curricular Periphery to Center of Design Research and Public Discourse

Guest lecturers were not exclusive to Meyer’s era at the Bauhaus. Gropius had organized lectures in Weimar right from the start and Mies van der Rohe carried on with them in Berlin until the end. In the spirit of progressive education, Gropius organized extra-curricular lectures to expose students to contemporary ideas.³⁸⁰ Meyer went further, however, to integrate a broader sampling of contemporary theoretical and cultural discourses into the curriculum. With topics spanning visual/performing arts, philosophy, theoretical psychology and the more practical occupational psychology to engineering and urban planning, every lecture shared the fundamental principle: to look forward by gaining an understanding of the newest developments in each field rather than to look backwards to historical models for guidance. His lecture program was not ideologically-driven or polemical. Though some speakers reflected Meyer’s personal

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

³⁸⁰ Bernhard, “Gastvorträge,” 91. Outside teaching also had a practical manifestation. The first forays of architectural training in Weimar relied on practicing architects and engineers as adjunct teaching staff. For more about Weimar architectural courses, see Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, *Die Architektur am Bauhaus in Weimar*, Edition Bauhaus Dessau (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1993) and Wallis Miller, “Architecture, Building and the Bauhaus,” in *Bauhaus Culture: from Weimar to the Cold War*, Kathleen James Chataborty, ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

vision, others did not. Rather, lectures by experts in their fields were meant to expose students to a variety of disciplines and perspectives, to establish a foundation for their own design thinking and to inform their design process.

Announcements and detailed accounts in the quarterly journal *Bauhaus: Journal for Design* (*Bauhaus: Zeitschrift für Gestaltung*), general newspapers and specialized magazines reached both national and international audiences and leave us with a historical record of the events. The lectures varied widely in subject, audience and venue. Attendees came from Dessau and beyond, with Berliners traveling about two hours in each direction. In spite of the lack of clarity about logistical particulars, some information is known.³⁸¹ Predating the school's move to Dessau in 1925, for example, Gropius and Dessau's Mayor Fritz Hesse arranged to hold some lectures at the mayoral home (the Messel-haus) to drum up public support.³⁸² Audiences varied—sometimes the evenings were limited to *Bauhäusler*, others included Bauhaus supporters in the *Kreis der Freunde* (Circle of Friends) and still others were open to the public at large. Most guest speakers gave a single lecture, but series of *Gastkurse* (Guest Courses) were held on occasion with the likes of Dutch designer and architect Piet Zwart, Czech critic and designer Karel Teige, who taught typography and literature, and Basel ABC architect Paul Artaria, who taught “Financing and Practical Implementation of the Modern Housing Development.”³⁸³

³⁸¹ For an overview and citations to primary documents, see Bernhard, “Gastvorträge.”

³⁸² Diary entry dated 19 October 1925. Gropius, *Diary*. Quoted in Bernhard, “Gastvorträge,” 92.

³⁸³ Piet Zwart, “Gastkurs in Typographie” (Guest course in typography, 9-14 December 1929); Karel Teige, “Gastkurse über zeitgenössisches Schrifttum und neue Typographie” (Guest course on contemporary literature and typography, 20-25 January 1930) and “Soziologie der Stadt und des Wohnens” (Sociology of the city and housing, 3-6 March 1930), and Paul Artaria “Gastkurs über Finanzierung und praktische Durchführung moderner Wohnbauvorhaben” (Guest course on financing and practical implementation of modern construction projects, 20-22 February 1930). Hannes Meyer to Reichkunstwart Dr. Redlob 20 August 1930, 177, in Kleinerüschkamp, ed., *Hannes Meyer, 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer*, 177.

Just as Gropius had done before him, Meyer took advantage of the lectures to establish ties with the international avant-gardes in art and architecture as well as with innovative thinkers within the fields of philosophy, psychology and emerging social sciences. Speakers' messages reached a much wider audience through announcements and reviews in the school's quarterly journal *Bauhaus*. Published excerpts by such artists as El Lissitzky (1 October 1929), filmmaker Dsiga Vertov (10 June 1929) and Naum Gabo (2 – 9 November 1929) fortified the school's position within the international art scene, with a special affinity to Constructivism.³⁸⁴

Performances by dancer Gret Palucca (5-6 May 1928), and numerous musical recitals both provided entertainment and rounded out the students' engagement with current cultural trends.³⁸⁵

German and international architects and planners introduced their approaches: Expressionist architect Erich Mendelsohn presented "Russia and America: an Architectural Cross-Section;" R. Niemeyer-Oppeln, the Silesian governmental building official (*Baurat*) spoke on land-use planning; and visiting instructor Mart Stam presented "M-Kunst," a partial transcript of which was published in *Bauhaus*.³⁸⁶

³⁸⁴ Lissitzky discussed architecture and design at the Bauhaus and at Moscow's VChUTEMAS. Anonymous, "veranstaltungen am bauhaus," *bauhaus: vierteljahr-zeitschrift für gestaltung* 3, 1 (1929): 25; and Anonymous, "veranstaltungen am bauhaus," *bauhaus: vierteljahr-zeitschrift für gestaltung* 3, 3 (1929): 28.

³⁸⁵ Anonymous, "veranstaltungen am bauhaus seit 1.4.28," *bauhaus: zeitschrift für gestaltung* 2, 2/3 (1928): 33.

³⁸⁶ Ibid. Mart Stam was a Rotterdam-based architect and planner and was Gropius' first choice for heading the architecture department. A colleague of Meyer's in the ABC circle and in the CIAM (International Congresses of Modern Architecture), Stam supported the Bauhaus's endeavors through guest lectures, teaching courses and through writing published in the journal *bauhaus*. For Stam, "M-Kunst" meant art of the past or the art of the monument. His text reads like Meyer's own, beginning with the Constructivist denunciation of historical styles and notions of "composition" with the aim of replacing them with productive art, design and architecture. Breaking down forms and materials in laboratory workshops opens up the discovery of new possibilities.

we need from each exercise (*aufgabe*) to get the necessary and constructive, and to solve this in the easiest and most economical way. but we choose the construction scheme such that it provides as many opportunities as possible and viable in as many situations as possible. life does not tolerate representation, no monument, no symbol, no art-M. it tolerates only solutions to useful exercises that can serve the people.

Meyer organized most of the lectures while serving as director, although the Hungarian Ernst Kállai, the school's publicity spokesman and editor of the journal *Bauhaus*, was involved at times as well. Speakers were given ample freedom to choose their preferred format, location and time. With considerable extant archival material, Karel Teige's lectures provide a good case in point to shed light on logistical organization of the lectures from invitation to subject and format. A modernist writer, art and architectural critic and graphic designer based in Prague, Teige taught in the Bauhaus Advertising Program for one week in January 1930 and a second week in March 1930, in addition to serving as editor of *Bauhaus* after Kállai's departure.³⁸⁷ His January lectures considered issues ranging from literature, psychology and letterpress printing: "Introductory History of the Development of Material and Expressive Problems of Contemporary Literature and Poetry;" "Material and Technology of the New Literature: On the Psychology of Writing and the Word;" and "New Typography: Letterpress Printing and Advertising."³⁸⁸ Teige was not expected to lecture for the entire class period and could devote

"wir müssen aus jeder aufgabe das konstruktiv-notwendige herausholen und dieses notwendige auf die einfachste und am meisten ökonomische art lösen. das konstruktionsschema aber wählen wir so, daß es viele möglichkeiten bietet und möglichst vielfach lebensfähig ist. denn das leben ist stark und besiegt unerbittlich jedes werk, das mehr sein möchte als solche organization. das leben duldet keine representation, kein monument, kein symbol, keine M-kunst. es duldet nur lösungen von nützlichen aufgaben, mit denen man den menschen dienen kann." Mart Stam, "M-Kunst," *ibid.* 2, 2/3 (1928): 16.

Stam and Meyer share both tone and sentiment in their writing. It is not simply a case of Stam toeing the Bauhaus "line," but reflects instead the influences on the school and its place within the international avant-garde. Meyer's ideas did not arise in a vacuum; rather his ideas, writing and approach were squarely centered in progressive circles all over Europe at that time. Editors Ernst Kállai and Meyer extended the association to Stam and Dutch urban planning by publishing examples of his projects in *bauhaus*.

³⁸⁷ Meyer wrote to Teige that he expected Teige to come for a week in April 1930, but it does not seem to have come about. Hannes Meyer to Karel Teige 2 February 1930, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

³⁸⁸ "entwicklungsgeschichte einföhrung in die material- und ausdrucksprobleme der zeitgenössischen literatur und dichtung;" "material und technik der neuen literatur, zur psychologie der schrift und des wortes;" "neue typographie: buchdruck und werbedruck," Hannes Meyer Memo regarding Teige Lectures 7 January 1930, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

class time and attention to student critiques or allow time for studio practice.³⁸⁹ A testament to both the immersive and egalitarian ethos of the school, Meyer also gave Teige the option of speaking to the entire student body in the canteen for an informal lecture or discussion.³⁹⁰

Informality aside, lectures were more than entertainment or cultural enrichment—they were central to a Bauhaus education and to the design practice itself. After his first year as director, Meyer put forward the diagrammatic representation of the school’s courses and program.³⁹¹ (fig. 22) Its variable and somewhat unwieldy design marks a visual and conceptual break with those designed by Gropius in 1923 (fig. 23) and Herbert Bayer in 1927, (fig. 24) which were based on a self-contained circular or grid structure into which the content was adapted.³⁹² Conceived as open systems, Meyer’s diagram was a complex web of

³⁸⁹ “Ihr gastkurs am bauhaus: mit dem thema des theoretischen sehr einverstanden! wir überlassen es ihnen vollständig, wie sie ihre mitarbeit in der reklame-abteilung zeitlich halten wollen. sie sollen nicht andauernd vorträge halten, sondern können auch nach aufgabestellung durch korrektur anregung gaben. die angehörigen der reklame-abteilung sind im allgemeinen täglich 4 bis 6 stunden in der werkstatt zu ihrer verfügung anwesend, es ist aber nicht notwendig, dass sie sich andauernd mit ihnen beschäftigen. verfahren sie in jeder hinsicht ganz nach ihrem belieben.” Hannes Meyer to Karel Teige 7 January 1930, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

³⁹⁰ “sie könnten per sonnabend, den 1. märz, zum bauhaus fest kommen und ab montag ihren unterricht oder ihre vortragsreihe beginnen. sie sind uns ja immer noch den vortrag in der reklame-abteilung schuldig und sie könnten dieses mal grössten teils in der reklame-abteilung mitwirken. wenn ihnen aber eine anderweitige auswirkung hier im haus sympathischer ist für den augenblick, z.b. vor allen bauhäuslern oder diskussion in der kantine usw., so its es uns auch recht. die hauptsache ist, sie halten ihr versprechen ein und kommen auch im nächsten monat für eine woche ans bauhaus. ich nehme an, zu denselben finanziellen bedingungen wie das letzte mal.” Hannes Meyer to Karel Teige 12 February 1930, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

³⁹¹ See Droste’s discussion of the diagrams in her “Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit.” For more on the school’s organizational structure, see Winkler, *Baulehre und Entwerfen am Bauhaus 1919-1933*, 16-31.

³⁹² Chapter III, “Meyer’s New Building Theory: ‘the architect is dead,’ But the Building Lives” delves more into the curricular diagrams. In the current context, I would like to point to the formal differences between the directors’ models that reflect their respective approaches. Gropius’s grid, for example, exemplifies his formalist, elementarist approach to building.

interconnections with multiple paths and possibilities, all of which were integral to Meyer's Gestalt-based design thinking as well as his pedagogical aims.³⁹³

On the horizontal axis, Meyer differentiated *Die Lehre* (theoretical, classroom teaching, in rectangles) from *Arbeitskreis bzw. Zelle* (studio, working cells, in circles), with “science” and “art” comprising the vertical axis. On the far left, *Kunst* (art)—consisting of *Herz* (heart) and *Intuition*—stands at the top of the vertical axis opposite *Wissenschaft* (science) at the bottom—comprised of *Hirn* (brain) and *Intellekt*. Arrows pointing up and down signify the continuous and infinite nature of academic exploration. Visually and metaphorically grounded on this spectrum of theoretical inquiry (science and art, the objective and the subjective, practical and ideal), the horizontal axis spans theory, practice and work—with *Werk* (work) as the final product on the far right opposite the theoretical pole of art and science. Illustrating Meyer's belief in open and ever-changing systems, even Bauhaus “work” products are works in progress, as the diagram itself was an open-ended continuum of intersecting relationships.

While Gropius's curricular focus on formal (artistic) and technical (scientific) qualities of design and architecture, Meyer's diagram broadened the definitions of the so-called “artistic” fields to include philosophy, psychology, film and theater, music, painting and sculpture, art history and literature; and the so-called “scientific-leaning” subjects to encompass advertising theory, hygiene, anatomy, spatial acoustics, color theory, lighting, physics and chemistry, biology, occupational psychology and sociology. Guest lectures were a significant outlet for realizing these expanded fields of study. Their positions on the diagram created brackets around the entire theoretical side of instruction with *Künstlerische Gastvorträge* (Artistic Guest

³⁹³ For a theoretical discussion of the diagram, see Anthony Vidler, “Diagrams of Diagrams: Architectural Abstraction and Modern Representation,” *Representations* 72, Autumn (2000): 1-20; Hays, “Diagraming the New World, or Hannes Meyer's ‘Scientization’ of Architecture.”

Lectures) on top (above the x axis) and *Wissenschaftliche Gastvorträge* (Scientific Guest Lectures) below (the x axis). Reflecting the art and architectural vernacular of the Weimar period, Meyer's paradigm cast art and science as spectral opposites that would encompass a synthetic unity at their intersection through Bauhaus education. The curricular diagram reiterated and reinforced Meyer's assertion unifying *Geist/Seele* and *Leibe/Seele* in mankind in the 1929 announcement illustrated by Schlemmer's *Man*. (fig. 5).

“It is impossible to convert the Bauhaus into a scientific school,” Meyer explained to Bauhaus student representatives upon his appointment as director, “for the simple reason that the small budget does not provide any means for appointing the necessary scientifically-trained faculty.”³⁹⁴ Though often cited to reinforce the notion of Meyer's Marxist materialism, contextualizing the sentiment within the curricular diagram and guest lectures broadens our interpretation of Meyer's notion of appropriate topics of study to include both scientific and technical fields, as well as humanities, social sciences and psychology and brings a fresh perspective to Meyer's entire Bauhaus project. Even though the school could not afford many full-time faculty, Meyer brought in outside specialists for the sake of providing the students with a broad, generalized education. While science had been the lynchpin for philosophical and aesthetic discourse at the Bauhaus from its inception, Meyer's application of scientific analysis through the social sciences and psychology developed broader theoretical and social frameworks and established a new paradigm for the creative process associated with architectural and design research.³⁹⁵ As architecture student Hubert Hoffmann explained in retrospect:

³⁹⁴ Meyer, “Address to the Student Representatives,” translated in Winger, *The Bauhaus*, 141.

³⁹⁵ For more on Meyer's relationship to science, see Hubert Hoffmann, “Hannes Meyer: Ökologische Aspekte seiner Lehre und deren Auswirkung,” in *Hannes Meyer: Beiträge zum 100 Geburtstag 1989*: [5

Hannes Meyer's contribution was undoubtedly to have achieved the tangible increase in workshop production, which doubled, and with that to educate successful designers. He is also to thank for a substantial increase in the theoretical courses. "Scientism," the label used to describe the systematic introduction of the guest courses, has led to misunderstandings. Hannes Meyer intended to introduce the students to the possibilities of the newest scientific discoveries, not, however—this is the misunderstanding—to train the specialized designer in a specific area.³⁹⁶

Meyer's application of scientific ideas and rhetoric within the context of a generalist education runs contrary to the wide-spread belief that Meyer was a single-minded functionalist intent on training technocratic designers.³⁹⁷ Meyer retained idealist, spiritual and metaphysical overtones that have been overlooked in critical and historical readings of his Bauhaus agenda—stripped away in part because they are considered antithetical to aspects of scientific inquiry.

In many ways, Meyer's pedagogical framework was also a continuation of the discussion at the Bauhaus and society at large about designing for the modern world using the conceptual tools at hand. First among these tools was Gropius's notion of art and craft and from 1923, the technology of standardization and mechanization. Meyer's scientific analyses drew inspiration and methodologies from many disciplines ranging from natural and social sciences, psychology and philosophy resulting in a fruitful infusion into Bauhaus thinking. A similar convergence was

Internationales Bauhaus-Kolloquium in Weimar Juni 1989] (Weimar: Der Rektor der Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen, 1990), 94-109.

³⁹⁶ "Hannes Meyers Verdienst war es zweifellos, die Konkretisierung gut gehender Werkstätten erreicht zu haben (eine Verdoppelung der Produktion), und damit eine erfolgreiche handwerkliche Erziehung. Auch eine erhebliche Bereicherung des theoretischen Unterrichts ist ihm zu danken. Die Bezeichnung "Verwissenschaftlichung" für die systematische Einführung von Gastkursen hat jedoch zu Mißverständnissen geführt. Hannes Meyers Absicht bestand zu Recht darin, den Studierenden an die Möglichkeiten neuester wissenschaftlicher Erkenntnisse heranzuführen, nicht aber—ein Mißverständnis—den Gestalter zum Spezialisten auf verschiedenen Gebieten auszubilden." Ibid, 95-96.

³⁹⁷ Although Meyer scholars have acknowledged his broadening of subject matter, the mistaken notion of single-minded functionalism still dominates Meyer's legacy as understood by the public.

taking place within the weekly salon of the Vienna Circle, and the Bauhaus lectures provided a forum for mutual dialogue.

The Vienna Circle, initially called the Ernst Mach Society, began in 1922 as an informal discussion group centered at the University of Vienna under the stewardship of physics and philosophy professor Moritz Schlick. Among its noted adherents were philosopher Rudolf Carnap, philosopher of science, political economist and social scientist Otto Neurath, and mathematician Hans Hahn. Interdisciplinary in make-up and intention, the group included natural and social scientists, mathematicians and philosophers who sought to formulate a universal analytical model for investigation, regardless of discipline—what Carnap described as a “unified science.” This method of analysis, which Galison called “transparent construction,” entailed “building up from simple elements to all higher forms that would, by virtue of the systematic constructional program itself, guarantee the exclusion of the decorative, mystical, or metaphysical.”³⁹⁸

By 1929, the Ernst Mach Society, called “The Vienna Circle” by that time, had been forging relationships with outside groups through their own lecture series and publications.³⁹⁹ Their programmatic pamphlet called *Scientific World-Conception: The Vienna Circle* (Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung: Der Wiener Kreis) explained their ideas and intentions and beckoned like-minded thinkers:

The Vienna Circle does not confine itself to [a] collective world as a closed group. It is also trying to make contact with the living movements of the present, so far as they are well disposed toward the scientific world conception and turn away from metaphysics and theology....*First*, [the scientific world conception] is *empiricist and positivist*: there is

³⁹⁸ Galison, “Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism,” 710.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 720.

knowledge only from experience, which rests on what is immediately given. This sets the limits for the content of legitimate science. *Second*, the scientific world-conception is marked by the application of a certain method, namely, *logical analysis*.⁴⁰⁰

Members of the Vienna Circle thought that logical analysis of empirical data would lead to a unified theory of science, which would in turn find multiple practical applications in society. As Galison noted about the influence of their ideas: “We witness the spirit of the scientific world-conception penetrating in growing measure the forms of personal and public life, in education, upbringing, architecture, and the shaping of economic and social life according to rational principles.”⁴⁰¹ These ideas clearly struck a chord within the Bauhaus.

The entwined history of the Bauhaus and Vienna Circle—from the early 1920s in Weimar through the 1940s in Chicago and beyond—deserves its own full-length study. Although there are many references to the intellectual and political affinities and a handful of articles, most were written by historians of the Vienna Circle or in texts devoted to the history of philosophy or science. Galison’s 1990 essay is the first study of which I am aware specifically devoted to the relationship between the Bauhaus and the Circle. A history of science scholar, he focused on the philosophical questions of science taken on by members of the Vienna Circle while exploring similar modernist objectives within the Bauhaus. Ambitious in scope—he took on politics, culture, art, science, and philosophy during the hotbed of the Weimar Republic—the essay must, out of necessity, make some generalizations that opened it to criticism from specialists.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid, 731-732.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid, 732.

Philosophy scholars including Thomas Uebel, Angela Potochnik and Audrey Yap have questioned Galison's conclusions about the Vienna Circle.⁴⁰²

The only art historical response to Galison's essay has been Botar's doctoral dissertation "Prolegomena to the Study of Biomorphing Modernism: Biocentrism László Moholy-Nagy's 'New Vision' and Ernő Kállai's Bioromantik."⁴⁰³ Botar incorporated the lectures into his broader discussion of biocentrism as a response to Galison's essay. He questioned the impact of the Vienna Circle's logical positivism on the Bauhaus to promote his position on the importance of biocentrism. As this chapter illustrates, Meyer's holistic outlook of interconnected, open systems allowed for both philosophical impulses—scientific analysis and bio-centric holism—to operate simultaneously. I agree with Botar that Meyer's holism far outweighed his application of principles garnered from Logical Positivism and will build on Botar's writing to reveal a more nuanced view of Meyer's application of scientific principles.

This chapter will not claim to dissect the philosophical nuances of early logical positivism, but instead relies on Galison's and Botar's pioneering work as springboards to delve into issues concerning Meyer's pedagogical and curricular changes.⁴⁰⁴ A historiographical overview of some key issues they raised provides a critical framework for a discussion of the

⁴⁰² Scholars have criticized Galison for applying generalizations to the group as a whole. This social mandate, for example, was shared by the so-called "Left Vienna Circle" of Neurath and Carnap, for example, not the more traditional branch represented by Schlick's narrower focus on the philosophy of science itself. See Thomas Uebel, "What's Right About Carnap, Neurath and the Left Vienna Circle Thesis: a Refutation," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 41, 2 (2010): 214-221; Angela Potochnik and Audrey Yap, "Revisiting Galison's 'Aufbau/Bauhaus' in Light of Neurath's Philosophical Projects," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 37, 3 (2006): 469-488; Hans-Joachim Dahms, "Neue Sachlichkeit in the Architecture and Philosophy of the 1920s," in *Carnap Brought Home: The View from Jena*, Steve Awodey and Carsten Klein, eds. (Chicago: Open Court, 2004).

⁴⁰³ Botar, "Prolegomena."

⁴⁰⁴ Dahms, Bernhard and Nerdinger have begun to contextualize the Bauhaus within philosophical traditions. Dahms, "Neue Sachlichkeit;" Bernhard, "Gastvorträge;" and Nerdinger, "Anstößiges Rot." Also see Peter Galison and Emily Ann Thompson, eds., *The Architecture of Science* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999).

guest lectures at the Bauhaus. Though convergences exist, there were also significant procedural and philosophical differences between Circle members and the Bauhaus pedagogy and curriculum during Meyer's tenure that undermine key tenets of Galison's argument.

As Galison noted, both groups sought to break with historical models. For the Vienna Circle, that meant eradicating the vestiges of a metaphysical philosophical heritage leaving only empirical evidence for consideration. As he explained:

Throughout its existence, the Vienna Circle conceived of itself as modern and scientific, as a movement that would tear apart the stagnant, pointless inquiry that called itself philosophy. In the place of traditional philosophy the Circle wanted to erect a unified structure of science in which all knowledge—from quantum mechanics to Marxist sociology and Freudian psychology—would be built up from logical strings of basic experiential propositions.⁴⁰⁵

For Bauhaus pedagogy, it involved stripping away decorative ornament and its historicist associations to create an environment appropriate to the new conditions of modernity. Both groups also applied scientific methodologies and principles to their respective fields and shared a commitment to interdisciplinarity. Granted, parallels existed, but Galison failed to distinguish variations in pedagogy among instructors or over time. Elementarism and an embrace of technology were fundamental to Bauhaus teaching and production between 1923 and 1928, but were less important before and after. Galison explained:

For their part, the *Bauhäusler* hoped to use scientific principles to combine primitive color relations and basic geometrical forms to eliminate the decorative and create a new antiaesthetic aesthetic that would prize functionality. So close had the two groups come in their shared vision of modernism that, when the Bauhaus reconvened as the New

⁴⁰⁵ Galison, "Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism," 713.

Bauhaus in Chicago after fleeing the Nazis, the New Bauhaus imported the Vienna Circle's logical positivism as a fundamental component of its basic design program.⁴⁰⁶

Even though Galison's stated focus was the late Bauhaus of the late twenties and early thirties, he drew from Weimar, Dessau and even the Chicago Bauhaus to support his argument. However, because he did not acknowledge some significant differences in the pedagogical theories and practices under each director, his understanding of Bauhaus teaching was oversimplified.

In their long-running courses, Kandinsky, Albers and others did incorporate elementarist analysis—the notion of breaking down to the simplest elements to analyze each specific part before rebuilding them into something new—but Meyer's synthetic methodologies in theoretical courses and his curricular restructuring did not. Rather, Meyer's emphasis lay in exploring design problems unique to specific situations to reflect a dynamic, conditional worldview. Eschewing modernist aesthetic values, he favored the analysis of systemic relationships and variable conditions between users and their environments based on sociological, psychological and ecological design research.⁴⁰⁷

Meyer's approach runs counter to the Circle's attempt to unify science. Galison described the process:

From simple observation reports ("protocol statements") and logical connectives (such as "if/then," "or," "and"), the logical positivists sought to ground a "scientific," antiphilosophical philosophy that would set all reliable knowledge on strong foundations

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., 711.

⁴⁰⁷ Although outside the scope of this discussion, Mies's approach in the early 1930s and Bauhaus pedagogy in Chicago also contradict Galison's assertion.

and isolate it from the unreliable. Since all valid inferences would be built out of these basic statements, the sciences would be unified by their shared starting points.⁴⁰⁸

Moreover, even Kandinsky's elementarist analysis relied on "unreliable" ideas and methods, imbuing the process with spirituality and psychology that were antithetical to logical positivism.

Galison's discussion addressed a contentious issue that *Bauhäusler* themselves grappled with throughout the life of the school: the role of technology. He argued that the Vienna Circle and the late Bauhaus both held a similar faith in technology. This is another area in which Galison's analysis fell short. The Vienna Circle lectures never focused specifically on technology, addressing philosophical questions instead. Galison's analysis perpetuated a commonly-held reductive cliché that the Bauhaus was "scientistic and machine-centered."⁴⁰⁹ His linear narrative was formulaic from Itten's Expressionistic Bauhaus to Meyer's so-called "technocratic" one without mentioning Mies's own divergent directional shift. Although Galison acknowledged variability to the standard trajectory, he still fell prey to stereotyping when he wrote that "[t]he modernism of the Bauhaus spanned many styles, political orientations, leaders, and artists—from their almost expressionist pre-World War I efforts in Weimar to the Marxist and technical orientation of the Dessau years."⁴¹⁰

As Botar maintained in his dissertation, Galison seems to have ignored the non- or even anti-technological traditions at the Bauhaus that persisted from the school's beginning to its end.

⁴⁰⁸ Galison, "Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism," 711.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., 749. cited in Botar, "Prolegomena," fn. 239, 611. "Scientization" of architecture means, for Hays, the reconceptualization of architecture not as an aesthetic object—the organization of an organic whole that we normally mean by "good design"—but as a scientific computation system—a program, a set of functions and procedures, a "biological process." Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*, 249.

⁴¹⁰ Galison, "Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism," 711.

Botar may have overemphasized Meyer's life philosophy-grounded guest lectures and diminished the importance of the analytical philosophers. I argue that Meyer chose to expose the students to the widest variation possible for the sake of a humanistic curriculum.

Galison ran into another problematic generalization when he elided the political complexities on both ends of the ideological left/right spectrum of the Circle members. As Botar pointed out, Galison's concentration on the left-leaning members was misleading since the political positions within the Vienna Circle spanned the entire political range, with Schlick on the right and Carnap and Neurath on the left. Moreover, Galison described an oppositional paradigm that divided members of the Circle—metaphysical/right wing and positivist/left wing. Granted, some of the individuals involved in the debate fit into this left/right divide: some Nazis embraced Schlick and rejected Neurath but others did not. Botar has shown that adherents to a metaphysical worldview, including organicists and monists, came from both the right and the left; they were not uniformly proto-Nazis as Galison suggested, even though some were, and some of their ideas were later co-opted by the fascists.⁴¹¹

Fourth Tenet: Duality of Emotion and Logic

Instead of a design theory in the sense of classical or modern styles, it should embody the dualism of both emotional and logical building practices.⁴¹²

Embodied with emotion and logic, Meyer's architect was not dead after all. Not an objective technician or engineer, but an empathetic interpreter of complex living systems. Growth in those living systems was never equated with Darwin's theory of evolution or its

⁴¹¹ Botar, "Prolegomena," fn. 239, 611. Botar and Galison both delve more deeply into the complexities of political ideologies.

⁴¹² "statt einer bauformlehre im sinne klassischer oder moderner stile/soll sie die dualismus gefühlsbetonter u. logischer bauweise." Hannes Meyer, "Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929."

attendant randomness. Rather like Bertalanffy's "systems biology," designs developed deliberately with interaction among agents whether architect, user, ecology, materials, neighbors, or regions. In his 1928 essay "building," Meyer articulated that "building is the deliberate organization of the processes of living." Emotion and empathy implied an interactive agent who could respond and influence the "living building" or design. With terminology such as "interactions," and "reciprocal," he explained:

First, the daily routine of each person is given a functional diagram—interactions between the house and its occupants and the world outside; examine the ways in which human beings and animals relate to the garden and the reciprocal effects that human beings, pets and domestic insects have on one another.⁴¹³

Recall that Meyer transformed the modern architect into a philosopher with "the greatest possible overview about people's lives; the greatest possible insight into the people's psyche; and the greatest possible understanding of being or existence (*Dasein*)."⁴¹⁴ When Meyer tried to redirect the creative impetus of architecture and design to the variable conditions of use and context, he was accused not only of dehumanizing architecture and design in service to his ideal of a socialist state, but also of dehumanizing the architect.

One explanation for this mischaracterization was Meyer's scientific rhetoric: "Building as the organization of life's activities (*Lebensvorgänge*)...can be understood as a theorem in geometry" which included technical, economic and sociological organization. But Meyer invoked a holistic approach to quickly transcend the material world—and its empirically-based analysis—for the metaphysical: "We assert: the spirit! New building (*Neues Bauen*) seeks to

⁴¹³ Meyer, "bauen."

⁴¹⁴ "bester baumeister: größmögliche übersicht über das volksleben; größmögliche einsicht in die volksseele; größmögliche erkenntnis des daseins." Meyer, "Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929."

organize every aspect of life's activities. Mind and soul (*Geist* und *Seele*) together shape life."⁴¹⁵ Although the initial design research was based on scientific methods—namely, close observation of local conditions—the psychological conclusions he drew from them fell squarely in the realm of the metaphysical or the emotional. The wider implications for his project have yet to be explored in the literature. Like many figures of his generation—particularly at the Bauhaus—this merging of positivist and mystical tendencies was common within the tradition of *Lebensphilosophie*. It raises a significant question to consider, namely how much was Meyer's Bauhaus approach influenced by the other teachers and the students? Were his holistic impulses synthesized with Bauhaus currents and if so, can it help to explain a shift in his own work and writing between 1926 and 1928?

The ADGB trade union school in Bernau of 1928 illustrates very briefly the last three stages of Meyer's design process. (figs. 33a-e) Meyer described the second stage in terms of standardizing all similar spaces, defining types and then collating the overall results from each separate analysis. Finally, a diagrammatic plan of the entire building would be drawn to scale. One student example of this can be seen in Ernst Göhl's "study for an eight classroom school" published in *bauhaus* (*bauhaus* 2, no. 4, 1928), which shows the building plan instead of sociological or psychological studies. (fig. 36) The explanatory text described the assignment to create a design that reflected ideals of progressive education. The school was modeled after Meyer's and his partner Hans Wittwer's design for the ADGB school in Bernau with its groupings of classrooms and corresponding individual outdoor space. The elastic plan—with its conflation of overlapping perspectives—evoked the flux and movement of the diagrams. The

⁴¹⁵ "bauen als organization der lebensvorgänge. selbstverständlich wie ein lehrsatz der geometrie— ...wir behaupten: die geist! neues bauen will organization aller lebensvorgänge (geist u. seele) = bilden leben. alles leben = drang zu harmonie. gesellschaftlich: ausgleich der gemeinschaften u. individual kräfte." Ibid.

final stage involved working out the draft of the entire building—drawn on the smallest possible scale in tersely standardized form and incorporating the myriad factors examined in the preliminary studies.

Although the ADGB commission for this school was awarded to Meyer and Wittwer, Bauhaus students in the architecture program were involved in the design and building processes. Just as they had done in their coursework, Meyer and his students began their analyses on individual components—the two-person dorm room—and built outward from there.⁴¹⁶ For example, the number of dormitory buildings was based on the grouping of the visiting students, exterior glass walkways that saved space and facilitated socializing among groups, and a site plan in harmony with the pond and hillside of the landscape. The campus was the embodiment of Meyer’s theoretical principles, procedures and practical work that he had been advocating within the Bauhaus architecture studio.

Critic Adolf Behne counted Meyer’s ADGB building as a successful example of functionalism and his writing serves to expand our characterization of Meyer’s architecture beyond the utilitarian or rationalist. Behne gave an articulate voice to the same discursive issues that engaged Meyer when he wrote:

Functionalists are concerned with solving a problem of general significance to our culture. The utilitarian only asks: What is the most practical way for me to act in this case? But the functionalist asks: “How do I act most correctly in principle?” Their attitude inclines toward philosophy and has a metaphysical basis.... There is no question but that the functionalists, even the most [*sachlich*] ones, could more readily be classified as romantics than as rationalists.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁶ Meyer, “erläuterungen zum schulprojekt: grundsätze der gestaltung,” 14.

⁴¹⁷ Behne, *The Modern Functional Building*, 122-123. The quote also appears in Bletter’s introduction, 42.

In her introduction to Behne's *The Modern Functionalist Building* (1927), Bletter's nuanced definition of functionalism as an umbrella term for wide-ranging practices has opened the possibility for an expanded field to better understand Meyer's complexities. Contrary to the standard reading of Meyer's work, the student projects did not reflect a utilitarian view of behavior in terms of labor or economy, nor rationalist, nor industry-driven views of design. Rather, Meyer's holistic view stemmed from a merging of traditional thought with interdisciplinary systematic analysis—*Lebensphilosophie*, Gestalt principles and empirical design research.

The importance of holism to Meyer's thought was further aligned with Behne's expanded notion of *Sachlichkeit* in his 1927 *Neues Wohnen—Neues Bauen*, which Bletter showed to be a social, as opposed to technocratic, enterprise similar to Georg Simmel's and Weber's conception of social action.⁴¹⁸ Behne described that “each *Sache* (object, thing) is a nodal point, a crossing point of relations between human being and human being...To work *sachlich* therefore to work socially in each discipline. To build *sachlich* means to build socially.”⁴¹⁹ Behne's nodal points, removed from a mathematical or rationalist context as Bletter has done, support an understanding of Meyer's Gestalt-based model of social architecture in which each element is contingent upon and in constant flux vis-à-vis every other element.

Meyer was an intellectual and an educator whose methodological investigations extended beyond the utilitarian into the grander philosophical questions of the human condition. Critical reception in the press transformed Meyer's lecture platform into an ongoing public dialogue that transpired in the mass media all over Germany and Switzerland with the traveling exhibition.

⁴¹⁸ Bletter, introduction to *ibid*, 53.

⁴¹⁹ Adolf Behne, *Neues Wohnen--Neues Bauen* (Leipzig: Hesse & Becker, 1927), 34. Quoted in *ibid*.

Analysis of newspaper clippings reveal that despite Meyer’s philosophical terms of discussion, very few critics engaged in his complex discourse preferring instead to focus on reductionist issues that have defined Meyer ever since. Exceptions confirm that Meyer succeeded in conveying his message to some, but it is still significant that most understood him even in his lectures. After attending Meyer’s public lecture in Basel, “Building and Education” (Bauen und Erziehung), one critic nailed it: “The school’s first architect, [spoke on the] question of building as discussed at the Bauhaus....but he was more of a psychologist, more of a pedagogue than an architect.”⁴²⁰

Meyer’s *Weltanschauung*, and its influences on his pedagogical practices, cannot be labeled within a precise philosophical heritage—more synthetic than specific, categories applied to Meyer tend to contain some contradictions. Like many intellectuals in Weimar Germany, he drew from theorists who often shared a common intellectual or social heritage—boundaries were blurred between fields that are more discrete today, including the natural sciences, philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, and sociology.

Meyer’s pedagogical practice provided a conceptual framework for students to work within conditions created by the ebbs and flows of a changing world instead of imposing ideals of rigidity and timelessness; perceiving the details and specifics of each moment as it unfolded instead of being shackled to historical or technological fads; and fostering harmony with self, neighbors, community and nature. What better way to equip students with necessary practical tools to work within the new conditions of a society still reeling from the First World War and the subsequent economic and housing crises?

Predicated on Meyer’s belief in open systems whereby everything is interconnected and

⁴²⁰ “Der erste Architekt des Bauhauses sprach. Er war mehr psychologie, mehr Pädagogue als Architekt.”

perpetually in flux, he rejected the notion of a fixed method for creating architecture and design, nor a universal solution to a building problem. A Gestalt-based model is consistent with Meyer's cooperative/anarchist view of freedom from authority—historical, political, economic, artistic—even the authority of Gropius's Bauhaus. Meyer approached teaching itself as a living, evolving form as well—an interactive engagement between teacher and student design teams of myriad conceptual frameworks and contingencies.

Holism and Gestalt theory permeated Meyer's approach on every conceptual and practical level at the school from the smallest details to the broadest sweeps—from establishing design teams, to general education in the humanities and social sciences, to architectural studies as dynamic and sustainable interactive design. Meyer's writing during his Bauhaus phase confirmed his turn away from his 1926 rhetoric of “The New World” of engineering, materials and technology toward design research focused on the social structure of the inhabitants and their relationships to each other and to the environment as the originators of form. Meyer called this “Building Unleashed” (*entfesselttes Bauen*) and “Living Building” (*lebendiges Bauen*)—building as a process of design and process for living—an elastic concept, ever-adaptable to current conditions—whereby the architect and the user work in tandem to create the appropriate spaces that are required.

The designs were rooted in the particular circumstances of the present condition in a society still recovering from the socio-economic and political crises after the Great War, the 1929 economic collapse and the ongoing housing shortage, and like art, design, and literature of the period, embodied notions of *Sachlichkeit*. But an innovative designer must focus on the future to envision what the user's needs shall be. And that is where educating students, architects and the public made a difference. Meyer wanted the Bauhaus to give practitioners and the people

at large the conceptual and practical tools they needed to become more self-sufficient and to create their own experiences, so that they could adapt to and shape their lives amidst changing socio-economic, political and environmental circumstances. Chapter Four will address this goal of public service in a discussion of the Bauhaus traveling exhibition of 1929-30.

CHAPTER IV

BAUHAUS WANDERAUSSTELLUNG: DISCURSIVE SPACE AND DO IT YOURSELF DESIGN

Ladies and Gentlemen,

You know that I come from the Bauhaus. You know everything about the Dessau Bauhaus—white cubes, steel frames, glass facades and a flat roof. Inside—six color games: white, gray, black, red, yellow, and blue. Bauhaus is fashion: every architect works in the Bauhaus style; every lady at dinner waxes on about Bauhaus Constructivism, her visiting card printed in lowercase letters. (Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929”)

To introduce the 1929 Bauhaus *Wanderausstellung* (traveling exhibition) to Basel, Hannes Meyer opened by sarcastically alluding to the popular understanding of the Bauhaus, his impertinence directed squarely at the public perceptions of the school’s designs under its patriarch and first director Walter Gropius. In the nine years since the school’s founding, he argued, many of its initial innovations had been successfully adopted by the mainstream and de-radicalized. Its aestheticized industrial forms had become empty signs of modernity—formal in their conception, imposed on the user, and shaped by ease of production rather than usefulness. Condemning it as “Bauhaus style,” he went on to explain the problem or “danger: to be clenched in the world of horizontal-vertical forms, frozen in the Academy....fashion!”⁴²¹ The school had become the establishment, no longer nimble or fresh. His solution was “to get back into life.”⁴²² Instead of continuing in the vein of table-top luxury goods and Marcel Breuer’s iconic tubular

⁴²¹ “Gefahr: in horizontal-vertikale formenwelt verkrampft, in academie erstarrt. mode! rettung aus dieser lage: zurück ins leben.” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929.”

⁴²² “sprechen wir über ‘lebendiges bauen,’” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929.”

steel, Meyer's Bauhaus responded to market demands for inexpensive, lightweight designs more suitable for an urban population boom in a worldwide economic depression.

In his catalogue essay for the exhibition's final stop in Zurich, critic Georg Schmidt detailed the process of mainstream cultural acceptance as "three stages of change—from insanity, to fashion, to style. They correspond pretty well with the metamorphosis of the thing itself. And thus the transformation of the Bauhaus!"⁴²³ Paraphrasing Meyer, Schmidt went on to describe the school's goal in its present state as a process of transcending style, not just repudiating it:

It is the *Geist* (spirit/mind) which is decisive for teaching and working at the Bauhaus. The *Geist*, in fact, cannot be better described than with the word '*Sachlichkeit*' (objectness, functionality). It is that goal which is crucial at the Bauhaus today. This aim can best be described with the formula: 'the overcoming of style.' One cannot declare it any more emphatically: **the goal is '*Stillosigkeit*' (the lack of style)**. Just as the plow or airplane without style...besides its plain usefulness, for example, is elegant, so may it be with our cities, our homes, our furniture and our appliances!⁴²⁴

The lecture was given in conjunction with the Bauhaus *Wanderausstellung* marking the school's tenth anniversary. The first large-scale public presentation of its production since the 1923 Bauhaus Weimar exhibition, Meyer took the opportunity to showcase its new approach and accomplishments during his tenure as second director from 1928–30. Promotion, sales, and

⁴²³ "Diese drei Stufen der Wandlung um Urteil der Allgemeinheit, Verrücktheit, Mode, Stil—sie entsprechenden ziemlich genau der Wandlung der Sache selber. Und damit auch der Wandlung des Bauhaus!" Georg Schmidt, *Bauhaus-Wanderschau 1930* (Zurich: Kunstgewerbemuseum der Stadt Zürich, 1930), 14.

⁴²⁴ "Entscheidend ist der Geist, in dem am Bauhaus gelehrt und gearbeitet wird. Diesen Geist aber kann man tatsächlich nicht richtiger und nicht knapper bezeichnen als mit dem Wort '*Sachlichkeit*.' Entscheidend ist das Ziel, um das es heute am Bauhaus geht. Dieses Ziel aber kann man nicht richtiger bezeichnen als mit der Formel: 'Überwindung des Stils.' Nur drastischer nicht kann man es sagen: das Ziel ist die '*Stillosigkeit*'! Wie der Pflug oder das Flugzeug ohne Stil und dennoch, oder vielleicht gerade deswegen, neben anderem, zum Beispiel neben ihrer schlichten Nützlich, auch schön sich—so seien es auch unsere Städte, unsere Häuser, unsere Möbel und unsere Geräte!" Ibid.

advancing ties to the manufacturing industry were main objectives of the exhibition, but Meyer's ambitions were greater.

This chapter considers the exhibition as a springboard for public discourse and hands-on involvement through installations, catalogues, lectures and press coverage. A study of the exhibition reveals the intersection between theory and practice and the school's ability to communicate effectively with the general public to promote its products, to justify its public funding, and to promote public discourse. Bauhaus theory and practice from the post-Gropius period broke with the Werkbund debate and model of leaving questions of design to the experts—architects, interior designers, and trained craftsmen—to carry out. It anticipated the so-called New Bauhaus schools in Chicago and Ulm. The exhibitions cultivate a new relationship between designer and visitor/consumer/user, in which the end users could play an active role in the design and interpretive process. The architect was “dead,” just as in 1934 Walter Benjamin would declare the author dead.⁴²⁵ The culmination of contemporary social, intellectual, and professional developments, the *Wanderausstellung* was a unique and radical discursive space that invited interaction.

A full-scale study of Meyer's exhibitions has yet to be undertaken and much is still left to discover. A complete record of the exhibitions—such as checklists of all works included, photographs of every installation, visitor numbers—does not exist, but piecemeal documentation provides some basis for historical analysis. In addition to scholarship by Ute Brüning and Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, most of what is known was published in Bauhaus historian Droste's “Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit am Bauhaus unter Hannes Meyer,” (Course Structure

⁴²⁵ Walter Benjamin, “Author as Producer,” (1934) in Walter Benjamin and Peter Demetz, eds., *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writing* (New York: Schocken Books, 1986).

and Workshop Production at the Bauhaus under Hannes Meyer) who, drawing from archival sources, outlined many of the logistical details about the exhibitions.⁴²⁶ With Droste's research as a springboard, this chapter relies heavily on extant primary material such as exhibition catalogues, critical reviews, correspondence, Bauhaus publications, partial checklists, and installation photos.

Scholars have recently begun to turn more attention to the exhibition. My own 2009 essay "Hannes Meyer's Bauhaus—'die Wanderschau' 1929-30," for example, examined the role of the exhibitions for Meyer's overall publicity campaign for the school. Christoph Zuschlag's 2012 essay "'ein eisenbahnwaggon ausstellungsgut' Die Bauhaus-Wanderausstellung 1929/30 und ihre Mannheimer Station" ('A Railcar of Exhibition Goods' The Bauhaus Traveling Exhibition 1929/30 and its Stop in Mannheim) focused specifically on the Mannheim Kunsthalle installation.⁴²⁷ The *Wanderausstellung* garnered mention in the scholarship most often within broader discussions of Meyer's successes in manufacturing and sales of design goods in an attempt to make the Bauhaus financially self-sufficient. Indeed, the exhibition embodied Meyer's cooperative roots.⁴²⁸ Scholars, including Winkler, have argued that the exhibition exemplified Meyer's programmatic aim to transform society in which "serving the needs of the people" (*Volksbedarf*) had Marxist connotations within capitalist constraints.⁴²⁹ This chapter puts

⁴²⁶ Droste, "Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit;" Brüning, Fiedler, and Buschfeld, *Das A und O des Bauhauses: Bauhauswerbung: Schriftbilder, Drucksachen, Ausstellungsdesign*; Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*.

⁴²⁷ Dara Kiese, "Hannes Meyers Bauhaus-die 'Wanderschau' 1929-30," in *Bauhaus-Kommunikation*, Patrick Rössler, ed., Neue Bauhausbücher (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2009). Christoph Zuschlag, "'ein eisenbahnwaggon ausstellungsgut' Die Bauhaus-Wanderausstellung 1929/30 und ihre Mannheimer Station," in *Festschrift für Wolfgang Wittrock: zum 65 Geburtstag am 1 Mai 2012*, Meike Hoffmann and Ursula Schulz-Dornburg, eds. (Meerane: Schwarz 2012), 107-116. I thank the author for sharing his essay with me.

⁴²⁸ Winkler, *Architekt Hannes Meyer*, 120-121.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, 122.

forward another paradigm that posits the exhibition within a new discursive and commercial space. The “people” (*Volk*) were the school’s customers and “serving their needs” had both practical and theoretical manifestations. The school offered consumer choice on a practical level in customizing his home in an era of serial production and standardization.

Conceptually, Meyer infused his own pedagogical approach into the audience’s experience that sought to instill in the viewer new theoretical frameworks for analyzing and envisioning his own built environment. Inherent in his curatorial shaping were the same cooperative values and Gestalt principles that formed the foundation for his directorship. Not merely a practical solution to contemporary problems, Meyer presented a radical reconfiguration of design education that reflected burgeoning professionalization of the fields of industrial design, graphic design and advertising, and architecture that relied on interdisciplinary approach and teams and a research-based production and process.

Spanning a year and a half from April 1929 to August 1930, the Bauhaus *Wanderausstellung* (sometimes called the *Wanderschau*) appeared in seven cities as an overview of the Meyer era of Bauhaus pedagogy and production.⁴³⁰ Between April 1929 and August 1930, variations of “The Bauhaus Traveling Exhibition” traveled to Basel, Breslau, Leipzig, Dessau, Essen, Mannheim and Zurich according to the following schedule:

bauhaus dessau: j. albers, l. feininger, w. kandinsky, p. klee, o. schlemmer, Kunsthalle Basel (20 April – 9 May 1929).

das bauhaus dessau, Gewerbemuseum Basel (21 April – 20 May 1929).

Werkraum und Wohnung (Werkbundaustellung), *Wuwa*, Breslau (15 June – 19 September 1929).

⁴³⁰ Most exhibitions showed mainly Meyer-era production, but the Dessau show was an exception with “10 Years of Bauhaus.”

“Die Volkswohnung,” Grassimuseum, Leipzig (September 1929).

10 Jahre Bauhaus, Kunsthalle Dessau (26 January – 2 February 1929).

[“Wanderausstellung des Bauhauses Dessau”] Folkwang Museum, Essen (16 February – 6 April 1930).

bauhaus dessau wanderschau 1930, Kunsthalle Mannheim (14 May – 22 June 1930).

bauhaus-wanderschau 1930, Kunstgewerbemuseum der Stadt Zürich (20 July – 17 August 1930).

The length of the exhibitions ranged from one week in Dessau (*10 Jahre Bauhaus*) to three months in Breslau in conjunction with a Werkbund exhibition (*Wohnen und Werkraum* or *Wuwa*), with most lasting about a month. Choices in venue, installation (how objects were placed in the galleries), and the range of objects on view distinguish this exhibition from other categorical types such as trade shows, arts exhibitions, school presentations or elaborate spectacles, and embody both the underlying philosophy and pedagogical aims of the school during Meyer’s tenure.

Though the contents of the exhibitions remained relatively constant, some notable additions were produced along the way—the *Volkswohnung* (people’s dwelling) a model apartment fitted with Bauhaus furnishings displayed in Leipzig, Meyer’s organizational and curricular charts, and a maquette of Schlemmer’s *Man* among them. (fig. 37) The institutional character of each venue shaped its installation as well as its interpretive framework and dialogue with the audience. In Dessau and Mannheim, the show was mounted in *Kunsthallen* which were facilities for temporary art exhibitions, whereas in Essen, the Folkwang-Museum—a newly established art museum with its own collection—hosted the show. In Zurich, the exhibition was

installed at a museum for applied arts and crafts (*Kunstgewerbemuseum*).⁴³¹ In Basel, the only site where two complementary shows took place simultaneously, the paintings were installed in the *Kunsthalle* and everything else including the preliminary coursework was shown in the *Kunstgewerbemuseum*.⁴³² In Breslau, the Bauhaus was given a special exhibition space in conjunction with the 1929 Werkbund exhibition *Wohnen und Werkraum* (*Wuwa*), which re-cast the show in conjunction with the broader context of Werkbund production. Though Meyer sought to separate fine arts practices in design and architectural thinking, mounting the exhibitions in arts institutions tended to highlight Gropius' foundational principle of uniting arts and crafts. This issue was not lost on the critics and will be addressed below in the discussion of preliminary course student work and paintings by Bauhaus masters that were included in the exhibition.

Meyer defined four broad themes for the organization of the exhibition layout that were subsequently broken down into smaller sections. Press announcements for the exhibition in the *Kunsthalle Mannheim*, for example, outlined them as follows: 1) Structure (*Aufbau*) of Bauhaus pedagogy; 2) Workshops; 3) People's dwelling (*Volkswohnung*); and 4) Group show of works by Bauhaus masters (*Bauhausmeister*), including architecture, textiles, photography, and paintings.⁴³³

⁴³¹ The extent of Meyer's involvement in curating at other venues is not known, however Alfred Arndt was charged with installing the exhibition at the *Kunsthalle Mannheim* (4 May – 22 June 1930).

⁴³² According to the exhibition review in the *Baseler Tages Anzeiger*, the 1st gallery held Albers' materials coursework, the 2nd gallery showed works from the Kandinsky and Klee courses and the advertising workshop; the 3rd gallery contained works from the stage department and the 4th gallery showed interior design. F.H., "Das Bauhaus Dessau im Kunstgewerbemuseum," *Basler Tages Anzeiger*, 20 April 1929, Basel. [exhibition review of "Das Bauhaus Dessau," *Gewerbemuseum Basel* 21 April – 20 May 1929] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

⁴³³ Anonymous, "Neues Bauen," *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 10 May 1929, Frankfurt. [exhibition review of "Bauhaus Dessau Wanderschau 1930," *Kunsthalle Mannheim* (14 May – 22 June 1930)] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

Catalogues were published in conjunction with the exhibitions in Basel at the Arts and Crafts Museum and the Kunsthalle in 1929 and at the Zurich Arts and Crafts Museum the following year. Kállai wrote short essays for the Basel shows before he resigned from his Bauhaus post in late 1929.⁴³⁴ Although Kállai focused on design and its pedagogy for the Arts and Crafts Museum show, the role of the painters at the school was a central issue in both essays. He framed the dialectical relationship in terms of “the two faces of the Bauhaus: practical and spiritual,” which will be examined in the section on painters below. The Kunstgewerbemuseum catalogue included photographic reproductions of furniture, an architectural study, examples from the Bauhaus stage, textiles and an Albers material study. (fig. 38) The Kunsthalle catalogue did not include reproductions, but unlike the furniture in the Kunstgewerbemuseum catalogue, contained an exhibition checklist with sale prices. (fig. 39)

Meyer made an effort to strengthen Bauhaus ties to the wider design community and to potential customers with the *Wanderausstellung*. Several stops of the exhibition’s tour were timed to coincide with trade shows, namely those in Basel (*Schweizer Mustermesse* 13-23 April 1929), Mannheim (*Bauhaus Dessau* 4 May – 22 June 1930) and Breslau (*Wuwa*). Meyer took advantage of the large audiences drawn to trade shows that included representatives of manufacturing industries, government, planners, reformers, as well as the general public. Yet no venue perfectly suited the complexities of Bauhaus production with respect to fine arts,

⁴³⁴ The explanation of Kállai’s resignation is unclear to me. According to the standard account, Kállai left over disagreements with Meyer about the role of fine arts at the Bauhaus, but I have yet to find evidence of it or a first-hand account of his departure. As the school’s spokesman, it is difficult to know whether the views he expressed in that capacity were his own or the school’s (i.e. Meyer’s). Kállai’s tenure at the Bauhaus is fertile ground for future research. Distortions abound. For example, Kállai’s article “Ten Years Bauhaus,” (*Die Weltbühne* 21, January 1930) is viewed as his farewell indictment of Meyer’s Bauhaus. There is some truth in that. The last two paragraphs question Meyer’s precarious inclusion of painters at the school and then charges Meyer with promoting his own version of “Bauhaus style.” That said, most scholars have failed to realize that most of the article was taken from Kállai’s Basel Kunstgewerbemuseum catalogue essay and its critique is directed squarely at the Gropius era, not at Meyer. The article is translated and published in Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, 161-163.

pedagogy, architecture, and design. Nor was there a discursive space to adequately accommodate all of the various goals of the exhibitions including advancing sales, forging relationships with industrial manufacturers, promoting the school and finally, educating the public. Reflecting the unique nature of the school and its mission, perhaps the most appropriate venue was the Dessau Bauhaus building itself when it housed the exhibition in February 1930.

Neutrality

The same words used by some critics to disparage Bauhaus household objects—“cold,” “clinical,” “functionalist”—could also describe the *Wanderausstellung*. Intentional and calculated, Meyer’s curatorial choices resulted in a straight-forward, unornamented, and austere presentation of the Dessau Bauhaus. Some detractors viewed it as an assertion of a “communist” vision of a “proletarian” society—not just an austere, bland subversion of individuality, but a dogmatic imposition of moral or ethical choices representing a specific worldview.⁴³⁵

A slight shift in interpretation leads to different conclusions, despite the shared descriptive language. A straight-forward presentation meant letting the designs speak for themselves without obvious branding or sales pitch. And most of the designs were for sale, after all. Karl Teige, Czech typographer, critic and guest instructor, reinforced the message in a local leftist newspaper, “The show was not conceived for the sake of publicity, but rather responds to the question of where we stand as a lively annual report detailing the singular work of all of the departments for the 10th anniversary.”⁴³⁶ Austerity can also be understood to mean neutrality,

⁴³⁵ [Dr Walter Ueber-Wasser], “Das Bauhaus Dessau im Gewerbemuseum. V: Schluss,” *Basler Nachrichten* 16 May 1929, Basel, [exhibition review, 21 April - 20 May 1929]. [Archive, Basel Gewerbemuseum].

⁴³⁶ “Nicht Reklamegründen verdankt diese Schau ihr Entstehen, sie soll anlässlich des 10 jährigen Bestehens des Instituts Aufschluß geben über alle Einzelheit der Arbeit in allen Abteilungen, ist wie ein großer, überaus lebendiger Rechenschaftsbericht, es ist die Antwort auf die Frage ‘wo stehen wir?’” [Karel Teige], “Bauhaus-Wanderschau 1930,” *Volksblatt für Anhalt*, 27 January 1930, Dessau, [exhibition review of “10 Jahre Bauhaus,”

transforming Meyer's aesthetic rigor of neutral presentation into an appeal to individuality. Consistent with his cooperative and pedagogical roots and the open atmosphere for intellectual and creative exchange he cultivated at the Bauhaus, the exhibition design adopted what Meyer believed to be *neutral* and anti-didactic principles of organization in order to allow the visitor to make up his or her own mind about the material.

Poster announcements employed the same straight-forward approach that characterized the exhibition they promoted. *Bauhaus Dessau*—no need for explanation as the name spoke for itself—a testament to the school's wide-reaching reputation. The poster designed by student Franz Ehrlich from sketches by the head of the Advertising Department, Joost Schmidt, for the Gewerbemuseum Basel is a prime example and an announcement in a Basel newspaper took note. (figs. 40 a-b) The concept of neutrality in communication was imbedded in contemporary discourse of New Typography, as Schmidt wrote, "It is clearly apparent that the installation itself, along with the poster and exhibition brochure, were organized in accordance with Bauhaus principles."⁴³⁷ Schmidt advanced his belief that graphic design should rely on "neither suggestion nor information," but should persuade "by means of clear presentation of facts" in order to activate the viewer to interpret meaning.⁴³⁸

As minimal and straightforward as the exhibition it announced, the poster foregrounds efficiency, legibility and function—hallmarks of the new direction Meyer was taking the school.

Kunsthalle Dessau (26 January - 2 February 1930] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

⁴³⁷ "Dieses Bild erscheint dadurch in besonders deutlichem Licht, daß die Anordnung der Ausstellung auf einem im Bauhaus genau durchgearbeiteten Plan beruht. In gleicher Weise sind das Plakat und der Führer der Ausstellung im Bauhaus selbst entstanden oder nach den Angaben der Leitung des Bauhauses hergestellt worden." F.H., "Das Bauhaus Dessau im Kunstgewerbemuseum."

⁴³⁸ Wick quoted Helene Schmidt-Nonné from an unpublished manuscript on Schmidt, chapter 6, 3. Wick, *Teaching at the Bauhaus*, 297.

With a simplified sans-serif type and bold palette, its visual impact relied on subtle and systematic variations in width and color. Stenciled letters—the ultimate in “objectivity” and reproducibility—overlap the list of opening hours with “no admission charge,” enticing the wider public to visit.

Student production under Schmidt’s guidance exemplified many hallmarks of effective graphic design that typographer and theoretician Jan Tschichold codified in his canonical handbook, *The New Typography* (1928). Tschichold was a vital advocate and international mediator of graphic design and presented guest lectures at the Bauhaus. After Herbert Bayer’s departure in 1928, Schmidt had been promoted to head the advertising workshop which, in conjunction with the printing workshop and Walter Peterhans’s new photography department, made up one of the first comprehensive advertising programs in Germany.⁴³⁹

Principles of New Typography had been guiding Bauhaus graphics production since the school’s first major Bauhaus exhibition in 1923 when Schmidt was a student in the sculpture department. 1923 marked a major turning point as the Bauhaus moved away from Walter Gropius’s 1919 foundational tenet to unify arts and crafts in service of architecture. While expressive printmaking formed the basis of most graphic work in the earliest years, typographic experimentation and letterpress design increasingly made their way into the workshop and into the preliminary course after Moholy-Nagy’s faculty appointment in 1923. The exhibition provided the opportunity for students to try something new—publicity and promotion within the context of print production including brochures, admission tickets, invitations and posters.

⁴³⁹ For more on printing and advertising at the Bauhaus, see Brüning, Fiedler, and Buschfeld, *Das A und O des Bauhauses: Bauhauswerbung: Schriftbilder, Drucksachen, Ausstellungsdesign* and Gerd Fleischmann, ed. *Bauhaus: Drucksachen, Typografie, Reklame* (Düsseldorf: Edition Marzona, 1984).

The Weimar exhibition and its publicity were crucial for securing continued financial support from the state of Thuringia where Weimar was located, and as such, from the wider public whose taxes paid for it. Yet formal and systematic training in graphic design were minimal until 1925, when Herbert Bayer took over as head of the printing workshop (1925–28), and included typography and advertising in his curriculum. Self-promotion dominated Bauhaus print production throughout the school's tenure because losing public funding—or worse, forced closure—was an ever present threat.

The winner of a student competition, Schmidt's 1923 exhibition poster expressed the new Gropius motto that ushered in a new ethos: 'Art and Technology: A New Unity.' (fig. 41) With the iconic face from Oskar Schlemmer's official Bauhaus seal as the central focus, Schmidt composed a composite structure out of simplified abstract forms and highly geometric lettering. Exemplifying Constructivist influences, the poster was a far cry from earlier Bauhaus Expressionist prints and the highly individualized script that characterized them. Schmidt's creative typographic experimentation with letter weight, thick and thin rules, geometric forms and legibility reveal a talent that in 1925 would lead to a teaching position at the Bauhaus that included instruction in lettering, printing and advertising. Ultimately, Schmidt's greatest contribution would come later, when he helped to remake the school's public image during Hannes Meyer's directorship.

By the mid-1920s, design was no longer grounded in an expressionist idiom, and graphics production had fully assimilated Constructivist and de Stijl principles into New Typography with its use of bold color, open space and line to structure a dynamic composition. Moholy-Nagy's *Bauhaus* book series or Bayer's poster announcing an exhibition of Kandinsky's painting on the occasion of his 60th birthday represents the 'classic' Bauhaus period (figs. 42 and

43).⁴⁴⁰ Recasting the pared-down compositions in terms of scientific objectivity, clarity and technical ease of production, Moholy-Nagy described typographic experimentation: “We must unequivocally design our machines for clarity, conciseness, and precision. Today, everybody’s time is valuable, just as valuable as materials and labor.”⁴⁴¹ Though still expressing aspects of New Typography, emphasis on technology and its producer would be downplayed during Meyer’s directorship.

By 1928, Bayer had become critical of current tendencies in New Typography:

The system of elemental typography which was first developed by the Constructivists doubtlessly pointed out basically new ways of thinking in typographical work. Most of all, it led to a typography built on the inherent qualities of the material, from which a typesetting technique could be developed. The call for clarity, precision, explicitness and abstract form (in the layout as well) was well received, especially in Germany ... probably because ... publicity is somewhat primitive. Superficial imitation, however, misunderstands or overlooks the actual meaning, namely functional application of the elements. What remained were merely heavy dots and bold lines or even ornaments and imitations of nature carried out with typographical material.⁴⁴²

It is no wonder that Meyer criticized Bauhaus production of the late Gropius era for having become ‘Bauhaus style,’ when one of its preeminent designers lamented the ubiquitous imitations of his work. Thus the objectivity or neutrality of Ehrlich’s (and Schmidt’s) exhibition poster was a repudiation of ‘style’ as much as it signified a scientific or rational approach to design. The poster relied on the materials themselves—colored paper, typographic forms,

⁴⁴⁰ The *Bauhausbücher* (Bauhaus book series), edited by Gropius and designed by Moholy-Nagy, was published from 1925–30. Many books were devoted to the international avant-garde, including Van Doesburg, Mondrian and Malevich. For a concise history, see Adrian Sudhalter, “Bauhaus Book Series 1925–30,” in *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity*, Leah Dickerman Barry Bergdoll, ed. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 195-198.

⁴⁴¹ Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, 114.

⁴⁴² Herbert Bayer, ‘Typography and Commercial Art Forms,’ *bauhaus* 2, no. 1 (1928), translated in *ibid.*, 135.

asymmetrical layout, and open space—to catch the eye of the busy passerby without muddying the message with superfluous decoration like the abstract form on Schmidt’s 1923 exhibition poster.⁴⁴³

Meyer’s repudiation of “style” is one reason critics and historians have often associated his approach with Russian Constructivism and Productivism. A brief aside to compare Soviet designer El Lissitzky’s poster for the *Russische Ausstellung*, held at the Kunstgewerbemuseum Zurich concurrently with the *Wanderausstellung* in 1929, elucidates some major differences and reinforces the significance of Meyer’s ideological position of “neutrality” that shaped his curatorial and pedagogical approaches.⁴⁴⁴ (fig. 44) While Bauhaus students distilled typographic elements for the sake of clarity and universality, many Russian designers turned to bold text, graphics, photography and photomontage to get their messages across, particularly after Stalin instigated his first Five-Year Plan in 1928.⁴⁴⁵

Photography and film were embraced by artists and the Soviet state alike as practical tools to educate the masses and to propagandize political ideology. Photography was viewed as objective, legible and universal: it could bridge national borders; it could accommodate the fast

⁴⁴³ Jan Tschichold, *The New Typography: a Handbook for Modern Designers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 176.

⁴⁴⁴ El Lissitzky, *USSR. Die russische Ausstellung* (USSR: The Russian exhibition), poster for exhibition at the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zurich, 1929.

⁴⁴⁵ Politics were intertwined with artistic work in the Soviet Union during the 1920s and 1930s, but the start of the Stalin era in 1928 is commonly seen as a demarcation between post-revolutionary avant-gardist production and Soviet totalitarian propaganda. While there is an element of truth in this dichotomy, scholars have been reevaluating work from the Stalin-era resulting in a more complex picture. Christina Lodder, *Russian Constructivism* (New Haven Yale University Press, 1983) and Benjamin Buchloh, “From Faktura to Factography,” *October* 30, Autumn (1984) have been very influential for the discussion. For more recent scholarship, see Victor Margolin, *The Struggle for Utopia: Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy, 1917-1946* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), particularly chapter 5, “Representing the Regime: Lissitzky and Rodchenko 1930-1941. Peter Nesbit has written extensively on Lissitzky from the Stalin-era. See his “El Lissitzky circa 1935: Two Propaganda Projects Reconsidered,” in *Situating El Lissitzky: Vitebsk, Berlin, Moscow*, Nancy Lynn Perloff and Brian Reed, eds. (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2003), 211-234.

pace of modern, urban life; and in the Soviet context, it could reach a population with a high illiteracy rate. In 1928, the Soviet photographer and designer Alexander Rodchenko discussed the transformative potential in re-educating the masses:

In order to teach man to look in a new way it is necessary to photograph ordinary, familiar objects from totally unexpected viewpoints and in unexpected positions, and to photograph new objects from various vantage points so as to give a complete impression of an object. We are taught to look in a routine, inculcated manner. We must discover the visible world. We must revolutionize our visual thinking.⁴⁴⁶

With ‘USSR’ branded on the melded portrait of a boy and girl, Lissitzky’s message of an optimistic Soviet future was obvious. Decried by critics as too propagandistic, this type of poster received a lukewarm reception by many advocates of New Typography at the time.⁴⁴⁷ The poster’s propaganda, point of view, and even the trace of ambiguity stood in sharp contrast to Ehrlich’s poster and the *Wanderausstellung* more generally. The starry-eyed teenagers, whose faces have been merged with a shared eye, hover larger than life over empty exhibition stands designed by Lissitzky. Formal abstractions if they had been presented on their own, the exhibition stands provide another point of departure to distinguish Meyer’s exhibition design.

Meyer believed that ‘Bauhaus style’ stemmed from Gropius’s 1923 declaration to unite art and technology, and he looked to new sources of inspiration for pedagogical and design practices. One key aspect of Meyer’s pedagogy aimed to provide students with a broad-based general education that included continued involvement with international artistic circles, as well

⁴⁴⁶ Alexander Rodchenko, ‘Puti sovremennoi fotografii’, *Novyi LEF* 2, no. 9 (1928): 28-29. Quoted in Lodder, *Russian Constructivism*, 203.

⁴⁴⁷ Though Tschichold recognized its merits and added it to his international collection, now housed in the Architecture and Design Department at the Museum of Modern Art. Juliet Kinchin and Aiden O’Connor, *Century of the Child: Growing by Design, 1900-2000* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2012), 124.

as with social scientists, psychologists and philosophers. Schmidt's advertising courses, for example, were no longer just formal experiments with new technologies, but took on an all-encompassing approach to the design process, incorporating aspects of psychology, technical processes and social science. Graphic design and typography under Schmidt's direction (1928-1932) combined student experimental exercises with practical projects such as exhibition design or advertising for clients, comprised of many manufacturing firms that partnered with the school to produce Bauhaus saleable goods, many of which were included in the exhibition.

The development of a comprehensive advertising degree program at a time that the field was in its nascent phase of professionalization put the Bauhaus in the forefront of New Advertising.⁴⁴⁸ Joost Schmidt's course plan for the advertising department, published in the school's 1929 prospectus *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!*, epitomized social-based design research in its conception, classroom and studio practice, as well as in its production. Students began with technical training in areas such as typography, photography, material studies, drawing, and Gestalt psychological principles of perceptual theory. Lectures and special courses rounded out their theoretical studies in "society, economics, and advertising," "sales advertising organization," "psychology and psycho-technics of advertising," and "the language of advertising." Finally, some students would gain practical experience in conjunction with the interior finishing production department to design and produce exhibitions, window displays, and graphic design for clients.

⁴⁴⁸ After his own Bauhaus training, Bayer was hired to direct the typography workshop in 1925. He changed the name to the "Workshop for Advertising Design" (Werkstatt für Werbsachengestaltung) in 1927 in conjunction with Gropius' reconfiguration of the curriculum. For more on printing and advertising at the Bauhaus, see Brüning, Fiedler, and Buschfeld, *Das A und O des Bauhauses* and Fleischmann, ed., *Bauhaus: Drucksachen, Typografie, Reklame*.

Schmidt elaborated on the program in a public lecture he gave in Dessau in conjunction with the *Wanderausstellung* in early February, 1930. A local newspaper critic praised the lecture and the school's efforts to develop an innovative advertising program, "the likes of which did not yet exist in Germany."⁴⁴⁹ A testament to Schmidt's ability to communicate the importance of design research, analysis and psychology to the general population, the critic explained:

The role of commercial art in the process of advertising, is to entice people from a distance to become buyers. Psychologically, one must proceed very carefully. Questions one must ask: To whom is the advertising directed? To which sector of society do the potential customers belong? What are their financial resources? Is the product advertised already familiar to them or is it being introduced for the first time? Is the advertising directed to increase sales in one country or are sales meant to increase throughout the whole world? These and similar considerations guide the design and character of an advertising campaign.⁴⁵⁰

Though Schmidt explained the design process in writing and lectures, the exhibition itself was free of didactic texts, opting instead to illustrate its concepts through example. The pedagogical foundation in the advertising department—and its sociological, psychological, and business workings—were demonstrated indirectly through experimental student exercises and the school's own design commissions. Photographs of an exhibition stand designed for Dessau's Junkers Company that appeared in the Berlin trade show *Gas und Wasser* (Gas and Water) were installed in the *Wanderausstellung* (figs. 45 a-c) and reproduced in the quarterly journal

⁴⁴⁹ Anonymous, "Abschluss der Bauhaus-Woche. Vortrag Joost Schmidt, 'Ueber Werbegraphik'," *unknown periodical*, [early February] 1930, [Dessau]. Bauhaus-Archive Berlin. Even Gropius would attest to the program's importance when he wrote a letter recommending that Schmidt be allowed entry into the US to work on an exhibition. Walter Gropius to Whom it May Concern. [Assorted papers relating to Bauhaus designers, 1919-1984] Getty Research Institute.

⁴⁵⁰ "Die Rolle der Werbegraphik im Werbeprozess ist, weit entfernte Käufer zu werden. Sehr sorgfältig muß psychologisch dabei vorgegangen werden. Fragen: an wen wendet sich die Werbung, welcher Schicht gehören die Umworbenen an, wie sind die finanzstellen Mittel dieser Käufer bestellt, wird für eine schon bekannte aber für eine völlig neue Ware geworben? Soll diese Werbung nur ein Land beleben oder über die ganze Erde sich erstrecken? Diese und ähnliche Ueberlegungen bestimmen Form und Wesen der Werbearbeit." Anonymous, "Vortrag Joost Schmidt," Bauhaus-Archive Berlin.

bauhaus.⁴⁵¹ An all-inclusive environment comprised of multifaceted information graphics, large-scale photographs, wall text, and directional graphics illustrated the company's working methods through "economic, scientific, and technical data" while simultaneously showcasing Bauhaus pedagogical and practical methods.⁴⁵²

Indicative of Meyer's Gestalt approach to integrate design practices, the advertising department oversaw an inter-departmental effort from the printing, plastic arts, cabinetry and metal workshops. Typically interior furnishings were designed by students and then manufactured elsewhere, although the Junkers designs were completed in house. The physical space of the Junkers exhibition was transformed into an immersive environment for the viewer, which Teige deemed successful, though still more reserved than Lissitzky's *Pressa* exhibition in Cologne in 1928. (fig. 46)⁴⁵³ The Bauhaus was entirely capable of designing and staging a spectacle for the audience, but Meyer chose not to. The Junkers exhibition was not theatrical, but immersed the viewer in technical facts, information graphics, and photographic illustrations. Providing visual proof of the deliberate curatorial shaping of the exhibition and Meyer's priority on neutrality in concept and form, the simple, spare exhibition design of the *Wanderausstellung* stood in sharp contrast to the advertising department's own design accomplishments.

The impetus for Meyer's curatorial vision goes back to his background in the Swiss cooperative movement, which guided this exhibition in its conception, installation and

⁴⁵¹ *bauhaus* 3, no. 3 (1929): 1-9. The Museum of Modern Art Library.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁵³ [Teige], "Bauhaus-Wanderschau 1930."

objectives.⁴⁵⁴ Based in cooperative ideals, financial self-sufficiency was a driving force behind the laborious *Wanderausstellung*. That said, the 1929 exhibition diverged from the exhibition he curated five years previously for the United Swiss Cooperative Union (VSK) in the Swiss Hall of the Exposition Internationale de la coopération et des Oeuvres sociales (EICOS, International Exhibition of Cooperatives and Social Work) which took place in Ghent, Belgium from 15 June – 15 September 1924 and traveled to the Siedlung Freidorf the following month. (figs. 11 and 15)

Recalling the discussion in Chapter One, the Ghent exhibition illustrated Meyer's early experience with propagandizing. Meyer described transforming the space into a site of "agit-prop" by painting every surface red.⁴⁵⁵ Social-realist portraits of co-op residents hung on the walls alongside charts and diagrams showing factual information about Swiss cooperative economies and a large vitrine displayed everyday co-op goods.⁴⁵⁶ (fig. 15) A far cry from his Bauhaus neutrality, that exhibition sought to inform, persuade and sell cooperative living and their products by melding facts, theater and aestheticized packaged goods. By the time of the *Wanderausstellung*, however, Meyer no longer communicated his functionalist and cooperative ideals with expository wall text, symbolic gestures or sculptural relishes. The ideals were still present, but had been internalized into the designs and the installation.

⁴⁵⁴ For more on Bauhaus production and sales, see Frederic J. Schwartz, "Utopia for Sale: The Bauhaus and Weimar Germany's Consumer Culture," in *Bauhaus Culture: from Weimar to the Cold War*, Kathleen James Chaborty, ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 115–138.

⁴⁵⁵ "signalisierte allüberall Wärme: signalrote Decke, signalrote Sitzbänke, signalrote Einfassung der Bilderbogen an den Saalwänden. In der Saalmitte ein übergrosser Glas-schaukasten: signalrotes Aquarium der Co-op-Artikel genossenschaftlicher Produktion. Am Saalende über Rechtecksausschnitt der Bühne und musikdosenhaftem Phonopavillon in signalroten Lettern: LE THEÄTRE CO-OP." Meyer, "Siedlung Freidorf," 329.

⁴⁵⁶ Meyer and Bard, "das propagandatheater co-op."

An exhibition of this scale and geographic scope was a tremendous undertaking for the Bauhaus to organize and fund. Meyer described his efforts, including public lectures in more than nine cities, as a means to forge relationships with manufacturing firms. His time paid off. The school signed licensing agreements to produce textiles, lamps, furniture and wallpaper, commissions included exhibition designs for industrial clients, and students were hired at several companies after graduation. Students were not only developing design and technical skills, but actual business expertise.

Cooperative aspirations for financial independence and self-determination would become central to his reforms at the Bauhaus in curriculum and production, and serial production and sales of Bauhaus goods were its most apparent manifestations. Financial independence meant a greater autonomy in decision-making and freedom from state oversight in employee hires, curricular changes, and accomplishments that justified tax funding. Increased revenue also promoted economic diversity in the student body through scholarship funding. “Thus our budget had prospects of improving in the only really sound way,” Meyer wrote, “namely through self-help.”⁴⁵⁷

Meyer depicted this business model in a 1930 diagram of the school’s administrative structure. (fig. 29) Conceived for the purpose of public exhibition, the chart was created in time to be included in the 1930s venues.⁴⁵⁸ The school was transformed into a public-private partnership built on Bauhaus workshop production and an egalitarian model of leadership. Each

⁴⁵⁷ Meyer, “My dismissal from the Bauhaus; open letter to Mayor Hesse, Dessau.”

⁴⁵⁸ Droste wrote that the organizational and curricular charts were probably produced for the Dessau venue in “Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit,” 136-137. Mention of the chart in exhibition reviews informs us that it appeared in Mannheim. Anonymous, “Das 'Bauhaus' in der Kunsthalle,” [exhibition review (14 May – 22 June 1930)] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

member of the Masters' Council (*Meisterrat*) was given an equal position at the table regardless of rank. The Bauhaus hovered over the solid ground of the city and state governments with "Business Administration" (*Geschäftsführung*) as the central nexus joining workshop production, the school administration, and the sales office. The school was on its way to financial self-sufficiency, but had not yet achieved full independence.

This schemata was typical of Meyer's ideal information graphics. He codified essays on the social aspects of Bauhaus pedagogy and the Bauhaus role within society as a whole into an abstract visual image. Thousands of words were reduced to a single-page diagram for a quick glimpse at the school's new business model. Critics took note. The chart was used as a demonstration board for a press preview at the Mannheimer Kunsthalle given by Alfred Arndt, the head of the interiors department and the venue's exhibition designer. Praising its clarity, critics referred to the diagram in order to explain differences between Meyer's tenure and the earlier Gropius era.⁴⁵⁹

As scholars have shown, Meyer described the curriculum as cooperative in nature and a mirror of contemporary society. He explained to the public in a 1929 lecture about the Bauhaus that "if today's society alone creates the school, it would be collective in character."⁴⁶⁰ Though framed in cooperative terms, Meyer's ideas helped the school adopt and generate significant innovations in the fields of architecture, design, and advertising as they became increasingly professionalized and modern. A reporter covering the Basel public lecture, quoted Meyer:

⁴⁵⁹ Anonymous, "Das 'Bauhaus' in der Kunsthalle," [exhibition review (14 May – 22 June 1930)] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

⁴⁶⁰ "Wenn die heutige Gesellschaft selbst Schule macht = Schule mit kollektivem Charakter." Meyer, "Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929," section VI.

Each student receives an honorarium so that even as a student, he develops a feel for economic freedom and economic responsibility, The tendency of the Bauhaus is to increasingly become a productive collective. This provides us our budget: RM 147,000 for 177 students and ten masters! We already have a production turnover [sales] of RM 170,000 per year!... The Bauhaus is neither an art school nor an academy. It is a transit point for life and wants to become more and more a part of life itself! The individual is being merged into a common entity comprised of all. Our goal is not a product, but man.⁴⁶¹

Meyer's ideal synthesis of theory and practice as preparation for the changing professional world was illustrated in the exhibition through a second diagram showing the school's new curricular structure.⁴⁶² (fig. 23) The schematic grouping of the workshops comprised the new courses of study. "Advertising" (Reklame) consisted of printing department (Druckerei), sculpture workshop (Plastische Werkstatt) and the photography department (Fotoabteilung); "Interiors" (Ausbau) included the metal workshop (Metallwerkstatt), carpentry (Tischlerei) and wall-painting (Wandmalerei); and the "Building Department" (Bauabteilung) combined building instruction (*Baulehre*) and the building office (*Baubüro*).⁴⁶³ Adopting Pestalozzi's pedagogical model of small groups or "cells" (*Zelle*) Meyer called each workshop a "working circle or cell" (*Arbeitskreis bzw. Zelle*). Building on this concept, Meyer's educational model helped develop design studios that both reflected and shaped new professions. Although called "workshops" or "laboratories," they were becoming models for design studios that prefigured contemporary studio practices.

⁴⁶¹ F.H., "Das Bauhaus Dessau im Kunstgewerbemuseum."

⁴⁶² Along with the organizational chart, this was also likely to have been shown only in Dessau, Essen, Mannheim and Zurich.

⁴⁶³ The weaving workshop (Weberei) is represented as a separate case as distinguished in the diagram. Comprised of a single workshop instead of a new professional field, its subgroupings demarcate practical applications within the workshop (as working circles or cells [*Arbeitskreis bzw. Zelle*])—woven textile (*Gobelin*) and color (*Färb*).

Meyer's student prospectus *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!* acknowledged change when he asked: "Are you searching for a throughway station to a new time?... Are you a trained craftsman looking to improve your skills?...Are you agonizing over the problems of contemporary design?"⁴⁶⁴ The "Interior Finishings" (Ausbau) section of the exhibition showed student production with objects from several workshops (cabinetry, textiles, metal, and wall-painting) that Meyer had combined to form a new course of study. Unlike the material-based workshops of the early Bauhaus, the interior finishings department represented Gropius' and Meyer's synthetic design thinking that coincided with new professional realities in the field.

Meyer took it further. No longer craftsmen in a workshop or "artist-designers" from the Gropius era, students worked in integrated teams in design studios. This restructuring also had roots in a cooperative model where work was collaborative in nature and egalitarian in tenor. Its anti-authoritarianism and self-determination reflected Meyer's intellectual heritage in the noted Swiss Johann Pestalozzi's philosophy of child-centered education and Peter Kropotkin's anarcho-communalism. To the dismay of some long-time Bauhaus masters, Meyer described the ideal studio as one without instructors at all because, he argued, the principle of "teaching" in the workshops was outdated and he advocated for "fields of experimentation."

'Pedagogy'

"The insights into the fundamental work of teaching are more important than the tentative results themselves, because in them, the most primitive notions of education based on

⁴⁶⁴ "suchst du die durchgangsstation zur neuen zeit? ...suchst du, ein fertiger handwerker, vertiefung deines könnens?...quälen dich die probleme neuzeitlicher gestaltung?" Meyer, ed., *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!*, n.p. Bauhaus-Archive Berlin.

the original data become clear. Here one stands truly at the beginning!”⁴⁶⁵ This Düsseldorf critic spoke for many when describing the “Pedagogy” section of the exhibition. Curatorial shaping of the exhibition paralleled the school’s own pedagogical structure, with student work displayed from the preliminary and foundation courses taught by Schlemmer, Kandinsky, Klee, and Albers.⁴⁶⁶ (figs. 47 and 48)

More than a standard “school pin-up,” individual studies were framed by uniform mattes and hung as a solid line of works for a clean aesthetic. Hung on temporary partitions instead of the walls themselves, each section was conducive for efficient shipping and reinstallation—infinately adaptable to any circumstances or venue. Three-dimensional studies from Albers’ course were presented in vitrines, on Bauhaus tables or in photographs. But more importantly for the viewer, it introduced the visitor to a key theme of the exhibition—namely, the creative process as an open-ended “experiment.”

The *Wanderausstellung* of the Bauhaus wants nothing more than to show the path individual students take that leads toward mastery of the medium. These means, although they appear to be purely mechanical and technical, yet demand intensive, intellectual engagement to achieve creative mastery. What is also to be seen is that nothing is really ‘finished,’ nothing is ‘artistic’ per se, but what is on display are pedagogical studies that illustrate the methodology.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁵ “Die Einblicke in die elementare Werklehre sind wichtiger als die vorläufigen Ergebnisse selbst, weil in ihr die primitivste Begriffs bildung von Ur tatsachen anschaulich wird. Hier steht man wirklich am Anfang!” Dr. St., “‘Bauhaus Dessau’ in Essen: Ausstellung im Museum Folkwang,” *Der Mittag* [22/23] February 1930, Düsseldorf. [exhibition review (16 February - 6 April 1930)] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

⁴⁶⁶ “elementare gestaltungslehre der flaeche: unterricht klee;” “abstrakte formelemente: unterricht kandinsky;” aktzeichnen: unterricht schlemmer; and vorkurs werklehre: unterricht albers.”

⁴⁶⁷ “Die Wanderausstellung des Bauhauses will nun nichts anders als den Weg zeigen, der den einzelnen Schüler zur Beherrschung der Mittel führt, dieser Mittel, die zwar scheinbar rein mechanisch-technisch sind und doch intensivster geistiger Erfassung bedürfen, wenn schöpferische Meisterschaft erreicht werden soll. Was also zu sehen ist, das ist keineswegs ‘Fertiges,’ nichts ‘künstlerisches’ an sich—es sind Lehrblätter, die die Methode verdeutlichen.” Anon., “Die Bauhaus-Schau der Wuwa,” *Volkswacht Breslau*, 15 August 1929. Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

The student exercises were allowed to speak for themselves. Installation views and exhibition reviews indicate that there was very little explanatory wall text next to the student studies.⁴⁶⁸ Meyer opted instead to provide background and context in the exhibition catalogue, public lectures and Bauhaus publications. Maintaining some distance between didactics and objects on view was one aspect of a deliberate curatorial decision to present the material to the visitors free of hierarchical ranking or the appearance of curatorial authority, an approach that echoed Albers' own teaching methods. To foster a student's own creativity and encourage unfettered experimentation, Albers explained that his preliminary course began with only the most basic materials, which "forces us to begin thinking and doing on our own without introductory instruction, without method, and without tools."⁴⁶⁹

The subject matter of the "Pedagogy" section was not simply the paper, metal or wood objects that comprise the "material" studies, but rather included the individual creative thinking processes that the studies exemplify. As such, its staging in the exhibition emulated Bauhaus pedagogy. Rather than ascribing specific fixed meanings, visitors were invited to discover, analyze and gain appreciation of the works for themselves in the spirit of Bauhaus experiential learning and the anti-authoritarianism of the cooperative movement.

All of the departments are not only represented at the show, but the pedagogical principles and fundamental teachings are extraordinarily well presented. Hannes Meyer and instructors of individual subject matter (Albers, Kandinsky, Engelmann) provided commentary on the tour about the exhibited works. 'The material studies course

⁴⁶⁸ Kandinsky's exercises seem to be the exception with text integrated into the student projects themselves.

⁴⁶⁹ Wingler p. 142 quote is from Prague 1928, not traveling exhibition.

(Werklehre) is the foundation and the beginning of all educational work at the Bauhaus,' stated J. Albers. As a result, the visitor encounters this first at the exhibition.⁴⁷⁰

Albers reiterated this in "Education for Creativity" (Erziehung zum Schöpferischen), a public lecture at the "Künstlerbibliothek" in Berlin in early 1930 at about the same time as the *Wanderausstellung's* stop in Dessau:⁴⁷¹ Like Meyer's egalitarian ideal of a studio without instructors, Albers explained that:

education for creativity is the opposite of instruction and the best teacher is life itself—it is the acquisition of experiences.... The best quality exchange of experiences occurs from student to student without the mediation of the teacher. It is worth the effort to put students to the test with the most unimportant, so-called "scrap" material, rather than with their works of art, in order to fundamentally encourage the creative person.⁴⁷²

Albers' background and role in preliminary courses prepared him to be one of the most articulate voices about pedagogy at the Bauhaus.⁴⁷³ Before enrolling at the Bauhaus in 1920, his experience as an elementary school teacher exposed him to progressive education and Friedrich

⁴⁷⁰ "Alle Abteilungen nicht nur sind auf der Schau vertreten, auch die pädagogischen Grundlagen und Grundlehren finden ausserordentlich glückliche Darlegungen. Hannes Meyer und die einzelnen Fach-Dozenten (Albers, Kandinsky, Engelmann) gaben bei dem Rundgang einzelne Erläuterungen zu den ausgestellten Arbeiten. Die Werklehre ist die Grundlage und der Anfang aller Ausbildungsarbeit am Bauhause, von J. Albers. Infolgedessen trifft der Besucher auf ihre Ausstellung auch zuerst." [Teige], "Bauhaus-Wanderschau 1930."

⁴⁷¹ The exact date of the lecture was unclear, but it was one lecture in the series called "Wege zur Kunst" ("The Ways to Art"). At least four Berlin newspapers reported on the talk throughout the month of February 1930. The Dessau exhibition, "10 Jahre Bauhaus" (10 Years of the Bauhaus), ran from 26 January – 2 February 1930. Christian Wolsdorff discussed this lecture in Christian Wolsdorff, "Josef Albers' Vorkurs am Bauhaus 1923-1933," in *Josef Albers: Eine Retrospektive*, Nicholas Fox Weber, ed. (Cologne: DuMont Verlag, 1988), 52.

⁴⁷² "Er betonte, dass die Erziehung zum Schöpferischen den Gegensatz zur Ausbildung darstelle, der beste Lehrmeister sei das Leben selbst, also der Gewinn von Erfahrungen.....dass der Austausch von Erfahrungen am besten von Schüler zu Schüler, also ohne Vermittlung des Lehrers, erfolgt. Erstrebenswert bleibe die Bewährung des Schülers am geringsten, sogenannten Abfallmaterial, nicht zuerst das Kunstwerk, sondern grundsätzlich die Förderung des schaffenden Menschen." A.S., "Erziehung zum Schöpferischen," *Berliner Tageblatt*, 25 February 1930, Berlin, [review of Albers lecture at the Kunstbibliothek, Berlin] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

⁴⁷³ For more on Albers' pedagogy, see Wolsdorff, "Josef Albers' Vorkurs am Bauhaus 1923-1933," 49-60 and Jeffrey Saletnik, "Pedagogic Objects: Josef Albers, Greenbergian Modernism, and the Bauhaus in America," in *Bauhaus Construct: Fashioning Identity, Discourse and Modernism*, Jeffrey Saletnik and Robin Schuldenfrei, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2009).

Fröbel, the founder of kindergarten. Quickly advancing from student to master, Albers began to teach the first semester of the preliminary course (Vorkurs) while Moholy-Nagy taught the second semester from 1923-28. After Moholy-Nagy's departure, Albers was charged with the entire year-long course on his own until the school's closure in 1933 and he led the carpentry workshop from 1929-30.⁴⁷⁴

Albers own philosophy embodied the latest tenets of progressive education such as “learning through doing” instead of memorization, and a preference for “inductive” thinking that emphasized relationships between objects or ideas in which the whole is other than the sum of its parts, rather than aesthetic values. Meyer's teaching philosophy and even his intellectual approach more generally embraced the same values. For example, Albers' “inductive” thinking is compatible with the Gestalt theory espoused by Meyer. As Rainer Wick and others have noted, Albers and Meyer both focused more on process than product.⁴⁷⁵ Albers' lecture also put forward other catch phrases one might normally associate with Meyer when he explained that the “preliminary course studies do not educate for art, but rather for life;” and “whatever serves the people is ‘modern.’”⁴⁷⁶

While critics distinguished Albers' experimental approach from the more systematic studies in Klee's and Kandinsky's courses, all three instructors espoused the progressive, experiential pedagogy embraced by Meyer as well. Kandinsky's 1928 essay “Art and Pedagogy”

⁴⁷⁴ Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919-1933*, 140.

⁴⁷⁵ Wick, *Teaching at the Bauhaus*.

⁴⁷⁶ “Die Werklehre bildet nicht zur Kunst aus, sondern zum Leben, ‘modern ist, was dem Volke dient’...” [Teige], “Bauhaus-Wanderschau 1930.”

reveals a synthetic teaching model emphasizing flexibility and the belief that the conceptual model is more important than the product:

Every kind of teaching today—almost without exception—lacks any ‘worldview’ of an internal nature, any ‘philosophy’ to establish the meaning of human activity....The main aim of all teaching should be to develop the capacity for thought in two simultaneous directions: 1. the analytical and 2. the symbolic.....Then young people would desert the *petrified atmosphere if ‘either-or’ for the flexible, living atmosphere of ‘and’*—analysis as the means to synthesis. From here it is easy to conclude that 1. the main basis of all education or of all teaching is always the same, 2. art teaching is therefore not divorced from all other kinds of teaching. 3. *first and foremost, it is not what is taught that is important, but how.*⁴⁷⁷ (emphasis added)

Meyer took issue with the course’s pedagogical model of elementarism as a main governing pedagogical principle for modern design thinking, as well as its formalist aesthetic of essential geometric form and pure color, but both this difference of opinion and the existence of other pedagogical affinities with Bauhaus instructors attested to an ongoing dialogue among them.

Whether such parallels affirm that Meyer was well-suited to the school’s pedagogy when he was hired or that he absorbed a tremendous amount from his colleagues merits further study.

User Interaction

In the exhibition, the same emphasis on experimentation and self-discovery that underscored preliminary coursework and Meyer’s own theoretical building courses fostered a public dialogue about pressing issues such as housing reform and urbanization. Design objects were presented as tools to be used in creative and innovative ways to address those concerns.

⁴⁷⁷ “es fehlt heute in jedem unterricht—fast ohne ausnahme—eine ‘weltanschauung’ inneren charakters oder die ‘philosophische’ grundlage des sinnes der menschlichen tätigkeit....der hauptzweck jedes unterrichts sollte die entwicklung des denkvermögens in zwei gleichzeitig vor sich gehenden richtungen sein: 1. der analytischen und 2. der synthetischen....dann würde die jugend die starr gewordene atmosphäre des ‘entweder-oder’ verlassen und sich in die biegsame, lebendige atmosphäre des ‘und’ begeben—analyse als mittel zur synthese. daraus ist die folgerung leicht zu ziehen, daß 1. die hauptbasis jeder erziehung oder jedes unterrichtes immer dieselbe bleibt, 2. also der kunstunterricht kein von jedem anderen unterricht abgesondertes gebiet ist und 3. in erster linie nicht das wichtig ist, was unterrichtet wird, sondern wie.” Wassily Kandinsky, “kunstpädagogik,” *bauhaus* 2, 2/3 (1928): 8. The essay appears in translation in Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, 147.

Their conceptual underpinnings, while nearly absent in the exhibition itself, were explained in exhibition catalogues, public lectures, and in the school's quarterly journal *Bauhaus* and could be adopted as conceptual tools for the public to frame their own deliberations.

Student Hubert Hofmann's article, "Home, Sweet Unornamented Home" (kein schmuckes heim, glück allein), published in *bauhaus* in conjunction with the *Wanderausstellung*, described the single room as two rooms in one.⁴⁷⁸ Installation photographs of this people's dwelling (*Volkswohnung*) by the head of the newly-established photography department, Walter Peterhans, illustrated its dual purposes for day and night-time use with collapsible, lightweight furniture that was infinitely adaptable to the inhabitant's life. (fig. 49) The photos were put forth as anti-Bauhaus—a revolt against the commodification of avant-gardist production and its now reified, sometimes luxurious style. Breuer's "Gentleman's Room" exhibited in the Paris Werkbund exhibition at about the same time provides a stark visual comparison, despite its own emphasis on lightweight, modern furniture. (fig. 50) Yet more than a rebellion against Gropius' Bauhaus, the interior demonstrated the evolution of Bauhaus interiors in design, production, exhibition and use that reflected the socio-economic and geographical flux of the young Weimar Republic.

After the First World War, technological advances and new materials helped popularize lightweight furniture among the forward-thinking cultural elite, exemplified by Bauhaus student Marcel Breuer's tubular steel furniture which appeared in the most fashionable magazines. But serialized production was only one factor that modernized interior design. Designers joined

⁴⁷⁸ Hubert Hoffmann, "kein schmuckes heim, glück allein" *bauhaus: vierteljahr-zeitschrift für gestaltung* 3, 4 (1929): 22-23.

avant-garde artists, writers and architects in their desire to break with historical models. A critic for the daily *Baseler Nachrichten* described this break in both practical and ideological terms:

Recall on the other hand, how in the decade before the war a very different “worldview trend” (*Weltanschauungswelle*) wanted every piece of furniture to be solid, stable and immobile. Fearing unrest, people dug into renovating the old country house style with built-in cupboards, benches, and tables! Those were the houses whose roofs reached the ground—and today one builds houses that are open to sun and storm, without even a roof, so to speak!⁴⁷⁹

A rejection of historical styles was more than fashion. The war fueled new cultural currents in their emancipation from ideological, geographical and socio-political burdens of Wilhelmine Germany. The unprecedented freedom and potential felt at every level of society undergirded Meyer’s whole project with its grounding in cooperativism. Such grandiose ambitions, acknowledged in the critical discussion of the exhibition, were transformed by and through modest designs and a restrained presentation. In this context—“open to sun and storm without a roof”—Meyer refused to replace one style or authority with another one, no matter how “up-to-date” it might be at the moment.

The same *Baseler Nachrichten* critic went on to distinguish new furniture for the new post-war era:

It is so characteristic that most examples of Bauhaus furniture (Möbel) are “mobile” in the original sense. They are all very flexible and chairs and tables are collapsible for eating and writing. Each table can be taken apart quickly and can be folded, like a pull-out bed. The furniture is so light that one can carry it in one hand. Not intended for families for any duration, they will probably be used for weekend houses or bachelor pads. It is comparable to the invention-happy, practical carpentry that uses crate covers to

⁴⁷⁹ “Man erinnere sich demgegenüber, wie in dem Jahrzehnt vor dem Kriege eine ganz andere, ‘Weltanschauungswelle’ noch einmal jedes Möbel fest machen wollte. Man fürchtete die Unruhe und grub sich ein in einen wiederaufgefrischten alten Landhausstil, in dem Schränke, Bänke, Tische, fest eingebaut waren! Das waren die Häuser, deren Dächer bis auf den Erdboden reichten—und heute baut man Häuser, die Sturm und Sonne offen sind, sozusagen ohne Dach!” [Dr Walter Ueber-Wasser], “Das Bauhaus Dessau im Gewerbemuseum. V: Schluss,” *Basler Nachrichten* 16 May 1929, [exhibition review, 21 April - 20 May 1929]. [Archive, Basel Gewerbemuseum].

fashion everything needed in haste in the trenches. Tomorrow you'll be displaced. It is temporary furniture derived from a quick imagination.⁴⁸⁰

Unlike this author who thought of the furniture as cheap and disposable, leftist critics deemed the furniture as too expensive. While more affordable than Breuer's tubular steel chairs, they regarded the furniture on display as a temporary solution for the school while it developed its capacity for serialized mass production. As Dessau critic Gerhard Seger's review explained in the both the *Danziger Volksstimme* and the *Hamburger Echo*:

This Bauhaus exhibition might result in more recognition, though the casual observer must be shown that the Bauhaus produces something besides tubular steel furniture! On the contrary, the exceptionally clean and technically perfect products crafted by the joinery workshop deserve to be known throughout the *Reich* and beyond. Perhaps the *Wanderausstellung* (Wanderschau) will contribute to this. The products of the Bauhaus are still far, far too expensive, but the problem could easily be solved by implementing serialized production.⁴⁸¹

Werner Wetthaus, of the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* concurred, "Certainly, the furniture is expensive, but only until they are able to take advantage of advances in serialized production."⁴⁸²

⁴⁸⁰ "Es ist so charakteristisch: Die meisten Bauhaus-Möbel sind Mobilien im ursprünglichen Sinne. Sie sind äußerst beweglich durchweg. Man konstruiert Klappstühle, Klapptische (zum Speisen und zum Schreiben). Jeden Tisch kann man in einer Minute auseinanderlösen und nach Art einer Bettstelle wieder zusammenhängen. Die Möbel sind so leicht, daß man ihre Teile zusammengepaßt in einer Hand forttragen kann. Keineswegs auf die Dauer von Familien berechnet, mögen sie die Luft von Wochenendhäusern und von Junggesellenbuden werdern. Etwas von der erfindungslustigen, ‚praktischen‘ Zimmerei in den Schüssengräben, wo man aus Kistendeckeln alles machte, hastet ihnen an. Morgen wird man daraus herausgeschossen sein. Es sind die beweglichen Gestelle rascher Phantasie." Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ "Die Ergebnisse dieser Tätigkeit des Bauhauses sind vielleicht am weitesten bekannt geworden, wenn auch der oberflächliche Betrachter darüber belehrt werden muß, daß das Bauhaus auf diesem Gebiete nicht nur Stahlrohrmöbel hervorgebracht hat! Im Gegenteil, die überaus sauber und technisch vollkommen einwandfrei gearbeiteten Erzeugnisse der Tichlereiwerkstatt verdienten es, im ganzen Reiche und darüber hinaus bekannt zu werden. Vielleicht trägt die Wanderschau dazu bei. Das Problem ist lediglich, die Serienherstellung einzuleiten, denn heute sind die Erzeugnisse des Bauhauses noch viel, viel zu teuer." Gerhard Seger, "Zehn Jahre Bauhaus," *Danziger Volksstimme* 7 February 1930. The same exhibition review appeared in *Hamburger Echo* 11 February 1930. Both clippings are included in Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

⁴⁸² "Freilich, die Möbel sind teuer, aber angeblich nur solange sie noch nicht in Serien herauszubringen sind und zur vollen Ausnutzung dieser Erfindung die Mittel fehlen." Werner Witthaus, "Begegnung mit dem Bauhaus

Even though the Bauhaus only achieved serialized production for its lamp and wallpaper design prototypes, attempts to forge ties to the manufacturing industry had begun during the Gropius era. Interchangeable, standardized components had been central to the designs dating back to the 1923 Weimar exhibition and the experimental Haus am Horn. (fig. 51) The furniture in the *Wanderausstellung* expanded standardization aiming for a comprehensive system spanning a whole series of furniture designs. One chair's leg, for example, could become secondary structural support when attached to a different piece, like a table or cabinet.

Meyer's emphasis on neutrality in designs lent itself to serialized interchangeability. The furniture itself was as "styleless" or neutral as the exhibition design itself—free of a designer's signature or personal vision.⁴⁸³ The understated neutrality of furniture, just as the exhibition itself, was indeed ideologically loaded—as "anti-style," or "non-ideological"—and an act of provocation based on egalitarian principles. One critic cautioned that functionalist considerations alone could "result in a uniformity of existence—a most boring egalitarianism—its effect on human beings is debilitating and deadly."⁴⁸⁴

Others launched their critique from quite a different perspective. Instead of uniformity, they disparaged the entire design process as incoherent and lacking singular vision and extended

Dessau," *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, March 1930, Cologne. [exhibition review, Folkwang Museum, Essen (16 February – 6 April 1930)] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

⁴⁸³ Christian Wolsdorff deems this anonymity as boring, cheap and impossible for the user to empathize with. See his essay on Bauhaus furniture in Christian Wolsdorff and Museum für Gestaltung Bauhaus-Archiv, *Bauhaus Furniture: a Legend Reviewed* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 2002), 33.

⁴⁸⁴ "Zweck und Nützlichkeit allein sollen bestimmend sein. Aber was aus ihnen geschafft wird, ergibt eine Uniformierung des Daseins, eine höchst langweilige Gleichmacherei, deren Wirkung auf den Menschen man lähmend und tödlich, zu nennen versucht ist." Dr. M-Sch., "Wie steht es am Bauhaus? Zur Ausstellung im Museum Folkwang," *Essener Allgemeine Zeitung* 17 February 1930. [exhibition review, Folkwang Museum, Essen (16 February – 6 April 1930)] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

the critique to the furniture and the exhibition itself. The author (signed as M.) wrote in the *Basler Nationalzeitung* on 16 May 1929:

The modern architect does not design a house with a home in mind, but rather its singular components: foremost are the kitchen and bath, followed by the bedrooms and living rooms. He approaches each room separately. The whole house emerges, so he says, from the configuration of parts, resulting in motley exteriors. The older architect saw his task to find a unity among the different rooms. Modern furniture design is the same, with each stool, table, and cabinet created separately and thrown together without consideration of how they fit together. And the same can be said for the exhibition at the Gewerbemuseum as well: we see individual pieces by themselves, exhibited like statues. The relationship between table and chair, let alone the more homey setting for an entire room, is never envisaged.⁴⁸⁵

Perhaps Meyer's consternation at the critic's response prompted the addition of the "people's dwelling" (*Volkswohnung*) to later venues of the *Wanderausstellung*.⁴⁸⁶ The critic seems to be reacting, in part at least, to the way the pieces in all their variety were displayed together, rather than to the possibilities for variability itself. (fig. 52) As the technological innovations of serial mass production were being assimilated by the late 1920s—thanks to Gropius and others—attention turned to innovative thinking about an object's entire life cycle from production, including Bauhaus student production, to distribution, commerce and consumption. Furniture, textile swatches, wall color samples, wallpaper, and table-top designs

⁴⁸⁵ "Der moderne Architekt hat beim Hausbau nicht das Haus in Auge, hingegen dessen Einzelteile: die Küche und die Badstube vor allen Dingen, Schlaf- und Wohnräume sodann. Er denkt jeden Raum für sich durch. Das Ganze (das Haus) ergibt sich danach von selbst, sagt er, aus der Zusammensetzung der Teile. Es entstehen die Häuser mit einem sehr zusammengewürfelten Äußern. Der ältere Architekt sah seine Aufgabe darin, für alle die verschiedenen Räume die Einheit des Hauses zu finden. Das gleiche beim modernen Möbel. Jeder Teil wird für sich ausgebildet; es entstehen Stühle, Tische, Schränke noch völlig ohne einen Gedanken darauf zu werfen, wie sich diese Einzelmöbel untereinander benehmen werden. Auch die Ausstellung im Gewerbemuseum zeigt es: Wir sehen Einzelmöbel für sich, wie man Statuen ausstellt. Der Zusammenhang von Tisch und Stuhl, noch mehr der wohnliche Zusammenhang eines Zimmers ist noch nirgends ins Auge gefaßt." [Ueber-Wasser], "Bauhaus Dessau im Gewerbemuseum."

⁴⁸⁶ The *Volkswohnung* was built for the Grassi Museum (Leipzig), where it was exhibited for six months. Burckhard Kieselbach, Tapetenfabrik Gebr. Rasch, and Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, *Bauhaustapete: Reklame & Erfolg einer Marke = Advertising & Success of a Brandname* (Cologne: DuMont, 1995), 30.

such as lamps could all be ordered separately and in any combination. Thus “authorship” became an interactive experience that included the buyer or end user, what Meyer might conceive of as a Gestalt configuration between the original designer and the user. The consumer could choose separate, but compatible pieces, customize them with his or her choice of finishes and textiles, and design his or her own environment.

Demonstration boards (*Demonstrationstafeln*), appearing both in the exhibition and printed publicity material and magazines, illustrated the entire process that allowed the consumer to make his or her own choices from many possibilities.⁴⁸⁷ Disassembled furniture hung flat to stress ease of distribution, assembly and agility. Joseph Albers’s ti 244 armchair (“ti” stands for *Tischlerei* or carpentry workshop) was shown as a simple construction of four pieces of laminated, bent plywood, two metal rods, bolts, and two cushions. (fig. 53) One U-shaped pair of plywood pieces served as armrests and legs; the other L-shaped pair created the seat and back. The canvas upholstery was produced in the textile workshop. “Work stool me 1002” (*Arbeitsstuhl*, “me” stands for metal workshop) splayed out the separate components of a stool (“for household and workshop”) along with a choice of material finishes. (fig. 54) “Please lift” (*Bitte heben Sie*) printed next to an arrow pointing to the “handy and light” floor model, directed the visitor to interact with or experience the stool. Critics remarked on the “practical advantages for the visitor that he himself could try out.”⁴⁸⁸ Indeed a small gesture, but “please lift” also lifted the weight of the Wilhelmine Empire off their backs.

⁴⁸⁷ Student Hubert Hoffmann listed and described five demonstration boards in his “kein schmuckes heim, glück allein,” 22. The Museum of Modern Art Library.

⁴⁸⁸ “Ein letzter Raum führt in die Geheimnisse der Metallwerkstatt, der Wandmalerei, Weberei und Tischlerei, alles mit praktischen Erzeugnissen, deren praktische Vorteile der Besucher zum Teil selbst ausprobieren kann.“ [Dr Walter Ueber-Wasser], “Das Bauhaus Dessau im Gewerbemuseum. V: Schluss.”

The modular system of these chairs expanded Breuer's focus on industrial production as head of the carpentry workshop until his departure in 1928 when Albers took over for a year. Although Breuer's tubular steel chairs could be stacked and packed together as a group of many chairs for convenient shipping to a retailer, they were not broken down into individual flat packs and sent directly to customers. With a limited number of standardized parts that could be packed flat and easily assembled, the innovation lay in the consumer's creative control and flexibility to easily adapt the design to changing circumstances over time. (figs. 55 a-b) Components for a desk, for example, could be built into a whole office system, depending on one's needs. The system easily accommodated individual taste preferences in terms of finishes, materials and color. The conception for "Demonstration board 5," though never realized, used a worn-out (*abgenutzt*) child's chair to show how appropriate paint could withstand child's play, as well as experimentation with different painted surfaces resistant to fire or acid damage.⁴⁸⁹ Hung on wallboards, these chairs present an alternative to Bayer's aestheticized chairs that hung in the 1930 Paris Werkbund exhibition. (figs. 56 a-b) Display of the new Bauhaus furniture embodied the practicality, flexibility over time and function that were inherent in the design themselves.

Experimentation and individual consumer choice were even more financially successful in the textile and wall painting workshops, which shared exhibition space with furniture. "Demonstration board 3" transferred fabric swatches from a sample book to display the inherent properties of each piece with regard to texture, pattern, and materials. (fig. 57) By design, these samples were not complete works of art but rather experiments with new synthetic materials and techniques that could outfit modern buildings, furniture or people as wall coverings, upholstery

⁴⁸⁹ Hoffmann described the fifth board, but I have not seen any photographs of it. Meyer's "situationsbericht" (1 September 1929) cited four boards, implying that a fifth was never produced. Kleinerüschkamp, *Hannes Meyer, 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer*, 170

or garment fabrics. Large-scale textiles hung separately and, along with objects from the metal workshop, could be sold by quantity or custom made to order.

Exhibited next to it on “Demonstration board 1,” a concise chart delineated multiple uses and finishes for painting samples from the wall painting workshop (*Wandmalerei*). Entire wall painting schemes were presented as a solid band across the wall behind the boards. (fig. 57) The effects of the school’s programmatic changes were well-illustrated in the wall painting workshop. While in Weimar, artists had added sculptural or decorative murals to walls, (fig. 58) whereas in Dessau, students in the wall painting workshop conceived of color and texture in dialogue with the formal structures of the new building. (fig. 59) Artists were transformed into designers and collaborators in the architectural process. Finally, the paint and wallpaper samples enlisted the user in the design of their own architectural interiors. (fig.60)

Hinnerk Scheper’s development as a designer is a case in point as he spanned both Gropius’s and Meyer’s tenures, first as a student in Weimar and then as head of the wall painting workshop in Dessau. (fig. 61) In Scheper’s scheme for the exterior of the Bauhaus building, color defines architectural components in four elevation drawings: red demarcates window frames and entrances, gray shows the foundation and connective elements (bridge and staircase), black draws attention to cantilevered elements and yellow appears under the balconies. As Scheper would later recall:

Color balance is determined by the proportions of the quality and intensity of pure colors to neutral tones. Incorrect proportions destroy the statics, and correct proportions create a new, clear space, perceived as a conscious architectural structure.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁹⁰ Renate Scheper, *Farbenfroh! die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei am Bauhaus* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 2005).

Under Scheper's leadership until he moved to Moscow on leave in autumn 1929 when Alfred Arndt became the head, the wall painting workshop improved a system to sell paint and wallpapers individually in addition to the complete wall painting schemes. Wallpapers would become the best-selling Bauhaus product and exemplify the successful manufacturing partnerships Meyer forged for the school in the name of cooperation.⁴⁹¹

Finally, "Demonstration board 4" showed metal workshop production as the final comprising Meyer's consolidated interiors department. Door handles, shelves and a lamp displayed more potentialities for budding interior designer/consumers who no longer needed the services of a contractor or middle man. Marianne Brandt and Hin Bredendieck's "basic" bedside lamp occupied its own demonstration board.⁴⁹² Diagrams detailed the design research process along with its arc of light that was also illustrated through photographs. Brilliantly simple yet highly functional, the stable base prevents tipping and the hinged shade rotates and tilts to direct the light. Two lamps hung on the board: one complete and one disassembled to show its streamlined use of easy-to-assemble components that were made from inexpensive, industrial materials such as sheet steel and aluminum. Just one of many examples of successful licensing agreements for Bauhaus designs with outside firms including the Leipzig lighting firm Korting & Mathiesen ("Kandem"), the lamp display embodies cooperative ideals from design research to public/private manufacturing partnership to activated consumer. The demonstration boards stood in sharp contrast to metal production displayed in nearby vitrines. The table-top designs—dating

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.; Juliet Kinchin, "Wallpaper Design," in *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity* Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman, eds. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 292-295.

⁴⁹² Good resources to read more about Bauhaus lamps are Justus A. Binroth, *Bauhausleuchten? Kandemlicht!: die Zusammenarbeit des Bauhauses mit der Leipziger Firma Kandem. Bauhaus lighting? Kandem light!: the collaboration of the Bauhaus with the Leipzig company Kandem* (Stuttgart: Arnoldsche, 2002) and Klaus Weber, Jutta Weber, and Museum für Gestaltung Bauhaus Archiv, *Die Metallwerkstatt am Bauhaus: Ausstellung im Bauhaus-Archiv, Museum für Gestaltung* (Berlin: Kupfergraben Verlagsgesellschaft, 1992).

from the Gropius era—were precious goods in need of protection against theft or damage.

(fig.62)

Far from a dogmatic imposition of a collective worldview, a close look at this exhibition confirms the opposite. Meyer's emphasis on experimentation and individual choice was in the forefront of commercial sales, the likes of which are ubiquitous today as "design systems." By designing a system of user choice, the choices in design that had previously only been available to the elite were now being made widely available. Critics and reviewers picked up on the fact that experimental design processes were just as much a subject of the exhibition as the designs themselves. And this speaks again to Pestalozzi's ideal of experiential learning. If a student could do it, then why not the consumer? Experimentation and choices activated the audience to take charge of their decisive role in the design process.

Meyer's appeal to consumer choice distinguishes his approach from those of other social housing reformers in Germany and elsewhere because it gave individual occupants the freedom to create their own affordable dream houses instead of leaving the decisions to a governmental planner. Perhaps empowering the occupants of a new housing settlement could alleviate some of the criticisms that had been waged against Gropius's Törten Siedlung.

Meyer never suggested that these designs were meant for everyone in society—rich and poor alike.⁴⁹³ Rather, he claimed that the Bauhaus was charged with a specific task: to address the current housing shortage and the increasing geographic mobility of a population in flux. His

⁴⁹³ Nor did he use Marxist rhetoric like "proletariat" or "class." Reporting on Meyer's lecture in Essen, one critic wrote: "Only the stratification of society—society not as class, but seen *en masse*—with their sociological, psychological, scientific and spiritual requirements determine the form." (Nur die Schichtung der Gesellschaft—Gesellschaft nicht als Klasse sondern als Masse gesehen—mit ihren soziologischen, psychologischen, wirtschaftlichen und geistigen Bedürfnissen bestimmt die Form.) M-Sch., "Wie steht es am Bauhaus? Zur Ausstellung im Museum Folkwang," [exhibition review, Folkwang Museum, Essen (16 February – 6 April 1930)] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

answer was not a single solution. Through experimentation, neutrality, and an integrated public discussion of the theoretical underpinnings, Meyer provided the discursive and practical tools necessary for people to create environments to suit their own needs. Successfully communicating his cooperative goals to the public through the exhibition, writing and lectures, Meyer dared the public to get past their own assumptions and try something new instead of imposing a Bauhaus vision or lifestyle on society at large. “Neutrality” in the designs did not mean prescriptive universal design for the anonymous “everyman,” but rather a pragmatic solution that engaged the user in an ongoing “living” design process of creation and re-creation. The emphasis was not on new materials or rationalized means of production, as it had been during Gropius’s tenure, but on the potentialities of expanding broader choices by consumers.

Architecture

Kállai applied the same principles of co-authorship and perpetual creation to the building itself in the catalogue:

The environment—impersonal on its own—only realizes its characteristic potential when completed for its particular manner of use. Moreover, the final combinations are not compositions, but rather are the actual formulations to meet our vital needs. They must be given the opportunity to stand still while, at the same time, remain ever-changing. Only the simplest, most unequivocal elements make a perpetually present moment possible without the need to continually update its fixtures. Our residence should have no 'style', but only reflect the character of its occupants. The architect (producer) creates only half of the dwelling place; the residents create the other half. (Kállai, Basel catalogue, 1929.)⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁹⁴ “Die Umgebung, im Einzelnen unpersönlich, nur in ihrer anwendungsart und fertigen Kombination charakteristisch. Auch die Kompositionen, sondern die aktuellste Formung unserer lebendigen Bedürfnisse—sie müssen die Möglichkeit zum stabil-ständigen ebenso wie zum dauerndwechselnden erhalten. Nur die eindeutig-einfachsten Elemente ermöglichen diese immer aktuelle, also wechselnde Formung, ohne, daß man die einzelnen Einrichtungsgegenstände erneuert. Unsere Wohnung soll keinen ‘Stil’ haben, nur den Charakter seines Bewohners tragen; der Architekt (Produzent) schafft nur die Hälfte der Wohnung, der Bewohner die andere Hälfte.” Ernst Kállai, *Das Bauhaus Dessau* (Basel: Gewerbemuseum Basel, 1929). Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

Although explicitly written in the catalogue, the message to activate the consumer in the building process seems to have been lost on the exhibition goer. Whereas the interiors section of the exhibition focused on activating consumers to become co-designers in their built environments, the other programs of study were presented more pedagogically and process-oriented.

Pedagogical intentions of the preliminary courses were discussed in the press coverage as clear or obvious, but the underlying pedagogical principles of Meyer's architecture program were less apparent to the public. As discussed in Chapter Three, Meyer intended to equip the visitor with new theoretical frameworks for conceiving of a modern built environment based on holistic notions of integrated individuals, communities and ecologies that Bauhaus spokesman Ernst Kállai described in the Basel Gewerbemuseum exhibition catalogue in 1929:

[Meyer] is one of the rare modern architects who subordinates rationalization and industrial means of construction to a higher goal...namely, to support a geographically and socially organic architectural culture.... Meyer conceived of building as a means to foster a human spiritual awakening intended to enrich life. Hannes Meyer strives for an architecture that is not merely predicated on commercial, technical, and construction interests, nor simply an architecture displaying modern intelligence. Rather, he strives for an architecture with soul. That does not relegate him to the sentimental romanticism of *Heimatschutz* or the whims of artsy personalities. Hannes Meyer's new conception of building retains a socio-humanistic conceptual basis as a prerequisite for developing a new Bauhaus pedagogy, as well as to serve people (*Volk*). (Ernst Kállai, *Das Bauhaus Dessau*⁴⁹⁵)

⁴⁹⁵ "er gehört zu den seltenen modernen architekten, die rationalisierung und industrietechnische konstruktivität nur als untergeordnetes mittel zu einem höheren zweck betrachten. diese mittel sollen im dienste einer geographisch wie sozial organisch vorgehenden baukultur stehen, die den baustofflichen und landschaftlichen gegebenheiten der natürlichen umgebung gerecht wird und nicht so sehr auf meter- und pfennigkalkulation, auf möglichst wirtschaftliche, d. h. billige massen verschachtelung, sondern vielmehr auf umfassende, seelisch menschliches aufschließende, bereichernde lebenserfüllung bedacht ist. hannes meyer erstrebt eine architektur, die nicht nur wirtschaftlichen, technischen konstruktiven sinn, also nicht nur moderne intelligenz, sondern auch seele hat. ohne dabei einer sentimental en heimatschutzromantik oder künstlerischen persönlichkeitslaunen zu verfallen. hannes meyer gibt dem neuen baubegriff einen sozial-humanistischen sinn, betrachtet bauen als dienst am volke und entwickelt von solchen voraussetzungen aus auch für die erziehung am bauhaus neue wesentliche gedanken." Ibid.

A few insightful newspaper reviews confirm that Meyer's architectural intentions were indeed communicated to the public through a combination of lecture, catalogue and exhibition, but scant attention in the wider press suggests that communication fell short. Reporting on Meyer's public lecture at the opening of the *Wanderausstellung* in Basel, the *Basler Anzeiger* connected Bauhaus design, and pedagogy to the presentation itself:

In the exhibition, [Meyer] not only showed a series of finished goods but also offered a glimpse into teaching at the Bauhaus in order to familiarize visitors with what is understood as 'new building' (*neues Bauen*) and 'new design' (*neues Gestalten*). The installation follows the same carefully-crafted plan that the Bauhaus is based on, which brings its pedagogy into a particularly clear light.⁴⁹⁶

Chapter 3 discussed at length how Meyer's theoretical student assignments served to explore specific questions about the user's experience within the house, and with their family, neighbors, and the surrounding ecology. Indeed, the "new architectural theory" served as the platform in Meyer's public lectures to present his views on the current cultural landscape, architectural production from the building department did not hold the same central position in the *Wanderausstellung*. Yet the dearth of installation photographs documenting the department's work both underscores and perpetuates its minor role. (fig. 63)

Photos, archival records and newspaper reviews confirm that architectural material was presented within the context of a group installation (*Kollektivausstellung*) for Bauhaus masters as Meyer's pedagogy. The section was comprised of theoretical student studies discussed in Chapter Three that were mounted on boards with the intention to exhibit, (figs. 31, 34-35) buildings

⁴⁹⁶ "Was under 'neuem Bauen' und neuem Gestalten' zu verstehen ist, lernt der Besucher der Ausstellung umso mehr kennen, als ihm nicht nur eine Reihe fertiger Gegenstände vorgeführt, sondern auch ein Einblick in die Lehre des Bauhauses geboten wird. Dieses Bild erscheint dadurch in besonders deutlichem Licht, daß die Anordnung der Ausstellung auf einem im Bauhaus genau durchgearbeiteten Plan beruht. In gleicher Weise sind das Plakat und der Führer der Ausstellung im Bauhaus selbst entstanden oder nach den Angaben der Leitung des Bauhauses hergestellt worden." F.H., "Das Bauhaus Dessau im Kunstgewerbemuseum."

including the Dessau Törten extension, and project proposals such as the Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund Arbeiter Bank in Berlin, as well as engineering exercises from Alcar Rudelt's courses. (figs. 64-65) The school's architectural crowning achievement during the Meyer era held the limelight with a large selection of photographs and drawings from Meyer and Hans Wittwer's ADGB school in Bernau.(figs. 66 a-c)

The prominent message conveyed in his public lectures concerning architecture was Meyer's assertion that building was "not an aesthetic, but a social process." Although often repeated, the phrase "social process" seldom received elaboration in the press. Indeed, Meyer's lecture and the catalogue essays served as a template for critical reviews, yet Kállai's "socio-humanist" terminology was ignored, save for a few exceptions.⁴⁹⁷ While a few individuals seemed to grasp Meyer's attempts to redefine the architectural design process, most critics were less theoretically-minded.

Critical accounts of Meyer's Bauhaus confirm that his intellectualism distorted his legacy. With the abstract notion of "a social building process" superficially bandied about, in what capacity did objects in the *Wanderausstellung* communicate Meyer's architectural theory to the public? Moreover, did the message or the "anti-aesthetic" architectural production fall flat? Then, as now, many audiences crave beauty, spectacle, and tangible objects in an exhibition. Even in a harsh economic climate with more unrealizable projects than finished buildings, people need something to see and not just to read. A comparative look at Gropius' 1923 Weimar exhibition and 1930 Paris Werkbund exhibitions illustrate Meyer's missed opportunities to engage the audience with a meaningful theoretical framework to discuss the built environment and to present his Bauhaus work in dialogue with wider currents in contemporary architecture.

⁴⁹⁷ For example, see quote on page 161 (note 299).

In 1923, the Bauhaus did not even have a formal architecture program, yet Gropius presented Bauhaus architecture on two separate occasions: first in a small 1922 Bauhaus exhibition, and then in the context of a survey of international modernism that made up the architectural component of the major 1923 Bauhaus exhibition which included the experimental Haus am Horn. (fig. 67).⁴⁹⁸ These early displays exemplified the “Bauhaus style” that Meyer derided at the start of his lecture.⁴⁹⁹

Scholars have discussed the pivotal year of 1922 when Gropius began refining design systems for serial production.⁵⁰⁰ Exploring the potential of modern technology and new materials to create flexible housing types, his concept for large-scale building blocks (*Baukasten im großen*) would become a basis of Gropius’s own architectural practice. (fig.68) Gropius’ caption to the building block figure read: “An oversized set of toy building blocks out of which, depending on the number of inhabitants and their needs, different types of machines for living can be assembled.”⁵⁰¹

Use of large-scale building blocks also made its way into student architectural thinking about an unrealized Bauhaus *Siedlung* project. Use of elementary parts was also well-suited for serial production of design objects whereby modular components could be produced,

⁴⁹⁸ Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, “Das staatliche Bauhaus und die Negation der klassischen Tradition der Baukunst. Die Architekturausstellungen in Weimar--1919, 1922, 1923,” in *Klassik und Avant-Garde: Das Bauhaus in Weimar 1919-1925*, Hellmut Th. Seeman and Thorsten Valk, eds., Klassik Stiftung Weimar Jahrbuch 2009 (Weimar: Wallstein Verlag, 2009), 261-284; Horst Dauer, “Bauhaus-Ausstellung und Bauhauswoche 1923 in Weimar,” in *Konstruktivistische Internationale, schöpferische Arbeitsgemeinschaft, 1922-1927: Utopien für eine europäische Kultur*, Bernd Finkeley, ed. (Stuttgart: Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).

⁴⁹⁹ See opening quote of this chapter. [Ueber-Wasser], “Bauhaus Dessau im Gewerbemuseum.”

⁵⁰⁰ Bergdoll, “Bauhaus Multiplied: Paradoxes of Architecture and Design in and after the Bauhaus;” and Miller, “Architecture, Building and the Bauhaus;” and Winkler, “Das staatliche Bauhaus und die Negation der klassischen Tradition der Baukunst. Die Architekturausstellungen in Weimar--1919, 1922, 1923.”

⁵⁰¹ Friedrich Fröbel advocated breaking down of complex structures to their essential characteristics, an emphasis on sensory perception, and learning through doing.

repositioned and assembled into a broad range of standardized objects. Standardized, cubic parts could be manufactured off-site and then assembled into a variety of floor plans. The series of modest homes by Fred Forbat, a former Bauhaus student who worked in Gropius' private office, was featured in both architectural exhibitions in Weimar. (fig. 69)

In the 1923 exhibition "International Architecture," Forbat's models were placed behind fellow student Farkas Molnár's *Red Cube*—a colonnaded single-family home evoking Kandinsky's theoretical studies of elementary form and color. Miller explained that the Bauhaus section included fifteen projects from Gropius and his partner Adolf Meyer's private firm along with student experimental work in "housing types" represented through both models and drawings. The adjacent section showed photographs representing the latest in international architecture with buildings by Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier and J.J.P. Oud, among others, thereby legitimizing the Bauhaus project through association.

Georg Mucbe's Haus am Horn (with Adolf Meyer), built in only four months for the 1923 exhibition, offered visitors an experiential understanding of the building. Mucbe, a painter and the form master in the weaving workshop, had won an internal design competition that included an entry by Gropius himself. In Gropius's modular, cubic vocabulary, Mucbe experimented with technological innovations including pre-cast concrete blocks made of industrial waste products, new materials such as peat insulation, and hygienic materials.⁵⁰² Although conceived as a prototype for a housing estate, its innovations were not feasible on a large scale. Still, Mucbe's design represented the artistic underpinnings of the school as well as its embrace of technical experimentation.

⁵⁰² Michael Siebenbrodt and Lutz Schöbe, *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Weimar-Dessau-Berlin*, Temporis collection (New York: Parkstone Press International, 2009), 191.

Meyer criticized such projects as architectural formalism, arguing that they favored the creative vision of the designs over the needs of the inhabitants or the building's relationship to the surrounding environment. Students produced the interior furnishings, textiles, rugs and wall painting, presenting a cohesive home environment that some critics of the *Wanderausstellung* longed for. Meyer may have argued that the house itself did not leave much to the visitors' imagination for envisioning their own scenarios or asserting their own personalities and left the options wide open in the neutral presentation of the *Wanderschau*.

Herbert Bayer, the exhibition designer for the architecture gallery of the German section at the Paris Werkbund Exhibition (*Section allemande, Exposition de la Société des Artistes décorateurs* at the Grand Palais) that ran concurrently with the *Wanderausstellung*, presented an international survey of architecture as photographic spectacle. (figs. 70-71) Large-scale photographs survey contemporary architecture in Germany, including Gropius' Dessau Bauhaus building (presented in model and photos) and masters' houses, were positioned as characters on stage. Relative uniformity in both photographic print and in architectural style decontextualized social or situational connections. Disregarding the buildings' theoretical underpinnings, Bayer foregrounded not only aesthetics of form, but the experience of looking. Bayer's creative design techniques overshadowed the intended subject—current building practices in Germany. Critics launched the same critique of his exhibition design at the 1938 Bauhaus exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, which was heavily based on the Paris show.

In contrast, though Peterhans' photographs of the ADGB building in the *Wanderausstellung* were indeed aesthetically beautiful and meticulously crafted, they were presented as neutral documents without a trace of mediation by photographer nor exhibition designer. Instead of a timeless, non-site or aestheticized portrait of an architectural creation, the

school's context remained intact and integral to the message communicated to the public. Interior photos included students going about their day and bird's-eye views of the campus illustrated its integration into the natural surroundings and student recreation areas. In the gallery installation, Meyer reinforced his integrative approach to architecture by hanging a photo of the school's exterior within an arrangement of dormitory room furnishings.⁵⁰³

ADGB competition drawings showed the research stage of the design process that Meyer developed in his building theory courses and expounded to the public in his lectures. (figs. 33 b-e) As Detlef Mertins articulated, the material successfully conveyed Meyer's holistic approach in conception, execution and implementation of the ADGB.⁵⁰⁴ Kállai explained in the catalogue that even though Meyer employed new materials and building techniques, these technical drawings focused more on the psychological and physical needs of the buildings' occupants. Vignettes of analytical diagrams, ranging from sun conditions to furniture arrangements would serve to determine the buildings' functional form. Not simply utilitarian, the drawings also demonstrated the care taken to integrate the campus-like retreat for union tradesmen into the landscape on a sloping hill next to a lake on the outskirts of Berlin. While critics scarcely acknowledged the student architectural studies, they praised the ADGB's successful application of the underlying cooperative ideals and attention to the environment. Recounting a public lecture at the Bauhaus, one Dessau reporter remarked on Meyer's holistic emphasis: "The guiding principle for all current Bauhaus work ought to be: back to nature!"⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰³ Visual evidence confirms the installation in Mannheim and Zurich. I cannot confirm their inclusion at other venues.

⁵⁰⁴ Mertins, "Hannes Meyer."

⁵⁰⁵ "Der Leitsatz für alle Arbeit des Bauhauses müsse heute heißen: zurück zur Natur!" Anonymous, "Das Bauhaus lebt!," *Dessauer Zeitung*, 22 November 1929. Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

Painting

More than any other section in the exhibition, holistic impulses played out in the discussion of painting at the Bauhaus in light of Meyer's attempts to separate aesthetic concerns from a socio-humanistic design process. In a lecture presented in conjunction with the *Wanderausstellung*, Kandinsky asked the Dessau public, "Why is art at the Bauhaus?" One critic (called "W.") recounted Kandinsky's unexpected assessment, explaining that painting and architecture were reunited in Dessau under the banner of holism:

In Weimar, the Bauhaus and the Academy of Art underwent a hostile separation [when the Bauhaus was forced to move]. In Dessau...painting and architecture live under one roof again, ...although not without resistance, but still meeting on an internal basis. These tendencies lead to progress. Therefore, excess of intellect [architecture] and soul [painting] is good. Though life ensures that a perfect balance never takes place, one thing is always pernicious: one-sidedness.⁵⁰⁶

Even though painters garnered relatively little critical attention in press coverage of the *Wanderausstellung*, their inclusion in the exhibition sheds light on the creative tension in the relationship between art and workshop practice during Meyer's tenure.⁵⁰⁷ Kandinsky declared that "the Bauhaus is a house of contradictions" and Bauhaus publicity during the *Wanderausstellung* confirm as much. However, despite conflicting opinions and interpretations, a holistic message of synthesis and balance prevailed.⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁶ "In Weimar hatten sich Bauhaus und Kunstakademie feindselig getrennt. In Dessau hat sich das überwiegen des 'Kopfes' ausgeglichen: Malerei und Architektur wohnen wieder unter einem Dach. Geraten sie auch hier nicht oft äußerlich in Widerspruch, so treffen sie sich doch auf einer inneren Basis. Diese Neigungen führen zum Fortschritt. Darum ist ein Zuviel von Kopf und Seele gut. Das Leben sorgt dafür, daß ein vollkommener Ausgleich nicht stattfindet. Eines aber ist immer verderblich: die Einseitigkeit." W., "Warum Kunst beim Bauhaus? Das Bauhaus—'das Haus der Widersprüche,'" *Anhalter Anzeiger*, 3 February 1930, Dessau. Stadtarchiv Dessau-Roßlau.

⁵⁰⁷ For more on the complex discussion of painting at the Bauhaus, see Rose-Carol Washton Long, "From Metaphysics to Material Culture: Painting and Photography at the Bauhaus," in *Bauhaus Culture: from Weimar to the Cold War*, Kathleen James Chataborty, ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

⁵⁰⁸ Droste reconciled art and design in terms of "balance" in "Unterrichtsstruktur und Werkstattarbeit."

The ongoing question of reconciling fine-arts based studies within the context of functionalist production underpinned a range of issues that were discussed within Meyer's Bauhaus, such as the role of the preliminary course or expressing the "Bauhaus spirit." Mixed messages to the media expressed internal debates and the multiplicity of voices, mainly spokesman Ernst Kállai in exhibition catalogues, and Albers, Kandinsky and Meyer himself in their public lectures and guided exhibition tours. For example, aside from brief mentions in the *Wanderausstellung* press coverage of the Bauhaus painters—Kandinsky, Klee, Albers and sometimes Feininger—any in-depth discussions of their work quoted heavily from Bauhaus publications and lectures given in conjunction with the exhibition. The relative lack of attention paid to the painters and fine arts reflected Meyer's own emphasis on his building theory courses in his public lectures instead of on Bauhaus pedagogy or production more broadly.

As discussed in earlier chapters, Meyer's rhetorical position attenuating the role of fine arts methods as a foundation of architecture and design has been narrowly interpreted as a denunciation of fine arts altogether. Critics interpreted Meyer's description of artistic production in reductivist terms narrowly focused on Constructivist terminology, thereby ignoring or diminishing references to the metaphysical or subjective realms. He wrote in his 1929 "Bauhaus and Society" that "all art is organization. Organizing the dialogue between the here and now and the ever after, organization of the impressions of the human eye, and therefore subjective and bound to the individual, [and thus objective and societally contingent]...."⁵⁰⁹ Meyer expanded on this further in his *Wanderausstellung* lecture notes when he added terms such as "psychic release...the irrational...and organizing existence/being." His notes read:

art is organization (therefore 'subjective' organization contingent upon the individual).

⁵⁰⁹ Meyer, "bauhaus und gesellschaft" in Schnaidt, ed., *Hannes Meyer*, 99-101.

Art = the means of psychic release (therefore ‘objective’ ordering is contingent upon society). ‘Art theory/instruction’ is important for the study of ordering processes. Art is the ‘grappling with the irrational.’ To be an artist is not a profession, but rather the artist is an organizer. The best artists are clear organizers of existence.⁵¹⁰

Meyer counted Klee and Kandinsky among the “best artists.” It follows that retaining the painters suited Meyer’s pedagogical aim toward a well-rounded education grounded in socio-humanistic principles. When scholars and critics omitted the central tenets of this creative relationship, only a one-sided view of Meyer’s intentions remains.

Exhibition reviews of the *Wanderausstellung* at the Folkwang Museum in Essen exemplified this common tendency. Reporting on Meyer’s lecture (“Enfesseltes Bauen”) and guided tour for the *Essener Allgemeiner Zeitung*, the author (signed as M. Sch.) framed the discussion with the objective/collectivist versus subjective/individualist dichotomy. First, he repeated Meyer’s argument about art as organization:

The view taken by the lecturer of art teaching is revealed in two succinct sentences: ‘All life is the drive toward harmony, thus building theory works toward a harmony of existence and all art is organization, thus arts instruction is the systemization of the organization processes.’⁵¹¹

The error in the argument followed when the author drew faulty conclusions about art, based on the initial premise about functional design and architecture. He continued:

⁵¹⁰ “was willst du mit der kunst? kunst=ordnung (je nachdem ‘subjektive ordnung’)(individual bedingt.) markart/hodler/klee kunst=mittel psychischer befreiung
jenachdem ‘objektive’ ordnung) (gesellschaftsbedingt)wagner/bach
‘kunstlehre’ als studium der ordnungsprozesse nötig
nötig auch: mathematik-gleichung-proportion
‘systeme der ordnung kennen lernen’
‘kunstlehre’ als ‘auseinandersetzung mit dem übersinnlichen’
künstler kein beruf! sondern künstler = ordner
bester künstler = klarer ordner des daseins” Meyer, “Vorträge in Wien und Basel 1929.”

⁵¹¹ “Die von dem Vortragenden vertretene Kunstlehre enthüllt sich in zwei lapidaren Sätzen: “Alles Leben ist drang zur Harmonie und so wird Baulehre zur Harmonie vom Dasein und ‘alle Kunst ist Ordnung und so wird Kunst—Lehre zur Systematik des Ordnungsprozesses.” M-Sch., “Wie steht es am Bauhaus? Zur Ausstellung im Museum Folkwang,” [exhibition review, Folkwang Museum, Essen (16 February – 6 April 1930) Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

To work from art is no longer the operative discussion at the Dessau Bauhaus. This art—pardon—this ‘organization process,’ along with the mastery of technical design principles, is purely a national-economic affair. Function and usefulness should be the sole determinatives.⁵¹²

After misrepresenting what Meyer was doing—that Meyer applied functionalist principles to fine art—the author put forward the paintings in the exhibition as counter examples.

Paintings by Kandinsky and Klee illustrate that art cannot be replaced by mathematics and primitivism. This objective results in superficial design alone and is really only driven to an extreme subjectivity. One notes, not without amusement, this contradiction with his own, initial theory. The beloved artist L. Feininger, who has proven his exceptionally fine perception of graded color tones in his mathematics, does not recognize the great Unknown. It is odd to see this delicate poet in such an environment.⁵¹³

Despite his reductivist view of Meyer’s agenda, the author reached the same conclusion—that the paintings were subjective and poetic rather than functionalist.

Another reviewer, Werner Witthaus, also asserted the artistic merits of Bauhaus masters in the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*:

The Bauhaus itself is responsible for ensuring that with any serious attempt, the self-evident prerequisites are at once exhausted, and art begins. One only need see the works of the Bauhaus masters—of Klee, Kandinsky and Feininger, let alone Albers, whose teaching remains true to his own studio practice! What would be left of these artists if one sought to summarily damn them the way the Bauhaus program damns aestheticism and romanticism? The guiding principle for the Dessau Bauhaus—that one does not train

⁵¹² “Von Kunst Arbeiten des Dessauer Bauhauses nicht mehr die Rede sein. Diese Kunst—pardon—dieser Ordnungsprozeß ist neben der Beherrschung der technisch-konstruktiven Grundlagen eine rein national-ökonomische Angelegenheit. Zweck und Nützlichkeit allein sollen bestimmend sein.” Ibid.

⁵¹³ “Daß Kunst nicht durch Mathematik und Primitivismus zu ersetzen ist, beweisen dann die Bilder von Kandinsky und Klee. Diese objektiv sich gebärdende Flächengestaltung ist im Grunde nur eine zum äußersten getriebene Subjektivität. Man notiert diesen Widerspruch mit der eigenen, eingangs beleuchteten Theorie nicht ohne eigenes Schmunzeln. Künstler beliebt L. Feininger, der sich ein äußert fein gestuftes Empfinden für Farbtönungen bewahrt hat und in seiner Mathematik nicht die große Unbekannte erkennt. Es ist seltsam, diesen zarten Lyriker in solcher Umgebung zu sehen.” Ibid.

artists in Dessau, but rather creative technicians—is actually nothing more than a contested assertion in and of itself.⁵¹⁴

It was true that the Bauhaus did not confer a degree in painting, but it does not follow that, for example, Kandinsky and Klee trained “creative technicians” in their free painting courses. Even Kandinsky stated that “art cannot be taught.” Witthaus also conflated several issues about the school’s goals, functionalist design and painting, leading to reductive conclusions. It is likely that Meyer had not clearly enough articulated these complex issues in a short talk or tour.

What Meyer stated exactly, one will never know. But along with the 1929 lecture notes, the student prospectus, *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!*, sheds more light on Meyer’s view of the role of painting at the Bauhaus. Beckoning potential students, Meyer asked: “Do you aspire to a systematic study of art? Do you love modern art—abstract and concrete?”⁵¹⁵

However, his means of communicating issues around painting in the prospectus was more poetic than articulate. Drawing from images and text from previously published material from the journal, Meyer’s choices provide the first cohesive framework regarding art and his vision for the school. Contrary to rhetorically-radical statements in his essays “Building” and “Bauhaus and Society,” such as “art is dead,” Meyer forged a new niche for art at the school whereby the pedagogy was based on the idea of educating “the whole man.”

⁵¹⁴ “Das Bauhaus selbst steht dafür ein, daß bei jedem ernsthaften Versuch einmal die selbstverständlichen Voraussetzungen erschöpft sind und die Kunst anfängt. Man sehe nur die Arbeiten der Bauhausmeister an, die von Klee, Kandinsky, Feininger und selbst die von Albers, die seinem Werkunterricht auch im eignen Atelier treu ist! Was würde von diesen Künstlern noch übrigbleiben, wenn man sie kurzerhand verdammen wollte, wie das Bauhausprogramm Ästhetizismus und Romantik verdammt? Der Leitsatz, daß man in Dessau keine Künstler erzieht, sondern schöpferische Techniker, ist tatsächlich nicht mehr als eine in sich selbst bestreitende Behauptung.” Witthaus, “Begegnung mit dem Bauhaus Dessau.”

⁵¹⁵ “wünschst du eine systematische schulung zur kunst? liebst du moderne kunst, abstrakt und sachlich?” Meyer, ed., *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!*

An odd choice for the “fanatical functionalism” of his legacy, Meyer chose a painter to introduce prospective students to the school. (fig. 72) The opening page spread, “Paul Klee speaks,” established the tenor for the brochure and set out to clarify and illustrate the school’s mission using text, portrait, and drawing. Klee wrote:

We design and build (*konstruieren und konstruieren*), yet intuition still remains a good thing indeed. Without it, one can do a lot, but not everything. One can work for a long time, and do all kinds of things—essential things—but not everything....All of this is fine, yet it leaves a void: intuition, after all, cannot be entirely replaced. One proves, explains, justifies, constructs, and organizes: these are good things, but one does not arrive at ‘totalization.’...The school lives. Long live the school!⁵¹⁶

Klee “spoke” as much to the school’s critics as he did to young art, design and architecture students. Indeed, his presence provided continuity amidst changes resulting from faculty turn-over and Meyer’s directional shift. Klee spoke of affirmation to reassure skeptical Bauhaus supporters. Klee spoke to a central concern of Bauhaus discourse about the nature of creativity in the modern era that was dominated by science and technology. Klee spoke about the role of painters and painting at the Bauhaus after Meyer dismantled Gropius’s foundational premise to unite art with design and architecture. Klee spoke to the city taxpayers whose taxes funded the Bauhaus experiment despite its recent increases in financially lucrative ventures with the manufacturing industry. Klee spoke to the customers who would buy the modest interior furnishings they produced. And finally, Klee spoke to Hannes Meyer himself. Taken together, Klee “spoke” to the ongoing and competing forces that the Bauhaus grappled with from beginning to end.

⁵¹⁶ “wir konstruieren und konstruieren und doch ist intuition immer noch eine gute sache. man kann ohne sie beträchtliches, aber nicht alles. man kann lange tun, mancherlei und vielerlei tun, wesentliches tun, aber nicht alles.” Ibid.; English in Winger, *The Bauhaus*, 148.

Meyer’s visually poetic introduction to the school’s curriculum and instructors—in which theory and practice, preliminary courses and studio production, and finally “spirit” and “body”—served to educate well-rounded practitioners. Fundamental to his conception was the separation between arts instruction and building. Reiterating the configuration of the new curricular chart (fig. 22), Meyer chose exemplary works to clarify over the next few pages that “Bauhaus work goes from pole to pole: ‘art;’ ‘reality;’ ‘life’” (“Bauhaus Arbeit geht von Pol zu Pol: ‘Kunst,’ ‘Wirklichkeit,’ ‘Leben.’”).

Meyer’s selection of four images confirms his own sensitivity to aesthetics and symbolic form. Each image is both visually and conceptually connected. Klee’s etching, *Beride*, provides the entrée from his opening statement and compositional synthesis of visual tropes for the following works that open this pictorial treatise. Klee “constructed” his Swiss town (Beride) with pencils stacked like a children’s game. The etching’s ground is transformed into the weft of textiles from the workshop he directed, made ambiguously deep with the walkway leading to the little castle behind the cathedral. Oval and triangular flags puncture the surface of Klee’s composition and lead to the subsequent images. A watercolor by student Fritz Kuhr bridges Klee’s visual references to textiles and then on to a more direct representation of textiles in Kuhr’s close-up photograph in which Klee’s portals become a magnifying glass—a self-referential trope of close examination and seeing.⁵¹⁷ Taking references of abstraction and *Sachlichkeit* to the next level, Kuhr abstracts both the texture of the weave and the shape of the lens to create a fantastical image.⁵¹⁸ Alexander Schawinsky’s demonstration board, “Attack of

⁵¹⁷ Anja Baumhoff and Magdalena Droste, eds., *Mythos Bauhaus: zwischen Selbsterfindung und Enthistorisierung* (Berlin: Reimer, 2009), 20.

⁵¹⁸ First published in an advertisement for the Weaving Workshop on the back cover of the same issue.

the Bacteria!” (*Überfall! Bakterien*) from the 1928 Junkers trade fair stand, completes the Bauhaus pedagogical trajectory of abstraction and fantasy, to reality and function.

What is more, Meyer established a link between the preliminary courses and design practice. Questions remained for many critics about the director’s anti-aesthetic rhetoric while at the same time exhibiting fine arts production through the preliminary course sections and masters’ art works. The purpose of the preliminary courses—as fundamental experimentation with form, material and color—was described by many critics as foundational, but how those skills would serve workshop/studio production was less clear to both critic and visitor. Adding to the confusion, Meyer’s polar conception was just one of many views at the Bauhaus communicated to the public through the *Wanderausstellung*. Some blame falls on the school’s publications—exhibition catalogues, for example, reflected their authors’ own perspectives.

Ernst Kállai, the Bauhaus spokesman, wrote exhibition catalogue essays for both Basel venues—at the Gewerbemuseum and the Kunsthalle—the first stop of the *Wanderausstellung* in April 1929. Kállai distinguished the preliminary courses from the painterly production of the Bauhaus masters in the Kunsthalle show featuring Albers, Feininger, Kandinsky, Klee and Schlemmer. A point of contention during Meyer’s tenure, Kállai characterized the preliminary courses as relics of the “romantic Weimar period,” an assertion repeated in the press without much elaboration.⁵¹⁹

Kállai did his best to explain the inherent contradiction with the statement that even though the painters were preparing students for design and architectural work, any aesthetic influences in their creative processes were simultaneously rejected. His solution was to distance

⁵¹⁹ “der vorkurs ist ein nachklang der goldenen weimarer bauhauszeit, der romantischen bauhausperiode.” Kállai, *das bauhaus dessau*. The preliminary courses were also contentious during Mies’ tenure.

the school's current functionalist aims from the founding principles as holdovers of the Expressionist Bauhaus, while concurrently paying lip service to their ongoing relevance for the theater and advertising workshops.⁵²⁰ Kállai asserted in the Basel catalogue that Albers' material studies (*Werklehre*) were useful for developing design products while theoretical courses taught by Klee and Kandinsky informed Advertising and the Stage workshop production. Reinforcing the notion in the exhibition itself, examples from the foundation courses taught by Klee and Kandinsky shared a gallery with graphic design and typography studies from Joost Schmidt's courses in at least one venue.

Kállai's emphasis on materials, typical of his Marxist position, refers more to Albers' preliminary course than to the drawing and color courses taught by Kandinsky or Klee.⁵²¹ That critics picked up on this is no surprise because Albers' pedagogy retained its relevance for the school's reconfigured agenda. Albers' emphasis on open-ended experimentation would have been closer to Meyer's teaching philosophy than the systematic training in foundation courses taught by Klee and Kandinsky.

After Kállai resigned from his post at the Bauhaus, Meyer asked art historian and critic Georg Schmidt to write an introductory guide for visitors to the exhibition at the Kunstgewerbemuseum Zurich in 1930. Schmidt, whose brother Hans Schmidt was involved with

⁵²⁰ "differenzierte materialempfung und handfertigkeit, ein auerordentlich phantasievolles kombinationsreiches spiel mit konstruktionsmglichkeiten bei knappster stoffausnützung sind die kennzeichen der vorkursarbeiten am bauhaus. diese arbeiten dienen der knstlerischen vorbereitung. es werden da wegen zu einer modernen bhnenbildnerei und reklamegestaltung angebahnt, weniger jedoch zu den sonstigen werksttten des bauhauses, wie tichlerei, metallwerkstatt, wandmalerei, bauabteilung, der bauhüsler, der in diese streng praktischen zweckwerksttten kommt, kann nichts dringlicheres tun, als den vorkurs zu vergessen, in dem er ein semester lang in aller unschuld und straflosigkeit sozusagen unbegrenzten material- und strukturphantasien leben durfte." Ibid.

⁵²¹ "der werkliche formunterricht geht vom studium des werkstoffes aus, dessen konstruktive behandlung durch mglichst unbeeinflusstes, vorurteilsfreies probieren erlernt wird. mehr durch eigene erfahrungen der studierenden als durch unterweisungen des unterrichtsleiters." Ibid.

the *ABC* group, was the librarian at the Gewerbemuseum Basel in 1930 and helped to organize the exhibition there the previous year.⁵²² Contradicting Kállai's position, Schmidt described the preliminary courses as preparation for conceiving of and producing prototypes by hand before sending them away for mechanized mass production.⁵²³

Questions regarding the preliminary courses entered the public discourse in newspaper reviews of the "Pedagogy" section. Reviewers routinely described the courses as both the foundation for subsequent design and architectural training as well as a defining, unique characteristic of the school. Even though most critics glossed over the issue, a few went further to address the contested role of fine arts training in light of Meyer's attempt to separate fine arts practices from the creative process for architecture and design. Reasoning varied, with critics finding ways to either justify or to criticize the continuation of the preliminary courses.

Paintings by Bauhaus masters were treated as another issue separate from the student studies from their courses. Although the terminology to explain the presence of paintings at the Bauhaus varied, the dominant voices expressed the same sentiment in support of holistic, general education to produce well-rounded designers. Along the lines of Meyer's polar dichotomy between art and science (or building), Kállai put forth an opposition between design and art in his essay for the Kunsthalle Basel catalogue:

⁵²² Schmidt was also a critic for the *Basler Nachrichten*, which might help to explain the paper's lengthy and in depth analyses of the Bauhaus, its production and pedagogy even though he was not cited as author in the articles I have. He would go on to become Director of the Gewerbemuseum Basel from 1939-1961. Regarding Schmidt's brother Hans in the *ABC* circle, see Ingberman, *ABC*, 35.

⁵²³ "Die sogenannte 'Vorlehre' am Bauhaus dient sogar ausdrücklich der Entwicklung des handwerklichen, sinnlichen Gefühls für die spezialischen Eigenschaften jedes Materials und für dessen konstruktive Möglichkeiten. Denn jedes Produkt muß, ehe es der Maschine überweisen wird, von einem Kopf erdacht und von einer Hand im Modell gefertigt worden sei." "The so-called 'preliminary course' at the Bauhaus serves very specifically the development of the craftsmanlike, sensual feeling for the specific properties of each material and for its constructive possibilities." Schmidt, *Bauhaus Wanderschau 1930*, 12.

Coinciding exhibitions allow each attentive visitor the opportunity to grasp that the Dessau Bauhaus has two faces: one that is practical and functional and one that allows the free expression of artistic imagination. The practical Bauhaus harnesses advances in machine technology to provide the broadest cross section of society with useful products. The artistic Bauhaus stands in sharp contrast to such demands....Bauhaus painting—with masters Feininger, Kandinsky, Klee and Schlemmer—is rife with subtlety, depth and musicality. These comprise the architecture milieu—an extreme intellectualism with presumably nothing less than irrational values at its center. Feiniger, Kansinky, Klee and Schlemmer are personalities.... yet their images share a common spiritual adherence to nature (*Naturhaft*)—visionaries of the genuine, pure artistic image of moderation that allows the graphic to prevail....The art of the Bauhaus painter expresses profound spiritual satisfaction while remaining closed to someone who has only a practical or rational sensibility. (Ernst Kállai, *bauhaus dessau: j. albers, l. feininger, w. kandinsky, p. klee, o. schlemmer*, Kunsthalle Basel (20 April – 9 May 1929). Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.⁵²⁴

In the catalogue, in his role as editor of the school's quarterly journal *Bauhaus* and elsewhere in his writing as spokesman for the school, Kállai stressed that painting was spiritually enriching.

During an era known more for its functionalism than its Expressionist heritage, the painters' role was to provide balance and a counterweight to the increasingly dominant position of industrial manufacturing and the new technologies according to Kállai. As he explained in the Gewerbemuseum Basel catalogue:

Although it may seem odd at first that precisely this kind of painting blossomed under the same Bauhaus roof with singularly purpose- and engineering-minded functionalism, it is merely driven by the natural equalization of forces, indicative of compensation and the release of stress. The opposition between functional form and art form at the Bauhaus corresponds with the tension that prevails in the foci of European-American civilization

⁵²⁴ das zeitliche zusammentreffen dieser beiden ausstellungen wird jedem aufmerksamen betrachter gelegenheit zur feststellung geben, daß das bauhaus in dessau zwei gesichter habe; ein praktisch zweckgebundenes und ein künstlerisch-phantasiefreies. das praktische bauhaus wird von den forderungen des verstandes und der maschinentechnik beherrscht und das mit recht, denn seine arbeit soll der möglichst wirtschaftlichen massenherstellung von gebrauchsgegenständen dienen. das künstlerische bauhaus steht in schärfstem gegensatz zu solchen forderungen....die malerei am bauhaus, mit meistern wie lyonel feininger, wassily kandinsky, paul klee und oscar schlemmer ist voller hintergründigkeit, tiefe und musikalität. dies inmitten eines architekturmillieus, das extrem-intellektualistisch, in seiner mitte nichts weniger also solche irrationalien werte vermuten läßt. feininger, kansinky, klee und schlemmer sind persönlichkeiten ...doch ihre bilder haben das gemeinsame, geistiges dem naturhaften, visionäres dem wirklichen, rein malerische bild mäßigkeit dem gegenständlichen vorherrschen zu lassen.die kunst der bauhausmaler läßt geistiges in einer tiefe erfüllen, die jedem zugriff einer nur praktischen oder vernünftigen sinnlichkeit verschlossen bleibt.

between technology and the soul.

The escalation of industrial and technologically organized intellect necessitates that one summons the strengths of one's spiritual and emotional side to the plan. In the field of pictorial forms, in order to understand the possibilities of mechanical imagery leading to the clearest end in their separation from the mechanistic: avoid photography. At the Bauhaus there is a lot of outstanding photographic work. But there is a wide distance between art as an expression of human consciousness as in the art of the Bauhaus masters, from all of the naturalistic and photographic possibilities displaying the powers of this art at its most original because no other form of human expression remains aligned to access such an immediately recognizable sphere. The most personal wellsprings of art are also the deepest wellsprings of life. They lie in that layer of being in the self, united with the last creature-like embryo of nature, that reaches up from the root toward the brightest and most rigorous consciousness. That is the value that art has given us since time immemorial and especially now, in our present era of consumerism. (Kállai, *Das Bauhaus Dessau*)⁵²⁵

Reinforcing what Meyer had said, Kállai emphasized to the reader that for him, “the ultimate goal of all Bauhaus work is 'the alignment of all the living forces for the harmonious arrangement of our society.'... a balancing of individual and cooperative strengths with the spiritual needs and the material necessities of life. Thus the Bauhaus achieves a totality from the new program....”⁵²⁶ Kállai's rhetoric attests to the complexities of intersecting and competing

⁵²⁵ “es mag zunächst merkwürdig erscheinen, daß unter dem gleichen Dach mit der lediglich zweck- und konstruktionsbestimmten Sachlichkeit am Bauhaus gerade diese Art von Malerei zur Blüte kam, ist aber nur als natürlicher Ausgleich der Kräfte, als Entspannung und Kompensation zu deuten. Die Gegensätze zwischen Zweckform und Kunstform am Bauhaus entsprechen der Spannung, die in den Brennpunkten der europäisch-amerikanischen Zivilisation zwischen Technik und Seele herrschen. Die Zuspitzung (Escalation) ins Industrietechnische, verstandesorganisierte muß auf der anderen Seite alle Kräfte des Seelischen auf den Plan rufen. Auf dem Gebiet des Bildnerischen in Formen gefaßt, die ihre Absonderung vom Mechanistischen auch darin zum klarsten Ende führen, daß sie den Möglichkeiten der Mechanischen Bilderei: der Photographie aus dem Wege gehen. Am Bauhaus wird sehr viel und ausgezeichnet photographiert. Der weite Abstand, in dem die Kunst der Bauhausmeister sich von aller Naturalistischen, auch photographisch möglichen Darstellung befindet, ist ein Zeichen der unterschiedenen Selbstbesinnung, mit der die Kräfte dieser Kunst auf ihr ureigenstes, weil von keiner anderen menschlichen Ausdrucksform so unmittelbar erfassbares Gebiet gerichtet bleiben. Die eigensten Quellen der Kunst sind zugleich die tiefsten Quellen des Lebens. Sie liegen in jener Daseinsschicht, (level/layer of existence/being) in die selbst das Hellste und strengste Bewußtsein wurzelhaft hinabreichen und wo es mit dem kreatürlich letzten Keimhaften der Natur eins sein muß. Das ist der Wert, den uns die Kunst seit jeher gegeben hat und in unserer erstandesüberspannten Zeit erst recht zu geben hat. ...”

⁵²⁶ “das Endziel aller Bauhausarbeit ist ihm ‘Zusammenfassung aller lebendigen Kräfte zur harmonischen Ausgestaltung unserer Gesellschaft.’ keine einseitige Begabtenauslese, kein Spezialistentum, keine modisch-flache Flächenornamentik, keine formelhafte Geometrialität, keine leichthin typisierende sog. Sachlichkeit, aber auch kein berufsmäßiges Künstlertum, keine geistige Inzucht, sondern ein Ausgleich der individual- und kooperativkräfte, der seelischen Bedürfnisse und der materiellen Zwangsläufigkeiten....damit gewinnt das Bauhausprogramm von neuem eine Totalität...” Ibid.

theories. At once anti-technology (and photography) and constructivist, Kállai's position embodied Botar's term "bioconstructivist."⁵²⁷

Questioning the sincerity of Kállai's references to spirit or soul, a writer for the *Basler Nachrichten* criticized his catalogue essay:

'The opposition between functional form and art form at the Bauhaus corresponds with the tension that prevails in the foci of European-American civilization between technology and the soul.' Soul! A word that evokes resounding laughter at the Bauhaus. Although because Ernst Kállai (Dessau) even mentioned the 'spiritual' in reference to its program, we can't ignore it when examining Bauhaus painting. Painting at the Bauhaus is bogus (schwindsüchtig) according to the guiding principles of the Bauhaus. It only exists because a few souls such as Paul Klee and Kandinsky were recruited as masters.⁵²⁸

The author then twists Kállai's intended meaning by tweaking the language. While acknowledging that Klee and Kandinsky had "soul," it did not follow that they temper the dominance of modern technology. This passage provides insights about the effectiveness of Bauhaus publicity. Even if the rhetoric stressed totality, holism, or "soul," the public did not necessarily believe it.

Returning to Kandinsky's explanation about why art remained at the Bauhaus—"the house of contradictions"—the longtime Bauhaus master elaborated on the issue from the perspective of a painter and a pedagogue. Taking a different approach than Schmidt, he maintained that painting and the preliminary courses did not serve more practical design

⁵²⁷ Botar, "Prolegomena."

⁵²⁸ 'Die Gegensätze zwischen Zweckform und Kunstform am Bauhaus entsprechen der Spannung, die in den Brennpunkten der europäisch-amerikanischen Zivilisation zwischen Technik und Seele herrschen.' Seele! ist am Bauhaus sonst (sic?) ein Wort, das schallendes Gelächter hervorruft. Da aber Ernst Kállai-Dessau das Seelische hier einmal programmatisch erwähnt, so unterdrücken wir es nicht bei der Untersuchung der Malerei des Bauhauses. Die Malerei des Bauhauses ist bei den Grundsätzen des Bauhauses schwind-süchtig. Sie existiert allein, weil ein paar Seelen wie Paul Klee und Kandinsky als Meister gewonnen sind. [Ueber-Wasser], "Das Bauhaus Dessau im Gewerbemuseum. I."

workshops. In fact, he wrote as much in an earlier letter to his friend, the critic Will Grohmann on 14 September 1926:

There is really very little advantage for us three [Kandinsky, Klee and Feininger] when we are treated solely as Bauhaus masters. You know as well that our art at the Bauhaus has nothing to do with 'pure art' and that our art at the Bauhaus is not used at the Bauhaus in any way. Until now, Klee and I have only given theoretical courses and practical instruction to those few students who came to us on their own initiative. Starting this autumn, this situation will probably change in that students will take a regular, but not obligatory course in painting. But this has not yet been definitively worked out and I ask that you don't mention it for the time being.⁵²⁹

Ise Gropius had also discussed this de-emphasis in her Diary in March 1927 in a statement that echoed the Soviet Constructivist and Productivist discourse: "The days of the painter at the Bauhaus appear to be truly over. They are estranged from the actual core of present activities and their influence is more restricting than inspiring."⁵³⁰ Removing the painters from their central position had unexpected results, however, with increased prominence in both publicity material and exhibitions.

⁵²⁹ Kandinsky wrote to Grohmann on 14 September 1926. "Es ist für uns alle drei wirklich sehr wenig vorteilhaft, wenn wir lediglich als Meister des Bauhauses behandelt werden....Sie wissen ja auch, daß unsere Kunst im Bauhaus als solches mit der ‚reinen Kunst‘ nichts zu tun hat und daß unsere Kunst im Bauhaus in keiner Weise verwendet wird. Bis jetzt haben Klee und ich nur theoretischen Unterricht gegeben und praktische Weisungen gaben wir nur denjenigen Schülern, die aus eigener Initiative zu uns kamen. Von diesem Herbst ab wird sich die Sachlage vielleicht insofern ändern, daß die Schüler einen regelmäßigen, aber nicht obligatorischen Unterricht in der Malerei haben werden. Dies ist aber noch nicht definitiv ausgearbeitet und ich bitte Sie, vorläufig nicht weiter darüber zu sprechen." Reprinted in Karl Gutbrod, *Lieber Freund: Künstler schreiben an Will Grohmann* (Cologne,: M. DuMont Schauberg, 1968), 51-52.

⁵³⁰ Gropius, Diary entry 2 March 1927, translated in Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919-1933*, 161.

In light of the evolving role of the painters and acknowledging the many inherent contradictions, Kandinsky cautioned against “one-sidedness” and stressed the importance of a well-rounded education.⁵³¹ As he explained in his lecture:

One would have to criticize the Bauhaus for being a spiritual 'changeling' if art had not stepped in to what would have been purely intellectual work...This gift, of course, does not mean that everyone has the opportunity of creating art, and can incorporate his or her own experiences in it, so they are able to continue to lead a completely objective life. For that reason it is also not the purpose of the artistic education to make an artist out of every student (of whom there are already enough as far as society is concerned). Rather the study of art at the Bauhaus fulfills the purpose of augmentation, walking on the side of instruction for work, which if left alone, would necessarily lead to a condition of one-sidedness. It is for that reason that the general coursework in art is obligatory during the first four semesters, no matter which course of study the students pursue.⁵³²

Kandinsky elaborated in his views in his 1928 essay “Art and Pedagogy,” which Meyer included in *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!*, that unlike specialist training,

...[A]rt teaching cannot exist at all as such, since art can be neither taught nor learned: art is a matter of pure intuition, which in the natural course of events cannot be produced by force or by means of instruction....this inner meaning, or the inner tension of further ‘development,’ should be made the basis of all teaching; dispersion is replaced by integration. ‘Either-or’ must give way to ‘and.’ Specialist training without a general, human basis ought to be no longer possible. Every kind of teaching today—almost without exception—lacks any ‘worldview’ of an internal nature, any ‘philosophy’ to establish the meaning of human activity....The capacity for synthetic observation and thought is so little taken into account that it largely atrophies. The main aim of all teaching should be to develop the capacity for thought in two simultaneous directions: 1.

⁵³¹ Kandinsky described educating a whole person as “general education,” and internalizing objective knowledge to use instinctively. Clark V. Poling, *Kandinsky's Teaching at the Bauhaus: Color Theory and Analytical Drawing* (New York: Rizzoli, 1986), 33.

⁵³² “Man mußte dem Bauhause den Vorwurf eines geistigen Wasserkopfes machen, wenn nicht die Kunst ergänzend zu der rein intellektuellen Arbeit träte....Diese Begabung führt natürlich nicht bei jedem bis zur Möglichkeit, Kunst zu schaffen, d.h. die eigenen Erlebnisse so zu verkörpern, daß sie in stande sind, ein ganz objektives Leben weiterzuführen. Deshalb ist es auch nicht Zweck der künstlerischen Erziehung, aus jedem Schüler einen Künstler zu machen (deren es, sozial gedacht, genug gibt). Der Unterricht im Bauhaus verfolgt vielmehr den Zweck, ergänzend an die Seite der Werklehre zu treten, die, wenn sie allein bliebe, notwendig zur Einseitigkeit führen mußte. Deshalb ist der allgemeine Kunstunterricht obligatorisch für die ersten vier Semester, gleichviel aus welchem Schulen die Studierenden kommen.” W., “Warum Kunst beim Bauhaus? Das Bauhaus—'das Haus der Widersprüche',” Stadtarchiv Dessau-Roßlau.

the analytical and 2. the symbolic.....Then young people would desert the petrified atmosphere if ‘either-or’ for the flexible, living atmosphere of ‘and’—analysis as the means to synthesis. From here it is easy to conclude that 1. the main basis of all education or of all teaching is always the same. 2. art teaching is therefore not divorced from all other kinds of teaching. 3. first and foremost, it is not what is taught that is important, but how.⁵³³

Kandinsky’s holistic underpinnings, famously articulated in years before in “The Spiritual in Art” (1911), were transformed and applied to art pedagogy at the Bauhaus. Stressing synthesis, generalized learning, and using arts education as a general theoretical model for investigation, his theories were applicable to Bauhaus pedagogy regardless of “expressionist” or “functionalist” leanings. Kandinsky’s writings confirm his continual relevance throughout the school’s life.

Still rife for examination, however, is the dialogue between Meyer and Kandinsky and their mutual influence on each other. Kandinsky systematized the process of painting pedagogy under the banner of his “scientific” approach—and the underlying beliefs about abstraction and spirit remained. Kandinsky and Meyer shared a humanistic approach to educating well-rounded students and painting was just one component of this “spiritual” dimension of the late Bauhaus. Further study of the languages of art, science and spirit would lead to a reevaluation of our limited and disparate definitions of all three, as they are not mutually exclusive nor irreconcilable.

Meyer, the painters, all of the existing faculty, the guest lecturers and the students were involved in a serious dialogue, influencing each other and the school’s production. “The purpose of this course is the development of analytical thinking, familiarization with materials, the greatest possible detachment of the student from conventions, and the awakening of the

⁵³³ Kandinsky, “kunstpädagogik.”

individual's own energies. These are the foundations of Bauhaus work," wrote Meyer, not Kandinsky or Albers, about the architecture department in his *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!*

Perhaps one could indeed define a "Bauhaus pedagogy," as long as it were broad enough to include a multiplicity of voices and methods. One thing remains certain, that painting was an active component of Meyer's Bauhaus, despite his desire to remove arts from the architectural and design processes. As one Zurich critic remarked:

Art by Bauhaus masters on view in the Kunsthalle represent a fundamentally very important discovery, that despite standardized housing and furniture, free art is not dead at the Bauhaus and by no means is there a uniform or homogeneous theory.⁵³⁴

The school that was very much alive with experimentation and painting under Gropius not only continued that tradition under Meyer, but it continued to develop that aspect, to help fulfill Meyer's desire to provide for a broad-based generalist education for every student and to strike a balance between the individual and the collective.

Although the inclusion of paintings by the Bauhaus masters in the exhibition was not uniformly understood in holistic terms, Schlemmer's *Man* described it as such. (fig. 37) The maquette held a prominent position within the installation on the Bauhaus stage. In Basel, one critic described that "...a gallery contained the Bauhaus stage in theoretical form, so to say. In the center stood a synthetic study of the psychological, social, biological and cosmic

⁵³⁴ "Die Kunst in der Kunsthalle ausstellenden Bauhausmeister vertreten über die grundsätzlich sehr wichtige Entscheidung hinaus, daß am Bauhaus trotz Typenhaus und Typenmöbel die freie Kunst nicht tot ist, durchaus keine einheitliche 'Lehre.'" d.t., "Das Bauhaus Dessau III," *National Zeitung Zürich*, 3 May 1929, Zurich. [exhibition review of *bauhaus dessau: j. albers, l. feiningger, w. kandinsky, p. klee, o. schlemmer*, Kunsthalle Basel 20 April – 9 May 1929] Josef Albers scrapbook, Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum.

relationships of man...”⁵³⁵ Not mentioned, however, was Meyer’s commissioning of the maquette for the exhibition.⁵³⁶ While the connection to Meyer may have not been obvious, his commissioning of the course on Man (*Der Mensch*) in 1928, the maquette in 1929 and the pairing of the drawing with the lecture series in *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!* indicates his sustained support of Schlemmer’s undertaking.

At least some contemporary critics perceived a continuation of holistic tendencies from the so-called “Expressionist” era to the exhibition. The author of an exhibition review in the *Basler Nachrichten* related Meyer’s Bauhaus production with Rudolph Steiner and Goethe and then went on:

Just as Steiner changed the so-called Totality Doctrine of his own "Anthroposophy" into something much more spiritual, moved into the 'Goetheanum' where he wanted to ascribe solely methodological value to natural science, so Gropius' idea about the unity between life and art was immediately severed in the machine shops of Berlin's industrial suburbs (for that's what Dessau is today). But here today as then, one recognizes the vibrant desire for "completeness" that one had found in Weimar. One sees the Anthroposophists as well as those active in the Bauhaus forge world plans according to their own image of spiritual transcendence or from a mechanistic view of their this-worldly philosophy of life, and build a world according to their pictures: house building, picture painting, typeface inventing, clothing weaving, dance and stage plays creating. Whatever either of them still lacks in "wholeness" or totality in their vision of life, they strive to complete. ([Uber-Wasser], “Das Bauhaus in Dessau im Gewerbemuseum.”)⁵³⁷

⁵³⁵ “Ein weiterer Raum enthält die “Bauhausbühne”, sozusagen in theoretischer Form. In der Mitte erhebt sich eine synthetische Studie über die psychologischen, sozialen, biologischen und kosmischen Beziehungen des Menschen, ...ferner sieht man bunte Figurinen aus dem bunten ...” F.H., “Das Bauhaus Dessau im Kunstgewerbemuseum.”

⁵³⁶ Meyer explained on 1 September 1929 that the maquette cost 1500 mk instead of the initial 400 mk estimate, would be constructed by students in the stage workshop, and would be ready for exhibition on 17 January 1930, in time for the Dessau stop in the *Wanderschau*. Hannes Meyer, “Situationsbericht” in Kleinerüschkamp, *Hannes Meyer, 1889-1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer*, 168-170.

⁵³⁷ Nur wandelte Steiner die eigene ‘Anthroposophie’ genannte Totalitäts-Lehre ins extrem Geistige, verlegte sie in ein ‘Goetheanum’ wo er der Naturwissenschaft lediglich methodischen Wert beimessen wollte, während die Idee vom dem Leben verbunden Gesamtkunstwerk, die Gropius hatte, sofort in die Maschinenhallen der Arbeits-Vororte von Berlin (als solcher darf heute Dessau gelten) abgetrieben wurde.

Rather than pedaling cheap goods for a socialist worker collective utopia/dystopia, as some may have thought, Meyer's *Wanderaustellung* provided a public platform so that all could join in on the discussion with their own divergent views about the built environment and artistic production towards the end of the Weimar Republic. The school's cooperative model opened the door to welcome the public, and equip them with conceptual and practical tools to help create their own environments. That discussion is still going on. It has not and cannot be stopped.

Aber den in Weimar gefundenen, lebendigen Totalitätswillen sieht man hier wie dort. Man sieht den Anthroposophen ebenso wie die Bauhäusler aus der ihnen eigenen geistig transzendenten oder aber mechanisch diesseitigen Lebensauffassung heraus Weltpläne schmieden und sich eine Welt nach ihrem Bilde zimmern: Häuser bauend, Bilder malend, Druckschriften erfindend, Kleider webend, Tanz und Schauspiel gestaltend. Was jeder beiden Lebenserscheinungen an 'Gesamtheit' noch fehlt, trachten sie zu ergänzen. [Ueber-Wasser], "Das Bauhaus Dessau im Gewerbemuseum. I."

CONCLUSION

HANNES MEYER'S HOLISTIC THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS AS DIRECTOR OF THE BAUHAUS

Only the arrangement of society by category—society not based on class, but regarded *en masse*, with its sociological, psychological, economic and spiritual requirements—determines its form.... The guiding principle today for all the work of the Bauhaus should be: back to nature! The work of the Bauhaus should be to serve the people and the Bauhaus itself must have studied the community and the people to understand what they require....

There is a need for a more universal representation of all groups of people, of all outlooks, at the Bauhaus, as there are no flags here, and it would be false if some were only to see a [communist] red flag at the Bauhaus. The Bauhaus may not engage in the selective acceptance of contributions, but rather it must try to integrate every member of society who offers to put himself at our disposal in order to arrive at the correct place....

Hannes Meyer concluded with words that received a very enthusiastic reception: “The Bauhaus should be a place for anyone who wishes to cultivate their mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects and for all who desire to remain young through an ongoing revolutionary engagement vis-à-vis life.” (Anonymous review of Meyer’s public lecture in Dessau, “Das Bauhaus lebt!,” *Dessauer Zeitung*, 22 January 1929)⁵³⁸

Meyer’s engagement “with life” was expansive, indeed, and he opened up the Bauhaus in every sense. He was open to teachers, lecturers and students from different backgrounds; open to

⁵³⁸ “Nur die Schichtung der Gesellschaft—Gesellschaft nicht als Klasse sondern als Masse gesehen—mit ihren soziologischen, psychologischen, wirtschaftlichen und geistigen Bedürfnissen bestimmt die Form....Der Leitsatz für alle Arbeit des Bauhauses müsse heute heißen: zurück zur Natur! Die Arbeit des Bauhauses solle Dienst am Volke sein. Das Bauhaus müsse haben die Bedürfnisse der Gemeinschaft und das Volk selbst studieren....Das Bauhaus brauche Vertreter aller Volkskreise und Menschen aller Gesinnung, es besitze keine Fahne und es sei daher falsch, wenn manche im Bauhaus nur immer die rote Fahne sähen. Das Bauhaus dürfe auch keine Begabtauslese treffen, es müsse jedes Glied der Gesellschaft, das sich ihm zur Verfügung stelle, in die Gesellschaft einzugliedern versuchen, damit es an die richtige Stelle komme. Es wäre falsch, wenn im Bauhaus der Künstler als Beruf dochgezüchtet würde. Hannes Meyer schloß seine mit sehr lebhaften Beifall aufgenommenen Ausführungen: ‘Das Bauhaus soll eine Stätte sein für alle, die seelisch aufbrechen wollen, für alle, die jung bleiben wollen in immer wieder umgewälzter Einstellung dem Leben gegenüber.’”

the public, customers, public and private business associates; open to ideas and methods, both new and old; and he addressed design problems as open-ended. What was begun by Gropius and his team of innovators was further “unleashed” under Meyer: building, designing and educating.

No one could save the school from its abrupt end, but politics are not solely to blame for the lingering misunderstandings about Meyer’s project. It is the aspect of openness itself fostered by Meyer that has been too abstract to grasp. The need for something tangible led to characterizations that Meyer had no clear vision; Meyer let the students run wild; Meyer imposed a communist vision on the built environment; Meyer was an enemy of art; a petit bourgeois; an architect-engineer-technocrat....and so on. That circumstances in the Weimar Republic necessitated political aloofness is understood, but maneuvering through such a difficult historical passage may have been the impetus for new intellectual, pedagogical and design strategies that were so new that people simply did not know what to make of them. Meyer’s answer was an open theoretical framework, not a specific solution—a process, not a product.

Abstract theories bear some responsibility for Meyer’s misunderstood directorship, but his late entrée into Gropius’ school and its culture played a significant role. The polarized view of Meyer’s and Gropius’ directorships is just one of many of the enduring oppositional paradigms from early modernist discourse that has been under reevaluation in Bauhaus scholarship during the last twenty years— Gropius and Meyer, art and technology; spiritual and material; intuition and science; individual and collective; subject and object; expressionist and functionalist; early and late. When Meyer joined the Bauhaus, and its many longstanding discussions, his thinking was structured around the same binary relationships. For example his 1926 essay, “The New World,” addressed questions of art and technology initially put forward by the German Werkbund and reiterated by Gropius in 1923. But instead of Gropius’ call for

unity, Meyer allied his position with Constructivism by supposedly removing art from the equation and stressing technology instead. Timing is relevant. In 1927 when he was hired at the Bauhaus, he said: “The fundamental premise of my teaching will be functional, collectivist-constructive in the vein of *ABC* and [my manifesto] ‘The New World.’”⁵³⁹ Despite reticence among some *Bauhäusler*, Meyer’s position was still ensconced within the parameters of the debate as defined in 1923. Yet Meyer quickly left this conversation behind. Having already divorced art from the design process in “The New World,” he removed technology as its other mainspring in “Building” (1928) and “Bauhaus and Society” (1929).

Upon becoming director in 1928, Meyer posited an alternative paradigm for new methods in pedagogy and for the design process that better expressed his holistic worldview founded on ideals of cooperativism and Gestalt theory. His was not merely an anti-aesthetic position as is commonly believed, but was also predicated on his rejection of elementarist analysis, which he believed changed the meaning of the parts and therefore of the whole Gestalt. I am also not suggesting that Meyer rejected modern materials or industrial means of production, but rather his view was that the creative processes for architecture and design should not be derived from or shaped by them. Technological advances that dominated early 20th century architecture, design and artistic discourses were becoming assimilated by the late 1920s and Meyer moved the conversation forward accordingly. The question for Meyer was no longer *how* to make modern things, but rather a process for deciding *what* to make. The task for the architect, designer or theoretician was not to adapt old ideas to new technology, but instead to conceive of the potentialities of technological innovations to do something new, and to work, solve problems and teach in new ways that change our relationship to our world.

⁵³⁹ “die grundtendenz meines unterrichts wird absolut eine funktionell-kollektivistisch-konstruktive sein im sinne von ‘abc’ und von ‘die neue welt.’” Meyer to Walter Gropius 16 February 1927.

Meyer's pivotal first year at the Bauhaus serves as the launching point for this dissertation. "The New World" and his 1926/27 building projects, with Hans Wittwer, for the Peterschule and League of Nations, have been described by K. Michael Hays, Manfredo Tafuri and others as the pinnacle of his career.⁵⁴⁰ If 1927 were the pinnacle, however, then 1928 would necessarily have been part of his decline. That logic follows if scholars apply the model of "unity of art and technology" or even a Constructivist framework. Critical judgments have failed to examine Meyer's subsequent work on its own terms, which, coupled with shorthand treatment of Meyer's Bauhaus years as an unchanging, singular block of time, and short-hand recycling of assumed terms and definitions, has led to misunderstandings about his Bauhaus years that my dissertation helps to rectify.

Meyer's rhetorical shift from technology to biology served as the lynchpin for understanding pedagogy, curriculum and production at the Bauhaus during his tenure there. Meyer's broader outlook of interconnected, open systems allowed for both philosophical impulses—scientific analysis and bio-centric holism—to operate simultaneously. Application of biological models to guide cultural and intellectual inquiries informed Meyer's turn to application of holistic Gestalt and life philosophy (*Lebensphilosophie*) thinking to issues such as ecology and sustainability. Biological systems are more open-ended and Meyer opened up the Bauhaus to as many new ideas, methods and models as he could.

Turning away from objects and production, Meyer began to focus more on processes to meet the changing needs of people, users and consumption.⁵⁴¹ His methodology centered around

⁵⁴⁰ Manfredo Tafuri, *The Sphere and the Labyrinth: Avant-Gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970s* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987), 222-223; Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*.

⁵⁴¹ Miller, "Architecture, Building and the Bauhaus."

“Man,” hence Schlemmer’s new course in 1928. Man was not narrowly defined along class lines as owners and workers, but he regarded mankind as a unity of mind or spirit and body in the humanist tradition. Man’s needs were researched and analyzed in order to determine the appropriate design. Man also meant the designer whose broad humanities-based education would instill in him a sense of empathy toward the intended user and working together to meet the user’s needs. Mirroring the emergent fields of psychology and the social sciences, designers also required an ability to define and analyze complex theoretical questions for their design research. Repositioning Meyer within a humanist tradition serves to debunk his technocratic legacy and opens up several new lines of inquiry for considering his career, the late Bauhaus and even our understanding of modernism.

Meyer presented his philosophical underpinnings that included influential figures such as Friedrich Nietzsche, Hans Prinzhorn and Ludwig Klages in a public lecture presented in Basel in conjunction with the *Wanderausstellung* in 1929. These figures have been mentioned in passing, my dissertation situates Meyer within the metaphysical tradition associated with the so-called “Expressionist” era of the school’s early years. While scholars have begun to break down the standard linear trajectory from Expressionism to Functionalism of Bauhaus history, Meyer has been seen as an impediment rather than a participant in Expressionistic tendencies of the later Bauhaus years. A closer examination of the metaphysical, philosophical and spiritual tendencies present from the school’s founding until its closing reveals that Meyer’s participation and contributions to this discourse were more significant than previously understood.

The role of scientific inquiry in Meyer’s Bauhaus has also been too narrowly defined in terms of “hard sciences” and their attendant notions of objectivity, positivism, technology and engineering. His efforts to expand the uses of science, redefine the role of art and expand

concepts of “building” were misunderstood by some and contributed to Meyer’s reputation as a technocratic “enemy of art” who denounced individuality. Granted, some of his own rhetoric may have reinforced that misconception. Expanding the relevance of scientific models and applications to include social sciences and analytical methods of design research lends Meyer’s project more depth. Meyer was drawn to explore psychology and ecology, both of which contributed fundamental principles and means of understanding the user within the context of his physical and social environs and a new model of connectedness. Within a framework of wholeness, Meyer’s insights supported the advertising department and its groundbreaking approach to marketing and branding. Gestalt psychology underpinned design research whereby his students looked at the entire Gestalt configuration of interrelated and interdependent parts instead of isolated elements, whether in architecture or in other areas of design. Finally, awareness of Gestalt principles informed Bauhaus furniture design and its interactive authorship.

Alternatively, ecology prompted more than the poetic treatment of buildings within their surroundings. Bauhaus studies took eco-social relationships into consideration in their formulating building plans. Rather than viewing the integration of the ADGB school into its surroundings as an anomaly, applying an eco-social framework to his other architectural projects opens up avenues for rethinking his work and expands the definition of functionalism. An interpretive lens informed by Gestalt and ecology shows Bauhaus architectural projects engaging in issues of sustainability that are integral and relevant to current architectural practices. Unlike autopoiesis, discussed by Mertins in his essay “Bioconstructivism,” Bauhaus theoretical studies

germane to sustainability demand architectural and user agency to engage with the process of creation and recreation as an open system and an ever-changing Gestalt.⁵⁴²

The principles of mutual cooperation were not only central to Meyer's own architectural practice but formed the foundation for changes he implemented at the Bauhaus at every level, from the organizational structure of the school, to the curriculum, to the students' classroom and workshop assignments. That is not new information to Bauhaus scholars. This dissertation brings to the fore philosophical or ideological underpinnings of Meyer's interest in cooperation, Gestalt theory and holism, as well as a deep-seated anti-authoritarianism and the individual's right to self-determination. This positions Meyer's directorship, pedagogy and public presentation first and foremost as an educator in the model of progressive pedagogical reforms in which students and the public were free to make their own decisions. He disdained top-down public housing developments as much as top-down authority within the school. It is ironic that his own anti-authoritarianism fed the perception that Bauhaus students were out of control or that allowing them to express their own views—including communist views, in particular—led to his dismissal from the school. Fostering an anti-authoritarian atmosphere and curricular structure did not win him any favors among some members of the faculty either. It is Kandinsky, after all, who complained to the Mayor about the school's raucous atmosphere before Meyer was fired.

Meyer's successes in forging ties to the manufacturing industry in a drive to foster financial self-sufficiency has been well documented, along with his workshop restructuring based on a cooperative model. My dissertation reminds the reader that Meyer's public/private partnerships were by definition neither Marxist nor socialist. Meyer countered one student's surprise at his business prowess by reminding him that he was part of a family with a long line of

⁵⁴² Mertins, "Bioconstructivism."

Basel businessmen. While German-language literature has generally been able to put the cooperative heritage into perspective, an English-language study that overrides Cold War dogma is long overdue.

A strong grounding in the ideals of cooperative movement was the impetus for Meyer's reorganization of the school that resulted in the creation of a new studio model that continues in the design community to today. Moreover, Bauhaus training in business practices for the sake of self-sufficiency prepared students for new professional conditions that awaited them upon graduation. Designers were not artists or craftsmen. Designers were organizers, producers and shapers of content—equipped with the conceptual and practical tools necessary to work in any circumstances, with any client.

My interest in Meyer stems from the disparity between the historical record and the historical memory. Although scholars recognize now the extent to which politics have distorted his legacy, stereotypes continue to be repeated in both blatant and subtle ways. The discrepancy between image and product prompted me to delve into the breakdown in communication by exploring what Meyer said, wrote and did and what people understood him to say and do.

The parameters of my undertaking spanned the 1920s, the period of Meyer's early career at the Freidorf Siedlung until his move to Moscow in 1930. In addition to official Bauhaus publications, lectures and exhibitions, I looked at the press coverage about the school to examine the interpretation of its mediated message. Moreover, personal accounts offered insights, particularly when written contemporaneously, but they revealed biases and a common practice of decontextualiation that have resulted in misunderstandings that are recycled through quotations.

After establishing Meyer's reputation at the time of his arrival at the Bauhaus, my primary focus revealed specific details about what happened at the school during his tenure in regards to implementing a generalized, humanities-based curriculum to the extent that had been possible. My close reading of Meyer's Basel lecture notes and research into the lineages that Meyer advanced as underpinnings of theoretical architectural courses opens new avenues for scholarship within philosophical and theoretical discourses. Hays' discussion of Meyer within the context of critical theory informed my thinking about Meyer. Meyer's interactive design process between designer and activated consumer, for example, seem compatible with Hays' notion that the post-humanist subject could "no longer [be] viewed as an originating agent of meaning, but as a variable and dispersed entity whose very identity and place are constituted in social practice."⁵⁴³ A more theoretically-oriented study could take Hays' line of inquiry further.

Meyer's embrace of a humanities-based education and psychology can also be interpreted as a retrograde position. In addition to his having an eye on the future, perhaps he also embodies more traditional and conservative ideas. Positioning him within the realm of *Lebensphilosophie*, for example, could raise questions about his associations with some who became aligned with National Socialism or at least reactionary tendencies.⁵⁴⁴ Even though this philosophical tradition spanned political ideologies, it could help to explain why this possible influence has not yet received any in-depth treatment.

One potential critique of my attempt to bring together the divergent influences Meyer himself put forward is lack of a personal, expressed, and consistent belief or ideology. Instead of

⁵⁴³ Hays, *Posthumanist Subject*.

⁵⁴⁴ Meyer was never a Nazi though he admitted to being a "theoretical Marxist," he was not a party member. As an aside, my cursory research of Meyer in the Stalin era has revealed nothing more than lip service to the Soviet state.

dilettantism or “hidden views,” his determination to maintain an ideologically “neutral” posture was meant to facilitate student-driven learning while exposing students to a broad range of ideas and at the same time, to keep the school outside the political fray. Inconsistencies and generalities attest to the open dialogue of divergent influences that characterize his tenure. Meyer was an educator, an intellectual, and an architect, not a philosopher, ideologue or a scientist.

This study also raises another question of influence. “Meyer’s Bauhaus” does not mean Meyer alone, but the Bauhaus during his directorship. Despite the painters’ contentious position at the school that dated back to Itten’s resignation in 1922, the presence of longtime *Bauhäusler* Kandinsky, Klee, Albers and others, was crucial to the school’s pedagogical program and success. Their disagreements with Meyer have eclipsed that they held many views in common, and the ongoing collaboration among faculty and cooperative teaching of different courses of study have tended to be overlooked. An important question remains about mutual influences. During the 1930 publicity campaign, painters presented public lectures emphasizing their scientific bases, but that rubric existed long before Meyer came onto the scene. Meyer’s holistic pedagogy may have developed largely after his arrival at the Bauhaus as a response to the ideas he encountered there.⁵⁴⁵

Another avenue for further research should consider Meyer’s influence on architecture and design pedagogy in the 1940s-1960s. Parallels between the Meyer’s project and Moholy-Nagy’s Bauhaus in Chicago or Gyorgy Kepes’ program at MIT have not yet been explored. Instead, the line is drawn directly from Gropius’ Bauhaus to the Chicago Bauhaus and MIT,

⁵⁴⁵ Another potentially influential figure on Meyer is Hans Wittwer. Based on my correspondence with his son Hans-Jakob Wittwer, I would like to examine his papers in order to better understand his collaborative role in the ADGB building. The impact of figures including Hans Wittwer and Ludwig Hilberseimer on Meyer’s Bauhaus needs further study.

ignoring evident connections to Meyer's progressive pedagogy. Reevaluation of the connection between the Ulm School for Design to Meyer's Bauhaus is overdue and a new holistic framework could change our understanding of both institutions.

A study addressing Meyer's impact on social design research beginning in the 1960s will shed light on current practices. Victor Papanek's writing from the early 1970s echo Meyer's when he wrote:

Much recent design has satisfied only evanescent wants and desires, while the genuine needs of man have often been neglected by the designer. The economic, psychological, spiritual, technological, and intellectual needs of a human being are usually more difficult and less profitable to satisfy than the carefully engineered and manipulated 'wants' inculcated by fad and fashion.⁵⁴⁶

Like the late 1920s, our culture is at once assimilating massive changes in social and technological relationships but also having difficulty envisioning the near future. Just as Meyer had done at the Bauhaus, designers and design educators turn to theoretical lines of inquiry to prepare students for anything that arises. At the same time, designers are doing their best to conceive of new potentialities for the technology on hand instead of just translating old ideas to new materials. How do teachers prepare the next generation and design increasingly complex and abstract learning tasks? They challenge students to conceive of new questions instead of looking to old answers. The processes of both learning and working are becoming more collaborative in nature, just as Meyer recognized.

Returning to the concept of "Building Unleashed," Meyer replaced what he viewed as Gropius' outdated design process with a designer who worked within an ever-fluctuating

⁵⁴⁶ Victor J. Papanek, *Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change*, 2nd ed. (New York: Bantam Books, 1973), 10-11.

constellation of factors—an interactive Gestalt. The goal was to understand the consumer as a subject, integrated within a series of overlapping and interactive systems from the family and home, to neighborhood, to larger communities, each comprised of a complex network of social and economic conditions and cultural values. This turned Bauhaus thinking outward to experiment with multidisciplinary practices and methodologies rooted in the humanities and social sciences. He employed the same pedagogical principles to the public sphere by equipping people with the discursive and practical tools necessary to imagine and create their own suitable and sustainable environments—Bauhaus unleashed.

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Figure 1
Section Allemande, catalogue, Exposition de la société des artistes décorateurs, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930



Figure 2
Section Allemande, Exposition de la société des artistes décorateurs, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930

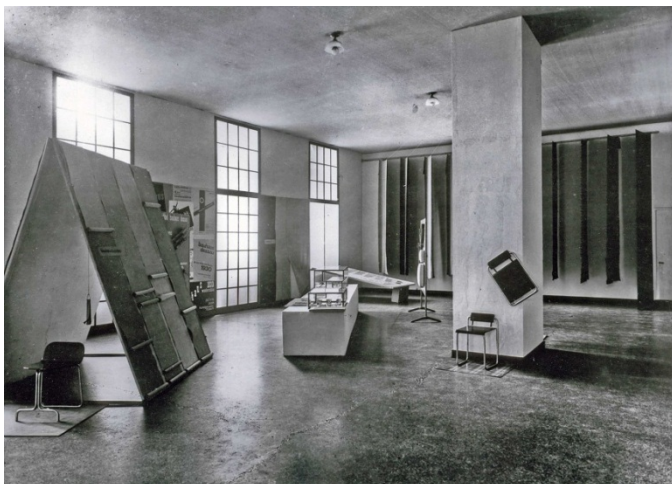
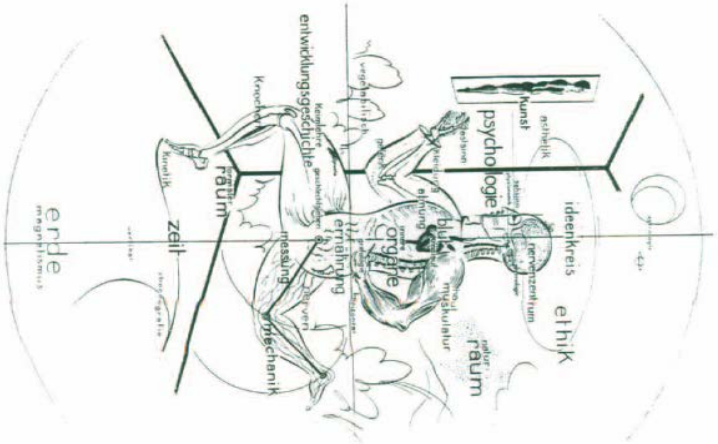


Figure 3
bauhaus wanderschau, Kunstgewerbemuseum der Stadt Zürich, 17 July – 13 August 1930



Figure 4

Bauhaus 1919-1928, Museum of Modern Art, 7 December 1938- 30 January 1939



der mensch als einheit

- unsere gastvorträge:**
- 5. 6. 28. **prof. walter gropius, berlin**
"amerikag"
 - 11. 6. 28. **dr. phil. schorr, freiburg i. b.**
"dostojewski und die russische idee"
 - 10. 7. 28. **dr. max hodann, berlin**
"beit und sozia"
 - 1. 10. 28. **el lissitzky, moskau**
"architektur und werkerbeit"
 - 5. 10. 28. **ignaz lezower, berlin**
"soziologische und kinetische elemente des films"
 - 12. 10. 28. **lu märten, berlin**
"historische dialktik und experiment"
 - 2. 11. 28. **n. gabo, berlin-moskau**
"eführung in mein werk"
 - 3. 11. 28. "aber den wert des menschen und den wert der dinge"
 - 5. 11. 28. "inhalt und form in der gestaltenden kunst"
 - 29. 11. 28. **dr. med. r. neubert, dresden**
"lebensbedingte und technische organisation"
 - 7. 12. 28. **paul forgo-fröhlich, budapest**
"mann bauen in ungar"
 - 14. 12. 28. **otto heßler, a. d. g. b., berlin**
"wesen und ziele der freien gewerkschaften"
 - 12. 2. 29. **dr. ing. hanns fiedel, dresden**
"organisation der arbeit"
- unsere gastvorträge:**
- 22. 2. 29. **prof. dr. sachsenberg, dresden**
"reklame"
 - 15. 3. 29. **d. hanns pinzhorn, frankfurt**
"leib - seele - einheit"
 - 16. 3. 29. "grundlagen der neuen persönlichkeitspsychologie"
 - 18. 4. 29. **stadthaurat max berg, berlin**
"ästhetik und heutige gestaltung"
 - 20. 4. 29. **henry cowell, san franztisco**
"elgane kompositionen am klavier"
 - 27. 4. 29. **paul aron, dresden**
"literatur, moderne franzosen"
 - 27. 5. 29. **dr. dr. neurath, wien**
"ästhetik und eigenwert"
 - 6. 6. 29. **k. von meyenburg, ing., basel**
"gründlagen der arbeit und arbeitsforschung"
 - 10. 6. 29. **dasiga werthoff, moskau**
"kino-auge", methode und technik des russischen films
 - 3. 7. 29. **dr. herbert feigl, wien**
"die wissenschaftliche wertfassung"
 - 4. 7. 29. "physikalische theorien und wirklichkeit"
 - 5. 7. 29. "naturgesetz und willensfreiheit"
 - 6. 7. 29. "zufall und gesetz"
 - 7. 7. 29. "leib und seele"
 - 8. 7. 29. "raum und zeit"

geist / seele leib / seele

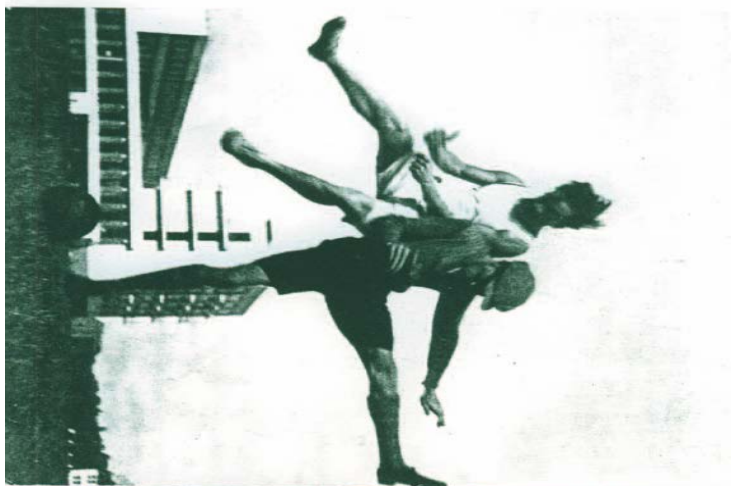


Figure 5

"Man as Unity: Mind/Soul, Body/Soul" Double-page spread from the Bauhaus prospectus *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!*
 (young people come to the bauhaus!) 1929, conception and design by Hannes Meyer. Drawing by Oscar Schlemmer and photograph by Lux Feininger

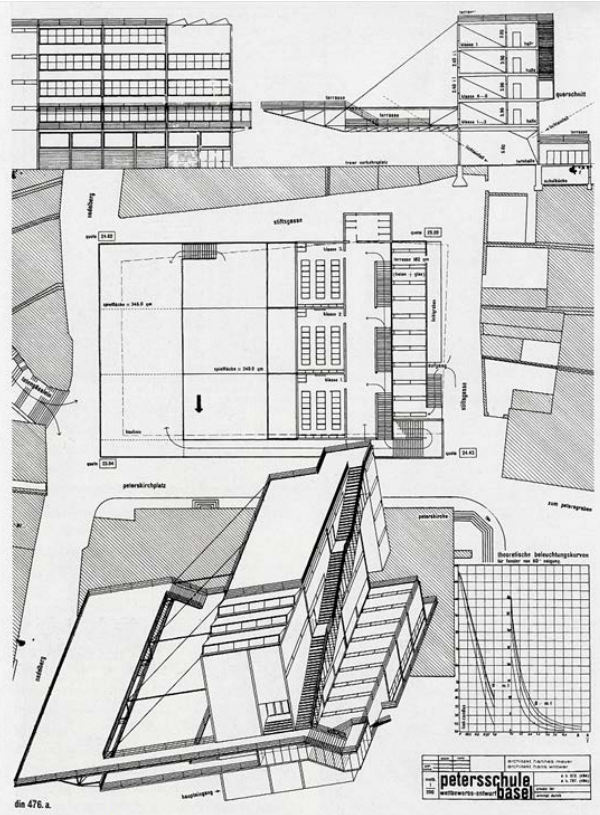


Figure 6
 Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer,
Wettbewerbsentwurf der Peterserschule Basel
 (Competition entry for the Peterserschule in
 Basel) as published in *bauhaus* 2, no. 2
 (1927): 5

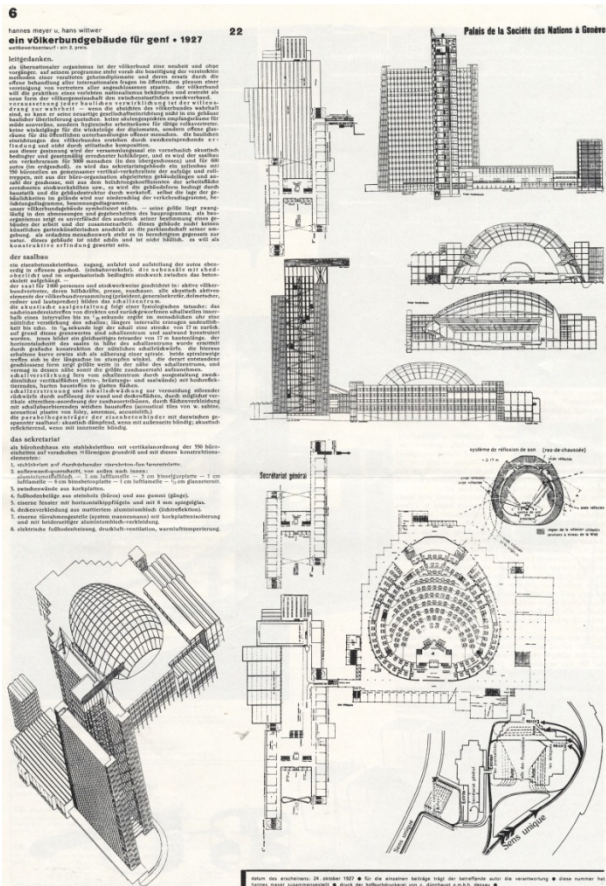
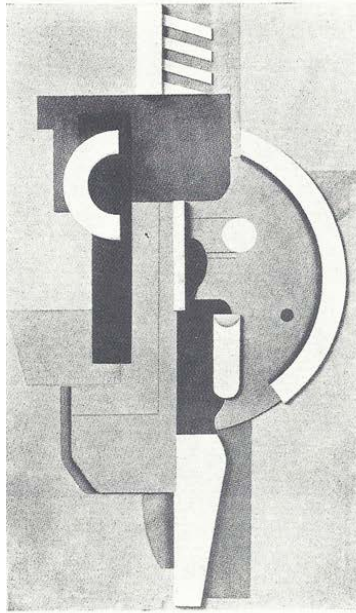
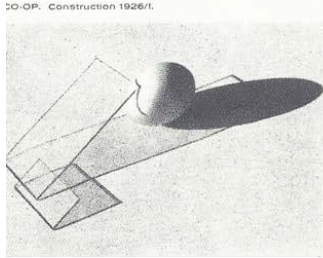


Figure 7
 Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer,
Wettbewerbsentwurf dem
Völkerbundesgebäude für Genf (Competition
 entry for the League of Nations in Geneva)
 as published in *bauhaus* 2, no. 4 (1927): 5



W. BAUMEISTER, Mauerbild, 1924.



CO-OP. Construction 1926/1.

ABONNEMENT (SCHWEIZ) 4 NUMMERN FR. 6.-
 ABONNEMENT (ÖSTERREICH) 4 NUMMERN FR. 7.-
 ADMINISTRATION
 REDAKTION
**A
 B
 C**
 NUMMER **2**
 ZWEITE SERIE
 BEITRÄGE ZUM BAUEN
 REDAKTION DIESER NUMMER:
 HANNES MEYER, BASEL

AUGUSTINERGASSE 5, BASEL - SCHWEIZ

WILLY BAUMEISTER

STUTT GART:
 Die Künste haben das Imitative verlassen; sie sind in das Stadium der Realisationen getreten. Nicht dass die Früheren keine realen Ziele und Resultate gehabt hätten, doch die Eigenkräfte der Künste zu lösen blieb dem Aktivismus und dem Erfindergeist unserer Generation vorbehalten.

Die Maschinen und Kinos wurden vorgefunden; aber das Mechanische, Dynamische und Kinetische zu einer empfindsamen Sensation zu bringen, um das Auge und die Anschauung zu lenken, ist eine Tat, und diese ist erst im Anfangsstadium.

Die Bewegung oder Relativität fühlen wir auch gebannt in dem Gefüge der Hohlräume und Mauern der Baukomplexe und Strassen, in den Kompositionen der Maler, in der Reklame und Typographie wie in allen Gestaltungen des neuen Geistes, die an sich keine Bewegung aufweisen.

Das Bedürfnis zur Relativität, die Einordnung in ganz grosse Komplexe, hat das Umfassende und Prinzipielle, das Kollektive und Typische gebildet.

Die Wahrheit des Daseins dokumentiert sich in der Bejahung und Aktivität, im Kampf gegen Dekadenz und Trauer, gegen Mystik und Scheinheiligkeit. Die Wertschätzung der Naturkräfte durch Licht, Luft, Sport vermindert den Absatz der Aerzte und Apotheken. Das Baden ohne Kleider zieht gegen die dumpfe Erotik. Die neue Generation ist ein neues Geschlecht.

Iwan Tschichold,
 Leipzig
DIE NEUE GESTALTUNG.

Im neunzehnten Jahrhundert war das Bild der letzten Rechte seiner ursprünglichen sozialen Zwecke (als Kultur- und Freskomalerei) entkleidet worden. Er erlangt Selbstständigkeit, die es als Letzt neue Fort-Kunst (Kunst der Kunst wegen) ausserhalb des wirklichen Lebens stellt. Die Skulptur, längst schon nicht mehr erschauend wie im Mittelalter, wird, als Darstellung der Wirklichkeit, durch die bessere, weil exakte, Photographie abgelöst.

Figure 8

Hannes Meyer, Co-op Konstruktion 1926/4
 In *ABC: Beiträge zum Bauen 2*, no. 2 (1926)



Figure 9

Performance sketch by the Bauhaus Stage,
 1929



Figure 11

Exposition internationale de la coopération et de œuvres sociales (EICOS, International Exhibition of Cooperatives and the Social Welfare Services), Ghent, Belgium, 15 June – 15 September 1924

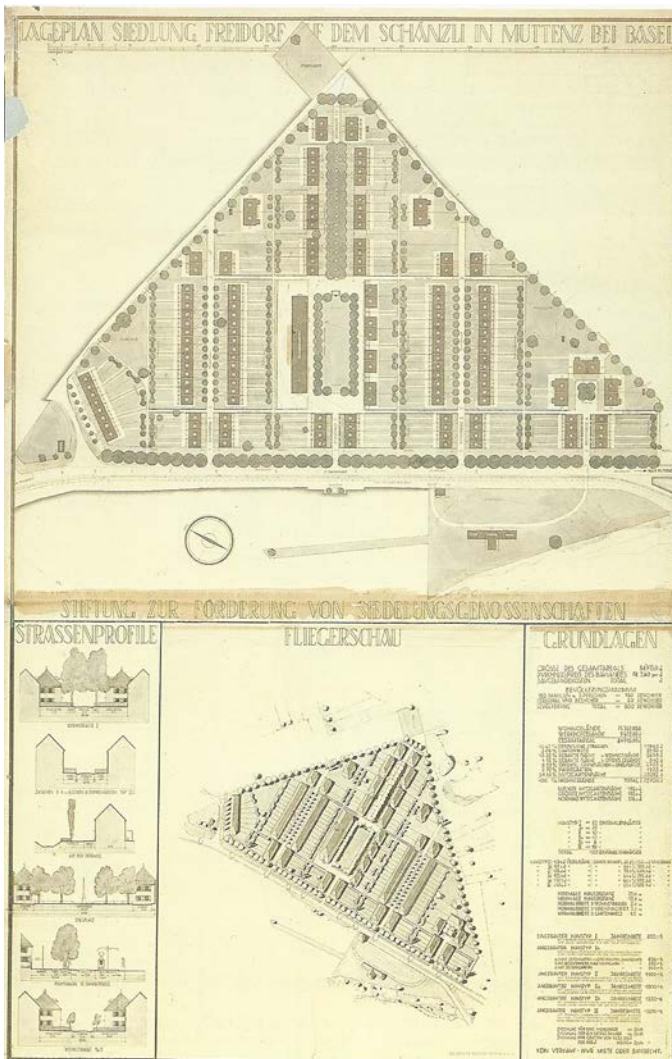


Figure 12 A

Hannes Meyer, Site plan, Siedlung Freidorf, 1920



Figure 12 B
Hannes Meyer,
Siedlung Freidorf, c. 1925



Figure 13
Hannes Meyer and Jean Bard, "Theater Co-op," *Exposition internationale de la coopération et de œuvres sociales* (EICOS, International Exhibition of Cooperatives and the Social Welfare Services), Ghent, Belgium, 15 June – 15 September 1924



ABD. 14 DAS THEATER CO-OP DIE ARBEIT GEBÄRDENSPIEL

DAS THEATER CO-OP

Hannes Meyer, Basel und Jean-Bard, Genf

Ort der Handlung: Die Internationale Ausstellung des Genossenschaftswesens und der sozialen Wohlfahrtspflege (E. I. C. O. S.) in Gent, Belgien. Zeit: 15. Juni bis 15. September 1924. Aussteller: Der Verband Schweizerischer Konsumvereine (V. S. K.) als Zentralorganisation von 512 Konsumgenossenschaften mit 360 000 Schweizerfamilien unter weitblickendem Führer: Bernhard Jäggi. Mit seltenem Verständnis für unsern Vorschlag: es sei diese tausendste Gelegenheit zu übergeben, hunderttausend Ausstellungsbesucher mit üblichem, architektonisch oder kaufmännisch aufgeputztem Wust der Tabellen, Waren, Modelle, Statistiken, ausstellungsmüde zu machen; es sei dieser Anlass zu verpassen, «Schweiz» vor internationalem Publikum durch Kuh, Chalet, Schokolaterie, Schwyzerin in Landestracht blosszustellen; dagegen sei erster Versuch zu wagen, mit zeitgemässer Kleinbühne im Gebärdenspiel lebendige Landesvertretung unter 30 ausstellenden Ländern auszurufen.

So wurde schweizerischer Stand der EICOS Zuschauerraum. Ein langer Saal in Rot. Signalrot signalisierte allüberall Wärme: signalrote Decke, signalrote Sitzbänke, signalrote Einfassung der Bilderbogen an den Saalwänden. In der Saalmitte ein übergrosser Glashaubkasten: signalrotes Aquarium der Co-op-Artikel genossenschaftlicher Produktion. Am Saalende über Rechtecksausschnitt der Bühne und musikhosenhaftem Phonopavillon in signalroten Lettern: LE THEATRE CO-OP.

In der Folge sah eine dreimonatige Spielzeit an 100 Aufführungen gegen 15 000 Zuschauer, sah zweisprachig Arbeitsvolk aller Schichten: Vlamen, Wallonen, Analphabeten, Waisen, Schüler, Internationale.

Das Thema «Schweizerisches Genossenschaftsleben» aktuell und allumfassend in unserm Lande der 12 000 Genossenschaften, wo selbst Staat als Eid-Genossenschaft sich formte. Aus des Vorwurfs Vielgestalt wurden diese vier Kernfragen der Arbeit, Familie,

329

Figure 14

Hannes Meyer and Jean Bard, “Das Theater Co-op,” *Das Werk* 12, no. 11 (1924)

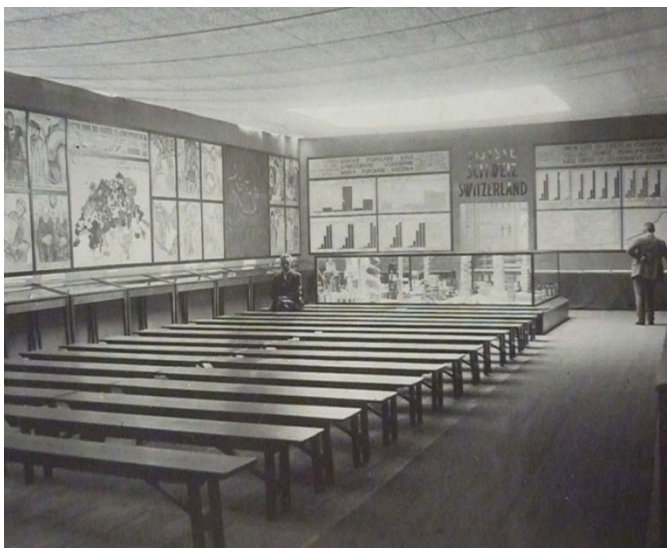


Figure 15

Exposition internationale de la coopération et de œuvres sociales (EICOS, International Exhibition of Cooperatives and the Social Welfare Services), Ghent, Belgium, 15 June – 15 September 1924

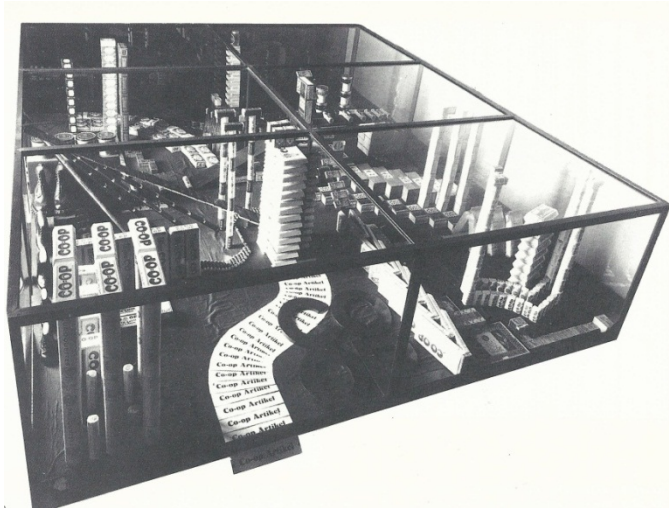


Figure 16
 Hannes Meyer, “Vitrine Co-op,” *Exposition internationale de la coopération et de œuvres sociales* (EICOS, International Exhibition of Cooperatives and the Social Welfare Services). Photo from the installation at the Siedlung Freidorf, c. October 1924



CO-OP



CO-OP CO-OP



CO-OP

Diese Rollen tragen die Eigenpackungen des Verbandes (gemäß. Benennung) in Briefl.

Diese Eigenpackungen
 sind erstklassig in der Qualität und mäßig im Preis. Soweit sie nicht in den eigenen Verbandsbetrieben hergestellt werden, liegt ihre Fabrikation unter der Kontrolle des Verbandes, der durch sein sorgfältig eingerichtetes und geführtes Laboratorium in der Lage ist, jede Warenkategorie (sachgemäß) zu beurteilen.

Die Gewürzmühle des Verbandes
 verarbeitet nur reine Naturprodukte, die ohne Zutun in den Eigenpackungen des Verbandes zum Verkauf gelangen.

Wer CO-OP-Produkte bevorzugt
 handelt im gemeinsamen Interesse der organisierten Kaufleute; er hilft mit am Ausbau der Genossenschaftsbewegung nach der produktiven Seite hin, zugleich aber hat er die Gewähr, nur gute, preiswürdige Produkte zu erhalten.

Eigenpackungen des V. S. K.

Gewürze / Bierrohren / Saftflaschen / Honig / Milchpulver / Tee aller Art / Fleischweine / Kaffeesorten / Nudeln / Schokolade und Kakao / Schokolade (eigene Produktion) / Kakaopulver / Speisefett / Dillöl / Strauchöl / Schokolade (eigene Produktion) / Bruchstücke / Glimmerstein / Glimmersteinpulver / Seife und Seifepulver / Schokolade / Pfeffer / Bodenwolle / Borax / Panamarinde / Stahlpfanne / Stahlnetze / Eier- / Hühnerpulver / Gummischnur / Papierrollen / Zündhölzer.



Handwerker, Familienrat!
 Gehen bei euren Einkäufen diesen
 :: Zeichen den Vorzug! ::



Wendet auf die Einkaufsliste
 der organisierten Kaufleute!

Figure 17
 Hannes Meyer, Advertisement from the *Exposition internationale de la coopération et de œuvres sociales* (EICOS, International Exhibition of Cooperatives and the Social Welfare Services), Ghent, Belgium, 15 June – 15 September 1924



JOS LEONARD
LINO (1925)



MARC EEMANS
LINO (1925)

Zu den vornehmsten Kriegsprodukten gehört das Kriegsdenkmal. Die Absicht ist verständlich, deren Verwirklichung mitunter nicht. Belgiens vornehmstes Exempel steht ausserhalb seiner Landesgrenzen und gilt Holland. Das *Denkmal in Amersfoort*. Erbaut von dem Vlamen *Huib. Hoste* unter bildhauerischer Mitarbeit des Holländers *Hildo Krop* und des Schweizlers *François Gos*. 1917 aufgeführt durch belgische Interierte auf einem »Berg« nächst der Kleinstadt Amersfoort in der Provinz Utrecht. Mit Pylonen, Zwischenmauern, Loggien, Treppen, Ehrensaa, Reliefs und Aussichtsterrasse besitzt das Mal alle landläufigen Bestandteile . . . dennoch wird man nicht froh. Der Erbauer unterlag allzuvielen Ueberlegungen, und man spürt die Mühe des Vlamen, Volksart abzulegen und Weltart anzunehmen. Oder wird auch dem Besten unsrer Zeit das Denkmal zur hohlen Gebärde? Wie unendlich erschütternder wirkt — kaum auffällig — der »Tombeau du Soldat inconnu« in der Rue Royale zu Brüssel. Wo jeder Vorbeihastende zum Hute greift. Wo das Mal nur »irgend ein Ort« ist, an dem »irgend ein Mensch« liegt. Das grosse baumeisterliche Können *Huib. Hoste*s zeigt vielmehr seine *Siedlung Setzaete* in Westflandern. Hier spürt man überall die volle Freude am Zweckbau, und dem innern Ausbau

folgt getreulich der äussere Aufbau mit Flachdach, Rücksprung und Vorsprung, Nebenfenster und Türkragstein. Das Ganze ist die Manifestation eines Zeitgenossen im Wiederaufbaugbiet

der ehemaligen Kriegszone, allwo sich heute, begünstigt von einer findigen, aber erfindungsarmen Bauindustrie, alle Bauformen der Vergangenheit am Wiederauferstehungstage wähen.

Hannes Meyer.



KAREL MAES / LINO (1925)

Aus »Henri Van de Velde: Formules d'une esthétique moderne.«
»L'audace de la ligne nouvelle n'est pas de source mystique comme ce fut le cas pour l'audace gothique: elle est le résultat de l'absolue confiance que nous avons prise dans les calculs.«
»J'aime le corps des insectes dont le jeu des articulations s'avère autant que celui des armures... J'aime tous les ustensiles, les vêtements que le sport façonne, toutes ces formes d'objets précis et organiques...«
»La plus essentielle, la plus indispensable beauté d'une oeuvre d'art réside en la vie que manifestent les matières dont elle est faite.«



ARCHITECTE VICTOR BOURGEOIS UND
GARTENARCHITECT L. VAN DER WAAELMEN, BRÜSSEL / LA CITE MODERNE
(Pläne auf Seite 274)

Junge Kunst in Belgien

Mit der »Sabwa« vier Flugstunden nordwestwärts unserer Nordwestgrenze, überrascht den Schweizer in Belgien unter heimatähnlichen Volksverhältnissen gleichermasse die Heftigkeit des Rassenkampfes und die Höhe des Nationalbeitrags an internationale Wirtschaft und an zeitgenössische Ausdruckskultur. Als Pufferstaat gepufft von grossen Nachbarn, als Zwischenstaat mit Mischvolk untermischt, als Kolonialmacht ein Faktor der Weltwirtschaft, ward Belgien Brechpunkt stärkster völkischer und wirtschaftlicher Brandung. Es ward Mole gegen kulturelle und wirtschaftliche Ueberflut. Es ward Wallstatt des Weltkrieges. Es ward das stetsfort offene Blachfeld des Kulturkampfes von Welsch und Deutsch.

Diese Gewalt der Auseinandersetzung zweier Rassen und der anhaltende fremde Einbruch in eigenes Wesen und in eigene Wirtschaft erzwingt Hochspannung aller Landeskräfte. Sie zeitigt — satissam bestaunt vom einem europäischen Publikum — die bekannten belgischen Höchstleistungen: Im Eisenbahnetz. Im Freitailionfahren. In der Tafeltraubenbeucht. In der Arbeiterbewegung. In der Blumengürtnerrei. Im Sechstagerennen. Im Sodakonzern. An der Iserefront 1914/18. Im Seebad Ostende. An der Börse in Brüssel. Im Kongo. Im Port d'Anvers.

Reich sein ist alles. Belgien ist reich. Reichtum der Kohlen. Reichtum der Kirchen. Reichtum der Kanäle. Reichtum der Kolonien. Reichtum der

Figure 18
Hannes Meyer, "Junge Kunst in Belgien," *Das Werk* 12, no. 9 (1925)

Figure 19
Victor Bourgeois, "La Cité Moderne" in Berchem-sur-Brussels, 1922 in "Junge Kunst in Belgien," *Das Werk* 12, no. 9 (1925)



Figure 20

Walter Gropius. Bauhaus building, Dessau.
1925–26

Photograph: Lucia Moholy, 1926



Figure 21

Walter Gropius. Masters' houses, Dessau.
1926. Photograph: Lucia Moholy, 1926



Figure 26
Herbert Bayer, Design for “universal”
lettering. 1927

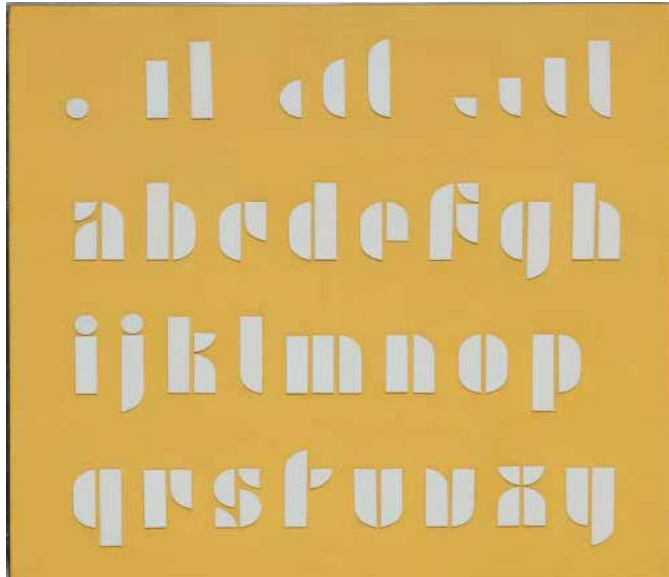


Figure 27
Josef Albers, *Kombinations-Schrift*
(Combinatory letters). Designed 1926. Made
for Albers by Mettalgas A.G.,
Offenburg/Baden, c. 1928

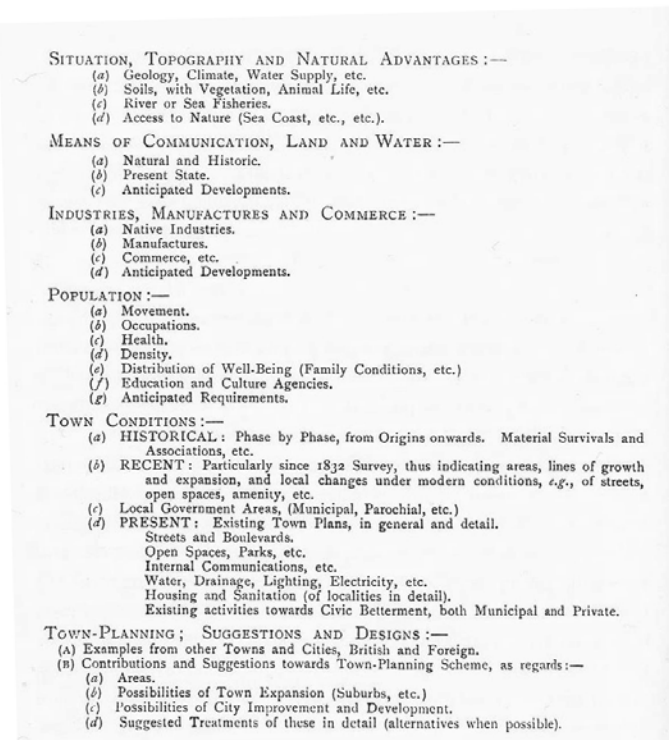


Figure 28
Patrick Geddes, survey 1911. Source: Volker
Welter, *Biopolis: Patrick Geddes and the City
of Life* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), 110

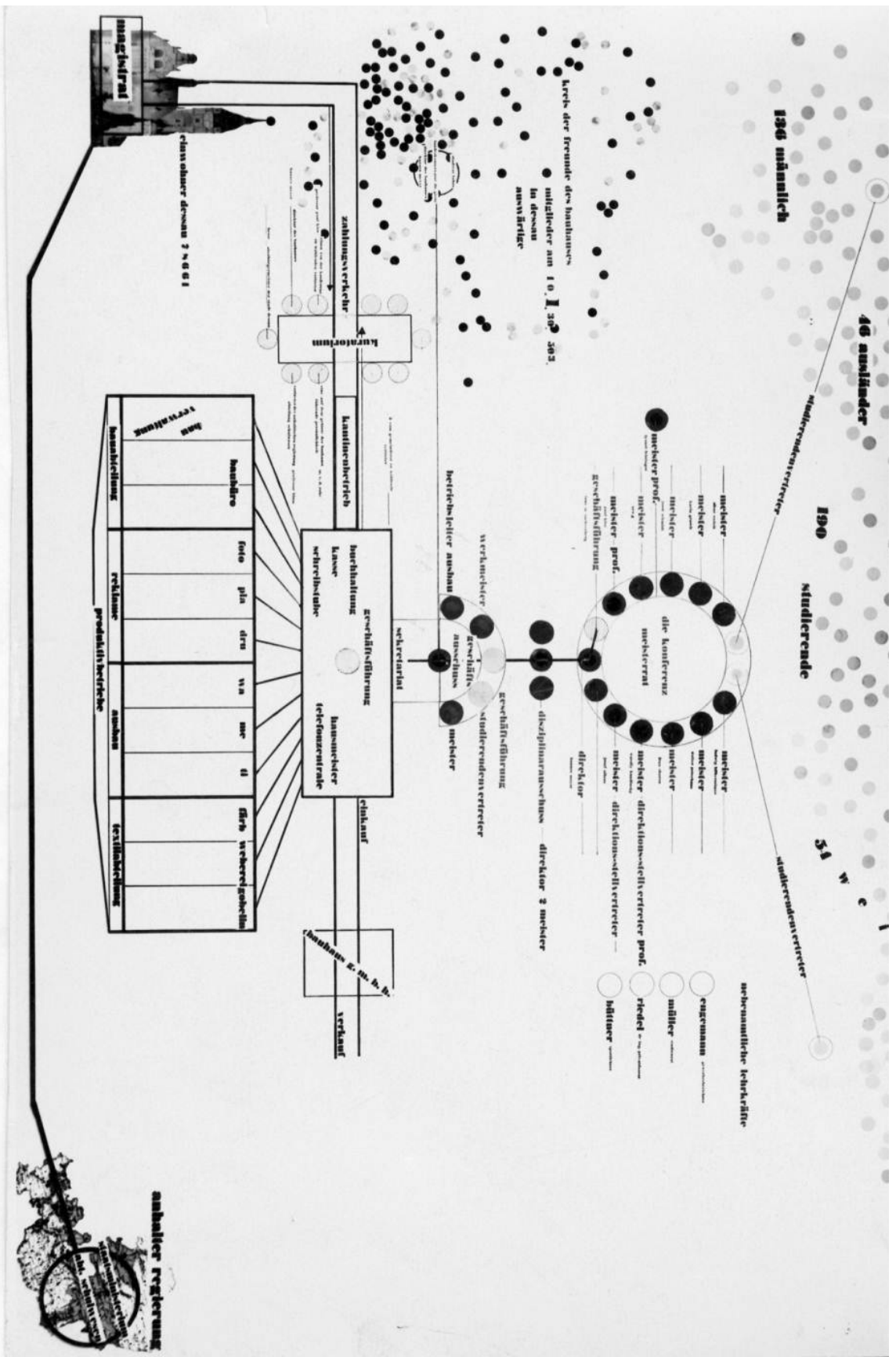
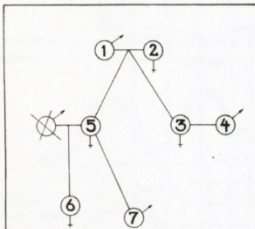


Figure 29
 Hannes Meyer, Bauhaus Organizational Diagram, 1929

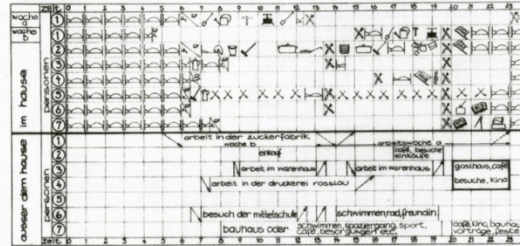
studie zur periodizität
des lebensraumes

die bewohner des hauses

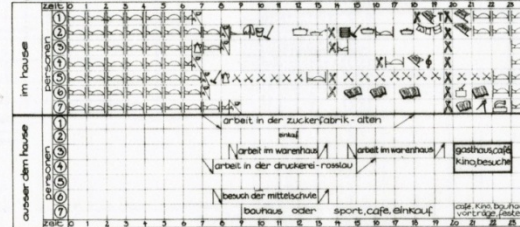


- ① 67-jährig, arbeiter in der zuckerfabrik-alters
27-wochenlohn, altersrentenempfänger
- ② 65-jährig, besorgt den haushalt der 7 bewohner
zeitweise unter mitthilfe der tochter 5
- ③ 27-jährig, tochter von 1 und 2
angestellte an der buchkasse eines
warenhauses in dessau, 180-monatsgehalt
- ④ 35-jährig, ehemann von 3
maschinensetzer in einer druckerei
in rosslau ca. 250-monatsgehalt
- ⑤ 45-jährig, tochter von 1 und 2, geschieden,
arbeitet als berufsschneiderin zu hause,
zeitweise im haushalt tätig
- ⑥ 15-jährig, tochter von 5
besucht die mittelschule in dessau
- ⑦ 21-jährig, untermieter von 5
studierender des bauhauses in
dessau

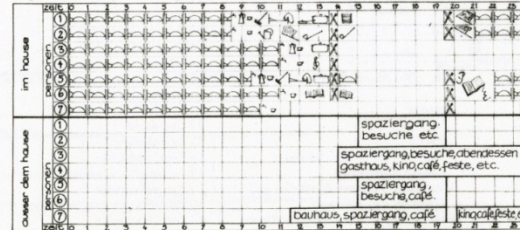
tagesdiagramme im sommer



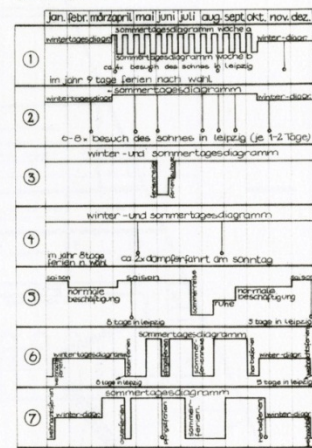
tagesdiagramme im winter



tagesdiagramme am sonntag



jahresdiagramme



- besuche im hause:
5 - fast täglich kundenbesuch
7 - privatbesuche
anfang oktober - besuch von verwandten:
2 erwachsene (1-2 tage)
2 kinder (8 tage)

grundrisse der wohnung

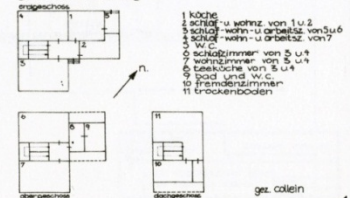


Figure 30
Edmund Collein, Study of the periodization of living space. 1928- 29

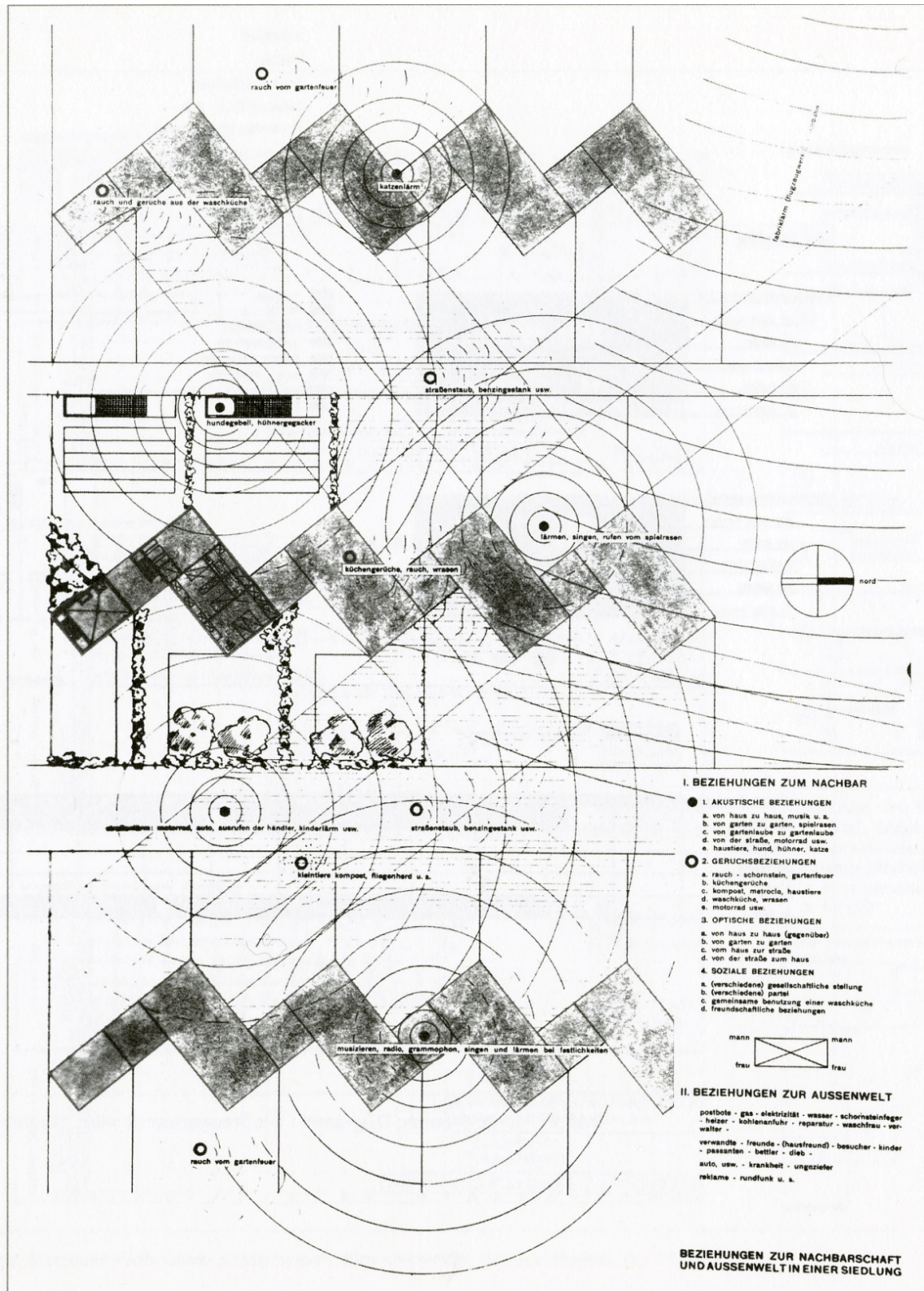


Figure 31

Siegfried Giesenschlag, Relationships to the neighborhood and environment in a housing estate, 1930

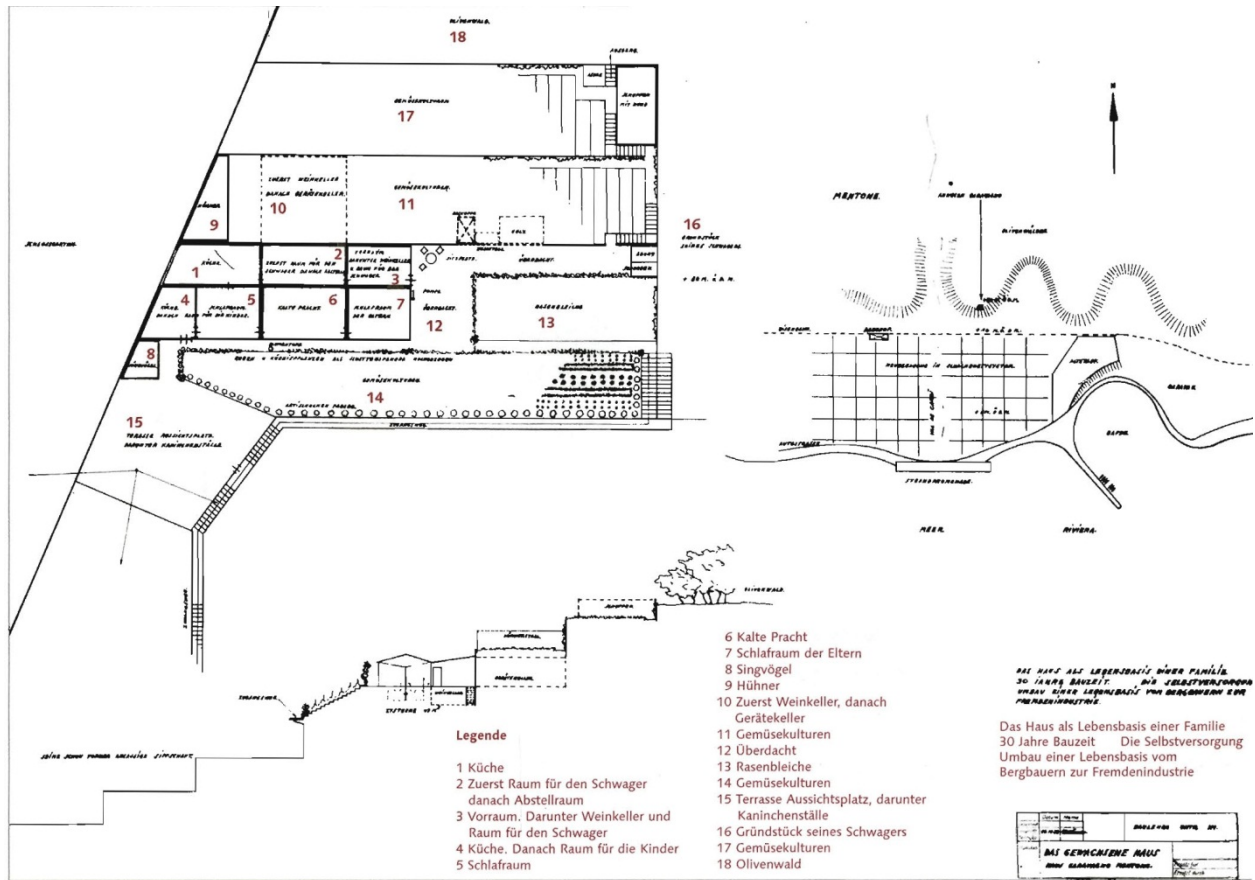


Figure 32

Klaus Meumann, Project for Meyer's building theory course, "The Growing House—Haus Caravaggio Mentone" (Das gewachsene Haus. 1929)

(Reproduced with key by Klaus-Jürgen Winkler in his *Baulehre und Entwerfen am Bauhaus 1919-1933*. Weimar: Bauhaus-Universität, 2003)



Figures 33 a-e

Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer.
Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen
Gewerkschaftsbundes (Federal school of the
German trade union federation), Bernau.
1928–30

Figure 33 a

Postcard showing aerial view from southwest.
Photograph: Junkers Luftbild

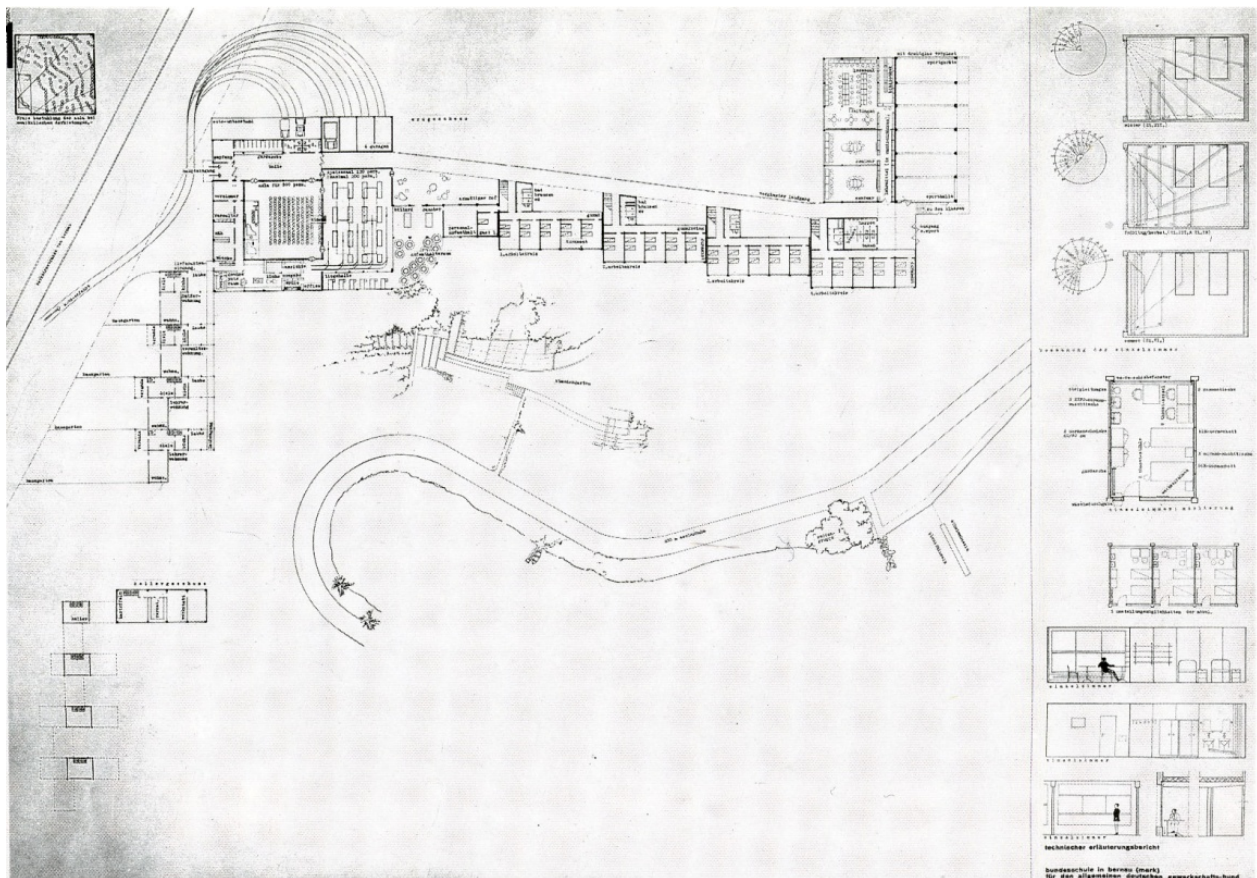


Figure 33 b-e

Competition drawings for ADGB building

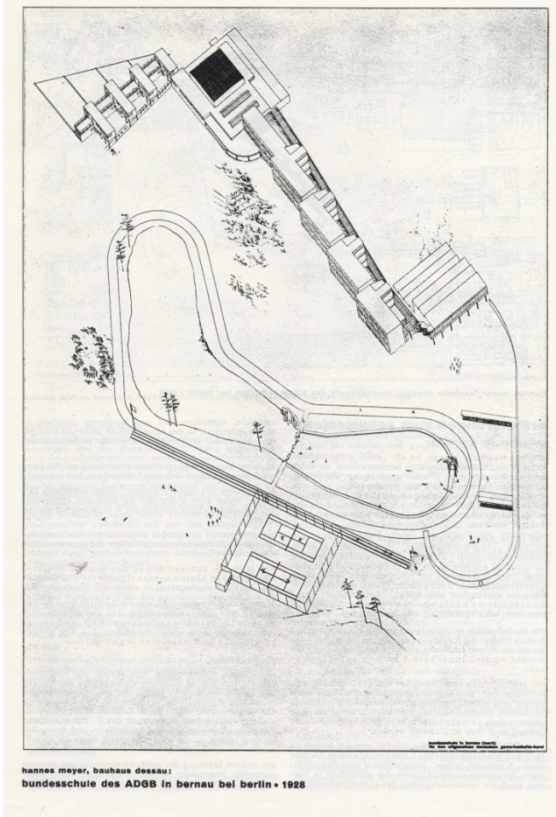


Figure 33 c

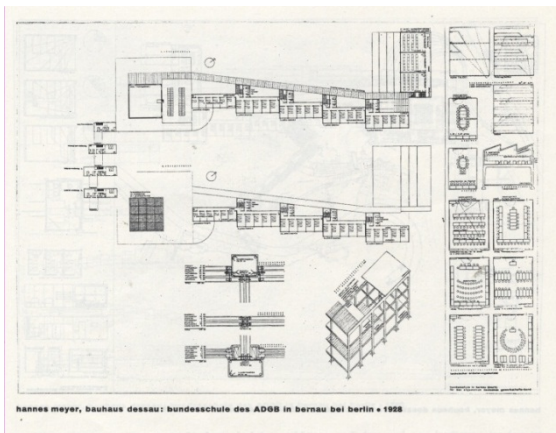


Figure 33 d

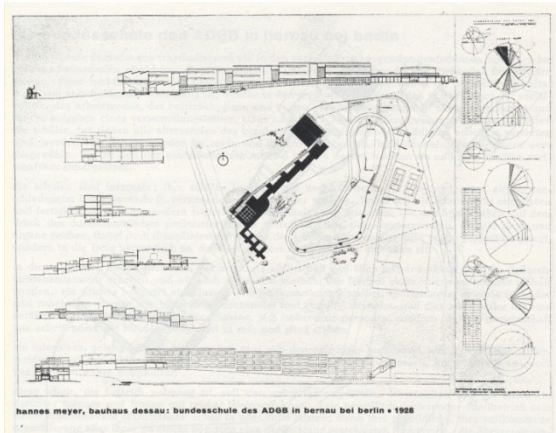


Figure 33 e

der garten als erweiterung des wohnraums

räumliche erweiterung:

gartensitzplatz laube kinderspielplatz
gartenwege pflanzfläche

funktionelle erweiterung:

verbreiterung und verlegung des wohnvorgangs ins freie
gartenarbeit luft - sonnenbäder freiluftgymnastik
ozonisierung der luft



erholungswert:

gegensatz zu berufsarbeit und -raum

der garten als nährbasis

pflanzliche nahrungsmittel:

gemüse obat küchenkräuter

tierische nahrungsmittel:

garten ermöglicht kleintierzucht:
fleisch eier

soziale stufen des gartens:

blumentopf bis herrschaftspark

der garten als erweiterung des erlebnisraums

sinneseindrücke:

gesicht:

pflanzengrün blüten - fruchtfarben
blatt - blüten - fruchtfarben pflanzenformen allgemein

geruch:

pflanzengerüche allgemein: koniferen minze geranium
blütengerüche erdgeruch herbstgeruch

haut:

kühle im baumschatten: stufen der schattendichte: rosskastanie bis birke

gehör:

vogelgesang insektensummen baumrauschen herbstlaubrascheln

psychische wirkungen:

hauptsächlich durch farben:

grün - blaureihe tonisch
gelb - rötreihe erregend

assoziationen:

individuell verschieden

abhängig von mit den assoziationsstützen verknüpften erlebnissen

durchschnittsassoziationen:

schneeglöckchen

eiche



alpinum

nahender frühling
kraft „deutsch“



hochgebirge



wasserbassin



see meer



kakteen



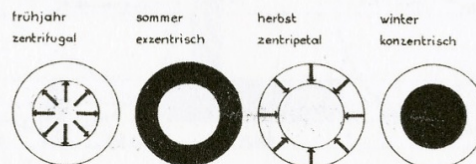
übersee



gartentypen:

der garten in berlin o : mietskasernenhof
der improvisierte garten : restaurationsgarten
der zimmergarten : blumentopf bis wintergarten
der naive garten : bauerngarten
der kultische garten : japanischer garten
der modische garten : staudengarten
der repräsentierende garten : herrschaftgarten
der garten im grossstadgeschäftsviertel : dachgarten

der garten steigert das erleben der jahresperiodizität unserer lebenskurve



mensch : steigende erregung äusseres leben zunehmende ruhe inneres leben
gartenarbeit: säen pflegen ernten ruhe
vegetation: keimen blühen reifen ruhe

23-34	Knaub	gärten	1-100
garten			

Figure 34

Heiner Knaub, garden as extension of living space, 1929-30



Figure 37

Oscar Schlemmer, maquette from the Wanderausstellung, as published in Hannes Meyer, ed, *junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!* (1929)



Figure 38

das bauhaus dessau, exhibition catalogue for the Gewerbemuseum Basel, 20 April – 9 May 1929

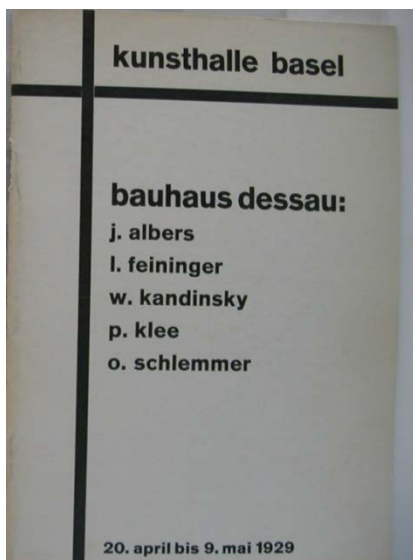


Figure 39

bauhaus dessau: j. albers, l. feiningger, w. kandinsky, p. klee, o. schlemmer, exhibition catalogue for the Kunsthalle Basel, 20 April – 9 May 1929



Figures 40 a and b

Franz Ehrlich from sketches by head of the Advertising Department, Joost Schmidt, poster for *das bauhaus dessau* at the Gewerbemuseum Basel, 21 April – 20 May 1929



Figure 41

Joost Schmidt, poster for the Weimar Bauhaus exhibition, 1923



Figure 42

Lászlo Moholy-Nagy, dust jackets for Bauhaus book series, 1924 - 30



Figure 43

Herbert Bayer, Poster for *Kandinsky Jubiläums-Ausstellung zum 60. Geburtstag* (Exhibition celebrating Kandinsky's sixtieth birthday), 1926

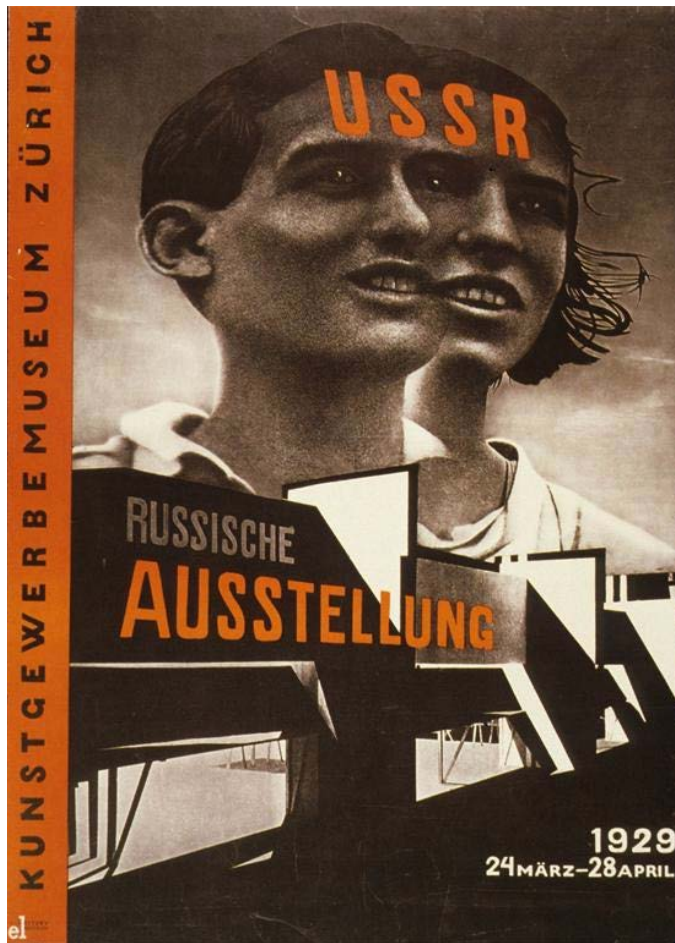
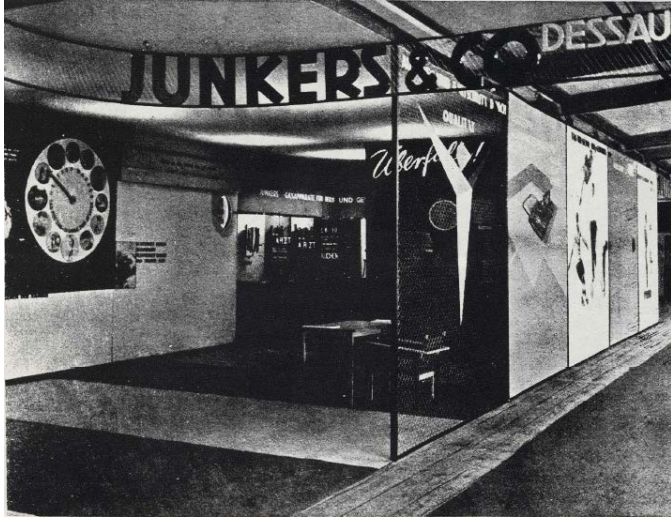


Figure 44

El Lissitzky

Poster for *Russische Ausstellung* Zurich,
1929



Figures 45 a-c
 Junkers & Co., “Gas und Wasser” (Gas and Water). Exhibition Berlin, 1928. Illustrations from *bauhaus* 3, no. 3 (1929)



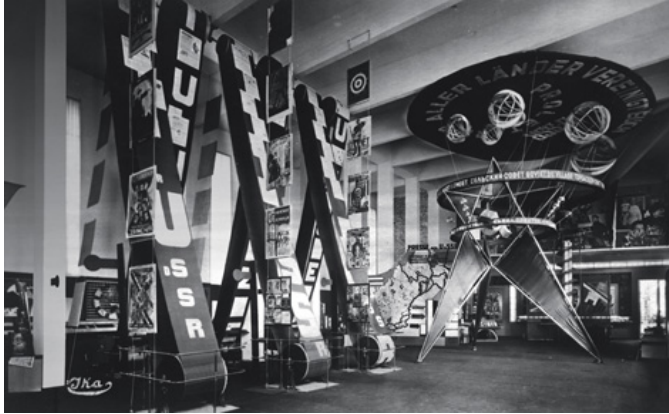


Figure 46

El Lissitzky

Soviet Pavilion, *Pressa* exhibition, Cologne, 1926



Figure 47

Pedagogy section, *das bauhaus dessau*,

Gewerbemuseum Basel, 21 April – 20 May 1929



Figure 48

Pedagogy section, *das bauhaus dessau*,

Gewerbemuseum Basel, 21 April – 20 May 1929



vorbereitung bauhaus, einstellung grübel-modern fertig
licht in dem wohnraum

kein schmuckes heim, glück allein

sondern eine brauchbare vollwohnung zu zeigen, ist sinn und zweck der bauhaus-tafeln im grass-museum zu Leipzig. eine brauchbare vollwohnung muß billig sein. die bauhaus-wohnung ist billig durch äußerste platznutzung, minimale raumhöhe, selbständige praktische einrichtung.

zwei räume, zugleich wohn- und schlafzimmer. klapp-tische bieten, bei tag hochgehängt – die nachts herab-geklappt, sich gleichbedeutend schrankstellen: versetzbare zwickzackbänke ermöglichen verschiedene einrichtung, somit verschiedene verwendung, minimale laib der schränke, günstiges kinderlager durch herausgeschobene klappen-tische.

küche: maßgebend nur die forderung, der hauffrau jede überflüssige bewegung zu ersparen.

der waschräum: mit waschbecken und handbräse hat in sich alles, was ein hausfrau brauchen kann.

wände mit bauhaus-tapeten: kalk-putz-wände, sondern kleinste musterung in strich wirkend, daher realistische ausrichtung der tapeten wie jedes abstr.

beleuchtung: gleichmäßig verteiltes einwandfreie licht durch kunstlichter (bauhaus-modell).

verwendet wurde neue erfindungsschaffen der haus-halt-technik, um der frau das arbeits im hause möglichst zu erleichtern.

die demonstrati-onstafeln zeigen, wie die bauhaus-wohnung zur einrichtung geeignet ist. die schrank-tafeln, wände, die praktische kinder-lager, nach der haus, innen- und außenwörter oder maschinen-tafeln art.

moderne wohnungs- und wirtschafts-einrichtungen
durch die gemeinsinnigkeit des bauhauses, architektur – bedarf druckens, bildstil im hand-nominal, technische spezialisierung der neuen kunst fides g. m. b. h.

Figure 49
volkswohnung bauhaus, exhibition at the Grassimuseum, Leipzig. In Hubert Hoffmann, “kein schmuckes heim, glück allein” *bauhaus 2*, no. 4 (1929): 22-23



Figure 50
Gentleman’s Room, *Section Allemande, Exposition de la société des artistes décorateurs*, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930

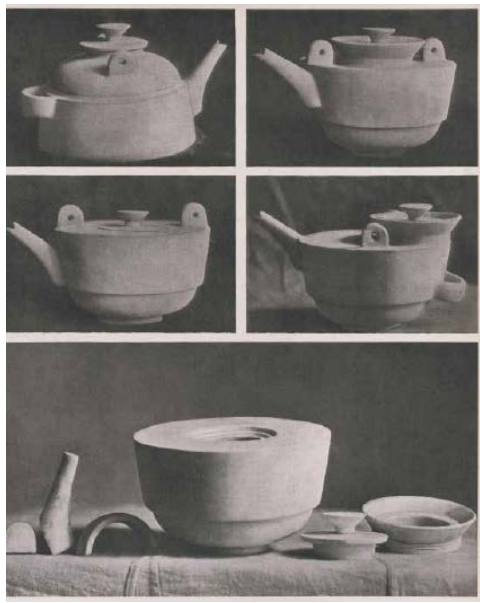


Figure 51
Theodor Bogler, plaster models for ceramics casting, 1923. As reproduced in *Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar*, 1923



Figure 52

bauhaus dessau wanderschau 1930, Kunsthalle
Mannheim, 14 May – 22 June 1930

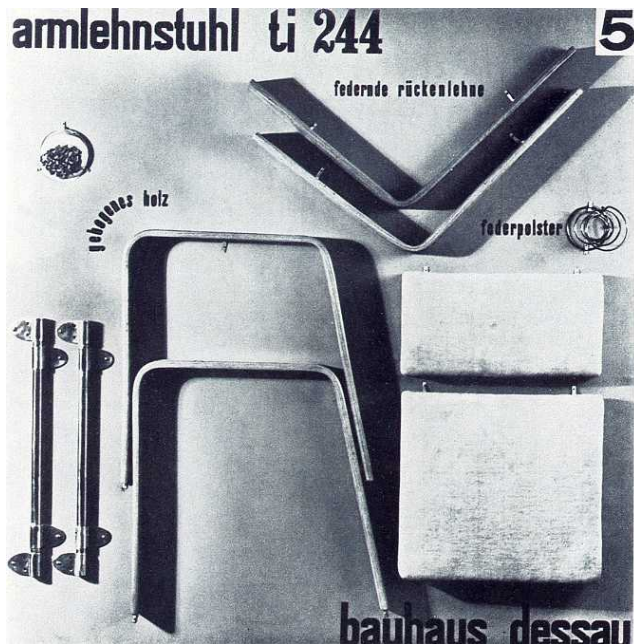


Figure 53

Josef Albers, 244
Bauhaus Wanderausstellung demonstration
board
1929-30

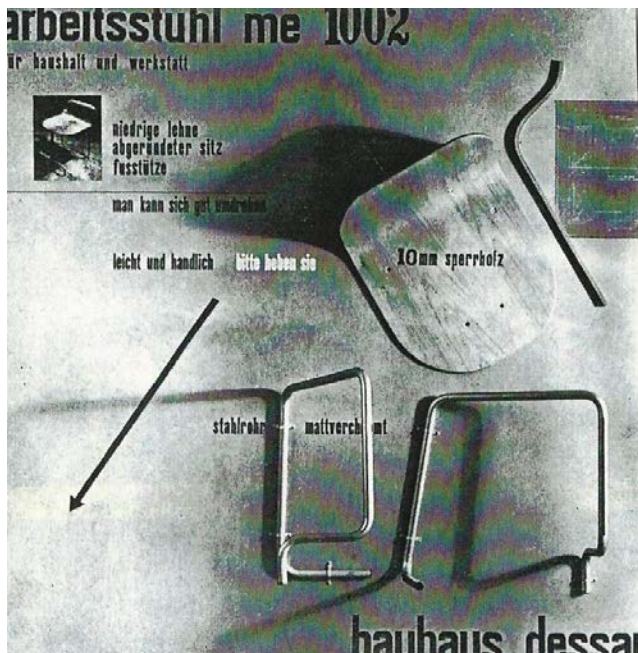


Figure 54

Work stool me 1002
Bauhaus Wanderausstellung demonstration
board, 1929-30



Figure 55 a
das bauhaus dessau, Gewerbemuseum
 Basel, 21 April – 20 May 1929

gebrauchsmöbel

	<p>ti 207-217 (3)</p> <p>schreibtisch zusammen- stellt aus norm- tisch ti 207 (auseinandernehmbar) u. schubkasten- teil ti 217 (3)</p>
	<p>ti 217 (3)</p> <p>schubkasten- teil</p> <p>einsteckklappe, hängeregistra- tur- geöffnet</p>

bauhaus dessau

Figure 55 b
 Advertisement in *bauhaus* 3, no. 2 (1929)

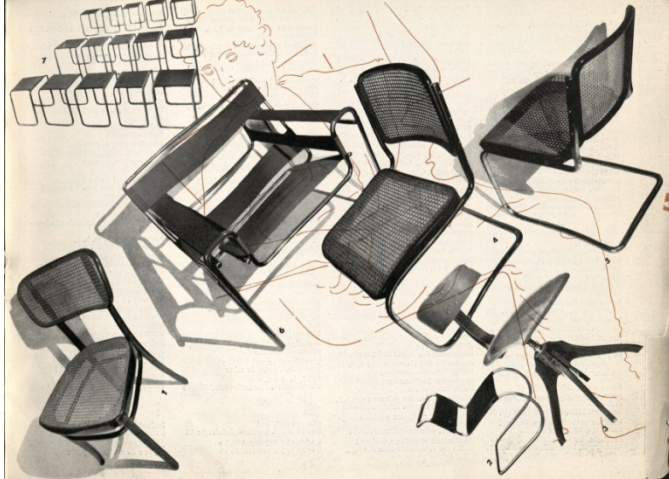


Figure 56 a
Section Allemande, catalogue, *Exposition de la société des artistes décorateurs*, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930



Figure 56 b
Herbert Bayer gallery installation. *Section Allemande*, *Exposition de la société des artistes décorateurs*, Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July 13, 1930



Figure 57
das bauhaus dessau, Gewerbemuseum Basel, 21 April – 20 May 1929

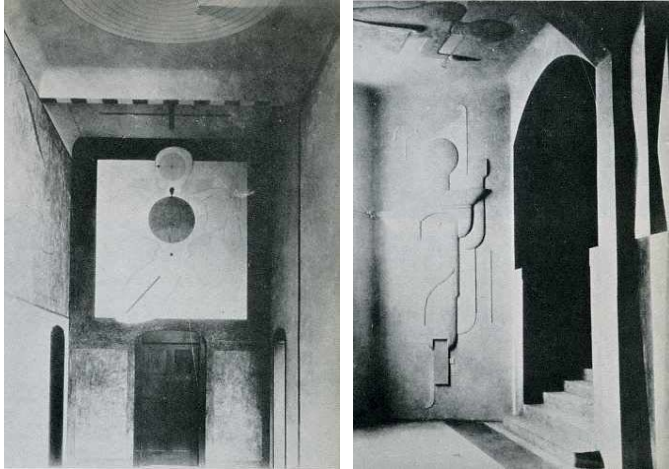


Figure 58

Oscar Schlemmer murals in fresco and relief
Weimar Bauhaus exhibition, 1923



Figure 59

Heinrich Koch, Wall-painting schemes for
the studio and living room of Oskar
Schlemmer's Master House, Dessau, 1926

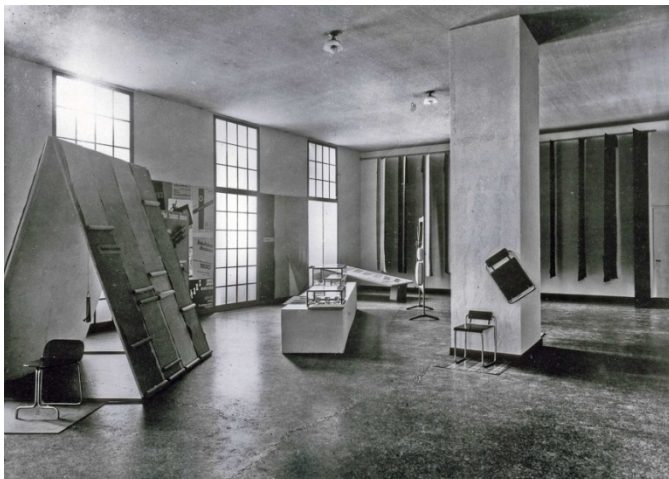


Figure 60

bauhaus wanderschau, Kunstgewerbemuseum
der Stadt Zürich, 17 July – 13 August 1930

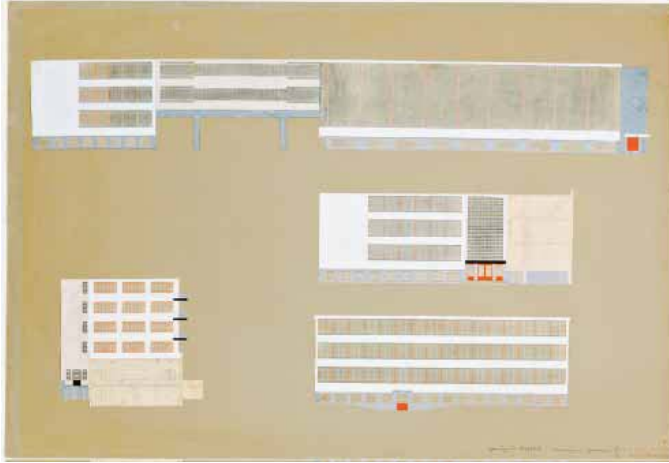


Figure 61

Hinnerk Scheper

Color scheme for the exterior of the Bauhaus building, Dessau, 1926



Figure 62

bauhaus wanderschau,

Kunstgewerbemuseum der Stadt Zürich, 17 July – 13 August 1930

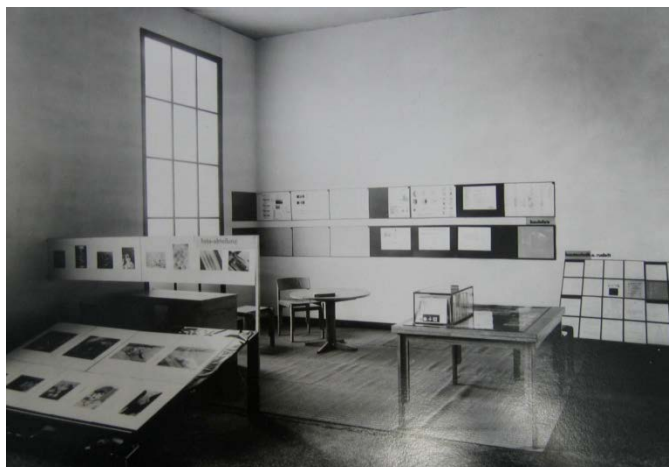


Figure 63

Architecture and photography installation.

bauhaus wanderschau, Kunstgewerbemuseum der Stadt Zürich, 17 July – 13 August 1930

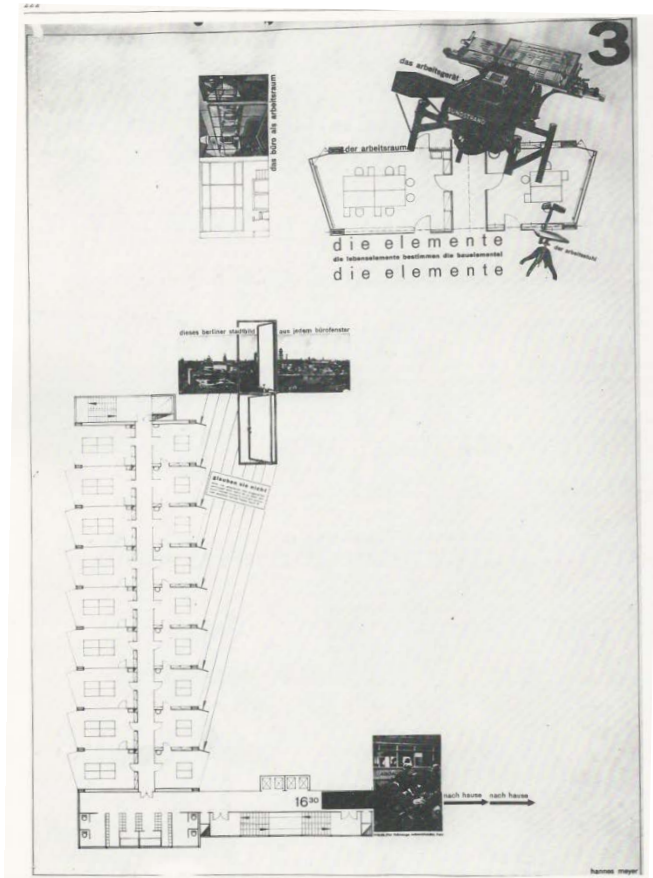


Figure 64
Competition drawing for the ADGB Arbeiter Bank, 1929



Figure 65
Siedlung Törten housing extension, Dessau, 1930



Figures 66 a-c

Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer,
Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen
Gewerkschaftsbundes (Federal school of the
German trade union federation), Bernau,
1928–30

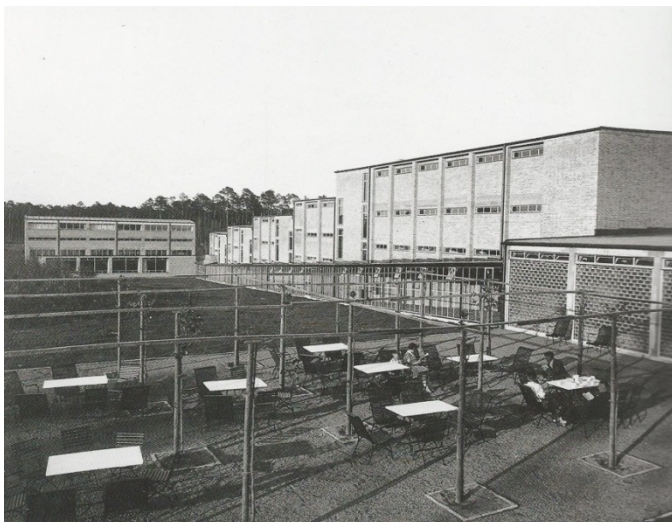




Figure 67

Georg Muche and Adolf Meyer. Haus am Horn, Weimar. Alma Buscher and László Moholy-Nagy seen at left, c. 1923

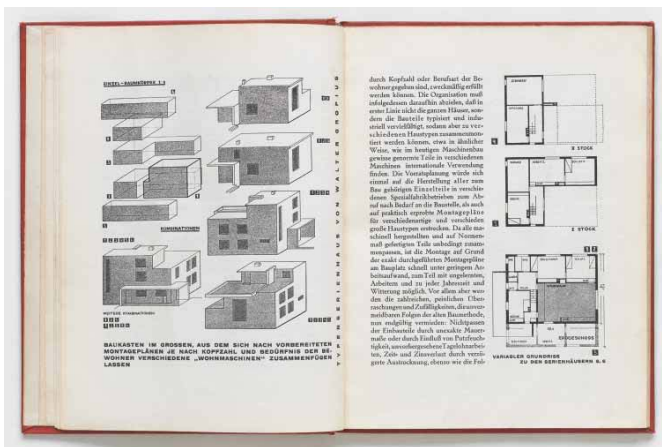


Figure 68

Walter Gropius, *Baukasten im großen (Large-Scale Building Blocks)*, 1923. Reproduced in Adolf Meyer, *Ein Versuchshaus des Bauhauses in Weimar. Haus am Horn* (1925)

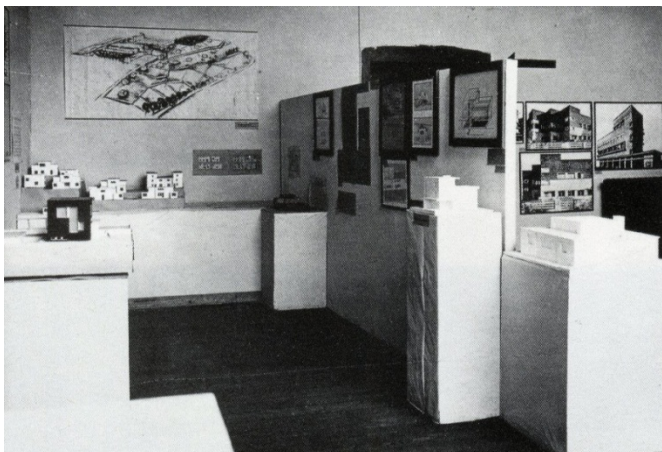


Figure 69

Ausstellung Internationaler Architekten, Bauhaus, Weimar, Summer 1923



Figure 70
*Section Allemande, Exposition de la société
des artistes décorateurs, Werkbund*
exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris. May 14-July
13, 1930

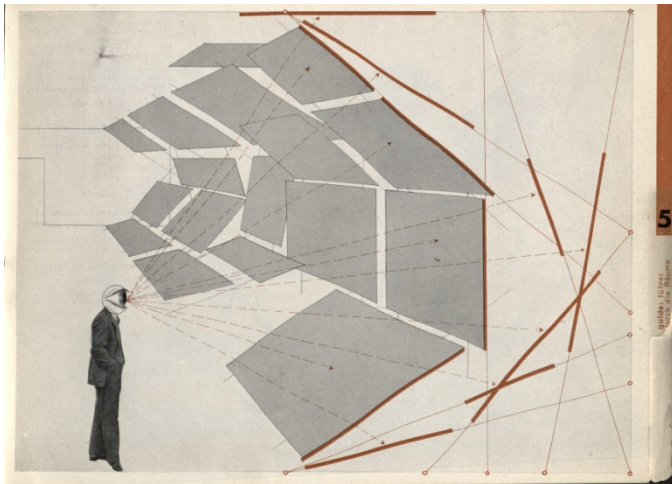


Figure 71
*Section Allemande, catalogue, Exposition de
la société des artistes décorateurs,*
Werkbund exhibition, Grand Palais, Paris.
May 14-July 13, 1930

