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TRICE, CECIL W.

AMERICA AND WEIMAR CULTURE, 1919-1933

The University of Oklahoma

Ph.D.

1979

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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

AMERICA AND WEIMAR CULTURE, 1919-1933

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
CECIL W. TRICE
Norman, Oklahoma
1979

AMERICA AND WEIMAR CULTURE, 1919-1933

APPROVED BY

Harvey Morgan
David W. Perry
Donald J. Beebe
Robert C. Hooper
Donald A. Hamann

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

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AMERICA AND WEIMAR CULTURE, 1919-1933

PREFACE

The Weimar Republic has a unique position in history. Coming after Kaiser Wilhelm II and before Adolf Hitler, it was Germany's first experiment in democracy. It has been and still is an intriguing subject for historians who seek to explain the rise of the Nazis and the failure of representative government in Germany. In recent years, the cultural life of the Weimar Republic has received almost as much attention as its politics. Writers have emphasized the new or modern elements evident in Weimar culture. The very use of the terms indicate that something sets it apart from traditional German culture. Historian Walter Laqueur argues that it was "the first truly modern culture." There is a tendency to see German politics in the light of the rise of Hitler, and to view Weimar culture as an expression of modern times.

But did American observers in the twenties perceive German culture in the same way? I wondered if American critics and artists were as interested in Weimar culture as present day scholars are. German cultural influences were strong in America before the Great War and became stronger

afterwards. A number of authors have suggested the richness and variety of German and American artistic interchange, but no attempt has been made to present an overview from the American perspective. I decided to concentrate on American attitudes toward Weimar's art, architecture, music, drama, and cinema. In stressing this side of the cultural relationship, one cannot entirely ignore American influences in Germany. George Grosz and Bertolt Brecht were attracted to American subjects; German architects were aware of the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, and director F. W. Murnau was familiar with the films of Griffith and Chaplin. This affected the way Americans looked at Weimar culture. My goal is not, however, to offer a rigid dichotomy of how the two cultures influenced one another. The scale is tipped in favor of American evaluations of German accomplishments and what those accomplishments meant to artists, critics, and their public.

Ironically for Weimar's modernists, most Americans were interested in their work more for the traditions they said they rejected than for the new art they created. In 1929, Isaac Marcossan summarized majority opinion when he wrote "The New Germany" for the Saturday Evening Post. His article evaluated the achievements of the Republic in its first decade and concluded "Deep down the German character has never undergone a change. Those qualities of obedience and discipline have simply reasserted themselves since

1918, under a different and more elastic regime, to make the new Germany a study in striking contrasts." The contrasts were particularly striking in the arts. Walter Gropius called for a new architecture, new materials, and modern principles, and then organized the Bauhaus like a guild. Arnold Schoenberg wrote music for modern ears but did so within the framework of the German musical heritage. Weimar culture that was sometimes considered shockingly modern had its spiritual roots in tradition.

The traditionalist-modernist debate was not new to the twenties. The intellectual gap between the two schools of thought has been a feature of most historical eras, but it seemed to widen greatly in the first two generations of the twentieth century.

In art as in other fields, traditionalists sought continuity in attitudes and institutions. They believed that culture must evolve in an orderly fashion through the process of organic change. Most did not believe that change was inherently bad. While they might disagree on individual points, they retained a reverence for some aspect of the past and identified modernism as a common enemy. If a New York critic and his Berlin counterpart agreed that atonalism was clearly outside the western musical heritage, their shared opinion acted as a powerful intellectual bond. The traditionalist held that history was their most powerful ally, and they used existing institutions as bulwarks

against the radical theories of the modernists.

Modernists proclaimed that the old order was dead. They challenged most of the assumptions of the traditionalists. New art forms, they argued, must replace the worn out formulas of the past. They used abstraction and combinations of art forms to get at "the inner meaning of life." Although some nasty conflicts occurred between groups of modernists, conservative institutions remained their basic foe. In their attempt to redefine the essence of the arts, they founded a seemingly endless number of schools. Cubism, Expressionism, Dadaism, atonalism, and new objectivism were efforts to create an art that would reflect "current realities" and transport their exponents into the pantheon of the arts. Much was rhetoric and many modernists circumspectly conceded that they too found inspiration in earlier art forms. But their interpretations were so different from those of the traditionalists that the two groups seldom occupied the same intellectual ground.

Rarely were Americans either wholly tied to the past or attached to modernism, but fundamental values changed almost imperceptibly during the twenties. This did not mean that modern artistic theories had no effect on the artistic community or the public. As communication technology became more sophisticated, the public was exposed to more cultural experiences than ever before, both modern and traditional. Most modern art forms failed, however, to

make much of an impression on the masses. Their contact with modernism was broadly cultural (jazz, automobiles, radios) rather than formally artistic (abstract art, atonal music, Expressionism). Modern artists failed to overcome the common man's attachment to familiar representational art forms. Contemporary Americans listened to jazz but liked Gershwin better than Hindemith. In Germany, playwrights and composers were subsidized and received performance opportunities. Americans usually did not have this luxury, an outlet they most surely desired. Many modernists in both countries groused about indifferent success and the resistance of the cultural establishment. They predicted that future generations would recognize their work. In so doing, they revealed their attachment to an old way of thinking. They had many of the traditional goals (if not modes of expression) and were loath to admit that they too desired critical approval.

Many Americans and Germans believed that the United States was a country without traditions. Dramatist Ernst Toller thought this an advantage. America was potentially the most culturally malleable of all nations, a land of artistic opportunity. Artists needed only to educate a vast, untapped audience. To their dismay, they discovered that audiences were not so easily molded. Intrigued one moment, bored the next, the "people" defied predictability. When the public did become aware of a modern art form, they

usually disappointed the theorists. This resulted in the artist's disillusionment and some stereotypical comments about the taste of the average American. When expatriate German artists arrived in the United States after 1933, many, especially those in the performing arts, soon longed for the old days in the home country.

In the twenties, American artists and intellectuals confronted an established technological society. Neither traditionalists nor modernists denied that technology affected one's daily existence. They had seen what machines could do in war and pondered what they might do in peace. Previous generations contemplated the implications of mechanization, but the machine was fully with the Americans of the post-war decade. The machine was the physical manifestation of technology and modernity. In one sense, machines reduced physical labor and made life easier, but they also made it more complicated and less sure than in the nineteenth century. Aesthetic and social critics promoted culture in relation to the realities of modernity. They attempted to establish an aesthetic for what they believed was an uninformed, unsure, and confused populace. The old guard argued that the arts should instill a sense of beauty based on unity and harmony. They wanted artists to produce work that took men away from dehumanizing technology. Their ideal was a well ordered national artistic community based upon accepted values, and a national respect for

individual genius in the cultural as well as the material worlds. Their intellectual rivals did not fear the machine or technology. Instead, they embraced modernity, claiming that the machine could give man beauty. They argued for a new aesthetic that used the symbols of modern society. In the clashes between the two groups, they searched their own and other lands to realize their particular aims. Americans who studied Germany acquired many useful insights regardless of what position they held.

Contemporary American observers did not know that Hitler was going to seize power, nor did they emphasize so strongly the modern aspects of German culture. The expression "Weimar culture" was not a phrase they used, for they did not separate the arts of the infant republic from those of the past. Americans thought in terms of German culture. They followed the progress of the arts in Germany because they always had. Americans deeply respected Germany's artistic accomplishments and envied the important role that culture played in the life of the average German. American intellectuals and artists wanted to find appropriate artistic expressions of American life that could capture the hearts and minds of the people. In studying German culture, they hoped, through emulation rather than imitation, to find ways to achieve their goal.

The reader should be aware of a few guidelines. My main concern is with the "arts," and, to that extent, I use

the idea of culture in a limited sense. German literature tells us much about the intellectual life of the era, but since I have chosen to concentrate on the visual and performing arts, I have commented only in passing on the German literary efforts of the period. To most Americans, German cultural developments were not limited to the borders of the republic. A good part of Central Europe was thought of as German, thus Vienna was the cultural capital of southern Germany and Berlin the leader in the north. The inhabitants of the two cities would probably have been appalled, but American critics usually identified critics or artists from either city as bearers of "German culture."

In trying to piece together the contemporary picture of Weimar culture, I have adopted an eclectic approach rather than concentrating on a single art form. In some quarters in the twenties, the distinction between "popular culture" and the arts began to blur. For this reason, I have written a chapter on the upstart of the performing arts, the cinema. It fit well in my overall design. What emerges from this study, I hope, is a representative cross section of the culture of America and Germany. I adopted an organizational method that presents the perceptions of the contemporaries of the period. I chose to write an overview of the two cultures in an effort to open up larger historical questions related to the respective fields.

It has become fashionable to concentrate on

increasingly specialized historical areas. The argument is that through generalization, we distort, needlessly simplify, or do injustice to a topic. While there is some merit in this viewpoint, it also seems appropriate to present broad studies. They open possibilities for closer historical investigation and have the virtue of being intellectually stimulating and challenging. I hope this account can in some way generate enthusiasm for a rich and varied facet of recent cultural history.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have helped make this dissertation possible. The Interlibrary Loan Staff of the University of Oklahoma tracked down a variety of essential materials. The General Research and Humanities Division and the Performing Arts Research Center of the New York Public Library provided invaluable assistance. My stay at the Museum of Modern Art Library proved more rewarding than I could have imagined, and I am especially grateful to Mr. Fred Silvis of the library who helped me select a representative group of German films for viewing.

I would also like to thank the members of the dissertation committee, David W. Levy, Russell D. Buhite, Robert A. Nye, and Gordon D. Drummond, for reading the manuscript, pointing out errors of fact, and making helpful suggestions. Barbara Mandel accepted the task of typing the dissertation and dealt successfully with strange instructions and even stranger handwriting. Two colleagues, Philip H. Vaughan and F. G. "Goose" Gosling III, read either all or part of the text. I find it difficult to express adequately the deep debt of gratitude that I owe to H. Wayne Morgan. At each stage of this study,

his suggestions were unfailingly helpful and his criticisms insightful and well taken. His intellectual and spiritual support enabled me (despite a personal history of sloth) to follow his most insistent command, i.e., to "get on with it."

AMERICA AND WEIMAR CULTURE, 1919-1933

BY: CECIL W. TRICE

MAJOR PROFESSOR: H. WAYNE MORGAN

This study concentrates on the American response to German artistic development during the Weimar period. It is a broad cultural study that examines American viewpoints on Germany's art, architecture, music, drama, and cinema. The main concern is with the "arts," and, to that extent, the idea of culture is used in a limited sense.

German cultural influences were strong in America before the Great War and became stronger afterwards. Although this study stresses the American side of the cultural relationship, it does not ignore American influences on German artists. George Grosz and Bertolt Brecht were attracted to American subjects; German architects were aware of the work of Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright; and director F. W. Murnau was familiar with the films of Griffith and Chaplin. This affected the way Americans looked at Weimar culture. The dissertation does not, however, offer a rigid dichotomy of how the two cultures influenced one another. The scale is tipped in favor of American evaluations of German accomplishments and what those accomplishments meant to artists, critics, and their public.

In each cultural area, Americans tended to use accepted stereotypes to explain the traditional and modern art forms of Weimar Germany. Most experts expected German painting to be dreary, gloomy, and mystical, basically at odds with American aesthetic sensibilities. Bauhaus architects were seen not only as proponents of modernism but also as builders with a high degree of engineering expertise. The Germanic tradition in music survived the war and continued to dominate the symphony halls of America. In addition, atonalists such as Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton von Webern received a hearing in the United States partly because Americans identified them with Germany's musical heritage. Although, Americans were not overly fond of German playwrights of the

era, critics were intrigued with German play production methods and the professionalism of German actors. The technical sophistication of the Germans' camera work, the thematic maturity of their screenplays, and the cinematic imagination of their directors led many American critics to acclaim Weimar's cinema as the greatest in the world.

Contemporary American observers did not know that Hitler was going to seize power, nor did they emphasize so strongly the modern aspects of German culture. The expression "Weimar culture" was not a phrase they used, for they did not separate the arts of the infant republic from those of the past. Americans thought in terms of German culture. They followed the progress of the arts in Germany because they always had. Americans deeply respected Germany's artistic accomplishments and envied the important role that culture played in the life of the average German. American intellectuals and artists wanted to find appropriate artistic expressions of American life that could capture the hearts and minds of the people. In studying German culture, they hoped, through emulation rather than imitation, to find ways to achieve their goal.

"One will have to begin living again on a new basis, which does not mean that all that was done before the war will be forgotten, but rather that everything done after it ought to be done differently."

Albert Roussel (1918)

AMERICA AND WEIMAR CULTURE, 1919-1933

CHAPTER I

CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC PERSPECTIVES

In 1930, an American living in Germany, Nancy Ross, commented that she was "convinced that the Germans possessed a rare combination of such qualities as sentimentality, efficiency, honesty, logic, and love of beauty."¹ Ross' views were not extraordinary. They summarized the way how most Americans perceived the Germans. The image was built up over two centuries of observing the German country and its people.

The first German immigrants came to America during the colonial period. The earliest ones fled their homes to avoid religious persecution. Wars, uncertain political conditions, and especially economic duress convinced others to follow. As Germans moved into Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and the Carolinas, the English colonists noted certain characteristics. The Germans were clannish, kept to themselves, and clung to their language, ethnic communities and churches. They were a bit too mysterious. Some English colonials believed that the Germans had an unfathomable side to their character; they often seemed

mystical, aloof, and preoccupied with the grotesque side of life. Over the generations this proved to be one of the most enduring stereotypes of the individual German.

The English colonial governments grudgingly accepted the Germans and required the new arrivals to take a loyalty oath to the king. But the Germans soon established a reputation for hard work, cleanliness, and orderliness, and their many admirable characteristics made them acceptable subjects in the colonies. By the time of the American Revolution, the German population had passed 225,000.²

The most important emigrants after American independence were the political refugees from the German Revolution of 1848. The "forty-eighters" were generally better educated than the earlier settlers. They were activists who became leaders of the German community and prominent in local and national affairs. Most had retained their political liberalism, and men like Carl Schurz served in the Union army. Schurz later became influential in the Republican Party and was Secretary of Interior under Rutherford B. Hayes. The "forty-eighters" contributed to American society and created a favorable impression on native born Americans as well as those of German ancestry.³

The Germans were especially respected for their

scientific achievements, and shared a talent for engineering with Americans. Their mastery of machines and technology was well known. Rudolf Diesel and Charles Steinmetz were masters of applied science. The latter worked his magic in America, developing the mass produced electric motor. George Westinghouse was an inventor and entrepreneur.⁴ Many Americans concluded that Germans were hard working, ambitious capitalists with much in common with their American cousins. Whether in their homeland or in the United States, Americans believed that it was no wonder that the Germans were a successful people.

The German reputation for excellence was not limited to technical matters. In 1902, the editor of the New York Evening Journal wrote, "German thought has set before the world an invaluable example of thoroughness; the Germans are original, imaginative, and they have excelled in war, in all the arts, in commerce--- in every form of human effort." Germany was the land of philosophers, poets, and musicians and their thinkers were learned if not always the most easily understood. Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven were the greatest composers, German musicians the finest. In America, the many German-American singing societies (Sanger Feste) showed their great love for music and natural aptitude for performance.

In New York and Philadelphia, Germans dominated the orchestras.⁵ By the end of the nineteenth century, the excellence of German culture was firmly established in American minds.

Many American intellectuals believed that the German university was an important source of these contributions to civilization. Nowhere were standards higher. German professors were stern masters who insisted on total dedication to one's studies. The twin ideals of scholarly research and academic freedom remained uppermost in the minds of instructors and students alike. Göttingen, Heidelberg, and Vienna became learning centers for ambitious American students. For a number of years, Americans were the largest foreign contingent studying at Heidelberg. In the 1880's, the number of American students in Germany reached its peak. While many physicists, physicians, economists, and historians were trained in Germany, the German idea of advanced graduate study also became important in the United States. The traditions of the German university went beyond the considerable influence of individual study in Germany and affected the academic orientation of American schools.⁶

In some ways, it seemed that the German and American peoples shared a common heritage. There were historical theories explaining the connection. Late in

the nineteenth century, a number of American historians advanced the "Teutonic hypothesis" of cultural development. Prehistoric Germany was the cradle of early civilization, they argued, and the Aryans who inhabited the forests dispersed and their descendants settled in Greece, Rome, England, and eventually America. Social Darwinism was summoned to give the thesis the lustre of scientific authenticity. Racial theories were developed to prove that the Germans were the true bearers of the democratic tradition. In 1883, Herbert Baxter Adams argued that New England towns were "Germanic in origin." Ancient German villages were self-governing and contained "the germs of our state and national life...." Although more cautious in his support of the idea, Albert Bushnell Hart believed that the "Teutonic race combined the greatest love for freedom with the greatest respect for law."⁷ According to many intellectuals, Germans and Americans were "of the same stock."

But there was also a dark side to the American image of Germany. Some observers found the Germans preoccupied with death and terror. Writing in the twentieth century, essayist Roger Gilman noted the strength of this belief, commenting that the Germans were "almost gruesome, suggesting [a] fascination with horror that we are told is the inmost thing in that national soul." Others

found the Germans naturally aggressive and traced their penchant for violence to ancient struggles for survival in primeval forests. These rather frightening, unfathomable or mystical interpretations of the German character also appeared in references to their art and literature.⁸

On the more practical side, it seemed that many German achievements were won at too great a cost. The German university may have produced results, but it was also elitist and authoritarian. Although few Americans were familiar with German educational methods, many did have definite opinions about the Germans. Their convictions were based on personal observations. While Germans were disciplined, stable, hard-working and honest, they were also authoritarian, stubborn, clannish, and dogmatic. Positive and negative traits appeared to cancel one another out. Many Americans believed that the Germans were overly proud of their culture and origins. They either did not know or cared little for the theories that claimed Germans and Americans shared a common heritage. Why, they asked, did Germans retain so strong a loyalty to the homeland?⁹

Before the World War, many Americans categorized Germans as Prussians. Prussianism evoked a vast array of images, most of them negative. Militarism, monarchy, and bellicosity were the hallmarks of the Prussian

dominated German Reich. The brash German Kaiser Wilhelm II might use the "natural" German penchant for discipline and dedication to forge a war machine and attempt to win Germany a place in the sun. As an incident with American war ships at Manila Bay and a diplomatic confrontation at the Algeciras Conference illustrated, Germany's national ambitions frequently created international tension. As disturbing as these events were to many Americans, some citizens admitted that there was a familiar side to the Prussian temperment. In some ways the German need for world prominence was not so different from American desires to be known and respected throughout the world. To Americans, the difference was, however, the choice between democracy and autocracy.¹⁰

Wilhelm II was the embodiment of autocracy. Many considered him the ultimate symbol of Prussianism. Vain, arrogant, anti-democratic, and seldom seen out of uniform, the Kaiser seemed to be a strutting peacock whose stock in trade was political malapropism. The German monarch was the master of the inflammatory statement. Wilhelm railed about the yellow peril, harped about Germany's need for glory, and bragged about the Fatherland's military machine. All too often, the Kaiser's ill advised personal diplomacy summoned war clouds. As his personal ventures backfired, the Kaiser frequently sought the

aid and comfort of his fellow leaders, the men who best understood the burdens of responsibility. The last of Germany's monarchs wrote many times to Theodore Roosevelt.¹¹

The two men were often compared. While some emphasized physical similarities, temperament was the real key. Roosevelt considered himself calmer, more shrewd, and viewed himself as a moderating influence on the volatile Kaiser. In Roosevelt, Wilhelm saw a kindred spirit, a man who was not adverse to using the big stick. Americans disliked Germany's sabre rattling and often characterized Germany as a "warlike," militaristic, and aggressive nation. Writing in 1902, Harvard psychologist Hugo Münsterberg noted that many Americans did not like Germans and especially the embodiment of "Germanness." But despite all his troubles over the years, the Kaiser still appealed to many Americans. In 1913, the President of Columbia University, Nicholas Murray Butler, stated that "if the Kaiser had been born an American Citizen he would have been chosen President by his admiring fellow Americans." Butler's comment was an overstatement, but it indicated that Americans had ambivalent feelings about the Kaiser and his subjects.¹²

When German general Friedrich von Bernhardi's

Germany and the Next War (1913) was published in America, many Americans concluded that the Germans never seemed more menacing. The general glorified war as a social necessity and claimed that a strong Germany must seek world domination to remain a vital nation. American newspapers frequently quoted the work, and, when war broke out in 1914, a variety of books sought to explain what Bernhardt had prophesized. Many focused on the Kaiser who was often depicted as the ideal war leader, intelligent, imaginative, and well-informed. His alleged abilities made him the ideal symbol of threatening German imperialism.¹³

Despite the German threat, Americans had no desire to get involved in the war. The vast majority supported Woodrow Wilson's neutrality proclamation. Americans did not want to fight Europe's war, but Germany's war policies confirmed many old stereotypes. Books, articles, newspaper reports, and eyewitness accounts gradually affected American views on the war. The German submarine campaign was seen as inhuman, a cruel extension of the war that took the lives of innocent women and children. Rumors circulated that German-Americans were involved in plots to sabotage American industry and slow down shipments to the Allies. When the German military attaché at the German embassy in Washington, Franz von

Papen, was expelled for subversive activities, rumors turned into fact. The sinkings continued to repulse Americans, none more than the Lusitania in 1915. Two years later emotions reached a fever pitch with the reintroduction of the unrestricted submarine warfare and the release of the Zimmermann Telegram. The threat to the United States seemed clear. The stage was set for President Wilson's war declaration.¹⁴

Throughout the war, the average American tended to blame Germany's government, not its people. In the last days of the conflict, the President adopted a similar attitude. On October 23, 1918, Wilson told the German government that the Allies would conduct peace negotiations only with the true representatives of the German people not "the military masters or the monarchical autocrats." Chancellor Prince Max of Baden, the cabinet, and most Reichstag party leaders realized that the Kaiser had to abdicate in order to secure an Armistice. The Americans wanted the Germans to lay down their arms and establish a democracy. The Kaiser vacillated, but finally gave in. On November 9, 1918, Philip Scheidemann proclaimed a German republic from the balcony of the Reichstag building. Ironically, German republicans had to face the victors at Versailles.¹⁵

After the Paris talks ended, American attention

focused on the domestic debate over treaty ratification. President Wilson embarked on an unsuccessful and physically debilitating crusade for adoption. As the President lay ill in the White House, others promoted his cause, but the longer the wait, the less likely it was that the treaty would emerge from the Senate. As domestic economic and political problems mounted, the American people began to lose interest. They turned their attention away from foreign affairs and concentrated on domestic difficulties. Shortly after Wilson left office, the treaty died a quiet death, and in 1921 the Treaty of Berlin officially ended hostilities between the United States and Germany.¹⁶

Americans ultimately forgave the Germans for the war, and the period between 1919 and 1923 was especially important. Outrage over war and demands for revenge gradually receded and humanitarian impulses began to take over. Even before the final decisions at Versailles, some American writers hinted that the Allies were being vindictive toward the German people. The blockade of German ports affected the population, not the Kaiser. After Wilson had been roundly condemned and the humiliating treaty signed, Germans continued to appeal to Americans. Foreign correspondent William McDonald re-

ported from Berlin that "America is looked to to stand in the breach and save Germany from its enemies and [give] the financial aid which will aid Germany to recover."¹⁷

1923 was a pivotal year for the young Republic. When the government fell behind on reparation payments to France, the French occupied the Ruhr district. The government followed a policy of passive resistance and the resulting economic repercussions helped hasten the ruinous inflation.¹⁸ Political revolt broke out in Munich and Hamburg and pessimistic observers predicted the end of the Republic. As rumors of the imminent passing of Weimar increased, a new government rallied under the leadership of Gustav Stresemann. The new Chancellor did not head the government for long, but his strong willed policies carried the nation through the crisis. Adolf Hitler's Munich putsch was suppressed, the Hamburg Communists were brought to heel, and new economic policies were formulated. Stresemann stayed on as Foreign Minister until 1929 and worked to restore Germany's position as a leader in Europe.¹⁹

The Weimar government first had to solve Germany's economic problems. The reparations and war debts issues made the task difficult, for the peace treaty stipulated that Germany had to pay England and France for war damages.²⁰ But, only a prosperous nation could fulfill the

requirements, and France seemed determined to keep Germany weak. The war debts question also muddled the diplomatic waters. The United States insisted that loans granted the Allies during the war must be repaid. As Calvin Coolidge allegedly said, "They hired the money, didn't they?" Although American diplomats repeatedly denied that there was any connection between reparations and war debts, the English and French claimed that they would pay America when Germany paid them. The monetary issues complicated diplomacy and involved the United States in European affairs.²¹

Americans were instrumental in devising programs that enabled Germany to meet her reparation payments. American confidence in German economic recovery was high even during the unsettled pre-1923 era. In 1920, the New York Times estimated that over one-half of foreign investment in Germany came from the United States. After the debacle of the inflationary period, financial experts Charles G. Dawes, Owen D. Young, and Henry M. Robinson served on the committees that devised the schedule of payments and suggested the granting of loans to aid German recovery. The Dawes Plan went into effect On September 1, 1924 and initially worked well. Later, Owen D. Young negotiated a further reduction in reparations and on August 31, 1929, in the presence of an

American observer, the "final and definitive" Young Plan went into effect. During the first seven years of the plans, Germany met her obligations. Confidence in the German economy remained firm, and American investors rushed to purchase the Republic's bonds.²²

Germany's diplomatic relations with her neighbors also improved in other areas. With the initialing of the Locarno agreement in 1925, many Americans concluded that Germany had finally re-entered the community of nations. Stresemann signed the treaty with Belgium and France that guaranteed the national borders established at Versailles, and the signatories agreed to negotiate peacefully any disputes that might arise. When Germany and fourteen other countries signed the American sponsored Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact on August 27, 1928, the dream of European and world peace seemed possible.²³

The diplomatic achievements of the twenties did not endure. Depression and the rise of Fascism destroyed the illusion of world stability. The Great Depression that began after 1919 put enormous pressure on the western nations. Social critics wondered whether the democracies could survive. In the United States, the strongest of the democracies, demagogues offered easy solutions to complex problems. They played on the fears of a frightened and uncertain people, but the republic

was strong enough to withstand, if not solve, the crisis.²⁴

The Weimar republicans were not so fortunate. Individual Germans blamed them for their nation's problems. Germany's crisis was almost as much spiritual as material. Many citizens had never accepted the Republic as legitimate and the current difficulties provided them with issues to topple the government. In July of 1930, the fragile structure of German democracy developed fissures that revealed a thinly disguised dictatorship. President Pual von Hindenburg and Chancellor Heinrich Brüning invoked Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution and ruled in effect without the Reichstag. Though some analysts reasoned that the Chancellor's move was necessary, others feared that the Weimar government would not be able to solve fundamental social and political problems.²⁵

Hitler's coming to power confirmed many preconceptions. Most American journalists reverted to stereotypes in their attempts to explain the Führer's political hold over the German people. Commentators claimed that the Nazis were successful because they appealed to the German's "natural" instincts. They charged that Germany was sterile ground for the growth of democracy. H. L. Mencken sardonically declared that "The most surprising thing about him [Hitler] it seems to me is that his emergence should have been surprising." It was

another indication that Americans tended to see Germans not as individuals, but as members of a specific group. Whether based on fantasy or fact, explanations based on ethnic stereotypes were often used to explain German political developments. In the spring of 1933, Dorothy Thompson wrote what many Americans had already sadly concluded that the German people had rejected democracy in "an overwhelming vote of confidence in autocracy."²⁶

Contemporary American critics argued that the Nazi government would exert a strong influence on the arts in Germany. Hitler had definite ideas on what constituted German culture, and it was apparent that most modern artists would not be acceptable to the new regime. Many American intellectuals had misgivings about Weimar culture and their response to post-war German artistic developments was often one of skepticism. Modern theories that seemed so popular in Germany appeared potentially destructive to Germany's traditional cultural forms. In areas where Germans already had a weak reputation, e.g., painting, their modern canvasses revealed the worst "Teutonic" tendencies. The technique was too often brutal and harsh, fine examples of craftsmanship perhaps but lacking the inspirational spark of French art. Conversely, the

critics frequently bowed to the "obvious" German talent in music, and their criticism was usually more temperate. The traditional image remained intact; Germans were good musicians and bad painters. The cultural events that unfolded between 1919 and 1933 did surprisingly little to change the American assessment of German culture.

Before 1918, the Kaiser was the cultural guardian of the Reich. He announced that any art that went "beyond the laws and limits imposed by Myself" was no longer art. Wilhelm was convinced that his pronouncement was the last word on the merits of any opera, painting, or play. Understandably, many German intellectuals and artists found him boorish and conservative. Richard Strauss branded Wilhelm a philistine. Gerhard Hauptmann's naturalist play the Weavers (1894) caused him problems with the government censor who claimed that the play contained the seeds of social revolution. Artists were no happier with the Kaiser than the politicians, and Wilhelm encountered resistance in the cultural world as well as the political. On the eve of the war, neither group paid much attention to him. Some critics argued that much German culture flourished despite the Kaiser's patronage not because of it, and a growing number of

artists began to protest state interference.²⁷

Many of the protestors fervently believed that defeat in war revealed the moral and intellectual bankruptcy of the old order. The loss affected all levels of society, especially revolutionary artists who urged their countrymen to reject autocracy. "Working quietly in their studios," radical painters presaged the defeat of Germany. A number of artists felt that they had played an important role in toppling the government.²⁸ With the war ended, the way was open for an art that would serve all of the people. Gone was the Kaiser with his insipid artistic dictatorship. The old generation in general was blamed for the calamity of war, and there resulted a lack of respect and veneration for the artistic forefathers. The "court" intellectuals had failed and those who survived argued that they must work toward the establishment of an art for the masses.²⁹

In 1918, the November revolutionaries promised political and artistic freedom and equated cultural with political liberation. Many artists, architects, and writers took part in or supported the cause. In Bavaria, Expressionist playwright Ernst Toller helped establish a short-lived Räterepublik (Soviet Republic). Others concentrated more on the politics of art. Intellectuals and artists referred to themselves as

workers and formed councils. The Nation reported that in Munich "The Council of Intellectual Workers proposes to itself as its object the revolutionizing from top to bottom of the mentality of the German people." The council was but one indication of modern artistic activism. Dadaists, Surrealists, and Expressionists predicted the eventual acceptance of their ideas, modernist ideas.³⁰

In Germany, modernism became a panacea for many activist artists. Members of the art community who promoted its cause were painter Wassily Kandinsky, architect Walter Gropius, composer Arnold Schoenberg, dramatist Ernst Toller, and film director Robert Wiene.³¹ All employed new techniques and novel methods of presenting art and gave modernism its language. They rebelled against the representational, the ornate, and the non-functional. Art must reflect contemporary society. The majority of post-war German modernists were collectivist in their approach. Some dabbled in communism, but most were socialistic in a general sense, usually avoiding the commitment of party membership. They emphasized co-operative effort, and stated that art must be available to the masses. Once the people understood the benefits of modern techniques, society and its artists would enjoy a fuller life.³²

Modernists relied on technology not only as a

means of expression but also as a vehicle of communication. In 1918, Dutch architect J. J. P. Oud linked the importance of "a technical-industrial trend...which seeks to give artistic form to the products of technology" with artistic objectivity or abstraction. Technology was the handmaiden of industrial society and the task of the artist was to give aesthetic form to the objects of modern life. In addition to forging this important component of artistic techniques, practical inventions aided in the dissemination of information. Film and radio became mediums of exchange. Bertolt Brecht's "The Radio as an Apparatus of Communication" (1924) was an attempt to explain the connection between art and technology.³³ Distances were shrinking, and intellectual interchange became increasingly easy. Novelist Lion Feuchtwanger announced that an international community of ideas existed and "London and New York are in every respect much less distant [from Germany] than they were before the war." It seemed that each day a new invention helped spread the process of modernization.³⁴ Many young artists were intrigued with machines and considered them the aesthetic manifestation of technology. Ezra Pound wrote that "The lesson of the machine is precision, valuable to the plastic artist, and to literati." Simplicity, exactness, and precision were idealized. There were manifestos on

mechanical music, the machinery of the stage, and the clean orderliness of architectural design. Gropius and LeCorbusier planned structures with neoteric materials and daring construction methods. Theatre director Erwin Piscator used machinery to enhance stage effects. The conquest of machines meant a more rewarding life in physical and artistic terms. Man was better off because of new inventions, and many modern artists reasoned that the masses not only accepted the machine but realized its importance to their lives. They wanted to develop a machine aesthetic that the public would come to appreciate.³⁵ The poet and author Franz Werfel spoke encouragingly to the young men and women associated with these ideas when he announced that "[our] generation... believes its day has come."³⁶

But modernism also helped intensify generational conflict. For each advocate, it sometimes appeared that there were dozens of adversaries. The proponents of new ideas tended to be youthful,³⁷ and their proselytizing often produced bitter reactions. The average German burgher considered them rash, revolutionary, and dangerous. Moderates and conservatives charged them with social and artistic irresponsibility. To some, their ideas were a threat to the existence of society. The artist Georg Grosz epitomized the worst tendencies of art's new

generation. His political cartoons were grotesque and amoral. If the modernists were to succeed, their succession guard would not go uncontested. German culture rested upon a tradition of dedicated thinkers and artists; the new generation, the conservatives argued, seemed to forget their responsibility to society and their illustrious forebears.³⁸

The defenders of German tradition ranged from the celebrated to the obscure. They used a variety of intellectual approaches to make their points. Oswald Spengler issued the most foreboding interpretation of German and western civilization. An unknown schoolmaster before the war, Spengler became the era's foremost prophet of doom. In Decline of the West (1918), he chronicled the impending collapse of civilization, an eventuality that would ensure that other nations would join Germany in defeat. His pedantic treatise worried more moderate conservative thinkers who claimed that Spengler misinterpreted the course of history and did disservice to traditional values.³⁹ Concerned with the popularity of Decline of the West, Thomas Mann rebuked its author and offered a calmer viewpoint. Many critics argued that Mann was a more responsible thinker whose concern for the future rested upon strong humanitarian impulses. The author of Buddenbrooks (1900)

told German youth "though people may say that the nineteenth century ideas are dying, let them take care not to throw out the baby with the bath."⁴⁰

Many Germans passionately wanted to believe that the nation's youth did not follow radicals or revolutionaries. Surely, they hoped, most youths believed in the echt German values. Enjoying nature, studying the German classics, dedication to country, these were the traditions they revered. Lion Feuchtwanger observed that foreigners who thought Berlin was Germany should look to the provinces where values remained unchanged. Underneath the outward raucousness of the Weimar social scene, the argument went, a quiet majority lived life much as they had before. Too often, however, there was a hollowness in these self-assured statements and, as Feuchtwanger concluded, "there was a strong national desire for some sort of order and organization."⁴¹ As the republic entered its second decade, it became increasingly difficult for the government to satisfy these needs.

Intellectuals were troubled. Both modernists and traditionalists wanted to set the standards for society, to provide a sense of direction where the government had failed. They sought continuity but differed on which forms society should adopt. Some foreign

observers perceived a connection between the radicals and their artistic precursors. In 1921, A. W. G. Randall, a frequent contributor to international literary journals, argued that modern German novelists (whether radical or conservative) had a good deal in common with the writers of the pre-war generation. He stressed the idea that current movements had their basis in pre-1914 artistic experimentation. Even the controversial Grosz some said found inspiration in traditional culture. Count Harry Kessler wrote that "He [Grosz] wants to become the German Hogarth, deliberately realistic and didactic..."⁴² This was small comfort to those who objected to Grosz and others like him. Although they looked hard for signs of encouragement, the traditionalists often concluded that their enemies seemed to have the upper hand. Instead of seeking compromise and accommodation between old and new, the true believers seemed unwilling to bend. They equated compromise with capitulation. Neither side freely admitted that they often borrowed from one another.

German traditionalists were especially displeased with the younger generation's growing admiration for the United States. One report traced "the nervous condition" of Germany's youth "to American influences." Gerhard Huebner, a German professor of English literature,

noted that most of his fellow intellectuals thought of America as "exclusively utilitarian and materialistic...."⁴³ They believed that America was the home of a soulless technology. Her "factories" poured out identical automobiles, radios, and motion pictures, the drab devices of "popular culture." America's heroes were not artists or intellectuals but inventors and entrepreneurs. Henry Ford intrigued the Germans because he was both. The Dearborn genius was a demigod to many modernists, a demon to their foes. Ford's autobiography sold over two hundred thousand copies in Germany between 1924 and 1929, creating cause for great alarm on the popularity of American methods. In 1928, Gustavus Myer capitalized on the American craze in his History of the Great American Fortunes. When Bertholt Brecht wrote The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny (1929), the story of a mythical city located somewhere between Alaska and Florida, it was but one more indication of the growing preoccupation with America.⁴⁴

Many German intellectuals argued that all the American inspired jazz music and wild dancing was just a passing fad. Richard Strauss smugly declared that "America has no culture. Culture will always come from Europe." After turning down an offer to write a book on American literature, Dr. Max J. Wolff told the Berliner

Tageblatt that it would have been an impossible task. American writers were incapable of capturing the essence of their nation and remained "to the last merely Europeans transplanted to America." In matters dealing with the arts, the Americans were imitative, mere poseurs. Whatever talent they did possess, lay in other areas, the practical, utilitarian, or technocratic.⁴⁵ The old line German intellectual asked what these qualities had to do with art, music, or poetry. When the modernist artist answered that those were precisely the characteristics that were most important in the development of a modern culture,⁴⁶ their elders despaired.

The conservative philosopher Count Hermann Keyserling was perhaps the most prolific if not the most profound European critic of American culture. Well-known in the United States as a touring speaker and author of philosophical treatises, Keyserling concluded that Americans "have no sense of beauty. Utility is everything. Never has there been a race on earth which took so little advantage of the natural beauties of the country it peopled and which thought so little of aesthetic values as aims...." The Count was appalled that any European could take American popular culture seriously, and he repeated the European theory that democracy was inimical to the development of the higher arts;

the natural leveling process led to mediocrity. Standardization and the worship of the pragmatic led Americans to a culturally debilitating "like mindedness." After meeting John Dewey, the German philosopher commented that "he made practically no impression on me. Nor did his philosophy mean anything to me; it has never meant anything to Europeans, nor is it likely ever to mean anything to them in the future."⁴⁷ In his many books, Keyserling reached the same conclusion about the American experience in general and her arts in particular.

When America was the topic, Germans were of many minds. German intellectuals began with the same assumptions about the essential characteristics of Americans but arrived at different conclusions. On one side, precision, efficiency, and machine technology were usually considered admirable, valid expressions of modern art. On the other, these "American traits" raised the spectre of an unhappy sterile society, one destructive to traditional culture. In the New World, the attempt to chart the course of the arts resulted in similar intellectual battles.

Keyserling's views carried intellectual weight with many unsophisticated Americans partly because he was a European, and partly because of America's cultural self doubts. What he wrote struck a painful nerve.

Many critics lamented that America's achievements in the arts failed to equal her material successes. This was disturbing because of the accepted idea that the arts most clearly expressed the accomplishments of civilization. Majority opinion followed historian John Fiske's theory of the "transit of civilization." According to the experts, culture came from Europe. Americans assimilated, distilled, and placed their stamp upon it, but despite their best efforts, American painters, architects, musicians, and dramatists seemed inferior to their European counterparts.⁴⁸

Before 1900, most intellectuals believed that Americans were second class citizens in the cultural world. It did not mean that all intellectuals and artists resigned themselves to the status of cultural inferiority. Many sought solutions. The nation's talented (and many more untalented) felt obliged to visit the fount of culture. Through exposure to European influences, they hoped to gain artistic skills, escape parochialism, and become part of an established tradition. But, some were dissatisfied with this approach. The goal was not to imitate, but to create and originate. Although difficult enough, it was not simply matter of producing great art. American artists were urged to fashion a republican art that reflected Amer-

ican values and could withstand critical scrutiny.⁴⁹

Within this framework of hope and aspiration, Americans greeted the new century. Artists joined reformers and set their goals high. The effort to change permeated all aspects of the nation's intellectual life.⁵⁰ Artist Robert Henri stressed realism dealing with modern and democratic ideas, while photographer Alfred Stieglitz promoted modernism, technical proficiency, and abstract experimentation. Many argued that it seemed that the arts were more important than ever and were finally on the verge of assuming their proper status in America. When the Armory Show opened in New York in 1913, the organizers, Walt Kuhn and Arthur B. Davis, supposed that they were riding a wave of art appreciation that was not about to crest.⁵¹

Despite all the debate, these doings scarcely affected the public, the art academies, or the museums. Even before the World War, many artists and intellectuals were disturbed. Kenyon Cox, the traditionalist muralist critic, inveighed against modern ideas that threatened established painterly technique. Cox and his fellow traditionalists preached from their academic strongholds that modernism was a threat to beauty and cultural unity. They charged that it destroyed aesthetic forms, and modernists seemingly disregarded all the

lessons of the past. New theories that so interested young activists scarcely penetrated the academic studios.⁵²

Conservative criticisms were but pinpricks compared to the shock of war.⁵³ The war profoundly influenced young writers such as Randolph Bourne and Van Wyck Brooks. Bourne became infamous for his attacks on intellectuals who supported American participation in Europe's fight. His bitter literary assaults reflected a deep-seated disappointment in the United States. Through all the miseries, however, Bourne retained a fundamental faith in democracy and refused to reject entirely the ideal of progress; nonetheless, a small post-war group of intellectuals emphasized their disillusionment with America. Unlike Bourne, who died shortly after the Armistice, Brooks wrote into the twenties and beyond. As a prophet of modernism, he challenged fundamental American assumptions about life. In The Wine of the Puritans (1915), he wrote that Americans "never think what life is---we are continually intent on what life brings." Brooks counselled Americans to reject materialism and develop a "European sense of art."⁵⁴ But the war brought into question the future of European culture, and what role America might play in the post-war decade.

After the war, Harold E. Stearns invited Brooks

and twenty-nine other American authors to comment on the nation's cultural condition. In Civilization in the United States (1922), Stearns seemed disconsolate, maintaining that "we have no heritage or tradition to which to cling except those that have already withered and turned to dust."⁵⁵ His essay was not, however, a nihilistic tract. Although Stearns and the others criticized America, they were not prepared to write off the future. Stearns asked "Has not the magic of America been hidden under a fog of ugliness by those who never really loved it, who never knew our natural gaiety and high spirits and eagerness for knowledge? They have the upper hand now---but who would dare to prophesy that they can keep it?" Brooks' article, "The Literary Life," examined the dilemma of the American author. How, he wondered, could one display genius and satisfy "the mob?" Republican prosperity seemed shallow to him, but he refused to submit to current trends. "As for us, weak as many of us are, ignorant, isolated, all too easily satisfied, and scarcely as yet immune from the solicitation of the mob, we still have the advantage, that an age of reaction is an age that stirs the few to consciousness of themselves."⁵⁶ In finding themselves, the intellectuals implied that they might help the nation find itself.

Some fled America in search of self and relevant

values. They called themselves "the lost generation." Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Floyd Dell used the phrase. It was useful to them, for it described their disillusionment and pursuit of existential meaning.⁵⁷ Nihilism and alienation were themes that ran through their prose and their critical success (before and after the twenties) helped stamp an indelible impression on the post-war decade.⁵⁸ But these writers did not capture the minds of the masses. Most of their contemporaries did not read them and found Zane Grey, Edgar Rice Burroughs, or Douglas Fairbanks more interesting.

H. L. Mencken was not surprised, nor was Sinclair Lewis. Mencken's vivisection of American society was often brutal. As the era's acknowledged phrase maker, he wrote about the "boobification of the American people," and the petty pretensions of the "booboisie." The shortcomings of democracy were his favorite subjects, but whether Mencken was a nihilistic cynic or a defender of disappearing traditions, he had a large following, a group that considered itself especially civilized because they agreed with the Baltimore sage's observations.⁵⁹ Lewis was just as devastating in his satire, In Main Street (1920), the citizens of Gopher Prairie have all the wrong motivations. In order to get ahead,

they cheat their neighbors and dupe ignorant farmers. With the publication of Babbitt (1922), he reached a critical apex. George F. Babbitt was morally inconsistent, completely bourgeois, and without self-awareness. Most readers concluded that Babbitt typified the American middle class, and many Europeans believed that the Lewis character was the embodiment of the average American. Mencken and Lewis exposed the foibles of the people and helped define social issues.⁶⁰

The conservative philosophers who preached the New Humanism were also highly critical of American society. They developed their ideology long before the war and honed their arguments during the twenties. Paul Elmer More and Irving Babbitt, the leading exponents of the movement, were essentially literary critics who expanded their studies into the fields of philosophy and social comment. They held that the industrial and urban mass society of the modern age was destroying America. Technology was a primary problem facing all of humanity and, they concluded, the resultant complication of life could only be dealt with if Americans rededicated themselves to traditional values. Babbitt and More stressed the sanctity of individual freedom which they believed could not be preserved in a technocratic machine dominated society.⁶¹

In 1925, conservative art critic Lloyd Goodrich

drew a parallel between jazz music and the machine. Just as jazz bands sounded out incessant rhythms, so did great machines keep time with dulling regularity. Modern man never had a chance to rest, to contemplate the finer experiences in life. Goodrich concluded that "We have lost all repose...everything is jazz."⁶² Drama and art expert Sheldon Cheney was convinced that the mechanization of society influenced life on all levels. "The conquest of mechanics," he argued, "affected life and influenced culture more than changing political institutions, more than the crumbling of the religions of faith, and more than the spread of the scientific spirit...." While Goodrich was maudlin, and Cheney somewhat detached, the editor of Creative Art chose action. He urged artists to accept the machine as a manifestation of modern society and admit that "the machine had come to stay, and this being so, it must be controlled and made to give us beauty."⁶³

The question remained, however, whether America could be brought to develop an aesthetic sense. The traditionalist and expatriate writers both depicted a society that was venal, frivolous, and valueless. Contemporaries gave the era its own folklore; it was the jazz age, and the flapper reigned supreme. Flaming youth seemed hell bent on pleasure. Awash in gin, they

hurtled themselves in automobiles from one party to the next. Never had Americans seemed so materialistic. Mass advertising pushed everything from radios and phonographs to mail order careers. Voracious consumers rushed to purchase "the latest thing." The average American's life was as predictable as the giant machines he manipulated.⁶⁴

These criticisms had little effect on the population. Most Americans (if they were aware of the social critiques at all) believed that the comments were directed at someone else. Everyone was not caught up in jazz, nor did citizens ponder their fate in light of dehumanizing technology. In college, the vocational fields were overcrowded, and the goals of youth differed little from those of their parents. Although the American young appeared unconventional, there was no overall desire to reorder priorities. Youth continued to embrace the business ethic and the American system. Society was changing, but also resisting change. Observers who saw social revolution all around them seemed somehow uninformed in many particulars.⁶⁵

In the twenties, some of the best known Americans were those who knew how to express traditional values within the framework of modern communication. Evangelists Aimee Semple McPherson and Billy Sunday

were experts at it. Although their sermons stressed fundamentalist values, they used the techniques of mass entertainment to attract the faithful.⁶⁶ Some aesthetes and critics argued that the arts required the same kind of promotion.

Whether traditionalist or modernist, technology was used to promote viewpoints. In 1928, old guard art critic Forbes Watson observed that the nation had grown "keenly aware of art." He attributed the public's art consciousness to a vast new communications network. Just as machines created prosperity, Watson argued, they could be used to foster aesthetic appreciation.⁶⁷ Critics and artists tried new ways to mold national artistic tastes. Differences between rival camps were as pronounced as in the past, but aesthetic battles were waged on a broader front. The great cultural figures of history had long contended that "art reflects life." As in the past, the warring groups of the twenties disagreed not only about the meaning of life, but also its artistic expression.⁶⁸

During the Weimar period, American and German intellectuals renewed cultural contacts. The war produced a cultural embargo, but with the Armistice signed, intellectual curiosity replaced wartime hatreds. American traditionalists argued that neither war nor

revolution could shake the foundations of German culture. They evaluated Weimar culture according to the standards of the past. They expected the Germans to excel in certain areas, and they believed that post-war Germany would withstand the encroachments of modernism. As a German correspondent surmised in 1929, there was an affinity between Germany and the United States, and "that affinity is to be found in a common struggle against materialistic and machine civilization and in a belief in the dominance of spirit over reason...."⁶⁹ Not surprisingly, modernists offered a different interpretation. They also anticipated German excellence, but looked to the younger generation, and a few of youth's pre-war cultural heroes such as Arnold Schoenberg and Wassily Kandinsky. These Americans believed that Germans were, by nature, disciplined, orderly, exact, and precise, and these traits were ideally suited to serve the new art forms of the machine age.

Both sides tended to stereotype Germans, and, from their respective vantage points, American intellectuals and artists expected German culture to flourish in the post-war decade. In music, the Germans were pre-eminent. In drama, Joseph Wood Krutch noted that the Germans maintained excellent acting and directorial skills while developing new methods. Film reviewer

Robert Benchley reported that the Germans blended perfectly the dramatic and technical elements of cinema production.⁷⁰ While tradition favored Germans in these areas, it tended to work against them in painting and architecture. Americans expected less but were still interested, and in Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the nation's modernists discovered artists whose banner they followed long after the passing of the Weimar Republic. With varying degrees of expectation, each field produced its share of triumphs and failures. Entering the twenties, many Americans predicted rewarding artistic relationships.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

¹Nancy Ross, "German Main Street," Saturday Evening Post, 205 (October 22, 1932), 21.

²James Stuart Olson, The Ethnic Dimension in History, Vol. I (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 25-26. The population figures for colonial America are repeated in a number of sources and come from Albert B. Faust, The German Element in the United States, Vol. I (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909), 285. John A. Howard, The Tragedy of German-America: The Germans in the United States of America during the Nineteenth Century- and After (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1940); Henry Pochman, German Culture in America, 1600-1900 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957); Theodore Huebner, The Germans in America (New York: Chilton, 1962); Richard O'Connor, The German Americans: An Informal History (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1968); and La Vern J. Rippley, The German Americans (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976) all contain chapters on the early German settlement of America.

³Carl Wittke, Refugees of Revolution: The German

Forty-Eighters in America (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1952), 13-16, 61-62. Wittke breaks down the professions of those who immigrated. See also Robert Henry Billigmier, Americans from Germany: A Study in Cultural Diversity (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1974), and for the impact on Germany and the contemporary political debates concerning emigration Mack Walker, Germany and the Immigration, 1816-1885 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), 103-52.

⁴O'Connor, The German Americans, 367.

⁵New York Evening Journal, 28 February 1902, quoted in Sander A. Diamond, The Nazi Movement in the United States, 1924-41 (Ithaca, New York and London: Cornell University Press, 1974), 37; David Ewen, Music Comes to America (New York: Allen, Towne and Heath, Inc., 1947), 83-86.

⁶In the nineteenth century, more than nine thousand Americans studied in Germany. Before 1850 about two hundred Americans attended German universities. A variety of factors account for the increase. See Richard Hofstadter and Walter P. Metzger, The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1955), 367-412. The authors also point out that a disproportionate number

of students came from Harvard. Charles Franklin Thwing, The American and the German University, One Hundred Years of History (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1928), covers the subject in greater detail but is short on analysis. On the medical profession, see Thomas Neville Bonner, American Doctors and German Universities, A Chapter in International Relations, 1870-1914 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963).

⁷Edward N. Saveth, American Historians and European Immigrants, 1875-1925 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), 20-21, 25, and Frederick C. Luebecke, Bonds of Loyalty: German Americans and World War I (De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974).

⁸Roger Gilman, "Estimate of Modern Architecture in Germany," Parnassus, 2 (May, 1930), 1.

⁹Luebecke, Bonds of Loyalty, 59-62.

¹⁰Germans were well known for their military exploits. German mercenaries fought against America in the Revolutionary War, and Prussians were thought of as the ultimate soldiers. When Bismarck secured the emperor's crown for the Prussian King, many Americans envisioned the development of a militaristic state. See Clara E. Schieber, The Transformation of American Sentiment Toward Germany, 1870-1914 (Boston: Cornhill Publishing Co., 1923). For a quick survey of American

diplomacy before 1900 with a brief reference to German and American confrontations, see Robert L. Beisner, From the Old Diplomacy to the New, 1865-1900 (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1975).

¹¹On the Kaiser, see Michael Balfour, The Kaiser and His Times (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1964), and Virginia Cowles, The Kaiser (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1963).

¹²Henry F. Pringle, Theodore Roosevelt: A Biography (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1931), 341-42, 364-66. For comparisons of Roosevelt and Wilhelm, see Howard K. Beale, Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956), 442-47. Oswald Garrison Villard related the story on Butler in "The Rebirth," Survey Graphic, 14 (February 1, 1929), 608. Hugo Münsterberg, American Traits from the Point of View of a German (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1902), 5.

¹³Lubeke, Bonds of Loyalty, 77-78.

¹⁴"American Sympathies in the War," Literary Digest, 43 (November 14, 1914), 939. See also Ernest R. May, The World and American Isolation, 1914-1917 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959); Carl Witte, German-Americans and the World War (Columbus: The Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society,

1939); Barbara Tuchman, The Zimmermann Telegram (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1966), and Luebeke, Bonds of Loyalty, 83-308. On Wilson, see Arthur S. Link, Wilson (Princeton University Press, 1947-).

¹⁵William S. Halperin, Germany Tried Democracy: A Political History of the Reich from 1918 to 1933 (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1946), 92-93, 154; Richard M. Watt, The Kings Depart: The Tragedy of Germany, Versailles and the German Revolution (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), 340-45; and A. J. Ryder, The German Revolution of 1918: A Study of German Socialism in War and Revolt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 111-87.

¹⁶See Thomas Bailey, Woodrow Wilson and the Lost Peace (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1944), and Woodrow Wilson and the Great Betrayal (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1945).

¹⁷On American attitudes see, Klaus F. Schoenthal, "American Attitudes Toward Germany, 1918-1932" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio State University, 1959); George H. Mead, "The Repulsiveness of the German State," Historical Outlook, 9 (November, 1918), 417-419; New York Times, 27 March 1919; Oswald Garrison Villard, "The People Are Paying," Nation, 115 (July 26, 1922), 87-88; William McDonald, "Foreign Correspondence," Nation, 110

(February 7, 1920), 172. On the Treaty of Berlin see Barbara Ann Wechter, "The United States and Weimar Germany, 1919-1929" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1960), 133-47, and Betty Glad, Charles Evans Hughes and the Illusion of Innocence: A Study in American Diplomacy (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966), 216.

¹⁸Halperin, Germany Tried Democracy, 247-69.

¹⁹See Henry Ashby Turner, Stresemann and the Politics of the Weimar Republic (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

²⁰Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles stipulated that Germany was responsible for the war. Although the Germans signed the treaty, many post-war politicians did not accept this part of the peace. Conservatives and reactionaries never let the issue die. Halperin, Germany Tried Democracy, 301-04, 312-15, and Lewis Hertzman, DNVP: Right Wing Opposition in the Weimar Republic, 1918-1924 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963).

²¹Coolidge quoted in L. Ethan Ellis, Republican Foreign Policy, 1921-1933 (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1968), 193; Joan Hoff Wilson, American Business and Foreign Policy, 1920-1933 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1971), 123-56.

Robert H. Ferrell points out that the Americans refused to admit any connection because it would have "openly involved Americans in European affairs, in American Diplomacy in the Great Depression: Hoover-Stimson Foreign Policy, 1929-33 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 110. William Appleman Williams contends that America was involved not only in Europe but throughout the world in an attempt to expand and protect American markets and sources of raw materials. See William Appleman Williams, "The Legend of Isolationism in the 1920's," Science and Society, 18 (Winter, 1954), 1-20, also his The Tragedy of American Foreign Policy, Rev. ed. (Dell Publishing Co., 1962), and Carl Parrini's Heir to Empire: United States Economic Diplomacy, 1916-1923 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1969). On French diplomacy see Judith M. Hughes, To the Maginot Line: The Politics of French Military Preparation in the 1920's (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971).

²²"Americans Buying Heavily in Germany," New York Times, 9 June 1920. Wilson, American Business and Foreign Policy, 1925-1929 (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1961), 221-22; Wechter, "The United States and Weimar Germany," 312-39.

²³See Jon Jacobson, Locarno Policy: Germany and the West, 1925-1929 (Princeton: Princeton University

Press, 1972); Ellis, Frank B. Kellogg and American Foreign Relations, 193-210; Robert H. Ferrell, Peace in Their Time: The Origins of the Kellogg Briand Pact (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952). For a brief traditional view of America's diplomacy in the twenties see John D. Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 1921-1933 (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1960), 130-52, 241-59.

²⁴Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 260-80; David A. Shannon, Between the Wars, 1919-1941 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965), 109-146. On the Great Crash see Richard Sobel, The Great Bull Market: Wall Street in the 1920's (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1968), 129-61.

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²⁶H. L. Mencken, "Hitlerismus," American Mercury, 30 (December 1, 1933), 506, and Dorothy Thompson, "Back to Blood and Iron: Germany Goes German Again," Saturday Evening Post, 205 (May 3, 1933), 6.

²⁷Walter Laqueur, Weimar, A Cultural History, 1918-1933 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), 164; Henry Pachter, Modern Germany: A Social, Cultural, and Political History (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1978), 33-46; and Gerhard Masur, Imperial Berlin (New York: Basic Books, 1971).

²⁸"Revolution Reflected in the New Art of Germany," Current Opinion, 67 (October, 1919), 254-56).

²⁹A number of works cover artist's reactions to the end of the war, see Gay, Weimar Culture, 70-77; Laqueur, Weimar, A Cultural History, 25-40; Istvan Deak,

Weimar's Left Wing Intellectuals: A Political History of the Weltbühne and Its Circle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 65-82; John Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period: The New Sobriety, 1917-1933 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 17-56.

³⁰Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 45-46; "A Council of Intellectual Workers," Nation, 108 (February 8, 1919), 218. See also Laqueur, Weimar, A Cultural History, 170-71; Peter Gay, Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1968), 70-101; Otto Friedrich, Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920's (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1972), 145-66.

³¹Robert Weine was the director of the Expressionist film The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1919).

³²On the role of German and European avant garde in politics see John Henry Zammuto, "The Politicization of the Berlin Avant-Garde," in "Art and Action in the Metropolis: The Berlin Avant-Garde, 1900-1930" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1978), 278-351; and Theda Shapiro, Painters and Politics: The European Avant Garde and Society, 1900-1925 (New York: Elsevier, 1976).

³³Oud and Brecht quoted in Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 32, 104. See also Zammuto,

"Art and Action."

³⁴Lion Feuchtwanger, "Germany Turns from French to English Literature," Literary Digest, 96 (January 7, 1928), 25. See also O. E. Dunlap, Jr., "The Etheral Theatre of Radio," Theatre, 45 (May, 1927), 70.

³⁵Pound quoted in Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 103. See also Maxwell Fry, Art in a Machine Age: A Critique of Contemporary Life Through the Medium of Architecture (London: Meutchen and Co., 1969); and "Art in the Machine Age," Creative Art, 3 (July, 1928), 79; and Urich Conrads, ed., Programs and Manifestos on 20th Century Architecture, translated by Michael Bullock (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1970). For the effects of mechanization on society, see Siegfried Giedion, Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948).

³⁶Werfel quoted in Allen W. Porterfield, "Germany Takes Up Books Against a Sea of Troubles," New York Times 5 August 1923.

³⁷In 1920, many of the leading cultural figures were not yet forty. For example: Art: George Grosz (27), Otto Dix (29), Karl Schmidt-Rottluff (36); Architecture: Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (34), Walter Gropius (37), Ernst May (38); Music: Kurt Weill (20), Paul

Hindemith (25), Alban Berg (32); Theatre: Bertolt Brecht (22), Ernst Toller (27), Erwin Piscator (27); Cinema: Fritz Lang (26), Ernst Lubitsch (28), G. W. Pabst (35). There were, of course, older leaders who shared a general preference for modern ideas and often served as teachers, e.g., Wassily Kandinsky (54), and Arnold Schoenberg (46).

³⁸Patcher, Modern Germany, 141-42; Wolfgang Sauer, "Weimar Culture: Experiments in Modernism," Social Research, 39 (Summer, 1972), 254-84; H. H. Wollenberg, Fifty Years of German Cinema (London: The Falcon Press, 1948), 18-19. See also "German Censorship of Literary Mud," Literary Digest, 92 (January 22, 1927), 28-29, and Walter R. Brooks, "Foreigners Are Queer," Outlook, 156 (October 29, 1930), 335-36).

³⁹Gordon A. Craig, Germany, 1866-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 489-91; Richard Grütz-macher, "Oswald Spengler," Living Age, (July 7, 1923), 26; and H. Stuart Hughes, Oswald Spengler: A Critical Estimate (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952); and Kohn, The Mind of Germany, 334-36, 340-44. See also John Dewey's review of Spengler's Man and Technics (1932) in "Self-Server or Frankenstein," Saturday Review of Literature, 8 (March 12, 1932), 582.

⁴⁰Thomas Mann, "To German Youth," Living Age, 341 (November, 1931); Thomas Mann, "German Letter,"

Dial, 73 (December, 1922), 645-54; Kohn, The Mind of Germany, 252-58. Those who defended the "old" values often disagreed among themselves. The reactions to the Weimar Republic and modernity was multi-faceted. I have referred to the defenders of old values most frequently as traditionalists or conservatives. This did not necessarily mean that they were of one mind. The same could be said of the modernists. See Walter Laqueur, "The Role of the Intelligentsia in the Weimar Republic," Social Research, 39 (Summer, 1972), 213-227; Henry Pachter, "The Intellectuals and the State of Weimar," Social Research, 39 (Summer, 1972), 228-53; Klemperer, Germany's New Conservatism; Fritz Stern, The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of German Ideology (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), and Friedrich Meinecke, Cosmopolitanism and the National State, translated by Robert B. Kimber (Princeton University Press, 1970).

⁴¹Heinrich von Münchenhausen, "Friedrich Schmidt, Average German," Survey Graphic, 14 (February, 1929), 576-77; Lion Feuchtwanger, "Germany Turns from French to English Literature," Literary Digest, 96 (January 7, 1928), 25.

⁴²A. W. G. Randall, "Main Currents in Contemporary German Literature," Dial, 70 (April, 1921), 422-27. Randall

surmised that "It may be questioned whether political events- even events of tremendous magnitude- have the important influence which is commonly ascribed to them;" Count Harry Kessler, In the Twenties: The Diaries of Harry Kessler, translated by Charles Kessler (New York: Holt, Reinhardt, and Winston, 1971), 64.

⁴³"Organized Crime in Germany," Literary Digest, 100 (March 16, 1929), 20; Gerhard Huebner, "Books for Germany," Nation, 117 (October 3, 1923), 355.

⁴⁴Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 98-99. Brecht's and other's approval of America did not necessarily extend to the American political or economic system. Later in the twenties, many young German intellectuals became increasingly critical of the United States. George Kaiser and Ernst Toller expressed grave doubts about an uncontrolled dictatorship of technology. See Laqueur, Weimar, A Cultural History, 32-33.

⁴⁵Henrietta Straus, "Fifteen Minutes with Richard Strauss," Nation, 113 (August 3, 1921), 127; "The Unknown American Soul," Literary Digest, 105 (June 28, 1930), 19.

⁴⁶Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 54-55.

⁴⁷Count Hermann Keyserling, America Set Free (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1929), 536,

522-23, 123-24, 427-66. In Europe, translated by Maurice Samuel (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1925), 385, Keyserling asserted that America was a threat to European culture. See also his The Travel Diary of a Philosopher, translated by J. Holyrod Reece, II (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1925), 279-360. Despite his popularity, most of America's serious thinkers considered Keyserling a minor figure. See C. E. Ayres, "Pale, Sickly Thought," Bookman, 67 (August, 1928), 681-83.

⁴⁸John A. Kouwenhoven, The Arts in Modern American Civilization (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1948), 1. See also Henry Steele Commager, The American Mind: An Interpretation of American Thought and Character Since the 1880's (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), 406-443.

⁴⁹See B. E. H. Chamaj, "The Double Attraction: A History of the National Artistic Will, 1890-1919," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1961); H. Wayne Morgan, The New Muses: Art in American Culture, 1865-1920 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978); Oliver W. Larkin, Art and Life in America, rev. ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960).

⁵⁰On the political and social atmosphere before the war, see George E. Mowry, The Era of Theodore

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⁵¹Henry F. May, The End of American Innocence: The First Years of Our Own Time, 1912-1919 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 285-87; Larkin, Art and Life in America, 321-25; Joshua C. Taylor, The Fine Arts in America (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 151-65.

⁵²Barbara Rose, American Art Since 1900: A Critical History (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), 36-87.

⁵³For an introduction to the intellectuals' dilemma with the war, see Loren Baritz, ed., The Culture of the Twenties (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1970), 5-40.

⁵⁴Brooks quoted in Alfred Kazin, On Native Grounds: An Interpretation of Modern American Prose Literature (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1942), 79. For capsule comments on Brooks and Bourne, see Kazin, On Native Grounds, 179-85; Roderick Nash, The Nervous Generation

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⁵⁵Stearns quoted in Nash, Nervous Generation, 43.

⁵⁶Van Wyck Brooks, "The Literary Life," in Harold E. Stearns ed., Civilization in the United States, An Inquiry by Thirty Americans (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1922), 193, 197.

⁵⁷For an explanation of the term see, Nash, Nervous Generation, 117-19.

⁵⁸Frederick J. Hoffmann, The Twenties: American Writing in the Post-War Decade, rev. ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1962), 87-97, 102-07, 113-14, 133-43; Kazin, On Native Grounds, 327-41, 315-24; Malcom Cowley, Exile's Return: A Narrative of Ideas (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1934), 7-15; Paul A. Carter, The Twenties in America, 2nd ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1975), 59-71; Baritz, The Culture of the Twenties, 297-329.

⁵⁹On Mencken and the American Mercury, see Hoffmann, The Twenties, 348-55. Roderick Nash admits that

Mencken lashed out at America with an "acidulous" pen but claims that Mencken tried to defend the American tradition of liberty. Nash, Nervous Generation, 59-62.

⁶⁰Spiller, ed., Literary History of the United States, 1922-1927; Kazin, On Native Grounds, 218-26; Hoffmann, The Twenties, 408-15. David Shannon charges that Sinclair Lewis' works have failed the test of time, and he is surprised that Lewis' and Mencken's popularity was as great as it was. David A. Shannon, Between the Wars, America, 1919-1941 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965), 96-97. Malcom Cowley is similarly unimpressed in Think Back On Us, A Contemporary Chronicle of the 1930's, edited by Henry Dan Piper (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois Press, 1967), 1-13.

⁶¹Curti, The Growth of American Thought, 624-25; J. David Hoeveler, Jr., The New Humanism: A Critique of Modern America (Charlottseville: University Press of Virginia, 1977), vii, 76-78, 188-89; Cowley, Think Back on Us, 9-11. For the contemporary response to the philosophy, see Henry Seidel Canby, "The New Humanists," Saturday Review of Literature, 6 (February 22, 1930), 749-51, and Robert Shofer, "The Definition of Humanism," Hound and Horn, 3 (July-September, 1930), 533-56).

⁶²Lloyd Goodrich, "Tradition and Jazz," Arts, 7 (June, 1925), 347.

⁶³Sheldon Cheney, "Theatre in the Machine Age," Theatre Arts Monthly, 10 (August, 1926), 504; Editorial, Creative Art, 3 (July, 1928), 72. See also Gilbert M. Ostrander, American Civilization in the First Machine Age, 1890-1940, (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1970), 199-236; and Gidieon, Mechanization Takes Command, 9-31.

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(New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 365-76;
Baritz, The Culture of the Twenties, 161-209; Paul A.
Carter, Another Part of the Twenties (New York: Colum-
bia University Press, 1977), 41-62.

⁶⁶Nash, Nervous Generation, 149-52.

⁶⁷Forbes Watson, "Land Aware of Art," New York
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⁶⁸Andre Siegfried, "Mechanization of Culture,"
Fortnightly Review, 133 (June, 1930), 770-72; Sheldon
Cheney, "Theatre in the Machine Age," Theatre Arts
Monthly, 10 (April, 1926), 504; "Machine Crushes Man's
Feeling for Beauty Laubenthal Believes," Musical Courier,
106 (February 25, 1933), 7.

⁶⁹A. Menar of de Lowis, "Letter from Germany,"
Saturday Review of Literature, 5 (July 6, 1929), 1164.

⁷⁰Joseph Wood Krutch, "Genius of Max Reinhardt,"
Nation, 125 (December 7, 1927), 666; Robert C. Benchley,
"Appreciation: The Last Laugh," Life, 85 (March 5,
1925), 18.

"You will, for one thing, almost instantly discover that this new effort of the Germans to secure a place in the sun is only our own problem all over again, for we, too, have been barred from world recognition in the congress of arts and any effort of another nation to seek a new path up Parnassus is bound to be interesting to us--- is bound to suggest ideas to us."

Henry McBride (1931)

CHAPTER II
THE AMERICAN REACTION TO GERMAN
PAINTING AND ARCHITECTURE

In 1928, Forbes Watson wrote that Americans were more than ever before "keenly aware of art." He claimed that art was now playing a significant role in the lives of average citizens. Watson expected many gratifying returns from this satisfying state of affairs. The nation's artists had labored too long in the shadow of the more famous Europeans, and the period of feeling "inferiority over art" was about to pass. The republic was primed to bring art to the people: "The artist is surrounded on every side by the workings of a vast democratic system of education which...is making idealistic efforts to democratize esthetic appreciation."¹

Painting and architecture were the classic visual arts. These two primary expressions of national culture had much in common. Their importance required no defense. Art and architecture gave intellectuals visual proof of the nation's vitality. But the two cultural forms were not always easily understood. Art had its "isms" and architecture its aphorisms. Modernity

further complicated an already complex cultural landscape as warring critics attempted to lead the democratic masses toward greater cultural awareness.

After victory in 1918, a professional critical community was prepared to guide the novice in artistic matters.² New York was the nation's unquestioned art capital, and many influential critics wrote for the city's leading newspapers. Henry McBride's columns were in the Sun, Royal Cortissoz's in the Herald Tribune, and Elizabeth L. Cary reported for the Times. Their viewpoints were discussed in leading art journals such as Arts, Art News, and Creative Art. The interpretive political journals also kept pace with developments as The Nation, The New Republic, and Living Age featured articles on art and helped introduce the country to regional art centers in Pittsburgh, Chicago and San Francisco. Although concentrating on architecture, Lewis Mumford's articles often linked new ideas in building with modern art.³ Even the staid professional journals, Architectural Record, American Architect, and Architectural Forum, began to reflect the disagreements between the more open-minded architects and the old guard.⁴ Newspapers and the standard publications of informed opinion also discussed architectural ideas in the twenties.

In 1919, the United States seemed ready to match its economic successes with artistic ones, but the study of German art did not seem a logical starting point. Shortly before his death in the same year, Kenyon Cox dismissed almost all the work German painters had committed to canvass over the previous four hundred years. "Whenever the sublime, the beautiful, or even the tasteful is attempted, German art is stillborn. It is difficult to tell which is more fatal to it, the lack of inspiration or the lack of taste, and still more difficult to tell which is more distressing." His blanket condemnation included German painting of the early twentieth century. To Cox, the Germans were almost genetically incapable of producing great art. His indictment was all inclusive and went beyond condemning the art of a defeated enemy.⁵ At the time, the assessment did not create much of a stir, for German art did not have the appeal of the French or the veneration given the English. Nevertheless, within a few years after the war, German art acquired a number of American devotees.

The American interest was not totally without precedent. Albrecht Dürer and Hans Holbein were identified with the artistic glories of the seventeenth century.⁶ German artists also achieved some notoriety in the nineteenth century. Between 1849 and the Civil

War, the Düsseldorf School was popular in the United States. Its artists were polished craftsmen whose scientific technique epitomized German skill. Their idealized historical subject matter appealed to the American public and attracted native artists. A Düsseldorf gallery was opened in New York where the public marveled at the meticulous detail of the German paintings. Emmanuel Leutze, whose Washington Crossing the Delaware (1850) became one of America's most famous art works, studied at the Düsseldorf Academy. Through Düsseldorf, Americans came into contact with the Old World, escaped provincialism, and became familiar with new professional standards in art.⁷

Munich was seen in much the same light later in the century. In the seventies and eighties, the Bavarian capital became a cosmopolitan art center. Munich realism owed its heritage to the seventeenth century Spanish and Dutch masters and to some contemporary French influences. Wilhelm Leibl was perhaps the most famous Munich painter. His broad brush strokes and subtle use of light and dark tones gave a rich, "modern" look to realistic subject matter. As the reputation of Munich grew, its Academy attracted many young Americans who found Paris unrewarding. Frank Duveneck enrolled as a student of Wilhelm von Dietz. William Merritt Chase

also studied in Munich. But Munich did not maintain its position because the style did not permit the growth and variety of French Impressionism. The Academy's art was in vogue for a few years, but the school's appeal faded.⁸

In America, the attraction of Munich gave way to indifference toward German painting. During the reign of Wilhelm II (1890-1918), German art was virtually unknown in America, so great was the dominance of succeeding "Paris schools." German Expressionism was the most significant movement of the pre-war era in Central Europe. Expressionism defied easy definition. Its proponents reacted strongly against the art academies and the general state of society. They wished to startle the self-satisfied middle class and Germany's authoritarian government. They rebelled against the falsities of intellectualism and bourgeois life. In the search for artistic meaning, they emphasized a return to beginnings and much of their work exhibited primitive African and Chinese influences. In the United States, neither of its leading schools, Die Brücke (1905) nor Die Blaue Reiter (1911), created much excitement. Expressionism, however, did influence one important American artist. With the backing of Alfred Stieglitz, Marsden Hartley went to Berlin and met Wassily Kandinsky and other members of the Blaue

Reiter. Expressionism's intense emotionalism appealed to Hartley and some of his finest abstract works were created in Berlin before the war. But only Kandinsky and Franz Marc were represented at the Armory Show in 1913. And America's incomplete knowledge of the Expressionists led artists Walt Kuhn and Arthur B. Davies to conclude that most of them were simply imitators of the Frency Fauves.⁹ Until after 1919, the war's cultural embargo effectively ended further debate.

With the war ended, the negative images persisted. Old concepts remained intact, and Kenyon Cox was not alone. George Wyer claimed in the International Studio that German art was "fabricated to please the German mind" which was "unimaginative," materialistic, and conditioned to "authoritarianism and military expediency." These traits resulted in the Germans converting themselves "into the most unoriginal nation in the world." Wartime prejudices aside, many critics continued in this vein well into the Weimar period. Lloyd Goodrich, a traditionalist who commented regularly on New York exhibits for Arts, placed Weimar's art firmly within the accepted stereotype. The Germans loved "concrete fact and money detail," their brand of realism revealed "emptiness to the point of caricature, [and a] freedom from any fear of the ugly." In surveying contemporary

art for Americans, Forbes Watson predicted a bleak future for German painting in the United States "largely because our eyes are so trained to the Paris product."¹⁰ But German art had its defenders, and it became their task to show the public that the doubters were wrong.

American observers were not sure what to make of Germany's November 1918 Revolution. During the war, the American public tended to see the Germans as a benighted people who were the dupes of "Kaiserism." The old separation of attitudes between the government and the people it ruled remained. As the Kaiser and the aristocracy he represented fell, the German people seemed on the verge of accepting democracy. The reports of Communist activity were disconcerting, but events moved rapidly and uprisings in Berlin and Munich were soon brought under control. Although many cynics continued to vent their hostility, Americans grew increasingly interested in democracy in Germany. Much had happened in the first year after the war, and artists and intellectuals were frequently at the center of events.¹¹

In October of 1919, Cesar Searchinger, freelance journalist for many American publications, reported to the New York Evening Post that "Art has influenced the revolution, more perhaps than the revolution has influenced art, for pacifistic canvasses grew to maturity in the quiet

of many a studio in the days of November." In the preceding months, artists issued a series of political and social manifestos. For a few glorious moments, Germany's artists seemed capable of uniting social justice and individualism.¹² Americans commented on the euphoria but did not concentrate on art's political implications. Most tried to place artistic developments within a traditional framework. The Weimar Republic was the government but not the soul of Germany. In 1922, Ludwig Lewisohn wrote that "The hungry and distracted republic of today has little left in common with the empire of 1871 except precisely that preoccupation, that impassioned desire to comprehend and reshape through thought or art both man and nature."¹³ Lewisohn and many other Americans hoped for a new Germany, one that would retain only that which was exemplary in the old.

Between 1919 and 1923, critics prepared the way not only for German art but for art in general as a cultural force. Art was described as a cultural bridge, an aesthetic device to bring nations together. A. W. Walkely, a frequent contributor to British and American art journals, argued that art was a liberator. The painter emphasized common human ideals and spoke "to all mankind, to the whole universe even...." The conditions of modern life also dictated that there should be a fusion of concepts

and a growing commitment to the world's community of ideas. Art would now have a special role in showing and interpreting complex contemporary life. Lewis Mumford reasoned that "So far as there is life at all in [our] mechanical civilization, modern art expresses it; and until we develop something better in society we would do well to make the most of it."¹⁴ "To make the most of it," international co-operation was essential.

Nonetheless, modern art was unpopular in many quarters. The conservative critics and the democratic masses still demanded the assurances of representational painting. One disgruntled New York Times subscriber condemned modernism's meaningless abstractions and objected to "the flood of foreign art propaganda on American shores."¹⁵ In this setting, the Expressionism of Weimar hardly seemed likely to suit the artistic palates of Americans. Two men, one an exile and the other a respected authority on American culture, confronted the situation and attempted to educate the public and defeat the conservatives.¹⁶

Herman George Scheffauer was an American writer who worked in Berlin from 1915 until his death in 1927. He was familiar with German art movements and was one of the few Americans in Germany in touch with current trends. He published with American periodicals such as Freeman

and Dial and authored over thirty books. In 1924, he wrote The New Vision in the German Arts, which critized American society and extolled the virtues of Germany's republican art.¹⁷

Scheffauer maintained that America was a victim of the machine age. American art had "a normalcy about as rigid, dead, and uniform as the interchangeable parts of our automobiles." Expressionism, he claimed, could provide Americans with an artistic theory that offered an alternative to cultural sterility. He was only partially successful in his attempt to make Expressionism intelligible, admitting, as many had before him, that there was no acceptable definition. This fundamental dilemma did not shake his resolve, and he steadfastly pursued the idea that Expressionism had struck a new artistic vein. Scheffauer de-emphasized the complexities of the movement and stressed its vitality and activism.¹⁸

One of the primary purposes of The New Vision was to introduce English readers to Expressionist artists. Although Scheffauer discussed architects, playwrights, and poets, painters were his favorites. It was their early work that established the movement as a living force. He especially admired Kandinsky, Marc, Paul Campendonck, and Paul Klee. He repected George Grosz for his courage and integrity. Grosz's political cartoons

illustrated the power art exerted on society. The outstanding common trait of the Expressionists was their intense individuality. Scheffauer contended that the movement had a great deal to offer America's art and its artists. He reasoned that the intensity, intellectualism, and individualism "which characterizes the German soul, can only be of inestimable service to those forces full of promise which are struggling for artistic liberty and recognition in the America of today."¹⁹

Sheldon Cheney was not as impassioned as Scheffauer, but agreed that Expressionism was a vital movement in modern art. Cheney was a leading writer on culture and contributed many books and articles on art, theatre, film, and architecture. A Primer of Modern Art (1924) was an effort to introduce the layman to contemporary art. To Cheney, Expressionism was the dominant school in Central Europe, perhaps the entire continent. He admired the bold, intense feeling evident in the work of its painters. The canvasses of Oskar Kokoschka and Campendonck were already hanging in the museums of Austria and Germany, and he hoped that their paintings would soon be on display in the United States. Cheney also wrote that Expressionist influences were evident in American artist Albert Block's figure paintings.²⁰

The art of Kokoschka was particularly noteworthy.

Cheney maintained that he was "the most significant figure in mid-European art, ranking in importance with Picasso and Matisse." Although Kokoschka was not a native German, Cheney thought that he represented the main currents in Expressionism. "There are few things in this book which will so repay study as Kokoschka for intensity, for directness, for rugged form." Cheney urged the American public to become familiar with Expressionism. He emphasized the richness of visual reward for those who attempted to understand them.²¹

Ironically, these two efforts to promote German art in America came when Expressionism was losing its impetus. In his review of the two works for Arts, Lloyd Goodrich was highly critical. Scheffauer's book was relegated to the back shelf as "interesting," but too one sided. The New Vision was little more than a "religious tract." Goodrich asked "should we free ourselves from the British and the 'seductive poison of Paris' in order to become slaves of the Bombast of Berlin?" He found the Primer good in many respects, but Cheney's "strong penchant for the German Expressionists" misguided. Goodrich believed that "German art has always been the most conscientious, but not the most interesting in the world, and that it shows no sign of any change in this essential, therefore we cannot share his enthusiasm."

German painters, he emphasized, were always predictable, creating shadowy moods of Teutonic brooding. Their art may have been satisfying to Germans but hardly provided universal appeal.²²

Goodrich's opinions were printed just after the Germans had their first all-Expressionist exhibit in the United States. On October 7, 1923, New York's Anderson Galleries displayed the paintings of Emil Nolde, Arthur Degner, George Grosz, Max Pechstein, and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff. Elizabeth L. Cary's review was typical. She was restrained and fundamentally unimpressed, reporting that Grosz's paintings were "an unpleasant surprise," and Schmidt-Rottluff's monotonous. Throughout the twenties, other critics generally categorized the Germans in similar terms. It seemed that a Germanic name on the canvass insured a predictable critical reaction. The reviewers wrote that their paintings were plain, ugly, and matter-of-fact, technically proficient but drab and lifeless, a throw back to Germany's pre-historic forests and crude pictures etched on cave walls. When German art was shown in America, the majority of it failed to impress the experts, but individual critics usually discovered one or two artists in each exhibit whom they promoted.²³

Perhaps there were more unknown artists of

merit in Germany. Weimar's artistic achievements in other fields helped sustain interest in German painting, and even skeptical critics were sometimes willing to admit that new German painters deserved American attention. In 1928, the New York Times stated that there was "a general feeling that interesting things were going on [in Germany] about which we know almost nothing at first hand." This "feeling" sustained the enthusiasts, and gave German artists a chance for exhibits in the new world.²⁴

But the exhibits were never numerous, and before 1931 the growth in interest was painfully slow. Ruth Greer Harris reported in Arts that the only way to see Kokoschka in the United States was in Paul Westheim's lavishly illustrated Oskar Kokoschka (1925). Margaret Bruning, an art critic for the New York Evening Post, claimed that the ambitious Carnegie International Art Exhibit failed to give an adequate sampling of either Germany or other European countries.²⁵ Even Elizabeth L. Cary admitted that "far too little German art gets to the United States." The few supporters of Germany faced an uphill battle, for demand for it was traditionally limited and exhibitors not prone to give space to German canvasses at the expense of the French. Karl Hofer, a German artist and representative at the 1927

Carnegie, told Forbes Watson that the Carnegie presented "a limited and one-sided story of Germany's contemporary achievements in art." Watson doubted that it made much difference. He reasoned that "the normal American, when he considers the purchase [or viewing] of a painting, turns to those pictures most opposed to the spirit of the life that he is leading." Why, he implied, would Americans want paintings that suggested the inner psychological torment of modern society or realistic pictures that used machines as central motifs? If Watson was correct, German modernists' attempt to reflect the times worked against their acceptance in the United States.²⁶

Wassily Kandinsky was a possible exception. Art Digest announced that "Kandinsky's works have been acquired rather extensively in this country." He and Paul Klee were among the few Expressionists well known in the United States. Kandinsky's Improvisation No. 27 (1912) was one of two Expressionist canvasses at the Armory Show. Katherine Dreier's Societe Anonyme developed ties with him and showed his work on a number of occasions before 1933. As a founder of the Blaue Reiter group and a member of the Blue Four, he was identified as "a scientific painter and abstract artist" who used colors "as though they were painted music." Henry McBride, no friend of the Expressionist school, acknow-

ledged that "Kandinsky has been a constantly increasing influence upon artists of the modern school, and all those who deal in abstract art yield him high praise." But Kandinsky was so introverted that even his supporters conceded that his art would "probably never reach universal appeal." For like music, "it is concerned directly with the significance it wishes to express, being a novel language that few have learned to decipher." It seemed that only experts were capable of understanding him.²⁷

Kandinsky's paintings were exhibited throughout the country, first in New York, then in Chicago, and finally on the west coast. While laymen were often bewildered, the conservative critics were seldom at a loss for words. Royal Cortissoz, the archconservative of the New York Herald Tribune, commented that "Kandinsky's paintings are constituted of weird lines and circles, zigzags, queer indefinable twists of form, and bewilderments of color. If these obfuscating diagrams are painted music, then give me plain jazz." The San Francisco News critic wrote that his exhibit proved that the west coast got "what Europe and the eastern cities reject." After our eastern cities have picked it over, the suckers of the west are the last hope." He went on to claim that Kandinsky's "design and color are ambiguous and unscientific."²⁸ If nothing else, Kandinsky was

controversial but friend and foe alike doubted whether he would ever be popular in America.

His colleague Paul Klee was less well known, but his American reception paralleled that of Kandinsky. Klee appeared to be the only other Expressionist who was relatively familiar to Americans. Many considered him easier to appreciate, but he too suffered from problems of viewer comprehension. Museum of Modern Art curator Alfred H. Barr Jr. wrote that he was "one of the most interesting of the living painters." However, Ralph Flint advised that "one had best have a nimble mind, keen insight, some wit, and intellectual point of view, a feeling of superiority, and a profound conviction that representational art is dead." This seemed to eliminate the vast majority of Americans from the inner circle of Klee admirers.²⁹

Expressionism also lost its following in Germany where a new realism began to dominate the work of artists, playwrights, and film directors. Toward the end of the inflationary period, Otto Dix and George Grosz were among a group of artists who were identified with Die Neue Sachlichkeit.³⁰ Initially, Grosz thought little of the movement. In 1922, Grosz declared that "the so-called new objectivity is worthless for us today," but by 1925, his portrait of Max Hermann-Neisse (1925) was

a part of the all-Neue Sachlichkeit showing in Mannheim. Grosz's work had notably softened from his paintings and drawings of the early twenties, and he began to move in the circle of artists who identified themselves with the new movement. Although Expressionism continued to influence his style, German and American critics referred to him as a proponent of the new school.³¹

America influenced the ideas of the two young artists, particularly Grosz. Grosz's earliest post-war sketches depicted prize fights and skyscrapers. Jazz music also intrigued him. In 1920, one disapproving German critic called him "the German-American Grosz." Marsden Hartley chided him for his child-like fascination with America; nevertheless, Grosz kept his illusions, and his political preference for communism. This seeming incongruity did not bother Grosz. A cultural eclecticism which many critics contended was a feature of American life also seemed to be at work in Germany where young artists incorporated cultural influences from the east and the west. Although many German intellectuals ridiculed the "land of the charge account," America continued to exert an influence.³²

It was not until the mid-twenties that references to the New Objectivity began to appear in American publications. The movement was viewed as a counter trend

to Expressionism. Rom Landau wrote that Expressionism overemphasized "the importance of personal feeling" and neglected "the values of reality." Alfred H. Barr Jr. stated that the new realism was the artist's response to changes in society. The Germans were now "more concerned with subject matter whether real or fantastic." French essayist George Waldemar was highly critical of the movement because "The Neue Sachlichkeit is Americanism. It is the cult of use, of the object for its own sake. It is the cult of functional work, or professional conscience and utility." Waldemar would probably have agreed with Barr's conclusion the "In America,...the New Objectivity had spread with amazing speed, in large part because the formal, abstract qualities of much fashionable French painting are essentially foreign to American art, which is naturally more naive and realistic." Barr believed that the influence of the German movement was clearly evident in the work of Reginald Marsh, Charles Burchfield, and Edward Hopper.³³

It was finally plausible to predict success for German art in America; but, on another level, it gave almost everyone an opportunity to stereotype the New Objectivity. The realistic canvasses were characteristically German. Lloyd Goodrich stated that Grosz and Dix had "gotten back to realities, to things that can be

expressed in plastic terms, and they seem closer to the racial tradition than their predecessors." Forbes Watson reviewed the earliest examples of the New Objectivity in 1927 and concluded that they were "so German, so masculine, so unfashionable, and often in such appalling taste"³⁴ It seemed that the realism was exactly what many Americans expected from the Germans.

George Grosz was the first of the modern German realists to be recognized in the United States. Grosz's early fascination with America now included an admiration for its recent accomplishments. America's great machines, new technology, and mechanical ingenuity created images that surfaced in his work. But the nation's critics seldom mentioned his opinions about their country. Instead, they wrote of his "grotesque cartoons" or "extremist political attitude" and shocking paintings. The Museum of Modern Art purchased his drawings. The J. B. Neumann Galleries' brochure on his exhibit referred to him as "the great German artist, George Grosz....," but there was a lack of respect for his work in the art world.³⁵

Most critics were more impressed with Otto Dix. In a review of modern art in Germany, Rom Landau argued that Grosz was initially the leader of the New Objectivity, but Dix had replaced him. Barr believed that

Dix was "the painter whose heritage was most easily traced back to Dürer and Holbein." To Americans who were "devoted to contemporary French painting or its American imitation," Barr advised that "they will feel their prejudice against German painting strengthened by the work of Otto Dix. It seems so coarse and ruthless...." These artistic traits made his work not only modern but quintessentially German. In 1931, Barr purchased Dix's portrait of Dr. Meyer-Hermann for the Museum of Modern Art. Dix was recognized as a leading exponent of a modern school. The painting was a symbol of what the New Objectivity was like. The good doctor sitting in front of the instruments of contemporary science displayed a mordant realism and sense of modern technology in a starkly matter-of-fact setting.³⁶

There was no place for the Neue Sachlichkeit in Hitler's Germany. The modern realists may have had their roots deep in the German past but the Führer did not see the connection, nor did he tolerate their political beliefs. George Grosz sought sanctuary in the United States. His attempt to secure a position at the Art Students League caused a greater sensation than his drawings. John Sloan, the director of the League, offered him a post on the faculty. Because of his politics, Grosz's appointment came into question. The board members

who opposed Grosz did so because he was "an unhealthy influence on American youth...."³⁷ Sloan, however, refused to compromise. He argued that Grosz was more than qualified to teach, stating that "We've never had any academic training in this country except by proxy. Academic training sticks out in Grosz's work."³⁸ Grosz finally received the position but he was hired more for his academic training than the nature of his art work.³⁹ Those who opposed his appointment, C. J. Bulliet reported, were quite happy to read the bad reviews of Grosz's American work.

And modernism in Germany fared little better than Grosz did in the United States. As late as 1930, Florence Turkel-Deri, Art News' correspondent in Berlin, predicted closer artistic ties between America and Germany. "America draws away from traditionalism, while in Germany the wildness of post-war conditions undergoes a healthy process of clarification. It is plain that increased understanding between the two nations in matters artistic is hereby bound to result." She overestimated America's enthusiasm for modern painting and, like so many others, failed to foresee a new kind of wildness that was soon to befall Germany. When Hitler came to power, such predictions later embarrassed their authors. Aryanism and intense nationalism destroyed modernism and limited cultural

contact between Germany and other nations. In 1933, C. J. Bulliet surmised that "Hiter now has the weird joy of wiping out the modernism that he couldn't attain to. It's an unhallowed glee that many an 'old hat' American can appreciate- and envy."⁴⁰

The American critical community also resisted change. Despite its openmindedness or lack of it, the critics continued to rely on traditional reference points. They found it difficult to discard the idea of national schools of painting. Even abstract art supposedly had traits that were German or American.⁴¹ The attempt to break down national lines was neither effective nor particularly desirable. The critics had to have ways of cataloging the art of the world, and in painting, this worked against the objective analysis of German and American art.

Architecture was an engineering science as well as an art form, and American ingenuity and engineering marvels helped draw attention to the United States. The European tradition was predominant in the architecture of the western world, but in the later part of the nineteenth century the work of H. H. Richardson and Louis Sullivan became known in Europe. Richardson's neo-Romanesque buildings were more than the recapitulation of an historical style. His structures reflected America's

new sense of power. He was a reformer whose progressive vision placed him above the petty debates over architectural style. Sullivan was the great innovator. He and his engineering partner pioneered in steel frame construction and eschewed the restraints of historicism. With these men, American architecture achieved international standing.⁴²

Sullivan's pupil, Frank Lloyd Wright, continued the young tradition. In 1910, Wright co-operated with the Wasmuth Verlag on the publication of a monograph on his architectural ideas. Wright's work influenced the thinking of Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. The American's adoption of the machine as a partner rather than an adversary in building appealed to progressive architects throughout Germany. Before the war, they acknowledged his contributions in word and architectural application. Wright, the master builder, probably had as many followers in Germany as he did in the United States.⁴³

Although German architects acknowledged the work of American architects, most American architects still looked to France. An École des Beaux-Arts degree from Paris was the surest way to gain admittance to the best architectural firms, and American schools adopted the school's curriculum.⁴⁴ The system favored strict

academic training and instilled reverence for historical style and continuity. The American graduates were usually resistant to change, but, in the twenties, an almost imperceptible shift in attitudes began to take place. Students questioned basic assumptions and asked what relationship classical form had to current architectural problems.⁴⁵

Contemporary architecture was not necessarily modern architecture. Modernists rejected blind allegiance to historicism. They considered themselves brave, new proponents of an architecture that used the advances of technology. Pre-stressed concrete and other neoteric materials were the substances of their artistic expression. Some wanted to strip buildings bare of "needless" ornamentation, giving structures clean lines and the look of efficiency, and of modernity and the machine age. But the most popular fin de siècle firm, McKim, Mead, and White, built in the neo-classical style, and many architects imitated them. Modernism inflamed the passions of American architects. In the post-war decade, its defenders and detractors devised maxims.⁴⁶ These "truths" of architecture sustained the individual and defined the issues. Lewis Mumford was calm and reflective. In 1928, he wrote "Modernism, it seems to me, is an attempt to use as a form something that has come down to us as a fact. The fact is the increasing complication of living, and the increasing simplification

of the products." Mumford argued that architects must be trained in the use of new materials and they must adopt forms appropriate to the machine age. Most architects resisted these ideas. One contemporary designer, Arnold McLean, called modernism, "an infection." He hoped that it would "like a boil lanced, lead to healthfulness when its erratic course is run...." The traditionalists stated that any contemporary building was modern architecture, for the architect used current construction techniques and contemporary materials. A Western Architect editorial concluded that Stanford White's work was "really modern and fits into recent trends in art despite its classical heritage." The traditionalists had two comfortable realities that nourished them. They were in the majority and they were the architects who got the big commissions.⁴⁷

In Sticks and Stones (1924), Lewis Mumford attempted to "evaluate architecture in America in terms of our civilization." Unlike the majority of writers on architecture, he showed the relationship between change in society and architecture. He charged that the contemporary American architect encountered important issues that he failed to confront. Designers had given way to engineers, and architects merely constructed facades. Mumford argued that the machine age had blotted out the "elements of

personality and individual choice...and blotted out the architect, who inherited these qualities from the carpenter builder." The architect was no longer a craftsman but simply one element in a gigantic, impersonal building enterprise. Mumford called for a return to individual skills and a modern architecture that "does not merely respect the machine, [but] respects the people who use it."⁴⁸

Most American architects continued as they had in the past and were ignorant of the German architects who addressed a number of the issues Mumford identified. Many Americans who supported modern architecture seemed naive and tended to make open-ended statements that indicated uncertainty. One builder wrote "Whatever we may think of modern architecture, it is a sign of abundant life. Under its ferment is a mass movement...the response of society." Herbert Croly wrote that Americans had a history of "timidity and imitativeness" when dealing with architecture. In an age in which pundits predicted unprecedented prosperity, most American designers seriously doubted whether the "excessive abstractness" of modern architecture could satisfactorily reflect America's material success.⁴⁹

Germany's situation was different. Housing shortages and a lack of building funds plagued Weimar's leaders. The Bauhaus was established to help solve the architectural problems facing the new republic. Walter Gropius

was the school's director and its guiding spirit, and believed that the arts should serve society. He announced that the aim of the school was to "conceive, and create the new structures of the future, which will embrace architecture, and sculpture, and painting in one unity and which one day rise toward heaven from the hands of a million workers like the crystal symbol of a new faith." The aura of modernism and the rejection of tradition seemed to radiate from within the new glass and steel buildings of the Bauhaus school, but its educational programs did not always reflect the external image of modernity. The school had masters, journeymen, and apprentices, not teachers and pupils. This despite the fact that many of its supporters claimed a desire to break with the past. Gropius seemed able to accept contradictions between old and new, and he worked toward integration and the creation of a modern system founded upon efficiency.⁵⁰

By mid-decade, word of the Bauhaus and its methods reached the United States, but American schools did not rush to incorporate the programs of the Bauhaus into their curriculums. There was something hopelessly idealistic, and, more distastefully, socialistic about its architectural goals. Most American builders were more pragmatic. They wanted to see the structures that the Germans built. Given the state of the German economy, this was not

possible until the post-1925 period. Modern ideas failed to move the nation's architects, and the progressive German architect Bruno Taut stated that "Across the ocean, in the United States of America, the champions of modern architecture are obviously...isolated."⁵¹

In Modern Architecture (1929), Taut wrote that Frank Lloyd Wright was a "heroic figure," and "known by repute to the average architect in Europe," although he "was by no means held in such esteem in the United States." Wright inspired many prominent German modernists. His imaginative use of materials and his utilitarian yet artistic methods produced buildings that blended perfectly with the environment. Nature and building blended to create an aesthetic and scientific entity. Perhaps most important, as architecture historian Fiske Kimball noted in 1928, "From the beginning, [Wright] welcomed the machine as the tool of modernity...." They had a special appeal to the Europeans.⁵²

While Taut, Mies, and Gropius acknowledged a debt of gratitude to Wright, they had criticisms. Taut made his position clear. Wright was too individualistic. (Wright countered with the charge that the Europeans were "socialistic.")⁵³ Taut bemoaned the lack of "collectivist architecture in America," and the "highly capitalistic condition" that worked against modernist architects. He

wrote that "In describing the fate of modern architecture and modern architects to the present, the ubiquitous thread of collective or co-operative work seems interwoven throughout the whole fabric." The Germans employed Wright's concepts, but they Europeanized them. "The delirium of individualism" infected the Americans. Taut was compelled to write off the United States, for "However great our respect for the technical achievements of America and her enterprise, it appears as if in matters of art there may soon cease to be any connecting bridge." He continued that while "technical resources conquer distances and lessen it, yet the spiritual distances between Europe and America gets greater and greater." American architects ignored Wright, the collectivist spirit, and remained absurdly attached to outdated historical styles. Taut concluded that "America, the land of Whitman, is deliberately declining in the ruins of Europe."⁵⁴

Taut painted a bleak picture which failed to move America's academic architects. Many conservatives did not care for his kind of criticism or for his plans for the future. Philip Sterner, a practicing architect, wondered "whether domestic work would gain at all in sincerity or honesty if it were suddenly to be given into the hands of theoreticians who are at work in Europe...and if it is true our architects are slaves to tradition of a style, they are

not like their European cousins, slaves to the mechanistic idea." After a visit to Germany, Joseph Hoerner wrote that Gropius' houses were "devoid of any element of charm which will cause them to endure as monuments of our age."⁵⁵

Nancy Ross, an American living in Germany, lent further comfort to the anti-modernists. She reported that Germany's contribution to modern architecture was "understood by very few Germans and scorned by the many who engrave sentimental mottoes over their high eaved doors." After Hitler came to power, George N. Nelson, who did a series of articles for Pencil Points on European architects, declared that "you can tell how good a German your neighbor is by the pitch of his roof." The observation had obvious political connotations but also illustrated the aesthetic and social preferences of many Germans. Even a friendly critic like Herman George Scheffauer admitted that "the cold, angular, cubistic forms do not appeal to the populace which after all, still loves the traditional and the pretty."⁵⁶

Others considered the new architecture a natural outgrowth of the German character. Mass housing projects were an indication of the German preference for "logic and simplicity." Virginia Pope argued that the stark, abstract appearance of the apartments showed that the German architect was "governed by a thoroughly Teutonic

spirit." Herbert von Oelsen, the editor of Die Pyramide, wrote in Survey Graphic that "German post-war architecture was defined by concrete need, but much more by the abstract demand of the native character." For the contemporary seeking explanations, one could have it either way.⁵⁷

American architects were more interested in the reactions of businessmen than in the perceptions of the German burgher. What did the board of directors think; more importantly, what did they want? American businesses wanted their buildings solid, sound, properly decorated, and practical. Because the business community had an established aesthetic, the question of "architectural beauty" also had a practical side to it. These two issues, the practical and the aesthetic, formed the nucleus of a debate over modern architecture in America.

Corporations were interested in the "look" of a building. Architectural ornamentation created an image for the company. The more decoration, the more successful the company. When Gropius, Mies, or Wright contended that there was "no conflict between beauty and efficiency," it made little difference. Most business leaders had never heard of them anyway. When the question of architectural application arose, the average businessman did not want any surprises. While it seemed that many companies would

appreciate modern concepts of efficiency, the majority of architects and businessmen clung to what they knew best. Many builders were ready to satisfy these demands, and they were even confident enough to claim that American methods were well suited to European needs.⁵⁸

Europeans needed only to emulate American techniques to solve their rebuilding problems. The skyscraper was America's most noteworthy contribution to architecture. In 1921, the American Architect predicted that Europe "will adopt the skyscraper. Our national expertise, and practical grasp of the business of architecture will help war torn Europe to rebuild." The journal reported that architects in Berlin and Munich were preparing plans and studying "the probable effects of the high buildings, crowded streets, and congested business and residential centers." The American Architect reported this statement in all seriousness, and did not comment on the likelihood that the Germans had already decided that Wolkenkratzer ("sky scratchers") were not for them. Herman George Scheffauer concluded that "The skyscraper has found no friends in European cities."⁵⁹

An American building craze did not sweep Europe. Martin Wagner, Berlin's city planner, called skyscrapers "unhealthy...it is believed that tall structures would not allow dwellers on the lower floors sufficient light or

air necessary for health." Ernst May, who built public housing projects in Frankfurt, designed complexes that provided for open spaces, gardens, and the separation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.⁶⁰ May, Gropius, Otto Haesler, Mies, Wanger, and Bruno Taut were interested in improving life in the cities. Placing man in the darkened shadows, away from the sunlight had to be avoided at all costs.

Since the nuts and bolts of construction was the issue that most interested the American architect, the apartment projects of Berlin, Frankfurt and Kassel received more attention than the abstract social theories that many Germans promoted. The community projects⁶¹ were large enterprises, and the architect was the city planner, engineer, and builder. Every detail had to be taken into consideration. The design goal was to make each dwelling economical and comfortable. Traditionalist architects built many of the projects, but the modernist efforts were the most controversial. As sites approached completion, American journals printed numerous articles on the development of mass housing in Germany.⁶²

One writer predicted that Berlin was the city most likely to become a utopia in Europe. A "modern consciousness" was at work in the capital, and its

citizens looked forward to living in comfortable, modern housing. In New York, the Times' Miriam Beard reported that "facades are coming down in Berlin, like our brown-stone fronts...The age makes itself felt." In 1924, Martin Wagner studied industrial building in the United States and returned to Berlin to coordinate housing construction. Bruno Taut's Zehlendorf complex was typical of the results. There was plenty of space and light, the buildings had flat roofs, and were but two stories high.⁶³

In Kassel, Haesler's apartments were models of "economy in planning." The Architectural Record praised the successful application of new ideas, "Not only is the frank expression of the solution aesthetically satisfying but the resulting economics, all done without the substitution of inferior materials or construction methods, indicate the potentialities of more efficient planning." Catherine Bauer, who studied in Berlin in 1930, commented that everyone did not have a separate dwelling, but Haesler's "realistic planning can make for quality life." Roger Gilman recommended that American architects should "acquaint themselves with a movement so intense." He argues that builders should turn to "scientific processes" in order to solve the building problems of the future.⁶⁴

The Great Depression convinced many American architects that German methods could work in the United States. Before the crash, Joseph Hoerner stated that "our chief interest is not in the residential architecture of Germany, for we Americans require vastly more than efficiency in a house." By 1931, a change in viewpoint became evident. When Gropius wrote "The Small House of Today" for Architectural Record, the editor prefaced the article with the statement that "many of the things described are readily adaptable to this country."⁶⁵ The commissions from business were drying up, and architects had no work. The depression challenged American values and led architects and social thinkers to conclude that perhaps Americans would have to accept a different life style. Catherine Bauer believed that "private enterprise cannot be counted on" to meet the housing needs of the nation. Writing a few years later, George N. Nelson credited the Germans with anticipating "the standardized units which is the subject of so much experimenting in American architecture today."⁶⁶ German theories had made inroads, but only after many of its best modern architects had ceased to be a factor in Hitler's Germany.

As important as the subject of public housing became, it was but one facet of an architectural movement sweeping Germany and the rest of Europe.⁶⁷ In 1932,

Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson explained the stylistic, technical, and social principles of the new architecture. They also gave it a name. In The International Style: Architecture Since 1922, they identified three major attributes of the new wave. The internationalists emphasized the importance of space, the omission of mass, and dependence on the intrinsic elegance of materials. The Europeans stressed the primacy of orderliness and regularity. A good deal of what Hitchcock and Johnson wrote dealt with the aesthetic image that the Europeans created. The two Americans enthusiastically proclaimed that "the International Style already exists in the present, it is not merely something the future may hold."⁶⁸

They did not expect most American architects to embrace the International Style, but they predicted that there were those who would listen. "Commercially successful" architects unfamiliar with its principles would be opposed. And although they did not single out individuals Hitchcock and Johnson noted that "American nationals will also oppose the Style, as another European invasion."⁶⁹ They dismissed these individuals, for the movement was too rich to ignore. "Most American functionalists have much to learn from the leaders of the International Style, even if they cannot accept

sincerely the discipline these leaders have brought into being." Hitchcock and Johnson defended some American architects who had already assimilated some elements of the style. Raymond Hood's Daily News Building (1928) and his McGraw Hill Building (1931) revealed evidence of internationalist influence. Hitchcock and Johnson awaited a new age, one in which architecture was more than mere building. "Those who have buried architecture, whether from a thwarted desire to continue the past or from an over anxiety to modify and hurry on the future, have been premature: We have an architecture still."⁷⁰

The growing recognition of the Bauhaus architects was another indication of the currency of modern ideas. Under Mies,⁷¹ the school continued a reputation for excellence. One report claimed that "the Bauhaus experiment, however intermittent, is probably one of the most important original movements in the history of fine arts during the course of this century." By 1930 many Americans became interested in the school's work, and when the school came under attack in Germany, most observers rushed to defend it. Douglas Haskell's article surmised that "At a time when the Beaux-Arts in Paris survives by virtue only of the sentimental support accorded by its American 'old boys,' the Bauhaus has come to occupy a position similar to that held by the Beaux-Arts in its

palmiest days: The center of enthusiasm, of the greatest designing gifts, of the active molding ideas of its time." Rather belatedly in 1933, the American Magazine of Art announced that "The Bauhaus today is the unquestioned center of progressive architectural thought in the world."⁷²

Just as Americans took greater notice of modern theories emanating from Europe those principles became politically volatile in Germany. Hitler fancied himself an architectural expert. He even included architecture in the twenty-five point program of the Nazi Party. The Führer's preferences were well known. His taste ran to the gigantic, the monumental, and he preferred the work of Paul Troost, Werner March, and Albert Speer to that of Mies or Gropius. Hitler believed that internationalism devitalized architecture and robbed it of its national or Aryan qualities. The modernists architects with their collectivist political ideologies scarcely fit into the coming culture of the Nazi period. A few buildings in the modern style were built under Hitler, but the symbols of Nazi civilization were Troost's House of German Art (1937) and March's Olympic Stadium (1936).⁷³

In 1929, William Gaunt wrote of the arts in Germany that "I have given so much space to architecture because it seems to me the main artistic activity in modern Germany. The other arts seem to fall into line

behind it and obediently contribute to it." Gropius would have been gratified, but went one step further. Architecture also contributed to the other arts. Since he was an architect, he believed that his art was the most important. He pictured the architect as the grand co-ordinator, for buildings housed art. When he designed an overall plan for a community, he included a theatre, a motion picture house, and a concert hall. One could not separate art from daily existence.⁷⁴

American architect Claude C. Bragdon argued that his nation's performing artists deserved the same kind of co-operation from their architects. He complained that "there has been no intention of consciousness upon the fundamental physical problems of the theatre from any other point than that of monetary gain." Gropius offered alternatives. He believed that in planning centers for the performing arts, the architect had a responsibility to the artist as well as the audience. In a piece for Drama, he stated that theatres must be designed so performers could fully realize their art, and spectators should be brought into "the midst of stage events." The science of building, he proclaimed, must serve all of the arts.⁷⁵

While German painting failed to make great inroads in America during the twenties, German architecture showed the first signs of being at the heart of a signifi-

cant movement. Germany's modern artists confronted an inherited American skepticism about their talents and ultimately failed to overcome the shackles of the traditional image. Although a few supportive critics fought valiantly for the German painters' cause, German art did not gain a sizeable audience. In architecture, the respect Americans accorded Germany's technical skills helped to bring the International Style to the attention of architects and the public. The waning years of the Weimar Republic served as a preparatory period for the acceptance of modern architecture in the United States. In exile, Gropius and Mies became the standard bearers of a new architecture. Their modern compositions in glass and steel brought them almost as much fame as Germany's composers and musicians.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER II

¹Forbes Watson, "Our Land Grows Keenly Aware of Art," New York Times 4 March 1928. Watson was one of the leading critics of the twenties and contributed to many journals during a long and distinguished career. In the post-war decade, a good part of his energies were devoted to editing the Arts.

²The rise of professional criticism began after the Civil War and became increasingly more specialized in the twentieth century. See H. Wayne Morgan, The New Muses: Art in American Culture, 1965-1920 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978), 39-52, and Oliver W. Larkin, Art and Life in America (Rev. ed.; New York: Holt, Reinhart, and Winston, 1960), 325, 345-53, 369-75.

³Lewis Mumford, "Moderns," New Republic, 37 (January 12, 1927), 221-22.

⁴See Harold Bush-Brown, Beaux-Arts to Bauhaus and Beyond: An Architect's Perspective (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1976), 32. Bush-Brown was a student at Georgia Tech in the twenties. As an undergraduate, he noted that a growing number of architects began to

revise their opinions on the meaning of architecture in the modern world.

⁵New York Times, 18 and 21 March 1919.

⁶Representing the conservative position, Kenyon Cox claimed that Dürer and Holbein were "the only two" artists that Germany had produced. New York Times, 21 March 1919. George Wyler agreed in "Germany and Art," International Studio, 69 (December, 1918), 41-42 (sup). He wrote that Germany had contributed "no original art since Dürer and Holbein."

⁷Donelson F. Hoopes, "The Düsseldorf Academy and the American," in The Düsseldorf Academy and the Americans: An Exhibition of Drawings and Watercolors (Atlanta: High Museum of Art, 1972), 19-20. 34.

⁸Kermit S. Champa and Kate H. Champa, German Painting of the 19th Century (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1970), 57-64; Morgan, The New Muses, 90-96; Larkin, Art and Life, 263.

⁹John Canady, Mainstreams of Modern Art (New York: Holt, Reinhart, and Winston, 1959), 424-30; Barbara Rose, American Art Since 1900: A Critical Study (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1967), 24, 53-55; Laqueur, Weimar, A Cultural History, 110-19. Expressionism was also evident in drama, cinema, and literature, and it was difficult for contemporaries to find consistent ties

between the various fields. For attempts at definitions see Herman George Scheffauer, The New Vision in the German Arts (New York: Viking Press, 1924), 8. See also below 7-8, and Chapters IV and V. On Hartley's pre-war experience in Berlin see James Lee Colwell, "The American Experience in Berlin During the Weimar Period," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, 1961), 91-96.

¹⁰George Wyer, "Germany and Art," International Studio, 69 (December, 1918), 41-42 (sup); Lloyd Goodrich, "Exhibition of German Paintings at the Museum of Modern Art," Arts, 17 (April, 1931), 504; and Forbes Watson, "The Carnegie International," Arts, (November, 1927), 267.

¹¹For Americans reporting on political events see New York Times 16 January 1919; 12, 13 April 1919; and 23 June 1919. A representative account on Communism in Munich is in Max Hirschberg, "Communist Terror in Munich," Nation, 109 (July, 1919), 76-77.

¹²"Revolution in German Art," Current Opinion, 67 (October, 1919), 254. The avant garde soon found themselves in a quandary. Their elitism often attached them to the existing society, and dedication to individual artistic projects made it difficult for them to become directly involved in bringing about social change. See Theda Shapiro, Painters and Politics: The European

Avant-Garde and Society, 1900-1925 (New York: Elsevier, 1976), 221-25.

¹³Ludwig Lewishon, "Republican Germany and the Arts," Nation, 114 (March, 1922), 247.

¹⁴A. W. Walkely, "Art as Liberation: A. W. Walkely Explains the Expressionist Theory of Art," Arts and Decoration, 17 (September, 1922), 382; Lewis Mumford, "Moderns," New Republic, 43 (January 12, 1927), 222.

Da Da was a controversial modern art form. Its influence in the United States was limited, but for a brief time it did attract American artists. Joseph Stella, Arthur Dove, and Alfred Maurer all produced collages around 1920. Americans discovered in the movement a freedom from tradition that was compelling. The 1921 Berlin Da Da show created some interest, but American artists were on the periphery of the movement. Contemporaries were momentarily shocked, but the Da Da became passé. See Rose, American Art Since 1900, 98-100; New York Times, 22 Spril 1921.

¹⁵Letter to the editor, Charles L. Buchanan, New York Times, 30 March 1924.

¹⁶Forbes Watson claimed the modern art was "no longer unpopular," in "The Proposed Tariff on Art," Arts, 15 (February, 1929), 77. The question remained, however, what contemporary works could actually be classified as art.

¹⁷Colwell, "The American Experience in Berlin,"
107-14.

¹⁸Herman George Scheffauer, The New Vision in the German Arts (New York: Viking Press, 1924), 1-39. Scheffauer's career was a checkered one. During the war, he was indicted for aiding the German war effort. After 1918, he remained in Berlin where he wrote voluminously about German art and literature and became the German literary agent for Sinclair Lewis, H. L. Mencken, and Theodore Dreiser. After stabbing himself and his secretary in early October of 1927, he jumped to his death from a window ledge. Colwell argues that Scheffauer's influence was almost non-existent, but his observations were quoted at length in contemporary works, e.g., Anna Irene Miller, The Independent Theatre in Europe, 1877 to the Present (New York: Ray Long and Richard Smith, Inc., 1931). Scheffauer summarized Expressionism as: "The immediate expression which the artist receives and transfers to canvass or to paper is not art. Nor is art to be attained by the reproduction of an object, a feeling or an impression, but only by the transmutation of this impression into art, into an artistic relationship of means or rhythm. 'The reproduction of an impression,' says Rudolf Blümner, 'is not art; it remains impression. It is only through transformation to the purely artistic, that is the pure,

abstract vision of the impression- that we attain to expression- Expressionism. The formation of the individual experience (impression) by virtue of art, results in the work of art.'" Scheffauer, The New Vision, 8. See also Gerhard Handler, German Painting in Our Time (Berlin: Rembrandt Verlag, 1956), 19-27; and Bernard S. Myers, The German Expressionists: A Generation in Revolt (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1956), 35-40.

¹⁹Scheffauer, The New Vision, 19-29, 39.

²⁰Sheldon Cheney, A Primer of Modern Art (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1924), 192-207. The sixteenth edition of Cheney's book was issued in 1966.

²¹Cheney, A Primer, 201-202.

²²Lloyd Goodrich, "The New Vision in the German Arts," Arts, 6 (July, 1924), 60, and "A Primer of Modern Art," Arts, 5 (April, 1924), 233.

²³Elizabeth L. Cary, "The Multi-National Exhibit," New York Times, 7 October 1923.

²⁴E. A. J., "Düsseldorf a Mecca," New York Times, 24 June 1928.

²⁵Ruth Green Harris, "Oskar Kokoschka by Paul Westheim," Arts, 8 (december, 1925), 250.

²⁶New York Times, 18 February 1928; Forbes Watson, "The Carnegie International," Arts, 10 (november, 1927), 251; Myers, The German Expressionists, 58-70. On the new

realism, see below, 15.

²⁷"Kandinsky Seen Here," Art Digest, 7 (November 1, 1932), 17; Rose, American Art Since 1900, 74; New York Times, 1 April 1923, and 23 January 1924. Shapiro, Painters and Politics, 251. Henry McBride, The Flow of Art: Essays and Criticism of Henry McBride (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1975), from the New York Sun 12 November 1932; "Germany's Own Estimate of the Blue Four: Klee, Feiniger, Jawlensky, and Kandinsky," Art Digest, 4 (December 15, 1929), 10. A few more recent authorities argue that Expressionism influenced the American artists Arthur Dove and John Marin. Canady, Mainstrams of Modern Art, 442-47. Barbara Rose contends that German Expressionist influences on these artists are difficult to define, and that Dove might just as well have received his abstractionist inspiration from Thoreau as Kandinsky. Rose, American Art Since 1900, 61. Lyonel Feiniger was born in America, but he was identified as a German artist. He was a co-founder of The Blue Four in 1924. Feiniger returned to the United States in 1937.

²⁸"New York Criticism of the Kandinsky Exhibition at the Valentine Gallery," Art Digest, 7 (December 1, 1932), 14; "Modern Museum Shows Weber, Klee, Maillol, Lehmbruck," Art News, 28 (March 15, 1930), 11.

²⁹Alfred H. Barr, Jr., "Post War Painting in Europe,"

Parnassus, 3 (May, 1931), 21; Ralph Flint, "Modern Museum Shows Weber, Klee, Millol, and Lehmbruck," Art News, 28 (March 15, 1930), 11.

³⁰John Willett explains that Sachlichkeit conveys more than the English language notion of objectivity. It "implies objectivity in the sense of a neutral, sober, matter-of-fact approach, thus coming to embrace functionalism, utility, absence of decorative frills." Willett, Art and Politics in Weimar, 112. Gerhardt Händler pointed out that there is a connection between the new realism and Expressionism. The exaggerated method in which objects are depicted illustrates that inner emotion plays a large part in Die Neue Sachlichkeit. Händler, German Painting in Our Time, 28. See also Laqueur, Weimar, A Cultural History, 172-73; Gay, Weimar Culture, 122; Myers, The German Expressionists, 280-93; and John Henry Zammito, "Art and Action in the Metropolis: The Berlin Avant Garde, 1900-1930," Pt. II (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1978), 709-912.

³¹Beth Irwin Lewis, George Grosz: Art and Politics in the Weimar Republic (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1971), 180-84.

³²Lewis, George Grosz: Art and Politics in the Weimar Republic, 15-38; Zammito, Pt. I, "Art and Action," 390; Istvan Deak, Weimar Germany's Left Wing Intellectuals:

A Political History of the Weltbuhne and Its Circle

(Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), 87-88; and Alfred Kuhn, "German Art of the Present Day," Survey Graphic, 16 (February, 1929), 591-95.

³³Rom Landau, "Modern Movements in German Art," Arts, 14 (July, 1928), 28-29; George Waldemar, "New Art In France and Germany," Living Age, 334 (January 1, 1928), 78, from Revue Mondiale, October 15, 1927; Alfred Barr, Jr., "Otto Dix," Arts, 17 (January, 1931), 237. Barr also mentioned Charles Groeller and Peter Blume in the group of American verists. Barr, "Post War Painting in Europe," Parnassus, 3 (May, 1931), 21.

³⁴Lloyd Goodrich, "Exhibitions: Paintings at the Museum of Modern Art," Arts, 17 (April, 1931), 506; Forbes Watson, "The Varnegie International," Arts, 12 (November, 1927), 266. The German language publication Belvedere reported that German paintings exhibited in Philadelphia, Toledo and Pittsburgh were well received "with almost no adverse criticism." "Moderne Deutsche Kunst In Amerika," Belvedere, 10 (No. 10, 1931), 121.

³⁵On Grosz's attitudes toward America and "Americanism" in Germany see Zammuto, "Art and Action, 364-414; Lewis, Grosz, 15-38, 98-99; Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period; "German Paintings From the International 1933 Exhibition of Contemporary Painting,"

Bulletin of the Milwaukee Art Institute, 7 (January, 1934), 1-2.

³⁶Rom Landau, "Modern Movements in German Art," Arts, 14 (July, 1928), 28-29; Alfred H. Barr, Jr., "Otto Dix," Arts, 17 (January, 1931), 250.

³⁷"Grosz and Sloan," Art Digest, 6 (April 15, 1932), 4.

³⁸"Drawings and Water Colors by George Grosz," Bulletin of the Milwaukee Art Institute, 6 (May, 1933), 2.

³⁹"Grosz Slipping," Arts, 19 (April, 1933), 32.
Bulliet, art critic for the Chicago Daily News, surmized that "Another three or four years in New York and Grosz will be of no more consequence than the average good newspaper cartoonist."

⁴⁰Florence Turkel-Deri, "St. Gaudens Selects German Paintings," Art News, 28 (July, 1930), 17; "Hitler and Art," Art Digest, 7 (March 15, 1933), 7.

⁴¹See John W. McCoubrey, American Tradition in Painting (New York: George Braziller, 1963).

⁴²Leonard K. Eaton, American Architecture Comes of Age: European Reaction to H. H. Richardson and Louis Sullivan (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1972), 1-17. Eaton points out that the Europeans also used steel for construction but not quite so universally. For developments in the pre-1900 era, see John Burchard and Albert

Bush-Brown, The Architecture of America: A Social and Cultural History (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1961), 65-234; and William H. Jordy and Ralph Coe, eds., American Architecture and Other Writings by Montgomery Schuyler (New York: Atheneum, 1964). Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson concluded that most Europeans believed that Americans were good engineers but "poor artists." Henry Russell Hitchcock, Jr., and Philip Johnson, The International Style: Architecture Since 1922 (New York: W. W. Norton, Inc., 1932), 38.

⁴³Lewis Mumford, Roots of Contemporary Architecture: A Series of Thirty-Seven Essays Dating from the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the Present (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1972), 435; Fiske Kimball, American Architecture (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs Merrill Company, Publishers, 1928), 199.

⁴⁴Burchard and Bush-Brown, The Architecture of America, 307-10. The authors claim that the Beaux-Arts school thoroughly dominated architectural thought in America between 1913 and 1933. They state that the foreign dominance had no previous parallel in American history.

⁴⁵Harold Bush-Brown, Beaux-Arts to Bauhaus, 27-29. On American variations in classical style see Walter C. Kidney, The Architecture of Choice: Eclecticism in

America, 1880-1930 (New York: George Braziller, 1974), 1-11.

⁴⁶Architecture has spawned almost as many proverbs as there are buildings. Ruskin's "Form follows function," Wright's "The inappropriate cannot be beautiful," and Mies' "Only today can be given form" are only three examples culled from hundreds. See Matthew Nowicki, "Function and Form," and Frank Lloyd Wright, "The Art and Craft of the Machine," in Mumford, Contemporary American Architecture, 411-18, 178, and Ulrich Conrads, Programs and Manifestos of the 20th Century Architecture (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1970), 74.

⁴⁷Lewis Mumford, "Towards a Rational Modern Art," New Republic, 54 (April 25, 1928), 297-98; Arnold McLean, "Modernism," Western Architect, 39 (July, 1930), 104; "What Is Modern Architecture," Western Architecture, 33 (October, 1924), 114; and Kimball, American Architecture, 147-71. Mumford has not been an advocate of modern form to the extent that he would discard the past. He has criticized much modern architecture. He would tend to accept, I think, a part of what the conservatives of the twenties said. See also Brent C. Brolin, The Failure of Modern Architecture (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1976).

⁴⁸Lewis Mumford, Sticks and Stones: A Study of

American Architecture and Civilization (New York: Horace Liveright Publisher, 1924), 132-33, 160-61, 182. For contemporary reviews which were generally favorable, see Percy A. Hutchinson, "American Architecture, the Expression of Our Culture," New York Times, 21 September 1924, and "Sticks and Stones," Architectural Record, 56 (October, 1924), 387. For a layman's perception of American architecture see G. H. Edgell, The American Architecture of Today (New York and London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928). Thomas A. Tallmadge provides a professional's viewpoint in The Story of Architecture in America (New York: W. W. Norton, Inc., 1932).

⁴⁹Edith Eloener Wood, "Recent Housing Work in Western Europe," Architectural Record, 53 (February, 1923), 183; Herbert Croly, "Notes and Comments," Architectural Record, 56 (October, 1924), 381; "Architecture in Europe Today," Western Architect, 34 (April, 1925), 41.

⁵⁰Walter Gropius, "Programme of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar," in Conrads, On 20th Century Architecture, 49. See Walter Gropius, The New Architecture and the Bauhaus, trans, by P. Morton Shand (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1936), and Siegfried Giedion, Walter Gropius: Work and Teamwork (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1954). The standard work on the

Bauhaus in Hans M. Wingler, The Bauhaus (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1969). For the controversy surrounding the school's move to Dessau, see Barbara Miller Lane, Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918-1945 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 69-86.

⁵¹Bruno Taut, Modern Architecture, (London: The Studio, Ltd., 1929), 65.

⁵²Taut, Modern Architecture, 68; Kimball, American Architecture, 194.

⁵³Taut, Modern Architecture, 98. On the growing split between the Europeans and Wright see Burchard and Bush-Brown, American Architecture, 295-96; Vincent Scully, Jr., Modern Architecture: The Architecture of Democracy (New York: George Braziller, 1961), 30-31; and Frank Lloyd Wright, Modern Architecture (Princeton: Princeton Press, 1931).

⁵⁴Taut, Modern Architecture, 133, 140, 211.

⁵⁵Philip Sterner, "Architectural League," Arts, 13 (March, 1928), 187; Joseph Horner, "Modern Architecture in Germany," Architectural Forum, 51 (July, 1929), 41.

⁵⁶Nancy N. Ross, "German Main Street," Saturday Evening Post, 205 (October 22, 1932), 70; George N. Nelson, "Architects of Europe: The Luckhardt Brothers," Pencil Points, 16 (March, 1935), 129; Herman George Scheffauer, "A New Vision in Design Has Gripped Germany,"

New York Times 17 July 1927. It seemed that Scheffauer, like so many other contemporaries, assumed that the new architecture was intrinsically ugly.

⁵⁷Virginia Pope, "Architecture of America Molds Beauty Anew," New York Times, 19 December 1932; Herbert von Oelsen, "Post-War German Architecture," Survey Graphic, 14 (February, 1929), 599.

⁵⁸On the preferences for various ornamentation and decoration in the twenties see Martin Battersby, The Decorative Twenties (New York: Walker Publishers, 1969).

⁵⁹"Europe Turns to American Architects," American Architect, 119 (January 19, 1921), 69; "Germany Wants Skyscrapers," American Architect, 119 (February 23, 1921), 215; Herman George Scheffauer, "The Skyscraper Has Found No Favor in Europe," New York Times, 22 August 1926.

⁶⁰New York Times, 3 November 1925. Le Corbusier inspired the Germans. Bruno Taut wrote that the French architect was an important influence on him, the architects of the Bauhaus, and builders throughout Germany. This was particularly true in the area of community housing. Taut, Modern Architecture, 94. For a retrospective on Le Corbusier, Gropius and the formation of the Congress Internationaux d Architecture Moderne (CIAM) see Maxwell Fry, Art in the Machine Age: A Critique of Contemporary Life Through the Medium of Architecture (London: Meuthen

and Co., Ltd.), 103-31.

⁶¹These were the German Siedlungen (housing estates) which were publicly financed. In Berlin, the trade unions funded the projects. Martin Wagner was a Social Democrat, and he formed cooperatives of building craftsmen. The CEHAG (Gemeinutziege-Heimstätten-Spar-und-Bau, A. G.) was the result. In Frankfurt, the city financed the projects of city planner Ernst May.

⁶²See Mumford, Sticks and Stones, 164-68; Lewis Mumford, "Mass Production and the Modern House," Architectural Record, 67 (January, 1930), 13-20; "13 Housing Projects," Architectural Record, 71 (March, 1932), 261-82.

⁶³William Gaunt, "Modern Utopia, The New Germany, The New Movement," Creative Art, 5 (December, 1929), 859-65; Miriam Beard, "In Architecture, A New Germany Arises," New York Times, 15 March 1931. On Taut's Zehlendorf buildings see Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 125.

⁶⁴In 1931, Bauer won the Fortune prize in Industrial design for an essay on modern architecture. Later in life she worked in the Federal Housing Authority. "Economy in Planning," Architectural Record, 66 (September, 1929), 274; Catherine Bauer, "Architecture," Arts Weekly, 1 (March 8, 1932), 30; Roger Gilman, "Estimate of Modern Architecture in Germany," Parnassus, 2 (May, 1930), 11.

Regardless of the great strides made in public housing, Werner Hegemann, an official in the SPD, claimed that there was a "shelter famine." "It is a curious reflection upon the traditional 'German efficiency' that in Germany the standardization of housing is still in its infancy." Werner Hegemann, "Shelter Famine," Survey Graphic, 14 (February, 1929), 602. See also Nikolaus Pevsner, An Outline of European Architecture (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), 211-15.

⁶⁵Joseph Hoerner, "Modern Architecture in Germany," Architectural Forum, 51 (July, 1929), 41; Walter Gropius, "The Small House of Today," Architectural Forum, 54 (March, 1931), 266. Gropius emphasized the importance of prefabrication and standardized materials, the same principles that he followed in the construction of apartments.

Standardization did not seem to have much of a future in the United States. The houses of America were built in many styles and reflected regional preferences that had long been a feature of American architecture. Richard Neutra was a European who flourished in America by satisfying the individual tastes of Americans. In Vienna, he studied with Adolf Loos and Otto Wagner. In turn, Loos had journeyed to America at the end of the nineteenth century. Neutra arrived in the United States

in 1923 and was largely removed from direct contact with developments in Weimar. See McCallum, Architecture, USA, 62; Eaton, American Architecture Comes of Age, 109-41; and Richard Neutra, Life and Shape, (New York: 1962).

⁶⁶Catherine Bauer, "Architecture," Arts Weekly, 1 (March 8, 1932), 30; George N. Nelson, "Architects of Europe Today: Mies van der Rohe," Pencil Points, 16 (March, 1935), 131.

⁶⁷The modernists fared better in Germany than they did elsewhere in Europe. During the twenties, the movement was young and traditional projects far outnumbered the modern structures. For a review of the different styles, see Arnold Whittick, European Architecture in the Twentieth Century (New York: Abelard-Schuman, 1974), 89-133, and in passing, Pevsner, Outline of European Architecture, 211-15.

⁶⁸Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, The International Style: Architecture Since 1922, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1932), 13, 21.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 15. Suburban dwelling, particularly for the upper and upper middle classes, commanded more attention. Architects such as Harrie T. Lingberg and Paul Chafin were more interested in building homes in one of the popular regional styles. Burchard and Bush-Brown, American Architecture, 298-301.

⁷⁰Burchard and Bush-Brown, American Architecture, 285-87; Ross, American Art Since 1900, 283-85; Hitchcock and Johnson, The International Style, 95.

⁷¹Hannes Meyer replaced Gropius on 1 April 1928. He envisioned a more spartan, society oriented program than did the founder. The theatre, crafts, and painting sections suffered. The reaction to his changed were mixed, and some concluded that it was good for the school when he resigned and Mies replaced him. See Milton D. Lowenstein, "Germany's Bauhaus Experiment," Architecture, 61 (July, 1929), 1-6; Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 122-23, 132-38. On Mies see Ludwig Hilberseimer, Mies van der Rohe (Chicago: Paul Theobald and Co., 1956).

⁷²"Bauhaus at the Becker Gallery," Art News, 29 (January 17, 1931), 1-2; Douglas Haskell, "The Closing of the Bauhaus," Nation, 135 (October 26, 1932), 374; "Architecture and the Nazis," American Magazine of Art, 26 (September, 1933), 420.

⁷³Lane, Architecture and Politics in Germany, 148, 185-99; Whittick, European Architecture in the Twentieth Century, 479-86; "Architecture and the Nazis," American Magazine of Art, 26 (September, 1933), 420. Mies did not leave Germany until 1938. In 1935, George N. Nelson characterized Mies as virtually apolitical. He supported his argument with the fact that Hitler made

Mies the director of the German Academy of Architects.

George N. Nelson, "Architects of Europe Today: Mies van der Rohe," Pencil Points, 16 (September, 1935), 453-60.

⁷⁴William Gaunt, "Modern Utopia Berlin, The New Germany, The New Movement," Creative Art, 5 (December, 1929), 865; Giedion, Gropius, 61-67.

⁷⁵Claude C. Bragdon, "Towards a New Theatre," Architectural Record, 52 (September, 1922), 172; Walter Gropius, "Modern Theatre Construction: The Rebuilding of the Piscator Theatre," Drama, 18 (February, 1928), 136.

"There are indeed only two kinds of music. German music and bad music."

H. L. Menken (1926)

CHAPTER III

AMERICA AND THE GERMAN MUSICAL TRADITION

In 1919, music critic John N. Burke, a senior member of Musical Quarterly's staff, insisted that music could rejuvenate the nation. In order to re-establish the tranquility of western civilization, music must re-assert itself "and assume again its essentially democratic nature." Many intellectuals believed with Burke that music should play a more important role in the lives of Americans. As a representative letter to the editor of Musical America declared, "America must foster the arts, we cannot be simply a commercial people."¹

In the nineteenth century, commercial or "popular" music was the listening fare of most Americans. For the average citizen, the songs of Stephen Foster (1826-1864) had more appeal than the concertos of Edward MacDowell (1861-1908). Many critics stated bluntly that commercialism dominated the nation's musical life. The working man preferred the music hall and the minstrel show to a symphony or recital. The musical experts spent much of their time explaining why American tastes ran to the "cruder" forms of musical expression. In composition,

performance, and appreciation, Americans, they contended, were naive. The public liked big shows and extravaganzas that satisfied the common man's "insatiable appetite for the sensational...."²

The critical community frequently commented on the importance of expanding serious music's audience. In 1926, George Elliot Simpson, a Yale professor of music who wrote a series of articles on American music for Musical Courier, stressed the variety of America's musical experience and emphasized the necessity of promoting serious music. Achievement within the classical tradition was the surest sign of a nation's musical maturity, he claimed. Intellectuals sometimes doubted the ability of the masses to appreciate classical music, but usually committed themselves to the cause, for it was their livelihood as well as the composers' and musicians'. More significantly, he believed that music was essentially universal and democratic in nature. Looking back to previous generations, they acknowledged a debt of gratitude to German professionals who were instrumental in establishing a solid foundation upon which to build.³

Germans helped form Boston's first full-time symphony orchestra. And after the Civil War, the German born Theodore Thomas became a central force in the musical development of New York and the nation. In 1848 and 1853,

German orchestras toured New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Boston. Many of the musicians chose to remain in America rather than return to politically unstable Europe. They formed the nucleus of many young American orchestras. Theodore Thomas and Leopold Damrosch (also from Germany) took their musicians into the interior of the country. Just as the republic expanded from east to west, music followed the same pattern. The efforts of these two men inspired communities to form their own organizations. Chicago was an early convert, and St. Louis (with its large German-American population), Cincinnati, Pittsburg, and Los Angeles quickly followed. While Boston, New York, and Philadelphia maintained and embellished their reputations, the new orchestras set similarly high goals and served as outposts of musical culture.⁴

The symphonic music the groups played was predominantly German, and in opera, the Italians were the great favorites. Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven dominated the concert programs. Italian operas were in constant demand, but German composers (sometimes using Italian librettos) such as Mozart were also frequently performed.⁵ It seemed German trained and German born musicians were in the vanguard of every effort to carry the music of the masters to American audiences. They were the bearers

of the German tradition and promoted the cause of modern German music. Theodore Thomas played Wagner "even if only one liked it." Leopold Damrosch was equally active in both areas.⁶ Although German music was most often performed, the musicians, conductors, and composers realized that all music must receive a fair hearing, especially American, and that all must work toward increasing the acceptance of classical music throughout the nation.

In the twenties, musicians, composers and critics used a variety of forums to bring music to the people. The nation's major cities served as centers for information. A host of professionals contributed articles and granted interviews to a variety of publications. Articles and essays fell into three basic categories. The more sophisticated national journals such as The Nation and The New Republic had respected authorities who wrote periodically about music in the United States and Europe. Living Age, Literary Digest and similar publications followed the same practice albeit on a somewhat lower intellectual level. Musical America and Musical Courier were important weeklies that covered musical events all over the globe through a network of foreign correspondents. These newspapers did not have as diversified an audience as the other journals and

addressed primarily those who followed closely the progress of music in America. The more scholarly journals such as Musical Quarterly, Etude, and especially Modern Music (a New York based publication of the League of Composers) reflected the interests of the serious musician. Articles in them were frequently quoted in other publications. Many contributors appeared in more than one category of printed matter. Metropolitan newspaper critics continued to be important and their opinions often found their way into national magazines.

While the object was to capture the attention of the general public, musicians and composers realized that they had to work closely with those who had supported music in the past. Traditionally, the wealthy were music's most influential friends. Rich patrons were indispensable. They had generously subsidized the New York Philharmonic and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the first two organizations so favored in the United States. The affluent dominated symphony and opera boards, choral societies, and chamber music organizations. The pronouncements of Mrs. E. H. Harriman, president of the American Orchestral Society, received instant notice.⁷ Music directors and impresarios understood that it was part of their job to satisfy the desires of the rich and well-born. The patrons formed a hub around which the

rest of the musical world revolved. The question which occupied musicians and intellectuals was how large the musical wheel would become.

But in the face of this inherited elitist ideal, music offered something for all society. In addition to aesthetic properties, it possessed utilitarian qualities. Redfern Mason, Commonweal's resident music expert, informed his readers that "Eventually we shall be able to bring the business-like American to recognize that music...pays as advertising, pays as education, pays as a deterrent from crime, and pays as a character builder...." The professional journal Etude announced to musicians that "Your greatest obligation...is to let the world know how music, more than anything else sustains faith, fortifies courage, promotes initiative, and energizes work." As the editors of Etude made clear in 1933, listening to and understanding music was a wholesome activity, in harmony with American values, and the general desire for a cultural democracy.⁸

Partly for this reason, the artistic trends of the twenties were vexing to many members of the musical establishment. Modern music presented problems. Its apparent coarseness seemed to represent not a healthy democratic character, but "musical anarchism." Americans were not noted for their receptiveness to new music.⁹

In earlier times, audiences expected orchestras to include popular tunes with its standard repertoire, mixing the "serious with the sensational." It took a long time to build a following and audiences had to be introduced gradually to new symphonic works. In 1920, Richard Wagner was still too modern for many Americans. The conductor who performed modern music took a chance, for the serious music public was often opinionated and wanted familiar works that they had come to love. This was particularly true of patrons. Also, the more complex the music (as modern scores frequently were), the more difficult it was for marginal orchestras to perform. Many practicing musicians disliked promoting and performing unpopular modern works. It was a risky business to support modern music if this threatened musicians' security and the possibilities of enlarging audiences. Before Americans could enjoy full artistic expression, they had to establish an unassailable idea that music had many valid forms, each contributing to a general tradition of support.¹⁰

Developments in Weimar Germany were of special interest to Americans. Despite political and social tensions and economic uncertainties, Germany supported a flourishing musical life.¹¹ Weimar's success in the subsidizing, staging, performing, and conducting over-

shadowed Central European influences in the realm of new musical composition. America's musicians, critics, and patrons looked to Germany in order to emulate its success in making serious music a vital force in the nation's life. While the productions of the modern works of Schoenberg and others did occur and receive critical review, fundamental concerns centered on creating an environment which would lead to the advancement of American orchestras, musicians, and composers.

After the war serious music prospered in America. Looking back on the twenties, musicologist David Ewen fondly recalled a resplendent era. While opera retained its popularity, the singers had to share the limelight with orchestras, and, above all conductors. In spite of the World War, the German-Austrian musical tradition remained firmly entrenched in the United States. The music of Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms overcame brief and irrational war-time prejudices. Veteran's groups and anti-German polemicists were defeated in their drive to suppress German music. By mid-decade, the 1919-20 period was a dim memory. H. L. Mencken summarized the prevalent attitude when he declared German music to be superior to all other kinds.¹²

With their German training, American orchestras were primed to assume new musical heights. Metropolitan

orchestras in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston already compared favorably to European counterparts. Thanks to the critics, and to tours, their musical expertise was a well known source of civic and national pride. The growth of American orchestras in the twenties persuaded many critics that a golden age was in the making. The nation displayed "solidity, permanence, and wide diffusion in its organized musical life," both for listeners and performers. The German tradition had served American music lovers well in the past. There was a natural tendency to follow the path of previous musical success, typified in several fine civic institutions, and attempt to emulate German methods on a broad national scale.¹³

As the desire for German music increased, audience attention focused on the podium. Conductors were lionized, and became the stars of the concert hall. As with stars in the cinema, politics, and other public sectors, the name of the maestro was often more important than what he did. Symphony boards increasingly sought out Weimar's most notable music directors in order to satisfy a growing public's musical appetite. Throughout the twenties the giants of German conducting came to the United States. Bruno Walter, Wilhelm Furtwaengler, Otto Klemperer, and Erich Kleiber regularly included America

on their artistic itineraries.¹⁴

The Central Europeans fit rather easily into the American system. They had international reputations and the aura of musical authenticity. Encounters between German conductors and American orchestras yielded mutually beneficial results. The conductors were part of a growth process. Their presence served to increase interest in serious music while contributing to the proficiency of American ensembles. To the Europeans, America was a haven for performance in the economically troubled early part of the decade and later an indication of one's professional standing. As one reviewer proudly stated, "Indeed, it is one of the ambitions of every great European conductor to lead at some time one of our great orchestras."¹⁵

The goal of many of the newer symphony organizations was to acquire the services of a German musician. The titans of the podium, such as Walter, normally visited and returned to the homeland. But other talented practitioners of the German tradition remained in the United States to impart their wisdom to American orchestras. Felix Weingarten stated that he preferred to live in America, and Fritz Reiner was credited with revitalizing the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, while the older Frederick Stock was a fixture in Chicago. The young

Hungarian conductor Eugene Ormandy observed that the combination of American resources and European training produced musical experiences of surpassing quality.¹⁶

The orchestral boom produced two major reactions. Americans consistently sought out German artists while simultaneously developing a twinge of nationalistic artistic vanity. The popular Czech soprano Maria Jeritz summarized what many American critics accepted. She told an interviewer that "Contact between America and Europe is growing closer all the time and today there is a regular exchange, chiefly in artistic production, which is refining the taste of the American public and is giving new ideas to huge masses of people." This combined with a growing sense of pride in America's accomplishments. Arthur M. Abell of Musical Courier reasoned that in the world of orchestras America had reversed roles with Europe. European orchestras "must now be measured against American standards." Thus, the Berlin Philharmonic became as good as the symphony orchestras of New York. While clamoring for German artists, some Americans actually reached a point where notable German conductors were no longer sophisticated enough for American audiences.¹⁷

Henrietta Malkiel, well known booster of America's "musical independence," reported that New York had re-

placed Berlin as the musical capital of the world. She saw this as a significant first step in America's musical maturation. But it was only a first step, for New York was not the nation. Elizabeth Armstrong, a reporter for Musical America, was also interested in the spread of musical culture in America and believed that the United States had to train musicians in order to bring music to the hinterlands. She clarified the long range objectives and wrote that Americans should strive to create a musical environment similar to Germany's where "the most wonderful tradition was an orchestra in every town."¹⁸ Americans needed only to nurture native talents.

A rather ironic set of circumstances faced the aspiring American musician. Interest in serious music was on the upswing, but opportunities for performance and education were limited. So many Europeans had implanted themselves in the United States that the young artist frequently had difficulty trying to perfect his skills. Openings in music academies and chances for engagements were limited.

Germany beckoned! The Weimar Republic offered the same kind of promise which America held for some German musicians. Aaron Copland admitted that American schools were making great strides, but he also noted that immersion in the European milieu was invaluable. And

study in Germany was cheap. Despite the establishment in 1924 of the Julliard School, the Eastman School, and the Curtis Institute, many musicians believed that training comparable to Berlin's Akademie der Kuenste was unavailable elsewhere at any price.¹⁹ Adding in the economies, Germany became an extremely attractive place to study. In addition to acquiring an education, a student could receive a hearing. For a modest sum, a musician could hire a hall and give a recital before an audience.

The Musical Courier reported that Berlin was full of Americans. Americans talented in vocal and instrumental music joined with hopeful composition pupils. An American musician in Germany, Eric Salter, observed that "Berlin is a meeting place for American singers, not only those who seek engagements, but for those who wish to study." Pianist and composer Artur Schnabel guided the studies of George Antheil, Henry Cowell, Roger Sessions, and many other Americans who later enjoyed prominent concert and teaching careers. Arnold Schoenberg tutored the American composers Adolf Weiss and Marc Blitzstein.²⁰

Germany provided the ideal setting. Berlin alone had four opera companies,²¹ but Germany was more than the capital city. Opportunities existed in many areas. If one could not find work in Berlin, he had only to

travel to the provinces. The American soprano Emma Redell, who experienced her initial successes in Germany, wrote a primer on how to go about starting a career in Germany. Nor was Redell's good fortune an isolated incident. Actress and singer Helen Gahagan performed at Augsburg. Pennsylvania Governor Gifford Pinchot's niece Rosamund Pinchot sang and acted her way across the stages of Central Europe. As one reviewer noted, it was "a bit ironical that this American never won the greatest recognition in her native country until she appeared on the German stage."²² Triumph in Germany could lead to success in America and serve to separate one from the run-of-the mill American performers who could claim no European experience.

Critics lauded the Weimar Republic for preserving Germany's artistic ambience, but were displeased that American artists did not have similar opportunities in the United States. The New York Times reported that music under Hindenburg revealed artistic conditions which any musician would envy. The nation of great composers presented unprecedented occasion to obtain "a complete musical and dramatic education." Milton Weill, editor of Musical America, asked the rhetorical question how "An American can go to Europe, be he musician, architect, artist, or sculptor, and receive Government recog-

dition which places him in a high position, but his own government pays absolutely no attention to him or what he represents?" The German system of municipal and state subsidies meant that the government supported and appreciated the value of the artist in society.²³

The National Association of Music Merchants, which promoted the expansion of America's musical horizons, wanted to spearhead a revision of the nation's commitment to music. To them, it was obvious that Americans had the necessary talent; one need only read of the activities of Americans in Germany. The merchants were in favor of rationalizing the performance and production of music in the United States. America's public monetary resources should be used to create a forum for musicians. It was a question of how to go about it. The most efficient and satisfying model in existence was the German program. America must have a "Department of Fine Arts" to co-ordinate the nation's musical life. The department could sponsor seminars and concerts, subsidize artists, and support musical festivals. As the Nation's roving music reporter Henrietta Straus asserted, "when American artists are found they must be assured of a ready and sympathetic hearing."²⁴

The musical community agreed that greater efforts had to be made to promote the cause of serious music in

the United States. But musical developments in the twentieth century created deep divisions among classical music's champions. Atonality, Neo-Classicism, jazz, and other "modernities" were uncertain commodities when compared to the music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Daniel Gregory Mason, composer and MacDowell Professor of Music at Columbia University, believed that "new works often quickly grow old while underneath the surface there flowed the steady stream of Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, and Schumann." The same could not be said of the modernists who often drove audiences to despair. An all modern music program could not draw an audience without cheap theatrics, Mason held. Musicians might balance aesthetics and the realities of the box office, but never at the expense of art.²⁵

A German author accurately portrayed the conditions confronting music's friends. Adolf Weismann's Problems of Modern Music (1925) concluded that "The American spirit which now demands a musical life of its own, is very difficult to define; for it loves show and excitement, is uninterested in abstractions, is dominated by money, and is only beginning to entertain a notion of taste in art." American composer Henry Cowell also identified the same tendencies in an article for Century. He commented that twentieth century compositions usually

troubled America's aural sensibilities, but he hoped that the prejudiced and the uninformed could be educated. John Putnam, in his regular column for Musical Courier, stated that the public was wise. He charged that "Modern music was uninspired" and reflected a "decadence in the field of creative music."²⁶ The battle was joined when advocates and detractors of modern music debated the status of music in America.

Deems Taylor, composer and editor of Musical America from 1927 to 1929, questioned the ability of modern music to transcend its immediate artistic ambience. Taylor believed that the modern compositions of the Schoenberg school were obsessed with making their works mirror the times. He reasoned that "As our times become more remote there is the danger that the music that deliberately sought to express them will seem remote indeed." Grenville Vernon of Commonweal echoed Taylor's sentiments. Vernon's review of Alban Berg's opera Wozzeck (1925) epitomized widely held conservative opinion. "The present writer believes that Wozzeck is of today, and only of today, that is unless music is to have a future built upon a quagmire, which for art is an impossibility."²⁷ These were harsh words, but they accurately reflected the concern of many critics. How could this music build a solid foundation for the future,

they asked?

On the other side of the critical ledger, Ernst Decesy, the respected Viennese music critic and author, presented an altogether different, more confident attitude. "Thank heaven art is protean," he proclaimed, "new faces appear, and a great tradition renews itself." Decesy was a member of the group which eagerly awaited each new development. They believed that modern music could prosper in the traditional musical forums. Henry Cowell insisted that "Modern music is distinctly not attempting to disregard the classics but rather to do exactly what those same classics accomplished in their day- to add new principles to what had been established before." The youthful Willi Reich, a pupil and confidant of Anton Webern, assured American readers that the "New Music" was "breaking down prejudices against what is new by showing...that modern music may be interesting and agreeable and quite within our grasp."²⁸

Change produced both anxiety and confidence among the critics. In the twenties, two German composers clearly illustrated the diversity of musical form. Richard Strauss and Arnold Schoenberg were major personalities in the world of music and famous representatives of the Austro-German tradition in the twentieth century. Strauss was the living embodiment of fin de siècle

musical modernism. In Salome (1903-1905) and Elektra (1906-1908), he used the techniques of dissonance and the lessons of Wagnerian opera theatre. But Strauss never abandoned tonality. His return to classical form and technique began with Der Rosenkavalier (1909-1910) which was one of his last critical triumphs. Even before the war, he and his music began to show sign of weariness.²⁹ Nevertheless, in America Strauss' music was performed and lauded much more than Schoenberg's. The latter's compositions appeared only on daring programs. The two composers' careers helped bring into focus America's musical proclivities.

Strauss' American successes predated the war. In 1904, Hermann Hans Wetzler, a wealthy New York entrepreneur who backed concerts, invited Strauss to conduct a series of performances for which he was handsomely paid. He returned to the United States for the 1920-1921 concert season and again commanded huge fees. Many of the things he did during his visits to the United States created controversy. On the earlier trip, he performed a concert in Wanamaker's Department Store. The money, it seemed, was right.³⁰ Strauss the conductor was, however, less important than Strauss the composer and man.

Richard Strauss had the reputation of being

"extroaordinarily unfriendly to Americans." In turn, he attracted a good deal of Yankee animosity on artistic and social grounds. Paul Rosenfeld, a well known literary and music critic of the twenties, considered Strauss' career a sham. He argued that Strauss "has become a bad musician. He is the cruel, the great disappointment of modern music, of modern art." In addition, the "great" German composer's blatant materialism seemed to be out of step with the American conception of the artist. Strauss' sole concern appeared to be to collect as many American dollars as possible. Most Americans adhered to the starving artist theory of musicianship and found it difficult to imagine that making money (the function of corporations and entrepreneurs) had much to do with producing art. The New York Times reported that he was "enoumously clever" but "inartistic" in light of his worship of money. Many Americans were particularly offended because Strauss took their money while ridiculing their culture.³¹

He nonetheless received bouquets as well as arrows from the critics. The Brooklyn Eagle commented on his lasting contribution to music. The New York Evening Post's Henry T. Finck and Frank Patterson of the Musical Courier declared Strauss "the greatest living composer." Despite his failing musical gifts and his graceless

personality, Strauss continued to command attention and notice. Even his witless ballet Whipped Cream (1922) received kindly reviews.³² Richard Strauss personified a tradition, and his identification with the German musical heritage overcame growing critical suspicions.

In retrospect, Strauss seemed out of place during the Weimar years. His roots went back to the old imperial days when he could discreetly bandy words with the Kaiser. It was as if Strauss was a spectre from an earlier era. David Ewen observed that the composer of Don Juan (1888) was a victim of the post-war period. He claimed that "There must be a poison in our modern age. Something about our times seems to make it impossible to create great music." Critic Eric Bonner, writing in Outlook in 1928, made it sound as if Strauss were already dead. "What Strauss has done, for which the musical world owes him a large debt of gratitude, is to show that one can use the modern idiom and yet retain the lyric beauty that so many modern composers seem to think beneath them." Many members of the musical fraternity concluded that "the worst of Strauss is better than the best of most present day composers."³³

In 1932, Friedrich E. Deutsch contended that "Of all living artists, Strauss is the great favorite, the representative master of German music, while Schoenberg,

the solitary inaugurator of the new tone system, must wait for a later generation to assign his true place in history." Schoenberg's music stemmed from his employment of a radical technique that produced sounds which were either shocking or unpleasant to the uninitiated. When critics attempted to explain his music, they referred to labels such as "sonal anarchism," "atonalism," "futurism," and "Expressionism." None of these terms explained precisely what Schoenberg was trying to accomplish, nor could explanations overcome traditional aesthetic tastes. Part of the problem lay in the difficulty that listeners, even sophisticated ones, found the explanations unsatisfactory. Because of his reputation as a leading German composer, Schoenberg was assured of a hearing if not acceptance. But, in 1919, his music was little known in the United States, and this gave his supporters grounds for hope.³⁴

When Schoenberg's work was heard in America, it received a rather chilly reception. To the great mass of music lovers, he was an "insoluble enigma." In 1926, Chicago concertgoers were unreceptive to his Verklaerte Nacht (1899) and Five Orchestral Pieces (1909). In Philadelphia, the Variations for Orchestra (1928), under Leopold Stowkowski, was roundly hooted. Musical Courier announced that "The reviewers are united...on

the proposition that Schoenberg's Variations is an unexciting and uninspired work and does not justify the compliment of being hissed."³⁵ A disgruntled New Yorker who heard Schoenberg's music suggested "that matters might be satisfactorily resolved to all concerned by including these demonic outbursts at the end of programs, thus giving those people who dislike them an opportunity to withdraw 'before the racket starts.'"³⁶ This hardly seemed to be music that would enrapture the public and lead to a flood of patrons demanding seats in the nation's symphony halls.

A few critics argued that atonalism was an acquired taste. In order to appreciate the master, one had to develop one's cultural palate. Schoenberg did represent a new approach and his work in Berlin, the hotbed of German musical activity, sustained America's interest in his career. Cooler temperaments took hold as Americans were advised to adopt a patient attitude. Artistic movements required long gestation periods, and one must weigh carefully the works of the modern composers. The musical journal for teachers, Etude, was stoical. "Forty years hence there will be those who will say musical perfection had been reached and those who will see nothing but decadence." The contemporary question remained whether or not American audiences could keep an open mind "for what

appeared to be no music at all."³⁷

Nevertheless, Schoenberg did gather a following. One of America's most generous musical patrons, Mrs. Elisabeth Sprague Coolidge recognized his talents in 1927 when she commissioned his Third String Quartet (1927). In the Arts, Dane Rudyhar wrote that "Schoenberg can be considered...the destroyer of worn out forms, who by destroying, worked also for the future of the new American music, the dawn of which has not yet come."³⁸ The Austrian composer was a teacher, and in that role had helped to build the reputations of Anton Webern and Alban Berg. Talented Americans waited to follow in their footsteps. For good or ill, Schoenberg exerted a worldwide influence. Writing in 1941, Aaron Copland observed that "Some ten years ago many young composers whose work I had occasion to examine showed unmistakable signs of the Schoenberg influence."³⁹

Schoenberg came to America in the autumn of 1933, a victim of Hitler's policies on art, and received an enthusiastic reception. He was a famous international figure who carried with him the aura of the German musical mystique. One editorial predicted that "His presence among us should have profound effects upon music in America, for to him will go the many musicians who seek guidance in a creative art which only an Arnold

Schoenberg can give." His "music of the future" was difficult to discount whatever the immediate effects of his work. An earlier article in Nation offered advice for those who remained unconverted. Miscomprehension was not the fault of the music, but of the listener. The Nation advised that "We have to trust Schoenberg wherever he may lead us."⁴⁰

However, Alban Berg, not Schoenberg, came closest to achieving success for German modernism in America. Berg's opera Wozzeck (1925) did more to delineate the atonal technique than any other work.⁴¹ To many, Wozzeck was a promise of what modern music could become. Pitts Sanborn, who served as music editor for a number of New York papers between the wars, reported "As compared with the late music of Schoenberg as we know it in America, Wozzeck is at once clearer and richer, less mechanical, and with more humor." The March 19, 1931 Philadelphia premiere "filled the members of its audience with great enthusiasm" and was "the sensation of the American opera season." According to Theatre Arts Monthly, the opera was "the only one in the modern manner to achieve greatness, it makes all the contemporary attempts in the same style seem puny and ineffective."⁴²

But Berg's triumph did not usher in a new musical era; Wozzeck was an exception. Berg's music was success-

ful in the dramatic context of the opera, but less so in providing a pure musical experience. The music did not transfer well to the concert hall. Local orchestras did not rush to acquire suites from the opera, and few American cities had the resources to mount a full production. America was not Germany; each city did not have its own orchestral and operatic tradition or facilities. This reality reduced the number of performance possibilities for new music, or indeed, any serious music of doubtful appeal. Many critics and patrons believed that this was why the cause of music had to be promoted carefully, using the standard German repertoire. The typical approach was first "the right kind of music," then the money, and finally the musicians.

In the early twenties, Vienna's young Erich Wolfgang Korngold seemed to represent the traditional mode among rising young German composers. Mahler and Strauss lauded him in youth, and the critics fell obediently in line. He wrote melodies, not raucous discords. As the Musical Courier put it, "That boy is not afraid to write tunes." While his opera Die Tote Stadt (1920) was well received, his musical staying power was questionable. Although many critics were inclined to defend his work, when Violanta (1914) and The Ring of Poly-crates (1919) reached America they were coolly received,

and his chamber music failed to persuade reviewers. Korngold remained active, but, ultimately, he committed artistic suicide in the eyes of the professional musical community. When he became primarily a film composer, not only did his early promise remain unfulfilled, they concluded, but he turned to the production of pap for the moguls of Hollywood. Most critics, however, had categorized him as a minor figure long before the film work, concluding that his compositions were too imitative of Strauss, Puccini and others. Korngold's pieces were devoid of a life of their own, and his later attachment to the film industry cast further shadows on his claim to being a great creative artist.⁴³

The direction of contemporary musical trends, in terms of audience taste or performance, was almost impossible to predict, for music was in a constant state of flux. In addition to the various German experiments, Americans examined other composers or schools which seemed to have a future. Igor Stravinsky was popular, and the parade to Nadia Boulanger's music school at Fontainebleau continued throughout the first post-war decade. Given the confusion and conflicting musical styles, perhaps native composers could develop their own schools of American music.

In Tune in America (1931), Daniel Gregory Mason

wrote longingly of America's future musical independence. He provided lists of new American works, described conductors and audiences, and tried to explain how America could cultivate a musical aesthetic. Mason wanted to see American conductors and audiences continue to sustain the classics but also to devote more time and energy to American composers. To that end, he advised musical training which allowed for originality. His was a familiar nationalist's viewpoint. He was fundamentally unimpressed with international musical organizations, nor did he wish to ape the Europeans. "The cult of ugliness, disorder, disillusion, which may be a necessary phase for a Europe more than half effete, is simply irrelevant to a young, vigorous people like ourselves." He dismissed Schoenberg and Hindemith. He also gave the back of his hand to American jazz, as banal claptrap that represented the baser side of the American character. Mason believed in music that displayed emotion and the finer qualities of America. He thus went against some of the basic precepts of the modernists and clearly opposed an American idiom, jazz.⁴⁴

Jazz was a disturbing phenomenon because, whether critics liked it or not, it was easily identified as "American." It was certainly popular. At one time or another, almost every conceivable social evil was somehow

linked to jazz music. Syncopated rhythm infected the soul. Prelates, professors, musicians, and critics condemned jazz and its companions booze, speakeasies, rumble seats, and cheap dance halls. A worried citizen wrote to Musical America's editor: "If jazz represents the American soul, then God help America."⁴⁵

But jazz also had defenders. George Gershwin explained that it was "the spontaneous expression of the nervous energy of American life." The music should be allowed to transcend its unsavory beginnings. Jazz could furnish the best chance for America to contribute something unique to music. Others agreed. It could be art, and there was "no intrinsic reason why jazz cannot also be fine music." In 1927, critic Andre Levinson, who was an expert on dance, asserted that "Jazz is henceforth admitted into the hierarchy of the arts...although it is only a little while since it was the butt of the press and the public alike...."⁴⁶

Jazz even reached the shores of Germany and eventually influenced serious composers. Cabarets and bistros adopted the music, using small groups which imitated American bands. The dissemination of jazz on this level sparked wide-spread comment, usually along sociological lines, but German composers also began dabbling with jazz techniques. American music's self-styled

"Bad Boy," George Antheil, helped introduce jazz to a number of interested European composers. His Airplane Sonata (1921) and Ballet Mecanique (1924) were in the American idiom. Stravinsky composed Ragtime for Eleven Instruments (1922), and in Germany, Paul Hindemith's Suite "1922" for Piano (1922) produced images of the shimmy and the foxtrot. These manifestations of Americanism produced a good deal of speculation among America's intellectual elite.⁴⁷

Living Age reported that the Old World had something novel to tell the New. "Germany had boldly blazed out two new trails in jazz composition." Ernst Krenek created the greatest initial reaction with his opera Jonny Spielt Auf (1927). The work used jazz and atonality to depict modern conditions. Americans found it thematically scandalous because a black band leader was the hero of the musical drama, but Jonny was simply a captivating novelty to Europeans. Lawrence Adler commented in Nation that the message of the opera was "Live vociferously, be sure of yourself, and obey the voice of the moment...could anything be more in keeping with such a gesture than the principles of atonality." Kurt Weill also wrote a series of operas or "stage plays" which attracted notice in the United States. Using a smattering of atonal technique and major elements of jazz,

Weill's Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny (1927) and The Three Penny Opera (1928) followed social themes which delighted some and outraged others.⁴⁸

Virtually every publication that had anything to do with music reviewed the January 19, 1929 American premiere of Krenek's "jazz opera." Its dramatic context and social themes shocked many critics. Once again the Europeans seemed to be saying that America was decadent and immoral. Grenville Vernon recoiled at Jonny's blatant "animalism and the obvious implication of racial overtone." Vernon warned that Jonny might be "the beginning of a jazz school of opera, or the final deliquescence of all opera, of the recognition of need of a return to more ordered musical and aesthetic standards, or of the complete triumph of the sensualism and discord of a mechanistic and souless age."⁴⁹ Jonny was indeed animalistic, amoral, and materialistic, but the composer claimed that not just America, but western civilization was falling prey to modern corruptions. In 1930, Krenek wrote that "Jonny is actually a part of the technical-mechanical side of the world; he reacts easily, as gratifyingly and amorally as a well constructed machine."⁵⁰

Perhaps even more disarming to American critics was the fact that Krenek used jazz, the American idiom.

When the Metropolitan Opera presented the work, most critics responded with a good deal of nationalistic pique. Literary Digest claimed that it was "dull and quite innocent of the real jazz rhythm." The Saturday Evening Post informed readers that Krenek's "jazz is not even good jazz." Roles had been reversed. As Americans were ridiculed for imitating European music, Krenek garnered the barbs of Americans. Adolf Weissman adopted a more objective, dispassionate tone in Modern Music, but his even-handed, scholarly approach was atypical.⁵¹ Olin Downes of the New York Times summarized the majority opinion. "That the opera is of lasting value, except for its curious reflection of currents of a certain period, it would be futile to claim."⁵²

Jonny Spielt Auf created the greatest stir because it was the first jazz opera from Europe, but Kurt Weill's experiments were more moderately received and ultimately enjoyed a longer performance life. The social themes of Mahagonny and The Three Penny Opera escaped many reviewers,⁵³ but, generally speaking, Weill earned respect for his music in America. Cy Caldwell, a freelance critic in New York, wrote of the first American performance of Three Penny on April 13, 1933 that it "must have lost something in transit. I was seldom amused... often bored...Instead of gaiety there was a sort of

brooding communistic complaint in the drab rags the beggars wore...." Despite this, he liked the music. Essayist Hans Gutman believed that Mahagonny was not really an opera but "a starting point for a new musical theatre." Reviewing the American premiere of Three Penny, Walter A. Kramer, editor of Musical America, contended that "The Three Penny Opera is a unique creation of our day, in which Kurt Weill's music stands out as a remarkably clever example of the influence of popular music from our U. S. A. on European continental composers." Unlike Geraldine de Courcy's report of the Kroll Opera's world premiere, Kramer was impressed perhaps because it was "a production for music critics and only those with open minds." Aaron Copland concluded ten years later that Three Penny was the best European example of jazz "not so much because it added anything to jazz, it was in fact, much inferior to the home grown variety- but because it used the jazz idiom...."⁵⁴

German composers had used jazz. To many, this was an indication of the artistic coming of age of jazz. A growing number of American musicians believed that jazz presented the most promising opportunity to make their mark in an ever expanding musical world. Composer John Alden Carpenter declared that American men of music could no longer ignore jazz. Americans had the upper

hand when employing jazz; it was their native music. One report claimed the jazz was the "Esperanto of music" with universal appeal. Implicit within its attraction was the idea that other nations would never equal the American practitioners of the art. Another essay warned Europeans that they should not make the mistake of supposing that they could "use the language as well as or better than their more humble American colleagues."⁵³

Jazz had many sides, for it appeared to be national, universal, topical, and in many quarters, popular with the public. More than anything else, it gave American composers a chance to gain recognition. Important critics of jazz still existed, but music's mavericks predicted that the "reactionaries" would not be able to stem the tide. "Their" music was at the Metropolitan.⁵⁶ It seemed an easy step from there to securing positions on the influential music organizations like the League for Composers. Just as the German composer possessed the respect of his nation, American jazz-oriented composers looked forward to a time when they would represent the musical taste of critic and public alike. More than atonalism, jazz seemed the path to success, the vehicle of American equality in the international musical arena.

But it was not to be. Daniel Gregory Mason re-

flected the lingering doubts about jazz and represented the true feelings of the musical hierarchy, the dominant figures who decided the contents of symphony and opera programs. In 1931, he denounced jazz as crudely commercial and exploitative. It was "instinctively felt by all sensitive minds to be artificial...[and] Despite its kinship with an undeniable if superficial side of our character, and in spite of its acceptability to Europeans in search of new rather than of living art, the bankruptcy of jazz as a source of serious music is becoming daily more evident." The hysterical rhythms of jazz were but "a symptom of a sick moment in the progress of the human soul: the moment of industrial turmoil, fever, and distress that we can but hope to survive, not to perpetuate."⁵⁷

Mason and other writers confidently predicted that the new musical forms would die out because they did not truly represent the American character. Taken in the best sense, Americans were simple, naive, honest, and thankfully removed from divisive or corrupt experience. Americans were essentially sentimental, and therefore romantic. In order to represent and maintain these traits, one had to avoid the transitional and shallow music of recent vintage. Ironically enough, this usually meant turning to Beethoven or Brahms.⁵⁸

Music's intellectuals failed to resolve fundamental questions. They wanted music to be popular and artistic without being cheap or commercial. Given these standards, neither atonalism nor jazz could fill the bill. Composers and musicians went to great pains to illustrate that music had qualities which transcended regional and national boundaries. Yet, they continued to strive mightily to create a distinctly democratic or American music. National composers strove to write music that presented America in the best possible artistic light. By 1933, they had not discovered in what direction serious music was moving so they were forced to rely on what they had known in the past.⁵⁹

Many musicians felt that the best way to ride out the contemporary storm was to preserve and strengthen America's existing musical structure. This approach solved only one part of the musical puzzle, for it preserved a system designed primarily to perpetuate European music. Symphony orchestras, opera houses, choral societies, and chamber groups served as the repositories of musical tradition, and frequently as bulwarks against modernity. Periodically, a conductor would bow in the direction of a modern composer, but this was not the order of the day.⁶⁰ Instead, conductors and music directors promoted a workable German tradition rather than

the new theoretical music of Europe or artistically suspect jazz.

In America the musical issues of the twenties were hotly debated but seldom resolved. The debates were good for the growth of interest in music. Although many Americans refused to accept jazz, the end of the Weimar period was the beginning of the acceptance of the "American idiom" as a valid artistic expression. The Germans and other Europeans acknowledged its significance and used its techniques. The atonalists were not as successful in their quest for recognition, but they had champions. Despite this, the musical establishment changed little. The German repertoire remained the core of the orchestral literature, and the old guard continued to demand the standard opera and referred to Jonny and Three Penny as "novelties." Weimar Germany was of interest not so much because of new innovations but because of the way she maintained a musical environment in spite of the vagaries of modern life. This was a valuable lesson for Americans determined to do the same in the turbulent 1920's.

Germany's musical achievements also attracted the notice of observers in related fields. In 1928, drama authority Robert A. Simon concluded that new German operas such as Wozzeck should not be regarded as master-

pieces, but as stage experiments. He believed that experimentation was "exactly what the operatic stage needs." German composers and stage experts, he continued, imaginatively exploited the full resources of opera-theatre. "That the dividing line between opera and drama may become blurred, that eventually opera may be considered as one of the divisions of theatre rather than one of the branches of music is not inconceivable." Simon suggested that German dramatic productions equalled or surpassed Weimar's musical feats.⁶¹

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER III

¹John Burke, "The Democratic Ideal in Music," Musical Quarterly, 5 (July, 1919), 316; and [Letter to the Editor] Eleanor E. Freer, "A Plea for American Music," Musical America, 39 (April 15, 1924), 10.

²David Ewen, Music Comes to America (New York: Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc., 1947), 8; "Our American Idiom," Musical Courier, 92 (January 28, 1926), 28.

³George Eliot Simpson, "American Music, Pt. I," Musical Courier, 93 (September 2, 1926), 6; "Musical Nationality," Musical America, 46 (August 6, 1927), 12; Ewen, Music Comes to America, 18-29.

⁴Ewen, Music Comes to America, 19, 26.

⁵See John Tasker Howard, Our American Music, Three Hundred Years of It, 3rd ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1946); and Gilbert Chase, American Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present (New York: McGraw-Hill Co., Inc., 1955).

⁶Ewen, Music Comes to America, 25. On the battles between European and American composers in the pre-war era, see Chase, American Music, 324-45

⁷Ivan Narodny, "Discovering the Nation's Soul Through Music," Musical America, 39 (January 19, 1924), 4.

⁸Redfern Mason, "Good Berliner's Opera," Commonweal, 12 (May 7, 1930), 12; [A Message] "Four Giant Enemies of Depression," Etude, 51 (March, 1933), 150. German composer Paul Hindemith sounded what he hoped was the death knell of these types of claims in A Composer's World: Horizons and Limitations (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), 207-08.

⁹Dane Rudyhar, "Schoenberg and Musical Anarchism," Arts, 3 (April, 1923), 268-69. In one extreme case, the orchestra actually participated as part of the audience. At the world premiere of Anton Webern's Symphony for Chamber Orchestra (1928), Paul Rosenfeld reported that "The musicians on the platform started the outburst by smirking between notes...." Paul Rosenfeld, "Three Concerts: World Premiere of the Chamber Symphony," New Republic, 61 (January 8, 1930), 198. Rosenfeld noted that many reviewers received the work well and failed to report accurately the audience's response. See Friedrich Wildgans, Anton Webern, trans. by Temple Roberts and Humphrey Searle (New York: October House, Inc., 1967), 103.

¹⁰Editorial, "Music and Life," Musical Courier, 83 (December 8, 1921), 6; Emma Redell, "Up the German Opera Ladder, Pt. II," Musical America, 47 (March 24,

1928), 25-26; Geraldine de Courcy, "American Singers Find Welcome in German Opera Houses," Musical America, 50 (May 25, 1930), 5, 40. De Courcy was Musical America's regular correspondent in Berlin for most of the Weimar period. See also Ewen, Music Comes to America, 134-57.

¹¹Regardless of periods of economic uncertainty, Weimar remained committed to music. See Alfred T. Marks, "Music Subsidized in Europe Despite Economic Distress," Musical America, 39 (March 8, 1924), 1, 9; Cesar Searchinger, "Musical Europe on the Upgrade," Musical Courier, 89 (December 4, 1924), 6; "Music under Hindenburg," New York Times, 30 December 1928; and Geraldine de Courcy, "Germany Fights to Save Its Historic Institutions," Musical America, 52 (January 25, 1932), 37, 80. Pianist Artur Schnabel claimed that music in Germany during the inflation of 1923 "went on absolutely undisturbed" and was "animated and stimulated as never before." Artur Schnabel, My Life and Music (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1963), 91. See also Fritz Busch, Pages From a Musicians Life, trans. Marjorie Strachey (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, Publisher's, 1971), 126. See also Dietrich, Before the Deluge, 91-92.

¹²Ewen, Music Comes to America, 141-53; [Letter to the Editor by Issac Goldberg, author of The Man Mcken (1925)], "Musical Credo of an American Credoist,

H. L. Mencken," Musical Courier, 91 (September 10, 1925), 6.

¹³Cesar Searchinger, "Musical Europe on the Upgrade," Musical Courier, 89 (December 4, 1924), 6. The American composer Virgil Thomson did not respond well to the German dominance of the American musical scene. One of the reasons he left the United States was to escape these tendencies. Virgil Thomson, Virgil Thomson (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), 117-18. Writing more recently, Harold C. Schonberg claims that "any form of native American orchestral excellence was, for well over a century, stifled before birth, stifled by an ambience that reflected the great and powerful German school." Harold Schonberg, The Great Conductors (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967), 344.

¹⁴Ewen, Music Comes to America, 148. See also Neil Leonard, Jazz and the White Americans (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963).

¹⁵"Berlin Opera Deaf to 'Death Verdict,'" Musical Courier, 78 (June 12, 1919), 33. Most German conductors remained attached to their art to the exclusion of all else. Political events and the cares of the every day world were unwelcomed intrusions. They claimed to speak an international language, the language of music. See Bruno Walter, Theme and Variations: An Autobiography,

trans. James A. Galston (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), 244-45; and Otto Klemperer, Minor Recollections (Denis Dobson, 1964). "American Orchestras," Outlook, 142 (February 17, 1926), 239.

¹⁶"Reiner Arouses Los Angeles Enthusiasm," Musical Courier, 91 (August 6, 1925), 25; Willaim Knapp, "Why American Orchestras Surpass Those in Europe," Musical America, 46 (August 20, 1927), 7.

¹⁷"Jeritza on America," Living Age, 338 (May 1, 1930), 317; Hal Crain, "Europe Has No Monopoly of Atmosphere," Musical America, 39 (December 15, 1923), 9; Arthur M. Abel, "Impressions of Post-War Berlin," Musical Courier, 92 (May 27, 1927), 6; and B. H. Haggin, "Munich and Salzburg," Nation, 127 (October 17, 1928), 405.

¹⁸Henrietta Malkiel, "Schneevoigt Sees Berlin Vying with New York in Music as the Gold Mark Brings More Stability," Musical America, 43 (January 23, 1926), 9; Elizabeth Armstrong, "Klemperer, Seven Foot Conductor Comes to America," Musical America, 43 (January 23, 1926), 5. Klemperer made the statement and Armstrong argued that America should strive toward the same goal.

¹⁹Aaron Copland, "What Europe Means to the Aspiring American Composer," Musical America, 41 (January 3, 1925), 15, 27; James Lee Colwell, "The American Experience in Berlin during Weimar Republic," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale

University, 1961), 159.

²⁰"Berlin Is Full of American Musicians," Musical Courier, 85 (October 19, 1922), 7; Eric Salter, "Autumn Music in Berlin, Gossip From Unter den Linden," Musical America, 47 (November 19, 1927), 21; Colwell, "The American Experience in Berlin," 156.

²¹New York Times, 16 December 1923. The four opera houses listed were the Berlin State Opera, Deutsches Opernhaus, the Grand Opera at the Koenigsplatz, and the Grosse Volksoper.

²²Emma Redell, "Up the German Opera Ladder, Pt. I and II," Musical America, 49 (March 17, 24, 1928), 3, 25-26; William Spier, "Salzburg Moves to Manhattan, Reinhardt's Plans Are Completed," Musical America, 47 (October 22, 1927), 4.

²³"Music Under Hindenburg," New York Times, 30 December 1928; "Gargantuan Festival of Music and Theatre," Living Age, 336 (May, 1929), 205; [Editorial], Milton Weill, "Are They Entitled to Eat Cake?," Musical America, 40 (October 18, 1924), 2; Alfred T. Marks, "Music Subsidized Generously in Europe Despite Economic Distress," Musical America, 39 (March 8, 1924), 1, 9; James Whitacker, "Fine Arts Business," Musical America, 49 (April 25, 1929), 9-10, 61. Marks supplied a list of subsidies bestowed in Bremen, Coblenz, Frankfort am Main, Stettin,

and Stuttgart. James Lee Colwell notes that "Each German city of even modest proportions boasted its opera house and its orchestra. These were inevitably subsidized by state and municipal governments, which were subsidized in turn by loans from American banks. In this way, American money helped indirectly to further the future of American music...." Colwell, "The American Experience in Berlin," 154.

²⁴James Whittacker, "Fine Arts Business," Musical America, 49 (April 25, 1929), 1-10, 61; Henrietta Straus, "Lower Rhein Festival," Nation, 125 (August 31, 1927), 211.

²⁵Paul Beckert, "Attendance at Munich Mozart-Wagner Festival Sixty Per-Cent American," Musical Courier, 97 (August 30, 1928), 8, 25; Daniel Gregory Mason, Music in My Time, and Other Reminiscences (New York: Macmillan Company, 1938), 158-59.

²⁶"Birdseye View of Music Under German Spectacles," New York Times, 11 October 1925; Henry Cowell, "The Impasse of Modern Music," Century, 114 (September, 1927), 671-77; John Putnam, "Why Modern Music Is Uninspired," Musical Courier, 97 (July 19, 1928), 8.

²⁷Deems Taylor, Editorial, Musical America, 49 (May 10, 1929), 11. "In many musical circles the mere mention of Deems Taylor is certain to start a lively argument, particularly among radicals. To the modernist cult

his name is anathema; he is scorned by many of them as a reactionary." John Tasker Howard, Our Contemporary Composers: American Music in the Twentieth Century (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1941), 27; Grenville Vernon, "Wozzeck," Commonweal, 15 (December 16, 1931), 186.

²⁸Ernst Decesy, "Jazz in Vienna, Jonny Spielt Auf," Living Age, 334 (March 1, 1928), 445; Willi Reich, "Paul Hindemith," Musical Quarterly, 17 (October, 1931), 491; see also William W. Austin, Music in the Twentieth Century: From Debussy through Stravinsky (New York: W. W. Norton, Inc., 1966), 359; and Nicolas Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, 3rd. ed. (New York: Coleman-Ross Co., Inc., 1949).

²⁹Eric Saltzman, Twentieth Century Music: An Introduction (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1967), 8-9. Wallace Brockway and Herbert Weinstock contend in Men of Music: Their Lives, Times, and Achievements, rev. ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), 573, that "Strauss was the end of a tradition- the afterglow of Liszt and Wagner- rather than the beginning of a new. There is, perhaps, some obscure connection between this fact and the mysteries of his final decline after 1911. There is about all the best of his achievements a feeling of applied modernism, a suggestion of shocking the bourgeoisie- a tendency that by the second decade of this century had become very old fashioned."

³⁰Ibid.

³¹New York Times, 29 March 1921; Charles Meltzer, "Strauss and His Music," Independent, 107 (November, 1921), 155; Paul Rosenfeld, "Richard Strauss," Dial, 68 (February, 1920), 145; New York Times, 29 March 1921.

³²"Two German Concerts," Literary Digest, 71 (November 19, 1921), 26; "Is Strauss the Greatest Living Musician or a Charlatan?," Current Opinion, 71 (December, 1921), 761-62; for example see, "Strauss' Whipped Cream," Living Age, 341 (June 28, 1924), 1258. In the Current Opinion article Strauss attempted to backtrack on some of the disparaging remarks that he had made about the United States. He claimed "the highest respect for American appreciation of art."

³³David Ewen, "Also Sprach Richard Strauss," Musical Quarterly, 16 (April, 1930), 213; Eric Bonner, "A Strauss Premiere," Outlook, 149 (July, 1928), 382; "Viennese Schlagobers," Time, 21 (January 16, 1931), 29. See also Lawrence Adler, "Strauss in Philadelphia," Nation, 127 (December 5, 1928), 640. Austin, Music in the Twentieth Century, 31-32. The major biography in English on Strauss is Norman DelMar, Richard Strauss, 3 vols (London: Oswald Wolff, Ltd., 1963-71).

³⁴Frederich E. Deutsch, "Strauss Today," Living Age, 342 (May, 1932), 240. Deutsch was music critic for

the Berlin newspaper Vossische Zeitung. His byline often appeared in Living Age. See Dane Rudyhar, "Schoenberg and Musical Anarchism," Arts, 3 (April, 1923), 268-69; "Schoenberg at 50," Musical America, 40 (October 4, 1924), 18; "Expressionism: The Battle Cry of Modern Music," Musical America, 44 (July 3, 1926), 25.

³⁵Hugo Leichentritt, "Schools and Currents of New Music," Musical Courier, 105 (July 30, 1932), 6, 8; "Schoenberg's Music in Chicago," Musical America, 43 (February 6, 1926), 31; Leonard Liebbling, "Variations," Musical America, 44 (November 2, 1929), 31.

³⁶[Letter to the Editor], R. H., "Would Escape Modernism," Musical America, 45 (November 13, 1926), 23.

³⁷"Fortieth Anniversary, Prophecies and Greetings," Etude, 41 (October, 1923), 662; Oscar Thompson, "Stage Schoenberg Opera and Stravinsky Balley," Musical America, 50 (April 26, 1930), 5.

³⁸Austin, Music in the Twentieth Century, 307; Rudyhar, "Schoenberg," Arts, (April, 1923), 269. Many music critics held that Schoenberg represented a continuation of the German tradition, and that his work formed a direct link to the Romantic tradition. Aaron Copland described Schoenberg's musical Expressionism as "A kind of exaggerated and exasperated romanticism." Aaron Copland, Our New Music: Leading Composers in Europe and America

(New York: McGrae-Hill Book Co., 1941), 47. Paul Rosenfeld agreed in, "Musical Chronicle," Dial, 82 (May, 1927), 445-48. Another indication of Schoenberg's traditionalism can be seen in his attachment to the idea of German musical ascendancy. He believed that his techniques "would guarantee the supremacy of German music for centuries to come." Charles Rosen, Arnold Schoenberg (New York: Viking Press, 1975), 70-71.

Whatever the musicological aspects, the audiences did not identify the new music as Romantic or "tuneful" and therefore refused to embrace it. Many years later in 1948, Schoenberg complained that he did not receive a fair hearing in the United States. "I was so seldom performed in New York, that nobody knows whether my music is worth something. It is worse in Los Angeles." Letter to Henry Cowell, 6 November 1948 in Erwin Stein, Arnold Schoenberg, Letters, trans. Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), 256.

³⁹"Schoenberg at 50," Musical America, 40 (October 4, 1924), 18; Joan Peyser, The New Music: The Sense Behind the Sound (New York: Delacorte Press, 1971). For contemporary comment on the connection between Berg, Webern, and Schoenberg see Theodore Weisengrund-Adorno, "Berg and Webern- Schoenberg's Heirs," Modern Music, 8 (January-

February, 1931), 29-38. Copland, Our New Music, 57.

⁴⁰"The Coming of Arnold Schoenberg," Musical America, 53 (September, 1933), 16. Schoenberg went to the small and little known Malkin Music Conservatory in Boston where he had few students and suffered greatly from the harsh New England winters. See Willi Reich, Schoenberg: A Critical Biography, trans, Leo Bloch (New York: Prager Publications, 1971), 192-93; Peyser, The New Music, 86-89. Richard Specht, "Arnold Schoenberg," Nation, 121 (October 14, 1925), 446.

⁴¹Austin, Music in the Twentieth Century, 493; Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, 325-26. See also Theodore W. Adorno, Philosophy of Modern Music, trans, Anne S. Mitchell and Wesley Blomster (New York: Seabury Press, 1973).

⁴²Pitts Sanborn, "Alban Berg's Wozzeck," Arts, 17 (May, 1931), 578. The Harvard educated Sanborn was music editor for the Globe, the Evening Mail, and the World Telegram. "Wozzeck," Theatre Arts Monthly, 15 (May, 1931), 365. See also Marshall Kernochan, "Wozzeck," Outlook, 159 (December, 1931), 467; Arthur Mendel, "The Anatomy of Opera," Nation, 125 (December 6, 1931), 678. Berg worked to achieve the total integration of music and drama. He gave a short explanation of his operatic theories in "A Word About Wozzeck," Modern Music, 5 (November-December, 1927), 22-24. See also Kolodin, The Metropolitan Opera,

1883-1966: A Candid History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), 602.

⁴³"Korngold's Success Makes Hamburg a Musical Mecca," Musical Courier, 82 (April 21, 1921), 8; "Violanta," Outlook, 147 (November 16, 1927), 332; Lawrence Adler, "Korngold's 'Violanta,'" Nation, 125 (December 7, 1927), 664-66; Austin, Music in the Twentieth Century, 137.

⁴⁴Daniel Gregory Mason, Tune in America: A Study of Our Coming Musical Independence (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931). See Chapters One, Three, Four, Thirteen, and Fourteen. The direct quote is from page 194.

⁴⁵Leonard, Jazz and the White Americans, 1-56; Gilbert Seldes, The Seven Lively Arts (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, Inc., 1957), 83-110 originally published in 1924 ; [Letter to the Editor], "Is Jazz the American Soul," Musical America, 39 (November 24, 1923), 10.

⁴⁶George Gershwin, "Our National Anthem," Theatre, 41 (May, 1925), 30; John Despard, "Jazz as an Art Form," Musical America, 41 (June 27, 1925), 22; Andre Levinson, "The Negro Dance Under European Eyes," Theatre Arts Monthly, 11 (April, 1927), 282; Leonard, Jazz and the White Americans, 37-40; Seldes, The Seven Lively Arts, 90-97.

⁴⁷"Club Life in Berlin," Living Age, 333 (July 15, 1927), 176-77; George Antheil, Bad Boy of Music (Garden

City, New York: Doubleday, Doran, and Co., Inc., 1945), 127-29; Geoffrey Skelton, Paul Hindemith: The Man Behind the Music (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976), 206-08; 230-41; Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 89-90.

⁴⁸"Jazz Operas in Germany," Living Age, 332 (April 15, 1927), 176-77; Lawrence Adler, "Jonny Spielt Auf," Nation, 128 (February 27, 1929), 264; Geraldine de Courcy, "Opera Satire on Modern Life [Mahagonny] Has Premiere," Musical America, 50 (April 10, 1930), 5, 10.

⁴⁹Grenville Vernon, "Jonny Spielt Auf," Commonweal, 9 (February 3, 1929), 429. See also New York Times, 20 January 1929; Lawrence Adler, "Jonny Spielt Auf," Nation, 128 (February 27, 1929), 264; Kolodin, The Metropolitan Opera, 276-78; 283-86.

⁵⁰Ernst Krenek, Exploring Music: Essays by Ernst Krenek, trans. Margaret Sheffield and Geoffrey Shelton (New York: October House, Inc., 1966), 24. John Willett writes that many of the avant garde in Germany believed Jonny to be only superficially modern. In Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 167.

⁵¹"Jonny Strikes Up the Band," Literary Digest, 100 (February 9, 1929, 20; "Portrait of Richard Strauss," Saturday Evening Post, 202 (October 26, 1929), 89; Adolf Weissman, "Germany's Latest Music Drama," Modern Music,

4 (May-June, 1927), 23-24.

⁵²"Of Modern Opera," New York Times, 31 March 1929; Musical America and Musical Courier had numerous reviews of the European and American productions.

⁵³Mahagonny and Three Penny were composed in a period of artistic and political transition for both Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht. They had many ambivalent feelings about America and were moving toward a kind of naive Marxism. In October of 1927 Weill wrote of opera that "it will be one of the essential factors in that universally apparent development which is heralding the coming liquidation of all the bourgeois arts. It should not therefore dissipate itself either in an aesthetic "renaissance" movement or in the presentation of day to day events from the outside world which have validity only at the immediate time of writing. It must rather turn to the areas of interest of that wider audience toward which the opera of the immediate future must be directed if it is to have any kind of raison d'être." Kurt Weill, Ausgewahlte Schriften, ed. David Drew (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1975), 36. Passage translated by T. A. J. Souster.

Mahagonny is the story of a contemporary man who is sent to the electric chair because "he cannot pay his way" in a capitalistic society. Geraldine de Courcy,

"Opera Satire on Modern Life Creates Uproar," Musical America, 50 (April 10, 1930), 5.

The Three Penny Opera has become enormously popular, but largely because of the music and not the adaptation of John Gay's original The Beggar's Opera (1750). Brecht intended to parody capitalist society through an expose of "bourgeoise respectability." Zammuto, "Art and Action in the Metropolis," Pt. II, 811 ff. Although the pieces were considered anti-capitalist in tone, most American reviewers did not dwell on this aspect of the operas. The style of the works seemed to push concern with content into the background.

⁵⁴Cy Caldwell, "To See or Not to See," New Outlook, 161 (May, 1933), 46, 47; Walter A. Kramer, "Three Penny Opera Has American Premiere," Musical America, 53 (April 25, 1933), 27; Copland, Our New Music, 98-99. See also Hans Gutman, "Mahagonny and Other Novelties," Modern Music, 7 (June-July, 1930), 35.

⁵⁵Oscar Thomson, "Modern American Life Symbolized in Skyscrapers," Musical America, 48 (February 27, 1928), 1; David Stanley Smith, "Some Reflections on the State of American Music," Musical America, 52 (May 10, 1932), 12.

⁵⁶Seldes, The Seven Lively Arts, 93-95; George Gershwin, "Our National Anthem," Theatre, 41 (May, 1925), 30.

⁵⁷Mason, Tune in America, 164, 165.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹This of course did not mean that the search for American music came to an end. Endless discourses and programs continued to appear, but the realities of concert life meant the continuation of the standard repertoire. See Howard, Our Contemporary Composers, 3-9.

⁶⁰Arthur Mendel, "What Is American Music?" Nation, 134 (May 4, 1932), 524-25; Ewen, Music Comes to America, 262-81; Chase, American Music, 488-516; Howard, Our Contemporary Composers, 446-539.

⁶¹Robert A. Simon, "Why Write a Libretto," Theatre Arts Monthly, 12 (August, 1928), 556.

"It is strikingly confirmed today, after ten years, that the present tendencies in the drama began their developments years before the war, and that since then they have simply been in more rapid eruption."

Ernst Toller (1928)

CHAPTER IV

AMERICA AND GERMAN STAGECRAFT

"Truly, indeed, the stage is the symbol of life," remarked F. E. W. Freund in the International Studio in 1924. No self-respecting playwright, actor, or director denied the veracity of Freund's observation. Musicians might claim the music was "essentially democratic," but theatre people went a step further, insisting that drama was the embodiment of democracy in the arts. In The Theatre of Tomorrow (1921), Kenneth Macgowan, a prominent art theatre director and drama critic, wrote that in its greatest periods the theatre "has been utterly democratic, and it succeeds only when it is perfect enough to induce a common reaction among its spectators, to forge a common soul."¹ Play production combined the talents of many individuals whose co-operative efforts were compatible with America's democratic experience.

The American stage tradition was especially varied and earlier developments seemed to indicate that Americans had a "common soul," perhaps all too common. Americans enjoyed all kinds of stage entertainment. Although major preferences were established before 1860, many critics

believed that the 1870-1900 period was the golden age of the American theatre. American audiences always claimed Shakespeare as their favorite, even in bowdlerized forms. Touring troupes also performed the critically successful works of European dramatists (particularly the English and the French). American plays ran to the melodramatic. Uncle Tom's Cabin had its first production in 1852 and remained a favorite of audiences in the 1870's. In 1879, there were approximately fifty touring companies staging it all over the country. An insatiable public spent countless hours in the light entertainment of vaudeville, burlesque, and minstrel shows.²

Most Americans' dramatic tastes were simple. James A. Herne (1839-1901) wrote realistic plays that ideally suited public preferences. His most successful work, Shore Acres (1893), was shot through with pathos. Its characters represented truth, honesty, and hard work, the American virtues which Herne and his audience held dear. His simple realism had a counterpart in a growing American penchant for "naturalism." After initial successes in New York, Henrik Ibsen's plays were well received in Chicago and other major cities throughout the nation. The American stage had a dual tradition. Co-existing with the respected works of Shakespeare, Ibsen, Shaw and other European playwrights was the mass popularity

of Herne and the rambunctious minstrel shows and vaudeville productions.³

The big theatrical producers in New York gave the public what it wanted and established trends for the rest of the country. The critics accused them of artistic heresy. Art, they claimed, was in a death struggle with commercialism. The issue was continuously debated in the pages of professional journals between 1900 and 1920. Critics referred to the legitimate stage as opposed to the commercial stage. Many gifted actors and producers seemed bent on expending their efforts in the interest of making money. They were content to wring dollars from sentimental or sensational kinds of entertainment. In the academic community, meanwhile, Harvard's George Pierce Baker and Columbia's Brander Matthews called for literary excellence in American plays. In the areas of production, performance, and play content, America seemed to be heading for a precipitous decline. Some observers feared that artistic productions would disappear in favor of the commonplace.⁴

And what of Macgowan's idealized vision of the theatre? Few American playwrights, actors, or directors received critical approbation, nor did the public's craving for sensationalism create demand for quality drama. Too many Americans liked their theatre light-

weight and simple, a diversion before dinner. In 1922, the eminent actor and frequent drama critic Roland Young concluded that "We are not yet a country that is easy with the theatre as an expression of life, or natural with it as a daily habit."⁵ Young and his colleagues made a definite distinction between the popular stage and the ultimate dramatic experiences of the serious play.

In 1925, the critic Sheldon Cheney, founder of the influential Theatre Arts Magazine, wrote mournfully of the theatre's recent past. Forty years earlier, America had begun to develop an international reputation through the work of such repertory companies as Augustin Daly's. But something sinister had intervened. The American theatre had become commercialized. A few powerful figures dominated the New York stage, and they "unfortunately" set the standards for the whole nation. To Cheney this indicated a ruthless age that crushed competition and praised profits and "truths" that existed in balance sheets. In New York, producer David Belasco and others pandered to a public taste largely of their own making. Most audiences were "dull minded," "sensation craving," and "star oriented." They forever sought out the "obvious," with "seldom a chance to form a taste for the phases of the dramatic art that are most worth while." Undaunted, Cheney believed that there was a sizeable potential audience for the finer

phases of the dramatic art. He did not predict the downfall of Broadway but thought that the establishment of an "art theatre" in the United States could eventually improve all dramatic productions in America. He argued that a theatre with high standards "reaches out until it affects the whole."⁶

Since high standards were not the order of the day in America, men and women of the theatre quite naturally looked elsewhere for examples of theatrical excellence. Shortly after the Armistice, the New York Times commented on the "quickenened interest in the living drama which aroused a lively curiosity about the art itself." Americans looked to Europe, especially Germany, to gain new insights into the drama. Barrett H. Clark, a leading American authority on world drama, noted that "One of the unmistakable indications of the vitality of the modern German theatre is the long stream of articles and books and lectures devoted to a discussion of it." Sheldon Cheney asserted that Germany had "outstripped" the rest of Europe. The Germans offered the greatest innovations and could justly claim "the foremost theatre in the world." Cheney and his fellow critics were interested in the German theatre both for its inherent excellence and for what the German experience could impart to American dramatists, actors, and stage designers. If Americans learned their

lessons well, Cheney felt "for a certainty that the future is ours."⁷

The reputation of the German theatre grew steadily during the Weimar period. A. W. G. Randall, a keen observer of the German literary and theatrical scene, was impressed with the Germans' skillful blending of tradition and change. By the early twenties, Randall believed that the German theatre was "now more important than ever."⁸ In Germany the theatre was a daily habit, a national institution strong enough to weather war, revolution, and economic upheaval. Since Germany was a new republic, her theatre seemed particularly interesting. The November Revolution brought new playwrights into the limelight, and some enthusiastic critics prophesied the arrival of a new Goethe or Schiller. As for German actors, they were the consummate thespians, able to meet the demands of any role. German stagecraft fascinated Americans who were intrigued with Central European theories. As the twenties came to a close, it became increasingly apparent that Americans lost their enthusiasm for most modern German plays and concentrated instead on the more "significant" German stagecraft and acting theories. The Weimar stage influenced Americans who thought they could discover insights into the "living theatre" and advance the cause of drama within the nation's democratic culture.

American enthusiasm for the German theatre existed in many quarters. By 1920, a well defined critical establishment reviewed theatrical events throughout the world. An indication of the importance of Germany was evidenced in the editorial policy of the Theatre Arts Monthly, the leading "stage periodical." The publication rarely went without an essay or a notice on German conditions. Drama and Theatre were professionally oriented and tended to concentrate their attention more heavily on the American scene. In the popular field, Life and other magazines devoted space to the drama and often found German plays and personalities excellent topics for comment. Critic and author Robert Benchley was a mainstay for Life. Eclectic national magazines such as Nation, New Republic, Dial, and Literary Digest also featured drama sections. The New York critics wielded influence and their bylines were commonly found in periodicals of all stripes.⁹

The Weimar theatre attracted the critics because of its seemingly endless vitality and variety. Employing its typical tabloid jargon, Variety's Hayden Talbot stated in 1920 that Berlin was "the best show town in the world." Set designer Lee Simonson observed that "Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of the European theatre is the continued vitality of the German stage." Amid revolution and

defeat, the Germans maintained the essence of their dramatic tradition. And the importance of the theatre throughout Germany was impressive. After a four month survey of the German theatre, special correspondent Henry Obermeyer concluded in the New York Times that the dramatic productions in Germany's provinces were as good as or better than those one attended in Berlin.¹⁰

The New York Evening Post's Charles Victor reported from Germany in 1919 that "There is more democracy to the square inch in Germany than anywhere else. Nowhere is this more true than in the theatre." In addition to making the theatre more accessible to the masses, young authors saw their plays produced for the first time. A few of the honored figures of the pre-war era, Gerhard Hauptmann and Hugo von Hoffmanstahl, attracted less attention as new dramatic forces dominated the post-revolutionary stage. The beneficiaries of the democratic trends included Ernst Toller, Georg Kaiser, Walter Hasenclever, Fritz von Unruh, and Bertolt Brecht. The young dramatists were prepared to write for a vast "new" audience that appeared ready for novel theatrical experiences.¹¹

Nonetheless, political and social conditions in early Weimar produced doubts in America about the future of the theatre in a democratic Germany. In the period immediately following the Armistice, lurid sexual melo-

dramas seemed to dominate the stage, and skeptics wondered if democracy might be the destructive agent of the German tradition. Grace I. Colborn, who claimed to be the first theatrical businesswoman in Germany after the war, noted that the middle and professional classes were avoiding the theatre. Reports of republican censorship and the imposition of curfews also caused concern. In the south of Germany, a leader of drama's Expressionist school, Ernst Toller, was in prison for his part in the abortive Bavarian Revolution of 1919. Living Age commented, "It is indicative of the chaotic state of affairs in modern Germany, that while Toller languishes in the prison of one German state, his play [Der Hinkermann, (1923)] is being produced at the state theatre of another [Leipzig]." ¹²

Americans found the Weimar theatre admirable partly because the Germans survived these conditions so splendidly. In an interview with Ernst Toller for the New York Times, Mary Heaton Vorse departed the Bavarian prison with renewed confidence. "In speaking with this young German, so sincere and earnest in his denunciation of militarism, imperialism, and the misdeeds of his country, I found strength to hope that the new Germany truly exists and may arise to redeem herself." ¹³ Many American drama experts were similarly moved and their critical investigations of German theatre did more than salve contemporary

political anxieties. In 1921, Kenneth Macgowan and Robert Edmond Jones went to Germany to examine the theatre, and they emerged from the experience with a reverence for the German method. Their book Continental Stagecraft (1922) was a glowing account of what they witnessed throughout Central Europe and became a standard reference work for American theatre arts students.¹⁴ It seemed that the German theatre not only would not falter under democracy but would serve as a positive force in the social and political recovery of the German people. As critics surveyed the dramatic landscape, they reasoned that the German experience could well lend credence to theories concerning the positive link between theatre and democracy.

Onto the German scene came full-blown the pre-war child Expressionismus, mature and allegedly ready to dominate the German stage and influence the American. Drawing its inspiration from the Expressionist painters, the dramatists made sweeping claims for their approach. American drama critics were bemused but also inquisitive, and quite interested in the rough-hewn and startling school of drama.

American expatriate Herman George Scheffauer did his best to clarify the meaning of Expressionism. He admitted that even in Germany there was no universally accepted definition, and he wrote circumspectly about the

"essence of Expressionism." In 1931, Dr. Anna Miller, Associate Professor of Drama at Goucher College and a serious student of the European stage, wrote that "The elucidation of Expressionism, the German Expressionismus, is not easy. Its enthusiasts tell us in one breath that it is both a world tendency and inexpressible." Despite this, American drama critics tried to define Expressionism and make it comprehensible to Americans. The most common approach was to explain it as a negative reaction to naturalism, a dramatic school which audiences understood. The Expressionists were concerned with the innermost soul of man and subjective states which often led them to distort reality and create a frightening world of nightmarish images. They tried to bring meaning into a civilization that they thought was sick, mendacious, and chaotic. Theirs was a pre-war movement that claimed to be even more relevant to a morally bankrupt post-Armistice Europe.¹⁵

Barrett Clark wrote warmly about the active, powerful forces inherent within Expressionism. Sheldon Cheney found it the "only force that is live enough, in the field of art and playwriting of today, to revitalize the worn out, misused, unimaginative current theatre." Herman George Scheffauer used similar logic. Expressionism was a curative for American art which was weighed down with "a normalcy almost as rigid, dead, and uniform as the inter-

changeable parts of our automobiles." American audiences must be exposed to it Scheffauer believed.¹⁶

Gradually, Expressionist plays were introduced in the United States. Quite a number were produced, and no organization did a better job than the New York Theatre Guild.¹⁷ Their productions of Georg Kaiser's From Morn to Midnight (1916), Ernst Toller's Man and the Masses (1921), and Franz Werfel's Goat Song (1921) were among the best American representations of the new German art. From Morn to Midnight's (1922) plot centered on a bank teller who embezzled money in order to gain the favor of a young woman. As the tortured teller struggled his way through the day, he found only rejection at the hands of the woman and the miseries of the modern world. Man and the Masses (1924) dealt with a woman worker, anti-militarism, revolution, and her execution at the hands of a revolutionary mob gone berserk. Of the three, perhaps the most bizarre was Goat Song (1926) which involved a strange creature (half man, half animal) which led a revolution of homeless people in eighteenth century Europe. It went beyond mere allegory because of its highly stylized use of expressionistic formulas. The critical response to these plays was mixed, but theatre patrons could easily find positive reviews. Gilbert Seldes, theatre critic and editor of Dial, assured his readers that From Morn to

Midnight was filled with action, was never dull, and "certainly not mad or insane." Arthur Hornblow, the founder of Theatre, reported that Ashley Dukes had provided a spirited translation and Lee Simonson the ideal sets to reveal the "psychological content" of Kaiser's play. In the same publication, Barrett H. Clark declared that Ernst Toller was the most "creative and wonderful dramatist" whose Man and the Masses displayed an instinctive knowledge of play structure and audience communication. The New Republic proclaimed Goat Song the "most important play of the season." The author provided insights into the secrets of human existence. The overall impression from these kinds of reviews was one of excitement and individual experience born of the playwright's inspiration.¹⁸

American dramatists took note. Eugene O'Neill used expressionist methods in The Emperor Jones (1920) and The Hairy Ape (1922). Although O'Neill later denied the impact of Kaiser on his thinking, The Emperor Jones had much in common with From Morn to Midnight. In 1924, The Emperor Jones was produced in Berlin which led a German reviewer to grumble that Germany already had enough "expressionistic distortions of emotions." Elmer Rice, a young German-American, was identified as an Expressionist playwright after The Adding Machine appeared in 1923. The play, he wrote in the New York Times, was "an attempt to

go beyond mere representation and to arrive at interpretation....The author attempts not so much to depict events faithfully as to convey to the spectators what seems to him their inner significance." John Howard Lawson was also a prominent "art theatre" playwright who found Expressionist formulas the best outlet for his dramatic ideas in Roger Bloomer (1922) and Processional (1925).¹⁹

When German concepts surfaced in the work of George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly, Cheney's vision for the theatre seemed close to realization. In Begger on Horseback (1924), the authors satirized the mechanization of American life and the businessman's lack of culture. Based on Paul Apel's Hans Sonnenstoessers Hollenfahrt (1914), Begger on Horseback had easily identifiable American characters. The play's plot development and dramatic stylization owed a good deal to Georg Kaiser. Expressionism had influenced the commercial theatre.²⁰

Expressionism was most successful in America when it was in the hands of native playwrights. If used sparingly and stage action made readily identifiable through American characterizations, it made for effective theatre. But there must have been something in Expressionism that frightened American playwrights, and it seemed to go deeper than admitting that Americans were simply once again imitating Europeans. O'Neill, Rice, and Connelly

denied that the Germans influenced them. O'Neill said that he "did not think much" of Kaiser's plays, and Connelly protested that he had not read Paul Apel's work.²¹ The Americans did not want to be identified with a movement whose tenets clashed with well-known American tastes. They were apparently successful, for most critics agreed with the respected drama essayist Pierre Loving who surmized that O'Neill "does not bulk large as the American prophet of the new movement, nor is this anything to his detriment as an artist."²²

As early as 1924, critics in America began to ask what was "the next step after Expressionism." Expressionist works had lost their appeal and were no longer considered innovative. Why should Americans subject themselves to an onslaught "of horrors, frenzied madness, unearthly screechings, lurid cursings, world tumults, and delerium...?" The New York World's Alexander Woolcott concluded that German Expressionist plays were obscure and had little if any relevance to life in the United States.²³ Strong-willed, self-confidant individuals who challenged and tamed the wilderness did not fall prey to inner turmoil and self-doubts. Americans did not seem to be interested in drama that reflected the modern condition too closely. In concentrating so single-mindedly on a character's inner psyche, the Germans displeased

most audiences. Their drama seemed antithetical to the concepts of progress and pragmatic (and successful) American responses to difficult national and individual problems. In looking back on the twenties, Meyer Levin, an actor and author, claimed that Expressionist plays "did not appeal to the essential American traits of 'fair play,' realism, and idealism and thus failed to reach American audiences." German Expressionist plays invariably had short runs, were unpopular in the provinces, and were dismissed as "simply another high brow experiment: a cubist plaything of the intelligentsia."²⁴

German Expressionism did influence the American stage, but it did not overwhelm it. German and American audiences turned away from it because of its excesses. It appeared to be untheatrical and unrelated to American life. Its self-centered romanticism was too intense, too obscure for most audiences in either country. Entertainment or some moving experience that the individual could encounter and understand remained essential to good theatre, and the German Expressionists seemed to ignore that fact. In 1932, Joseph Wood Krutch argued that "it was not possible to get people into the theatre unless the play is in some very broad sense of the word entertaining." The simplest epitaph on Expressionism appeared in Saturday Review of Literature. Audiences were not

attracted to "dramas which no one understood."²⁵ Many theatre goers wrote off the movement as only another manifestation of the mystical side of the German character. The United States did not have a strong tradition of performing German plays and Expressionism was not the midwife of such a tradition.

In Germany, Expressionism gave way to Post Expressionism, Neo-Naturalism, and the New Objectivity. In America, their existence created scarcely a ripple on the dramatic waters. Expressionist turned Neo-Naturalist Bertolt Brecht,²⁶ in retrospect a giant to the twentieth century stage and a popular enough leftist dramatist in Weimar Germany, was known, but his influence on America limited throughout most of the republican period. One critic viewed him as "a strong but somewhat careless talent who has been pampered by the public in Germany."²⁷ Before 1933, Brecht experienced the same fate as Hugo von Hoffmannstahl. The Austrian's reputation in America rested largely upon his work as Richard Strauss' librettist while Brecht was most famous for his collaboration with Kurt Weill on The Three Penny Opera (1928).²⁸ After 1930, the depression and the rise of Hitler obscured theatrical developments in Germany and created an instant nostalgia for the halcyon days of the twenties in the United States when box office returns were high and the number of

legitimate and commercial theatre productions exceeded by more than two-fold the number of any year since.²⁹

As Hitler's cultural controls silenced the new schools before they could fully develop, it seemed fitting that a much older figure was able to withstand and survive the Nazi years. Gerhart Hauptmann was to drama what Richard Strauss was to music. He loomed larger than German drama's upstarts, for he outlasted the immediate post-war enthusiasm for the younger German writers. Though a few critics were at times acerbic, Hauptmann's pre-war work kept his reputation intact. He was described as an Olympian figure, a literary descendant of Goethe, and a world famous representative of German culture. The Weavers (1894) alone secured his place in the history of the drama. But American audiences were usually unsympathetic to the social themes within his plays. Only infrequently could audiences survive his "Teutonic obscurity,"³⁰ particularly when contrasted with their penchant for heroes of few words and direct action. Meyer Levin perceived a connection between The Weavers and the Expressionist plays. They were all "propaganda plays" and thus not easy to "bring off" in the United States. In addition, the quality of Hauptmann's work in the twenties did not meet his previous standards. Increasingly, there were retrospectives on his literary accom-

plishments, a subtle indication that the critics were ready for Hauptmann to pass from the scene.³¹

Unlike Hauptmann, Artur Schnitzler did not live to see Hitler in the Berlin Chancellery, nor did he baffle New World audiences. Schnitzler was the master of the Old World, genteel melodrama.³² History has made him a footnote, but he meant more to contemporaries. Popular, well-versed in character development, and echt Viennese, Schnitzler turned out a lengthy series of plays and novels. At the time of his death in 1931, the author of Anatole (1893) was well on his way to becoming outdated but enjoyed literary success throughout his life. In America, he attracted a large audience whose preferences ran toward mild titillation. He represented something not really "German." His plays were not heavy, dark, or impenetrable, but more down to earth, stories of men and women in complicated social and sexual situations. He came closer to satisfying the American dramatic tastes than did the Expressionists.³³

American audiences did not warm to Expressionism's metaphysical musings, and most productions had limited success. The performances that had longer runs did so because they were well acted or interestingly staged. A night at the theatre had many sides to it. Play content might seem shocking or obscure but the acting methods and

stage direction involved might not. Reviewers often commented that a production was imaginatively presented or that the director tried new methods that seemed ideal. For those who saw little of value in the German dramatic literature, there were many other aspects which did merit study. The theatre in Weimar Germany was envied because of its importance to the life of a highly cultured nation.

In 1929, Joseph Wood Krutch wrote that "Nothing I have seen in the Berlin theatre seems to me so worthy of study by American producers as...the unchanged tradition of great acting which is kept up even now, when most observers tell me, there are few plays quite worthy of it."³⁴ Employing the training and learning facilities of the repertory company, the Germans produced a long line of accomplished performers. The list included Emil Jannings, Alexander Moissi, Elizabeth Bergner, Fritz Kortner, Rudolf and Joseph Schildkraut, and Werner Krauss.³⁵ These actors thrived in an artistic environment which many critics believed approached the ideal. Even with the economic and social upheaval of the early Weimar period, Berlin and the provinces provided a home for a continuing acting tradition.³⁶ An indication of the theatre's strength was the wide variety of roles which were open to German actors. Kenneth Macgowan and Robert Edmond Jones believed that republican Germany presented the most exciting arena in

the world for actors and directors.³⁷

Although not every critic found German acting methods laudatory,³⁸ most agreed with Oliver M. Salyer, an acknowledged authority on the drama and author of books on the German and Russian theatres, that "The pitch and tone of Teutonic acting is patently higher than our own." Ludwig Lewisohn blamed at least part of the lowly state of the American theatre on the "unliterary attitude of the American actor." Lewisohn, who many critics felt was pro-German, did not condemn all American actors, but thought that most lacked education and training. He claimed that Americans could learn from the Germans. Rudolf and Joseph Shildkraut were in America (first in the Yiddish theatre and then on Broadway) and their talent provided a guide. Lewisohn argued that American actors could "markedly heighten and deepen the appeal of the American theatre if they watched closely the attitude, characteristics, and instincts" of so great an acting family.³⁹ Salyer, Lewisohn and many other critics traced German acting excellence to the conditions which existed within the repertory theatre system. The "star system" did not dominate in Berlin or the provinces. Each performer in the repertory environment had the chance to become the master of his craft because he was exposed to all aspects of the theatre and all manner of acting

techniques. One could easily see how Emil Jannings brought special meaning to a part. His experience as an apprentice, journeyman, and eventually master of the repertory theatre enabled him to explore every nuance of a role. As a young man in a German company, Jannings had had the opportunity, indeed the honor, to speak the words of all the great dramatists from Euripides to Shaw. The German actor was an essential figure in the artistic panorama of the thriving German stage.

American critics contrasted Jannings to native actors who often had plays written to suit their limited talents. Americans worshiped their performers with an almost child-like devotion. A glamorous performer commanded huge salaries and audiences did not begrudge them their riches. Americans seemed to place actors outside of the strictly artistic field. While it was expected that "stars" be handsomely paid, artists in other fields were criticized for seeking wealth to go along with fame. Within the framework of the Horatio Alger myth, the "star" had reached the ultimate goal, his attainments indicated the fulfillment of the American dream. At the same time, Americans liked plays that depicted real people, "the working stiff." They placed famous actors on a pedestal but liked to think that actors were not much different from themselves. Generally, they did not envy performers,

but when they followed individual careers, Americans looked for signs of shared backgrounds or common experiences. The press obliged them. Humble beginnings justified glamorous life styles, and quite frequently, reporters kept the star's life in perspective as they showed them at home indulging in simple pastimes (albeit in sumptuous surroundings) just as their "fans" did. The critics railed against the star system but their protests fell on deaf ears.

Although Emil Jannings was not as critical of American theatre as were the nation's professional journalists, he had some reservations concerning American methods. In an interview for Theatre in 1927, Jannings objected to American concepts such as "light and heavy" parts and "character roles," terms with little to do with an actor's artistry. A repertory education taught actors the significance of all parts.⁴⁰ Jannings' observations were highly idealized, but contained principles many American critics praised. Nothing could replace an actor's perfecting his skills "in the presence of the spectator." The nation needed actors and repertory theatre to train them throughout the country to realize the full meaning of their art.⁴¹

The theatre was alive and well in Germany, but had its problems. For many observers, the Americanization

of Germany created the greatest dismay. In 1925, a Theatre Arts Monthly editorial reported on a decline in German repertory production. "In their stead are... announcements of long run performances in which 'stars' are featured as they are on Broadway. Not a healthy sign!" Although Germans had their forms of light entertainment, it seemed that American influences elevated cabaret and vaudeville entertainment to a position of unaccustomed importance in Germany. The article claimed that the universal sameness of Broadway might come to dominate the German stage. Would heightened levels of international communication lead not to excellence but to the triumph of American banality? Germans were converting theatres and even railroad stations into "vaudeville houses" as they aped the most common aspects of American life styles. From Berlin in 1928, Joseph Wood Krutch wrote that "The very things which seem to us the most banal are doubtless those which, superficially at least, are the most characteristically American, and they are therefore those which seem the most piquantly interesting to Berliners."⁴²

More and more, Americans commented on the ascendancy of the "box office" in Germany. Flappers, bobbed hair, and the Charleston were overwhelming German society. The German theatre became a victim of these influences,

and not everyone was unhappy. In 1922, a New York Times article stated that "Whatever the reason be, the fact remains that the Berlin theatre, and with it the theatre of Germany, is no longer fit subject for the loud mouthed veneration of the critics tired of the offerings of their own country." Max Reinhardt was forced from Berlin "by the commercialization of the theatre" as musical reviews, jazz bands, and the cinema competed for the attention of German citizens. In a special review, free lance critic Arthur A. Kutscher wrote that the spirit of the German theatre had "become Americanized; syndicated theatres were conducted by holding companies, by corporations, as though they were department stores."⁴³

Fears mounted concerning the fate of the German actor. The performer with a reputation for greatness had only to turn to the cinema. As early as 1920, there were reports of giant motion picture companies buying up theatres to show motion pictures. Max Reinhardt claimed that the movies have "made it almost impossible to produce plays."⁴⁴ What would happen to German acting foundations if all of the talent flocked to the movie studios? In Germany, an actor could make a small fortune in a few weeks without having to learn any lines. Art and theatrical tradition seemed about to collapse under a torrent of decadent outside influences.

Many important American critics remained firm in their support of the German theatre regardless of the short term evaluations. While there was no doubt cause for concern, more even handed observations revealed that the German theatre was not about to become one huge chorus line. Germans and Americans did perceive a threat to German institutions,⁴⁵ but the German theatre was quite capable of weathering the storm. The American critical establishment's mainstays, Cheney, Clark, and Sayler, refused to dismiss the German theatre. It was too strong, too firmly a part of German life. Whether it was a Volksbühne actor or Alexander Moissi doing Shakespeare, the German actors provided the most visible outward sign of the vitality of the German theatre. Their performances displayed "a gusto and vitality that would shock and depress the players of Broadway and the West End."⁴⁶ Americans who believed that the German theatre was a model for inspiration were assured that shallow impressions based upon a quick trip to Berlin did not represent the true state of affairs in Germany. The debate continued throughout the twenties, but the experts remained strong in their support of the German theatre until the pervasive influence of Hitlerism deprived the theatre of its variety.⁴⁷

As admirable as the German acting tradition was, with its heritage of hard work and multi-faceted skills,

it paled before the esteem accorded German directors. They were the embodiment of theatrical supremacy, the technique, the machinery, the control of all of the forces of the stage. The German director symbolized the coming together of all the diverse elements of the German theatre. The regisseur with the knowledge that he possessed, and the lessons he could impart, was the most fascinating component of a fascinating subject, the German stage.

Conversely, in the United States, Sheldon Cheney complained of "The lack of artist-directors, which today [1925] seems the chief obstacle in the way of developing art theatres...." The living image of the artist director was the German director Max Reinhardt. He, more than any other figure of the pre-Hitler years, illustrated how desirable it was to realize the interplay of the arts on the stage. In 1931, Anna Miller wrote that "No lover of plays has believed more firmly than Reinhardt in the composite nature of the acted play, the co-operation and interdependence of playwright, actors, producers, scenic artists, and the audience." She noted that in an age of growing international communication Americans should exercise every opportunity to learn from him.⁴⁸

What Richard Strauss was to German music and conducting, Max Reinhardt was to German theatre direction and production. And as with Strauss, he had detractors in

America.⁴⁹ Although Reinhardt was not an author of plays, he enjoyed a position at the top of the hierarchy of German regisseurs throughout the Weimar period. Burns Mantle, the New York Daily News drama critic and editor of a best plays of the year series, thought that Reinhardt's work was virtually incomparable. In commenting on Reinhardt's Shakespeare productions, Mantle noted that "Nothing that we have evolved in our wildest imaginings equals the Reinhardt production...." The German's director's advice was sought out, his ideas integrated into American theories of the drama. Reinhardt brought to bear "all the national passion for scholarly thoroughness and accuracy."⁵⁰ An evening with Reinhardt was an evening to remember.

Many Americans got the chance to witness the great man's work during the 1924 theatre season. In mid-winter of that year, his production of Karl Vollmoeller's The Miracle (1912) came to New York. The production was doubly celebrated because one of America's finest scenic designers, Norman Bel Geddes, worked with Reinhardt. Bel Geddes was the perfect collaborator, for he was familiar with Reinhardt's and Adolphe Appia's theories. Any drama critic who could lift a pen or pound a typewriter rushed into print to discuss the performance of The Miracle. It was a religious morality play that was performed in pantomime thus eliminating potential problems with language.

Vollmoeller's play was a spectacle of the first order, employing all of Reinhardt's guile and talent as a director.⁵¹ An avalanche of reviews of the Century Theatre production declared that Reinhardt's talents were never more well presented.⁵²

The Germans understood the meaning and importance of stagecraft. Reinhardt was only the most prominent among a group of men who were identified with the German tradition. The ideas of Adolphe Appia remained influential although he was inactive through most of the twenties and died in 1928. Leopold Jessner became internationally famous for his Shakespeare productions. Erwin Piscator, the radical stage theoretician, also evoked interest but was somewhat suspect because of his politics. In 1932, Lee Simonson, for many years the chief set designer for the Theatre Guild, wrote that "The highest level of theatrical production in the modern theatre was revealed in Germany from 1900 to 1914 and...for some years after the close of the war."⁵³

Part of the reason Simonson wrote his book The Stage Is Set (1932) was to suggest that there was a danger in accepting too freely European and German theories of the theatre. He believed that machines, devices, and scenery were beginning to dominate the theatre. Germans may have had the mechanical techniques, the national

passion for efficiency, but these methods could destroy as well as make drama more exciting. Simonson was critical of Kenneth Macgowan who he thought had become too enamored with stage theory.⁵⁴ Macgowan's Theatre of Tomorrow (1921) hinted that the set designer was the key figure for the future, perhaps more important than the play, the actor, or the director. He even discussed replacing actors with giant puppets.⁵⁵ Simonson did not want to discard the theories. He was simply counseling caution. Stark Young, from 1924 through 1925 the New York Times drama critic, was more reproofing. In 1927, he noted that all the talk of theory was getting a bit old, and "the subject of decor and production...a bit used up." The importance of "the ideas of movement and design seem to be an effort of ten years ago."⁵⁶

Others joined the chorus of those who questioned the relationship of the drama and its staging. George Jean Nathan, who frequently wrote glowingly of Max Reinhardt, commented that "As for Germany the stage appears to have superceded the drama." Another reviewer found Jessner's Shakespeare "sometimes unspeakably boring, although Jessner is a great director."⁵⁷ Early in the decade, Lee Simonson argued that there was no need to apologize for the American theatre, especially in light of the work of Norman Bel Geddes and Robert Edmond Jones. Toward the end of the decade, these kinds of observations

were definitely on the upswing. Increasingly, as Players Magazine reported, there were feelings of "satisfaction with America's lot."⁵⁸ Many individuals thought that the American theatre was coming alive through the efforts of the Theatre Guild and Eva Le Gallienne's Civic Repertory Theatre. The discerning critics knew where the precedents for these theatres came from. Occasionally, a note of chauvinism might dim an individual's perceptions,⁵⁹ but usually the contributions of Germany were mentioned. German ideas had an effect, if not on the dramas' content then on the way in which a play was presented.

German theories had positive and negative features. The problem facing American men and women of the theatre was one of balance, what to use and what to dismiss. The Germans had certain things to say to the producers of Broadway as well as the directors of art theatres. Reinhardt's production of The Miracle illustrated his skill at controlling a large number of people on the stage, effects which were not lost on the directors. Reinhardt, Jessner, and the young Jürgen Fehling of the Volksbühne provided information for an entire generation of repertory directors, scenarists, and actors, for despite the charges that machinery dominated people, those men continued to argue for basic theatre concepts. In 1924, Reinhardt told Barrett H. Clark that one must always remember the

"play and the actor are the most important parts of all."⁶⁰

Gradually, the new practices became integrated into the main body of theatrical thought. Oliver M. Sayler was close to the typical American view on the concept of total theatre. The set designer, the actor, the director, were all part of a grand concept. A play must be the result of a united effort, with the director merely "the first among equals," a person who had to have "a profound imagination, supreme tolerance and catholicity of taste, vast experience, and firm will power."⁶¹ One was forced to the conclusion that all the other people in the theatre had to have the same qualities.

Nonetheless, Sayler did describe the qualities of the ideal director, and Max Reinhardt fit the mold. In 1927, Joseph Wood Krutch proclaimed him "a genius." George Jean Nathan wrote that he was "incomparable." On Reinhardt's twenty-fifth anniversary as a director in 1930, he was heralded as a titan of the theatre. The consensus had not changed since Macgowan argued that Reinhardt was "the greatest man of the theatre of this century." Nathan wrote "Reinhardt, with Papa Craig peeping over his shoulder, has brought more life to the modern stage than any other practicing director and producer of his time. His influence has spread over all lands and seas."⁶²

Leopold Jessner and Emil Pirchan filled the second

tier of directors in the minds of Americans along with the problematical Erwin Piscator. The New York Times claimed that Jessner "created more excitement than the stars." He used simple set designs and the world famous Jessnertreppen. First employed in a production of Wilhelm Tell before the war, the steps were designed to "release the mind of the audience by riveting their attention on to the substance of the play." Shenck von Trapp used Jessner's steps in a 1927 production of Don Giovanni.⁶³ Emil Pirchan was, like Jessner, active in staging new works as well as the classics. He was particularly interested in scenic design and its role in an audience's dramatic experience.⁶⁴ As for Piscator, his didactic and "communistic" style caused most Americans to admit only grudgingly his talents. Marie Stehle, Drama's special correspondent in Berlin, declared that Piscator's production of Toller's Hoppla, Wir Leben! (1928) was "colored by current political agitations. Such matters have no place on the stage in anything intended to be more serious than a vaudeville sketch." Because of his politics and strident style, he was, like Brecht, suspect and written off as "the mechanical playboy of the German theatre" whose efforts subordinated the cause of democratic theatre to that of the proletarian theatre. What had been admirable in Reinhardt's use of stage machinery became dangerous in Piscator's hands. Julius Bab, a contributor

to Drama and Theatre, accused Piscator and Brecht of totally collectivizing the stage and thus "sapping the heart out of the drama."⁶⁵

With so much of the attention focused on the directors, the less thorough publications frequently ignored the theatrical scene in Germany and just how it came to be that so many German directors had the chance to work and prosper in the theatre of central Europe. The professional drama critics did not let this aspect of affairs escape their notice. In this connection, the subject of theatre subsidization assumed great significance. Again the Reinhardt influence was felt. His ideas on the Theatre of the Five Thousand, an enormous theatre building and support organization to give people an opportunity to see plays cheaply, and his Deutsches Theatre, a more intimate house with audiences around three hundred, became topics of great interest. Jürgen Fehling also did marvelous plays in the Volksbühne.⁶⁶

The appeal of subsidized theatre was quite strong. An article in the New York Times asked its readers to "Imagine the New York Theatre Guild with 150,000 members in the metropolis instead of 20,000 and linked up with some 400,000 other play goers pledged to take a dozen tickets every season." This was the projection the Times put forward if only Americans could develop a theatre like

Berlin's Volksbühne. Sheldon Cheney preceived many advantages, such as funding for all types of plays. Actors could also work the year round, the theatre building would be constantly in use, and the public would finally have a chance to develop long-term dramatic tastes. A true "people's theatre society" had existed in Germany since 1890. He argued that "The chief facts about the Volksbühne are worth recording" for the stimulus they could create for an enterprising American organizer. To Marie Stehle it seemed almost criminal that Americans had not embarked on a "people's theatre" experiment.⁶⁷

The support for municipal and audience subsidization sometimes yielded unexpected results. Cheney argued that the best way to move toward a democratic theatre was through subsidization that would enable American producers to present the "best things from French, German, Spanish and other languages....And let me repeat, audiences will accept them. In drama, as in music, one's taste improves with experience of the best."⁶⁸ This, of course, was standard fare, but, Arthur Hopkins, a theatrical producer who presented substantial as well as "popular" drama, may have indicated the general attitude toward subscription as far as the producers were concerned. Like Brock Pemberton, Gilbert Miller, and even David Belasco, Hopkins had attempted to bring cerebral drama to the people. In

a 1931 article, he wrote that light hearted drama, the cinema, and radio "have drawn away from the theatre the proletarian with the result that the stage is more free to cater to the thoughtful people...the theatre does not have to consider what Elizabethans called 'groundlings.' It is now in a position to address itself directly to intellectuals of all classes." Hopkins went on to argue for subsidized theatre but not for state support, for, if the state becomes involved, the the dramas presented would have to appeal to the lowest or "popular" segment of the general audience. He subverted the ideal of the direct, all-encompassing democratic theatre. But like Cheney, he still believed that with the aid of the affluent "the subscription plan can spread its influence throughout the entire nation. This condition of affairs might easily said to be now under way."⁶⁹

If Americans did not want to graft the German system to an American one, it was certainly understandable. At decade's end, the American theatre had produced a great deal to admire and a corresponding level of optimism existed. Eugene O'Neill, George S. Kaufman, Robert Sherwood, and Marc Connelly wrote plays that compared favorably with other nation's contemporary drama. The Germans had made a number of important contributions to American stage theory.⁷⁰ In relation to the German theatre,

Americans accepted German ideas about the theatre much more readily than they did the new plays which came from Weimar. They adopted, not the tenets of the radical theatre of Erwin Piscator, but ideas associated with the German theatrical tradition. As A. E. Zucker in a review of German methods noted, "In order that the student of theatre may make the past living, he must know first hand the problems of today, and in order to understand the present, he must know well the tradition of the past out of which the stage has come to be what it is."⁷¹

Both nations faced serious theatrical dilemmas as they entered the "unhappy days" of the thirties.⁷² Whereas Sheldon Cheney had been downhearted at the beginning of the post-war period, his spirits rose during the decade. But even before the crash, Walter Prichard Eaton was still complaining that "the American theatre had gained artists and lost an audience." Unfortunately, the depression further dampened not only Eaton's but many others' attitudes. In 1933, the theatre in Germany was definitely declining. In the years between Bruening and Hitler, the state funds had been drastically curtailed. Ashley Dukes noted that "now in Germany, there is too much theatre in the street, not enough on the stage." It appeared that "the most exciting stage in Europe" was entering an uncertain period when artistic

freedom would be a dim memory.⁷³

The great threat to the theatre in Germany was Hitler; in America, it was Hollywood. Theatrical successes were few in the early thirties. The Federal Theatre Project of Hallie Flanagan, with its imitation of many German ideas, had its share of failures and triumphs, but there were not enough good things happening to off-set the ~~per~~ pervasive influence of the film moguls. The challenge was not new or unique, for the outlines of the menace were clear before the Great War. Motion pictures constituted a real problem, not merely on the national level but throughout the world. Hollywood grabbed Emil Jannings and tempted Reinhardt. The theatre had to be defended; its people protected, for what did the movies have to do with art?⁷⁴

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER IV

¹F. E. W. Freund, "Max Reinhardt's Evolution," International Studio, 78 (January, 1924), 350; Kenneth Macgowan, The Theatre of Tomorrow (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1921), 278. Macgowan, set designer Robert Edmond Jones, and Eugene O'Neill combined their talents and rejuvenated New York's Provincetown Theatre in 1923. The theatre, started in 1915 in Provincetown, Massachusetts, had the reputation of being the "Playwright's Theatre." Macgowan's credits included production of All God's Chillun Got Wings (1924) and Desire Under the Elms (1924). Helen Deutsch and Stella Hanau, The Provincetown: A Story of a Theatre (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1931), 3-132; Sheldon Cheney, The Art Theatre: Its Character, as Differentiated from the Commercial Theatre; Its Ideals and Organization, And a Record of Certain European and American Examples, Rev. ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1925), 68-69. Macgowan was a tireless promoter of the American theatre on all levels. See his Footlights Across America: Towards a National Theatre (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929), and on his work in New York see Mardi

Valgema, Accelerated Grimace: Expressionism in the American Drama of the 1920's (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois Press, 1972), 98-99. Macgowan eventually turned his considerable abilities to the world of film.

²Glenn Hughes, A History of the American Theatre, 1700-1950 (New York: Samuel French, 1951), 228-319.

³Hughes, A History of the American Theatre, 287-92, 351-53, 383-85; Lee Simonson, "Apologizing for America," Theatre Arts Magazine, 5 (July, 1921), 201-06.

⁴Cheney, The Art Theatre, 20-24; Ludwig Lewisohn, Drama and the Stage (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922), 3-46, 201-06; Joseph Wood Krutch, The American Drama Since 1918 (London: Thames and Hudson, 1957), 3-25; Oliver M. Sayler, Our American Theatre (New York: Brentano's Publishers, 1923), 1-10; Wisner Payne Kinne, George Pierce Baker and the American Theatre (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954).

⁵Roland Young, "Bringing in the Ducks," New Republic, 32 (November 1, 1922), 252. "Theatre" and "drama" were employed as synonyms and the critics of the twenties normally did so. There were, however, subtle shades of meaning. In its narrow sense, drama referred to the art of the playwright, i.e., the theme and structure of his play. Theatre usually implied the drama and interrelated aspects of play production. The theatre also included the

human element, those individuals whose lives were dedicated to the myriad aspects of theatrical life.

⁶Cheney differentiated between the commercial theatre of quick profit and low quality and the "art theatre" which stood for excellence and the finest traditions and would, he hoped, become the standard in America. Cheney, The Art Theatre, 22-24, 216, 226.

⁷New York Times, 5 January 1919; Sheldon Cheney, "Answering Mr. Simonson," Theatre Arts Magazine, 6 (January, 1922), 231; Barrett H. Clark, "Young Germany and the Theatre," Drama, 15 (November, 1924), 25. See also Allen Harbor, "South of Berlin," Saturday Review of Literature, 1 (January, 1925), 449.

⁸A. W. G. Randall, "Main Currents in Contemporary German Drama," Dial, 70 (April, 1921), 172, and Barrett H. Clark, "Max Reinhardt, Himself," Drama, 14 (May-June, 1924), 247-48.

⁹See George Freedley and John A. Reeves, A History of the Theatre (New York: Crown Publishers, 1941), 614. Subsequent editions keep the pre-World War II period largely unchanged, and especially Glenn Hughes, A History of the American Theatre, 1700-1950 (New York: Samuel French, 1951), 407-17.

¹⁰Hayden Talbot was quoted in "Dominating Figure in the New Theatre in Germany," Current Opinion, 68

(January, 1920), 56; Lee Simonson, "The New German Stagecraft," New York Times, 9 April 1922; Henry Obermeyer, "The Provinces vs. Berlin," New York Times, 11 March 1923. For a list of important premiers outside of Berlin see Laqueur, Weimar, A Cultural History, 28.

¹¹Charles Victor was quoted in "Democratizing the German Theatre," Literary Digest, 62 (September 6, 1919), 33; see also "Where the Theatre Is Democratized," Literary Digest, 64 (February 28, 1920), 31-2. Despite Hauptmann's identification with the Weimar Republic (even to the extent of being considered a possible presidential candidate), he had been a loyal German citizen during the war. Before the completion of the deliberations at Versailles, Hauptmann received criticism for defending Germany against her former enemies in 1919-1920. See Editorial, "Slaves and Supermen," New York Times, 6 February 1919. Hauptmann's plays slowly reemerged in America in the early twenties as war time feelings began to ebb.

Germans went to the theatre before the November Revolution, and the lower classes enjoyed productions in their own mass subscription theatre the Volksbühne. Many playwrights and directors hoped that uncensored new plays could be produced for workers, the middle-class, and the intelligentsia under the republican government. See "The Berlin Stage," New York Times, 16 March 1921.

¹²Grace I. Colborn, "Some Trials of the German Playgoer," New York Times, 18 January 1920; "In the German Theatre," Living Age, 310 (July 9, 1921), 120-24; "German and Austrian Plays," Living Age, 320 (March 22, 1924), 575.

¹³New York Times, 22 February 1919. Vorse returned from Germany and worked with the Provincetown group.

¹⁴Freedley and Reeves, A History of the Theatre, 530.

¹⁵In 1917, Kasimir Edschmid gave a lecture "Concerning Poetic Expressionism" in which he pointed out that the new artist loathes the mere recording of the impressions that an object makes on him. Instead, he endeavors to express their inner meaning. Edschmid talked of a "spiritual movement of a time that places inner experience above external life." Quoted in Valgema, Accelerated Grimace, 4; see also John Willett, Expressionism (London: McGraw Hill, 1970); Laqueur, Weimar, A Cultural History, 118.

Freedley and Reeves provide the most manageable definition. "Expressionism is a term taken from painting where it signified the revolt against 'impressionism' or realism. In both arts it reflects inner reality of the subject as the eye of the artist or the brain of the dramatist sees it. Its external form, or seeming unreality to the mind of the audience, is of no primary concern to the theatre artist," in A History of the Theatre, 520.

Roger Burlingame may have come closest to the

popular, and to a certain degree the critical, American perception of Expressionism when he constructed a hypothetical conversation between a group of intellectuals. The alleged authority on Expressionism glibly concludes, "Well, you see, I really haven't the faintest idea of what Expressionism is." Roger Burlingame, "Expressionism," Independent, 114 (April 18, 1925), 438. Mardi Valgemaes sees the article in Independent as an indication that the movement "had penetrated the sedate world of middleclass theatregoers...." in Accelerated Grimace, 97.

¹⁶Barrett H. Clark, "The Work of Ernst Toller," Theatre, 39 (June, 1924), 22; Sheldon Cheney, "Expressionism in the German Theatre and Our Own," New York Times, 30 April 1922; Scheffauer, The New Vision in the German Arts, 38. See also Paul Henckels, "My Attitude Toward Expressionism," Theatre Arts Magazine, 6 (April, 1922), 112.

¹⁷The Theatre Guild began as the Washington Square Players in 1915. Their goal was to advance the cause of artistic theatre. A spirited and glowing account of the Guild's first ten years is in Walter Pritchard Eaton, The Theatre Guild, The First Ten Years (New York: Brentano's, 1929), 3-127. Hollywood and numerous outside projects depleted its ranks and the organization became more like Broadway. The second set of dates for the plays refers to the years of the Guild productions. See also Valgemaes,

Accelerated Grimace, 10-12, 49-50, 60-1, 112-13.

The text contains the English titles of the plays. For a representative listing of German plays with their German and English titles, see Freedley and Reeves, A History of the Theatre, 518-37.

¹⁸Gilbert Seldes, "From Morn to Midnight," Dial, 73 (July, 1922), 116-17; "Mr. Hornblow Goes to the Play," Theatre, 36 (August, 1922), 71; Barrett H. Clark, "The Works of Ernst Toller," Theatre, 39 (June, 1924), 48; "Goat Song," New Republic, (February 24, 1926), 17-18.

¹⁹Valgema, Accelerated Grimace, 29-30. 62-63, 72-73; Rice quoted in Accelerated Grimace, 63. See also Brock Pemberton, "Europe in a Nutshell," Theatre Arts Magazine, 6 (July, 1922), 217-25; John Corbin, "Expressionism and the Cartoon," New York Times, 1 April 1923 for initial responses.

²⁰Hughes, A History of the American Theatre, 394; Freedley and Reeves, A History of the Theatre, 594; Valgema, Accelerated Grimace, 97-99.

²¹Pierre Loving, "George Kaiser's Latest Expression of Expressionism," New York Times, 3 June 1923. See also his The Revolt of the German Drama, [Little Blue Book No. 777], (Girard, Kansas: Haldeman-Julius Company, 1925); and on O'Neill in later years see Krutch, The American Drama Since 1918, 89-133.

²³"The Next Step After Expressionism," Literary Digest, 82 (September 20, 1924), 32-33; Arthur Hornblow referred to the onslaught in "Mr. Hornblow Goes to the Theatre," Theatre, 43 (April, 1926), 16. In 1922, the same reviewer found Kaiser to be an excellent playwright. Two forces were at work. Hornblow's dislike of a particular play (Goat Song) and the ebbing of Expressionism; Woolcott quoted in "A Play by the Leader of Germany's Intelligentsia," Literary Digest, 88 (February 13, 1926), 25-26. Krutch also comments on the short vogue of the movement in The American Drama Since 1918, 239-40.

²⁴Meyer Levin, "Playwrights and Protests," Theatre Arts Monthly, 17 (May, 1933), 358. As one critic put it, "The more expressionism we see, the more we prefer musical comedy." Robert A. Parker, "Expressionism, Good, Bad, And Indifferent," Independent, 110 (April 14, 1923), 27. Samuel Putnam used the phrases "cubist plaything" in "For the Etymological Theatre," Drama, 16 (February, 1926), 169. In addition to Macgowan, Vorse, and others, Grace Anschutz went against the tide and claimed that the movement had lost none of its impetus in "Expressionist Drama in the American Theatre," Drama, 16 (April, 1926), 245-46, 278-80. In an article for Nation, Ernst Toller wrote what sounded like a eulogy for a dramatic school whose day had come and gone. "Expressionism wanted to influence environment, to

change it in giving it a brighter more righteous appearance, to make it impossible, for example, for a catastrophe like the war to ever threaten man again." "Post-War Drama," Nation, 127 (November 7, 1928), 486. See also John Mason Brown, The Theatre in Revolt (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1929), 65-67.

²⁶Walter Laqueur notes that in Germany "By 1923, Expressionism in the theatre was finished and the public was eagerly awaiting new plays with real human beings and not with mankind in general." Laqueur, Weimar, A Cultural History, 144; Joseph Wood Krutch, "Drama as a Social Force," Nation, 134 (April 20, 1932), 468, and his The American Drama Since 1918, 11-31. Frank Thiess, a minor German playwright who moved in and out of intellectual circles in Weimar, concluded that Expressionism did not appeal to either Germans or Americans. Frank Thiess, "German Literature of Today," Saturday Review of Literature, 1 (May 9, 1925), 745. The New York Times' critic in Berlin, C. Hooper Trask, noted the decline of radical ideas in plays in Germany. "And now, the cold balance sheet shows not a single play which will enrich the German repertory. Even Kaiser's From Morn to Midnight seems cold on renewed acquaintance. Bronnen's Vatermord (1920), Brecht's Trommeln in der Nacht (1922), Unruh's poetic trilogy, Toller's Massenmensch all seem more out of date than

Schiller or Kleist." In C. Hooper Trask, "In Berlin-Notes on the Younger Generation," New York Times, 7 November 1926. See also George Jean Nathan, "Sardu with an Umlaut," American Mercury, 13 (February, 1928), 244-46.

²⁷"Der Tote Tag," Dial, 77 (November, 1924), 414; Laqueur, Weimar, A Cultural History, 147; see also Bertolt Brecht, "On the Experimental Theatre," in Theatre in the Twentieth Century, ed. Robert W. Corrigan (Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1970), 94-110; and on Brecht's Americanism in his plays see Zammito, "Art and Action in the Metropolis," Pt. II, 632 ff; Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 201-04.

²⁸"Der Tote Tag," Dial, 77 (November, 1924), 414. In addition see, Thomas Mann, "German Letter," Dial, 74 (October, 1923), 369-74. Brecht was also described as a "Communist Propagandist," and a "blatant sloganeer" who used "tap room language;" nevertheless, most critics followed his career with increased interest with the passing years. Julius Bab, "News of the European Theatre: Germany," Drama, 21 (April, 1931), 16.

²⁹See Hughes, A History of the American Theatre, 380.

³⁰Lillian T. Mowerer, "Theatre in Berlin," Drama, 19 (February, 1929), 138-40; and "Hugo von Hofmanstahl," Commonweal, 10 (July, 1929), 327.

³¹Laqueur, Weimar, A Cultural History, 121-23;

Meyer Levin, "Playwriting and Protest," Theatre Arts Monthly, 17 (May, 1933), 358-60; Harry Salpeter, "Gerhart Hauptmann: His Life and Work," Bookman, 67 (August, 1928), 663-68; M. Stehle, "Hauptmann and Shakespeare," Drama, 18 (April, 1928), 202-03, 228. Hauptmann managed to make the transition from republic to Hitlerian Reich. He lived and functioned in Nazi Germany and outlasted the thousand year Reich by one year. In America, Hauptmann did not enjoy great success either before or during the Weimar period. "Gerhart Hauptmann's Dramas," Living Age, 303 (October 4, 1919), 21-24. The correspondent for Living Age noted that Hauptmann was "never adequately represented on the English speaking stage."

For an example of the impressions his work had on contemporaries, see Hallie Flanagan, Shifting Scenes of the Modern European Drama (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1928), 227.

³²See Anita Block, The Changing World In Plays and Theatre (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1939), 137-43. "Rose Bernd," Theatre, 36 (December, 1922), 375; Joseph Wood Krutch, "Vita Brevis," Nation, 121 (October 28, 1925), 494-95; Otto P. Schimmer, "Schnitzler: A Man Who Loved Life," Nation, 133 (November 11, 1931), 516-17; Harry Slochower, "Artur Schnitzler," New Republic, 69 (November 18, 1931), 22-23; "The World and the Theatre," Theatre

Arts Monthly, 16 (April, 1932), 268; Freedley and Reeves, A History of the Theatre, 515-16.

³³Miller, The Independent Theatre in Europe, 132, 34; "The Source of Play Supply," Literary Digest, 90 (August, 1926), 33. For an explanation of the German view of the classics see, "New Notes of the Berlin Stage," New York Times, 5 June 1921; Lee Simonson, "Down to the Cellar," Theatre Arts Magazine, 6 (April, 1922), 119-38; and Lillian T. Mowerer, "Drama and Music," Survey Graphic, 14 (February, 1929), 597, 634, 39. On American plays preferred in Germany, see Lillian T. Mowerer, "Theatre in Berlin," Drama, 19 (February, 1929), 138-40.

³⁴Joseph Wood Krutch, "Piscator and the German Tradition," Nation, 126 (June 6, 1928), 644. Krutch went on to say "I have myself neither seen nor heard any modern German dramas that are better than those which we can find at home, but as players the Germans are far above us."

³⁵Freedley and Reeves, A History of the Theatre, 530.

³⁶Ludwig Lewisohn, "The Two Shildkrauts," Nation, (February 28, 1923), 250; Joseph Wood Krutch, "Reinhardt's Redemption," Nation, 127 (December 5, 1928), 640-41.

³⁷Macgowan and Jones, Continental Stagecraft, 81-105.

³⁸New York Times, 12 March 1922.

³⁹Oliver M. Sayler, "Play of the Week," Saturday Review of Literature, 4 (February 4, 1928), 568; Ludwig

Lewisohn, "The Two Shildkrauts," Nation, 127 (December 5, 1928), 250.

⁴⁰Emil Jannings [interview], "The Way of All Flesh: A Great Artist of the Screen Reveals Intimate Facts About Himself and His Work," Theatre, 46 (October 6, 1927), 43; Jim Tully, "Emil Jannings: An Estimate of the Great German Star Recently Imported to Hollywood," Vanity Fare, 29 (November, 1927), 77, 126.

⁴¹"The Great World Theatre," Theatre Arts Monthly, 12 (November, 1928), 771; Macgowan, Footlights Across America, 3-26.

⁴²"The Great World Theatre," Theatre Arts Monthly, 9 (April, 1925), 270; "Vaudeville in a Berlin Terminal," Living Age, 336 (June, 1929), 288; Joseph Wood Krutch, "Berlin Goes American," Nation, 126 (May 16, 1928), 564; Macgowan and Jones, Continental Stagecraft, 49, 51.

⁴³New York Times, 12 March 1922; Hugo von Hofmannstahl, "Prologue," Living Age, 322 (July, 5, 1924), 33; New York Times, "Those Peculiar Germans," 6 September 1926; Arthur A. Kutscher, "The German Theatre: A Balance Sheet," Theatre Arts Monthly, 17 (February, 1933), 127.

⁴⁴Barrett H. Clark, "Max Reinhardt, Himself [interview], Drama, 14 (May-June, 1924), 247.

⁴⁵Prince Henry of Reuss, "Talkies and the Stage," Living Age, 339 (November, 1930), 298. Prince Henry was

particularity worried about the "centralization of the theatre" which would threaten "the diversity of German production."

⁴⁶Allistaire Cooke, "Volksbühne: A Note on German Directing," Theatre Arts Monthly, 17 (January, 1933), 57; C. Hooper Trask, "The German Theatre," New York Times, 13 March 1927; Harbor H. Allen, "South of Berlin," Saturday Review of Literature, 1 (January 10, 1925), 449.

⁴⁷German actors and professionals who came before the American public were more impressed with the American theatre than were the native critics. Speaking to an interviewer in Vienna, Jannings said "there are no bad theatres over there [in America]." Ernst Lubitsch was told that American drama lagged behind Europe, but he was not convinced after only a short stay in the United States. Lubitsch, an early defector from Weimar Germany and somewhat suspect because he was a movie director, lauded America's musical comedy, its dances, chorus, and decorations which were "superior to anything in either Berlin or Paris." It was almost impossible for serious critics to see musical comedy as a contribution to the legitimate stage. Emil Jannings, "Why I Left the Films," Living Age, 338 (July, 1930), 556; Ludwig Lewisohn, "Ernst Lubitsch," Nation, 114 (January 18, 1922), 76.

⁴⁸Cheney, The Art Theatre, 29; Miller, The Independent

Theatre in Europe, 138-39, 381.

⁴⁹See Gilbert Gabriel, "Reinhardt in His Den," Theatre Arts Monthly, 12 (April, 1928), 256-62.

⁵⁰Burns Mantle's observations appeared in "So Much Reinhardt to So Much Shakespeare," Literary Digest, 95 (December 10, 1927), 24; Ludwig Lewisohn, "Max Reinhardt," Nation, 111 (October 3, 1920), 405.

⁵¹"Miracle: A Collaboration," Theatre Arts Monthly, 8 (March, 1924), 171-83.

⁵²"A Pantomime Wonder of the Stage," Current Opinion, 76 (March, 1924), 330. Among those who were reported as impressed with what they saw were Alexander Woolcott (New York Herald), John Corbin (New York Times), Heywood Broun (New York World), and Percy Hammond (New York Tribune), Robert A. Parker was not quite so sure about the performance. He argued that it was spectacular, but he did not think that it qualified as art, in "Art and the Miracle," Arts, 5 (March, 1924), 138-39.

⁵³Lee Simonson, The Stage Is Set (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1932), 399. See also his "The New German Stagecraft," New York Times, 9 April 1922. On Americans implementing new set designs in the German mold, see Valgemmae, Accelerated Grimace, 34, 47, 98, 104-6.

⁵⁴Simonson, The Stage Is Set, 5-7.

⁵⁵For a contemporary review of The Theatre of

Tomorrow, see "'The Theatre of Tomorrow' and 'The Exemplary Theatre,'" Drama, 13 (December, 1922), 99.

⁵⁶Stark Young, "Reinhardt's Shakespeare," New Republic, 53 (December 7, 1927), 71-72; and "Another Reinhardt 'Jedermann,'" New Republic, 53 (December 28, 1927), 164-65.

⁵⁷George Jean Nathan, "Review of the Drama in Europe," American Mercury, 15 (October, 1928), 246; "The Theatres of the World," Theatre Arts Monthly, 13 (December, 1929), 18-19.

⁵⁸For a direct example of the influence of Adolphe Appia on Norman Bel Geddes see, Lee Simonson, "Appia's Contribution to the Modern Stage," Theatre Arts Monthly, 16 (August, 1932), 631-44. "Adolphe Appia's theory of the theatre has found no more complete realization than in the work of Norman Bel Geddes...." Lester Raines, "Activities in France, Switzerland, and Germany," Players Magazine, 8 (March-April, 1932), 9. Raines was a professor of drama at New Mexico Normal College whose relative isolation may have colored his evaluation.

⁵⁹For example see Brock Pemberton, "Europe in a Nutshell," Theatre Arts Monthly, 16 (July, 1932), 217-25. Pemberton was a prominent theatrical producer on Broadway who later in the twenties became more interested in the European theatre. See Hughes, A History of the American

Theatre, 423, 27.

⁶⁰Barrett H. Clark, "Max Reinhardt," Drama, 14 (May-June, 1924), 248. See also Barrett H. Clark, A Study of the Modern Drama: A Handbook for the Study and Appreciation of the Best Plays, Europe, English, and American of the Last Half Century (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1928), 79-80.

⁶¹Oliver M. Sayler, "Ultra Modern Art In Relation to the Theatre," Arts and Decoration, 24 (December, 1925), 52.

⁶²Joseph Wood Krutch, "The Genius of Reinhardt," Nation, 125 (December 7, 1927), 666; George Jean Nathan, "Other Imcomparable Max," American Mercury, 13 (January, 1928). 118. Papa Craig was the Englishman Gordon Craig whose theatrical ideas received wide application before and after the war.

⁶³New York Times, 24 October 1926; Eugene Stimson, "Modern Settings for Chicago's Revival of 'Don,'" Musical America, 45 (January 8, 1927), 1.

⁶⁴"Decorative Influences in the German Theatre," Musical America, 42 (July, 1926), 210, 240.

⁶⁵Marie Stehle, "'Hoppla Wir Leben,'" Drama, 18 (January, 1928), 104; New York Times, 28 April 1929; Julius Bab, "Germany: The Theatre," Drama, 21 (April, 1931), 16-17. See also C. D. Innes, Erwin Piscator's

Political Theatre: The Development of Modern German Drama (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 118-127; Maria Ley Piscator, The Piscator Experiment: The Political Theatre (New York: James H. Heinemann, Inc., 1967) is particularly good on the fate of German artists in the United States in the thirties, pages 130-38.

⁶⁶Freedley and Reeves, A History of the Theatre, 526; Lee Simonson, "Apologizing for America," Theatre Arts Magazine, 6 (April, 1922), 226-30.

⁶⁷New York Times, 7 February 1926; Marie Stehle, "People's Stage Society," Drama, 19 (November, 1928), 40-42, 64.

⁶⁸Cheney, The Art Theatre, 173.

⁶⁹Arthur Hopkins, "Trends in the Theatre," Drama, 21 (June, 1931), 5-6; Hughes, A History of the American Theatre, 385; Cheney, The Art Theatre, 264.

⁷⁰Arthur A. Kutscher, "German Theatre: A Balance Sheet," Theatre Arts Monthly, 17 (February, 1933), 128.

⁷¹"The Great World Theatre," Theatre Arts Monthly, 12 (February, 1928), 85-87; A. E. Zucker, "Study for the Theatre in German Universities," Theatre Arts Monthly, 16 (July, 1932), 556.

⁷²Glenn Hughes uses the term "unhappy days" to refer to the American theatre in the thirties, in A History of the American Theatre, 419-47.

⁷³Walter Prichard Eaton, "Charting the Course of American Drama's Drift," New York Times, 19 February 1928; Ashley Dukes, "The Scene in Europe," Theatre Arts Monthly, 17 (January, 1933), 27.

⁷⁴"The Great World Theatre," Theatre Arts Monthly, 17 (November, 1928), 771-73.

"The Motion Picture is in fact the oldest, most simple
art in the culture of the race."

Terry Ramsaye¹ (1926)

CHAPTER V

CINEMA: THE BUSINESS OF ART

By 1920, the working classes made moving pictures the most popular form of mass entertainment in the United States. For a nickel one could escape the drudgery of life and watch fantasy unfold on the screen. Hugo von Hofmannstahl wrote of the individual's experience in a movie house. "The crowded darkening room with its fluttering pictures is...almost...worthy of reverence, for it is the place to which men are driven in an effort of self-preservation, they flee from the real, the mechanical, the drab, to seek the light."² Many American intellectuals accepted Hofmannstahl's description but could not share his reverence. Movies were simple, and the masses seemed too easily amused. Cultured Americans tended to view moving pictures as fodder for the common man. Only gradually did a body of serious film criticism develop a challenge to these intellectual contentions.

In the years after the turn of the century, it was not quite clear who was qualified to comment on films. Since movies aspired to be a form of the play, drama critics frequently inherited the task of reviewing new

productions. New York was the home of the nation's pre-eminent drama critics, and the city became the leading center of film criticism.³ Between 1909 and 1919, the most significant material on films appeared in trade journals and entertainment periodicals such as Moving Picture World. The base of criticism expanded greatly in the twenties when drama, art, literature, and political magazines began to comment on moving pictures. Arts, Drama, Theatre Arts Monthly and the Nation increased the space allotted to film. Specialized journals also attracted the notice of serious film goers. Exceptional Photoplays was a leader in establishing a high level of criticism, but while many intellectuals turned to film periodicals, the people had their movie magazines filled with gossip and intimate details of stars' lives. Newspapers ran reviews and humor magazines such as Life contributed to the avalanche of information.⁴

The serious critics, however, wished to be instructive as well as informative. The eastern critical establishment believed that it had a responsibility to be a cultural beacon to the benighted people of the interior, and moving pictures were seen as a potential source of transmitting culture. In no other field could the taste of the common man be so easily molded. Movies were shown everywhere, and many writers argued that critical

sophistication was needed before the penny arcade could be transformed into a substantial cultural medium. In 1910, a pioneer film critic Louis Reeves Harrison commented that "Every strong [film] play helps all concerned, strengthening the hold on the public, pleasing the people in general, advancing the interests of the exhibitor and giving every department of the business a dignity which no part of it now enjoys."⁵ The post-war decade was a period of unprecedented growth in the quality and quantity of film criticism. New aspirants sought to join the ranks of such early writers as Vachel Lindsay, Robert Coaky, Gilbert Seldes, Hubert Münsterberg, and Kenneth Macgowan.⁶

Unlike as with the drama, a critic in Chicago or Los Angeles could review the same photoplay as one's counterpart in New York. One did not have to be in the "cultural capital" to offer intelligent commentary. But New York's hold on the nation could not be loosened. Despite protestations to the contrary, New Yorkers did not want to share the limelight. Journalists and essayists continued to look first to New York, and the easterners still set the standards which others followed.⁷ While some critics viewed this as friendly competition and good for the growth of intelligent criticism throughout the nation, many others bristled at the eastern attitude. In 1930, Dwight MacDonald epitomized the region's haughtiness.

"Hollywood is in the middle of a barbarically provincial non-city, three thousand miles from our cultural capitalMy modest proposal for improving the quality of our films is that the industry move back to where it started from, namely Fort Lee, New Jersey, a short bus ride from civilization."⁸

Many intellectuals agreed with MacDonald and ridiculed most Hollywood pictures. For films of artistic merit, they turned to Europe. French, Italian, and Scandinavian movies were the most successful imports before 1914, but at least until 1927 (and to a lesser extent into the thirties), German films best illustrated the potential of motion pictures. American critics and intellectuals found their films the most rewarding. Nor could the movie industry ignore the critical success of the possible competition from Berlin studios. In 1922, Will Rogers remarked, "If you think this picture's no good [The Headless Horseman] (1922), I'll put on a beard and say it was made in Germany, and then you'll call it art."⁹ While movie moguls praised their own efforts, the critics hailed Germany as the great innovator, the nation that brought art to the motion picture. For a few short years, the German cinema assumed on the screen something of the rank that the German stage held for a generation or more.¹⁰

Germany was widely praised, Hollywood assailed. Almost all major critics agreed with Evelyn Gerstein of the Boston Evening Transcript who argued that "Hollywood lives for money and sex. It borrows or buys its art. It is the Germans who are the perpetual adventurers in the cinema." German films were artistic projects while American moving pictures were the products of "industry as distinguished from an art."¹¹ It was not so much that Americans could not produce fine films, but that Hollywood values and aims inhibited artistic effort.¹² The California film moguls had little cultural sensitivity and refused to spend their profits on creative or innovative film projects. Concerned critics wanted to persuade Hollywood to reform. Some industry sources even began to talk about a film embargo in response to the critics who were demanding that more German films be imported into the United States. Reports described a "German menace" to the American movie market. The New York Times concluded "The real German menace in the moving picture field is the menace of superior intelligence." The New York Globe countered the charges with the observation that all of the complaints were merely an effort to "keep Los Angeles unintelligent and unartistic."¹³

In 1916, Harvard psychologist Hugo Münsterberg wrote that, "The greatest mission which the photoplay may

have in our community is that of esthetic cultivation."¹⁴ His suggestion became a popular subject for debate in intellectual circles. With the early motion pictures of Ernst Lubitsch and the artistically successful The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1919), reviewers discovered films that created genuine intellectual experiences. The German cinema helped transform many critics into film enthusiasts. The Germans excelled in film direction, architecture, and technical effects. Their screenplays, while important in developing mature thematic material for motion pictures, were secondary in significance to the methods of cinematic production. German efforts demonstrated "the amazing scope of the movies." Margaret Marshall, an associate editor for the Nation, claimed that their films made one aware of the possibilities of the subtle and beautiful expression" of an infant art form. But film commentators doubted that Hollywood would learn from the Germans.¹⁵

The Germans seemed able to overcome the rigid American cinematic formulas. In the first five years after the Armistice, their reputation grew rapidly. The critics applauded the technical proficiency and thematic content of the new films from Central Europe. They tended not to note the enormous German output of syrupy melodramas and simple-minded light comedy. In Germany as well as the United States, these types of motion pictures were

the most popular, and they continued to be so during the golden age of German cinema.¹⁶ The Berlin worker was as interested in light hearted entertainment as was his American counterpart; but, American critics were inclined to assign a higher level of sophistication to German audiences. They assumed that Europeans recognized culture, and the artistic and commercial success of a number of post-war German films convinced many that cinema patrons in Berlin, Munich, and Hamburg were more cosmopolitan. In their zeal to promote aesthetic films, American observers usually ignored the reality of the German box office.¹⁷

The dictates of mass appeal determined the style and content of American screenplays. Films were seldom intellectually ambitious, and were designed to fall well within the "ceiling of popular understanding."¹⁸ The American cinema seemed incapable of overcoming its vulgar heritage. The old minstrel shows, vaudeville, and cheap melodrama seemed to satisfy the "cultural needs" of the people. The peep show and nickelodeons were "predictable" outgrowths of the "low brow" tradition. When film moved to the big screen, productions followed the same path, and most critics argued that the "great public" wanted more of the same. Alexander Bakshy, an influential critic for the Nation, wrote that "It is said that the American 'hick' is the arbiter of fashion who dictates to Hollywood." Another

writer for the same publication claimed that the simple, naive American mind was incapable of grasping mature themes. Movies satisfied the "mass mind" which was "computed to be fourteen years of age." The American screen was placed in the same category as "dime novels, the circus, and newspaper comics."¹⁹

Civic and cultural leaders deplored the basic assumptions of American film makers. Critic Tamara Lane's What's Wrong with the Movies (1923) employed a vast array of moral and intellectual arguments. She believed that Hollywood made movies that threatened American values and preyed upon man's baser motivations. Donald Young, a professor of Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, concluded that motion pictures were a leading contributor to "defective social standards." The motion picture industry became monster-like, an institution destined to drag the average citizen into a vortex of cheap sex and crime. Movies slighted traditional values and had an unwholesome effect upon America's youth. Teachers and parents found it difficult to counteract the negative influences of the movies.²⁰

Intellectuals faced a troublesome situation. How could one convince a successful businessman that quality not sensationalism would produce satisfying returns at the turnstiles? How did one reform a profitable business?

Some of the questions defied solution, for the movie magnates seemed deaf to the cries of outrage. Many of those involved in attacking Hollywood had been social activists during the Progressive era. They argued that American producers had to be brought to their senses and made to realize their social responsibilities.²¹ Photo-plays were immature and exploitative. Frivolous comedies, inane sexual melodramas, and mindless horse operas dominated the screen.²² Hollywood consciously escaped reality in favor of the box office. When comparing German and American films, the National Board of Review Magazine concluded that the Germans presented "the serious treatment of a problem, its inception, progress, and solution" while an American picture "takes the same problem, discards all its problematic attributes and presents an example of showmanship, with sensational irrelevancies played for all they can get."²³ The Germans were singled out for developing mature themes for the screen, and their work was considered a relief from the subject matter that made most American films ordinary.

American movie actors and directors also had little to commend them. The individuals who worked in Hollywood were rarely referred to as artists. By the twenties, the star system had reached gaudy heights. Actors were cogs in a gigantic business enterprise, and profits rather

than artistry determined their status. Professionalism became a sham as publicity departments helped create personalities instead of actors. The director's main task seemed to be discovering the star's best camera angle. Hollywood was virtually without a talented person in either category. Critic Leo Korber concluded that the typical director was "Barnum trained." Evelyn Gerstein wrote that it was "wiser to forget what happens to directors in that fleshy paradise by the western sea where studio politics is the only intellectual diversion and the director is merely an unhappy soul lost among the magnates."²⁴

Jesse Lasky, Louis B. Mayer, and Adolph Zukor were among the most prominent "magnates" behind the system. Most of the film moguls were Jewish immigrants from Germany, Russia, or Poland who parlayed their ghetto penny arcades and nickelodeons into theatre chains and motion picture production companies. Zukor and Mayer were there just when the Edison Kinetoscope and the Mutoscope put film on the large screen.²⁵ The critics held the moguls responsible for the insults to intelligence and the creation of an arid cinematic landscape. These men had indifferent artistic sensibilities, made all the more suspect because of their humble backgrounds.²⁶ They gave the people what they wanted with little or no concern for

the ideal of "esthetic cultivation." The studio titans had a viselike grip on the kinds of pictures made in America. The Independent's film editor Percy Reniers declared that the moguls were incapable of turning over a project to an artist, for it would constitute a threat to the almighty ledger sheet.²⁷ Because men like Lasky and Mayer were responsible for the final product, critics frequently saved their most stinging comments for the studio heads. The moguls were the money men, and most critics doubted whether money alone could produce art.²⁸

Financial success obviously did not insure critical acclaim. Periodically, the studio heads responded to the endless accusations. They thought they were in a strong position, for their movies were an example of democracy in action. The people, not addle brained critics, determined success or failure. Such views failed to alter critical evaluations. The film experts observed that the moguls, in conjunction with the local movie exhibitors, conspired to keep standards low and "ban the very best pictures," including many excellent German imports. Was this, they asked, democracy or monopoly? Hollywood refused to acknowledge a duty to enlighten and uplift the audience. Dedicated advocates of the film continued to hope that Americans were ready for pictures that were "at least calculated to appeal to adult intelligence."²⁹

Cinema authority Alfred Kuttner wrote warmly of the enormous potential of German films. He implied that the public could recognize their value "if given a chance to see" them. Robert Sherwood explained a popular intellectual notion behind Kuttner's remark. If we can succeed in luring a large number of intelligent people into the film theatres, we shall automatically receive more intelligent pictures."³⁰ American intellectuals had only to accept one primary assumption about democratic culture. The people could appreciate artistic achievement; they needed only the opportunity to experience it. "Intelligent" American pictures were, however, in short supply.

For the intellectuals, German pictures filled a void. Ernst Lubitsch's Passion (1919) was one of the earliest post-war screenplays to reach the United States. Exceptional Photoplays reported that his direction made it a film "of which our best producers may well be envious." The French Revolution was brought to life in spectacular fashion in a motion picture that depicted the stirring events of a turbulent era. Lubitsch's control of the crowd scenes, and his feeling for the period impressed the critical community. The acting of Pola Negri and Emil Jannings approached repertory standards. Alfred Kuttner observed that the films of Lubitsch and his

colleagues went beyond the work of D. W. Griffith. He believed that the Germans understood the "real significance of the human spirit." Their films proved that photoplays could be art.³¹

The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1919) brought this message home most clearly to American intellectuals. It premiered in New York in early 1921. Robert Wiene directed the story of an asylum inmate who reconstructed a strange tale of murder. Expressionist artists painted the sets which highlighted the madman's vision of his surroundings. The plot followed the musings of the insane Francis who recounted the activities of the hypnotist Dr. Caligari, and the actions of his pawn, the murderous somnabulist Caseare. As the sleepwalker was dispatched to perform his gruesome tasks, the people of the town speculated who the murderer might be. Eventually, the homicides were traced to Caligari, but the play did not end with his capture. Instead audiences discovered that Francis had recreated only a madman's version of reality. The screenplay was an intellectual tour de force, but a box office failure.³²

The picture's credits told an interesting story. The painter and illustrator Alfred Kubin designed the sets, and Expressionist artists Hermann Warm, Walter Röhrig, and Walter Reimann painted the eerie scenery.

Professional stage actors Werner Krauss and Conrad Veidt played the major roles. These were men of impressive cultural credentials. Caligari became a "yardstick for artistic endeavors," a prototype of the new art film. The picture did not establish a genre; however it did serve as a beacon to the cinema's more devoted admirers. Still, the critics were in a quandary, for they continually had to assure audiences that the movie made sense, that it was not impossible to understand. The weird paintings, the odd camera angles and strange shadows confused rather than impressed film goers.³³

While Wiene's film failed at the box office, E. A. Dupont's Variety (1925) became a popular picture with Americans. The screenplay was interesting and the production technically excellent. It was a story of circus life and the blissful partnership of a husband and wife trapeze team. The marriage dissolved when a famous flyer entered their lives. Emil Jannings, as the husband, followed his rival and killed him after catching him philandering with his wife. Karl Freund's camera work astounded audiences and critics alike. Reviewers praised Dupont and filled their columns with denunciations of Hollywood's "matter of fact technique." Percy Reniers wrote that "it seems to me we are to expect only the foreign studios, and principally Ufa of Berlin, to supply

us with drama of the eye sustained through the six or eight reels prescribed." Variety overcame the limitations of cheap sentimentality. It was the ideal picture to promote in America because it was a commercial and aesthetic success. Critic Larry Barreto contended that the film was the kind of movie that overturned "all the notions of the movie magnates as to what the public wants."³⁴

Seymour Stern, the poison-penned critic of Greenwich Village's Quill, believed that Variety provided an example of the differences between American and German cultures. The film was "like a pyramid of gold in a desert of rubbish," and reflected Germany's serious commitment to cinematic art. He went on to state that the Germans were a somber people whose temperament tended to be metaphysical. Conversely, Americans produced only "moral, sentimental, and materially idealistic" pictures that have "never risen above our philosophy." Stern's articles epitomized the combative attitude toward Hollywood. While other critics shared his contempt for that "fleshy paradise," they were not all that sure whether German movies could provide a workable guide to American film makers.³⁵

Their films were "too gruesome for the American public," and the actresses "not young and beautiful enough to satisfy Americans." Quinn Martin, the regular reviewer for the New York World, wrote that the Germans were

obsessed with producing "grim melodramas." There always seemed to be a "heavy emphasis on the less cheerful aspects of the human enterprise." The periodical Variety, show business' keeper of the books, frequently commented on the unsuitability of German movies for the American market, "If the Germans wouldn't always pick their actors so homely and middle-aged, they might work up some foreign rights." In 1928, C. Hooper Trask, reporting for the New York Times from his post in Berlin, concluded that "I should...class not one of the current releases as of interest for general American consumption."³⁶

For most enthusiasts of the German cinema, the charges were unimportant. One could expect little comprehension from an audience brainwashed by Hollywood. Many critics who praised the Berlin studios did not do so for the use of "Teutonic" themes, but because of the German approach to film making.³⁷ Quinn Martin expressed a popular theory. Although he concluded that most German imports were too gloomy for Americans, he believed that "Out of the meeting between Germany's amazing technical facility and America's steadily progressing ability to place a running story on the screen dramatically will come to final cinema of greater strength and beauty than ever could have been wrought by either studio alone." Results were not long in coming as Victor Schertzinger's

Forgotten Faces (1927) displayed obvious German influences in the areas of staging and camera angles. Robert Sherwood maintained that the success of Variety and other German movies was satisfying because it inspired "those progressive American directors and actors who are ready and able to give the public worthwhile pictures."³⁸ Both nations therefore would enjoy the blessings of cultural co-operation.

America's producers were also interested in the German cinema. They wanted to know why reviewers were impressed with German films and repulsed with American ones. Critics were bothersome, and created adverse publicity for the entire industry. If Americans duplicated some of the essentials of the German style, perhaps critics could be won over. Hollywood was also interested in American imports into Central Europe, and their desire to make money overseas added another dimension to the American response to Weimar's film industry.³⁹

In the immediate post-war period, Hollywood kept abreast of developments in Germany. "Teutonic" films were an important factor in the world film market. The New York Times reported that German imports were sold in America "so cheaply...that already great numbers of our movie actors and actresses are out of employment...." The president of the National Association of the Motion

Picture Industry called for a "tariff wall so high that German producers cannot leap over it."⁴⁰ In short order, the critics began to write of the artistic qualities of Weimar's films. The Berlin studios appeared to be poised to mount a serious threat to America's dominance.

Before 1924, the German movie industry prospered. During the ruinous inflation, the cinema was never more popular. The theatres were full, and exports brought in valuable foreign currency. Production companies sprouted up all over Berlin. But as Weimar recovered, the companies began to falter. The stabilization of the mark helped curtail exports, and many corporations failed. Ufa (Universum Film A. G.), the nation's largest, was on the brink of bankruptcy.⁴¹

It provided a golden opportunity for Americans. Domestic films which did only moderately well in the United States could show a profit through good foreign sales or rentals.⁴² Carl Laemmle (Universal), Adolph Zukor (Paramount), and Marcus Lowe (Metro-Goldwyn) wanted to acquire production facilities in Germany. Zukor and Lowe granted a loan that saved Ufa from financial collapse. Their plan was to control a large share of the German market. In return for loans, they were given exhibition rights in Ufa theatres and the privilege of making films in Germany. American pictures were success-

ful in Central Europe. Chaplin's films were popular with everyone, influencing the avant garde and delighting the common man. The average German also flocked to see the cowboy epics, "vamp" movies, and Keystone Cop comedies. Few American intellectuals made much of this side of the German character, but the moguls knew better. They secured control of Ufa and other theatres to insure the distribution of Paramount and Metro-Goldwyn productions.⁴³

Although Germany's domestic market was important, direct American control of Berlin studios was short lived. The Weimar Republic placed too many limitations on the exhibition of foreign films. In 1924, the government established the Kontingent. The law stated that "for every foreign film released a German film should be produced." Through arrangements similar to the Ufa deal, Hollywood produced quota movies in Germany. Each domestic production gave a company the right to acquire a quota certificate which authorized its holder to import a foreign picture. Many films were made and never released in order to get American movies into Germany. By 1927, the Americans began to tire of the arrangements. Alfred Hugenberg, a prominent conservative newspaper publisher, purchased Ufa and the Americans divested themselves of their investments. The end of direct involvement did not mean the end of American pictures in Germany. Hollywood invented new

ways for getting around the quota system, and invested in individual German productions.⁴⁴

The individual German film rather than the organization of their film industry most interested the moguls. From the infancy of film, intellectuals criticized the artistic quality of American offerings. A relatively small number of German movies helped inflame this already sensitive issue. E. A. Dupont, Fritz Lang, Ernst Lubitsch, and F. W. Murnau directed pictures that were aesthetic successes. In attacking the American film, critics used German imports to expose the weaknesses of the nation's movie business.

Hollywood counterattacked. The magnates used the methods that they knew best. If German directors and actors worked in the United States, Hollywood not Berlin would reap the honors. It seemed absurdly easy: simply hire away Germany's best. The production of "arty" pictures would show that the film industry was interested in culture. If the pictures failed to make money, at least the moguls illustrated their commitment to the intellectual improvement of the cinema. Perhaps critics would grant industry leaders their due, and Hollywood could get on with its real business, "turning a profit." By buying out the Germans, the studio heads reduced the strength of a competitor and silenced critics.

But, the critics held fast. While many intellectuals were excited about the arrival of the Germans, they feared what might become of the "Innocents Abroad." In 1930, Huntly Carter wrote that "the American Film Kings have succeeded in buying up nation after nation and have thus attained the supreme object, the capture of the universal appetite and its conversion to gold- the ideal of their own special interest." American materialism degraded German artists. Those who left their homeland reaped a barren harvest, for, "The great energy, the enterprise, the technical advances that have gone to the making of the German pictures in the past have been sold to or pawned with American magnates who in return have debauched Germany with their picture productions." Carter was bitter. Most intellectuals tended to agree with him.⁴⁵

In response, the "Film Kings" noted that they not the critics made the movies. Benjamin B. Hampton argued that the moguls had contributed a great deal to the development of film. He believed that the Zukors and Mayers had achieved what no others could. The success of a movie was "in the hands of the ticket buyer." American audiences found "entertainment in very few of the foreign made films and the reasons...[were] simply that Europeans have not learned how to make pictures that appeal to the general public, the democracy 'that must be catered' if mass

production is to be successful." Hampton's argument applied to the Germans as well.⁴⁶

"American films have beaten the Germans on their home front," reported the Living Age. But, despite the success of Hollywood films in Germany, many German and American intellectuals still held that the two peoples had different cultural tastes. Foreign directors, they argued, were fundamentally unable to satisfy the artistic appetite of the domestic population. Director G. W. Pabst asserted that Germans could not "make pictures in the American style (even if we wanted to), for the whole of our mentality is different. To make American pictures, we must be American...." Nevertheless, in the period after 1925, many German producers tried to imitate American pictures. Alexander Bakshy wrote that the Germans had succumbed "to the same system of commercial mass output and lowered standards to suit the big public." Although German films of quality continued to appear, the German cinema was on the decline. In 1932, A. Krazanau-Krauz, reporting in the international film journal Close-Up, concluded that, "The interests of the German film people have shifted enormously from the serious subject to what really matters, money."⁴⁷

Commercialism again thwarted the quest for aesthetic cultivation, but the ideal survived. In Germany,

joint projects were continued. The Warner Brothers and G. W. Pabst collaborated on the production of The Three Penny Opera (1931). Variety's review was quite accurate in its evaluation not only of the Kurt Weill adaptation but also of similar projects. The reviewer pointed out that "Many American directors are going to be grateful to Pabst after seeing this picture, for the things they can learn from it. But the brothers may well have to wait a long, long time before they get back any large part of the money it cost them."⁴⁸ In the United States, enough returns were in to make judgments about another facet of German-American co-operation.

In 1930, cinema historian Paul Rotha wrote that "Hollywood took interest in her [German] rival, nourished her rival, but stole her talent."⁴⁹ It was popular to blame Americans for the decline of the German film. The pilfering of German talent did occur, but it was not the primary cause of the troubles that afflicted the Berlin studios. Failures in domestic and foreign markets led to the loss of actors and directors. The departures were not the cause of the decline but merely a symptom. The image, however, persisted.

As the German film industry fell on hard times, many leading actors began to look elsewhere for work. For a period of three or four years, it became fashionable

for major American studios to employ Germans. All parties benefited, at least initially. The lure of American gold was appealing enough, but there were other considerations. The working conditions appeared ideal, and American moguls seemed highly impressed with the actors' previous critical triumphs. While Hollywood films were often lampooned, they were still the most popular in the world. The opportunity for international exposure was a powerful inducement. Oscar Henning, an interviewer for the New York Herald Tribune, reported that Emil Jannings and Conrad Veidt were thrilled with the prospect of a "vast new audience that ...would see them on the screen for the first time."⁵⁰

Many Central European directors and producers also found it difficult to reject a call from Hollywood. Before the Atlantic voyage, the plaudits of the critics and the dollars of the moguls helped remove lingering doubts about leaving the Fatherland. Jim Tully, Vanity Fair's film editor, remarked that "The superiority of the German film is accepted in America as another example of the technical genius of the Teutons." The directors, in particular, were considered the bearers of that genius. But Lothar Mendes, the German born director, told Tully that the American technical apparatus was far better than anything in Germany. Mendes argued that the Americans were the masters of the machine age, and that foreigners

would learn a great deal in the United States. He did believe, however, that the Germans could impart special knowledge gained through experience.⁵¹ Americans only slowly realized the superiority of their own technical resources. They still sought out the Germans who were considered better. Americans tended to ignore the fact that individual German directors had unique talents. Instead, they expected Germans to exhibit stereotypical traits. Germans were somehow inherently technically oriented.

Among the first actors to answer the call to America was Pola Negri. In 1925 and 1926, a second wave arrived, including Conrad Veidt, Emil Jannings, and Lya de Putti. The foreign contingent represented some of the most successful "stars" of the German screen. Many of the performers were not German, but they were considered part of the "German Invasion" if they had made their reputations on the German screen. Their talents were apparent. Most had theatrical experience, and a few managed to continue their work on the stage while making movies.⁵²

Pola Negri became famous for her performances in the German films Passion (1919) and Gypsy Blood (1920). Artistically, her credentials were impeccable. Before working in the two Lubitsch pictures, she had acted on the stage for Max Reinhardt. Negri was touted as a

performer who realized the promise of screen acting. A voluptuous actress, she was type-cast in America as a "vamp," a second generation Theda Bara.⁵³ By mid-decade, critics charged that Hollywood had turned Pola Negri into a one dimensional character. Robert Sherwood claimed that she was the victim of a series of poor productions. Only occasionally was she able to rise above the inane screenplays she was given. Jim Tully wrote that Negri "could have been a Bernhardt." Unfortunately, she ended up one of the "greatest women ever stranded on the treacherous shores of Hollywood." For her the change in environments was disastrous. The training that had made her an accomplished actress was wasted. Her career lasted well beyond the silent era, but later triumphs were always tempered with a touch of sadness for what might have been.⁵⁴

While most German actors found it professionally perilous in California, Emil Jannings rose above the pitfalls of Hollywood life. Before 1926, Jannings refused offers from America. Many critics were relieved, for as Percy Reniers concluded, "In the light of the dissolution of Pola Negri's talent from the moment she set foot in Hollywood, it seemed extraordinarily good news that her former co-actor was to remain at home." The heavy set German seemed ill suited for the American screen. He did

not fit the mold of the handsome leading man. He was a "character actor," but one who possessed a powerful screen presence. When Jannings finally accepted an American offer, film enthusiasts feared the worst. They were pleasantly surprised to learn that he was "so good that he survived the Hollywood transplant."⁵⁵

Jannings was the most well known and critically acclaimed German actor in America.⁵⁶ Between 1919 and 1926, he became, with Chaplin, a favorite of audiences all over the world. Passion (1919), The Last Laugh (1924), and Variety (1925) were his major accomplishments. Throughout his film career, he continued to work in the theatre, which "proved" his devotion to the actor's craft. Jannings was an expressive actor, and the camera seemed to highlight his emotive gifts. His stage training was an obvious asset, and enthusiastic critics noted that Jannings was capable of riveting an audience's attention even with his back turned to the audience, as he did in the final scenes of Variety. In 1926, he signed a three year contract with Jesse Lasky's Famous Players, and, from the beginning, made it clear that he would not accept roles that failed to meet his artistic standards. Jannings appeared to be "just the man to bring something new and telling to our rather limited movie art."⁵⁷

He did not disappoint his admirers. In his first

two films, The Way of All Flesh (1927) and The Last Command (1928), he proved that America had not corrupted him. The critical notices were excellent and convinced most doubters of Jannings' ability to function in Hollywood. He was "an American film star." Richard Watts, Jr. reported that his role in The Way of All Flesh was "final proof that he is so far ahead of all other cinema actors that any comparsion is ridiculous." Toward the end of his American sojourn, he made the Patriot (1928) with Ernst Lubitsch which led A. M. Sherwood, Jr. to claim that all other actors "must bow the knee to Jannings."⁵⁸ For his performances in The Way of All Flesh and The Last Command, Jannings won the first Academy Award given to the best actor.

He achieved what many believed impossible. He lived and worked in Hollywood while maintaining his artistic integrity. How had he done it? One theory held that Jannings remained isolated, socializing only with other members of California's German community. In the interviews he granted, he always voiced his admiration for America, but in light of his life style, critics questioned whether he would remain on the west coast. They reasoned that he needed the cultural nourishment of his homeland.⁵⁹

Brilliant as it was, Jannings' career in the United States did not last long. American technology developed

talking pictures, which convinced Jannings to return to Germany. He had always been diffident about his English. While he had maintained his professional reputation, he was not totally comfortable in Los Angeles. The great German actor refused to speak English except when necessary, and he was close only to those who shared his native tongue. There were also other considerations. In America he had no outlet for his stage skills. There were also signs that Jannings' film acting was beginning to become tedious. More and more, reviewers commented on "his weakness for unrestraint" and his exaggerated screen gestures. In his first sound film, The Blue Angel (1930), he overcame many of the objections. Some of his deliberate mannerisms worked well when attuned to screen dialogue. In 1930, Richard Dana Skinner concluded that it was "good to know" that Emil Jannings could be counted "among the few great artists of the talking screen."⁶⁰

His early work enabled him to remain a respected figure until after he became involved in making pictures in the Third Reich.⁶¹ After The Blue Angel, he and Marlene Dietrich were headed in opposite directions. She was the young actress with potential, and he was a man who seemed to know how to depart gracefully. Jannings' personal timing, it seemed, was as good as it had been in many of his pictures.

While critics admired the work of Jannings and other German actors, most theorized that the director was the most important single individual in film making. The director held all of the threads of production in his hands. His role was analogous to the stage regisseur's. Ideally he was the first among equals in an artistic community, artists dedicated to making films of quality. Technician, master story teller, and grand co-ordinator, the director was responsible for the final product. The successful ones had to have all of these talents. In a correctly cast film, the director's dramatic horizons seemed virtually limitless.

Ernst Lubitsch and Emil Jannings worked together on many projects. The last was The Patriot (1928). In many ways, their careers paralleled one another, but it was Lubitsch who remained at the top of his profession throughout his life. He did so because he adjusted to success in the United States. Born in Berlin in 1892, Lubitsch studied with Reinhardt and rose from bit player in Berlin to director. His American achievements were primarily in the area of film comedy. Neither gloomy nor dark, his pictures sparkled with an urbane sophistication. They were invariably full of humor, irony, and drama. It was called "the Lubitsch touch." With it, he conquered Hollywood and triumphed when most Germans

failed. Lubitsch made popular pictures.⁶²

In 1922, Mary Pickford invited Lubitsch to direct her in a motion picture. He arrived in October, 1922, and Rosita was released the following year. Lubitsch became a favorite of the critics. He proved the correctness of the contention that the ultimate value of a film depended upon its director. The old Berlin actor caused quite a stir. He was an interesting blend of "terrible hun" and middle European charmer. Studio publicity agents enthusiastically recounted his antics on the movie set, and serious critics found his films fascinating.⁶³

Lubitsch was as interested in the United States as the critics were in his films. Temperamentally, he was different from Jannings and most of the other Germans. He did not cling to the Old World but instead invested time and effort in the study of the new. The hectic American life style intrigued him. The great German director was the perfect medium for the international exchange of art. On an early visit to New York, he acknowledged the work of D. W. Griffith and reported that the German people loved American movies. He told an interviewer that in Germany there was an intense desire "to learn your customs and see what the United States was like."⁶⁴ Later, film experts marveled at his ability to depict American life styles.

The director of Passion moved quickly into the top rank of American film makers. After The Marriage Circle (1924), a satirical spoof of the rich and their marital relationships, Lubitsch enjoyed a string of successes. He became known as "the German gentleman who made American comedies grow-up in spite of themselves." John S. Cohen, the leading reviewer for the New York Evening Sun, wrote that "The influence of the Lubitsch comedies has been good-...everybody's going Lubitsch now from Eddie Sutherland to scores of Warner Brothers directors." He was recognized as one of the best directors in the world.⁶⁵

But Lubitsch was not without his critics, especially those who feared the "Europeanization" of American films. One was Matthew Josephson who was an editor for Broom and a contributor to Motion Picture Classic. He deplored Lubitsch's cinematic compositions primarily because of their studied manipulation of characters and the static settings. He claimed that Lubitsch did not understand the "restless and animated" spirit of the nation. The German concentrated on the rich whose lives were hardly indicative of what America was really like.⁶⁶ D. W. Griffith held similar views. He told the New York Times that American film makers "must rely more on life and less on plot."⁶⁷ To critics of like mind, Lubitsch seemed woefully out of step.

The Germans also turned away from the nightmarish world of Caligari. Their best post-1924 work portrayed reality; in some ways, it was a return to Naturalism. Many Germans did not try to imitate American movies. In the second stage of Weimar's film development, directors moved away from Expressionism and on to a new kind of objectivity or "sobriety" (Neue Sachlichkeit). The New Objectivity, already evident in painting and drama, first reached American shores through the film medium. Of the films in the new genre, none made a greater impact in the United States than F. W. Murnau's The Last Laugh (1924).

Murnau used the full resources of the screen. The most fascinating aspect of the film was its universal appeal within the critical and professional community. Film and political journals, humor magazines, and newspapers were all anxious to praise the efforts of the young German director. Robert Benchley thought that The Last Laugh made "almost any play seem like the markings on a Cro-Magnon wall." It made him "feel that in a hundred years there will be nothing but movies, and that the spoken drama will occupy the place that the Punch and Judy show now holds."⁶⁸ Hollywood director Monta Bell wrote that the film "demonstrated as no other picture has demonstrated, the true power of the movie camera to speak for itself." Many observers believed that Murnau

was without peer. John S. Cohen advised that "Every director in the world, with absolutely no exception, should study with F. W. Murnau, the greatest brain in the motion picture industry." Hollywood wasted little time in bidding for his services.⁶⁹

In July of 1926, William Fox brought Murnau to the United States. Hollywood cranked up the publicity mills to a fever pitch. Fox introduced his new employee as the "German genius" who came to America to produce a film that "would be infinitely cultured, symbolic, in short completely European." Murnau had plenty of money to make the kind of picture he wanted. Hollywood spared no expense in order to produce art. Murnau said "I accepted the offer from Hollywood because I think one can always learn and because America gives me new opportunities to develop my artistic aims."⁷⁰

The result was Sunrise (1927). Based on Hermann Sudermann's short story "The Journey to Tilsit," the film's plot involved an illicit love affair and a husband's plot to kill his wife. In some respects it resembled Theodore Dreiser's An American Tragedy but with many deviations in story line. Although most reviewers were impressed, the critical unanimity which greeted The Last Laugh was not evident in the reception of Sunrise. Robert Sherwood considered it the "most important picture in the history

of the movies," and the New York American reported that the picture was already a classic.⁷¹ Representing the minority opinion, Adolph C. Glassgold argued that Sunrise was an example of "too much resourcefulness [leading] to disaster." John S. Cohen found it a bore. Nevertheless, Hollywood was proud of itself. Murnau's picture and William Wellman's Wings (1927) were Academy Award winners as Best Motion Pictures of the Year. Though the film was heavily promoted, Fox did not fully realize his dream. He produced an "arty film," but one whose beauty and symbolism failed to touch the American public.⁷²

Unlike Lubitsch, Murnau did not adapt well to life in California. While the critics remained largely supportive, the audiences stayed at home. His German and American pictures were financial failures. One Philadelphia exhibitor complained that "The Last Laugh was on him for having rented the picture." Sunrise was no different. Murnau resented Fox's interference in the production and editing of The Four Devils (1928) and The City Girl (1929) [released under another director as Our Daily Bread]. The "German genius" bought his contract and escaped to the South Seas where he filmed his last picture Tabu (1931). Using his own funds, he once again made a picture without interference, but Tabu took all the money he had. Almost mercifully, he died before it

was shown. Paramount paid the existing debts and the film was finally released, but reviews were mixed.⁷³

Murnau never escaped the shadow of The Last Laugh. In a retrospective of his career, Alexander Bakshy concluded that Tabu was "cheaply melodramatic" and none of Murnau's American efforts came "anywhere within measurable distance of the early masterpiece."⁷⁴ For Murnau, an American career proved fatal not only in a physical sense but also in an artistic one. When forced to defend himself against the film industry, his work suffered. It seemed that the critics' warnings about Hollywood were distressingly true in the case of Murnau who Jannings called the "most German" of all cinema personalities.⁷⁵

Before the Great Depression, the Berlin studios floundered. For those Germans who wished to see their favorite screen personalities, American movies featured Emil Jannings, Conrad Veidt, and Pola Negri. Each year the German share of the movie market decreased. American movies and those in the American fashion became the standard fare. Weimar's cultural watchdogs were as concerned with salacious photoplays as their American counterparts. In Berlin, social clubs sprang up all over the city in order "to offer the youngsters various healthy alternatives to the movies."⁷⁶ Moving pictures failed to

supply wholesome entertainment.

The decline of the German film continued, though producers made one last effort to recapture the former commercial and artistic glory. A new breed of German film appeared in the United States. In 1931, John S. Cohen noted that "No week passes these days without a German musical comedy." There were claims that the Berlin studios finally had a commercial foothold in the New World. Only a few serious films such as M (1931) and Mädchen in Uniform (1932) impressed the critics. The unfathomable Germans had become humorous, but in the "Teutonic" manner.⁷⁷

Waltz Dream (1925) was an early indication that German musical comedy of operetta worked in America.⁷⁸ It was one of a handful of German films to make money in New York. In addition, to the well-known gloomy side of the German character, Americans became familiar with the beer guzzling Gemütlichkeit of the university and Hofbräuhaus. The advent of sound gave the Germans the opportunity to fill theatres with the sound of Viennese waltzes and the sonorities of Europe's great voices. "Talkies from Germany" were a hit. In a review of Liebeswaltzer (1930), the Living Age reported that, "With Russian technique influencing them on one side and American markets tempting them on the other, the

talkie producers in Germany are in a position to combine the artistic and the profitable." Variety printed an apt description of the German operetta, "Much music, and most of it nice- plenty of shouting and beer drinking, much eating, more beer drinking, a pretty heroine, a handsome leading man, a silly story, and a considerable number of well cast character parts."⁷⁹ It seemed that the American influence far outweighed the Russian.

The Berlin studios had gone full circle. Starting with costume epics and art films, they finished with musicals employing elaborate costumes and Hollywood formulas. Ironically, the light hearted comedies owed much of their inspiration to Ernst Lubitsch.⁸⁰ The initial appearance of the operettas stirred a good deal of interest, but their appeal to Americans wore thin quickly.

At the same time German musical farces began to fade from the American scene, the political situation in Germany became tense. In the fall of 1932, John Bryher wrote from Berlin that the city "is too unsettled, too fearful of the coming winter to care much for the cinema."⁸¹ After Hitler became Chancellor, German film makers were forced to adopt a new, politically correct viewpoint. The Führer envisioned a new nationalist cinema to serve the state. Fritz Lang was his first choice for overseer of the new Reich's film industry. In an interview in

April, 1933, Joseph Goebbels told Lang that Hitler wanted him to "make national socialist film(s)...." Lang left Germany the same day as the interview. After a short stay in France where he shot Lilion (1933), he sought a directing job in a country that he had sworn he would never work in.⁸²

Fritz Lang made movies in the United States for twenty years. His career began inauspiciously. The creator of Metropolis (1926) discovered that life in Hollywood was unlike anything he encountered in Europe. The American film industry was technologically far ahead of Europe's, and the position of the director much different. In the United States, he was not an independent artist, but simply an employee who "no longer commanded unlimited money and manpower." His time on the set was severely restricted. Working days followed a strict regimen. His idea of creating a repertory production staff was almost an impossibility.⁸³

Hollywood had not revised its image of German directors. Lang probably fortified the image. He was the supreme technician, a perfectionist, and a difficult man to work with. He managed to stay in America because of his devotion to hard work and a willingness to immerse himself in the life styles of America. During the first year, Lang refused to speak German and spent most of his

time reading newspapers and familiarizing himself with American slang. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer signed him for only a one year contract, but hard work, professionalism, and a bit of luck permitted him to make pictures well into the fifties. Until the end, he remained a maverick who jumped from one studio to another.

Even after all of Hollywood's failures with German artists, they hired Fritz Lang. Although the German film was ascendent for only a short period of time, its reputation endured. Whatever their failures in America, the Germans retained a cultural mystique. Because they were Europeans, there was an authenticity to their art. As Europeans, they understood culture but found it difficult to transfer their knowledge to Americans, especially the film moguls. American intellectuals wanted a national appreciation for culture, but they discovered that American values too often clashed with their cultural vision. In the spring of 1931, Alexander Bakshy wrote that "the old German excellence" was gone and "the hopes of a renaissance of the film in Germany and under German stimulus in Hollywood were doomed to early disappointment."⁸⁴

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER V

¹Terry Ramsaye, A Million and One Nights (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1926), 3. In 1915, Terry Ramsaye joined the Mutual Film Corporation in New York and produced a few short Chaplin comedies. He devoted the majority of his life to writing about the film industry. His book was a continuation of a series of articles for Photoplay Magazine. A Million and One Nights is considered the first significant history of the motion picture.

²Hugo von Hofmannstahl, "Substitute for Dreams," Drama, 13 (April, 1923), 247.

³In the early years the film companies were located in the east. Edison's studios were in New Jersey and Vitagraph's in Brooklyn, New York. Before 1914, Essanay's Chicago studio was one of the few located in the west. After the Armistice, California became the center for film production. See Lewis Jacobs, The Rise of the American Film (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1939), 85-86; Edward Wagenknecht, Movies in the Age of Innocence (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 41-43; Keeneth Macgowan, Behind the Screen: The History of the Motion

Picture (New York: Delacorte Press, 1965), 138-39, 163-66, 259; and Ramsaye, A Million and One Nights, 443-44.

⁴Myron Osborn Lounsbury, The Origins of American Film Criticism, 1909-1939 (New York: Arno Press, 1973), xvi-xix. The work is a reprint of Lounsbury's 1966 University of Pennsylvania dissertation.

⁵Louis Reeves Harrison, "How to Improve the Business," Moving Picture World, 9 (December 24, 1910), 21.

⁶These critics were singled out in Stanley Kaufmann, ed., American Film Criticism: From the Beginning to Citizen Kane, Reviews of Significant Films at the Time They First Appeared (New York: Liveright, 1972), 46. All of the articles from Kaufmann's compilation of reviews are complete articles without deletions. See also Harrison's "The Art of Criticism," Moving Picture World, 17 (January 31, 1914), and Gilbert Seldes, "Editorial," Dial, 66 (July 12, 1919), in Kaufmann, American Film Criticism, 72-73, 109-10. On Harrison see Lounsbury, Origins of American Film Criticism, 9-12.

⁷In 1926, Wilfred Beaton began publication of Film Spectator in Los Angeles. It was an attempt to escape the shadow of the east and establish a professional film journal in the nation's film capital. Kaufmann, American Film Criticism, 188.

⁸Macgowan, Behind the Screen, 6.

⁹Macgowan, Behind the Screen, 219.

¹⁰Kaufmann, American Film Criticism, 193.

¹¹Evelyn Gerstein, "Metropolis," Nation, 124 (March 23, 1927), 323. Also in Kaufmann, American Film Criticism, 186. Gerstein was a frequent contributor to Nation and New Republic throughout the twenties. In addition to Gerstein, see "The Movie Finger Writes," New York Times, 2 May 1919.

¹²D. W. Griffth was the film maker most discussed in this context, and Europeans often noted a debt of gratitude to him. In addition to the works already cited on early American film, there are dozens of books on the infancy of film. Edward Wagenknecht lists the most important in Movies in the Age of Innocence, 31-32. See also Robert Sklar, Movie-Made America (New York: Random House, 1975), 3-67; and Anthony Slide, Early American Cinema (Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, 1970).

¹³Hugo Münsterberg, The Photoplay: A Psychological Study (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1916), 228; and Lounsbury, Origins of American Film Criticism, 59.

¹⁵Robert Sherwood, "Variety," Life, 88 (July 8, 1926), 26; Margaret Marshall, "Importations," Nation, 134 (May 25, 1932), 607.

¹⁶H. H. Wollenberg, Fifty Years of German Cinema (London: The Falcon Press, 1948), 18. Wollenberg was

the editor of the Berlin cinema periodical Lichtbühne from 1920 to 1933. He noted that the German public "was offered an unending stream of frequently blatantly sentimental light entertainment films." See also Siegfried Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler, A Psychological History of the German Film (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), 4-6.

¹⁷A few critics did mention the popularity of American films in Germany and noted the poor productions which were made in some of the Berlin studios. See below.

¹⁸Ramsaye, A Million and One Nights, 28.

¹⁹Alexander Bakshy, "The Future of the Movies," Nation, 127 (October 10, 1928), 360; "Morals and the Movies," Nation, 112 (April 20, 1920), 581; J. K. H., "The Motion Picture," Theatre Arts Monthly, 13 (September, 1929), 643.

²⁰Tamara Lane, What's Wrong with the Movies (Los Angeles: Waverly Co., 1923); Donald Young, "Social Standards and the Motion Picture," Annals of the Academy of Political Science (November, 1926), 149. Hereafter cited as AAPS. Stephen B. Harmon of the University of Tennessee argued that even if a movie were only "ten per cent salacious" it would downgrade society, in "The Relation of the Motion Picture to Changing Moral Standards,"

AAPS, 152.

²¹Harmon, "The Relation of the Motion Picture to Changing Moral Standards," AAPS, 151-57.

²²See Claire Price, "Do Our Movies Libel Us Abroad," New York Times, 6 January 1924, and New York Times, 11 March 1928.

²³John A. Thomas, "Der Andere," National Board of Review Magazine, 7 (February, 1932), 15. Hereafter cited as NBRM. The Board was a private organization with three hundred reviewers. For a description of their purposes and goals, see Wilton A. Barrett, "The Work of the National Board of Review," AAPS, 175-86. A contemporary rating of the various film journals provided by Lincoln Kerstein, "Films: Film Magazines," Arts Weekly, 1 (May 7, 1932), 198-99, 201-02.

²⁴Leo Korber, "Invited Invaders," Museum of Modern Art Director Files, E. A. Dupont. Many of the citations in the director and actor files are not identified. When possible, the pertinent information appears in the footnote. Hereafter cited as MMA, DF.

²⁵Gerald Mast, A Short History of the Movies (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1976), 119.

²⁶Sklar, Movie Made America, v.

²⁷Percy Reniers, "When the Gods Arrive," Independent, 116 (January 30, 1926), 136. Lewis Jacobs presents a more

positive view in The Rise of the American Film, 216-17.

²⁸Many intellectuals believed that the monetary aspects of movie making was what made American films suspect. Robert Sklar maintains that the uniqueness of the movie was that it was "art for money." Sklar, Movie Made America, 86-88.

²⁹"Martin Luther," NBRM, 3 (October, 1928), 4; Adolph C. Glassgold, "Domestic Amateurs and Foreign Professionals," Arts, 15 (March, 1929), 204.

³⁰Alfred Kuttner, "The Cabinet of Dr. Calagari," Exceptional Photoplays, 1 (March, 1921), 3; also cited in Lounsbury, A History of American Film Criticism, 93; Robert Sherwood, ed., The Best Motion Pictures of 1922-1923, Also Who's Who in the Movies and the Yearbook of the American Screen (Boston: Small, Maynard, & Co., 1923), 67.

³¹"Passion," Exceptional Photoplays, 1 (November, 1920), 3; and Alfred Kuttner, "The Foreign 'Invasion,'" Exceptional Photoplays, 1 (November, 1921), 2.

³²Kracauer, From Caligari to Hilter, 61-72. Kracauer claimed that the original intent of Carl Mayer's screenplay was changed, and the indictment against German authoritarianism defused. A more dispassionate account appears in Lotte Eisner, The Haunted Screen: Expressionism in the German Cinema and the Influence of Max Reinhardt (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969).

³³Typical contemporary responses to the film are in "A Cubist Film That Marks an Epoch in the Movie, 'The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari,'" Current Opinion, 70 (June, 1921), 786-87.

³⁴Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler, 126; Percy Reniers, "Made in Germany," Independent, 117 (July 24, 1926), 105; Larry Baretto, "Variety," Bookman, 64 (September, 1926), 86.

³⁵Lounsbury, Origins of American Film Criticism, 163, 161.

³⁶"Don't Fear German Films," New York Times, 29 May 1921; Quinn Martin's comments appear in Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, Vol. II, [The Street]; New York Herald Tribune, 10 February 1931; Variety clipping in Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, Vol. II, [The Street]; New York Times, 15 January 1928.

³⁷Both Europeans and Americans believed that the cinema could help explain their respective cultures. The domination of American films proved disconcerting to intellectuals on both sides of the Atlantic. See below.

³⁸Quinn Martin, "German Influences," in Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, Vol. I; Robert Sherwood, "Variety, Part II," Life, 88 (July 22, 1926), 25; Jacobs, The Rise of the American Film, 325, 388-89.

³⁹U.S., Foreign and Domestic Commerce Bureau, The

Market for Motion Pictures in Central Europe, Italy, and Spain, by George R. Canty, Trade Information Bulletin No. 542 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1927).

⁴⁰New York Times, 16 May 1920; and New York Times, 20 April 1921.

⁴¹Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler, 132.

⁴²Benjamin B. Hampton, History of the American Film Industry to 1931 (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1970), 349, 357. The Dover edition is an "unabridged and slightly corrected" reprint of Hampton's A History of the Movies originally published in 1931. See also Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler, 134-36 and U.S., Foreign and Domestic Commerce Bureau, The European Motion Picture Industry in 1928, by George R. Canty, Trade Information Bulletin No. 617 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1928).

⁴³Calvin W. Brown was the head of the Motion Picture Trade Association. Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, Vol. II; C. V. North, "Our Foreign Trade in Motion Pictures," AAAPS, 100-08; Helena Huntington Smith, "The Big Boy of Hollywood," Outlook, 150 (September 19, 1928), 806. The decline in the German film is dated from 1924 according to Paul Rotha. He divides the pre-Hitler period into three parts. "Firstly, the theatrical costume picture; secondly, the big middle period of the studio art films; and thirdly,

the decline of the German film in order to fall into line with the American 'picture sense' output." Paul Rotha, The Film Till Now (London: Jonathan Cape, 1930), 177-78; and Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler, 4.

⁴⁴New York Times, 11 November 1925; Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler, 132-33. See also "Down with American Films," Review of Reviews, 81 (April, 1930), 116-17.

⁴⁵Huntly Carter, The New Spirit in the Cinema (New York: Arno Press, 1970), 237, 252. This edition is an exact reprint of the 1931 original.

⁴⁶Hampton, History of the American Film Industry, 359.

⁴⁷"German-American Films," Living Age, 333 (October 1, 1927), 647; on Metro-Goldwyn's approach see "Metro-Goldwyn Films to Be Seen in Europe," New York Times, 17 July 1925. Their plan was to make movies with a "Continental atmosphere." Alexander Bakshy, "German Invasion," Nation, 132 (May 13, 1931), 538; A. Kraznau-Krauz, "The German Film Season, 1932-33," Close-Up, 9 (September, 1932), 186.

⁴⁸Variety, 20 May 1931.

⁴⁹Rotha, The Film Till Now, 253; Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler, 135.

⁵⁰Oscar Henning, "Innocents Abroad," Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, II, 1927.

⁵¹Jim Tully, "Metropolis," Vanity Fare, 26 (November, 1926), 78. For the influence of American technology

in Germany, see John Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period: The New Sobriety, 1917-1933 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 87-89.

⁵²Kracauer provides a representative list of performers in From Caligari to Hitler, 135. Robert Sherwood evaluated their progress in "What the Foreign Invasion Has Accomplished and Failed to Accomplish," Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, I, 1927. Pola Negri was from Poland, but she was considered a German actress. Although Greta Garbo was Swedish, her first important roles were in German movies, e.g., The Joyless Street (1925). Some critics believed that her experience in Germany was vital to her development. Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler, 167-68.

⁵³The "vamp" was a woman who existed "only for passion, seduction and pure love." Usually set in exotic surroundings, the vamp movies had a calculated appeal which exhibited the worst habits of Hollywood. Robert Sherwood categorized them as "boob bait." Sherwood, "The Silent Drama," Life, 82 (August 16, 1923), 24; in Lounsbury, Origins of American Film Criticism, 121. See also Gilbert Seldes, "Sugar and Spice and Not So Nice," Esquire, 2 (March, 1934), in Kaufmann, American Film Criticism, 294-98.

⁵⁴Robert Sherwood, "What the Foreign Invasion Has Accomplished and Failed to Accomplish," Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, I, 1927; Jim Tully, "Interview: Pola Negri,"

Vanity Fair, 26 (August, 1926), 55.

⁵⁵Percy Reniers, "Mostly Jannings," Independent, 119 (July 30, 1927), 114.

⁵⁶Among the avant garde in Germany, actors like Jannings or directors like Pabst and Lang were hacks of the commercial screen. They considered their film artificial and shallow. Hans Richter, an avant garde film producer and director, sought salvation in the creation of film societies which would eventually turn the masses back to the "possibilities" of the cinema. America also had its film societies with much the same goals, but there was a difference. Most American intellectuals considered many "German commercial" products as primary example of art films. This was the case until Russian films began to appear in the late twenties, but German films still maintained their standing because of earlier successes. On German intellectual attitudes toward their own film industry, see Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 139-48.

⁵⁷Percy Reniers, "Mostly Jannings," Independent, 116 (July 30, 1927), 114; New York Times, 29 October 1926; Helena Huntington Smith, "The Big Boy of Hollywood," Outlook, 150 (September 19, 1928), 806; "A German Conquest," Review of Reviews, 78 (November, 1928), 545.

⁵⁸Adolph C. Glassgold was one who refused to

follow the crowd. He thought that Jannings' performance was simply a conglomeration of his roles in Variety, Peter the Great, and The Last Laugh, and "Unlike the foreign pictures, The Way of All Flesh affords very little pleasure for those who seek purely visual values in addition to an entertaining story." Glassgold, "The Americanization of Emil Jannings," Arts, 12 (August, 1927), 114. Richard Watts, Jr. in "Jannings Now an American Film Star," Literary Digest, 94 (July 23, 1927), 22; A. M. Sherwood, Jr., "The Movies," Outlook, 150 (September 5, 1928), 744.

⁵⁹Helena Huntington Smith, "The Big Boy of Hollywood," Outlook, 150 (September 19, 1928), 814.

⁶⁰On Jannings' problems with English, see "The Blue Angel," NBRM, 6 (January, 1931), 3. "Tartuffe, The Hypocrite," NBRM, 3 (May, 1928), 5-6; Richard Dana Skinner, "Mädchen in Uniform," Commonweal, 17 (December 31, 1931), 216; and Eisner, The Haunted Screen, 80-81, comment on his acting technique.

⁶¹David Stewert Hull covers Jannings' career in the thirties in Film in the Third Reich: A Study of the German Cinema (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969).

⁶²"The Lubitsch touch" defies easy definition. One contemporary journalist wrote that "The Lubitsch touch has a subtle quality of irony, pathos, bitterness, and

laughter. It is more often sarcasm, felt but not seen, amid a pseudo artistry (which Lubitsch detests), born out of an impossible situation which might easily degrade a hero, or disqualify a genius," in Ernst Lubitsch, MMA, Film Files. A modern perspective is in Herman G. Weinberg, The Lubitsch Touch: A Critical Study (New York: E. P. Dutton, Inc., 1968).

⁶³"Mr. and Mrs. Lubitsch," Motion Picture Magazine, 30 (January, 1926), 34; Weinberg, The Lubitsch Touch, 48-49.

⁶⁴New York Times, 22 October 1922.

⁶⁵"Mr. and Mrs. Lubitsch," Motion Picture Magazine, 30 (January, 1926), 34; Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, I, 1925. Eddie Sutherland was an American film director, What a Night (1928), Mississippi (1935). Lubitsch was on the list of best film directors of 1926-1927. Two other Germans, E. A. Dupont and F. W. Murnau were also honored. Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, II, 1927. See also Jacobs, The Rise of American Film, 356-61.

⁶⁶Lounsbury, Origins of American Film Criticism, 186-87. Josephson was in the minority. Every Lubitsch film was not a success, but his technique, dedication to detail, and ability to depict the human condition was always evident in his work. He was active, competitive, and optimistic about new challenges. It was his adaptability which made him a success in America.

⁶⁷New York Times, 16 November 1924.

⁶⁸The Last Laugh was the story of an old hotel porter whose source of pride was his job and the uniform that went with it. With age, the porter (Emil Jannings) no longer was capable of performing his duties. Neighbors and family rejected him after he was demoted to wash room attendant. Audiences witnessed the porter's attempt to keep his demotion a secret and the final discovery of his ruse by his loved ones. Murnau and his cameraman Karl Freund depicted his plight realistically and in minute detail. The picture had a double ending with the porter falling heir to a fortune. In effect, the second finale was a cinematic jeer directed at the Hollywood formula happy ending. Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler, 100-01.

⁶⁹Robert Benchley, "The Last Laugh," Life, 85 (March 5, 1925), 18; Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, "The Last Laugh," I, 1925; Film Scrapbook, "Faust," I, 1926. For his part, Murnau was not overly self indulgent. He viewed it as "My own contribution to the field of arty films," an attitude that may have made him attractive to Hollywood moguls. Ibid. See also "The Last Laugh," Theatre Arts Monthly, 9 (April, 1925), 218-19, and Lewis Jacobs, The Rise of the American Film, 309-10.

⁷⁰Lotte Eisner, Murnau (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), 167; Weinberg, Film

Scrapbook, I, 1927.

⁷¹Eisner, Murnau, 186.

⁷²Adolph C. Glassgold, "Motion Pictures: Sunrise," Arts, 12 (November, 1927), 282-83; and Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, II, 1927. Lotte Eisner claims that Sunrise was not particularly well known, but her biography, originally printed in French in 1964, may have reintroduced the critics to the film. A survey in the film journal Sight and Sound in 1967 picked it as one of the ten best films of all time. Sklar, Movie Made America, 141.

⁷³"South Sea Tragedy Is Murnau's Epitaph," Literary Digest, 109 (April 4, 1931), 37-38; and Kenneth White, "Film Chronicle: Murnau," Hound and Horn, 4 (July-September, 1931), 581-84. For the details of Murnau's death see Eisner, Murnau, 221-26.

⁷⁴Alexander Bakshy, "Too Much Halo," Nation, 132 (April, 1931), 430.

⁷⁵Jannings statement quoted in Eisner, Murnau, 226.

⁷⁶"Club Life in Berlin," Living Age, 333 (July 15, 1927), 177.

⁷⁷MMA, Film Files, Acht Tage Gluck. For reviews of M and Mädchen in Uniform, see New York Times, 3 April 1933; and Alexander Bakshy, "Mädchen in Uniform," Nation, 135 (October 12, 1932), 338.

⁷⁸"Talkies in Germany," Living Age, 338 (May 1,

1930), 291; Variety, 6 May 1931.

⁷⁹Weinberg, The Lubitsch Touch, 58. One other film genre appeared in the late twenties. It was the German "Mountain film." Typically, the movies relied on magnificent scenery and the beauty and grandeur of the Alps. Story lines were usually juvenile. Siegfried Kracauer argued that the "mountain pictures" were another indication of Germany's pro-Nazi tendencies during the pre-Hitler period. Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler. Alexander Bakshy, "The Grafted Narrative," Nation, 131 (October 15, 1930), 424. See also "The White Hell of Piz Palu," Close-Up, 5 (December, 1929), 543-45.

⁸⁰See Weinberg, The Lubitsch Touch.

⁸¹John Bryher, "The German Film Season of 1932-1933," Close-Up, 9 (September, 1932), 184.

⁸²Fritz Lang's reservations about America are best revealed in a statement he made to an interviewer in 1927, "Americans left to themselves for a few years, would destroy the greatest art in the world." This rather nasty observation was made in reference to the editing of his film Metropolis (1927) in America. Weinberg, Film Scrapbook, I, 1927. Metropolis is considered one of the prototypical cinematic statements on the machine age. One might also wonder if Lang's coming to Hollywood might have been his attempt to keep the Americans from destroying

great art or, at least, trying to make some of his own.
See also Lotte H. Eisner, Fritz Lang (New York: Oxford
University Press), 14-15, 131.

⁸³Eisner, Lang, 367-68.

⁸⁴Alexander Bakshy, "German Invasion," Nation,
132 (May 13, 1931), 538.

"In the throes of a severe case of depression, I miss the old Berlin of the Republic, the care-free, emancipated, civilized air, the snubnosed young women with short-bobbed hair and the young men with either cropped or long hair- it made no difference- who sat up all night with you and discussed anything with intelligence and passion."

William Shirer (1934)

CHAPTER VI

AN ERA REMEMBERED

Hitler ended Germany's affair with the modern and abstract arts. He replaced them with his version of tradition. As American critics commented on the new regime, they emphasized the ominous side of the German character. The harrassment of the "unvolkish" artists saddened them, and many rushed to defend artists they had attacked only a few years earlier. The freedoms that had existed under the Weimar government seemed to have been incompatible with Germany's heritage, observers claimed. All the experimentation, the attempts to bring new art to the common man, these dreams were dashed. The opportunity for free artistic expression no longer existed. Along with H. L. Mencken, many Americans were not surprised at the turn of events.

The fanatacism of National Socialism brought down the curtain on much of Weimar culture. The Nazis destroyed a particularly promising and hopeful flowering of the arts in many fields. Weimar culture had left its mark upon the rest of the world, in art and architecture, in music, in the drama, in cinema. And nowhere was its impact felt more

importantly than in the United States.

Most American intellectuals thought that Nazi artists were dull and predictable and not as interesting as Weimar's leading figures. The republic had permitted a wide range of artistic expression. The variety of its cultural experience attracted Americans of virtually all intellectual persuasions. Sheldon Cheney, Robert Benchley, and Josephy Wood Krutch argued that Germany had the most exciting and active artistic community in the world. Even those who were critical of Weimar culture admitted that Germany had an energetic if not always praiseworthy cultural life. Where else could one see the excellence of a Reinhardt production one night, a Piscator the following evening, and a Jessner the next. So much was going on that American publications had a difficult time keeping up with Germany's art exhibitions, cinema productions, and musical premieres. Although Americans continued to follow artistic developments in Germany after 1933, interest was never again so high nor the German arts so widely acclaimed as in the twenties.

In the United States, the champions of Weimar culture emphasized the shared attitudes that existed between American and German intellectuals. Although Germany symbolized the cultural tradition of Europe, it was also a modern and technologically sophisticated nation, in

numerous ways like the United States. Germans and Americans were of the modern world, and American observers were especially impressed with the efforts the Germans made to balance old and new forces. They saw in the German confrontation with modernity a society struggling to find solutions to many of the same social and cultural issues that faced American society. In architecture, the Germans stressed simplicity and clarity in design, and they created structures that answered the needs of the age. Expressionist painting was complicated, thus reflecting the complexities of modern life; yet, they were also individualistic and this appealed to one facet of the American mind. In music and the theatre, the Germans used machines not only to promote the new but also to enhance the visual and aural aspects of traditional works. Weimar's actors and directors transformed the cinema from a sideshow into a valid art form. America's contemporary critics asserted that German artists had accomplished a great deal in the twenties, and they did so with typically German thoroughness. Technological innovation, professional and academic training, hard work and dedication, these were the qualities evident in their best work. They were the same qualities that Americans valued.

But there was also much in what the Germans did that produced negative comment. Their paintings were often too

maudlin, their buildings sterile and not "homey" enough. The Germans brooded and dwelled too long on mental aberration, critics noted. Screen and stage plays were full of such stuff, and most Americans would have none of it. The psychological turmoil evident in plays and motion pictures often revealed an underlying German penchant for authoritarianism and order at the expense of wholesome democratic ideals. Although Americans were not known for their sense of history, this German stereotype was well entrenched. Just as with other ethnic groups in the United States, the Germans had their peculiarities. When Americans identified these elements of "Teutonic" culture in German art, it left a bitter aftertaste.

Nonetheless, Americans usually emphasized the positive aspects of German achievements. German music epitomized their respect for the German arts. While not knowing exactly why, most music lovers agreed that German music was the best. The German musical tradition was unassailable, a part of western culture. The first professional symphony orchestras in the United States were German and understandably so was the music they played. Americans enjoyed Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. Perhaps American composers would never equal the German masters, but everything should be done to give native musicians the opportunity to create great music. This did not mean a

return to aristocratic patronage. American intellectuals reasoned that if republican Germany supported the arts so could their country. The central features of the German system, they argued, were suitable for transportation to the United States.

The intellectuals who sought an exalted position for the artist in American society were often far removed from the artist and his work. Many artists shunned contact with either critics or audiences. They created works for purely aesthetic reasons that were difficult or impossible to explain to laymen. They did want public acceptance of their work, but on their own aesthetic terms. What most critics and artists could agree upon was that the artist deserved the support of a society that would allow him to create. He required freedom of expression and the recognition of his special position within society.

At times during the Weimar era, it seemed as if there were as many kinds of potential audiences for art as there were artists. Each of these audiences expected artists to satisfy their tastes. In some ways, the cognoscenti were a microcosm of society. Although better informed, there were those who despised anything new that upset their image of what constituted "art." Others praised the modern style to the exclusion of all else. And many, just like the rest of the population, needed

to be convinced that formal culture had intrinsic value. If the masses were to be trained into aesthetic appreciation, America had to develop a national commitment to the arts and a plan to bring the message to the people. In addition to the inherent importance of the work of Weimar's artists, Weimar's cultural milieu evoked intense interest because it was not merely a matter of Germany's republican culture, but the continuation of a system that had existed for generations.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

The present broad study can only suggest the richness of information that exists on the intellectual and artistic contacts between America and Weimar Germany. Some of the cultural areas deserve individual treatment. The following essay does not catalogue all of the material that appears in the footnotes, and gives only short notice to the many works touching but briefly on Germany. It is merely a compilation of the sources that I found most useful and that might aid the reader in further pursuit of the subject.

General

Any study of the American intellectual response to Germany rests upon contemporary writings. One must rely upon the response of the critics and the artists themselves. Periodicals printed much of what they had to say and book publishers invited both groups to reveal their opinions at greater length. The periodicals fall under three major headings. A few national magazines with large audiences such as Living Age and Literary Digest attempted to bridge the gulf between the popular audience and the intellectual set. Nation, New Republic,

and Dial tended to be more discriminating in what they printed and who they asked to comment on artistic matters. They featured the musings of the more gifted, or in some cases, more pretentious writers. Each artistic field also had specialized journals that informed the discipline's professionals and invited the enlightened outsider to keep pace with recent developments.

As with all periods in history, the books of the era ran the gamut from the prescient and influential to the turgid and easily forgotten. Some books are interesting for what they omit. G. H. Edgell's Modern Architecture in America (New York and London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928) scarcely mentions Frank Lloyd Wright or the work of progressive architects. The significant contemporary works are listed in the respective categories.

Finally, there is the tangible record that the artists left to posterity. The Museum of Modern Art Library has a number of German films that are available to scholars, and the Museum has examples of Expressionism and the New Objectivity. In addition to the impressive holdings of the main library, the New York Public's branch at Lincoln Center contains a record of the dramatic productions of the twenties including theatre programs, reviews, photographs, and details on set design.

General Studies

The post-war decade is a popular period for historical investigation. Many consider the decade unique, with a style all its own. Recent research indicates that American values in the era did not change as much as previous chroniclers suggest. If neither position is exaggerated, there appears to be room for both interpretations.

Frederick Lewis Allen's Only Yesterday: An Informal History of the Nineteen-Twenties (New York: Harper and Row, 1931) is the traditional account of the era. In Perils of Prosperity, 1914-1932 (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1958), William Leuchtenburg presents a good narrative that tends to reinforce Only Yesterday's jazz age image of the twenties. David A. Shannon offers many useful insights in Between the Wars: America, 1919-1941 (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1968) and Paul Carter in Another Part of the Twenties (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977) takes issue with many of the stereotypes of the period and presents some interesting ideas. Roderick Nash's The Nervous Generation: American Thought, 1917-1930 (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1970) is effective in showing the social and intellectual questions that existed in American society. To Nash, the decade is not one that can be easily summarized. Loren Baritz (ed.), The Culture of the Twenties (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill

Co., Inc., 1970), supplies contemporaries' views on politics, business, the younger generation, literature, society and modern technology. Although concentrating on literature, Frederick J. Hoffman, The Twenties: American Writing in the Post-War Decade, rev. ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1962), identifies intellectual issues of the age. Malcolm Cowley, Exile's Return: A Narrative of Ideas (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1934), gives the reader a sense of what it was like to be part of it all.

Cushing Strout provides essential background material on American perceptions of Europe in The American Image of the Old World (New York: Harper and Row, 1963). Frederick C. Luebke's Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War I (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University, 1974) is helpful to the reader seeking information on American attitudes immediately prior to the Weimar period. Contemporary impressions of Germany are presented in John Palmer Gavit (ed.), "New Germany, 1919-1929," Survey Graphic, 14 (February 1, 1929), 533-640. The issue covers Germany's economic, social, political, intellectual, and artistic developments through the eyes of Germans and Americans.

The number of works on the Weimar Republic has reached staggering proportions. Many cover political developments. The events that took place in Germany

serve as a backdrop for this study and a few major works should sufficiently acquaint the reader with the significant trends in Weimar.

Although over thirty years old now, William S. Halperin's Germany Tried Democracy: A Political History of the Reich from 1918 to 1933 (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1946) is still a good, if somewhat tedious, work to familiarize one with the significant political events. Those whose academic German is exceedingly strong will find Karl Dietrich Bracher's Die Auflosung der Weimar Republik, 5th ed. (Villingen, 1970) the definitive study. For witty and intriguing comments on everything from politics to bistros, Count Harry Kessler's In the Twenties: The Diaries of Harry Kessler translated by Charles Kessler (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1971) is a pleasant way to meet the leading figures of the time. Two new studies supplement these works and offer a broader view of politics and culture. Gordon A. Craig's Germany, 1866-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) is primarily political history while Henry Pachter's Modern Germany: A Social and Cultural and Political History (Boulder, Colorado: Western Press, 1978) concentrates more on intellectual concepts.

The cultural life of the republic has been fairly well served in recent years. Purists might object to any

one volume attempting to explain the varied aspects of Weimar's artistic movements, but a number of authors have made contributions toward that end. In Weimar Culture: The Insider as Outsider (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1968), Peter Gay introduces readers to a culture that was rich and varied. "Germany, 1919-1932: The Weimar Culture," Social Research, 39 (Summer, 1972), presents a number of articles on the intellectual life of the Republic. Wolfgang Sauer, Henry Pachter, and Walter Laqueur are among the contributors. Laqueur develops his ideas more fully in Weimar, A Cultural History, 1918-1933 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974). He gives a good deal of space to the writers, artists, and educators but somewhat slights the film makers and traditional musical scene. The most recent work is John Willett's Art and Politics in the Weimar Period: The New Sobriety, 1917-1933 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978). His book stresses the importance of American technology in the thinking of many German artists. Some may find his passionate defense of the Neue Sachlichkeit and the claims he makes for the works of its adherents a bit difficult to accept. John Henry Zammuto's "Art and Action in the Metropolis: The Berlin Avant-Garde, 1900-1930," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1978) is a long winded account covering much the same ground as Willett but with

greater detachment. Zammito concentrates much more closely on the careers of Alfred Döblin, George Grosz, and Bertolt Brecht. Keith Bullivant (ed.) has collected a series of essays on Weimar that are radical interpretations of facets of Weimar culture in Culture and Society in the Weimar Republic (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978). Of particular note is Ronald Taylor's observations on Wozzeck and The Three Penny Opera.

Art

Although German art was not a favorite topic of most art journalists, Weimar's artists attracted more notice than at any time since the Munich School. Under the editorial supervision of Forbes Watson, Arts kept pace with international exhibits in America, and he wrote perceptive reviews of the Carnegie International. Art News, Art Digest, and Creative Art usually devoted space to Expressionism and the New Objectivity. Two cogent, and generally favorable contemporary analyses of German art were Rom Landau, "Modern Movements in German Art," Arts, 14 (July, 1928), 24-30, and Alfred H. Barr, Jr., "Post-War Painting in Europe," Parnassus, 3 (May, 1931), 20-22.

Oliver W. Larkin, Art and Life in America, Rev. ed. (New York: Holt, Reinhart, and Winston, 1960), presents a grand survey of American art and also devotes chapters to architecture. His book serves as an excellent introduction to the major trends in American art history.

John W. McCoubrey, American Tradition in Painting (New York: George Braziller, 1963), examines American painting from the colonial portrait artists to the abstract expressionists of the sixties. He concentrates on the unique characteristics of American canvasses. Of the general studies of the period, Barbara Rose, American Art Since 1900: A Critical History (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), offers a solid survey of artists and their schools. Sam Hunter's Modern American Painting and Sculpture (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1959) is also helpful.

Some of the most enjoyable reading on art comes from artist-journalists. Although antagonistic toward German Expressionists and rather thin on German painting, Henry McBride, The Flow of Art: Essays and Criticisms of Henry McBride (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1975), confronts the issues of the day. This work is a collection of the many articles McBride wrote for the New York Sun and Dial. Guy Péne du Bois, Artists Say the Silliest Things (New York: American Artists Group, 1940), proves just how appropriate the title of his book is.

Sheldon Cheney's A Primer on Modern Art (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1924) continues to endure. The primer covers modern art throughout the world and singles out the Expressionists for particular praise. By 1966, the book

had gone through sixteen editions with no change in the text. John Canady's Mainstreams of Modern Art (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1959) is a standard survey of the latter part of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and contains a valuable section on German and American painting of the twenties.

Two exhibition catalogues serve as good background works on nineteenth century German art. The Düsseldorf Academy and the Americans: An Exhibition of Drawings and Watercolors (Atlanta: High Museum of Art, 1972) is enlightening on the period before the Civil War, and Kermit S. Champa and Kate H. Champa, German Painting of the 19th Century (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970) is useful for the post-1865 era. Herman George Scheffauer unashamedly champions the cause of Expressionism in The New Vision in the German Arts (New York: Viking Press, 1924). Despite his pro-German bias, his work was more influential than many recent authorities care to admit. Contemporaries frequently quoted Scheffauer. Peter Selz's German Expressionist Painting (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1957) is a good short introduction. Bernard S. Myers, The German Expressionists: A Generation in Revolt (Praeger, 1963), is more complete and contains an extensive bibliography. Gerhard Händler offers a broader survey in German Painting

in Our Time (Berlin: Rembrandt Verlag, GMBH, 1956).

Many more recent studies examine the role of the artist in society. Three are of special value. Theda Shapiro, Painters and Politics: The European Avant Garde and Society 1900-1925 (New York: Elsevier Publishing Co., 1975) probes the inconsistencies that artists in politics often develop. In some ways, John Willett, Art and Politics in the Weimar Period: The New Sobriety, 1917-1933 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), is a modern day Scheffauer who looks back at German artists with the same enthusiasm that Scheffauer had in 1924. Beth Irwin Lewis's biography, George Grosz: Art and Politics in the Weimar Republic (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1971), makes many references to the artist's admiration for America.

Architecture

As one might expect, most articles in the leading architectural journals echoed prevailing opinions, but the modernists did make inroads in the late twenties. American Architect followed builders' conventions and other prosaic aspects of architecture. It was basically conservative. While Architectural Record and Architectural Forum were far from radical, they more easily accommodated differing viewpoints. Western Architect was more than a regional publication often including articles on the architecture of Europe. Pieces from other journals also

helped bring German architecture before the public. Roger Gilman, "Estimate of Modern Architecture in Germany," Parnassus, 2 (May, 1930), 11-13, effectively summarizes the growing interest in German methods. In "Architecture," Arts Weekly, 1 (March 8, 1932), 30-32, Catherine Bauer praises the Bauhaus and modern architecture. In 1931, the editor of Architectural Record asked Walter Gropius to contribute an article on housing. His "The Small House of Today," Architectural Forum, 54 (March, 1931), 266-78, illustrates America's recognition of an international artist and the concern for housing during the Depression.

Bannister Fletcher's A History of Architecture, 18 ed., revised by J. C. Palmes (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975) is a comprehensive introduction to the architecture of the world. John Burchard and Albert Bush-Brown, The Architecture of America: A Social and Cultural History, rev. ed., present a standard work that does a fair job of explaining the significance of America's architecture. They see the twenties as the period of Beaux Arts dominance in the United States and are highly critical of most of the period's buildings. Fiske Kimball offers an early overview of American development in American Architecture (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Publishers, 1928). Arnold Whittick provides an informative, well-illustrated survey in

European Architecture in the Twentieth Century (New York: Abelard-Schuman, Ltd., 1974). Carl W. Condit, American Buildings: Materials and Techniques from the First Colonial Settlement to the Present (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), examines the growth of American building expertise.

In Sticks and Stones: A Study of American Architecture and Civilization (New York: Horace, Liveright, 1924), Lewis Mumford rises above the usual weaknesses of architectural history and adopts a broad, humanistic approach. Mumford's first book touches briefly on German architecture, but identifies historical tendencies in American architecture and the issues of the future. One is tempted to cite all the books Mumford has written but his recent thinking is most easily accessible in Lewis Mumford (ed.), Roots of Contemporary Architecture: A Series of 37 Essays Dating From the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the Present (New York: Dover Publishers, Inc., 1972). In addition to his introductory essay, architects and their critics are represented.

The growth of American architecture in the twentieth century is explored in Walter C. Kidney's The Architecture of Choice: Eclecticism in America, 1880-1930 (New York: George Braziller, 1974). He describes the American penchant for a multiplicity of styles and reviews architectural

fashions of the period. Ian McCallum uses a biographical approach, American Architecture: USA (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp., 1958), to examine the structures of major architects. He includes the buildings of the expatriates Mies, Gropius, and Neutra. The many photographs give the reader a representative sample of contemporary American architecture. Wayne Andrews addresses a wide range of issues in Architecture, Ambition, and Americans (New York: Harper and Co., 1947). Harold Bush-Brown's Beaux-Arts to Bauhaus and Beyond (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1976) is a practicing architect's memoirs. His career spanned the years from World War I to the early 1970's.

As Leonard K. Eaton shows in American Architecture Comes of Age: European Reaction to H. H. Richardson and Louis Sullivan (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1972), continental architects were familiar with American building procedures before 1900. Eaton's study is an excellent preparatory work for the Weimar era, for he discusses the social attitudes of many of Germany's young architects. Ulrich Conrads (ed.), Programs and Manifestos on 20th Century Architecture, translated by Michael Bullock (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1970), assembles a variety of social, aesthetic, and political proclamations made by German architects. Two biographies on leading figures contain essential insights on two of

Weimar's leading builders. Ludwig Hilbersemier, Mies van der Rohe (Chicago: Paul Theobald, 1956), probes the architect's theoretical ideas but is weak on Mies' German career. Siegfried Gideon's Walter Gropius: Work and Teamwork (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp., 1954) is much better balanced on its subject. Bruno Taut's Modern Architecture (London: The Studio, Ltd., 1929) is an important work that presents German architectural ideas and criticizes the architects of America. Reading Taut is instructive for those who believe that modern architecture in Germany was only the Bauhaus. Nevertheless, the school's importance cannot be overlooked and Gropius' The New Architecture and the Bauhaus (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., and the Museum of Modern Art, 1935) is the basic statement. Hans M. Wingler's The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1968) is the standard secondary work. John Willett has some interesting material on Hannes Meyer, the man who succeeded Gropius at the Bauhaus. A well integrated account on German architecture that stresses social and political considerations is Barbara Miller Lane's Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918-1945 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968). Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson praise the German practioners of modern architecture in the essential

The International Style: Architecture Since 1922 (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1932).

Maxwell Fry and Brent C. Brolin differ on the suitability of modern architecture in today's society. Their books discuss much of what German and American architects have done to change the buildings we live and work in. Fry, who worked with Gropius in London, offers a reverential view in Art in a Machine Age: A Critique of Contemporary Life Through the Medium of Architecture (London: Meutchen and Co., 1969). He praises the efforts of German architects as well as those of other modernists, especially Le Corbusier. Brolin is unimpressed with modernists or their followers, and The Failure of Modern Architecture (New York: Van Nostrand Co., 1976) criticizes contemporary architecture on aesthetic and social grounds.

Many individuals and ^{Music}journalists supported music in America. Their main goal was to inform the people that there were many musical events, and audiences had the opportunity to hear music on an almost daily basis. Musical America and Musical Courier were published weekly. Both employed local, regional, national, and international correspondents. Their coverage ranged from brief notices to lengthy articles. The scholarly journals were more likely to print material on new music, the current state

of composition, and the aesthetic and cultural importance of music. Musical Quarterly and Etude were in this category. A few professionals believed that even more needed to be done to advance contemporary music, and the League of Composers established Modern Music in order to have a platform to promote the merits of their work. An early post-war editorial that describes American conditions is "Music and Life," Musical Courier, 83 (December 8, 1921). Alban Berg gave Americans the opportunity to share his thought in "A Word on Wozzeck," Modern Music, 8 (November-December, 1927). Two later giants of musicology, Theodore Weisengrund-Adorno, "Berg, Weber- Schoenberg's Heirs," Modern Music, 8 (January-February, 1931), 29-38, and Willi Reich, "Paul Hindemith," Musical Quarterly, 17 (October, 1931), 486-96, explain recent developments in their homeland.

Even more than the performers, the American composer has suffered when compared to the musical titans of Germany. The twenties, however, were a time of growing confidence and recognition of American idioms. In order to trace American developments up to that point, David Ewen, Music Comes to America (New York: Allen, Towne, Heath, Inc., 1947), recounts the nineteenth century musical trends and concludes that American music of all types comes of age in the 1920-30 period. John

Tasker Howard's Our American Music, Three Hundred Years of It, 3rd ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1946) follows the same path but without Ewen's literary style. In Our Contemporary Composers: American Music in the Twentieth Century (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1944), Howard examines the careers of American composers of the first third of the century. Gilbert Chase's American Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present (New York: McGraw Hill Co., Inc., 1955) is a perceptive study. Irving Kolodin, The Metropolitan Opera, 1886-1966: A Candid History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), presents an enormous amount of material on the Met and identifies patrons of the nation's foremost opera company.

In the area of broad international studies, Nicolas Slominsky, Music Since 1900, 3rd ed. (New York: Coleman-Ross Co., Inc., 1949), is a standard work. H. H. Stuckenschmidt, a composer and musicologist who knew the major figures of post-war German music, includes some useful information in Twentieth Century Music, translated by Richard Deveson (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1969). A more recent perspective is in William W. Austin's Music in the Twentieth Century, From Debussy through Stravinsky (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1966). Austin's book is balanced, scholarly, and includes an excellent bibliography.

Perhaps because of the performing nature of their art, musicians seem more willing to talk and write about the twenties. There are many memoirs and reminiscences. On the American side, George Anthiel, Bad Boy of Music (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., Inc., 1945), is particularly candid. Anthiel seems to have met most major musical personalities of the era. In Virgil Thomson (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), the composer recreates the excitement of Paris while denouncing the confining nature of German music. Aaron Copland, Our New Music: Leading Composers in Europe and America (New York: McGraw-Hill Books, Co., 1941) is more clinical in his survey of the composers of his generation. Another, less well-known composer, Daniel Gregory Mason, Tune in America: A Study of Our Coming Musical Independence (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1930) and Music in My Time and Other Reminiscences (New York: The McMillan Co., 1938), takes a conservative position. He describes methods America must adopt to place her composers in the vanguard of international music.

The Germans are even more prolific. Composers, performers, and conductors have frequently rushed into print. In Theme and Variation: An Autobiography, translated by Jane A. Galston (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), Bruno Walter recounts the excitement of making

music before audiences throughout the world. Fritz Bush, Pages From a Musician's Life, translated by Marjorie Strachey (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, Publ., 1971), sums up his life as a conductor in Central Europe. Otto Klemperer's Minor Recollections (London: Dennis Dobson, 1964) is quite brief but includes some interesting observations. Paul Hindemith writes of the composer's lot in life in A Composer's World: Horizons and Limitations (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952). Ernst Krenek explains the rationale behind his composition in Explaining Music: Essays by Ernst Krenek, translated by Margaret Sheffield and Geoffrey Shelton (New York: October House, Inc., 1966). In the Path to the New Music, edited by Willi Reich (Bryn Mar, Penn.: Theodor Presser Co., 1963), Anton Webern does his best to define his aesthetically trying music. Perspectives, compiled by Hans Moldenhauer and edited by Dera Irvine (Seattle and London: University of Washington, 1966) contains a list of Webern premieres in the United States. Virtuoso pianist Arthur Schnabel, Arthur Schnabel, My Life and Music (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1963), relives the life of an international concert artist. He also comments on the differences between touring in America and Europe.

Works on modern German composers and their music

abound. Theodore W. Adorno, Philosophy of Modern Music, translated by Anne S. Mitchell and Wesley Blomster (New York: Seabury Press, 1973), confounds the reader with his heavy prose. His monograph illustrates how difficult it is to describe the essence of any art, especially modern music. In Men of Music: Their Lives, Times and Achievements, rev. ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), Wallace Brockway and Herbert Weinstock present an interesting sketch of Richard Strauss. The authors are highly critical of most of Strauss' twentieth century work. Joan Peyser, The New Music: The Sense Behind the Sound (New York: Delacorte Press, 1971), writes interestingly and informatively of Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, and Hindemith.

Schoenberg's importance goes beyond his actual composition. As a teacher of Berg and Webern, he molded musical minds. Four works were particularly helpful to the present study. In Arnold Schoenberg: Letters, translated by Eithene Wilkens and Ernst Kaiser (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), Erwin Stern has collected a variety of correspondence that reveals the composer's personality and sheds light on the composer's decision to come to the United States. Charles Rosen's Arnold Schoenberg (New York: Viking Press, 1975) is a short but perceptive introduction. H. H. Stuckenschmidt,

Arnold Schoenberg, translated by Edith Temple Roberts, 2nd ed. (New York: Grove Press, 1959), has the advantage of being a composer himself. Willi Reich, Schoenberg: A Critical Biography, translated by Leo Black's (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971) profile comes closest to being the standard work.

Reich has also written Alban Berg, translated by Cornelius Cardew (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1965). This work first appeared in 1937 and concentrated "on Berg the man." Friedrich Wildgrans, Anton Webern, translated by Edith Temple Roberts and Humphrey Searle (New York: October House, Inc., 1967), provides a workman-like account which includes a list of articles that Webern wrote. Henry Pleasants, The Agony of Modern Music (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1955) addresses the vexatious question why contemporary music has failed to please modern ears.

Drama

In order to study the theatre in the twenties, one must go beyond newspaper reviews of current plays. The New York critics were important and wielded an enormous amount of influence, but the more reflective writing often appeared in journals dedicated to the theatrical arts. Theatre Arts Magazine (later Theatre Arts Monthly) analyzed all phases of the drama and became known for its excellence. Drama was also highly respected. Kenneth

Macgowan, Lee Simonson, Sheldon Cheney, and Barrett H. Clark were frequent contributors to these two leaders. Although an occasional article on German drama appeared, Theatre, Stage, and Theatre Guild concentrated more on the national scene. Of the interpretive journals, Nation and Dial offered some of the most perceptive comment. A good contemporary version of what was significant in German drama is in A. W. G. Randall "Main Currents in Contemporary German Drama," Dial, 70 (April, 1921), 172-75. Grace Anschutz, "Expressionist Drama in the American Theatre," Drama, 16 (April, 1926), 245-46, 278-88, gives a rather optimistic account of Expressionist influence in the United States. For a note on Expressionism's decline, see C. Hooper Trask, "In Berlin- Notes of the Younger Generation," New York Times, 7 November 1926. Arthur A. Kutscher, "The German Theatre: A Balance Sheet," Theatre Arts Monthly, 17 (February, 1933), 123-30, takes a dispassionate look at the German stage on the eve of Hitler's assumption of power.

Many worthwhile histories of the American and German theatres exist. George Freedley and John A. Reeves, A History of the Theatre (New York: Crown Publ., 1968), identify movements and dramatists. They devote separate chapters to the theatres of both countries. Glenn Hughes, A History of the American Theatre, 1700-

1950 (London: Samuel French, 1951), considers the twenties a time of boom and crash in the theatre as well as the business world. Joseph Wood Krutch's The American Drama Since 1918 (New York: Random House, 1953) remains required reading for students of the American theatre. In Our Changing Theatre (New York: Dial Press, 1931), Richard Dana Skinner appraises the drama of his day.

Theatre directors, critics, and actors were worried about the future of the theatre, and they wrote volumes on how the drama could meet the challenge from movies and radio. The ubiquitous Sheldon Cheney, The Art Theatre: Its Character as Differentiated from Commercial Theatre, European and American Examples, rev. ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1925), blasts Broadway and calls for a theatre of quality. The Germans were singled out for approval. Lee Simonson, The Stage Is Set (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1932), is much less enthralled with the Germans. He applauds the American theatre, and is especially pleased with the work of set designer Robert Edmond Jones. In a series of books, Kenneth Macgowan asks Americans to expect and demand better theatrical productions. In Footlights Across America: Towards A National Theatre (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Co., 1929), he argues for the establishment of local theatres based upon a national commitment to

excellence. He uses Germany as an example of how it could be done. With Robert Edmond Jones, he wrote Continental Stagecraft (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1922) which is almost as one sided in favor of Germany as Scheffauer's New Vision.

If other Americans were not as generous in their praise, they were still interested in following European and German developments. Barrett H. Clark's books are so extensively subtitled that they explain themselves. European Theories of the Drama: With a Supplement on the American Drama, An Anthology of Dramatic Theory and Criticism from Aristotle to the Present Day, In a Series of Collected Texts with Commentaries, Biographies, and Bibliographies, rev. ed. (D. Appleton and Co., 1947), and A Study of the Modern Drama: A Handbook for the Study and Appreciation of the Best Plays, European, English, and American of the Last Half-Century (New York: D. Appelton and Co., 1928). Hallie Flanagan, later director of the Federal Theatre Project, examines German developments but finds the English and Russian theatre more fascinating in Shifting Scenes of the Modern European Theatre (New York: Coward-McCans, Inc., 1928). Anne Miller, The Independent Theatre in Europe, 1877 to the Present (New York and London: Benjamin Bloom, 1931), has a lengthy chapter on Germany. In Modern Continental

Playwrights (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1931), Frank Chandler includes information on German playwrights through George Kaiser but has little to report on Brecht and the younger playwrights.

On dramatists, Camille von Klenze supplies needed background information in From Goethe to Hauptmann (New York: Viking Press, 1926). The prolific Huntly Carter's The Theatre of Max Reinhardt (New York: Benjamin Bloom, 1964) is the standard text in English of Reinhardt's early career. It was first issued in 1914. Olivia M. Saylor's (ed.) Max Reinhardt and His Theatre, translated by Mariele S. Gudernatsch, et. al. (New York: Brentano's, 1924) is a series of articles on the techniques of the great director. Herman George Scheffauer's New Vision contains a paean to Germany's Expressionist theatre, and Mardi Valgemae equals his enthusiasm in Accelerated Grimace: Expressionism in the American Drama of the 1920's (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois Press, 1972). In Erwin Piscator's Political Theatre; The Development of Modern German Drama (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972), C. D. Innes comments on Piscator and the post-war generation of playwrights. Maria Ley-Piscator gives a personal account and makes some observations on the fate of German artists in America in The Piscator Experiment: The Political Theatre

(New York: James Heinemann, Inc., 1967). Bertolt Brecht has an interesting essay in Robert W. Carrigan's (ed.) Theatre in the Twentieth Century (Freeport, New York: Books for Library Press, 1970). The Theatre Guild performed many German plays in the twenties and there is a summary in Walter Pichard Eaton's The Theatre Guild, The First Ten Years (New York: Brentano's, 1929).

Film

A comprehensive discussion of the major film periodicals is in Myron Osborn Lounsbury, The Origins of American Film Criticism, 1909-1939 (New York: Arno Press, 1973). Lincoln Kerstein's "Films: Film Magazines," Arts Weekly, 1 (May 7, 1932), 198-99, 201-02, is a contemporary review. While many periodicals carried news of international film developments, National Board of Review Magazine (originally Exceptional Photo-plays), Close-Up, and Film Spectator maintained the highest standards. The later seems to have been less influential on the east coast. As the movies became increasingly popular, publications of all types began to include film sections. Arts offered some particularly perceptive and pointed criticism. Experimental Cinema got off to a promising start and employed some well-known authorities, but it only survived through three volumes. Intellectual journals such as Hound and Horn delighted in explaining the symbolic, political, and social sig-

nificance of German movies while Life and Vanity Fair were less serious but sometimes no less perceptive. In November of 1926, the Annals of the Academy of Political Science devoted an entire volume to an investigation of the effects of the motion picture on American life. This is an ideal place to discover the major issues of the time. Alfred Kuttner's "The Foreign Invasion," Exceptional Photoplays, 1 (November, 1921), 1-2, is an early appreciation of the German cinema. A typical ode to a German artist is Kenneth White, "Film Chronicle: F. W. Murnau," Hound and Horn, 4 (July-September, 1931), 581-84. Robert Sherwood, "Variety," Life, 88 (July 8, 1926), 26, displays his enthusiasm for the German film. A. Kraszna-Krausz, "The German Film Season, 1932-33," Close-Up, 9 (September, 1932), 184-87, reluctantly sounds the death knell for a once glorious film industry.

Despite its being a latecomer to the performing arts, more good and bad books have been written on the cinema than almost any other subject. Terry Ramsaye's A Million and One Nights: A History of the Motion Picture (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1926) was the first systematic attempt to investigate the film industry. Of course, it can only suggest what sound might mean to the future of motion pictures. Ben J. Hampton's A History of the American Film Industry From Its Beginnings to 1931

(New York: Dover Publication, 1970) is particularly strong on the moguls and how pictures are made. In The Rise of the American Film (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1931), Lewis Jacobs offers a detailed study of the development of the American film until 1939. Edward C. Wagenknecht covers the era in Movies in the Age of Innocence (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962). Kenneth Macgowan eventually turned from drama to the cinema and his last book is Behind the Screen: The History and Technology of the Motion Picture (New York: Delacorte Press, 1965). In Movies Made America: A Social History of American Movies (New York: Random House, 1975), Robert Sklar attempts to explain the impact of movies on the nation.

Lounsbury's The Origins of American Film Criticism places the film criticism in perspective. A good introduction to the contemporary film literature of the twenties is Stanley Kaufmann and Bruce Hentsell (eds.), American Film Criticism: From the Beginnings to Citizen Kane, Reviews of Significant Films at the Time They First Appeared (New York: Liveright, 1972). Concern with the Hollywood product was evident in many books and articles. Two of the earliest are Laurence Hill and Silas E. Snider, Can Anything Good Come Out of Hollywood (Los Angeles: Times Mirror Press, 1923), and Tamara Lane, What's Wrong With

the Movies? (Los Angeles: The Waverly Co., 1923).

Two Pioneering studies of international film are Paul Rotha, The Film Till Now (London: Jonathan Cape, 1931), and Maurice Bardèche and Robert Brasillach, The History of Motion Pictures, translated and edited by Iris Barry (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1938). A more recent study is Gerald Mast, A Short History of the Movies (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1976). Reviews and comments on films are in Iris Barry's collection of Program Notes, Museum of Modern Art Film Library.

The most widely quoted work on German film is Siegfried Kracauer's From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947). Caligari is an excellent source on film produced in Germany, but Kracauer's thesis that the needs of National Socialism and the fall of Weimar are everywhere evident in German films becomes a bit tiresome. Fritz Lang (among others) took Kracauer to task for his position. Although Lotte Eisner's The Haunted Screen: Expressionism in the German Cinema and the Influence of Max Reinhardt (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969) deals more with the technical aspects of film making; it supplements and tones down From Caligari to Hitler. H. H. Wollenberg,

Fifty Years of German Film (London: The Falcon Press, 1948) is less opinionated than Kracauer but is also quite brief, more an essay than a serious study. David Stuetz Hull's Film in the Third Reich: A Study of the German Cinema, 1933-1945 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969) contains some coverage of the pre-Hitler years but is mainly concerned with the decline of the cinema under the Nazi regime. A short book in German, Walter Kaul (ed.) Caligari und Caligarismus (Berlin: Deutsche Kinemothek, 1970), is another work in praise of this significant film.

Biographies on film figures are usually more glitter than substance. But Lotte Eisner's Murnau (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973) and Fritz Lang (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973) are helpful in explaining why the two directors came to America. In Murnau, she deals effectively with what can happen to an artist when he becomes involved with film moguls. Herman G. Weinberg tells an altogether happier story in The Lubitsch Touch: A Critical Study (New York: Dutton, 1968). An example of the fluff one encounters in film writing is Leslie Frewin's banal Dietrich: The Story of a Star (London: Leslie Frewin, 1967).