



William Owen Harrod

Bruno Paul – The Life and Work of a Pragmatic Modernist

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At the dawn of the 20th century, Bruno Paul (1874–1968) stood like a colossus astride the landscape of an emerging Modernism. As an illustrator, architect and educator his influence was unequalled. Arguably the most important German designer of his generation, his work was ubiquitous in the technical and professional publications of his day. For five decades, Paul's reputation was unparalleled among progressive German artists. As a young man he was a member of the Munich avant-garde responsible for the creation of the Jugendstil. As a designer of furniture and interiors, he achieved a commercial success unmatched by his illustrious contemporaries. In the light of his professional accomplishments, he was the most influential German architect of his generation, a figure of international significance. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Adolf Meyer and Kem Weber were among his students, and their work developed from the practices of his atelier. Indeed, as director of the Vereinigte Staatsschulen für freie und angewandte Kunst in Berlin he presided over an institution that rivaled the Bauhaus as a center of progressive instruction in the arts.

Despite the renown he enjoyed at the height of his career, Paul's name has been largely absent from the standard histories of the modern movement. Indeed, this book is the first comprehensive study of his life and work. Nevertheless, Paul's story embodies a significant facet of the history of 20th-century design: the development of Modernism in Central Europe and its coalescence from the influences of Jugendstil, Elementarism, Classicism, Expressionism and Functionalism. Paul played a prominent role in this coalescence, and he deserves a place of honor in the history of the modern movement. Yet his biography also encompasses a less familiar, but no less significant, aspect of the history of modern design. It is the story of a pragmatic Modernism that occupied a middle ground between avant-garde experimentation and conservative professional practice, a Modernism that was timeless, practical and principled. It was this pragmatic Modernism that won the patronage of the middle classes and established progressive design as an accepted alternative, and eventually as the preferred alternative to the period styles. Moreover Paul's pragmatic Modernism, and its underlying principles, remain as relevant today as when they were first conceived.

William Owen Harrod is a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Texas at Austin, where he received his doctorate in architectural history. He is a practicing architect, theoretician and historian, based in Austin, Texas.

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Introduction

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Bruno Paul (1874–1968) stood like a colossus astride the landscape of an emerging Modernism. As an illustrator, architect, and educator, his influence was unequalled. The most important German designer of his generation, his work was ubiquitous in the technical and professional publications of his day. Paul was master of a formal vocabulary that was simple, practical, and elegant: a pragmatic Modernism suited to the needs and aspirations of the middle classes. Popular acceptance of this pragmatic Modernism in Europe and America prepared the way for the triumph of the avant-garde, and ultimately for the canonization of Modernism as the characteristic style of the twentieth century. For this alone Paul deserves to be remembered, but he was more than a pathfinder for the work of a younger generation. Throughout his life he promoted a vision of modernity that remains as relevant today as when it was first conceived.

For five decades, Paul's reputation was unparalleled among progressive German artists. As a young man he was a member of the Munich avant-garde responsible for the creation of the Jugendstil, the first modern movement in Central Europe. As a designer of furniture and interiors, he achieved a commercial success unmatched by his contemporaries Richard Riemerschmid and Peter Behrens, with whom he joined in the founding of the Werkbund in 1907. In light of his professional accomplishments, he was the most important German architect of his generation, standing with Henri van de Velde and Josef Hoffmann as a figure of international significance. Yet he made his greatest contributions as an educator. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Adolf Meyer, and Kem Weber were among his students, and their work developed from the practices of his atelier. As director of the Vereinigte Staatsschulen für freie und angewandte Kunst in Berlin, he presided over an institution that rivaled the Bauhaus as a center of progressive teaching. Indeed, Walter Gropius conceived his own program of educational reforms in response to Paul's example.

Despite the renown he enjoyed at the height of his career, Paul's name is largely absent from the standard histories of the modern movement. He is remembered as a pioneer, but not as an active participant in the development of the Functionalist aesthetic that began to characterize progressive design in the 1920s. His exclusion from the Modernist canon originated in the restrictive interpretation of Modernism adopted by its early proponents, following the selection of participants for the 1927 exhibition of experimental housing at the Weißenhofsiedlung in Stuttgart. When Mies planned the Weißenhofsiedlung, he did not invite his former teacher to contribute, notwithstanding Paul's contemporary work designing prefabricated modern housing for the Deutsche Werkstätten. The architects that he did consider – from van de Velde, Behrens, and Berlage to Gropius, Bruno Taut, and Le Corbusier – became the central figures in a narrowly focused Modernist historiography. Mies made his choices to support a polemical Modernism that he termed a »battleground of the spirit«.¹ Paul himself could not and would not identify himself as a begetter of such a movement. Yet his work demonstrated a close and reciprocal relationship with the practice, if not the ideology, of the Functionalist avant-garde.

Though Paul was committed to advancing the cause of modern design, by the 1920s his work was profoundly unlike that of his younger colleagues. As a designer, he promoted rational detailing and exquisite workmanship. While he embraced the stylistic vocabulary of the avant-garde, he preferred proven solutions to technical challenges; he explored new technologies, but never celebrated technology for its own sake. He regarded industrial production as a tool available to the craftsman, useful only if employed with skill and understanding. Paul's Modernism was essentially pragmatic: comfortable, practical, and efficient. It was a Modernism applicable to daily life.

Paul created and disseminated a modern aesthetic capable of challenging the dominance of the historical styles. He facilitated the transformation of Modernism from the purview of a radical avant-garde and a narrow circle of patrons into the vocabulary of mainstream design. He first achieved this end in 1908, when he embraced a simple, practical classicism that he adapted to suit the demands of standardized production. Nikolaus Pevsner credited Paul's work prior to the First World War with changing popular tastes throughout Germany, thereby encouraging the widespread acceptance and appreciation of contemporary design.² Paul achieved an even broader success in the 1920s, winning international recognition for his designs. His work, popularized by such ecumenical publications as *House and Garden* and the international journal *Vogue*,³ introduced British and American readers to progressive German design long before Mies or Gropius were widely known outside of professional circles. It was Paul who prepared the way for the German émigrés who fled their homeland following the Nazi accession of 1933 and the collapse of the Weimar Republic.

Paul’s work prefigured the triumph of the International Style, but it remained distinct. His designs during the final years of the Weimar Republic represented a critique of Functionalism, particularly of the poor detailing and impermanent materials that often accompanied cool, functional abstraction. His critique was progressive rather than reactionary, and it embodied his ethos of reform. He did not renounce the aesthetic of the modern movement, but advocated the continued relevance of the »timeless German building arts«. ⁴ In so doing, he promoted a reconciliation of the ambitions of the avant-garde with the lessons of professional experience, practices that he pointedly deemed timeless rather than traditional.

Paul’s critique is largely absent from the standard histories of the modern movement, which thus ignore the very existence of a pragmatic counterpoint to the work of his younger colleagues. The historians of Modernism emphasized the role of an avant-garde to which Paul, at the height of his professional career, no longer belonged. Moreover, Paul restricted his criticism of contemporary design to the context of his work, rather than to the composition of the polemical statements of principle that are the primary documentary source for the modern movement. Throughout his life, Paul was a prolific designer but a reluctant promoter of his own reputation. Even after he had progressed from innovative and experimental youth into creative and professional maturity, he remained among the most frequently published architects and designers in Germany – albeit rarely as an author. ⁵ Paul was a leading member of the Werkbund and of the Prussian academy of arts, and he served as an advisor to the German government. He was director of the school that was likely the most important center of progressive artistic education in Central Europe. There was not a single prominent Modernist in Germany whom he did not know, personally or professionally, and there were few with whom he had not collaborated. He was, in fact, so close to the center of the modern movement that any consideration of its history that excludes him is, from its very conception, inherently flawed.

The early proponents of the modern movement praised it for its opposition to the reactionary Historicism of the nineteenth century. »Architecture as a continuation of the traditions of building«, Hannes Meyer wrote in 1928, »is a resignation to architectural history«. ⁶ But by the 1920s little remained of the much-maligned practices of the nineteenth century. In Germany, the International Style arose in opposition to Expressionism, which was an easy mark, and to the pragmatic professionalism that Paul espoused, which was not. Understanding his position is essential to understanding the development of both canonical modern design and the alternatives that emerged concurrently. Many of these alternatives have been largely forgotten.

Paul himself inadvertently contributed to his omission. He wrote little about his work, and was indifferent to personal fame. His home and office in Berlin were bombed during the Second World War, and his private papers, his possessions, and his records of fifty years of professional practice were dispersed or destroyed. He was unable to recover them, and left no accounting of what was lost. Banished from public life by the Nazis in 1933, he faded into obscurity.

Yet much of Paul’s legacy has survived. Many of his most important buildings are intact and some are still in the hands of their original owners. Examples of his furniture have been collected in museums throughout Germany. His early illustrations for the satirical journal *Simplicissimus* are still extant, and his postwar papers are preserved in Nuremberg. Letters and photographs survive among the collected papers of his former colleagues, the Munich avant-garde of the first decade of the twentieth century. The Vereinigte Staatsschulen für freie und angewandte Kunst in Berlin, now the Universtät der Künste, maintains the records of Paul’s administration between 1907 and 1933, including his personal correspondence and several unpublished essays. The archives of the Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk and the Deutsche Werkstätten, the firms that produced most of his furniture, have also survived. Disparate records of individual commissions are preserved in public and private collections. These resources, and the recollections of those who knew him personally, permit a detailed reconstruction of the history of Paul’s life.

Paul’s story is a significant element of the history of twentieth-century design, and, to a certain extent, it is a familiar one. It is the history of the development of Modernism in Central Europe, and its coalescence from the influences of Jugendstil, Elementarism, Classicism, Expressionism, and Functionalism. Paul played a significant role in this coalescence, and he deserves a place of honor in the history of the modern movement. However, his biography also encompasses a less familiar, but no less significant, aspect of the history of modern design. It is the story of a pragmatic Modernism that occupied a middle ground between avant-garde experimentation and conservative professional practice. In the end, it was this pragmatic Modernism that won the patronage of the middle classes, and established progressive design as an accepted alternative, and eventually as a preferred alternative, to the period styles.

1. The making of a pragmatic Modernist: 1874–1896

Like many in the first generation of European Modernists, Bruno Paul was deeply concerned with reestablishing a harmonious relationship between the fine and applied arts in an age of increasingly impersonal, automated production. As a child, he witnessed firsthand the displacement of traditional craftsmanship by the process of mechanization, as well as the disintegration of the social order that had prevailed prior to industrialization. Later, as a student painter, he was confronted with the increasing irrelevance of mannered, academic art to the contemporary world, and the absence of an effective system for training designers to meet the burgeoning needs of industry. As a young man, Paul confronted many of the theoretical issues that had inspired the artistic and social reform movements of the second half of the nineteenth century. In response, he embraced a profoundly personal modernity.

Seifhennersdorf

Bruno Paul was born on 19 January 1874 in the house his grandfather had built in the Saxon village of Seifhennersdorf, a predominantly rural community on the border between Germany and the Austro-Hungarian province of Bohemia. He was the last of seven children of Gustav Eduard Paul, an ironmonger, and Johanne Juliane Auguste Jentsch. ⁷ He was given the name Bruno in memory of an elder brother, Robert Bruno, who had died in infancy. Unlike the four brothers and two sisters who preceded him into the world, he never received a second Christian name. He was simply baptized »Bruno« in the Protestant parish church of the village fourteen days after his birth. ⁸ The two weeks that he spent un-christened may simply be a consequence of a harsh winter, yet his parents’ confidence that he was not at risk of dying an unbaptized infant was a precient recognition of the extraordinary constitution that would sustain him through ninety-four years of vigorous life.

According to Paul’s own account of the origins of his family, his ancestors were among the Protestant families expelled from the Austrian Salzkammergut by the Roman Catholic archbishop of Salzburg in 1731. ⁹ Weavers by trade, the exiled family settled in the Oberlausitz region of Saxony, where they were able to reestablish themselves under the policies of religious tolerance promulgated by the government of the Saxon king Augustus the Strong. Their successful rehabilitation in Seifhennersdorf, a center of the weaving trade, accorded with the fundamental character of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the eighteenth century. The church encouraged the diligence, self-discipline, and civic responsibility of its adherents. Paul learned these qualities, the core of the Protestant ethic, from his baptism. Yet his personal faith would also reflect the lessons of his own family history through a commitment to remain steadfast in the face of adversity, and a belief in the sanctity of honest labor.

Paul’s grandfather, Johann Gotthelf Paul, established himself as a member of the small commercial class in Seifhennersdorf that was indirectly dependent upon the success of the local weaving industry. He ran a tavern near the outskirts of the town at Warnsdorfer Straße 15, serving local farmers on the first floor of the house that he shared with his wife Christiane. Later, he opened a general store (Krämerei) in a larger house at Warnsdorfer Straße 4. ¹⁰ Paul’s father Gustav Eduard Paul was born on 1 February 1836 in this same house, a substantial village home built above the little river Mandau that divided the town and provided power to the weaving mills that clustered on its banks. The house was typical of the Oberlausitz, composed of simple, practical details that would exert a lasting influence on Paul’s domestic architecture. »The wide, white-painted windows set beneath the long ridge of a thatch roof framed by mighty poplars and linden trees stood closer to my youthful ideal«, he later recalled of the houses of Seifhennersdorf, »than the factory windows set in their whitewashed walls beneath black tar roofs.« ¹¹

Very little is known about the life of Paul’s father, Gustav Eduard Paul, although he has been identified as a master carpenter (Zimmermeister), ¹² and a building contractor (Bauunternehmer). ¹³ His granddaughter described him as a joiner or cabinetmaker (Tischler), while church records in Seifhennersdorf refer to him as an ironmonger (Material- und Eisenwarenhändler). ¹⁴ According to local tradition, Gustav Paul assumed control of his father’s general store in 1860 before achieving economic success selling tools and domestic ironwork. All of the accounts of his career share one important detail: in a town that was dominated by the weaving industry, he was an independent businessman, a dealer in building materials and, by most accounts, a craftsman in his own right.



1. Seifhennersdorf. The center of the village is dominated by the parish church where Paul was baptized on 2 February 1874.
2. Warnsdorfer Straße 4, Seifhennersdorf, circa 1920. In the center of the photo is the house where Bruno Paul was born in 1874.
3. Bruno Paul as a student, circa 1886.

Gustav Paul was a tradesman in the age when the traditional crafts were being challenged by the advance of industrialization. He undoubtedly exerted a profound influence on the development of his youngest son's own understanding of the role of craftsmanship in an industrializing society. Gustav was an ambitious man, however, and did not intend that his children should follow his own modest example. His wife Johanne Juliane Auguste belonged to the Jentsch family, among the most prominent members of the community and the proprietors of a weaving mill that dominated the center of the town.¹⁵ One of the largest structures in the community, it was clearly visible from the Pauls' home on Warnsdorfer Straße. In marrying into the Jentsch family Gustav Paul made a propitious union, and he was determined that his children should pursue respectable careers. He wanted his sons to become schoolteachers or clergymen, professions that epitomized culture and sophistication in a rural community.¹⁶

Bruno spent an uneventful boyhood on Warnsdorfer Straße, and in later life remembered the simple pleasures of a rural childhood. One of his most cherished memories was of a pet raven, captured in the fields surrounding Seifhennersdorf. Although the bird was never truly domesticated, it spent enough time with its young master to mimic the sound of his voice. Paul's youthful laughter, prompted by the ceaseless conflict between a pet dog and a neighborhood cat, formed the basis of the raven's limited vocal repertory. Although Paul often kept dogs in later life, the laughing raven was apparently his fondest boyhood companion.¹⁷

Paul passed much of his youth, as he later recalled, in the yard of his father's business. There, asphalt-impregnated roofing paper provided him with his first experiences in the art of building. Together with other village boys he would gather scraps of this material, and bits of lath discarded by his father, to build teepees (Indianerzelte) and huts for their childhood games. Yet for Paul these early constructions represented more than a childish pastime. He studied, experimented, and learned through the collaborative efforts of his mind and hands the properties and characteristics of the simple materials available to him. »In the early days of my youth«, he wrote, »my clothes were inevitably stained with tar.«¹⁸ Even as a boy, Paul began to develop the rigor that would serve as the basis of his professional success.

Bruno Paul never spoke of his earliest formal education, but he evidently attended a local village school (Volksschule) to receive the primary education mandated by the Saxon government.¹⁹ Even as a schoolchild, the full weight of his father's ambitions fell upon his shoulders. His brother Reinhard, eighteen years older, had followed his father into the family business, becoming an ironmonger in the neighboring village of Warnsdorf. His brother Otto, fourteen years older, was an agent for the Bruns cigarette company in Eisenach. Two other brothers had died as children, leaving only Bruno to pursue a learned profession.



Dresden

When Paul was twelve years old his parents sent him to Dresden to continue his schooling. Dresden, already known in the nineteenth century as the Florence of the Elbe, was an ideal location for a provincial youth to be immersed in European culture.²⁰ Paul's family enrolled him in the Kreuzschule, a municipal secondary school (städtisches Gymnasium) with a long tradition of religious instruction.²¹ The Kreuzschule was a prestigious and venerable institution, founded as a seminary in the thirteenth century and Protestant since the reformation. Paul's acceptance at the Kreuzschule was a first step towards the realization of his father's ambitions, and an introduction to an educated, respectable life as a clergyman.

The earliest known photographic portrait of Paul, taken in Seifhennersdorf while he was a student at the Kreuzschule, depicts the child of a successful, middle-class family. Even as a boy, he seems to have been fastidious in his dress and personal appearance, a proclivity he would maintain throughout his life.²² Although he proudly held the uniform cap of the Kreuzschule in his portrait, he was not an exemplary student. He apparently did not apply himself, and he never completed the obligatory nine years of study at the Gymnasium. He left the Kreuzschule after only four years.

Though Paul proved unsuited to the ministry, he was still bound to honor his father's ambition. After leaving the Kreuzschule, he enrolled at the teacher training college (Königliches Lehrerseminar) in the Dresden suburb of Friedrichstadt.²³ The Lehrerseminar was essentially a vocational school, and offered neither the cultural enrichment nor the prestige of a Gymnasium education. By enrolling, Paul embarked on a course of study that led only to the lower echelons of the civil service, yet still fulfilled his father's expectations. In Friedrichstadt, he resigned himself to becoming a teacher, and to providing compulsory primary education on behalf of the Saxon government in a school much like the one that he himself had attended as a child. He never completed his studies in Friedrichstadt, however, proving as unsuited to pedagogy as he had been to ministry. He left the Lehrerseminar in 1892.

During the time he was a student in Friedrichstadt, Paul evidently reached the momentous decision to pursue a career in the arts. He apparently worked in an architectural office in Dresden for a year following his departure from the Lehrerseminar, earning his first regular salary as a draftsman.²⁴ His earliest published biography stated that he was a student at the Dresden Kunstgewerbeschule (school of applied arts) during this same period.²⁵ If he was simultaneously working in an architectural office, he may well have received his initial training in the evening classes intended for the education of working apprentices.²⁶ As an assistant in a professional design bureau seeking to refine his technical skills, Paul was a model candidate for evening instruction as a draftsman. The modesty of such an introduction to the applied arts may explain why he seldom discussed his attendance at the Dresden Kunstgewerbeschule in later life. Yet it is certainly appropriate in the context of his career that he should have begun his work as an artist with the straightforward, practical instruction offered in the evening classes at the school of applied arts.

Notwithstanding the benefits of employment, Paul was not content to be an office draftsman: he wanted to be a painter. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the most successful German painters had attained wealth, influence and social prominence. Talented artists enjoyed a degree of freedom unparalleled in German society, and even a draftsman of humble birth could hope to be included among the painter-princes (»Malerfürsten«), the circle of prominent German artists that included Fritz August von Kaulbach, Franz von Lenbach, and Franz Stuck.²⁷ Paul hoped to join this intellectual and cultural elite. In so doing he could respect his father's wishes that he pursue a learned career, while engaging with his own hands in the creative process.

In 1893, Paul enrolled as a student at the Königliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste (Saxon royal academy of arts) to become a painter. In order to be accepted at the academy, he would have had to either present a portfolio of work demonstrating his abilities as an artist, or provide a letter personally commending him to one of the academic professors. He left no indication that he entered the academy on the strength of a letter of recommendation. Moreover, his experience during 1892 was fairly typical of prospective academy students at the end of the nineteenth century. Several of the painter-princes began their training in the schools of applied arts before gaining admittance to one of the royal academies.²⁸ Paul seems to have followed their example, and enrolled in the school of the Saxon academy on the strength of his innate ability, and the determination that accompanied his decision to pursue a career of his own selection.

When Bruno Paul was admitted as a student, the academy in Dresden was at the height of its prestige, and in the process of relocating to the palatial Akademie- und Ausstellungsgebäude



4. Kunstakademie und Kunstaustellungsgebäude Dresden, circa 1920. The academy building on the Brühl Terrace (left foreground) was designed by Constantin Lipsius and completed in 1894.
 5. Drawing from life, undated.
 6. Marienplatz, Munich, circa 1895. The city center, as it appeared upon Paul's arrival from Dresden.

(academy and exhibition building) on the Brühl Terrace above the Elbe. The academy building, a temple of art crowned by a faceted dome and gilt bronze statue of fame, was an elaborately ornamented pastiche of historical architectural forms designed by Constantin Lipsius. A popular building and well-known in Dresden, it was a source of considerable pride.²⁹ It was also a perfect symbol for the academy and its school. At the end of the nineteenth century, the German royal academies were philosophically and methodologically aligned with an inherently conservative interpretation of the fine arts. »The teaching methods were largely those of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The centre-piece of the instruction given was still the drawing from plastercasts for the beginners and from the living model posing à l'antique for the advanced students«, Nikolaus Pevsner later wrote.³⁰ Such a refined and mannered approach to artistic education provided a counterpoint to the emphasis of the schools of applied arts on the education of tradesmen working in the minor arts. The belief in common principles applicable to all forms of artistic expression was a radical notion in 1892, and contrary to the conservative policies of the Saxon academy. Paul did not have long to absorb its ideology, however, since he departed within a year of his enrollment, without recording the names of his professors or the focus of his study.³¹ Once he decided to become an artist, he pursued his objective with a determination wholly lacking in his earlier schooling. By the winter of 1893, Paul's ambitions turned his attention from Dresden to Munich, a city whose reputation as a center of the arts then rivaled that of Paris.

Munich

In 1894, more painters and sculptors lived and worked in Munich than in any other German city.³² This was the era of the radiant Munich immortalized by Thomas Mann in his 1902 novel *Gladius Dei*; *Schwere Stunde*, the city of dreams (*Traumstadt*) of Peter Paul Althaus, the *Schwabylon* of the satirist Roda Roda. The preeminence of Munich as a center of the arts was sufficiently respected in Central Europe to allow the city's large population of resident artists to enjoy an unusually high standard of living. The opportunities available in Munich provided a powerful attraction to the twenty-year-old Bruno Paul, and to innumerable other aspiring artists. In his fragmentary memoirs, Paul recalled his years in the city. »In the last three decades before 1900«, he wrote, »artistic and intellectual tensions found a point of focus in traditional, old-Bavarian Munich.« He praised the conditions of peace and self-sufficiency prevailing in the city at the end of the nineteenth century and conducive to supporting a vibrant and diverse community of artists. In Munich, he noted, »the historical styles slowly faded. At the same time, the emerging artistic trends towards realism, contemporaneity and abstraction found opportunity and support.«³³ It was these developing trends that drew Paul to Munich, and that made the city the center of Germany's artis-



tic avant-garde. Schwabing, the artists' quarter of Munich, was the German Montmartre, and at the edge of Schwabing stood the Königliche Akademie der bildenden Künste (royal academy of fine arts), the most prestigious school of art in the nation. Each year more than five hundred students came to the academy from Europe, Asia and the Americas to learn the techniques of the »Münchener Malerei«, the Munich painting admired throughout the world.

Paul enrolled as a student at the Königliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste in 1894. The nineteenth-century matriculation book of the academy has survived, and his name appears among the students registered in the spring of that year. He was identified as student number 1246, Bruno Paul of Seifhennersdorf in the kingdom of Saxony, son of a Protestant merchant. His age was listed as twenty years, and he was referred to as a student painter, assigned to the atelier of Paul Höcker. This brief record, noted by hand in the registrar's old-fashioned script, marked the end of Paul's provincial childhood.

Paul's professor at the academy, Paul Höcker (1854–1910), was himself a young and progressive artist, one of the one hundred and seven original members of the Verein bildender Künstler Münchens »Sezession« (the Munich secession) founded in 1892.³⁴ His work as a painter demonstrated the realism, contemporaneity, and abstraction that Paul equated with an emerging modernity. When he enrolled in Höcker's atelier and subsequently joined the secession,³⁵ Paul entered the circle of Munich's avant-garde. On the cusp of the twentieth century, Höcker and his fellow secessionists led a movement committed to the reconciliation of modern art and modern life.

The Munich secession to which Paul belonged was the first such organization of progressive artists in Central Europe, and was allied with the separatist artistic movements in France that had nurtured the development of modern European painting.³⁶ Its establishment was motivated by a growing dissatisfaction by the more progressive members of the Münchener Künstlergenossenschaft (association of Munich artists) with the policies governing the exhibitions staged by the association. Many of the early members of the secession were inspired to join by practical considerations, the prospect of better opportunities to display and sell their works promised by the secession's policy of smaller and more selective exhibitions. Nevertheless the executive committee of the secession advocated elite and artistically pure (reinkünstlerische) exhibitions rather than the populist policies of the Künstlergenossenschaft. The ideal of artistic purity was, inevitably, associated with emerging trends in creative expression.

Höcker's work exemplified the prevailing character of the secession. Initially he had specialized in traditional genre paintings and in portraits. During the years when Paul was under his instruction at the academy, his paintings displayed the lyrical qualities of the Modernism emerging in Munich art during the last decade of the nineteenth century. The catalog of the »World's Columbian Exhibition« of 1893, in which Höcker participated, described the characteristics of his work on the eve of Paul's admission to his atelier. »The very modern note is struck by the two paintings

of PAUL HOECKER, the interior of a shoemaker's workshop and the scene between the decks of the iron-clad, H. M. S. DEUTSCHLAND ... On the contrary, his large painting of 'the Nun' is inspired by a touch of pathos and imagination, – the grave, sweet faced novice sitting telling her beads in the convent garden alley suggests many things to any but the most unimaginative spectator.³⁷ These three paintings, with their Naturalist and Symbolist tendencies, were characteristic of the secession.

Only a few drawings by Paul survive from his days as a student in Höcker's atelier: all are in private collections. They reflect the *plein-air* Naturalism that characterized the first secession exhibition of 1893, but show little direct evidence of Höcker's influence. Paul practiced drawing classical nudes at the academy under Höcker's direction, and he produced simple pencil sketches of unposed figures from daily life. But he did not illustrate the rural subjects favored by prominent Munich Naturalists. Rather, he sketched scenes from contemporary urban life, including women on a park bench, a tradesman with his pencil tucked behind his ear, and the passengers on a streetcar.

Paul's interest in drawing scenes of common daily life in Munich paralleled his political inclinations as an academy student. As a young man, he was at least peripherally involved with the socialist cause of the urban working classes. His illustrations appeared in two publications for socialist students, *Der sozialistische Student* and *Sozialistische Monatshefte*.³⁸ He also submitted work to the social-democratic journal *Süddeutscher Postillon*.³⁹ Paul later recalled his contributions to *Süddeutscher Postillon* as his first employment as an illustrator, the beginning of his career as an independent artist.⁴⁰ The journal certainly provided his introduction to social and political satire, a field to which his natural talents proved uniquely suited.

In drawing figures from modern life, Paul displayed an innate capacity for observing and identifying the essential character of his subjects. He refined his ability to suggest intrinsic qualities with a few deftly executed lines, a skill that provided the basis of his later success as a caricaturist. Stylistically, Paul's early graphic works reflected the inspiration of the Japanese woodcuts and medieval decorative design characteristic of progressive graphic art in Munich at the turn of the century. Though many Munich painters at the end of the nineteenth century remained fundamentally conservative, the city's graphic artists were far less bound to convention. Paul was drawn to the creative opportunities inherent to graphic art, though his technique developed from his academic training as a painter. His earliest graphic works were characterized by a simple palette of vivid colors, a subversion of illusionistic perspective, and an abstraction of naturalistic forms into decorative patterns – tendencies apparent in the program cover that Paul designed for a carnival party hosted by the students at the academy in 1896 entitled *Unterwelt* (underworld).

Paul's *Unterwelt* cover illustrates his alignment with the progressive faction within Munich's artistic community that created the Jugendstil. Many were Höcker's students, and regular con-



7. Königliche Akademie der bildenden Künste, Munich, circa 1890. The building where Paul studied to be a painter on Akademiestraße in Schwabing.
8. Franz von Stuck, Villa Stuck, Munich, 1896. Interior.
9. *Unterwelt*, 1896. Program cover for a carnival party.

tributors to the Munich magazine *Jugend* (youth) from which the new style received its name.⁴¹ Yet Paul was also inspired by work undertaken outside of Höcker's atelier, specifically that of another member of the faculty, the prominent Munich artist Franz Stuck (1863–1928).⁴² His *Unterwelt* cover was particularly indebted to Stuck. Superficially, it incorporated themes from Stuck's 1891 painting *Der Mörder* (the murderer), in which three furies pursued a killer fleeing his grisly crime with knife in hand. Paul's furies, on the other hand, tormented an editor grasping a pen.⁴³ The satiric humor of the composition, characteristic of Paul's later work, required familiarity with *Der Mörder*, which had been exhibited in Munich in 1894.⁴⁴ His *Unterwelt* cover was simultaneously an homage to Stuck's work and a parody of it. Paul condensed the striking green and orange tonality of *Der Mörder* to a sharply contrasting palette that owed more to the precedent of Japanese prints than the atmospheric presentation of Stuck's painting. Yet Paul's juxtaposition of fields of green and orange ink also suggested the spatial ambiguities of Greek vase painting or Pompeian frescoes, precedents that were of interest to Stuck in 1896 as he completed the drawings for his Munich villa on the Prinzregentenstraße. Likewise the snakes depicted on Paul's cover transformed a recurring metaphorical image from Stuck's paintings, known in Munich through the exhibition of his scandalous painting *Die Sünde* (the sin) in 1893,⁴⁵ into an abstracted, decorative form recalling the characteristic whiplash curve of the Jugendstil. Ultimately, Paul's *Unterwelt* cover demonstrated a profound understanding of Stuck's work derived from both perceptive observation and cogent analysis. Although it was a synthetic composition, the cover was nevertheless strikingly original, and embodied the rudiments of Paul's unique personal style.

Paul's early admiration of Franz Stuck is particularly significant in light of his subsequent career as an artist. Stuck, too, commenced his artistic education in the applied arts, before studying painting at the Munich academy. He began his professional career as an illustrator and, even after making his name as a painter, maintained his interest in craftsmanship and the minor arts.⁴⁶ For example, he carved the elaborate gilt frames in which he exhibited the majority of his paintings, and produced models for figurative sculptures. While Paul was a student at the academy, Stuck was designing his villa, concurrently working as architect, sculptor, decorative painter, mosaicist, and furniture designer. When completed, the Villa Stuck was a perfect Gesamtkunstwerk, a total work of art. The villa also embodied the union of the fine and applied arts that Stuck celebrated in his drawing *Kunst und Handwerk* (art and craftsmanship). In 1896, Stuck exemplified what Paul himself would later become: a proponent of a modern art that reunited multiple fields of design and craftsmanship within a single, coherent discipline. And, like Stuck, Paul would begin his career as an illustrator.

The keen and perceptive humor of Paul's *Unterwelt* cover, with its layered references, proved to have a widespread popular appeal, and was reprinted in the eighth issue of the influential journal *Jugend* during 1896.⁴⁷ *Jugend* provided Paul's introduction to the emerging field of graphic art. It was a fortuitous match; the modern graphic style of *Jugend*, which combined numerous disciplines of the applied arts, was fundamentally suited to Paul's unique talents as an artist.⁴⁸ The first defining moment in Paul's life occurred when he determined to pursue a career in the arts; the second occurred when he recognized that his future did not lie in traditional studio art, but in the new art of the Jugendstil.

In 1896, Bruno Paul was twenty-two years old. He had completed his formal education and stood on the threshold of his professional career. He had also joined the circle of progressive Munich artists committed to reshaping contemporary life through the reform of contemporary art, and he exemplified the character and experiences of the first generation of Central European Modernists. At the same time, however, he had also demonstrated a tenacious determination to find his own way in the world.





10, 11. *Kraft und Stoff, Geist und Gemüse* (Strength and Substance, Intellect and Vegetables), 1897.
 12. *Vision*, 1896.
 13. *Seelen* (Souls), 1896.
 14. *Die Frau vor dem Rad, hinter dem Rad und auf dem Rad* (Woman before the Wheel, behind the Wheel, and on the Wheel), 1896.

2. Turn of the century in Munich and the culture of youth: 1896–1906

At the end of the nineteenth century, when Bruno Paul was a student in Munich, the cultural vitality of the Bavarian capital was unparalleled in Germany. There he joined the artistic avant-garde that had founded the Munich secession, the first such movement in Central Europe. Its establishment paralleled the emergence of modern movements in the theatre, literature, graphic arts, and popular politics, all of which drew their support from the same progressive tendencies in German society. Two new illustrated magazines, *Simplicissimus* and *Jugend*, disseminated Munich's culture of youth throughout the German empire, and launched Paul's career as an artist.

Bruno Paul as illustrator

Despite his innate abilities, Paul did not distinguish himself as a studio painter. Although he briefly operated an atelier in collaboration with his friend Rudolf Wilke,⁴⁹ this venture proved unsuccessful.⁵⁰ He soon abandoned his studio and became a regular contributor to the monthly magazine *Jugend*. Painting, even among the membership of the Munich secession, remained inherently conservative. Illustration, on the other hand, which reflected the evolving technology of photomechanical reproduction and which promised broad popular exposure, was a realm of uncharted opportunities. Paul, with the enthusiasm of youth, chose to pursue the latter career.

Founded in 1896 by the publisher Georg Hirth, *Jugend* soon established a relationship with the circle of Munich's progressive artists to which Paul belonged. Thirteen of the twenty founding members of the secession published works in *Jugend*, as did many of the »Malerfürsten«, including Franz von Lenbach and Franz Stuck.⁵¹ The journal printed reproductions of notable contemporary works by artists as diverse as Lovis Corinth and Auguste Rodin, but it also provided opportunities for the younger artists who were responsible for the »decorative revival« of the Jugendstil.⁵² *Jugend* provided a venue for artistic experimentation, encouraged by advances in printing technology that produced the strong, simple colors characteristic of the journal. Together with his Munich contemporaries Otto Eckmann, Emil Orlik, Bernhard Pankok, and Richard Riemerschmid, Paul experimented on the pages of *Jugend* with flowing curves and abstracted natural forms suggestive of the Art Nouveau of Belgium and France. Their work for the publication was representative of Munich's culture of youth during the final decade of the nineteenth century.

Paul's illustrations for *Jugend* constituted his first professional success. His contributions differed significantly from those of Eckmann, Orlik, Pankok, or Riemerschmid; they were, notwithstanding the methods of their composition, closer to the aesthetic of the graphic arts than to traditional painting.⁵³ His illustration *Die Frau vor dem Rad, hinter dem Rad und auf dem Rad*,⁵⁴ for example, was typical of his illustrations for the magazine. The inclusion of text and decorative borders as elements of the composition indicated his departure from the conventions of painting, as did the spare, impressionistic use of line with which he portrayed the human figure. Conversely, he depicted implements and machinery in precise if suggestive detail. As a young man, Paul regarded the artifacts of human ingenuity with analytical detachment; he did not sketch an object without understanding how it functioned and how it had been assembled. He observed human subjects with equal solicitude, but depicted them in a manner that was more empathetic than precise. Paul's emerging style of caricature was exemplified by the pair of illustrations *Kraft und Stoff* (strength and substance) and *Geist und Gemüse* (intellect and vegetables)⁵⁵, in which the soft, amorphous figures of the first illustration contrasted with the attenuated, angular figures of



the second. The visual analogy was no less effective for its simplicity, a quality ideally suited to the medium of its reproduction.

Notwithstanding his explorations of the conventions of printed art, Paul never renounced his academic training as a painter. His illustrations for *Jugend* reflected his continuing admiration for Franz Stuck. His compositions *Adam u. Eva* (Adam and Eve),⁵⁶ *Vision* (vision),⁵⁷ and *Der Sündenfall* (the fall of man)⁵⁸ were all variations on the symbolism of Stuck's notorious *Die Sünde* (the sin). Moreover, Paul often adopted specific details from Stuck's paintings. The suggestive Lilly of Stuck's *Innocentia* (innocence) of 1889, for example, reappeared in Paul's drawing *Vision*, just as the knotted serpents of Stuck's *Medusa* of 1892 appeared as a decorative border for *Adam u. Eva*. In addition, many of Paul's captions employed the antique letter forms that Stuck preferred, such as his illustration for Victor Hardung's poem *Seelen* (souls).⁵⁹ Paul's *Seelen* was a perfect expression of the interrelationship of the Jugendstil and the broader Symbolist movement, particularly as embraced by Stuck. Yet Paul transformed the portentous biblical and mythological themes beloved of the Symbolists into a critique of contemporary society as he developed his own personal style. In so doing, he produced a series of commentaries that were both sharper and more satiric than the majority of illustrations in *Jugend*. They were, in fact, closer to the spirit of the Munich weekly *Simplicissimus*, the magazine that would make Paul's reputation as an artist.

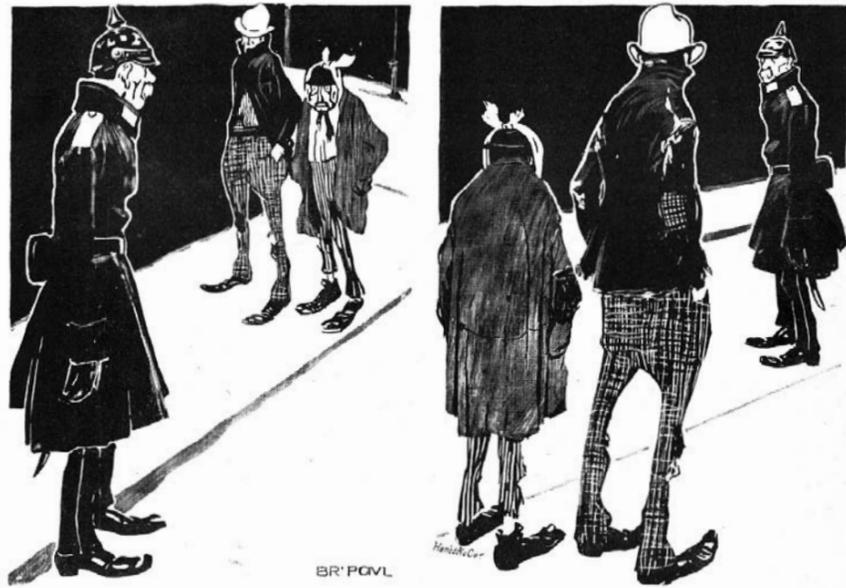
Simplicissimus

In the spring of 1897, Paul accepted a position as an illustrator for *Simplicissimus*. Albert Langen, a Munich publisher, had established the weekly magazine the previous year in conjunction with the secession painter Thomas Theodor Heine.⁶⁰ They conceived *Simplicissimus* as an erudite literary journal, and the first issues contained songs and poems as well as prose contributions by prominent authors including the young Thomas Mann and the playwright Frank Wedekind. Although its format was similar to that of *Jugend*, *Simplicissimus* distinguished itself through its biting social and political satire. Indeed, Langen soon abandoned his original ambitions for *Simplicissimus*, and printed a magazine wholly devoted to sarcastic commentary on both the German government and popular morality.⁶¹ This boldness prompted the Bavarian government to ban an 1898 issue of *Simplicissimus* satirizing a pilgrimage to the Holy Land undertaken by Kaiser Wilhelm II, and to condemn Heine and Wedekind to six months imprisonment in the fortress of Königstein for insulting the emperor, the crime of *lèse majesté*. Langen himself fled Munich to spend five years in Paris as a political exile. Governmental censure, however, only provoked popular support for the magazine and confirmed its reputation as the embodiment of the bold and irreverent spirit of Munich's cultural avant-garde. This spirit had already begun to manifest itself in the March of 1897, when Paul's first full-page illustration, *Entwurf zu einem Denkmal für den Deutschen Michel* (project for a monument to the average German), appeared in *Simplicissimus*.⁶²

When Paul joined *Simplicissimus*, the members of the staff were retained as salaried employees. His acceptance of such a paid position was yet one step further removed from his father's ambition that he should become a clergyman or a teacher. But Gustav Paul died on 28 February 1897 at the age of sixty-one, freeing Bruno from the burden of paternal expectation. Joining the staff of *Simplicissimus* was a clear assertion of his independence, a final renunciation of his early, half-hearted efforts to enter one of the traditional learned professions.

As an employee of *Simplicissimus*, Paul published more than four hundred illustrations over nine years, in a style unlike that employed by any of the other artists on the staff. His early illustration *Entwurf zu einem Denkmal für den Deutschen Michel* demonstrated the lingering influence of Stuck and the traditions of academic art in the form of the antique altar that formed the base of the proposed monument as well as the classicizing form of his signature: BR. PAVL. However his devotion to such precedents was soon supplanted by his own emerging, idiosyncratic style, already apparent in his illustration *Vis-à-vis*, published in March 1897.⁶³

Paul's graphic vocabulary was related directly to the manner in which he composed, using India ink, pencil, charcoal and watercolor. Although he utilized a variety of media, his illustrations reflected his training as a painter. As he refined his skills, Paul relied less frequently upon pencil underdrawings for his illustrations, instead composing directly with a brush. His originals were significantly larger than the printed versions in *Simplicissimus*; at an average size of 30 x 40 cm, they were painterly in scale as well as technique.⁶⁴ One of the few surviving paintings by Paul, a 1900 composition entitled *Alles eine Nummer zu groß!* (everything one size too large!), demonstrated



15. *Vis-à-vis* (Face to Face), 1897. The caption, in the dialectical German of Bavaria, reads: »Are they for real, or is this a masquerade?« »Is that a policeman, or is this a masquerade?«.

16. *Alles eine Nummer zu groß!* (Everything One Size Too Large!), 1900. Painting in the style of Franz von Lenbach, depicting Chancellor Bernhard von Bülow wearing Bismarck's gala uniform.

17. Untitled illustration for *Agricola*, 1897.

18. *Entwurf zu einem Denkmal für den deutschen Michel* (Project for a Monument to the Average German), 1897.

19. *Mißraten* (Gone Astray), 1897. »Rector: So what have you made of yourself, Mr. Baumann? – I'm a painter, Sir. – A painter! But your father was such a good, respectable man.«

20. *Sonderbarer Optimismus* (Misplaced Optimism), 1898. »Why are these modern artists always so prone to exaggeration? Nobody is as ugly as these drawings.«



his intermingling of the fine and graphic arts. The subject of the painting was closely related to his work for *Simplicissimus*: chancellor Bernhard von Bülow wearing Bismarck's gala uniform.⁶⁵ In fact, the painting appeared on the cover of the magazine in 1900.⁶⁶ Yet Paul composed his portrait of the chancellor with the confident hand and practiced eye of an accomplished academic painter. Nevertheless the work was not merely a caricature of Bülow, but a sophisticated parody of the work of Franz von Lenbach, and particularly of his well-known portraits of Bismarck, which numbered more than eighty upon the artist's death in 1904.⁶⁷ However, Paul did not parody a specific painting by Lenbach but rather his style, which was rich and luminous in the tradition of the old masters.

As in his illustrations for *Jugend*, the human subjects of Paul's illustrations for *Simplicissimus* were distorted, composed of amorphous fields of color that frequently approached pure abstraction, and were often ideally suited to mechanical reproduction. His remarkable attention to detail was manifested in his careful depiction of the military uniforms, furniture, buildings, mechanical devices, and regional costumes that endowed his caricatures with their immediacy and facile humor. The majority of the visible amendments to his originals were corrections to such technical details, or refinements to the few portraits that Paul included in his work, such as a caricature of the department store magnate Wolf Wertheim, published in the 1902 illustration *Weihnachten bei Wertheim* (Christmas at Wertheim).⁶⁸ The caption epitomized Paul's critical humor. »Why shouldn't we celebrate his birthday?« it read. »He brought our lovely Christmas business into the world.«⁶⁹ The 1898 drawing *Sonderbarer Optimismus* (misplaced optimism)⁷⁰ was also typical of Paul's work. In careful detail, he reproduced the heavy, eclectic furnishings of a middle-class German home of the last decade of the nineteenth century. Again the caption reflected his self-effacing wit. »Why are these modern artists always so prone to exaggeration?« he wrote. »Nobody is as ugly as these drawings.«⁷¹ Paul considered himself to be one such modern artist. Yet he was well compensated for his work, and could be counted in his own right as a member of the Bavarian middle class. He was, in fact, precisely the sort of parvenu he regularly satirized. He was a reformer rather than a revolutionary, committed to change from within. He mocked the shortcomings of a culture he hoped to improve, and to which his success as an illustrator had granted admission.

Despite his prolific contributions to *Simplicissimus*, Paul found time to pursue other artistic interests. He was involved with the group of painters working in Dachau, a rural community in the marshy moorlands northwest of Munich. At the end of the nineteenth century, the quiet town was a popular destination for Munich artists seeking the inspiration of either the atmospheric local landscape or the picturesque Bavarian peasantry. The secession painter Adolf Hölzel was among those working in Dachau during the 1890s.⁷² Paul was a frequent guest at Hölzel's lodgings, where he met the author and playwright Ludwig Thoma.⁷³ Thoma hired Hölzel and Paul to illustrate his book *Agricola*, an account of rural life published in Passau in 1897. Hölzel would provide the landscape illustrations for *Agricola*, Paul the character studies. Paul completed a series of sketches for the book in the village of Lauterbach near Dachau, composing his drawings with the keen characterization and loose manner of his work for *Simplicissimus*, rather than the lyrical style of the Dachau painters. They paralleled the origins of abstract art, a form of expression closely related to his forceful caricature. Significantly, Hölzel himself was creating purely abstract drawings by the end of the century, more than a decade earlier than Kandinsky's first nonobjective experiments.⁷⁴

Paul's character studies for *Agricola* inspired Albert Langen to commission illustrations for several volumes in a series of modern works introduced in 1897 as the *Kleine Bibliothek Langen* (Langen's compact library). Paul provided a decorative Jugendstil cover for Heinrich Mann's *Das Wunderbare* and a cover in the style of his *Simplicissimus* vignettes for *Der wilde Jockey* by Fritz Mauthner. He also illustrated several more of Thoma's books including *Die Medaille*, *Komödie in einem Akt* (the medal, in one act) of 1900; *Assessor Karichen* (Karichen the civil servant) of 1901; and *Die Hochzeit, eine Bauerngeschichte* (the wedding, a peasant history) of 1902. Paul's cover for *Assessor Karichen*,⁷⁵ with its bold disavowal of artistic convention and its subversive sensuality, was typical of his contemporary work. All of these books, including those by Thoma, were originally published in Munich by the Langen Verlag. Paul had introduced Thoma to Langen and the *Simplicissimus* circle or »Simpl-Kreis«, as the staff of the magazine was known, at the Café Heck on the Munich Odeonsplatz in 1897.⁷⁶ This introduction proved particularly fortuitous. When Langen began his Parisian exile in 1899, he selected Thoma, who had become a regular contributor, to edit *Simplicissimus* during his absence. Under Thoma's guidance, the magazine continued to grow in both readership and influence. Paul, who had initiated

the alliance between Langen and Thoma, became a Munich celebrity, a leading member of the Simpl-Kreis.

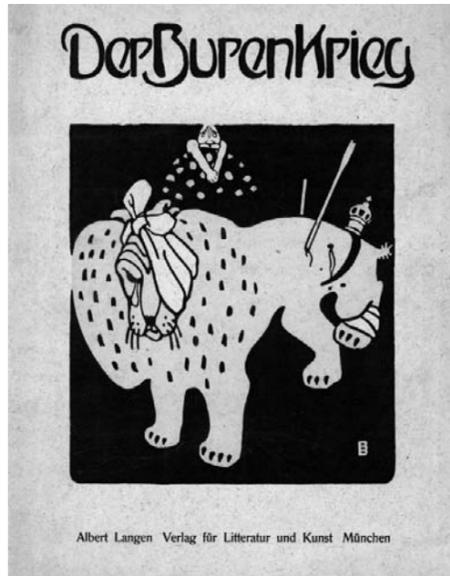
The celebrated staff of *Simplicissimus* enjoyed a bohemian camaraderie. They shared in their social and recreational activities, and enjoyed the intimacy of an extended family. Paul traveled widely with Thoma, including a 1902 bicycle tour through Italy undertaken with the illustrators Wilke, Eduard Thöny, and Ferdinand Freiherr von Reznicek. For this group of young artists, the bicycle was a symbol of modern life and modern leisure. In fact several of these artists were employed by the Opel bicycle company⁷⁷ in 1898 to produce a popular series of advertisements promoting its products. The group also engaged in such short-lived obsessions as bicycle polo, in which Paul was an avid participant. With and without their bicycles, he and Wilke paid extended visits to Georg Hirth, the publisher of *Jugend*, in the Bavarian Alps. Paul skied in the Finsterwald with Olaf Gulbransson, and enacted vignettes from the Franco-Prussian war in a beer-cellar presentation of Thoma's *Pippinger Veteransfest*. He gathered with his colleagues to celebrate the Munich carnival, Fasching, with the enthusiastic irreverence for which *Simplicissimus* was renowned. This close-knit group embodied the spirit of the Munich avant-garde at the close of the nineteenth century. Paul commented on the life of his fellow artists in his drawing *Mißbraten* (gone astray) of 1897, the caption to which read »Rector: So what have you made of yourself, Mr. Baumann? – I'm a painter, sir. – A painter! But your father was such a good, respectable man.«⁷⁸ Dismissing many of the social conventions of the waning nineteenth century, the bohemian staff of *Simplicissimus* formed their own brilliant community in Schwabing.

It was through the *Simplicissimus* circle that Paul met and courted Paula Maria Graf, the beautiful, red-haired daughter of the prominent Munich banker Friedrich Karl Graf. The young couple married in Strasbourg on 14 December 1899, far from their respective families.⁷⁹ At the time, Maria was already five months pregnant. While such a pregnancy was by no means an uncommon occurrence among Munich's young artists at the turn of the century, it would not have been expected of the daughter of a prominent financier.⁸⁰ That Paul was able to attract a member of Munich society like Maria Graf attests to the recognition he had obtained through *Simplicissimus*. He had also achieved financial security by 1901, when he, Maria, and their newborn daughter Hildegard moved into a comfortable two story semi-detached house at Gernerstraße 4 in the fashionable Munich district of Neuhausen. Paul's house, which overlooked the canal on the grand axis of Nymphenburg palace, reflected both the material success and social status that he had attained. Unlike the overwhelming majority of idealistic artists, even in turn-of-the-century Munich, the members of the Simpl-Kreis were handsomely rewarded for their efforts.

Simplicissimus and liberal politics

The year of Bruno Paul's marriage was marked by a significant international crisis that provoked an immediate response in the pages of *Simplicissimus*, offering an insight into the complex, and ostensibly contradictory, political positions of the journal and its staff. The Boer War began in October 1899 when a dispute over sovereignty between the British Colonial Office and Dutch settlers in the Transvaal escalated into armed conflict. In Germany, the plight of the Boers aroused widespread public interest as a consequence of the perceived cultural kinship between the Boers, who had emigrated from the Netherlands, and the Germans. Moreover, British military action against the Boer Republic promised to subject the whole of southern Africa to English hegemony, a triumph that would stand in stark contrast to the abject failure of German ambitions on the continent. *Simplicissimus* provided an ideal venue for the expression of ambivalent German feelings towards the conflict in the Transvaal.

Paul's drawings from the period of the Boer War were not so much pro-Boer as they were anti-English. He produced so many of these drawings during the years of conflict in Africa that he was selected to design the cover for Albert Langen's book *Der Burenkrieg* (The Boer War), a supplement to *Simplicissimus* published in 1900.⁸¹ His drawing *Englische Zivilisation*⁸² was a typical example of his commentary on the Boer War. The caption proclaimed »We can hire men for five shillings a day to carry on the greatest wars for the honor of our nation. No English gentleman would be a party to such dirty manual labor.«⁸³ In his drawings, Paul ruthlessly satirized Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) and the uncle of Kaiser Wilhelm II, as a fat, drunken libertine.⁸⁴ In addition, he also produced inflammatory comments on alleged English atrocities, as in the drawing *Der Raubmord in Südafrika* (robbery and murder in South Africa) which appeared on the cover of *Simplicissimus* in 1900.⁸⁵ The caption for this illustration read:



21. Cover for Ludwig Thoma's *Assessor Karlichen*, 1901.

23. *Am Ziel* (At the Destination), 1898. Advertisement for Opel bicycles and Henkell Sekt published in the magazine *Über Land und Meer*.

22. Cover for *Der Burenkrieg*, 1900.

24. *Der Raubmord in Südafrika* (Robbery and Murder in South Africa), 1900. »(The Queen) Don't worry Joe, those men back there won't disturb us, they're my relatives!«



(The Queen:) »Don't worry Joe, those men back there won't disturb us, they're my relatives!«⁸⁶ The Joe in the drawing, a lanky figure brandishing a long knife, was British Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain. The man in the background wearing a Cossack hat was Nicolas II, Czar of Russia. The figure in a *Pickelhaube*, the spiked Prussian helmet, was Wilhelm II.⁸⁷ Queen Victoria's personal and military domination of her Prussian grandson was at the crux of the anti-English sentiment of *Simplicissimus*, and of Paul's vitriolic illustrations concerning the war in Africa.

Though *Simplicissimus* supported the strength and independence of the German government with respect to international affairs and the Kaiser's independence of his grandmother's policies, the position of the journal regarding internal politics was distinctly different. Throughout its history, *Simplicissimus* was consistently critical of the military, the bureaucracy, the power of the church, and the excesses of the capitalist elite. As a consequence, the journal was associated with the political left. During the first years of the twentieth century the political right in Bavaria was dominated by the moralistic and conservative policies of the military and the power of the hereditary monarchy. The contemporary Zentrumspartei (center party) was both religious and particularistic, and sponsored repressive policies such as the notorious Lex Heinze of 1900. This law, named for a Berlin pimp, was intended to counter the morally destructive influence of a broadly defined pornography. As originally written, the law would have imposed harsh punishments upon graphic artists and playwrights whose work was deemed to be obscene. In light of the obtrusive policies of the ostensible center, it was inevitable that the Munich Modernists, and particularly the circle responsible for the pervasive eroticism of *Jugend*, should be driven to the left. Paul summarized his own opposition to the Lex Heinze and its supporters with his drawing *Der Cylinderhut als Feigenblatt* (the top hat as fig leaf) of 1900.⁸⁸ He was clearly provoking the censors with this drawing, and the obvious double entendre that it contained. But *Der Cylinderhut als Feigenblatt* was printed amidst a deluge of satirical commentary on the Lex Heinze that appeared in the pages of *Simplicissimus* and other popular publications during 1900, and Paul's provocation went unanswered. Nevertheless opposition to the Lex Heinze was sufficiently widespread to prevent passage of the legislation in its original form, largely as a consequence of the efforts of Paul and other avant-garde artists to draw popular attention to what would have otherwise been an obscure legal proceeding. He played an active role in opposing the policies of the right concerning the Boer War and of the center concerning the Lex Heinze. Ironically, he was equally successful in his opposition to the policies of his own employers.

In his memoirs, Paul noted that while on the staff of *Simplicissimus* he and Thomas Theodor Heine had been supporters of »international« and »radical«, that is to say socialist, politics.⁸⁹ Heine was, in fact, internationally regarded as a »rabid social democrat.«⁹⁰ Yet the most radical political action in which Paul actively participated during his years in Munich occurred within the offices of *Simplicissimus*, when in 1906 the staff of the journal disputed the absolute authority wielded by Langen. The artistic contributors threatened to establish their own, competing publication if Langen did not offer to share a percentage of the profits earned by the journal. The editor relented, reestablishing his magazine as a corporation. Paul and his coworkers each invested 1400 Marks in *Simplicissimus* GmbH to become shareholders in the new company.⁹¹ The reorganization of *Simplicissimus* represented a shrewd and profitable commercial undertaking by its staff. Wherever Paul's political sympathies lay in 1906, he himself had become a successful capitalist with an income sufficient to establish himself in a comfortable, middle-class life.⁹²

Modern graphic art and modern life

The spirit of reform that Paul and his fellow members of the Munich avant-garde promoted was not confined to individual disciplines, but rather embraced the Jugendstil ideal of the Gesamtkunstwerk: the total work of art. Modern art, modern politics, modern work, modern dress, and modern theater were all perceived as facets of the Gesamtkunstwerk of modern life that was the ultimate goal of the Munich reformers. As a member of this avant-garde, Paul's own artistic efforts quickly assumed the same interdisciplinary character as the broader movement, a trend that would have significant consequences for his later career.

Soon after joining the staff of *Simplicissimus*, Paul began preparing graphic designs for firms that advertised in the journal, or were otherwise supportive of Munich's progressive artists. An early logotype for the printers Michael Huber, completed by 1898, epitomized these designs. It was an exemplary expression of the Jugendstil, combining type design, painterly representation, and purely abstract composition. The serpent in the composition recalled his earliest graphic de-

signs, and their homage to Stuck. However by 1898 Paul had perfected a uniquely personal mode of expression.

In 1901, Bruno Paul designed a poster for the »1. Ausstellung für Kunst im Handwerk« (first exhibition of art in handicraft). His *Reiherplakat* (heron poster), was one of the finest expressions of the Jugendstil aesthetic. It was praised in the magazine *Innen-Dekoration* as thoroughly modern and devoid of any trace of retrospection – even if the heron itself recalled Paul's earlier work for Michael Huber.⁹³ It became, in fact, an iconic image of the Munich Jugendstil, an embodiment of the spirit of the city's avant-garde. The heron poster was even the subject of an illustration in *Jugend* by Angelo Jank in which it was contrasted with a provincial couple reminiscent of Paul's illustrations for *Agricola*, representatives of a hidebound, conservative society. Paul's mastery of the Jugendstil was reflected in the manifest beauty with which he expressed artistic innovation. He developed this mastery in compositions for *Simplicissimus* such as *Deutsche Weihnachten* (German Christmas) of 1899.⁹⁴ Yet the caption for this graceful illustration was bitterly sarcastic: »In solemnity the angel of Christmas floats down to grant peace and good fortune to the Germans. To her regret, she finds nobody at home: the entire nation sits in prison for *lèse majesté*.«⁹⁵ Nevertheless Paul himself remained unpunished for this particular offence.

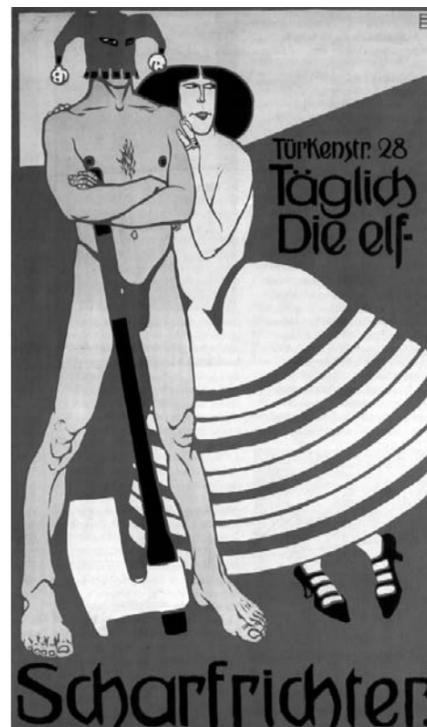
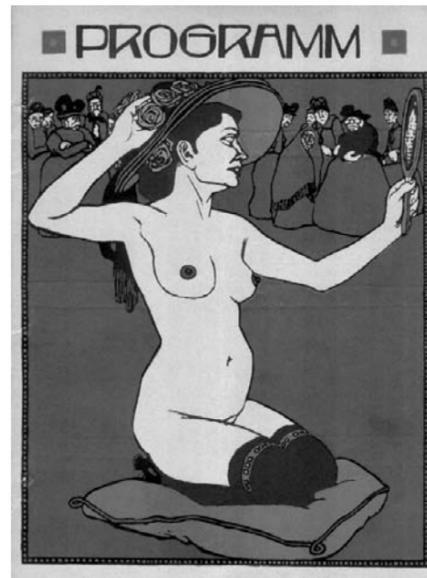
In the same year that Paul designed his heron poster, he created a program cover for the Elf Scharfrichter (eleven executioners), a satirical cabaret inspired by the famous Paris cabaret *Le Chat Noir*. The Elf Scharfrichter were supported by the circle of artists to which Paul belonged: Hirth and Stuck were financial backers, and Wedekind was a member of the ensemble.⁹⁶ The format of the cabaret allowed its performers to address issues too controversial or sensitive to be presented in print or on canvas.⁹⁷ During the two years of its existence, the Elf Scharfrichter offered scathing criticisms of the hypocritical religious, political and moral attitudes of the Wilhelmine middle classes. Paul may not have been a member of the closed society that sponsored the cabaret, but he was certainly among the inner circle of its artistic supporters, a group that included both Heine and Ernst Neumann.⁹⁸

Paul's program cover for the Elf Scharfrichter was striking for its stark and earnest sensuality. His drawing of a female nude was far more provocative than the unclothed figures that had become a staple of *Jugend*. The cover was a challenge to conventional morality, and particularly to the Catholic center party that had sponsored the Lex Heinze. The old women in the background of Paul's composition, clad in sober black, have been interpreted as an embodiment of the Catholic center, a satirical reference typical of his biting sense of humor.⁹⁹ Paul contrasted these figures with his nude subject just as Jank had juxtaposed two bemused provincials with the heron poster. The Elf Scharfrichter cover embodied the union of modern art and modern life, and a condemnation of the mores of the nineteenth century.

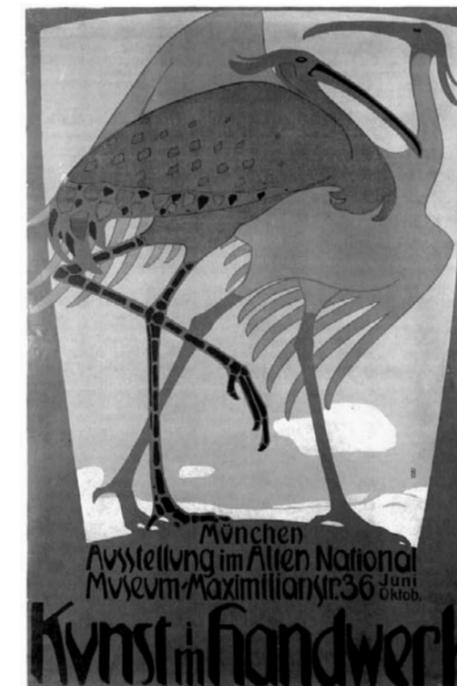
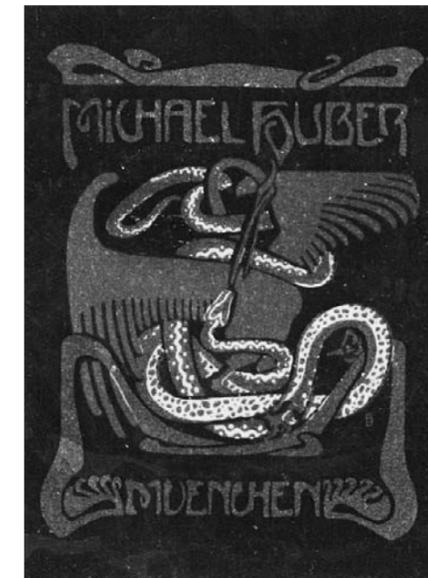
Paul also designed a poster for the Elf Scharfrichter in 1903, the last year of the cabaret's existence. He employed the same basic colors as in the earlier heron poster, as well as a derivation of the same idiosyncratic alphabet. Yet the two posters were stylistically distinct. The heron poster, with its exotic, natural forms and gorgeous, muted colors, exemplified the aesthetic of the Jugendstil. The *Scharfrichter* poster, with its hard, bright hues and abstract, geometric background, prefigured Modernist graphic design. Nevertheless, the artistic construction of the later poster was clearly derived from that of the earlier. The ambiguous relationship of figure and ground that Paul established in the Heron Poster by establishing a continuous field of color for the printed border and the legs of the two striding birds also characterized the *Scharfrichter* poster. In the later design, a series of concentric yellow stripes set against the red field effectively suggested a rounded form in space, despite the lack of any device of illusionistic perspective.

The inherent similarities between the two posters revealed underlying trends in Paul's work as an artist. The predominance of abstract, thematic issues over purely stylistic ones characterized both designs. While the two posters were stylistically dissimilar, the alternating use of a continuous red field as figure and ground was central to each composition. As a pair, the posters illustrate Paul's tendency to explore differing interpretations of a central theme, a practice that he perfected as an illustrator for *Simplicissimus*. That he could produce, with equal facility, classic examples of printed art in both the naturalistic vocabulary of the Jugendstil and the abstract, geometric vocabulary of an emerging Modernism illustrates the artistic versatility that was a fundamental characteristic of Paul's work.

These same trends were apparent in Paul's work as an applied artist which, like his poster for the Elf Scharfrichter, originated in the Simpl-Kreis. *Simplicissimus* stood near the center of the Gesamtkunstwerk of modern life that Paul and his colleagues were shaping. The significance of the magazine as a representative of the modern ethos in Munich was raised in 1903 by a dele-



- 25. Program cover for the Elf Scharfrichter, 1901.
- 26. Poster for the Elf Scharfrichter, 1903.
- 27. Poster for the »1. Ausstellung für Kunst im Handwerk« (»Reiherplakat«), 1901.
- 28. Logotype for the printers Michael Huber, 1898.
- 29. *Streit der Moden* (Quarrel of the Fashions), 1905. »Above all the reform dress is hygienic, and keeps the body conditioned for the demands of motherhood. As long as you're dressed in those rags, you won't have to worry about that particular embarrassment.«
- 30. *Deutsche Weihnachten* (A German Christmas), 1899. »In solemnity the angel of Christmas floats down to grant peace and good fortune to the Germans. To her regret, she finds nobody at home: the entire nation sits in prison for *lèse majesté*.«



gate to the Bavarian parliament who denounced the pernicious influences of a *versimplicis-simusten Gesellschaft* (Simplicissimusified society); in his diatribe he condemned at a single stroke progressive movements in literature, politics and art.¹⁰⁰ Paul's 1905 illustration *Streit der Moden* (quarrel of the fashions) epitomized the attitudes of this Simplicissimusified society.¹⁰¹ »Above all the reform dress is hygienic, and keeps the body conditioned for the demands of motherhood«, read the caption, echoing the proponents of the simple, practical Reformkleid. »As long as you're dressed in those rags«, came the reply, »you won't have to worry about that particular embarrassment.«¹⁰² Although Paul himself never designed a Reformkleid, by 1905 he had turned to the applied arts to extend this influence from the public realm of artistic expression to the private domain of daily life.

Bruno Paul and the applied arts

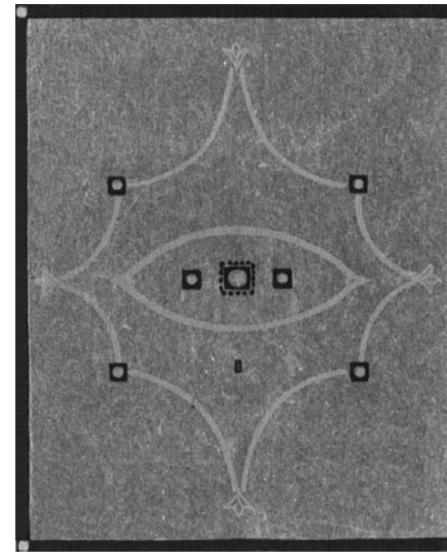
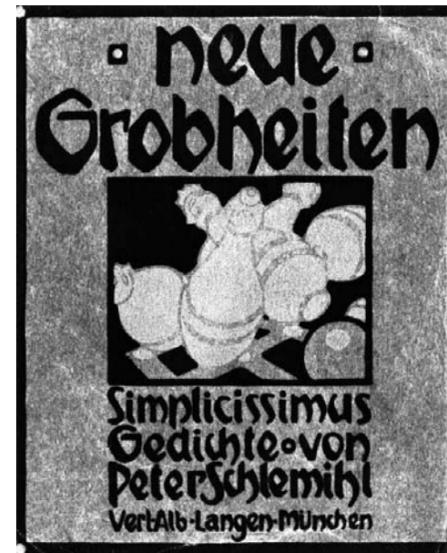
Paul's engagement with *Simplicissimus* and the circle of progressive artists on its staff led directly to his career in the decorative arts, and to his participation in the development of the Kunstgewerbebewegung (applied arts movement). He apparently executed his first furniture designs for his colleague Heine in 1897. Heine had rented an apartment furnished in the heavy, historicist style favored in nineteenth-century Munich. Despairing of his landlord's taste in decoration, he enlisted his friend and fellow *Simplicissimus* illustrator Paul to compose something more in keeping with the spirit of the times. Although there is no surviving evidence to corroborate this story, which Paul himself told in 1966,¹⁰³ he was already demonstrating the natural abilities that would foster his success as an architect and a decorative artist shortly after joining the staff of *Simplicissimus*. He soon found a client for his work in the Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk (united workshops for art in handicraft).

The Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk was incorporated in Munich in 1898 by a group of artists who had participated in the »VII. Internationale Kunstausstellung im Königlichen Glaspalaste in München« (seventh international art exhibition in the royal glass palace in Munich),¹⁰⁴ held in 1897. Paul was a member of the circle of progressive Munich artists who had exhibited at the seventh international exhibition, many of whom belonged to the Sezession. The Sezession fostered an atmosphere of artistic synthesis that inspired members such as Riemerschmid, Peter Behrens, and Adalbert Niemeyer to expand their work to include the design and production of furniture, metalwork, clothing, and other artifacts of modern life. The spirit of the Gesamtkunstwerk also pervaded the rooms devoted to the applied arts at the VII. Internationale Kunstausstellung. These rooms were among the most popular at the exhibition, and prompted such enthusiastic reviews as the article »Endlich ein Umschwung« (finally a change for the better) in the influential journal *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*.¹⁰⁵ The successful inclusion of the applied arts in the seventh international exhibition inspired the foundation of the Ausschuß für Kunst im Handwerk (the committee for artistry in craftsmanship) to promote the continued exhibition of decorative arts at the annual exhibitions of fine art. The very wording of its title, »Kunst im Handwerk« (artistry in craft), became a rallying cry for the Kunstgewerbebewegung, and a synopsis of its principal objective.¹⁰⁶ On 13 April 1898, its members incorporated the Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk G.m.b.H. in Munich.¹⁰⁷ The Vereinigte Werkstätten was dedicated to the development and promotion of the decorative arts through the manufacture and sale of artist-designed housewares, a pragmatic recasting of the original ideals of the applied arts movement. Though Paul is frequently cited as one of the founders of the Vereinigte Werkstätten,¹⁰⁸ the documents of incorporation for the firm indicate otherwise.¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, he was providing furniture designs for the company within a year of its establishment, and he quickly became one of its most prolific and successful designers.

The Vereinigte Werkstätten manufactured the earliest documented furnishings and interiors designed by Paul. He must have demonstrated his abilities as a decorative artist prior to receiving his first commission from the Werkstätten, but his development as a designer paralleled the history of the firm. Initially he designed in the curvilinear Jugendstil vocabulary of the pieces he exhibited in 1897.¹¹⁰ The vestibule that Paul designed for the »Kunst-Ausstellung Dresden« (Dresden art exhibition) of 1899 was typical of this early work.

Paul's work for the 1899 »Kunst-Ausstellung Dresden« illustrates the origins of his practice as an applied artist. The paneling, doorcases, and furniture were notable for the linear character of their ornamental embellishments. Paul used opulent and expensive materials in his design, including mahogany, brass, bookmatched black marble slabs, and yellow opalescent glazing. Yet he

31. Room of applied arts at the »VII. internationale Kunstausstellung«, 1897. The room illustrated was furnished by the Ausschuß für Kunst im Handwerk.
32. Vestibule exhibited at the »Kunst-Ausstellung Dresden«, 1899. Executed by the Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk.
33, 34. Cover for *Neue Grobheiten*, 1903.



employed these materials in a painterly manner, utilizing them to create a sumptuous visual experience without clear acknowledgement of their differing tectonic capabilities. The graphic quality of Paul's vestibule was summarized in the frieze that he stenciled on the walls. The frieze was entirely two-dimensional, a direct translation of his printed work to an architectural scale. It was clearly related to his book illustrations for Albert Langen, such as his design for the back cover of Peter Schlemihl's *Neue Grobheiten*.¹¹¹ Paul had never worked as a sculptor, and his room for the »Kunst-Ausstellung Dresden« lacked the plastic quality of contemporary works by Hermann Obrist or August Endell, who translated graphic conventions to three-dimensional forms.¹¹²

Yet Paul matured quickly as a designer. He continued to employ the fluid curvilinear forms of the Jugendstil, but he soon abandoned the applied decoration of his projects for the »Kunst-Ausstellung Dresden« in favor of an intrinsic, architectonic ornamentation. In the »Jagdzimmer« (hunter's room) that he designed for the Vereinigte Werkstätten at the end of 1899 he exploited the ornamental qualities of a single material: elm wood. The room included elm paneling, carved elm reliefs, and elm chairs composed of simple members with dramatic compound curves that imparted a muscular vitality. His sparing use of accent materials, including gray-green upholstery and brass lamps, heightened the dramatic effect of the pronounced grain of the wood. The artistic quality of his hunter's room was recognized at the »Exposition Universelle« of 1900 in Paris, where it received a Grand Prix.¹¹³

Paul's »Jagdzimmer« epitomized his personal style at the turn of the century. The room was exhibited in Munich in 1901 at the »1. Ausstellung für Kunst im Handwerk«, the exhibition for which he designed the heron poster, and at the 1902 exhibition of decorative art in Turin. The armchairs for the hunter's room, produced by the Vereinigte Werkstätten as Model 1744, were particularly successful. A set was sold to King Ferdinand of Bulgaria for installation in Sitnjakowo castle, Paul's first royal commission. He continued to explore permutations of their characteristic splayed form, and produced a number of related designs between 1901 and 1904. The development of the Model 1744 armchair reflected the relentless experimentation that distinguished Paul's work as a designer. Although he did not actually construct his furnishings with his own hands, in working through countless variations of his designs with the artisans who executed them he developed the profound and sympathetic understanding of form characteristic of a master craftsman.

In 1904, Paul designed his »Herrenzimmer für den Regierungspräsidenten von Bayreuth« (office for the head of the provincial government at Bayreuth). The suite of furniture that Paul assembled included Modell 652 and Modell 2531 armchairs derived from the hunter's room of 1899. In the Bayreuth office, however, these characteristically Jugendstil chairs served as a counterpoint to an interior dominated by straight lines and simple geometries similar to the motifs employed in the editorial offices that he designed for *Simplicissimus* in 1903. The editorial offices incorporated a frieze consisting of framed illustrations from the magazine that was echoed in horizontally striped walls and in the severe furnishings, another example of the influence of his graphic work on his projects as an applied artist. He developed the orthogonal motifs of his *Simplicissimus* office in his design for Bayreuth, evoking the final, rectilinear phase of the Jugendstil. The rectilinear aesthetic of the turn of the century originated with the arts and crafts movement, and received its canonical form in the works of the Scottish architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Wiener Werkstätte of Vienna, established by Josef Hoffmann in 1903. Yet while Paul's success as an applied artist paralleled that of Hoffmann,¹¹⁴ there is little in his Bayreuth office to suggest the influence of Glasgow or Vienna.¹¹⁵ Instead he drew his inspiration from German design of the late eighteenth century.

Similarities between Bruno Paul's designs and the simple, sturdy classicism of the Biedermeier period, the age of Goethe and Schiller, were the subject of critical comment even before he had fully forsaken the lingering influence of the Jugendstil.¹¹⁶ Although later historians have tended to focus on the formal qualities of the German classicism of the early twentieth century, contemporary critics adopted a more nuanced assessment of the relevance of the Biedermeier to modern design.¹¹⁷ A 1905 article by E. W. Bredt in *Dekorative Kunst* entitled »Bruno Paul – Biedermeier – Empire« included an evaluation of the influence of eighteenth-century precedents on Paul's work. Bredt noted that the salons of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries shared a fundamental characteristic of »simple, domestic elegance« with those designed by Paul. »When one examines black-and-white illustrations of Paul's furniture and interiors«, he continued, »the effect of the surfaces and lines alone speaks of a certain coolness that is characteristic of design in the age of Napoleon, although the differing colors of woods, wall coverings and upholstery caution against too close a comparison of the old and the new designs.«¹¹⁸ This description, which accords perfectly with tendencies that would coalesce in Paul's work after 1908, was illustrated with

photographs and drawings of an office he designed for Fritz Esche of Chemnitz in 1903, and photographs of a living room conceived in the same year. These two rooms and their furniture recorded Paul's mastery of the Jugendstil concept of Gesamtkunstwerk, and included such overt references to the union of art and craftsmanship as hammered metal fireplace surrounds that displayed both refined proportions and the physical exertion of their fabrication. These rooms did not incorporate stylistic references to eighteenth-century designs, but rather emulated less tangible qualities perceived as characteristic of Biedermeier interiors. The same was true of Paul's government office for Bayreuth.

The Bayreuth office was exhibited in the United States at the St. Louis International Exhibition of 1904. The room received a Grand Prix, Paul's second major international award. Exhibition audiences were impressed with his work, and unlicensed copies of his housewares were soon being manufactured in the American heartland.¹¹⁹ In addition, the Philadelphia department store magnate John Wanamaker purchased twenty-one interiors from the German exhibition. It is possible that one of these rooms was Paul's Herrenzimmer.¹²⁰ Unfortunately, most of Wanamaker's purchases have not survived, although the colossal bronze eagle that August Gaul cast for the court of honor in the German pavilion is still displayed in the former Wanamaker store in Philadelphia. Paul's work also received critical acclaim in Germany. Hermann Muthesius, writing in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, stated that »Bruno Paul's room is a museum piece; it points to the desired perfection towards which we are striving«.¹²¹ Critics such as Muthesius admired the office for what was perceived as a new direction in German design after the eclectic Historicism of the nineteenth century and the often overwrought exuberance of the Jugendstil. Paul himself had adopted a typically satiric opinion of these stylistic trends following the St. Louis exhibition, when he illustrated »Die offizielle Berliner Kunst in Saint Louis« (the official art of Berlin in St. Louis) for *Simplicissimus*.¹²² By 1904, he was developing a new vocabulary of form characterized by simplicity, clarity, and practicality.

Paul's work for the Vereinigte Werkstätten was not limited to prestigious projects such as the office for Bayreuth. He also designed small housewares for the company, including a series of brass candleholders, as well as affordable furniture for mass production. The 1903 summer exhibition of the Vereinigte Werkstätten was entitled »Die Wohnung für Minderbemittelte« (dwelling for people of limited means). Paul designed a combined living and dining room for the exhibition, a response to the restricted living space of the typical, working-class apartment. The same year, he designed three suites of inexpensive furniture marketed as the »Einfaches Schlafzimmer«, »Einfaches Speisezimmer«, and »Einfaches Wohnzimmer« (simple bedroom, simple dining room, and simple living room). The 1906 Vereinigte Werkstätten summer exhibition, held at the Gasthof Hirsch in Munich, was dedicated to »Die Wohnung der mittleren Preislage« (the moderately priced dwelling). For this exhibit, Paul designed three rooms, a drawing room, office, and bedroom for a four-room, middle-class residence. In 1906, he also designed an inexpensive combination workroom, living room, and dining room. This set of furniture was suited to an even smaller apartment than the dwelling for people of limited means of 1903. It sold for 700 Marks, less than half the price of his contemporary Living Room 24 for the Vereinigte Werkstätten, which included a writing desk, table, side chair, arm chair, table lamp, sofa, bookcase, end table, long case clock, and oval mirror – all for 1700 Marks.

The inexpensive furniture Paul designed for the Vereinigte Werkstätten marked a significant departure from the precedent established by the English firms such as Morris and Company that had pioneered the Arts and Crafts movement. William Morris had clearly inspired the founding of the Vereinigte Werkstätten, and the very name of the firm echoed the »banded workshops« of his 1890 novel *News from Nowhere*.¹²³ Although the Vereinigte Werkstätten promoted the integration of design and production that was central to the Arts and Crafts movement, the company avoided the fundamental compromise accepted by Morris and his contemporaries. The Vereinigte Werkstätten did not embrace only an ideal of noble craftsmanship that limited its production to a few wealthy clients; on the contrary, the firm readily accepted industrial production of its furniture and successfully promoted its housewares to a broad sector of German society.¹²⁴ Advertisements for the Vereinigte Werkstätten appeared in design magazines such as *Innen-Dekoration* and *Dekorative Kunst*, but also in *Simplicissimus*. It is telling that all six of the Vereinigte Werkstätten advertisements published in *Simplicissimus* during 1904 featured Paul's projects exclusively.

Paul was initially identified as a »Kunstmaler« (art painter) in the Vereinigte Werkstätten advertisements, a reminder of the calling that had drawn him to Munich eight years before. By 1904, however, he was a prolific designer of furniture and interiors as well as an illustrator. Other than



35. »Jagdzimmer«, 1899. Executed by the Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk.

36. »Herrenzimmer für den Regierungspräsidenten von Bayreuth«, 1904. Executed by the Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk. Note the kidney-shaped desk, an adaptation of the classic Hepelwhite writing table.

37. *Die offizielle Berliner Kunst in Saint Louis* (The Official Art of Berlin in St. Louis), 1904.

38. First- and second-class waiting room for Nuremberg main station, 1905. Executed by the Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk.



his work for *Simplicissimus*, he painted very little. His evolving attitude towards the fine art of painting was already suggested in a cover illustration from 1898 entitled »Wilhelm der Schweigsame« (William the Silent).¹²⁵ In this technically advanced illustration,¹²⁶ Paul contrasted a photographic reproduction of a historical portrait with characters and a background of his own composition – acknowledging the discord between the traditional art of portraiture and the realities of modern life. Only the wealthy purchased paintings in any quantity; Paul's projects for the Vereinigte Werkstätten, like his illustrations for *Simplicissimus*, found a far broader audience.

In 1905, Paul designed the interiors of the first and second class waiting room of the main railway station in Nuremberg.¹²⁷ His designs for Nuremberg represented a new challenge to the young artist, that of responding to the strict functional and economic demands of a commercial enterprise. The first and second class waiting room was to be furnished as a café-restaurant, and required a far larger number of identical tables and chairs than any previous project Paul had undertaken. Such a room was typically furnished with the ubiquitous Thonet bentwood chairs, which were lightweight, durable, and inexpensive.¹²⁸ However, Paul did not elect to use bentwood chairs in Nuremberg.¹²⁹ Instead, he designed a series of simple, carved chairs assembled in a variety of configurations from standardized components. While the use of common elements to produce a range of furnishings echoed the manufacture of Thonet's bentwood chairs, the solid materiality of Paul's design made a far more explicit reference to the ideals of high culture than the comparatively utilitarian designs produced by Thonet. The translation of cultural identity to objects of mass production was intimated by a 1906 article in *Dekorative Kunst* by Paul Johannes Rée that praised the Nuremberg waiting room as an example of the best achievements of contemporary interior design.¹³⁰

Paul had the opportunity to justify the accolades accorded his Nuremberg waiting room in 1906 when he participated in the »3. Deutsche Kunstgewerbe-Ausstellung Dresden« (third German applied arts exhibition in Dresden). He exhibited three complete rooms. The first was the office from Bayreuth, displayed as a study, albeit differing subtly but significantly from the one presented in St. Louis in accordance with Paul's developing taste.¹³¹ In Dresden, the details and furnishings of the office were simplified. For instance, Paul replaced the elaborate motif of the ceiling coffers of the original installation with a pattern of concentric squares. He also revised the stepped configuration of the corner cabinet with its wooden buttresses integrated with the paneled walls in favor of a lower version with a strong horizontal cornice. A stark square table with a leg at each corner replaced the pedestal table displayed in 1904, and he substituted refined and elegant leather seats for the complex Modell 652 chairs in the earlier room. Only the paneling, the frieze, the pendant light fixtures, and the carpet remained unchanged. The other rooms exhibited by Paul in Dresden, a vestibule and reception room for the marble quarries of Kiefersfelden in the





39. »3. Deutsche Kunstgewerbe-Ausstellung Dresden«, 1906.
 40. »Arbeitszimmer« displayed at the »3. Deutsche Kunstgewerbe-Ausstellung Dresden«, 1906.
 41. Dining room displayed at the »3. Deutsche Kunstgewerbe-Ausstellung Dresden«, 1906.
 42. Festival decoration of the Schwere-Reiter-Kaserne, Munich, 1906.

Bavarian Alps and a dining room for the Vereinigte Werkstätten, displayed the same self-confidence and maturity as the reworked office.

The Dresden exhibition was a significant event in the history of modern design in Germany, as a consequence of policies adopted by the organizing committee led by the architect Fritz Schumacher. Schumacher developed a selection process that favored the designs of independent artists rather than the potentially artistically indifferent products of established manufacturers. Paul's work was prominently displayed in Dresden, evidence of his fundamental agreement with the Kunstgewerbebewegung promoted by Schumacher and his circle, which included Muthesius, Peter Bruckmann, Wolf Dohrn and J. A. Lux. These men would withdraw from the Fachverband für das Deutsche Kunstgewerbe (alliance for the German applied arts) over their support of Schumacher and his ideals, prompting the establishment of the German Werkbund.

The artist as architect

Bruno Paul's introduction to the practice of architecture occurred through the Vereinigte Werkstätten, as a logical extension of his projects for furniture and interiors. Soon after it was founded, the firm offered the planning, construction, and furnishing of entire houses. The company archives contain photographs of architectural models of three small houses that Paul conceived in 1905, his earliest known designs for entire buildings. They are identified as an »Angebautes Wohnhaus mit Atelier« (enlarged house with studio) and a »Landhaus mit Atelier« (country house with studio) by Bruno Paul, and a »Landhaus« by Bruno Paul and F. A. O. Krüger.¹³² These were apparently speculative projects; although a similar design was built in Bonn as Haus Prym.

Paul's designs for small artists' houses with attached studios immediately suggest the most famous examples of the type built in Germany during the first years of the twentieth century: the residences designed for the Darmstadt Künstlerkolonie (artist's colony) by Behrens and Joseph Maria Olbrich. Paul's houses were superficially similar to those built in Darmstadt, with rough-cast walls and asymmetrical massing derived from the projects of the architect-members of the English Arts and Crafts movement. The influence of English design on progressive German housing was particularly pronounced following the publication of Muthesius' *Das englische Haus* in 1904.¹³³ The suggestion of Fachwerk, the German equivalent of English half-timber construction, on both of Paul's models certainly suggested the influence of *Das englische Haus*, while the horizontal bands of windows, low eaves, and chimney pots of the small country house recalled the contemporary work of Voysey and his followers. Details of Paul's models also echoed the characteristic rural houses of the Oberlausitz, the »Umgebendehäuser« that he had known as a child. Yet despite such concurrences, Paul's designs were uniquely his own.

Paul's model for a house with studio offers a significant insight into his development as an architect. The house was to be ornamented with a series of panels containing elongated lozenges defined by inward-curving arc segments. Paul employed this same motif in his designs for the »3. Deutsche Kunstgewerbe-Ausstellung« (third German applied arts exhibition) where it occurred, in various forms, in art glass panels, lighting fixtures, mirror frames, a decorative frieze, and various pieces of furniture.¹³⁴ Considering the time required for the Vereinigte Werkstätten to



execute Paul's contributions to the Dresden exhibition, it is likely that he was designing them in parallel with the preparation of his model houses. At the time he was clearly interested in a formal vocabulary that he employed, with equal facility, in a variety of artistic media. This practice again recalls the ideal of the Gesamtkunstwerk, the artistic synthesis characteristic of the Jugendstil that was a central theme in Paul's early work as an applied artist.

Paul's first published architectural project was even more closely related to his interior designs than his apparently unexecuted series of artist's houses. In 1906, he received a commission to decorate the stark façades of the Munich barracks of the heavy cavalry regiment »Prinz Karl von Bayern«, the Schwere-Reiter-Kaserne, for a visit by Kaiser Wilhelm II. Paul adapted another of the motifs he had employed in Dresden, that of an orthogonal grid interrupted by a single lozenge as a focal element, in the wooden architectural ornaments that he conceived for the barracks. The effect of his ornaments, installed like pilasters against the smooth façade of the existing building and adorned with ribbons and garlands, was soberly festive, monumental, and classical.¹³⁵

When Wilhelm II arrived in Munich on 12 November, he found Paul's decorations very much to his liking. According to Paul's recollection, the Kaiser halted his motorcade as it passed the barracks and personally commended the designer.¹³⁶ Despite the satires on the official taste of the Hohenzollern monarchy that regularly appeared in the pages of *Simplicissimus*, the Kaiser himself maintained an educated interest in architecture.¹³⁷ His admiration for Paul's work illustrates the extent to which the artist had engaged the aesthetic sensibilities of mainstream culture. Notwithstanding the inherent irony of the meeting between the autocratic sovereign and the *Simplicissimus* illustrator, Paul's brief reception by Wilhelm II in 1906 facilitated his appointment to a professorship in Berlin the following year.

A new direction

By 1906, Bruno Paul had emerged as one of the most prominent modern artists in Central Europe. His fame had been established through his illustrations for *Simplicissimus*, published over the span of a decade. The vibrant cultural milieu of turn-of-the-century Munich that had provided *Simplicissimus* with its creative vitality inspired Paul to explore the limits of his own artistic abilities. He continued to draw and paint, but also designed metalwork, furniture, textiles, and entire interiors for the Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk for which he received international acclaim. As an applied artist, Paul contributed to the definitive character of the Jugendstil, and then to its transcendence. In 1906 his work was increasingly cited as a harbinger of a new direction in German design. Paul's designs for furniture and interiors ultimately led him to architecture, a discipline in which all of his interests could be conjoined. His first executed commissions demonstrated his natural talent for design on an architectural scale.

Despite his splendid accomplishments, Paul had never realized the objective that had brought him to Munich as a student. He had not become one of the »Malerfürsten« of the city, and it was obvious that he never would. Characteristically, he confronted this realization by seeking a new challenge towards which to apply his restless intellect. Paul was ready to leave Munich when an opportunity arose in 1906.

3. The reconquest of a harmonious culture: 1906–1912

Two events of lasting importance to Bruno Paul's professional career occurred within a single year: his appointment to direct the *Unterrichtsanstalt* of the *Kunstgewerbe-Museum* in Berlin and his participation in the establishment of the *German Werkbund*. Both evoked a common theme: the ideal of a harmonious culture embodied in the reconciliation of artistic principles with the production of the artifacts of daily life. Paul related this ideal of cultural harmony to the precedents of Biedermeier Neoclassicism. In the period following his appointment to the Berlin school of applied arts, he developed a design vocabulary in his buildings and interiors that recalled the simple elegance of the middle-class aesthetic of the last years of the eighteenth century. For Paul, this aesthetic represented more than formal language; it embodied the reform of the applied arts in Germany and the re-establishment of the more equitable relationship between patrons, artists, and craftsmen that had existed prior to the industrialization of the nineteenth century.

Paul sought to renew this relationship in Berlin through his reform of the curriculum of the school of applied arts, as well as in his designs for furniture and interiors. After his move to Berlin, he also established an independent architectural practice. His work as an architect, which largely consisted of prestigious residential and commercial projects, extended the aesthetic program of his furnishings to the scale of entire buildings. Nikolaus Pevsner, in his seminal 1936 book *Pioneers of the Modern Movement from William Morris to Walter Gropius*, concluded that Paul's aesthetic program was able to »effect a change of taste throughout the county, which Gropius, the most uncompromising German innovator, might not have been able to bring about«, and praised the »comfort, cleanliness and abolition of tawdry fuss« characteristic of Paul's work.¹³⁸ This work reflected a significant direction in the history of progressive design in Central Europe, that of a pragmatic Modernism attuned to the needs and desires of the middle classes. It was this Modernism that sustained the often-fractious *German Werkbund* in the years prior to the War, and which played a central role in shaping its ideological positions.

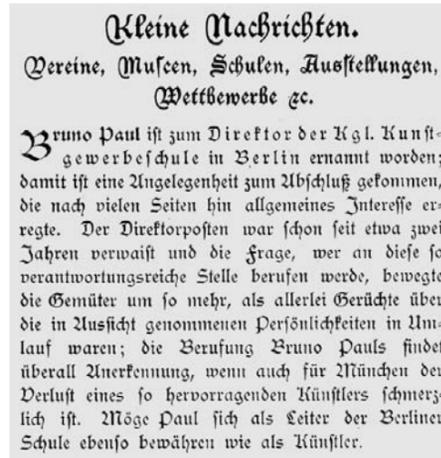
Paul's appointment to the Berlin school of applied arts

On 7 December 1906, the Prussian government appointed Bruno Paul to head the school of applied arts in Berlin, officially the *Unterrichtsanstalt des königlichen Kunstgewerbe-Museums* (educational institution of the royal museum of applied arts).¹³⁹ At the time, the museum was located in the 1881 building later known as the *Martin-Gropius-Bau*, an elegant structure in the style of Schinkel's celebrated *Bauakademie*,¹⁴⁰ and a Historicist extension to the west, the *Museum für Völkerkunde* (museum of ethnology). The school of applied arts was east of the museum, in a Neo-Baroque building overlooking the gardens of the *Prinz-Albrecht-Palais*.¹⁴¹ It had not had a permanent director since December 1904, when Professor Ernst Ewald died in office following a protracted illness that had long deprived the school of effective leadership. Although Paul was chosen as an artist rather than an administrator, he began to reform the curriculum of the school as soon as he accepted the office of director – transforming the institution into one of the most emulated and admired schools of art in Central Europe. A brief notice in the journal *Kunst und Handwerk* commemorated the transition in his career: »Bruno Paul was appointed the director of the royal school of applied arts in Berlin; thus bringing to conclusion an affair that has excited general interest in many quarters. The director's post having been vacant for approximately two years, the successor to this preeminently responsible position has been an open question, colored by abundant rumors concerning the likely contenders; Bruno Paul's appointment has garnered universal admiration, even if the loss of such an outstanding artist is painful for Munich. Paul may prove as successful a director of the Berlin school as he is an artist.«¹⁴² In fact, Paul's success in Berlin would soon eclipse his achievements in Munich.

Paul's opportunity to reform the school of applied art originated with two of the most significant artistic advisors to the government of Kaiser Wilhelm II: Hermann Muthesius and Wilhelm Bode.¹⁴³ In 1904, Muthesius had been appointed a »Geheimrat« (privy councilor) in the Prussian government upon the completion of an eight-year attachment to the German Embassy in London. Muthesius originally went to London to study the principles of design and design education that had facilitated the global success of British industry and commerce. As a privy councilor, he was responsible for reorganizing schools of art throughout the state of Prussia, and he responded to this charge by appointing prominent and successful artists to positions of leadership. Within a year of his return to Berlin he had already appointed the architect Hans Poelzig to direct the

43. Unterrichtsanstalt des Kunstgewerbe-Museums, Berlin, circa 1910.

44. Announcement of Paul's appointment to head the Unterrichtsanstalt, 1906.



school of applied arts in Breslau, and Paul's Munich colleague Peter Behrens to lead the school in Düsseldorf.

Wilhelm Bode was the director of the Prussian state museums, including the museum to which the Berlin school of applied arts was attached. In 1906 he attended the »3. Deutsche Kunstgewerbe-Ausstellung« specifically to seek a candidate to succeed the late director, Ernst Ewald. He later recorded that upon examining the exhibits he selected Paul, who had »cast off the bad habits of the Jugendstil« in favor of a compelling and personal interpretation of historical precedents. By 1906 the vocabulary of Art Nouveau had already lost its aura of contemporaneity.¹⁴⁴ Nevertheless Bode recalled his apprehension upon approaching Wilhelm II with his recommendation that a member of the staff of *Simplicissimus* receive a royal appointment. Indeed, the Kaiser himself had studied at the school of applied arts as a boy,¹⁴⁵ and had been personally tutored by Ewald. Moreover the school had enjoyed the particular patronage of his mother Victoria, who had been Kaiserin of Germany for ninety-nine days in 1888 prior to the premature death of her husband, Kaiser Friedrich III. However, Wilhelm's autocratic personality inadvertently ensured Paul's success. »I know nothing of *Simplicissimus* and care to learn nothing of your candidate«, the Emperor proclaimed, declaring that he would act on the strength of Bode's recommendation.¹⁴⁶ As a consequence, Paul relinquished his position on the staff of *Simplicissimus*, published his final illustrations under the pseudonym Ernst Kellermann, and entered the service of the Prussian government. Nevertheless his appointment was the subject of considerable comment, epitomized by a verse from a poem penned by the critic Alfred Kerr: »Bruno Paul caused quite a fuss/Drew for *Simplicissimus* /Yesterday a malefactor /Now applied-arts school director /Anton Werner ›The state's disgrace! / (A change of pace – a change of pace!)«.¹⁴⁷

Prior to Paul's appointment, the school of applied arts in Berlin provided conventional instruction in the minor arts, offering classes in architectural drawing, sculpture, metalwork, painting, and graphic design. In addition, the faculty operated educational workshops to teach engraving, printing, enameling, woodcarving, decorative painting, and embroidery, as well as offering evening classes for the training of apprentices. The curriculum reflected the needs of nineteenth-century industry, a situation that Pevsner decried for the reactionary spirit and emphasis on historic ornament emphasized in the education of its students.¹⁴⁸ But Paul was not inclined to maintain the status quo. He moved his family to Berlin in early 1907, and assumed his office with clear ideas for the reform of the school of applied arts, aspirations derived from his personal experiences in Dresden and Munich.

As director, Paul promoted revisions to the curricula for the training of craftsmen, de-emphasizing classroom study in favor of increased training in the school's workshops or the private practices of its professors. He expressed the belief that this change would result in the education of craftsmen better suited to the needs of modern industry.¹⁴⁹ He also addressed the difficult question of the education of women at the school, which accommodated a large number of female students who were nevertheless excluded from the advanced courses that would have prepared them for professional employment. Paul began by denouncing the mass acceptance of female students, proclaiming that the school should only accept those who demonstrated genuine artistic ability and could hope to pursue independent careers.¹⁵⁰ His own daughter Hilde, who was seven years old when he moved to Berlin, would later benefit from his willingness to train capable young women. Indeed, his policies would eventually lead to the admittance of women to all of the school's programs, and to an essential parity between the opportunities available to male and female students. This parity was encouraged by Paul's imposition of more selective admission criteria for both male and female applicants to the school. He strongly believed that practical experience and natural ability were essential prerequisites to an education in the applied arts.

In 1907, Paul stated that »A practical training in commercial operations is the precondition of every healthy school of applied arts. Each pupil should know the techniques and materials of a trade before he enters the school.«¹⁵¹ He did not, however, believe that any given student should be proficient in a specific trade, rather that each should have a basis of practical experience on which to build. This conviction originated in his own career as an artist, as well as in the Jugendstil ideal of artistic synthesis.

Paul's students began their studies in the *Vorschule* (introductory curriculum) that preceded admittance to one of the *Fachklassen* (subject courses) in an individual discipline. The introductory curriculum was organized into four classes, one each for architecture, sculpture, painting, and graphic and commercial art. Paul reorganized the *Vorschule* so that all of the four courses were taught concurrently. This schedule allowed all students in the introductory curriculum, regardless of their intended vocation, to work together and to learn from one another. In 1907, Paul

expressed his belief in the shared experience of sculptors, furniture designers, graphic artists, decorative painters, commercial draftsmen, and engravers, thereby establishing the fundamental principle of his reforms.¹⁵²

Along with his obligations as director of the school of applied arts, Paul assumed responsibility for teaching one of the advanced courses for architecture, Fachklasse 1c. The advanced classes at the school were organized around the professional activities of their instructors, and students worked on the private commissions received by their professors. Paul praised this arrangement soon after his arrival in Berlin, noting that the students in the advanced classes and the workshops had the opportunity to gain practical experience working on actual projects under the guidance of their teachers.¹⁵³

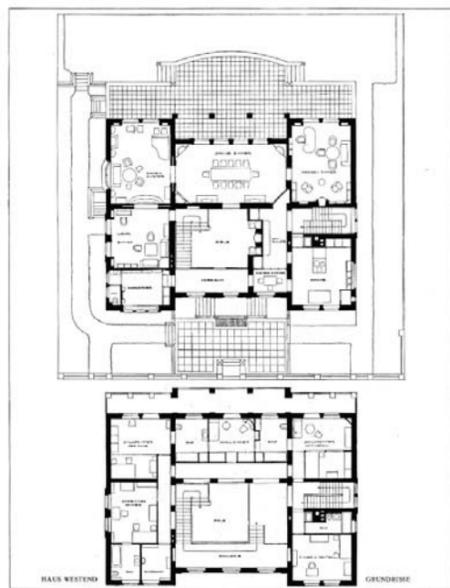
In addition to his Fachklasse, Paul established an independent architectural practice in Berlin. His private office was very much an adjunct to his studio at the school of applied arts, which was staffed with eager if inexperienced students working without monetary compensation. The rate of turnover among his paid staff was relatively high, with staffing levels fluctuating in response to the volume of work being produced. A similar condition existed at Behrens' Berlin office, though he did not have the advantage of unpaid student assistants after leaving his academic position in Düsseldorf in 1907 to become the artistic advisor to AEG. Several well-known architects of the second generation of European Modernists worked for both Paul and Behrens in Berlin. The best known is Ludwig Mies, who worked briefly for Paul during 1907. In addition, Paul Thiersch, appointed to be Paul's assistant in 1907, had previously worked for Behrens in Düsseldorf. After Thiersch opened his own office in 1909, Paul hired Adolf Meyer, another former Behrens employee. He also retained Thiersch to lecture at the school of applied arts, exemplifying the close relationship between his private practice and his official position as director of the school.

The first architectural works of Paul's Berlin practice

Paul's first architectural project in Berlin was Haus Westend, built in the fashionable district of Charlottenburg in 1908 for Hans Schuppman, one of the directors of the Vereinigte Werkstätten. Paul designed the house during 1907, soon after his arrival in the capital. The project exemplified his confidence and natural ability as an architect, although the building was closely related to his furniture and interiors. Schuppman intended his house to be an advertisement for the Werkstätten, a demonstration of the full range of services offered by the firm. Paul responded with a design derived, like his contemporary furnishings, from Biedermeier models. Yet Haus Westend was not a Historicist building. Paul reduced the formal vocabulary of the late eighteenth century to its essential characteristics: simplicity, consistency, and formal discipline. These timeless qualities were antithetical to the decorative exuberance of the Jugendstil. In forsaking the restless ornament of the turn of the century, Paul abandoned the pursuit of a synthetic modern style. Instead he developed a language of typical and normative forms, derived from a dateless Classicism. In so doing, he created a modern architecture of flexibility, functional efficiency, and proportional elegance.

Haus Westend is notable for its incorporation of architectural characteristics that would be present in Paul's work throughout his long career. The public façade of the house, the elevation facing Kaiserstraße,¹⁵⁴ reflected an elegant, disciplined formal vocabulary immediately reminiscent of the middle-class architecture of the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The simple forms of the façade, rendered in pebble roughcast and articulated with classically-proportioned casement windows without shutters, a row of attic dormers, and a single concession to Empire grandeur in the stone embrasure of the centrally-located door, recalled such well-known monuments of German classical design as Goethe's house on the Frauenplan in Weimar.¹⁵⁵ The garden façade displayed a looser interpretation of the tradition of German Classicism. The portico facing the garden featured a complex stepped roof with undulating ridgelines, a charismatic expression of the innovation that Paul derived from the vocabulary of Biedermeier Classicism.

Haus Westend differed most significantly from its early-nineteenth-century precedents in its plan, which was that of a modern middle-class house with integrated sanitary and service facilities in place of the detached kitchen and servants' quarters and absent indoor plumbing of the prosperous homes of the preceding century. The incorporation of contemporary amenities posed a significant design challenge in that the smaller symmetrical house plans of the age of Schinkel, exemplified by such iconic buildings as the pavilion at Charlottenburg palace, made no accommodation for kitchens, toilets or baths. At Haus Westend, Paul located such auxiliary functions



45. Haus Westend, Berlin, 1907. Street façade.

46. Haus Westend, Berlin, 1907. Garden façade.

47. Haus Westend, Berlin, 1907. Plan.

48. Schloß Börnicke, Mark Brandenburg, 1909. Living room with van Gogh's *Vase with Fourteen Sunflowers*.

49. Schloß Börnicke, Mark Brandenburg, 1909. South façade.



behind the street façade, where tall windows illuminated some of the smallest rooms in the house. The principal interior spaces, the central dining room and flanking Herrenzimmer and Damenzimmer (study and drawing room) on the main floor and the owners' bedrooms on the floor above, all adjoined the more secluded garden front of the house. The ordered composition of the main façade reflected the differing functions accommodated by the plan. Thus the two front windows in the kitchen were paired with three smaller windows in the slightly projecting bay of the garderobe in the opposite wing of the house. The ordering of the façade was sufficiently strong to balance the asymmetrical configuration of the windows, which adds a dynamic element to what would otherwise have been a distinctly severe elevation.

Paul's plans for Haus Westend embodied a response to the aspirations of many successful Berliners of the first decade of the twentieth century. The design was comfortable and convenient, luxurious without being pretentious, and elegant without being immodest. The house was well built, and exquisitely tasteful. Although Haus Westend was Paul's first significant architectural commission,¹⁵⁶ it was confidently and masterfully conceived. Amidst the eclectic historicist and Jugendstil villas that fronted Kaiserstraße in Charlottenburg, he built a modern suburban house that reflected the ideal of harmonious culture embodied by his furniture and interiors. In so doing, Paul established himself as a favored architect of Berlin society.

Paul created a new and versatile typology with his design for Haus Westend, a stylistic vocabulary that was applicable to domestic projects of widely divergent function and scale. In 1909, for example, he designed a country house north of Berlin for the banker Paul von Mendelssohn-Bartholdy: Schloß Börnicke. While significantly larger and more complex than Haus Westend, Schloß Börnicke incorporated the same formal conventions as the earlier house. Again Paul subverted strict bilateral symmetry to the functional efficiency of his plan. As a consequence, the elevations of the house exhibited an inherent tension between the order suggested by the formal vocabulary of German Neoclassicism, and Paul's informal and domestic distribution of architectural elements. He achieved a similar balance in his integration of the new Schloß into the parks and gardens of its predecessor. »Bruno Paul's artistic ability to bind architecture and nature into a unified composition is exemplified by this rebuilding«, his assistant Joseph Popp later wrote, »whatever was dull or uninteresting was improved, the best of the old work was preserved and organically incorporated into the new.«¹⁵⁷ In the house itself he successfully combined the functional flexibility of the English free style, popularized in Central Europe with the publication of Muthesius' *Das englische Haus*, with a quiet, classical dignity. Schloß Börnicke was an ideal home for an enlightened member of the aristocracy. It was also an emphatically modern house, commissioned in part to display Mendelssohn-Bartholdy's collection of contemporary paintings. Van Gogh's celebrated 1889 still life *Vase with Fourteen Sunflowers* hung in the hall of Paul's Schloß Börnicke, in a niche with a sofa, table and side chairs that he designed to accompany it. Yet Paul's work was by no means limited to the social stratum of the Mendelssohn-Bartholdys.



At the same time that Paul was working on Schloß Börnicke, he designed a much smaller house in Berlin for the prominent Social Democratic politician Dr. Heinrich Braun. Epitomizing the fluency that Paul had achieved as a residential designer, Haus Braun was a simple, practical building, elegantly proportioned and skillfully detailed. The house combined a cool precision reminiscent of Schinkel with a functional efficiency derived from the vernacular tradition of domestic design. The balance that Paul achieved between seemingly contradictory influences had a profound influence on his students, among whom was the young Ludwig Mies. Mies' first executed project, the Villa Riehl, was a direct counterpart to Haus Braun, and borrowed freely from Paul's practice. Despite its many naïve characteristics, Villa Riehl prefigured Mies' mature work in its abstracted classicism, pure geometries, and dynamic symmetry – all features he derived from Paul. As well as providing inspiration to his students, projects such as Haus Braun contributed to the ubiquity of the Neoclassical villa as a suburban housing type in pre-war Berlin.

The significance of Haus Braun, and indeed its particular influence on Mies, lay in the rationale that underscored its composition. As an architect Paul was, effectively, an autodidact. He was not immersed in the classical tradition as a student: as a successful designer he deliberately chose this vocabulary for his architectural projects. Moreover he specifically selected the Classicism of the eighteenth century, rather than the antique classicism which he knew well from his time at the Munich academy,¹⁵⁸ and which paralleled the language of his own work as an illustrator. Eighteenth-century Neoclassicism provided Paul with a model solution to problems similar to those that beset architectural practice in the first decade of the twentieth century, namely the imposition of order and clarity upon changes wrought by the introduction of new materials and techniques, unprecedented functional requirements, and unfamiliar societal demands. This model offered a response to modern problems, and held the promise of a correspondingly modern architecture. Paul was certainly not alone in turning to the precedent of eighteenth-century Classicism for the development of a modern vocabulary of design. This was the cause advocated by Paul Mebes' influential book *Um 1800: Architektur und Handwerk im letzten Jahrhundert ihrer traditionellen Entwicklung* (around 1800: architecture and craftsmanship in the final century of their traditional development), which was published in 1908. However Paul, who was studying eighteenth-century prototypes long before the introduction of Mebes' book, proved particularly successful accomplishing the transformation of such precedents. Haus Braun clearly indicated the path of these transformations.

In addition to designing residential projects, Paul also established himself as a commercial architect. In 1910 he designed a façade and interiors for an office building planned by the architect Kurt Berndt for 36 Unter den Linden, the celebrated avenue leading from the Brandenburg Gate to the Berlin Schloß. Paul's façade for the building, the Zollernhof, was immediately evocative of the formal vocabulary of Haus Westend, with attenuated, severely molded bands of masonry on-

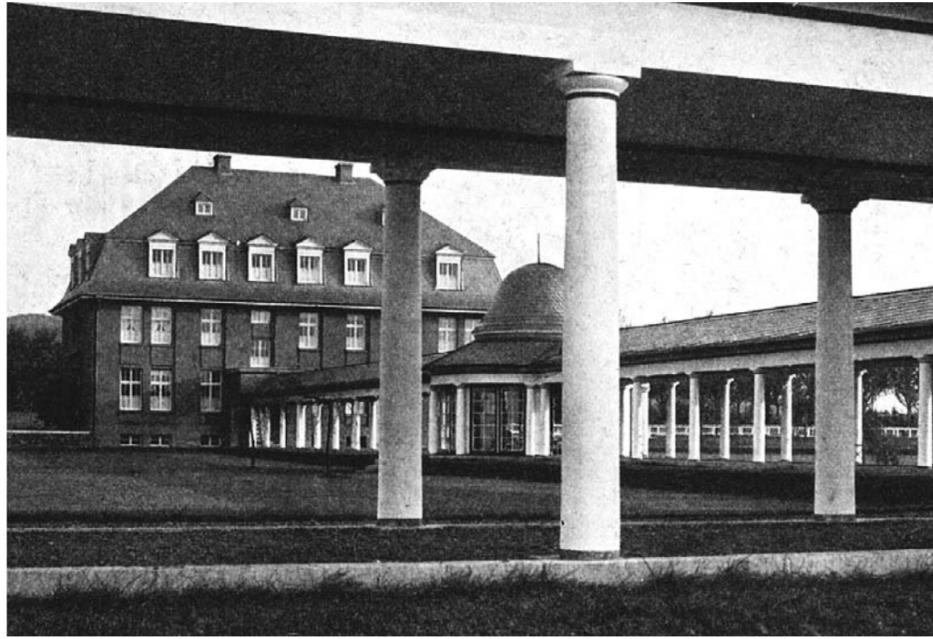


- 50. Haus Braun, Berlin-Klein Machnow, 1910. Street façade.
- 51. Zollernhof, Berlin, 1910. Façade.
- 52. Haus Hainerberg, Königstein im Taunus, 1911. Garden façade.
- 53. Haus Hainerberg, Königstein im Taunus, 1911. Service buildings.



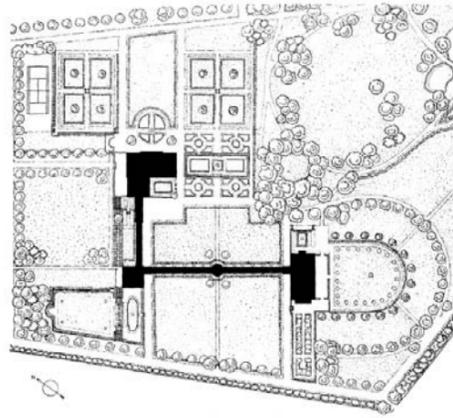
ly suggesting the proportions of a classical order. The Zollernhof diverged from the precedent of Paul's earlier domestic projects in the sculptural embellishment of the façade. Heroic nude figures, carved from the same stone as the ashlar veneer, stood between the paired windows of the tall attic. A band of heavy swags set beneath shells and rosettes, realistically carved with unblemished fruit, crowned the shop windows opening onto the street. By the standards of Wilhelmine Berlin, the sculptural program of the Zollernhof was modest; it was not, however, an element of Paul's original project. He added the sculpture at the instigation of the Kaiser, who believed that the severity of the initial design was unworthy of Unter den Linden. In fact, Paul provided a re-touched and simplified photograph of the Zollernhof for inclusion in Joseph Popp's weighty monograph *Bruno Paul* of 1916. The original photograph, showing the additional sculptural embellishment of the actual building, was later published in Gustav Adolf Platz's seminal *Die Baukunst der neuesten Zeit* of 1927,¹⁵⁹ the first thorough compendium of Modernist architecture in Germany. Paul had embellished his original design at the same time that Adolf Loos was obliged to revise the elevations of his office building for Goldman & Salatsch on the Michaelerplatz in Vienna (which, incidentally, also appeared in *Die Baukunst der neuesten Zeit*), and in response to a similar imperial objection.¹⁶⁰ Neither architect was pleased to have done so. Nevertheless in a 1913 article in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, Paul stated of the Zollernhof: »It is instinctive, from nowhere, in the shadow of Messel.«¹⁶¹ This deference to Alfred Messel, designer of the Wertheim department store and the foremost commercial architect in contemporary Berlin, is typical of Paul's self-effacing assessments of his own work. The sharply delineated stereotomy of the Zollernhof was considerably more abstract than Messel's buildings, notwithstanding the recollection of Biedermeier domesticity in the eyebrow dormers of its steeply pitched tile roof. If Paul believed himself overshadowed by Messel, he was nevertheless responsible for introducing a new rationalism to the architecture of central Berlin.

At the same time Paul was designing the Zollernhof, he was also preparing drawings for a palatial house commissioned by Adolf Gans for Königstein im Taunus, a small country town in the mountains north of Frankfurt. Haus Hainerberg, as the building was named, provided a compelling demonstration of the flexibility of Paul's architectural vocabulary. Haus Hainerberg itself was conceived as a grand country house, and might have been mistaken for an eighteenth-century Schloß but for the distinct clarity and abstraction of individual architectural elements and the tension between order and asymmetry typical of Paul's work.¹⁶² The project included the design of a complex of service buildings at the edge of the property, including stables, storage, and accommodations for staff. At Haus Hainerberg Paul employed the same architectural vocabulary in his humblest and grandest residential designs, without compromising the propriety of either. The complex of buildings that he designed in Königstein embodied the ideals of modest wealth and noble labor, an equitable relationship between social classes, and a harmonious German culture.

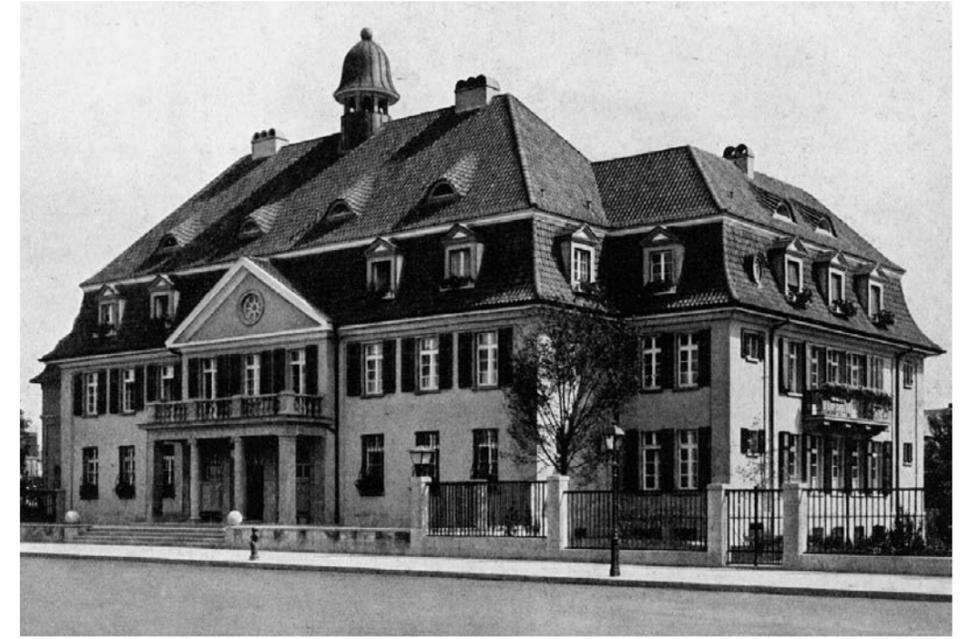


By the eve of the First World War, Paul's aesthetic sensibilities had made him a profoundly successful architect. He had established himself as a favorite of Berlin society, and designed a number of large and costly houses in the capital. Among his most important clients during this period was Paul von Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, for whom he designed a large house in the Berlin suburb of Wannsee as well as an office building for the Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Bank on Jägerstraße in central Berlin. Paul also designed houses in Wiesbaden, Cologne, and Duisburg, establishing a reputation in the Rheinland that would eventually lead him to establish an office in Cologne, directed by Franz Weber. His commercial projects prior to the First World War included the Heilanstalt Pützchen, a sanatorium built in the suburbs of Bonn in 1911, but which closed after Germany's defeat of 1918. However Paul's plan, which reflected his interest in the relationship of architecture and landscape, survived the reconstruction of the former Heilanstalt in 1925,¹⁶³ and, indeed, is preserved in the configuration of the Sankt-Adelheid-Gymnasium which presently occupies its site. In 1912 Paul designed the Nellinistift of the Rose-Livingston-Stiftung in Frankfurt, a home for elderly women dedicated the following year. Such projects, published in contemporary journals, constitute the recognized body of Paul's works from this period prior to 1914. Yet the few surviving records from Paul's classes at the school of applied arts indicate that his published works represent a mere fraction of the total number of projects for which he was commissioned.¹⁶⁴

In addition to his private projects, Paul received prestigious commissions from the imperial government – although he never received the favor of the Kaiser himself. His best-known building from the era prior to the First World War was such an official project, the Völkerkunde-Museum (later the Asiatisches Museum) in Dahlem. Wilhelm von Bode described the project in the 1915 *Jahrbuch der preußischen Kunstsammlungen* (yearbook of the Prussian art collections). »For the style of the building«, Bode wrote, »a connection with the monumental eighteenth century estates of Brandenburg was desired; not only for the sake of tradition or out of consideration for the proximity of Potsdam, the most beautiful townscape in Prussia, but also because of the way in which the individual buildings of a large estate relate to one another.« He continued by recounting his desire that the museum building should be as simple and practical as possible. »Paul's plan met this requirement«, he concluded, as »both the overall plan and the individual buildings made the desired association with Prussian buildings of the second half of the eighteenth century, and presented a tasteful solution that met the desires of the departmental curators of the Asiatic museum.«¹⁶⁵ In spite of Bode's description of the stylistic program for the new museum, Paul's design was clearly developed from the precedent of Haus Hainerberg. The war delayed construction of the museum, however, and when it was finally completed in 1921, it was the last and grandest of Paul's architectural expressions of the »zweites Biedermeier«, the reinterpretation of the simple, practical aesthetic of German Classicism that he had been instrumental in promoting as a style for the new century.



- 54. Heilanstalt Pützchen, Bonn, 1912.
- 55. Heilanstalt Pützchen, Bonn, 1912. Condition in 1925, following the construction of the main building of the Sankt-Adelheid-Gymnasium on the site of Paul's colonnade.
- 56. Heilanstalt Pützchen, Bonn, 1912. Plan.
- 57. Asiatic Museum, Berlin-Dahlem, 1921.
- 58. Rose-Livingston-Stiftung, Frankfurt, 1913.



Paul and the Werkbund

Paul's move to Berlin in 1907 coincided with the events that predicated the founding of the Deutscher Werkbund. Although the Werkbund was formally established in Munich on 5 October, 1907, its origins can be traced to the »3. Deutsche Kunstgewerbe-Ausstellung« in Dresden, which was organized by the architect Fritz Schumacher on behalf of the government of King Friedrich August of Saxony. Schumacher's selection process for the exhibition favored the works of individual artists over the production of established firms working in the historical styles. Condemning the notion of the applied arts as a business, he organized an exhibition that celebrated the applied arts as art.¹⁶⁶ In early 1907 Muthesius followed the Dresden exhibition with a series of lectures at the Berlin Handelshochschule (business college), where he had been appointed to a professorship. In his inaugural lecture, he denounced the same firms that had been slighted by Schumacher's selection process the year before. The subsequent publication of Muthesius' lecture produced the storm of controversy that he had desired. The June 1907 annual meeting of the Fachverband für die wirtschaftlichen Interessen des Kunstgewerbes (association for the economic interests of the applied art industries) precipitated a direct confrontation between the supporters and opponents of Muthesius. This confrontation resulted in the resignation of the progressive faction within the Fachverband, and prompted the establishment of the Werkbund four months later.¹⁶⁷

The original membership of the Werkbund consisted of twelve prominent artists and twelve applied art firms. Paul was one of the twelve artists, as were Peter Behrens, Theodor Fischer, Josef Hoffmann, Wilhelm Kreis, Max Läger, Adalbert Niemeyer, Joseph Maria Olbrich, Richard Riemerschmid, J. J. Scharvogel, Paul Schultze-Naumburg, and Fritz Schumacher. The firms included the Vereinigte Werkstätten, the Deutsche Werkstätten of Dresden, and the Wiener Werkstätte.¹⁶⁸ At the ceremonial foundation of the Werkbund in Munich, Schumacher proclaimed the principal objective of both the new organization and the German nation as a whole to be »the reconquest of a harmonious culture« (die Wiedereroberung einer harmonischer Kultur).¹⁶⁹ This objective mirrored the Gesamtkunstwerk of modern life developed in fin-de-siècle Munich, and the majority of the original members belonged to the Munich Sezession, or to its successors in Vienna and Berlin.¹⁷⁰ Consequently the Werkbund was an extension of a culture that Paul had helped to define, and its ideology reiterated his own program of reform. Indeed, he served on the executive committee of the Werkbund in the years prior to the First World War, and exerted considerable influence over the development of its policies.

The twelve founding corporate members of the Werkbund demonstrated the pragmatic objectives of the organization, described by Ludwig Deubner as »the co-operation of art, industry and handicraft by means of education, propaganda, and concerted action.«¹⁷¹ Muthesius was the



most committed sponsor of the alliance between the association and commercial enterprise. When he returned to Berlin in 1904, he brought with him the conviction that German standards of design compared unfavorably to those of Great Britain, and that fundamental reforms to the practices of German industry and the German educational system would be required before the country could compete effectively in the international market. The Werkbund became the primary focus of his efforts to elevate the standing of German design. In 1908 Paul designed a new line of standardized furniture for the Vereinigte Werkstätten, the Typenmöbel, that expressed his commitment to the Werkbund and its ideals.

Typenmöbel

The Vereinigte Werkstätten introduced Paul's Typenmöbel in 1908. Although Typenmöbel literally means type-furniture or typical furniture, the term »standardized furniture« may be closer to the intent of the name, insofar as the concept of a standard simultaneously implies both exemplary and normative status. The Typenmöbel was a range of mass-produced furniture, as well designed as the individual pieces that Paul conceived for private commissions, yet intended to be readily affordable. Paul intended his Typenmöbel to be versatile and flexible in its use, so that any number of different groupings could be composed from the various pieces produced. In 1936, Pevsner described Paul's Typenmöbel in terms of a foreign industrial precedent, stating that »the idea came from America, where it had been in use for some time for bookcases.¹⁷² Although there are obvious similarities between the commercial production of shelving in standardized sizes and the uniform proportional and dimensional system maintained throughout the Typenmöbel range, Paul's furniture represented something far more significant than a European adaptation of American industrial practices. As the first Typenmöbel catalog proclaimed, the furniture was intended to establish an alternative to the »stylistic confusion of the last forty years: the frivolity of Renaissance, Gothic, Baroque, Empire, Rococo, Egyptian-Hellenic-Assyrian-Style, Louis XVI and Jugendstil.«¹⁷³ The Typenmöbel was conceived in »simple, standardized forms that could be adapted to differing tastes and differing floor plans«. The individual pieces were not »resplendent with superfluous decoration«, but designed with »solid forms and equally solid workmanship.«¹⁷⁴ In short, the Typenmöbel represented a new way to furnish a middle-class German home.

The first Typenmöbel catalog, published in 1908, emphasized the modernity of the designs. Paul himself conceived the cover for the catalog, including the Vereinigte Werkstätten trademark he designed and registered the same year. The bold geometries, simple coloration, and innovative alphabet that he employed in the cover epitomized avant-garde graphic design. The catalog illustrations were simpler still. They consisted of photographs with laconic captions, arranged objectively on the individual pages. The borders, printed in pale green, provided a spare elegance. Paul's catalog embodied the union of the fine and applied arts that was central to his program of reform, and provided a perfect counterpart to the furniture that it illustrated.

Paul's Typenmöbel included all of the pieces necessary to complete a living room, dining room, bedroom, nursery, or study with a matched set of coordinated furnishings. The line incorporated a remarkable number of elements, ninety-nine individual pieces upon its introduction: beds, sofas, bookcases, and desks in a range of sizes, as well as chairs, dressers, a buffet, a variety of tables, and even a long case clock. Typenmöbel could be purchased in several finishes, including varnished walnut, mahogany, oak, and lacquered spruce. All of the pieces were produced in accordance with a consistent aesthetic program and, in the larger elements such as the bookcases and shelving, to a modular system of dimensions. As a result, pieces with the same finish could be combined to create an effectively unlimited number of harmonious ensembles. Indeed, as the photographs in the 1908 Typenmöbel catalog demonstrated, it was possible to tastefully furnish a house entirely with Paul's standardized furniture.

Paul's Typenmöbel was intended to be simple, practical, and inexpensive. Nevertheless it could not be classified as »Arbeitermöbel«, or furniture for the working classes: Typenmöbel was furniture for a middle-class home.¹⁷⁵ The Typenmöbel dining room illustrated in *Dekorative Kunst* in 1908 consisted of a square table, two armchairs, two side chairs, a buffet, and a credenza. In the period prior to the First World War, when the average income of a working class German family was between 900 and 3000 Marks, a Typenmöbel dining room in stained oak cost 969 Marks.¹⁷⁶ Typenmöbel was not merely too expensive for most working class homes, it was also designed for a different social environment. For example, the elements of the Typenmöbel dining room suite paralleled those of the most exclusive groupings produced by the Vereinigte Werk-

59. Typenmöbel catalog, circa 1908.

60. Typenmöbel catalog, circa 1908. Cover. Paul also designed the company logo for the Vereinigte Werkstätten.

61. Typenmöbel dining room, 1908.

62. Dining room in Paul's residence, Berlin, 1907. An interior of the apartment on Grolmanstraße in Charlottenburg. Just visible at the left of the image is the frame of one of a number of Japanese prints that Paul hung in his dining room.



stätten, including the dining room exhibited by Paul at the »3. Deutsche Kunstgewerbe-Ausstellung« of 1906. Such rooms reflected social rituals that did not occur in the average working class apartment or rural home of 1908. When Paul designed a suite of »Arbeitermöbel« in 1906, he included furnishings for a combined living, working, and dining room in deference to the modest standard of living typical of the Wilhelmine working classes. In contrast, the Typenmöbel dining room suite resembled the furnishing of his own dining room in Berlin, the dining room of a prominent royal professor.

Paul conceived his Typenmöbel as simplified versions of the expensive handmade suites of furniture that he was designing for the Vereinigte Werkstätten. Nevertheless the serially-produced Typenmöbel represented a viable option for the furnishing of a typical middle-class home, and as such reflected a new and important development in European interior design. Paul's Typenmöbel marked the first occasion on which progressive design was successfully promoted, on the scale of mass production, to middle-class customers.¹⁷⁷ The role of the middle classes in supporting modern design, and of commercial interests in fostering this support, was growing in the years prior to 1908. In 1902, and again in 1905, the Wertheim department store in Berlin staged significant exhibitions of modern interior design to widespread public interest.¹⁷⁸ The Typenmöbel could be distinguished from the artist-designed interiors displayed at Wertheim in 1905, or in Dresden the following year, by its relative neutrality. Although the Typenmöbel was radical in its simplicity, its transformation of classical forms, and its modes of production and distribution, it was also elegantly restrained. The furniture that Riemerschmid and Pankok designed in the first decade of the twentieth century still manifested the lingering Jugendstil ideal of the Gesamtkunstwerk.¹⁷⁹ Their compositions suggested that any element of disharmony in the attire, the demeanor, or the possessions of the household would compromise the integrity of the whole. Significantly, Paul never designed a Typenmöbel room as such, only rational, practical, and flexible suites of furniture that would have to be combined with fabrics and accessories from other sources.¹⁸⁰

Paul developed the Typenmöbel in parallel with his work as an architect and designer. His interiors for the doctors' and patients' rooms at the Heilanstalt Pützchen were furnished with Typenmöbel, and he did not hesitate to utilize pieces of his standardized furniture for commissions that were otherwise completed with custom designs.¹⁸¹ Moreover, Paul utilized aesthetic motifs from the Typenmöbel in his architectural commissions. The service buildings at Haus Hainerberg incorporated the ornamental lozenges of the Typenmöbel buffet, as well as the fundamentally modular composition of his standardized furniture. Although Paul did not promote his service buildings as standardized houses (Typenhäuser), they were certainly not far removed from such a description. Like the Typenmöbel, they belonged to the Werkbund ideal of harmonious culture.

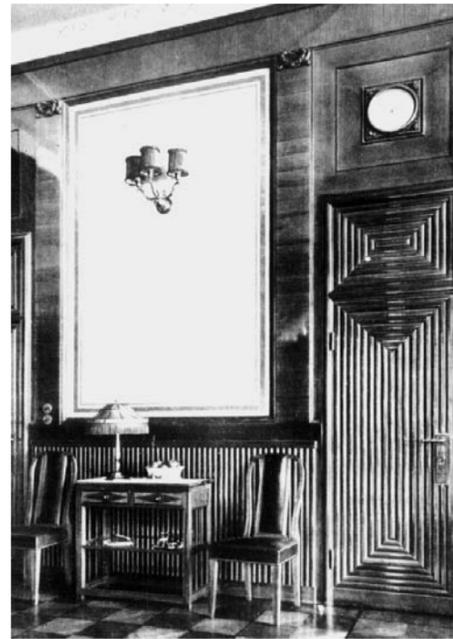


Reforming the artifacts of daily life

In 1909, Paul completed the interiors of the Villa Feinhals in Cologne, a project begun by Olbrich in 1908. Had Olbrich lived, he would have designed the interiors of the house himself, but he died prematurely while his drawings were still incomplete and the house was under construction. The client, Joseph Feinhals, selected Paul to complete the work. Feinhals owned the company that made Manoli cigarettes, and was a prominent supporter of the Werkbund.¹⁸² Paul was a personal friend, and one of the few artists considered capable of succeeding Olbrich.¹⁸³

The interiors Paul conceived for Villa Feinhals reflected the harmonious culture embodied in typical forms, and included elements of Typenmöbel for the garden furnishings, as well as modular kitchen cupboards that were almost identical to the Typenmöbel buffets.¹⁸⁴ Paul's dining room for the Villa Feinhals included a table and chairs that were also closely related to items from the Vereinigte Werkstätten catalog, and to the simple dining room furniture installed in Haus Westend the previous year. Yet much of his furniture for Villa Feinhals did not conform to the ideal of standardization as emphatically as did the kitchen and dining room suites. The garden room furnishings especially demonstrated a more idiosyncratic approach. The furniture for this room consisted of individual designs, notwithstanding their subsequent listing in the Vereinigte Werkstätten catalog. The garden room chairs, Modell 12137, combined formal simplicity, refined detailing, and emphatic coloration. There was an inherent tension in their design, reflected in the juxtaposition of architectonic, fluted front legs with brass bases and capitals and zoomorphic rear legs with a subtle yet muscular curvature. The same apparent tension existed in the carved arms, which combined sweeping upper surfaces with straight vertical elements and an inward curving volute at the point of support. Such features clearly recalled the precedent of eighteenth-century English furniture such as that produced by Robert Gillow of Lancaster and his apprentice, George Hepplewhite. Nevertheless the Modell 12137 chairs bore approximately the same relationship to Georgian prototypes that the Typenmöbel chairs did to Biedermeier originals. In both instances Paul accepted an eighteenth-century model as the expression of a type that he subsequently developed in accordance with contemporary methods of production and with his own personal aesthetic program. Critics noted the references to eighteenth-century precedents in the completion of the Villa Feinhals, but credited Paul with creating a »modern environment for modern man« characterized by the calm and simple refinement of its design.¹⁸⁵

Joseph Feinhals was one of a number of prominent capitalists who embraced Paul's understanding of the needs of the »modern man«. As early as 1905, Countess Otilie von Faber-Castell, heir to the celebrated pencil company founded by A. W. Faber in 1761, hired Paul to execute a suite of rooms in the castle designed for her family by Theodor von Kramer in 1903. The successful execution of Paul's modern interiors within the Faber-Castells' otherwise historicist Schloß Stein



63. Bruno Paul and Josef Maria Olbrich, Villa Feinhalls, Cologne, 1909. Garden room.
64, 65. Bruno Paul and Josef Maria Olbrich, Villa Feinhalls, Cologne, 1909. Dining room. The chairs, Vereinigte Werkstätten model 10366, were identical to those Paul used in the dining room of Haus Westend.
66. Centralhotel, Berlin, 1909. Interior. Watercolor by Richard Böhland.



established significant precedents in his career, with respect both to the prestigious nature of the commission and to the endorsement of his aesthetic sensibilities that it entailed. In 1907, Paul received a commission from Baron Jan Viktor von Wendelstadt to design three rooms for Schloß Neubeuern, which was being rebuilt by Gabriel von Seidl. As he had for Schloß Stein, Paul completed a suite of rooms, and their furnishings, with simple geometric ornamentation typical of his contemporary work. Once again, his interiors were distinguished by their inherent modernity. In 1909, Paul designed a dining room for Robert Bosch, who had commissioned an Italianate villa in Stuttgart from the architects Carl Heim and Jakob Früh. Paul's interior for the Villa Bosch demonstrated the ascendancy, even among prominent circles of German society, of the practical modernity that he espoused.

In addition to prestigious interiors for private clients, Paul provided designs for a series of relatively modest commercial projects. These interiors, like the service buildings for Haus Hainerberg, demonstrated Paul's success in developing a vocabulary of form that could be applied across multiple social strata, a characteristic of cultural harmony. Several of his commercial interiors were published, including the Staeger coffee sales room and the Café Kerkau, both furnished by the Vereinigte Werkstätten in Berlin in 1909. The two interiors displayed the influence of the Villa Feinhals, particularly in the patterns of multiple frames that were a favorite motif of Olbrich and the Viennese Secessionists, and which Paul adopted for his work in Cologne. The same pattern appeared in the plaster ceiling of the Café Kerkau, although the interior as a whole owed little to Vienna. Paul created an individual design that was praised for its »essential qualities, functional expression and material beauty«, qualities typical of his contemporary work.¹⁸⁶

In spite of Paul's success as a designer of interiors, he continued his relentless stylistic experimentation rather than perpetuating proven and popular forms. In 1910 he designed a series of display rooms for the Vereinigte Werkstätten in Berlin, with furniture that displayed the same slender, refined aesthetic as the garden room furnishings for the Villa Feinhals. Georgian furnishings continued to provide Paul with the inspiration for a more refined development of the Biedermeier.¹⁸⁷ He touched on the process of his adaptation of historical models in a 1907 synopsis of his objectives for the school of applied arts. »By detailed study of exemplary works of art from significant moments in the history of craftsmanship«, he wrote, »a pupil ought to develop a sense for the logical handling and application of materials and for the beauty of form that arose during periods of artistic perfection.«¹⁸⁸ The process he described was certainly applicable to the furnishings displayed in 1910, which embodied the logic and grace of Georgian prototypes in wholly original compositions.

The furniture Paul derived from eighteenth-century English models retained the simplicity and refinement characteristic of all of his work. He was, as he noted in 1907, not interested in the style of historical precedents, but rather their embodiment of timeless principals of composition.

Accordingly, Paul simultaneously explored a spectrum of design vocabularies throughout his career, ranging from the severe and utilitarian to the delicate and ornate. The archives of the Vereinigte Werkstätten alone contain over 3,000 individual designs he produced between 1897 and 1928. He developed early proposals for starkly minimalist furniture, including a purist folding chair conceived in 1907. The dining room suite he designed for Haus Herxheimer in Frankfurt in 1911 included another remarkably prescient piece, the buffet listed in the catalogs of the Vereinigte Werkstätten as Modell 12314. Although the base of the buffet was assembled from solid mahogany, it was surmounted by a series of tubular metal stanchions, most likely brass, supporting sheets of plain float glass from unadorned corner brackets. This composition of metal and glass would still have been regarded as inherently modern a quarter century after its introduction, when these materials were once again of interest to the avant-garde. Yet Paul also produced extraordinarily late Jugendstil works, including a series of chandeliers with arms in the form of smiling serpents reminiscent of his *Unterwelt* cover of 1896. One such chandelier, designed for the living room of Haus Hainerberg in 1912, remained in Deutsche Werkstätten catalogs into the 1920s. Nevertheless, throughout his career the majority of his designs fell between the extremes of severity and exuberance.¹⁸⁹

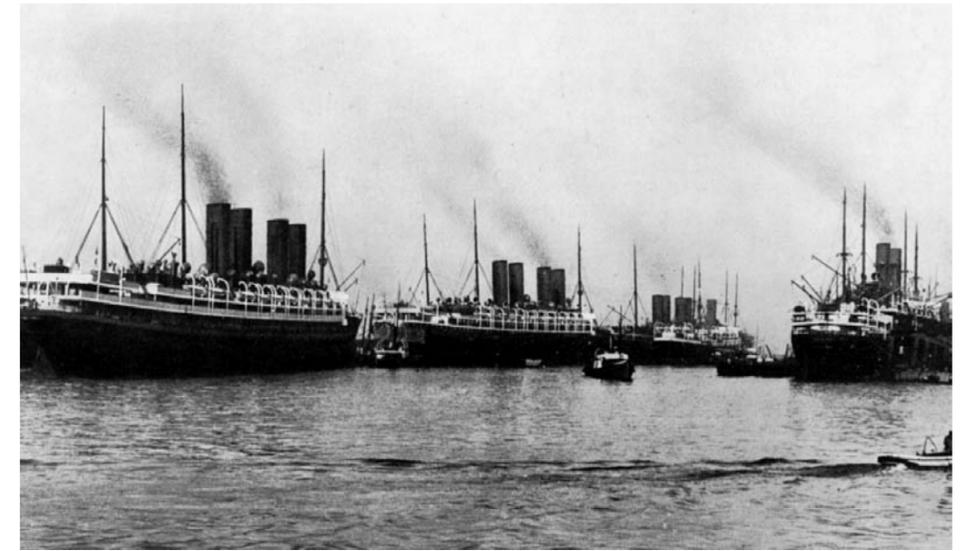
Interiors for Norddeutscher Lloyd

By 1906 Heinrich Wiegand, director of the Norddeutscher Lloyd (North German Lloyd) shipping company of Bremen, concluded that the interiors of his ocean liners should reflect the inherent modernity of the best contemporary decorative art. He considered a group of young artists, lead by Bruno Paul, Henri van de Velde, Peter Behrens, Otto Eckmann, and Richard Riemerschmid, to champion the renewal of both European art and European culture.¹⁹⁰ Of these artists, Wiegand selected Paul as the most suitable (geeignetsten) to assume responsibility for the interior design of the Norddeutscher Lloyd liners.¹⁹¹ The position that Wiegand offered was both prestigious and lucrative, a great opportunity both for Paul and for the Kunstgewerbebewegung. However, his offer came too late, after Paul had accepted the still greater honor of leading the school of applied arts in Berlin.

Nevertheless, Wiegand persisted in his desire to commission modern interiors for his ships. In 1906 he announced a contest for the design of first-class cabins for the new liner *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*. The winners included, unsurprisingly, both Paul and Riemerschmid, as well as Joseph Maria Olbrich. Paul's cabin, executed by the Vereinigte Werkstätten in a vocabulary reminiscent of his work for the »3. Deutsche Kunstgewerbe-Ausstellung«,¹⁹² was a striking departure from the Neo-Baroque interiors characteristic of earlier Norddeutscher Lloyd vessels.¹⁹³ When he wrote the article »Passagierendampfer und ihre Einrichtungen« for the 1914 Werkbund yearbook, Paul

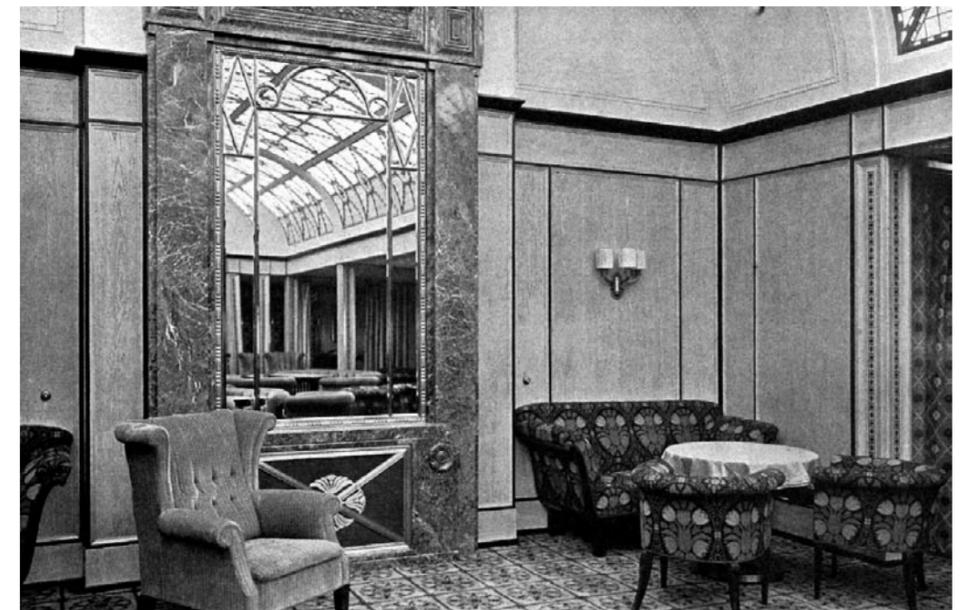


- 67. Display room for the Vereinigte Werkstätten, Berlin, 1910. Note the Japanese prints on the walls.
- 68. Haus Herxheimer, Frankfurt am Main, 1911. Dining room.
- 69. First class cabin for the Norddeutscher Lloyd liner *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*, 1906.
- 70. Express steamers of the Norddeutscher Lloyd at Bremerhaven, circa 1910. In the left foreground are the nearly identical liners *Kronprinzessin Cecilie* and *Kaiser Wilhelm II*, in the right foreground is *George Washington*.
- 71. Solarium of the Norddeutscher Lloyd liner *George Washington*, 1910.



dismissed the snobbery and furniture-magazine banality (»Möbelmagazin-Banalität«) of the »Norddeutscher Lloyd style« of the nineteenth century. By contrast, his first-class cabin was simple and elegant. Following his designs for *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*, he designed a smoking room for the postal steamer *Derfflinger* of 1907 and a dining room and salon for the Genoa–New York liner *Prinz Friedrich Wilhelm* of 1908. A Norddeutscher Lloyd publication described how »with a desire to eradicate the purposeless character of the interior decoration and appointment of steamships, the North German Lloyd resolutely took the advanced step of inviting the leading architects for interiors to design and fit up the interiors of the *cabines de luxe* of the *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*«. The brochure stated that in the competition organized by the line, »Prof. Bruno Paul easily established his supremacy, and it naturally followed that he be entrusted with the modern designing of the interiors of the North German Lloyd's steamships *Prinz Friedrich Wilhelm*, *Derfflinger*, and finally the magnificent *George Washington*.«¹⁹⁴ Paul's commission to complete the principal public rooms of *George Washington* provided him with an opportunity to address a uniquely modern design challenge.

Paul's designs for *George Washington* reflected a significant opportunity for the ideology of the Werkbund. The ship was the largest yet constructed in Germany, and a symbol of national opposition to British domination of maritime commerce. *George Washington* represented the first op-



portunity offered to a leading member of the Werkbund to design the major public rooms of a North Atlantic liner. Paul's interiors, assembled by the Vereinigte Werkstätten in Bremen, exhibited an understated elegance derived from disciplined design and meticulous craftsmanship, as well as the judicious use of costly materials. In addition to exquisite woodwork and vibrant textiles, Paul employed simple accents of polished stone. The gilt framed mirrors and stone veneers of the »Repräsentationsraum« illustrated in the Werkbund yearbook of 1914, evoked traditional conceptions of luxury without the imitative qualities of the »Norddeutscher Lloyd style«.

Paul's designs for *George Washington* were widely exhibited. The reading room was displayed in Munich in 1908 where, as the company noted, it was »most favorably commented upon«.¹⁹⁵ The same year the first class salon of the ship was exhibited in the »Schiffbauausstellung Berlin« (Berlin shipbuilding exhibition) for which Behrens executed his first architectural commission for AEG. In addition, the Norddeutscher Lloyd published a small book in English in 1910 to promote *George Washington* to American travelers.¹⁹⁶ According to this publication, the ship represented »the culmination of applied art«. »It is a steamship of individuality«, Norddeutscher Lloyd proclaimed, »admired by all for its attractiveness, its purity of design, its beautiful lines and the rich, soft harmony of colors in the inlays of woods and finishes«. The brochure described the interiors of the ship as »restful, luxuriously elegant and artistic«, spaces in which »all unnecessary elaboration has been eliminated«. These qualities were characteristic of Paul's work. His interiors for *George Washington* constituted a prominent international success for the recently-established Werkbund.

The touring exhibition »German Applied Arts«

Photographs of Paul's interiors for the Norddeutscher Lloyd were included in the 1912 touring exhibition »German Applied Arts«, organized for display in the United States by the museum director Karl Ernst Osthaus.¹⁹⁷ Paul's work was represented by photographs of the hall and solarium aboard *George Washington*, the exterior of Haus Westend, and a boudoir from the Villa Feinhals.¹⁹⁸ He also contributed the graphic work *Peasant Woman*,¹⁹⁹ eight different wallpaper patterns manufactured by Otto Schütz, and two different linoleum designs manufactured by the Delmenhorster Linoleum Fabrik »Anker-Marke«. In addition to Paul's work, the selection of wallpapers in the exhibition included patterns by Behrens, Hoffmann, Riemerschmid and Max Läger, who had designed the gardens for Villa Feinhals. According to the exhibition catalog, Paul and his colleagues »through decorative construction and color arrangement in clear accentuation of the character of the paper, created modern wall papers which bring light and beauty also into the little dwellings of the townspeople and workmen.«²⁰⁰ – a reiteration of the aspirations of the Werkbund in the form of a cultural renewal predicated on the union of artistic design and industrial production.

The touring exhibition »German Applied Arts« opened in Newark to widespread popular acclaim, before traveling to St. Louis, Chicago, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and New York. Contemporary observers compared the exhibition to the Armory Show,²⁰¹ the International Exhibition of Modern Art displayed in New York between 15 February and 15 March of 1913 which has been credited with introducing the American public to Marcel Duchamp and European Modernism. More insightful commentators noted that the Touring Exhibition exemplified the modern movement in the applied arts, which was recognized as originating fifteen years previously – with the emergence of the Jugendstil.²⁰² It is perhaps fortuitous that American observers regarded 1897, the year that Paul began his professional career, as the origin of the modern movement. He was specifically cited in American newspapers as one who had »developed the arts of both exterior and interior decoration to keep pace with the times.«²⁰³ The touring exhibition »German Applied Arts« consolidated his position as a leading exponent of an incipient international Modernism.

The 1912 exhibition was a celebration of the artistic individualism that Osthaus supported. He wrote the catalog so that the names of artists were given precedence over the titles or descriptions of their works. Nonetheless, reviews of the exhibition generally focused on the quality of the designs displayed, which demonstrated, in the words of a reporter for the *New York Herald*, »what can be done to impress an artistic standard on the everyday life of a people.«²⁰⁴ This assessment underscored the success of the Werkbund, both in Germany and abroad, in achieving the objectives that Schumacher proclaimed at its founding, and to which Paul had so successfully given form.



72. Thirteen-armed candelabrum, 1901. Manufactured by the Vereinigte Werkstätten and exhibited in Dresden in 1906, in a room designed by F. A. O. Krüger. Compare this room with Paul's »Arbeitszimmer« from the same exhibition.

73. Paul's official residence, Berlin, 1914. Salon.

74. Bruno Paul, circa 1914.

75. Paul's official residence, Berlin, 1914. Living room of the new residence of the director on the grounds of the school of applied arts.

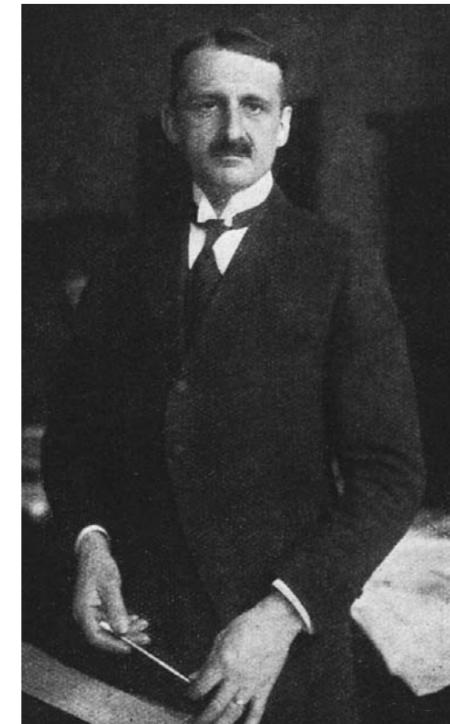


Paul's residence in Berlin

In 1914, Paul rebuilt his official residence in the buildings of the school of applied arts on Prinz-Albrecht-Straße, a project that epitomized his artistic beliefs. The furniture that he designed for this, his own home, reflected the elegance, refinement and cultural harmony of his commissioned interiors on the eve of the First World War. Paul's living room embodied the timeless virtues of anthropometric proportions, signified by the conscientious use of the antique orders, by the inclusion of rare and inherently beautiful materials such as mahogany, crystal, and marble, and in the harmonious and muted coloration of painted, stained and dyed surfaces.

The interiors that Paul designed for his residence also demonstrated the position that he himself had attained in Berlin society. As a royal professor he was numbered among the »hoffähig«, the privileged circle entitled to appear at court. In addition to his own work, his residence contained etchings by Piranesi, Tang bronzes, and European antiques. Such symbols of refined culture reinforced Paul's identity as a person of taste and of means. His personal life echoed his material success; he was a frequent traveler and an accomplished horseman.²⁰⁵ Moreover, the former *Simplicissimus* illustrator had attained the dignity of official recognition. He had been admitted to the Prussian royal academy in 1907.²⁰⁶ In 1911, he received the Prussian order of the red eagle (Roter Adlerorden), an honor bestowed by the Kaiser for service to the crown.²⁰⁷ By 1914, he had fulfilled the parental aspirations that had dispatched him to Dresden in 1896. The rebellious spirit of youth had led him to a lofty position in the Prussian civil service, material prosperity, and the patronage of the imperial government.

In addition to artifacts of aristocratic culture, Paul displayed venerable objects of his own design in his Berlin residence. The thirteen-armed candelabrum that he designed for the Vereinigte Werkstätten in 1901 was prominently displayed. Despite such symbols of continuity, Paul's residence also indicated emerging changes in his career. His furnishings were not produced by the Vereinigte Werkstätten, but likely by the Berlin firm Herrmann Gerson, purveyors of furniture to the imperial court. Moreover, many of the pieces Paul conceived for his own home reflected a far looser interpretation of the solid, practical elegance of eighteenth-century designs than his earlier work. By 1914 Paul was seeking a cultural ideal more expressive and elaborate than simple, Biedermeier Classicism. This search prefigured the next phase in his artistic career.



4. War and revolution: 1912–1920

Although Paul and his colleagues in the Werkbund succeeded in promoting the quality and marketability of German design, the loose aesthetic principles of the organization never coalesced into a coherent style. The competitive challenges of the open market were increasingly reflected in Paul's own designs in the years prior to the First World War, as he labored to consolidate his position as a leader of the avant-garde. By 1912, his work had embodied the influence of Biedermeier Classicism for seven years. After successfully advancing the »zweites Biedermeier« as the characteristic vocabulary of progressive German design, Paul sought to maintain his position as an arbiter of popular taste by reinventing his personal style.

During the years immediately before and after the war, Paul's designs evinced a relentless formal experimentation. Just as he had never completely forsaken the influence of the Jugendstil, so he retained his commitment to the material simplicity and functional elegance of German Classicism. Yet Paul explored innumerable themes and variations in his furniture and interiors, continuously expanding the formal vocabulary of his earlier work through the development of new designs. His architectural projects from the second decade of the twentieth century followed the precedent of his furniture designs. His buildings continued to draw from the tradition of eighteenth-century Classicism, although their references to historical models became looser and increasingly abstract.

The development of Paul's personal style paralleled his reform of the curriculum of the Berlin school of applied arts. By 1912, he had held the directorship for five years, and he had established himself in the vanguard of the movement to reform artistic education. He continued to shape the organization of his school both through the appointment of new staff and the promotion of professors whose ideas agreed with his own. Paul encouraged collaboration between the members of the faculty, and he actively sought their participation in the completion of his own projects. When the war suspended his private practice, Paul turned his attention to the theoretical objectives of his educational reforms. During the war he wrote a series of articles elaborating his theories on the future of artistic education and the applied arts. These essays, among the few theoretical works that he published, identified the basic principles that would shape the development of his school in the first years of the Weimar Republic.

Educational reform

In 1912 Paul was still living in the apartment on Grolmanstraße in Charlottenburg where he had moved with his wife Maria and their young daughter Hildegard in 1907.²⁰⁸ Despite his daily commute across Berlin to his office on Prinz-Albrecht-Straße, his private life had become virtually indistinguishable from his role as director of the school of applied arts. He traveled widely on behalf of the school, representing his administration and its reforms at conferences and exhibitions throughout Central Europe. He ran his architectural studio from Prinz-Albrecht-Straße, working in concert with his students and his fellow professors. The curriculum of the school was an extension of Paul's private practice; as he implemented his reforms, he shaped the administration of the school and the composition of its faculty in the image of his own professional success.

Paul officially taught a »Fachklasse« in architectural design, in accordance with the terminology of the Kunstgewerbeschule. Even his earliest students referred to his atelier, however, using the French name associated with academic instruction.²⁰⁹ The change in nomenclature, which would not be officially recorded in the curricula of the school until 1921, is indicative of the direction of his reforms. He had himself been an academy student, and was influenced by the academic model of artistic education. Nevertheless his primary motivation in the organization of his classes was teaching students in the pragmatic discipline of professional practice. Paul's students worked long hours on his architectural and interior projects, learning the techniques of design through direct experience under the guidance of their professor. In accordance with Paul's reforms, only the most capable students were admitted to the advanced courses offered by the school. His students demonstrated confidence and ability in their work, and several of them, including Julius Bühler and Otto Scholz, had drawings published in *Moderne Bauformen*.²¹⁰ Colored illustrations by his students Bruno Scherz, Julius Cunow, and Bernhard Fech were included in the book *Farbige Raumkunst: 120 Entwürfe moderner Künstler*.²¹¹ Their work reflected Paul's stylistic influence, but also the competence and self-discipline required of a successful architect. Students of

painting, sculpture, and drawing worked in similarly academic settings, where the distinction between the fine and applied arts was gradually dissolved.

In his teaching plan for the school year ending in 1911, Paul proclaimed his determination that his professors should »consult with their students as frequently as possible on the practical details of their own private commissions«. ²¹² Moreover, he intended that these private commissions should conform to his own progressive inclinations, rather than mindless duplication of historical models that had characterized the German schools of applied arts in the nineteenth century. Although Paul believed in the value of historical precedents, he did not advocate the perpetuation of historical styles. Accordingly, he sought practicing modern artists of refined technical ability to lead the advanced classes at his school.

The Prague-born painter, print-maker, and photographer Emil Orlik, a professor at the school of applied arts since 1905, embodied the qualities that Paul sought in members of his faculty. Orlik belonged to the circle of progressive artists working in Berlin, and was an active member of the Sezession movement. The characteristic style of his graphic art was inspired by an extended journey to Japan in 1900, where he printed woodcuts that were enthusiastically exhibited in Dresden, Berlin, Brno, and Vienna upon his return. Orlik was, in the words of the critic Ludwig Hevesi, the »most-Japanese European artist« at a time of widespread enthusiasm for Oriental art.²¹³ As a teacher, he helped inspire the increasing interest in geometric abstraction that would become characteristic of twentieth-century graphic art. He also inspired Bruno Paul. Photographs of Paul's apartment on Grolmanstraße, published in *Dekorative Kunst* in 1908, show several Japanese prints prominently displayed among his possessions. Whether or not Orlik prompted the acquisition of these prints, which do not appear in earlier photographs of Paul's home in Munich, the two professors clearly agreed in matters of aesthetic principle. As a consequence, Paul sought Orlik's collaboration on many of his architectural commissions. He also facilitated the transformation of Orlik's class in commercial and publishing art into an atelier in the model of his own.

The Berlin Sezession, to which Paul and Orlik belonged, contributed to Berlin's ascendancy over Munich as the center of the arts in Germany. The Sezession also provided a forum for artists whose opinions paralleled Paul's own, including the painter Emil Rudolph Weiß.²¹⁴ Like Orlik, he had been a professor at the school of applied arts under Ewald. When Paul assumed the directorship of the school, Weiß was responsible for the advanced classes in decorative painting and pattern design. His elegant, impressionistic style possessed a classical simplicity that appealed to Paul. In 1911, Weiß painted the walls of a salon in Schloß Börnicke, another example of the professional collaboration that Paul encouraged among the members of his staff. In 1915, Paul devoted one of his few published articles to the subject of Weiß and his architectural painting, writing: »Now the ways and means are in the hands of both the mature leaders and the young seekers, and they are all promoting the same objective: The development of a decorative painting that will correspond to the nature and the needs of our time.«²¹⁵

In addition to advancing the careers of members of Ewald's staff whose ideas were sympathetic to his own, Paul was able to appoint new faculty members as he consolidated his influence on the curricula of the school. In 1909, he hired Ludwig Sütterlin to teach the evening classes in handwriting. The circumstances of Sütterlin's appointment illustrate the efforts made by the leadership of the Werkbund to influence the German educational system. In October 1909 Wolf Dohrn, managing director of the organization, wrote Paul a letter recommending Rudolf Koch for the vacant teaching position for handwriting and script. Paul, who clearly envisioned the vacancy in a broader context than the teaching of handwriting, replied that Koch did not have enough experience as a printer. Moreover he already had an ideal candidate in the person of the »efficient Sütterlin«. ²¹⁶ Sütterlin was responsible for the development of the Sütterlin Kurrent or Sütterlin-schrift, a simplified script that was taught throughout Prussia.²¹⁷ In addition to his interest in the reform of German handwriting, Sütterlin was a successful applied artist, a prolific graphic designer as well as a craftsman in glass and leather. He was also a painter, and the catalogs of the school referred to him as Maler (painter) Sütterlin.²¹⁸

The sculptor Joseph Wackerle was another of the multi-talented artists Paul recruited to join the faculty of the school of applied arts. Like Orlik and Weiß, he made periodic contributions to Paul's buildings and interiors. In 1909, he worked with Paul on the interiors of the Café Kerkau²¹⁹ as well as the reception room of the Imperial Chancellery, one of Paul's most prestigious commissions.²²⁰ He also carved the entry doors for Villa Feinhals.²²¹ Wackerle worked with equal facility in wood and stone, bronze, gold, and porcelain, displaying a multitude of talents that accorded perfectly with Paul's ideal of creative ability. From 1910, he led the classes for decorative sculpture at the school of applied arts.