GERMANY’S CULTURAL IDEOLOGY OF *BILDUNG*
*1870-1945*

A dissertation submitted to Kent State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

Hans-Henning Bunge

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Dissertation written by

Hans-Henning Bunge

M.S. Lack Ingenieur Schule, Germany

M.A., Kent State University

Ph.D., Kent State University, 2015

Approved by

_________________________, History, Chair Doctoral Dissertation Committee
Richard Steigmann-Gall

_________________________, History, Member, Doctoral Committee
Timothy Scarnecchia

_________________________, University of Akron, Member, Doctoral Committee
Shelley Baranowski

_________________________, Geology, Member, Doctoral Committee
Alison Smith

_________________________, Graduate Faculty Representative
Sue Ellen Wright

Accepted by

_________________________, Chair, Department of History
Kenneth Bindas

_________________________, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
James Blank
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INTRODUCTION

During World War II the Russian forces had encircled a German division and its chance to breakout was slim. A young Fähnrich (officer cadet) was to escape the anticipated surrender to the enemy by being flown home. As he came to say his goodbyes, the commanding officer addressed the young man by quoting the famous inscription of the memorial at Thermopylae where Leonidas, king of the Spartans perished in 480 BC as he defended the mountain pass against an overwhelming Persian force. “Go tell Germans ….”¹ He then continued his recital in ancient Greek. When the recruit responded with a blank stare, he repeated the quote in Latin. But the recruit remained clueless. Whereupon the commander commented to his comrade, a physician, both members of the humanistic educated Bildungsbürgertum: “If he does not even understand the Latin version, why is it he who is being saved.”²

The Bildungsbürgertum (educated bourgeoisie) was since the early nineteenth century uniquely privileged to receive a secondary education and they thereby became the main proponents of Germany’s cultural ideology of Bildung. This ideology of Bildung combined the desire for intellectual exploration, with ethical values, self-reliance and personal betterment of the Lutheran religion. It was also influenced by the idealized culture of ancient Greece and Rome that were highly admired and perceived as the zenith

¹ Go tell Spartans, stranger passing by, that here obedient to their law we lie. Steven Pressfield, Gates of Fire (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 1.
² Peter Bamm, Die unsichtbare Flagge (Berlin: Deutsche Buch-Gesellschaft, 1952), 254.
of mankind’s accomplishment. This ideology had sprung from a contemplative social environment during a time when Germany’s economy was mainly agrarian, but the nation’s industrialization during the Kaiserreich provided less fertile condition for it to thrive.

In response to the changing social and economic environment the Ministry of Education reformed and expanded the secondary education, which up to now was only offered by the humanistic Gymnasium that was also responsible for perpetuating the cultural ideology of Bildung. In order to educate a larger section of the population, and not just the small elite of the Bildungsbürgertum, the Realschule with its more utilitarian orientation was upgraded to provide the lower classes with a better access to a secondary education and to universities. The expanded secondary education caused the middle class to restructure and thereby diminished the role of the Bildungsbürgertum as the primary promulgator of Germany’s cultural ideology. These changes together with nation’s industrialization altered the importance Bildung played in the lives of the newly formed Bürgertum.

The above discourse between the two generations exemplifies the cultural conflict that the school reform generated. For the two officers the Fähnrich’s unfamiliarity with antiquity meant Germany’s cultural ideology, which the Bildungsbürgertum identified with, was being lost. This leads to the purpose of this thesis: to investigate what role the cultural ideology of Bildung continued to play in Germany after the school reform and social upheaval reconfigured the middle class, and caused the Bildungsbürgertum to lose its dominating influence. I am asking the question whether this ideology gradually
vanishes as the belief in man’s progression made way for an increasingly utilitarian and materialistic orientation, or did the concept of Bildung adapt to become part of the new social order? In this thesis I will focus on the development of each aspect of the ideology of Bildung: cognitive interests, enjoyment of the arts and ethical values.

**Purpose of Dissertation**

The main objective of this dissertation is to establish whether the cultural ideology of Bildung remained part of Germany’s cultural identity up to 1945, in spite of the nation’s social, economic and political transitions. I will first look at the changing role secondary education played in perpetuating this ideology. This will include exploring Gymnasium, high school, teachers’ individual opinions about humanistic education as society started to favor more utilitarian teachings, and whether they were able to adjust their teaching to meet the demands of an altered social environment. As part of the cultural ideology these philologists familiarized students almost excessively with idealized cultural achievements of ancient Greece and Rome, which is why it is frequently claimed that Germany was imitating these partly spurious ideals of antiquity to the detriment of its own cultural identity. By reviewing essays of Gymnasium teachers on this subject I will explore the perspective of Germany’s cultural development, which they conveyed to their students as the self-confidence of the nation increased.

In this dissertation I will research the acceptance of the humanistic ideology by Gymnasium students by evaluating their writings about this topic. Their comments will also provide me with information about their parents’ adherence to the culture of Bildung.
I will further explore whether these students continued to accept traditional conventions by examining their youth association and what it stood for.

In the main part of this thesis I will investigate the Bürgertum’s adherence to the ideology of Bildung after the monarchy collapsed and the nation experienced economic and political turmoil. Fundamental school reforms between 1809 and the Weimar Republic changed the social structure of upper and middle class and diminished the dominance of the Bildungsbürgertum. The impact that this social reconfiguration had on the cultural ideology will be an important part of this investigation, and will be explored by reviewing diaries of members of the Bürgertum. I will also review these documents to establish women’s commitment to Bildung, and the importance arts retained as part of this ideology.

No study about the changing role of Bildung as the result of drastic social and political changes has previously been conducted. Basing this research on individual testimonies of Gymnasium educators, their students, and members of the Bürgertum also distinguishes this study distinctly from existing scholarship. Current scholarship describes the influence Germany’s changing social and political environment had on Gymnasium education, but the effect it had on the perspective of the individual educator or its students has not been addressed. Similarly practicing the ideology of Bildung is frequently described as belonging to the past without considering whether it remained part of the nation’s culture.
Existing Literature

In 1809, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Prussia’s Minister of Education, was commissioned to convert Germany’s utilitarian second education into one based on neo-humanistic ideology with emphasis on introspection, Bildung and civic responsibility. The Gymnasium he established aimed to educate a small elite, the Bildungsbürgertum, and to instill in them Germany’s cultural ideology. In one of the earlier treatments of neo-humanistic education, Eduard Spranger writes that Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s pedagogical concept of “all abilities of a child should be advanced” was, together with the teaching of the history of ancient Greece and Rome, fundamental to Wilhelm von Humboldt’s humanistic education, in which he gave more credence to the interpretation of these ancient culture’s ideals and psychology than to the teaching of mere historical facts. In his view, studying these cultures made an ideal teaching tool because their accomplishments and humane qualities surpassed those of other nations. Spranger argues that such an idealized interpretation of their history reflected the ethic-esthetic notion of Bildung at that period in Germany. As authoritative as Spranger’s book is, it fails to consider the ways in which ancient history also taught civic duty to the sons of the Bildungsbürgertum. He describes the values which neo-humanistic education tries to convey. He neglects to explore, and I will examine in this dissertation, the changing impact of these teachings on the lives of Gymnasium graduates as the social environment became less receptive to practice these ethic-esthetic notions.

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3 Eduard Spranger, Wilhelm von Humboldt und die Reform des Bildungswesens (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1965).
In *Education and Society in Modern Germany*, Richard Samuel and R. H. Thomas contend that humanistic education became a defensive weapon against social change.\(^4\) I argue for stemming the social tide, the *Bildungsbürgertum*, in spite of their formidable influence, was too small a minority. *Gymnasium* education by conveying cultural ideals and ethical values, formed the identity of the *Bildungsbürgertum*, which I claim in this thesis educators tried to uphold instead of being concerned with preventing social changes.

Walter Horace Bruford, in his consideration of the subject, argues it was part of German middle-class culture not to get involved in politics. To give up their inwardness for external objectives would have violated their sense of national identity, he writes.\(^5\) Germany’s change from an agricultural to a more demanding industrial economy undermined the social environment for introspection, and led to a consequential adjustment of the *Bildungsbürgertum*’s identity, which he fails to consider. He also overlooks the increasing emphasis of the *Gymnasium* and *Realschule* on civic duty in the final years of the monarchy and Weimar Republic, and the *Bürgertum*’s growing engagement in public affairs, all signs of a shift from introspection to civic responsibility. In this thesis I will investigate the effect these social and political changes had on the *Bildungsbürgertum*’s identity and their commitment to civic activities.

Konrad Jarausch claims that higher education did not contribute much to social mobility because parents of the lower class were in general reluctant to send their

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children to secondary schools. He fails to point out that in the early years of the monarchy, the government intentionally prevented social mobility by increasing Gymnasium tuition, but once the Realschule was upgraded in 1900, a larger section of the population did seek a secondary education. The ensuing social mobility changed the composition of the middle and upper class, and thereby diminished the influence of the Bildungsbürgertum on Germany’s cultural and ethical norms. Therefore after the school reform, graduates with a secondary education will be referred to as Bürgertum because they were not limited any more to Gymnasium graduates, the Bildungsbürgertum. In this dissertation I will explore the transition the cultural values underwent as the result of these social changes, which Jarausch does not address.

More recently, Fritz Ringer, in Toward a Social History of Knowledge, fittingly describes Bildung as a cognitive disposition beyond education. He states a Gymnasium education was the prerequisite for Bildung, which meant an in-depth familiarity with the arts, literature and history, especially of antiquity. Ringer fails to investigate, and I will address, whether such acquisition of knowledge ended with graduating from the Gymnasium or became a lifestyle. He further argues that having graduated from the Gymnasium was a status symbol, entitling one to social privileges and serving as a means for upward mobility for the lower and middle class. Similar to Bruford, he argues that as industry’s need for science-oriented knowledge became more urgent, Bildung gradually became less of a social marker as secondary education shifted from the Gymnasium to the

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I will argue Bildung retained its function as a social marker, but by educating a larger section of the population and due to the changing social environment, its concept and cognitive disposition were transformed. Ringer and Brudford wrongly portray German university graduates as politically naïve by failing to recognize their increasing social responsibility at the turn of century. He does not acknowledge Gymnasium students’ gradual emancipation and their more outward orientation, which I will explore in Chapter III. During the Weimar Republic, Eda Sagara correctly points out, education continued to determine the social stratification, but now included Realschule graduates as well. All three authors make no or little reference to the formidable impact the school reform had on the social composition of the Bürgertum and thereby on the cultural ideology, which this thesis will explore.

In her highly regarded recent monograph, Susanne L. Marchand describes how in the nineteenth century, Hellenic culture became part of a German national consciousness. She argues that neo-humanism was mainly concerned with teaching appreciation of beauty, self-refinement and ancient languages, and was to bind its graduates in an elitist association. She claims that recent archeological findings dethroned the belief in ancient Greece’s cultural superiority without pointing out Humboldt always intended to use an idealized version of ancient history as a teaching

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10 Ibid., 28.
Humboldt meant the idealized Greek culture to be a teaching tool for forming the mindset of Gymnasium students by conveying the appreciation of beauty, ethical values and the desire for intellectual explorations. Archeological findings did not diminish this function because Hellenic culture continued to be perceived as one of man’s greatest achievement. I will investigate whether such archeological findings made these ancient ideals less effective in forming the mindset of Gymnasium students by examining their ideological orientation in the late years of the monarchy.

Marchand argues that Germany’s youth eventually had difficulty accepting “the classical cultural hegemony” particularly in the aftermath of the First World War and as a result, she contends, humanists became more oriented toward contemporary artists. She fails to explain that the general appreciation of beauty was fundamental to the humanist ideology and that such interests illustrated its continuing vitality, as my analysis of the diaries will show. She further does not explore what became of this cultural ideology, as the majority of pupils no longer graduated from the humanistic Gymnasium but rather from Realschulen, which I will address in the last chapter of this thesis. Marchand argues humanistic education served to familiarize students with Greece’s artistic and cultural achievements and stimulate their intellectual interests. Finding little or no treatment in her book, however, are what were arguably equally important parts of Greece’s culture, such as its social programs, socioeconomic development and educating its people to become responsible citizens. These values were not only fundamental to humanistic education, but also to the cultural ideology of the Bildungsbürgertum, as I will show.

11 Ibid., 116.
12 Ibid., 118, 241.
The Gymnasium, derided by many for its unimaginative education, is praised by Fritz Stern in *The Politics of Cultural Despair* as pedagogically excellent, but he then questions why so many of its pupils revolted against its teaching methods, a question for which he provides no answer and I will examine. The youth movement, he contends, was a rebellion against the pedantry and artificiality of their *Gymnasium* teachers, but he makes no mention whether students continued to identify with the humanist ideology in spite of the changing social environment, which will be investigated when I analyze pupils’ contributions to school papers and the *Wandervogel* movement.

In *Geschichtsunterricht und Geschichtsdialektik vom Kaiserreich bis zur Gegenwart (History, Education and the Dialectic of History from the Kaiserreich to the Present)*, it is argued that during the monarchy, history lessons reflected recent research. In my review of *Gymnasium* history books of that period, I found this to hold true only in some cases, but independent of the changing interpretation of history, the Hellenic culture continues to be depicted as ideal in these schoolbooks, which these authors do not address. In this thesis I will investigate *Gymnasium* students’ willingness to accept these cultural ideals by reviewing articles they wrote for a school paper that express their views in this subject.

The above authors further claim that the Kaiser, because of his bellicose intentions, opposed the teaching of republican *Weltbürgertum* and political tolerance; the latter he felt would contribute to the strength of the Socialist Party. They argue that

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because educators at the fin de siècle feared Gymnasia would become sidelined as an institution, they complied with the Kaiser’s demand by highlighting Germany’s national accomplishments, and comparing them to the greatness of Rome and Athens. They fail to mention, a point which I will address, that these comparisons to the glory of these ancient nations became much more frequent as the war progressed, and continued after Germany lost the war in 1918 in order to counteract the humiliation of a defeated nation.

These authors correctly state that Gymnasium teachers refused to curtail cosmopolitan education. Following World War I, the Bildungsbürgertum’s cosmopolitan attitude was interpreted as lack of patriotism, which was perceived as having contributed to the nation’s defeat. When Humboldt implemented the school reform in 1809, cosmopolitanism was fundamental to his educational concept because at that time nationalism was in its infancy and the only indicator of Germanness was their common language. Based on this tradition the respect for other cultures remained an essential part of the Gymnasium education, even as nationalism was on the rise, as I will show. None of the reviewed authors consider the dichotomy of patriotism and cosmopolitanism as reflected in the Weltbild of the Bürgertum, which I will explore in Chapter IV.

Hans Jürgen Apel and Stefan Bittner, in their extensive study of Gymnasium education, contend the predominant teaching of ancient languages during the Kaiserreich failed to form the intellect of students, as had been widely assumed. They argue the Gymnasium was not seen as offering an inspiring education anymore, and its diploma

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15 Ibid.
now merely served as a necessary step to qualify for a career as a civil servant. They claim Gymnasia failed to acknowledge recent research in ancient history courses, and their teaching had little in common with Humboldt’s Neuhumanismus; instead it ensured national conformity. They opine that the increasing dominance of Realschulen in the Weimar Republic contributed to a more realistic education than what the Gymnasium had to offer.\textsuperscript{17} Nevertheless Gymnasium graduates, among them Albert Einstein (1879 -1955), were responsible for major scientific discoveries, and placed Germany at that time in the forefront of technological developments. The ineffectiveness of the Gymnasium education they lament is thus not justified, as I will show when reviewing the diaries.

Hartmut Kaelble, in his review of Germany’s secondary education, contends the Gymnasium attempted in vain to stem its declining importance as an educational institution partly because of its reluctance to adjust the curriculum to meet the changing social demands.\textsuperscript{18} He fails to consider that Gymnasium education had been designed for an elite, particularly for those with an aptitude for languages. The declining importance of the Gymnasium can partially be attributed to the reluctance of educators to compromise these high educational standards as well as humanistic ideals. The main reason for this institution being marginalized was the introduction of the Realschule, which the majority of students choose as their educational path, because it was less demanding. The aim of the Gymnasium was not only to teach factual knowledge and critical thinking, but also to ensure for pupils to identify with the nation’s cultural and

\textsuperscript{17} Hans Jürgen Apel and Stefan Bittner, Humanistische Schulbildung 1890-1945 (Köln: Böhlau Verlag GmbH & Cie, 1994).

ethical values. Neither of these two monographs addresses the ability of this institution to fulfill these mandates in the face of the nation’s changing social environment. In this thesis I will evaluate the effort of Gymnasium educators to convey these values and whether pupils continue to identify with them. I will further assess the role these cultural ideology and ethical values continue to play in the adult lives of these students.

Hans-Ulrich Wehler claims that the desire for traditional high level of Bildung declined.\(^\text{19}\) This held true for the Bildungsbürgertum, but he does not explore the continuing importance of the fundamental concept of Bildung in the lives of the newly structured Bürgertum, which will be part of my investigation. Ralf Dahrendorf is one of the few authors to address the role of the family in perpetuating Germany’s cultural values. He writes that families were seen as the main educators because they were considered to be more effective in forming their children’s attitudes and virtues than schools.\(^\text{20}\) His investigation does not consider the part parents play in inspiring in their children the love for classical music, literature or modern art. Such interests were considered an important part of the ideology of Bildung, as this thesis will show, but were widely ignored by secondary schools.

The following historiographies will pertain to the Bildungsbürgertum’s youth, whose role will be addressed in chapter three. In an early work, Siegfried Kawerau in Soziologischer Ausbau des Geschichtsunterrichts underlines the importance of history to teach students to subordinate individual desires to the demands of a community and laws


governing societies. He argues that that man can only realize his full potential by totally integrating into the \textit{Volksgemeinschaft}. He opines history is best taught through contemporary novels written during the past four to five hundred years.\textsuperscript{21} Kawerau’s emphasis on \textit{Volksgemeinschaft} and pupils’ physical fitness foreshadows to a degree the ideology of the Third Reich. He makes no mention of the continuing influence of the humanistic educational concept during Weimar Republic, which in many respects diverges from his pedagogical goals. He also does not refer to youths’ emancipation and their declining willingness to accept total subjugation to parents and teachers, issues that I will investigate in this thesis.

Youth, at the \textit{fin de siècle}, are frequently perceived as rebelling against social confinement. Walter Laqueur argues that \textit{Gymnasium} pupils were disquieted by the conventions of the Wilhelmine society: its artificiality, materialism, absence of human warmth and sincerity.\textsuperscript{22} He claims \textit{Wandervogel} was mainly a Protestant movement restricted to big cities with little participation from Socialists and Catholics.\textsuperscript{23} He makes no mention of the role the humanistic education plays in the dissonance youth experienced or whether common grievances united \textit{Wandervogel} chapters, which I will explore in Chapter III. In contrast John Gillis, in his more recent \textit{Youth and History} contends that adolescents in the last decade of the \textit{Kaiserreich} experienced neither a crisis nor did they rebel against the authoritarian domination by parents and teachers.\textsuperscript{24}

Marin Doerry in \textit{Übergangsmenschen} (\textit{Mankind in Transition}) largely agrees with Gillis’

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Siegfried Kawerau, \textit{Soziologischer Ausbau des Geschichtsunterrichts} (Berlin: Verlag Neues Vaterland E. Berger & Co. 1921), 3.
\item Ibid., 11.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
findings, arguing the youths’ fixation on authority was not shaken during the monarchy. Neither author consults directly the opinion of students to confirm their findings. By reviewing school papers I will investigate whether students express in their contributions the acceptance of the unquestionable authority of parents and teachers.

In “Mit uns zieht die neue Zeit” Der Mythos der Jugend, the authors explore in more detail the impact the changing social environment had on juveniles of that period. They outline the difficulty youths had in finding their bearings within an antiquated social structure and outdated political system, which was intensified by the decay of moral standards and authoritarian rearing practices. The youth of Bildungsbürger reacted by disregarding their elders’ belief in Germany’s authoritarian militaristic society and concentrated instead on their own individual abilities, they contend. They further argue that the Wandervogel and similar associations were attempts by youths to affirm their status as individuals and reestablish their collective identity. The authors do not explore whether students, in spite of their discontent, continued to identify with the Gymnasium’s humanist ideology, and if these teachings contributed to their ambivalence. They also fail to highlight the Wandervogel’s critical view of conventions that distinguished it from other and far larger youth organizations of that time. In this thesis I will examine students’ personal opinion concerning these topics by reviewing their essays.

A reoccurring subject of the reviewed books is the civic mindedness of Germany’s upper and middle class youth during the monarchy and the Weimar Republic.

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27 Ibid., 192.
The authors of *Die Bildung der Nation* state that civic responsibility was not on the agenda of the *Wandervogel* movement. This changed after World War I, Eric Weitz argues in his more recent monograph. After the collapse of the monarchy, he states, students were more interested in public affairs and demanded the right to read newspapers, a practice secondary schools of the monarchy frowned upon. Both authors examine the attitude of youths during these periods, but not the importance of their civic mindedness and political interests in their adult lives. In this dissertation I will investigate the reflection of these issues in diaries of the *Bürgertum*.

**Method and Chapter Outline**

**Chapter I**

In this chapter I will first describe the historical development of the cultural ideology of *Bildung* with which the *Bildungsbürgertum* identified, and the changing contributions made by the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. In the remaining chapter I will discuss scholarships of topics related to this thesis and highlight the issues they did not address, but which this dissertation will explore. In this regard I will review monographs dealing with the concern of the *Bildungsbürgertum* that their humanist ideology might be replaced by a utilitarian materialistic orientation. I will further evaluate writings concerned with the reluctance of Gymnasia philologists to curtail their traditional curriculum to meet the educational demands of an industrial economy in their effort to adhere to the fundamental ideology of humanistic education. Finally, I will

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consult literature that addresses the impact Germany’s industrialization and social reconfiguration had on its cultural ideology before and after World War I.

**Chapter II**

The humanistic education during the Kaiserreich came increasingly under attack for being too antiquated, with the Kaiser among its critics. It was particularly criticized for the curriculum’s heavy emphasis on Latin and ancient Greek. For Gymnasium educators, teaching their students these ancient languages was part of their humanist pedagogy. Together with Humboldt, they believed the fluency in Greek and Latin was the prerequisite for students to gain a deep understanding of these ancient cultures, and that mastering these languages was essential for training their intellect. To curtail studies of antiquity meant to forfeit the essence of their pedagogic and philosophic convictions.

Germany’s changing economic and social environment influenced Gymnasium educators’ perception of these values and the interpretation of the neo-humanistic education. Chapter II will trace these teachers’ changing perspective of humanist ideology and religion as well as their stance on cosmopolitan and nationalistic education. In this chapter I will establish the influence a revised curriculum and changed social environment had on these philologists’ interpretation and teaching of nation’s cultural ideology of Bildung.

To retrace Gymnasium teachers’ changing perspectives about these issues and humanistic education in general I conducted a research for sources in which they expressed their personal opinion. A number of books, available at the Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung, (DIPF), written by Gymnasium educators
during the Kaiserreich about humanistic education furnished such information. The same institution also archived yearbooks (*Jahresberichte*) each *Gymnasium* published. Besides reporting on school events of the preceding year these documents also feature essays written by teachers on a wide variety of topics ranging from antiquity to religion, the defense of the humanistic education and the importance of ancient languages.

The chronological reviews of these treatise, written between 1871 and 1918, portray these teachers’ changing attitude towards issues such as the culture of ancient Greece and Rome, religion, and the pedagogical concept of training the intellect through ancient Greek and Latin. They thereby provide an excellent source for illustrating both the struggle and willingness of *Gymnasium* teachers to adjust their educational concept to Germany’s changing social environment without abandoning the teaching of cultural ideology. Analyzing these essays thereby contributes to the topic of my investigation: the continuing importance of *Bildung*. These voices of educators together with other sources, discussed later, also serve to provide insight whether these philologists prepared students to pursue *Bildung* later in life and at the same time meet the professional demands they would face in an industrial society. Because the DIPF compiled these documents only recently, this is the first study of this kind. The publication of *Jahresberichte* became sparse during the war years because of paper shortage, and was not resumed in the Weimar Republic.

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30 DIPF - *Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung*, Warschauer Straße 34 - 38, 10243 Berlin, Germany.
I am investigating in this dissertation the changing role cultural ideology played in the lives of the generation that was for the most part educated during the Kaiserreich, but whose productive lives ranged to the end of World War II and beyond. Gymnasium teachers’ attitude during the Weimar Republic and the following years was therefore of lesser importance, and will not be addressed. In the past historians have not explored these developments by consulting testimonies of individual educators.

Chapter III

In Chapter III, I will review Gymnasium students’ reaction to the increasingly diverging social environment in the last decades of the monarchy and their acceptance of humanist values. In the early years of the monarchy Bildungsbürgertum’s youths were obsequious and in general adhered to traditional mores imposed on them by teacher and parents. The school reform of 1900 was not only responsible for offering secondary education to the lower classes; the Ministry of Education also encouraged educators to cultivate pupils’ independent thinking and individual aptitude, but also to deemphasize demanding respect, obedience and obsequiousness.

This more progressive pedagogical approach contributed to Gymnasium students’ increasing assertiveness, and their willingness to challenge their parents’ traditional conventions and previously unquestionable authority. The Wandervogel movement, initiated in 1904 exclusively by Gymnasium students, was a prime example of their gradual emancipation and desire to escape Germany’s restrictive traditions. Its members besides pursuing idealistic non-political goals, also openly flaunted traditional customs. This movement was in this regard distinct from Germany’s many much larger youth
organizations of the fine de siècle, which were mostly recreational in nature. In my evaluation of the Wandervogel organization I will examine its structure and ideology, including its acceptance of the humanistic ideology, as well as highlighting the controversies among its participants. The review of the Wandervogel serves mainly to better portray the purpose of this chapter: the social conflict Gymnasium youths’ experienced during that period, and is not based on primary sources.

In 1908, as a further indication of Gymnasium students becoming more assertive, they published the school paper Der Anfang (The Beginning), which was first issued in Berlin and then in quick succession in other German speaking cities. In its articles students address the ideology of Bildung, and acceptance of humanistic ideals, but also criticize their teachers and parents in addition to elaborating on typical problems of adolescents. Students at that time were considered incapable of having an opinion; to publish articles critical of parents and teachers was unheard of and daring. Publication of Der Anfang documents the high degree of self-confidence the humanistic education had instilled in Gymnasium youth because only they, and not Realschulen pupils, published an independent school paper. A number of these student authors remained anonymous, thereby allowing them to voice their true opinion.

Der Anfang, by shining a light on the next generations’ acceptance of Bildung and their parents’ adherence to this ideology represents a unique source for understanding the cultural transition I am exploring in this thesis. Individual issues of the paper appear to not to be available any more. Instead I was able to find a selection of its articles compiled
Because of the very limited availability of these documents they have previously not been consulted for a similar investigation.

**Chapter IV**

I will have investigate in Chapter II the Gymnasium educators’ changing perspective of the ideology of Bildung, and in Chapter III the acceptance of these cultural values by Gymnasium students. In Chapter IV I am exploring the effect the nation’s drastic social, economical and political changes had on the role Bildung played in the adult lives of mainly Gymnasium graduates. For this purpose I will review diaries describing lives of the upper and middle class ranging from the Kaiserreich the end of World War II. I also will consider the influence the diarists religious beliefs had on accepting the Nazi ideology. The humanistic education aimed to instill in their students a cosmopolitan worldview. In the review of these chronicles I will address the importance this worldview retained as nationalism was on the rise. In addition I will evaluate the Bürgertum’s commitment to civic activities.

Of the two possible types of chronicles, autobiographies and diaries, I selected the latter. Autobiographies, because they cater to a wide readership, harbor a greater potential of skewing events to create a more favorable impression than diaries that are mainly written to document events for the author and his immediate family. The authors I reviewed were predominantly males, who for the most part were born during the monarchy, and, except one, had a secondary education. Since the purpose of this thesis is

to explore the cultural ideology’s changing role in the lives of middle and upper classes, I did not include diaries written by laborers. Women in Imperial Germany were only permitted to attend the Lyceum instead of the Gymnasium, and only in the Weimar Republic were they given full access to secondary and tertiary education. Because the Lyceum emphasized humanistic education less, the diaries of women are of particular interest. By having had limited exposure to these values, their commitment to Bildung serves as an indicator of the role the Bürgertum’s family played in conveying commitment to this cultural ideology. Their diaries also illustrate women’s emancipation during the final years of the monarchy up to the end of the Third Reich.

I evaluated thirty-four randomly selected diaries covering the period from 1847 to 1943. This relatively large sample size provided me with meaningful information about the changing role of Bildung as the composition of the Bürgertum and the socio-political environment changed. Some of these documents were written as memoirs in the late years of the authors, and in many cases after World War II. In these retrospective reports the portrayal of events can lack accuracy or might have been adjusted to hide, for example sympathies for Hitler or events that violated the writers conscience. Such documents might not reflect the author’s actual political orientation, but they will correctly document lifelong habits such as pursuing knowledge, attending concerts, interests in the arts or engaging in civic activities. During the Third Reich diarists who expressed critique of the regime had to fear being denounced if their writing fell into the wrong hands. This was especially true for soldiers whose dissenting political opinion could harm their families even after being killed in action. Their writing was thus often
cryptic when describing bellicose activities or events, which makes the assessment of their true opinions difficult. Such precautions did not diminish the value of these diaries for this investigation because they did not effect the portrayal of their interest in the arts and other aspects of Bildung.

Some diarists reported attending church services while others consider such events not worth mentioning, which makes it difficult to draw conclusion about the person’s religious belief. I will therefore not comment on their faith unless authors specifically allude to its importance in their lives.

Members of authors’ families made these diaries available to the Deutsches Tagebucharchiv e.V. (DTA) (German Archive of Diaries) in Emmendingen, Germany.\(^{32}\) The DTA was established in 1998 and is the only institution for collecting diaries of common citizens in Germany. Because an accumulation of such diaries has not been available in the past, no similar study has been conducted. Family members frequently provided additional biographical data that will precede the review of these documents.

**Archives Used**

I consulted the following archives for my investigation. The reviewed historiographies were mainly obtained from the library of the Kent State University or interlibrary loans.\(^ {33}\) To explore the different interpretation of antiquity in history schoolbooks I visited the Eckert Institut in Braunschweig, Germany.\(^ {34}\) The Eckert Institut specializes in collecting German schoolbooks including history books issued during

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\(^{32}\) Deutsches Tagebucharchiv e.V., Marktplatz 1, 79312 Emmendingen, Germany.

\(^ {33}\) Kent State University, 800 E Summit St, Kent, OH 44240.

\(^ {34}\) Eckert Institute, Cellerstr. 3, 38114 Braunschweig, Germany.
different periods, in various regions and written by different authors. Their archives helped me to investigate especially the changing interpretation of ancient Greece as being democratic or authoritarian depending on Germany’s own political constellations at that time.

Following World War II each of the two federal German states collected independently and at numerous locations, historical documents of schools in their territory. After unification the Berlin branch of the Institut für Pädagogische Forschung (DIPF) became, in 1992, the center for archiving these documents as well literature pertaining to pedagogic and Bildungswesen. At the time of my investigation, DIPF was in the process cataloging these documents consolidated from different scattered location of the now united Germany. Numerous of the documents which I researched, were still in the early stages of being registered and kept in cartons that were only identified by the name and location of the school. Since many of these records were scorched, it appears that they had been salvaged during the war from bombed and burning school buildings. The DIPF, in addition to collecting records of various schools, including their yearbooks, also archived publications about pedagogy, and treaties on school related issues. From these documents I was able to draw information about Gymnasium teachers’ changing pedagogical approaches, as well as their changing interpretation of humanistic education.

In the search for documents written by students, I first contacted the Schulmuseum-Nürnberg, which archives their essays written by students of different

35 DIPF - Institut für Pädagogische Forschung-Berlin, Bibliothek für Bildungsgeschichtliche Forschung des Deutschen Instituts für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung, Warschauer Str. 34-38, D-10243 Berlin, Germany.
educational levels reaching back to the early years of the twentieth century. Their resources were very limited and did not provide me with essays that expressed the opinion of pupils. As an alternate source in which students expressed their opinion, I became aware of the school paper Der Anfang, which had been published in the pre-World War I years. It appears that original issues of these school papers are not available anymore; instead DIPF had a copy of the book Der Anfang “Zeitschrift der Jugend” that contained a selection of reprints of articles from this school paper. One of its editors, Georges Barbizon, apparently as a student, authored some of these articles, which can only be assumed since the school paper does not provide the first name of its contributors. Because DIPF had been established as a central archive for matters of education and Bildung I did not need to explore alternative sources.

In 1998, the Deutsches Tagebucharchiv e.V. was established with the mandate to collect diaries, correspondence and memoires of the common man rather than celebrities, and is the only institution of its kind in Germany. Its archived documents cover the timespan from the end of the eighteenth century to the present, which are provided by family members or the author. To find a reflection of Germany’s changing cultural ideology of Bildung I was particularly interested in researching diaries of their representatives, the Bürgertum and aristocracy. To provide me with a time-related development of this ideology I randomly selected thirty-four diaries written between the middle of the nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth century, which I reviewed in the

36 Schulmuseum-Nürnberg, Regensburger Str. 160, 90478 Nürnberg, Germany.
37 Barbizon, „Der Anfang“ Zeitschrift der Jugend
order of the author’s birth year. At the beginning of each review I list the lifespan of the author, followed by his name. The document is identified as a diary and the years it covers if events were recorded as they occurred. In the case of retrospections, the year is listed in which the report was written. Almost of all these diaries were initially written in German script, which was the common form of writing up to the Third Reich. Many of these diaries had been transcribed into typed versions to make their reading less cumbersome; I choose only from this group.
CHAPTER I

METHOD

Germany’s cultural ideology of Bildung was in the nineteenth century the domain of the Bildungsbürgertum, who ensured its perpetuation. Germany’s increasing industrialization during the Kaiserreich affected not only its commitment to this ideology but the concept of Bildung, which I will explore in this dissertation. To better understand the importance of these cultural values I will first present their history, and the function education played in its perpetuation. I will then discuss the circumstances that caused a change in the Bildungsbürgertum’s commitment to this ideology, and the impact the school reform had on the concept of Bildung.

Humanist Ideology

According to the historian Horace Walter Bruford’s excellent definition, for a German, culture equates with Bildung, which is itself defined as introspectiveness, and a careful tending, shaping, deepening and perfecting of one’s own personality or, in religious terms, the salvation and justification of one’s own life.38 The prominent literary figure Thomas Mann adds to this perspective: “What seems important to German people is Bildung and the morality that stems from it. Only the cultivation of the mind makes men free.”39 The perfection of one’s personality was not restricted to continuous intellectual exploration, but also included ethics, as Mann points out. These concepts of Bildung together with admirations of beauty were fundamental maxims of the

39 Ibid., 231.
Bildungsbürgertum’s cultural ideology, which was in its prime in the early years of the Kaiserreich. Its description by these authors highlights the self-oriented nature of this ideology, and makes it clear that for Bildung to be practiced, it needed a contemplative environment. It also implies that a less leisurely setting would require this ideology to be modified. Germany’s growing industrialization caused such changes; it eliminated the fertile milieu for this concept to prosper in its initial form. Historians have examined the effect these changes had on the Bildungsbürgertum’s pursuit of Bildung, but not whether their ideology was able to adapt to meet these new social realities, which is the aim of this thesis.

After the school reform of 1900 Realschule graduates soon outnumbered those of the Gymnasium causing the Bürgertum to become restructured and the Bildungsbürgertum to lose its guiding influence on the nation’s cultural ideology. The question to be answered is whether the ideology of the Bildungsbürgertum succumbed to these changes or survived by adapting an altered form.

Let me first outline the historically fundamental role Bildung played in Germany’s cultural ideology. Its importance rests on its religious roots, that is, Bildung was associated with being God-like in the fourteenth century. This desire to expand one’s knowledge was reaffirmed when the Hellenic passion for intellectual exploration was rediscovered during the Renaissance. The ideological synchronicity of these two cultures explains why Germany’s educated elite enthusiastically embraced the rediscovery of these ancient ideals. In particular, the focus on the individual was an

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40 Klaus Vondung, Das wilhelminische Bildungsbürgertum (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), 36.
important feature that Lutheranism shared with the Greek culture. When the Renaissance opened access to works of Plato and Aristotle, their writings had a profound and lasting impact on the spiritual developments of western society in general and many principles of the ancient Greeks would eventually provide the ideological skeleton for our own world.\(^{41}\) In spite of this similarity, Germany’s humanist ideology reflected its own cultural energy and was not merely an imitation of the ancient Greek and Roman cultures, as Eduard Spranger points out.\(^{42}\)

This cultural energy emanated from a religious movement by the people, Lutheranism, which differed from the top down politically motivated religious policies of England and France.\(^{43}\) In a similar vein the historian Friedrich Meinecke states:

“Historical ideas reflect foremost trends, which are more influenced by the desires of the will and emotions than by the intellect.”\(^{44}\) The commitment to this religion explains the important role Lutheran clergy was able to play in Germany’s reconstruction after the Thirty-Year War of 1618-1648. They instructed farmers in new methods of husbandry, nurtured a musical tradition in the home and church, and their doctrine guided the lives and thinking of people. The farmhouse even in remote areas, Eda Sagarra writes, was an island of culture and the nursery for many intellectuals. By educating a broad spectrum of

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\(^{42}\) Spranger, *Wilhelm von Humboldt und die Reform des Bildungswesens*, 59-60.


the population, the Lutheran clergy was instrumental in establishing a middle class culture with a predilection for Bildung and music.45

In the eighteenth century, the Lutheran Pietist movement reinforced these religious tendencies through their strong influence on the education of Protestant Prussia and by helping to prepare the ground for its enlightenment. They emphasized introspection and the perfecting of one’s own personality. In addition, they recognized the significance of forming the character of young people by pedagogical means. Most importantly they propagated citizens’ ethical responsibility toward the state and harnessed Protestant voluntarism thereby initiating a broad activist constituency. The Pietists’ direct influence on education declined when Friedrich II (the Great) ascended the throne in 1740, but the concept of social responsibility that they had taught in their schools and universities remained fundamental to the Protestant ethics of the aristocracy and the Bildungsbürgertum. The Pietist’s pedagogic and educational concepts later guided Wilhelm von Humboldt’s neo-humanistic school reform.46 This reformed educational system would become fundamental in ensuring the continuation and refinement of Germany’s cultural values. The following outline of the Bildungsbürgertum’s education is therefore essential to understanding their cultural ideology.

**Gymnasium Education - School Reform of 1808**

After Prussia’s defeat by Napoleon in 1806, its king, Frederick William III, recognized the necessity to modernize the state’s bureaucracy, civil service and

45 Sagarra, *A Social History of Germany 1648-1914*, 120-123.
educational system. The king, by reforming the educational system, wanted to facilitate a more politically cohesive society with citizens committed to Prussia.\(^47\) Heinrich von Stein (1757-1831), Prussia’s Minister for Economy and Finance, was a major force behind these reforms. He recognized the necessity for an expanded pool of self-reliant, responsible and well-educated Bürger to implement these new institutional structures and in 1808 commissioned Wilhelm von Humboldt, Minister of Education, to redesign the educational system accordingly.\(^48\)

Humboldt and his contemporaries considered the Greek culture the zenith of human development and believed their cultural achievements exceeded those of other nations. The amalgamation of the ancient mindset, esthetics and humanitarian principles constituted a dogma of absolute primacy of the ancient Greek culture. Humboldt therefore considered the history of Attics, their culture and writings ideally suited to form pupil’s intellect, moral values and esthetics, and made them the foundation of his neo-humanistic educational concept.\(^49\) Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Schiller, the main representatives of Weimar Classism, inspired his educational reform. Both were enamored with the Hellenic culture and pedagogy, which Goethe expressed in his novel Wilhelm Meister and Schiller in the essay Über die esthätische Erziehung des Menschen. Their philhellenism contributed much to the ideology of the Bürgertum at the end of the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century.\(^50\)

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\(^{47}\) Ibid 318, 331.

\(^{48}\) Andreas Flitner, Die politische Erziehung in Deutschland (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer Verlag, 1957), 79-80.

\(^{49}\) Spranger, Wilhelm von Humboldt und die Reform des Bildungswesens, 59-60.

\(^{50}\) Marchand, Down from Olympus: Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970, xviii-xix.
The influence of Hellenistic culture was perceived to have contributed to the
greatness of Rome, by helping it to recognize its own individuality and
genius. Rome’s discipline and political savvy was greatly admired and seen as exemplar. Humboldt therefore wanted Gymnasium students to also be familiar with Roman statecraft, laws and
the masterpieces of their literature. Students’ in depth knowledge of the historic
development of these two cultures had the added benefit of developing their
cosmopolitan attitude. Idolizing the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome reflected
Humboldt’s and his contemporaries own construct of an ideal nation, and were thus
perfect educational and ideological tools.

Humboldt’s neo-humanistic educational reform, besides being guided by
idealized Hellenistic cultural values, was based on a holistic pedagogical approach with
an emphasis on Bildung and Protestant ethics. Its aim was to develop student potential to
its fullest, and form well-rounded human beings. Students were instructed in a wide
range of general knowledge founded in Enlightenment, but were also taught to appreciate
beauty, nature and arts by familiarizing them with ancient Greek and Roman literature
and sculptures. These aspects of neo-humanism were influenced by the writings of Plato,
Aristotle and Sophocles, who assigned more importance to virtue, Arete, the appreciation
of beauty, and the development of man’s inner self than to the concerns with ineluctable
desires, such as the pursuit of a career. These concepts became part of the

51 Ernst Krieck, Menschenformung. (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1933), 218.
52 Stephen Cabot, Secondary Education in Germany, France, England and Denmark (Cambridge; Harvard
University Press, 1930) 8-14.
53 Ernst Krieck, Philosophie der Erziehung. (Jena: Eugen Dietrich, 1922), 304.
54 Friedrich Hörmann, Vom Menschen in der Antike (München: Bayrischer Schulbuch-Verlag, 1957), 63.
Bildungsbürgertum’s ideology and formed their identity until economic and political changes gradually prevented such a focus on the individual.

Proficiency in ancient Greek and Latin was meant to provide pupils with the means to understand these ancient cultures and to appreciate the beauty and wisdom of their literature. In response to the needs of an increasingly industrializing economy, however, instruction in mathematics and science also gradually gained importance. Attention to these subjects also reflected the general fascination with science and its unambiguous precision. This appeal is evident from a surprisingly large number of popular science magazines and books that were published from 1850 onward.55 This allure of exact science was also the first sign of the declining appeal of the more abstract humanist ideology.

Neo-humanism replaced the previous utilitarian education, and abandoned courses in French, civic duties and instruction to underpin and reinforce pupils’ social standing. More profession-oriented instructions were intentionally left to the tertiary education or apprenticeship.56 Prussia’s Minister for Economy and Finance, von Stein, was of the opinion that the lower and middle classes would assume civic duties and social responsibility as they became more affluent and their social standing advanced. He thus found it unnecessary for such obligations to be taught, which also indicates confidence in the citizens’ ethical responsibility that the Pietists had taught and their loyalty to the monarchy.

56 Flitner, Die politische Erziehung in Deutschland, 88.
John Gottfried Fichte (1762-1832), a leading philosopher and republican, proposed the reform offering equal education to all classes, instead of Humboldt’s tiered system with its strong divide between well and poorly educated. Fichte also wanted to make the teaching of the constitution, civil duties and civil rights obligatory. Humboldt rejected such civic-minded education. For him, the primary educational goal was to provide Gymnasium students with the intellectual tools to pursue, in their adult years, interests unrelated to the necessities of everyday life, such as expanding their general knowledge, enjoying arts and the beauty of nature, and gaining inner perfection. He believed man could only acquire humanity through universal education, and argued that man needed an environment of personal and political freedom to develop his given potential, and moral values and in which he is allowed to pursue his interests without impediment.\(^{57}\)

Humboldt justified this apolitical education by contending that ancient Athenians made too many sacrifices to partake in political activities. He claimed that in a modern monarchy, such as Germany’s, the political participation of its citizen was unnecessary and a waste of energy that could more usefully be applied to individual betterment.\(^{58}\) The proposal of Fichte, a commoner, and its rejection by Humboldt, an aristocrat, illustrate the successful subjugation of the existing democratic tendencies by the nobility. The widely held belief in the benevolence of the monarchy made such apolitical attitudes possible. His argument appears to find some justification when, in the later years of the

\(^{57}\) Spranger, *Wilhelm von Humboldt und die Reform des Bildungswesens*, 47.
\(^{58}\) Flitner, *Die politische Erziehung in Deutschland*, 5,88.
Kaiserreich, the Bildungsbürgertum’s pursuit of their ideology declined as their political activity increased.

Humboldt, as part of his 1809 school reform, placed all schools and universities under government control, made school attendance compulsory, and established educational standards for students and educators. The clergy would inspect all secondary schools. Graduation from Gymnasia became mandatory for entering the civil service and the Abitur, the comprehensive final exam, became a prerequisite for being admitted to a university. Secondary education, by extending it to commoners, was now based on merit and not on birthright. This change did not spring from the desire to implement democratic principles, but was recognized as a necessity if Prussia was to successfully compete with its neighbors. The defeat by Napoleon, as mentioned, greatly contributed to this realization. Humboldt’s school reform advanced a national cultural unity particularly among high-ranking civil servants and thus benefited Prussia’s economy.59

Germany’s uniform education became an especially important contributor in uniting its principalities after the Kaiserreich was established in 1871. However, it also created a caste system of a small well-educated social group united by its cultural ideology, the Bildungsbürgertum, which believed they were destined to perpetuate mankind’s progression in a continuation of ancient Greek and Roman intellectual and cultural achievements. This group was distinct from the general population, which only marginally identified with their cultural ideology. In spite of the Bildungsbürgertum’s

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Philhellenism, its predilection for the democracy of ancient Greek was limited. This reflected their overall contentment with the monarchy, but also exposed the educational emphasis on the antidemocratic writings of Plato, Aristotle and the Greek historian Thucydides, who all equated democracy with ochlocracy, rule by the mob.

In Imperial Germany, most educators and historians shared this skeptical view of democracy and their teaching favored the Macedonian Monarchy over the Attic Republic. Gymnasium teachers played a major role in perpetuating the Bildungsbürgertum’s ideology, for it was their responsibility to teach students ethical values, social and political standards, and to preserve the concept of Bildung and humanist ideals. Because of the importance of these Gymnasium teachers, the third chapter will examine their changing perception of humanistic education as it came under attack in the last decades of the monarchy.

The historian Suzanne Marchand, in her book Down from Olympus, claims archeological excavations undermined the neo-humanistic dogma by causing the ancient Greek culture to be perceived in a different light and by exposing the importance of other cultures. The famous historian T. Mommsen, in Römische Geschichte, published between 1854-6, also challenged the perception of antiquity by abstaining from an ideologically tinted historical interpretation; instead, he highlighted the different social, economical and external events that formed Rome’s culture. His book gained wide recognition and became for many years the standard for historical writing. Some

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61 Ibid., 52 & 81.
62 Marchand, Down from Olympus, xx, 124.
63 Theodor Mommsen, Römische Geschichte (Leipzig: Phaidon-Verlag, 1932)
schoolbooks either copied excerpts of Römische Geschichte or reflected this novel interpretation of ancient cultures, as evident in the two editions of 1910 and 1922 written by the historian Karl Lorenz.\textsuperscript{64}

However, this revised interpretation of ancient Greek and Roman history and the effect of recent excavations barely affected the ideology of the neo-humanistic pedagogic concept. Attica continued to be perceived as the zenith of mankind’s cultural achievement and the ideal nation on earth in spite of its shortcomings and tribulations. The influential historian Jacob Burckhardt shared this view, although he was otherwise very critical of the idealized interpretation of ancient history.\textsuperscript{65} These ancient cultures and values served mainly as symbolic teaching tools, and as such, their absolute historic validity were of only limited importance, a fact that Marchand fails to consider.

The demands which the Kaiserreich’s industrialization made on the individual increasingly limited the pursuit of this self-oriented ideology and forced it to adapt. This transition of Germany’s cultural ideology has drawn little attention from historians, and will be investigated in this thesis. The nation’s changing economy at the fin de siècle again demanded that the educational system to be reformed. The first school reform was implemented to help Prussia in establishing an administrative structure, this one was designed to meet the needs of the emerging industrial economy.

\textsuperscript{64} Karl Lorenz, Lehrbuch der Geschichte für die Oberstufe höherer Lehranstalten (München: Druck und Verlag von R. Oldenbourg, 1910 & 1922).

\textsuperscript{65} Srbik, Geist und Geschichte, 166.
School Reform of 1890

The Bildungsbürgertum at the fin de siècle regarded the Hellenic culture as a stepping-stone for mankind’s progress, which Germany was destined to advance. Because Gymnasia over-emphasized this ancient culture, their education failed to fully meet the needs of an industrialized state. In 1882 the Operprima, the final year before graduating, 128 hours were dedicated to teaching Greek and Latin, but only twenty-four to German. Consequently, students had an intimate knowledge of ancient history, culture and languages, but lacked adequate German writing skills and knowledge in the history of their own nation. Starting in the early decades of the Kaiserreich, the Gymnasium education had also become somewhat petrified by often favoring rote learning over developing the individual abilities of students. Many politicians, teachers and industrialists recognized these shortcomings, and petitioned the government to require Gymnasia to devote more time to teaching science, mathematics and modern languages, but with little success. For government officials, having graduated from the Gymnasium, the traditional humanistic education had established their Weltbild and made them reluctant to alter the curriculum. It took the authority of the Kaiser to initiate changes, which he proposed in his opening speech at the school conference of 1890. He argued that the Gymnasium, by teaching students to write better essays in Latin and Greek than in German, failed to prepare them for life. As an expression of growing nationalism, he wanted pupils to become more familiar with Germany’s role on the international stage.

68 Ibid., 162,166.
and its own history. Educators should not just convey theoretical knowledge, but rather form their pupils’ character and prepare them for the practical aspects of life.\textsuperscript{69}

As a result of the Kaiser’s intervention and because of increasing public demand, this school conference and those that followed implemented major changes to secondary education. The Prussian Minister of Education partially modified the curricula of Gymnasia, but equally important, he specified educational requirements for different position levels in government and industry. A six-year secondary education, Einjährige, qualified one for an occupation as mid-level civil servant such as in mining, architecture and forestry. Nine-year secondary education, ending with the Abitur, was the prerequisite for a career as an upper level civil servant, and for admittance to university.

Realschulen were initially introduced in 1740 as an alternative education to the Gymnasium. In the beginning, they only offered a range of vocational training and in later years provided an alternative to the humanistic secondary education, but without qualifying its graduates to attend a university.\textsuperscript{70} As part of the school reform, Realschulen were now upgraded to allowed their graduates to pursue a tertiary education as well. Realschulen emphasized modern languages, math and science, with humanism being mainly relegated to courses in ancient history. Even though its education remained less prestigious compared to the humanistic Gymnasium, the emancipation of the Realschule contributed greatly to the transformation of Germany’s cultural ideology, as this thesis will show. As part of this reform, technical universities could now also bestow doctoral


\textsuperscript{70} Clark, Iron Kingdom,134.
degrees; more importantly at the fin-de-siècle, women were finally admitted to universities, but only to study medicine. As a result of these educational reforms, humanistic ideology became eventually less emphasized in Gymnasia and marginalized in Realschulen. This reflected Germany’s changing socioeconomic environment and would change the role which the nations cultural values played in the lives of the Bürgertum. It is the purpose of this thesis to examine the transition of these values.

Germany’s traditional cultural ideology as taught by the humanistic Gymnasium was rooted in a contemplative social environment, but the industrialization of the nation necessitated that this ideology adjust. The funding in 1834 of the Deutsche Zollverein, an economic association of Germany’s principalities under Prussian leadership, was responsible for triggering rapid economic and industrial growth of its members. Its conversion in 1871 into Imperial Germany accelerated this development and was instrumental for the nation’s conversion from an agrarian to industrial economy. This transformation into an industrial economy was very rapid as these figures show: between 1874 and 1894 its net national product (NNP) rose by close to 60% and from 1870 to 1913 its industrial output grew 3.4 fold. In addition the German population grew, between 1871 and 1911, by about 60 % from roughly 42 million to 65 million, whereby its urban population doubled.

This rapid economic growth and the lack of adequate alternatives to the Gymnasium education prior to the school reform caused a shortage of technically trained academics. The upgrading of the Realschulen addressed these needs and also released a

71 Albisetti, Secondary School Reform, 233-270.
pent up desire by members of the middle class and students with a low aptitude for languages to attain a secondary and tertiary education. It explains why, after the school reform, attendance in the Realschulen grew by 190%, but only 64% in Gymnasia, the latter being equivalent to the population growth. Overall secondary school attendance grew by 105%, documenting an increased educational level of Germany’s population.

Professionals with technical training frequently came from lower middle class families, and mostly did not favor a Gymnasium education for their offspring because they themselves had not experienced a humanistic schooling. As a result, Gymnasium attendance declined from 60% in 1900 to 55% in 1911, and 39% by 1918. Of all students completing secondary school, only 5-8 % or 1% of all 18 year olds opted for nine year schooling and graduated with the Abitur. The rest would graduate with the Einjährige, a six year secondary education, qualifying them for a limited three-year tertiary education or a mid-level civil service position. Of graduates with an Abitur, almost 80% had attended a humanistic Gymnasium and came from families of the Bildungsbürgertum. Most would again hold high civil service positions, while others pursued careers in academia or corporate management. The Gymnasium-educated elite would thus continue to occupy Germany’s many influential positions, which did not, however, prevent the decline of their trend-setting influence on Germany’s cultural ideology.

73 Albisetti, Secondary School Reform, 312.
74 Michael Stürmer, Das ruhelose Reich, Deutschland 1866-1918 (Berlin: Severin & Siedler, 1983), 139.
76 Ibid., 1201-4, 764.
Dividing secondary education into two levels, six and nine years, and placing *Realschule* on par with *Gymnasium* would eventually eliminate the caste system that provided the *Bildungsbürgertum* with an elite status. This social group would gradually be absorbed into the upper and middle class of the general *Bürgertum*, and terminate their role as the prime bearers of the traditional cultural ideology. This transition changed the concept of Germany’s cultural values, which the newly composed *Bürgertum* would represent. Their identification with these values and their continuing importance has not previously received scholarly attention and will be investigated further in this dissertation.

The school reform would broaden, but not abolish, the educational hierarchy by including a larger section of the population. Academics continued to occupy the highest social rank, and workers not only occupied the lowest, but they were looked down on because they were considered “uneducated”. This social stigma of the worker served as a strong motivator for the *Bürgertum* to have their children complete secondary education as will be shown later. The historian Hans-Ulrich Wehler contends that the school reforms reduced the hold of the *Bildungsbürgertum* on higher education, and was responsible for an increased attendance at secondary schools. At the turn of the century, about ten percent of Germany’s youth opted for advanced schooling.\(^\text{77}\)

The revised curriculum of the *Gymnasia* and *Realschulen* now assigned more importance to establishing student national identity through the teaching of German

\(^{77}\) Ibid., 1201-4.
Schools also served to promote the monarchy by highlighting the benevolent rule of the royal dynasty, which the monarchy claimed benefited Germany for centuries. The position of Gymnasium teachers was elevated to the highest social rank of civil servants, which contributed to ensuring their loyalty to the Kaiserreich. The Ministry of Education stressed that pupils should understand the interconnectedness of historical events and be able to draw conclusions from the past to the present. Students were to be familiarized with Germany’s social and economical development and its effect on the well being of the nation.

In spite of the reform, humanist ideology remained fundamental to the Gymnasium education because, proponents argued, it had been responsible for producing the men that made Germany great. The Gymnasium teachers continued to view familiarity with the ancient cultures and their idealized ideology as best suited to prepare their students for life and instill in them ethical values. The less contemplative social structure of an industrialized state increasingly prevented full commitment to such passions, which, as I will show, the adjusted educational concept assigned to the Gymnasia by the reforms failed to reflect.

In the second chapter I will examine the effort of humanist educators to teach students the desire to pursue knowledge, appreciate art and beauty and not restrict their interest to a narrow professional scope. The teachers pedagogical success will be discussed in the following chapter by examining the commitment of Gymnasium students to the

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79 *Lehrpläne und Lehraufgaben für die Höheren Schulen* (Halle: Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1901), 48.
humanistic ideology. Contrary to other investigations of Gymnasium education, this study is based on the individual perspective of the educator, student and Bürger.

After the school conference of 1901 the curriculum of the Gymnasium underwent some adjustments. Table 1 compares the schedule of its weekly lessons to those of Realschulen.

Table 1. Curricula of German Secondary Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjekt</th>
<th>Gymnasium</th>
<th>Realgymnasium</th>
<th>Oberrealschule</th>
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<td>Einjährige</td>
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<td>Science</td>
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</tbody>
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Table 1. Curricula of German Secondary Schools in 1901

Weekly hours in the last year before graduation

81 Lehrpläne, 4-6.
Realschulen were established in two versions: Realgymnasium and Oberrealschule. The Realgymnasium continued to teach Latin because it was a prerequisite for certain majors at the university, such as jurisprudence and medicine. The Oberrealschule was more oriented toward science, math and modern languages, and qualified its graduates for majoring in engineering and science at the university. The government specified the curriculum and content of courses for all secondary schools and stressed that teachers be objective, and not taint their teachings with biased opinions.\textsuperscript{82} The adherence to the latter has to be questioned, for teachers were also instructed to highlight the benevolence of the monarchy, foster patriotism and compare Germany favorably to other nations. The curricula of the Gymnasium illustrates the continuing dominance of ancient languages, with more than 40\% of the time being dedicated to teaching Greek and Latin, while only 20\% was allotted to math and science. Modern languages were omitted altogether. It is noteworthy that religion was taught for two hours per week independent of the educational level, which underlines the importance religion continued to play, a fact that will later be illustrated by analyzing teachers’ treatise on this subject.

By providing a larger section of the population access to secondary education, the educational reform expanded the middle class, increased their assertiveness and helped to establish bourgeoisie as the dominant culture of this period.\textsuperscript{83} The transition from educating a small elite to a broader section of the population democratized not only

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., 45-47.
secondary education, but advanced secondary education in general. And since *Realschule* graduates were soon in the majority, the school reform necessarily entailed an alteration of the nation’s cultural ideology, as I will show in the last chapter.

The historian Margaret Lavinia Anderson argues growing interest in public affairs and demand for more democratic institutions was a reflection of this higher educational level in the population. In particular, she argues, the growing number of academics and professionals increasingly influenced public opinion.\(^{84}\) The demand for a secret ballot in the *Reichstag* illustrates Germany’s political maturation during the *Kaiserreich*. In 1860 National Liberals and Conservatives had prevented the introduction of secret ballots to the *Reichstag*, which would have allowed representatives to vote more independently, and to be less exposed to outside pressure. Forty-three years later, in 1903, the Centrum, Left Liberals and SPD parties, through the support of the now expanded group of academics and professionals, passed this legislation.\(^{85}\) This event supports Anderson’s findings, and illustrates German’s increasing political engagement; it also undermines the perception of the educated elite’s passivity. The growing interest in public affairs cannot solely be explained with the higher educational level of a larger section of the population, but also as a result of a changing interpretation of the cultural ideology from an introspective to a more outward orientation in tune with the socio-economic environment. This transition of the cultural ideology will be addressed in the following chapters.

The reconfigured *Bürgertum*’s growing assertiveness and democratic tendencies developed in spite of its youth being taught to prefer an autocratic government, as is

\(^{85}\) Ibid., 249-260.
evident from history schoolbooks. In 1887, history books for secondary schools highly praised Athenian democracy under Pericles, and the expected participation of its male citizens in leading the country.\textsuperscript{86} In 1905, they portray Pericles’ rule as monarchical and stressed the advantages of his strong autocratic leadership.\textsuperscript{87} Friedrich Neubauer, in his history book of 1902, similarly attributes Rome’s success to its strong and autonomous aristocratic leadership.\textsuperscript{88} Authors of these schoolbooks use the historical circumstances that led to the demise of ancient democracies to question the advantages of a republic, and support their interpretation of history by quoting antidemocratic stances of Plato and Aristotle.

The propagating an autocratic monarchy reflects the state’s concern regarding the increasing democratic tendencies after the school reform. In 1887, the support of the monarchy by the Bildungsbürgertum was not questioned. In 1905, such unconditional backing of the Kaiser by the reconfigured Bürgertum could not be taken for granted any more. The changing composition and enlargement of the Bürgertum not only affected Germany’s cultural ideology, but also the political scene.

The high social rank of Gymnasium teacher, Germany’s improving living standard and its growing prominence on the international stage inclined these high priests of the Bildungsbürgertum to remain partial to the monarchy.\textsuperscript{89} When they lectured

\begin{footnotes}
\item[86] Wilhelm Pütz, \textit{Grundrisse der Geographie und Geschichte der alten, mittleren und neuen Zeit} (Leipzig: Verlag von Karl Baederker, 1887), (Book II), 106.
\item[87] H. Stich, \textit{Lehrbuch der Geschichte für die oberen Klassen der Gymnasien. Part I, Das Altertum} (Bamberg: C.C. Buchners Verlag Rudolf Koch, 1905), (Book I), 73.
\item[88] Friedrich Neubauer, \textit{Lehrbuch der Geschichte für höhere Lehranstalten} (Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1902), (Book III), 59.
\end{footnotes}
students about the benevolence of the monarchy, it was mostly out of conviction and not just to comply with ministerial teaching instructions.\textsuperscript{90} However, their teaching and the government’s decreed interpretation of history was out of tune with the growing democratic orientation in the last decades of Imperial Germany. In particular during the war years of 1914 to 1918, education became increasing nationalistic, and any of Germany’s military accomplishments were compared to the great battles of the past, such as Attica defeating Persia and Hannibal’s humiliation of Rome. Nationalism amplified by the events of the war only appears to have undermined the cosmopolitan educational concept of the Gymnasium. For the Bildungsbürger cosmopolitism did not exclude nationalism. In the following chapters I will explore the role both ideologies played in their lives.

**Secondary Education During the Weimar Republic**

After the monarchy was overthrown at the end of World War I, the Weimar Republic passed the new 1919 constitution under the auspices of the strongest democratically minded party, the Social Democrats (SPD). One of their concerns was to establish a more democratic and egalitarian educational system that would provide children of the lower class with a better opportunity for a secondary education. The following articles (paraphrased and abbreviated) in the Constitution concerning education reflect this effort:\textsuperscript{91}


Article # 145: Every child is required to attend an elementary school for eight years, and continue schooling to the age of eighteen. The attendance of elementary schools and educational material is free.

Article # 146: The State shall pay secondary school tuition for qualified students who are lacking financial means.

Article # 148: All schools shall teach students:

- Morals
- Civic virtues and attitudes
- Personal and professional excellence, and work ethics
- The spirit of German culture
- The importance of the peaceful coexistence of nations
- All topics shall be presented in a manner as not to offend students with a different opinion [called: tolerance clause].
- All students are to receive a copy of the constitution when graduating.

The Social Democrat’s proposal to familiarize all students with the constitution and convey its spirit was rejected. A strong faction of the constitutional assembly retained sympathy for a monarchy, and, as evident from the Tolerance Clause, considered

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92 “Beim Unterricht in öffentlichen Schulen ist Bedacht zu nehmen, daß die Empfindungen Andersdenkender nicht verletzt werden.” This “tolerance clause,” as it became known, had been introduced during the constitutional debate by the German Nationals with strong support by the Center Party, whose initial concern was religious tolerance. The representative Koch, DDP, who later became Reichsinnenminister (Minister of the Interior), expanded its meaning to tolerate the coexistence of monarchal and democratic attitudes, particularly in schools. The German National Party much applauded this change and declared: “We expect also in a democratic Germany that the feelings of monarchist will be tolerated in schools as in general.”

93 Becker, Die Bildung der Nation, 241.
democracy as only one possible form of government, but not necessarily the best one.\textsuperscript{94} Even though the Constitution was to provide the basis for Germany’s democracy, an effort was made in its wording to avoid too strong a break with the Imperial period.\textsuperscript{95} Civic instructions were to be general, and not explicitly favor specific types of governments, such as democracy.\textsuperscript{96} Education was to strengthen Germany’s \textit{Volksgemeinschaft} (national unity) by paying special attention to teaching German, history and literature, and by highlighting its cultural continuity from the Imperial period to the Weimar Republic. As during the monarchy, secondary schools were to provide mainly general knowledge, emphasize Germany’s culture, “Germanness,” and highlight the accomplishments of the nation’s outstanding leaders and intellectuals.

In a continuing effort to show the connectedness of Germany’s culture with those of ancient Greek and Rome, history books drew parallels between historical events of these nations. For example, in their schoolbook, Uhl and Ruider compared Bismarck’s political strategy to the alliances that the Greek statesman Themistocles engineered with neighboring states. In an attempt to downplay Germany’s defeat in World War I, and to reinforce nationalism, they made an analogy between recent occasional triumphs of the Imperial army and those of Arminius leading the Germanic tribes to the defeat of three Roman Legions.\textsuperscript{97} In an effort to continue the neo-humanistic tradition, the \textit{Gymnasium}’s fundamental concept and curriculum were otherwise little changed in the post-war period.

\textsuperscript{94} A similar attitude can be found among ancient Greek intellectuals; even after a very successful democratic period under Pericles’ leadership, Socrates’ students, for example, did not favor a democracy.\textsuperscript{95} Becker, \textit{Die Bildung der Nation}, 151.\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., 240.\textsuperscript{97} Uhl, \textit{Deutsches Werden Geschichtsunterricht. Altertum und Germanische Zeit} (Book IX), 54,72.
Because teachers of the monarchy retained their positions in the Weimar Republic, and were only required to take an oath to uphold the laws of the Republic, their humanist ideology, political orientation and teaching methods continued to influence Gymnasium education for many years. As discussed later, attempts were made to breathe new life into the humanistic concept, but because of a less fertile social environment and waning Gymnasium attendance, German cultural ideology in its traditional form did not experience a renaissance. By avoiding a fundamental break with the culture and values of the Kaiserreich and permitting educators to retain their positions, the Weltbild conveyed to their students by secondary education was likely to remain the same, even without the traditional emphasis on ancient languages. In the following chapters I will investigate the impact this educational and political reorientation had on Germany’s cultural ideology.

The SPD, undeterred by the partial setback of its school policies, was determined to change the presentation of certain subjects; in particular, they insisted that history should be taught in an impartial manner. Germany was not to be depicted any more as being superior, as had been taught during the monarchy; instead, other nations were to be credited for their achievements and not derided. To this effect Prussia’s Minister for School Affairs, the Social Democrat Konrad Haenisch, in 1919 issued the following decree:

- Courses in history and other disciplines are not to be used to create hatred of other nations, but are to provide factual, cultural-historical information. Biased teachings about WWI and its causes are to be avoided.
- All books glorifying war are to be removed from school libraries.
At the school conference in 1920, he ordered school libraries to replace all history books from the Imperial period with revised versions. These steps emphasized the cosmopolitan education also for Realschulen, and illustrate the adherence to the educational ideology of the monarchy, which, however, during the war was undermined by deriding the enemy. Educators perceived the insinuation that their presentation of history had not been impartial during the monarchy as an attack on their professionalism and were highly insulted. They argued that teaching nationalism during the monarchy had been their duty and insisted their presentation of history had been objective.98 Following the war, Gymnasium teachers were berated by members of the Bürgertum for their students’ cosmopolitan attitude and lack of nationalism, which might indicate at least their attempt at an unbiased approach to history. Teachers were given much more leeway in their interpretation of the subject they were teaching in accordance with the educational guidelines the Constitution stipulated.99 Gymnasia continued to teach fundamentally the same values as during the monarchy, but students’ willingness to identify with them declined increasingly in the final years of the Weimar Republic, as I will show in the fourth chapter.

The Social Democrats tried to replace the educational hierarchy established by the school reform of 1890 with a more egalitarian system, but failed. Students, as in the past, had to decide in lower grades whether to pursue a primary or secondary education. Their choice would determine their life-long social status because once pupils opted only for

98 Andreas Reineck. Reichsschulkonferenz 1920 (Germany: Global Research and Information Network, 2003), 9.
99 Ibid., 9.
primary schooling, it was extremely difficult to reverse their decision if they realized
their potential a year or two later. This educational hierarchy hindered the social mobility
that the Social Democrats had been striving for, and the resulting categorization created a
strong divide between these social groups and made a mockery out of the popular concept
of Volksgemeinschaft. Because of the segregation between Bürgertum and workers the
lower class identified only to a limited extent with the cultural ideology. By providing
secondary education to a larger section of the population its exclusivity became
diminished, its elitist character, however, remained intact, as did the strong distinction
between “educated” (Gebildete) and “uneducated” (Ungebildete). It contributed to the
desire of the first generation Gebildete, to emulate the Bildungsbürgertum’s cultural
ideology, as I will show in the final chapter.

**Humanistic Education in the Weimar Republic**

After the war it was hoped that the introduction of the Neue Humanismus,
Renewed, or Third Humanism would rekindle Germany’s traditional humanist ideology
and assist in the nation’s intellectual and cultural renewal. The Minister of Education
wanted ancient Greek and Roman cultures to serve again as the template for forming the
mindset of German youth. The Greek culture continued to be perceived as the
personification of the absolute values of reason, freedom and beauty, and as representing
the ideal of human purity, ideals the German nation was longing for after the war. The
political involvement of the Athenian people was now considered the zenith of human
development and was to serve as a model for Germany, even if that meant overlooking
the fact that the majority of the ancient Athenian population were slaves and had no
voice. The Ministry of Education in the Weimar Republic tried to revive the spirit of the ancient cultures as a model for the intellectual and ideological development of secondary students. He failed to acknowledge that because the number of pupils attending the *Gymnasium* was declining the Renewed Humanism would have affected only a small percentage of secondary students. In addition, the post-war social environment was less receptive to the Athenian’s ideals. The idolizing of Hellenic culture had been in decline during the *fin de siècle*, and its reappraisal appears as an attempt by the Ministry of Education to find a moral and ideological compass in a time of political uncertainty and social restructuring after a disillusioning war. In particular, ancient Rome was considered exemplary for a stable and well-organized state and its values of *integritas, fides, pietas, autoritas, disciplina* were perceived fundamental for mankind’s coexistence.¹⁰⁰

The popular post-war books of Werner Jaeger and Ernst Kriek also emphasized humanistic education. Jaeger promoted the importance of the Greek culture as a model for a modern German society and argues that Germany’s industrialization, starting in 1830, caused a disorientation of the *Bildungsbürgertum* and their break with traditions. To establish German pupils’ values, he contended, it was essential to base humanistic education on ancient Greek culture and acquaint students with the art and literature this society had perfected. In accordance with the humanistic traditional pedagogy, he wanted education to develop each aspect of student potential and form them into well-rounded human beings.¹⁰¹ In his opinion, a secondary education directed toward a profession and

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¹⁰¹ Ibid., 47-50.
the teaching of political doctrines would interfere with this holistic approach. Jaeger admired Athenians for their civic activity and hailed them for overcoming feudalism and developing into a society whose citizens were law-abiding, self-controlled and who honored equality before the law. The ‘political humanism’ he proposed combined the individual desire for developing humanity with the assumption of civic responsibility as the Athenians did. Jaeger’s writing appeared as an attempt to evoke the fading ideals of a past epoch that had, in many respects, lost their attraction in a changed social setting. This so called Third Political Humanism remained largely anti-democratic, and educators continued to use Plato’s and Aristotle’s skepticism toward democracy to expose Gymnasium students to their own misgivings about the Weimar Republic.

Ernst Krieck’s writings similarly reflected enthusiasm for humanistic education. As previously mentioned, he saw Germany with its high level of humanist education as being destined to establish an intellectual Pantheon. He considered education responsible for maintaining the coherence of a nation, and argued that by teaching students discipline, order and ethics, they would be imbued with values fundamental to Germany’s culture. Krieck too praised the ancient Romans’ discipline and obedience to law, contending that democracy in post Pericles Athens was destroyed when

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103 Ibid., 11.
104 Preuße, Humanismus, 182-3.
105 Krieck, Philosophie der Erziehung, 301-4.
undisciplined and excessively individualistic men assumed power. Both authors appeared to perceive democracies as the rule of Ungebildete, “uneducated masses”, and regarded such a form of government unsustainable as ancient Athens and Rome had shown. The same argument was used to support the monarchy, but was also influenced then and in Weimar Republic by Darwinism.

The Minister of Education’s aim to revive the traditional humanistic educational concept and Krieck’s treatise reveals the desperate attempt by the Bildungsbürgertum to hold on to an outmoded ideology. In particular, the latter’s belief that Germany would establish an intellectual Pantheon appeared, in 1922, an illusory hope of a downtrodden nation. His argument: order and discipline being fundamental to the survival of a nation were reoccurring themes and reflected the lack thereof in the aftermath of the war when these books were written. His writing anticipated the mindset that fed the ideology of the NSDAP. The cultural ideology Jaeger and Krieck desired to rejuvenate had in its initial form outlived itself because it lacked the social environment to prosper.

The revolutionary scientific discoveries in the early twentieth century, such as quantum mechanics and the relativity theory, created doubts about whether the humanistic ideology and its cultural values expressed reality. Even though such doubts were unfounded, they contributed at that time to the decline of the humanist ideology. Revolutionizing scientific discoveries would eventually create huge technological advancements. However, they were unrelated to the humanist ideology with its

108 NSDAP stands for Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei from which the term Nazi originated.
109 Olson, Science and Scientism, 10-11.
concentration on the human being as an individual, and would not affect its fundamental concept: the enjoyment of intellectual pursuits together with the appreciation of art and beauty.

In the Weimar Republic, Gymnasium teachers lost some of the social status they had enjoyed in Imperial Germany. In addition, their savings were wiped out by severe inflation and the devaluation of war bonds. On the positive side, teachers in the Republic gained civil rights they had lacked in Imperial Germany; they could now become politically active, join political parties and could openly criticize the government without risking dismissal. The decline of their social standing cannot automatically be equated their resenting the Weimar Republic. Only a very few secondary teachers openly opposed the Weimar Republic in its early phase, when it could have been expected. As Vernunftrepublikaner most accepted nolens volens the political change and many for nationalistic reasons wanted to contribute to the wellbeing of Germany during this time of political and social turmoil. Over the years, they increasingly identified with the Republic as their hope for the reinstatement of the monarchy gradually vanished.

The history schoolbooks issued during the Weimar Republic reflected the dichotomy between the skeptics and advocates of the Republic. In his schoolbook, the author Bernhard Kumsteller upheld the monarchy by citing the preference of Socrates

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110 Andreas Brüggemeier, Der Kampf gegen die geistliche Schulaufsicht (Köln: S.P. Bochon Verlag, 1906), 10-11.
111 Nolens volens or half willingly.
and Aristotle for a single ruler.\textsuperscript{113} In contrast, E. Neustadt and G. Röhm praised, in their edition, the republic (\textit{freier Volksstaat}) as the highest political achievement.\textsuperscript{114} These revised textbooks no longer glorified the Imperial era, but neither did they familiarize students with the Weimar constitution, and the tolerance clause prevented educators from propagating democracy as the preferred form of government. It depended on the teacher’s interpretation of ancient history whether he would steer students either toward democracy or an authoritarian system.

Educators’ subjective interpretations of ancient Greek and Roman political systems undermined their role as advocates of human development. In the past \textit{Gymnasia} focused on the cultural achievements and \textit{Arete}, virtue, of these ancient societies to mediate values to their pupils. Diluting these teachings with political controversies contributed to antiquity losing its guiding function for Germany’s cultural ideology.

\textbf{Bildungsbürgertum}

The \textit{Bildungsbürgertum}, united by their cultural ideology, became well established in the nineteenth century. At its zenith in the early years of the Kaiserreich, its members formed a singular class with their own conventions and behavior patterns; all had a humanistic education, many had an academic degree, and most were Protestant. During the \textit{Kaiserreich}, Protestants dominated the social and political scene as evident by the composition of the nation’s leadership. Between 1888 and 1914, and out of ninety

\textsuperscript{113} Bernhard Kumsteller, Ulrich Haacke & Benno Schneider. \textit{Geschichtsbuch für die deutsche Jugend} (Leipzig: Verlag von der Quelle & Meyer, 1930) (Book VIII), 31-37.

\textsuperscript{114} E. Neustadt and G. Röhm, \textit{Geschichte des Altertums} (Berlin: Verlag und Druck von B.G. Teubner, 1927), (Book VII), 20.
chancellors, state secretaries and ministers, only eight were Catholics. The importance of
the Bildungsbürger grew particularly in the last decades of the Kaiserreich, when they
were increasingly recruited for upper administration positions, which noblemen had filled
almost exclusively before 1891.\textsuperscript{115} The social status of this elite group was determined by
education rather than material wealth or social class, whereby the most respected
members of their hierarchy were high-ranking civil servants, professors, judges,
Gymnasium teachers and pastors. They perceived themselves as representing Germany’s
cultural ideology, and ensured its perpetuation by staffing the nation’s Gymnasia and
universities. Physicians, lawyers, writers, artists and journalist represented the second
tier, while scientists were outside of their class structure and not considered part of the
Bildungsbürgertum.\textsuperscript{116}

The influence of the Bildungsbürgertum was inversely proportional to its size. In
1873 they represented only a surprising 0.8% of the total population or three hundred
thousand members, a number that grew to six hundred thousand by 1914.\textsuperscript{117} By
eventually occupying the state’s most influential positions, however, they played a major
role in forming public opinion, the nation’s consciousness and its perception of reality.\textsuperscript{118}
Their control of most secondary and tertiary education put them in the position of shaping
the social, political and cultural standards of Germany’s upper and middle class.\textsuperscript{119} It is
the aim of this thesis to investigate the Bildungsbürgertum’s influence on Germany’s

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\textsuperscript{115} Sagarra, \textit{A Social History}, 271-2.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 732.
\textsuperscript{118} Vondung, \textit{Das wilhelminische Bildungsbürgertum}, 24-33.
\textsuperscript{119} Fritz K. Ringer, \textit{The Decline of the German Mandarins} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press,
1969), 12.
cultural ideology beyond their small elitist ranks, and the role their value system played after its influence declined.

With the nation’s growing population and the increasing importance of the science based professions, the Bildungsbürgertum as a class gradually lost its unique status, but initially not their influence as administrators, because they recruited candidates for civil service positions almost exclusively from their own ranks. Moritz Föllmer, correctly defines the Bildungsbürgertum as a cultural, but not as a socioeconomic entity. He argues Imperial Germany’s elite, industrialists and Bildungsbürgertum, had, during the last decade of the monarchy, a symbiotic relationship with common goals and interests. Their mutual radical nationalism, he contends, influenced the educational policies and helped to impel the Völkische idea during the Kaiserreich. He does not believe that the Bildungsbürgertum was in a crisis during the period.\textsuperscript{120} The cultural dominance of Bildungsbürgertum experienced in the first decade of the twentieth century a temporary reprieve, but, as an institution, it was their swan song because of the nation’s social and economic changes.

With an increasing percentage of the lower middle class graduating from Realschulen and technical universities, the Bildungsbürgertum’s cultural ideology lost its prominent importance. The demand for professional expertise in a more competitive industrial environment left them, at the turn of the century, with less time to pursue other interests, as Hans-Ulrich Wehler argues. He claims professional requirements did not allow the Bildungsbürgertum to maintain their demanding standards of perpetually

\textsuperscript{120} Moritz Föllmer, Die Verteidigung der bürgerlichen Nation (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 302, 318.
expanding their knowledge.\textsuperscript{121} He fails to explore whether its cultural values eventually lost validity or continue to influence the lives of the newly formed \textit{Bürgerum}.

The \textit{Bildungsbürgertum} considered the working class inferior, and in their disdain made little effort to understand their plight.\textsuperscript{122} At the same time they were increasingly leery of the Social Democrat’s growing power, as they gained one third of the Reichstag’s seats in 1912. The ruling class realized that workers, comprising a majority of the population, would eventually claim their political rights, and feared the consequences. The social changes accompanied by rapidly progressing industrialization caused wariness and the desire by the \textit{Bildungsbürgertum} to adhere to their traditional values. This dichotomy between workers and this elite group, with their rigidity and apprehension, contributed to the solidarity of both classes and hindered the exchange of their social values. Germany’s democratic trends in the last decade of the \textit{Kaiserreich} had limited impact on the nation’s class structure and traditional cultural norms. Its hierarchy, based on birthrights, educational level and military rank, remained the backbone of its rigid social structure and prevented the feeling of equality among many of its citizens, in particular,, workers. As I will show this class distinction between the educated and workers motivated \textit{Realschule} graduates, the new \textit{Bürgerum}, to identify with and imitate to a degree the values of \textit{Bildungsbürgertum}, more so than if such a dichotomy and the resulting feeling of solidarity among \textit{Bürgerum} and among workers had not existed.

After years of war when there were no signs of the fighting abating, the faith in the ability of Germany’s leadership increasingly deteriorated; in addition many traditional


\textsuperscript{122} Doerry, \textit{Übergangsmenschen},15.
conventions broke down and gender roles were being reassessed. World War I and its aftermath strongly victimized the *Bildungsbürgertum* and accelerated the waning of their influence on the *Bürgertum’s* social norms. Their income declined due to inflation by 47%, and many depleted their savings by being forced to buy food on the black market to supplement meager rations; some even became impoverished. Their predicament reinforced their conservative political orientation and latter their frequent antidemocratic stance.¹²³

Imperial Germany’s authoritarian tradition made it possible during the Weimar Republic to reinstate professors, Gymnasium teachers, judges and clergy in their positions. But the new parliamentary system and more powerful political parties lessened the influence of civil servants, positions frequently occupied by the *Bildungsbürgertum*.¹²⁴ The reduced prosperity of Gymnasium educators and the declining prominence of humanistic education gradually diminished their social rank. Many civil servants, aristocrats, army officers and educators were hostile to the republic or accepted the new system only gradually, and composed the conservative right.¹²⁵ Such opposition expressed not only the resentment of the new political order, but also the realization that the *Bildungsbürger* era, with educators as its agents, was in decline.

Thomas Mann, in his speech *Reflection of an Apolitical Man*, delivered October 15, 1922, expresses the eventual acceptance of the new reality when he states: “True *Bildung* can only be achieved in a republic because it provides all citizens with the

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opportunity for their individual development and to become familiar with the ideals of humanity.” In the past, he depicted Bildung as being a fashionable and snobbish ideology of the middle class.\footnote{Ibid., 255.} His previously condescending attitude, typical for Bildungsbürgertum toward the lower middle class, had made way for the hope that they too would subscribe to humanist ideals.

The concerns about the validity of traditional values the war had caused continued during the Weimar Republic. Wehler argues the humanist ideology with its desire for inner perfection, appreciation of beauty and Germany’s role in reincarnating Hellenic culture were being questioned after the war.\footnote{Wehler, \emph{Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte, 1914-1949}, vol. 4, 294-7.} Other scholars believe that the exclusive position the Bildungsbürgertum occupied during the monarchy had outlived itself in the Weimar Republic.\footnote{Konrad H. Jarausch, Larry Eugene Jones ed., \emph{In Search of a Liberal Germany} (New York: Berg Publishers, Inc., 1990), 235.} Moritz Föllmer contends that little research has been done to confirm such statements; on the contrary, some of the political-historical publications point to a reaffirmation of the Bürgertum in the Weimar Republic.\footnote{Föllmer, \emph{Die Verteidigung der bürgerlichen Nation},14.} He argues the lost war, the empowerment of the Socialists, and French occupation of the Ruhr, reaffirmed their ideology instead of creating doubts and insecurity.\footnote{Ibid.,15, 19, 302 , 318.} Nostalgia for the traditional humanist ideology with its emphasis on individual fulfillment and appreciation of beauty represented an antidote to the horrors of the Great War, and could explain its attempted revival in the Weimar Republic. However, such movement would have involved only a very limited group of people, and not the majority of the middle class, because the latter
lacked a humanistic education. These authors fail to ask the question whether the socio-economic demands prevented the Bildungsbürgertum from pursuing inner perfection during the prewar period, and from leading a lifestyle that would be a testament to the reincarnation of the Hellenic culture.

Even as the humanist ideology’s prominence was declining, it retained much of its formative presence in Germany’s cultural scene. Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), the influential philosopher of that period, argues in Being and Time (1927), as the humanists did, that individuality has lost out in modern society to the anonymous masses. The return to being self occurs through stages of caring for others.131 Heidegger writes: “The Being-with-one-another dissolves one’s own existence (Dasein) completely into the kind of being of ‘the Others’ in such a way, indeed, that the Others, as distinguishable and explicit vanish more and more.”132 His and the traditional ideological concepts are both rooted in the Christian concern for one’s fellow man. But while the Bildungsbürger is also concerned for his fellow man, he “dissolved his own existence” in Bildung and in the arts; Heidegger moves away from such self-orientation to “the Other.” He thereby sacrifices the concept of Bildung to the outward oriented Christian ideal of brotherly love. Germany’s changing cultural ideology would not adopt such extremes, but it did move to a more outward orientation.

In pre-war years, the Bildungsbürgertum perceived Hellenic culture as a steppingstone for Germany’s progressing development. The war had caused strong

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131 Weitz, Weimar Germany, 279-281.
doubts about this concept of humanity’s ability to progress, but it did not diminish the
desire to emulate the admired Hellenic cultural accomplishments. The changed social
environment had undermined the self-centered aspects of the Gymnasium education, but
the desire for Bildung together with the appreciation of arts and nature remained a
prominent aspect of its teachings. It inspired in the post-war years a burst of creativity in
the arts, which had been liberated from their traditional orientation.\textsuperscript{133}

To summarize, Germany’s cultural ideology was based on Bildung, Protestant
ethics and influenced by an idealized Hellenic culture. Initially, the aristocracy and a
small group of intellectuals championed these principals before the Bildungsbürgertum
became its main representative, believing that their cultural ideology represented an
advancement of mankind. The changing social environment, and more so World War I,
trimmed away many aspects of this ideology among them the belief in mankind’s
progression. In the following chapters I will investigate what remained of this ideology’s
different facets as Germany’s social structure and environment changed.

\textsuperscript{133} Weitz, \textit{Weimar Germany}, 11.
CHAPTER II

GYMNASIUM TEACHER’S ESSAYS

Introduction

The *Bildungsbürgertum* in the latter part of the nineteenth century represented Germany’s cultural ideology, and relied on *Gymnasium* teachers for its perpetuation. In the final years of Imperial Germany, the social environment that once nourished this ideology was changing, and these teachers were torn between the demand to adjust the curriculum and their desire not to sacrifice any of their traditional educational concepts in the process. Much has been written about their effort to adapt their teaching and the effect school reforms had on the humanistic education in the *Kaiserreich*. None of these treatises, however, focus on the response of individual teachers to the changing educational demands and their perception of its impact on the humanistic education, which I will examine in this chapter. For *Gymnasium* teachers, humanist ideology was not just an educational concept, but formed their *Weltbild* (worldview) and identity, which almost resembled a religious belief. Germany’s changing social structure caused them not only to adjust their educational concept, but also to adapt, gradually and reluctantly, certain aspects of this new emerging *Weltbild*. In this chapter I will explore their changing cognizance of humanistic education in the last decades of the monarchy.

The primary sources for this chapter are books and essays written by teachers for *Gymnasium* yearbooks during the *Kaiserreich*. Their yearly contributions declined during the war years when paper became scarce and yearbooks less voluminous, and stopped in
the Weimar Republic altogether, in spite of the government’s encouragement to resume this tradition. These yearbooks were scattered in various archives while Germany was divided, and had not been cataloged, which made their systematic evaluation difficult if not impossible. The Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung (DIPF) in Berlin is only now in the process of assembling and categorizing these documents, which is where I found these records as I was exploring their archives for information about Gymnasium teachers.\footnote{DIPF - Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung, Warschauer Straße 34 - 38, 10243 Berlin, Germany.}

**Background**

Germany’s traditional cultural ideology as taught by the humanistic Gymnasium was rooted in a contemplative social environment. The drastic change from a rural to an urban society triggered by the nation’s rapid industrialization created competitive conditions with more social interaction than in the past introspective setting, in which the self-oriented cultural ideology had flourished. As to be expected, these developments together with Germany’s swift population growth, had a fundamental impact on its social structure, and created the need for a larger portion of the population to have a secondary and tertiary education, and ultimately initiated a realignment of the nation’s cultural ideology.

The resulting school reform, by upgrading the Realschule, would gradually deprive Gymnasium teachers of their role as guardians of the nations cultural and ethical values. In the following discussion, I will outline the importance of the Gymnasium
education for establishing these values and the development that reduced their significance.

Education for the general population had in the eighteenth century been limited to a few years schooling in elementary schools where literacy and religion were taught, but almost more importantly, discipline and obedience. Aristocrats and a small elite group of Bildungsbürger had access to secondary education based on the utilitarian educational principal as previously pointed out. In 1809, Wilhelm von Humboldt introduced the humanistic secondary education to prepare students through its institution, the Gymnasium, for positions in Prussia’s expanding public administration.

The humanist education established and then unified the elite group of the Bildungsbürgertum, first mainly in the Prussian territory and then through the introduction of universal Gymnasium education throughout Imperial Germany. The idealized ancient Hellenic and Roman cultures provided a guide for this educational concept, because their values were considered exemplary and without parallel in man’s intellectual achievements. In particular, the writings of the ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle expressed many of these accomplishments. They were the first to lead human beings to find value within himself and to discover the good in mankind; principles the Lutheran religion also later adopted. Plato believed that for a society to be sustainable, the state needs to reflect the moral qualities of its citizens, and considered education essential to impart these values. He argued humans inherently knows nothing of justice and mercy, but recognizes only the right of the stronger, which is why he considered education to be of foremost importance to form human’s character,
conscience and intellect. Livingstone argues that next to Christianity, the philosophies of these two philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, had the most influence on the western world’s spiritual development and its fundamental principles. Humboldt subscribed to these concepts and made them a major part of the humanistic education he devised.

Humboldt wanted not only to familiarize students with the teaching of the Greek philosophers, but also to guide them in understanding the spirit of Athenians, which he saw as combining civic responsibility with the pursuit of intellectual interests and the enjoyment of the arts and beauty. For Athenians, the reason for living was to continuously expand one’s knowledge, and to pursue materialistic goals meant abandoning one’s ideals and forgoing the reason why humans were born. They admired a contemplative life and the pursuit of intellectual interests because they ranked reason as the highest and best of mankind’s attributes. Ancient Greeks studied science not to exploit its benefits, but to widen their understanding of the world. They were the first to recognize mankind’s potential for progress by expanding their knowledge. Greeks gained richness in their lives by developing their full potential, and in this regard were considered to have surpassed every other nation.

The educational goal of Gymnasium teacher was to evoke a similar desire in Germany’s youth, complimented by the cultural ideals of ancient Rome: discipline, civil obedience and patriotism. Educators, by acquainting students with the accomplishments of both cultures, intended to equip them with intellectual stipulations and ethics from which they could draw throughout their lives to reach their full potential and become

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136 Ibid., 63,125.
valuable citizens. When Humboldt introduced this ideology, the social setting of Germany and these ancient cultures were fittingly similarly in their contemplative tone, which was not the case after Germany became industrialized.

It is important to note that these values were not only derived from these ancient civilizations, but were part of the Germany’s own cultural development. The medieval German-speaking areas already regarded Bildung as an important cultural component and particularly the Protestant principalities valued self-reliance, personal betterment and concern for others. This congruity with the Hellenic culture explains the ready acceptance of Humboldt’s conversion from a previously utilitarian to the humanistic education. The various political constellations of Athens and Rome were also considered excellent teaching tools to familiarize students with different forms of government. In particular the failed democracies of antiquity served to illustrate the advantages of Germany’s monarchy in its last decades. The Gymnasium, by familiarizing students with the history of these different cultures, taught students a cosmopolitan perspective, which was and remained a fundamental component of the Bildungsbürgertum worldview even as nationalism became more prominent.

After Germany’s principalities integrated into a sovereign state in 1871, this newly formed nation established its own identity, and in support of this process, and the now universal Gymnasia were instructed to familiarize students with Germany’s historic accomplishments. These directives did not hinder humanistic education from remaining fundamentally cosmopolitan, but without deterring its graduates from being patriotic and nationalistic, as their heroism and bravery in World War I showed. Realschulen, in
contrast to Gymnasia, offered a more utilitarian education to prepare students for their professions. Gymnasium teachers, as will be shown, rejected this educational concept because they believed it taught students to seek external gratification, which prevented them from developing their full potential later in life. They also questioned whether such utilitarian education was sufficiently able to instill proper social and ethical values in pupils and, in accordance with Plato, tame the “right of the stronger” inherent to mankind.

Germany’s increasing affluence and economic growth contributed to expansion of the Bildungsbürgertum from about 0.7% to 0.9% of the total population; while the nation’s population grew between 1871-1914 by 65% to 65 million, the Bildungsbürgertum doubled, comprising roughly 600,000 members in 1914. By occupying leading positions in administration, education, government and the judiciary, their influence particularly on Germany’s cultural scene exceeded their size. In the final years of the Kaiserreich, their power waned as political parties, professional associations and professional politicians gained leverage in the Reichstag.137

In spite of Germany’s changing social structure, the Bildungsbürgertum for the most part retained their prestige throughout the Imperial period. Not withstanding their continuing eminence in and leverage on education, Imperial Germany’s economic and industrial expansion gradually limited the Bildungsbürgertum’s pursuit of their cultural ideology and particularly of Bildung. School reforms at the turn of the century acknowledged Germany’s changing educational needs by permitting Realschulen

graduates to attend universities. These changes at the same time enhanced social mobility by encouraging the lower middle class to pursue a higher education and allowed students with a limited aptitude for ancient languages to attain a high school diploma. The increasing professional opportunities for Realschule graduates with a science-oriented education caused the relative Gymnasium attendance to decline from 66% of Germany’s graduates in 1885 to 39% in 1918. However, of Gymnasium graduates, 70-80% continued to come from families of the Bildungsbürgertum, who perceived the humanistic education to be superior in particular because of the values it conveyed. \(^{138}\) By frequently seeking civil service occupations these graduates retained some of this group’s influence on policies of the monarchy.

The decreasing popularity of Gymnasium education meant that the perpetuation of the Bildungsbürgertum’s cultural ideology was declining. Even though the upper echelon, by preferring the Gymnasium, continued to be exposed to the humanist curriculum and identified for the most part with its paradigms and ideals, the majority, Realschule graduates, were only taught a much-watered down version of this ideology. In general, Germany’s changing social environment was little suited for such an individualistic, contemplative ideology, which caused a gradually changing paradigm in Germany’s educated population. Gymnasium teachers were responsible for conveying to students the nation’s traditional cultural ideology, therefore the changing paradigm affected them foremost. By teaching these values they did not just execute an educational policy, but conveyed their own convictions and Weltbild. In this chapter I will explore their

\(^{138}\) Ibid., 732, 749, 1204-6.
commitment to this ideology as well as their gradual, often reluctant, response to accommodate the changing needs of this educational concept.

For this investigation I will review publications of these teachers, primarily those written for Jahresberichte from 1877 to 1918. These were annual reports issued by each Gymnasium to review school events and student performance. In addition they featured essays written by a teacher on a general topic or a subject of his expertise, which frequently demonstrated their university level scholastic knowledge. These topics included the analysis of ancient Greek authors, philosophers or playwrights; others were of religious nature or addressed the goals and purpose of the humanistic education and its relevance in modern times. The authors frequently gave a verbal presentation of their essays to the assembled student body at the beginning of the school year. To better trace these educators’ response to social changes as they were evolving, I will review their essays in chronological order. No similar study that considers the opinion of individual teachers to the changing humanistic education has ever been done before. Educators’ contributions to Jahresberichte started to decline in the late period of the Kaiserreich and were discontinued altogether in the Weimar Republic.

**Reviews of Books and Essays, 1877 -1918**

Between 1877 and 1918 Gymnasium educators of Imperial Germany presented treatises at the beginning of each school year about various subjects to the assembled student body. Their interpretations of different topics reflect the influence the changing social environment had on their perception of the values and ideology they were teaching. The review of these articles will allow me to analyze the importance teachers continue to
assign to Bildung and the impact that growing nationalism had on antiquity as an educational tool; they will further indicate the willingness of these authors to accept the upgrading of Realschulen and the expansion of democratic principles.

**Book – 1877**

Ludwig Ballauf, writing in 1877, compares Gymnasium and Realschule educations. He argues the science-oriented education of the Realschule was only concerned with teaching something that it takes for reality, but neglects the higher-ranking values of the humanistic education. He claims that the ancient languages the Gymnasium taught developed students’ universal cognitive ability, and equipped them with the ability to analyze and find solutions to every kind of problem they were confronted with later in life, including scientific ones. The author contended that even though such claims had not been scientifically validated, the many accomplishments of men educated by Gymnasia prove his point. He argues that fluency in ancient Greek and Latin, as was expected of Gymnasia students, improved their ability to understand and solve problems, particularly in the field of law. In accordance with many Gymnasia teachers, Ballauf is of the opinion that ancient languages were better suited than English and French to advance pupil’s cognitive ability because the latter, by being more closely related to German, presented less of a cognitive challenge. He further argues, in the past, ancient languages mainly served to develop students’ cognitive abilities while now they also aided in analyzing ancient texts. Humanistic education, he claims, had in recent

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years reinvigorated its goal to form pupils’ character by imbuing them with the ideals and values of ancient authors.

Ballauff expresses Humblodt’s premise that students’ fluency in ancient Greek and Latin was a prerequisite for understanding the spirit of these ancient cultures, fundamental to the humanistic education. In addition, by being able to read the original text instead of translations of ancient plays, literature and philosophical treatises of Plato and Aristotle, they would better understand the foundation of western intellectual heritage. Nevertheless, many educators doubted the cognitive benefits of learning ancient languages, and the advantage of being able to read classical literature in the original language. Instead, they pointed to the value of being able to communicate with Germany’s neighbors if English and French were taught. The superior cognitive stimulation of ancient Greece and Latin was based on empirical and ideologically slanted assumptions; none of the following essays refer to studies that would have substantiated these claims. The lack of such scientific evidence did not deter many, if not most, philology teachers from subscribing to the cognitive benefits of ancient languages. The advantage of teaching ancient languages is a reoccurring topic in the early Jahresberichte, and is indicative of these educators’ reluctance to abandon traditional concepts.

The neo-humanistic education was increasingly attacked for being out of tune with the Zeitgeist of Germany’s socioeconomic development. This is evident in light of the defensive posture of essays by Ballauff and others. He argues that the elimination of the Gymnasium education would deprive the German people (Volk) of the highest
attainable education (*Bildung*). The curriculum of the *Realschulen*, he claims, is to the detriment of the nation because it replaced the ideals and ethical values of the humanistic education with selfish, pleasure seeking and materialistic ones.\(^{140}\) These recurring arguments by *Gymnasium* teachers mirror their confrontation with a changing social environment and resulting discordant paradigms. The reshaping from an agricultural to an industrial economy increased the demands on the individual, and caused educators’ self-oriented world-view to gradually be replaced by a more pragmatic and utilitarian one, as these writings will show.

Indicative of the *Bildungsbürgertum*’s mindset of that period is Ballauff’s statement that humanistic ideals and ‘higher-ranking’ values represent reality, but the pragmatism and utilitarianism the *Realschule* was teaching did not. When he wrote this book in 1877, the traditional neo-humanistic concept still dominated secondary education, because *Realschulen* did not yet offer an equivalent education and its graduates did not qualify to attend universities. His defense of the merits of learning ancient languages indicates his being aware of the threat which the traditional humanist educational concept was facing. He and others endorse the unabating educational value of ancient Greek and Rome cultures by claiming that recent archeological findings had widened the perspective of these societies, but did not diminish their fundamental accomplishments. He emphasizes the continuing importance of cosmopolitanism as part of the humanistic education, as in 1877 nationalism was increasingly being heralded.\(^{141}\)

To prove their patriotism, *Gymnasia* compared Germany’s recent military achievements

\(^{140}\) Ibid., 2-22.
\(^{141}\) Ibid., 2-22.
to the heroic deeds of ancient Greece and Rome, but in spite of such assurances, humanistic education remained fundamentally cosmopolitan in nature. The reader might recall that in 1877, Prussia had, under Bismarck’s leadership, been victorious in three recent military campaigns.

*Gymnasia* did make an effort to better accommodate the educational requirements of an industrial society by expanding courses in science and mathematics. Overall, such adjustments to the *Gymnasium* curriculum contributed little to silence the still muted demands for more radical changes with less emphasis on the humanistic aspect. The defense of the traditional education by its teachers might appear self-serving or even spurious if attributed to their fear of losing prestige. Such an interpretation fails to recognize their deep-rooted belief in the benefits of humanist ideology, which formed Germany’s elite cultural and ethical values; *Gymnasiun* teachers were convinced that they aided the progression of mankind by expanding student interest beyond utilitarian needs.

**Jahresbericht - 1880**

Johannes Müller, in his scholarly contribution to the *Jahresberichte* of a *Gymnasiun* in Berlin, describes Martin Luther’s role in establishing Germany’s primary school system. He contends that besides teaching literacy in elementary schools, Luther’s main educational goal was to form students’ character, aid in their emotional development and support their religious belief. He writes to ensure pupils’ religious orientation in those parts of Germany where the Reformation had taken hold, Luther wrote a catechism to aid religious instructions in elementary schools. Müller further
points out that Luther placed the main responsibility for the education of children in the hands of parents.\textsuperscript{142} The historian Ralph Dahrendorf demonstrates the lasting influence of Luther’s educational guidance. He argues that German parents, in the 1960s, still saw themselves as their children’s primary educators and were responsible for teaching them public virtues, while schools were to instruct pupils in knowledge they could not provide.\textsuperscript{143}

The Hellenic emphasis on individualism, personal development and self-reliance strongly influenced Luther and became an integral part of the Protestant dogma. As previously mentioned, the Reformation in Germany originated from the people and was not the result of potentates’ changing religious orientation, as had been the case in England and France.\textsuperscript{144} For this reason, the spirit of the Protestant religion in Germany was an integral part of the culture, ethical values and mindset of its people and not just the \textit{Bildungsbürgertum}, as I will show. Later, as a consequence of Enlightenment and a more critical view of religious dogma, these values eventually became independent of church rituals and dogmas. The theologian Ernst Troeltsch argues that Luther’s religious values increasingly underwent secularization. He contends Protestants’ emphasis on personal religion and the individual’s pursuit of \textit{Bildung} also affected German Catholics in the early nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{145} The humanist ideology reflected Lutheran, as well as ancient Greek, educational concepts of forming students’ character, establishing their

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[\textsuperscript{142}] Johannes Müller, \textit{Luthers reformatorische Verdienste um Schule und Unterricht} Wissenschaftliche Beilage zum Programm des Friedrichs-Gymnasiums, Ostern 1883 (Berlin: R. Gaertners Verlagsbuchhandlung, Hermann Heyfelder, 1883), 6-32.
\item[\textsuperscript{143}] Dahrendorf, \textit{Society and Democracy in Germany}, 301-2.
\item[\textsuperscript{144}] Wundt, \textit{Die Nationen und ihre Philosophie}, 71.
\item[\textsuperscript{145}] Bruford, \textit{The German Tradition of Self-cultivation}, 236.
\end{enumerate}
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ethical values and developing their intellect. This congruity of the Lutheran religion with many Athenian cultural values makes it clear why the school reform of 1809 that replaced utilitarian schooling with humanistic education was so readily accepted.

The reflection of Protestantism in the cultural ideology was part of the reason why the latter became the Bildungsbürgertum’s doctrine and explains the tenacious reluctance by the Gymnasium to accept changing cultural values. Wehler states, Bildung provided the paradigm of the Bildungsbürgertum’s worldview, defined their existence and served as a substitute for religion. He claims their attitude of intellectual superiority and social primacy defined their self-image, and lead to a stereotypical lifestyle.146 The decreasing church attendance in the late nineteenth century appears to support Troeltsch’s and Wehler’s argument. Church attendance, particularly for Protestants, had been declining constantly since 1750; around 1900 regular presence at church services ranged from thirty to ten percent for Protestants and sixty-two percent for Catholics. Both groups maintained the various rights of passage such as baptisms, confirmations and weddings. The historian Gunilla-Friederike Budde argues that these rituals had largely lost their religious significance and were now mainly occasions for family gatherings. Religious moral codes such as industriousness, modesty and obedience had similarly lost much of their sacred character; for the majority of the population, the churches maintained their social influence by providing guidelines for rearing their children, she claims.147

These statements are not supported by increasing religiosity in the later part of the
_Kaiserreich_ despite declining church attendance.\textsuperscript{148} The frequency with which religion
was discussed in these _Jahresberichte_ support these findings. For Germany’s
Freemasons, who personified the humanist ideology, _Bildung_ without religiosity was
inconceivable.\textsuperscript{149} The theological origin of _Bildung_ together with self-reflection and self-
reliance of Lutheranism does not allow the separation of the _Bildungsbürger_’s ideology
from religion. The lower church attendance indicates more a critical view of the church
doctrine and an internalization of religion rather than its rejection. Exploring God-given
intellectual capabilities, as advocated by humanists, was not a substitute for religiosity,
but an integral part of it. The prevailing religiosity of that period with its congruity with
cultural and ethical values partially explains the reluctance of _Gymnasia_ as the main
promulgator of these values to alter their educational concept.

**Jahresbericht -1885**

This undimishing strong role which personal Christian religion plays in
Germany without relying on rituals is evident in Hofrat Jacob’s essay five year later. In it
he stresses the comfort Christian belief has to offer in all aspects of life, and urges
students to find strength in their religion. Rather than advocating church attendance, he
emphasizes an individual relation to God.\textsuperscript{150}

\textsuperscript{149}Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, _Politics of Sociability, Freemasonry and German Civil Society 1840-1918_ (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), 214.
\textsuperscript{150}Dr. Jacob Hofrat. Ansprache an die Schüler in der Aula des Königlichen Gymnasiums zu Dresden-
Neustadt. Seperater Druck aus dem Program des Gymnasiums, Ostern 1885(Dresden: B. G. Teubner, 1885)
Jahresbericht -1883

In the 1880s, teachers started to question the effectiveness of ancient languages in developing students’ cognitive ability. Instead antiquity increasingly served to acquaint students with various social and political constructs and cultures partially to cultivate their cosmopolitan perspective. S. Herrlich’s essay reflects this trend by contrasting the moral values in ancient Greece to those of contemporary Germany. Murder in Athens, he states, was not considered a crime against society and thus was not punishable by law; instead it was left to the next of kin to seek revenge. He claims the importance we attribute to human life was only established with the introduction of Christianity.¹⁵¹ Acquainting students with a nation’s versatility of customs and ideological concepts contributed to the Bildungsbürgertum’s better understanding of diverging societies and to forming their Weltbild. In the past, Hellenic ethical values were seen as the pinnacle of human development. In a gradually more self-assertive nationalistic Germany, the author portrays antiquity as being culturally less advanced and no longer the ultimate moral guide.

Jahresbericht - 1886

This emerging nationalistic attitude of the previous author is also evident in H. Meyer’s essay. He claims Goethe’s and Schiller’s writings were less influenced by ancient cultures of Greece and Rome, than was generally assumed; instead they had expressed a German cultural ideology that was rooted in its own historical development. Germany’s cultural identity, he contends, was therefore less rooted in these ancient

cultures than commonly believed. He argues that the erroneous perception that the
aesthetic values in the works of Goethe and Schiller had originated in antiquity prevented
Germany from establishing its own identity.\textsuperscript{152} His perception of Germany’s cultural
development is historically more accurate, as discussed above. Also this essay expresses
Germany’s growing self-confidence and nationalism, and reflects its expanding economy
and increasing political prominence on the international stage. The \textit{Bildungsbürgertum}
now identified with Germany’s cultural values, instead of believing they were a remake
of ancient cultures. The influence of ancient cultures was not being denied, but instead of
humanists identifying with them, as in the past, they now perceived antiquity as a mere
stepping-stone for Germany’s own cultural progression.

\textbf{Jahresbericht -1887}

When addressing students in Erfurt, Wilhelm Heinzelmann argues that the main
function of \textit{Gymnasium} was to teach students freedom. He argues the individual can only
gain freedom by subordinating his will, moral values, ideals, and desires to the social
norms and by becoming part of the greater communal entity. He quotes Emanuel Kant,
who defines freedom as obedience to the moral order of society, and argues these norms
were anchored and reinforced by Christian belief. Heinzelmann states Christian faith,
together with the antiquity-rooted humanist ideology, fulfills the German ideal of
freedom. For him, even the freedom of exploring the arts and science needed to stay

\textsuperscript{152} H. Meyer. \textit{Bemerkungen zu dem Zeitalter der schönen Wissenschaften}. Wissenschaftliche Beilage zum
Programm des Berlinischen Gymnasiums Zum Grauen Kloster. Ostern 1886, (Berlin: R. Gaertners
Verlagsbuchhandlung, Hermann Heyfelder, 1886), 29.
within the boundaries of what was contemporaneously morally and socially acceptable.\textsuperscript{153} Heinzelmann’s effort to restrict arts and science, not to reach beyond established knowledge, appears as a desperate attempt to stem the tide of a changing social environment and avoid adjustment. His rigid adherence to existing conventions and values underpins the frequently expressed fear in these essays of reaching beyond traditional intellectual concepts.

The teaching of freedom as obedience to the moral order of society continues into the next decade as evidenced by a student’s essay in a \textit{Jahresbericht} of 1892 titled: \textit{Der Mensch ist nicht geboren, frei zu sein} (“Man is not born to be free” taken from Goethe’s play \textit{Tasso}).\textsuperscript{154} What both authors define as freedom might be better described as the voluntary acceptance of Germany’s cultural, ethical and social norms. Its teaching can be seen as the educational goal, universal to any nation, to have its youth identify with and to have them internalize existing social parameters and operate within its boundaries.

\textbf{Jahresbericht -1889}

Eduard Kuenen, a student at a \textit{Gymnasium} in Düsseldorf, illustrates the nationalist trend in his essay by arguing that in the past, the \textit{Gymnasium} aimed to create \textit{Weltbürger} with a cosmopolitan attitude. Now the teaching of Germany’s own history should be brought more to the fore by familiarizing students with its cultural heritage and national literature, such as the \textit{Niebelungenlied}.\textsuperscript{155} However, the \textit{Gymnasium}’s primary

\textsuperscript{153} Wilhelm Heinzelmann \textit{Über die Freiheit als Ziel der Erziehung} Beilage zum Programm des K. Gymnasiums zu Erfurt (Erfurt: Druck von Bartholomäus, 1887), 7-17.

\textsuperscript{154} Deutsche Musteraufsätze 1892 Unterprima, “\textit{Der Mensch ist nicht geboren, frei zu sein} (Tasso von Goethe)” published in the Jahresblätter of a Gymnasium in Danzig.

\textsuperscript{155} An epic poem in Middle High German written at the beginning of the thirteenth century. (Knaurs Lexicon A-Z, 1956 ed., s.v. “N-Lied.”)
role, he contends, remains to form students’ character and ethical values by using the Bible and the Hellenic culture as teaching tools.\textsuperscript{156} His treatise shows that in spite of the emphasis on Germany’s own heritage, Gymnasium education continuing to use cultural ideologies of other civilizations as guides. Kuenen’s, as in previous essays, also emphasizes Germany’s continuing commitment to the Christian religion.

\textbf{Schulkonferenz-1890}

At the Schulkonferenz in 1890, the Kaiser in his opening speech proposes to deemphasize the teaching of ancient Greek and Latin languages in Gymnasium. Instead, he argues, students’ German writing skills should be improved, as should their knowledge of national history. Many Germans supported the Kaiser’s point of view, especially those who hoped his speech would help to accredit the more science and math oriented Realschulen. They were of the opinion that Gymnasium education failed to meet the needs of an industrial society and created an ivory tower for a selected few. The Ministry of Education and others successfully boycotted the recommended alteration of the Gymnasium curriculum. They also continued to prevent graduates of Realschulen from attending universities.\textsuperscript{157} The refusal to implement the Kaiser’s proposals illustrates the power the Bildungsbürgertum continued to wield in spite of their small number; but more importantly it demonstrates how strongly this elite group continued to identify with the cultural and ethical values conveyed by the humanistic education. In addition, their rejection of William II proposition reflected the Bildungsbürgertum’s fear of having their

elite status challenged, even though they based their superiority on Social Darwinism. The school conference of 1890 did not diminish the importance of the Athenian civilization for the Gymnasium’s educational concept as the following essays show.

**Jahresbericht -1892**

Many *Gymnasium* teachers remained undeterred in an almost defiant effort to introduce students to the beauty of Hellenistic literature. This is evidenced by Eduard Lübke’s contribution to the *Jahresberichte* of the Lessing *Gymnasiums* in Berlin. In his scholarly analyses, he describes the beauty of the plays by the ancient Greek Menander, even though only fragments survived.\(^{158}\)

Karl Thiemann, in the *Jahresberichte* of the Leibniz *Gymnasium* Berlin, links “The Platonic Eschatology” of the ancient Greek philosophy to Christian belief by describing Plato’s perception of death and the afterlife. Similar to our religion, he writes, for Plato the soul descended from god with whom it would reunite after an exemplary life on earth; this belief, he points out, is likely to have originated in Egypt or India. Thiemann argues that for Plato the acquisition of wisdom and knowledge was the primary goal of man’s existence;\(^ {159}\) a concept the humanist ideology had widely adopted. Thiemann demystifies the Lutheran faith by familiarizing students with various aspects of its ancient philosophical foundation. His essay reflects a secular perception of religion and a more rational interpretation of antiquity, which was increasingly evolving at the *fin de siècle*. This changing notion of the ancient Greek culture nevertheless did not alter its


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influence on Germany’s ideals as evident by Thiemann’s emphasis on the lifelong striving for knowledge, which Plato advocates. Attica remained the ideal nation on earth, not only for the art-historian Jacob Burckhardt, as previously indicated, but for Gymnasium educators as well. The more analytical explanation of Christianity concurs with the inclination of Protestants not to blindly accept the dogmas of the church, but, as shown above, it did not affect their religiosity. The author, in an interesting comment, writes Plato believed men were punished for their misdeeds by being reincarnated as women. The lowly standing of women in the Hellenic culture could explain Plato’s conviction. His millennia-long undiminished authority most likely was part of the reason the role of women in western societies was traditionally subordinate.

**Schulkonferenz 1900**

At the next Schulkonferenz, ten years later, the Bildungsbürgertum could no longer ignore the growing demand for changing the Gymnasium curriculum. The teaching of Greek was curtailed to the benefit of mathematics and science, and instructions about the ancient Greeks and Romans were partially relegated to history courses taught in all secondary schools. It was also decided to finally admit Realschulen graduates to universities. The exposure of a wider spectrum of the population to a secondary and tertiary education would gradually contribute to Germany’s democratization. The upgrading of the Realschulen eventually caused their graduates to numerically exceed those of the Gymnasium thereby undermining the perpetuation of the Bildungsbürgertum’s cultural ideology and their elitist status. It prompted Gymnasium

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160 Srbik, Geist und Geschichte vom deutschen Humanismus bis zur Gegenwart, 166.
philologists to publish, in the following years, more essays in defense of the humanistic education, to the detriment of their scholarly contributions. To pacify adversaries of the Gymnasium, teachers downplayed the cosmopolitan nature of humanistic education and emphasized their teaching of national history. The articles also start to reflect the pedagogical trend of recognizing students as individuals, and not, as previously, part of an undifferentiated mass. The expanded secondary education reflected the socio-economic changes and again growing nationalism evident in the Kaiser’s emphasis on German writing skills and history. The following essays illustrate the only gradual acceptance by philologists of the 1900 school conference’s guidelines.

**Jahresbericht – 1900**

Paul Cauer, in defense of humanistic education, argues that the naïve view of nature in ancient writing offers the senses so much more than its perception as influenced by modern science. Voicing the opinion of many Bildungsbürger, he argues that Gymnasia, because of their high educational standards, should train Germany’s elite, while the less gifted are to attend Realschulen, though all graduates should be admitted to universities. His elitist viewpoint appears symptomatic of the difficulty many educators had in accepting Germany’s trend toward a more egalitarian social order. He still argues the teaching of ancient languages develops student’s cognitive ability better than other educational tools.¹⁶¹ Such reasoning became rare after the 1900 school conference when the government had decreed an increase in the teaching of math and science to the

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detriment of Greek and Latin. In support of the monarchy, he claims democracy is an unviable form of government, as Athenians have shown, because an unavoidable sequence of events will cause a republic to degenerate to the rule by the plebs. Cauer’s conservative stance is again apparent by interpreting the demise Athenian democracy as predestined without considering specific historic circumstances that led to such a development. In 1900, other authors were already taking a more critical approach to interpreting history, and many did not believe past events followed a predetermined path. Gymnasium teachers because of their unassailable high social status were seldom critiqued, which might explain the intellectual inflexibility apparent in some of these essays.

**Jahresbericht - 1901**

Wilhelm Busch is one of the few authors to address the social changes and their presumed effect on the individual. In his essay, he laments the artificiality of the patriotism the state was promoting. He argues that many of the educated population lose their sense of belonging and intellectual orientation by leaving the area of their upbringing and relocating to cities. He claims such uprooting and the materialistic inclination of the time undermined the desire to search for ideals that were able to fulfill their lives, as is evident by the decreasing interests in arts and poetry. He believes that this trend could be reversed if schools instilled in students a love and connectedness to the town of their upbringing. Unusual for his time, when fear of the increasing power of

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163 Ibid., 2-38.
the lower classes was common, he writes that artisans and workers were an integral part of the community and should not be looked down upon.\textsuperscript{164}

Busch recognizes, more so than the other authors, the ideological reorientation Germany’s well-educated professionals were undergoing. He contends that utilitarianism, which he defines as “Americanism,” will be replacing the Bildungsbürger’s pursuit of ideals, for which he blames the negative influence of large cities. He fails to recognize that Germany’s fundamentally changing social environment was responsible for altering the traditional value system. Instead, he hopes to prevent a further deterioration of their cultural ideology by strengthening the connection of youths to their hometowns.

Many of these \textit{Jahresberichte} reflect Gymnasium educators’ fear of an impending invalidation of their value system, thus illustrating the clash of two paradigms. However, their belief in the superiority of the humanistic education, and the values it imparted was too deeply ingrained in their \textit{Weltbild} for many to even consider adjusting their educational concept to make it more compatible with contemporary social demands. Educators, by continuing to stress the importance of being totally committed to Bildung in spite of the improbability of such pursuit, misguided the youth, as the following chapter will show.

\textbf{Jahresberichte - 1903}

Pedagogues, at the turn of the century, started to recognize their responsibility to assist students in developing their individual abilities. The Education Ministry supported this trend by encouraging teachers to show more respect for pupils’ specific needs and

aptitudes. In his article, Paul Falk points out that the size of school classes regrettably limited the teachers’ ability to concentrate on each individual student. As a reflection of the changing social environment he, and other authors, increasingly lamented the difficulty of cultivating students as individuals in a mass oriented industrial society. They feared the materialistic trend would diminish the Bildungsbürgertum’s desire for self-cultivation fundamental to Christian and humanistic ethics, and would eventually cause both ideologies to be abandoned. What these authors define as a materialistic trend was rather a changeover from a contemplative to a more dynamic social structure. This transition would not cause many of its aspects their traditional value system to be transformed, as I will show on the last chapter.

In the ensuing years, teachers’ contribution to the Jahresberichte declined steadily, in spite of being encouraged by the Education Ministry to resume writing scholarly essays. The lessening inclination of educators to present learned treatises parallels the Bürgertum’s declining pursuit of Bildung in response to a more demanding and less contemplative social environment. My investigations reported in the following chapters confirm this trend.

In 1906, the historian Ludwig Gurlitt argued that in the past, Gymnasia were highly regulated, educational methods were uniform and very regimented, leaving little room for initiatives by the individual educator. Now, he states, teachers were able to implement their own pedagogical strategy, and by exposing students more to ancient

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literature and less to Greek and Latin, the spirit of humanist ideology was reinvigorated. He deplores that not withstanding recent concerns for the individual, pupils’ high workload left them little time for developing their personalities. *Gymnasia*, regardless of the new pedagogical trend, continued to rear duty-minded, obedient and subservient citizens, he contends. Students, because of such obsequiousness, ape, but rarely question, the opinion of teachers, Gurlitt argues.\(^\text{166}\)

The new pedagogy and teaching guidelines by the Education Ministry could only gradually change the established pedagogy of *Gymnasium* educators. They traditionally occupied a highly respected and a widely omnipotent and unassailable position, whose authoritarian status was deeply ingrained in German culture. A less regimented education advocated by the government, with teachers playing a more approachable role, is unlikely to have found willing acceptance particularly among the old guard. And for students to be less subservient towards their teachers would most likely have been to pupils’ detriment. A few dared to rebel against such authoritarian rearing practices in their school papers, as will be shown later, but for fear of repercussions many of these student authors did not reveal their identity.

The new educational policies and pedagogical trends reflect the shift toward a more democratic social structure in which the rights of the individual were starting to become more recognized. However, the traditional educational concept of turning out obedient and subservient citizens was too deeply engrained for this new approach to teaching to have more than a gradual impact on secondary education. While the changing

\(^{166}\) Gurlitt, *Der Deutsche und seine Schule*, 145-7, 167.
social environment forced the *Bildungsbürgertum* to limit their traditional pursuit of *Bildung*, the failure for educators to adjust their dealings with students was less consequential and allowed the educational concept to respond more slowly.

Considering that humanism taught self-cultivation and inner freedom, subservience seems a contradiction, but Germany’s humanist ideology strongly distinguished between public and private spheres. As pointed out above, in the public sphere liberty was seen as accepting unconditionally the social mores that consisted of being dutiful, obedient and subservient to the authorities and to blend seamlessly into society. Individualism and the manifestation of the humanist ideals such as *Bildung* and self-orientation were intended for the private sphere of the *Bildungsbürger*.

**Jahresbericht - 1904**

Adolf Harnack in his essay continues to defend the teachings of the *Gymnasium* to promote education for the elite, arguing its primary goal was to teach students humanity and advance their individual development, and the instruction in mathematics and science ranked second. He recommends that those who are aiming to assume leading positions in government, the church or otherwise within the German society should attend the *Gymnasium*. The premise was that humanistic values, not the materialistic ones the *Realschulen* taught, should guide Germany’s leaders. The frequent pretentious attitude of *Gymnasium* students reflected this elitist concept. They were convinced their humanistic education had imbued them with superior cultured knowledge unmatched by

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Realschulen, whose graduates they treated with a degree of contempt.\textsuperscript{168} Their disdain was often based on spurious accomplishments from today’s perspective, such as being able to recite passages out of Homer’s Iliad in ancient Greek. But besides such haughty attitudes this behavior shows the Bildungsbürgertum’s concern for the wellbeing of the nation if its leader lacked the cultural and ethical values the Gymnasium taught. It reflected Plato’s teaching that only education prevented man from exercising the right of the stronger.\textsuperscript{169} Their apprehension proved to be only too justified when the NSADAP, with their different paradigm, came to power. Teachers perceived the Kaiserrreich not as an authoritarian system, but as a benevolent monarchy and a Rechtsstaat (constitutional state) that cared for the wellbeing of its citizens. The educational system increasingly reinforced this concept by emphasizing the benefits the House of Hohenzollern had for centuries provided for its subjects.

\textbf{Jahresberichte - 1906}

Gustav Roerthe writes: individualism taught by Gymnasia is the best weapon against the herd instinct, which socialism is creating; he consequently strongly opposes the emancipation of Realschulen. Humanistic education, he argues, has proven its value because Germany’s intellectual accomplishments were built on the enormous scientific and cultural achievements of ancient Greece. Antiquity’s outstanding cultural inheritance, he contends, is indispensable as a foundation for all subsequent cultures and only fools

\textsuperscript{168} Gurlitt. \textit{Der Deutsche und seine Schule}, 65-7
\textsuperscript{169} Livingstone, \textit{Greek Ideals and Modern Life}, 53-97.
think they can do without it.\textsuperscript{170} His article shows the continuing deep and rigid commitment of many \textit{Gymnasium} educators to the humanistic education, but also clearly demonstrates a fear of the emerging working class. In contrast, Ludwig Gurlitt in his book contends that the attempt to amalgamate ancient Greek and German spirit was a utopian idea that hindered Germany’s development as a nation. He argues that trying to initiate cultural achievements comparable to those of ancient Greece through humanistic education is a misconceived concept. He contends that ancient Rome’s attempt to imitate Greece’s culture through a more demanding education failed. He writes that it was not Hellenes’ educational system that was responsible for the burst of unparalleled social, scientific and artistic accomplishments, but rather it was the inherent mindset and cultural ideology of its people.\textsuperscript{171} His argument illustrates that Germany’s increasing self-confidence and nationalism caused humanistic education to move away from using antiquity as an ideological benchmark. Instead, it was increasingly a blend of Protestant ethics, \textit{Bildung} and selected ideological concepts of antiquity, such as the appreciation of beauty, that served as an educational guide. Gurlitt fails to give full credit to these developments in Germany.

The changes in the educational system intensified the polarization between the defenders of the traditional humanistic education, and the less orthodox \textit{Gymnasium} teachers, who recognized the need to adjust to Germany’s changing social, political and economical environment. Gurlitt contends that eventually even the most strident

\textsuperscript{170} Gustav Roethe. \textit{Humanistische und nationale Bildung} Vortrag gehalten an der Vereinigung der Freunde des humanistischen Gymnasiums in Berlin und der Provinz Brandenburg am 6. Dezember 1905 (Berlin: Weidammansche Buchhandlung, 1906 )

\textsuperscript{171} Gurlitt, \textit{Der Deutsche und seine Schule}, 116.
guardians of the “true ideals” of educating youth recognized that the “medieval-monasterial” humanistic education did not meet the day’s requirements. He claims ideals need to be anchored mainly in the present and the goals of a nation, and what ancient cultures can contribute in this regard is limited. For many of the younger Gymnasium teachers, he states, the recent educational changes the School Reform implemented did not go far enough.\textsuperscript{172} The liberal approach to humanistic education, which he presents in his book of 1906, gained much attention as evident by its two editions. The actual adjustment of Gymnasium education was, however, more gradual than Gurlitt proposes as the less strident essays in the Jahresberichte show. But his monograph and these essays illustrate the humanistic educational concept was responding to Germany’s changing needs and to the reorientation of its cultural ideology, albeit slowly.

\textbf{Jahresbericht - 1907}

Eduart Meyer’s essay provides further evidence of Germany’s nationalistic trend. He encourages sacrifice for the fatherland, and argues that history teaches how great men relinquished their personal interest to serve the state. In the continuing effort by these teachers to defend humanistic education, he contends that individualism is justified if it does not interfere with serving society and obeying its mores.\textsuperscript{173} As previously pointed out, subjugating individual desires to the demands of society and relegating individualism to the private sphere was not only part of the Gymnasium’s educational concept, but also an integral part of Prussian culture.

\textsuperscript{172} Gurlitt, \textit{Der Deutsche und seine Schule}, 84-91.

\textsuperscript{173} Eduart Meyer. \textit{Humanistische und geschichtliche Bildung} Vortrag gehalten an der Vereinigung der Freunde des humanistischen Gymnasiums in Berlin und der Provinz Brandenburg am 27. November 1906 (Berlin: Weidamannsche Buchhandlung, 1907), 12-43.
Jahresbericht - 1908

Alois Riehl assigns the role of forming student’s cognitive ability to teaching mathematics and science, and not to becoming fluent in ancient languages. He argues that science and mathematics discipline the intellect by teaching a systematic approach to solving problems, which was balanced by educating students to appreciate beauty by exposing them to arts. He contends that only the combined knowledge of the ancient culture and modern science can create a well-rounded Weltbild. He emphasizes that inspiring students’ desire for Bildung and to develop their inner self, remains Gymnasia’s primary goal.\textsuperscript{174} Riehl too shows a certain willingness to adjust the curriculum, but not its fundamental concept: self-orientation in spite of a social environment that limits such dedication. He also fails to redefine the concept of Bildung to assure that it is attuned to professional requirements pupils will have to meet later in life. The Gymnasium continues to teach students that only by perusing Bildung and inner perfection can they lead a fulfilling life, which when they are confronted by reality, causes dissonance, as I will show in the next chapter.

Hans-Jürgen Apel and Stefan Bittner, in their book \textit{Humanistische Schulbildung} (Humanistic Education) \textit{1890-1945}, perceive the more science oriented Gymnasium curriculum as a concession to the opponents of the humanistic education, an argument that appears to be only partially true.\textsuperscript{175} Already Athenians recognized the educational


\textsuperscript{175} Apel, \textit{Humanistische Schulbildung 1890-1945},149.
benefits of mathematics and science; the now greater emphasis on these subjects was therefore not in conflict with the humanistic tradition. The reluctance of some Gymnasium teacher to forego the preeminence of the ancient languages can be largely attributed to their inflexibility. The more recent of these essays appear less obsessed with the benefits of ancient languages for developing students’ cognition, and after the school conference of 1900, educators rarely heralded such claims. \(^{176}\) The tradition of the humanist ideology did not prevent Gymnasium teachers from accepting new paradigms, as some of their essays illustrate. But, humanists were unwilling to sacrifice the fundamentals of their ideology, which was to instill in students the ideals and morals inspired by Protestantism and antiquity, and to animate pupils to pursue non-utilitarian interests throughout their lives. This cannot be interpreted as a merely stubborn attempt by humanists not to relinquish an antiquated educational goal; instead they were defending Germany’s cultural ideology fundamental to the Bildungsbürgertum’s Weltbild.

**Jahresbericht - 1910**

Paul Cauer and Otto Immisch were, in their time, well-known proponents of the humanistic education. Greek sophists, they state, had recognized that man establishes his values by what he has been taught.\(^ {177}\) They argue to provide students with a broad perspective it is therefore important not only to acquaint them with science and art, but

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\(^{176}\) Gurlitt, *Der Deutsche und seine Schule*, 84-91.

history as well. Here again it is evident that these authors no longer perceive Hellenism as the ultimate human evolution, but rather as a teaching tool to illustrate the historic ups and downs of a nation’s cultural and political development and to create a cosmopolitan perspective. In general, educators of the Imperial period only gradually followed Theodor Mommsen’s (1817-1903) more causality-based interpretation of history presented in his widely acclaimed *Römische Geschichte* (History of Rome). Instead many continued to depict ancient democracies as inherently unsustainable political systems in a biased attempt to support the monarchy and without paying tribute to specific historical circumstances.

In the last years before World War I, educators such as F. Friedensburg, were increasingly confronted with the gradually declining influence of the *Bildungbürgertum* and the growing power of the lower classes. In his essay, he laments the declining desire to excel above the masses through individual betterment and the abiding willingness to sacrifice personal ambitions for the common good. He claims that the erosion of the humanist education caused the sense of duty to dwindle along with discipline and the respect for institutions and authorities. He believes the change from an elitist to an egalitarian social structure contributed to the deterioration of traditional values and helped the socialist movement to prosper.

The *Bildungbürgertum* had difficulty accepting the changing social paradigm, more so than any other social group, because Germany’s cultural ideology was part of

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their identity. Friedensburg expresses this in his essay when he argues knowledge is not acquired anymore to ennable one’s character, but merely as a tool to meet utilitarian needs and to gain riches. The Bildungsbürgertum believed the pursuit of humanist ideals helped mankind and especially Germany’s elite to progress. They were concerned that instead of continuing this process, the emergence of a utilitarian and materialistic worldview would cause these social advancements to regress. They also feared the decline of the humanistic education would have a negative impact on the wellbeing of the German nation and impede its political and economical advancement. E. Grünwald, in his essay, expresses similar apprehensions by arguing that German people were rightly perceived as idealistic, but care should be taken that they not become victims of Americanism. All these statements demonstrate these educators’ quandary, and their difficulty adjusting to Germany’s changing social paradigm. It should be kept in mind that Gymnasium teachers’ were the high priests of the Bildungsbürgertum’s ideology. They identified more than any other member of this social group with these cultural values, and a declining adherence to this ideology would affect them most. For this reason, these essays present a sensitive indicator to the changing constellation of the Bildungsbürgertum.

180 E. Grünwald. Das humanistische Gymnasium und die Anforderung der Gegenwart Veröffentlichung der Vereinigung der Freunde des humanistischen Gymnasiums in Berlin und Brandenburg, Heft 2. Im Auftrag des Vorstandes herausgegeben von Prof. Dr. Eugen Grünwald (Berlin: Weidemannsche Buchhandlung, 1910), 96-100.
Jahresbericht - 1913

Richard Haeusler, in line with the intensifying nationalistic trend, proposes Gymnasia should teach more national history to remedy the neglect of Germany’s civic education. Assigning more importance to Germany’s past, he contends, does not mean neglecting to teach students how deeply rooted their national culture was in antiquity. For example, he states, ancient Greece teaches the concept of citizenship, while Rome establishes the notion of a state as a well organized, disciplined social unit, qualities that were responsible for the might and longevity of its empire. He too advocates the monarchy by claiming Rome only reached its zenith under the rule of its emperors after democracy failed. He contends that similar to Rome, Germany has a strong constitutional monarchy with a well-structured society in which citizen share in the responsibility for the wellbeing of the nation.\footnote{Richard Haeusler. \textit{Geschichte und Bürgerkunde, Beobachtungen und Bemerkungen} Jahresbericht des Gymnasiums zu Berlin-Friedenau, Ostern 1913, Wissenschaftliche Beilage. (Berlin-Friedenau: Druck von Hermann Brücker, 1913), 4-15.}

The author sacrifices objectivity to patriotism by praising Germany’s constitution. He fails to outline its limitation and peoples’ inadequate ability to influence government decisions. In general, Haeusler’s interpretation of history and humanism is more sober. He continues to promote the virtues and accomplishment of ancient Greece and Rome as exemplary teaching tools, but considers them less of a guide to form student character and ethical values. Instead, by familiarizing pupils with the different stages of these ancient societies’ development, he tutors them to be open-minded toward other cultures.
The diaries of the *Bürgertum* discussed in the last chapter reflect the success of this pedagogy.

Paul Lorentz, in his essay, perceives the adoption of Hellenistic ideals in the early nineteenth century as a life-affirming rebirth of Christianity that replaced its misanthropic outlook of the previous period. He claims these normative ideals of antiquity were gradually abandoned as Germany developed its own national culture, and also when social anthropologists provided a more realistic picture of the ancient world. He contends that in this day the Hellenistic dogma is not part of the humanist ideology anymore. Instead, ancient history serves now solely to explain the cultural development of western societies. He argues the humanist ideology, however, continues to guide the educational norm of the *Gymnasium* by instilling in students a humanistic spirit, it forms their character, teaches independent thinking and establishes their *Weltbild* through a well-rounded education. Lorentz, like previous authors, argues an essential and fundamental part in forming student character is to manifest their understanding of the interrelationship between freedom and the laws governing society.¹⁸²

Freedom within the confines of the order defined by society, as described by the philosophy of Kant, is a recurring theme in these essays, and underlines its pedagogical significance. Lorentz is one of the more enlightened educators reviewed. He stresses the importance of teaching students social behavior, but without emphasizing discipline and obedience as most authors of these essays did. His and other essays reflect a more self-confident nation by increasingly defining Germany’s cultural and national identity. As

part of this development, he too defines the role of ancient Greece and Rome as an illustration of the historical developments of nations. As part of a general trend, the author’s interpretation of antiquity’s social environment was more rational and less romantic. Recent anthropological findings contributed to this more restrained view of these ancient cultures, but they did not prevent the Bürgertum from continuing to adhere to the Hellenistic ideology as a guide.

Gustav Wyneken is the founder and principal of the Wickersdorf School; he also promoted the emancipation of youth and the Jugendkultur (youth culture) movement. As part of this effort he encouraged and supported the Wandervogel movement and the publication of the school paper Der Anfang, both of which are topics of the following chapter. In his monograph Wyneken pursues, more so than the other authors, a modernized educational concept geared to furthering students’ individual abilities. For him, the foremost goal of secondary education was the perpetuation of Germany’s cultural ideology, instilling in students the desire for pursuing intellectual interests, and teaching them to appreciate beauty and art. He argues that intellectual interests and the passion for beauty and arts should never succumb to the necessity of earning a living, but he recognizes that only a selected few would belong to such a “nobility of mankind.”

He contends that enlightenment had caused religion to lose its metaphysical character and autonomy, and now served only as a moral guide for the urban population in particular. He sees the existing concept of a uniting deity being replaced by Darwinian universal causality and scientific concepts that would bond the world’s inhabitants. He argues that

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education in religion no longer introduces students to a common religious belief shared by the majority of the population as in the past. The perpetuation of religiosity should thus be left to each family.\footnote{Ibid., 164-5.} His opinion about the teaching of religion appears to reflect an atheistic stance. The assessment that in Germany religion serves purely as a moral guide, but has otherwise lost its function, is too general and is not confirmed by the role religiosity continues to play as discussed above. Education in religion also continues to occupy a strong position in the Gymnasium curriculum, as shown above.

Wyneken, by stating that only the “nobility of mankind” will strive for knowledge and be passionate about arts and beauty recognizes more clearly than the previous authors that the traditional cultural values as a unifying ideology of the Bildungsbürgertum had outlived themselves. He was one of the rare educators to publically support youths in their desire to be more assertive which was very controversial, as I will show. His efforts foreshadowed developments, which the war followed by political turmoil, would accelerate.

\textit{Jahresbericht - 1914}

Ernst Lemke writes that individualism has become revitalized after it was suffocated in the nineteenth century. It now is associated with social responsibility, and with what each person can do for the greater good of society. Socialist agitation, he argues, is threatening individualism and has a negative influence on Germany as a nation, in particular on the religion and morals of the middle class. For Lemke, only a selectively educated elite group with superior intelligence is capable of individualism; he believes
socialism reduces the standards of a nation through its leveling, egalitarian effect. For this reason he considers an authoritarian system led by an elite group superior to democracy.\textsuperscript{185} The Social Democrats’ power had grown continuously during the last decades of the nineteenth century, and by 1914, they were the strongest party in the Reichstag, holding about one third of the seats.\textsuperscript{186} Lemke’s essay of 1914 reflects the unease of the Bildungsbürger as the influence of the socialists grew and the social structure was changing. This author, together with previously cited humanists, feared a more egalitarian society would compromise Germany’s cultural ideology and reduce the nation’s intellectual standard. The elitist attitude of these educators prevented them from adjusting the teaching of cultural values to permit their pursuit in spite of the demands of an industrial economy. Essays written by Gymnasium students for their school paper, discussed in the next chapter, illustrate this inflexibility of their teachers.

**Jahresbericht - 1915**

Albert von Berzeviczy claims that World War I erupted because of excessive national conceit from which hatred for other nations sprang. He believes the brutality of the war had shaken humanists’ belief in mankind’s progress. Once the fighting stopped, he wanted youths of the hostile nations to be reminded of their common cultural heritage: Christianity and humanism founded in antiquity. This shared legacy, he hopes, will serve as a basis for reconciliation and help to bridge the division between these nations. Germany’s industrialization caused the idealization of individualism to decline, but he

\textsuperscript{185} Ernst Lemke. *Hauptrichtung im deutschen Geistesleben der letzten Jahrzehnte* Wissenschaftlicher Beitrag zum Jahresbericht des königlichen Gymnasiums in Dramburg. (Dramburg: W. Schade & Co. 1914), 9-27

\textsuperscript{186} Holger Herwig. *Hammer or Anvil.* (Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1994), 164.
insists, it remains the purpose of humanistic education to teach students a love for humanity and social values, thus enabling them to reach their full potential. Far from joining the national anticipation of Germany’s glory, for Berzeviczy, the war was destroying part of humanists’ fundamental beliefs and educational goal - the progression of mankind. Instead of seeing the war as Germany’s assertion among the European nations, as many did, for him, it is a fight among related nations with a common culture and religion. It is his hope that this commonality would assist Europe to reconcile after the war. Germany’s Bildungsbürgertum might have been more enamored with the ancient Greek and Roman heritage than the French and English, but all three nations believed in humanistic values. The warring nations’ strong nationalism, in spite of these common cultural standards, caused some authors to question the benefits of a cosmopolitan humanistic education.

Not all authors portrayed such a conciliatory attitude toward the enemy while the fighting lasted. Instead, others try to create enthusiasm for the war and to vilify England and France in often extremely nationalistic essays. Many argue that the war will strengthen and unite Germany, as Athens and Rome were strengthened by their campaigns. The atrocities of this conflict, once they became better known, reenergized for some the symbiotic relation between Christianity and humanist ideology, while for others it underpins the outmodedness of both of these beliefs.

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In 1918 as the war was dragging on and victory was eluding Germany, Bastian Schmid portrays doubts about whether Gymnasia are still meeting the educational needs of a modern society. He states that the war has proven the necessity of teaching science and mathematics in order for the German nation to survive. He complains that many Gymnasium teachers still fail to recognize the importance of these subjects, even though they are not in conflict with the humanistic ideology. Already in antiquity, he argues, science and math were taught to expand students’ Weltbild and advance their cognitive ability. He contends that the Gymnasium’s education in science and math needs to be improved even though the analytical capabilities of its students has proven in the past to be superior compared to those of Realschüler (Realschule students). In the last year of the war, the essays by Schmid and other Gymnasium teachers reflect their shaken confidence in the higher quality of Germany’s Gymnasium education in relation to secondary schooling of other nations. They still believe in the fundamental advantage of the neo-humanistic education, but because Germany had lost the war they became uncertain of whether the educational concept of the Gymnasium might not have contributed to the nations defeat and whether it was still meeting the demands of the contemporary society.

Summary

*Gymnasium* teachers throughout these essays emphasize the elite status of their students, who, they argued, having proven to be more capable than *Realschule* graduates, should occupy the nations leading positions. Educators particularly in the early years voice their concern that if *Realschulen* should be placed on a par with *Gymnasia* Germany’s elite would be prevented from attaining the highest educational level, and their character and values would no longer be formed by Hellenic culture and Luther’s teachings.

With increasing nationalism in latter years of the nineteenth century the strong reliance of the *Gymnasia’s* educational concept on antiquity is declining; instead more emphasis is placed on teaching German history. The cultures of ancient Greece and Rome are now considered mere stepping-stones for Germany’s own cultural development. The various political phases and social upheavals of these ancient civilizations also serve to teach students a cosmopolitan *Weltbild*, which remains an important part of the educational concept, even as nationalism is on the rise. With the declining importance of antiquity, the perception that the Greek and Latin languages are best suited to training students’ intellect gradually gives way to math and science being recognized as equally effective.

In spite of the Hellenic culture’s declining centrality in the *Gymnasium* education, its ancient ideals retained their importance as a guide for forming students’ ethics and values, as well as passion for the arts, the pursuit of intellectual interests and desire for *Bildung*. Antiquity also continues to be considered an indispensable building block for
future civilizations. Encouraging students pursue Bildung throughout their lives, the personal advancement outside their professions, remains, implicit or explicit, the overriding message of these essays, even when World War I causes to question mankind’s progression. Philologists’ hope, at the height of World War I, that the warring nations’ common cultural heritage, based on Christianity and values of antiquity, would eventually serve to reconcile their differences, illustrates the continuing prevalence of Athenian ideals.

A few authors in the prewar decade question the validity of these ancient paradigms, arguing the ideals of a nation need to be anchored in the present. But in general these essays express concern that a utilitarian orientation, labeled as Americanism, will replace the ideals of the humanistic education. Various treatises, before and after the turn of the century, stress that individual freedom can only be attained within the confinement of social norms and laws. Addressing this topic repeatedly illustrated the significance education assigns to teach students to conform.

In the final years of the monarchy, the history of Greece and Rome is increasingly used to illustrate democracy as an unviable form of government. It would eventually lead, authors argue, to the decline of the nation’s standards, its moral values and, similar to socialism, the rule of the mob. None of the essays advocate a democracy. Instead, an author in 1913 argues that the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome reached their zenith only under an emperor after their democracies failed. He further states the constitutional monarchy of the Kaiserreich is comparable to Rome’s; he also emphasizes, as did other authors, the importance of citizens’ willingness to serve their nation. In
general these authors’ portray an elitist stance and disdain for an egalitarian society. However, one essay, written in 1901, indicates the existence of a democratic tendency by pointing out that artisans and workers are part of the community and should not looked down upon.

The ethical values of the Lutheran religion and ancient Greece are perceived throughout these reports as congruent and considered essential in forming students’ character. Early essays encourage students to find comfort in religion, while in later years authors analyze the influence of earlier cultures and philosophies on the historical development of Christianity, but neglect its spiritual aspects.

**Conclusion**

Many aspects of Hellenic and Roman spirit and philosophy influenced Protestantism and Germany’s cultural ideology, making it difficult to define the uniquely German contribution. Bildung, because of its religious association during the Middle-Ages, stands out in this regard. Bildung does not just mean being well-versed in the cultural diversity of Germany and other civilizations; it also includes the perpetual expansion of such knowledge and a semi-spiritual component of reaching out to appreciate beauty and emotions, such as those provided by music and the arts. This concept together with Lutheranism had for centuries been fundamental to the cultural ideology of Germany’s aristocracy and Bildungsbürgertum, who had been responsible for its perpetuation. This blend of cultural norms and religion represented for Germany’s elite a large part of their identity. They believed they had advanced their cultural ideology beyond Hellenistic and Roman ideals, which they saw as evidence of mankind’s ability to
progress. Humboldt’s introduction of the neo-humanistic education, as part of his school reform at the beginning of the nineteenth century, reflected this cultural tradition. It made the Gymnasium the main promulgator of Germany’s cultural ideology and their teachers its high priests.

During the nineteenth century, Germany transformed from a rural to an urban society and its economy became increasingly industry based. These socio-economic changes increased the demand for the more utilitarian secondary schooling offered by Realschulen whose graduates soon outnumbered those of the Gymnasium. The writings reviewed portray Gymnasium teachers’ determined adherence to neo-humanism and the difficulties they experienced in dealing with the changing social environment. The controversy of whether pupils’ cognitive ability would benefit more by being taught math instead of ancient languages ranked high in this regard. This dispute did not fully subside until the importance of technology in modern warfare underpinned the significance of teaching math and science.

These essays also illustrate the changing role of antiquity as a teaching tool, whose cultural values became less of a guide, but instead were seen as a stepping-stone for attaining more advanced cultural achievements. Germany, by demonstrating itself for the first time in recent history to be as powerful as its neighbors, became more nationalistic and assertive, which these writings reflect, as did the curriculum of the Gymnasium. Not only was the teaching of national history being emphasized, but also more importantly, these authors now stressed that Germany’s culture was not an imitation of antiquity, but had always been rooted in Lutheranism and its own concept of Bildung.
In the late years of the Second Reich, some teachers even argued Germany’s veneration of ancient cultures was misconceived and had handicapped its own development, because, they claimed, it was not possible to graft the spirit of one nation onto the culture of another. The depreciating currency of antiquity and a more realistic interpretation of its history had, however, little influence on the perception of the Hellenistic and Roman ideals. These often-spurious conjectures lost their influence on the humanistic education only very gradually.

_Bildung_, i.e., having interests beyond utilitarian needs, remained fundamental to Germany’s cultural ideology, which was why almost every one of these essays encouraged students, directly or indirectly, in its pursuit. Religion for most German Protestants had become the individual’s relationship to God, to the detriment of traditional Church rituals. These authors, who were predominantly Protestant, thus did not admonish students to attend Sunday service; instead they encouraged them to find comfort and strength through their God. Because such religious belief did not rely on dogmas, it allowed educators at the turn of the century to interpret the Bible rationally and explore its philosophical origin without having to fear of offending students.

The ancient Greeks saw conscience formation as the primary purpose of education. Imperial Germany increasingly recognized the potential of its close cousin “social engineering” as an educational tool. This pedagogical concept accounts for the persistently reoccurring theme that individual freedom can only be found through the subordination to rules of society and by identifying with its demands, mores and values.

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In addition, educators emphasized the need to serve society by placing its greater good before one's own desires. Frederick the Great, by portraying himself as the first servant of the state, had a formative influence on these values, becoming part of Germany's cultural ideology, as did Emanuel Kant, for whom such subordination was anchored in the Christian belief. Educators, in support of these teachings, highlighted the sacrifices made by Athenian and Roman leaders. In an attempt to inspire patriotism at the fin de siècle, history lessons became more concerned with Germany’s past than with antiquity. These efforts reached their peak during the war years when educators accentuated the Fatherland’s historic victories under the valiant leadership of its generals. In spite of growing nationalistic tendencies, which these essays express, teaching a cosmopolitan worldview remains fundamental to Gymnasium education, a dualism apparent in the diaries as well.

Humboldt’s educational reform was initially geared toward furthering the talents of the individual student, while Imperial Germany’s increasingly military culture, in contrast, valued and taught uniformity. Many teachers admired the military, which they expressed by becoming officers in the reserve. Their teaching methods mirrored this esteem for soldiering; instead of recognizing pupils as individuals, they treated them as part of an undifferentiated, subordinate group. At the school conference of 1890, teachers were asked to recognize and support the specific aptitude of each student in place of the military cult of uniformity pedagogues had been advocating. The Ministry of Education in the following years issued edicts encouraging educators to adjust their teaching accordingly. Because this novel approach to teaching assailed the traditionally
unquestionable authoritarian position of educators, pupils’ emergence from anonymity was only very gradual.

Before the outbreak of hostilities, many Europeans believed a war would remedy what they perceived to be spreading effeminacy that was undermining their nation. None of these authors expressed such an opinion; instead they had difficulty understanding why nations that were united by a common culture waged war against each other. These teachers expressed their cosmopolitan worldview by promoting the commonality of these nations as the basis for reconciliation once the hostilities had ceased.

Being unable to promulgate humanist ideology because of a changing social environment is a recurring theme of these writings, but these essays also illustrate efforts to adapt the Gymnasium education and cultural concept to these changes. Cognitive training shifted from teaching ancient languages to teaching math and science, and history lessons concentrated more on Germany’s past than on antiquity. Neo-humanistic education that had become stagnant and rigid, had lost sight of some of its fundamental aspects and had become partially reoriented by the need to adjust to the socio-economic changes. Instead of concentrating on ancient languages, Gymnasia now focused more on the interpretation of ancient literature and its philosophy. Instructing teachers by ministerial decree to recognize student’s individual aptitudes was a remarkable development in a militaristic culture that valued behavioral uniformity.

With a growing percentage of the population attending Realschulen for their secondary education Gymnasium teachers recognized their waning ability to perpetuate the cultural ideology as a Weltanschauung among Germany’s intellectual elite. However,
this did not deter their effort to inspire students to pursue interests beyond utilitarian needs. Their success will be discussed in the following chapters.
CHAPTER III

GYMNASIUM STUDENTS IN IMPERIAL GERMANY

Introduction

After the school reform, in 1900, pedagogues slowly started to view students more as individuals than they had in the past, and gradually changed their approach to teaching. The Ministry of Education supported their effort and encouraged educators to be less rigid in their teaching methods. It urged them to rely less on the prescribed course material, and instead to apply their pedagogical skills to cater to the needs of the individual student. Military drill as way of instructing, particularly of primary school pupils, was also deemphasized. This new pedagogic approach, but perhaps even more so the changing social environment, had a liberating affect on Gymnasium students. Their changing attitude was most visible in the Wandervogel movement, but also in their daring publication of school papers. Much has been written about the Wandervogel movement, which I will briefly review in the initial part of this chapter to assist in a better understanding of the changing attitude of students, and also of their parents.

In the previous chapter, I explored the reshaping of teachers’ viewpoints about neo-humanistic education, and established that Gymnasia continued teaching students to dedicate their lives to the pursuit of individual betterment and Bildung. This ideological indoctrination of students had the potential of creating a generational conflict because

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192 Gurlitt. Der Deutsche und seine Schule, 147.
professional demands made it difficult for parents to adhere to these standards. In this chapter I will explore whether humanistic teachings created a discord between children and their parents, by reviewing articles pupils wrote for the school papers after 1900. I will also focus on the opinion students expressed on a variety of other topics, such as their acceptance of social conventions. These articles, published in the school paper, Der Anfang, (“The Beginning”) as noted above, issued by a number of German Gymnasium, will be the primary sources of this research. Copies of the original school papers are lost, but compilations of its articles were published in a book archived by DIPF, which was previously not subject to an investigation.¹⁹³

**The Wandervogel Movement**

At the turn of the century youth organizations became very popular in Germany and Wandervogel was one of them, but with fewer members than most of the others. In general, interest groups, such as the Socialist Party (SPD), founded these organizations to provide for young people the opportunities to take part in sports, hiking and general camaraderie. The different chapters of Wandervogel movement were, however, founded by Gymnasium students themselves. They had the same basic purpose, but were also united by ideals and in their opposition to certain traditional behavior patterns.

The symbol of the Wandervogel movement was the Greif, a romanticized mystical bird, which rises and soars weightlessly above the “Niederen,” the low elements of life. It was adopted from sketch of the Greif in the songbook of the Wandervogel the

¹⁹³ Barbizon. Der Anfang.
"Der Zupfeigenhansl". The Greif is already mentioned in the Egyptian mythology around 4000 B.C., and for early Christians it was a metaphor for Jesus Christ (Figure 1).

Figure 1. The Greif.

In the following, I will outline the Wandervogel activities, the ideals they committed to and the interpretation of this movement by various authors.

The new educational concept the Ministry’s of Education proposed was not meant to deter Gymnasium teachers from maintaining neo-humanism at the center of their educational mission. The Bildungsbürgertum’s tendency to rigidly adhere to most of these established norms created social conflicts, as I will show, and the lack of an open discussion that would have been possible in a more liberal environment prevented their resolution.194 The Bürgertum’s perpetual search for Bildung, as their paradigm stipulated, was however hampered by the demands of the socio-economic environment. For the Bildungsbürgertum youth these social changes confronted them with a number of conflicts as well. The growing influence of the working class exposed them to a less rigid social structure, while their parents’ authoritarian rearing practices continued to perpetuate traditional values. Parents particularly stressed, from an early age,

194 Doerry. Übergangsmenschen, 19.
unconditional obedience to teachers, authorities and the law. For parents and teachers of
the bourgeois to discipline children for not being absolutely obedient was an expected
and common practice.\textsuperscript{195} This led to authoritarian educators who were little motivated to
inspire their servile pupils or teach them critical, independent thinking.\textsuperscript{196} This combined
authority of parents and teachers prevented adolescents from deviating from established
rigid social standards. As new paradigms replaced these traditional norms at the turn of
the century, many upper class youths were torn by this dichotomy. Their ambivalence
expressed itself in the \textit{Wandervogel} movement.

Around 1904 pupils of the Steglitz \textit{Gymnasium} in Berlin founded and pioneered
this autonomous youth organization, and it quickly spread to other German and Austrian
cities.\textsuperscript{197} Fourteen to twenty-year-old \textit{Gymnasium} students were mostly responsible for
initiating and leading the individual \textit{Wandervogel} chapters. The law required any youth
organization to register with the police and to have at least one adult member, who in this
case, were frequently notable academics or politicians.\textsuperscript{198} These elders directed and
sponsored a \textit{Wandervogel} chapter, others ensured they would not be infected by socialist
ideology and some tried to direct their members toward traditional cultural and social
values.\textsuperscript{199} For the most part, however, the function of adult members was limited to an
advisory role.\textsuperscript{200}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[195] Gillis. \textit{Youth and History}, 120.
\item[197] Ibid.,35.
\item[198] Koebner, \textit{Mit uns zieht die neue Zeit}, 10, 35.
\item[200] Roseman, \textit{Generations in Conflict},94.
\end{footnotes}
The *Wandervogel* associations represented only a small fraction of Germany’s organized youth, but because of their social composition and ideals they were unique. The approximately 50,000 members of the *Wandervogel* movement were mainly comprised of *Gymnasium* pupils from *Bildungsbürgertum* families. Fifty percent of their fathers had a university degree and worked for the government, others were self-employed, businessmen, artisans and mid-level civil servants. Even though this movement opposed class barriers, they did not include members with either a proletarian or an aristocratic background.\(^{201}\)

In the prewar period, a large section of the nation’s youth belonged to a variety of organizations which pursued an array of ideological goals. These organizations included the Catholic Youth Association with 280,000 members in 1913, and the *Jungdeutschlandsbund* a militaristic and government-sponsored group with 750,000 members in 1914.\(^{202}\) The Socialist Party established a club for children of workers, which comprised the world’s largest ideologically oriented youth association of that period.\(^{203}\) Even though they were independent of the *Wandervogel* movement, they shared certain similarities: neither group was a revolutionary hotbed, both were apolitical and did not glorify war and they both enjoyed the outdoors and camaraderie.\(^{204}\) The different ideological orientations of these organizations and the fact that some had ties to the socialist party caused the government concern about their political potential. To

\(^{203}\) Donson. *Youth in the Fatherless Land*, 4.
safeguard their nonpolitical nature, the *Reichsvereinsgesetz* was passed in 1908 making it illegal for any of these youth organizations to pursue political goals.\(^{205}\)

The *Wandervogel* movement was an attempt by *Gymnasium* students to gain more respect as individuals from their educators, to break with the rigid social structure and to modify the philistine behavior of their parents. The previously mentioned Gustav Wyneken, founder and principal of the *Wickersdorf School*, states that they identified with Germany’s changing culture, but lacked direction.\(^{206}\) This mainly Protestant association criticized the *Bildungsbürgertum’s* social values for being too artificial, materialistic, insincere and for lacking in compassion and warmth. They advocated instead decency, open-mindedness, and focused particularly on inner values, self-determination and truthfulness; their ideals were devoid of any political orientation.\(^{207}\) These values reflect their humanistic education, but were not necessarily those of the *Bürgertum* in general anymore. The *Wandervogel* defied conventions by displaying less inhibited and, for its time frankly provocative, behavior, such as going hiking in shorts and bareheaded, addressing each other by their first names and with the less formal *du* instead of *sie*.\(^{208}\) Hiking and connecting to nature ranked high on their agenda, especially since most of these youths grew up in large cities. Initially, they also opposed the military and rejected militarism.

The wide range of ideals which the *Wandervogel* chapters subscribed to initiated a variety of theories about their motivation and their social role. Walter Laqueur argues

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\(^{207}\) Laqueur. *Young Germany*, 233.
\(^{208}\) Gillis. *Youth and History*, 150-2.
they had no political agenda, or made any attempt to develop their own ideology; instead, they were interested in inner betterment and educating a new elite from within its own ranks. Similarly to the sentiments expressed in the students’ essays, he perceives the movement as a revolt against the unquestioning obedience and conformity demanded of these young people, and their longing for more freedom and recognition as individuals by adults. Mark Roseman contends this movement did not cause a generational conflict, but rather the friction came from the bourgeois adults’ fear of losing their social status, their concern over increasing materialism, and a deterioration of their humanistic values. He fails to consider their defiant attitude towards many social norms.

In divergence from my findings Martin Doerry claims that no adolescent crisis exists; youths never questioned their obedience to authority nor did they oppose Germany’s intolerance toward persons who diviated from the social norm. By contrast, the authors of “Mit uns zieht die neue Zeit. Der Mythos der Jugend” (New times are moving with us. The mythos of the youth) claim that while Germany’s industrialization and democratization were establishing a new social paradigm, its youth was confronted with an antiquated political system, outmoded moral standards, authoritarian parents and tyrannical education. They argue that the Bildungsbürgertum youth rejected the humanists’ belief in human’s progress and rebelled against their subjugation and the demand for conformity; instead the youth emphasized the value of the individual. The authors contend that the Wandervogel by defying traditional values, made a vague

209 Laqueur, Young Germany, 234.
210 Ibid.,129.
212 Doerry. Übergangsmenschen,18.
attempt to shake the foundation of Germany’s social construct. I will instead argue
Wandervogel youths identified more with traditional values than their parents did. In this
chapter I will examine the Gymnasium students’ stance on these issues by consulting
essays they wrote about these topics.

The youth movement reached its zenith on 12. Oct. 1913 with the congregation of
the Wandervogel chapters at the Hohe Meißner, a mountain outside of Kassel. The date
of this assembly was chosen to coincide with the hundredth anniversary of the battle at
Leipzig, which freed Germany from the French occupation under Napoleon, and was
meant to symbolize national liberation and renewal. The participating Wandervogel
chapters called themselves Freideutsche Jugend, a term coined by Johann G. Fichte,
1762-1814, a German philosopher, who advocated teaching youth inner freedom,
independence and refinement. The Freideutsche Jugend widely adopted the
Wandervogel ideology, which included criticizing society, pursuing new trends in the arts
and literature, and desiring to be connected to nature. The most famous slogan of the
Hohe Meißner event was “rein bleiben und reif werden” (to remain pure and become
mature).

At the conclusion of the meeting, the chapters jointly committed to what came to
be known as the “Meißnerformula”: a life based on self-determination, personal
responsibility and inner truthfulness. The Meisnerformula ended with the following

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213 Koebner, Mit uns zieht die neue Zeit, 10, 53, 55.
214 The commemoration, in October 2013, of its two hundred year anniversary illustrates the continuing
historical importance Germany ascribes to this battle.
215 Donson. Youth in the Fatherless Land, 36.
sentence: “Für diese innere Freiheit tritt sie (die Freideutsche Jugend) unter allen Umständen geschlossen ein” (United, we (the Freideutsche Jugend) will under all circumstances, defend inner freedom). The Meiβnerformula reflected the pedagogy Fichte and Johann H. Pestalozzi had formulated a century earlier and which was part of the humanistic educational concept. It strongly identified with humanist values, which the Gymnasium was teaching youths in the Bildungbürgertum, proving that these students did not revolt against, or even intend to distance themselves from the cultural values of the Bildungbürgertum.

The Wandervogel social grievances were, however, not as uniform as the proclamation of the Meiβnerformula suggests. The differing concerns of their various chapters caused the Freideutsche Jungend to lose its consensus shortly after the meeting and splinter into numerous independent groups. Nonetheless, their overarching objections remained similar, including their belief that adults lacked respect for adolescents, and their rejection of parent and teacher demands for absolute conformity and subordination. Their emphasis was less on the inner freedom advocated in the Hohe Meiβner proclamation, and more on their desire to have their opinions respected and to be freer of restrictive conventions. Andrew Donson contends that at the Meiβner meeting, the Freideutsche youths’ proclamation, “We are united in the life-long pursuit of truthfulness,” strengthened their desire to solve the problem of modernity. Failing to specifying what he understands modernity to be, however, makes his statement very vague.

218 Laqueur, Young Germany, 233.
219 Donson. Youth in the Fatherless Land, 36.
The movement failed to gain a broader following among the middle-class youth, and thus should not be considered a general revolt of Germany’s youth, but rather an attempt by Gymnasium students to break out of their social confinement. Walter Laqueur argues that in the early years of the Kaiserrreich this youth movement would have been unthinkable. He claims that in spite of their apolitical nature and small size, they influenced the transformation of Germany’s secondary education to a small degree and initiated among the bourgeoisie a more natural, less pretentious social tone.\(^{220}\) The obstinacy of Wandervogel also helped to ease some social demands for conformity, but had no noteworthy effect on the Bildungsbürgertum’s deeply ingrained traditional values. Laqueur rightly states the social upheaval of World War I deprived the Wandervogel of their reason to protest and made it obsolete after the war.\(^{221}\)

In response to Germany’s changing social paradigm the school reform of 1900 introduced a less militaristic and more liberal secondary education, which some thought long overdue. The nationwide easing of the Gymnasium’s educational straightjacket provided its pupils with sufficient freedom and opportunity to question the mold that had formed their parents. The youth movement also coincided with the trend to accept students as individuals, which eased the demand for their subserviency and the absolute social conformity teachers and parents imposed.

The nationwide emergence of the Wandervogel movement in 1904 was thus not the result of a coordinated revolt with defined goals, but rather a reaction to the eased regulations and changing social environment. It explains the association’s lack of unity

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\(^{220}\) Laqueur. *Young Germany*, 233.

\(^{221}\) Ibid., 129.
after their brief accord at the Hohe Meißen meeting and the fragmentation of their different chapters. The Gymnasium students’ desire to break with some of their parents’ traditions is especially evident when they flaunted conventional behavior during their meetings where they addressed each other by their first names, wore comfortable hiking clothes and associated with the opposite sex without chaperones.

This movement of the Bildungsbürgers’ youth was not an attempt to break with the humanist ideology fundamental to their class as evident in the Meißnerformula. On the contrary, the communiqué such as rein bleiben und reif werden (to remain pure and to mature) and their desire to lead a life based on self-determination, personal responsibility and inner truthfulness mirrors their desire to adhere to the traditional cultural ideology, as does their rejection of the preponderance of materialistic values. Thus, in the final two decades of the Kaiserreich, Bildungsbürgertum’s youth did not reject but instead continued to identify with the traditional cultural ideology. The Wandervogel and Freideutsche Jugend movements reflect a limited attempt to adjust to a changing social environment and can only to a small degree be interpreted as a generational conflict, as some authors claim.

**The School Paper “Der Anfang” (“The Beginning”)**

The increased importance pedagogues assigned to the individuality of students in the last decades of the Kaiserreich helped pupils to become more assertive and break out of the rigid confinement schools had imposed. Gymnasium students, being the best educated, were in the avant-garde to take advantage of this more liberal atmosphere by publishing a school paper in which they expressed their grievances about their immediate
The publication, in 1910, of the school paper *Der Anfang*, in a number of German speaking cities such as Vienna and Breslau was a similar attempt of Gymnasium youths to test the boundaries of the more liberal educational environment which the government was trying to implement. For students to publish their own paper had been unheard of, because neither teachers nor parents considered pupils intellectually ready or able to have their own opinions. To publicly criticize teachers or parents as they did in their editorials was seen as extremely presumptuous.  

*Der Anfang* was first published from 1908 to 1911 by Wyneken’s private school, *Die Freie Schulgemeinde Wickersdorf*. By law, such publication needed to have an adult on their staff. To meet this demand and to prevent any misguided publications, Wyneken served at his school as editor of *Der Anfang*, but otherwise students had total autonomy regarding the paper’s contents.

Wyneken belonged to a group of influential pedagogical reformers of that period, and objected particularly to students’ subservient behavior toward parents, teachers and persons of authority. For encouraging pupils to fight for their rights as individuals, he was instrumental in creating the ideology of the youth-culture (*Jugendkultur*). The present school system, he argued, served only to prepare students for meeting professional demands for Germany’s economy; such drill enslaves pupils and prevents them from reaching their full cognitive potential.

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Wyneken, in tune with the recent trend of recognizing students as individuals, wanted to free them from what he perceived as an educational straightjacket and from demand for their absolute conformity. He considered adolescence a separate period of human development with its own rights, and not just an undefined stage for preparing young people for adulthood. He argued that schools should serve to perpetuate the nation’s cultural values and prepare students to meet the demands of a changing social environment. Youths’ characteristically idealistic attitude and malleability, he contended, should aid in teaching students values, such as intellectual curiosity, ethical concepts and the appreciation of beauty that would guide them throughout their lives.\textsuperscript{223} Thus, his educational goal of individual fulfillment through lifelong intellectual interests and appreciation of beauty remained part of the traditional humanist ideology. Wyneken was actively involved in arranging the meeting of the Freideutsche Jugend at the Hohen Meißen and took part in composing the Meißenformula. However, when he attempted to lead the meeting, he was rejected by several of the participating youth groups.\textsuperscript{224} Their refusal to accept an adult as their leader indicates the degree of independence the youth movement had achieved.

To gain an insight into the aspirations, beliefs and values of these Gymnasium pupils I will, for the remainder of this chapter, review articles written by students for the school newspapers Der Anfang. Its contributing authors were not limited to students from Wickersdorf School, but also include submissions from secondary students from all over

\textsuperscript{224} Barbizon Der Anfang. 8.
Germany. Their contributions dispel any suspicion that Wyneken might have used his authority as principal and teacher to perpetuate his pedagogical philosophy through the school paper. The opinions voiced in Der Anfang can be seen as reflecting a desire of young people to be accepted as individuals and have their opinion acknowledged and treated with respect. The easing of Germany’s militaristic educational style, which valued conformity, permitted its youth for the first time, albeit hesitatingly, to advance this desire by expressing their grievances and hopes in Der Anfang and through the Freideutsche Jugend movement.

The first editions of Der Anfang, from 1908 to 1911, appear to have been lost. After suspending publication for two years, the school paper was again published in 1913 until the beginning of the war in 1914. Because it is unlikely that copies of this paper still exist, I had to rely for my review on a selection of Der Anfang’s articles reprinted in the book “Der Anfang” Zeitschrift der Jugend. One of its editors, Barbizon, appears to have, as a student, contributed two articles to Der Anfang. Under the category Jugend und Jugendkultur (Youth and Youth-culture) a Barbizon is listed as the author of Frauenfrage und Jugendemanzipation (Women and the emancipation of youth) and of Jugend und Persönlichkeitskult, (Youth and personality cult). Since the author’s first name is not provided for Der Anfang contributions, it can only be assumed that he and the editor are the same person. The editors of the book categorized Der Anfang articles under the following headings, to which I will adhere when discussing their contents:

Jugend und Jugendkultur (Youth and Youth-culture)

Jugend und Schule (Youth and School)
Jugend und Elternhaus (Youth and Parents)

Jugend und Religion (Youth and Religion)

The editors of “Der Anfang” Zeitschrift der Jugend failed to provide any information regarding the student authors, and often not even list their full name. Some of the contributing pupils disguised their names because they could not be confident that their critical opinion would not lead to repercussions by their teachers, who equated being criticized with an attack on their dignity. Girls still rarely attended the Gymnasium in the pre-war years, therefore boys wrote most of these articles. Many of these commentaries portray typical conflicts that juveniles experience during their transition into adult life. However, these article not only illustrate the formative influence of the humanistic education on its students’ worldview, but also how they judged their parents and teachers based on these parameters. These essays therefore highlight the students’ perspective of the discrepancy between the humanistic values they are being taught and their parents’ adherence to these ideals. How much these humanistic ideals would later form these students’ own adult life will be discussed in the last chapter.

Jugend und Jugendkultur (Youth and Youth-culture)

The first two articles take issues with sexual mores and the double standards of the students’ fathers regarding sexuality.

Von der Mission der Jugend (About Youths’ Mission) by Herbert Blumenthal, Berlin. To establish one’s values as an adolescent is an overwhelming experience, Blumenthal states. He contends that youths draw energy and vitality from their ideals, which guide them in establishing social orientation and goals based on truth, beauty and
goodness. The interaction with friends and peers assists juveniles in establishing social parameters and helps them to recognize that they share the same trepidations, doubts and character traits, which he feels they otherwise might have judged to be defective. He argues that only youths are able to analyze their culture without emotional prejudice or preconceived notions. He writes that the subjugation of a young person to social rules is an essential role in developing their personality. Adolescents gradually experience the fullness, purity and richness of their sexuality but conventions prevent their unfolding.

He believes his generation has the potential of altering Germany’s culture particularly by eliminating the negative connotation associated with sexuality. The etiquette of German culture prevents the natural unity of sensuality and the intellect from developing, and impedes youths from admiring the beauty of the human body as the ancient Greeks had done, he argues. It is the mission of today’s youth to revive this spirit of ancient Greece with its veneration of the human body. Herbert Blumenthal admonishes the discrepancy between familiarizing pupils with the admiration of the human body by the ancient Greeks and the prevailing puritan attitude towards sensuality. During the *Kaiserreich*, the admiration of the human body, because it collided with puritan moral values, was in general restricted to ancient arts.

In this and the following article by Ardor, both authors highlight this conflict between the humanistic education and the prevailing moral values of their parents. As later essays show, other students express similar frustration with the restrictions that govern relations with females; a topic dear to their hearts as their own sexuality is

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225 Ibid., 9-14.
developing. In the remaining article Blumenthal identifies with the humanist ideology and supports its perpetuation by the Gymnasium education. The next article, besides criticizing the way history is being taught, continues in the same vein.

Romantik by Ardor. Eine nicht gehaltene Rede an die Schuljugend. (An address to students, not given.) History teachers, this author laments, only present facts, instead of familiarizing students with the nation’s chronological development of science, arts and legal systems. He argues that to help adolescents form judgments, ideals, and help them become politically orientated, they need to be made more familiar with mankind’s development and the way different cultures emerged. He wants history lessons to convey the circumstances and motivation which initiated events, instead of being presented with an idealized portrayal of the past. The Gymnasium, by emphasizing instruction in ancient fine arts, shields students from reality and is grooming the next generation to be apolitical, he complains.

He argues that in students’ interactions with parents and even fellow pupils, they adhere to conventions and pretenses, but avoid discussing topics tabooed by society, such as sexuality. He contends: “The prudish attitude of our society suppresses any reference to sensuality, and by preventing boys and girls to freely socialize, fails to acknowledge the needs and desires of adolescents. Young people thus need to satisfy their sexual curiosity secretly rather than through an open discourse.” He further states that it is the mission of today’s youth to rediscover the excitement of exploring realistic truth to prevent a romanticized version from guiding them.\footnote{Ibid., 14-17}
The student authors repeatedly accuse their parents of Spießbürgertum, philistinism, and of an uncritical and rigid adherence to conventions. In particular, they object to sexual taboos and the idea that they can only socialize with the other sex in the presence of a chaperone. They criticize their fathers for pretending to have a puritan attitude while visiting cabarets and cheap establishments to satisfy their sexual fantasies. The youths’ awakening sexuality necessarily influence their attitude, but their maturing intellects also lets them recognize the hypocrisy in the lifestyle of the Bildungsbürgertum.

These authors do not object to the traditional values of the humanistic education with its admiration of beauty and self-betterment, but rather bemoan the discrepancy, typical for that period, between the Hellenic admiration for the human body and denial of sensuality. Because of the disparity between German mores and the sensuality of the Greek culture, its admiration becomes an abstract exercise and prevents its meaningful manifestation in the Bildungsbürgertum’s active values. The social changes created by Germany’s industrial environment challenge the paradigms of the Bildungsbürgertum and the ensuing conflict affects its youth most, because they are not yet firmly anchored in the values of the parents. These essays express the incongruity between the traditional upbringing and the change toward a less rigid, more outward looking society. The following article expands on the criticism of Gymnasium teachers’ lackluster presentations.

Romantik – die Meinung eines anderen (Romantic – another’s opinion) by Hyperion, Berlin. Hyperion argues that school’s tedious reviews of literary works by Goethe and Schiller spoils their enjoyment and appreciation for many years to come. But,
he states: “This should not rob us of the pleasure we can gain from many other unexplored works of other authors.” His statement makes it again apparent how deeply Germany’s cultural ideology with its desire for intellectual pursuit remains engrained in the mindset of these students in spite of such uninspiring teaching methods. Whether the embodiment of this ideology carried over into the adult life of these students will be discussed in the following chapter. The next article by the same author again reflects the discrepancy between the ideals the Gymnasium is teaching and the lifestyle of adults.

*Erfahrung (Experience) by Ardor*

Ardor protests against the attitude of adults who view the period of youthful ideals as temporary, before they are replaced by the lessons of life they call “experience.” He perceives parental life as being one of compromise, and lacking ideals. He labels adults Philistines, *Spießer*, and argues they fail to search for a higher purpose and that the adversities of life cause them to lead an existence without meaning. He claims these *Spießer* never consider ideals beyond “experience,” such as loyalty, truth, goodness and the admiration of beauty, values that guide youth. Adults are right in predicting the young people’s exposure to life will be arduous, he argues, but they will gain strength from ideals beyond the concern for only the bare existence. Ardor contends: “Our lives will gain meaning from intellectual and spiritual inspirations and make us more tolerant than the *Spießer.*” 227

Adolescents, independent of their culture, are commonly critical of adults. The challenge to the Bildungsbürgertum’s value system contributes to their children’s

227 Ibid., 20-21.
uncertainty and exacerbates the disapproval of their parents. Their increasing exposure to the less confining social interaction of the working class further adds to their cultural anxiety. The *Wandervogel* movement expresses this desire of *Gymnasium* students to emulate such less formal intercourse. The continuing strong influence of traditional cultural (humanist) ideology is again evident in Ardor’s assurance that youths in later life will pursue intellectual goals and expand their appreciation of arts and beauty. By portraying parents as having succumbed to the drudgery of life and lacking idealistic aspirations, he indirectly accuses them of having abandoned this ideology, but promises not to follow their path. However, not all of these students acquiesced to the liberal attitude expressed in most of these articles, as the next essay shows.

*Der Exodus der Jugend. Ein Kampf in Kassel* (Exodus of the youth. A struggle in Kassel) by Henning Pfannkuche, Heidelberg. Henning Pfannkuche describes his impression of a meeting by the *Freideutsche Jugend* in Kassel, which he attends. He finds it highly objectionable for boys and girls of the *Freideutsche Jugend*, who hardly know each other, to walk arm in arm through the streets of Kassel in a display of supposing “harmless” idealism. He perceives such behavior as dangerous because it toys with the natural force of their sexual desire. He also finds the hiking trips by his fellow members, with their guitars and their shorts, abhorrent. He argues these students wrongly think they are entitled to attack the “Philistine” generation of *Gymnasium* teachers and their romantic ideas of ancient Greece because they believe themselves to be the foremost representatives of a new spirit and in tune with the rhythm of their own time. This group of the *Freideutsche Jugend* to which the author belongs, believes abstinence represents
the spirit of the twentieth century and of Germany’s youth, while other groups have a
more liberal attitude. His opinions illustrate the wide range of convictions and standards
this youth movement embraces, and their uncertainty of which values to choose.

To help overcome the distrust of educators toward the Freideutsche Jugend, one
of these youth groups in Kassel proposed nominating teachers or parents as leaders of
their association. Pfannkuche points to a recent case where these arrangements were
implemented, but, he states, when adults took control, they subjugated student members.
He praises the intervention of the Bremen group, which prevented adults from managing
these groups. He argues that adults frequently display disregard for the Freideutsche
Jugend; for example, in one of their meetings guest teachers continued their conversation
even while a student gave a presentation. The student panel was afraid to admonish them
out of their traditional respect for educators, he states.228

Pfannkuche’s article illustrates how middle-class youth is torn between the
traditional values and the changing social paradigm. The group he belongs to continues to
advocate traditional puritan conventions while the Wandervogel movement aims to
overcome these restrictions by promoting free and unsupervised socializing among boys
and girls, including joint overnight hikes. In spite of the Wandervogel popularity, most
middle-class parents did not allow their daughters to participate in joint overnight
excursions because of the social stigma these girls would have had to endure. The force
of the existing conventions thus greatly limits the impact of this youth movement.

228 Ibid., 23-27.
The attitude of guest teachers illustrates their indifference toward the cause of the Freideutsche Jugend movement, as well as their failure to respect adolescents as individuals. As could be expected, the new educational policy, to treat students as persons, would only very gradually replace the authoritarian approach. For Gymnasium teachers, their unquestionable authority was part of their status and they would have perceived a request to stop talking and to listen to the student orator as a personal affront. Donson points out teachers of elementary school embraced this new pedagogical trend more than their socially higher-ranking counterparts of the Gymnasium.229 The next author creates imaginary scenarios of parents’ behavior to demonstrate what he deems their appropriate reaction should be.

Schrankenlose Ehrlichkeit (Unrestricted honesty) by Vincent, Berlin. Vincent created the following scenes to demonstrate the conflict youths are experiencing because of the declining validity of traditional social values and the difficulty of dealing with authoritarian parents: A daughter wants to meet a male fellow Gymnasium student in an ice-cream parlor, but her mother outright rejects her proposal arguing: “what will people say?” Instead she proposes to ask the boy to come to their home. The author considers this an acceptable solution, which he contrasts with an alternative response: the mother is outraged at such a proposal, prevents her daughter from explaining herself, punishes her and accompanies her the next day to school to prevent any socializing with the boy. In another scenario he describes a father being indignant that his son intends to meet a girl,

229 Donson. Youth in the Fatherless Land, 38.
whom he automatically assumes is a prostitute. The son stubbornly refuses to reveal the
girl’s name to his father and, in spite of his objection, meets the girl.

Vincent argues that defying parents cannot be the choice of only the individual
anymore, but rather is a goal of the youth movement. He states young people want to
choose their own male or female friends, and be open about it, instead of having to
conceal their relationships. He wants adults to respect their opinions and restrictions
should not just be commands, but need to be supported by logical explanations. He
contends that parents and their children could much improve their relationship if both are
honest and open with each other.\textsuperscript{230} The main purpose of his article is to convince fellow
students of the importance of becoming emancipated and to make clear that the youth
movement will support them in their effort. The author’s intense writing style is
reminiscent of a political rally as he tries to mobilize fellow members of the
\textit{Jugendbewegung}. The female author of the next essay again admonishes parents for their
lack of ideals.

\textit{Unsere Fahne}, (Our Flag) by Ruth, Leipzig. Ruth takes issue with the lifestyle of
her parents, which to her appears, because of its pragmatic orientation, gloomy and
lacking ideals. She argues young people have to reject such dismal existence because it
does not provide them with strength. The future belongs to the new youth; by uniting they
will gain the necessary strength to achieve their sacred desires. They are searching for
true ideals, unadulterated truth, responsibility and above all veneration for greatness, she
writes. In their lives they aim to show courage, to be joyful, compassionate,

\textsuperscript{230} Barbizon. \textit{Der Anfang}, 29-33.
understanding and especially kind. Students are united by the pursuit of these ideals, and not by their grievances regarding teachers and schools that they address in Der Anfang, she argues.231

These essays intensely express the conflict students experienced because of the discrepancy between the humanist ideals they are being taught and the lives their parents are leading, which reflect these values only to a limited degree. This discord is exacerbated by these juveniles’ urgent search for ideals and goals they could follow. The changing socio-economic culture is mainly to blame for their uncertainty of which path to follow, but the limited guidance of their Gymnasium education contributed as well. The rift between unrealistic ideals and life’s pragmatic demands are similarly apparent in the previously mentioned mantras of the Freideutsche Jugend movement. It should be kept in mind that the opinions expressed by members of these youth groups and Der Anfang represent only the small group of Gymnasium students, the children of the Bildungsbürgertum. The majority of Germany’s youths belonged to other social classes and their outlook on life, aspirations and relations to their parents is not being investigated here. The Reichsvereinsgesetz (national association law), passed in 1908, was designed to hinder youth from becoming politically active, and undermined the potential of these different social groups to find a common political goal. Only after the war did Germany’s youth become more politically aware and active, as former Wandervogel members recall in later years.

231 Ibid., 34-35.
The educational system of the Kaiserreich tried to promote nationalism at each educational level, but failed to advance an ideology that would have united the different social classes. The German people were thus united by patriotism, but otherwise the nation lacked an ideology the upper and middle classes could share with the working class. This lack of a unified ideology made its young adults potentially vulnerable to the doctrine of radical political parties, as evident in the final years of the Weimar Republic. In addition, the discrepancy between the ideals taught by the Gymnasium and the pragmatic demands of everyday life disoriented some of its graduates and made them susceptible to other ideological trends. This might possibly explain why, during the Third Reich, former Wandervogel members occupied prominent positions in the SS. In the next article the author anticipates not only how the role of adolescents might change in the future but also the role of women.

Frauenfrage und Jugendemanzipation ("Women and the emancipation of youth") by Barbizon. In his visionary essay Barbizon argues that the emancipation of youths will have a major impact on their lives. He contends that future economic development will make it necessary to wean pupils from their families before they graduate, and to expose them to professional life at a young age. He predicts an expanding economy will require women to become part of the workforce and thereby force their emancipation. For middle class women to stay home will then become a luxury, he claims. These changes will necessitate an adjustment of family life and require finding arrangements to allow women

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232 Donson. Youth in the Fatherless Land, 236.
to pursue a profession without sacrificing motherhood. It will provide women with the opportunity to utilize their potential and gain equal rights before the law, he contends.

Barbizon compared the subjugation of youth to that of women and, in a surprisingly accurate analysis of future economic needs, predicts such developments will advance the emancipation of both. The slow progress of women’s emancipation exemplifies the resilience of entrenched cultural traditions. Even in the twenty-first century, women’s remuneration is below men’s in equivalent jobs and they continue to be underrepresented in leading positions. As Barbizon had foreseen, in present day Germany students are emancipated, even though they rarely enter the job market before they graduate. His foresight underlines the revolutionary atmosphere of this youth movement. In the following article the same columnist discusses, as previous authors did, the lack of ideals in the lives of adults.

*Jugend und Persönlichkeitskult,* (Youth and Personality cult) by Barbizon. Barbizon argues secondary schools are “teaching jails” that incarcerate and enslave students instead of acquainting them with professional options or Germany’s culture. He states that the bourgeoisie repudiates the natural tendencies of young persons to believe in religion, love, loyalty and sacrifice; they consider such ideals to be unnatural and unacceptable. Their attitude, he argues, constrain the youths’ upbringing and leads to their own lives being self-centered, pompous and superficial, without ideals and the

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desire for fulfillment. To escape from such doldrums, adolescents need to follow their own path and pursue the ideals of the youth movement, he contends.²³⁴

Barbizon cites Wyneken when he laments the loss of fundamental humanist ideals in everyday life. In his essay he also comments on the clash between the lingering ideals of a vanished contemplative culture and the demands of a more pragmatic and materialistic industrial society. The transcending meaning he tries to assign to life illustrates how humanist ideals retained their importance for the children of the Bildungsbürgertum, in spite of the progressive stance he voices in the previous article. Gymnasia by teaching an ideology of a restricted compatibility with contemporary social requirements, create an elitist group that occupies in many respects an ideological position outside a large part of Germany’s population. Student contributions under the following heading testify to the prevailing antiquated teaching methods of the Gymnasia.

Jugend und Schule (Youth and School)

Unterricht und Wertung (School Lessons and their Assessment) by Ardor. Ardor complains that schools fail to consider the deeper meaning of poems and plays and through tedious recitals and style analysis, depriving students of their beauty. Little effort was being made to acquaint students with modern art, he laments. Because teachers lack appropriate teaching guidelines and fail to understand this new artistic expression, they reject it with disdain, he contends. He claims history lessons rely on antiquated traditional interpretations. Instead of teaching how jurisprudence, education, ethics and modern psychology developed, students are presented with an accumulation of barely related

²³⁴ Ibid., 39-41.
facts and dates. Only the emergence of socialism is taught in more detail in order to prevent pupils from sympathizing with this movement. In spite of such shortcomings he states: “We prefer humanistic education to purpose oriented Darwinism, but would like its presentation to be more realistic, democratic and less pretentious.” He argues that ancient Greece should not be presented as an ideal, harmonious culture, but as the misogynist, male adoring, aristocratic and slave dependent society it really was. He also proposes that ancient philosophers be discussed in more detail.\footnote{Ibid., 44-48.}

The humanistic education in the Kaiserreich had, in many respects, deviated from the ideology Humboldt envisioned, and, as shown in the previous chapter, was only slowly being adapted to the changing social paradigm. Civil servants and as such Gymnasium teachers were expected to implement a precisely outlined policy and educational program; flexibility was therefore foreign to their professional culture. The work ethic of the Beamter (civil servant) contributed to the strength of Germany’s administrative apparatus. Their pride in the absolute adherence to established rules prevented corruption, but at the same time cultivated inflexibility. This inflexibility of Gymnasium teachers and their administrators was partially to blame for the slow change in the humanistic education. Ardor, as well as other students, recognize these shortcomings and demand a new direction. The next two articles reflect such rigidity of Gymnasium teachers and their troublesome attitude.

Der "Anfang“ und ich. (“Der Anfang” and I) by Loge, Nuremberg. Loge argues that many teachers are too aloof and overwhelmed by their own importance to become
attuned to the needs of their students. Others try to be mentors, but have difficulty overcoming the demeanor dictated by the continual demand for respect associated with their profession. He states Der Anfang portrays the shortcomings of teachers not as satirical, but in an effort to improve education. He wants teachers to better understand their pupils and be guiding friends who does not look down on their students.236

Was ich dazu meine. Eine Antwort auf Loges Kritik des Anfang (My opinion, a response to Loge’s Criticism) by E.B. Sachse, Köln. E.B. Sachse states that teachers in his Gymnasium did not encourage students to voice their own opinions, think independently or be creative. He argues Loge, in the previous essay, fails to point out that teachers should encourage students not be submissive, but instead to value their own thinking to improve their self-esteem.237

Both students again point to the major grievances of the youth movement: for students to be accepted as individuals in their own right, and to be able to question the teacher’s opinion without being considered arrogant. They resent teachers who, for their own aggrandizement, subjugate pupils. These articles demonstrate how progressive the youth movement was, in spite of the strong authoritarian environment of the Kaiserreich. Their revolt against absolute submission reflects the changing social demands of an industrial environment. At their Zenith, the small elite Bildungsbürgertum dominated German society, while the now industrial society depended on the participation of all social classes. These social and economic changes led to the nation’s gradual democratization and undermined its authoritarian culture, albeit slowly. In the following

236 Ibid., 50-54.
237 Ibid., 57.
contribution one of the few female columnists highlights the inflexibility of the teaching methods.

*Gedanken über den deutschen Aufsatz* (Thoughts about the German Essay) by Hilda G., Wien. Hilda argues the Gymnasium conveys knowledge, but fails to teach students how to think. Essays about personal experience are not meant to express personal feelings or reveal how the events affected the writer. Instead they are purely fact-oriented, and she complains, in order to get a good grade they cannot deviate from the expectations of the teacher. Teachers shy away from modern literature, and in girl’s schools the wording of poems is altered to avoid the slightest hint of sexuality, even references to the bridal bed are expunged, she states.238

Hilda, similar to the male authors, feels schools do not prepare students adequately for life. The last articles underpin the previously discussed unwillingness of many Gymnasium teachers to recognize students as individuals as directed by Ministry of Education. Instead teachers continue to insist on students’ anonymity by preventing them from expressing their emotions and by rejecting their personal interpretation of events. In part, Gymnasium teachers believed their high social rank and the tradition of humanistic education entitled them not to comply with the ministerial directive, but rather to continue with their authoritarian approach to teaching. Imperial Germany’s prevailing militaristic culture supported such a stance by spurning the public displays of emotions and non-conforming behavior. The following essays express students’ longing for better

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238 Ibid., 58-62.
understanding by their parents, and the typical difficulty of adolescents to adapt to their social environment.

**Jugend und Elternhaus (Youth and Parents)**

*Appell an die Eltern, Ein Primaner, einer für viele.* (Appeal to parents, one senior student, speaking for many). The author recommends parents read *Der Anfang* to better understand their own children and learn that fellow students share the same thoughts and ideals. He argues that adults should make an effort to understand youths better and support their aspiration for a new, truthful and pure life.239 These articles frequently have an almost combative tone in their desire to replace the Philistine behavior of their parents with their “pure” values, which illustrates the discrepancy between the ideology they are being taught and their parents’ social norms.

*Eltern und Kinder, von einem Kind in Wien* (Parents and Children) by a child in Vienna. The anonymous author argues that parents’ domination and demand for unquestionable acceptance of their authority prevents youths from forming their own opinions and establishing independence. The author contends sparents prevent their children from contemplating the meaning of life, exploring cultural questions or establishing their own worldview. Instead of guiding their development, adults are mainly concerned with imposing their authority on them. The author states that schools, churches and parents show little understanding for youths during the stage in their development when they are trying to establish their own opinions, reject authority and accept only what they judge rational. Adults should not expect their children to accept the

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239 Ibid., 68.
same yoke, which the author perceives their lives to be, but which parents view as optimal.\textsuperscript{240}

The grievances expressed in this essay are recurring age-old points of contention between parents and their adolescent children. What stands out in this and other articles is the resentment of their parents’ authoritarian rearing practices and unassailable righteousness. In spite of their often-provocative tone, these writings are just protests and not revolts. These student authors are only starting to explore their recently acquired liberty to publicly voice their opinions, but for outright mutiny, their emancipation was too nascent.

**Youth and Religion**

*Eine Zuschrift,* (A contribution) by H.B. H.B. comes from a religious family and is himself deeply religious, but, like other authors, is starting to doubt his religious beliefs because of the alienating way secondary schools teach religion. To avoid such conflicts he recommends religious education in schools should be unrelated to a specific denomination. He writes that the *Zentrumskatholiken* party, whose meetings he attended, advocates a better integration of religion into secondary education.\textsuperscript{241} It appears that the *Zentrumskatholiken* are promoting a more rigid adherence to doctrine than was customary among Lutherans. Religious education creates a similar conflict for the following author.

*Des Schülers Gott* (The pupil’s God) by Ado, Twelfth Grade, Berlin. Ado writes that the school teaches religion in the morning and, in the evening, his pastor prepares

\textsuperscript{240} Ibid., 72.  
\textsuperscript{241} Ibid., 93.
him for confirmation. The religion teacher assures his pupils he does not want to deprive them of their conviction that the events described in the New Testament are true. However, his rational and convincing interpretation of the scripture causes Ado to doubt in his own religious belief in the morning, while in the afternoon his pastor’s transfiguring portrayal of the New Testament helps him to regain his faith. He writes: “By seeking solitude in nature and reading the Bible I was eventually able to overcome this conflict and establish a firm footing in my religious faith.”

Both these articles reflect a critical attitude of secondary schools towards religion, which was particularly pronounced in Protestant areas. Their cogent interpretation of the Christian religion mirrors the analytical and rational mindset of an increasingly technical environment, but contrasts to a certain extent with the Gymnasium’s idealistic interpretation of the Hellenic culture. Ado, by finding his faith in solitude, documents the previously mentioned Verinnerlichung (internalization) of religion, independent of religious rituals. The dominantly Protestant Bildungsbürger ideology had widely shed the dogmatic elements of its religion, but retained its fundamental elements. Their ideological ideals consisted of an amalgamation of Protestant and Hellenic values such as individual betterment, self-reliance, a life-affirming attitude and especially the esteem of knowledge, Bildung. The latter had been reinvigorated in the seventeenth century by the religious movement of Pietism as an integral part of Germany’s cultural ideology. The Bildungsbürgertum, in spite of their more critical analyses of the Bible’s mystical events, had thus not become secular. Instead, they had shifted religion from a public to an

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242 Ibid., 93-95.
individual realm without losing its importance for their lives. The following article illustrates the prevailing reluctance of adults to accept the emancipation of these Gymnasium students.

Klassenspiegel (Reflection on Lessons)

Was ist ein Klassenspiegel? (What are the reflections on lessons and teachers?) by Dr. W. It appears that Dr. Wyneke, the editor of Der Anfang, wrote this article. He states: “Der Anfang is our weapon against shortcomings in schools, whereby we do not want to insinuate our examples are the norm, but we rather want to show that such vagaries are still possible. We know with certainty some schools barely have one teacher with acceptable pedagogical qualifications. Because there are only few educators who recognize the needs of an adolescent, we need to shed light on those who mistreat students. Der Anfang, besides highlighting shortcomings of our educational system, also wants to assist students in the correct interpretation of circumstances and familiarize them with satire and humorous writing.”

Various high ranking officials of the Bildungsbürgertum opposed or attacked Der Anfang and accused the paper of encouraging disrespect for schools and parents. They argue that youths are expected to be demure and submissive, and not free and self-assured as advocated by Der Anfang. They also reject the Jugendkultur, the ideology of the Freideutsche Jugend and Wandervogel movement, accusing the latter in particular of violating sexual mores and of being provocative by not wearing conventional clothing. Minister v. Killing of the Bayrische Landtag, a predominantly Catholic region, publically

243 Ibid., 94.
declares his strong opposition to the Jugendkultur movement and states that he will do everything in his power to prevent their activity in public schools. Other prominent conservative representatives in Bavaria attack Der Anfang, the Jugendkultur, Wandervögel and its editor Wyneken. In addition, many students also consider Der Anfang to be too disrespectful towards teachers and parents.244 Their voice makes it clear that this movement represents the avant-garde and not the mainstream of Germany’s youth.

In February of 1914 a group of the Freideutsche Jugend arranged a meeting with Wyneken as an orator, to allow him to defend his and their position. In anticipation of his appearance, a member of the Bavarian legislative assembly openly attacked Wyneken’s ideas and their representation in Der Anfang, and demanded that the paper be banned. This vilification had the effect that for the first time many sympathizers of high standing openly supported Wyneken’s ideas. Der Anfang would have stood its ground in this meeting had not representatives of the Freideutsche Jugend, for no discernable reason, denied any connection to the paper, its editor and what it stood for. Their betrayal of the Hohe Meißener resolve, “The Freideutsche Jugend is united in their commitment to defend inner freedom,” was indicative of the youth movement’s disunity, and explains the movement’s quick fractionalizing into smaller independent groups after the convention. Der Anfang, undeterred by these events, continues to carry the torch of Hoher Meißener spirit until the war brought its publication to an end.245

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244 Ibid., 103-116.
245 Ibid., 116-119.
The “resolve” at the Hoher Meißener meeting was carried by the enthusiasm of its many participants. However, it took individual responsibility to publicly defend Der Anfang against the assault of government officials and society at large. The paper’s critique of parents’ restrictive rearing practices and the Gymnasium’s authoritarian teaching methods was the first time students dared to publically vent such discontent. But, in general, Gymnasium students were still too deeply anchored in their obedience demanding, authoritarian, militaristic upbringing, to have the courage to publically defend such a controversial stance, which explains why Freideutsche Jugend distanced themselves from the student paper.

The increasing importance of the individual in Germany’s changing social environment was reflected in the pedagogical trend of not treating students as part of an anonymous mass. Having gained recognition as persons emboldened some pupils to publically voice critical opinions, which they would not have dared to do in the past.

**Summary**

Students, in their contributions to Der Anfang, repeatedly emphasize the importance of being guided by a higher purpose in life such as loyalty, truth, goodness and beauty as well as intellectual and spiritual inspirations. They berate their parents for having succumbed to adversities, accuse them of being Philistines, Spießer, and argue that their existence lacks meaning because it is void of these ideals. They state, that because parents do not share their children’s aspirations, they fail to understand them. The dissonance between parents and their children these articles reflect is partially caused by the failure of the Gymnasium to adjust its teachings to accommodate Germany’s
socio-economic changes. The demands of daily life would prevent parents from leading a life dominated by the pursuit of Bildung as advocated by Gymnasium educators. Students by showing that parents’ lives are not dominated by this cultural ideology give testimony to the declining importance of Bildung for the Bürgertum in the final decades of Imperial Germany.

Even though students identify with the ideology of the humanistic education, they admonish the idealistic interpretation of the Hellenic history. They argue that depicting ancient Greece as an ideal, harmonious culture, rather than as the misogynist, male adoring, aristocratic and slave dependent society it really was, shields pupils from reality. They want educators to explain social developments of civilizations to help students understand present political events, and instead of a biased interpretation of socialism, they like to be instructed in the functioning of democracy. Various of these authors contend that Gymnasia’s restricted intellectual freedom and educators’ expectation to comply with their opinions hampers pupils’ cognitive development. Students also resent not being introduced to contemporary art and literature because, they argue, their teachers lack educational guidelines for instructing them in these contemporary topics.

These articles show that Gymnasium teacher continue to convey ideals and values of the humanistic education, but fail to adjust these concepts as well as their pedagogical approach to accommodate the nation’s changing social environment. These contributions by students do not allow us to draw conclusions about the Gymnasium’s ability to train student’s intellect.
As can be expected of articles written by adolescents, inter-sexual relations play a major role, particularly because of the restrictive puritanical moral code of that period. Students argue that being taught to admire the human body, as the ancient Greeks did, is incompatible with the prevailing puritan attitude. They express their discord by accusing parents of having double moral standards, who consider it improper for their children to socialize with the opposite sex without a chaperone, while their fathers frequent establishments of ill repute. One female student complains that Gymnasia even alter the wording of classical poems to shield girls from any hint of sexuality.

Their columns indicate that the unsupervised excursions of boys and girls of the Wandervogel movement remain ruinous for the reputation of the girl. One contributor to Der Anfang endorses puritan standards, while the majority would prefer to ease them. They recommend for parents to discuss sex related topics openly and rationally rather than skirting these issues and hiding behind conventions. These students desire to loosen the prevailing puritanical restrictions foreshadows the development of the post World War I years.

A major issue of contention of these articles is the condescending attitude of parents, teachers and even priests toward adolescents. Several students complain that parents, clergy and teachers expect them to be submissive, disregard their opinion and do not accept them as individuals. Adolescents are expected to follow commands without been given an explanation of their validity, which, they argue, impedes their intellectual development. Teachers, one student writes, believe to have unquestionable authority, are aloof and overwhelmed by their own importance. Those who attempt a more personal
approach have difficulty overcoming their authoritarian demeanor. Authors support these grievances by describing, among other examples, how teachers carry on their conversation during a presentation by a student and attempts of adults to take control of *Wandervogel* chapters. These protests indicate a social reconstruction in which absolute submissiveness to authority is starting to be questioned by the next generation. World War I would accelerate the deterioration of these conventions.

Students, in *Der Anfang*, express the dichotomy the teaching of religion causes because schools analytically dissect religion and its history, while clergy provides the same student with a mystical interpretation of Christianity. One student describes eventually finding his religious belief through nature. This trend of *Gymnasia* at the fin de siècle to provide a historical and rational interpretation of religion is also apparent in the above essays by teachers.

Germany’s changing conventions in the final years of the monarchy allowed *Gymnasium* youths in particular to become more emancipated as their contributions to the *Der Anfang* illustrate. The articles also provide evidence that the Bürgertum in the final years of the Kaiserreich is less committed to the concept of Bildung in spite of the Gymnasium’s continuing effort to convey these values to their students.

**Conclusion**

The German philosopher Johann G. Fichte, 1762-1814, together with Pestalozzi, advocated teaching students personal responsibility, inner freedom, independence, refinement, and principles; he coined the term *Freideutsche Jugend*. This pedagogic concept became the foundation of the humanistic education Humboldt introduced in
1809. This liberal approach to education was neglected in Imperial Germany, and instead of students being supported according to their individual aptitudes, they were treated as part of an anonymous mass, in tune with the Kaiserreich’s military culture. Rote learning was thus more the rule than the exception, and students were expected to be submissive instead of engaging in a free exchange of ideas. Most teachers, instead of vying for recognition, demanded respect, which caused students to ape their opinions in order to ensure a passing grade.

The demand for individual initiative increased with Germany’s transition from a rural to an industrial society, and necessitated a new pedagogical approach geared to further the singular abilities of students. Following the school conferences of 1890 and 1900, the Minister of Education encouraged Gymnasium teachers to respect students as individuals and to recognize their unique aptitudes. These directives appear to have been more effective than the Gymnasium students gave them credit for in their articles. These pupils now dared to publically challenge their elders’ traditional behavioral patterns and attacked unreasonable teaching and rearing practices of teachers and parents in school papers. Their increasing exposure to the less conventional conduct of the working class also contributed to their flaunting of orthodox customs. In particular, Heinrich Zille’s popular drawings in the magazine Simplicissimus and in his book of 1908, played a major role in acquainting the Bürgertum with the living conditions and less formal behavior of workers.246

246 Heinrich Zille. Kinder der Strasse: 100 Berliner Bilder (reissued by: Komet Verlag GmbH, Köln, 206).
Many of the issues the Wandervogel movement and Der Anfang addressed were common attempts of fledgling youths to become oriented in their social environment and come to grips with their developing sexuality. But this movement and also the articles in the school paper revealed the dissonance they experienced, which was caused by the lack of their parents’ adherence to the ideals the Gymnasium was teaching. Their response was not so much a revolt, because they continued to identify with the humanistic ideology; but rather, an expression of the dilemma caused by being taught cultural ideals that were increasingly out of tune with the demands of their social environment. In addition, the Wandervogel movement and the school paper expressed Gymnasium students’ desire to be recognized as individuals and have their opinions valued.

Germany’s other much larger youth organizations might have had similar grievances, but only Gymnasium students voiced them publicly. This illustrates that the Gymnasium, more so than Germany’s other educational institutions, inspired students to be self-determined and to assume personal responsibility in spite of its uninspiring pedagogy. World War I accelerated many of the social changes that were in the making during the monarchy; it thus eliminated most grievances of the Freideutsche Jugend, while the authoritarian attitude of parents and teachers, voiced in Der Anfang, took longer to abate. Gymnasia in spite of having wavered from the intended pedagogy of their founders remained undeterred in teaching its fundamental educational goal: Germany’s cultural ideology. In the next chapter I will determine how much these Gymnasium students’ adult life reflected the cultural values they were taught.
CHAPTER IV
DIARIES 1847 TO 1943

Introduction

In Chapter II, I assessed the effort of Gymnasium educators to maintain the fundamental principles of humanistic education at the same time as the socioeconomic environment during the Kaiserrreich increasingly undermined the prerequisites for this ideology to flourish. In the next chapter I looked at the success of these educators in instilling humanistic values and Germany’s cultural ideology in Gymnasium students by investigating a youth movement of these pupils and their essays in their school paper. Starting in the Kaiserrreich the ability of the Bildungsbürgertum to perpetuate Germany’s cultural ideology and ethical values declined, as previously discussed. In this chapter I will determine the effect such waning had on the upper and middle classes’ traditional cultural ideology of Bildung, their humanist ethical values and the influence Nazi-ideology had on these concepts. I will do this by reviewing diaries written by members of the Bürgertum, who predominantly completed their secondary education during the Kaiserrreich; only four authors graduated during the Weimar Republic.

Historians and writers, ranging from Hans-Ulrich Wehler to Golo and Heinrich Mann frequently depicted the Bildungsbürgertum as Weltfremd (unworldly), and being more concerned with the pursuit of intellectual interest and the arts than with public affairs. To determine whether this holds true I will examine this social group’s civic
engagement. Previously, individual testimony of the Bürgertum has not been investigated to determine the change of their cultural ideology and ethical values during the Kaiserreich to the end of World War II.

To establish the mindset of the Bürgertum, I initially considered evaluating secondary students’ essays about German literature or philosophical topics. Such essays, besides recounting lectures they have heard, would have reflected the expectation of the teacher, thereby preventing me from drawing conclusions about the influence of the humanistic education on forming the paradigm of the author. To explore the cultural ideology, intellectual and ethical orientations of individual diaries appeared to be a better source. They are in particular well suited for assessing the authors’ changing worldviews and commitment to Bildung in response to an altered social and political environment. Such subjective documents are actually one of the few means of investigating the changing paradigm of a specific social group during a historical period if the sample number is sufficiently large, thirty-four in this case. Diaries were chosen over autobiographies because the former tend to better reflect the author’s view with fewer pretenses and be less prone of trying to create a desired image.

When reviewing these diaries I found the more authors feared the potential of an unauthorized reader, the less they revealed their true opinion and feelings. This was most evident in one diary in which the writer shrouded his true feelings because he considered the Gestapo, the Nazi’s secret police, to be a possible reader. It is questionable whether these documents always permit an objective interpretation of the author’s ethical behavior by an outsider because of unrecognizable or unknown mediating circumstances.
Authors’ are likely to portray circumstances in a favorable light that caused them to act in violation of their principals; they thereby will have limited informational value especially in retrospective diaries. Comparing those statements to similar behavioral trends in other of these diaries from the same period assists in getting a more accurate picture. The Bürgertum of the Kaiserreich believed the German nation had reached and had become a beacon of mankind’s development. The cataclysm of the two world wars together with the social changes and political reorientation had to cause these members of Bürgertum to question the validity of this concept as well as of many traditional values they had been taught. In my analysis of these memoirs, I will establish how much the authors were able to retain their ethical values and cultural ideology of Bildung as these changes evolved, and their susceptibility to the Nazi doctrine.

These diaries, written by members of the Bürgertum, were randomly selected and cover the period from 1847 to 1943. They will be reviewed in order of the author’s year of birth, which will be listed prior to their names. Many of these diaries recorded events as they occurred; others were compiled many years later mostly in the author’s twilight years based on notes made in the past or purely on the writer’s memory. Even if authors of the retrospective chronicles do not recall certain events accurately, their individual adherence to the cultural ideology will be evident, which is a major concern of this investigation.

Diaries in most cases do not describe issues the author takes for granted because they are part of the structure of his personal life or were common knowledge at that time but might now be forgotten. In some cases this and causalities undetectable to an outsider
can lead to unavoidable misinterpretations of the writer’s motivations, but should not influence the greater picture of the portrayal. The authors of these diaries, with one exception, graduated from the Gymnasium or Realschule and many had an academic degree; aristocrats with similar educational levels also wrote a few of these chronicles. Female authors of the Kaiserreich attended secondary schools for girls, the Lyceum, which taught modern but not ancient-languages, which qualified them for a very limited tertiary education. Only the Weimar Republic started to offer women and men the same educational opportunities, which may be why only one of the reviewed female authors had an advanced academic degree.

It is the objective of this chapter to evaluate the influence Germany’s political and social transformation had on the cultural paradigm and ethical values of the Bürgertum. The Bildungsbürgertum, together with the aristocracy, dominated Germany’s cultural, political and economic scene of the Kaiserreich. The monarchy prevented members of the working class from joining their ranks by raising Gymnasium fees to an amount they could not afford given their already subsistence income. Due to lack of education in their class, their influence on Germany’s cultural scene was very limited, which is why I will not consult their diaries in this thesis. Imperial Germany’s educational hierarchy also explains why none of these diarists came from laborer families.

These diaries are archived at the Deutsches Tagebucharchiv e.V. in Emmendingen, Germany and were donated by families, in the hope that they would be
preserved for posterity. The Tagebucharchiv categorized the diaries and had most converted into typed versions to increase their accessibility, because the majority of the originals had been handwritten in the antiquated German script unfamiliar to most of the present generation. The Tagebucharchiv provided each diary with a brief data sheet, which frequently filled in the lacking biographical information provided by the author’s family, which will precede each review. As was to be expected, a large portion of the diaries reported trivial events, which I will disregard. Instead I will focus on particular aspects of these diaries, including the significance of Bildung and religion to authors, their social and political commitment, and later their stance toward the Third Reich. The term “diary” in the heading indicates whether the events were written as they occurred otherwise the year is listed when the chronicle was written.

**Review of Diaries - Part I**

The diarists completed their secondary education prior to the school reform of 1890. Up to the school reform of 1890 only the Bildungsbürgertum had, with few exceptions, access to a secondary education – the humanistic Gymnasium, which established the Weltbild and cultural ideology of Germany’s educated class. To make tertiary education accessible to a wider spectrum of the population, Realschule graduates after 1890 could attend universities and not just three years of a technical school as before. These graduates soon outnumbered those of the Gymnasium and thereby reduced the influence of the humanistic education on Germany’s cultural ideology. The diaries reviewed in the first part of this chapter were written before the school reform and

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247 Deutsches Tagebucharchiv e.V., Marktplatz 1, 79312 Emmendingen, Germany
therefore all of their authors, except one, were Gymnasium graduates. Authors in the second part of this chapter had received their secondary education after the school reform when the humanistic education had lost dominance, and some writers were educated in Realschulen. Germany’s socio-economic transition affected the ability of the Bildungsbürgertum to adhere to the cultural values which the Gymnasium was trying to convey prior to the school reform. By comparing the diaries of these two periods I will determine the changing role of Germany’s cultural ideology and ethical values as the nation’s class structure and political constellation were changing.

These first two diaries illustrate the importance of Bildung and education for this social group but otherwise provide little information.

1829-88, Reinhard Münch, Tagebuch 1847-1860 (Diary 1847-1860), diary written forty three years prior to the school reform of 1890. Reinhard Münch breaks off his theology studies in spite of being the son of a pastor, and emigrates to Lyon, France, where after a difficult initial period, he becomes a successful merchant. To better pursue his commercial interests, he moves his family to Paris, and subsequently describes how the city was besieged by Prussian troops in 1870-71. As a German, he is forced to leave France after the war and settles in the, at that time, German Mülhausen, where he establishes a German language newspaper. In his diary he expresses a strong desire to live a pure Christian life, asking God for support and strength to resist temptations. As evidence of the importance of cultural values play in his life he decides not to marry a

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248 Reinhard Münch, Tagebuch 1847-186, 166/1, Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
249 The initially French Mülhausen became German after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870/71. (Meyers Konversations-Lexicon 1897 ed. . s.v. “Mühlhausen.”)
girl because: “She is not sufficiently interested in poetry and does not possess a love of nature.” The wife he choses instead plays the piano and is a devoted Christian.

1832-1918, Carl Henkius, Mein Lebenslauf, (My life), written between 1882-1884. To ensure that Carl Henkius is able to attend the Gymnasium his family moves from a village to the city. The sacrifice his family made for his Gymnasium education illustrates the importance they ascribe to education and Bildung, but his diary otherwise provides little information about his interests or values.

1842-1920, Friedrich Berner, Lebensbeschreibung, (Review of my life), written 1920. To prepare Friedrich Berner for the Realschule entrance exam, his family hires tutors for Greek and Latin. After being admitted, he has to leave his rural home and moves to the city. During his school years, he goes to plays and takes frequent hikes to enjoy nature. While studying mechanical engineering at a technical school, his father dies, leaving little money to pay for tuition, and only through his mother’s substantial sacrifices is he able to complete his studies. When he loses his first job as an engineer due to an economic downturn, he uses the years of unemployment to complete a two and a half years apprenticeship in a machine shop. He elaborates on the various types of employments he holds in the following years before seeking a government position for better job security.

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\(^{250}\) Carl Henkius, Mein Lebenslauf; 364/1, Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.

\(^{251}\) Friedrich Berner, Lebensbeschreibung, 1534, Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
Berner has little sympathy for the harsh conditions of the workers and complains about their insubordination and attraction to the ideology of the emerging Social Democrats. His attitude stands in contrast to the understanding of workers’ plight by some authors of later diaries. His resentment of the Social Democrats around 1880 obviously had not diminished forty years later, in 1920, when he wrote these memoirs. His disregard for the lower class and rejection of their socialistic ideas reflects the frequent attitude of superiority expressed by the Bürgertum, which contributed to dividing the German population into two distinct social groups with few common interests to bridge the gap.

Berner expresses little political interest; the only comments he makes in this regard are about the affect of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870/71 on the well-being of his family. His sister, he writes, is going to Switzerland in an exchange program to qualify her as governess by learning French. For women, professional opportunities were extremely limited at that time and consisted mostly of becoming an elementary school teacher or governess. Berner’s review illustrates his and his sister’s eagerness to gain an education and thereby retain their social status. Bildung was not only an integral part of the Bildungsbürgertum’s ideology, but also ensured their economic wellbeing and prevented their slide to the disdained level of worker. The stigma associated with such a decline reinforced the desire for an education.

1844-1889, Arno Hercher, Tagebuch Juli 1853 bis Juli 1876 (Diary – July 1853 to July 1876), diary.\textsuperscript{252} Arnold Hercher, the son of a teacher, grew up in a small rural

\textsuperscript{252} Arno Hercher, Tagebuch Juli 1853 bis Juli 1876, 805/III.2 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
village where he goes to elementary school and regularly attends church services. In preparation for the Gymnasium he is tutored in Latin, Greek, and French, and in addition receives piano and singing lessons. He describes in detail the many chores assigned to him, such as tending the garden, pressing laundry, fetching water and taking dough to the baker to bake their bread. He studies Latin every day and was not only able to translate the Bible into Latin, but also could transcribe German dictated to him into Latin. To meet all these demands, he rose between four-thirty and five o’clock in the morning and went to bed at nine in the evening. His narrative provides a good insight into how labor-intensive rural life was before mechanical devices were introduced. At fourteen he is admitted to Gymnasium in Weimar, the next big city, and later attends the university to become a teacher. In his early years as an educator he also heads a trade association and organizes educational courses for its members.

Hercher demonstrates, more than any of the other authors, the perseverance it took for the rural population to gain a secondary and tertiary education, and the important role parents played in conveying humanistic values to their children in spite of harsh conditions. At the same time it shows this social group’s deep-rooted desire for Bildung. The author shows his commitment to civic responsibility as part of humanistic values by volunteering to teach extracurricular courses in his community.

1846-1929, Maria Auguste Karoline Freiin von Pechmann, Meine Lebensgeschichte 1849-1929 (The story of my life 1849-1929), written 1927. Maria Auguste von Pechmann is born into an aristocratic family. Her father had been in charge

253 Maria Auguste Karoline Freiin von Pechmann, Meine Lebensgeschichte 1849-1929, 1100,1. Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
of the Bavarian police force under its King Ludwig I, and advanced to Interior Minister under King Ludwig II. After graduating from a Catholic girls’ school, she becomes proficient in playing the piano and, as an autodidact, expands her knowledge in Italian, history and religion. Her broad knowledge qualifies her to assume a teaching position in her former school (1873-77). Later, at the age of thirty-four, she becomes lady-in-waiting to the sister of King Ludwig I whom, as part of her duties, she accompanies to concerts, plays and other cultural events. At the same time she writes novels, and because such activity was unseemly for aristocrats and even more so for women, she published her books under the pseudonym Martha Friede. Following her assignment at the king’s court, she heads a Catholic book association at age of forty-six, about which she comments: “This position gave me the chance to expand my knowledge, practice foreign languages and draw strength from the many literary works I am reading.”

Being comforted by acquiring knowledge and reading familiar literary works such as Homer’s Odyssey is a reoccurring theme throughout hers and other’s diaries. These statements are reminiscent of religious experience, but it can only be speculated what caused this calming and strengthening effect. The belief in mankind’s intellectual development being at par with religious experience might be one explanation, and would concur with the interrelationship between the humanist ideology and religion apparent in some of the following diaries. For religious individuals, partaking in rituals such as attending a service, often provides strength. The cultural rituals of reading books and intellectual explorations might have a similar effect by providing comfort. In this vein the historian Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann claims the self-reflecting understanding of Bildung.
was superimposed on its religious origins, without ever entirely replacing its religious substance.\textsuperscript{254}

In 1897, Pechmann cofounds, and then chairs until the age of eighty, “Patronage” a Catholic institution that cares for young girls after they leave school and aims to deepen their religious belief. She is very patriotic and believes Germany’s enemies had forced World War I upon peace-loving nation, an assumption the other entire authors share without exception. Following the public appeal “iron for gold” to support the war effort, she donates all her jewels and other valuable gifts from the king. In view of Pechmann’s intimate relation to the monarchy, it is not surprising that she is greatly shocked when the revolution of 1918 deposes the king of Bavaria. Her diary conveys her deeply religiosity and she views an audience the Pope grants her in 1920 as the highlight of her life. Her letters written during the ten years following the war, show some political interests, in particular she resents persecution of Jews and their brutal treatment. As all authors of this period, she laments the impact the severe inflation of the post-war years had on Germany and her own wellbeing.

Pechmann’s social standing and financial security allowed her to pursue intellectual interests denied to other women who had to fight to survive in a time when professional training for females was not customary. Her well-rounded knowledge, desire for intellectual explorations, interests in the arts and social responsibility make her an exemplary representative of Germany’s cultural ideology of that period, and her charitable activities show the inspiring influence of the Pietists. This ideology, which

\textsuperscript{254} Hoffmann, Politics of Sociability, 214.
parents and Gymnasium instilled in the aristocracy and Bildungsbürgertum provided a cohesive function for these social groups, and extended also to the Bürgertum in general as the above diary of Berner shows. The working class, with only an elementary education, identified to a much lesser degree with these cultural values, and thereby represents a separate entity within the German society. Their frequently very harsh living conditions forced them to focus on their survival, and left little time to pursue interests unrelated to their livelihood. The Bürgertum treated the working class, with their lack of a secondary education, with certain contempt, without considering their economic destitution. At the same time, they feared that their growing political strength would eventually threaten their dominance.

1847-1919, Julius Meisner, Tagebuch 1868-1876 (Diary 1868-1876), diary. Julius Meisner describes his life as a fraternity student with its rituals, and flirtations, but also recounts his hikes to enjoy nature and visits to concerts and museums. He briefly elaborates on paintings he saw in the museum and in passing, mentions the books he is reading, his piano playing and his joining a church choir. One of the fraternity members, he states without comment, calls Bismarck a scoundrel who should be hanged, but otherwise makes no further political statement. Meisner mainly conveys how much he enjoys life as a fraternity student. I included his diary because in spite of its superficial nature, his interest in literature, visits to museums and concerts illustrate the integral and essential role these cultural attributes play in his life.

255 Julius Meisner, Tagebuch 1868-1876, 1166/I.2 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
1849-1940, Wilhelm Emil Seelmann-Eggebert, no title (*Lebenserinnerungen, Memoirs*), written 1939 at age of 90. Wilhelm Emil Seelmann-Eggebert’s father, a textile merchant, familiarizes his son, from his early age on, with German literature and art by taking him to museums. The north German dialect they speak at home might have inspired his passionate interest in the origins of the German language, because already during his *Gymnasium* years, he learns Gothic and Medieval German languages. He contends that the relative lax discipline at his *Gymnasium* allowed students to develop their individual gifts and was responsible for producing a number of very successful men. His father dies during his university years, and only the sacrifices of his mother made it possible for him to complete his education in classical German and German philology. As a student he spends long hours volunteering in the university library where he is employed after graduating.

After completing his dissertation, he works for the National Library, and in addition lectures at the university. In the subsequent years he publishes numerous books on the subjects of Low German language and the medieval history of various North German and Danish tribes. Seelmann-Eggebert’s diary reflects a strong lifelong desire to deepen his knowledge in a variety of academic fields. This desire might have been his individual character trait, but it certainly was supported by the humanist tradition of the *Bildungsbürgertum*—to expand one’s intellectual horizon. The historian Bruce Bueno de Mequita states that these intellectual ambitions of the *Bürgertum* were responsible for

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256 Wilhelm Emil Seelmann-Eggebert, no title (*Lebenserinnerungen*), 162,II Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
Germany’s accomplishments; Seelmann-Eggebert’s prolific scientific contributions supports this premise.\textsuperscript{257}

1853-1921, Prof. Adolp Mathaei, \textit{Erinnerungen aus der Kriegszeit 1914-19}, (Memories of the war 1914-19), diary.\textsuperscript{258} Adolph Mathaei, a Gymnasium philologian, teaches theology, Latin and Greek. He has five sons who each, at the outbreak of the war, eagerly volunteer to join the army. He writes how he is being envied for having five sons serving the country, but he states: “They fail to consider the worries they cause their parents.” At the start of the war, he is convinced Germany will be victorious within six months. When in 1918, at the end of the war, sailors of the navy start the revolution in Germany he is outraged. He writes his son who, while a prisoner of war, reads Homer, attends lectures and concerts offered by other prisoners. Mathaei’s diary evidences strong patriotic feelings and the initial enthusiasm for the war. But more importantly, his writing again provides evidence of the comfort \textit{Bildungsbürger} gain in adverse times from reading Homer, deepening their knowledge and listening to classical music.

1854-1924, Eva Steltzer, \textit{Tagebuch 1876-1883} (Diary 1876-1883), written 1876-1880.\textsuperscript{259} Eva Steltzer writes of being able to play the piano and organ proficiently before graduating from the Lyceum. After the customary six month training as a teacher, she is briefly employed as governess in an aristocratic household until her marriage to a pastor. Her diary covers mainly the two years before she marries. She repeatedly writes of her struggle to believe in God and her difficulty in accepting the Bible, and as with many of

\textsuperscript{257} Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. \textit{Predicting Politics} (Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 2002), 9-13.
\textsuperscript{258} Adolph Mathaei, 1853-1921, \textit{Erinnerungen aus der Kriegszeit 1914-19}, 69 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
\textsuperscript{259} Eva Steltzer, \textit{Tagebuch 1876-1883}, 1839 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
the other authors, she too mentions her love of the outdoors and frequent visits to museums. Steltzer is fluent in English, takes lessons in Italian and is familiar with the literary works of Lord Byron, Shakespeare, and the then popular “Geschichte der deutschen Nationalliteratur” by Christian Vilmar, which was reissued twenty-three times between 1845 and 1913. Her interest in the arts, and her desire to expand her knowledge, testify to the desire for Bildung in women, in spite of their very limited humanistic education compared to the Gymnasium schooling of boys. The perpetuation of these cultural values depended therefore not just on the Gymnasium, but also on the Bildungsbürgertum’s upbringing in an environment where these ideals were the paradigm. Steltzer’s and other authors’ desire to find solace in Christian belief is reflected in the historian W. Schieder’s claim of Germany’s “vitalization of religiosity” in the later part of the nineteenth century, even as church attendance was declining. The popularity of Vilmar’s book mirrors the strong patriotic and nationalistic trend of that period, which many of these diaries reflect as well.

1858-1946, Rose Fechter, Lebensschicksale, (Destinies), written 1921-1922, 1935. Rose Fechter is the daughter of a Gymnasium teacher who taught Greek and Latin. She attends a Lyceum away from home in Königsberg and writes: “The most memorable event of my youth was when Kaiser Wilhelm I shook my hand during his visit in 1879 as I was standing on the roadside with a group of other girls watching the parade.” Her husband is unsuccessful in his business ventures and after his early death,

\[261\] Rose Fechter, Lebensschicksale, 1838 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
she and her children are left financially destitute. As was the norm for daughters of the Bürgertum, she was not taught any professional skills. To survive, she first works in a household as a maid, and then manages a boarding house while her children stay with relatives. Her youngest son had stayed with her brother-in-law; when the latter dies, Fechter’s employer refuses to let her son stay with her, forcing her to quit her job. To generate an income and provide a home for her youngest daughter and son, Fechter rents a large apartment to allow her to take on boarders. In spite of her low income, she makes it possible for her other sons to complete their tertiary education and her daughter to attend a trade school.

Her life illustrates the shortcomings of the social structure of the Second Reich, where women of the Bildungsbürgertum were not only unable to attain an education of their choice to qualify them for a well-remunerated position, but where such ambitions seen as improper. Some women, as previous diaries show, overcome their educational shortcomings by pursuing intellectual interests to gain knowledge comparable to men’s. For Fechter, the lack of an education meant a significant drop in her social status after her husband’s death left her in poverty because Bürger women’s status depended almost entirely on their husbands. Fechter, to prevent a similar fate for her daughter, ensured that she learned a profession albeit a not well paying one, as they were then unavailable to women. Her enormous sacrifice for her children’s education – neither Gymnasium nor university was free – highlights the determination of the Bildungsbürgertum to avoid falling to the level of the working class. For the same reason, she talks her daughter into marrying a well-off man in spite of their incompatibility. The working class was not only
looked down upon because of what was considered lowly jobs they performed, but also for their lack of education i.e. Bildung.

1859-1939, Julius Waßner, *Jugenderinnerungen 1859-1920* (Memories of my youth 1859-1920), written 1935.\(^{262}\) Dr. Julius Waßner grows up in the border town Hadersleben, which at that time belonged to Germany, but previously had been Danish. After graduating he studies and then pursues a career in Germany as a Gymnasium teacher. It seems he is not ambivalent about his nationality because he is attracted to German nationalistic organizations. He never joins a political party since, he contends, they represent his patriotic feeling insufficiently. In his diary, he mainly describes the history of the small border town, Hadersleben, he grew up in, and the history of its alternating Danish/German nationality. Hadersleben had been Danish during his mother’s youth, but became German after the German-Danish war of 1864. As a result, she was well versed in the literature of both countries. He describes how the German part of the population enthusiastically welcomed the Prussian troops as they marched in, while the native Danes resented the takeover. In 1920, its population decided in a plebiscite to revert back to Danish sovereignty.

When Hadersleben was Prussian, his parents befriended Countess Eulenburg, whose brother was the confidant of the Kaiser. His family was astonished by the countess’ ability to play the piano and cello, converse in foreign languages and her high educational level. It exemplifies the contrast to small German cities, where the

\(^{262}\) Julius Waßner, *Jugenderinnerungen 1859-1920*, 1800 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
Bildungsbürgertum, for the most part, had the well-versed Gymnasium education and plays an instrument.

1868-1943, Theodor Wolff, *Meines Sohnes Tagebuch 1906-13*, (Diary about my son 1906-13), diary. Theodor Wolff does not complete the Gymnasium and complains about tedious presentations by uninspiring teachers. Other authors voice similar gripes, and a few regret that the repetitious teaching method of their educators robbed them of enjoying the classics later in life. Though they rarely mention other shortcomings of the Gymnasium, such as its failure to expose students to contemporary art or literature and the neglect of classical music. Instead of being introduced to Germany’s rich musical heritage, students in their music education were limited to singing traditional folksongs. The profound knowledge many authors reveal of classical music and contemporary literature was thus autodidactic, evidencing their desire for Bildung. In the same spirit, almost all authors write of their frequent visits to museums, plays and concerts.

The humanist ideology had absorbed many of the Greek ideals and amalgamated them with Luther’s interpretation of Christianity to create guiding values for Germany’s strongly protestant upper class. These values developed into a unique German cultural ideology and were responsible for the pursuit of its previously mentioned cultural attributes. Historical research in the nineteenth century established a more realistic interpretation of the ancient Greek culture. For example essays in the student paper, *Der Anfang*, condemning the prevailing slavery in ancient Greece, illustrate this more critical

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263 Theodor Wolff, *Meines Sohnes Tagebuch 1906-13*, 1351-I Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
264 In 1890 of the Germany population 63 % were Protestants, 36% Catholic, 1.2% Jewish. (Meyers Konversations-Lexikon (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1897).
view of the Hellenist social construct by the younger generation. The new historical perspective of ancient Greek and Rome was partially responsible for these nations assuming a more peripheral role in education, but they did not cause Gymnasia to devalue the fundamental paradigms they associated with their cultures. Attica remained the ideal nation on earth, despite its shortcomings and tribulations. As such, ancient Greek and Roman societies continued to be the preferred choice for teaching students ethics and to strive for the pursuit of higher non-materialistic interests. The continuing quest for Bildung and interest in the arts described in these diaries reflect the success of these teachings.

Wolff took selected courses at the university and eventually gained exceptional knowledge in all aspects of Germany’s contemporary culture. In spite of his negative school experience, Wolff was strongly committed to the nation’s cultural values and became one of its foremost representatives by excelling in many of its different facets. In this diary, Wolff talks about his children, the affection he has for his family and their move from Paris to Berlin, but provides little other information. His brief biography provided by the Tagebucharchiv depicts Wolff as very influential journalist during the Kaiserreich and the Weimar Republic, which led me to explore his other diaries and activities. Evidence of his importance as a journalist in the late Kaiserreich and the Weimar Republic is the prize Germany established 1962 in his name for outstanding journalistic achievements.

265 Barbizon Der Anfang, 44-48.
266 Srbik, Geist und Geschichte vom deutschen Humanismus bis zur Gegenwart, 166.
Wolff was the Paris correspondence for the *Berliner Tageblatt* from 1894 to 1906, before being promoted to editor-in-chief, a position he held to 1933.\textsuperscript{267} As a correspondent in Paris, he acquaints his German readers with contemporary French artists, including the sculptor Auguste Rodin. Later as editor-in-chief, he converts the conservative *Berliner Tageblatt* to a more liberal paper that vehemently promotes democracy. He believes, and conveys to his reader, that the Kaisereich in 1913 was heading for a domestic crisis and that its government structure in its present form had little chance to survive.\textsuperscript{268}

He uses the *Berliner Tageblatt* to enhance his readers’ political awareness and in this regard educates them in the function and potential of the press. To this effect he argues, in often-provocative articles, that Germany, which is striving to expand commerce and to excel in technology, science and the arts also needs to aim for representation by the people and not be dominated by a small, provincial self-serving upper class. He accuses Germany of being a mismanaged caste-system for which he does not blame individuals, but its antiquated constitution and government structure.\textsuperscript{269} His newspaper, in addition to advancing political awareness, also makes a point of addressing general social grievances. The *Berliner Tageblatt*’s increased circulation from 95,000 to 245,000 by 1913 indicates an acceptance and compliance with of his views by a formidable portion of the Berlin population of two million.\textsuperscript{270} The success of his

\textsuperscript{268} Ibid., 10.
\textsuperscript{269} Ibid., 123-126.
newspaper is even more impressive when considering that Germany in 1908 had 3,887 newspapers with a maximum individual circulation of 100,000.271

The popularity of the paper attests to the Bürgertum’s increasing political orientation and their growing desire for a more democratic system and self-determination. In some of his essays, Wolff discusses this trend and writes: to help a people emerge from their present dependency on a democracy, they have to be accustomed to owning property and must be taught to be responsible towards a greater good, as well as to develop self-determination, self-confidence and to internalize their liberty. The Bürgertum had, for the most part, established these attributes, but for the working class, the majority, they were largely lacking, which he fails to clarify.

He claims that the longer World War I lasted, the general German population, as well as the aristocracy, were increasingly vying for a more democratic system.272 He contends it would be impossible to reinstitute the uncritical obedience of the common man after they shared the trenches with the aristocracy in World War I. These veterans would demand participation in ruling the country and would not blindly follow policies concocted and dictated by a small elite as in the past, he argues.273 He advocates a more democratic government, but without clearly repudiating the monarchy. During the war, the government occasionally prohibited the Berliner Tageblatt’s publications because of articles considered too provocative.274

273 Ibid., 245.
274 Ibid., 27.
The desire to implement a more democratic system reflected a general trend among many European states to which progressive industrialization was a major contributing factor. Because the lower class was needed to perpetuate industrialization, their voices had to be heard and their demands could no longer be discarded. Many of these authors identify with the people having a stronger voice, but often in the form of a parliamentary monarchy rather than in a republic. The better understanding of democratic values also holds true for Gymnasium pupils of the Kaiserreich. This is evident by their contribution to their school paper Der Anfang in particular their discussion of the discrepancy between a true democracy and the one practiced in ancient Athens, where the large slave population was excluded from the concept of equality.\(^{275}\) This demonstrates that in the final years of the monarchy, the democratic concept had become an integral part of the Bürgertum youth’s Weltanschauung. The mourning in these diaries for the demise of the monarchy, however, indicates their preference for a parliamentary monarchy over the Weimar Republic.

Following World War I, in November 1918 Wolff became a cofounder of the Deutsche Demokratische Partei (DDP). He contends the constitution of the Weimar Republic was too much the product of intellectuals; it was designed for a nation with a long democratic tradition, which Germany was lacking.\(^{276}\) The government of the Weimar Republic made use of the extensive contacts with foreign diplomats, which

\(^{275}\) Barbizon Der Anfang, 44-48.
\(^{276}\) Bröhan. Theodor Wolff, 275.
Wolff had established as a journalist, and frequently sent him on secret missions abroad.277

Wolff was well acquainted with many members of Germany’s literary establishment, such as Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Thomas Mann, Andre Gide, Stefan Zweig, and Gerhard Hauptmann. He himself authored novels and plays, of which “Niemand weiß es” (Nobody Knows It) was performed in Berlin under the direction of Max Reinhardt, a renowned film and artistic director. Wolff with his broad intellectual interests and passion for arts personifies Germany’s cultural ideology in its prime.

His outspokenness as a journalist and being Jewish made him a prime target of the Nazi-regime and caused him to leave Germany in the night of the Reichstagsbrand, in February 1933. He settled in southern France, where he wrote autobiographical essays until he was captured and sent to a concentration camp where he died 1943.278 In essays written while in exile in France, Wolff states: democratic constitutions vary among nations, but fundamental principals of a democratic culture bind all. They include humanity, respect for the individual, equality, freedom of expression supported by laws, which protect each member of a society and society as a whole. Otherwise, he states, the label “democracy” is just an empty vessel.279 Wolff’s intense political and cultural engagements are the exception, but also indicate Germany’s democratic tendencies in the final years of the Kaisereich. Most of these authors were politically passive, but not Weltfremd (unworldly), which is frequently associated with the self-orientation of the

278 Bröhan. Theodor Wolff, 167.
279 Ibid., 256.
Bildungsbürgertum. For the population of most democratic countries, political passivity is more the rule than the exception, and Germany’s Bürgertum did not differ in this regard. However, roughly one third of these authors were active in their community since contributing to the common good was part of the cultural ideology.

1872-1914, Leopold von Troschke, Berichte über China-Expedition 1900-1 (Report of an Expedition to China, 1900-1), diary. 280

Leopold von Troschke graduates from a school run by the clergy, and, after getting a law degree, joins the military to become a carrier officer. He takes part in the China military campaign of 1901; from 1904-6 he is a member of the general staff and learns Japanese during that time. With the rank of captain he is sent to Japan to study their military, the first German officer to be assigned to such a mission. In 1909, he is promoted to company commander and sent to the front where he is killed in action during the first month of World War I. During his voyage to China, he publishes an on-board newspaper and gives lectures about China’s culture and religion. In his diaries he portrays the Chinese living conditions and expresses his admiration for their architecture and the beauty of the countryside; Buddha-temple and the emperor’s palace particularly impressed him. He regrets how many artifacts the “barbarians of the west” have already destroyed.

Of interest are his comments about the armies of various countries. He admires the English soldier most and envies their sport activities, but considers French officers undisciplined. He describes Japanese officers as excellent, with great self-discipline, but

280 Leopold von Troschke, Berichte über China-Expedition 1900-1. 30/II Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
is appalled by their screaming at soldiers during training exercises. Officers in the German army, he states, were promoted according to merit and not birthright, but he accuses particularly older German soldiers of going too much by the book even if circumstances require flexibility.\textsuperscript{281} He writes of being victorious when leading an attack on a Chinese position by disobeying an order because the circumstances had changed from the time it was issued. He states it was the only major victory of the China campaign and the field marshal praises him for his independent judgment. His autonomous action, self-assuredness and independent thinking can partially be attributed to the feeling of superiority which humanistic education instilled in its students. It also gave Gymnasium students the courage to publish the school paper \textit{Der Anfang} in spite of wide condemnation of such undertaking.

The recent more realistic perception of the ancient Greek and Roman cultures changed their role from an ideological template for the humanistic ideology to a steppingstone of mankind’s progress. The exploration of ancient societies as part of the Gymnasium education, laid the foundation for the Bildungsbürger’s impartial observance of other civilizations.\textsuperscript{282} Troschke’s and other diary’s’ authors open-mindedness toward other cultures and anthropological interest can be attributed to this cosmopolitan education. It allowed him the unprejudiced appreciation of Chinese and Japanese culture and art, and stood in contrast to the prevailing Darwinian notion of viewing non-Western cultures as inferior. His lectures to fellow officers during the passage to China on this

\textsuperscript{281} As of 1813 Germany’s army recruited its officers not only from the aristocracy, but from all levels of society that had a secondary education. (Meyers Konversations-Lexikon, 1896 ed., s. v. “Offiziere”)

land’s culture indicate that they shared his interest in other societies, but also their desire for Bildung.

1872-1952, Friedrich Adolf, Mein Aufenthalt in Rom (My stay in Rome), diary. After getting his law degree, Friedrich Adolf opens a law firm, and in 1901 becomes a councilman in the city of Lübeck, and later its police commissioner. He writes of promoting the arts as a police commissioner and organizing the city’s food supply during World War I to prevent the starvation of its citizens. He is dismissed from his post in 1933 because of his opposition to the Hitler regime. In his diary he writes about enjoying nature and hiking, and describes in detail the architecture of Notre Dame he admired while in Paris. On a journey to Rome, he stops in Venice to visit its museums, and writes how their paintings enthrall him like a religious experience. In Rome, he admires the ancient art of Greece and Rome, as well as more recent sculptures and paintings. A bust of Zeus reminds him of Homer, whom he quotes in Greek script in his diary. While in Rome, he remembers Goethe’s poems about this ancient metropolis, and reminiscences about Martin Luther’s visit to the Holy City.

Adolf’s strong religious feeling become evident when he writes: “The sermon by the Pope overwhelmed me.” As with many of these authors, he is very religious while at the same time, his appreciation of the arts has a strong spiritual element. Even though the admiration of art dominates his impressions in Italy he also describes life in the streets, and praises the self-assuredness of Italy’s young women, as well as the beauty of the countryside. Adolf’s appreciation of various forms of art, different cultures and the social

283 Friedrich Adolf, Mein Aufenthalt in Rom. 1085,3 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
interaction of the common man exemplifies the Bildungbürgertum’s versatile level of knowledge and interests, Bildung, and again their cosmopolitan attitude.

Born in 1870, he belongs to the group of religious authors of these diaries whose career is cut short in 1933 because his ethical values prevented him from conforming to the ideological demands of the Nazi regime.

1873-1952. Dr. Rudolf Fuchs, Erinnerungen - Die Tätigkeit des Dr. Rudolf Fuchs, (Memoirs -The Activities of Dr. Rudolf Fuchs), written 1938.284 Rudolf Fuchs grows up as part of the Catholic minority in a small Lutheran rural town. He makes a point of stating that his parents would not have tolerated any discrimination against Jews in his village. After his father dies while he is still young, his mother can only raise the tuition for his Gymnasium with difficulty. As a pupil he takes hikes together with his priest, who, he writes: “answered many of my questions and introduced me to the beauty of nature.” He contends: “My Gymnasium teachers bestowed on their students humanist ideology, ethics and patriotism, while the religion teacher conveyed the beauty of the Christian religion and ignited my life long faith in God.” At the university, he finds graduates of the Gymnasium outperform Realschule students even in math. As a university student, he is much intrigued by the social disparity between rich and poor, the lot of the industrial worker, and finds the economic environment to be incompatible with the demands of the Christian religion. To become more knowledgeable in the social sciences, he takes courses in economics, law and sociology in addition to majoring in

284 Rudolf Fuchs, Erinnerungen – Die Tätigkeit des Dr. R. Fuchs, 875 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
engineering. Fuchs also attends meetings of the Social Democrats and State Assembly, where he is much impressed by their informed discussions of current issues.

In his first employment as a civil engineer, his coworkers frown upon his social attitude. To better act on his social concerns he takes a civil service position as factory inspector in a government agency. This agency reinforces the 1879 legislation that protects factory workers. As an inspector, he ensures the safety of the workplace, and promotes acceptable working conditions, but also recommends additional legislation to better protect the labor force. He argues that the wages workers receive for a ten to eleven hour workday leaves them in poverty because they are insufficient to pay for sufficient clothing, food and decent housing. He opines that this misery causes the lower class to feel Christianity favors the rich, which is why they abandon religion. His deep religious feelings motivate him to use his position to improve the conditions of the worker wherever he can; in addition, he is active in a socialist organization that helps workers acquire houses with small gardens. Companies, fearing the cost, frequently resist his demand for better working conditions or his efforts to prevent their exploiting natural resources. At the same time, he completes his doctoral thesis about social policies and lectures at the university on this subject. In some instances, the press criticizes his agency for working with the Social Democrats, but when their new management starts to favor employers, they side with the worker. This new direction his employer takes conflicts with Fuchs’ ideals and causes him to resign.

For a government to establish an institution with the purpose of reinforcing and improving legislation for the betterment of working conditions in factories was
revolutionary at that time, particularly since it was often opposed by industry. This type of legislation reflects the social responsibility the Kaiserrreich repeatedly demonstrated. The duty to care for the wellbeing of the needy is part of the monarchy’s cultural ideology to which not only the aristocracy but also the Bürgertum commit, as these diaries show. This benevolent attitude of the monarchy contributed to the preference for a parliamentary monarchy in the post World War I period by many members of the Bürgertum.

Fuchs, in spite of being a pacifist, volunteers to join the army as the war breaks out in 1914. Together with most of the authors of these diaries, he accepts the official version that Germany had been attacked and was victimized. As an officer in charge of fortifying the Belgian city of Antwerp, he tries to establish amicable relations with the local population. Reflecting his cosmopolitan attitude, he makes a special effort to become familiar with their customs and learns their local dialect to be able to read their newspapers and literature. After the war, in an effort to help prevent Germany’s radicalization, he joins the Zentrumspartei and runs unsuccessfully for office. In the post-war years, Fuchs works for the Ministry of Labor as a civil servant where he advances to the high-ranking position of Ministerialdirektor and is involved formulating various social legislations. He opposes the Nazi regime and when they come to power in 1933, he takes early retirement at age sixty.

After the war, he claims that humanistic education became less valued; because of the atrocities committed during the war and the suffering Germany endured, educators started to question its ideals and its efforts. To convince the public of the benefits of a
humanistic education, Fuchs joins and later heads the Karlsruhe organization “Friends of
the humanistic education.” He contends humanistic education made him recognize the
importance and worth of intellectual and spiritual pursuits, and prevented him from
assigning too much significance to material values. He states that God and His revelation
in nature had guided him throughout his life and considers religion to be the educator of
mankind.

Religion guided Fuchs more than any of the other authors in every aspect of his
life, which is particularly evidenced by his strong concern for the wellbeing of the
underprivileged and by his ethical values. His humanistic education with its emphasis on
Bildung was responsible for his interest beyond science namely in literature and nature
and for his cosmopolitan orientation that caused him to view Germany’s enemies without
prejudice but as human beings.

1873-1968, Martin Hoffmann, Briefe 1883-1896 (Letters 1883-1896), letters.285
At the age of thirteen, Martin Hoffmann, a pastor’s son, began studying Latin, Greek,
French and piano, to which Hebrew is added when he turns fifteen; in the same year he
moves to a larger city to attend the Gymnasium. He tells of the many German classics he
reads during his high school years, of becoming fluent in Latin and Greek, and the
exhausting demands of the Gymnasium. His personal interests represent the customary
cultural orientation of the Bürgertum, including enjoyment of nature, music,
contemporary literature and poetry, especially by Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866).286 He
shows some interest in local politics and comments on his strong religious feelings. To

285 Martin Hoffmann, Briefe (Letters) 1883-1896, 996/V Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
286 F. Rückert is today mainly known for his “Kindertotenlieder” G. Mahler set to music.
become an educator he majors in theology, literature and geography, subjects he then teaches at a *Lyceum* before becoming its principal.

Recurring themes of these early diaries are the love of nature and literature, but above all their belief in God and the inner strength they draw from religion. Familiarity with contemporary literature depends on the initiative of the individual student; in the *Gymnasium* they tediously memorize the classics, which, as many authors complained, dampened their interest in these works later in life. Their almost universal interest in contemporary literature therefore surprises and can only be explained by the desire of intellectual pursuit, which the humanistic education instilled in them.

1875-1972. Annemarie Pallat, *Meine Lebensgeschichte für Peter* (The story of my life for Peter), written 1901-67.\(^{287}\) Annemarie Pallat comes from a well-to-do family. She learns English and French at the *Lyceum* and after graduating takes a position as a governess in Geneva, Switzerland, which also helps her improve her French language skills. In Geneva she signs up for courses in French literature, and archeology, and becomes acquainted with the famous art-historian Jacob Burckhardt and his interpretation of art. His elucidations are of particular interest to her as she is considering becoming a painter. Earlier she had taken some painting courses and decides to improve these skills by attending an art institute in Paris for three years. In the next year, she travels to Egypt and Greece to explore their architecture and ancient sculptures. Later Pallat describes a bicycling tour she makes together with her girlfriend from the Bretagne to Paris. She expresses her passion for classical music by writing: “The religious feelings I am

\(^{287}\) Annemarie Pallat, *Meine Lebensgeschichte für Peter*, 475, 1-85 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
experiencing when listening to J.S. Bach’s Passion of St. Mathew exceed those of a church service."

In spite of the Lyceum’s failure to familiarize students with contemporary literature and art, Pallat’s strong interests and knowledge in these subjects provide evidence of the degree to which such pursuits were part of the Bürgertum’s culture. Her long trips abroad and the bicycle tour of Paris, at that time unusual for a woman, demonstrate her independence. They also illustrate her desire to break out of the passive role assigned to women of that period.

The man she marries works for the Ministry education where he proposes and implements new teaching methods in Germany’s schools; in his free time, he studies ancient cultures. Together they take trips to view artworks in Germany and abroad. They regularly entertain friends with whom they make music or discuss the works of contemporary authors such as Carl Zuckmayer (1896–1977). To earn extra money she develops and markets handicraft and weaving-kits for children. When World War I breaks out she writes: “The Wandervogel Group went into the trenches with works by Goethe, Hölderlin and Nietzsche in their duffel bags.” During the war when food becomes scarce, Pallat considers it unpatriotic to buy food on the black market and refuses to do so even when her children go to bed hungry. As further evidence of her unwavering patriotism she sacrifices her jewelry to the previously mentioned “gold for iron” drive in support of the war and harbors in her house, recuperating wounded soldiers. In her diaries she only briefly comments on major political events such as the
Versailles Treaty. In the post-war years, her husband encourages her to publish articles about educating children in the arts based on her own experience.

Her husband is still employed at the pedagogical institute in Berlin when Hitler comes to power. He rejects an offer to teach at the university in Halle, because he fears if he leaves, the Nazis will bring his institute under their total control. She claims all intellectual women of their acquaintance oppose Hitler; some even form a circle of like-minded dissidents. Pallat never becomes a member of this circle, but on occasion attends lectures by guest speakers they sponsor. After an informant denounces the group, some of its members were imprisoned while others were even executed. She writes of reading about the events of the Kristallnacht in a newspaper during a visit to Rome and states: “We did not understand what was happening at the time and only many years later learned the real truth.” Since these events of the Kristallnacht were self-evident it is not clear what she means by this statement.

Ms. Pallat’s and her husband’s intellectual pursuits and appreciation of the arts exemplified the strong cultural ideology of the Bildungbürgertum. Berlin’s rich cultural scene and pool of likeminded people was a perfect location to stimulate and satisfy these interests. Uncommon for a woman in those years was her independent spirit and willingness to explore new territory, such as developing and selling educational toys and publishing articles about child pedagogical.

She as well as other female authors of these early diaries was not as demure as women of that period are frequently depicted. Instead, they were active representatives of Germany’s cultural paradigm, as is evident by their charitable engagements, music
making and forming of book-circles. To a certain degree, their confidence in the Kaiserreich and its perceived benevolence were responsible for a general disinterest in political events. The historian Friedrich Meinecke expresses this attitude in his autobiography by stating: “Politics did not enter our conversations because we trusted Bismarck’s ability.” However, of Wilhelm II’s reign, he as well as the Bürgertum was more critical. Particularly during the war, their trust in the government eroded and they gradually became politically more aware as evident in some of these diaries.

1875-1950, Hermann Wilhelm Petersen, Erinnerungen 1875-1945 (Memories 1875-1945), written ?-1945. Hermann Wilhelm Petersen, a pastor, chose the same profession as his father. He describes how the extraordinary celebration Wilhelm I’s ninetieth birthday in 1888 united the German people. Later that year, he is very touched by Kaiser’s Friedrich III illness and death. About his youth, he writes of visiting art museums with his father, the enjoyment he finds in hiking, of instruction in religion and how he learns to play piano and violin. He is very impressed by Jesus’ humility and modesty, and claims they guided him throughout his life. Such modesty was, in general, socially expected behavior in Germany while self-promotion was frowned on. Music plays an important role throughout his life and he tells of getting together with his mother and friends to make music. It goes without saying and as is evident from his diaries that they played classical music. Like other authors, he states J.S. Bach’s Passion of St. Mathew and Mass in B-minor gives him a foretaste of a “higher world,” similar to the feelings he experiences in Gothic cathedrals. It shows how much music, but also

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289 Hermann Wilhelm Petersen, Erinnerungen 1875-1945, 1528/V Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
architecture, were intertwined with religion and are part of the emotional foundation of
Germany’s cultural ideology.

In the Gymnasium, German history lessons, he argues, were responsible for his
strong patriotism while political indoctrination, when introduced during the war, did not
add to such feelings. Teachers of classical philology conveyed effectually the spirit of
ancient Greece and Rome and love for their literature he writes, while they avoided topics
such as the Kulturkampf, discussions about the Social Democrats and general political
issues. It was therefore left to him to become informed about current events, which he did
by reading newspapers that attests to his desire for Bildung. He, as well as others authors,
voice regrets about being made familiar with only the art of ancient Greek and Rome, and
not with contemporary artistic creations. The deep understanding by some authors of
more recent classical music, arts and architecture therefore surprises. The exposure to
classic concepts of beauty was obviously able to teach students recognition and
admiration of the arts and beauty in general; such interests were also initiated and
supported by many families. As previously shown in the seventeenth century, Lutheran
pastors had been instrumental in establishing among rural families the love for music and
Bildung; this tradition continued to be cherished not only by the Bildungsbürgertum but,
as I will show below, by the Bürgertum in general.

Petersen attends university lectures dealing with the amalgamation of Christian
religion with the spirit of ancient Greece and Rome, and liberation of religion from
Catholic dogmas by the Reformation. He writes, that in his fraternity of mostly theology
students, politics and the latest scientific developments are frequent topics. As a pastor,
he notices that at the beginning of the war people turned more to religion than before and
churches services were well attended. However, the longer the war lasts, the fewer
people are consoled by church sermons, and he argues that religious belief has to reassert
itself after World War I; this is in contrast to diaries of the immediate post World War II
period, which report people flocking to Churches. Petersen has doubts about the moral
legitimacy of World War I, which he tries to overcome by arguing that Germany had no
choice but to defend itself after being attacked from three sides by enemies that lacked
ethics or humanity. All of the authors of these diaries, without exception, believe
Germany is the victim and did not contribute to the outbreak of this war, which explains
the uproar when the Versailles Treaty accused Germany of having initiated the hostilities.
His description of severe food shortages following the war, but more so of the financial
losses he suffers due to inflation, illustrate the social upheaval the war caused.

In 1927, he assumes a position as a pastor and religious instructor at a boarding
school, and laments the widespread resentment of religion not only by students, but also
teachers. Other authors indicate that they, as holders of the ideals of the humanistic
education, suffered similar disillusionment. The brutality mankind inflicted on each other
during the war caused the trust in God and belief in betterment of humanity to suffer
greatly as is clearly evident in the post-war diaries. The revival of religion after the even
more savage World War II therefore is surprising. In 1934, when Petersen gives a sermon
that pays tribute to the exiled Kaiser’s seventy-fifth birthday, but not to the anniversary of
the coming to power of the NSDAP, he is officially reprimanded. Later the Nazis
criticize him for neglecting to ring the church bells on Hitler’s birthday. He joins and
later heads the *Bekennende Kirche* in Nauenburg, which Pastor Martin Niemöller had founded as a counter movement to the *Deutsch-Christliche Kirche*, which the Nazis had launched. Many of the authors born during the monarchy write of the importance and guiding role religion plays in their lives even if they do not regularly go to church.

In 1935, Peterson, as a member of the *Bekennende Kirche*, is accused of “High treason against the German people, *Führer* and God,” and he resigns from his post. In the same year he quits his teaching position because his school had been converted into a National Socialistic educational institution (NAPOLA), an elite school for Nazi-youth. In his new position at an institute for recuperating tuberculosis patients, he mostly refrains from religious activity. He writes that many pastors are incarcerated during the Hitler years, including pastor Niemöller, who was sent to the concentration camp *Sachsenhausen* in 1937. Initially Petersen openly opposes Hitler and his regime, but later hides his opinion out of fear of being denounced, losing his income or being imprisoned.

Peterson’s adherence to his religious belief and ethical values together with his continuous quest for expanding his knowledge are exemplary for the cultural ideology of the *Bildungsbürgertum*. Even though he made concessions in order to survive the Nazi regime he does not compromise his humanistic ideology and ethical values.

1878-1949, Karl Mayer, *Lebenserinnerungen eines 70 jährigen* (Memories of a septuagenarian), written 1949.²⁹⁰ Karl Mayer finishes his *Gymnasium* education in evening courses while serving as an apprentice in a pharmacy away from home. After completing his apprenticeship, he travels as journeyman for the obligatory two years

²⁹⁰ Karl Mayer, *Lebenserinnerungen eines 70 jährigen*. 1846 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
throughout Germany before studying at the university pharmacology and medicine. To finance his education, he works the nightshifts at pharmacies. Like almost all the previous authors, he writes of visiting opera performances, concerts and hikes he takes on weekends to enjoy nature.

After graduating as a physician, he marries and takes a position as a country doctor responsible for treating patients in twelve villages to which his wife drives him in a horse drawn carriage. When the war breaks out he joins the army as a medical doctor. A few years after the war, he sells his rural medical practice and moves his family to the city to provide his son with the opportunity to attend the Gymnasium. Here Mayer takes employment as a physician in a coal mining company, which provides him with a secure income throughout the depression. To reduce the plight of less fortunate during this period, he provides financial support for destitute families. In the ensuing years he purchases a medical practice in a small town, specifically mentions volunteering his service to train Red Cross personal and treating SA-Men, stating: “Because my medical practice was open to every one.”

He believes Germany is making progress under Hitler because: The loyalty and efficiency of the German people could master any adversities.” He regrets how little he can influence the negative aspects of the regime. He claims the German people draw their strength from their unwavering ideals, but that their unbending loyalty also plunges them into the abyss. According to Mayer, a whole people should not be judged by atrocities committed by a few. He writes: “The Autobahn and the Olympic games will at one time

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291 SA (Strurmabteilung): a paramilitary organization of the NSDAP that subdued their political opponents by force during the Weimar Republic. (Knaurs Lexicon A-Z, 1956 ed. s.v. “SA.”)
stand as the positive accomplishments of this time.” He contends the men of Hitler’s entourage failed to intervene when he (Hitler), who inspired these achievements, became mentally deranged. He further states: “It will be these men history will judge because they caused our downfall.” Mayer’s diary, written four years after the collapse of Hitler’s reign, reflects the dissonance of some members of the Bürgertum, who were initially sympathetic to Hitler and his cause, but now were confronted with the atrocities committed during the Third Reich.

Weimar Republic in its last years had already discarded democratic principles and Hitler’s more dictatorial methods and voiding of human rights were thus not an abrupt change from a democracy to a dictatorship, but rather a continuation of Germany’s recent political past. Hitler not only revived Germany’s economy, but also reestablished order after the misery, chaos and anarchy of the Weimar Republic’s final years. The reestablished order was an important factor in members of the Bürgertum accepting the new regime, despite the fact it was a negation of their own humanistic and ethic standards.

Mayer despairs because of the discrepancy between Hitler’s initial concepts and success, and the atrocities of his rule in the following years and writes: “Was my life a failure and my life long striving and sole wish to help my fellow men in vain?” He was despondent about the German nation being judged by the doings of a “number of depraved villains.” He is the only author to clearly express such despair, which others must have felt as well. The ideological paradigm of Germany’s upper class was so totally
opposite to the realm and paradigm of the Third Reich that it prevented at its onset many Bildungsbürger from recognizing the Nazi’s maliciousness.

The Bürgertum believed in Germany’s long tradition of a benevolent government, benevolence such as the social legislation introduced during the Kaiserreich. Hitler initially appeared to continue this tradition by creating jobs and order. Reviving the economy and overriding many demands of the Versailles Treaty prevented the Bürgertum, particularly in the beginning, from realizing how fundamentally opposed and incompatible the paradigms of their humanist ideology was to that of the NSDAP. When they recognized the mutual exclusiveness of the two value systems, it created dissonance and often denial. Mayer exemplifies this conflict; his humanitarian acts and interest in the arts and literature, reflect his commitment to Germany’s cultural ideology, which he later realizes has nothing in common with Nazi ideology. To justify particularly to himself his early sympathy for Hitler he places the burden for the crimes committed during the Third Reich on Hitler’s entourage and accuses them of having failed to intervene when Hitler became insane.

The authors of these diaries, men or women, display a strong desire for Bildung, not only by overcoming formidable adversities to gain a Gymnasium education, but also through lifelong striving to expand their knowledge in literature and the arts. The attributes of Bildung such as reading of the classics and listening to classical music comforted many, not unlike religion, in the trenches of World War I, as POWs or in other trying circumstances. However, Bildung did not replace religion, as evident by the
strength some authors gained from their religious belief while other express their Christian orientation by serving the community in various forms.

Numerous authors illustrate the cosmopolitan stance the Gymnasium was teaching through their unbiased appreciation of foreign cultures. When in the later years these diarists were confronted with Nazi ideology, some took early retirement to avoid corrupting their ethical standards by complying with its demands. Only one author believes in Hitler’s initial good intentions. After the collapse of the Third Reich he has extreme difficulty dealing with the atrocities the Nazis committed and blames the Hitler’s entourage for not intervening when the Führer became “mentally deranged.” He expresses his despair by stating: “Was my life a failure and my life long striving and sole wish to help my fellow men in vain?” The humanistic ideology was such a deep-rooted part of his and many other members of the Bildungsbürgertum that they had difficulty grasping a paradigm that had a total disregard for their cultural and ethical values. These authors show how strongly Germany’s cultural ideology and education had formed them and was guiding their behavior.

**Review of Diaries - Part II**

The diarists completed their secondary education after the school reform of 1890. The school reform of 1900 made secondary education accessible to a larger section of the population, the Bürgertum, instead of a privileged few, the Bildungsbürgertum. All of the following authors graduated after 1900, some during the monarchy others in the Weimar Republic. The changing social composition which school reforms initiated, the nation’s industrialization, World War I and political transformation all had a profound impact on
Germany’s cultural ideology and ethical values. By evaluating the diaries written in the different periods, my main concern will be their authors’ changing interpretation of the cultural ideology and their adherence to the traditional ethical values.

1883-1957, Maximilian Thum, *Reisebericht: Japan, Siam, Ostasien 1911-1912* (Account of a journey to Japan, Siam and East Asia 1911-1912), diary. Maximilian Thum, the son of a missionary, studies theology and medicine. After graduating as a physician, he travels the world as a ships doctor, and later during his residency specializes in psychiatry. After working at various hospitals, he eventually becomes director of a mental institution, but loses this position in 1933 for not acquiescing to the ideology of the NSDAP. From 1934-41 he is able to find employment as a staff physician, and, after the war, in 1946, becomes director at that institution.

Thum on his visit to Japan is enthused about the energy of its people. He states: “Here even workers study English while riding in a streetcar; on my preceding trip to China, I found such eagerness to learn totally lacking.” He writes most scientists in Japan learn German to keep up with the latest publications in their field. He comments on the importance of Germany’s trade with Japan and that Siemens had supplied the streetcars in Osaka. He finds Japan’s historical buildings, with their beautiful details pleasing, but considers other architecture too foreign to appreciate their beauty. Thum is impressed by the beauty of their parks, but has difficulty finding a contemplative mood in their temple.

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292 Maximilian Thum, *Reisebericht: Japan, Siam, Ostasien 1911-1912. 1042/3-5 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.*
As he continues his trip to Siam (Thailand), he describes extensively this country’s landscape, cities and architecture, but also the Siamese customs and religion. The previous king of Siam, he points out, had been responsible for modernizing his country. Its best high school students are sent to universities in France, England and Germany to learn Western skills as part of their civil service training. He writes that its military is patterned after Germany’s, and German engineers and administration experts operate the postal service, telecommunication, and railroads, and they also own the main trading companies. Thum laments England and France dominating the political scene in Siam while Germany, in spite of its strong presence, lacks political influence and shows no ambition in this regard. He argues that Germany should not participate in England’s and France’s unjust seizure of foreign territory, but as a powerful nation, should make its voice heard and participate in furthering the economic development of these Asian nations.

The trademarks of Germany’s cultural ideology continue to come to the fore in his diary: appreciation of the arts and nature, the desire to gain knowledge and especially its cosmopolitan perspective in admiring foreign cultural accomplishments. The latter includes respecting the sovereignty of nations as evident by admonishing the colonial policies of France and England. As many of the other authors do, he too expresses strong patriotism by ranking Germany as one of the leading nations and by highlighting Germany’s scientific and technical accomplishments. Imperial Germany’s lack of assertiveness, Thum laments, illustrates how new and inexperienced it is at playing the political game on the world stage. His unwillingness to renounce his ethical values causes
him not only to reject the Nazi ideology, but also to accept the consequences by forfeiting
his leading position. His stance indicates the continuing deep rootedness of values the
humanistic education had conveyed.

1884-1945, Felix Hecht, *Tagebuch 1902* (Diary 1902), diary.\(^{293}\) After getting his
PhD in law, Felix Hecht, son of a Jewish antique dealer, opens a law firm in 1913.
During the war, he serves in the army from 1915-1918 and is decorated with the Iron
Cross 2\(^{\text{nd}}\) Class. In the following years, he marries into an aristocratic family, but is
divorced in 1933. Soon thereafter, in the early years of the Nazi regime, he loses his
license to practice law because of anti-Semitic laws forbidding Jews to practice law.
Starting in 1938, he is repeatedly sent to concentration camps where he eventually dies in
1945. An exhibition shown in various German cities in 1989 titled: “In the name of the
German people – judiciary and National Socialism” also featured his biography.

His diary deals mainly with his years at the university. He writes: “As an
elementary school pupil I am the only Jew to be invited to the home of an upper class
Christian family. But this contact ceases during my Gymnasium years, and classmates
only visit me when they need tutoring.” When asked during his high school years to give
a speech in honor of the Kaiser, he declines because he feels such a presentation by a Jew
would not be well received. He frequently comments on various concerts and plays he
attends, as well as on numerous books he reads, including those of contemporary authors
such as Gerhard Hauptmann and Emile Zola, the latter he reads in French.

\(^{293}\) Felix Hecht, *Tagebuch 1902*, 1598 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
His uncle counseled the court of one of Germany’s principalities, and, Hecht claims, could have become a minister had he agreed to be baptized. He bases his university selection on this uncle’s recommendation of the institution with the most professors friendly to Jews. As a freshmen, various fraternities try to recruit him, but withdraw their offers when he informs them that he is Jewish. Hecht writes that Jews are frequently not admitted to Christian fraternities even though only two or three of its members are anti-Semitic. He has no intention of joining a fraternity, but still becomes bitter after the second fraternity withdraws their offer because of his Jewishness. He wonders how educated people can harbor such an attitude; this embitterment surfaces throughout his diary.

He comments that when an acquainted Jewish physician finds out that his fraternity, the Hannoveraner which he once helped to found, did not admit Jews any more, he cancels his membership. Thus, the resentment toward Jews at universities seems have been stronger in the first decades of the twentieth century than previously. He describes the condescending attitude towards his father, particularly from military officers as they pawn their wares in his antique shop. When he decides against getting baptized, his father supports his decision, and advises that as a Jew it is not necessary to worship their traditional God in a temple.

Besides majoring in law, he takes numerous courses in other subjects of his interest, and repeatedly comments on political events. He quotes the historian Theodor Mommsen, who in his praise of the Social Democrats stated: “If August Bebel’s brain would be divided among twelve Junker from east of the river Elbe every one of them
would still have exceptional abilities. “His strong quest for Bildung is especially remarkable when considering his young age; he is eighteen when he writes this diary, and illustrates the Bürgertum’s continuing strong adherence to Germany’s cultural ideology. Similarly to other Jewish authors, he appears more attuned to political and social events possibly because of the threats they might harbor for people of his faith.

1884-1964, Baron Adolf Freiherr von Haaren, Erinnerungen eines alten Kurländers 1884-1946 (Memories of an old Kurländer 1884-1946), written 1960-63.294 Adolf Freiherr von Haaren, a German-Baltic, is born in Latvia into an ancient aristocratic family with large land holdings. He writes that his ancestral knights belonged to the Teutonic Order, which had conquered Latvia in the thirteenth century. Many Germans had immigrated to Latvia when the Teutonic Order ruled the Baltic; they were mostly Lutherans and had maintained their German identity, as is evident from his diary. He argues that without the influence of the German culture, the “Russian Bear” would have devoured the Baltic States and their cultural centers such as Riga and Reval would not exist.295 He claims the cohering German aristocrats and intellectuals in the Baltic countries always had a domineering influence on their culture and every day life. He writes: “Many of these aristocrats, such as his father, play an active role in their community, and try to establish a Christian brotherly relation with the Latvians.” He tells of these German settlers having translated the Bible into Baltic languages, taught the local population modern agricultural methods and introduced hybrid seeds. He contends

294 Adolf Freiherr von Haaren, Erinnerungen eines alten Kurländers 1884-1946, 1019 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
295 The capital of Estonia was called Reval to 1918; now Tallinn. (The New Columbia Encyclopedia, 1975 ed. s.v. “Tallinn.”)
that after Latvia became a Russian Baltic province in the eighteenth century, the good relationship between the German and native population continued. This changed through the negative influence of the Bolsheviks after the Soviet Revolution.

Von Haaren writes that his family reads mostly German literature, but also works of French, English and Russian writers. He and his siblings are taught to play instruments, frequently visit the theater and musical performances in the next big city, and are tutored in French and English during their summer vacation. These activities evidence the strong commitment of Germany’s aristocracy to its cultural values and charitable engagements in spite of living outside the Kaiserreich.

To attend the Gymnasium he moves to the city where he lives with his uncle. He states that his Gymnasium teachers were mainly German, but the primary language at school was Russian, which initially gave him difficulty. As a university student he complies with Germany’s cultural tradition of gaining a well-rounded knowledge by frequently visiting the theater, and discussing Kant, Engel and Nietzsche with his classmates. He mentions going to church on Sundays.

After graduating, he is drafted into the Czarist army where he joins the Narv Dragoon Regiment that stood under the command of the German Kaiser. “The training is hard and the exam to become an officer of the reserve difficult; war was in the air.” he writes. He comments: “All Russians are drafted for five years and illiterates are taught to read and write, the literacy rate of Russian men was therefore high.” During pogroms in Russia he, together with the dragoons he commands, save Jewish families from the fiery death the mob had intended for them.
Following his release from the army, he studies agricultural engineering and land design at a German university, a profession he thinks would be desirable in Russia. From today’s vantage point, it is surprising that von Haaren geared his education as an agricultural engineer to professional opportunities in Russia, considering his strong German cultural and family ties. It illuminates how much more Russia, before World War I, was considered an integral part of European economy than at present. Their monarchical form of government not only resembled those of the rest of Europe, but the Czar was also related to the royalty of England and Germany. This favorable perception of Russia changed when it became a communistic dictatorship under Lenin, and, as he states, the Bolshevik’s sent two million Germans that lived in Russia to Siberia.

While studying in Germany, he contacts his extensive aristocratic relatives making it apparent how his family had remained interlinked with Germany’s nobility. His education requires becoming an intern to gaining practical experience; he divides this internship between Russian and German companies that drain swamps. At the beginning of World War I, he is drafted into the Russian army where his German background caused much suspicion since Germany was the enemy. He praises the magnanimity and warmth of the Russian people, and claims to be well liked by the troops under his command because of his concern for their welfare. This is evidenced by his description of how his unit unanimously confirms him in his post when the Bolsheviks insisted they should elect a commander of their choice. When he is transferred, his unit bids him an emotional farewell and presents him with a sword inscribed “father of his troops.”
After the war, he completes his education and briefly administers the landholdings of his family as Latvia is now under German protection. In 1920 he moves to Germany where he eventually buys a rundown farm near Stettin. To finance the necessary improvements in his estate, he uses his expertise as an agricultural engineer to instruct twenty-six farmers in advanced land management. On his farm, he upgrades the living quarters of the farm hands by installing central heating, showers, and laundry facilities while his wife cares for his workers when they are sick or injured. During the depression he makes sure all his laborers are well provided with food, and later throughout World War II, extends such care to the POWs from Russia, Poland and France who are assigned to his farm. In 1945, when the Soviet army overruns his farmstead, these POWs prevent his deportation to Siberia by intervening on his behalf.

Initially, he seemed to have some sympathies for the Nazi movement, but after Kristallnacht and the torching of the synagogue in Stettin, he describes his repugnance for this inhumane organization. He tells how his eldest son, not withstanding his own antipathy for Hitler, succumbed to the fascination of the Hitler Youth. For many of these authors, the Kristallnacht pogrom in 1938 is the moment of dissolution with the Hitler regime. At that point, Hitler's initial promises and economic improvements did not, for these writers, outperform the regime’s maliciousness and shortcomings anymore. Kristallnacht’s ostentatious defiling of human decency and humanity appeared to have made many these Bürgertum authors recognize the unbridgeable gap between their moral and ethical values and the ideology of the Nazi regime. The decreasing ability of secondary education and of the family to convey these values as well as the changing
social and political environment becomes apparent in the sympathies of his son for the Nazi ideology.

Social responsibility is not only considered an important aspect by Germany’s monarchy, but is also an integral part of the culture of the ruling class, the aristocrats. In these diaries, aristocrats often assume more social responsibility than members of the Bürgertum because they have traditionally been part of the ruling elite, as was the case for von Haaren. As an expression of this cultural ideology of benevolence, he shows a concerted effort to improve the wellbeing of his workers, POWs and soldiers under his command. His humanitarian attitude is also expressed when he protects the lives of Jewish families from the murderous intent of the mob in Russia. His and his family’s strong adherence to Germany’s cultural ideology, such as interest in the arts and literature, is apparent in the description of his adolescence years but is later little mentioned. The pursuit of such interests might have been taken for granted and not worth being referred to or they may have become sidelined by his military service and professional ambitions not unlike the neglect parents were accused of in Der Anfang.

1883/1886-?, Hans und Gertrude Sandhop, Tagebücher über die Kindheit der Tochter Dietburg 1927-35 (Diaries about the childhood of our daughter Dietburg 1927-35), diary. Hans Sandhop was an opera singer and early member of the Nazi party NSDAP. He describes how he takes his daughter, Dietburg, to rehearsals in preparation for the celebration of Hitler’s birthday where “for the first time she is photographed standing under the Swastika flag.” He proudly reports: “Joseph Goebbels praises his

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296 Hans und Gertrude Sandhop, Tagebücher über die Kindheit der Tochter Dietburg 1927-35, 1588 1+2 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
daughter for reciting a Christmas poem at a NSADA event.” In 1929, Dietburg, he reports proudly, befriends the daughter of a Party member and a year later learns to sing *Die Fahne Hoch*, the party hymn of the NSDAP.” Surprisingly he writes of attending a memorial service for the *Kaiserin’s* birthday.

He laments the teaching of the Old Testament in his daughter’s school and tells her: “Those Jewish tales (in the Old Testament) do not concern us because they are foreign to the German mentality, and the same holds true for the New Testament.” Sandhops celebrate *Julkapp*, the winter solstice, instead of Christmas because he is of the opinion that Christianity is an instrument of the Jews, which they use to infiltrate the western world. In 1934, they are guests at a *Nordungen* wedding, a ceremony his daughter finds more beautiful than Christian church weddings. He writes: “In general she prefers Nordic to Christian rituals, and actually finds the latter horrible.” When, in 1935, Dietburg was admitted to the *Lyceum*, the future of the *Nordungen* religious movement became uncertain. He therefore decides she should not forfeit lessons in the Christian religion because, he argues: “She eventually will resent this Jewish religion anyhow.” He reports an incident in his daughter’s school class where a girl asks the religion teacher if Jesus was a Jew and when the question is affirmed, she questions why they are then taught such a subject.

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297 The party hymn of the NSDAP is also known as *Horts-Wessel-Lied.* (Knaurs Konversations-Lexikon A-Z, 1936 ed., s.v. “Wessel, Horst.”)

298 *Nordungen* was based on a Germanic pagan faith and had a small group of followers in the Third Reich. (Wikipedia.de, 2015 ed. s.v. “https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artgemeinschaft__Germanische_Glaubens-Gemeinschaft__wesensgemäßer_Lebensgestaltung.”)
Of these Bürgertum authors thus far examined, only the Sandhops show an unabashed resentment of Jews and even a rejection of the Christian faith because of its Jewish roots. As previously mentioned, for the Bürgertum, Christianity was an integral part of their cultural ideology. Many of these authors rejected the Nazis’ religious orientation when they recognized its incompatibility with their Christian belief. Other of these authors repudiated Hitler because they found their ethical and cultural values to be incompatible with those of the Nazi regime.

For the Sandhops, neither cultural nor Christian principals restrained their acceptance of the new regime in its early years. Their diary ends in 1935, three years prior to the revealing events of Kristallnacht. No indication is given as to whether, at that point, the Sandhops started to resent the Nazi regime as the other authors did. Of the reviewed diaries this is the only author to portray enthusiasm for the Nazi party even when its dictatorial methods were apparent after 1933 when Hitler came to power.

The purpose of this thesis to establish whether the Germany’s cultural ideology with its ties to Protestantism and ethical values remained an integral part of the Bürgertum as the influence of the Bildungsbürgertum was waning. The Sandhops’ obviously pursued other than the Protestant religious affiliation, but in their diary make no mention of cultural interests. However, theirs or others’ enthusiasm for the Nazi ideology does not preclude a disregard for the pursuit of Bildung. Even though the humanistic values are incompatible with the Nazi ideology, the concept of acquiring knowledge and cherishing Germany’s cultural values is not; Hitler was a great fan of the music by Richard Wagner and Franz Liszt. This diary was included to show the diversity
of the Bürgertum’s mindset and ideological orientation to which the success of the Nazi regime attests to all too well.

1888-1980, Richard Mörike, Lebenserinnerungen (Memoirs), written 1971-72 and 1978. In 1907, Richard Mörike, whose father is a professor of civil engineering, graduates from a Realschule. He writes that the secondary education provided him with good overall knowledge, taught him to appreciate beauty and formed his character by familiarizing him with ethics and religion. He tells of extensive hikes with his father, their joint visits to the theatre and opera, and of the good relationship he has with his pastor. Judging by his later activities, he at some point in his youth learns to play the piano or flute. In 1912, he graduates from the university as a civil engineer and joins the equivalent to the US Corps of Engineering. Mörike claims the assassination at Sarajevo triggered the war the Entente had planned for a long time.

As a student he completes mandatory military training, but when he volunteers to join the army at the outbreak of the war in 1914, he is rejected because of a heart ailment, to his great disappointment. To serve the nation in some form, he volunteers to provide basic military training to senior high school students. After a successful completion of a military maneuver by his reserve battalion he is overjoyed when he is finally admitted to active duty as an officer in a construction unit on the Russian front.

At the outbreak of World War I, his father already has a pessimistic view of Germany’s situation, but only as the war progressed did others start to share his perspective. When the 1918 revolution deposes the Kaiser, Mörike is aghast. In the post

299 Richard Mörike, Lebenserinnerungen, 859 II Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
war years, he again works as a civil servant, and eventually is promoted to a high-ranking administrative position as a civil engineer. He joins an association for protecting the environment, an uncommon and progressive aim at that time. By being in charge of road construction, he is able to contribute to his association’s cause by preventing the placement of billboards next to the roadside.

His high rank allows him to witness illegal acquisition of wealth, protectionism and the vying for power. It convinces him to favor an authoritarian system because, he argues, parliamentarianism with its political parties encourages corruption. It explains why he joins the Stahlhelm organization, an anti-democratic, paramilitary association of World War I soldiers that favor an authoritarian system for Germany. After it is dissolved in 1935, he, together with some of its members, voluntarily joins the NSDAP where he trains soldiers in the newly formed army. His wife joined the Louisenbund, an associated organization of the Stahlhelm for women, through which she actively supports the poor. When the Louisenbund is taken over by the NSDAP, she too becomes a “Party member.” During these years Mörike and his wife also join a reading circle and participate in religious events.

In later years, a local court almost expels him from the NSDAP because he fails to attend a youth festival as was requested. He writes: “From now on my loyalty to the Nazi regime is being questioned, and the Gestapo opens my mail.” In 1943, a neighbor denounces him by claiming he accepted a chicken from a farmer as a bribe and that he wasted government property by opening a window in the wintertime, letting the heat escape. He successfully defends himself and the accusations had no consequences. “But
had I been found guilty, I could have been sent to a concentration camp.” he writes. In the final month of World War II, he is drafted as an instructor into the *Volkssturm*, a paramilitary unit for defending the homeland. When his unit is ordered to defend the town against the approaching US Army, he is considered too old to take part, but volunteers anyway because he does not want to abandon the men he trained.

The occupying forces suspend him from his position as a civil engineer due to his NSDAP affiliation. He claims: “Members of my congregation and colleagues testify on my behalf ensuring the authorities I had not used my position to cause harm to anybody.” The Federal Republic of Germany initially downgrades Mörike’s civil service rank, owing to his Nazi membership, but in the following years he is repeatedly promoted. He writes of heading the electoral oversight committees on the county, state and federal level in the now democratic Germany. After his retirement he hikes, frequently enjoys cultural events, plays music with his wife and is active in his church.

His narrative reflects an eagerness to be involved with the army; the main reasons appear to have been patriotism and duty, reinforced by a culture enamored with the military. Mörike’s contentment with the autocratic *Kaiserreich* and the negative aspects of a democracy he witnessed in the Weimar Republic caused him to believe that an autocratic political system is preferable over a democracy. He joins the *Stahlhelm* organization and later the NSDAP out of conviction because, at least initially, he identified with their political goals of establishing an autocratic political system that repudiates the Versailles Treaty, rebuilds the army and reestablishes Germany’s honor. Mörike, remaining a member of the NSDAP in spite of being under observation by the
Gestapo, does not necessarily indicate his continuing agreement with Nazi polices, since cancelling his membership would have meant losing his employment and possible incarceration. His diaries do not express whether or how much he identified with Nazi ideology after he became familiar with atrocities committed by the Nazi regime. Judging by the post-World War II testimonies of his coworkers and church members, he appears not to have been a fanatical Nazi possibly because their values conflicted with his Christian ethics and values.

As evident from his diary, Bildung with its different facets plays an important role in the life of the Bürge****

As evident from his diary, Bildung with its different facets plays an important role in the life of the Bürgertum born at the fin de siècle even if they attended Realschulen and not the Gymnasium. This can be attributed to the perpetuation of this ideology by Bildungsbürgertum, and by being fundamental to Lutheranism.

1888-1971, Max Rohwerder, Kriegstagebücher der Jahre 1939-1942 (War diaries, 1939-42), diary. At university, Max Rohwerder majors in German philology, classical Greek, Latin and physical education, and then teaches these subjects at various Gymnasien before becoming principal of a Jesuit-Gymnasium until being drafted. He serves as an officer in both world wars and opposes National Socialism according to the notes accompanying his diary. In his writings, he expresses only indirect opposition to Hitler. His notes do not cover World War I; instead he provides a newspaper article recounting a German gas attack against a Russian position. It describes the reaction of the professor who developed the poisonous gas, and is sent to the front to observe its effectiveness. The author of the article is horrified and appalled by the impact the gas has,

300 Max Rohwerder, Kriegstagebücher 1939-1945, 141/I.3 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
as he witnesses the death throes of dying Russian soldiers. He is shocked and unconvinced by the comments of the professor, who states calmly, factually, and unemotionally: “If the world attacks Germany, such measures are justified and any moral qualms have to be deferred.”

Rohwerder does not provide a commentary on the article, but rather lets the statement and facts speak for themselves. He uses the same passive approach throughout the diary, letting the reader guess his true opinion. The reason for only stating the bare facts without condemning the atrocities committed could have been fear of incriminating himself and of the possible repercussions if his notes fell into the wrong hands. The impression the reader gets is one of the Gestapo looking over his shoulder and judging what he is writing. He portrays an almost cheerful life in the army, occasionally interweaving factual statements of atrocities he witnesses or are reported him.

During a stay in Warsaw, he writes of attending concerts, visiting the theater and being invited to a champagne breakfast by a Count. When visiting the city’s Jewish Ghetto he comments: “The Jews looked at us soldiers with subdued hatred.” He tells of a soldier coming back from the Ukraine who reports: “They killed all Jews after they had been ordered to dig their own graves.” He interweaves the narrative with notes about his personal life: “Yesterday I went to confession and Holy Communion,” and later he describes in detail a foxhunt followed by a luxurious dinner to which an SS-Cavalry Regiment had invited him and other officers. When a news bulletin reports of Colonel-

301 Fritz Haber developed the poisonous gases deployed in World War I and is most likely the professor who witnessed the test. (http://chemicalweapons.cenmag.org/when-chemicals-became-weapons-of-war/) Sarah Everts, “When Chemicals Became Weapons of War,” C&EN Chemical & Engineering News, 23 February 2015, 10.
General Heinz Guderian’s tanks approaching Moscow, he regrets not being part of the offensive. In general, Rohwerder does not mind being a soldier; he seems eager to be praised by his commanding officer and hopes in vain to be decorated.

He purposely fails to attend a thanksgiving service for what he calls the liberation of the Ukraine. When he first encounters Russian prisoners as they are shipped from the front to Germany he writes of their: “Disgusting Mongol faces.” It remains unclear whether he expresses his own convictions or tries to convince a potential reader of his belief in Aryan supremacy. He then goes on to describe how the warden beats the starving POW’s heads with a board to prevent their desperate, hunger driven fight over garbage. German troops he meets on a train ride to Minsk talk about having machine-gunned 1,400 Jews - men, women and children - who were accused of having provided partisans with ammunition. A stationmaster he talks to had heard 7,000 Jews were killed for the same reason and that similar executions took place in other Soviet towns.

In contrast to these horrific events, Rohwerder describes the beauty of cathedrals in Smolensk and their wonderful rich interior. But then again he writes, without any comments, of having been told about a POW camp in which thirty-five Russian prisoners who died during the night were eaten before daybreak. He juxtaposes the reports of such savageries with his own humanitarian conduct: In the Russian town under his command a Russian woman had attacked a German soldier with a coal-shovel, for which she was to be executed. He was able to commute her sentence to a beating in front of the assembled townspeople. In the same town, he arranges a joint Russian/German performance of folk music and dances and insists that the Russians to be compensated with the food they were
lacking. According to his diary, members of the Russian ensemble cried when he was transferred.

When Hitler relieves Walther von Brauchitsch of his command as supreme commander of the army, Rohwerder writes in quotation marks: “Brauchitsch is gone; as of December 12, 1941 Hitler assumed supreme command of the army and the old World War I soldier will lead the army to victory.”

“Everybody is taken aback,” he comments, and compares the general mood to that of Napoleon’s army when, in 1812, they were forced to retreat from Russia. When his unit is told to withdraw, he writes: “It is a shame to burn the villages as we retreat. What will the outcome be? I am very depressed but cannot show it.” When he hears of Field Marshal Walther von Reichenau’s death, it reminds him of the misfortunes and murders in ancient Athens and Rome: “Many of the passages by Tacitus now become meaningful.” he states.

It appears he and many others at that time believe Reichenau was murdered while he actually died of natural causes. The mood of his diary lightens when the German radio station broadcasts some military success in Africa and Russia. The only mention he makes about the conditions at home is when writing about a visit of a district attorney from Germany, who reports: “Of horrible trials at home against priests.”

Rohwerder never displays any enthusiasm for the Third Reich or confidence in its future; on the contrary, he doubts the successful outcome of the Russian campaign and is cynical about Hitler taking over the command of the army. He voices such skepticism at a

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302 Walther von Brauchitsch was from 1938 to 1941 Supreme Commander of the German army. (Wehler. Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte vol. 4, 861)
time when the German troops are still victorious in various theaters of the war and before its turning point, the battle of Stalingrad in November of 1942. For him, Russians, by contrast to the Nazi ideology, appear not to be Slavic Untermenschen, but rather suffering and hungering human beings, which he expresses in his attempts to ease their plight. It would be the same recognition of the equality of mankind other authors express in previous diaries through their objective descriptions of foreign cultures. However, his comment about the “disgusting Mongol faces,” and his lack of opinion about the executions of Jews prevent an accurate assessment of his true conviction.

Rohwerder repeatedly mentions going to confession and Holy Communion indicating he too had religious roots. Taking time while fighting a war to enjoy the paintings in a Russian cathedral suggests that art, i.e. cultural values, continue to provide a refuge as it has for previous authors. Otherwise Rohwerder, in spite of having majored in classical Greek and Latin, does not write about drawing comfort from reading Homer or other classical authors, as was frequently reported in diaries about World War I. Finding refuge in art however does indicate he would therefore condemn the described atrocities. Not only Hitler but many of the Nazi big-wigs are known to have enjoyed classical music and art in general.

1890-1969, Hildegard Rodewald, Tagebuchbriefe an Tochter Dorothea (Diary letters to daughter Dorothea), diary April-August 1945.\textsuperscript{303} After graduating from the Gymnasium, Hildegard Rodewald majors in chemistry and social science at the university, but breaks her studies off before graduating. During the Nazi years, her

\textsuperscript{303} Hildegard Rodewald, Tagebuchbrief an die Tochter Dorothea, 856/II.5 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
husband works as a physician in a penitentiary in Leipzig and is a member of the NSDAP. When the Americans forces conquer the city, they briefly arrest him because of this Nazi affiliation. After the US forces turn Leipzig over to the Red Army, the Russians arrest him again, and he eventually dies in prison.

Her diary depicts her life with four of their five children in Leipzig, mainly after the incarceration of her husband. She writes: “As the American army enters Leipzig many people destroy their party badges, swastika flags and pictures of Hitler. The defeat is a repetition of 1918; I sit in the basement despondent, and try to deal with my bitterness and immense disappointment. How shameless and without dignity many Germans act towards the occupying forces.” She suffers from the humiliation caused by the released POWs and the occupational army. “However, worst of all is what our own people did to the German nation; what we thought was grossly exaggerated propaganda by the enemy now turns out to be true.” she writes. She describes the food shortage and bemoans how many of her male relatives and friends are missing: “It is rumored the Germany army has capitulated, now at last the meaningless dying comes to an end and the nightly bombings stop.”

When the American army occupies Leipzig and incarcerates her husband because of his NSDAP membership, she comments: “His jailing at least prevents him from witnessing the horrible collapse of the Third Reich and the insults and humiliation we have to bear.” She fails to understand why he is being imprisoned because: “He always was a diligent and dutiful civil servant and never a friend of the Gestapo’s double justice. As physician in a correctional facility he always cared for the prisoner’s health the best
he could.” When the US forces release her spouse, he learns English to be better able to communicate with Americans, which he wrongly assumes will continue to occupy Leipzig.

When the husband of a neighbor is killed in the final days of the war, she writes that his wife is finding comfort that he died with his unshakable belief in Germany and the Führer intact, and is spared the humiliation and disgrace of his country. Rodewald’s comments about the Third Reich’s humiliation and collapse do not allow us to conclude indisputably whether she or her husband bought into Hitler’s ideology or not, in particular, since she later in her diary expresses satisfaction that Hitler’s rule has come to an end.

During these difficult times, she finds comfort in her faith and is consoled by her pastor. She hopes now that the Nazis are not in charge any more, schools will reintroduce religious education to allow her son to become familiar with Christianity and give him the opportunity to find faith in God. In spite of being surrounded by destruction, chaos and hunger, she writes how much joy the beauty of flowers give her.

Rodewald, in compliance with the music tradition of the Bürgertum, arranges piano lessons for her children. Music plays an important role in her life, as is evident from the consoling effect she experiences when listening to J.S Bach’s Oratorio of the Passion of St. John. She states: “Its performances drew only a small audience during the Third Reich while now I have to wait in line to get tickets.” This sudden popularity of sacral music might have to do with the rejuvenation of religion after World War II, which was mentioned earlier. But in addition, the suppression of religion during the Third Reich
had prevented many people from openly displaying their beliefs, which they now do not need to hide. Leipzig, the city where J.S. Bach (1685-1750) spent most of his life, has a strong cultural tradition of performing his sacral music that reaches into the present. In 2011 this city with a population of about half a million offered between Ash Wednesday and Good Friday twelve performances of J.S. Bach’s Passions of St. John or Mathew in addition to twenty-three performances of sacral symphonic music. Performances of Bach’s music might have therefore drawn a larger crowd in Leipzig than in other cities.

During the turmoil and misery of the immediate post-World War II period, many of these Bürgertum authors write of the comfort they found in their cultural ideology such as pursuing intellectual activities, and attending plays as well as concerts wherein the music of J.S. Bach is repeatedly mentioned as providing solace. The diaries written after World War I express a similar need to find repose in humanist ideology; in both periods, it fulfills the desire and need for higher and more permanent values after experiencing unimaginable atrocities and cruelty. Rodewald, by giving her children piano lessons, tries to perpetuate these cultural values after they had been widely neglected during the Nazi regime.

1894-1916, Gotthard Gmelin, Tagebuch 1916, Brie fe, (Diary 1916, letters), diary. Gotthard Gmelin studies German philology to become a teacher. At the outbreak of World War I, he, together with his three brothers, enthusiastically volunteers to fight

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305 Gotthard Gmelin, Tagebuch 1916, Brie fe, 138/1-3 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
for the Fatherland. All three are assigned to the same battalion in France, where the
author and one brother are killed in action. His diary describes his life as a soldier.

In November of 1914, he writes that only the war can help mankind to again focus
on itself and return to true life. As the war progresses, he questions whether the
transformation he had envisioned is taking place; he is encouraged by some changes, but
then writes: “In many respects everything appears to remain the same.” He perceives the
German people as being altruistic with a strong sense of duty and believes especially their
spirituality will benefit from the war. He claims the war destroyed a lot of selfishness and
egoism, but definitely deepened religious feelings. War, he argues, has to have a positive
mission: “Would we gain only power and might, the spilled blood would not be worth it.
I am confident this war will have a spiritual benefit.” Later he notes: “What enlightens
our life and frees our soul of its earthly ties are those rare moments when we experience
eternal bliss.”

Gmelin writes these comments in the first month of the war when he and many of
his contemporaries still believe combat has a cleansing effect, and will rejuvenate an
unselfish spirituality founded in religion. Three months later, he still comments in a letter
to his cousin in America: “I would not have believed the German people were able to
meet the demands of the war, and display such moral improvement when before, decency
appeared to be sliding.” He writes: “My comrades and I are reading Kant, Goethe, Fichte
and Schiller in the trenches and draw strength from their immortal ideals.” He comments:
“The war will not be won by battalions, but by Germany’s strong ethical values. Victory
is not just important for the Fatherland, but for the ideals of the world. Our nation is
therefore fighting also for its enemies, to advance goodness and nobility for mankind.” A month later, he despairs about the war, questions the purpose of life, and wishes the masses could be taught the importance of humanity.

He desperately tries to find strength in a God of love, and a little further down exalts because he has found peace in God, who he believes to be not wrathful but merciful. In a later entry he writes: “The realm of the soul has to triumph above everything, above being and earthly existence. Our body and spirit will enter eternity and endless space.” His writing in the last part of his diary appears to be an attempt to accept the possibility of being killed, or even a premonition of his death in 1916.

Germany’s cultural ideology and religion are for this author, as well as many others, strongly intertwined. Being surrounded by death and destruction intensifies his search for God and longing to find peace in religion; it gives his religious struggle more depth than can be found in any of the other diaries. His diary depicts his exceptional and advanced skill in mastering the violin and piano, in addition to the other instruments he plays. He describes being totally enraptured by his own and other musical performances, and at one point decides to change his career goals and become a professional musician. Even while war is waging around him, he tries whenever possible to absorb the beauty of nature and is in particular enticed by the ocean. While on home leave, he discusses politics and later writes: “When Germany is fighting with such determination for peace it is bound to accomplish it.” After being promoted to corporal, he asks his parents to send classical literature for his men. On the day before he is killed, on June 17, 1916, he copies a poem into his diary about overcoming the fear of dying.
Gmelin’s youth, he died at the age of 24, and exceptional sensitivity, contributed to his overly idealistic views. But in general, the belief in the advancement of mankind paired with religion was representative of the Bürgertum’s mindset of Imperial Germany. The historian Friedrich Meineke explains this attitude by claiming that the World War would transform Germans into a true Weltvolk, which would not become mired in egoistic nationalism, but would represent humanity. These ideals permeate Bürgertum and permit the perception by these authors that Germany is waging a just war, especially since they all believe their nation is the victim of its neighbor’s aggression. Reading German classical literature in the trenches to fortify their inner strength and reinforce their belief in higher values was not Gmelin’s exceptional absurdity, but is reported by other authors as well. It illustrates the strong Verinnerlichung, internalization, of these cultural values, and the importance of religion. In his diary, these idealistic humanistic premises seem to gradually decline as the war progresses.

Gmelin and the last few authors completed their secondary education roughly about the same time, but only this diary was written before its author was exposed to the turbulent post-World War I era and the dictatorship that followed. The ideals he portrays about the German nation and mankind in general are lacking in the diaries whose authors experienced the political turmoil between 1918 and 1945. It illustrates the strong influence of these social and political changes on the mindset of the Bürgertum, which however had little impact on their quest for Bildung as evident from their diaries.

306 Hoffmann, Politics of Sociability, 276.
1898-1955, Aline Kirchner, *Briefe einer Jüdin 1946-48 an Freundin Jela in USA.*

(Letter of Jewish woman, 1946-1948, to her friend Jela in the USA), letters. Aline Kirchner, daughter of a Jewish mother, converts to Lutheranism. After graduating in 1930 with a degree in philosophy and history, she works for two major publishing houses in Berlin until the Nazi government in 1933 prevents her, as a Jew, from holding such positions. In the same year, her marriage to an “Aryan” ends in divorce, leaving their daughter in her care. In 1934, her son is born out of wedlock; the father commits suicide because he was unable to resolve the conflict with his family about being involved with a Jewish woman. From 1935 to 1938 she studies medicine so she can have a profession in the USA, where she wanted to emigrate. As a student, the university issues her a yellow card identifying her as a Jew and forbids her to have any contact with fellow students. Some students violate these restrictions in private settings, but none dare to be seen with her in public. After she completes her medical studies in 1938, friends help her to find a research position in a major pharmaceutical company, which prevents her persecution and deportation by the Nazi regime. She writes about having lived in constant fear of being arrested, particularly during the last two years of the Hitler regime.

In the post-war years, she completes her doctoral degree in medicine and then opens a medical practice in East Berlin, the capital of the GDR. Her diary consists of letters to her friend in the United States, in which she describes her struggle to carve out a living in East Germany after 1945. She writes: “I have difficulty getting used to being a

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307 Aline Kirchner, *Briefe einer Jüdin 1946-48 an Freundin Jela in USA.* 1138 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
308 GDR stands for German Democratic Republic
German again after the Nazis denied me it.” She is embittered by the difficulty of getting
a permit to practice medicine while, she states: “It is readily granted to former NSDAP
members. These former Nazis are doing so much better than we are and then they
complain of the difficulties they encounter for being Party members.” She and her
German friends are disconcerted and dismayed by how little the attitude toward Jews
changed in the GDR. She writes to her friend in the States: “You can understand it drives
us crazy and we ask ourselves why we remained alive.” She finds the anti-Semitic
incidents reported in newspapers of 1947 shameful and aggravating, and despairs over
their growing frequency. She writes: “It is difficult to accept six million people died for
nothing.”

Kirchner is acquainted with Peter Suhrkamp, who, from 1928 to 1932, was a
contributing journalist to the afore mentioned Berliner Tageblatt. Starting in 1932, he
leads the S. Fischer publishing house until he was accused of high treason in 1944 and
sent to a concentration camp from which he is released in February 1945. Suhrkamp
also complains to her about the insufferable postwar developments in Germany,
contending: “In 1945, we all would have been willing to forget the injustice each of us
had suffered.” Many of our common friends did not survive, she states.

The nationalistic attitude carried over from the Nazi time also remains strong
among children. This is evident when fellow classmates harass her son for wearing
American shoes her friend had sent. They tell him: “A German boy does not wear such
shoes.” In 1948, she writes: “I was convinced a world without Hitler could become

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309 After the war Peter Suhrkamp founded the Suhrkamp Verlag, which published contemporary authors.
meaningful. I am totally apolitical but cannot tolerate limitations to freedom or any form of totalitarianism. I tremble at the thought of now being forced to do something against my will.”310 She writes: “Under Hitler I had the advantage of being prevented from participating, but doubt as an Aryan I would have gotten involved.” She does not accept the claim of many that they had to join the NSDAP to survive, because, she argues: “Rarely did any of my friends join the Party; on the contrary, the majority opposed Hitler. This is why I cannot tolerate the excuse of many that they had no choice but to join the Party.”

As evident from previous diaries, some members of the Bürgertum refused to replace their ethical values with the Nazi ideology and suffered the consequences. However, her argument that it was not necessary to join the NSDAP to survive cannot be applied to all professions; civil servants in many cases would have faced unemployment if they did not become Party members. Disguising one’s convictions by pretending to commit to an opposed ideology to survive was not only practiced during the Nazi regime, but frequently holds true for members of many larger social group. She herself converted to Christianity, but makes no mention in her diary about whether she changed her religious affiliation out of conviction or for safety reasons.

She likes living in Berlin in spite of its destruction, and contends the only joy she still has, is going to concerts and seeing plays, in particular those by Jean-Paul Sartre and Thornton Wilder. As previously pointed out, the cultural ideology of the Bürgertum serves as a repository of strength in difficult times, providing them with moments of

310 She is referring to the restrictions the GDR is imposing.
escape into a different realm. In diaries written prior to World War I the reading of ancient literature such as Homer is cited as providing refuge. For Kirchner, cultural values consisted of the acquisition of knowledge, the pursuit of Bildung, through which she gains solace. However, in her case, it is not certain if she graduated from the Gymnasium or Realschule.

The cultural values once associated with the Bildungsbürgertum, i.e. Gymnasium graduates, now become increasingly the domain of the Bürgertum in general, as some of the following diaries will show. Similar to other authors, she writes of the comfort and peace she experiences when listening to performances of Bach’s St. John Passion. Surprisingly, authors describe such religious experience only when referring to Bach’s St. John Passion and St. Matthew Passion, but they hardly ever mention similar feelings when enjoying compositions by other classical composers.

She laments the difficulty of bearing Germany’s isolation and writes to her friend: “You cannot imagine what it means for us, in our misery and hopelessness, to have contact with the outside world. Sometimes these times are almost too difficult to endure.” She begs her friend in the US to send food and clothing for her and her children, because they lack both. She comments: “At times the scarcity of paper or electrical black-outs prevent me from writing to my friends.” Kirchner’s determined effort to establish a medical practice and escape poverty is unsuccessful because of the restrictions she encounters in the GDR. After having survived persecution and discrimination in the Third Reich, she is appalled by the reemerging anti-Semitic tendencies in East Germany and the lack of remorse by the participants of the Nazi regime. The continuing prejudice
against Jews, the preferential treatment of former NSDAP members, and the difficulty of establishing her medical practice cause her to become severely depressed and leads to her suicide.

1899-1967, Hanna Kisker, *Reisebericht in Brieform 1920* (Letters - Account of a journey 1920), diary.\(^{311}\) After graduating from a Gymnasium, Hanna Kisker spends one year at a domestic school for women, as was customary for upper class daughters. In the fall of 1920, she takes a six week-long journey, by train and on foot, through the southern part of Germany. She calls it “my trip to freedom” because she believes it will be the only time in her life when she has no responsibility. In the course of these six weeks, she wants to decide whether to learn a profession or to become a housewife.

Kisker provides very knowledgeable accounts of paintings, sculptures and architecture she encounters when visiting museums and cathedrals on her journey. She is particularly impressed by an expressionist exhibition with works of Picasso, Kokoschka, Barlach and Nolde, artists that were ultra modern at that time. As previously mentioned, the Gymnasium at that time did not convey such proficiencies; her knowledge and appreciation of these arts is thus autodidactic, and attests to her desire to expand her knowledge beyond her classical and traditional education. Most of these authors share this intellectual curiosity and desire for Bildung, thereby illustrating the dominant role it continued to play as part of Germany’s cultural ideology.

She admires the beauty of the Black Forest while hiking alone to the town of Salem, her final destination where she visits Kurt Hahn. In 1920, Hahn cofounded

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\(^{311}\) Hanna Kisker, *Reisebericht in Brieform 1920*, 1010/I.1.3 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
Schule Schloss Salem, a famous boarding school with the humanistic educational goal of developing each student’s individual talent to its fullest.\textsuperscript{312} About this meeting, she mainly reports their extensive discussion of the unacceptability of the Versailles Treaty. The overwhelming economic and psychological effect this treaty had on Germany and its population stirred deep emotions and made it an almost compulsory topic of discussion, even for people with otherwise little interest in politics. After completing her trip, she feels obligated to move to her married sister because she believes her help is needed.

Kisker exemplifies the typical daughter of a well-to-do family of that period. Her humanistic education, Bürgertum’s cultural setting and religion define her ethical values and social responsibility, the latter is indicated by her selfless volunteering to help her sister. The diary of Kisker’s daughter, discussed later, includes letters of Hanna Kisker to her daughter, which documents how Hanna Kisker’s ethical values were incompatible with Nazi ideology.\textsuperscript{313}

Previous authors were born during the monarchy and completed their secondary education while the Kaiser ruled. The following writers grew up in Imperial Germany as well, but gained their secondary education in the Weimar Republic at either the Gymnasium or Realschule.

1910 (1849-1930), Dr. Rudof Mücke, \textit{Agnes Loß - Aufzeichnungen über das gemeinsame Leben mit der Enkelin von 1921-1929} (Agnes Loß - living with my granddaughter from 1921-1929)), diary. This diary falls outside of the chronological

\textsuperscript{312} Among the school’s more famous graduates were: the historian Golo Mann and Prinz Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, husband of queen Elisabeth II. (Wikipedia.de, 2015 ed. s.v. \texttt{https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schule_Schloss_Salem})

\textsuperscript{313} Rudof Mücke, \textit{Agnes Loß – Aufzeichnungen über das gemeinsame Leben mit der Enkelin von 1921-29}, 1160 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
order because its subject, the granddaughter, Agnes Loß, was born in 1910. The time
frame is further expanded by the comments the son of Agnes Loß (the great-grandson of
the author) made about the Weimar Republic. He was probably born around 1940 and
added his views before submitting the diary to the Tagebucharchiv. The diary was
reviewed here because it represents the perspectives of two generations in the early days
of the Weimar Republic.

Rudof Mücke is seventy-two years old when his granddaughter, at the age of
eleven, comes to live with him and his wife. He had been a teacher of ancient Greek,
Latin and history before becoming headmaster of a Gymnasium. After his retirement, he
heads the Scientific Exams Division at the University of Göttingen. Both he and his wife
are religious and the preamble describes them as conservative. His son-in-law, father of
this granddaughter, also teaches ancient languages in secondary schools. Agnes Loß, the
granddaughter, attends the Gymnasium during the Weimar Republic, where she is
familiarized with German classics, Kant and Nietzsche. She goes to church and together
with her grandfather visits museums; she also likes to hike and learns to play the violin.

Her Gymnasium’s curriculum and cultural practices both illustrate the effort to
perpetuate Germany’s cultural ideology in the less receptive social environment of the
post-World War I years. Mücke laments Agnes’ lack of interest in religion; however, her
son claims in her later years she went to church regularly. He also contends that in her
youth, his mother became victim of Hitler’s persuasiveness and voted for the NSDAP
against her father’s will. Her father, Erich Loß, after reading Mein Kampf, discarded
Hitler and his ideology before he became Chancellor in 1933. The youth of the
Bürgertum, in spite of their traditional upbringing and often anti-Nazi stance of their family, frequently succumbed to Hitler’s slogans, as was the case for Agnes, as well as for the son of von Haare, described in a previous diary. It demonstrates the lacking synchronicity between the values the Gymnasium was teaching and those of the general society, which made adolescents susceptible to other ideologies. The daughter of Kisker, Eva-Maria Dahlkötter, is by contrast widely immune to Nazi ideology because of her strong Christian faith, as is evident from her diary reviewed later.314

Agnes’ son argues that his grandfather, as a typical member of the educated class, fails to teach his children political judgment. He supports his argument by referring to Golo Mann’s contention that the Bürgertum’s enormous unfamiliarity with political events was responsible for the German catastrophe. To portray the German Bürgertum as having their heads in the clouds and being self-absorbed is unjustified, as the previous diaries have shown. In every society, some members are more interested in political events than others. Economic collapse and anarchy during the last years of the Weimar Republic were to blame for clouding the judgment of many members of the Bürgertum and in particular, its youths were susceptible to the spurious promises Hitler made.

1912-? Dr. Hubert Vogel, Ahnen und Erinnern (Ancestors and Memories), written 1997, at age 85.315 Hubert Vogel’s son briefly introduces the diary and tells of his father’s comments about World War I: “Russia and England for certain wanted war, but not before 1916 because Russia needed more time to expand its fleet.” His father was

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315 Hubert Vogel, Ahnen und Erinnern, 5 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
convinced Germany did not initiate the war, but rather was the victim. He writes: “When Germany mobilized, the troops’ enthusiasm prevented tearful goodbyes and forgotten were differences in social status and party affiliation,” After having passed his Abitur in 1931, Hubert Vogel studied history, Greek, Latin and German philology. He dislikes Hitler and the Nazis from early on because of their brutality and writes: “To the dismay of the Nazis, the newspaper Geraden Weg, in their effort to prevent Hitler from coming to power publishes an article titled “Does Hitler have Mongol blood in his veins?” After Hitler became Chancellor he observes what he calls “an odd development”: “Now the most unlikely people are discovering their predilection for Hitler and the Nazis. In the first half of 1933, so many people have applied for membership to the NSDAP that the Party does not accept any more newcomers.” He writes that this enthusiasm was neither hampered by the deteriorating political climate nor by the rule of terror Hitler introduced by late summer of 1933.

On February 23, 1933, a few days before the Reichstag’s fire, Vogel in his intense struggle to find God, experiences an epiphany. He writes: “I suddenly know with absolute certainty that Christ resurrected from the dead.” Shortly thereafter, he converts to Catholicism. When the association he belongs to decides in the summer of 1933 to cooperate with the Nazis, he cancels his membership. During the winter semester of 1933/34, he complains that the political climate at the university in Munich is terrible. His conversion to Catholicism makes him suspect to the Nazis and gives him reason to fear he could be prevented from continuing his studies or from taking final exams. To give the appearance of being loyal to the regime and to avoid having to become a
member of the NSDAP, he joins the SA. In his final exams, he is required to translate speeches by Hitler and Goebbels into classical Latin.

Vogel joins in a pilgrimage to Rome and suspects his group is suffused with NS spies. In Rome, he is granted a private audience with the Pope who: “Comforts me greatly, especially by his anti-Nazi stance.” After becoming a teacher, he joins the Catholic association Rhaetia, which between 1932-33 expelled all Hitler sympathizers. He writes: “It allows us to freely express grievances about the regime without having to fear denunciation.” He argues Rhaetia’s leaders display exceptional courage by firmly adhering to their principals and are willing to incur great sacrifices until their association is finally dissolved in 1938. He decides to quit his teaching position partly because he finds it difficult to promote Nazi ideology to his students. Instead, he completes his PhD, but is, in 1939, denied the right to take the civil servant exam because of “insufficient loyalty to the regime.” To avoid possible persecution, he joins the air force, because, he states: “Your political attitude became less of a factor once you became part of the Wehrmacht. Many joined the army to escape being victimized by the NS system, and not because of their enthusiasm for the military.” He spends the war years with the Luftwaffe, Air Force, in France, and comments on the plight of France’s civilian population and their suffering under the German occupation. At the end of his diary Vogel states: “I never expected to survive the NS State.”

Vogel is one of the few authors to express his opposition to Hitler even before he came to power in 1933, and to try to survive with limited compromises of his ideological principles. He was guided by his strong Christian convictions, but also by the cultural
values, which education and his upbringing had instilled in him. Together they provided him with ethical values and principles of Germany’s cultural ideology that prevented him as it did with other authors from accepting the Nazi’s ideology and social norms. World War I and its aftermath cause many of the other authors to question the validity of these traditional values and made them more susceptible to other ideologies. This was particularly true for the generation which in their formative years were influenced by the Nazi ideology and who lacked a strong religious believes, as previous diaries have shown.

1913-1999, Hans Kircheldorff, *Erinnerungen an das Zwanzigste Jahrhundert*, (Memories of the twentieth century), written 1989-94.\(^{316}\) Hans Kircheldorff, after graduating from the Gymnasium, studies law and journalism before being drafted into the army. He is captured and becomes a prisoner of war until 1948. After his release, he works as a journalist covering mainly courtroom trials in West Germany, the FRG. During his retirement, he freelances for two of Germany’s major newspapers *Die Welt* and *Die Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Neither his parents nor the school exposed him to religion when he was growing up, which he states: “Helped me to abandon such ideas from early on; instead, I concentrated on my interest in the latest scientific developments.” In regards to his Gymnasium education in the Weimar Republic he comments: “The tedious memorizing of Homer’s verses and German poetry during my high school years were not able to spoil their beauty for me.” Even after World War I, Homer was able to retain his magic for some Gymnasium students in spite of the often-

\(^{316}\) Hans Kircheldorff, *Erinnerungen an das Zwanzigste Jahrhundert*, 1235 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
uninspiring teaching methods. Thus the ability of the Gymnasium to convey its Bildungsbürger ideology declined thus gradually. Regarding history lessons he writes: “They taught us history up to the Middle Ages, but failed to familiarize pupils with subsequent developments and in particular omitted more recent events.”

To teach students the workings of democracy during the Weimar Republic, Minister for Culture Carl Heinrich Becker introduces self-government by the pupils in the schools. Kircheldorff is elected to represent his class at the student government but claims: “It taught us little about democracy.” Such a viewpoint appears questionable. In the incipient stage of Germany’s republic, neither pupils nor teachers were intimately acquainted with the working of democracy. Their better understanding of this form of government through self-representation in schools would thus not have been necessarily perceptible to its students and much less so sixty years later when the author of these memoirs was living in an environment that took democracy for granted. He comments in unison with other authors: “The Bürgertum was an avid reader of newspapers, but had little interest in social or political topics.” As evident from these diaries, political interest increased temporarily when French and Belgian troops occupied the Ruhr, which also strengthened Germany’s already significant nationalism. He claims: “By being well read already as a pupil I was not susceptible to the media’s defamation of Jews and Marxists.” He perceives his own political stance as a mixture of conservative, liberal and leftist ideas, but contends he was overall more interested in cultural development than in politics.
Kircheldorff reads Adolf Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* and dismisses its author as primitive and boisterous. He finds the parades of the Socialists, Communists, SA and *Stahlhelm Bund* with their military conduct and lack of culture suspicious and repulsive. His being bothered by their lack of culture is not void of a certain vanity, which the status conscious *Bürgertum* all too often displayed toward the lower class. He claims when Chancellor Heinrich Brüning tried to rule without parliament, and the Weimar Republic came to an end, that it became impossible for citizens to remain apolitical. In retrospect, he wonders why, at the time, neither he nor his liberal minded host family disapproved when Chancellor Franz von Papen dismissed the Prussian government, in clear violation of the law. He writes: “On the contrary we welcomed action instead of the previous government’s hesitance and helplessness.” He contends his politically more engaged friend, a theology student, however, viewed these developments more disapprovingly.

His friend illustrates again the previously observed more critical stance toward human rights violation felt by people with strong religious convictions. The unopposed shedding of the Weimar Republic’s democratic institution shows a lack of commitment to democracy by the German nation, and leveled the way for Hitler half a year later to drastically curtail their liberties further with little open resistance.

Kircheldorff states that after Hitler came to power, people did not dare anymore to openly discuss the arrests of Jews. He writes: “At the *Bücherverbrennung* (book burnings) people watched in silence and did not cheer as is often claimed. The crowd is also mute as they watch the events of the *Kristallnacht* and anybody who did voice disapproval is arrested. I had to decide which side I wanted to take and what the
alternative is; my main objection to the Nazi regime was their hostility towards culture.”

This passage reveals the fundamental importance traditional cultural values continue to play in the Weltanschauung, worldview, of the Bürgertum. The newspaper Times, he writes, viewed Hitler favorably until German troops marched into Bohemia and Moravia in March of 1939. Because of Hitler’s success, more and more people started to agree with his policies, he contends, but when in 1939 it became clear war was imminent, the mood in Germany became very somber. In 1940, he learns for the first time of the conditions in concentration camps from a former inmate.

Kircheldorff, in spite of his opposition to the Nazi regime, is disappointed when an injury prevents him from joining the military, but later, in 1940, he is drafted anyway. When Germany at the end of 1940 celebrates its victories in its various theaters of war, he considers revising his stance toward National Socialism, and accepting the dictator’s success. He muses: “Maybe it was true, that all our thinking, opinions and beliefs were false and a totally new period was now beginning.” But then in 1941 he writes: “I am healed from such opportunism and am ashamed of it.” As the war progresses, he is trained to become an officer and comments that most of the course participants come from the lower middle class. They are very eager to advance to the rank of an officer because they will then enjoy a higher social status and the privileges otherwise closed to them. During officer training, to his surprise, they are not instructed in Nazi ideology. The Nazi regime by bestowing officer privileges on the lower class ensured these men’s loyalty without indoctrination and at the same time created a counter weight to the potentially more critical Bildungsbürgertum officers. In addition, the Wehrmacht’s pool
of potential capable officers was enlarged by promoting soldiers based on merit without
the prerequisite of a secondary education. Later he writes: “During his visit to a
restaurant Hitler addresses the nation over the radio; nobody dares to leave before he ends
out of fear of being denounced.” It illustrates how Nazi enthusiasts helped Hitler to stay
in power, a role they retained to the very end.

As a POW in a Russian prison camp, Kircheldorff gives lectures on the subject of
Goethe’s Faust. Diaries of World War I POWs document a similar need for intellectual
stimulation, as well as the comfort such familiar cultural attributes provide. In the same
vein he states: “In the immediate post-war years, I compensated for the scarcity of
consumer goods by pursuing intellectual interests.” Similar to other authors, he finds
gratification in striving for Bildung, and is solaced by the exploration of Germany’s
cultural legacy. Kircheldorff was unusually honest by confessing his brief sympathies for
the Nazi ideology during the Third Reich’s victorious stage and by admitting doubts
about the value of traditional humanist ideology.

Germany’s severe humiliation by the Versailles Treaty and the occupation of the
Ruhr by Belgium and France with its economic consequences were still too fresh in
everybody’s mind not to be jubilant when these countries were defeated at the beginning
of the war. Many authors of these diaries were still absolutely convinced Germany’s
enemies had initiated World War I, and when the Versailles Treaty defined Germany as
the aggressor and punished it with severe penalties, it strongly incensed even the most
apolitical of its citizens. When the Wehrmacht’s early victories revenged Germany and
“rehabilitated its honor” many were willing to take even severe shortcomings of the Nazi-
regime in stride. After the initial exaltation, Kircheldorff and others of these authors recognized the unacceptable conflict between the Nazi ideology and their ethics and humanist values and rejected their regime.

Others negated this conflict, particularly those who greatly benefitted from the bellicose ambition of Hitler such as professional military officers. The secret recordings of conversations of high-ranking German POWs in English prison camps make this clear. The vast majority of these officers had attended Gymnasia as well during the Kaiserzeit, but only very few condemned Hitler in spite of the atrocities Nazis committed of which they had better knowledge than the civilian population.317

The United States established a special prisoner-of-war camp as well, where they interviewed German soldiers and secretly recorded their conversations. Based on their documentation, Nazi ideology or political issues seem to be of minor concern for the common soldier and were seldom discussed with their comrades. It was different for non-commissioned officers, whose conversations were also documented in this camp. They had completed their secondary or academic education during the monarchy or the Weimar Republic and thus belonged to the same social group as the authors of these diaries. Because of their educational qualifications, they held staff positions or if they had language skills served in special interpreter units. In their civil professions, these interpreters were mostly language teachers at schools or universities, or merchants that had often lived abroad.

317 Sönke Neitzel, Abgehört (Berlin: List Taschenbuch, 2007).
As evident from these records, the majority of these non-commissioned officers opposed the Nazi-regime. Members of these interpreter units reported that ninety percent of their staff wished the attempt to assassinate Hitler in 1944 had succeeded. Most of these non-commissioned officers have the same critical attitude toward Hitler or reject his ideology outright as many of these diarists; by contrast, commissioned officers were likely to identify with the Nazi-regime even though the majority of both groups attended the Gymnasium and were raised by families that often belonged to the Bildungsbürgertum.

Hitler, by reestablishing the army, had created for professional soldiers the unexpected opportunity to advance their careers, which led many to abandon their humanistic principals. One of these officers in his professional eagerness, even as POW, asked Hitler in a letter for a promotion, which he was granted. It appears that these officers longing for an advanced rank and to be decorated were blinded from assessing the Nazi regime objectively. The cultural ideology continued to comfort the Bürgertum in spite of the changing social and political environment; their ethical values, however, were less entrenched and more prone to be abandoned.


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previously reviewed.\textsuperscript{320} Dahlkötter, after graduating from the Gymnasium, spends one year with the Reicharbeitsdienst (RAD), an obligatory work brigade for young women. The RAD organization sends her, together with other young women, to a farm to work in the field, garden and household. She is also required to attend lectures on the ideology of National Socialism (NS), whereby the main topic of her course was: “The person and accomplishments of Hitler.” She writes: “The main aim of these instructions is to teach us women should be as politically and ideologically informed as men. Because we (the NS-state i.e. the National Socialist-state) need women that understand the worldview and political struggle of men.”

In a letter to her parents she writes: “They teach us that their Positive Christianity believes in a God, who is independent of religious denominations, but Christianity demands more than just the belief in a God.” She is repulsed by the constant talk about the belief in the godliness of “our blood” and of the German race, as well as by the slander against the Christian religion and its priests. She copies the lyrics of various patriotic songs and comments: “The fatherland and German people are also important to us Christians, but they can never rank highest. We are unavering in this regard because our values are absolute and we cannot renounce our Christian belief and eternal life.”

As a determinant for the admission to the Abitur, she was required to write a biographical essay and states: “I described how much the German culture and love for the fatherland guide me, but I avoided to write about the Führer’s influence on my life.” Her mother in a letter to her daughter writes: “Bolshevism and National Socialism claim each

\textsuperscript{320} Hanna Kisker, \textit{Reisebericht in Brießform 1920} (Letter - Account of a journey 1920), diary.
to be the salvation for all nations. Germany, by persecuting Jews and Christians, by euthanizing undesirables and repressing liberties of individuals has given other countries sufficient cause to dread the Nazi regime as much as Bolshevism.” She perceives Bolshevism as the biggest evil and a great threat to Christianity.

After the debacle of Stalingrad her mother laments the strategic mistakes Germany made in Russia and the misery they have caused for the German soldier and the country, and writes: “The war is a mistake.” Then she tells of the empty churches and how her husband, a pastor, was not allowed to hold a commemorative service for Germany’s Sixth Army after it vanished in Stalingrad. It was a daring letter considering, that if censored, it could have endangered herself and her daughter and might have caused their imprisonment in a concentration camp.

After completing the obligatory one-year RAD in March of 1943, Dahlgötter, to her surprise, is admitted to the university. She wants to become a teacher of Greek and Latin, to which her father comments: “You can study to become a teacher, but I will not permit you to teach in this NS-state. But who knows what will be in a few years.”

The correlation between strong religious belief and those who reject the Nazi ideology continues to hold true for the generation that attended Gymnasium in the Third Reich. While Dahlgötter rejects the “positive Christianity” of the Nazis, Agnes Loß, who lacked strong religious ties was enticed by the NS-System despite her father’s anti-Hitler stance.³²¹ Both were daughters of Bildungsbürgertum’s parents and both had a Gymnasium education. Judging by these diaries, it appears the cultural ideology even

³²¹ Rudolf Mücke, Agnes Loß – Aufzeichnungen über das gemeinsame Leben mit der Enkelin von 1921-29, 1160 Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen e.V.
without religious fortification helped the Bürgertum born before World War I to be less susceptible to Nazi ideology than the post-World War I generation.

Summary

Age of Diarists at major historical events is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Age of Diarists at Major Historical Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of birth</th>
<th>Abitur(^{322}) at age 18</th>
<th>WWI start</th>
<th>Weimar Republic</th>
<th>Hitler(^{323})</th>
<th>WWII start</th>
<th>WWII end</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1828-1859</td>
<td>1846-1877</td>
<td>86-55</td>
<td>91-60</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868-1878</td>
<td>1886-1896</td>
<td>46-36</td>
<td>51-41</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>65-55</td>
<td>71-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883-1894</td>
<td>1901-1912</td>
<td>31-20</td>
<td>36-25</td>
<td>50-39</td>
<td>56-45</td>
<td>62-51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899-1913</td>
<td>1917-1931</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>20-6</td>
<td>34-20</td>
<td>40-13</td>
<td>46-32</td>
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<tr>
<td>1923-</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Authors’ Years of Birth: 1828 to 1859

These authors spend most of their productive lives in the years before World War I and many grew up in rural communities.

A number of these diarists spent their childhood in small towns and often had to divide their time between helping out on the farm and preparing for the Gymnasium entrance exam by studying Latin and Greek. To attend the Gymnasium they had to move to the next big town either alone or with their parents. Authors repeatedly mention the sacrifices their mothers made to allow them to finish their second and tertiary education after the premature death of their fathers.

\(^{322}\) Abitur is the comprehensive exam at the end of the Gymnasium education.

\(^{323}\) Hitler became Reichskanzler on January 30, 1933, which marks the beginning of the Third Reich.
Fathers frequently expose their sons already during their elementary school years to music, German literature and, through joint visits to museums, to art displays in order to inspire their desire for Bildung. Many authors describe a life long interest in these cultural attributes to which their family and Gymnasium had exposed them. All of these diarists identify with the cultural ideology of the Bildungsbürgertum as evident by their ability to derive comfort and inner strength from rereading classical literature and especially by listing to J.S. Bach’s music when facing adversities.

Women, whose humanistic education of the Lyceum was less rigorous, displayed the same desire for Bildung as men. Many were well-read, interested in ancient and contemporary art and eager to learn modern languages such as English, French or Italian. Especially the diary of an aristocratic woman testifies to her autodidactic high educational level. For women of the Bürgertum there were at that time no employment opportunities available with an income that would allow them to maintain their middle class status after their husbands’ premature death. To provide for their children they worked as housekeeper or sublet rooms, and in spite of their meager income paid for their sons’ Gymnasium and tertiary education as they recount in their diaries.

In these reports of the early years most authors indicate a strong religious belief and some depict their struggle to find God. Prevalent is these writers’ love of nature, and many mention frequent hikes they took with their parents or later in life.

**Authors’ Years of Birth: 1868-1878**

These authors could have fought in World War I and some approached retirement age when Hitler came to power.
These diaries reflect the increasing assertiveness of Imperial Germany, but also the transition of the nation’s cultural paradigm after the monarchy collapsed. In the early years of the Kaiserreich Bildung and the belief in mankind’s progression dominated the cultural ideology of the Bildungsbürgertum. The nation’s industrialization, World War I followed by periods of economic hardship and the introduction of the Nazi ideology changed the socio-economic reality and caused the Bürgertum to subscribe to a more utilitarian, less idealistic worldview.

However, Gymnasia are slow to adapt their educational concept to these changes and for the most part continue to teach the cultural ideology that prevailed during the Kaiserreich. Diarists credit the humanistic education of bestowing in its students ethics, the spirit of antiquity, love for literature, and patriotism, but blame them for not addressing contemporary issues such as the Kulturkampf. The comfort they gain by reading Homer and other classics in the trenches of World War I indicates how much the Bildungsbürgertum continues to identify with these values. A number of these diarists comment again on the solace they gain by listening to music especially compositions by J.S. Bach. World War I at the beginning is perceived as a fight to purify mankind and to deepen its religious feelings, as hostilities fail to end such idealization of the war dissipates and its moral legitimacy is being questioned. Various writers continue to express deep religious feelings, but at the end of World War I and in the following years a pastor laments the strongly declining church attendance.

Authors continue to describe their love for nature and a frequent topic is their continuing effort to expand Bildung by reading contemporary literature, and visiting
museums in Germany and abroad; the changing political scene does not appear to hamper these interests. When taking trips abroad they display their cosmopolitan attitude by admiring art and customs of the host country without prejudice.

Theodor Wolff as chief-editor of one of Germany’s larger newspapers increases its circulation by promoting democracy and political engagement; in addition, in tune with the nations cultural ideology, he familiarized his readers with contemporary literature, plays and works of art from around the world. The growing readership of a newspaper promoting democracy indicates a general readiness of the Bürgertum for a more republican form of government. In an early diary an author expresses his disregard for the working class, while now diarists document their social responsibility by writing about their efforts to improve laborers’ habitat and work environment.

When Hitler came to power, in 1933, some of these authors took early retirement because they rejected the ideology of the Nazi-regime. Those who rejected the system but were too young to retire, report that they tried to survive by hiding their opposition. Some writers initially sympathized with Hitler but were appalled when they became aware of the atrocities committed under the banner of the Third Reich. Independent of their political stance all authors are very patriotic and eager to follow the call to arms by the Kaiser.

**Authors’ Years of Birth: 1883-1894**

The authors graduated from the Gymnasium just after the school reform of 1900, some fought in both world wars and were close to retirement age at the end of World War II.
The humanist concept, the *Gymnasium* taught, remained fundamentally the same throughout the monarchy; ethical and cultural values these authors express thus appear not to differ from previous diaries. Some writers again describe their strong religious inclination and others portray their cosmopolitan attitude by being open-minded toward other cultures. Parents continue to encourage their children to visit museums, the theater and concerts, and most of these diarists remain well versed in contemporary literature. These somewhat younger authors also gain comfort as soldiers by reading Homer, Kant and German classics, and particularly J. S. Bach’s music is valued for its ability to console throughout these diaries.

Patriotism, expressed by these writers through their willingness to follow the call to arms, does not diminish either under the Kaiser or Hitler. Various authors indicate their social responsibility by writing of improving the conditions for their laborers and their concern for the welfare of POWs that worked for them.

The main difference of these diaries compared to the previous ones is the impact the Nazi-regime had on the life of their authors and the changing attitude towards Jews, which is already apparent during the Weimar Republic. A diarist reports when he was a child in Imperial Germany his parents would not have tolerated discrimination against Jews in his village. Another author writes that his Jewish uncle helped found a fraternity during the Kaiserreich. In the Weimar Republic the same and other fraternities invite this author to become a member but withdraw their offer when he informs them that he is Jewish. He writes that his classmates in elementary school (1890-1896) invited him to
their homes, but later, in the Gymnasium, they only associated with him when they need tutoring.

In 1933 this diarist’s aristocratic wife divorces him and the “Aryan” partner of another Jewish author commits suicide because he is unable to deal with the racial conflict. After World War II a Jewish author, having survived the Third Reich, takes her own life because of the discrimination she is facing as a Jew in the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The Nazis killed two of the three Jewish writers whose diaries I analyzed.

When Hitler came to power the age of these authors ranges from thirty-nine to fifty years, and most describe the impact the Nazi-regime had on their lives and attitude. Some diarists never accepted the NSDAP ideology especially those with strong religious believes, while others did not reveal their stance in their writings. A number of authors state that it took the events of the Kristallnacht for them to reject the doctrine of the Third Reich. Others joined the NSDAP some out of conviction but others to remain employed and avoid persecution. One member of the NSDAP, even after having been harassed by the Gestapo, makes no mention of denouncing the Nazi regime in his writings. Authors that were members of the NSDAP claim after the war their neighbors and parish members testified on their behalf because they had not committed inhuman acts.

The school reform of 1900 would eventually cause a major social reconfiguration by allowing Realschule graduates to attain a tertiary education. It would also allow women to attend universities, and thereby provide them with the opportunity to be more financially independent than the previous age group. Three of the diarists reflect this
educational reform, two female authors had a tertiary education and one male graduated from a *Realschule*.

**Authors’ Years of Birth: 1899-1913**

These authors are too young to have served in World War I, most graduate from the *Gymnasium* during the Weimar Republic, are in their early adult years when Hitler comes to power, can serve in World War II, and are in the prime of their lives in 1945 when the war ended.

One author contemplates why he and others did not object when Chancellor Franz von Papen illegally dismissed the Prussian government in 1932, but instead welcomed his leadership. In 1933, when Hitler came to power, the majority of these authors are in their twenties. Some succumbed to Hitler’s hypnotic rhetoric and voted for him, but most rejected the NSDAP ideology, especially those with strong religious beliefs, which often brought them in conflict with Nazi regime and limited their professional opportunities. Other authors claim to be too well read to accept the twisted truth, which various political parties are promoting, and Hitler is presenting in his book *Mein Kampf*. They strongly oppose the militaristic conduct and brutality of the Socialists, Communists, SA and *Stahlhelm Bund*, and contend during the *Bücherverbrennung* and the *Kristallnacht* bystanders did not cheer as the press reported, but watched in silence fearing arrest if they protested. One diarist writes that while Hitler’s speeches are being broadcast in restaurants nobody dares to leave before he ends out of fear of being denounced.

A frequent topic is the professional and personal difficulty they face because of their religious affiliation or for not being a member of the NSDAP. They contend that in
order to avoid being victimized as dissident many join the Wehrmacht because soldiers were in less danger of being persecuted for political reasons, while others join the SA, a paramilitary organization of the NSDAP. Nevertheless when the Wehrmacht celebrates its initial victories one author, who had opposed the system, briefly pondered whether there were merits to the Nazi ideology.

The cultural ideology of Bildung retains its importance also for this generation, as is evident by their interests in literature, art and architecture and lectures they give as POWs about German classics.

**Author’s Year of Birth: 1923**

This author was the only one not to have lived in Imperial Germany. Of all reviewed diarists only this diarist completed her Gymnasium education during the Third Reich. Her strong religious belief shielded her as well from identifying with the ideology of National Socialism (NS). This is especially remarkable because contrary to all previous diarists she is not only exposed to the Nazi indoctrination during her secondary education but also while serving a compulsory six month in the Reichsarbeitsdienst (RAD) doing mostly farm work. In her diary she describes how she deals with these indoctrinations, but also discusses letters of her mother, who is appalled by the crimes the Nazis are committing.

**Conclusion**

In the early years of the monarchy, Germany’s cultural and ethical values rested mainly with the aristocracy and the Bildungsbürgertum and were reinforced and perpetuated by the Gymnasium education, which the lower classes could not afford.
Starting in 1890, various school reforms broadened the access to secondary education. The resulting social mobility changed the composition of the upper and middle class and gradually diminished the dominance of the elite groups and the influence of the Gymnasium. This change of the educational system by itself had the potential of affecting the cultural and ethical values of the newly formulated Bürgertum. However these concepts were even more challenged by the nation’s increasing industrialization, world wars that altered Bürgers’ perception of reality, and a dictatorship with a different paradigm and unrelated ethics. To establish the effect these events had on the ethical and cultural values of the Bürgertum, I reviewed diaries that covered the period from the monarchy to the Third Reich.

Authors of the early diaries were exclusively members of Bildungbürgertum because they graduated from the Gymnasium prior to the school reform of 1890, at which the accessibility of secondary education was expanded. These Bildungsbürger during a large part of their lives saw their fundamental paradigm with its ethical and cultural values reinforced by the social environment of the monarchy, and for the most part they continued to identify with these values during the Weimar Republic. The ideology of National Socialism, which promoted the right of the stronger violated these ethical values, confronted some members of this social group only in their late years. To avoid conforming to Nazi ideology, these diarists took early retirement. Only one of these authors initially admired Hitler because he revived the economy, but was then unable to accept the policies of the Nazi regime that followed.
Authors of the diaries who completed their secondary education at the fin de siècle and the following two decades had been exposed to social restructuring as well as economical and political turmoil. They were more open to political alternatives and did not reject the Nazi ideology outright, as the older generation had done. Some hesitated before rejecting Nazi ideology, while others appear to have accepted their concept. Exceptions were authors with strong religious beliefs who never wavered in spurning the Nazi paradigm even when exposed to intense Nazi indoctrination as students.

Gaining comfort from reading the symbolic literature of this cultural ideology such as works by Homer and German classics declined somewhat, while viewing art seem to retain its consoling effect. The Bürgertum’s almost religious experience when listening to classical music, especially the Passions by J.S. Bach also did not diminish. Authors detailing their experience in World War I find the same unchanging solace in the performance of classical music as those who experienced the miseries of the collapsing Third Reich.

Retaining interests outside life’s necessities by pursuing Bildung remained part of the Bürgertum’s cultural ideology but assumed a more peripheral role, as professions became more demanding. Parts of the cultural tradition were charitable activities and social engagements, which also remained prevalent during the reviewed time period. The Bürgertum’s fundamental concept of Bildung with its religious roots was thus more resistant to social changes and the Nazi ideology than their ethical paradigms as these
findings show. Thomas Mann’s perspective: “What seems important to German people is Bildung and the morality that stems from it.” is thus only partially true.  

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324 Bruford, The German tradition of self cultivation, 231.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

After the Thirty Year War (1618-1648), which had largely destroyed Germany’s once thriving culture, the Protestant clergy was instrumental in reestablishing its cultural values by educating the Lutheran, and at that time, mainly rural population. Their values were founded on Protestantism with its emphasis on civic responsibility and inner perfection through Bildung. The Pietists in the early eighteenth century were instrumental in fine-tuning this cultural ideology and taught Prussia’s mainly aristocratic elite to identify with these values, thereby ensuring its perpetuation.

In 1809, Prussia, the emerging dominant power among the German principalities, recognized the need to reform its secondary and tertiary education to broaden the base of its educated elite. To this effect von Humboldt introduced the neohumanist Gymnasium, whose educational concept combined Protestant values with those of an idealistic interpretation of the ancient Greek and Roman cultures, and was to define and perpetuate the nation’s cultural ideology. Its graduates, mainly commoners, would form the Bildungsbürgertum, staff Germany’s leading administrative positions and increasingly personify Germany’s cultural ideology. High tuition fees purposely prevented lower classes from joining the ranks of this elite group. This ideology, by emphasizing inner perfection through intellectual advancement, reflected the rural and contemplative social environment of that period and was considered to represent mankind’s progression.
During the following eighty years Germany changed from a contemplative milieu to a more hectic urban and industrial social structure, which gradually caused the quest for inner betterment, pursuit of Bildung and interest in arts to assume a less dominant role in the lives of its Bildungsbürger. The changed social structure did not cause intellectual and cultural interests to be abandoned, the desire to expand their knowledge remained, but its pursuit became more marginalized.

The sheltered intellectual environment of Gymnasium teachers, the primary promulgator of this ideology, prevented them from adjusting their teaching to the changed social environment of 1900. Even though Gymnasia reduced the teaching of ancient languages, albeit reluctantly, they continued to instruct students that the primary goal in life should be to strive for Bildung and inner perfection and not be content with satisfying their utilitarian needs. These educators’ failure to recognize that the demands of an industrial economy would prevent humanistic educated parents to fully commit to such lofty goals created a generational conflict. Parents were able to recite ancient Greek and Latin and were well versed in the attributes of Germany’s culture, which the Gymnasium had taught them. However, they lacked the time to expand this knowledge in a concentrated effort while trying to meet the demands of their professions. But even if interests outside the daily necessities became pastime endeavors, they remained committed to the cultural ideology of the Bürgertum.

With the rise of nationalism in Imperial Germany, Gymnasium teachers increasingly depicted ancient cultures not so much as a cultural guide, but as a stepping-stone for Germany’s own advancement. However, the changing role of antiquity did not
diminish its importance for teaching the social and cultural values of these civilizations. The Hellenic-Roman cultures also retained their significance for instilling in students a cosmopolitan perspective and the respect for the accomplishments of other societies. Teachers in their essays, as well as a number of diarists, reflect this open mindedness towards other customs and traditions not only of countries they visited, but also of those Germany occupied during both World Wars. This cosmopolitan attitude did not lessen the fervent patriotism many authors expressed. On the contrary, secondary education’s increasing emphasis on German history and language reinforced their nationalistic stance, as did World War I.

Initially the aristocracy had been largely responsible not only for administering the country but also for perpetuating the nation’s cultural ideology of Bildung. The school reform of 1809 enlarged this educated elite by establishing the Bildungsbürgertum, which identified and perpetuated the cultural ideology and assumed administrative positions. At the fin de siècle Germany’s growing economy again demanded to expand secondary education, but this time to include a much larger section of the population. The school reform of 1900 accomplished this by upgrading the more utilitarian Realschule to be on par with the Gymnasium. This expansion of secondary education eventually initiated a restructuring of Germany’s upper and middle classes that would contribute to converting the Bildungsbürgertum’s cultural ideology of Bildung to a less demanding concept, which the general Bürgertum would practice.

Germany’s educated elite, the Bildungsbürgertum, had not been concentrated in the nation’s capital as in France or England, but was ubiquitous even in small towns.
where they personified the elite. They were thereby able to perpetuate Germany’s cultural ideology throughout the nation by inspiring new members of the Bürgertum to emulate them. In addition Bildung by being an integral part of Lutheranism and initially considered God-like, contributed to the fact that this value system remained an integral part of the nation’s ideology. But, because a large part of the restructured Bürgertum now lacked a humanistic education and had to meet the demands of their profession, the traditional cultural ideology assumed a less important role than it previously occupied in the lives of the Bildungsbürger. The desire for Bildung remained, but its focus diminished and instead became more of a recreational activity in the form of reading circles, attending cultural events and visits to museums. But even in its new role Bildung remained a social marker, and Bürger who lacked general knowledge were looked down upon even if they excelled in their professions. To accommodate the Bürgertum’s desire for such cultural pursuits even small communities subsidized the necessary institutions such as orchestras and theaters, and still do so to this day. Germany’s socio-economic changes together with the school reform, thus “partially” democratized its cultural ideology; “partially” because the lower classes identified to a much lesser extent with these values.

A gauge for this cultural transition can be seen in the ability of Bildung to provide comfort especially in adverse circumstances. Diarists portraying World War I, who often had just graduated from the Gymnasium, find comfort in the trenches by reading Homer, Kant and German classics. However, authors of the same age group, when describing the tumultuous post World War I period and events of World War II, rarely mention any
more finding equilibrium by reading these classics. Instead they mention seeking intellectual stimulation by learning a language, attending contemporary plays and visiting museums. For them, the deeply ingrained desire for intellectual advancement, *Bildung*, served to gain equanimity, and functioned as an emotional anchor in an environment that lacked permanence. It appears *Bildung* had now become more *verinnerlicht* (internalized) and less ostentatious than during the pre-World War I years.

Enjoying the beauty of arts, more so than the intellectual aspect of *Bildung*, continued to provide a refuge for the *Bürgertum*, for example, by finding solace in admiring the artworks in a church at the Russian front. Classical sacral music, in particular, stands out in retaining its consoling effect. Various diarists, independent of age and of whether they portray the events in Imperial Germany or the collapse of the Third Reich, write of the religious experience and comfort they find by listening to J.S. Bach’s (1685-1750) Passion of St. John or Passion of St Mathew. Both compositions appear to convey deep religious feelings to these listeners by reflecting Germany’s strong pious spirit in the aftermath of the Thirty Year War (1618-48), when these compositions were written. The composer Richard Wagner expresses this sentiment when stating that Bach was “himself the history of the German spirit through that horrible century during which the light of the German people was completely extinguished.”

In Germany even today, Bach’s music retains its role of a major cultural attribute as evident by its frequent performances. Within the concept of *Bildung*, classical music appears to have retained

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more of its importance than its cognitive aspects, possibly because it addresses emotions instead of the intellect.

A persistent part of the Gymnasium education was that gaining freedom as an individual was only possible by submitting to the nation’s laws and social norms. Fundamental to the secondary education was also the teaching of ethical values based on Christian principals. Because Christianity was taught in a factual manner and not as an ideology, ethics were not considered to be dependent on religion. These ethical values taught by the Gymnasium, and which were part of the concept of Bildung, stood in absolute contrast to the right of the stronger, disregard for individual rights and human life, which National Socialism personified. To assess from these diaries with certainty whether the author was drawn to the NSDAP-ideology and for how long is only possible if they explicitly express their commitment to the latter or substantiate their opposition to the paradigm of the Third Reich. In particular, it was hard to determine, since the pursuit of Bildung or interest in cultural events was not in conflict with the Nazi ideology, and was practiced by members of the NSDAP including Hitler, who frequently attended performances of operas by Richard Wagner at the Bayreuth Festspiele.

Most diaries do not clearly reveal the political orientation of the author particularly if they were written after the collapse of the Nazi regime and its fascist ideology. Many diarists who were in their sixties when Hitler came to power took early retirement rather than conform to the ideology of National Socialism (NS), which would have been required if they wanted to remain employed. Some of the younger age authors
opposed the Nazi-state, particularly when events of the Kristallnacht made them realize their own paradigm was incompatible with that of the NSDAP.

The emphasis of Germany’s secondary education on finding freedom within the prevailing laws and social norms might have contributed to the fact that the Bürgertum complied with the Nazi paradigm once it was the law of the land. Authors, whose ethical values were strongly rooted in religion, rejected the NSDAP ideology, without exception and independent of their age.

In conclusion Germany’s small elite during the Kaiserreich identified with the cultural ideology of Bildung, which the Gymnasium perpetuated. The school reform of 1900 was less committed to this ideology and significantly expanded secondary education to include a larger section of the population. This altered educational concept together with social, economical and political changes after World War I reduced the importance Bildung played in the national consciousness as the reviewed diaries demonstrate. However, these writings also show that Bildung, because of its deep roots in Germany’s traditional cultural ideology, remained part of the national identity, even in its diminished form.

It appears that Germany’s cultural ideology of Bildung is composed of a cognitive and a spiritual component; in early diaries both are able to console and provide comfort. The socio-economic environment gradually marginalizes the intellectual aspect of Bildung, but without voiding its formative influence on the nation’s culture. In the process, its attributes such as classical literature are being less consulted to calm in adverse circumstances. In contrast, social and political changes appear not to reduce
ability of the spiritual component of Bildung to provide comfort in the enjoyment of art
and particularly in listening to music.

Gymnasium teachers were slow to adjust the on Hellenic ideals based education to
account for the altered social environment, as evident from their treatise. The discrepancy
between their teachings together with the gradual declining currency of these ideals left
the values system of Gymnasium graduates increasing in limbo and thereby vulnerable to
the ideology of National Socialism. It explains why the more social and political changes
took hold in Germany the more these diarist were inclined to sympathize with the
ideology of the NSADAP. Diarists who spend their formative years in the Kaiserreich
mostly opposed the Nazi regime, those born after 1900 were frequently ambivalent to or
accepted the new paradigm while youth educated and indoctrinated during the Third
Reich were likely to identified with its concepts.

The Nazi regime, by personifying the right of the stronger, assails the
Bürgertum’s Christianity based ethics that were part of the cultural ideology of Bildung.
Some members of the Bürgertum nolens volens tolerated the values National Socialism
imposed on them while others identify with the Nazi ideology. Individuals who rejected
the Nazi’s ideological imperatives were mostly guided by strong religious beliefs, but
also by traditional ethics.
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