

**Munich and Theatrical Modernism: Politics, Playwriting, and Performance,
1890 - 1914.**

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INTRODUCTION: MODERNISM, THEATER, MUNICH Page 1

2 - Modernists asked the questions: What is Art, and what should it be? What is society, and how should it be reformed And, what are the mediations between the two?

The crisis of community, individuality, and language gave modernism its great dynamism.

3 - Rather than creators of culture, men were its creatures. Stuck, Nietzsche said, in "the prison-house of language."

3 - Mann said Germans have a reverence for theater. The Kaiser told an actress, "theater is a continuation of the university."

Modernists also turned to theater because it fused all the arts.

5 - By focusing on Munich we lose Gerhart Hauptmann and others, but the movement was international.

6 - And in Munich we have THE decline of liberalism and growth of political Catholicism: the prevalence of a classical tradition in the arts; the increasing commercialization of cultural production and diffusion; and the persistence of traditional culture in ways not found in other cities.

7 - Censorship is at the center of this tale.

7 - Censorship makes some aesthetic and some political.

7 - Bavarian royalty stood for liberalism through much of the 19th century; its art, neoclassicism. With rational secular values.

8 - After mid-century boudoir farces and sexually suggestive material dominated commercial stages; the state and Catholics and modernists hated this.

9 - These were "golden ages," but contested.

CHAPTER ONE: MUNICH IN 1890 Page 11

The Official neoclassical art provided a foil for Wagner and Ibsen (two part-time residents of Munich).

Anticlericalism, “Official” Classicism, and the Challenge of Wagner and Ibsen pg. 12

The Catholic Church and state-sponsored classical – liberalism. Originally Bavaria had been nearly entirely Catholic. By 1815, 1 out of 4 were Protestant.

The change was due to annexing northward after Napoleon.

The Bureaucracy and urban areas were Protestant dominated.

In the 1860s the Church launched a campaign for worldly power. The Church was frightened by moves to unify with Prussia (which would have increased Protestant power). Catholics, therefore, created what became the Center Party in 1887. It was nobility, peasants and Catholics against urban folk and for independence.

13 – Protestants kept control via the Monarch appointing cabinets. The monarch aligned with Protestants to steer clear of Catholic domination. And did gerrymandering.

14 – Catholics dominated voting, but still had limited power.

Ludwig II (1864 – 1886) and Luitpold (1886 – 1912) appointed liberal cabinets.

15 – The Bavarian government supported Bismarck’s Kulturkampf in the 1870s.

The Protestants fought Catholics with the classicism of Goethe and Schiller.

16 – The desired nation was a body of educated citizens who would employ a common German language to discuss philosophical, religious, scientific, artistic, social and political issues. The middle-class was the best target for such edification.

This required the petty aristocracy to become one with subordinate classes.

The most thorough statement of the political function of classical culture is Schiller’s *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1795). He thought the French Rev terror showed his contemporaries lacked the emotional and moral self-restraint necessary for collective government. Classical culture would fix this.

17 – It is through beauty that one progresses to freedom. Artists and playwrights were especially important in creating such a public. Religion was, due to its sensuous appeal, but rationalism messed that up. Enlightened monarchs would nurture the people; that was the order. Then a democracy would be ready to happen.

19 – Yet this beautiful culture was also free from political and social concerns. Classicism thus somewhat helped authoritarian rule.

A Franciscan monastery was demolished to make way for the Nationalbuhne (National Theater).

By 1830 Bavarians got more classical training than anywhere else in Germany.

20 – Ludwig I (1825 – 1848) pushed this neoabsolutism replacing the previous Catholic Baroque. His son, Maximilian II (1848 – 1864) too. But since Ludwig I was forced to abdicate in 1848, his son depoliticized the classical tradition. Art was a realm of beauty; formalism and elegance were very important.

22 – Ludwig II (1864 – 1886) had schizophrenia and wanted more charismatic monarchy. As such he pushed Wagner.

Whereas the middle wanted a nation, Wagner wanted a volk, via emotional theater, not pedantry. He wanted to get rid, like Nietzsche, of utilitarian, rational individual, aestheticism.

23 – Between 1865 and 1870 we get the major Wagner operas. But opposition to his personal life, his immoral operas, and desire to interfere with Bavarian politics at the highest level, meant he had to flee Munich in December 1865 after little more than a year there.

Henrik Ibsen (1828 – 1906) lived in Munich (1875 – 1891). People in his plays wanted liberation from bourgeois restrictions.

25 – Thus, despite differences, Ibsen and Wagner both attacked bourgeois convention.

“If we had a national theater, we would also become a nation.”

Munich’s Naturalist Movement: Michael Georg Conrad and the Modern Life Society Pg. 26

26 – The 1880s were “Moderne” in that they sought to focus the public’s attention on the problems and realities of the modern world.

Berlin naturalists looked for an objective POV; Munich naturalists stressed that observers create reality; thus the emphasis on the personality of the artist.

27 – Michael Georg Conrad (1846 – 1927) stood at the center of Munich’s naturalist movement. He was virulently anti-clerical. So much so that in 1878 his books were banned in post-Kulturkampf Prussia.

28 – He, Wagner, Nietzsche, Zola all saw the artist as a connoisseur of life.

29 – As capitalism pulled the world apart, he hoped a transcendent patriotism would unite the folds. And, a strong state would initiate this. People spurred by one anguish to renew their ethical conscience and awaken their slumbering energies for a common goal.

30 – Monarch and artists together; via “aesthetics of power;” and an “aristocracy of the spirit.”

31 – Thus artists needed to reject official culture for more challenging ideal found in Wagner and Ibsen.

32 – In 1890 Conrad formed the naturalists association: the Modern Life Society.

35 – Their member Gumpfenberg drew fire for his agnostic approach to religion. His *Messias*, showed Jesus as a natural man who staged miracles in the name of social justice. The Catholics had him imprisoned.

38 – The Catholics based their worldly influence on the Holy Family in heaven and the Catholic family on earth. They attacked blasphemy.

39 – In addition to naturalizing Jesus, they portrayed sexual tensions and anxieties within marital relationships. Catholics said they thus encouraged the problems they portrayed.

39 – A Strategy developed wherein the court would appease Catholics by putting modernists on trial, even though they knew they'd be acquitted.

41 – In their first 6 months, they alienated both the Clergy and the proletariat. They were seen as wanting the same thing as the socialists: overthrow of the Christian world order: "Socialists in Tail Coats."

42 – Conrad objected because he did not like Marxism. He wanted class harmony. He attacked the Socialist Democratic Party (SDP) and their materialism. The SDP and clergy wanted to divide the national spirit; he denounced.

Naturalist Theater and Drama in Munich Pg. 44

44 – They Modern Life Society was unified, itself, on targets, but not in positive productions.

In 1890, Munich had 350,000 people and only 4 theaters. Three were administered by the court.

45 – When commercial theaters arose, they had to submit their work to policy prior to performance; there was no room for challenging theater. Private showings in Vereine (voluntary associations) challenged this monopoly – annual dues, no admission fees, made them private.

The Modern Life Society too early announced Ibsen as their president and alienated him; losing a great potential ally.

47 – The Munich naturalists' Free Theater would be open to all, and more patriotic than Berlin's. German and Bavarian history could be dramatized at a low price.

48 – Conrad resigned in 1891; the new generation thought him too old anyway. They did a staging or two and by 1893 dissolved. Their fare had been mediocre; but they dramatized the struggle between the individual artist and the bourgeois.

50 – Though they promoted the vision of a great individual artists, they were largely mediocre. They did, though, put themselves in the center of state discussions.

51 – The naturalists failed to make plays that were true to life. Munich’s first two modernist playwrights turned that into a virtue; they embraced art as artifice.

CHAPTER TWO: CARNIVALESQUE MODERNISM: SEXUALITY AND SATIRE PAGE 53

Munich was home to 2 of the most radical experimental dramas of the early 1890s. Frank Wedekind’s *Spring Awakening* and Oskar Panizza’s *The Council of Love*.

Panizza attacked Catholicism; Wedekind German classical tradition. Both sought inspiration from pop culture and aesthetic paganism in that they denied binaries such as: Good/ evil, order/disorder, mind/body, sacred/profane).

They performed carnivalesque dramas in which all binaries were upset.

Oskar Panizza and *The Council of Love* Pg. 54

Panizza’s father was Catholic and mother fanatically Protestant. After dad died, Mom fought the church for the right to raise him Protestant.

55 – In *The Council of Love* God is tottering, needing to be held up by angels, spitting and coughing on a broken throne. He is infatuated with a cherub.

In Act 1

The earth is so wicked that God wants to destroy it; but then, he is told, he won’t have the requisit strength to build the earth anew. He calls Jesus and Mary. Jesus is weak because the Catholics keep eating his flesh and drinking his blood. Mary is vivacious sexy, reads Boccaccio, speaks French, and dabbles in lesbianism.

In Act 2

56 – They decide to look at the papal court prior to making a decision. They peer in on Pope Alexandar VI’s orgies.

In the 3rd act, Satan, the only person left up there with energy and purpose is told to design a plague; he creates syphilis. In return he wants his books to circulate freely in heaven and on earth.

In act 4, Mary meets Satan’s daughter and kisses her. She is kicked out of heaven because it is feared that Jesus might be seduced by her.

In Act 5: The syphilitic woman infects the Pope and many others.

The Council of Love (COL) was published in 1894.

The government censored the books, pulled them and sued for prosecution. But, they had to find someone offended, which was hard as only 20 copies were sold prior to removing them from shelves. Those who bought them were anti-clerics themselves, and so not offended.

57 – The work was technically published in Switzerland, causing prosecution problems, (they argued that he desired it to be published in Germany) and the investigators were allowed to stand in for offended citizens.

58 – Panizzi welcomed the trial as a way to publicize his ideas (as it would never be staged in Germany); he said he was only concerned with artistic ideas, like the idea of God in Alexander VI's mind.

59 – He argued that not he, but the Catholic Church, had blasphemed. He was given 1 year in jail.

61 – Panizza said the individual and the state were in conflict; his demon he said, came from inaccessible regions of the mind. It was not an emanation of God, but natural. It appeared to him via rigid self-analysis; The state and society cohered as long as individuals repressed the Demon; if the repression was too great, the Demon (demon) might create hostility to social demands.

62 – Conversely when society got too weak individual violence; conspiracy or revolution might erupt.

The demon can only live during chaos and upheaval: "Unity is princely violence, is tyrannical rule. Discord is popular violence, is freedom."

If the demon speaks in religious terms it is unstoppable. Because they encounter similar depths and abysses among the listening masses. He was into charismatic figures.

If successful, their realizations were incorporated and became ossified. New outbreaks would follow.

63 – This was bad, but also allowed the demon room to breathe. Most naturalists saw man as transparent and good. Panizza surpassed them. He nearly transcended naturalism by invoking unconscious factors.

He also broke with the classical tradition. Schiller wrote that every individual has an ideal self, to which it is the great duty of his existence to conform." This came out via classical education.

64 – This ideal self might be pro or anti-social. But, no reformist artist of the 1800s or 1900s doubted the possibility of achieving a social state where the ideal promptings of the individual might harmonize with those of his fellow men.

Trilling called this the doctrine of “sincerity.”

Panizza said to liberate yourself you needed to destroy all illusions. The Damon is your ultimate authority.

In his trial he screamed at the oppressive order.

65 - Freud found the COL revolutionary.

He was into violent anarchists. “propaganda by deed.”

66 – Feeling his literary work impotent, he hoped at least the masses were on his side. His insight that there was a split between the peasants and official Catholic doctrine was an important insight and contribution.

The peasants did rally to keep their traditional sexual mores in a Charivaris. They formed the Peasant League and also attacked liberal economic policy.

67 – He was the first German playwright to note the “carnavalesque” nature of pop culture. His own work mirrored theirs in an attempt to invert binaries; to see the world in its wholeness. In peasant work Mary was sexual; passionate.

69 – At his trial he held a long discourse on the history of popular satire.

70 – showing such work would have been met with more tolerance by earlier incarnations of the church.

But, the COL’s complete lack of religious devotion made it anathema to popular culture.

71 – Conrad’s Modern Life Society praised his “science of inversion.”

Panizza was naturalist in that he looked at modern problems; but he rejected their realist style and thought their focus on social reality subservient to the status quo as it denied the power of the damon.

73 – By attacking the Pope he vindicated his mother over his father.

74 – He attacked the Kaisar in scatological terms when in exile. They froze his assets; he returned to stand trial. Was put in an insane asylum for life.

Frank Wedekind and *Spring Awakening* Pg. 74

75 – His father went to San Francisco. His full name Benjamin Franklin Wedekind (1864 – 1918).

76 – As a youth he was upset that his father was so liberal yet domestically so bourgeois. He made his mother end her acting career upon marriage.

77 – There was a movement wherein Aesthetic paganism advocated bodily and emotional development, in contradistinction to ascetic Christianity.

Goethe's Faust was Wedekind's most lasting literary influence.

78 – He quoted Heine in his notebook: "We do not want sans-culottes, frugal citizens, incorruptible presidents. We are establishing a democracy of equally splendid, equally holy, equally blissful gods. . . . We demand nectar and ambrosia, purple cloaks, . . . etc."

79 – He distinguished between two social systems: Those of spiritualists (or Nazaerenes) and sensualists (or Helenes).

Spring Awakening (SA) 's plot is easily told. 14-year-old Wendla Bergmann can't get Mom to explain the facts of life. She becomes pregnant. Her mother arranges an abortion and it kills her. Her ex-boyfriend, (Melchoir) meanwhile, has created a tract to explain the facts of life. His friend (Moritz) reads it and is so overwhelmed that he leaves school and commits suicide. He is buried to the sound of curses from teachers, his father and priests. The boyfriend is expelled once the tract is discovered. He escapes from the assigned reformatory and meets his suicide friend in a graveyard, holding his own head under his arm. The headless friend asks the boyfriend to join him in death, but a mask man shows and persuades him that would be a bad idea.

80 – This is a *missbildung*. It shows that the gymnasium seeks to overburden the minds of its pupils in order to distract them from their instinctual inclinations.

The sensitive fellow overcomes the over education by blowing his brains out.

The characters, kids, do try to haltingly express themselves in classical references.

82 – The carnivalesque comes in a homosexual scene – Greek – in school. The same secondary character (Hanschen) tells about western civ while masturbating in an outhouse; he uses erotic western art to do so. Othello too.

82 – This points to a debate where censors confiscated cheap reproductions of erotic western masterpieces. Hanschen got the nudes from his father's desk. Amidst the dry education, busts of progressive educators are on tables. The reformatory the boyfriend goes to to learn about "the good" is full of sexual depravity. They use bible tales to get off.

84 – Every scene has humor. This made it hard to censor. But, to avoid censors it had to be performed as a tragedy.

85 – But conflating tragedy and comedy was seen as subversive too.

87- Language was a theme too as sexuality, the inability to talk about it, and the failure of words to convey run through *Spring Awakening* as a theme. No eroticism may be mentioned.

88 – The boyfriend’s father only speaks in cliches’ “Whoever is too weak for the march falls by the wayside.” His wife screams back, you have to be a man to speak like that; so blinded by the written word. No human understanding, a soulless bureaucrat, in order to see moral corruption in our son.

Some words are stream of consciousness.

89 – Before his suicide Morize emits “I will – scream! – scream!”

This is like the definition of expressionism as a scream for the soul; for help.

90 – Separation between generations, sexes, public and personal inclinations is another theme.

The boyfriend never confronts his father. In most scenes, kids and adults interact separately. The plot is also disrupted by small asides and monologues not seamlessly tied into the play.

It posed very basic questions about genre, dramatic structure and the ability of language to convey meaning. It is consciously anti-naturalist.

91 – While worrying about oppressive institutions; he thought realistic reproduction in gesture and language did nothing to cure the problem. He told Hauptman, “Realism has made you forget man.”

92 – Some people think *Carnival* is conservative as a steam valve.

94 – The homosexuality in *SA* is not meant to shock, it is natural.

96 – In the end the characters in *SA* have no alternative presented; they must live within / compromise in bourgeois society; its structure is intact.

Both Wedekind and Panizza advocated a freeing of personal fantasy.

97 – The radical individualism stance could end up just being satirical with no positive constructive alternative provided.

98- Panizza provided German lit a model of political engagement. Wedekind’s impact was artistic. *SA* became the most performed modernist German drama of the century.

CHAPTER THREE: ANALYTIC MODERNISM: ART AND MAMMON IN WEDEKIND'S DRAMA PAGE 100

Wedekind decided arousing empathetic reactions was futile; art can't bridge estrangement. And, the Lulu plays showed it could never capture a person or project humanity's essence. By the time of *The Marquis of Keith* he was very abstract and characters were uni-dimensional ciphers with no depth. He also pushes towards an anti-capitalist structure that is a theme in 20th century theater.

Earth Spirit and Pandora's Box: The Marketing of Art and Eros Pg. 101

102 – Commercial demand and artistic desire clash. In 1893 4,000 original plays were submitted to German theater and 120 were performed. Some were rich, most were poor.

103 – to succeed they had to produce enjoyment with no demands and satisfy sex instincts. French salon plays, and that type did the best; comedy of manners with sexual themes.

Add to this, that many writers came from well-to-do families.

104 – The clash between expectations and ideals encouraged anti-bourgeois attitudes in art.

Wedekind was saved from destitution by an art forger in Paris. He came to think crooks had more compassion than the respectable.

Earth Spirit looks at the interaction of spirit, sex, art, and money. Rationalism is represented by Lulu. The title refers to the Earth Spirit in Faust.

Lulu is a street orphan who doesn't know her own name. She escaped socialization. All men use her via art.

Schon took her off the street and made her his mistress, but hopes to marry a wealthy woman. So he married her to a physician Dr. Goll. He is impotent so he tries to compensate via voyeurism; he does this by having Schwarz paint her – to whom he dictates every brushstroke.

The portrait that results is neither an artistic expression of her nature or from Schwarz's heart.

107 – Act 2 – Goll dies and Lulu is rich. He paints her over and over cause he can get money for her portraits. She is just a woman to him.

Act 3 – Schon needs to marry her again so he puts her on auction. He sets her on a career in dancing so that someone in the audience might marry her. He coaches her

to be somewhat nude, to make her a perfect dancer. Voyeurism and mass consumption.

She asks Schon to marry her; he does, but it is doomed because he is rational and she, emotional. In trying to bridge this gap he goes mad, and they have a fatal confrontation.

109 – In the ensuing play, Pandora's Box (1902), Art and prostitution are paralleled. Sex goes into marriage or prostitution. Art attenuates sexuality. By making Lulu art, people can avoid their own real sexuality.

110 – By the time of these plays Wedekind had decided that artistic forms could not express emotion; it always implies objectification. It is not only impersonal, it is anti-personal.

Schon's son Alwa can either write a play about her or love her, but not both. Art must become socially analytic rather than subjectively evocative. Drama could not express personality because it was beyond the power of words. It could, though, express ideal types. The characters are empty and want money or sex.

112 – Lulu says 'I don't know,' to basic questions; as such she cannot be tagged by bourgeois standards and Wedekind has said he cannot convey her character; paradoxically, he put her on stage to prove this point. Art must always be artificial; her personality exists beyond the confines of art.

113 – An animal tamer opens the play, complains about actors, Ibsen, and Hauptman and says, to compete, his characters are animals he will tame. "soulless creation . . . tamed by human genius."
Earth Spirit's prologue tells the audience, this is not a slice of life, it is a conscious creation.

114 – Wedekind uses wrong or over-the-top gestures to distance the audience. It is farcical – except Lulu's death by Jack the Ripper.

The Deutsches Theater: The Making and Unmaking of a "Modern" stage 115

In 1895 Wedekind came back to Munich and found it hard to get produced.

116 – Messthaler had some successes because conservative hounding gave him publicity.

Seeing opportunity Friedrich Haenle decided to invest in the Deutsches Theater – an entertainment palace.

118 – One complainant said it would be "an institute for moral pig-breeding."

It was hard to get permits because they could sap money from the government sponsored theater.

Bluhm got the theater concession. It was hyped as the arrival of modernism in Munich, but failed. Messthaler was fired for not creating “crowd-pleasers.”

It was transformed into an eating and shopping center with an entertainment hall attached.

Wedekind used the theater’s failure for *Der Marquis von Keith*.

The Marquis of Keith: Dramatizing a Culture of Commercialism Pg. 125

The lead character, Keith, is modeled on Willy Gretor, the art-con man that saved him earlier.

126 – Opposite Keith is Ernst Scholz who is rich but has a heavy work ethic. The latter’s failures lead him to ask Keith how to enjoy in a properly aristocratic fashion.

Keith manipulates art dealership journalistic criticism and concert management to sell questionable art products.

Keith puts out a sexy woman singing to get backers, but she ends up marrying a rich audience member. Keith also gets burned in a forgery scam and so loses the art center and flees Munich.

Keith is said to have entrepreneur virtues.

The real Deutsches Theater becomes a cabaret.

131 Wedekind thought Keith his best play. It has farcical gestures and ideas instead of dialogue. There is no character development. Critics hated their mute emotional life and Wedekind needed to act the lead to convey the craziness he wanted.

134 – Naturalistic actors thought it burlesque. Others couldn’t do it, from 1902 to his death in 1918 he performed in his own plays over 500 times.

137 – Heinrich Mann said we see nowhere better than in Wedekind’s plays that life prior to WW I was already war.

138 - The people wanted short, pithy and eminently “theatrical” events, so all turned to Vaudeville.

CHAPTER FOUR: CABARETIC MODERNISM: BETWEEN POLITICAL AGGRESSION and AESTHETIC INTIMACY PAGE 139

Elf Scharfrichter – Eleven Executioners is the pre-eminent art Cabaret of the turn of the century. It opened in 1901 and was killed by liberals in 1903.

Political Harbingers of Cabaret: Jugend, Simplicissimus, Lex Heinze Pg. 140

Loosening of old hierarchal arrangements, brought a swift mobilization of right – wing elements.

After Chancellor Leo von Caprivi (1890 – 1894) an old man took over and really the conservatives and cultural repression increased. Catholic and anti-Semites were at the forefront of this.

They attacked industrialization, Social Democracy and urbanization.
Lex Heinze was the censorship law.

142 – The definition of obscene was at stake. Even one store had to remove the Venus de Milo.

Panizza read a list of censored pieces at the last Modern Life Society meeting.

Franz Stuck was the biggest painting proponent of sensualism. Georg Hirth founded the journal *Jugend* in 1896 for artistic rejuvenation. It was a part of the international Art Nouveau.

145 - *Jugendstil* is German for Art Nouveau.

Simplicissimus was another provocative journal. Wedekind worked with them. He was given 7 months in prison and finished *Keith* there.

147 – They also formed the Protective League for German Art and Culture called “Goethebund.” Catholics had long targeted Goethe. They dared conservatives to denounce Goethe.

149 – Lex Heinze was killed by parliamentary subterfuge. The defenders helped launch the 11 executioners cabaret.

Exclusivist Tendencies in Modernism: Halbe’s Intimes Theater and Stollberg’s Schauspielhaus Pg. 151

152 – Unpopular and outsiders, they made this a virtue by saying they were elite avant – Garde of the future. Forward looking in theory, defensive in practice.

The Intimes Theater was not to be accessible to money. High brow artist friends were to be in it. But, they weren’t successful until after Lex and the journals, about 1901.

156 – As in *Jugendstil* generally, there was escapism from this ugly world motivating it. The Schauspielhaus was off the street behind gardens. This was an intimate theater (though quite large). It did modern theater. But that was still a minority of its repertoire.

The Attraction of Vaudeville Pg. 160

Cabaret with juggling, wrestling, tightrope walking, trapeze-artistry, clowning, folk songs, skits, restrained striptease and more arose in the second half of the 19th century in Germany. By 1901 Munich had 10 major ones.

161 – This was popular, the official stage did German history plays. If they did modern, spoken word predominated. Such classicism renounced all joviality, secretiveness, and sensuality, color and aroma in an effort to be morally uplifting.

163 – Vaudeville was its total contradiction.

164 – Bierbaum, a big promoter, wanted to integrate the arts-and-crafts movement. He said, “The contemporary city-dweller has vaudeville nerves. He seldom has the capacity of following great dramatic continuities.”

Cabaret provided steady income. It was also a place where writers, artists and composers were performers.

The Elf Scharfrichter Pg. 167

The 11 executioners seated 80 people.

170 – The 11 executioners were swift against reaction and obscurantism. It is said. One skit was in Panizza’s Council of Love. It told the lascivious thoughts of a priest hearing confessions.

Vaudeville licenses could be revoked permanently at the discretion of the police. Participants wanted more liberty at home and more imperialism in Asia and Africa. Conrad said, like the Boars” they stood like men.

173 – They protested the Lex Heinze and fought for “freedom, beauty, prowess, and manly dignity.”

174 – A most popular skit showed a rabbi saying eroticism was a better basis for marriage than spiritual love. He was against Platonic love.

There was a play in which a weight lifter marries the Empress and grows weak. She strangles herself because he is so weak.

One told of embedding a public latrine in a monument.

Most barbs aimed at modern artistic culture, however. The verbosity of Hauptmann for example. It featured a single five-minute-long sentence. There was a play symbolist and symbolistin’ which parodied him. There was quite a bit of self-parody as well.

179 – Nevertheless the irony and cynicism betrayed a sense of failure. Wedekind’s drama’s met with incomprehension. The great Schauspielhaus theater had to be subsidized by vaudeville.

180 – They sort of used folk songs to break out of self-parody and into something real and not aesthetic. They charged high prices but sang songs praising peasants, workers and the poor.

181 - In 1903 political forces made the 11 executioners open so that censors could attack it. 4 major skits were immediately banned.

182 – They also couldn't criticize censorship; The Lex Heinze kinda won in the long run. It was good that it closed; Wedekind was tired of singing folk songs and groveling and wanted to return to serious work. Even Sunday matinees were added to the schedule. And they needed new material every 4 – 6 weeks.

184 – 11 executioners was also killed by the constant pressure to pander.

185 – It radically shifted, though, taste. The long literary bourgeois no longer worked.

CHAPTER FIVE RETHEATRICALIZED MODERNISM: The KUNSTLER-THEATER AND ITS AFFINITIES PAGE 186

Modern theater looked at the brighter, faster, popular theater, cultic performances in Greece, and volk fairgrounds art.

Fuchs initiated the Kunstlertheater. (Munich Artists Theater). Reinhardt gesture and pantomime; Kandinsky rejected plot lines.

Georg Fuchs: The Rites of Mystic Nationalism Pg. 187

187 – Fuchs combined aristocratic and racist-populist in a modern way. He was super trendy. He mouthed, we are told, slogans often.

188 – But he preferred elite movements that promised a rejuvenated Germany. The Munich Secession was a secession from the Academic Salons. They were open to new arts but very selective.

Fuchs associated with Stefan George's symbolist movement in poetry. This thought that only a select few could find the evasive truths hidden in the human soul and surrounding world. Elite. Fuchs liked it. But, not even Fuchs could get in.

189 - He also got into Jugendstil architecture: "The harmony of the arts is the beautiful symbol of a strong volk." Jugendstil needed to be brought into theater.

One of his short plays had "the man" and "the woman" anxiously awaiting a sign that would free them from the psychic malaise occasioned by a general lack of direction and higher ideals.

Finally the sign comes, it is a diamond. Created out of compressed dust; it is a community that is beautiful, structured, and hard.

193 - When it wasn't successful he turned to theory. Get The Kaiser, Culture and Art).

195 – He wished to design a theater wherein the seating would symbolize the equality of all spectators and their subordination to the artist.

Theater should be a cultic experience where all social barriers would be erased via intoxication of the artistic presentation. No illusion of depth and naturalistic acting and sets; no realism.

By the 19th century theater no longer implied ritual spectacle or ecstatic play; it was staged discursive literature. He called them “treasure – chests of ethics, tribunals of applied psychology, cabinets of erotic curiosities.” Man still though, felt an inner urge to regain the festive and orgiastic impulses of ritual and popular theater. In modern conditions we rarely can take part in splendid processions or storm about in unbridled festivals.

196 – We need some common more refined and spiritual forms wherein we can taste the old, strong magic.

Vaudeville at least brought movement back to theater. Drama in its simplest form is movement of the body in space. We needed extremely stylized acting, rhythmic and symbolic that would stand out against a planar background.

Not thinking, like Wedekind, he wanted formal rigor and rhythm to create a mind-blotting trance. His plays combined Christian, classical and romantic literature. Only one was performed and its two productions were failures.

Rather than fighting industrialism, urbanization and secularism with a return to old morality, he waned modern solutions; mystic communitarian ideology; clearly proto-fascist.

198 – Fuchs said capitalism and Jews atomized German society. “Culture is order, is legislation, is rhythmic formation; culture is the artistic form that a race imposes on the particularities and the totality of its existence; its timing, tonality, and tempo are determined by the rhythm of its blood. . . Culture is predicated upon a volk; a volk is predicated upon war; because if it wants to remain a Volk, it must differentiate its blood-realm from that of others.”

199 – “Just as soldiers were brought into form by the army, so too should German civilians be shaped by cultural institutions.”

He hated contemporary social and political topics on stage. We needed racial politics, not party politics.

200 – Fuchs feared unrest; political instability was the backdrop to all of his plays.

201 – In his novel Michael, Goebbels compared the statesman to an artist, a sculptor.

202 – Fuchs must have also felt like fuhrer when he got the gig managing the Kunstlertheater for the 1750th anniversary of Munich in 1908. He toned down his politics to build the theater for the event.

206 – The theater opened with a performance of Faust. The prologue had his rhythm and interesting lighting effects. People likened it to thinking great frames would make great paintings appear.

208 – Still, though out and ridiculed, Fuchs wrote on theater. His cry, “Retheatricalize the Theater” and texts spread wide outside of Germany.

Max Reinhardt: High Culture as Cabaret and Circus Pg. 208

Reinhardt achieved the retheatricalization of theater. He undertook all parts in theater, from actor on up.

209 – His success came from 1) regarding theater as a spectacle; 2) marketing with engineered press campaigns; 3) thinking of theater only as entertainment and diversion; he had no desire to transform society or the public in any ethical or political way.

210- He came to hold conservative views, but regretted needing to have them. Reinhardt took over the management of the Kunstlertheater. Fuchs was humiliated and thought Reinhardt “un-German.”

211- Artistically, he reversed Fuchs too; he used deep stage and ultra-realism. But Reinhardt also was non-dogmatic and used techniques appropriate to each show.

Reinhardt did one entirely lights and pantomime work – sans words.

214- In 1910 he started with theater in the round; with actors in the audience. This was innovative, but he tried to do it with Greek plays that, he found out, did not resonate with metal workers and modern audiences.

Vassily Kandinsky: The Theater of Spiritual Awakening Pg. 217

218 – Kandinsky’s blue rider group believed that great art must be based upon deep and sincere spirituality and hues not real, but from the artist’s inner eye.

219 – Early he was a wage theorist ; but he despaired that social sciences could help the poor and thought arts create more influence.

And he came to believe that the palette was more important than the objects in the painting.

220 – His trips to peasant villages, with their colors, got him the idea to move in a picture, to live in a picture.”

He chose Munich to train in, artistically. He wanted to discover a new language of color – not Esperanto – Malerei, which means copying, not imitating.

Like theater, painting had been “realistic.” We needed a truly spiritual response that came from pure color, line, and shape, which would express specific moods and ideas for all times in a universal language.

222 – He also developed a hieroglyphic language from folk art.

The artist would lead people to find long lost “inner resonances” of the soul, and materialism would give way to the greatest spirituality;

224 – He kept some Christian images so that the traditional public could enter into his world.

In his pure theater, he used pure elements – color, sound, and motion. He rejected narrative plot and even the actor in favor of these pure elements.

225 – 6 – One play depicts a battle between the bourgeois and the color violet. The bourgeois are represented by a woman in a gown, an elegant man and a cow. They are all threatened by the sickly color of violet.

226 – In a scene a man cries out: “Measure! Measure! Measure exactly, that’s all there is to it!” Later in the play a woman speaks incomprehensibly, really, about the soul.

227 – The color yellow is a mystery play that celebrates the future and yellow – though no one agrees on the meaning beyond its portraying the spiritual evolution of humanity.

228 – Men seem to go from being animals to having a primitive society. There is a constant grey over the people. When they evolve – supposedly – into peasant society more colors are present, (he thought peasant life full of vibrant individuality). The bourgeois are green, white and black. In the next scene we have the future and people in tights. Colors and movement harmonize.

230 – Wedekind started wanted to create emotion; but he went to distancing and ideas. Kandinsky combined these in that he believed the ultimate goal of art was to create a “Klang” (sound or resonance) deep in the viewers’ souls.

231 – In violet we see workers making the set for the play. They say, this is the beginning. He found Wagner smooth and tried to disrupt faculties of perception and emotion to cut into the mind and soul. Ideally at the end, the color unity of the whole would be apparent.

232 – He aimed at spiritual anarchy, that is seen as order. He too believed that modern society corrupts man, who is naturally good and cooperative. Unlike Panizzi who thought individualism must lead to clashes with society; Kandinsky thought the common Klang of humanity would unite, when unmasked by the artist.

233 – His plays didn't get produced as WW I broke out and he had to flee as an alien. But, given the hostility that his paintings received, they would not have done well.

235 – Though different, Fuchs, Reinhardt and Kandinsky all wanted the stage to be a source of spectacle, sound, and motion.

CHAPTER SIX: ACTIVIST MODERNISM: FAILED COMPROMISE, RENEWED ASSAULT PAGE 236

In the years prior to WW I censorship leagues gained in power.

Police created Censorship Advisory Councils to institutionalize a compromise between conservatives and liberals.

Valles Intimes Theater: Morality Campaigners and Commercialized Cabaret Pg. 237

239 – One big subject of censorship was Valle's low cabarets. Valle hired Wedekind for nightly appearances and so got big crowds. He hated appearing, but needed the money. Valle cashed in on clichés of modernism; Wedekind gave him cache. On tour he would falsely claim to be the legitimate heir of 11 executioners.

242 - Valle associated cabaret with modernism and strip shows. He had a wedding night strip act. It was a hit! He had another called "The Women's Movement."

243 – He drew audiences from the "better classes" of society and so got clout. It became trendy for the rich to see his plays.

245 – A Men's League got Valle's cabaret banned and he moved it to Frankfurt.

246 – Fortunately, some people did try to distinguish between pornography and serious art!

The Limits of Compromise: Munich's Censorship Council Pg. 247

Censorship nooses tightened. Thoma's comedy, written in jail for censorship violations, had members of the censorship league secretly going a high class prostitute.

248 – Sex remained a hot topic. Wedekind wrote a play, Death and the Devil, that discussed sex and women's independence from within a brothel.

250 – The aforementioned censorship committee had 24 members. It started in 1908.

251 – Catholics understood the moral damage of decadence and the weakening of the people resulting. “Is the Christian population totally defenseless against such poisoning?” they asked.

Hitler saw Spring Awakening in Vienna and went to a prostitutes’ alley to gaze.

254 – Thomas Mann was on the censorship panel. Mann’s *Gladius Dei* is a response to the Lex Heinze affair. Mann also wrote a play about the struggle between ascetics and libertines. His take was aloof and gave both sides their airing in the play.

255 – Mann’s sojourn on the censorship board strained his friendship with Wedekind.

257 – Wedekind’s last work was on a female Faust, *Franziska*, was staged with one scene censored.

As censorship peaked, Fuchs got another chance to direct. But his chumming up to the government as such cost him respect as a cultural leader in Munich.

Mann voted against censoring *Lulu*, resigned due to “collegial considerations.” So moderate modernists were gone.

259 – They banned plays that were performed in Berlin without incident.

The Erotic Catholicism of Heinrich Lautensack Pg. 260

Lautensack tried to fuse Catholic and modern ideas. He wanted to revise the holiness and beauty that had once been a part of Catholicism.

In a play, eros created communities of lovers whose actions and emotions prefigured that spiritual communion of man promised by Christ.

262 - He has a play wherein Mary Magdalene gives birth to Christ’s child as he is crucified. He also invoked Faust and Helen of Troy. But she is an ugly Helen, Medusa.

263 – Lautensack thought the puritanical streak in the church was a recent post-enlightenment move; previously baroque had tried to integrate flesh and the spirit.

265 – In a play he depicts the looser morals of a traditional village. A policeman falls in love with a peasant girl; murder happens when he finds she has others. He is said to have so little to do with the true Trinity.

266 – Indeed rural priest often had sexual relations with their cooks and housekeepers.

I am only human, a character says, that is what original sin is about. Extramarital relationships, we learn, need not stand in the way of faith or eternal salvation.

268 – Lautensack’s plays were censored. No balance was achieved. Modernists were losing.

Erich Muhsam and the Origins of Activism Pg. 268

268 – These modernists did not seek social justice or a transformation of the structures of society, just a reevaluation of middle class morals. They were only political in that they warded off attacks by the state on their art.

Their work could even be called conservative as it provided a safety valve for the frustrations of liberals.

269 - Catholics very easily and effectively censored many plays. The apparent ineffectiveness of these moderate artists was not lost on a new generation that was increasingly active until the onset of WW I.

Muhsam was one such strident youth. He founded and was forced to participate in cabarets too, but had little respect for them – 11 executioners excepted.

271 – He was a clinger-onner to Wedekind.

272 – He made crudely explicit what was implicit in Wedekind’s work. Capitalists are inferior to con men. They steal. Muhsam was so suspicious of cash that he wouldn’t take money for his serious works.

273 – Open marriage is a play he did in 1909; it argued that true love requires promiscuity. It eliminates dominance and possessiveness; characteristics that bolster capitalism.

274 – This was hailed as a new theater, that didn’t worry about aesthetics as long as it changed thought and behavior.

275 – Wedekind dismissed workers’ movements as bourgeois in work ethic and sexual code. People on the fringes – con men, prostitutes, circus artists, literary bohemians – presented the ethics he admired. They could bring about social transformation that mattered.

276 – Whereas Wedekind represented them artistically, Muhsam actually tried to organize them in Gruppe Tat. He wanted to nurse their vague hostility to society.

“Criminals, vagabonds, whores, and artists – that is the boheme that points the way to new culture.”

They distributed literature urging an end to church membership.

The Catholic Church in Spain was behind the execution of an anarchist who organized free schools. Muhsam's Tat circle was tied to a murder and a bomb plot.

278 - Witnesses said they made up their stories about Muhsam because the police asked them to. They also said they went to his meetings to get clients and free beer.

By the end of the trial, all charges were dropped. Muhsam was humiliated and quit organizing, but others took up the torch of organizing outsiders.

279 - Instead, he moved to trying to organize intellectuals; he organized against censorship – especially of Wedekind's work.

280 – Muhsam said, “Artist belong in the social struggle! They are the chosen ones who must protect the freedom of spiritual life against police intimidation and police authority!” This went far beyond what anti-Lex Heinze people said at their Goethebund meetings.

Rather than go along, his German Writers' Defense League wanted to abolish the censorship board.

282 – He wrote “Let us be chaotic!” It was a cry for the carnivalization of society. His group wanted to overcome the repression of individuality in everyday life.

284 – Wedekind was weakened by wartime food shortages and died March 9, 1918. While an actor recited Muhsam's lines, Lautensack ran out and sank next to the grave; he went insane. Muhsam broke down in tears when he saw his friend go insane.

Within a year, Lautensack died in a sanitarium and Muhsam laid the groundwork for the Bavarian Soviet Republic.

CONCLUSION: REVOLUTION OF THE THEATER AND THEATERS OF REVOLUTION: 285

A tattooed lady, named Munich, had Rembrandts and Ruben tattooed on her front and expressionist, dada and futurist art on her front. The barker noted that the church allows her to be seen by those over 18.

286 – Artists who promoted liberating eroticism had a hard time differentiating their work from pornography. And the respectable classes' fondness for titillation did not help. The law and the church lumped them together.

Ernest Toller wrote the scenario about the tattooed woman in 1918, while in jail with Munsam for participating in their “Writers' Revolution” of 1918- 1919.

But their being there, was presaged by the earlier generations. They had only official theaters. The Naturalists helped leak social criticism into plays. Panizza and Wedekind launched the Carnavalesque in theater; cabaret lent a hand. Kandinsky went past narrative – Modernists had rediscovered theatricality.

290 – Modernists had to face both commercial pressures and censors.

The center and Catholics lost credibility – and this gave rise to extremes of right and left. This grew out of the fact that as democracy expanded, we found the majority to be censorious and even authoritarian. The liberals governed against the will of the majority to guarantee freedoms.

The clash between freedom and democracy were too unique to Munich.

291 - When even the liberals censored, the artists were pushed to the peripheries.

292 – Whereas before this modernist movement, artists were seen as upholding and forming a liberal nation; after modernism, they became enemies of society or for making unity more compulsory.

Berlin had more modernism – in the form of naturalism – but less innovation than Munich.

293 – This radicalism partially came from having a more censorious populous and state, as well as a Catholic majority to deal with. Vienna had some of the same situation as Munich and went away from naturalism to avant garde faster.

294 – Avant-garde responses to the war drew inspiration from re-war Munich.

Hugo Ball, with his Cabaret Voltaire, was a full-fledged product of Munich's pre-war modernist milieu.

He wrote a play called the executioner; it described the crass thoughts of an executioner as he killed a lovely woman. It used sexual and religious imagery. It was called "The Executioner" "Der Henker."

297 – Ball, having rejected all the social and political bases of their age, had no ground upon which to stand and that their gestures were vapid. In 1916 it ceased to exist.

Ball, got excited by war, as did Wedekind and Muhsam. The latter two were quickly disillusioned and joined Heinrich Mann's pacifist discussion circle. Together with Toller they organized a strike of 8,000 munitions workers.

Eisner was a co-conspirator who rose in Weimar power. He tried to have Muhsam arrested, but mass protests freed him. Eisner resigned. Johannes Hoffmann became

prime minister and he galvanized rightists to suppress the soviet council movement of Muhsam – who along with Toller – went to jail for 5 years.

The levity and artistic nature of Mohsam's work changed with the dirt burying Wedekind.

301 - Wedekind was not, however buried, during the Weimar, censorship got lifted and his plays got a revival. These in turn created virulent right reactions; the occupying of said performances. Shouts of "whorehouse, stud farm brothel, Jewish pig-band, lascivious pack!"

302 – Previously rightists and Catholics had protested, lost some and won some; but after the war, they went extra-legal in their efforts.

303 – One bad thing, all six leaders of the revolution in Munich – Eisner, Muhsam, Landauer, Toller and two others were Jewish. Cabarets were often Jewish led too.

304 – When lads attacked Jewish theaters, the police would not provide protection.

305 – The police chief of Munich, Wilhelm Frick, promulgated a law "Against Negro Culture, For our German Heritage," In May of 1930.

306 – The plays continued to be performed, however. In many ways, Bertolt Brecht was the true heir of Wedekind. He read his works repeatedly as a child and sang his ballads. Baal refers to Wedekind and is said by some to be a male Lulu.

307 – Paradoxically, in Munich after the war modernism received short shrift. Many artists turned towards political activity.

308 – Fuchs organized Freikorps to keep Bavaria from the twin dangers emanating from Berlin, Bolshevism and capitalism, which came from the "Berlin Jew – racket and stockmarket – government." He was arrested and his Kunstlertheater was destroyed in Allied bombing. Erich Muhsam died in a concentration camp.

For these reasons, we think of the Regency period as Munich's Golden Age, but we must remember that even then artists faced imprisonment for their work and were impoverished; but this environment did push people to great work.

309 – Thus the first act of modernism was played on an unsettled stage.