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Cleanliness, Clarity – and Craft: Material Politics in German Design, 1919–1939

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Abstract

This essay juxtaposes modern German design with cultural politics from 1919 to 1939, demonstrating the interlocking relationship of craft and industry during this pivotal period. Rejecting conventionally opposing categories of “hand” and “machine,” it reveals instead how material properties and technical processes became charged with political meaning. While the Nazis exploited modern handcraft (like the early, earthy ceramics from the Weimar Bauhaus) in service of their populist nationalism, they also deployed “clean,” progressive, industrial design (like Bauhaus-trained Wilhelm Wagenfeld’s sleek, transparent glassware) as visual and material propaganda, creating the illusion of a modern regime deeply invested in providing German citizens with cutting-edge conveniences in the latest style. Why did the Nazis appropriate an aesthetic rhetoric of transparency for their political agenda, which was so dependent on secrecy, hypocrisy, and opacity? The pages that follow explore how and why modern German design – and transparent glass objects in particular – slipped so easily into enemy hands.

Keywords: Bauhaus, German design, glass, modernism, national socialism, transparency, Weimar, Wilhelm Wagenfeld

During the first years of the twentieth century, German design reformers struggled to perpetuate a sense of handcrafted quality within increasingly industrialized practices of modern design. While the modern wooden chair, for example, became simpler overall – cheaper to fabricate thanks to powered tools, quicker to assemble by virtue of standardized designs, and stripped of what reformers understood as “applied ornament” – the pattern and strokable texture of woodgrain began to stand in for what had been stripped away, and offered a visible, tangible link to vernacular traditions of craft.¹ In the case of another material – clay – this industrial sleight of hand was perhaps even more deft: at the turn of the century and with the help of progressive, modern designers, the German stoneware industry found a way both to incorporate and to disseminate the singular, indelible touch of the potter’s fingers through technologically advanced, serially produced tablewares.² Despite their production in almost identical multiples, each ceramic vessel still delivered an experience of uniqueness, conveyed directly through the sensation of *touch*: a permanent imprint on the clay surface, connecting the user not merely to an individual (if nameless) craftsman, but to a now inaccessible past. Modern techniques of industrial replication, while generally threatening to sever connections with historical periods and cultural epochs, actually enabled – for German salt-glazed stoneware – the transfer of history’s traces to the modern household. A human hand reached through

the mists of the past and the mechanisms of technological reproduction to touch another human hand, their fingers meeting in indexical comradeship on the vessel’s gritty *skin*.

If ambivalence towards the touch and the trace characterized the development of modern design in Germany before the First World War, it is the material of clay that most completely embodies this ambivalence through the complexities of its design and manufacture. But after the Great War, ambivalence towards the vestiges of human presence in design shifted gradually, but consistently, towards outright rejection. By the 1930s, this new resistance to touch and disdain for its evidence – traces – was mounted by another material: glass. In his 1933 article, “Experience and Poverty,” German cultural critic Walter Benjamin writes, “[i]t is no coincidence that glass is such a hard, smooth material to which nothing can be fixed. A cold and sober material into the bargain. Objects made of glass have no ‘aura.’ Glass is, in general, the enemy of secrets. It is also the enemy of possession.”³

Benjamin contrasts this stark, modernist image by revisiting one of his pet critiques, which centers around Bertolt Brecht’s employment of the “trace.”⁴ Benjamin writes, “If you enter a bourgeois room in the 1880s ... there is no spot in which the owner has not left his mark – the ornaments on the mantelpiece, the antimacassars on the armchairs, the transparencies in the windows, the screen in front of the fire. A neat phrase by Brecht helps us out here: ‘Erase the traces!’”⁵ To meet this demand, Benjamin looks to the Bauhaus school – “with its steel” – and to expressionist science fiction writer Paul Scheerbart’s prophetic 1914 work, *Glass Architecture*, as models for the creation of modern rooms “in which it is hard to leave



Fig 1 Walter Gropius, Bauhaus, Dessau, c.1925. Photograph by author (2003). © 2020 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.

traces.”⁶ Benjamin invokes Scheerbart’s utopian vision of a “culture of glass,” which Scheerbart himself describes as a “new glass milieu that will transform humanity utterly . . . it remains only to be wished,” he concludes, “that the new glass-architecture will not encounter too many enemies.”⁷

In 1933, then, glass takes a distinct stance. No pliant surface awaiting human imprint, nor passive object of human use, it becomes instead a subject – an *enemy*, not simply of the domestic dust and grime that Benjamin associates with nineteenth-century plush-lined rooms, but of bourgeois conservatism itself: personal possession, private conspiracy – dirty secrets. But neither the coldness, nor the smoothness, nor the resistance of glass – the hygienic properties to which Benjamin

assigns its anti-bourgeois agency – made it the “enemy of secrets.” It was the essential material trait of modern glass – its transparency – that endowed it with the liberating (and terrifying) power to expose and reveal. Glass, in this context, was political: it was not just an enemy, it had the capacity to make enemies, as well.

When Benjamin identified glass as the “enemy of secrets,” the National Socialist German Workers’ Party had already taken an actively adversarial position towards what was, even then, a modern glass icon (Figure 1). In September of 1932, the Nazi-dominated city council of Dessau had forced the closure of Walter Gropius’s brazenly transparent steel-and-glass Bauhaus (along with the progressive workshops that



Fig 2 Wilhelm Wagenfeld, *Kubus* storage containers, c.1938. Vereinigte Lausitzer Glaswerke, AG. I. Museum Associates/LACMA/Art Resource, NY © 2020 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.

occupied it) through funding cuts. The council's antagonism to the school was driven by fear of its ties with Soviet artists and movements, as well as the school's overall leanings towards the political left. The rights to all patents, equipment, and even the Bauhaus trademark were put in the hands of architect Mies van der Rohe, who had in 1930 assumed directorship from the openly socialist Hannes Meyer, director of the Bauhaus, in his turn, since 1928 – the year of Gropius's departure. Mies reopened the Bauhaus as a private institution in Berlin in late October of 1932, but even the school's new private status failed to shield it for long. While it appears that Mies did seek accommodation for a short period with the government in regard to the Bauhaus faculty, he finally dissolved the school in August of 1933 as a result of Nazi pressure.⁸

The same transparency that Benjamin (and the Bauhäusler) hailed as social and political liberation, the Nazis decried as “un-German,” “Bolshevik,” and “degenerate.”⁹ Despite their real and symbolic opposition to both Bauhaus organization and building, however, the Nazi government continued throughout the Third Reich to support and exhibit the work of several Bauhaus artists, among them the glass designer Wilhelm Wagenfeld. In 1938, Wagenfeld designed a set of stackable food service and storage cubes, whose manufacture from cheap pressed borosilicate glass enabled them to travel smoothly from table to refrigerator in households across the Reich during the Second World War (Figure 2). But these mass-produced *Kubus* containers bore an ironic resemblance to the quintessential Bauhaus object. Wagenfeld's cubic vessels, their contents laid bare by clear glass walls, mimicked –

in miniature – the Bauhaus itself, whose glass “curtain wall” provided a penetrating view of its own contents: the school’s activities and actors.

This glassy correspondence signals how the inherent, physical properties of materials can transform them from passive objects to active subjects: how these material subjects communicate specific messages to those who encounter them, and how, in turn, the material’s engagement with its temporal surroundings invests it with new – and often conflicting – meanings. What follows is an investigation of the cultural and political implications and impact of two materials, ceramic and glass, both of which offer malleability as their fundamental working property. Though both are ancient materials, their shapes and meanings changed, during Germany’s interwar years, in conjunction with developments in their process of manufacture, promotion, and use. Though both are in these multiple senses shape-shifters, glass is translucent (and sometimes transparent), while ceramic is opaque. Though both can be architectural materials, I consider them here not at monumental scale, but in the domain of those modest objects of everyday use whose materials and forms were (or were intended to be) the substance of modern life.

The material politics under investigation here centers around the long-cherished belief in a polar opposition of handcraft and industrial production.¹⁰ Within this binary convention, “craft” emits that aroma of individuality that Benjamin calls the “aura.” No matter how many strikingly similar products the hand creates, each handcrafted object retains its uniqueness through the “traces” of the maker’s (fallible) hand, whose touch lives on in the object’s function. Where the machine-made object is cool, the handcrafted thing is warm. Where the product of industrial

technology is clinically clean, its handcrafted counterpart is organically earthy. This rhetoric of hygiene – a dialectic of controlled, sterile cleanliness versus a rampant, fertile dirtiness – became highly charged in Germany, not only materially and socially, but politically, in the years leading up to the Second World War. The modern desire to sanitize or to rid objects of unhygienic traits or *content* through alterations in their materials and design was recognized and manipulated by a fascist regime that propagandized images of cleanliness and dirtiness in a cunning campaign for social control, and, ultimately, in the service of genocide. These micro and macro phenomena – the homely, everyday response to new trends in industrial design, and the sinister political capitalization thereon – betray an underlying cultural perception of craft objects as both invested and *infested*: already filled up with characteristics and meanings transmitted often quite literally “by hand.” Where handcrafted objects appeared opaque or “full,” then, modern industrial products – like pressed glass or mass-produced porcelain – seemed to become, as Benjamin suggests, increasingly “transparent,” open to interpretation, evacuated of precise or circumscribed meaning. Applied to German design between the First and Second World Wars, however, these conventional oppositions between the handmade and the machine-made break down. Within the interwar period’s complex web of materials, processes, and ideas, “craft” and “industry” not only coexisted, but overlapped and interacted.

The Prewar Hybrid: Craft and Industry in the German Werkbund

Well before the Third Reich – and even before the Bauhaus – both ceramic and glass



Fig 3 Richard Riemerschmid, *Jug*, 1903. Salt-glazed stoneware with cobalt-oxide decoration. © V&A Images/2020 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.

had established their own reputations as modern materials, chiefly through design projects either directly implemented or supported by members of the German Werkbund. This organization of architects, designers, industrialists, retailers, and other reformers supported and undertook the literal re-forming of everyday objects and environments as a means of modernizing and elevating German culture and society.¹¹ A prime target of the Werkbund's modern reform project (and eventually, one of its most successful products) was German stoneware, an industry which had been in operation since the thirteenth century, but at the dawn of the twentieth century had required a double injection of modern design strategies and new manufacturing processes

to ensure its survival in the so-called "machine age."¹²

Munich designer Richard Riemerschmid came to the industry's aid on both fronts with a progressive response to what his countrymen understood as a "rough, hard, manly" material with a unique history of craft.¹³ Riemerschmid's simple, sphere-and-cylinder design for a 1903 jug (Figure 3) appears restrained and rationalized in contrast to the comparative complexity of the sixteenth-century baluster jugs that provided its archetype. The historical jugs were executed in a multi-step construction process that had involved free-throwing on a potter's wheel; molding and attaching a decorative frieze by hand; stamping, rouletting, and incising the clay surface; and finally, applying cobalt oxide pigment to accentuate the ornament. Riemerschmid's jug, while it alludes to its predecessor's decorative vernacular, was not handcrafted in this conventional sense. Though its decorative lozenges had to be carved – just once – into the body of an original, "model" jug, these ornamental incisions became endlessly replicable reliefs when the original jug was cast to create a hollow mold. Modern potters – now called technicians – could then throw jug after identical jug inside the mold cast from the original. The surface decorations were no longer applied painstakingly, one at a time, by hand, but instead imprinted all at once into the jug's surface as the technician pressed the soft clay against the sides of the mold to form the vessel itself. While Riemerschmid's process modernized the one-off production of the vernacular potter, it was yet a far cry from the slip-casting of industrial mass production. The maker's hand could still be felt in the final product, and yet his role – and certainly his identity – within the making process had become

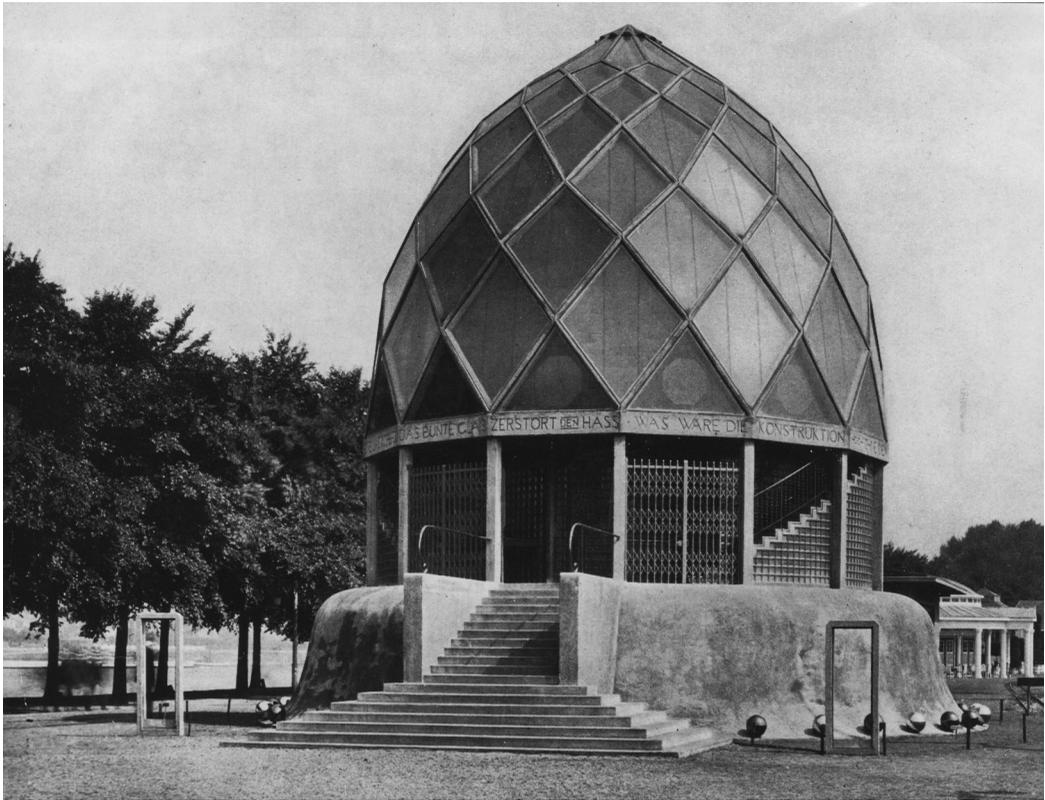


Fig 4 Bruno Taut, Pavillon der Glasindustrie, Werkbundausstelung in Köln 1914. Foto Arthur Köster © 2020 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn. Akademie der Künste Berlin, Bruno-Taut-Collection No. 210, Ph. 2a.

complex and veiled. Whose fingers had touched the grainy stoneware, and at which step in the mysterious fabrication sequence?

If Riemerschmid's production process offered the German stoneware manufacturers a compromise between their long-standing craft traditions and the modern drive towards progress, the forms and decoration of his vessel designs concretized and externalized this compromise for the modern German consumer. His straightforward constructions of reduced, geometric components, though made of the same stuff as their

more idiosyncratic historical counterparts, were not only simpler to reproduce but easier to clean. Their ornamental schemes, too, straddled a reverence for historical convention and an inclination towards modern taste. One reviewer noted that although Riemerschmid's stoneware decorations "spring from a strictly modern force of line," they still "nestle against the body of the vessel, as the old reliefs used to do."¹⁴ By enabling a production process in which form and ornament were created simultaneously in one infinitely repeatable step, while at the

same time “handing” the consumer the sensations and symbols of timeless craft, Riemerschmid’s design bridged a gap between stoneware’s historical, cultural authenticity, and the modern demand for standardized, sanitized housewares.¹⁵ His modern stonewares were at once nostalgic and progressive: they manufactured a facsimile of the aura for the modern age, which Benjamin famously called “the age of technological reproducibility.”¹⁶

Modern German stonewares, including Riemerschmid’s – with their ties to a shared past and their promise of a future in which all Germans might have culture and convenience at their fingertips – were featured as examples of good modern design at the Werkbund’s 1914 exhibition in Cologne. At the same exhibition (cut short by the outbreak in August of World War I), expressionist architect Bruno Taut displayed a similarly Janus-faced, though far grander and more fantastic object: a pavilion made of colored glass (Figure 4). While Taut’s *Glass House* was startlingly and self-consciously new – a conscious reflection of Paul Scheerbart’s futuristic architectural fantasies – as architectural historian Rosemarie Haag Bletter has argued at length, both Taut’s and Scheerbart’s projects were rooted in a vision of glass, extending far back into the ancient world, as transformative, alchemical – magical.¹⁷ Scheerbart had dedicated his 1914 *Glass Architecture* to Taut, and that same year at Cologne, Taut returned the favor. Scheerbart’s vivid descriptions of a fluid, floating, mobile, and multicolored architecture of glass are materialized in Taut’s *Glass House*, whose interiors were neither purely colorless nor truly transparent, but polychrome and translucent, enabling and amplifying the animated play of gemlike color and prismatic light.

The modernization of weighty, opaque German stoneware may be understood as both progressive (despite its dialogue with history) and socially conscious, not simply in its democratization of well-designed products made from quality materials but in its rehabilitation of a collective cultural memory. By contrast, however, experimental, expressionist designs for glass, like Taut’s 1914 pavilion, conveyed overtly utopian – and pointedly political – meanings. The transformative possibilities of glass architecture in Scheerbart’s book represented, as Bletter has explained, “the metamorphosis of the whole society, an anarchist society, which through its exposure to this new architecture, has been lifted from dull awareness to a higher mode of sensory experience and from political dependence to a liberation from all institutions.”¹⁸ During the First World War, when architectural commissions were scarce, Taut engaged with Scheerbart’s utopian schemes through pictorial treatises relating glass architecture and anarchist society. In Taut’s *Alpine Architecture*, published in 1919, transparent, crystal houses perch high up in mountains whose peaks are adorned with colored glass, and whose clear lakes are decorated with floating glass ornaments.¹⁹ Taut’s text promotes the impracticality of these structures in his pacifist response to the devastating, utilitarian logic of war:

Yes, impractical and without utility! But have we become happy through utility? Always utility and utility, comfort, convenience – good food, culture – knife, fork, trains, toilets, and yet also – cannons, bombs, instruments of murder!²⁰

Bletter observes that Taut’s crystalline constructions were to be achieved “communally by the masses in the same way

that Taut imagined Gothic cathedrals had been built."²¹

“In Earth, as It Is in Heaven”: Crystal and Clay at the Bauhaus

The image of the “glass house” as a catalyst for social and political transformation reappeared that same year in an illustration for a pamphlet circulated by one of Taut’s Werkbund colleagues, the architect Walter Gropius (Figure 5). American-born artist Lyonel Feininger’s woodblock print, *The Cathedral of Socialism* (sometimes called *The Cathedral of the Future*), accompanied Gropius’s Program for the State Bauhaus in Weimar, which included the now legendary text: “Together let us desire, conceive and create the new structure of the future, which will embrace architecture and sculpture and painting in one unity and which will one day rise toward heaven from the hands of a million workers like the crystal symbol of a new faith.”²² Gropius’s program (later known as the “Bauhaus Manifesto”) was a recruitment tool, calling young artists, who had just returned from the trenches or come of age in their wake, to offer up their individual talents in the collaborative service of craft. Later that same year, in an address to the first crop of Bauhaus students, Gropius likened these modern craft collectives to medieval *Bauhütte*, or:

small, secret, self-contained societies, lodges. Conspiracies will form which will want to watch over and artistically shape a secret, a nucleus of belief, until from the individual groups a universally great, enduring spiritual-religious idea will rise again, which finally must find its crystalline expression in a great Gesamtkunstwerk. And this great total work of art, this

cathedral of the future, will then shine with its abundance of light into the smallest objects of everyday life...²³

Together, Gropius’s words and Feininger’s picture bound the notion of craft not simply to expressionist images of crystal and light, but – through the concept of transparency – to the utopian politics of collectivism. Ironically, however, while Gropius had enlisted Feininger’s print to embody transcendent transparency, this woodcut was inherently earthy and opaque – its opacity cemented by the obvious traces of its craft: the visible, indexical marks of the making process, in which wood fibers had been gouged from the heavy, solid block. More than opaque, it was earthy – dirty. Its craftsman had made no attempt at achieving the crisp, “clean” lines synonymous today with the Bauhaus’s legacy for design. The object’s rough, jagged cuttings, and especially the errant flecks of black ink within the white, voided areas, besmirch and fundamentally negate the pristine immateriality of its subject: glass.

This friction between transparency’s promise of transcendence or social transformation and the earthbound opacity of craft at the Weimar Bauhaus was nowhere more pronounced than in the ceramics workshop, which, unlike the other Bauhaus workshops, was located at a 20-kilometer remove from the central Weimar campus: at Dornburg an der Saale in the buildings of an abandoned castle, owned by the local state government. Bauhaus ceramic students had initially worked in confining and ill-equipped quarters in a room rented from a Weimar kiln factory. Their relocation to Dornburg in 1920 was accomplished as part of a collaborative agreement with the established local

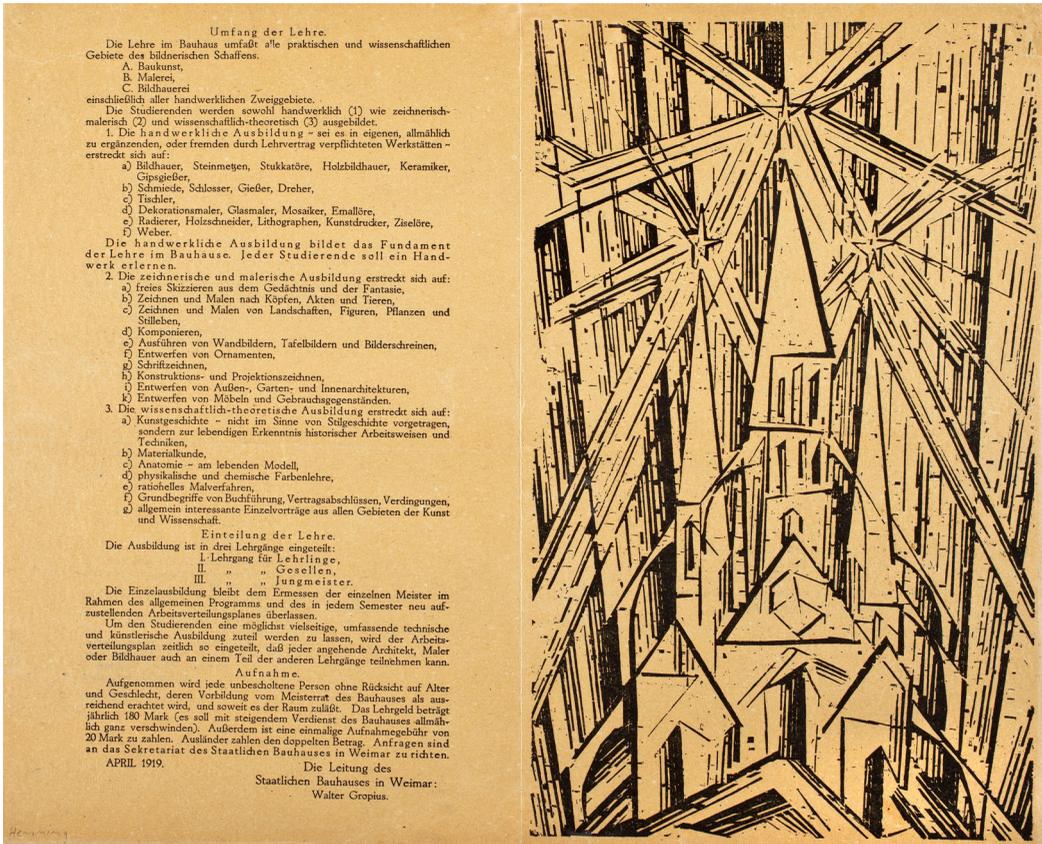


Fig 5 Lyonel Feininger (artist) and Walter Gropius (author), *Manifesto and Program of the State Bauhaus*, April 1919, with title page “Cathedral” by Lyonel Feininger. Four-sided leaflet, letterpress on gray-green factory printing paper, on the cover sheet. Original size reproduction (zinc etching) after woodcut. Museum Associates/LACMA/Art Resource, NY © 2020 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.

potter, Max Krehan, who agreed to take the Bauhaus students on as his apprentices, thus becoming their *Werkmeister*.²⁴ Krehan, whose workshop was located on the castle grounds, represented the fourth generation of a Thuringian pottery family.²⁵ His work was characterized by the influence of the well-respected local tradition of Bürgel, a nearby production center whose manufacture of stoneware and high-fired earthenware vessels with brown slip decoration had begun in the

Middle Ages.²⁶ Bürgel's guild records show it to have been the earliest pottery producer in Thuringia, and Krehan's family workshop had been in operation since 1770.²⁷ Not only did this firm foundation in local production convention serve to root the Bauhaus students in the historic soil of the guild system, it also established a necessary link between Krehan's family trade and the next generation.²⁸ Because he had no heir to carry on his trade, he welcomed these serious students – not to

mention the financial support of the State Bauhaus at Weimar.²⁹

In his Bauhaus Manifesto, Gropius had proclaimed craft as the liberator of the “unproductive” (or, as was frequently the case in postwar Germany, unemployed) artist:

When young people who take a joy in creation once more begin their life's work by learning a trade, then the unproductive “artist” will no longer be condemned to deficient artistry, for their skill will now be preserved for the crafts, in which they will be able to achieve excellence.³⁰

It was Krehan's practical embodiment of the *Bauhütte* philosophy, not merely through his adherence to tradition but also through the sales of his “rustic” pottery, which produced an income for the Bauhaus ceramics workshop (allowing it to be financially as well as ideologically self-contained), that facilitated a tangible “return to the crafts” for these *Bauhäusler*.³¹ Just as it had done before the war, clay offered significant connections to the *past*: to the material past, but also to a more evanescent, idealized past of secret societies and their “conspiracies.”

The mystical, and even at times explicitly religious language of Gropius's early proclamations was reflected in the formation of an almost cultic cohesiveness at Dornburg. Gropius's imagery, revolving around both communal and spiritual structures – the medieval *Bauhütte* and the collectively constructed cathedral – materialized in the close-knit, earnest band of students and instructors at Dornburg and their vital sense of mission and moral purpose.

The *Bauhütte* model was consciously adopted by the workshop's *Formmeister*

(Master of Form), the sculptor Gerhard Marcks, who made clear from the establishment of the workshop that, “in essence we are all striving to unite all of the fine arts in the *Bauhütte*, along with a foundation in handicraft training.”³² The framework of the Dornburg experience rendered this concept practical. Although the self-sufficiency and initiative of the *Bauhäusler* were evident in their very first project – the construction of a new workshop in the stables of the old Rococo palace given to the Bauhaus by the Thuringian government – it was largely owing to the pre-established structure provided by Krehan that they were quickly able to coalesce into something spiritually akin to the time-honored German craft guild.³³

According to Marguerite Friedländer (later Wildenhain), an enthusiastic Bauhaus apprentice who would become an internationally recognized ceramist, the entire experience of the Bauhaus ceramics workshop was earthy, messy, *dirty*: some would-be apprentices arrived at the workshop “in uniforms, tattered and torn from four years in the trenches, others in old clothes that they had worn since the beginning of the war, some barefoot . . .”³⁴ And yet, “all of them were ready to start afresh with all they had in ideals, energies, gifts, and total devotion . . . It was a rebellious group, afire with ideas of a better future for mankind, where the crafts would be an integral part of art, and art of total life.”³⁵ Workshop members dug their own clay from the banks of the local river (in which they also washed themselves); they chopped wood and slaved day and night over smoky, wood-burning kilns. The Dornburg *Bauhäusler* worked the soil to grow much of their food, and several women potters, including the apprentice Lydia Driesch-Foucar, undertook to cook for the

community.³⁶ Friedländer was herself a driving force in the Ceramics Workshop, and articulated in retrospect her perception of the workshop's predicament in the context of the Bauhaus financial structure, not to mention Germany's postwar economic crisis and skyrocketing inflation:

What we produced belonged to the Bauhaus, which sold our work and gave us a percentage of the price as remuneration. As the German inflation accelerated, we were paid three times a week, and rushed to shop the very minute we got our money; a few hours later it would all have been worth only half as much ... It was a horrible time for all of us, and food was scarce because nobody wanted to sell anything. If we could buy a hundred-pound sack of oatmeal, we did, and many times we ate oatmeal for breakfast, oatmeal and home-grown chard for lunch, and chard and oatmeal for dinner.³⁷

These trying conditions seem to have galvanized the Bauhaus potters: Friedländer asserts that "... against the outside world, we were as one ... we became a real community."³⁸ The experience that Friedländer, Driesch-Foucar, and other members of the Dornburg ceramics workshop describe is in many ways Gropius's *Bauhütte*, realized in the gritty and sometimes dire terms of communal, subsistence living. Here, participation in what he had envisioned as a grand *Gesamtkunstwerk* was not a dilettantish whim – it was a matter of survival: you rolled up your sleeves, pitched in and got your hands dirty, or you starved. For the Bauhaus potters, however, this was a productive, fecund kind of dirtiness. Mud was at once Mother Earth, medium, and muse. The local

slip-painted pottery tradition, embraced by Formmeister Marcks and inculcated by Werkmeister Krehan, mined this mud for all its aesthetic properties: Bauhaus pots were both made from and decorated with dirt. In fact, to those who take the Bauhaus at its well-established word about form, function, and "clean lines," Bauhaus pots (especially when one encounters them "in the flesh") can seem surprisingly humble, rustic, and brown (Figure 6).³⁹

For Friedländer, the Bauhaus had, from her very first encounter with it, embodied the hands-on, material process of craft. She describes a kind of conversion on a trip to Weimar in 1919, when she came upon a poster displaying Feininger's *Cathedral of Socialism*, along with Gropius's manifesto. The words that stirred her soul – and prompted her to enroll as a Bauhaus student – were these:

Architects, sculptors, painters, we must all [re]turn to the crafts. Art is not a profession, there is no difference between the artist and the craftsman. In rare moments beyond the control of his will, the grace of heaven may cause his work to blossom into art. But proficiency in his craft is essential to every artist. Therein lies the source of creative imagination.⁴⁰

Feininger's cathedral, erecting itself scratch by scratch before her eyes (just as it had originally emerged from a solid block of wood), represented for Friedländer both the physical process and material product of craft that bound its practitioners together in the construction of the "great total work of art, this cathedral of the future," destined to shine with "abundance of light into the smallest objects of everyday life ..."⁴¹



Fig 6 Marguerite Friedlaender-Wildenhain, *Painted Pitcher with Handle*, 1922–23. Earthenware with salt glaze over clay slip. © Charles Friedlaender, New York. Courtesy Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin. Photo: Gunter Lepkowski.

One of Friedländer's fellow apprentices, the native Thuringian Otto Lindig, seems to have translated Feininger's woodcut into clay, while at the same time interpreting Gropius's verbal image most literally. Lindig's thrown and hand-built *Temple of Light* (1921) might be understood variously as a small-scale sculpture, an expressionist architectural model, or an elaborate lantern (Figure 7). Period photographs testify to its distinction from the more rustic, intentionally rough and earthy pots of Friedländer, Krehan, and Marcks not only in terms of its multi- (or non-) functionality, but, perhaps more

strikingly, by virtue of its intricate structure and its refined white clay body. The *Light Temple*, its pure whiteness rendering it already somehow lighter – less assertively material – than the rich, muddy, grainy pots thrown by Lindig's colleagues around the same time, undergoes a transformation – a further dematerialization – when illuminated from within. Rather like the contrast between a photographic print and its negative, the illuminated object seems to dissolve, its once-solid body now serving only as the aperture for light itself. Otto Lindig's ceramic *Temple* inhabited the liminal territory between materiality and immateriality – that limbo between heaven and earth: the "abundance of light" that it was designed to emit transformed it from an embodied thing into the bodiless, spiritual "symbol of a new faith."

The Emperor's New Clothes: The Politics of Emptiness

But a faith in what, exactly? In response to ideological shifts within the Bauhaus itself, as well as financial pressure applied by its sponsor, the local state government in Weimar, Gropius began in 1923 a systematic reorientation of the Bauhaus – theoretically and practically – towards industrial production, under the slogan: "art and technology – a new unity."⁴² In a letter to Marcks on April 5, 1923, Gropius expressed his concerns about the handcrafted singularity of Dornburg's vernacular-inspired pottery: "Yesterday I had a look at your many new pots. Almost all of them are unique, unrepeatable; it would be positively wrong not to look for ways of making the hard work that has gone into them accessible to large numbers of people ... We must find ways of duplicating some of the articles with the help of machines."⁴³

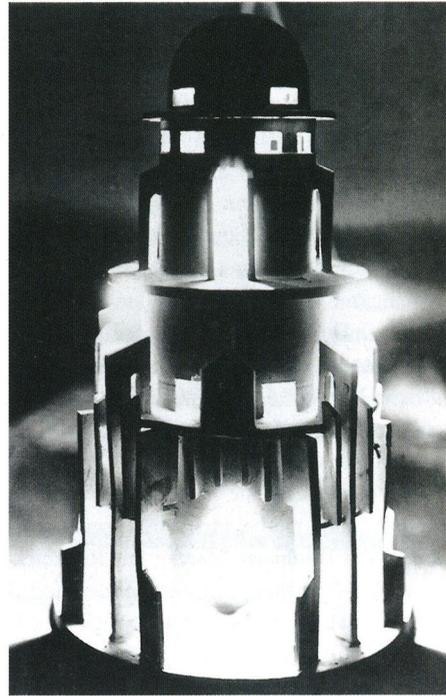
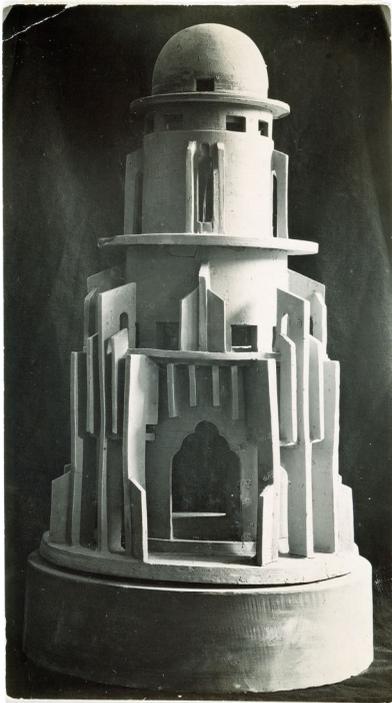


Fig 7 Otto Lindig, *Light Temple*, 1920–1921. Earthenware. © Maria Hokema, Schwäbisch-Gmünd. Courtesy Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

Although the vision of clay as deriving a cultural richness and rootedness from its history of handcraft was one that many of the Bauhaus potters shared with the artists and technicians who had helped to revive the flagging German stoneware industry two decades before, the *Bauhäusler*, their utopian collectivism notwithstanding, had developed no strategy for disseminating or democratizing either their products or their values, while strategies for the promotion of both had been central to the successful modernization of stoneware. Indeed, some of the Bauhaus potters were strongly opposed to production in multiples, as this seemed to fly in the face of the art-craft ideal that Gropius had established in his 1919 manifesto, which had served for many as a lure – or a catalyst.

Marcks, for his part, was deeply skeptical of the broader implications contained in Gropius's critical assessment of Dornburg's production. Much later, recalling his time in Weimar, Marcks writes: "The year 1923 marked a change: the poster at the train station, Art and Technology – A New Unity, was the signal. 'Exactly what we didn't want,' Feininger said to me."⁴⁴ The *Formmeister* saw Gropius's shift towards industry, expressed in his new conviction that "crafts and industry are today steadily approaching one another and are destined eventually to merge into one,"⁴⁵ as a betrayal of and a threat to what he, Marcks, termed his "sole artistic purpose of uniting handicrafts with art as much as possible."⁴⁶ Gropius's radically altered position that "the teaching of craft is meant to

prepare for designing for mass-production"⁴⁷ did not sit well with Krehan, either.⁴⁸ The goal of the *Werkmeister's* instruction was to build skill in his apprentices, to train them to produce almost identical forms one after the other by hand, without any technological aid beyond the wheel. If apprentices were now to be encouraged to replicate their forms indefinitely through molds and modules, this would significantly devalue Krehan's training in the precision and efficiency of the hand – if not render it altogether obsolete.

But not all of the Bauhaus potters opposed the rapprochement of craft and industry. The Ceramics Workshop, in spite of the resistance of its masters, as well as its material and ideological bases in regional craft, was the first of the Bauhaus divisions to form links with industry.⁴⁹ Design historian Robin Schuldenfrei has characterized Gropius's 1923 proclamation, "art and technology – a new unity," as advancing not simply an agenda of industrial collaboration, but a prescription for Bauhaus objects themselves, involving "the use of new materials, more stripped-down forms, and a spare, functional aesthetic."⁵⁰ Lindig and his fellow apprentice, Theodor Bogler, had since 1922 been handcrafting forms composed of geometric components potentially suitable to mass production, and glazed in dark, metallic colors evocative of the aesthetics of heavy machinery. Together they also developed a new clay body that was more plastic and higher-firing than its predecessor, and so better adapted to the industrial process of plaster casting, as well as more hygienic for modern use. After visiting area ceramics manufacturing, the two men set up a series design "laboratory" at the rustic Bauhaus pottery, where they developed modular prototypes for industrial production.⁵¹ One of the

earliest of these was Bogler's earthenware *Mocha Machine*, assembled from both thrown and cast modular components (Figure 8). Bogler's interlocking geometry of warmer, water tank, pot, filter fitting and strainer reflected his aspirations towards industry. Even the term "machine" bespoke the transformation of the modern kitchen from a multipurpose living space to an "industrial-age" workplace.⁵²

But Bogler's high-fired earthenware prototype, while intended for industrial production, still spoke, through its rough, brown body and dirty, slip-smear surface, to craft's intimacy of process and material: the physical contact embedded in and embodied by Friedländer's cow and Feininger's cathedral. Bogler's attempt to transcend clay's earthiness through a collaboration with the Älteste Volkstedter Porzellanfabrik, a local porcelain manufactory, reveals a gap between the Bauhaus's industrial intentions and the realities of Domburg's design process. Though the *Mocha Machine* was briefly manufactured in Volkstedter porcelain, the multipart design proved too complicated – and thus too costly – to mass produce in the long term, and was dropped from production by 1924 (Figure 9).⁵³ Its industrial unwieldiness notwithstanding, however, Bogler's *Mocha Machine* was indeed transfigured in its new porcelain body. With its complex, puzzle-like construction – like a utilitarian translation of Lindig's expressionist *Light Temple* – it approached transparency (while remaining opaque) through its clinical whiteness and highly reflective surface. Was Bogler's blanched *Mocha Machine* the new "cathedral of socialism" – the new "cathedral of the future"? Might it symbolize, in spite of its technical failure, Gropius's re-vision of a social equality forged not in the sacred flames of



Fig 8 Theodor Bogler, *Mocha Machine* (five-part), 1923. High-fired earthenware painted with iron-oxide slip, free-thrown and assembled. © Maria Laach Monastery. Courtesy Klassik Stiftung Weimar. Top photo: Renno. Bottom photo: Roland Dressler.

mystic brotherhood, but in the purifying fire of industry?

The cathedral's metamorphosis – from Taut's multicolored mysticism of the 1910s, to Feininger's scratched sign for a socialist future, to Lindig's luminous lantern, and finally to Bogler's porcelain "machine" – traces a shift not simply through a set of beliefs or meanings, but across an array of materials: glass, paper (its cousin, wood), and various types of clay. A further work – Wilhelm Wagenfeld's now iconic table lamp (Figure 10), which he designed in conjunction with Carl Jucker at the Bauhaus Metal Workshop between 1923 and 1924 – marks an even more significant step in this modern evolution, as the lamp reunites the Gothic image with its *ur*-material, glass, while simultaneously transforming it from a utopian prototype (a beacon or *promise* of future realization) to a humble, utilitarian object that, through its simple, everyday function of shining light,

appears to make good on that promise.⁵⁴ With its cool, resistant, and (sometimes) transparent materials, the "Wagenfeld lamp" was an aura-less object upon which, like the Bauhaus rooms Benjamin described in 1933, it was "hard to leave traces."

But "the dark secret of this bright light," as design theorist Frederic Schwartz has put it, was that, for all its visual, material signifiers of rationalized industry, it was never put into mass production.⁵⁵ Years later, Wagenfeld himself recalled that "these designs which looked as though they could be made inexpensively by machine techniques were, in fact, extremely costly craft designs."⁵⁶ Despite its utilitarian intentions, Wagenfeld's lamp remained – like its crystalline predecessors – a miniature monument to a future where Gropius's "abundance of light" would no longer shine "into the smallest objects of everyday life," but, instead, where clean, cool, transparent objects themselves would shine



Fig 9 Theodor Bogler, *Mocha Machine*, 1923. Slip-cast porcelain, for Älteste Volkstedter Porzellanfabrik. © Maria Laach Monastery. Courtesy Klassik Stiftung Weimar. Photos: Roland Dressler.

forth their own transformative light, revolutionizing modern life from the inside out. “The transparent glass of the base and shaft in the version we most often see transmits the light;” Schwartz writes, “the milky glass of the shade diffuses it; the chrome steel in the center reflects it back.”⁵⁷ The complex design for the transmission and emission of light via this visually simplified object conveys, as Schwartz argues, a very different socialism from the embracing anarchism cast through Taut’s warm colored glass, or from Feininger’s and Lindig’s collaborative, crystalline collectivism: “The white light of Wagenfeld and Jucker . . . is even, objective, diffuse, everywhere the same. It won’t destroy hatred, but it will show it clearly; it won’t pierce the consciousness with any sort of revelation, but will simply expose the world to the power of the mind.”⁵⁸

As an “everyday” object, then, the lamp failed: like Bogler’s *Mocha Machine* with its mechanistic, industrially suggestive design, the Wagenfeld lamp could not be mass-

produced, and as a result, would never be disseminated to the masses. As such, its socialism was passive, symbolic – what Schwartz has called “a socialism of vision.”⁵⁹ “Impractical but nonetheless compelling,” Schwartz writes, “a vision of the future that still had to be crafted by hand, the Bauhaus lamp serves as a symbol for a moment when politics retreated into visual form . . .”⁶⁰ Bauhaus objects that, like Lindig’s *Light Temple*, Bogler’s *Mocha Machine*, and Wagenfeld’s lamp, struggle to shake themselves from the visible “dirt” of handcraft, but are yet incapable of dispensing with its traditional processes, betray a rhetorical shift in the politics of modern design away from the ideological opacity or “fullness” of specific craft traditions – Bürgel’s earthy, slip-painted pottery, for instance, or the kaleidoscopic ecstasy of the Gothic window – towards the impartial reflectivity of chrome, and the “empty” transparency of glass.⁶¹ Did modernism’s retreat from expressionist warmth and anarchist action into a cooler, more removed



Fig 10 Wilhelm Wagenfeld and Carl Jakob Jucker, *Table Lamp* (Glass version MT 9/ ME 1), designed c.1923–1924, executed 1927. Glass, chrome, steel. © 2020 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn. Courtesy Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin. Photo: Gunter Lepkowski.

and observant “socialism of vision” mark a kind of political withdrawal? What sort of vessel did the ostensibly progressive objectivity and aesthetic passivity of modern design – its openness, emptiness, and transparency – furnish those who recognized the aesthetics of the everyday as a powerful instrument of political propaganda?

In 1925, the Bauhaus workshops relocated from romantic, sleepy Weimar to the industrial city of Dessau, where they were installed in Gropius’s full-scale, modernist cathedral: his steel-and-glass temple to the ideal of mass-design. The ceramics workshop, anchored to Weimar’s local craft tradition (and having failed, ultimately, to create

enduring links with industry) did not join them. It was this new Bauhaus that was closed in 1932 due to withdrawal of government support. Historian Paul Betts has argued that, in light of the Nazis’ persecution of the subsequent Berlin Bauhaus as an “unwanted scourge of cultural bolshevism,” and in conjunction with their populist, agrarian, rhetoric of “blood and soil,” it has long been taken for granted that the Bauhaus’s ultimate demise in 1933 signaled a reinvestment in – even a deification of – vernacular handcraft within the vocabulary of Third Reich design.⁶² And this is not entirely untrue – the values associated with indigenous handcraft certainly resonated with fascist ideologies. However, the Nazi image of craft was systematically sanitized: traces of the gritty vernacular that clung, for instance, to Riemerschmid’s serially produced stonewares and to Friedländer’s “muddy” slip-painted pottery (though both of these examples were actually far from “authentic”) had been carefully erased. This politically engineered, generic German craft was sterile, not simply in a hygienic, utilitarian sense; it was aesthetically infertile (Figure 11).

While purging the Bauhaus cathedral of its socialist “contents” – its workshops and workers – effectively crushed the progressive, social agenda of modern design in 1933, Betts contends that designed objects themselves remained “pro-modern, in both rhetoric and style” during the Nazi era.⁶³ The Nazis recognized the cultural currency of stylistically “modern” objects – aura-less objects like those pioneered at the Bauhaus – and capitalized on the political promise of allegiance to a modern style. Ironically, it was the Nazi subsidization of modern design originally developed during the years of the Weimar Republic, including designs by former Bauhaus



Fig 11 “Bauerlich gleich deutsch gleich gut [Rustic = German = Good].” *Reichsstand des Deutschen Handwerks, Handwerkliches Bilderbuch 5* (1939), 15.

artists like Lindig and Wagenfeld, that made it generally affordable, enabling it to achieve that status of true “mass design” for the first time.⁶⁴ And since metal, concrete, and wood were increasingly requisitioned for weapons production, ceramic and glass commodities became important sources of revenue for the Nazi economy. These commodities, Betts writes, “quite unchanging in actual design – became a favorite *repository* of Nazi myths and fantasies.”⁶⁵ In other words, the Nazis took modern design hostage, forcing it to play host to their parasitic populism.

Modernist emptiness beckoned the Nazis not simply with its dispassionate, clinical

order, but with its very lack of specific regional or historical style: a stylelessness that the Nazis apprehended, popularized and propagandized as *ewige*, or “eternal” form, acting as material evidence of “timeless German greatness.”⁶⁶ Over the twenty years between one world war and the next, the mobile, multicolored, anti-utilitarian and anarchist glass of expressionism had gradually been blanched and frozen by a cold, rational “socialism of vision,” in which, according to Wilhelm Wagenfeld, utility itself was beauty. Motionless and mute, modernism’s defenseless “eternal forms” passed into enemy hands.

Years later in the 1980s, after both wars were long over, Wagenfeld reminisced about his *Kubus* storage vessels, designed in 1938 and produced during his years at the Lausitzer Glassworks, in the late 1930s and early 40s:

Some people came to visit us [at the Glassworks] once and said that, just like the Volkswagen factory [newly constructed and opened in 1938], a new refrigerator factory would be built, and for this they needed our set of refrigerator storage containers, measured it, and declared it wonderful. We sold the sets in huge quantities. Some were shipped to Kiel, and some to Le Havre [both port cities]. I was tricked into believing they were for export, but it turned out they were for the German navy.⁶⁷

While Wagenfeld believed this subterfuge to have taken place in 1938, the historical record does little to support his suspicions: there is no hard evidence that the *Kubus* blocks were delivered to or used by the German Navy during World War II.⁶⁸ Though Wagenfeld recalls that the *Kubus* blocks were widely popular as “civilian wares,” it was the ghost of this possible “swindle” that seems to have haunted his mind despite the lapse of almost 50 years. But whatever their motives, the visitors to Wagenfeld’s Glassworks apprehended the mass-produced *Kubus* containers as fundamentally populist objects, capable, certainly, of serving a direct, functional purpose within the complex machinations of the approaching war, but, perhaps even more importantly (if less pointedly) of bringing simple “joy” to the German people – akin to the Volkswagen or “people’s car,” which Adolf Hitler had just

celebrated at a 1938 rally as built “for the broad masses . . . to answer their transportation needs, and . . . intended to give them joy.”⁶⁹ But why (and how) did Wagenfeld imagine his “people’s containers” – eminently useful, but also intentionally passive and *empty* forms – as immediately filled with fascist aggression?

Industrial modernism’s snowy porcelains and icy glass cubes were objects on which it was “hard to leave traces.” Their designs had evolved through the desire for both material and conceptual cleanliness. Taking modern design’s complex and ambivalent history within the context of interwar politics into account, then, the notion of Bauhaus modernism as simply and invitingly “empty” becomes problematic, because despite its consciously evacuated design, it was never truly emptied of meaning. On the contrary, this very stylistic vacuity *itself* meant something unique, irreplaceable. Betts writes that the progressive, modernist design object, understood as an active subject, or agent, in Nazi cultural politics, became a “living witness of cultural rebirth, social reconstruction, racial victory, and private pleasure.”⁷⁰ In other words, it *meant* something, in the way that an important hostage, held because of a specific, provocative cause or set of values, *means* something. And the modernist object – designed to be transparent, empty, and free – was an easy hostage to apprehend. It was, in fact, more like a host – a vessel, which, though originally invested with socialist objectivity, became quickly infested with national socialist hypocrisy. Wagenfeld felt swindled in 1938 – and, apparently, still in 1980. But, like modern industrial design itself, Wagenfeld had, on the eve of World War II, already retreated, ceded the public field. His bright “socialism of vision” had faded to

political blindness. Why did the Nazis fear the glass Bauhaus, while desiring the glass blocks by a Bauhaus designer? Was it because the first was so difficult to empty, while the last were all too easy to fill?

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes

- 1 For further discussion of this phenomenon see Freyja Hartzell, "A Renovated Renaissance: Richard Riemerschmid's Interiors for the Thieme House in Munich," *Interiors: Design/Architecture/Culture* 5, no. 1 (March 2014): 5–35.
- 2 I will discuss this process in further detail below. See also Freyja Hartzell, "A Ghost in the Machine Age: The Westerwald Stoneware Industry and German Design Reform," *The Journal of Modern Craft* 2, no. 3 (November 2009): 251–77.
- 3 Walter Benjamin, "Experience and Poverty," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, volume 2, part 2, 1931–34, ed. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999), 733–4.
- 4 Bertolt Brecht, "Aus dem Lesebuch für Städtebewohner" (1926–27), in *Bertolt Brecht Hundert Gedichte: Ausgewählt von Siegfried Unseld* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2013), 42.
- 5 Benjamin, "Experience and Poverty," 734.
- 6 *Ibid.*
- 7 *Ibid.* See also Paul Scheerbarth, *Glass Architecture* (1914), translated by James Palmes and reprinted in *Glass! Love!! Perpetual Motion!!! A Paul Scheerbarth Reader*, ed. Josiah McElheny and Christine Burgin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 90.
- 8 For more on Mies's relationship to Nazi politics, and the closing of the Dessau and Berlin Bauhaus, see Celina R. Welch, "Mies van de Rohe's Compromise with the Nazis," *Wiss. Z. Hochsch. Archit. Bauwes. – A. – Weimar* 39 (1993) 1/2: 103–14; and Franz Schulze, *Mies van de Rohe: A Critical Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 186.
- 9 Paul Betts, *The Authority of Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 63.
- 10 The assumption that handcraft and industrial technology stand as polar opposites is based largely upon nineteenth-century British Arts and Crafts rhetoric and its idealization of the medieval craftsman. Peter Dörmer challenges this perception of technology as antithetical to craft by demonstrating the interdependent nature of the two, and their organic development as part of the process of making, in *The Culture of Craft: Status and Future* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 8.
- 11 For detailed and comprehensive accounts of the history and theory of the Werkbund, see Joan Campbell, *The German Werkbund: The Politics of Reform in the Applied Arts* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978) and Frederic J. Schwartz, *The Werkbund: Design Theory & Mass Culture before the First World War* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996).
- 12 Modern reforms of the Westerwald stoneware industry were underway at the turn of the twentieth century, several years before the founding of the Deutscher Werkbund in the autumn of 1907. However, the artists, manufacturers and government officials instrumental in the rehabilitation of the German stoneware industry soon became influential Werkbund members. For a thorough treatment of the topic, see Hartzell, "A Ghost in the Machine Age," 251–77.
- 13 See a description of stoneware by Gustav E. Pazaurek, director of the Königliches Landesgewerbemuseum in Stuttgart in "Neues Steinzeug von Albin Müller," *Die Kunst* 24 (1910/11): 178.
- 14 H. H., "Die keramische Ausstellung im Berliner Kunstgewerbemuseum," *Keramische Monatshefte* 7 (1907): 148.
- 15 See Hartzell, "Ghost in the Machine Age," 263–65.
- 16 See Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility" (1936), in

Walter Benjamin: *Selected Writings*, vol. 3, ed. Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press, 2002), 101–33.

- 17** See Rosemarie Haag Bletter, "The Interpretation of the Glass Dream – Expressionist Architecture and the History of the Crystal Metaphor," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 40, no. 1 (March 1981): 20–43.
- 18** Bletter, "Glass Dream," 32.
- 19** Bruno Taut, *Alpine Architektur* (Hagen: Folkwang-Verlag, 1919). An original edition of this five-volume publication, including 30 original drawings, is available in the archive of the Akademie der Künste, Berlin.
- 20** See Bletter's translation of the text from plate 16 of Taut's *Alpine Architektur* in "Glass Dream," 35.
- 21** *Ibid.*, 35.
- 22** Walter Gropius, "Program of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar," in *Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, ed. Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), 435.
- 23** Walter Gropius, "Address to the Students," in *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Hans Maria Wingler (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969), 36.
- 24** Each Bauhaus workshop was co-led by a *Werkmeister* (master of work, or craft), responsible for developing the apprentices' technical skills, and a *Formmeister* (master of form), responsible for guiding the students' artistic vision.
- 25** Hans-Peter Jakobson, *Otto Lindig – der Töpfer, 1895-1966* (Karlsruhe: Museen der Stadt Gera, 1990), 11.
- 26** David Gaimster, *German Stoneware, 1200-1900: Archaeology and Cultural History* (London: British Museum Press, 1997), 276.
- 27** See *ibid.*, 282, and Marguerite Wildenhain, *The Invisible Core: A Potter's Life and Thoughts* (Palo Alto: Pacific Books, 1973), 24.
- 28** Lydia Driesch-Foucar, "Erinnerungen an die Anfänge der Donburger Töpferwerkstatt des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar, 1920-1923," in *Keramik und Bauhaus*, ed. Klaus Weber (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1989), 71–81.
- 29** Wildenhain, *Invisible Core*, 24.
- 30** Walter Gropius, "Program of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar," 435.
- 31** Jeannine Fiedler and Peter Feierabend, eds., *Bauhaus* (Köln: Könenmann, 1999), 440–2.
- 32** Quoted in Klaus Weber, "Zwischen Tradition und Avantgarde. Gerhard Marcks am Bauhaus," in *Keramik und Bauhaus*, 37.
- 33** Wildenhain, *Invisible Core*, 25.
- 34** *Ibid.*, 23. Upon her marriage to Hans Wildenhain in Halle, Friedländer took her husband's surname and was known during her career in the United States as Marguerite Wildenhain.
- 35** *Ibid.*, 23–24.
- 36** Driesch-Foucar, "Erinnerungen," 76. Driesch-Foucar admits that cooking for the community, which she undertook single-handedly at first, proved to be such an overwhelming task that she eventually felt compelled to stop making pottery and become Dornburg's resident chef after her marriage to Johannes Driesch in 1922. Despite its indisputably progressive admission of women students from the time of its founding, the Bauhaus has accrued a reputation in scholarship for its frequently traditional – and sometimes even dismissive or repressive – approach to the question of gender equality within its workshops; however, women like Marianne Brandt in the Metal Workshop and Gunta Stölzl in the Weaving Workshop, albeit in the face of genuine adversity, were also recognized and even promoted as important, innovative designers central to the institution's mission and success as both school and design laboratory.
- 37** Wildenhain, *Invisible Core*, 28–29.
- 38** *Ibid.*, 28.
- 39** Juliet Kinchin also remarks on the ways in which the "materiality of the clay bodies and irregularly pitted glazes (from matte black-brown to pale white-buff, from translucent to viscous) references an essentially Romantic exploration of inanimate matter through the art of the individual potter." See Kinchin, "Theodor Bogler Teapots. 1923," in *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity* (MoMA: 2009), 110–3.
- 40** Gropius's "Program for the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar," as quoted in Wildenhain, *Invisible Core*, 22.
- 41** Gropius, "Address to the Students," 36.
- 42** See Walter Gropius, *The New Architecture of the Bauhaus* (London: Faber and Faber, 1935),

- 55–6, and introduction to *Neue Arbeiten der Bauhauswerkstätten*, Bauhaus Book, 1925 (Mainz: Florian Kupferberg Verlag, 1981). For a comprehensive historical discussion of the Bauhaus's ideological and practical shifts see Gillian Naylor, *The Bauhaus Reassessed* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1985), 83–102; 124–45.
- 43** Magdalena Droste, *Bauhaus 1919-1933* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv Museum für Gestaltung, 1998), 70.
- 44** From Gerhard Marcks, "My Short Stay in Weimar," in *Bauhaus and Bauhaus People*, ed. Eckhard Neumann, trans. Eva Richter, and Alba Loman (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1970), 30.
- 45** Walter Gropius, "Theory and Organization of the Bauhaus," in *Bauhaus 1919-1928*, ed. Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius, and Ise Gropius (Boston: Charles T. Branford Company, 1959), 25.
- 46** Marcks, "My Short Stay," 30.
- 47** Gropius, "Theory and Organization of the Bauhaus," 25.
- 48** Droste, *Bauhaus*, 70.
- 49** Jakobson, *Otto Lindig*, 17.
- 50** Robin Schuldenfrei, "The Irreproducibility of the Bauhaus Object," in *Bauhaus Construct: Fashioning Identity, Discourse and Modernism*, ed. Jeffrey Saletnik and Robin Schuldenfrei (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 37.
- 51** Michael Siebenbrodt, ed. *Bauhaus Weimar: Designs for the Future* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2000), 15.
- 52** *Ibid.*
- 53** Klaus Weber, "'Weimarer Dinge'. Die Veltener Keramik und Das Bauhaus," *Berlin und Brandenburg: Keramik der 20er und 30er Jahre*, ed. Hans-Joachim Theis (Stuttgart: Edition Cantz, 1992), 26.
- 54** This lamp has been generally attributed in scholarship to Bauhaus apprentices Wilhelm Wagenfeld and Carl Jucker (see, e.g. Frederic Schwartz's reference in note 55, below). However, as has recently been brought to my attention by Dr. Julia Bulk of Wilhelm Wagenfeld Foundation in Bremen, a 1999 court ruling by the Hanseatisches Oberlandesgericht in Hamburg established Wagenfeld as the single author/creator of the lamp. It is still possible, though, to credit Jucker with preliminary studies/ sketches, as has been the procedure of the Bauhaus Archive in Berlin.
- 55** Frederic J. Schwartz, "Wilhelm Wagenfeld and Carl Jakob Jucker Table Lamp. 1923-24," in *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity*, ed. Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman (Museum of Modern Art: 2009), 138.
- 56** *Ibid.* Schwartz employs Gillian Naylor's citation of Wagenfeld in *The Bauhaus Reassessed*, 112.
- 57** Schwartz, "Wilhelm Wagenfeld and Carl Jakob Jucker Table Lamp," 138.
- 58** *Ibid.*, 138–40.
- 59** *Ibid.*, 140.
- 60** *Ibid.*
- 61** *Ibid.*
- 62** Betts, *Authority of Everyday Objects*, 23–72.
- 63** *Ibid.*, 24.
- 64** *Ibid.*, 68.
- 65** *Ibid.*, 49.
- 66** *Ibid.*, 67.
- 67** Wagenfeld executed other commissions for Nazi organizations, including the KdF (Kraft durch Friede, or "Strength through Joy"); in the same interview he describes a special commission of burgundy glasses for Göring's Luftwaffe ministry. Wilhelm Wagenfeld quoted in interviews with Walter Scheiffele during the 1980s in Walter Scheiffele, *Wilhelm Wagenfeld und die moderne Glasindustrie: Eine Geschichte der deutschen Glasgestaltung von Bruno Mauder, Richard Süßmuth, Heinrich Fuchs und Wilhelm Wagenfeld bis Heinrich Löffelhardt* (Stuttgart: Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1994), 221.
- 68** Wagenfeld's interview statement did of course produce a powerful response, and the question of whether his Kubus designs were "enlisted" by the Navy has colored the Wagenfeld literature since the late 1970s. Beate Manske lists a series of reasons why it is highly unlikely that the Kubus-Geschirr were used by the German Navy in "Wilhelm Wagenfelds Rautenglas – Aufbau und Vermarktung des Sortiments," in *Zeitgemäß und Zeitbeständig. Industrieformen von Wilhelm Wagenfeld* (Bremen: Wilhelm Wagenfeld Stiftung, 2012), 172.
- 69** Hitler's speech is quoted in Steven Parissien, *The Life of the Automobile: The Complete History of the Motor-Car* (Thomas Dunne Books, 2014), 119.
- 70** *Ibid.*, 72.