Historical Papers
Communications historiques

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Volume 9, Number 1, 1974

Toronto 1974

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/030783ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7202/030783ar

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Publisher(s)

The Canadian Historical Association/La Société historique du Canada

ISSN

0068-8878 (print)
1712-9109 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this article

Hopwood, R. (1974). Paladins of the Buergertum: Cultural Clubs and Politics in Small German Towns, 1918-1925. *Historical Papers / Communications historiques*, *9*(1), 213–235. https://doi.org/10.7202/030783ar

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Paladins of the Buergertum: Cultural Clubs and Politics in Small German Towns, 1918-1925.

> Whatever else the war has spared, it all gives no cause to raise our hopes. All our values have been destroyed; Impoverished *Reich*, impoverished Volk.[1]

To the burgher who inhabited a small German community,[7] the collapse of the Empire in November 1918 and the subsequent establishment of the Weimar Republic seemed to release a stream of events that threatened to engulf his most cherished possessions: his values, property, institutions, community and nation. Of what relevance were his values in an age in which the rule of law was violated regularly by radicals, the ethic of hard work was subverted by inflation and speculation, decency was ridiculed by young hoodlums and workers, thriftiness, sobriety and self discipline were ignored by a public bent on self indulgence, compromise was outmoded by tendencies toward extremism, and far-sightedness was rewarded with visions of chaos? His faith in the state diminished when it seemed unable to protect German lands from Poles, Danes, and Frenchmen, when it permitted private armies to roam the countryside, when it was unable to keep the railroads running, when factories and municipalities had to issue their own money, and when the centralizing tendencies of the Republic decreased local autonomy and freedom.[3] The burgher fumed when housing commissions ordered him to rent part of his house to lodgers and then dictated how much he could charge. He feared for the welfare of his children when schools were secularized and women were liberated and given equal rights at the ballot box. He complained bitterly about rapidly rising taxes on beer and property – by 1931-32 in Prussia welfare costs carried by the communities had increased 1000% over the figures for 1913-14.[4]. To run his business effectively he had to fight his way through insurmountable obstacles: regulations determined the allocation of raw materials, restricted the number of hours that one could work, set the hourly rate he could pay his employees, and controlled the prices he could charge. Inflation and depression, strikes, power shortages, and competition from cooperatives, department stores and mail order houses combined to make rational business practices impossible. The "rights" recently granted to the new states of Europe, the socialist–organized workers, and women seemed to have come at his expense, either materially or in the sense of self esteem. Even his political language no

longer adequately described reality: "liberals" opposed the parliamentary political system; "monarchists" ran one of their kind for president of the republic in 1925, and in 1932 "socialists" supported that same confirmed monarchist; socialists regularly favoured the right of private property; "conservative" farmers behaved like revolutionaries; "Jeffersonian" democrats shifted easily over to National Socialism; "extremism of the middle" became a pertinent political concept; the army of the Republic was officially known as the *Reichswehr*; a "republican" flag flew at home and "monarchical" flag flew from the masts of the merchant marine. Confused, frustrated and bitter, most of the burghers of the small towns came to believe that they had become ensnarled in the web of an historical process over which they had little control.

It was very much this feeling that he had lost control over his fate with which the burgher was so ill prepared to cope. The 19th century had been the century of the *Buergertum*, a time when the burgher's values, attitudes, interests and institutions had shaped much of the historical development of Germany. This feeling was particularly strong within the small towns. Success had not come easily to burghers there. They knew that life was a constant struggle and that men of ability only arrived at the top by working hard. They attributed the growth of their community from a sleepy farming village to a lively production and commercial center to the same virtues that had brought them success. Not withstanding their pride in their accomplishments, doubt began to erode their confidence in the closing decades of the Empire. In increasing numbers, scholars as well as many burghers started to question the burghers' assumptions, role in history, and mission in the future.[5] Who were the burghers of the small towns? The burghers' reply projected a general self image. Economically, the burghers were those men who had initiated and directed the early stages of economic growth but were now gradually losing control of it to forces external to the community. Politically, they were those men who had early assumed dominance in local, regional and national representative institutions, only to find that they were blocked from wielding ultimate power at the national level and increasingly threatened by the socialists at the local and regional levels. Socially, they were those men who found that their dominance in the clubs no longer spread their influence over the entire community, because the Socialists and Catholics were successfully enrolling former burghers into separate cultural systems. And culturally, they were those men who roared with rage when their values were derisively characterized as *spiessbuergerlich*, or philistine, even while they also began to doubt the utility of those values in modern life. Negatively identified, the burghers were those residents of towns who were members of neither the socialist nor Catholic sub cultures. It is difficult to apply terms associated with other cultures to the burghers. They rejected the designation

"middle class" because the term "class" had a Marxist ring to it and ran counter to the myth of a classless folk. They objected to being called "bourgeoisie" because it was a French word and because it carried the connotation of an exaggerated attachment to material goods, a notion that conflicted with their values of idealism and community service. Finally, they resisted being absorbed by the increasingly popular German term *Mittelstand*, the middle estate or orders of society, because it diminished their status and weakened their common cultural front against socialism and Catholicism. These, then, were the burghers, a group proud of their past and convinced that they were engaged in a terminal struggle for survival.

By November 1918, faced with the threat of historical extinction, the burghers responded by mobilizing all of their institutions. Political parties, economic interest groups, and social clubs all joined in the effort to throw up a dike against the storm tide of changing attitudes and power relationships. But disunity plagued the burghers' attempts from the beginning. Lacking a homogeneous social base, most of the burghers' political, economic and social structures found it difficult, sometimes impossible, to cooperate consistently even when in dire straits. What they needed most of all was some kind of mortar to join together the burgher community. Until the new Republic and its administration could regain some of the legitimacy formerly accorded the Empire, the task of providing cohesion for the *Buergertum* fell by default to its culture and its cultural clubs, those social institutions dedicated to fostering community values and traditions. The mayor of Schorndorf expressed the burghers' outlook quite clearly:

> History teaches us that neither politics nor economics is able to put back on its feet a beaten and rejected folk without the help of religious and other moral forces. And in the top ranks of these constructive moral forces is the German song, an unshakably pure, crystal-clear source of the folk's strength and courage that will initiate our moral and national regeneration . . . Thousands of things in our life divide us. But our songs span the cleavages spawned by party factionalization . . . There are still things on this earth that are worth more than money: things that cannot be socialized, communized, or even capitalized; far greater things which belong to all of us, which cannot be subordinated to the struggle to make money, and which bind rather than divide us. I speak of course of our common hometown, common blood, common history, common language, and above all our common songs.[6]

Popular culture, of course, flows along many channels and is transmitted by many agents. What I have done here is select a few of the major institutional bearers of the burghers' values and traditions – the gymnastic clubs, singing clubs and shooting clubs[7] – and ask how they influenced the local political process during the Republic.

The Cultural Clubs and the Political Process

During the Weimar Republic the clubs often became deeply engaged in the political process. The more burghers blamed political parties for contemporary problems, the more they were inclined to use the clubs for political purposes and the more the "above party" cry pervaded the civic culture. In general, it was largely because of the part played by the clubs in local affairs that the sense of political anomie that characterized much of the period did not spread into the social system and destroy entirely the cohesion of the community.[8] Political despair did not diminish civic spirit, because a few of the clubs simply filled the vacuum and assumed "political" functions. Burghers did not drop out of public life, despite their distaste for parties and the parliamentary system. If anything, the level of "political" participation increased even while politics grew ever more unpopular, a fact demonstrated by the consistently high turnouts in elections. The cultural clubs penetrated the political life of the small towns in an infinite number of ways and in varying degrees, but I am limiting my considerations here to three areas of influence that seemed to have been important in all the communities I have studied. The question I pose, then, is: What part did the clubs play in furnishing leadership to the community, in organizing and mobilizing society, and in raising issues and keeping them alive until they could be directly absorbed into the political system?

. . . . . .

We want men, not weathervanes,
Who at the first sign of a storm,
Shrug and spin like a plane.
We want men, who in order to win,
Will go through hell and risk their skin.[9]

There can be no doubt that the burghers were obsessed with the desire to find strong and capable leadership at this juncture in their history.[10] Anxiety replaced self confidence, as they became aware that they no longer were able to control their fate. From a leader they came to expect moral as well as political guidance. In an introspective frenzy, they clawed at their cultural heritage to find guidelines or models for daily behaviour and for the means of regaining power. There appeared to be few cultural heroes who did not offer some advice pertinent to their problems. Clubs assumed the role of sponsoring ceremonies dedicated to honouring figures like Schiller, Goethe, Jahn, Kant and Luther. From one the burghers could learn the lesson of spirited resistance to oppression in general and France in particular. Another exposed them to the virtues of morality, idealism and a completely inner-directed life free of politics and materialism.[11] Some models of true "German" behaviour lived yet. The burghers of Baden, for example, found

that Hans Thomas, that "true son of the Black Forest", had been uncorrupted by modernity:

> Hans Thoma is not only a great painter but also a poet and philosopher; and in life as well as in art, he is a teacher and model for the German folk. Everything he does as a painter and writer bears the stamp of a free, richly textured and strong personality and shows his confident, religious and individualistic outlook. He is and should be the educator of his people.[12]

Often towns called on local heroes who displayed characteristics needed in post war Germany. Schorndorf proudly dragged out such heroic native sons and daughters as Johann Phillipp Palm and a woman, Mayor Kuenkelin, both of whom had defied French troops over a century before. "The French" as one local figure observed, "have always been the same".[13] And Bad Gandersheim, a town adjacent to the Harz Mountains, decided it was appropriate to reach back into the middle ages to honour the saintly Rosa Hwirtha, who would hopefully revitalize religious feeling among the burghers.

In marked contrast to this mixed local and national pantheon of cultural heroes, were the models of political leadership that the burghers relied upon. Contemporary figures were of course beyond the pale; even someone like Hindenburg divided the burghers more than united them.[14] For strong, practical men the burghers honoured above everyone else Bismarck and Frederick the Great, who offered such prime political virtues as dedication, duty, will, activism and vision. The curious thing about the burghers' proclivity towards rummaging through their past to find suitable models for contemporary leaders is that none of the men proposed exhibited characteristics suitable for taking over both the moral and political leadership of the *Buergertum*. As one man in Schorndorf put it in 1921: "What we need today is a man who is a combination of Luther and Bismarck, one who could give us inner strength, peace and order".[15] As long as the burghers focused on reviewing their national heritage for model leaders, they were only able to come up with artificial, composite figures. Neither in their past nor their present could the burghers discover politicians who possessed the necessary traits for an ideal leader. One finds no festivals honouring a politician, except those sponsored by the political parties themselves. To the burgher, the politician was nothing more than a "weathervane", who represented interests of segments of the population, but not the good of the entire community, and definitely not ideals. Believing that "politics ruins character",[16] the burgher at best might reluctantly accept politicians as a necessity, but he would never perceive them as "ideal" leaders. A man like Bismarck stood somewhat higher in the burgher's estimation, even though the founder of the German state did not reflect German values absolutely, because he at least acted for the benefit of the nation as a whole and not for fractions. The

burgher could go along with that kind of leader, but even Bismarck did not become the model. Contrary to the common stereotype, the burgher seemed to find Benjamin Franklin closer to his ideal leader than the crusty Iron Chancellor. Burghers approvingly saw in Franklin a man who had become rich through thrift and hard work, who had served his community of Philadelphia by improving town lighting, founding the police, the fire brigade and the militia, and who had only then entered politics.[17] What Franklin represented of course were the true ideal leaders of the *Buergertum,* the *Honoratioren,* the local notables, men who were only marginally "politicians". Usually notables entered the political elite of the community because of the prestige and influence they had gained from being leading figures in the economic, administrative, or social life of the hometown. They did not become important because they were political leaders; they became political leaders because they were already important.[18] Until the rise of National Socialism, one could not become a significant politician locally without first rising to the top of some other dimension of community affairs, for politics carried with it no legitimacy of its own. The burghers' ideal leader had to be successful, realistic and practical, but at the same time he also had to be idealistic and a visionary.

But where in the real world would one find men who embodied these virtues? The place where the burghers found them in their small towns were in the leading circles of the cultural clubs! It is obviously no accident that the most significant political leaders in four of the five communities I have examined were also of the chairmen of the major gymnastics club; and in the fifth town the same observation can be applied to the chairman of the Association of Veterans. Only in their political preferences did the image of the chairmen differ from town to town. In Weiden, Dr. Ernst Stark was the leader of the National Socialists; in Lahr, Paul Waeldin was the head of the Democratic Party; in Schorndorf, Immanuel Roessler was the culturally oriented leader of the Conservative Party; and in Kulmbach, Oskar Petschke was the pragmatically inclined chief of the Conservative Party. In almost every other way they seemed remarkably alike. All represented the political mainstream of the local burghers. All were protestants. All posed as idealists who also had a firm grip on reality. All had impeccable credentials as patriots. All were renowned for the many services they had performed for the community. All became chairmen in their early thirties before they reached the top ranks in local politics. All seemed to be young, vigorous men of action who eagerly and optimistically became engaged in the struggle for existence rather than submitting to fate. Clearly, they personified the basic values of the burghers, just as the gymnastic clubs viewed themselves as the institutional embodiment of those same values.[19]

One similarity should be considered separately, for it suggests the unique way in which modernity and tradition fused in the burgher's consciousness. Not only did each chairman stand for the best traditions and ideals of his community, he also had succeeded in the contemporary economic world. Waeldin headed the largest industrial enterprise in Lahr; Roessler owned the main newspaper in Schorndorf; Petschke's successful wholesale business put him in close touch with farmers as well as local tradesmen and shopkeepers in Kulmbach; and Dr. Stark was the leading force behind the transformation of Weiden's small clinic into the major medical facility between Bayreuth and Regensburg. In other words, in his person the chairman represented both the material growth and progress of the community and the high quality of its culture, the basic components of the burghers' image of their town's historical development.[20] To formulate the concept in the terms of the primary relationship of the burghers' value system, the chairman represented the burghers' attempt to wed the modern values associated with industrialization and economic liberalism to preindustrial traditions and values. Thus the chairman represented the burghers' treasured conception of a wholesome equilibrium of materialism and idealism, and the retention of vital traditions in the midst of economic growth.[21] This odd mental compound shows up particularly clearly in Roessler, whose proudest accomplishments were his personal relations with the Richard Wagner cult in Bayreuth, his role in restoring the original *Fachwerk* style of the town square in Schorndorf, and the part he and his conservative associates played in attracting new industries to Schorndorf and its hinterland.[22]

Men possessing such a public image could not be kept from the halls of political power, if they desired to enter. As it turned out, they had that desire. Their positions in the turners and other cultural clubs gave them an unparalleled opportunity to dominate the local political scene. From this vantage point they had no difficulty standing above many of the divisive issues tormenting the burghers. When Chairman Paul Waeldin called upon the burghers of Lahr to free themselves from the chains of political and religious parties, the familiar call for unity above party, it had a credibility that it lacked when party personalities issued the same plea.[23] It was rarely necessary for the chairmen to campaign wearing their political hats; in effect they campaigned all year round before a cultural background congenial to all the burghers. To the cultural clubs fell the duty of conducting the myriad of ceremonies honoring the high points and heroic figures of German history, pageants heavy with emotional images shared by the entire *Buergertum*. Simply by chairing and speaking at these festivals, the chairmen of the clubs tended to become identified with the myth and the men honoured and to assume the accompanying idealized personal qualities. In the public mind, the

chairmen became a part of the cultural tableau before which they performed; though still very much alive and able to influence contemporary events, they entered into the ante chambers of the pantheon of Gods! [24]

It is also important to realize that the heads of the cultural clubs not only were seen in more attractive surroundings than were leaders whose influence was based primarily in political parties, but they were also seen much more often. Whereas political parties did not meet often unless campaigns were in progress, cultural clubs were continually staging formal or informal gatherings. For instance, as a matter of routine the gymnastic clubs held weekly workouts for their active members, subsidized and organized vacation tours and trips to competitions, sponsored family evenings, held regular dances and song festivals, and presented dramas. All these events drew tighter the emotional and social connections between the chairmen and club members and between the club and the community. Moreover, the cultural clubs, particularly the turners, served as the epicenter of almost all civic gatherings called in reaction to the seismic shocks that frequently rolled through the small communities of Germany during the republic. When the war dead were honoured, the turners invariably organized the ceremony. When the town feted the returning prisoners of war, the turners were there in the front ranks. When children fleeing from the French occupied Ruhr valley arrived in their foster communites, the turners attended to the entertainment. When money was being raised to keep the Zeppelin from the clutches of American financiers, the turners put on a benefit performance.[25] To the burghers, it must have seemed that whenever they acted in common, the cultural clubs and their chairmen were in the forefront of the participants.

In 1903 George Bernard Shaw had ruminated about the need for a great man to break the institutional deadlock that seemed to block the progress of humanity. Characteristically, he posed the problem with ironic overtones:

> The cry for the Superman did not begin with Nietzsche, nor will it end with his vogue. But it has always been silenced by the same question: what kind of person is this Superman to be . . . Unfortunately you do not know what sort of man you want. Some sort of goodlooking philosopher-athlete, with a handsome healthy woman for his mate, perhaps.[26]

While Shaw was pessimistic about finding a suitable man, the burghers knew exactly the "sort of man" they wanted: he was to be a "philosopher-athlete" but a businessman too; he was to be the chairman of the gymnastic club!

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The cultural clubs did more than influence the selection of political leaders; they penetrated deeply the structures of the political process itself. It

is not surprising that the clubs did so, for before the war they had largely to themselves the task of organizing society, regulating its activities, and integrating disparate interest orientations within the community by providing common leisure opportunities and by elaborating a system of common values and historical traditions. Thus the clubs were very much involved in shaping the burghers' political culture. Though to some extent they shared this function with more specialized structures such as the churches and economic interest groups, the clubs probably constituted the main institutional link between the burgher and his community.[27] Political parties, on the other hand, had little to do with the social organization of the *Buergertum*. In fact, during the Empire politics in the small towns seemed to be curiously detached from society in general. While the attitudes of the burghers toward party politics certainly varied enormously, most of them knew little of political matters, and what they did know they vaguely disliked. Most of all the burghers believed that party politics simply did not matter. An efficient and "objective", rather than "political", "self administration"[28] – that wonderful German amalgam of local self government and administrative dictatorship – solved their most pressing problems and sheltered their community from the ill effects of creeping politicization. Of course, nationally led political parties ostentatiously distributed their campaign promises throughout the town and made an unseemly amount of fuss in the Reichstag. But in the end crucial issues were always decided somewhere in the depths of the machinery of the German state.

To be sure, located in the towns, were political "clubs", which usually held one or two rallies during the election campaigns and sometimes sat as factions in the municipal councils. The limited extent of their activities between campaigns suggest that often they lacked the continuing organization and function that are the prerequisites for a true political party. Certainly the views expressed by their representatives in the Municipal Council showed little relationship with party programmes. It did not matter whether they bore the label "Democratic Verein", "Liberal Verein", or "Conservative Verein"; in practice, in the typical pattern that emerged the proponents of an expanding and progressive hometown would gather in one group and take a party label, and the rest, would assemble in an opposition group, which eventually would decide on its party designation. The labels themselves normally had little descriptive value. A "conservative", for instance, was just as likely to be a proponent of economic growth and consequent high property taxes as was a liberal or democrat.[29] The burghers saw little connection between this local style of "politics" and the activities of national political parties, and of course they were right. As a matter of custom, they also did their duty as citizens by regularly turning out in large

numbers to vote against the rather distant Catholic and socialist menaces, but once again they imagined this act to be a defence of their way of life, not playing at politics.

Before the war this, then, was the extent of the political life of the burghers and their attitude toward it. Their social and political outlook was composed of a complex mixture of a sophisticated social system juxtaposed to an underdeveloped political system, of a highly integrated culture that insisted on ghettoing its political institutions, of a set of attitudes that worshipped culture and denigrated politics, of a point of view that tended to attach the term "cultural" to behaviour that was actually political, and of a political process in which a large part of the total process was explicitly performed by cultural agencies, because of prevailing burgher taboos. Illusion and reality flowed side by side into the burghers' consciousness, where they mixed to create a poorly blended base for the burghers' twisted political attitudes in the Republic.

The collapse of the Empire did not rationalize overnight the burgher's political attitudes and behaviour, but it did compel him to face the fact that politics could no longer be ignored, that politics in fact now mattered very much. The transition from a monarchical to a parliamentary political system and the introduction of democratic suffrage regulations changed radically the dynamics of local politics and awakened the burghers to the need to restructure their political activity. Once again, patterns varied from place to place, but in general the years following the birth of the Republic witnessed changes in the relationship between culture and politics: though these ties still often remained masked because of the burghers' innate distaste for politics, the iron law of survival demanded that the explicit gap between culture and politics be closed, and that political activity become a legitimate field of endeavor for cultural clubs and cultural activity become a legitimate realm for political parties. The Weimar period helped usher in the beginning stages of the fusion of the political and social systems in the small towns.

It is perhaps easier to see how this process unfolded by following its main stages in one community rather than by generalizing further. The pattern of fusion emerged very clearly in Kulmbach. There the burghers faced extreme threats to their welfare from local socialists, who often took harsh positions because of the influence of radical socialism in Munich and neighboring Saxony and Thuringia, and from the Catholic and sometimes particularistic Bavarian government in Munich.[30] As elsewhere in Bavaria, the revolutions of 1918 and 1919 impelled the burghers of Kulmbach to form "councils" that stood above party lines in order to bargain on even terms with the workers', soldiers' and even farmers' councils. When the emergency

eased, these *ad hoc* institutional expressions of the burghers' desire for unity began to come apart, and the burghers gravitated toward individual party factions. The old separation between political parties and cultural clubs remained in effect. But since the crisis of 1918-1919 never entirely went away, the growing antagonism between socialists and burghers,[31] the economic insanity of the inflation, and march of the French into the Ruhr in January 1923 enveloped the *Buergertum* in an extended crisis-laden atmosphere that drove the burghers into permanent political activity. It was this perception of an indefinite crisis, and the need for a long term political commitment by the burghers that accompanied it, that furnished the proper soil for the growth of attitudinal and to some degree institutional links between culture and politics in the small towns.

To meet the challenge in 1923, the notables tried to mobilize the entire *Buergertum*. The means they used to do this were determined largely by the negative attitude of the burghers toward politics. Existing political parties tended to drop out of public view,[32] and the cultural clubs emerged temporarily as the unchallenged leaders of the movement to awaken the burghers to their critical situation. The clubs tried to revive community spirit by increasing the frequency and emotional intensity of civic ceremonies. At these festivals, they repeatedly portrayed the *Buergertum* as a community on the brink of oblivion, about to be absorbed politically and culturally by the implacable foes, the socialists and French. Paced by the activities of the turners, shooting clubs, singing and musical associations, and the veterans' alliance, the burghers sought to build an unbreachable barrier between themselves and their enemies and raise to a fevered pitch the sense of burgher solidarity.[33] A spate of civic rituals in the summer of 1923 culminated in the open appearance of the Volkish movement during the German Day celebrations on 12 August 1923, when the last vestiges of party factions were shunted aside in favour of a solid, above party burgher community.[34] A new conception of politics emerged from this cultural barrage. No longer were politics to be directed toward the distribution of material resources among segments of the *Buergertum*. The purpose of politics was now the realization of burgher ideals, the spiritual and political revitalization of the hometown and the nation, and the defeat of the socialists in the Municipal Council. Not only did the "new politics" gain legitimacy from its fusion of idealism and politics, it also gained the emotional commitment of a good part of the *Buergertum*. Excitement ran high, the festivals drew ever larger and more enthusiastic crowds, and the expectation mounted of some momentous political event that would come in the near future.

This unusual monopoly of civic life by the cultural clubs could not last indefinitely, of course. Nonetheless, the momentum that the burghers had

gathered by the end of August 1923 was great enough to carry them through the next sixteen months of intense political activity. Despite the divisions within the Volkish movement caused by Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch, despite the subsequent re-entry of the regular political parties into community affairs, despite the gradual improvement of the economic situation after the stabilization of the currency in November 1923, despite the reduced threat from France and the dimunition of the emotional reports from the occupied zone, despite the internal antagonism resulting from the long string of electoral campaigns from February 1924 to December 1924 – despite all of these potentially divisive factors, the united burgher front held together well enough to bring to the polls 90% of the electorate and easily oust the SPD from the city hall in the Municipal Council elections in December 1924.[35] To be sure, the burgher front that came into power was no longer a united movement operating above parties, but a shaky coalition between the hard core remanents of the Volkish movement and the traditional political parties.[36]

If the case of Kulmbach may be taken as a guide – and it seems to me that what happened there occurred elsewhere in less extreme forms – the extended crisis of the early Republic set in motion a realignment of burgher society. Burghers became accustomed to the blurring of the functional boundaries between politics and culture and the blending of the structural systems attached to each. This development allowed cultural clubs to intervene more openly in political matters and political parties to intrude legitimately on cultural affairs. The fact that the political allegiance of the turners was the major issue in Kulmbach's lively electoral campaign for the May 1924 elections to the Reichstag and Landtag indicates that the transformation in the relationship between culture and politics was not easily accepted by many burghers and would remain an open issue for some time.[37] The long-term political consequences of this period were changes in attitude that politicized the "unpolitical" burgher and changes in structure that increased the potential capacity of the *Buergertum* for rapid and thorough political mobilization. Finally, while in itself a rational development, by mobilizing the burghers to defend their most treasured beliefs the fusion of culture and politics tended to introduce a measure of emotionalism and irrationalism into local political life.

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Political irrationalism, perhaps historically the most dangerous ingredient in the Weimar political process, was also furthered by the kinds of issues typically conveyed by the clubs. The cultural clubs in the small towns gathered ideas and emotions, kept them alive and shaped them, and then pressed them upon the political system. For the most part, the clubs

concentrated on issues related to the problem of how local and national ideals could survive in a hostile international and domestic environment. It was impossible to be an inhabitant of a small German town without being touched by the constant flow of various forms of nationalism, which were conveyed by the popular culture in response to outside threats to the values and traditions of the burghers. Either directly or indirectly virtually all local institutions aided the transmission of nationalism. Schools sponsored organizations dedicated to keeping alive the German culture among German minorities located outside of Germany. Because they generally tried to avoid issues that would alienate part of their readers, local newspapers downplayed domestic politics, would not report critically on local affairs, and fed their readers a heavy diet of cultural and international news. Except during campaigns, political parties also normally sponsored shows and speakers that focused on national problems. All gatherings, regardless of the purpose for which they were called, without fail would end with some derogatory allusion to the French and a call for three cheers for the German nation. Similarly, interest groups would often note with great emotion the close connection of specific economic problems to French reparation tactics. A favorite ploy was to take the latest figure owed by Germany in reparations, divide the town's population into that, and arrive at the exact amount that each local inhabitant would pay to France each year for the rest of his life. Used in this way, each reduction of the total payment conceded by the allies only increased the nationalism of the burghers, who of course did not want to be reminded of their debts. Raised in this kind of milieu, almost all burghers became nationalists to some degree.

The cultural clubs were the natural loci of the popular nationalism of the hometown, for they were responsible for reiterating the theme through the media of civic ceremonies, entertainment evenings, and the announcements and reports they placed on placards and in the local newspapers. One form frequently used was productions of thinly disguised morality plays. Usually these plays amounted to no more than simple skits performed to enliven a family evening. On occasion, however, a club would mount a full-scale presentation in order to raise funds for a trip to a national competition, for the orphanage, or for improvements to the athletic fields or city auditorium. Such plays normally played to full houses, for they furnished audiences with an opportunity for entertainment as well as for exercising their patriotic feelings. Though often the content of the plays were trite, the didactic images they projected were vividly drawn and were calculated to reawaken the beliefs already harboured by most of the burghers. Thrilled by the performance and attendant pageantry, comforted by the message, and warmed by the congenial company they had shared, the burghers probably left the halls able for a time to drift above their troubled

real world, happily absorbed in the illusionary solutions of the world of popular drama.

Roessler, the chairman of the Turnverein in Schorndorf, wrote, produced, directed and starred in a drama of this kind in the winter of 1924. He faithfully followed the classical format of the morality play; and the conflict between good and evil was posed in exaggerated terms, including in the title itself, "Out of Darkness, and into the Light". Although it was sponsored by the turners, the singing and musical clubs also played a prominent role in the production, as was usually the case in the gatherings of the turners. The audience, according to the breathless reviewer, "stemmed from all estates and circles of society", a fact that should have reminded everyone how much the cultural clubs drew the entire community together.[38]

The curtain rose, and there on the dimly lit and starkly furnished stage stood the "German Man", noble in stature but confused, wracked with doubt and indecision, and unable to find his way toward truth. Enter the Devil, Dr. Mephisto, whose warped appearance transmitted to the audience his ultimate evilness. Immediately the Devil began to cast his spell upon the German Man, trying to subvert the hero's natural goodness, tempting him into degeneracy. Locked in a momentous confrontation, the tall, erect (and I suspect, blond), healthy and virile but obviously indecisive and a bit stupid German Man stood face to face with Mephisto, a sallow, twisted little figure, who dragged his right foot as he walked, rolled his eyes suggestively and wheezed rather than spoke in a staged French accent. Mephisto was played by none other than Roessler, who was well known for his nationalist views. Probably the irony of the casting was not lost on the audience, and it may well have heightened the emotional impact of this thinly-veiled allegory. Troubled and beset with indecision, the German Man groaned audibly as he searched for truth. Suddenly a revelation illuminated the darkened stage, as the historical Greek origins of the German way of life were revealed to the German Man and the audience simultaneously. Clad in white tunics, turners of all shapes and sizes dashed onto the stage from both wings and down the aisles. The choir and orchestra exchanged its somber tunes for bubbly songs of joy and exhuberance. Life, rather than death, now charged the atmosphere of the hall. Pirouetting, bounding, frolicing youth spilled over the stage, vaulting, tumbling and wrestling as they raced joyfully about. Their vitality and enthusiasm swept from the stage into the audience, as the turners performed daring athletic feats and recreated the famous sword dance of ancient Greece. Abruptly the tone of frivolity ceased. One of their number, apparently stricken with an unknown but fatal sickness, sagged to the floor, giving occasion for the young athletes to close their performance with a tragic death

scene. One thousand burning candles now illuminated the otherwise unlit stage. As they were snuffed out, total darkness descended upon the hall. Then, the dawn! The German Man had returned to the suddenly brightly lit center stage. No longer was his face etched with signs of despair. Now he stood proudly erect. Now he strode about confidently. Now his previously dulled eyes burned brightly. Now his voice resonated across the footlights. Once again he was the optimistic, buoyant German Man, glowing with the spark of "German Genius". Encountering his revitalized adversary, the "Great Negativist", Mephisto, shrivelled up and slinked off the stage, unwilling and unable to face up to the true German Man.

How seriously the audiences or participants took all of this charade is difficult to say. Roessler, for one, when I spoke to him about it a few years ago, recalled the episode with a smile and a gleam in his eye. Yes, he admitted, the drama had been played with the melodramatic mannerisms current in the silent films of that time. The crowds had accepted it for what it was and had heartily applauded the caricatures boldly enacted by the amateur thespians. Generally, the onlookers were good-natured and boisterous, rather than tense and sober. They too were enthusiastic participants, there to boo the villains and cheer the heroes. As with all rituals, the audiences knew what to expect and roared with approval whenever the drama reaffirmed those expectations. To me, the audience's response seems quite similar to the way contemporary Germans respond to the annual "monster" Fasching shows held in Mainz or Cologne. Yet there certainly was a more serious side to the experience that is difficult to measure. Perhaps something of a spiritual catharsis, a cleansing of the soul and a venting of pent up frustrations, was experienced by some burghers. Almost surely, when it was all over many in the audience at least felt better about being Germans, for there is nothing more reassuring to discover that in the end good will prevail over evil, especially when you are identified with the good. It was, as Roessler forewarned his readers a *Tendenzstueck*, a play with a dominant polemical intent. Its stated purpose was through exaggeration, ridicule and oversimplification to arouse the emotions and consciences to the dangers confronting the *Buergertum*. Until all Schorndorfers returned to their traditions, recaptured their basic values and rid themselves of the materialistic (and French) ways represented by Mephisto, they would remain downtrodden, unworthy of an equal place in world affairs, and unable to take up a way of life represented by the brotherhood, youth, vigor, and optimism of the harmonious society of ancient Greece. The audiences were challenged to do no less than look into their souls and begin the long upward climb toward true culture, to climb "Out of the Darkness, and into the Light"!

What went on in a small way in Schorndorf and other small towns was repeated on a much larger scale on the national level. As part of the festivities, the Thirteenth Turners' Festival, held between 13 and 20 July, 1923 on the Theresienwiese in Munich, produced a morality play, *Frisch Auf mein Volk*, which in the next few years was given by the turners in the five communities I have examined. I will not elaborate upon it here because it followed closely the format of Roessler's play. The *Turnfest* itself, however, bears further consideration. It was an integral part of the strange wave of enthusiasm and feeling of impending national revival that swept across Germany in mid 1923, in spite of an inflation that by 20 July 1923 had reduced the value of the German Mark so much that one American dollar was worth 217,455 Marks. Held on the site of today's famed Octoberfest, the turners' festival virtually monopolized the attention of Germany's burghers for a week. The interest it drew was probably greater in the small towns, because it was one of the few nation-wide events in which they played a significant part, a fact confirmed by the fact that the editors of most of the local newspapers used reports submitted by members of local delegations to the festival rather than relying on regional press services. To the burghers of the hometowns, what happened in Munich symbolized the confluence of their interests with the interests of the entire German nation.

It is just this point that must be stressed, for it reveals the burghers' perception that nationalism should not come at the expense of the hometown but through it, that the growth of the nation state should not decrease local liberties but increase them, and that in honouring the state the burgher was not trying to "escape from freedom" but step closer to it. The intricate interrelations of these three value dimensions, which together constituted the basis of the burgher's political attitudes, demand closer attention that I can give here. My present concern is to suggest how the first dimension, the symbiotic relationship between hometown and nation, so elaborately displayed in the pageantry and eye-witness reports of the *Turnfest*, was probably perceived by the *Buergertum*. Certainly the small town reporter, for one, seemed obsessed with the way in which the festival harmoniously blended the cultures of the *Heimat, Land* and *Vaterland*. Taking their cues from early 19th century cultural nationalism, reporters repeatedly pointed out that the festival realized in fact the ideal of joining together unique local cultural patches to form the richly varied and colourful patchwork quilt of German culture, creating out of many parts a new whole which in turn was of a higher order than each of the parts.[39]

The creation of the quilt began even before the local delegations arrived in Munich. The experiences of the turner's contingent from Glueckstadt were

likely typical. Thirty participants and an unknown number of spectators and team officials climbed aboard a special chartered train at the station in Elmshorn, embarking on a trip that over the next 24 hours was to take them almost the length of Germany. As the train slowly wended its way through the cultural landscape of Germany, it stopped at almost every small town along the line to pick up other local groups of turners. Each stop constituted a miniature festival in its own right, as communities turned out to bid their turners farewell. Flags waved, bands played and dignitaries blessed their competitors and the German nation alike. Groups already aboard responded with cheers and stanzas of *Deutschland, Deutschland, ueber alles*. Once under way again, the songs of different hometowns and regions echoed in endless counterpoint to one another. Reportedly 141 specially chartered turner trains converged upon Munich between 12 and 16 July, along with uncounted numbers of special cars and sections that had been added to regularly scheduled trains.[40] Visionaries in the mid 19th century had everywhere proclaimed that the building of the railroads would unify their nations. Perhaps even they would have been surprised how effectively their lines of steel served the cause of unity in mid July 1923!

The integration of *Deutschland, Deutschland, ueber alles* with Glueckstadt's "Schleswig Holstein meerumschlungen" did not cease when the turners arrived in Munich. Around 150,000 contestants stopped briefly to leave their belongings at one of the barracks or eighty primary schools that had been set up to house and feed them, and then joined an estimated 200,000 other visitors to the city to roam the city's festively decorated streets and pour into its famed beer halls. The entry of the Glueckstadt group into a packed beer hall set into motion all over again the sequences of local songs, jests about different regional attire, exchanges of mutually incomprehensible dialects, and finally the inexhaustible declarations of German brotherhood. The next day marked the opening ceremonies of the *Turnfest* and the mammoth and gala parade. Departing at 10 a.m. from different starting points, 300,000 paraders formed into two columns totalling eight kilomenters in length to march on the *Theresienwiese*, a parade that lasted until late in the afternoon. Mixed among the contingents of turners were groups representing all the segments of the *Buergertum* of Munich and much of its hinterland. Burgher society, clad in the attire they had worn when they had been at their historical peak, marched in review. Scores of guilds, archers, shooting clubs, other clubs of all kinds, flag bearers, honour guards, bands -- all accompanied the turners, whose men wore white shirts and long white pants, the symbols of burgher respectability, and whose women wore simple dark skirts and white blouses. Floats sponsored by different groups rolled by loaded with flowers and scenes representing vividly the burghers' fondest memories. Among the most notable, were eight floats

built by the Imperial Association of German Barbers, which depicted some of the highlights, all martial in tone, of German history. Frederick the Great and his generals, the rising of the German folk in 1813, and heroes from the more distant past like Siegfried, Bruennhilde and Emperor Maximillian were represented. Conspicuously absent, to the historian, were scenes related to German history after 1813, an absence that was likely in deference to Bavaria's lingering political particularism. Otherwise there was no shortage of signs of German unity. With banners flying, hometowns, regions and the nation were marching shoulder to shoulder, in the metaphor of Roessler, out of the darkness of economic and political chaos and into the light generated by overheated cultural nationalism. For at least a few days the burghers escaped the sober circumstances of their times. The festival had proved, according to one observer, "where there is a will there is a way",[41] a harmless platitude in normal times but a dangerous political guideline in the summer of 1923. It was this stridently emotional atmosphere of Munich, and the distorted political attitudes and expectations that it bred, that set the stage for Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch attempt a few months later.[42]

Not that the festival directly furthered Hitler's cause! In fact it should have forewarned Hitler that even many strong German nationalists could not be counted upon to support his movement. The *Turnfest* aimed above all at German unity, and the efforts of the National Socialists during the festival to gain support of the turners was greatly resented by most of them. Before the meetings began the German Association of Turners rejected the demands of the Austrian delegations that Jews be denied the right to participate. According to a Lahr reporter, the Austrians consequently showed up in Munich in a surly mood, easily fell for Hitler's flattery, and became the core of turner support for his efforts at proselytizing among the visiting delegations. Forbidden to call a National Socialist political rally, Hitler and his cohorts made the rounds of the giant beer halls which nightly hosted the celebrating visitors to the city. Brief speeches, a few choruses of the "Ehrhardlied," and three cheers to Hitler and Ehrhardt were usually enough to precipitate a few fights, sometimes a full scale melee, which inevitably ended with the arrival of the police and the subsequent jailing of some of the turners as well as the Nazis. Another frequent trick of the National Socialists, and one that apparently caught the fancy of some of the turners, was to enter a restaurant or coffee house, sometimes accompanied by a small band, and break into a rendition of *Deutschland, Duetschland, ueber alles*. Whoever did not immediately stand and join in, and when these locales bordered on working class districts there were many who would not, would thereupon be attacked. While such tactics undoubtedly were popular with some of the turners, who were not completely unaccustomed to breaking a few workers'

heads, the majority of their leaders disapproved[43] and managed to keep their association "free from party influence of any kind, lest it become impure".[44]

Parteigeist, the spirit of party, ran counter to the turners' intention to create a new national spirit in Munich.[45] "Awakening of the folk's soul", "rebirth of national feeling", "enthusiasm for the fatherland", "sparking of a national consciousness" – it was said in many different ways, but all observers meant that Munich should mark the first step toward the reunification of the German people. The internal disputes that had opened the nation to misfortunes of all kinds had to be forgotten and a new sense of mission found. Small issues as well as big ones showed the benefits of working together. Had not the threat of the turners to boycott the Munich beer halls forced the major breweries to reduce the price of beer by two thirds? Still, national solidarity was pounded into shape on the anvil of French oppression, for in the ideology accompanying the festival the theme of the threat from France ran second only to that of the richness and harmony of German culture. The connections between the two themes were apparent to all. Nothing struck the reporters quite so much as the inspirational sight of those turner delegations from the French occupied zones, which proudly bore their local flags side by side with banners proclaiming: "We will never be slaves" or "The Ruhr will remain German". One reporter probably spoke for most of the observers, when he commented that Germans must honour:

> these singing men and women, who have suffered six months of French brutality, and who in order to get here had to creep across the border on dark and foggy nights, under the most difficult circumstances, undetected by French guards.[46]

France, in its unopposed march into Germany, had successfully imposed its will on the German state. But they had thereby left the German people with few retalitory weapons other than their culture. In a sense the *Turnfest* brought to the national level the local role of the clubs in rebuilding the confidence and optimism of the burghers. The turners carried back to their hometowns this message:

> The German Turnfest is over; the outward signs of the pageant have scattered to the four winds. But the vital, inner values experienced there will remain. In difficult, murky times German-minded comrades out of all districts, gathered together, extended the hand of brotherhood and swore to uphold the fatherland. May the inspiration and enthusiasm revealed there permeate the hearts of all Germans and enable them to gather a new will to live. May they dedicate their lives to work and strive for Germanness, German unity, German honour, and German freedom.[47]

Conclusions

This paper does not mark the conclusion but the beginning of an historical inquiry. We really know very little about the burghers in the small towns during the Weimar Republic. Even though around 60% of the German population in 1925 lived in communities with less than 20,000 inhabitants, historians still tend to be satisfied with writing off these burghers as cultural "philistines", as bearers of an archaic "artisan" economic outlook, and as politically unsophisticated dupes of the Nazis. Though all of this may well be true, these charges have not been substantiated and appear to reflect a modern urban bias that has perhaps closed the door prematurely on an important segment of German history.[48] What I have tried to do here is to set aside for the time being the stereotype of the burgher that has jelled over the years and reopen the door of the small town at least a crack. In order to get as close as possible to the burgher, I focused this examination on a few of his cultural clubs, because it was here that much of his style of life was expressed and formed and it was here that he was fitted with his perceptual lenses. The observations I have made must be provisional, for they are based mostly on a consideration of the relationship of the clubs to the political process. This of course is but a small slice of the complex of interrelationships that determined the behavioural scope of the burghers. Before any judgments can take a firmer quality, one must also inquire into such difficult problems as the influence of economic interest groups or of structures external to the community of the *Buergertum*. With these limitations in mind, the argument of this paper might be summed up in the following manner. The cultural clubs were the public conscience of the burghers, the defenders of their values and traditions, the initiators and institutional base for a revitalized and restructured political community. In short, the cultural clubs were the Paladins of the Buergertum!

NOTES

1 Hr. Dionns Vogt, "Ein Bluetenstrauss zum 60er = Fest", in *Rems Zeitung*, 1 August 1924.

2 This paper is based on research into five German communities that ranged in population from 6500 to 20,000 during the Weimar Republic. Collectively, they do not constitute a typical cross section of small German towns, but the same could be said with equal justification of a much larger selection. Whenever I refer to "the" small towns, as I often do in the paper, I mean only the five communities I have studied and do not intend to imply that the statement applies to all German towns. However, having dipped briefly into the records of several other communities, I have tentatively concluded that the main points I make in this paper do have some validity across the

board. Eventually, I intend to examine three more northern German towns in order to gather more information on the influences of the Prussian state, large Catholic and Communist majorites, and heavy industrial complexes on the *Buergertum* of small towns. The towns included in this essay are: Glueckstadt, an economically depressed community on the right bank of the Elbe, a short distance north of Hamburg: Lahr, a prosperous commercial and industrial center, dominated by mixed light industries, and located on the Rhine plain, 37 kilometers north of Freiburg/Baden; Schorndorf, a market center on the main rail line east of Stuttgart, which was beginning to feel the social strains accompanying the gradual industrialization of the Rems river valley; Kulmbach, a town 22 kilometers northwest of Bayreuth with a firm but erratically successful industrial economy based on brewing and textile enterprises; and Weiden, located midway between Regesnburg and Bayreuth, and the major industrial and railroad center of the Upper Palatinate.

3 The last issue is the object of two excellent studies. Hans Herzfeld, *Demokratie and Selbstverwaltung in der Weimarer Epoche*, (Stuttgart, 1957); and Arnold Koettgen, *Die Krise der kommunalen Selbstverwaltung*, (Tuebingen, 1931).

4 Mabel Newcomer, *Central and Local Finance in Germany and England*, (New York, 1937), p.39.

5 The critics' debate about the nature of the burghers is admirably summed up by Hansjoachim Henning, *Das westdeutsche Buergertum in der Epoche der Hochindustrialisierung 1860-1914; Soziales Verhalten und Sociale Strukturen*; Teil I: *Das Bildungsbuergertum in den preussischen Wesprovinzen*, (Wiesbaden 1972), pp. 15-38. The self image of the small town burghers that I describe, however, is inferred mainly from the ideation expressed by the burghers in the local press. As might be expected, the small town burghers seem to have been less concerned with education and more closely connected with a sense of community than were the burghers examined by Henning.

6 See the speech to the district gathering of the Choral Society in *Schorndorfer Anzeiger*, 28 June 1921.

7 The connections between these clubs were extremely close. It would not be unusual for a burgher to belong to all three clubs; and they normally cooperated in staging civic ceremonies and fund raising events. They were, according to the chairman of the turners in Weiden, "the main pillars of the nation". See speech Dr. Ernst Stark in *Oberpfaelzischer Kurier*, 10 August 1921.

8 Unlike many of his critics, the small town burgher had a firm sense of "place" and "belonging"; and he owed this comforting feeling to the wide variety of choices for companionship that the clubs afforded him. For instance, aside from the countless opportunities for fraternity in informal drinking and dancing locales, in the town of Weiden, a community of around 20,000 inhabitants, he could select from among 21 professional and civil servant associations, 42 industrial and trade associations, 6 political parties, 29 religious clubs, 30 sport, gymnastic and hiking clubs, 17 livestock and animal conservation groups, 16 veteran and military associations, and 59 miscellaneous clubs! See *Adressbuch, Stadt Weiden*, (Weiden 1932).

9 Bruder Willram, "Was wir wollen"! , *Oberpfaelzischer Kurier* 12 January 1912.

10 A typical expression of this came from Dr. Edmund Neuendorff in September 1924: "In these hard times we need men of stature". See *Glueckstaedter Fortuna*, 27 September 1924.

11 See *Schorndorfer Anzeiger*, 31 August 1929, 3 September 1929 and 3 October 1931 for Schiller; 16 October 1928 for Jahn; 23 April 1921 for Luther. For Goethe see *Weidener Anzeiger*, 22 March 1932.

12 *Lahrer Zeitung*, 3 October 1919.

13 *Schorndorfer Volksblatt*, 16 October 1923. *Schorndorfer Anzeiger*, 16 May 1923.

14 In 1925 political opponents of the conservatives warned that Hindenburg's entry into politics would ruin his admirable character. Hence their campaign slogan: "Whoever loves Hindenburg must vote for Marx". *Lahrer Anzeiger*, 16 April 1925.

15 *Schorndorfer Anzeiger*, 23 April 1921, 4 October 1929 and 30 July 1923.

16 Maxim cited in *Weidener Anzeiger*, 19 August 1923.

17 *Lahrer Anzeiger*, 24 February 1925.

18 Frau Paula Haushahn noted her father had no real interest in politics but that he was coaxed into serving on the Municipal Council by the readers of his newspaper and his friends in the clubs. Interview with Frau Paula Haushahn, 4 November 1971 in Schorndorf. Without exception, everyone I interviewed who was active in politics during the republic made exactly the same point that one ascended the political ladder by virtue of accomplishments in other fields.

19 It should also be pointed out that before the republic, the chairmen of the turners were usually far older and much less likely to be deeply involved in local politics. For example when the three leading members of the board of Turnerbund Weiden retired in November 1919, their terms in office totalled 107 years. *Oberpfaelzischer Kurier*, 27 November 1919.

20 As far as the small town entrepreneur is concerned only in Weiden (significantly the largest community covered) did I find much evidence of the kind of narrow-minded businessman that Jaeger sees as the norm in the Empire. See Hans Jaeger, *Unternehmer in der Deutschen Politik*, (Bonn 1967), p. 285.

21 Efforts to reconcile these two values systems sometimes created odd split personalities. For example, Theodor Leser, the director of Lahr's Municipal Savings Bank, tended to lecture audiences on the evil influence of money on the common man. *Lahrer Zeitung*, 22 June 1919.

22 Interview with Immanual Roessler on 2 November 1917.

23 *Lahrer Zeitung*, 6 March 1919.

24 For instance, Dr. Stark's character was so universally admired that even his political enemies paid deference to him. Interview with Dr. Hans Nickl, 12 February 1972 in Weiden. No friend of radicalism, "Feierabend", a regular columnist in the *Weidener Anzeiger*, made the kind of comment so often heard about Stark. "That a man like Dr. Stark has been persuaded to address the rally has given all of us joy and confidence". *Weidener Anzeiger*, 12 December 1922.

25 *Schorndorfer Volksblatt*, 4 December 1925 and 9 August 1923. *Weidener Anzeiger*, 26 January 1923. *Lahrer Zeitung*, 1 August 1921.

26 George Bernard Shaw, "The Revolutionist's Handbook", in *Man and Superman* , (London 1903) p. 182.

27 The ceremonial life in Bavarian towns receives a good treatment in Werner K. Blessing, "Zur Analyse politische Mentalität and Ideology der Unterschichten im 19. Jahrhundert", *Zeitschrift fuer bayerische Landsgeschichte*. Bd. 34, Heft 5 (1972), 791 ff.

28 The structure of local government of course differed from state to state in Germany, but the inhabitants of southern German towns also sharply distinguished between "objective" and "political". See, for example, the speeches on the occasion of Raible's twenty-fifth year as mayor of Schorndorf in *Schorndorfer Anzeiger*, March 1950.

29 Interview with Immanual Roessler on 2 November 1971 in Schorndorf.

30 The postwar situation in Upper Franconia receives it best treatment in

Joachim Reimann, *Ernst Mueller-Meiningen senior und der Linksliberalismus in seiner Zeit*, (Munich 1968).

31 Which broke into open conflict in February 1922, when the SPD sprang its plan to incorporate a working class suburb into Kulmback and thus ensure for all time their control of city hall. This attempt turned out to be, the words of the editor of a local newspaper, "the point of departure for a vital community political life". *Kulmbacher Tagblatt*, 3 February 1922.

32 Only the Democratic Party openly tried to interfere with the clubs' direction of public affairs during this period.

33 Typical were two ceremonies on 21 June 1923 honouring Leo Schlageter and the day of the summer solstice, and the shooting competition in July. *Kulmbacher Tagblatt*, 26 June 1923 and 10 July 1923.

34 For the German Day festival, see *Kulmbacher Tagblatt*, 14 August 1923, and the large file of newspaper clippings related to the events of that weekend in *Staatsarchiv Bamberg*, K 3 Praes, Reg. Acten des koeniglichen Regierungs Praesidiums von Obf., Nr. 1896, "Innere Uhruhen", Bd. IV.

35 *Kulmbacher Tagblatt*, 9 December 1924

36 The political meetings reported in the *Kulmbacher Tagblatt*, 15 and 24 November 1924, reveal traditional bargaining among the interest groups and parties.

37 See especially the *Kulmbacher Tagblatt*, 4 and 6 April, 1924.

38 *Schorndorfer Anzeiger*, 12 February 1924. The following description of the play relies on this review, interviews with Roessler on 2 and 3 November 1971, and Roessler's column announcing the forthcoming performance in the *Schorndorfer Anzeiger*, 7 February 1924.

39 A four part series on the Munich festival started on 11 October 1923 in the *Glueckstaedter Fortuna*. The *Lahrer Zeitung* carried detailed reports on 14, 21 and 31 July 1923. The *Schorndorfer Volksblatt* carried reports on 20 and 21 July 1923. Unexplainably, in Kulmbach, probably the most nationalistic of the communities I have examined, the two newspapers carried only cursory reports. In Weiden, the Catholic newspaper as a matter of general policy reported little on turner affairs and the *Weidener Anzeiger* run for July 1923 is mostly missing.

40 *Glueckstaedter Fortuna*, 11 October 1923.

41 *Glueckstaedter Fortuna*, 12 October 1923.

42 Harold Gordon's excessively narrow focus on power causes him to neglect the cultural mobilization that preceded the putsch. He observes, for example, that between May and September 1924 there was "little significant political activity" in Bavaria. See Harold Gordon, *Hitler and the Beer Hall Putsch*, (Princeton 1972) p. 209.

43 The Lahr reporter claimed that "many thousands" left Munich before the end of the festival because of political incidents. *Lahrer Zeitung*, 21 July 1923.

44 *Glueckstaedter Fortuna*, 12 October 1923.

45 Wolfgang Eichel, an East German historian, states that nationalism was the sole theme of the *Turnfest*. See Wolfgang Eichel, ed., *Geschichte der Koerperkultur in Deutschland*. Bd. III: *Die Koerperkultur in Deutschland von 1917 bis 1945*. (Berlin 1964), 30.

46 *Glueckstaedter Fortuna*, 12 October 1923. See also *Lahrer Zeitung*. 31 July 1923.

47 *Glueckstaedter Fortuna*, 13 October 1923.

48 These stereotypes are still with us. See, for instance, Hermann Glaser, *Kleinstadt Ideologie Zwischen Furchenglueck und Sphaerenflug* (Freiburg 1971).