AN ART OF THEIR OWN
REINVENTING FRAUENKUNST IN THE FEMALE ACADEMIES AND ARTIST LEAGUES
OF LATE-IMPERIAL AND FIRST REPUBLIC AUSTRIA, 1900-1930

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By

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Megan Marie Brandow-Faller, M.A.

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ABSTRACT

Focusing on the institutionalization of women’s art education, this dissertation traces the development of the concept of Frauenkunst, (women’s art) originally connoting substandard, amateurish works intended as distraction rather than vocation, as well as certain lower genres (flower-painting, still-life, etc) associated with slavish reproduction rather than creative innovation, in Austrian artistic-educational systems circa 1900-1930. The originally-private, later state-subsidized Viennese Women’s Academy, which gained official institutional parity with Austria’s premier state academies of fine and applied arts, assumes particular significance for the question of a distinct “women’s art.” Originally founded by a private-league, the Women’s Academy gradually became integrated in late-Imperial Austria’s mainstream institutional framework: gaining rights of public incorporation in 1908, increased levels of state-funding and employment of key personnel, and the privilege of issuing degrees equal to the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts. Both undercutting and reinforcing the existence of a gendered aesthetic, Austria’s single-sex academy and artists leagues brought the concept of Frauenkunst full circle: reinventing the stereotypes against which women artists had traditionally struggled.

The Viennese Women’s Academy represented a unique case in point of institutional equality of difference. While similar institutions in Central Europe closed
after women were integrated into the mainstream state academies, the Viennese Women’s Academy experienced a renaissance just as Austria’s state Academy began accepting female students in 1919/20. Preceding women’s admission to the Academy, the state equipped the Women’s Academy with Courses in Academic Painting and Sculpture granted official institutional parity with the state Academy and extended government contracts to core-faculty. This sense of institutional equality of difference, pitted on the distinct pedagogical needs of female art-students, justified the Women’s Academy’s continued existence after women’s admission to the state Academy. Austria’s Women’s Academy occupied a liminal space between state-affiliated and league-school, the fine and applied arts, and public and private institution.
TO

ADAM
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### Commonly Used Abbreviations

#### Institutions/Organizations

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABKW</td>
<td>Akademie der bildenden Künste Wiens (Viennese Academy of Fine Arts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK</td>
<td>Acht Künstlerinnen (Eight Women Artists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AÖFV</td>
<td>Allgemeiner Österreichischer Frauenverein (General Austrian Women’s League)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BÖFV</td>
<td>Bund Österreichischer Frauenvereine (League of Austrian Women’s Associations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVFF</td>
<td>Christlicher Verein zur Förderung der Frauenbildung (Christian League for the Advancement of Women’s Education)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FE</td>
<td>Feministák Egyesülete (Association of Hungarian Feminists)</td>
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<tr>
<td>KFM</td>
<td>Kunsthalle für Frauen und Mädchen (Art School for Women and Girls)</td>
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<tr>
<td>KGS</td>
<td>Kunstgewerbeschule (Austrian School of Applied Arts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>KVM</td>
<td>Künstlerinnen Verein München e.V (League of Munich Women Artists.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDA</td>
<td>Münchener Damen-Akademie (Munich Ladies’ Academy)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDE</td>
<td>Maria Dorothea Egyesület (Maria Dorothea Association)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MKE</td>
<td>Magyar Képzőművésznők Egyesülete (Association of Hungarian Women Artists)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MtKU</td>
<td>k.k. Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht (Ministry for Cults and Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MfKI</td>
<td>k.k. Museum für Kunst und Industrie (Museum for Art and Industry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNSz</td>
<td>Magyarországi Nőegyesületek Szövetsége [Hungarian National League of Women’s Associations]</td>
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<tr>
<td>ONI</td>
<td>Országos Nőiparegylet (Hungarian National League for Women’s Employment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ONKE</td>
<td>Országos Nőképző Egyesület (Hungarian National League for the Advancement of Women’s Education)</td>
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<tr>
<td>VBMÖ</td>
<td>Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs (Association of Austrian Women Artists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDMÖ</td>
<td>Verband der deutschen Mädchenmittelschulen Österreichs (Imperial Band of Girls’ Secondary Schools)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VfEF</td>
<td>Verein für erweiterte Frauenbildung (League for Expanded Women’s Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VESBKFM</td>
<td>Verein zur Errichtung einer Schule der bildenden Künste für Frauen und Mädchen, League for Establishing a School of Fine Arts for Women and Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VKFM</td>
<td>Verein Kunsthalle für Frauen und Mädchen (Art School for Women and Girls’ League)</td>
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<tr>
<td>VÖBKK</td>
<td>Vereinigung österreichischen bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen</td>
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<tr>
<td>VÖLE</td>
<td>Verein der Lehrerinnen und Erzieherinnen in Österreich (League of Austrian Women Schoolteachers and Governesses)</td>
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<tr>
<td>VSKW</td>
<td>Verein der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien (League of Viennese Women Writers and Artists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>VWFA</td>
<td>Verein Wiener Frauenakademie (Viennese Women’s Academy League)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFEV</td>
<td>Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Verein (Viennese League for Women’s Employment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WF</td>
<td>Verbandes Bildender Künstlerinnen und Kunsthandwerkerinnen “Wiener Frauenkunst” (Band of Women Artists and Craftswomen “Wiener Frauenkunst”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFA</td>
<td>Wiener Frauenakademie (Viennese Women’s Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WKH</td>
<td>Wiener Kunst im Hause (Viennese Art in the House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WW</td>
<td>Wiener Werkstätte (Viennese Workshops)</td>
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**ARCHIVES/LIBRARY/REPOSITORY ABBREVIATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BMUKK</td>
<td>Schulbuch- und Schulschriftensammlung des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, Vienna, Austria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSA</td>
<td>Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna, Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCF</td>
<td>Henry Clay Frick Art Reference Library, New York, NY.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MET</td>
<td>Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas J. Watson Library, New York, NY.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSA</td>
<td>Stadtarchiv München, Munich, Germany.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ÖGBA</td>
<td>Österreichische Galerie Belvedere Archiv, Vienna, Austria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ÖMAK</td>
<td>Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, Sammlungen und Hausarchiv, Vienna, Austria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ÖNB</td>
<td>Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria</td>
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<tr>
<td>ÖNB-HANS</td>
<td>Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Autographen-, und Nachlass-Sammlung. Vienna, Austria</td>
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<tr>
<td>ÖStA</td>
<td>Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-HA</td>
<td>Hausarchiv der Sammlungen des Fürsten von und zu Liechtenstein, Vienna, Austria.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAABKW</td>
<td>Universitätsarchiv der Akademie bildenden Künste, Vienna, Austria.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAKS</td>
<td>Universität für angewandte Kunst, Sammlungen und Oskar Kokoschka Zentrum, Vienna, Austria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPENN</td>
<td>Annenberg Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Van Pelt Library, The University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V BKÖ-ARCH</td>
<td>Archiv der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs Vienna, Austria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBR-HANS</td>
<td>Wienbibliothek im Rathaus (formerly Wiener Stadts-u.Landesbibliothek), Handschriftensammlung, Vienna, Austria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMS</td>
<td>Sammlungen des Museums der Stadt Wien, Vienna, Austria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOLF</td>
<td>Wolfsonian Florida-International University Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, Miami Beach, FL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WStLA</td>
<td>Wiener Stadt-und Landesarchiv, Vienna, Austria.</td>
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MAPPING FRAUENKUNST ON THE VIENNESE URBAN LANDSCAPE

KEY:

WOMEN’S ART INSTITUTIONS (RED)
KFM (Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen) Art School for Women and Girls
VBKÖ (Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs) Association of Austrian Women Artists
*small red arrows indicate KFM studios separate from its headquarters at Stubenring 12

MAINSTREAM ART INSTITUTIONS (BLUE)
ABKW (Akademie der bildenden Künste Wiens) Viennese Academy of Fine Arts
KGS (Kunstgewerbesschule) Austrian School of Applied Arts
Hagenbund (Hagenbund Artists’ League)
Künstlerhaus (Gesellschaft der bildenden Künstler Österreichs Künstlerhaus) Association of Austrian Visual Artists “Künstlerhaus”
Secession (Vereinigung bildender Künstler Österreichs Wiener Secession) Association of Austrian Visual Artists Viennese Secession
Introduction: Feminist Art History and Austrian Frauenkunst

And truly women have excelled indeed
In every art to which they set their hand.¹
--Giorgio Vasari, Lives of the Artists (1564)

Since the 1971 publication of Linda Nochlin’s groundbreaking essay “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists,” feminist art historical interventions have striven to uncover women’s contributions to the art historical canon.² Early feminist art historical and cultural studies as represented by the works of Linda Nochlin, Ann Sutherland Harris and Germaine Greer focused on the myriad educational and institutional obstacles facing female artists.³ Propelled by the second-wave feminist movement sweeping the United States and Europe in the 1970s, such studies demanded women’s inclusion in traditional art history. A concurrent renaissance of women’s artist leagues pursuing the professional and commercial interests of female artists paralleled the body of scholarship on historical women artists. The late 1960s women’s art movement “arose out of the genuine needs of women artists which were not being met by the largely male organizations of their day: they provided support, a place to show work, and… often provided instruction or models as well.”⁴ Such mid-twentieth century “leagues of their own” led the way to institutional parity and commercial equality.

Yet, in judging historical women artists by subjective masculine criteria of stylistic innovation and individual genius, such “add women and stir” scholarship came under increasing fire for “creating its own canon of white female artists… a canon that is almost as restrictive and

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exclusionary as its male counterpart.”

Newer currents of research led by British and American scholars Norma Broude, Mary Garrard, Whitney Chadwick, Rozsika Parker, and Griselda Pollock have overturned the very assumptions on which traditional art historical scholarship is based: in particular, the cult of the individual male genius. Influenced by post-structuralist literary criticism, feminist revisionist art history “examines the art of both women and men, conceptual frameworks and social constructs, to challenge art history as a disciplinary practice that has reified the asymmetrical power positions determined by gender.” For such revisionists “the way the history of art has been studied and evaluated is not the exercise of neutral, ‘objective’ scholarship but an ideological practice.” More recently, the field as led by Broude and Garrard has broken free of post-modernism’s depersonalizing yoke, reviving the political urgency of first wave feminism and its concern with women’s historical agency.

The late twentieth-century renaissance of women’s art in academic and artistic practice was not without its institutional precedents. Recent European and American revivals of women’s art have mirrored the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century women’s movement in the arts. Therein women’s groups across Western-, Central Europe and America circa 1870-1920 campaigned to break down educational and institutional barriers impeding professional female artists: a struggle that feminist Germaine Greer has framed as “the obstacle race.” An earlier generation of female artists thus encountered similar challenges in navigating asymmetrical gender prescriptions as those faced in

9 Germaine Greer, The Obstacle Race.
the late twentieth century. Both the academic and artistic communities, however, have underestimated women artists’ analogous mitigation of male-dominated institutional culture through the ages. Indeed, in confronting questions of whether “women’s art” warrants leagues, exhibitions, and museums of its own, such questions still vex cultural institutions to this very day. Whether the existence of Washington’s National Museum of Women in the Arts, for example, facilitates or undermines women’s rightful place in the art historical canon remains to be seen. The June 1987 issue of *Women Artists News* parodied the pink marble pantheon as “a white glove, un-feminist status quo operation based on a corporation image of power and success.” Yet its founders defended the Museum as presenting “not a footnote to the history of art, but a supplement; not a ghetto, but an extension.”

Recent controversies involving women’s art bear a striking resemblance to the contested terrain of *Frauenkunst*, or women’s art, in fin-de-siècle Central Europe. A prime example of similarities between the women’s art movements of the early and latter twentieth centuries can be found in the polarization of women’s art movements of Late-Imperial and First Republic Austria with the postwar United States. In many ways, conflicts between the conservative and radical factions of Austrian *Frauenkunst* foreshadowed ensuing political tensions between 1960s-era East and West Coast feminist art. While New York artists leagues prioritized economic parity and equal representation at exhibitions, West Coast groups concerned themselves with theoretical issues of gendered aesthetics. A transnational comparative lens thus brings into focus an uncanny degree of verisimilitude to the early-twentieth century schism of Austrian *Frauenkunst*. Like East Coast feminist artists, Austria’s older, more conservative *Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs* (1910) preferred to work within the framework of existing male artistic corporations rather than

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challenging the patriarchal structures whereon such institutions stood. The VBKÖ’s radical offshoot, the *Wiener Frauenkunst* (1926), sought to pull the carpet out from under male artistic corporations and provocatively embraced the notion of a separatist women’s art. Paralleling the activism of West Coast feminist artists Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro, the *Wiener Frauenkunst* chartered pioneering explorations of questions of gender, art, and creativity through the use of new media and exhibition formats. Both groups, as manifested in Chicago’s seminal feminist statement *The Dinner Party* and the *Wiener Frauenkunst*’s series of provocative public exhibitions, proclaimed their liberation from male artistic institutions. Connections between the women’s artists leagues of Late-Imperial and First Republic Austria and post-war America constitute only one example of the continued relevance of the educational, institutional, and professional obstacles surmounted by female artists across borders of time and space.

Unfolding the history of Late-Imperial and First Republican Austrian *Frauenkunst*, the following study of Austrian women artists’ educational and institutional development strikes a balance between the theoretical positions on feminist art history outlined previously. An emphasis on historical agency and the ways in which culturally-active women harnessed patriarchic norms to their advantage drives the current study, which likewise stresses the institutional hurdles impeding professional female artists. Similar to Norma Broude’s recent arguments on Mary Cassatt’s simultaneous adherence to and transgression from traditional gender norms, the Austrian *Frauenkunst* movement was characterized by “a pattern of guarded social resistance on the one hand and complicity on the other.”

While taking women as its main subject of historical inquiry, this investigation does not, however, presuppose the existence of woman as a fixed, ahistorical category. Rather, this study stresses the manner in which socio-cultural constructions of gender gave shape to

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12 Norma Broude, “Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman or the Cult of True Womanhood,” *Reclaiming Female Agency*, 263.
female artists’ spheres of social interaction. In contrast, however, to the depersonalized post-modernist feminist scholarship of the past decades, the present study favors an eschewal of theoretical constrictions and “a desire to return to real-world issues.”\textsuperscript{13} Furthermore, in painting case studies of the collaborative efforts of Austrian artist couples, this study launches a frontal assault on the myth of “the individual artist as hero… divorced from the contemporary social conditions of production and circulation.”\textsuperscript{14}

On a broader level, the ensuing schism of interwar Austrian Frauenkunst investigated here represented a microcosm of dilemmas faced by women artists in sister leagues in Britain, France, Germany and beyond. Should women artists and their artwork seek public recognition as “separate, but equal,” or, simply as equal and hence abandon the safe haven of leagues, exhibitions, and academies of their own? As demonstrated by the continued controversy surrounding the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the issue has yet to be settled in academic or professional circles. The following chapters paint a picture of Austrian Frauenkunst, the hotly-contested movement championing a feminine “art of their own” both reinforcing and undermining women’s exclusion from artistic and cultural institutions, on the canvas of fin-de-siècle Austrian history.

Recent criticism leveled at the NMWA harkened back to earlier debates on the existence of a distinct women’s art. Viennese feminist and cultural philosopher Rosa Mayreder quipped at the notion of women’s art in a 1930 exhibition-catalogue entitled “Wie Sieht die Frau?” (How Does a Woman See?),

\begin{quote}
I can hardly answer the question of ‘How Does a Woman See?’ due to the standpoint I take in the gender-question. I represent the point of view that gender-difference, beyond basic sexual characteristics, is only a formal, but not an essential, difference. […] For my part, I could not say to what extent the works of a Rosa Bonheur, an Angelika Kaufmann, a Tina Blau, a Feodorowna Ries, or a Käthe Kollwitz are seen as specifically feminine. […] In my opinion, those with
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{13} Norma Broude and Mary Garrard, \textit{Reclaiming Female Agency}, vii.
\textsuperscript{14} Whitney Chadwick, \textit{Women, Art, and Society}, 9.
talent look differently than those lacking talent, but this has nothing to do with
gender difference.\textsuperscript{15}

Mayreder, who herself was an accomplished painter, could not have been more at odds with the
exhibition’s aesthetic underpinnings, for Mayreder’s constructionalist view of gender left little
room for the gendered-essentialism that the show represented. Organized by the Verband
bildender Künstlerinnen und Kunsthandwerkerinnen Wiener Frauenkunst (Union of Women-
Artists and Craftswomen Viennese Women’s Art), a 1926-founded offshoot organization from
the conservative Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs (Austrian Association of
Women-Artists), the Wiener Frauenkunst propounded the idea of a specifically-feminine
aesthetic, a women’s art, or Frauenkunst, in the catalogue’s introduction, arguing that “we are of
the opinion that works from women’s hands bear the stamp of their female-origins in and of
themselves.”\textsuperscript{16} That the League’s members unabashedly billed their work as Frauenkunst, a term
conventionally connected with works of a dilettantish, amateurish nature, and the low rather than
the high, or, fine, arts, and, instead, showcased works of applied art alongside the daring,
expressionist paintings of its members represented a change radical enough to make the show
groundbreaking. Even more ahead of its time were the questions of gendered aesthetics raised
not only by Mayreder but the other critics answering the question of “How Does a Woman See”
raised in its catalogue. These contributors included A.F. Seligmann, longtime professor and
director of the Viennese Women’s Academy and feuilletonist for the Neue Freie Presse, art-
historian Hans Tietze, and Bund Österreichische Frauenvereine (Union of Austrian Women’s
Leagues, established in 1902 as an umbrella organization for all Austro-Hungarian women’s
groups) founder Marianne Hainisch. The theoretical questions underlying “Wie Sieht die Frau”

\textsuperscript{15} Rosa Mayreder, Preface to the Catalogue of the Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen und Kunsthandwerkerinnen
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 7.
bring the contours of “women’s art” in the female academies and artist leagues of late-Imperial and First Republic-era Vienna into high relief, revealing how these institutions’ very separateness constituted a transitory stage in symmetrizing gender relations in the arts.

The women’s artist leagues and academies to be explored in this study represented a sort of ‘Art of Their Own,’ in that their exclusively-female member base, in contrast to the exclusionary membership policies of the major Viennese institutions—the Academy of Fine Arts (1692), Society of Austrian Fine Artists (Genossenschaft der bildenden Künstler Österreichs, Künstlerhaus 1861), Secession (1897), and Hagenbund (1900), allowed women to redraw the exhibitionary aesthetic experience, both as artists and onlookers, on their own terms. While a handful of women managed to show their works in the major exhibition houses including the Secession, Hagenbund, and the conservative Imperial Artists’ Guild, or Künstlerhaus, in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, these leagues’ policies of excluding women as regular members, which remained largely in place until after World War II, prevented women from serving on working or jury committees or being eligible for prizes.

The largely untold, turbulent story of these leagues and academies underlines the plasticity, and indeed fragility, surrounding the concept of Frauenkunst and its institutional position. This study argues that the Viennese women artists leagues and academies circa 1900-1930 deftly navigated tensions inherent in the concept of Frauenkunst to not only expand the range of artistic and material opportunities open to women artists, but to reframe Frauenkunst as crucial to rejuvenating the cultural life of the post-war Austrian state. Not without its share of contradiction, the shifting fortunes of the Austrian Women’s Academy reflect the political dimension of women’s education in the Late Imperial and First Republic period as expressed through party positions. Both undercutting and reinforcing the existence of a gendered aesthetic,
these gender-specific institutions brought the concept of Frauenkunst full circle: reinventing many of the stereotypes against which women artists had traditionally struggled.

Beginning with the turn-of-the-century movement to reform and professionalize women’s artistic education, this study traces the development of the concept of Frauenkunst, originally connoting substandard, amateurish works intended as distraction rather than vocation, as well as certain lower genres (flower painting, still life, etc) associated with slavish reproduction rather than creative innovation, through Austrian institutions circa 1900-1930. The seeds of the interwar renaissance of Austrian Frauenkunst were planted in the fin-de-siècle reforms to professionalize and expand women’s art education. Austria’s Women’s Academy represented a unique case in point, in that, while similar European women’s academies tended to be integrated into mainstream state academies, Austrian Frauenkunst experienced a renaissance at the Women’s Academy just as the doors of the state Academy opened to women. The opening of Austria’s main academy to women in 1919 coincided with the elevation of what had been a private Art School for Women and Girls to a full-fledged Women’s Academy equipped with the ability to issue state-accredited degrees in academic painting. Likewise did the artist-leagues emerging from the intersection of these semi-public and state-academies come to embrace and innovate certain aspects of the feminine aesthetic the educational reform-movement had sought to minimize. Changing perceptions of Frauenkunst suggest the degree to which the idea of a women’s art, once regarded as substandard and trivial, had assumed a valuable civic mission in First Republic society.

The new Republic born out of the post-war collapse of the multinational Habsburg Empire held much promise for the cause of women’s emancipation in the arts. As historian Brigitte Bader-Zaar commented; “In … formulating visions of women’s profound moral influence on politics and society, both male and female proponents of female suffrage attached
great hope to women’s right to vote.” Gaining national and provincial suffrage privileges and the right to stand for office in November 1918, Austrian women became fully enfranchised for the first time. Ironically it had been politics more than ideology dividing the pragmatic and visionary and wings of Austria’s pre-war women’s movement (respectively, the Bund Österreichischer Frauenverein, BÖFV Federation of Austrian Women’s Leagues founded in 1902 and the Allgemeiner Österreichischer Frauenverein, AÖFV or General Austrian Women’s Association, founded in 1893), or, more aptly put, the latter group’s apolitical, anti-partisan approach towards the woman-question and privileging of women’s intellectual autonomy over practical politics. Subsequently, under the banner of the Republic, women were elected to important municipal and national positions. On all sides of the political spectrum, great hope was invested in gender and the family as a building block for societal change: a fitting tribute to the moderate brand of relational, maternalist feminism characterizing the Austrian middle-class women’s movement. That the main political parties tended to be more interested in women’s...
voting behavior than in integrating women and their interests into the political mainstream did not, however, expedite these hopes.

Nonetheless, without a clear will to live (*lebensunfähig*), the rump Austrian state was, as Steven Beller has recently paraphrased Robert Musil’s famous novel, a “land without qualities:” i.e. a state without a clear national identity or cultural mission. Stripped of its richest industrial and agricultural provinces and access to the Adriatic through *Südtirol* (South Tyrol), Austria’s population sank to under 7 million inhabitants, most of whom lived in Vienna or surrounding areas of Lower Austria. These political changes—that Vienna suddenly became the capital of a truncated Austrian state divorced from its imperial hinterland—were not inconsequential to the interwar development of the fine and applied arts in Austria. While conventionally associated with a new generation of Austrian expressionists, the interwar Viennese art scene lost much of its dynamism due to a shifting of political and social gravity out of the former *Haupt-und-Residenzstadt*. Historian James Shedel has summarized Austria’s postwar position as “no longer [being] the forefront of artistic innovation… Vienna itself had become less of a magnet for new talent and lost ground to the provinces as the Austrian source of creative inspiration.” Like Vienna’s grand monuments reflecting its imperial past rather than the Republic’s more uncertain present, the apogee of Viennese modernism resided in the heroes (Gustav Klimt, Kolomann Moser, Egon Schiele) of the *fin-de-siècle* and the embracing sense of “Austrianness” associated with important public exhibitions, such as the Imperial Jubilee of 1908 and other shows at the “big-three” exhibition halls. The development of post-war Austrian expressionism, *Neue*

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Sachlichkeit (New Objectivity), and cubism has failed to resonate on the same wavelength as the amount of popular and scholarly interest generated on the Viennese Moderns, or the groups and individuals responsible for the development of modernism in the arts and literature in the Austrian capital from 1890 to 1910, before the watershed years of 1914/18. In the words of art-historian Irene Nierhaus

In the general Austrian public, fine art of the period from 1914 to 1945 is mostly regarded as a sort of ‘intermediary chapter.’ The fear, deeply-rooted in our cultural identity, of not measuring up to an ‘Austria of international-reputation’—which was also mushrooming into cultural ‘Lebensunfähigkeit’ (inability to sustain life) in the interwar period—betrays a disinterest for an era which has left us few supranational great artists [as the leading practitioners of Austrian expressionism were working abroad].

That Dada, abstractionism, and other avant-garde styles made, in fact, few inroads in interwar Austria further deflects the art-historical canon from new and progressive currents in the interwar period.

Absent from cultural histories of fin-de-siècle and First Republic Austria is the question of how works created by women artists merit a rethinking of assumptions about stylistic development, periodization, identity, and the very socio-political foundations of the Austrian First Republic. If postwar Austria, a state that “nobody wanted” was forced to accept life against its will, its female artists and craftswomen were nevertheless perceived as vital to sustaining the lifeblood of Vienna’s position as an artistic and cultural center. However, it is hardly surprising that the patriotic implications of Frauenkunst have been overlooked in art- and cultural historical narratives given that the relevant primary and archival materials have yet to be tapped.

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24 These rich sources include institutional records, official reports, ministerial proceedings, documents from the official academies of fine and applied art, and correspondence from the archives of the various women’s artist leagues (the VBKÖ and Wiener Frauenkunst), the state-subsidized Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (Art School for Women and Girls, founded 1897) as well as those of more mainstream institutions such as the Austrian
The cultural landscape of fin-de-siècle and First Republic Austria thus assumes different significance in terms of the history of women artists and their access to exhibition leagues, educational institutions, and the art market itself. Indeed, from the vantage point of the women’s artist leagues and the private and semi-public women’s academies, the chronological boundaries between the historical watersheds of 1914/1918 represented just as much continuity as change. The doors of the Schillerplatz, or, the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts, finally opened to women in the 1919/1920 academic year. Ironically, however, while falling in the era of the First Republic and Otto Glöckel’s ‘Red Vienna’ municipal government, the breaking of this institutional barrier merely brought to fruition the piecemeal progress achieved in art education for women under the banner of the Imperial Austrian bürgerliche Frauenbewegung (middle-class women’s movement), a direct heir to the tradition of Austrian liberalism. Although the “decline” of Austrian liberalism is conventionally associated with an efflorescence of art and culture circa 1900 in the annals of cultural history, it was moreso the vitality of Austrian liberalism that was propelling the women’s artist leagues and associated organizations around the turn-of-the-century and into the First Republic.25

The Austrian women’s artist leagues circa 1900-1930, most significantly the 8 Künstlerinnen (1900), the Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs (1910), and the Wiener Frauenkunst (1926), boldly pursued the economic, material, and artistic interests of women-artists while holding to liberal beliefs in market competition, individualism, and education; all of which have been flagged by Pieter

25 The failure of liberalism thesis—that the decline of Austrian liberalism and the Liberal Party explained, at least in part, for a generation of outcast artists, writers and aesthetes seeking refuge in a Dionysian temple of art in the Austro-Hungarian capital around 1900—was propounded by Carl E. Schorkse in a series of essays weaving together social, cultural, artistic, psychological, and literary arguments, and later published in book form. In terms of political history, the failure of liberalism has conventionally been traced the continued political importance of the dynasty, clergy, aristocracy in Central Europe, and specifically, the liberals’ inability to break the power of traditional landed elite and institute more democratic forms of government that would have calmed national tensions.
Judson as hallmarks of Austrian liberalism. Judson has convincingly argued that, although the Austrian liberals ceased to maintain a parliamentary presence after 1900, “liberal political culture seems to have reinvented itself frequently,” a flexibility which allowed the Austrian women’s movement—and most specifically, the branches of the women’s movement concerned with art and culture—to adapt the ideals and rhetoric of Austrian liberalism to its own purposes.  

This study sides with the body of recent literature, including the works of John Boyer, Deborah Coen, Pieter Judson, and James Shedel, supporting the viability and continued twentieth-century influence of Austrian liberalism.  

In the spirit of recent “post post-modernist” feminist scholarship breaking free of discursive confines, the chapters to follow provide a genealogy of the development and demise of interwar Frauenkunst in the leagues and academies of Late-Imperial and First Republic Austria.

Chapter One: ‘Taking up the Cudgels for the Woman-Question:’ The Austrian Women’s Movement and the Reformation of Female Art Education, 1860-1920

The first collective monograph of Austrian women artists, published by a female Viennese journalist in 1895, opened with the following pledge.

In unfurling the biographies of outstanding women-artists, I should also like to take up the cudgels for the Woman Question and, through the depiction of endeavors crowned, for the most part, with shining success, strengthen and spread the belief in women’s abilities…

The author then substantiated her call-to-arms with the conclusion that;

Even the bitterest enemies of women’s emancipation can no longer deny that there are women capable of achieving greatness in all fields, who completely comprehend and fully measure up to their profession. And these are not just exceptions reaffirming the norm along narrow-minded ideals, but comprise a not-to-be underestimated majority…

Riding the coattails of Europe’s burgeoning corpus of literature on women artists, Karoline Murau’s portrait of forty-two contemporary Austrian women-painters brings the embeddedness of female emancipation in the arts in the greater woman question, and above all, in educational reform, into high relief. Originally published as a series of articles in “Wiener Familien-Journal” (Viennese Family Journal), Murau’s Viennese Women-Painters profiled both traditional Salondamen (salon-ladies) cultivated in the tradition of aristocratic dilettantism and modern Malweiber: professional painters earning their livelihood through art and whose masculine manners, styles of clothing and hair sent ripples through the press. Prominently featured was Tina Blau, the “Old Mistress” of Early Austrian Modernism famous for her Atmospheric Impressionism (Stimmungsimpressionismus) and pushing a perambulator filled not with babies, but canvases and brushes through the Prater. Also profiled were Bertha von Tarnóczy, the Innsbruck-born Hungarian noblewoman who co-founded the Künstlerinnen Verein München

29 Ibid., 11-12.
30 Sophie Pataky, Lexikon deutscher Frauen der Feder, Band II (Berlin, 1898), 72.
e.V. (Munich League of Women Artists, Registered Association), Germany’s second-oldest Women’s Artist League behind the Verein der Künstlerinnen und Kunstfreundinnen zu Berlin (League of Women Artists and Art-Lovers in Berlin, founded 1867), as well as amateurs such as Rosa Mayreder for whom painting was a hobby and, in Mayreder’s case, intermittent distraction from her literary pursuits. As architect Karl Mayreder described how the Malteufel (Painting-Demon) periodically seized hold of his wife; “The Painting Demon has set in [again]!”

Uniting all the women surveyed by Murau was their collective struggle in overcoming the educational, institutional, and societal hurdles to becoming an artist. From defying parental wishes to circumventing art academies’ exclusion of women, Austria-Hungary’s first generation of professional women painters faced an uphill climb. Late nineteenth-century attitudes towards women artists, bound up in notions of aristocratic dilettantism and intellectual inferiority, posed tremendous socio-cultural obstacles to aspiring young artists. Not only regarded as physically unsuited to the monumental genres of sculpture, history and landscape painting, women were deemed incapable of higher intellectual cognition, creative innovation, and technical mastery: the exalted gifts associated with artistic genius. Talented lady-painters were discouraged from showcasing, yet alone selling, works in the public sphere until the mid-to-late nineteenth century. That nineteenth-century codes of feminine upbringing, which expected young ladies to be accomplished in languages, singing, dancing, and painting, bred artistic mediocrity did not do much to advance Frauenkunst in the public eye. Contrary to Murau’s arguments, the careers of her forty-two women painters represented the exception rather than the norm, and to the Empire’s general public, social anomalies.

Trivializing female ability to certain gender-appropriate genres, the discourse surrounding women-artists was used to rationalize women’s exclusion from Austria-Hungary’s state art schools. Related arguments justified women’s absence from secondary and post-secondary educational institutions. With few exceptions, Austro-Hungarian women had little opportunity for higher education, artistic training included, until the early twentieth century. It was undoubtedly education and rigorous academic instruction that ultimately opened the doors of salon, exhibition hall, and academy to Austro-Hungarian women. Winning access to institutions of secondary and higher education thus was not only a crucial aim of the Austrian women’s movement, but of vital importance to Austrian women artists. Only recently has the field begun to explore this artistic branch of the Austrian women’s movement, while corresponding movements remain virtually uncharted in the Hungarian context. As curator Ursula Storch surmised, “The women’s movement and women’s art organizations could reap equal benefit from mutually supporting each other.”33 As will be discussed at length in the chapter to follow, the leading periodicals associated with the Austrian women’s movement, Dokumente der Frauen (Women’s Papers), Neues Frauenleben (New Women’s Life), and der Bund (the Union), the organs of the AÖFV and BÖFV, respectively, featured regular columns profiling special exhibitions, awards, and distinctions earned by women artists, and offered detailed coverage of the campaign for improving women’s education. In Hungary, the Feministák Egyesülete (League of Feminists) organized concerts, exhibitions and lectures, and kept its members abreast of cultural affairs through its periodical A nő és a társadalom (Woman and Society [1907-1914], known as A nő: Feminista Folyóirat, or Woman: Feminist Journal, after 1914). By and large,

however, Hungarian society remained more conservative on the woman question.\textsuperscript{34} While Hungarian women enjoyed certain legal and contractual rights that their Austrian sisters did not, the old proverb that \textit{mulier taceat in ecclesia} (let the woman be silent in church) generally held true for Hungarian Society under Dualism.\textsuperscript{35}

This chapter will survey the leagues, associations, and individuals fighting for women’s access to institutions of secondary and higher learning circa 1860-1920. Private initiative in the form of leagues aligned with the Austrian feminist movement provided the impetus for the institutional reforms propelling \textit{Frauenkunst}’s interwar renaissance, with the Imperial Ministry of Education following suit somewhat reluctantly. Feminist critics declared that “providing for girls’ higher education constitutes no glorious chapter in the history of Austrian educational administration” because privately-maintained girls’ secondary schools received less than adequate financial and administrative support from the government.\textsuperscript{36} As would also be the case in state institutions of fine art, the many \textit{Frauenberufschulen} (Women’s Vocational Schools) cropping up in the latter decades of the nineteenth century were catered to fields, such as needlework and culinary arts, deemed appropriately feminine. In the Hungarian lands, the government played a more active role in supporting women’s education than in the Crownlands: somewhat ironically given the less-advanced state of the women’s movement east of the Leitha. The liberal buoyancy following the restoration of the Hungarian constitution in 1867 propelled a slew of educational reforms achieved under the tutelage of Baron József Eötvös (Hungarian Minister of Education 1867-71) and successors, including state support of girls’ lyceums and

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{34} Malvine Fuchs, “Die Frauenfrage in Ungarn” \textit{Dokumente der Frauen} 5:5 (1 June 1901): 145-150.
\textsuperscript{35} In summarizing Hungarian women’s legal equality, Hungarian feminist Rose Revai wrote that; “Hungarian legislators have always treated us favorably in all matters pertaining to the family, marriage, and inheritance… As heirs, our interests are not forgotten, and as widows, we have the [sic] control over our own children.” Quoted in Theodore Stanton, “Continental Europe,” \textit{History of Woman Suffrage}, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Matilda Gage, eds. Vol. III (Rochester: Charles Mann, 1887), 907.
\end{footnotesize}
gymnasiums.\textsuperscript{37} In this manner, Hungary’s efforts to modernize its state apparatus and catch up with Western progress in education benefited Hungarian men and women alike. Nonetheless, feminist \textit{kékharisnyák} (bluestockings) remained as suspect in Budapest as they were in Vienna.

Opening the doors of Austro-Hungarian universities, however, to female students proved more complicated than expanding women’s vocational instruction, not only for the moral issues involved in coeducational study but for the overhaul of secondary/post-elementary curriculum such a change necessitated. While the \textit{Alma Mater Rudolfina} (University of Vienna) was opened to women auditors in 1878, similar measures were not achieved in Budapest until 1895: at which point the then Minister of Education, Gyula Wlassics, the great champion of women’s education, opened Budapest’s philosophical, medical, and pharmaceutical faculties to women on a provisional, case-by-case basis. What is more, even after women were granted provisional admission to Hungarian universities, Hungarian professors began enacting measures to limit the droves of under-qualified girls they perceived to be swarming their lectures.\textsuperscript{38} Yet these girls were merely products of the schools in which they had been educated, which were, for the most part, lyceums.

To the men and women of the educational reform movement, Austria-Hungary’s female \textit{Lyzeum} (lyceum), with its focus on modern languages and literature and a course of study that ended a full two years earlier than the all-male \textit{Gymnasium}, was clearly inferior. The \textit{Lyzeum} constituted little more than a finishing school in comparison to the rigorous, classical education male students gained from the \textit{Gymnasium}, where an eight to nine year curriculum emphasizing

\textsuperscript{37} Under the terms of the \textit{Ausgleich}, internal matters including education and religion, etc. were delegated to Hungary while the common affairs of foreign policy, finance, and war were managed by a Common Council of Ministers. Educational reform represented a keystone of Dualist Hungary’s efforts to modernize its state apparatus. Similar to the \textit{Reichsvolkschulgesetz} of 1869 in Austria, Eőtvös’s Educational Reform Bill of 1868 established a general elementary curriculum, placed all schools under state supervision, and established a program of teacher training and regulation.

\textsuperscript{38} Ex-Minister President Baron Bánffy even went so far as to suggest a \textit{numerus clausus} for women in state secondary schools in the Hungarian Parliament in March 1903. \textit{Neues Frauenleben} 19:3 (March 1907): 21.
classical philology was the norm. Furthermore, even the instruction in drawing and craft imparted in such lyceums betrayed a sense of superficiality. Less out of pedagogic intent than for transforming pupils into proper hostesses were the arts included in the lyceum curriculum. As one Austrian pedagogical reformer, Siegmund Kraus, put it; “[t]he Mädchenlyceum, as our Educational Ministry would have it, is nothing other than a school for ‘höhere Töchter’ (well-born daughters).”

It was precisely the inferior state of women’s education in Austria-Hungary, and especially ladies’ superficial education in the arts, that was responsible for doubly disadvantaging women artists. Not only was public academic training in the arts off-limits, this sort of dilettantish education bred a discourse casting even serious women-artists as flippant, mediocre, and imitative. Nevertheless, the new generation of women artists portrayed in this study deftly navigated such challenges in Austro-Hungarian educational systems and mental attitudes. To better contextualize the general state of women’s education in late-Imperial Austria-Hungary, as well as in the Austrian First Republic that followed, the following pages present an brief overview of developments in educational reform, 1860-1920.

The Vienna-based critic, educational-reformer, and translator Amelia Sara Levetus optimistically summarized the state of Austrian women’s education in her important 1905-treatise on Viennese art and culture.

Within the last few years a great revolution has come over the city in favour of higher education of women, last year bringing very important changes, for some of the private lyceum for girls were granted public rights, as was also the girls’ Gymnasium, which had already been in existence as a private undertaking for ten years previously. But even before this time girls were allowed to matriculate at boys’ schools after they had qualified themselves

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for the examination either by private instruction or at the private
Gymnasium. 40

Describing the public incorporation of the Gymnasiale Mädchenschule des Vereins für
Erweiterte Frauenbildung (Girls’ Grammar School of the League for Expanded Women’s
Education) and other private girls’ schools, the English-born Levetus had much reason for her
optimism. She had, after all, been the first woman to lecture at the University of Vienna; founded
a state-recognized language school; and introduced aspects of British art, culture, and politics to
Austrians. 41 Furthermore, through her life-long position as Studio correspondent, Levetus
reported the latest trends in Austro-Hungarian art and crafts to Anglo-American audiences.

Behind Levetus’s buoyancy, however, lurked fundamental pedagogic problems still in desperate
need of reform. Although women had been permitted to enroll in the University of Vienna’s
Philosophical Faculty as ordentliche and außerordentliche Hörerinnen (matriculating and non-
degree students) since 1897, the state continued to assume little responsibility in female
secondary education, preferring to delegate such matters to private hands. The Educational
Ministry had, however, extended moderate financial support to league-sponsored schools
modeled on the six-form Lyceum founded in Graz in 1873. The Danube Monarchy’s first lyceum
for German-speaking girls, the Grazer Mädchelyceum (Graz Girls’ Lyceum) became the first to
gain public status in 1886 and enjoyed a subsidy of 3,000 florin per annum from the Ministry of
Education. 42 Nonetheless, despite the reformed, and from 1900 onwards governmentally-
supervised, lyceum-curriculum, the lyceum’s modern-language focus left young ladies ill-

40 A.S. Levetus, Imperial Vienna: An Account of its History, Traditions, and Arts. Illustrated by Erwin Puchinger
(London: John Lane, 1905), 348.
41 Levetus’s two open public lectures on the English-cooperative movement were initiated at the invitation of
Professor Schwiedlang, with whom she had audited classes since 1893. Franz Plener ed. Das Jahrbuch der Wiener
42 Julius Reuper, “Das Mädchenvon in Graz,” Frauenberuf und Frauenbildung: Ein Beitrag zur Frauenfrage
(Wien: Pichler’s Witwe Sohn, 1878), 58. The Graz Lyceum, however, did not represent the first such institute
altogether in the Habsburg Monarchy. A similar lyceum had been opened ten years earlier for Czech-speaking girls
in Prague.
prepared to face the Maturitätsprüfung, or university qualification-examination. The opening of
the philosophical faculty, which finalized the piecemeal achievements of the 1870/80s toward
opening the ivory tower to women, did not improve the situation in Austria-Hungary’s other
state Hochschule (institutions of higher learning), nor inspire women’s career prospects in the
liberal professions.

On the other hand, in being penned by an Englishwoman for whom Vienna was an
adopted home, Levetus’s comments on women’s educational reforms assume another level of
significance, particularly given the strength of the women’s movement in Britain.43 The
historiography of the European women’s movement and women’s education has traditionally
classified women’s education in Central Europe as backwards and lagging behind the example of
western Europe, particularly Great Britain and France. Maintaining gender-segregated schools
when the Anglo-American world began favoring coeducational institutions and admitting women
to university studies quite late, Germany, and especially Austria, have been characterized as
following a deviant, Sonderweg path towards women’s emancipation.44 Helmut Engelbrecht’s
definitive, multi-volume history of Austrian education depicted Austria as halfheartedly
following trends having already swept the United States, Great Britain, France, Sweden, and
Germany. In that private leagues, petitions and demands, and not government initiative, finally
broke down Austria’s patriarchal educational structure, Engelbrecht casts Austria as “hobbling
behind western-European development.”45 Similarly, social historian Waltraud Heindl notes that

43 On the early origins of the women’s movement in Britain, see Millicent Garrett Fawcett, “The Women’s Suffrage
Movement” in The Woman Question in Europe: A Series of Original Essays, Theodor Stanton, ed. (New
York/London: G.P. Putnams’s Sons, 1884), 1-29.
44 Richard Evans groundbreaking 1984-study of German feminism challenged aspects of this backward model,
arguing that “society and politics [with regard to the feminist movement] in Wilhelmine Germany were more
complicated than historians find it convenient to imagine…” Richard Evans, The Feminist Movement in Germany
45 Helmut Engelbrecht, Geschichte des österreichischen Bildungswesens Bd. IV. (Wien: Österreichischer
Bundesverlag, 1986, 279).
“along with most of Germany Austria was the last European state to permit women to study.”

According to the conventional view, Austria-Hungary’s educational policies toward women lagged behind the West due to the fact that private enterprise, rather than state initiative, provided the impetus for reform.

Yet Levetus’s comments problematize the supposed backwardness of Austro-Hungarian education, especially in coming from a Briton at the pulse of all that was progressive in international women’s education. Indeed, Levetus correctly singled out progress made in Austrian women’s education, by pointing to the support given to the Girls’ Grammar School of the League for Expanded Women’s Education, which would assume the more prestigious status of publicly-recognized Gymnasium in 1904, as well as to the state’s overhaul of the lyceum curriculum in 1900 and the educational statutes of 1908/12. Women’s education in Austria, though possessing certain peculiarities that were, in fact, more restrictive than western Europe, was far from backwards. On the contrary, Austria pursued liberal policies on many fronts including opening the Matura (university entrance examination) to women in 1872; allowing women to audit university classes in 1878; granting female teachers permission to take secondary teacher examinations; granting women full privileges to matriculate for university and doctoral studies in 1897; and, in a few cases, habilitating female university professors and recognizing foreign medical degrees. This occurred around the same time, if not earlier, than in

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much of Europe, at least on the basis of attending as auditors.\(^{48}\) That Austria’s (1869) and Hungary’s (1868) Elementary School Laws actually mandated elementary instruction decades before Western European countries such as Great Britain is overlooked all too often. Yet, in giving little public support for women’s secondary education, obstructing the placement of female lyceum teachers until 1900, and barring women from the university’s legal and theological faculties until 1919, Austria lagged behind her Swiss and German neighbors.\(^{49}\)

What emerges from all of the ministerial decrees, regulations, and voices of the men and women supporting pedagogical reform, is a highly-complex, and at times winding path toward opening higher education to Austrian women. Questioning narratives of Austrian backwardness, this study sides with Historian James Albisetti’s arguments that “Austria was more progressive [in certain respects] than any of the German states and the vast majority of European countries and American states as well.”\(^{50}\) While this path took different turns than in Western Europe, women’s education in late-Imperial Austria-Hungary was progressing along a modern route in many respects. The Austrian Educational Ministry’s cooperation with private leagues in hammering out a reformed lyceum curriculum, its development of state vocational schools for women, and its acquiescence of women attending university lectures earlier than in the supposedly more progressive Western European countries all exemplified this modern trajectory.

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\(^{48}\) Women were admitted to university study in the following years: Switzerland (1865), Russia (1867 and on the same terms as men in 1905) and in Finland (1867/ on the same terms as men in 1901), Italy (1874), Great Denmark (1875), Britain (1876), France (1880), Belgium (1880), Norway (1884), Spain (1888), Germany (1908).

\(^{49}\) Prussia created an advanced certification system for female secondary teachers, the Oberlehrerinnenprüfung, in 1894. As part of the Provisional Statute of December 1900 regulating female lyceum, Austria’s Ministry of Education allowed women who had graduated from a lyceum or teachers’ college, and who had attended the university for three years as full-time auditors, to become lyceum teachers. This measure greatly increased the number of female lyceum teachers but was sharply criticized by feminists as the female teachers were poorly educated in comparison to their male colleagues, who had to study for around 11 years to be qualified for such positions.

While supporting “an education equal to men’s” for women, the Ministry of Education’s concept of “feminine distinction” and the specific physical, moral, and ethical needs of female students mediated its policies towards secondary, vocational, and university education for women.\(^{51}\) The question of whether higher education for women should be adjusted to their womanly nature or simply mirror boys’ schooling—like the question of “How Does the Woman See?” confronting women artists—was faced repeatedly, though never settled, on the path to achieving equal educational access for women.

In order to fully understand the scope and aims of Austria’s late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century educational reform movement, it is necessary to briefly survey the history of women’s education in Austria. The formal history of women’s education in the Habsburg Empire began with the late eighteenth-century enlightened reforms of Empress Maria Theresia. The Habsburg matriarch had established a *Studienhofkommission* (Educational Court Commission) for the hereditary lands in 1760, which was populated by Enlightenment figures including Gerhard van Swieten, Karl Martini, Joseph Sonnenfels, and Johann Anton von Pergen.\(^{52}\) Not until Pope Clement XIV’s suppression of the Jesuit order, and the state’s seizure of Jesuit assets, did the Commission’s proposed overhaul of the Monarchy’s educational institutions gain sway at court, as well as the financial wherewithal to fund a state educational system. An imperial edict of 1774 defined the duties of the *Studienhofkommission* as

> In total autonomy… to implement uniform, thorough, practical and permanent educational institutions, hence taking all rural and urban schools, grammar schools and elite *Gymnasien*, convent schools and monasteries,


academies and universities, as well as the Academy of Sciences to be established in Vienna, under its supervision and charge.\textsuperscript{53}

This short excerpt illustrates the Commission’s mission to centralize, regulate, and standardize the monarchy’s school systems: processes which would come to exercise a marked impact on the course of women’s education in the Austrian lands.

Promulgated by the \textit{Studienhofkommission} to increase the Empress’s subjects’ productivity and utility to the state, the Theresian General School Reforms (\textit{Allgemeine Schulordnung der Kaiserin Maria Theresia}, enacted in the hereditary lands in 1774 and 1777 in Hungary) introduced a three-tiered system which made, at least in theory, six years of elementary school education mandatory for all girls and boys.\textsuperscript{54} Marianne Hainisch emphasized that “not only boys but also girls should receive regular instruction” in describing Maria Theresia’s educational reforms.\textsuperscript{55} Boys and girls could be instructed within the same school, although separate schools, or at the very least, separate classes for girls, were highly desirable so that appropriate instruction in “sewing, knitting and other womanly matters” could be provided.\textsuperscript{56}

Although this legislation theoretically opened public education to women, in practice, girls’ schooling was limited to instruction in the \textit{Trivialschulen} rather than the higher-level \textit{Normal-} and \textit{Hauptschulen}, designed for teachers and other educated professionals. The precise extent to which the compulsory aspect of the Theresian reforms were actually enforced for girls still remains to be fully explored, although mandatory education was handled more laxly for girls


\textsuperscript{56} Allgemeine Schulordnung vom 6. Dezember 1774, Art. XII. “Wo es die Gelegenheit erlaubt, eigene Schule für Mägdlein zu haben, da besuchen sie solche, und das daselbst, wenn es füglich angeht, auch in Nähen, Stricken, und in anderem ihrem Geschlecht angemessenen Dingen zu unterweisen.”
than boys. At any rate, public schools were not viable options for daughters of the aristocracy and growing middle-classes; attending public schools open to lower-class pupils compromised the social prestige of the upper-classes.

In the Hungarian Lands, the Theresian primary school reforms were promulgated in 1777 as the *Ratio Educationis*. Similar to the Crownlands, the school laws set forth four-year primary schools (népiskola, i.e. people’s or Volkschule) where Hungarian, rather than German, was the language of instruction. Latin remained the *lingua franca* in secondary and higher education. The Theresian reforms of 1777 were followed by a second comprehensive law on education in 1806 known as the Second *Ratio Educationis*, which was tougher than the first in enforcing the reforms’ compulsory aspect. Influenced by the *Nyelvújítás*, the language renewal launched by Hungarian linguists in reaction to Josef II’s 1786 decree making German the language of official public transactions, the *Ratio Educationis* of 1806 conciliated Hungarian nationalism by making Magyar the language of secondary-school instruction. Enforcing primary schooling and combating illiteracy proved more difficult in Hungary than in the hereditary lands, not only due to Magyar resentment over Habsburg centrism but because of the Protestant Church’s strong control over primary schooling in Hungary. Even by the time of the *Ausgleich* in 1867, only 41% of the male population over six years and 24% of the female population could read and write.

By contrast, literacy figures were significantly higher in Western Europe. Literacy rates in France, Belgium, and Ireland held steady at around 60% in 1870, climbing to over 80% by the end of the century, while England maintained literacy rates of around 80% in 1870 and almost

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58 Hungarian language reformers such as György Bessenyei and Ferenc Kazinczy introduced a *Nyelvújítás* (language renewal) to make the Magyar tongue—then a peasant language filled with layers of foreign words—suitable for scientific and scholarly use. See Lóránt Czigány, *The Oxford History of Hungarian Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 105-6.
90% by 1900. Germany, too, boasted higher literacy rates than her imperial cousins, with literacy rates rivaling Great Britain’s by the end of the century.

Also part of the Theresian-Josephinian reforms, the state established a pair of twin institutions for daughters of military officers and civil servants, the Offizierstöchter-Erziehungs institut (Officers’ Daughters Educational Institute, founded 1775) and the Zivilmädchenpensionat (Civil Servants’ Girls Boarding School, founded 1786). However, the institutes represented an exception to the norm in being “the only state schools providing for girls’ post-elementary education.” Generally, any schooling for girls beyond elementary school instruction was left to private hands until the late 19th century. The state boarding schools for girls, established by Maria Theresia and her son Emperor Josef II, offered the daughters of army officers and civil servants a cost-free general education superior to that offered in the public Volksschule and the chance to train as governesses, and, after a reform instituted by Emperor Franz Josef in 1877, primary school teachers. To inspire the principle of self-reliance in its pupils, the institute required the girls to leave the school by their twentieth birthday and become economically self-sufficient. The idea for the schools originated with Hungarian Field Marshall Count Andreas Hadik von Futak, President of the Hofkriegsrat (Court War Council), who presented the idea to Josef II on 13 March 1775. Defending such an institution’s necessity, Futak argued that while the sons of officers from poor families could pursue a career in the military academies, girls were left with no viable options for advancement.

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60 Harvey Graff, The Legacies of Literacy: Continuities and Contradictions in Western Culture and Society (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1991), 375.
Josef, ever the utilitarian, was motivated by the prospect of turning otherwise-destitute orphans into well-educated governesses for the aristocracy. Both the Offizierstöchter-Erziehungsinstitut and Zivilmädchenpensionat remained under joint administration until the early nineteenth century. A late-imperial manual of Viennese and Lower-Austrian schools listed the Zivilmädchenpensionat’s mission as

[T]o educate daughters, primarily those without financial means, of civil-servants, also of officers’ and military officials, for the professions of primary school teachers and governesses…The boarding school has the duty of replicating upbringing in an educated family, performing the tasks of a public teachers’ college, as well as conveying the special knowledge and skills, which are especially necessary for governesses.\(^\text{64}\)

The Offizierstöchter-Erziehungsinstitut had an identical purpose, with the exception that its composition of officers’ daughters and supervision by the War Ministry lent it a higher level of social prestige. The female teaching staff of these institutes received benefits of state employment but were required to be single; widows with children were also excluded from employment.\(^\text{65}\) Located in the Viennese suburbs of Josefstadt and Hernals, both institutions were considered upstanding institutions for respectable middle-class daughters.\(^\text{66}\)

A similar institute was founded on private initiative in Ödenburg/Sopron for Hungarian orphan girls, which was subsumed by the joint Austro-Hungarian War Ministry in 1877.\(^\text{67}\) The Hungarian institute grew out of a Women’s League for the Education of Poor, Orphaned Officers’ Daughters in Ödenburg (Frauen-Vereins zur Erziehung verwaister mittelloser Officiers-Töchter in Ödenburg), founded by Countess Mathilde Zahradnik Bolza to care for

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\(^{65}\) Verordnungsblatt für den Dienstbereich des Ministeriums für Cultus und Unterricht, Beilage 4 (Feb 1883) (Wien: Verlag des k.k. Ministeriums für Cultus und Unterricht, 1883), 18.

\(^{66}\) The Offizierstöchter-Erziehungsinstitut was originally located in the Lower Austrian town of St. Pölten, but moved to Hernals (incorporated as Vienna’s 17th district in 1892) around 1785. After the fall of the Monarchy, the schools became democratized and lost their bourgeois cache. Joined as the “Bundeserziehungsanstalt für Mädchen” (BEA) in 1919, the school was to serve as a model institute for educating new teachers for the Republic.

\(^{67}\) Malvine Fuchs, “Die Frauenfrage in Ungarn” Dokumente der Frauen 5:5 (1 June 1901), 147.
children of Hungarian officers killed or executed for treason in the Hungarian 1848/49 Revolution [Figure 1.1b]. The league received generous donations from the Empress Elisabeth, Karoline Auguste of Bayern (fourth wife of Emperor Franz I of Austria), and Austrian Crown Princes and Albrecht and Carl Ferdinand. A generous donation from Field Marshall Josef Wenzel Radetzky—with the condition that the institute open within five years, lest the funds be turned over to its sister institution in Vienna—reportedly inspired enough donations from the military to fund two-thirds of the league’s activities. Continuing education classes, designed to pave girls’ transition to university studies, were added to the school’s curriculum around the turn-of-the-twentieth century.\(^{68}\)

Yet these schools, the state’s lone investment in post-primary women’s education until the latter half of the nineteenth century, would face much of the same criticism for a superficial curriculum later leveled at the nineteenth-century lyceum. In the words of Historian Helmut Engelbrecht; “[a]bove all, foreign languages, didactically geared toward salon conversation, music, and women’s handicrafts dominated the curriculum. Meanwhile, the course of instruction was tailored to parents’ wishes, with much attention given to proper upbringing and pupils’ social skills.”\(^{69}\) In the arts, instruction entailed a bit of drawing, a bit of music, and a bit of dancing but lacked in-depth concentration in any one area. Such institutes offered precisely the kind of superficial education in the arts that became the target of critics from the late-nineteenth century women’s movement and the industrial arts revival.

For the rest of the population, girls’ education beyond the fundamentals of reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion could only be found in costly convent schools run by Catholic

\(^{68}\) Ibid., 148.
\(^{69}\) Helmut Engelbrecht, Geschicke des österreichischen Bildungswesen, Vol. IV, 278.
female orders, such as the Ursulines, English Ladies, and School Sisters. As James Van Horn Melton argued in his history of eighteenth-century compulsory schooling in Austria and Prussia; “[g]irls, if they received any education at all, were instructed by tutors in a nearby convent.” Under the direction of Empress Eleanore (r.1651-1686), the Ursulines had established schools across the Crownlands, including Vienna (1660), Klagenfurt (1670), Linz (1682), Graz (1686), Innsbruck (1691), and Salzburg (1695). The English Ladies (Beatae Mariae Virginus der Englischen Fräulein) founded a convent and attached school in St. Pölten in 1706 while the Salesian Sisters set up a boarding school for noble girls in 1717. The situation was similar in Hungary, with the exception that Protestant clergy and local communes controlled a significant number of schools. Catholic convent schools, however, still represented the predominant option among the leading Habsburg-treu families of the Hungarian high nobility. Molding young girls into proper Damen, or ladies of society, represented the primary purpose of these convent schools. Above all, such upper-class convent schools served to “transmit a certain cultural knowledge, primarily of an aesthetic-literary character. In the curriculum, particular weight was placed upon foreign languages and music, above all playing the piano, as well as practicing the womanly handicrafts while the other subjects generally found little consideration.” The costliness of convent schools, traditionally the domain of aristocratic women, precluded lower-class girls from post-elementary instruction.

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70 On Mary Ward and Englische Fräulein Order in early modern Germany, see Ulrike Strasser, State of Virginity: Gender, Politics and Religion in Early Modern Germany (Ann Arbor, 2003).
During the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, hiring private tutors, most often in French, also became fashionable among the nobility and bourgeoisie. Also limited to elite pupils was a growing number of private girls’ school developing in the Monarchy’s urban centers at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Like the composition of the late nineteenth-century female Lyceum and Gymnasium, a high proportion of girls at such institutes were Jewish or of Jewish descent.\textsuperscript{75} Supplemental lessons in drawing, music, and dancing were often continued in the homes of Bildungsbürgertum daughters. Yet the quality of education in the arts and music gleaned through private instruction was highly differential and tailored towards sociability. In contrast to Austrian cities, the growth of private or league-sponsored girls’ schools in Hungarian urban centers appears to have been minimal due to the influence of communal and Protestant schools.\textsuperscript{76}

A major breakthrough in women’s education occurred with the liberal school laws enacted after Emperor Franz Josef issued a Constitution in late December 1867 securing the basic legal rights of all citizens. Passed on 14 April 1869, the Reichsvolksschulgesetz (Imperial School Law) represented an educational antecedent to liberal constitutionalism in secularizing and liberalizing public education. The legislation affected Austrian women in several ways. The Imperial School Law secularized public education and mandated elementary instruction for all citizens, boys as well as girls. Of prime importance, mandatory schooling was better enforced in the nineteenth century than after the Theresian reforms. Compulsory instruction was increased from six to eight years in the inter-confessional Volksschule (primary school) and Bürgerschule (a form of secondary school that catered to the professions rather than university study). Instruction was coeducational in the Volksschule. In larger municipalities, pupils had the

\textsuperscript{75} Harriet Freidenreich, \textit{Female, Jewish, and Educated: The Lives of Central European University Women} (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2002), 5.

\textsuperscript{76} Rosa Schwimmer-Bedy calculated that only 1.16\% (197 schools) of Hungarian elementary schools were in private hands around 1900, with an even fewer percentage, 0.52\% (or 89 schools), sponsored by private leagues. Roszika Schwimmer, “Das Stand der Frauenbildung in Ungarn,” in \textit{Handbuch der Frauenbewegung}, 195.
possibility of attending separate, 3-year Bürgerschule after successful completion of the 5-year Volkschule. Boys and girls were taught separately, according to different lesson plans, in the Bürgerschule. While boys received a heavier dose of arithmetic, geometry, and drawing, girls were made to do handicrafts such as needlework and embroidery.

Animated by a similar liberal spirit as in Austria, Hungary’s Educational Act of 1868 made elementary schooling mandatory well before many of Western Europe’s supposedly more advanced countries. Indeed, it is often forgotten that Austro-Hungarian law regulated compulsory schooling over a decade before the passing of the Elementary Education Acts of 1880 and 1893 in Great Britain. The work of progressive Minister of Education József Eötvös, Hungary’s Education Act broke the Church’s monopoly on education and introduced a system of six-year compulsory schooling which boys and girls aged 6 to 15 were required to attend. Testifying to the laws’ liberal spirit, the language of classroom instruction was to be the pupil’s mother tongue. Schoolteachers were hence required to be multi-lingual in ethnically-diverse areas. Latin remained the language of secondary instruction, although this would change to Hungarian with the Secondary School Act of 1883.

Similar to the tiered system in Austria, the Elementary Act provided for three types of basic schools: 1) Népisolák (Elementary Schools); 2) Felsőbb Népiskolák (Higher Elementary Schools); 3) Polgáriiskolák (Civic Schools) as well as teacher-training schools. Népisolák were 6-year primary schools which taught basics of reading, writing, arithmetic, history, etc. The

80 C. I. Dodd, “Hungarian Education,” Education in Scandinavia, Switzerland, Holland, Hungary, etc., 490.
Felsőbb Népiskolák offered three-year extension courses to successful Népisolák graduates in penmanship, drawing, Hungarian as a second-language for non-Hungarian districts (and German for Hungarian-districts), and economics. Much attention was granted to girls’ needlework and embroidery in the Higher Elementary Schools; so much so that certain critics complained of the detrimental effects of executing elaborate Hungarian needlework patterns on pupils’ eyes. The Polgáriisolák, analogous to the Austrian Bürgerschulen, could be found in larger villages and urban centers and offered a more humanistic curriculum than the other types. In addition to the subjects previously mentioned, particular attention was devoted to Hungarian and German Language and Literature, as well as French, Music, and Latin. In contrast to Austria, however, Hungary’s Education Acts introduced a different type of middle-school, the Revision School. According to the Elementary Act, children were required to attend elementary school from age 6-12, at which point many progressed into Citizen or Upper-Elementary Schools. Those who did not were required to attend a Revision School, in which applied and theoretical economics and practical skills were taught in addition to standard subjects, for a certain number of hours per week from age 12-15.

In addition to protecting linguistic minority rights, the 1868 Educational Laws also upheld religious freedom by stipulating that in districts with Church Schools, communities were required to establish separate schools for students of different faiths, provided that at least a group of thirty given students of any given faith could be formed. If the number was less than thirty, children were required to attend the Church School, where separate religious instruction was provided. The latter case was closer to the solution in Austria’s Reichvolksschulgesetz, which left religious instruction mandatory but provided for separate classes according to

81 C. I. Dodd, “Hungarian Education,” Education in Scandinavia, Switzerland, Holland, Hungary, etc., 495.
83 C. I. Dodd, “Hungarian Education,” Education in Scandinavia, Switzerland, Holland, Hungary, etc., 491.
confession. The 1868 Laws, in contrast to the earlier Theresian reforms, exercised a much more marked effect on combating illiteracy among the Hungarian masses: with rates of illiteracy dropping from 68.7% to 31.3%. Eötvös’s reforms also reorganized Hungary’s gimnáziums, expanded the facilities of the Budapest University, and of prime importance for women, established teacher-training colleges.

As also held true in Austria, Hungary’s Educational Ministry privileged educational ideals founded on gendered difference rather than equality. Classes, and when possible entire schools, were segregated by gender and curricula were tailored to male and female societal roles. “In schools attended by both sexes, the boys are taught in separate classes by men teachers, and the girls are in the charge of women teachers.” Until 1896, when the state opened its first gimnázium for girls, girls public schooling in Hungary was limited to the three types of schools stipulated by the 1868 laws. All three types of schools, nonetheless, stood fully open to women, albeit with certain areas of the curriculum rigged to prepare women for domestic duties.

Particular weight was placed upon language instruction, primarily Hungarian, German, French, and English, as well as the womanly handicrafts. Even more so than in Vienna, hiring English nannies also became de rigueur for wealthy families in fin-de-siècle Budapest. These factors, aided by Dualist Hungary’s liberal impetus to modernize its educational structure, paved the way for the proliferation of the Lyceum throughout Hungary in the 1870s and 80s.

Importantly, Austria-Hungary’s liberal school laws opened the professions of kindergarten and primary-school teachers to women in both halves of the Monarchy. In the eyes of contemporaries, women were well-suited to professions in early-childhood education

85 C. I. Dodd, “Hungarian Education,” Education in Scandinavia, Switzerland, Holland, Hungary, etc., 494.
given women’s “natural calling” in raising children “since time immemorial.” However, this natural calling did not extend to teaching advanced students; female teachers were not permitted to instruct at higher secondary schools, such as Realschule, Gymnasium, or the female lyceum whose curriculum was largely improvised over the course of the nineteenth century. Higher education, as was generally the case in the rest of mid-nineteenth-century Europe, was strictly segregated by gender. The law stipulated that elementary teaching staff should be educated “in teacher training institutes according to the gender of the candidate.” With a Ministerial Decree of 3 November 1869, Austria created a system of official pedagogical institutes for the Crownlands. The first 4-year school for women in Vienna opened to an incoming class of forty on 15 December 1869. Similar organizations were soon founded in Linz, Graz, and Innsbruck as were Vienna’s older Zivilmädchenpensionat and Offizierstöchterinstitut revamped as official state pedagogical institutes. In Hungary, candidates for teaching elementary school were required to study a variety of subjects (with special attention devoted to Women’s Work, Cookery, Domestic Economy, Needlework) from age 14-18 while candidates for teaching in the Upper-Elementary and citizen schools were required to study until age 21. Austrian female schoolteachers were generally granted equal pay with their male colleagues and the privilege of electing representatives for district school-boards: albeit through a male proxy. Hungarian female schoolteachers also, according to leaders of Hungary’s women’s movement, enjoyed

88 Quoted in Helmut Engelbrecht, Geschichte des österreichischen Bildungswesen Vol. IV, 280.
90 Ibid.
91 In contrast, male teachers in Hungary were required to master more subjects than female teachers, including Religion, Pedagogy, School Method, Geography, History, German, Hungarian, Natural Science [with special reference to Agriculture, Rural Economy, and Gardening], Mathematics, Singing, Music, and Gymnastics.
92 Helmut Engelbrecht, Geschichte des österreichischen Bildungswesen Vol. IV, 280.
equal treatment with their male colleagues and were even permitted to marry. Unlike their Hungarian sisters, Austrian teachers were required to remain celibate, with very few exceptions.

With the right of free assembly protected by the 1867 Constitution, a variety of leagues dedicated to the pedagogical and material interests of women schoolteachers developed. New genres of specialized periodicals aimed at the Empire’s growing corps of female schoolteachers appeared concurrently. Launched in 1869, the first of these specialized journals was *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Lehrerinnen* (Female-Teachers’ Standard Journal), edited by Ferdinand Wendt, Professor of Psychology at the Imperial Teacher Training Institute in Troppau, and Helene Lintemer, Director of the German Girls’ Elementary School in Smichov by Prague. A “journal dedicated exclusively to the interests of women schoolteachers,” the *General Journal for Women Schoolteachers* offered readers pedagogical essays addressing the special needs of girl pupils, teaching methodology, news on professional developments, educational history, book reviews, and job postings. Directors and professors from pedagogical training institutes across the Empire, as well as educators and school officials, rounded out its editorial board and lent the journal a quasi-official character. Other specialized journals included *Der Lehrerinnen-Wart* (*Women Schoolteachers’ Watch*), founded 1889 and running under various title changes until 1901, as well as *Österreichische Lehrerinnen-Zeitung* (Austrian Women Schoolteachers’ Newspaper), organ of the *Verein der Lehrerinnen und Erzieherinnen in Österreich* (League of Women Schoolteachers and Governesses in Austria, VÖLE, founded in 1869 by Marianne Hainisch), which was published from 1893 to 1901 under the editorship of Viennese Roszika Schwimmer, “Das Stand der Frauenbildung in Ungarn,” 195.

93 The periodical was published as *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Lehrerinnen* from 1869-1876, and then appeared from 1876-83 as *Mädchenschule: Ein Organ für die gesamten Interessen des Mädchen-Schulwesen*. 95 *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Lehrerinnen* 1:1 (20 December 1876): 2.
schoolteacher Fanni Borschitzky [Figure 1.2]. The two latter journals confronted issues of equal rights with male colleagues, as well as fundamental reforms in the Austrian school system, more aggressively than earlier journals and became springboards for the women’s movement in Austria-Hungary.

In the Hungarian lands, a journal called Nemzeti Nőnevelés (National Women’s Education) led to the founding of the Maria Dorothea Egyesület (Maria Dorothea Association, or MDE) teachers’ union in 1885. The MDE campaigned for the interests of female teachers and addressed the woman question more generally. Longtime editor of Nemzeti Nőnevelés Ilona Stetina played a leading role in the league and its mission to create a home and sanatorium for teachers no longer able to support themselves. That the MDE organized itself around the issue of women’s education rather than confessional or charitable interests distinguished it from earlier charitable societies for Hungarian women. The Pesti Jótékony Nőegylet (Pest Women’s Charitable Society), founded in 1817, represented the oldest of such charitable leagues.

“Women teachers are essential!” or at least rang the slogan of an essay on the importance of gender in education and character formation. Likening morality and character formation to a carefully-constructed Kunstwerk, an article in the premiere issue of Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Lehrerinnen (Journal for Women Schoolteachers), an organ published by the imperial teachers’ training school, stressed the necessity of distinct, gender-appropriate training for male and female “architects” of character formation. Just as the Apollo of Belvedere represented the perfect male aesthetic, so did the Venus of Knidos represent an appropriate feminine ideal.

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96 Lehrerinnen-Wart ran as ‘Women-Schoolteachers’ Watch’ from 1899-1891. From 1891-1894 it was published as Neuzet: Blätter für weibliche Bildung in Schule und Haus, zur Förderung der Frauenbestrebungen Vertretung der Fraueninteressen and finally from 1894-1901 as Frauenleben: Blätter zur Vertretung der Frauen-Interessen.
98 A Buda - Pest Jotekony Nögesületek Alapszabályai, mintazok 1817-dik évben az egyesületek keletkezése alkalmaival alapítatta (Pest: Károlyi/Trattner, 1843); Anton Dolánszky, Darstellung des Oñer wohltätigen Frauen-Vereines und seines Wirkens (Pest, Aloys Busanszky, 1857).
Likewise, while women should not aspire to the “majestic” domes of the Renaissance or other monumental art, producing refined needlework and other handcrafts was well within female abilities. Hence, in order to provide students with appropriate role models, a gender-balanced classroom, reflecting male and female teachers’ particular areas of expertise, was essential to proper character formation.

We absolutely need women-teachers in order to educate girls, especially to provide the necessary groundwork for proper feminine character formation. Therefore, a girls’ school with no women-teachers or where the number of female teachers is not at least equal to male is no place that earns the name of a rational, pedagogic institute.99

The essay went on to elaborate that an all female environment was equally undesirable, yet such girls’ schools with exclusively-female staffs were preferable for the preservation of the “feminine nature” than schools with only male teachers.100 While going beyond the balance suggested by the Directors of the Pedagogical Institutes, female schoolteachers accounted for as much as 43.8% of all Viennese teaching staff by 1896.101

However, the lure of a career in school-teaching was not without its pitfalls for Austrian women. Though Austrian women schoolteachers were better compensated than their German sisters, they were still expected to live on a fraction of male teachers’ salaries. Many teachers took to moonlighting as tutors, writers, and academic research assistants to make ends meet while others found more traditional ways of economizing.102 The celibacy required of state schoolteachers was a large sacrifice for women desiring a family or spousal companionship. The idea of working, married women not only offended traditional notions of gendered spheres where

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100 Ibid.
men were breadwinners, but gave fuel to criticism against double-income households wherein two salaries were viewed as unethical. Contemporaries nonetheless sanctioned single women working, particularly those employed out of economic necessity. Nonetheless, high percentages of female public schoolteachers gave rise to complaints of the “feminization of the schools.”103 Many of the teachers’ unions mentioned above, in addition to the AÖFV and BÖFV, campaigned to improve such issues around the turn of the century. Resulting from the more favorable treatment Hungarian schoolteachers reputedly received, as well as the general passivity of the women’s movement in Hungary, Hungarian female schoolteachers took a more moderate line and seemed to heed the mulier taceat in ecclesia dictum.104 The Austrian groups’ protests, however, had to be carefully framed as non-political, as § 30 of the Austrian Vereinsgesetz (Law of Associations) forbade women, along with “foreigners and minors” from membership in political leagues.105 Nonetheless, the ostensibly non-political nature of such unions allowed women schoolteachers to air their grievances.

One influential treatise addressing problems facing women schoolteachers was composed in 1885 by Fanni Borschitzky, Moravian-born public schoolteacher, editor of the VÖLE’s Österreichische Lehrerinnen-Zeitung, and AÖFV activist.106 Her prize-winning essay Für das gute Recht: Ein Beitrag zur Lehrerinnenfrage (For True Justice: A Study of the Women-Teachers Question) was an eloquent plea for equality with male teachers. Yet her arguments were carefully phrased to avoid “denouncing the ‘male teacher’” but to shed light on overlooked statistical data and facets of the woman-teacher problem.107 The essay scrutinized four arguments

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103 Helmut Engelbrecht, Geschichte des österreichischen Bildungswesen Vol. IV, 280.
106 On Borschitzky, see Marianne Nigg, Biographien der österreichischen Dichterinnen und Schriftstellerinnen: Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Literatur in Österreich (Kühkopf: Korneuburg, 1893), 11 and die Österreicherin 10:8 (1937): 3.
107 Fanni Borschitzky, Für das gute Recht: Ein Beitrag zur Lehrerinnenfrage (Wien: Bergmann, 1885), 1.
frequently leveled against Austrian female teachers: 1) that Germany’s women teachers were paid less, hence Austrian female schoolteachers were overpaid; 2) that female teachers were more prone than men to illness and early retirement; 3) possessed inferior education and training and; 4) displayed inferior teaching abilities. Rather than disputing the first point, for it was, in fact, one of the Austrian educational system’s more progressive elements that female teachers were granted equal pay, Borschitzky offered a rational explanation of the salary disparity.

“Female teachers in Germany generally receive 90% of the salary of male teachers, what in no way reflects a lower estimation of female teachers themselves, but should be viewed as the natural consequence of women’s quantitatively lesser achievements, of her unequal pre-qualifications and lack of higher qualifying exams.” Thus, the economic value of female teachers, in that they normally began teaching around age 18 after only 2-3 years of training, was actually lesser than male teachers, who were required to go through extensive training and examinations. Borschitzky dismissed the second point on the susceptibility of women teachers to illness, pointing to her own experience. While teaching at a girls’ school with an all-female staff, her director told her that he had to “help out” because of absences much more frequently when he was a running a boys’ school with all-male staff than with the present staff. Responding to accusations from opponents that female teachers were under-educated, Borschitzky responded that the vast majority of male teachers also lacked any sort of academic education. Besides, it was not pure “book learning” but the “correct methodological, didactic, and practical training gained at pedagogical institutes and vocational schools” that made for good educators. Her

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108 Ibid., 6.
109 Fanni Borschitzky, Für das gute Recht: Ein Beitrag zur Lehrerinnenfrage, 8. Prussian regulations instated in 1874 provided for the certification of female teachers at the elementary or higher levels, but the qualifications were more lenient than for male teachers.
110 Fanni Borschitzky, Für das gute Recht, 9.
111 Ibid., 11.
retort to point four countered many false notions about women teachers. In contrast to the alleged protection and illustrious career paths erroneously connected with female teachers, the author showed that, in reality, the careers of women teachers were much more contingent. For instance, low-level female teachers were only promoted to permanent state positions several years after their male colleagues while their salaries remained significantly lower. The celibacy required of female teachers represented a final point of criticism: particularly the pseudo-reasoning that male teachers deserved higher salaries in order to support families when female schoolteachers were excluded from the same source of personal fulfillment. Nonetheless, despite the problems highlighted by Borschitzky, the profession of schoolteacher proved an attractive and relatively equally-compensated career path for many Austrian women.

The founding of a variety of Frauenberufschulen (women’s vocational schools) in the 1860s and 70s offered Austro-Hungarian women unprecedented professional opportunities and demonstrated the women’s movement’s faith in liberal principles of self-advancement. Founded by various private leagues, most prominently Vienna’s Frauen Erwerb Verein (League for Women’s Employment, founded 1866) and Budapest’s Országos Nőiparegyiolet (National League for Women’s Employment, founded 1872), such vocational schools provided training in fields deemed appropriately feminine: domestic cottage industries such as embroidery, needlework, sewing, cooking, as well as careers in commerce and technology. Duration of study at such institutes ranged from 1-3 years and tuition varied greatly by institution. Teaching methods and curriculum of such schools, run by all-female staffs, were catered to the distinct needs of female students.

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112 Ibid., 14.
113 Ibid., 24. The marital rights of Hungarian schoolteachers represented one way in which Hungarian school policy vis-a-vis women was far more progressive than in Austria.
From the very beginning these schools were something completely separate and independent, growing out of feminine nature and female initiative, so that bureaucratic union… with male schools serving the same purpose could never be imposed… From the onset, the schools’ external organization and their internal makeup, teaching goals, curriculum and subject matter were adapted to the feminine nature and attuned to womanly careers.\footnote{Anna Harmer, “Frauenberufschule,” in Hundert Jahre Unterrichtsministerium 1848-1948: Festschrift des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht in Wien, 234.}

Moreover, in empowering girls to economic self-sufficiency through careers in the womanly handicrafts, industry, and domestic service, such schools embodied liberal principles of self-help and advancement. “Giving women independence and a career, making her life more free and secure reflected the tendencies of the era around 1850, right after the 1848 March Revolutions as well as the strongly liberal and feministic endeavors of the following decades.”\footnote{Ibid., 239.} A final characteristic of the Frauenberufschulen was that private initiative for vocational training predated government support; only after the models established by private leagues, such as the widely successful vocational courses of the Frauen-Erwerk-Verein, did the Ministry of Education follow suit. All the same, the liberal winds of the 1860s and 70s propelled the creation of state schools empowering women to self-sufficiency through their own handiwork.

The k.k. Kunststickereischule (Imperial-Royal School of Art Embroidery), founded in response to the pavilion of women’s handicrafts organized for the 1873 Vienna World Exhibition, was the first of the state-sponsored women’s craft schools. In the eyes of art historian and Kunstgewerbemuseum (Museum of Applied Arts) Textile Curator Alois Riegl, famous for his contributions on stylistic development and nations’ so-called Kunstwollen (roughly the “will-to-art”) to the Viennese School of art history, the 1873 exhibition had failed miserably in its attempt to raise awareness of appropriate materials, methods of decoration, and color scheme.
among dilettante craftswomen. Instead, “any object of daily use found acceptance [in the 1873 exhibition] as long as it demonstrated a certain level of quality and solidity.” Thus, “a movement for founding a specialized school for the purpose of reforming needlework art” developed and the k.k. Kunststickereischule, which offered 3-year courses in basic drawing, practical embroidery, theoretical subjects and pattern making, opened its doors in October 1874. The embroidery school boasted an all-female staff and directorship. Therese Mirani, successor to Emilie Bach as Kunststickereischule Director in 1889, received the highest level of civil decoration (Goldene Verdienstkreuz mit der Krone, or Crowned Golden Cross of Service) upon her retirement for lifelong service to the state. The ÄÖFV praised her for being a “loyal advisor and motherly friend [to her students] who spared no effort in helping her students to achieve a secure, independent existence.”

The embroidery school, along with the 1879-founded k.k. Zentralspitzenkurs (Austrian Central Course for Lace-Making), was incorporated into the k. k. Zentralanstalt für Frauengewerbe (Austrian Central Institute for Women’s Crafts) in 1911. The new Central Institute for Women’s Crafts offered tracks in sewing, dress-, hat- and flower-making. Courses began with two years of practicing basic methods, techniques, and pattern-making; at which point students were given the chance to spend another 1-2 years honing their skills in master schools with experienced craftswomen. Upon successful completion

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116 Many of Riegl’s more innovative theories are contained in Stilfragen: Grundlegungen zu einer Geschichte der Ornamentik (Berlin, 1893).
119 “Notizen [Therese Mirani]” Dokumente der Frauen 5:1 (1 July 1901): 224.
120 Ibid.
121 On the Zentralspitzenkurs, founded with aims similar to the Kunststickereischule, see Else Cronbach Die österreichische Spitzenhausindustrie: Ein Beitrag zur Frage der Hausindustriepolitik (Wien: Deuticke, 1907).
of the master schools, pupils were qualified to become state-certified teachers. Naturally, at state as well as privately-sponsored vocational schools, strict segregation of the sexes was maintained.

The earliest of Austria-Hungary’s private Frauenberufschulen were those founded in the late 1860s by the Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Verein (Viennese League for Women’s Employment, or WFEV), a league which Marianne Hainisch called the “eldest” and most prominent of the Austrian school unions. Indeed, the WFEV represented a truly groundbreaking achievement in being one of the world’s first leagues dedicated to marketing products of female handicraft. Vienna’s Society for Women’s Employment predated the founding of Candace Wheeler’s New York Society of Decorative Arts (1877), an organization founded “to encourage profitable industries among women who possess artistic talent, and to furnish a standard of excellence and a market for their work,” by a full eleven years, and appeared only months after Berlin’s Lette Verein (Verein zur Förderung der Erwerbsfähigkeit des weiblichen Geschlechts, or League for Advancing the Gainful Employment of the Female Sex) was established in February 1866 by Prussian Crown-Princess Victoria. A parallel organization to the WFEV, the Országos Nóiparegylet, would be founded in Budapest in 1873. The WFEV was founded in 1866 by Iduna Laube, Auguste Littrow-Bischoff, Helene von Hornbostel, Amelie Koppel, and Marie Kompert, upper-middle-class Viennese women active in society and the budding campaign for women’s rights. Bringing economic self-sufficiency to poor women and girls, as well as providing higher education to middle class daughters, fueled the league’s establishment.

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124 Candace Wheeler, The Development of Embroidery in America, (New York: Harper Brothers, 1921), 112. The founding of the New York Society of Decorative Arts in 1877 to enhance women’s career opportunities through the decorative arts inspired the founding of similar organizations in cities across the United States. Partly inspired by the display of women’s handicrafts at the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition, Wheeler was also influenced by the English design reform movement and the South Kensington Museum.
The *Frauen-Erwerb-Verein* brought about significant progress in artistic, commercial, and academic fields. Its purpose was to “create a new intellectual and practical foundation for women’s education, that is to say, to generate opportunities beyond the general primary-school obligation, whether in commercial-, cottage industries, or general fields of education.”

Courses in household sewing inaugurated the WFEV’s activities in 1868. Economically empowering women to earn money through conventionally feminine spheres such as sewing and embroidery, the middle-class ladies of the *Frauen-Erwerb-Verein* displayed groundbreaking feminist initiative, as the following passage vividly illustrates.

When the league was founded on 13 November 1866 to enable the widows and orphans of those fallen in the war in finding work and sustenance, the ladies were tottering in wide crinolines to the memorable meeting of the *Verein für Volkswirtschaftlichen Fortschritt* (League for National Economic Progress) in delicate, swaying steps, shrouded in fur-trimmed veils, crimped hair held up in silk nets… Nonetheless, the women of Vienna’s cultural, intellectual, and economic elite banded together to purchase a few of the new sewing-machines, just introduced in the factories, in order to give girls and women without means the opportunity to own their daily bread by making linens.

The sewing course was followed by a 3-year *Hauswirtschaftliche Fortbildungsschule* (Home-Economics Continuing Education School) in 1871 and a 3 year- *Höhere Arbeitsschule* (literally higher work-school, a type of German reform pedagogical school stressing learning through experimentation). Other vocational offerings included a 2-year trade school, 2-year courses in stenography, telegraph-operation and seminars in cooking, needlework, millinery, and hand- and machine-embroidery.

The WFEV gave rise to a similar organization in Budapest, the *Országos Nőiparegylet* (National League for Women’s Employment, or ONI). Founded in 1873 to give a living to poor

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and abandoned women, the ONI promoted women’s vocational education and the cultivation of traditional Hungarian peasant cottage industries.\textsuperscript{128} Traditional folk art objects made in the home were marketed to large audiences at public exhibitions in the hopes of integrating poor rural women into the modern capitalist economy. As one observer reported; “[a]prons, carpets, textile fabrics, slippers, tobacco pouches, whip handles, and ornamental chests are made artistically according to antique models.”\textsuperscript{129} At the same time, the league supported the revival of traditional methods of Hungarian decoration, ornament, and design that became central to the late-nineteenth-century search for a Hungarian language of form.\textsuperscript{130} However, in contrast to Vienna’s WFEV, the ONI proved less successful in clamoring for female schools of trade, craft, and commerce. In comparison to the myriad activities of the WFEV, the ONI represented, in the words of Susan Zimmerman, “a shadow existence and saw itself confronted with strong societal resistance.”\textsuperscript{131} Nonetheless, despite the patriarchal norms characterizing Hungarian culture, the ONI’s journal \textit{A nők munkaköre} (The Sphere of Women’s Work), launched in November 1872, tirelessly campaigned for the educational and economic interests of Hungarian women. Like the Austrian middle-class women’s movement, the ONI distanced itself from radical feminists whose revolutionary ideas “achieved nothing other… than forgetting their womanliness.”\textsuperscript{132}

More successful than Hungary’s League for Women’s Employment was its \textit{Országos Nőképző Egyesület} (National League for the Advancement of Women’s Education, or ONKE), founded in 1868 by a group of 22 female journalists and activists. Assisted by journalist Emília

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\textsuperscript{128} On the revival of Hungarian peasant arts and crafts, see Aladár Körösfői-Kriesch, “Hungarian Peasant Art.” \textit{Peasant Art in Austria and Hungary}. Charles Holme, ed. (London: The Studio, 1911): 31-46

\textsuperscript{129} Käthe Schirmacher, \textit{The Modern Woman’s Right Movement}, Carl Eckhardt, Trans. (New York: Macmillan, 1912), 171.


\textsuperscript{131} Susan Zimmermann, “Die bessere Hälfte?” 24.

\textsuperscript{132} \textit{A nők munkaköre} (November 1872): 1. Quoted in \textit{Ibid.}, 25.
Kánya (Szegfű Mórné, 1830-1905), editor of the women’s weekly *Családi Kör* (Family Circle), Hermina Beniczky (Veres Pálné, 1815-1895) led the movement to establish a league dedicated to advancing Hungarian women’s education in 1868. The ONKE founded a higher school for girls in 1869 with the intention of bringing women self-sufficiency through higher education. With Hungarian literary critic, Pál Gyulai, an outspoken supporter of women’s education presiding as superintendent over an all-male teaching staff, the school opened to an inaugural class of fourteen girls. Subjects of instruction included history, geography, science, Hungarian language and literature, and French. Conspicuously absent from Veres’s curriculum were such feminine subjects like embroidery, handicraft, and music, as Veres purposefully steered her institute away from becoming another finishing school. Encouraged by a visit from Empress Elizabeth in 1871 when she addressed students in Hungarian, the Veres school served as a model for the establishment of similar schools across Hungary. The ONKE school’s first class graduated in 1872 and a woman became superintendent for the first time in 1879. Analogous to the continuing and vocational courses being initiated at the same time in Vienna, the society offered courses in domestic economy and home economics for adults. It was largely through the lobbying of the ONKE that Hungarian Minister of Education Wlassics accepted a proposal to

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133 According to Hungarian custom, women used their husbands’ forenames plus the feminine suffix –né rather than their own given names in public life. The names given in parentheses (Veres Pálné, or Mrs. Paul Veres) reflect this naming practice. On Hermine Beniczky, see Veres Pálné (Beniczky Hermin) élete és működése: hálás tisztelete jeléül kiadja az Országos Nőképző-Égvesület, Rudnay Józsefné és Szigethy Gyuláné, eds. (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1902); on Emília Kánya refer to *Biographical dictionary of women’s movements and feminisms: Central, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe, 19th and 20th centuries*, Francisca De Haan, Krasimira Daskalova, Anna Loutfi, Francisca De Haan, eds. (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 213-216.

134 Susan Zimmermann, “Die bessere Hälfte?” 24. Countess Blanka Teleki had also established a short-lived girls school (1846-1848) around the time of the Hungarian Revolutions. Accordingly, the pedagogical principles of Teleki’s school were more patriotic than anything. Teleki wanted to remedy the fact girls’ schooling was mostly in the hands of foreign tutors, resulting in the fact that upper-class Hungarian girls could hardly speak their native tongue. The aims of Teleki’s school, however, were far less ambitious than Veres’s and more like traditional upper-class boarding schools.


establish a girls’ Gymnasium in Budapest in 1896. In contrast to the situation in Vienna, girls’ classical education was initiated by the state rather than private leagues.

Although Hungary’s ONI was less successful in erecting applied-arts schools in Budapest, Vienna’s Frauen-Erwerb-Verein expanded its program by opening schools for painting and drawing in 1873. In the WFEV’s new art courses “all types of pattern-drawing and decorative painting are executed; sketches and patterns for all fields of women’s handicrafts are produced, and stylistically-functional designs for weaving and other decorative arts are drawn.”¹³⁷ The art courses offered by the WFEV constituted a tremendous step forward for Austrian women’s art education. At the time, the WFEV represented one of the few credible institutions where women could study fundamentals of painting and drawing, albeit with a focus on the applied rather than fine arts. The importance of the WFEV drawing school would only multiply after the Vorbereitungsschule (Preparatory School) of the Austrian School of Applied Arts was closed in 1886 until further notice to women. Until the Vorbereitungsschule reopened to women in 1901, commercially-oriented courses like those of the WFEV or private artistic training, costly and of highly differential quality, represented the main channel of art instruction in Austria. In Hungary, women were permitted to study at the Országos Magyar Királyi Mintarajztanoda és Rajztanárképezde (Royal Hungarian National Drawing and Teaching-Training School), since its 1871-founding, albeit under certain limitations and provisions. The Országos Magyar Királyi Iparművészeti Tanoda egyetlen osztálya (Royal Hungarian Royal Institute of Arts and Crafts), established under the jurisdiction of the Drawing School in 1880, opened to female students in 1911/12.

The WFEV’s applied arts courses embodied the latest trends in the decorative arts revival movement in Austria-Hungary, largely due to the influence of Jeanette von Eitelberger-Edelberg, founding-member and league president from 1873-1897. As will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Two, a movement developed in late nineteenth-century Austria-Hungary to reform the womanly handicrafts: to involve amateur practitioners of women’s crafts such as needlework, embroidery, and weaving in design processes so as to avoid tasteless executions of inappropriate patterns and materials. As MfKI Curator Jacob von Falke lambasted over-ornamented embroidery; “Do we think that we shall sit more comfortably with rocky landscapes at our backs, or that we shall sleep more soundly if we rest our heads upon loving couples holding sweet converse together, or that our feet will be the warmer if they repose upon embroidered pug-dogs?” Spearheading the Viennese needlework reform-movement were Jeanette von Eitelberger and her husband Rudolf, co-founder of Austria’s Museum for Art and Industry, as well as Jacob von Falke, curator and successor to Eitelberger as Museum Director in 1885 [Figure 1.3]. Activist for women’s educational and employment opportunities, Jeanette von Eitelberger played an instrumental role in organizing the Pavilion of Women’s Handicrafts at the 1873 Vienna World’s Exhibition and served on its executive committee. Objects exhibited at the World’s Fair were to serve as didactic models of good taste, diligent execution, and proper materials. The exhibition showcased works of: 1) female schools 2) female Hausindustrie (domestic industry) 3) decorative and industrial art from female dilettantes (i.e. objects made by housewives for domestic consumption) and 4) women’s literary production. The example of

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139 “Die Frauenarbeit Österreichs auf der Weltenausstellung,” Mitteilung des k.k. Österreichischen Museum f. Kunst und Industrie Vol. VIII, no. 91 (1 April 1873): 331. Hungarian women were not included in the women’s pavilion since Hungary was represented separately at the 1873 exhibition.  
Alois Riegl, however, has already shown that the exhibition came under fire for representing everything but good taste and diligent execution. At any rate, the WFEV’s drawing and sewing schools, as well as its trade and telegraph classes and courses in English and French, were duly represented at the Women’s Pavilion. Works exhibited included paintings, drawings, embroidery, hand- and machine-needlework as well as written documents. Nonetheless, while the exhibition of women’s handcrafts clearly celebrated women’s ability to participate in the market economy, the organizers of the Women’s Pavilion were careful to keep their distance from radical feminism. The purpose of the exhibition was strictly pedagogic and national-economic and had “nothing to do with the nebulous ‘women’s emancipation’ of the present.”

Yet, however carefully the exhibition was cloaked, the Women’s Pavilion had everything to do with women’s emancipation in glorifying woman’s ability to provide for herself.

Introducing a variety of academically-oriented course offerings, the WFEV played a decisive role in opening academia to women: the field in which women’s integration proved the trickiest. At the third general meeting of the *Wiener Frauen Erwerb Verein* on 12 March 1870, Marianne Hainisch addressed a petition to the Viennese Municipal Government for the establishment of parallel classes for girls at boys’ *Realgymnasien*. Knowing that such a radical proposal would encounter resistance, Hainisch added the caveat that; “[i]n the case that such a proposal is rejected, the petitioner suggests asking the imperial government to grant permission to found a *Realgymnasium* for girls, and to take the administration of such a school into its own

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Hainisch argued that the WFEV’s craft- and vocational schools, though useful for working-class girls, left middle-class families in the lurch. “Do you think… that a father from the bourgeoisie or the civil-service could quietly close his eyes when no other future than as such [working as a day-laborer] existed for his daughter?” Pointing to how increased Mittelschule (secondary-school) education was available even to sons of the poorest craftsman while middle-class women’s education was ignored, Hainisch maintained that “the gap between the general level of education between boys and girls will only grow larger.” Instead of another finishing school, Hainisch proposed a “serious school, a school in which girls essentially learn to think as our boys must learn.” In practical terms, Hainisch demanded nothing less than creation of a girls’ Unterrealgymnasium (the first four forms of the Realgymnasium, a type of pre-university secondary school offering modern languages in addition to Latin) from the Educational Ministry and the establishment of parallel girls’ classes at boys’ Realgymnasien from the Viennese School Board. Nonetheless, like others before her, Hainisch struck a leitmotif of moderation in distancing her arguments from the dangerous word “emancipation.” Such educational innovations would only, in her view, enhance women’s ability to be virtuous wives and mothers. The petition passed the WFEV unanimously.

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145 Hainisch later related that the idea for such a school came out of a personal epiphany when advising a friend whose husband was sick and no longer able to provide for the family. As the following passage illustrates, few wage-earning possibilities existed for educated middle-class women. “Aber obwohl wir beide [Hainisch and her friend] uns von morgens bis abends den Kopf zermarterten, konnten wir für die Frau, die mehrere Sprachen sprach und sehr musikalisch war, keine Erwerbsmöglichkeit ausfindig machen.” In “Zur Geschichte der österreichischen Frauenbewegung: Aus meiner Erinnerungen,” Frauenbewegung, Frauenbildung und Frauenarbeit in Österreich, 14.


147 Ibid., 6.

148 Ibid., 6.

149 Ibid., 14.

150 Ibid., 8.
Taking action on the petition, Budget Committee Speaker Dr. Heinrich Perger von Pergenau and later-Justice Minister Dr. Glaser introduced proposals for supporting women’s higher education into the Parliamentary Budget Committee in May 1870. Their plan to subsidize a Realgymnasium for girls won them an audience with Karl Stremayr, Minister of Education, that same spring. Yet the WFEV petition, along with other petitions for similar girls’ schools, came to a crashing halt on the Minoritenplatz. Such proposals went against the Ministry’s fundamental belief in women’s unique societal roles and the distinct pedagogical needs this difference entailed. Stremayr, though a member of the Liberal party, harbored conventional views on gender and education. The Minister maintained “that higher education is conducted strictly under separation of the sexes is a significant foundation of our educational systems.”

As Hainisch put it; “[l]ike the great majority of the population, they [ministerial officials] remained convinced that girls’ education must be one suited to woman’s unique nature.”

Ultimately, the Ministry tabled the WFEV’s plea for girls’ secondary schools on par with boys’ Gymnasien and advised creating more of the sort of “höhere Mädchenschule” (higher girls,’ i.e. finishing schools) that Hainisch and her colleagues were fighting against. With any reference whatsoever to girls’ higher education ignored in its 1870 Gymnasiale Enquête (Commission of Inquiry), the Educational Ministry instead provided moderate levels of support to lyceums and vocational schools ran by private leagues. By the turn of the century, the state began assuming supervision over the largely-improvised curricula of Austrian lyceums. As Minister Baron Paul Gautsch von Frankenthurn (Minister of Education from 1885-1893; 1895-1897), former Director

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154 Ibid., 16.
of the Theresian Military- and Oriental Academies before becoming one of Emperor Franz Josef’s most trusted advisors, clarified the government’s policy on women’s secondary education;

As long within woman’s true nature and actual needs, the Education Ministry does not desire to step in the way of [giving women an education equal to men’s and greater earning power] but to fully account for it [women’s education]. Yet, to give girls unrestricted access to the Realschule and Gymnasium created for the needs of male youth, and more generally to open up all fields of employment to women, does not suit her purpose. This would impinge serious dangers on woman’s physical constitution and natural calling and would not be without disadvantages for men, whose earning ability… could easily sink to such a degree that he could not support the maintenance or education of a family.\textsuperscript{155}

While not doubting its importance to modern society, Frankenthurn’s vision of women’s education prioritized woman’s childrearing and familial skills. The vision of women’s equality harbored by the Ministry for Education was one based on gendered difference, not sameness. That girls gained the right to stand for the Matura as special guest-students (Externistinnen) at boys’ Gymnasien in 1872 represented a small, if short of their demands for a state-sponsored girls Gymnasium, consolation to the women’s movement.\textsuperscript{156}

Taking matters into its own hands, the WFEV opened a 4-year Höhere Bildungsschule für Mädchen (Girls’ School of Higher Education) for pupils aged 12-16 in October 1871. The school’s curriculum was roughly equivalent to that of the six-year Realschule, with German, mathematics and drawing receiving priority. The school was rechristened as a six-form Lyceum (Mädchen-Lyzeum des Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Vereins, or Viennese League for Women’s Employment Girls’ Lyceum) in the 1889/90 school year and received rights of public


\textsuperscript{156} Yet these Externistinnen lacked many of the privileges of their male colleagues. Most importantly, the phrase “reif zum Besuch der Universität” remained absent from girls’ Matura certificates until 1901 and girls could only study at the university with special permission of the faculty.
incorporation (Öffentlichkeitsrecht), the ultimate ministerial blessing, in 1891 [Figure 1.4]. The school eventually opened institutes for studying English, French, and Latin; the latter of which was crucial for the university entrance exam.

The WFEV Mädchenlyzeum came under the stewardship of pedagogue Johann Degn in 1900, who was responsible for the far-reaching governmental reform of the Lyceum curriculum in December 1901.\textsuperscript{157} The result of a ministerial investigation conducted under Minister of Education Dr. Wilhelm Ritter von Hartel, the Ministerial decree of 11 December 1900 (Erlass MfKU Z. 34551) provided for the provisional reorganization, reform, and supervision of lyceum curriculum and was the first time that the state took an active hand in overseeing girls’ secondary curriculum.\textsuperscript{158} The model lyceum standardized by the regulations was to have six forms, offer a completion exam and be catered to the “feminine nature.”\textsuperscript{159} Modern languages (French, English, and German) predominated in the curriculum, accounting for around 50% of class time; religion, receiving 10-12 hours per week, followed close behind.\textsuperscript{160} Other subjects, such as geography, history, mathematics, geometry, and drawing were given short shrift in comparison to boys’ schools while singing, gymnastics, women’s handicrafts, and stenography rounded out the electives.\textsuperscript{161} According to the Provisional Regulations of 1900, the prototype Lyceum lacked a “tiered” structure that would funnel students between vocational, housewifely, or academic paths. Instead such matters (i.e. elective courses in crafts or higher educational seminars) were to be decided through individual course selection.

The Ministry of Education’s Provisional Lyceum Regulations of 1900 only stoked the fires for reform and governmental support of absolute equality in the form of girls’ Gymnasien.

\textsuperscript{158} Siegmund Kraus, “Österreichische Mädchenlyceen,” 81-82.
\textsuperscript{159} Adele Gerber, “Zur bevorstehenden Reform der höheren Mädchenbildung in Wien,” 35.
\textsuperscript{160} Siegmund Kraus, “Österreichische Mädchenlyceen,” 86.
\textsuperscript{161} Siegmund Kraus, “Österreichische Mädchenlyceen,” 89.
Male and female critics alike singled out the regulations’ many inadequacies, and above all, the government’s insistence on the lyceum, in preserving women’s uniquely feminine qualities and virtues, as the only proper form of girls’ secondary education. Auguste Fickert said of the provisional lyceum statute that “its best characteristic must be designated as said regulations’ provisional character.”\footnote{162} Much to the chagrin of Fickert and her colleagues, these provisional statutes were to remain in place for over ten years. Adele Gerber, editor of Neues Frauenleben and AÖFV board member, complained that; “[w]e fought against these schools [lyceums] from the very beginning, and can only wish, with all due respect to his Excellency, for their abolition or complete reorganization.”\footnote{163} Psychologist Siegmund Kraus assaulted the concept of \textit{weibliche Eigenart} (unique feminine nature) constantly referenced in ministerial decrees, rulings, and memoranda. “The feminine nature is, in this case, nothing other than a platitude that lends itself to citation anywhere where the curriculum holds gaps that cannot be otherwise cloaked.”\footnote{164} Kraus alleged that

\begin{quote}
They [Austrian lyceums] impart no general education, as the practical subjects find too little cultivation, their entire structure is not designed to prepare girls for attending institutions of higher learning, for graduates of the girls’ lyceums lag far behind graduates of male secondary schools. Thus, as the state neither founds nor maintains these schools, these schools were not suitable for enhancing women’s general education from the very onset.\footnote{165}
\end{quote}

Kraus, like Gerber, suggested scrapping the lyceum model altogether in favor of state-sponsored female Gymnasien, which the state was still hesitant to support even as late as 1910. Minister of Education Count Karl Stürgkh maintained “that this type of school [Lyceum] fits the present

\footnote{162} Quoted in Helene Langer and Getrud Bäumer, \textit{Handbuch der Frauenbewegung} III. Teil (Berlin, 1901), 175.
\footnote{163} Adele Gerber, “Zur bevorstehenden Reform der höheren Mädchenbildung in Wien,” 40. Minister-President Stürgkh was famously assassinated by Friedrich Adler while luncheoning on the Altes Markt as Prime Minister in 1916.
\footnote{164} Siegmund Kraus, “Österreichische Mädchenlyceen,” 86.
\footnote{165} Siegmund Kraus, “Österreichische Mädchenlyceen,” 91.
needs of the population.”  

Critics, however, saw through the transparency of such arguments and insisted that the elitist, privately-maintained lyceum was actually in the financial interests of both local communities and the central administration.  

Instead of investing in public girls’ secondary schools (Mädchenbürgerschulen) that would be open to all, the high-tuition lyceum ensured that these schools would maintain themselves. 

Another important point of criticism leveled at the provisional statutes of 1900 was the asymmetrical qualifications required of male and female lyceum-professors. While male teachers had to undergo extensive study and training, which could be as much as ten years, any female graduates of a lyceum or teacher’s college who had attended the university as full-time auditors (außerordentliche Hörerinnen) for three years were qualified to teach any level of the lyceum. 

Naturally, while this motion opened the profession of lyceum teacher to women for the first time, female lyceum-teachers’ qualifications often left something to be desired. The League of Women Lyceum-Teachers campaigned for the continuing education of female lyceum teachers and for their right to “unrestricted” university study as normal, matriculating students. 

Finally, critics pointed out that the Ministry’s lyceum plan lacked any sort of channeling or level system (similar to the Ober- and -Unterstufe of boys’ Gymnasien) that would separate vocational and academic tracks. 

By the time the Provisional Statutes of 1900 were issued, however, the private Gymnasiale Mädchenschule (Girls Grammar School) of the Verein für erweiterte Frauenbildung (League for Expanded Women’s Education, or VfEF) was well on its way to becoming Austria’s

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168 Martha Braun, Frauenbewegung, Frauenbildung und Frauenarbeit in Österreich, 122.  
first girls’ Gymnasium. Forerunner of the VfEF’s humanistic Mädchen-Obergymnasium that gained rights of public incorporation in 1904, the school had been founded in 1892 as a 6-year humanistic grammar school. Establishing a Gymnasium for girls, providing women with a broadened, more substantial education, as well as opening up the educated professions to women, represented the VfEF’s driving goals.\textsuperscript{170} The league met the formidable task of collecting the funds necessary to establish and maintain such a school as well as obtaining ministerial permission for the venture—without any guarantee that graduates having passed the Matura would, in fact, be allowed to matriculate.\textsuperscript{171} Counting 211 members in its first year of existence, founding- and contributing- members included prominent Austro-Hungarian women writers Marie Najmájer and Marie Ebner-Eschenbach as well as contributions from men such as neurologist Moritz Benedikt, philosopher Theodor Gomperz, and industrialist and politician Rudolf Auspitz.

Besides supporting higher education for women, Benedikt, Gomperz, and Auspitz all shared a Jewish pedigree: social backgrounds that were indeed consistent with the strong representation of Jewish women and girls in such leagues and secondary schools. In a city where Jews made up 10% of the population, Jewish boys constituted around 30% of Gymnasium students; at 50%, the ratio of Gymnasium students was even higher for Jewish girls, who also accounted for the overwhelming majority of lyceum pupils.\textsuperscript{172} Steven Beller reports approximately two-thirds of male graduates of the Viennese Central Gymnasien between 1870-

\textsuperscript{171} Jahresbericht des Vereines für erweiterte Frauenbildung in Wien 1. Jahrgang (1888/89) (Wien: Selbstverlag des VfEF, 1889), 1. At the time the school opened, women allowed to study at the university, but only in “exceptional cases” falling to the discretion of university faculty as per Ministerial Ordinance Z. 5385 of 6 May 1878.
\textsuperscript{172} Harriet Freidenreich, Female, Jewish, and Educated, 6. To put these figures into better perspective, Jews constituted 10% of the Viennese population; 5% of the population of Cisleithania; and 3% of the total population of the kingdoms and lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.
1910 were Jewish, with the proportion higher among Jewish girls. According to the calculations of historian Marsha Rosenblit, “in 1895/6, 57% of all Lyceum students were Jewish, and in 1910 the figure was still 46%.” By any yardstick, Jewish women accounted for a high proportion of women in secondary and higher education in Austria.

Given the predominance of Jewish women and girls in such schools and leagues, as well as in the women’s movement in general, it is not surprising that a number of leagues dedicated to “expanding and broadened women’s education, above all among the Christian populace” developed around the turn-of-the-century. Although the statutes of the *Christlicher Verein zur Förderung der Frauenbildung* (Christian League for the Advancement of Women’s Education, or CVFF, founded in May 1910 by Countess Gerta Walterskirchen) contained no explicitly Anti-Semitic language, non-Christians were discouraged from membership or attending the league’s lectures, courses, and from 1910-onward, its own *Mädchen-Lyceum* in Wieden. In contrast to the VfEF, the Christian League for the Advancement of Women’s Education was inclined to “accept existing models” of women’s secondary education rather than blazing the *Gymnasium* trail. Consequently, the CVFF opened a conventional 6-year lyceum more focused on practical subjects than the classics; nonetheless, the institute integrated “*reform-realgymnasiale Oberklassen*” (courses replicating the upper forms a *Realgymnasium*) in the 1913/4 school year. Indeed, while the strong presence of Jewish women in secondary and higher-education

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173 Steven Beller, *Concise History of Austria*, 174-175.
176 *Jahresbericht des öffentlichen Wiedner Mädchen-Lyceums* [1913/14]. (Wien: Selbstverlag des CVFF, 1914), 1. The idea for a new girls secondary school was conceived at the First Austrian Conference of Catholic Women on Easter 1910; shortly thereafter, a committee of ladies formed the CVFF in May 1910 and won approval for the institute in September 1910.
stands proven, the chapters to follow will show how this Jewish predominance also held true in the Viennese women’s artists leagues and academies.

In December 1891, Marianne Hainisch’s motion that, having collected the necessary funds and materials, the school should open at the beginning of the 1892 school-year, unanimously passed the VfEF board.\(^\text{178}\) Minister of Education Paul Gautsch von Frankenthurn granted his “friendly consent” to the endeavor during an audience with League Vice-Presidents Marie Bosshardt van Demerghel and Dr. Serafin Bondi and VfEF Member High-Court-Justice Ertl von Séau.\(^\text{179}\) The school opened as planned in Fall 1892 on its premises at Hegelgasse Nr. 12 in Vienna’s First District.\(^\text{180}\) Despite von Frankenthurn’s encouragement and the Ministry’s willingness to grant the institute rights of public incorporation in 1903, the VfEF’s repeated applications for government subventions fell on deaf ears: or, more accurately, on ears attuned to “feminine distinction” and girls’ particular educational needs rather than gendered sameness.\(^\text{181}\)

The Girls’ Gymnasium would not receive direct government assistance until 1920, when the political climate of the Republic was more sympathetic to absolute equality in women’s higher education.\(^\text{182}\) In this respect, in funding and giving public rights to a lánygimnázium as early as 1896, Hungary surpassed the Empire’s Western half in supporting women’s education. At any rate, the Gymnasiale Mädchenschule graduated its first class in 1898, who were required to take

\(^{178}\) *Jahresbericht des Vereines für erweiterte Frauenbildung in Wien IV. Jahrgang (1891/92) (Wien: Selbstverlag des VfEF, 1889), 1.*

\(^{179}\) *Jahresbericht des Vereines für erweiterte Frauenbildung in Wien IV. Jahrgang (1891/92) (Wien: Selbstverlag des VfEF, 1889), 1.*

\(^{180}\) During the presidency of Editha Mautner von Markhof, philanthropist and wife of Karl Ferdinand Mautner von Markhof, the school moved to larger premises at Rahlgasse IV in Vienna’s Sixth District, the former home of the VfEF before it relocated to larger facilities and a new school-building in Wieden, Vienna’s fourth district. Largely due to the efforts and personal contributions of Mauthner-Markhof were funds raised to purchase the new headquarters. Marked by a plague to Marianne Hainisch, the school is currently a coeducational Bundesgymnasium/Bundesrealgymnasium.

\(^{181}\) The women’s newspapers regularly carried news of state subventions for women’s education. For instance, although the VfEF filed a petition in Parliament for 40,000 Kronen (what was indeed, a large sum) for its Girls’ Gymnasium, this and similar motions amounted to nothing. *Neues Frauenleben* 17:1 (January 1905): 16.

\(^{182}\) Martha Braun, *Frauenbewegung, Frauenbildung und Frauenarbeit in Österreich*, 128.
the Matura as special “guest students” at the nearby Akademisches Gymnasium, Vienna’s oldest and most prestigious Gymnasium. Yet facing an oral examination with strange teachers not only put VfEF pupils at a psychological disadvantage, the practical issue of different professors’ areas of classroom emphasis, particularly male pupils’ superior instruction in Greek and Latin, negatively affected girls’ scores.

In the hope of gaining the Öffentlichkeitsrecht and the attached privilege of administering the Matura in-house, the school underwent a fundamental reform in 1901. The VfEF transformed its institute from a six-year grammar school into an 8-year Gymnasium. Mirroring the best boys’ Gymnasien, the institute was re-structured into a 4-year Untergymnasium and 4-year Obergymnasium: for the latter of which pupils 13 years and older had to pass an entrance exam. Significantly, its upper levels (Obergymnasium) were not only open to graduates of the VfEF’s Untergymnasium but also to “girls from public secondary schools (Bürgerschulen) with exceptional pre-qualifications.” The Unter- and Obergymansium’s new curriculum represented a vast improvement over the model set out by the 1900 Provisional Decree. Latin, Greek, Mathematics and Sciences were balanced with study of modern languages (German, French, and English) while the frivolous electives so lambasted by critics disappeared from the curriculum altogether.

A Ministerial Decree of 16 February 1901. Z. 5094 granted the Obergymnasium the right of public incorporation, to take effect with the incoming 1902/03 Obergymnasium class. Enjoying the Öffentlichkeitsrecht, “pupils could be administered the

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Matura by their own professors,” which happened for the first time in Spring 1906.¹⁸⁷ Hainisch lauded the Obergymnasium’s right of public incorporation as “having made classical education for girls, what had only been tolerated up to now, fully recognized and entitled; it is the granting of the final link in the previously-discontinuous chain leading from the first grade of primary school to completed university studies.”¹⁸⁸

As Hainisch alluded, many barriers to women’s higher education had already been overcome by the time the VfEF graduated its first class. After all, university study had been open to Austrian women since 1878 and the university entrance examination since 1872. In accordance with Ministerial Ordinance Z. 5385 of 6 May 1878, women were allowed to attend regular university lectures as special guest students in “limited cases” pending the discretion of university faculty.¹⁸⁹ A university education was open to women, provided they were willing to jump through the bureaucratic hoops this entailed. While conventional scholarship has tended to stress the lateness of Austria’s opening of the ivory tower to women, the balance shifts when 1878, rather than 1897 (which was, in fact, the same time as the rest of Europe that women were admitted to university studies), becomes the center of gravity. James Albisetti has duly noted that “the Austrian policy of [1878] was less restrictive at the time than that of any German university except Leipzig” as other universities in the German-speaking world shut out women auditors altogether.¹⁹⁰ Nonetheless, non-matriculating female students could use academic credit from courses completed in Vienna towards foreign degrees.

¹⁹⁰ James Albisetti, “Female Education in German-Speaking Austria, Germany, and Switzerland,” 48.
A series of decrees in the late 1890s signed into law by Minister Frankenthurn broke down remaining asymmetries in higher education. Ministerial Ordinance Z. 6559 of 16 March 1896 provided for the nostrification (official recognition) of foreign medical degrees. A number of women doctors, such as Georgina von Roth and Gabriele von Possaner-Ehrenthal, were henceforth able to practice in Austria. On 23 March 1897 Ministerial Ordinance Z. 7155 opened the university’s philosophical faculties to women as full-time, matriculating degree candidates and auditors, with the medical and pharmaceutical faculties following suit in 1900. The bureaucratic loophole that the phrase ‘reif zum Besuch der Universität’ (qualified for university studies) was missing from girls’ Matura certificates was cleared up once and for all in 1901. Yet not until 1919, under the flag of the Republic and the favorable winds of the Social Democrats’ educational policy toward women, were the legal faculties and other state institutions of higher learning, such as the Technical University, Commercial Academy, and Veterinary School, fully accessible to women. The doors of the Schillerplatz, or the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts, along with the University’s Protestant Theological Faculty, opened to women for the first time in the 1920/1 school year. No woman, however, would cross the thresholds of the Catholic Theological Faculty until 1945.

As paradoxical as it may seem, opening the universities to women in Hungary proved more complicated than in Austria despite the fact that the Hungarian state played a more active role in women’s education. Verordnung des des Ministers für Kultus und Unterricht vom 19. März 1896, Z. 6559, betreffend die Nostrifikation der von Frauen im Auslande erworbenen medicinischen Doctordiplome. Vorschriften übder das Frauenstudium an österreichischen Universitäten, Carl Brockhausen, ed. (Wien: Verlag Carl Konegen, 1898), 14. Verordnung des MfKU vom 6. Mai 1878, Z. 7155, betreffend die Zulassung von Frauen als ordentliche oder außerordentliche Hörerrinnen an den philosophischen Facultäten der k.k. Universität, 15-17. Marie Spitzer, “Aus der Frauenbewegung: Fortschritte der Frauenbewegung im Jahre 1901,” Neues Frauenleben 14:1 (Jan 1902): 16. Viennese Professor of Law Edmund Bernatzik made an eloquent, though ultimately unheeded, case for women’s admission to legal studies. In a lecture at the VIEF, Professor Bernatzik argued that it was unjust to deny women admission to “worldly faculties” such as law while countenancing their matriculating as regular students in the philosophical faculty. See his Die Zulassung der Frauen zu den juristischen Studien: Ein Gutachten (Wien: Verlag des Vereines für erweiterte Frauenbildung, 1900), 5-6. Women had been permitted to audit courses at the Technical University since 1902/ but were not allowed to stand for degrees until 1919/20.
role in supporting women’s classical secondary education. Thanks to the lobbying of the ONKE and allies in Budapest’s university faculty, the first lánygimnázium had opened in Hungary in Fall 1896, which was immediately outfitted with public rights by Hungarian Minister of Education Gyula Wlassics.\(^{195}\) This recognition came, in fact, before the VfEF’s Girls Gymnasium in Vienna was publicly recognized by the Austrian Ministry of Education in 1904. Erecting a state lánygimnázium, according to the arguments of Budapest University Professor Zoltan von Beöthy, was necessary “to make women’s education equal to man’s not only because women had a right to the highest culture, but for the sake of that culture itself that needs what women’s minds can bring to it.”\(^{196}\) Giving women a living constituted a secondary motivation.

As in Austria, the curriculum of Budapest’s lánygimnázium was appropriately tailored to the feminine nature. A British educator observed that; “[t]he Gymnasium selected the best features of the boys’ Gymnasium and also of the existing girls’ schools and attempted to unite them on scientific principles.”\(^{197}\) In practice, the school followed the model of the Reform-Realgymnasium curriculum, with Latin introduced a few years into the program and Greek offered as an elective. Classical literature was read in translation throughout the school’s eight forms. Hungarian and German were balanced fairly equally, although Hungarian was given an extra hour of weekly instruction in each form. Instruction in feminine subjects such as drawing, singing, and needlework accounted for around 1-2 hours per week. The effect of this model was to produce classically-educated young ladies, but girls nonetheless steeped in feminine propriety and women’s distinct societal roles. Malvine Fuchs surmised that; “[t]here are no overly-sophisticated girls studying here, no pale, anemic bluestockings, but rather vivacious happy

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\(^{195}\) Malvine Fuchs, “Die Frauenfrage in Ungarn,” 147.
\(^{196}\) C.I. Dodd, “Hungarian Education,” 521.
\(^{197}\) C.I. Dodd, “Hungarian Education,” 521.
beings.” By and large, however, the girls of Budapest’s lánygimnázium performed more poorly on the finishing exam than their Austrian colleagues, at least in the Budapest lánygimnázium’s early years. The majority of examinees scraped through with average or below-average marks, a trend not explained by available documents and reports.

Despite Hungary’s state support of girls’ classical education, admitting women to university studies in Hungary occurred significantly later than in Austria. What had been achieved in the Austrian lands in 1872—women’s provisional admission to university studies—would not ensue in Hungary until 1896: at which point Austrian women were on the cusp of achieving unrestricted access to university studies the next year. 1896/97 both represented milestone years in Austro-Hungarian higher education though the progress embodied by these years was highly asymmetrical. Exceptionally-talented Hungarian women only received admission to Hungarian universities’ philosophical, medical, and pharmaceutical faculties beginning in the 1896 fall semester on a limited basis, “upon which the rectors of the three given faculties should decide on a case-to-case basis.” Opening Hungary’s ivory tower to the other half of the population was the work of Hungarian Minister of Education Gyula Wlassics, hailed by Hungary’s leading feminist, Rosa Schwimmer-Bedy, as “the biggest support of Hungarian women’s education.” Minister Wlassics justified the action on the logic that intellectual work would not make women unfeminine but would enhance their womanly mission as bearers of Hungarian culture. Wlassics argued in a ministerial rescript of 2 December 1895 that “the fundamental exclusion of women from a large portion of the academic professions is one of society’s greatest injustices and inequities, which prevents a civilization from achieving

198 Malvine Fuchs, “Die Frauenfrage in Ungarn,” 147.
200 Malvine Fuchs, “Die Frauenfrage in Ungarn,” 147.
With Wlassics’s early Christmas gift opening Hungary’s philosophical, medical, and pharmaceutical faculties to women, women began attending the universities in Budapest and Kolozsvár (Cluj): initially, mostly in the medical faculty but with increasing numbers in the philosophical faculties after the lánygimnázium graduated its first class. As Rosa Schwimmer surmised; “[t]he sudden increase in female students in the 1900/1 school year [from 33/36 total female students per semester in the 1899/1900 to 99/99 students during the 1900/00 school year] can be attributed to the fact that that the girls who graduated from the lánygimnázium could take the university-entrance examination for the first time at the close of the previous school year.” Nonetheless, levels of women’s enrollment in Hungarian universities remained approximately one-third lower than in Austrian universities in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Even after woman had been provisionally admitted to Hungarian universities, Hungarian female students faced increasing restrictions, both de jure and de facto, from the Hungarian academic community. In the first place, the admission of women to Hungarian universities on a provisional, case-by-case basis greatly limited the number of female students. Although few women applicants were actually rejected, this “harmless formality” nonetheless discouraged potential applicants from applying. In addition, beyond legal formalities, Hungary’s male academic community was notorious for its incredulity towards the flocks of women filling its lecture halls and took steps towards imposing a numerus clausus on women in the universities. A rallying of conservative university faculty and Magyar traditionalists ensued shortly after women were admitted to university studies in 1896. In addition to the mental stigma attached to female students, policies of individual departments set around the turn of the century effectively restricted female students’ university access. Building on already existing restrictions, a further

204 Rosa Schwimmer, “Die Stand der Frauenbildung in Ungarn,” 204.
measure to limit women’s access to university studies unanimously passed the Hungarian Parliament in March 1907, grounded on the idea of protecting true Hungarian family values. Ex-Minister President Baron Bánffy went so far as to demand a *numerus clausus* for girls in secondary schools, a measure that failed to gain a majority. These restrictions greatly limited the number of women able to complete higher university degrees and remained in place until just before the fall of the Monarchy. That the state supported a *lánygimnázium* yet countenanced their obstruction to university studies can be attributed to the prevalence of traditional patriarchal codes in Hungary, as well as the relative weakness of the women’s movement in Hungary. Aside from the state *lánygimnázium* and the ONKE’s Higher Girls’ School, the Hungarian women’s movement had few league-sponsored private girls schools to fall back on.

While league-sponsored schools represented a minute portion of girls schools in Hungary, the Imperial government’s cooperation with private reformist schools paved the way to opening the university for girls in the Austrian lands. For instance, the Austrian Educational Ministry’s willingness to institutionalize girls’ classical secondary education is illustrated by its support of Eugenie Schwarzwald’s progressive *Schwarzwald’sche Schulanstalten* (Schwarzwald Educational Institutes) [Figure 1.5]. Fresh from receiving her doctorate in German Literature in Zurich, Frau Doktor Schwarzwald initiated a new era in Austrian pedagogy when she took the reigns in 1901 of what was formerly the Jeiteles Lyceum. Schwarzwald established a variety of schools under the umbrella of her *Schwarzwaldsche Schulanstalten* dedicated to bringing rigorous, horizon-broadening educations to girls pursuing both academic and non-academic tracks. Although Schwarzwald established an 8-form *Realgymnasium* carrying the right of public

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206 Eleonore Jeiteles’s private Lyceum, with an attached boarding school, was located on the Franziskaner Platz V when Schwarzwald assumed control of the institute. The boarding school was administrated separately after Schwarzwald moved her institution to roomier premises at Kohlmarkt VI/ Wallnerstraße II.
incorporation in 1911/2, the Galician-born pedagogue did not see the lyceum as a throw-away form. On the contrary, Schwarzwald strove to expand and deepen the lyceum curriculum so that even girls destined for futures as housewives would have a more fulfilling educational background. An Annual Report from 1905 does not do justice to the rich education her lyceum conveyed.

The Girls’ Lyceum, whose curriculum has been standardized by the Ministerial Decree of 11 December 1900, provides for normal secondary education for womankind: imparting pupils aged 10 to 16 a fundamental education in their native tongue, modern languages and literature, natural sciences, mathematics, drawing, and electives.207

Yet a school brochure, describing the Lyceum as “imparting a modest, though nonetheless thorough” education, reveals how Schwarzwald’s pedagogical philosophies and outstanding teaching staff distinguished hers from other schönegeistig (aesthetic) lyceums.208 The Educational Ministry recognized Schwarzwald’s efforts to work within the existing lyceum structure and awarded her Mädchenlyzeum the Öffentlichkeitsrecht on 8 June 1905, Z. 20778.209 Schwarzwald’s coeducation elementary school, launched in the 1903/04 school year, also gained ministerial approval with its 24 October 1905 bestowal of public rights, Z. 29021.210 While Minister of Education Wilhelm Ritter von Hartel harbored grave moral reservations about mixed-gender education for adolescents, such ideals were not applicable to pre-pubescent youth. Speaking to the Ministry’s ideals of gender-specific education, Schwarzwald’s lyceal- and early-childhood institutions won favor with Austria’s educational establishment.


208 Quoted in Alice Herdan-Zuckmayer, Genies sind nicht im Lehrplan vorgesehen (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1979), 34. Emphasis added.

209 Initially, the Öffentlichkeitsrecht was only granted to the two lower classes of the Mädchenlyceum in 1905. This provisional recognition, however, was granted to all six forms in subsequent years. The Lyceum was granted the privilege to administer the lyceal school-leaving examination in 1910. Eugenie Schwarzwald, Jahresbericht der Schulanstalten der Frau Dr. Phil. Eugenie Schwarzwald in Wien 1904/5 Wien: Selbstverlag der Schwarzwaldschen Schulanstalten, 1905), 13.

210 Ibid., 3.
Nevertheless, when overstepping the boundaries of gender-appropriate education, limits existed as to how much of Schwarzwald’s foreword-thinking philosophies the Austrian government was willing to stomach. For instance, Schwarzwald encouraged lyceum graduates to continue with 4-year *Humanistische Gymnasialekurse für Mädchen* (Humanistic University-Preparation Courses for Girls) she inaugurated in the 1901/2 school year. This tier structure assured a smooth transition into academic studies, even for girls who had not intended on continuing their education past the lyceum.\(^{211}\) These *Gymnasium* courses, however, never received ministerial approval because “they were organized according to a curriculum not acknowledged in Austria, that of the Frankfurt-prototype *Gymnasium*.”\(^{212}\) Due to the technicality that the Frankfurt model (4-5 year humanistic programs designed to follow graduation of secondary school) stood on shaky ground with the Ministry of Education, *Gymnasialekurse* pupils were forced to take the Matura at the *Akademisches Gymnasium*, even after their colleagues in Schwarzwald’s Girls’ *Gymnasium* were allowed to take their exam in house. Co-education, however, represented the true thorn in Schwarzwald’s side. While her coeducational primary school and kindergarten were governmentally sanctioned, she could never win approval for introducing co-education into her 8-form *Realgymnasium*. The idea for Schwarzwald’s *Realgymnasium*, centered around Latin, French, and English, with Greek offered as an advanced elective, had originally been conceived in late 1909. When Schwarzwald tried to introduce coeducation in 1910/11 for the *Realgymnasium*’s first incoming class according to her own original curriculum, the Ministry’s non-recognition of her curriculum forced her to back down.\(^{213}\)

\(^{211}\) The *Humanistische Gymnasialekurse* were catered to especially talented students with outstanding work ethics who could master the Gymnasium curriculum in 4 years. Most of these girls had only decided on an academic path later in their secondary school career.


Upon re-submitting the coeducational plan according to the officially-sanctioned curriculum in 1911/2, Schwarzwald won the right to introduce coeducation, but only in preposterously-low male to female ratios: around 1% male to 99% female, as the lone male name on the 1911 class lists attest. As Schwarzwald vented her frustrations with imperial officials after the fall of the monarchy:

I might show the Imperial officials the evidence that, for every issue which belongs under the rubric of the present school reforms [during the First Republic], we only received turned up noses. When I proposed to introduce coeducation into my secondary school, I was allowed to introduce 1% boys into a class of 25 girls. As I couldn’t move myself to divide a boy into 4 parts, coeducation had to wait until the First Republic.

That many of Schwarzwald’s reforms, such as establishing a school-library, student scholarship funds, and introducing principles of democracy, coeducation, flexibility, and experimentation into the curriculum, laid the groundwork for the First Republic’s education overhaul is a verity obscured by the circumstances of her forced immigration to Switzerland in 1940.

In addition, Schwarzwald employed members of the Viennese intelligentsia, many of whom Schwarzwald and her husband Hermann entertained in their salon, as lecturers in her Wissenschaftliche Fortbildungskurse Division (Academic Continuing Education Courses, designed to supplement lyceal study). Oskar Kokoschka taught drawing; Egon Wellesz, Alexander Zemlinsky, and Arnold Schönberg instructed music courses; Hans Kelsen offered

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215 Interview with Eugenie Schwarzwald, Quoted in Alice Herdan-Zuckmayer, Genies sind nicht im Lehrplan vorgesehen, 40.
217 Schwarzwald and her husband hosted a salon in their Josefštädterschule 68 flat, the interior of which was also designed by Adolf Loos. Loos, as well as Egon Friedell, were prominent Stammgäste in Schwarzwald’s salon. The Schwarzwalds came into contact with Kokoschka and Schönberg through Loos. Due to her outspokenness on women’s education, Schwarzwald was never on good footing with Karl Kraus, the self-proclaimed greatest admirer and detractor of women. Consequently she and her husband were satirized as Hofräthin and Hofrat Schwarz-Gelb in Kraus’s satirical drama die Letzten Tagen der Menschheit.
lectures in sociology and economics; and Adolf Loos offered courses in Art History and Architecture. Not only a lifelong confidante of Schwarzwald’s, Loos designed the Schwarzwald School’s premises when the institute moved around the corner to Wallnerstrasse 9 in 1914. The architect even took pupils on excursions to tour his works, including the Haus Scheu in Hietzing, one of the first terraced houses in Europe. Schwarzwald’s institutes met a variety of educational needs, from kindergarten to continuing education: what Harriett Anderson has likened to a Gesamtkunstwerk, or total work of art, of women’s education. As the example of the Schwarzwald Schools illustrates, the educational administration engaged in dialogue with one of the most outspoken figures in Austrian women’s education and even went so far as to grant her schools public rights.

All in all, great leaps and bounds had been achieved in the field of Austrian women’s education in the period from 1860-1920. While the state’s model of girls’ secondary education was one founded on gendered difference and the womanly tasks of motherhood and childrearing, alternative visions put forth by private leagues laid out career paths to the academy and educated professions. Together, the Ministry cooperated with progressive associations representing liberal ideals of self-help and advancement to institutionalize a variety of gender-

218 A former Schwarzwald pupil related in her memoirs how her godfather was shocked to see pictures painted by his goddaughter. When asked what she has painted, she replied that “I paint what I imagine. Our teacher [Kokoschka] tells us stories and we paint and draw what comes to mind.” The godfather proceeds to criticize her picture’s wild color scheme and is shocked to discover that Kokoschka, “the criminal” is her art teacher. Although Kokoschka would eventually lose his position due to his lack of a teaching certification, Schwarzwald argued in front of the Minister for Education that Kokoschka is a genius, yet to be recognized. Minister Max Hussarek v. Heinlein replied that “Geniuses are not allotted in the curriculum.” Alice Herdan-Zuckmayer, Genies sind nicht im Lehrplan vorgesehen, 47-50.
219 Loos’s plans for the Wallnerstraβe 9 premises included a foyer, 4 large- and 4 small-classrooms, cloakrooms and a gymnasium on the ground floor; administrative and director’s offices, 5 classrooms, a physics laboratory, an auditorium, a teachers’ planning room, on the first floor; and a library, art and supply room on the second floor. Loos’s auditorium, done in charestically-Loosian veneer wood paneling was used for musical, theatrical, and dance performances. Adolf Loos Archiv (ALA), Dokumente (Schwarzwaldschule Wien) Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna.
220 An entry of 26 May 1915 (Exkursion der Schwarzwaldschule, Klasse Loos) in the Haus Scheu Gästebuch lists 15 pupils’ names, accompanied by Loos and their teacher Wanda von Jablowska. Photocopy of Haus Scheu Guest Book provided by Dr. Sepp Leodolter, current owner of Larochgasse 3.
221 Harriett Anderson, Utopian Feminism, 105.
specific, vocational schools lending marketable practical skills to women without financial means. While the government might not have gone as far as the women’s movement wished in supporting girls’ classical secondary education, the Austrian Ministry of Education cooperated with pedagogical experts and leaders of the women’s movement to deliver a reformed program for the Monarchy’s predominant form of female secondary school, the lyceum. Early twentieth-century reforms undertaken on the lyceum made it less of a ‘finishing school’ and gave pupils options towards academic or vocational tracks. Moreover, by granting rights of public incorporation to the VfEF’s Mädchen-Obergymnasium, the Girls’ Gymnasium achieved a quasi-official status and served as a model for other private Gymnasien, as well as Lyceums with attached Gymnasiale Oberstufen (upper-level university preparation courses). During the last years of the Monarchy, around 5 Gymnasium/Realgymnasium were open to women in the Austria lands, not including the large number of Lyceum with attached university preparation courses. In Vienna, private schools included the 8-form Public Realgymnasium for Girls of the League for Girls Classical Education in Vienna (Achtklässiges öffentliches Realgymnasium für Mädchen des Vereines für realgymnasialen Mädchenunterricht in Wien) and the Parents Association’s coeducational Private Reformed Secondary School (Privat-Reform Mittelschule mit Koëdukation der Elternvereinigung).222

All of these changes go to show that, contrary to conventional historiography, women’s education in Austria-Hungary embodied a progressive and forward-thinking field that was able to blend elements of tradition with modern ideas. One commentator summarized the state of women’s education in Austria for the international community as such;

If we now turn to the general education of women, we find that great progress has been made during the past ten years, especially in Austria. The

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public and private schools for girls are infinitely improved. The establishment of girls’ lyceum (*Lyceen*), which aim at the higher and broader education of women and which cover almost the same ground as the boys’ *Gymnasien*, was a great step in advance."

Women’s education in Austria undoubtedly conformed to a Central European model that privileged gender-segregated, gender-specific instruction over the Anglo-American model of coeducational instruction. Yet there is much reason to believe that the separate education the Ministry of Education favored for girls was in no way inferior to boys’ education. In fact, compelling evidence indicates that the Ministry favored a policy of establishing “separate but equal” institutions for girls. That such notions of separate but equal gained ministerial inertia is demonstrated by the Ministry’s efforts to update lyceum curriculum and its support of a variety of parallel institutions designed specifically for girls. The vocational and craft schools of the 1870s, as well as a new generation of academic institutions called into being around 1900, all fit this pattern. Moreover, as will be seen in the discussion of the Women’s Academy, the government was particularly keen on supporting “separate but equal” facilities in the realm of art: from awarding large subsidies to the women’s academy, to granting its Academic Courses institutional parity with those of the Schillerplatz, and making its core faculty state employees. The Ministry’s willingness to augment the curriculum of the School of Applied Art with a variety of gender-specific training facilities, such as the imperial Embroidery and Needlework Schools, further illustrate this trend of catering to men and women’s special talents. Difference, then, did not necessarily spell inequality.

The Ministry of Education equality of difference policy toward women’s education is illustrated particularly well by the government’s support of the *Athenäum* League: a group of university professors dedicated to organizing academic lectures and courses for women and girls.

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Founded in 1900 by the *Vereinigung der Wiener Hochschuldozenten* (Association of Viennese University Docents) under the leadership of Ludo Hartmann and Emil Zuckerkandl, spouse of famous journalist Bertha Zuckerkandl-Széps, the *Athenäum* was founded as a ‘*Frauenhochschule*’ (women’s university) where “graduates of girls’ secondary schools; women whose domestic duties leave them enough time for in-depth studies; older ladies who are in the position to be able to live out their interests find intellectual stimulation the possibility to expand their ways of thinking, and gain glimpses into the workshops of the world’s great minds.”

From 1900 onwards, the Austrian Ministry of Education awarded the Athenäum generous yearly subsidies of 1,000 Kronen in recognition of the league’s public service in women’s academic and continuing education. Epitomizing the model of the single-sex women’s university, the Athenäum resembled Cambridge University’s Newnham and Girton Colleges and Berlin’s Victoria Lyzeum that Crown Princess Victoria envisioned as a prototype for German women’s colleges. The Athenäum offered a total of 362 courses, attracting over 10,964 students, in the first ten years of its existence. On average, the Athenäum offered around 28 courses every winter semester, which drew around 971 students: in the summer semesters, an average of 8 courses, attracting an average of 125 auditors per term.

That the institute was inaugurated after women had gained the right of university matriculation in 1897 suggests the Athenäum was not merely paying lip-service to women’s emancipation—for the opening of the university surely represented the apex of this struggle—but

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225 Since the Athenäum was largely self-funded in that it used university premises, lecture halls, teaching facilities, etc. the additional 1,000 kronen subsidy represented a substantial extra source of funding.
228 ÖStA, AVA, MfKU, Fasz. 3360, Z.42573/1910.
harbored deep-seeded ideals on the value of single-gender education. Created as a parallel institute to the university, with courses offered by prominent professors such as art historian Hans Tietze and anatomist Emil Zuckerkandl, disciplinary offerings ranged from Art History, to Philosophy, to Medicine and the Natural Sciences. Courses in literature and language were also offered, often with a foreign language as the language of classroom instruction. The following passage from the Athenäum’s 10th Annual Report underscores how its university character was more than skin-deep.

The Athenäum became a Frauenhochschule, not only because of its external connections with the university, that is that the lectures are held in university institutes in close connection with university professors who serve as Athenäum lecturers, but above all through the spirit of higher learning, the academic seriousness and conveying the results of free academic research and teaching.

The same spirit of free research and scholarly dialogue pervaded Athenäum courses, all held on university premises and laboratories, taught by professors motivated not out of careerism or greed but for the sheer joy of sharing their discipline with others. The vast majority of auditors had been educated at lyceums and public Bürgerschule, with a considerable chunk having attended teachers’ colleges or been schooled privately. As will be seen in Chapter Two, the Athenäum was a tremendously important institution for female students of the fine arts, not permitted to study at the Viennese Academy of Fine Arts until 1919/20. Girls from the Women’s Academy attended Athenäum courses in anatomy given the centrality of the human anatomical structure to figural painting.

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229 For instance, in the 1904/5 Winter Semester, Amalia Levetus offered a Ruskin seminar conducted in English; likewise, courses in French literature were conducted en français. Bericht über das Vereinsjahr 1904/1905 (Wien: Selbstverlag des Vereins Athenäum, 1905), 4-5.
What is more, the relationship between the University and the Athenaum mirrors that of the state-subsidized Kunsthalle für Frauen und Mädchen (Art School for Women and Girls, KFM) and the Akademie der bildenden Künste Wiens (Viennese Academy of Fine Arts). Like the Athenaum, the KFM was founded as an institutional parallel to the male Academy and boasted a stellar teaching staff from mainstream institutions including the Secession, Kunstgewerbeschule, and Academy. The KFM offered a rigorous curriculum emulating those of the Academy and Kunstgewerbeschule, just as Athenaum professors brought the latest research in a variety of disciplines to young girls and housewives. In addition, the KFM could play a trump card that the Athenaum lacked: the ability to issue academic degrees in painting equal to those of the state academy. The highpoint of the KFM’s reputation as an art academy occurred after women were admitted to the Schillerplatz in the 1920s, just as thousands and thousands of women flocked the Athenaum’s courses in comparison to the relatively small number who began matriculating for university degrees. Both institutions were born of private initiative but found a foster parent in the Educational Ministry, adhering to its ideas of gender-appropriate education. The similarities between the Women’s University and Women’s Academy are striking. In both cases, the Ministry of Education was more than willing to lend its support to these “separate but equal” women’s academies. Yet the entire discussion of such separate but equal women’s institutions begs the question of gender asymmetry; were women, by the very separateness of such institutions, being further marginalized from the institutional mainstream? Or, on the other hand, were the more intimate facilities and dedicated teaching staff of such women’s schools better suited for integrating women into mainstream academic life? The chapters to follow will address these fundamental questions in relation to Austria’s gender-specific artists’ leagues and academies.
On the higher educational front, Austrian women still had numerous challenges to face in gaining full-scale access to university studies. In the first place, female university students had to overcome mental attitudes idealizing women in the domestic sphere. As Medievalist Professor Alfons Dopsch reminisced about the students of the first hour, “[t]he woman-student had to overcome many prejudices. She counted as a ‘bluestocking’ and at that time, many men would have nothing to do with women’s emancipation.”232 Beyond the social stigma of being labeled as a feminist lay the practical issue of women students’ preparation. Even with girls Gymnasien and college preparation courses at lyceums, female students were by and large not as well equipped as male students for the rigors of university study. Female students’ weakness in Greek and Latin was not indicative of their own intelligence but of their schooling, which emphasized modern languages rather than the classics. Even the best girls’ Gymnasien could not hold a candle to the classical instruction at the elite boys’ Gymnasien, such as the Akademisches Gymnasium. For this reason, many girls obtained special permission at study at boys’ Gymnasien, which represented a more economical method of Matura preparation than expensive private girls’ institutes. Although permission to study as special guest students at a boys’ Gymnasium was granted liberally during the reign of Minister Gustav Marchet (1906-8), known as a “friend of women’s education,” his successor Count Karl Stürckh clamped down on this privilege in keeping with his views on gender-separate education.233 Also problematic was the fact that women were expected to absorb the Gymnasium curriculum in a shorter time span than boys. This was largely due to objections to girls’ maturity: specifically, that a young girl could not face the weighty decision of attending university at the same age as boys. Nearly every proposal considering the establishment of a girls’ Gymnasium singled out the starting age of 14 as too young on the grounds that the decision

233 Helmut Engelbrecht, Geschichte des österreichischen Bildungswesens Vol. IV, 287.
for university study must be undertaken freely and girls would not be capable of a rational choice at that age. However, University Professor Friedrich Jodl, the philosopher who played a leading role in the founding of Vienna’s Women’ Academy, quashed such counterfactual claims; “If a girl, ‘who has achieved the goals of girls’ secondary education’ enters a Gymnasium at age 15 or 16 to prepare for the university entrance exam—is the girls’ Gymnasium then not required to achieve the same in 3, at most 4 years, for which the humanistic Gymnasium in the German Empire requires 9, in Austria 8, years?”234 Women students, particularly those switching into academic tracks from public Bürgerschulen, were unrealistically expected to master Gymnasium curriculum much faster than boys.

Due to their background in the Lyzeum and Realgymnasium, the vast majority of female students enrolled in the modern philological faculty, especially in French and English, and gradually turned towards Art History and Literature. Pharmacy and the natural sciences became increasingly popular concentrations among women students in the 1920s. One of the first women to receive a doctorate at the University of Vienna was Latin Philologist Elise Richter.235 Richter received her doctorate in 1901, was habilitated as a lecturer in 1907, and received a promotion to full professor in 1922.236 Writing her dissertation on Austrian Baroque sculptor Georg Rafael Donner under Franz Wickhoff and Alois Riegl, who, in the words of E.H. Gombrich, “directed [their students’] attention away from the ‘classic’ periods to those neglected epochs which had suffered under the stigma of decline,” in 1905 Erika Conrat became the first woman to receive a doctorate in Art History at the University of Vienna.237 Together with husband Hans Tietze,
Conrat’s studies of the Italian Renaissance and Austrian Baroque sculpture represented an important contribution to the Viennese School of Art History. Much like their predominance in secondary education, Jewish women were strongly represented in Austrian academia, including both Tietze-Conrat and Richter. While the great philologist would perish in Theresienstadt in 1943, Hans and Erika Tietze-Conrat escaped to New York, where their famous double portrait now hangs in the Museum of Modern Art. Painted in the couple’s Heiligenstadt study in 1909, Kokoschka painted Tietze in profile while preferring to paint Tietze-Conrat “en face;” the canvas is charged with a primal electrical energy and the couple’s intellectual bond.

Like the examples of Tietze-Conrat and Richter, the majority of doctorates awarded to women from 1897-1926 at the University of Vienna fell within the Philosophical Faculty. No less than 943 women (45.5% of total doctorates awarded to women, 1897-1926) were made doctor philosophiae during these years [See Appendix 2.1]. In total, 2075 women earned the rank of Frau Doktor in law, political science, medicine, pharmacy, and philosophy in the first thirty years of the Frauenstudium at the University of Vienna. Behind the philosophical faculty, Medicine (36.5%), Pharmacy (13.4%), Law (2.5%) and Political Science (2.3%) represented the most common doctoral tracks pursued by women.

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238 A collection of Tietze-Conrat’s essays has recently been published as Erica Tietze-Conrat: Die Frau in der Kunstwissenschaft, Texte 1906-1958, Almut Krapf-Weiler, ed. (Wien: Schlebrügge, 2007).
239 Richter’s Nachlass was nonetheless rescued for posterity by her student Christine Rohr von Denta, Romance Language Scholar. Rohr von Denta was the first woman to be taken into academic service at the Austrian National Library in 1922.
241 Technically, a Magister (Master’s) was the highest degree which could be obtained in pharmacy. Because students obtaining the Magister in pharmacy have traditionally been calculated with doctoral candidates in historical sources, my figures have retained including Mag. Pharm. with doctorates awarded.
By the 1900/01 Winter Semester, women comprised 2.3% of the total student body at the University of Vienna. Women accounted for 1.7% and 0.1%, respectively, during the same term at the more conservative universities in Graz and Innsbruck. In Vienna, women’s enrollment rose to 7.6% in 1910, peaking at as much as 25-36% during World War I, and settling at around 15% in 1920. Largely due to male wartime depopulation, the numerical highpoint of interwar women’s enrollment occurred in the Winter Semester of the 1922/23 academic year, when 2,203 female students (18% total students) were enrolled at the University of Vienna. A plurality (53.2%) of female students from 1897-1926 matriculated in the philosophical faculty, followed by the medical (35.0)% and legal faculties (11.7%). Of the 24,737 women enrolled at the University of Vienna during the first thirty years of women’s unrestricted access to higher education, the overwhelming majority (74.6%) enrolled as full-time matriculating degree candidates while only 25% enrolled as some form of non-matriculating auditor (i.e. außerordentliche Hörerinnen, Frequentantinnen, Hospitantinnen). Many of the 5,780 female auditors were lyceum teachers furthering their education, or lyceum-graduates striving to become lyceum instructors through the three years of university auditing stipulated by the lyceum code. The smaller percentage of university auditors was not only due to the opening of the Medical (1900), Legal and Protestant Theological Faculties (1919) to women as full-time degree candidates, but also competing continuing education programs, such as the Athenäum Frauenhochschule. If obtaining degrees or certificates was not a primary motivation for study,

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242 Refer to Appendix 1.3, Overview of Female Students at the University of Vienna 1897–1926.
243 The numbers of women in the Legal Faculty are relatively low because the legal faculty only opened to women in 1919.
244 Three classifications of students existed at the university of Vienna at this time: ordentliche Hörerinnen, außerordentliche Hörerinnen, and Hospitantinnen. Ordentliche Hörerinnen were regular, matriculating degree-candidates. Außerordentliche Hörerinnen were auditors who could not matriculate for university degrees but could obtain specialized certificates by passing exams (for instance, the Lehramtsprüfung for schoolteachers). Hospitantinnen were special guests students permitted to attend lectures, but could not sit for examinations or obtain degrees or certificates.
many women found such private and league-sponsored courses to be a satisfactory alternative to the *Alma Mater Rudolfina*.245

Even with institutional barriers eradicated, women worked decades to be fully integrated into Austrian academic life. The early appointment of Elise Richter as docent and professor represented the exception rather than the rule. Initially, many professors were hesitant about letting women into the ranks of the masculine academic corporation and harbored doubts about female students’ intellectual capacities.246 Parallel to comments leveled against female artists and craftswomen, the University of Vienna’s female students were found to be dedicated and industrious though not necessarily capable of higher intellectual cognition. One professor in the history department reported that; “[t]hey take their work seriously enough, are dedicated to attending lectures regularly, and demonstrate solid participation in class exercises… [Yet] one hears the observation quite frequently that ‘Yes, female students are hard-working but never rise above mediocrity.’”247 Dopsch, a medieval historian, countered this faculty hearsay by pointing out that genius was also very rare among male students. Above all, Dopsch argued for the need for girls to be better prepared for university studies, which, in practical terms meant a solid classical education in a *Gymnasium*. “The more girls attend the *Gymnasium*, the better the material will be that, in the end, is acquired up until the Matura.”248 Nothing less than state-mandated secondary education for girls was needed to put female students on firmer ground for the rigors of university study.

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245 After the Charles University in Prague, the *Alma Mater Rudolphina Vindobonensis*, or University of Vienna, ranks as the second oldest university in the German speaking lands.

246 Amalia Levetus reports that at the University of Vienna “individual professors too often refused to allow them [female students] to be present at their lectures...” A.S. Levetus, *Imperial Vienna*, 350.


Spearheaded by Social Democratic women Parliamentarians and the “reform division” of newly-formed Staatsamt für Inneres und Unterricht (State Department of the Interior and Education), the educational reforms of the early Austrian First Republic circa 1919-22 attempted to do just this by standardizing and incorporating girls’ secondary education into the state apparatus. Building on the educational philosophies of fellow Social Democratic Party leaders Max Adler and Otto Bauer, Otto Glöckel’s first move during his brief tenure from March 1919 to October 1920 as Unterstaatssekretär für Unterricht (Under-State Secretary for Education) was to create a Reformabteilung (Reform-Department) in the Ministry: reform-minded pedagogical experts hand-picked by Glöckel. Glöckel’s braintrust included pedagogue Dr. Viktor Fadrus as head of the Division for Primary-, Middle-, and Teacher- Training schools; University Professor Eduard Martinak as chair of the Division for Secondary Schools, backed by individuals such as Dr. Rudolf Ortmann, an expert in Germany’s school reforms, and Gymnasium-Professor and Pedagogical-Reformer Dr. Hans Fischl. Fischl commented that “the young Republic had the earnest intention of asserting the principle of gender equality in the school systems” in contrast to how he perceived women were treated as second-class citizens during the Monarchy. Yet, like the Monarchy, the Republic’s egalitarian spirit would make full allowance for feminine distinction (Eigenart) in the state’s educational structure.

Of immediate concern to the new republic, women’s secondary schools were seriously threatened by the economic crisis following World War I and the fall of the Habsburg Monarchy. That the majority of the Mädchenmittelschule were in private rather than public

251 Hans Fischl, Sieben Jahre Schulreform in Österreich (Wien: Deutscher Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1926), 123.
252 For more on the war’s effect on civilian life, especially women and children, see Maureen Healy Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire: Total War and Everyday Life in World War I. (Cambridge: Cambridge University
hands did not help matters; even increased levels of tuition could not prevent many private schools from folding. For these reasons, leagues developed to pressure the main political parties in Parliament to grant greater attention and money to the cause of women’s education. Such leagues included the Verband der deutschen Mädchenmittelschulen Österreichs (VMSÖ or Union of German Girls’ Secondary Schools) founded under the black-and-yellow Imperial flag on 15 April 1918 by Walter Schiff, who also held the position of Co-President of the League for Girls’ Classical Education in Vienna, VIII.²⁵³ Consisting of the directors, staff, and parents of Austria’s Mädchenmittelschulen, the VMSÖ sought to save girls’ secondary schools from financial ruin and imminent collapse. With the republican regime shift, the VMSÖ became the Verein Mädchenmittelschule (Girls’ Secondary School League) representing the corporate interests of all Mädchenmittelschule teachers. Moreover, with the much-hated paragraph 30 of the Imperial Associations Law a thing of the past, female teachers could fully participate in these and other political organizations. Women’s lobbying proved crucial to the progressive educational legislation passed during the Christian Social-Social Democratic coalition (March 1919-October 1920) as well as the elections preceding this brief political honeymoon. In the words of Hildegard Meißner, longtime Director of the VfEF’s Girls’ Secondary school:

During the elections of 1919, the League Mädchenmittelschule interested the political parties in our [girls’] schools, and invited a number of important leaders representing both ends of the political spectrum to extrapolate on party position at the league’s mass meetings, not only advertising their worldview to the league’s members and guests, but taking with them a certain responsibility to supporting girls’ higher education.²⁵⁴

²⁵³ Statuten des Verbandes der deutschen Mädchenmittelschulen Österreichs (Wien: Gerin, 1918).
Following the letter of Glöckel’s Ordinance of 22 April 1919 on the cooperation of classroom and home, a parents’ auxiliary to the VMS was founded on 23 February 1920.\textsuperscript{255}

An important memorandum penned by the Organization of Girls’ Secondary School Patrons, Teachers, and Parents landed on the desk of Minister of Education Rafael Pacher, a German National by party alliance, and reached the Austrian Parliament in April 1919.\textsuperscript{256} The memorandum demanded help for the much-neglected field of girls’ secondary schooling in Austria. Held up as evidence was the fact that the state expended for boys’ secondary education eighty-three times the amount it did for girls’ in the 1918 fiscal year.\textsuperscript{257} In relation to other European countries, Austria possessed only one humanistic girls’ Gymnasium, four Realgymnasien, eight Reformrealgymnasien, and fifteen Lyzeen (of which three offered Realgymnasium extension courses); in total, only four of these schools were state institutions. By comparison, the report pointed to Germany, where in Hamburg alone forty-one girls’ higher education schools could be found, two of which were public institutions. Likewise in Paris seven state girls’ secondary schools existed; even the tiny state of Bulgaria, according to the report, spent more on girls’ education than the Austrian Empire.

Above all, the report “demanded a transformation of girls’ secondary education, which should not only offer the knowledge necessary for advanced studies, but also preparation for woman’s natural vocation and social work.”\textsuperscript{258} The report stipulated that women teachers should be hired in greater numbers, employed as civil servants, and integrated into the structure of the

\textsuperscript{255} By the Provisional National Assembly’s ruling on 30 October 1918, the k.k. Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht was reorganized as the Deutsch-Österreichisches Staatsamt für Inneres und Unterricht. Two Unterssekretäre (Vice-Secretaries) responsible to a Staatssekretär were each delegated Religion and Education separately.


\textsuperscript{258} Ibid., 81.
Educational Ministry and local school boards. Lastly, girls’ schools were to be aided through subventions, not only to ensure that secondary education would be available to girls of all socio-economic classes but to give teachers a decent living.

The idea of a unitary secondary school open to all classes appealed to the Austro-Marxist pedagogical philosophies of Secretary of Education Glöckel and the tradition of the anticlerical Freie Schulen (Free Schools) he founded in 1905. The “Luxusschule” (school of luxury) was Glöckel’s petname for the lyceum, bastions of wealth, privilege, and frivolity. Discerning the ruling classes’ monopoly on educational capital, Glöckel theorized that

In a criminal manner, hundreds of thousands of proletarian children are denied admission to secondary schools, and with it, the possibility of social advancement. The ruling classes have excelled at propping up their hegemony through the privilege of education.\(^{259}\)

According to Glöckel’s Austro-Marxist philosophies, which he later expanded in Der Tor der Zukunft, class trumped gender in accounting for socio-educational discrimination.\(^{260}\) Assuming control of the Education Division of the Staatsamt für Inneres und Unterricht in March 1919, Glöckel proposed to solve the problem of girls’ secondary education by the most democratic means possible: by opening all boys’ secondary schools to girls. Meanwhile, in May 1919, Social Democratic Deputy Therese Schlesinger argued to the Budget and Financial Committee for state subventions for girls’ schools, describing the pitiful financial situation of low-level female teachers.\(^{261}\) Later in the 1920 budget debates Schlesinger again spoke up for girls’ education, arguing that all boys’ schools, particularly vocational schools teaching valuable trades, should be opened to girls in light of the pressing financial crisis.\(^{262}\) Yet such

\(^{259}\) Otto Glöckel, Schulreform und Volksbildung in der Republik (Wien: 1919), 7.
\(^{260}\) Otto Glöckel, Der Tor der Zukunft (Wien: Alfred Rastl, 1924).
\(^{262}\) Hauch, Vom Frauenstandpunkt aus, 210.
coeducational proposals threatened to eradicate the existence of an entire industry—hundreds of schools and thousands and thousands of teachers—catered to the specific needs of girls’ education. Even Glöckel himself, quite outspoken in supporting full-fledged equality for women, was forced to realize the political impossibility of such an action. Glöckel’s best intentions, as his reformist colleague Fischl formulated the matter, “butted heads with the resistance of teachers and related circles, who for political or pedagogical reasons, denied any form of coeducation.”\textsuperscript{263} Coeducational measures would have to be balanced with the interests of the gender-specific \textit{Mädchenmittelschule}.

A compromise was reached from all sides by agreeing upon nationalization of private schools as the best method for supporting girls’ secondary education. In a Parliamentary assembly of 27 April 1919, leaders of the major political parties, including Gabriele Proft (Social Democratic), Dr. Ignaz Seipl (Christian Social), Dr. Straffner (Pan-German Party), as well as representatives of the BÖFV, teachers unions, and school leagues such as Marianne Hainisch, Marie Fürth, and Anna Postelberg, pledged to take women’s secondary education under the state’s wing.\textsuperscript{264} Supporters of women’s education were found on all sides of the political spectrum: from Pan-German People’s Party Delegates Emmi Stradal and Dr. Maria Schneider, to Christian Social Deputies Olga Rudel-Zeynek and Emmi Kapral; to Gabriele Proft and Therese Schlesinger, the Social Democratic Party’s tireless mouthpieces for women’s education.\textsuperscript{265} Within the Educational Ministry, women’s education found allies in Glöckel’s \textit{Reformabteilung}, and above all in Dr. Rudolf Ortmann, head of the Ministry’s Secondary School Division.\textsuperscript{266}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{263} Hans Fischl, \textit{Sieben Jahre Schulreform in Österreich}, 123.
\textsuperscript{265} See Gabrielle Hauch’s \textit{Vom Frauenstandpunkt aus} (with attached biographical appendix of the First Republic’s women Parliamentarians) for these female deputies’ political resumes.
\textsuperscript{266} Indicative of Glöckel’s Reform Camp’s receptiveness to foreign models, Ortmann had undertaken research trips to Germany with Dr. Ludo Hartmann, Athenäum founder, to study Prussian reform school movements.
\end{footnotesize}
To combat the immediate financial plight of the girls’ secondary schools, Schlesinger filed a motion before the Finance and Budget Committee on 27 May 1919, arguing for subventions and extension of state contracts to Mädchenmittelschule teachers. Making good on an old promise from the Imperial Ministry to support women’s secondary education, the Parliamentary Committee for Education and Upbringing ruled on 30 April 1920 that; “the state ministry for education is ordered, in cooperation with the state Ministry of Finance, to award one-time emergency financial assistance in appropriate sums to the teaching staff of Austrian girls’ secondary schools for the 1919/20 school year…” In the months and years to come, this award was extended and regularized by a number of measures taken by the Parliament and Educational Ministry. In practice, state subsidies for Austrian Mädchenmittelschulen fell into two categories: Barsubventionen (cash-subsidies) and the so-called lebende Subventionen (living subventions). A pivotal phase in incorporating private girls’ schools as public institutions, the first type of subsidy was exemplified by measures taken by the federal government in the 1920/21 school year to sponsor running costs for the first forms of four Viennese Mädchenmittelschulen: specifically, the WFEV Mädchengymnasium, VfEF Mädchengymnasium, Mädchenrealgymnasium Wien VIII., and the Hietzinger Mädchenschule. The Ministry of Education passed this historical “life-preserver” for girls’ secondary schools under the steerage of Secretary Walter Breisky on 4 October 1920. In return for financial assistance, girls’ schools had to pledge to freeze their tuitions (Schulgelder) at levels not exceeding the state schools and to submit curricula and the hiring and firing of teaching staff for

269 Hans Fischl, Sieben Jahre Schulreform in Österreich, 123.
ministerial approval. Extended to more schools in subsequent years, the Republic gradually assumed control of girls’ secondary education.\textsuperscript{271}

Another reform particularly welcome by teachers was the introduction of the so-called “living subventions.” On 1 October 1921 Otto Glöckel unveiled a measure to bring seventy \textit{Mädchenmittelschule} teachers into service of the federal government.\textsuperscript{272} As such “living subventions” were only awarded to public or league-sponsored schools, the \textit{Mädchenmittelschule} Verein clamored for the conversion of the few remaining private schools into league-sponsored ventures. The conversion of the private \textit{Schwarzwaldsche Schulanstalten} into the \textit{Gesellschaft der Schwarzwaldschen Schulanstalten} (Schwarzwald School Institutes Society) represents a case in point.\textsuperscript{273} Henceforth, all girls’ schools stood open to cash- or living- subsidies and the “the gradual take-over of girls schools by the state was heralded.”\textsuperscript{274} The Viennese Women’s Academy, as will be detailed in the next chapter, benefited from such “living subsidies” through the extension of state contracts to five core professors and an administrative officer in the summer of 1921.

In addition to the measures supporting girls’ schools, the First Republic made groundbreaking progress in introducing coeducation into public schools. While paying tribute to the interests of \textit{Mädchenmittelschule} proponents, Glöckel and other radicals got their way in legalizing coeducation in Austrian state schools, albeit in a somewhat moderated form than Glöckel had originally planned. A ministerial decree of 21 July 1919, Z. 10773 Nr. 44 issued to all Austrian state school officials mandated the admission of girls as regular pupils at boys’

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{271} See also Helmut Engelbrecht’s discussion of these reforms, \textit{Geschichte des österreichischen Bildungswesen} Vol. V, 142.
\bibitem{274} Helmut Engelbrecht, \textit{Geschichte des österreichischen Bildungswesen} Vol. V, 142.
\end{thebibliography}
In the first place, the law granted girls who had been studying at boys’ secondary schools as special “guest-students” on a provisional basis rights as full-fledged regular pupils. Under special permission from school faculty and local school officials, girls were permitted to study at boys’ secondary schools (i.e. for Matura preparation) by the Ministry since 1910. Secondly, the law set out rules for admitting new female pupils into boys’ public schools. In localities without secondary schools for girls, female pupils were to be admitted to any secondary school on the same conditions as male pupils. In places where one or more state girls’ school or school with rights of public incorporation existed, girls were permitted to enroll at boys’ schools: pending permission of local school boards and that a parallel class of at least 30 girls could be formed at an existing boys’ school. Such parallel classes were to be conducted according to the Reformrealgymnasium curriculum, with the majority of classes taught by female teachers. In practice, however, female teaching staffs were limited to physical-education or sewing teachers in more remote localities. The upshot of the 21 July decree, as well as a subsequent clarification on 8 October 1920, was to provide girls unrestricted access to boys’ state secondary schools.

Following Glöckel’s resignation as State Secretary of Education with the fall of the Coalition in late October 1920, a Thermidorian climate set in towards the Republic’s radical educational reforms. While supporters of gender-segregated education realized that the Lyceum had outlived its usefulness, many groups, such as the staff of Austria’s Mädchenmittelschulen as well as Christian Social and Pan-German politicians, sought for a way to revitalize the

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276 Hans Fischl, Sieben Jahre Schulreform in Österreich, 122-123.
Frauenoberschule. Maintaining single-sex girls’ education fit the interests of Austria’s Mädchenmittelschule industry as well as Christian Social and Pan-German philosophies towards women’s distinct societal roles. Right-wing parliamentarians criticized coeducation not out of a fundamental animosity to women’s higher education, but rather because sending girls to boys’ schools neglected the cultivation of specifically-feminine virtues and domestic skills. In a parliamentary session of 11 March 1921 Pan-German Deputy Emmy Stradal argued that although the opening of boys’ schools to girls was praiseworthy, it did not represent an ideal solution to the problem of women’s education, for such schools ignored women’s roles as mother and housewife and related home-economic skills. Women should “flex their political muscle…” not “to be further integrated and make competition in men’s professions, in careers… which are not suited to us.” Stradal proceeded to demand the transformation of the lyceum into modern Frauenoberschulen (Women’s Secondary Schools) and the nationalization of private girls’ schools.

The interests of Stradal and the Mädchenmittelschule League were satisfied with a Ministerial Decree of 30 July 1921, introducing the Frauenoberschule as a new prototype of girls’ secondary education. Commencing around age fourteen (after the fourth form of the lyceum or the lower levels of a middle school), the Frauenoberschule focused on childcare, sewing, cooking and home-economics and was geared to “woman’s special nature and cultural duties.” Fischl, a high-level official in the Ministry’s Division for Secondary Schools, described it as such:

…[T]he Frauenoberschule was at once theoretically and practically oriented, in the middle between a purely-general and a purely-vocational

279 Quoted in Gabrielle Hauch, Vom Frauenstandpunkt aus, 213.
281 Quoted in Helmut Engelbrecht, Geschichte des österreichischen Bildungswesen Vol. V, 143.
school, striving to connect a higher general education with practical training for the so-called feminine career fields [childcare, nursing, home economics]…

Its academic curriculum largely mirrored that of the reform Lyceum, with the exception that German literature and history, as well as the newer fields of psychology and pedagogy, received particular stress. Faced with the question of a German-Austrian identity after the fall of the Monarchy, the rump Austrian state put heightened emphasis on German language and literature, in addition to identifying with Austria’s Baroque heritage in music and art, in official curricula. As later Secretary of Education, Hans Pernter, wrote in the mid 1930s; “[i]n language instruction, Austrian culture must also cultivate the German language—we are Germans and want to preserve and enhance our language’s cultural heritage.” In addition to normal school-leaving examinations, certifications in childcare and the culinary arts were introduced in 1924. Frauenoberschule graduates were entitled to attend the university, but only as non-matriculating auditors. However, provided she could complete a supplemental examination in Latin and Mathematics at a Gymnasium, the Frauenoberschule graduate was also granted full-access to matriculate in the university’s philosophical faculty. Despite the lyceum’s problems under the Empire, it nonetheless conveyed a more substantial general education than the Frauenoberschule’s Kinder-Küche mantra.

While Christian Socials and Pan-Germans chiseled away at Glöckel’s federal educational reforms after the black-red coalition caved in 1920, Glöckel continued his work as Chairman of

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the Viennese School Board from 1922 onward. Less favorable climates towards women’s education were also furthered by shrinking federal budgets and the currency crisis preceding the introduction of the Schilling in 1924. Conservatives, however, could not touch what Glöckel had achieved in restoring the secularization of the 1869 Reichsvolkschulgesetz. While Glöckel left mandatory religious instruction in place, pupils were not required to participate in religious practices, such as attending mass or confession, during school. What is more, many democratic reforms achieved during Glöckel’s tenure as Viennese School Board Director actually harkened back to reforms called for and implemented by the women’s educational reform movement. For instance, central to Glöckel’s policies was the idea of a unitary secondary/middle school open to all students aged 11-14, which, in the words of Historian Helmut Gruber “provided enriched core subjects (mathematics and German) for all, yet at the same time was flexible enough to allow the study of foreign languages and the Realschule, stepping stones to university education and the higher professions.” Importantly, these new Allgemeine Mittelschulen (general secondary/middle schools), which Fischl called “keystone of the new school structure” would postpone the channeling of students into academic, professional, or vocational tracks until age 14.287 Channeling students later in their school careers engendered


287 Hans Fischl, Sieben Jahre Schulreform in Österreich, 82. While Glöckel’s Einheitsschulen were motivated by a spirit of egalitarianism, school classes were still differentiated based on pupils’ ability. Klassenzug I was designed for students of above-average ability, while Klassenzug II was open to students of below average ability. For a more detailed discussion of the Glöckian Einheitsschule, see Erik Adam, “Austromarxismus und Schulreform,” in Die
a spirit of *Gemeinschaft*, or community, among all classes and left the choice of vocational or academic tracks to more mature, autonomous youth.

Postponing the schools’ academic channeling is precisely what the women’s educational reform movement in Austria had been striving at during the late-Imperial era. The Lyceum’s *Gymnasiale Oberstufen*, for instance, allowed girls to switch into academic tracks at a later age. In facing the question of the proper form of secondary schools for girls, the leading advocates for women’s education had been calling for such unitary *Mittelschulen* since the turn-of-the-century lyceum debates. Marianne Hainisch, in mulling the issue of the Provisional Lyceum Regulations of 1900, was ready to abandon the lyceum altogether for a new form of secondary school. “It is to be hoped, that the future will yield a reform… [creating] an *Einheitsschule* (comprehensive- or unitary school) school lasting until the 13th or 14th year, which would postpone the choice of an academic, professional, or immediate vocational, educational direction for parents and children.”

Likewise, Friedrich Jodl, a leading supporter of women’s education and Professor of Philosophy and Aesthetics at the University of Vienna, also stood in Hainisch’s corner in arguing for public utility of *Einheitsschulen* over lyceums. “As a foil [to the lyceum] I envision a unitary secondary school with a curriculum which is the very same for both sexes, assuring both [sexes] the same general knowledge, the same intellectual discipline, and, by refraining from all preparation for specific career, holding back from one-sidedness and dryness.” As these brief passages from Hainisch and Jodl illustrate, the idea of a unitary *Mittelschule* was not unique to Glöckel’s reform camp but had been planted by *fin-de-siècle* educational reformers. In addition, the *Gesamtunterricht* (holistic instruction) orientation of the new Social Democratic schools,

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which introduced less-disciplinarian, creative teaching methods, emphasized pupils’ mental and physical health, and catered to individual needs of each student, were a direct reflection of earlier forms of experimentation in the women’s educational reform movement. For instance, the Social Democrats’ new primary schools were strikingly like the sort of individualized, holistic coeducational elementary instruction, which strove to make school interactive and not about memorization drills, punishment, or fear, that Eugenie Schwarzwald had been offering for over a decade at her Schulanstalten. One could easily mistake Glöckel’s sentiments that “the primary evil of early education lies in the fact that individuality of the pupils remains completely ignored… and learning is only a strenuous duty…” for Eugenie Schwarzwald’s writings on early-childhood pedagogy. That many of the Republic’s most important educational reforms—coeducation, egalitarianism, less-authoritarian teaching methods, and greater teacher and student support in the form of scholarships and stipends—found their roots in the women’s educational reform movement is a verity too often overlooked by historians and the Austrian general public alike.

The reforms in Austrian women’s education circa 1850-1920 summarized in this chapter appear to follow a revolutionary, 360-degree trajectory. That is, women’s secondary and higher education went from being a matter left entirely to the private sphere to becoming completely state-regulated, sponsored, and subsidized with the ascension of Glöckel and the Social Democrats in the early days of the Austrian First Republic. The central government made great progress towards exercising greater control and financial support of women’s higher education in

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290 Hans Fischl, Sieben Jahre Schulreform in Österreich, 67-82.
the late-Imperial and early-Republican periods. The state worked with a variety of progressive women’s leagues and schools to deliver an improved, if imperfect, curriculum for the predominant form of female secondary school: the lyceum. The Imperial Ministry of Education set up and lent its support to a variety of vocational schools celebrating women’s earning power, and took significant steps toward opening the doors of Austria’s ivory tower to women. Indeed, the Ministry played every card in its deck to advance the cause of women’s education: so long as this education did not overstep the boundaries of feminine propriety. The vision of women’s equality shared by imperial officials, liberal and conservative alike, was one grounded on feminine distinction rather than absolute equality. For this reason were schools that catered to the special female Eigenart (nature) so crucial to late-Imperial ministerial plans for modernizing women’s education.

The radical reforms of the First Republic—coeducation, unitary schools, and principles of curricular flexibility—seem to go in the face of the moderate progress achieved under the Monarchy. Yet, in considering the concurrent continuities and discontinuities in the realm of women’s education between the late-Imperial and early-Republican periods, the old adage that “the more things change, the more things stay the same” rings resoundingly true. While Glöckel and his reformist cohorts may have introduced measures that seemed groundbreaking to the general public, many of these techniques were products of pre-war progressive schooling methods. The private schools of Eugenie Schwarzwald, particularly in the way that the government borrowed ideas of less-authoritarian, creative methods of elementary instruction, as well as coeducation, school libraries, and pupil scholarships, stand as a case in point. Also a relic of the k.k. era, the unflagging belief in the necessity for an education tailored to woman’s particular societal duties continued to influence the educational politics of the First Republic.
Arguments on the importance of women’s role as wife and mother, only multiplied by her role as transmitter of Austro-German culture in the post-imperial Austrian state, fostered the creation of a new type of women’s secondary school, the Frauenoberschule, that would replace the Lyceum. The Lyceum, a bastion of privilege and the well-born daughters of “The World of Yesterday,” became less relevant in the Republic’s new socio-political constellation and post-war shortages. Nonetheless, in representing the final step in encouraging the state to take an active role in women’s education, the postwar economic chaos was a blessing in disguise for Austria’s Mädchenmittelschule.

All in all, the years from 1850-1920 witnessed monumental progress in the field of women’s secondary and higher education. While the late-eighteenth-century Theresian reforms laid the foundation for girls’ public schooling, the pivotal Reichvolkschulgesetz of 1869 secularized education and extended mandatory schooling to eight rather than six years. A new contingent of female schoolteachers educated in state pedagogical institutes soon filled classrooms in cities and villages across the Empire, and state-sponsored vocational and craft schools taught women to fend for themselves. The Imperial Ministry of Education was not shy about taking a clue from what private leagues, such as the WFEV and the VfEF, had laid out in league-sponsored private institutions. By the late-nineteenth century, the doors of Austria’s institutions of higher learning would be open to women as well, illustrating that Austria was just as advanced as her Western neighbors in supporting women’s higher education. Though facing significant hurdles, female students were well integrated into the philosophical, medical, and pharmaceutical university-faculties by the first decades of the twentieth century, with the legal faculty quickly following suit. Advancing women’s ability to perform at the university, many
Lyceums offered classical Gymnasium extension courses, in addition to a growing number of publicly-incorporated Mädchengymnasien.

Framed in this light, both the continuities and discontinuities of the regime shift from Monarchy to Republic come into sharp relief. The spoils of full political participation—suffrage, the right to stand for office, and become members of political associations—politicized women’s education to a degree never seen under the Monarchy. Indeed, extracting a clear political position from any of the Empire’s main political parties on women’s education is an exercise in futility. Before gaining suffrage, women were essentially second-class citizens whose interests or educational needs were not directly represented in national politics. Due to women’s inability to participate in politics, the Austrian women’s movement, the educational leagues and feminist groups surveyed here not excluded, operated outside party structure. Democracy and the coming of the First Austrian Republic changed all of this. All sides of the political spectrum, from Pan-German, to Christian Social, to Social Democratic, were deeply concerned with the problem of women’s education and promised resolutions to female constituents. Women themselves became integrated into the political parties and offered their special expertise on women’s issues such as family, children, and education. Social Democratic female deputies espoused the most radical overall views on women’s education, while Pan-German politicians would not budge on the Frauenoberschule’s necessity. Yet, despite the novelty of female Parliamentarians, it cannot be forgotten that the nearly-complete Verstaatlichung (nationalization) of girls’ school-systems during the First Republic merely represented the capstone of reforms that had already been in place under the black and yellow flag of the House of Habsburg-Lorraine. Both the Imperial and Republican administrations grappled with the question of women’s equality in the realm of education, and despite certain differences, both adhered to policies privileging woman’s special
nature and pedagogical needs. The form that women’s equality ought to take in Austria—
whether women’s unique nature destined them to schools, leagues, and academies of their own—
would vex the artistic and educational institutions of the Monarchy and Republic alike.
Chapter Two: Institutionalizing Frauenkunst in the Austrian State Academies of Fine and Applied Arts, 1865-1925

In February 1872, as excitement was mounting for the pavilion of Austrian women’s handicrafts to be included with the Viennese World Exhibition planned to open the following spring, a group of twenty female students at the Austrian Kunstgewerbeschule addressed a petition to the school’s Board of Directors. The Kunstgewerbeschule, which had been founded in 1867 in connection with its sister-institution the Museum für Kunst und Industrie (1864, henceforth abbreviated as MfKI) to train future artists and crafts[wo]men, to further Austrian industry, and to raise public appreciation for the applied arts, represented Austria-Hungary’s lone state academy open to men and women alike. Like the rising enrollments at the vocational schools described in Chapter One, levels of female students at the Kunstgewerbeschule had been rising steadily from the eight young ladies enrolled during the inaugural 1868/69 school year. On the eve of the 1873 Exhibition, no less than thirty-two female pupils could be found scattered throughout the KGS’s Vorbereitungsschule (General Preparatory Division) and Fachklassen (specialized classes). Although the Kunstgewerbeschule had admitted female students since opening on 1 October 1868, certain limitations, foremost among them prohibition from the life-drawing class (or Aktsaal), excluded female students from pursuing tracks in figural painting or sculpture. In effect, female pupils were restricted to studying the “low” arts in the workshops for decorative-, porcelain-, and flower- painting: fields commensurate with common notions of gendered aesthetics in late-Imperial Austria-Hungary. Like the questions of gender equity facing Imperial Austrian educational systems generally, the program of study open to women during the early period of the Kunstgewerbeschule remained theoretically equal to men’s, but was tailored to woman’s unique nature and perceived prowess for the decorative.
Capitalizing on the attention surrounding the Women’s Pavilion, twenty female regular- and guest-students directed a request to the Kunstgewerbeschule’s advisory board “that a F{}\"{}achs{}\"{}chule for figural drawing and painting be established in the same manner as for pupils of the male sex.” MfKI Director and Founder Rudolf von Eitelberger, a champion of women’s education in the industrial arts and instrumental figure in organizing the Women’s Pavilion, responded that

The main issue at hand of the entitlement of pupils of the female sex to participate in the Austrian Museum [of Art and Industry’s] School of Applied Arts has already been decided. They have enrolled as regular students, taken part completely in theoretical and practical exercises, [and] no difference is made between issuing diplomas to pupils of the female or male sex…From the very beginning it was clear to the leading circles of the Museum School that its halls must be open to members of the female sex who have dedicated themselves to the applied arts.

Eitelberger proceeded to highlight women’s particular talents in certain fields of the applied arts such as embroidery, weaving, flower-painting, porcelain- and decorative painting, arguing that “the female sex… is called to practice these applied arts to an equally high degree as men.” Yet, with his caveat that “women’s calling in the monumental arts is a very limited one,” Eitelberger’s words epitomized the late-nineteenth century Central European discourse on women-artists painting Kunstübende Frauen as frivolous dilettantes dappling in gender-appropriate spheres of the applied arts. Not only due to a lack of institutional space and funds but in “going against the rules of propriety and good German morality that girls should draw and paint from live nude male models amongst themselves, let alone in the company of male pupils” did Eitelberger and the Kunstgewerbeschule Board of Directors silence the girls’ plea for a

\footnotesize{293 Ibid., 62.  
\footnotesize{294 Ibid., 61.  
\footnotesize{295 The term Künstlerin only came into common circulation during the last decades of the 19th century, suggesting the linguistic discomfort with formations of the term for woman-artists. Instead, other terms describing women artists, such as Kunstübende Frauen, Künstlerische Frauen, were employed.}  

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separate school of figural painting and drawing. Instead, the female pupils were given limited access to the boys’ school of figural drawing, but not beyond the point where life drawing was introduced. Eitelberger undoubtedly welcomed women’s presence in fields of the applied arts harmonious with traditional feminine virtues and women’s role in the domestic economy: a realm of artistic production exemplified by the works of female embroidery, needlepoint, and textiles displayed at the women’s pavilion. Nonetheless, Eitelberger and his colleagues delegated responsibility for women’s education in the fine arts, including oil-, landscape, portrait, and genre-painting, back to the Ministry of Education, arguing that private ateliers for women to study “serious” painting should be established and maintained through state subventions.

That the KGS faculty council, headed by Eitelberger’s successor Jacob von Falke, successfully moved to suspend admitting women to the General Preparatory Division in the 1886/87 school year on the grounds that this training should be taken over by private institutions, represented the apotheosis of this exclusionary, privatization trend. Signed into law by Minister of Education Paul Gautsch, the closure of the Vorbereitungsschule to women took effect in the 1886/87 school year and reflected faculty fears about the hyper-feminization of the institution. Barring women from the general preparatory course forced young women wishing to study in the “feminine” workshops still open to women, such as the Special-Workshop for Ceramic Decoration and Porcelain (1877) and the Special-Workshop for Embroidery Design (1879), to undertake preparatory training privately. From the mid 1870s onward, the WFEV’s drawing courses and a variety of private ateliers remained options, though significantly more expensive than state schools. Even the tuition at the chain of state-sponsored General Drawing

296 Antrag Sistierung der Aufnahme von Schülerinnen in der Vorbereitungsschule, Archiv der Hochschule für angewandte Kunst [AHA], Verwaltungsakten [VA] 1886/90, Z. 88 [27 February 1886] [Universität für angewandte Kunst, Sammlungen und Oskar Kokoschka Zentrum, Vienna, Austria].

297 Sistierung der Aufnahme von Schülerinnen in der Vorbereitungsschule, AHA VA 1886/92, Z. 4207 [6 August 1886].
Schools born out of Eitelberger’s and Falke’s proposals was nearly double that of the KGS for hourly instruction. Indeed, women’s opportunities at Austria’s state schools of craft remained narrowly circumscribed by socio-cultural ideals of gender, art, and creativity.

This brief account from the early years of the Kunstgewerbeschule illustrates how late Imperial Austria’s state academies of fine and applied art—the Austrian School of Applied Arts, the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, and the Viennese Women’s Academy, a league-sponsored quasi-public academy—confronted the same essential questions faced in women’s secondary education: whether women’s unique nature necessitated schools, leagues, and academies of their own or if integration into the male institutional mainstream represented the most expedient route to attaining gender equity in art education. Like the ebbing fate of the Austrian girls’ Lyceum and Gymnasium summarized in the previous chapter, the inclusion and non-inclusion of women in Imperial Austria’s public art academies illustrates the intersection of gender and the shifting political and economic realities of the specific ministerial administration in question. The fate of women at the Austrian Kunstgewerbeschule represents a telling case in illuminating the contingent fate of female art students: specifically, how Austrian liberals such as Jacob Falke, Rudolf Eitelberger, and Armand Dumreicher valued Austrian craftswomen’s industriousness in supporting the domestic economy but remained uncertain about the possibility of an Altmeisterin, or “Old Mistress.” The historian Carl Schorske highlighted the latter two of these

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298 For instance, in 1874 monthly tuition of one-half Krone at the Allgemeine Zeichenschule für Frauen und Mädchen was actually less than the KGS’s monthly tuition of 1 Krone. However, while students paid one-half Krone for 48 monthly hours of classroom instruction at the Allgemeine Zeichenschule, KGS students received 180 hours of classroom instruction for 1 Krone. By contrast, the tuition of the Zeichenschule of the Wiener-Frauen-Erwerb Verein was very pricey at 2 Kronen for only 48 hours of classroom instruction.

individuals as poster-children for his failure of liberalism paradigm, but their views on gender demonstrate that even the parity of progress could be very traditional.\textsuperscript{300} While women had been granted admission on equal terms with men during the highpoint of the liberal educational reforms and were hailed as crucial to rejuvenating Austro-Hungarian manufacturing and cottage industries, educational parity at the Kunstgewerbeschule was revoked during the conservative “Iron-Ring” government of Minister-President Eduard von Taaffe (1868–70; 1879–93).\textsuperscript{301} Fears of the KGS becoming a “breeding-ground for female dilettantism or adding to the already large artistic proletariat” fanned the flames of the conservative fire slowly devouring the progress achieved under the liberal banner.\textsuperscript{302} The restriction of female students to the lower, reproductive arts in the 1886-87 school year remained policy until a Secessionist coup seized the KGS’s leading positions around 1900, introducing a thoroughgoing overhaul of its pedagogical methods and structure.\textsuperscript{303}

Common among the main three educational institutions under examination in this chapter, the Kunstgewerbeschule, the Akademie der bildenden Künste, and the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (later Wiener Frauenakademie), was a view of institutional parity pitted on gendered distinction rather than sameness: a principle of “separate but equal” artistic educational institutions for women. As formulated by the Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (Art School for Women and Girls League) in relation to the need to provide continued support for a

\textsuperscript{300} Carl Schorske, \textit{Fin-de-siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture} (New York: Vintage, 1980), 66-67. Schorske writes of Dumreicher “[t]he high bureaucrat who designed the school system was himself a liberal whose nationalism was both intensified by the failures of ‘cosmopolitan’ capitalism in Austria and driven to traditional romantic channels by it.” Schorske, 67.

\textsuperscript{301} On Taaffe and the Iron-Ring coalition of German landowners, conservative clericals and Slavs, see William Jenks, \textit{Austria Under the Iron Ring} (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1965).

\textsuperscript{302} See Antrag von Myrbach von 21.7.1900 um die Wiederaufnahme von Schülerinnen an der Allgemeine Abteilung der Kunstgewerbeschule. ÖStA, AVA, Fasz. 3135, Z. 21601/1900. Indeed, the image of the independent Kunstgewerblerin became so prevalent, if contentious, in post-war Austrian society that she was fictionalized as “Elisabeth” by Joseph Roth in the second of his three-volume saga of the von Trotta dynasty’s downfall.
separate women’s academy after the opening of the Schillerplatz to women; “the issue at hand cannot be about equality in a literal sense, i.e. instruction that would be imparted in the same building by the same teachers, but rather equality of substance.” Equality of instructional substance was precisely what the Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, founded in 1897 under the leadership of Univ. Prof. Dr. Friedrich Jodl, Marianne Hainisch, and Rosa Mayreder, had in mind in establishing a separate women’s academy. In appealing to the Lower Austrian Government to sanction the League’s statutes, the KFM’s provisional Executive Committee declared “its purpose to be the establishment and maintenance of a school in which women and girls, for a marginal fee, can enjoy vocational training in art.”

Offering vocational training and certifications in the fine and applied arts equal to those of the Academy and KGS, the KFM offered pupils the best of both worlds: that is, an education with institutional parity to the premier state institutions in the applied and fine arts yet accordant with the Central European model of single-gender education. Although the KFM’s curriculum reflected the hierarchical structure of the Academy and KGS, a trend which intensified with the 1918/19 introduction of Academic Courses in Painting that were theoretically equal to those of the Academy, gender-specific teaching-methods and accommodations to the feminine aesthetic remained in place. The very existence of the KFM was justified by the widespread belief that “the psychological conditions for art instruction for female-pupils are fundamentally different from male-pupils.”

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304 Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on the Admission of Women to Academy of Fine Arts (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBKÖ], ARCH 32/2.
305 The VKFM’s Provisional Executive Committee consisted of Univ. Prof. Dr. Friedrich Jodl, Marianne Hainisch, Bertha Hartmann, Rosa Mayreder, Helene Bettelheim-Gabilion, Dr. Karl and Ernestine Federn, Olga Prager, Dr. Julius Pap.
306 WStLA, MA 49/V A 6025/1925, Z. 62814/V. After the school opened in Winter 1897, the Verein dropped the “Errichtung” (Establishment) from its name. This change of title and the League’s amended statutes were approved by the NÖ Staatsrat on 12 January 1899. WStLA, MA 49/V A 6024/1925, Z. 52714/V, Z.115322.
307 Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on Admission of Women to the Academy of Fine Arts (1918), ARCH VBKÖ, ARCH 32/1-2.
The existence of a separate women’s academy maintained by a private league offered a convenient solution to circumvent, or at least postpone, the opening the doors of the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts to female students. The Academy’s negative rulings on admitting women in 1872, 1904, and again in 1913 on the grounds of women’s limited abilities in the monumental arts deflected the responsibility of training of women artists to back to the private sphere. Yet, while the Educational Ministry’s preference to work within the framework of league schools demonstrates its faith in traditional gendered notions of public and private spheres, its endorsement of the Viennese Women’s Academy to facilitate equal opportunity in art education showed a more progressive side to its policies. The Ministry’s official endorsement of the Wiener Frauenakademie lent the school a public, quasi-state character: trends that accelerated after the school achieved rights of public incorporation in 1908/9 and introduced courses in Academic Painting in the 1918/9 school year granted parity with those of the state Academy. The “theoretical Verstaatlichung” (or nationalization of the Women’s Academy was further confirmed by the First’s Republic’s so-called “living subventions” supporting girls’ education, which brought five core professors and an administrative officer into service of the state. Extending state contracts to its professors allowed the KFM to attract and retain stellar artistic talent. Secure state contracts, however, exercised a decisive impact in gaining a new

308 The KFM was granted the provisional Öffentlichkeitsrecht, which allowed graduates to become certified drawing teachers in state elementary, middle, and secondary schools, at the end of its eleventh year on 30 June 1908; this was extended to the dauernde Öffentlichkeitsrecht on 8 June 1910. Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchens (1910) Jahresbericht über das XIII. Vereinsjahr 1909/1910. Wien: Selbstverlag der VKFM, 5; Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchens (1918), Jahresbericht über das XXI. Vereinsemähr. Wien: 1918, 4. The introduction of Courses in Academic Painting was approved by the decree of the Ministerium für Cultus und Unterricht Z-23280-XVII and 4 December 1918 Z-41195-Abt. 17.

309 Anna Spitzmüller, “Die Frau in der bildenden Kunst,” Frauenbewegung, Frauenbildung und Frauenarbeit in Österreich, Martha Braun, et. al. eds. (Wien: Selbstverlag des Bundes Österreichischer Frauenvereine, 1930), 321. Whether the KFM was, in fact, a state school remained a matter of contention. In 1922, the Republican Ministry of education later that the KFM was no state institution but that the state merely provided the Academic Schools with a yearly subsidy of 10,000 Kronen.

310 Indeed, from the very beginning KFM pupils had enjoyed a superb teaching staff that included Austria’s most famous woman-painter, Tina Blau-Lang as well as painters Rudolf Jettmar, Hans Tichy, Christian Martin, and Adolf
generation of painters and architects who not only fortified the Women’s Academy’s academic reputation but steered the Frauenakademie in new, avant-garde directions in the late 1920s. Like the changing codes of gender apropos art, culture, and education in late-Imperial and First-Republic Austria, the Wiener Frauenakademie occupied a liminal space between public and private, tradition and innovation, and absolute and particularist ideals of gender equality.

Against the backdrop of the Central European discourse on women artists, the current chapter explores the institutionalization of Frauenkunst in the Austrian state academies of fine and applied art. Although the idea of Frauenkunst was originally cast in exceedingly negative terms, connected with amateurism, dilettantism, and the low arts, “women’s art” came to play a valuable role in the cultural life of late-Imperial and early-Republican Austria. Ironically, Frauenkunst would pride itself on many of the tenets for which it was traditionally disparaged, such as its connection with craft and decoration, during its mid 1920s zenith. Given the tremendous loss of territory and resources in separating rump-Austria from its imperial hinterland, women’s cultural mission was viewed as all the more valuable to preserving the Republic’s cultural mission. All forces, women not excepted, of the Austrian body politic had to be tapped in order for Austrians to continue their role as the Central European Kulturvolk.

Nonetheless, while celebrated for a brief moment in time for its patriotic mission, Frauenkunst’s position between public and private, state and non-affiliated buckled to the predominant belief that mainstream rather than gender-segregated education best served the Republic.

Böhm. However, many of the KFM’s prominent teachers were eventually lost to more prestigious and lucrative state teaching posts at the Academy of Fine Arts and KGS. Jettmar, Tichy, and Martin all gained professorships at the Academy of Fine Arts while Boehm was appointed to the Kunstgewerbeschule. Other KFM faculty going on to more prestigious state-positions included Ludwig Michalek and Hermann Grom-Rottmayer, who went on to the Graphische Lehr-und Versuchsanstalt and the Technische Hochschule, respectively. On Tina Blau’s KFM tenure, see Alexandra Ankwicz “Tina Blau, eine Österreichische Malerin.” Frauenbilder aus Österreich: Eine Sammlung von 12 Essays, Alma Motzko, et al, eds. (Wien: Obelisk Verlag, 1955) 245-271.
From Dilettante to Artist
Discursive Visions of Women Artists in Central Europe, 1890-1930

The concept of Frauenkunst referenced by KGS Director Eitelberger in elucidating women’s limited proficiency in the fine arts was rooted in the notion of dilettantism: the idea of dabbling, without serious conviction or training, in the arts and crafts. Art historian Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber has recently observed that female dilettantism embodied the hallmark of ‘Frauenkunst’ in nineteenth-century Central Europe. As has been shown in Chapter One, the notion of female dilettantism—skimming the surface of the arts without real talent in any single field—became a primary target of the women’s educational reform movement at the fin-de-siècle. In a feuilleton for Dokumente der Frauen, journalist Bertha Zuckerkandl applied Hamburg Art Historian Alfred Lichtwark’s coining of dilettantism as Germany’s “Neue Volkskunst” to the Austrian context. Referring to the way that society educated young girls to take a greater interest in the art of socialization rather than cultural and public affairs, Zuckerkandl held that: “here [in Austria], the deficient upbringing of girls bears the guilt for the dull indifference brought to public questions.” As will become apparent in the pages to follow, the aesthetic notion of Frauenkunst—connected as it were with frivolity, superficiality, and artifice—was a far cry from the cultivated, urbane, and republican model into which it would be transformed in the 1920s.

The prejudices surrounding Central European women artists in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries stemmed from the sort of superficial education in the arts gleaned at lyceums and other höhere Töchterschulen (secondary girls,’ i.e. finishing, schools). As will be remembered from Chapter One, the late-nineteenth century lyceum curriculum placed much

312 Alfred Lichtwark, Vom Arbeitsfeld des Dilettantismus (Dresden: Verlag Gerhard Kühtmann, 1897).
emphasis on the cultivation of artistic, craft, and musical skills: devoting around 2-3 weekly classroom hours to drawing, singing, and crafts, each.\textsuperscript{314} The provisional Lyceal statute of 1900 retained these subjects, but made singing, gymnastics, feminine handicrafts, stenography, and home economics afternoon elective courses to be completed after obligatory academic subjects in the morning.\textsuperscript{315} Education in the arts, if only skin-deep, was necessary to prepare girls for duties as hostesses and ladies of society. Leaders of the Austrian women’s movement, however, realized how discourses glorifying women’s social duties served to confine women’s intellectual development. As Rosa Mayreder saw it; “…the salon in which woman reigns is nothing more than a modernized \textit{gynaeceum}, inhabited by elegant dolls whose primary duty is ornamenting themselves in order to please [others]. The lady purchases her supremacy at a very high price.”\textsuperscript{316} The price of this social supremacy, Mayreder insinuated, was none other than the loss of a thorough education and inability to realize her capacity as an individual.

As revealed by Mayreder’s salon metaphor, practicing \textit{Frauenkunst} represented a method of cultural distinction in late-Imperial Austrian society. The cultivation of artistic talent increased families’ probabilities of marrying up in society, enabling girls to marry into the lower nobility from the mercantile class or the \textit{Bildungsbürgertum}, and enhanced the status of future spouses’ households. That women’s art was produced for pleasure rather than economic necessity not only increased households’ “cultural capital,” but brought husbands’ economic prosperity to light by highlighting the leisure time available to their wives.\textsuperscript{317} Precisely for these socio-cultural reasons were the craft schools of the \textit{Wiener Frauen Erwerb Verein}, focused as they were on training women for piece-work and cottage industries, hardly acceptable places of study for upper-


\textsuperscript{315} § 8 B [Freie Lehrgegenstände], Provisorisches Statut von 1900, betreffend die Mädchenlyceeen.


middle-class daughters as WFEV Honorary Member Marianne Hainisch pointed out.\textsuperscript{318} In its original meaning, Austrian \textit{Frauenkunst} remained inseparable from a sense of noblesse.

Aristocratic women had enjoyed private lessons in painting and drawing since the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, but dilettantes’ works were produced strictly for personal enjoyment in the home rather than consumption in the public sphere. Empress Maria Theresia’s beloved daughter, Archduchess Maria Christine, a talented painter specializing in gouache and watercolor, represents a case in point within the imperial ruling dynasty [Figure 2.1a]. Likewise her younger sister, Archduchess Maria Carolina, Queen of Naples and Sicily, was also an amateur painter. An early patron of Swiss-born “Old Mistress” Angelika Kaufmann, a founding member of the British Royal Academy in 1768, Marie Carolina not only commissioned portraits from Kaufmann before her works became fashionable among English aristocratic circles, but hired the artist to provide her daughters with palace drawing lessons [Figure 2.1b].\textsuperscript{319} Yet, as talented as the Archduchesses and other noblewomen might have been, their works were unvaryingly viewed as amateur despite the fact that ladies of the high aristocracy studied with the same artists teaching at court academies. Works produced by aristocratic women were rarely presented in public and never sold. Indeed, even a century later in the first group monograph (1895) on Austrian women artists, journalist Karoline Murau shied away from presenting her subjects as breadwinners.\textsuperscript{320} Instead, the overwhelming majority of Murau’s biographies mention the women artists using their works as gifts or tokens of friendship rather than economic commodities. Only when forced to be economically independent, such as in the cases of widowhood or a


\textsuperscript{319} Heidi Stroebel, “Royal ‘Matronage’ of Women Artists in the Late 18\textsuperscript{th}-Century.” \textit{Woman’s Art Journal} Vol. 26, No. 2 (Autumn 2005/ Winter 2006): 3-9. Kaufmann was born in Chur in the Swiss canton of Graubünden but moved to Schwarzenberg, in what is today Vorarlberg, where her family originated.

\textsuperscript{320} Caroline Murau, \textit{Wiener Malerinnen}. 

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dependent’s illness, did their works of Frauenkunst provide a living. As will be detailed in Chapter Four on Austria’s Women Artists’ Leagues, aristocratic women continued to play a crucial role in supporting the professional organization and public exhibitions of Austrian women artists around the turn of the twentieth century.

What changed in the nineteenth century was that Austria’s growing middle classes carried on the tradition of aristocratic dilettantism in girls’ secondary schools. In increasing numbers, middle-class daughters were schooled in the arts, literature, and music. In addition to the höhere Töchtersschulen described in Chapter One, a variety of state-supervised drawing schools developed to accommodate this trend. Sculptor Franz Pönninger opened the first of these schools, the Allgemeine Zeichenschule für Frauen und Mädchen (General Drawing School for Women and Girls) in Vienna’s First District on 26 January 1874. The Allgemeine Zeichenschule für Frauen und Mädchen was one of several schools resulting from an 1872-3 Ministerial Commission, headed by Minister Karl Streymayr and Eitelberger with other KGS professors sitting on the board, advising the reform of drawing instruction in Austria. To be located in the urban centers of the Crownlands possessing art academies, the General Schools’ main purpose was to train future artists and craftspeople in the fundamentals of drawing. In Vienna, an Allgemeine Zeichenschule for men was opened in the third district in December 1873, followed by two similar men’s institutions established in the ninth and sixth districts, respectively, in 1874 and 1876, while the lone women’s school was inaugurated in January 1874. These four schools “were provisionally placed in the direct supervision of the Kunstgewerbschule’s Board of Directors” which was responsible for passing judgment on drawing curriculum in state middle-

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secondary-, and craft schools.\(^{323}\) At all of the schools instruction was to be based on copying of ornamental styles, plastic models, and working from the human figure. Instruction took place weekdays from 3-6pm in the evenings, after the normal school-day, and was open to all students having completing the fourth form of a Gymnasium or equivalent at a Realschule or Lyzeum.\(^ {324}\) In its first year of operation, sixty-three girls, mostly daughters of industrialists, merchants, and clerks who had been schooled privately and by tutors, enrolled at the school Pönninger operated in cooperation with his student-turned-wife Caroline.\(^ {325}\) Yet students’ preparation left something to be desired, as Pönninger reported that not one of them could “correctly comprehend the simplest surface ornament, and what is more, to draw a straight line along the length of a normal drawing grid was an impossibility to them.”\(^ {326}\) Resulting from the varying quality of private instruction, many female students lacked the most basic fundaments in drawing.

Pönninger’s school was one of those inspected by k.k. Landesschulinspectoren Dr. Julius Spängler and Prof. H. Herdtle in June 1886 as a follow up to the suspension of women from the General-Division of the KGS Vorbereitungsschule.\(^ {327}\) At the time of the inspection, 32 girls were enrolled at the institute; the majority of whom were studying anatomy and ornament from plaster casts, though a few advanced students were working from living (fully-clothed) models.\(^ {328}\) In answering the question of “whether the two institutes [Pönninger’s school and the WFEV art schools] offered an adequate substitute for instruction in the Vorbereitungsschule of the


\(^{325}\) Mittheilungen des k.k. Museum für Kunst und Industrie XI, no. 130 (1 July 1876): 135.

\(^{326}\) ÖStA, AVA, Fasz. 3704, Z.10340/1876.


Kunstgewerbeschule” the report nonetheless ruled “that at none of the said schools is instruction in drawing is as exhaustive as that of the Kunstgewerbeschule.”

329 Providing training in the fundamentals of drawing and composition, Pönninger’s Allgemeine Zeichenschule served as an institutional stepping stone for women pursuing artistic careers.330

Founded by academic painter Heinrich Strehblow in 1899, the state-licensed and municipally-subsidized Kunsthochschule Strehblow represented another important private drawing school.331 Strehblow boasted of his school as being the first to offer both “Damenkurse” and “Herrencurse” under one roof with separate studios and entrance-stairways for men and women.

Painter Gustav Bauer assumed control of the school at Annagasse 3 when Strehblow left for a position as director of the Fachschule für Glasindustrie (Trade School for Glass Industries) in Haida, Böhemia in 1907.332 While the private, intimate nature of fin-de-siècle drawing schools makes them too numerous to list here, other significant girls’ schools included Adolf Kaufmann’s Malschule für Damen at Weyringergasse 7, founded around 1900; the Malschule Kruis-Hohenberger at Kohlmarkt 1 in operation 1902-1916 by Secessionists Ferdinand Kruis (1869-1944) und Franz Hohenberger (1867-1941); as well as the Malschule für Damen opened in 1903 by Tyrolean Painter Albin Egger-Lienz, reportedly after he was denied a teaching


330 Successful graduates from Pönninger’s drawing school included Eugenie Munk and Isa Jechl (1873-1961, the latter of which was active in the executive council of the Verein der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien and as treasurer of the Vereinigung Österreichischen Bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen (League of Austrian [Male and Female] Artists, or VÖBKK).330 Not to be confused with the Secession, i.e. Vereinigung bildender Künstler Österreichs Secession or the 1910-founded Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, the VÖBKK was founded in 1899 by a group of male and female artists belonging to neither the Secession or Künstlerhaus for the purpose of organizing public exhibitions and sales. Frequently held at Salon Pisko on the Parkring, VÖBKK shows represented some of Vienna’s earliest jury-free group exhibitions. See Wilhelm Freiherr von Weckbecker, ed. Handbuch der Kunstpflege in Österreich (Wien: k. k. Schulbcher Verlag, 1902), 229-30; Zehnte Ausstellung der Vereinigung österreichischen bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen [Salon Pisko Wien] (Wien: Adolf Holzhausen, 1904).


position at the Viennese Academy earlier that year.  

The professional Austrian women-artists having their first artistic training at such private drawing schools were many. Impressionist Painter Irma von Duczynska (1870-1932), who exhibited with the VBKÖ and the big three Viennese exhibition houses, hailed from Kaufmann’s school. Kruis-Hohenberger alumni included Painters Lilly Charlemont (1890-1981) and Helene Cornaro (1871-1965) as well as graphic-artist Mela Köhler (1885-1960) who studied further with Kolo Moser at the KGS and was famous for her fashion sketches for the Wiener-Werkstätte. From Egger-Linz’s atelier, painters Regina (Rega) Kreidl-Winterberg (1874-1927) and Therese Schachner (1869-1950) went on to exhibit with the VBKÖ and VBÖKK.  

Moreover, women began opening such schools themselves in increasing numbers. Irma von Duczynska operated her own school, the Malschule Irma von Ducyznska, at Rosenbursenstrasse 4 in Vienna’s first district, from 1909-1914. Duczynska’s Hagenbund colleague sculptor Imre Simay (1874-1955) also taught at the school, in addition to Hungarian sculptor Elsa Kövesházi-Kalmar (1875-1956).  

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333 See Egger-Lienz’s advertisements published in the Neue Freie Presse, e.g. Nr. 14013 (1 September 1903): 13.  
334 Vienna’s private drawing schools have been vastly under-researched. While the following list is by no means exhaustive, a longer list of private drawing schools open to girls follows below. Malschule Franz Cizek (1898, Fischertiege 9, Wien I); Franz Pönninger Allgemeine Zeichenschule für Frauen und Mädchen (1874-1907, Schellingstrasse 11 Wien I); Zeichnen und Malschule H. Streblow (1899-after 1926 (?), Annagasse 3, Wien I); Malschule Robert Scheffer (1891-after 1934, Corneliusgasse 5, Wien VI); Adolf Kaufmann Malschule für Damen (1900- ?, Weyringergasse 7); Malschule Hohenberg (1902-1916, later Malschule Hohenberg, Malschule Kohlmarkt, Kohlmarkt 1, Wien I); Albin Egger-Lienz Malschule für Damen (1903-1907, Veithgasse 3, Wien III); Kunstschule für Damen Adolf Streicher (1907-mid 1930s, Burggasse 89, Wien VII; Kunstgewerbliche Privatlehranstalt Emmy Zweybrück-Prochaska (1915-1935, Piaristengasse 47, Wien VIII), Kunstschule Johannes Itten (1917-19); Zeichnen und Malschule für Damen Olga Höningmann (1890-190?, Opernring 1-5, later Hoher Markt 11, Wien I); Atelier Marie Arnsburg (ca. 1900, Freyung 6, Wien I); Ateleir Camilla Göbl (1900-before 1920, Neustiftgasse 31 Wien VII, Lerchenfelderstrasse 50); Private-Kunstunterricht für Damen und Kinder Marianne Frimberger und Adelheid Malecki (1906- ca. 1917, Stubenring 15, Wien I); Malschule Irma von Duczynska (1909-1914, Rosenbursenstrasse 4, Wien I); Atelier Frau Seidl (ca. 1905-1910, Nussdorferstrasse 65, Wien IX); Atelier Marie Cyrenius (1904-1921, after 1921 studio in Salzburg; Tallesbrunngasse 4, Wien XIX). In Innsbruck: Maria Anna Stainer-Knittel Zeichenschule (1873-1906); Maria Deininger-Arnhard (1906-?). In Linz: Rosa Scherer Malschule (1889-1926); Linzer Malschule [led by Michaela Pfaffinger from 1896-8; then by Bertha von Tarnoczky until 1919]. In Salzburg: Künstlerwerkstätten für Kunst und Mode Architekt Georg Schmidhammer (1919-?).  

The trend of schooling young girls to be fluent in diverse artistic genres became so widespread that fin-de-siècle critics began attacking what they viewed as nothing more than an education in vanity. Karl Kraus, the self-proclaimed greatest admirer and detractor of women, poked fun at modern woman’s myriad and sundry artistic pursuits, suggesting that no real talent lay in any one of these fields. “Nowadays woman and music are so intellectually superior that an educated man should no longer be ashamed to let himself be excited by them.”\footnote{Karl Kraus, Die Fackel 9:229 (1907): 13.} Kraus’s attitudes towards women artists are best encapsulated by the aphorism; “Frauenkunst: The face looks worse the better the verse.”\footnote{Karl Kraus, Die Fackel 9:229 (2 July 1907): 1} To Kraus and his colleagues among the Vienna Moderns,
catalyzing male creative juices through their sensuality represented woman’s ultimate aesthetic task. As Kraus’s friend Peter Altenburg put it; “[f]or us [men], a woman must be like a mountain-forest, something which raises us up and frees us from our inner slavery, something exceptional, like a fairy to the lost journeyman, mildly leading us to our highest heights.”342 The eternal feminine was to lead male genius onward and upward, not achieve great artistic heights herself.

Kraus and Altenburg shared this view of femininity’s creative potential with Hamburg-based critic and publicist Karl Scheffler. Drawing on Viennese sexologist Otto Weininger’s dictum of ‘das Weib ist nichts’ [woman is nothing], Scheffler shared Weininger’s views that “[w]oman is excluded from that sort of genius, however, which remains one and the same despite deep differences between original genius… [.]” 343 Yet, in contrast to Weininger, who viewed femininity and women’s unbridled sexuality as unconditionally negative, Scheffler, like Kraus and Altenberg, looked to femininity as a font of creative inspiration and a reflection of the perfection striven for through art. Scheffler held that “[t]he male artistic genius regards women as a work of art of nature, like the counter image of his highest striving… She herself is the soul and embodiment of nature’s work of art, just as the great male creator is culture’s work of art.”344 Despite differences on femininity’s redeeming qualities, the writings of all four men—Kraus, Altenberg, Weininger, and Scheffler—on femininity and creative inspiration reveal a

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343 Weininger, Sex und Charakter, (Wien: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1905), 143-4. Weininger—like his devotees Kraus and Scheffler—viewed the women’s movement as an indication of cultural decline. But, in contrast to Weininger he looked down upon ‘natural’ femininity and viewed the Viennese feminists as intellectual and physical hermaphrodites. In his thinking—because “W’s need and capacity to emancipate herself lie only in the elements of M which she possesses”—only Mannweiber (masculinized women) deserved emancipation. [“…dass Emanzipationsbedürfnis und Emanzipationsfähigkeit einer Frau nur in dem Anteile an M begründet liegt, den sie hat”], Otto Weininger, “Die emanzipierte Frauen,” Sex und Charakter 80.
344 Karl Scheffler, Die Frau und die Kunst: Eine Studie (Berlin: Verlag Julius Bard, 1908), 32.
fundamental discomfort with *Frauenkunst* and viewing women as creators, rather than subjects, of art.

Enemies of the women’s movement were not alone in calling attention to the excesses of *Frauenkunst* and female education in the arts around the turn of the twentieth century. The women’s movement, too, expended much energy on reforming the nature of women’s secondary education, as we have seen in Chapter One, with much of this vigor being directed towards art education and notions of dilettantism. In a 1902-essay addressing the issue of female dilettantism, Maja Ipold described how newfound leisure time, resulting from nineteenth-century industrialization and urbanization, drew middle-class women to the arts like never before. “There is nothing incomprehensible about the fact that in our time dilettantism has spread like wildfire among women…As the transition came about […] when much surplus time was created for all of those who did not have to earn a living, the arts enticed [women] with all of their power.”

Ironically, while men’s role was to be productive in the modern capitalist economy, women were to refrain from all forms of productivity except childbearing. Ipold went on to allege that Austrian women were particularly afflicted by dilettantism, while in other European countries, particularly Great Britain, the women’s movement was rallying against this inefficient diffusion of women’s intellectual and creative resources.

We Austrian women, however, are still stuck in the thick of dilettantism… If we continue to practice “indulgence and pleasure,” to find inadequacy agreeable and the diverse interesting, we will continue to fragment ourselves rather than concentrating, fishing on the surface rather than going into the depths, wanting to be everywhere instead of adhering to a point.

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Rather than indulging in superficial artistic inclinations for the sake of social prestige, reformers such as Ipold preached the need to introduce more seriousness into women’s art education to avoid connecting *Frauenkunst* with dilettantism.

Aside from dilettantism, *Frauenkunst* was linked to the notion of women’s reproductive talent and influenceability in the applied arts and, above all, the idea that women’s psychological makeup made them fundamentally unsuited to practicing the fine arts. In summarizing the issue of women’s entitlement to institutions of higher learning, Franz Matsch, Professor in the *Kunstgewerbeschule’s Fachschule für Zeichnen und Malen* from 1893-1901, surmised that women-artists “have certainly achieved nice reproductive successes, but of original, self-created works… one sees and hears very little.” Indeed, many of the Myrbachian reforms at the KGS would be directed at changing the reproductive nature of the “womanly handicrafts,” a term referencing the mindless copying—rather than original creative genius—that Professor Matsch insinuated. Matsch’s resignation from his professorship in 1901 represented a direct protest to the reforms of Myrbach and then-time Minister of Education Wilhelm Ritter von Hartel ameliorating the status of women at the *Kunstgewerbeschule*. With the shoes of Professors Matsch, König, and Macht filled with those of Hoffmann, Moser, and Roller, critic Ludwig Hevesi likened the changing of the guard at the KGS to the falling of the Bastille in revolutionary Paris. “The *Kunstgewerbeschule*, a Viennese Bastille just a few months ago… has been stormed overnight; rather it gave itself up and found a new commander and troops for itself from the camp of the Secession, only yesterday mocked.”

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347 Franz Matsch, *Bildende Kunst und deren Schule* (Wien: Schroll, 1900), 18. [Emphasis original]. Educated at the KGS 1875-1883 under Ferdinand Laufberger, was a part of the so-called “Maler-Compagnie” together with Gustav and Ernst Klimt that helped Michael Rieser execute the Votivkirche murals, as well as the ceiling murals in the Viennese Burgtheater and Kunsthistorisches Museum. A major falling out with Klimt occurred around the time of the University Mural Affair in 1907.

Parallel to the reforms introduced at the Kunstgewerbeschule, infusing women’s handicrafts with a greater degree of creative innovation remained a frequent refrain of Joseph August Lux’s criticisms in Hohe Warte, a periodical he founded to promote a classless Austrian civic-patriotism though the cultivation of domestic arts and crafts. Lux wrote that; “[w]hat is learned and practiced today in school and at home under the concept of “womanly handicrafts” has, in my view, nothing, absolutely nothing to do with art. The pattern has suffocated every instance of independence and personal taste here.”349 Lux concluded that methods would only change if the purely-mechanical handicrafts were elevated as artistic work; a situation only ensuing when the “crafty” women would design the patterns they execute.350 While reforms to integrate pattern design and execution had been underway at institutions such as the Wiener Frauen Erwerb Verein for decades, Lux’s criticism reveals how much progress was yet to be made in reforming women’s artistic education and the degree to which Frauenkunst was still conceived of as inferior around the turn of the century.351

The vehement highpoint of the pseudo-scientific discourse against women artists was found in Karl Scheffler’s widely-read 1908 work Die Frau und die Kunst. Scheffler, an influential theorist in the German Werkbund and editor of the periodical Kunst und Künstler, would exercise a tremendous impact on perceptions of women artists for decades to come.352 Epitomizing a genre of literature theorizing the capacities of women artists and related notions of

351 Dumreicher highlights the progress achieved in unifying design and product by the WFEV schools, particularly with regard to the 1873 exhibition. Armand Freiherr von Dumreicher, “Das gewerbliche Unterrichtswesen,” Offizieller Ausstellungs-Bericht herausgegeben durch die General-Direction der Weltausstellung 1873 (Wien: k.k. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1874), 40-1.
352 While Scheffler initially looked upon the Berlin Secession critically, he became a protagonist of German Impressionism and Max Liebermann, publishing a Liebermann monograph in 1906. To the new generation of German Expressionists he remained lukewarm. For more on Scheffler, see Peter Paret The Berlin Secession: Modernism and Its Enemies in Imperial Germany (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980).
gender, genius, and creativity, Scheffler’s treatise “belonged to a new type of German literature that emerged towards the end of the nineteenth century… scrutiniz[ing] women’s capacity in certain professions.”

Likening the women’s movement to “an infectious disease” devouring all parts of the body politic, Scheffler argued that modern women “were forced to take up men’s work and lose, against their will, valuable traits of their feminine nature… [.]

In this manner, Scheffler expanded upon Otto Weininger’s views of feminists and other women pursuing “men’s work” as hysterical hermaphrodites. “Hence,” Scheffler explained, “when she takes up competition with the man, woman immediately changes into an insufferable hermaphrodite… fluctuating between the gender ideals of nature and one belonging to the ‘third sex.’”

Because woman deviated from “natural” gender roles when invading the masculine workshop to create art, Frauenkunst was inherently inferior to Männerkunst; an argument which would be repeated in many variations in scrutinizing twentieth-century women artists. “She [the woman artist] is the imitator par excellence, the empathizer that sentimentalizes and scales down masculine art forms… She is the born dilettante.”

A criticism leveled again and again at women artists that frequently came up against the Austrian Women Artist Leagues in the 1910s and 1920s, Scheffler defined women’s art as deriving “from that which can be learned and taught.” The following passage further clarifies Scheffler’s understanding of gender difference in art.

Therefore the woman painter is fundamentally dictated by imitation and emulation of men’s works, to naturalism, dilettantism, and formalism. Originality is always lacking. One very well finds a strong sense of color harmony, yet never that deep sense of color achieving poetic psychology with tone nuances. Woman’s talent is only sufficient for the echoable, decorative, and ornamental…

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354 Karl Scheffler, Die Frau und die Kunst, 6, 11-12.
355 Ibid., 41-2.
356 Ibid., 42.
357 Ibid., 59.
358 Ibid., 59.
Frauenkunst ultimately represented a vain attempt to emulate the heights of male creative genius.

While Scheffler’s theories remained in circulation until the mid-twentieth century, not all Central European discursive visions of women artists were as vindictive. As early as 1886, Bohemian-born art critic and museologist Joseph Wessely took up the defense of women in the arts, echoing similar works published in English and French since the mid nineteenth-century.\textsuperscript{359}

Long before women emancipated themselves in all fields of industry and science and placed themselves on the same level with men’s work, women have tried themselves in all forms of art, and even if all them might not have rivaled a Raphael, Tizian or Rubens, they nonetheless produced noteworthy work. In one field of art, flower painting (absolutely naturally), they even measure up ahead of men of the highest caliber; to a Rachael Ruysch, the poet’s words [Schiller’s Ehret die Frauen] fit perfectly: *Sie flechten und weben/Himmelliche Rosen in’s irdische Leben* (She braids and weaves/heavenly roses into the earthly life).\textsuperscript{360}

*Kunstübende Frauen* contained biographical details and anecdotes on well- and lesser-known women artists from the annals of art history and particularly, given Wessely’s own specialization, female engravers. Wessely hoped that his monograph would “inspire female youth to cultivate their inborn talent with perseverance and dedication.”\textsuperscript{361} Nonetheless, that Wessely’s title used the turn of phrase *Kunstübende Frauen* (women practicing art) rather than *Künstlerinnen* (women artist) suggested a fundamental linguistic discomfort with the term “woman artist:” a linguistic pattern which remained common until the early twentieth century.


\textsuperscript{360} Joseph Eduard Wessely, *Kunstübende Frauen* (Leipzig: Bruno Lemme, 1884), v. Born in Welltau Bohemia and having attending the University of Prague and the Prague Academy, Wessely developed a reputation for his publications on art, particularly etching and engraving, from his position as Royal Museum Inspector in Braunschweig, Saxony.

\textsuperscript{361} Joseph Eduard Wessely, *Kunstübende Frauen*, 78.
Similar expressions including *malende Damen* (painting ladies) and *Maldamen* (lady painters) also found frequent usage.

A two-volume study of women artists in history penned in 1905 by Anton Hirsch, Director of Luxembourg’s Royal School of Applied Arts, was even more ambitious than Wessely in defending the abilities of women artists.\(^{362}\) Quashing Nietzsche’s argument that “masculinization of woman is the true name for woman’s emancipation,” Hirsch made a case that the role of women artists in history had been vastly underestimated and circumscribed by ideals of gender propriety.\(^{363}\)

One speaks of woman’s imitative instincts, her desire to conform, and her need for dependency; one says that she is more echo than original utterance. That may very well be the case by and large, barring many numerous and famous exceptions; but normally it is forgotten to add that woman indisputably could have achieved something more meaningful and independent if her personality could have developed to maturity and her world of ideas could have been penetrated with greater depth.\(^{364}\)

Education, as Hirsch drew from his own experience as Director of the *Kunstgewerbeschule* in Luxembourg, was crucial to removing the mental obstacles holding back women artists.\(^{365}\) In contrast to critics like Scheffler and his protégées, Hirsch argued that the women’s movement was not encroaching upon men’s rights and cultural turf but that the “reasonable women’s movement wants to take nothing from men but only give something to women, that is to say their own rights.”\(^{366}\) Nonetheless, the author acknowledged that radical feminists had given rise to caricatures of female students and painters, exemplified by the branding of many of the artists


\(^{363}\) Quoted in Anton Hirsch, *Die bildenden Künstlerinnen der Neuzeit*, 2.


in his study as Malweiber (roughly ‘Painter-Broads’). Director Hirsch proceeded to counter
accusations that the new knowledge and skills gained by women would make her alienated from
her femininity—the hysterical hermaphrodites theorized by Weinger, Kraus, and Scheffler—but
that a more thorough education would only represent “another blossom in the crown of
feminine virtues” making her all the more pleasing to men. Similarly, Hirsch pulled the carpet
out from under arguments justifying women’s exclusion from public academies on their
supposedly inferior artistic capacities; in reality, men’s fear of female competition motivated
women’s institutional exclusion. “If man is really better disposed by nature [for practicing art]
than woman, then he has no cause to fear before female competition; since this is not that case
and both sexes are equally talented, it would be an injustice to try to suppress the strivings of the
one sex.” While not free of reproducing certain stereotypes about women artists, Hirsch’s
assessment of feminine creativity was exceedingly positive in the context of his time.

Practicing the fine arts is indeed one of the most valid abilities, and one
residing closest to the female genius. Woman is by nature more sensitive
and equipped with a greater aesthetic sense than man. That she shows
depth aesthetic understanding in the selection and arrangement of her
clothing, as well as personal taste and a fine aesthetic sense in the
outfitting of her home is manifest from this resultant difference.

Hirsch’s vindication of women artists was not universally well received. While certain
reviews criticized the book in a more oblique manner, suggesting that in spite of Hirsch’s
meticulous research “the text as an academic work leaves something to be desired,” German
critic and dealer Wilhelm Uhde launched a full-scale frontal assault on Hirsch’s work.

Arguing that Hirsch painted the history of women artists in an all-too-flattering light, Uhde

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368 Hirsch, Die bildenden Künstlerinnen der Neuzeit, 9.
369 Ibid., 9.
alleged that most of the women profiled by Hirsch hardly represented geniuses or above-average talents. “The facts are as boring as the judgments,” Uhde mused, concluding that it was astounding that such arguments came not from a matchmaker, but the Director of the Princely School of Art and Craft in Luxembourg.\(^{371}\) That Uhde reportedly used his marriage to avant-garde designer Sonia Delaunay to mask his homosexuality sheds light on his harsh assessment of femininity’s creative potential.

In summary, the development of ideas on women artists in Habsburg Central Europe hardly progressed in a linear fashion, but was marked by interruption, contingency, and setbacks. While certain critics treated Frauenkunst more favorably than others, common among critics and the popular imagination alike were notions circumscribing women’s art to certain lower, gender-appropriate genres casting female artists as dilettantes and amateurs. Exceptionally-talented women excelling past clichés of female dilettantism such as Tina Blau-Lang or Käthe Kollwitz, were derogated as Malweiber: viragos overstepping the boundaries of gender propriety and acting out against prescriptions of women’s cultural sphere.\(^{372}\) That another popular history of women artists published in 1928 still echoed many of Scheffler’s anti-Frauenkunst sentiments, reminding readers “not to expect an undiscovered female Leonardo, Michelangelo… Rembrandt, Rubens…etc,” suggests how contingent women artists’ position remained in the popular mindset even in the second quarter of the twentieth century.\(^{373}\) Ironically, despite the prejudices faced by women in the fine arts, women’s perceived prowess for the feminine handicrafts lent them an elevated position in the eyes of the men in charge of Austrian art and industry during the heyday

\(^{373}\) Hans Hildebrandt, Die Frau als Künstlerin (Berlin : Rudolf Mosse, 1928), 8.
of Austrian liberalism. Opening the doors to women in the applied arts both advanced and retarded the cause of women’s artistic education in late-Imperial Austria-Hungary.

**Crafty Girls and Painting Ladies: The Re-Education of Gender at the Austrian School of Applied Arts, 1860-1930**

Admitting women to the Austrian *Kunstgewerbeschule* on equal terms as men in 1868 represented an unprecedented step forward in Habsburg Central Europe’s state academies. While a handful of women painters, among them Electoral Palatinate court painter Anna Dorothea Therbusch (1721-1782), noted portraitist Barbara Krafft (1764-1825), and Gabriele Bertrand-Beyer (1737-1802), the Viennese court painter who had tutored Archduchess Maria Christina and her sisters, became members of the Viennese Academy in the late eighteenth century, the Academy’s portals remained closed to female students until the fall of the Monarchy.\(^{374}\)

That academic privileges were bestowed more rarely to women in the nineteenth century did not inspire prospects of Central European women’s professional opportunities in the fine arts, either. Likewise in the German states, women’s chances to study at Prussian court academies, a practice which had often been countenanced informally, became increasingly slimmer after 1850 as new regulations formalized women’s exclusion from academic study.\(^{375}\)

Since 1872, correspondence from the Imperial Ministry of Education soliciting expertise from the Viennese Academy of Fine Arts on the possibility of admitting women had met an abrupt end against the brick facade of the Academy’s new home on the Schillerplatz. Freshly elevated with its new 1872-statutes as a *Hochschule* (institution of higher learning) and an imposing Neo-Renaissance edifice to match,

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the Academy left all pretenses of its connection to the applied arts, and by extension women, behind. Female craftswomen would be better served by one of the state Fachschule, such as the Central Institute for Embroidery, and in certain exceptional cases, at Imperial Austria-Hungary’s central institute of applied arts: the Kunstgewerbeschule of the Austrian Museum for Art and Industry. Provoked by the petition for a women’s life class at the KGS described at the onset of this chapter, the Academy’s first of many rulings on the Frauenstudium seconded Eitelberger’s call for privatization, pointing to the difficulties of coeducational studies and women’s inferior intellectual capacities.

What is surprising about the fate of women at the Kunstgewerbeschule was not, due to women’s ‘natural’ stake in the decorative and applied arts, that women were admitted on equal terms with men when the KGS opened in 1868. Rather baffling remains the fact that the same men responsible for granting women full admission to the KGS in 1868—KGS Founder and Director Rudolf von Eitelberger, KGS Head-Curator Jacob von Falke, and supervisor of Imperial craft schools Armand Freiherr von Dumreicher—overturned this measure only eighteen years later by suspending women from the Vorbeitungsschule and clausting them in certain gender-appropriate workshops. During the highpoint of the mid-nineteenth century Gründerzeit, however, the men of Austrian industry and capital had looked to the female workforce as a crucial element in giving Austrian industry a competitive edge over other nations. In the words of KGS Founder and Director Rudolf von Eitelberger, statist liberal efforts “to upgrade and elevate the products of female handicraft and cottage industry to an article of industry, to an object of everyday use for broadened markets, an object bringing increased sources of income to

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376 Statut der k.k. Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien vom Jahre 1872. Reprinted in Die Kunstbewegung in Österreich seit der Pariser Weltausstellung im Jahre 1867, 130-6
female workers” were to be supported by the Imperial government at all costs.\footnote{377} While Dumreicher, the high-level ministerial official charged with reorganizing the Austrian state craft school system in 1874 after control of craft schools, or the \textit{k.k. Fachschulen}, was transferred from the Ministry of Trade to the Ministry of Education, focused on women’s role in the Austrian national economy, women’s stake in household art by way of “her taste, her judgment, her wisdom in selection” represented the driving aim of Falke’s works.\footnote{378} That these men have been characterized as embodying Austrian liberalism in supporting “state-sponsored scholarship, public exhibition, and education” in Carl Schorske’s classic account of Viennese modernism begs the question of liberality of their views on gender.\footnote{379} While progressive views on women’s role in the decorative, industrial, and applied arts stamped the written oeuvre of these three liberals, Eitelberger, Falke, and Dumreicher struggled in vain to come to terms with ideas of women creating monumental masterpieces of painting, architecture, or sculpture. In an anonymously-published essay taking up the problems facing the Austrian \textit{Kunstgewerbeschule} in 1885, Dumreicher wrote “that it is highly recommended to rid the Austrian \textit{Kunstgewerbeschule} of its ‘female elements’ [\textit{weibliche Elemente}] as soon as possible. The few female students who are pursuing serious industrial goals… would be better served at the \textit{k.k. Fachschule für Kunststickerei.”}\footnote{380} Against the backdrop of the founding and early years of the Austrian \textit{Kunstgewerbeschule} and \textit{Museum für Kunst und Industrie}, the following pages will explore how the inferior education provided to women by the state ultimately motivated this sudden shift of fortune for women at the \textit{Kunstgewerbeschule}. Only after the pedagogical reforms pushed

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\item \footnote{378}{Armand Freiherr von Dumreicher, \textit{Über die Aufgaben der Unterrichtspolitik im Industriestaate Österreich} (Wien: Alfred Hölder, 1881); Jacob von Falke, “Woman’s Aesthetic Mission,” in \textit{Art in the House}, 315.}
\item \footnote{379}{Carl Schorske, \textit{Fin-de-siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture}, 66.}
\item \footnote{380}{\textit{Vertrauliche Denkschrift über die Lage am k.k. österreichischen Museum für Kunst und Industrie} [Handexemplar Manuscript] (Reichenberg: Selbstverlag, 1885), f. 15-16.}
\end{itemize}
through by the late-nineteenth-century women’s educational reform movement had a chance to come to fruition did Frauenkunst regain equal footing at Austria-Hungary’s premier state institute of applied arts.

The movement to found a museum and school dedicated “to collecting any materials serving the arts and sciences and supporting activities in the industrial arts and betterment of public taste” took shape in Austria in the early 1860s. Influenced by the World Fairs of 1855 in Paris and “particularly the 1862 Exhibition in London,” Archduke Rainer Ferdinand, Minister-President under the liberal Schmerling cabinet, headed an imperial commission investigating the establishment of a separate academy dedicated to the applied arts. Prior to the mid-nineteenth century, the applied arts had been included under the curricular umbrella of the Academy, beginning with the so-called Manufakturschule established in 1758 by Florian Zeiß and which was incorporated into the main Academy in 1786. Yet, following the greater trends in Central European academic life described in Nikolaus Pevsner’s important study, arguments for separating the training of fine and applied arts gained momentum in the mid-nineteenth century. Accordingly, Rudolf Eitelberger, at that time Professor of Art History at the University of Vienna, was sent to London to study the international displays at the 1862 World’s Fair and gather information on the industrial arts in Great Britain. With good reason were the Austrians captivated with the British model. Not only had a system of publicly-funded Schools of Design been established as early as 1837 but the South Kensington Museum had been established in 1852 following the Great Exhibition of the preceding year as the first museum of

383 On the training of applied artists at the Academy and its Manufakturschule, see Carl von Lützow, Geschichte der k.k. Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien (Wien: Gerold 1877).
its kind dedicated exclusively to the decorative arts.\textsuperscript{385} Encompassing vast collections of silver, ceramics, textiles, furniture, and sculpture, the South Kensington served as a model for the creation of similar teaching-collection museums across Europe. Austria’s \textit{Museum für Kunst und Industrie} represented the first of these on the European continent.

While Austria took part in the 1862 world exhibition in London with honor, aspects of industrial art education in Britain and France offered models for improving Austria’s state system of craft education. Eitelberger observed that although Austrian craftsmen’s technical acumen was top notch, “as far as the spiritual element of work was concerned, that is the influence of art and good taste… [Austria] fell behind the accomplishments of other states.”\textsuperscript{386} Eitelberger looked to the South Kensington Museum and the South Kensington Schools as a “rich nursery for taste in the commercial arts” as well as France’s “century-long [tradition] of meticulous art instruction” as models for establishing a Central Museum and School of the Applied Arts in Austria.\textsuperscript{387} Emperor Franz Josef’s letter of 7 March 1863 to Archduke Rainer confirmed that “something similar must also be founded in Austria.”\textsuperscript{388} With Imperial support secured, plans for the k.k. Museum got underway, with Eitelberger appointed as director, Falke as head-curator, and Archduke Rainer named as imperial protector.\textsuperscript{389} Conceived upon Gottfried Semper’s concept of the ideal design museum, the \textit{k.k. Museum für Kunst und Industrie} was to offer encyclopedic teaching collections organized by media with examples of material and craft techniques. The commission also provided for a library, prints-and-drawing collection and

\textsuperscript{385} The Central School of Design was renamed as the National Art Training School in 1853 (with its separate Female School of Art housed in different buildings) and again as the Royal College of Art in 1896, but remained informally known as the South Kensington Schools during this entire period.
\textsuperscript{387} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{388} Quoted in \textit{Ibid.}, 219.
supporting technical departments. In keeping with the Museum’s threefold didactic mission—to support Austrian industrial art, to raise the level of public taste, and to provide an artistic education to Austrian craftsmen and women—a school of applied arts, to serve as central training institute for the provincial craft schools, was planned from the very beginning. The *k.k. Museum für Kunst und Industrie* was unveiled to the public on 21 May 1864 from its temporary quarters in the Hofburg’s Ballhausplatz wing. From its opening in 1868 until Heinrich Ferstel’s new Neo-Renaissance School and Museum Building opened on the Stubenring in Fall 1871, the *Kunstgewerbeschule* was located outside the city proper, near the university in Vienna’s ninth district. Stylistically, the leading circles of the Austrian Museum and School of Applied Arts favored the emulation of historicist styles in the twin institutions’ collections, exhibitions, and teaching principles until the turn of twentieth century.390

In defining the new school’s mission, Eitelberger defended the unity of the fine and applied arts in an education that would provide applied artists with an *artistic*, rather than purely industrial or mechanical, education. In his “Vorschläge zur Errichtung einer Kunstgewerbeschule” [Recommendations for Establishing a School of Applied Art] Eitelberger held that;

A higher school of the applied arts should be an institution not to educate the worker, but rather the artist and teacher. In this School of Applied Arts, artists in the true sense of the word will be educated, such artists, who can fulfill all demands of artistic industry, even the highest, so that one will no longer need to make do with incompletely- or superficially-trained drawings…. [The school] will bring an artistic impetus into our factories; it will transform the goldsmith, the cabinetmaker, the porcelain-painter, any sort of craftsman into masters: not in an industrial, but rather in an artistic sense of the word.391

Eitelberger went on to clarify that the three primary fine arts, painting, sculpture, and architecture, “must be cultivated in the same careful manner as the applied arts are nothing other than the epitome of these three arts applied to the needs of daily life.” Nonetheless Eitelberger’s proposal was careful not to tread on the territory of the Academy of Fine Arts by making his claim to the fine arts too strong. Eitelberger lauded the fact that the Academy’s new statutes eliminated passages referencing the cultivation of “various forms of Kunstfleiß (applied/industrial art)” upheld in the statutes of 1800 and 1812. “The Academy,” Eitelberger reasoned, “hardly has the task of serving industry.” While subscribing to prevalent beliefs doubting women’s abilities in the fine arts, Eitelberger left “no doubt that women must be admitted” to schools such as the KGS providing training in the applied arts, particularly due to their feminine virtues of patience, perseverance, and inborn aestheticism.

The letter of the KGS’s new statutes provided, at least in theory, for the equal admission of men and women to Imperial Austria’s central academy of applied art. Although the Ministry of Education rebuked, to some degree, Eitelberger’s visions of unifying the fine and applied arts and educating artists rather than workers, the spirit of Eitelberger’s “Vorschläge” was still realized in the KGS’s inaugural statues. The statutes for the k.k. Kunstgewerbeschule, drawn up by Architect Eduard van der Nüll, Professor Adolf Beer, Professor Eduard Engerth in

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392 Ibid., 224.
393 Similarly, but more strongly pronounced than in the statutes of 1800, § 20, no. 4 of the Academy’s 1812 statutes referred to the necessity of providing basic drawing in painting and drawing as necessary to “verschiedene Zweige des Kunstfleisses.” See the Academy’s statutes of 1800/12 as reprinted in Lützow’s Geschichte der k.k. Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien, 158-165.
396 In reviewing Eitelberger’s proposals, the Ministry of Education revealed vision of the Kunstgewerbeschule as a place for educating craftsmen and the working-classes rather than lofty artists. ÖStA, AVA Fasz. 3124, Z. 7796/1867.
cooperation with Eitelberger, were ratified by the Emperor on 21 September 1867.\textsuperscript{397} The statutes provided for a \textit{Vorbereitungsschule}, having “the task of providing proficiency in drawing necessary for… instruction in the \textit{Fachschulen},” and three advanced schools encompassing all branches of 1) Architecture; 2) Sculpture; and 3) Drawing and Painting.\textsuperscript{398} The KGS Board of Directors maintained that “the statutes of this school…do not exclude women from attending either the \textit{Vorbereitungsschule} or the advanced \textit{Fachschulen}, provided they carried the necessary pre-qualifications.”\textsuperscript{399} Upon passing an entrance-exam, KGS pupils (having completed the lower classes of Gymnasium, Realschule, or equivalent) began the \textit{Vorbereitungsschule}, or general preparatory school (drawing from antiquity and nature, ornamentation, formal analysis, art history, anatomy, life drawing classes, etc.) under the guidance of Master-Professors and Teaching Assistants. Upon successful completion of the preparatory courses, students were then funneled into smaller specialized classes within one of the three \textit{Fachschulen}: 1) Architecture (Building, Cabinet-Making, and Interior Decoration); 2) Sculpture (Goldsmithery, Metallurgy, Glass, Ceramics, and Stone-Cutting); 3) Drawing and Painting (Decorative and Ornamental Painting, Mural Decoration, Porcelain, Mosaic Glass Painting). Also connected to the \textit{Fachschulen} stood a \textit{Zeichenlehrer-Bildungscurs} (Training Course for State-Certified Drawing Teachers), an important institutional development since drawing teachers had traditionally been frowned upon at the Academy as non-serious artists. Additional workshops celebrating the rebirth of older forms of craft, such as workshops for heraldry, ornamental writing, and bookbinding, were later added as were \textit{Spezialateliers} focused

\textsuperscript{399} \textit{Mittheilungen des k.k. Museum für Kunst und Industrie} Vol. III, no. 38 (15 November 1868): 293.
on single branches of art integrated into the KGS’s program in the mid 1870s. During its first year, 1868/9, 8 (10%) of the 78 total KGS pupils were female, most of them enrolled in the Vorbereitungsschule. Referring to Appendix 2.1, levels of female enrollment rose steadily over the next few years: to 26 (19% total students) in 1869/70 to 33 (17 % total students) in 1870/1 to 31 (18% total) in 1871/2. Female enrollment would peak in the early 1880s, when women accounted for as much as 27% of the total student body at the KGS. Aside from the Vorbereitungsschule, in the early years of the KGS the vast majority of female students studied in the Fachschule für Zeichnen und Malen’s workshops for ornamental and flower painting.

Despite women’s theoretical admittance to all areas of the KGS, during the period from 1868-1900, female students were limited to workshops harmonious with prevalent notions of gender and artistic hierarchy. As Annetta Pfaff, the Republic’s first state Schulinspektorin for drawing in girls secondary schools and the woman responsible for the Frauenoberschule’s art curriculum, encapsulated the situation of women at the Kunstgewerbeschule before the fin-de-siècle Myrbachian reforms,

Up until this year [1900] a different course of instruction was provided for girls than for boys. Female pupils… could only enter the Fachklasse for decorative painting and… porcelain-painting, where they were taught separately from male pupils. […] The Fachklassen for architecture, sculpture, ceramics, and woodcarving were closed to female students. Admission to specialized workshops focused on the “high or fine arts,” such as the Fachschule for Figural Painting and Drawing as well as the Sculpture Fachschule, was difficult for female pupils due to their restricted access to the life drawing class: a prerequisite essential to all branches of the fine arts. Although female pupils were allowed to participate in summer

401 See Appendix 2.1 Female Pupils at the Kunstgewerbeschule, 1868-1896.
anatomy courses, at least up until the point when drawing from nude models rather than plaster casts was introduced, overall the “pupils” of the female sex access to instruction in the Fachschule for Figural Drawing and Painting is much more restricted than in the rest of the Kunstgewerbeschule’s Fachschulen.” Eitelberger refused to budge in giving female students increased access to the Figural Painting and Drawing Fachschule: even after receiving a petition signed by 20 female students, as the example at the onset of this chapter demonstrated. Not only was the prospect of women sketching nude models in life drawing classes, either alone or in the company of male colleagues, an outrage against good German morals, a “certain line” was not to be overstepped in providing female students anatomical instruction at a state school like the KGS. Justified by a lack of institutional space and the disturbances resulting from mixed-gender life classes, women’s presence in the KGS’s life drawing classes remained “as good as forbidden” until 1900, around the time that women were admitted to such classes across the rest of Europe.

Gaining admittance into the life drawing classes necessary for specialized training as professional artists was not a problem unique to Austrian women. Indeed, instruction in the human anatomical structure had bedeviled aspirant women artists for centuries. In the view of feminist art historian Linda Nochlin, lack of anatomical instruction remained the foremost reason why relatively few women have been celebrated as “great” artists in the annals of art history. Undertaking further studies in other European capitals, particularly Paris, to compensate for such deficiencies after completing studies at the KGS, KFM, and private

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404 Ibid., 60-62.
institutes in Vienna represented a common practice among Austrian women painters. Austrian women began flocking to Paris in greater numbers as the turn of the century neared, many coming under the spell of Impressionism and Fauvism. In late-nineteenth century Paris, a variety of single and mixed-gender private studios, such as the Académie Trélat, Académie Colarossi, and the popular Académie Julian, provided women with a chance to sketch from live models and instituted a system of monthly prizes designed to encourage competition among students. Other private studios dating from the early nineteenth century focused upon instruction in the applied arts. One contemporary critic observed that; “whether it be the glamour which has always enveloped Paris as an art center, or the attractiveness of life ‘in the Quarter’… lady art students of the present day are going to Paris in increasing numbers.”

However, in contrast to the myriad opportunities in private Parisian studios, much resistance was raised against establishing a life drawing class at France’s premier academy after women had gained admission to the École des Beaux-Arts in 1896. In 1900, the French legislature finally yielded to create a women’s life drawing class at the École des Beaux-Arts. In England, the admittance of women to the Royal Academy in 1861 by no means assured them complete academic instruction. Similar to the situation at Vienna’s Kunstgewerbeschule, a petition of twenty female Royal Academy students to establish a separate life drawing class for women was unanimously vetoed. A separate women’s life drawing class, using draped models, was

412 Anne Havemann, “A Call to Arms: Women Artists’ Struggle for Professional Recognition in the Nineteenth Century
first introduced in 1892, with women gaining full access to nude drawing classes in 1903. Internationally, the United States represented the most progressive nation by being the first to allow women access to life drawing classes. At the Pennsylvania Academy of the Arts, where women had been permitted to study as early as 1844, a separate women’s life class was opened in 1859 using draped models. A women’s life class with nude female models was initiated in 1868. In the conservative, Catholic social fabric of late-Imperial Austria, the notion of using women as nude models represented such an offense to decency that similar proposals were never entertained at the KGS or Academy. KGS girls’ restricted access to the boys’ life classes was confirmed despite the fact that their plea for a life class of their own was unilaterally denied.

While short of granting the female-pupils’ demands for a women’s life class, the KGS Board of Directors responded to the petition by creating special workshops catered to the notion of a separate feminine aesthetic, such as the Spezialatelier für keramische Dekoration und Emailarbeiten (Special-Workshop for Ceramic Decoration and Porcelain, 1877) and the Spezialatelier für Spitzenzeichnen (Special Workshop for Embroidery Design, 1879). The establishment of these specialized workshops, while a setback to women’s possibilities for education in the fine arts, embodied Eitelberger, Falke, and Dumreicher’s visions of women’s proper sphere of activity in the arts harmonious with the Habsburg Staatstradition of modernization.

In his official review of the Pavilion of Women’s Handicrafts at the 1873 Vienna World’s Exhibition, a project initiated by Eitelberger but organized by Falke, Dumreicher held that

The Austrian government could take a friendly attitude towards as many modern tendencies [women’s education in the industrial and applied arts]

Art World,” in Women Impressionists, Pfeiffer and Hollein, eds. (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2008), 287.
as were in a laudable position in following older state traditions. Empress Maria Theresia correctly recognized the importance of further education for the female sex early, and energetically took up the establishment of Spinnstuben (spinning rooms) in Bohemia; and since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the government has endeavored to further the cottage industry of lace-making by the establishing of teaching workshops.  

In addition to the Imperial government’s direct support of female cottage industries, Dumreicher lauded Austria’s “well-organized voluntary organizations” patterned on the German model of economic and educational advancement, rather than radical political goals of the Anglo-American women’s movement. Government-supported vocational and educational institutes established by leagues such as the Wiener Frauen Erwerb Verein and similar organizations in Prag, Graz, and Klagenfurt, were celebrated as “shining successes,” particularly in light of their “illustrious” showings at the 1873 exhibition. In particular, Dumreicher singled out the works of the Viennese vocational schools in that works produced by the WEFV and similar schools spoke to the elegance of the cosmopolitan imperial capital while supporting nationale Hausindustrie (national cottage industries). Such Viennese works “distinguished themselves from works of similar German and Austrian schools by a certain, indescribable something noticeable in design and color-effect.” True to his philosophies of national economic competition, Dumreicher proudly claimed the works of the Viennese elementary-, middle-, and vocational girls’ schools for supra-national Habsburg patriotism, arguing that the Austrian displays far outshone similar displays by German schools.

Typifying the post World Exhibition movement to reorganize the Kunstgewerbeschule according to industrial art’s practical needs, a variety of industrially-oriented workshops

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413 Armand Freiherr von Dumreicher, *Das Gewerbliche Unterrichtswesen* [Offizieller-Ausstellungs Bericht Herausgegeben durch die General-Direction der Weltausstellung 1873], 40.
415 Armand Freiherr von Dumreicher, *Das Gewerbliche Unterrichtswesen* [Offizieller-Ausstellungs Bericht Herausgegeben durch die General-Direction der Weltausstellung 1873], 40.
416 *Ibid.*, 41
developed at the KGS, the specifically feminine crafts not excluded. That one of the first “women’s” workshops at the KGS was dedicated to embroidery and needlework was hardly surprising considering women’s traditional role in textiles. As curator Alois Riegl phrased it; “[t]hese works [making and decorating textile objects designed for use in the home] have constituted an exclusively-feminine domain since ages past, at least among European nations. If the sword designates the male line, the female line is characterized by the distaff.”417 From the very beginning, the leading circles of the KGS strove to elevate embroidery to a more artistic and less mechanical feminine vocation: that is to say, to a Kunst- rather than Handarbeit.

Demonstrating the centrality of embroidery to Austria’s applied-arts reform movement, one of the earliest exhibitions reviewed in the Museum’s journal Mittheilungen des k.k. Museum für Kunst und Industrie was an 1867 exhibit showcasing the works of Court-Embroiderer and k.k. Kunststickereischule Director Therese Mirani. Mirani, who was celebrated by the state on her retirement for her role in supporting “the revival of women’s crafts in Austria,” exhibited works of white-on-white embroidery executed in a “fine and skillful manner.”418 In contrast to fussy, unclear embroidery designs produced mechanically, Mirani’s works were praised for employing “a noble, stylish pattern” and her “beautiful and clear execution.”419 Providing didactic examples of ‘good’ pieces of embroidery figured more prominently in a subsequent embroidery exhibition held the following spring in the Vienna Cursalon. Works exhibited by Mirani and a Frau Benkovits were praised for employing stylized oriental motifs appropriate to two-dimensional ornamentation rather than complex naturalistic scenes or Baroque arabesques.

419 Ibid.
Choosing a mode and scale of ornamentation appropriate to the intended use of the object remained the driving refrain of Jacob von Falke’s program for reforming women’s embroidery at the Austrian Museum for Art and Industry and its Kunstgewerbeschule. The complex naturalistic landscapes and needlework portraits that were de rigueur among aristocratic dilettantes were not necessarily the best schemes for adorning pieces of decorative art intended for everyday use. “She [the artist] must ask herself not what is abstractly beautiful, or what pleases her best, but what will best decorate the object under consideration and is most suitable to it.”\textsuperscript{420} By introducing examples of “good” patterns and execution into their home as Falke suggested, embroidery offered women a means of flexing their muscles as cultural tastemakers in the domestic sphere. In defining these “good” patterns, Falke advocated stylized oriental designs, like those showcased in the so-called “Oriental Quarter” of the 1873 exhibition as well as in the Museum’s teaching collections, as tasteful and labor-effective design schemata to be copied by amateur and professional needleworkers.\textsuperscript{421} The 1868 Cursalon Exhibition had been praised for arousing “interest in high circles for a branch of industrial art that has fallen into decay which… in its regeneration will become the true field for women’s paid employment… First, good examples are necessary and then schools for feminine handicrafts wherein embroiderers to learn to design good patterns themselves and to devise ornamentation appropriate to the material.”\textsuperscript{422} Providing women training in new embroidery methods not only gave professional needleworkers an added source of earning power but granted amateur embroiders an important role as arbitrators of taste in the decorative arts.

\textsuperscript{420} Jacob von Falke, “Woman’s Aesthetic Mission,” in \textit{Art in the House}, 328.
\textsuperscript{421} \textit{Ibid.}, 329.
Culminating the Austrian Museum’s and KGS’s efforts to raise the artistic level of women’s needlework, the Kunstgewerbeschule launched a course for embroidery-design in 1878. The following year the course was elevated as a Spezialatelier für Spitzenzeichnen in connection with the Architecture Fachschule.\textsuperscript{423} Loosely associated with certain Fachschulen, the Special-Ateliers integrated into the curriculum of the KGS in the mid 1870s were designed to “give advanced pupils practical training in specific branches of artistic technique” and were loosely modeled on the Meisterschulen (master classes) introduced to the Academy after 1850.\textsuperscript{424} The Special-Atelier for Embroidery-Design had the duty of training advanced KGS pupils “in cooperation with the Austrian embroidery industry, namely retailers and manufacturers, as well as the needs of current fashion… in embroidery design and execution using old, ‘good’ embroidery designs.”\textsuperscript{425} Working closely with Austrian manufacturers, the Special-Atelier for Embroidery stood in close connection with the k.k. Kunststickereischule and k.k. Central-Spitzen curs. In fact, pupils were required to attend a practicum taught by KGS professors at the Kunststickereischule in embroidery, sewing, and bobbin-lace making.\textsuperscript{426} Overall, however, the KGS’s Special-Atelier for Embroidery was artistically more prestigious than the k.k. Kunststickereischule, which was more focused on industrial production and tended to attract working-class girls. Parallel to the situation at the Kunststickereischule, at the KGS Special-Atelier for Embroidery-Design “all teaching materials designated for the Embroidery Atelier become property of the Kunstgewerbeschule and are inventoried as such.”\textsuperscript{427} In practice, this

\textsuperscript{424} Programm der Kunstgewerbeschule des k.k. Österreichischen Museums für Kunst und Industrie Enthaltend Statut und Lehrplan. (Wien: Verlag des k.k. Österreichischen Museums, 1888), 8.
\textsuperscript{425} § 36 [Special-Atelier für Spitzenzeichnen], Lehrplan der Kunstgewerbeschule [1888], Programm der Kunstgewerbeschule des k.k. Österreichischen Museums für Kunst und Industrie Enthaltend Statut und Lehrplan, 30-1.
\textsuperscript{426} Ibid., 31.
\textsuperscript{427} Ibid.
meant that works produced in the embroidery workshop were put on public display in semi-annual exhibitions, were state property, and could be sold or retained in the Museum’s collections. While the sale of works produced at the *k.k. Kunststickereischule* encountered charges of unfair competition in that the Educational Ministry-sponsored *Kunststickereischule* was exempt from paying normal income taxes like other companies, the KGS was spared from such charges.  

Public exhibitions of works produced by the *Spezialatelier für Spitzenzeichnen* enjoyed great success. Works of needlework and embroidery produced by the KGS’s *Spezialatelier für Spitzenzeichnen*, the *k.k. Central-Spitzenkurs*, the *k.k. Kunststickereischule*, and the Embroidery Division of the WFEV schools represented Austria-Hungary with great honor at the August 1892 exhibition *les Arts de la femme* (The Arts of the Woman) in Paris’s Industrial Palace. With a variety of wall-hangings, embroidery, lace, carpets, fabric, as well as works of porcelain and flower painting, the works exhibited in the Austrian display at *les Arts de la femme* were praised for “all showing a beautiful composition… clear forms and diligent schooling methods… [and representing] an exemplary selection of objects demonstrating tasteful coloring and division of colors.”

In addition, as mentioned in Chapter One, Jacob von Falke organized a *Specialausstellung weiblicher Handarbeiten* (Special Exhibition of Women’s Handicrafts) at the Austrian Museum for Art and Industry from March-May 1886 as a follow-up to the Women’s Pavilion he had curated, along with Rudolf and Jeanette Eitelberger, at the 1873 Vienna World’s Fair. Thanks to the educational programs launched by the Ministry of Education, including the *Kunststickereischule* and the KGS’s Special Atelier for Needlework, Falke reported in the

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catalogue’s introduction that much progress had been made in reforming the field of women’s needlework and embroidery. This progress was particularly apparent in the works of the professional needleworkers and lacemakers.\textsuperscript{430} Despite the progress displayed by professional needleworkers, Riegl criticized the works of dilettantes for employing complicated, overly-stylized embroidery schemes rather than simpler patterns they had designed themselves. “The variable element in embroidery is primarily the pattern… and emancipating oneself from school-patterns…is to be particularly welcomed.”\textsuperscript{431} Connected to notions of women’s reproductive talents in the applied arts, the discourse on women’s art continued to influence critical receptions of women’s needlework and handicrafts more generally.

Similar to the Special Atelier for Embroidery Design, another “Special-Atelier” for ceramics and porcelain initiated in the late 1870s directly affected women’s course of studies at the KGS. The establishment of the \textit{Spezialatelier für keramische Dekoration und Emailarbeiten} in 1877, concurrent with the attachment of a \textit{Chemisch-Technische Versuchsanstalt} (Chemical-Technical Institute) to the Museum by a ministerial decree of 1 January 1876, ensured women a special place in porcelain decoration: a traditional artistic diversion for aristocratic ladies.\textsuperscript{432} Following the dissolution of the Imperial Viennese Porcelain Manufactory in 1866, what had been founded in 1718 as Europe’s second-oldest porcelain manufactory, the head-chemist of the Imperial Porcelain Manufactory received an imperial patent to open a chemical laboratory and workshops at the KGS for the decoration of porcelain, glass, ceramics, and glass.\textsuperscript{433} The school’s

\textsuperscript{433} Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven, “Staatliche Musealwesen und Kunstakademien,” in \textit{Hundert Jahre Unterrichtsministerium 1848-1948: Festschriften des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht in Wien}, Egon Loebenstein,
statutes summarized the Special-Atelier’s goals as giving pupils technical expertise in ceramic production as well as in “independent manufacturing, in particular decoration of ceramic objects, especially those colors, compounds, etc. made by the Kunstgewerbeschule’s own chemical laboratories that can be put to use.” Like other “Special-Ateliers,” students were expected to have mastered technical drawing, applied chemistry, and formal composition. Led by painter and KGS graduate Hans Macht from 1891 to 1902, the porcelain-painting workshop decorated the ceramics produced in the attached laboratories. The Spezialatelier für keramische Dekoration quickly became an overwhelmingly-feminine domain. What is surprising is that while porcelain painting was traditionally viewed as a noble pursuit for aristocratic ladies, professional porcelain painting at the Imperial Porcelain Manufactory constituted an exclusively male domain from its early days as private manufactory under Claudius du Paquier until after the firm became court-subsidized after 1744. For the first time, with the newfound professional training imparted in the Spezialatelier, women were recognized as professional decorators of glass, ceramics, and porcelain. Indeed, the first woman to carry the title of professor at the Kunstgewerbeschule, Adele von Stark, had begun her career studying under Professors Hans Macht and Friedrich Sturm from 1879-1890, continuing under Felician Mybach and Hermann Heller from 1897-99. She represented Austria with distinction at many international exhibitions and World’s Fairs. Upon Mybrach’s suggestion, Stark was charged with supervising the “technical instruction” of Spezialatelier für Emailarbeiten in 1903, extended to a permanent state contract in 1909, thus following the footsteps of her teacher as “Professorin” and leader of the Ceramics Workshops.

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435 Stark was among the many female teachers and students honored at the St. Louis World’s Fair, receiving gold and silver medals. AHA, VA 1907/16.
436 AHA VA 1903/326.
That Stark specialized in a genre as delicate and graceful as porcelain painting only reinforced the gendering of certain KGS workshops as feminine.

Efforts to sequester women away from men’s artistic sphere came to a head with the 1886/7 closure of the KGS Vorbereitungsschule to women due to anxieties about the hyper-feminization of the institution. That women’s exclusion from the Vorbereitungsschule, justified by arguments on women’s proper vocation in certain gender-appropriate Fachschule such as porcelain and flower-painting, only obstructed their advancement into the Fachschulen reinforces the contradictory logic motivating this sudden exclusion of women. In 1885, Armand Freiherr von Dumreicher, the Ministerial Official charged with the administration of the KGS Museum, and the provincial craft/technical schools, or Fachschulen, suddenly demanded the “immediate” suspension of women from all areas of the KGS, advising those few female students pursuing serious goals to transfer to the k.k. Fachschule für Kunststickerei. “Only after the female dilettantes have been removed from the Kunstgewerbeschule can the task of providing a serious preparation for industrial professions, ‘studies for bread’ in the strict sense… be taken in hand and organized.”

This brief passage from Dumreicher’s anonymously-published Secret Expose of 1885, extrapolating his views on the general decay of the KGS’s quality of education, betrays Dumreicher’s sudden change of heart on women’s national economic potential in the industrial arts. Dumreicher had taken a clear stance in favor of coeducational study at the Kunstgewerbeschule, in addition to his numerous essays championing Viennese women’s achievements in the applied arts, such as in the 1873 World’s Fair. Dumreicher held that coeducational instruction was “advisable and rewarding” as long it

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437 Vertrauliche Denkschrift über die Lage am k.k. österreichischen Museum für Kunst und Industrie [Handexemplar Manuscript] (Reichenberg: Selbstverlag, 1885), f. 15-16.
did not obstruct the KGS’s general level of efficacy.\textsuperscript{438} When push came to shove, however, women would have to yield to the needs of Austrian industry, at least as the KGS would have it. When the overcrowded \textit{Vorbeistellungsschule}, filled with 106 students, 28 (26.4\%) of whom were women, was producing skilled craftsmen in excess of available jobs, women were the first to feel the crunch.

A close reading of the documents surrounding the decision to suspend women’s admission to the \textit{Vorbeistellungsschule} reveals fundamental anxieties about women artists and, what is more, a fear of professional female competition among the school’s leading circles. Not triggered by any single event, the KGS Faculty Council’s motion to ban women from the KGS’s preparatory school reflected longtime tensions concerning women’s capabilities in the fine and applied arts. From the very beginning, KGS professors had complained of how pupils, male and female alike, were vastly under-qualified for their studies. As was reported about the first incoming class in 1868; “[t]he pre-knowledge of the incoming pupils has been characterized as poor, and has left much to be desired.”\textsuperscript{439} Similar observations continued to be made during the KGS’s early years. Although such reports contained no specific details as to whether male students were better prepared than their female colleagues, the proceedings surrounding the 1886 closure of the \textit{Vorbeistellungsschule} to women made women bear the brunt of the guilt: that male pupils were being held back by their under-qualified female colleagues. In reality, however, the increasing competition represented by the female workforce played a large factor in limiting women’s access to the Austrian School of Applied Arts.

Led by KGS Director Michael Rieser and Museum Director Jacob von Falke, the KGS Faculty Council sent a motion to the Ministry of Education on 27 February 1886 to suspend the


admission of women to Kunstgewerbeschule’s overcrowded Vorbereitungsschule.\footnote{Antrag f. Sistierung der Aufnahme von Schülerinnen in die Vorbereitungsschule [27 February 1886], AHA VA 1886/90.} Due to the “rush” of students into the basic theoretical subjects, neither the school localities nor teaching staff could accommodate such high numbers of students in the Vorbereitungsschule. Moreover, “the Fachschulen [could] only take a fraction of the graduates of the Vorbereitungsschule and were delivering… more trained sketchers, designers, etc. than could be absorbed by domestic industry.”\footnote{ÖStA, AVA Fasz. 3135, Z. 4207/1886.} An expansion of the Vorbereitungsschule’s faculties thus was not advisable because its current levels of enrollment already exceeded the needs of Austrian industry. As far as women were concerned, KGS faculty maintained that career prospects for female graduates looked exceedingly grim. Reflecting on two decades of women’s education at the Kunstgewerbeschule, the Faculty Council observed that

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\ldots[A]t most of the Viennese girls’ secondary schools, drawing instruction is imparted by former Kunstgewerbeschule students and a good many flower, ceramic, and porcelain painters and pattern-designers in the textile industry have come from the institution. But the same teaching positions have long since been filled and the need in our industries for artistic work in those fields in which women can be successfully employed is… too low in order to make mass instruction for women necessary.\footnote{Antrag f. Sistierung der Aufnahme von Schülerinnen in die Vorbereitungsschule [27 February 1886], AHA, VA 1886/90.}
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The report then alleged that the numbers of women finding work in these fields of specialized painting were very low. Moreover, the pay for producing the retail piecework that many craftswomen undertook was so low as to hardly warrant five years of study at the KGS, both from female pupils’ and the state’s standpoint. Due to these reasons, the Council declared it

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\ldots[a] matter of conscience to only educate at the institution those girls whose talent is strong enough and whose diligence and perseverance guarantees productivity above the average level… [in order for the KGS]
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not to become a breeding ground for dilettantism or add to the ranks of the already-large artistic proletariat from the female population.\textsuperscript{443}

Like Eitelberger’s response to the girls demanding admission to the \textit{Fachschule} for Figural Painting in 1872, the Faculty Council’s motion to suspend women from the \textit{Vorbereitungsschule} was grounded on the logic that basic preparation should be subsumed by private institutions: specifically, the Drawing Courses of the \textit{Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Verein} and the \textit{Allgemeine Zeichenschule für Frauen und Mädchen im I. Bezirk}. To this effect, the Ministry initiated an inspection of the WFEV Drawing School and Pönninger’s \textit{Allgemeine Zeichenschule} by Artistic Inspector of Craft Education H. Herdtle and \textit{Landesschulinspektor} Dr. Julius Spängler to determine “if and to what extent the instruction imparted at these schools appears an appropriate replacement for the \textit{Vorbereitungsschule} of the \textit{Kunstgewerbeschule}” and if the private schools provided adequate preparation for entrance into the \textit{Fachschulen}.\textsuperscript{444} Herdtle and Spängler’s verdict was that while the drawing instruction at WFEV and \textit{Allgemeine Zeichenschule} roughly mirrored that offered in the KGS, instruction in theoretical subjects (Perspective and Shading, Technical Geometry, Art History, and Stylistic History) left much to be desired.\textsuperscript{445} Herdtle thus recommended that female students wishing to study with Professors Friedrich Sturm, Oskar Beyer, or Hans Macht in one of the “ladies workshops” (the \textit{Fachschule} for Animal, Flower- and Ornamental Painting, the Special-Atelier for Ceramic Decoration and Porcelain Painting, and the Special-Atelier for Embroidery Design) attend KGS lectures in the theoretical subjects to supplement their private studies. While this \textit{fachmännische} solution was

\textsuperscript{443} Antrag f. Sistierung der Aufnahme von Schülerinnen in die Vorbereitungsschule [27 February 1886], AHA, VA 1886/90.
\textsuperscript{444} ÖStA, Fasz. 3135, Z. 4207/1886. [Ministerial Report Concerning the Inspection of the Private Girls Drawing Schools]
\textsuperscript{445} Inspectionsberichte ÖStA, Fasz. 3135, Z. 4207, 4208/1886.
never realized beyond paper, the Ministry of Education was progressing forward with plans to enact the suspension.

Approving the Faculty’s plans to stabilize the numbers of pupils in the *Vorbereitungsschule* to a manageable level, Minister of Education Paul Freiherr Gautsch von Frankenthurm signed into law the “suspension of the admission of female pupils into the *Vorbereitungsschule* of the *Kunstgewerbeschule* beginning in the 1886/7 school year until further notice.” Further engraining women’s proper place in certain feminine crafts, the decree upheld the admission of “adequately qualified, talented girls in the applied arts workshops of Ceramics, Textiles and Embroidery.” For fifteen years, the *Vorbereitungsschule* would be off-limits to women, ostensibly due to the flooding of Austrian industry with more skilled workers than it could absorb.

The disastrous fallout following women’s suspension from the *Vorbereitungsschule* brings the contradictory logic of the leading circles of the KGS motivating this policy into high relief. For one, women’s non-admittance into the Preparatory School exercised the intended effect of drastically limiting the numbers of women in the other *Fachschulen*. Although the numbers of *Fachschule* pupils were not systematically included in every annual report from the years 1886-1901, the available data reveals how women’s presence in the advanced *Fachschule* was curtailed, but not eliminated [see Appendix 2.1]. While the Faculty’s 1886 motion to suspend women maintained that career outlooks for female graduates were highly negative, with levels of female employment already saturated, such arguments represented little more than thinly-veiled attempts to keep female competition out of the masculine workshop. Rather than eliminating female competition, women’s presence in the *Fachschulen* remained steady.

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446 AHA, VA, 1886/92.  
447 ÖStA, Fasz. 3135, Z. 4207/1886. [Ministerial Notes concerning the motion to suspend women from the Vorbereitungsschule].
Nonetheless, privately-schooled female pupils’ foundation in drawing and theory lagged behind the more thorough preparation offered in the KGS Vorbereitungsschule. That female pupils were more poorly prepared than their male colleagues in the Fachschule not only fanned the flame of arguments of female artistic inferiority but retarded progress for both sexes, as Myrbach pleaded to the Ministry of Education in 1899. Due to students’ asymmetrical preparation, Fachschule professors were often required to repeat the most basic artistic fundamentals in advanced workshops.

From the standpoint of the Modernists whose artistic vision triumphed around 1900, the period of women’s limited admission to the Vorbereitungsschule represented an era of general artistic stagnation at the Kunstgewerbeschule. Since the very beginning of the Austrian Museum and School of Applied Arts, Eitelberger and Falke had privileged the emulation of historicist styles: above all, the Italian Renaissance style as embodying the liberal ideals of learning and craftsmanship the twin institutions strove to promote. To quote an essay from modernist critic Bertha Zuckerkandl, the founders of the KGS and Museum found Italian Renaissance “the only style that is fruitful for Austria and speaks to Austrian uniqueness.”448 While Zuckerkandl praised the Museum and School’s efforts for bringing Austria’s “general stylistic confusion” to an end, the flourishing of Austrian crafts came to an abrupt end with the 1873 stock market crash. “Had Austria’s general artistic sense had a chance to grow stronger, inventiveness and creative individuality would have gained power instead of the slavish copying of foreign models [that ensued].”449 Compounding the general Stilverwirrung (stylistic confusion) arising from the KGS’s principle of learning through copying was the introduction of Oriental and neo-Baroque and Rococo styles in the late 1870s and 1880s. Albert Ilg, Curator at the Austrian Museum, held

449 Ibid., 95.
up the Baroque as Austria’s best and most original artistic style, which influenced Austrian manufacturers to mass produce reproductions of elaborate aristocratic furniture for the middle-classes. As architect and cultural critic Adolf Loos observed in reviewing the KGS’s annual Christmas exhibition in 1897; “...the copies of antique furniture now on view at the Austrian Museum have aroused a sensation... one would think he is still living during the zenith of Austrian applied arts, when Eitelberger ruled the roost of the house on the Stubenring... Yet the life that we lead stands in contradiction to the objects with which we surround ourselves.”

Like the pieces of women’s embroidery criticized for replicating patterns of old aristocratic linens, Austria’s general level of craftsmanship had fallen into decay during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Zuckerkandl and Loos were not alone in drawing attention to the stale principles of slavish copying in place at the KGS. Fellow critics Ludwig Hevesi and Hermann Bahr lent their support to the modernist attack of the Viennese Bastille on the Stubenring. While the tides began to turn with the appointment of anglophile and orientalist Arthur Ritter von Scala as Museum Director in 1897, many critics argued that Scala’s exhibitions of English Chippendale and Sheraton furniture only replaced the principle of copying older historical models with newer ones. As Hermann Bahr commented in Ver Sacrum, the organ of the Vienna Secession; “Among circles of Viennese artists and art lovers, the English style has been the subject of recent discussion.” While Scala was to be lauded for breaking historicism’s artistic stranglehold on Austrian design by introducing simpler English prototypes, Bahr posed the question of “whether

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451 Adolf Loos, for instance, argued that what Scala’s exhibitions had discovered was not the English style but middle-class furniture rather the fussy historical models copied during much of the nineteenth century. See Loos, Adolf Loos, "Schulausstellung der Kunstgewerbeschule,” 23-26; "Der Weihnachtsausstellung im Österreichischen Museum,” in Ins Leere Gesprochen, 27-34.
much is improved, if our craftsman begin copying English and American models, that is to say still not ceasing copying.”

The principle of copying, as Bahr pointed out, remained outdated although Austrian craftsmen’s end products were starting to look more appropriate to the times. As Zuckerkandl put it, “the Austrian Museum of Art and Industry does not know [how] to protect the rights of old art [in allowing tasteless copying] and therefore does not know [how] to acknowledge the claims of contemporary art.”

Zuckerkandl’s words were particularly applicable to the condition of women artists at the KGS, refuted in attempts to excel in traditional feminine handicrafts as well as the high arts. The period of the KGS’s artistic stagnancy, coinciding with women’s claustration in gender appropriate workshops, would soon fall to the Secessionists’ storming of Vienna’s artistic Bastille.

The first steps towards improving women’s lot at the Kunstgewerbeschule occurred towards the end of Josef Storck’s tenure as KGS Director (1889-1899), at the beginning of Arthur von Scala’s administration of the Museum (1897-1909). Adele von Stark, who had studied art with Franz and Caroline Pönninger at the Allgemeine Zeichenschule für Frauen and Mädchen and at the KGS under Friedrich Sturm (Fachschule für Zeichnen und Malen) and Hans Macht (Spezialatelier für Keramische Dekoration und Emailarbeit) from 1879-1890, sent the Ministry of Education a plea for establishing a state drawing school for girls on 21 December 1897.

Drawing from her own experience in private and state artistic institutions, Stark maintained that classes paralleling the instruction offered to boys in the KGS’s Allgemeine Abteilung (what had formerly been known as the Vorbereitungsschule) were crucial to women pursuing careers in the applied arts.

455 ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Z. 19093/1897.
Since the higher powers have decided that no more female pupils should be taken into the Kunstgewerbeschule’s Vorbereitungsschule, one is struck by the lack of a drawing school for girls which continues the drawing instruction begun in the elementary schools until imparting every sort of skill already to be mastered by the time that one sets foot in higher education in the fine as well as applied arts.\(^{456}\)

Because the drawing instruction provided by the Wiener Frauen Erwerb Verein and other private schools did not meet the “heightened requirements” of KGS pupils’ artistic pre-knowledge, Stark recommended the establishment of a state supported “drawing school for young girls, which ideally would stand under female leadership.”\(^{457}\) Stark’s report was forwarded to the KGS Board of Directors for comment after having reached the Ministry. While not approving of Stark’s plan in its present form, the KGS Board of Directors used this “petition composed from within the Porcelain-Painting Workshop,” to extrapolate on the state’s proper role in providing drawing education for girls.\(^{458}\) The Board’s response to Stark’s plea represented a crucial turning point in the state’s assumption of responsibility for girls’ art education. Although upholding the 1886 exclusion of girls from the Vorbereitungsschule as justified, Storck acknowledged the duty of the state rather than private institutions in providing girls with basic artistic education in fundamentals of drawing, as well as women’s numerous achievements in the applied and fine arts. Storck and the KGS Board of Directors thus recommended the creation of a new female division “in direction connection with the Allgemeine Abteilung of the KGS and under the supervision of the KGS” which would parallel boys’ instruction in drawing and theoretical subjects, with anatomical instruction provided in a “special manner.”\(^{459}\) The Ministry concurred with Storck’s proposal for admitting women to parallel classes of the Allgemeine Abteilung.

\(^{456}\) ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Z. 19093/1897.
\(^{457}\) ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Z. 19093/1897.
\(^{458}\) ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Z. 19093/1897 [KGS Board Meeting of 9 April 1897 and Attached Memorandum on Girls’ Drawing Instruction]. At the time, Stark was pursuing further education at the KGS from 1897-9 under Myrbach and Heller.
\(^{459}\) ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Z. 19093/1897 [KGS Board Meeting of 9 April 1897 and Attached Memorandum on Girls’ Drawing Instruction].
rather than the separate institute envisioned by von Stark. Yet, the Ministry held that, due to the spatial and financial constraints of the institutions, the idea of women’s parallel classes to the Allgemeine Abteilung could not be realized at present. The issue of women’s admission to the General Division was left sitting on the table until seized by Myrbach two years later.

The appointment of Felician Freiherr von Myrbach-Rheinfeld as Provisional Leader of the Kunstgewerbeschule on 27 January 1899 launched a thoroughgoing overhaul of the KGS’s organization, teaching methods, curriculum, and gender policies. Myrbach, who was trained at the Viennese Academy of Fine Arts and gained a reputation as an illustrator in Paris following his military career, had been teaching in the KGS’s Fachschule für Malerei since 1897 when he returned to Vienna to join forces with the Secession. The KGS Board of Directors, which was becoming increasingly isolated from Storck and the ‘old-school’ conservatives faction due to the influence of Otto Wagner and other modernists, appointed Myrbach as Provisional School-Leader on 27 January 1899: a position that was made permanent the next year after Storck was forced into retirement. As Amalia Levetus summarized the impacts of Myrbach’s reforms to Anglo-American audiences in The Studio,

The authorities were fortunate in finding a man armed with the knowledge and power requisite to bring about a reform. It was no easy task to lift the arts and crafts out of the stereotyped lines between which they had been so firmly fixed for so many decades and to put them on a new and sound foundation. The result was seen in the short space of a year, for at the exhibition held in 1900 it was manifest that a great success had been achieved, and that Austrian arts and crafts only needed judicious organization, coupled with judicious teaching, for their development. Baron Myrbach excelled in both directions and under his able teaching graphic art has become a real thing here.460

Myrbach’s first move as Director was to freeze the admission of all new students into the institute. Instead of having the intended effect of reducing levels of students in the General

Division, the 1886 suspension of women had only been coupled with allowing more and more male students into the General Division and Fachschulen. By 1896/97, ten years after women’s suspension from the Vorbereitungsschule, levels of enrollment had already exceeded those in 1886. Myrbach’s application of 25 May 1899, approved by the KGS Advisory Board, was forwarded to the Ministry of Education and approved on 30 May 1899. With the exception of certain craft-school graduates and teaching-certification candidates, Myrbach froze the admission of all new students, male and female alike, to bring the swelling levels of enrollment throughout the school under control.

Like-minded progressives in the Ministry and the KGS aided Myrbach’s efforts to improve women’s lot at the KGS. The appointment of Classics Professor Wilhelm Ritter von Hartel, a champion of the new art as well as a “warm friend” of women’s education, as Minister of Education represented a great asset to advancing gender symmetry in art education. Associated with the founding and acquisitioning of contemporary works for the collections of the Moderne Galerie as well as obtaining state support of the Secession, Hartel helped to push through many of Myrbach’s modernist reforms restructuring the KGS around the workshop principle of experimentation. Indeed, much of the stagnancy of the 1880s and 1890s can be attributed to policies made subject to bureaucratic intrigue—in that the School Directors’ decisions were subject to the approval of the Museum Director, KGS Advisory Board, Imperial Protectors and Educational Ministry—as well as the staunch conservatives filling the offices of Director and many of the key professorships. But, as Bertha Zuckerkandl celebrated the

461 ÖStA, AVA [MBiKU], Z. 14952/1899 [Myrbach’s Petition of 24 May 1899 Concerning the Suspension of all New Students into the KGS].
Myrbachian era; “Art to the artists—and nevermore to the bureaucrats.” To this effect, Myrbach secured the administrative division of the Museum and School on 12 March 1900, which gave the Director a freer hand in implementing policy. While the modernists favored Museum Director von Scala’s preference for English models over previous directors’ support of historicism, much controversy still existed between the KGS Advisory Board’s conservative and modernist factions. Open conflict erupted between the Board’s modernist contingent, led by von Scala and Otto Wagner, and conservative professors including Hans Macht, Franz Matsch, and Otto König. In fact, Archduke Rainer gave up his position as Museum Protector in 1896 due to conflicts between von Scala, the Archduke and the Wiener Kunstgewerbeverein (Viennese Arts and Crafts Association), an organization of Austrian industrialists founded in 1884 whose influence on the museum was decreasing. The Archduke reportedly declared he would never set foot in the museum again as long as von Scala was in charge.

Enlisting “a brand of devoted men great as artists and craftsmen and as teachers” to the KGS ushered in a new pedagogical philosophy at the KGS based on modern ideas of Materialgerechtig- und Zweckmässigkeit (suitability of material and utility) and the Lehrwerkstatt (learning-workshop) Principle: philosophies which fully embraced women’s presence in the workshop. Replacing conservative professors including Hans Macht, Franz Matsch, and Otto König who were all placed into retirement, the first professors to be brought on by Myrbach were his Secessionist colleagues Josef Hoffmann (25 April 1899), Kolomann Moser (1 October 1899), Arthur Strasser (2 December 1899) and Alfred Roller (7 April 1900), who were given professorships in architecture, sculpture, and the decorative arts. Hoffmann “brought

464 See Gottfried Fliedl, Kunst und Lehre am Beginn der Moderne: Die Wiener Kunstgewerbeschule 1867-1918 (Salzburg: Residenz Verlag, 1986), 138. Sektionschef Latour, an relative of the War Minister murdered in the 1848 Revolutions, was also involved in the ministerial intrigue against the Archduke.
new life to architecture” while the decorative arts “went forward by strides” under the influence of Moser and Roller.\footnote{A.S. Levetus, “The Imperial Arts and Crafts Schools, Vienna,” \textit{The Studio} 39 (1906): 324.} In retrospect, contemporary critics like Zuckerkandl praised Myrbach’s vision for choosing this “brave band of compatriots… out of the tides of the [then] unknowns.”\footnote{Bertha Zuckerkandl, “Baron Myrbach,” \textit{Zeitkunst Wien}, 20.} At the time of their appointment as KGS Professors, Hoffmann, Moser, and Roller were not the household names they became a few years later through Hoffmann and Moser’s founding the \textit{Wiener-Werkstätte} (1903), an arts-and-crafts commercial enterprise loosely model on William Morris’s workshops: a venture to which craftswomen had also made significant contributions. Roller’s appointment as the \textit{k.k. Hofoper’s} Stage-Designer during Gustav Mahler’s directorship helped thrust the graphic artist into the public spotlight. Other modernists coming on board to the KGS were Illustrator Carl Otto Czeschka, Sculptor Franz Metzner, Calligrapher Rudolf Larisch, and former \textit{Zentral-Spitzencurs} Professor Johann Hrdlička. Awarded contractual positions in the Textile and Gobelin Restoration Department, Rosalie Rothansl and Leopoldine Guttmann were the first women to employed in the KGS’s teaching staff.\footnote{The teaching positions held by these individuals are listed in parentheses as follows. Carl Otto Czeschka (1902-4 Assistant Teacher Allgemeine Abteilung/Figurales Zeichnen/ 1904-5 Provisional Leader of the Myrbach \textit{Fächerschule}; 1905-7 Teacher \textit{Fächerschule} für Zeichnen und Malen); Sculptor Franz Metzner (1903-7 Professor Abteilung für Figurales Modellieren); Zentral-Spitzencurs Professor Johann Hrdlička, (1898-1907 Spezialatelier für Spitzenzeichnen); Calligrapher Rudolf Larisch (1901-5 Docent for Ornamental Writing and Heraldry, from 1905-1933 Professor); Rosalie Rothansl (1901-9 Contracted Teacher Spezialkurs für Teppich und Gobelin Restaurierung; 1909-11 Vertragslehrerin Sonderkurs für Textilarbeiten; 1911-4 Werkstätte für Textilarbeiten; 1914-1920 Lehrerin Werkstätte für Textilarbeiten; 1920-5 Professorin Werkstätte für Textilarbeiten); Leopoldine Guttmann (1902-1910 Lehrerin Spezialkurs für Teppich und Gobelinrestaurierung). Erika Patka and Vera Vogelsberger, \textit{Verzeichnis der Lehrpersonen und ihrer Tätigkeit an der Kunstgewerbeschule 1868-1918}, in Gottfried Fliedl, \textit{Kunst und Lehre am Beginn der Moderne: Die Wiener Kunstgewerbeschule 1867-1918}, 393-400.} While Rothansl and Guttmann were only brought on, at least initially, as contractual teachers, Myrbach succeeded in having Adele von Stark invested with the “provisional technical instruction” of the \textit{Spezial-Atelier für keramische Dekoration und Emailmalerei} upon Professor Hans Macht’s forced removal from teaching.\footnote{As stipulated by Ministerial Decree Z. 23571 of 11 November 1902, AHA, VA 1903/ 326 [MfKU an die}
only confirmed von Stark’s appointment contingently, as the provisional leader of the atelier, suggests the gendered hierarchies still in place at Austria’s state academies.\textsuperscript{470}

Director Myrbach’s Secessionist colleagues, above all Hoffmann and Moser, collaborated with him and allies in the Ministry to expand women’s possibilities at the Kunstgewerbeschule. The first reform in this direction, on 17 June 1899 Myrbach argued to the KGS Advisory Board that female pupils in the Fachschulen, particularly those in the overcrowded Fachschule for decorative painting, should be allowed to switch into the first class of the Allgemeine Abteilung if their prowess in technical drawing and theory was unsatisfactory. Pointing out the error of the 1886 Sistierung (suspension) of women from the Vorbereitungsschule, Myrbach maintained that the situation disadvantaged male as well as female students because professors wasted much class time making up for the insufficient pre-education of female students.

The female pupils of the KGS, who can only find admission to the specialized courses, can only receive their general artistic training in private schools. It goes without saying that such girls lag far behind their professionally trained male colleagues, making it necessary for Fachschule Professors to take on the added burden of elementary drawing instruction… detracting class-time from the actual goal of craft instruction, much to the detriment of male pupils…\textsuperscript{471}

Forwarded on to the Ministry for approval, Myrbach’s proposal to open the Allgemeine Abteilung to current female students was approved by Minister von Hartel on 7 October 1899, slowly making progress towards what had been promised to Adele von Stark two years ago.\textsuperscript{472}

Opening the General Division to female pupils in the Fachschulen not only served to give female pupils the basic training in drawing and art theory that they lacked but served to alleviate

\textsuperscript{470} Adele von Stark was Provisional Leader of the Spezialatelier für Emailarbeiten from 1903-8 and was given a contractual teaching position beginning in 1909. She was promoted to Professor in the Werkstätte für Emailarbeiten in 1914, where she worked until her death in 1923.

\textsuperscript{471} ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Fasz. 3135 Z. 17556/1899 [Felician Freiherr von Myrbach, An das Aufsichts-Rath der Kunstgewerbe-Schule des k.k. österreichischen Museum, Aufnahme Schülerinnen in die Allegemeine Abteilung, 17 June 1899].

\textsuperscript{472} AHA, VA 1899/268.
pressure in the *Fachschulen*, where professors had to deal with students whose levels of preparation varied greatly. The first pupil recorded in the archives of the *Kunstgewerbeschule*, today known as the *Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien*, who took advantage of the new situation was Anna Pleyer, whose request to be transferred to the KGS’s *Allgemeine Abteilung* was approved on 12 September 1899.\(^{473}\) At the time, during the 1898/1899 school year, forty-three female pupils were scattered throughout the *Fachschulen*, the majority (28 girls) of whom were concentrated in the *Fachschule für Malerei*, particularly in the classes of Professor Karger (12) and Professor Baron Myrbach (12).\(^{474}\) The next school year (1899-1900), six of the *Fachschule* girls transferred into the general division.

The next matter to be conquered was the re-opening of the *Allgemeine Abteilung* to all female pupils. In his comprehensive Reform-Program sent to the KGS Advisory Board on 27 October 1899, Myrbach had initially sided with Adele von Stark’s reasoning in arguing for a separate “*Damen-Abteilung*” of the Preparatory Division.\(^{475}\) Myrbach formalized his plans for a 2-year girls’ preparatory division in a memorandum sent to the Ministry of Education on 21 April 1900. In this report, Myrbach maintained that the 1886 suspension of female students was motivated more out of personal than ideological or artistic ideals and that the reasons justifying women’s exclusion did not hold water. Absolutely false was the faculty’s contentions that Austrian industry could not absorb KGS graduates, particularly women. Appendix 2.4 illustrating the careers of KGS graduates in the fine and applied arts proves the falsity of such arguments beyond the shadow of a doubt. Moreover, Director Myrbach held that recent female achievements at public exhibitions, such as the 1892 Parisian Exhibit of Women’s Artworks, were living proof that “girls’ works in many branches of art are at least equal to those of

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\(^{473}\) AHA, VA 1899/278.

\(^{474}\) ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Fasz. 3135, Z. 6425/1900 [Ausweis über die Frequenz der Kunstgewebeschule].

\(^{475}\) ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Fasz. 3135, Z. 17556/1899.
boys.” Echoing his observations from the previous summer, Myrbach highlighted how under-
qualified female students in the Fachschulen not only disadvantaged female pupils themselves
but their male colleagues and professors, who had to labor to “eradicate all bad weeds of their
[girls’] deficient training” at the expense of specialized instruction. For these reasons Myrbach
recommended the creation of a two-year girls’ institution parallel to the Allgemeine Abteilung to
Department XVI of the Ministry for Education in his 21 April memorandum. Yet, before the
Ministry had a chance to pass final judgment on Myrbach’s proposal, Myrbach revised his
position and sent the Ministry a new petition on 11 July 1900, requesting that girls be permitted
to take part in the upcoming entrance examination for the Allgemeine Abteilung for the 1900/01
school year. The existing archival evidence leaves the reasons for Myrbach’s changed
ministerial recommendations unclear. Yet, in whipping up enthusiasm for the subject in the
Ministry, Myrbach’s policy revision was most likely strategic, as integrating women into the
existing institutional structure represented a more economical remedy to the problem. Without
giving specific comment on the Director’s previous proposal for a separate Damen-
Vorbereitungsabteilung, on 23 August 1900 the Ministry granted permission for the KGS to take
girls as regular pupils in the Allgemeine Abteilung as long as “no expenses incur because of
this.” Due to women’s re-incorporation into the KGS’s Allgemeine Abteilung, the Ministry
recommended the eventual termination of the Allgemeine Zeichenschulen, which was ceded with
a ministerial ordinance of 30 April 1907.

Further structural and pedagogical reforms undertaken by Myrbach and his reformist
cohorts planted the seeds of a less-hierarchical teaching philosophy based upon the modernist

\[\text{476 } \text{ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Fasz. 3124, Z. 11430/1900.}\]
\[\text{477 } \text{ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Fasz. 3124, Z. 11430/1900.}\]
\[\text{478 } \text{ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Fasz. 3135, Z. 21601/1900 [Antrag Myrbach vom 21.7.1900 um Wiederaufnahme von}\]
\[\text{Schülerinnen in die Allgemeine Abteilung].}\]
\[\text{479 } \text{ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Fasz. 3135, Z. 21601/1900.}\]
\[\text{480 } \text{ÖStA, AVA [BMfKU], Fasz. 3703, Z. 25960, 28757/1910.}\]
unity of material, design, and function into the fertile soil of the KGS. Myrbach, who was not only KGS Director and Professor but tried his hand as pupil in the KGS workshops to engender a spirit of camaraderie and diversification among students and faculty, implemented a fundamental reorganization of the KGS’s curriculum based upon the Lehrwerkstätten, or teaching workshops, principle.\footnote{Bertha Zuckerkandl reported that “[u]n seine Schülern bei ihren Arbeiten das Verständnis entgegenzubringen, welches er glaubte, dass sie von ihm zu fördern berechtigt wären, geht er selbst in die Lehre. Ein halbes Jahr bringt er am Webstuhl zu, dann lehrt er Töpfe drehen, Schnitzen, Metalltrieben und anderes mehr. Nicht um sein Können für sich selbst zu verwerten… sondern um zu beherrschen, wo er zum Urteilen berufen ist.” “Baron Myrbach,” Zeitkunst Wien, 23.} Influenced by the British models of the arts-and-crafts workshop—particularly Letharby’s Central School of Arts and Crafts, Walter Crane’s reorganization of the National Art Training School, and Ruskinian spirituality—Myrbach implemented the ideal of the medieval guild workshop, based upon pre-industrial methods of production, as a pedagogical nucleus to be reproduced throughout the school.\footnote{On the British Arts and Crafts Movement and Education, see Alan Crawford, “The Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain,” Design Issues Vol. 13, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 15-26; Mary Ann Stankiewicz, “From the Aesthetic Movement to the Arts and Crafts Movement” Studies in Art Education, Vol. 33, No. 3 (Spring 1992): 165-173; Toni Lesser Wolf, “Women Jewelers of the British Arts and Crafts Movement,” The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts, Vol. 14, (Autumn 1989): 28-45.} The workshops taught principles of Zweckmässig- and Materialgerechtigkeit (functionality and suitability of materials), meaning that students in diverse fields of the KGS were encouraged to test the unity of a given piece’s design, material, and functionality from its genesis. Ornamentation was to evolve from organic or geometric motifs and expressed an object’s utility. Particularly significant for women since ornamental painting represented a traditionally-feminine domain, KGS Professors such as Hoffmann and Moser taught students to integrate ornamentation into the fabrication and functionality of an object. According to Secessionist teaching philosophies, each crafts[wo]man was to master the entire creative process—not only designing but executing and ornamenting works—rather than copying stock designs from a pattern book.
The new Secessionist reforms directly influenced several traditionally-feminine KGS Fachschule and Spezialateliers. Following the dissolution of Hans Macht’s Spezialatelier für keramische Dekoration und Emailarbeit, the forced retirement of Macht notwithstanding, the workshop was reorganized in early 1903 as the Spezialatelier für Emailarbeit (Special-Atelier for Enameling) under the guidance of Adele von Stark, while the Ceramic Course continued in conjunction with the Chemical Laboratory. Likewise, the Embroidery Workshop was also reorganized according to integrative principles. More focused on patterns, the Spezialatelier für Spitzenzeichnen was dissolved and reorganized as the Spezialschule für Kunststickerei und Spitzenarbeiten in 1902 under the leadership of Johann Hrdlička, who had previously taught pattern design at the Centralspitzenkurs. A Spezialatelier für Teppich und Gobelinstaurierung (Special-Workshop for Carpet and Tapestry Restoration) was incorporated in 1902 under the leadership of Leopoldine Guttmann and Rosalie Rothansl, the latter of which had demonstrated her diligence in the four-year restoration of a splendidly-embroidered Maria-Theresian bed in the Imperial Hofburg.

Also reflecting the spirit of Secessionism, the KGS reformist camp took strides to elevate certain genres of Kleinkunst (minor or low art) and the graphic arts on an equal plane with the high arts. With the purchase of a lithograph in 1901, the school’s graphic arts department was greatly expanded. Tremendously popular among female students were Myrbach’s illustration course as well as Kolo Moser’s Course for Ornamental, Animal, and Flower Painting in the Fachschule für decorative Zeichnen und Malen. A Course for Ornamental Writing and Calligraphy under the guidance of Rudolf von Larisch, whose student and wife Hertha Larisch-Ramsauer later became a teaching assistant and professor in the same workshop, was also

483 AHA, VA 323, 325, 327/ 1900; Personalakt Adele von Stark.
484 See Kunst und Kunsthandwerk Vol. V, no. 3 (1902): 166.
485 AHA, Personalakt Rosalie Rothansl.
incorporated in 1901. The next year Myrbach was successful in incorporating a course in leatherwork and bookbinding: a move demonstrating the Vienna Moderns’ interest in reviving handicrafts that had fallen into decay. The modernist styles and methods pioneered in these KGS workshops would be particularly crucial to making Frauenkunst an avant-garde commodity in commercial ventures such as the Wiener Kunst im Hause (1902) and Wiener Werkstätte (1903), to be discussed in more detail below. A final structural reform implemented during Myrbach’s term in office was the creation of an “Übungschule für Zeichenunterricht” (Practical School for Drawing Instruction) for teacher certification candidates in drawing under the direction of Franz Cizek. The KGS’s public programs would be further expanded with the creation of Cizek’s renowned Jugendkurs in 1897, as well as the creation of public life drawing classes for men (1909) and women (1910).

Along with these structural reforms, Myrbach implemented modernist reforms in drawing and ornamentation instruction. “[R]elegating the plaster model to the attic,” Myrbach replaced copying antique architectural forms and ornament with study of living plants and beings. Bertha Zuckerkandl heralded the downfall of the pattern designer creating stock ornamentation to be mindlessly copied by housewives, dilettantes, and industrial craftswomen alike:

The era of the plaster models, the pattern-designer who uses one and the same ornament for metal, leather, glass, porcelain… the era in which every feeling to nature and its inexhaustible richness of lines, every feeling to the epoch’s new intellectual and social ideals had disappeared, will not survive the coming century in architecture and applied arts.

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486 Bertha Zuckerkandl praised an exhibition of book-binding art from students of Moser and Hoffmann as equaling the great artistic bookbinding of the old masters. WWAN-0012 [Bertha Zuckerkandl, Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung 24.II.1905]; Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, Archiv Wiener Werkstätte, WWAN 81 [Wiener Werkstätte Annalen], Band I [Besprechungen 1904-7].

487 AHA, VA 201/1909; 161/1910.


Such reforms directing ornamentation away from replicating stock patterns made strides towards rectifying notions of feminine over-ornamentation in the popular mindset. To quote Adolf Loos’s famous polemic against ornament; “Wherever I abuse the everyday-use-object by ornamenting it, I shorten its life span…Only the whim and ambition of women can be responsible for the murder of this material…” Integrating ornamentation and production affected women’s course of study at the KGS for the better: elevating women’s art from mindless copying to artistry in the true sense of the word.

A sense of democratic experimentation, as well as diversification of students’ education, was encouraged in the workshops. Zuckerkandl reported that

Teachers learned along with students. Myrbach tore down the confining walls, which maintained a strict division of class from class and technique from technique. He let draftsmen learn metalwork, he sent painters to the Architecture School, and from there pupils could devote themselves to pottery or weaving.

In this liberal spirit of curricular diversity, professors learned along with students to devise new solutions to redesigning the needs of everyday life: an area in which women had particular clout due to their association with the domestic sphere. Reoutfitting the home using bold geometric patterns, shapes, and colors, the KGS students fulfilled the Secessionist ideal of Ver Sacrum, a sacred spring of art that would rejuvenate modern life. “The spirit of youth, which pervades spring…and through which the present is becoming modern…” was sweeping the halls of Eitelberger’s institution on the Stubenring.

The ascendant position of women in the Austrian Kunstgewerbeschule is illustrated by women’s rising numbers in the General Division and specialized workshops as well as the

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491 Bertha Zuckerkandl, “Baron Myrbach,” Zeitkunst Wien, 23.
strong female presence in the early-twentieth century applied-arts commercial ventures associated with KGS faculty and students: the *Wiener Kunst im Hause* (1900-04) and *Wiener Werkstätte* (1903-1932). Indeed, while the subject of women’s contributions to the *Wiener Werkstätte* has been amply documented from a design historical perspective, the *Wiener-Werkstätte Kunstgewerbeweib*’s (applied arts gal) schooling at the KGS has received less scholarly emphasis.\(^{493}\) Women’s numbers in the *Kunstgewerbeschule* rose dramatically after the Myrbachian reforms: not only in the General Division and traditionally-feminine *Fachschulen* but in conventionally masculine fields including architecture.\(^{494}\) The overall numbers of women’s enrollment at the KGS indicate that the swelling numbers of KGS pupils during and after World War I, although partially influenced by a wartime gender-imbalance and absence of young men, had their roots in the slower moving trends initiated by Myrbach and his reformist colleagues, as well as his 1905 successor as school director Oskar Beyer.\(^{495}\)

KGS Secessionists, particularly Josef Hoffmann and Kolomann Moser, played a crucial role in integrating women into fields conventionally viewed as men’s turf and savaging disparaged genres of *Kleinkunst* as important household crafts. Hoffmann welcomed ladies into

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\(^{494}\) Aside from women’s role as interior designers in the KGS Architecture School, Austrian women generally entered the architectural profession later than their German counterparts owing to the fact that German Technical Universities opened to women in 1908. By contrast, Austria’s Technical University did not open until to female students until after World War I, in 1919. Despina Stratigakos, “Architects in Skirts: The Public Image of Women Architects in Wilhelmine Germany.” *Journal of Architectural Education*, Vol. 55, no. 2 (Nov. 2001): 90-100 and *A Women’s Berlin: Building the Modern City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

\(^{495}\) Appendix 2.1 depicts women’s statistical presence at the KGS in great detail with regard to academic year, semester, and discipline, while Appendix 2.4 presents an overview of the career paths of graduates during the KGS’s first forty years.
his architecture classes with open arms while Moser experimented with his students to devise new solutions to the design of household objects. Progressive teaching methods inclusive of women marked the workshops of Rudolf Larisch (Ornamental Writing), Carl Otto Czeschka (*Fachschule* for Drawing and Painting), Berthold Löffler (*Fachschule* for Drawing and Painting/ Illustration), all of whom were *Wiener Werkstätte* collaborators, as well as Adele von Stark’s pioneering techniques blending traditional methods of porcelain and enamel painting with bold, modern designs. Objects produced by female students represented the Austrian *Kunstgewerbeschule* with honor at the school’s annual exhibitions, the Parisian *Exposition Universelle* of 1900, including cabinetry by Else Unger and decorative objects by Gisela von Falke, and the 1904 World’s Fair in St. Louis. Indeed, the successful relationship cultivated between Hoffmann, Moser, and their female students would prove to be more than academic, extending into the realms of commerce and applied-arts retail.

A forerunner to the world-renowned workshops of the *Wiener Werkstätte*, whose furniture, textile, and accessory (silver, jewelry, and diverse *objet d’art*) designs left a strong imprint upon the canon of twentieth-century design history, the *Wiener Kunst im Hause* (1900-04) represented the earliest commercial venture launched by KGS students and professors. Hoffmann, Moser, and Myrbach all functioned as honorary members of the group, whose regular members were equally divided between male and female. The Secessionist design-

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496 KGS Female teaching staff and pupils racked up medals at a 1907 Exhibition, with silver medals in education being awarded to Leopoldine Guttmann (in addition to silver medal in the manufacturing division) and Adele von Stark (as well as a gold medal in manufacturing); silver medals in art to Emma Schlangenhausen and Hilde Exner; bronze medals in art to Jutta Sikka and Hella Unger and Bronze Medals in Manufacturing for Elsa Baumfeld, Marie Trethahn, Gisela von Falke, Marie Bibel, Hermine Kolbe, Rosa Neuwirth, Marietta Peyfuss, and Josefine Schlitter. Official Copy to the Directors of the k.k. Österreichischen Museum f. Kunst und Industrie in Wien, AHA, VA 1907/16. The precise details of this 1907 exhibition remain unrecorded in the Kunstgewerbeschule archives.

497 The *Wiener Kunst im Hause*’s regular members consisted of KGS graduates Baronesse Gisela Falke, Marietta Peyfuss, Else Unger, Jutta Sikka, Therese Trethahn, Leopold Forstner, Alexander Hartmann, Emil Holzinger, Franz Messner, Michael Powolny, Wilhelm Schmidt, Karl Sumetzberger, and Hans Vollmer. These young artists worked with commercial Viennese firms such as J. Böch (Porcelain), Bakalowits & Söhne (Glass and Crystal), and J. Backhausen und Söhne (Textiles) to manufacture the designs they created.
periodical *Das Interieur* (The Interior) described the *Wiener Kunst im Hause* as “a new group of young male and female artists, who have set the goal of cultivating a dignified style of interior arrangement with a specifically-Viennese flair” [Figure 2.2].\(^{498}\) In fact, the new exhibiting association was comprised of the same KGS pupils who had participated in the Parisian Exhibition of 1900 and the well-regarded school-exhibitions around 1900. Feminist journal *Dokumente der Frauen* not only praised the group’s “charming” designs but for “signaling a step forward in the area of the woman question.”\(^{499}\)

Given its mission of “exhibiting applied arts objects [for the home] manufactured according to its members’ designs,” traditional notions of feminine domesticity gave women a strong stake in the *Wiener Kunst im Hause* [Figure 2.3].\(^{500}\) Critics for *Das Interieur* and other design periodicals echoed Jacob von Falke’s ideas on the propriety of women’s aesthetic mission in decorating and beautifying their homes. As design scholar Rebecca Houze has recently observed; “the modern interiors on display largely designed by women enjoyed a certain legitimacy… [due to] the traditional role of the bourgeois Viennese lady to order and arrange her furnishings—beautifying or ‘dressing’ her home as she would herself.”\(^{501}\) Contemporary reviews of the venture stressed the mutually complementary nature of the work executed by its “mélange of talents” in that they “reciprocally completed” and balanced each other’s work.\(^{502}\) Thus, despite the fact that the General Austrian Women’s Association praised the equal participation of men and women in the group, *Wiener Kunst im Hause* retained a


\(^{499}\) “Wiener Kunst im Hause,” *Dokumente der Frauen* VI: 17 (1 December 1901): 491

\(^{500}\) “Vorwort,” Wiener Kunst im Hause Exhibition Catalogue (Vienna, 1903), 1.


strong sense of gendered hierarchy.\textsuperscript{503} In part, this trend grew out of the gendered pecking order developing within individual KGS workshops leaving women to complete lighter tasks appropriate to their sex. According to his former students, Hoffmann had encouraged women’s presence in his architecture school but not necessarily as architects per se.\textsuperscript{504} In keeping with his \textit{Gesamtkunstwerk} ideals, Hoffmann educated multi-talented artists to accessorize and decorate spaces created by their male colleagues. However, the existence of female cabinetmakers like Elsa Unger discounts the notion that Hoffmann excluded women from more masculine tasks like furniture making, altogether.

At any event, the naturalized assumptions of gender and sexual difference at work at KGS workshops spilled over into the gendered divisions of labor in the \textit{Wiener Kunst im Hause}. For instance, in describing the \textit{Wiener Kunst im Hause}’s 1902 exhibition at the \textit{Wiener Kunstgewerbeverein} showcasing three rooms completely designed by members (from furniture, to carpets, linens and accessories), the periodical \textit{Das Interieur} described the division of labor such that, “while the male members mostly provide for and oversee architectural composition and the manufacturing of furniture, the ladies have taken over arranging and accessorizing.”\textsuperscript{505} The hierarchy implicit in this language—men ‘overlook’ while women ‘arrange’ —is clear.

Despite, or perhaps because of, these hierarchies of gender and craft, the \textit{Wiener Kunst im Hause} was publicly heralded as a successful commercial venture, paving the way for the internationally-renowned workshops of the \textit{Wiener Werkstätte}. An invitation to participate in the fifteenth Exhibition of the Vienna Secession in November and December of 1902 represented the \textit{Wiener Kunst im Hause}’s highpoint in the public spotlight [\textbf{Figure 2.4}]. Widely

\textsuperscript{503} “\textit{Wiener Kunst im Hause},” \textit{Dokumente der Frauen} VI: 17 (1 December 1901): 491-2.
attended and covered by the press, its displayed works of wood, metal, leather, glass, pottery, paper and linen were praised for being “tasteful and relatively inexpensive,” thus defeating notions that modern design necessarily be outrageously expensive.506 “Luxury can only lie in the preciousness of the materials” held Das Interieur’s editor Ludwig Abels.507 Also drawing favorable attention from press and public alike was the exhibition’s arrangement like a domestic Gesamtkunstwerk in contrast to the crammed, ‘market-hall’ exhibition-style characterizing the Künstlerhaus and Academy shows. Textile and embroidery work from Jutta Sikka, as well as Unger’s furniture and lighting designs, received special praise.

Evolving out of the Wiener Kunst im Hause, the founding of the Wiener Werkstätte (Vienna Workshops) in 1903 represented an important professional opportunity for KGS graduates. Financed by wealthy industrialist Fritz Waermdörfer until 1914 and in its later years by Otto and Mäda Primavesi, the driving aim of Wiener-Werkstätte co-founders Kolomann Moser and Josef Hoffmann was “to follow in the footsteps of Ruskin and William Morris… and so bring about a right feeling not only for the artist but for the craftsman who breathes life into the artist’s work.”508 Like its predecessor Wiener Kunst im Hause, the Wiener Werkstätte worked in collaboration with Viennese firms such as Josef Böck Porcelain, the Jakob & Josef Kohn and Thonet Brothers bent-wood furniture companies, and glass manufacturers J.L. Lobmeyr and Baklowits and Sons to produce high-quality craft products. With the famous Gitterwerk squarey-pattern characterizing its early purist period, the recurrent geometrical motifs of W-W furniture, accessories, and textiles transformed the customer’s home into a modernist Gesamtkunstwerk. In-house workshops for Ceramics (1906), Textiles (1910), Fashion

507 Ibid.
(1911) grew out of the original workshops for furniture, metal, leather, bookbinding, and painting outlined in the W-W’s work manifesto.\textsuperscript{509} Several workshops were centered at the Wiener-Werkstätte’s headquarters at Neustiftgasse 32-4 while subsequent showrooms and retail-branches were scattered through the inner-city and outer-districts.

Female graduates of the Kunstgewerbeschule contributed to the Wiener Werkstätte in a major way.\textsuperscript{510} Referring to Appendix 2.3, around half of the Wiener-Werkstätte’s women artists had studied with Hoffmann, figures even higher when other KGS professors are factored in. In total, around 101 female KGS graduates are known to have worked for the Wiener Werkstätte. As exemplified by the recent surge of interest in Wiener Werkstätte female-craftswomen such as Mela Koehler (1885-1960), Maria Likarz-Strauss (1893-1971), and Vally Wieselthier (1895-1945), women’s presence was particularly felt in the fields of fashion, textiles, jewelry, and ceramics [See examples of Wiener Werkstätte textiles in Figure 2.6].\textsuperscript{511} Similar to perceptions of women’s natural stake in the domestic displays of the Wiener Kunst im Hause, contemporary critics generally looked favorably upon female craftswomen’s contributions to the Wiener Werkstätte, such as in its 1906 Christmas Exhibition “der Gedeckte Tisch” (The Festive Table).\textsuperscript{512} Unlike the affordability of WKH designs, however, the press slammed Wiener-Werkstätte Archiv, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, Bibliothek und Studiensammlungen. The Wiener Keramik was founded in 1906 by Michael Powolny and Berthold Löffler.

\textsuperscript{509} Unfortunately, the Archives of the Wiener Werkstätte at Austria’s Museum of Applied Arts contains few traces to women, mainly because much of the Wiener-Werkstätte’s archival materials were auctioned off upon the firm’s dissolution in 1932. The existing records are mostly of a financial nature. Women, however, are mentioned in the so-called Wiener-Werkstätte Annalen [WWA/ WWAN], a surviving collection of contemporary press clippings.\textsuperscript{511} Marianne Hörmann, and Vally Wieselthier, Vally Wieselthier, 1895-1945: Wien, Paris, New York [Keramik, Skulptur, Design der zwanziger und dreissiger Jahre] (Wien: Böhlau, 1999); Vally Wieselthier: Ceramic Sculpture, (New York: Galerie St. Etienne, 1948); Exhibition: The James May Collection of Textiles, Wall Papers, Embroideries and Objects 'art from the Vienna Workshop 1902-1932, (New York: Austrian Institute, 1982) [Accessed from the James May Collection of Textiles, Wallpapers, Embroideries, and Objects d’art from the Vienna Workshops, Wolfson Collection, Wolfsonian Florida-International University, Miami Beach, FL].

\textsuperscript{512} “Der gedeckte Tisch” [Weihnachtsausstellung in der Neustiftsgasse 32] Neue Freie Presse (12 December 1906); M. Sch., “Der gedeckte Tisch” Wiener Extrablatt (14 October 1906); A.F., Neues Wiener Tagblatt (16 October 1906); Österreichische Volkszeitung (12 October 1906); Deutsche Zeitung (11 October 1906). Österreichisches
Werkstätte creations as elitist and outlandishly expensive. The satirical journal *Kikeriki* poked fun at how the “Festive Table’s” dainty, surgical-like flatware reduced appetites to a minimum, “what is indeed desirable given the current prices of groceries.”513 On a more general note, *Wiener-Werkstätte* ceramicists such as Gudrun Baudisch, Mathilde Flögl, Hilda Jesser, Susi Singer, and Vally Wieselthier, all of whom hailed from the KFM and KGS gained an international reputation for their imaginative designs and artistic versatility.

Not only dominating the *Wiener-Werkstätte’s* ceramics, textile, and fashion departments, female graphic-artists played important roles in illustrating postcards, children’s books, and ex-libris plates.514 Baudisch, Flögl, and Wieselthier coordinated the avant-garde constructivist graphic design of the 1929-publication *Die Wiener Werkstätte, 1903-1928: Modernes Kunstgewerbe und sein Weg* (The Vienna Workshops: The Path of Modern Applied Arts).515 Most significant to the development of a distinct Frauenkunst in interwar Austria, in 1913 the WW’s so-called “Künstlerwerkstätten” (Artistic Workshops) opened in the Döblergasse 4 building built and operated by Otto Wagner. These Künstlerwerkstätten, under the supervision of Dagobert Peche, enjoyed a reputation of experimentalism and unbridled expressionism where female craftswomen could try out new methods and materials free of men’s gazes.516 According to critic Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven,

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516 Dagobert Peche (1887-1923), who studied at Vienna’s Technical University and then at the Viennese Academy of Fine Arts under Friedrich Ohmann, was a multi-talented artist collaborating with the Wiener-Werkstätte to produce furniture, metal, silver, jewlery, ceramic, leather, and clothing. His whimsical, Neo-Baroque style is often defined as more feminine and decorative in contrast to the Wiener Werkstätte’s early purist phase 1903-1901 marked by geometricism and the Gitterwerk ornament. See *Dagobert Peche und die Wiener Werkstätte: Die Überwindung der Utilität*, Peter Noever, ed. (Ostfildern: Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1998).
When one entered the ateliers in the Döblergasse, one saw little of the men directing the whole thing… but the young women-artists in their white smocks zipped through the whole building, populating all of its stories. If one searched for them in the workplaces, one found them either at the drawing table with a textile-design sketch, or occupied with embroidery or a poster, or else busy as ceramicist at the pottery wheel.\textsuperscript{517}

Objects produced in the Döblergasse, including fashion-accessories, textile and embroidery designs, painted glass, figural and decorative ceramics, seasonal decorations and other objet d’art, were often of a fantastical, playful, or whimsical nature, sometimes with no ostensible use

[Figure 2.5]. Decorative motifs and techniques tended to be influenced by exoticism and primitivism. Similarly, WW women artists harnessed new materials and techniques conventionally considered below art, such as batik printing and use of paper and other rubbish, to produce elegant decorative objects for ladies’ boudoirs or salons. The ceramic figurines illustrated above characterize the capricious, experimental style of the pottery coming out of the \textit{WW Künstlerwerkstätten}. That such women artists received, for the most part, equal compensation with their male colleagues suggests the relative equality enjoyed by the \textit{WW Kunstgewerbeweiber} (applied arts gals). Economic Historian Herta Neiß’s marshalling of the \textit{Wiener Werkstätte}’s financial records has shown that, contrary to arguments that Hoffmann and Moser tapped their former students as a cheap source of labor, WW female artists were actually paid on the same \textit{Honorar} (honorarium) basis as men, impossible to forge or cheat.\textsuperscript{518} However, the \textit{Künstlerwerkstätte}’s era of creative freedom came to an end in 1923 when Julius Zimpel, another KGS alum, succeeded Peche as artistic director of the \textit{Wiener Werkstätte}. Forced to work on fixed

salaries rather than *Honorar* freelancing, many of the Döblergasse *Kunstgewerbeschule* severed ties with the W-W to found their own workshops.\(^{519}\)

The female-dominated *Wiener-Werkstätte*, however, was not without its share of critics: foremost among them architect and cultural-critic Adolf Loos. Linking the overly feminized decorative objects produced by the *Wiener Werkstätte* with cultural decay, Loos dubbed the W-W’s world-renowned workshops as the “Wiener Weh” (Viennese Woe).\(^{520}\) Loos believed that Hoffmann and his girly cohorts were nothing better than a band of decorative swindlers hoodwinking the nouveau-riches with their overpriced kitsch: a situation which he polemicized in a series of public lectures and essays.\(^{521}\) Women, in the eyes of Loos, became dangerous when they crossed the boundary between salon and studio, infiltrating the artist’s workshop with impure decorative aesthetics.\(^{522}\) Loos and his followers contended that although women possessed a natural affinity to ornament and even a capacity for ornamental innovation, this trait was (ironically) neither ‘modern’ nor ‘artistic.’ As Loos satirized in his allegory “The Poor Little Rich Man,” the doilies, needlepoint, and folk art produced by women had no place in Man’s Temple of Art.\(^{523}\) As late as the 1920s, popular notions of *Frauenkunst* still confined it to craft, away from the monumental fine arts.

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\(^{521}\) Although beyond the scope of this study, issues of sexuality and the Wiener Werkstätte merit further scholarly inquiry. Not only Hoffmann but his colleagues Eduard Wimmer-Wisgrill and Dagobert Peche were rumored to be closeted-homosexuals. See Christian Witt-Döring, “Wenn Inhalte zu Informationen werden: Ein Brief Fritz Waerndorfer an Eduard Wimmer-Wisgrill,” *Der Andere Blick. Lesbishwoles Leben in Österreich*, Wolfgang Förster, Tobias Natter and Ines Rieder, eds. (Wien: Frauenbüro der Stadt Wien, 2001), 63-70.


‘After the Doors Have Been Opened Wide Everywhere Else, the Academy Can’t Keep Theirs Closed Any Longer:’ Making Space for Frauenkunst at the Academy of Fine Arts

Although references to women are common enough in the Archives of the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts (ABKW), the female names filling the Academy’s mid-to-late nineteenth century ledgers invariably fall into two categories. The first of these were aristocratic women endowing the Academy with prizes and scholarships, while the second category was comprised of Academy professors’ widows claiming pension benefits. Only in 1871 can the first reference to women as potential students and practitioners of the fine arts be gleaned, despite the Vienna Academy’s late-18th century precedent of making women honorary academicians.524 A petition from the Niederösterreichische Handels- und Gewerbekammer (Lower Austrian Chamber of Commerce and Industry) landed in the ABKW’s Faculty Council on 4 December 1871. That the first motion considering women’s entitlement to academic instruction originated from the Lower Austrian Chamber of Commerce may seem surprising but was embedded in the same turmoil surrounding women’s studies at the Kunstgewerbeschule. Owing to the fact that a member of the Chamber of Commerce sat on the KGS Board of Directors, the N.Ö. Gewerbekammer was kept abreast of problems developing from the rising numbers of women enrolling at the Kunstgewerbeschule. As shown on Appendix 2.1, levels of female pupils at the KGS shot from around 10% at its founding to as much as 17-19% in the early 1870s. Increasing numbers of female pupils gave rise to concerns on the KGS Board of Directors that the KGS was becoming a sort of “Damen-Winkelakademie” (backstreet ladies’ academy): i.e. that women were infiltrating the academy through the backdoor by turning to masculine fields of history and

portrait painting in frightening numbers. The KGS Board maintained, however, that the school would only accept female students pursuing careers in the applied and industrial arts, not those who hoped to use the institute as a vehicle to realize dreams of becoming serious artists: that is, landscape, history, or portrait painters. Such concerns motivated the Lower Austrian Chamber of Commerce’s December 1871 inquiry to the Ministry of Culture and Education, intended to size up possibilities for integrating women into the Academy.

The Academy’s response to the 1871 inquiry mirrored the answer given by the KGS Board of Directors in response to the demands of female students for a Fachschule of Figural Drawing and Painting outlined at the beginning of this chapter. By the time the Academy’s Faculty Council got around to answering the Chamber of Commerce’s inquiry, which the Cultural Ministry had forwarded to the ABKW Faculty Council for comment in December 1871, MfKI Director Rudolf von Eitelberger had already issued his “On Regulating Art-Instruction for the Female Sex.” Eitelberger’s outlines on women’s entitlement to applied and fine arts instruction undoubtedly influenced the ABKW Faculty Council deliberations on the docket in March and April of 1872. The Faculty Council’s final judgment on the matter was rendered back to the Ministry on 17 April 1872. In this ruling, the faculty maintained not only the undesirability but the impossibility of integrating women as regular students at the Academy of Fine Arts for a variety of artistic, moral, and logistical reasons. In the first place, “the present confines of space at the Academy … represented one of the most important reasons why

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the faculty spoke out against admitting women to the academy.”528 Since an expansion of the Academy’s current premises was not foreseen, integrating women into the Academy represented a spatial impossibility in the near future. In reality, the Academy, which had been equipped the same year with a new statute as a Hochschule (with an Academic Rector and Faculty Council) and had removed applied arts instruction from its curriculum entirely, would relocate into a spacious Neo-Renaissance building on the Schillerplatz only five years later. Despite the Vienna Academy’s long tradition of cultivating the applied/industrial arts within the parameters of academic study, indeed, since the incorporation of Zeiß’s Manufakturschule in 1786, the delegating of applied arts training to the KGS, Graphische Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt and provincial Fachschulen did little to advance women’s foothold in an institution now dedicated solely to the fine arts. Arguments of a lack of space and women’s limited talents in the monumental arts remained the Academy’s tired excuse for excluding women, right up until the point when women were admitted in 1920.

Beyond the supposed logistical impossibility of coeducation, fundamental artistic and moral issues prevented women from academic study. That the life-drawing classes necessary for academic training could never occur in mixed-gender environments represented a foregone moral conclusion on the part of the faculty. “It must occur to any unbiased observer that ladies drawing, painting, and modeling from the naked living human-model in the company of men cannot be permitted.”529 The Faculty Council argued that women’s proximity to the male academy foretold the grave moral peril represented by mixed gender academic settings. At its then home in the Annagasse, the Academy was housed in the same building as a training facility for female teachers, and faced countless morally-compromising situations. For instance, in

528 UAABKW, VA 104/1872.
529 UAABKW, VA 104/1872.
sharing a common staircase, the morality of the innocent young ladies of the teachers’ college was constantly jeopardized by the “immoral drawings [i.e. nude sketches] befouling the walls.”\textsuperscript{530} The offense to good morals ensuing when men and women would not only be in close proximity but sharing artistic instruction was unthinkable. Added to these moral factors, the faculty maintained that women’s artistic talents tended to be clustered in the so-called “low arts” below the academic curriculum. “In landscape, flower, and portrait painting many young ladies have achieved [something] not unimportant, the very subjects not cultivated at all at the Academy… thus it is impossible for girls to conduct their studies in the company of young men in good conscience without damaging the peace and order of the institute… [.]”\textsuperscript{531} In the eyes of Academy professors, Frauenkunst was beneath the monumental arts practiced at the Academy.

The Faculty Council’s recommendations for educating women in the fine arts followed Eitelberger’s guidelines in calling for the creation of state-supported private ateliers. Privatization, along with a tendency to deflect responsibility for women’s education in the fine arts between the ministry and state art schools (ABKW, KGS, and eventually the KFM), represented the predominant official response to demands for women’s access to academic instruction. However, in addition to echoing Eitelberger’s proposal for governmentally sustained private schools, the Academy Council put forward the idea of a ‘separate but equal’ women’s academy as an apt solution to the problem. Following the model of Munich’s Damenakademie established in 1884, the Faculty Council proposed single-sex art education as the most expedient and modern solution.\textsuperscript{532} The admission of women to academic studies could only be accommodated “if an institution similar to Munich’s Kunstschule für Frauen were to be

\textsuperscript{530} UAABKW, VA 104/1872.
\textsuperscript{531} UAABKW, VA 104/1872.
\textsuperscript{532} On the 36-year history of Munich’s Ladies’ Academy, see Yvette Deseyve, Der Künstlerinnen-Verein München e.V. und seine Damen-Akademie Eine Studie zur Ausbildungs situation von Künstlerinnen im späten 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert, esp. Chapter VI “Die Damen-Akademie des Künstlerinnen-Vereins München (1884-1920.”
established in Vienna or if individual private studios were maintained through state subventions. With this ruling volleying the responsibility for women’s education in the fine arts to private leagues and institutions, the Academy closed the book on the academic Frauenstudium until after the fall of the Monarchy. The state, in turn, contributed to help subsidize Pönninger’s Allgemeine Zeichenschule, and supported the 1897-founded private academy Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (later Wiener Frauenakademie) in a major way. The subject of a chapter of its own to be explored at length in the pages to follow, the publicly-incorporated KFM came to occupy a unique position between public and private, league- and state sponsored, and official and unofficial state academy. That the KFM’s teaching staff overlapped with Vienna’s premier art institutions (including the Secession, Hagenbund, KGS, and Academy itself) and was able to issue degrees in Academic Painting equivalent to those of the Academy convinced the general public that admitting women to the “real” Academy on the Schillerplatz represented a moot point.

It was precisely the Wiener Frauenakademie’s position as a quasi-state academy on theoretically-equal footing with the main academy that explains the Academy’s negative attitude towards admitting women, as well as the Ministry’s countenance of this stasis. As summarized by Josef Müllner, Academy Rector during the late 1920s; “in earlier years, one believed to have adequately provided for the artistic training of women and girls at the Women’s Academy for Fine and Applied Arts, which was also equipped with classes in Academic Painting and subsidized by the state.” Likewise, as evidenced by the Ministry’s dropping of the affair until decades later, the Ministry of Education found the ‘separate-but equal’ Women’s Academy to be a satisfactory, and indeed, exemplary, solution. In fact, after

533 UAABKW, VA 104/1872.
the ABKW Faculty Council’s 1871/2 ruling casting privatization as the best method of handling women’s fine-arts education, the Academy remained tight-lipped on the issue of admitting female students until just before it was, under pressure from the Ministry and various women’s groups, forced to open what represented Vienna’s artistic ‘old-boys-club’ to women in 1920. Thus, in keeping the Academy’s doors closed to women far longer than at the Kunstgewerbeschule, the prevalent Central European discourse casting women artists as mediocre dilettantes, and at best, industrious craftswomen explains, at least in part, why notions of gender and the hierarchy of the arts persisted so strongly into the twentieth century. Officially keeping its distance from the Frauenstudium, the Academy’s skepticism towards women in the fine arts can be gleaned from its obliqueness in approaching the issue of women’s fine arts education, and how the accountability for providing this education was volleyed between the Ministry, KGS, KFM, and ABKW.

From the Academy’s point of view, the issue of admitting female students boiled down to a lack of space rather than gender anxiety. Again and again, the Academy’s official protocol maintained that it was only a lack of space and funds preventing the opening of the Schillerplatz to women.535 However, a 1919-Memorandum by the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to the V勃KÖ (or Association of Austrian Women-Artists) suggests quite the opposite, alleging that the Academy refused to budge due to fundamental anxieties about differing mental conditions of male and female students. Such anxieties included typical allegations that female students, while more mature and hardworking, were controlled by their emotions and were marked by a tendency for imitation. The degenerative effects of the coeducational life-drawing class, as manifested by the Academy’s response to the 1871 inquiry, represented dangerous

535 Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to V勃KÖ on Admission of Women to Academy of Fine Arts (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH V勃KÖ], ARCH 32/ 1-2.
social forces not to be unleashed. Repeated throughout the official correspondences and memoranda ca. 1919-1921 was the turn of phrase “the academy has never spoken out against women studying on principle.” A special committee consisting of Professors Bacher, Delug, Schmutzer, Jettmar und Müllner first gave voice to this opinion in early 1920. While the Academy had not likewise spoken up in favor of admitting women, the Faculty Council’s proceedings stressed that the Academy was already turning away many qualified candidates, regardless of gender. In reality, however, a mixture of practical and psychological reasons motivated the Academy’s hesitation to lower the bar to women. The Academy’s silence, neither taking a pro nor contra attitude towards admitting female students not only illustrates a typically-Austrian sense of bureaucratic Schlamperei and fortwursteln (sloppiness/muddling through), but reveals the fundamental ambivalence male Academicians held towards women in the arts. By speaking up in favor of the Frauenstudium, including women in the Academy would represent another source of competition to men in an already-saturated art market. On the other hand, by positioning itself against the Frauenstudium, the Academy risked isolating itself from liberal Austrian intellectuals supporting women’s studies, not to mention late-nineteenth-century Austria’s successful women artists, such as Tina Blau-Lang and Olga Wisinger-Florian, whose talents left no doubt as to female capabilities in the arts.

The Academy was not confronted with the issue of admitting female students again until the beginning of the twentieth century, the first direct assault on the academic citadel since 1871.

In response to a barrage of criticism from feminist groups, in 1904 the Academy established a

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536 In a report of 28 January 1920 to the Ministry for Culture and Education produced by a special-faculty committee of Bacher, Delug, Schmutzer, Jettmar, und Müller on the provisional admission of women to study at the Academy, the committee stressed that acceptance in any one of the academic schools was “solely dependent on the prerequisite of the individual artistic skills of the applicant” [rather than sex] and that the Academy “had never spoken out against women studying on principle” but rather voiced concern with the lack of space and funds. As it were, the Academy could only accept some 20 of the 120 highly-qualified applicants to the Painting School. Universitätsarchiv der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien [UABKW], VA [Verwaltungsakten] 1112-1920.
new commission, consisting of Professors Georg Niemann, Edmund Hellmer, Christian Griepenkerl, William Unger and Rudolf Bacher, to tackle the problem of the Frauenstudium. Much like its earlier ruling, the committee pointed to the moral impossibility of coeducational studies and women’s limited capacities in the monumental arts. As the committee reasoned;

Experience proves that, not seldom, are women highly talented, as long as they stand under the guidance of their teacher, and distinguish themselves through their teachability, industry and pure diligence; but rather, with few exceptions, are excluded from creative genius in the field of monumental art… and stand helpless to serious tasks…

The committee thus advised against admitting women to the state academy, suggesting the KFM as an appropriate private alternative. This endorsement led directly to subventions for the KFM beginning in the next academic year (1904/05) as well as the rights of public incorporation bestowed on the school in 1908/10. A few years later in 1907, another challenge to Vienna’s male academy originated further afield, in the Polish lands. Although the Ministry for Education had ruled that although it had no major objections to women studying at the academy, the Ministry stipulated that the matter was dependent upon the approval of the Monarchy’s other art-academies. In contrast to Austria’s system of applied arts schools, which were scattered throughout the Empire in the form of specialized Fachschule with the KGS/MfKI serving as the premier training and exhibition facility, the Empire’s academies of fine art were centralized in the provincial capitals of Krakow, Prague, and Vienna. As the matter depended upon a pan-imperial consensus on admitting women to academic studies, a group of female art students in Krakow addressed themselves directly to the ABKW Faculty Council. In contrast to the ingenious solution that such “separate but equal” ladies academies represented to the Ministry,

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537 UAABKW, VA 1904/65.
538 Although Budapest possessed a Magyar Királyi Mintarajztanoda és Rajztanárképezde (Royal Hungarian National Drawing and Teaching-Training School), this institute was not elevated as an “Academy” until the turn of the twentieth century.
artistic establishment, and general public, the Krakow girls pointed out the many deficiencies of private academies for women. Above all, such ladies’ academies remained associated with dilettantism. The meaning of this dilettantism was twofold. First, the absence of entrance exams at most private academies entailed the admission of students of average, or even below average, artistic talent. Second, such Damenakademien, whose pricey tuitions made them only accessible to social elites, were breeding grounds for those who did not wish to pursue art as a vocation but merely for personal fulfillment and pleasure. As the Krakow girls put it, such schools had

[n]o artistic, specialized purpose, but only support the spreading of aestheticism in people. The level and the work in these schools are lowered as a consequence of their over-filling with incompetent women. The high costs [of such schools] only allows participation by the wealthy, for the most part those who do not desire to dedicate themselves to serious work or who cannot soar to great [artistic heights].

The picture of the Damenakademie painted by the girls’ letter represented one very different from that propped up by the Academy. Indeed, the very existence of a separate women’s academy embodied the primary justification for keeping the Schillerplatz exclusively male. Unsurprisingly, the Faculty Council’s response to the inquiry was resoundingly negative, referring the girls to previous decisions negating the possibility of women’s studies. The 1907 inquiry was followed by similar petitions from a variety of Bohemian and Moravian women’s groups, above all, the Women’s Auxiliary of the Ústřední matice školská (Central Educational League). Yet these petitions, along with the great majority of the Krakow and Prague Academy faculties’ support for admitting female students, hit a brick wall at the Ministry against the old excuse of lack of funds and space for female students. Proposals for admitting women to Austrian state art academies gathered dust on the Minoritenplatz until after the fall of the Monarchy.

539 UAABKW, VA 1907/356.
The sudden immediacy of women’s admission to the Academy in 1919-20 resulted not from a sudden upsurge in the women’s movement, for Austrian women’s leagues had been steadily campaigning for educational rights for the past half-century, but from the Republic’s new socio-political constellation. Specifically, with the ascension of Otto Glöckel as Under-Secretary of Education in 1919, the asymmetrical situation that the ABKW remained Austria’s last Hochschule (institute of higher learning) closed to women gave way to equality. Glöckel’s communiqué of 18 July 1919 to the Academy reveals the awkward situation ensuing from the Academy’s continued non-acceptance of female pupils after the Republic’s other Hochschulen, including the Technical and Agricultural Universities, had opened their doors to ladies. Glöckel implored; “In the enclosed petition, numerous women’s leagues have campaigned for women’s admission to studies at the Academy of Fine Arts. I entreat the rector’s office to bring up this matter for discussion in the Faculty Council meeting, where the matter should be given a thorough evaluation both according to the existing conditions at the Academy as well as from a purely theoretical perspective.” Despite a period of continued stalling, Glöckel’s pressing forced ABKW Rector Edmund Hellmer, who had previously ruled against admitting women, and the ABKW Faculty Council to finally face up to admitting women.

However, despite Glöckel’s mid-summer initiatives, it was actually the Greater-German People’s Party (Groß-Deutsche Volkspartei) rather than the Social Democrats who had first rekindled the flames of women’s education in the fine arts in late spring 1919. The Social Democrats, though undoubtedly the party most strongly linked with supporting women’s emancipation, took little stake in women’s classical or fine arts education. Instead, more practical matters as such political integration, vocational training, and equal compensation were stressed

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in the Social-Democratic party platform towards women. In May 1919, Greater-German Deputies Max Pauly and Dr. Hans Schürff spearheaded a parliamentary motion urging the admission of women to the state art academy. The motion’s succinct text follows below:

"Up until now, women have been excluded from studying painting and sculpture at the Viennese Academy and are thus dependent upon very expensive private studies only accessible to well-off circles. As the educational institutions previously closed to women have been opening to women on an ever-increasing scale, this [breaking of institutional barriers] also seems necessary with respect to the Academy. Therefore the undersigned raise the motion: The government ought to mandate the admission of women to study at the Viennese Art Academy."

Signed by twelve parliamentary deputies, not a single woman among them, on 23 May 1919, the motion was forwarded to the Academy. The Greater-German People’s Party’s support of women’s academic studies represented a manifestation of the party’s vision of fundamental socio-cultural reforms that would not only uplift the German-Austrian Volk but would bring Austrian laws in accordance with those of the Greater-German state, i.e. the Weimar Republic.

Generally, women had been free to attend German art academies since the legal ban on women’s university studies had been lifted in 1908.

The period following Glöckel’s July 1919 memorandum remains characterized by the Academy’s stalling and shoving of responsibility to other parties. A full four-months passed before the Faculty Council convened to deliberate on the issue, presumably due to the summer recess. The Faculty Council’s verdict, finally delivered to the Educational Ministry on 11 November 1919 after having been drawn up during the Faculty Meeting of 9 October, held that

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541 Antrag der Abgeordneten Dr. Schürff, Pauly, und Genossen betreffend die Zulassung der Frauen zum Unterricht an der Wiener Kunstakademie [Nr. 246 der Beilagen des stenographischen Protokolls der konstituierenden Nationalversammlung, 23 Mai 1919]. UAABKW, VA 540/1919.
542 The undersigned included Deputies Karl Kittinger, Rudolf Wedra, Dr. Leopold Waber, Dr. Josef Ursin, Dr. Franz Dinghofer, Dr. Strasser, Dr. Hans Schürff, Max Pauly, Franz Schöchtner, Emil Kraft, Adam Müller-Gutenbrunn, Dr. Ernst Schönbauer.
544 UAABKW, VA 895/1919.
“no objections could be raised to the requested admission of women” but that the pressing issue of space constraints prevented taking female pupils in practice. 545 As not even the predominant majority of talented young male artists could be offered spots at the Academy, the Faculty Council maintained that “the admission of women must first be preceded by a significant expansion of the institution.” 546 A line, once again based on the Academy’s logistical and spatial constraints, had been drawn in the sand.

Under-Secretary Glöckel, however, showed little patience for the Academy’s tired pretext of spatial and monetary constraints. Although the Academy maintained that it had never spoken out against admitting female pupils, the Faculty Council, in fact, had ruled against admitting women in 1904, 1907, 1911, and 1913. 547 Glöckel ordered “that as a further postponement of admitting women to academic studies cannot be justified, ways and means must be found to accommodate this admission [of women], at least provisionally, in the school’s current premises sooner rather than later, that is, from the beginning of the coming school year.” 548 Under-Secretary Glöckel directed the Faculty Council to provide detailed suggestions “concerning the necessary space and other various material needs” for the provisional admission of female students. To be handled with “great haste,” the Faculty’s detailed proposals for realizing the admission of female students were to be rendered back to the Ministry no later than the close of January 1920.

545 Verdict of Academy Faculty Council to Staatsamt für Inneres und Unterricht, 9 October 1919 [Delivered 11 November 1919], UAABKW, VA 744/1919; Protokoll der XVIII ½ Sitzung des Professoren-Kollegiums vom 8. Oktober 1919 OeStA, AVA [MiKU], Z. 25400/1919.
546 Verdict of Academy Faculty Council to Staatsamt für Inneres und Unterricht, 9 October 1919 [Delivered 11 November 1919], UAABKW, VA 744/1919.
547 Protokoll der X. Sitzung des Professoren-Kollegiums [7 April 1913] OeStA, AVA [MiKU], Z. 17126/1913; Z. 43738/1913; Z. 43/1904.
548 Under-Secretary of Education Otto Glöckel to the Rector of the ABKW [1 December 1919], UAABKW, VA 1112/1119.
Realizing that the days of the male academic corporation were nearing a close, the ABKW Faculty Council elected a special-committee from among its ranks to deal with drafting the requested report. Professors Bacher, Delug, Schmutzer, Jettmar, and Müllner, many of whom had sat on previous commissions, sat on the committee. Convening on 28 January 1920, just in time to meet Glöckel’s deadline, the Special-Commission produced a detailed report enumerating the necessary steps that would have to ensue to accommodate female students.\footnote{ABKW Special Report to Staatsamt f. Inneres und Unterricht concerning the admission of women [29 January 1920], UAABKW, 1112/1920.} From the onset of the report, the Committee repeated, probably as a face-saving measure, that it had never spoken out against admitting women, what was in fact false, but had merely brought the logistical infeasibility of the matter to light. Similar to the tiered structure of the Kunstgewerbeschule, the Academy possessed two general schools (General Schools for Painting and Sculpture) and a row of special, advanced or master-schools. A four-year sequence, with each successive year led by a different professor, gave order to the General School of Painting, while the Sculpture General School was led by a single professor. Both the general schools as well as the specialized schools conveyed \textit{en masse} every evening for a common life-drawing class, working from nude human models. In the case that women were to be admitted, all pupils, male and female alike, would be subject to the same stringent entrance examination. The academic faculty, however, revealed deep fears not only about the small number of spaces available to entering students but also male-female competition in the advanced schools. “Out of the 130 talented young painters applying to the academy each year, only around twenty can be regularly accepted.”\footnote{ABKW Special Report to Staatsamt f. Inneres und Unterricht concerning the admission of women [29 January 1920], UAABKW, 1112/1920, S. 3.} Twenty-five represented the absolute maximum that could be accommodated by the Academy’s present facilities and teaching staff. Moreover, the Committee
voiced concerns about the competition that would develop between the sexes in the master classes, particularly the catfights that might occur due to limited workspace. Advanced students in the specialized schools were typically given individual workspaces, what seemed impossible given an additional influx of students.

At the heart of the committee’s anxieties were concerns about the already-overcrowded evening life-drawing class. Beyond the affront to moral and religious mores represented by naked bodies in the presence of mixed company, the Special Committee manifested a reluctance to give up the unifying ritual represented by the compulsory life class. The necessary furnishing of a separate Aktsaal for women represented a final assault on the academic male corporation and the masculine collectivity represented by this artistic rite of passage. Resigning itself to the inevitable, the Special Commission recommended the three following points as necessary to accepting female pupils. First, a new life drawing hall would be necessary. Ideally, “two attic rooms in the southeast and southwest corners of the Academy Building would be transformed into Aktsäle, not only equipped with skylights but furnished with appropriate lighting and heating.”551 Second, the influx of new students demanded the appointment of at least one more full-time teaching position. Finally, the Special Committee requested an “appropriate increase in monies for life-models” to fund the hiring of additional models. The specific arrangements of the women’s life drawing class—whether male or female models would be employed and how the presence of male professors would be handled—were yet to be ironed out. 552 Above all, the Academy reminded the Ministry of the Academy’s continued importance given the fall of the Monarchy. “Despite the reduction of our state to the German-speaking areas…the pool of

551 UAABKW, VA 1920/131.
552 ABKW Special Report to Staatsamt f. Inneres und Unterricht concerning the admission of women [29 January 1920], UAABKW, 1112/1920, S. 5.
applicants has not worsened in recent years.” On the contrary, the Vienna Academy continued to attract pupils not only from the successor states but the Balkan countries, as well as Germany, Switzerland, and beyond.

Measures undertaken during the summer of 1920 provided for the acceptance of female students with increasing haste. Glöckel’s reply to the January Report of the ABKW Special Commission on Admitting Women generally approved of the Committee’s proposals. The request for increased funds for life-models was uncritically accepted. Glöckel told the Academy that preparations for a new Aktsaal were already underway, though reminding the faculty that the architectural adaptation of this new space would have to be confined to the “absolute necessities” given the current economic constraints. Glöckel naturally assented to the same admission criteria for male and female applicants, although no new professor appears to have been engaged at that time. In summer of 1920, the Academy Rectory officially acceded to the admission of women in the coming Winter 1920/1 semester without further objection. Consequently, the Academy began accelerating the tempo of its demands to the Ministry for the ladies’ Aktsaal and other accommodations to the female sex.

Ready or not, the Academy opened its doors to female pupils for the first time in the Winter 1920/21 Semester. Women’s admission to the academy was the subject of much popular attention in the summer preceding women’s enrollment. The leading Viennese daily Neue Freie Presse printed a short notice from Viennese sculptor and journalist Rosa Silberer publicizing what, a few years before, had seemed unattainable—women were to be accepted as students at the Viennese Academy beginning that fall.

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553 ABKW Special Report to Staatsamt f. Inneres und Unterricht concerning the admission of women [29 January 1920], UAABKW, 1112/1920, S. 2-3.
554 Under-Secretary of Education Glöckel to ABKW Rector [14 June 1920], UAABKW, VA 645/1920.
555 Rosa Silberer (4 January 1873–23 September 1942) studied at the Athenäum under Rudolf Weyr and Julius
A short, unlikely notice “The Admission of Women to Study at the Academy of Fine Arts” catches our eyes, leaving us hanging on these few words… After the doors have been opened wide everywhere else, the Academy can’t keep theirs closed any longer. Come in, whoever has talent, whether man or women! Why the artistic institutions have finally become the very last [to admit women], one asks oneself in amazement. Were there and are there not enough women who have proved themselves worthy of admission?556

Meanwhile, while Silberer was pointing to female artists like Rosalba Carriera, Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun, and Käthe Kollwitz as proof of women’s artistic talents, the Academy was sweating out the details of the coming semester. With increasing urgency and frequency did the Academy direct its correspondence to the Ministry of Education, above all, concerning the completion of a separate Aktsaal for the ladies. Proceedings from the Faculty Meeting of 23 July 1920 stressed that the timely opening of the institute in the fall depended upon the building of the new Aktsaal in the academy building in the summer months, as well as procuring ample supplies of coal to heat the school during the cold winter months.557 A brief memorandum to Glöckel, penned in response to his letter of 13 June 1920, followed a few days after the faculty meeting. The memorandum of 25 June 1920 stressed the “urgency” of the timely erection of the new life-drawing hall, with a somewhat-frantic handwritten postscript reading “in light of the advanced time of year, the greatest haste [on the matter] is requested.”558 That the building of new classroom facilities also involved the approval of the Finance Ministry (Finanzamt) and the Ministry for Trade, Commerce, and Industry (Staatsamt für Handel und Gewerbe, Industrie und

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557 Protokoll der Sitzung des Professoren-Kollegiums [23 Juli 1920], OeStA, AVA [MiKU], Z. 15286/1920.
558 ABKW to Staatsamt für Inneres und Unterricht [25 June 1920], UAABKW, VA 645/1920.
Bauten) further slowed down matters. When construction on the new Aktsaal still was not underway in mid-August, ABKW Rector Edmund Hellmer took it upon himself to again write the Educational Ministry with the urgency of the construction.

As the adaptations for the promised new Aktsaal at the Academy of Fine Arts have not yet gotten underway, I feel obligated to clarify that if this construction is not begun immediately and finished before the beginning of October 1920, admitting women to the Academy will be impossible.\footnote{ABKW Rector Edmund Hellmer to Staatsamt für Inneres und Unterricht [16 August 1920], OeStA, AVA [MfKU], Z. 16324/IV/ 1920.}

While the ABKW Faculty won out to have the new life-drawing hall installed in the main building in the face of proposals that would have located the new hall in adjacent locations in the sixth and seventh districts, the Academy’s plans for a bright, modern classroom were compromised by budget constraints. Instead of an attic-studio outfitted with skylights, which would have cost around 470,000 Kronen, the Faculty Council settled for the adaptation of the attic rooms with artificial lighting, a more affordable option at 100,000 Kronen.\footnote{Despite the higher numbers of these figures, the Academy’s expenditure on the Aktsaal must be understood in the context of the Krone’s postwar inflation rates. Around the time that the ABKW’s new Aktsaal was constructed, the Krone was valued at 90,000 to a dollar; before the war, the Krone held steady at five to a dollar. OeStA, AVA [MfKU], 5287/1920.} With the remodeling of the attic space finally underway in late summer, all preparations had been made for the first coeducational incoming class at the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts.

Fourteen young ladies entered the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts in the Winter 1920/21 Semester. The vast majority (around 70%) of the new female students concentrated in painting, followed by sculpture (23%) and architecture (7%) [refer to Appendix 2.9]. While ten of these women began in the General Schools for Painting and Sculpture, four women placed into the advanced master classes: two in the Painting Special Schools and two in the Architecture Schools. Agnes Hochstetter (b. Vienna 1898), who boasted a distinguished record at the Wiener Frauenakademie, was accepted into Professor Jungwirth’s Master Class while Luise Tittel (b. Vienna 1898), whom
Vienna 1902) was accepted to study with Secessionist co-founder and Painter Rudolf Bacher. The fourteen female students scattered through the Academy comprised 5.3% of the total student body in the Winter 1920/1 semester; numbers which rose slightly over the next few years. The percentage of women students at the ABKW rose to 8.5 % and 8.9% in 1921/22 (in the Winter and Summer Semesters, respectively); 10.4 % and 9.6% in 1922/23; 14.5 % and 14.0% in 1923/24; as high as 16.2 % in 1924/25; and leveling out at 15.7% and 16.5% in 1925/26 [Refer to Appendix 2.9]. Chosen fields of study during the first five years of the academic Frauenstudium revealed that most female students concentrated in fields of art harmonious with traditional feminine ideals. Sixty-eight percent of total female students at the Academy circa 1920-5 opted for concentrations in painting, followed by 22% in sculpture and 3% in the emerging field of graphic arts. Only 8% of total female students elected for careers in the more masculine field of architecture.561

Surviving student files housed in the ABKW Archives and Austrian State Archives provide a more intimate look at the Academy’s women of the first hour. Given the Academy’s cap of twenty-five students per incoming class, competition for admission at the Academy remained fierce among male and female applicants from Austria, the successor states, and beyond. Academic placement was particularly difficult for foreign-born applicants, given the Faculty’s preference towards well-qualified Austrian applicants. Despite the intervention of the Bulgarian Consulate and the applicant’s prior studies in Munich under Painter Walter Thor, Bulgarian applicant Liuba Danaïloff was denied admission in November 1921.562 In reviewing her application materials, Professor and Secessionist Rudolf Jettmar admitted that, as his own

562 UAABKW, VA 1174/1921.
students had repeatedly complained of hardly having enough room to stand, “absolutely not can I take a foreigner,” especially in light of the weakness of her submitted drawings. Danaïloff’s Polish counterpart Slava Horowitz did not fare much better in 1921 either, despite the efforts of Polish diplomats stationed in Vienna. The reason for Horowitz’s 1921 rejection, however, resulted not from lack of talent but lack of space. Horowitz was far too advanced for the Painting School’s first or second year classes, yet the third and fourth year-levels were already filled beyond capacity. Persistence, however, made perfect, as Horowitz was offered admission after re-applying in 1925. In addition to aspiring young artists, the Academy also attracted established women-artists for further career-training and advancement. For instance, long-time president of the Austrian Association of Women-Artists Louise Fraenkel-Hahn, herself a graduate of the Kunstgewerbeschule, enrolled in a course for painting restoration in 1935.

The first generation of female academicians was successful in winning a variety of awards, scholarships, and travel grants. A certain Grete Kmentt from Hainfeld, Lower Austria was awarded a travel-grant in March 1924 for landscape painters in the amount of 500,000 Kronen, a sum which, in light of rampant levels of inflation, remained quite modest. Painter Erna Charlemont received a tuition-free scholarship in May 1925. Sculptor Cäcilie Danzer from Eger, a pupil of Professor Müllner and Professor Bitterlich in the General School of Sculpture, was awarded a Silver Fügermedaille in July 1926. Yet there were limits as to how far male academicians were willing to go in integrating their female colleagues. Despite the

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563 UAABKW, VA 1174/1921.
564 UAABKW, VA 1266/1921.
565 UAABKW, Kartei 1920-45 [Louise Fraenkel-Hahn].
566 While valued at five to the dollar before the outbreak of World War I, by the mid 1920s the Austrian Krone had sunk to a value of 90,000 to one dollar. ABKW Sitzungprotokoll [March 1924], OeStA, AVA [MfKU], Z. 16439/1924. This was the same Grete Kmentt-Montandon who would take over the Austrian Association of Women Artists as President in 1944 after the VGBKÖ’s Aryanization and purification of its Jewish members.
567 ABKW Sitzungprotokoll [5 December 1925], OeStA, AVA [MfKU], Z. 28753/1925.
568 ABKW Sitzungprotokoll [23 July 1926], OeStA, AVA [MfKU], Z. 20369/1926.
hoards of female pupils filling the halls of the Schillerplatz in the 1920s, the Academy’s statutes were not changed to reflect a more gender-neutral language until 1926/27. Until then, the statutes were framed exclusively using male nouns of personal reference (i.e. *der Schüler/Student* rather than *der Student/ die Student* or *Student/in* or *StudentIn* or better yet, the gender-neutral formation *Studierende*). In fact, by describing the *Herren* (gentleman) of the advanced classes, the new statutes of 1922 were written in a manner that specifically excluded women. Motions to diversify and expand the curriculum, including proposals for introducing gymnastic and *Ausdrucksmethode* (expressive method) courses in the late 1920s were unanimously tabled by the Faculty Council. Such girly dancing courses had no place in a state academy. In addition, the tensions developing between the Schillerplatz and the ambitious Academic Classes of the *Wiener Frauenakademie* had only just begun when women were finally accepted into the Viennese Academy. Coming to a head in the mid 1920s, the institutional tensions between the ABKW, KGS, and KFM will be brought into high relief in the next chapter on the Viennese Women’s Academy: what remained Austria’s prestigious women’s ‘academy of their own’ even after the opening of the Schillerplatz.

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570 UAABKW, VA 582/1922.

571 ABKW Sitzungprotokoll [23 March 1927], OeStA, AVA [MfKU], Z. 8483/1927.
Chapter Three: Equality of Difference? The Wiener Frauenakademie’s Quasi-State Accreditation and Institutional Tensions with Austrian State Academies

The Wiener Frauenakademie (Viennese Women’s Academy, or WFA), originally christened as the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (Art-School for Women and Girls, or KFM) in 1897, celebrated its thirtieth Jubilee in the Spring of 1928. In April 1928, the League Wiener Frauenakademie organized a special retrospective exhibition at the Austrian Kunstgewerbemuseum, formerly known as the Museum für Kunst und Industrie.572 Funded by the Ministry for Education, the exhibition commemorated the triumphs of the Academy’s past thirty years, including the rights of public incorporation the school had enjoyed since 1908 and the state-accredited academic classes in operation since 1918. Pieces on view ranged from oils, graphic works, and sculpture to scenery, costume-designs, and diverse objets d’art from the Academy’s applied arts workshops. Featuring works of current and former WFA students, many of whom continued their careers at the KGS and ABKW, the exhibition drew such crowds that it had to close after only ten days. Indeed, as reflected in the exhibition’s widespread press coverage, the Wiener Frauenakademie was prestigiously situated as a publicly-recognized, state-accredited academy accommodating the particular needs of female art students. Der Tag’s art-reviewer praised the League WFA for “founding a school providing girls and women what [academic studies] which a narrow-minded pedagogy had previously denied them.”573 Likewise the Neues Wiener Tagblatt lauded the dazzling quality of the works of fine and applied art exhibited while another reviewer commented that “the niveau of this exhibition is astonishingly high… high enough to cause one who is opposed to academies in principle to make an

572 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz 2941, Z. 14505-I-6a/1930.
Nonetheless, in contemplating the *Wiener Frauenakademie*’s thirtieth jubilee, critics did not fail to level typical accusations against women artists, such as tendencies for imitation, mannerism, and stylistic dependency, at WFA pupils. Many critics observed a trend of WFA students to imitate the styles of prominent teachers including Impressionist Tina Blau-Lang and Secessionist Richard Harlfinger: so much so that critics wrote of students painting *à la Harlfinger* or *Harlfingerizing* (*harlfinger*). As Viennese critic Arthur Roessler surmised; “… dependence upon teachers, down to impersonal imitation of his very manner of artistic expression… must be fought against. One Harlfinger, one Kitt [WFA Professor Ferdinand Kitt] is all well and good, but a dozen more or less thieving imitators is but a vice.”

Other critics found the anatomical “castration” imposed by the WFA Director oddly out of place in a twentieth-century institution; specifically, that “young female sculptors remained remarkably deficiently oriented with the male model’s pelvic region… making them creators of a third, neutered sex.” Despite the deep-seeded prejudices towards *Frauenkunst* revealed by these critics, the overall public reaction to the exhibition, as well as how the WFA’s “virtues… [were] well known to the Ministry and high administration,” remained resoundingly positive.

As a present befitting the jubilee exhibition’s public success, the WFA petitioned the Educational Ministry to provide for the *Pragmatisierung*, or employment as civil servants with full insurance, tenure, and pension benefits, of five key teaching positions and an administrative post at the Ladies’ Academy. Thanks to a parliamentary act of 1921, the WFA reaped the fruits the state’s so-called “living subventions,” or subsidizations of girls’ higher education through

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577 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz 2941, Z. 17049/1928.
employing these five core teachers and a school secretary as civil servants.\textsuperscript{578} These living subventions, i.e. that state-employed teachers became the “living” beneficiaries of state contracts, represented only one of the many reforms achieved by Otto Glöckel during his short but influential term as Under-Secretary of Education.\textsuperscript{579} Shortly after the state’s contracting of these teaching positions for the 1921/22 school year, in 1925 the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen succeeded in having itself recognized as the Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für freie und angewandte Kunst (Viennese Women’s Academy and School for Liberal and Applied Arts): a title befitting an official Hochschule rather than another private academy.\textsuperscript{580}

On the occasion of its thirtieth Jubilee, however, the Wiener Frauenakademie had its sights set on transforming these five core teaching staff’s positions from regular Vertragsangestellter and systemisierte Stellen (contractual and regular civil-service positions) to obtaining full spoils of state service with the permanent Pragmatisierung of these positions, a more secure, tenured type of state position. In defending the worthiness of such subventionary support, the Frauenakademie referred to the parliamentary transcript of 30 September 1921: a period during which the Republic’s key educational policies towards women were being formulated. During what was the fifty-fourth Session of the Austrian Nationalrat, the “unique facilities” of Austria’s Frauenakademie were praised as “one of Vienna’s best educational institutions” and for fulfilling “its public educational mission in women’s art education… above all in fields primarily suited to girls.”\textsuperscript{581} That a string of prominent teachers including Rudolf

\begin{itemize}
  \item OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz 2884 (Mappe 15A), Z. 14610/1922.
  \item Proposed by the Greater-German Party, a motion to subsidize (provide for the Systemisierung of) five teaching positions and an administrative post first passed by the Parliamentary Committee for Upbringing and Education on 23 June 1921. Bericht des Ausschusses für Erziehung und Unterricht über den Antrag der Abgeordneten Dr. Zeidler, Emmi Stradal und Genossen betreffend die Systemisierung einiger Stellen an der Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Mappe 15A, Z. 14610/1922.
  \item WStLA, MAbt 119 A 32 [Gelöschte Vereine] 49/6025/1925.
  \item Beiblatt zum Gesuch des Vereins Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für freie und angewandte Kunst um Pragmatisierung von 5 systemisierten Lehrstellen und einer systemisierten Kanzeleiterstelle, OeStA, AVA
\end{itemize}
Jettmar (ABKW), Hans Tichy (ABKW), Christian Martin (ABKW), Josef Stoitzner (ABKW), Adolf Böhm (KGS), Ludwig Michalek (Graphische Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt), Hermann Grom-Rottmayer (Technische Hochschule), and Max Fabiani (Technische Hochschule) went on to positions in Austrian state academies supported the WFA’s foothold in mainstream institutional life and its unique position as a state-accredited, “separate but equal” women’s academy [See Appendix 3.2]. Making its case for the full Pragmatisierung of these six core positions, the League Wiener Frauenakademie’s Executive Committee argued

A harvest of the best functions at this school. For the best of our nation’s culture, for the intelligence of our female youth is the school’s maintenance an absolute necessity…Our school has a number of academic classes equal to those of the Academy of Fine Arts, a situation which the Educational Ministry, in agreement with the Academy, has recognized by allowing our institute to carry the name “Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für Freie und Angewandte Kunst.” In its early days under the Monarchy as well as in the Republic, our school has always occupied a special position. It has been acknowledged by experts as a unique rarity in all of Europe and indisputable to [the cultural life of] Vienna and Austria.\(^{582}\)

Now carrying the more prestigious title of Wiener Frauenakademie, the WFA was pleading for the ultimate ministerial recognition that would put its faculty on par in terms of tenure, insurance, and pension benefits with any other Austrian Hochschule.\(^ {583}\) Testifying to the high regard that the Ladies’ Academy enjoyed in official circles, the Ministry assented to the WFA’s petition for the Pragmatisierung of the core petitions, albeit with slight amendments to the

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\(^{582}\) Beiblatt zum Gesuch des Vereins Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für freie und angewandte Kunst um Pragmatisierung von 5 systemisierten Lehrstellen und einer systemisierten Kanzeleiterstelle, OeStA, AVA [Bundesministerum f. Inneres und Unterricht], Fasz. 2884 (Signatur 15—Frauenakademie und Kunstschulen) Z. 5198/1927. S. 1.

\(^{583}\) When the Verein Kunstschule f. Frauen und Mädchen’s request to change its name to “Verein Frauenakademie für Kunst und Kunstgewerbe” was rejected by Viennese municipal officials in 1925, it settled for the name “Verein Wiener Frauenakademie,” resignating the school Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für Freie und Angewandte Kunst. Still, ABKW Rector Rudolf Bacher found the name, especially with regard to the applied arts descriptor, unworthy of designation as an academic Hochschule. OeStA, AVA [Bundesministerum f. Inneres und Unterricht], Fasz. 2884 (Signatur 15—Frauenakademie und Kunstschulen) Z. 18530/III/1925.
WFA’s demands. Three core teachers, Adalbert Franz Seligmann, current WFA Director (1926-1932) and Professor of Academic Painting, Professor of Academic Painting Richard Harlfinger, and Otto Friedrich, Leader of the WFA’s Applied Arts Workshops, along with the WFA’s Administrative Officer Helene Roth, would be offered fully pragmatized state positions. Filling the shoes of Professors Kauffungen (Professor of Sculpture 1908-1926; WFA Director 1908-1926) and Hermann Grom-Rottmayer (1915-1926 WFA Schools of Academic Painting), two new professors, Ferdinand Kitt and Heinrich Zita, would be employed as contractual state employees.  

Despite increased levels of state subsidization, the Wiener Frauenakademie’s battle to have Frauenkunst recognized on par with the male establishment was still being waged in the classroom, exhibition hall, and ministry. A subsequent request in 1928 to have four key individuals involved in the Frauenakademie since its founding commended in an official capacity illustrates lingering tensions about the limits of Frauenkunst. Executive Committee Member and League KFM Founder Olga Prager, longtime WFA Professor and Director Adalbert Franz Seligmann (Professor 1897-1936, Director 1926-32), as well as the powerful Roth “clique,” sisters Helene Roth and Paula Taussig-Roth, all stood as candidates for the bestowal of honorary official titles, including Regierungsrat (state-councilor) and Professor.  

Documents attached to the request clarified that the entire initiative for the school was indebted to Painter Olga Prager, who, after studying at Munich’s Ladies’ Academy, established a league to found a similar institution in Vienna in collaboration with her tutor Seligmann. Academician and longtime WFA Professor A.F. Seligmann, a great protagonist of

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584 OeStA, AVA, OeStA, AVA [Bundesministerum f. Inneres und Unterricht], Fasz. 2884 [Mappe 15B], Z. 8048/1928. Professor Richard Kauffungnen went into retirement in 1926 while Grom-Rottmayer took a more lucrative teaching post at the Technische Hochschule.

585 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz 2941, Z. 17049/1928.
Austria’s greatest women artist Tina Blau-Lang, had been a constant public advocate for the school since leading its first painting classes. Likewise, the omnipresent influence of Blau-Lang’s nieces, Helene and Paula Roth, who headed the Academy’s secretariat and decorative arts courses, earned them nomination for their efforts. While most of the requests for Ehrentitel (honorary titles) were granted without event, the motion to have Paula Taussig-Roth, who had taught embroidery, needlework and tapestry art at the WFA for over 25 years, recognized with the title of Professorin hit a ministerial dead end. Despite her distinguished career at the Fachschule für Kunststickerei under Therese Mirani and the KFM’s Schools of Applied Art under Adolf Böhm, Taussig-Roth was denied the title of Professor because she functioned outside the WFA’s academic schools. A ministerial official handling the matter commented that “because the matter concerns an institution [the WFA’s Schools of Applied Art] standing closer to a school of industrial/applied art,” bestowing the prestigious Professor title was impossible. Although her male colleagues teaching painting and sculpture enjoyed titles as Wiener

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586 In his capacity as an art critic and feuilletonist, Seligmann represented an important supporter of Tina Blau-Lang. Rosa Mayreder, writing under the nom-de-plume Franz Arnold, was another Blau-Lang champion. See Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Autographen-, und Nachlass-Sammlung, A.F. Seligmann Teillnachlass, Autograph 959/48 201/78 and Tina Blau to A.F. Seligmann, H.I.N. 95645-6 [28-9 Feb 1914] Handschriftensammlung, Wiener Bibliothek im Rathaus.

587 According to the school’s last director before its ‘purification’ and seizure by National Socialist functionaries in 1938, the Roths’ intimacy with the League’s founders and Executive-Board allowed “these two ladies and their clique always [to] enforce their wishes and views upon—and get in the way of voting—in the Executive Board meetings […] the entire faculty and, particularly, the director was dependent upon the sympathy of this dangerous clique.” Heinrich Zita, Tatsachenbericht über meine Tätigkeit als Direktor der Wiener Frauenakademie. Österreichische Staatsarchiv [OeStA], Allgemeine Verwaltungsakten [AVA], Ministerium für Kultur und Unterricht [MfKuU] Fasz. 2884 (Sig 15), Mappe 15 (Frauenakademie), Z. 1795/1940a. That Zita singled out the “dangerous clique” of the Roth-Sisters as “leading Social-Democratic functionaries” and Jews—as well as Fr. Prof. Kraus, Fr. Prof. Fränkl, etc.—suggests political motivations for his hostility. In the wake of the National Socialist Laws on leagues and voluntary associations (Gesetz vom 17. Mai 1938 über die Überleitung und Eingliederung von Vereinen, Organisationen und Verbänden), Zita was forced into early retirement before the school was ordered by the Stillhaltekommissar für Vereine, Organisationen und Verbänden to be incorporated under the control of the National-Socialist Viennese municipal government (MA 7). Long before the intrigue against Zita, however, Zita had successfully managed to have the Roth sisters dismissed from their long-held posts. On 2 January 1939, the Verein Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule fur freie und angewandte Kunst was officially dissolved by police authorities. WStLA VA 6025/1925 Z.2.

588 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz 2941, Z. 25122/I-6a 1928 [6 October 1928].

589 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz 2941, Z. 4386/1927.
Frauenakademie Professors, the non-recognition of Paula Taussig-Roth stemmed from deep-seeded notions of craft-oriented Frauenkunst as being fundamentally inferior to men’s monumental art. Yet Taussig-Roth’s older sister Helene enjoyed the title of Kanzleirat for her secretarial services until “a fundamental purification and reorganization” of the school implemented by Director Heinrich Zita ousted them from their positions in 1933.\footnote{Heinrich Zita “Tatsachenbericht über meine Tätigkeit als Direktor der Wiener Frauen-Akademie,” OeStA, AVA [MfKU], Fasz. 2884 (Sig 15), Mappe 15C, Z. 1795/1940.} Hertha Taussig, the daughter of Paula Taussig-Roth who had been working for the school as a secretarial assistant, was also booted with her aunts on Zita’s trumped-up charges. Meanwhile the status of the WFA’s Non-Academic General- and Applied Arts Courses remained contingent, not to be confirmed as equivalent to state degrees until 1929.\footnote{OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz 2884, Z. 12023/I-6a/1929.}

The tensions surrounding the Wiener Frauenakademie’s thirtieth jubilee festivities reveal more than petty squabbling about names, but manifest the tenuous public position Frauenkunst held in interwar Austria’s cultural landscape. Recognizing the WFA’s male academicians with the Professor title was one matter but acknowledging a woman whose specialty resided in the low or applied arts was another. Like the individual workshops of Austria’s Kunstgewerbeschule, a strong sense of gendered hierarchy remained in place at the Women’s Academy. From an official point of view, the WFA’s courses in Academic Painting, granted official institutional parity with those of the ABKW in 1918/19, operated on a fundamentally different level than the applied and decorative arts courses taught by Taussig-Roth. While the equality of the WFA’s state-accredited academic courses with the state academy was upheld in a number of ministerial rulings in the 1920s, the position of the Academy’s applied arts division, more closely connected to notions of women’s handicrafts, remained more ambiguous. In the interwar years, however, a number of WFA graduates from Austria and the imperial successor states waged battles to have
their credentials recognized as equal to Kunstgewerbeschule degrees. The official declaration of the Frauenakademie’s General and Applied Arts Schools “as equivalent to that of graduates of the Kunstgewerbeschule’s General Division” was finally achieved in 1929. Complex layers of gendered hierarchy entangled the tenuous institutional equality carried by the women’s academy.

While the very existence of Austria’s “separate but equal” women’s academy was based on feminine particularism, ideals of equal access motivated the government’s support of the Ladies’ Academy. State support of the school, while substantial under the Monarchy, catapulted to higher levels with the Republic’s increased support for women’s single-sex education, even after the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts integrated women. The case of the Austrian Women’s Academy embodies a unique case in point of institutional equality of difference. While similar institutions in Central Europe closed after women were integrated into the main state academies, the Viennese Ladies’ Academy experienced a renaissance after the state Academy began accepting female students in 1919. What is most curious is that in addition to providing rigorous academic training to professional female artists, the post-1920 Ladies’ Academy concurrently refashioned itself as a haven for serious dilettantes: talented women and girls, “who, due to various reasons, can or do not want to practice art as a vocation.” The idea that the Frauenakademie could not only serve professional artists as a “preparatory and nursery school for later academic specialized training” but provide “serious and dignified artistic training through which dilettantism in the good sense would be cultivated” might seem surprising given the League’s founding aims—that is, providing women serious academic training in lieu of state academies—but filled an important gap in providing essential artistic instruction glossed over by

592 OeStA, AVA [BMfU], Fasz. 2884, Z. 12023/I-6a-1929.
593 Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on Admission of Women to Academy of Fine Arts (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBKÖ], ARCH 32/1-2.
the Lyceum and Frauenoberschule. Contemporary critics thus believed increased proficiency in the arts not only propelled women’s career ambitions but enhanced the Republic’s social fabric through wives’ and mothers’ increased general knowledge of the arts. As longtime WFA Director Sculptor Richard Kauffungen put it; “even if women marry in the middle of their studies, their tuition has not been spent in vain. The [artistic] abilities that have been cultivated in them are passed on to their children…” From a practical standpoint, opening its doors to second-class talents in the WFA’s General Division provided the school with a handy cash-cow. Nonetheless, despite the Frauenakademie’s tolerance of dilettantism in its General and Applied Arts Courses, its priority lay with its prestigious, state-accredited Academic Classes. In no way was the Frauenakademie willing to serve as a dumping ground for second-rate talents rejected from the Academy. The Ladies’ Academy fought vehemently against the idea that “a pupil who has performed poorly at the AKBW can have a better day with us [WFA] and vice-versa.”

Both the expanse and boundaries of the KFM’s institutional powers come into focus through the complex web of relations between the KFM, KGS, ABKW, and Ministry of Education. Crucial to the KFM’s institutional dynamics and its position vis-à-vis the Republic’s other state academies were the arrangements worked out for the Hilfsfächer, or auxiliary subjects. Essentially, with the exception of first-year lectures in anatomy and perspective, the auxiliary subjects were farmed out to other state-academies: i.e. the Austrian School of Applied Arts and the Academy of Fine Arts. Having KFM Academic pupils frequent lectures in these auxiliary subjects “at a state school designated by the Leadership of the WFA and approved by the Ministry of Education” not only relieved an economic burden from the already-overtaxed

594 Ibid.
KFM, but underlined the quasi state-school nature of a KFM Academic degree.\textsuperscript{597} While the Republican Ministry of Education sanctioned KFM pupils’ attending lectures in Art History at the Austrian state Academy and Kunstgewerbeschule, inter-institutional tensions remained in negotiating the details of time, place, and fees—as well as in expanding the range of lectures KFM pupils were allowed to frequent. Ironing out these arrangements offered the KFM a chance to flex its institutional muscle. In particular, KFM’s choice of where to send its second and third year Academic Pupils allowed it to play the state institutions off one another.

Yet limits existed as to how far the male establishment was willing to go in officially acknowledging and institutionalizing Frauenkunst. Discursive biases towards women’s art, typified by the accusations of imitation, stylistic dependency, and technical deficiencies sampled in the opening example colored critical reactions to Frauenkunst during the entire period under examination here. Even two of the strongest male proponents of the school, longtime KFM/WFA Professors Richard Kauffungen and Adalbert Franz Seligmann, remained conservatively anchored to ideas that a “tendency for imitation and dependency on models is much more pronounced in woman” than in man and that women’s art tended to be more sentimental and decorative than men’s.\textsuperscript{598} That the periodicals of the women’s movement tended to review the KFM school exhibitions in a more favorable light, maintaining the “surprising independence” of pupils’ works, suggests that gendered tensions and a fear of female competition motivated the harsher criticism generated by male critics.\textsuperscript{599} While assessing the validity of these aesthetic judgments remains beyond the scope of this study, stripping down the socio-cultural milieu in

\textsuperscript{598} Adalbert Franz Seligmann, “Eine Frauenkunstschule: Zur Ausstellung der Wiener Frauenakademie anläßlich ihres dreißigjährigen Bestandes” Neue Freie Presse Nr. 22817, (24 März 1928/Morgenblatt), 3.
\textsuperscript{599} “Schulausstellung der Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen,” Dokumente der Frauen Vol. VI, no. 5 (1 June 1900): 183.
which such criticism was generated remains a driving aim of the present chapter. The analysis to follow reveals that attacks on women artists boiled down deeper than gender tensions to the greater debates at the heart of artistic modernism. Dialogues on the gendered spaces of modernity and the movement away from academicism and established artistic institutions underlay such criticism.\textsuperscript{600} That the \textit{Wiener Frauenakademie} sought to become ensconced in the public institutionalism which had traditionally excluded women artists only gave added ammunition to critics faulting the establishment’s inhospitality to modernism. When critics like Arthur Roessler, not known for his generosity towards women artists, lampooned the WFA as representing all that was wrong with academicism, the influential Viennese critic was picking an easy fight, so to speak, by critiquing the women’s academy rather than her more firmly-established cousins on the Schillerplatz. However, not only mis-conflating the true nature of WFA academic study, for a number of thoroughgoing reforms incorporating experimentation and flexibility distinguished the WFA’s teaching methods from the academic formulae preached at the ABKW, Roessler made the \textit{Frauenakademie} a sacrificial lamb in a larger debate against academicism. In reality, the Academic Classes of the WFA, in incorporating naturalistic \textit{plein-air} painting sessions with a modernist faculty stressing experimentation, flexibility, and the workshop principle, were far less ‘academic’ in the derogatory sense.

Offering pupils the best of both worlds, that is, an education with institutional parity to the premier state academies of fine and applied arts, the \textit{Wiener Frauenakademie} embodied a uniquely-Austrian version of the single-sex institutional paradigm. Yet the women’s academy and its progressive faculty represented a short-lived academic utopia. While the story of the

\textsuperscript{600} As feminist art-historian Griselda Pollock encapsulated the evaluation of academic study by nineteenth-century Modernists: “debased, unimaginative academicism in which all sparks of originality and spontaneity were progressively schooled out of an art student, crushed beneath the dead hand of a tradition that was now reduced to over-taught formulae.” Griselda Pollock, \textit{Mary Cassatt: Painter of Modern Women} (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 79.
Vienna’s Ladies’ Academy does not end in 1930, the shifting political winds of the 1930s propelled the Frauenakademie’s sails in a radically-different direction. The Frauenakademie survived the socio-economic turbulence of the 1930s but not without heroic sacrifices on the part of its faculty. By 1939, however, all Jewish and politically-suspect WFA faculty had been removed, replaced with National Socialist functionaries who transformed the urbane Ladies’ Academy into a Schule für bildende Kunst und Werkkultur, a craft school that was a far cry from the classical Academy envisioned by its founders. That the coopted Frauenakademie actually survived the war, reopening under the innocent name Modeschule der Stadt Wien in the former Imperial Residence Schloss Hetzendorf in 1956, but was stripped of all pretenses to the fine arts only attests to the ironic twist of fate experienced by the Frauenakademie. Central Europe’s leading single-sex academy went from being a prestigious, academic institution to little more than a finishing school. For a brief moment in time, Vienna’s “Academy of Their Own” proved critical venue for the modern, experimental women’s art movement of the First Austrian Republic. Like Frauenkunst’s tenuous position in Austrian public and critical opinion, the Ladies’ Academy occupied a liminal space between Academy and finishing school, the fine and applied arts, and public and private institution.


602 An additional casualty of the Second World War, the School Archives of the Wiener Frauenakademie were irrevocably lost, for the school’s then-time headquarters at Siegelgasse 2-4 in Vienna’s Third District suffered a direct hit by Allied bombs on 5 November 1944. All school records and collections were destroyed completely. However, much of the story of Vienna’s Ladies’ Academy can be reconstructed through existing archival materials in the Austrian State Archives, the Vienna City Archives, the Archives of the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts and University for Applied Arts (formerly Kunstgewerbeschule), the private archives of the Austrian Association of Women-Artists, and materials in the collection of the Schulbuch- und Schulschriftensammlung of the Bundesministeriums für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur as well as in individual collections of personal papers. Yet certain aspects of daily life at the Wiener Frauenakademie, such as professor-student relationships, visual records of students’ works, and detailed academic records for individual students and faculty, cannot be extracted from the extant sources.
Separate but Equal: Gendered Spaces and the Institutional Beginnings of the *Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen*, 1897-1908

At the close of the *Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen*’s inaugural 1897/98 school year, League KFM Chairman University Professor Dr. Friedrich Jodl offered the following advice to the sixty-four young girls enrolled at the school. “Strive to look at nature as if never a painter had painted before you, as if you were the first ones to behold it; strive not to see with the eyes of other painters but with your own.” When the idea for establishing a private art school for women and girls in Vienna on the model of Munich’s *Damenakademie* was first conceived by painter Olga Prager in Spring 1897, not even the strongest proponents of the school would have dreamt that Vienna’s Ladies’ Academy would have been up and running before the year’s end, let alone that it would represent the cutting edge of progressive art education. As the Foundation’s First Annual Report declared; “As we banded together then and in the following autumn, we did not believe that the school could open sooner than one to two years.” Yet, not only did the Provisional Executive Committee convening on the premises of the *Verein zur Abhaltung akademischer Vorträge für Damen* (League for Holding Academic Lectures for Women) manage to collect enough funds to open its first atelier for life-drawing in November 1897, the League KFM established an art academy that was thoroughly permeated by modern artistic and pedagogical currents. From the very beginning, the pupils of Vienna’s Ladies Academy were encouraged to chart their own artistic paths independent of art historical precedents. The KFM pioneered a sort of modern academicism which, although steeped in the academic tradition of learning from classicism and historicism, allowed KFM students to bring their unique, individualistic styles, uninhibited by teachers or male colleagues, to fruition.

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604 Ibid., 5.
Central to the KFM’s teaching philosophies lay “an individualized method of instruction adapted to the particular needs and abilities of pupils,” an emphasis upon aesthetic naturalism over artifice, and a modernist enthusiasm for incorporating emerging fields of applied arts traditionally viewed beneath the high arts, such as graphics, decorative arts, and handcrafts, into the parameters of academic study.605

Combating popular notions of Frauenkunst as derivative of the great male masters, the individualistic, anti-academic slant of the Women’s Academy directly corresponded to the channels of thought at the forefront of Austrian feminism. That realizing each individual pupil’s artistic potential and distinct stylistic accents embodied a driving aim of the Viennese Women’s Academy should come as no surprise considering that Austria’s leading feminist thinker, Rosa Mayreder, steered the KFM’s Executive Committee.606 Due to her own interest in painting, including her membership in amateur exhibition societies and lessons with Tina Blau, Mayreder remained personally committed to the Women’s Academy. Mayreder argued in her magnum opus Zur Kritik der Weiblichkeit (English Translation A Survey of the Woman Problem) “intellectual development occurred independent from gender” and that “the concept of individuality comprised a multitude of different [gender] characteristics.”607 Allowing feminine individuality to be expressed through art represented the KFM’s driving mission. As critic and Ver Sacrum editor Wilhelm Schölermann encapsulated the KFM’s project of attaining female individualism: “The essence remains the striving and that, which through this striving for humanistic achievement and individual perception, is awoken and freed.”608

605 OeStA, AVA [BmFu], Fasz. 3360 (Sig 15), Z. 19980/1910.
606 Her husband, the architect Karl Mayreder, held the position of KFM Executive Board Chairman for many years as well.
608 Wilhelm Schölermann, “Die Zweite Schulausstellung des Vereines ‘Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen’ in
integrality of Austrian feminism and the historiographically-neglected women’s movement in the arts, the KFM’s founding aim of helping aspiring artists realize their own artistic personalities reflected the ideological foundations of the Austrian women’s movement.

Viennese-born portraitist Olga Prager launched the idea of a women’s academy in Vienna after her studies at Munich’s Damen-Akademie (MDA), a private art-school founded in 1884 by the Künstlerinnen Verein München e.V (KVM, League of Munich Women Artists). Although Munich’s Damenakademie predated Vienna’s by several decades, the Viennese Women’s Academy represented a unique Central European example of continued single-sex art education after women became integrated into the mainstream state academies. The Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen experienced a renaissance in the 1920s after Austria’s state Academy opened to women, while its German counterparts folded with the opening of all institutions of higher education to women. Like the 1,750 girls studying at Munich’s Ladies’ Academy during its thirty-six years of existence (1884-1920), Prager enjoyed academic-caliber instruction by established painters such as Heinrich Knirr, Ludwig Herterich, and Tina Blau-Lang, although for a much higher price than Germany’s royal academies. However, the MDA’s high tuition and meager levels of support from provincial and municipal governments made it only accessible to wealthy families.

Upon returning to Austria in 1897, Prager launched an energetic campaign to found and fund a similar Academy for girls in Vienna. The initiative for the school first originated during private painting lessons Prager took with four other young ladies in the studio of Adalbert Franz Seligmann, who had attended the Vienna and Munich Academies and became a member of the Wien,” Dokumente der Frauen Vol. I, no. 7 (15 June 1899): 191.

609 See Yvette Deseyve, Der Künstlerinnen-Verein München e.V. und seine Damen-Akademie: Eine Studie zur Ausbildungs situation von Künstlerinnen im späten 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert (München: Utz Verlag, 2005), 69, 76. Pupils of Munich’s Ladies’ Academy received 27 weekly hours of classroom instruction for around 400 Marks per year. In comparison, students at Munich’s Royal Academy paid 70 Marks for an entire year of academic instruction.
Austrian Artists’ Guild, or Künstlergenossenschaft, in 1887. Seligmann later recollected that
Prager “made the suggestion to me to call into life such a school following the Munich model”
during one of these life-drawing sessions.\footnote{Adalbert Franz Seligmann, “Eine Frauenkunstschule: Zur Ausstellung der Wiener Frauenakademie anlässlich ihres dreißigjährigen Bestandes” Neue Freie Presse Nr. 22817 (24 March 1928/Morgenblatt): 2.} While Seligmann, “lacking the courage and the
means” for such an ambitious project, initially denied Prager’s request, the Academician later
“came round to the idea.”\footnote{Ibid.} Seligmann’s first move was to introduce Prager to Bertha Hartmann,
“a great proponent of women’s rights” and mother of Seligmann’s childhood friend Ludo
Hartmann, founder of the Äthenäum.\footnote{Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, Jahresbericht über das I. Vereinsjahr (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1898), 5.} Via Hartmann’s well-connected social circles, Prager
introduced the idea to other like-minded progressives on the logic that

In Vienna, the Academy of Fine Arts is closed to women. On the one
hand, the private schools are not comprehensive enough, on the other
hand, instruction with individual masters is likewise only available to the
rich. Finally, the Museum-School can only accept the smallest percentage
of applicants.\footnote{Adalbert Franz Seligmann, “Eine Frauenkunstschule: Zur Ausstellung der Wiener Frauenakademie anlässlich ihres dreißigjährigen Bestandes” Neue Freie Presse Nr. 22817 (24 March 1928/Morgenblatt): 2.}

Finding a receptive audience in intellectuals, feminists, and philanthropists with extensive
fundraising experience, the movement to found a Ladies’ Academy in the Austro-Hungarian
capital was underway.

The preliminary organization of the school and its privately-supported League (Verein
die Errichtung einer Schule der bildenden Künste für Frauen und Mädchen, VESBKFM or
League for Establishing a School of Fine Arts for Women and Girls) was undertaken in Summer
1897. In June 1897, a Provisional Committee met on the premises of the Verein zur Abhaltung
akademischer Vorträge für Damen (League for Establishing Academic Lectures for Ladies). Led
by individuals including Univ. Professor Friedrich Jodl, Rosa Mayreder, and Marianne Hainisch,
the Provisional Executive Committee hammered out the league’s statutes, collected propaganda funds to advertise the school, and sought to spread the idea of the school “as widely as possible” among Viennese society.\footnote{The VKFM’s Provisional Executive Committee consisted of Olga Prager, Univ. Prof. Dr. Friedrich Jodl, Marianne Hainisch, Bertha Hartmann, Rosa Mayreder, Journalist Helene Bettelheim-Gabillon, Surgeon Dr. Karl Federn and his wife Ernestine, and Dr. Julius Pap.} In appealing to the Lower Austrian Government to sanction the League’s statutes, the VESBKFM declared “its purpose to be the establishment and maintenance of a school in which women and girls, for a marginal fee, can enjoy vocational training in art.”\footnote{WStLA, MA 49/VA 6025/1925, Z. 62814/V [20 July 1897].} Tuition at the KFM ranged from around 300–375 Kronen yearly for the main morning courses.\footnote{Upon written application, tuition could also be paid on a monthly basis; 38–46 Kronen monthly for the main courses, and 10–12 Kronen for the afternoon courses. Studienordnung des Vereines Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen 1910–1911, ARCH VFKÖ ARCH 32, pg. 2.} An additional 80–100 Kronen for the afternoon courses, plus 10–20 for seasonal open-air studies, and an 8 Kronen materials fee and dues for Athenäum courses, was also to be rendered to the League before the start of classes in October and February. In her dissertation on women’s art education in Austria, Barbara Doser has calculated that an average tuition of a girl attending courses mirroring the course of study at the Academy averaged around 319 Kronen for the 1902/03 school year.\footnote{Barbara Doser, Das Frauenkunststudium in Österreich. [Dissertation zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades an der geisteswissenschaftlichen Fakultät der Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck]. Innsbruck, August 1988, 219-221.} To alleviate its relatively high tuition, the League set up a system of scholarships to provide for girls of all social classes. Undeniably, the KFM’s “marginal fees” were nearly double those of the state academies due to the League’s reliance upon private funds. According to § 2 of the statutes, the school was to be maintained by membership dues, government subventions and voluntary donations, as well as proceeds from League publications and events. The VESBKFM received official approval of its statutes from the Lower Austrian government on 20 July 1897.\footnote{WStLA, MA 49/VA 6025/1925, Z. 62814/V [20 July 1897].} Once the plans for the school were realized in Winter 1898, the League dropped the “Errichtung” (Establishment) from its name, becoming simply the Verein
*Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen* (Art School for Women and Girls League). The KFM Executive Board admitted that its former name had been “too long and complicated.” The League’s amended title and statutes were sanctioned by the Lower Austrian authorities on 12 January 1899.

With § 6 specifically declaring that “men as well as women could be elected to any league function,” a patent sense of gendered symmetry guided League politics. Men and women shared the leading positions on the KFM Executive Committee during the forty years of its existence. Active on the League’s inaugural Executive Committee were Austrian women’s rights activists including Helene Bettelheim-Gabillon (1875-1927), Ernestine Federn (1848-1930), Daisy Minor (1860-1927), and Rosa Mayreder (1858-1938), many of whom played active roles in the AÖFV, BÖFV, and *Verein Wiener Settlement* founded in 1901 by Marie Lang for the education and care of the working-classes, as well as painters Tina Blau-Lang (1845-1916) and

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619 WStLA, MA 49/ VA 6024/1925, Z. 52714/V.
621 Similar to other voluntary organizations, VKFM membership was organized around a tiered structure. Under § 3 of the inaugural statutes, regular members (*Wirkliche Mitglieder*) were responsible for a 3 Kronen joining-fee and yearly dues of no less than 5 Kronen, while Supporting Members (*Förderer*) were required to contribute at least 10 Kronen per year. Initially, all pupils were required to become league members, although this policy was revised when the school became publicly incorporated in 1908. At a higher level of membership, Founders (*Gründer*) offered a one-time financial contribution of 1,000 Kronen or more, while Benefactors (*Stifter*) contributed at least 2,000 Kronen. In exchange for their generous support, §5 stipulated that Founding and Contributing Members were entitled “to nominate a pupil…for studies at the league school…absolutely free” for *Stifter* and at half-tuition for *Gründer*. In addition, certain outstanding individuals could be made Honorary Members (*Ehrenmitglieder*) at the suggestion of the Executive Committee and seconding of the General Assembly. While the school’s leadership and administration were entrusted to the Executive Committee, all members were invited to participate in League’s Annual General Meetings. Members had the right to propose motions before the General Assembly, which were to be filed in writing with the Executive Committee and seconded by at least eight other members, as well as the right to recall Executive Board Members. Such recalls had to be approved in the presence of at least two-thirds of league members, with a two-thirds majority assenting to the executive recall. Otherwise, voting operated on a simple majority rule. Further duties of the General Assembly included: 1) approving the Executive Committee’s statement of accounts; 2) choosing two members to audit the League’s financial statements; 3) making decisions on motions relating to legal and financial matters, and; 4) appointing Honorary Members. The bonds of KFM membership lasted a lifetime, although membership could be revoked from members “acting in a manner malicious to the purpose or reputation of the league” or those defaulting on dues for over a year. In the case of the League’s possible dissolution, remaining KFM funds were to be used for “grants for needy women-artists or for poor women and girls desiring an artistic education.” WStLA, MA 49/ VA 6024/1925, Z. 52714/V, Z.115322 [12 January 1899], KFM Statutes.
623 WStLA, MA 49/VA 6025/1925, Z. 62814/V [20 July 1897].
Olga Prager (1872-1930). Univ. Professor Friedrich Jodl, with Bertha Hartmann functioning as Vice-Chair, Dr. Emil Postelberg serving as Recording Secretary and Legal Counsel, and Carl Colbert as Treasurer, headed the VKFM’s inaugural Executive-Committee. An additional Executive Committee secretarial position was created in November 1899, filled by Blau-Lang’s niece Helene Roth.\textsuperscript{624} Prior to Roth’s appointment as \emph{Kanzeleileiterin} (Administrative Director), Prager and two other KFM pupils, Emmy von Pokorny and Luise Pollitzer, volunteered their time in performing secretarial duties.\textsuperscript{625} Professor Jodl, whose oratory skills were a tour-de-force in laying the school’s ideological foundations, continued to chair the KFM \textit{Exe}cutiv-Comité until 1904, at which point Architect Karl Mayreder, husband of the feminist philosopher, assumed the reigns of Executive Committee Chair until 1920. Incidentally, although Jodl had been a reader of Otto Weininger’s influential dissertation \textit{Sex and Character}, the school’s principles as formulated by Jodl, Kauffungen, and Seligmann left no room for the gendered indeterminacy and mixing of masculine and feminine characteristics theorized by Jodl’s notorious student. The KFM’s single-sex educational environment was to produce ladies through and through: not “borderline cases of the womanly-man or the manly-woman.”\textsuperscript{626} In addition, as the League’s statutes stipulated that active faculty had to serve on the Board in an official advisory capacity, all KFM teaching staff were required to sit on the Executive Board.\textsuperscript{627} KFM Statutes mandated that; “[t]he appointment of a teacher concurrently encompasses his/her cooptation to the Executive Board.”\textsuperscript{628}

\textsuperscript{624} OeSTA, AVA [BMfU], Fasz. 2884 (Sig. 15), Z. 17049/1928, Beilage III “Helene Roth.”
\textsuperscript{625} Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, \textit{Jahresbericht über das I. Vereinsjahr} (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1898), 10.
\textsuperscript{626} Richard Kauffungen, “Über das Kunststudium der Frau,” \textit{Neue Freie Presse} Nr. 20133 (14 September 1920/ Morgenblatt), 3.
\textsuperscript{627} Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (1898), \textit{Jahresbericht über das I. Vereinsjahr 1897-8} (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 11). “In order to provide League leadership with an official, artistic opinion … teachers active at the KFM must belong to the Executive-Board.”
\textsuperscript{628} WStLA, MA 49/VA 6025/1925, Z. 62814/V [20 July 1897]. VESBKFM Statutes § 15.
As suggested by the heritage of many of the individuals listed above, liberal members of Vienna’s upper-middle-class assimilated Jewish society played a major role in supporting and running the League KFM. As rightly argued in a recent monograph on longtime KFM Professor and Director Richard Kauffungen; “a strikingly large number of Jewish intellectuals were found on the [League’s] Executive Committee, which clearly reflected the socio-cultural situation of Vienna 1900…[].” Steven Beller has shown the influence of Jewish thought on Vienna 1900 beyond the shadow of a doubt, though his arguments on the minimal Jewish influence on the fine arts stand to be revised with the example of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen.  

Beginning with Tina Blau-Lang, born the daughter of a Jewish military dentist at the Heumarkt-Barracks, and her nieces, who came to wield extremely powerful roles on the Executive Board, activity in the KFM represented a family affair passed down through members of elite, assimilated Viennese households. That the Federns and Mayreders were personal friends with Blau-Lang and the Roths helped to spread the word among adherents of the women’s movement and attract donations from prominent Jewish families including the Gomperz, Lieben, Rothschild, and Wittgenstein families. Although Mayreder represented the exception to the rule, in that she herself was not Jewish, many of her colleagues in the Austrian’s women’s movement were Jewish or of Jewish descent. Numerous members of the KFM Faculty, including Tina Blau-Lang, Adalbert Seligmann, Otto Friedrich, Paula Taussig-Roth, as well as Hans Tietze and

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629 Olga Stieglitz, et. al. Zwischen Ringstraße, Künstlerhaus und Frauenkunstschule: Der Bildhauer Richard Kauffungen (1854-1942), (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2008), 128.
632 Blau-Lang and Mayreder’s personal correspondence discussed League KFM happenings, appointments, and school-exhibitions, including securing the Salon Pisko, Blau-Lang’s dealer, for KFM exhibitions. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Autographen-, und Nachlass-Sammlung, Nachlass Felix Braun, Tina Blau’s Briefe an Rosa Mayreder [Wien 20.01.1899-29.11-1908], Inv. Nr. 27729; Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, Handschriftensammlung, H.I.N. 217.293 [13 June 1900], 118.911 [16 September 1909].
Emil Zuckerkandl, were Jewish or of Jewish descent. The social-economic composition of the KFM, with a large percentage of Jewish students and faculty, follows logically from the strong presence of Jewish women in Austria’s middle-class women’s movement as discussed in Chapter One.

Due to the successful canvassing of League members, the Viennese Ladies’ Academy opened its doors in the so-called Lobmeyrschen-Haus at the corner of Schwangasse and the Kärntnerstraße, adjacent to Vienna’s elegant Neuer Markt, to an incoming class of sixteen on 1 December 1897.633 Not a lack of interest but a lack of classroom space explains the KFM’s low enrollment in its infant stages. By the end of its inaugural school year, during which time the KFM had acquired additional studio space at Bäckerstrasse 1, enrollment had jumped to sixty-four, and to ninety-five by the beginning of the next. KFM enrollment numbers steadily increased over the next few years, as Figure 3.1 attests: to 175 in 1900, to 200 in 1905, and 228 in 1908.634 Likewise, the League KFM member count rocketed to 119 by the end of the year. Tina Blau-Lang, who taught at Munich’s Ladies’ Academy from 1887-1894, and the academically-trained Adalbert Franz Seligmann, an early champion of Blau’s Impressionism, taught collaboratively in the KFM’s first atelier, located at Schwangasse 1 on the Neuer Markt.635 When the League began renting additional studios in the Bäckerstraße in January 1898, Blau took over the Course for Landscape and Still-Life. Seligmann continued teaching the school’s other main course, the Course for Life and Human-Head Drawing, solo. Auxiliary courses, such as Seligmann’s Course for Anatomy and Dr. Fulda’s Lectures on Perspective, were also incorporated by the end of the 1897-8 academic year. Typically, the Hauptkurse (core

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633 Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (1898), Jahresbericht über das I. Vereinsjahr 1897-8 (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 6).
634 Refer to Appendix 3.1 for detailed statistics on KFM enrollment compiled from yearly reports and archival materials.
635 On Blau-Lang’s teaching career at the München Damen-Akademie, see Deseyve, Der Künstlerinnen-Verein München e.V.
courses) met from 9am-12pm daily, while the *Nebenkurse* (auxiliary courses) convened for several hours, 3-5pm or 5-7pm, in the afternoons and evenings. Many of the theoretical auxiliary courses, such as Anatomy, Perspective, and Art History, were held on the premises of the *Athenäum* in the University’s Anatomical Institute at Währingerstrasse 18. Holding the theoretical courses at the *Athenäum Frauenhochschule*, where renowned scholars such as Anatomist Emil Zuckerkandl, Physician Julius Tandler, and Architect Max Fabiani offered pro bono instruction, represented a tremendous financial alleviation to the KFM, which relied entirely upon private funds until 1903/04.

That female students were offered access to life drawing classes featuring both male and female models, a crucial element of academic training typically denied to women, distinguished the *Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen* from Vienna’s other private art-schools. Indeed, feminist art-historians have universally acknowledged “the study of the naked human form ...[as] the most privileged course [in academic study]... and the basis for the supreme achievements in great art.”

Yet open mixed-studios with live nude models on the model of Paris’s Académie Julien or Colarossi remained unthinkable in Austria’s strict Catholic society. Before the *fin-de-siècle* Myrbachian reforms, even female pupils at the Austrian *Kunstgewerbeschule* were not permitted to fully take part in anatomical and life-drawing classes due to the moral perils “with regard to [the presence of] both sexes.”

Earlier generations of Austrian women artists, including many of the older founding members of the V BKÖ, “had been forced to undertake costly travels abroad to Paris or Munich to complete their studies.”

Bridging this educational gap to offer women a professionalized artistic education on a par with

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638 OeStA, AVA, BMKU Fasz. 3136, Z. 19093/1897.
elite European academies represented the KFM’s founding goal. Justifications of women’s exclusion from academic life drawing, based on the moral impropriety of coeducational anatomical instruction, became irrelevant in the single-sex environment of the League School. That the KFM’s evening life-drawing courses were invariably instructed by older men in the presence of teenage girls never, however, appears to have encountered any moral objections, although existing archival materials retain few details on the Aktsäle (attendance, hiring and sex of models, etc.) in the school’s early years. Later materials indicate that the Wiener Frauenakademie, as it was known from 1925 onwards, undertook assertive, competitive measures to ensure that its life models were compensated equally with KGS and ABKW models.\(^{640}\) While the KFM imposed no general admission requirements before its public incorporation in 1908 and the introduction of courses in academic painting in 1918/19, pupils were required to be sixteen years of age to participate in anatomical or life-drawing classes. The evening life-drawing sessions also stood open to older, established artists desiring further training in life studies, many of whom never had the chance to work from live models. The League reserved the right, however, to remove “students whose abilities were declared by their teachers as insufficient.”\(^{641}\)

KFM life-drawing courses proved a colossal success, as evidenced by positive criticism and the creation of two parallel classes to augment Seligmann’s original *Kurs für Kopf und Akt.* Early reviews of the KFM’s annual exhibitions praised the diligence, maturity, and vigor of students’ nude sketches. One reviewer in *der Bund,* organ of Hainisch’s League of Austrian Women’s Associations, praised the “drawn and painted nude- and portrait-nudes executed in the classes of Michalek, Kauffungen, Seligmann and Fabiani, which show three-dimensional objects

\(^{640}\) Compare Helene Roth’s correspondence to the ABKW Rectory, UAABKW, VA 944/1921 [17 September 1921].

\(^{641}\) Studienordnung des Vereines Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen 1910-1911, ARCH VBKÖ ARCH 32, pg. 2.
modeled with masculine energy.”

Another review not only praised the solid fundamentals exhibited in the life-drawing sketches but commented how the “tasteful arrangement and careful selection of works prevented the odious impression often imparted by such school-exhibitions, in which the particular manners of the teacher in question are reflected in infinite repetitions.”

Indispensable for careers in figural-, history-, mural- painting and sculpture, the KFM’s life drawing classes provided Austrian women with a key component of professional artistic training.

The Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen expanded its two original courses “unselfishly pioneered” by Blau-Lang and Seligmann in the years to follow. In the 1898-99 school year, a second course for Life Drawing paralleling Seligmann’s class, led by Ludwig Michalek, assistant professor at the ABKW and later professor at Vienna’s Graphische Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt, was added. Blau-Lang continued to lead the third Core Course, the Course for Landscape Painting and Still-Life. Academically-trained sculptor Richard Kauffungen, along with Seligmann a member of the Künstlergenoßenschaft, led the League School’s fourth Core Course, a School of Sculpture. Blau-Lang introduced an additional evening course designed to introduce craftswomen to natural and organic motifs, Studies from Nature for the Applied Arts. Small but significant changes were made to the Auxiliary courses. University Professor Schiffer took over the Perspective Lectures from Fulda, while Zuckerkandl volunteered to take the reigns of Seligmann’s Anatomy Course. Zuckerkandl’s generosity in moving the auxiliary courses to the Athenäum freed important resources for the KFM, allowing KFM faculty to focus on artistic instruction.

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644 Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, Jahresbericht über das I. Vereinsjahr 1897-8 (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 6).
Stamped by a modernist unity of the fine and applied arts, the breadth of KFM curriculum continued to be expanded in the early 1900s. Jodl’s words before the KFM’s Sixth General Assembly on 9 December 1903 encapsulated the *Künstlerische Gesamtausbildung* (Holistic Art Education) in place at the KFM. “We believe to comprehend and to serve our times…[in recognizing] the unity of artistic life and feeling; the impracticality of sharp divisions between art and craft; and the importance of the artist’s mastery of various technical requirements.” To this effect, the 1899/1900 school year witnessed the introduction of a Course for Decorative and Applied Arts taught by Adolf Böhm, a graduate of the Viennese Academy and founding member of the Vienna Secession. Böhm’s students would gain critical acclaim for works submitted to the seminal 1908 *Kunstschau* exhibition headed by Gustav Klimt and Josef Hoffmann. Painter Otto Friedrich, another Secessionist-cofounder filled Böhm’s shoes in 1909/10 when the latter was made professor at the KGS, where he taught from 1910-25. A third parallel course for Life Drawing led by Hans Tichy, the Academician who renounced his membership in the *Künstlergenoßenschaft* to become a founding member of the Vienna Secession, became integrated into the KFM curriculum in the 1900/01 school year. Tichy taught at the KFM until 1914, at which point he gained a professorship at the ABKW where he taught until his death in 1925.

Demonstrating the school’s commitment to modern printmaking, in the same year the school purchased a lithographic device for the reproduction of student graphics. In freeing human creativity from mechanical reproduction via planographic print techniques, KFM Chair Jodl heralded the acquisition as “a promising tool in the struggle of creative freedom against the

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646 See works of Böhm’s students at the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen in the *Katalog der Kunstschau 1908* (Wien, 1908).
The acquisition of an in-house lithographic device strongly reflected the KFM’s emphasis on cultivating the fine- and applied- arts concurrently. The more one could master techniques of lithographic reproduction, ever so greater could “free artistic fantasy be magically produced on a stone and made widely available through duplication.” Further proof of the KFM’s “striving towards erasing the artificial boundary between art and craft” were the auxiliary course for woodcutting, the oldest of the graphic arts, and metallurgy led by Secessionists Friedrich König and Georg Klimt, brother of painter Gustav Klimt, respective graduates of the KGS/ABKW and KGS, introduced in February 1902. A course for ornamental writing led by Rudolf von Larisch, Docent at the Austrian Kunstgewerbeschule, was added in 1903/04 school year. Paula Taussig-Roth launched an embroidery seminar the following year.

The KFM boasted a stellar faculty with strong professional affiliations. The majority of KFM Faculty hailed from the Viennese or Munich Academies and had direct ties to Austria’s leading artist guilds, leagues, and exhibition societies. Of the faculty active at the school in its early years, the overwhelmingly majority of KFM Faculty were Academicians situated in the modernist camp of the Vienna Secession. Appendix 3.2 illustrates that no less than ten important faculty were Secessionists, a situation even more pronounced than at Munich’s Ladies’ Academy. Properly named the Vereinigung bildender Künstler Österreichs Wiener Secession, the Secession had ceded from the Austrian Artists Guild (the Genossenschaft bildender Künstler Österreichs known by the name of its exhibition hall, the Künstlerhaus) in 1897 due to the latter

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649 Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, Jahresbericht über das III. Vereinsjahr 1899-1900 (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1900), 8.
651 Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, Jahresbericht über das III. Vereinsjahr 1899-1900 (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1900), 8.
group’s ‘market-hall’ exhibition policies and general artistic conservatism. Adolf Böhm, Friedrich König, Hans Tichy, Maximilian Kurzweil, and Otto Friedrich were all founding members of the Vienna Secession, the latter serving as editor for “Ver Sacrum,” the official organ of the Vienna Secession. Many of these Secessionist founders had renounced their membership in the Künstlergenossenschaft in a gesture of solidarity with Klimt’s symbolic Austritt. Other faculty, such as Decorative Artist Georg Klimt, brother of the Secession’s Inaugural President Gustav Klimt, remained closely associated with Secessionist circles. That Anatomy Lecturer Emil Zuckerkandl’s wife, the art critic Bertha Zuckerkandl, was a great champion of Secessionism in her feuilletons further reinforced the KFM’s Secessionist connections. In the school’s second and third decades, KFM Professors Hermann Grom-Rottmayer, Richard Harlfinger, Josef Stoitzner, Rudolf Jettmar, Christian Martin, Ferdinand Kitt, and Heinrich Zita also ranked as members of the Vienna Secession. While art historian Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber has argued that “Secessionists and artists of the second-rank taught at the so-called Frauenkunstschule… using their time teaching at the school as a temporary waiting period until offered a professorship at the Kunstgewerbeschule, Academy, Technical University, or Graphische Versuchs- und Lehranstalt,” the career resumés of Böhm, König, Tichy, and others belie the notions that these individuals were “second-rate” artists. Plakolm-Forsthuber signals the absence of more prominent Secessionists like Roller, Moser and Hoffmann as revealing the “second-rate” nature of KFM faculty. Yet, not only were Roller, Moser, and Hoffmann applied artists, through and through, and not Academicians, their radically-modernist ideals would have clashed with more conservative KFM faculty. By no means were KFM faculty second-rate. Their eventual appointments to positions at other state schools only reinforces the preeminence of KFM faculty members and their strong connections to modernist institutions.

652 Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, Künstlerinnen in Österreich, 53.
On the other side of KFM faculty’s artistic divide were representatives of the conservative Künstlergenoßenschaft (or Künstlerhaus), the official Austrian Artists’ Guild from which the Secessionists had ceded, and its associated Ringstraße style of traditional academic historicism. Künstlerhaus members Richard Kauffungen and Adalbert Seligmann, the KFM’s two greatest public advocates, propounded arch-conservative artistic worldviews and opposed the ‘new art’ known as art-nouveau, Jugendstil or Secessionism. Seligmann polemicized against overly-stylized and ‘primitive’ modern art in his columns in the Neue Freie Presse, in particular against the fussy decorative aesthetics of the Vienna Secession as represented by Hoffmann, Moser, and Klimt. As Seligmann assessed Klimt, who, like many modern artists, failed to uphold the sacred boundary between art and craft; “When Klimt paints human-flesh like inlaid mother-of-pearl, his backgrounds as pieces of differently-patterned tapestry, and actually gilds parts of his pictures, etc., this is just pure tomfoolery by an [otherwise] fine and unique talent.”653 Such artistic politicking clearly motivated Seligmann and League Chair Friedrich Jodl’s decidedly conservative position in intriguing against Gustav Klimt in the University Murals Controversy of 1900.654 In addition, Seligmann’s fellow guildsman Kauffungen embodied “the type of the contemporary ‘Auftragskünstler’ (commission based Artist) and remained a traditionalist and not an innovator for his entire life.”655 Duly noted by art-historians Olga Stieglitz and Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, the situation that two artistic arch-conservatives became such outspoken spokesmen for the Ladies’ Academy seems somewhat paradoxical from a contemporary point of view.656 Particularly curious is the two men’s rationalization of the continued existence of the

654 For two opposing interpretations of the University Mural Controversy, see James Shedel, Art and Society: The New Art Movement in Vienna, 109-150 and Carl Schorske Fin-de-siècle Vienna: Politics, Art, and Culture, 208-278.
656 Olga Stieglitz, et al. Der Bildhauer Richard Kauffungen, 123; Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, Künstlerinnen in
Ladies’ Academy after the Schillerplatz finally opened to women in 1919. Although providing women with academic training had represented the KFM’s ostensible founding mission in 1897, Seligmann and Kauffungen’s responses to the opening of the state Academy to women only entrenched the necessity for gender-segregated education all the more strongly. As will be explored in the pages to follow, Kauffungen and Seligmann re-branded their Ladies’ Academy on an equality of difference and a distinct women’s art that emanated more from the heart than head. The more conservative professional affiliations of Kauffungen and Seligmann balanced the connections of the KFM’s Secessionist camp.

The expansion of KFM curriculum, coupled with a lessening of the boundaries between the high and low arts, proved crucial to the professional development of KFM graduates. As Jodl formulated the issue at the League KFM’s Fifth Annual General Assembly on 30 January 1903

> The goal, as I have often had the opportunity to express, is to contribute to expanding women’s occupational sphere through artistic education and training, and in particular to open such paths which rise above artistic schooling of hand and eye, [leading to] artistic upbringing of fantasy and the entire feeling for forming a higher style for craft and technical applications.\(^657\)

A direct result of the school’s cultivation of the graphic arts, Jodl heralded the formation of the Radierklub Wiener Künstlerinnen (Etching Club of Viennese Women Artists) on 18 April 1903 as “a welcome sign of the capabilities of graduates of our institute” [Figure 3.3].\(^658\) The club’s statutes declared its purpose as “to cultivate the finest, richest in expressive qualities types of graphic art through close collegial union of practicing members and to win friends for the

\(^{657}\) Österreich, 53.


\(^\text{658}\) Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, *Jahresbericht über das VII. Vereinsjahr 1903-1904* (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1905), 6-7. KFM graduate Marie Adler became the club’s first president, with fellow KFM graduates Fifi Elbogen, Rosa Frankfurt, Karoline Goldschmidt-Laski, Emma Hrnczyrz, Baronesse Hedwig von Ledow, Magda von Lerch, Erna Mendel, Anna Mik, Minka Podhajska, Hermine Scheid, Marie Spitz, and Lilly Steiner counting as charter members.
graphic arts through distinguished, artful publications.” The Radierklub printed a limited-edition (capped at 25) yearly volume of 12 original prints by members, to which each active member was expected to contribute at least one etched plate. Printed by the Artaria Press, the beautifully-printed volumes were devoured by Viennese collectors, particularly given the contemporary surge of interest in photography, printing, and book-binding.

The professional, modernist thrust of KFM curriculum situated it far ahead of other ladies’ art schools intent on turning a profit rather than rendering a duty to society. From the very beginning, the KFM made it clear that it was not motivated by commercial goals but social and artistic ones. “Anxiously holding to the kaufmännischen (businessman-like) standpoint would support neither our artistic or social goals, which for us stand behind [the school’s] secondary practical goals.” The KFM’s founding ideals strongly reflected a Secessionist spirit of Ver Sacrum, or art as a sacred spring that would rejuvenate modern life, and modern art’s social mission. Reflecting the KFM’s social mission was its, to use contemporary academic parlance, “need-blind” admissions policy, meaning that qualified girls were essentially guaranteed spots in the school despite their parents’ financial outlook. The number of full- and half-tuition scholarships increased dramatically over the course of the school’s development: from 3 full- and 2 half-tuition scholarships in 1897/98, to 24 and 21 full- and half- scholarships in 1905/06, to 28 full- and half- 17 scholarships in 1909/1910. The generosity of private individuals, as well as the tireless campaigning of league members, enabled the creation of these financial awards [refer to Appendix 3.1 for a detailed illustration of scholarship development by annum].

659 §1 Statuten des Radierklubs Wiener Künstlerinnen (Wien: k.k. Hoftheater Druckerei 1903), 2.
private donations from patrons such as Albert Freiherr von Rothschild and Paul Wittgenstein and smaller sums from KFM faculty and supporters of the women’s movement were instrumental in getting the scholarship funds off of the ground. For the 1899-1900 school-year, for instance, the fundraising efforts of League Member Marie von Najmájer, also a founding member of the VfEF, brought an extra 1,000 Kronen into the KFM’s coffers, allowing the League to create 12 full- and 11 half- scholarships. Special events and lectures were also used to raise scholarship monies. Funds drawn from public lectures, such as KFM Executive Committee Member Emil Zuckerkandl’s talk on “Art Forms in Nature,” were devoted to the KFM’s Freiplatzfonds in their entirety. Although the number of scholarships had risen to 28 (17 full- and 11 half-) by the 1901/02 school year, a further expansion of such scholarships could not be undertaken without jeopardizing “the financial security of the entire operation,” for the school relied upon tuition-fees to sustain itself. KFM members were thus called upon to “advertise for members for the league and spread the school’s significance for the artistic development of Viennese women and the social philosophies upon which the school is built, in the circles of your relatives and friends.” KFM scholarships would not be further expanded until the school began receiving higher levels of state funding towards the end of the decade.

In addition, rather than framing women as disadvantaged newcomers to the arena of professional artists, KFM founders framed women’s relative newness to the artistic profession as offering a breath of fresh, modern air. As Jodl phrased the issue to the one-hundred-fifty girls gathered at the KFM General Meeting in 1900;

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663 Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, Jahresbericht über das III. Vereinsjahr (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1900), 11.
666 Ibid.
No long and so-to-say organic tradition, as behind the art of the male sex, stands behind your artistic practice. You are pioneers; therefore you also need an especially good and proper armor, without which your works easily would fall prey to a certain softness or barbarization.\textsuperscript{667}

Precisely because of women’s limitation from traditional academic study, the KFM’s female pioneers stood poised to throw off the shackles of nineteenth-century historicism all the more easily than men. Despite certain advantages that women’s position as institutional “other” entailed, KFM founders took pains to ensure that pupils would not fall victim to Frauenkunst’s negative connotations, in particular the notion that women’s art implied acts of mechanical reproduction rather than original creation. Jodl countered the notion that art was nothing more than a craft that could be learned through mimesis.

\begin{quote}
It would be a grave error to argue that only the eye needs to see and that the finger, as obedient servant, must execute what it has seen… Drawing, Sculpting, Painting are not \textit{Handarbeit} (handicrafts, or work of the hands) but \textit{Kopfarbeit} (intellectual work, or work of the head).\textsuperscript{668}
\end{quote}

As practiced at the \textit{Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen}, Frauenkunst was refashioned as original acts of intellectual creation.

The KFM’s pioneering modernist pedagogical philosophies owed much to its dedicated corps of teachers. Celebrated artists such as Kauffungen, Seligmann, Blau-Lang and others worked at the KFM without compensation or for a tiny fraction of the salary awarded at state academies. One historian has estimated that KFM Professors’ salaries remained a tiny-fraction, one-seventh to be precise, of the pay of a janitor at the state academy.\textsuperscript{669} Not until the state systemization of five core teaching positions and an administrative position in 1922 did KFM professors’ compensation improve, if but slightly. Tina Blau-Lang, acknowledged as the “Old

\textsuperscript{667} Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, \textit{Jahresbericht über das III. Vereinsjahr 1899-1900} (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1900), 13-14.
\textsuperscript{668} \textit{Ibid.}, 12-13.
\textsuperscript{669} Barbara Doser, \textit{Das Kunststudium in Österreich} [Dissertation], 178.
Mistress” of Austrian Painting during her own lifetime thanks to the championing of A.F. Seligmann and Rosa Mayreder (writing under the pseudonym of Franz Arnold) exercised a strong effect in serving as a female role-model for aspiring artists [Figure 3.4].

Widowed in 1891 after the early death of husband Heinrich Lang, painter of battle-scenes, Blau-Lang devoted her energies to teaching young girls in Munich and Vienna. The invitation to teach at the KFM, along with the illness of her elderly mother, prompted Blau-Lang’s permanent move back to family in Vienna in 1894 from her studios in Munich. Reflecting the gender-bias that has colored her biography, the atmospheric Impressionist was posthumously mistaken as a student of Emil Schindler’s, but in fact only shared space with him at their Prater studio. Blau-Lang represented the epitome of the Malweib. With her loose-fitting painting smock, unkempt hair and serious expression, and perambulator filled with canvases and stretchers, Blau-Lang cut an odd figure in Viennese society, but one that served to inspire a new generation of Austrian women artists. The presence of feminist Rosa Mayreder, at the personal invitation of Blau-Lang, at advance viewings of school-exhibitions and special outings also left a lasting impact on students. Blau-Lang said she would be “most delighted” if her friend were “pleased with her students’ accomplishments.”

Blau-Lang’s commitment to modern naturalistic instruction is evidenced by her introduction of afternoon plein-air painting sessions: first in meadows near her Prater studios and then further afield in the Vienna Woods. In 1902/03, Blau-Lang initiated spring excursions with

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students to paint on the Kahlenberg, a hill on the outskirts of Vienna. Getting pupils out of the studio and into the open air encouraged students to experiment with transient qualities of light, atmosphere, and color. “That Frau Tina Blau has again placed her students eye to eye with the natural landscape itself is natural; during the past year, she chose not the Prater but the Kahlenberg-village with its wonderful union of brook and meadow, mountain forest and orchards, as a working site.” In addition, “through the generosity of a private-man [a certain Herr Nahofsky],” Nahofsky’s Hietzing garden stood open to students for outdoor life studies from the living model. “Honored and loved by the vast majority of her students,” Blau-Lang continued to teach at the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen until she was 70. Upon her retirement in 1916 due to poor hearing and vision, a special “Tina Blau-Lang Funds,” through which an outstanding “student piece of art-work would be purchased annually,” was established in her honor. According to former students, “she found encouraging words for everyone in whom she recognized talent and serious convictions, responding to pupils’ intentions and giving them strength. Her company refreshes you like air from the mountain-tops.” Not only a source of psychological support, Blau-Lang’s atmospheric Impressionist style, with its keen attention to ephemeral qualities of light, air, and the natural landscape, left a distinct mark on the formal and aesthetic accents of a new generation of Austrian women artists. Secessionist Wilhelm Schölermann lauded the mastery of plein-air painting exhibited by her students.

The school of Frau Professor Tina Blau presents itself most admirably. Her day- and evening- courses show welcome/pleasing successes; accurate sight, keen observation of the essential, and versatile techniques are

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practiced. Here and there, independent perceptions emerge, for instance in the watercolor drawing of a mistletoe by Miss Altmann. What is more, Blau-Lang facilitated the careers of exceptional students through placement of their works at Gustav Pisko’s art-salon, her regular dealer. As monographic details on her students are uncovered, it is to be hoped that members of the anonymous “School of-” and “Circle of Tina Blau” will assume their rightful place in the canon of Austrian modernism—and begin fetching the high prices of their auspicious teacher at auction.

Blau-Lang’s colleagues, Richard Kauffungen and Franz Seligmann, also played critical roles in guiding the careers of young women artists and promoting the KFM to the general public. Yet Seligmann’s and Kauffungen’s vision of women’s art was very much at odds with Blau-Lang’s. In a feuilleton celebrating the KFM’s twenty-fifth anniversary in 1923, Kauffungen lamented the fact that the Ladies’ Academy remained relatively unknown to great segments of the Austrian population. “…[T]he nature and functions of this school are virtually unknown, not only in our population, but even in official administrative circles, with the exception of the Ministry of Education.” In contrast to the grand buildings and resources of the ABKW and KGS,

The Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen is located in the attics of three non-adjacent apartment buildings, is run from an office, a tiny chamber in which, for lack of a proper desk, a secretary, overburdened from her works, leads a dire existence, and a School-Director whose activities are hardly known outside of the school.

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Here, Kauffungen’s appraisal of the school’s obscurity—that he was now director of a second-rate women’s academy—may have also reflected his own bitterness in losing a professorship at the ABKW (filling Kaspar Zumbusch’s position) to Hans Bitterlich in 1901. The article went on to celebrate the past and present of the school “whose duty is educating the unique artistic abilities of woman and making them serviceable to the prosperity of our Vaterland.” What is striking about Kauffungen’s words was that the sculptor tended to stress the distinct accents of women’s art and the particular needs of female art students to a much greater degree than his female colleague. Blau-Lang, a critical success in the mainstream art-world, chafed at the notion of a distinct women’s art. The established Austrian Impressionist felt little need to have her works reduced to “women’s art,” with all the discursive baggage this entailed. Internationally, it was common for successful women artists to refuse to participate in amateurish shows of women-artists leagues given such women’s memberships in other exhibition societies. Tensions surrounding preparations for the Women’s Pavilions of the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition and the 1893 World Columbian Exposition revolved around conflicts between professionals and amateurs, as well as among practitioners of fine-, applied-, and industrial- arts. American expatriate Mary Cassatt, for instance, critically acclaimed in the Parisian Salons and the Impressionist Exhibitions of 1879, 1880, 1881, and 1886 only sent works to be shown at the American Association of Women Artists in New York with great apprehension. Blau-Lang did allow her monumental canvas “Frühling im Prater” (Spring in the Prater) to be exhibited at the Association of Austrian Women-Artists’ landmark historical retrospective “Die Kunst der Frau” in 1910, but never joined the league as a regular member. In contrast to a subsequent generation of women artists in the 1920s embracing their feminine identity and the notion of Frauenkunst,

*Tante Tina* (or Aunt Tina, as she was known to her family and students) painted in a “man’s world,” downplaying any references to her womanliness. Though short of donning male clothes or pen-names like French artist Rosa Bonheur, Blau-Lang shared with Mayreder the desire to seize artistic and intellectual traits typically assigned to men, what amounted to, as critic Karl Scheffler would have it, a sacrifice of her feminine identities. Blau-Lang passed down her un-sentimentalized treatment of the natural landscape and the courage to survive a masculine environment to her young protégées.

In contrast to Blau-Lang, Kauffungen and Seligmann emphasized the unique contours of Austrian women’s art and the particular pedagogical needs of female art students. Both Kauffungen and Seligmann praised the great and “unforgettable artist” Tina Blau-Lang as a great example to aspiring women artists. Yet Kauffungen and Seligmann read her work as bearing the stamp of its womanly creator to a much greater degree than Blau-Lang herself. Director Kauffungen paid his departed colleague tribute by declaring that; “This outstanding artist was in her inner ways a lady through and through… Her ways were singular and her pictures were completely unique phenomena… She loved the Prater from a woman’s perspective, she lived in and with it and sublimated the Prater artistically, free from all sort of intellectualism, only from her heart.” While women artists could truly achieve levels of artistic greatness, conservatives like Kauffungen and Seligmann interpreted this greatness as embodying inherently feminine qualities.

Holding strongly to biologically-defined gender roles, Kauffungen believed that “separate but equal” gender-segregated art education could most effectively allow women artists to

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complete, rather than compete with, the oeuvre of male artists.’ Kauffungen stressed the pressing need for single-sex art education to ward off female dilettantism, psychological inhibitions, and a tendency to imitate men’s manner of expression. “When men and women are educated together in the realm of art, often it occurs that women, aspiring to be like, for the most part, more impulsive men, do not bring their true womanly personality to fruition, falling prey to imitation and apathy, which, with the dwindling of her supporting influence, accordingly leads to an impersonal and therefore less valuable practice.”\textsuperscript{686} For these reasons, Kauffungen argued that an “Art Academy for Ladies is extremely useful and necessary. There, as women are only among themselves, the teacher only confronts the expressions of the feminine psyche.”\textsuperscript{687} The crux of Kauffungen’s arguments rested on the different pedagogical conditions necessitated by the female psyche, convictions he shared with his longtime colleague A.F. Seligmann. All too often it is forgotten, the KFM Director maintained, “that instruction for women, if it is to be effective, must be conducted in a fundamentally different manner than for young men.”\textsuperscript{688} Kauffungen’s essentialist views of gender difference come to light when he insisted that women’s “strength and desire to work,” as well as the intensity of their talent, was compromised by physical weakness. Mentally, “their psychic makeup makes them overly sensitive to praise as well as criticism; their abilities usually fall in certain genres including portrait, landscape, graphic, applied arts, etc.”\textsuperscript{689} Art instruction for girls thus should function to bring these specifically-feminine artistic prowesses to fruition. In no way, however, did Kauffungen and his colleagues cast these feminine areas of specialization as inherently inferior to men’s art. On the contrary, Kauffungen praised the essence of Frauenkunst as complementing men’s art, which also, in

\textsuperscript{687} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{688} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{689} Ibid.
Kauffungen’s view, eliminated the possibility of an artistic battle of the sexes, tensions negatively affecting women’s trajectories at the KGS and ABKW. Like societal ideals of gendered spheres, “the truly genuine woman has her special field, the genuinely manly feeling man likewise has his; the more individually, the more artistically both are in their work, the less can they be competitors; they can never antagonize each other, as their work runs parallel and complements one another.” Each with his or her own area of specialization, KFM founders believed that Frauenkunst and Männerkunst formed a complementary whole. Kauffungen would expand upon these views in the wake of women’s admission to the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts in 1919.

Adalbert Seligmann shared Kauffungen’s beliefs on the distinct physical, psychological, and pedagogical needs of female art students, as well as the latter’s essential views of gender difference. Maintaining that all artists, male and female alike, were influenced by the stylistic precedents of contemporaries and predecessors, Seligmann argued that women-artists were particularly susceptible to stylistic dependency and the whims of their emotions. “…[I]n women, a need for love and affection is stronger than in men. Female art-students who switch to a different teacher, begin working in the shortest time in the style of this latter [new teacher].”

Judging from contemporary criticism, a great number of KFM pupils seem to have been strongly influenced stylistically by prominent teachers such as Seligmann, Kauffungen, Blau-Lang, Harlfinger, etc., as the critical reaction to the 1928 School-Exhibition demonstrated. Yet the Austrian women’s movement press differed sharply with the Viennese dailies on this very issue. While organs of the women’s movement took pains to show the “surprising independence” of

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students’ works, male critics like Arthur Roessler and Wilhelm Schölermann tended to stress female students’ penchant for imitation and mannerism. As any sort of illustrations of the works on view at these early school exhibitions, as well as the art-works themselves, have not been preserved, drawing aesthetic judgments on the verity of such claims represents an exercise in futility. What is clear, however, is that this tendency for imitation among female art students presented a much greater threat to male than female observers. Related to this, Seligmann pointed out that in Künstlerehen, the artists’ marriages to be examined as case studies in Chapter Five, the female partner tended to adapt the male partner’s artistic vision: so much so that “her works are difficult to distinguish from his.” Dismissed, however, is the possibility that female artists exercised a similar effect upon their male partners, as well as how instances of such Frauenkunst in fin-de-siècle Vienna directly negated Seligmann’s claims.

As for the positive aspects of Frauenkunst, Professor Seligmann pointed out that women’s artistic talents were often “more versatile and visual” than men’s. Furthermore, women often exceeded men in “intelligence, ambition, and energy,” probably due to the hurdles they had to overcome. Seligmann summarized the strength and weaknesses of female art students as follows:

In my forty-year career, it has been my experience that in female painting students, their sense for color, in comparison to their male colleagues, is generally developed disproportionally stronger than theirs for large plastic forms; precise feeling for linear perspective is also rather seldom; a talent for composition, often in combination with ingenuity, humor, and poesy, is often present in illustrative fields; in grand matters, which demand intellectual penetration and perfect command of the figural, especially in grand style, something is left to be desired. This applies to Frauenkunst in general.

694 Ibid.
695 Ibid.
Although one of the KFM’s strongest protagonists, fighting for the school to receive public recognition and funding, Seligmann harbored fundamental doubts on women artists’ abilities to achieve the heights of male genius. If women’s strengths in color and composition gave them certain advantages over male artists in the decorative arts, women were to strive all the more doggedly to master “male: qualities of linear perspective and modeling, rather than giving expression to a specifically-feminine artistic style. Women artists, in Seligmann’s view, should strive to execute works presented in a gender-neutral manner. Like his colleague Blau-Lang, Seligmann believed that mastering the monumental arts entailed the emulation of male genius: that is, demonstrating mastery of aspects of academic training typically off-limits to women, i.e. linear perspective, sculptural modeling, and fluency with the human figure.

From Private to Publicly-Accredited and Supported Academy: The KFM’s Rights of Public Incorporation and Expansion of Curriculum, 1908-1918

In spite, or perhaps, because of the Kunsthalle für Frauen und Mädchen’s special accommodations to the female sex, the KFM gradually gained public recognition in late-Imperial Austria’s mainstream institutional framework. Beginning in 1898/99, Kaiser Franz Josef offered annual donations in the amount of 1,000 Kronen from his personal accounts in recognition of the public service rendered by the school.697 The League interpreted the generous donation from “His Highness’s Private Accounts,” which nearly equaled the annual dues gathered from all members in that year, “as proof of His Majesty’s gracious aid for all artistic endeavors and a high honor for the league, for which it renders the most deferential thanks.”698 Though modernist to the core, the League KFM was not above using the language of courtly politesse to acquiesce

697 Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, Jahresbericht über das III. Vereinsjahr 1899-1900 (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1900), 11.
698 Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, Jahresbericht über das V. Vereinsjahr 1901-02 (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1902), 8.
funding opportunities. The League remained indebted to the Kaiser and other members of the Imperial Household, including Archduke Rainer, supportive in fundraising and drawing attention to the school’s activities until the Monarchy’s eclipse. Upon Franz Josef’s death on 21 November 1916, the KFM issued a memorial for the Kaiser, expressing its profound grief and “inexpressible gratitude” for the Kaiser’s goodness and fatherly patronage. After all, it was “during his benevolent rule that our Art School received rights of public incorporation and the paternal care of his majesty, who through an annual subvention since the founding of the school, allowed our League to be true to its social mission, even in hard times.” Gaining the favor of the Imperial House represented a major asset in transforming the KFM into a publicly accredited institution.

Securing the official blessing of the Kaiser, whose position as ceremonial head of the Austrian Artists’ Guild (Genoßenschaft der bildenden Künstler Österreichs) could make or break artists’ careers, represented the first step in obtaining official government support and public recognition for the KFM. In its seventh year, the KFM declared its curriculum to be “fully developed... a curriculum that allows its students to complete their education, in a modern sense, in diverse fields of art.” Hand in hand with the broadening of KFM curriculum went a necessary expansion of teaching facilities and staff: changes which spelled increasing costs, despite steady increases in membership dues and private donations. By 1902, the KFM had expanded from its original studios at Schwangasse 1 on the Neuer Markt and Bäckerstrasse 1 by the Lugeck to additional premises at Tegethoffstrasse 1, Tuchlauben 8, and Bibergasse 8. The fancy addresses of KFM studios, in contrast to the numerous private art schools located in

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699 While neither the Emperor nor Archduke Rainer occupied the formal role of protector, both were important patrons summoning further public support for the school.
Vienna’s outlying middle-class suburbs, came as no coincidence. Choosing prestigious locations inside the *Ringstrasse* represented more than a method of impressing clients, but reflected the KFM’s efforts to geographically situate itself adjacent to the state academies and cultural institutions. Nonetheless, the school continued to be logistically impeded by the fact that its ateliers were scattered throughout Vienna’s first district. Administrative matters were greatly facilitated when the League KFM acquired centralized headquarters in the upper-floors of a building at Stubenring 12, vis-à-vis the Austrian *Kunstgewerbeschule* and Museum, in 1904/05.\(^ {702}\) The collaborative efforts of faculty, students, and the KFM Secretary Helene Roth met the “great challenges” of orchestrating “such a move” during the course of the school year.\(^ {703}\)

Beginning in the 1903/04 school year, the KFM obtained annual subventions from the Ministry for Cults and Education on top of the 1,000 Kronen it received directly from the Kaiser. The negotiating skills of KFM Executive Board Members with the Ministry of Education, particularly of Attorney Emil Postelberger, played an important role in securing these funds. For 1903/04, the KFM received 500 Kronen from the Education Ministry, something KFM Board Members hoped would set a precedent for higher levels of governmental support. Not to be underestimated in achieving state support was the Academy’s official endorsement of the KFM as a way of circumventing women’s admission to the ABKW, as detailed in the previous chapter. In the League’s seventh annual meeting on 18 January 1905, Rosa Mayreder lauded the subventions but cautioned that “however grateful we feel for this recognition and how welcome these funds are to our budget, they do not begin to cover the costs of the scholarships.”\(^ {704}\)

\(^{702}\) *Ibid.* The KFM nonetheless retained its ateliers in the Bibergasse even after the move, though it gave up its Schwanngasse and Tuchlauben premises.

\(^{703}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{704}\) Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, *Jahresbericht über das VII. Vereinsjahr 1903-04* (Wien: 233
Mayreder was right, for each scholarship awarded equaled precious lost revenue for the leagues coffers. Fortunately, the Ministry raised the KFM’s annual subvention to 600 Kronen the following school year (1905/06), “so that we may well hope for raising this subvention to 1,000 Kronen in the content of our next good-intentioned appeal to the Ministry.” By 1910, the Ministry had increased its yearly subvention to 1,200 Kronen which accompanied the rights of public incorporation gained by the school at that time. These subsidies remained fairly constant until the end of the Monarchy, although they decreased due to wartime expenditure during the Great War. The governmental subventions not only helped in financing the school’s new teaching facilities and staff, but, for the first time since mid-decade, significantly increased levels of student financial aid.

The process through which the KFM was gradually recognized and accredited publicly accompanied these higher levels of governmental support. Obtaining the so-called Öffentlichkeitsrecht, or right of public incorporation, was of crucial importance to the career outlook of KFM graduates. Not only would publicly-accredited diplomas put KFM girls closer to ABKW or KGS graduates, the Öffentlichkeitsrecht would allow KFM graduates to stand for state-certified teaching examinations (Lehrämtestandprüfung) for instructing drawing in middle, secondary, or vocational/craft schools. In the hopes of gaining rights of public incorporation, League attorney Dr. Emil Postelberg met with Lower Austrian officials in Summer 1908 to have necessary changes to the VKFM’s statutes sanctioned. Germane to the public-incorporation desired by the league were two alterations to § 4 and 6: 1) that KFM pupils could no longer be League Members during their course of study and 2) a School Director,

Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1905), 6.

Ibid.


appointed by the VKFM Executive Committee, who should “be responsible to k.k. School-Officials.”

Lower Austrian Officials approved the new statutes on 5 June 1908, and Sculptor Richard Kauffungen was appointed as first Schulleiter (School Director) of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen.

A number of sympathetic high-level officials in the Ministry for Education abetted the KFM’s case for obtaining its rights of public incorporation. In particular, League Chairman Karl Mayreder expressed the League’s gratitude to Minister of Education Dr. Gustav Marchet, the liberal friend of women’s higher education whose wife attended and supported the school. Mayreder reported that Marchet “only showed warm interest and benevolent goodwill towards our strivings” throughout the entire process. Further champions of the KFM on the Minoritenplatz included Ministerialrat Rudolf von Förster-Streffleur, Sektionschef Graf Max Wickenburg, and Hofrat Dr. Rieger. Agreeing to have its curriculum and facilities inspected by state educational authorities, the KFM fulfilled the conditions of the inspection. “The fruits of lengthy negotiations on the part of the KFM Executive Board,” the Ministry for Education awarded the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen the provisional, two-year Öffentlichkeitsrecht on 30 July 1908 under the Ministerial Decree Z. 24624. The League celebrated “the increased value of our diplomas, especially for those of our graduates having the intention of using the knowledge and abilities gained at our school to seize a certain profession.” That the KFM’s right of public incorporation was only awarded on a two-year provisional nature represented a ministerial formality. In a Ministerial audience with Postelberg, Kauffungen, and Executive-

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710 Ibid.
711 VKFM to k.k. MiKU, OeSTA, AVA, MiKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19880/1910 [15 May 1910],
712 Ibid., WStLA, MA 49/6025/1925, Z. 2569/1.
Committee Chair Karl Mayreder, Marchet had “specifically stressed that it is a formality that the Öffentlichkeitsrecht should be provisionally set only for the length of two years.”

Vienna’s Ladies’ Academy stood poised to claim its permanent place in Imperial Austria’s mainstream institutional framework.

Minister Karl Stürgkh’s issuing of permanent rights of public incorporation on 8 May 1910, along with rising levels of state funding and involvement, sealed the KFM’s ascending position in the Austrian cultural landscape.

In appealing to the Ministry to deliver what it had promised with the permanent accreditation of the school, Mayreder and Kauffungen pointed to an opinion from inside the Ministry.

As he observed personally, it is very well known to Hofrat Rudolf von Förster that the League which administers and maintains the private educational institution in question not only follows the rule of law and instructions of school officials to a tee, but that, in this case, concerns an institution… working with full strength and great energy that its female-pupils’ instruction in the fine arts is conducted by first-class teachers, in a model manner.

Mayreder and Jodl went on to support the Hofrat’s convictions with their own; “In fact, we believe to be able to say without presumption that the matter concerns a model institution of this type [for women]… a situation which is perhaps best illustrated by the annual donations which His Imperial and Hungarian Royal Apolistic Majesty, and the yearly subvention, from the high Educational Ministry, have granted us.” The letter went on to remind the Ministry that the Öffentlichkeitsrecht’s permanence was of crucial importance to KFM students hoping to practice art professionally and that the ambiguity of the current provisional status of the KFM’s public rights demanded redress. The KFM laid down the concrete argument that, “[p]upils enjoying

714 VKFM to the k.k. MfKU, OeSTA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19880/1910 [28 January 1910].
715 OeSTA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19880/1910.
716 VKFM to the k.k. MfKU, OeSTA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19880/1910 [28 January 1910].
717 VKFM to the k.k. MfKU, OeSTA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19880/1910 [28 January 1910].
instruction at this institution and who spend multiple years here, cannot be told if in the interim
between completing their studies and when they finally leave, whether the right to issue state-
accredited certifications will stand or not.” Appealing to the Ministry’s common sense,
Kauffungen and Mayreder repeated their plea for the permanent bestowal of the
Öffentlichkeitsrecht.

Notes on the Ministerial File compiled for Minister of Education Graf Stürghkh had good
things to say about the school. Landesschulinspektor Dr. Rieger completed a final inspection of
the KFM’s main courses and facilities in March 1910, which he described as appropriate to the
school’s goals, “at least as much as rented localities will allow.” Enrollment numbers,
currently around 170, were reported as good and students’ works were described as
“corresponding to the diligence and zeal with which they are executed.” Rieger described the
KFM’s curriculum as “individualized and suited to the particular needs and abilities of
students.” Rieger also lauded the participation of Professor Böhm’s class in the Kunstschau
Exhibition of 1908 and the founding of the Radierklub Wiener Künstlerinnen as speaking to the
“potential for achievement among KFM graduates.” Without further delay, on 8 May 1910
Minister of Education Graf Karl von Stürghkh and Head of the Ministry’s Section for Artistic
Affairs Leopold Förster declared; “the Minister for Cults and Education has awarded the private
educational institution for instruction in the fine arts maintained by the League Kunstschule für
Frauen und Mädchen the permanent Öffentlichkeitsrecht for the duration of its fulfillment of the
accordant legal conditions.”

718 VKFM to the k.k. MiKU, OeSTA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19880/1910 [28 January 1910].
719 OeSTA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19880/1910 [7/9 May 1910].
720 OeSTA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19880/1910 [7/9 May 1910].
721 OeSTA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19880/1910 [7/9 May 1910].
722 OeSTA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19880/1910 [7/9 May 1910].
723 OeSTA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19880/1910 [8 May 1910].
By the time it gained its permanent rights of public incorporation, the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen had garnered an auspicious domestic and international reputation. Numerous articles commended the school for performing a vital service to Austrian society. An article in der Bund celebrating the school’s tenth anniversary provided an overview of highlights during the school’s history, culminating with the recent success of KFM graduates, increasing levels of funding by the Ministry of Education, and its bestowal of the Öffentlichkeitsrecht. “Thanks to the benevolent cooperation of the Ministry for Education for its decision to allow state-certified school-diplomas to be issued… During the past ten years, the Executive Committee may very rightly claim to have acted true to the motto of ‘no rest, no rust.’”724 Another article in Neues Frauenleben praised the Ladies’ Academy as a “praiseworthy exception” to the rule of women’s exclusion from academic training in the fine arts.725

While women have long conquered Gymnasium and University, the doors of the art academy still remain obstinately closed, and in most cases, they [women] are left with no other choice than, with much greater effort and diverse obstacles, advancing through costly private studies or mindlessly copying countless heads in one of the more-or-less lower-quality painting schools.726

Beyond coverage in Der Bund, Dokumente der Frauen, Neues Frauenleben and other periodicals of the Austrian women’s movement, the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen became well-known to the international art-world through graduates’ commercial ventures such as the Radierklub Wiener Künstlerinnen and the school’s participation in important public exhibitions, particularly the 1908 Kunstschau.

In 1908, KFM Professor of Applied Arts Adolf Böhm mounted an exhibition of nearly 80 objects crafted by 25 KFM pupils in an entire room of the Kunstschau Exhibition. Led by the

726 Rosine Handlirsch, “Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen,” 83.
“Klimt-Gruppe” (Gustav Klimt, Josef Hoffmann, and Kolomann Moser), the Kunsthau was a group of modern artists breaking away from the Viennese Secession due to a disagreement on the value of applied arts versus painting. Vanguards like Klimt and Hoffmann believed that Secessionists (the ‘Nur-Maler’ or painterly purists) had become artistically complacent, more concerned with money than art, while Secessionists like Carl Moll believed that Raumkünstler (Interior Artists) like Hoffmann and Klimt placed too much emphasis on the applied arts and presentation of paintings. As Klimt described how the new art union was to stand above ideological and artistic factions

The [new] art-union should stand above all parties. It has nothing, absolutely nothing in common with the usual character of an artists’ league. It should be the meeting point of all artistic will, standing higher than personal interest. Above all, it should, in a single word, serve “art” and not the artist…Whether one is a member of the Secession, the Hagenbund, or even the Künstlerhaus or a “Wild-One” standing totally outside, doesn’t concern us in the least.727

Freeing itself from artistic dogmatism and the confinement accompanying an institutional building and statutes, the Kunsthau was to function as a loose association of like-minded artistic outsiders,’ dedicated to artistic, rather than commercial, goals. By associating itself with the Kunsthau, the KFM situated itself in the more progressive, modern camp. Conservative stalwarts like Kauffungen and Seligmann, however, unsurprisingly had little to say about KFM pupils’ participation in the Kunsthau.

Böhm’s students’ works, displayed in Room 29 of the Kunsthau (entitled “Kunst für das Kind,” or “Art for the Child”), represented diverse genres of the applied arts. Pieces on view ranged from graphic works, to carpets and tapestries, to artistic toys and children’s furnishings [Figure 3.6]. Reflecting the recent surge of interest in art and early-childhood pedagogy, KFM

pupils’ works played upon essentialist discourses naturally linking women and children.\textsuperscript{728}

Whereas previously, children had been treated as miniature adults, the nineteenth-century invention of childhood entailed the birth of child-pedagogy, psychology, and unprecedented attention to the concept of Kinderkunst, or children’s art.

The numerous exhibitions of “\textit{Kinderkunst}” that have surfaced in individual localities in the past three years and have been much noticed are useful for a new branch of knowledge which has just been awoken… and which appears to be on the cusp of founding a new field of academic inquiry. One could name this field the study of the drawing child.\textsuperscript{729}

Works created by KFM students were thus doubly relevant to theories of gender and early-childhood art-pedagogy, for most of the KFM pupils were adolescents and closer to the primitive “\textit{Kinderkunst}” theorized by Lindner. In total, around 25 of Böhm’s pupils in his Applied Arts Course participated in the \textit{Kunst für das Kind} room, even designing the decorative wooden frieze titled “Improvised Parade” (\textit{Improvisierte Festzug}) framing the hall’s entrance [\textbf{Figures 3.6, 3.7}].\textsuperscript{730}

Many KFM pupils contributing to the “\textit{Kunst für das Kind}” Exhibition went on to successful careers as professional artists, craftswomen, or patronesses. Heiress Magda von Mauther Markhof, niece of Koloman Moser’s wife Editha von Mauthner-Markhof, honed her own artistic skills at the KFM, as demonstrated by the artistic “Puppenhaus” (see pg. 44) she exhibited at the \textit{Kunstschau} before turning her energies to collecting and serving as protagonist for the \textit{Wiener Werkstätte} [\textbf{Figure 3.6}]. In fact, many of Mauthner-Markhof’s colleagues exhibiting at the 1908 \textit{Kunstschau} collaborated with the \textit{Wiener Werkstätte} in their later careers,

often after completing further studies at the Austrian Kunstgewerbeschule under Hoffmann, Moser, or Böhm [See Appendix 2.3].

Yet other artists, such as Ella Irányi and Fanny Harlfinger-Zakucka, became pioneers in the Austrian Women’s Artists Leagues. Harlfinger-Zakucka, whose husband Richard began teaching courses in Academic Painting at the KFM during his term as Secession president in 1917-19, played an instrumental role in the Austro-German Frauenkunst movement of the mid-1920s. In particular, Harlfinger-Zakucka gathered support for the 1925 “Deutsche Frauenkunst” Exhibition held at the Austrian Kunstgewerbemuseum and led the coup wherein the radical faction of the VBKÖ seceded as its own organization, the Wiener Frauenkunst. Even in her early career, however, Harlfinger-Zakucka was known to international audiences for her versatility as an artist and designer. A.S. Levetus commented that “Frau Harlfinger-Zakucka is already known to readers of The Studio as a designer and maker of artistic toys. But she is a many-sided woman as her work at large will show.” For the 1908 Kunstschau, Harfinger-Zakucka contributed over a dozen works, including the furniture, toys, embroidered panneaux, and carpets illustrated in Figures 3.6-3.7. The playful nursery suite, executed by J. Peyfuss, was constructed of maple, featuring ebonized wooden spindles and stretchers, with mother-of-pearl and ebony inlays [Figure 3.7a]. Harlfinger’s skill in artistically furnishing and decorating children’s rooms in a modern fashion, as well as her fluency with the practical and decorative qualities of various woods, won her critical acclaim. Today, as monographic details on her career come together,

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731 Among the Wiener Werkstätte ’Kunstgewerbeweiber’ participating in Böhm’s exhibition of children’s art included Selma (Susi) Singer-Schninnerl, active in the ceramics, textiles, and graphic art (postcards) divisions; Marianne Perlmutter, active as a textile designer; Frieda (Friedrike) Löw-Lazar, who contributed graphic works, jewelry toys, wooden boxes, glass, textile, and fashion-accessory designs; and Mitzi (Maria Rosalie) Friedmann-Otten, active in the Wiener Werkstätte’s graphics, metalworks, textiles, jewelry, and ceramics divisions. See Werner Schweiger, “Biographien der Künstlern” in Wiener Werkstätte: Kunst und Kunshandwerk (Wien: Brandstätter, 1982), 259-269.


Harlfinger’s works are beginning to fetch soaring prices, including her designs for the *Kunstschau*.\textsuperscript{734}

In addition to the favorable press it received for the *Kunstschau* exhibition, the KFM’s curriculum and course of study became increasingly professionalized and expanded in the early 1910s. The issue of dilettantism had been a controversial one from the very beginning. KFM founders realized early on that in order to keep the school financially afloat, both students of extraordinary and average artistic talent would have to be admitted. “We know very well that great talents are sparse … Nonetheless, we would also like to give minor talents the chance to educate themselves and to succeed in its application, whether in teaching or, above all, in industry.”\textsuperscript{735} For this reason, to foster the cultivation of great as well as minor artistic talent in women, the *Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen* imposed no particular entrance examination when it opened its doors in 1897. With the onset of the KFM’s Schools for Academic Painting in 1918/19, however, this would change dramatically. Not only did the KFM’s stringent admission requirements mirror those of the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts, students in the academic schools were required to sign a written declaration pledging their intention to practice art professionally.

The years leading up to the introduction of academic classes in 1918/19 foreshadowed the KFM’s upped admission requirements and focus on producing professional artists. School Director Richard Kauffungen declared at the *Verein’s* 16\textsuperscript{th}-Annual General Meeting on 27 January 1914; “It is most gratifying to confirm the fact that our pupils are approaching their studies with ever-increasing seriousness and that the number of those who consider and aspire to

\textsuperscript{734} The Maple and Ebonized Wood Secretary for the “Kunst für das Kind” room illustrated above realized $12,000 at auction at Christie’s New York on 19 December 206 (Lot 596); the matching pair of maple and ebonized chairs are currently for sale at a New York gallery with a $40,000 price tag.

\textsuperscript{735} Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, *Jahresbericht über das I. Vereinsjahr* (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1898), 7.
practicing art as a vocation, is only increasing.” Indeed, since graduating its first class in 1904, the League proudly published graduates’ career placements. Similar lists, with rising numbers of graduates practicing art professionally, continued to be published every year. KFM graduates even launched careers in decidedly masculine fields, such as Mizi Terzer’s profession as a medical/histological painter. Careers as drawing instructors proved increasingly attractive after the introduction of the Öffentlichkeitsrecht in 1908/10, as the state accreditation of KFM degrees allowed graduates to sit for the state-certified drawing teachers’ examination for secondary schools.

KFM curriculum continued to be expanded in the modernist spirit in the years following the school’s public accreditation. 1910-11, the first full school year in which the KFM enjoyed the permanent Öffentlichkeitsrecht, provides an apt overview of the school’s curricular development in the decade leading up to the introduction of academic classes in painting. The KFM offered main courses in Drawing and Painting from the Living Model, Landscape and Still-Life Painting, the Decorative and Applied Arts, and Sculpture. Additional courses in life drawing, landscape and still-life painting (plein-air, weather permitting), etching and print-making, woodcutting-arts, applied arts metalwork, and ornamental writing, as well as the necessary theoretical subjects of perspective, anatomy, and art history, were offered in the afternoon. Attendance of the afternoon studio sessions was generally left to the discretion of

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737 For the 1903/04 school year, for instance, 12 women set up shop as independent portraitists, including: Olga Adler, Marie Alter, Georgine Altmann, Elise Fülop, Olga Jonas, Kathleen Lewis, Jella Liebscher, Olga Prager, May Roxburgh, Emma Simon, Marie Spitz and Elise Spitzer. Altmann, Lewis, Roxburgh, and Simon were also listed as working in landscapes and still-lifes. Mizzi Krisch, Baronesse Hedwig Lekow, Else Lott, Minka Podhajska, Berta Reisz, and Fanny Zakucka went on to careers in fashion, and the decorative and applied arts. *Ibid.*, 8.
students and teachers, although students “were obligated to attend the course in question if a
teacher of one of the main courses should find it necessary.”

Two separate but interrelated trends emerge as striking from the KFM’s course of study
circa 1910. First, the Viennese Ladies’ Academy had progressed from humble beginnings as
sixteen girls gathered in an ad-hoc studio to a full-fledged Academy mirroring the meticulous,
hierarchical structures of the Austrian Kunstgewerbeschule and Academy of Fine Arts. Like the
Austrian State Schools of Fine and Applied Arts, the KFM’s curriculum was hierarchically
organized by students’ year (Jahrgang) and discipline, for which, at this point in the history of
the Ladies’ Academy, Schools of Painting, Sculpture, and Applied Arts existed. Further division
into core courses, offered in the morning, afternoon theoretical subjects and evening life classes
also reflected the structure of the state academies. Unique to the Women’s Academy, however,
was its flexibility in allowing students to combine tracks in the fine and applied arts; a trend
which reflected the state Academy’s pre-1872 policy of including the applied and industrial arts
in the academic curriculum. KFMers could choose between, or combine, concentrations in
Portrait-, Landscape, or Still-life Painting; Sculpture (Figural), Applied Arts (including
Metalwork and Print-Making; Graphic Arts; Illustration; Goldsmithing; Woodcutting; and
Needlework Art. While the post-1872 ABKW turned its nose up at this sort of interdisciplinary
fluidity embracing the applied and decorative arts, the KFM’s holistic curriculum reflected a
modernist unity of the applied and fine arts.

The second and interrelated trend emerging from the KFM’s class schedule circa 1910 is
the profound faculty overlap between the Ladies’ Academy, the KGS, and ABKW. More than
half of the professors listed above were currently teaching, had formerly taught, or would receive
future appointments to Austrian state academies. Rudolf Jettmar (ABKW), Hans Tichy

738 Ibid.
(ABKW), Christian Martin (ABKW), Josef Stoitzner (ABKW), Adolf Böhm (KGS), Ludwig Michalek (Graphische Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt), Max Fabiani (Technische Hochschule), and Hermann Grom-Rottmayer (Technische Hochschule) left the KFM for more lucrative and prestigious state-teaching positions, often taking former KFM pupils with them [See Appendix 3.2]. In addition, the vast majority of KFM teachers were themselves products of Austrian academies, whether trained as Academicians, like Seligmann and Kauffungen, or trained in the applied arts tradition like König and Klimt. Moreover, KFM Faculty possessed strong ties not only to traditional artists’ guilds like the Künstlergenoßenschaft but to modernist institutions like the Secession and Hagenbund. As detailed previously, KFM Faculty Adolf Böhm, Friedrich König, Hans Tichy, Maximilian Kurzweil and Otto Friedrich had been founding members of the Secession, many of whom had renounced their membership in the Künstlerhaus. Hermann Grom-Rottmayer, Richard Harlfinger, Josef Stoitzner, Rudolf Jettmar, Christian Martin, Ferdinand Kitt, and Heinrich Zita also joined the Secession after 1897. Harlfinger, a core professor at the KFM’s Academic Classes in the 1920s, served as Vienna Secession President from 1917-19. Ferdinand Kitt, who also taught in the KFM’s Academic Schools, occupied the same office from 1926-1929, as did Grom-Rottmayer who periodically filled the role of Vice-President. In addition to the school’s affiliations with the Vienna Secession, a few KFM faculty members, including Friedrich König and Heinrich Zita, were associated with the Hagenbund, Vienna’s other “big-three: exhibition hall. Precisely because the school was maintained by a private league gave it a freer hand than the state Academy in appointing progressive and modernist faculty. The Academy, on the other hand, was forced to refuse the appointment of prominent modernists like Gustav Klimt and Albin Egger-Lienz.
The individuals teaching the KFM’s School of Academic Painting’s Core Courses, Professors Seligmann, Kauffungen, Harlfinger, and Grom-Rottmayer, conveniently illustrate the diverse affiliations of KFM Faculty. From the colorism and expressionism of Richard Harlfinger to Grom-Rottmayer’s monumental nudes and allegories, the bold experimentalism of the generation of Austrian women artists educated in the late 1910s and 1920s directly reflected the modernist influences of their teachers. Traditional academic paths, too, could be pursued with Kauffungen or Seligmann. Bolstering the modernist ties of KFM faculty, further innovations to the KFM curriculum came with the introduction of a course in modern clothing, influenced by the art-nouveau artistic dress movement, under Otto Friedrich in 1915/16.739 A few years earlier Friedrich had also introduced classes in batik dying, an exotic wax-based textile dying technique from India which became au current among Viennese Kunstgewerbeweiber in the interwar years.740 The influence of such non-Western techniques demonstrates the Secessionist influence of Eastern art.

Around the same time, women became integrated as KFM teaching staff in heightened numbers. Paula Taussig-Roth had been entrusted with the technical leadership of the Embroidery Section of the Applied Arts Course (under Adolf Böhm and upon Böhm’s KGS appointment, Otto Friedrich) since 1901 but gained more authority mid-decade. Due to its great popularity, the KFM’s Applied Arts Course was split into beginner and advanced sections in the 1912/13 school year. At this point, Taussig-Roth assumed full-control of the beginners’ course, nonetheless

“under the supervision” of Friedrich.\textsuperscript{741} Marianne Fieglhuber, a KFM graduate successful as a portraitist and active in the \textit{Radierklub Wiener Künstlerinnen} and VBKÖ, began working as an assistant professor in Michalek’s Printmaking Course during the same year.\textsuperscript{742} The KFM, however, lost a great asset with the retirement of Tina Blau-Lang at the close of the 1914/15 school year. She was replaced by Viennese painter Josef Stoitzner, who had studied at the KGS, ABKW and was affiliated with the Vienna Secession.\textsuperscript{743} A few years later, in the 1915/16 academic year, Mathilde Quirin helped to fill the shoes of Max Kurzweil and Georg Klimt, who had both been called to wartime military service.\textsuperscript{744} Quirin, a former KFM pupil, was provisionally entrusted with instructing Klimt’s Course for Decorative Metalworking while Hermann Grom-Rottmayer, who had studied at the Vienna and Munich Academies and was successful as a painter, lithographer, and set-designer, assumed control of Kurzweil’s life drawing class. When Kurzweil, by all accounts a tremendously talented painter, took his on life on 19 May 1916, Quirin was given formal control of the metalworking course.\textsuperscript{745} Likewise, Grom-Rottmayer retained Kurzweil’s position as Professor of the KFM’s third Figural Drawing Class on a permanent basis.

In general, the coming of the Great War exercised little influence on the daily run of affairs at the KFM. With the exception of lower subsidies from the Ministry of Education due to wartime shortages and the absence of certain teachers, business proceeded as usual at the Viennese Ladies’ Academy.


\textsuperscript{745} \textit{Ibid.}, 7.
The European War, which holds the forces of our Fatherland under the utmost strain and caused a significant decline in the number of our pupils in the previous school-year, remains in the 1915-15 school year insomuch without influence, as enrollment numbers climbed to 232 from 155 and through this exceptional increase surpassed the highest figures recorded up to now.\textsuperscript{746}

Indeed, although enrollment numbers sunk to their lowest since 1900 with the outbreak of the war in the 1914/15 school year with 155 students, enrollment hit an all-time high in the following school year (1915/16) with 232 students. These high enrollment numbers again topped themselves in the last two years of the war, with a whopping 269 students in 1916/17 and 303 in 1917/18. Referring to Figure 3.1, which depicts KFM enrollment numbers in detail, this represented an 11% increase from the previous school year and a 30% increase from before the war. The number of scholarships, too, grew during the war, from 22 full-scholarships in 1914 to 28 in 1918.

Despite budgetary constraints, KFM curriculum continued to develop during the war. Blau-Lang resumed summer \textit{plein-air} sessions on the Kahlenberg with her students following periods of military restriction and the open-air sessions in Hietzing commenced once again.\textsuperscript{747}

The Hietzing villa, however, where the sessions were held was sold to a Herr Baron Krupp from Nadowsky, who had generously put his property at the school’s disposal since 1902. The KFM’s efforts to expand its curriculum into the applied arts paid off during the war, particularly Friedrich’s Course for Decorative and Applied Arts and seminar in modern clothing. Ten students were accepted as members of the Austrian \textit{Werkbund}, a union of artists, craftsman, and industrialists founded in 1912 on the model of the \textit{Deutscher Werkbund} (1907).\textsuperscript{748} Promoting

\textsuperscript{746} Ibid., 5.
\textsuperscript{748} On the Austrian Werkbund see \textit{Bericht über das Jahr 1917 und über die Vollversammlung am 28. November 1918 mit dem Vortrag Alfred Rollers über fünfzig Jahre Wienerkunstgewerbeschule} (Wien: Verlag des Österreichischen Werkbundes, 1918).
quality craft principles and functionality in industrial art production, as well as cooperation between art and industry, represented the Werkbund’s main goal. Werkbund members’ works were exhibited and put up for sale at the Werkbund’s “Schau und Verkaufstelle für Industrie und Gewerbe” (Exhibition and Shop for Industry and Craft) at Kärtnerstraße 53.

Another highpoint celebrated during the war was the seventieth birthday of Tina Blau-Lang, as well as the establishment of the Tina Blau Fund for the annual purchase of outstanding student works. Blau-Lang received a special certificate, lettered in ornamental calligraphy by KFM pupil Rafaela Stöhr, in which she was named as the League’s first Ehrenmitglied (Honorary Member). The League received an additional 2,772 Kronen in donations for the Blau Fund, 300 of which came from the generosity of School Director Kauffungen. Although the Executive Council had recognized Kauffungen’s “extraordinary toiling” for the school with a special 300 Kronen honorarium, Kauffungen volunteered this sum to the Blau Funds. While the school’s state subsidies were reduced to around half of their normal levels before the war, private funding remained strong. The KFM also enjoyed support from art-dealers such as Galleries Arnot, Heller, Miethke, Pisko, and Wawra.

Although casualties related to the Great War remained relatively minor, the KFM lost several founding Board Members towards the end of the war. Vice Board-Chair Bertha Hartmann, a founding member of the Executive Committee whose efforts had been instrumental in launching Prager’s idea for a Ladies’ Academy, succumbed to terminal illness on 3 January 1916. Before she died, however, the League recognized Hartmann’s eighteen years of service as

751 Ibid.
“pathfinder and leader at the head of the school” by naming her as Honorary President.\textsuperscript{752} The League’s tribute that “the name Bertha Hartmann will remain connected to our school for time memorial, and all who stand close to our institute will pay tribute to her memory with warm gratitude” represents an ironic twist of fate.\textsuperscript{753} Not only has Hartmann’s name slipped into oblivion, the entire Viennese Women’s Academy remains unknown and unstudied, particularly in English-language scholarship. The League also lost members who had signed the original statutes in 1897, including writer and feminist Goswina von Berlepsch, on 11 April of the same year. In addition to the death of Kaiser Franz Josef, whom the KFM mourned as a “powerful patron and goodhearted-supporter,” the KFM mourned the death of His Excellency Dr. Gustav Marchet.\textsuperscript{754} As Marchet, known for his liberalism towards women’s higher education, had reigned during the bestowal of the “most useful” Österreichische Gesetz in 1908/10, the League remained “permanently thankful to this warm-hearted benefactor.”\textsuperscript{755} Despite the loss of these individuals crucial to the KFM’s founding and public accreditation, the KFM gained new female leadership. Her Excellency Frau Emilie Marchet, widow of the departed Minister who enrolled in KFM classes, replaced Hartmann as Executive Board Vice Chair. Also joining Marchet, Mayreder, Goldschied and the other women on the Executive Board were Margarethe Escherich and Elisabeth Luzzatto. By the eclipse of the Monarchy, Vienna’s Ladies’ Academy not only represented a state-accredited, publicly-recognized institution for women, but one being increasingly taught and controlled by them.

\textsuperscript{752} Ibid., 7.
\textsuperscript{753} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{755} Ibid.
From Kunstschule to Frauenakademie: Introduction of Courses in Academic Painting, Institutional Parity, and the Nationalization of the Viennese Ladies’ Academy, 1918-1925

Ledger notes from Imperial Ministry of Education’s Department XVII, the division responsible for league affairs, described the momentous change ensuing with the installation of state-accredited courses in academic painting at the Ladies Academy in Fall 1918.

To fulfill the wishes made stronger by the minute to offer members of the female sex the possibility for regulated art-studies not offered at the state academies, at the beginning of the next school year academic-training classes are to be installed at the publicly-incorporated Kunstschule f. Frauen und Mädchen in Vienna’s first district, Stubenring 12, with the duty of providing women and girls, who want to dedicate themselves to the artistic profession, the opportunity for artistic training in painting and sculpture in the same manner as it is conducted at the state art academies.756

As intimated by the increasingly-urgent demands for women’s artistic education noted above, the installation of schools of academic painting and sculpture at the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen in Fall 1918/19 came on the cusp of women’s admission to the Austrian State Academy of Fine Arts in 1919/20. “Subsidized and supervised by the Imperial Ministry of Education,” the KFM’s academic schools had the duty of providing women professional academic training in the arts “in a manner equal to that offered at the state art-academies.”757

Ensuing just before women were finally admitted to the Schillerplatz, the installation of academic courses at the KFM would seem a last-ditch conservative redoubt defending the sanctity of the male academy. Undoubtedly, conservative voices holding up the Ladies’ Academy as an Ersatzakademie, or surrogate Academy, supported the KFM’s academic courses to filibuster women’s integration into mainstream academic life. Even as late as 1918, Academy

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756 OeStA, AVA, BmKU (Sig. 15). Fasz. 3368 Z. 17479/1918 [16/17 May 1918].
Professors delivered “a unanimous, stiffly-negative opinion” against admitting women based on the Academy’s limited spatial and logistical resources, the moral impropriety of mixed-gender life-studies, and, above all, the “fundamentally different psychological conditions of art-instruction for girls.” For these reasons did ABKW Faculty remind the Educational Ministry that “an art-school for women and girls had already existed for 22 years and was in every respect capable of its task [of providing women quality artistic instruction].”

While such conservatism played a role in sequestering women at the Ladies’ Academy, various channels of progressive thought motivated the decision to attach state-accredited Schools of Academic Painting and Sculpture to the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen in the years preceding women’s admission to Austria’s State Academy of Fine Arts. In the eyes of liberal commentators, the promise of the Academy opening its doors to women represented a chimera in achieving gender equality. Not only could the Academy accept, due to its already strained financial, professorial, and logistical resources, a limited number of female students, its cramped study conditions were arguably worse than those of the KFM. At least KFM pupils would enjoy adequate work space, materials, and professorial guidance. The KFM defended the installation of its Academic classes in light of women’s imminent admission to the Schillerplatz,

As the issue at hand can not deal with equality in the literal sense, whereby the instruction in question would have to be given in the same building and by the same teachers, but rather with equality of substance; that is, to give women the due chance to undergo the same education with the same admission requirements, and such, as men, it is recommended that Academic Classes be installed at the said Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, even more so because of the renowned teachers working there.

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758 Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on Admission of Women to Academy of Fine Arts (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBKÖ], ARCH 32/1.
759 Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on Admission of Women to Academy of Fine Arts (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBKÖ], ARCH 32/2.
760 Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on Academic Courses (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBKÖ], ARCH 32/1-2.
Indeed, even the strongest supporters of women’s equality in the absolute sense did not believe that the opening of the Academy would instantly solve the problem of integrating women into mainstream artistic life. Professor Karl Mayreder, Chairman of the KFM Executive-Committee since 1904, argued that “the unrestricted admission of women and girls to state art instruction” only achieved a “partial but by no means final” solution to gender symmetry in the arts.\footnote{Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, \textit{Jahresbericht über das XXI. Vereinsjahr} (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1918), 5.} Not because he opposed women’s integration into the state academies but precisely because he supported it did Mayreder believe the installation of state-subsidized academic courses at the KFM could facilitate women’s entrance into male academies and artistic corporations. A separate Women’s Academy, with elite courses in academic painting structured identically to the state academy, could therefore absorb women not offered places at the ABKW given its limitation of incoming-classes to twenty-five. In addition, by boosting women’s confidence in a single-sex environment, the KFM’s accommodations to women’s special pedagogical needs would boost women’s professional advancement and stylistic development. Vienna’s “separate but equal” women’s academy offering academic courses taught in the same manner as the state Academy’s \textit{Allgemeine Abteilungen} (General Divisions) would thus pave the way to women’s integration into professional artistic institutions.

In addition to arguments supporting the advancement of professional women-artists in the KFM’s Academic Schools, a separate strand of arguments advanced notions of the KFM’s necessity as a “preparatory and nursery-school for later academic training” and in cultivating “serious” dilettantism.\footnote{Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on Academic Courses (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBKÖ], ARCH 32/ 5-6.} The League maintained that in no way should the KFM in its present form as an art school providing women with a fundamental, if sub-academic, education cease to
exist with the opening of the Academy to women. “Girls and women possessing talent but who, due to various reasons, can or do not want to practice art professionally receive here serious and proper instruction through which dilettantism—in the good sense—is cultivated.” Not only would such artistic education enrich the pupil’s own humanistic education, her increased artistic knowledge benefited society at large through her role in the family. In addition to cultivating this serious dilettantism, the KFM would be useful in training women for state-examinations as drawing teachers in elementary, middle, secondary, and vocational schools. Since drawing-teacher training was not prioritized by the Academy, concerned with producing artists of monumental stature, the KFM’s attention to artistic pedagogy filled an important void in the system. In the face of gender mainstreaming, the KFM’s ‘separate but equal’ ideology was used not only to justify the Ladies’ Academy post-1919 continued existence but to incorporate it within the state apparatus. Indeed, beginning in the 1918/19 school year, the Ministry pledged an annual subvention of 10,000 Kronen to maintain the Academic Schools, presided over the hiring and firing of KFM Faculty, and oversaw the KFM’s curriculum, which was to be, in every respect, equal to that offered in the Academy’s General Division. Teachers in the KFM’s Academic Schools enjoyed the title of Professor, just like instructors at any other Austrian Hochschule, while KFMers’ Academic credentials were recognized as equal in value to those of their male ABKW colleagues.

Granted official institutional parity with the state academy, the KFM’s Academic Courses represented a quasi-state institution. The institutional prestige, however, enjoyed by the KFM’s academic classes remained somewhat precarious. Despite its generous governmental subventions, joint responsibility with the state in administering the school, and, after 1921,

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763 Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on Academic Courses (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBKÖ], ARCH 32/6.
elevation of KFM Professors as civil servants, the KFM’s Academic status hovered unclearly between a state-, state-accredited, and private institution. As the Ministry clarified the situation in 1922; “in no way are these Academic Classes a state institution, but rather have been established by the League maintaining the school, and for this reason, the state pledges a yearly-subvention of 10,000 Kronen solely to be used for these academic classes’ operating expenses.”

The pages to follow examine how the KFM capitalized on its foothold in the state apparatus and fought for the full-recognition of the Ladies’ Academy on a par with Austrian state Hochschulen, or institutions of higher learning.

Created to offer aspiring women artists “an education equal to that offered at the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts,” Academic Classes were launched at the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen in Fall 1918. Decrees of 17 September 1918 under the Monarchy and of 4 December 1918 under the new Republican Ministry ratified the KFM Academic Schools’ new statutes. While the KFM Academic Schools were realized under the banner of the First Republic, the idea for state-maintained Academic Courses at the Ladies’ Academy remained a product of the Imperial Ministry. Under the Ministerial Decree of 14 December 1917, the Educational Ministry pledged “a yearly subsidy of 10,000 Kronen, to be awarded until further notice” for the cost of the Academic Courses. The League KFM was obligated to use the state funds “solely for these Academic Classes’ operating expenses” and to “accept at least five pupils fulfilling the admissions requirements into every year of these courses.” Fulfilling the Ministry’s role in “subsidizing and overseeing the Academic Schools of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen,” KFM Academic Schools were regulated by the state. The state oversaw the

764 OeStA, AVA, BMfKU (Sig. 15). Fasz. 2884 Z. 5764-IV/1922.
765 Verein Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, Jahresbericht über das XXI. Vereinsjahr (Wien: Selbstverlag des VKFM, 1918), 4.
766 OeStA, AVA, BMfKU (Sig. 15). Fasz. 3368, Z. 41198/1918 [31 October 1918].
767 OeStA, AVA, BMfKU (Sig. 15). Fasz. 2884 Z. 5764-IV/1922; OeStA, AVA, BMfKU (Sig. 15). Fasz. 3368, Z. 41198/1918.
Academic Schools’ program of study as the “curriculum for each academic year is to be submitted to the Ministry of Cults and Education for approval in a timely fashion.”\textsuperscript{768} In addition, all appointments and dismissals of KFM Faculty had to be approved by the Educational Ministry. Having passed through the Ministerial gauntlet, Professors of the KFM Academic Schools’ Core Subjects (\textit{Hauptfächer}) were granted the privilege of using the title of professor for the duration of their appointment at the institution.

Arrangements worked out for the theoretical auxiliary subjects, or \textit{Hilfsfächer}, enforced the quasi-state nature of a KFM degree. While the Academic Schools’ \textit{Hauptfächer} (or core-subjects) were all taught in-house, second-year KFM pupils were to attend lectures in the auxiliary theoretical subjects at one of “the [state] schools determined by the school-administration and approved by the Ministry for Cults and Education.”\textsuperscript{769} For first-year students, the auxiliary subjects comprised of anatomy and perspective, courses taught at the KFM. Second-year students were compelled to attend lectures in History, Art History, and Stylistic History (\textit{Allgemeine Geschichte, Kunstgeschichte, Stillehre}). As the second-year Art History lectures could not “be held at the school itself without excessively-high costs,” the KFM negotiated an arrangement with the Ministry of Education by which KFM pupils could attend the necessary theoretical lectures at ministerially-approved state schools, in practice at the Austrian \textit{Kunstgewerbeschule} and Academy of Fine Arts.\textsuperscript{770} Head of the Department for Art Rudolf von Förster-Streffleur, who had helped the KFM to achieve the Öffentlichkeitsrecht in 1908/1910,
campaigned for the interests of KFM students in attending these auxiliary subjects as special guest-auditors (Hospitantinnen) at Austrian state schools. The main problem was that KFMers stood to face double tuition fees by attending the extra lectures at state academies. In addition to normal KFM tuition fees, KFM auditors would owe the Kunstgewerbeschule, the institute initially designated for attending auxiliary lectures, additional fees of 30 Kronen tuition per semester, an annual materials charge of 8 Kronen, and a one-time registration fee of 4 Kronen. Although KGS Director Alfred Roller expressed no objections to allowing KFM pupils to audit Art History lectures and was even willing to waive tuition for the girls, waiving the materials and enrollment fees were beyond Roller’s powers. In a letter of 1 May 1918, Roller told Förster that “should a waiving of the registration and materials fees also be desired, this matter must be determined by the Ministry for Public Affairs.” Förster pressed the issue with the Ministry for Public Affairs on 16 May 1918, arguing that KFM Academic Students must be treated equally with Schillerplatz Academicians in every respect.

… the intention underlying this entire mission must place value upon the [idea] that the KFM pupils cannot be second to Academy pupils in this respect. For this reason, the same fees of 20 Kronen Tuition per Semester for tuition and a one-time 4 Kronen matriculation fee have been imposed for the KFM’s Academic Students as at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, at which the auxiliary subjects in question are also taught. As, under these conditions, highly-similar instruction [in the auxiliary subjects] could be rendered without [additional] separate payment, the Ministry for Cults and Education renders the honor of beseeching that the admission of the Academic Students of the Kunsthochschule für Frauen und Mädchen in Wien as guest-auditors in Art- and Stylistic-History at the Kunstgewerbeschule of the Austrian Museum for Art and Industry be granted without monetary fees.

If the KFM’s Academic Schools, whose tuition rates were set identical to the state academy, were to truly be on equal footing with the Schillerplatz, then such extra tuition fees to the

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771 Letter of Alfred Roller to Minister Förster OeStA, AVA, BMfKU (Sig. 15). Fasz. 3368, Z. 17479/1918 [1 May 1918].
772 OeStA, AVA, BMfKU (Sig. 15). Fasz. 3368, Z. 17479/1918 [16/17 May 1918].
disadvantage of KFMers could not be countenanced. More on principle than for monetary reasons did Förster object, and prevail, in fighting this asymmetrical situation. The admission of KFM Academic Pupils as tuition-free guest-auditors to the Kunstgewerbeschule was approved by the Ministry of Public Affairs on 16 May 1918.\textsuperscript{773} Despite Förster’s efforts in having these inequitable fees waived, institutional tensions with the KGS and ABKW lingered into the 1920s.

Besides the state’s increased supervisory role in KFM curriculum and faculty appointments, the new statutes dramatically upped admission requirements for its Academic Schools. Whereas no admissions criteria had existed previously, the Academic Schools’ Statutes enacted strict requirements mirroring the admissions policies of the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts. Like the Academy, students were to have completed studies “with good marks” at an Untergymnasium, Lyceum, or demonstrate “knowledge equivalent to that imparted at these schools.”\textsuperscript{774} Candidates for admission were also to prove “specialized pre-knowledge of foundational elements of the fine arts” by submitting “drawings from nature and sketches from one’s own imagination” and completing a closed entrance examination.\textsuperscript{775} The latter entrance-examination, to be completed by the pupil within an enclosed space, consisted of executing an ink drawing from nature, using perspective and shading, and completing a compositional sketch according to a given theme. Finally, a clause unique to the Ladies’ Academy, applicants were required to produce a “declaration that the student will practice art as a profession.”\textsuperscript{776} The KFM clearly sought to weed out all traces of dilettantism among its applicant pool with this added

\textsuperscript{773}OeStA, AVA, BMfKU (Sig. 15). Fasz. 3368, Z. 17479/1918 [16/17 May 1918].
\textsuperscript{776}Ibid.
prerequisite. Initially, placement in the KFM Academic Schools required Austrian citizenship, although this policy was revised after the fall of the Monarchy to accommodate “German-Austrian” girls located outside the borders of the rump Austrian state. On 26 June 1919, the school petitioned the Ministry of Education to allow “foreign pupils of German nationality” admission.\footnote{\textit{OeStA, AVA, BMfKU} (Sig. 15). Fasz. 2884. Z. 12912/1919} The Ministry willingly assented to this request, as restricting admission to applicants of Austrian nationality no longer seemed applicable to the times. In addition to the heightened admissions requirements, the KFM Academic Schools imposed tighter disciplinary requirements. Infringements against the school’s “rules, decorum, morals and order” not only resulted in severe reprimanding of a pupil in front of the entire KFM Faculty and possible suspension, but future “exclusion from all German-Austrian public teaching positions.”\footnote{\textit{§2, 4 Akademische Schulen der Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, Disziplinarordnung für die Akademischen Schulen Studierenden}, VBKÖ Archiv, DRUCK 29-30.} KFM faculty could, moreover, take steps to have a student banned from possible placement in other state schools. While existing archival materials indicate that such drastic measures were never taken, the serious tone of the Academic Schools’ Disciplinary Codes aimed at professionalizing artistic training for women.

The establishment of Academic Schools of Painting, Sculpture, and from 1925 onwards Graphic Art, at Vienna’s Ladies’ Academy satisfied, for the most part, both the left- and right-wings of the political spectrum. Preserving single-gender education appeased conservatives while the KFM Academic School’s mantra of professionalization pleased liberals viewing the move as a stepping stone to women’s full-scale integration into the male academy. An article in \textit{Die Österreicherin}, the journal replacing the BÖFV’s \textit{Der Bund} in 1928, celebrated the institutional parity enjoyed by the KFM’s Academic Schools.
After the fall of the Monarchy, after women were granted complete civil rights, the Ministry for Education established Academic Classes for Painting and Sculpture, later Graphics, at the school which are led in the same manner as the General Classes of the Academy of Fine Arts and are equal to these. […] From modest beginnings, the school has unfolded into a first-class institution of equal value and rights standing next to the academic Hochschulen.779

Struggling for equal recognition of its pupils’ degrees, as well as pupils’ rights to compete for state prizes and scholarships, the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen developed from an ad-hoc private school to a state-accredited academy granting degrees equal to the state schools. That a separate Ladies’ Academy accomplished the task of educating professional women artists not only placated conservatives but fostered the rebirth of a distinct Frauenkunst in Austria’s interwar art scene.

Believing strongly in the existence of a unique women’s art, the leaders of the Viennese Women’s Academy defended the necessity of a separate women’s art school in the face of the Austrian state Academy opening to women in 1919. The Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen faced a grave legitimation problem with women’s admission into the state Academy, not to mention an added source of competition. After all, the KFM had been founded with the intent of providing women artistic education in lieu of state-supplied academic training. With the first female class entering the state Academy in 1919/20, many insisted that the KFM had outlived its institutional usefulness; ideas that gradually gained momentum in the 1920s and 1930s. The leading powers of the KFM, cleverly remarketing and rebranding the school, argued for its maintenance as nothing less than a moral imperative.

In the eyes of Kauffungen and Seligmann, the KFM’s two most preeminent defenders, such a “separate but equal” academy was a necessity to preserve women’s particular feminine qualities. KFM Director Kauffungen argued that the opening of the Schillerplatz to women only

represented a “superficial form of equality” and that demands for women’s institutional integration implied that women’s schools were inherently of lesser value than men’s.\textsuperscript{780}

Kauffungen defended the KFM’s continued existence after the opening of the state academy to women by asserting that,

\begin{quote}
I do not represent the standpoint of many modern psychologists who find women of lesser intellectual value. They are of equal intellectual value but their intellect is different than men’s intellect and cannot compete with it. It is God’s plan that women are different.\textsuperscript{781}
\end{quote}

Believing women were fundamentally different than men—that women thought, felt, and acted differently due to their biological makeup—Kauffungen maintained that single-sex education upheld a God-given natural order. Coeducational studies disadvantaged both men and women, and especially the latter since women were driven “to take on men’s manner of expression” to the detriment of their femininity.\textsuperscript{782} As the Director explained; “Art is [the expression of] heightened humanity; every human must first find him/her self in his/her own person. On this path will man only find man in himself, woman will only find woman, and their accordant manners of artistic expression.”\textsuperscript{783} In such a manner, Kauffungen reasoned, “women would not effectively be educated to be men, but to complement men’s accomplishments.”\textsuperscript{784} With their heightened emotionalism, inborn aesthetic sense and taste, women’s art was to complement and complete men’s art, but not compete with it. Kauffungen proceeded to describe women artists’ particular areas of strength.

\begin{quote}
Book-dealers and printers need women’s manner of expression for a certain genre of literature, applied-arts producers need Frauenkunst for certain purposes, and commissions are flying in from the public to female-
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{780}Richard Kauffungen, “Über das Kunststudium der Frau,” \textit{Neue Freie Presse} Nr. 20133 (14 September 1920/Morgenblatt), 2.
\textsuperscript{781}Ibid., 3.
\textsuperscript{782}Richard Kauffungen, “Über das Kunststudium der Frau,” \textit{Neue Freie Presse} Nr. 20133 (14 September 1920/Morgenblatt), 2.
\textsuperscript{783}Ibid., 3.
\textsuperscript{784}Ibid., 3.
students…These are facts which cannot be denied; they point to a particular Frauenkunst.785 Nonetheless, as evidenced by petitions at the Ministry of Education to allow men admission to the Ladies’ Academy, radicals believed that single-sex education and the concept of a women’s art were becoming obsolete. Even the editorial word at the article’s close, stating that the Neue Freie Presse was not responsible for the opinions of the honored sculptor and professor and welcomed counter-opinions, reinforces the datedness of Kauffungen’s views.

Speaking in the name of the Austrian Association of Women Artists, Hedwig Brecher-Eibuschitz countered Kauffungen’s essentialist arguments to keep women out of the Schillerplatz. Brecher-Eibuschitz, a painter and printmaker who had studied at the KFM under Martin and Michalek, played leading roles on the VBKÖ Executive Committee, Hanging Commission, and Jury, remaining with the rump-VBKÖ after Fanny Harlfinger’s Frauenkunst faction broke off in 1926.786 “Precisely to save and preserve ‘Frauenkunst,’ which we view as an important part of our national Volkskunst, we stand by the belief in equality of men and women in every learnable art.”787 Thus it was not recommendable “that our small state should maintain two large [art]-schools in the same category. Only one is known to us, that is the Academy on the Schillerplatz.”788 Precisely for this reason, to show the absurdity of maintaining two competing state academies, did the V BKÖ agitate to have men admitted to the Ladies’ Academy on the grounds that such a measure would alleviate the overcrowded Schillerplatz and allow males to enjoy the “free choice of teacher” introduced at the Ladies Academy. Needless to say, this proposal was quickly tabled, which the V BKÖ interpreted as the Academy’s refusal to have its

785 Ibid., 3.
788 Ibid., 1-2.
best talent stolen away. Similar measures would not be proposed again until during the Second Republic, at which point various parties petitioned to allow young men to study at the Modeschule der Stadt Wien, the fashion-school to which the Ladies’ Academy had been reduced after the war. Motions to introduce coeducation into theModeschule in 1958 were dismissed on the circular logic that “due to its organizational statutes, theModeschule is not in the position to accept male pupils.” A similar logic of “separate but equal” institutionalism motivated the maintenance of separate schools of Academic Painting and Sculpture at the KFM during the First Republic.

Striving to emulate the Academy of Fine Arts in every regard, albeit with pedagogical accommodations to “persons of the female sex,” the structure of the KFM’s Academic Schools closely mirrored the General Division of the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts. Students were to choose between concentrations in sculpture and painting, and from 1925-onward, graphic arts. Paralleling the state Academy, dual-concentrations were frowned upon and only permitted in certain exceptional situations. Only when a student of “outstanding abilities” received the permission of her professors was she permitted to switch schools, or to visit both schools concurrently. The KFM’s Academic Schools’ plan of study was organized hierarchically, with Kauffungen leading the division for sculpture and Seligmann presiding over the painting Division. Grom-Rottmayer and Harlfinger were the painting school’s other main instructors.

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when it was launched.\textsuperscript{792} Depending upon their individual course of study, the records of which have been destroyed, students might have also taken applied arts courses with Otto Friedrich.

KFM Academic Students progressed through a curriculum ordered by school and Jahrgang, or year. First-year students in the Painting School studied drawing and painting from the living model, as well as vestment studies, daily from 9am-12pm.\textsuperscript{793} Afternoons and evenings were in spent in Costume Studies and in the Evening Life Drawing Class: each organized as 2 hour sessions 5 times per week.\textsuperscript{794} Landscape and Still-life painting, instructed by Professor Harlfinger, could also be studied in the mornings and afternoons as a non-obligatory elective. In Kauffungen’s Sculpture School, students learned to model the human body and head, as well as practicing composition and drapery studies, daily from 9am-12pm.\textsuperscript{795} Like the state Academy, the Sculpture students joined their colleagues from the Painting School for a common Life Drawing Session in the evenings.\textsuperscript{796} On average, KFM Academic Pupils spent around 27-35 weekly hours in classroom instruction.\textsuperscript{797} Their professors spent, respectively, around 20 hours in the classroom, not counting time spent in administrative duties and office hours.\textsuperscript{798}

In addition to the Core Courses, or Hauptfächer, all KFM Academic Students were required to fulfill requirements in the necessary theoretical and auxiliary subjects, or Hilfsfächer.

First-year students were required to attend lectures in the auxiliary subjects of Anatomy and

\textsuperscript{792}OeStA, AVA,MBfIU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 5764-IV/1922 [Beilage]
\textsuperscript{793}OeStA, AVA,MBfIU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 14125-IV-10a/1922.
\textsuperscript{794}OeStA, AVA,MBfIU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 14125-IV-10a/1922.
\textsuperscript{795}OeStA, AVA,MBfIU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 14125-IV-10a/1922.
\textsuperscript{796}OeStA, AVA,MBfIU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 14125-IV-10a/1922.
\textsuperscript{797}OeStA, AVA,MBfIU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 5764-IV/1922 [Beilage]
\textsuperscript{798}OeStA, AVA,MBfIU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 5764-IV/1922 [Beilage]
Perspective for one hour per week. As the instruction of anatomy in a single-sex environment was deemed of utmost importance to students’ morals, these lectures were offered on the premises of the KFM by KFM Faculty or University Professors. Academic Painter Dr. Hermann Vincenz Heller, a specialist in anatomical instruction for artists teaching at the ABKw, KGS and other state institutions, offered the girls lectures in Anatomy while University Docent Eduard Schiffer instructed Artistic Perspective. Second-year students’ course of study was virtually identical to the first-year curriculum with the exception that composition exercises were added to painting students’ regular curriculum. Second-year auxiliary subjects, to be frequented at the Kunstgewerbeschule or Academy of Fine Arts, were Art History, History, and Stylistic History. Tensions with the ABKw and KGS remain evident from the KFM’s correspondence over routine matters of time and place for attending the Hilfsfächer lectures. Helene Roth was particularly incensed with the Academy’s refusal to place auditing-students’ marks directly on their KFM transcripts, despite the efforts of Director Kauffungen to rectify the matter in 1926. Instead, the girls were issued certificates as “Hospitantinnen,” or special guest-auditors, which the KFM interpreted as an institutional affront. The Core Subjects studied in the third and final year of Academic Study remained largely the same as the first two years, though third-years studied color-theory and chemistry as auxiliary subjects.

In some ways, however, the course of study offered in the KFM’s Academic schools remained inferior to that offered at the state Academy. No Master Classes or Specialized workshops existed in connection with the KFM’s Academic Schools. In contrast to the state Academy, the duration of study at the KFM’s Academic Schools was limited to three years to the

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799 OeStA, AVA, MBfIU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 14125-IV-10a/1922.
800 UAABKW, VA 876/1920, VA 989/1920, VA 1122/1921.
801 UAABKW, VA 389/1926.
802 Landscape and still-life painting remained an elective for second-year students hoping to specialize in objective rather than figural painting.
disadvantage of KFMers. §18 of the Academic Schools’ Statutes read that “the total duration of study may not exceed 3 years.” 803 At the state Academy, pupils had a total of four years to spend in the General Courses, which could, in certain cases, be extended to five. Seeking to redress this imbalance, on 9 February 1922 the KFM petitioned to have the maximum duration of study in its Academic Schools extended to four years.

In consideration of the fact that many pupils need another year to complete their studies in order to be able to practice art professionally and for a living, also because of the rampant lack of space at the [state] Academy, which makes it very difficult [for KFMers] to transfer into a Master-School, the undersigned School Administration petitions the Ministry of Education to amend §18 of the Statutes… to allow pupils, when necessary, to study further for another year. 804

While the Ministry approved the amendment, the situation still disadvantaged KFM pupils, for the maximum length of study was only to be extended to four years in certain exceptional cases. Three years remained the rule. By contrast, at the state Academy of Fine Arts, students typically spent three to four years in the General Courses, and then three to four years in the Meisterschulen, or Master Classes, making students’ total duration of study around eight years.

In addition, while KFM courses were instructed in an Academic-caliber manner, the limited resources of the League-sponsored Ladies’ Academy could never surpass those of the state schools, despite the Ministry’s generous annual subventions. In a 1919- memorandum to the VΒKÖ (Association of Austrian Women Artists) arguing for expanded state support of the Ladies’ Academy, the KFM maintained the perpetual inequality of a separate Ladies’ Academy working under financial and spatial constraints. “A class of a dozen or so pupils, attached to a private school located in rented, inadequate rooms, ordered to maintain itself through its own

804 Richard Kauffungen to the Ministry of Education, OeStA, BMfIU, AVA Fasz. 2884, Z. 3115-IV/1922 [9 February 1922].
funds” could never compete with “a richly-endowed state Hochschule with around 300 students, its own buildings, rich collections, and libraries.”

In light of the uphill battle faced by the earlier generation of Austrian Women Artists who had founded the VGBKÖ, most of whom were forced to pursue professional artistic training circuitously, such as taking private lessons with moonlighting Academicians or studying in Parisian coeducational studios, the KFM found a sympathetic audience in the Association of Austrian Women Artists, then under the Presidency of Helene Baroness von Krauss (1876-1950) and Vice-Presidency of Louise Fraenkel-Hahn (1878-1939).

In the same confidential memorandum from 1919, the KFM revealed several key proposals for its Academic Schools to the VGBKÖ, many of which were put into action in the years to follow. First, the KFM recommended the “allocation of classroom space in a state-building as well as allocation of appropriate teaching materials.”

Not only would this allocation of state materials and space foster the growth of the KFM’s Academic Schools to accommodate as many as fifty students, this additional state support would facilitate the entrance of KFM graduates into the state Academy’s Master Classes. Advanced students “would have the opportunity to enter Special Schools in which they could execute independent works in their own workshops.”

Certain students could even be allotted student-ateliers on the Schillerplatz, which would help to counter objections to coeducational instruction in advanced master-schools. Second, the KFM called for the incorporation of KFM Faculty “in some sort of form of state service.”

The third proposal suggested the attachment of a course for plein-air landscape and animal studies, “an essential form of education in contemporary painting,” as well as the

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805 Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VGBKÖ on Academic Courses (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VGBKÖ], ARCH 32/ 3.
806 Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VGBKÖ on Academic Courses (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VGBKÖ], ARCH 32/ 4.
807 Ibid.
808 Ibid.
necessary space and accommodations.809 Furthering the expansion of KFM curriculum in the early 1900s to include the applied arts, the KFM’s fourth point centered on the “attachment of a (especially important for women!) class for applied arts” to the KFM’s Academic Courses.810 The call for expanding the KFM’s program in the applied arts hardly represented a radical motion, especially given women’s traditional stake in the applied and decorative arts. What was radical, however, about the KFM’s suggestion was the addendum that the “gradual relief of the Kunstgewerbeschule by taking the female-pupils studying there, which can hardly meet with resistance on the part of the Kunstgewerbeschule” accompany the expansion of its applied arts offerings.811 Although this drastic, institutionally-aggrandizing measure was never realized, the proposal, most likely penned by Kauffungen and Seligmann, reflected the KFM’s attempts to defend its institutional necessity in the wake of women’s admission to the state Academy. Such a radical proposal would not surface again until 1938, at which point Wiener Frauenakademie Director Heinrich Zita proposed, in a desperate attempt to save the Ladies’ Academy from imminent demise by the National Socialist Regime, to transfer all female pupils at the KGS and ABKW to the Ladies’ Academy.812 Zita’s proposal, like its 1919 predecessor, was rejected flat-out from all sides.813 The KFM’s fifth proposal outlined to the VBVÖ concerned the creation of teacher-training courses to prepare candidates for taking the Lehramtsprüfung (state-certified teachers’ examination) for teaching drawing in elementary-, middle-, secondary-, and trade schools. A League of Female Drawing Teachers (Verein der Zeichenlehrerinnen) provided the stimulus for introducing this reform. Finally, along with the expansion of the KFM’s Academic

809 Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBVÖ on Academic Courses (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBVÖ], ARCH 32/4.
810 Ibid.
811 Ibid.
812 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884 Z. 43153/1938, 45699/a/1938.
813 ABKW to MiKA (Ministerium für innere kulturelle Angelegenheiten) [24 November 1939], KGS to MiKA [29 November 1938], OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884 Z. 43153/1938, 45699/a/1938.
Facilities, KFM Faculty confided to the VBKÖ the “practical pedagogical reforms speaking to the modern spirit” it had in store.\textsuperscript{814} Reforms to abolish the separate Jahrgänge (years/forms), introduce free choice of teachers, imbue students with craft- and workshop- centered instruction, and practical measures for the transition from school into practical life would transform the KFM’s Academic Schools into a modern Academy.

Most of the reforms outlined in the KFM’s clarion call to the VKBÖ would be enacted in the 1920s and pushed the institution towards heightened levels of state nationalization. The memorandum’s more outlandish proposals, however, such as the clause to point four that all female students at the Kunstgewerbeschule be gradually transferred to the KFM, were scrapped. Similar to its reaction to Kauffungen’s 1920 feuilleton in defense of non-integration, the VBKÖ declared that “the removal of female pupils from the Kunstgewerbeschule would directly contradict the principles of the Association of Austrian Women Artists.”\textsuperscript{815} The rest of the KFM’s proposals for greater state support, including granting the KFM state buildings, materials, and teaching contracts, as well as plans to reform KFM curriculum, met with the “warmest approval” on the part of the Women Artists’ League.\textsuperscript{816} As the most prudent solution to the problem at hand, the VKBÖ thus recommended the

Nationalization of the Kunstschule with the introduction of the suggested reforms, admitting men and women to both the ABKW and KFM so that the latter could be considered for its long-desired and necessary expansion and organization as an Academy, [introducing] free choice of teachers… as well as the possibility of filling teaching positions with female forces to document the principle of equal rights.\textsuperscript{817}

\textsuperscript{814} Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on Academic Courses (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBKÖ], ARCH 32/ 5.
\textsuperscript{815} VBKÖ comments on Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on Academic Courses (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBKÖ], ARCH 32/ 7.
\textsuperscript{816} VBKÖ comments on Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on Academic Courses (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBKÖ], ARCH 32/ 7.
\textsuperscript{817} VBKÖ comments on Memorandum of the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen to VBKÖ on Academic Courses (1918), Archiv der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [ARCH VBKÖ], ARCH 32/ 8.
Gaining added buoyancy from the Republic’s democratic spirit and leveling of gender relations, the Women’s Academy stood poised to claim its permanent position in the Republic’s mainstream institutional framework.

The KFM’s demands for its Verstaatlichung began to be realized with the incorporation of six KFM faculty as civil-servants in the 1921/22 school-year. As detailed in Chapter One, the KFM reaped the fruits of one of Under-Secretary for Education Otto Glöckel’s “living subventions.” On 21 January 1921, a parliamentary motion for the systemization of 6 positions at the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen was co-sponsored by two German Peoples’ Party Deputies serving on the Committee for Education and Upbringing. 818 Emmy Stradal, the Lower-Austrian housewife-turned-politician concentrating upon social issues, above all women’s issues, during her tenure in Parliament, and Dr. Viktor Zendler, a former Gymnasium professor, represented the key forces in initiating the legislation. 819

Sharing Seligmann and Kauffungen’s convictions on “the accents of a distinct Frauenkunst,” the German People’s Party believed that maintaining the women’s academy was nothing less than a patriotic duty to the German-Austrian state. 820 For these German Peoples’ Party Deputies, the innate artistic sense of German-Austrian women lay untapped. Not only would education allow women to bring these artistic talents to fruition, serious training in the arts would fortify women’s knowledge in cultural affairs, particularly crucial to their societal roles as

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818 Antrag der Abgeordneten Dr. Zeidler, Emmi Stradal und Genossen betreffend die Systemisierung einiger Stellen an der Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (127 der Beilage). OeStA, VA MiKU, Fasz 2884 (Sig 15), Mappe 15A Z.14610/1922.
819 Fellow partymen including Gymnasium professor Dr. Hans Angerer, jurist Dr. Felix Frank, teacher Max Pauly, Dr. Sepp Straffner, Dr. Jurist Dr. Franz Dinghofer, Ing. Friedrich Lackner, Businessman Emil Kraft, Teacher Dr. Ernst Hampel, Commissioner for Finance Dr. Leopold Waber, industrialist Dr. Hans Schürff, farmer Felix Bichl, and tradesman Matthias Wimmer co-signed the motion. On Emmy Stradal, see Gabriela Hauch Vom Frauenstandpunkt aus, 337-340.
820 Antrag der Abgeordneten Dr. Zeidler, Emmi Stradal und Genossen betreffend die Systemisierung einiger Stellen an der Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (127 der Beilage). OeStA, VA MiKU, Fasz 2884 (Sig 15), Mappe 15A Z.14610/1922.
wife and mother. Stradal and Zeidler argued that the opening of the ABKW only represented a theoretical victory for most female applicants to the Academy were still turned away because of lack of space. Accordingly, the two drafted a motion to subsidize five teaching positions, including “one connected with the position of School-Director remunerated at higher level,” and an administrative post at the KFM. 821 In contrast to the Academy’s cramped conditions, the KFM’s Academic Schools “[equipped] with the same rights, duties, and direction as the Academy” could accommodate more female students in a gender-appropriate manner. 822 Contending that women could pursue all fields of art, the motion echoed Kauffungen’s ideas that women’s successes in art “do not make competition for men, but that male work is most valuably complemented through the full development of feminine forms of expression.” 823 Particularly marked by the Viennese taste, “the genuine imprint of Frauenkunst” not only represented an important force in the art world, but stamped women’s capacity as teachers, mothers, and citizens. Stradal and Zeidler closed with the declaration that the Republic’s best interests would be served by extending state-contracts to these six key personnel: a KFM Director/Professor, four core professors, and an Administrative Officer. On 23 June 1921, the Parliamentary Committee for Upbringing and Education reported that the motion to subsidize these six positions had been approved in the Ministry for Education. 824

The systemization of these positions represented a tremendous victory for the KFM, further engraining its claims to being a state institution. Richard Kauffungen, KFM Professor

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821 Antrag der Abgeordneten Dr. Zeidler, Emmi Stradal und Genossen betreffend die Systemisierung einiger Stellen an der Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (127 der Beilage). OeStA, VA MfKU, Fasz 2884 (Sig 15), Mappe 15A Z.14610/1922.
822 Antrag der Abgeordneten Dr. Zeidler, Emmi Stradal und Genossen betreffend die Systemisierung einiger Stellen an der Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (127 der Beilage). OeStA, VA MfKU, Fasz 2884 (Sig 15), Mappe 15A Z.14610/1922.
823 Ibid.
824 Bericht des Ausschusses für Erziehung und Unterricht über den Antrag der Abgeordneten Dr. Zeidler, Emmi Stradal und Genossen betreffend die Systemisierung einiger Stellen an der Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen (127 der Beilage). OeStA, VA MfKU, Fasz 2884 (Sig 15), Mappe 15A Z.14610/1922.
since 1898 and Director since 1908; Adalbert Franz Seligmann, Professor since 1897; Otto Friedrich, Professor since 1910; Hermann Grom-Rottmayr, Professor since 1916; Richard Harlfinger, Professor since 1917; and Helene Roth, KFM Administrative Officer since 1899, were all extended state contracts. From a financial point of view, the regularization of these professors’ salaries relieved a huge burden from the school. More than half of the individuals listed above had worked for over twenty-five years for a pittance of the hourly rates given to maintenance workers at the Academy. Like the female secondary schools described in Chapter One, the KFM faced dire monetary straights in the early years of the Republic. Roth, Kauffungen, and League-Chair Mayreder pleaded to the Ministry of Education that “because our country’s economic situation has brought the art school, maintained by you [the Ministry] into danger, [the KFM] requests that the salaries of its core teachers and secretary be secured by the state.” Although Section-Head Förster had initially denied the parliamentary motion to “take these personnel on as state-servants” in January 1921, arguing that a portion of the KFM’s annual subvention should be reserved “so that the institution would be in the position to award salaries to its personnel as it sees fit,” the Ministry yielded to pressures to employ KFM personnel as state-servants in the Winter of 1921. Additionally, in the same statement in which Förster had spoken out against incorporating KFM faculty into the civil service, Förster expressed doubts as to the KFM’s claims to being a state, or even quasi-state, institution. Förster argued that the petition for the systemization of 6 KFM personnel “seems to have been based upon the false assumption that state Academic Classes have been attached to the institution in question…[.]” Instead, Förster clarified that the Academic Classes were, in fact, no state institution nor would this “introduction [of Academic Classes] stand in any sort of connection

825 Karl Mayreder, Richard Kauffungen, and Helene Roth to BMfIU [26 September 1921], OeStA, Fasz. 2884, Z. 14610/1922.
with the Academy of Fine Arts, as this [women’s admission] was only allowed two years after
the establishment of the Academic Classes in question, specifically in 1920.”

Nevertheless, Förster could not deny that “even today—that is, after the admission of women to studies at the
Academy of Fine Arts—the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen fulfills needs in the field of
women’s education, and the state education-administration strives, when at all possible, the
support the aforenamed Kunstschule materially.”

Yielding to parliamentary pressure, Förster assented to the systemization of KFM Personnel. In the Parliamentary Session of 30 December 1921 the Federal government was authorized to extend fixed government contracts to the six key KFM personnel. Finally, the KFM enjoyed a heftier share of state funding, which nonetheless only met around ¼ of the school’s operating costs.

Despite its victory in securing its key-personnel as state employees, the KFM still had many battles to wage in striving to have itself recognized on a par with other Austrian Hochschulen. Indeed, many of the points outlined to the VBKÖ in the KFM’s confidential memorandum of 1919 were never wholly realized, if at all. Levels of state funding on top of the “living subventions” for the six key personnel remained constant at 10,000 Kronen per year. While the KFM did receive additional funds for special occasions and school exhibitions, such as the 30th-year Jubilee Exhibition described at the beginning of this chapter and a school exhibition in conjunction with the international women’s congress held in Vienna in 1930, the KFM would be resigned to operating from a string of rented rooms for most of its institutional lifespan. In addition to its premises at Stubenring 12 and Bäckerstraße 1, from 1925 onwards the WFA began

827 Ibid.
828 Ibid.
829 Beiblatt zum Gesuch des Vereines “Wiener Frauen-Akademie und Schule für freie und angewandte Kunst” um
Pragmatisierung con fünf systemisterten Lehrstellen und einer systemierten Kanzeileileiterstelle, OeStA, AVA,
BMfIU, Fasz. 2884 (Sig.15), Mappe 15C Z/ 5198/1927 [18 Feb 1927].
830 Stieglitz, XXX.
renting additional space from the provincial government at Henslergasse 3 in the third district.\textsuperscript{831} Helene Roth pleaded to Minister of Education Anton Rintelen on 10 July 1926 “to crown the works of your Ministry, and help us, your graciousness, [acquire] our own school-house!,” referring to the recently-vacated premises of the \textit{Akademisches Gymnasium}.\textsuperscript{832} Roth’s plea nonetheless fell on deaf ears. Only in 1937 did WFA Director Heinrich Zita maneuver to have a grand, three-story former school building at Siegelgasse 2-4 in the third district given to the school from the Viennese Municipal government.\textsuperscript{833}

The victory, however, remained bittersweet. Not only was the \textit{Verein Wiener Frauenakademie} dissolved by the \textit{Reichskommissar für die Wiedervereinigung Österreichs mit dem Deutschen Reich} on 22 December 1938, the school lost many of its most talented forces with the suspension of Jews from studying or teaching at the institution.\textsuperscript{834} Zita, whose instrumentalized Nazi sympathies came all too late, also was removed from his position in April 1940 due to his political unreliability.\textsuperscript{835} The death knell came when National Socialist municipal authorities assumed control of the \textit{Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für bildende Kunst und Werkkultur} on 22 November 1938.\textsuperscript{836} The \textit{Frauenakademie} ceased being an academy of the fine arts altogether with the discontinuation of its Schools of Painting, Graphics, and Sculpture, and instead focused on producing craftswomen useful to the \textit{Deutsche Arbeitsfront}. The school survived the war, holding classes in the Music Conservatory and \textit{Konzerthaus} after its Siegelgasse home had been bombed out. Offering concentrations in fashion, textiles, and crafts, the school reopened as the \textit{Modeschule der Stadt Wien} in the former imperial residence at

\textsuperscript{831} OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Mappe 15 B, Z. 66378/III/1925.
\textsuperscript{832} Helene Roth to BMfU [1- July 1932], OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Mappe 15 B, Z. 18932/1932.
\textsuperscript{833} OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 17534/Va/1937.
\textsuperscript{834} WStLA, MA 49/ VA 6025, Z. 2 [29 December 1938].
\textsuperscript{835} Heinrich Zita, Tatsachenbericht über meine Tätigkeit als Direktor der Wiener Frauenakademie. Österreichische Staatsarchiv [OeStA], Allgemeine Verwaltungsakten [AVA], Ministerium für Kultur und Unterricht [MfKuU] Fasz. 2884 (Sig 15), Mappe 15 (Frauenakademie), Z. 1795/1940a.
\textsuperscript{836} WStLA, MA 49/ VA 6025, Aktzeichen IV Ab Dr. Bla/Ho-37A [22 December 1938]
Hetzendorf in 1946. While the *Modeschule* continues to exist to this day, all that the Ladies’ Academy had stood for—ideals of enlightenment, emancipation, and progress—had been destroyed.

During the height of its institutional prestige in the 1920s, the KFM fought to have its rights as an Austrian *Hochschule* confirmed by the state. The battle for the full institutional parity of the KFM’s Academic Courses embodied an uphill climb fraught by contradiction. As Förster’s reaction to the systemization petitions of early 1921 demonstrated, at times the state was willing to lend its name to the school, yet at other times emphasized that the KFM was, in fact, no state *Kunsthochschule*. Following the first full academic year of women’s admission to the Schillerplatz, Director Kauffungen petitioned the Ministry of Education to ensure that its Academic Students received the same rights as state Academicians “with regard to state scholarships and prizes, appointment to state positions, and possible transfer into the Academy of Fine Arts.” When the Ministry consulted the ABKW on the matter, the Academy gave the somewhat impertinent answer that “Ministerial Decree z. 23280/17 of 17 September 1918 had already confirmed the equality of pupils of these [KFM Academic Schools] with the Academy Pupils. Further legal confirmation of the terms of these statutes does not appear necessary to the Rectory.” The Academy provided no further clarification of KFM Academic Students’ ability to compete for state scholarships or official posts.

Kauffungen’s latter point that KFM Academic Students be freed from an additional entrance examination when transferring to the ABKW did not fare so well, either. Kauffungen had petitioned for this concession on the logic that KFMers, having already passed the KFM’s

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837 WStLA, MAbt 813, A44/1/ Modeschule der Stadt Wien, Diverses 1940-1968 [Informatives: Prospekte, Artikel, usw.].
838 Richard Kauffungen to BMfiU [20 October 1922], OeStA, BMfiU, AVA, Fasz. 2884, Z. 24523/1922.
839 ABKW to BMfiU, Gleichmässige Behandlung der Schülerinnen der akademischen Klassen der KFM [23 November 1922], OeStA, BMfiU, AVA, Fasz. 2884, Z. 24523/1922.
stringent entrance examination, were subjected to double jeopardy by having to submit for another entrance examination in the case of their possible transfer to the ABKW after completing preparatory studies at the KFM. However, the Academy argued that KFMers were being treated “absolutely equal to others” in this regard.  

840 Not only “was the entrance examination required from all other pupils of other art academies applying for admission here,” the KFM’s individualized methods of instruction necessitated an entrance-examination “in order to give a clear picture of the applicant’s abilities.”  

841 Director Kauffungen submitted to this line of reasoning that KFM pupils were in fact being treated equally with other applicants in a ministerial audience in November 1922.

Lastly, Kauffungen requested that KFM pupils be granted the same privileges, that is free or reduced admission, as Academy students when visiting art-league exhibitions or public museums. The Academy declared it had already took action to free KFMers from admission fees at public exhibitions, a claim that nonetheless lacks substantiation in the ABKW or Austrian State Archives. The Ministry, however, willingly intervened on the KFM’s behalf. The Ministry for Education instructed the administrative offices of the Kunsthistorisches Museum (Art-History Museum), the Austrian Modern Galerie at the Belvedere Palace, the Albertina Graphic Collections, the Vienna Secession, Hagenbund, and official artists’ guild of the Genossenschaft bildender Künstler Wiens “to offer KFM Academic Pupils the same reduced admission rates as pupils of the Academy of Fine Arts” for the purpose of furthering their education.  

842 Nonetheless, the issue continued to beleaguer the school into the 1930s, when ticket sellers at the

840 ABKW to BMfIU, Gleichmässige Behandlung der Schülerinnen der akademischen Klassen der KFM [23 November 1922], OeStA, BMfIU, AVA, Fasz. 2884, Z. 24523/1922.
841 ABKW to BMfIU, Gleichmässige Behandlung der Schülerinnen der akademischen Klassen der KFM [23 November 1922], OeStA, BMfIU, AVA, Fasz. 2884, Z. 24523/1922.
842 OeStA, BMfIU, AVA, Fasz. 2884, Z. 24523/1922.
Belvedere and other state collections refused to recognize WFA students’ identification cards. The issue was resolved once and for all in 1930 when the Directors of the Belvedere, Albertina and Vienna’s Art-History and Natural-History Museums resolved to provide all Ladies’ Academy pupils free admission upon presenting official identification. The Ministry and Academy’s response to Kauffungen’s 1922 demands to legally confirm the equality of the KFM’s Academic Schools to those of the Academy aptly demonstrates the ambiguity surrounding the precise institutional status of the Ladies’ Academy, as well as how the Ministry and ABKW volleyed responsibility for the KFM between each other. In particular, the Academy refused to budge in cooperating with the Ladies’ Academy, as demonstrated by its response to Kauffungen’s pleas.

The KFM’s next major attempt to shore up its status as a Hochschule came in May 1925 with its newly drafted statutes, curricular reforms, and the adoption of the more prestigious title of Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für Freie und angewandte Kunst (Viennese Ladies’ Academy and School for Fine and Applied Art). If the KFM’s Academic Statutes of 1918/19, mirroring the ABKW’s curriculum and hierarchical structure, had represented a frondian-attack, the KFM’s new statues of 1925 represented an all-out frontal assault on the Academy. The League submitted amended statutes to the Viennese School-Board and Municipal authorities on 10 May 1925. Fulfilling its promise to the VBKÖ to integrate the applied-arts and workshop principle into its curriculum, the new statutes contained important changes such as the attachment of Academic Schools of Graphic Arts and the installation of the workshop principle throughout the institution and the adoption of Wiener Frauenakademie für Kunst und Kunstgewerbe as the new name for the school and league. Indeed, the attachment of classes in

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843 Direktion der Österreichischen Galerie to BMfU [12 April 1930], OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 13029/1930.
the Graphic Arts to the KFM’s Academic Schools had been approved by the Viennese School Board’s on 19 December 1924, taking effect the following calendar year. While the Ministry had no objections to the expansion of the KFM’s curriculum in the applied arts, it expressed “deep reservations” about the proposed new name of Viennese Women’s Academy for Fine and Applied Arts. The Ministry of Education consulted ABKW Rector Painter and Secessionist founder Rudolf Bacher for his opinion on the matter. In the meeting of the Ministry’s Division for Art on 8 June 1925, Bacher voiced his conviction that the designation of “Frauenakademie,” especially with regard to its applied arts division, did not befit the character of an Austrian Hochschule. Considering that Bacher sided with the conservative rump Secession during its 1908 schism, Bacher’s insistence that the applied arts not be equated with academic studies is not surprising. Both the Federal Ministry and Municipal authorities agreed with Bacher that “according to the present school organization, a hochschulmässig operation of its applied arts instruction is absolutely not planned for at the present time.” Accordingly, the League resubmitted its name as Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für freie und angewandte Kunst to municipal authorities on 21 July 1925, a title which demarcated a division between the school’s Hochschule-like offerings in the fine arts and its schools of craft. The new name of Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für freie und angewandte Kunst was confirmed by Viennese municipal authorities on 11 August 1925. Along with this more prestigious designation as

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845 OeStA, BMfiU, AVA, Fasz. 2884, Mappe 15 A (Frauenakademie), Z. 18530/III/1925.
846 BMfiU to MA49 (Wiener Magistrat als politische Landesbehörde) [2 June 1925], WStLA, MAbt 119/ A32/ 49/6025/1925, Z. 6482, MA 49/1925.
847 OeStA, AVA, BMfiU, Fasz. 2884, Mappe 15A (Frauenakademie), Z. 18530/1925
848 BMfiU to MA49 (Wiener Magistrat als politische Landesbehörde) [2 June 1925], WStLA, MAbt 119/ A32/ 49/6025/1925, Z. 6482, MA 49/1925.
850 BMfiU to MA49 (Wiener Magistrat als politische Landesbehörde) [2 June 1925], WStLA, MAbt 119/ A32/ 49/6025/1925, Z. 6482, MA 49/1925.

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Academy, the WFA School-Director was officially allowed to use the more prestigious title of Direktor rather than Schulleiter from 3 May 1927 onwards.\footnote{Otto Glöckel/Wiener Stadtshulrat to WFA [3 May 1927] WStLA, MAab 119/ A32/ 49/6025/1925, Z. 6482, MA 49/1925. Thus far, the text has used “School Director” interchangeably with “School-Leader” in order avoid the cumbersome latter designation. Technically, however, only the title Schulleiter (School-Leader) was used officially up until 1927.}

What was radical about the Frauenakademie’s proposed new statutes was the manner in which the WFA directly mimicked the rigid hierarchical structure of the state Academy, leaving no doubts that the WFA had arrived as a Hochschule. On 22 April 1925, the League WFA Executive Committee moved to adopt the same admission criteria for the state WFA Academic Schools that were in place at the state Academy, which involved successful completion of secondary school with the Matura, as well as the normal artistic work-samples and qualification-examinations.\footnote{OeSTA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884 (Mappe 15A), Z. 12852/III/1925.} A further move significantly enhancing the prestige of the WFA’s Academic Schools was its proposed adoption of Meisterschulen, or Master Classes and Workshops, in which advanced students could hone their artistic skills before becoming independent practitioners. A “fundamental division between the general schools of painting, sculpture, and graphic arts” would support the “further and higher development of the school.”\footnote{OeSTA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884 (Mappe 15A), Z. 12852/III/1925.} Whereas previously KFM Academic Students had been forced to transfer to the Schillerplatz to pursue further training in Master Classes, the WFA’s proposed reforms would have allowed advanced Academic training to have been completed at the WFA. To illustrate the fundamental restructuring it envisioned, the WFA submitted excerpts from the state Academy’s recently-approved statutes with added clauses and alterations penned in by hand. The WFA’s claims to the Academy’s formal structure were clear. The tactic, however, of showing the Ministry what it had approved for the ABKW backfired. The WFA’s proposed Hochschule-like statutes met with rejection in early summer 1925. The proposed attachment of master-classes represented an
unwanted source of competition to the state Academy, which desired to retain its monopoly on premier artistic training. The version of the WFA’s Academic Schools Statutes that was approved on 11 August 1925 largely mirrored that of its 1918/19 statutes.\footnote{Statuten des Vereines Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für Freie und Angewandte Kunst, WStLA, MA49/ VA 6025/ 1925 [10 August 1925].} Another version of the Academic Schools’ Statutes was passed on 26 May 1928, though the changes to those of 1925 were superficial and hardly equaled the more radical demands of its initial summer of 1926 draft.\footnote{WStLA, MAbt 49, VA 6025/1925 Z. 3038.}

Despite this minor setback, the Frauenakademie progressed by leaps and bounds in its quest to provide Hochschule-quality instruction. The WFA’s organization developed significantly in spite of the Ministry’s refusal to develop a system of Master Classes at the WFA. In 1926, the first full-year in which it operated as an Academy, the WFA was divided into three divisions: 1) a General Preparatory Division offering courses in drawing, painting, life-studies, landscape, still-life, and graphic-art; 2) Higher Academic Training in Academic Schools of Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic-Art; 3) Schools of Decorative and Applied Arts. The introduction of these formal curricular divisions mirrored the structures of the state academies into general and specialized schools. Auxiliary courses in Anatomy and perspective continued to be offered in-house, while lectures in stylistic history, art history, general history, color science, and chemistry were to attended at the ABKW. Lectures in costume history were offered in conjunction with the Kunstgewerbeschule. Faculty in the WFA’s Academic Schools included Kauffungen, Seligmann, Friedrich, Grom-Rottmayer, Harlfinger, Heller and Larisch. New to the WFA in the early 1920s were Christian Ludwig Martin, who taught in the WFA’s Graphic Schools beginning in 1920/21, and Architect Viktor Weixler, who taught perspective.\footnote{Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für freie und angewandte Kunst [Prospekt], VBKÖ ARCH, DRUCK 21.} Two
additional professors, Secessionists Ferdinand Kitt and Sculptor Heinrich Zita, were awarded contractual positions in 1926 to replace Grom-Rottmayer, who had taken a position at the Technical University, and the recently retired Kauffungen.\(^857\) When Kauffungen stepped down from his directorial and professorial duties, longtime colleague A.F. Seligmann filled the post of Director until 1932.\(^858\) Although Seligmann remained on staff teaching until 1936, at which point the Academy had already taken a sharp decline, Seligmann was seceded by Otto Friedrich as Interim Director in 1932.\(^859\) Heinrich Zita, like his predecessor Kauffungen a sculptor by training, became the WFA’s last director before the Nazification and dismantling of the Academy.

The WFA’s School of Decorative and Applied Arts experienced a strong upsurge in the mid 1920s. Building on a preparatory course based on drawing from nature, the WFA’s Decorative Workshops offered concentrations in ornament, applied arts objects design, industrial graphics (packaging, poster-making), book decorating and binding, ornamental writing, and modern clothing. Female instructors predominated in the WFA’s Applied Arts workshops, many whom were KFM/WFA graduates. In addition to longtime KFM/WFA faculty member Paula Taussig-Roth’s position leading the embroidery workshop, Elfriede Berbalk taught metalworking, Hedwig Kohn presided over the porcelain and enameling workshops, Mina Hadrboletz provided instruction in tailoring, Maria Reich taught courses in fashion, and Adelheid Paukert headed the workshop for porcelain painting.\(^860\) The lone male in the applied arts workshop was Josef Klein, who led the workshops for bookbinding and box-maxing. Additional courses for theatrical set-design and lighting were offered in conjunction with the Austrian

\(^857\) OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 34510/1932.
\(^858\) OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 34510/1932.
\(^859\) A.F. Seligmann to BMfU [24 October 1932], OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884 Z. 30630/1932.
\(^860\) Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für freie und angewandte Kunst [Prospekt], VBKÖ ARCH, DRUCK 21.
National Theater. Unfortunately, the destruction of the WFA School Archives has resulted in little detailed information on the teaching careers of these women, as the majority of the ministerial correspondence tended to focus on the WFA Academic Schools.

The zenith of the Frauenakademie’s institutional prestige came around the time of its thirtieth anniversary in 1927 with the Pragmatisierung, or extension of permanent state contracts, of the WFA’s six state funded positions. Although the 1921 “systemization” of six KFM personnel constituted a tremendous financial alleviation to the League, the “Pragmatization” of the positions entailed a heightened level of stability, as positions were tenured and interminable, and the added perquisites of eligibility for state insurance and pension benefits. Arguing that “the systemized positions are the cornerstone of our school,” the WFA maintained that “only first-class teaching forces not otherwise occupied in other time-robbing teaching activities can fulfill our school’s lofty goals, [that is] only teachers, who are permanently connected to our institution.”

In other words, the WFA spelled out to the Ministry, the rigors of providing 20-25 weekly hours of classroom instruction did not allow the WFA to supplement their modest salaries with additional teaching at other schools. The League reminded the Ministry of the renown that the Frauenakademie enjoyed throughout Europe, and particularly the Parliamentary Motion of 1921 to subsidize the positions.

It has been acknowledged [by Parliament] as one of the best educational institutions in Vienna and prized for its national educational mission [and] for providing artistic education to its pupils in such areas which are particularly suited to women…Our school has steadily occupied a special position in the time of the Monarchy as well as in the Republic. Acknowledged by specialists as unique throughout all of Europe, both Austria and Vienna are unimaginable without the Frauenakademie.”

Beiblatt zum Gesuch des Vereins WFA und StFkRA um Pragmatisierung vom 5 systemisierten Lehrstellen und einer systemisierten Kanzleileiterstelle [18 Feb 1927] OeStA, AVA, Fasz. 2884 (Sig. 15), Mappe 15C Z. 5198/1927, Seite 2.

Beiblatt zum Gesuch des Vereins WFA und StFkRA um Pragmatisierung vom 5 systemisierten Lehrstellen und einer systemisierten Kanzleileiterstelle [18 Feb 1927] OeStA, AVA, Fasz. 2884 (Sig. 15), Mappe 15C Z. 5198/1927, Seite 2.
The WFA’s prestige was largely owed to state-subsidized positions, a favorable reputation which could only proliferate with the fortification of this support. Short of the WFA’s demands for five-fully pragmatized positions, the Ministry “was authorized to implement the pragmatization of 3 teaching-positions for the School-Director Seligmann and the teachers Friedrich and Harlfinger as well as the appointment of Helene Roth to administrative duties, but to leave the posts of the two assistant-professors, Zita and Kitt, as contractual-employees.”

Gaining the full benefits of civil service on par with professors at other Austrian Hochschule came as a source of gratification to WFA Professors who had toiled for decades for a pittance of what their colleagues on the Schillerplatz earned. Sadly, however, this victory would be coupled with an abrupt denouement brought on by the shifting political winds of the 1930s.

At the climax of its power in the late 1920s, the WFA achieved further triumphs in ensuring its institutional parity. One of the final victories was the recognition of WFA degrees in the applied arts as equal to those issued by the Austrian Kunstgewerbeschule. The Educational Ministry, in collaboration with the Ministry for Trade and Transportation, granted the official institutional parity of WFA applied arts degrees on 7 May 1929. The issue was precipitated by the case of Marianne Zels, a KFM graduate currently working as a teacher in the KGS’s workshops for fashion and textiles. Upon applying for a pay raise, to be classified in “Group 5” under the federal salary law, Zels was faced with the realization that her KFM credentials meant little in the context of Austria’s system of trade schools. Pursuing the matter, however, with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Commerce and Transportation, the case of Marianne Zels gave rise to the ruling that “graduation of the former Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen

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863 OeStA, AVA, Fasz. 2884 (Sig. 15), Mappe 15 C Z. 5198/1927.
864 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 12023/1-6a/1929.
is equal in value to the General Division of the Kunstgewerbeschule." Finally, the status of the WFA’s non-Academic schools had been officially clarified.

Related cases from KFM graduates working in Austria and the successor states demanded similar clarifications of KFM degrees and the precise legal status of the WFA in the years preceding and following the Zels ruling. The professional advancement of KFM alumni in Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Romania raised fundamental questions of whether the KFM/WFA was a state institution of higher learning or merely a private school equipped with rights of public incorporation. Chances for career promotions and official appointments often hinged upon the applicant’s credentials at a public institute of higher learning. On top of the ambiguity surrounding the WFA’s official status, the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy further muddled matters.

Preceding the Zels ruling by about a year, another case concerned a certain Hilde Bräunlich, currently a Teacher of Drawing and Handicrafts and Director of the Applied Arts Workshops of Brünn’s Frauen-Erwerb-Verein. Bräunlich, who had studied for the state-certified teachers examination at the KFM and attended supplementary lectures at the KGS from 1916, stood to have her position at Brünn’s Frauen-Erwerb-Verein made into a civil service position. The Czechoslovakian government, however, required the recognition of her degree as equal to those of the Kunstgewerbeschule. Marginal notes to Bräunlich’s file commented that “an equalization of the graduates of the applied arts division of the institute above [WFA] with graduates of the Wiener Kunstgewerbeschule has never been settled.” Nor would it be with Bräunlich’s case either. Most of the cases, however, after the Zels ruling fared better in obtaining

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865 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 12023/I-6a/1929.
866 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 14018/1928.
867 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884 (Sig. 15), Z. 13860/1929.
868 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884 (Sig. 15), Z. 7477/1928.
a firm answer that the Academic courses were indeed a state institution. Replies to petitions from Romanian and Austrian graduates repeated the turn of phrase; “with Ministerial Decree of 17 July 1930 Z. 19042, studies in the Academic Classes of the *Wiener Frauenakademie* have been declared as equal to all of the entitlements bestowed to candidates for the state-certified drawing-teachers examination studying at the Academy of Fine Arts.”

Though short of full-fledged equality, this ruling represented the strongest declaration of official institutional parity that the WFA would receive.

Ironically, however, the WFA’s attainment of official institutional parity respective to both its Academic and Applied-Arts Courses remained all-too-short-lived. With the departure of several key Faculty—Kauffungen’s retirement in 1926, Seligmann’s resignation of his directorial post in 1932, and various faculty departures to other state positions—the Academy lost many of its most committed teachers. Moreover, the changing of the guard at the *Frauenakademie* began to steer the institution in a different direction, away from the ideals of classical academic education upon which the school had been founded. Sculptor Heinrich Zita, who had first been appointed as Head of the Sculpture Division upon Kauffungen’s retirement in 1926, sought to transform the WFA into a *Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für bildende Kunst und Werkkultur* in 1934, a distinct departure from the school’s original vocational mission in the fine arts. Zita’s plans to integrate practical schools of craft and interior design into the WFA’s curriculum were nonetheless rejected by Viennese School authorities.

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869 See the cases of Surika Schächter (Romania) and Magdalene Röder (Austria), OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884 (Sig. 15), Z. 34927/1/6a/1931, Z. 30982/1935.
870 *Wiener Frauenakademie für Bildende Kunst und Werkkultur: Organisation und Lehrplan*, OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884 (Sig. 15), Z. 34276/1937.
Zita initiated a fundamental purge of the school upon taking the office of WFA Director in 1932.\footnote{OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 34510/1932.} According to Zita, Helene and Paula Taussig-Roth, “the true owners of the school,” were endangering the school’s finances through the “controlling economy of the secretariat” and their clique’s stranglehold on the Executive Committee.\footnote{Heinrich Zita, Tatsachenbericht über meine Tätigkeit als Direktor der Wiener Frauenakademi. Österreichische Staatsarchiv [OeStA], Allgemeine Verwaltungsakten [AVA], Ministerium für Kultur und Unterricht [MfKuU] Fasz. 2884 (Sig 15), Mappe 15 (Frauenakademie), Z. 1795/1940a, S. 1.} Zita stressed that “these two ladies and their clique always enforce their wishes and views upon—and get in the way of voting—in the Executive Board meetings […] the entire faculty and, as well as the director were dependent upon the sympathy of this dangerous clique.”\footnote{Heinrich Zita, Tatsachenbericht über meine Tätigkeit als Direktor der Wiener Frauenakademi. Österreichische Staatsarchiv [OeStA], Allgemeine Verwaltungsakten [AVA], Ministerium für Kultur und Unterricht [MfKuU] Fasz. 2884 (Sig 15), Mappe 15 (Frauenakademie), Z. 1795/1940a, S. 1.} Because the school was already in dire financial straights, Zita imposed a policy through which faculty would voluntarily renounce their salaries to save the school. Nonetheless, in February 1934, Zita reported that “the Ministry of Education…already represented the standpoint of letting the school run its course, as no more money for the director-post had been allotted and the appointment of new faculty was absolutely beyond question.”\footnote{According to figures in the Austrian State Archives, the WFA received the following subsidies: 1927 800 Schilling, 1928 700 Schilling, 1929 1000 (800?) Schilling, 1930 800 Schilling, 1931 800 Schilling, no subsidies listed for 1932-4, 1935 400 Schilling, 1936 600 Schilling, 1937 2,000 Schilling. OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. Z. 4046-I-6a.} Indeed, the Ministry had cut levels of funding to the WFA drastically in these years, freezing support in the early 1930s.\footnote{Heinrich Zita, Tatsachenbericht über meine Tätigkeit als Direktor der Wiener Frauenakademi. Österreichische Staatsarchiv [OeStA], Allgemeine Verwaltungsakten [AVA], Ministerium für Kultur und Unterricht [MfKuU] Fasz. 2884 (Sig 15), Mappe 15 (Frauenakademie), Z. 1795/1940a, S. 1.} Meanwhile, the school’s bank accounts had taken a fatal nosedive, which occasioned the Roth sisters and other ladies on the Executive Committee to hire legal counsel “to protect themselves from possible legal action in the expected insolvency of the school.”\footnote{Ibid.} The Roths had a large personal stake in the school financially, as their family and their aunt Blau-Lang had been strong backers of the school from the beginning.
Ostensibly to save the school from the Roths’ intriguing, Zita took measures to impose “a fundamental purification and transformation of the school” in the Summer of 1933, including pensioning Helene Roth and firing her sister Paula and niece Hertha Taussig without severance.

As conveyed by the multifarious intrigue surrounding Zita’s directorship, the Frauenakademie’s abrupt denouement was hastened by the foreboding political winds of the mid-1930s, the brewing clouds of Austro-Fascism and National Socialism. While Zita does not appear to have been a committed Nationalist Socialist of the first hour, he was sensitive to the changing political tides and used National Socialist language in an effort to save his position. His “Factual Report on My Activities as Director of the WFA,” a face-saving measure written after a period of political intrigue and his dismissal as Director in 1940, scapegoated the Roth clique as Jews and wives of leading Social Democratic functionaries.877 Along with Professor Ferdinand Kitt, Zita collaborated with colleague Viktor Weixler, who had replaced Otto Friedrich in 1934 and headed the school’s Werkkultur division, to hand the school over to municipal authorities. In this manner, the three believed, would the school be saved from imminent demise and could be incorporated into the NSDAP cultural framework. Part of their desperate plan in late 1938 to save the women’s academy were measures to authorize the immediate transfer of all female students at the ABKW and KGS to the WFA. These desperate pleas nonetheless met with stiff resistance on the part of the Academy and Kunstgewerbeschule, both maintaining each institution’s diverging goals and that the WFA had been dominated by Jews from the very beginning.878 While the connection of Kitt, dismissed from his position on 29 March 1940 due to his “Marxist” leanings, allegiance to the Austrian Vaterland, and marriage to a Mischling II. Grad, to National Socialism remains ambiguous, Weixler appears to have been a committed

877 Ibid. 1.
878 OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 45699/1938.
National Socialist.\(^79\) In the police investigation of all WFA Faculty following the National Socialist seizure of power, Weixler’s name was found on a 1933 list of NSDAP Party members, proving beyond a doubt that Weixler was an active party member during the _Verbotszeit_.\(^80\) Zita, whose late conversion to National Socialism aroused suspicion among party elite, was sent into provisional retirement from his directorial position in April 1940, and released from his teaching duties in July. Benefitting from Zita’s downfall were two high-level officials in the municipal government’s _Kulturamt_ who had led the intrigue against Zita and the _Frauenakademie_, Wilhelm Frass and Johannes Cech, who filled Zita’s and Kitt’s positions. With the League dissolved and, the school ceded to the hands of National Socialist municipal authorities, all pretenses to Academic Education disappeared as the school was converted into a haven of fashion, craft, and _Volkskunst_.\(^81\) The prestige enjoyed by the Viennese Ladies’ Academy quickly faded into memory.

The ivory towers of the _Wiener Frauenakademie_ began to topple in 1932 and came crashing down in 1938, but landed with a thud so soft it was barely heard. Indeed, the demise of the _Frauenakademie_ ensued far too quickly for it to be saved. Under the aegis of Professor Seligmann in 1930, the _Frauenakademie_ had participated with honor in the International Women’s Congress held in Vienna that year.\(^82\) Working in conjunction with the _Wiener Frauenkunst_ and VBKÖ, both of which staged monumental public exhibitions, the _Frauenakademie_ was internationally acclaimed for the virtuous works displayed in its student exhibition. The state, too, gave the WFA its stamp of support with funding to put on the show.

\(^{79}\) OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Mappe 15C, 8048/1940, 1795/1940.  
\(^{80}\) OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Mappe 15C, 1910/1939.  
\(^{81}\) WStLA, MA 49/ VA 6025, Z. 2 [29 December 1938].  
\(^{82}\) OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2884, Z. 12816/1930.
Without warning, however, levels of state funding were frozen in the early 1930s, which made the expansion of the WFA’s facilities and faculty an impossible dream. The departure of the WFA’s core faculty and personnel, Seligmann, Kauffungen, and the Roths, removed the Academy from its original founding aims. What ensued between 1932, when business at the Ladies’ Academy was running as normal, and 1938 occurred so rapidly that virtually no one saw it coming. Surely the last situation that Helene Roth, the WFA’s devoted servant since 1899, could have imagined was being ousted from her position of over thirty years in 1933, and having to desperately plead with well-connected friends about what to do with “Tante Tina’s” pictures in the wake of the Anschluß a few years later. Paula and her family, who emigrated and settled on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, fared better than her sister, who was deported from Vienna to Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1941. Yet never again did Taussig-Roth return to her Viennese home, as all that she stood and worked for in the Women’s Academy, was gone. Many WFA students, including Hedwig Brecher-Eibuschitz, Ella Ipanyi, and Gertrud Zuckerkandl-Stekel were barred from practicing art professionally and were forced into exile or simply disappeared without a trace.

The tumultuous history of the Viennese Women’s Academy demonstrates the liminal space acceded to Frauenkunst in interwar Austria. Blossoming under the idea of “separate but equal” institutionalism, the WFA enjoyed official institutional parity with Austria’s premier academies in the fine and applied arts in the late-Imperial period. This equality came at the end of a long battle in which the WFA struggled to have its institutional credentials recognized and confirmed. The First Republican state supported the Ladies’ Academy in a major way,

883 Helene Roth to Alexandra Ankwicz [30 November 1938], Österreichische Galerie Belvedere Archiv, Nachlass Hofrat Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven.
884 Alexandra Ankwicz to Paula Taussig-Roth [5 September 1938], Österreichische Galerie Belvedere Archiv, Nachlass Hofrat Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven.
subsidizing the key personnel of its Academic Courses and awarded generous subventions as benefitting the occasion. Yet, during the end of Seligmann’s tenure, the idea of the WFA as an antiquated institution that should be gradually extinguished took hold. For a variety of reasons—the escalating inflation and unemployment of the early 1930s; the erosion of republicanism and constitutionalism in light of the emergency decrees of 1933/34, and slide towards Austro-Fascism, and, finally, the stifling effects of the National Socialist seizure of power respective to its Gleichschaltung (uniformization) of cultural organizations—did the halcyon days of these “leagues of their own” become a mere memory. Beyond Austria’s weakened economy remained the attitude, exemplified by its ever-decreasing government subsidies and critical resonance towards the female academy and artist-leagues, that Frauenkunst belonged to the past rather than the future. The volkish artistic tastes of the Austro-Fascist and National Socialist states left little room for pretentious lady-painters making claims to the high arts. As brief as the tenure of its late 1920s apogee was the WFA’s swirling nosedive into oblivion hastily sealed.
Chapter Four: A Verein of Their Own: Institutional Politics and the Organizational Network of Austrian Women-Artists Leagues, 1885-1930

A rush of correspondence flooded the mailbox of the Association of Austrian Women-Artists in early 1910. Nearly one-hundred replies to invitations to join the organization trickled in from near and far. While not constituting the first organization of Austrian women artists, the VBKÖ pursued the rights of women artists more aggressively than its predecessors.886 As the League’s first President, Baroness Marie Olga von Brand-Kriehammer, explained to the Ministry of Education; “The goal of the new league is, in time, to acquire its own home for the exhibition of members’ works and thus to support the economic interests of women active in the arts.”887 Unlike forerunner organizations such as the VSKW, focused on a female-artists’ pension fund and which rarely organized exhibitions, or the loose conglomeration of the Acht Künstlerinnen, the VBKÖ vigorously campaigned for the artistic, material, and economic interests of Austrian women artists.

In mid 1910, time remained of the essence for the VBKÖ. The league had only a few short months to organize what constituted Europe’s most ambitious historical retrospective of women artists’ works. “To interest the general public in our strivings,” the VBKÖ curated an exhibition featuring over three-hundred works by one-hundred and ninety-five contemporary and historical female artists from thirteen countries.888 The undertaking envisioned by the VBKÖ was to embody “nothing less than an international retrospective exhibition of female creativity from the beginning to the present,” which occasioned the VBKÖ to “search for Frauenkunst in the art-histories of these countries” and bring representative pictures on loan to Vienna.889

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886 The VBKÖ was preceded by the Verein der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien (1885) and the informal exhibition society Acht Künstlerinnen (1901).
887 Olga von Brand-Kriehammer to MfKU [16 March 1910], VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 1.
Obtaining official diplomatic endorsements from the Austrian Foreign Ministry, VBKÖ Executive Board Members traveled across Europe to secure works from important public and private collections. Brand-Krieghammer assumed responsibility for France and Switzerland and Sculptor Lona von Zamboni handled the Italian peninsula. Wunderkind-Sculptor Ilse von Twardowska-Conrat, who described herself as “known equally well to Viennese society and art-circles through her works and exhibitions at that time,” volunteered to oversee England, Belgium, and Holland. For the young Conrat, arranging the logistics of loans from the British Isles and Low Countries coincided with a wedding trip, following her engagement to Prussian Major General Ernst von Twardowska, and her conversion from Judaism to Christianity. As the artist reminisced in her memoirs, “after some advice from my mother and grandmother and a baptismal certificate, the trip got underway.” Like many of her colleagues at the WFA and KGS, Conrat stemmed from the ranks of Vienna’s liberal assimilated Jewish bourgeoisie.

Opening in November 1910, the VBKÖ’s “Art Of the Woman” exhibition represented an unprecedented encyclopedic assemblage of women’s art. Securing the help of friends in high places proved a tremendous asset to the VBKÖ pioneers in staging the exhibition. Indeed, no less than five ladies on the league’s inaugural executive committee possessed noble titles while others belonged to the leading families of Austria’s grand-bourgeoisie. Such connections helped the VBKÖ secure the backing of the high-aristocracy, including engaging Archduke

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890 Olga von Brand-Krieghammer to MfKU [13 April 1910], OeStA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15 Fasz. 2939, Z. 19373/1910.
891 München Stadtarchiv, Nachlass Ilse von Twardowska-Conrat, Nr. 65 Erinnerungen, 23.III.1939, Seite 118.
892 Ibid.
893 Married to a distinguished army officer, VBKÖ President Olga Baronin Brand-Krieghammer’s father General Edmund Baron Krieghammer had served the Kaiser as War-Minister while her mother’s family hailed from the industrial aristocracy. Twardowska-Conrat shared the office of Vice-President with Academically-trained Painter Baronin Helene Frein von Krauss (Second VBKÖ President 1916-1932), daughter of a high-level official in the Imperial Foreign Ministry and cousin of the famous architect Franz Freiherr von Krauss. Fellow Executive Board-Member Louise Fraenkel-Hahn (Third VBKÖ President 1923-1938), daughter of k.k. Telegraph Correspondence Bureau Chief Hofrat L.B. Hahn, married Secessionist Painter Walter Fraenkel in 1903. On Brand-Krieghammer’s father General Edmund Baron von Krieghammer, see Gunther Erich Rothenberg, The Army of Francis Joseph (Purdue: Purdue University Press, 1999), 130-1.
Rainer as protector and a generous 6,000 Kronen from the Ministry of Education to sponsor “Die Kunst der Frau.” Spearheaded by Josef Engelhart, the Vienna Secession opened its doors to the VBMÖ, allowing the ladies to use its exhibition space for its debut exhibition. Showcasing works from great women artists of the past including Rachel Ruysch, Rosalba Carriera, Angelika Kauffmann, Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun alongside recent works of Berthe Morisot, Eva Gonzalez, and Rosa Bonheur, the show proved a phenomenal success. The VBMÖ exhibition attracted almost 12,000 visitors from its opening on 5 November 1910 to its closing on 8 January 1911. Counted among its guests were members of the Imperial family, high aristocracy, and social and financial elite. Even Kaiser Franz Josef paid his respects with a personal visit, though he was advised by Minister-President Stürgkh not to open the exhibition to avoid “offending the other artist-unions by paying such an honor to a new institution of this sort.” Other members of the high aristocracy, including members of the Czernin, Schönburg, Bienerth, Taxis-Hohenlohe, and Windischgrätz families, served on Archduke Rainer’s Honorary Committee while Prince Johann II von und zu Liechtenstein, Baron S.M. von Rothschild, Her Excellency Frau Baronin Stummer, Frau Marie Hämmerle, and Mining Wittgenstein supported the league as benefactors. In total, the VBÖ sold fifty contemporary works executed by its members, several of which were purchased by the city of Vienna, for a total of 22,981 Kronen. Like the Frauenakademie, the VBMÖ quickly became integrated within fin-de-siècle Vienna’s mainstream institutional

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894 ÖStA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15, Fasz. 3360. Z. 43193/1910.
895 MfKU to Oberstkämmereamt betreffend ein Majestätsgesuch der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs in Wien um a.g. Eröffnung der I. Ausstellung dieser Vereinigung am 5. November d.J. OeStA, AVA, MfKU, Sig. 15 Fasz. 2929. Z. 45125/1910.
landscape. That the VKBÖ framed its feminist demands moderately greatly abetted its case with the Educational Ministry.

Yet the cultural landscape of Viennese women’s art exhibitions was far from an Arcadian paradise. While critics including A.F. Seligmann, Ludwig Hevesi, and Bertha Zuckerkandl feted the groundbreaking exhibition “as earning our particular consideration,” other critics slammed it as epitomizing all that was wrong with Frauenkunst. In her insightful analysis of women’s art exhibitions in fin-de-siècle Vienna, Julie Marie Johnson has argued that; “If some critics saw women’s exhibitions as microcosms of femininity where male spectators simply did not belong, others began to see them as realms created to beguile men.” From the female sitters depicted in portraits, to the fashionable presentation of works on richly-upholstered walls, to its graceful lady visitors, critics such as Karl Schreder, Paul Zifferer, and Josef Folsenics framed the exhibition as embodying nothing more than the artifice and mannered poise of the feminine salon. Describing the exhibition’s elegant arrangement and a laundry list of famous women-artists deployed by the VBKÖ, Architect Josef Folsenics interpreted the entire undertaking as a clever, if backhanded, attempt on the part of the exhibition’s organizers to leave no doubts as to their own abilities. “An unbroken line of acknowledged female masters from the seventeenth century to the end of the nineteenth century” seemed to whisper to visitors “do you still wager to put women’s entitlement to the field of the fine arts in doubt?” Folsenics chided the exhibition for constituting nothing less than a holy crusade “to take visitors captive” as to women’s prowess in the arts. Even modernist critics like Arthur Roessler, the great champion of Egon Schiele, harbored fundamental misgivings on women’s original creative abilities. Roessler maintained

901 Ibid.
that women artists were dependent on male artists for creative “insemination.”

Women, in Roessler’s pessimistic view, possessed no “art of their own” but only that which they derived from men.

Beyond male critics’ accusations that the “Art of the Woman” signified superficiality and mannerism lingered fundamental tensions within the ranks of Austrian women artists as to the utility of such gender-specific exhibition leagues. While the added competition of professional female artists threatened men and motivated the critical assessments surveyed above, reservations about the necessity of women artists’ leagues from inside the body of Austria’s professional female artists presented a more foreboding obstacle to female solidarity. From the very beginning, women invited to join the VBKÖ expressed fundamental qualms about joining gender-specific exhibition unions due to existing professional affiliations and general reservations about Frauenkunst. The reasons for this disinclination were twofold. Established female artists deliberately avoided women-artists’ leagues to avoid tainting their work with Frauenkunst’s negative connotations: amateurism, dilettantism, and creative reproduction rather than originality. Many of fin-de-siècle Vienna’s most famous women-artists, for instance, the illustrious Schindler School of Tina Blau-Lang, Marie Egner, and Olga Wisinger-Florian, never associated themselves with the VBKÖ as members, although they permitted their works to be shown at the “Art of the Woman” and subsequent VBKÖ exhibitions. In addition, many of the well-born ladies considering membership in the VBKÖ hesitated to associate themselves with a group espousing radical feminist demands. To be sure, late-Imperial Austria’s educated

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903 While recorded as a student of Schindler’s posthumously, the idea that Blau-Lang was a student of Schindler is an often-reproduced historiographical misconception. In reality, Blau-Lang was Schindler’s colleague at shared studio space with him at the Prater. At the VBKÖ’s 1910 “Die Kunst der Frau” show, Tina Blau allowed her oil-masterpiece “Frühling im Prater” (Exh. No. 154) to be shown as a non-member; Egner exhibited her “Dünenlandschaft in der Bretagne” (Exh. No. 200); Wisinger-Florian also showed two oil paintings, “Platanenalle in Alcsut” (Exh. No. 187) and “Wiese in Spätherbst” (Exh. No. 207). The VBKÖ’s 1911 exhibition featured an entire room dedicated to Wisinger-Florian’s works, with over twenty paintings on view.
*Bildungsbürgertum* were the greatest champions of Austrian feminism. Yet, as scholars such as Harriet Anderson and Brigitte Bader-Zaar have shown, Austrian feminism represented a brand of feminist thought known for its moderate, ideological nature rather than radical political demands along the Anglo-American model.\(^904\) That the VBKÖ cloaked its feminist demands in moderate language and relied upon traditional avenues of feminine influence signified a major factor in the league’s success.

Similar to the Viennese Women’s Academy, many commentators viewed the idea of a women’s artist league as an interstitial necessity that would serve the economic interests of female artists until they acquired full membership privileges in male artistic corporations. Although prominent women artists were regularly invited to exhibit at the *Künstlerhaus*, Secession, and Hagenbund, women were denied admission to Vienna’s “Big Three” exhibition houses as regular members, with rights of sitting on jury-, working-, and hanging commissions, until after World War II. The Hagenbund became the first artist union to allow women membership in 1912, albeit as Corresponding Members lacking full voting privileges. Women undoubtedly participated in the “Big Three” exhibition houses of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna’s cultural landscape but as passive bystanders without rights to shape the shows to which they contributed. By staging regular public exhibitions for the sale of members’ works, the founders of the VBKÖ sought to reverse this trend to give women an active voice in planning exhibitions and determining their content. Paralleling the *Wiener Frauenakademie*’s public ascendency, the VBKÖ became ensconced in the institutional mainstream from which it was officially excluded by cooperating with Vienna’s main exhibition houses and cultural institutions throughout the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s. An intriguing byproduct of its institutionalization, the disparaged

concept of Frauenkunst gained new life as a dynamic, avant-garde genre in the mid 1920s. A radical faction of the VVBKÖ, espousing the belief “that works from women’s hands bear the stamp of their female-origins in and of themselves,” broke off from the conservative rump VVBKÖ resulting from disagreements on this very issue. The resurgence of a specifically-feminine identity in the 1920s represented a direct outgrowth of the Republic’s subsidization of single-sex secondary and artistic training. Indeed, leaders of Frauenkunst’s interwar renaissance possessed educational pedigrees rooted at the WFA.

Briefly surveying nineteenth-century forerunner organizations including the Verein der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien (League of Women Artists and Writers in Vienna, VSKW, 1885), Vereinigung österreichischen bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen (Association of Austrian Male and Female Artists, VÖBKK, 1899), and the 8 Künstlerinnen (8 Women Artists, 1901), the following chapter will examine the organizational network of female artist leagues in late-Imperial and First Republic Austria, focusing on the heated ideological and artistic conflicts between the VVBKÖ and Wiener Frauenkunst in the interwar period. In addition, the pages to follow unearth late-Imperial Vienna’s monumental exhibitions of women’s art and interwar-Austria’s forgotten renaissance of avant-garde Frauenkunst.

‘The Intellectually-Creative Woman Stands Helpless and Defenseless’
Imperial Austria’s Nineteenth-Century Forerunner Organizations, 1885-1910

The First Annual Report of Vienna’s League of Women Artists and Writers exposed a supreme irony of modern life. Although women could achieve professional success in intellectual careers through toil and perseverance, women’s independence remained...

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906 In addition to official correspondence, records, exhibition catalogues, and annual reports housed in the Austrian State Archives, Vienna City Archives, National and Viennese City Libraries, the following analysis draws from the rich holdings of the VVBKÖ’s private archives and individual collections of artists’ papers.
compromised by patriarchal systems presupposing their dependence upon men for living and retirement funds.

In our era, which is so rich in humanitarian institutions, the woman creating and working in intellectual fields stands helpless and defenseless. She can neither count on support in a moment of material distress, nor on care in age or sickness because the aid leagues of her male colleagues remain closed to her.\textsuperscript{907}

To a progressive group of Viennese ladies headed by Baronesses Marie von Augustin and Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach and writers Marie von Nájmajer and Betty Paoli, the establishment of a female artists’ union providing pension and sickness coverage to independent career-women represented nothing less than a moral imperative. “The founding of a league, which offers female artists and writers support and encouragement in their work, along with an emergency and pension fund, and which protects her from need and sorrow became a necessity for us, a moral duty, a social obligation.”\textsuperscript{908}

Marie von Augustin, Ebner-Eschenbach, Nájmajer, and Paoli, together with fellow women’s rights champions Minna Kautsky, Irma von Troll-Borostyány, Ellen Key, and Ada Christen, founded the League of Women Artists and Writers in Vienna in Spring 1885. Informed by liberal principles of \textit{Selbsthilfe} (self-help) and \textit{Selbstbildung} (self-cultivation), the VSKW’s statutes were approved by Lower Austrian authorities on 24 March 1885.\textsuperscript{909} The league’s constitutional meeting took place on 1 April 1885, at which procedures to elect the League’s Executive Committee commenced. The results of the VSKW Executive Committee elections were confirmed by the VSKW General Assembly on 24 April 1885.\textsuperscript{910} Baroness Marie von Augustin-Thurnberg (1810-1886), a respected Austrian painter and writer of advanced years,

\textsuperscript{907} \textit{Erster Jahres-Bericht des Vereines der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien} (Wien: Selbstverlag, 1886), 3.
\textsuperscript{908} \textit{Erster Jahres-Bericht des Vereines der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien} (Wien: Selbstverlag, 1886), 3.
\textsuperscript{909} \textit{Ibid.}, 5.
\textsuperscript{910} \textit{Erster Jahres-Bericht des Vereines der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien}, 5.
was elected as the VSKW’s inaugural president. Born the daughter of an Imperial Army Officer in the Hungarian Banat, Thurnberg became famous for her novels, poetry, and essays, including her *Gedanken einer Frau über die angeborenen Rechte des Frauengeschlechtes* (A Woman’s Thoughts on the Inherent Rights of the Female Sex), which supposedly “gave the first impulse for the later founding of the *Frauen-Erwerb-Verein*.” Protecting and supporting class interests, providing temporary aide to needy members and members’ orphaned children, and above all, establishing pension and sickness funds for VSKW members represented the league’s founding aims. The VSKW modeled its pension fund on that of the 1851-founded Concordia Writers’ Guild but innovated the manner in which funds were collected and reinvested. After ten years of funds accruing interest and endowments from wealthy members, the league realized its goal of “bringing to life” its own pension system in 1894.

The VSKW’s early years remained hampered by organizational hurdles. A history published on its twenty-fifth anniversary reported that personality conflicts and administrative incompetence had much to do with the League’s relatively slow start. As “the woman of that time was not adequately brought up to collegial and purely objective work,” league activities and voting protocol were often hampered by “unhandiness and, above all, the rule of the emotional moment… [.]” Admittedly, the female solidarity summoned up by the VSKW lacked organizational precedents. As such, there were “no models for such [a league], and so the needs

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915 *Zehnter Jahres-Bericht des Vereines der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien für das Vereinsjahr 1884-5*, 3.
and conditions for its prosperous further development only could be determined through experience.”

However, with the changing of the VSKW’s Executive Board in 1886, a greater sense of “order came to [the league’s] division of work and the occasion for the frequent scenes whose echoes left a bleeding, spooky presence in the protocols” diminished dramatically.

Heading the VSKW’s new board was Writer and Actress Minna Kautsky as President and Writer Maximiliane von Weißenthurn as Vice-President. In the hands of these highly capable women, the League experienced “the beginning of an [era of] firmer administration of business” and a significant expansion of league membership and pension funds. Distinguished Austrian women-writers and poets Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, Marie von Najmajer, Betty Paoli also served on the VSKW’s Board in its early years.

The VSKW relied on three types of members to sustain the league and bolster its pension funds. Membership as an Ordentliches Mitglied (Regular Member) was limited to female Austrian writers and artists and “those foreigners living permanently in our Fatherland.”

Regular members’ dues were 6 Gulden per year, in addition to a 10 Gulden joining fee.

Combating popular confluations of Frauenkunst with amateurism and superficiality, the VSKW strove “to lock out dilettantism from the league’s doors and searched for signs through which to recognize it.” In the performing arts, the VSKW limited admission to female composers, state-appointed music-teachers, or women running their own music schools. Virtuosi and musical performers interpreting other composers’ works were excluded from membership. Likewise, women artists and writers were required to provide proof of their artistic abilities. Later, under the Presidency of Viennese Painter Wilhelmine Hoegel (VSKW President 1890-1900), the

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917 Erster Jahres-Bericht des Vereines der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien, 3.
918 Fünfundzwanzig Jahre Geschichte des Vereins der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien, 1885-1910, 8.
919 Ibid., 9.
VSKW’s membership policies were revised to exclude writers “only working in translations and artists whose realm of activity lies purely in the applied arts.” Membership nonetheless stood fully open to women in the theatrical arts, a situation following logically from contemporary assessments of women’s “natural” vocation in theater. Shaped by contemporary notions of Frauenkunst, a clear sense of artistic hierarchy guided the VSKW’s admission criteria.

VSKW Membership also stood open to male and female “friends of the arts” as Stifter (Benefactors) and Beiträgende Mitglieder (Supporting Members). VSKW Benefactors were required to contribute at least 100 Gulden while Supporting Members contributed 2 Gulden per annum. In this manner, non-artists could help sustain the league financially. VSKW leadership was balanced between an Executive Board, consisting of a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary, and an Advisory Committee consisting of five members. Initially, men could theoretically serve on the advisory committee since two of these five positions could be delegated to supporting members who, upon rendering an annual donation of at least 12 Gulden, could gain General Assembly voting rights. This General Assembly male suffrage clause, however, was revoked in the 1886 statutes. Like other women’s art organizations, the VSKW received generous donations from the Imperial family, Austrian and European aristocracies, and members of the industrial elite. In 1886, Kaiser Franz Josef pledged a 200 Gulden endowment. Generous gifts from Austrian Crown-Princess Stephanie, Prince Johann von und zu Liechtenstein, Princess Marie Antoinette of Parma, Princess Carmen Silvia of Romania, and the City of Vienna followed the Kaiser’s donation in subsequent years. Other benefactors from the

923 Ibid., 9.
924 Zweiter Jahres-Bericht des Vereins der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien für das Vereinsjahr 1886-7, 3.
925 Dritter Jahres-Bericht des Vereines der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien für das Vereinsjahr 1887-8, 3.

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early 1890s included Minister-President Count Eduard Taaffe, Caroline Gomperz-Bettelheim, Nicolaus von Dumba, and Baroness Bettina von Rothschild as well as wealthy VSKW members Baroness Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, Julie Thenen and Olga Wisinger Florian. In 1885-86, the League’s first full year of existence, the League counted 15 Benefactors, 55 Regular-Members, and 154 Supporting members. These numbers increased so rapidly that the VSKW imposed measures to limit membership to avoid overextending its pension pool and keep members balanced between artists and writers. Undoubtedly, however, writers tended to predominate in the group, followed by performing artists and actresses, and finally, painters.

Despite awakening “a feeling of solidarity” among women artists, the League offered little in the way of staging public exhibitions of visual art. Indeed, during the period from its founding until the end of the Monarchy, the League organized only one art exhibition. The VSKW’s lone exhibition opened on 30 January 1886. Austrian landscape artist Olga Wisinger-Florian, who later held the office of VSKW Vice-President and President and helped to organize the Acht Künstlerinnen, played a major role in organizing the exhibition and accompanying musical-literary performances and refreshments. The exhibit included forty-five paintings executed by VSKW members which, with the exception of some copies from Old Masters, were all original works. Unlike later public exhibitions of women’s art organized by the AK and VBKÖ, however, the VSKW’s exhibition was only open to the league’s regular and supporting members and benefactors. Such exclusivity limited the exhibition’s pedagogical impact on the

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928 Erster Jahres-Bericht des Vereines der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien, 3.
930 The 1886 art exhibition represented the VSKW’s only exhibition until much later in its history, after the post World War I presidency of Dora von Stockert-Meynert (1870-1947).
931 Jahresbericht des VSKW für das zweite Vereinsjahr 1886 (Wien: Selbtsverlag des VSKW, 1887), 4-5.
932 Ibid.
greater Austrian public. The landmark public exhibitions of the VBKÖ, by contrast, reached much broader audiences.

While regular art exhibitions were not launched until after World War I, the VSKW hosted frequent “intimate evenings” in which members performed poetry, musical, and literary selections written or composed by its members. In addition to raising funds, fostering a sense of collegiality and artistic stimulation among members represented the main purpose of these literary-musical evenings open to members and guests. As evidenced by the League’s renting of larger and larger venues to house these intimen Abende, the VSKW “intimate evenings” became a phenomenal success in Viennese society. Prominent thespians such as k.k. Court-Actors Josef Lewinsky and Katharina Schratt, who was also a VSKW benefactor, staged readings of members’ works. One such performance included Schratt’s delivery of Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach’s “Totenwacht” in the grand-hall of the Lower Austrian Gewerbeverein on 25 January 1896. Prominent musicians including violinist Arnold Rosé and a variety of female performers contributed to chamber music and Lieder concerts.

Yet the League implemented strict measures to ensure that its “intimate evenings” were not associated with Frauenkunst in the derogatory sense. In the late 1880s, VSKW Vice-President Mina Hoegel stressed “that the works of composers and writers should only be performed by artistically-trained forces at the intimate evenings so that a higher niveau would be striven for in all performances.” When Hoegel became VSKW President in 1890, the Viennese-based artist took further steps to ensure the quality of the league’s “intimate evenings.” Hoegel began by limiting the number of such evenings staged. After all “as one could hear

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933 Sechster Jahresbericht des VSKW für das Vereinsjahr 1890-1, 6-7.
934 Fünfundzwanzig Jahre Geschichte des Vereins der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien, 1885-1910, 23.
935 Ibid., 14.
abundant excellent music in Vienna,” Hoegel saw little sense in engaging in a battle between the
great concerts of the “giants” against the VSKW’s Lilliputian efforts. Hoegel thus shifted the
evenings’ focus from the general public to the league’s member-base, reinforcing the roots of
league functions in the private salon. Presidents Weißenthurn (VSKW President 1887-89) and
Hoegel (VSKW President 1890-1900) both went to great lengths to weed amateurism from its
performances. Weißenthurn instituted a jury system stipulating that “works destined for the
performances should first be sent to the Executive Committee.” In addition to reforming the
VSKW’s performances, Hoegel VSKW’s quadrupled the league’s pension funds and increased
membership numbers from 188 to 275 during her tenure as President. However, while forging
groundbreaking solidarity among Austrian women artists, the VSWK offered few avenues for
visual artists’ economic advancement.

In contrast to the VSKW’s social aims, commercial bonds tied together Vienna’s *Acht
Künstlerinnen* (Eight Women Artists, or AK), a group founded in 1901 for the purpose of
organizing salons of members’ and guests’ works. Lacking formal officers, statutes or
ideological program, the informal exhibiting-society was an outgrowth of VSKW members
frustrated with the lack of opportunities to publicly exhibit and sell their works. Illustrious
landscape- and flower-painter Olga Wisinger-Florian (1944-1926), who, along with Tina Blau-
Lang ranked as one of late-Imperial Austria’s most famous lady-painters, organized the Eight’s
annual and biennial exhibitions in the gallery of her dealer, Gustav Pisko, circa 1901-1910. The
year preceding the Eight’s founding, Wisinger-Florian had a collective solo exhibition at the

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938 *Fünfundzwanzig Jahre Geschichte des Vereins der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien*, 23, 25. Hoegel,
upon retiring as president in 1900, was made an honorary member for her tremendous services to the League.
Salon Pisko.\textsuperscript{939} A student of the great Austrian landscape painter Emil Jakob Schindler, Wisinger-Florian held the office of VSKW President from 1900-1918 during the AK’s short lifespan. Wisinger-Florian, whose works were regularly shown at the Künstlerhaus and represented Austria-Hungary internationally including at the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition, had been responsible for coordinating the VSKW’s lone art-exhibition in 1885.\textsuperscript{940} Her colleagues in the League of Viennese Women-Artists and Writers Bertha von Tarnoczy (1846-1936), Baroness Marianne Eschenburg (1883-1942), and Marie Egner (1850-1940), who had also studied with Wisinger-Florian under Schindler, joined forces with the new union while continuing their VSKW membership.\textsuperscript{941} In addition to Wisinger, Egner, Eschenburg, and Tarnoczy, the Eight’s other regular-members consisted of portraitists Susanne Granitsch (1869-1946) and Marie Müller (1847-1935), KGS alumna Eugenie Breithut-Munk (1867-1915), and Russian sculptor Teresa Feodorowna Ries (1874-1950).\textsuperscript{942} The latter artist, whose ebullient “strong personality exuding a distinctive individuality” was reflected in contemporary criticism of the Eight, enjoyed studio space on the premises of the Palais Liechtenstein from 1906 onwards for executing her monumental marble works.\textsuperscript{943} Débuted at the Künstlerhaus in 1896, Ries’s provocative Hexe, Toilette machend zur Walpurgisnacht (Witch Making her Toilette for Walpurgisnight, 1895), a life-size sculpture drawing a conceit between the witch’s sharpening of

\textsuperscript{939} Dokumente der Frauen Vol. II, no. 22 (1 Feb 1900): 638.
\textsuperscript{941} On Tarnoczy, see Plakolm-Forsthuber, Künstlerinnen in Österreich, 275-6; on Egner ebda. 269, Doppler, Blickwechsel und Einblick: Künstlerinnen in Österreich, 125, and Brugger, Jahrhundert der Frau: Vom Impressionismus zur Gegenwart: Österreich 1870 bis heute 339.
\textsuperscript{942} On Granitsch, see Doppler, Blickwechsel und Einblick: Künstlerinnen in Österreich, 125; on Müller see ebda. 128; on Ries, see ebda. 129 and Plakolm-Forsthuber, Künstlerinnen in Österreich, 274.
\textsuperscript{943} B.W. “Ein Besuch bei der Bildhauerin Feodorowna Ries,” Neue Freie Presse [without date] Nachlass Hans Ankwicz-Kleeheven Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, KünstlerInnen Datenbank [RIES]; see also the correspondence between Ries and her patron Prince Johann II von und zu Liechtenstein in the Sammlungen des Fürsten von und zu Liechtenstein, Hausarchiv [SL-HA], FA Karton 68.
her toenails and the act of marble carving, catapulted the artist into the public spotlight [Figure 4.1].

Despite the prominence of Ries and other members, the lion’s share of the work of planning the Eight’s exhibitions fell upon Wisinger-Florian and Baroness Eschenburg.

Originally, the *Acht Künstlerinnen* had been envisioned as a “Club of 13,” although only eight female artists were ultimately selected by the league’s first executive committee. One acerbic *Neue Freie Presse* reviewer quipped that the Eight differed greatly from the “unsure, self-ironic sound of handcuffs” that had characterized the Parisian *Salon des Refusés* in the 1860s. Referencing the Eight’s selective exhibition criteria, “there were no rejected [artists] but rejecters perhaps” in Vienna’s *Acht Künstlerinnen*. Indeed, the Eight’s regular members ranked among late-Imperial Austria’s most well-known and successful female artists. Breithut-Munk, Eschenburg, Egner, Granitsch, Tarnoczy, and Wisinger-Florian had all been profiled in Karoline Murau’s groundbreaking 1895 history of Austrian women artists and many were also included in Anton Hirsch’s 1905 survey of contemporary women artists. Despite the absence of a formal jury apparatus, the Eight prided themselves on their selectivity and high public regard.

Because the group lacked statutes governing exhibition frequency, the Eight’s exhibition activity remained irregular and dependent on members’ organizational initiative. The Eight staged a total of five known exhibitions in the first decade of the twentieth century. The precise

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944 Although calling the artist “an undoubtedly highly-talented lady” and approving of the other three portrait busts she exhibited, Seligmann found Ries’s witch to demonstrate a huge “portion of tastelessness” and that “everyone will find it abominable.” Aus dem Künstlerhaus,” *Wiener Sonn- und Montagszeitung* (13 April 1896): 1. According to Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, at the Künstlerhaus 1896 exhibition, the statue supposedly aroused the attention of Kaiser Franz Josef, who expressed a desire to meet the creator of this witch. Plakolm-Forsthuber, *Österreichische Künstlerinnen*, 212.


947 Ibid.

number of the Eight’s exhibitions may have been higher, but catalogues and other records thereof have not been preserved. Contemporary reviews show that the Eight’s first exhibition took place at the Salon Pisko in January 1901, followed by a second exhibit in 1902 and a third in 1904. The Eight’s fourth exhibition was held in 1906 and its fifth and final known exhibition in 1909. Nevertheless, despite the ad-hoc nature of the endeavor, the Eight’s concerted efforts to organize public exhibitions for the viewing and sale of Frauenkunst represented a tremendous step forward in late-Imperial Austria’s women’s artist leagues.

The Eight’s inaugural show in January 1901 at the Salon Pisko opened to reviews highly favorable in comparison to other contemporary exhibitions. Referring to the stylized Jugendstil typeface adorning Secessionist posters, the Neue Freie Presse’s conservative reviewer praised the Eight’s restrained and intelligible exhibition poster design. “The device of illegibility usually employed by modern exhibition posters to heighten their allure, striving to tingle and stimulate visitors’ nerves, is shunned here.”949 Despite such praise, however, more attention was focused upon the event’s social significance rather than the pictures hanging on the walls. To the extent of neglecting a thorough discussion of exhibited works and artists, contemporary reviewers carefully noted members of the Austrian high aristocracy and financial elite present, as well as the richly-carpeted red staircase leading to the exhibition in Pisko’s elegant Ringstrasse Palais. As the Neue Freie Presse’s reviewer commented; “[n]ot the artistic value of the pictures hanging on the wall there matters to us. This exhibition offers something completely different than scenic perspectives in the kaleidoscope of our social life—translated literally kaleidoscope means Schönbildseher (beautiful-picture-viewer).”950 The review’s Schönbildseher pun not only referred to the works of Frauenkunst adorning the walls but the living and breathing Frauenkunst

strolling through the show. The anonymous reviewer framed the entire exhibition as an artistic battle of the sexes, in which “the poor men with their dulled senses had no idea” of the clever entrapment into which they had been lured under the pretense that they, not the guest exhibitors, were the ‘guests’ referenced in the group’s title.\textsuperscript{951} As men were “taken in tow by feminine art,” “the malende Frauenclub [painting women’s club] is better disposed, perhaps more assured of their victory than other women’s club in which [matters] are only discussed, coffee is drunk, and tobacco is smoked.”\textsuperscript{952} Stereotypes of feminists as cigar smoking viragos did not escape what was indeed a very elegant and refined affair. Similar narrative strategies of women artists’ attempts to entrap unknowing male visitors into their artistic seraglio would shape critical reactions to the VVKÖ’s 1910 \textit{Kunst der Frau} show.

Speaking to the moderate feminist line touted by late-Imperial Austria’s women artists leagues, the Eight’s opening represented a departure from the self importance of mainstream Viennese exhibitions.

Today there was a \textit{Jour de vernissage} [exhibition opening] in Vienna. In complete silence, without banners fluttering above the building and coattails fluttering inside. A \textit{vernissage} without the normal varnish. No welcome speeches and no boring tours by official art-lovers in departmental-head-uniform sort of \textit{vernissage}...\textsuperscript{953}

Despite its relative dearth of bells and whistles, the \textit{Acht Künstlerinnen}’s 1901 and subsequent exhibitions proved to be a tremendous commercial success, particularly due to the remarkable productivity of Egner and Wisinger-Florian. At the January 1901 exhibition, a total of seven major works were purchased by the Ministry of Education including paintings by Eugenie Breithut-Munk, Bertha von Tarnoczy, Olga Wisinger-Florian, and Susanne Granitsch, and Marie

\textsuperscript{951} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{952} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{953} Ibid.
Egner. Gradually, as the novelty of an exhibition of Frauenkunst wore off in the years to follow, critics began granting more attention to the art than the exhibitions’ elegant lady-visitors.

The Eight’s exhibitions continued to attract international critical acclaim and commercial success. At the Eight’s second exhibition at the Salon Pisko in January 1902, Amelia Levetus noted to Anglo-American audiences that

Last year eight of the chief lady artists and sculptors here made a new departure by having an exhibition at the Salon Pisko, all to themselves, of their works and those of invited lady artists; and this has proved so successful that the experiment has been repeated this year, but with this difference that they have done their best to make it international, though few foreigners have responded.

Indeed, despite the Eight’s efforts to bring foreign artists into the fold, the Eight’s exhibitions remained dominated by German-speaking Austrians and Hungarians with smaller numbers of Reich Germans and international artists participating. In particular, Levetus mentioned Marie Müller’s “very charming” Study of a Girl’s Head, which was purchased by the Ministry of Education. Levetus was less captivated by the same artist’s portrait of distinguished poet Marie Ebner von Eschenbach as “one’s attention is attracted to the hard hair, freshly crimped by the hairdresser’s irons, instead of to the fineness of the drawing and painting of the intellectual face.” Among the Eight’s regular members, works by Breithut-Munk, Eschenburg, Wisinger-Florian, “a favorite here,” also received favorable press from Levetus. Levetus also referenced works by AK guests Josefine Swoboda, Hermine von Janda, and Clara Walther in her column. A reviewer in the BÖFV’s Neues Frauenleben also had nothing but praise for the “rich selection

956 Ibid., 137
957 Ibid.
958 Ibid.
of good portraits, sketches, and atmospheric landscapes” at the Eight’s second exhibition.\textsuperscript{960} The portraits of Breithuk-Munk and Müller were feted for their excellence and expressive individuality, as was Granitsch “represented by two fine portrait-sketches.”\textsuperscript{961} Guests’ works included Helene Friedländer’s fine studies of children’s heads, the “finely-perceived atmosphere” of Ernestine von Kirchberg’s landscapes, a portrait-bust by Melanie von Horsetzky, Hermine von Janda’s attractive watercolors, as well as various works by Marie Pecival-Chalupek, Josefine Swoboda, and Marie Arnsburg. Among the Eight’s regulars, the Neues Frauenleben’s reviewer noted the watercolors of Marie Egner, Ries’s clay mask of a child’s face, and “the numerous landscapes of Olga Wisinger-Florian,” of which some were particularly distinguished by their “fresh colorism” and “the finely-depicted evening or rain Stimmung [atmosphere].”\textsuperscript{962} Wisinger-Florian tended to send more of her own works for exhibition when sufficient guests’ works could not be found.

Not all of the Eight’s critics, however, were as universally praiseful as Levetus and those of the women’s newspapers. In reviewing the Eight’s January 1901 exhibition, Bertha Zuckerkindl lamented the fact that Teresa Feodorowna Ries, undoubtedly one of the most talented artists among the Eight, only sent one small work (the clay child’s mask noted by Levetus) to the exhibition. Zuckerkindl also found critical words for the “astonishing productivity” of Wisinger-Florian’s numerous landscape and flower-studies.\textsuperscript{963} As Zuckerkindl faulted the occasional sketchiness of Wisinger’s work;

Yet she leafs through the book of nature a bit too hastily and in a rather superficial manner. Comprehending the characteristic form of an image with great talent, the artist does not know to thoroughly immerse herself in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{960} “Acht Künstlerinnen und ihre Gäste,” Neues Frauenleben 14:1 (January 1902): 15.
\item \textsuperscript{961} “Acht Künstlerinnen und ihre Gäste,” Neues Frauenleben 14:1 (January 1902): 15.
\item \textsuperscript{962} “Acht Künstlerinnen und ihre Gäste,” Neues Frauenleben 14:1 (January 1902): 15.
\end{itemize}
the same [image] and to crystallize a compact, firm slice out of the atmosphere by eliminating secondary random moments.\textsuperscript{964}

Zuckerkandl approved of portraitists Susanne Granitsch and Eugenie Breithut-Munk as “modernly educated artists,” both schooled at the KGS, an institution of which Zuckerkandl was a great champion. Zuckerkandl nonetheless found Granitsch’s realism lacking psychological penetration of the sitter’s psyches. Overall, Zuckerkandl attributed great progress to the Eight in the modernization and professionalization of Austrian Frauenkunst.

A heightened ability of the women-artists is unmistakably present in this exhibition. No longer are dainty, lemonady-sweet themes handled, as was formerly the custom among the ladies. The malende Frauen’s (painting women’s) view of life has become a deeper, more serious one; their conceptions are connected to the train of thought of moderne Empfindungsthemen (themes of modern perception). The aesthetic has yielded to the truth.\textsuperscript{965}

Staging regular public exhibitions in their own professional corporation, the Acht Künstlerinnen represented a tremendous step forward in overcoming traditional associations of Frauenkunst with aristocratic dilettantism and amateurism.

While continuing to stage exhibitions throughout the first decade of the twentieth century, the Eight remained hampered by its ad-hoc nature and the loose structure of the group’s exhibition planning mechanisms. Ceasing annual shows in 1902, the Eight’s next exhibition was not held until 1904 because the entire burden of coordinating exhibitions and arranging for appropriate numbers of guests’ works to be shown fell entirely on individual member initiative rather than formal planning committees. Another biennial show was organized early in 1906. The BÖFV commented on the Eight’s 1906 show, what would prove one of the group’s final public exhibitions, “once again this year, the Acht Künstlerinnen and their guests have organized an exceptionally-charming exhibition justifying the women artists’ strivings to make their works

\textsuperscript{964} Ibid.
accessible to the public independently. Even today, a hard-to-overcome prejudice against women’s creations exists in the juries of many artist associations.” Although the Eight’s exhibitions gradually diminished with the close of the decade, the *Acht Künstlerinnen* laid the foundation for 20th-century Austria’s modern women artists leagues.

The story of late-Imperial Austria’s women’s artists leagues would not be complete without a brief discussion of the 1899-founded *Vereinigung Österreichischer Bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen* (VÖBKK, or Association of Austrian Male and Female Artists). Founded to support the artistic and material interests of artists not affiliated with the Secession or *Künstlerhaus*, the VÖBKK represented Austria’s first artist league open to male and female artists, as well as one of Vienna’s first jury-free artists’ unions. As detailed previously, while it was not uncommon for female artists to exhibit their works at Vienna’s “Big Three” Exhibition Houses, women were largely denied the spoils of full membership in such leagues until after World War II. While lauded by the artistic establishment for maintaining a high quality of exhibited work, Vienna’s jury system disadvantaged female artists because they could not serve on jury-, working-, or hanging commissions. Austrian women artists undoubtedly found success in the mainstream exhibition houses but often through a sort of “male protectionism.” Having a well-connected male acquaintance or relative in an artist union facilitated women’s ability to exhibit and intervene in the affairs of the mainstream leagues. The VÖBKK sought to challenge all of this by taking on women as full members and scrapping the biased jury system altogether.

Unfortunately, relatively little is known about the VÖBKK as the bulk of its exhibition catalogues, as well as any league archives and records, have not been preserved. Members’

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967 For more on this ‘male protectionism,’ see Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, *Künstlerinnen in Österreich, 1897-1938* (Wien: Picus, 1994).
artwork tended to be executed in traditional, academic styles, and, due to the league’s jury-free system, encompassed both amateur and professional quality work. Existing primary materials reveal that the league was founded on 16 October 1899 and was headed by Academic Painter Adolf Mayerhofer as President, Sculptor Rudolf Schörer as Vice-President, and Painter and VSKW Executive-Committee Member Isabella (Isa) Jechl as Secretary. The League, whose main purpose was the staging of commercial exhibitions of members’ works, counted 20 members at the time of its founding. By 1902, the VBÖKK counted 60 Regular Members, 2 Corresponding members, 6 Irregular members, 37 Supporting members, and 3 Benefactors. Surprisingly, little continuity existed between the VBÖKK and other Austrian women’s artist leagues. Isa Jechl represented the only VSKW member to play a significant role in the VBÖKK. Among the women-artists active with the VBÖKK, only a handful went on to join the VBKÖ. A generational gap, as art historian Werner Schweiger has accurately surmised, remains a likely explanation for this organizational discontinuity.

VBÖKK Regular and Corresponding members were subject to annual dues of 20 Kronen while Irregular members contributed 40 Kronen per annum. Supporting members were responsible for donating at least 10 Kronen per annum which entitled them to participate in an annual raffle of members’ works or receive a graphic Jahresgabe (Annual Gift). Members of the Imperial family, particularly the Archdukes Ludwig Viktor, Eugen, and Rainer, patronized the

968 Geschäftsbericht der Vereinigung bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen (Wien: Selbstsverlag, 1901), 1.
969 Ibid., 3.
971 Olga Brand-Krieghammer became the VBKÖ’s first president while Therese Schneegans and Yella Liebscher became regular and irregular members, respectively. Ella Ehrenberger exhibited with the new union but did not become a member.
973 Ibid., 230.
VÖBKK through donations and by purchasing a great number of exhibited works. In addition to “their excellencies Count and Mrs. Statthalter (Governor) Kielmannsegg, Count Lanckoroński, Count Schönborn, and k.k. Department Head Stadler von Wolfersgrün” being singled out as “preeminent friends of the arts,” the Viennese Bildungsbürgertum played a large role patronizing the league. The League found generous benefactors (Stifter) in Prince Johann II von und zu Liechtenstein and Arthur Krupp, as well as a subvention of 200 Kronen from the Viennese municipality.

The VÖBKK staged a total of ten exhibitions in the span of its brief history circa 1899-1907/08. Featuring 112 works, the League’s first exhibit opened in Vienna on 11 March 1900 and ran until 8 April 1900. The VBÖKK’s second exhibition, containing 106 works, ran from 15 April to 20 May 1900. Showcasing 104 pieces, the VBÖKK held a third exhibit in Vienna in early summer 1900 from 27 May to 8 July. In collaboration with local authorities, the VBÖKK’s third exhibit took place at the Innsbruck Pädagogium from 26 July to 9 September 1900. The exhibit featured 391 works, including 94 works by Tyrolean artists, and was opened by Archduke Eugen, under whose protectorship the exhibition functioned. Back in Vienna, the VBÖKK’s fifth exhibit was held in the Wiener Kunstgewerbe Verein in the Palais Herberstein in March 1901. An improvement on its prior exhibition locale in the commercial Mariahilferstraße, the VBÖKK’s fifth exhibition attracted a slew of aristocratic visitors. A total of 56 works by 26 artists were sold in the VBÖKK’s first five exhibitions, having been purchased by a variety of aristocratic and upper-middle-class patrons. While records on the

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974 Geschäftsbericht der Vereinigung bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen (Wien: Selbstverlag, 1901), 2.
975 Ibid.
976 Ibid.
977 Ibid.
978 Ibid.
979 Geschäftsbericht der Vereinigung bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen (Wien: Selbstverlag, 1901), 2.
980 "Verzeichnis der Werke, welche in den von der Vereinigung bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen veranstalteten
group’s exhibitions between 1901 and 1904 have been lost, the VBÖKK staged its tenth exhibition in the Salon Pisko in October and November of 1904.\textsuperscript{981} Showcasing 133 works in total, female exhibitors outnumbered men at a ratio of 24 to 15, although the ratio of total works exhibited remained evenly balanced between the sexes: 68 works (51\% total works) exhibited by women and 67 works (50\% of total works) shown by men.\textsuperscript{982} The group’s 1904 exhibit at the Salon Pisko may well have been its last public show. Towards the end of the decade, traces of the group gradually tailed off in art-handbooks and indexes, perhaps resulting from the imminent founding of what would become Austria’s most important women’s artist league: the Association of Austrian Women Artists, or VBKÖ. That the group’s exhibitions stressed quantity rather than quality made it easy prey for accusations of amateurism. Nonetheless, in introducing principles of cooperation between the sexes and existing artistic networks, the VÖBKK laid the groundwork for the integrationalism and monumental public exhibitions chartered by the VBKÖ and \textit{Wiener Frauenkunst}.

\textbf{Reinventing Modern \textit{Frauenkunst} in the Association of Austrian Women Artists, 1910-1925}

The formation of the \textit{Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs} (Association of Austrian Women Artists) in 1910 at once represented a vast departure from the artistic solidarity chartered by predecessor organizations while embodying continuity with certain aspects of the VSKW, AK and other earlier leagues. Valuing the Eight’s prioritization of commercial exhibitions, the VBKÖ boldly pursued the economic interests of Austrian women-artists. Yet, in contrast to the Eight, the VBKÖ staged landmark public exhibitions not only affecting a small circle of connoisseurs but whose didactic bent reached broad segments of Viennese society. Like

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\textsuperscript{5} Ausstellungen verkauft wurden,” in \textit{Geschäftsbericht der Vereinigung bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen}, 10-11.

\textsuperscript{981} \textit{Zehnte Ausstellung der Vereinigung österreichischen bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen} [Salon Pisko Wien] (Wien: Adolf Holzhausen, 1904).

\textsuperscript{982} \textit{Zehnte Ausstellung der Vereinigung österreichischen bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen}
the VSKW, the VBKÖ promoted institutional solidarity among Austrian women artists. In opposition to the VSKW’s earlier attempts to encourage artistic camaraderie, however, the VBKÖ pitted their artistic bonds strictly professionally rather than socially. That the new generation of women founding the VBKÖ and Wiener Frauenkunst were products of Austrian state institutions, primarily the KFM/WFA, KGS, and ABKW, constituted a major difference between the VBKÖ and the predecessor organizations outlined above. Indeed, the majority of the older generation active in the VSKW and Acht Künstlerinnen had been schooled privately, often studying informally with established academicians. The Eight’s illustrious Schindler-School, i.e. Marie Egner and Olga Wisinger-Florian, represents a prominent example. Most of their colleagues in the Eight, including T.F. Ries, Tarnoczy, Eschenburg, also received their formative training privately, quietly challenging an exclusive system via circuitous academic schooling. Although several of the VBKÖ’s older founding-members represented exceptions to the norm in pursuing academic training privately, the bulk of the Association of Austrian Women Artists’ members hailed from the “separate but equal” women’s academy, Austrian Kunstgewerbeschule, and, to a lesser extent, the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts.

The focus and scope of the present study differs from previous scholarship on fin-de-siècle Austria’s women artists’ leagues in unearthing the contested terrain of interwar Austrian Frauenkunst. While Julie Johnson’s insightful dissertation brought the artistic politics of the VBKÖ’s 1910 “Art of the Woman” exhibition into high relief, the VBKÖ’s turbulent postwar history, including the group’s dissolution into two contested factions representing “modernist” and “conservative” camps, was left unexplored. Likewise, although Sabine Plakolm-

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983 Of the Eight, only Granitsch and Breithut-Munk were trained at the Austrian Kunstgewerbeschule.
Forsthuber’s groundbreaking study of Austrian women artists offered readers an excellent overview of the VBKÖ, the author’s monographic focus obscured greater institutional developments.\textsuperscript{985} Examining the \textit{longue durée} development of Austria’s women’s artist leagues through the late-Imperial and Republican periods, the present study argues that the educational and institutional reforms chartered by the Austrian women’s movement circa 1900 not only paved the way for an explosion of the women’s movement in the arts, but planted the seeds of its demise. Paralleling the \textit{Wiener Frauenakademie}’s gender-segregated institutionalism examined in the previous chapter, the creation of an Association of Austrian Women Artists represented an institutional time bomb with fuses lit at both ends. On the one hand, women’s exclusion from membership in Vienna’s “big three” exhibition houses deemed the formation of such a league an absolute necessity. Yet by the same token, the existence of the VBKÖ remained compromised by its incipient demand for mainstream institutional integration. As the \textit{Wiener Frauenkunst} phrased the matter in 1926, the existence of such gender-specific exhibition leagues “may be a transitional phase, but one grounded in presently existing relations.”\textsuperscript{986} It is my argument that the Austrian Association of Women Artists’ great interwar schism into “two sharply-divided camps” directly reflected the diverse educational backgrounds of the association’s membership pool, and particularly the institutionalized \textit{Frauenkunst} of the First Republic.\textsuperscript{987} That the group’s more radical faction was the generation pioneering the institutionalization of \textit{Frauenkunst} in the Austrian State Academies of Fine and Applied Arts, while the older, more conservative camp generally had been trained privately, represents an important historical footnote providing clues to the schism’s roots. While feelings of feminine solidarity provided an adequate organizational

\textsuperscript{985} Refer to Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, \textit{Österreichische Künstlerinnen.}
rallying point when the league was founded, the VBKÖ’s tenuous bonds caved with the stress of ideological and artistic divisions becoming increasingly apparent as the ABKW opened to women. Above all, as women made further inroads into Vienna’s mainstream institutional landscape, the question of what bonded interwar Austria’s women artists leagues together pressed all the more urgently. For many, the identity of “woman” was becoming less relevant in the face of fundamental artistic and ideological allegiances. Yet other KFM/WFA artists clung all the more firmly to the idea that “works created by women’s hands bear the stamp of their feminine origins in and of themselves.”

The following section unearths the tumultuous history of the Austrian women’s artists leagues circa 1900-1930, focusing on elements of institutional continuity and change between the late-Imperial and Republican periods.

The Association of Austrian Women Artists’ entrance into the Viennese cultural stage in early 1910 ensued at a particularly favorable time. With the state’s increased role in supervising female secondary education confirmed by the Lyceal Regulations of 1900 and 1908, as well as the late-nineteenth century chain of victories in opening university educational to women, late-Imperial Austria’s Ministry of Education embraced women’s roles in the cultural sphere. Moreover, in forming a league fostering supranational dynastic patriotism by extending membership to Austrian women of any national or ethnic background, the VKBÖ made an obvious candidate for governmental support. That the Ministry generously underwrote the VBKÖ’s “Art of the Woman” at a time when its support of exhibition leagues was generally limited to the “big three” exhibition houses, above all the Secession and Künstlerhaus, speaks to the prestige garnered by the League within the Ministry, as Julie Johnson has rightly argued.989

989 Julie Marie Johnson, The Art of the Woman: Women’s Art Exhibitions in fin-de-siècle Vienna, Volume I
However, while Johnson attributes the Ministry’s support of the group primarily to its “significant aristocratic connections,” the state had deeper stakes in Austrian Frauenkunst than Johnson suggests. Beyond the group’s gemeinnützig (benefitting the common good) contributions to society, supporting a moderately-feminist organization such as the V BKÖ went hand in hand with its gender specific reform program for women’s secondary and post-secondary education. The idea of a distinct Frauenkunst as touted by the V BKÖ symbolized the logical culmination of women’s particular pedagogical needs outlined by the Ministry apropos its Lyzeum and Gymnasium curricula.

The establishment of the Association of Austrian Women Artists in Winter 1910 found its “spiritual creator” in Painter and VÖBKK Member Baroness Olga Marie von Brand-Krieghammer. Daughter of distinguished Secretary of War Edmund Baron Krieghammer, Brand-Krieghammer received her artistic training from Schindler-pupil and Secessionist Carl Moll, stepfather of aspiring-composer turned muse Alma Mahler-Werfel, and with Parisian flower-painter Ernest Quost. While she was able to exhibit at the Künstlerhaus and with the Acht Künstlerinnen, the biases of Vienna’s male jury system became quickly apparent to Brand-Krieghammer and her contemporaries. Early in 1910, a group of Austrian female artists put aside ideological differences to band together as the Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs. Styling its own artistic identity after the Secession by adopting a feminized version (Vereinigung bildender KünstlerINNEN Österreichs, or V BKÖ) of the latter group’s title, the V BKÖ made its claims to the Secession’s position as institutional vanguard of modernism, and the state’s

[990] Ibid., 157.
patronage thereof, crystal clear. Without delay, this female Secession carved out a space for Frauenkunst in the Viennese cultural landscape.

Professionally trained artists with capable administrative skills led the newly formed Association. The VBKÖ’s first executive committee was headed by Brand-Krieghammer as President, with Baroness Helene Freiin von Krauss (Second VBKÖ President 1916-1923), and sculptor Ilse von Twardowska-Conrat sharing the office of Vice-President and painters Lila Gruner and Hedwig Neumann-Pisling serving as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively [Figure 4.2]. Though second in command to Brand-Krieghammer, Baroness Krauss, daughter of a high level Foreign Ministry Official and cousin of architect Franz Freiherr von Krauss, always had her nose in matters. Krauss frequently co-signed official documents and acted in the president’s stead, especially given Brand-Krieghammer’s frequent absences and move to the Hungarian countryside due to her mother’s terminal illness. Louise Fraenkel-Hahn (Third VBKÖ President 1923-1938), Rosa Fuchs, Hilde Kotany, Baroness Camilla Possanner, Hella Unger, and Sculptor Lona von Zamboni rounded out the VBKÖ’s Executive Board Members [Figure 4.2]. In mid February 1910, the VBKÖ executive committee submitted its statutes to

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994 Refer to the biographical appendices at the end of this dissertation for more details on the individual careers and biographies of these artists.


996 Refer to the biographical appendices at the end of this dissertation for more details on the individual careers and biographies of these artists.
Lower Austrian authorities for official approval. The Association of Austrian Women Artists league was publicly recognized on 25 February 1910.997

Similar to forerunner organizations, the VBKÖ possessed a tiered structure providing different levels of membership to practicing artists and patrons. Three types of membership existed for practicing female artists. Inclusion as an *Ordentliches Mitglied* (Regular Member) was open to “all female artists with their residence in the lands and kingdoms represented in the Imperial Reichsrat” as well as Austro-Hungarian artists living abroad.998 In most cases, inclusion as regular members only ensued after probation as *Ausserordentliche Mitglieder* (Irregular Members), although “in special cases women artists without prior exhibition with the Association could be chosen as regular members.”999 Candidates for irregular membership were required to “send a collection of their works to the Executive Committee.”1000 If submitted works met the committee’s standards of professional excellence, candidates were granted membership privileges. Irregular members could petition to become regular members after thrice exhibiting with the league. Both regular and irregular members paid yearly dues of 20 Kronen and enjoyed free admission to all VBKÖ exhibition and functions. Only regular members, however, enjoyed active and passive voting rights in the General Assembly and could stand for the League’s triennial Executive Committee elections.1001 A third type of corresponding membership was offered to Austrian and foreign artists living abroad. Corresponding Members (*Korrespondierende Mitglieder*) were female artists of any nationality “inclined to support the interests of the Association in their place of residence.”1002 VBKÖ Corresponding Members were to be nominated by the Executive Committee and approved by the General Assembly.

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997 VBKÖ to MiKU [17 May 1910], VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 1.
998 §1, Statuten der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 2, Bl. 1-6.
999 §1, Statuten der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 2, Bl. 1-6.
1000 §2, Statuten der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 2, Bl. 1-6.
1001 §6 & §8 Statuten der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 2, Bl. 1-6.
1002 §2, Statuten der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 2, Bl. 1-6.
Additionally, three further types of membership stood in place for art patrons. VBKÖ Benefactors (Stifter) were “friends of the arts supporting the Association through major material donations” and included members of the Wittgenstein, Rothschild, and Liechtenstein families. Benefactors (Stifter) were “friends of the arts supporting the Association through major material donations” and included members of the Wittgenstein, Rothschild, and Liechtenstein families.  

Gründer, or Founding Members, were those “supporting the Association through a one time donation in the amount of 100 to 500 Kronen” while Unterstützende Mitglieder (Supporting Members) contributed 20 Kronen per annum. VBKÖ Founding and Supporting members hailed from the Austrian aristocracy and Bildungsbürgertum and enjoyed free admission to league events as well as advance viewing and purchase rights for league exhibitions. Similar to the support bases of the Frauenakademie and girls’ higher education, assimilated Jewish families played a major role in supporting the VBKÖ.

Importantly, VBKÖ membership was designed to be harmonious with existing professional and artistic affiliations. The statutes provided that “members have the right to exhibit with other artists’ associations.” VBKÖ membership was not to preclude but to acquiesce ties with other artists’ associations and cultural institutions. Moreover, in certain “exceptional cases” previously exhibited works could be re-showed with the VBKÖ. Non-members, too, could exhibit with the VBKÖ without formally joining the league. Furthermore, in contrast to the loose, un-juried structures governing predecessor leagues, all VBKÖ exhibition submissions were subject to scrutiny by an all female jury. Juries consisted of the Executive Committee and three regular members, from which a jury leader and deputy were

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1003 §2, Statuten der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 2, Bl. 1-6. The VBKÖ’s inaugural benefactors were His Royal Highness Prince Johann II von und zu Liechtenstein, Baron S.M. von Rothschild, Frau Marie Hämmerle, Her Excellency Frau Baronin Stummer, and Fräulein Mining Wittgenstein. Over the next few years, the VBKÖ significantly expanded the circle of its benefactors and supporting members. 1004 §2, Statuten der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 2, Bl. 1-6. 1005 §4, Statuten der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 2, Bl. 1-6. 1006 §6 Statuten der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 2, Bl. 1-6. 1007 Ibid. 1008 An exception to the VBKÖ’s all-female jury rule occurred with its inaugural “Kunst der Frau” exhibition, in which the show was co-juried by the VBKÖ and Secession.
chosen. While most of the VBKÖ’s bylaws followed standard operating procedures regarding General Assembly and Executive Committee suffrage rights, the VBKÖ added an important clause distinguishing its exhibition policies from predecessor leagues. VBKÖ bylaws governing exhibition organization reserved the right to collect 10% of the price of all works sold at exhibitions. The VBKÖ’s complex organizational structure and operating rules surpassed previous attempts to organize Austrian women artists.

Fighting for the artistic, social, and economic rights of Austrian women artists, the platform of the newly-recognized Association of Austrian Women Artists outstripped those of predecessor women artists’ leagues. Baroness Krieghammer explained the pressing need for such an organization to Minister of Education Count Karl von Stürgkh:

> The banding together of women artists has proved necessary because of the ever-greater difficulties against which they have to struggle. In Vienna, women are excluded from membership in the major associations on principle. The ability to exhibit and thus to sell their works is currently a highly problematic one.  

“The goal of the new organization,” Brand-Krieghammer continued, “is, in time, to acquire our own home [exhibition house] to publicly exhibit its members’ works and hence to support the economic interests of artistically active women.”

Three main objectives set out in the league’s inaugural statutes further clarify the artistic and material causes driving the VBKÖ’s founding. Open to all female artists functioning “in the kingdoms and lands represented in the Imperial Reichsrat,” § 1 of the VBKÖ’s inaugural statutes enumerated its three primary goals: 1) supporting the artistic interests of female artists; 2) safeguarding professional interests; 3) enhancing the economic circumstances of Austrian women artists through the creation of exhibition opportunities. On top of these goals, the league planned to stage what represented

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1009 Olga Brand-Krieghammer to MfKU [17 March 1910], OeStA, AVA, MfKU, Fasz. 3360, Z. 21547/1910.
1010 Olga Brand-Krieghammer to MfKU [17 March 1910], OeStA, AVA, MfKU, Fasz. 3360, Z. 21547/1910.
Europe’s most ambitious encyclopedic historical retrospective of women’s art, the VBKÖ’s 1910 “Art of the Woman” Exhibition, featuring 316 works executed by two-hundred European and American female artists. Extending membership invitations to dozens of professionals, Austrian women artists’ war cry for equality had been sounded.

Yet, from the very beginning, women invited to join the VBKÖ expressed fundamental qualms about joining forces with a gender-specific exhibition union due to ideological reservations about Frauenkunst. Painter and Graphic Artist Emma Schlangenhausen (1874-1947), a student of Moser and Roller at the KGS active in the Austrian Werkbund, Salzburg’s Wassermann league, and the Wiener Frauenkunst, declined the invitation to join the VBKÖ on the grounds that Frauenkunst, as such, had not yet reached a sufficient level of artistic maturity. As she explained to Brand-Krieghammer;

Honored Frau Brand! Above all my deepest thanks for your kind invitation, which, after careful consideration, I can nevertheless not accept because, in my view, ‘individual/independent’ Frauenkunst as such is not yet appropriately developed today in Vienna in order to emerge as an independent association. In principle, I would be particularly sympathetic to the idea but I am deeply sorry to have to follow my conviction and act in the negative.\(^{1011}\)

Venturing that perhaps she was in the wrong and Brand-Krieghammer was in the right, the Salzburg-based Schlangenhausen closed her letter by extending the shadow of the doubt to the VKBÖ ladies.\(^{1012}\) Nonetheless, although expressing fundamental doubts on “independent Frauenkunst” in 1909, Schlangenhausen became a founding member of the Wiener Frauenkunst in 1926, the VBKÖ splinter organization prioritizing applied and decorative arts. Another Salzburg artist linked with the KGS, Werkbund and Wassermann, Sculptor and Ceramicist Hilde

\(^{1011}\) Emma Schlangenhausen to VBKÖ [27 November 1909], VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 21 [Künstlerinnen Briefe zur Gründung der VBKÖ], Bl. 33-34.

\(^{1012}\) Emma Schlangenhausen to VBKÖ [27 November 1909], VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 21 [Künstlerinnen Briefe zur Gründung der VBKÖ], Bl. 34.
Exner (1880-1922) refused VBKÖ membership due to ideological convictions. Detailing the reasons for her decision, Exner theorized that

I represent the standpoint that that a group of artists, regardless of whether they are men or women, band together for an artistic reason, meaning that they all strive for the same artistic goal, although perhaps with outwardly different ways and means, in order to make this idea clear to the general public through an appropriate quantity of works, and hence to interest [the general public in it]; or, people unite due to purely social reasons, above all, to achieve material success.

Exner went on to classify the Secession as belonging to the first, ideological type of artists’ union, insinuating that the VBKÖ, with its goal of exhibiting and selling members’ works, fell under the rubric of the second. The aesthetic and ideological unity of such commercial unions, Exner hinted, left something to be desired. Admittedly, with the extreme aesthetic and stylistic diversity of VBKÖ members’ works, Exner’s premonitions panned out in practice. Exner conceded “that much good can also come from the other type [of commercially-based artist union], I grant without reservation, yet this isn’t for me… []” Artists unions, in Exner’s views, should be based upon ideological fault lines rather than gender or economic motivations.

Other Austrian women artists responded negatively to VBKÖ membership due to existing professional affiliations and successful exhibition records. Prominent women artists such as Blau-Lang, Duczynska, and Exner garnering successful career-resumes exhibiting in the mainstream institutional network harbored serious reservations about pigeonholing their artistic identities as feminine. For this reason, famous women artists avoided gender-specific exhibition

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1014 Hilde Exner to VBKÖ [undated], VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 21 [Künstlerinnen Briefe zur Gründung der VBKÖ], Bl. 62-63.
1015 Hilde Exner to VBKÖ [undated], VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 21 [Künstlerinnen Briefe zur Gründung der VBKÖ], Bl. 63.
1016 As discussed previously, VBKÖ membership was intended to be harmonious with existing professional affiliations. The assumptions of Ruhm and Duczynska are thus incorrect.
leagues despite their support for the women’s movement in the arts. Portrait-, Landscape, and Genre-Painter Karoline Ruhm regretfully informed the VBKÖ that she could not join the newly-formed league as she had “been a guest of the Acht Künstlerinnen for years” and saw no reason to renounce this affiliation. Should, however, the Acht Künstlerinnen join forces with the VBKÖ, Ruhm would wholeheartedly attach herself to the group. Nonetheless showing a portrait at the 1910 Kunst der Frau show, Ruhm became a regular member of the group in 1919 and sat on the VBKÖ’s Jury-, Working-, and Hanging Commissions in the 1920s. Painter and Sculptor Irma von Duczynska, who as detailed in Chapter Two operated her own painting school, declined VBKÖ membership due to her connection to the Hagenbund. “Unfortunately, I must share with you that I have been a member of the Hagenbund for some years… and see no reason to announce my resignation from this association.” A firm connection to the mainstream artistic establishment gave the Galician-born artist little rationale to attach her name to a group of women artists, given the notions of dilettantism still surrounding Frauenkunst. Some established women artists, such as Styrian born Pre-Raphaelite painter Marianne Stokes-Preindlsberger, who resided in England with her husband Adrian Stokes, only joined the VBKÖ after a period of initial apprehension. Stokes joined the VBKÖ in 1911 as a Corresponding Member, but warned the league of her unreliability in that she spent much of her time

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1017 To be sure, such a quandary was not unique to Late-Imperial and First-Republic Austria. French Impressionist Berthe Morisot invariably signed her canvases as Morisot and listed herself as “B. Morisot” in the catalogues of France’s Société anonyme des peintres, sculpteurs et graveurs, effectively masking her feminine identity. Her colleague Mary Cassatt, though pigeonholed by subsequent biographers as a ‘painter of women and children,’ also kept her distance from exhibitions of women’s art and being categorized as a ‘lady painter.’
1018 Karoline Ruhm to VBKÖ [29 April 1909], VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 21 [Künstlerinnen Briefe zur Gründung der VBKÖ], Bl. 72-73.
1019 In 1912, the Hagenbund allowed four women to join the group, albeit as corresponding members. Why Duczynska’s correspondence to the VBKÖ from 1911 claims that she had been a Hagenbund member for “a few years” remains unclear.
1020 Irma von Duczynska to VBKÖ [30 January 1911], VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 21 [Künstlerinnen Briefe zur Gründung der VBKÖ], Bl. 77-78.
1021 Like Ruhm, however, Duczynska nevertheless sent two paintings and a sculpture to be shown at the 1910 “Kunst der Frau” exhibition.
traveling. The British émigré may have accepted membership in the VBKÖ, but not before she had reprimanded Brand-Krieghammer for listing her surname incorrectly in the 1910 catalogue and exhibiting an early work the artist believed to be below her current abilities.

VBKÖ Vice-President Ilse von Twardowska-Conrat recalled the tremendous ideological and class divisions overcome by members in founding a league dedicated to Frauenkunst.

“Taking a liking to this woman [Brand-Krieghammer] approximately 6-8 years older than I, I overcame my reluctance against women’s leagues and took on the responsibility [of co-curating the VBKÖ’s inaugural die Kunst der Frau exhibition].”

As insinuated by Conrat, potential VBKÖ members harbored reluctance about joining a group of women artists not only because of Frauenkunst’s bad reputation, but the miasma surrounding the concept of Frauenemanzipation, or women’s emancipation. Aristocratic and upper-middle-class ladies were highly unlikely to support a group espousing radical feminism that sought to overthrow the established order. To be sure, late-Imperial Austria’s educated Bildungsbürgertum remained the greatest champions of Austrian feminism. Yet, as scholars like Anderson and Bader-Zaar have proven, Austrian feminism represented a brand of feminist thought known for its moderate, ideological nature rather than radical political demands along the Anglo-American model.

The VBKÖ remained keenly aware of the controversy surrounding Frauenemanzipation in Austria and carefully framed its demands in non-radical language, seeking to uphold the current societal order.

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1022 VBKÖ ARCH, ARCH 21, Bl. 47-8. [Marianne Stokes to VBKÖ, 19 February 1911].
1023 In the 1910 catalogues, Stokes was listed as STOKES-PREINDLSBERGER Marianne. The artist corrected the VBKÖ on the matter, stating, “concerning my name, I would like to mention that I have, for the sake of brevity, omitted my family name. My artistic name is simply Marianne Stokes.” VBKÖ ARCH, ARCH 21, Bl. 47-8.
Maintaining a ladylike public image and relying upon traditional avenues of feminine influence facilitated the league’s acceptance in mainstream cultural life.

Harnessing a feminist yet feminine ideology, the VBKÖ staged a series of major public exhibitions that resurrected Frauenkunst’s tarnished image and claimed a fair share of public funding for women artists. The VBKÖ’s 1910 “Art of the Woman” show represented a phenomenal triumph in bringing “the league into the public [spotlight] and thus providing league members an opportunity to sell their works.”

Much of Die Kunst der Frau’s success can be credited to VBKÖ Executive Committee Members’ ministerial dexterity and prowess in courtly supplication. The VBKÖ’s generous subventions from the Ministry for Education, awarded at a time when state support was generally limited to the “Big Three” exhibition houses, typified this deftness. Although the league had raised half of the exhibition’s projected operating costs of 20,000 Kronen through private donations and membership dues, the league was left with an additional 10,000 Kronen in uncovered costs.

To cover these costs, the league has turned to art-loving private citizens, however, only half of the necessary amount has been raised through these donations. Thus, we address Your Excellency with the plea to graciously grant us a subvention in the amount of 10,000 Kronen. In this respect, may Your Excellency consider helping artistically active women to be able to work through the benevolence of Your Excellency and the material support of the honored k.k. Ministry for Education.

Valuing the exhibition’s didactic historical mission, Minister Stürgkh granted the VBKÖ a one-time subvention of 6,000 Kronen with the assurance the League would find the means “to muster the remaining funds.”

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1026 VBKÖ ARCH, ARCH 1 [17 May 1910].
significant financial boost to the league at an amount rivaling the Ministry’s subsidies to the Secession and other major artists’ unions.\(^{1030}\) In the meantime, the VBKÖ Executive Board finalized negotiations with the Secession to assure the Ministry that the international retrospective would “definitely take place in fall of the current year and would open in the first days of November.”\(^{1031}\) By early October 1910, Helene Krauss and Hedwig Neumann-Pisling reported that a total of 13,940 Kronen had been collected “to cover the cost of the Frauenkunst exhibition.”\(^{1032}\) In less than half a year, the VBKÖ collected enough funds to launch an exhibition endeavoring to grant Frauenkunst its rightful place in mainstream artistic life.

By all accounts, “The Art of the Woman” did much to advance Frauenkunst and women artists’ causes in the public arena. Critic Karl Kuzmany commented that

One can thank a certain Association of Austrian Women Artists for such an extensive bold exhibition unprecedented on German soil and perhaps anywhere. Not only encompassing those [artists] in the geographical vicinity of the newly-founded Association, the exhibition transcends [local ties] for a collegiality embracing all civilizations, connecting living artists to the female masters of centuries gone by.\(^{1033}\)

Indeed, as Kuzmany highlighted, the exhibition embodied a transnational expression of Frauenkunst and feminine solidarity. Works of British, American, French, Dutch, and Italian women artists were shown alongside Reich-Germans and Austrians hailing from Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, Galicia, and the Crownlands. Der Bund editor Daisy Minor celebrated the exhibition’s symbolic importance in making women artists visible to the general public.

Every year, Viennese artistic life offers us many pictures shows, yet it may appear to the attentive observer that women had only taken up brush and palette in exceptional cases; that is, one or two females are found among

\(^{1030}\) Around 1910, the Secession received annual subventions ranging from 8,000-10,000 Kronen. ÖStA, AVA, MiKU, Fasz. 3360, Z. 19373/1910, Z. 27056, Z. 45375/1910. The MiKU generously underwrote the inaugural Kunstschau exhibition of 1908, awarding the league 30,000 Kronen to cover the exhibition’s running costs.

\(^{1031}\) Secession Secretary Rudolf Lechner to VBKÖ, ÖStA, AVA, BMfKU, Fasz. 3360, Z. 48346/1910

\(^{1032}\) Vermögensstand der VBKÖ [5 October 1910], ÖStA, AVA, BMfKU, Fasz. 3360, Z. 48346/1910

several hundred male exhibitors because none of the large artist corporations took them as regular members; so that up until now, it was not possible for women to appear to the public as an independent factor and make their works accessible in broader circles.  

The novelty of the “Art of the Woman” lay in its dual presentation of Frauenkunst as the independent factor described by Minor, yet a women’s art that was distinctly engrained in Imperial Austria’s mainstream institutional landscape. Housing the exhibition on the premises of Vienna’s foremost modern exhibition house, the Secession, underscored its planners’ intent to demonstrate Frauenkunst’s relevance to the prevailing art historical canon. 

Die Kunst der Frau unearthed works from international women artists from the Renaissance to the present, emphasizing women’s historical contributions to the fine arts. Of the 316 works shown at Die Kunst der Frau, around 30% had been created by historical artists. Contemporary artists accounted for the remaining 70% of total exhibited pieces.  

Female masters such as Angelika Kauffmann, Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun, as well as Viennese Academician Gabriele Bertrand-Beyer were strongly represented through recourse to the collections of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Albertina, Liechtenstein Family, and private Viennese households. Pictures from England, France, Italy, and the Low Countries lent the exhibition a strong showing of Baroque and eighteenth-century art, as well as the recent movements of French Realism and Impressionism. Combating notions of women’s “natural” calling in the applied arts, the Frauenkunst exhibition accented women’s vocation in the fine arts. The league had, after all, to draw a line in the sand by naming itself an association of fine artists.  

At the time of its founding, the vast majority of VBKÖ members were painters and sculptors, although its

\[1035\] At the 1910 exhibition, 92 works (29%) were by historical, non-living artists and 224 (71%) were by contemporary artists.  
\[1036\] Literally, the Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs means the Association of Austrian Fine/Visual Women Artists.
membership base gradually evolved to encompass a greater percentage of applied artists in years to follow. Only two of the thirty-two Regular Members listed in the 1910 exhibition catalogue listed themselves as *Kunstgewerblerin* (Craftswomen).\textsuperscript{1037} Along with its emphasis on the fine arts, the exhibition’s format followed that of the traditional salon-style picture show. In contrast to the *Wiener Frauenkunst*’s exhibitions focused around specific themes explored via programmatic exhibition catalogues, *Die Kunst der Frau* included a wide variety of styles, themes, and subject matter. If any one theme can be discerned from the 1910 exhibit, it was the feminine virtues of modesty, domesticity, and maternity that linked the exhibit’s retrospective and contemporary sections [Figure 4.3].\textsuperscript{1038}

Some critics interpreted the V BKÖ’s reliance upon the great female artists of the past as a backhanded method of propping up their own talents, as Julie Johnson has correctly pointed out.\textsuperscript{1039} As critic and MfKI docent Josef Folnesics quipped; “not without [a dose of] feminine slyness and clever calculation has the Association of Austrian Women Artists attached a luminous foreword to their exhibition. They have left it to the best, most distinguished representatives of long-past artistic epochs to take their living and working sisters under their wing.”\textsuperscript{1040} In the eyes of such critics, the exhibition was nothing more than a cunning form of artistic seduction analogous to the female-dominated salons of the Rococo Period. Conservative feuilletonist Paul Zifferer mused that “the *Frauenausstellung* in the Secession is a salon, just like the very first one created by Madame de Ramboulet when she covered the best room of her hôtel

\textsuperscript{1037} Katalog der XXXVII. Ausstellung der Vereinigung Bildender Künstler Österreichs, Wien. I. Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Oesterreichs. “Die Kunst der Frau.”
\textsuperscript{1038} See Julie Johnson’s insightful arguments on the feminine virtues exhibited at “The Art of the Woman,” “From Brocades to Silks and Powers: Woman’s Art Exhibitions in fin-de-siècle Vienna,” *Austrian History Yearbook* Vol. XXVIII (1997), 277-286. See also Appendix 3.1 for a complete list of works exhibited at *die Kunst der Frau.*
\textsuperscript{1039} *Ibid.*
with sky-blue velvet…” Zifferer proceeded to maintain that the exhibited pictures could be read on two levels; both as “a work of art” and as “the colorful pages of the book” of society. As detailed in Chapter One, the art of feminine self-presentation entailed its own set of womanly arts which co-existed uneasily with conceptions of being an artist. For critics like Zifferer, observing the living Frauenkunst admiring their painted sisters on the walls was more interesting than the art itself. Zifferer commented that the high number of portraits shown at the exhibition was hardly surprising “for it is the vocation of femininity to place themselves in scenes and be represented. Women are accustomed to playing with colors… they know which shade best complements their face and hair and love trying to understand themselves in the middle of such landscapes.” With their make-up palettes, brushes, and foundational-clothing, the fashionable ladies strolling through die Kunst der Frau were both painter and sitter, artist and critic, jury and judge in perfecting the art of feminine self-styelization. Woman’s true atelier was her salon, not the workshop.

Despite such derisive reductions of Frauenkunst to feminine stylization, “The Art of the Woman” brought Austrian Frauenkunst unprecedented public attention and critical acclaim. One critic wrote that “for the first time, a question of equal artistic and social interest was broached; the question of whether one can only speak of women’s reproductive talents, or whether it is only a hobby… or an inner drive that moves her to take up art.” The anonymous critic proceeded to crush notions of female dilettantism and artistic dependence, declaring that “primarily, the exhibition shows how women have practiced art independently over the course of the centuries, how they have proven to equal men in originality in multiple ways, how their

1042 Paul Zifferer, “Im Atelier der Frau,” 2.
1043 Ibid.
feminine nature has been brought to fruition in their taste for color and charming tones, and how they have spoken out on the side of Impressionism in the struggle for modernism in the last century and have equaled men’s spirited and serious ambitions.”¹⁰⁴⁵ The “Art of the Woman” served as proof that professional women artists could create original art equal in quality to that produced by their male colleagues, and that women were an important force to be reckoned with in artistic modernism. Nonetheless, as Frauenkunst represented the epitome of women’s unique feminine nature, it was an equality of difference propping up the equality of Austrian women’s art.

The same sense of “equality of difference” animated other critical reactions to Die Kunst der Frau. Detailing women’s lack of access to mainstream exhibition leagues and public art schools, KFM Professor A.F. Seligmann delivered a bold defense of Frauenkunst to would-be critics. Countering objections that women artists have never equaled the heights of male artistic genius, Seligmann maintained that “the great, idiosyncratic artists represent exceptions in general, also among men” and that women’s “work ethic, perseverance, manual skills, grace, and taste” were more pronounced than those of male artists.¹⁰⁴⁶ Seligmann argued that “preconceived opinions and theories” on Frauenkunst had little to do with reality, as “the newly-opened exhibition in the Secession had nothing whatsoever feminine [about it].”¹⁰⁴⁷ While other critics interpreted Kauffmann’s and Vigée-Lebrun’s portraits as speaking to a distinctly feminine essence, Seligmann found their works confirming stylistic tendencies of their era, not their gender. Even Folsenics, a critic who delivered a harsher critical assessment of Frauenkunst than Seligmann, declared; “as soon as we recognize that a real, un-falsified value resides here [in

Frauenkunst], the question of whether a man or a woman has created this work of art loses its meaning.” In the eyes of many contemporaries, however, Frauenkunst possessed all the more significance precisely because it was born by women’s hands.

All in all, “The Art of the Woman” constituted a phenomenal success, drawing a record number of visitors and witnessing major sales to important public and private collections. Helene Krauss’s Wiener Vorstadthof (Viennese Suburban Courtyard), purchased by the Viennese Municipal government, represented one such official purchase [Figure 4.4]. Besides Krauss’s works, paintings by Brand-Krieghammer, Fraenkel-Hahn, and Hilde Kótany-Pollak, as well as the “excellent engravings” of Prague-based artist Lili Gödl-Brandhuber and the talented drawings of Marianne Frimberger and Gabriele Murad-Michalkowski, received widespread critical acclaim [Figures 4.3 and 4.5]. The sculpture of Ilse Conrat, including her 1907 bust of the assassinated Empress Elisabeth (pg. 34), as well as Teresa Ries’s likeness of her teacher ABKW Professor Edmund Hellmer, also solicited much critical praise. In the years following Die Kunst der Frau, subsidies from the Ministry of Education and municipal government remained fairly constant.

In addition to bringing the league commercial and critical success, the exhibition served to thrust the cause of professional Frauenkunst and women’s art education into the public spotlight. Der Bund columnist Daisy Minor observed that

The suspiciousness which Frauenarbeit (women’s work) encounters in the general public comes to expression particularly in [the field of] art because dilettantism is widespread and the höheres Töchtertum (daughters of the privileged classes) would like to be smuggled into the artists’ leagues. The

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1049 Judging from a letter from Secession President Josef Engelhart to Helene Krauss, a dispute appears to have arisen between the V BKÖ and Secession after the exhibition in early 1911, presumably over the collection of sales royalties. Josef Engelhart to Helene Krauss [20 Month? 1911], VBKÖ ARCH, ARCH 21, Bl. 85-6.
VBKÖ is fighting against this with great seriousness, in that it is very careful when selecting works for exhibition, only choosing those with original qualities… [.]\textsuperscript{1052}

Other critics within the women’s movement were equally concerned with the potential for amateurism in gender-specific leagues and schools. In reviewing \textit{Die Kunst der Frau}, Leopoldine Kulka, a regular columnist for Auguste Fickert’s \textit{Neues Frauenleben}, argued that the lax admissions criteria at women’s private academies begot mediocrity. Kulka argued that the motto of “many are called, but few are chosen” should hang above the gates of the Ladies’ Academy, but instead it opened its doors “all too wide.”\textsuperscript{1053} In Kulka’s view, the added competition from men’s academies, corporations, and exhibition houses represented the best remedy to cure \textit{Frauenkunst} of lingering traces of dilettantism. Instead, given women’s exclusion from mainstream artists’ leagues and academies, the formation of “special artists’ associations and \textit{Frauenkunst} exhibitions” constituted a necessary action in “self-defense.”\textsuperscript{1054} Even to the strongest supporters of the women’s movement, \textit{Frauenkunst} and the formation of gender-specific exhibitions was viewed as a sort of transitory, necessary evil that would yield to gender mainstreaming.

Capitalizing upon the success of \textit{Die Kunst der Frau}, the VBKÖ created a niche for \textit{Frauenkunst} in Vienna’s mainstream institutional network. Held at the \textit{Hagenbund} from September to October 1911, the VBKÖ’s second exhibition further enhanced its position vis-à-vis the ‘Big Three’ exhibition houses. The Hagenbund, founded in 1899 by architect Josef Urban, represented Vienna’s other main modernist exhibition hall next to the Secession. In contrast to \textit{Die Kunst der Frau}’s historical focus, the VBKÖ’s second exhibition consisted solely of contemporary works produced by members and guests. To this effect, Ida Mauthner

\textsuperscript{1052} Daisy Minor, “Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs,” \textit{Der Bund} Vol. IX, no. 7 (July 1914): 17.
commented that although Viennese society came to the “The Art of the Woman’s” opening “highly divided and full of curiosity… [hoping] to have a look at and judge die Kunst der Frau,” only the second exhibition afforded the Viennese a chance to form opinions on contemporary Frauenkunst.\textsuperscript{1055} The same reviewer, a leader in the working women’s movement, complimented the league’s tremendous productivity. “…It is astonishing what an abundance of excellent works have been completed in such a short time, for, without exception, these are works which have been created in the few months since the first exhibition.”\textsuperscript{1056} Yet artistic controversy remained coupled with the VGBKÖ’s departure from the safe Frauenkunst of the female old masters. Mauthner found the bold, expressionistic canvases of new VGBKÖ Corresponding Member Helene Funke to be “uninviting.”\textsuperscript{1057} Funke was represented at the VGBKÖ’s second exhibition with a collection of thirteen oil landscapes, still-lifes, and portraits and three engravings.\textsuperscript{1058} Deeply influenced by the Fauves during her studies in Paris, Funke’s expressionistic colorism and virtuoso brushwork were not universally well-received by conservative Viennese audiences.\textsuperscript{1059} Even A.F. Seligmann reacted negatively to the “horrible Van-Goghification” of Funke’s expressionistic canvases.\textsuperscript{1060} Seligmann’s lukewarm reception of Funke’s works demonstrates that, while the KFM/WFA may have represented a modern institution, avant-garde influences of Matisse, Van Gogh, and the Fauves clashed with the moderately-modernist Frauenkunst envisioned by the KFM’s founding fathers.


\textsuperscript{1056} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{1057} Ida Mauthner, “Die zweite Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs,” 7.

\textsuperscript{1058} Katalog der II. Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, Hagenbund [September–Oktober 1911]. (Wien: Ch. Reisser’s Söhne, 1911). Funke had also exhibited two oil paintings at the VGBKÖ’s first annual exhibition as a non-member.

\textsuperscript{1059} According to Julie Johnson, “Among the Parisian Fauves, Funke’s colorful, expressive canvases were wild among the many, but in Vienna they were too singularly wild even for a critic who championed other women artists [A.F. Seligmann],” Julie Marie Johnson, “Rediscovering Helene Funke: The Invisible Foremother.” Woman’s Art Journal Vol. 29, no. 1 (Summer 2008): 33-40.

\textsuperscript{1060} Quoted in Plakolm-Forsthuber, Österreichische Künstlerinnen, 67.
Amelia Levetus cheerfully welcomed the opening of the VBKÖ’s second annual exhibition at the Hagenbund, stating “it is pleasant to be able to state that the critics again measured the contributors as artists, totally ignoring any questions of sex, which is after all as it should be.” Although Levetus’s assessment of male critics’ impartiality towards Frauenkunst was perhaps too generous, the VBKÖ’s exhibitions facilitated the increased recognition of professional women artists in late-Imperial Austria. In reviewing the VBKÖ’s second exhibition, Levetus lauded Louise Fraenkel-Hahn’s flower studies and decorative Madonna, Helene Krauss’s Alte Frau (Old Woman), an oil portrait showing “much thought and penetration,” and Hilde Kotányi’s Kinder-Reigen (Children’s Games) as “a work remarkable for simplicity of treatment and loveliness of coloring [Figures 4.5 and 4.6].” Works by non-members, including Budapest artist Olga Hadzsky and “veteran” Viennese artist Olga Wisinger-Florian, also received particular critical attention.

In its second and third exhibitions, VBKÖ members ventured beyond the typically feminine genres of still-lives, flower paintings, and depictions of mothers and children to produce an abundance of landscapes, architectural studies, and history paintings [Compare Appendix 4.2 and 4.3]. What emerges as most interesting, however, about women artists’ reinvention of Frauenkunst was how its practitioners reinvigorated certain typically-feminine genres such as portraiture and flower painting through recourse to contemporary international artistic influences. KFM graduate Johanna Freund’s Fechter (Fencer), depicting a young male fencer paused in a moment of concentration and self collection, reversed expectations of the mothers and children the public expected to see portrayed at such a Frauenkunst exhibition.

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1062 Ibid.
Instead, the large oil canvas was executed in a bold painterly style with virtuoso brushstrokes reminiscent of Manet’s Spanish phase, further emphasizing the painting’s masculine qualities. Louise Fraenkel-Hahn’s *Flora mit den Blumen des Jahres*, (Flora with the Flowers of the Year) a decorative composition featuring a demure female nude framed by a garland of flowers, cleverly played upon gender expectations by way of the artist’s forthrightness in reducing the female figure to a decorative element [Figure 4.6a]. In having been produced by a woman artist, *Flora* at once became a comment on how the societal reduction of women to aesthetic objects, like the heavy floral garden burdening Flora, hampered the female sex. Increasingly working in a photorealistic, *Neue-Sachlichkeit* style and incorporating non-Western ‘exotic’ objects into her canvases, Fraenkel-Hahn’s flower studies of the 1920s breathed new life into the typically-feminine genre of flower painting. That both Fraenkel-Hahn (1878-1939) and Kampmann-Freund (1888-1940), as well as prominent VGBKÖ colleagues Ella Iranyi and Hedwig Brecher-Eibuschitz, were of Jewish descent testifies to Jewish women’s prevalence in the arts.

True to its founding ideals, the VGBKÖ opened its exhibitions to participation by non-members. In the 1911 exhibition, for instance, 20 non-members contributed a total of 56 works (31% total works exhibited, see Appendix 4.3 and 4.4). For the 1912 exhibition, 18 non-members produced 46 works (47% total works exhibited). By contrast, 52 works (53% of total works exhibited) were produced by VGBKÖ members in the same year; that is, 36 works by

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1064 On the gendering of painterly techniques, see Pamela Invinksi, “‘So Firm and Powerful a Hand:’ Mary Cassatt’s Techniques and Questions of Gender,” in *Women Impressionists*, 178-187.
1065 In fact, one of Kampmann-Freund’s works having illegally entered the collection of the Wien Museum has recently been restituted. Johanna Kampmann- Freund, *Parkeingang mit Villa*, Bleistiftzeichnung, 28,7 cm x 39 cm Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien Inv. Nr. 70.342.
1066 *Katalog der II. Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, Hagenbund.*
1067 *Katalog der dritten Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreich.*
regular members, 11 works by irregular members, 4 works by corresponding members, and 1 work by a supporting member. Corresponding members included prominent foreign artists and Austrian artists living abroad. By including non VBKÖ members in its exhibitions, the VBKÖ extended an olive leaf to women artists who, due to successful exhibition records and existing professional affiliations, did not wish to join a league of women artists.

The VBKÖ’s third exhibition in Fall 1912 constituted an important milestone in the league’s inscription in Vienna’s mainstream institutional landscape. While the league had depended upon the goodwill of men’s artists’ leagues for realizing its first and second exhibitions, the league staged its third exhibition on its own institutional turf, in its newly-acquired “row of charming ateliers in the highest floor of the Hotel Astoria [Figure 4.7].” The league’s institutional home at the heart of Vienna’s first district at the corner of the Maysedergasse and the Kärntnerstrasse, an elegant shopping street, clearly reflected its aim to establish itself in a high-profile location. The League heralded its new Maysedergasse 2 headquarters in its 1912 exhibition catalogue, celebrating its independence from men’s leagues.

The Association of Austrian Women Artists… organized its first exhibition, *Die Kunst der Frau*, a large retrospective picture-show, in the year 1910 on the premises of the Secession. In 1911, the *Hagenbund* offered its home for the league’s second exhibition. The tremendous participation on the part of Austrian women artists and the friendly interest of Viennese art patrons and the general public gave initiative for the Association’s attempts to stand on its own feet, to found a home and to stage its third exhibition independently. Thanks to a ministerial subsidy of 5,000 Kronen and the generous support of Prince Johann II von und zu Liechtenstein, the VBKÖ’s newly renovated rooms in the Hotel Astoria opened to the public for the league’s third annual exhibition in September 1912, which ran until the end of

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November. The league’s new rooftop administrative offices and exhibition space were accessed via an elegant glass elevator. As A.F. Seligmann commented, “The Association of Austrian Women Artists has just opened its third exhibition, that is, in its own localities after having been guests at the Secession, then the Hagenbund.”¹⁰⁷⁰ The VBKÖ’s inaugural exhibition in its Maysedergasse home attracted 2,568 visitors and 43 works were sold.¹⁰⁷¹ Seligmann recommended several artists as particularly deserving of critical acclaim including several of his own former KFM pupils: gifted portraitists Johanna Freund-Kampmann, Jella Fischer-Liebscher, and Elise Weber-Fülöp as well as graphic artist Tanna Hoernes-Kasimir.¹⁰⁷² The only drawback to the league’s new exhibition space was found in its relatively small size in comparison to the Secession, Hagenbund, and other major exhibition houses. The league declared; “even this time [1912] the space almost proved too small to show everything good created by women’s hands in Austria… [.]”¹⁰⁷³ Indeed, the league was growing rapidly, having significantly expanded its membership base from the VBKÖ’s twenty-one founding members.¹⁰⁷⁴ By the time it acquired its own home in 1912, the league boasted 40 regular members from across the Empire, 8 irregular members, plus 27 corresponding members living abroad, including internationally-known artists such as Helene Funke, Käthe Kollwitz, and Margaret MacDonald Mackintosh.¹⁰⁷⁵

¹⁰⁷¹ Jahresbericht der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs für das Vereinsjahr 1912 (Wien: Gerold, 1913), 1.
¹⁰⁷³ Vorwort, Katalog der dritten Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreich (Wien: Gerold, 1912).
¹⁰⁷⁴ ÖStA, AVA, MiKU, Fasz. 2939 Z. 21547/1910.
In addition, the VBKÖ member base gradually began to encompass greater numbers of applied artists.

In contrast to its inaugural exhibition’s focus upon transnational Frauenkunst, the VBKÖ’s second and third exhibitions embodied strong expressions of Austro-Hungarian Frauenkunst, representing female artists from the Monarchy’s emerging national cultures. The stylized Hungarian folk art gracing its exhibition catalogue in 1911 exemplified the group’s inclusive Austrian identity [Figure 4.8]. While most VBKÖ members lived or worked in Vienna, the Monarchy’s largest cultural center, a good deal of exhibitors hailed from Budapest, Prague, Cracow, etc. By the league’s third annual exhibition in 1913, Austro-Hungarian artists accounted for 89% (87 items) of works exhibited while foreign artists produced 11% (11 works) of the 98 total works exhibited. [See Appendix 4.6, 4.7, 4.8]. Within the contingent of Austro-Hungarian artists, Viennese artists submitted 78% of exhibited works, followed by artists hailing from Prague and environs (10%), Graz (3%), Budapest (1%), and Sarajevo (1%). Nonetheless, despite the prominence of Viennese artists, the VBKÖ could truly claim to be a league of Austrian artists in representing women across the Empire, as well as provincials migrating to Vienna for artistic training. In this way, the VBKÖ differed from predecessor leagues such as the VÖBKK, whose geographical reach hardly extended beyond the Imperial capital.

At this juncture, the development of a similar league of women artists in Budapest, the Austro-Hungarian Empire’s dual capital, should be mentioned. The Magyar Képzőművésznők Egyesülete (Association of Hungarian Women Artists, or MKE) was founded in Budapest in


1076 These figures are not necessarily indicative of artists’ national/ethnic backgrounds, as many artists listing Viennese addresses had migrated to Viennese and originally came from the provinces.
1909 under the tutelage of Baroness Anna Sóos-Korányi. That much contact occurred between the women’s artists’ leagues of Vienna and Budapest seems highly probable due to Sóos-Korányi’s membership in the VBKÖ beginning in 1912. Budapest-based painters Valerie Telkessy, Eleőd Vámosyné, and Sándorné Kaliwoda also belonged to the VBKÖ while other Hungarian artists, such as Aranka Lichtenberg-Propper Olga Hadzsy, Mariska Klammer participated in the VBKÖ’s exhibitions as non-members. Yet, beyond occasional references to exhibitions in the women’s presses of the Monarchy’s twin capitals, little is known about the interaction between the Danubian women’s artist leagues. The lack of knowledge about connections between these league results from a lack of existing primary materials on the MKE. Unlike the VBKÖ, the records of the MKE have not been retained in a private archive nor appear to be concentrated in any major public repositories; even many of the MKE’s exhibition catalogues have been reported missing at the time this study was written. Unfortunately, the rich holdings of the VBKÖ’s private archives contain few clues as to the Hungarian women’s league, leaving scant exhibition catalogues and coverage in the women’s press as the lone historical sources.

What is clear about the MKE is that it was established in Budapest in 1909 by a group of professional women artists. Like its Viennese counterpart, the MKE was founded by well-connected members of Budapest’s haute bourgeoisie and lower nobility. Baroness Anna Soós-Korányi served as president during the 1910s while Aranka Lichtenberg-Propper and Mrs. Árpád Dégen shared the office of Vice-President. The MKE, too, benefitted from royal patronage, enjoying the protectorship of Crown Princess Stephanie and Princess Mrs. Elemér Lónyay.

1078 *Katalog der ersten, zweiten und dritten Ausstellungen der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreich*
1079 Several MKE catalogues in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York have been listed as ‘missing.’
Similar to the VBKÖ’s collaborative efforts, the MKE cooperated with mainstream exhibition houses such as Budapest’s *Nemzeti Szalon* (National Salon, or Hungary’s equivalent of the *Künstlergenoßenschaft*) and came to occupy a prominent position in Hungary’s mainstream institutional life. On the occasion of the MKE’s ninth annual exhibition in 1917, a show featuring over 240 works from MKE members, MKE Secretary János Bende declared that the Hungarian Women Artists’ Association occupied such an important position in Hungarian artistic life as to “hardly require lengthy words of introduction.”

The MKE exhibition catalogue’s forward celebrated the diligence and productivity of Hungarian women artists. Like [the MKE’s] eight previous exhibitions, this ninth exhibition has carefully selected exhibits from the Association’s members demonstrating members’ best creations; all of the exhibition’s visitors have observed its rich and diverse collections, seeing the fruitful and diligent work women artists have completed this past year.

Paralleling the VBKÖ’s exhibition activity, the exhibitions of the Association of Hungarian Women Artists functioned to bring women’s art into the public spotlight in Hungary, earning the group coverage in major Hungarian journals such as *Művészet* (Art). In a MKE exhibition held in the Hungarian Salon in 1913, for instance, Baroness Anna Soós-Korányi won a gold medal for her oil painting *Antivari-i utca* (Antivari Street). Hermina Bruck received a silver medal for her pastel *Őszi virágok* (Autumnal Flowers) and Mrs. Endre Komáromi-Kacz was awarded a bronze medal for a watercolor titled *Oktober végen* (End of October). Unfortunately, however, the overall historical picture of the MKE, as well as information specific to the Vienna-Budapest connection, remains greatly limited by a lack of available primary sources on the Hungarian

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1083 *Művészet,* “Kitüntetések,” Vol. XII, no. 6 (1913): 237.
league. Nonetheless, that two leagues developed in tandem suggests the artistic, material, and social concerns shared by women artists across Central Europe.

The women’s artists leagues of Vienna and Budapest remained strongly connected to the women’s movement, both domestically and internationally. In Vienna, the VBKÖ played a large role in late-Imperial Austria’s feminist network since its founding in 1910. Personal connections between the VBKÖ, the pragmatically focused BÖFV, and the intellectual union of the AÖFV facilitated communication between the groups. For instance, the VBKÖ regularly engaged Marianne Hainisch to address its members.\(^{1084}\) The VBKÖ’s formal connection to the Austrian feminist network intensified, however, when it joined Hainisch’s BÖFV, or League of Austrian Women’s Associations, in 1913.\(^{1085}\) By joining the BÖFV, an umbrella organization founded by Hainisch in 1902 intending to bridge gaps between divisions of class, confession, and profession present in individual women’s groups, the VBKÖ solidified its position as a feminist organization, albeit one that chartered a moderate line, and its connection to international women’s groups. The BÖFV, as will be remembered from Chapter One, became allied with the suffrage-based International Council of Women from 1905 onwards. The same year it joined the BÖFV, the VBKÖ participated in the International Women’s Suffrage Conference, held in Vienna from 11-12 June 1913.\(^{1086}\) The conference featured American, British, and Scandinavian suffragettes including Carrie Chapmann-Catt and Millicent Fawcett as keynote speakers. For its part in the cultural excursions designed to foster informal bonds between members of the international women’s movement, the VBKÖ opened its home for an exclusive art exhibition for

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\(^{1084}\) *Jahresbericht der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs für das Vereinsjahr 1917*, 2.

\(^{1085}\) Sechzig Jahre Bund Österreichischer Frauenvereine (Wien: Ludwig Schöler Verlag, 1964), 34.

\(^{1086}\) Programm der Internationalen Frauenstimmrechtskonferenz in Wien 11 und 12 Juni 1913, VBKÖ ARCH, ARCH 9, 1.
conference participants. Further demonstrating the VBKÖ’s solidarity with international women artists, in 1913 the VBKÖ organized an exhibition in collaboration with the *Svenka Konstnärinnor* (Association of Swedish Women Artists), which offered a retrospective of works of Swedish women artists from 1600 to the present. By the same token, the VBKÖ progressed towards curating exhibitions conceptualized around specific themes or groups rather than traditional salon-style picture shows. In Budapest, the Association of Hungarian Women Artists, too, remained closely connected with the international women’s movement via its association with Hungary’s *Feministák Egyesülete* (Association of Hungarian Feminists), a member of the International Women’s Suffrage Alliance, and the *Magyarországi Nőegyesületek Szövetsége* (National League of Hungarian Women’s Associations), linked with the International Council of Women.

While clearly aligned with the modern feminist movement, both the VBKÖ and MKE took up causes associated with traditional female charitable leagues in the wake of the First World War. Generally, the Great War brought the activities of the women’s movement to a screeching halt, as various women’s groups were required to put aside their differences and devote the totality of their energies to the war cause. In Budapest, the MKE dedicated the

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1087 Programm der Internationalen Frauenstimmrechtskonferenz in Wien 11 und 12 Juni 1913, VBKÖ ARCH, ARCH 9, 2.
1089 On the Hungarian women’s leagues, see Susan Zimmerman *Die bessere Hälfte: Frauenbewegung und Frauenbestrebungen im Ungarn der Habsburgermonarchie 1848 bis 1918.*
proceeds from its 1917 exhibition to the National Defense of Mothers and Orphans League.\textsuperscript{1090} In this way, the Hungarian women artists put their artistic interests on hold to fulfill duties executed by traditional charitable leagues, such as the 1817-founded \textit{Pesti Jótékony Nőegylet} (Pest Women’s Charitable Society). During the war in Vienna, the Association of Austrian Women-Artists hosted a variety of charitable activities in its Maysedergasse premises, including opening a kindergarten and sewing and knitting stations to make clothing for those hospitalized or serving on the front.\textsuperscript{1091} The VSKW, too, published a \textit{Merk-und-Mahnbüchlein} (Little Book of Remembrance and Exhortation) in 1915, with contributions from renowned members such as Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach and Alice Schalek, to benefit war widows and orphans.\textsuperscript{1092}

The Great War drastically limited the VVKÖ’s exhibition activity, which was brought to a standstill when the league allocated its headquarters to the \textit{Kriegsfürsorgeamt} (Office of War Welfare) in 1914. While the VVKÖ was permitted to stage exhibitions again by 1916, only after 1920 did the scale of VKBÖ exhibitions begin to rival those organized before the war. That the VVKÖ temporarily suspended its stringent jury policies during the war due to a lack of exhibition-quality work gave rise to heated criticism within the Viennese art scene. While jury-free exhibitions may have fostered greater creative freedom, in the eyes of the VVKÖ’s critics “jury-free exhibitions were a means of opening the door and gate to dilettantism.”\textsuperscript{1093} Even the \textit{Neues Frauenleben}’s art reviewer admitted that at the VVKÖ’s sixth exhibition in 1916 “dilettantism was widespread…and the viewer’s consequential impatience is unfortunate… to

\textsuperscript{1090} A \textit{Magyar Képzőművésznők Egyesülete kilencedik rendes tárlatának: Gyűjteményének katalogusa} (Budapest: Nemzeti Szalon, 1917), 6-7.
\textsuperscript{1091} The kindergarten service was operated in collaboration with the imperial \textit{Lehrerinnenbildungsanstalt} examined in Chapter One. See \textit{Der Bund} Vol. IX, no. 8 (August 1914):14, Jahresbericht der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs für das Vereinsjahr 1914.
\textsuperscript{1093} Leopoldine Kulka “Frauenkunst,” \textit{Neues Frauenleben} Vol. XVIII, no. 5 (May 1916): 112.
see a few good things… [.]” Der Bund’s review was somewhat more generous in acknowledging the “serious striving and talent” present at the Association’s next show in 1917 yet pointed out the stylistic dependency of many exhibited works. “Here a Leo Putz, there a Gauguin devotee… yet the old-Viennese Muttersprache is heard rather infrequently.” The originality and artistic independence of works exhibited at the VVKÖ wartime exhibitions, the BÖFV argued, left much to be desired.

Unleashing greater debates on women’s art exhibitions, some feminists were becoming increasingly critical on the very separateness upon which Frauenkunst was based. In 1917, the BÖFV warned of the dangers of protecting female artists from male competition and the pitfalls of separatist movements in general.

Resulting from this situation [women’s exclusion from the ABKW and men’s artist leagues] women were forced to organize separatist movements and to show what they could do alone. The danger, however, that the artistic niveau might sink, that an exhibition might become more of a social event than an artistic one lies very close…”

Similar concerns troubled Austria’s other main feminist group, the intellectually centered General Austrian Women’s Association, or AÖFV. AÖFV activist Leopoldine Kulka questioned the “justification of special Frauenkunst exhibitions.” The usual justification for such exhibitions, Leopoldine Kulka argued, “was that they were a necessary evil.” Yet Kulka pointed out that such Frauenkunst exhibitions were “just the same as all gender-segregated deployments in which gender has nothing to do with the matter at hand.” To certain feminists, it was Frauenkunst’s very separateness that compromised women artists’ chances for

1094 Ibid.
1097 Ibid.
1098 Ibid.
1099 Ibid.
mainstream artistic success. The questionable quality of exhibited works and the limited funds available for printing exhibition catalogues and posters notwithstanding, the exhibitions of 1916 and 1917 each drew around 35,000 and 50,000 Kronen, respectively.\footnote{Both exhibitions included a number of purchases by major official collections. At the 1917 exhibition, the Viennese municipal government purchased Gabriele Murad-Michalkowski’s drawing \textit{Schreibtzimmer der Schriftstellerin Marien von Ebner-Eschenbach}, Zeichnung and also her render of Ebner-Eschenbach’s \textit{Sterbezimmer}, in tempera for 600 and 800 kr. \textit{VII. Ausstellung} [I. Maysedergasse 2, 4 Jänner- 4 Februar 1917] Wien: 1917.}

Despite a slackening in exhibition activity, important developments in the institutionalization of Austrian \textit{Frauenkunst} occurred during World War I. In the years leading up to and during the Great War, institutionalized \textit{Frauenkunst} coagulated around the VBKÖ with influxes of former KFM/KGS students as members. The VBKÖ, in other words, increasingly became an association of professionally-trained female artists, the products of late-Imperial Austria’s public and semi-public art educational system. Indeed, several of the VBKÖ’s founding members, including Landscape Painter Elisabeth Kesselbauer-Laske, Ceramicist Johanna Michel-Meier had studied at the KFM/KGS, or both. However, an influx of professionally-trained artists joining the Association rapidly intensified around 1914 due to the maturity of the generation entering the KGS and KFM around 1900. Even as early as 1912, former KFMers, including Johanna Freund, Jella Fischer-Liebscher, Elise Weber-Fülop, Tanna Hoernes-Kasimir were exhibiting with the Association, as mentioned in reference to Seligmann’s criticism of his former students’ works. A tremendous force to be reckoned with in interwar Austrian \textit{Frauenkunst}, KFM and KGS alumnus Fanny Harlfinger-Zakucka first exhibited a collection of applied arts objects in 1914.\footnote{Katalog der fünften Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [I. Maysedergasse 2 Jänner-Februar 1914]} In 1916, Harlfinger not only gave the public “a nice overview of her artistic activity in a room [of the 1916 exhibition]” but began serving on the
committee, along with colleagues Irene Hölzer-Weinek and Julie Sitta. All three women would agitate for the radical Frauenkunst faction in the Association’s mid-1920s schism. Other KFMers were accepted as irregular members during the war, who were later extended full membership privileges, included portraitists Marianne Gutscher-Fieglhuber and Hannah Petschau as well as graphic artist Magda von Lerch. Hand in hand with greater numbers of women artists trained in public academies, the balance of the VVKÖ membership pool gradually began to shift to include a greater number of applied artists. Many of the KGS-trained Wiener Werkstätte Künstgewerbeweiber played prominent roles in the VVKÖ’s 1917 and 1921 exhibitions. By 1917, 20% of members with stated specializations were listed as working in some field of the applied or decorative arts. While still in the minority, applied artists were gaining ground vis-à-vis fine arts thanks, in a large part, due to the resuscitation and modernization of traditional feminine handicrafts at the KGS and KFM and the modern unification of the fine and applied arts championed by the Secession and Wiener Werkstätte. Once Austrian women had proved themselves as fine artists, salvaging the reputation of the applied and decorative arts represented the next step in defense of Frauenkunst. The upsurge of

the applied arts, especially the fields of architecture and interior design, reached its climax during the First Republic.

In summary, the idea of a women’s artist league aggressively pursuing the material and economic interests of Austrian women artists remained contested throughout the late-Imperial period not necessarily due to its feminist ideals, but due to its very feminine identity. Certain branches of the Austrian women’s movement found such women’s leagues to embody a “necessary evil.” That is, although such leagues facilitated women’s retail opportunities, gender-specific leagues obstructed women’s entrance into mainstream institutional life and the mixed gender competition that would ultimately benefit both sexes. Women’s art exhibitions were inevitably subject to the question; “How would this or that work compare among Männerarbeiten (men’s works)?”¹¹⁰⁴ Despite the controversy surrounding Frauenkunst exhibitions, the VBKÖ increasingly attracted professionally-trained women artists and expanded its member base to include not only classically trained painters and sculptors but practitioners of the applied arts. Yet the fundamental question of whether a gender-specific artist league defeated its ostensible purpose of promoting the professionalization of women’s art continued to bedevil the league. The ties bonding together this motley association beyond the category of “woman” quietly began to unravel as the war clouds settled. As the BÖFV prophesized in 1917; “the best success that one can wish of the Association is that it may become no longer necessary.”¹¹⁰⁵

First Republic Austria’s ‘Modernist’ and ‘Conservative Camps’
The Great Interwar Schism of Austrian Frauenkunst

Similar questions of gender and identity bedeviling the Association from the very beginning surfaced in the postwar period, creating irreparable fissures among League members.

¹¹⁰⁴ “VII. Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs,” Der Bund XII, no. 2 (February 1917): 14.
¹¹⁰⁵ “VII. Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs,” Der Bund XII, no. 2 (February 1917): 14.
Forced to accept life against its will, the formation of the rump Austrian state in 1919 promoted a general realignment of cultural affairs. Proposals for a new Kunamt (Bureau of Art) within the Ministry of Education that would represent the collective interests of Austrian artists circulated through the Viennese art world. Motivated by such rumors, the VBKÖ addressed an urgent request to the Ministry “to secure its representation, analogous to men’s artist leagues, on the proposed new Kunamt.” In addition to requesting exhibition funding, the VBKÖ petitioned the state to establish a system of official prizes and purchases of Frauenkunst similar to the Künstlerhaus’s and Academy’s annual awards. The democratic promise of the First Republic held a distinct meaning for women artists.

All of these proposed changes served to exacerbate latent tensions between VBKÖ board members. By 1919, internal feuding within the VBKÖ became so apparent that the Board’s “left and right” wings were mentioned in the league’s annual report. Leading the conservatives was the academically-trained Baroness Krauss, who had succeeded Brand-Krieghammer as President in 1916, followed by other privately trained artists including Angela Adler and Hedwig Neumann-Pisling. The Secessionists, a younger generation of artists schooled at the KFM/KGS, rallied around painter and designer Fanny Harlfinger-Zakucka. Allying with the modernists were many of Harlfinger’s classmates from the KFM and KGS such as Louise Fraenkel-Hahn, Edith Knaffl-Granström, Irene Hölzer-Weinek, Marie Magyar, and Hedwig Brecher-Eibuschitz. Resulting from these tensions, adherents of the VBKÖ modernist camp participated in the 54th Secessionist Exhibition in June-July 1919 under the name Freie Vereinigung (Free

1106 For more on the Kunstrat and other proposed artistic corporations, see James Shedel, “Art and Identity: The Wiener Secession, 1897-1938,” 13-47.
1107 VBKÖ to SSSKU, ÖStA, AVA, MiU (Sig. 15), Fasz. 3369, Z. 1978/1919 [27 January 1919].
1108 VBKÖ to SSSKU, ÖStA, AVA, MiU (Sig. 15), Fasz. 3369, Z. 1978/1919 [27 January 1919].
1109 Jahresbericht der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs für das Vereinsjahr 1918/19 (Wien: 1919).
Association). Freie Vereinigung exhibitors tended to work in avant-garde, expressionistic styles and included Funke, Hölzer-Weinek, Brecher-Eibuschitz, Fraenkel-Hahn as well as members of Salzburg’s Wassermann league. Though lacking formal statutes, the FV valued installing increased artistic freedom and democracy into women’s exhibition culture. Secessionist President and WFA Professor Richard Harlfinger facilitated the Freie Vereinigung’s acceptance as guests at the Secession, for the FV was headed by his wife Fanny and included many of his pupils. The Freie Vereinigung never, however, formally seceded from the VBKÖ and continuing exhibiting with the older league.

After the VBKÖ resumed regular exhibition activity in the 1920s, critics gradually noticed the quiet dissension among the VBKÖ’s ranks. An exhibition held from 13 February to 3 March 1921 marked the VBKÖ’s grand return to the Viennese art scene after a period of irregular activity during the war. Held at the Künstlerhaus, the VBKÖ staged a “Collective Exhibition of the Association of Austrian Women Artists” featuring over four-hundred works of VBKÖ members and regular guests. Many of the Freie Vereinigung dissidents participated as well. VBKÖ President Krauss was largely responsible for organizing this traditional, salon-style picture show. That the exhibition was held at the Künstlerhaus, the home of Austria’s official artists’ guild, the Genossenschaft der bildenden Künstler Wiens, further situated the show in the tradition of European academic salons. Not all works exhibited, however, had their origin in classical artistic training. The show represented a diverse mishmash of Austrian Frauenkunst, varying from graphic works to oils and watercolors to a considerable selection of ceramics and

other *Kleinkunst*. More varied, however, than the genre and medium of exhibited works were the diverging stylistic and artistic philosophies conveyed by the works exhibited. Exhibitors ranged from classically-trained Academicians, to artists bearing the stamp of the KGS’s and KFM’s modernist reforms, to adherents of the *Freie Vereinigung* and other avant-garde movements. If creating a salon of *Frauenkunst* had represented Krauss’s ultimate aim in the 1921 exhibit, it was certainly a salon reflecting the diverse artistic background of its participants.

Diverging artistic philosophies within the VBKÖ had been apparent to critics as early as 1920, when the VBKÖ staged a similar show on a smaller scale incorporating works from the FV modernist camp. Commenting upon the VBKÖ’s 1920 show, Seligmann noted that the “powerful paintings” of Therese Mor, Marie Egner, Josefine Swoboda, and Marianne Eschenburg nicely represented the league’s older, conservative faction.1112 Yet the KFM founder was quick to find fault with the “unaesthetic colorism” of Ida Schwetz-Lehmann, a multi-faceted artist working in the applied arts.1113 Seligmann routinely polemicized against neo-primitive, expressionist art; tendencies which did not escape his criticisms of women artists.1114 Somewhat mockingly, Seligmann noted that the VBKÖ’s “extreme leftists [members of the *Freie Vereinigung*] found themselves gathered together in the [Künstlerhaus’] right-hand wing’s rooms.”1115 Included in the radical FV faction were the paintings of Martha Reif, Fanny Harlfinger-Zakucka, Irene Hölzer-Weinek, Emma Schlangenhausen’s woodblock prints, Marie Augustin’s engravings, Edith Knafl-Granström and Elisabeth Laske’s “rhythmic compositions,” as well as Grete Zuckerkandl-Stekel’s portrait sketches. Clearly, although the VBKÖ continued exhibitions as normal, deep seeded tensions fomented on an increasingly noticeable level.

1113 *Ibid*.  
1114 See, for instance, Seligmann’s “Der sterbende Expressionismus,” *Neue Freie Presse* No. 20281, Morgenblatt (13 February 1921): 1-4.  
Tensions between the VBKÖ’s conservative and modernist factions came to a head under the presidency of Louise Fraenkel-Hahn (1923-1938). Wife of Secessionist Painter Walter Fraenkel, Fraenkel-Hahn remained loosely associated with the Freie Vereinigung but sat to the right of the modernist camp’s more radical members. By the time the Association staged its eleventh annual exhibition in 1923, the modernists outnumbered the conservatives on the executive board.\footnote{XI. Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [Wien I., Zedlitzgasse 6, 4 Nov- 2 December 1923].} While still holding a position as executive board member, Krauss and fellow conservative Gabriele Murad-Michalkowski were outnumbered by Fraenkel-Hahn, Ella Rothe, Marie Magyar and other younger artists running the board.\footnote{In 1923, the VBKÖ Executive Board consisted of Louise Fraenkel-Hahn as President, Gabriele Murad-Michalkowski as Vice-President, Ella Rothe as Secretary, Marie Magyar as Treasurer with Ella Adler, Hedwig Brecher-Eibuschitz, Helene Krauss, Grete Noindl, and Gusti Mundt serving as board members.} In addition, a large number of painters and applied artists schooled in the Secessionist tradition dominated the exhibition’s jury and hanging commissions.\footnote{Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven, “Frauenkunst,” Wiener Zeitung Nr. 29 (26 November 1923), 1.} Accordingly, vitrines of applied art began to comprise a greater percentage of exhibited works than in previous years. The VBKÖ’s modernist camp, as well as multitalented Kunstgewerbeweiber active with the Wiener Werkstätte, were both strongly represented during the Fraenkel-Hahn presidency.

The same tensions discernable to Seligmann in 1920 were impossible to avoid by 1923. In reviewing the VBKÖ’s eleventh annual exhibition, running from 4 November until 2 December 1923 at the Hagenbund, the VBKÖ’s warring ideological camps emerged immediately to critic Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven. He observed that “the women painters form two sharply-divided camps, on the left the ‘Modernists’ and on the right and in the middle, the ‘Conservatives;’ quality is fairly evenly divided so that one comes to no final judgments [between them].”\footnote{Admitting his sympathies to the former camp, Ankwicz-Kleehoven}
declared that “undoubtedly Stephanie Hollenstein ranks as one of the most talented painters of the radical group, [represented here] with a collection of boldly-colored and interestingly composed landscapes of Lake Constance and the Gardesee as well as charming watercolors...[1120] Fellow ‘radicals’ Edith Knaffl-Granström and Elisabeth Kesselbauer-Laske were commended as “worthy of attention.”[1121] In particular, Irene Hölzer-Weinek “proved herself to be a modern-minded portraitist with a grey on grey portrait of a lady” while Fanny Harlfinger’s “darkly colored landscapes evoked a bit of mysticism.”[1122] From the conservative camp, Ankwicz praised Therese von Mor’s solid academic technique and noted that Helene Krauss’s “pretty motif Waldlichtung (Forest Light) should not be missed.”[1123] In the graphic arts, divisions between the VBKÖ’s modernist and conservative camps were equally noticeable. “Emma Schlangenhausen, Katharina Zirner, and Frieda Salvendy pay tribute to various expressionist techniques while the etchings of Gabriele Murad-Michalkowski, Frieda Gold, and Hermine Ginzkey and the woodblock prints of Helene Ladstätter, Valerie Petter, Sophie Noske and M. Frimberger-Brunner stay on the conventional track...[1124] From conventional to modernist, academic to avant-garde, the VBKÖ’s diverging visions of Frauenkunst were becoming increasing visible to outsiders.

The ideological disunity forecast by Frauenkunst skeptics in 1910 erupted into open combat between the VBKÖ’s warring factions in the mid 1920s. Beginning in 1925, the VBKÖ employed two parallel juries to placate tensions between the feuding camps.[1125] One jury possessed jurisdiction over the applied arts and avant-garde painting while the other had

1120 Ibid.
1121 Ibid.
1122 Ibid.
1123 Ibid., 2.
autonomy over traditional painting and sculpture. The dual jury system was repeated at the league’s thirteenth annual exhibition the subsequent year. Somewhat mockingly, Ankwicz-Kleehoven noted the rising tensions present at the 1926 exhibition, stating; “it is well known that, within their league, the Viennese ladies differentiate themselves into two groups, whose sharp divisions are not always taken seriously by outsiders, of which one group takes a conservative, the other an ‘extremist’ position.” From the inside, however, these competing visions of Frauenkunst drove serious rifts between league members.

Meanwhile, several VBKÖ members were collaborating with WFA Professors Hermann Grom-Rottmayer, Christian Ludwig Martin, Richard Harlfinger, and Otto Friedrich in preparing the groundbreaking exhibition Deutsche Frauenkunst. Held at the Künstlerhaus from September-October 1925, the exhibit strove to unify “works of fine and applied art of Austrian and German women artists and thus to provide an overview of women’s capacities in art.” Endorsed by WFA professors, the exhibition was supported by a modest state subvention of 500 Schillings. Adherents of the VBKÖ’s “radical” faction including Fanny Harlfinger, Johanna Kampmann-Freund, Elfriede Miller-Hauenfels and Katharina Wallner played a large part in organizing the exhibition. Likewise VBKÖ moderates such as Fraenkel-Hahn were represented at the exhibition. Yet, while individual VBKÖ members may have taken part in the exhibition, the VBKÖ Executive Board specifically clarified to the Ministry of Education that “in no way

1126 At the 1925 exhibition, the juries consisted of: Jurymitglieder Gruppe I: H. Brecher-Eibuschitz, Berta Czegka, Klara Epstein, Luise Fraenkl-Hahn, Helene Krauss, Marie Magyar, Karoline Ruhm; Jurymitglieder Gruppe II: Maria Cyrenius, Edith Knaffl-Granström, Irene Hölzer-Weinek, Valerie Petter, Jutta Sika. Juries for the VBKÖ’s 1926 show were as follows: Jurymitglieder Gruppe I: H. Brecher-Eibuschitz, Berta Czegka, Klara Epstein, Louise Fraenkl-Hahn, Helene Krauss, Anna Kiertabl-Hofmann, Marie Magyar, Karoline Ruhm; Jurymitglieder Gruppe II: Maria Augustin, Irene Hölzer-Weinek, Edith Knaffl-Granström, Irene Hölzer-Weinek, Elizabeth Laske-Kesselbauer, Jutta Sika, Grete Wieden-Veit; Kunstgewerbejury: Sophie Noske-Sander, Marietta Peyfuss, Julie Sitte, Helene Trampler.
1128 Hermann Grom-Rottmayer, Deutsche Frauenkunst [Wien Künstlerhaus September-Oktober 1925].
1129 ÖStA, BMfU, AVA, Sig. 15 Fasz. 2940, Z. 21785/III/6a/1925.
did the [recently opened picture show] stand in any connection with our Association’s regular events… while individual members may have been represented there… our organization itself stands aloof from the matter.”

Despite the participation of individual VbKÖ members, conservative Executive Board members motivated this ministerial clarification. As a corporation, the conservative VbKÖ kept its distance from the idea of a Frauenkunst leveling the hierarchy of the fine and applied arts and academic and vocational training.

The official break between Austrian Frauenkunst’s radical and conservative factions came in May 1926 when the insurgents ceded from the VbKÖ. Led by Fanny Harlfinger, VbKÖ radicals founded the Verband bildender Künstlerinnen und Kunsthändwerkerinnen Wiener Frauenkunst (Alliance of Women Artists and Craftswomen ‘Viennese Women’s Art’, or WF) around the idea of women’s unique mission in the decorative arts. As Harlfinger described Vienna’s “female Secession” in retrospect, “the founding of the Wiener Frauenkunst occurred in the year 1926 through the resignation of a string of members from the Association of Austrian Women Artists, who were not able to accomplish their artistic goals in the latter league.”

Statutes for the new league were drawn up in late May and approved by the Viennese Municipal government on 16 June 1926, only months after many of the extremists had participated in the VbKÖ’s 13th annual exhibition at the Hagenbund in February. The splinter group provocatively embraced typical penchants of Frauenkunst, particularly women’s role in the decorative and applied arts and interior design, re-spinning these characteristics in an urbane, sophisticated key. The Wiener Frauenkunst’s bold declaration that “we are of the opinion that works from women’s hands bear the stamp of their female-origins in and of themselves”

1130 VbKÖ to BmFu [29 September 1925], ÖStA, BmFu, AVA, Sig. 15 Fasz. 2940, Z. 23192/III/6a/1925.
1132 Satzungen des Vereines WIENER FRAUENKUNST [16 July 1926], WStLA, MAbt 119: A 32, 49/5977/26 [16 June 1926].
encapsulated their incendiary vision of avant-garde women’s art.\textsuperscript{1133} While the VGBKÖ had offered more conventional thematizations of women’s art, the WF used \textit{Frauenkunst} as a provocative vehicle for advancing women’s connections to expressionism, primitivism, and other avant-garde movements.

The resurgence of a separatist \textit{Frauenkunst} movement in interwar Austria directly reflected the Republic’s preservation of single-sex secondary education in the \textit{Frauenoberschule} and the state’s subsidization of fine and applied artistic training at the WFA. Indeed, the women leading the interwar \textit{Frauenkunst} renaissance possessed educational pedigrees rooted at the Ladies’ Academy and \textit{Kunstgewerbeschule}. WF founder Fanny Harlfinger, the multi talented artist who attended the Ladies’ Academy from 1899-1903 under Böhm and Michalek and continued at the \textit{Kunstgewerbeschule}, embodied a prime example. Not all, however, women trained at the public and semi-public academies ceded from the rump VGBKÖ. Moderately modernist Louise Fraenkel-Hahn, schooled at the KGS during the Myrbach era, stayed at the helm of the older Association. Likewise other women artists noted for their ‘expressionistic’ tendencies, such as the KGS-schooled Elisabeth Kesselbauer-Laske, remained true to the VGBKÖ. In addition to VGBKÖ ‘radicals’ including Gabi Lagus-Möschl, Friede Miller-Hauenfels, Valerie Petter-Zeis, Marie Cyrenius, and Herta Strzygowski, the new league attracted women artists who had previously kept their distance from the \textit{Frauenkunst} movement, such as Salzburg based artists Helene Taussig and Emma Schlangenhausen.\textsuperscript{1134} While counting as a staunch critic of the VGBKÖ in 1910, arguing that \textit{Frauenkunst} had not reached a sufficient level of artistic development, Schlangenhausen supported Harlfinger’s vision of avant-garde \textit{Frauenkunst}

embracive of the fine and applied arts. Accordingly, a much greater percentage of WF founders than VBKÖ members listed themselves as active in the applied arts.\textsuperscript{1135} Around half of the WF’s founding members practiced some form of applied arts, i.e. architecture, ceramics, silver, crafts, etc., often in addition to concentrations in painting and sculpture. The prevalence of multi-talented applied artists and craftswoman in the \textit{Wiener Frauenkunst} echoed the strong emphasis in WFA curriculum on the applied arts.

While both arising from women’s exclusion from mainstream artistic corporations, the \textit{Wiener Frauenkunst} and VBKÖchartered diverging paths from the mid-1920s onward. Corresponding to the bold expressionism, primitivism, and stylized naïveté of members’ works, the \textit{Frauenkunst} navigated a more aggressive feministic platform. The WF promoted “the collegial support of its members in general and, in particular, artistic relations,” while the VBKÖ’s main ambition of organizing conventional salons reflected its more conservative social vision.\textsuperscript{1136} On a symbolic level, too, the polarization of the interwar Austrian \textit{Frauenkunst} movement into “left” and “right” wings mirrored the greater split in Austrian politics and society between conservative and radical factions. In particular, while members of the older VBKÖ generation tended to hail from liberal backgrounds, many \textit{Frauenkunst} adherents tended to espouse Social Democratic allegiances. The Wiener Frauenkunst’s premier exhibition-catalogue in 1927 made the group’s aggressively feministic bent clear.

\textsuperscript{1135} The professions of the Wiener Frauenkunst’s founding members were listed as follows: Getrud Bartl, Kunstgewerblerin und Bildhauerin; Elfriede Berbalk, Silberwerkst.; Herta Bucher, Keramikerin; Maria Cyrenius, Kunstgewerblerin; Hedwig Denk, Kunstgewerblerin; Christa Deuticke, Malerin; Helene Funke, Malerin; Fanny Harlfinger, Malerin und. Kunstgew.; Stephanie Hollenstein, Malerin; Hilda Jesser-Schmid, Kunstgew.; Sascha Kronburg, Radiererin; Dina Kuhn, Keramikerin; Gabriele Lagus-Möschl, Kunstgew.; Fritzi Löw-Lazar, Malerin; Elfriede Miller-Hauenfels, Malerin; Zoë Munteanu, Kunstgew.; Elisabeth Niessen, Architektin; Amalie Nowotny, Kunstgew.; Valerie Pitter-Zeis, Malerin und Graph.; Elisabeth Schima, Malerin; Emma Schlangenhausen, Graph.; Hedwig Schmidl, Bildhauerin; Anni Schröder-Ehrenfest, Graph.; Lydia Schütt, Malerin; Louise Spanning, Keramikerin; Herta Strzygowski, Malerin; Helene Taussig, Malerin und Graph.; Katharina Wallner, Malerin; Grete Weinberg, Malerin; Grete Wilhelm, Malerin.

\textsuperscript{1136} §1, Satzungen des Vereines WIENER FRAUENKUNST [16 July 1926], WStLA, MAbt 49/5977/26.
Realizing this goal [of staging public exhibitions], female creative artists, who have only enjoyed guest-rights in the exhibitions of their male colleagues, is only possible through banding together with her peers into artist-leagues… This might be a transitional phase, but one grounded in existing present-day relations.\(^{1137}\)

That the Wiener Frauenkunst anticipated its boldness would provoke public criticism only fanned the flames of the league’s notoriety. As the WF antagonized potential critics in its inaugural exhibition catalogue; “we know very well that we will face stiff criticism, but we must only hope for such criticism if we take ourselves and our work seriously.”\(^{1138}\) The VBKÖ, by contrast, never challenged its critics in such an offensive manner.

The \textit{Wiener Frauenkunst}'s series of public exhibitions in the late 1920s and 1930s served as a platform for avant-garde Austrian \textit{Frauenkunst} and interior design while revolutionizing the aesthetic and theoretical foundations of women’s art exhibitions. Beginning with its inaugural exhibition held at the Austrian MfKI from December 1927- January 1928, the WF departed from the traditional, salon style picture shows typically mounted by the V BKÖ. To begin with, works were organized collectively, by artist and by medium, which lent the shows a greater sense of artistic unity. The WF centered their exhibitions around specific themes and published catalogues that not only listed works exhibited but explored theoretical aspects of \textit{Frauenkunst} via programmatic essays. What is more, the WF valued the applied arts on an equal plane with painting and sculpture. At the WF’s first exhibition, for instance, a string of several rooms were devoted exclusively to the decorative and applied arts, including avant-garde \textit{Wandmalerei} (wall paintings) on silk panels by Gabriele Lagus-Möschl, costume and fashion sketches from \textit{Wiener Werkstätte} artists including Maria Likarz-Strauß, Hilde Jesser-Schmidt, and Mathilde Flögl, as


\(^{1138}\) \textit{Ibid}. 

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well as a diverse array of ceramics, porcelain, silver and decorative objects. Indeed, a great number of Wiener Werkstätte craftswomen and designers, such as the women of Peche’s Künstlerwerkstätten described in Chapter Two, collaborated with the Wiener Frauenkunst. Valuing the WF’s efforts in promoting the applied and decorative arts, the Ministry of Education provided modest subventions for the WF’s series of public exhibitions.¹¹³⁹

The Wiener Frauenkunst’s entrance into the public spotlight attracted much attention in the Viennese art world. As expected, the WF’s provocative debut garnered its fair share of criticism. A.F. Seligmann censured the group for falling short of its programmatic, ideological pretensions.

The association Wiener Frauenkunst has an exhibition in the Austrian Museum…it is a radical offshoot from the VBKÖ, a sort of Secession. The cause for forming and dividing such groups would seem to be polarities in artistic convictions; in reality it is often personal motives…Thus, at such exhibitions, in no way do we find the artistic program realized that all such groups propagate…every philosophy that is artistic is accepted.¹¹⁴⁰

Seligmann went on to lampoon “the most different levels of quality imaginable united under one roof” at the exhibition, in particular those “certain modern movements whose adherents cultivate the expression of Qualitätslosigkeit (qualitylessness). To them, they [such movements] appear as the expression of naïveté, of primitiveness and thus—as paradoxical as it sounds—as the expression of quality.”¹¹⁴¹ Seligmann found the “distortions of the most abrasive and childlike nature, absence of any sort of perspective, and the unnatural colors” of works displayed to reveal artists’ pretentious quasi-scientific systems, but certainly no quality art. The critic related that, standing before a picture, a lady at the exhibition approached him and declared; “You are not aware of the sort of work that goes into that. It is a science!,” to which Seligmann answered,
“Precisely because of that is it no art.”\textsuperscript{1142} One of Frauenkunst’s greatest supporters could also be its most unforgiving detractor.

Art Historian Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven likewise ridiculed the Wiener Frauenkunst as a “female Secession which unified all garish, forward-thrusting elements and leaves nothing to be desired on modernity of disposition.”\textsuperscript{1143} Overall, however, Ankwicz-Kleehoven reviewed the WF’s opening exhibition more generously than Seligmann, conceding that “by and large, the impression of the exhibition is a highly favorable one, thanks to its successful arrangement, the debut of the new league is highly promising.”\textsuperscript{1144} Kleehoven described the “true color fireworks” of Helene Funke’s collection of thirty oil paintings, watercolors, and drawings, “whose pointillist mist pours equally over figural compositions, portraits and still lifes.”\textsuperscript{1145} While some critics may have labeled Funke’s “somewhat obtrusive technique” as mannered, in Funke’s case her works were animated by great brio and individual style, qualities not common in women artists.\textsuperscript{1146} Kleehoven found the colorism of Vorarlberg painter Stephanie Hollenstein to be “considerably more concentrated” than Funke’s and thus bearing an even stronger luminosity and penetration of colors [than Funke].\textsuperscript{1147} The critic also gave a favorable mention to the exhibition’s section of “more or less expressionistically-oriented” graphic art, as well as Fanny Harlfinger’s landscapes, which “nonetheless do not deny their origin in the applied arts” and influence of contemporary French art. Study of Japanese art was likewise noted in the drawings of Salzburg Expressionist Helene Taussig. In contrast to Seligmann’s dismissive review, Kleehoven dedicated one-third of his review to describing the fanciful ceramics, colorful Wandmalerei, textile and costume sketches displayed in the applied arts rooms. All in all, the WF’s premier exhibition represented

\textsuperscript{1142} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1143} Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven, “Wiener Frauenkunst,” Wiener Zeitung Nr. 22725/Morgenblatt (1 January 1928), 7.
\textsuperscript{1144} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1145} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1146} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1147} Ibid.
a bold step forward from what the more conservative VBKÖ had pioneered.

If the WF’s debut exhibition began to devolve from the Frauenkunst norm, the Wiener Frauenkunst’s subsequent shows went even further in pushing the envelope of theoretical, programmatic Frauenkunst. The Wiener Frauenkunst’s second annual exhibition, again held at the Austrian MfKI from February-March 1929, revolutionized Viennese exhibition culture with its daring program emphasizing women’s role in Innenarchitektur (interior design) and Raumkunst (art of interiors). The WF’s new exhibition, Ankwicz-Kleehoven observed, “pleasantly differentiated itself from similar exhibits through the fact that [the current exhibition] has been based upon a sort of program, which appears to be paraphrased through the title Das Bild im Raum (The Picture in the Room).” An introductory essay encapsulated the exhibition’s didactic mission in illustrating the art of avant-garde interior design.

The exhibition Das Bild im Raum should be a guide [Führerin] in the art of how we use pictures in living spaces in our contemporary age… That the rooms shown in the current exhibition concern not exclusively pieces of furniture, but rather, are to be viewed as complete room suites, goes without saying. Showing pictures in their relationship to their immediate environment is the duty of this exhibition.

The WF’s mission of demystifying the integration of art into interior design constituted a revolutionary development in Austrian Frauenkunst in several respects. In the first place, female architects and designers, fields traditionally dominated by men, took center stage. In contrast to women’s role as accessorizers in earlier design projects, such as the Wiener Kunst im Hause, WF architects controlled all aspects of interior design: from architecture, to furniture, to carpets and lighting. Above all, the architectural settings created by designers such as Fanny Harlfinger,

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Hilda Jesser-Schmid, and Gabi Lagus-Möschl stressed the importance of proper display and placement of art in sparsely-furnished interior settings. This avant-garde vision of artistic interior design thus possessed significance on several levels. First, apropos Frauenkunst, giving women roles as avant-garde interior designers revolutionized women’s traditional role in aestheticizing the home, as was discussed with regard to MfKI founder Jacob von Falke in Chapter Two. The purist, streamlined looks showcased at Das Bild im Raum provided instructive models of how modernist art was to be properly showcased in a variety of domestic settings. In this manner, the “female Secession” of the Wiener Frauenkunst carried on the traditions of modernist groups such as the Vienna Secession (1897) and Kunstschau (1908), both of which privileged the proper architectural presentation of art just as much as art itself. Just as the Secession had split in 1905 between the modernist Raumkünstler (Interior Artists) and Nur-Maler (Only-Painters), similar debates on the borders between art, craft, and design motivated the WF and VBKÖ’s great 1926 schism. Hand in hand with the WF’s emphasis on the art of interior design, its attempts to enliven Viennese exhibition culture with a greater dose of thematic unity and theoretical richness constituted a groundbreaking development in Frauenkunst exhibitions. Moreover, WF pioneered modern exhibition catalogues; that is, booklets not only offering lists of works displayed but theoretical texts and essays designed to enhance and enrich the public’s viewing experience. Generally, VBKÖ catalogue text was limited to brief introductory remarks that were intended to please rather than provoke the public.

Playing on women’s traditional stake in the decorative arts and interior design, “Pictures in Interiors” reinvented women’s art as avant-garde Raumkunst maximizing functionality and expressing the inner psyches of interiors’ inhabitants. Like the complex scientific painting systems mocked by Seligmann in reviewing the WF’s first exhibition, the WF propagated an
artistic system of interior art and architecture designed to harmonize with the needs of modern life. Whether for public or private, commercial or ceremonial spaces, the WF’s *Gesamtkunstwerk* of avant-garde interior design was to be guided by principles of rationality, functionality, and sobriety. The WF propounded that

> The home is to be the place of our spiritual renewal, the place where we live as pure human beings. But the home’s mission is not to serve an aestheticizing connoisseurship in the *fin-de-siècle* sense, but rather to help to give shape to the inner ‘I.’ In the manner of appointing a room, in the arrangement of furniture and its forms, in the colors that predominate a room, we may enliven a room with a certain spiritual force to which our inner ‘I’ may soar to in its most precious moments.\(^{1150}\)

In contrast to the bric-a-brac crowding nineteenth century historicist interiors, a sober yet tasteful aesthetic giving inner clarity to its inhabitants guided the art of feminine *Raumkunst*. In this manner, Vienna’s “female Secession” (i.e. the *Wiener Frauenkunst*) was the direct heir of the philosophies of art and design promulgated earlier by the Secession and *Wiener Werkstätte*, with the WF’s notable innovations in the realm of domestic interiors. Reinventing women’s traditional aesthetic mission in the home gave the WF foothold in a cutting edge women’s art.

The *Wiener Frauenkunst* championed the proper use of art in domestic settings, for “the picture is the most poetic expression of our inner self.”\(^{1151}\) While the WF admitted that no hard and fast rules existed for the proper placement of art, certain general guidelines were to be abided by. For instance, the top edge of paintings’ frames was to be placed in alignment with the highest extending piece of furniture in the room. Additional pictures could be hung below this, arranged in a diagonal as demonstrated by the pictures in Harlfinger’s “Breakfast Room.”\(^{1152}\)

Symmetrical, asymmetrical, and triangular hanging patterns could also be employed in certain

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\(^{1150}\) Karl Maria Grimme, “Das Bild im Raum [Vorwort],” *Das Bild im Raum: Führer durch die zweite Ausstellung der “Wiener Frauenkunst*, 5.


\(^{1152}\) Karl Maria Grimme, “Das Bild im Raum [Vorwort],” *Das Bild im Raum: Führer durch die zweite Ausstellung der “Wiener Frauenkunst*, 7.
contexts. Particular consideration was to be devoted to the placement of art for certain “favorite spots in the living room,” such as above the fireplace.\footnote{Karl Maria Grimme, “Das Bild im Raum [Vorwort],” Das Bild im Raum: Führer durch die zweite Ausstellung der “Wiener Frauenkunst, 7-8.} Paintings, which “usually stood on their own feet,” were not to be crowded together but used sparingly, to enhance their expressive power, whereas multiplied pieces of graphic art could be displayed together.\footnote{Ibid., 8.} In terms of framing, the WF dismissed using “poor copies of past cultural epochs” but suggested simple, modern profiles.\footnote{Ibid., 10.} Effective choices included simple black canted profiles accented by thin gold bands; alternatively other colors such as white, gold and vermilion, and natural wood finishes represented viable alternatives. Because “paintings and graphics, wall murals, and decorative objects in living spaces are the highest expression of our pure-human selves,” the WF advocated granting as much attention to the architectural presentation of art as the art itself.\footnote{Ibid., 11.}

Various model rooms showcased at Das Bild im Raum served as archetypes of the WF’s vision of women’s role in modern Raumkunst [Figure 4.9]. Anni Schröder’s Empfangsraum (Parlor) demonstrated the architect’s streamlined model of a modern hearth [Figure 4.9a].\footnote{Das Bild im Raum: Führer durch die zweite Ausstellung der “Wiener Frauenkunst, 16-19.} With furniture designed and arranged by Anni Schröder, Schröder’s oil painting Pantomime, hung to angle out towards the viewer, “dominated the entire room.”\footnote{Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven, “Kunstausstellungen,” Wiener Zeitung 9 March 1929: 1.} The painting depicted a contemporary couple in a Neue Sachlichkeit inspired photorealistic style. Decorative ceramic objects from Susi Singer, as well as an exquisitely hand-painted lacquered commode, completed the ensemble. Adorned by modernist wall paintings, Gabi Lagus-Möschl’s elegant Damenzimmer was praised by critic Ankwicz-Kleehoven as a “noteworthy creation” [Figure
The Ladies’ Salon featured a divan upon a pedestal, for “one resides there [on a divan upon a pedestal] ceremoniously, what lady would refuse that?” The room’s most innovative feature was the white tapestry, accented in light brown tones, covering the walls. Cloth panels featuring abstract figural and geometrical compositions executed in batik were framed by wooden strips to form modern “wall paintings.” Demonstrating how the WF cleverly capitalized on women’s natural connection to the decorative, the exhibition catalogue read that “as one sees, the ornamentation of the wall surfaces… forms the main framework of the wall painting.” Additional rooms by Fanny Harlfinger including a Library and Children’s Room demonstrated the designer’s concern for modern functionalism suited to the specific needs of the space in question. Harlfinger heralded Lagus-Möschl’s and Harlfinger’s prototypes as some of “the exhibition’s most successful rooms.”

In addition to such Gesamtkunstwerk architectural visions, a number of rooms were devoted exclusively to the applied arts. Painted silk handkerchiefs, strongly influence by stylized Japanese designs and primitive art, fanciful ceramics, beadwork and embroidery filled several halls, and “female Wiener Werkstätte collaborators Mathilde Flögl and Felice Rix taught us how a modern coterie should look.”

Devoting as much attention to women’s handicrafts as to paintings, the Wiener Frauenkunst’s “Pictures in Interiors” remained poles apart from the VGBKÖ’s salons of old female masters.

Meanwhile the VGBKÖ had also been experimenting with incorporating more avant-garde styles and genres into its artistic program. Under the aegis of President Fraenkel-Hahn in 1926, the VGBKÖ began employing a separate jury for works of applied arts. This move suggested

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1161 Das Bild im Raum: Führer durch die zweite Ausstellung der “Wiener Frauenkunst”, 51.
1164 XIII. Jahresausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs [Hagenbund Februar 1926]. Wien: 1926.
that, while the VBKÖ was willing to incorporate the applied arts into its exhibitions, the decorative and applied arts would be subject to a different rubric than painting and sculpture [Figure 4.10]. This represented the crucial, if minute, point where the two leagues diverged. Whereas the WF envisioned the fine and applied arts in a complementary, holistic manner, the VBKÖ regarded the applied arts to be in service of the monumental fields of painting, drawing, and sculpture. Nonetheless, many artists such as Irene Hölzer-Weinek, Katharina Wallner, and Elisabeth Kesselbauer-Laske favoring expressionistic and modern styles had remained with the VBKÖ in 1926. The VBKÖ’s 14th and 15th exhibitions, held in 1927 and 1929, respectively, paid tribute to the degree to which certain modern movements and the applied arts were represented in the VBKÖ. Indeed, many of the craftswomen exhibiting as guests with the WF showed works with the older league. The painted silk and beadwork exhibited at the VBKÖ’s 1929 exhibition, illustrated below, were practically identical to those showcased at the WF’s “Pictures in Interiors” the same year [Figure 4.10]. Thus, concluding that the VBKÖ represented a group of conservative academics while the WF embodied all that was progressive in Austrian Frauenkunst would be a gross misconflation of the true situation, for the VBKÖ, too, included its share of modernists. It was merely the two group’s differing attitude towards the hierarchy of art and craft, as well as the proper avenues for pushing women artists’ professional interests, that divided them. Despite their common aims, the two leagues would remain at loggerheads for the duration of their existence.

First Republic Austria’s dueling women artists’ leagues found a showdown in staging competing exhibitions on the occasion of the I.C.W’s International Women’s Congress held in Vienna in late-Spring 1930. True to its ideal of a traditional, Künstlerhaus-style salon, the


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VBKÖ staged an encyclopedic exhibition of works of women in the fine arts titled “Zwei Jahrhunderte der Kunst der Frau in Österreich.” Held at the Kunstgewerbemuseum, the VBKÖ recycled the premise of its 1910 show with an added emphasis on a specifically Austrian identity. “Providing our welcome guests from different parts of the world a picture of women’s artistic achievements in Austria, of the Austria of times gone by and the Austria of today” represented the primary ambition of the VBKÖ historical retrospective.\(^{1166}\) By contrast, the Wiener Frauenkunst’s third annual exhibition provocatively took up the question of “How Does the Woman See?” in inviting prominent intellectuals to address theoretical questions of gender, art, and aestheticism in its exhibition catalogue.\(^{1167}\) These contributors included interwar Austria’s leading artists, art-historians, and women’s rights crusaders. Viennese feminist and cultural philosopher Rosa Mayreder quipped at the notion of women’s art in her piece in the catalog.

> I can hardly answer the question of ‘How Does a Woman See?’ due to the standpoint I take in the gender-question. I represent the point of view that gender-difference, beyond basic sexual characteristics, is only a formal, but not an essential, difference. […] For my part, I could not say to what extent the works of a Rosa Bonheur, an Angelika Kaufmann, a Tina Blau, a Feodorowna Ries, or a Käthe Kollwitz are seen as specifically feminine. […] In my opinion, those with talent look differently than those lacking talent, but this has nothing to do with gender difference.\(^{1168}\)

Mayreder’s constructionalist view of gender left little room for the gendered-essentialism that the show represented. Still, Mayreder’s dismissal of the question only fanned the flames of publicity. Painter and Hagenbund-President Carry Hauser explained the reemergence of a distinctive Frauenkunst as disappointment with the equality, in the sense of a gendered-sameness, achieved

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\(^{1167}\) Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen und Kunsthandwerkerinnen Wiener Frauenkunst, in Wie sieht die Frau? May 17 – June 29, 1930, DRUCK 24, Archives of the VBKÖ, 7.

by the women’s movement.

The question of “How does the Woman See?” appears to me as an important phase of the women’s movement, a movement that is just as old as the female sex itself… After having—nearly—reached the goals of the previous-century’s women’s movement (equality with man), not without the age-old disappointment following successful realization of a wish, in its current phase even stronger forces are leading the way, who are taking pains to establish the contrasting natures of feminine and masculine sensory worlds, often with force equally excessive of the goal. […] To me, the question posed above seems to prove the conviction that woman possesses a nature of her very own with which to see.\footnote{1169}

Beyond Hauser’s subjective views on gendered sameness, the reemergence of a distinctively-feminine women’s art was symptomatic of the First Republic’s continued focus on single-sex education. The Wiener Frauenkunst’s “How Does a Woman See?” show undoubtedly used the idea of a distinct “women’s art,” provocatively associated with characteristics typically assigned as feminine, to attract an unprecedented degree of public attention to the material and economic interests of Austrian women artists.

The competing leagues vied for official recognition, support, and space to host the grand scale shows they had planned to coincide with Vienna’s international women’s congress of 1930 [Figure 4.11]. Both the VBKÖ and WF proved successful in eliciting state funds for their upcoming exhibitions. “How Does a Woman See?,” which was slated not only to feature paintings and decorative objects but entire rooms designed by WF members ala Das Bild im Raum, promised a decidedly avant-garde, modernist feel. The exhibition was planned to take place at the Hofburg’s Glaspalast. The WF’s focus on installation art, however, significantly increased its projected costs for Wie Sieht der Frau. As Fanny Harlfinger petitioned the Ministry of Education; “as the Wiener Frauenkunst does not have a building of its own at its disposal, every time it is forced to undertake… highly significant and expensive installations in the

currently available space” exceeding revenue brought in by entrance tickets. The Federal Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Ministry for Trade and Commerce, granted the WF a subsidy of 500 Schillings to defray running costs for “How Does A Woman See?”

The VVKÖ, however, emerged victorious in attracting high-level Republican officials to endorse its show. VVKÖ President Louise Fraenkel-Hahn successfully intervened to have its exhibit opened by Bundespräsident (Federal President) Wilhelm Miklas. The VVKÖ’s longer, distinguished history gave it an edge over the WF in securing government officials to lend their names to the exhibition. Because the VVKÖ “celebrated its twentieth anniversary in the current year and its work for the common good of women artists must be acknowledged,” the Ministry willingly approved Fraenkel-Hahn’s request to honor the league with a ceremonial opening by President Miklas. Fraenkel-Hahn’s ministerial prowess again proved useful in having the VVKÖ’s 1934 and 1936 shows opened by Frau Bundeskanzler Bertha von Schnussnigg and, in 1936, not only in the presence of Miklas, but Minister of Education Hans Pertner and Cardinal Theodor Innitzer, the Viennese high-cleric and theologian known for his cooperation with the Austro-Fascist and National Socialist Regimes. Clearly, the VVKÖ’s more conservative vision lined up with the state’s emphasis on preserving Austria’s historical cultural mission. While both leagues emphasized Frauenkunst’s civic mission to the fledging Austrian Republic, the differing visions of Frauenkunst imagined by each group had little in common besides claiming to represent the category of woman.

1170 Fanny Harlfinger to BMfU [18 March 1930], ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2941, Z. 6531/1930.
1171 ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2941, Z. 12500/1930, Z. 9475/1930. The influence of Hofrat Prof. Dr. Josef Strzygowski, professor at the University’s Institute for Art History and husband of WF member Herta Strzygowski, appears to have exercised a decisive factor in drumming up ministerial support for the 1930 exhibition.
1172 Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Austria (OeStA), AVA (Allgemeine Verwaltungsarchiv) Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Faszikel (Fasz) 2941 (Sig. 15) Z. 6531, 9475, 11273, 12500, 13016/1930.
1173 ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2941 (Sig. 15), Z. 11273/1930.
1174 Louise Fraenkel-Hahn, Handsigned invitations to 1934 and 1936 VVKÖ Exhibitions. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Nachlass- und Autographen Sammlung. Autog. 200/57-1/2; OeStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz (Sig. 15), Z. 17855/1936.
Two years after their 1930 showdown, the feuding leagues set aside their differences to petition the BMfU Kunstrat to equalize its policies on the awarding of state prizes. The main thrust of the VGBK’s and WF’s argument was that women should; 1) be allowed to stand for state prizes and scholarships; 2) be represented on the state jury awarding the prizes in question. Helene Krauss had petitioned the Ministry to the same effect in 1919, but her proposals never received serious consideration.\footnote{ÖStA, AVA, MfU (Sig 15) Fasz. 3369, Z. 1978/1919.} The WF and VGBK thus renewed their efforts to bring a greater degree of gender symmetry to the Kunstrat’s state prize system through a concerted letter writing campaign. Although the VGBK’s petition took a softer approach than the WF by flattering the Ministry’s constant support, the VGBK had grown impatient with the Ministry’s inertia. As Fraenkel-Hahn and Krauss argued:

\begin{quote}
The Association of Austrian Women Artists, the first major women artists’ association in Austria, was founded in 1910. The necessity for such a league arose out of the fact that women were not taken as members in any major artists’ league and hardly had their say in the artist leagues’ exhibitions. Even today, nothing has changed.\footnote{VBKÖ to BMfU [23 February 1932], ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Sig. 15., Fasz. 3378, Z/ 5927/ 1932. Emphasis added.}
\end{quote}

Due to women’s continued prohibition from mainstream artists’ leagues and “automatic exclusion from competition for state prizes,” the VGBK thus recommended that annual delegations of “women artists not represented in the spring and fall exhibitions be sent to the Academy of Fine Arts, so that [these women] can compete for state prizes.”\footnote{VBKÖ to BMfU [23 February 1932], ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Sig. 15., Fasz. 3378, Z/ 5927/ 1932.} As a rule, Vienna’s most prestigious art exhibitions at the Künstlerhaus and Secession were exclusively held in the spring and fall months when the Kunstrat awarded official prizes and made state purchases. Due to the high cost and unavailability of the coveted spring and fall exhibition dates, women’s art exhibitions tended to be held in the off-peak months from November-February, which excluded the women artists from standing for prizes awarded to members of the

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{ÖStA, AVA, MfU (Sig 15) Fasz. 3369, Z. 1978/1919.}
\footnote{VBKÖ to BMfU [23 February 1932], ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Sig. 15., Fasz. 3378, Z/ 5927/ 1932. Emphasis added.}
\footnote{VBKÖ to BMfU [23 February 1932], ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Sig. 15., Fasz. 3378, Z/ 5927/ 1932.}
\end{footnotesize}
mainstream artists leagues. In a more aggressive tone than the VBKÖ, the WF pointed out that

In all of these events [women’s art exhibitions] a state art prize has never once been awarded. Without wanting to criticize the Kunstrat entrusted with the bestowal of these prizes, this situation seems to us, in light of our serious strivings, to be a most depressing outcome more or less resulting from the fact that such prize juries consist exclusively of men, moreover, of older male artists.  

Harlfinger went on to echo Fraenkel-Hahn’s critique of women’s continued exclusion from mainstream artists’ leagues, stating that “the dismissive behavior of the major artists’ leagues against the admission of women as regular members speaks a very clear language, indeed.”

Thus, given the continued necessity for separatist women’s leagues, both the VBKÖ and Wiener Frauenkunst recommended that a certain percentage of state prizes be allotted to women artists and that women be represented on the state prize jury. The leagues “held this as a fair and self-evident demand.” The Ministry responded by stating that the jury had already been formed and time was too advanced to create a system of Frauenkunst state prizes for the current year. However, the matter of integrating women into future state juries was entrusted to Hofrat Schubert-Soldern to bring up for discussion in the jury’s upcoming meeting. Ledger notes on the ministerial file reveal that “obligatory representation of women artists on this jury as well as setting a certain quota of state prizes for women artists was unanimously denied” by the Kunstrat at its meeting of 25 April 1932. The Kunstrat’s outright rejection of the leagues’ proposals crushed hope of mending fences between First Republic Austria’s feuding artist leagues.

Paralleling the rapid decline of the Wiener Frauenakademie, the conflict between First Republic Austria’s two foremost women artists leagues reached an abrupt cease-fire with the coming of the Austro-Fascist and National Socialist regimes in the mid- and late-1930s. While

1178 WF to BMfU [26 February 1932], ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Sig. 15., Fasz. 3378, Z. 5573.
1179 WF to BMfU [26 February 1932], ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Sig. 15., Fasz. 3378, Z. 5573.
1180 WF to BMfU [26 February 1932], ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Sig. 15., Fasz. 3378, Z. 5573.
1181 Schubert-Soldern, Ledger Notes [25 April 1932]. ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Sig. 15., Fasz. 3378, Z. 5573.
the Wiener Frauenkunst continued staging independent exhibitions until early 1938, the year in which it organized a 10\textsuperscript{th} Jubilee Exhibition, the WF’s avant-garde expressionistic bent made it suspect to \textit{Vaterländische} sympathizers envisioning more conventional roles for women in the Austrian \textit{Heimat}. Even the VBKÖ’s more moderate feminist platform had to adapt to survive in the increasingly oppressive atmosphere of the Austrian Corporate State. The tone of the VBKÖ’s 1936 25\textsuperscript{th}-Jubilee Exhibition \textit{Heimat und Fremde} (Homeland and Abroad) brings the Austrian Corporate State’s \textit{vaterländische} cultural program into high relief.\textsuperscript{1182} With the fall of an independent Austria in 1938, however, National Socialist conceptions of degenerate art left little room for the exotic and primitive materials, methods, and manners of expression used by \textit{Frauenkunst} practitioners. Forced to set aside their differences after the \textit{Anschluß}, the two warring artist leagues were merged as the \textit{Künstlerbund Wiener Frauen} (Viennese Women’s Artist League) in 1939. Not only stripping the group of any traces of an Austrian identity, many of the VBKÖ’s and WF’s greatest talents were forced into hiding, exile, or worse, faced death, because of their Jewish heritage. A member address book, annotated with comments \textit{Jüdin} [Jewess], “\textit{Halbjüdin} [Half-Jewess],” “1/4 \textit{Jüdin} [1/4 Jewess],” “\textit{Jüd. Geheiratet} [Married to a Jew],” “\textit{ausgetretenen}” [resigned] und “\textit{Vollarierin}” [Full-Blood Aryan], remains a chilling reminder of the Aryanization of Austria’s women artist leagues and members’ complicity in the process.\textsuperscript{1183} Among the numerous Jewish women-artists displaced by Nazi persecution was VBKÖ President and founding-member Louise Fraenkel-Hahn (President 1932-1938). As she bid her colleagues farewell when she was forced to resign her membership and presidency.

\textsuperscript{1182} 25 \textit{Jahre Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs: Jubiläums Ausstellung “Heimat und Fremde”} [Hagenbund Oktober-Novemeber 1936], (Wien: 1936).

“Believe me that I will always remember these 16 years [her presidency 1923-1938] fondly and that I wish the League, whose artistic and material position remained very close to my heart during the time of my presidency, all the very best in every respect in the future.”\textsuperscript{1184} The further re-designation of the group as the \textit{Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen der Reichsgaue der Ostmark im großdeutschen Reich} (Association of Women Artists in the Eastern March Imperial District of the Greater German Reich) in 1941 and \textit{Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen, Sitz Wien} (Association of Women Artists, Headquarters in Vienna) in 1942 only reinforced the group’s loss of its original Austrian identity. While both groups, like the WFA, would reconvene independently after the war, haunting skeletons lingered in the closet. The cosmopolitan atmosphere of \textit{fin-de-siècle} and First Republic Austria had been radically altered, producing a climate in which ‘an art of their own’ could no longer thrive.

\textsuperscript{1184} Abschiedsbrief von Louise Fraenkel-Hahn an die VBKÖ [28 May 1938], VBKÖ Archiv, ARCH 26, Bl. 72.
Chapter Five  
Musedom and the Art of Frauenkunst in Six Austrian Artist Couples

All that is transitory  
Is but an image;  
The inadequacy of earth  
Here finds fulfillment;

The indescribable  
Here is accomplished  
The eternal feminine  
Leads us upward.\textsuperscript{1185}

The four preceding chapters have explored the transformation of Frauenkunst in late-Imperial and First Republic Austria from an institutional perspective. Formal organizations such as leagues, schools, and associations have provided the main historical lens through which the experiences of Austrian women artists have been scrutinized. While the present study has attempted to provide an overview of the professionalization of women’s art in Austria circa 1870-1930, the broad contours of such an endeavor nonetheless render the careers, struggles, and triumphs of individual women artists hazy. Moreover, the focus on professional women artists obscures the concept of musedom: a vital contribution of the feminine to the fine arts. Muses, or the spiritual forces guiding acts of artistic and literary creation, have long been associated with the creative output of the Vienna Moderns: the groups and individuals responsible for the

development of modernism in the arts and literature in Vienna from 1890 to 1910. Commonly personified as femmes-fatales, femmes-fragiles, and femmes-savantes, these inspiring women played crucial roles in bringing the art, architecture, and writing of Viennese Modernism to fruition. Never, however, have the celebrated muses of the Vienna Moderns been considered as chasing the same goals as their colleagues pursuing professional artistic training. Unearthing the story of Austria’s women’s academy and female artists leagues without revealing women’s roles in the creative process as muses thus provides an incomplete picture of Austrian Frauenkunst circa 1900-1930. Reinventing conventional ideals of feminine dilettantism, both vocations as professional artists and muses allowed women to navigate autonomous careers in the arts.

Austria’s women’s movement in the arts pursued its objectives within the context of bourgeois respectability and mirrored the sort of reinvention of traditional feminine ideals used by the muses and salonieres of Vienna 1900 to play an active, but nonetheless socially-acceptable, role in the arts. While scholars have conventionally divided processes of artistic creation according to active and passive lines, the present study seeks to bring such boundaries into question by integrating analyses of Viennese women’s activism in the studio and exhibition hall alongside muses’ inspiration, orchestration and patronage of artistic creativity in the salon. That muses often served to inspire and facilitate the art, architecture, and writing of Viennese Modernism stands firmly entrenched in the historiographical record. What remains to be seen, however, is the ways in which the boundaries between muse and artist were more fluid than previously assumed. Muses used the Vienna Moderns’ ambivalent views on women—the feminine arts male artists both loved and feared—to pry open the masculine studio and artist

1186 In their introduction to Die Frauen der Wiener Moderne (München: R. Oldenburg Verlag, 1997), Emil Brix and Lisa Fischer argue that the muse (along with the category of suffragette) remains one of the most important categories of analysis shaping the history of women and gender in Austria. See also fn. 5 for a sampling of such muse-histories.
league. In this way, muses exploited traditional conceptions of womanhood in a manner paralleling the VΒΚΟ’s and WF’s harnessing of conventional feminine virtues. Studying Austria’s women’s movement in the arts from a biographical perspective, this chapter examines the phenomenon of Austrian Frauenkunst from the perspectives of six case studies of gender, creativity, and art between 1900-1930.

Focusing on musedom and the womanly arts of socialization, this chapter’s first set of case studies calls the traditional gendering of the muse paradigm into question. Examined here are Alma Mahler, muse to composer Gustav Mahler, expressionist-painter Oskar Kokoschka, Bauhaus-founder Walter Gropius, and poet Franz Werfel; Emilie Flöge, reform-clothing designer and Gustav Klimt’s lifelong-companion; and Lina Loos, wife of architect Adolf Loos. It is my argument that these acclaimed muses not only found similar inspiration in their male partners, but utilized the very canon of femininity that enshrined them as unreachable ideals to carve out a feminine space in the arts. Indeed, the men of the Vienna Moderns served as muses, as beings who inspired and enabled the genesis, creation, and completion of works of art, literature, and poetry. While artists and muses have conventionally been understood in gendered terms, with male as artist and female as muse, the three couples’ own writings and correspondences reveal the artistic careers of Emilie, Lina, and Alma to have been inspired, enabled, and even negatively motivated by their male partners. These three case studies of creativity and intimate partnership show that Vienna 1900’s celebrated female muses practiced their own form of art in a manner that subtly undermined conventional gender norms.

Complementing the investigations of artist-muse relationships appear additional case-study analyses of Austrian artist couples. Analyses of painters Louise and Walter Fraenkel-Hahn, Anglo-Austrian Pre-Raphaelite painters Adrian and Marianne Stokes-Preindlsberger, and Fanny and Richard Harlfinger, a couple whose personal and professional connections to the KGS, WFA, and WF stood at the apex of Austrian Frauenkunst, illustrate different models of the so-called Malerehe (painters’ marriage) in late-Imperial and First Republic Austria. The examples of these Künstlerpaaren (artist couples) substantiate the paradigm extrapolated in the previous set of case studies of musedom as a dynamic form of mutual support and inspiration. While attracting a great deal of attention in contemporary art periodicals, the fascinating phenomenon of the artist couple has nevertheless slid into obscurity. Most interesting in these “artistic marriages,” particularly those in which both partners worked in the same medium, was how each partner mediated his/her own area of specialization without treading on that of his/her partner. Preconceptions of women’s tendency to be influenced by men strongly shaped critical perceptions of such couples. While the romantic notion of “Two Souls, One Mind: Two Hearts, One Beat” may have held true in normal domestic life, contemporary discourse warned of the pitfalls of “Two Palettes, One Brushstroke”: that is, artist couples whose work was dangerously similar. Like other forms of intimate partnerships, female partners in Künstlerehen had to navigate a careful line between artistic and wifely duties.

The chapter to follow lends Austrian Frauenkunst a human face by profiling individuals whose careers highlight the similarities, as well as differences, between professional women artists and women professionalizing the art of musedom. Both sets of partnerships, i.e. publicly-recognized pairings of “creator and muse” and “creator and creator,” represented models of intimate relationships in which the spirit of artistic creation flowed in both directions. In the first
category of artist and muse, the art of Frauenkunst resided in women’s capacity to inspire and interact with male genius. Yet, the gendered definitions of genius explored in Chapter Two have marginalized muses’ roles in processes of artistic creation. As Whitney Chadwick and Isabelle de Courtivron have argued in a recent study on intimacy and creative partnership; “traditional biographies and monographs have typically described creativity as an extraordinary (usually male) individual’s solitary struggle for artistic self-expression.” Yet the “significant others” of such geniuses often played pivotal and active roles in the creative process. The second category of artist couple, creator and creator, likewise manifested a model of mutual support and inspiration between two practicing artists. However, the latter category of artist couple differed in that professional women artists’ active role in the creative process earned them greater societal recognition than muses. Joining the growing body of literature calling attention to these significant others, this study seeks to undermine such artificial, gendered divisions in the creative process. Creating a feminine space in the arts, both models of intimate partnership necessitated deft navigation between traditional ideals of feminine passivity and conceptions of the modern, active woman. The two types of artist couples to be explored in this chapter thus offered Austrian women avenues for emancipation in the arts within the context of traditional feminine virtues.

Musedom and Frauenkunst in Three Viennese Creative Partnerships, 1900-1920

Although historians have typically deployed gendered concepts, viewing men as artists and women as muses, these case studies show how male artists in fin-de-siècle Vienna played a reciprocal role of muse to their female counterparts. Emilie Flöge, Lina Loos, and Alma Mahler

assumed the role of artist, despite the tensions between conceptions of woman, artist, and creative genius laid out in Chapter Two. All three women, in fact, used these very tensions to their advantage. First, negating contemporary ideas on women as disposable artistic stimuli, Gustav Klimt served as a reciprocal source of inspiration to Emilie Flöge’s career as a reform-clothing fashion-designer. Next, in a reversal of the conventional muse paradigm, it was Adolf Loos’s domineering manner of personal relations—and abstraction of Lina to an unreachable ideal—that provided the negative inspiration for Lina’s literary career. The poet’s works were highly critical of bourgeois marriage and Austrian society’s double standard with regard to women’s sexual and professional desires. Finally, reveling in the sort of feminine idealization that Austrian feminists deplored, Alma Mahler elevated musedom to a form of art and thrived on being a “Creator of Creators” a self-consciously active and aggressive facilitator of artistic genius. The womanly arts of grace, artifice, and self-stylization offered a convenient means of carving out a feminine space in the arts that extended beyond the private enclave of the salon. Gender prescriptions, and the divide between the public and private spheres, thus proved flexible for the cultivated women of the Vienna Moderns.

**Gustav Klimt and Emilie Flöge**

Emilie Louise Flöge has been characterized as the Coco Chanel of the Mariahilferstrasse (Vienna’s main shopping street), an important collaborator with the Wiener Werkstätte, and, as Gustav Klimt’s muse.\(^\text{1190}\) None of these labels, however, adequately conveys Flöge’s creative role in the reform-clothing movement, the late-nineteenth-century crusade against the physical and psychological ills of the corset. Taking inspiration from art-nouveau centers abroad, Flöge created reform-clothing integrating traditional modes of ornamentation and decoration, such as frills,
ruffles, and the famous geometrical patterns used on her fabrics, into simplified dress-forms.\footnote{Mary Wagener, “Fashion and Feminism in fin-de-siècle Vienna,” \textit{Woman’s Art Journal}, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1989): 29-33.}

Such garments allowed women greater freedom of movement: a sartorial innovation crucial to setting “women in motion” in the public sphere.\footnote{Roman Sandgruber, “‘Frauen in Bewegung:’ Verkehr und Frauenemanzipation,” in \textit{Die Frauen der Wiener Moderne}. Emil Brix and Lisa Fischer, eds. (München: R. Oldenburg Verlag, 1997), 53-64.} Her lifelong companion, Secession Founder Gustav Klimt, shared her enthusiasm for freeing men and women from encumbering clothing. Not only painting his subjects in Flöge’s creations, often overwhelming their bodies with their dresses’ decorative surfaces, Klimt produced clothing designs commissioned by Flöge’s workshop. Embracing the decorative feminine aesthetics that commentators such as A.F. Seligmann and Adolf Loos deplored, Klimt and Flöge’s version of \textit{Jugendstil} modernism affirmed the compatibility of femininity and art.

Klimt and Flöge first met after the marriage of their siblings: Flöge’s elder sister Helene and Klimt’s younger brother Ernst Klimt, Junior. Klimt’s older brother Georg, who trained as a goldsmith like the Klimt patriarch, taught applied arts courses at the Women’s Academy. Ten years after Ernst’s untimely death in 1892, the three single Flöge sisters, the widow Helene, Pauline and Emilie, opened a fashion salon at Mariahilferstrasse 1b in the Casa Piccolo. This establishment, the \textit{Schwestern Flöge Modehaus}, thrived thanks to Emilie’s artistic vision, insider knowledge of the Viennese and Parisian fashion industries, and creative intuition.\footnote{Refer to Wolfgang Fischer, \textit{Gustav Klimt and Emilie Flöge: An Artist and His Muse}, 39-42.} \footnote{Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Autographen-, und Nachlass-Sammlung, Gustav Klimt und Emilie Flöge Nachlass, Autograph 959/48. [Gustav Klimt an Emilie Flöge, Paris, März 1913].} Although Klimt communicated with Helene and his niece after his brother’s death, Klimt’s correspondence with Emilie was much more frequent and informal, demonstrating the value he placed upon...
Emilie’s camaraderie. In contrast to the majority of women artists profiled in this dissertation, Flöge lacked professional artistic training. However, like most bourgeois daughters schooled in the tradition of feminine dilettantism, the Flöge sisters enjoyed childhood drawing lessons. That Flöge realized a successful career without formal schooling speaks to her inborn artistic sense.

When the Flöge sisters launched their fashion house in 1904, Viennese ladies had three options for purchasing clothing: haute-couture boutiques, prêt-a-porter outlets, and hired seamstresses. While all of these alternatives were expensive, the high prices of Flöge’s fashions bolstered her firm’s success and exclusivity. The Flöge label was ten times more expensive, for example, than garments produced by seamstresses and four times the price of prêt-a-porter clothing. To put these prices in perspective, the average artisan in Vienna 1900 might have been able to buy his wife four of Flöge’s garments annually, provided he squandered none of his wages on food, rent, or other necessities. Despite the exclusive prices of Flöge’s creations, her reform-clothing designs, which were patterned to bring a similar level of modern functionalism and mobility to women’s clothing as recent advancements in men’s clothing, exercised a trickle-down effect upon the makers of cheaper garments. Even inexpensive department stores began selling housedresses and simple shift-dresses like Flöge’s that would have allowed middle and working-class women more freedom of movement.

Flöge identified closely with the Secessionist credo preached to female students at the KGS and KFM and with the Wiener-Werkstätte Gesamtkunstwerk ideal. Elevating the applied arts like fashion, jewelry-making, and interior-design to a level plane with painting, sculpture, and the other fine arts, the Wiener Werkstätte strove to unify every aspect of daily life

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1195 Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Handschriftensammlung, Gustav Klimt und Emilie Flöge Nachlass, Autographen 959/47-59. In contrast to the candid and highly informal nature of Klimt’s correspondence with Emilie, Klimt’s letters to his sister-in-law Helene and his niece are all politeness and formality, even in his manner of penmanship. See Autograph 959/59 [Gustav Klimt an Helene Klimt].
1196 Wolfgang Fischer, Gustav Klimt and Emilie Flöge, 38-39.
into a single work of art. As detailed in Chapter Two, Professors Josef Hoffmann and Kolomann Moser encouraged female students at the Kunstgewerbeschule to re-design every aspect of modern life. Women designers particularly excelled in the fields of ceramics, fashion, and textiles. Flöge worked closely with Hoffmann, Moser, and other Wiener-Werkstätte designers including Eduard Wimmer-Wisgrill, to produce reform-clothing dresses following Henry van der Velde’s model. A series of lectures in Vienna by van der Velde, the Belgian designer who led the fin-de-siècle artistic dress movement, strongly influenced the designs of Flöge and her Wiener Werkstätte colleagues. It was the same reform clothing impulse that inspired the introduction of clothing courses at the KFM around the outbreak of World War I. Flöge incorporated Wiener-Werkstätte textiles into her creations and furnished her boutique with Moser’s elegant black-and-white furniture and retail displays of Hoffmann jewelry. In addition, Flöge’s sewing-workshop executed Hoffmann’s and Wisgrill’s designs before the W-W launched an in-house fashion department. The sleek modern lines of such Werkstätte fashions, devoid of constricting corsets, hoops, or stays, conveyed an elegant simplicity of form reminiscent of the Empire fashions. Given her garments’ comfort, functionality, and elegance, Flöge’s couture line quickly gained a following among avant-garde circles. These reform-clothing creations were worn by salonnières including Sonia Knips, Adele Bloch-Bauer, Frederike Maria Beer, and Alma Mahler.

Existing historiography has neglected Klimt’s role in Flöge’s career as a fashion designer. Art historians concur that Emilie represented Klimt’s ‘eternal feminine’ and inspired many of his masterpieces. Yet most do not acknowledge the possibility of the ‘eternal masculine:’ the idea that Klimt, too, was a source of spiritual and practical inspiration and support to Flöge. Since so much attention has been devoted to the issue of Flöge’s musedom,

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these arguments will not be reproduced here. What is more interesting is the way that the painter played the role of muse to his female counterpart, and how this suggests fluidity between creator and muse in late-Imperial Austria.

Klimt disdained bourgeois convention, gender norms not excepted. From clothing to ideas on gender and sexuality, Klimt refused to be constrained by social mores and preferred a more bohemian lifestyle. Social expectations did not prevent his indecorous flirtations with well-bred young ladies, such as pursuing Alma Schindler during their 1899 travels through Italy, or employing lower-class call-girls as models. Nor was he bothered by the 14 illegitimate children he left scattered around the city. Libertine though he was, Klimt still expected his mother and sister to attend to his physical comforts. Klimt was fed, clothed, and housed by his mother for his entire life, never formally attaching himself to Flöge in a domestic union.

Klimt’s scandalous personal life and persona as an artistic rebel, amplified by the public outcry surrounding Klimt’s university murals controversy, made him equally unsuitable for teaching at the Women’s Academy as at the ABKW. In addition, the craft-based, expressive symbolism championed by Klimt was anything but the classical academic training envisioned by Kaufmann and Seligmann.

Yet Klimt dedicated much energy to facilitating Flöge’s career in reform-clothing design. This support took on emotional, spiritual, and practical dimensions. The two shared a similar worldview of working against the philistine and bourgeois society that motivated their work and endeared them as lifelong companions. This attitude is evident in their everyday correspondence

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1199 For such an interpretation, refer to Wolfgang Fischer’s An Artist and His Muse or Alessandra Comini, Gustav Klimt (New York: G. Braziller, 1975).
1200 For Alma’s account of this pursuit as Klimt followed her family’s travels through Italy, see her Tagebuch-Suiten 1892-1902, Antony Beaumont and Susanne Rodebreymann, eds (Ithaca: Cornell, 1999).
1202 Although Klimt was elected as a professor at the Viennese Academy of Fine Arts in 1901, the government committee refused to ratify the appointment. For Bertha Zuckerkandl’s reaction to the University Mural Controversy, see “Die Klimt Affäre” in Zeitkunst Wien, 162-168.
in the years 1913-1918. The manner in which Klimt discusses the stuff of everyday life from professional matters to social happenings illustrates that the pair regarded the formalities of late-Imperial Austrian society, and his professional obligations as a painter, with skepticism.\textsuperscript{1203} Klimt, for instance, poked fun at the very \textit{Wiener-Ansichtskarten}, i.e. picture postcards of recognized Viennese landmarks, such as the Stephansdom, Schönbrunn Palace, and the Hofburg, that he used to write to Emilie [Figure 5.1]. On these cards, he entrusted her with candid remarks on his colleagues, such as Josef Hoffmann and Carl Moll, as well as patrons including the Primavesi, Waerndorfer, and Stoclet families.\textsuperscript{1204} All the while, however, the painter declared to his ‘Midi’ how he eagerly awaited their next meeting or her homecoming when she was away on business. Furthermore, when both partners were in Vienna, Gustav and Emilie not only collaborated professionally but were avid theater-, opera-, and concertgoers. Indeed, an entire folder of the Klimt-Flöge Nachlass contains theater invitations: invariably listing the time, place, location of seats, and names of any other parties who would be in attendance.\textsuperscript{1205} Another form of entertainment at the center of their relationship was humor. As Wolfgang Fischer has rightly argued, Klimt’s irreverent sense of humor offered Flöge the businesswoman an outlet of stress-relief: a source of rejuvenation crucial to her firm’s success.\textsuperscript{1206}

On a pragmatic level, too, Klimt provided invaluable assistance to Flöge’s career. In addition to having various \textit{Wiener Werkstätte} pieces especially commissioned for Emilie, Klimt

\textsuperscript{1203} Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Handschriftensammlung, Gustav Klimt und Emilie Flöge Nachlass, Autographen 959/47-59.

\textsuperscript{1204} See especially his May 1914 cards written to Emilie from Brussels during a visit to the Haus Stoclet—the first major commission of the Wiener-Werkstätte, for which he produced the murals—upon which he trusts her with his clients’ remarks on the recently-completed Primavesi portraits, as well as speculations about sitters for further portrait-commissions. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Autographen-, und Nachlass-Sammlung, Gustav Klimt und Emilie Flöge Nachlass, Autograph 959/50-1 [Gustav Klimt an Emilie Flöge, Brüssel, Mai 1914].

\textsuperscript{1205} Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Handschriftensammlung, Gustav Klimt und Emilie Flöge Nachlass, Autograph 959/57 [Einladungen].

\textsuperscript{1206} Wolfgang Fischer connects many of Klimt’s humorous sketches, such as a self-caricature depicting Klimt as a testicle-shaped mouse, to a fear of women. Refer to Fischer, \textit{An Artist and His Muse}, 112.
served as a liaison to the *Wiener Werkstätte* and passed along orders, designs, and patterns to his colleagues. Not only offering alterations to Wisgrill and Hoffmann’s clothing-designs, Klimt sketched clothing patterns for himself and Emilie to be produced by Flöge’s workshop. Such garments included flowing smock-like housedresses that Emilie donned during their yearly *Sommerfrische* (summer holiday) to the *Salzkammergut*, as well as painting smocks for the studio. It was there in the Austrian Lake District that the symbolist painter pioneered modern fashion photography [*Figure 5.2*]. His photos of Emilie modeling a variety of frocks, which were cut on the three basic patterns of the Reform Dress (the ‘tent’ dress; the straight cut dress; and the extra long dress with narrow silhouette and widening below the knee), demonstrated his mastery of composition. Their collaboration on fashion photography revealed much fluidity between the roles of artist and muse, student and mentor, and assistant and master. Here, as fashion was Emilie’s domain, one might expect that she was directing and Klimt assisting. However, given that Gustav was behind the camera and Emilie was modeling, these roles appear to have been interchangeable. The photos were the product of joint artistic collaboration. Such flexibility suggests that meanings of ‘artist’ and ‘muse’ did not correspond to gendered prescriptions.

Not only deviating from conventional gender roles, there is good evidence to suggest that the Klimt-Flöge partnership actually constituted a reversal of male and female norms. For instance, although his correspondence with others was highly erratic, Klimt wrote Emilie daily when she was traveling and noted the frequency with which she answered his letters. He complained of the

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1209 Refer to Figure I, which depicts Emilie in an elegant concert dress embellished with a black-white checkerboard pattern.
one-sided nature of their correspondence when the designer was conducting business in Paris. As he wrote her in May 1914 en route to visiting the Palais Stoclet in Brussels, a major commission of the *Wiener Werkstätte* for which he painted a series of murals:

> On bright meadows full of summer-flowers. At the moment it seems there is no telephone connection to Vienna...[various details about train accommodations]. The mail is collected in the morning here, so at least this card will be in your hands by the evening. And now dear Midi again the most sincere things from your GUSTAV.1210

If Klimt’s eagerness in this note to contact Emilie is any indication, Klimt had invested himself in Emilie despite the fact they never married. Klimt’s conception of musedom was, in fact, nothing like Friedell’s idea of a stimulus to be used to boost one’s artistic metabolism and then disposed of. The painter’s dismay at Emilie’s inaccessibility, a regular feature of these correspondences, for Klimt invariably noted when and where he received answers to his letters as well as the date of their next meeting, suggests that he was closer to being used and discarded than she was. While Klimt may have also used her as a source of motivation, Klimt served as a reciprocal source of spiritual, emotional, and practical inspiration to Emilie. His capacity to see Emilie as an artist discredits the notion that femininity and creative genius were necessarily irreconcilable concepts in Vienna 1900. Together, he and Flöge fashioned a version of modernism in which the two concepts were harmonious. In Klimt’s and Flöge’s artistic universe female artists belonged in the atelier rather than the salon.

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1210 Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Handschriftensammlung, Gustav Klimt und Emilie Flöge Nachlass, Autograph 959/49-1 [Gustav Klimt an Emilie Flöge, Passau, 13 Mai 1914].
Adolf and Lina Loos

A counterpoint to Klimt and Flöge’s bohemian alliance, the brief marriage of Adolf and Lina Loos catalyzed the latter’s career in theater and feminist prose. Karoline Obertimpfler was born to the proprietors of the Café Piccolo, a coffeehouse located on the ground floor of Flöge’s fashion house. The young Lina committed herself to acting, a vocation which contemporary theorists viewed as a natural, if scandalous, artistic calling given women’s dramatic propensity. While studying theater, Lina gained a following among Viennese coffeehouse intellectuals. Peter Altenberg christened her the ‘Silberne Dame’ of the Vienna Moderns in tribute to her girlish figure and aura of impressionable femininity.1211 “Silver Lady” Lina became particularly popular with members of Altenberg’s Stammtisch (Regulars’ Table). Members included Karl Kraus, Egon Friedell, and Adolf Loos, the architect and cultural critic who debated the proper vernacular of modern architecture and design with Otto Wagner and Josef Hoffmann in a series of public lectures and essays. In fact, it was Loos’s famed cigarette case, which, free as it was of ornament or decoration, he often produced during his lectures as a model of modern functionalism that indirectly brought Lina and Adolf together. During their first encounter in the Café Löwenbräu, Lina is reported to have snatched and accidentally broken the well-known thing. When Lina asked how she might compensate for the loss of his precious case, he surprised her with a marriage proposal.1212 A half-year later, on 21 July 1902, the two were wed by Loos’s uncle at the Schlosskapelle Lichtenstein in Eisengrub/Lednice, not far from Loos’s hometown of Brünn/Brno.

1212 This is the story of their first encounter, as narrated by Lina in a feuilleton years later. Refer to Christa Gürtler and Sigrid Schmid-Bortenschlager Erfolg und Verfolgung: Österreichische Schriftstellerinnen 1918-1945 Fünfzehn Porträts und Texte (Salzburg: Residenz, 2002), 45.
While this and other versions of their meeting have become the stuff of legends, Lina and Adolf’s motivations for marriage remain clear. For Lina, the prospect of marriage to a respectable, if outspoken, architect not only allowed her to placate her parents’ displeasure over her acting career, but to gain permanent access to the artistic milieu in which Loos stood center. While Lina’s later writings reveal that she viewed the marriage as an interlude in her own process of self-realization, the union promised social and artistic advantages at the outset. Different concerns, however, motivated Loos to marry a girl twelve years his junior. Although it was quite normal for Viennese gentlemen to marry younger women, Loos displayed an unmistakable preference for the ‘Kindfrau,’ the sort of fragile, child-like, and sexually-innocent young creatures that Altenberg’s aphorisms glorified, in his first and subsequent marriages. The image of the Kindfrau with her slight, androgynous figure and look of emotional detachment appealed to artists like Loos and Altenberg because they could worship, idolize, and form such a girl to their desires without her becoming dangerous. As Lisa Fischer has rightly argued; “women were to be modeled according to men’s needs; this was a fundamental reason why Adolf Loos took an interest in, and loved, Lina.” Lina, therefore, was to be born anew as his creation and accept an identity as the wife of a great architect rather than as a great actress in her own right.

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1213 In addition to the Löwenbräu anecdote, Lisa Fischer reports an alternate version of their meeting, wherein Loos escorted Lina back to the Casa Piccolo after assisting her from a fall sustained while promenading around the Ring. See Fischer, *Lina Loos: oder, wenn die Muse sich selbst küsst* (Wien: Böhlau, 1994), 60-61. Yet another variation is provided by Burkhard Rukschcio and Roland Schachel’s *Adolf Loos: Leben und Werk* (Salzburg: Residenz Verlag, 1982), in which Loos extolled Lina, when asked to select between his beloved cigarette-holder and a highly-decorative one, for choosing the simplest, and thus, most modern, object. Rukschcio and Schachel, 51-52.

1214 Kratzer, *Die Unschicklichen Töchter*, 102.


1216 See Loos’s remarks on the Kindfrau in his memorial piece to Altenberg, Adolf Loos, “Abschied von Peter Altenberg,” in *Das Altenbergbuch*, 349-358.


1218 Lisa Fischer, *Lina Loos: Oder, wenn die Muse sich selbst küsst*, 78.
Aside from the appeal of fashioning his very own *Kindfrau*, Lina’s financial prospects attracted the aspiring and notoriously broke architect. Upon meeting Lina, Loos’s financial resources were exhausted from his 1893-1896 travels through the United States on top of perennial over-expenditure on tailored clothing. While renowned for his cultural criticisms in the *Neue Freie Presse*, Loos remained without a regular income during the marriage due to his spending habits. Money proved a continual source of marital stress. Lina’s parents, in fact, paid the rent for the young couple’s ten-room Bösendorferstrasse flat and provided most of its furnishings [Figure 5.3]. Although Loos was eager to assume the husbandly role of provider, Lina relied upon her parents and friends in the AÖFV and BÖFV for financial support during their marriage. Both Adolf and Lina’s close friendship with Marie Lang, who, along with Rosa Mayreder and Auguste Fickert, headed the General Austrian Women’s Association, proved pivotal to the Loos’s future. The Marie Lang circle not only organized fund-raising lecture-opportunities for Adolf, but obtained him numerous architectural commissions including the Wiener Frauenklub, the interiors of Dr. Eugenie Schwarzwald’s Female-Lyceum and private residence, and other projects.

Although the idealized *femme fragile* could bolster masculinity, femininity could also become threatening. Like his friends Peter Altenberg and Karl Kraus, Adolf Loos held highly complex and contradictory views on women. Women, in the eyes of Loos, became dangerous when they crossed the boundary between salon and studio, infiltrating the artist’s workshop with impure decorative aesthetics. This constituted a major factor motivating Loos’s vehement critique

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1220 Adolf Loos’s second wife, Elsie Altmann-Loos recalled an anecdote of Adolf’s in her memoirs. Once, when only 2 crowns were left in Lina and Adolf’s household, Adolf was to bring home groceries for their bare pantry; instead, he squandered their last two crowns on an English wooden-and-silver mustard-pot. When questioned why he bought an empty container rather than food to fill it, Loos replied that he could surely find another few crowns much easier than such a charming mustard-pot. Elsie Altmann-Loos, *Mein Leben mit Adolf Loos*, Adolf Opel, ed., (Berlin: Ullstein, 1986), 41.
1221 Gürtler and Schmid-Bortenschlager, 48.
of the girly ornamentalism of the *Wiener Werkstätte*, whose workshops were dominated by female KGS graduates. According to Loos:

> The modern producers of our culture have no ornamentation…Only people who were born in the present but actually live in earlier times—women, the rural population, Orientals (including the Japanese)—as well as people with mutilated brains, such as necktie and wallpaper designers, are capable of producing new ornamentation of equal quality to the old.\(^{1222}\)

Loos contended that although women possessed a natural affinity to ornament and even a capacity for ornamental innovation, this trait was (ironically) neither ‘modern’ nor ‘artistic.’ That women resided in the past rather than in the present only underscored the incompatibility of femininity and modernism. The Neo-Baroque ornamentalism of the Wiener Werkstätte’s *Künstlerische Werkstätte* during the Peche era represented a case in point. In contrast to the *Wiener Werkstätte*’s feminine aesthetics, Loos envisioned a modern aesthetic that disguised rather than celebrated difference and was honest in its presentation of materials.\(^{1223}\) The masculine solidity of his Haus am Michaelerplatz façade exemplified this aesthetic principle.\(^{1224}\) As far as Loos was concerned, the salon with its artifice, stylistic deception, and conspicuous display of difference was women’s proper domain. True art, in which craftsmen labored for an integral presentation of function and material, remained the realm of the masculine workshop.

Linked to the idea of the feminine drive to ornamentation was Loos’s notion that women themselves were significant primarily for their decorative value and should, like a fragile *objet d’art*, be kept separate and protected. Loos’s views corresponded to nineteenth-century educational ideals providing girls with dilettantish artistic training to enhance women’s ability to fulfill societal

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duties. Adolf’s designs for their Bösendorferstrasse flat, very much an architectural expression of
gendered spheres, illustrate his efforts to mold the much-adored ‘Silver-Muse’ of the Vienna
Moderns to his ideals of feminine purity. Lina’s bedroom, washed in white from floor to ceiling,
symbolized Loos’s conception of private female virtue [Figure 5.4]. Using a pale angora as a
floor-covering and airy white curtains to soften the walls, the bedroom design invoked an
atmosphere of security, tranquility, and, above all, feminine purity. The architect published
photographs of the room in Kunst, Altenberg’s art-review to which Loos’s insert Das Andere: Ein
Blatt zur Einführung abendländischer Kultur in Österreich was attached as a supplement. Loos
added the simple caption, “Adolf Loos: My Wife’s Bedroom: White Linens, White Curtains,
White Angora-Fur” to the illustrations. The brevity of Loos’s description only reinforced his
efforts to create an unornamented and hence purer feminine space. Shortly after publishing these
photographs, Loos composed a private letter to Lina on the coming of their first anniversary.
Though praising Lina as ‘the wisdom of the world’ precisely for her unknowingness, Loos
expressed discomfort with Lina’s continued dedication to theater. Loos reproached her to “study
your little role [as his wife] rather than all of the others. If you want to stay with theater, there will
be time later.”

Rather than reinforcing her fragility and separateness, however, Loos’s attempts to
domesticate Lina in the private sphere produced the opposite effect. Her frustration erupted in an
affair with Heinz Lang, young son of their friend Marie Lang. Furthermore, Lina began writing

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poetry, plays, and essays exposing the very set of feminine ideals to which she felt confined.\footnote{Marie Lang, whose feminist vision stressed progressive motherhood and a freer attitude towards sexuality, had left her husband, the respected jeweler Theodor Köchert, for the lawyer Edmund Lang. Marie then bore a child, Heinz, six months before her wedding to Edmund. In any case, it was quite to Adolf’s surprise when he discovered Lina having an affair with the 18-year-old Heinz in the very bedroom he designed as a tribute to her purity. While this scandal also led to Heinz’s suicide (after consulting Altenberg on the subject), it also convinced Loos to release her from the marriage in 1905, when she resumed her acting career. Refer to Anderson, Utopian Feminism 135-137, for an account of this scandal.}

Stylistically, she adopted a short ‘telegram style’ of prose like that of her admirer Peter Altenberg.\footnote{Most of her essays were published after the First World War in periodicals & newspapers such as Wiener Woche, Prager Tagblatt, Arbeiter-Zeitung, Neues Wiener Journal, Die Dame, Neues Wiener Tagblatt. Das Buch Ohne Titel (Wien: Wiener Verlag, 1947) was the first anthology of Lina’s works: some of her more well-known pieces include the dramatic piece Sirene, a satirical dramatization of men’s ideas of feminine imagination, as well as “Ein Duell,” a poetic conversation between a man and a woman using a pear-tree metaphor to poke fun at sexual double standards.} Stimulated by her exposure to the women’s movement, Lina’s marital experience provided the emotional catalyst and content for her critiques of bourgeois gender norms and marriage.\footnote{Gürtler and Schmid-Bortenschlager, 46-47.} In a reversal of the conventional muse paradigm, her experience offered a kind of negative inspiration for her writing. Lina later satirized how unknowing young wives devoted all their energies to their husbands at the expense of their own fulfillment.

Woman: “I would like to make you happy in this way, forever”
Man: “I’d like to make \textit{myself} happy, in this way, always!”
Narrator: “So begins the sexual criminalism of men.”\footnote{Lina Loos, Quoted in Erfolg und Verfolgung, 45.}

Daring to bring women’s sexual desires into public discourse, Lina endeavored to expose the hypocrisy of those, who like her husband, proclaimed themselves modern while indulging in private gender relations that were anything but modern. While his prolific writings and lectures chastised Austria for its cultural backwardness, Loos could not tolerate that his wife might be more concerned with her own talents than with his.

While Loos should not be measured against contemporary standards of emancipation, his personal ideals measure up as relatively backwards even by turn-of-the-century standards. Loos’s marital life stands curiously at odds with his personal connections to leading figures of Austrian
feminism such as Schwarzwald, Mayreder, and Lang. According to Lisa Fischer, Loos’s domineering manner of personal conduct was markedly less advanced than the male conduct found in most other Viennese households. He specifically instructed Lina not to dream of becoming a great woman or actress, but to be content as the wife of a great architect. Loos’s unwillingness to accommodate Lina’s creative aspirations was all the more puzzling considering that he gave public-lectures on ladies’ fashion in conjunction with the AÖFV, insisting that women’s occupational and social advancement could not be achieved until women’s clothing achieved the same level of functionalism of men’s clothing. Lina’s innate sense of independence, which led her to view the marriage as an interlude to a longer process of self-actualization, multiplied these frustrations. Stimulated by Loos’s refusal to compromise, Lina pursued her literary ambitions and acting career at New York City’s German Theater, on various European tours, and in the Cabaret Fledermaus with renewed fervor after their separation, and subsequent 1905-divorce. The split between Loos’s public modernism and private conservativism mirrors the conflicting modern impulses in place at the Wiener Frauenakademie. While WFA founders wholeheartedly supported women’s emancipation in the arts, Seligmann and Kauffmann envisioned a Frauenkunst grounded in classical academic training.

In his article “Ladies’ Fashion” in the March 1902 issue of Dokumente der Frauen, Loos argued that the unequal development of men’s and women’s clothing over the past century was owed to the fact that women’s clothing still retained ‘pre-modern’ ornamentation, colors, and long skirts encumbering bodily mobility.

1232 See Lisa Fischer, ‘Weibliche Kreativität—oder warum assoziieren Männer Fäden mit Spinnen?’ in Wien 1900: Einflüsse, Umwelt, Wirkungen and “Das Schicksalsjahr 1902,” in Lina Loos: oder Wenn die Muse Sich Selbst Küßt, 73-103. Loos’s subsequent wives have produced biographies of Loos that reveal him to have displayed similar patterns of behavior towards his wives. The age-gap between Loos and his bride only increased in his next marriages to the dancer Elsie Altmann and Claire Beck, a client’s daughter. Refer to Claire Loos, Adolf Loos Privat, Adolf Opel, ed. (Wien: Böhlau, 1985) and Elsie Altmann-Loos, Mein Leben mit Adolf Loos.

1233 Lisa Fischer, Lina Loos: oder Wenn die Muse Sich Selbst Küßt, 82.
No cultural period other than ours has witnessed such an enormous difference in the clothing of the free man and the free woman. In past epochs, the man also wore clothing colorful and richly decorated clothing whose seams reached to the ground. The grandiose advancement that has taken hold of our century has happily overcome ornament… Ornament is something that must be overcome.\footnote{Adolf Loos, “Damenmode,” in Dokumente der Frauen, Bd. 6., No. 23 (1902), 663.}

In a typically polemic fashion, Loos likened the trends in ladies’ clothing to “the cries of abused children, the shrieks of mistreated women, the monstrous screams of tortured prisoners, the shrieks of those dying on the funeral pyre.”\footnote{Adold Loos, “Damenmode,” 660.} He asserted that because women are subject to men in love and the social world, women’s clothing was not motivated out of shame or modesty, but to make them an enticing riddle to men. As “the awakening of love is the only weapon that woman presently wields in the battle of the sexes,” sexual allure as expressed through clothing remained the primary method through which women buttressed their social position.\footnote{Ibid., 661.} Breaking out of this sartorial backwardness to dress in a more rational manner was necessary, Loos argued, not only out of cultural, but socio-political grounds. Loos concluded his piece on ladies’ fashion with a progressive optimism:

No longer through an appeal to sensuality, but rather, through woman’s hard-achieved economic and intellectual independence will an equality with man be reached. Worth or un-worth of woman will not rise and fall with the change of sensuality. In this manner will velvets and silks, flowers and ribbons, feathers and colors, lose their influence.\footnote{Ibid., 664.}

In spite of his behavior at home, Loos hoped that, with the disappearance of such impractical materials and embellishments, modern ladies’ clothing would no longer signify women as a sexual and erotic commodity, but become closer to the more uniform standards in men’s clothing. Yet Loos disliked the decorative reform-dresses designed by Flöge and ‘Quadratl’ Hoffmann almost as much as he found traditional women’s clothing impractical. In contrast to Hoffmann and Flöge,
Loos believed clothing should be left to tailors, lest clothing fall into the hands of pretentious artists and architects. Simply-tailored garments—well-cut yet comfortable suits, blouses, skirts, jackets—embodied Loos’s vision for women’s clothing. That Lina increasingly sported the Wiener-Werkstätte fashions that he so detested served as an added source of frustration.

Particularly in light of his marital experience, Adolf Loos’s cultural criticisms present an interesting contrast to Klimt and Flöge’s modern vision. Despite their mutual concern with reforming women’s fashion, Loos’s version of modernism denigrated feminine ornamentation, while Flöge and Klimt’s decorative art-dresses embraced it. Loos, Klimt, and Flöge’s diverging views on fashion mirrored their broader conceptions of modernism. While, like Loos, Flöge wanted to liberate women from a sexualized suit of armor, her vision of modern clothing, patterned on the art-nouveau reform dress, contrasted sharply with his idea of simple, tailor-made suits. Leaving aside his greater critique of the Wiener Werkstätte, the decorative swindlers he dubbed the ‘Wiener Weh,’ Loos believed that the reform-dresses produced by Flöge and the Wiener Werkstätte imposed a foreign form on women. Draped with overwhelming geometric patterns, the female body was subordinated to the dress’s decorative function. Modernist critic Berta Zuckerkandl also expressed qualms about the arts-and-crafts dress, though for different reasons than Loos. She argued that, by handing artists the responsibility for fashion, clothing might lose its value as a form of feminine self-expression. Loos was admittedly less concerned with female self-expression, the major leitmotif of Zuckerkandl’s criticism.

Despite his attempts to invest a similar degree of modern uniformity in women’s clothing as men’s, Loos championed a genteel vision of men’s clothing defined in contrast to the feminine. Loos predicated his analysis of clothing on the inherent difference between men and women.

1238 Janet Stewart, Fashioning Vienna, 119.
While reform-style women’s clothing was ephemeral and drew attention to the body, men’s clothing was to be modeled on British *Vornehmheit*, or propriety. The proper English gentleman, though well-dressed and put-together, should not seek to draw attention to himself through clothing. Loos argued that the modern man should reject the ‘fetish of fashion’ and endeavor to be inconspicuous. Clothing, therefore, should function as a mask that all men could don in the public sphere. He recommended,

> To be correctly dressed! With that expression I feel as if I had removed the mystery with which our fashions have been surrounded until now. With words such as beautiful, elegant, chic, smart, or dashing we try to describe fashion. But that is not the main point at all. The point is to be dressed in such a manner as to attract as little attention to oneself as possible.\textit{1241}

A model of inconspicuous consumption and gentility, Loos sought to distance men’s fashion from feminine excess.

Such a vision was quite at odds with Flöge and Klimt’s vision of modern fashion. While Loos sought to reinforce the essential difference between male and female and, by extension, the boundary between public and private, Klimt’s and Flöge’s vision of fashion prescribed a more androgynous norm. Klimt’s kimono-like smocks for himself and Emilie downplayed the gender difference: lending credit to Zweig’s ideas that modern fashion de-emphasized the difference between male and female.\textit{1242} Moreover, whereas Loos’s ideas on fashion promoted a modern uniformity, each of Flöge’s reform-dresses emphasized its unique decorative qualities. A uniform, for Flöge, was completely antithetical to clothing’s expressive function.

Loos’s cultural criticism and manner in which his conventional views on gender relations animated Lina’s literary and acting career underscores the divergent conceptions of gender, artist, and the ‘modern’ within the Vienna Moderns. Loos’s modern vision contrasted sharply with Flöge

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\textit{1241} Adolf Loos, “*Die Herrenmode*” (1898), in Loos *Sämtliche Schriften*, 20. Emphasis original.

\textit{1242} In his *Welt von Gestern*, Zweig describes how, in contrast to the fashions of the turn-of-the-century, modern fashions (of the 1940s and 1950s) de-emphasized the difference between male and female. Zweig, 92-96.
and Klimt’s, which embraced feminine decoration and female artists. Despite his progressive views on women’s fashion, Loos posited distinct cultural roles for masculine and feminine. Like Scheffler’s prescriptions discussed in Chapter Two, men created culture while women were the divine creatures suffering for, and inspiring, it. That Lina found a sort of ‘negative inspiration’ for her own creative endeavors in these ideals—seeking to critique the very canon of femininity to which she felt confined—became an unintended byproduct of such attitudes.

Around the time she was gaining recognition as a writer, Lina put an essay called “Thinking Over My Life” to paper. She recounted how a teacher, who once had called her nothing but “eyes, hair, and dreamy silliness,” asked her at age fourteen what she wanted to become in life; she replied “…I would like best to live and die for a great idea!” Years after her divorce Lina confided this memory to Egon Friedell, inquiring how he interpreted such a remark. The answer, Friedell surmised, was simple; she had died a martyr’s death in her former life [with Loos] and had been born again. Lina recalled that; “[n]ow I am old, and when I reconsider my life, how peculiarly fateful was this childish dictum! I was becoming an actress; [yet] I turned down big roles to the annoyance of the director determined to make a famous and celebrated actress out of me…” Coming to fully appreciate the meaning of her fateful comment, Lina concluded; “Now, at my life’s end, I finally understand the beginning of my life; in between lies an ever-unfulfilled remaining desire…” For Lina Loos, Frauenkunst lay not in inspiring male genius but in finding her own.

1244 Ibid., 275-276.
1245 Ibid., 277.
Gustav and Alma Mahler

Alma Maria Schindler has been celebrated as the twentieth century’s muse extraordinaire, animating the creative outputs of Gustav Klimt, Gustav Mahler, Oskar Kokoschka, Walter Gropius, and Franz Werfel.\textsuperscript{1246} The eldest daughter of Austrian landscape painter Emil Schindler, Alma was raised in the circles of the Vienna Moderns. The death of her father when she was thirteen, whom Alma revered as a “great monument,” left a lasting impact on her life.\textsuperscript{1247} Alma expressed her grief in her compositions and spent the rest of her life searching for partners whose genius rivaled her father’s.\textsuperscript{1248} With much resentment did Alma receive her mother’s decision to marry Schindler’s protégée, the painter and art-dealer Carl Moll, and move the family to a Hoffmann-villa on the Hohe Warte, a fashionable residential-development at the edge of the city. Nonetheless, because of Moll’s position as Secession co-founder, Alma enjoyed distinct intellectual and artistic privileges, including standing invitations to exhibitions, salons, opera, and concerts; intimate acquaintances with the avant-garde; and an advanced education. Alma attended the Institut Hanausek, a prestigious private girls’ school, together with Erica Conrat (later the art-historian Erica Tietze-Conrat), younger sister of VΒΚÖ Vice-President Ilse Conrat, and regularly attended the Conrats’ salons, where Brahms was a standing guest.\textsuperscript{1249}

What distinguished Alma from other socialites was that she aspired to be a composer. “Already in my early years a desire for heaven on earth grew within me; I found this through

\textsuperscript{1246} See Herrberg and Wagner’s “Inspirierend und Kühn: Die Netzwerkerinnen der Salons,” in \textit{Wiener Melange}, which highlights how Alma has been celebrated as the muse of Vienna 1900. Herrberg and Wagner, 25-49.
music,” Alma commented in her autobiography. Her musical training consisted of piano and counterpoint lessons with organist Josef Labor and composition-studies with Alexander Zemlinsky, the teacher and brother-in-law of Arnold Schönberg. Alma’s combination of beauty and intellect, in addition to her affairs with famous men, has generated considerable popular interest in her. While a serious biography of Alma Mahler remains to be produced, many recent works cast Alma as a repressed artist forced to give up composition by her egocentric husband: the composer and Hofoperdirektor (Imperial Court Opera Director) Gustav Mahler. Mahler became captivated with her during a dinner party at Berta Zuckerkandl’s Döbling villa on 7 November 1901. Such accounts, while correcting the neglect of Alma’s musical output, misconstrue Alma’s true creative calling: animating artistic genius in others.

Alma possessed an uncanny ability to recognize artistic genius in others: to enable and even force creative minds to bring their talents to fruition. She thrived on being what she termed the ‘Creator of Creators,’ a sort of active and even aggressive facilitator of artistic genius. In weighing the merits of pursuing composition against supporting the artistic output of others, Alma decided that she could best achieve her dream of an artistic ‘heaven on earth’ through the masterpieces she could indirectly create. As she re-collected; “Whatever my productive gifts were, I could relive them [better] in other more important minds.” Alma, nonetheless, embodied a different sort of muse than the childish waifs described by Altenberg or the independent businesswoman embodied by Emilie Flöge. In contrast to both, Alma, the ‘Creator of Creators,’

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1250 Mahler-Werfel, Mein Leben, 14.
played an active, and often abrasive, role in the creative process, exacting high levels of artistic output from her partners. The meaning of this ‘Creator of Creators’ concept is best summarized in Alma’s own words.

When I was young, I saw myself as one of the first great female composers. But then I also began to realize the tremendous impression that I could make on men, what an important role I could play in their lives, becoming literally the Creator of Creators. Would you want me to recall the works in music, literature, painting, and architecture that would never have been done without my having been there? 

Alma echoed Karl Kraus’s idea that women were the creators of books and paintings though they were not holding the pens or brushes. Taking a different path towards creative expression than both Lina and Emilie, Alma expressed her artistic aspirations through the traditional feminine roles of muse and salonnière, and reveled in the sort of idealization described by Mayreder rather than shunning it. In this manner, the arguments of recent scholars that Alma “suffered the costs of self-abnegation and repressing one’s abilities in the process of motivating others” are open to debate. 

A space traditionally classified as feminine, Alma’s salon was her atelier. Through a mixed media of emotional manipulation, intellectual guidance, and sex, Alma’s male admirers provided a canvas for the ‘Bride of the Wind’s masterpiece. Hence, it is quite fitting that, in old age, Alma described her own life as a ‘masterpiece;’ her Upper East Side New York apartment, filled with Mahler manuscripts [including his unfinished Tenth Symphony, upon which he famously scribbled outpourings of devotion to her], Kokoschka sketches, and Werfel’s books, was a shrine to her own career. In the same way that the VBKÖ and WF reinvented Austrian Frauenkunst, so too did Alma Mahler inject the art of musedom with a greater degree of autonomy and assertiveness.

While existing scholarship has acknowledged Alma’s inspiration of Mahler’s works, it has ignored the manner in which she elevated her strong presence in the creative process to a form of artistic expression. Recent musicological work, for instance, has established Alma’s role in inspiring many of Mahler’s symphonies, Lieder, and orchestral works: pieces that have created portraits of him, Alma, and their daughters; captured the heroism of the human spirit; and, explored fundamental questions of life, death, and love.\textsuperscript{1256} To this effect, as Gustav wrote Alma during their courtship on music’s metaphysical potential; “You will find a new light on the relation of music to reality; for music, mysterious as it is, often illuminates our souls with a flash of lightening.”\textsuperscript{1257} Scholars, however, often overlook the revelations in Gustav’s letters to Alma that he regarded these compositions not as \textit{his} but as a mutual creative endeavor. As he wrote to Alma before their marriage; “From now on, is it not possible for you to regard \textit{my} music as if it were \textit{your own}?\textsuperscript{1258} This was a mission that Alma was prepared to accept, but perhaps more actively than it was intended. While she wrote of composing grand operas in her diary as a teenager, the more-mature Alma shifted to a different form of artistic expression: the manipulation of human feelings.\textsuperscript{1259} As she summarized her achievements in an interview later in life; “…self-reflectively, egotistically, I collected people—if you insist on seeing it that way—and gave the world works of art.”\textsuperscript{1260} Blurring the boundary between muse and artist, such egotistical words from a muse call


\textsuperscript{1257} Gustav Mahler, Letter of 5 December 1901 to Alma Schindler, Mahler-Werfel Papers [MS Collection 525], Annenberg Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Van Pelt Library, The University of Pennsylvania. Box 35 [Typescript of “Ein Leben mit Gustav Mahler” and Mahler Correspondences].


\textsuperscript{1259} Alma Schindler, Tagebuch-Suite IV [Entry of 29 January 1898]. Mahler-Werfel Papers [MS Collection 525], Annenberg Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Van Pelt Library, The University of Pennsylvania, Box 26, Folder 1502.

\textsuperscript{1260} Walter Sorell, “Meeting Alma Mahler-Werfel” [Personal Interview with Alma Mahler] \textit{Austria Kultur} 4, no.3 (1994): 7.
the traditional gendering of the muse paradigm into question. Far from Scheffler’s idea of women as an accidental stimulant to be used and then disposed of, Alma was a selective muse only concerned with first-rate geniuses. After all, Alma had once declared to Gustav that all she loved in a man was his achievement and, if she ever met a man with a greater talent than his [Mahler’s] she would “have to love him.”

Mahler’s expectations for the marriage both opposed, and in certain ways, paralleled Loos’s ideals [Figure 5.5b]. Gustav’s famous letter of December 20th 1901, written to his fiancée from Berlin, presents a good picture of his intentions. Although Mahler did not, like Loos, wish to transform Alma into an aloof and unreachable ideal, he did hope to guide Alma’s intellectual growth. The court-opera-director provided his young fiancé with philosophical and literary reading lists in their correspondences. Mahler did, however, expect her to prioritize their art: that is, the compositions for which the musically-trained Alma served as muse, copyist, and sounding board, but which officially bore only his name. While certain passages of Mahler’s letter have been taken out of context to construe him as a domineering tyrant who demanded that his fiance give up composition, such an interpretation misconstrues the true situation. A sterile-minded and obedient wife was the last thing that Mahler intended. As he clarified to Alma; “Don’t believe that I take the philistine view of the relationship of a married couple which sees a woman as some sort of diversion along with being a housekeeper to her spouse. Surely you don’t believe that I think or feel that way.” Nevertheless, while Mahler may have distanced himself from more philistine expectations of marriage, he drew the line in how far he was willing to share his art with Alma.

1262 Ibid., 42. Alma commented that; “[s]ometimes he played the part of a schoolmaster, relentlessly strict and unjust…I was a young thing he had desired and whose education he now took in hand.”
“One thing is certain: if we are to be happy together, you will have to be ‘as I need you’—not as my colleague, but as my married wife!”

In spite of his supposedly progressive views on marriage, Mahler, like Adolf Loos, preferred that his wife’s creative ambitions not compete with his.

Although the emotional torpor with which she received this letter should not be overlooked, Alma ultimately concluded that her talents were best invested in musedom rather than in composition. As she recalled in her Mahler memoirs; “I spent the night in tears…[but] recovered my confidence and finally wrote him a letter, promising what he wished…”

The issue of whether Alma composition’s could have been realized under different social conditions is largely beside the point given the scope of this study. What is clear, however, is that Alma distanced herself from her composition and focused upon recreating herself as an assertive muse. Manipulating her lovers to produce certain levels of artistic output in exchange for her hand, i.e. in her promise to marry Kokoschka upon completing his masterpiece; enforcing her husbands’ isolation to facilitate their concentration as with Werfel’s writing; and providing not only spiritual but practical career-advice when, for example, she encouraged Mahler to resign as Viennese Hofoperdirektor in exchange for more promising opportunities in New York, included some of these more active forms of ‘inspiration.’

This is not, however, to dismiss the seriousness with which Alma had approached composition in her youth. In fact, Alma’s diary-suites reveal an extraordinary dedication to composition. The young socialite often declined invitations to compose or study. Alma even derided her ‘frivolous side,’ a desire for praise and attention in the social world, for distracting

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her from more important intellectual pursuits.\textsuperscript{1266} The encouragement of Alexander Zemlinsky, her composition teacher, that she possessed the ability to produce better-quality work by concentrating upon the form of her pieces only reinforces such themes.\textsuperscript{1267} Nonetheless, Alma abandoned composition to marry Mahler. Further evidencing Alma’s distance from her composition is Mahler’s unearthing of her ‘poor, forgotten’ songs shortly after he discovered Alma’s affair with the architect Walter Gropius beginning during their stay at a health resort. One evening at their summer-residence at Toblach in the South-Tyrol, Alma heard her ‘poor, forgotten Lieder’ being played from the house as she was returning from a walk. Although Mahler was full of praise for her songs, Alma, who had long realized that her true talents were not found in composition, was “petrified and embarrassed” to hear her immature \textit{Lieder} being over-esteemed by someone as gifted as Mahler.\textsuperscript{1268} Whether Mahler genuinely detected any merit in her songs or was merely attempting to flatter her cannot be determined with any certainty. However, it was clearly at his insistence that the songs were revised and published. Alma, on the other hand, had come to terms with the limitations of her musical talents.

more candidly reveals her own inner-struggles with the role of muse.\textsuperscript{1269} The details of Alma’s various relationships are apparent in its plot. Viktor is a Moravian Jew whose father, like Mahler’s, was a dealer of brandy and books. Viktor’s talent and thirst for artistic perfection lands him in the Vienna Music Conservatory, where he falls in love with a Christian girl, Eva. While wrestling with her own creative ambitions and ambivalence towards Jews, Eva chooses a life of supporting Viktor’s genius, and, with the fall of an independent Austrian state, follows him into exile to the United States just as Alma lived in exile with Werfel in Los Angeles. “Between Two Wars” clearly expresses Alma’s own creative struggles to an extent not acknowledged in her memoirs, but, overall, concludes with an uplifting vision gratifying Eva’s, or rather, Alma’s, role in furthering the cycle of human creation.\textsuperscript{1270} As Alma closed her real-life autobiography; “My life was beautiful. God granted me to know our time’s works of genius, before they left their creators’ hands. And if I can, for a while, hold the stirrups of these knights of light, so is my existence justified and consecrated.”\textsuperscript{1271} In spite of the gender roles her society demanded, Alma reworked traditional codes of musedom largely framed in terms of feminine passivity, innocence and unknowingness into a dynamic and self-aware role. Reinventing musedom on more active terms signified an artistic vocation that both supported and also subverted accepted codes of femininity.

Understandings of gender and creative genius varied greatly among Austrian artist couples circa 1900-1930. All three women examined here as case-studies pursued careers as artists by playing the tensions between these concepts to their advantage. While conventional

\textsuperscript{1269} Alma Mahler-Werfel, “Zwischen Zwei Kriegen” (novel manuscript written in the early 1940s). Mahler-Werfel Papers [MS Collection 575], Annenberg Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Van Pelt Library, The University of Pennsylvania. Folder 1572.


\textsuperscript{1271} Mahler-Werfel, Mein Leben, 370.
accounts have correctly stressed the muses’ importance to the Vienna Moderns’ creative output, such accounts neglect how traditional feminine roles lent power to the salonnière, and the interactive nature of the artist-muse relationship. Men, too, served to inspire the female artists of Vienna 1900. Only now is the art-historical canon recognizing contributions of female artists to Viennese Modernism.¹²⁷²

Like their sisters active in the fine arts, muses such as Emilie Flöge, Lina Loos, and Alma Mahler promoted a unique sort of feminine emancipation in a way that minimized their aberration from traditional gender ideals. These resourceful women used the Vienna Moderns’ ambivalent views on women explored in Chapter Two to open the artistic professions to women. The manner in which muses harnessed traditional feminine virtues mirrored the way that VBKÖ and WF recast old penchants of Frauenkunst in a modern light. Mildly leading male artists to their highest heights, the celebrated muses of the Vienna Moderns practiced their own form of modern Frauenkunst.

Creativity and Intimate Partnership in Three Austrian Artist Couples, 1900-1930

Paralleling the previous set of case studies, the second set of Austrian artist couples examined here reveals a similar model of mutual support, encouragement, and inspiration. These artist couples faced comparable challenges in balancing private gendered duties with professional artistic life. For the three women artists spotlighted, expressions of typically masculine qualities such as individualism, assertiveness, and creativity had to be tempered by feminine passivity, modesty, and virtue. The spouses of these three successful women painters, too, had to allow their wives their fair share of acclaim in the masculine public sphere. As one

contemporary art-critic put it; “it is always curious to see how a human couple, a husband and wife, endure when they are given to the same profession, namely practicing art, when their life proceeds in this way day by day, hour by hour.” Yet, to a greater extent than the muses profiled above, women artists practicing in Austria circa 1900-1930 received widespread contemporary recognition for their work. Such acclaim was logical considering that such Damenmaler (lady painters) fit typical definitions of artist as creators with brush and palette in hand rather than muses practicing the womanly arts of Frauenkunst. Ironically, however, while the muses of Vienna 1900 have been the subject of much scholarly attention, artist couples involving two practicing artists have been erased from the Austrian cultural landscape. The fin-de-siècle Künstlerpaar as epitomized by Walter and Louise Fraenkel-Hahn, Adrian and Marianne Stokes-Preindlsberger, and Richard and Fanny Harlfinger-Zakucka has been all but forgotten. In a collection of essays spotlighting 20th-century artist couples, art historian Renate Berger rightly argues that the scholarly focus on musedom has obscured other forms of creative partnership. “…Only the muse has found modest acceptance. The inspirational, not the creative, female being has thus become a ghetto for indirect creativity needing a male medium, consequently divesting female autonomy from the end-product.” Even today, gendered definitions of genius continue to marginalize the vital contributions female artists and muses played in creating art and artistic creation. Like the title of Berger’s anthology, Liebe Macht Kunst (literally “Love Makes Art/ Love Power Art”), intimate life, art, and power became

entangled in the personal and private lives of modern artist couples in Late-Imperial and First Republic Austria.

The case studies profiled here spotlight the artistic and societal challenges faced by Austrian Künstlerpaaren and the multifold ways in which partners assisted each others’ careers. As in the prior set of case studies, this support took on artistic, practical, and professional dimensions. Viennese Jewish painters Louise and Walter Fraenkel-Hahn used their personal and professional connections to advance the cause of Austrian Frauenkunst via the VBKÖ in a major way. Sharing a studio in their Döbling villa, the pair nonetheless concentrated on different fields of painting corresponding to traditional masculine and feminine virtues. The Anglo-Austrian Pre-Raphaelite-, travel-, and landscape painters Adrian and Marianne Stokes-Preindlsberger greatly benefitted from their national and geographic diversity. While Styrian-born Preindlsberger thrived in the academies and leagues of her adopted British homeland, her English husband Adrian benefitted from Marianne’s Austro-Hungarian roots. A collaborative series of landscape and folk paintings, Adrian and Marianne Stokes Hungarian Journeys, produced in Eastern Hungary became the couple’s most famous and critically-acclaimed work. Finally, the pairing of Fanny and Richard Harlfinger stood at the pulse of the interwar Austrian Frauenkunst movement. Both schooled in the modernist spirit, the Harlfingers used their professional connections to put women’s applied arts on an equal footing with painting and sculpture and to push the ticket of a provocative, craft-based, and expressionistic Frauenkunst in the WFA and WF. The pages to follow explore how these three Austrian artist couples not only served as models of mutual support and creative inspiration, but furthered the professionalization of Austrian Frauenkunst in the first decades of the twentieth century.
‘Two Souls, One Thought, Two Hearts, One Beat… Two Palettes, Two Brushstrokes’
Louise and Walter Fraenkel-Hahn

An undated contemporary periodical clipping from the Austrian National Library Manuscripts Division spotlighted the singularity of two professional painters, Walter Fraenkel and Louise Fraenkel-Hahn, both living and working under the same roof in Vienna’s genteel Döbling neighborhood.

House number thirty-nine rises up a few steps from streetcar number 40’s Gymnasiumstraße stop. ‘A pretty villa,’ one thinks, upon entering, but upon leaving one knows that one has been in a temple of art. On the [villa’s] highest floor, Walter Fraenkel and his wife Louise Fraenkel-Hahn, president of the Association of Austrian Women Artists, have set up their workshop.\textsuperscript{1276}

The article proceeded to describe how the motto of Zwei Seelen und ein Gedanke, zwei Herzen und ein Schlag (two souls and one thought, two heart and one beat) usually gave order to domestic life. Normally, the article implied, it was women who ruled the domestic roost and determined this joint impulse. Such oneness, however, remained absolutely unsuited to Malerehen (painters’ marriages) such as the Fraenkel-Hahn’s in which “both spouses practice the same art.”\textsuperscript{1277} The notion of Zwei Paletten und ein Pinselstreich (Two Palettes and One Brushstroke) represented an artistic absurdity. Rather, domestic gender norms were unusually flexible in such artistic marriages, for “in art… every woman allows her husband to go his own way. This [rule] is also upheld in the Fraenkel house.”\textsuperscript{1278} Creativity flowed in both directions with the Fraenkels.

Although Louise and Walter developed similar styles upon meeting as students, the Fraenkel-Hahns’ mature works came to embrace distinct stylistic penchants and traits appropriate to the gender of each spouse. Their common study of the Florentine Old Masters in

\textsuperscript{1278} \textit{Ibid.}
1902 made their early works difficult to distinguish, “both in technique and subject.”\textsuperscript{1279} Later, however, Fraenkel-Hahn found a niche as a flower painter, capturing “the fineness of nature with delicate feeling and female intuition,” and as a portrait painter.\textsuperscript{1280} Tempera, a direct reflection of the artist’s Pre-Raphaelite allegiances, constituted Fraenkel-Hahn’s primary medium. By contrast, her husband specialized in “briskly and vivaciously-rendered” pastel landscapes and his “archaic” figural, religious, and history painting executed in oils.\textsuperscript{1281} Together, Louise and Walter Fraenkel-Hahn formed a duo whose joint professional affiliations and painting fortes formed a complementary gendered whole. The Fraenkel-Hahns’ professional affiliations to the Secession, Hagenbund, and other institutions not only abetted their individual careers, but served the collective interests of Austrian women artists through the couple’s joint dedication to the VDKÖ.

Similar artistic aspirations and social backgrounds first drew Louise Hahn and Walter Fraenkel together. The couple met in 1901 when attending classes at the Heinrich Knirr Malschule in Munich and undertook study trips through Italy and Greece the following year.\textsuperscript{1282} The two deeply revered Italian Pre-Raphaelite painting and took great interest in the fin-de-siècle revival of tempera. The egg and pigment based medium had been out of favor since the late Renaissance, when oil paints, which allowed a deeper color saturation than tempera, arrived in Italy from the Low Countries. Yet the pair remained intrigued by the expressive qualities of tempera’s smooth matte finish and used the medium, along with pastels and oils, throughout their careers. In addition to the Florentine Old Masters, Hahn and Fraenkel studied the bold colorism and brushwork of the French Impressionists during study trips in Paris: elements which they

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1279} H.G., “Walter Fraenkel, Luise Fraenkel-Hahn,” ÖNB-HANS, Beilage zu 200/57.
\item \textsuperscript{1280} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
strove to combine with academic draftsmanship.\textsuperscript{1283} Beginning in the 1902 season, Fraenkel and Hahn began exhibiting regularly in major Viennese exhibition houses such as the Secession, Hagenbund, \textit{Künstlerhaus}, and prestigious private galleries. Fraenkel’s \textit{Condottiere} (Mercenary) and Hahn’s \textit{David}, both from 1902, demonstrate the couple’s mutual interest in historical and biblical themes.\textsuperscript{1284} Other religiously-themed works include Walter Fraenkel’s \textit{Salome} (1911), \textit{Heilige Drei Könige} (Three Holy Kings, 1911), \textit{Verkündigung} (Annunciation, 1913) and Louise Fraenkel’s \textit{Lasset die Kindlein zu mir kommen} (Let the Little Child Come to Me, 1910) and \textit{Madonna} (1911) [Figure 5.6].\textsuperscript{1285} The pair wed on 28 September 1903.\textsuperscript{1286}

Demonstrating Jews undervalued presence in the visual arts in Vienna, Fraenkel and Hahn both hailed from Jewish families. Daughter of \textit{Hofrat} Ludwig Benedikt Hahn, director of the Imperial Telegraph Correspondence Bureau, and Emma Hahn-Blümel, Louise’s family stood at the zenith of Vienna’s “world of fully assimilated Jewish bourgeoisie.”\textsuperscript{1287} The youngest of the three Hahn siblings, Louise Hahn was born on 12 August 1878.\textsuperscript{1288} Louise’s elder brother, philosopher Hans Hahn, played an important role in the Vienna Circle while Louise’s elder sister Olga married Otto Neurath, another \textit{Wiener Kreis} philosopher. As the Hahn patriarch had converted to Christianity upon marriage, Louise grew up in a culturally, but not religious, Jewish household. The situation was similar for Walter Fraenkel, born 12 March 1879 in Breslau, Germany (present-day Wroclaw Poland). Most likely, Fraenkel converted to Christianity upon

\textsuperscript{1287} Steven Beller, \textit{Vienna and the Jews}, 16.
\textsuperscript{1288} ÖNB-HANS, Autog. 200/57, Beilage I [Biographische Daten zu Louise Fraenkel-Hahn].

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moving to the Imperial capital, explaining his fascination with Christian mythology. Indeed, both spouses executed a great number of religiously and Biblically-influenced works, such as Fraenkel-Hahn’s modern Madonna mentioned in Chapter Four. Yet, while both painters enjoyed contemporary fame, the bias of current scholarship is revealed by historian Steven Beller’s omission of Fraenkel-Hahn in any capacity other than having married “the Jewish painter Walter Fraenkel.”¹²⁸⁹ Fraenkel-Hahn’s pioneering role in the VBKÖ and as an artist in her own right is marginalized. Generally, however, the Fraenkel-Hahns’ Jewish background remained in the shadows until the coming of the National Socialist regime and subsequent purification of Austrian artist leagues.

The Fraenkel-Hahns enjoyed extensive professional artistic training bearing the stamp of modern reforms. Nonetheless, each spouse’s schooling reflected contemporary ideals of gendered art education. Walter’s training possessed a more academic character while Louise’s education was more craft-based. After undertaking preparatory studies in Vienna at Adolf Kaufmann’s private academy, Fraenkel enrolled at the Munich Academy under Gabriel Hackl from 1899-1900.¹²⁹⁰ Fraenkel-Hahn, by contrast, studied painting at the Austrian Kunstgewerbeschule under Karl Karger from 1897-1900. Fraenkel and Hahn then completed further studies with Academic Painter Heinrich Knirr from 1900-01. Knirr, whose illustrious students included Paul Klee and Emil Orlik, ran a private academy while teaching at the Munich Academy.¹²⁹¹ While the couple’s formal studies ended in 1901, the Fraenkel-Hahns continued expanding their artistic training throughout their lives. In addition to the previously-noted study trips through the Western Mediterranean, a 1907 extended stay in Paris left a lasting impact on

¹²⁸⁹ Steven Beller, *Vienna and the Jews*, 16.
the couple, where they took in important shows of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism. The Fraenkel-Hahns continued to be receptive to new international movements and styles back home in Vienna, as evidenced by their affiliation with the Hagenbund and Secession. Abandoning her lyrical religious canvases, Louise Fraenkel-Hahn became intrigued by a *Neue Sachlichkeit* inspired photorealistic style in the late teens and early 1920s. The natural landscape, rather than religious or classical themes, increasingly became the subject of Walter Fraenkel’s mature works. Moreover, at the age of 57, Fraenkel-Hahn was among the first to enroll in the ABKW’s painting restoration program when it was launched in Fall 1935.\(^{1292}\)

The Fraenkel-Hahns used their personal and professional connections to advance the causes of Austrian women artists. The pair’s connections to the Vienna Secession, Hagenbund, Künstlerhaus, and *Wiener Kunstgemeinschaft* greatly facilitated the VBKÖ’s integration into Austria’s mainstream institutional landscape, including the “Fatherland Front” government. That Fraenkel was acknowledged as one of the Hagenbund’s leading members explains the frequent occurrence of VBKÖ exhibitions at the Hagenbund.\(^{1293}\) In addition to its 1912 show, the VBKÖ held a string of exhibitions in 1923, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1930, and 1936 at the Hagenbund after Fraenkel-Hahn succeeded Krauss as president.\(^{1294}\) The symbolic geography of staging these exhibitions at the Hagenbund in the 1920s represented a telling indicator of the VBKÖ’s cautiously modernist stance. Upon assuming the VBKÖ’s reigns in 1923, Fraenkel-Hahn steered

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\(^{1292}\) UAABKW, Kartei 1920-1945 [Louise Fraenkel-Hahn].

\(^{1293}\) A.S. Levetus, *Imperial Vienna*, 266.

the league away from the traditional salon-style picture-show staged by Helene Krauss at the *Wiener Künstlerhaus* in 1920. For better or worse, however, Fraenkel’s embrace of modernist impulses erupted in tensions that ultimately drove the V BKÖ apart into “two sharply-divided camps,” as narrated in detail in the previous chapter. ¹²⁹⁵ Nevertheless, though Fraenkel-Hahn’s and Krauss’s artistic ideology stood at loggerheads, the two women collaborated on petitioning the government to improve the professional outlook of Austrian women artists. Fraenkel-Hahn followed up on Krauss’s 1919 petition to provide for the awarding of state prizes, scholarships, and representation on the *Kunstrat* to Austrian women artists, throughout the 1920s and 1930s. ¹²⁹⁶ In 1930, for instance, Krauss and Fraenkel-Hahn sent the ministry a request to have its 20ᵗʰ Jubilee Exhibition, a major retrospective coinciding with the I.C.W. International Women’s Congress, opened by Federal President Wilhelm Miklas. ¹²⁹⁷ In light of the V BKÖ’s distinguished track record with the Ministry, the request was granted. Fraenkel-Hahn also succeeded in having its 1934/36 shows opened by high-level federal dignitaries, as detailed in Chapter Four [Figure 5.7]. ¹²⁹⁸ For the V BKÖ’s 1936 *Heimat und Fremde* (Homeland and Abroad) Exhibition, a show that was attuned to the changing political winds of Austro-Fascism, Fraenkel-Hahn petitioned the Ministry to institute a system of “a state prize and other honors” at the exhibition. ¹²⁹⁹ This request, however, fell flat with the Ministry on the grounds that “state prizes are only awarded in Vienna in the context of the common spring exhibitions.” ¹³⁰⁰

¹²⁹⁶ V BKÖ to SSfKU, ÖStA, AVA, MIU (Sig. 15), Fasz. 3369, Z. 1978/1919 [27 January 1919].
¹²⁹⁷ ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2941 (Sig. 15), Z. 11273/1930 [14 March 1930].
¹²⁹⁸ Louise Fraenkel-Hahn, Handsigned invitations to 1934 and 1936 V BKÖ Exhibitions. ÖNB-HANS Autog. 200/57-1/2; ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz (Sig. 15), Z. 17855/1936.
¹²⁹⁹ ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2942 (Sig. 15), Z. 17855-I/6A/1936 [3 August 1936].
¹³⁰⁰ ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2942 (Sig. 15), Z. 17855-I/6A/1936 [3 August 1936].
Nonetheless, the VBKÖ proved victorious in having an oil painting by Katharina Wallner purchased by the state for the Natural History Museum.\textsuperscript{1301}

Walter Fraenkel-Hahn was hardly a passive bystander in the monumental public exhibitions of interwar Austrian Frauenkunst. On the contrary, he played an active role in facilitating contact between the women’s artist league and various professional groups and in organizing exhibitions. In the VBKÖ’s 1930 20\textsuperscript{th} Jubilee Exhibition, for instance, Fraenkel-Hahn generously acknowledged her husband’s help in preparing the text for exhibition catalogue: a task which included historical research on the artists included in the show.\textsuperscript{1302} The Künstlerheim Ollersbach (Ollerbach Artists’ Home), an institution founded in 1920 for needy, ill, and elderly artists of both sexes, embodied another cause at the forefront of the Fraenkel-Hahns’ interests.\textsuperscript{1303} Located in the Lower Austrian hamlet of Ollersbach midway between Vienna and St. Pölten, the Künstlerheim stood open as a haven to male and female artists whose independent careers left them without familial networks. The second exhibition staged by President Fraenkel-Hahn in 1924, titled Vier Jahre Künstlerheim (Four Years Artists’ Home), benefitted the Ollersbach haven.\textsuperscript{1304} Krauss and Fraenkel-Hahn surmised that “the founding of the Künstlerheim Ollersbach, an initiative growing out of the VBKÖ and realized under extreme difficulties, may be valued as an achievement which stands at the service of the entire [Austrian] Künstlerschaft (body of professional artists).”\textsuperscript{1305} The Fraenkel-Hahns demonstrated a deep social commitment to securing the interests of Austrian artists, male and female alike.

Louise and Walter Fraenkel-Hahn’s myriad artistic connections allowed the couple to mutually support and further their respective careers. The challenge in such artist couples, as

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item [1301] ÖStA, AVA, BMfU, Fasz. 2942 (Sig. 15), Z. 42275/1936.
\item [1304] Katalog der Ausstellung Vier Jahre Künstlerheim [November-December 1924, Wien I., Maysedergasse 2].
\item [1305] AVA, ÖStA, BMfU, Fasz. 2942 (Sig. 15), Z. 17855/1936 [May 1936].
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
described in the opening paragraph, was allowing each partner to find his/her area of expertise without impinging upon the other. Yet, in the case of the Fraenkel-Hahns, “two do different things and yet the same: they create works of art of the highest achievement and entangling charm.”

Fraenkel’s early specialization on figural, religious, and occasionally allegorical subjects gave way to a preference for natural landscapes, which he rendered with much masculine “vigor and liveliness.” His studies of French Impressionism and Post-Impressionism also influenced his use of a bolder color palette, though tempered by an academic attention to drawing. The Impressionistic preference for quickly-rendered canvases rather than staged studio scenes elicited criticism of Fraenkel’s somewhat “nervous impressions” that he exhibited at the Vienna Secession in Spring 1907. Another painting shown at the Secession’s 1913 Winter Exhibition, entitled Weisse Rosen (White Roses), departed from Fraenkel’s academic roots altogether. A.S. Levetus commented that the work “was admirably treated and of highly decorative effect.” Although Walter also favored Louise’s preference for tempera, he increasingly turned to pastels: ironically, a medium loaded with connotations of the feminine Rococo. Generally, however, reviews of the pair stressed the energetic, masculine qualities of Fraenkel’s works and the feminine grace of Fraenkel-Hahn’s.

Fraenkel-Hahn, too, came to embrace a style that was all her own. In addition to the influences of the Italian Old Masters and French Impressionists that she shared with her husband, Fraenkel-Hahn was deeply influenced by eastern art. Japonisme, which had taken hold in Paris in the 1870s and was popularized by Siegfried Bing’s L’Art Nouveau, gained sure ground in Austria around the turn-of-the-century due to protagonists like Bertha Zuckerkandl and Gustav

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Klimt. Austrian art nouveau, i.e. the Viennese Secession and offshoots, must thus be understood as continuing earlier influences from East Asian art. While Fraenkel-Hahn did not go as far as radical proponents of Frauenkunst’s modernist camp, for instancing employing black lines to bound areas of color or severely foreshortening compositions, Fraenkel-Hahn did integrate Japanese objects, such as the colorful vase depicted in Figure 5.9 into her paintings and employed a flatter spatial perspective. Fraenkel-Hahn’s “characteristic works” breathed new life into the tired feminine genre of flower painting through provocative subject matter not only including East Asian objects such as porcelain but by studying exotic flower specie such as magnolias, anemones, and lilies [Figure 5.9].\footnote{A.S. Levetus, “The Spring Exhibition of the Vienna Secession,” The International Studio Vol. 44, no. 173 (July 1911): 60; A.S. Levetus, “Studio Talk—Vienna,” The International Studio Vol. XLV, no. 179 (January 1912): 244.} As one reviewer described Fraenkel-Hahn’s “famous, exquisitely colorful flower paintings,” with their clear “illustrational” style,

> Her way of painting flowers has something so uncommonly appealing in her decorative manner, which does not hinder her to go into the most delicate detail of her blooming models with unending love, and it is flowers and always flowers that she, whenever possible, brings into her pictures and one [painting] leaving us to miss this [element] seems not entirely complete.\footnote{Ida Mauthner, “Die zweite Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs,” Österreichische Frauen-Rundschau Vol. IX, no. 9 (November 1911): 7.}

In contrast to the masculine qualities of strength, energy, and vigor charging reviews of her husband’s works, Fraenkel-Hahn’s painting was praised for the womanly love and charm poured into it. True to her craft-based modernist education at the KGS, Fraenkel-Hahn was also active in the graphics arts as an engraver and woodblock print-maker. The artist produced a number of modern ex-libris plates for friends and acquaintances.\footnote{Christine Gruber, Claudia Karolyi and Alexandra Smetana Aufbruch und Idylle: Exlibris österreichischer Künstlerinnen 1900-1945, (Wien: Österreichische Exlibris-Gesellschaft, 2004), 72-73.} In a departure from her trademark flower pictures, in 1929 Fraenkel-Hahn produced a Neue-Sachlichkeit inspired Self-Portrait: one of two known self-portraits the artist completed [Figure 4.2]. The painting depicts the artist at
work in the act of painting her own portrait. With her bobbed hair and loose-fitting clothing, little about the painting corresponded with the feminine elements typically filling her canvases. First exhibited at the VBKÖ’s 1929 exhibition, the bold self-portrait represented a bold departure from the pictures of women and children by which the artist had built up her name.

Yet, in contrast to radicals like Fanny Harlfinger and Stephanie Hollenstein, Fraenkel-Hahn’s modernism remained anchored in her reverence of the Italian Old Masters. Her experimentation with new movements, modes of expression and subject matter was consistently tempered by traditionalism. One reviewer made the observation that the Geschmacksicherheit (security of taste) of Fraenkel-Hahn’s portraits, flower and animal studies rested upon a “sound tradition.” Fraenkel-Hahn’s modernism integrating elements of continuity and innovation with artistic tradition serves as a visual representation of the moderate feministic platform chartered by the VBKÖ. While boldly campaigning for the interests of Austrian women artists, the VBKÖ made its demands within the context of traditional feminine respectability. On a greater level, too, Fraenkel-Hahn’s modernism grounded in tradition reflected the moderate nature of the Austrian women’s movement.

The gains achieved by the VBKÖ under the leadership of Louise Fraenkel-Hahn were reversed with the coming of the Austro-Fascist and National-Socialist regimes. In place of the experimental and exotic Frauenkunst of the 1920s, the establishment of an Austrian corporate state demanded a resurrection of traditional gender roles. Beginning in 1934, the VBKÖ changed its tune to please the new regime, organizing exhibitions themed around Kinder—Blumen—Tieren (Children—Flowers—Animals) and Heimat und Fremde (Homeland and Abroad). President Fraenkel-Hahn remained attuned to the changing political winds and invited dignitaries such as Bertha von Schuschnigg, wife of the last Chancellor of the independent Austrian state.

and Federal President Wilhelm Miklas to open VBKÖ exhibitions. The artist’s personal contributions to the VBKÖ’s 1934 and 1936 shows, including paintings depicting women in Dirndl and German shepherd dogs, reflected the folkish bent of these shows. Unlike their colleagues, however, the Fraenkel-Hahns’ Jewish roots prevented their cooption in the National Socialist state. Helene Krauss, known as a committed Nazi long before the Anschluss, came to play a major role in the reconstituted Vereinigung der bildender Künstlerinnen der Reichsgaue der Ostmark (Association of Women Artists of the Imperial District of the Eastern March). 1314 Louise Fraenkel-Hahn was forced to resign her office as president as her colleagues assigned degrees of racial purity to VBKÖ members, purging the league of unfit individuals. 1315 In a heartfelt letter to the VBKÖ, Fraenkel-Hahn revealed not one ounce of bitterness but only thanked her colleagues for “the memories of the many wonderful years of work together.” 1316 The Fraenkel-Hahns were forced to leave everything, their Döbling studio, villa and artwork, all behind and emigrate to Paris. Few details are known about the Fraenkel-Hahns’ life in exile. While Fraenkel-Hahn died in Paris in 1940 at the age of 62, her husband went missing the same year. 1317 Whether Louise Fraenkel-Hahn died from illness, exhaustion, or heartbreak is impossible to discern. According to some sources, however, Walter Fraenkel is reported to have emigrated to Montreal, Canada at the time of his supposed disappearance. 1318 Because the artist

1314 See, for instance, Krauss’s Wir danken unserem Führer (Wien: Verlag Karl Kühne, 1940) and Des Führers Jugendstätten (Wien: Verlag Karl Kühne, 1939).
1315 VBKÖ Register bis März 1938, VBKÖ ARCH, ARCH 65 [1938].
1316 Abschiedsbrief von Präsidentin Louise Fraenkel-Hahn an die VBKÖ, ARCH VBKÖ, ARCH 26, Bl. 72 [28 May 1938].
may have assumed a new name upon arriving in North America, any attempts to locate the émigré Fraenkel have proven futile.

Adrian and Marianne Stokes-Preindlsberger: A European Malerehe

Anglo-Austrian artist couple Adrian Stokes and Marianne Stokes-Preindlsberger faced comparable challenges as the Fraenkel-Hahns in conducting a marriage between two professional painters. Yet, despite the parallel difficulties encountered by both couples, the Stokes’ situation differed significantly from the Fraenkel-Hahns.’ To begin with, while the Fraenkel-Hahns were based in Central Europe, the Stokes led peripatetic lifestyle that took the painters through England, Italy, France, Holland, and distant regions of Preindlsberger’s Austro-Hungarian homeland. Like the Fraenkel-Hahns, the Stokes provided mutual assistance to each other’s careers. Yet, in contrast to the Viennese painting duo, the Stokes’ national and geographic diversity exponentially increased their professional connections. Preindlsberger greatly benefitted from introductions to British exhibition venues and associations while Stokes likewise reaped the rewards of his wife’s Central European roots. The highest expression of the Stokes’ Central European work was found in their richly-illustrated, 315-page volume entitled Hungary, consisting of both artists’ paintings of the peoples, lands, and regions of Transdanubia. For the widely-popular volume, the couple traveled through remote regions of Hungary such as Transylvania, the Tatra, and Dalmatia (now within the present-day boundaries of Romania, Slovakia, and Poland), depicting these lands’ colorful people and sights. Thus, in contrast to the Fraenkel-Hahns, who generally worked independently, painting often constituted a collaborative effort for this “anglicized Styrian and very European Englishman.”

The gendered dynamics of the Stokes’ artistic relationship, however, bore a strong
resemblance to that of the Fraenkel-Hahns.’ Like the feminine virtues associated with Fraenkel-
Hahn’s flower paintings and the masculine vigor connected to her husband’s landscapes, the
Stokes’s artistic specializations, too, reflected traditional gender ideals. Preindlsberger-Stokes, a
leading member of the second generation of Pre-Raphaelites in Britain, was most acclaimed for
her whimsical figural portrayals, primarily of women and children, often in the historical guise of
the Middle Ages. As the artist once revealed the demands of capturing children in paint; “many
of the great artists have only touched upon the most difficult subject of childhood, but never
made a specialty of it… [Only a few Old Masters] saw in children the pure and touching
innocence which appeals so much to our hearts.”1321 Stokes-Preindlsberger’s sex gave her a
natural claim to painting children. Like Fraenkel-Hahn, Stokes was a multi-talented artist, taking
a “great interest in the revival of tempera painting,” painting in gesso and watercolor, and
producing tapestry designs for Morris and Company.1322 While Stokes-Preindlsberger sought out
people as the subject of her paintings, her husband preferred the rugged landscape and sea,
“intoxicated by the atmosphere of the air, and the charm of land and water,” as the subject of his
work.1323

Yet, critics held that it was more than subject matter distinguishing the painting of this
husband wife team. While Marianne Stokes “sought for decorative effort… and personal
beauty,” painting a “honest representation of nature, an example of logical painting” represented
her husband’s primary goal.1324 However, while Fraenkel-Hahn rarely faced charges of stylistic
dependency, Stokes-Preindlsberger occasionally encountered charges of artistic derivation. The

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1321 Marianne Stokes, Quoted in Adrian Margaux, “Which is the Best Painting of a Child?” The Strand Magazine
1322 Clara Erksine Waters Clement, Women in the Fine Arts from the Seventh Century to the Twentieth Century
(Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1904), 327.
Anglo-Austrian artist’s close emulation of the jewel-like brilliance of *Quattrocentro* art revered by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood explains, in large part, for such accusations. In addition, that Stokes-Preindlsberger ranked among the second wave “Pre Raphaelite Sisterhood,” a group of later female Pre-Raphaelites commonly denigrated for copying the original Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood founded in 1848, fueled the fires of such criticism. Finally, the Stokes’ relationship conformed to conventional gender ideals in the couple’s collaborative division of artistic labor. For their illustrated travel narratives printed in book-form and reproduced in serial publications, Adrian composed the text while Marianne was responsible for the illustrations. Nonetheless, Adrian received the bulk of the credit for such collaborations.

That both artists enjoyed widely successful careers not only speaks to the pair’s talents but the respect the Stokeses earned in the eyes of contemporaries. Ironically, however, while the Stokes remain relatively well-known in England due to widespread reproductions of their works and public exhibitions, the Styrian born artist has been forgotten in her Austrian homeland. Efforts to interest Austrian artistic and cultural institutions in this “clearly influential but patently forgotten Styrian artist” have largely ended in vain. This case study strives to highlight the Austro-Hungarian roots of this important European *Künstlerpaar*.

Like the Fraenkel-Hahns, Marianne Preindlsberger and Adrian Stokes met through professional training. Preindlsberger, born on 20 January 1855 in Graz, showed an early talent for drawing and enrolled in the Graz Academy. In 1874, the Graz Academy awarded the young artist a scholarship for the most promising Styrian art student. Preindlsberger used the

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award to finance her further education in Munich with Gabriel Hackl, Otto Seitz, and Wilhelm Lindenschmitt, and from 1880 onward, at the Académie Colarossi and Académie Trélat in Paris.\textsuperscript{1329} Her informal studies with French realist painter Pascale Adolphe Dagnan-Bouveret first introduced her to Stokes in 1880. Born to an English school inspector in Southport near Liverpool, Stokes studied at the British Royal Academy from 1871-1875 after considering a naval career.\textsuperscript{1330} In 1876, the first year he exhibited at the Royal Academy, Stokes went to paint at Brittany’s Pont-Aven: a location to which he often returned. Generally, Stokes’ works from his student years tended to be genre and history paintings, often featuring heightened dramatic action. While the young artist “had not yet found his own [artistic] language” in his early works, still, a “developing first-rate quality in his consistent striving to be true to nature at any price, to falsify nothing” was present.\textsuperscript{1331} Becoming acquainted via their mutual studies with Dagnan-Bouveret and during a study-trip to Brittany, Stokes and Preindlsberger wed in 1884.

The married couple hardly settled into normal domestic life at home in England. On the contrary, the Stokes led a highly mobile existence, with their work and professional connections frequently taking them around the continent. As a Viennese critic quipped at the couple’s \textit{Wanderlust}; “a few days in London are followed by extended journeys to Italy, Spain, Ireland, Holland, to the artist’s homeland of Styria as well as multiple trips to the Tyrolean countryside, whose beauty is evidenced by many pictures of the wedded couple.”\textsuperscript{1332} 1884 marked the first year that Stokes-Preindlsberger exhibited in the French salon, for which she received an honorable mention. The subsequent year she began regularly exhibiting at Britain’s Royal Academy, where her husband had been showing works since 1876, as well as the Institute of

\textsuperscript{1330} Felix Becher, Ulrich Thieme, and Hans Vollmer, \textit{Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart}, Band XXIII, (Leipzig: E.A. Seeman Verlag, 1923), 100.
Painters in Oil Colors, and Liverpool Autumn Exhibitions. After visiting the artists’ colony at Skagen, Denmark in 1885, the couple settled in the colony at St. Ives, Cornwall, where they played leading roles in the colony’s artistic and intellectual life.

Due to their mutual artistic connections, the Stokes won a wide-range of European artistic awards in the following decade. In 1891, Stokes-Preindlsberger won a gold-medal at the International Exhibition in Munich, a show to which both she and her husband contributed. Stokes-Preindlsberger also won a gold medal for her contributions to the British pavilion of the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair. Demonstrating her reluctance to be associated with organized Frauenkunst, a concern shared by many professional women artists, Stokes-Preindlsberger’s works were not represented at the Women’s Pavilion but in the Fine Arts Palace. Stokes’s “original and simple” Annunciation, along with works by her husband and John Millais, were praised by American critics. The couple continued exhibiting in Europe, including in Preindlsberger’s Austrian homeland, and joined progressive leagues in Britain such as the New English Art Club, the St. Ives Club, and the Ridley Art Club.

An 1895 study trip through Italy exercised a profound effect upon the couple, who began to break free of their teachers’ tutelage. While Preindlsberger’s early works bore the influence of the French plein-air and realist schools, her 1890s works embraced an elegant, Pre-Raphaelite

1334 “Upon the assembling of the Board of Lady Managers in Chicago, we found that the first important duty to be settled was whether the work of women at the Fair should be shown separately or in conjunction with the work of men under the general classifications. This was a burning question, for upon this subject every one had strong opinions, and there was great feeling on both sides, those who favored a separate exhibit believing that the extent and variety of the valuable work done by women would not be appreciated or comprehended unless shown in a building separate from the work of men. On the other hand, the most advanced and radical thinkers felt that the exhibit should not be one of sex but of merit, and that women had reached the point where they could afford to compete side by side with men, with a fair chance of success, and that they would not value prizes given upon the sentimental basis of sex.” Bertha Honoré Palmer, “The Growth of the Women’s Building” in Elliott, Maud. Art and Handicraft in the Women’s Building of the World’s Columbian Exhibition, Chicago 1893. New York: Goupil & Co., 1893),11.
style depicting stylized historical subjects from the Middle Ages. Like Fraenkel-Hahn, the Stokeses began painting in tempera and gesso. Her stylized compositions like *Madonna and Child*, an image which Great Britain issued as a postage stamp in 2005, took full advantage of the flat, jewel-like qualities of the medium [Figure 5.10]. Stokes-Preindlsberger’s 1896 work, *Saint Elisabeth of Hungary Spinning for the Poor*, also possessed a strong Pre-Raphaelite influence [Figure 5.10]. Depicting the virgin Elisabeth diligently at work at the spinning wheel, the picture was praised as an elegant depiction of feminine virtue and modesty. As one commentator wrote; “Marianne Stokes comes very close to the technique of the primitive Italians in this painting.”

Interestingly enough, Stokes’ stylized Pre-Raphaelite canvases were not universally well-received, especially by continental critics. As A.S. Levetus commented on Stokes-Preindlsberger’s contribution to the Hagenbund’s Twenty-Third exhibition in 1908; “notwithstanding her native origin, however, her art has characteristics which are considered here—wrongly perhaps—to be English rather than Austrian; certainly her methods generally are widely different from those of Austrian artists at large.” Still, Stokes-Preindlsberger’s religious works proved particularly popular, and her *Mending the Net* was feted by Levetus as the artist’s best work for its “great delicacy of manipulation [Figure 5.11].” Non-sentimentalized pictures such as *Mending the Net* embody the mature phase of Stokes-Preindiblder’s career, when she had “broken free of the sweet chains of Pre-Raphaelite art.”

A contemporary review article of her collective works reasoned that “Mrs. Stokes is one of the fortunate ones who find their métier early, and who never swerve from their allegiance to it.”

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Adrian Stokes, too, developed a unique trademark style as a landscape painter. Abandoning the stuffy historical and genre paintings characterizing his student years, Stokes hit his stride as a painter of the natural landscape.

Adrian Stokes found in himself the great landscape painter that he is. General painting techniques he could learn from other Masters; but his own way of representing the landscape as he saw it, amplified or softened through the orbit of his personality, he had to learn through years of practicing art on his own two feet and learning from himself... Whatever Adrian Stokes paints, whether Netherlandish marshs or Tyrolean mountains, he strives for trueness to nature.1342

Particularly talented in *Luftmalerei*(atmospheric painting), a coloristic technique used to express atmospheric conditions, Stokes’s mature style can be encapsulated as an honest and forthright portrayal of the natural landscape. Stokes found widespread success, both in Britain and on the continent. Stokes won a medal at the 1889 Exposition Universelle in Paris and came to play a leading role in various artists leagues, including the St. Ives Arts Club, of which he was the first president. In 1919, Stokes was elected as a member of the British Royal Academy and the next year as an Associate Member of the British Watercolour Society, a distinction which was extended to full membership in 1923. These professional connections also proved useful to Marianne, who served on the working and hanging commission of many of these leagues, and was elected to the Royal Watercolor Society in 1923.

The pinnacle, however, of the Stokes’ *Künstlerehe* was represented by their collaborative artistic output. Around the turn-of-the-century, the Stokes began publishing illustrated travel narratives, featuring richly-illustrated plates produced by the pair and Adrian’s descriptive text. The couple began close to home, publishing brief pieces on the British Isles in mass-market periodicals. A feature in *The English Illustrated Magazine*, for instance, spotlighted the region of

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Lismore, Ireland. Adrian’s text offered colorful narratives of the surrounding countryside and historical anecdotes. The article opened as follows;

Our first impressions as the train rushed south from Dublin were sad and dreary ones. The country became more and more deserted—houseless, save for a few ruined cottages that appeared to have been abandoned before they had been completely built, then cowless even, only frequented by a few crows.  

Such colorful travel pieces heightened the couple’s popularity with the British public.

The highpoint of Adrian and Marianne’s illustrated travel narratives was undoubtedly embodied by their widely-popular 315-page 1909 volume Hungary [Figure 5.12]. Richly illustrated with Adrian’s landscape paintings and Marianne’s portrait studies, the work offered English-speaking readers a cook’s tour through remote regions of Hungary including Dalmatia, Transylvania, and the Tatra region of Upper Hungary, comprising not only present-day Hungary but Slovakia, Romania, and Poland. While British and Western European visitors represented a common occurrence in Central European urban centers like Budapest, foreigners were a rarity in such provincial locations, especially a modern painting couple like the Stokeses. Stokes’s opening sentence described his desire to introduce Western Europeans to the fascinating, but relatively unknown, Hungarian lands.

Hungary is less frequented by foreign visitors than other great countries of Europe; still it has charms beyond most. In spite of modern developments—in many directions—the romantic glamour of bygone times still clings about it, and the fascination of its peoples is peculiar to them.

Mirroring their love of Pre-Raphaelite purity, the Stokes admired Hungary’s romantic vestiges of simpler times and hoped to broaden appreciation for Hungary’s rich folk art traditions.

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1344 Ibid., 471.
As in other publications, Stokes remained solely responsible for the text while Stokes-Preindlsberger concentrated upon the illustrations. Portrait studies of the locals, particularly children, represented the artist’s specialty, though she often had trouble obtaining regular sitters, even for ready money. Nonetheless, it was Stokes-Preindlsberger’s gentle womanly charms that enabled her success in Hungarian folk portraiture. As one critic surmised the artist’s dexterity in working with unwilling local sitters:

The boy from whom Mrs. Stokes made one of her paintings in the village of Vaszecz was brought to her twice by the landlord and was sent for the third time, and to a fourth sitting was hauled by the police. Women, less reluctant, and very friendly and sweet in manner sometimes kissed the lady that painted them and stroked her in sign of their pleasure in their portraiture.\textsuperscript{1346}

Mrs. Stokes thus possessed a natural maternal ability in helping her sitters to feel comfortable before the canvas. Clearly, gender left a strong imprint on the interpersonal dynamics of the Stokes’ artistic relationship.

Standing testament to the Stokes’ mutual creative productivity, \textit{Hungary} proved to be a smashing success on several levels. The work was positively received and was purchased by international collectors and libraries. The \textit{Burlington Magazine} called it “a rather more than usually effective colour-book, Mrs. Stokes’ figure subjects in particular, with their brilliant reds, come out well in reproduction and Mr. Stokes’ landscapes are charming.”\textsuperscript{1347} Moreover, the Stokes were unusually advanced in their “even-handed treatment of Slovaks, Romanians, Germans and other minorities under Hungarian rule.”\textsuperscript{1348}

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\textsuperscript{1346} Alice Meynell, “Preface,” \textit{An Exhibition of Pictures Painted in Austria-Hungary by Adrian and Marianne Stokes} (London: Ernest, Brown, and Phillips, 1906), 5.  \\
\end{flushright}
one locale. Both Adrian’s text and Marianne’s illustrations demonstrated a deep reverence, not a bizarre curiosity, for the isolated peoples they visited. The Hungarian government showed its “gratitude to two potent advocates of the Hungarian national cause” by hosting an exhibition of the couple’s Hungarian paintings in Hungary’s Nemzeti Szalon, or National Salon. Indeed, Hungary remains the couple’s most well known collective work.

Like the Fraenkel-Hahns, Adrian and Marianne Stokes-Preindlsberger’s Malerehe manifested a model of mutual creative inspiration and support in which each partner’s artistic forte corresponded to traditional gender traits. Unique to the Stokes, however, was their mutual creative output on projects such as Hungary and other travel narratives. The mobile duo enjoyed widespread success as a European Künstlerpaar and reaped the benefits of each other’s professional affiliations. That scholarship on the Styrian-born Preindlsberger-Stokes has lagged behind in her Austro-Hungarian homeland is a situation which demands scholarly redress. On a broader level, the traditional focus within art-history on Romantic conceptions of individual genius has marginalized artist couples such as the Stokes. All too often, this “archaic individualism at the heart of art historical discourse” has obscured the dynamic forms of creative partnership examined in this chapter.

Richard and Fanny Harlfinger-Zakucka: Harmonizing the Fine and Applied Arts

Like the Fraenkel-Hahns, the Harlfingers stood at the pulse of institutionalized Frauenkunst in late-Imperial and First-Republic Austria. Via their leading roles in the KGS, Wiener Frauenakademie, and the Wiener Frauenkunst, the Harlfingers advocated an avant-garde Frauenkunst that placed women’s applied arts on a equal plane with the fine arts. In contrast,

1349 Béla Déry, “Introduction,” Adrian és Marianne Stokes Minálunk (Budapest: Nemzeti Szalon, 1910) [December 1910-January 1911].
however, to the previous case-studies, the gendered dynamics of the Harlfingers’ artistic relationship flew in the face of tradition. Fanny Harlfinger’s pioneering role in the conventionally-masculine fields of architecture and interior design proved instrumental in opening the field to a younger generation of female architects. Moreover, by explicitly embracing a feminine penchant for the decorative, Harlfinger-Zakucka pushed the envelope of the radical, expressionistic Frauenkunst movement explored in Chapter Four. Fanny’s husband Richard Harlfinger also played an integral role in advancing the professionalization of Austrian women’s art. In addition to serving as Core Professor of Academic Painting at the WFA, Harlfinger supported his wife’s pioneering efforts in leagues such as the Freie Vereinigung, Deutsche Frauenkunst, and Wiener Frauenkunst through his leading role in the Secession and other cultural institutions. Harlfinger’s formative influence on WFA students, many of whom joined the VVKÖ and Harlfinger’s offshoot organization the Wiener Frauenkunst, created a network through which female artists expanded their artistic and professional contacts. As a counterpoint to the Fraenkel-Hahns who supported a more moderate form of Frauenkunst, the Harlfingers led a younger generation of Austrian women artists trained at official public institutions and linked with professional women’s artist leagues. The example of the Harlfinger Künstlerehe illustrates the coagulation of educational, artistic, and social organizations dedicated to the professionalization of Austrian Frauenkunst. The pages to follow profile the couple’s contributions to the reinvention of Austrian Frauenkunst circa 1900-1930.

Like the other couples profiled here, Franziska Zakucka and Richard Harlfinger both received professional artistic educations. Born 26 May 1873 in Mank, Lower Austria, Zakucka attended the KFM from 1899/1900-1902/03, studying the applied arts and painting under Adolf Böhm and Ludwig Michalek, and was a member of one of the KFM’s first graduating classes.
Zakucka then completed further artistic training at the Austrian Kunstgewerbeschule under her mentor Böhm. It was around this time that she met and married emerging painter Richard Harlfinger, born 17 July 1873 during his parents’ holiday in Venice, Italy. Steadily making a name for himself on the Viennese art scene, Harlfinger was accepted as a member of the Vienna Secession in 1906, an organization of which he served as President from 1918-19. In contrast to his wife’s craft-based education, however, Harlfinger possessed a more academic pedigree. After preparatory studies at Heinrich Strehblow’s private academy in Vienna, Harlfinger enrolled at the Munich Academy from 1892-94 to study under Nicholas Gysis, a Greek Impressionist, and German-American painter Karl von Marr. While his earlier works explored figural subjects, Harlfinger’s mature compositions focused on landscapes, above all, Alpine motives, often from an elevated perspective. Collectively, the Harlfingers contributed to many of the seminal Viennese exhibitions of the fin-de-siècle and First Republic periods, including the 1908 Kunstschau, the 1910 Jagdausstellung, and were regular contributors to Secession and Hagenbund shows. Harlfinger’s works, such as the 1930 view of the Danube Canal, featured a bold, expressive color palette [Figure 5.13]. As detailed in Chapter two, Harlfinger-Zakucka contributed innovative designs to Adolf Böhm’s Kunst für das Kind room of the 1908 Kunstschau. Yet Harlfinger-Zakucka’s turned-wooden artistic toys were attracting the attention of international audiences even before the Kunstschau. As Levetus observed as early as 1906;

Frau Zakucka-Harlfinger and Fräulein [Minka] Podhajska are both pupils of Professor Böhm at the Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen, Vienna—an art school set apart exclusively for females. They turned their thoughts to toymaking some three years ago, and… have been very successful in their achievements… These designers have studied every branch of their art…

As fluent in painting as she was with the carpenter’s lathe, Harlfinger-Zakucka was praised for her versatility in navigating diverse fields of the applied and fine arts.

The Harlfingers did much to promote the interests of Austrian women artists and resurrect the reputation of women’s handicrafts. After joining the VBKÖ in 1914 and serving on its executive board from 1916, Harlfinger-Zakucka soon began taking issue with the VBKÖ’s more conservative vision of Frauenkunst and the traditional jury policies that determined exhibition content. Along with other progressive artists, Harlfinger-Zakucka founded the Freie Vereinigung, also discussed in Chapter Four, dedicated to exhibiting women’s art in a jury-free, democratic setting. The climax of the building tensions between the VBKÖ’s conservative and modernists wings, after years of simmering tensions as discussed in detail in Chapter Four, occurred in the early 1920s, when a small group of VBKÖ members rallying around Harlfinger-Zakucka began taking active steps to break free of the VBKÖ’s yoke. The bulk of the VBKÖ’s radical faction were products of Austria’s public and semi-public academies, many of whom trained with Richard Harlfinger at the Wiener Frauenakademie. In fact, the influence of Harlfinger’s bold, expressionistic colorism on a younger generation of Austrian women artists was so great that critics spoke of “the strong influence of the Master on his students.”\textsuperscript{1354} By 1923, the rift between the Harlfinger-Hollenstein and Fraenkel-Hahn/Krauss faction had become impossible for critics to ignore.\textsuperscript{1355}

The Harlfingers embarked on the first steps towards severing avant-garde Frauenkunst from the older artist league in Fall 1925 by organizing the exhibition Deutsche Frauenkunst [Figure 5.14]. Headed by Richard and Fanny Harlfinger, along with WFA colleagues Ludwig


Christian Martin, Otto Friedrich, and Hermann Grom-Rottmayer, “the present exhibition of Austrian and Reich-German women artists comprises of works of fine and applied art and thus strives to provide an overview of women’s artistic abilities.”\textsuperscript{1356} The Harlfingers and WFA Faculty successfully campaigned to obtain ministerial funding for the exhibition highlighting not only women’s achievements in the fine arts, but placing great value on traditional Frauenkünste encompassing Kleinkunst (minor arts), craft and applied art. In addition to Harlfinger-Zakucka, the exhibition featured the daring, expressionistic works of KFM graduates such as Johanna Kampmann-Freund, Elfriede Miller-Hauenfels, and Rosa Frankfurt-Prévot in addition to renowned Wiener-Werkstätte Kunstgewerbeweiber including ceramicist Vally Wieselthier.

While many details of the exhibition’s planning have not been preserved in the Austrian state archives, existing documents reveal that WFA professors Richard Harlfinger and Hermann Grom-Rottmayer tirelessly lobbied the state to obtain financial support for the exhibition.

Harlfinger-Zakucka’s founding of the Wiener Frauenkunst on 16 June 1926 signaled the end of the honeymoon of Austrian Frauenkunst. Provocatively embracing the notion of a distinct women’s art, Harlfinger’s new league espoused the notion that “above all, works of art reveal a personal conviction… works created by women’s hands reveal their female origins in and of themselves.”\textsuperscript{1357} The Wiener Frauenkunst justified its existence on the transitory period in which women were barred from men’s artist leagues and corporations.\textsuperscript{1358} Favoring a more aggressive feministic platform than the VBKÖ, Harlfinger-Zakucka and contemporaries seceded from the VBKÖ to establish the Wiener Frauenkunst the summer following the Deutsche Frauenkunst exhibition. Endorsed by Deutsche Frauenkunst participants and KFM/WFA alumni, the new

\textsuperscript{1356} Vorwort, Deutsche Frauenkunst [Künstlerhaus Wien September-October 1925] (Wien: Genoßenschaft der bildenden Künstler, 1925), n.p.
\textsuperscript{1357} Introduction, Wie Sieht die Frau Katalog der III. Ausstellung des Verbandes Künstlerinnen und Kunsthandwerkerinnen Wiener Frauenkunst (Wien: Jahoda and Siegel, 1930), 7.
\textsuperscript{1358} Vorwort, I. Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen und Kunsthandwerkerinnen Wiener Frauenkunst (Wien: Jahoda & Siegel, 1927), n.p.
league promoted the “mutual collegial support of its members in general, and particularly in the artistic context, and in addition, centralizing all valuable strivings of women in the fine arts.”

Above all, the splinter league harmonized women’s traditional connections to the decorative and applied arts with her vocation in the fine arts.

The *Wiener Frauenkunst* thus represented a microcosm of Richard and Fanny Harlfinger’s artistic specializations and educational backgrounds. The new league valued the fields of architecture, applied, and decorative arts practiced by Harlfinger-Zakucka while meriting women’s achievements in the fine arts as embodied by Harlfinger’s teaching career at the *Wiener Frauenakademie*. In the WF’s series of major public exhibitions, the Harlfingers promoted the notion that women’s roles in the fine and applied arts were harmonious, rather than conflicting, fields of activity. Late-nineteenth century ideals of girls’ diverse, but superficial, artistic education had been largely discredited by the movement to reform Austrian *Frauenkunst* away from old ideas of feminine dilettantism. Yet, with such multitalented women artists emerging from the KGS and KFM like Harlfinger, notions of feminine artistic diversity were reborn in a positive light. Rather than being criticized for being jacks of all trades and masters of none, multi-talented craftswomen such as Harlfinger were feted for their command of painting as well as architecture and interior design.\textsuperscript{1360} Women’s artistic diversity was reinvented as a source of strength rather than weakness.

A concern for interior design and the placement of paintings represented a primary means through which the Harlfingers spread their ideal of modern *Frauenkunst*. In her capacity as an architect and interior designer, Fanny Harlfinger showed a special womanly concern for the proper aestheticization of the home. “The four walls in which the majority of the lives of

\textsuperscript{1359} § 2. Satzungen des Vereines Wiener Frauenkunst. WStLA. MAbt 119: A32 (Gelöschte Vereine), 49-5977/1926.

civilized peoples has played out, has always provided a source of joy in arrangement.” Yet, in contrast to certain modern architects who wished to eliminate all decorative elements from interior design, i.e. the modernistic “white out,” Harlfinger made a plea for the proper use of art and decorative elements in interior design. A variation of the Gesamtkunstwerk ideals of the Secession and Wiener Werkstätte, this concern with art and interior design motivated the organization of several important Wiener Frauenkunst exhibitions, most prominently in the 1929 Das Bild im Raum (The Picture in the Interior) and the 1933 Die schöne Wand (The Pretty Wall) exhibition [Figure 5.15]. As Harlfinger explained in the preface to the 1933 exhibition catalogue, “the exhibition serves to illustrate countless examples of creating harmonious unity between pictures and walls.” Yet, while harnessing women’s natural connection to the domestic sphere, the WF updated traditional ideals of women’s role in interior design. Women were not only to be asetheticizers in the sense prescribed by MfKI Curator Jacob von Falke but active participants in interior architecture. “Even today, the home remains woman’s particular domain in that she not only manages the home but actively presides over its design in various ways.” As embodied by women architects such as Fanny Harlfinger and Liane Zimbler, women’s modern roles in interior design shifted from decorative asetheticizers to active architects and designers. That the conventionally masculine field of architecture represented one of Frauenkunst’s forte represented an ironic inversion of traditional gender roles.

Richard Harlfinger actively supported his wife’s activities with the Wiener Frauenkunst. Not only recruiting WFA alumni to exhibit with and join the union, Harlfinger used his

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1362 Ibid.
professional connections as Secession President to facilitate WF exhibition planning. Thanks in part to her husband’s connections, Fanny Harlfinger frequently staged WF exhibitions at the Austrian Museum for Art and Industry and the Hagenbund. In this regard, Richard Harlfinger’s assistance in holding and staging WF exhibitions mirrored Walter Fraenkel’s assistance of his wife’s endeavors in the VVKÖ. However, in stark contrast to both artist couples examined previously, the gender dynamics within the Harlfinger family flew in the face of tradition. Richard Harlfinger painted while his wife built architectural interiors and furnishings. Yet Fanny Harlfinger’s specialization in interior design integrated aspects of the feminine handicrafts, which served to further complicate these roles. Moreover, in contrast to the strong manner in which the Stokes were perceived as a unitary duo, the Harlfingers’ works invariably stood on their own. Rarely were the Harlfingers thought of as a Künstlerpaar, probably due to the extreme artistic diversity represented by their work.

The Harlfingers provide a convenient ending to the biographical perspectives on Austrian Frauenkunst explored in these three case studies. Both Richard and Fanny Harlfinger stood at the center of interwar Austrian Frauenkunst through their roles in the WFA and WF. Yet, the disappearance of the Austrian Frauenkunst movement after World War II is aptly illustrated by the two artists’ own lifespans. With Harlfinger’s retirement at the WFA, as well as the forced retirement of many of his colleagues with the coming of National Socialism, the WFA’s most progressive elements disappeared. The prestigious Frauenakademie was reduced to a fashion school, as detailed in Chapter Three. Likewise, although the Wiener Frauenkunst was reconstituted by Harlfinger after the war, the league did not survive very long beyond the death of its creator in 1954.\footnote{Fanny Harlfinger to BMFI, WStLA, MAbt 119: A32, 49-5977/1926, Z. 323010-4/1946 [29 January 1946].} The league was dissolved in early 1956 by chairwomen Valerie Petter-Zeiß and Zoe Muntenau on the grounds that “the league has not conducted any functions for
years, as new members could not be found.” As Muntenau admitted to police officials, “since
the death of our chair Fanny Harlfinger in 1954 and the inactivity of other members, league
activity has never existed.” An ironic realization of the WF’s own prognostication that its
days were limited, the era of avant-garde Austrian Frauenkunst had come to a close.

**Conclusion: Musedom and Frauenkunst in the Arts**

The two sets of case studies examined here have demonstrated the model of mutual
support and inspiration present in the Künstlerehen (artists’ marriages) of Late-Imperial and First
Republic Austria. Both female muses and practicing artists pursued emancipatory ideals and
played active roles in Austria’s modern cultural output. The six culturally-active women profiled
as case-studies faced similar challenges in having artists as life partners. Unconventional artist
couples such as the Fraenkel-Hahns, Stokes-Preindlsbergers, and Harlfinger-Zukuckas
represented a new type of creative partnership that left a distinct mark on twentieth century
European art. Yet, despite the novelty of such “artist-artist” pairings, in certain ways these
relationships conformed to traditional gender ideals. Artistic specializations within these couples
on certain gender-appropriate fields reflected this conformity.

Monographic studies of individual, typically male, artists have obscured scholarly
attention from the fascinating artist couples populating the landscape of early-twentieth century
modernism. That such artists couples achieved widespread contemporary fame but have been
largely forgotten only speaks to the monographic hegemony. While studying individual artists
embodies an important aspect of artistic and cultural studies, it is not to be forgotten that such
artists did not work in a vacuum. The artistic, practical, and professional support provided in
such Künstlerehen not only enabled these couples’ artistic output, but advanced the material

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causes of Austria’s professional women artists. The collaborative efforts achieved by the Fraenkel-Hahns, the Stokes, and Harlfingers stand tribute to these couples’ support of the women’s movement in the arts. The female muses and artists examined here remained united in pursuing a unique form of women’s emancipation that minimized their aberration from traditional gender ideals. It is to be hoped that this study encourages further investigation of such “significant others” in the turn-of-the-century women’s movement in the arts. The eternal feminine not only led male artists to great artistic heights but found her own inner strength as an artist and woman.
Conclusion: Frauenkunst Revisited

The uniquely Austrian single-sex institutions profiled in this study offered pupils the best of both worlds: educations with institutional parity to the premier state academies of fine and applied arts. These institutions’ moderate feminist platforms concurrently reflected the Austrian women’s movement’s prioritization of intellectual over political goals. Yet Vienna’s Women’s Academy represented a short-lived academic utopia. The shifting political winds of the 1930s propelled the Frauenakademie in a radically different direction. By 1939 all Jewish and politically suspect WFA faculty had been removed, replaced with National-Socialist functionaries who transformed the urbane Ladies’ Academy into a lowly craft school, a far cry from the classical Academy envisioned by its founders.\footnote{Reichskommissar für die Wiedervereinigung Österreichs mit dem Deutschen Reich/ Stillhaltekommissar für Vereine, Organisationen und Verbände/ Lösung Verein WFA, Wiener Stadts- und Landes- Archiv [WStLA], MA 49/VA[Vereinsakten] 6025/1925 Z. 2[22 November 1938].} In an ironic twist of fate, the National-Socialist Frauenakademie survived the war, innocently reopening in 1956 as the Modeschule der Stadt Wien (Viennese Municipal Fashion School) in the former imperial residence Schloß Hetzendorf. Central Europe’s leading single-sex academy was transformed from a prestigious, publicly-accredited academic institution to little more than a finishing school with no pretensions to the high arts.

Austria’s women’s artists leagues experienced a similar fate. The fundamental purge following the Anschluß severed many of the VBKÖ’s and WF’s leading talents from their ranks. Merged as the Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen der Reichsgaue der Ostmark im großdeutschen Reich (Association of Women Artists in the Eastern March Imperial District of the Greater German Empire) in 1941, the leagues abandoned their emancipatory project altogether during the National Socialist period. The folkish “Kinder-Küche-Kirche” bent of wartime exhibitions left little space for the feminist “art of their own” nor the heated ideological
struggles that marked the interwar era. While the WF and VBKÖ were independently recast in 1946 and 1947, respectively, Austrian Frauenkunst had permanently lost its institutional inertia. Austria’s women’s artists leagues and academies would never regain the institutional prestige and accreditation these female institutions had enjoyed during the interwar period when the traditionally-disparaged idea of Frauenkunst was reframed in an avant-garde light.

At the end of the day, the discursive fog surrounding the concept of Austrian Frauenkunst never yielded to clear institutional skies. Ideas of women artists’ connections to craft, amateurism, and dilettantish genre dappling had clouded the existence of single-sex educational and professional institutions from the outset. Despite the tremendous advances in women’s secondary and university education, fundamental tensions in conceptions of women, art, and creativity presented significant, but not insurmountable, obstacles to the professionalization of Austrian Frauenkunst. Many female students at the KGS, KFM/WFA and ABKW, however, successfully navigated these tensions to pursue careers as professional artists. Yet prominent women artists and radical feminists were the first to raise objections to the safe haven of single-sex institutionalism. As Germaine Greer famously phrased the matter in 1979; “then as now, the women who might have given the organization[s] real clout stayed away.”

The ultimate demise of the Austrian women’s art movement thus lay not in its feminist, but feminine, identity.

From the vantage point of the twentieth century, relegating single-gender institutionalism as a relic from a bygone era seems a foregone conclusion. Normative models of women’s institutional advancement posit a trajectory wherein women, after periods of single-sex institutional isolation, become integrated into mainstream schools, leagues, and cultural institutions. Similar lines of thinking have motivated the critiques of Washington’s National

1368 Germaine Greer, The Obstacle Race, 139.
Museum of Women in the Arts mentioned in the introduction. Yet the Central European model of gender-segregated institutionalism as demonstrated in this study of Austrian women’s art education and professional associational culture has proven that equality of difference does not necessarily spell inequality. On the contrary, the founders of the Viennese Women’s Academy viewed women’s artistic education as every bit as important, if not more, than men’s. Central to the KFM’s teaching philosophies lay an individualized method of instruction adapted to pupils’ particular needs and abilities, an emphasis upon aesthetic naturalism over artifice, and a modernist enthusiasm for incorporating applied arts including graphics, decorative arts, and handcrafts, into the parameters of academic study. The institution’s strong modernist thrust, as evidenced by the appointment of KFM faculty to positions at other state schools, directly fostered the birth of the avant-garde interwar Frauenkunst movement expressed in the VGBK and WF. While the very existence of Austria’s “separate but equal” women’s academy was grounded on feminine particularism, ideals of equal access motivated governmental support of the Ladies’ Academy. The “separate but equal” motives of KFM founders and Imperial and Republican Austria’s Ministry of Education must, therefore, be taken at face value as an effort to provide young women with a modern art education in line with contemporary ideals of feminine propriety.

On a broader level, the female art institutions examined in this study shed new light on late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century movements to professionalize and reform the practice of women’s art. Feminist art historians including Whitney Chadwick, Tamar Garb, and Griselda Pollock maintain that the nineteenth-century development of gendered spheres greatly impeded

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women’s access to public sphere institutions.\textsuperscript{1370} While women artists such as Mary Cassatt, Berthe Morisot, and Eva Gonzales made significant contributions to French Impressionism despite their exclusion from public sphere venues, their ability to participate in male artistic institutional life largely stemmed from their social and personal connections.\textsuperscript{1371} As Linda Nochlin insisted as early as 1971, it was above all educational and institutional factors preventing women artists’ professional advancement in late nineteenth century European art.\textsuperscript{1372} Likewise, in the case of German Expressionism, art historian Alessandra Comini has convincingly argued that, rather than a qualitative inferiority of women artists’ works, gendered definitions of genius and women’s access to professional training obscured women artists’ place in the “litany” of Austro-German Expressionism.\textsuperscript{1373} Such “revolts of the sons against the fathers” have perennially framed the positivistic art-historical trajectory of stylistic and educational advancement. Late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century ideals on gender, art, and creativity thus situated women at the margins of mainstream art schools and academies.

Generally, women’s art education has been characterized as most progressive in Western Europe and the United States. Great Britain’s Society of Female Artists, founded in 1856 and which organized major exhibitions of works of women artists annually, furthered the economic and educational interests of women artists. The Society limited membership to professional artists to combat notions of feminine amateurism. In an 1859 Petition to the Royal Academy,

\textsuperscript{1373} Alessandra Comini, “Gender or Genius: The Women Artists of German Expressionism” in Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany, 271. Comini argues that “the trouble lie[s] with our discipline’s standard definition of Expressionism—a definition which seems to take relish in contemplating and re-contemplating the ‘revolt of the sons against the fathers.’”
protesting against the Academy’s practice of not accepting female students, the Society argued that; “no less than one hundred ladies have exhibited their works in the Royal Academy alone….it thus becomes of the greatest importance that they should have the best means of study placed within their reach.” After an Academy council discovered that no statutes prevented women from entering the Royal Academy Schools, a handful of women were accepted within the next few years. Though many hurdles still existed to integrating women into the Royal Academy Schools, foremost among them the problem of the life drawing class, scholarship has stressed the rigorous, professional, and coeducational nature of art education for women in Britain. Moreover, the doors of the Female School of Design (1842), London’s Central School of Art (1852), which later became known as the South Kensington Schools and incorporated the Royal Female School of Art in 1908, the Royal Female School of Art (1861), as well as a variety of reputable private schools, all stood open to women.

Similarly, in France the Union des Femmes Peintres et Sculpтеurs (UFPS), founded by sculptor Mme. Hélène Bertaux in 1881 and later led by painter Virginie Demont-Breton, led the campaign to admit women to the “impregnable citadel of the Beaux Arts.” The UFPS campaign finally succeeded in 1896, after government proposals to create separate studios for women were negated as too costly. Additionally attracting aspiring female painters and sculptors from across Europe and the Americas, and, in particular, a group of young American ex-patriots coined by Henry James as the “White Marmorean Flock,” were Paris’s many private, co-ed ateliers: Academie Colarossi, Academie Julian, Academie Suisse, all of which offered young

men and women the chance to work from live models. Many of the older generation of artists involved in Austrian Frauenkunst enjoyed life classes at such studios.

The situation was similarly progressive in the United States, whose premier art academy, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, had accepted female students since 1844, and established a separate life-drawing class for women in 1868. Nonetheless, the majority of the specialized art schools founded in the 1850/60s, such as the Woman’s Art School of the Cooper Union, the Lowell School of Design, the Pittsburgh School of Design, and the Cincinnati School of Design, taught women gender-appropriate skills in the applied arts of embroidery, lace-making, needlework, and china-painting rather than training in the monumental fine arts, such as sculpture, architecture, or history painting. The landmark international exhibitions of 1876 and 1893, the Women’s Pavilion of the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition and the Women’s Building of the Chicago Columbian Exhibition, both stood testament to the progress of women, displaying encyclopedic surveys of women’s achievements in the fine and applied arts. Yet, paralleling objections to gender-specific artist-leagues and shows cropping up decades later in fin-de-siècle Austria, the show’s organizers faced the “burning question” of whether the work of women “should be shown separately or in conjunction with the work of men under the general classifications.” The resultant separate display of women’s art did not fail to attract its fair share of controversy, especially from radical feminists. While showcasing female achievements

1376 “Upon the assembling of the Board of Lady Managers in Chicago, we found that the first important duty to be settled was whether the work of women at the Fair should be shown separately or in conjunction with the work of men under the general classifications. This was a burning question, for upon this subject every one had strong opinions, and there was great feeling on both sides, those who favored a separate exhibit believing that the extent and variety of the valuable work done by women would not be appreciated or comprehended unless shown in a building separate from the work of men. On the other hand, the most advanced and radical thinkers felt that the exhibit should not be one of sex but of merit, and that women had reached the point where they could afford to compete side by side with men, with a fair chance of success, and that they would not value prizes given upon the sentimental basis of sex.” Bertha Honoré Palmer, “The Growth of the Women’s Building” in Elliott, Maud. Art and Handicraft in the Women’s Building of the World’s Columbian Exhibition, Chicago 1893. New York: Goupil & Co., 1893),11.
in the arts and crafts, the essence of what defined women’s art, and indeed, whether such an entity actually existed, would be left up to question in Europe and America alike.

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the ideology of separate gendered spheres was firmly implanted in mainstream institutional culture. Women artists gained increasing public recognition but most often via their feminine distinctness. Separate pavilions for women artists at the nineteenth-century world’s fairs listed previously represented the zenith of this ideology of separate gendered spheres. As feminist art historian Whitney Chadwick has argued

The lumping together of fine arts, industrial arts, and handicrafts, and the work of professional and amateur artists implicitly equated the work of all women on the basis of gender alone. Critics were quick to challenge the displays [at nineteenth-century world’s fairs] for their lack of ‘quality’ and women once again found themselves confronting universalizing definitions of ‘women’s’ production in a gender-segregated world.\footnote{Whitney Chadwick, Women, Art, and Society, 4th ed., 121.}

By making little distinction between the applied and fine artists and works of professionals and amateurs, the late nineteenth-century ideology of separate gendered spheres hardly translated to equality. At expositions, academies, and world’s fairs, women’s position as institutional outsiders only reinforced their exclusion from mainstream artistic life.

Late-Imperial and First Republic Austria’s female academies and artist leagues both challenge and confirm this paradigm of the inequality of difference. In some ways, the institutional culture of Late-Imperial and First Republic Austria conformed to exclusionary patterns across Europe. Women, though allowed to show works as guests in Austria’s major exhibition houses, lacked voices as active, voting members of artists’ leagues. Although Austria’s Kunstgewerbeschule was the first continental institutional of its kind to admit women, the Austrian Academy of Fine Arts ranked as one of the last to open its doors to women. In contrast to the situations in Britain, France, and the United States, Germany and Austria followed
policies of establishing “separate but equal” women’s academies receiving varying levels of state support and recognition. Traditionally, such developments have been interpreted, in combination with the later chronologies of German and Austrian women’s artist leagues, as a sign of cultural backwardness.

However, not only have Austrian institutions been wholly neglected in the literature, the leading syntheses of European women artists provide misleading information casting the situation in the Austro-German lands as more discriminatory than the evidence supports. On the contrary, the Wiener Frauenakademie represented a cutting-edge modern academic institution that fed the development of interwar Austrian women’s art. Art historian Wendy Slatkin grossly oversimplifies Austro-German women artists’ outlook in her survey textbook Women Artists in History.

German women who aspired to become artists acquired their training under highly discriminatory conditions. As late as the 1890s, women were still not permitted to study at the state-sponsored academies in Austria or Germany… In response, the Verein der Künstlerinnen ran independent schools in Berlin, Munich, and Karlsruhe, organized around a traditional academic curriculum… This situation differed from that of the women’s art organizations of England and France, which sought to integrate women students into the male educational establishments, the Royal Academy in England or the École des Beaux-Arts in France.1378

Slatkin goes on to claim that German art education was not as rigorous, professional, or as long in duration as that offered in Great Britain. Likewise, an important scholarly article has characterized the curriculum of the Künstlerinnen-Verein München e.V. Damen-Akademie (Ladies Academy of the Munich Women Artists’ League) as substandard.

The equal treatment won by women students in Paris had been hard won by French women artists. In Germany, the artists approached the problem of a discriminatory education differently. Instead of taking action to democratize

Positing the progressiveness of Western European countries like France and Britain, Slatkin’s account reinforces the notion of a backwards, Central European Sonderweg towards modernizing and professionalizing women’s art education.

Syntheses like Slatkin’s are troubling on several fronts. First is the obvious absence of Austro-Hungarian institutional developments, from artist leagues like the VBKÖ to the turbulent history of female study at the KGS and ABKW, from such histories. Second, the generalizations made on the nature of Austro-German female academies are highly misleading. Women were permitted to study at the state academies of applied art in Austria and Germany and such “women’s academies,” were, in fact, accredited state schools as well. In addition, although the Austrian and German ladies’ academies were gender-segregated and based on the notion of female distinctiveness, the curricula of these schools mirrored those of the normal state academies. Regarding claims on duration of study, leagues such as the VBKÖ successfully petitioned officials to have the length of study extended on several occasions. Austria’s women’s academy proved particularly triumphant in gaining official state recognition. Not only gaining rights of public incorporation in 1908/10, the Wiener Frauenakemie’s courses in academic painting were granted official institutional parity with those of the state academy and increased levels of subsidization as the Schillerplatz opened to women. That Austria’s Ministry of Education actually encouraged the WFA to work within the structure of the established institutions by sending students to attend various necessary lectures and auxiliary courses at the KGS and ABKW further brings into question the notion that Austro-German schools were

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hesitant on integrating women into male educational establishments. What is more, both the
women’s academies in Munich and Vienna took initiative on integrating current pedagogical
trends into their curricula, such as introducing the free choice of teacher and subject, as well as
attracting distinguished faculties with strong ties to leading modern institutions.

Much comparative work on women artists and art education remains to be done in the
Austro-German context. Indeed, the body of literature on Austro-German women-artists and
women’s artistic institutions is minute in comparison to those on Britain, France, and the United
States. This study has only touched upon the most important leagues and institutions centered
in the Austro-Hungarian capital. Similar single-gender institutions in Austrian provincial centers,
such as Budapest and Prague, are particularly deserving of further research. In the German
context, a recent scholarly monograph on the Künstlerinnen-Verein München e.V. and its Ladies
Academy represents a step in the right direction. While Deseyve’s work “sketches out and places
the Munich Women Artists’ League in the context of contemporary discourse” from its 1882
founding until the dissolution of the Ladies Academy in 1920, limiting the scope of her study to
one single league necessarily restricts the scope of her findings, in addition to her infrequent

1380 On Austrian women artists, see Barbara Doser, Das Frauenkunststudium in Österreich. Dissertation zur
Erlangung des Doktorgrades an der geisteswissenschaftlichen Fakultät der Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck.
Innsbruck, August 1988; Julie Marie Johnson, The Art of the Woman: Women’s Art Exhibitions in fin-de-siècle
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Vol. 4, No. 3 (2005); “Rediscovering Helene Funke: The Invisible Foremother.” Woman’s Art Journal Vol. 29, no.
1 (Summer 2008): 33-40; Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, Künstlerinnen in Österreich, 1897-1938 (Wien: Picus, 1994);
comparisons to the international scene.\textsuperscript{1381} That the Munich Ladies’ Academy closed when the Munich Academy of Fine Arts allowed women to inscribe in the 1920 Winter Semester, yet the KFM continued to flourish, and indeed, reached the apex of its prestige as a quasi-state academy, after women were admitted to the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in 1919/20 suggests that the institutional foundations of Frauenkunst were on more solid footing in Vienna than in Munich and Berlin. Indeed, the KFM came into its own institutionally after the Schillerplatz opened to women in 1920. Thriving through the 1920s and into the beginning of the 1930s, the KFM survived through the post World War II period, after having been Aryanized and instrumentalized during the National Socialist Regime, by transforming itself from an art-academy to a fashion school: what was essentially a finishing school rather than the serious academic institution it had been during the interwar heyday of Austrian Frauenkunst.

For a brief moment in time, however, interwar Austrian society celebrated Frauenkunst for the feminist yet feminine qualities of practitioners’ work and ideals. Austria’s movement for women’s professional rights in the arts thus conformed to the “important and widespread pattern of resistance on the one hand and simultaneous complicity on the other, a pattern typical of many Euro-American women artists and intellectuals.”\textsuperscript{1382} By working within the framework of existing institutions and conventional ideals of feminine respectability, the KFM/WFA, VBKÖ, and WF all served to uphold Late-Imperial and First Republican Austria’s traditional patriarchal order. Yet, in such leagues’ and schools’ reinvention of conventional and even essentialist feminine ideals, Austrian Frauenkunst affirmed women artists’ claims to individualism, autonomy, and the public sphere. To close with Marianne Hainisch’s answer to the Wiener

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{1381} Yvette Deseyve, Der Künstlerinnen-Verein München e.V. und seine Damen-Akademie: Eine Studie zur Ausbildungssituation von Künstlerinnen im späten 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert (München: Utz Verlag, 2005), 3.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{1382} Norma Broude, “Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman or the Cult of True Womanhood,” Reclaiming Female Agency, 261.}
Frauenkunst’s question of “How Does the Woman See,” “in my view, the woman sees as an individual, not as a gendered being. Her outlook is not influenced by her gender but by her intellectual personality. If it is outstanding, then her perception is also outstanding. The Nurweibchen (purely-female being) sacrifices [her] creative forces.”

Austrian Frauenkunst as envisioned by its founders thus allowed women artists to embrace modern cultural ambitions in traditional feminine guises.

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