

**Revitalizing Comprehensivization:
The Berlin School Reform of 2009**

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Dedication:

I dedicate my thesis to all of my friends and family who would smile, nod, and pretend to understand me every time I needed someone to bounce ideas off of.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“Alle Erziehung ist Säemannsarbeit, und das um so mehr, je jünger die Kinder sind, um deren Erziehung es sich handelt. Der [L]ehrer muß darum an die einstige Ernte noch mehr denken als jeder andere Lehrende.”¹

~Johannes Tews, *Die deutsche Einheitsschule*

Since the formation of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, most of the German *Bundesländer* have instituted little change in their educational systems. This phenomenon is well documented by a variety of scholars, including Wilde (2000), Heidenheimer (1974), and most famously Robinsohn and Kuhlmann (1967). In fact, until recently, this character of “non-reform,” as Robinsohn and Kuhlmann refer to it, was the case for all of Germany. In 2009, however, Berlin politicians altered the state of educational reform in the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, when they passed the *Bundesland*'s most recent school reform. This school reform altered the fundamental structure of the capital-state that had existed since its creation 70 years earlier. In doing so, it created a more egalitarian school system.

This movement toward comprehensive schooling is called comprehensivization. In his paper, “The Politics of Educational Reform: Explaining Different Outcomes of School Comprehensivization Attempts In Sweden and West Germany,” Heidenheimer discusses this concept. He defines comprehensivization as involving the “revolutionary reorientation of...education from selective to an egalitarian basis” (Heidenheimer 388). Basically, comprehensivization is the process of moving towards comprehensive schooling, i.e. schooling that provides the entire school-aged population with equal educational opportunity.

Comprehensivization, therefore, is not necessarily a single moment when education changes

¹ All education is the work of the sower, and das even more so, the younger the children are, whose education is in question. The *Volksschule* teacher, therefore, must think about the first harvest than every other teacher.

from selective to egalitarian but is often a slow process toward the ideal of the comprehensive school. For example, the comprehensivization of the Swedish system took several decades (Heidenheimer 388). The comprehensivization of the German system has taken much longer, as it began in 1800 and continues even today, as German comprehensivization has been discontinuous and infrequent.

The Berlin School Reform of 2009 is the next step in this process, as it altered the structure of the Berlin school system from tripartite to bipartite, granting students of the previous *Hauptschule* access to a better education, which now includes the possibility of access to the university, something these students never had before. Though a similar reform occurred in Hamburg simultaneous to the Berlin reform, this paper focuses primarily on the latter, as Berlin has shown a history of unsuccessful comprehensivizing reforms, primarily with respect to the *Gesamtschule* (Schütten 1; Van de Graaff 83). In fact, Van de Graaff as early as 1967 believed that Berlin would implement a completely comprehensive educational system (83).

The Berlin School Reform of 2009 is not only unique in its own time period but also in the history of Germany. Two other periods in German history have successfully implemented comprehensivizing reform in Germany, namely, early nineteenth-century Prussia and the Weimar Republic. By successful, I mean that they have been put into law or at least widespread use. This paper will attempt to establish that these periods demonstrate that a pattern exists in successful German educational reform.

One difficulty in comparing these three periods is that they occur in three distinct political domains, i.e. Prussia, the Weimar Republic, and the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. In fact, the final reform occurs not throughout a nation, but in a single *Bundesland*. This does not pose so great a difficulty as to make an analysis invalid. First, I recognize that Germany has gone

through several different changes in political structure since its unification, not to mention the countless changes that have occurred before Germany was established as a nation. Prussia played a large role in German unification. As a result, the Prussian educational system, based on the *Volksschule* and *Gymnasium*, was transferred over to the unified German Empire (Schleunes 317; Olson 1). Therefore, the transition between Prussia and Germany poses relatively few problems in my analysis.

Second, although the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* is a federal state, meaning that the Berlin School Reform of 2009 is almost exclusively restricted to Berlin, the ramifications of any educational reform is not exclusive to the *Bundesland* in which it was passed. In Chapter 2, I will discuss in more detail the *Kultusminister Konferenz* and its role in unifying educational standards across all of the *Bundesländer*. Essentially, the Berlin School Reform sets a precedent for the rest of Germany, getting the proverbial ball rolling on comprehensivizing reform. In fact, in an interview with *Die Zeit*, Jürgen Zöllner, the leading *Bildungspolitiker* for the reform, states that “andere Bundesländer streben den gleichen Weg an,”² demonstrating that the Berlin reform has an effect on other Germany *Bundesländer* as well (Spiewak). I will discuss this more extensively in the final chapter of this paper.

Having established continuity between the three periods, I plan to analyze similar aspects among them. These include what instigated these reforms, what motives the main reformer of each period demonstrated in their speech, and what the reforms accomplished. This paper will also look at the non-comprehensivizing periods before and between the comprehensivizing ones, contrasting them with the successfully comprehensivizing periods. In this analysis, I hope to establish that a pattern has existed in successful German comprehensivization efforts since

² Other *Länder* aspire to the same path

Natorp's centralization of the schooling system in the early nineteenth century. While other scholars have addressed and analyzed certain periods of reform or non-reform in Prussia and Germany, no one has analyzed all of these periods of comprehensivization together, as the Berlin School Reform has only occurred in the last 5 years. After establishing this pattern, which is the primary goal of this paper, I will use then briefly discuss what this means for the fate of Berlin School Reform of 2009, that is, will it spread to the rest of the *Bundesländer* and how long will this period last.

Chapter 2: The Berlin School Reform of 2009

Section 2.1: Establishment of the Educational System of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*

The *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* came into existence after the Second World War. Initially, the name referred to West Germany, while East Germany was known as the *Deutsche Demokratische Republik* (DDR). Since Reunification, however, the name is used to refer to the contemporary unified nation of Germany. When the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* was formed on May 23, 1949, many areas of the nation's political structure were reevaluated, not the least of which was its educational system. The aspects of educational policy that the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* chose to implement still impact the schooling system in the German *Bundesländer* today. Therefore, this chapter will begin with a brief discussion of the educational system in Germany that existed up until 2010, when the latest Berlin School Reform was implemented.

The *Grundgesetz von 1949*, which created the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, established a federal political system with West Germany, which still exists today (Wilde 39). This federalism means that the *Bundesländer*, or states, rather than Germany itself, have control over certain aspects of their citizens' lives, such as education ("Aufgaben der KMK"). Also stated in the *Grundgesetz von 1949* is that the national government reserves the responsibility of overseeing the education of its citizens ("Aufgaben der KMK"). The organization that conducts this supervision is the *Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (often referred to simply as the *Kultusminister Konferenz* or KMK) ("Zur Geschichte"). This organization created a standard system for the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* after WWII and has coordinated disparities between *Bundesländer* ever since, such as ensuring that leaving certificates for different schools in different *Bundesländer* are equivalent, allowing

access to jobs and universities between the *Bundesländer* (329; “Aufgaben der KMK”). Any ruling by the KMK on “extensive changes” must be unanimous, preventing the *Bundesländer* from making too many drastic changes at once (Wilde 41).

Because of this national organization, the school systems among the 16 *Bundesländer* share similar characteristics. In the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, the secondary educational system is largely tripartite. Initially, students attend the *Grundschule*, which consists of four years in almost every state. Berlin and Brandenburg are the exceptions, as the *Grundschule* lasts until the sixth class (Wilde 43). Thereafter, students are stratified into three different schools, the *Gymnasium*, the *Realschule*, and the *Hauptschule*, ordered from most to least prestigious. The respective leaving certificates for these three schools, the *Abitur*, the *Realschulabschluss*, and the *Hauptschulabschluss*, grant students access to varying levels of tertiary education and careers. The *Abitur*, the leaving certificate originally only offered by the *Gymnasium*, is the only way to access the university. In fact, it actually grants students the *right* to a university education (Wilde 45).

In many states in Germany, including Berlin, there exist varying degrees of divergence from the fundamental system. The most common example is the *Gesamtschule* (comprehensive school), which is described by Ertl and Phillips. This school was an experiment in comprehensivization that was implemented into a number of the German *Bundesländer*. There are two types of *Gesamtschulen*: the *kooperative* (cooperative) and the *integrierte* (integrated). The *kooperative Gesamtschule* simply combines the three different school types into one building. The second type, the *integrierte Gesamtschule*, teaches students together as one student body, though on separate tracks that grant them access to the three leaving certificates (395; Vieth-Entus “Alles”). In states where this type of *Gesamtschule* exists, such as Berlin prior to its

latest school reform, it exists parallel to the tripartite system, diverting some of the students from the three-track system into a one-track one. The problem with this duality is that the students who are diverted tend to be students with lower learning abilities, so that the *Gymnasium* is still the most prestigious school (Wilde 44). At any rate, the *Gesamtschule* provides an alternative to the classical tripartite system. It is important to note, however, that the *Gesamtschule* does not eliminate the tripartite system but is simply an amendment to it (Wilde 48).

Other examples exist in three of the former-DDR *Bundesländer*. Wilde, for example, explains how after reunification with Germany in the 1990's, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia all combined the two lower schools, the *Realschule* and the *Hauptschule*, into one school. These schools have different names in the three states, the *Sekundarschule* (secondary school), the *Mittelschule* (middle school), and the *Regelschule* (standard school) respectively (43). These names imply that either the school is secondary to the prestigious *Gymnasium* or that it is the normal school while the *Gymnasium* holds a higher esteem. By renaming these schools, the *Bundesländer* attempt to cancel out the negative connotation that the *Hauptschule* had, which was the purpose of creating these schools post-reunification (Wilde 43). As Wilde documents, however, these *Bundesländer* chose to incorporate stratification in their school systems, rather than maintain the one-track *polytechnische Oberschule* (POS) that had characterized their educational systems in the DDR (Wilde 40, 43). Though these schools represent some of the most *comprehensive* schools in the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, the reforms that created them were not *comprehensivizing*. Still, it must be noted that they are the predecessors of the *integrierte Sekundarschule*.

Although some states, including Berlin, attempted to alter their school systems with the *Gesamtschule* or other non-traditional schools, the fundamental structure effectively remained

the same. In the rest of this chapter, I will discuss the Berlin School Reform of 2009 and what differences it has made in the Berlin educational system. I first discuss the reason for the reform, then the main SPD reformer, Jürgen Zöllner, and finally the reform itself. In doing so, I hope to set up a system of comparison between the Berlin School Reform of 2009 and the Prussian as well as Weimar reforms, which I will use in the final chapter of my paper to establish the pattern in successful comprehensivizing reforms.

2.2 An Excuse for Reform: PISA 2000

The reason that Berlin implemented this reform was the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests, which were conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (“Standing Up” 1-2). The first of these tests took place in 2000, and its results were released in late 2001 (Stanat et. all 22). When these results came out, the Germans were caught off-guard by their substandard scores. In fact, this event is commonly referred to as the “PISA-Shock” (“Standing Up” 2). This shock was the result of a complete and sudden reversal in the status of German education, from highly prestigious to sub-standard (Stanat et. all 7). In this section, I discuss Germany’s previously alleged esteem as well as the findings of PISA. This will provide the background for explaining the motives for the most recent reform in Berlin.

For over a century, the German educational system had been considered extremely effective, as the Germans constantly referred to their nation as the land of the poets and thinkers (*Land der Dichter und Denker*) (Tröhler 150). Not only Germany but also the international community believed that the tripartite system of the *Bundesrepublik* was especially adept in instilling knowledge in the youth of the population. In fact, a study conducted by Prais and

Wagner compared the mathematical prowess of German students with their counterparts in England and found that German students received a “broader curriculum, combined with significantly higher levels of mathematical attainment, for a greater proportion of pupils than does the English system” (68). This higher attainment was especially focused in the “lower half of the ability-range” (68).

When the 2000 PISA test compared mathematical literacy of students in Germany and the United Kingdom, the number of German students who were above Level IV, i.e. capable of “independent mathematical reasoning and reflection,” was only 1.3% (Stanat et. all 9). The United Kingdom also scored 39 points higher in the test, which secured the nation eighth place among the tested nations (7). Germany, on the other hand, was cast below the OECD average (500 points) by 10, which was enough for the land of poets and thinkers to fall below average (7). In the other two areas tested by PISA, reading and scientific literacy, Germany did not fair any better, scoring 16 and 13 points below average (7). All of these scores were considered “significantly below average” (7). Although Berlin was disqualified from the 2000 PISA test, as its “response rates were well below the specified level,” most of the German states fell below average in all of the test categories (5, 15). Additionally, educational achievement has become almost synonymous with economic prestige (Murphy 35). Therefore, Berlin could not ignore the “PISA-Shock” that affected the rest of the nation.

Reading literacy			Mathematical literacy			Scientific literacy		
Countries	Means (standard errors in parentheses)	Distribution*	Countries	Means (standard errors in parentheses)	Distribution*	Countries	Means (standard errors in parentheses)	Distribution*
Finland	546 (2.6)	291	Japan	557 (5.5)	286	Korea	552 (2.7)	263
Canada	534 (1.6)	310	Korea	547 (2.8)	276	Japan	550 (5.5)	297
New Zealand	529 (2.8)	355	New Zealand	537 (3.1)	325	Finland	538 (2.5)	283
Australia	528 (3.5)	331	Finland	536 (2.2)	264	United Kingdom	532 (2.7)	321
Ireland	527 (3.2)	309	Australia	533 (3.5)	299	Canada	529 (1.6)	290
Korea	525 (2.4)	227	Canada	533 (1.4)	278	New Zealand	528 (2.4)	326
United Kingdom	523 (2.6)	330	Switzerland	529 (4.4)	329	Australia	528 (3.5)	307
Japan	522 (5.2)	284	United Kingdom	529 (2.5)	302	Austria	519 (2.6)	296
Sweden	516 (2.2)	304	Belgium	520 (3.9)	350	Ireland	513 (3.2)	300
Austria	507 (2.4)	307	France	517 (2.7)	292	Sweden	512 (2.5)	303
Belgium	507 (3.6)	351	Austria	515 (2.5)	306	Czech Republic	511 (2.4)	308
Iceland	507(1.5)	302	Denmark	514 (2.4)	283	France	500 (3.2)	334
Norway	505 (2.8)	340	Iceland	514 (2.3)	277	Norway	500 (2.8)	311
France	505 (2.7)	301	Liechtenstein	514 (7.0)	322	OECD average	500 (0.7)	325
United States	504 (7.0)	349	Sweden	510 (2.5)	309	United States	499 (7.3)	328
OECD average	500 (0.6)	328	Ireland	503 (2.7)	273	Hungary	496 (4.2)	331
Denmark	497 (2.4)	319	OECD average	500 (0.7)	329	Iceland	496 (2.2)	284
Switzerland	494 (4.2)	335	Norway	499 (2.8)	303	Belgium	496 (4.3)	364
Spain	493 (2.7)	276	Czech Republic	498 (2.8)	320	Switzerland	496 (4.4)	324
Czech Republic	492 (2.4)	318	United States	493 (7.6)	325	Spain	491 (3.0)	310
Italy	487 (2.9)	296	Germany	490 (2.5)	336	Germany	487 (2.4)	335
Germany	484 (2.5)	366	Hungary	488 (4.0)	321	Poland	483 (5.1)	313
Liechtenstein	483 (4.1)	316	Russian Federation	478 (5.5)	343	Denmark	481 (2.8)	335
Hungary	480 (4.0)	306	Spain	476 (3.1)	298	Italy	478 (3.1)	319
Poland	479 (4.5)	326	Poland	470 (5.5)	336	Liechtenstein	476 (7.1)	315
Greece	474 (5.0)	320	Latvia	463 (4.5)	337	Greece	461 (4.9)	327
Portugal	470 (4.5)	320	Italy	457 (2.9)	299	Russian Federation	460 (4.7)	316
Russian Federation	462 (4.2)	303	Portugal	454 (4.1)	299	Latvia	460 (5.6)	321
Latvia	458 (5.3)	334	Greece	447 (5.6)	357	Portugal	459 (4.0)	287
Luxembourg	441 (1.6)	325	Luxembourg	446 (2.0)	307	Luxembourg	443 (2.3)	315
Mexico	422 (3.3)	281	Mexico	387 (3.4)	273	Mexico	422 (3.2)	251
Brazil	396 (3.1)	284	Brazil	334 (3.7)	320	Brazil	375 (3.3)	301

* Gap between the scores of the 5% lowest performing students and the 5% highest performing students.

- Performance significantly above the OECD average
- Performance does not differ significantly from the OECD average
- Performance significantly below the OECD average

Figure 1, Mean Test Scores of the PISA Tested Nations, (Stanat et. all 7)

Reading literacy			Mathematical literacy			Scientific literacy		
Countries	Means (standard errors in parentheses)	Distribution*	Countries	Means (standard errors in parentheses)	Distribution*	Countries	Means (standard errors in parentheses)	Distribution*
Finland	546 (2.6)	291	Japan	557 (5.5)	286	Korea	552 (2.7)	263
Canada	534 (1.6)	310	Korea	547 (2.8)	276	Japan	550 (5.5)	297
New Zealand	529 (2.8)	355	New Zealand	537 (3.1)	325	Finland	538 (2.5)	283
Australia	528 (3.5)	331	Finland	536 (2.2)	264	United Kingdom	532 (2.7)	321
Ireland	527 (3.2)	309	Australia	533 (3.5)	299	Canada	529 (1.6)	290
Korea	525 (2.4)	227	Canada	533 (1.4)	278	New Zealand	528 (2.4)	326
United Kingdom	523 (2.6)	330	Switzerland	529 (4.4)	329	Australia	528 (3.5)	307
Japan	522 (5.2)	284	United Kingdom	529 (2.5)	302	Austria	519 (2.6)	296
Sweden	516 (2.2)	304	Belgium	520 (3.9)	350	Ireland	513 (3.2)	300
Bavaria	510 (4.0)	309	France	517 (2.7)	292	Sweden	512 (2.5)	303
Austria	507 (2.4)	307	Bavaria	516 (4.2)	337	Czech Republic	511 (2.4)	308
Belgium	507 (3.6)	351	Austria	515 (2.5)	306	Bavaria	508 (4.4)	334
Iceland	507(1.5)	302	Denmark	514 (2.4)	283	Baden-Württemberg	505 (4.7)	358
Norway	505 (2.8)	340	Iceland	514 (2.3)	277	France	500 (3.2)	334
France	505 (2.7)	301	Liechtenstein	514 (7.0)	322	Norway	500 (2.8)	311
United States	504 (7.0)	349	Baden-Württemberg	512 (4.6)	338	United States	499 (7.3)	328
Baden-Württemberg	500 (5.5)	368	Sweden	510 (2.5)	309	Saxony	499 (5.1)	335
Denmark	497 (2.4)	319	Ireland	503 (2.7)	273	Hungary	496 (4.2)	331
Switzerland	494 (4.2)	335	Saxony	501 (4.3)	322	Iceland	495 (2.2)	284
Spain	493 (2.7)	276	Norway	499 (2.8)	303	Belgium	495 (4.3)	364
Czech Republic	492 (2.4)	318	Czech Republic	498 (2.8)	320	Switzerland	495 (4.4)	324
Saxony	491 (5.0)	347	United States	493 (7.6)	325	Thuringia	495 (5.3)	324
Italy	487 (2.9)	297	Thuringia	493 (6.0)	315	Spain	491 (3.0)	310
Rhineland-Palatinate	485 (6.6)	357	Schleswig-Holstein	490 (3.8)	349	Rhineland-Palatinate	489 (7.9)	356
Saarland	484 (2.4)	352	Germany	490 (2.5)	338	Germany	487 (2.4)	335
Germany	484 (2.5)	366	Hungary	488 (4.0)	321	Schleswig-Holstein	486 (3.6)	364
Liechtenstein	483 (4.1)	316	Rhineland-Palatinate	488 (5.5)	354	Saarland	485 (2.9)	337
Thuringia	482 (7.0)	344	Saarland	487 (2.7)	348	Poland	483 (5.1)	313
North Rhine-Westphalia	482 (2.6)	384	Hesse	486 (5.6)	351	Hesse	481 (4.7)	336
Hungary	480 (4.0)	306	Mecklenburg-West Pomerania	484 (5.0)	320	Denmark	481 (2.8)	335
Poland	479 (4.5)	326	North Rhine-Westphalia	480 (3.6)	354	Mecklenburg-West Pomerania	478 (6.4)	340
Schleswig-Holstein	478 (4.2)	365	Lower Saxony	478 (3.4)	332	North Rhine-Westphalia	478 (3.3)	169
Hesse	476 (6.6)	365	Russian Federation	478 (5.5)	343	Italy	478 (3.1)	318
Lower Saxony	474 (4.9)	374	Saxony-Anhalt	477 (4.6)	306	Liechtenstein	476 (7.1)	315
Greece	474 (5.0)	321	Spain	476 (3.1)	298	Lower Saxony	476 (3.7)	352
Portugal	470 (4.5)	320	Brandenburg	472 (5.0)	304	Saxony-Anhalt	471 (5.9)	334
Mecklenburg-West Pomerania	467 (5.9)	350	Poland	470 (5.5)	336	Brandenburg	470 (4.9)	324
Russian Federation	462 (4.2)	303	Latvia	463 (4.5)	337	Bremen	461 (5.6)	368
Brandenburg	459 (6.3)	338	Italy	457 (2.9)	299	Greece	461 (4.9)	316
Latvia	458 (5.3)	334	Portugal	454 (4.1)	299	Russian Federation	460 (4.7)	327
Saxony-Anhalt	455 (5.9)	354	Bremen	452 (5.2)	368	Latvia	460 (5.6)	321
Bremen	449 (4.1)	327	Greece	447 (5.6)	357	Portugal	459 (4.0)	287
Luxembourg	441 (1.6)	324	Luxembourg	446 (2.0)	307	Luxembourg	443 (2.3)	315
Mexico	422 (3.3)	281	Mexico	387 (3.4)	273	Mexico	422 (3.2)	251
Brazil	396 (3.1)	284	Brazil	334 (3.7)	320	Brazil	375 (3.3)	301

* Gap between the scores of the 5% lowest performing students and the 5% highest performing students.

- Performance significantly above the OECD average
- Performance does not differ significantly from the OECD average
- Performance significantly below the OECD average

Figure 2, Mean Test Scores of the PISA Tested Nations with *Bundesländer*, (Stanat et. all 15)

In their interpretation of the PISA data, Stanat et. all found several problems with the German school system aside from low test scores. As stated by the 2000 PISA test, nearly a quarter (23%) of German students were at the most basic level of reading proficiency (Level I) or not proficient at any level (8). This percentage was roughly equivalent for the other two tested areas, mathematic and scientific literacy (9-10). As the number of high performers (Level V proficiency or above) was at the OECD average of 9%, the number of low performers (below Level II) largely contributed to Germany's below average score in all three areas (8). Children of two main social groups contributed to this high percentage of low performers: migrants and the lower class. According to the 2000 PISA test, half of migrant students did not even achieve Level I proficiency, though most (70%) were educated in German schools (13). This failure of the educational system to cater to migrant children may be the reason why children who had no parents born in Germany were half as likely to enter the *Gymnasium* and twice as likely to enter the *Hauptschule* as their counterparts with at least one parent born in Germany (12). In fact, when children were compared at equal reading levels, this inequality disappeared (13).

Although this inequality is significant, first and second generation immigrant children were not the only ones to contribute to the high number of the low performers (below Level I), as half of low scoring students were born to German-speaking parents in Germany (9). A high proportion of these students came from the lower class, with 40% of children of un- or semi-skilled workers being low performers, while only 10% of children of the upper class performed so poorly (11). Just as the educational system failed immigrant children, there was also a disparity between the acceptance rates for children of the upper and lower classes.³ While half of

³ Stanat et. all use the EGP occupational class scheme, defining the highest socio-economic group (in this paper simply upper class) as "professionals, civil servants in the administrative/professional, executive and clerical grades and members of semi-professions" and the lowest socio-economic group (in this paper simply lower class) as

the children of the upper class were in the *Gymnasium*, 40% of the children of the lower class were sent to the *Hauptschule* (12). In fact, upper class children had three times the chance of admittance into the *Gymnasium* as lower class children (11). Since a large number of lower class children and immigrant children were being sent to the *Hauptschule*, PISA offers another reason why these children scored lower in reading literacy, i.e. a lack of qualified teachers in these schools. When tested, *Hauptschule* teachers could not even identify one-fifth of their students whom PISA classified as “at-risk” in reading proficiency (9). Whether because of the failings of the educational system or other reasons, PISA found that Germany had the highest correlation between social background and students’ performance on the test (For international comparisons, see Figure 3) (11).

“skilled workers, workers with supervisory duties, manual workers, unskilled and semi-skilled workers and agricultural workers” (Stanat et. all 10).



Figure 2, Effect of Socioeconomic Effect on Test Scores in Test Nations,⁴ (Stanat et. all 11)

This inequality in their educational system was not quite news for Germans, as inequality based on social background had been a part of the German school system for centuries *Deutschland* (See Schleunes 334, Phillips “Introduction” 4, and Wilde 43). Therefore, the reaction to the test in Germany resulted largely from the low scores. In order to improve its mean test score effectively, Germany could have improved the test scores of those students above

⁴ “The differences in the mean reading literacy scores of two subgroups of students – the 25% of students from families with the highest social status in the country and the 25% of students from families with the lowest social status.” (Stant et. all 11)

Level IV proficiency (the highest scorers) or below Level II (the lowest scorers) (“Country Notes” 2). While the Berlin School Reform could have addressed both of these groups, the reformers chose to address the inequality caused by stratification. This implies that the reformers used the PISA scores as an excuse to implement reforms that decreased inequality in the school system rather than directly addressing the issue of low test scores. The PISA scores, then, were an excuse for the Berlin School Reform rather than the cause of it. This becomes even more evident after an analysis of the rhetoric of the main Berlin reformer, Jürgen Zöllner.

Section 2.3: Jürgen Zöllner

While the entire SPD worked to bring about reform in Berlin, Jürgen Zöllner is credited with leading it (Spiewak). According to his biography on Berlin’s official website, Zöllner was born in Uničov in the Czech Republic on July 11, 1945. After receiving his *Abitur* in 1964, he began his career in academia, participating in administrative positions at universities throughout the 1980’s until the early 1990’s. He then chose to enter politics, having been a member of the SPD since 1972. In 1991, he became *Minister für Wissenschaft und Weiterbildung* in Berlin and held a variety of political positions until 2006, when he became *Senator für Bildung, Wissenschaft, und Forschung* in Berlin. It was in this position that he led the Berlin School Reform of 2009. He held also positions in the KMK as president in 2007 and vice president in 2008 (“Prof. Dr. E. Jürgen Zöllner”).

Zöllner demonstrated his commitment to equal opportunity not only in his acts, i.e. creating and passing the Berlin School Reform of 2009, but also his rhetoric (Spiewak). His commitment is most obvious in his defense of the *Schulлотterie* (school lottery), a system that sorts some of the students into schools based on lot (See page 20-21) (Klesmann, “Die

Schulлотterie”). In defending this system, he states that the point of the lottery is “so that the building of artificial social barriers is hindered” (Klesmann, “Die Schulлотterie”). These social barriers refer to those that have been documented by the PISA study, namely, that lower class students tend towards the *Hauptschule*, while upper class students are more highly accepted at the *Gymnasium* (Stanat et. all 10). In implementing the *Schulлотterie*, Zöllner hoped to tear down the obstacles that prevented lower class students from entering the *Gymnasium*. How these obstacles should be removed is more thoroughly explored in the next section.

Another part of the reform concerned the criteria for acceptance in a particular school. The Berlin School Reform removed one of these criteria, the network plan of the Berliners Verkehrs Aktiengesellschaft (BVG), which is the main transport system in Berlin and how most students commute to school (Klesmann, “Die Schulлотterie”). The issue with this aspect of the school reform is that a student may be accepted to a school that he or she cannot reach daily. Zöllner argues that removal of this criterion would remove “such things as social islands at schools” (Klesmann, “Die Schulлотterie”). By this he means that students will not be accepted to a school simply because they live near it or are on the right route of the BVG. Put more literally in the words of Zöllner’s colleague, Steffen Zillich, it would allow “the *Gymnasium* to become less exclusive and a social mix [at the schools] would become possible” (Klesmann, “Die Schulлотterie”). Zöllner defends each controversial aspect of the reform through its potential to create social mobility and equal educational opportunity, providing further evidence that the Berlin School Reform of 2009 was designed to create a more comprehensive educational system in Berlin, despite being a reaction the low test scores of 2000 PISA test.

One may, however, doubt Zöllner’s dedication to complete comprehensivization, as his reform created a bipartite structure rather than a one-track system. In an interview with Martin

Spiewak, he explains, “it is not the work of the state, to force benefit on parents and children” (translated by author). Regardless of his beliefs, it is not his duty to force a system on a populace that does not want it. Therefore, falling short of complete comprehensivization does not mean that he or the SPD is not committed to it; it simply would have been ill-timed to implement it in the recent Berlin reform. In fact, even this partial comprehensivization was far from universally accepted in Berlin (Klesmann “Berliner”). Immaterial of how thoroughly comprehensivization was implemented in the Berlin School Reform of 2009, the way that Zöllner talks about the school reform demonstrates his dedication to implementing more egalitarian schooling. As a result, the newest Berlin school reform brought the Berlin school system closer to full comprehensivization.

Section 2.4: The Berlin School Reform of 2009

In 2009, the Berlin *Senat*, led by the SPD, passed a reform, creating a revolutionary school system that differed from anything that had preceded it. A major though not wholly unique feature of this new school system was its bipartite structure. Previously, the *Gymnasium* in Berlin had been complemented by the existence of the *Realschule* and *Hauptschule*, as well as the one-track *Gesamtschule*. Now, however, these three schools would be eliminated, and the *Gymnasium* would be paralleled solely by the new *integrierte Sekundarschule*, a school that would take students from the previous *Realschule*, *Hauptschule*, and *Gesamtschule* and instruct them together (Klesmann, “Die Schullotterie”). Other systems, however, have taken students with different learning abilities and schooled them in the same building or even the same school, such as the *integrierte* and *kooperative Gesamtschulen*. If this integration were all that the school system did, the Berlin school structure would be no different than those in other states like

Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia. Two aspects of the Berlin School Reform set it apart from previous reforms in the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. The first is that it is a comprehensivizing reform, as it changed the Berlin school system from a tripartite to a bipartite system. The only other bipartite schools before 2010 were in Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thüringen, though these schools replaced the comprehensive POS. The second aspect of the Berlin School Reform that makes it unique are three features that were included in it after the reform: (*Gemeinsam Lernen*) collective learning, the *Abitur* in the *integrierte Sekundarschule*, and the *Schulлотterie*. I focus on these in describing the Berlin School Reform as they reinforce the more comprehensive educational structure now in place in Berlin.

The principle of *Gemeinsam Lernen* in the *integrierte Sekundarschule* did not mean that these schools offered only one level of schooling; rather many classes were divided into *Grundniveau* (basic level) and *Erweiterungsniveau* (extended level), which affects how difficult the class is and how grades are weighted (*Individuelles Lernen* 2, 8). However, tracked schooling was eliminated in these schools. Previous schools and reforms in the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* prior to reunification combined students into the same building or even the same school, such as the *Gesamtschule* (Ertl and Phillips 395). However, even the most comprehensive of these, the *integrierte Gesamtschule* sorted students into different levels according to ability (Vieth-Entus “Alles”). In fact, in 2005 a new experimental school, the *Gemeinschaftsschule*, was introduced, which would give some students a completely comprehensive education, while others would be stratified into a pseudo-tripartite system (Merkelbach). Even these new schools stratified students within the school. The *Gemeinschaftsschulen* in Berlin, which began in the 2006/2007 school year, were the only *Gesamtschulen* allowed to remain in the system, though they function as experimental schools

(Vieth-Entus “Alles”). In the main school system, the new reform explicitly avoids stratified education within schools, ensuring *Gemeinsam Lernen*. More importantly, the *integrierte Sekundarschule* is not an alternative school, such as the *Gesamtschule* or *Gemeinschaftsschule*, but one of the main schools, providing collective learning to a majority of the population (Vieth-Entus “Alles”). In doing so, collective learning brings the Berlin school system closer to the ideal of a comprehensive school system.

Despite the advantages of collective learning, its danger lies in its potential to hinder the quicker learners or fail the slower. Therefore, the reformers took additional steps to ensure that collective learning maximized its positive benefits. Two of these include the *Ganztagsbetrieb* and *Fortbildung*. The first of these, the *Ganztagsbetrieb* (full-day service), is not a full school day, as opposed to the half-day school day to which the Germans are accustomed. According to Berlin’s official website, it is rather an optional set of classes, such as sports or music, which is offered after the first part of schooling has ended. More relevant, however, is that it offers tutoring or advanced classes to students who exist at the extremes of the spectrum of learning speeds. The *Ganztagsbetrieb* even offers fiscal aid to those families who need it, ensuring that *Gemeinsam Lernen* does not reduce itself to tutoring only for the upper classes (“Berlin macht ganztags Schule”). In addition, teachers are offered *Fortbildung* (additional training) to help them convert to the new system and deal with teaching students of different abilities (Vieth-Entus “Alles”). These two measures ensure the efficacy of complete intraschool collective learning, which separates the Berlin School Reform from its predecessors anywhere in the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*.

Though collective learning is a major progression toward a comprehensive school system, the SPD did not stop there. While collective learning solely affects students in the *integrierte*

Sekundarschule, the leaving certificates that this school offers impact students across secondary education in Berlin. Though the *integrierte Sekundarschule* offers the *Hauptschulabschluss* and the *Realschulabschluss* just as the *Hauptschule*, *Realschule*, and *Gesamtschule* did, it offers a third option: the coveted *Abitur* (Klesmann, “Hurra, hurra, die Schulreform; Vieth-Entus “Alles”). Since students can only enter a university with an *Abitur*, which was only available through the *Gymnasium* and *Gesamtschule*, the inclusion of the *Abitur* in the *integrierte Sekundarschule* is a significant advancement in equal educational opportunity (Ertl and Phillips 394-395). As students have been streamed after the sixth class in Berlin, many students were told before age twelve that the *Abitur* was out of their reach or at least would be incredibly difficult to attain. In fact, although the German system does allow for transfer between schools, known as *Durchlässigkeit*, the overwhelming majority of students transfer into a lower school (403). Now, however, they had the option to acquire an *Abitur* until the tenth class (“Schulreform”). The only time that this kind of delay in stratification was offered in the main school system anywhere in Germany before was in the POS, though this school did not offer the *Abitur* (Wilde 43). However, all traces of this school were eliminated after reunification (40). Although the *Gesamtschule* offered the *Abitur* as well, the *integrierte Sekundarschule* succeeded where the experiment of the *Gesamtschule* had failed, i.e. by giving all students access to the *Abitur*. This aspect of the reform was crucial to the reformers attempts to ensure that the *integrierte Sekundarschule* was *gleichwertig* (of equal value) with the *Gymnasium*, something that the *Gesamtschule* also failed to attain (Vieth-Entus “Alles”; Ertl and Phillips 398). In fact, *integrierte Sekundarschule* are already showing this Gleichwertigkeit. One principal of a particular *integrierte Sekundarschule* in Lichtenrade notes that he had a student who attended his school despite attaining an extremely high grade of 1,1 (Klesmann “Schulleiter”). Christian

Füller, a journalist who has written for such publications as *Der Spiegel*, also notes that the ten most requested schools in Berlin are *integrierte Sekundarschule*. However, a full study of the Berlin School Reform will not be conducted until 2015 (Greiner 2). Still, though the Berlin school system remains stratified, access to the *Abitur* for all students creates the potential for an essentially comprehensive bipartite system.

The last major change of the Berlin school system is also its most unique. The *Schulлотterie* (school lottery) was introduced at the end of the *Grundschule* and uses a lottery system to sort students into the *Gymnasium* (Klesmann, “Schulanmeldung”). While selection by lot may seem controversial, the measure was actually introduced to divorce class stratification from school stratification (Klesmann, “Die Schulлотterie”). An initial sixty percent of the students are sorted based on their grades (Klesmann “Schulлотterie führt”). Another ten percent of places are reserved for students who must attend a certain school for specific reasons (Härtefälle), such as an inability to secure transportation to a distant school (Klesmann “Schulanmeldung”). The remaining thirty percent of seats are granted based on a lottery (Klesmann “Schulanmeldung”). Only students who have grades “from at least 2,2 to 2,7” enter the *Schulлотterie*, so that students at the lower end of this spectrum, who might not receive the necessary recommendation to the *Gymnasium*, can now attend this school (Klesmann, “Die Schulлотterie”).

The reason that these students fail to attain a recommendation may have less to do with their grades than their habitus, defined by Bourdieu as “differences in manner [which] constitute a set of secondary properties, revealing different conditions of acquisition and predisposed to receive very different values in the various markets” (66). Essentially, habitus is the way that people act, which is learned based on socio-economic conditions in which they were raised and

is rarely teachable. It often affects teachers' decisions about whom to recommend to the *Gymnasium* (Greiner 1). Now, however, some of the students who scored a lower grade because of their parents' economic or educational capital have the possibility to enter the *Gymnasium*, potentially breaking the cycle of inherited class. Although the full extent of its efficacy will not be surveyed until 2015, the newest Berlin school reform is beginning to show progress (Schütten 2). For example, though Vieth-Entus demonstrates that non-recommended students are over six times as likely to fail the probationary seventh year at the *Gymnasium*, 66% still pass and continue on, which would not have been possible before (Vieth-Entus "Noch mehr Schüler"). Though the new system may fail in fostering some of these students' true potential, it undeniably grants others a chance that they would never have received otherwise.

Next to the concurrent Hamburg school reform, the Berlin School Reform of 2009 is the most comprehensivizing educational reform of the twenty-first century and quite possibly the most comprehensivizing since the founding of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. The great upheaval of the prestige of the German educational system caused by the "PISA Shock" allowed reformers in Berlin to implement their reforms. These reforms affected the Berlin education system in a way not seen before in Germany. Although the system was made bipartite by the introduction of the *integrierte Sekundarschule*, this school was not the most significant reform. The reform was unique in the introduction of collective learning, the *Abitur* in the all schools, and the *Schullotterie*. The former, with the help of the *Ganztagsbetrieb* and *Fortbildung*, ensured that the system was bipartite in spirit as well as in letter, while the last two went beyond this, attempting to bridge the gap in educational opportunity and social background between gymnasial and non-gymnasial students.

Ultimately, however, all of these aspects of the reform affected the Berlin school system in one similar way; they all altered the fundamental structure of the school system. Most noticeably the system went from tripartite to bipartite, which resulted in students being taught more collectively, educational opportunity becoming more egalitarian, and the social make up of schools becoming more heterogeneous.

This situation is somewhat unexpected. Although the PISA test in 2000 as well as those in subsequent years have reestablished the well-known fact that stratification of German schools was closely associated with social background, the “shock” associated with the 2000 PISA results regarding the test scores (“Country Notes” 2). While improving the test scores of lower scoring students improved test scores, reformers could also have effectively improved test scores by improving the education of the higher scoring students. The SPD chose to attempt to correct unequal educational opportunity, which was barely addressed not only in the capital-state but also across most of Germany for most of the latter half of the twentieth century, as documented by Robinsohn and Kuhlmann (1967), Heidenheimer (1974), and Wilde (2000). Although this school reform represents a huge shift in reform in post-WWII Berlin, the Berlin School Reform of 2009 is not the first time such a shift has occurred. Two other periods, one in the Weimar Republic and the other in early nineteenth-century Prussia, represent similar comprehensivizing reforms. In the following two chapters of this paper, I will highlight certain aspects of these periods, while in the final chapter I plan to connect these aspects, demonstrating a pattern that has developed in comprehensivizing reform in Germany.

Chapter 3: The Prussian Reforms

Section 3.1: The Eighteenth Century Prussian School System

A description of the eighteenth-century Prussian educational system is incredibly complex and impossible to describe in a paper as short as this one, as the nation's school system up until the early nineteenth century was almost entirely decentralized, practices and quality of education differed across the country (Schleunes 318). Although Frederick Wilhelm I instituted regulatory codes for education in Prussia in 1713 and Frederick the Great made education mandatory in 1763, most teachers were substandard and many students did not meet the six hours a day requirement for schooling (Thomas 219-220). Essentially, the educational system in Prussia was ineffective in spreading mass education.

According to Schleunes, if education of the general population was considered, it served the purpose of economic growth or to increase military power and territorial control (317). Even for the middle class, education eventually served the purpose of educating students so that they could operate well in business (Cocalis 403). The area where schooling improved the most was in elite education, namely the university and the *Gymnasium*, which is where reform was focused during the latter half of the eighteenth century (Schleunes 316). As W.H. Bruford put it, reform of mass education in Prussia was a "dead letter" (quoted in Schleunes 318).

Though compulsive mass education was not well enforced in Prussia prior to 1800, educational reform of the masses was still widely discussed in Prussia during this time period. As was previously mentioned, Frederick Wilhelm created regulatory codes and Frederick the Great passed legislation on compulsory education. However, another group of noblemen, called the *Philanthropen*, attempted to institute general education in Prussia as well as other areas of

Europe (318). Like the reforms of the Prussian kings, these reformers were unable to effect sweeping changes throughout the kingdom. As in Berlin during the latter half of the twentieth century, though the reform efforts existed, the conditions were not right to implement the comprehensivizing changes that these noblemen promoted. Unlike Berlin, however, the appropriate situation would only come after the near destruction of a nation and its demoralization due to its loss of prestige.

Section 3.2: The Battle of Jena and the Treaty of Tilsit

Like the 2000 PISA test, the Battle of Jena and resulting Treaty of Tilsit, which was signed just nine months later, gave reformers an excuse to effect change in Prussian education, as well as its political, economic, and military structure (Schleunes 316-317; Thomas 219-220). For decades, reform had been focused on schooling for the elite in Prussia (Schleunes 316). General schooling suffered, however, despite laws enacted by reformers as powerful as Frederick the Great (Thomas 219). After the Battle of Jena in October 1806, however, Prussia was in a complete state of ruin. Gray describes how thoroughly Prussia had been stripped of her power after the Treaty of Tilsit:

But the once proud kingdom emerged from the Napoleonic war with a shattered military organization, a devastated countryside, a bankrupt treasury, a broken economy, a government in chaos, and with all but a fraction of its territory either annexed or occupied by foreigners (1).

Formerly one of the major powers of Europe, Prussia was now so demoralized and destroyed that the need for rebuilding was indisputably.

However, the Battle of Jena not only led to a rebuilding of Prussia but also a reform of it. In fact, the reform was to be so exhaustive that it would “eradicate [the evil] at its roots,” that is, remove anything weakening Prussia’s power (Hardenberg, as quoted in Schleunes 324).

However, this complete alteration of the system could not be put into effect until the nation was in such shambles that a return to the past structure was no longer possible.

Section 3.3: The Reformers: Stein, Humboldt, and Natorp

The reforms in Prussian education are the result of several different reformers. The first is Baron Karl von Stein. As one of the leaders of the reform movement in Prussia from October 1807 to November 1808, he was responsible for the oversight of much of the changes that occurred in Prussia after Tilsit (325). The fact that Stein was chosen to lead the reforms is actually the most convincing evidence of the complete reversal in the attitudes of Prussian rulers towards reform, for the king of Prussia at the time, Frederick Wilhelm III, had found Stein's "resolute advocacy for reform" so appalling that he had removed Stein from his government position (Gray 1). Only several months later, after Napoleon's destruction of Prussia, Stein was acting as head of the government, leading reforms that would reshape every aspect of the nation (Thomas 219).

Stein's reforms would be marked by a desire to increase "personal freedom and... the right to choose a livelihood and to own and dispose of property" (221). Following this guiding principle, he enacted reforms that increased social mobility. One such reform was the Edict of Emancipation, which dismantled the estate system that preserved the social hierarchy in Prussia (Schleunes 325). Although Stein became "one of the few political heroes of the past whom Germans comfortably honor," his reign lasted just over a year (Gray 2-3). Still he effected such sweeping changes that Prussia became a completely new nation in the nineteenth century.

One area in which Prussian remodeling would become obvious was education. While he set out the policies that guided the reforms in Prussia, Stein did not directly oversee the changes

in education. This work was left to Wilhelm von Humboldt, whom Stein appointed as head of the Department of Schools and Poor Relief (Schleunes 325). Humboldt's definition of *Bildung* influenced his educational policy and, more importantly, his appointment of Ludwig Natorp as reformer of the Prussian educational system. Therefore, before discussing Natorp and his reforms, I will discuss Humboldt's concept of *Allgemeinbildung* as partial evidence that the school reforms instituted by Natorp were inherently comprehensivizing.

Bildung, in its most basic sense, is not simply education (*Erziehung*), but rather a development of the inner self (Oelkers 29). This idea of inner development was first connected to a religious meaning, to God's creation of man (Cocalis 400). It later went through several redefinitions, its meaning changing from "sculpting away impurities" to Anthony Ashley Cooper's "formation of a genteel character" by aristocrats to Germans interpreting Cooper's definition as providing a tool for social mobility (400-403).

Ultimately, through all these changes, the religious meaning of *Bildung* was removed and replaced with an aesthetic one (407). Lessing, however, argued earlier that an aesthetic education devoid of religion would lead to men who pursued earthly activities, such as music and writing, rather than religious activities (402). The ramifications of a divorce of religion from education went even further than Lessing could have imagined, as schooling eventually gained the sole duty of educating the middle-class in "virtue, bookkeeping, and managing capital" (403). Herder and Schiller eventually developed ideas of *Bildung* that moved away from this capitalistic interpretation, the former believing that state education only churned out "machines," and the latter interpreting *Bildung* as virtue alone, "a function of aesthetics in general" (404-405). Their interpretations divorced schooling and *Bildung*, as schooling was considered practical and *Bildung* became aesthetic.

It was Wilhelm von Humboldt, a contemporary of both Herder and Schiller, who allowed for *Bildung* to be incorporated into the school system, as the moral development of man rather than simply training the middle class to perform in an increasing capitalistic society. In speaking of the attainment of education without development of the self, Humboldt writes, “the cultivation of the mind [remains] unfruitful, that a great deal is achieved around us, but only little improved within us” (Humboldt 58). He believed that one should not just learn to affect the world but to affect oneself as well. He also believed that one “should breathe his virtue and his strength (in such might and dominance are they to permeate his being) into his progeny,” demonstrating the need for the more experienced to share their *Bildung* with younger generations (59). Essentially, Humboldt believed that *Bildung* was an on-going process of inner moral development that resulted in a *Persönlichkeit* (personality), without which “human existence would be more transient than the existence of a flower” (Klafki 87; Tröhler 159; Humboldt 59). It was a development of the character, which one used to develop his or her abilities by impressing themselves on the world (Humboldt 58). While the ideal of *Bildung* was the Greeks, there was no set purpose for the development of *Bildung*, only the “true path” that “follow[s] steady progress to the final goal” (Thomas 221; Humboldt 59).

As *Bildung* is an on-going process, everyone has the potential to become *gebildet* (Klafki 91). Humboldt originally did not believe in public education, seeing any welfare of the state as potentially harmful to the basic idea of freedom in *Bildung* (Thomas 222-223). Rather than public education, he believed that the state should provide museums, galleries, etc. to aid in the *Bildung* of all (Cocalis 406). Despite his original objection, however, he later came to see the merits of comprehensive schooling (Thomas 225). He believed that education should be general rather than specific, preparing the mind for creativity in any field (224, 226). Klafki quotes

Humboldt in saying that “the meanest day laborer and most consummate scholar [must] originally have been attuned the same” (89). Here we see similarities with stipulation of the Berlin School Reform that students receive a *gleichwertig* education (Vieth-Entus “Alles”). Rather than condemn some of the students in German school system to the “sink school,” all students in Berlin now have the potential to receive the same education up until their tenth year.

In his short “Theorie der Bildung des Menschens,” Humboldt states that:

we demand that *Bildung*, wisdom, and virtue, as powerfully and universally propagated as possible, should prevail under [a nation’s] aegis, that it augment its inner worth to such an extent that the concept of humanity, if taken from its example alone, would be of a rich and worthy substance. (59)

Here, Humboldt emphasized that it is crucial for *Allgemeinbildung* not to be reserved for the elite but rather to permeate society, “powerfully and universally” (Klafki 89). Again the similarities with the ideas behind Berlin School Reform of 2009 are notable, as the idea of universality here can be seen as synonymous with comprehensivization. Even *Allgemein-* in *Allgemeinbildung* means general or universal. In fact, Humboldt’s idea of *Bildung* was largely a reversion back to Cooper, as both believed that intercultural and historical educations were key to *Bildung* (Cocalis 406-407). However, while Cooper reserved his “formation of a genteel character” for the aristocrats who could travel around Europe and the world, Humboldt believed that *Bildung* should be fostered by a nation’s museums and educational system as a tool for social mobility and the creation of a meritocracy (401, 406-407). Humboldt’s *Allgemeinbildung* therefore neither directly contradicts egalitarian education nor avoids mention of it, but rather supports equal educational opportunity, i.e. comprehensivization, so that everyone receives guidance and aid in the development of the inner self.

Despite the fact that Humboldt reunited schooling with this idea of *Bildung*, as well as its egalitarian implications, Schleunes argues that Humboldt had little effect on public education

himself (325). While it is true that Humboldt had little direct effect on reform in the Prussian public education system, leading the Department of Schools and Poor Relief for only two years (1808-1810), he still influenced it (325). Initially Humboldt appointed K.A. Zeller to lead the educational reforms. However, after K.A. Zeller's failed educational reforms, involving the training orphans to become a sort of "teacher class" and attempting to "spiritual[ly]-psychological[ly]" cleanse them, Humboldt appointed Ludwig Natorp in 1809 to lead the new wave of reforms (327-328). Natorp directly carried out the ideas of the earlier *Bildung* theorists, particularly those of Johann Pestalozzi, a contemporary of Humboldt, in reforming the Prussian educational system, which was to be one of the first to successfully develop mass schooling (315, 317).

At first Natorp was simply chosen to prepare Zeller's schools in Brandenburg, until Zeller himself could arrive (328). In doing so, however, Natorp felt that the schools needed not improvement but rather "radical and total reform," similar to the SPD's efforts to change the fundamental structure of the Berlin educational system in the twenty-first century (Schleunes 329; B. Natorp 15). In fact, in his outline of a new school system in Essen, *Grundriss zu Organisation allgemeiner Stadtschulen*, he discusses how "small improvements" in school plans, classes, tests etc. would not help the school system, but rather that they needed to be completely changed (B. Natorp 14-15). As with the Berlin School Reform, small alterations in the system would not truly change the system and correct the problems associated with it; complete structural change was necessary.

Bernhard Christoph Ludwig Natorp was born in Werden an der Ruhr on the 12th of November 1774 (P. Natorp 84). He quickly became involved in educational reform, designing a plan for the Essen school system as early as 1804 and being appointed by Humboldt to lead

reforms only a few years later (84). In works as early as his *Grundriss*, he displays his commitment to comprehensive education. In this outline of his school plan, he states that the *allgemeine Stadtschule* should be a school for “every person, without distinction of sex or distinction of future position and career” (B. Natorp 20). In his plans for a national school, he called this school the *Volksschule* (P. Natorp 87). He wanted to create such a *Volksschule* to educate the masses. It is important, however, to note that this school was not meant for the “squalid youth from the basest classes of the nation” but rather for all to be educated as “youth from the whole” (Ludwig Natorp as quoted in P. Natorp 88). This is similar to the idea of removing the “sink school” from the Berlin school system and replacing it with something *gleichwertig* to the *Gymnasium*.

Unlike previous attempts at mass education, Natorp did not want to educate for economic power or political control, but to “prepare [students] surely and thoroughly,” regardless of the career they would pursue (B. Natorp 21). His attempt at egalitarian mass education meant more than ever before, as Stein had recently ordered the Edict of Emancipation, creating a more mobile society (Schleunes 325). The Treaty of Tilsit gave reformers an excuse to implement their “radical and total reform” in not only education but also the political and social structure of Prussia, which helped to foster the reforms in education. Through Natorp’s writings and rhetoric on education, his motives for reform become even clearer. Like Stein, he wished to create equality of opportunity and social mobility, and following in the footsteps of Humboldt, Natorp designed an educational system that would allow its students to be prepared for any career that they wished to pursue.

Section 3.4: Reform Under Natorp

Natorp's reforms changed the structure of the Prussian educational system. In fact, as the previous system was decentralized, Natorp's system actually did more; it *established* the structure of education in Prussia, as well as that of its successor, Germany. Natorp's reforms were comprised of two new introductions: the *Volksschulen* and the *Seminare*. The former persisted even after WWII, at least in name, until it was replaced by the *Hauptschule*; the latter educated *Volksschule* teachers until the establishment of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Van de Graaff 77; Tröhler 153, 161). In discussing these two aspects of Natorp's reforms, similarities can be seen between this reform and the Berlin School Reform of 2009.

The first aspect of this reform, the *Volksschule*, severed the purpose of educating all students with general knowledge that would be useful regardless of what their future careers entailed. It is interesting that he prefers general education over specific as a study conduct by Halls nearly two centuries later revealed that general education is more effective than specialized as it does not hinder one's main area of study, while specialization hinders the acquisition of general knowledge (430). Natorp did not even consider the *Gymnasium*, which at that time was already a school for the elite, to be all that prestigious. He states in his *Grundriss* that it has "no value" for most, teaching students "of the languages of antiquity and of theological knowledge" (B. Natorp 18). He believed that the *allgemeine Elementarschule* (public elementary school), *allgemeine Stadtschule* (public municipal school), and *Gymnasium* "should be treated as a single, large institution for the national *Bildung* of youth" (P. Natorp 88). Several leading figures of the time, including the Johann Gottlieb Fichte, one of the first German nationalists, as well as Madame de Staël, both lauded his system as providing social mobility and removing barriers between the classes (Schleunes 330). By attempting to create a system which did not perpetuate

or create distinctions and which taught all students collectively, he helped to foster the social mobility that Stein had set out to create in Prussia.

The second aspect of the reforms, the *Seminare*, served to reinforce the egalitarianism of the *Volksschule*. Prior to Natorp's reforms, teacher education in Prussia was haphazard at best. Thomas Alexander notes that a teacher was considered qualified "if he could read but poorly, sing the best-known church hymns, repeat the five articles of the smaller Lutheran catechism, and could write" (as quoted in Thomas 220). In fact, less than a decade before Stein implemented his reforms, Ernst von Massow advised Frederick Wilhelm III that education of lower school teachers was too economically burdensome to be effective (Schleunes 321). As a solution to this, Natorp's predecessor, K.A. Zeller attempted to convert orphan "spiritual[ly]" into teacher-training institutions, essentially turning orphans into an educating caste (327). However, all of these techniques proved ineffective or, in the case of Zeller, unethical.

Natorp's *Seminare* was eventually adopted as the teacher-training institutions of the revitalized Prussia. In fact, by the 1830's it was considered one of the best of its kind in Europe, if not the world (317). Natorp believed that "every school is a good school, if the teacher is a good teacher" (as quoted in P. Natorp 85). The institution, an "academically oriented boarding school," would last two years, after which the graduates would become teachers for the *Volksschule* (Schleunes 329-330). There was no distinction in prestige between teachers, as Natorp held that it was a "terrible, most highly deleterious judgment, when one assigns a lower rank to an elementary school teacher than a teacher in a higher institution" (as quoted in P. Natorp 85). In creating a curriculum for education standard for all teachers, Natorp was able to supplement the egalitarianism implicit in the structure of his *Volksschule* with a standard of

education of teachers, which could be replicated anywhere across the nation for any and all students.

In the design of the *Volksschulen* and *Seminare*, Natorp was able to set in motion a school system that had lasting effects on education in Prussia and Germany. In fact, 80% of the children between ages six and fourteen were able to receive an education as early as 1837 (Schleunes 317). The history of Natorp's reform, however, is short. Although Natorp's critics found his reforms "disrespectful," Schleunes notes that even they would ask for him to develop his plans for the *Volksschule*. Although he finished his plans by 1813, his outline was not put into law immediately, due to the political situation at the time, namely the resurgence of the Napoleonic Wars (330). Even though the bill was eventually passed in 1819, war and recession had once again changed the mentality of reform in Prussia (330). Despite this, the *Volksschule* and *Seminar* remained an integral part of Prussian education up until the time of German unification and beyond. Although Natorp's reform led to a structured educational system wherein more children received an institutional education, the original intent and strength of comprehensivization in Natorp's original plans suffered over the next century.

Section 3.5: After Natorp

Natorp's comprehensivizing approach to education did not go without criticism and was even feared by some of the Prussian elite for creating social instability (330). The conservatives in Prussia instilled this fear in the public after a depression that hit the nation in 1820 (333). One of the leading conservative thinkers, Ludolf von Beckendorff, headed a commission that in 1821 found a connection between the recent school reforms and developing social disorder, essentially blaming Natorp's reform for the increasing social disorder (333-334). By 1825, Beckendorff had

published an essay, “Concerning the Concept of the *Volksschule*,” in which he laid out a plan to accomplish the real goal of schooling, which he stated was not egalitarianism, as *Bildung* had purported, but stratification of society, ironically called *Standes-Bildung* (334). He proposed the creation of several types of *Volksschulen*, namely *Landschulen*, *Armenschulen*, and *Bürger- und Hauptschulen*, for the peasants, urban poor, and industrial and commercial classes respectively (334). These *Volksschulen* would not lead to *Gymnasien* or universities, which were reserved for the “learned estate,” the upper class (334). Though this system was never put in practice in Beckendorff’s time, its concept led to a movement away from egalitarian, *Allgemeinbildung*-based reform toward an educational system that returned to stratification of society (334-335). This line of thought led Rhineland industrialists in the 1840’s to attempt to introduce “useful knowledge” to the curriculum to the *Volksschulen* (340). Though this useful knowledge fell out of the curriculum in less than a decade, it should be noted that this knowledge was not installed into the *Gymnasien*. It can therefore be inferred that this “useful knowledge” was an attempt to establish what the *Volksschulen* and *Hauptschulen* later became, namely training schools for the lower class, for if this knowledge was so “useful” it would have been introduced into upper class education first.

During the same decade, a movement began among the working class of establishing *Bildungsvereine* (*Bildung* associations) (Olson 5). While the main goal of these associations was to improve the economic wellbeing of the artisans and apprentices that joined them, they also served the secondary purpose of aiding these workers in their attainment of *Bildung*, which these groups defined as “the knowledge necessary for economic well-being and social reform” (5). Here, we can already see that *Bildung* is undergoing a change in definition, from one that dealt only in the moral and aesthetic realms to one that now considers the physical development and

wellbeing of a person. This transformation of *Bildung* symbolized the differing opinions of what the *Volksschule* should accomplish, either *Standes-Bildung* or comprehensive education. Though conservatism was unsuccessful in actual reform for the thirty years following Beckendorff's report and the working-class began to develop their own idea of *Bildung*, the idea of *Standes-Bildung* continued to guide upper and middle-class Prussian understanding of education up until the establishment of the Second Reich and beyond (Schleunes 334-335).

Bildung, by the time of the unification of Germany, had come to resemble Beckendorff's *Standes-Bildung* rather than Humboldt's idea of *Allgemeinbildung*. Under the reign of Kaiser Wilhelm II it became further altered to mean an anti-democratic form of education (Tröhler 157). The German empire at this time expanded in all areas so extensively that the most powerful nations of Europe, with the exception of Austria-Hungary, began to see the new German empire as a threat (151-152). Germany's growing power created a rift between it and the rest of Europe that caused the German empire to envision itself, its culture, and its ideology as directly opposed to those of "the West" (152). Education, therefore, became "conservative, anti-socialist," and "elitist," opposing democratic western Europe (157-158, 160). While Humboldt wanted his general education to be distinct from vocational training, "chronologically and institutionally," while still necessary for any career, the bourgeoisie of the Second Reich helped to form an educational system that saw vocational training as opposed to the values instilled in general education (Klafki 101; Thomas 224; Tröhler 153). In fact, this polarization became so severe that by 1914, the Social Democrats were by and large devoted to school reform, as the purpose of the *Volksschule* had become "to inculcate piety, patriotism, and the work ethic in the children of factory workers, artisans, peasants, and small tradesmen," which was basically the realization of the plans Beckendorff had laid out in "Concerning the Concept of the *Volksschule*" (Olson 3).

Among other anecdotes quoted by Olson, one worker describes the *Volksschule* curriculum, specifically that of a *Bürgerschule*, as “empty insipid exercises, penmanship, singing, arithmetic, reading, all presented in endless repetition that presented nothing new” (4). Because of this split of vocational and general knowledge, elementary school (*Volksschule*) teachers were excluded from pedagogical training in the universities until after World War II (Tröhler 157, 161).

Because of the German empire’s political situation during this time, one which would lead to the First World War, Germany created an anti-Western, and thus anti-democratic and stratified, educational system, which distorted the classic pedagogical thinking Humboldt and others.

Natorp did not simply alter the structure of the Prussian educational system but rather establish it. In doing so, he broke from the traditional educational thought in Prussia, namely that the elite and lower estates should be educated separately and differently, if the lower estates should be educated at all. His reform of the Prussian school structure was made possible by the reforms that Stein began to implement after the Battle of Jena and ensuing Treaty of Tilsit and followed the *Allgemeinbildung* theory that Humboldt had developed. Natorp’s *Volksschule* led to increasing education of the lower classes and his *Seminar* created a standard of education, which previously had been rather low, if even existent. Although not in the way that he had originally hoped, Natorp’s school structure increased the number of students educated in a formal setting. However, as Beckendorff and others hindered Natorp’s comprehensivizing efforts, which would have arguably been more extensive than those implemented in Berlin in 2010, as they would have comprehensivized the entire system, the strength of comprehensivizing efforts weakened in the subsequent history of German education in Prussia and Germany. However, they did not die completely. Though the educational situation in Prussia and the German Empire became more and more elitist, as early as the 1840’s, a movement for more comprehensivized education began

to form in Central Europe. Not until after WWI, however, did Natorp's hope of an *allgemeine Volksschule* regain any traction. The period that brought it about, however, shared more similarities with Natorp and Zöllner's reforms than just their attempt at comprehensivizing the school system. The following chapter will explore this period and its similarities with the two previously mentioned reforms, providing further evidence that there is, indeed, a pattern in successful comprehensivizing reforms in German history.

Chapter 4: The Weimar Republic

Section 4.1: The SPD and GTA before World War I

As has already been stated, the German Empire developed an ideology that contradicted the democracy of the West, which made the German empire anti-democratic, anti-socialist, and elitist. In fact, Otto von Bismarck, the first Chancellor of the German Empire, created anti-socialist laws that lasted from 1878 until 1890. These laws hindered any activity of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) and thus hindered any attempts at comprehensivization in the German Empire (Olson 6). While these reformers did not believe in *Bildung* the same way that Natorp did, they were still committed to the idea of a general education. Aside from the SPD, another group that was committed to school reform was the German Teachers Association (GTA). These groups worked together to accomplish comprehensivization. However, they had difficulty in doing so until the founding of the Weimar Republic. This section discusses the accomplishments of the SPD and GTA from 1880 to 1914 with respect to comprehensivization, setting up a contrast in the efficacy of school reform before and after the Great War.

Although the SPD and GTA wanted much the same thing, and indeed German teachers used the SPD to accomplish their goals, they were not the same (Olson 12). Social Democrats included some of the more radical reformers, who attempted to accomplish such reforms as healthcare in the school system and afterschool programs (12). Teachers, as well as the more moderate Social Democrats, were more concerned with changing the structure of the school system, hoping to reduce and ultimately eliminate stratification (Lamberti 16). In fact, the GTA had three goals: elimination of the *Vorschulen*, preparatory schools for the *Gymnasium* largely attended by the elite; elimination of confessional stratification of students; and creation of a fully

comprehensivized school (3). Since the *Vorschulen* stratified students along class lines and the confessional stratification along religious lines, elimination of both was meant to aid the accomplishment of the comprehensivized school, making this the most important goal.

The *Gymnasium*-educated elite reformers, on the other hand, attempted to improve the school system by adjusting curriculums and attempting to make “modern” *Gymnasien* equal to the neo-humanist ones (16). This type of reform dominated the period before WWI, while the structural reforms of the moderate Social Democrats and teachers did not gain any traction. In fact, the greatest accomplishment that the Social Democrats had achieved as late as 1911 was the Prussian government’s acknowledgement that “moral education was not properly promoted in the *Volksschule*” (Olson 9). As World War I was breaking out, both the Social Democrats and the German Teachers Association were still trying to reform the *Volksschule* and the overall educational system in Germany with little success (Olson 1; Lamberti 107). This situation changed after the end of World War I and the establishment of the Weimar republic. The rest of this chapter will focus on the successes and failures of the SPD in implementing their comprehensivizing reforms.

Section 4.2: World War I

Prior to the Great War, Germany was vying with Great Britain as the regional power in Europe. The two industrialized countries had developed alliances and were preparing for war (Papayoanou 42). In just over four years, the German Empire had ceased to exist, instead replaced by a war-torn, heavily indebted Weimar Republic (Collier and Pedley 1). Much like the Battle of Jena and the Treaty of Tilsit did for Prussia, the Second World War and the Treaty of Versailles left Germany demoralized so severely that there was no choice but to accept reform

(16). In fact, now that the kaisership had been replaced with representative government and the state of Prussia no longer held majority in the *Bundesrat*, which was one of the two legislative bodies of the German Empire, the Social Democrats now had the appropriate conditions to implement the comprehensivizing reform that had been unsuccessful in Prussian and German education since the time of Natorp (19). Though many different people and groups supported and influenced the reforms, the most influential reformer of the Weimar Republic was Johannes Tews, who not only developed the structure of the comprehensivized school but also the plans for carrying it out. The next two sections will cover Tews and the reform that he helped to lead, demonstrating that this period of German educational history also represents one characterized by comprehensivizing reforms.

Section 4.3: Johannes Tews

Johannes Tews was born in Pomerania in 1860. Professionally trained in schoolteaching, he moved to Berlin 1883, and though never gaining a legislative seat, he was involved in school politics there until the 1930's (Lamberti 16). Although he published many works on the subject, perhaps his most influential is *Die deutsche Einheitsschule* (1916), in which he argues for the *Einheitsschule*, a completely comprehensivized school, as well as describes how to go about reforming it (107). His dedication to a one-track school system stemmed from his belief that "all people should have the same right to acquire an education for which they are destined by their mental faculties" (109). While the school was not meant to result in students of equal ability, the system would at least "open the path to all who are capable" (107). In this way, those from the lower classes at least had the potential to acquire a quality of education that was not available in the *Volksschule*.

Tews's book led to many of the reforms of the period as well as setting up the general steps that reformers should take in order to accomplish the *Einheitsschule* in a slow and steady manner (107). Rather than attempting to establish the *Einheitsschule* all at once, as Natorp almost accomplished with his version of the *Volksschule*, Tews accepted that neither conservatives nor the public would yield to demands for a comprehensive school all at once, even in the destruction that followed WWI (107). Tews's strategy more closely resembles that taken by Zöllner and the SPD in Berlin, as both did not attempt to introduce the comprehensive school in one moment. The reason that Natorp's approach differs from that of Tews and Zöllner is largely due to the political situation at the reformers' respective time periods rather than a lack of commitment to comprehensivization. While Natorp had the full backing of Stein and Frederick Wilhelm III as well as some of his critics, who could have seen the reform through had the political landscape not been complicated, Tews and Zöllner had to work inside the republican framework of the German nation, so that opposition from conservatives hindered such a strategy.

In *Die deutsche Einheitsschule*, Tews defends the idea of a comprehensivized school. In the foreword, he writes:

... daß die Volksschule für Volk and Vaterland nur vollen Wert erhalten kann, wenn aus ihr die Wege nicht nur in alle Zweige des Schulwesens, sondern auch in alle Gebiete der Volksarbeit offen stehen. Nur dann ist sie, was ihr Name besagt, eine Volksschule und keine Sonderschule für geistlich und wirtschaftlich Arme...⁵ (Tews 4)

Like Natorp, he believed in a *Volksschule für das Volk* (*Volksschule* for the people). Just as Natorp's school did not distinguish by a person's future position in society, i.e. did not stratify students based on their ability and projected careers, Tews's *Einheitsschule* left all "branches of the school system" and "areas of work" available to its students. In this way, both resemble the

⁵ ...that the *Volksschule* can sustain only the full value for the people and fatherland, if from it the ways not only to all branches of the school system, but also to all areas of the work of the people remain open. Only then is it what its name means, a "people's school" and not a "special school" for the mentally and economically poor...

integrierte Sekundarschule, which leaves the *Abitur* as well as the other two leaving certificates open to all throughout most of their secondary school careers.

Also similar is the phrase “no ‘special school’ for the mentally and economically poor.” Here, Tews conveys his concern that the *Volksschule*, originally intended by Natorp to be a sort of *Einheitsschule* and include all regardless of sex or class, has become a school that teaches “empty insipid exercise” to the non-elite and lower classes (Olson 4). With this statement, Tews renews Natorp’s goals of an *allgemeine* school. Zöllner as well conveys this motive in his reform. In attempting to create a school that is *gleichwertig* to the *Gymnasium*, he hopes to raise the *integrierte Sekundarschule* and its would-be *Hauptschule* students from the “sink school” (Phillips “Introduction” 4; Wilde 43). Tews’s statement here draws the connection between Natorp and Zöllner, illustrating how all three attempted to raise the “mentally and economically poor” out of their poverty and into a nation with more social mobility.

One final notable quotation from the foreword of *die deutsche Einheitsschule* is the metaphor comparing the education of children to agricultural work. He says that:

Alle Erziehung ist Säemannsarbeit [sic], und das um so mehr, je jünger die Kinder sind, um deren Erziehung es sich handelt. Der Volksschullehrer muß darum an die einstige Ernte noch mehr denken als jeder andere Lehrende.⁶ (Tews 4)

Here, he places emphasis on a child’s early education, for it prepares the child for every other year of education that he or she might undertake. Although he does not place as strong of an emphasis on early education, Natorp also expresses the same emphasis when he said that the work of teachers in elementary schools should not be considered less prestigious than that of their colleagues in the university, *Gymnasium*, or even just a higher class in the same school (P. Natorp 85).

⁶ See footnote on page 1

Despite his dedication to the *Einheitsschule*, this school was not realized during his lifetime and remains unrealized in Germany even today. His work during the Weimar era was in vain, however. Two comprehensivizing reforms, inspired by *Die deutsche Einheitsschule*, were implemented in Weimar Germany. The first of these, the *Aufbauschule*, became a widespread experimental school by 1930 in the state of Prussia alone (Lamberti 119). Second and even more substantial was the *Grundschule*, a new comprehensive school lasting the first four years of institutional education, was made into law and survived Nazi Germany, still existing today. The work of Tews and his fellow reformers, like Natorp's *Volksschule* and *Seminar*, had long lasting effects in the comprehensivization of German education.

Section 4.4: Reform in the Weimar Republic

Prior to the Weimar Republic, Wilhelmian Germany was behind Western Europe with respect to democracy. In fact, V.R. Berghahn describes the German Empire as an “autocratic monarchy with a few parliamentary trimmings” (quoted in Papayoanou 67). Therefore, the establishment of the Weimar Republic after the Great War offered Social Democrats both the opportunity and the excuse to reform education, that is, using the republic to rebuild the nation. Germany, which had been considered one of the most powerful nations in Europe before WWI, was now war torn and heavily indebted to the Allies (Papayoanou 42). Much like in Prussia after the Treaty of Tilsit, Germany recreated its nation after WWI. This situation allowed the Social Democrats to pass the comprehensivizing school reform, entitled the *Grundschulgesetz vom 28. April 1920*, almost immediately after the end of the war (Lamberti 110). This is extraordinary, considering that the Social Democrats had been trying for over three decades to reform German schooling with near no widespread success. The war and its aftermath in Germany gave

reformers a chance to implement reforms that had been unsuccessful in the past within a relatively short time, namely over the next decade.

The *Grundgesetz* of 1919 established the Weimar Republic, though it was voted into law. It also created the *Grundschule* in Germany. This school, which still exists in Germany today, was compulsory comprehensivized primary education for the first four classes of schooling (119). The *Grundschulgesetz vom 28. April 1920* later planned for the immediate removal of all public *Vorschulen* and the eventual elimination of all private *Vorschulen* by the start of the next decade (110). In so doing, reformers hoped to standardize and comprehensivize schooling, possibly to six years, as the Social Democrats even planned to increase the length of the *Grundschule* another two years, which would allow for at least half of all students' compulsory education to be comprehensive (111). Again, although Tews and the SPD did not implement completely comprehensive schooling, these half-measures did not represent a lack of confidence in the ideal of the *Einheitsschule* but simply an acceptance of the political reality. Though conservatives made attempts to stop this law and some parents blatantly ignored it, Social Democrats had enough support to see it through and solidify its place in German education, securing its position even today (114-117). Lamberti describes this structure-altering reform as the high achievement of the Social Democrats, though they may have achieved even more, such as full comprehensivization, had it not been for the rise of the National Socialists in the 1930's (119).

The *Aufbauschule*, on the other hand, was equally comprehensivizing but ultimately less successful. It was to serve as a connection between the *Volksschule* and the *Gymnasium* (108). Prior to the establishment of the *Aufbauschule*, there was no possible lateral movement between the two main types of schools (Lamberti 108; Schleunes 334). This school would allow some of the students to leave the elementary school and enter secondary education, i.e. schooling leading

to the university (Lamberti 108). The opportunity to take the *Abitur* as part of graduation from the *Aufbauschule* made this possible, in a sense diminishing the high status of the *Gymnasium* (108). While the *Aufbauschule* did not create an ideal school structure, it at least allowed for mobility within the school structure, so that students who had not achieved the *Gymnasium* after the fourth class were now able to achieve the *Abitur* through the *Aufbauschule* as late as the seventh class (108).

Though Tews was in favor of an eventual comprehensivization of the German school system, he was more willing than former Social Democrats, especially the more radical ones from 1900-1914, to adopt a foot-in-door approach to reform. Therefore he conceded the continued existence of the elite secondary education, i.e. the *Gymnasium*, at least for the time being (108). Therefore, reform was slow but steady. Despite the attempts of conservative interest groups, such as the Secondary Schoolteachers' Association, to block the comprehensivizing reforms, especially the introduction and obligation of the *Grundschule*, reformers of the Weimar period were able to move the German educational system at least in the direction of comprehensive schooling.

Section 4.5: National Socialist and Educational Policy of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*

Comprehensivization was not fulfilled during this time, as one can discern from the current general school structure of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. Comprehensivization in this period reached its peak around 1930. At this time students in the first four classes received a completely comprehensivized education, and reformers were on their way to comprehensivizing secondary education. Secondary school comprehensivization came to a halt, however, when the Great Depression caused many GTA members to back the National Socialist (197-198). Just as

the Social Democrats and the National Socialists had conflicting political theories, they also had conflicting school structure reforms. In fact, though many of the GTA members turned to the Nazis after major cutbacks in their salaries in the early 1930's, the structural reforms caused by the Nazis were antithetical to those of the Social Democrats during the 1920's. Nazi policy was not entirely clear to the GTA members, however, as the Nazis avoided the issue of school reform as part of their party platform, especially since the reform of confessional education became a major issue at this point in time (201). When Hitler came to power and the National Socialists could finally implement widespread reform, instead of improving the lot of the students of the *Volksschule*, i.e. the lower classes, the Nazis established *Ausleseschule* (selection schools) (Pine 71). Pine states that, in doing so, the Nazis proposed that they had eliminated stratification of students by social class. Stratification by class, however, was simply replaced by stratification by race (71). These *Ausleseschulen* were used to train an elite group of children to become the next generation of leaders in the Nazi military and government (14). As a result, by the time that WWII ended, the *Aufbauschule* experiment had lost its momentum, exemplified by how "only a very limited number" of these experimental schools were dispersed in rural areas after the Second World War (Robinson and Kuhlmann 316). Though the *Grundschule* survived the Nazi period, the hope of the reformers to increase the length of the *Grundschule* an extra two years was only been implemented in two states before 2010, Berlin and Brandenburg (Wilde 45). Because of the Nazi period, comprehensive education came to a halt and could not be revitalized until after the war had ended. The effects of National Socialist policy on German educational reform proved to be more detrimental in the progression of comprehensivizing reform in Germany, as it resulted in stagnation of the comprehensivization movement in Germany for over 80 years.

Although the post-WWII reformers were less comprehensivizing than the Weimar reformers, they at least did make the National Socialist school system more egalitarian, if only slightly, as they eliminated an explicitly racially selective school system. However, this change was as far as comprehensivization was to progress for some time. After the war, the Germans were pressed between two influences on their educational system, namely the Nazi system and further comprehensivization proposed by the Allied occupiers (Robinsohn and Kuhlmann 312). Instead, the Germans chose not to bend to either influence and simply return to the educational system of the Weimar Republic (Ertl and Phillips 392). Hence, educational reform in this post-war period was marked by the idea of “On from Weimar” (405). Of the school systems adopted by the Allies, Nazis and Weimar Republic, the Weimar educational system was considered the most ideal.

This slogan also implies that reformers and pedagogues wanted to create a smooth transition back into the Weimar system, as if ignoring the Nazi educational system. The policy of “On from Weimar” is ironic, however, when one considers the second slogan of the period “no experiments,” which perhaps resulted from the rapid changes the Nazis had implemented to German schooling as well as those influenced by Allied occupation (405). The irony here is that the reformers of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* wanted to exclude “experiments,” which had defined the very Weimar period that reformers hoped to develop “on from” (405). This paradox affected the reforms of post-war Germany, completely altering the very character of the reforms when compared to the Weimar period.

In adopting the Weimar school system, Germany made a move backwards in time, while the Weimar school system had been the forward-thinking revitalization and renovation of the school system that had existed in Prussia over a hundred years. Robinsohn and Kuhlmann,

among others, have even noted how, in creating the educational system of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, reformers did not take advantage of the situation by creating something completely new. This fear of experimentation was the result of a war-shattered Germany searching for stability (311). As Robinsohn and Kuhlmann have documented, this fear heavily impacted every aspect of reform in the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* for over twenty years after WWII, though its influence still persists today.

Of the two reforms of the Weimar period, only the *Grundschule*, which incidentally was the only one to be passed into law, survived the post-war reform. However, the plan of reformers to implement a six-year *Grundschule*, was only adopted by Berlin and Brandenburg, the latter doing so after abdicating the implementation of a fully comprehensive school system (Wilde 44-45). This contrast demonstrates the stagnancy of post-war German reforms, which chose not to change their structure, though they did adopt some curricular or economic adjustments in line with Tews and Weimar Social Democrats, such as free tuition and teaching materials (Lamberti 109; Robinsohn and Kuhlmann 319). However, this policy was not even unanimous by the late 1960's (319). Ultimately though, the structure of the schools remained unchanged, symptomatic of the West German search for stability (311). This situation was made even more stagnant by confirmation of the validity of the school system through its increased prestige internationally, especially with respect to England (Prais and Wagner 110).

However, the other major reform proposed by the Weimar reformers, the *Aufbauschule*, suffered a loss (Robinsohn and Kuhlmann 316). The *Mittelschule*, later called the *Realschule*, usurped this school, as *Realschule*, introduced in the nineteenth century, would become firmly established in the school system (Robinsohn and Kuhlmann 316; Ertl and Phillips 399). While both of these schools acted as an intermediate school between the *Volksschule* (later the

Hauptschule) and the *Gymnasium*, there are very important distinctions between them. The first is the year of sorting for each. The *Aufbauschule* sorted children three years after the main sorting process, i.e. into the *Gymnasium* and *Volksschule*, meaning that students still had a chance to be sorted into secondary education until the seventh class (Lamberti 108). The *Realschule*, into which students were sorted after the fourth class in most states, stratified students much earlier (Wilde 45). Even the more progressive states of Berlin and (post-reunification) Brandenburg sort students after the sixth class, a year earlier than the *Aufbauschule* did (45).

This strategy made sense directly after the war, as there existed a notion in Germany that intelligence was inborn (Heidenheimer 390). However, Sweden, which originally had a tripartite structure similar to Germany, conducted a test when it transitioned into a comprehensive system. According to Heidenheimer, reformers temporarily split Stockholm into north and south, so that students in the north were stratified after the fourth class as usual, while students in the south studied together until the ninth class, when they were ultimately sorted. The study found that higher testing students in the early-stratified north initially did better than their counterparts in the late-stratified south. However, by the ninth class, the two groups of students scored equally well. More significantly, students of lesser ability scored better in classes four through nine in the later-stratified south (391). Though providing evidence that early stratification actually had a *negative* effect on the education of children, this study did not affect any of the German states, most of which retain stratification after the fourth class to this day, while this study was conducted in the late fifties (391). Even in Berlin and Brandenburg, there is a difference of three years compared to the southern Stockholm students. Weimar reformers, on the other hand proposed a later stratification option than what was instituted by the initial post-war reformers,

even though this study had not yet been conducted. Post-war reformers allowed the less comprehensivizing *Mittelschule* (*Realschule*) to remain while allowing the *Aufbauschule* to fall out of the system. As the increasing stature of the *Realschule* forced the students of the *Hauptschule* to an even lower status than before as a “sink school,” the *Realschule* increased stratification rather than having a “compensatory effect,” as Ertl and Phillips claim it did (399). The preservation and increased status of the *Realschule* demonstrates how post-WWII reformers placed more importance on stratification than on comprehensivization.

Another aspect of the *Aufbauschule*, which was unique in Germany prior to 2010, was the option of obtaining the *Abitur* (394). Initially only with an *Abitur* could a student attend a university (Wilde 44). In fact, the *Abitur* does not just grant a student the *option* of studying at a university but actually gives them the *right* (45). The subsequently introduced *Mittelschule* granted students the *mittlere Reife* (now *Realschulabschluss*), but this simply allowed students to gain better jobs than they would with the *Hauptschule* leaving certificate, the *Hauptschulabschluss* (Ertl and Phillips 394-395). The university was still out of their reach. In fact, the establishment of the *Realschule* hindered the complete integration of the *Gesamtschule*, which would have offered all students a chance at the *Abitur* until the tenth class (401).

In order to make up for any possible mistakes made by the tripartite system, post-WWII reformers introduced the *Zweiten Bildungsweg* (second path to education/self-development), which also grants its graduates access to the university as well as other forms of higher education (404). While this was an important aspect of comprehensivizing education, Robinsohn and Kuhlmann did not find it “to have altered the system of...German education in any important degree” (Ertl and Phillips 404; Robinsohn and Kuhlmann 311). This may be because, in the words of its advocates Ertl and Phillips, the *Zweiter Bildungsweg* serves to “mitigate the

consequences of a possibly wrong selection of German pupils” (404). This alteration does not fix the German system but is merely an amendment to it, like duct tape to a leaky pipe. As a result, it takes longer to attain higher education through the *Zweiten Bildungsweg*, as study is part-time and often mixed with vocational training (404). Like the *integrierte Gesamtschule*, the *Zweiter Bildungsweg* is simply an add-on to the tripartite system, rather than a revision of it. In fact, it is called the “second way” to education, implying that it not just an alternate route (*anderer Weg*), but a second measure, a backup plan, making the *Abitur* from a *Gymnasium*, up until 2010, the quickest and easiest way to enter a university. As the reformers in the Weimar period attempted to offer a quicker path to the university by giving students in the newly created *Aufbauschule* a chance at obtaining the *Abitur*, the *Zweiter Bildungsweg* still displays a lack of commitment to comprehensivization on the part of post-war reformers. In the end, all of the reforms that were conducted by post-war reformers up until 2010 attempted to mend a broken tripartite system, while Weimar reformers attempted to replace this system through a slow though ultimately halted process.

While the Weimar reformers attempted to revitalize the reforms set out by Natorp, intentionally or not, their progression towards comprehensivization was halted by Nazi educational policy and hindered by the commitment of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* to non-experimentation. The *Grundschule* failed to develop to include more years of education and the *Mittelschule/Realschule* replaced the experimental *Aufbauschule*. Ultimately, the developments of the Weimar Republic disappeared or solidified in their forms, preventing the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* from fully adopting the Weimar system in spirit. As a result, an unchanging school system would characterize Germany until 2009, when the Berlin *Senat* passed the newest Berlin

reform into law, changing the fundamental system of German education for the first time in over 80 years, and the third time in over two centuries.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

The three reform periods discussed in this paper demonstrate many similarities between these reforms over the last two hundred years in Prussia and Germany. This final chapter will attempt to show that a pattern exists in successful comprehensivizing reforms in the history of Germany and its predecessor, Prussia. To do this, all three reforms will be discussed in each section devoted to a particular characteristic that they all share. These include the conditions prior to reform, the event that instigated each reform, the motives and rhetoric of each period's reformer, and the method of reform. In the final section, I will discuss what this pattern means for the current Berlin school reform, i.e. if it is destined to die out as the others have.

Section 5.1: Pre-Reform Conditions

In demonstrating how the reforms are similar, it is necessary to illustrate how they differ, that is, from other periods of reform. Therefore, this section will briefly cover the reforms prior to and between each of the successfully comprehensivizing periods. In doing so, I hope to set up a contrast, with which to establish the pattern of the successful comprehensivizing reforms.

In general, German education since the creation of a centralized school system has focused on stratification. In post-Natorpian Prussia, though the school system educated four-fifths of the population as early as 1837, Beckendorff's repurposing of the school system accomplished *Standes-Bildung* rather than *Bildung*, and thus the *Volksschule* became by Tews's time the school for "*geistlich und wirtschaftlich Arme*" (Tews 4). Similarly, the reformers of the post-WWII era reacted against the elitist Nazi amendments to the already biased school system, making schooling more egalitarian, though still not progressing "On from Weimar" as they had claimed. In fact, the establishment of the *Realschule* further stratified schooling by hindering

comprehensivizing attempts as well as creating a tripartite system and forced the *Hauptschule* down to the “sink school” that it is in the German *Bundesländer* today.

The only period discussed in this paper that did not systematically stratify students was in eighteenth century Prussia. The only reason that this period escapes such a classification, however, is because it did not systematically accomplish anything as it was largely decentralized. Despite this, it did stratify society, as the lower estates mostly could not attain education. If they did, it was to control them, to train them to operate in a mercantilist society, or to increase the power of the ruling estates. Not until Natorp’s plan for the *Volksschule* was passed into law did they receive any systematic education.

In the periods prior to and between each of the comprehensivizing reforms, reform resulted in stratification of students, sometimes even intentionally along class lines, such as Beckendorff’s *Volksschule*. Another aspect of these periods was that little structural adjustments were passed. Some exceptions of this were Beckendorff’s restructuring of the school system and the implementation of the *Realschule* after WWII. However, in the first case, Beckendorff simply put a heavier emphasis on the long-established *Gymnasium* while pairing it with an distorted version of Natorp’s *Volksschule*. In the second case, although the *Realschule* allowed for more social mobility, it diminished the status of the already insubstantial *Hauptschule*. More importantly, the *Aufbauschule* was replaced by an increasingly prestigious *Realschule*, which stratified earlier and did not grant its graduates access to the university, thus increasing stratification.

Ultimately, these non-comprehensivizing periods involved stratification of students, often intentionally along class lines and with little to no structural change. The lack of these characteristics set the comprehensivizing periods apart from the rest of the history of Prussian

and German reform. In the following three sections, I will address three other characteristics that the three comprehensivizing periods possess.

Section 5.2: Instigation

All three of these reform periods began with an upheaval of the German prestige. In the first instance, Prussia had been defeated by Napoleon at the Battle of Jena. Prior to the battle, Prussia was considered one of the greatest powers in Europe (Gray 1). After the war, Prussia was so demoralized and destroyed in every aspect of their nation that complete reform was not just allowed but crucial to the survival of the Prussian nation (Gray 1; Thomas 219). Two instances from before the Battle of Jena prove that the school reform was not possible without the complete demoralization of Prussia through its loss of prestige. The first is that the king of Prussia at the time, Frederick William III, asked Stein to lead the overall reforms in Prussia. The reason that this is odd is because the same king had removed Stein from his position specifically “because of the minister’s advocacy of reform” (Gray 1). If this fact alone is not enough to prove how the Battle of Jena opened up a chance for reform in Prussia, previous kings of Prussia had tried to reform the school system, attempting to make at least some years obligatory, but had failed even in the most “favourable” of environments (Thomas 219-221). Therefore, the Battle of Jena, with all the destruction that came with it, left Prussia in such a state of demoralization as to allow Stein, Humboldt, and Natorp to accomplish what previous reformers, including Stein himself, had failed to achieve.

In the instance of the Weimar reformers, despite the fact that they were “the largest single political movement in Germany on the eve on World War I,” they were unable to accomplish many of the reforms that they had aspired to prior the outbreak of the Great War (Olson 3). This

failure is partly due to the political system, which was limited in its parliamentary power (Papayoanou 67). Even what little parliamentary power existed was blocked by the constitution of the German Empire, which gave Prussia overwhelming control of the *Bundesrat*, the legislative body having the power to veto the *Bundestag*. Joshi and Navlakha have documented how unicameral legislatures tend to favor more democratic or socialistic reforms, due to the fact that they cannot be vetoed by the “the non-elected second legislative chamber,” which in the case of the German Empire was the *Bundesrat* (3). Therefore, not only did the bicameral legislature interfere with the reform of the Social Democrats, but the state of Prussia also had the ability to control the entire legislative system. This was not the case once the Weimar Republic was established after WWI. Prussia had lost a significant amount of territory, and thus *Bundesrat* members, which affected the *Bundesland*'s strength in both houses, bringing its voting power below 50% in the Weimar Republic (Collier and Pedley 16, 170). More importantly, the *Bundestag* now had the ability to veto the *Bundesrat* with a two-thirds majority, making it the “less important” house of the Weimar Republic (16). Reformers also used the war as a reason why the *Einheitsschule* should be established. Tews expressed that “‘the unified school system shall come’ since it has ‘received its charter in the trenches’” (Lamberti 44). By this he means that the German government owed all children the same educational opportunities because of the sacrifice of the German people during the war (44). World War I provided Germany both with the basis and opportunities for accomplishing the *Einheitsschule*, which was only interrupted by the Great Depression and the rise of the National Socialists to power.

The PISA tests, while not leaving Germany war-torn, did provide a huge disruption of the German prestige as it revealed that rather than having the allegedly elite primary and secondary school system of the previous hundred years, German schooling was actually significantly below

average. Regardless of the validity of these findings, this affected the Germans' self-perception to such a degree that the results of the 2000 PISA test became known as the "PISA-Shock." As a result, reformers like Zöllner were able to institute the Berlin School Reform of 2009. As has been expressed, structural reform was largely unsuccessful in the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, but the PISA tests, which created a need for higher test scores, gave the reformers an excuse to implement structural changes in Germany, the degree of which had not been seen since the Weimar period. Although the PISA tests did not leave Germany in complete shambles, it at least shook their faith in their educational system to such a degree that the SPD in Berlin could implement incredibly comprehensivizing reforms.

Section 5.3: The Rhetoric and Motives of the Reformers

Essentially, all of the reforms were instigated by a need to rebuild German prestige. Despite this, the focus of the reformers' works and rhetoric was not simply on improving the efficiency of the school system or producing above average students. Rather, all of the reformers of the comprehensivizing periods seemed to focus on expanding educational opportunity, i.e. increasing the standards of the lower classes. In this section, I will discuss the implicit or explicit motives demonstrated in the speech of the reformers and why these motives are so extraordinary in their historical context.

The common theme among all of these reformers was the prevention and elimination of what Zöllner calls "social islands" (Klesmann, "Die Schullotterie"). For Natorp, schools should not be separated based on their students' sex and projected social status. In fact, even teachers should not be considered better or worse just because of the level of schooling they were employed in. For Tews, it was creating a *Volksschule* that truly was for *die Volk* (the people)

rather than for “*geistlich und wirtschaftlich Arme*” (Tews 4). He also shows the necessity of good teachers at all levels when he compares educating to the sowing of seeds. Zöllner refers to the need to eliminate barriers between social classes when he describes his motives for the inclusion of the innovative *Schullotterie* in the application process. The elimination of estate or class stratification in the schools was essential for each of these reformers, perhaps more so than the creation of what Tews referred to as the *Einheitsschule*. In fact, the Berlin School Reform of 2009 attempted to create a comprehensive bipartite structure, which, though paradoxical, could be effective if the reform does in fact create two schools that are completely *gleichwertig*.

Their rhetoric is even more notable in contrast to the causes of the reform. Although each of the reform periods was caused by a decrease in the prestige of their respective nations, each reformer spoke of increasing the educational standards of the lower classes. Unlike the many of the reformers of the non-comprehensivizing periods, the reformers of these periods did not focus on increasing the standard of the *Gymnasium* but rather on allowing the entire student population to reach the standards already set by the *Gymnasium*, if not something higher. This contradiction is crucial as it demonstrates the motives of the leading reformers compared to the rest of German educational history since 1800. By this I mean that moments that instigated the reforms put people in power that were dedicated to comprehensive schooling or at least gave them the ability to effect change. This second characteristic of the successful periods of comprehensive reform helps to explain the final and perhaps most crucial characteristic, the method of reform, as it perhaps explains why these periods, more than any other, focused on structural change of the Prussian and German educational systems.

Section 5.4: Method of Reform

Although each period was instigated by a demoralizing event, which allowed its leading reformers to implement reforms that would comprehensivize their respective school systems, the most substantial evidence for the pattern of successful comprehensivizing reform in German schooling is how the reforms were carried out. By this I mean that each reform was carried out on the structure of the school system, which is largely uncharacteristic of the other periods. In this section, I will address each of the reforms separately, demonstrating how each implemented major change to the fundamental structure of the school system in Prussia or Germany. Then I will demonstrate how these reforms differ from some other reforms that may have influenced the operation of school system, though not its core structure.

Natorp's *Volksschule* is perhaps the most obvious to distinguish as structural change, since it created the structure in the first place. While most of the reform prior to Natorp was conducted in order to improve the *Gymnasium*, Natorp's reform focused on centralizing education so that all students could gain access to institutional education. He accomplished this through his introduction of the *Volksschule* and the *Seminar*. In doing so, Natorp created two new educational institutions that had never existed before. In fact, both of these institutions symbolized two concepts that had not been introduced before, equal educational opportunity in the form of the *Volksschule* and educational standards in the form of the *Seminar*. While his reforms did not accomplish complete comprehensivization, they eventually gave eighty percent of students of the lower classes in Prussia access to standardized education. In this way, further comprehensivizing educational reforms could be implemented on a nation-wide basis.

While Natorp's reform could not accomplish comprehensivization due to disruption by conservatives, the reforms implemented by the SPD were successful in their goals. While some students had previously been given the chance to attend the *Vorschulen*, thus giving them an

advantage in entrance to the *Gymnasium*, now all students had the same chance regardless of class or social position. This was because of the structural changes caused by the implementation of the *Grundschule* and removal of the *Vorschulen*. This caused a structural change in the partite structure of primary school that had existed for decades, making it instead comprehensive. The reformers did not focus on bringing up the standard of the *Volksschule* but instead eliminated its competition. This contrasts greatly with the post-WWII reformers who implemented the *Gesamtschule* alongside the tripartite structure. The reason for this failure was the competition from the tripartite structure. Had the Weimar reformers attempted to implement the *Grundschule* alongside the *Vorschule*, it would not have been as successful in providing the lower classes with equal education.

Though they did not accomplish this on the secondary level, this was because the *Gymnasium*, which has survived multiple reforms, had become cherished in Germany, since at least in this type of school “man weiß, was man hat”⁷ (Greiner 1). However, the steadfastness of the *Gymnasium* simply meant that reforms had to circumvent it. They did this through the *Aufbauschule*. In implementing this school, reformers allowed some members of the lower classes access to the university. Previously, the university was reserved for the elite. In fact, even as late as 1967, the proportion of students in the *Gymnasium* was less than one in twenty (Wilde 43). Now, however, non-gymnasial students had access to the *Abitur*, and the number of these students would increase as the *Aufbauschule* became more popular. Already the Reich Interior Ministry had guaranteed the graduates of the *Aufbauschule* “a degree equal to that of the nine-year *Gymnasium* and entitled them to examination for the *Abitur* and to enter the university” (Lamberti 119). This is set up in contrast to the *Realschule*. Though this school allowed some

⁷ “one knows, what one has”

would-be *Hauptschule* students to rise up, it still was one more tier of stratification, ultimately leading to the status of the *Hauptschule* dropping from a somewhat attractive educational option to a “sink school” (Wilde 43). Essentially, the increased status of the *Realschule* students was countered by the reduced status of the *Hauptschule* students. Rather, the *Aufbauschule* acted as a “bridge” between the classes (Lamberti 119).

Again, comprehensivization was short-lived and would not be reanimated until the Berlin School Reform of 2009. This school reform succeeded in what the *Aufbauschule* hoped to accomplish and more, as it not only granted non-gymnasial students access to the *Abitur*, but it also gave all students the opportunity to obtain this up until the tenth class. Even the *Aufbauschule* did not accomplish this, since it not only stratified students but did so three years earlier than the *integrierte Sekundarschule*. While other reforms had accomplished a bipartite structure and even *Gemeinsam Lernen*, only the *integrierte Sekundarschule* moved towards a comprehensive system rather than away from it. In this way it contrasts with all of the reforms and alterations of the educational system in the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, i.e. the more prestigious *Realschule*, the *Zweiter Bildungsweg*, the *Gesamtschule*, and the bipartite systems in the former-DDR *Bundesländer*, making it as well as Hamburg the leaders of the new comprehensivizing movement of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*.

All of these reforms, which began with a rapid decrease of German prestige and were carried out by ironically egalitarian-minded reformers, focused on the structural changes of the Germany. While the motives of the reformers made them comprehensivizing, it was the structural changes that ensured their success and longevity, as they often eliminated competition from previous structures in implementing their changes. Having now established that there is indeed a pattern in successful comprehensivizing reforms in Germany as well as its predecessor

Prussia, I will use my last section of this chapter to conclude with the implications about what this means for Germany. In doing so, I hope to offer some insight into how far the Berlin School Reform of 2009 could potentially take Germany toward comprehensivization.

Section 5.5: The Fate of the Berlin School Reform of 2009

As this paper has established that the Berlin School Reform of 2009 does in fact follow the pattern of comprehensivizing reform in Germany and Prussia, the final section will be devoted to discussing the potential for the Berlin School Reform to have nation-wide effects as the other two did. There are two important aspects to this. The first is how the reform would spread to other *Länder*; the second concerns how long the reform period will last. In addressing these questions, I ultimately hope to understand if and how the Berlin School Reform of 2009 can affect Germany as a whole.

The question of how, and indeed if, the Berlin School Reform can affect the rest of Germany is the more crucial of these as without this possibility the Berlin School Reform cannot be described as a *German* comprehensivizing period of reform. There is, however, one very important reason that the Berlin School Reform can spread to the rest of Germany: the KMK. As this organization standardizes education across Germany, it serves to counterbalance an entirely federal system, in which states remain independent of one another. Instead, schooling standards in each state must conform to a general national standard. Since the KMK has allowed Berlin to create an *integrierte Sekundarschule*, which includes the *Abitur*, a precedent has been set for this type of school, which other states can now follow.

In fact, there are already indications that the Berlin School Reform will not be an isolated incident. One is the Hamburg School Reform, which occurred simultaneous to the Berlin School

Reform. Similar to the Berlin School Reform, it created a bipartite system, moving Hamburg toward comprehensivization (Schütten 1). Though this reform did not result from the Berlin School Reform, it demonstrates that the will to comprehensivize is not isolated to Berlin.

Additionally, Brandenburg shows potential for implementing the bipartite structure as well. The reason for this is that Brandenburg has long considered fusing with the capital-state to form a combined *Land*. In fact, this is the reason that Brandenburg imitated Berlin's six-year *Grundschule* after reunification (Wilde 45). According to Klesmann, Berlin even implemented a stipulation in the reform to allow students from Brandenburg to apply for spots in the Berlin schools so long as there remain extra spots after Berlin students are allotted places in these schools (Klesmann "Eine Frage"). Though it has not implemented a reform similar to Berlin's yet, the *Land* shows interest in Berlin's new more comprehensive system. As Zöllner stated in his interview with Spiewak, other *Länder* are considering following in Berlin's footsteps.

As it is possible and even plausible that the Berlin School Reform will spread to other *Länder*, the one thing that could stop the reform is a loss of its momentum, i.e. an end to the current comprehensivizing period. In the six year between Natorp's outlining of the *Volksschule* and its implementation, the political situation had changed so severely that the original concept was distorted. Similarly, just ten years after the Weimar reformers significantly began to impact Germany, a recession and the National Socialists ended the period of comprehensivization. While the former is not as likely in Berlin, as the *integrierte Sekundarschule* is already incorporated into law, the latter situation, a loss of momentum, could occur in Germany. In fact, besides a decrease in education standards in the new system, which will not be tested until 2015, the most immediate danger to the momentum of the current comprehensivizing period is the very thing that instigated it, the PISA tests. A serious increase in Germany's standing in the PISA

tests would mean that Germany no longer needs to reform its school system, as a reform could have more negative effects than positive ones, the reverse situation of the “PISA-Shock.” In fact, this very situation has been occurring. Since PISA 2003, Germany’s scores have increased so significantly that in PISA 2012, Germany was one of the highest scorers (“Country Notes” 1). Additionally, the only period that Germany’s scores did not increase was between 2009 and 2012, the time period corresponding to Berlin and Hamburg’s reforms (1). While it is not only difficult to discern as well as unlikely that scores leveled due solely to any aspect of Berlin’s reform, much less its comprehensivization, this still represents a real threat for the current reform period.

In the previous periods of successful comprehensivizing reform, structural changes were implemented on a nation-wide basis immediately following the instigating event. The Berlin School Reform differs in this way, as it was implemented on a *Bundesland*-wide basis nearly a decade after the PISA results were published. This makes it difficult to analyze the current period for how extensive it will be. On the one hand, no comprehensivizing reform period in German history has lasted more than a decade. On the other, the fact that the reform had enough momentum to be passed nearly ten years after its instigation is perhaps an indication that the spirit of this period will last longer than the previous two. Ultimately, however, as the Berlin School Reform can certainly spread to the rest of Germany and the *integrierte Sekundarschule* has been made into law, the Berlin School Reform represents a significant step towards comprehensivization, even if it does not progress further or reach other *Länder*.

The comprehensivization that began with Natorp has had a short but influential history in German education. Though the German school system has been largely conservative and characterized by non-reform, there still remain German reformers dedicated to comprehensive education. Often, these reformers have had to wait for moments of serious demoralization of the

German people. However, when given the chance, they have effected sweeping changes, even if only in a single *Bundesland*. While it remains to be seen just how extensive the current period will be, it is undeniably linked to the brief moments of successful comprehensive reform in German educational history, one that has endured through nearly two centuries of stratification and elitism, providing a bright guiding light at the end of three converging tunnels.

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