

# Projecting the future in German art historiography of the nineteenth century: Franz Kugler, Karl Schnaase, and Gottfried Semper<sup>1</sup>

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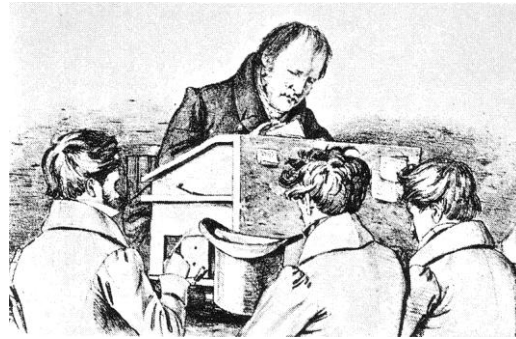


Figure 1 Franz Kugler, *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel at the lectern*, 1828. Frankfurt am Main, Goethe-Haus – Freies Deutsches Hochstift. Diathek TU Dresden

Hegel's provocative concept of the end of art – or, more precisely, of the retrospective character of art – has generated much reflection and controversy since the early nineteenth century. Most discussions of art's end take Hegel's philosophy as a starting point, but the context in which Hegel developed his theories about art was quite different from that of today.

The main source for this famous concept comes from a passage in Heinrich Gustav Hotho's introduction to Hegel's *Lectures on Aesthetics*, which Hotho edited and published in 1835, after Hegel's death:

Art, considered in its highest vocation, is and remains for us a thing of the past. Thereby it has lost for us genuine truth and life, and has instead been transferred into our ideas instead of maintaining its earlier necessity in reality and occupying its higher place.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the English correction of this article, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Jeanne-Marie Musto.

<sup>2</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. M. Knox, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975, 11. Original text: 'In allen diesen Beziehungen ist und bleibt die Kunst nach der Seite ihrer höchsten Bestimmung für uns ein Vergangenes. Damit hat sie für uns auch die echte Wahrheit und Lebendigkeit verloren und ist mehr in unsere Vorstellung verlegt, als daß sie in der Wirklichkeit ihre frühere Notwendigkeit behauptete und ihren höheren Platz einnahm.' Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Werke*, xiii: *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, I, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1986, 25.

This formulation doesn't appear in Hegel's own publications, but its general authenticity is guaranteed by the responses of a number of contemporaries. The composer Felix Mendelssohn-Bartoldy, for instance, was surprised by the philosopher's opinion that the art of his time was '*mausetot*' ('stone dead') – given his simultaneous passion for the living theatre.<sup>3</sup> The German philosopher (fig. 1) didn't really assume, of course, that the art of his time would come to an end, but he noted a decisive break between the natural presence of the art of older times and the reflexive character of contemporaneous art: 'Art invites us to intellectual consideration, and that not for the purpose of creating art again, but for knowing philosophically what art is.'<sup>4</sup>

This is the starting point for the modern discussions of the 'end of art' promoted by the philosopher Arthur C. Danto, who has been publishing on the subject since 1984.<sup>5</sup> In his book *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History* (1997), he tied the artistic epoch of modernism, beginning with Van Gogh and Gauguin, to Hegel's concept of modern reflexivity. Danto emphasized 'that mimetic representation had become less important than some kind of reflection on the means and methods of representation. [...] In effect, modernism sets itself at a distance from the previous history of art.'<sup>6</sup>

Whereas this conception may be applied – in a somewhat simplified manner – to the leading currents of twentieth-century modernism, it doesn't go well with the complexity of contemporary art. In her book *The Past is the Present; It's the Future, Too* (2012), Christine Ross demonstrates how deeply the art of the present is concerned with archives and the relics of the past, with memory practices and re-enactments, with history and archaeology, detecting a 'temporal turn' in

<sup>3</sup> Günter Nicolin, ed., *Hegel in Berichten seiner Zeitgenossen*, Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1970, 480, nr. 669. More sources in: Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert, *Ist die Kunst tot und zu Ende? Überlegungen zu Hegels Ästhetik*, Erlangen and Jena: Verlag Palm & Enke, 1993, 4-7. The preserved records of Hegel's lectures are less specific on this point. See esp. the record of Hegel's lecture in the summer semester of 1823, written by his pupil Heinrich Gustav Hotho: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Kunst*, ed. Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert, Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2003, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Hegel, *Aesthetics*, 11. 'Die Kunst lädt uns zur denkenden Betrachtung ein, und zwar nicht zu dem Zwecke, Kunst wieder hervorzurufen, sondern, was die Kunst sei, wissenschaftlich zu erkennen.' Hegel, *Vorlesungen*, 26. This thought was inspired by German writings of the late eighteenth century, especially Friedrich Schiller's paper *On naïve and sentimental poetry* (1795).

<sup>5</sup> Arthur C. Danto, 'The end of art', in: Berel Lang, ed., *The Death of Art*, New York: Haven Publishers, 1984, 5-38.

<sup>6</sup> Arthur C. Danto, *After the End of Art. Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997, 8. See page 17, note 1, for a history of modern writings on the subject. Compare also: Heinz Friedrich and others, *Ende der Kunst – Zukunft der Kunst*, Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1985; Hans Belting, *The End of the History of Art*, trans. Christopher S. Wood, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987; Arthur C. Danto and others, *Estética después del fin del arte. Ensayos sobre Arthur Danto*, Boadilla del Monte (Madrid): A. Machado Libros, 2005.



Figure 2 Hanne Darboven, *Kulturgeschichte 1880 – 1983* (*Cultural history 1880 – 1983*), 1983. New York, Dia Center for the Arts. Photo: Florian Holzherr. Submitted by Magenta on Sun, 09/06/2009 – 02:15

contemporary art (fig. 2).<sup>7</sup> ‘It is the case that artists today have adopted a more historiographical outlook on time and conversely a more temporal outlook on history [...]’.<sup>8</sup> Referring to Dieter Roelstraete’s essay on the ‘archaeological imaginary in art’, Ross points out the problems of this artistic trend: ‘The current historiographic preoccupation in art has in fact become an aesthetics of compensation for art’s “inability to grasp or even look at the present, much less to excavate the future.”’<sup>9</sup>

All questions of time are experiencing a renaissance in contemporary thought. Aspects of the present are being combined with those of the past in imagining the future. In leaving behind the historical amnesia of twentieth-century modernism, the art and architecture of today recall strongly the complexity of historicism in the nineteenth century.

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The topicality of history among twenty-first-century scholars and artists adds fresh weight to the question of how those of the century before last conceived interrelations between past, present and future. The starting point shall be again Hegel’s idea of the end of art, precisely speaking: of the past-time character of contemporary art.

<sup>7</sup> An early example is Hanne Darboven’s monumental installation *Kulturgeschichte 1880-1983* from 1983 in the Dia Art Foundation, New York. Cf. Dan Adler, *Hanne Darboven. Cultural History 1880-1983*, London: Afterall Books, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> Christine Ross, *The Past is the Present; It’s the Future, Too. The Temporal Turn in Contemporary Art*, New York and London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2012, 39.

<sup>9</sup> Ross, *Past is the Present*, 44; included citation: Dieter Roelstraete, ‘The way of the shovel: on the archaeological imaginary in art’, *e-flux journal* 4, March 2009, <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/51>.

The core of this concept is the assumption of a fundamental difference between former epochs and the present regarding the importance of art in society. In Hegel's view, the sculptures of ancient Greece had been the embodiments of mythical deities and moral laws – in his *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (*Phenomenology of the Spirit*) of 1807 he had already named this phenomenon 'Kunstreligion' – 'religion of art'.<sup>10</sup> Even Christian artworks of the Middle Ages that had been venerated as representations of saints stood for a transcendental truth. This extraordinary status of art within society could not be conserved in the modern, secularized society that followed the Reformation and Enlightenment. According to Hegel, the loss of transcendental truth was nevertheless balanced by the emancipation of art from religion. Modern artists could freely portray the complexity of nineteenth-century life.

It cannot be ignored that Hegel held a neoclassical opinion of art and connected the ideal of beauty with the sculptures of ancient Greece.<sup>11</sup> Thus he was sceptical of the subjectivity expressed by painters of the German Romantic movement and their followers in the Düsseldorf School of painting.<sup>12</sup> This scepticism dimmed his expectations concerning future developments in the arts.

Hegel's understanding of the essence of art as inherently historical granted art history a new and prominent position. It is tempting to connect this understanding with the rise of art history as an academic discipline, which occurred more or less around the same time.<sup>13</sup> In actuality, however, Hegel was not central to the formation of the discipline. The five lectures on aesthetics that he held at the universities of Heidelberg and Berlin between 1818 and 1829 were only known within a relatively small circle of students, and their late publication by Hotho between 1835 and 1838 didn't deeply influence the development of contemporary art history.

All the same, it is remarkable that both art historians who laid the foundations of modern art historiography in Germany – Karl Schnaase (1798-1875) and Franz Kugler (1808-1858) (figs. 3-4) – heard Hegel lecture in their early years (fig. 1).<sup>14</sup> What is more, Kugler's drawing of Hegel at the lectern from 1828 is the

<sup>10</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Werke*, iii: *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1986, 512-544. Original title: *System der Wissenschaft. Erster Theil, die Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Bamberg and Würzburg: Joseph Anton Goebhardt, 1807. Compare Vittorio Hösle, *Hegels System. Der Idealismus der Subjektivität und das Problem der Intersubjektivität*, vol. 2, Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1988, 589-638; Regine Prange, *Die Geburt der Kunstgeschichte. Philosophische Ästhetik und empirische Wissenschaft*, Köln: Deubner Verlag für Kunst, Theorie & Praxis, 2004, 72-78.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Hösle, *Hegels System*, vol. 2, 598-599.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert, 'Die Kritik an der Düsseldorfer Malerschule bei Hegel und den Hegelianern'. In: Gerhard Kurz, ed., *Düsseldorf in der deutschen Geistesgeschichte (1750-1850)*, Düsseldorf: Verlag Schwann, 1984, 263-288. See in general: Bettina Baumgärtel, ed., *Die Düsseldorfer Malerschule und ihre internationale Ausstrahlung 1819-1918*, 2 vols., Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Prange, *Geburt der Kunstgeschichte*, 71-93.

<sup>14</sup> Schnaase came under Hegel's sway during his law studies in Heidelberg in 1817 and followed the philosopher one year later to Berlin; Kugler attended at least some of Hegel's lectures in 1828 and 1829 and was a close friend of Karl Rosenkranz, one of Hegel's most important pupils and author of a

only existing authentic portrait of the philosopher at work.<sup>15</sup> Neither Kugler nor Schnaase, however, were Hegelians. Their conceptions of art were formed by Romantic sources as well as by the empirical turn of Germany's intellectual culture around 1830. For these reasons, they approached the question of the future of art in a completely different manner than had Hegel.

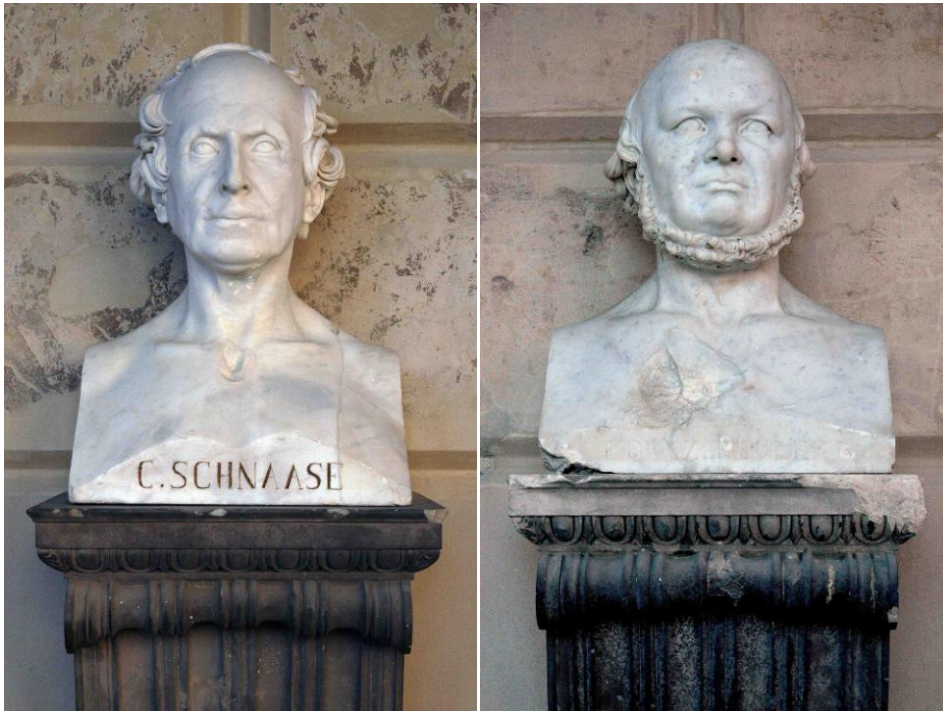


Figure 3 Joseph von Kopf, *Portrait bust of Karl Schnaase*, 1875. Berlin, Neues Museum.

Photo: Andreas Kilger. Author's archive.

Figure 4 Bernhard Afinger, *Portrait bust of Franz Kugler*, around 1870. Berlin, Neues

Museum. Photo: Andreas Kilger. Author's archive.

Kugler's nearly total abstention from philosophical questions and his concentration on facts about artists and artifacts enabled him to address, for the first time ever, art history as a whole, comprising all epochs, cultures and nations according to the knowledge of his time (including, for instance, the Pre-Columbian cultures of America) (fig. 5). All this was achieved in a single book of nearly a

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handbook of literary history (*Handbuch einer allgemeinen Geschichte der Poesie*, 1832-33) which clearly served as a model for Kugler's handbooks. Cf. Henrik Karge, 'Franz Kugler und Karl Schnaase – zwei Projekte zur Etablierung der "Allgemeinen Kunstgeschichte"', in: Michel Espagne, Bénédicte Savoy and Céline Trautmann-Waller, eds., *Franz Theodor Kugler. Deutscher Kunsthistoriker und Berliner Dichter*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2010, 83-104, esp. 89-91.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Heinrich Dilly, 'Kunsthistorische Studien, "weniger mit der Schreibfeder als mit dem Zeichenstifte gemacht". Franz Kuglers Zeichenkunst', in: Espagne, Savoy and Trautmann-Waller, *Franz Theodor Kugler*, 45-68, esp. 49-53.

thousand pages, entitled *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte* ('Handbook of art history'), published in 1842.<sup>16</sup>

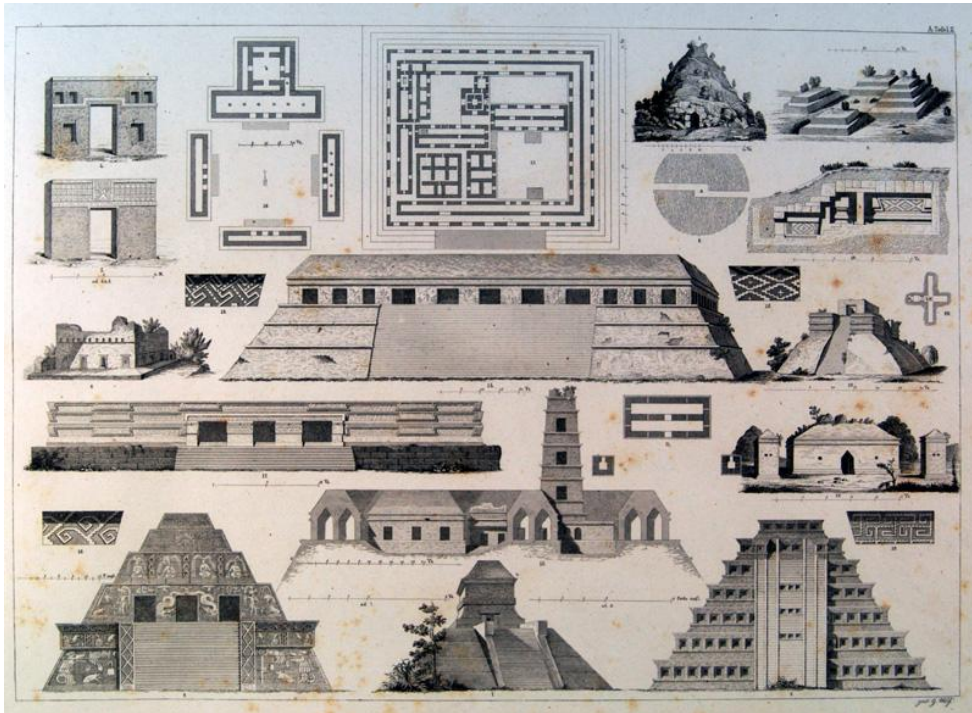


Figure 5 *Denkmäler der Kunst zur Übersicht ihres Entwicklungs-Ganges [...]*, edited by Ernst Guhl and Joseph Caspar, begun by August Voit (containing plates to illustrate Franz Kugler's *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte*), vol. 1, fascicle 1, 1845, plate A II: *Baudenkmäler aus Südamerika und Mexiko* (Monuments from South America and Mexico). Author's archive

<sup>16</sup> Franz Kugler, *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte*, Stuttgart: Verlag Ebner & Seubert, 1842. The only recent book about Franz Kugler is the above mentioned: Espagne, Savoy and Trautmann-Waller, *Franz Theodor Kugler*. Cf. also: Dan Karlholm, *Handböckernas konsthistoria. Om skapandet av 'allmän konsthistoria' i Tyskland under 1800-talet*, Stockholm: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposion, 1996; Prange, *Geburt der Kunstgeschichte*, 144-147; Henrik Karge, 'Welt-Kunstgeschichte. Franz Kugler und die geographische Fundierung der Kunsthistoriographie in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts', in: *Kunsttopographie. Theorie und Methode in der Kunstwissenschaft und Archäologie seit Winckelmann*, Stendal: Winckelmann-Gesellschaft, 2003, 19-31; Henrik Karge, 'El arte americano antiguo y el canon de la antigüedad clásica. El "Nuevo Continente" en la historiografía del arte de la primera mitad del siglo XIX / Die altamerikanische Kunst und der Kanon der klassischen Antike. Der "neue Kontinent" in der Kunsthistoriographie der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts', in: Helga von Kügelgen, ed., *Herencias indígenas, tradiciones europeas y la mirada europea / Indigenes Erbe, europäische Traditionen und der europäische Blick*, Madrid and Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Vervuert, 2002, 315-374, on Kugler: 331-334, 351-354; Henrik Karge, 'Zwischen Naturwissenschaft und Kulturgeschichte. Die Entfaltung des Systems der Epochenstile im 19. Jahrhundert', in: Bruno Klein and Bruno Boerner, eds., *Stilfragen zur Kunst des Mittelalters. Eine Einführung*, Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2006, 47-50; Heinrich Dilly, 'Franz Theodor Kugler (1808-1858)', in: Michel Espagne and Bénédicte Savoy, eds., *Dictionnaire des historiens d'art allemands*, Paris: CNRS éditions, 2010, 117-130; Timo Niegsch, 'Franz Theodor Kugler, *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte*', in: Paul von Naredi-Rainer, ed., *Hauptwerke der Kunstgeschichtsschreibung*, Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 2010, 261-265.

Characteristic is the following passage in Kugler's preface: 'The whole of our discipline (*Kunstgeschichte*, art history) is still very young; it is an empire that we are still busy conquering, [...] so it is difficult, often nearly impracticable to lay a geographical net upon that new empire and to separate provinces, districts and communities from each other.'<sup>17</sup> Kugler presents the self-image of an intellectual conquistador, but his methodology consists of interweaving empirical facts into a coherent stylistic history of art.

It is remarkable that Kugler concluded his book with a short chapter on the art of his own day: 'Blick auf die Kunstbestrebungen der Gegenwart'.<sup>18</sup> On these eight pages he revealed a distinctly Prussian, even specifically Berlin-centred perspective on contemporary art. But his exposition is nonetheless interesting because he interprets the complex situation of architecture and fine arts of his day as the consequence of the long and chequered history of art since the fifteenth century. More precisely, he sees contemporary art as resulting from three artistic developments in play since the mid-eighteenth century: a tendency towards naturalness, the Greek revival, and the Gothic (which Kugler calls 'Germanic') revival.<sup>19</sup>

Kugler also offered his own recommendations concerning future artistic developments. On the one hand, artists should free themselves from a narrow relationship with historical models – classical or medieval – in order to create monumental works that demonstrated their personal talents. On the other hand, he warned about excesses of individuality.

Kugler summed up the future potential of the arts in the last sentences of his epoch-making handbook:

The art of our time is extraordinarily rich in means and forces. If these means and these forces, each in their own measure, will be guided to one common goal; if they will once again conform to their common root, true monumental art; if, above all, architecture will regain an independent and lively shape – if all this will be the case, we can expect that the things that have begun in our days will develop in the future to their highest peaks. May the significance of architecture, nearly forgotten for four centuries, be again appreciated, and may architecture itself begin again to lead the way!<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> 'das Ganze unsrer Wissenschaft ist noch gar jung, es ist ein Reich, mit dessen Eroberung wir noch eben erst beschäftigt sind, [...] da ist es schwer, oft fast unausführbar, ein behagliches geographisches Netz darüber zu legen und Provinzen, Bezirke, Kreise und Weichbilder mit saubern Farbenlinien von einander zu sondern.' Kugler, *Handbuch*, x.

<sup>18</sup> Kugler, *Handbuch*, 853-860.

<sup>19</sup> Kugler, *Handbuch*, 855-857.

<sup>20</sup> 'Die Kunst unsrer Zeit ist überaus reich an Mitteln und an Kräften. Wenn diese Mittel und diese Kräfte, ein jedes nach seinem Maasse, einem gemeinsamen Ziele entgegengeführt werden; wenn sie sich dem gemeinsamen Stamme, der eigentlich monumentalen Kunst, wiederum anreihen; wenn vor

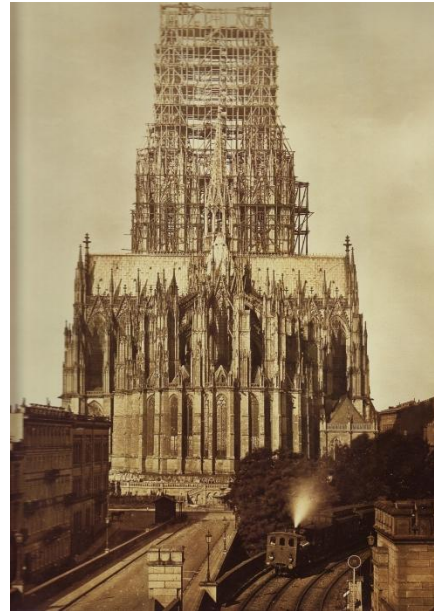


Figure 6 King Frederick William IV at the cornerstone ceremony of the completion of Cologne Cathedral in 1842, contemporary illustration. Diathek TU Dresden

Figure 7 Cologne Cathedral nearing completion in 1880, contemporary photograph. Prometheus Bildarchiv, Cologne. Diathek TU Dresden

Kugler wished architecture to be the guiding artistic discipline of the future. This idea might be inspired by the model of Gothic cathedrals as the greatest artistic achievements of the Middle Ages – produced through the coordinated efforts of artists and artisans working in diverse media to realize an architectural plan. For Kugler, the highest ranking of all Gothic cathedrals was that of Cologne, built from 1248 according to French models, but surpassing them in architectural perfection, even though it remained largely incomplete at the end of the Middle Ages.<sup>21</sup> It is a peculiar coincidence that the Prussian king Frederick William IV laid the cornerstone for the completion of this cathedral in 1842 (figs. 6-7), the same year in which Kugler's *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte* was published. The Gothic cathedral as a model for the arts headed by architecture would have a great future: it was still the guiding idea of the Bauhaus manifesto of 1919 as is shown by Lyonel Feininger's title woodcut (fig. 8).<sup>22</sup> In 1842, it manifested the desire to reorganize the arts so as to overcome the chaotic complexity of contemporary artistic production.

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Allem die Architektur wiederum eine selbständig lebenvolle Gestalt gewinnt, so haben wir von dem, was in unsern Tagen begonnen, das Höchste zu erwarten. Möge man die Bedeutung der Architektur, die seit Jahrhunderten fast vergessen ist, wiederum erkennen, und möge die Architektur selbst sich aufmachen, der Zeit wiederum voranzuschreiten!' Kugler, *Handbuch*, 860.

<sup>21</sup> Kugler, *Handbuch*, 550-552.

<sup>22</sup> There were many other modernist adaptations of the myth of the Gothic cathedral: cf. Regine Prange, *Das Kristalline als Kunstsymbol – Bruno Taut und Paul Klee. Zur Reflexion des Abstrakten in Kunst und Kunsttheorie der Moderne*, Hildesheim, Zurich and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1991, 127-140;



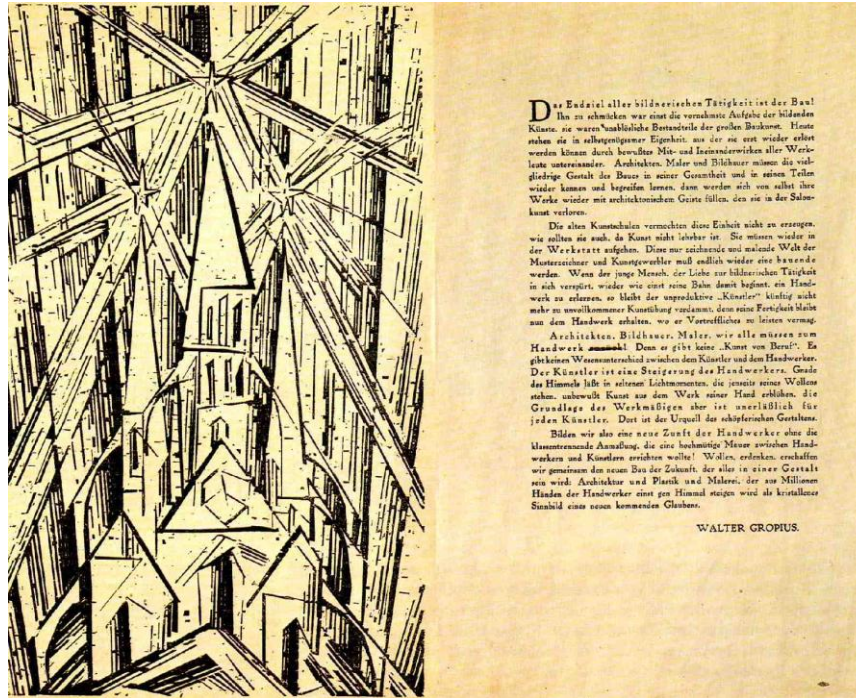


Figure 8 Lyonel Feininger, woodcut: *Gothic cathedral*, *Bauhaus-Manifest*, 1919. Prometheus Bildarchiv, Cologne. Diathek TU Dresden

Kugler was vacillating between, on the one hand, enthusiasm for the variety of artistic achievements and new techniques so characteristic of the nineteenth century,<sup>23</sup> and, on the other hand, the conviction that the arts needed to submit to a new artistic order under the guidance of architecture.

Kugler was not the only pioneer in producing handbooks that attempted to cover the history of art of all epochs and cultures. Karl Schnaase (fig. 9),<sup>24</sup> ten years older than Kugler,<sup>25</sup> published the first volume of his monumental work *Geschichte*

Florens Deuchler, 'Le passé présent dans les arts: à propos du mythe moderne de la cathédrale', *Zeitschrift für schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* 54, 1997, 169-174.

<sup>23</sup> Franz Kugler, a friend of important poets like Theodor Fontane and Theodor Storm, was intensely involved into the literary and artistic life in Berlin. Cf. Leonore Koschnick, 'Franz Kugler (1808-1858) als Kunstkritiker und Kulturpolitiker', Ph. D. thesis, Freie Universität, Berlin, 1985; Roland Berbig, 'Ein glückliches Maklertalent. Franz Kugler als literarischer Förderer', in: Espagne, Savoy and Trautmann-Waller, *Franz Theodor Kugler*, 231-244.

<sup>24</sup> Some of the author's articles on Schnaase: Henrik Karge, "'Die Kunst ist nicht das Maaß der Geschichte". Karl Schnaases Einfluß auf Jacob Burckhardt', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 78, 1996, 393-431; 'Das Frühwerk Karl Schnaases. Zum Verhältnis von Ästhetik und Kunstgeschichte im 19. Jahrhundert', in: Antje Middeldorf-Kosegarten, ed., *Johann Dominicus Fiorillo. Kunstgeschichte und die romantische Bewegung um 1800*, Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1997, 402-419; 'Vom Konzert der Künste zum Kanon der Kunstgeschichte: Karl Schnaase', in: Christian Scholl, Sandra Richter and Oliver Huck, eds., *Konzert und Konkurrenz. Die Künste und ihre Wissenschaften im 19. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen: Universitätsverlag, 2010, 93-105; 'Karl Schnaase (1798-1875)', in: Espagne and Savoy, *Dictionnaire*, 265-276; 'Stil und Epoche. Karl Schnaases dialektisches Modell der Kunstgeschichte', in: Sabine Frommel and Antonio Brucculeri, eds., *L'idée du style dans l'historiographie artistique. Variantes nationales et transmissions*, Rome: Campisano Editore, 2012 (actually 2013), 35-48.

<sup>25</sup> For more about the interrelations of both art historians see: Karge, 'Franz Kugler und Karl Schnaase'.



Figure 9 Eduard Steinbrück, *Portrait of Karl Schnaase*, oil painting, 1836. Düsseldorf, Stadtmuseum.  
Author's archive

*der bildenden Künste* ('History of the fine arts') one year after Kugler's handbook, in 1843; the final volume of the first edition would be published in 1864.<sup>26</sup> Instead of Kugler's terse arrangement of facts and monuments, Schnaase went into greater detail and considered the cultural conditions of art historical processes. On this account, the eight volumes of his compendium only reach the early Renaissance, and never touch on questions of contemporary or future art.<sup>27</sup>

Schnaase was, however, in contact with contemporary artists. After his university studies in Heidelberg and Berlin, he worked as a Prussian public procurator in Düsseldorf between 1829 and 1848. During this time he made a name for himself not only as an art historian but also as an intellectual mentor of the Düsseldorf School of Painting, at the side of the poet Karl Immermann.<sup>28</sup> Already in

<sup>26</sup> Karl (Carl) Schnaase, *Geschichte der bildenden Künste*, 7 vols., Düsseldorf: Verlag Buddeus, 1843-1864; second revised edition: 7 vols., Stuttgart: Ebner & Seubert, 1866-1876; vol. 8, Stuttgart: Ebner & Seubert, 1879.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Henrik Karge, 'Karl (auch Carl) Schnaase, *Geschichte der bildenden Künste*', in: Naredi-Rainer, ed., *Hauptwerke*, 394-399; Karge, 'Zwischen Naturwissenschaft und Kulturgeschichte', 51-54; Karge, 'Stil und Epoche'; Karlholm, *Handbäckernas konsthistoria*, esp. 110-116; Prange, *Die Geburt der Kunstgeschichte*, 137-144; Katharina Krause, Klaus Niehr and Eva-Maria Hanebutt-Benz, eds., *Bilderlust und Lesefrüchte. Das illustrierte Kunstbuch von 1750 bis 1920*, Leipzig: Seemann 2005, 110-112.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Henrik Karge, "'Denn die Kunst ist selbst nichts Absolutes...'" Karl Immermann, Karl Schnaase und die Theorie der Düsseldorfer Malerschule', in: Peter Hasubek, ed., *Epigonen und Originalität*.



Figure 10 Andreas Achenbach, *View of the Academy of Arts in Düsseldorf*, 1831. Düsseldorf, Museum Kunstpalast. Diathek TU Dresden

1831, Schnaase gave a programmatic lecture 'Ueber die Richtung der Malerei unserer Zeit' ('On the tendency of painting in our time') at the Arts Society of Rhineland and Westphalia.<sup>29</sup> He integrated German painting of his time into the broader narrative of European art since Raphael, emphasizing, in contrast to Hegel, the blossoming – and the historical depth – of the Düsseldorf school. In Schnaase's opinion, the importance of contemporary painting derived from its dissociation from the antique canon of the neo-classicists as well as from the medieval models of the Nazarenes. Painting at the Düsseldorf Academy (fig. 10) presented a new synthesis arising from the struggle between the neoclassical and the romantic schools of art – a 'third school of thought, that of our present time', founded on the belief 'that both the [abstract] ideal and the [spiritually] meaningful are fateful for the arts, that they have to be independent from all one-sided pretensions. This free exercise of art has tended to integrate all achievements of former schools: studies of

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*Immermann und seine Zeit – Immermann und die Folgen*. Frankfurt am Main etc.: Peter Lang, 1997, 111-140; Henrik Karge, "'... erhielt die Praxis der Kunst hier ihr Komplement, die Theorie.'" Karl Immermann, Karl Schnaase und Friedrich von Uechtritz als Mentoren der Düsseldorfer Malerschule', in: Baumgärtel, *Düsseldorfer Malerschule*, vol. 1, 62-75.

<sup>29</sup> Karl Schnaase, 'Ueber die Richtung der Malerei unserer Zeit. Vorgetragen in der General-Versammlung des Kunstvereins für die Rheinlande und Westphalen 1831', *Kunstblatt* 12, 1831, 325-336, 340, no. 82-85.

antiquity and of nature, striving for beauty and valuing content, cheerfulness and earnestness, all is demanded and permitted.<sup>30</sup>

Schnaase turned against the traditional hierarchy of art forms in favour of an intermingling of history and genre painting. His goal: to overcome the divide between spirit and nature in the representation of man. Some paintings made by the Düsseldorf artist Karl Friedrich Lessing, such as *Die Hussitenpredigt* ('The Hussites' prayer') from 1836 (fig. 11),<sup>31</sup> can be considered as realizations of Schnaase's demand for such a fusion of genres.



Figure 11 Karl Friedrich Lessing, *Die Hussitenpredigt* (*The Hussites' Prayer*), 1836. Berlin, Nationalgalerie.  
Reproduction from: *Die Düsseldorfer Malerschule und ihre internationale Ausstrahlung 1819-1918*,  
ed. Baumgärtel, vol. 2, 267

Four years before the publication of Hegel's lectures on aesthetics, Schnaase's lecture breathes a more optimistic, almost enthusiastic spirit into discussions of contemporary art. The art of the present was also the benchmark of the extensive reflections on the philosophy and history of art embedded in

<sup>30</sup> 'So entstand denn aus ihr die dritte Richtung, die unsrer gegenwärtigen Zeit, welche, ohne den Anspruch auf die höhere Bedeutung aufzugeben, von der Ansicht ausgieng, daß sowohl das Ideal als auch das Bedeutsame der Kunst verderblich sey, daß sie vor Allem unbefangen von allen einseitigen Ansprüchen seyn müsse. Diese freie Kunstübung hat alle Verdienste der frühern Richtungen sich anzueignen gestrebt: Studium der Antike und der Natur, Streben nach Schönheit und nach der Bedeutung des Inhalts, Heiterkeit und Ernst, alles ist gefordert und gestattet.' Schnaase, 'Ueber die Richtung', 325.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Baumgärtel, *Düsseldorfer Malerschule*, vol. 2, 265-268; Martina Sitt, *Duell an der Wand. Carl Friedrich Lessing. Die Hussitengemälde*, Düsseldorf: Parerga, 2000.

Schnaase's first great work: *Niederländische Briefe* ('Netherlandish letters') from 1834, according to Karl Immermann a 'Haupt- und Grundbuch' ('main and fundamental book') of the new discipline of art history.<sup>32</sup> Both Schnaase and Kugler shared the essential concept of a continuous evolution of modern art from Renaissance times to the present, with ups and downs but without interruption.



Figure 12 Ludwig Persius, Friedenskirche, 1845-48, Potsdam, interior. Diathek TU Dresden

Schnaase cultivated a highly nuanced position concerning the development of contemporary architecture. He articulated this in two articles in *Deutsches Kunstblatt* and *Christliches Kunstblatt* in 1858 and 1860. In the first article, Schnaase turned against the orientation of present-day church architecture, and towards Gothic models. At the time, Gothic models were being promoted in a militant manner by the ultramontane faction of the Catholic Church and their review *Organ für christliche Kunst*.<sup>33</sup> The second article goes into the stylistic options of contemporary architects. According to Schnaase, architecture should correspond to the needs and reflect the fundamental spirit of its own time, but such an architecture

<sup>32</sup> Karl Schnaase, *Niederländische Briefe*, Stuttgart and Tübingen: Verlag J. G. Cotta, 1834. New edition: Karl Schnaase, *Niederländische Briefe. Mit einer Einleitung und einem Themenverzeichnis*, ed. Henrik Karge, Hildesheim, Zurich and New York: Olms-Weidmann, 2010. See page lvii for the context of Immermann's words. Cf. also: Michael Podro, *The Critical Historians of Art*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982, 31-43.

<sup>33</sup> Karl (Carl) Schnaase, 'Archäologischer Rückblick auf das Jahr 1857', *Deutsches Kunstblatt* 9, 1858, 144-148, 170-175, esp. 147-148. Schnaase defends his friend Wilhelm Lübke against the attacks of the ultramontane *Organ*.

could not be created *ex nihilo*, without connection to the past. For this reason, Schnaase conceded, medieval models were still important for religious architecture

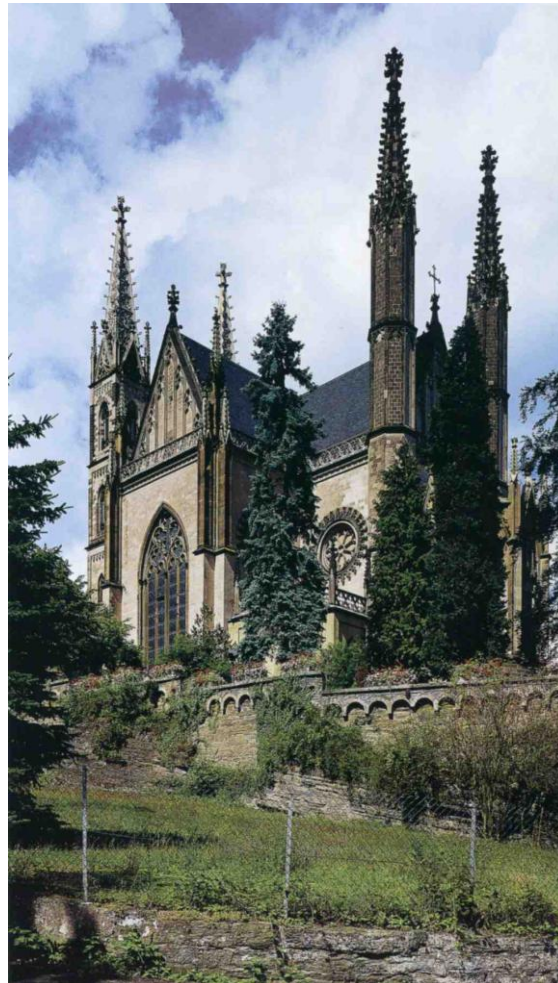


Figure 13 Ernst Zwirner, Apollinariskirche, 1839-43, Remagen. Diathek TU Dresden

in the 19th century, but these models needed to be chosen with care. He deplored, for instance, the Prussian government's propagation of the so-called '*Basilikenstil*' (fig. 12), based on early Christian models, because it had no roots in Germany. The system of Gothic architecture was more suitable for modern adaptations in Schnaase's opinion, but he saw the disadvantage that it was too elaborated to permit further developments in the present (fig. 13). The Romanesque style was, however, on account of its simplicity and openness to new developments, the most appropriate for use by contemporary architects. As an example, Schnaase cited the new village church of Callenberg in Saxony: the architect used Romanesque forms

to create a new spatial solution which was not typical for a Romanesque church (fig. 14).<sup>34</sup>

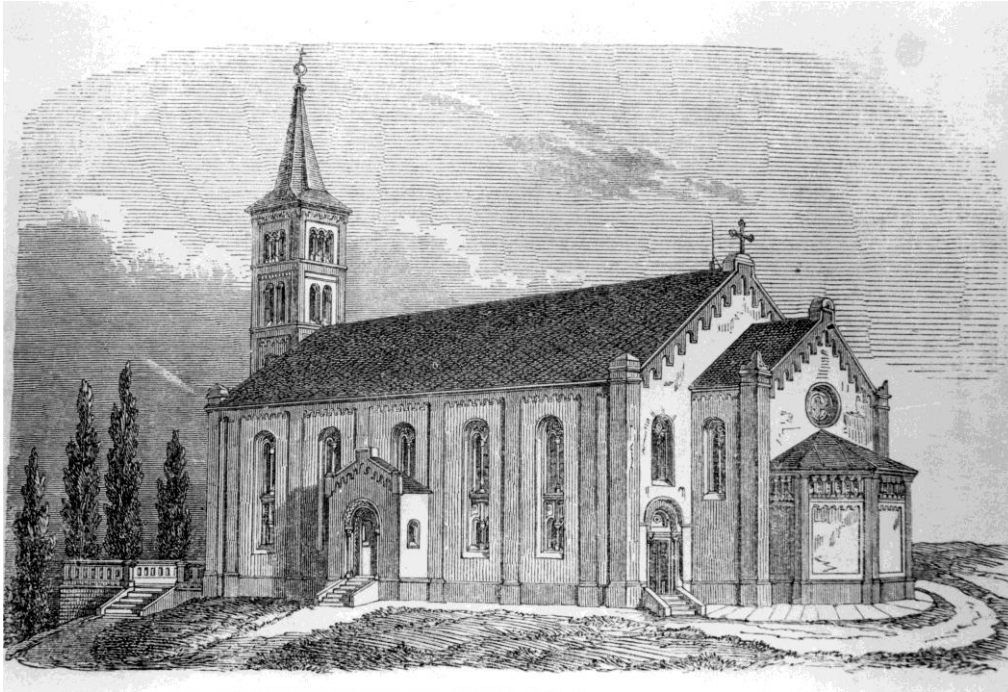


Figure 14 St. Katherine's church, 1845-48, Callenbach (Saxony), contemporary engraving.  
Diathek TU Dresden

Thus Schnaase supported – like Kugler in a short remark in his handbook<sup>35</sup>– the application of the *Rundbogenstil* (Round-arched style).<sup>36</sup> This style represented the most important attempt to create an autochthonous architecture of the nineteenth century in Germany. It was only loosely connected with historical styles such as the Romanesque and the early Italian Renaissance. The conception of *Rundbogenstil* had been established by Heinrich Hübsch, architect in Karlsruhe (fig. 15), who published a book in 1828 with the famous title: *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?* ('In which style shall we build?').<sup>37</sup> Today, this title is usually seen as an

<sup>34</sup> Karl Schnaase, 'Die neue Kirche zu Callenberg im Königreich Sachsen. Nebst einer Vergleichung der Stilarten des christlichen Kirchenbaues', *Christliches Kunstblatt* 1860, 1-12.

<sup>35</sup> Kugler, *Handbuch*, 857-858.

<sup>36</sup> There are relatively few studies on the conception of *Rundbogenstil*: Dieter Dolgner, 'Der Rundbogenstil – Ein Versuch der architektonischen Erneuerung im 19. Jahrhundert', *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen Weimar* 27, 1980, no. 4, 199-210; Kathleen Curran, 'The German Rundbogenstil and reflections on the American round-arched style', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 47, 1988, 351-373; Wolfgang Herrmann, ed., *In what style should we build? The German debate on architectural style*, Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1992 (Texts & documents); Ulrich Maximilian Schumann, 'A Renaissance consciously unconscious? Heinrich Hübsch and the round-arch style ("Rundbogenstil")'. In: Frédérique Lemerle, ed., *Le XIXe siècle et l'architecture de la Renaissance*, Paris: Picard, 2010, 153-163.

<sup>37</sup> Heinrich Hübsch, *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?*, Karlsruhe: Verlag Chr. Fr. Müller, 1828. Cf. Silke Walther, 'In welchem Style sollen wir bauen? Studien zu den Schriften und Bauten des Architekten

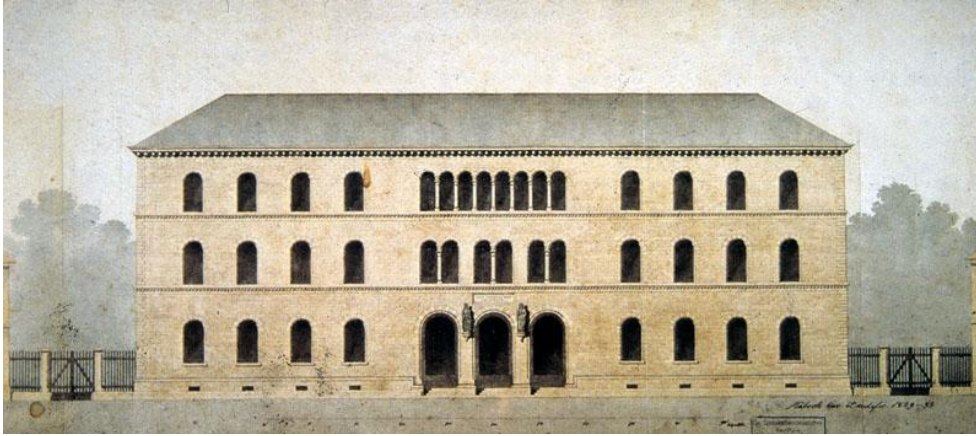


Figure 15 Heinrich Hübsch, *Façade plan for Polytechnical School in Karlsruhe*, 1832. Diathek TU Dresden

expression of the supposed arbitrariness of the choice of architectural styles in nineteenth-century historicism, but actually it stands for a program of modern building. A main advocate of this new system was Schnaase's friend Rudolph Wiegmann, an architect in Düsseldorf. Wiegmann articulated his wish for greater innovation in architecture and art in an article about the 'development of a modern national building style', published in 1841:

In the realm of spirit there is no circulation; in the realm of spirit there is only a steady flow of occurrences – no beginning, no end and no return – only progress. And for that reason, our present and all future art won't ever take on a former shape. And in the cases where it attempts to do so, it remains beyond the fertile soil of the present and is hovering in the air, a fading art.<sup>38</sup>

Wiegmann's opinion was shared by Schnaase, who not only ruled out the end of art and its return to former states and conditions, but also the possibility of directing the trend of future art. In that respect, a dossier about the development of contemporary architecture written for King Maximilian II of Bavaria in 1860 is of particular interest. In 1850, this king had announced a competition for the invention

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Heinrich Hübsch (1795-1863)', PhD thesis, University of Stuttgart, 2004, <http://elib.uni-stuttgart.de/opus/volltexte/2004/1936/>.

<sup>38</sup> 'Im Reiche des Geistes giebt es keinen Kreislauf, im Reiche des Geistes giebt es nur einen stetigen Fluß der Erscheinungen – keinen Anfang, kein Ende und keine Wiederkehr – nur Fortschritt. Und deshalb kann unsere und alle zukünftige Kunst eine schon einmal dagewesene Gestalt nie wieder annehmen. Und wo sie es versucht, steht sie außerhalb des fruchtbaren Bodens der Gegenwart und schwebt verwelkend in der Luft.' Rudolph Wiegmann, 'Gedanken über die Entwicklung eines zeitgemäßen nationalen Baustyls', *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* 1841, 207-214, esp. 210. Similar ideas may be found in: Rudolph Wiegmann, *Der Ritter Leo von Klenze und unsere Kunst*, Düsseldorf: J. H. C. Schreiner, 1839, esp. 49-56.



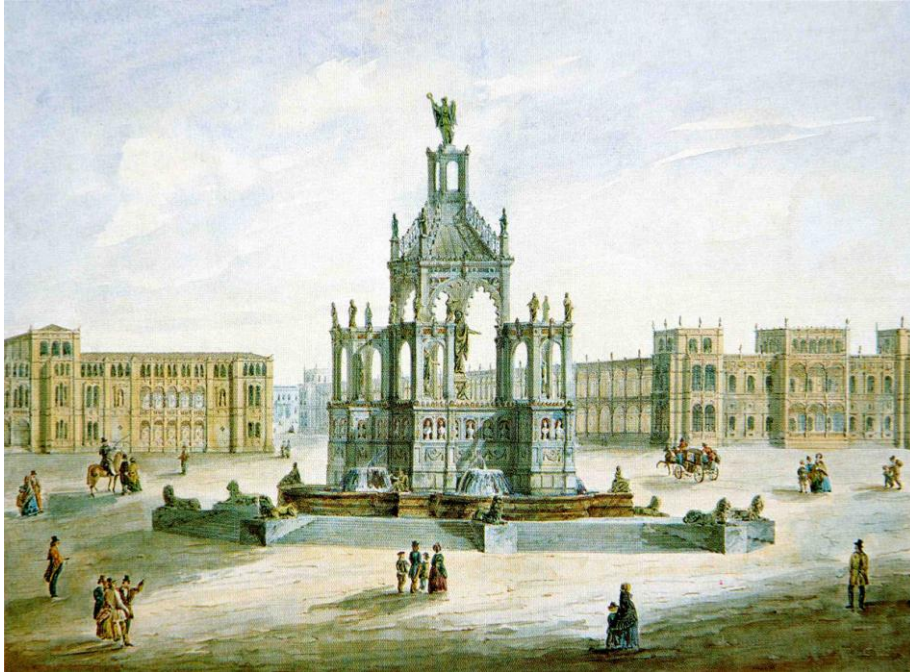


Figure 16 August Voit, *Project of a place in Munich*, example of “Maximilianstil”, 1850. Diathek TU Dresden

of a new building style, the so-called ‘Maximilianstil’, with deceiving results.<sup>39</sup> According to the plans of the architect August Voit, a new district of Munich, including some government buildings, was erected (fig. 16), but the highly ornamental hybrid system of Gothic and Renaissance elements found no success as a new building style. Ten years later, Voit asked some prominent persons, mainly architects, for dossiers about the tendencies of contemporary architecture. Schnaase, the only art historian, advised the king in his paper from November 1860 against all attempts to influence the development of architecture because it could only follow the fundamental structures of its time. Thus he wrote that even Greek and Gothic revival buildings reflected the character of the nineteenth century.<sup>40</sup>

As could be demonstrated, in the decades around 1850 various art historians and architects shared common views concerning the development of art and architecture from past to future times. So it may be justified to take a closer view of an architect who was one of the most original historians of culture and art. Gottfried Semper (1803-1879) (fig. 17) was born five years after Schnaase and five before Kugler, his adversary in the heated question of polychromy in ancient architecture. Semper was one of the few architects in history who excelled in the same degree as

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Eberhard Drüeke, *Der Maximilianstil. Zum Stilbegriff der Architektur im 19. Jahrhundert*, Mittenwald: Mäander Verlag, 1981; August Hahn, *Der Maximilianstil in München. Programm und Verwirklichung*, Munich: Heinz Moos Verlag, ca. 1982.

<sup>40</sup> Unpublished dossier: Munich, Geheimes Hausarchiv München, Nachlass Max II., 77-6-90.



Figure 17 Portrait of Gottfried Semper, anonymous pencil drawing, 1834. Zurich, gta Archiv / ETH Zürich, Nachlass Gottfried Semper: A.IV.a.I. Author's archive

both builder and theoretician.<sup>41</sup> Strangely enough, he wrote little about architecture, and still less about his own buildings. He dedicated most of his studies to the

<sup>41</sup> There is an abundant bibliography on Gottfried Semper; some of the most important works of the last decades: Heidrun Laudel, *Gottfried Semper. Architektur und Stil*, Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1991; Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Gottfried Semper. Architect of the Nineteenth Century*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996; Winfried Nerdinger and Werner Oechslin, eds., *Gottfried Semper 1803-1879. Architektur und Wissenschaft*, Munich: Prestel Verlag and Zurich: gta-Verlag, 2003; Mari Hvattum, *Gottfried Semper and the Problem of Historicism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; Michael Gnehm, *Stumme Poesie. Architektur und Sprache bei Gottfried Semper*, Zurich: gta-Verlag, 2004; Henrik Karge, ed., *Gottfried Semper – Dresden und Europa. Die moderne Renaissance der Künste. Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums der Technischen Universität Dresden aus Anlass des 200. Geburtstags von Gottfried Semper*, Munich and Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2007; Rainald Franz and Andreas Nierhaus, eds., *Gottfried Semper und Wien. Die Wirkung des Architekten auf 'Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst'*, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2007; Sonja Hildebrand, 'Gottfried Semper', in: Ulrich Pfisterer, ed., *Klassiker der Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 1: *Von Winckelmann bis Warburg*, Munich: C. H. Beck Verlag, 2007, 62-75; Hans-Georg von Arburg, *Alles Fassade. 'Oberfläche' in der deutschsprachigen Architektur- und Literaturästhetik 1770-1870*, Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2008, 264-344.

analysis of applied arts and ornament in his own day, and to theories concerning the earliest stages of human artistic creativity.<sup>42</sup> His most productive years as royal architect in Dresden (fig. 18) came to an end in 1848, when he had to leave Saxony on account of his revolutionary activities. London, his place of refuge, didn't offer him work, but it did inspire him, thanks to innovations in industrial arts and design initiated by the Great Exhibition of 1851.



Figure 18 Gottfried Semper, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Zwinger façade, 1847-55. Dresden. Photo: Henrik Karge

As a result, Semper published in 1860 and 1863 the two monumental volumes of *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten* ('Style in the technical and tectonic arts'), which are exclusively dedicated to the archaeology of such applied arts as ceramics and textiles, which he saw as the basis of all human artistic creation.<sup>43</sup> In contrast to the art historians Kugler and Schnaase, Semper didn't try to

<sup>42</sup> The first complete reprint edition of Semper's works is now appearing: Henrik Karge, ed., Gottfried Semper, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 4 vols., Hildesheim, Zurich and New York: Olms-Weidmann, 2008-2013. Vols. 2-4 have already been published; vol. 1, which contains the smaller writings in chronological order and a general introduction of the editor, is about to appear.

<sup>43</sup> Gottfried Semper, *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten, oder praktische Ästhetik. Ein Handbuch für Techniker, Künstler und Kunstfreunde*, vol. 1, Frankfurt am Main: Verlag für Kunst und Wissenschaft, 1860, vol. 2, Munich: Friedrich Bruckmann's Verlag, 1863. Reprint edition: Semper, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Karge, vols. 2-3, 2008. English translation: Gottfried Semper, *Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts; or, Practical Aesthetics*, introduction by Harry Francis Mallgrave, trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Michael Robinson, Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 2004.

write a coherent history of the (applied) arts. He looked instead for archetypes and fundamental conditions of the creation of artistic objects in early cultures, presuming their continuous effectiveness through all epochs of civilization until the present time.



Figure 19 Gottfried Semper, Palais Oppenheim, 1845-48, Dresden (destroyed). Historical photograph.

Author's archive

In his architectural practice, Semper looked to the Italian Renaissance, and especially to the *palazzi di cinquecento* Rome and Venice, as a reference for his own buildings (fig. 19). In so doing, he adhered to the same evolutionary model of artistic development from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries as did Schnaase and Kugler.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, Renaissance architecture played a surprisingly

<sup>44</sup> About the 'invention' of the Renaissance style in the nineteenth century and its inclusion in the wider concept of 'modern' architecture: Henrik Karge, 'Renaissance. Aufkommen und Entfaltung des Stilbegriffs in Deutschland im Zuge der Neorenaissance-Bewegung um 1840', in: Walter Krause, Heidrun Laudel and Winfried Nerdinger, eds., *Neorenaissance – Ansprüche an einen Stil. Zweites Historismus-Symposium Bad Muskau*, Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 2001, 39-66. Semper's adaptation of Italian Renaissance models has been analysed by Gisela Moeller, "Solange Steine reden können." –

small role in Semper's writings. It was the *Rundbogenstil* and its Romanesque and Byzantine roots that were of major importance for his ideas about the future development of architecture.



Figure 10 Gottfried Semper, *Project for Nikolaikirche (St. Nicholas) in Hamburg*, 1844. Diathek TU Dresden

These ideas were first formulated in Semper's polemical publication *Ueber den Bau evangelischer Kirchen* ('About the construction of Protestant churches') from 1845. He wrote this essay to defend his position in the vehement debate about the reconstruction of the church of St. Nicholas in Hamburg after the great fire of 1842, which had become a central battlefield in the 'war of styles'.<sup>45</sup> Semper's project of a domed church on a centralized plan followed the principles of the round-arched style and was accentuated by Renaissance and Byzantine elements. Although it had won first prize in the competition (fig. 20), in the end George Gilbert Scott's project

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Zur Formsynthese von Antike und Renaissance bei Gottfried Sempers Bauten der Dresdner Jahre', in: Karge, *Gottfried Semper – Dresden und Europa*, 161-174.

<sup>45</sup> Gottfried Semper, *Ueber den Bau evangelischer Kirchen. Mit besonderer Beziehung auf die gegenwärtige Frage über die Art des Neubaues der Nikolaikirche in Hamburg und ein dafür entworfenes Project*, Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1845; new edition: Gottfried Semper, *Kleine Schriften*, ed. Manfred and Hans Semper, Berlin and Stuttgart: Verlag W. Spemann, 1884, 443-467. (Reprint: Semper, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 4, 2008, ed. Karge; reprint of original version in preparation for vol. 1).

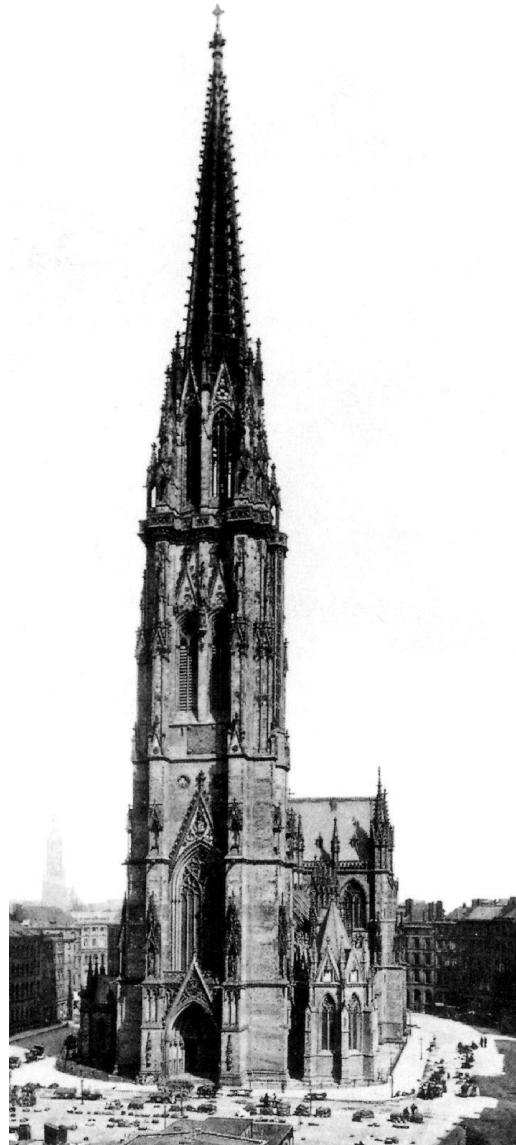


Figure 11 George Gilbert Scott, Nikolaikirche, 1845-63, Hamburg (partly destroyed). Historical photograph. Diathek TU Dresden

of a church in Gothic form, which was supported by the radical Protestant faction, was chosen and built (fig. 21). The experience of this competition intensified Semper's aversion towards the fundamentalist currents in the Catholic as well as the Protestant Churches of that time – and towards all attempts at a Gothic revival.

In his book on Protestant church building, Semper rejected both the architecture of early Christian times, the so-called basilica style – Schnaase, too, would later adopt this position – and the Gothic architecture as starting-points for conceptions of present-day buildings. He recommended instead the round-arched



Figure 12 Katholikon of monastery, around 1080, Daphni near Athens, interior with dome. Diathek TU Dresden

style with its Romanesque and Byzantine roots<sup>46</sup> – the Renaissance elements of his church project didn't play a role in his theory. Semper had become interested in the churches of the Byzantine Empire since journeying through Greece. Later he would develop a detailed analysis of Byzantine cross-dome-churches (fig. 22) in his travel account 'Reise-Erinnerungen aus Griechenland' ('Travel memories from Greece'), which was published in 1858.<sup>47</sup> In *Ueber den Bau evangelischer Kirchen*, Semper saw these Greek-Byzantine churches as models for the gallery constructions in Protestant churches. German Romanesque architecture appeared to him a multifaceted system of national character which had not evolved organically because of the adoption of the pointed arch from the French Gothic system. Present-day architects had the opportunity, therefore, to develop the still-unrealized potential of Romanesque architecture – an architecture characterized, according to Semper, by a 'greater simplicity and variety in the building masses'; in Semper's

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Dieter Dolgner, 'Gottfried Semper und der Rundbogenstil', *Architectura* 11, 1981, 157-182.

<sup>47</sup> Gottfried Semper, 'Reise-Erinnerungen aus Griechenland', *Frankfurter Museum. Süddeutsche Wochenschrift für Kunst, Literatur und öffentliches Leben* 4, 1858, 153-159, 335-338, 734-739, 984-989, 1005-1007, 1064-1068, 1088-1093, esp. 734-739 ('Byzantinische Bauten und Anwendung ihres Styls auf die Neuzeit'); new edition of the first passages, without the analysis of Byzantine churches: Semper, *Kleine Schriften*, 429-442. (Reprint: Semper, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 4, 2008, ed. Karge; reprint of complete original version in preparation for vol. 1). Cf. for the cultural and political implications of the concept 'Byzantine style': Jeanne-Marie Musto, 'Byzantium in Bavaria: Art, Architecture and History Between Empiricism and Invention in the Post-Napoleonic Era', PhD thesis, Bryn Mawr College, 2007.

opinion, the beauty of Byzantine and Romanesque churches had a special effect on the human mind comparable to music or poetry<sup>48</sup> – an idea similar to that which Karl Schnaase had expressed in his early work *Niederländische Briefe* from 1834.<sup>49</sup>

Some of Semper's arguments concerning Protestant church building, such as his polemics against the Gothic revival, would recur in his lecture *Ueber Baustyle* ('About architectural styles'), which he gave in Zurich in 1869.<sup>50</sup> At the same time, the architect denied the possibility of inventing a new style. In Semper's opinion, societal change and a new world view were the prerequisites for the emergence of new building styles.

At this point, Semper's and Schnaase's lines of thought were actually converging. Schnaase published in 1870 a favourable review Semper's lecture *Ueber Baustyle* in an article which was dedicated to the perspectives of the present and future of the art: 'Gegenwart und Zukunft der Kunst'.<sup>51</sup> In the second review of this article, Schnaase criticized – very much like Semper in similar cases – the negative attitude of a religious author towards the reality of modern life. Schnaase pointed out that the empirical and 'atomistic' structure of the natural sciences, just like the naturalistic approach of contemporary art, could not revert back into a religious culture of organic uniformity.<sup>52</sup> By contrast, in the short first review Schnaase showed deference to the 'famous, ingenious master of architecture' and recognized Semper's approach to the future of art and architecture as being much like his own. Especially Semper's opinion that a new building style could only evolve on the basis of profound cultural innovations, of a new universal idea, found special favour with Schnaase.<sup>53</sup> In the introduction to his article, Schnaase emphasized in a highly concentrated sentence that the formation and interpretation of contemporary art required a vision of the future as well as continuity with the past:

The appreciation of the art of our time and, to this end, of the art of the previous era is no useless game; it will always arouse ideas about the

<sup>48</sup> 'Die eigentlich architectonischen Schönheiten der byzantinisch-romanischen Kirche lassen sich in ihrer Wirkung auf das Gemüth mehr mit der Musik oder der Poesie vergleichen. [...] Es gehört dazu eine größere Einfachheit und Abwechslung in den Massen [...]' Semper, *Ueber den Bau evangelischer Kirchen*, 21.

<sup>49</sup> Schnaase, *Niederländische Briefe*, ed. Karge, 409-410. In a general way, the similarities between Schnaase's and Semper's lines of thought have already been detected by Michael Podro: Podro, *Critical Historians*, 44.

<sup>50</sup> Gottfried Semper, *Ueber Baustyle. Ein Vortrag gehalten auf dem Rathhaus in Zürich am 4. März 1869*, Zurich: Verlag Friedrich Schulthess, 1869; new edition: Semper, *Kleine Schriften*, 395-426. (Reprint: Semper, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 4, 2008, ed. Karge; reprint of original version in preparation for vol. 1).

<sup>51</sup> Karl Schnaase, 'Gegenwart und Zukunft der Kunst', *Christliches Kunstblatt* 1870, no. 3, 33-41, 52-59, including reviews of works by Gottfried Semper, Karl Christian Planck and H. Holtzmann.

<sup>52</sup> Review of Karl Christian Planck, *Gesetz und Ziel der neueren Kunstentwicklung im Vergleiche mit der antiken*, Stuttgart: Ebner & Seubert, 1879, in: Schnaase, 'Gegenwart und Zukunft der Kunst', 34-41.

<sup>53</sup> Schnaase, 'Gegenwart und Zukunft der Kunst', 34.



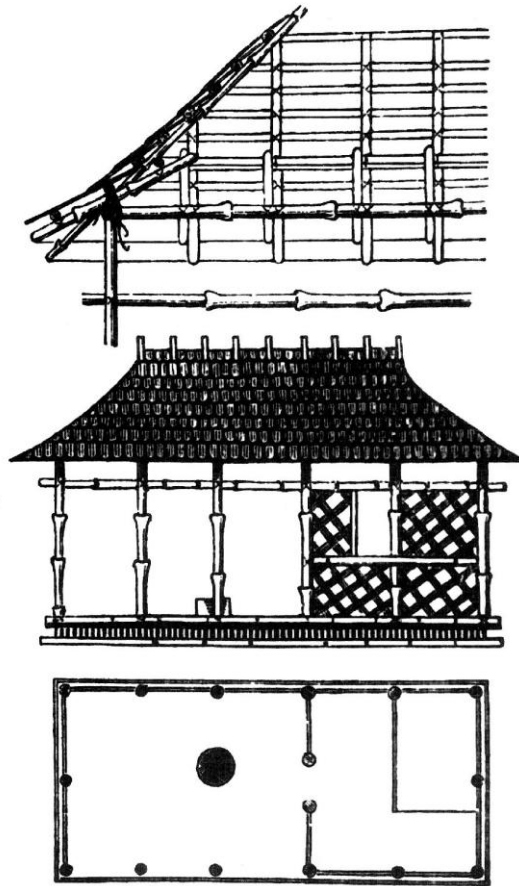


Figure 13 Gottfried Semper, *Caribbean hut from Trinidad*, engraving in: *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten*, vol. 2, 1863, 276

desired future, about the aims to which contemporary art must turn and, in such a way, gain influence over its destiny.<sup>54</sup>

Schnaase's vision of a fundamental coherence of past, present and future art was nearly identical with Semper's, but this sense of temporal continuity didn't determine the architect's *fortuna critica*. Semper's writings have had lasting impact on the self-image of architects in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries not because of his evolutionary theory of contemporary style, but on account of his archaeological investigations into creativity. The archetypes of the design process which Semper detected in the early cultural stages of mankind and in remote parts of the present world (fig. 23) offered creative patterns which seemed independent from the cultural contingencies of the succeeding epochs. These 'eternal' patterns

<sup>54</sup> 'Die Würdigung der gegenwärtigen Kunst und zu diesem Zwecke der ihr vorhergegangenen, ist kein müßiges Spiel; sie wird immer Vorstellungen über die zu erstrebende Zukunft, über die Ziele, denen jene sich zuwenden muß, erwecken, und dergestalt Einfluß auf ihre Schicksale erlangen.' Schnaase, 'Gegenwart und Zukunft der Kunst', 33.

Henrik Karge    Projecting the future in German art historiography of the nineteenth century: Franz Kugler, Karl Schnaase, and Gottfried Semper

had the advantage of freeing architects from the relativity of history; they seemed to offer objective laws of creation. As distinct from Hegel's integration of art into history and Schnaase's and Kugler's balance between art and history, Semper tried to release the process of artistic creation from its immediate historical models by referring to fundamental archetypes. These archetypes, presented as valid for all time, including the future, left no place for an end of art. Rather, they stood for a vision of a distant past which tends to reduce the perspectives of history. At the same time, Semper always emphasized the importance of the continuity of cultural epochs. His oeuvre thus offers models both for the modernist negation of history and for the present recovery of historical consciousness in the arts.

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