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The Anti-Historicist Historicism of German Romantic Architecture

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Nineteenth-century German architecture was characterized by a conflict between the availability of multiple historically derivative styles and the demand for the establishment of a culturally appropriate normative one. This conflict resulted from an aesthetic historicism that posited the cultural specificity of architectural styles while simultaneously abstracting them from their original contexts. Because the same aesthetic, ideological, and functionalist claims could be and were advanced on behalf of different styles, the prolonged debate among German architectural writers and practitioners about which one should be favored proved irresolvable so long as it was assumed that a style must be historically referential.

In nineteenth-century German architecture, the persistence of a plurality of historically derivative styles of exterior design was matched only by the persistence of the desire for a newly normative style. In 1828 the Hessian architect Heinrich Hübsch, an associate of the Nazarene group of artists, published a treatise whose very title posed the question that preoccupied architects for much of the century: *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?* In what style should we build? His own answer was the *Rundbogenstil*: rounded-arch or Romanesque style. Sixteen years later the Saxon architect Carl Albert Rosenthal directed the same question to members of the Association of German Architects, noting that what was at stake was the architectural expression of national character (23). Unlike Hübsch, Rosenthal favored the *Spitzbogenstil*: pointed-arch or Gothic style. In 1850, no consensus about a national style having emerged in the meantime, the Bavarian king Maximilian II ordered the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich to hold a competition for "a new national form of architecture" in which "the character of the age [*Charakter der Zeit*] would unmistakably find its clear expression" – yet the terms of the competition encouraged the entrants to mix existing styles while not neglecting the "old German, so-called Gothic architecture" (qtd. in Hahn 102–3).[1] Unsurprisingly, all seventeen submissions were eclectic, a result that, according to the surviving reports, satisfied neither the judges nor the king (Hahn 114–16; Klenze, *Memorabilien* fol. 44r).[2] Evidently the question of stylistic choice could not be answered on its own terms. But was the difficulty, as a contemporary editorial in the *Deutsches Kunstblatt* maintained, that "architectural styles are not created, but develop [*entstehen*]" ("Neuer" 145, qtd. in Herrmann, "Introduction" 9)?

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Recent scholarship has been concerned largely with elaborating the ideological programs underlying the preferences for particular styles, whether explicit, as in the Rhenish politician August Reichensperger's relentless promotion of the Gothic as a distinctively *christlich–germanische* architecture (Lewis 75–85), or implicit, as in Hübsch's dissociation of the *Rundbogenstil* from classical style in order to promote Christian universalism by association with the basilican architecture of the early, which is to say undivided, Church (Bergdoll, "Archaeology"). In a book on the relationship between Romantic historicism and Prussian cultural politics in the early nineteenth century, the historian John Toews has interpreted the architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel's shift in his professed allegiance from Gothic to Greek style after 1815 as the result of a transformation in his conception of an ethical national community: whereas the Gothic, articulated in Schinkel's unrealized design for the *Befreiungsdom* (1814), a cathedral commemorating the German people's liberation from Napoleon, symbolized a community of autonomous individuals identifying subjectively with an historically informed idea of the nation, the Greek, expressed in his more modest but executed design for a museum of antiquities (Altes Museum, 1823–1830), symbolized "the ethical power of aesthetic experience" to integrate isolated individuals into a community defined by a shared past and common will (120–37, 141–52). Analyzing the publications of Bavaria's leading architect, Jörg Traeger (67–73) and Dirk Klose (126–27) have argued that Leo von Klenze sought to legitimize his own preference for Greek style by appeal to the contemporary racial theory of the common origin of the German and Greek peoples in the Caucasus. In his survey of nineteenth-century German architectural theory, Mitchell Schwarzer has identified in justifications of different historical styles the promise to the anxious modern subject of affiliation with "ideas of social cohesion located alternatively in classical antiquity, feudal Christianity, court culture, and mercantile humanism" (37).

Persuasive as such interpretations are in themselves, they are generally limited by their focus on individual styles and their reliance on the architects' own writings. In the absence of an agreed style, practitioners felt compelled to justify discursively, if primarily to themselves and their professional colleagues, their choices among the available stylistic registers. But in practice, the selection of a style was rarely left to the architect alone. A particularly instructive example is Bavaria, whose king Ludwig I, upon ascending the throne in 1825, undertook an ambitious, expensive building program that transformed the appearance of Munich. However firmly convinced Klenze may have been that ancient Greek architecture provided "a firm principle for all times" (*Versuch* 7), he proved perfectly capable of designing buildings in other styles. As his biographer observes, "Klenze – following royal wishes – himself contributed to the development of that historicizing stylistic pluralism and eclecticism which he sought lifelong to combat" (Buttlar 10). Indeed, each of his three additions to the royal Residenz complex in the center of Munich is in a different historically derivative style: the Florentine Renaissance Königsbau (1826–1835), whose windows recall the Palazzo Pitti and pilasters the Palazzo Rucellai; the Allerheiligen-Hofkirche or Court Church of All Saints (1826–1837), which combines a Romanesque exterior and a neo-Byzantine interior decorated at Ludwig's insistence with extravagant gold mosaics after the model of the Norman Cappella Palatina in Palermo; and the classical Festsaalbau (1832–1842), whose façade was inspired by Palladio's Basilica in Vicenza. Similarly, Klenze's rival Friedrich von Gärtner was commissioned to design for a single street, named after Ludwig himself, a monumental state library (1832–1843) in an Italianate *Rundbogenstil* reminiscent of the Palazzo Pitti, a three-arched loggia (Feldherrnhalle, 1841–1844) copied from Florence's fourteenth-century Loggia dei Lanzi (figure 1), and a triumphal arch (Siegestor, 1843–1852) modeled on Rome's fourth-century Arch of Constantine.

That an artistically cultivated ruler, intent on turning his capital city into a major intellectual center, would not only countenance but demand this stylistic diversity suggests the absence of established, particular ideological associations with the styles themselves. Thus the formation of such associations was factitious. Even the identification of the Gothic with Germanness, which would have appalled most eighteenth-century German architectural theorists (Frankl 418–22), was largely a creation of Romantic writers like Ludwig Tieck, Friedrich Schlegel, and Joseph Görres, provoked by the French domination of German lands during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars (Beutler 75–76; Germann 89; Lewis 30–31). The fusion of the aesthetics of the sublime with artistic nationalism in the celebration of Gothic cathedrals made those buildings powerful symbols of the Germans' aspiration to emancipate themselves from the French and to constitute themselves as a single linguistically and culturally defined nation. Schinkel's devotion to the Gothic in the early 1810s, when he supported himself by painting nationalistic scenes – such as the *Medieval City by a River* (1815; figure 2), in which a rainbow arches over a castle, a vast cathedral, and a city, implying the unity of society under the authority of the king who appears in the foreground, returning victoriously from battle (an obvious allusion to the Prussian-led campaign against Napoleon in 1814) – was the architectural counterpart to the interest of his friends Clemens Brentano and Achim and Bettina von Arnim in German folk songs (Bergdoll, *Schinkel* 31–33).

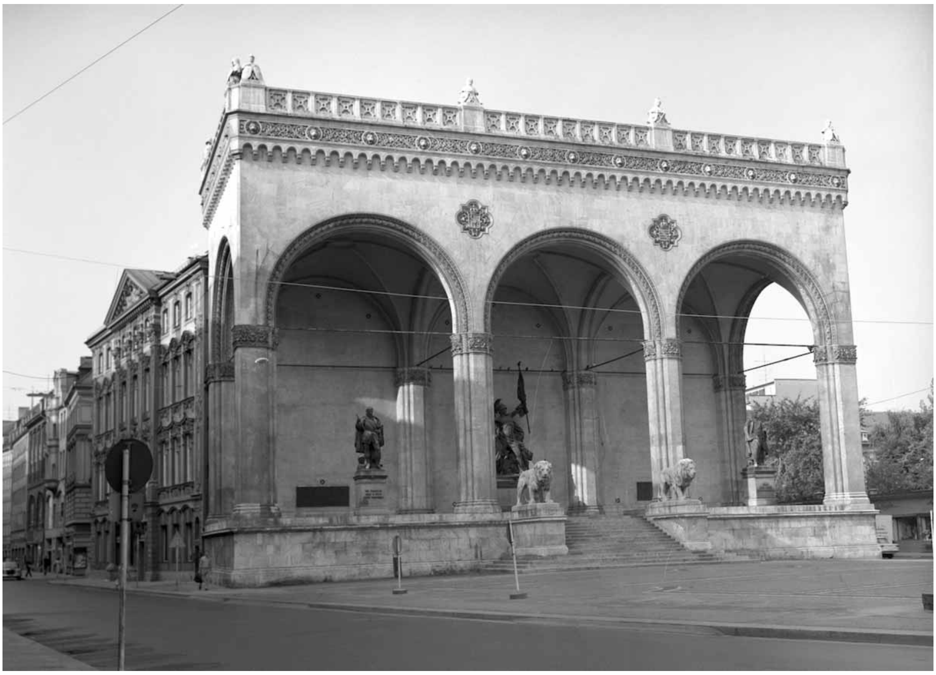

Figure 1. Friedrich von Gärtner. Feldherrnhalle, Munich (1841–1844). Photograph: Helga Schmidt-Glassner. Bildarchiv Foto Marburg.

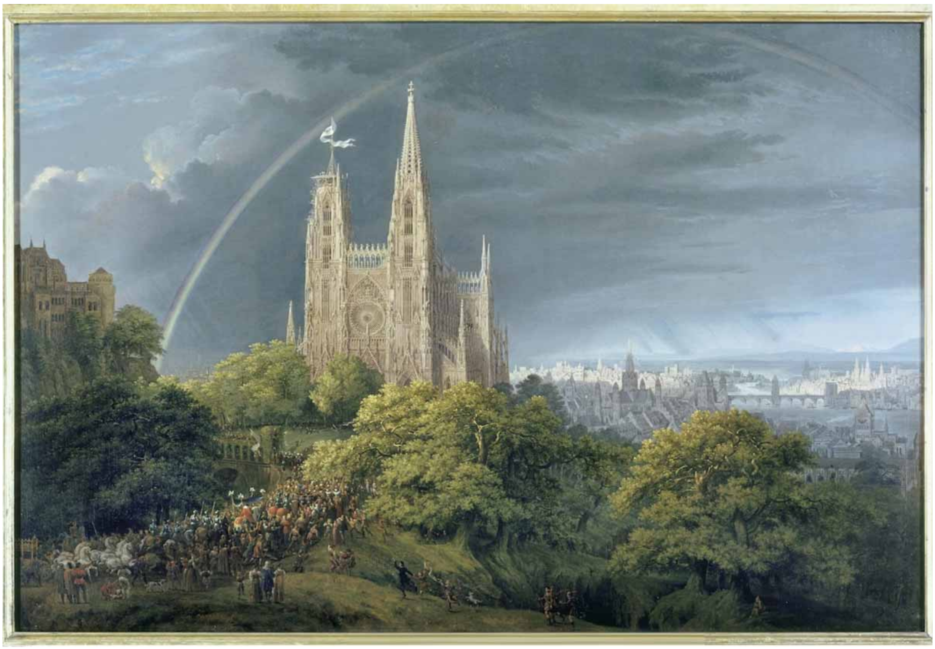

Figure 2. Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781–1841). *Mittelalterliche Stadt an einem Fluss* (1815). Oil on canvas, 95 × 140.6 cm. Berlin, Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photograph: Jörg P. Anders. Copyright BPK/Nationalgalerie, SMB/Jörg P. Anders.

Considerations of the Gothic in contemporary studies concerned specifically with architecture, however, tended to be historicizing (Frankl 466–67; Germann 93; Kruft 290–92, 296–97), and the style did not in fact become dominant, let alone normative, when building projects could again be undertaken after 1815. By far the most significant German Gothic structure built during the century was the portion of Cologne Cathedral that had remained unbuilt since the fifteenth century.[3] That the cathedral, whose "ruinous incompletion" Görres had interpreted as a symbol of the unrealized unitary German state (2), was completed in 1823–1880, was overdetermined by the conflicting ideological interests of Rhenish Catholics like Reichensperger, who wanted to preserve a sense of cultural distinctness in the face of the post-1815 Prussian annexation of the Rhineland, and of the Protestant Prussian crown, which wanted to secure the loyalty of its new subjects (Lewis 11, 34–42).

If there had been any overwhelmingly compelling reason, whether structural, aesthetic, or ideological, for preferring one style to another, architects need not have resorted to submitting variously styled versions of preliminary designs for projects, thus conceding to their patrons the final decision on the style to be realized. When, for example, the young Klenze, at Ludwig's urging, decided to participate in the competition for a sculpture gallery (Glyptothek, 1816–1830), he submitted not one but three schemes – Greek, Roman, and Renaissance – of which the Greek was built after modifications demanded by the crown prince (Buttlar 113–18). Nowhere, however, is the essential arbitrariness of the choice of historically referential ornamentation at the time revealed more starkly than in Schinkel's submission, to the Prussian crown prince in 1824, of a single sheet containing four alternative designs, two classical and two Gothic, for the Friedrich Werder Church in Berlin (figure 3), the double-turreted Gothic alternative finding royal favor (Bergdoll, *Schinkel* 90–94). In these circumstances, identifying the motivations for individual stylistic choices cannot explain how architectural style became the focus of debate in the first place and why that debate could not be resolved except, in the Modern Movement of the early twentieth century, and then only temporarily, by the dismissal of style as irrelevant (see Benevolo 473; Crook 236–71).

For all their differences, nineteenth-century German architects and architectural theorists shared three basic assumptions: first, that architectural form served an important public function, expressing a communal identity or inculcating social values; secondly, that stylistic plurality as such was unacceptable and a single, normative style was preferable (if not for all purposes, then at least for each purpose); and thirdly, that this new norm would be chosen or assembled from among styles of ancient or medieval origin. Had architects not been confronted with the simultaneous availability of multiple historical styles, or had they simply accepted that plurality and not sought to justify the exclusive adoption of one style, they might have spared themselves a century of inconclusive argument. As a comparison with the political use of architecture in the so-called Baroque period will clarify, the predicament of Hübsch's generation and the next originated – unlike the styles they favored – in the latter half of the eighteenth century, and must therefore be examined in the context of contemporary intellectual developments.

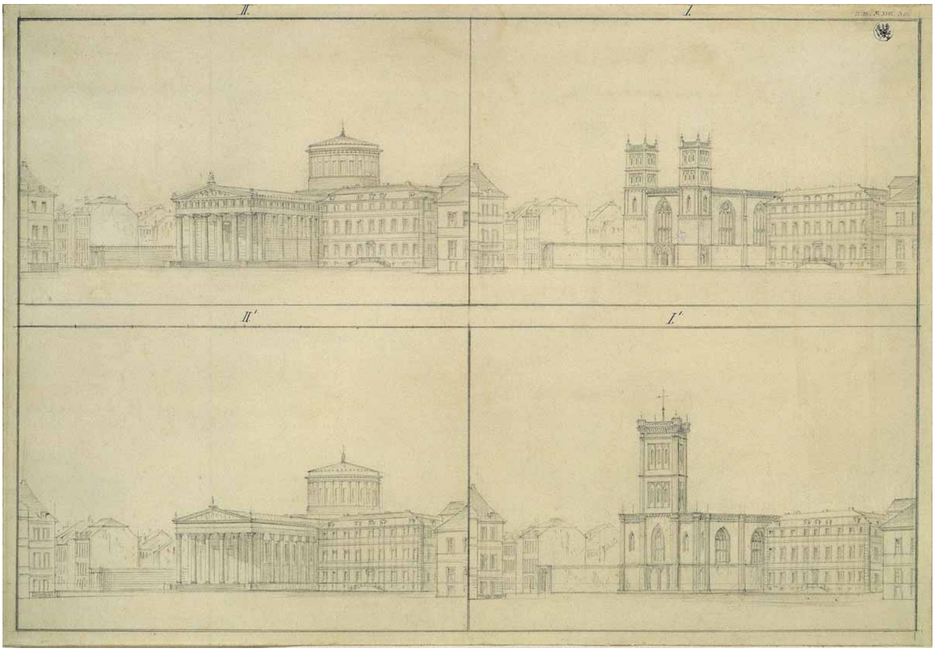

Figure 3. Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Friedrichwerdersche Kirche, Berlin. Four design options in Gothic and antique style (early 1824). Pencil on paper, 41.2 × 61.1 cm. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photograph: Jörg P. Anders © 2014. Photo Scala, Florence/BPK Bildagentur für Kunst, Kultur und Geschichte, Berlin.

Like the princes and popes of Renaissance Italy, the absolutist rulers of the German states understood very well how to express their power architecturally. Following the prototype of Versailles, in which the palace (as expanded by Louis XIV with the king's bedroom at its center) formed the focal point of the town's avenues, the margrave of Baden-Durbach founded Karlsruhe in 1715 as an ideal city in which no fewer than 32 avenues radiated outwards from the palace. In the Palatinate, the prince-electors depleted the electorate's treasury in order to construct in Mannheim (from 1720 to 1760) a palace second only to Versailles itself in size, extending 450 meters along its front façade and covering seven hectares in total. For their part the prince-bishops of Würzburg sought to impress other rulers with the size and theatrically conceived exterior elevations and interior spaces of their Residenz (built 1720–1781), especially the staircase hall with Giovanni Battista Tiepolo's allegorical ceiling fresco of 600 square meters glorifying Bishop Karl Philipp von Greiffenklau (see Blanning 74–75). But because an eclectic classicism remained normative for the duration of the *ancien régime*, the external decorative idiom as such was politically insignificant. Princes conveyed their status through the location, size, spatial disposition, and interior opulence of their palaces.

Like the monads of Leibniz's cosmology, mirroring the universe individually without interacting with one another, German Baroque palaces were meant as isolated statements, expressing at once the importance of the princes who commissioned them and the political structure of the absolutist state. In the architectural historian Sigfried Giedion's account of the transformation of classicism in the eighteenth century, a systematic Baroque radialism in which each architectural element was defined by its relation to the entire structure succumbed to a decentered Romantic plasticity in which every room was self-enclosed and equal in status to every other: "The overriding social ideal is dissolved into equal individuals, all demanding unconditional recognition" (103, 157, 162). Yet the implication of a connection between Romantic classicism and an individualism derived from the ideals of the French Revolution is misleading. For not only were the buildings that Giedion adduces – notably those designed by Schinkel in Prussia and Klenze in Bavaria – commissioned and built after the post-Napoleonic restoration of the German princes (under the terms of a loose confederation dominated by Prussia, Austria, and Bavaria), but classicism itself lost any claims to normativity in German architectural design after the French Revolution.

To Giedion, classicism was merely "a coloring [*Färbung*]," "the empty frame of antiquity" into which each age inserts its own content (9). But his Romantic assumption that architecture expresses a *Zeitgeist* and his Modernist rejection of style as a basis for comparative analysis prevented him from recognizing that the shift in the locus of representationality in German architecture at the end of the eighteenth century did not occur within the confines of classicism. On the contrary, style itself became that locus. Citing approvingly the complaint of Gottfried Semper, the most influential German architect of the second half of the nineteenth century, that "our major cities blossom forth as true *extraits de mille fleurs*, as the quintessence of all lands and centuries, so that in our pleasant delusion we forget in the end to which century we belong" (47), Giedion observed that "around 1830 it became common to use the most varied styles side by side" (16). Exactly that phenomenon, which Giedion himself considered merely symptomatic of Romanticism's inability to develop an ornamental motif that "would have served as a symbol of the time" (17), will be considered here as a manifestation of the period's troubled consciousness of history.

An initial departure from the conventional eighteenth-century understanding of German public architecture as an expression of local political authority occurred in 1772, when the 23-year-old Goethe, in an anonymously published panegyric of Erwin von Steinbach, the purported designer of Strasbourg Cathedral, proclaimed the Gothic a distinctively and indigenously German style, in contradistinction to the derivative classicism with which the French and Italians had to content themselves. Completely ignoring the cathedral's religious purpose, Goethe treated its style as an autonomous property, expressive of a notional German nation: "Now I should not become angry, holy Erwin, if the German art expert [*Kunstgelehrte*], from the hearsay of envious neighbors, misjudges his advantage and belittles your work with that misunderstood word *Gothic*. For he ought to thank God that he can declare, 'That is German architecture, our architecture; for the Italian may boast of none of his own, still less the Frenchman' ... This characteristic art [*charakteristische Kunst*] is the only true one" (*Baukunst* 13).

On German Architecture (*Von deutscher Baukunst*) attracted little attention at the time of its publication – a fact that Goethe later and rather disingenuously attributed to the baleful influence of his friend Johann Gottfried Herder on his prose (*Dichtung* 508) – and its nationalist chauvinism was unfounded, for Gothic architecture was Anglo-Norman in origin and Strasbourg Cathedral French in its design and details (Frankl and Crossley 50–52, 134–35). But the essay is historically significant for anticipating, by twenty years or more, both the central concerns and the argumentative strategies of German Romantic architectural theory. Appealing to the historical origin of a style, Goethe identified it with a particular nation; appealing to structural necessity, he legitimized that style as an aesthetic norm. That neither line of argument was factually accurate in this case did not impede the later adoption of both in the promotion of other styles.

Rejecting the French Jesuit theorist Marc-Antoine Laugier's speculative historical derivation of the column, entablature, and pediment of classical architecture from the upright, horizontal, and inclined wooden posts of the "primitive hut" (Laugier 12–13) – a theory that effectively affirmed the normativity of classical design on structural grounds – Goethe proposed an alternative account of the autochthonous development of architecture in northern Europe from the need for walls for protection against the elements. From this perspective, Gothic ornamentation, which had first struck Goethe as frivolous, became comprehensible as the harmonization of structurally necessary forms: "How happily could I ... look at [the cathedral's] harmonious masses, alive with countless small components, down to the tiniest filament, and all contributing, as in the works of eternal nature, to the shape of the whole [*alles zweckend zum Ganzen*]" (*Baukunst* 12). Having thus established the necessity of Gothic forms, he could assert their conformity to universal canons of beauty: "The more the soul rises to a feeling for those proportions which are alone beautiful and eternal ... the more this beauty penetrates the mind's being [*in das Wesen eines Geistes eindringt*], so that it seems to have arisen with the mind, so that nothing satisfies the mind but beauty, so that the mind creates nothing but beauty, the happier is the artist" (13–14).

Despite its emphatic rejection of classical models, *Von deutscher Baukunst* has striking affinities with Johann Joachim Winckelmann's foundational work of historicizing classicism, *Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture* (*Gedancken über die Nachahmung der Griechischen Wercke in der Mahlerey und Bildhauer-Kunst*, 1755), which simultaneously affirmed the paradigmatic status of classical Greek sculpture as the representation of ideal human beauty and explained its creation as the result of a unique concatenation of climatic and socio-political factors. Classical Greek sculptures, the antiquarian proposed, are superior to those of later ages and other nations not only because the artists idealized, rather than merely imitated, the human form, but because the physical bodies that served as the models for their idealizations were themselves fitter and more attractive, owing to the Greek practice of exercising in the nude, than the bodies of modern peoples (Winckelmann, *Gedancken* 30–33). Founding a claim of aesthetic exemplarity in part on a narrative of origination, Winckelmann established a pattern that Goethe and subsequent German writers on architecture, such as Klenze, followed. For his part the antiquarian conceived no tension between his historicism and his idealism because, assuming transhistorically valid standards of beauty, he historicized the production but not the reception of art: a work could be expressive simultaneously of its unique culture of origin and of universal aesthetic values. To the extent that this dogmatic classicism constituted a form of resistance or, as the historian Friedrich Meinecke insisted, "contradiction to the tendencies of the nascent historicism" in Winckelmann's time (249), it was in fact highly characteristic of the ambivalent assimilation of historicism by aesthetic theory.

If the identification of national styles was a consequence of the historicization of the concept of artistic style, such classification did not have in architecture the effect that Niklas Luhmann (166–69) and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (182–83), referring more generally to artistic production from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, attributed to it, namely of reducing the burden of stylistic choice after the dissolution of a traditional prescriptive aesthetics (derived from classical authorities and exemplars) in which all artworks could be judged by uniform criteria. On the contrary, by assessing not only classical but non-classical architecture according to *structural* criteria, the first histories of the subject, published in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, helped undermine the universalist premise of normative classicism – that is, the assumption that the fundamental principles of classical design were grounded in the order of nature – and encouraged the eventual *aesthetic* revaluation of non-classical forms, in *de facto* isolation from functional considerations, with the result that the range of styles available for contemporary use expanded. Christopher Wren may still have believed that the classical Orders inhered in the nature of architecture and hence were "incapable of Modes and Fashions" (351); but as that belief became increasingly unsustainable, critical attention shifted from the Orders themselves to broader questions of style. The historicization of architectural form led to the aestheticization of architectural history.

In France, where the Académie d'Architecture provided a forum for debate about architectural theory, both the authority of the classical Orders and the barbarity of the Gothic – basic tenets of Renaissance classicism – were questioned, even as classical style remained normative in practice. Representing the Moderns in the architectural counterpart to the literary *Querelle des anciens et des modernes*, Claude Perrault argued that the proportions embodied in the Orders were manifestations of "arbitrary beauty," determined by custom and taste and thus historically contingent (vii–viii; see also Herrmann, *Theory* 53–55 and 58–63, Rykwert 58–60). A few years later Jean-François Félibien, the royal historiographer and secretary to the Académie, inaugurated a revaluation of Gothic architecture with his historical survey of architects from ancient Greece to medieval France (*Recueil historique de la vie et des ouvrages des plus célèbres architectes*, 1678), including the designers of four French Gothic cathedrals (148–95; see also Frankl 343–46, Watkin 20–21). Following the influential academician François Blondel and anticipating Winckelmann, Germain Boffrand attributed architectural developments to climatic and cultural conditions, and while praising the "noble simplicity" of classical design (exactly the phrase that Winckelmann would use a decade later) he also vindicated the Gothic as a form imitative of trees, hence deriving "from the bosom of nature" (8, 6). By the middle of the eighteenth century, the static advantages of Gothic vaulting having been acknowledged by a succession of historians and theorists, the aesthetic effects of Gothic design began to receive favorable attention, notably from the architect Jacques Germain Soufflot in a lecture of 1741 (Soufflot; Frankl 396–400) and from none other than Laugier, the unnamed target of the young Goethe's ire. The patriotic fervor of *Von deutscher Baukunst* might have been dampened if Goethe had acknowledged Laugier's declaration that no structure was "as boldly imagined, as happily conceived, as appropriately executed" as the tower of Strasbourg Cathedral (233).

In a well-known essay, Erwin Panofsky distinguished between two self-conscious Gothic Revivals in northern Europe. The first, manifested predominantly in eighteenth-century garden follies, resulted "not so much from a preference for a particular form of architecture, as from a desire to evoke a particular mood" (221). The second, which occurred in the Romantic period, was archaeological in character and sought to recreate Gothic architecture proper (222). But even if the differentiation of architecture from garden design is admitted, the historical distance that Panofsky thought a prerequisite only to the second revival, enabling the Gothic to be recognized as a distinct style "determined by autonomous and determinable principles" (221), was already necessary to the first. Whether in artificial ruins or new churches, whether vaguely evocative or minutely imitative, the Gothic (like the Greek Doric illustrated from the "rediscovered" temples in Paestum, Agrigento, and Athens) could be revived only after it was understood to be no longer living – that is, to be an artefact of the past. Such historical distance was not yet present, for example, in seventeenth-century Oxford, where the Gothic tower of the Bodleian Library was built with superposed classical columns (1613–1638) and the Tudor-style Canterbury Quadrangle in St. John's College with classically styled arches (1632–1636).

The widespread historical revivals in architecture from the mid-eighteenth to late-nineteenth century, as opposed to Renaissance classicism and to local survivals sanctioned by custom, were predicated on *both* the existential alterity and the formal reproducibility of the past. Indeed, the latter – the reduction of the historical to an appearance – was the very confirmation of the former. Historicism in the architectural sense, as design in styles associated with the past, acknowledged by seeking to compensate for the cultural cost of historicism in the broader sense, meaning the interpretation of the human world as "the product of specific historical processes" rather than in terms of "an eternal form, permanent essence, or constant identity that transcends historical change" (Beiser 2). That cost entailed, among other things, the dissolution of the aesthetic norms that, in the preceding three centuries, had allowed architects considerable individual freedom within a common frame of reference.

Comparative histories of architectural form, supplemented from the 1750s by illustrated surveys of ancient Greek buildings (see Wiebenson), made the styles associated with different epochs and nations simultaneously accessible to architects, just as the five canonical Orders of classical architecture (Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite) had been for centuries. This was especially true of Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach's remarkable *Outline of a History of Architecture* (*Entwurff einer Historischen Architectur*, 1721), which, in contrast to Winckelmann's developmental account of ancient art, consisted of a series of engraved and captioned illustrations of historical structures from a diverse range of national architectures: Roman, Greek, Egyptian, Hebrew, Turkish, Arab, Assyrian, Persian, Thai, Chinese, and Japanese. Attributing stylistic diversity to cultural difference, Fischer tried weakly to uphold symmetry as a universal design norm while otherwise conceding that "the tastes of nations ... are as dissimilar in architecture as in food and dress" ([6]). Nonetheless, he concluded his preface by declaring his hope that the work would contribute to "the progress of art [*Aufnehmen der Kunst*]" ([6]). But what exactly would this contribution be?

Since the commentary on the plates made no effort to relate styles to particular building types, and the illustrations themselves (e.g., of Solomon's Temple) were mostly speculative reconstructions, supplemented by a section of Fischer's own designs, the purpose of the *Entwurff* was clearly to provide stylistic models for contemporary European architects. Surveying an unprecedentedly broad range of designs without judging them functionally or aesthetically, Fischer paradoxically negated the significance of the national differences that he was at pains to illustrate. Insofar as it affirmed the value of stylistic diversity as such, the *Entwurff* abstracted historical styles from their temporal and national origins and assimilated them to a nontemporal conception of individual style.[4] While the Flemish art theorist Karel van Mander, in his *Book of Painting* (*Schilder-Boeck*, 1604), had advised artists to cultivate an individual style by selectively emulating other painters' styles (see de Mambro Santos 215–69), Fischer implicitly encouraged architects to do the same with regard to historical and national styles. Such acceptance of stylistic diversity, which Fischer first extended to non-Western architecture, opened the way for "the simultaneous use of different styles" later in the century (Ginzburg 143), as in the juxtaposition of a Chinese pagoda and a Palladian hall in the early 1790s in Munich's English Garden.

Thus the historicization of architectural style did not so much supersede the older idea of individual style, to which van Mander and before him Giorgio Vasari had subscribed, as redefine it, the architect's individuality being limited effectively to a choice from among long-established stylistic sets. Though no longer confined to a single canon, architects were more closely chained to each of their multiple canons. Diderot's injunction to painters of imaginary ruins, "Traverse the globe, but in such a way that I always know where you are, be it in Greece, Alexandria, Egypt, Rome" (719; see Halmi 13), could have been addressed equally to German Romantic architects. Since what was lost in the affirmation of the historicity and individuality of culture was above all a sense of profound historical continuity in which the aesthetic and moral exemplarity of the past for the present could be assumed, the challenge was less to reassert the authority of a "classical tradition" that would no longer bear critical scrutiny than to recuperate the historical *per se*. For that reason, the choice of a particular historical model mattered less than the visual faithfulness to that model, whatever it might be. The historically referential buildings of Ludwig I's Munich, like his collections of ancient statues and Old Master paintings, sought not to establish specific connections with Periclean Athens, Constantinian Rome, or Medicean Florence, but to assert Bavaria's claim to be the modern representative of the cultural pre-eminence associated with those past societies.

Nonetheless, the conflict between the historicist emphasis on cultural individuality, which translated architecturally into an expectation of the appropriateness of a given style to its time and place, and the abstraction of historical styles from their original contexts ensured that the question of stylistic choice would preoccupy architectural theorists in the Romantic period. Already in the 1770s, the Swiss philosopher Johann Georg Sulzer, who on the one hand identified the state of a nation's architecture with its “state of mind” (*Gemüthszustand einer Nation*) and on the other believed that the Orders could not be improved on (1:129, 130), recognized that the different national idioms *within* the classical family created for contemporary architects a dilemma that could not be resolved by reference to purely aesthetic criteria. Distinguishing Greek, Roman, Italian, and French classicisms – he rejected the Gothic as “barbaric” – Sulzer, in conformity to his morally instrumentalist conception of art, proposed selecting according to building type: the “noble simplicity and grandeur” of the ancient styles (*Bauarten*) made them most suited to “temples, triumphal arches, and large monuments,” while the Italian combination of “grandeur and splendor with simplicity” was best for palaces and the French, with “less grandeur and simplicity but more delicacy and pleasantness,” for mansions (1:127). To be sure, this principle was no less arbitrary than any other, because historically buildings of each of those types, to say nothing of others, had been built in each of those national styles. But the rationalization of stylistic decisions on supposedly functional grounds offered later theorists and practitioners a means of evading or effacing the radically contingent relation of decorative scheme to building type and purpose.[5]

The Romantic-era counterpart to Fischer’s *Entwurff* was the French pedagogue J. N. L. Durand’s *Collection and Comparison of Buildings of Every Kind, Ancient and Modern* (*Recueil et parallèle des édifices de tout genre, anciens et modernes*, 1800), an atlas whose arrangement subordinated national characteristics to building types. Here the abstraction of historical form was conscious and explicit, as Egyptian temples were juxtaposed with Greek temples, pagodas with mosques, Roman arches with French, ancient theaters with modern – all illustrated to a uniform scale in plan, elevation, and section only (figure 4).

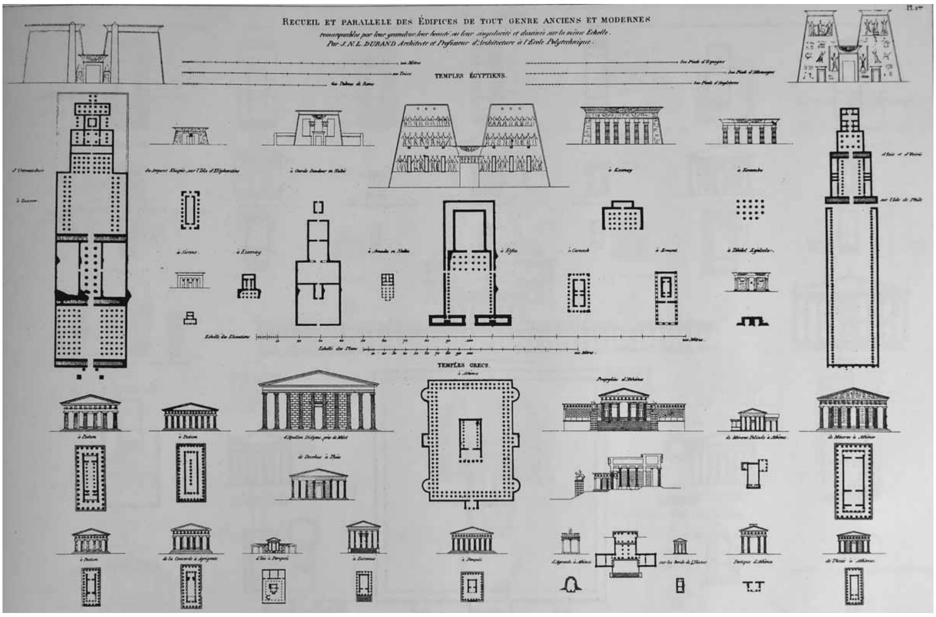
RECUEIL ET PARALLELE DES ÉDIFICES DE TOUT GENRE ANCIENS ET MODERNES
remarquables par leur grandeur, leur beauté, ou leur singularité et dessinés sur la même Echelle.
Par J. N. L. DURAND Architecte et Professeur d'Architecture à l'Ecole Polytechnique.
TEMPLES ÉGYPTIENS.
TEMPLES GRECS.

Figure 4. Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand (1760–1834). *Recueil et parallèle des édifices de tout genre, anciens et modernes*, rev. ed. (Brussels, 1842), plate 1. Author’s photograph.

As he confirmed two years later in the published *Précis* of his lectures at the École polytechnique, Durand accepted the relativism implied by the historicist principle of cultural individuality, but in doing so he also effectively denied the principle of individuality itself. Architectural forms, he taught, "are not so firmly defined by the nature of things that we cannot add to them or subtract from them" (108–9), combining modern with ancient, Roman with Greek, Eastern with Western, as one sees fit. But what constitutes fitness? In answering this question, which was the central preoccupation of the *Précis*, Durand redefined the traditional standard of stylistic appropriateness for purpose – a standard elaborated by Cicero for use in oratory (Ginzburg 137–38) – in terms of structural type and function. Refusing to address style as such, for he rejected ornamentation for its own sake, Durand resolved aesthetic choice into the rational assessment of what he called *disposition*, or the arrangement of spaces and structural elements: "Disposition must therefore be the architect's sole concern ... since decoration cannot be called beautiful or give true pleasure except as the necessary effect of the most fitting and the most economical disposition" (86). The supposedly universal and transhistorical standard of disposition thus assumed, in Durand's teaching, the normative role that classical style had occupied in Renaissance architectural theory.

Durand's morphological idealism, which approached architecture of all places and times as a single, timeless object of study, permitted him to assemble an expansive combinatorial repertoire of basic forms from historical examples of specific styles, illustrated in the 33 engraved plates to the *Précis*. That the historical sources often remain recognizable in his illustrations even after being subjected to his geometrical reduction – combined with other forms and drawn on a grid to a single scale – is a major inconsistency of his method. But this would not have seemed problematic to architects who were seeking, in Hanno-Walter Kruft's apt phrase, "pseudo-reasons for their historical preferences" (308–9). Taught to German pupils at the École polytechnique (among them Clemens Wenzeslaus Coudray, who became the Weimar court architect in 1816) and further disseminated through the frequently reprinted *Précis* (of which German translations appeared in 1806 and 1831), Durand's utilitarian eclecticism had a profound impact on nineteenth-century German architecture (see Szambien 122–33). Klenze's Glyptothek, for example, was "generically Durandesque in its square modularity," with galleries arranged around a courtyard, while the vaulted galleries themselves, whose elaborate decoration was destroyed in the Second World War and unfortunately not restored, "followed line for line one of Durand's paradigms" (Hitchcock 51, referring to *Précis*, plate 14). Schinkel's Altes Museum, too, although the product of an urbanistic and technological sophistication foreign to the French engineer, is Durandesque in its combination of a Greek Ionic portico and a Pantheon-like central rotunda (Giedion 73, 144, and plates 46, 91–92; Goalen).

Durand's influence is more evident, however, in the rhetoric of functionality that dominated German architectural theory in the first half of the nineteenth century. Variants of Durand's criteria recur so frequently in architectural treatises that a credulous reader might wonder what grounds their authors could have had for disagreement. Even Christian Ludwig Stieglitz, a Leipzig official who insisted in 1792 (in terms explicitly recalling Winckelmann's) that modern architecture could achieve greatness only by imitating Greek and Roman models (*Geschichte* vii), was preaching the doctrine of functionalism by the 1830s: "Construction alone – the forms of the principal parts and of the body of the building as a whole – leads to and lays the foundation for architectural beauty" (*Beiträge* 2:189). Now rejecting stylistic imitation that paid no regard to “the purpose and the character of the building” in question, he conceded to contemporary architects the availability of three equally meritorious stylistic classes, all in the event historically imitative: Greek, *Rundbogenstil*, and *Spitzbogenstil* (*Beiträge* 2:178–79). In order to reduce this plurality to a *de facto* singularity, however, he referred like Sulzer a half-century earlier to building-type as determinant: palaces and most secular public buildings demanded an Italianate *Rundbogenstil*; theaters, city halls, and stock exchanges a Byzantine *Rundbogenstil*; and churches a Byzantine style or, better yet, *Spitzbogenstil* (*Beiträge* 2:180–88). Despite his assurance that the “timid imitation of old forms” would not produce “a true German work” (*ein ächtes deutsches Werk*), Stieglitz in fact confirmed the historicist status quo.

In 1822, after traveling through Italy and Greece, Hübsch initiated his critique of neoclassical theory by denying the existence of a timeless architectural ideal, such as the archaeologist Aloys Hirt had proclaimed ancient classical (particularly Greek) architecture to embody (Hübsch, *Griechische*). In a polemic appended to the second edition of *On Greek Architecture*, Hübsch criticized Hirt for promoting thoughtless imitation: “Instead of historically derived, mechanically learned rules of beauty [*Schönheitsregeln*], I would let architectural forms develop from the same purpose from which they originally arose” (“Vertheidigung” iii). Six years later, declaring the choice of decorative form as such to be arbitrary and untheorizable (*Style* 2–3), Hübsch distinguished two basic structural systems, trabeation, used by the Greeks and especially suited to marble, and arcuation, used by the Romans and especially suited to brick. Since the building materials available in Germany were more akin to those of Rome than of Greece, it followed that the Germans should build in the *Rundbogenstil*, whose resemblance to Romanesque architecture “arises from the nature of things [*der Natur der Sache*] and was not induced by the influence of authorities or individual preference” (*Style* 51).

To be sure, Hübsch’s materialist analysis of the *Rundbogenstil* was confined to ecclesiastical examples, and *In welchem Style* was published on Dürer’s three-hundredth birthday for a meeting of the Nazarenes, who were committed to a revival of religious feeling. Though not stated openly, the ideological implications of Hübsch’s argument were scarcely disguised, for the tract was dedicated to the Nazarenes. But the appeal of functionalism seems to have been so compelling, as architects sought to deny or repress the double-bind of their relationship to architectural history – at once detached from and beholden to the past – that even ideological preferences for particular styles could not be justified on their own terms. The two criteria of “utility [*Zweckmäßigkeit*] – namely, fitness for purpose (convenience) and lasting existence (solidity)” (2) – by which Hübsch vindicated the *Rundbogenstil* were not essentially different from those by which Hirt had defended Greek style: “the essence of beauty must proceed from construction and a functional layout [*einer zweckmässigen Anordnung*]” (13). Because the ancients, according to Hirt, had fully realized “the essence of appropriate construction in every kind of material,” to build properly was inevitably to build “in the Greek manner [*griechisch*]” (38).

Like Hübsch and Hirt, the latter of whom he studied under from 1800 to 1803 (Buttlar 29–31), Klenze, with whom I shall conclude this essay, translated the historicist principle of individuality (i.e., cultural appropriateness) into functionalist terms to rationalize the use of an historically derivative style while denying it an historically specific character.[6] Kruft (305) and Mallgrave (105) have noted the Durandesque character of Klenze’s definition of architecture in his manifesto of 1822 for the architectural contribution to the religious and civic renewal of post-Napoleonic Bavaria: “the art of molding and combining natural materials for the purposes of human society and its needs so that the way in which the laws of constancy, preservation, and functionality [*Erhaltung, Stetigkeit und Zweckmässigkeit*] are followed ensures the highest possible degree of solidity and durability in construction with the smallest expenditure of materials and forces" (*Anweisung* 6–7). Yet Klenze was not content to defend on purely pragmatic grounds his candidate for the architectural prototype that fulfilled these criteria.

Convinced that "the lack of historical sense was what ailed our time" (v), he advanced, in the *Versuch* of 1821, an elaborate historical argument for the utility of Greek architecture as the best model for contemporary purposes. Drawing on scholarship by Winckelmann, William Jones, Johannes von Müller, Friedrich Schlegel, Friedrich Creuzer, and others in classical archaeology and philology, comparative linguistics, and comparative religion, his speculative reconstruction of ancient Tuscan temple design by analogy to Etruscan and modern-day Rhaetian and Tyrolian architecture provided the purported historical basis for his affirmation, a year later, of the normative status of Greek architecture. Klenze's analogical method, which emphasized basic structural principles at the expense of empirical forms "more or less modified according to regional and climatic conditions" (*Versuch* 7, 42–43), allowed him to claim that just as the peoples of northern and southern Europe were connected through their common origin in the Caucasus, so Greek architecture was linked "to the building practices [*Bauarten*] of all times on a common chain" (7–8). Even Gothic architecture, the revival of which Klenze rejected as a "stillborn idea" (*Anweisung* 13), had sufficient formal parallels (*Formanalogien*) with Greek design, as well as a similarity in the arrangement of interior space to Roman basilica design, that to call it German or Saxon was "without proven historical foundation" (11–12) – an argument directed implicitly against the Nazarene artist Peter Cornelius's efforts to persuade Ludwig that Greek style was not nationally appropriate (see Buttlar 148, 288; Watkin and Mellinghof 158–59). Having thus, in his 1822 manifesto, asserted the derivation of the Gothic (which he renamed "the Nordic basilica style") from classical antecedents and denied it a distinctly German or Christian character, Klenze could advocate the appropriateness of Greek style for both national and religious purposes precisely because of its universality: "We have sought to show," he concluded, "that the rigorous [*strenge*] architectural style of the Greeks, insofar as it alone is based on the laws of statics, economy, and utility – which are the same for all times and places – must also satisfy all times and places and serve as a norm [*Richtschnur*]; and we believe equally that differences in climate or building materials cannot substantively reduce this general utility [*Allgemeinheit der Zweckmässigkeit*]" (*Anweisung* 21).

By ostensibly historicizing means, then, Klenze promoted a thoroughly anti-historicist, idealist conception of Greek architecture. Given the flexibility of his own handling of classical style, we might say that his forays into architectural history were directed to restoring the theoretical underpinning of an older model of classicism, in which the classical stylistic repertoire was accepted as canonical but individual ancient monuments were not expected to be copied exactly. In his published description of the Walhalla – a peripteral Doric temple, as stipulated by Ludwig, erected in 1830–1842 on a giant tiered platform above the Danube near Regensburg for the purpose of housing busts of distinguished Germans – Klenze himself emphasized that the range of possibilities realized in ancient Greek temple design allowed the modern architect ample and "inherent freedom of artistic development" ("Walhalla" 3). But perhaps because, as he freely acknowledged, the external form had been determined in advance, and not by the architect (indeed, he reprinted in full Ludwig's program for the Walhalla), Klenze did not apply to this structure his earlier vindication of Greek architecture, which had resolved the question of stylistic choice into a more comprehensive historical and structural analysis.[7]

On the contrary, he called attention to his departure from ancient models on account of exactly those factors that his theoretical writings minimized, local climatic conditions and building materials: "Since the location, light, color of material, conceptions of time, needs, and contingencies [*Umstände*] are completely different here … no Greek proportion [*Verhältnis*] and no Greek form could be imitated slavishly" ("Walhalla" 6). Written at the end of the building's construction for his collected designs – the serial publication of which had begun in 1830 with the prefatory assertion that "there was and is and will be only one architecture, namely that which reached its perfection" in ancient Greece (*Sammlung* fol. 3) – Klenze's commentary focused on elaborating the iconography of the interior decoration and the details of construction, such as the technologically advanced iron roof trusses that enabled the architect to dispense with the barrel-vaulted ceiling originally favored by his patron (figure 5).

In defiance of his own theoretical insistence on the inseparability of external form from functional and tectonic considerations, Klenze concluded that whereas "the positive [i.e., technical] aspect of architectural endeavors must be explained in detail, the artistic can speak for and explain itself" ("Walhalla" 8). If elsewhere he sought to justify a normative classicism by denying the autonomy of style, here he tacitly

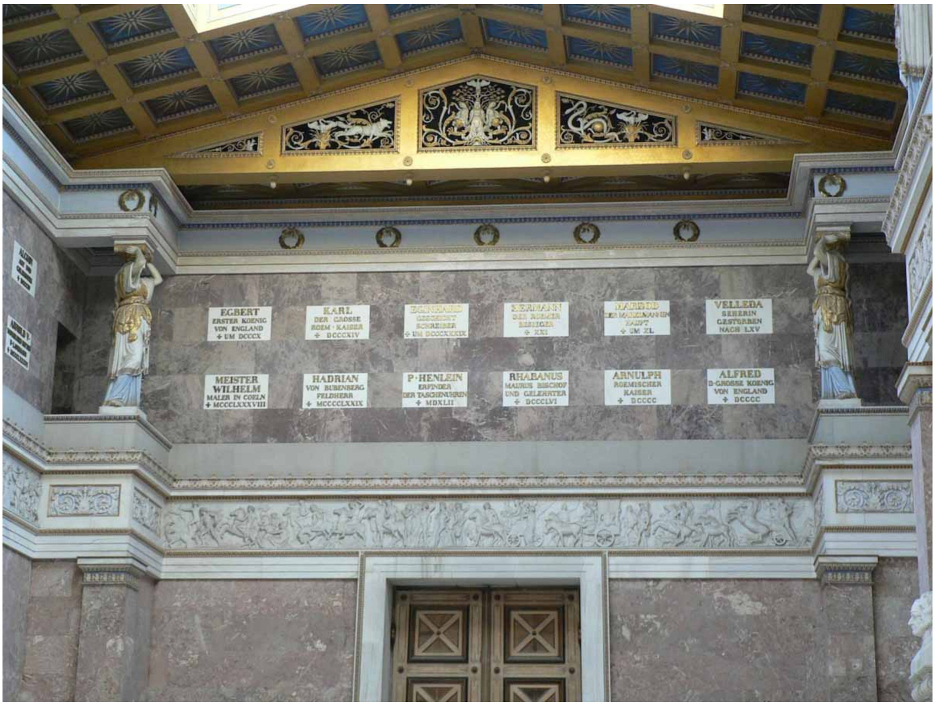
EGBERT
ERSTER KOENIG
VON ENGLAND
✝ UM DCCCX
KARL
DER GROSSE
ROEM · KAISER
✝ DCCCXIV
VELLEDA
SEHERIN
GESTORBEN
NACH LXV
MEISTER
WILHELM
MALER IN COELN
✝ MCCCLXXXVIII
HADRIAN
VON BUBENBERG
FELDHERR
✝ MCCCCLXXIX
P · HENLEIN
ERFINDER
DER TASCHENUHREN
✝ MDXLII
RHABANUS
MAURUS BISCHOF
UND GELEHRTER
✝ DCCCLVI
ARNULPH
ROEMISCHER
KAISER
✝ DCCCC
ALFRED
D·GROSSE KOENIG
VON ENGLAND
✝ DCCCC

Figure 5. Leo von Klenze (1784–1864). Walhalla, near Regensburg (1830–1842). Interior, south side, with frieze by Johann Martin Wagner representing the Aryan peoples' northern migration, caryatids representing the Valkyries (and containing iron supporting rods), and iron roof truss. Author's photograph.

conceded precisely that autonomy by declining to justify the classicism of his own building. Thus in both the construction and the discursive presentation of what has justly been called "the most memorable building of the classical revival in Germany" (Watkin and Mellinghof 162), Klenze belied the idea to which his claims for the normativity of Greek architecture appealed: the idea of history without historicity.

Although he won the battle with Cornelius over which historical style was to be deemed suitable for a monument celebrating Germanness, their agreement about the social value of the project itself indicates that, considered in the context of the historical, political, and technological conditions that encouraged and permitted its realization despite the enormous cost involved, the question of the Walhalla's style was somewhat beside the point. But the contest for Ludwig's stylistic affections, like the self-contradictions of Klenze and his contemporaries in regard to the self-declared problem of stylistic plurality, were characteristic manifestations of the age's unwillingness fully to accept the implications of its aesthetic historicism. The debate about style in German Romantic architecture was the more intense precisely because, in the face of an emergent historical consciousness that imperiled an intellectually and socially compelling sense of continuity with the past, the stakes of that debate were so small.

Notes

1. Translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.
2. In contrast, when the French Académie royale d'Architecture, a year after its foundation in 1671, sponsored a contest for a "French Order" to be used in the courtyard of the Louvre, it was assumed that the submissions would be based on the *classical* columnar Orders. The winning entry, submitted by none other than the academy's founder, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, was in fact a variant of the Roman Corinthian Order, with a fleur-de-lys inserted in the capital above the acanthus leaves (Rykwert 77, 79).
3. Although Georg Moller, whose rediscovery (with the architectural historian Sulpiz Boisserée) of a thirteenth-century drawing of the planned western elevation of Cologne Cathedral gave the completion project its historical mandate, was the first architect to publish detailed illustrations of German Gothic architecture, he himself considered the style "magnificent and sublime, but ... the result of its time," and hence inappropriate for contemporary use (1:5; qtd. in Kruft 296 n. 72) – an attitude reflected also in the printing of his book in Roman type rather than the usual "Gothic" Fraktur.
4. See Neville on the eighteenth-century reception of Fischer's *Entwurff*. Of the five editions, two were published in English translation (1730 and 1737), while the three in German (1721, 1725, and 1742) included French translations.
5. Despite its self-conflicted combination of organicist expressivism with moral instrumentalism – and a hostile review from Goethe ("Künste") – Sulzer's *Allgemeine Theorie* was sufficiently well received that it was pirated four times between 1773 and 1779 and reissued in expanded editions in 1786–1787 and 1792–1794 (Kruft 190 n. 154).
6. I am here neglecting Schinkel, who performed an artistic and administrative role comparable to Klenze's but had a far greater influence on subsequent architectural history, in favor of the Bavarian partly because the latter *published* his major theoretical statements relating to architectural form, whereas Schinkel's attempt at a systematic theory remained fragmentary and unpublished, and partly because Klenze's written and built works have received much less attention in anglophone scholarship than the Prussian architect's have. But I plan to consider Schinkel more fully in a book I am now writing, of which an expanded version of this essay is to form one chapter.
7. See Buttlar, ch. 6, for an account of the Walhalla project from its inception in 1807 to its completion in 1842. Klenze's submission for the competition announced in 1814 was a Parthenon-like Doric temple reinforced by hidden iron rods. His second scheme, commissioned by Ludwig in 1819, was a Pantheon-like circular temple surrounded by a Doric

peristyle. When this failed to meet royal approval, Klenze offered in 1821 a modified version of his original design, which was accepted (although not without further disputation with Ludwig about the roof redesign).

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