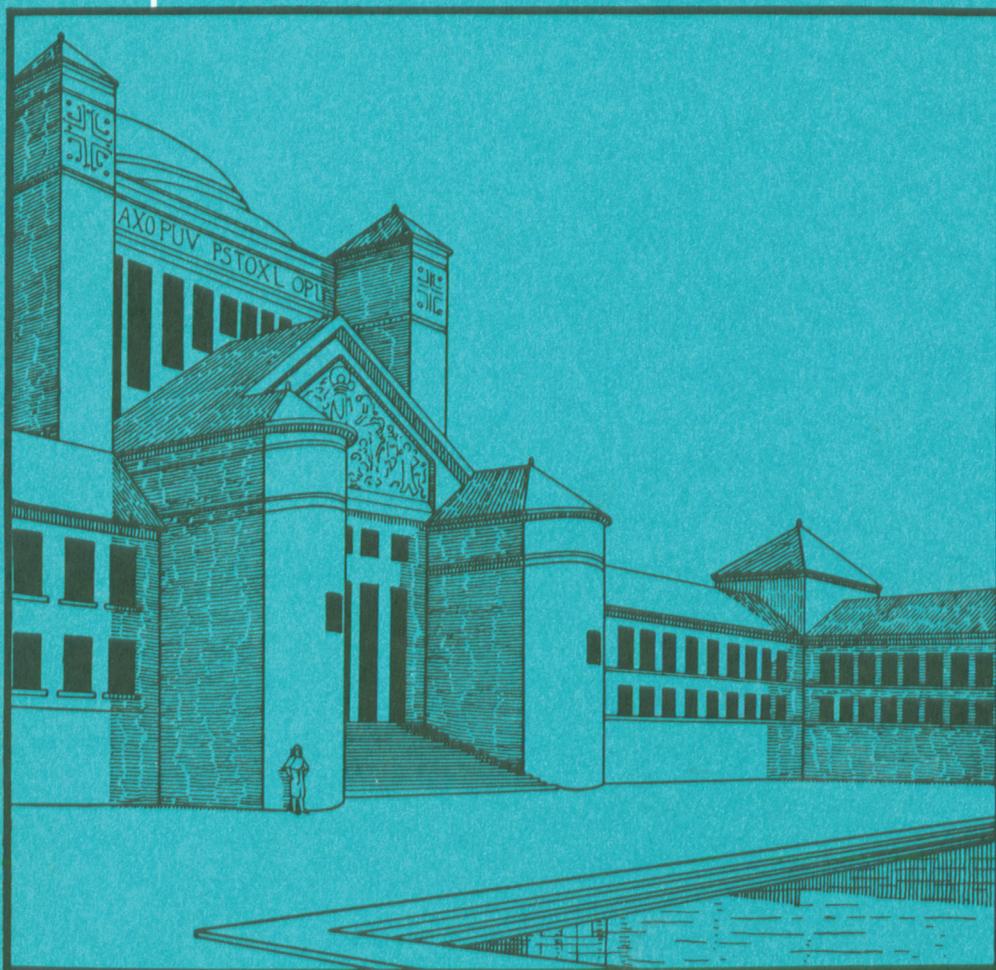


TEXTS & DOCUMENTS

Hendrik Petrus  
**BERLAGE** THOUGHTS  
ON STYLE  
1886–1909



INTRODUCTION BY IAIN BOYD WHYTE  
TRANSLATION BY IAIN BOYD WHYTE AND WIM DE WIT

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Hendrik Petrus  
BERLAGE

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PUBLISHED BY THE GETTY CENTER FOR THE HISTORY OF ART AND THE HUMANITIES

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS For permission to reproduce works in the collection of the Nederlands Architectuurinstituut I am most grateful to Mariet Willinge. In turning Berlage's convoluted and sometimes chaotic original texts into consistent and readable English, I have benefited from the editorial skills of Benedicte Gilman, Lynne Kostman, and Anne-Mieke Halbrook, and the consistent enthusiasm of Julia Bloomfield. Most important of all, however, has been the support of Wim de Wit, who translated five of the texts from Dutch, rendering Berlage's difficult and often extremely complex language into English. This book could not have been written without his unstinting efforts, for which I am sincerely grateful.

—IBW

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TRANSLATORS' NOTE H. P. Berlage's critical writings are of central importance to the theoretical discussions that accompanied the birth of architectural Modernism. His despair at what he saw as the weakness of late nineteenth-century architecture and the evangelical zeal with which he proclaimed the gospel of a new, rational architecture appropriate to the twentieth century give his writings great power. Yet, the conviction and the sheer volume of Berlage's written output led to repetition and muddle, with the result that his writings often lack the lucidity and clarity that mark his buildings. Berlage was a committed internationalist, and the same text was often published in several languages, with marked differences in both writing style and content.

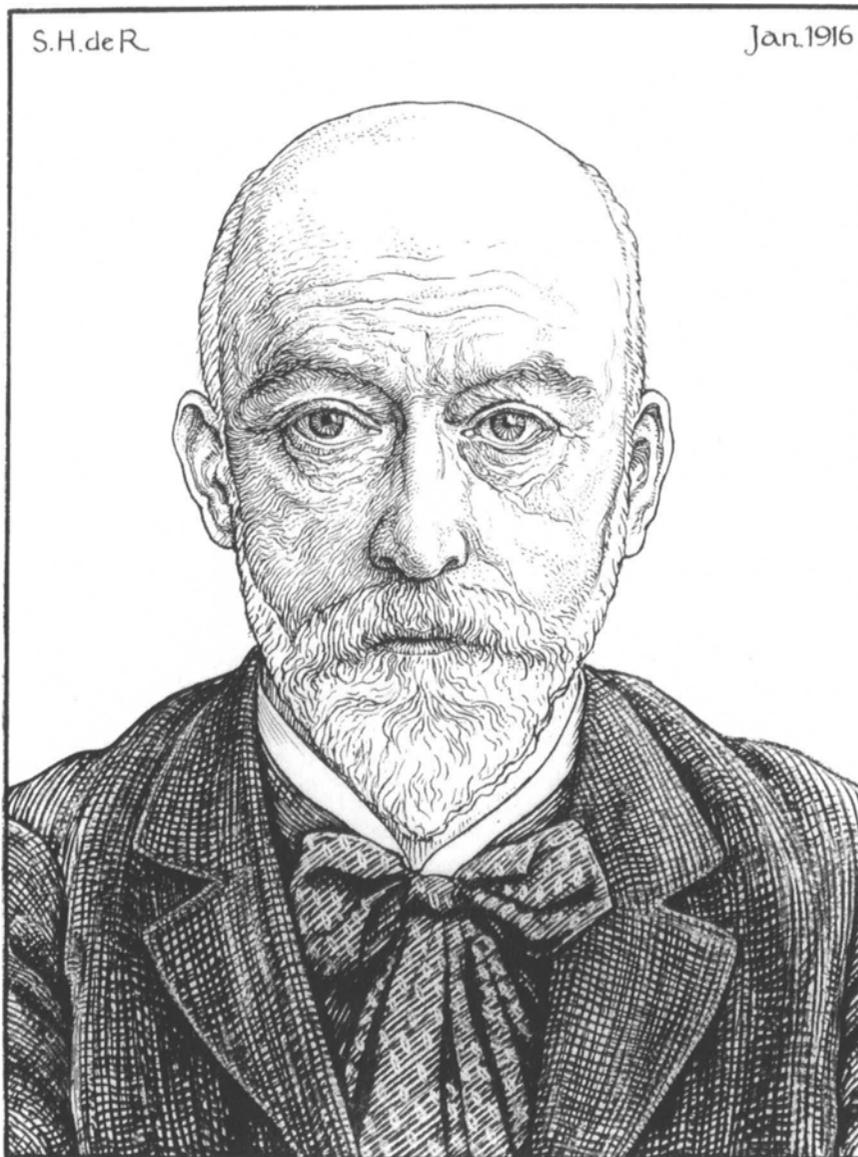
The two essays that were originally published in German—*Thoughts on Style in Architecture* and *The Foundations and Development of Architecture*—were translated by Iain Boyd Whyte. The rest, first published in Dutch, were translated by Wim de Wit and reviewed by Anne-Mieke Halbrook.

Three of the essays, "On the Likely Development of Architecture" (1905), "Some Reflections on Classical Architecture" (1908), and "Art and Society" (1909), were first published as journal articles. Berlage subsequently included the first and the last in his collection of essays *Studies over bouwkunst, stijl en samenleving* (1910) and "Some Reflections" in the collection *Beschouwingen over bouwkunst en hare ontwikkeling* (1911). The journal and book versions of these essays are in all substantive respects identical, with differences largely confined to typographical errors and the rephrasing of the occasional sentence without altering the meaning. As the texts published in book form appeared later, they can be considered more definitive, and for this reason the translations in this volume have been made from those versions. The illustrations accompanying the texts in this volume are also taken from the book versions of Berlage's texts.

Not all of the quotations included by Berlage can be traced back to their original sources. Of those that have been identified, some were found to deviate from the originals in a number of ways that have been indicated in the editor's notes.

—IBW, WdW

Fig. 1. S. H. de Roos, portrait of H. P. Berlage, 1916, ink on paper, 18 × 14 cm. Private collection. Photo: Courtesy of Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Rotterdam.



# INTRODUCTION

Iain Boyd Whyte

In a letter written in 1923 to his wife, the German architect Erich Mendelsohn explained the significance of Hen-

drik Petrus Berlage (fig. 1): “Berlage is the conscious break with classical eclecticism, the end of romanticism, the rediscovery of the elements of building. The first in Holland and apparently in Europe.”<sup>1</sup> A few years later, in 1928, Peter Behrens, another German architect, offered a more perceptive view when he wrote: “If today one sometimes has the feeling that modern functionalist buildings can perhaps be a little cold and boring in the long run, then Berlage’s most important building, the Amsterdam Stock Exchange, shows that it is indeed possible without disturbing the whole effect to add that further dimension that not only enhances and accentuates the functional elements but also offers a focus for our spiritual life.”<sup>2</sup> Berlage was born in 1856. When he died in 1934, at the age of seventy-eight, he left behind him a distinguished array of buildings constructed over four decades that witnessed the gestation and birth of architectural Modernism. In addition, he left to posterity a body of writing unequalled in this century in its scale and ambition. These two main strands of his life’s work cannot be unraveled or studied separately, for our comprehension of one depends on our understanding of the other.

In his writings—which are highly eclectic, often confused, and invariably repetitive—Berlage pursued cultural and political goals that went far beyond the confines of the individual building or even the city plan. His aim was the definition of style, which he saw as the essential link between architectural production and cultural context. For Berlage, style was the result of an essential unity shared by every fragment of cultural expression, a unity vitally necessary in evoking those perceptual and emotive associations that tie all forms of art and architecture to a common past and a common value system. As he asks rhetorically in *Thoughts on Style in Architecture (Gedanken über Stil in der Baukunst)*, 1905, “Is not culture the accord between a spiritual core, the result of communal aspiration, and its reflection in material form, that is to say, art?”<sup>3</sup>

In giving this conviction historical dimensions, Berlage found the existence of a communal spiritual ideal in two phases of Western civilization above all others, namely Periclean Athens and the northern European Gothic. In this perception he took his place in a tradition that embraced Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Karl Friedrich Schinkel in the early nineteenth century and moved via Eduard Metzger and Carl Bötticher in mid-century<sup>4</sup> to Karl Scheffler at the start of the twentieth century. In both of his major publications, *Thoughts on Style in Architecture* and *The Foundations and Development of Architecture (Grundlagen und Entwicklung der Architektur)*, 1908, Berlage points

to Classical Greece and Gothic Europe as the twin models against whose perfection all future architectural production should be judged. In the former and more poetic of these two books, Berlage summons images of medieval Bruges and of the Panathenaic procession passing through the Propylaeum and climbing the Acropolis. More prosaically, in the technically oriented *Foundations and Development*, Berlage calls on the authority of the influential German architect and theorist Hermann Muthesius, who had obligingly noted that “since the beginning of history, two luminous periods stand out in Western culture as notably artistic: Greek antiquity and the Nordic Middle Ages. The first denotes an artistic height that the world can hardly hope again to attain; the second, at the very least, embodies that complete artistic independence and that absolute artistic ethnicity that are basic conditions of any stylistic era.”<sup>5</sup>

This joyful consensus between the temple builder and the wider society had been lost, felt Berlage, with the advent of the Renaissance. Once again, Berlage sits centrally in a nineteenth-century debate pursued most vigorously by such advocates of Gothic revivalism as Augustus Welby Pugin in Britain, August Reichensperger in Germany, and Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc in France. Berlage’s initial argument against the Renaissance was structural and focused on the folly of copying Roman models, which were themselves an irrational hybrid of Greek columnar decoration superimposed on the arched structures of the Romans. In expressing his despair at this development, Berlage rehearsed the same argument verbatim in both of his principal texts: “The revival of an art that itself was not essentially constructional and for that reason degenerated into a purely decorative impulse was questionable from the outset; its apostles soon ran into contradictions, which were not to be avoided.”<sup>6</sup> Due to this inherent weakness, said Berlage, architecture after the Renaissance progressively lost its earlier preeminence as leader of all the plastic arts. From this specifically architectural starting point, Berlage launched a much wider critique that identified the victory of Renaissance humanism as the beginning of the end of the consensus between artistic production and the wider society that he saw as the essential prerequisite of style. With the emergence of the individual will and the related phenomenon of Protestantism, spirituality was suddenly perceived as something upheld by earthly, visible man and thus in need of his constant renewal. The result, for Berlage, was the collapse of all those transcendent values essential to and expressed by his notion of style: the death of Christianity and the rise of the academy; the loss of religious or spiritual authority; the growth of individualism, materialism, and money worship, which combined to produce social chaos and artistic anarchy. Again, Berlage’s critique was in the mainstream of nineteenth-century radical thought as it had evolved in the writings of William Cobbett, John Ruskin, and William Morris.

Driving the critiques of nineteenth-century social radicalism is the profound sense of loss that marked the late nineteenth-century crisis of faith. This loss can be found again and again in Berlage's texts:

*But when I speak of ugliness in the realm of the spirit, I am referring to the total lack of what one might call a common purpose in our existence, a sense of working together toward one goal. A certain consecration of life is lacking, ultimately a lack not of education . . . but of culture, which is something quite different. For is not culture the accord between a spiritual core, the result of communal aspiration, and its reflection in material form, that is to say, art? Humanity, seen as the community, no longer has an ideal. Personal interests have replaced mutual, spiritual interests and have assumed a purely materialist form, money.<sup>7</sup>*

Culture here is synonymous with style, which has been lost as the inevitable consequence of the loss of faith and the total absence of any consensus on spiritual or cultural goals.

Among the most powerful and explicit statements of the waning of religious faith was Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach," written in 1851. Here are the third and fourth stanzas:

*The Sea of Faith  
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore  
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.  
But now I only hear  
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,  
Retreating, to the breath  
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear  
And naked shingles of the world.*

*Ah, love, let us be true  
To one another! for the world, which seems  
To lie before us like a land of dreams,  
So various, so beautiful, so new,  
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,  
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;  
And we are here as on a darkling plain  
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,  
Where ignorant armies clash by night.<sup>8</sup>*

Fifty years later, as the nineteenth century was turning into the twentieth, Berlage stood on the opposite but equally bleak shore, pondering strategies for redemption.

Berlage's architectural production falls into four distinct phases. The first embraces his student works, travel sketches, and early professional practice with the Amsterdam architect Theodor Sanders. It is generally accepted that a major turning point in Berlage's career occurred around 1890, ushering in the second and most significant phase of his working life, which extended to the period of the reception of the Amsterdam Stock Exchange in 1903. Not only did this period witness Berlage at his most unique and authentic as an architect, it also saw the evolution and definition of his theoretical standpoint. Although he overstates the case, Pieter Singelenberg has considerable justification in claiming that "Berlage's opinions underwent no change after the beginning of the twentieth century."<sup>9</sup> The third phase ran from 1903 until the end of World War I and saw Berlage as the undisputed leader of his profession in the Netherlands, active in three loosely related areas as city planner, designer of modest housing schemes, and grandiose architectural fantasist. Stimulated by a visit to the United States in 1911, the final phase from 1919 until Berlage's death in 1934 witnessed a series of monumental projects in which American design influences and technological advances challenge the orthodoxies of the earlier works. Whereas Berlage's activity as a designer is illuminated by the essays, lectures, and books on architecture that he produced throughout his working life, it would be a mistake to read the texts merely as a series of explications of his architectural designs. As was the case with his great contemporary Otto Wagner, the theoretical insights that were penned for the cost of the ink generally preceded their realization in bricks and mortar, which demands enlightened patronage. Nevertheless the desire to build lies behind all of Berlage's writing, and the theoretical and critical positions that he adopts can be understood only as ideal scenarios for the architecture of the future.

Berlage trained initially as a painter at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten (State academy of visual arts) in Amsterdam before deciding that his talents were spatial rather than pictorial. This realization led him to enroll in the school of architecture at the recently established Eidgenössisches Technisches Polytechnikum (Federal Institute of Technology) in Zurich. In his definitive monograph on Berlage, Singelenberg proposes several reasons for this choice, the most telling of which is Berlage's disinclination to train in Holland, either in the unsatisfactory schools or in the private studio of P. J. H. Cuypers, the leading Dutch architect of the day. A further attraction of the Polytechnikum was the lingering ghost of Gottfried Semper. Although Semper had left for Vienna

four years before Berlage's arrival in 1875, his continuing influence was exercised through his successors in the design studio, Julius Stadler and Georg Lasius, and through the physical surroundings of the Polytechnikum building itself, built to Semper's design in 1858–1864. A strong similarity can be seen between Semper's Polytechnikum and Berlage's diploma scheme for a school of applied art and a museum submitted in 1878.<sup>10</sup>

After three years spent traveling and sketching around Europe, Berlage was confronted on his return to Holland in 1881 by an architectural profession dominated by the Gothic revivalism of Cuypers and by the cultural polemics of J. A. Alberdingk Thijm. As Pieter Singelenberg has noted, "These leaders of the Roman-Catholic revival exerted a powerful influence on the arts for several decades, an influence which went further than the circle of their co-religionists."<sup>11</sup> Cuypers had first met Viollet-le-Duc in Paris in the mid-1850s and subsequently invited him to Roermond in the province of Limburg to advise on the restoration of the minster. In his own work, Cuypers combined Viollet-le-Duc's admiration for the rationalism of Gothic structure with the more dogmatic ethical imperatives of the English Gothic revival to create an eclectic manner of design that he proposed as a national style.<sup>12</sup> This notion of a normative, national style was a central element in the various Gothic revivals throughout Europe and was endorsed by the Dutch government when it commissioned Cuypers to design two of the most conspicuous public buildings in Amsterdam: the Centraal Station (1876–1889) and the Rijksmuseum (1875–1885). The museum marked the climax of an almost conspiratorial campaign orchestrated by Victor de Stuers, the director of the department of art and science in the interior ministry, which saw Cuypers's protégés given important public positions, and Alberdingk Thijm—Cuypers's brother-in-law—appointed professor of aesthetics and art history at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam.<sup>13</sup> This attempt to link state control with architectural style was vigorously resisted by the professional architectural associations in the mid-1880s, and in particular by the *Maatschappij tot Bevordering der Bouwkunst* (Society for the promotion of architecture), which at a general meeting in September 1884 proposed the Neorenaissance style as the most suitable for public building. Berlage was involved in the formulation of this position, which also corresponded to his own architectural practice at this point in his career, when he was working in the studio of Sanders. Two of the Sanders/Berlage projects from this period—the Focke & Meltzer store in Amsterdam (1884–1886) and the first competition design for the Amsterdam Stock Exchange—both drew heavily on Italian Renaissance sources. Indeed, Singelenberg has identified a whole series of sources from Berlage's Italian travels, which were incorporated into a sepia drawing of the interior of the Stock Exchange, including the Pantheon, Brunelleschi's Pazzi Chapel, and Borromini's Convento dei Filippini (fig. 2).<sup>14</sup> In an article pub-

Fig. 2. Theodor Sanders and H. P. Berlage, first design of the interior for a new stock exchange in Amsterdam, international prize competition, 1884, sepia and wash, 43.8 × 49.3 cm. Amsterdam, Gemeentearchief, Hist. Top. Atlas, Architectural Drawings Department, inv. no. PW 18187/14.

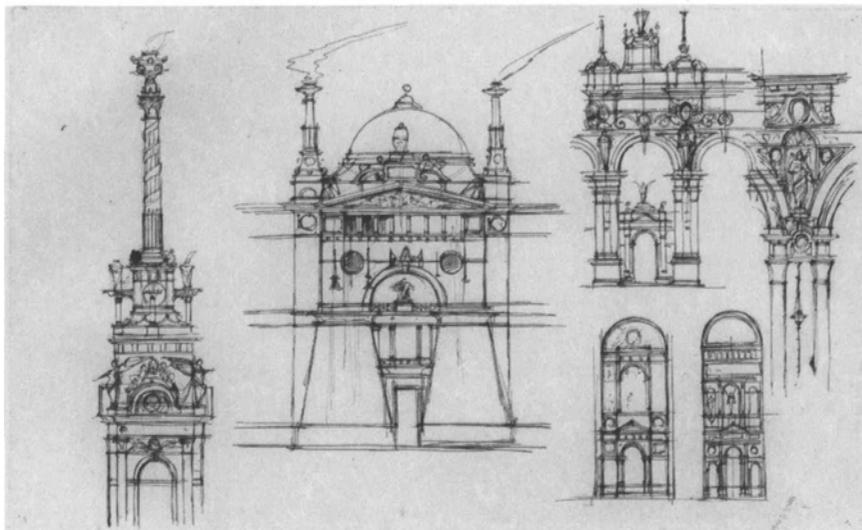
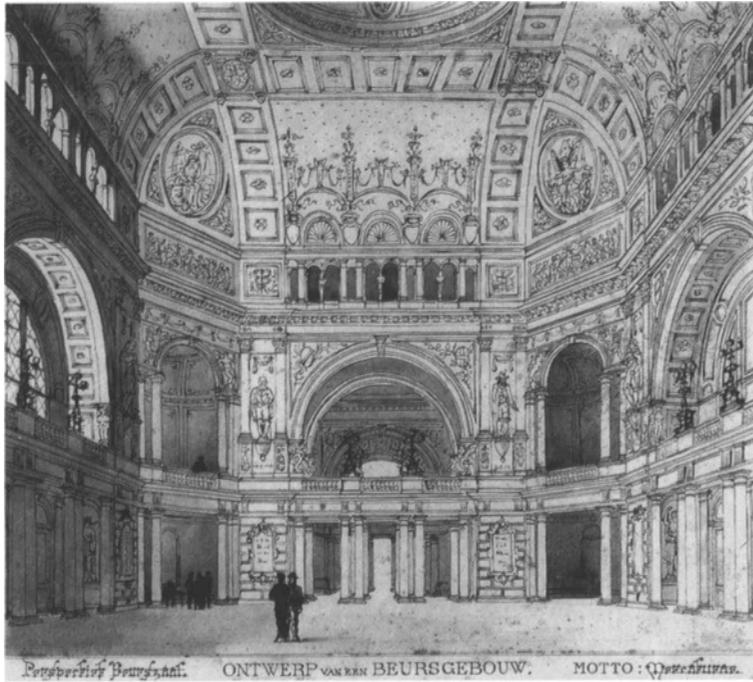


Fig. 3. H. P. Berlage, *Monument historique, projet d'un mausolée, monument crématoire* (Historical monument, design for a mausoleum, crematorium), 1889, ink on paper, 22 × 42 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 46.017.

lished in February 1883, Berlage applauded a similarly additive approach to Renaissance design in his analysis of Bramante's design for Saint Peter's in Rome, in which he found elements of San Lorenzo in Milan, the Parthenon, and Sant' Andrea in Mantua.<sup>15</sup>

This account of Saint Peter's, which appeared in *Bouwkundig Weekblad*, was Berlage's first publication. In reality, it is little more than a précis of Heinrich Adolf Geymüller's book on the same subject,<sup>16</sup> enlivened by Berlage's own firsthand impressions. A similarly informal relationship with the source material can be noted in many of Berlage's texts. As a practicing architect, whose interest in writing was polemical rather than academic, Berlage was prone to decorate his own aesthetic preferences and practical insights with resonant quotations and bons mots, culled from scholarly sources. In the process he showed scant regard for the niceties of scholarly etiquette, and plagiarism was a constant crutch.

The creative combination of historical sources that Berlage noted with approval in the work of Bramante found an obvious echo in the design that marked the climax of Berlage's eclectic first phase, the "Monument historique, projet d'un mausolée, monument crématoire" (Historical monument, design for a mausoleum, crematorium), exhibited at the Paris World Exhibition of 1889 (fig. 3). The central chapel was composed of a giant, domed assemblage of historical motifs. As identified by Berlage himself, some of the sources are nonclassical: the Temple of Amon at Karnak and the towers of the cathedrals of Strasbourg, Rheims, and Antwerp. The majority, however, point to classicist preferences and include elements from the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates, the Parthenon, the Baptistery of Constantine, the Temple of Minerva Medici, the Pazzi Chapel, and the church of Il Redentore in Venice.<sup>17</sup> The insistent literalness of these quotations make it clear that Berlage was not proposing this phantasmagoric pile as something that might actually be built. Rather, it should be regarded in the same light as Piranesi's frontispiece to *Le antichità romane* or Thomas Cole's painting *The Architect's Dream*, as Berlage's paean to the art of architecture and to the triumphs of his illustrious predecessors. It was also a conspicuous display of erudition, a characteristic of much of Berlage's writing.

Yet the notion of architecture as the assembly of appropriate Renaissance-inspired parts can have had little charm for a cerebral designer such as Berlage. In his mature writings, Berlage vigorously condemned Renaissance design for favoring the merely decorative over the constructional, and this critical position began to evolve in the 1880s. Unable to accept that the principal business of architecture was the reshuffling of received motifs, Berlage returned to first principles in his writings of the 1880s, in which he addressed the nature of beauty and the aesthetic status of architecture. The first of the essays published in this volume, "Architecture's Place in Modern Aesthetics"

("De plaats die de bouwkunst in de moderne aethetica bekleedt"), published in *Bouwkundig Weekblad* in 1886, witnesses Berlage's early preoccupations with these questions. It is a survey of the treatment of architecture by some fifteen German aestheticians, based on Gottfried Kinkel's lectures on art history, which Berlage had attended at the Polytechnikum in Zurich. The rather cursory treatment accorded to the individual philosophers by Berlage suggests that his knowledge of their work was based on lecture notes rather than on a direct engagement with the original texts. At the end of his essay Berlage concludes that "architecture's place within the system of the arts has not been sufficiently answered by the observations of the aestheticians."<sup>18</sup>

Among the Berlage papers in the Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, however, is a series of extracts copied from Hegel's *Aesthetics* and from Immanuel Kant's *Analytic of the Beautiful* in his *Critique of Judgment*, which suggests some lasting influence from these sources.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, Singelenberg has suggested that Arthur Schopenhauer and, in particular, Hegel offer keys to the understanding of Berlage: "It is necessary, once more in order to fathom Berlage, to go some way into the relationship between art and the Idea in Hegel."<sup>20</sup> Whereas Singelenberg concentrates on the Hegelian notion that the plastic work of art is an idea given sensuous form, other Hegelian premises recur throughout Berlage's texts. These include the primacy of architecture over the other arts, the preeminence of the classical and Gothic periods in the historical evolution of architectural models, and the significance—within certain commonsense limits—of eurythmy and harmonic proportion in architectural design. The Schopenhauer connection is rather more precarious, and his somewhat reductive vision of architecture as the play of load and support was specifically criticized by Berlage at a later stage in his career.<sup>21</sup> Berlage also wrestled with the Kantian distinction between free beauty (*pulchritudo vaga*) and dependent beauty (*pulchritudo adhaerens*). Architecture, of course, was consigned by Kant to the latter and lesser category, and Berlage dutifully copied out the definition of the beautiful that concludes the "Third Moment" of Kant's *Analytic of the Beautiful*: "Beauty is the form of *purposiveness* in an object so far as this form is perceived in it *without the concept of purpose*."<sup>22</sup>

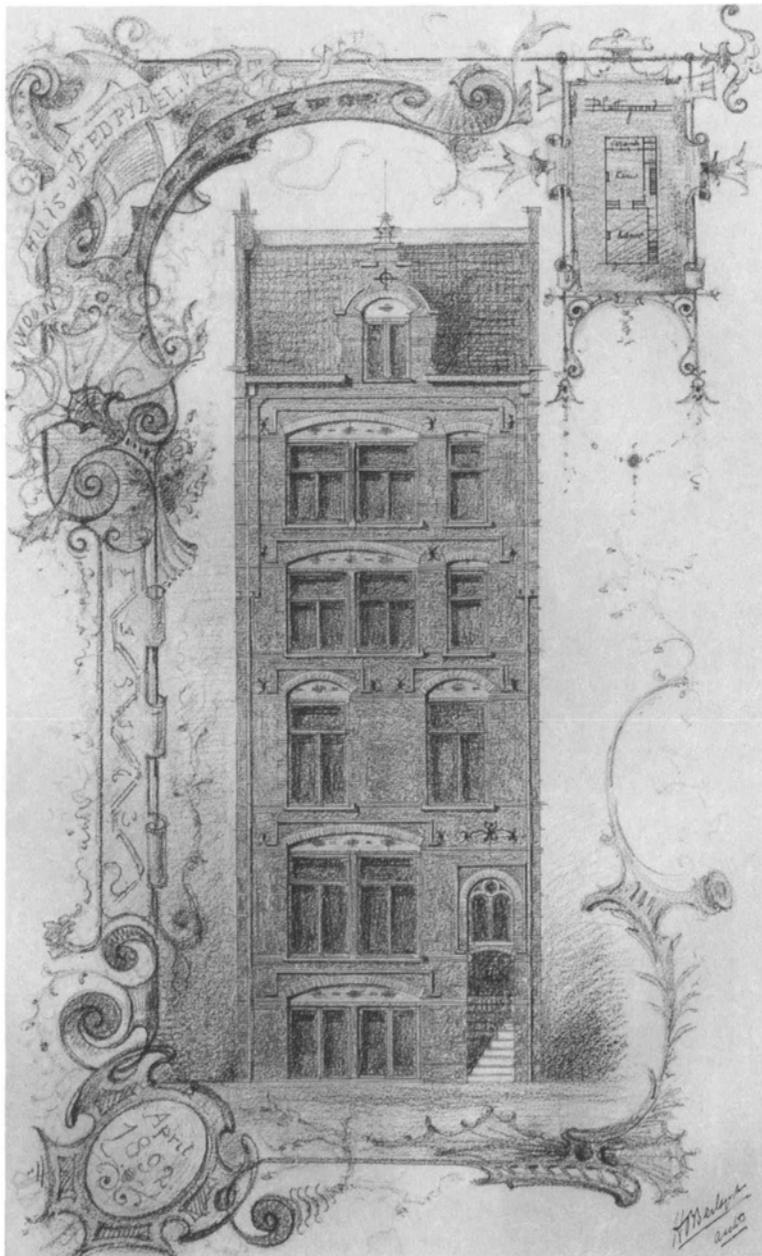
Yet Berlage's intelligence was little attuned to abstract aesthetic speculation or to Kantian abstractions that appeared to value decorative friezes more than the Parthenon.<sup>23</sup> His ultimate disillusionment with the abstruse wranglings of the aestheticians was summed up by the inclusion in *The Foundations and Development of Architecture* of a damning quotation from Muthesius: "The aestheticizing professor of art, a new type of the nineteenth century, took up his post and informed, examined, criticized, and systematized art. He was all the more powerful the weaker was the pulse of art, the more withered the natural life of art had become. Thus it is no longer the artist who sits at the source of the arts in the nineteenth century, but the professor of art."<sup>24</sup> By

the end of the 1880s Berlage was convinced of the need for what he subsequently called a “practical aesthetics,” to be based on architectural practice and the demands of the urban context rather than academic speculation. This was to be the mission that dominated his activity as both designer and writer in the second main phase of his working life, which, as already noted, ran from around 1890 to the completion and reception of the Amsterdam Stock Exchange in 1903. In formulating his “practical aesthetics” during the 1890s and around the turn of the century, Berlage established a set of theoretical premises to which he referred again and again in many texts published in the first two decades of the new century, most notably *Thoughts on Style in Architecture*, *The Foundations and Development of Architecture*, and the collection of essays published as *Studies over bouwkunst, stijl en samenleving* (Studies on architecture, style, and society), 1910.

The underpinning of this “practical aesthetics” was a rationalist theory of structure, derived ultimately from Viollet-le-Duc and transmitted, slightly paradoxically, via P.J.H. Cuypers. Cuypers was deeply influenced by Viollet-le-Duc, and the many Catholic churches that he built throughout Holland after the restoration of the Roman Catholic faith in 1853 were firmly grounded on the insights enshrined in Viollet-le-Duc’s *Dictionnaire raisonné de l’architecture française du XI<sup>e</sup> au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, published in Paris between 1854 and 1868.<sup>25</sup> As already noted, Cuypers had been condemned in the mid-1880s as ultraconservative by the radicals in the *Maatschappij tot Bevordering der Bouwkunst*, a prominent association of Dutch architects. This view was shared by Berlage, who had at that point favored the Neorenaissance style. This assessment was revised toward the end of the decade, however, by a group of Cuypers’s own students, including J. L. M. Lauweriks, K. P. C. de Bazel, and H. J. M. Walenkamp, who realized that the theories of proportion and rational construction proposed by Viollet-le-Duc and endorsed by Cuypers did not necessarily lead to solutions that looked like French models from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This reevaluation of French rationalism lay behind the foundation of the new architectural association *Architectura et Amicitia*, which launched its journal, *Architectura*, in 1893 with a lead article by Willem Kromhout, “Het rationalisme in Frankrijk” (Rationalism in France).<sup>26</sup>

Further reinforcement for the French rationalist arguments came from the other side of the Rhine, with the German discussion on architectural “realism” that figured large on the pages of the *Deutsche Bauzeitung* in the early 1890s. As K. E. O. Fritsch, editor of the *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, noted in an article on style published in 1890, a new mood of realism manifested itself in a growing awareness that “the style in which one builds in no way has the significance of a religious dogma, but is no more than an expressive vehicle for artistic thoughts. As such, it is entirely analogous to human language, in which very different yet equally valid tongues prevail.”<sup>27</sup> Among the many possible architectural languages that offered themselves, one in particular found Fritsch’s favor: the Ro-

Fig. 4. H. P. Berlage, Dr. E. D. Pijzel house, van Baerlestraat, Amsterdam, 1892, pastel and ink on paper, 58 × 36 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 172.



manesque style, which, he noted, “already holds sway over the architecture of a great country, namely the United States of America.”<sup>28</sup> Romanesque elements were also to be found in a building nearer home, the “Künstlerhaus zum St. Lucas” in Berlin, designed by Bernhard Sehring and singled out for praise by Fritsch in terms that prefigure many aspects of Berlage’s development over the decade:

*Herr Sehring, who with this work has made, as it were, his public declaration of faith, is following a direction that is brusquely opposed to all the academic rules and opinions. In the realm of architecture it corresponds to some extent to what is described as “naturalism” in the realm of painting. This is a direction that has become particularly developed among the architects of North America, where it has already achieved some very noteworthy results. This direction, however, appears in very different forms according to the artist’s point of departure. The academic architect adheres to a historically determined style and strives to maintain the unity of this style not only in every detail but in many cases subordinates his entire creation to the demands of this style. In contrast, the “most modern” among the architects, through the naive application of various stylistic forms and motifs appropriate to the specific function, aim simply to achieve a characteristic total image, which attracts in its picturesque impact and reflects the intended purpose of the building.*<sup>29</sup>

The impact of French structural rationalism and the almost iconoclastic freedom offered by Fritsch’s “realism” can be seen in the house that Berlage designed for Dr. E. D. Pijzel on van Baerlestraat in Amsterdam in 1891–1892 (fig. 4). Singelenberg points to this house as the first harbinger of Berlage’s new style, “in which he begins to leave out ornamentation which he knew from experience to be superfluous, and in which he starts to ‘plane’ his surfaces of moldings and curves.”<sup>30</sup> The contrast with the eclectic work of the 1880s could hardly be more marked, supporting J. J. P. Oud’s subsequent contention that the “Monument historique, projet d’un mausolée, monument créma-toire” of 1889 acted as the coffin lid of the first phase. As Oud noted:

*I regard this project as the turning point in Berlage’s development, which is to say, I believe that with this work, either consciously or unconsciously, Berlage made a final attempt to expand the possibilities of design within the framework of historicist architecture [Stilarchitektur]. It seems to me to mark the beginning of the insight that, in general, only reproductions or assemblages can be achieved with motifs from the historical styles, but no truly original work.*<sup>31</sup>

While the visual evidence supports Oud’s contention, it would be quite wrong to see in the development from Renaissance pastiche to expressed rationalist structure a teleology running from “old” decorated architecture to “new” undecorated and func-

tionally inspired design. For even in the radically new Pijzel house, Berlage reveals clearly his historical debts and precedents. The deep, polychromatically decorated tympana under the relieving arches of the windows, for example, not only emphasize the structure in the rationalist sense but also allude to Cuypers's use of the same motif in the director's house of the Rijksmuseum, dating from 1876–1883, and thus to the transmission into Dutch practice by Cuypers of Viollet-le-Duc's rationalist theory. It is appropriate to remember here Eduardo Persico's perceptive comment that Berlage "should not be judged by standards of 'rationalism,' but with a subtle understanding of his role as mediator between the 'ancients' and the 'moderns.'"<sup>32</sup>

Nowhere is this reciprocity between the timeless principles of the ancients and the specific demands of the modern age more clear than in Berlage's theories of eurythmy and geometric order. With the rationalist treatment of load and support established as the essential basis of architecture, in the sense proposed by Schopenhauer, the next brick in the theoretical pyramid concerned the mutual relationship between the parts and the whole. The key phrase here, repeated ad nauseam in Berlage's texts, is "unity in diversity." Berlage's masters in defining this notion were not the philosophers but, once again, the great architect/theoreticians of the preceding generation. As Berlage noted in *Thoughts on Style*:

*In the final analysis it is clear that philosophy is able to draw its conclusions only from appearances. Human ideas can be defined a priori, but art cannot be prescribed. In this respect the great practicing architects such as Viollet-le-Duc in France and . . . Semper in Germany are better teachers in that their major works, Le dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture and Der Stil in den technischen Künsten, offer practical aesthetics— aesthetics that one can use.*<sup>33</sup>

Both Viollet-le-Duc and Semper had explicitly located "unity in diversity" at the core of their respective theoretical arguments. In his ninth "Entretien," Viollet-le-Duc identifies this unity as the fundamental law of creation, making, in the process, a rather obvious allusion to the Biblical creation: "In fact, in organic nature, for example, we discover *one* principle. From the serpent up to the man the principle is rigorously followed out; it is the very variety of the applications of the principle that causes its unity to be recognized."<sup>34</sup> Semper developed the same thesis with more sophistication:

*Just as nature with her infinite abundance is very sparse in her motives, repeating continually the same basic forms by modifying them a thousandfold according to the formative stage reached by living beings and their different conditions of existence, shortening some parts and lengthening others, developing parts which are only alluded to in others, just as nature has her his-*

*tory of development within which old motives are discernible in every new formation—in the same way art is also based on a few standard forms and types that stem from the most ancient traditions and that always reappear yet offer an infinite variety and like nature's types have their history. Therefore, nothing is arbitrary; everything is conditioned by circumstances and relations.*<sup>35</sup>

This mutually supportive and explicatory relationship between the component parts and the whole is central to Berlage's notion of style, which has already been defined as the coherent pattern of perceptual and emotive associations that tie all forms of art and architecture to a common past and a common value system. For Berlage, style has nothing to do with motifs, with favored historical models, or with the whims of fashion: rather, it is the monist accord of every product and manifestation of society according to a single controlling authority.

There were, of course, historical periods that approached this ideal more closely than others, most obviously the Greek Doric and the medieval Gothic. In spite of all Berlage's reservations, the philosophers may have prepared his path, particularly in regard to the Doric model, in which Hegel saw a beauty that "consists precisely in this appropriateness to purpose which is freed from immediate confusion with the organic, the spiritual, and the symbolic; although it subserves a purpose, it comprises a perfect totality in itself which makes its one purpose shine clearly through its forms, and in the music of its proportions reshapes the purely useful into beauty."<sup>36</sup> The mysterious element that elevates the functional to the beautiful is eurythmy, which Hegel alludes to without pursuing further analysis: "In all these matters, in the relation of the breadth to the length and height of the building, of the height of the columns to their diameter, in the intervals and number of columns, in the sort of variety or simplicity of decoration, in the size of the numerous cornices, friezes, etc., there dominated in classical times a secret eurythmy, discovered above all by the just sense of the Greeks."<sup>37</sup>

As might be expected from Berlage's second "great age," control is also to be found in abundance in the architecture of the northern European Gothic. Berlage's prime source here was Viollet-le-Duc's *Dictionnaire raisonné*. In its enthusiastic reevaluation of Viollet-le-Duc in the early 1890s, the younger generation of architects was drawn not only to the doctrine of rational construction but also to the concomitant theories of geometrical systems and numerical relationships. Here they found an authority that carried spiritual resonances linked to the admired Gothic past, but which were also seen to be appropriate to spiritual and architectural needs of the beckoning century—all this in total accord with Viollet-le-Duc's insistence that "no one disputes the fact that an extensive knowledge of geometry is the groundwork of all architectural labors."<sup>38</sup>

From Viollet-le-Duc the gospel of geometric order was passed, as already noted, to Cuypers and from there to Lauweriks. Lauweriks grew up, quite literally, in Cuypers's studio, where his father was employed as a sculptor. After his studies Lauweriks returned to Cuypers as an assistant in 1887. A year later he was joined in the atelier by the young architect De Bazel, with whom he established a fruitful and creative partnership. Both men were strongly attracted to oriental philosophies and joined the Dutch Theosofische Vereeniging (Theosophical society) in 1894. In the theosophical gnosis they saw a means of combating the spiritual decline of the nineteenth century: aesthetic sensitivity rather than blind faith would provide access to the secret laws of nature, with systems of geometry, proportion, and color yielding an insight into the physical order of the universe. On the basis of this knowledge, the artist could create works on the microcosmic scale that echoed the structures of the universe.

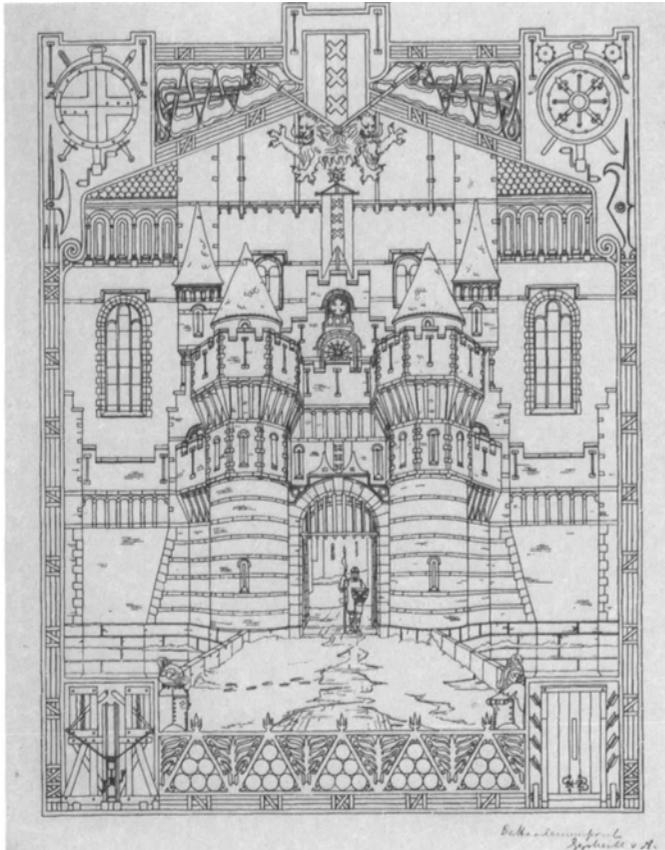
As members of the ethical-anarchist group "Wie Denkt Overwint" (Whoever thinks, overcomes), De Bazel and Lauweriks produced a series of illustrations for the group's journal, *Licht en Waarheid* (Light and truth), in which simple political messages were framed in the curvaceous forms of Nieuwe Kunst, the Dutch variant of Art Nouveau. De Bazel's woodcut *Anarchie* is typical of these works, both in its form and content. A selection of these illustrations was published in *Wendingen* in 1919, with an introductory text by the socialist painter Richard N. Roland Holst.<sup>39</sup> On the more abstract plane, De Bazel and Lauweriks also developed a course in practical aesthetics, which was given in 1897 under the auspices of the theosophical Vâhana School in Amsterdam, and focused on triangulation as the basis of two- and three-dimensional design. In 1896 Lauweriks published an article on the geometry of the Egyptian pyramids and followed this in 1896–1897 with a two-part article, in which he investigated the geometrical and proportional systems described by Viollet-le-Duc in his *Dictionnaire raisonné*.<sup>40</sup> Another important ally in the transition from the curves of Nieuwe Kunst to the tighter dictates of geometry and proportion was Jan Hessel de Groot, who taught at the Quellinus School in Amsterdam and was a vigorous advocate of current geometric theory.<sup>41</sup> Among the regulating figures that emerged from these studies were the Egyptian triangle—an equilateral triangle with a base-to-height ratio of 8 : 5—and the right-angled triangle with sides in the ratio 3 : 4 : 5. A further important figure, favored by De Groot, was a rectangle inscribed inside a circle, which was itself inscribed within a larger quadrangle, giving a ratio between the sides of the larger and smaller rectangles of 1 :  $\sqrt{2}$ .

Berlage also taught at the Quellinus School and left only in 1896 when the commission for the new Stock Exchange building in Amsterdam made significant demands on his time. In a lecture on the design of the Stock Exchange he listed as his inspiration the geometrical studies of Viollet-le-Duc, De Bazel, Lauweriks, and De Groot,<sup>42</sup> while

at the very end of his life he pointed to De Groot alone as the godfather of his own system of proportion.<sup>43</sup> De Groot was almost certainly the most significant literary source. In his book *Iets over ontwerpen in architectuur* (On designing in architecture), published in 1900, De Groot referred not only to Viollet-le-Duc but also to a medieval text by Mathias Roriczer, *Das Büchlein von der fialen Gerechtigkeit* (On the correct use of the finial), and to Georg Gottfried Dehio's *Ein Proportionsgesetz der antiken Baukunst und sein Nachleben im Mittelalter und in der Renaissancezeit* (A law of proportion in ancient architecture and its emulation in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance), both of which sources Berlage pillaged extensively for *Foundations and Development*.<sup>44</sup> De Groot also mentioned August Thiersch's essay "Die Proportion in der Architektur," first published in 1883, which devotes considerable attention to an analysis of the Sankt Elisabethkirche in Marburg, an example to which Berlage also returns in *Foundations and Development*.<sup>45</sup> In mediating, in Persico's words, between the "ancients" and the "moderns," Berlage repeatedly evoked the holy triad of nature, antiquity, and geometry to forge the link between primeval *Urform*, the architecture of antiquity, and the architecture of the future. As he insists in *Thoughts on Style*: "Just as order prevails in nature, in that nature works according to fixed rules, so we can perceive a certain order in the ancient monuments. Our own architecture, therefore, should also be determined according to a certain order! Would not design according to a geometric system be a great step forward?"<sup>46</sup>

Architectural design for Berlage was not, however, limited to the supporting frame and to the harmonious arrangement of the component parts and surrounding or enclosed spaces. "Unity in diversity" also had powerful social, political, and historical implications that tied the built form to the nation and city, and to the governance of both. Such wider issues of national history and national identity were given a particular focus in the early 1890s by the publication in 1892 of the first volume of P. J. Blok's *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche volk* (History of the Dutch people),<sup>47</sup> which found great resonance among the literary elite and thus in the national consciousness. As a more recent historian has commented on Blok's enterprise, "What the facts revealed was a kind of epic celebration of national grandeur."<sup>48</sup> Exactly these traits can be found in one of Berlage's more arcane projects from the early 1890s, namely his collaboration on a folio edition of Joost van den Vondel's drama *Gijsbrecht van Aemstel*, written in 1637. Vondel's theme was the siege, destruction, and ultimate rebuilding of Amsterdam following the death of Count Floris V in 1296. While this would seem an archetypically Dutch theme, Vondel's treatment gained a classical dimension through its close reference to the second book of Virgil's *Aeneid*, with the fall of Amsterdam echoing the fall of Troy. This fusion of classical precedent and local context and reference neatly parallels the evolution of Berlage's own position in the years 1891–1893, when he was

Fig. 5. H. P. Berlage, Haarlemmerpoort, drawing for stage set to *Gijsbrecht van Aemstel*, 1894, pencil and ink on paper, 50.5 × 38.5 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 280.012.



involved in the *Gijsbrecht* project. As Berlage explained in a lecture, the true hero of the drama is Amsterdam.<sup>49</sup> Vondel's structure strongly favors the pictorial aspect of the drama above the dynamic, and Berlage's response was a tableaulike set, played out in front of a massive city gate, modeled on the medieval Sint Antoniespoort on the Nieuwmarkt (fig. 5). As Manfred Bock has noted, "In the *Gijsbrecht* illustrations we find the origins of Berlage's quest for a national formal language, which clearly indicates its roots in the capital."<sup>50</sup>

Berlage's rapport with the city of his birth was a powerful formative influence in the redefinition of his architectural goals in the early 1890s. The most important literary

result of this process was the lecture “Architecture and Impressionism” (“Bouwkunst en impressionisme”), first delivered in Rotterdam in November 1883 and then published in installments during the summer of 1884 in the journal *Architectura*.<sup>51</sup> According to Bock “Architecture and Impressionism” marked the first salvo in Berlage’s campaign to relocate architectural design in the wider context of urban design: “In the early 1890s he began to expound his conviction that the problem of the modern city could not be solved primarily by architectural means, but that the solution presupposed a plan, on the basis of which the architect could approach the design work in a manner that was sensible both socially and aesthetically.”<sup>52</sup>

Berlage had already addressed this topic in an article published in 1883. Although conceived as a polemic against current plans to regularize the Amsterdam cityscape and fill in canals to create space for an ordered expansion, Berlage devoted by far the longest part of his text to ruminations on the picturesque and the monumental and the corresponding relationship between nature and architecture. As explained by Berlage: “The beautiful, in my opinion, can be reduced to two principal forms, which one should distinguish between when contemplating every work of art. These are, first, the picturesque and, second, the monumental. Not only the art of sculpture but, in particular, the art of building demands this differentiation, since it determines the character of every building and ultimately of every town.”<sup>53</sup> The model for picturesque beauty, said Berlage, was provided by nature: “Nature is not monumental, as it never works regularly in arranging its component parts, but is picturesque in the highest sense, since these parts are distributed in the most capricious manner in consequence of dozens of circumstances (displacements, temperature differences, etc., etc.).”<sup>54</sup> The function of the artist, therefore, could not merely reside in the imitation of nature, for this would preclude the monumental creation that is the true goal of the artist, sculptor, or architect. This conviction, of course, is entirely in accord with Hegel on the primacy of man-made, monumental art over the spontaneous creations of nature. As Hegel asks in the *Aesthetics*, “Why is nature necessarily imperfect in its beauty, and what is the origin of this imperfection?”<sup>55</sup> To which Berlage answers:

*To what else can we ascribe the impressions we receive in a park such as Versailles, or the overwhelming power that we sense on entering buildings like Cologne cathedral, or Saint Peter’s in Rome? It becomes clear that nature is not the sole mentor of art, and that exactly these impressions are the result of the harmonic composition and proportional arrangement that derive only from the human spirit.*<sup>56</sup>

In Berlage’s example, the park at Versailles with its axiality and geometric planning is a work of art, while the random formations of natural woodland are not. Transposed

to the city, the need to control random, incremental growth and urban chaos has to be balanced against the abolition of all picturesque qualities by the imposition of a monolithic plan. While admiring the “almost excessive simplicity of the most monumental of all arts, that of the Greeks,” Berlage condemns the gridiron plan of New York City as “too monotonous to be really monumental.”<sup>57</sup> The most important influence drawing Berlage to this conclusion was the Viennese architect and urban theorist Camillo Sitte, whose passionate defense of the medieval city plan was published in 1889 as *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen* (translated as *City Planning According to Artistic Principles*, 1965). Sitte’s premises are revealed very clearly in his chapter headings, which include: “The Relationship between Buildings, Monuments, and Their Plazas,” “That Public Squares Should Be Enclosed Entities,” “The Irregularities of Old Plazas,” and “The Meager and Unimaginative Character of Modern City Plans.” In Sitte’s analysis the relationship between solid and void had been reversed with the advent of the straight street, the boulevard, and the gridiron plan: “Formerly the empty spaces (streets and plazas) were a unified entity of shapes calculated for their impact; today building lots are laid out as regularly-shaped closed forms, and what is left over between them became streets or plazas.”<sup>58</sup> So impressed was Berlage by Sitte’s text that he presented a shortened version, with many passages transcribed verbatim, as a lecture to the Amsterdam branch of the *Maatschappij tot Bevordering der Bouwkunst* in March 1892.<sup>59</sup> In his lecture Berlage argued vigorously against a purely mechanistic view of urban design, and against the tyranny of the gridiron block: “It is not true that modern traffic compels us to do this; it is not true that the demands of hygiene force us to this; it is simple thoughtlessness, indolence, and lack of good will that condemn us modern city dwellers to a lifetime in formless quarters, condemn us to the spiritually deadening view of house blocks and streets that look always and endlessly the same.”<sup>60</sup> To resolve conflicting claims of picturesque and monumental beauty, Berlage proposes in “Architecture and Impressionism” an irregular city plan, based on the models of the medieval European merchant cities, and individual buildings designed with simple and monumental massing and profiles, yet able to accommodate picturesque detail.

According to rationalist theory, as formulated by Viollet-le-Duc, such detail should principally serve to stress the structural integrity of the building: “All form that is not indicated by the structure should be rejected.”<sup>61</sup> The strict adherence to this principle, however, as revealed in Viollet-le-Duc’s own architectural designs, can be supremely dull. Berlage was clearly aware of this danger, and his engagement with the surrounding cityscape and its history precluded the simple reductionism of the absolute rationalist. His vision of architecture as a central element in the wider construction of a common memory and a common value system again brought him close to the position of Sitte. For Sitte was a passionate Wagnerian, who had witnessed the first performance of the

Ring at Bayreuth in 1876. A year earlier he had published an article entitled “Richard Wagner und die deutsche Kunst” (Richard Wagner and German art),<sup>62</sup> in which he poured out his boundless admiration both for the Wagnerian total work of art (*Gesamtkunstwerk*)—with its ambition to unite all the arts—and for the Wagnerian artist as redemptive hero, able to save the people from the ravages of nineteenth-century industrialization, and to reassert the preindustrial values of German culture.

In Sitte’s program, the city itself was the ultimate goal of artistic redemption, the focus of all cultural and communal arts. This reading of the city as *Gesamtkunstwerk* was made explicit in an essay appended to the edition of 1900 of *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, which concluded:

*Thus it is demonstrated here again that . . . city planning properly understood is no mere mechanical office task, but is actually an important and inspired work of art. It is really part of a great and true art of the people, a fact that is the more important because our times lack just such a popular synthesizing of all the visual arts in the name of an all-encompassing and unified national work of art [Gesamtkunstwerk].*<sup>63</sup>

The impact of Sitte on his eminent Dutch contemporary can be encapsulated in a passage from Berlage’s *Thoughts on Style*, which merits quotation in full. After lambasting the materialism and crassness of the nineteenth century, Berlage concludes:

*And so it has come about that we live in an age that can be called the ugliest age of all time. Were it not for some pieces of literature and for Richard Wagner, artistically sensitive people would have absolutely no joy at all in life. And this age, which might at least have had some exterior charm, has even failed here, since the stimulus for beautiful form is missing. All we have is appearance for actuality, pretension as the expression of prosperity, for ostentation is a discovery of the nineteenth century.*

*And so I think back once again to Bruges and visualize the whole atmospheric picture of a Sunday morning in the Middle Ages, full of religious earnestness. A fair, perhaps, offers a counterpart, full of humor and happy bickering. Yet, both church and fair stand on the same spiritual and therefore artistic ground; both are expressions of a high culture.*<sup>64</sup>

How did these sentiments manifest themselves in Berlage’s designs from the 1890s? The most important commission from the early part of the decade was for an office building for an insurance company, *De Algemeene Maatschappij van Levensverzekering en Lijfrente* (General society for life insurance and annuities) on the Damrak in Amsterdam, designed in 1892 and completed by 1894 (fig. 6). While recognizably derived in its massing from the Neorenaissance block built eight years earlier for Focke

Fig. 6. H. P. Berlage, office building for De Algemeene Maatschappij van Levensverzekering en Lijfrente (General society for life insurance and annuities), Damrak, Amsterdam, 1892-1894. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, negative no. 000730.



& Meltzer, the building for De Algemeene breaks new ground in the violent contrasts between the smooth ashlar facades and the richly inventive decorative scheme, which contrives to be both specifically Dutch and unencumbered by any obligation to historical accuracy or consistency. The historical references are more theatrical than archaeological: the wheel window under the main gable and the arcaded fenestration on the top story carry strong echoes of the *Gijsbrecht* drawings. This loosely historical reference, pointing back to the foundations of Dutch mercantile prosperity in the early seventeenth century, is clinched by the standing portrait sculpture of the statesman Johan de Witt, set in a tabernacle on a corner plinth. Although strictly in the late nineteenth-century theatrical costumier style, Bart van Hove's sculpture and its siting at the most exposed corner of the block correspond to Berlage's suggestion, put forward in "Architecture and Impressionism," that "when designing details, one should exercise the utmost moderation and use a greater richness only in those places that are particularly conspicuous."<sup>65</sup> Had he known of his impending fate, De Witt would assuredly have availed himself of a life insurance policy of the type offered by De Algemeene. Together with his brother Cornelis, he was torn to pieces by an irate mob in The Hague in 1672.

It is impossible to consider Berlage's intentions at De Algemeene without comparing them with "Architecture and Impressionism," where the passage quoted above continues:

*What an impression will this simple and apparently easy program make when rigorously realized? There it stands, the plane of the wall with its gray and red lines, darker on the top, cut out against the sky with angular, beautifully simple lines. It makes a splendid, naturally elaborate, multicolored but quiet background for the motley bustle on the street. It is stained with dark window planes, only a few of which have a rich, sculptural frame, the elegant decoration of an otherwise sober dress. It is a serious piece of work that speaks well for itself, immediately eliciting sympathy, especially when we compare it to all the disorderly structures around it; it changes the mind of everybody who is not yet entirely spoiled by all the overwhelming tastelessness.<sup>66</sup>*

The same might be said of Berlage's building for De Algemeene, which attracted an extremely positive critical response. Willem Kromhout, for example, the architect of the American Hotel on Leidseplein (1898–1901), pointed to De Algemeene as a turning point in the development of Amsterdam architecture:

*It cannot be valued enough that the designer with great self-control has wrought a sober, monumental, and artistic whole. The substantial base, the first story, and an upper story that achieves a glittering effect, flanked by an extraordinarily successful gable made up of powerful combinations of lines—these all form a totality that is unique in Amsterdam and might stand as a manifesto in the realm of architecture. And above all, don't let me forget the inner coherence between the architectural elements and the sculptural details. This building ushered in a new form of architecture in Amsterdam.<sup>67</sup>*

The nexus of ideas collected in "Architecture and Impressionism" was not limited, however, simply to the promotion of new architectural forms. For explicit in Berlage's text is the conviction that aesthetically rewarding form also has the power to promote social welfare. Noting without regret the passing of religious and aristocratic patronage, Berlage insisted that the architect should respond to the demands of the new, social democratic spirit and give them tangible expression:

*Our age requires the construction of workers' housing on a large scale. We need new cities to replace the admittedly picturesque, but truly unhealthy, and therefore absolutely outdated houses of the poor, which are too horrible even to talk about and move even the most coldhearted to compassion. Without doubt, the first requirement in this new construction is to be cheap.*

Our age requires an extensive program for school construction, one that fulfills a need in a practical way but is at the same time inexpensive. Our age requires all kinds of institutions for the benefit of our society. Here, too, the requirement is to be as cheap as possible, for the government cannot disregard other interests by constructing luxury buildings. Having to reconcile himself to these circumstances, the architect discovers that he has to use simple but characteristic means in order to create any effect. He should therefore become an impressionist, for only an impressionist style will make this possible.<sup>68</sup>

The term “impressionism” links Berlage’s text to the *Beweging van Tachtig*, the leading radical artistic movement of the 1880s, seen by Theodoor Weevers as “the successful conclusion of the struggle begun circa 1780 to free the language of poetry from the burden of post-classicist diction and imagery and to free Dutch verse from the rigorous metrical code inherited from the eighteenth century.”<sup>69</sup> The parallel with Berlage’s contemporaneous emancipation from the demands of Renaissance composition is very obvious; the new freedom made explicit in the building for *De Algemeene* might be compared with the poetic impressionism of the “sensitieve verzen” that Herman Gorter wrote in the years 1889–1892, exactly the period in which Berlage reappraised his own means and goals. Berlage’s plea for an impressionist architecture in which the overall silhouette and impression takes precedence over the detail—“Let us look only for some characteristic large planes and edges!”<sup>70</sup>—can fruitfully be compared with the spontaneous expression of sensuous experience that Gorter pursued in his verse. Here, for example, is a stanza from Gorter’s *De school der poëzie* (From the school of poetry) of 1899:

*A red rose stands in my sleep,  
See how somber,  
Blood in my sleep,  
A dreamlike amber  
In red sea-dream my whiteness steep.*<sup>71</sup>

The strongly pictorial elements in both Berlage’s architecture and Gorter’s verse reflect the close contact they enjoyed with the radical painters associated with the *Beweging van Tachtig*, and in particular with Jan Toorop and Richard N. Roland Holst, who was a professor at the *Rijksakademie* in Amsterdam and husband of the poet Henriette Roland Holst. Toorop’s influence can be seen in some of the decorative borders with which Berlage framed certain of his drawings in the mid-1890s. His perspective drawing of the office block for the insurance company *De Nederlanden van 1845*, built 1894–1896 on the *Sophiaplein* (now *Muntplein*) in Amsterdam, is framed by an extrav-

Fig. 7. H. P. Berlage, perspective drawing for De Nederlanden van 1845, Sophiaplein (now Muntplein), Amsterdam, 1894–1896. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut.



agant border that struggles to unite the heraldic devices of convention and respectability with the curves and arabesques of Toorop's *Nieuwe Kunst* (fig. 7).

More than the comparable Art Nouveau movements in France or even Belgium, the artistic revival in Holland of the late 1880s and 1890s was intimately linked to a political program. An important forum was the journal *De Nieuwe Gids* (The new guide), founded in 1885, in which the dogged individualism and *l'art pour l'art* position of the poets Willem Kloos and Albert Verwey were offset after 1889 by the contributions of political "radicals" such as Domela Nieuwenhuis and Frank van der Goes. The radicals hovered in the space between demagogic socialism and what they considered to be bourgeois liberalism. As explained by the party ideologue and chairman M. W. F. Treub, radicalism proposed an undogmatic socialism based on realism and flexibility, aimed at the plausible goal of the maximum benefit for the largest part of the community.<sup>72</sup> Berlage was closely involved with the radicals in the late 1880s and early 1890s. In 1888 he was a signatory to a pamphlet calling for the creation of a radical electoral association in Amsterdam, and he was invited to run for the City Council as a radical candidate in

1891.<sup>73</sup> More pragmatically, Berlage was also active in a campaign that proposed shorter working hours and improved wages for construction workers, which was addressed to the City Council in 1893.<sup>74</sup> The meeting point for the radical intellectuals and politicians was the Breero Club, where Berlage met Treub, Dr. Pijzel, and P. L. Tak. Dr. Pijzel, as already noted, commissioned a house from Berlage in 1892, and Tak became editor of the journal *De Kroniek*, for which Berlage wrote articles on architecture.

Not surprisingly, the pragmatic nature of radical politics was reflected in Berlage's own political thought as it evolved in the 1890s and as set down rather tentatively in "Architecture and Impressionism." Admitting the conflicting interests between capital, which desires to build quickly and cheaply, and the architect's artistic and social conscience, which instinctively favors solid materials and painstakingly well-designed details, Berlage proposes a compromise in which simplification and an emphasis on the "characteristic" rather than the unique would lead to a situation in which "beauty is independent of money."<sup>75</sup> If the architect is unable to make this compromise, warns Berlage, the engineer and the building industry will simply take over: "The architect should prove himself able to keep abreast of his times, for only then will his work be guaranteed in the future."<sup>76</sup>

While the radical movement made a virtue of its protean instincts, its flexibility, and its lack of system, it was not without influence, particularly in Amsterdam, where it was responsible for putting under civic control the main public services: gas, electricity, and the telephone and tramway companies. Although severely weakened by internecine conflicts in the early 1890s, the radical impulse gained an extended influence with the election in 1895 of Treub as alderman for public works. One of the reasons for the breakup of the radical movement was the gathering power of the socialist party, formed in 1894 as the Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij (SDAP). Almost from the outset, the party gained support from the intelligentsia, and it was greatly boosted by Gorter's decision to join in 1897. In the 1880s Gorter had emerged as the great father figure in Dutch literature, described by E. H. Kossmann as "the prophetic poetic figure, who tried to express in his poems an experience of that essential unity which underlies the incoherent diversity of existence."<sup>77</sup> After 1897 Gorter found the unifying narrative in Marxist doctrine, as did his pupil Henriette Roland Holst, who joined the SDAP at the same time as Gorter. As Kossmann has noted: "Their passionate and untiring activity as theorists, propagandists, and poets raised the intellectual level of socialism in the Netherlands to a point it had not known before. For them it was a truly international principle that went far beyond the trivial local problems of everyday life in the Netherlands."<sup>78</sup> In two sonnets written in 1900, Henriette Roland Holst contrasted the vigor of cultural life in the Netherlands in the 1890s and its broad intellectual hori-

zons with the physical sense of enclosure and constraint engendered by the narrow boundaries of the country. The first sonnet concludes:

*Our eyes sense what is great, we feel a force  
that lends a greatness to our mind's aspiring,  
and hence we are at home in boundless spheres.*

While the second bemoans in its final stanza:

*Life to environment conforms in stature:  
it here grows dwarfed like plants on barren soil  
and no longer knows of its pristine nature.  
Gone is the greatness which in dream we find  
when once we bear our share in human toil:  
Holland, you give no space but to the mind.<sup>79</sup>*

In Berlage's work the same conflicts between the constraints of local traditions and his vision of an architectural language universally appropriate to the modern age can be found in the Amsterdam Stock Exchange, the design that marked the summation of the second phase of his working life and brought together many of the theoretical precepts and personal influences that had shaped his development to that time.

Berlage's Stock Exchange bears witness to a great talent wrestling to reconcile an extraordinary diversity of demands and expectations that ranged from the functional to the near mystical (fig. 8). The resulting building is highly complex and dense in meaning and may be seen as the perfect exemplar of Semper's definition of style in architecture as "the accord of an art object with its genesis, and with all the preconditions and circumstances of its becoming."<sup>80</sup> The genesis of the Stock Exchange is an immensely long and complicated tale, the potential subject, as Singelenberg has suggested, for a weighty book.<sup>81</sup> Berlage was involved in the project from the outset and had entered a scheme for the 1884–1885 competition, which was placed among the first five out of 199 entries. The winning project, by L. M. Cordonnier, was not commissioned, however, following charges of plagiarism. The atmosphere of conspiracy and distrust thus engendered continued to dog the project thereafter. Following the debacle of the international competition, little was achieved for a decade, beyond a series of weak proposals to relocate the Stock Exchange in existing buildings that were to be revamped for the purpose. In 1894 the City Council finally decided to enlarge the existing Stock Exchange on the Dam, built in 1840–1845 to the design of Jan D. Zocher, and a draft

Fig. 8. H. J. M. Walenkamp, Berlage's Stock Exchange, Amsterdam, 1898, photolithograph, 43 × 66 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 65.105.



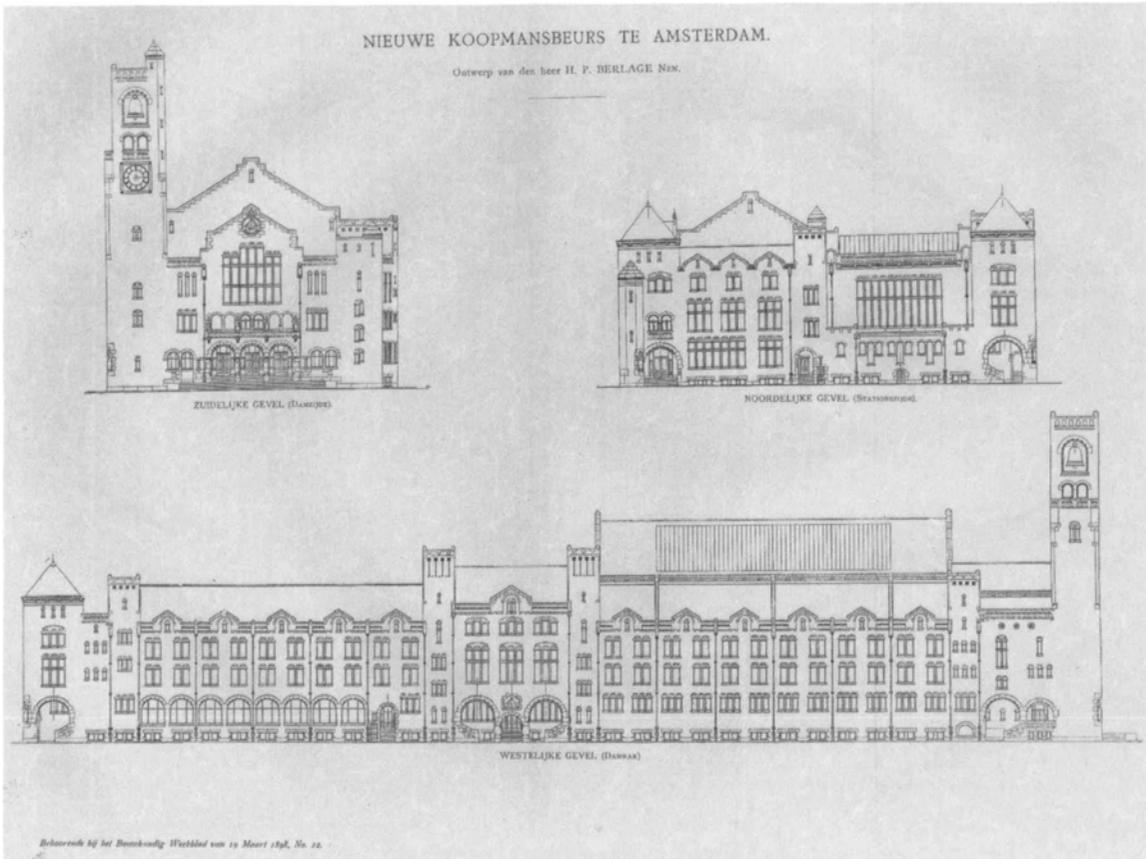
Fig. 9. Joh. Braakensiek, cartoon. From *De Amsterdammer*, 20 March 1898.



scheme was worked out by the city architect, A.W. Weissman. This project was ultimately rejected by the Stock Exchange Committee, whose chairmanship was then taken over in the autumn of 1895 by the radical politician Treub in his capacity as alderman for public works.

At this point the politics of the radical faction came into play, characterized by Kossmann as “realism, opportunism, a supple and rapid insight into what is required by the circumstances of the moment.”<sup>82</sup> Treub appointed Berlage as technical adviser to the committee, and between them the two hatched a scheme for a completely new building, which was designed behind closed doors, and whose existence was revealed to the public only after it had been accepted by the City Council in October 1896. Given the subterfuges involved in the commission, it is not surprising that the publication of the definitive design in March 1898 unleashed a torrent of criticism, derived in equal measure from the profession, the future users of the Stock Exchange, and the general public.<sup>83</sup> As summed up by Bock, “The architects criticized the architecture but really meant Berlage; the tradesmen on the Damrak criticized the site, but really meant Alderman Treub; the Amsterdam capitalists criticized the whole project, but really meant the radical party, of which Treub was the principal candidate.”<sup>84</sup> A splendid cartoon (fig. 9) published in *De Amsterdammer* on 20 March 1898 shows the mayor of Amsterdam, S. A. Vening Meinesz., giving a glass of Berlage’s medicine to the patroness of the city, who says, “It’s not true that it is sour and bitter at the same time; but it’s still a nasty

Fig. 10. H. P. Berlage, elevations of the Stock Exchange, Amsterdam. From *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 18, no. 12 (19 March 1898). Santa Monica, The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities.



potion.” To which Vening Meinesz. replies, “Perhaps, my lady, you’ll get used to the taste; in any case it’s good for you; the doctor and the professor have prescribed it for you, and as you know, they’re never wrong.”<sup>85</sup>

What was so radical about Berlage’s prescription that it caused such a vigorous reaction? By adhering to the site flanking the Damrak, Berlage and Treub frustrated the ambitions of those who advocated that the Damrak should be filled in completely in order to run a Haussmann-style boulevard from the Centraal Station to the Dam. By blocking this potential axis with the powerful silhouette of the Stock Exchange, Berlage adhered both to Sitte’s precepts as detailed in *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen* and to his own urban theories as outlined in “Architecture and Impressionism.” As one of the most vigorous of Berlage’s supporters commented at the time, “But it [the Stock Exchange] is fortunately an obstacle to those who wish to kill Amsterdam by reducing it to a boulevard city and force on her an unnatural worldliness as unbecoming to her as a court gown would be to the wife of a Volendam fisherman.”<sup>86</sup> Rather than the fripperies of a court gown or of its architectural equivalent, the weary swags and cartouches of the Renaissance revival, Berlage stretched along the Damrak front a dour, perforated brick wall some 143 meters long.<sup>87</sup>

As Berlage explained in very similar terms in both *Thoughts on Style and Foundations and Development*, the prime element of architecture—in both literal and figurative senses—was the wall: “the naked wall in all its simple beauty.” This was the key to architecture’s basic task, the enclosure of space. In *Foundations and Development* he insisted:

The art of architecture resides in the creation of spaces, not in the design of facades [fig. 10]. A spatial enclosure is produced by walls, and thus the space or the various spaces find external expression in a more or less complex arrangement of walls. It is also important in this sense that the walls should remain flat, for an overarticulated wall loses its intrinsic, wall-like character. By sachlich, clear work I mean that the architecture of the wall remains two-dimensional decoration, that the projecting elements are limited to those offered by the construction, such as window supports, water spouts, gutters, single cornices, and so on. It follows from this so-called wall architecture, in which vertical articulation disappears of its own accord, that the vertical supports such as piers and columns are not given projecting capitals, but rather that the development of the transitions are developed within the wall. The windows form the true decoration of the wall plane; they are installed only where necessary, and then in appropriate sizes.<sup>88</sup>

The source here was Semper, who had written in volume 1 of *Der Stil*, “The wall is that architectural element that formally represents and makes visible the enclosed space as such, absolutely, as it were, without reference to secondary concepts.”<sup>89</sup> In Semper’s

taxonomy, a key figure was the “wall-fitter” (*Wandbereiter*), who created the decorative mats with which the simple wooden frames of the earliest structures were dressed. With the act of hanging these mats, architecture emerged as an art rather than as a purely constructional activity. This relationship between frame and dressing, which so preoccupied Semper, is taken up by Berlage in his *Thoughts on Style*, where he relates the skeleton to the outer skin—implicitly linking the rationalist frame of Viollet-le-Duc to the cladding theories of Semper:

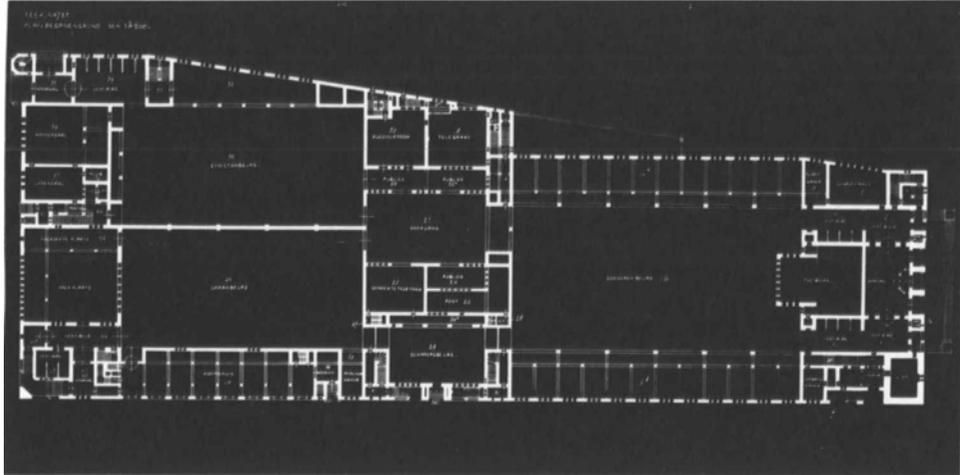
*We architects must also first study the skeleton, just as painters and sculptors do in order to give their figures the correct form. For the cladding of every natural object is, so to speak, an exact reflection of the inner skeleton, which, in that it presents us with the most perfect construction, can be called a work of architecture. But logical construction is the dominating element here, and the cladding is not a loose covering entirely negating the construction like a badly fitting suit but is totally rooted in the inner building and is ultimately a form of decorated construction.*<sup>90</sup>

Admitting, as does Semper, the primacy of the structure in establishing the building as space enclosure or shelter, Berlage also supports Semper’s proposition that it is on the outer skin of the building that the artistic form emerges from the merely constructional devices.

The ordering and articulation of the wall surface, therefore, is of the greatest significance, as it must reflect both the practical disposition of the internal spaces and the artistic volition that turns a shed into a work of art. To reconcile these potentially conflicting demands, Berlage turned to geometry as a way of uniting both the plan and the elevation under one ordering system. “Unity in diversity” was to be achieved—at least on the drawing board—by geometric means. As already noted, Berlage pointed to the geometrical models of Viollet-le-Duc, De Bazel, Lauweriks, and De Groot as the inspiration for his work on the Stock Exchange. Berlage explained his intentions in designing the Stock Exchange in a lecture delivered on 1 April 1898. As the report of this lecture notes:

*The investigations of Viollet-le-Duc, and more recently of De Bazel, Lauweriks, and De Groot, are utilized in the design of the facade; the building is constructed according to a 4 by 5 schema and is made up of an arrangement of four-pointed prisms, whose base is a square and whose height stands in a ratio to the side of a rectangle of 5 : 8. In the equilateral triangle the ratio of perpendicular to half the base is 5 : 4, which was known already in ancient times as the Egyptian triangle. The pyramids offer an example. The articulation of the facades, the interior architecture, in short, the entire building is constructed according to these proportions.*<sup>91</sup>

Fig. 11. H.P. Berlage, plan of the Stock Exchange, Amsterdam, 1900, blueprint, 39.3 × 74 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 65.108.



In *Foundations and Development* Berlage published the well-known drawing of the Damrak facade in the final version of the Stock Exchange building with a superimposed grid based on the Egyptian triangle, while the text proclaimed:

*The simple geometrical and even arithmetical ratios achieve the most beautiful results, in that the trained eye senses and therefore understands this. As already noted, the Greeks knew this fact and put it to use. Moreover, the pleasing effect of simple numerical ratios has been appreciated in all epochs. Once again a model can be found in nature, for it is known that not only the proportions of the human body but also those of various animals can be expressed in simple numbers. . . . The Stock Exchange building in Amsterdam . . . is entirely proportioned after the Egyptian triangle. It consists of a system of built-up pyramids with the ratio of 8 : 5, and can, therefore, be compared with a group of natural crystals.<sup>92</sup>*

In the “Prolegomena” to *Der Stil*, Semper points to symmetry, proportionality, and direction as the necessary conditions by which the diversity of form achieves unity, adding that “we meet the most perfect formations of such phenomena in the *mineral realm*. . . . Rejecting all external influences—this law finds its fullest expression in these crystal formations: as strict regularity and all-embracing enclosure.”<sup>93</sup>

The absolute dimensions of the Stock Exchange are based on a 3.8-meter-square module, which is applied in both plan and elevation (fig. 11). Within this modular sys-

tem, the relations of width to height, the roof pitches, and much of the decorative system are controlled by the 5 : 4 ratio derived from the Egyptian triangle, with which, in the words of Bock, Berlage seems to have been “obsessed” at the time.<sup>94</sup> Yet, while the system is employed most rigorously at the center of each face, the need to negotiate the corners and relate the decorative scheme to two facades that could be viewed simultaneously led Berlage to treat triangulation as a guide rather than an imperative. As Bock concludes:

*When the axis of symmetry did not correspond with the verticals derived from the ground-plan module—as, for example, on the corner towers on the south facade . . . then he sacrificed the rhythm of the module of symmetry. When a composition derived from the elevational module produced relationships that he “instinctively” found unsatisfactory, then he sacrificed the “Egyptian” triangle.<sup>95</sup>*

This acceptance that the specific functional and contextual demands of even the most modest building must preclude any notion of absolute regularity was implicit in Berlage’s admission in 1900 that De Groot’s system did not guarantee success as an architect.<sup>96</sup> Berlage thus endorsed the concluding comments in Thiersch’s essay on architectural proportion: “No law of art can replace lack of talent. The diligent use of the dictionary of rhymes does not make a poet; yet the poet must carefully observe the dictates of rhyme. In the same way a knowledge of the laws explained here will not make anyone into an architect.”<sup>97</sup> By the time he published *Foundations and Development*, in 1908, Berlage was even more wary of the blind application of proportional systems and invoked no lesser authorities than Viollet-le-Duc and Hegel in support of his conclusion that “the geometrical method should remain only a means.”<sup>98</sup> This slightly ambivalent conclusion echoed, perhaps, the pragmatism of Treub and the radical politicians, whose fixed general principles were pursued by flexible means appropriate to the moment.

Yet Berlage remained extraordinarily faithful to his principles in the architectural detailing of the Stock Exchange. Having established the dictates of the rational frame—the wall—and of geometric control, Berlage proceeded to elaborate an extraordinarily refined yet sensuous decorative scheme, based entirely—as he insisted in *Foundations and Development*—on the Egyptian triangle. As on the exterior, the flat plane of the wall is the prime bearer of the architectural message, with the interplay of load and support given symbolic expression and thus emphasis by the decorative elements. Inevitably, Berlage points to Semper as his authority, and in particular to the section of *Der Stil* devoted to the seam:

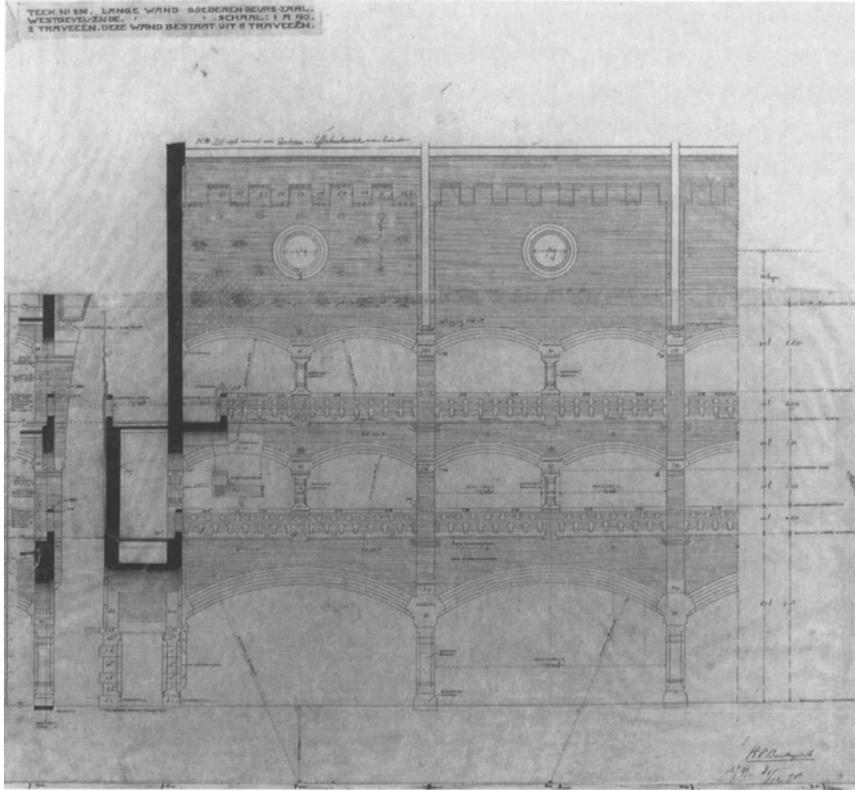
Fig. 12. H. J. M. Walenkamp, interior of Berlage's Stock Exchange, Amsterdam, 1898, photolithograph, 43 × 66 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, negative no. 001702



*Semper says something very original at the beginning of his observations on “the seam” [die Naht] as a necessary element in the joining together of various parts. He asks if there is an etymological link between the word “necessity” [die Not], as in the phrase “making a virtue out of necessity,” and the word “seam”; and whether the phrase should really mean “making a virtue out of the seam.” In other words, in assembling constructional elements, one should not attempt to eliminate the necessary “seam.” On the contrary, one should make it into a virtue, that is to say, a decorative motif. You artists should exploit, therefore, the various constructional difficulties as decorative motifs.<sup>99</sup>*

In this relationship between the rational frame and the decorative scheme, Berlage sees a link between Semper and Viollet-le-Duc that goes beyond their individual stylistic preferences. The passage quoted above continues: “In these words Semper paid tribute to true stylistic rationalism, even though he has little good to say about medieval, Gothic art. But does not this sentence correspond to Viollet-le-Duc’s principal tenet: ‘Every form that is not determined by the structure should be rejected’ (*Toute forme qui*

Fig. 13. H. P. Berlage, *Stock Exchange, Amsterdam, 1898*, ink and chalk on transparent paper (fixed on cardboard), 61 × 67 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 65.122.



*n'est pas ordonnée [sic] par la structure doit être repoussée*).<sup>100</sup> This happy alliance of Semper and Viollet-le-Duc, the two great mentors of Berlage's "practical aesthetics," can be seen in action in the sequence of the vertical supports in the main hall of the Stock Exchange—the Commodities Exchange—in its original state, before rebuilding (fig. 12). Starting from a square base, the corners of the stone pier are chamfered away to give a circular profile, at points marked by incised decorative bands. Reasserting its original square section as it confronts the job of carrying the weight of the segmental arches and the wall above, the pier takes on the form of a smooth cushion capital, cut back flush to the wall surface and terminating in an inverted voussoir. From this voussoir springs a corbel that in turn supports the brick wall post as it pushes upward in its dual role as loggia pier on the two stories above and, ultimately, as the springing point for the roof truss. As it reaches higher, the wall post moves out to embrace the outline

of the truss and is transmuted again into stone at its climax to provide a visually convincing support for the iron roof truss. On the truss itself, the decorative scheme is limited to the rivets that give symbolic expression to the material form and to the cumulative downward thrust of the iron components.

At each point in the transformation from the visually passive to the visually active, or in the sequence from stone to brick to stone to iron, the point of transition is marked by a decorative feature (fig. 13). As on the exterior, the expression of the integrity and composition of the wall plane creates the entire decorative scheme, which is given heightened interest on the interior by the wall's negotiation of the roof truss. In making a virtue out of these "seams," or points of transition, Berlage uses utterly simple formal devices, almost drawn from the kindergarten art class: color, material, texture, outline, light, and shadow. The result is extraordinarily sensuous and puts one in mind of Berlage's paean to the Romanesque portal, penned for *Foundations and Development*:

*Furthermore, is not a Romanesque portal—something that could hardly be conceived in a more simple form—cut out of the wall with the most delicate artistic sensibility, thereby possessing a beauty of unsurpassable nobility? And is not this rule confirmed by the observation that whenever these forms gradually develop in their richness and their clarity becomes obscured, there is a loss of beauty—even in the presence of the richest display.<sup>101</sup>*

Where the decorative elements are related not to the structure but to the services of the building, Berlage keeps a strong intellectual grip. As Singelenberg has shown, the interior lamp fittings designed by Berlage for the Amsterdam Stock Exchange were derived from the single-cell organisms depicted by Ernst Haeckel in his very popular and influential book *Kunstformen der Natur* (Art forms of nature), published in 1899.<sup>102</sup> By setting the protophyte or protozoa inside the larger prism, Berlage invoked two variations on the same theme of primeval structure, or *Urform*—one organic and one inorganic. Both were linked, however, in Semper's analysis, by the laws of planimetric symmetry, and Berlage's choice of these metaphoric *Urformen* further amplifies his support of the Semperian insight that nature uses the simplest of means in an entirely logical and nonarbitrary manner to produce an infinite variety of forms, both organic and inorganic.

Whereas the beguiling simplicity of a decorative scheme organized around the structural seams points forward to a modernist position, Berlage's Stock Exchange also inhabited the nineteenth-century realm of narrative decoration. Just as Schinkel had prefaced his Altes Museum in Berlin with a series of wall paintings in the entrance hall, portraying the emergence of life on earth from cosmic chaos, so Berlage conceived the Stock Exchange as a manifesto for the social and political issues that had engaged him

over the previous decade: nationhood, social equality, the conflict between individualism and community. In framing the ideological program that was chiseled into the decorative sculpture of the Stock Exchange and painted onto its walls, the poet Verwey played a very significant role. We have already met Verwey in the mid-1880s as a disciple of Kloos and editor of *De Nieuwe Gids*. Around 1890, however, he became increasingly impatient with the extreme and self-indulgent individualism of the *Beweging van Tachtig* and in 1894 set up a new magazine, *Tweemaandelijksch Tijdschrift* (Bimonthly review). Verwey described his ambition to steer the Dutch intelligentsia toward new goals in an editorial printed in the first issue of *Tweemaandelijksch Tijdschrift*, which hailed a new revolutionary era, whose religiosity would be derived from Spinoza and whose political ideology would be based on undogmatic socialism. Although Verwey's development was comparable to that of his friend and rival Gorter, there were marked differences in their respective definition of socialism. As Kossmann explains: "To Verwey and his followers socialism became a poetic vision of all that was harmonious and pervadingly beautiful, and as such it was clearly very remote from the sordid practices of party politics. Verwey could never understand why Gorter and Henriette Roland Holst should try to subordinate their poetry to their political beliefs."<sup>103</sup> Although Berlage wrote principally for Tak's journal *De Kroniek* in the 1890s, he contributed a long article on architecture to *Tweemaandelijksch Tijdschrift* in 1895/1896,<sup>104</sup> and his own rather vague socialist position was more in tune with Verwey's position than with that of the party functionaries of the SDAP.

Soon after his appointment as architect of the Stock Exchange, Berlage invited Verwey to act as *aesthetisch-historisch adviseur* for the project, and Verwey responded with an essay on the history, future, and decoration of the Stock Exchange, which he published in *Tweemaandelijksch Tijdschrift*.<sup>105</sup> Research into the history of the institution and its role in the life of the city of Amsterdam provided the basis of Verwey's work, and much of his material appears to have found its way, if unacknowledged, into the lecture on the Stock Exchange given by Berlage on 1 April 1898. Berlage opened with a poem by Vondel, dedicated to the first Amsterdam Stock Exchange, built to the design of Hendrick de Keyser on the Rokin between 1608 and 1611. Berlage had quoted directly from De Keyser's tower in the first scheme for the new Stock Exchange that he had drawn up while working with Sanders, and the importance of the historical precedent was very clear to both Berlage and Verwey. Indeed, the majority of Berlage's lecture was devoted to the history of the Stock Exchange in the "golden age" of the seventeenth century, with the nineteenth century admitted only very briefly, and then only as the necessary context for the rebuilding of the late 1890s.

The structure of this lecture closely matches the thesis proposed in *Thoughts on Style*, which dismissed the nineteenth century as a period of total decline and ruin, barely

worthy of serious consideration. Any hope of progress could not, said Berlage, be grounded on a simple continuation of nineteenth-century practice, and the only hope for future progress lay in the recovery of the values of the later Middle Ages, before they had been swept away by the linked evils of individualism and capitalism. The desire to link the new Stock Exchange to the history of Amsterdam commerce is made clear by the siting of Lambertus Zijl's rather hapless figures of Gijsbrecht van Aemstel, the founder of Amsterdam, and Jan Pietersz. Coen, the governor general of the Dutch East Indies in the 1620s: they are set into the southern and northern corners of the Damrak facade, respectively. The triumvirate of historical figures is completed by Zijl's free-standing statue of Hugo Grotius, which guards the northeast entrance. With his treatise *De iure praedae commentarius* (Commentary on the law of prize and booty), written in 1604, Grotius laid the foundation of international trading law, and thus, ultimately, of the Stock Exchange. The local tradition, which Berlage belabored so vigorously in his lecture, was stressed not only in biographical but also in architectural references. Most obviously, the three-arched opening on the south facade points back to the old Town Hall of Amsterdam, which burned down on 7 July 1651 but has survived for posterity in Pieter Saenredam's painting *The Old Town Hall of Amsterdam* (*Het oude stadhuis te Amsterdam*), 1657, now in the Rijksmuseum.

The historicizing schema, in which the weaknesses of the present are set against the lost virtues of the past as a measure of the hopes for the future, is further developed in the entrance. Above three arches on the south facade is a bas-relief by Zijl depicting paradise on one side, the slavery of labor on the other, and, above the central portal, a symbolic act of reconciliation between the two. Below the relief is a quatrain by Verwey, which reads:

*The stone spans the entrance portal like a forehead,  
The mind of trade takes lucid line.  
From that: Between man and matter  
Many dealings are directed at our existence.*<sup>106</sup>

The ethical implications of trade are restated in the vestibule, where the visitor is confronted by Toorop's *opera sectilia* panels representing the past, the present, and the future. These images perfectly depict the tripartite eschatology of utopian socialism, with the feudal order succeeded by the class society of nineteenth-century capitalism, which itself would be succeeded by a new age of harmony and religiosity. Verwey was the immediate source for this type of speculation.

That utopian or poetic socialists like Berlage and Verwey should be involved in the construction of a shrine of capitalism was in itself a slightly improbable constellation,

Fig. 14. H. P. Berlage, stockbrokers' boardroom, Stock Exchange, Amsterdam.  
The Hague, Gemeentemuseum.



and one which Verwey countered by proposing in his essay on the Stock Exchange that in the postcapitalist age of the future, the building would assume its true function as a temple to the new humanity. In this new climate of fairness and equality, the various plastic arts brought together in the Stock Exchange would unite into a potent *Gesamtkunstwerk*, through whose physical intercession the national achievements of the past would serve to inspire the fraternal ambitions of the future. In Verwey's scenario, the rigid social and commercial structures of the capitalist economy would be replaced by the autonomous, mutually supportive groups favored in current anarchist theory:<sup>107</sup>

*Both trade and industry shall be free, and a united humanity will support itself through organs of its own creation in its own, self-supporting way. Which means that trade as we have known it will disappear. . . . And from then on a new, free generation will see the temple erected to the*

godhead—by then forgotten—and will read in the windows and on the walls of the great deeds and see the heroes who accomplished them. In admiring what their own time has achieved, they will perhaps recall with melancholy and certainly with respectful admiration the vanquished enemy, who through its greatness made this new era possible.<sup>108</sup>

Needless to say, the vanquished enemy was capitalism.

A further important source is the British example, and in particular the writings of Ruskin and Morris. Both Toorop and Richard N. Roland Holst, who was responsible for the paintings in the southwest tower of the Stock Exchange, knew Morris personally, and much of the radical socialist theory that gained currency in Holland in the 1890s derived from the British models. Ruskin's theory of social justice, for example, published in 1862 as *Unto This Last*, was devoted to two themes: the definition of wealth and the moral conditions affecting its attainment. At the conclusion of the chapter entitled "The Veins of Wealth," he offers a vision of the future totally in accord with that of Verwey and Berlage:

*Nay, in some far-away and yet undreamt-of hour, I can even imagine that England may cast all thoughts of possessive wealth back to the barbaric nations among whom they first arose; and that, while the sands of the Indus and the adamant of Golconda [i.e., the diamond of the Indian fortress at Golconda] may yet stiffen the housings of the charger, and flash from the turban of the slave, she, as a Christian mother, may at last attain to the virtues and the treasures of the Heathen one, and be able to lead forth her Sons, saying,—“These are MY Jewels.”*<sup>109</sup>

Throughout Verwey's scheme for the Stock Exchange, the brokers and dealers were exhorted in this Ruskinian spirit to think beyond the obvious charms of a quick profit and to ponder the social and ethical implications of their work. Above the austere furnished stockbrokers' boardroom, for example, was placed a decorative frieze, from which two texts by Verwey reminded the brokers that, compared with social and ethical values, their commodities were of transient and arbitrary worth (fig. 14). Similarly, Joseph Mendes da Costa designed bronze reliefs to be set above fireplaces, representing such themes as virtue and loyalty. In some instances no actual fire was ever intended, prompting Singelenberg to Semperian speculation on the nexus of hearth and altar.<sup>110</sup> This dedication to moral reform and to a better society to come moved Leo Simons, one of Berlage's most loyal supporters, to the perceptive comment that the Stock Exchange was as much a building for the future as for the present: "And when one strolls in the great lofty hall of the Commodities Exchange, one feels that here in Amsterdam a space has been born that is fated to be, in addition, the meeting place of the community now

awakening with a new common consciousness and self-respect."<sup>111</sup> Seen in this light, the Stock Exchange is a parable of Berlage's social theories, with individualism, greed, and mendacity giving way to higher aspirations of community and equality. Out of the temple of Mammon was to emerge the Volkshuis, or temple of the people.

Sadly, the public response to the Stock Exchange and its reception by the brokers and dealers after its opening in May 1903 bore little resemblance to Simons's idealistic vision. Indeed, the avalanche of mainly negative criticism has provided material for a whole book.<sup>112</sup> In the architectural press the relationship between the structure and the decorative scheme attracted particular criticism, even from well-informed and generally sympathetic pens. Willem Vogelsang, to take one example, writing already in 1903 in *Dekorative Kunst* was very positive about the architecture: "There is great individuality in the consistent system of proportions, in the honest functionality of the parts, in the carefully chosen coloration of the materials, in the play of shadow and the disposition of the voids. A proud and powerful artistic spirit has created the whole building in a masterly fashion."<sup>113</sup> In contrast, Vogelsang had strong reservations about the decorative scheme. Admitting that Zijl's sculptural efforts were incomparably better than the mindless stucco affixed to most contemporary buildings, he noted the wild discrepancies between Zijl's various sculptural styles and concluded that in comparison to the intellectual control shown by the architecture, the sculptural ornamentation is "youthfully immature."<sup>114</sup> Similarly he found that the Toorop who created the decoration in the vestibule "remains the Toorop who exhibits and promotes himself here, not the Toorop who subordinates himself with self-imposed discipline to control on a higher plane."<sup>115</sup>

Berlage subsequently admitted this conflict in *Foundations and Development*:

*In the building there are also sculptures and wall paintings, which are designed partly following the same [geometric] system. Only partly; for in today's conditions one cannot win all the artists over to this point of view. The majority of them still profess themselves in favor of "free art" and do, indeed, regard a set pattern or guideline as a net in which they will entangle themselves. . . . The modern architect, in consequence, finds himself in the uncomfortable position of having to work out the outlines of the sculpture and painting himself (irrespective of whether or not he has the ability), which condemns the artists in question more or less to slave labor and therefore affects the quality of their work. If the architect relinquishes this preliminary control, as the artists would prefer, then under the current conditions he will quite certainly fail to achieve a unified totality in his architecture, since there is every prospect that the sculptor and painter will not be working in his spirit. This is not the fault of the artist as such but of an artistically immature age.*<sup>116</sup>

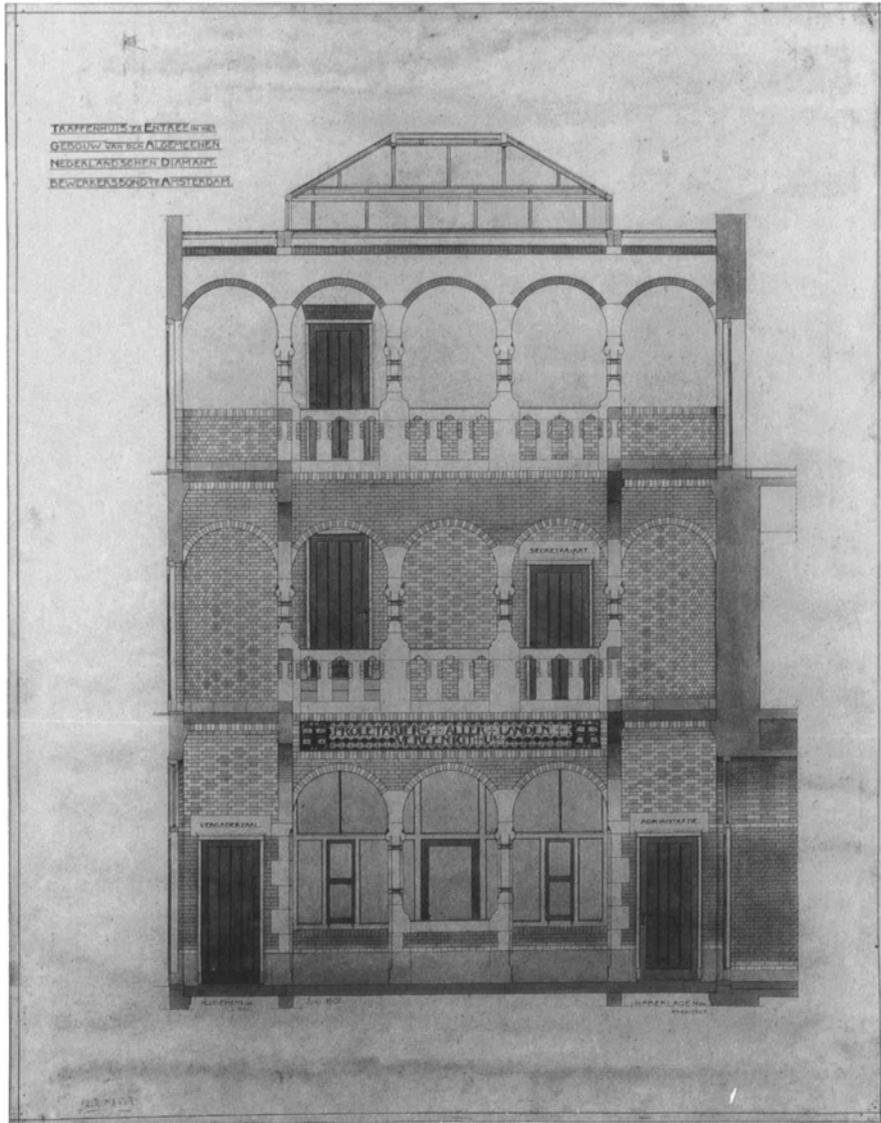
The problem, however, was not simply one of artistic maturity but stemmed from the essential differences between architecture and the fine arts, differences that had pre-occupied Berlage as a philosophical issue in the mid-1880s. One of Berlage's earliest biographers, Jan Gratama, writes well on this problem in the context of the Stock Exchange:

*Sculpture has the accent of reality, architecture has the accent of mystic geometry; the first connects directly with the concrete forms of life, the second with its abstract forms. If sculpture is to elucidate or decorate architecture, then it has to comply with the abstract beauty of the latter, it must therefore in a certain sense become architectonic. In a certain sense, for, on the other hand, the characteristic and effective aspect of the sculpture lies exactly in the fact that it evokes in the sublime abstract architectural beauty the suggestion of real life.<sup>117</sup>*

Much more damning, however, in the eyes of the general public than the dialectics of naturalism and abstraction was the harsh reality that the Stock Exchange began to settle and crack almost as soon as it had been completed. The fault lay more in the subsidence of the infill site than in the structure of the Stock Exchange itself, but critics and cartoonists were not slow with images of the Stock Exchange ravaged by cracks and propped up with wooden balks. An official inquiry was launched, and Berlage drew up a series of measures to stabilize the structure, which were completed by 1909. The most drastic alterations were in the largest of the interior spaces, the Commodities Exchange, where subsidiary columns were inserted at the centers of the spans forming the ground-level arcade, and iron tie-rods were added to the roof trusses. Doubtless spurred by Verwey's quatrains, which suggested that there was more to life than a profit margin, the stockbrokers used the sinking of the fabric as an excuse to move out of the Stock Exchange and commissioned Joseph Theodorus Johannes Cuypers—the architect son of P. J. H. Cuypers—to design a separate stocks and securities exchange (Beurs voor de Vereeniging voor den Effectenhandel). The result was an essay in institutional Neoclassicism. Provocatively located on the Beursplein adjacent to Berlage's Stock Exchange, it opened in 1914.

From the time of the first competition in 1884, controversy dogged the Stock Exchange: as described above, there were arguments about the siting, the choice of architect, and the way in which this choice was made, about the radical style of the building and the subsequent need for structural revisions. All this controversy inevitably influenced Berlage's subsequent career. Two specific consequences can be seen. On the one hand, Berlage became an internationally famous figure, particularly in professional circles, and launched himself on a vigorous career of self-advertisement.<sup>118</sup> From 1905 onward no international architectural convention was complete without Berlage's

Fig. 15. H.P. Berlage, De Algemeene Nederlandsche Diamantbewerkerbond (General Dutch diamond cutters' union), 1901, ink and watercolor on paper (fixed on cardboard), 87 x 69 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 67.013.



reassuring presence. Together with Wagner from Vienna and Muthesius from Berlin, Berlage formed the triumvirate that represented most vigorously the architectural conscience of Europe in the years leading up to World War I.

The second consequence of the Stock Exchange saga was a conspicuous lack of major architectural commissions between 1903 and 1914. The vast majority of Berlage's built commissions over this decade were for housing, either private or public. Only a handful of public buildings leavened this mix; small insurance offices for De Nederlanden van 1845, a country post office, a school, a hotel, and an undistinguished department store for Meddens en Zoon in The Hague. This lack of activity on the monumental scale is also attributable to changes in the Amsterdam City Council following the resignation in 1901 of Vening Meinesz., the mayor who had supported the radical initiatives over the previous decade. An immediate result for Berlage's practice was a moratorium on the Plan-Zuid, a development plan for the southeastern suburbs of the city, which had been commissioned from Berlage in March 1900. By the time the plan was unveiled to the public in the summer of 1904, a more pragmatic political climate prevailed, and the radical interest in large-scale planning had waned.<sup>119</sup>

The most significant public commissions in the early years of the century came not from the municipal authorities but from the labor movement. While working on the Stock Exchange, Berlage also designed the headquarters building for De Algemeene Nederlandsche Diamantbewerkerbond (General Dutch diamond cutters' union, ANDB), which was completed in 1900 (fig. 15). As the bastion and palace of organized labor, the building kept a severe front to the street while employing many of the same artists who were working on the Stock Exchange to produce an impressively decorated interior. As with the Stock Exchange itself, various Italian models have been cited as possible sources for Berlage's design. Bock, for example, has suggested persuasively that "in typological terms the union building is related to such thirteenth-century Italian town halls as the Palazzo del Podesta in Florence or the Palazzo dei Priori in Volterra, which Berlage interpreted as monuments of popular sovereignty."<sup>120</sup> Rather than historical associations, however, it is the control of abstract, cubic space that impresses in Berlage's design, with the printing works located in the half-basement, a *piano nobile* holding the main meeting hall, offices on the second floor, and library and archives on the third floor. These horizontal, functional layers are linked by the stairwell and vestibule that run the full height of the building in the interior, and which find splendid exterior expression in the entrance portal and tower. While all the decorative burden of the facade is carried by the entrance, the tower, and the crenellated roof line, the main block is austere plain, with the first three levels of fenestration forming a powerful rectangular square set within the larger cubic block. This is surely what Berlage was referring to toward the end of the decade when he defined style as "the principle of

clarity in the whole concept of plan and elevation."<sup>121</sup> As the German architect Bruno Taut subsequently commented, the ANDB building was "smaller, but perhaps a little bit more attractive" than the Stock Exchange.<sup>122</sup> As a highly successful expression of proletarian power and dignity, the ANDB spawned a close cousin in Rotterdam, with Berlage's design for the offices of the Arbeiders Coöperatie Voorwaarts (Workers' cooperative forwards), completed in 1907.

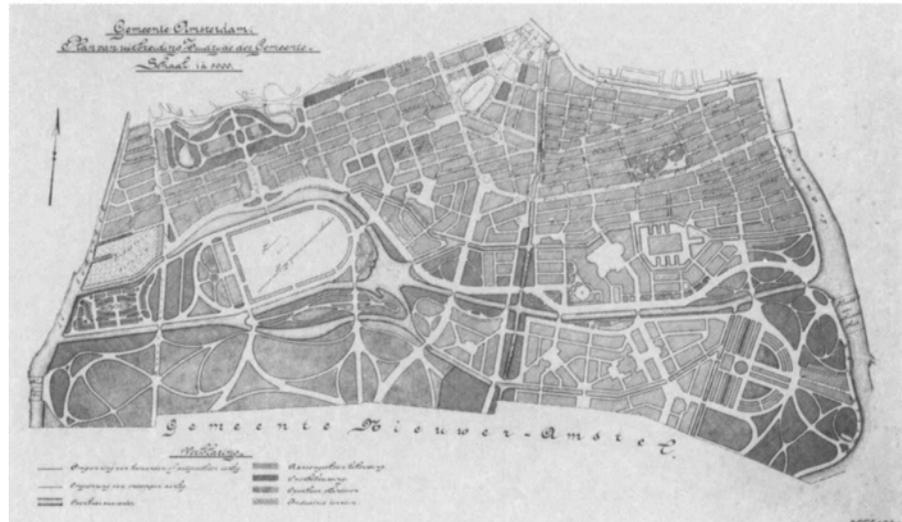
Berlage's close contacts with the trade-union movement and with the leader of the ANDB, Henri Polak, for whom he built a house in 1905, point to a spirit sympathetic to the socialist cause. But in spite of the majolica frieze in the vestibule of the ANDB building in Amsterdam—urging "Proletarians of the world unite!" (*Proletariers aller landen verenigt u!*)—it would be quite wrong to see Berlage as a revolutionary political spirit. Within the political spectrum, he stood with the majority Socialist Party (SDAP) on the revisionist center left, which believed in the progressive reform of the institutions of capitalism rather than their overthrow by revolutionary force. In a memoir of his father, Berlage's son recalled:

*My father was a socialist. I'm not absolutely certain if he was a member of the then SDAP, but we got Het Volk at home and the wonderful Notenkraker. . . . Let me put it like this. My father, like most intellectuals of his day—he was one of the senior figures among the tachtigers—was convinced that the greatest societal evil lay in the private ownership of the means of production. Troelstra became the strong political figure in this circle.<sup>123</sup>*

After the railroad strike of 1903—the first major strike in the Netherlands—attitudes within the SDAP became polarized, with increasing tension between the revisionists, led by Pieter Jelles Troelstra, and the radicals. Gorter allied himself with the radicals and published an epic poem in 1906 entitled *Een klein heldendicht* (A small heroic poem), which is devoted to the issues posed by the strike: the battle for an eight-hour working day, in particular, and Marxist theory, in general. Gorter finally resigned from the SDAP in 1909 and founded a new Marxist party, the Sociaal-Democratische Partij (SDP), which became the Communistische Partij Holland (CPH) in 1918. Henriette Roland Holst followed his lead and resigned from the SDAP in 1911.

Berlage's position was more ambivalent. Although he quoted extensively from both Gorter and Henriette Roland Holst in his essay "Art and Society" ("Kunst en maatschappij"), first published in 1909, Berlage's endorsement of the Marxist position is invariably qualified by revisionist doubts. Having condemned a system that dooms the working classes to an income below the subsistence level, Berlage hurriedly adds that "one always has to be extremely careful drawing conclusions from these kinds of fundamental observations, as it is tempting to want to fit everything into one [philosoph-

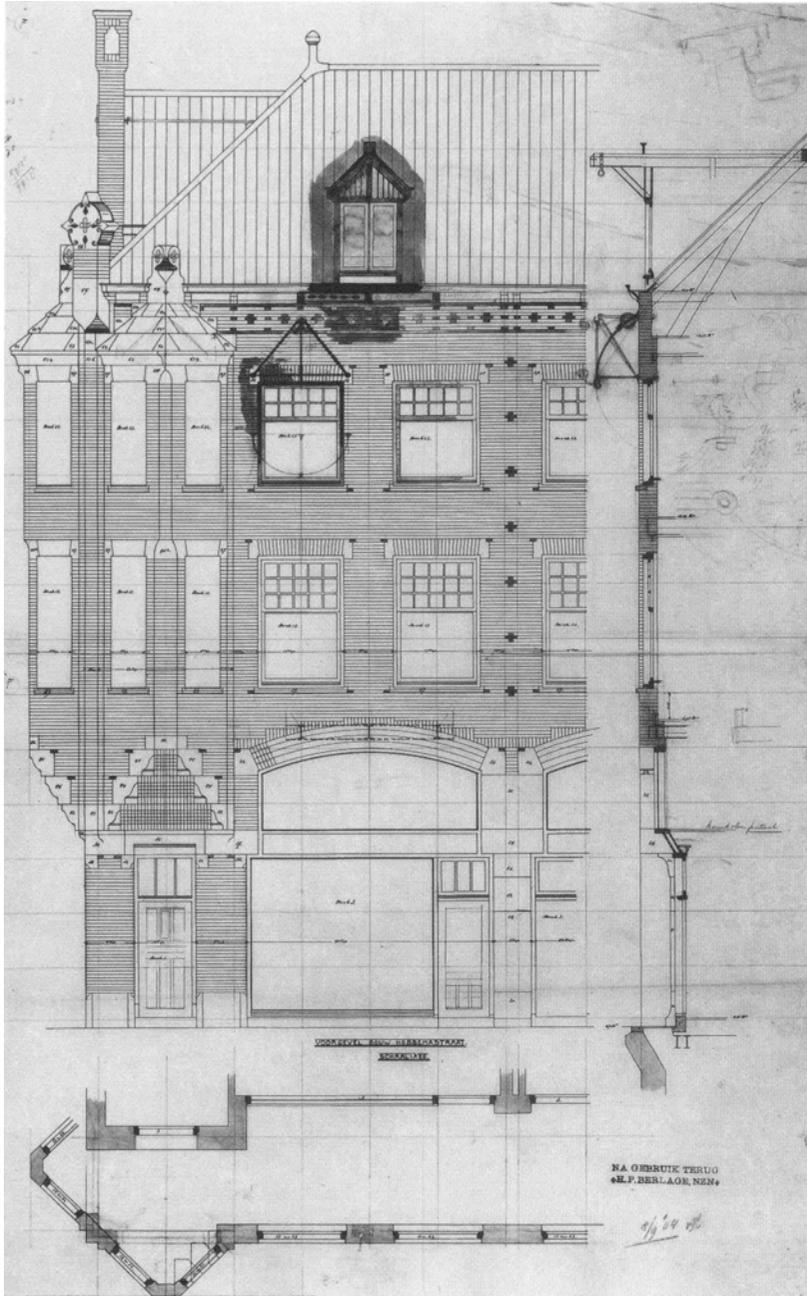
Fig. 16. H. P. Berlage, first Plan-Zuid for Amsterdam, 1903, lithograph, 59.5 × 98.5 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 189.004.



ical] system and force everything into the iron shackles of dogma.”<sup>124</sup> Later in the same text he complains that “it seems to me that just as the church fathers wanted to go farther in the Christian doctrine than Christ himself, the Marxists of today are trying to be more Marxist than Marx himself. Isn’t this development once again a descent from the general to the specific, from the natural to the unnatural?”<sup>125</sup> For Berlage socialism meant the advocacy of general egalitarian principles rather than the implementation of specific, revolutionary strategies. With his revisionist position, Berlage sat in the mainstream of modernist ideological thought, which did not aspire to seize the means of production by force but aimed instead to avert social revolution by improving the living and working conditions of the laboring classes. This revisionist intent was explicit in the founding statutes of the British Garden City Association—the subtitle of Ebenezer Howard’s first garden city tract was “A Peaceful Path to Real Reform”—and can be traced like a thread through the gestatory phase of the Modern Movement and into the 1920s, where it reappears in the concluding sentences of Le Corbusier’s *Vers une architecture*: “Architecture or revolution. One can avoid the revolution.”

The relative flexibility of Berlage’s socialist principles can be seen in his willingness in 1913 to tie himself contractually to the Kröller-Müller Company, headed by A. G. Kröller, whom Bock has described rather savagely as a “full-blooded capitalist and war profiteer.”<sup>126</sup> Berlage’s socialism found expression in two widely disparate areas. Most

Fig. 17. H.P. Berlage, shops with housing above, Hobbemastraat, Amsterdam, 1904-1905, pencil and ink on paper, 118 × 73 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 92.013.



tangibly, he was closely involved in the housing-reform movement, which produced notable results in Amsterdam over the early decades of the century. At a more polemical or ideological level, Berlage also produced numerous schemes at this time dedicated less to practical equality than to the abstract spirit of universal harmony, brotherhood, and sisterhood.

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At the practical level Berlage's work in the first two decades of the new century was dominated by the relationship between social and spatial order. On the urban scale, the first Plan-Zuid for Amsterdam provided a mix of high-density superblocks and lower-density row houses and suburban villas (fig. 16). The linking elements are greenery, parks, and waterways, with the serpentine forms favored by nature creating a townscape of contrived incident. Berlage's authority was Joseph Stübben's book on city planning, *Der Städtebau*, first published in 1890, which gave tangible form to the rather abstract theories of Sitté. In contrast, however, to Sitté's rather two-dimensional plans of plazas, streets, and intersections, Berlage's conception of the city was, as we have seen in "Architecture and Impressionism," much more plastic and three-dimensional. Urban architecture for Berlage was concerned with the delineation of volumes and the definition of functional spaces within which certain, desirable social relationships might be established. A mutual relationship was established between the wider social pattern of the city and the specific volumetric patterns of the individual block, with an element of control working in both directions. In 1904–1905, when he was working on the Plan-Zuid, Berlage also designed an elegant apartment building on Hobbemastraat with shops at street level. As Jan de Heer has shown, this building was one of a series of designs, including, of course, the Stock Exchange, that were composed around proportional grids or modular systems. At Hobbemastraat the plan module was 1.21 × 1.21 meters, while the elevations followed a 1.21 × 1.00 meter module derived from the dimensions of the Waal-type brick (fig. 17). In De Heer's words:

*The whole building rests on this modular grid. Whenever possible, the walls follow the module's straight line, and pilasters stand at the points of intersection. The axes of the openings for windows and doors coincide with the modular line or a line between two modular ones. The size of the space outlined by walls, floors, and ceilings is visibly ruled by the module, while the position of the openings and the pilasters, stairs, closets, fireplaces, and light fixtures marks the rhythm of this modulation.*<sup>127</sup>

Through repetition and division, the module takes on an authority that goes beyond the banal fact of its existence, and the building acquires a monumentality that goes beyond simple repetition.

Berlage developed his vision of housing as an ordering element in both the cityscape and the lives of the residents in a series of large schemes commissioned by working-class housing associations between 1910 and 1918. These commissions found an echo in Berlage's essay of 1910, "Art and Society," in which he quoted Morris's cherished hope "that it will be from such necessary, unpretentious buildings that the new and genuine architecture will spring, rather than from our experiments in conscious style."<sup>128</sup> This perception that housing would lead the architectural revolution was, of course, a fundamental tenet of the early Modern Movement, enshrined in the statutes of the garden city associations, and in the rhetoric of the modernist generation of architects born around 1880. Bruno Taut, for example, appointed advisory architect to the Deutsche Gartenstadtgesellschaft (German garden city association) in 1912, echoed the sentiments of Morris and Berlage almost exactly when he wrote early in 1914:

*Every epoch generates its typical building tasks, which correspond to the core questions of the age and which produce innovation in architecture. One must regard social engagement as the dominant concern of this age, as the concern with which everyone sympathizes. The new architecture will not be given to us by the Court Opera House, but by the People's Theaters, the new garden cities, and by all the buildings that stem from social idealism.<sup>129</sup>*

But whereas in Britain and Germany social idealism remained largely on the drawing board, the expanding influence of the SDAP in Dutch politics at the national level created conditions in which idealism could be given tangible expression. A national housing act—the *Woningwet*—was introduced in 1901, with provision of loans both to the city councils and to housing associations in order to improve the housing stock. It was followed in Amsterdam by the building code of 1905, which enforced fixed standards in such matters as site and internal planning, illumination, ventilation, entrances, and room sizes. The code was drafted by J. W. C. Tellegen, municipal director of housing construction and later mayor of Amsterdam. From its first representation on the City Council in 1903, the SDAP faction had been strongly committed to housing reform and submitted a proposal in 1911 for the construction of two thousand workers' dwellings, a figure that was almost doubled by 1915.<sup>130</sup>

Building on this scale within such well-defined codes demanded standardization of plans and constructional techniques. These conditions, which had been created by administrative edict, were entirely in accord with Berlage's idealist socialism. In "Art and Society" he describes "a fair system of regulation," which, "instead of strong indi-

vidualistic inclination . . . proposes the pursuit of absolute universalization; instead of an unorganized social arrangement, it proposes an organized one, and instead of a social order without style, it proposes a stylized one."<sup>131</sup> Stylization is again described as synonymous with simplification, which in turn leads to repose. Repose in the architectural sense was the product of repetition and standardization; it proposed a view of the community, or *gemeenschap*, as an agglomeration of more or less anonymous individual elements, made subservient to a greater whole and to a greater good, where the negative aspects of individualism, egocentricity, and competition would be suppressed in favor of the common interest.

As Helen Searing has shown, Berlage and De Bazel, who were both closely involved with the housing association De Arbeiderswoning (Workers' housing), favored standardized solutions and a small number of variable elements inventively combined to produce a controlled diversity.<sup>132</sup> The clarion calls for universality, standard and characteristic solutions, and constructive rationality that appear in general form in the pre-1914 texts, were repackaged by Berlage in an essay on standardization in housing, published in 1918. In accord with the Semperian vision of nature, in which an infinite number of variations are derived from a small number of archetypes, Berlage hailed the virtues of the large housing block with a limited number of plan types and decorative motifs brought together to achieve rhythmic monumentality: "Architecture salutes with true delight this way of expression, as a reaction against that orgy of architectural individualism that lies behind us. It can now achieve greater scale . . . and thus rediscover a beauty attained in previous times."<sup>133</sup> Berlage's blocks on Tolstraat or Transvaalstraat, both built in 1912–1913 for De Algemeene Woningbouwvereniging (General housing association), could be cited as proof of this contention.

In Berlage's eyes the improvement of the Amsterdam housing stock was merely the first step in a much greater enterprise of cultural reform. The ultimate goal embraced not only the physical well-being of all social classes but also the spiritual well-being of the entire society. In the earlier times of great architectural triumphs, the essential spiritual accord was the product of religious faith. In *Foundations and Development*, Berlage quotes Scheffler's observation that "the unanimity of earlier artistic epochs was based almost entirely on the fact that mankind had agreed on a religion, and the fragmentation in contemporary artistic production can equally be explained by the absence of a generally recognized universal idea [*Weltidee*]."<sup>134</sup> This social and religious consensus, to which Berlage ascribed the triumphs of Greek and Gothic architecture, began to collapse with the Renaissance and had reached a nadir, said Berlage, by the late nineteenth century. Dismissing the prospect of a religious revival led by the established churches, Berlage points in his various texts to the social-democratic movement as the new, redemptive spirit that will free humanity from the tentacles of rampant self-

interest and reassert the productive cultural values of the community. Berlage's authority in "Art and Society" is Henriette Roland Holst: "The old religious philosophy rooted in faith wanes and turns pale; the new, natural philosophy, which is based on science, that is, on a systematic organization of the facts, grows and gains ground. It is the result of the real, practical, human development, of the increasing power of mankind over nature; it is nothing more than a reflection of an increasingly powerful consciousness."<sup>135</sup> But just as the temple and cathedral provided a focus and tangible expression of religious faith, so the emerging social consciousness of the new century called for monumental expression in architecture. A secular temple was required, dedicated to the spiritual and communal ambitions of the new age.

Exactly what these ambitions were and how they might best be symbolized are questions that greatly exercised Berlage's mature imagination both as writer and as architect. Between 1906 and 1918 he produced a series of spectacular proposals for monumental buildings with little practical function beyond the assertion of noble ideals, both political and cultural. These buildings were conceived as sacred beacons, which would have an inspirational and regenerative impact on all other areas of human activity. In "Art and Society" Berlage summoned the neo-Calvinist conservative Abraham Kuyper in support of this position: "Both in the classical and in the so-called Christian art, the absolute and all-embracing work of art emerges first of all through architecture, while all the other arts adapt themselves around the temple and church, and, similarly, around the mosque or pagoda."<sup>136</sup> The Stock Exchange had clearly been conceived in this spirit. As Verwey wrote in 1934: "In brief, the Stock Exchange is the expression of a desire for social and artistic unity, which found powerful expression in narrow circles between 1890 and 1900, but which has weakened since that time. Berlage was the vehicle through which this double impulse found embodiment in a building."<sup>137</sup>

Nothing could have been more expressive of the desire for unity and accord than the competition in 1906 for a Vredespaleis (Peace palace) to be built in The Hague. Berlage was among the 216 entrants. His eminently Beaux-Arts plan proposed a main axis linking the entrance, main vestibule, and library, and a subsidiary axis crossing the vestibule on which are located the main and secondary courts of justice. In section, the dominant feature is the main vestibule, opened up on the lower two levels by segmental arcades reminiscent of the Stock Exchange, and topped by a shallow dome (see page 158). The exterior elevations are built up incrementally of units that reflect the distribution of the internal spaces. Stylistically there are very strong echoes of the Neoromanesque that H. H. Richardson had developed in America and that was well known to Berlage.<sup>138</sup> A further source of ideas nearer to home may have been the funerary monuments produced in the early years of the century by the students in Wagner's master class at the Akademie der bildenden Künste in Vienna.<sup>139</sup> Berlage and Wagner held

each other in mutually high esteem at this time and were in regular contact. It seems highly probable that Berlage would have known the illustrated yearbooks in which the diploma projects of the *Wagnerschule* students were published.

This configuration, with a *Wagnerschule* variant of the Tomb of Theodoric at Ravenna (A.D. 530) sitting on top of Richardson's Albany City Hall (1880–1883), recurs in Berlage's design of 1908 for a concert hall dedicated to Beethoven. The scenario behind this project involves a suggestion made in 1902 by the German critic Paul Marsop to build a Beethovenhalle, in which the orchestra would be hidden in a pit, leaving the audience free to commune with the spirit of genius. The year 1902 was a good one for Beethoven. Max Klinger's Promethean statue of the composer held center stage at the Vienna Secession exhibition that year, and Gustav Klimt and his collaborators transformed the Secession building into "a temple to consecrate Klinger's statue."<sup>140</sup> The political ambitions of the project are encapsulated in the last panel of Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze*, where the brotherhood of man is represented by a couple who embrace in response to Schiller's injunction: "Be embraced, oh ye millions!" (*Seid umschlungen, Millionen!*).

Not everyone was convinced, however, that the luscious Neobyzantinism of the Viennese Secession was the perfect vehicle for the spirit of Beethoven, and in 1907 the Munich architect Ernst Haiger proposed the Greek temple as a more appropriate setting in an article entitled "Die Wiedergeburt des Tempels aus dem Geiste der Beethovenschen Symphonien" (Rebirth of the temple from the spirit of Beethoven's symphonies). Also in 1907, the current Beethoven mania inspired a Frenchman, F. Garas, to dream of a "temple to ideas, dedicated to Beethoven" (*temple à la pensée, dédié à Beethoven*). His scheme included a monument to Beethoven conceived in the Klingerian mode: "For this I imagine a pensive bust of the god of music emerging from an enormous block and leaning toward a group of humans that surround him and stretch out toward him their supplicating arms while intoning the Ode to Joy."<sup>141</sup> In Holland, the Beethoven cult was led by Willem Hutschenruyter, editor of the magazine *Toonkunst*, who felt that a Beethovenhuis should be built on a site in the dunes at Bloemendaal on the Dutch coast and proposed Berlage as the architect. In a short essay in which he compared the various ideas of Marsop, Haiger, and Garas, Berlage identified as the unifying theme of all these proposals the cleansing of the visual environment, which would be cleared of the "profane impressions" that confronted concertgoers in contemporary concert halls. As Berlage explained at the beginning of his text with a quotation from Tolstoy: "So long as the merchants are not driven out, the temple of art shall be no temple. But the art of the future will drive them out."<sup>142</sup> Indeed, even the sweating and grimacing musicians were to be driven out of sight, so that nothing could detract from the contemplation of the pure spirit.

Fig. 18. H. P. Berlage, section of Beethovenhuis, 1907-1908, ink on paper, 27 × 38.5 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 107.010.



This pure spirit exists in the Hegelian realm of transcendental, absolute knowledge, represented in the post-Christian condition by art. Transcendental art exists, according to the Romantic theory of genius, not in the individual work, but in the very knowledge of transcendental beauty. Since only the artistic genius is in communion with this art that exists above utility, the genius alone is able to redeem alienated modern man, who has substituted materialism and acquisitiveness for true humanity. The notion of the genius as martyr, as one who triumphs through suffering, finds strong support in Hegel's theory of the world-historical individual, which demands that the genius be martyred so that the transcendent idea might be advanced. Following Walter Pater's dictum that "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music,"<sup>143</sup> it becomes clear that all theories of transcendental beauty and of redemption through art will look to music for inspiration, and in particular to instrumental music. For as E. T. A. Hoffmann explained, instrumental music is the highest and purest form of music, and "opens an unknown realm to man, a world which has nothing in common with the external world of the senses that surrounds him, a world in which he abandons all determinate feelings

in order to surrender to an inexpressible longing."<sup>144</sup> Exactly this position was adopted by Berlage in his scheme for the Beethovenhuis.

Having noted in his essay "Art and Society," for example, that Beethoven was a solitary figure (*eenling*) and that he achieved "the highest expression of art," Berlage introduces his scheme for the Beethovenhuis (fig. 18):

*But as an alternative to this specialized flourishing of only a few arts, I propose a universal blossoming of all the arts. Instead of an individual kind of music, which certainly was able to provide the highest enjoyment (but whose character is too specialized and whose performance could and should be unique, as Hutschenruyter explained in his piece Het Beethoven-Huis), I propose music that is truly related to, that is a consequence of spiritual life, that is, of the highest ethical feelings of the nation, and which will be performed in halls that are completely restful as far as the architecture is concerned—a condition needed to enjoy the performance in its true splendor.*<sup>145</sup>

Exactly how this restful architecture was to be achieved, and what style it might take was the subject of Berlage's lecture "Concertzalen" (Concert halls), given to a conference in Delft in 1908 and subsequently published in various forms. The lecture was prefaced by Nietzsche's famous question from Zarathustra's prologue: "But when Zarathustra was alone, he spoke thus to his heart: 'Could it be possible! This old holy man in his forest has not yet heard that God is dead!'"<sup>146</sup> In God's place, Berlage proposed the composer-genius as the guardian of the transcendental condition. And this condition is defined by Berlage as "sublime." In "Concertzalen" Berlage quotes Wagner as saying that Beethoven had elevated music "above the realm of the aesthetically beautiful into the sphere of the absolutely sublime. . . . Through Beethoven the melody has been emancipated from the influence of fashion and of changing taste, to a valid, purely human *typus*." In consequence, "Beethoven's work will be comprehensible to all ages, while the music of his predecessors will, for the most part, only remain intelligible to us through the mediation of art-historical deliberation."<sup>147</sup> In the Beethovenhuis, the timeless quality of the symphonies was to find an appropriate architectural setting, but what was the appropriate architectural style?

In his lecture, Berlage dismissed all historicist options, be it the Greek temple form proposed by Haiger or the Neorenaissance favored by the majority of nineteenth-century concert halls. No historical style was suitable for the symphonic art form that had so outdistanced architecture in its scope and ambition over the previous century. Again, Berlage's chosen authority was Wagner, who described his Bayreuther Festspielhaus (Bayreuth festival theater):

Fig. 19. H. P. Berlage, interior of Beethovenhuis, 1907–1908, ink, ink wash, and pencil on paper (fixed on cardboard), 54.5 × 72.6 cm on 58.3 × 76.6 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 107.015.

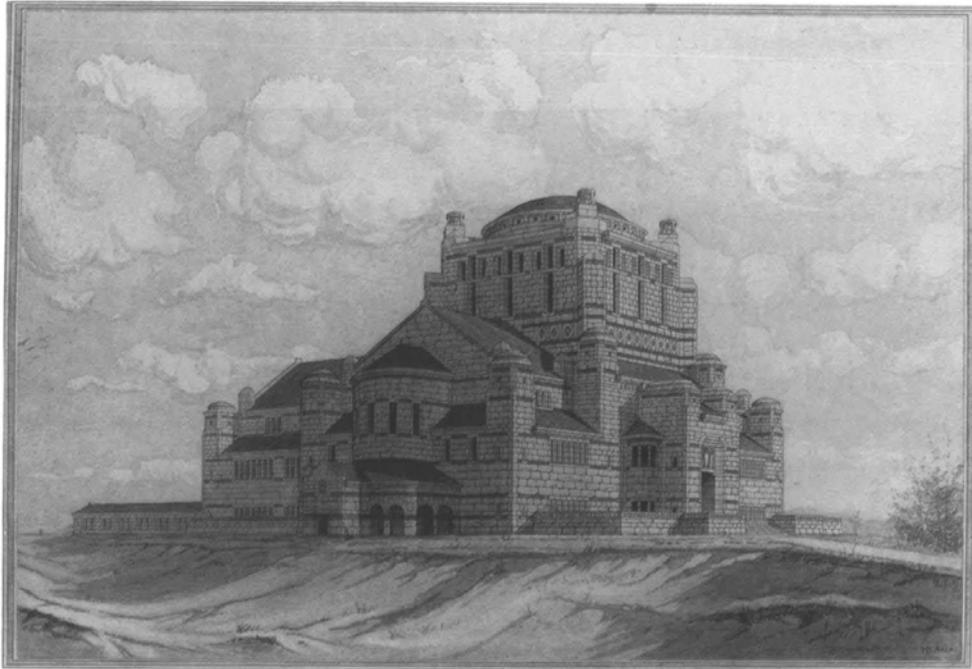
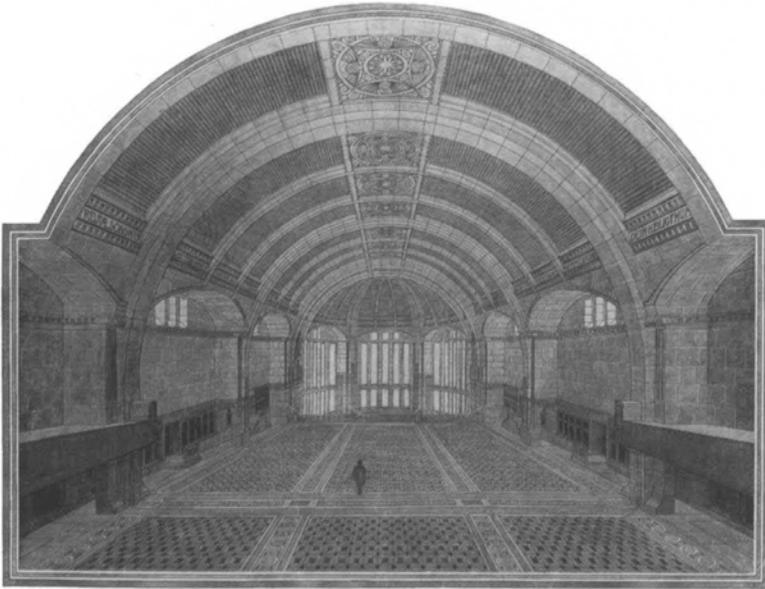


Fig. 20. H. P. Berlage, external perspective of Beethovenhuis, 1907–1908, ink and ink wash on paper (fixed on cardboard), 53.2 × 78.1 cm on 55.8 × 81.5 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 107.013.

*The characteristic feature of the development of our plan for the theater lay in the fact that in order to achieve ideal conditions, we had to clear away, bit by bit, the unsuitable and hence useless conventional ideas on the disposition of the interior spaces and then determine a new arrangement. For this new interior, as for the exterior, we could not use traditional ornament, so we have had to leave our building for the present in the naivest simplicity of a temporary structure.<sup>148</sup>*

Taking his lead from the master, Berlage says none of the historical styles of architecture is appropriate for the task of housing the spirit of Beethoven, adding that the impact of the music can only be weakened by its being played in overdecorated spaces. While he accepts Haiger's invocation of the temple as a symbol of the space in which a particular ritual takes place, Berlage denies that the temple has to take on historical forms. Instead, he pleads for a neutral architecture, adding:

*By neutral forms I mean a logical construction so that the architectural impact—and it is here that the focus should lie—is the exclusive result of noble proportions, simple lines, and pure construction. And this truly demands no mediocre architectural skills. On the contrary, it demands the very highest, since the other expressive means are excluded. It is self-evident that this does not imply the pedantic exclusion of all decoration, but, rather, that the decoration must be totally subordinated to the actual architectural composition, so that when one is in the auditorium, no single element stands out that might cause distraction.<sup>149</sup>*

The final result aimed at by Berlage was one of “solemn gravity” (*plechtige statigheid*) in which the architectural message would be carried almost entirely by the constructional elements of the building. The simple vaulted space of the auditorium in Berlage's Beethovenhuis project is decorated only by the most reticent architectural detailing and by the words of Schiller's “Ode to Joy” (fig. 19). As the perspective drawings suggest, this is a space for contemplation rather than sensuous delight in the plastic forms (fig. 20). The most minimal architectural language is used to engender the most intense emotional response.

This emotional response was specifically linked by Berlage to the aesthetics of the sublime, which Berlage felt was instrumental in our response to all great architecture: “To repeat the quotation, borrowed from Haiger: true works of art always breathe the same sublime tone! And can we now doubt that we are at last capable of creating a space with its own character, but emanating from the same sublime spirit?”<sup>150</sup> There is no talk here of “unity in diversity.” Indeed, this appears less and less in the later texts: only once—and then in the most generalist sense—in “Art and Society,” and not at all in the essay “On the Likely Development of Architecture” (*Over de waarschijnlijke ont-*

wikkeling der architectuur), first published in 1905. This omission marks a significant redefinition of Berlage's conception of the ultimate goal of architecture, comparable in importance to the shift of the early 1890s. No longer is style defined as the harmonious coexistence of various elements that give sensuous delight both individually and as a collective *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Instead, the ultimate goal is redefined as the creation of neutral spaces of silence and contemplation in which the human spirit, undistracted by the particularity of the architecture or decoration, can commune with the transcendental spirit in the search for absolute knowledge. This universal style (*algemeene stijl*) was the essential basis for the architectural developments of the future.<sup>151</sup>

Berlage presents this new position most forcefully in a lecture entitled "Modern Architecture" given in the course of his visit to the United States in 1911. In this lecture Berlage reshuffled many of the cards that he had already dealt in *Thoughts on Style* and *The Foundations and Development*: the weakness of the Renaissance model; the impropriety of using columns decoratively; the feebleness of nineteenth-century eclecticism; Viollet-le-Duc, Semper, and Morris as harbingers of hope. A new element, however, was Berlage's introduction of the sublime. This was done in his customary manner by invoking a higher authority, in this case Schopenhauer's discrimination between the beautiful and the sublime: "With the beautiful, pure recognition is supreme; with the sublime, this state of pure recognition is attained by a conscious and violent removal of the avowedly unfavorable relation of the object to the will, by a free and conscious elevation above the will, and the recognition related thereto."<sup>152</sup> What Berlage fails to make clear is the fact that the "unfavorable relation" between the object and the will is the result of an initial, instinctive reaction of fear. For the sublime operates in the no-man's-land between intuition and reason, at the point where man's intuitive ability to comprehend the scale or even the significance of an object breaks down. Defined by Kant as the limit of our powers of imagination (*Grenze der Einbildungskraft*), this gap between the realms of reason and of imagination has the potential to engender both fear and creativity. Confronted by the enormity of the object and the void of incomprehension, the observer experiences fear, which is then superseded by pleasure as new rational criteria are summoned to explain and contain what had previously been beyond comprehension. In the process, the power of imagination is stretched and extended to encompass new conceptions of space and time, and the power of reason generates visions of the world that extend to the limits of transcendental, absolute knowledge. In thus confronting and overcoming the abyss of incomprehension, the observer gains a heightened understanding of human potential and of the power of human rationality to overcome the chaos of creation and the intractability of nature. Aesthetic judgment is thus akin to moral judgment, and the wilderness of creation is given order by the intervention of free, rational man.

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries rude nature supplied the favored stimulus to sublime response: the cliff, chasm, or thundercloud. In the later nineteenth century the industrial city took over as the generator of incomprehensibility. As the aesthete Paul Crowther has noted in a recent study of the Kantian Sublime, “The structures of capitalism and the conflicts it engenders provide immediate and inescapable images that overwhelm our perceptual or imaginative powers, yet make the scope of rational comprehension or human artifice and contrivance all the more vivid.”<sup>153</sup> In the attempt to comprehend and go beyond the excesses of nineteenth-century materialism and acquisitiveness, the sublime response offers the hope of salvation. This was exactly Berlage’s position. As he wrote at the end of the essay “Modern Architecture”: “A great style may be expected in coming times—a style that shall not simply be beautiful, but will once more be able to attain sublimity.”<sup>154</sup>

In setting up a dialectical relationship between the beautiful and utilitarian, on the one hand, and the sublime and transcendental, on the other, Berlage resolved the problem that had dogged his aesthetic wrestlings in the 1880s. His own work in the period around 1910 followed this pattern, with well-designed and undeniably attractive housing complemented by essays on the architectural sublime. In establishing this dialogue, he prefigured much of the theorizing of German Expressionist architecture as it evolved between 1914 and 1920, which also proposed spectacular symbols of spiritual elevation surrounded by modest, almost traditional housing. Bruno Taut was the leading theoretician of Expressionism. In a pioneering article, “Eine Notwendigkeit” (A necessity), published in *Der Sturm* in 1914, he proposed: “Let us work together on a magnificent building! On a building that will not simply be architecture, but in which everything—painting, sculpture—will combine to create a great architecture, and in which architecture will once again fuse with the other arts.”<sup>155</sup> Suggesting as collaborators the artists associated with the *Sturm* group—Robert Delaunay, Franz Marc, Wassily Kandinsky, Aleksandr Profiryevich Archipenko, and Heinrich Campendonk—Taut echoed the sentiments that Berlage had already penned in his *Thoughts on Style*, and which he had attempted to implement in his decorative scheme for the Stock Exchange in Amsterdam.

Taut developed his vision of redemptive glass architecture in the series of drawings published as *Alpine Architektur*, which portrayed glass enclosures high in the Alps as spaces for contemplation, where the missing link between beauty and morality might be reestablished: “In the interior of the mountain gleam the treasures of the artificially illuminated glass architecture. The cathedral and its naves are filled with the cool daylight. But at night it radiates its light above the mountain and out into the firmament. The purpose of the cathedral? None—for whom devotion in the midst of beauty is not enough.”<sup>156</sup> While the link with the transcendental was to be established by the

nondenominational temple, the more profane need for shelter was to be provided for, according to Expressionist theory, by standardized row housing of the most unassuming type.

This creative tension between the sacred and profane functions of architecture was the main theme of Taut's most influential book, *Die Stadtkrone* (The city crown). His goal was simple: "We wish again to have cities in which, to quote Aristotle, we can live not only in safety and health but also in happiness."<sup>157</sup> State regulation and the mechanical control of the city were not enough, said Taut, to guarantee this happiness, for religious faith was missing: "Without religion there is no true culture, no art."<sup>158</sup> And for Taut, the new religious stirring was to be found in the movement toward social democracy, defined as "socialism in the unpolitical, suprapolitical sense, far removed from all forms of domination as the simple, straightforward relationship of people to each other."<sup>159</sup> To give physical form to this combination of quasi-religious aspiration and simple personal relationships, Taut brought together the glass temple of *Alpine Architektur* with the simple row housing he had developed for the *Deutsche Gartenstadtgesellschaft* to create the ideal city proposed in *Die Stadtkrone*. As precedents for this combination of the sacred and the profane, Taut illustrated the cathedrals of Gothic Europe and the temples of the Orient, which acted as a spiritual focus and beacon—as the city crown—for the modest housing that clustered around them. Once again, the theoretical presuppositions behind these seminal works of architectural Expressionism had already been anticipated by Berlage, both as author and designer.

There are, however, significant differences. Taut's sublimity was to be the product of dazzling visions of light, color, and material brilliance, brought about by the collaboration of many artistic talents on the creation of the great temple. This position is clearly cognate with Berlage's around the time of the Stock Exchange, when unity in diversity was seen as the ultimate goal. By 1910, however, Berlage was moving toward a much more ascetic vision of the sublime, as witnessed by the Beethovenhuis. In the essay "Concertzalen" he pointed to the vaulted spaces of the Roman and early Romanesque basilica as eminently sublime in their impact; and in the American lecture on "Modern Architecture" he illustrated the Romanesque cathedral at Hildesheim as an example of "strong" architecture. Strong, in this context, means undecorated, the characteristic, said Berlage, of the first phase of all creative evolution. Citing the Hegelian sequence of striving, attaining, and overreaching, Berlage proposes his own triad of severe, prime, and decline as the life history of an architectural impulse. Berlage's desire to go back to archetypes reflected his Semperian pedigree and also prefigured, once again, the Expressionist fascination with the primeval and with the *Urform*, which is an essential component in the sublime aesthetic. The combination in the Stock Exchange building of a prismatic grid and decorative elements derived from Haeckel's

Fig. 21. H. P. Berlage, second Plan-Zuid for Amsterdam, 1915, lithograph, 40 × 55 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, inv. no. BERL 189.018.



drawings of single cells—protophytes and protozoa—anticipated by a decade or more the Expressionist leitmotifs of crystals and single cells.

There were also wider resonances with the Neoclassical revival that swept Europe and the United States in the first decade of the new century, which saw the likes of Wagner and Behrens abandon the vestigial curves of Jugendstil in favor of simple, tra-beated forms, and led Edwin Lutyens to proclaim in a letter to Herbert Baker, written in 1903: “In architecture Palladio is the game!! It is so big—few appreciate it now, and it requires training to value and realize.”<sup>160</sup> A similar move in Berlage’s own position can be seen, particularly in his urban theory. Whereas the first Plan-Zuid for Amsterdam was conceived very much in the spirit of Sitte’s medievalism, Berlage’s second plan—drawn up in 1914–1915—is much more classical in spirit (fig. 21). An undoubted influence here was A. E. Brinckmann’s book *Platz und Monument* (Square and monument), published in 1908. This influence can be seen in Berlage’s article “Stedenbouw” (City planning), published in 1911, which is prefaced by a quotation from Brinckmann: “To build cities means using housing material to create space.”<sup>161</sup> The desired space in question was strictly geometrical, and Berlage described the Greek adoption of Eastern notions of geometric regularity in the fifth century B.C. through the mediation of Hippodamus of Miletus, who laid out Piraeus on the rectangular grid plan that was to become standard throughout the Greek world. After looking at similar tendencies in the Roman colonies, Berlage concluded: “The ideal layout of an ancient city, as shown by

the quotations above, was strongly geometric and thus corresponded to the character of classical architecture."<sup>162</sup> Moving forward to the axial planning of the Baroque, Berlage noted: "The city plan now became an arrangement of mostly rectangular building blocks, while a few streets made provision for diagonal traffic between corners. And once again a remarkable correspondence prevailed between plan and architecture, entirely in the spirit, of course, of antiquity."<sup>163</sup> Berlage's own conversion to Baroque planning principles shines through in the second Plan-Zuid for Amsterdam, most obviously in the *trivium* that dominates the southern flank of the site.

The power and simplicity of the Baroque plan demanded a complementary architecture, and this was offered by Berlage's severe style, which he saw as the only possible basis for architectural regeneration in an age of transition. Within the wider context of political and social reform he proposed an architecture that consciously dispensed with any notion of architectural "style," in the sense of detail or ornamentation. Instead, twentieth-century architecture—in its highest state—should inspire transcendental insights into such notions as harmony, peace, and brotherhood, which would serve to promote the cause of political reform. Only then, when the new society of brotherhood and equality was established, would the appropriate forms for the finer detailing emerge, and architecture would move from the severe to the ideal condition. As Berlage indicated in his lecture on classical architecture, "If we accept that a great style is possible only if it is an expression of a culture, and that culture can be obtained only if there is a harmony between spiritual and material needs, [then] a great style cannot be expected until the social relationships have been changed so much that this harmony is indeed achieved."<sup>164</sup> Such a dependence of architectural reform on social reform made for a stylistic vacuum, with architectural design subordinated to political exhortations. This tendency in Berlage's work around 1915 was criticized at the time by Max Eisler, who insisted that "architecture, however, does not want ethical thoughts, but rather desires to embody its own formal rules. For this reason already there is something ambiguous in Berlage's universal monuments. And also something unfulfilled: For even in the cases where the task is not determined by music, the desire for the emancipated condition of music floats unappeased over these works."<sup>165</sup>

This nexus of millenarian expectations and a monumental but intentionally simple, severe, and undeveloped architecture can be seen most clearly in Berlage's scheme from 1915 for a Pantheon der Menschheid (Pantheon of humanity). The general ambition for this project had already been stated in "Art and Society," in which Berlage proposes a new age of culture, focused on socialist principles of fraternity:

*Then, as in the past, drama will have become the synthesis of all the arts again, and the resolution of this drama will not be found in a fatal realization of something one has to do, nor in a*

*desperate failure of something one wants to do, but in the optimistic consciousness of something one will do!*

*And people will again go up to the religious community building, whose architectural prominence will command respect, and which can only be approached along a triumphal axis.*

*Its great internal space will again inspire us, not because of a sacredly mystic devotion that makes us long for a transcendental world, but because of a devotion characterized by a reborn Dionysian joy.*

*Yet, it will be essentially different from the small classical temple space, which was only intended to be used by the deity. For this new space will have to contain the thousands of people who will approach the earthly god in a totally different way, and the god will be present again in this space but only in a spiritual form.*

*The great acts that lead to the goal will be shown on the walls of the grand hall, and the virtues of the community will be represented in niches and on pedestals.*

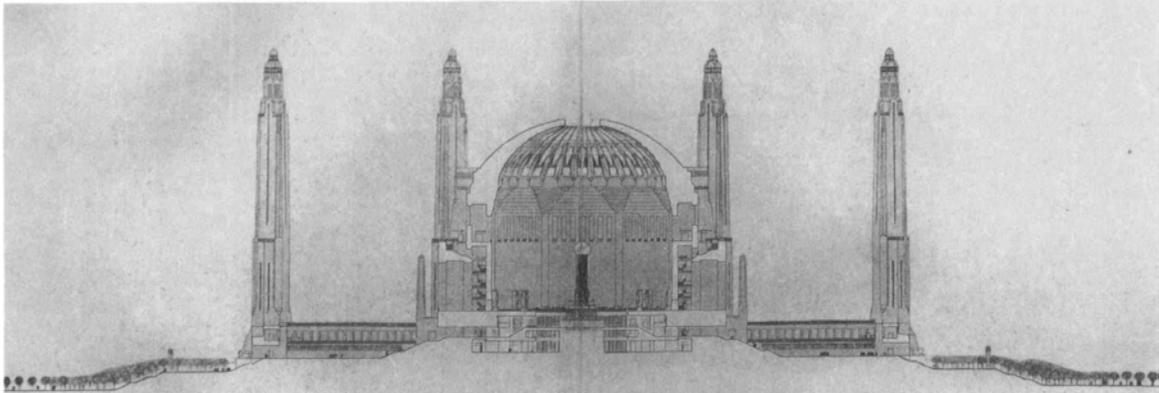
*Orchestral music will sound from the great apse, not accompanying liturgical singing or songs and dance, but accompanying the great choir that in glorious melodies jubilantly sings the hymn of peace.*

*Will this ideal remain an illusion? Even though the internationalist, cosmopolitan endeavors of social democracy show us a comparable ideal, will this vision of the future seem, as Kuyper thinks, to be a search for the unattainable, an attempt to realize a holy ideal in this sinful world?<sup>166</sup>*

The internationalist dream burst like a bubble in August 1914. The French socialists acquiesced when Paul Deschanel proclaimed to the Chamber of Deputies: "There are no more adversaries here, there are only Frenchmen," and the Marxist leader Jules Guesde joined a government of "sacred union." On the other side of the Rhine, Kaiser Wilhelm II insisted that "henceforth I know no parties, I know only Germans," and the parliamentary socialists voted unanimously for war credits.<sup>167</sup> Although Holland remained neutral in the 1914–1918 conflict, the collapse of the European order caused great economic distress among the mass of the Dutch people, while speculators made enormous profits from the war economies of the belligerents. As Henriette Roland Holst subsequently commented, "In no other country did the bourgeoisie make capital out of the catastrophe of the war with such shameless cynicism, by all possible means, even the lowest and most despicable."<sup>168</sup> The conflict between hunger, on one side, and the ostentatious display of profit, on the other, further stimulated the progress in the Netherlands toward political democratization.

Berlage had a foot in both camps. Between 1915 and 1920 he built the Saint Hubertus hunting lodge in the country near Hoenderloo for the Krölller-Müller family, a brick complex topped by a massive lookout tower, with undertones of English Arts

Fig. 22. H. P. Berlage, section of the Pantheon of Humanity, 1915. From H. P. Berlage, *Afbeeldingen van de ontwerpen voor het Pantheon der Menschheid* (Rotterdam: W.L. & J. Brusse, 1915), pp. 16–17. Santa Monica, The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities.



and Crafts in its butterfly plan and of Frank Lloyd Wright in its detailing. As if to ease his conscience at working for the profiteers, Berlage's other great tower scheme of the period was dedicated to suffering humanity. The drawings for Berlage's Pantheon der Menschheid were the central feature of an exhibition sponsored by the group Architectura et Amicitia, held at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam in November and December 1915. Set on top of a hill, the octagonal Pantheon was crowned by a dome and flanked by eight towers, representing liberty, love, life, strength, peace, courage, prudence, and knowledge. The eight sectors between the towers and the Pantheon were to be dedicated to the memory of the fallen combatants of World War I, while the central domed space symbolized the unity of mankind (fig. 22). In Berlage's own description: "Through the galleries of reconciliation one reaches the great central hall. There, surrounded by the gallery of remembrance, lit solely by the light falling through the zenith of the dome, stands the monument of humanity. Higher up are the galleries of cognition, of elevation, and of all-embracing universality, while the space is vaulted by the dome of the unity of nations."<sup>169</sup> Berlage's project for the Pantheon was also published with a postscript in verse by Henriette Roland Holst, "Ter Gedachtenis" (In memoriam). Spurning rhyme or any discernible verse pattern, the poem simply states the dedicatees of the Pantheon:

*To all the victims of the folly  
To all the victims of the madness.*<sup>170</sup>

After listing the dead, the crippled, the bereaved, the orphans, the refugees, and all who suffered, the poem offers a new dedication and a new hope:

*To the struggle for true freedom  
To the struggle for true peace,  
Which socialism alone  
Can spread over the earth.*<sup>171</sup>

The doggedly simple, almost banal directness of the verse is well matched by Berlage's schematic architecture, which shuns all detail in favor of the simple and the sublime, as already described in the context of the Beethovenhuis. Since Berlage was willfully shunning the historical conventions of architectural design in favor of the monumentally severe, it may seem perverse to look for historical parallels. One obvious stylistic source, however, might be mentioned: the diploma projects by the students in Wagner's master class at the Akademie der bildenden Künste in Vienna, particularly the gigantic domed and vaulted schemes produced around 1910 and included in the volume published in 1912 to mark Wagner's retirement from the Akademie.<sup>172</sup>

Concrete was the favorite material of the *Wagnerschule* in the early years of the century, and Berlage, too, began to address the new material at this time. At the Sixth International Congress of Architects, held in Madrid in 1904, he delivered a lecture on the implications of this new material for architectural design. Back in 1893, in "Architecture and Impressionism," he had suggested that art was immanent in the "pure construction"—referring to the iron frame. By 1904 concrete had taken over the role of iron as the constructional hope for the future, with unclad iron effectively banned in most countries as a fire risk. The new hopes pinned on reinforced concrete and the implications of the new material for architectural aesthetics are the most important topics in the essay "On the Likely Development of Architecture," which Berlage published in 1910. In this text, Berlage successfully predicted the general condition of future architecture, saying he was convinced "that we are gradually being moved toward a tectonic form that will look totally different from the earlier ones, a form that is characterized by the thin seamless wall and, as a result of the general endeavor described above, a wall without decoration."<sup>173</sup> Developing this theme, Berlage writes of a new but as-yet-unbuilt monumental architecture, whose principal feature would be "a grand, simple tightness of the surfaces,"<sup>174</sup> which he compares in their membranous character to Baroque precedents. This combination is clearly one that he was working toward in his own monumental designs of the period, most obviously the Pantheon der Menschheid. Berlage's vision of an architecture of cladding and dressing (*bekleedings-architectuur*) received vigorous support a year after the publication of the essay "On

the Likely Development” as a result of his firsthand experience of North American architecture.

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As noted already, Berlage had closely followed the development of American design during the 1890s in the architectural journals and found much to admire in the Richardsonian Neoromanesque. Among the many criticisms leveled at his design of the Amsterdam Stock Exchange was the charge that he plagiarized Richardson and other American contemporaries, and certain similarities are too striking to be fortuitous. In particular, the unusual motif of an arched portal incorporating the balustrade of a lateral staircase, which Richardson used at Trinity Church Rectory, Boston, recurs several times at the Stock Exchange. Berlage always admitted the attraction that North America had for him, and in 1909 he wrote to an American contact, the Minneapolis architect William Gray Purcell, asking if a lecture tour could be arranged, to enable him “to cross over to your country, which I have always desired to see.”<sup>175</sup> The tour was finally organized by Purcell in November and December 1911, in conjunction with the William B. Feakins Agency (whose other attractions for the 1911–1912 lecture season included the English pacifist Sylvia Pankhurst, and “The Curtis North American Indian Lecture-Entertainment, with motion pictures and orchestra of nine pieces”). Berlage’s lectures included “Art and the Community,” “Modern Architecture,” and “Foundations and Development of Architecture,” based on the similarly named texts. These shortened English-language versions were subsequently published in *The Western Architect*.<sup>176</sup> More important to Berlage’s own purposes than the lectures, however, was his exposure to American architecture and city planning. Looking back critically to Sitte’s antagonism toward the gridiron plan, Berlage came to the conclusion that “however aesthetically paradoxical it might seem, the development of the city on the American scale is possible only by the application of the rectangular street plan.”<sup>177</sup> Indeed, so different was the modern American city from its European counterpart that Berlage found there a tangible example of Nietzsche’s reevaluation of all values (*Umwertung aller Werte*). Among values that were to be rejected were, in Berlage’s opinion, the regressive anti-industrialism of Ruskin and Morris as well as the cultural stranglehold exercised by Beaux-Arts-trained designers. In their place he hailed the work of Louis Sullivan as “a serious attempt to formulate some industrial and aesthetic ideals.”<sup>178</sup> Building on Sullivan’s example, Wright was greeted by Berlage as the true spirit of modernity, and in Wright’s text “The Voice of the Machines” Berlage found the revelatory voice of the age: “According to the author, the machine is the savior of mankind, and the engineer is the only poet of this age.”<sup>179</sup>

Among Wright's works, Berlage was particularly drawn to the Larkin Building in Buffalo:

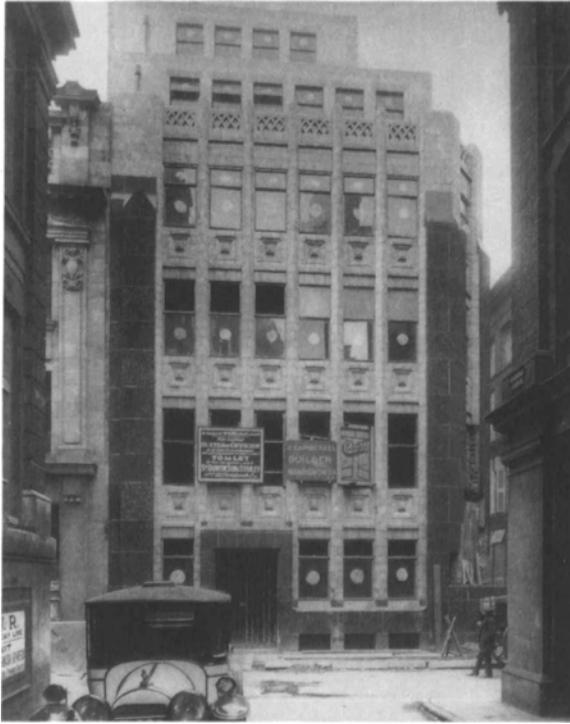
*The building proclaims itself a large, solid mass, with powerful, smooth wall areas at the corners, the point at which the stairs are located. In between, the windows are beautifully located, separated by pilasters that stretch the full height. The building has a flat roof; there is no decoration on the walls, only the piers are marked by horizontal indentations at the level of the top story. A single piece of sculpture is sited at the entrance. And the interior, too, is marked by the same sober and terse treatment, with detailing that immediately reveals the hand of a unique artist. The material is brick, red on the exterior and yellow on the interior; the floors are concrete, while the whole composition tends in itself toward a rectilinearity.*<sup>180</sup>

In its combination of rational frame, pragmatic function, and high moral tone, the Larkin Building clearly found a very strong resonance in the architect of the Amsterdam Stock Exchange. Just as the Stock Exchange is built around the Egyptian triangle, so the Larkin Building evolved out of a system of cubes, which, as Otto Antonia Graf has shown, determines the entire building, from the ornamental lamps at the entrances to the structural frame and all its decoration.<sup>181</sup> At the more literary level, the quotations from the Sermon on the Mount on the fifth-floor balconies and the grouping along the longer sides of the light court of exhortations such as "Generosity," "Altruism," "Loyalty," "Fidelity," and "Initiative" echoed in American simple-speak the quatrains composed by Verwey for the Amsterdam Stock Exchange. Little wonder, then, that Berlage should conclude his account of the Larkin Building with the assertion, "I left convinced that I had seen a genuinely modern work, and I am filled with respect for the master who created something that to my knowledge is without equal in Europe."<sup>182</sup>

As H. Allen Brooks has noted in his anthology of critical responses to Wright, "To Berlage must go credit for first articulating Wright's contribution to the design of interior space."<sup>183</sup> In his *Amerikaansche reisherinneringen* (American travel reminiscences) Berlage gives credit for this insight to Purcell, who accompanied Berlage on the pilgrimage "and characterized the work of Wright very originally as three-dimensional."<sup>184</sup> Later in the same paragraph Berlage uses the term "plastic" to characterize Wright's dynamic interior spaces, which reach out from the Semperian hearth and slide beneath the maternal, embracing eaves to engage with the natural realm beyond. Wright himself was to use the same term, noting in *The Natural House*, "I have since concentrated on plasticity as physical continuity, using it as a practical working principle within the very nature of the building itself in the effort to accomplish this great thing called architecture."<sup>185</sup>

In his contribution to the *Wendingen* volume on Wright, Berlage prophesized the

Fig. 23. H. P. Berlage, side wing of Holland House, no. 32 Bury Street, London, 1914–1916. The Hague, Gemeentemuseum.



“peaceful American penetration” of European architecture.<sup>186</sup> By the time this was published in 1926, Berlage was already putting his prophesy into action as a designer. Indeed, the two most distinguished works of his late career—Holland House in Bury Street, London, and the Gemeentemuseum (Municipal museum) in The Hague—speak with an unmistakably North American drawl.

In “Art and Society,” Berlage quoted Scheffler’s assurance that “whereas in the past, architectural forms had invariably been won from ideal buildings, the present age seeks to develop new forms from profane building types, from commercial, functional buildings.”<sup>187</sup> During the war years, Berlage gave double reinforcement to this argument. On the one hand, he designed ideal buildings like the Pantheon der Menschheid that admitted the impossibility of deriving architectural form in the absence of a cultural or spiritual consensus. On the other hand, he developed a vigorous public architecture to meet commercial need. His office building in London (fig. 23) was designed for his patron Wm. H. Müller & Co. and owes an obvious debt to American practice and to the

specific example of Sullivan's Guaranty Building in Buffalo, built in 1894 and visited by Berlage in 1911.<sup>188</sup> As Berlage explained to Purcell in a letter written in English and dated June 1918: "The office buildings in London are completed however, and of those I send a reproduction. It will perhaps interest you to learn that an iron frame being prescribed by the municipality, I solved the problem by covering the same with glazed terra cotta, in accordance with the later construction of some of the American skyscrapers."<sup>189</sup>

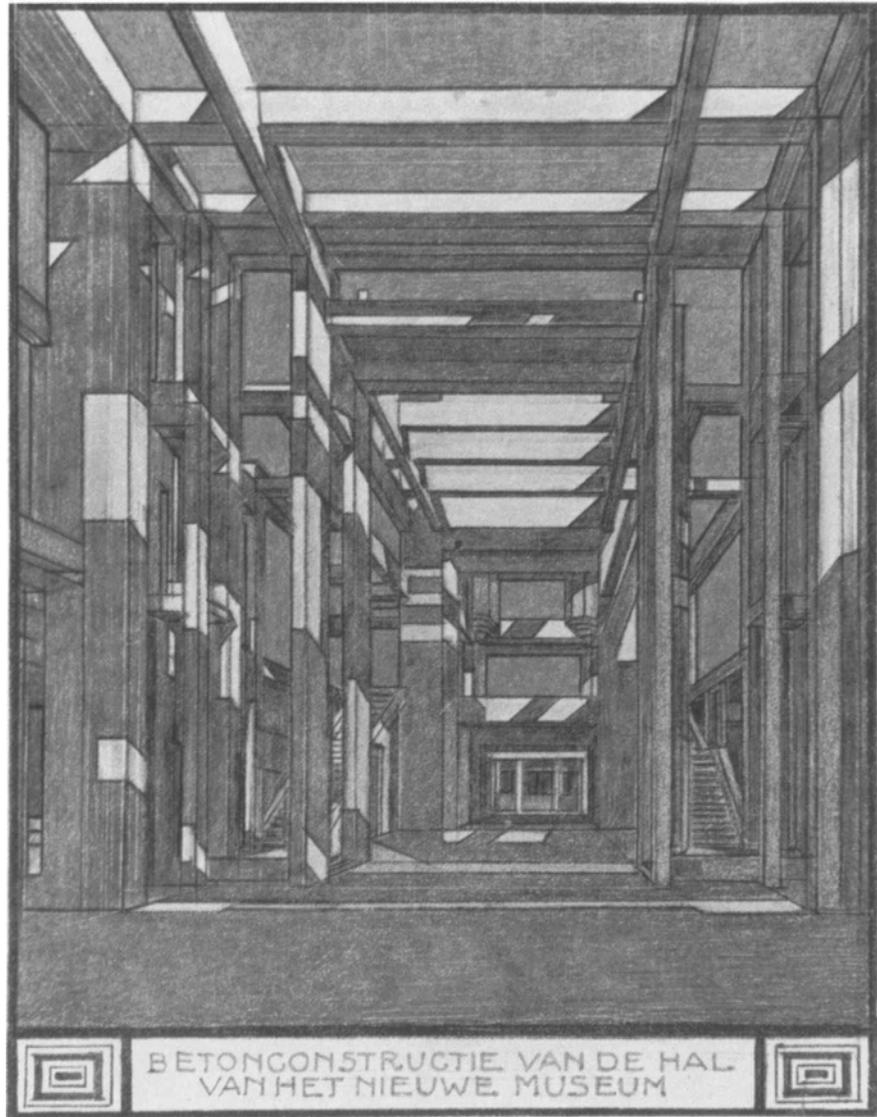
With Holland House, Berlage introduced into Europe the steel-frame curtain-wall office building, as developed in the United States in the 1890s. Its glazed panels and tiles are gray-green in color and contrast on the facade against the black granite podium on which the block sits and the two vertical black granite quoins that frame the whole composition. Berlage's obvious delight in the sensuous qualities of the materials echoes a passage in his essay "On the Likely Development of Architecture": "We have started once again to understand that polished marble really does not need extra decoration in order to show itself off in all its splendor; that granite is sufficiently beautiful because of its smooth surface; and that the endless color nuances of the various kinds of brick and stone give us sufficient variation in the wall surface not to require superfluous architectural design."<sup>190</sup> A very similar approach can be seen in the contemporary work of Adolf Loos in Vienna. The facade of the Looshaus of 1909–1911 on Michaelerplatz, for example, is virtually undecorated in the conventional sense, but richly finished in polished granite and cipollino marble. Like Berlage, Loos was a great admirer of American building, which he had studied at first hand in the mid-1890s.

American, and especially Wrightian, influences are also very prominent in Berlage's design for the Gemeentemuseum in The Hague. Like Holland House, Berlage's first engagement with the idea of designing an art museum came through the Kröller-Müller connection, more specifically through Hélène Kröller-Müller, art collector and oge. In a long saga of intrigue and clashing personalities, she commissioned successively Behrens, his former assistant Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Berlage to draw up proposals for a combined villa and museum to be built at Wassenaar, a fashionable suburb on the eastern outskirts of The Hague.<sup>191</sup> Nothing came of this scheme, whose site fell victim to a tramway line. The ambition survived, however, and a second site at Otterlo in the province of Gelderland was made available to Berlage in 1917. The resulting design is gravid with Wrightian echoes, particularly the central hall, which displays a combination of pillars, galleries, glazed roofing, and geometric decoration drawn directly from the Unity Temple at Oak Park, Illinois, designed by Wright in 1906 and illustrated in Berlage's *Amerikaansche reisherinneringen*. As she had already done to the efforts of Behrens and Mies, Mrs. Kröller-Müller rejected Berlage's proposal, moving him to terminate his contract with the family in 1919.

Fig. 24. H. P. Berlage, exterior of the Gemeentemuseum (Municipal museum) in The Hague, completed 1935. Photograph by Julius Oppenheim.  
The Hague, Gemeentemuseum.



Fig. 25. H. P. Berlage, interior of the final project for the Gemeentemuseum (Municipal museum) in The Hague, 1927-1929. From *H. P. Berlage ter gedachtenis*, 21 Febr. 1856-12 Aug. 1934. Bijlage van het Bouwkundig Weekblad Architectura, no. 51, 1934. Edinburgh, author's collection.



In the same year, however, the art gallery theme was rekindled by the City Council of The Hague, who commissioned Berlage to design the Gemeentemuseum. The first version, of 1919–1920, is an exercise in the monumental sublime, with powerful, undecorated volumes reminiscent of the Beethovenhuis or the Pantheon der Menschheid. The plan specifies two asymmetrical blocks, the larger forming an irregular rectangle enclosing a pool and entered through a domed vestibule conceived in the grand manner. The cultural intent is manifest, with a font set in a niche in the vestibule to mark the sacramental admission into the sacred realm of art, and the surface of the pool inviting calm reflection and introspection. Again, the plan remained unrealized when it was decided in 1923 that the city could not support a museum on this scale. Yet, the idea survived, and a second, more modest proposal was designed by Berlage in 1927–1929 and completed in 1935, a year after his death.<sup>192</sup>

Although the sublime rhetoric of domes and fonts is abandoned in the second scheme, there remains an enormous grandeur in the plan and in the integrity of the detailing (fig. 24). The galleries are arranged around a rectangular courtyard with access stairs at each corner—the Larkin Building turned inside out. The block facing the street is extended at one end to create an entrance based on a Greek cross, and a large water basin separates the street from the museum complex. Access across this water is gained by a glazed, covered pergola—again a process of foot washing, or purification, is implicit—leading into a lofty, top-lit, rectangular hall, whose volumes are the articulate result of the exposed concrete frame. Never were Viollet-le-Duc’s rationalist principles given clearer expression in Berlage’s work. Significantly, the frontispiece of the Berlage memorial volume, published in 1934, is a drawing of this concrete construction by Berlage himself, set before a sky of celestial blue (fig. 25). In accord with Viollet-le-Duc’s precepts, the elevations are controlled by a 43" × 43" modular grid of squares and isosceles triangles, derived from the size of the individual brick. To the ghost of French rationalism, however, Berlage added American know-how: the axial articulation of the solid volumes, the gardens, and the pools; the use of pergola and formal garden to tie the building to the site; and the details of lighting and brickwork all point inexorably westward to the Unity Temple and to Wright’s great early houses: the Dana house, the Darwin D. Martin house, and the Coonley house.<sup>193</sup>

In a simple teleology of Modernism that moved from the dark ages of the nineteenth century to the bright new truths of the twentieth, the Gemeentemuseum with its exposed frame, modular grids, and flowing, plastic interiors could be seen as a short step away from the Neoplasticism of Theo van Doesburg or the ascetic, white architecture of Neues Bauen. Berlage himself, however, was resolutely against taking this step. In 1925 he praised Frank Lloyd Wright in *Wendingen* for resisting the American urge toward “the inexorable rationalism of the machine” and for remaining open to “roman-

tic sensibility.”<sup>194</sup> This resistance to the mechanistic worldview had earlier prompted Berlage in his prognosis “On the Likely Development of Architecture” to deny the possibility of an entirely ascetic, undecorated architecture. While he accepted the inevitable victory of the seamless construction, the smooth plane, and the curtain wall, he could not accept these technical advances as adequate in themselves to bear a symbolic or cultural message: “I believe in a culture of the future, but not in its tectonic reflection without any decoration, for the simple reason that decoration is a natural human impulse.”<sup>195</sup> The culture of the future, in Berlage’s definition, could only be comprehended as a spiritual movement grounded on the belief in social equality. Only when this condition had been reached could an architectural style be expected to emerge that could compare with the achievements of Greek antiquity or the European Gothic. As Berlage insisted, “Style is nothing but the material form of a global idea, the product of a communal spiritual ideal.”<sup>196</sup> In the era of transition in which Berlage felt himself to be, the global idea could be imagined, but not given form. Precisely this condition has been identified by Jean-François Lyotard as the essence of the sublime aesthetic in which “modern art . . . finds its impetus and the logic of the avant-gardes finds its axioms.” In Lyotard’s formulation, the sentiment of the sublime is experienced “when the imagination fails to present an object which might, in principle, come to match a concept. . . . We can conceive the infinitely great, the infinitely powerful, but every presentation of an object destined to ‘make visible’ this absolute greatness or power appears to us painfully inadequate.”<sup>197</sup>

Right to the end of his life, Berlage produced ever-new variations on the theme of the *Stadtkrone*, the great architectural work that would both symbolize and inspire a new and beneficent social order. Among Berlage’s surviving papers is a handwritten epic poem in three cantos entitled “De Tempel.” It tells the tale of a pilgrim who arrives in a town and is depressed by the omnipresent ugliness, the lack of respect for the beautiful buildings of the past, and the grasping culture of individualism. Following a process of rediscovery and revelation, redemption is achieved through the construction of a temple that acts as a focus for the lost virtues of community and social equality:

*Then a communal spirit will pulse through the universe,  
The sacred spirit of the realm of peace will be realized  
By all people, united in their desire!*

*O noble friend, what wonderful light  
Suffuses this coming community,  
And I understand that it is the duty of all*

*To ensure that this spirit is not betrayed  
By the secret power, the reactionary urge  
That always lies in wait; to obstruct*

*The narrow path of a journey already difficult,  
Striving upward for the highest goals—  
While the masses advance as slowly as a glacier.*

*. . . . .  
And in ways unimaginable, this culture will build a temple  
From which a shining light, as if from countless suns,  
Will radiate across eternal space.<sup>198</sup>*

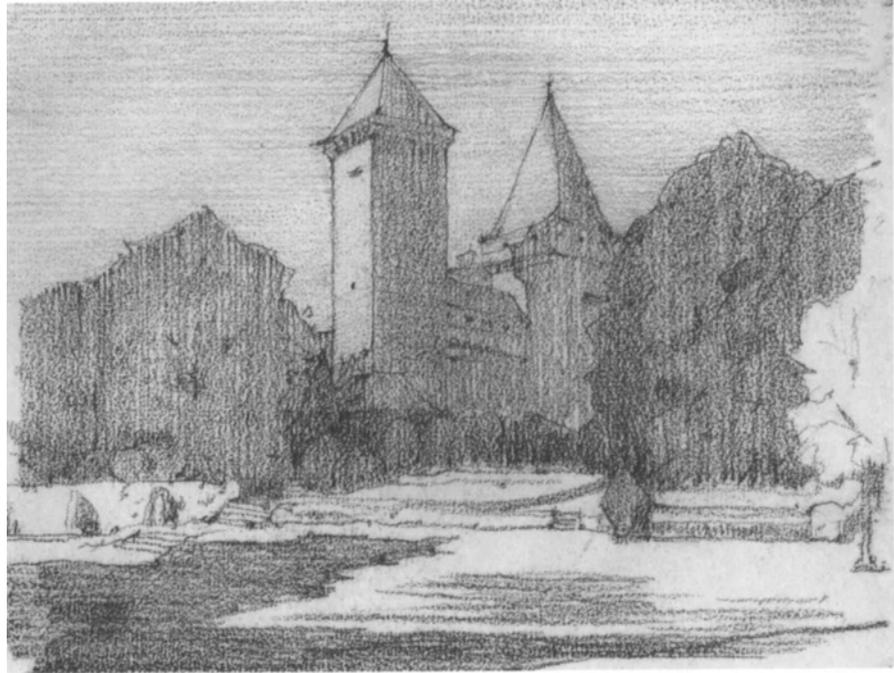
The vision of a universal Modernism harbored by the architectural avant-garde in the 1920s can itself be seen as comparably sublime conceit. In defining the first steps toward its realization, however, the luminaries of Neues Bauen adopted a polemical strategy of reductionism and simplification. This strategy was formally enacted by the CIAM (Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne) at its first meeting, held at La Sarraz in Switzerland in 1928. Although Berlage was a nominal signatory to the resulting declaration,<sup>199</sup> its iconoclastic tone was in obvious contradiction to his own theoretical position. As the opening paragraph of the La Sarraz declaration proclaims:

*The task of the architects, therefore, is to achieve accord with the great realities of the age and the wider goals of the society to which they belong, and to form their works accordingly. For this reason they refuse to adopt for their works the design principles of earlier epochs and of bygone social structures, but demand instead a specifically new understanding of the building task and the creative satisfaction of all practical and intellectual demands made upon them.<sup>200</sup>*

These demands, however, were defined both at La Sarraz and at the second CIAM conference in Frankfurt am Main in 1929 in a series of pragmatic and reductionist demands for hygienic surroundings, light, air, and sun. While Berlage could not have disagreed with these eminently reasonable demands, they fell far short of his goal of a sublime, monumental architecture able to inspire the other plastic arts to work under its aegis to give symbolic form to the cultural and spiritual ambitions of the community.

The profound differences between Berlage and the activists of the CIAM took ritual form at the La Sarraz meeting. Although his name headed the list of signatories—which also included Pierre Chareau, Hugo Häring, Le Corbusier, André Lurçat, Hannes Meyer, Gerrit Rietveld, Alberto Sartoris, and Mart Stam—Berlage took no part in the formal discussions. Instead, he sat outside in the park and drew the medieval castle

Fig. 26. H. P. Berlage, castle, La Sarraz, Switzerland, 1928, pencil on paper, 22.5 × 29 cm. Rotterdam, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, H. P. Berlage Archive.



owned by H el ene de Mandrot in which the congress was taking place (fig. 26). Asked to join in a group photograph taken at the conclusion of the conference on the steps of the castle chapel, Berlage refused. When his fellow countryman Rietveld asked him: "Why do you not join us, you belong with us, don't you?" Berlage replied with resignation: "You people are demolishing everything that I have built-up."<sup>201</sup>

## NOTES

Bracketed numbers following page numbers in the bibliographic citations below refer the reader to the translation of the cited texts that appears in the present volume.

1. Erich Mendelsohn, letter to Louise Mendelsohn, 19 August 1923, in Erich Mendelsohn, *Letters of an Architect* (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1967), 59.
2. Peter Behrens, comments on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Amsterdam Stock Exchange, *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 49, no. 21 (26 May 1928), 168: "Wenn man heute hin und wieder das Gefühl hat, dass die modern sachlichen Gebäude vielleicht für die Dauer ein wenig kalt und langweilig werden könnten, so liegt in dem bedeutendsten Bauwerk Berlages, der Börse von Amsterdam, ein Hinweis, wie es wohl möglich sein kann, ohne das Ganze zu stören, ein Mehr hinzuzugeben, das nicht nur das Sachliche erhöht u. deutlicher hervorhebt, sondern auch dem Seelischen einen Anhaltspunkt gibt." (Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.)
3. H. P. Berlage, *Gedanken über Stil in der Baukunst* (Leipzig: Julius Zeitler, 1905), 7. See "Thoughts on Style in Architecture," below, 122–56, esp. 126.
4. On the debate on architectural style in Germany during the first half of the nineteenth century, see 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).
5. H. P. Berlage, *Grundlagen und Entwicklung der Architektur: Vier Vorträge gehalten im Kunstgewerbemuseum zu Zürich* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse; Berlin: Julius Bard, 1908), 92. See "The Foundations and Development of Architecture: Four Lectures Delivered at the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zurich," below, 185–258, esp. 237.
6. Berlage (see note 3), 40 [146]; Berlage (see note 5), 85 [234].
7. Berlage (see note 3), 6–7 [126].
8. Matthew Arnold, "Dover Beach" (1851), in Francis Turner Palgrave, *The Golden Treasury of the Best Songs and Lyrical Poems in the English Language*, 5th ed. (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), 365–66.
9. Pieter Singelenberg, H. P. Berlage, *Idea and Style: The Quest for Modern Architecture* (Utrecht: Haentjens, Dekker & Gumbert, 1972), xi.
10. For a detailed analysis of the Semper-Berlage connection, see Pieter Singelenberg, "Semper's Einfluss auf Berlage," in *Gottfried Semper und die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1976), 303–14.
11. Singelenberg (see note 9), 52.
12. Cuypers visited England in 1862 with James Weale, an admirer of Pugin who lived in Belgium, and who was made an honorary member of the Ecclesiological Society. Coert Peter Krabbe has suggested Thomas Deane and Benjamin Woodward's Oxford University Museum of

Physical Sciences as an important source for the Rijksmuseum, a link that is particularly clear in the Neogothic competition design for the museum, executed by P.J. H. Cuypers 1875–1885. Coert Peter Krabbe, “The Opinions of Dutch Architects on British Architecture, 1840–1870,” lecture given at the Architectural Association, London, 7 March 1992.

13. See Manfred Bock, *Anfänge einer neuen Architektur: Berlages Beitrag zur architektonischen Kultur der Niederlande im ausgehenden 19. Jahrhundert* (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij; Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1983), 246–53.

14. Singelenberg (see note 9), 45.

15. H. P. Berlage, “De St. Pieterskerk te Rome,” *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 3, no. 5 (1 February 1883): 26–28; no. 6 (8 February): 33–35.

16. Heinrich Adolf Geymüller, *Die ursprünglichen Entwürfe für Sanct Peter in Rom*, 2 vols. (Vienna: Lehmann & Wentzel, 1875–1880).

17. See Pieter Singelenberg, “Berlage’s ‘Monument voor Verleden en Toekomst’ uit 1889,” *Album discipulorum aan J. G. van Gelder* (Utrecht: Haentjens, Dekker & Gumbert, 1963), 143–54.

18. H. P. Berlage, “De plaats die de bouwkunst in de moderne aesthetica bekleedt,” *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 6, no. 27 (3 July 1886): 161–63; no. 28 (10 July): 169–72, esp. 171. See “Architecture’s Place in Modern Aesthetics,” below, 95–104, esp. 102.

19. Berlage Papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Rotterdam, Dossier 164.

20. Singelenberg (see note 9), 171.

21. See H. P. Berlage, “Über moderne Baukunst,” *Der Architekt* 17 (1911), 49–55, esp. 50: “Ich für mich betrachte dies als eine Schwäche Schopenhauers. Er hat hinsichtlich der Baukunst beständig diese Äusserung gebraucht, aber weil Schopenhauer nichts anderes um sich sah als Säule und Last, als Säule und Architrav, daher konnte er diese Unterscheidung nicht machen” (I myself see this [insistence on post and lintel] as a weakness of Schopenhauer. He constantly made this comment with regard to architecture, but only because he saw nothing around him apart from column and load, column and architrave, and was therefore unable to make any differentiation).

22. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790; 6th ed., Leipzig: Felix Meiner, 1924), 77: “Schönheit ist Form der Zweckmäßigkeit eines Gegenstandes, sofern sie ohne Vorstellung eines Zwecks an ihm wahrgenommen wird” (emphasis in original). Translated in part by Walter Cerf under the title *Analytic of the Beautiful* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), 45.

23. For a refutation of this reading, see Eva Schaper, *Studies in Kant’s Aesthetics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 1979), 78ff.

24. Berlage (see note 5), 73 [228].

25. Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *Le dictionnaire raisonné de l’architecture française du XI<sup>e</sup> au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 10 vols. (Paris: B. Bance [vols. 1–8], A. Morel [vols. 9–10], 1854–1868).

26. Willem Kromhout, “Het rationalisme in Frankrijk,” *Architectura* 1 (1893): 6ff.

27. K. E. O. Fritsch, “Stil-Betrachtungen,” *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 24, no. 70 (30 August, 1890): 417–24; no. 71 (3 September): 425–31; no. 72 (6 September): 434–40; esp. 424: “. . . der Stil, in

welchem man baut, keineswegs die Bedeutung eines religiösen Dogmas hat, sondern dass er nichts weiter ist, als ein Ausdrucksmittel für künstlerische Gedanken— darin durchaus verwandt der menschlichen Sprache, in der ja auch sehr verschiedene, gleichberechtigte Zungen herrschen.”

28. *Ibid.*, 436: “. . . bereits die Baukunst eines großen Landes beherrscht, diejenige der Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika.”

29. K. E. O. Fritsch, “Berliner Neubauten, 55: Das ‘Künstlerhaus zum St. Lucas’ in Charlottenburg,” *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 25, no. 63 (8 August 1891): 377–79, esp. 378: “Hr. Sehring, der mit dieser Schöpfung gewissermaßen sein öffentliches Glaubensbekenntnis abgelegt hat, verfolgt bekanntlich eine Richtung, die sich in schroffen Gegensatz zu allen akademischen Regeln und Anschauungen setzt und auf dem Gebiete der Architektur etwa dem entspricht, was man auf dem Gebiete der Malerei als ‘Naturalismus’ bezeichnet. Eine Richtung, die insbesondere unter den Architekten Nordamerikas sich entwickelt und dort schon sehr beachtenswerthe Leistungen gezeitigt hat, die aber je nach dem Ausgangspunkte, auf welchem der Künstler gestanden hat, sehr verschieden in die Erscheinung treten wird. Während der akademische Architekt an einen geschichtlich abgeschlossenen Stil sich hält und nicht nur in allen Einzelheiten die Einheit desselben zu wahren bestrebt ist, sondern in vielen Fällen seine Schöpfung sogar den Forderungen dieses Stils unterordnet, streben jene ‘Modernsten’ unter den Architekten in naiver Verwendung verschiedener, dem jeweiligen Zwecke entsprechender Stilformen und Motive lediglich danach, ein eigenartiges, durch seine malerische Wirkung anziehendes, der Bestimmung des Gebäudes angemessenes Gesamtbild zu erzielen” (emphasis in original). On the American example, see A. W. Reinink, “American Influences on Late Nineteenth-Century Architecture in the Netherlands,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 24, no. 2 (1970): 163–73.

30. Singelenberg (see note 9), 63.

31. J. J. P. Oud, “Dr. H. P. Berlage und sein Werk,” *Kunst und Kunsthandwerk* 22 (1919): 200: “[Ich] halte dieses Projekt für den Wendepunkt in der Entwicklung Berlages, das heißt, ich glaube, daß Berlage in diesem Entwurf bewußt oder unbewußt einen letzten Versuch gemacht hat, die Möglichkeit des Entwerfens im Rahmen der Stilarchitektur zu erweitern. Es scheint mir der Anfang der Einsicht, daß im allgemeinen mit den Motiven eines historischen Stils nur reproduzierende oder zusammenstellende, keine wirklich bildende Arbeit zu verrichten ist.”

32. Eduardo Persico, “L’ultima opera di Berlage,” *Casabella* 8, no. 93 (September 1935): 7. Quoted in English in Giovanni Fanelli, “‘Unity within Diversity’: The Architecture of Berlage,” in Sergio Polano, ed., *Hendrik Petrus Berlage: Complete Works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 9–42, esp. 9.

33. Berlage (see note 3), 22 [136].

34. Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *Entretiens sur l’architecture*, 2 vols. (Paris: A. Morel, 1863–1872), 1: 410: “En effet, dans la nature organique, par exemple, il y a un principe un. Depuis le serpent jusqu’à l’homme, le principe est rigoureusement suivi: c’est la pluralité même des applications du principe qui en fait reconnaître l’unité.” Translated by Benjamin Bucknall under the title *Eugène-*

Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *Discourses on Architecture*, 2 vols. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1959), 1: 407.

35. Gottfried Semper, *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten; oder, Praktische Aesthetik*, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1878–1879), 1: “Prolegomena,” viii. The “Prolegomena” has been translated by Harry Francis Mallgrave and Wolfgang Herrmann under the title *Gottfried Semper, The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989), 183.

36. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik*, part 1, in idem, *Werke*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1842), 10.3: 303: “Ihre Schönheit besteht in dieser Zweckmäßigkeit selber, welche von der unmittelbaren Vermischung mit dem Organischen, Geistigen, Symbolischen befreit, obschon sie dienend ist, dennoch eine in sich geschlossene Totalität zusammenfügt, die ihren einen Zweck klar durch alle ihre Formen hindurchscheinen läßt, und in der Musik ihrer Verhältnisse das bloß Zweckmäßige zur Schönheit herausgestaltet.” Translated by T. M. Knox under the title *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Aesthetics*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), 2: 660.

37. Hegel (see note 36), 10.3: 307: “In allen diesen Beziehungen, in dem Verhältnis der Breite zur Länge und Höhe des Gebäudes, der Höhe der Säulen zu ihrer Dicke, der Abstände, Zahl der Säulen, Art und Mannigfaltigkeit oder Einfachheit der Verzierungen, Grösse der vielen Leisten, Einfassungen u.s.f. herrscht bei den Alten eine geheime Eurythmie, welche der richtige Sinn der Griechen vornehmlich ausgefunden hat.” Trans. Knox (see note 36), 2: 663.

38. Viollet-le-Duc (see note 34), 1: 391: “Ainsi personne ne conteste que des connaissances étendues en géométrie sont la base de tout travail chez l’architecte.” Trans. Bucknall (see note 34), 1: 388.

39. Richard N. Roland Holst, “Bij de reeds vijf en twintig jaar oude houtsneden van De Bazel en Lauweriks,” *Wendingen* 2 (1919): 3–4, 6–7.

40. J. L. M. Lauweriks, “Egypte en haar pyramiden,” *Theosophie* 5 (1896); idem, “Onderhoudingen over de bouwkunst door Viollet-le-Duc,” *Architectura* 4 (1896), and 5 (1897).

41. Jan Hessel de Groot and Jacoba M. de Groot, *Driehoeken bij het ontwerpen van ornament* (Amsterdam, 1896); Jan Hessel de Groot, *Iets over ontwerpen in architectuur* (Maassluis, 1900); idem, *Vormharmonie* (Amsterdam, [1912]).

42. H. P. Berlage, “De nieuwe Beurs te Amsterdam,” *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 18, no. 15 (9 April 1898): 111 (lecture delivered 1 April 1898 to *Architectura et Amicitia*).

43. H. P. Berlage, “In een woord vooraf” (January 1934), in J. C. Slebos, *Grondslagen voor aesthetiek en stijl* (Amsterdam: Ahrend & Zoon, 1939), 5: “Ik werk al sinds jaren nooit anders en was destijds ook leerling van De Groot” (For many years I have not worked otherwise, and I was in those days also a pupil of De Groot).

44. See Mathias Roriczer, *Das Büchlein von der falschen Gerechtigkeit* (1486; facsimile reprint, Wiesbaden: Pressler, 1965). Georg Gottfried Dehio, *Ein Proportionsgesetz der antiken Baukunst und sein Nachleben im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance* (Strasbourg: Karl J. Trübner, 1895).

45. August Thiersch, "Die Proportion in der Architektur," in J. Durm, H. Ende, E. Schmitt, and H. Wagner, eds., *Handbuch der Architektur*, part 4 (1883), 2nd ed. (Darmstadt: Arnold Bergsträsser, 1893).
46. Berlage (see note 3), 33 [141–42].
47. P. J. Blok, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche volk*, 8 vols. (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1892–1908).
48. E. H. Kossmann, *The Low Countries, 1780–1940* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 440–41. Blok's enterprise was echoed in the progressive architectural journal *Bouwkundig Weekblad*, which published a series of highly illustrated articles on old Dutch cities in the early 1890s. The proudly nationalistic tone can be exemplified in the opening of the article on Maastricht: "Wanneer er sprake is van merkwaardige steden in ons vaderland, van steden die een grootsche geschiedenis hebben en uit een archeologisch oogpunt van 't grootste belang zijn, dan behoort aan Maastricht daarbij een eerste rang te worden toegekend, ja, wellicht de voornaamste plaats" (Whenever the talk is of the notable towns in our native land, of towns that have a noble history and are of the greatest importance from the archaeological viewpoint, then Maastricht belongs among the first rank, perhaps even in the very first place). See C. T. J. Louis Rieber, "Maastricht," *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 13, no. 36 (9 September 1893): 217–20, esp. 217.
49. H. P. Berlage, "Schouwborgen," *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 15, no. 2 (12 January 1895): 7–10; no. 3 (19 January): 16–19; no. 6 (9 February): 36–40.
50. Manfred Bock, "Berlage and Amsterdam," in Maarten Kloos, ed., *Berlage in Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Architectura & Natura, 1992), 9–45, esp. 32.
51. H. P. Berlage, "Bouwkunst en impressionisme," *Architectura* 2 (1894): 93–95, 98–100, 105–6, 109–10. See "Architecture and Impressionism," below, 105–21.
52. Bock (see note 13), 17: "Anfang der neunziger Jahre begann er sodann die Überzeugung zu propagieren, daß die Probleme der modernen Großstadt nicht in erster Linie mit architektonischen Mitteln gelöst werden könnten, sondern daß die Lösung einen Plan voraussetze, auf dessen Grundlage der Architekt sozial und ästhetisch sinnvoll an die Entwurfsarbeit gehen könne."
53. H. P. Berlage, "Amsterdam en Venetië: Schets in verband met de tegenwoordige veranderingen van Amsterdam," *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 3, no. 34 (23 August 1883): 217–19; no. 36 (6 September): 226–28; no. 37 (13 September): 232–34, esp. 217: "Het schoone kan m. i. tot twee hoofdvormen worden terug gebracht, die men moet onderscheiden bij de beschouwing van elk kunstwerk. Het kan zijn 1. schilderachtig en 2. monumentaal. De beeldhouwkunst, maar vooral de bouwkunst verlangt deze onderscheiding in 't bijzonder; zij toch bepaalt het karakter van elk gebouw, en ten slotte van elke stad."
54. *Ibid.*: "De natuur is niet monumentaal, omdat zij in de groepeerings van hare onderdeelen niet regelmatig te werk gaat, maar in de hoogste mate pittoresk, omdat deze op de meest grillige wijze door elkaar zijn geplaatst, als gevolg van duizende omstandigheden (bewegingen, temperatuurverschillen enz. enz.)."
55. Hegel (see note 36), 10.1: 180: "Warum ist die Natur nothwendig unvollkommen in ihrer Schönheit, und woran tritt diese Unvollkommenheit heraus." Trans. Knox (see note 36), 1: 143. Stephen Bun-

gay, *Beauty and Truth: A Study of Hegel's Aesthetics* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1984), 15, has derived three consequences from the Hegelian position: "First, that Hegel bans the concept of mimesis from aesthetics; second, that art is a product of human freedom, and stands in contrast with nature; and third, that nature can be beautiful only if it is treated as if it were a work of art, that is as if it were a human product. This means that things which are not art can have certain aesthetic effects when they are viewed as if they were. But they do not thereby become art—it takes more than a few happy effects to produce a jump in ontological status."

56. Berlage (see note 53), 218: "Waarom is anders de indruk toe te schrijven, die men ontvangt in een park als te Versailles, of het indrukwekkende, dat bij het binnentreden van een Dom te Keulen, of van een Pieterskerk te Rome, ons overweldigt? Dan begrijpt men, dat de natuur niet alleen de leermeesteres der kunst is; want juist de indrukken zijn de resultaten van de harmonische samenstelling en verhoudingen, die alleen uit 's menschen geest zijn voortgesproten."

57. Berlage (see note 53), 219: ". . . van den bijna overdreven eenvoud der monumentaalste aller kunsten, de Grieksche"; and 226: "Haar grondplan is een ruitwerk. Deze regelmaat is te monotoon om werkelijk schoon monumentaal te kunnen zijn."

58. Camillo Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, 4th ed. (1889; Vienna: Carl Graeser, 1909), 97: "Früher war der leere Raum (Straßen und Plätze) ein geschlossenes Ganze von auf Wirkung berechneter Form; heute werden die Bauparzellen als regelmäßig geschlossene Figuren ausgeteilt, was dazwischen übrigbleibt ist Straße oder Platz." Translated by George R. Collins and Christiane Crasemann Collins under the title *City Planning According to Artistic Principles* (London: Phaidon, 1965), 87.

59. The text of the lecture was subsequently published as "De kunst in stedenbouw," *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 12, no. 15 (9 April 1892): 87–91; no. 17 (23 April): 101–2; no. 20 (14 May): 121–24; no. 21 (21 May): 126–27.

60. *Ibid.*, 126: "Het is niet waar, dat het moderne verkeer ons daartoe dwingt; het is niet waar, dat de hygiënische eischen ons daartoe noodzaken; het is eenvoudig gedachtenloosheid, gemakzucht en gebrek aan goeden wil, die ons, moderne stadbewoners, daartoe veroordeelen, om levenslang, in vormlooze kwartieren, den geestdoodenden aanblik van eeuwig en altijd dezelfde huizenblokken en straten to moeten bekijken."

61. Viollet-le-Duc (see note 34), 1: 305: "Toute forme qui n'est pas indiquée par la structure doit être repoussée."

62. Camillo Sitte, "Richard Wagner und die deutsche Kunst," *2. Jahresbericht des Wiener Akademischen Wagner-Vereins*, 1875. Also published separately (Vienna: Guttman, 1877).

63. Camillo Sitte, "Großstadtgrün," Appendix to *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen* (see note 58), 211: "So zeigt sich im ganzen auch hier wieder, daß der Städtebau, richtig aufgefaßt, keine bloß mechanische Kanzleiarbeit ist, sondern in Wahrheit ein bedeutsames, seelenvolles Kunstwerk, und zwar ein Stück großer, echter Volkskunst, was um so bedeutender in die Wagschale fällt, als gerade unserer Zeit ein volkstümliches Zusammenfassen aller bildenden Künste im Dienste eines großen nationalen Gesamtkunstwerkes fehlt." Trans. Collins and Collins (see note 58), 185.

64. Berlage (see note 3): 14 [130].
65. Berlage (see note 51): 105 [114].
66. Berlage (see note 51): 105 [114–15].
67. Willem Kromhout, "In gesprek met Willem Kromhout Czn," in Ida Jager, ed., *Willem Kromhout Czn. 1864–1940* (Rotterdam: Uitgeverij 010, 1992), 15–16: "Het valt niet genoeg te waarderen dat de ontwerper met grote zelfbeheersing een sober, monumentaal en kunstvol geheel heeft gewrocht. De flinke onderbouw, de verdiepingen en een schitterend effect makende bovenverdieping, geflankeerd door een ongemeen geslaagde topgevel van indrukwekkende lijncombinatie, vormen een geheel, dat eenig is in Amsterdam en dat als een manifestatie mag gelden op bouwkundig gebied. En laat ik vooral de innige samenhang tussen de bouwdelen en sculpturale details niet vergeten. Met dit gebouw werd de bouwkunst in andere vorm in Amsterdam ingeluid."
68. Berlage (see note 51): 106, 109 [117–18].
69. Theodoor Weevers, *Poetry of the Netherlands in Its European Context, 1170–1930* (London: Athlone, 1960), 171.
70. Berlage (see note 51): 106 [117].
71. Herman Gorter, "De School der Poëzie," 1899, in Weevers (see note 69), 302–3:
- Een roode roos staat voor mijn slaap,  
zie hoe somber,  
bloed in mijn slaap,  
een droom als amber,  
in roode zeedroom, ik blanker kaap.
72. See M.W.F. Treub, *De radicalen tegenover de sociaal-democratische partij in Nederland* (Amsterdam: van Locy, 1891). Treub subsequently wrote a refutation of Marxism: *Het wijsgeurig-economisch stelsel van Karl Marx*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Scheltema & Holkema, 1902–1903).
73. See Bock (note 50), 24.
74. See "Verkorting van den arbeidsduur met daarmede evenredige loonsverhooging," a petition addressed to the Amsterdam City Council, 1 September 1893, signed by the architects I. Gosschalk, H. P. Berlage, and I. E. van der Pek. *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 13, no. 36 (9 September 1893): 220.
75. Berlage (see note 51): 109 [118].
76. Berlage (see note 51): 110 [120].
77. Kossmann (see note 48), 443.
78. Kossmann (see note 48), 445.
79. Henriette Roland Holst, "Holland" (1900), in Weevers (see note 69), 350–53:
- Onze oogen proeve' iets groots en daarvan gaat er  
een trek van grootheid door ons gестes-trachten  
en zijn wij thuis in grenzeloze sferen.
- . . . . .

Het leven schept genoopt zich eigen maten,  
't is hier verwergd als een kruidsort in kloven  
en weet niet meer, anders te zijn geweest.  
Weg is de grootheid die we in waan bezaten  
zoodra we ons deel dragen van 't menschlijk sloven:  
Holland ge biedt geen ruimte als aan den geest.

80. Gottfried Semper, *Ueber Baustyle* (Zurich: Friedrich Schulthess, 1869), 11: "Styl ist die Uebereinstimmung einer Kunsterscheinung mit ihrer Entstehungsgeschichte, mit allen Vorbedingungen und Umständen ihres Werdens." Trans. Mallgrave and Herrmann (see note 35), 269.

81. Singelenberg (see note 9), 80: "The Exchange deserves a separate monograph, which would doubtless become voluminous." Singelenberg's own account in *ibid.*, 80–137, is still the most readable.

82. Kossmann (see note 48), 336.

83. For a detailed account of this criticism, see A. W. Reinink, *Amsterdam en de Beurs van Berlage: Reacties van tijdgenoten* (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij, 1975).

84. Manfred Bock, "Belage: Een monument opblazen," *Museumjournaal* 20, no. 4 (August 1975), 150: "De architecten bekritiseerden de architectuur, maar bedoelden Berlage; de middenstanders aan het Damrak bekritiseerden de bouwplaats, maar bedoelden wethouder Treub; het Amsterdamse grootkapitaal bekritiseerde het hele project, maar bedoelde de radikale partij, waarvan Treub de Amsterdamse lijsttrekker was."

85. Joh. Braakensiek, cartoon in *De Amsterdammer*, 20 March 1898, in Reinink (see note 83), 69: "Amst. Stedemaagd tot Burgemeester Vening Meinesz.: 'Dat het zuur en bitter tegelijk zou zijn, is niet waar; maar een leelijk drankje blijft het toch.' Burgemeester Vening Meinesz.: 'Misschien Mevrouw went u wel aan dien smaak; in elk geval het is goed voor u; de dokters en de professor hebben het u voorgeschreven, en u weet wel, die vergissen zich nooit!'"

86. Leo Simons, "De bouwkunst als toekomst-kunst," *De Gids*, no. 7 (1903), in Reinink (see note 83), 64: "Maar zij [de nieuwe Beurs] is gelukkig een sta-in-den-weg voor wie Amsterdam willen vermoorden tot boulevard-stad en haar een onburgerlijke wereldschheid willen opdringen welke haar misstaan zou als een Volendamsche een hofjapon." Trans., *ibid.*, 139.

87. It was the Damrak facade more than anything else that led to critical comparison in the press with prisons, barracks, and barns. The influential Austrian critic Joseph August Lux, for example, called the exchange "der brutale Ziegelschuppen, der zuletzt doch durch seinen doktrinären Puritanismus verstimmt" (the brutal brick barn that ultimately depresses one with its doctrinaire puritanism). Joseph August Lux, *Otto Wagner: Eine Monographie* (Munich: Delphin, 1914), 58.

88. Berlage (see note 5), 115–16 [249].

89. Semper (see note 35), 1: 213. Trans. Mallgrave and Herrmann (see note 35), 254 (emphasis in original).

90. Berlage (see note 3), 23 [136].

91. "De nieuwe Beurs te Amsterdam," report of a lecture given by H. P. Berlage on 1 April 1898, *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 18, no. 15 (9 April 1898): 109–12, esp. 111: "Bij het ontwerpen der gevels is gebruik gemaakt van de studiën en onderzoekingen van Viollet-le-Duc, en latere van de heeren de Bazel, Lauweriks en de Groot; het gebouw is geconstrueerd volgens een diagram, en wel een van 4 bij 5, en bestaat nu uit een samenstel van vierhoekige prisma's waarvan de basis een vierkant is, en waarvan dus de hoogte staat tot de zijde van het vierkant als 5 tot 8. De gelijkbeenige driehoek waarvan de hoogte staat tot de halve basis als 5 staat tot 4, was in de oudheid reeds bekend als de Egyptische. De pyramiden vertoonen o.a. die verhouding. De architecturale gevelverdeling, de binnen-architectuur, kortom het geheele gebouw is volgens de genoemde verhouding geconstrueerd."
92. Berlage (see note 5), 60–61 [218].
93. Semper (see note 35), 1: "Prolegomena," xxiv. Trans. Mallgrave and Herrmann (see note 35), 198 (emphasis in original).
94. Bock (see note 13), 67.
95. Bock (see note 13), 68: "Wenn die Symmetrieachse, wie zum Beispiel bei den Ecktürmen der Südfassade, nicht mit der vom Grundrißmodul angegebenen Vertikalen übereinstimmte, dann opferte er . . . den Rhythmus des Moduls der Symmetrie; wenn eine Komposition gemäß dem Aufrißmodul für sein 'Gefühl' ungünstige Verhältnisse ergab, dann opferte er das 'ägyptische' Dreieck."
96. H. P. Berlage, "J. H. de Groot," *De Kroniek* 6 (13 October 1900): 326.
97. Thiersch (see note 45), 87: "Keine Regel der Kunst ersetzt den Mangel des Genies. Der fleißige Gebrauch des Reimlexikons macht noch keinen Dichter; doch muß der Dichter die Regeln des Reims sorgfältig beobachten. So wird auch die Kenntniß des hier dargelegten Gesetzes noch Niemanden zum Baukünstler machen."
98. Berlage (see note 5), 56 [215].
99. Berlage (see note 3), 28 [139].
100. Berlage (see note 3), 28 [139]. Berlage misquotes Viollet-le-Duc slightly. Cf. note 61.
101. Berlage (see note 5), 97 [240].
102. Singelenberg (see note 9), 133–36. Ernst Haeckel, *Kunstformen der Natur* (Leipzig: Verlag des Bibliographischen Instituts [1899–1904]).
103. Kossmann (see note 48), 449.
104. H. P. Berlage, "Over architectuur," *Tweemaandelijksch Tijdschrift* 1 (6 July 1895): 417–22; and 2 (3 January 1896): 202–35. The Dutch version of Berlage's *Gedanken über Stil in der Baukunst* was first published in 1905, under the title "Beschouwingen over stijl," in Verwey's magazine *De Beweging* 1 (1 January 1905): 47–83, the successor to *Tweemaandelijksch Tijdschrift*, under Verwey's maxim: "Het eigenlijk moderne, in onzen tijd, is bezonnenheid" (The truly modern aspect of our age is levelheadedness).
105. Albert Verwey, "Bijdragen tot de versiering van de Nieuwe Beurs," *Tweemaandelijksch Tijdschrift* 4, no. 2 (1897–1898): 183–212.

106. Albert Verwey, quatrain inscribed above the entrance to the Stock Exchange in Amsterdam:

Als voorhoofd strekt de steen op de ingangsbogen  
't Verstand des handels breke in heldre lijn.  
Dáár uit: tusschen zoo mensch als dingen zijn  
Veel omgangsdaden die 't bestaan beoogen.

107. See, for example, Pyotr Alekseyevich Kropotkin, *L'Anarchie: Sa philosophie—son idéal*, 2nd ed. (Paris: P. V. Stock, 1896); idem, *Fields, Factories, and Workshops* (London: Hutchinson, 1899); idem, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (London: William Heinemann, 1902).

108. Verwey (see note 105), 212: "Ook de handel, ook de nijverheid zal vrij worden en de ééne menschheid zal door zelf-geschapen organen zich voeden op de ééne, háár-zelf voedende wijs. Dat zegt dat de handel, wat wij er onder gekend hebben, voorbij zal gaan. . . . En als dan een nieuw, vrij geslacht den tempel zien zal dien wij der dan-vreemde Godheid hebben opgericht, en in de vensters en op de muren de groote daden lezen en de helden zien die ze gedaan hebben, dan zullen zij misschien met weemoed en zeker met eerbiedige bewondering, bij het verheerlijken van wat hun eigen tijd grooters heeft, den dooden vijand gedenken die door zijn grootheid dien tijd mogelijk heeft gemaakt" (emphasis in original). Quoted in Bock (see note 13), 379 n. 21.

109. John Ruskin, *Unto This Last, and Other Writings*, ed. Clive Wilmer (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), 189.

110. Singelenberg (see note 9), 128.

111. Simons (see note 86), 102: "En als men in dien grootschen, doorluchten hal van de Goederenbeurs wandelt voelt men dat hier in Amsterdam een ruimte geboren is, voorbestemd om mede de verzamelplaats te wezen van haar tot nieuw bewustzijn en zelfeerbiedenis ontwakende volksgemeenschap." Trans., *ibid.*, 142.

112. See Reinink (note 83).

113. Willem Vogelsang, "H. P. Berlage's Neubau der Amsterdamer Börse," *Die Kunst: Monatshefte für freie und angewandte Kunst*, year 6, vol. 8 (August 1903), 401–21, esp. 410: "In den nach festem System berechneten Verhältnissen, der aufrichtigen Zweckmässigkeit der Teile, in den sorgfältig gewählten Material-Farben, in der Schattenwirkung und Anordnung der Durchbrüche ist sehr viel Individuelles. Eine stolze, kräftige Künstlernatur hat das Ganze beherrschend geschaffen."

114. Vogelsang (see note 113): 415.

115. Vogelsang (see note 113): 416.

116. Berlage (see note 5), 63–65 [219–22].

117. Jan Gratama, *Dr. H. P. Berlage, bouwmeester* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1925), xxvii: "Beeldhouwkunst heeft het accent van de werkelijkheid, bouwkunst heeft het accent van de mystische meetkunde; de eerste sluit direct aan bij de concrete vormen van het leven, de tweede bij zijn abstracte vormen. Zal nu de beeldhouwkunst de bouwkunst toelichten of sieren, dan moet zij zich voegen naar de abstracte schoonheid van de laatste; dan moet zij dus in zekeren zin architectonisch worden. In zekeren zin, want aan den

anderen kant is het karakteristieke, het doel-treffende dezer beeldhouwkunst juist dáárin gelegen, dat zij in de verheven abstracte architectonische schoonheid de suggesties van het reële leven oproept.”

118. See Bock (note 84), 150–51: “Tot deze ‘self-promotion’ hoorden tentoonstellingen, waardoor zijn werk in binnen- en buitenland bekend werd en ook regelmatige persinformatie, waardoor het publiek er steeds van op de hoogte bleef hoe het met Berlage ging” (This self-promotion included exhibitions, through which his work was made known at home and abroad, and also regular press information, which kept the public constantly informed about Berlage’s doings). As Berlage noted when writing about his reception in New York in 1911: “Nur die Lumpen sind bescheiden” (Only lumpens are modest). See H. P. Berlage, *Amerikaansche reis herinneringen* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1913), 6.

119. For detailed accounts of the history of the Plan-Zuid, see Vincent van Rossem, “Berlage and the Culture of City Planning,” in Polano (see note 32), 45–64; and Karin Gaillard and Betsy Dokter, eds., *Berlage en Amsterdam Zuid* (Amsterdam: Gemeentearchief Amsterdam; Rotterdam: Uitgeverij 010, 1992).

120. Bock (see note 50), 98.

121. H. P. Berlage, “Kunst en maatschappij,” in idem, *Studies over bouwkunst, stijl en samenleving* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1910), 3–44, esp. 41. See “Art and Society,” below, 277–322, esp. 315.

122. Bruno Taut, *Die neue Baukunst in Europa und Amerika* (Stuttgart: Julius Hoffmann, [1929]), 39.

123. Hendrik Peter (“Hein”) Berlage, “Berlage en Zoon,” *Forum voor architectuur* 27, no. 4 (June 1982), 42–45, esp. 43: “Mijn vader was socialist. Ik ben niet volstrekt zeker dat hij lid geweest is van de toenmalige SDAP, maar we kregen Het Volk thuis en die meesterlijke Notenkraker. . . . Laat ik het zo stellen. Mijn vader was met de meeste intellectuelen uit zijn tijd—hij was een senior onder de tachtigers—overtuigd geraakt, dat het grote maatschappelijk kwaad lag in het particuliere bezit van de productiemiddelen. Troelstra werd de sterke politieke figuur uit deze kring.”

124. Berlage (see note 121), 20 [295].

125. Berlage (see note 121), 31 [306].

126. Bock (see note 84), 152: “In de tijd dat Berlage in dienst van de volbloed kapitalist en oorlogs-profiteur Krölller was, werkte hij aan het uitbreidingsplan voor Amsterdam-Zuid.” Like all architects, Berlage found the prospects of getting his designs built a convincing antidote to ideological scruples. As he explained in a letter written in English to his American contact, William Gray Purcell, about the Krölller-Müller offer: “You easily understand that I hesitated at first whether to accept a proposition that involved changes in various ways, but the prospect of being able to see ideas realized in large works and of different kinds—among these being a private house of an uncommon kind and no mean dimensions finally decided me.” Berlage, letter to William Gray Purcell, 30 September 1913, Architectural Drawing Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara.

127. Jan de Heer, "Style and Dwelling Type: Berlage's Housing Projects," in Polano (see note 32), 66–90, esp. 70.
128. Berlage (see note 121), 41 [315].
129. Bruno Taut, "Das Problem des Opernbaues," *Sozialistische Monatshefte* 20, I, no. 6 (26 March 1914), 357: "Jede Epoche bringt ihre typischen Bauaufgaben hervor, die den keimtragenden Zeitgedanken entsprechen und das Neue in der Architektur schaffen. Als typische Idee unserer Tage, als die Idee, die von jedermann heute mitempfunden wird, wird man den sozialen Gedanken ansehen müssen. Nicht die Hofoperen können uns die neue Architektur beschenken, sondern die Volksbühnen, die neuen Gartenstädte und alle die aus sozialem Idealismus hervorgehenden Bauwerke."
130. For accounts of the housing reform movement in Holland, see H. P. Berlage, A. Keppler, Willem Kromhout, and Jan Wils, *Arbeiderswoningen in Nederland* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1921); Karin Gaillard, "The Amsterdam School and Public Housing Policy in the Netherlands between 1850 and 1925," in Wim de Wit, ed., *The Amsterdam School: Dutch Expressionist Architecture, 1915–1930*, exh. cat. (New York: Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 1983), 145–60; and Helen Searing, "Berlage and Housing," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 25 (1974): 133–79.
131. Berlage (see note 121), 39 [313].
132. Searing (see note 130), 159–61.
133. H. P. Berlage, *Normalisatie in woningbouw* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1918), 21–50, esp. 36. Quoted in Searing (see note 130), 162, 178: "Ja, de bouwkunst begroet deze wijze van uitdrukking zelfs met een ware wellust, als reactie tegen de orgie van architecturaal individualisme, die achter ons ligt. Want zij kan nu op groter schaal bereiken . . . zij hervindt een reeds vroeger veroverde schoonheid."
134. Berlage (see note 5), 111 [247].
135. Berlage (see note 121), 26 [301].
136. Berlage (see note 121), 12 [287].
137. Albert Verwey, "De eenheid in Berlage's plan van beursversiering," in "H. P. Berlage ter gedachtenis," supplement to *Bouwkundig Weekblad Architectura* 51 (1934), 6: "Kort gezegd: de Beurs is de uitdrukking van een sociale en artistieke eenheids-wil, zoals die tussen 1890 en 1900 in enkele kringen hevig leefde; maar die na die tijd weer heeft afgenomen. Berlage was het orgaan waardoor die dubbele eenheids-wil zich in een gebouw belichaamde."
138. For a list of articles on Richardson's work published in German and British architectural journals between 1870 and 1890, see Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *The Architecture of H. H. Richardson and His Times*, rev. ed. (Hampden, Conn.: Archon, 1961), 333–34. For Dutch connections, see Reinink (note 29).
139. See Iain Boyd Whyte, *Emil Hoppe, Marcel Kammerer, Otto Schönthal: Three Architects from the Master Class of Otto Wagner* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989).
140. Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 254.
141. F. Garas, "Mes Temples," quoted in H. P. Berlage, "Hoofdstuk I," undated typescript

(1907), Berlage papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Rotterdam, Dossier 173, p. 4: "J'imaginai pour cela un buste pensif du dieu de la musique émergeant d'un bloc énorme et penché vers un groupe d'humains l'entourant et tendant vers lui les bras suppliants, en criant l'hymne à la joie."

142. Ibid., 1: "Zoolang de kooplieden niet uitgedreven zijn, zal de tempel der kunst geen tempel zijn. Maar de kunst der toekomst zal ze uitdrijven."

143. Walter Pater, "The School of Giorgione," in *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (1893; Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1980), 106.

144. E. T. A. Hoffmann, quoted in Robert Currie, *Genius: An Ideology in Literature* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1974), 66.

145. Berlage (see note 121), 28 [302–3].

146. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, Prologue #2, quoted in H. P. Berlage, "Concertzalen" (1908), in idem, *Beschouwingen over bouwkunst en hare ontwikkeling* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1911), 83–102, esp. 83: "Als Zarathustra aber allein war, sprach er also zu seinem Herzen: 'Sollte es denn möglich sein! Dieser alte Heilige hat in seinem Walde noch nichts davon gehört, dass Gott todt ist.'"

147. Richard Wagner, quoted in Berlage (see note 146), 99: "... über das Gebiet des aesthetisch Schönen in die Sphäre des durchaus Erhabenen getreten zu sein. ... Die Melodie ist durch Beethoven von dem Einfluss der Mode und des wechselnden Geschmacks emanzipiert, zum giltigen [sic], rein menschlichen Typus erhoben worden. ... [darum] wird Beethoven's Musik zu jeder Zeit verstanden werden, während die Musik seiner Vorgänger grösstentheils nur unter Vermittelung kunstgeschichtlicher Reflexion uns verständlich bleiben wird."

148. Richard Wagner, quoted in Berlage (see note 146), 96: "Das Charakteristische der Ausbildung unseres Planes für das besprochene Theatergebäude bestand darin, dass wir, um einem durchaus idealen Bedürfnisse zu entsprechen, die uns überkommenen Anordnungen des inneren Raumes Stück für Stück als ungeeignet und deshalb unbrauchbar, entfernen mussten, dafür nun aber eine neue Anordnung bestimmten, für welche wir, nach innen wie nach aussen, ebenfalls keine der überkommenen Ornamente zu verwenden wissen, so dass wir unser Gebäude für jetzt in der naivsten Einfachheit eines Nothbaues lassen müssen." Berlage's source here was the speech delivered by Wagner at the laying of the foundation stone of the Bayreuth Festspielhaus (festival theater). See Richard Wagner, "Das Bühnenfestspielhaus zu Bayreuth nebst einem Bericht über die Grundsteinlegung desselben," in idem, *Dichtungen und Schriften*, Jubiläumsausgabe, 10 vols., ed. Dieter Borchmeyer (Frankfurt am Main: Insel-Verlag, 1983), 10: 43–44. The overall conception of Berlage's Beethovenhuis was deeply indebted to this text and to the model of Bayreuth.

149. Berlage (see note 146), 98: "Onder neutrale vormen versta ik een constructief logischen opbouw, zoodat de architecturale wijding—en hierop vooral moet de aandacht vallen—uitsluitend het gevolg zal moeten zijn van edele verhoudingen, eenvoudige lijnen, zuivere constructie. En dat vereischt waarlijk geen middelmatig architectonisch kunnen. Integendeel; het vereischt het allerhoogste, omdat andere middelen tot uitdrukking daarbij wegvallen. Dat hiermede geen pijnlijk weglaten van alle versiering wordt bedoeld,

spreekt van zelf. Maar wèl moet die versiering volstrekt ondergeschikt blijven aan de eigenlijke architecturale samenstelling, zoodat, wanneer men in de zaal is, geen enkel bouwdeel naar voren komt, dus afleidt.”

150. Berlage (see note 146), 98: “Want ik herhaal het citaat, ontleend aan Haiger, dat de echte kunstwerken ten allen tijde dezelfde verheven stemming ademen! En mogen wij er nu aan twijfelen eenmaal in staat te zijn een ruimte van een eigen karakter te scheppen, waarvan eenzelfde verheven stemming uitgaat?”

151. For precisely this reason, Berlage had strong reservations about the highly decorated architecture of the Amsterdam school. In a memoir written on the death of Michel de Klerk in 1923, he praised De Klerk as an “amazing talent,” and as an “admirable baroque nature, desiring a priori the decorative effect.” But Berlage went on to note a lack of “every symptom of universality which still connects with what already exists.” See also Singelenberg (note 9), 199–200.

152. Arthur Schopenhauer, quoted in H. P. Berlage, “Modern Architecture,” *The Western Architect* 18 (January 1912): 29–36, esp. 30.

153. Paul Crowther, *The Kantian Sublime* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 164–65.

154. Berlage (see note 152): 36.

155. Bruno Taut, “Eine Notwendigkeit,” *Der Sturm* 4, nos. 196–97 (February 1914), 174–75, esp. 175: “Bauen wir zusammen an einem großartigen Bauwerk! An einem Bauwerk, das nicht allein Architektur ist, in dem alles, Malerei, Plastik, alles zusammen eine große Architektur bildet, und in dem die Architektur wieder in andern Künsten aufgeht.”

156. Bruno Taut, *Alpine Architektur* (Hagen i. W.: Folkwang, 1919), pl. 11: “Im Berginneren erglänzen die Kostbarkeiten der künstlich beleuchteten Glasarchitektur. Der Dom und seine Seitenschiffe sind vom kühlen Tageslicht erfüllt. Nachts aber strahlt er sein Licht auf die Berge und zum Firmament. Zweck des Domes?—Keiner—wem nicht Andacht in der Schönheit genügt.”

157. Bruno Taut, *Die Stadtkrone* (Jena: E. Diederichs, 1919), 55: “Wir wollen wieder Städte, in denen wir nach Aristoteles nicht bloß sicher und gesund, sondern auch glücklich wohnen können.”

158. *Ibid.*, 59: “Ohne Religion gibt es keine wahre Kultur, keine Kunst.”

159. Taut (see note 157), 59: “. . . der Sozialismus im unpolitischen, überpolitischen Sinne, fern von jeder Herrschaftsform als die einfache schlichte Beziehung der Menschen zu einander.”

160. Christopher Hussey, *The Life of Sir Edwin Lutyens* (London: Country Life, 1950), 121.

161. A. E. Brinckmann, *Platz und Monument: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Ästhetik der Stadtbaukunst in neuerer Zeit* (Berlin: E. Wasmuth, 1908); quoted in H. P. Berlage, “Stedenbouw,” in *idem, Beschouwingen over bouwkunst en hare ontwikkeling* (1909; Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1911), 45–67, esp. 45: “Städte bauen heisst mit dem Hausmaterial Raum gestalten.”

162. Berlage (see note 161), 51: “De ideale aanleg eener oude stad, zooals uit het boven geciteerde blijkt, was streng geometrisch, en kwam dus overeen met het karakter der klassieke architectuur.”

163. Berlage (see note 161), 53: “Het stadsplan wordt nu een samenstelling van meestal rechthoekige bouwblokken, terwijl enkele diagonaalstraten zorgen voor het verkeer tusschen de hoekpunten. En er heerscht wederom een merkwaardige overeenstemming tusschen plan en architectuur, natuurlijk geheel in den geest der antieken.”

164. H. P. Berlage, "Eenige beschouwingen over klassieke bouwkunst," in idem, *Beschouwingen over bouwkunst en hare ontwikkeling* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1911), 3–16, esp. 16. See "Some Reflections on Classical Architecture," below, 259–76, esp. 273.
165. Max Eisler, *Der Baumeister Berlage* (Vienna: Ed. Hölzel, 1920), 20: "Die Baukunst aber will nicht ethische Gedanken, sondern ihre eigene formale Gesetzmässigkeit verkörpern. Schon deshalb liegt etwas Zweispältiges in Berlages Weltmonumenten. Und etwas Unerfülltes: auch dort, wo die Musik nicht die Aufgabe stellt, schwebt die Sehnsucht nach musikalischer Befreiung ungestillt über diesen Werken."
166. Berlage (see note 121), 43 [317].
167. On the union sacrée in France and the Burgfrieden in Germany, see James Joll, *Europe Since 1870* (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1976), 188–89.
168. Henriette Roland Holst (1926), quoted in Kossmann (see note 48), 553.
169. H. P. Berlage, *Het Pantheon der Menschheid* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1915): "Langs de galerijen der tegemoetkoming wordt de groote ruimte betreden. Daar staat ingesloten door de galerij der gedachtenis, alleen door het zenithlicht van uit den koepel bestraald, het monument der menschen-eenheid. Hoogerop worden de galerijen der erkenning, der verheffing en der alomvatting bereikt, terwijl de ruimte door den koepel der volkeren-gemeenschap wordt afgesloten."
170. H. P. Berlage, *Het Pantheon der Menschheid*, 2nd ed. (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1915):  
 Aan al de offers der verdwazing  
 Aan al de offers van den waan.
171. *Ibid.*:  
 Tot den strijd voor de ééne Vrijheid,  
 Tot den strijd voor den éénen Vrede,  
 Die alleen het socialisme  
 Over de aarde kan doen opgaan.
172. The volume *Das Ehrenjahr Otto Wagners an der k.k. Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien* (Vienna: Eduard Kosmack, [1912]) is listed in the bibliography included in Berlage's *Het wezen der bouwkunst en haar geschiedenis*, published posthumously (Haarlem: De Erven F. Bohn, 1934).
173. H. P. Berlage, "Over de waarschijnlijke ontwikkeling der architectuur," in idem, *Studies over bouwkunst, stijl en samenleving* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1910), 79–104, esp. 99. See "On the Likely Development of Architecture," below, 157–84, esp. 177.
174. *Ibid.*, 101 [178].
175. Berlage, letter to William Gray Purcell, 14 December 1909, Architectural Drawing Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara.
176. Berlage (see note 152); idem, "Art and the Community," *The Western Architect* 18 (August 1912): 85–89; H. P. Berlage, "Foundations and Development of Architecture," *The Western Architect* 18 (September 1912): 96–99; and 18 (October 1912): 104–8.
177. Berlage (see note 118), 10: "Met deze beschouwingen komt men tot de overtuiging dat, hoe

aesthetisch paradoxaal het schijnen moge, de ontwikkeling der stad op een schaal zooals de Amerikaanse, eigenlijk alleen mogelijk is bij toepassing van het rechthoekige stratenplan.”

178. Berlage (see note 118), 41: “... een ernstige poging om eenige industriele en aesthetische idealen te formuleren.”

179. Berlage (see note 118), 41: “De machine is volgens den schrijver ... de verlosser der menschheid, en de ingenieur is de eenige dichter van dezen tijd.” Berlage may well have been referring to Wright’s lecture “The Arts and Crafts of the Machine,” delivered in Chicago in March 1901 and published in the same month in the catalog of the fourteenth annual exhibition of the Chicago Architectural Club. See Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer, ed., *Frank Lloyd Wright: Collected Writings*, vol. 1, 1894–1930 (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), 59–69.

180. Berlage (see note 118), 44: “Het gebouw manifesteert zich als een groote zware massa, met geweldige muurvlakken aan de hoeken, de plaatsen waar de trappen zich bevinden, waartuschen de vensters, gescheiden door pijlers, die over de volle hoogte gaan, prachtig zijn gevat. Het gebouw is vlak afgedekt; de muren zijn niet versierd, de pijlers alleen op de bovenste verdieping door horizontale geleidingen. Een enkel beeldwerk is aan den ingang aangebracht. En ook van binnen dezelfde sobere maar kernachtige behandeling, door een detail, dat al dadelijk den bizonderen kunstenaar doet kennen. Het materiaal is baksteen, van buiten rood van binnen geel, de vloeren zijn van beton, hetgeen dus als van zelf tot een rechthoekige samenstelling moest leiden [sic].”

181. Otto Antonia Graf, “The Art of the Square. Analysis of the Larkin Building: Fugue on the Theme of the Cube,” in Robert McCarter, ed., *Frank Lloyd Wright: A Primer on Architectural Principles* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1991), 228–37.

182. Berlage (see note 118), 44: “Ik ging ten minste vandaar in de overtuiging een echt modern werk te hebben gezien, met achting voor den meester, die iets maakte, dat voor zoover mij bekend, in Europa zijns gelijke zoekt.”

183. H. Allen Brooks, ed., *Writings on Wright: Selected Comment on Frank Lloyd Wright* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981), 131.

184. Berlage (see note 118), 45: “... en karakteriseerde het [werk van Wright] zeer eigenaardig als driedimensionaal.”

185. Frank Lloyd Wright, *The Natural House* (1954; London: Pitman, 1971), 46.

186. H. P. Berlage, “Frank Lloyd Wright,” *Wendingen* 7, no. 6 (1926): 80. The seven consecutive special issues of *Wendingen* dedicated to Wright were also published in book form: H. Th. Wijdeveld, ed., *The Life-Work of the American Architect Frank Lloyd Wright* (Santpoort: C. A. Mees, 1925).

187. Berlage (see note 121), 37 [311].

188. On Holland House in London, see Pieter Singelenberg, “Belage in Londen: Holland House in Bury Street (1914–1916),” *Bouwen in Nederland: Vijfentwintig opstellen over nederlandse architectuur opgedragen aan Prof. Ir. J. J. Terwen*, Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek (1984), 407–25.

189. Berlage, letter to William Gray Purcell, 18 June 1918, Architectural Drawing Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara.

190. Berlage (see note 173), 85 [164].

191. See Polano (note 32), 207–8, 222–23 for accounts of the Kröller-Müller villa-museum projects.

192. See Pieter Singelenberg, “Het Haags Gemeentemuseum,” *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 25 (1974): 1–89.

193. The Dana house (Springfield, Illinois, 1900) and the Coonley house (Riverside, Illinois, 1907) were illustrated by Berlage in his *Amerikaansche reisherinneringen* (see note 118), and both were erroneously located by him in Oak Park.

194. Berlage (see note 186): 80.

195. Berlage (see note 173), 100 [178].

196. Berlage (see note 173), 79 [157].

197. Jean-François Lyotard, “What Is Postmodernism?” in idem, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1984), 77, 78.

198. H. P. Berlage, “De Tempel,” ms. text, undated (ca. 1930), canto 3, verses 38–41, 48. Berlage Papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Rotterdam, Dossier 205b. I am very grateful to Prof. Pieter Singelenberg for his help in dating this text.

*Dan zal gemeenschapszin het al doortrillen,  
De heil'ge geest van't vredesrijk gesticht,  
Door alle menschen, eensgezind van willen!*

*O, edle vriend, in welk een heerlijk licht  
Zie'k nu die komende gemeenschap baden,  
En ik begrijp, dat het nu ieders plicht*

*Te zorgen, dat die geest niet wordt verraden  
Door de geheime kracht, als tegen drang,  
Die altijd konklend loert, die enge paden*

*Te stremmen, van de toch reeds zwaren gang,  
Naar hoog gelegen top doelwaarts te streven—  
En gletschertraag duurt stuw der massa lang.*

*En die cultuur zal, zooals nooit verzonnen,  
Een tempel bouwen met een stralend licht  
In't grootsche ruim als van ontelbre zonnen.*

199. The other signatories were Victor Bourgeois, Pierre Chareau, Josef Frank, Gabriel Guevrékian, Max Ernst Haefeli, Hugo Häring, Arnold Höchel, Huib Hoste, Pierre Jeanneret, Le Corbusier, André Lurçat, Ernst May, Fernando García Mercadal, Hannes Meyer, Werner M. Moser, Carlo Enrico Rava, Gerrit Rietveld, Alberto Sartoris, Hans Schmidt, Mart Stam, Rudolf Steiger, and Henri Robert Von der Mühl.

200. "Die Erklärung von La Sarraz" (1928), in Martin Steinman, ed., *CIAM: Dokumente, 1928–1939* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1979), 28: "*Die Aufgabe der Architekten ist es deshalb, sich in Übereinstimmung zu bringen mit den grossen Tatsachen der Zeit und den grossen Zielen der Gesellschaft, der sie angehören, und ihre Werke darnach zu gestalten. Sie lehnen es infolgedessen ab, gestalterische Prinzipien früherer Epochen und vergangener Gesellschaftsstrukturen auf ihre Werke zu übertragen, sondern fordern eine jeweils neue Erfassung einer Bauaufgabe und eine schöpferische Erfüllung aller sachlichen und geistigen Ansprüche an sie.*"

201. Berlage to Gerrit Rietveld, La Sarraz, 28 May 1928, quoted in Singelenberg (see note 9), 177, 228 n. 42.

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Hendrik Petrus  
BERLAGE THOUGHTS  
ON STYLE  
1886-1909

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# ARCHITECTURE'S PLACE IN MODERN AESTHETICS

(1886)

In classical antiquity, the Middle Ages, and even in the Renaissance, architecture was so highly regarded that it was considered foremost among the arts. The modern age, however, not only thinks that this privilege should be denied, it even goes so far as to challenge

architecture's right to be an art. It therefore seems to me rather important to examine the views of those gentlemen who have some authority in this field—the aestheticians and philosophers—to see what they think about architecture. I will refrain from any criticism of their statements, even though they at times undoubtedly deserve it; instead, I will offer their observations without any discussion.

Kant considers architecture to be a branch of the plastic arts, which also includes sculpture.<sup>1</sup> By plastic art he means the art of the sensory truth, as opposed to the art of the sensory appearance. Sculpture's main purpose is to give expression to an aesthetic idea. For architecture, however, an object's degree of fitness for a certain kind of use is the most important qualification; therefore all household effects—for example, the work of a furniture maker and other things made for daily use—should be included.

Consequently, by “architecture” or “tectonics” Kant refers to the crafts in the larger sense of the word insofar as they evoke the sensory truth. However, objects of decorative art that serve only for display, such as curtains, room decorations, clothes, ornaments, etc., are in his opinion a part of the art of painting. Architecture in the conventional sense is therefore only a part of the art of building [*bouwkunst*] in the sense that Kant gives to the word. He does not hesitate to include architecture, as well as rhetoric, as a worthy member of the arts; nor does he see its subservience even to nonaesthetic purposes as a contradiction of the notion of a pure work of art.

Schelling, like Kant, employs architecture to mean tectonics or crafts in the wider sense of the word.<sup>2</sup> For him, it also comprises works of lesser importance, such as sarcophagi, urns, vases, bowls, candelabras, and the like, and he considers draperies and upholstery to be the most perfect and beautiful architecture. Nonetheless, since he does not admit to the existence of both upholsterers and architects, he tries to make a distinction between architecture and crafts, for he thinks that what serves a practical purpose cannot also be beautiful.

Like Kant, Schelling thinks that since architecture manifests itself through material objects, it is self-evident that it is some kind of plastic art.

According to Schopenhauer, architecture distinguishes itself from the visual and other arts in that it does not present something other than the object itself; in other words, architecture is not a pretty illusion but a beautiful reality.<sup>3</sup> It is the architect's

talent that he is able to maintain the purely aesthetic intention, despite the fact that it is subordinate to completely dissimilar requirements of usefulness. He can do this by trying to find as much balance as possible between these components. This compliance with the desired purpose, insofar as it presents itself in a building, relegates the building to useful architecture. Beauty in the artistic sense exists only in the visible expression of the purely aesthetic functionality of the components, so that they can contribute to the whole and give a sensory representation of the tension between load and support. Since the actual aesthetics of architecture are the result of the antagonism between the inorganic forces of nature and are absolutely unrelated to such notions as regularity, proportion, and symmetry in geometric and stereometric forms, the beauty of a building stems from the straightforward expression of its purpose and from an effective and natural way of achieving it. During the design process one should never think of the building's nonaesthetic purpose, but only of the distribution of masses in response to gravity.

As stated by Solger, architecture is an art only when it builds dwellings for the deity, which, like churches and governments buildings, bear little resemblance to the human dwelling because need is not the determining goal; architecture is totally devoid of dignity when it is used solely for the decoration of houses.<sup>4</sup>

Krause ranks the following among the useful arts, that is to say, those arts that are subservient to a particular purpose: decorative art; rhetoric; stylistics; philosophical art (i.e., purely scholarly discourse); declamation; play (i.e., gesticulation of the speaker); gymnastics; equestrianism; pugilism; architecture; landscape architecture; calligraphy; numismatics; lapidary art; cutting and polishing stones; making rings, bracelets, etc.<sup>5</sup> Landscape architecture does not aspire to grow useful fruits but is aimed at higher intellectual goals; and architecture, especially the design of monuments (columns, memorial stones), is directed toward higher, purely human goals. Yet, in his general classification Krause ranks both arts not among the free but among the dependent, useful arts. Useful art can be part of aesthetics only as a useful fine art, not on its own.

Insofar as architecture is the art of making architectural monuments, Krause defines it as ideal, beautiful, inorganic form. It is made, first of all, for its own purpose, secondly, for a worthy objective: for example, for edification, to stir patriotism, or for spiritual elevation, etc. He ranks it, therefore, as a subordinate part under plastic art.

Hegel describes architecture as "the art of the exterior," which for him means that the most important distinction is whether the exterior has independent meaning or is being used as a means to achieve another goal that, while being subservient, manifests itself independently.<sup>6</sup> The first category is symbolic architecture; the second is classical architecture; a third is romantic architecture.

Symbolic architecture has no purpose beyond symbolizing a particular notion or

sentiment. This does not mean that any monument can be called symbolic, insofar as it is intended only to commemorate certain events (battles, victories, accidents, or actions) or represent them through its character alone.

Thus, border stones, memorial stones, mounds of stone to commemorate battles, or stones whose sole purpose is to bear inscriptions are symbolic in the true sense of the word. They are the opposite of phallic columns, obelisks (representing a ray of light), or massive pyramidal towers (the Tower of Babel), which because of their numerology symbolize the universe with its spheres, etc.

As soon as a mound of stone becomes more than a sepulchral monument and covers or encloses a burial vault, as soon as the tower holds the *cella* of the deity, these structures are no longer purely symbolic, independent works of art but serve a practical purpose and therefore constitute a transition from the independently symbolic to the traditionally dependent or serving architecture.

Even better examples of this transitional stage are labyrinths, cave temples, cemeteries, etc., in which a cosmic symbolism is combined with practical purposes.

The specific practical purpose of architecture is to make an enclosure. Symbolic architecture either does this only partly or treats the enclosure as something of secondary importance. In classical architecture the enclosure is the main concern, whereas symbolism is only a superficial addition, or it is reduced to being an envelope around the architectonic core. Only when architecture becomes dependent, that is, when it serves some purpose or meaning that it does not have of its own, does it occupy this peculiar place, which is truly the right one. Insofar as symbolic architecture is not a transition to classical architecture but purely symbolic and without practical purpose, it is thus not a real part of architecture. The latter's beauty consists of this functionality itself, which, although dependent, creates an independent enclosure; through its forms it suggests the sole purpose, and through its harmonious proportions it makes the functional beautiful.

Romantic architecture is the combination of independent and dependent architecture. It not only completely serves the practical purpose but also elevates itself above this and every other specific purpose in order to exist independently. Thus, Gothic architecture sometimes provides enclosure for a sermon, sometimes for blessing a sick person, sometimes for a wedding ceremony, and in another place for a christening or a mass; through all this moves a procession, and everywhere people are on their knees like vagabonds in front of altars and statues of saints. Above this commotion are elevated majestic vaults—all of similar size and solidity. The towers are most independent of all in the way they soar toward heaven.

It should also be said that the practical purpose of the enclosure itself conforms to the absolute idea, i.e., to the divine. As a consequence, the Classical temple encloses a

representation of the deity, and the Christian cathedral encloses the deity in spirit and truth, which means in the spirit of its devoutly gathered community. This circumstance—that the special purpose of an architectonic creation is to serve the highest, the divine—not only sanctifies but also aesthetically ennobles. Buildings in which the functional quality remains predominant relegate beauty to mere decoration. The most unrestricted purpose lies, therefore, within the realm of religion. Only sacred architecture is able to transcend servitude, for it serves a divine purpose. This observation, expressed already by Solger, is also fundamental to Hegel's treatment of architecture, though nowhere does he fully formulate it.

In Trahndorff's [work], the place occupied by architecture within the hierarchy of the arts is adequately characterized by its relationship to horticulture in the same way that sculpture and painting are related in the visual arts.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, architecture for Trahndorff relates to the visual arts in the same way that rhetoric relates to poetry. Just as horticulture was created to meet our need for food, so architecture similarly meets mankind's need for protection: the desire to build fences against attacks from the outside. Architecture, therefore, should establish a three-dimensional, stereometric enclosure of space with the help of a solid, immobile, space-defining material. It does not, like the visual arts, record one moment in time but places something in space which, by its nature, is durable and lasting. Unlike the visual arts, architecture does not represent space as something real but places it in a dependent relationship to a living creature whom it serves.

All attempts to undo architecture's dependence on life and its needs will be in vain, for one would have to abolish the essence of architecture: its relationship to life.

First of all, need or practical purpose determines the form. Only after the need has disappeared, after the practical purpose of a building has ceased to exist so that only its pure form remains as a ruin of past times and bygone eras—only then does a building's form have an independent aesthetic existence, which, however, can be understood only aesthetically, through the historical recollection of its destroyed connection with earlier human needs.

Architecture serves one of three kinds of needs: the need of a single person (or family) in the struggle for existence; the need created by life in a society; or, finally, the need for the highest level of existence—the idea. However, these three progressive steps are still about necessity, and even the highest kind of relationship between an enclosed space and life—that is, the relationship of such a space to the life of a god in a temple or to the religious mood of the community gathered in a church—still remains a practical need, which in and of itself is neither aesthetic nor artistic.

Architecture must, first of all, be honest and true. It can achieve this by abandoning its pretensions to being a fine art and by being content, like the Dutch building style,

with being simply a useful or technical art. This cannot be achieved by holding up the formal beauty of historical models as ideals for today. While these models were appropriate and beautiful in the context of a bygone era, they lack any relationship to today's life or are even in conflict with it.

According to Weisse, architecture is a real art.<sup>8</sup> To him functionality is not the primary artistic principle but more like a coincidence stemming from its concept. Architecture continues to deal with beauty in the full sense of the word, unimpeded by its relationship to a finite goal. It even allows this functionality to show through as a factor that enhances beauty.

Architectural beauty can be found not only in harmonious spatial proportions but also (and Schopenhauer emphasizes this, too) in the conflict between gravity and the intellectual forces that neutralize it. On the other hand, when dealing with the essence of architecture, Weisse explains that the notion of art in spatial proportions that are obtained by material means does not create real nature; instead, it reveals the representation and expression of its own creative powers.

According to Schleiermacher, architecture creates forms in an inorganic way, just as sculpture creates forms in an organic way.<sup>9</sup> A building can be considered a crystallization insofar as the predetermined form emerges in the inorganic realm as an independent product of the human mind, whereas in the realm of organic creation, it emerges as a necessary product of nature by means of natural forces.

Yet architecture is subject to a certain ambiguity. It is on the borderline of the hierarchy of the arts, just like poetry on the other side of the spectrum. The relationship of architecture to landscape architecture is similar to that between sculpture [*plastiek*] and painting.

Landscape architecture is even more an independent artistic product than, for example, the architecture of a country house built in a park. For a plain [*burgerlijk*] architecture that serves practical goals falls completely within the applied arts and not within the aesthetics. Only monumental architecture approaches the other arts, and only in this realm does the question arise as to whether we are dealing with a free or applied creation. By monumental architecture Schleiermacher means public architecture, in other words, architecture that does not serve an independent purpose but a political, religious, aesthetic, or social one. Thus, there cannot be an architectural work without a purpose, for it would have no relation to a communal life.

The rare moments of communal and ethical life transform architecture into art, for only through these relationships does it become a free, independent art. In the field of landscape architecture, the human intervention should be considered to be the liberation of nature's true character. However, one should not mistakenly consider the results of this landscape a purely natural product, nor a result of an unnatural subjugation

of nature to human force (for it is restricted within confining forms). Like architecture, landscape architecture evokes not a representation but a reality.

Deutinger made a very precise study of architecture and feels a special attraction to it.<sup>10</sup> Among all the aestheticians, he is the one who has treated it most extensively, using Hegel's studies as a basis from which to start.

Like Schopenhauer, he starts from the point of view that in the realm of the arts, as in nature, one should proceed from the law of gravity. Architecture is the art in which this law can be more or less overcome and compelled into servitude, if not neutralized, by means of an intelligent use of the solidity and spanning potential of the material. In contrast to Schopenhauer, Deutinger does not limit himself to this elementary antithesis of load and support. Rather, he quite rightly goes deeper into the matter and examines which spiritual purpose is served by the victory over gravity and the raising of materials above the ground. Like Trahdorff, he acknowledges that the purpose of all construction is the protection of mankind against hostile powers. When we have a dwelling, we also have a central point for an expanding field of activity, a center for endeavors, plans, and prospects, a point of contact for family, social, and political life. In this way, however, architecture moves beyond the bounds of art and becomes the opposite of it. After all, the notion of art requires that any specific purpose should be abandoned, while architecture requires the adherence to purpose. When architecture abandons the purpose of a dwelling and is satisfied with being merely monumental and symbolic, it fails to meet its goal. On the one hand, its means of expression remain far removed from the imaginable infinity of this concept, while, on the other hand, as a purely symbolic act, it does not become an art, for art requires a concurrence between idea and material.

If architecture really wants to become art, the character of the simple dwelling and the simple monument needs to be relinquished, and both need to be incorporated into a higher unity. Thus, in order to belong to the realm of the arts, the dwelling itself must be given a monumental meaning or symbolic character, in other words, it must become a dwelling for eternity on earth. In this way, the material form shows evidence of the concept that springs from the invisible and infinite realm of the mind. Matter is not the servant of life arising from the mind, nor an expression of the spiritual energy that creates tangible forms; because of its absence within the space, it can work only negatively in suggesting the realm of the mind—in other words, it is purely symbolic.

The temple or church emerges like a crystal from the process of creative life and through its regular forms represents spiritual life enclosed within the body; it does not represent active life itself or the dogmas of some religion.

Vischer tries to make a distinction between architecture and sculpture, which are both three-dimensional arts.<sup>11</sup>

The distinction between forms (angular or round) cannot determine the difference between the two, for architecture, too, uses round forms (arches and domes, circular and oval plans).

This difference must be found, therefore, in the purpose that determines the choice of forms: whereas sculpture possesses purpose within itself, architecture serves an external purpose. Vischer maintains that the free arts do not serve an external goal and that the applied (i.e., dependent) arts come into existence as soon as they surrender to other purposes. Like Solger and Hegel, Vischer says: "Only in a temple does building elevate itself to a pure art, and sacred architecture becomes art because its purpose is an ideal purpose in itself, even if it comes from outside."<sup>12</sup>

Kirchmann differs from Kant, Zimmermann, and Köstlin, who do not distinguish between free and dependent arts and do not create two completely separate groups within the system of the arts.<sup>13</sup> However, he also does not adopt the opposing position of Schelling and Schleiermacher, who totally exclude from the field of aesthetics anything considered to be dependent, useful, and applied. Kirchmann claims that beauty is valid only as aesthetic appearance (or, as he says, image) and that one should start to interpret the reality of nature or of human production as aesthetic appearance even before one can understand their beauty. The same is true for those products of human activity that, although they did not come into existence entirely without consideration of beauty, have as their most important aspect a real purpose, with beauty being only an afterthought.

Kirchmann speaks in this regard of decorative beauty, for it decorates the utensil without elevating the entire object to an ideal image or aesthetic appearance.

If a work of art in itself is an ideal image or an aesthetic appearance of a purely ideal, aesthetic purpose [*selbstzweck*], its dignity as a work of free art cannot be changed by the fact that it is being used or misused by mankind for a real purpose. What matters when dividing the arts into groups of free and dependent arts is not which use or misuse for real, extrinsic purposes the works of art will undergo in the future but only which kind of real purpose we are dealing with. Is it purely aesthetic or nonaesthetic? Is it an ideally aesthetic purpose in itself or a practical purpose? Is the work of art itself only aesthetic appearance (or image), or is it a real object, the aesthetic appearance of which must first be stripped away by the viewer, while in the case of nonaesthetic contemplation the objective reality and subjective symbol merge?

Kirchmann does not hold to this point of view when, on the one hand, he classifies busts as decorative beauty and, on the other hand, arranges the better products of landscape architecture and architecture among the free or liberal fine arts.

He considers it to be incidental that because the beautiful building is made of solid materials, it can also have a practical use without detracting from its aesthetic value.

According to him, the reason for the subsequent practical use lies in the great expense of architectural work, which, so to speak, demands a double use for both aesthetic and practical purposes. From a purely aesthetic point of view, the subsequent practical use of a building is always misuse, even if its ideality suffers just as little from this as some *Venus* by Titian, viewed for sensual enjoyment alone. The more perfect a building, the more its real use must be considered unnatural, forced, and contradictory to its essence.

Zimmermann does not see any difference between free and dependent beauty.<sup>14</sup> The only things that matter to him are the six abstract forms drawn up by him as factors of beauty. He has no reason to consider architecture a lesser kind of art because its forms are applied spatially to objects that also have a practical purpose. He does not care too much for being true to nature but only for the representational inclusion of these six forms. He therefore sees no reason to consider the relatively abstract forms of architecture as having lesser aesthetic quality than the natural forms represented by sculpture and painting.

According to Köstlin, tectonics—or, the art of designing beautiful buildings and household effects—strives for beauty that is limited only by its design to be useful.<sup>15</sup> The purposes of being beautiful and useful conflict least with each other in this branch of tectonics, which deals with relatively simple structures of large sizes, i.e., architecture.

Köstlin does not see any problem in including tectonics, which is craftsmanship in the widest sense of the word, in the system of the arts.

Fechner always ranks architecture along with the applied arts as being among those arts that also serve a purpose; they are the arts of repose.<sup>16</sup> Their beauty is determined by functional appropriateness, which, in addition to a relatively formal beauty, is the indispensable basis for all tectonic beauty.

The great importance of architecture within the history of culture and art, witnessed by its dominance during many a golden age, is fully acknowledged by Fechner. He also reminds us of the fact that the entire historical style and taste of a certain period can be characterized by its fashion and hairstyle (e.g., Greek costume, Roman toga, braids, and wigs), even though clothing and fashion are of secondary importance as objects of taste.

As a consequence, one should not draw hasty conclusions about architecture's place within the system of the arts from its important significance in art and cultural history. Fechner does not draw a boundary line between architecture and the plastic arts, on the one hand, and architecture and tectonics, on the other; instead he rejects Kant's and Hegel's definitions as too expansive and those of Lotze<sup>17</sup> as too narrow.

One can see that the question of architecture's place within the system of the arts has not been sufficiently answered by the observations of the aestheticians.

Nobody argues with the thesis that architecture is closely related to the applied arts and landscape architecture and that the purely technical aspects of architecture lie completely within the applied arts. Some include all the applied arts in the realm of the fine arts without making a distinction between free and dependent arts; they do not see any reason to place architecture in a separate category. Others try to place architecture among the fine arts, and they entirely exclude the dependent arts from the field of the fine arts. Yet another group of aestheticians acknowledges the incorrectness of both points of view but cannot decide whether to give architecture the highest rank among the dependent arts or to leave it in the rank that they have accorded it. They try to give it the lowest rank within the group of the free arts without providing convincing arguments for this position.

*Source Note:* H. P. Berlage, "De plaats die de bouwkunst in de moderne aesthetica bekleedt," *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 6, no. 27 (3 July 1886): 161–63; no. 28 (10 July): 169–72.

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

1. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Berlin: Lagarde & Friederich, 1790). Translated in part by Walter Cerf under the title *Analytic of the Beautiful* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963). As noted in the Introduction, Berlage transcribed extracts from Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, see Berlage Papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Rotterdam, Dossier 164. On Kant's aesthetics, see in particular Salim Kemal, *Kant and Fine Art: An Essay on Kant and the Philosophy of Fine Art and Culture* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986); Paul Crowther, *The Kantian Sublime* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989).

2. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Über das Verhältnis der bildenden Künste zu der Natur* (Munich: P. Krull, 1807). Translated by A. Johnson under the title *The Philosophy of Art* (London: J. Chapman, 1845); Schelling, "Zur Philosophie der Kunst, 1808–1817," in Manfred Schröter, ed., *Schellings Werke, nach der Originalausgabe in neuer Anordnung*, Supplement, part 3 (Munich: Beck, 1956).

3. Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1819), esp. Book 1, § 43; Supplements to Book 3, § 35. Translated by E. F. J. Payne under the title *The World as Will and Representation*, 2 vols. (New York: Dover, 1969), 1: 213–18; 2: 411–18.

4. Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand Solger, *Vorlesungen über Aesthetik* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1829).

5. Karl Christian Friedrich Krause, *Karl Christian Friedrich Krause's Abriß der Aesthetik; oder, Der Philosophie des Schönen und der schönen Kunst*, ed. J. Leutbecher (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1837).
6. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik," in idem, *Werke*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1842), 10.1. Translated by T. M. Knox under the title *Aesthetics* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975). See also Stephen Bungay, *Beauty and Truth: A Study of Hegel's Aesthetics* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1984).
7. Karl Friedrich Eusebius Trahdorff, *Aesthetik; oder, Lehre von der Weltanschauung und Kunst* (Berlin: Maurersche Buchhandlung, 1827).
8. Christian Hermann Weisse, *System der Aesthetik als Wissenschaft von der Idee der Schönheit* (Leipzig: C. H. F. Hartmann, 1830); idem, *Kleine Schriften zur Aesthetik und aesthetischen Kritik*, ed. Rudolf Seydel (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1867).
9. Friedrich Schleiermacher, "Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik," in idem, *Sämtliche Werke* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1835–1864), part 3, "Zur Philosophie," section 7; Rudolf Odebrecht, *Schleiermachers System der Ästhetik* (Berlin: Junker & Dünnhaupt, 1932).
10. Martin Deutinger, *Geschichte der Philosophie* (Regensburg: G. Joseph Manz, 1852).
11. Friedrich Theodor Vischer, *Aesthetik; oder, Wissenschaft des Schönen*, 3 vols. (Reutlingen: Carl Macken, 1846–1857), esp. 3.2 (1852).
12. Berlage appears here to be paraphrasing the arguments of Vischer (see note 11), 3.2, § 556, p. 186: "Im Tempel nun aber ist der Bauzweck erst wirklich und ganz zum Absoluten geworden, die Architektur hat die Aufgabe erhalten, das absolute Haus herzustellen" (Only in the temple does the purpose of the building become an absolute: architecture is given the task to create the absolute house).
13. Julius Hermann von Kirchmann, *Aesthetik auf realistischer Grundlage*, 2 vols. (Berlin: J. Springer, 1868); idem, *Erläuterungen zu Kant's Kritik der Urtheilskraft* (Berlin: L. Heimann, 1869).
14. Robert Zimmermann, *Aesthetik*, 2 vols. (Vienna: W. Braumüller, 1858–1865); idem, *Schelling's Philosophie der Kunst: Ein Nachtrag zu meiner Geschichte der Aesthetik* (Vienna: K. Gerold's Sohn, 1875).
15. Karl Reinhold von Köstlin, *Aesthetik* (Tübingen: H. Laupp, 1869).
16. Gustav Theodor Fechner, *Vorschule der Aesthetik*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1876).
17. Hermann Lotze, *Geschichte der Aesthetik in Deutschland* (Munich: J. G. Cotta, 1868); idem, *Grundzüge der Aesthetik* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1884).

# ARCHITECTURE AND IMPRESSIONISM

(1894)

*Restraint first reveals the master.*

—Goethe

The powerful movement of modern life is most visible in the way in which most big cities are expanding as a result of strong population growth.

It is hard to imagine how we can keep up with this increase by constructing houses, for every

year there are again tens of thousands of new people calling for homes.

It is happening, however, which forces us to accept the fact that this job can be done, even if the intensity of the labor makes it a very difficult task.

We will, of course, have to sacrifice something. Even without taking into consideration the sometimes indifferent quality of new housing, we will have to disregard something or other, overlook something here or there. In particular, those who can never be satisfied should not make unrealistic aesthetic demands.

For this reason, people could accuse me of reopening old sores, especially if a list of all the shortcomings of those responsible for the aesthetic evils of the modern city were to follow. I have already demonstrated my intention not to do this (which makes the charge null and void) by saying that “we will have to sacrifice something.” With this statement, I raise the notion of necessity, which exonerates the authorities mentioned above, at least in part.

Indeed, the knowledge necessary for an immediate solution could not exist at the very moment when the housing shortage suddenly arose; one certainly could not expect this from all those bureaucracy-loving boards that revel in the fuss of reports and recommendations, and in all the business of papers, requests, and petitions. These institutions are, after all, predestined to kill every idea in its infancy (no matter how ingenious it is)—assuming that once in a while such an idea could surface in the brain of one of its members. Ideas from outside, in other words, not originating from the group itself, are usually rejected without a thought.

Yet, even if we can point to many outrageous things that should not have happened, let us be as fair as possible and say that the problem of expanding our cities on a large scale surprised our city authorities when they were not prepared for it, and that it seemed to be too powerful to be solved quickly and well.

In my opinion, this important issue should be considered from a totally different point of view and treated accordingly. It is like dealing with a sick person: one does not combat analogous cases of illness with the same drugs when the circumstances are totally different.

We have to ask ourselves whether the means that in earlier times led to a healthy, that is, aesthetic effect are still applicable in modern times. When we find proof to the contrary, we will have to try other means. We will have to diagnose or make a comparison between what was and what is. The question then immediately arises: why do old cities appear so enchanting? They appear to reflect a soul that sometimes forces us to exult, at other times just to smile, but that at quiet moments mostly touches our deeper feelings, at first as a rippling but then as a passionate effervescence.

What causes this captivating delight when we cross squares that are surrounded by tall buildings—beautifully tall, like a cathedral or a city hall—with sculptured portals formed to draw people in, or heavily profiled steps shaped to make people go up to the council meeting? Why are we captivated with streets and alleys that time and again provide attractive vistas, both short and enclosed, thus making a calm impression on the unassisted eye despite the busy, motley swarm.<sup>1</sup> What is the reason for our enthusiasm for views of old cities? What is the beauty that animates these paintings?

Is the joining of these human creations accidental, or is it done intentionally by many people working together in order to achieve a certain goal? Looking at this issue without prejudice, in other words, uninfluenced by the undeniably unique and important beauty that time gives to everything, we could say that the beauty of the town's older quarters originates from the irregular grouping of its components. This implies, of course, that each case can be beautiful in a different way, depending on the artistic quality of these components.

The answer to this question is bound to disappoint anybody who thinks that the city planners of old were not very particular in this regard and that people today are always negative, never satisfied.

On the face of it, these critics are right. Yet, a close reading of old city plans leads to the conclusion that one can certainly discover some design in them. One sees an artistic plan, beautifully grand, the intention of which was closely guarded by the collaborating artists for fear that others might ruin it. These artists also understood that the realization of the minor elements should be left to chance, so that the danger of aesthetic pedantry, aesthetic narrow-mindedness, or aesthetic indoctrination could be avoided. This element of chance gave the entire plan something unselfconscious, something monumentally picturesque.

When we look closely at the plans, it is evident that in achieving their goals, the old masters made the most of the means at their disposal. They were intelligent economists of art, careful with their artistic pennies. Knowing that the secret of all artistic effects is an economical use of decoration, they saved their great gifts for a few key points.

The characteristic quality of noble splendor has at all times been moderation: the

one immortal, classic quality that appears to have been indisputable through all artistic periods.

Our modern times are not yet aware of this quality. We think in exactly the opposite way, which is the reason why a certain vulgarity can be identified as one of the less pleasant characteristics of this time.

Could there have been any vulgar artists before the nineteenth century?

For city planners, the key points were a few squares and some prominent streets, which are for a city what the great hall is for a palace.

In the old Greek cities all artistic talents were directed toward the agora or the acropolis; in the Roman cities the forum became the center of attention; and in the medieval and Renaissance cities this focus was supplied by the squares flanking the cathedral, market, and city hall.

The comparison with the great hall holds true not only in the common sense but also in the artistic sense, as long as we carefully examine how the artistic effect was achieved.

One tried to create not a concentration of works of art but rather a visual concentration by making a closed space, like a room. This enclosure was achieved in all kinds of ways, but especially by making the streets that run into the square short, or otherwise curved and not too wide.

If we find this kind of design so often, should we still think it only a coincidence?

Indeed, when one thinks about the reason behind the pleasant—convivial and, in this case, artistic—impression of the old squares and streets, it is mostly attributable to the enclosed nature of the space; that was the whole secret, which was also well known to the old masters. Being painters, they did not leave any empty holes in their paintings. In this regard our modern times once again think in the opposite way. The contemporary system of expanding the cities can be described in two words<sup>2</sup> well known to everybody; and it is, one should note, a system that is inimical to enclosure. Its artistic product is a canvas with holes, preferably on a huge scale.

But even when the old masters limited themselves to these few main points, their great virtue and the sign of their true intelligence were that they restrained themselves and were moderate in the realization of their high artistic aspirations. In order to continue the comparison we started above: a room will make a distinguished impression only when the number of pieces of furniture, art objects, paintings, and so on, remains within the tightly drawn limits of overcrowding. How beautiful is a single painting on a moderately sized wall that, as far as form and color are concerned, is totally appropriate for that one purpose; how irritating is a wall full of paintings.

Because of a few monumental buildings, an old square was like a grand hall.

In only a very few cases was a square created as a work of art in which every artistic effort was made to exclude the unpretentious and the banal. These works of art were more beautiful than a painter had ever conceived: either as a background in a painting or as a stage set in a theater.

And yet, with all this wealth, there was no recklessness. In particular, there was no competitive pretension, no desire to seem smarter than one's neighbor, but an intelligent and refined modesty that is the characteristic of those works of art that have been admired through the ages.

In the composition of such a work of art, emphasis was put on finding the right location. This was done intelligently and in the interest of the work of art, especially when one was dealing with statues. These works—again in contrast to what is happening today—were not placed in the middle of a square, for they would obstruct traffic, and even more they would lack a background; nor were they placed right on the axis of a main portal, for that would create too busy a background for a piece of sculpture. Instead, they were placed next to or, preferably, against a quiet wall.

Remarks such as these, to which we could add many more, are important for us slaves of symmetry, who have forgotten so many of these simple things, or who conceitedly refuse to learn them.

We see that the character of all these works of art can be described by one word—"picturesque"—which does not need any further explanation, for we have become familiar with it and use it to refer to the romantic art found in the long succession of centuries that lie behind us.

This romantic art is passé; one should have the courage to express the conviction that there is no chance of it returning in any form whatsoever. One needs courage because this conviction implies that the art of the future must be completely different from that which we used to have, and that a sentence has been pronounced on all modern revivalism. It does not mean, however, that the art of the future has nothing to learn from the past.

The reason for this conviction is, I think, the special place that architecture occupies among the arts.

This special place results from the kind of ambiguity created by the conjunction of the ideal and the real, whereby the latter, as a practical theme, is certainly of no lesser importance.

This ambiguity is the reason why many people consider architecture not to be an art, and why numerous philosophers have devoted their attention to this problem.

Architecture is not purely ideal, for there is an underlying practical purpose. The final judgment of many people is that it is not an art because it has practical dimensions

that go beyond its own purpose. Despite the fact that all art is subjective, it also has an objective core, which can best be defined as the actual handwork, the *métier*, the craft. In order to become an artist, one needs complete professional knowledge, but, on the other hand, a person possessing every professional skill possible is not yet an artist. Art only starts when one adds the personal component. How few people who call themselves artists display it in their work; how many of them do not even understand the craft. There are all kinds of rhymesters and poets, music makers and musicians, sculpture makers and sculptors, builders and architects, etc.; only the sensitive artist will be able to distinguish where the *métier* ends and art begins.

The special place that architecture occupies among the arts lies in the relationship between craft and art, since craft deals with practical purpose in architecture. And one will understand immediately that while a pudding can be served with or without a sauce, it always remains a pudding.

After all, in cases where the need for the personal, the need for art, is not felt, one can limit oneself only to the *métier*, to the purely objective, to the simple realization of purpose; even if the end result is not architecture [*bouwkunst*], but construction [*bouwkunde*].

When the purely practical requirements have been met, a house is perfectly habitable, even if there is no real architectural beauty. One can worship God in a chapel consisting of four bare walls and a roof on top. The first Christians were even proud of such an absence of all splendor. Protestants have no artistic ambitions whatsoever, since their religion rejects in horror all ostentation.

One walks and drives just as easily over a common, purely constructional, iron bridge as over a monumental stone structure. An orchestra does not sound less melodious in a soberly white, dismally ordinary, stuccoed hall, in which the stiff, black dress suits seem mass-tailored, than in a hall that looks austere because of its beautiful lines, calm because of its delicate colors.

It is exactly this—the fact that one can, to put it plainly, meet the same requirements with and without art—that is the reason for the eternal struggle between client and architect. This is the struggle that ensues when the former has no need of art and desires to have only the impersonal, practical requirements met.

The distinction between what the Germans call a functional building [*Nutzbau*] and a work of architecture should not, I think, exist. It is actually an absurdity, yet understandable in the modern age, which, because of all kinds of bad examples, has gone astray and considers the purely constructional to be incompatible with any kind of art. In fact, the opposite should be the case: pure construction as such already contains all elements of art, however simple they may be. It is a matter of finding them, for which

one needs great skills. For the architect who has these skills the distinction does not exist, for only he will be able to make something beautiful using the fewest or even no conventional tricks.

Art suffers when practical requirements can be met most easily without applying art. This, unfortunately, is the case in modern city planning.

In order to promote traffic, health, and prosperity (!), the authorities thought it appropriate to make a long list of rules telling us exactly what we are not allowed to do; this list contains more or less everything that made the old cities so beautiful.

A discussion of the tyrannically bureaucratic list of building regulations would tax my patience unbearably, and I have no intention whatsoever of doing that. I only want to demonstrate how the demands of today can be met most easily without art; or rather, how these requirements are in conflict with any artistic notion because of the uniform results of all regulation. After all, roads need to have a certain, standardized width, preferably as wide as possible, with a thoroughfare in the center and sidewalks on both sides, in other words, adjacent to the buildings. As a result, a whole series of regulations was enacted to determine the height and depth of buildings, regulations that also apply to the old city in case of renovation.

All streets must of necessity be furnished with at least three kinds of pipes and conduits, and since it is easier to put these into straight streets rather than into crooked ones, one proclaims straight streets to be desirable. This, of course, is paramount to a decree.

There should be a standard size for the distance between two streets, and these streets should intersect at right angles, leading to a desire for standard, easily divisible, rectangular lots.

The architect is treated generously here; not too much is asked of him. In this sense, collaboration guarantees, after all, that there will be no serious aberrations.

The fact that irregularly sized lots are especially well suited for planning solutions is not only not considered, but rejected as impossible. The architect who is confused by an oblique-angled plan can only have an absolute beginner's knowledge of architectural principles.

The whole system of modern city planning consists of streets intersecting at right angles; whatever triangular lot is left in the checkerboard pattern of street blocks becomes a plaza.

I could add yet another category of all kinds of peculiar regulations and opinions regarding the construction of public buildings, but the foregoing, in brief, are the key points that should be observed in modern city planning. It is clear that these regulations were made only for convenience because modern requirements of health and

traffic can be met most easily in this way. The question of art is, however, no longer pertinent.

Instead of visual concentration, we have the opposite: the worship of the system of rectangular intersections. Instead of variable street widths, we have the opposite: the blandly comfortable “standard width.” Instead of a winding street, we have the opposite: the prescribed straight line. And, finally, we see the lack of all pleasant fortuities along the street; the public street—the sacred cow—is now so well protected that any infringement against it is punished severely.

No stoops, no front yards, no entrances to basements, no portals, no arcades, no oblique angles, no projections, no awnings, no anything, decreed to absurdity. For the architect’s most sacred commandment runs as follows: “Honor your building-line so that you will build well, and your practice on earth will be a long one.”

Finally, there is also the spirit of the time, which is hard to define but which nonetheless exists, and which has changed the character of everything. Thus the famous squares in the historic cities have completely lost their meaning as centers of festivities. Now they serve only to let in a little more light; they are places where we can plant some trees, where we can put our carriages or place some big building without taking into account the original purpose of the square. And why should we? A city hall does not have to stand on a market square anymore, for the market is held in a glass building. A grouping around a square consisting of a royal palace, residences for the nobility, and a loggia for the guards as we used to have is still conceivable. Yet, a cathedral square with a baptistery and a bishop’s palace as the seat of the church authorities has become redundant.

We can say without any exaggeration that all the design elements the old architects possessed have been taken away from us! The clothes of today’s architect have been torn off his body, and yet he has to go out into the street as a respectable man. Of course, there are enough clothing stores where, for a fair price, one can buy some decent, ready-made clothes, but they never fit like tailor-made clothes and will always look very ordinary.

No, there is need for clothes of a new cut; the old cut is lost, irrevocably lost.

Impressed by this truth, one is wise not to mourn these lost clothes any longer. Those with a practical outlook will exclaim, like Vondel’s *Gijsbrecht*, “One does not achieve anything with moaning and whining,”<sup>3</sup> for they see clearly that it is absolutely impossible to insist that the old motifs should return.

The architect of today knows too well the incredible difficulties that would present themselves should he want to apply even one of these inventive design elements—elements that, because of today’s universal notions of tastefulness, public traffic, etc.,

would have an immediate impact on the street. Today there is no place anymore for the portal or a stoop, both of which were so popular in our old architecture and decorated the whole city. On the contrary, the existing ones are torn down wherever possible. A building that bridges a street with the help of a few arches is (although no obstacle at all) simply inconceivable. Arcades are a thorn in the policeman's flesh, for they are a refuge for all kinds of homeless riffraff; therefore this design element is forbidden. I could give many more examples.

Yet, even if he wanted to, today's architect should not complain about all that has been lost. For only when he has come to this conclusion will a new era start, more artistic than the one we have now, for only then will we begin to look for new design elements.

The tremendously difficult profession of architecture, which is far too little appreciated by the public at large, entails being a slave of one's time, for the spirit of the age is unfortunately more powerful than the architect. But this same profession is, on the other hand, so beautiful because whoever practices it tries to make society more pleasant by looking for the most comfortable shape in which it should be dressed—he makes the material envelope of society itself.

Each time society was modified, experienced a change, or found itself in totally different circumstances, art also appeared in a different dress. After all, in art, too, it is not the essence but the form that changes.

And now, at the end of the nineteenth century, society is changing again. He is blind with open eyes who does not see how a total reorganization of society is gradually being prepared, and how it will certainly succeed (although inevitably not in the form proposed by many).

It is the beautiful principle of social equality that has come sneaking into the great factory of the world, in which violently roaring machines are driven by one gigantic flywheel. This idea started like a small creature whispering something, first in one ear and then in another. At first inaudible among the whirrings and whistlings, the voice persisted until many people knew what it wanted. Now these many people, enlisting the sympathy of many others for their idea, have grown into one great mass, which will become bigger and bigger, until in the end everybody will know what the small creature started to say.

Society is changing and urgently demands, therefore, a new dress, for its old one is completely worn out. Patching the old one up would not help anymore, for it would immediately be clear that what looked like a new dress would soon need to be put away again. This new dress is the new style that has to be invented. We shall look for it with all the seriousness we can muster in ourselves and, once the eureka sounds, reveal it with unprecedented jubilation.

Heavens no! I do not want to come along and ride this nineteenth- or twentieth-century hobbyhorse of architectural styles.

On the contrary, I think that we are farther away than ever from this music of the future [*Zukunftsmusik*]. The serious listener will certainly not hear this music. How narrow-minded, how derogatory, how tremendously shortsighted are those dreamers when they think and speak about a style that will be a reflection of our modern life—this multifaceted, intensely eventful modern life. Who is going to be the maker of this uniform dress for the whole world?

Which nation will become so powerful that it can force the entire world to accept its clothes as fashion?

This was only possible in an age when every country lived separately, as if for itself, and in which one country always set an example for others through its strength and display of power. As a result, its culture, society, and fashion—that is, its style—were imitated by others.

No! With the progress of the great social idea, we see that, conscious of its own power, of its own individuality, every nation of any significance values its own art; each merely looks at the other countries and learns from them but does not slavishly imitate the example of its neighbors.

And this is not only a national but also an individual characteristic. We are further away than ever from the great style of the future because we can sense at present an aversion to any kind of school. A school is detrimental to independent development; this is what the most accomplished artists proclaim, and not without reason. This specialization, which in itself is already a product of the Renaissance, has grown to full fruition in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

One can tolerate everything in the fin-de-siècle artist except imitation. In the public opinion about art, originality—even when imperfect—is better than facile copying. The call to “be yourself” comes to the artist from all sides, and we must admit straight away that this claim symbolizes the triumph of the modern theory of art.

We notice that this individualism in painting has led to a general characteristic in the manner of representation, the impressionistic one. We are referring to a kind of representation that pays less attention to detail (as it is subordinate to the whole) than to the larger, overall effect—or rather, the impression.

By impressionism we refer in general to the representation of an image as it presents itself, not objectively, but subjectively.

Impressionism is also being used by many modern poets as a means of expression; in nonrepresentational art it is, of course, totally different in character.

This disregard for details does not merit disapproval; on the contrary, the impressionistic manner of representation is very much a correct one.

Art, after all, is subjective, not only with regard to the impression one gets, but also with regard to the form in which the artist reproduces that impression.

A painting shows the impression of a moment, and we know how impossible it is to observe all details at once. People are right when they say that the artist who made a painting that is finished in every detail cannot have seen it in that way; in that case, the artist made up with his knowledge for what he did not see.

The truth of this principle is not diminished by the fact that the impressionists also exaggerate and purposely omit things.

It is not because of a desire for imitation or a flirtation with the so-called new direction that I state my conviction that architecture, too, must take that direction. Architecture must become impressionist precisely because it is a practical art. The circumstances are not merely favorable at this moment; they compel us to do so.

At all times, architects have learned a great deal from painting—the Renaissance was even prepared by painters. Now architects should do this again, just as, conversely, painters are well advised to consult from time to time the clarity with which the best architectural drawings are created.

It is not hard to understand what we mean by impressionist architecture, and one could explain it in a few words. Yet, some clarification is desirable, lest people think that we are preaching well-known truths.

Start with the essentials, in particular the distribution of masses! But that is something said in the first lecture of every architecture class: in conceiving a building, one aims, first of all, at a harmonious distribution of the masses. Once that is accomplished, one moves on to the details.

This has not yet changed but should be modified as follows: instead of a harmonious distribution of masses read “a characteristic silhouette in harmony with a simple substructure.” One should not think that by a memorable silhouette I mean a confusion of all kinds of towerlike projections, gables, dormers, balusters, etc., for otherwise many of my colleagues could share my vision and exclaim with understandable pride: “Look at my work! You can see here what you are talking about!”

I repeat that I have had enough of this. My conception of this characteristic silhouette is simpler and much more naive.

For the second part of the above statement one should read: When designing details, one should exercise the utmost moderation and use a greater richness only in those places that are particularly conspicuous. What an impression will this simple and apparently easy program make when rigorously realized?

There it stands, the plane of the wall with its gray and red lines, darker on the top, cut out against the sky with angular, beautifully simple lines. It makes a splendid, naturally elaborate, multicolored but quiet background for the motley bustle on the street. It is

stained with dark window planes, only a few of which have a rich, sculptural frame, the elegant decoration of an otherwise sober dress.

It is a serious piece of work that speaks well for itself, immediately eliciting sympathy, especially when we compare it to all the disorderly structures around it; it changes the mind of everybody who is not yet entirely spoiled by all the overwhelming tastelessness; it serves as an example to all the young designers who are still developing their ideas.

There are, however, other, more real reasons that urge us to apply a simpler architectural concept. These reasons are not subjective in character; instead, they are modern ideas provoked and dictated by time and money. These modern ideas are concerned, first with city planning in general, for they prescribe long, straight streets that intersect at right angles; they are also concerned with the inviolability (!) of the public street. This kind of city planning, which literally differs in every regard from the one we used to have, points automatically to a general simplification. For example, there is the construction of houses en masse which should lead to a concept of large-scale housing blocks. Instead of conceiving a block of speculative houses as one whole, however, each house is now, in order to avoid monotony, made into an Old Dutch house, exactly the way it was done in earlier times.

Such a design is in itself not objectionable; it is just unfortunate that it means that we are crushed under an avalanche of monstrous gables, corner oriels, turrets, dormers, and spires, an exhausting jumble of old, stolen, and badly used architectural elements. In defense of this style, people point to those modern streets that do have housing blocks with a single cornice—the great fear of all those who have had an aesthetic education. This principle is not only practical, it is also correct and therefore does not merit condemnation. Yet it is being applied totally incompetently by an artistic proletariat. It is the result of a halfhearted education, of abundantly available bad examples, preferably taken from foreign sources (which in turn result in bad copies), and finally of the desperate desire to be Old Dutch, a feeling that has been cultivated in an unashamedly excessive way. One should realize that there is no more destructive way of arguing than having to point to the bad application of a good principle. How succinctly beautifully and simply marvelously—completely appropriately for its character—a block of speculative houses would soar; it would be impressionistically angular, outlined with some simple, irregular details, such as the various entrance doors. Since one cannot interfere with the public road, one feels the serious need to consider a building's silhouette as the main concern.

Such a building style also releases the architect from his anxious search for symmetry in the placement of thousands and thousands of windows—the dizzying desperation of modern neighborhoods. It involves the elimination of all useless moldings, for

they do not have any effect on the impression made by the complex as a whole. Fortunately, it does away with the need for those rusticated blocks around the windows and those modern Old Dutch (?) details that, when badly understood and applied, make a facade look like a slice through a well-larded piece of meat.

A simpler style is not only recommended for building en masse, one should also follow this advice more generally, especially because of the second factor I mentioned before; time. Manifesting itself in the speed of construction, it has a particular impact on speculative building.

The demand for speed, which makes it possible to lower the total construction costs by some quarters of a percent, does not allow for any calm reflection, for any experimentation. After all, the architect has to be ready after so many months, otherwise he will be accused of stealing the capital interest from his client. He should stop thinking of those many splendid details and pieces of sculpture that look so stately and beautiful in silhouette and were the charm of buildings in romantic eras, for there is no time left to make them in any serious way. Any architect in practice is familiar with this greatest of all modern architectural evils. He can barely keep up with construction, for he is in charge of so many things that come from all parts of the world. This is a particular problem in our country, which is so poor in raw materials and therefore in industry.

While he is still working on the foundations, he has to be thinking of the roof decorations; while he is still studying facade details, he is already asked for drawings of the furniture; while he has not yet reached the roof, he has to place orders for the interior as it takes months for them to arrive. This explains the many ugly things designed even by capable artists. The expression “time is money”<sup>4</sup> certainly manifests itself to the late nineteenth-century architect, who almost always faces the problem of having insufficient time in which to do his job.

He is thus pressured into familiarizing himself with a whole new system of design. He has to simplify it if he wants to make something artistic, and artistic design is time consuming even for the most capable architects.

People say, “There is that architect”; he must be a smart man, he is working on so many buildings in all kinds of styles: Dutch, French, German Renaissance, Gothic, and Romanesque, and heaven knows which other styles. Oh! These people who measure the architect’s skills by the number of his works should know that such work has nothing in common with art. To implement all this construction—for it does not reach a higher level than that—simply demands one more draftsman in the office. After all, one can start to speak about art only when there is subjectivity. No, the architect who understands the present time and who wants to make something artistic will throw all ballast overboard. Away with all these time-consuming details, which cannot be executed the way one wants anyway; away with all those things that do not matter within the overall

impression! Let us look only for some characteristic large planes and edges! The architect of today should become an impressionist!

I do not care whether one can see some kind of stringcourse or not, so long as the ensemble as a whole gives expression to its broader outlines.

Finally, the third powerful factor that forces us to develop a simpler concept is *money*, or rather, the lack of it. This lack of money results not from the poverty in our times but from the way we now think. There are no longer any large sums of money available for large buildings. Hardly ever do we see the construction of an expensive government building, and the palace building has disappeared completely. What the temple was for the Greeks and Romans and the cathedral was for the Middle Ages, the palace was for the Renaissance: the leading, therefore the style-making building type; it was thus of great importance for the history and development of architecture. It has now been replaced by the middle-class house, which may sometimes be expensive but only rarely exceptionally luxurious.

The occasional examples of "palaces" built for some nouveaux-riches citizens will in the future not be regarded as typical of late nineteenth-century architecture but simply as curiosities. The time is past when the utmost patience and care were lavished on the cathedrals, those miracles of magnificence in which the nation invested with total confidence, convinced that there was no better way to use this money than on God himself. These sums of money would have seemed quite wonderful even to the princes of the *Thousand and One Nights*. The time is past when no expense was too great for the governments of rich commercial cities. They saw a luxuriously decorated city hall as a means of telling their contemporaries and descendants about their power and prosperity. Such times are definitely past, rendered obsolete by the powerful development of the democratic principle, which rightly regards luxury as an unjustifiable excess at a time when other costly projects that would benefit society are still waiting to be implemented.

Thus, when the government undertakes the construction of new buildings, the greatest possible economy should be exercised. Our age requires the construction of workers' housing on a large scale. We need new cities to replace the admittedly picturesque, but truly unhealthy, and therefore absolutely outdated houses of the poor, which are too horrible even to talk about and move even the most coldhearted to compassion.

Without doubt, the first requirement in this new construction is to be cheap. Our age requires an extensive program for school construction, one that fulfills a need in a practical way but is at the same time inexpensive. Our age requires all kinds of institutions for the benefit of our society. Here, too, the requirement is to be as cheap as possible, for the government cannot disregard other interests by constructing luxury buildings.

Having to reconcile himself to these circumstances, the architect discovers that he has to use simple but characteristic means in order to create any effect. He should therefore become an impressionist, for only an impressionist style will make this possible. Even the wealthy private person of today, although he may think that he can spend quite a lot, is involuntarily driven by the urge to save money. The architect knows by heart the first question raised no matter what he designs: "What is it going to cost?" and the response to the higher-than-expected figure: "Can it be done for less?" It should be noted in passing that the architects in our country suffer most from these questions.

*That is the fault of the Dutch:  
He is paying too little and asking too much.<sup>5</sup>*

Should this need for the inexpensive be deplored as something that is hard to realize? Should an architect really become despondent when the client curtails expenses again and again?

The answer in my opinion is, No! for I see this development as the only way gradually to work toward a simpler solution and to free ourselves at last from working with old forms that can no longer be applied. Only then will there be a real incentive to achieve absolute simplification, to search for effect without all those timeworn forms, to develop the impressionist concept.

I for one consider it to be the greatest achievement when one has created an exemplary solution with a minimal amount of money, for it proves the established rule that is understood by so few architects and simply reversed by the public—that beauty is independent of money.

This is absolutely no paradox but a truth that needs to be proclaimed loudly, and to which I would like to add: the less money available for luxury, the more chance one will have for an exemplary solution. To me it is a foregone conclusion that in order to achieve something original, modern architects will first have to get rid of all the fuss of acquired forms.

Furthermore, the availability of money leads to all kinds of misconceptions.

For example, it is totally excessive to design a luxurious decoration for the interior of a [railroad] station. Expensive furnishings are really excessive considering that one spends only a few minutes in the room; waiting rooms do not have to be as comfortable as a drawing room at home. Therefore the contemporary architect should become impressionistic. This is only the first of many examples to which everyone can easily add others.

One should not think that impressionism is something totally new, something of our time, an unprecedented conception of art; absolutely not. A study of the old masters

proves that the best among them, those at the top of the golden mountain, were also impressionists; they were also searching for those crucial moments. The art of the future will have to learn about simple, broad outlines from the art of the past, but it will have to find a variation; the theme may be the same, but the variation should look new. After all, it is only the form in art that enchants us.

The variation that we now have to develop will have to be very different from all previous ones, for the detail—or rather, the decoration—will either be very restrained or totally absent. The masters who gave us the splendor of Romanticism achieved great harmony between the whole and the rich detail, and this deserves admiration both now and at all times. The masters of the great art of the future will more or less completely have to try to sacrifice rich details—the pride of so many architects. Will this impressionism therefore be of lesser quality and require less talent? One could just as well ask, which is less: Notre Dame or the Pantheon? No! Impressionist art requires just as much, if not more talent, since the reduction to what is simple and beautiful is so terribly difficult and demands enormous effort from us who have so long been spoiled by all kinds of elaborate artistic expressions. We have lost the open-minded attitude that is absolutely necessary for this process of reduction. We will have to shake off everything that impedes us. It seems easy, but as a matter of fact, it is very difficult. Only the most capable will be able to achieve a purely original artistic expression.

The architect should become an impressionist!

I have given practical reasons why, in my opinion, the age compels us to do so. There are, however, also ideal reasons that are even more important.

The already-mentioned fact that it is possible to design a good building that meets all requirements without art implies an age in which, because of both economic and various other special considerations, we shall be forced to cut expenditure, in which we will give up all luxury and will in fact do without any art. Architecture will be in bad shape if there is no impulse to prove that one can also make something beautiful without extra expense. Despite man's innate desire for art, one fears that a more democratically governed society will have a cooler attitude toward art, for everything that is not of immediate use and does not benefit the prosperity of the community is considered to be criminal.

Well, let the architects make sure that by that time they are ready with their art, which should in short be an art that will cost no money. Should they be unprepared, we will see the architect's work taken over by the engineer, whose job it already is to make the actual functional buildings [*Nutzbauten*]. This word sounds harsh to today's architects but will no longer do so in the future, for then we shall be able to call all architecture by that name. If the architects are not ready with their great impressionistic art, their work in this world will have come to an end; *sic transit gloria mundi*. If they

are ready, the coming generations will be able to distinguish the artist from the scientific builder, the architect from the engineer. The architect will then have a splendid future, for mankind cannot do without an artistic ideal.

The architect should prove himself able to keep abreast of his times, for only then will his work be guaranteed in the future.

A further ideal reason compels us to develop the great impressionist concept in architecture. After the Middle Ages, architecture gradually lost its leading place among the arts; no longer were sculpture and painting subservient to it, no longer did it lead. Later, the three arts each went their separate ways, and architecture, now lowered in status, had the reputation of being the least [important] of the three. Today, architecture, which in classical and medieval times was the most important, beautiful, proud, and respected of all arts, is considered by many people not to be an art at all.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, through the efforts of a large number of capable architects, this opinion has been changed completely in favor of architecture. Even painters and sculptors (as biased as they were for a long time) no longer doubt that architecture is an art.

We can again see the great coming together of all the arts, which should lead to collaboration, the artistic ideal of all times.

Talented architects and sculptors are already working on large paintings and reliefs, no longer created as isolated museum pieces, but as building decorations—as in the times of the great monumental frescos. These paintings respect the architecture and keep in mind the purpose of the decoration of large surfaces, which means complementing rather than ignoring the architecture. These painters and sculptors, who understand the great art of lines and surfaces, hold out their hands to the architects; let the latter not decline the offer out of ignorance.

Understanding the new art, the most capable architects should make sure that their work shows great simplicity. Then, and only then, will they be able, as before, to take upon themselves the leadership of the great art of the future.

*Source Note:* H. P. Berlage, "Bouwkunst en impressionisme," *Architectura* 2, no. 22 (2 June 1894): 93–95; no. 23 (9 June): 98–100; no. 24 (16 June): 105–6; no. 25 (23 June): 109–10. For the translation, a copy of the original text was provided by the Universiteits-Bibliotheek, Universiteit van Amsterdam.

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

1. In this way Berlage rejects the use of long straight axes that would require binoculars for a good view and expresses his preference for the Sitte-esque city plan with curved streets.
2. Berlage's reference to "two words" is unclear.
3. Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679) was the leading poet of Holland's "Golden Age." His *Gijsbrecht van Aemstel* was commissioned by the city of Amsterdam to celebrate the opening of the new theater and was first performed on 3 January 1638. Dealing with the war between the city of Amsterdam, led by Gijsbrecht, and the province of Holland, the drama was tremendously popular in the Netherlands: between 1641 and 1968 it was performed every New Year's Day in the Amsterdam Stadsschouwburg (city theater).
4. The phrase is in English in Berlage's original text.
5. The ditty is in English in Berlage's original text.

# THOUGHTS ON STYLE IN ARCHITECTURE

(1905)

A couple of months ago, on a beautiful autumn evening, I was standing on the stone bridge over the Minnewater in Bruges.<sup>1</sup> The sun had just gone

down, and over the town and countryside descended that certain glow that evokes such a unique atmosphere on autumn evenings, an atmosphere in which silence is more appropriate than speech.

To the right the flat Flanders plain; one we Dutchmen would not happily swap for the hills. Meadows with cattle, framed by tall trees, set between the wide country roads. And the element that lends the Dutch landscape such enormous fascination—water. No broad river, but rather various ditches, dividing up the pastureland. The whole picture enlivened by farmsteads. The city still has its old ramparts. Although the fortifications have been pulled down, the moat has not been filled in, nor have the former gates disappeared in favor of the traffic. Indeed, the thought of traffic and Bruges makes one smile.

There are no new built-up areas, and for this reason the single houses, workshops, and yards on the landward side along the city moat still form the transition from town to country, from high to low.

To the left the city, with its roofs dyed an even deeper red than usual by the evening sun, the color reflected in the same intensity by the water in the pond.

The delicately colored towers of the churches of Notre-Dame and Saint-Sauveur,<sup>2</sup> magnificently echoed by the trees that rise above the houses, give the townscape a certain stateliness.

The whole thing a vision of sublime calm.

At the sight of such a picture all kinds of thoughts come to mind.

Earlier in the morning, before breakfast, I had taken a walk. I came to a small vegetable market, not a covered market, but one set beside a canal with trees along its banks, under which the women sat at their little stalls.

Beside the market was a steeply rising bridge, throwing an arch across the still waters of the canal. I was quite alone on the quay. Later I wandered through the whole town, along canals, through desolate streets and alleys with grass growing up between the cobblestones, all lined with the same little houses, with the same stepped gables. Then I came to the main square. The massive tower of the market hall looked down on the emptiness below, in which the statues of the two national heroes, Breydel and De Coninck, looked ridiculously lonely.<sup>3</sup>

I visited the Town Hall, a building in the finest Gothic style.

On I went, past Romanesque church portals whose wonderful balance of simple linear forms compels devotion.

I visited an old patrician house that joined the church of Notre-Dame to make a marvellous group of buildings. The house had been totally renovated, yet even the interior still revealed much of its former beauty.

Later in the same day, in the hospital of Saint John<sup>4</sup> and in the Stedelijk Museum, I saw the most beautiful medieval paintings in the world. Then I stood, as I said, on the bridge across the Minnewater, unable to take my eyes off the wonderful twilight vision.

Suddenly I saw something looming up on the bank of the canal that in this context was literally screaming against the heavens—a factory chimney. At that moment I realized what nineteenth-century man had lost. Although the town is now dead, I thought back to how it must have looked six hundred years ago when it was full of life. And I thought about a modern metropolis, with its long streets, electric trams, railway stations, and everything else that goes with it. The comparison filled me with deep despair.

For in one respect, all the enormous advances in the area of technology and industry have not been able to give us anything vaguely comparable to what existed earlier; I mean, in the relationship to beauty. It is about this beauty that I intend to talk.

Even admitting mitigating circumstances, we can safely claim that the nineteenth century was the century of ugliness, one of the worst judgments that can be made of any age. To arrive at this profoundly unamusing dictum, one merely has to look at everything calmly and unemotionally. In doing this, one should not be distracted by the questionable beauties that are at hand to tempt us in our artless age, nor overrate their significance.

The nineteenth century was the century of ugliness; our parents, our grandparents, and we ourselves have lived and are still living in surroundings more ugly than any before. I repeat: Look at everything with unemotional eyes, and when you have compared what we have today with what was there in earlier times, you will become convinced that not one of the objects used by our parents and ourselves today can be called beautiful, whereas those that still look attractive tend to come from an earlier century.

When we look inside our dwellings, we can only shudder at the junk that we call household goods.

There's not a chair, or a table, or a vase that is even vaguely gratifying, and the only reason we don't fret about it to the point of despair is because sadly—or perhaps fortunately—we have grown accustomed to it all.

Looking at the dwellings themselves, one sees that the much-lauded speculative development—mass production of the worst sort—has created a type in which little remains of what one usually calls architecture. The single, tolerable, architect-designed

“The New Stock Exchange in Amsterdam: Architecture of the Galleries.”



house cannot prevail against these speculative products, which are created in such a way as to preclude from the outset any prospect of a happy result.

This same mass production has destroyed the entire periphery of our towns and devastated the delightful transition from town to country by brutally extending the streets directly into the surrounding countryside.

Our towns? What can one say about our new districts? Ring roads [*Ringstraßen*] sicken me: Oh!—if they could only do without “grand” buildings!

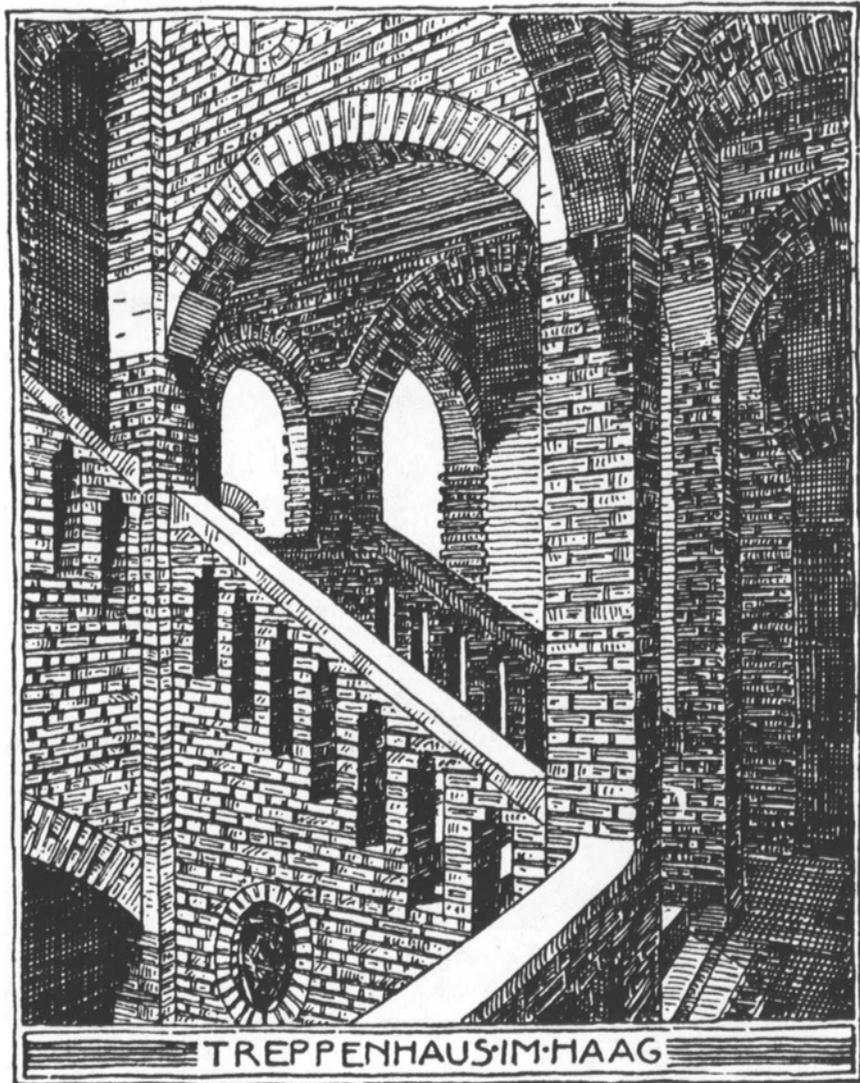
Among them, of course, and among the many shops and offices, there are some that have been designed with talent. Similarly, among the many private houses, there are those in which the inhabitant can feel at ease. But the “grand” buildings still disgust me; the boulevards sicken me with their competing facades. Quite apart from their many other questionable qualities, one reason for this is that these modern, monumental buildings lack the “certain something” that impresses us so much even in the most modest houses of earlier periods.

For heaven’s sake! Should we be forever vying with our neighbor, outbidding with ever more cubic meters of granite? For it seems there is something very seductive in granite pillars and gilded capitals, in balustrades at each window right up to the roof, and in bay windows and domes at every street corner. Treated differently, these are exactly the points at which the only real solution might be found. But more on this later.

And our new cities with their wide streets! Generous, spacious in their bland emptiness. I’m not referring to a lack of people or traffic, but to their artistic emptiness, which can be measured only too painfully against the narrow streets of the medieval town.

And further out, with the villa developments in the parklands, the story is no better. Once again I must declare my loathing for villas and fashionable suburbs. The same

"Stairwell in The Hague." [Office building for De Nederlanden van 1845, Kerkplein, 1895]



comments are applicable here, too. Although some of the buildings show signs of diligence and talent, the dominant force once again is the most ghastly mass production, which lacks any sense of unity. It is urban, monumental architecture transposed to rural housing types. The whole architectural program is even imposed on little houses, which are given tiny towers, baby bays, balconies, medieval glazing, and so on.

What of the contents of the many city shops, the modern department stores with their mass-produced goods? It is impossible to describe what can be found there, or rather, what cannot be found. Looking at the stock of these stores, one is no longer surprised at the interiors we talked about above. This has been commented on so often that to go into it again would be an unnecessary repetition of what has already been said and written. For indeed we lived in an age of ugliness not only because it lacked the means of artistic expression but ultimately because it was and still is ugly in spirit and intellect. This is not to claim that there are no scholars. On the contrary, the sciences—that is to say, the natural sciences—can point to droves of the most splendid apostles. But when I speak of ugliness in the realm of the spirit, I am referring to the total lack of what one might call a common purpose in our existence, a sense of working together toward one goal. A certain consecration of life is lacking, ultimately a lack not of education—for we are more educated (!) than our predecessors and no longer have funeral pyres, inquisitions, or slaves—but of culture, which is something quite different. For is not culture the accord between a spiritual core, the result of communal aspiration, and its reflection in material form, that is to say, art?

Humanity, seen as the community, no longer has an ideal. Personal interests have replaced mutual, spiritual interests and have assumed a purely materialist form, money.

You are saying, quite rightly, that it is unnecessary to repeat this well-known fact yet again. But the economic reasons for artistic decline cannot be ignored.

In the long list of sins resulting from the domination of finance capital, one sin is preeminent: the attachment of value to appearance rather than reality. Capitalism has thus helped not only material but also spiritual falsehood to the throne. The homage to capitalism that accompanied its development was a spiritual and intellectual homage, with the worst possible result that unselfishness became regarded not as a virtue but as stupidity.

Everything can be had for money, including art. The more money, the more art. Now comes the fatal confusion of cause and effect: If something costs a lot of money, it must be good art.

The total lack of judgment among the population at large in matters concerning art has had the dreadful result that everything expensive is involved in this homage to capitalism and is regarded as art.

But let us remain within our particular context, architecture. The dreadful conse-

quence of the current mania to outbid each other in expensive materials has been the introduction of imitation materials, which are used by those who cannot afford the real thing in the attempt to achieve the same effect. In art as in the realm of the intellect, appearance has supplanted reality; the lie now dominates art.

Today everyone knows the devastation wrought by capitalism when it is exploited in this way. The lie has become the rule, truth the exception; and the so-called official truth stands slightly to one side of reality, that is to say, it is a lie.

One could refer here to Max Nordau, who assuredly did not write his fatal book without a reason.\*<sup>5</sup>

Appearance for reality. That is now the watchword. Whatever costs a lot of money is also art.

In this context special mention must be made of the fact that easel painting has not only survived but has actually produced great works in this artless age.

Given such complicated circumstances, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions in this matter or to distinguish exactly between cause and effect. While we acknowledge that there is a certain reciprocity in all social relations, there can be no doubt that the prosperity of painting, specifically easel painting, sold at high prices for the exclusive benefit of the individual, is related to the capitalist hegemony. This has led to the sad state of affairs whereby a painting has become a commercial object, bought and sold by soberly materialist dealers without whom the painter could not exist.

And there are further consequences. In most cases the millionaire buys expensive paintings on the assumption that the more expensive they are, the more art they contain, or at least that they represent a good investment. He capitalizes on the fame of the artist. Art is not judged according to its intrinsic value, but in money. This is not to say, of course, that nothing bought for a high price can be art.

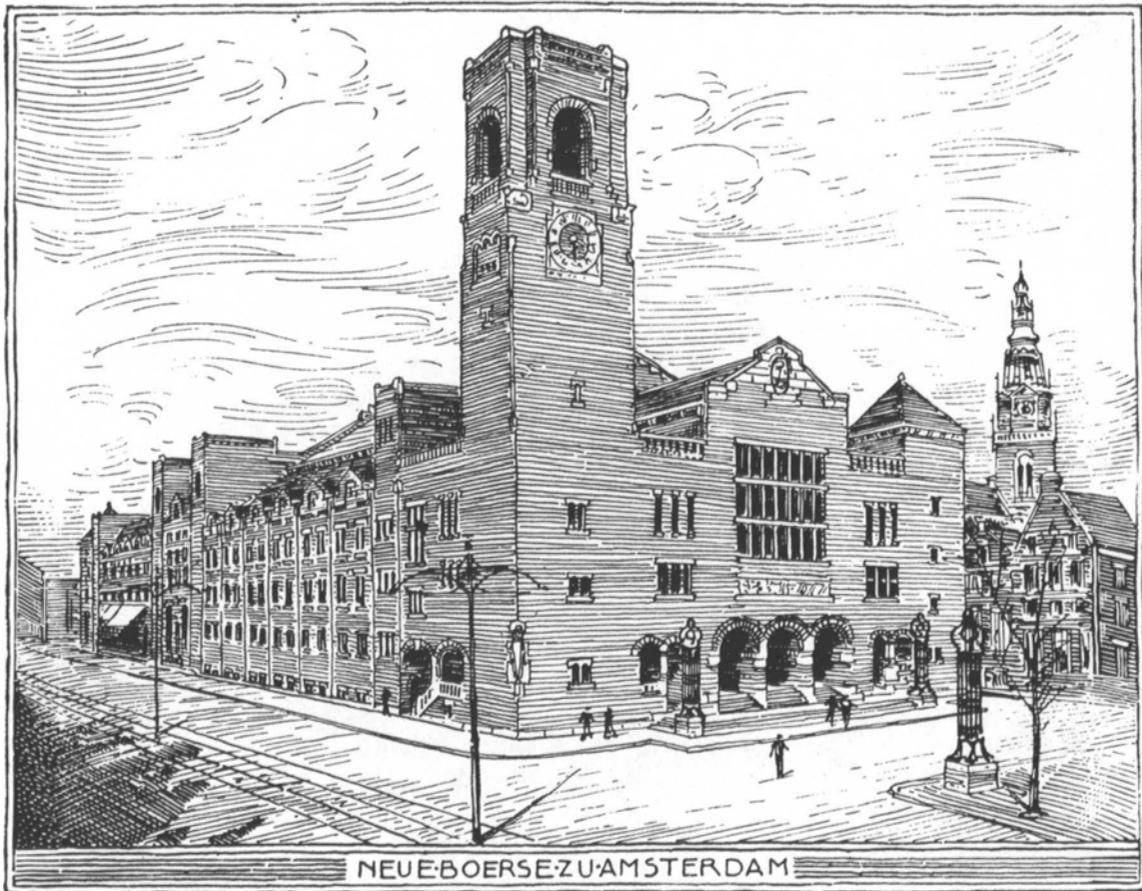
Which art stands to lose the most from the motto, "Appearance instead of reality," from the lie, and from expensive sham art? It is architecture. What has happened here, initially for the sake of true wealth—later to give the appearance of wealth—is obvious even at the most fleeting glance. The familiar *Ringstraßen* are the most striking evidence of this sham art. To be brutally honest, Germany has provided the worst examples.

The reason for this is not far away and is to be found in the massive industrial boom following the war in 1870 and in the resulting national wealth. Wealth always expresses itself most definitively in architecture. Whoever has earned a lot of money builds himself a grand house.

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\* *Die conventionellen Lügen* [The conventional lies].

"The New Stock Exchange in Amsterdam." [1898]



It is characteristic of this rapidly accumulated wealth and its corresponding expression that this architecture displays a rather ostentatious character. On the one hand, it is expensive architecture, on the other hand, sham architecture. But it is not beautiful architecture, and this in a land with such a wonderful tradition, in a land that can point to Hildesheim and Nuremberg—towns that are not only reminiscent of Bruges but that might even surpass Bruges in their beauty.

It is incredible to see not only everything that has been done on these buildings but also what sort of constructional falsehoods are found. Sham architecture has taken such a deep hold that I can even see it in the new Hamburg Town Hall. This is supposed to be a building of the first rank, on whose design, if I am not mistaken, seven architects were employed. Yet its “solid” granite columns are a sham, for they are not solid, and even the granite is only an imitation.

When imitation, sham architecture, and lies are to be found in a project of this stature, then it is no wonder that other buildings proceed with even less conscience. Natural stone that is not natural; iron used for all purposes but always hidden so that one would not even suspect its use; imitations of every conceivable luxury material; and vaults that are not vaults—these are only some examples of many.

This occurs, of course, not only in Germany. Even the mighty, monumental piers of Tower Bridge in London mask an iron structure, for which the masonry architecture forms only a loosely related covering.

The lie has become the rule, the truth an exception.

As it is in the life of the spirit, so it is in art.

The consequence of this state of affairs is spiritual ennui, for communal life has willfully abandoned its spiritual dimension. A further, or concomitant, result is artistic tedium. One does not have to be a moral reformer or a Calvinist to be annoyed when the hasty, unrelenting pursuit of money—and only money—leads to the most dreadful tedium among the masses, from which they escape by going to the pub or the music hall. For this reason the design of pubs and theaters has enjoyed a particular boom, with an architecture that tends toward a special luxury, in other words, that empty, bombastic pomp that exceeds the limits of propriety and stuns the public with its brothel-like character. The spread of these pubs in which pleasure is taken “en masse” marks a corresponding increase in spiritual emptiness. No longer the convivial cabaret, or the beer hall, no longer a Chat Noir or an Auerbach’s Keller, where the great minds of the age got together and where, without doubt, many of their most important ideas were born and nurtured through mutual contact.<sup>6</sup> Now there is an inconceivable expansion in choice and size, but one without benefit to the substance of the intellectual discourse. On the contrary, this boom has led to the general intellectual enfeeblement, typical of the self-satisfied public that now fills these establishments.

The artists and intellectuals oppose this tendency with their willful isolation, which, although understandable, is still bad. For it results in an unbearable pedantry, an intellectual and artistic smugness, leading to mutual dislike and jealousy among precisely those who should learn to understand and complement each other through continual contact. Instead, they despise and attack each other behind each other's back, preferably in public, each insisting to everyone else that he alone is informed. The stage has declined the most, for only those plays that deal with the ever-repeating complications of him, her, and a third party [*Monsieur, Madame, et le troisième*] attract an audience: drama has been replaced by the *café chantant*. The explanation is simple: after a hard, stressful day's work, there is no desire to digest heavy fare.

Sunday is the worst spectacle, for then the daytime has to be overcome as well. The marvellously atmospheric church bells are heard seldom or not at all, which is perhaps a good thing, as pious churchgoing is no longer done from the heart. It is as though the call to devotional gathering has been silenced with the disappearance of honest piety, which does not exist any more and can no longer exist in this age. Indeed, one has the feeling that the churchgoers go to church more to fill Sunday morning in a respectable way than to satisfy an inner compulsion. And Sunday in the city is dreadful. The city, which is not only the center and focus of intellectual and spiritual life, but which should also be its reflection, instead reflects merely genteel tedium. In the absence of motive, there can be no results.

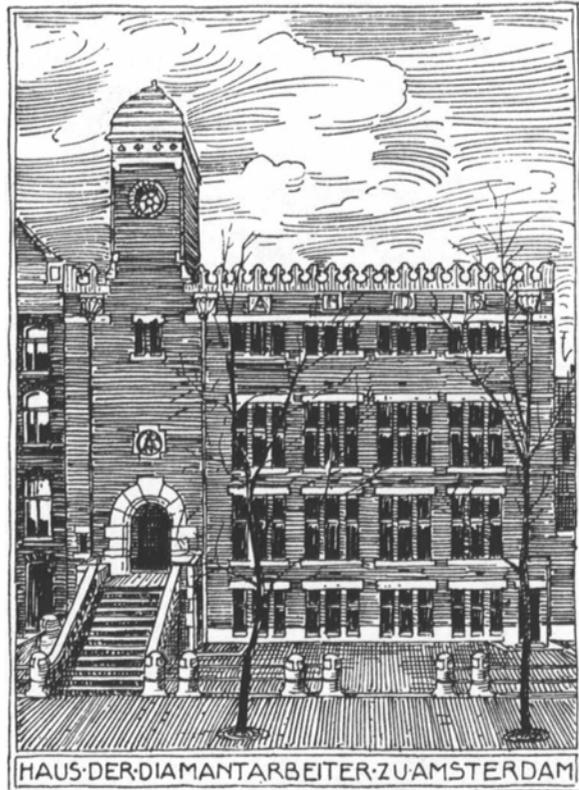
And so it has come about that we live in an age that can be called the ugliest age of all time. Were it not for some pieces of literature and for Richard Wagner, artistically sensitive people would have absolutely no joy at all in life. And this age, which might at least have had some exterior charm, has failed even here, for the stimulus for beautiful form is missing. All we have is appearance for actuality, pretension as the expression of prosperity, for ostentation is a discovery of the nineteenth century.

And so I think back once again to Bruges and visualize the whole atmospheric picture of a Sunday morning in the Middle Ages, full of religious earnestness. A fair, perhaps, offers a counterpart, full of humor and happy bickering. Yet, both church and fair stand on the same spiritual and therefore artistic ground; both are expressions of a high culture.

Or I think further back and see the Panathenaic procession, see the many riders, the sacrificial bulls, the maids of honor, stretching through the door of the Propylaeum, ascending the Acropolis with the intention of celebrating a festivity there, but a festivity as a manifestation of spiritual life in its entirety, something the Greek people could do when their civilization was at its most intense.

I see the sacred rites of the Egyptians, even the procession in the Roman circus of the condemned with their dying words, "Those who are about to die salute you" [*morituri te*

"House of the Diamond Workers in Amsterdam." [1899]



*salutant*]; I see them in the idealized light of a culture higher than ours. To repeat once again: we lack culture. It is this absence that makes us speak of the "good old days," and for this reason are we envious of those days each time we visit ancient towns, even though we know of all the dreadful things that happened then. But it is the beauty of those times that we want to win back, even with all the attendant abominations; even without their culture. We yearn for the age of the "uncivilized" Greeks, with their high culture. We yearn for the barbarian Middle Ages, with their high sense of duty and civil order, embodied in those magnificent works of the builder's art in which we comprehend immortality, yet to which we cannot aspire.

Then all at once I see the terrible emptiness of the present, the loathsome commercialism that cannot lift itself one inch above the level of prosaic, practical, calculating utility. And when one knows that everyone is fighting for himself, for his own little

position, “Make room for me” [*ôte-toi de là pourvu que je m’y mette*], with all means possible, both honest and dishonest; when one sees that a project is hardly ever undertaken for the benefit of the many but rather for the individual; when the struggle is never for or against a principle but invariably for or against a person—then one is left by these terrible certainties with a feeling of only the most profound melancholy.

We have, thank goodness, come to recognize this disastrous situation, and in this recognition are already to be found the seeds of reform. We now have to wrest ourselves free, there is no alternative. Every effort must be summoned to the cause.

But how? This desperate state of affairs has been recognized for a long time and is not a recent development, but the circumstances are so massively complicated that it is certainly not easy to find the means by which to regain the lost ideal.

We must examine cause and effect very closely in order to establish the mutual dependency of all the various manifestations. For to speak about a development in the arts, or to attempt to explain such a development without considering the political and economic factors, must surely be regarded as outmoded, since it would deprive any explanation of a valid basis. No art evolves without external influence.

Only in the second half of the last century did recognition of the desperate situation bring about a reaction against the coarse domination of capital; the demand for social democracy has grown steadily into the biggest movement known to history. It had to come.

Initially this was a purely economic response, which had nothing to do with a spiritual reaction. But it can, or rather, it should take on this dimension, for the philosophy of social democracy seeks to explain every development, including the spiritual, in terms of economics. It would follow from this philosophy that no progress in the visual arts was possible under the present economic conditions, nor would even the first seeds of this progress be allowed to develop.

But this has not been the case. It is truly remarkable that almost at the same time as the economic reaction set in, an artistic reaction also appeared, and battle was joined on this front; the battle against the art of deceit, against the art of empty wealth, against lies and tasteless forms. For in every country the revival of the so-called historical styles, the Neogothic and Neorenaissance, went exactly hand in hand with the beginnings of industry and the domination of capital—an extraordinary coincidence. It would seem as if the power of artistic invention waned with the growth of industry, that this marked the beginning of the spiritual vacuum. For is not the revival of earlier styles ultimately the result of a general spiritual emptiness? And this is truly not the fault of the leading revivalist artists, for among them are many who can be named among the best of all time.

If I were to mention some of the most famous names, I would begin with Germany.

The greatest respect is due, first of all, to the mighty Gottfried Semper, who revived the Italian Renaissance in Germany. More on him later. Before him it was Karl Friedrich Schinkel who gave expression to the Greek style in his beautiful, finely stylized monuments. To these two great masters were linked a substantial number of talents, the leaders of the Neorenaissance school, which was divided into further subcategories, namely the Italianate revival, the Greek revival, and German Renaissance revival. The Gothic revival was already in existence and developed in parallel to these others. Semper was also influential in Austria, where he established a tradition, with von Ferstel<sup>7</sup> as a Neorenaissance designer and Friedrich von Schmidt<sup>8</sup> as a Neogothicist.

In my own homeland, Petrus Cuypers deserves first mention, both as a Gothic revivalist and as one of the most important architects of the last century.<sup>9</sup> A decent Renaissance school was also established here, following the Neoclassical revival of the 1840s.

The same architectural movement occurred in France and England, that is to say, the development of a Neoclassical manner led by Pierre Vignon, which followed directly on the Empire style.<sup>10</sup> There was also a Renaissance revival initiated by the talents of Charles Percier.<sup>11</sup> These were joined by a Gothic revival, with the highly talented Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc as its apostle.

In a more conservative way, England had a significant Gothic revival together with a Renaissance movement.

Is it not, I repeat, a remarkable coincidence that a struggle has begun not only against pseudoart—the art of bad construction and imitation—but also against the much more elevated art of the great masters of previous centuries, whose entirely serious intention it was to bring back historical styles? We attack these masters not from lack of esteem or admiration for their work, nor because we are pedantic enough to think that we could do better. Truly not, for we are nowhere near able to achieve their perfection, and it would be appropriate if our younger architects were more modest when making comparisons. No, the attack had to come as a reaction against an art that, although on a higher conceptual and critical level, must still be regarded in the ethical sense as sham art in that it attempted to reintroduce forms from earlier periods into our quite differently ordered age.

In fact I should not spin out this much-treated theme too long. I would merely like to add here what Karl Scheffler says on the matter in his recent book on the conventions of art.\*

Asserting that all art, insofar as it aspires to be the language of the soul, is dependent on convention, and adding that the correct basis of art is lacking today, he goes on to

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\* Karl Scheffler, *Konventionen der Kunst* (Leipzig: Julius Zeitler, 1904), 15–16.

say that the last century was rich in victims, in geniuses who found no resonance in their own age, who therefore turned back to old conventions and became conventional. Others now struggle in desperation after new, global ideas that are not yet ripe and stutter obscure prophecies in fractured tones.

Great talents were engaged in the nineteenth century on the battlefields of art. In a stable epoch such as the Renaissance, or even the Gothic, these talents would have achieved immortal results, which, according to the degree of energy they generated, would be worthy of any master of the past. And yet, their work can remain only an episode.

The role that could be played by the great artists to which Scheffler refers was sadly only episodic. In spite of their great talents, these artists have not been able, since they lived in our epoch, to raise their art above the transitory; they had only a passing effect. They did not become sensations, achieved no lasting impact. This was their tragic destiny, for like all men they were dependent on the great conditioning factors of life.

And so the architecture of the last century produced great results; it aspired to magnificent results and achieved them. Yet it remained a sham art, not in the ordinary but in the elevated sense, since it was founded on false premises, or rather, had no premises whatsoever. This is what brought about the reaction. Just as the domination of finance capital was a necessary precondition for the ripening of the seed that led to the economic struggle, so the domination of sham art was necessary to germinate the seed of an artistic reaction.

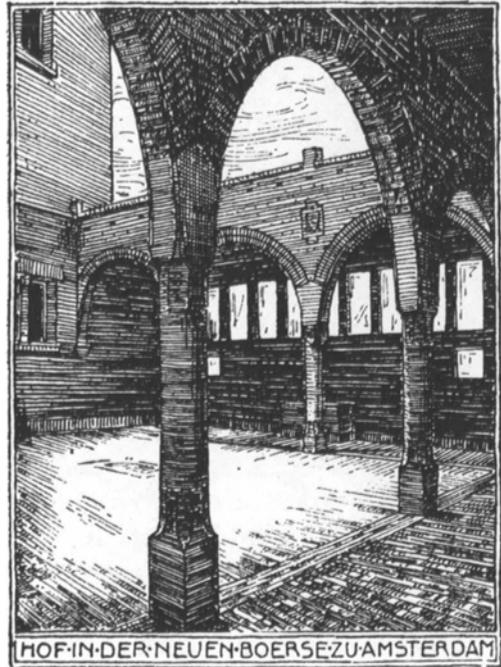
Just as capitalism initially promised only good things and did indeed have a beneficial effect, so did the historical styles in the beginning promise good things and have also been truly fruitful in that they raised architecture out of the morass of absolute degeneration. Historical styles were necessary. We can now perceive a spiritual evolution beside an economic one. But these evolutions belong to each other; they interlock and are, in principle, the same thing; they complement each other, and their leaders understand each other. They step together on the same path toward a distant goal.

The great struggle has begun.

But before we join battle, we should establish, first, what form the revolution might take and what exactly we hope to achieve and then the means by which the struggle should be pursued.

Experience has taught that even when certain basic principles can be pronounced and indeed already exist about various objects, and even when for that reason agreement is quite possible, such agreement has complications when it involves art. The reason for this surely lies in the fact that one element can never be eliminated, namely personal taste. But the various opinions probably result from the fact that the practicing artists themselves are not of a philosophical disposition (although there are exceptions)

"Courtyard in the New Stock Exchange in Amsterdam."



and are not inclined to give an adequate verbal account of their art, its sources, consequences, and so on.

Their opinions, insights, and philosophy of "art" lie in their works, and their creative urge is the reason why they pay little attention to the sources and consequences of their art. The saying, "Artists should work, not talk" is still true. And should we choose to ask the true philosophers for advice, this, too, has its drawbacks, since there appear to be differences of opinion here, too. And such is the scale of these differences that even the greatest thinkers have not succeeded in dealing with architecture, and, in particular, with whether or not it is an art. One only has to consult Schopenhauer, Solger, Krause, Hegel, Trahdorff, Weisse, and others for proof of how difficult it is to give a definition of architecture and consequently to say what architecture should be like.<sup>12</sup> And this is because philosophers are not practicing artists, for theory is gray and only the golden tree of life is green.<sup>13</sup> That means, quite simply, that no intellectual taught Beethoven or Wagner to compose, or Praxiteles or Michelangelo to carve sculpture; that no philosopher taught Raphael or Rembrandt to paint, or instructed Ictinus or Bramante in how to build. Even Ruskin, who can be called the father of modern art, ulti-

mately remains an intellectual and is of no direct use to us. And in the final analysis it is clear that philosophy is able to draw its conclusions only from appearances. Human ideas can be defined a priori, but art cannot be prescribed.

In this respect the great practicing architects such as Viollet-le-Duc in France and the already-mentioned Semper in Germany are better teachers in that their major works, *Le dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture* and *Der Stil in den technischen Künsten* (Style in the technical arts), offer practical aesthetics— aesthetics that one can use.<sup>14</sup>

But what is the purpose of this?

It is to have a style once more! Not only a kingdom, but all of heaven itself for a style! This is the despairing cry, the great, lost happiness. It is a matter of fighting the sham art—the lies—to regain the essence instead of the appearance.

We want the essence of architecture, which is to say the truth, I repeat, the truth. For in art, too, the lie has become the rule and the truth the exception.

We architects, therefore, must try to return to truth, to seize once again the reality of architecture. Now, architecture is and remains the art of construction, the joining together of various elements into a whole to enclose a space. And as even this fundamental principle has become an empty formula, the first priority is to go back to the basics, to construct well. In order to do this quite freely, we must do it in the simplest way. Intrinsically comprehensible objects should be created once again, objects whose bodies are not obscured by cladding.

But further, we architects must also first study the skeleton, just as painters and sculptors do in order to give their figures the correct form. For the cladding of every natural object is, so to speak, an exact reflection of the inner skeleton, which, in that it presents us with the most perfect construction, can be called a work of architecture. But logical construction is the dominating element here, and the cladding is not a loose covering entirely negating the construction like a badly fitting suit but is totally rooted in the inner building and is ultimately a form of decorated construction. This is how we want to find our way back again to the body. It must be done ruthlessly, and everything superfluous must disappear, for architecture is so fundamentally corrupted that no compromise is possible if we want to reach the ideal goal. To concede anything means to let things remain just as they were.

For the present, therefore, it is necessary to study the skeleton—dry construction in all its simple robustness—in order to arrive once again at the full body, but without the confusion of clothing. Even the last covering, the fig leaf, must go, for the truth that we desire is utterly naked.

Architecture was like a badly dressed person. Call it a dandy and a demimondaine, or superman [*Übermensch*] and superwoman [*Überdame*], it doesn't matter. The fash-

ionable clothes should be torn off and the bare form—healthy nature and truth—revealed.

To achieve this means learning the secrets by which the ancients managed to endow their buildings with a never-failing fascination; in other words, how they came to the results that we fail to achieve despite all our efforts.

Regardless of what else might happen—how many apparently inexplicable combinations or seeming deviations may emerge—one major, I might even say principal, characteristic becomes immediately apparent, and this is “repose.” In the smaller works of the ancients this is a charming repose, in their monumental architecture a sublime repose. In contrast, our present-day architecture gives a very restless impression. I would almost say that the two words *style* and *repose* are synonyms, that repose is the same as style and style the same as repose. From this concept, therefore, and from this experience, one can conclude that because the old architecture has style, it also displays an agreeable calm. Style is the cause of “repose.” It is now a matter of investigating this cause, to ask, therefore, what is style.

At this point in these reflections, a book to which I have already referred presses itself into our hands, namely *Der Stil in den technischen Künsten*, and with it its author, the great German art scholar and architect Gottfried Semper. I choose this book because there are sentences in it that could serve as mottos for several discourses on art. These sentences alone make the study of the book a pleasure.

But first, Semper, as mentioned already, was no philosopher in the strict sense, and for that very reason the study of his book can be highly recommended. For, above all—and this must be stressed heavily—Semper was a practicing artist. His book is nothing less than a “practical aesthetics.” In recent times only Viollet-le-Duc can be compared with him.

Semper’s aesthetic observations are based on such highly pitched ideas that one immediately realizes that his was a philosophically oriented mind. One might add, as an aside, that all great artists share this orientation to a greater or lesser degree, for serious art is not merely the expression of emotion but equally the result of precise thought. Semper strives to reach the heights, but at the same time calls to us: “Why wander into the distance when the good things are so near?”<sup>15</sup> But even things that are close seem so difficult for us today, which is not surprising in an age pregnant with antagonistic ideas, mystification, and complexities.

Like all great spirits, Semper looked toward the future; he is one of those who, as Heine says, “nod to each other over the centuries.”

I take a passage from the “Prolegomena,” the most beautiful that I know on this theme:

*Just as nature with her infinite abundance is very sparse in her motives, repeating continually the same basic forms by modifying them a thousandfold according to the formative stage reached by living beings and their different conditions of existence, shortening some parts and lengthening others, developing parts which are only alluded to in others, just as nature has her history of development within which old motives are discernible in every new formation—in the same way art is also based on a few standard forms and types that stem from the most ancient traditions and that always reappear yet offer an infinite variety and like nature's types have their history. Therefore, nothing is arbitrary; everything is conditioned by circumstances and relations.\*<sup>16</sup>*

Has this sentiment, which should be hung as a motto on the wall in every artist's studio, ever been expressed more beautifully? For I would claim that nature, and only nature, can show us the way forward, in the sense that:

1. Nature herself, with the simplest means, creates an infinite number of variously formed works of art, and
2. Nature is logical in that she never works arbitrarily.

If only one could tell the artists ever more clearly: ponder everything you do, and make sure that all your creations give evidence of this, right down to the smallest detail. Do nothing arbitrarily, but above all, be sparing in your use of motifs; in other words, be simple.

Against all those who believe that artistic talent reveals itself in a great diversity of motifs, Semper proclaims to the artist that this is not true. Examine nature, our universal mother, see how sparingly she works, yet understands how to achieve an endless and magnificent artistic richness. Is not nature the mistress of art for this very reason?

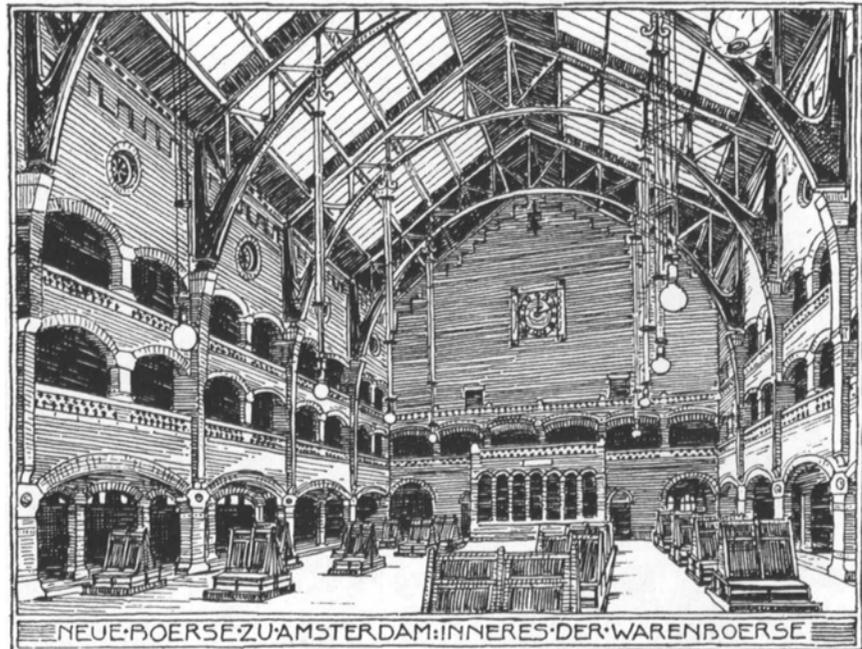
Let us take a second tenet. "Yes, nature, the great primeval creatress, must obey her own laws, for she can do nothing else but reproduce herself. Throughout everything her archetypes remain the same as those brought forth from her womb throughout the aeons."

So, you artists should not only be economical with your motifs but also realize that you are actually unable to invent new ones. Just as nature recasts her prototypical forms, so you can do nothing but recast the primal artistic forms. You cannot make new ones, and if you attempt to, you will see that your work can have no lasting value, for it will be unnatural and untrue!

And there is still more.

\* Semper, *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten*, vol. I, "Prolegomena," p. viii.

"The New Stock Exchange in Amsterdam: Interior of the Commodities Exchange."



Semper says something very original at the beginning of his observations on “the seam” [*die Naht*] as a necessary element in the joining together of various parts. He asks if there is an etymological link between the word “necessity” [*die Not*], as in the phrase “making a virtue out of necessity,” and the word “seam”; and whether the phrase should really mean “making a virtue out of the seam.” In other words, in assembling constructional elements, one should not attempt to eliminate the necessary “seam.” On the contrary, one should make it into a virtue, that is to say, a decorative motif. You artists should exploit, therefore, the various constructional difficulties as decorative motifs.

In these words Semper paid tribute to true stylistic rationalism, even though he has little good to say about medieval or Gothic art.

But does not this sentence correspond to Viollet-le-Duc’s principal tenet, “Every form that is not determined by the structure should be rejected.”<sup>17</sup>

The passages I have taken from Semper’s book might not seem to be related, yet they do connect and can serve as the basis of style. We ask ourselves why earlier works give an impression of repose that is lacking in our restless creations. Repose is the chief

quality, not itself the cause, but the result of a number of qualities that are immediately striking and allow us to distinguish an old building from a new one at a thousand meters' distance.

As this cause is "style," we are left, ultimately, with the question of what is to be understood by style. Although style is very difficult to characterize, Semper offers this very elegant definition, which says, "Style is the accord of an art object with its genesis, and with all the preconditions and circumstances of its becoming [*Werden*]." <sup>18</sup> But this refers more to the process itself and thus also to the process today. It would seem to me more comprehensible, because more practical, if this definition were to refer more directly to the work of art itself.

I refer to the definition, which, if I am not mistaken, comes from Goethe, "Style is unity in diversity." <sup>19</sup>

This explanation takes us a step further, for it makes repose the ultimate goal; where there is unity, there is repose.

How do we achieve unity in diversity, that is, unity in the diversity of assembled parts? I find a hint of this in Semper: follow nature as your teacher, which means, be economical in the choice of your motifs. This protects against errors that have only a detrimental effect in the matter of repose. In doing this, do not worry about being too prosaic or lacking in fantasy, for as nature proves, the greatest artistic richness is possible within the most confining restraints. Has not Goethe already said that the true master first reveals himself when restrained? And finally, be logical in your choice of motifs.

If you work in this way, you will have the chance to approach that which we are all pursuing, namely style, which is unity in diversity.

You will certainly have observed that nature works unconsciously, that is, within set laws that she must eternally obey. In doing this, she achieves the infinite diversity that is also her infinite beauty. Yet, in the endless richness and variety of her creations, nature never appears agitated or restless. Even the dazzling colors of the flowers, sown in their millions, never appear garish when they grow in the countryside. But when we humans put a couple of miserable flower pots in our little gardens, they clash immediately if they have not been placed with a certain sensitivity. The fact that this clash disappears when they are located in an artistically conscious manner can be explained as follows: While unity in diversity dominates in nature, here in the garden we are introducing contrast into nature, with the intention of creating an artistic whole.

The marvellous examples of architecturally laid-out parks and gardens, from the garden of Tiberius to the English garden of some lord or other, are excellent proof of the intention to create large-scale works of art in a nonnatural location. These are conscious attempts to generate style, to achieve unity in diversity with those elements that are

produced by nature herself. Indeed, the history of art offers an extraordinary record of artistic creativity in the pursuit of style, which is repose. The Greek temple, if not located in the city, stood amid rather neglected vegetation. The Rococo palace, by contrast, was situated in a garden of trimmed trees, as evidence of the artist's search for a balance between mobility and stasis, or, if you like, between restlessness and repose.

Nature herself provides balance, for when an overgaudy color would disturb the unity, she covers it with a patina. In this way she helps us, too, for something newly formed always makes a displeasing impression.

For this reason, as has often been said, time makes our work more attractive. But we should not draw the conclusion from this that older works of art are so beautiful only because time has worked on them. This is not true at all; after three hundred years our paintings will not be Rembrandts, and even after two thousand years our buildings will not have the "style" of a temple at Paestum or the Amiens cathedral. Age can improve but cannot, thank goodness, make the ugly beautiful.

Nature does not appear restless, for she has "style," and nor do works of art from earlier periods seem confused in our eyes, for they have style, which is to say, unity in diversity.

This even extends to the monuments of the Baroque age, in some of which we are not entirely unjustified in seeing exactly those qualities of wildness, overloading, and excessive play on form that we have found reprehensible. Yet these works still give the impression of repose, while our sober, modern streets seem entangled. Notwithstanding all its excesses, the Baroque has repose, in contrast to the modern, prosaic, chaotic lack of style.

One can feel this in the last remnants of the Renaissance, the old houses from the beginning and middle of the last century, which still display unity, despite their creators. These houses are evidence of the strength of a preceding stylistic age so powerful that even the plainest late examples still have qualities that command respect.

How can we achieve unity in diversity once again? There is no magic prescription that, once rediscovered, will bring about recovery. No, a long road leads from artistic experimentation to the final goal.

We should study nature in general, in the sense outlined above, and in our particular case we should also study the ancient monuments, not to imitate them or take detailed motifs from them, but rather to seek out those elements that have given them style. And is it not immediately clear that "order" or regularity is the fundamental principle of style? This is true even where there is no apparent sense of order, where no supposedly academic plans exist, where we are not dealing with symmetry in the usual sense of the word. It is not mere chance that we speak of the classical orders! Just as order prevails in nature, in that nature works according to fixed rules, so we can perceive a

certain order in the ancient monuments. Our own architecture, therefore, should also be determined according to a certain order! Would not design according to a geometric system be a great step forward? This is a method with which many of the modern Dutch architects are already working.

I cannot discuss this system now, but it can be compared, on the one hand, with the module of classical art and, on the other hand, with the medieval system of triangles.

It should be carefully noted, however, that this method is not an end in itself but only a means, and means in itself does not make an artist.

The enormous contemporary struggle for a so-called new style can only be seen as a search for “unity in diversity,” as an attempt to bring order or repose to the motifs—to the endless number of stylistic motifs that have been adopted at random with impetuous enthusiasm. This search must be pursued in a conscious manner, since man begins to work only when he works consciously.

All this, of course, seems self-evident. But I said that nature works unconsciously and nevertheless has style, and then I said that man should take nature as a model and work consciously. There must be a conflict here, the more so since in taking this position, we encounter once again a social phenomenon.

All those people who are dissatisfied with every aspect of contemporary society and its excesses, all those who want to go back to nature and preach a return to the land, all those who argue that man in today’s sense is no longer a herd animal, all those who argue that the cities should disappear—they tell us architects, “Go back to the farmhouse; the farmhouse is the result of simple needs.”

Quite right, but for the needs of the farmer. Our palaces also reflect a need. Seen philosophically, everything that is done is the result of a need.

Back to nature? But our cities are also nature; everything is nature. Dissimilar things are being confused here.

To begin with, we can exclude the possibility of allowing our cities to disappear, for man does not wish to be isolated, with the exception of a few souls who want to place themselves outside society. On the contrary, we have spiritual needs, and these needs demand social concentration. Colonies of bees and ants can serve as examples, examples still drawn from nature.

The natural development of humanity goes in exactly the opposite direction to that which these people want. The city stands not at the beginning but at the end of a culture, even if it gradually transforms itself, as is already occurring, from a tight, compact structure to a more spaciouly developed model. At the end of this development lies the so-called garden city of the future, made possible precisely through the many forms of transport, which no longer preclude a love of nature.<sup>20</sup> On the contrary, those people

who most admire the beauty of a city are invariably those who are most stirred by the sublimity of a starry night or by the magnificence of an autumnal wood. Quite apart from this, a return to the farmhouse is impossible simply because the farmhouse is not a work of art in the architectural sense. For the farmhouse has developed unconsciously, evolving in the same continuous fashion as nature itself evolves, unconsciously, yet within fixed laws. Like the products of nature, it adapts according to the conditions; for just this reason it is beautiful and fits into the landscape. It is beautiful in the same way that the unselfconscious creations of primitive peoples are beautiful. This quality is shared in a way by children's art, which is natural because of its naïveté, stylistically appropriate because of its naturalness, and therefore so admirable. For this reason these simple creations also harmonize with nature. The farmhouse is beautiful in the same way as the peasant costume (and even the clothing of the workers), which has evolved without the intention of making something beautiful and for that reason also harmonizes with nature. In contrast, the European clothes that one sees in the countryside, especially on Sunday, look entirely absurd. Herein lies the secret of so-called painterly charm, an unselfconsciously created beauty that led to the art of easel painting, to an imitative pictorial art, and to the corresponding branch of sculpture.

Just as architecture can learn both from nature and from primitive peoples, so one can learn from the farmhouse when designing a country house. The quality to be learned is that of primitive simplicity of form. But the farmhouse itself should not be rebuilt, for the goal is an intentional work of art, and this can be the result only of conscious effort, of the conscious intention to make something beautiful, which means something stylistically appropriate.

This is explicable because a stylistically appropriate country house will most certainly fit into the landscape, for, in contrast to the farmhouse, it embodies a higher order of beauty.

For the same reason stylistically deliberate clothing—the national costume, even the military uniform—also accords with nature, for once again it represents beauty of a higher order. It follows from here in general that stylistically conscious architectural beauty is of a higher order than painterly beauty. It is a matter of finding the transition to conscious work, for the same farmhouse, quite apart from all manner of technical mistakes, also displays the greatest artistic and aesthetic imperfections.

Our culture forces us to work deliberately. The return to the peasant cottage would mean a return to a lower culture, ultimately to a nonculture.

Semper felt that “only with an advanced art do we begin to vary the artistic treatment of the various usable materials, taking into account the limits and advantages of logical creation.” Before him, Hegel had said that “the beauty of art is *higher* than nature. The

beauty of art is beauty *born of the spirit and born again*, and the higher the spirit and its productions stand above nature and its phenomena, the higher too is the beauty of art above that of nature.”<sup>21</sup>

Let us, therefore, say it once again: learn from nature, but learn to use consciously what nature does unconsciously. If we work in this spirit, we shall again equal that which was achieved in all periods of style. For in such times both the monuments and the most insignificant objects showed the essential quality of style, namely, unity in diversity.

I must still introduce the magnificent exposition that Semper devotes to Egyptian art.

“The basic characteristics of all Egyptian architecture would appear to be contained in the Nile *situla* as in embryo; and no less striking is the kinship between the form of the *hydria* and particular variants of the Doric style. Both forms anticipate that which was invented by architecture, since they were attempts to give monumental expression to the essence of both peoples.”<sup>\*22</sup> Every style has its youthful stage, its wild years, and its archaizing phase, which must grow into manhood, into serene power and the conscious deed. We are still at the youthful stage; the conscious work has barely begun.

And so it is in these desperately confused times—times that do not look back but storm forward with the enormous expansion of the cities—that we quite literally yearn for a new style, in the final analysis for a monumental style. For only architecture is able, ultimately, to immortalize in visual form the greatest deeds and most sacred feelings of the nations, and the monuments that must do this again can be built only in a spiritual and intellectual center, that is to say, in a city of the future.

With a return to the farmhouse we architects would be finished, for we could quite safely leave this to the farmers themselves.

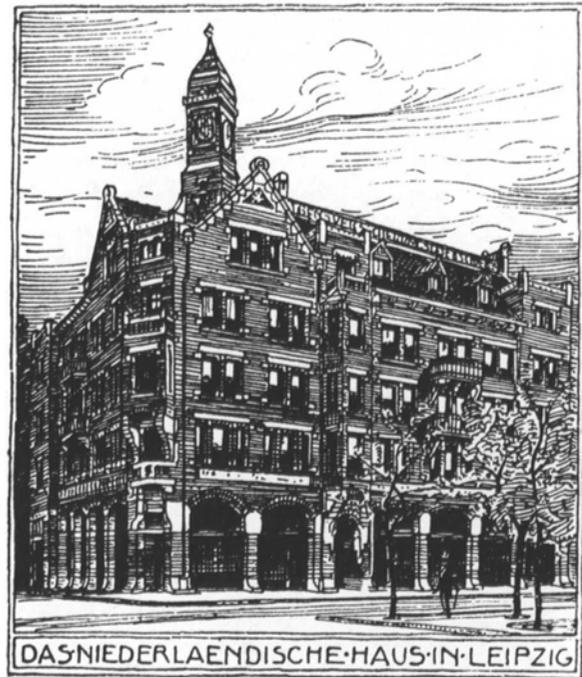
Our work belongs, however, to the new city; the only possible, only conceivable, only ideal alternative, and the best that there can be. We shall reach this goal, it seems to me, only in the distant future, and we shall not achieve it in one step.

Not in one step, I say, really not. For looking at the enormously powerful social movement and what it is shaking and stirring up, I become convinced not only that we are unable to demand architectural works of art, by which I mean works in the monumental style, but also that we cannot even expect them. For the time being I regard it as impossible for such a work to be created. Is there then no modern style? Have not half a dozen journals already announced the happy news? I am free-spirited enough to receive this happy news with considerable reservation, and what has already occurred in

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\* Semper, *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten*, vol. 2, p. 5.

"The Netherlands House in Leipzig." [1902]



this regard, I am not inclined to overrate. A single glance into a museum or a Japanese shop must, in my opinion, induce a certain modesty. To a style belongs a certain convention, a correspondence among the decorative elements, an essential basis. And when we look at the manifestations of the so-called modern style in the various European countries, then a certain reticence is, in my opinion, quite justified. For in contrast to one's expectation that increased mobility would sweep away the national borders, artistic activity everywhere displays nationalist tendencies. Although all modern men, as far as I know, pay homage to the principle of simple and honest construction, as described above, one soon realizes that most people, at best, pay only lip service to this principle or, at worst, misinterpret it. To give just one example, is not the so-called Art Nouveau, as propagated by the doubtless highly talented Henry van de Velde, the exact opposite of this healthy principle? And as a result, is the influence of this "new art" not already in significant decline, precisely because it misinterprets this principle?

It will be clear to you, of this I am convinced, that a direction can have value for the future only if it works with the principle of honest, simple construction at its cleanest, that is, at its most conscientious. As a guide to lead us, the medieval model offers a preparatory school of inestimable worth.

I mentioned the two great practical aestheticians, Semper and Viollet-le-Duc, and feel that Viollet-le-Duc's contribution should be valued no less than Semper's, since it was his insight that the art of the Middle Ages could, in principle, offer the correct basis for the modern period. For this is an art that not only stands on a purely constructional base but also forms the thread between old and new. We must take up this thread again at the correct point. Therefore, classical art—the Italian Renaissance and the whole Neorenaissance movement around the middle of the nineteenth century—was of only passing significance. The revival of an art that itself was not essentially constructional and for that reason degenerated into a purely decorative impulse was questionable from the outset; its apostles soon ran into contradictions, which were not to be avoided. Even Semper, from whom one would have expected a better understanding of the principles of medieval art, was not free from these contradictions. The blossoming of the Baroque style as the modern art, so-called, of contemporary Germany is deeply regrettable, and this style must surely be the last to teach us the lesson that, in history, every blossoming is also an end.

For this reason the Neorenaissance movement that appeared in every European country was, despite its talented leaders, only an act of desperation—a brilliant impotence, as Scheffler says. Exactly for this reason, the parallel medievalist movement has been more fruitful as the preparatory school for modern art, and this is why the great English impulse has had such a powerful influence, for it was nothing else but Neogothic.

As I have said already, I regard honest construction in simplified form as the correct principle on which we should work in the short term. I would even assert this quite dogmatically, for the true artist will himself make sure that nothing is destroyed for the sake of principle.

We should not try to achieve in twenty-five years that for which earlier generations have needed centuries. If we rush things, and there is a great danger of that in this fast-moving age, then we shall stumble and have to begin anew.

Furthermore, the problems faced by the architect in subdividing the floor plan are much more difficult and intricate than before, as a result of complicated work patterns and hygiene regulations. New materials are discovered every day, which must be tested in practice and used in an aesthetic way. Then there is the need for rapid construction—for always “time is money”<sup>23</sup>—and beyond all this, the battles with the contractors, who, instead of regarding the project as a joint enterprise, oppose on principle the architect and thus the work itself. How can we aspire to “unity in diversity” under these conditions? Yet, for all their unpleasantness, these disputes cannot be compared with the dissension between the collaborating painters and sculptors, who do not even share the same artistic convictions as the architect and cannot or will not understand him.

In the latter case the “intellectual unity” in diversity is missing. No, as long as both the material cause and intellectual causes work against the greater unity and inhibit our higher aspirations, we shall be stuck for a long time in a precarious situation. The difficulties to be overcome in the construction of a monumental building are so enormous that, from this perspective, too, a real work of art is not to be expected.

Thus we come to the despairing realization that nothing of consummate quality can be built

The things that we lack—this unity in diversity and style, that is, repose and order—were given their greatest manifestation in an Egyptian temple, a Greek sanctuary, a Romanesque cathedral, a Hindu temple, a Gothic cathedral, or a Renaissance town hall. They were to be found on various scales among the works of these magnificent epochs. But they were not the works of individuals, and the present age is the age of individualism and subjectivism carried to their greatest heights, recently reaching a pinnacle in Olbrich’s words: “Artist, reveal your world, which never was, yet ever will be.”<sup>24</sup> Everything must now be done by the individual, resulting in bitter personal hatred and spiteful glee about each other’s misfortunes. One is forgiven everything except the hint of having copied someone else. It is better to make something bad but new than a good revision of an earlier model, even if this would be the only correct way to achieve unity.

Today there is not only an economic struggle but also a spiritual struggle of the many against the one, the one against the many. There is as little spiritual cooperation as there is economic.

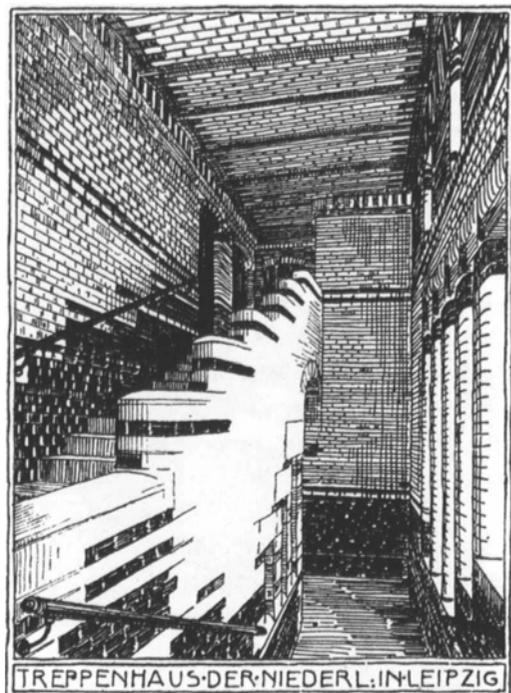
And spiritual cooperation is not possible, for working together also demands sacrifice, the subordination of one’s own opinion to higher authority. Our cynical age knows no sacrifice.

As a result, disorder—the lack of style—prevails. There is both economic and spiritual restlessness, and so long as this lasts, no development is possible toward that which we desire.

Will there ever be another age that pays homage to the opposing motto, “One for all and all for one”? As far as we can see, it is not easy even to have an illusion about this. Yet there remains a firm conviction of and hope for a monumental art in the future. This future is still far away, for reasons I feel I have adequately explained. For so much has to happen before we can reach our goal—before we can escape from this total stylelessness.

If one studies the connections between all the occurrences and manifestations on a higher plane, rather than concentrating, as is so often done, merely on one symptom—in this case an artistic one—then it becomes immediately clear that it will be a long time before we reach the gates of a new artistic era. Both economic and spiritual anarchy prevail, and anarchy is diametrically opposed to what we want to achieve. Above

"Stairwell of the Netherlands House in Leipzig." [1902]



all, the great workers' movement will have to have progressed far enough to be able at least to neutralize the destructive influence of the capitalist spirit. For it is not so much the money itself but this negative spirit that stifles the prospects for a monumental art, for an authentic style. *And this cannot occur without political conflict.*

*When one compares the political movements in all countries, a remarkable correspondence is revealed, which in turn is related to the currents in the arts. All number of political parties and groupings representing all number of individual opinions and views have replaced the former progressive party, since this has lost its ideals and now exists without these ideals as a weak, middle-of-the-road party. Out of this mess have now emerged two parties, representing the two extreme positions, and locked in a violent struggle from which one will finally emerge victorious. And it would seem a historical necessity that the victory should go to the workers' movement.*

*The same phenomenon is displayed by the modern currents in the arts. Here, too, there is a chaotic confusion between the various artistic directions and groups, with equally many individual styles and fashions, out of which two principal directions are emerging. One is*

religious—medievalist, orthodox-Protestant—the other is the modernist direction, which is developing at the present. This modernist movement does not yet have the clearly defined internationalist program of the political party; there are still anarchist elements, since an artistic movement is not a political one. Yet, out of this chaos a single direction will ultimately appear, elements of which are already perceptible. These elements have the chance to become the basis of the new style.<sup>25</sup>

The two evolutionary processes, material and spiritual, are moving toward consummation at the same time, for the spiritual process is also reaching this point. Is not the whole modern art movement, although expressed in all manner of forms, nothing other than this process. Ultimately, a solid artistic program will emerge from this artistic chaos. At the same moment that the political evolution is completed, the artistic evolution will make its breakthrough, and from this point on we shall be able to work on the development of a style. Only then can we talk again of a universal attitude, for then the great principle of equality for all men will prevail, not only in religion, but in the realm of politics and economics.

Scheffler has written: “No art exists that is not based on a universal attitude, on a primeval convention. A universally valid conception of the basis of life is of central importance for the visual arts.”<sup>26</sup> Is that not excellently put? Does not every artist today feel absolutely powerless to achieve anything of significance in the realm of ornament precisely because this ideal basis is missing? Scheffler continues:

*The unanimity of earlier artistic epochs was based almost entirely on the fact that men were in religious accord. The fragmentation in the artistic production of the present can be explained through the absence of a generally accepted vision of the world.*

*Style comes into being only through restraint: for its basis it needs a system, it is itself a system.*

*The more aware humanity becomes, the more it demands this system. It must answer as many doubts as possible and resolve all of life's contradictions.*

*The period between two conventions or religions is barren for the visual arts. Since there is no longer a valid consensus on the nature of social ideals, each individual is thrown back on himself and, since no generally comprehensible symbols are available to him, he must find in himself new analogies for his perceptions. The symbolic expressions of these perceptions are not shared by others, and he remains misunderstood.*

*The characteristic feature of every religious interregnum is a feeling of universal isolation; but only a feeling of solidarity creates culture.<sup>27</sup>*

Is that not true? The feeling of isolation is something that all artists experience in this age. They are not understood because they are bearers of artistic ideas alien to the

masses. If their works speak a language slightly different from the long-established and fatuous daily babble, they are reviled—ideally in the newspapers so that as many people as possible can be told of the nonsense that they have created. This is done by critics, so-called, who, of course, have far fewer points of reference than the artists themselves and thus write in the dark. The critics, of course, invariably forget that it is much easier to pass rash judgment than to create.

And so it goes on.

The present resides between two conditions, and all manifestations of the new art can be explained, on the one hand, by the lack of religious philosophical convention and, on the other, by the longing for this convention. Christianity is dead, and one scarcely senses the faintest beginning of a new form of universal order, which must be grounded on the results of research in the natural sciences.<sup>28</sup>

The artists share this dilemma. Some take old forms, both heathen and Christian, and try to make them conform to new forms of perception.

“What the utilitarian artists call functional ideas are essentially causal ideas, in other words, religious ideas, and the zealous attempts aimed at constructing tables and chairs, houses, and offices in a rational manner can be traced back to undercurrents that are inspired by religious yearning.”<sup>29</sup>

This is absolutely true, and in these words we can see, quite unconsciously, the ideal essence of the Modern Movement. Rational construction can become the basis of the new art. Only when this principle has not merely prevailed but has also been put into general application, shall we stand at the gate of a new art. This will be the moment at which the new universal spirit [*Weltgefühl*], the social equality of all men, will be manifested. The ideals of this new attitude will not be religious or located in the Beyond: They will, on the contrary, be tied to this earth. But will we not then have moved closer to the final goal of all religions and have realized the Christian ideal? For cannot the whole Christian doctrine be traced back to one tenet—equality for all men—the first condition of any idealist search?

Then once again art will have the spiritual basis it needs to manifest itself as a fully conscious expression of this universal attitude.

And the work of architectural art will not have a specific, individual character but will be the product of the entire community, with every worker making an intellectual contribution under the leadership of the master. For although we know that this sort of collaboration did not occur in the great epochs of culture, with the exception of the Middle Ages, we realize today that the interest of the worker in his labors is entirely missing. The idea of the close emotional involvement of the individual in his own work as the expression not of a person but of a spirit of the time, whose interpreter is the directing artist, has today disappeared. There would seem to be no chance of combat-

ting this tendency, for I know of artists who enthuse about the art of the future and talk of communal art, but who are the most reactionary when it comes to collaboration. And yet, as was previously the case, the individual is being pushed spontaneously into the background in favor not of the community but of the idea. For who asks after the principal architect of a medieval cathedral or after the name of an Egyptian architect; one knows only the rulers under whose power the buildings were created.

But nevertheless we can claim that a start has been made on the long path that leads to an architectural style, and I believe that nothing can now stop this movement. It even seems that architecture will be the art of the twentieth century, a conviction that I also derive from the present social and intellectual indications. For with the growth of the workers' movement, an art is also developing that we, the entire populace, can least do without, an art that is closest to all—architecture.

Its evolution began at the same time as that of utilitarian objects and household goods. It is once again strange to see with what passion these goods, furniture, and interiors are being redesigned. Just as the entire Egyptian style, says Semper, is contained in embryo in the Nile *situla*, with the style progressing from here to the temple, so it might be said, when looking back on the art of the future, that it was embodied in a modern vessel that has yet to come.

Architecture will then reassume the first position among the arts, precisely because it is the true art of the people [*Volkskunst*], not the art of the individual but the art of all, the art of the community in which the spirit of the time is reflected. Architecture demands the collaboration of all energies, and these can only be applied to spiritual ends when everyone is economically independent. Architecture is the manifestation of the greatest talents of an entire people. For only through the joint application of all our energies toward an ideal goal can the astounding perfection be achieved that is the secret of great architecture, which for this reason is unattainable by the individual alone.

And there is more.

Architecture will be the visual art of the twentieth century, just as it was six centuries ago; with painting and sculpture serving alongside it and, thus employed, able to achieve a higher state of development. They will lose their present character as easel painting and salon figure, since these forms represent an art that stands at a spiritually lower level, and they are, for that reason, of secondary stature. This is a prophetic tendency deriving from present social and artistic developments, for one can already see how the growth of interest in the practical arts has led to a decline in the number of easel paintings and salon figures. A yearning for unity in diversity prevails in our society, a yearning for style. I find it good that one can talk of style in society, just as it existed in the past and will exist again, but in a quite different form that we are not yet able to define. But this new community will stand, in any case, diametrically opposed

to the vision of Bruges and will spiritually be of a completely different nature. The artists of the present are confronting the wonderful task of preparing the artistic improvement—the great architectural style of this coming community. There can be no finer work, for this age will again have a culture and will propose tasks more beautiful than ever. For the new community will stand on a spiritual plane that is much higher than that of the Middle Ages and all that went before, for its ideals will also be higher as a result of the perfected principle of economic equality. Equally beautiful will be the material reflection of this principle, its architectural monuments and style. Those who have faith have no need to hurry. Even if, on the one hand, it is sad to know that we shall see nothing of this wonderful age, on the other, we have the compensation of the vision that out of this desert of ugliness, mutual hate, and material cynicism will arise, like Phoenix from the ashes, an art for which we may lay only the foundations.

#### *Addendum*

The true principle of architecture has been dominant at the beginning of every great cultural epoch—the principle of good, honest construction.

This has also been the leading principle in my own work. In accordance with the observations developed above, I have limited myself to the greatest possible simplicity and in matters of structure and decoration looked for those solutions that seemed to me the most natural.

The following comments might serve as an interpretation of this general principle. Since architecture is the art of spatial enclosure, we must emphasize the architectonic nature of space, in both a constructive and decorative sense. For this reason a building should not be considered primarily from the outside.

Spatial enclosure is achieved through walls, and the space or the various spaces are expressed on the outside as a more or less complex arrangement of walls.

Thus the prime importance falls on the wall, which in accordance with its nature should remain flat, for a too strongly modeled wall loses its intrinsic character.

The architecture of the wall is therefore limited to decoration on the plane. Projecting elements remain limited to those that are suggested by the construction, such as window lintels, water spouts, gutters, single cornices, and so on. It follows from this “architecture of the wall,” in which the vertical articulation falls away of its own accord, that the possible supports, such as pillars and columns, are not given projecting capitals, but rather that the transition is accomplished within the plane of the wall.

The actual decoration of the plane is performed by the windows, which are naturally located only where they are necessary, and then in various sizes as appropriate.

This program does not, of course, exclude the introduction of single colors and pictorial decorations. But these should not dominate, and the greatest care should be exercised in finding correct locations for them. Following the basic principle, the wall decorations should stay on the plane, that is to say, sunk into the wall, and sculptural elements should ultimately form ornamental wall components.

Above all, we should show the naked wall in all its simple beauty and scrupulously avoid any tendency toward overornateness.

Ultimately, the same principle reveals itself, irrespective of the individual interpretation:

1. In the Egyptian style
2. In the Greek style, and more clearly in the temple *in antis* than in the peripteral temple
3. In the Roman style, where it does not (erroneously) put the columnation in front of the wall
4. In the medieval style, including Romanesque works. The Gothic rapidly lost itself in a confusing formal and linear game
5. In the early Renaissance, when it was still under the influence of medieval art. Soon, however, it adopted the classical columnar scheme as wall decoration and thus abandoned the true principle. It gradually became a decorative style, and in this direction the Rococo style was the most successful.

*Source Note:* H. P. Berlage, *Gedanken über Stil in der Baukunst* (Leipzig: Julius Zeitler, 1905). (Two lectures given by H. P. Berlage on 22 and 23 January 1904 in Krefeld.)

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

1. This essay, first published in German in 1905, was later published in Dutch under the title "Beschouwingen over stijl" and included in the collection of texts by Berlage, *Studies over bouwkunst, stijl en samenleving* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1910), 47–76. In the Dutch edition the text is prefaced by a quote from Albert Verwey: "Het eigenlijk moderne, in onzen tijd, is bezonnenheid" (The truly modern aspect of our age is level-headedness).

2. Saint-Sauveur is actually the cathedral of Bruges.

3. Jan Breydel (1264–circa 1330) and Pieter de Coninck (circa 1255–1332 or 1333) were the lead-

ers of the Flemish popular uprising against the French in 1302, which resulted in the massacre of the French garrison at Bruges on 18 May—the Matins of Bruges (*Brugsche Metten*)—and the defeat of a powerful French army of invasion at the Battle of the Golden Spurs (*Guldensporenslag*) near Courtrai on 11 July. Their exploits were commemorated in a bronze double statue by the sculptor P. de Vigne, which was erected in the Grote Markt in Bruges in 1887.

4. Sint Janshospitaal in Flemish, Hôpital Saint-Jean in French.

5. Max Simon Nordau, originally Südfeld (1849–1923), was born in Budapest. He trained as a medical doctor and practiced in Paris, where he spent the majority of his working life. As George L. Mosse has noted: “With that typical abundance of energy for which we might envy the men of his generation, he treated his patients, wrote some nine volumes of novels and short stories, seven plays, and fifteen works of essays and cultural criticism, some of them running to several volumes. Later in life he produced speeches and writings on behalf of the Zionist cause. Small wonder that Nordau consistently stressed intellectual discipline and power of will” (George L. Mosse, “Introduction,” in Max Simon Nordau, *Degeneration* [New York: H. Fertig, 1968], xiv); originally published as *Entartung*, 2 vols. (Berlin: C. Duncker, 1892–1893). The “fatal book” to which Berlage refers is Max Simon Nordau, *Die conventionellen Lügen der Kulturmenschheit*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Naumburg, 1884). It was translated under the title *Conventional Lies of our Civilization* (Chicago: L. Schick, 1884) and ran to seventy-one editions. As paraphrased by Mosse, Nordau’s text asserts that “the future of humanity lies in its elevation, not its degradation. Ideas based upon the natural sciences will enable humanity to see this distant development more clearly than will the fog of superstition. Science and progress go together, and he who understands the workings of science will also have an unobstructed view of the future of man” (Mosse [above, this note], xv). The appeal of this program to a rationalist like Berlage is self-evident.

6. The Chat Noir was a cabaret in Montmartre, Paris, frequented by the musical avant-garde in the 1890s. Auerbach’s Keller in Leipzig was the student bar frequented by Goethe in his student days and used by him as the setting for the meeting of Faust, Mephisto, and students in *Faust*, part 1, 1808.

7. Heinrich von Ferstel (1828–1883) was a Viennese architect best known for his competition-winning design for the Votivkirche in Vienna, submitted in 1855 and finally completed in 1879. His success with this project marked the beginning of a glittering career that coincided with the development of the Ringstraße in Vienna. Among Ferstel’s major works are the palace of Archduke Ludwig Victor on Schwarzenbergplatz, Vienna (1864–1869), and the Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst (Austrian museum for applied art) in the manner of the early Italian Renaissance (1868–1871) and the University of Vienna in the style of the High Italian Renaissance (1873–1884), both on the Ringstraße. Very tellingly, the pseudonym used by Ferstel on his entry for the Berlin Reichstag competition was “Bramante.”

8. Following his training at the cathedral masons’ lodge (*Dombauhütte*) in Cologne, Friedrich Freiherr von Schmidt (1825–1891) won third prize with his entry for the Votivkirche competition

in Vienna (see note 7). In 1863 he was appointed resident architect for Saint Stephan's Cathedral in Vienna and directed a vigorous architectural practice, occupied principally with the design of churches in Germany and Austria.

9. The most influential Dutch architect of the nineteenth century, Petrus Josephus Hubertus Cuypers (1827–1921) provided the essential connection between the rationalism of Viollet-le-Duc and the cultural mission of Gothic revivalism, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the progressive architecture that blossomed in the Netherlands in the early twentieth century, significantly in the work of Cuypers's many pupils and assistants, who included J. L. M. Lauweriks, K. P. C. de Bazel, and H. J. M. Walenkamp. Although best known for his major public projects, Amsterdam Centraal Station (1876–1889) and the Rijksmuseum (1875–1885), Cuypers built a significant number of churches after the restoration of the Roman Catholic faith in the Netherlands in 1853, including St.-Martinuskerk, Wijk near Maastricht (1853–1859); Laurentiuskerk, Alkmaar (1859–1860); Kerk van St. Willibrordus buiten de Veste, Amsterdam (designed 1864–1866, built 1871–1873); and Kerk van het H. Hart, Vondelstraat, Amsterdam (1870–1873). He was also active in the restoration of historic churches, including Nieuwe Kerk, Delft (1873–1900) and Grote St.-Bavo, Haarlem (1874–1918).

10. Pierre Vignon (1763–1828) was a rather undistinguished architect. He was appointed general building inspector in the new French republic in the year II (1793/1794) and was closely involved with the remodeling of the Madeleine in Paris after 1806. In the words of Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler* (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann, 1940), 34: 358, Vignon was “a conceited braggart, totally devoid of any practical experience in building.”

11. Charles Percier (1764–1838) studied architecture at the French Architectural Academy where he was a grand-prix winner. With Pierre-Francois-Léonard Fontaine, his collaborator from 1794 to 1814, he is credited with the creation of the Empire style.

12. See “Architecture's Place in Modern Aesthetics” (above, 95–104), nn. 3–8.

13. Berlage is alluding to Goethe here: *Faust*, part I (1808), “Studierzimmer”: “*Grau, teurer Freund, ist alle Theorie / Und grün des Lebens goldner Baum*” (All theory, dear Friend, is gray, / but the golden tree of life springs ever green).

14. Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *Le dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française du XI<sup>e</sup> au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 10 vols. (Paris: B. Bance [vols. 1–8], A. Morel [vols. 9–10], 1854–1868). Gottfried Semper, *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten; oder, Praktische Aesthetik*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt: Verlag für Kunst und Wissenschaft, 1860–1863).

15. Although Berlage attributes this quotation to Semper, it is distinctly un-Semperian in both style and sentiment. Perhaps Berlage was offering a distant and scrambled memory of Goethe's exhortation, *Faust*, part I (1808), “Auerbachs Keller in Leipzig”: “*Man kann nicht stets das Fremde meiden, / Das Gute liegt uns oft so fern*” (One cannot always avoid what is foreign, / Good things are often far away).

16. Gottfried Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, trans. Wolfgang

Herrmann and Harry F. Mallgrave (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989), 183. Semper (see note 14), 2: viii, "Prolegomena."

17. Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *Entretiens sur l'architecture*, 2 vols. (Paris: A. Morel, 1863–1872), 1: 305: "Toute forme qui n'est pas ordonnée par la structure doit être repoussée."

18. Gottfried Semper, "On Architectural Styles," lecture delivered at the Rathaus in Zurich, 1869. Translation from Herrmann and Mallgrave (see note 16), 269.

19. Although Goethe may well have used this felicitous phrase, the Romantic paradox that unity can only be represented in diversity, and diversity only in unity, is usually ascribed to Adam Müller. See Eugene N. Anderson, "Response to Contemporary Crisis," in John B. Halsted, ed., *Romanticism: Problems of Definition, Explanation, and Evaluation* (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1965), 96–103. Goethe, however, read Müller's *Vorlesungen über die deutsche Wissenschaft und Literatur* (Dresden: C. G. Gärtner, 1806) shortly after its publication; see Oskar F. Walzel, *Romantisches*, vol. 2, *Adam Müller's Ästhetik* (Bonn: Ludwig Röhrscheid, 1934), III.

20. Berlage's reference to the "garden city of the future" points to the title of Ebenezer Howard's seminal book published in 1898 as *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1898). The direct result of this tract was the foundation of the Garden City Association in 1899 and the establishment of the first garden city at Letchworth, Hertfordshire, in 1903. In 1902 and subsequently, Howard's text was reprinted under the title *Garden Cities of To-morrow* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1902).

21. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Aesthetics*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), 1: 2 (emphasis in original); originally published as "Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik," in Hegel, *Werke*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1842), 10.1.

22. Semper (see note 14), 2.5: 5.

23. Berlage uses the phrase in English in his original text.

24. Hermann Bahr's aphorism, actually penned for the Secession Building in Vienna, was inscribed above the portal of the Ernst-Ludwig-Haus in Darmstadt, designed by Joseph Maria Olbrich and completed for the exhibition *Ein Dokument Deutscher Kunst* in May 1901.

25. The preceding text in italics is not found in the German edition of this essay but was added by Berlage in the Dutch version, "Beschouwingen over stijl" (see note 1), 71–72.

26. Karl Scheffler, *Konventionen der Kunst* (Leipzig: Julius Zeitler, 1904), 11. Berlage's quotation is a shortened version of Scheffler's text and is among a series of extracts that Berlage copied out by hand. See Berlage Papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Rotterdam, Dossier 163.

27. Berlage is paraphrasing here, with varying degrees of accuracy, sentiments taken from Scheffler (see note 26), 11–15.

28. This paragraph is a quotation, with some variations, from Scheffler (see note 26), 15.

29. Despite the implication in Berlage's text, this quotation is not to be found in Scheffler (see note 26).

# ON THE LIKELY DEVELOPMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

(1905)

*I prefer elegant failure  
to bourgeois rectitude . . .  
—van Deyssel<sup>1</sup>*

In my essay “Thoughts on Style in Architecture”<sup>2</sup> I tried to explain that the reason for the lack of style in our time is that a style can be developed only on a spiritual foundation. This means that style is nothing but the material form of a universal idea, the product of a communal spiritual ideal, and—lacking such an ideal—its development is for the time being out of the question.

I quoted Scheffler’s little book *Konventionen der Kunst* (Conventions of art), in which one can read among other things, “The present resides between two conditions, and all manifestations of the new art can be explained, on the one hand, by the lack of religious or philosophical convention and, on the other, by the longing for this convention.”<sup>3</sup>

In other words, the present time lies as an interim period, or, as Scheffler said, as a “religious interregnum” between two cultural eras, and all expressions of neohistorical styles can therefore be considered only temporary episodes. For “there is nothing worse than when a convention, which came into being centuries ago under very specific circumstances, is being dragged lifelessly along through times that have changed.”<sup>4</sup> Although the products of a so-called modern art, when created on an intellectual basis, might well have some value for the future, generally speaking, when we accept Scheffler’s thesis, their value can be only limited, as they are of a purely personal character and lack a communal spiritual ideal. Thus, none of the products share a common idea or even show a similarity in intention.

Olbrich’s proud words, “Artist, reveal your world, which never was, yet ever will be,” are a perfect reflection of this subjectivity, but they also contain the death sentence for this kind of art.<sup>5</sup> For an art that can manifest itself only through its creator and that blossoms with him but also dies with him cannot have a serious impact on the future.

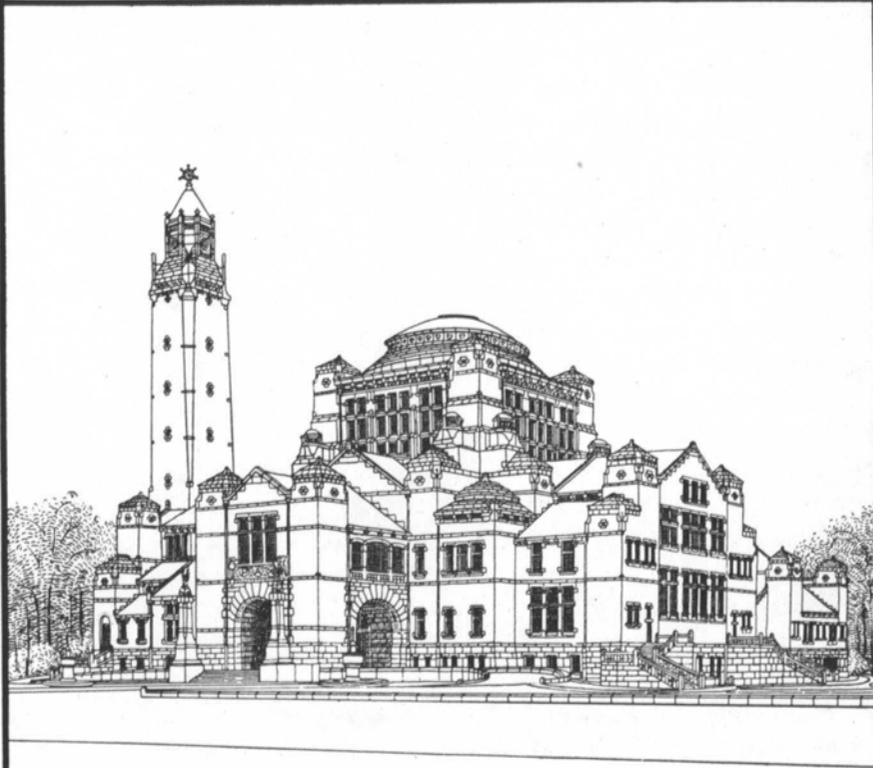
It is the most rarefied expression of subjectivism and will have to disappear before there can once again be an all-powerful universal idea.

At this moment, I would rather not pursue these reflections about a spiritual basis but focus instead on the potential art form of the future.

Just as its spiritual basis can be determined only by approximation (because history has taught us that many predictions, even those that seem to be based on firm grounds, have sometimes turned out to be wrong, and that the development of a movement may go in a different direction than initially anticipated), so a development in art can only be approximated; one can only guess how a certain art form will develop.

"On the Likely Development of Architecture. Design for a Palace of Peace."  
[Drawing by Johan Briedé, 1910, based on a design by H. P. Berlage, 1907]

OVER · DE · WAARSCHYN  
LYKE · ONTWIKKELING  
DER · ARCHITECTUUR



ONTWERP · VAN · EEN · VREDESPAELS

I want to attempt such a prognosis, based on the pertinent data. For just as philosophy draws conclusions based on spiritual phenomena, so art should follow a similar road.

I would like to add immediately that I hesitate to draw these conclusions. I say this not because I lack the courage to face up to them but because I am still somewhat scared of accepting them: they go against my feelings, against that which I admire, against the great beauties of the past.

Is this a reason to be conservative, that is to say, to be purposely blind to what is bound to come? Certainly not. On the contrary, one has to accept new things and attempt to give them as much beauty as possible while preserving one's principles.

One has to find new principles when the old ones appear to have changed.

An architect is no more, but also no less, than a child of his time.

In this same essay one can read the following: "Moreover, the architect's job is much more difficult and complicated than it used to be."<sup>6</sup>

One of the most difficult things that comes with the architectural profession is the study of the many catalogs of building materials. I am referring here not to the large category of imitative materials—those pernicious inventions of an industry interested only in profit. Their use will always compromise the architect, for the use of imitations cannot be defended, either stylistically or on principle. I refer, rather, to those inventions of the building industry that are indeed new and that not only should not but also cannot be ignored by the serious architect. For out of an admittedly heterogeneous but nonetheless important collection of catalogs one can, after some sorting, choose those materials that can be applied in practice. When we study them, it becomes clear that the inventions of the industry are, in general, intended to make improvements in order to eliminate the shortcomings of the traditional materials.

Although it is the profit motive that leads industry to search for improvements in order to compete with the materials currently in use, one cannot deny that technology benefits greatly as a result.

The art of building means considering the specific characteristics, that is, the disadvantages of building materials both practically and aesthetically (practically by taking appropriate measures, aesthetically by employing a stylistic treatment that, in Semper's words, makes a virtue out of the necessary joint or seam). Yet, even when the disadvantages of the materials have been eliminated as much as possible, some will always remain. For example—to mention the most common problems—the warping, shrinking, or tearing of wood, or the thermal expansion and contraction of metal. We all know how unpleasant these things are. Problems like these often lead clients to make less-than-pleasant remarks to architects, who in turn, although they are quite incapable of changing the laws of nature, would prefer that wood did not warp and metal did not

shrink. As a result, architects have sometimes secretly desired that the time would come when they would have a material at their disposal that was free of these unpleasant characteristics. An additional problem is that the requirements of hygiene, which need to be taken into consideration extremely carefully, preclude the use of some building materials.

This touches on a second point: changing ideas about society and resulting government interference have elicited all kinds of measures intended either to improve general health or to prevent, as far as possible, the danger of fire.

Whether or not these rules were necessary to protect tenants from one of the most questionable manifestations of the profit motive—building speculation—can be left as an open question. But it is certain that the *laissez-faire* attitude is being countered by a strong response from the government, whose principal aim is to make buildings as efficient as possible with regard to both technology and hygiene.

These requirements are of primary importance at this time. Opposing them when they might not fit in with our aesthetic ideas would only betray a lack of insight on the part of the architect and would be a lost cause when directed against the government.

These requirements are part of the social movement; they can be mentioned together with the growing interest in sport and gymnastics, yes, even with the vegetarian and temperance movements, which, whatever one may think about them, are undeniably phenomena of our time, and which, irrespective of their ethical considerations, propose a better care of the body. They may, therefore, be heralds of a new culture.

In this regard, too, one can see a change in social ideas from which nobody can hide in the long run, and which are now contributing to the establishment of a modern society—that is to say, a bourgeois society. The French Revolution signified the first start in this direction, but now such a society is certainly in the process of self-consolidation, a process best reflected in the simplification of our way of life—even whether we like it or not [*nolens volens*]<sup>7</sup>—in those circles that still form an independent elite within society.

It was Diepenbrock who, on the occasion of the magnificent coronation celebrations for the tsar of Russia, felt tempted to speak of an increasingly lackluster world, and in a sense he was right.<sup>7</sup> For irrespective of its spiritual character, this move toward a bourgeois society has certainly not yet made the visible, external world more beautiful, but more ugly.

One can therefore see a growth toward culture, albeit in a very early stage, but there are already some striking symptoms that will again be reflected in the arts, just as in the past.

And what are these symptoms?

Quite a bit of criticism was generated, and quite a few pens set into motion, when the

first modern craft products—furniture and household effects—came on the market. Chairs and cabinets, pots and pans, and even some buildings show not only a very strong tendency toward primitive simplicity but also an almost complete absence of decoration.

There appeared a movement toward omitting those elements that formerly had been considered the fundamental essence of a work of art. Neither a utilitarian object nor a building was considered a work of art if it lacked ornamentation; and neither a plain cupboard nor a factory or a warehouse could be the work of an artist.

It was not the form as such but, if you will, certain secondary circumstances that determined their artistic quality.

Please understand me correctly. I do not mean that the decoration that was applied could just as well have been left out. Absolutely not, for, in principle, form and decoration are one. They come into existence at the same moment, they grow together. It is simply a lack of discrimination that causes them to be separated like body and clothing, or pudding and sauce.

Exactly because form and decoration grow at the same time, the endeavors of our time are fundamental in character.

Aren't the objects that were designed in this way works of art? Is it really true that art starts with decoration?

On a simple level of reflection, something could indeed be said for this point of view, for in the current nadir of artistic taste, the most trashy object, provided that it is decorated (even with the most banal kind of ornament), tends to be more appreciated than an undecorated object with the noblest lines. Similarly, if a tenth-rate building has some ornamental details applied according to an existing formal scheme, it is considered more beautiful than a building that has impeccable proportions but lacks all decoration.

On a high level of art conception, which is the only correct one and which perceives art as a reflection of culture, the appreciation of the undecorated object as a work of art is indeed possible, for such a conception of art means that perceptions of art change when culture changes. I am not discussing here whether mankind will be able to live without decoration in the long run, that is, whether our innate desire for it forces us automatically to return to ornament.

Let me start by quoting from Hermann Muthesius's little book *Kultur und Kunst* (Culture and art), which in my opinion makes a basic mistake by not distinguishing between culture and civilization, with the result that it speaks constantly of our culture, even though our times are characterized by a total absence of culture and thus of art. Nonetheless, Muthesius's text is notable for the correctness of its observation and the clarity of its style.<sup>8</sup>

In his essay "Umbildung unserer Anschauungen" (Our changing views)<sup>9</sup> Muth-

sius compares the changes of taste that one can see taking place in our time with the conditions that prevailed in the eighteenth century (especially those in the field of architecture, which are so great that it seems we must expect a total transformation in taste). Muthesius writes:

*Whoever wants to comprehend in one particular sphere the enormous changes that our aesthetic senses have undergone over this period should look at men's clothing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.*

*In the eighteenth century the extravagantly embroidered silk jacket, the powdered wig, and the ruffled shirt were the norm. Today, the simple black morning suit worn with a simple white cravat over a plain, white, ironed shirt serves even for ceremonial dress. What man would feel comfortable today in the eighteenth-century costume?*

*And when we look at the utilitarian objects that surround us, we find the same transformation. Walking through an arsenal, we see the weapons of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, embellished with exquisite decoration. Today's hunting rifles and revolvers are entirely undecorated and embody only the notion of naked serviceability. Perhaps the comparison between now and then strikes us most forcibly when we look at the old gun barrels, which were copiously decorated with marvelously modeled acanthus leaves and are preserved in our museums as collectors' pieces. In contrast, the idea of embellishing our present-day gun barrels with ornament is patently absurd.*

And a little bit further on:

*In our machines, too, we find this mark of the age revealed equally unmistakably in another form—a quite distinctive tendency toward undecorated form, with an emphasis on the purely functional.*

*Indeed, precisely the machines tell us most about the character of our age, for they came into being without tradition, whereas the present form of things that were already used earlier, such as the landau or the sailing boat, has evolved from their earlier form only by a process of shedding layers.*

*One could, of course, question whether an earlier age would have decorated such things as machines, since the modern world of machines did not exist then. But there were tools, such as astronomical instruments and vehicles of all sorts, all of which were decorated, sometimes very richly. No locksmith constructed a lock without some ornamental effort, no joiner made a table without some tribute to fantasy. The astronomical instruments displayed rich engravings, the sailing ship an elaborately decorated prow, at the very least.*

*According to our current criteria, all these things were “artistically” formed. But according to the criteria current at the time, no one would have thought of art in the context of these things. They were formed just as the naive inner instinct dictated.*

Noting that in our time, especially, there is a loud cry for art such as one had never heard in the past, with the result that most sins are being committed in the field of building, Muthesius states that a fundamental error prevails, which mistakes ornament for art. He then concludes “that the development of our time forces us to throw off ornamentation,” even though this principle has not yet been implemented everywhere and has only seldom been achieved in a completely pure manner. He compares the clothing of women with that of men and shows that the former is still entirely under the influence of the principle of decoration. He adds immediately, however, that in this field, too, important changes have started to occur, especially in England, where some of the women’s clothing is already entirely undecorated. One can see this best in the sailor’s hat, which is being worn by women of all ranks.

In spite of the deeply rooted human desire for decoration to which I referred above—a desire that never denies itself and that will thus continue to present itself, something I will return to later—the correctness of Muthesius’s argument and the evidence of the effort to omit decoration can hardly be denied.

In any case, the general consensus about art has also come to the conclusion that it is a serious error to confuse art with decoration, an error that has had the most fatal impact on architecture as a whole.

I think I can refrain from giving you once again an extensive explanation of this error or detailing the tectonic disasters that have resulted from it, for this would be entirely superfluous.

Insofar as art is a reflection of culture, we may assume on the basis of these observations that the art of the future, the beginning of which can hardly be detected at the moment, will create unornamented objects, that is, it will use undecorated materials as a matter of principle.

Thus, without a doubt, our opinions about art have changed. We have started to like things that people used to find ugly, and we have started to see beauty in places where people in the past did not look for it. This change may have been a reaction against the overload of ornament, which was responsible for the errors mentioned above. For every action produces a reaction; every vehement action engenders an equally vehement and therefore excessive reaction. As a result, people have started to see the beauty of natural materials again, and that seems to me the most important outcome of this effort. People have rediscovered a beauty whose existence had slipped their memory. As a result, we

have also in this field come closer to a love of nature; we have started to see its endless beauty from which we had strayed so far.

We should not misunderstand Goethe's saying that "material acquires its value only through artistic design." On the contrary, it confirms our point of view as long as we can understand that we should see "artistic design" not as ornamental treatment only—for that may result in forgetting about the material—but instead as a treatment that allows the material to be presented at its best.

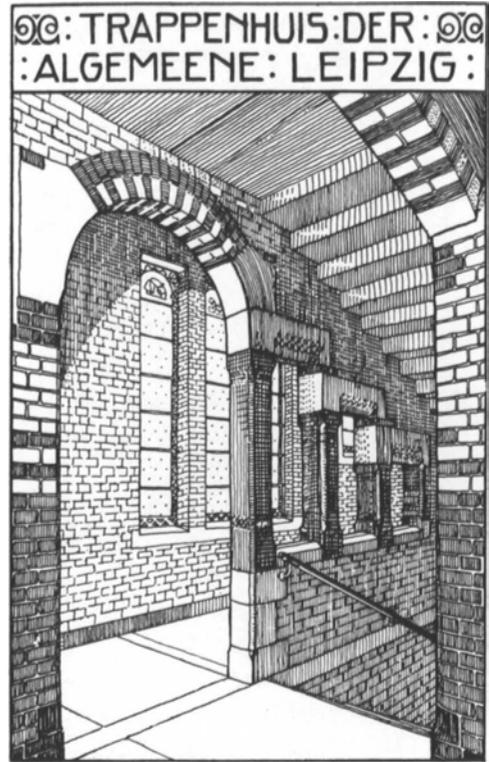
We have started once again to understand that polished marble really does not need extra decoration in order to show itself off in all its splendor; that granite is sufficiently beautiful because of its smooth surface; and that the endless color nuances of the various kinds of brick and stone give us sufficient variation in the wall surface not to require superfluous architectural design. We have also begun to understand that metals can give us a similar satisfaction; that the splendid surface of polished yellow copper has a beauty of its own, and that we enjoy seeing the smooth surfaces of a beautiful piece of cast iron solely because of the beauty of the material. We have rediscovered the natural attractions of the various kinds of wood, whose grain provides us with sufficient decoration so that we do not have to add anything to it. For is this not the reason that nature is the mistress of art?

As soon as the form is good, as soon as in that sense the "artistic design" is completed, the material offers enough beauty and does not need any extra decoration.

Following the quotation cited above and because the secret behind the changing views on beauty may in part be found in it, it should be noted here that we have really come so far that we can see beauty in the smooth cannon, in the machine glittering with a thousand reflections of light, in the locomotive, the bicycle, the electric streetcar, yes even in the automobile; we like them because of the beauty of their materials, even though these objects are not yet works of art. However modern this idea might appear, it is true that one cannot say where art begins and where it ends, for it is impossible for us to differentiate between the attraction we feel for various kinds of things artistic or nonartistic,<sup>10</sup> especially when these objects in every detail meet all practical requirements and thus contain an important element of beauty of our time. Nevertheless, one refuses for the present to see these objects as works of art and not without reason, for feelings can count for judgment when the mind cannot decide.

I say for the present, for if art is a reflection of culture, we do not know whether these objects will be considered works of art in the future. Or could it be that at this moment they have not yet acquired their definitive form, and that only the future will be able to lift them from the lower level of beauty to which we now consign them to a higher level on which they *will* belong, for we know even now that the engineer is not indifferent to the beautiful form of the various parts of a machine?

"Stairwell in the Algemeene, Leipzig." [Drawing by Johan Briedé, 1910, based on a design by H. P. Berlage for the office building for the Algemeene Maatschappij van Levensverzekering en Lijfrente, Leipzig, 1902]



The fact that at this moment we are not yet able to see these objects as works of art is perhaps simply because in these cultureless times they have not yet acquired the form they will have once a culture is established. The hackney carriage, for example, which at this moment does not show any traces of beauty, will then also take a different form. Witness the fact that the elegant carriage is already more pleasing to our senses. Men's clothes, which have lost any trace of beauty, will then also certainly change for the better. Men's clothes offer the best evidence of the ornamental tendency, which is why they are also mentioned by Muthesius. On the one hand, he is not entirely happy with them, but, on the other hand, he questions whether the attempts to make them look nicer will change anything. Yet, we can already see in our time an indication that men's clothing will improve in the future, just as the clothing of the women's reform movement is already moving in the same direction. Men's clothing also supports our argument that decoration is no longer used excessively.

On the basis of these reflections, I think that I have proven adequately that there will be a significant movement toward a future culture that will be characterized by a simplification of the architectonic forms: in general, there will be an absence of decoration but a satisfactory expression of beauty through the material itself.

Considering this development, one cannot help wondering what the future of our architecture will be. How will it present itself as the architecture of its time while taking this tendency into consideration? Within this irresistible unity, how will it manifest itself as the leading art? In this context, we have to go back to those government measures I mentioned at the beginning: the one to further hygiene and the other against fire hazards. Although it may seem strange, both have a serious impact on architecture.

I will start with the first one.

Every practicing architect knows that these ordinances have become very prominent recently and that the new building codes that have already been drawn up or are in preparation contain many clauses that are the direct result of the need for such ordinances. All kinds of regulations are being introduced with regard to the height and dimensions of the rooms, the relationship between the amount of light that comes into a space and its dimensions, and, in conjunction with this, the building materials that must be used. In short, these are governmental interventions with which the architect must comply. In addition, industry supplies materials that are already being used by the architect for reasons of hygiene. It is evident that these measures must have a considerable impact on our architecture, and I would like to quote Muthesius, who shed some light on these particularly modern factors in his essay "Über das Moderne in der Architektur" (On the modern in architecture),<sup>11</sup> which he gave as a lecture at the conference in Madrid<sup>12</sup> and which is very much worth reading. He said, "The challenge that the demands of hygiene made on architecture promoted a large number of innovations, which took their most visible form in the notion of the bath and the water closet, and for which the most important training school is the modern hospital."

In this connection, I would like to direct special attention to the improvement of the materials and to the place where the hygiene regulations are being applied most painstakingly, that is, the hospital, where unhygienic materials are being replaced with better ones. Considerations of hygiene and the purely practical reasons mentioned have already resulted in a search for a surface (wall, floor, or ceiling) without a joint or seam. Whereas plaster had already partly achieved this goal for the wall and ceiling, the floor is now being included. For the invention of such materials as artificial stone, or "torgament,"<sup>13</sup> now makes possible also a seamless floor, whereas previously linoleum with its few seams appeared already to be a sufficient guarantee against the problems mentioned above. And now catalogs are being sent around advertising seamless wooden doors, which would solve the problem completely.

These materials are not only of importance for hygiene, they also have the advantage of not warping, shrinking, or tearing, issues that I mentioned at the beginning. They are such a real blessing against all these unpleasant characteristics of the materials that the architect now spontaneously cries “eureka.”

Thus, in general, we can see a tendency—both for practical and for hygienic reasons—to find a seamless wall, a tendency that in principle deserves only applause.

When we want to use these materials, we are immediately faced with the question of whether we can give them a beautiful form, but I will return to this question later. In any case, as I have already indicated, the use of the seamless surface shows that there is a tendency to omit decoration, that there is a tendency to be content with the beauty of the materials themselves.

I am now moving on to the second category of welcome government measures: those against fire.

While the regulations concerning hygiene are already an important part of governmental involvement, those against fire risks are certainly no less important; every architect is familiar with this fact through his practice.

Initially, one material seemed to be the absolute solution against this danger; that was iron, the modern material invented by the “grace of God.” At the Madrid conference I proposed a thesis on iron, which started with the following explanatory preamble:

*The discovery of iron, that is, the manufacture of the iron girder and truss, is structurally and also stylistically without doubt the most important of the many building materials that industry introduces daily as it strives to achieve ever better results in the field of architecture. Alongside stone and wood, iron could become the third great building material and could thus initiate a new era in architecture. Yet, we can now see that, notwithstanding its great significance, iron has not been able to accomplish what it initially promised. We cannot, therefore, speak of an iron style, using style in the narrower sense of a style determined by the material. It also does not look as if we can expect such a development in the future.<sup>14</sup>*

In a practical sense, iron has been unable to measure up to the expectations. Because of its powers of expansion, it poses the greatest threat for fire, which is why the government, instead of encouraging the use of iron, dictates that when it has to be employed, it has to be wrapped in a fireproof material. It is impossible to disobey these regulations even though they may sometimes seem excessive. It is certain that the government did not understand the stylistic significance of its regulations, for the thought that there is such a thing as style would never occur to it. Although an explanation might result in

a somewhat more lenient application of the rules, the principle remains the same and, as I said already, one cannot disapprove of it.

A far-reaching consequence of this regulation is that the construction of a stock exchange like the one in Amsterdam, to mention just one example, would presumably not have been possible in Germany, and perhaps it is now no longer possible even in our own country.

Indeed, I do not have to dwell on the many examples of the great devastations caused by iron during fires. This devastation was so bad that in new theaters we have again started to make the roof over the stage out of wood, just as we used to do. The same thing happened to the posts in warehouses, for experience has taught us that wood can endure fire for a long time, whereas iron expands immediately and pulls down walls that would have remained standing had wooden posts been used.

The stylistic significance of iron in architecture is reduced to nil, therefore, except when it is used for railroad bridges and stations. One does not hear about an iron style any more, although iron was greeted with a great deal of enthusiasm at the time when people were asking for a nineteenth-century style. When iron was introduced in the simple form of the joist or in the complex form of the truss, people thought that everything was in order. But what a disappointment! For, irrespective of the much more profound qualities that are the basis for a general style, iron could not even meet the requirements as a building material; one cannot even speak of style in a narrower sense, even though it was studied most seriously at that time.

I remember a very fundamental study by a German who wanted to start from the so-called framework [*Gefach*], that is, the iron truss, as opposed to the classical column and beam; he developed a very learned theory on this basis.<sup>15</sup> It did not lead to anything, or other structures would already have been built. Indeed, if we want to make a material the basis for a style, we will have to be able also to make walls out of this material and, if necessary, on a large scale. One wanted so much for this to happen.

The new method of construction was used everywhere, wherever it was possible. This is understandable, for it is a material that possesses a large load-bearing capacity while it has little mass. But when one tried to use iron together with a material for which it seemed so appropriate, that is, with stone, it turned out to be a failure in an aesthetic sense as well. It failed because the character of iron, namely, its thinness, is constantly in disharmony with the character of stone, namely, its mass.

Iron seemed to be ill fated. And yet, one thought that it was terribly modern to place an iron beam above a large store window in order to support the solid facade above. There is a good reason for this method of construction, for nowadays floors above stores generally contain residential areas. In this case, however, the wall is again made of stone, for iron cannot be used in residential architecture. Who would not immediately

see the disharmony between the large opening on the lower level with two thin piers on either side—as is commonly asked for by the client—and the solid facade above? A wall with iron framing and large openings would restore this harmony. Who would not rather have a stone arch than the iron beam? In general, however, an arch cannot be used structurally, and one would get into an argument with the store owner, who usually wants as much light as possible.

In this sense the modern department stores with their sales areas on several floors are much better. They allow for iron construction with large window openings on every floor between stone piers that run over the entire height of the building. Paul Sédille's *Le Printemps* department store in Paris is the classical example of it, and the Wertheim department store in Berlin, with its most recent addition, represents possibly the best in this field.<sup>16</sup> But considering that the wall is being reduced to a minimum, one wonders inadvertently if it would not be better to make the piers of iron, too. This leads us automatically to the exhibition hall, which, after all, actually defines a department store. Such beautiful examples have been built already. I would mention the splendid buildings at the world exhibitions in Paris in 1878 and, especially, in 1889 with their extraordinarily beautiful terra-cotta decoration. The machinery hall of 1889, which was destroyed in 1900, was the masterpiece. The Crystal Palace in London was built at a time when one was still totally unprepared for such a problem, and as a result it looks like a gigantic greenhouse. The *Paleis voor Volksvlijt* in Amsterdam (Palace of national industry), on the other hand—an extraordinary piece of work for its time—went to the opposite extreme by trying too hard to be an imitation of a stone building in iron and glass.<sup>17</sup>

Who cannot see the same aesthetic conflict in our large railroad stations and bridges; in the former there is always an unhappy relationship between the shed and the actual station. I do not want to speak here about the American building method, which covers the iron skeleton with stone—stylistically, the worst use of these materials.

What a terrible mess when the iron construction has to be accommodated to historical architecture! It sounds like a paradox, but it happens regularly. Recently, I saw such a confusion at the main railroad station in Dresden, which is actually a first-rate building. Here the iron construction is joined with the stone building, which is classical in style, without any serious attempt to create an architectonic solution. It looks as if architect and engineer designed their projects without any collaboration. But even when an architect has good judgment, that is, when he avoids specific historical styles and makes a serious attempt to achieve a harmonic solution, he cannot escape the aesthetic conflict, even when the iron construction in itself is admirable. The lack of harmony is a constant factor in such a building, even though Muthesius thinks that we may be as proud of our iron constructions as the Romans were of the Colosseum. Over

and over again, the problem is that the building and the glass-and-iron roof seem to be two different constructions placed one next to the other. The reason for this is the different characters of the materials that are being used: one is in a sense agile, thin, and the other calm and solid; and these characters seem to be unable to tolerate each other. One could say about them that they can “neither be separated, nor be any good together.”

The Grand Palais at the most recent world exhibition in Paris has shown how far one can go astray when one joins these materials. Here, an especially heavy Baroque facade was placed in front of a light exhibition hall made of iron and glass. This must have made a most painful impression on every architect who saw it.

The same happens with our railroad bridges when, as is done so often in Germany, portals of a different material are being placed in front of the actual bridge. Such portals are made not of iron but of stone and, furthermore, are designed in the spirit of old Roman triumphal arches or in the character of old medieval town gates as we can see in the bridges across the Elbe in Hamburg or in the bridges across the Rhine near Bonn, Mainz, and Ruhrort. One always gets an impression of ambiguity, which in this case is reinforced by the fact that, for practical reasons, the iron construction is not attached to the stone, so that the portals do not support the girders of the bridge but have been set in front of it as decoration only.

Indeed, if one does not want to make an iron portal, which would actually be the only correct course (the bridge across the Meuse in Rotterdam has one, albeit an ugly one), then it is better to have no portal at all.

Suspension bridges, with cables hanging from solid stone portals, belong in the same category. The worst example of this sort is Tower Bridge in London, which has structurally correct iron-truss piers encased in the most questionable way by two monumental medieval fortresslike towers.

Yet there are already better examples, such as the new bridges across the Danube in Pest, which compare favorably with the old suspension bridge.

Notwithstanding applications, an iron style does not exist, for, on the one hand, the material turned out not to be practically useful and, on the other hand, a large-scale combination of materials did not produce satisfactory results. The reason was that regardless of the degree of success in combining the two, iron and stone are materials too different in character to go together harmoniously. One should, nevertheless, admit that in most buildings no other solution offered itself for such a combination of iron and stone.

Supposing, finally, that we had continued to use iron. We would have shied away from applying it in monumental architecture, for iron in general lacks that certain something that stone possesses, that is, it lacks the characteristic of repose, which alone

is able to create some solidity. In addition, stone, as a direct product of nature, also harmonizes with natural surroundings.

All these attempts might still be considered a beginning, which means that more study and experience might have given a better solution. One likewise cannot deny that on a small scale—in interior architecture for example—iron is perfectly satisfactory and has been used with good aesthetic results even in monumental settings, an area in which in our country Cuypers took the initiative.<sup>18</sup> Now, however, the government has introduced its fire regulations, which make this use of iron impossible; for all iron must be covered with a fireproof material—columns, beams, and soon also the shop-front architrave, as has already happened in Germany.

Thus the use of iron is forbidden forever. With this, the stylistic evolution of the one building type that is characteristic of our age, and which is predestined to undergo further spatial development, has been halted—at least as far as the use of iron is concerned. The building type in question is the large department store, which already possesses monumental qualities, and which may in the future belong among the most monumental buildings of all.

Iron is also obsolete in the stylistic sense. This is certainly a pity, especially when we consider the many commendable attempts that have already been made in this direction. This causes a great sense of resentment in the architect who receives his design back from the city with the request to cover all the iron.

Is there nothing we can do against these regulations? Can we not protest against them? Oh, no! We know that such a thing is impossible, even when these regulations are sometimes excessive. We have to obey the government. We may expect an intensification rather than a relaxation of these rules; and, as we said before, they are not objectionable in principle.

It is in this regard as with many other things, “We think that we push, but we are being pushed.”

I continued my explanation at the Madrid congress in the same vein:

“We may consider it to be a rule that iron in buildings has to stay out of sight, that it needs to be covered; as a construction material it, therefore, has meaning only as a core and is also stylistically no longer of immediate importance. This development is certainly regrettable, but to fight against it is like beating one’s head against a brick wall.”<sup>19</sup>

In this regard, a new invention that meets these objections because it simplifies the task of sheathing is of the greatest importance; in addition, this invention is also important for architecture as a whole, for its specific character may have the greatest impact on the development of architecture. I am speaking of reinforced concrete, which, after iron, is the most important invention in the field of building materials. It may

even be the most important one, since concrete offers all those qualities that iron lacks and combines all the characteristics of stone and iron. For what has now become possible? Nothing more or less than the construction of the surface without a seam, the wall without a joint, something that a stone wall, even after it was covered with plaster, was unable to give. In addition, it allows for the direct span of two points of support that can be, so to speak, any given distance apart.

Thus, it has become possible to construct in a technically perfect way the two most important elements of architecture: the wall and the spanning of any dimension between points of support. In addition, we can also join the floor and ceiling in one unit and make them any size we want. This new building material triumphs technically over all the problems that were caused by all the building materials produced hitherto. It frees the architect from all those inherent limitations that occupied him in the past.

Certainly, there is still relatively little experience as far as the new material is concerned. It is possible that we are overestimating it, just as we did with iron, for nothing is perfect, and there are, of course, also drawbacks. For the time being, however, it does not look as if this will be the case. On the contrary, we are only at the beginning of its application. Its potential increases daily, so much so that it is likely that this material will be the material of the future, also for monumental purposes.

I would immediately shy away from this prediction if the material promised stylistic chaos. But does not reinforced concrete fall entirely in line with the architectonic development of our time? Does it not fulfill completely this noticeable desire to create jointless and seamless surfaces, as well as practically all requirements of hygiene and fire prevention? Finally, does it not support the concomitant endeavor to create a style of the coming culture, which is the style of the undecorated object, of the unornamented building, of the satisfactory beauty of the material itself?

It is because of these facts that I said before that I am somewhat scared of its adoption. As I said in my address in Madrid, reinforced concrete “threatens” to become the building material of the future.

I said “threatens,” and with it I meant that, if reinforced concrete is adopted, the coming architecture will contradict the generally accepted notions of beauty. For what will it mean in aesthetic terms when a building is constructed completely out of this material?

It means that we will no longer have the beautiful wall surface as we have known it, a surface that radiates such an extraordinary charm precisely because it is visibly constructed. United and delineated by the joints, the various elements of the wall form a mosaic of unprecedented splendor, heightened by the endless variations in the color of the natural stone, which is the secret of the picturesque and becomes so movingly beautiful with the passing of time.

It means that we will no longer have the deep reveals of windows and doorways, for the reinforced concrete wall is thin because of the way it is constructed. Consequently, we will lose the beautiful shadow effects and the profiles around wall openings—exactly those elements that constitute the immortal beauty of medieval architecture.

It means that we will no longer have a building that has grown in harmony with nature, a building made of a material that has a harmonious, natural color, which only recently has restored joy to the natural wall surface. For reinforced concrete is not a natural material in this same sense, and its surface and color, in particular, are the qualities that satisfy us the least. It *does* mean that we will have an architecture that lacks all the elements of beauty that move us in the monuments of the past.

That is exactly why I am apprehensive about the arrival of this architecture. But I am quite sure that it will come, exactly because of the great technical advantages that I mentioned before and that architects have to accept.

One may ask, do aesthetic considerations carry no weight at all? Can they not counterbalance practical considerations, and can we not protest in the name of beauty against that which we consider ugly?

I said already that we are forced to use this material by regulations against which we cannot fight, something every architect has learned in practice; I also said that an architect is, or rather should be, a child of his time. Apart from the possibility of preserving the beauty of the past, I would like to ask if a change in our sense of beauty might also undergo a transformation. I do not mean that we shall start to hate what we considered beautiful before, but that we will also achieve beauty with this new building material, a different architectural beauty than in the past, for the material has neither the solidity nor the beauty of natural stone. It will, however, embody other factors that will gradually be recognized as beautiful.

By understanding and pondering the new possibilities, we shall presumably reach the point at which we shall no longer be so sad about the lost beauty. On the contrary, for it is exactly in the context of what I quoted before—the existing aesthetic conflict between iron and stone—that our deliberations produce such surprising conclusions.

We saw that in the large spans that we need nowadays (no other time had comparable requirements) there was always a lack of harmony between the iron roof and the actual building, between the wall and the ceiling, for the insubstantiality and, in a sense, mobility of iron do not allow for it to be joined in an aesthetic way with the solidity that is the repose of stone. And considering the fact that a wall made of reinforced concrete is thin, that because of its composition it has no need to be thicker, I think that we could achieve a harmonious unity if we would put these two together, especially because the wall will also contain iron elements. Thus there will be a stylistic similarity between the wall and the roof. In addition, even when we are not dealing with an open iron con-

struction but with the ceiling over a large hall, the problem is in general even greater;<sup>20</sup> for a stone vault is usually out of the question for spans of this kind. Iron that is kept visible causes the same conflict to an even greater degree, and in neohistorical architecture one was afraid to use it with load-bearing walls. Therefore, one resorted to an iron truss from which one suspended the ceiling as best one could, a practice that is stylistically questionable but defensible.

Now it has become possible to span the largest halls, a fact pointed out already by Joseph Cuypers in a lecture during the congress of architects in Amsterdam.<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, we were not inactive in this respect and, understandably, the engineers started to use reinforced concrete and apply it on a large scale.

It is well known how many building projects have already been realized in this material: workshops, sheds, and bridges, all with enormous spans. And there are wharves like the fishermen's harbor in IJmuiden, with its row of columns that have not been submerged yet, which remind us of the ruins of the temple at Karnak. Among the other examples are the viaducts that are currently under construction, such as the one designed by the engineer Bourdrez for the Dutch Electric Railroad, which will be 680 meters long.

But the architects, too, have already created some important works in reinforced concrete; here I mean solutions that are more architectural in character—excluding those that every architect has already had a chance to realize, such as theater ceilings and other internal constructions.

However, these are only partial applications, and they are, therefore, questionable in the stylistic sense, for a similar conflict between external and internal architecture develops as before. The construction of reinforced-concrete ribs on cross vaults with vaulting cells made of brick, which has been planned for some churches, seems even more objectionable.

I was especially interested, therefore, not only in the many illustrations of nonutilitarian buildings already made entirely out of reinforced concrete but also in a news item in a French magazine with an illustration of an entire church built on Montmartre in Paris, which was accompanied by the following description:

*In September 1904 on Montmartre a church was consecrated<sup>22</sup> that is architecturally original and peculiar, certainly strange to those eyes that are used to consider Roman and Gothic temples to be the definitive types for a religious monument. But the finances were limited and the architect Baudot had to resort to inexpensive materials and avoid all excessive decoration. The walls are made of brick and concrete; they are only seven centimeters thick. For decoration, one has used concrete arches and ceramics and at some points red brick.*

Thus, we have the very first attempt to use reinforced concrete for an entire building, even for such a monumental building as a church.

Much has already happened in this direction. It appears that such a building is cheaper than a similar one built out of the customary materials, which is certainly strange, for experience has usually taught us the opposite. It is, however, an advantage that should certainly not be underestimated.

Summarizing what I have developed above, one reaches the conclusion that this specific material:

1. offers the greatest advantages for building technology because it eliminates the many troublesome characteristics of the other materials
2. relates stylistically, that is, in an aesthetic sense, to the entire endeavor of the Modern Movement in art when it is used correctly.

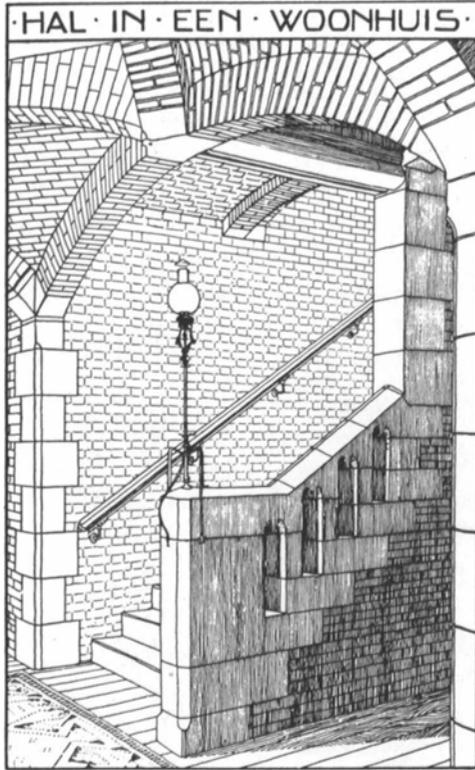
This being so, one will have to admit that there is a very good chance that the use of reinforced concrete will characterize the construction of the future and that we architects do not need to be so afraid of it, for there will in principle be a greater architectural harmony than in the weak architecture of this moment. Furthermore, the external appearance will be able to satisfy us even though its beauty goes against the canon of beauty to which we are accustomed.

My conclusion at the Madrid congress was, therefore, as follows: "Because of the great advantages offered by constructions in reinforced concrete, there is a high probability that we are standing on the brink of an entirely new architectural era in which buildings will be realized in this material. It is imperative that we study this artistic expression immediately."<sup>23</sup>

Information regarding this artistic potential is what we want to pursue. But even if we architects are, on the one hand, being pushed around and are in that sense no more than children of our time, we can as children of our time not help also pushing in order not only to master the forms of our time but also to anticipate them. It can be taken as an established fact that it is the architect who again will have to determine the definitive form in which this material will be used.

When I saw the possibility of this great change in architecture, I wondered if this material could be tested against rationalist criteria; I wanted to find out if its use could be defended even for monumental purposes (ignoring the fact that in principle the use of any building material is permitted, as long as it is being applied according to its special character, that is, according to its stylistic characteristics). I am now of the opinion that reinforced concrete can be recommended not only on a practical but even on a stylistic basis, since its composition relates it to the living organisms of nature. In that sense, too, one can come close, therefore, to a natural method of construction, indeed, approach a representation of a higher form of being.

"Hallway in a Residential House." [Drawing by Johan Briedé, 1910, based on a design by H. P. Berlage for Villa Henry, Oude Scheveningscheweg/Stadhouderslaan, The Hague, 1898]



If one compares the new material with the body of an animal, one can see many similarities between the two, for both have a core: iron for one, the skeleton for the other. One could further compare the envelope of flesh with the envelope of concrete.

Just as in the human body the external form is an indirect reflection of the skeleton—I say indirect, because the envelope of flesh follows in essence the core of the skeleton, but at specific points deviates from it to form denser areas—so the concrete envelope could correspond to the structure in the same way and could also show the same deviations at certain points determined by aesthetic considerations.

This is a striking parallel and one implicit in what I wrote on this subject in my essay "Thoughts on Style." There I stated that for the time being architects should act like painters or sculptors and first study the bare skeleton, which is in this case the pure structural form, since this knowledge was lost some time ago. Only then should they again consider the full body.

I want to continue to talk about this parallel a little longer and quote again from Muthesius's presentation at the Madrid congress entitled "Das Moderne in der Architektur": "In the many gas and water pipes of the houses, installed to satisfy modern man's increased demands for comfort, one can see a new and extraordinary refinement of the house as organism. Indeed, these new networks of pipes and cables call to mind the blood vessels and the nervous system of the human body."<sup>24</sup>

Seen from this point of view, a building would be even more closely related to the natural form of the living creature, a form that in principle does not belong to a lower order of beauty, but that, on the contrary, can aspire to beauty of a higher order.

In addition, one can see a great harmony between the various building materials of our time that I mentioned before; they are embodied in the seamless surface and the reinforced concrete wall, which represent the missing elements in this series.

Does not the plate-glass window, for example, with its largest possible dimensions—also a seamless surface—contrast fundamentally with the medieval stained-glass window and the eighteenth-century small, square panels of glass? And doesn't this same plate-glass window clash conspicuously with the solid monumental architecture in stone, as one can see clearly in those buildings in which old windows are replaced by plate-glass windows? And isn't the current trend to use medieval stained glass in eighteenth-century windows proof that this contradiction is being felt? Isn't it in a sense a decline of refined stylistic sensitivity when those windows are being used in a modern building; isn't it perhaps also practically incorrect since we need as much light as possible?

Isn't, for example, the torgament floor made of artificial stone also a seamless surface, in harmony with the reinforced-concrete wall? And isn't a parquet floor regressive when introduced into a modern building?

Yes, even in our modern streets, asphalt shows the same trend toward a seamless surface when compared with stone pavement. In this way, asphalt corresponds remarkably to the large plate-glass windows in the facades.

One could mention even more examples. I am sure that people will search for the seamless roof surface in order to complete the picture. But I feel that these few hints are already sufficient to convince us that we are gradually being moved toward a tectonic form that will look totally different from the earlier ones, a form that is characterized by the thin seamless wall and, as a result of the general endeavor described above, a wall without decoration.

Despite the remarkable examples of a general endeavor in our time, which might lead to an "ornamentless culture," my opinion in this regard is slightly different from that of Muthesius.

I want to repeat here something that was said before, namely, that culture and civili-

zation are two different things; this is not clear in Muthesius's study, which, therefore, causes some confusion, for civilization does not touch on the spiritual core, although it is the principal basis for culture. Staying with our subject, I do believe that, in spite of those changes in culture, a human being has some indestructible characteristics and, therefore, I cannot believe in the possibility of an art that is totally without ornament. Isn't that in principle a paradox?

Such art is either a conscious reaction against the desperate, meaningless overcrowding that we have had, and that is useful; or it is an attempt to rediscover the pure basic form, which was lost under the decoration, and which is praiseworthy; or it is just fashion, and that is always objectionable, for—and that is always clear—modern fashion is not an expression of culture but is made by industry. Muthesius agrees with me in this regard and says therefore, "It is the man behind the counter with his craving for novelty who determines popular taste, not the public."

Well, that is exactly it; since we do not have culture, cause and effect are turned around.

I believe in a culture of the future, but not in its tectonic reflection without any decoration, for the simple reason that decoration is a natural human impulse. It is so much an impulse that a close examination of those objects that are referred to as being totally without ornament shows that they are decorated. For example, the sailor's hat (mentioned before) always has a ribbon, and the man in evening dress always has a tie and a few specially made buttons on his shirt and cuffs.

And isn't there nowadays in a separate branch of the great modern movement a whole army of decorative artists looking for new ornament? Again, since culture, that is, a spiritual ideal, is lacking, this ornament is for the time being not much more than geometrical ornament with a sparse use of the animal figure. It is therefore, as van de Velde said, fundamentally an abstract ornament—which is generally an expression of the early phase of all cultural eras—and it also proves that the undecorated object will not be the goal of the coming culture.<sup>25</sup>

Surveying all of this, one slowly gets an idea of the architecture of the future; one can even see those elements that guarantee that the vital component of beauty will certainly not be lacking. On the contrary, this beauty will not even need to be of a lower order than that of earlier architecture, for some of its elements are already visible. And this is not to mention the philosophical impulse in man that will not allow him to rest until he has rediscovered the beauty that has been completely lost in these confusing times.

On the basis of what I have developed here, one will be able to imagine the beauty as it will be incorporated in monumental buildings characterized by a grand, simple tightness of the surfaces, even though the works that have already been realized offer no

proof of this. Indeed, impossible as it may seem—insofar as they are real architecture—these works bear traces of historic Baroque architecture. But in that way they prove that they were badly thought through or not thought through at all, for the architect was confronted by a completely new problem. And it is an ever-recurring phenomenon that initially traditional forms are repeated in the new material for a considerable time before there is a realization that this is a stylistic mistake. But there is also already proof to the contrary; there is a method of construction that enables us to use all kinds of dimensions and that is, therefore, perfect for the construction of the large-scale halls that the future will require us to build.

Windows, whose position will be determined with mathematical exactness, will on principle be the only decoration in these large walls, so that the most important artistic requirement to which all architecture ultimately aspires—the harmony between wall and opening—will be achieved in the purest form.

Add to this the fact that, although it will not be suppressed, other decoration will be used sparsely, thoughtfully, and in a form that cannot yet be described with certainty; it will be an idealistic decoration, as is being suggested by the busy decorative artists of our time.

In the architectural setting, sculpture will have the opportunity to act as decoration on those parts of the wall whose very construction demands articulation through ornament; this means that Viollet-le-Duc's thesis should be applied in an even stricter sense.<sup>26</sup> When this has happened, sculpture will be more closely connected to architecture, as has already been shown in some modern buildings. Figurative sculpture will in the end be realized in nobler materials, and it will be set back in relief in the wall, following, in essence, the practice pursued throughout history.

But it is decorative painting, in particular, that will have to do a great deal, for it will have to be used as decoration in order to neutralize the color of concrete, which is actually unnatural and, therefore, questionable. Indeed, apart from the rough surface, which requires extra work, the only objection against concrete as a material is its color. Painting will have to change the material completely, or create a powerful contrast to it through friezes or moldings, in order to enhance the color, which is particularly monotonous when used for outer walls. Good examples of stuccoed facades taken from the best periods prove that this use of decorative painting is possible; in this regard, plastered half-timber architecture should count as a particularly picturesque example. And how seriously people are searching in this direction is proven by a German invention that makes it possible to put an extra skin of concrete (composed of ground-up sandstone) immediately onto the original wall surface; this method is also being applied on the viaducts of the Dutch Electric Railroad.

Stylistically, this process does not seem objectionable, for one actually gets one mass

of concrete, which, because of the absence of seams, precludes any thought of real sandstone. In principle, therefore, it is much better than the commonly used veneer of thin plates of natural stone. Moreover, its surface seems to have the advantage that it can be manipulated just like stone so that it can be decorated with sculpture.

Indeed—and this should be especially stressed—as I said before in Madrid: “We cannot yet estimate what kind of stylistic consequences this change will have, but it is a fact that, in the context of the architectural forms that have been in use lately, the change will be fundamental, for an architecture that dresses [*bekleedings-architectuur*] will again be created, as opposed to a purely constructive architecture.”<sup>27</sup>

Through the use of this material—cement—one will automatically apply those decorations that the material intrinsically lacks. The decoration will be:

1. Painting directly applied to the surface, and
2. Inlaid work in general, which, as we all know, is not a new method but takes us back to earlier times, to the classical world, no less.

By that time, the aspect of our streets may have changed completely in the sense that those functions of the house that we now want placed facing the street may be moved to the rear, again to face a large courtyard or garden, and vice versa. The reason for this change is that it has gradually become unbearable to have living quarters along the busy streets, whereas it would be better to place on the street side the stairs, service, and toilets that are now placed in the back—in itself a burden because all the drain pipes need to be led toward the street. This is a change that again brings the classical world to mind in the sense that the most important part of a building is not located along the street, but within the enclosure of the walls, which is originally an oriental principle. Architecture is first of all the enclosure of space, not a spectacle aimed at the outside world; an architecture that dresses is therefore exactly right.

And now we are at a point that I did not anticipate, but that I reached spontaneously through observations that I think are part of the spirit of the time.

Indeed, summarizing the thoughts I have tried to develop, it seems to me that the possible form of future architecture bears a remarkable similarity to the architecture of ancient Rome, on the one hand, and to that of ancient Greece, on the other.

I speak of a similarity with the architecture of ancient Rome because of the grandness in intention and realization, and with that of ancient Greece because of the potential purity in style.

For the great *thermae* of the Romans come to mind and present themselves as comparisons, but stripped of the incorrectly applied Greek columns, which in essence spoiled Roman architecture. What is left is the beautiful core, and there lies its strength, a strength of simple greatness in form, which can be seen in the great engineering

works of that time. Yet these same works also admitted a majestic splendor in their execution, which started already in these *thermae* but is illustrated more purely and completely in the later, Byzantine period.

The much smaller buildings of the Greeks also come to mind; they give us this purity, this ideal form of simple construction and harmonious decoration. They are, therefore, indeed classical, which means that they are beautiful to all times.

Despite the fact that architecture has become more bourgeois [*verburgerlijking*], that is, more sober, I believe in a renewed splendor in architectural monuments, as I believe in the urge of human beings to refine the material form. And this urge will again increase once the transitional period of generalization and, thus, of simplification has started.

Only then will one be able to speak of a new style, which will have been developed out of the spiritual demand for social legislation and the practical demand for effective building materials—the latter resulting from the former.

This style will be a tectonic reflection of the entire spiritual life and, as I have said before, will show a similarity with the style of the ancient world.

For is it not a curious parallel and related phenomenon that the classical healthy mind in a healthy body [*mens sana in corpore sano*] is again being promoted today; that the care for our bodies, which used to be some kind of religion in classical antiquity, will again be demanded in the future but with a chance of better results because of our greater knowledge of natural sciences?

In its external form, the future may be a revival of the old classical time, but it will also be more beautiful because of our greater breadth of knowledge, which is the basis for all art.

Then engineering and architecture will no longer be two different professions, nor will one differentiate between the industrialist and the manufacturer of applied-art objects, whose products are now so inimical to one another. These present divisions result in the impossible separation between construction and architecture, industry and arts and crafts. Just how absurd this is becomes clear from the practical consideration that it is impossible to draw a line between the two.

In the future, a building—a house, a hall, a factory, or a temple—will be constructed by someone who will bear a name that will leave no doubt about this cultured person's profession.

In a spiritual sense, too, this new era will be similar to the classical world.

I ended my essay "Thoughts on Style" with the conclusion "that the coming worldview will not have its ideal in the hereafter and will in that sense not be religious, but will have an ideal on this earth. Did not the classical gods live in earthly temples?"<sup>28</sup>

One should see this in the most ideal sense, that is, build such temples for the earthly gods as reflect in material form the striving for happiness for all people.

Then there will again be culture, as there will be an agreement between the spiritual core and the material form. Then the first round of humanity will have been completed, but in a spiral form, so that the second start will be on a higher level.

And then—I am thinking of Bellamy—precisely the year 2000 may have arrived.<sup>29</sup>

*Source Note:* H. P. Berlage, “Over de waarschijnlijke ontwikkeling der architectuur,” in idem, *Studies over bouwkunst, stijl en samenleving* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1910), 79–104. First published in *Architectura* 13, no. 29 (22 July 1905): 239–40; no. 30 (29 July): 247–48; no. 31 (5 August): 259–60; no. 32 (12 August): 266–67; no. 33 (19 August): 273–74; no. 36 (9 September): 303–4; no. 41 (14 October): 371–73; no. 42 (21 October): 379–81.

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

1. Lodewijk van Deysel was a pseudonym for Karel J. L. Alberdingk Thijm (1864–1952), the cultural critic who was closely involved with the *Tweemaandelijksch Tijdschrift* in the late 1890s.
2. See above, 122–56.
3. Karl Scheffler, *Konventionen der Kunst* (Leipzig: Julius Zeitler, 1904), 15.
4. *Ibid.*, 16.
5. This challenge, which was actually penned by the essayist and critic Hermann Bahr for the Secession Building in Vienna, was inscribed above the portal of the Ernst-Ludwig-Haus, the focus of the Artists' Colony at Darmstadt, designed by Joseph Maria Olbrich and opened in May 1901 for the exhibition *Ein Dokument Deutscher Kunst*.
6. Berlage paraphrases from his essay “Thoughts on Style.” See above, 146. In the version of this essay published in 1905 in *Architectura*, Berlage here included the following text, which was omitted in the publication of 1910 on which this translation is based: “In addition to the fact that the demands concerning the design of a floor plan have in general become more difficult because of the complexity of the functions and public health regulations (so much so that the architect is reminded over and over again of the wish for the natural phenomenon of the sheep with an extra leg [a phrase in Dutch implying a favorable condition that is helpful when one has a demanding

task at hand)), new materials are being invented daily, and these materials need to be researched in practice and applied artistically.

And it is because of these demands and materials that I ask for your attention.”

7. Alphons Diepenbrock (1862–1921), writer and self-taught composer of predominantly choral and vocal works on religious and mythological themes, was influenced successively by Wagner, Mahler, and Debussy. Diepenbrock also collaborated with Berlage and A. J. Derkinderen on the folio edition of Joost van den Vondel’s drama *Gijsbrecht van Aemstel*. See Alphons Diepenbrock, *Verzamelde geschriften* (Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 1950).

8. Hermann Muthesius, *Kultur und Kunst: Gesammelte Aufsätze über künstlerische Fragen der Gegenwart* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1904).

9. Hermann Muthesius, “Die moderne Umbildung unserer ästhetischen Anschauungen,” *Deutsche Monatsschrift für das gesamte Leben der Gegenwart* 1 (1902): 686–702. The essay was included in Muthesius’s *Kultur und Kunst* (see note 8), 39–75. The following quotations appear on pp. 43–44 and 46.

10. The words “or nonartistic” were absent in the version of this essay published in 1905 in *Architectura*.

11. Hermann Muthesius, “Über das Moderne in der Architektur,” *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 24 (1904): 236–37.

12. Berlage is referring to the Sixth International Congress of Architects, held in Madrid April 6–13, 1904.

13. *Torgament* corresponds to the German *Steinholz* (literally: stone wood), an artificial stone material, which, marketed under the name Xylolith<sup>®</sup> (literally: wood stone), is used for walls and floors.

14. See H. P. Berlage, “Thema behandeld op het Congres te Madrid,” *Architectura* 12, no. 21 (21 May 1904): 163–64. Berlage’s lecture was later published in French in the congress proceedings: “Influence des procédés modernes de construction dans la forme artistique,” in *6<sup>e</sup> Congrès Internationale des Architectes, Comptes-Rendus* (Madrid: J. Sastre, 1906), 174–76.

15. See G. Heuser, “Der Gefachstil,” *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 27, no. 24 (25 March 1893): 149–54.

16. Paul Sédille, *Le Printemps*, rue du Havre, Paris (1881–1885); Alfred Messel, Wertheim department store, Leipziger Platz, Berlin (1896 onward).

17. Cornelis Outshoorn, *Paleis voor Volksvlijt*, Amsterdam (1858–1864).

18. Petrus Josephus Hubertus Cuypers used exposed iron construction extensively in his design for the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (1875–1885).

19. See above, note 14.

20. In the version of this essay published in 1905 in *Architectura*, this sentence read: “In addition, even when we are not dealing with a large hall, the problem is in general even greater.”

21. Joseph Theodorus Johannes Cuypers (1861–1949) was the son of P. J. H. Cuypers and, like his father, an architect. His lecture “Over IJzer constructiën” was given to the Nationaal Congres

vor Bouwkunst in Amsterdam in 1892; see *Bouwkundig Tijdschrift* 13 (= vol. 39 of *Bouwkundige Bijdragen*) (1893): 42. See also A. de Groot, "Rationeel en functioneel bouwen 1840–1920," in *Het nieuwe bouwen: Voorgeschiedenis* (Delft: Delft Univ. Press, 1982), 33.

22. Saint-Jean-l'Évangéliste, begun 1894. Anatole de Baudot was a leading spokesman of the second generation of French rationalist architects, who sought to give practical expression to the theoretical postulates of Viollet-le-Duc. His editorial program, published in the *Encyclopédie d'Architecture* in 1888, had great influence on contemporary Dutch architectural theory. See, for example, Willem Kromhout, "Het rationalisme in Frankrijk," *Architectura* 1 (1893): 2–3, 5–6, 10–11, 18–20, 25–27.

23. See above, note 14.

24. See above, note 11.

25. See Henry van de Velde, "Die Linie," *Essays* (1912), reprinted in Henry van de Velde, *Zum neuen Stil: Aus seinen Schriften ausgewählt und eingeleitet von Hans Curjel* (Munich: R. Piper, 1955), 181–95.

26. Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *Entretiens sur l'architecture*, 2 vols. (Paris: A. Morel, 1863–1872), 1: 305: "Toute forme qui n'est pas ordonnée par la structure doit être repoussée" (Every form that is not determined by the structure should be rejected).

27. See above, note 14.

28. Berlage here paraphrases from his essay "Thoughts on Style." See above, 150.

29. American journalist Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward, 2000–1887* (Boston: Ticknor, 1888). Bellamy's utopian novel about Boston in the year 2000 had a strong influence on visionary architects and urbanists of the period, not least upon Ebenezer Howard, the founder of the garden city movement, who read it in 1888. The tone of Bellamy's book was distinctly futuristic, with society dominated by the great metropolitan centers, manual work replaced by the machine, and pensions at forty-five years of age.

# THE FOUNDATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

Four Lectures Delivered at the  
Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zurich (1908)\*

*Time alters fashions . . . but that which is  
founded on geometry and real science  
will remain unalterable.<sup>1</sup>*

The English cabinetmaker Thomas Sheraton chose this motto for his collection of designs, *The Cabinet-Maker*, which was published in the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> One might think that such a motto would be intended for a scientific work, for a book on the technical arts, rather than for one on furniture. Nevertheless, I regard Sheraton's motto as correct and venture to make it my

own because it corresponds to an observation on art, specifically on the art of building [*Baukunst*]. For it is not concerned, as you might think, with the scientific element of architecture, namely, structural theory, but with its artistic element, that is, the creation of form at every scale. I have become convinced that geometry, the mathematical science, is not only of great usefulness in the creation of artistic form but is also an absolute necessity. In lectures given previously, I had the opportunity to argue that one can only contest principles and that the debate over "beautiful or not beautiful"—over the dispassionate identification of beauty—was, as we know, seen already by the Romans to be hopeless.

It is clear that individual taste throws considerable weight onto the scales in any sort of judgment, or as Hegel expresses it:

*It remains ever the case that every man apprehends works of art or characters, actions, and events according to the measure of his insight and his feelings; and since the development of taste only touched on what was external and meagre, and besides took its prescriptions likewise for only a narrow range of works of art and a limited training of the intellect and the feelings, its scope was unsatisfactory and incapable of grasping the inner [meaning] and truth [of art] and sharpening the eye for detecting these things.<sup>3</sup>*

It is, however, in a certain way outrageous that statements on matters of taste can be made without any basis and that the greatest works of art can be dismissed with the words "I don't like it." The judgment of the "man in the street"<sup>4</sup> should not be granted the same authority as that of a connoisseur of the arts; nor should an artist, for whatever

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\* These lectures, originally written in German, were delivered by me at the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Zurich during a course on interior design that I taught last year at the invitation of the director, Professor Julius de Praetere.

reason, be admonished by idlers for a work of art that stands sublime above all earthly concerns.

No, this should not be possible, and we add immediately, "It also does not have to be the case." For even on a higher level, among the artists themselves, it should be possible to reconcile differing notions of beauty and impossible, without giving precise reasons, for one person to praise what another censures. Ultimately it should be possible to force the opponent to admit that, "I don't like the work, but I must confess that it has aesthetic qualities, that it even impresses me; in short, I recognize in it the work of an artist."

If you go to the root cause of these differences of opinion, you will become convinced that in the majority of cases a certain degree of agreement is possible only if you ask about the "how" or base the discussion not simply on how a work of art looks but on how the forms came into being. Much would already have been gained if you could respond to the critic: "Alright, it may or may not be to your liking, but you should study how it has been done, in other words, how consistently the forms have been implemented. You should understand the logic with which the elevation has been developed out of the plan and the skill with which the respective building masses have been brought into accord. But not only this, you must also admit that the proportions are excellent and the decoration executed with great taste. All in all, you must confess that the entire building reveals an absolute unity in all its parts."

If this can be said and proven about a work of art, then it stands not only above ordinary criteria of taste but also above informed judgment. You may have no sympathy for the work as such, but you cannot in this case reject it. In the end, a work of art can be judged only from this viewpoint, and as the idler never arrives at this viewpoint, he has no say in the matter at all. For the beautiful, according to Kant, should be that which, without concept and outside the category of reason, can be imagined as an object of general pleasure. The assessment of beauty requires an educated mind; the man in the street has no judgment on beauty, in as far as this judgment makes claims to universal validity.

But now we must answer the question of what form a work of art must take so that it truly possesses the unity already described, so that the "unity in diversity" prevails, which is no less than the final condition of "style."

As an immediate comparison, I pose the question of what turns a plant into a work of art, thereby securing our inexhaustible admiration for the nature that surrounds us? What, ultimately, gives the universe its incomprehensible sublimity to mortal eyes?

For what seems so powerful to us in the crystalline, snowcapped crags is not the phenomena as such, for these could merely excite us. Rather, we are moved by the laws that govern the whole universe, the laws according to which it was formed, and by which

it must perpetually develop. We tremble in awe at these laws, tremble at the consistency with which the universe is ordered, and which penetrates infinity right down to the invisible particle. As Semper has already said in the wonderful “Prolegomenon” to his book *Der Stil*:

*Just as nature with her infinite abundance is very sparse in her motives, repeating continually the same basic forms by modifying them a thousandfold according to the formative stage reached by living beings and their different conditions of existence, shortening some parts and lengthening others, developing parts which are only alluded to in others, just as nature has her history of development within which old motives are discernible in every new formation—in the same way art is also based on a few standard forms and types that stem from the most ancient traditions and that always reappear yet offer an infinite variety and like nature’s types have their history. Therefore, nothing is arbitrary; everything is conditioned by circumstances and relations.<sup>5</sup>*

It is this last sentence—“nothing is arbitrary”—that I particularly want to stress, for it suggests that everything in nature is tied to fixed laws. Whereas the specific conditions of these laws produce all possible variations and relations, these do not proceed at random but according to the very same laws. And are not, in the final analysis, all human and social organizations bound equally by laws? In other words, did men not feel a necessity to create laws themselves, so that communities, municipalities, and cities could grow? Without these laws they could have achieved nothing, for isolated forces can come together only through organization and only in this way be able to create something great and united.

I do not hesitate to draw the relevant parallels to this claim in order to prove that with a work of art, too, nothing is arbitrary, and, therefore, that the whole should be formed according to a definite law.

Since these laws of form are of a mathematical nature throughout the universe, a work of art should thereby also be formed according to mathematical laws: stereometric laws in matters concerning the three-dimensional body, and geometrical laws in matters concerning the plane. For are not all celestial bodies spheres, the most perfect stereometric form; spheres that in certain circumstances become ellipsoids—bodies that still have a pure stereometric form? Do not all these heavenly bodies roam through infinite space in elliptical, that is to say, geometrical trajectories, with the center of the star placed exactly at the focal point, a position demanded by a physical law? And are not these trajectories modified by special circumstances, circumstances that are themselves of a physical nature? Do not all the plants and flowers develop according to geometrical laws? The division of vegetable growths by the intersection of the seed case;

the form of flowers and leaves; and the two-, three-, four-, and multileaved formations of the various plants all lead back to the laws governing the division of a circle, but with thousands of deviations conditioned by circumstance. And is it not for this reason that we choose plants as the model for our decorative art? Do we not meet in the animal world examples of a regular development, with fixed relationships, and lower animals even formed according to geometrical figures, such as the starfish and the water lily? Are there not animals who build their own houses in strongly geometrical forms, such as many of the shellfish and insects?

If you think about all this, and if you look at the world from this viewpoint, then you will see how the whole is constructed and formed according to geometrical laws. We even speak of God as the architect [*Baumeister*] of the universe. Man should not then claim that it is possible to complete his works without laws. And this, indeed, is impossible, as work done without organization and method can never lead to a satisfactory result. One should remember this particularly in works of architecture, for the universe itself can be compared to an architectural creation. One can go even further and maintain that symmetry, which dominates all natural growth, emphasizes certain original laws of form, which are in perfect accord with the laws of geometry, with the basic geometrical forms of polygons, or with the principles of cyclotomy. And while geometry constructs its figures *in abstracto*, we find in the actual creations of nature, as it were, a living geometry, a living, free creation that follows geometrical laws. This starts with the articulation of the natural forms, particularly the mineral forms. The basic form of the crystal is made up of polygons, and here, too, we find the triangle and rectangle as primitive configurations. The core figures of many crystals are thus the tetrahedron, composed of four identical, equilateral triangles; the hexagonal column; the cube, composed of six squares; and the quadratic column, made up of stacked cubes. At the same time, we find among the core figures of the crystal certain modifications, the cutting off of corners and edges, a process that has the most remarkable similarity to the development of the Gothic ground plan with its tendency to smooth off or remove corners and edges. One must also mention the fusion that occurs in nature between two crystals, a phenomenon that gives our observations a particular value in that it leads to further comparisons. This is a theme to which I shall return later. In creating his own artistic work, paradoxical as it may sound, man needs the guidance of fixed laws, which are necessary before any consummate works can be achieved. If we look at the question more closely, it becomes clear that our desires in this regard might, in a certain way, be seen as a reaction against the prevailing lawlessness, against total arbitrariness in the arts. Until now, such arbitrariness has been seen as the only true way, as the only artistic position. "Art should be free!" is the belief, one that is regarded as absolutely incon-

testable. As soon as you apply constraints to it, the art is lost! We should now ask ourselves where this view comes from, and whether it is justified.

This often-repeated view comes from the painters or, more specifically, from the realm of painting itself, which, as we know, more or less believes itself to be the only true art among the visual arts, although this judgment is sometimes extended to sculpture. The notion that architecture might be art is regarded as an exaggeration.

It might have been an art at some earlier time, but is no longer.

For this reason painting, which is to say, easel painting—as the only so-called free art—has acquired an influence under which all the other arts have suffered equally; a situation that dates back to the Renaissance. “Picturesque” [*malerisch*] has become a magic word in the sense that every pile of rubble holds more attraction for an artist and for a misled public than even the most sublime architectural creation. And a little picture with a cow standing beside a stream can count on attracting more sympathy than, for example, the frescoes of Giotto or Michelangelo. Free art or lawless painting has this evaluation on its conscience. And, as already mentioned, sculpture and architecture came under this influence to such an extent that sculptors and architects began to work in a picturesque manner. The former produced picturesque groups, the latter picturesque buildings, according to the personal, that is, quite arbitrary taste of the particular artist. Do not misunderstand me; the picturesque as such is not in dispute, for seen on a higher scale of values both a Greek temple and a Gothic cathedral have picturesque qualities. What should, however, be contested is the notion of the ingratiating picturesque that originated in post-Renaissance landscape painting.

With this notion, architecture entered into its very worst phase. From the moment that it set foot on the path of pure arbitrariness, architecture was lost. Quite apart from the already-noted fact that architects began to build in a picturesque way marked by all manner of superfluous additions, turrets, bay windows, and cozy corners, they also began to place value on picturesque drawings and pushed the truly architectonic elements into the background. Their design drawings, which in the last analysis are only a means and not an end, began to look like paintings—especially the perspective drawings. This persuasion is still so prevalent that it was defended last summer by a German architect at an architectural conference in London. When someone lamented the empty rooms in architectural exhibitions and means were sought to give a better understanding of architecture to the public, the architect in question suggested that we should produce even more beautiful drawings. I disputed this view, for I felt it would lead us down a totally wrong path. For the public would in this case not go to exhibitions to learn about architecture but for the sake of the paintings. And however beautiful an architectural drawing might be, it is not created with the intention of being a painting and cannot

and should not wish to compete with a painting. An approximate parallel would be to invite the public to an exhibition of musical composition while attempting to make the notation as beautiful as possible. No, if the public cannot understand or take pleasure in an architectural drawing, which, incidentally, is quite understandable, then it should stay away. Only when it has learned to understand architecture in the context of the true work of art—the building itself—will the public perhaps be more able to comprehend working drawings. In much the same way, we learn to understand music through the performance of a symphony and not from the score, even though an expert can take pleasure in reading a musical score. The extent of the havoc already wreaked by picturesque architectural drawing is frequently demonstrated in competitions, in which even the chosen judges are seduced by beautiful drawings and reward them with prizes that would better be given to projects with less “fancy” or picturesque drawings but with more architectural value.

From the moment architecture entered the realm of the so-called free arts, it was lost. This assertion sounds paradoxical and inartistic according to popular notions of art. For art, it is said, should have nothing to do with rules: feelings alone should dominate and dictate forms. Yet one can pose, without hesitation, the opposing view that art should not only be subordinated to laws, but that it will thereby achieve a more noble expression. And this is true not only for architecture, which by its very nature is closely related to science, but also for the two sister arts of sculpture and painting. These arts, too, should develop their forms less randomly and be made subject to certain rules in order to achieve greater nobility. As Hegel said:

*Art, far removed . . . from being the highest form of spirit, acquires its real ratification only in philosophy.*

*Nor does art elude philosophical treatment by lawless caprice, since, as has already been hinted, its true task is to bring the highest interests of spirit to our minds. From this it follows at once that, so far as content is concerned, fine art cannot range in wild unfettered fancy, since these spiritual interests set firm stopping-places for its content, no matter how multifarious and inexhaustible its forms and configurations. The same holds good for the forms themselves. They too are not left to pure chance. Not every artistic configuration is capable of expressing and displaying these interests, of absorbing and reproducing them; on the contrary, by a definite content the form appropriate to it is also made definite.<sup>6</sup>*

It follows from these observations that easel painting, as defined above, which is painting as we know it, has no place in an architectural composition, and that such painting can be tolerated only under the favorable conditions of a total composition.<sup>7</sup> Easel painting and the salon figure have gradually removed themselves from the artistic

community. If they are to be reintegrated, they must submit to the rules of the community; and if this does not happen voluntarily, then it must be achieved through compulsion. But it must happen, for it is the only way to recover a more noble architecture, in other words, a style. For ultimately it is a style that we want to achieve again, and this cannot be conceived of without laws.

What is the law, or the laws, that must form the basis of art? In a lecture, "Thoughts on Style,"<sup>8</sup> which I gave in several German cities, I attempted to explain that the particular quality by which historical buildings of any stylistic period distinguish themselves from their modern counterparts is "repose," that this repose is a consequence of style, and that style is in turn a consequence of "order"—of a particular method of design. The relevant sentence reads: "How can we achieve 'unity in diversity' once again"<sup>9</sup>—this generally accepted quality of style? There is no magic formula to be rediscovered that would bring about recovery. No, a long road runs from artistic experimentation to the final goal.

We should study nature in general, in the sense outlined above, according to its laws. In our particular case, we should also study the ancient monuments, not in order to imitate them or to take detailed motifs from them (I shall return to this in more detail later), but rather to seek out those elements that have given them style. And is it not immediately clear that "order" or regularity is the fundamental principle of style? This is true even where there is no apparent sense of order, where no supposedly academic plans exist, where we are not dealing with symmetry in the usual sense of the word. It is not mere chance that we speak of the classical orders, or that in some languages *Befehl* [order, command] and *Ordnung* [order, arrangement] are one and the same word. And just as order dominates in nature in that it works according to fixed laws, so we can see equally clearly a certain order in the ancient monuments. Our architecture, therefore, should also be determined by order once again. Would not design according to a geometrical system be a great step forward? This is a method with which many modern Dutch architects are already working.<sup>10</sup>

I was unable to discuss this in detail in the lecture but hope to do so now. In order, however, to avoid any misunderstanding, the following should be noted from the outset. This method, which assumes a geometrical basis for every design, should, of course, be only a means and not an end; the artistic idea precedes it. For one always comes back to what Eitelberger von Edelberg says in his art-historical writings, namely, that true art cannot be made according to rules, either in music, or in poetry, or in architecture; but rather, as he concludes, true art presupposes a knowledge of the great, simple laws.<sup>11</sup> It is these simple laws that control the forms and determine more closely the relationships that would otherwise be uncontrollable if left to individual taste and therefore utterly arbitrary. These laws should, as far as possible, avoid the absolute vacil-

lations between “this or that way” and finally replace endless uncertainty with definite knowledge.

For why should not the visual arts do those things that are considered quite natural in music and poetry?

Can you imagine a musical composition without a fixed key and rhythm, or a poem without syllabification and verse pattern?

Why should architecture, the art most frequently compared to music—something that led Schlegel to the well-known expression “frozen music”<sup>12</sup>—be composed without rhythmic, that is to say, geometrical laws? If rhythm is a law—an ordered sequence, as Lemke<sup>13</sup> puts it—could one not go further and claim that an architecture randomly composed is not architecture? This view gains more detailed support from Reichen- spercher’s observation, in his introduction to Roriczer’s little book on the correct use of finials, that “in its very essence, the notion of a true work of art is essentially mathe- matical, its highest laws the laws of mathematics.”<sup>14</sup>

Will the artistic idea be constrained or enchained by this? No more than the musical idea is constrained by the key or the poetic idea by its communication in verse. On the contrary, this form is a characteristic quality, a condition sine qua non.

It is a condition of beauty, without which the musical work would not be a musical work, the poem not a poem. Can one venture the conclusion that a work of architecture without such a rhythm is as little a work of architecture?

Best of all is the fact that this desire for architectural rhythm is nothing new.

I noted in the above-mentioned lecture that this system is to be compared, on the one hand, with the module in classical art and, on the other, with the medieval system of triangles. And there we have it: what the ancients possessed as a matter of course, we have lost, just as everything in architecture that reminds one of its former glory has disappeared, namely, pure eclectic architecture [*Stilarchitektur*]. For what do we do when we try to work in a historical way? We thoughtlessly copy the old forms and with them the related proportions. When we set a classical portico in front of a building, we yet again take out Vitruvius to refresh our memories of modules and parts but limit ourselves with these proportions to the portico in that we have no model for the other parts of the building. Or, when we construct a Palladian building, we are tied by the columnar proportions to fixed story heights and copy forms with the familiar column and cornice ratios that no longer have any life for us. And as far as the facade of a building is concerned, we work quite arbitrarily, for we have no norms for this.

The Greeks, as a matter of course, had already built their temples following a fixed norm, and it is without doubt these norms to which the temples are indebted for their wonderful beauty and their style. From Vitruvius we know that the Greek temple was assembled according to the general laws of the module, and that this system of ratios

was varied according to the intended purpose of the building, in that the human scale was taken as a measure for profane buildings but not for temples—the houses of the gods. Alberti, Barbaro, Blondel, Brisena,<sup>15</sup> and others have even claimed that the structures of the Greeks and Romans were built on harmonic proportions.

*The idea (says Charles Chipiez) of establishing a parallel between music and architecture is seductive. Although correct when the comparison does not exceed certain limits, the idea becomes false when it tends to suggest that the proportions of sound and those of form have identical laws. This theory, however, has led to surprising results; in the three principal dimensions of the Parthenon have been discovered “the tonic chord made up of the octave (the height), the double third (the width), and the double fifth (the length), and so on for all the other proportions of the temple.”<sup>16</sup>*

We know exactly from the Bible itself that the length of Noah’s ark was six times its width, that the ratio of its height to its width was 1 : 5, and that the volumes in Solomon’s temple were in a simple proportional relationship. And when one starts to learn architecture as a young student, the study of the columnar orders is the very first topic. But also in one sense the very last, since one then hears nothing more about possible laws of proportion. One is expected to get along with this very incomplete knowledge. It is incomplete, for one subsequently discovers that the principal proportions of the Greek temple can be expressed in simple numbers, and one learns the fascination that simple proportions always exercise on us. The Greeks called such simple proportion symmetry. Even in Aristotle we can find that the Greeks understood symmetry as the simple and therefore easily comprehensible mutual relationship between the various parts of an object. And Vitruvius understood symmetry as the numerical arrangement that determines the vertical proportions, the dispositions of the cornice, their mutual relations, and so on.

Today, however, we understand by symmetry something quite different. In his *History of Architecture*, Fergusson wrote of Greek architecture:

*The system of definite proportion which the Greeks employed in the design of their temples, was another cause of the effect they produce even on uneducated minds. It was not with them merely that the height was equal to the width, or the length about twice the breadth; but every part was proportioned to all those parts with which it was related, in some such ratio as 1 to 6, 2 to 7, 3 to 8, 4 to 9 or 5 to 10 etc. . . .*

*We do not yet quite understand the process of reasoning by which the Greeks arrived at the laws which guided their practice in this respect; but they evidently attached the utmost*

importance to it, and when the ratio was determined upon, they set it out with such accuracy, that even now the calculated and the measured dimensions seldom vary beyond such minute fractions as can only be expressed in hundredths of an inch.

Though the existence of such a system of ratios has long been suspected, it is only recently that any measurements of Greek temples have been made with sufficient accuracy to enable the matter to be properly investigated and their existence proved.

The ratios are in some instances so recondite, and the correlation of the parts at first sight so apparently remote, that many would be inclined to believe they were more fanciful than real. It would, however, be as reasonable in a person with no ear, or no musical education, to object to the enjoyment of a complicated concerted piece of music experienced by those differently situated, or to declare that the pain musicians feel from a false note was mere affectation. The eyes of the Greeks were as perfectly educated as our ears. They could appreciate harmonies which are lost in us, and were offended at false quantities which our duller senses fail to perceive. But in spite of ourselves, we do feel the beauty of these harmonic relations, though we hardly know why; and if educated to them, we might acquire what might almost be considered a new sense. But be this as it may, there can be no doubt but that a great deal of the beauty which all feel in contemplating the architectural productions of the Greeks, arises from causes, such as these, which we are only now beginning to appreciate.<sup>17</sup>

The existence of these Greek prime proportions is touched upon only superficially; one has to glean further information from the examples themselves. Nothing is said about the enormous significance of this whole modular system, ultimately for all architecture. There is, of course, absolutely no mention of possible further development of the system. This is regarded as an entirely lost science, and even if one perhaps has a notion of it, still no further value is placed on it. Yet, as Dürer said in his preface to the *Unterweisung der Messung, mit dem Zirkel und Richtscheidt, in Linien, Ebenen und ganzen Corporen* (Instructions in measurement with the compass and rule, in lines, planes, and volumes), printed in Nuremberg in 1525, "The arts can be lost very easily but are devised again only with difficulty, over a long period."<sup>18</sup>

And so it will be once more, for an art like this existed not only in classical antiquity but also to a lesser extent in the Renaissance. In medieval art, too, a perfected geometrical system appears to have served as the basis of architectural composition. I say appears to, for this does not seem to be generally known, although vigorous attempts have been made recently to uncover the so-called secrets of the masons' lodge [*Hüttengeheimnisse*]. For it is hardly conceivable that this art, which in its entire essence reveals a geometrical structure, with architectural forms that disclose so clearly the compass and the rule, could be based on arbitrary proportions and not determined by firm rules.

We have little information if we go back beyond Greek to Egyptian art. Yet it is safe to conclude from the great mathematical knowledge of the Egyptian people and from the character of their art that to this art, too, geometry was no stranger.

Research has proven that the Egyptian triangle, the section of the pyramid with the ratio of 8 long to 5 high, is—according to a whole “school of archaeology”—nothing less than “the key to all proportion, the secret of all true architecture.”<sup>19</sup>

Some also claim to have found the golden section in certain pyramids, namely, in the ratio of half the base to the hypotenuse.<sup>20</sup>

In their archaeological dictionary Mueller and Mothes speak of such things as “seriously proposed nonsense”<sup>21</sup> often applied to art and architecture, but the golden section plays an important role for Pythagoras, and Kepler even compared it to a precious stone. Either way, recent research leads to the conclusion that there must have been a program behind massive monuments such as the Egyptian pyramids, and this opinion is reinforced by the fact that the proportions of the royal chamber in the Pyramid of Cheops, dedicated to Osiris, Isis, and Horus, have been traced back to the Pythagorean triangle with the ratio 3 : 4 : 5.

And Dr. Petrie writes: “The most probable theory of the construction of Cheops is, that it was of such an angle that the height was the radius of a circle, equal to the circuit of the base. This is so exactly the case that it can hardly be questioned.”<sup>22</sup>

The studies of Persian monuments by, among others, Dieulafoy also brought some interesting results to light.

He writes of a dome construction, “How great was my surprise when I noted that the radii of curvature, the position of the centers, and, in a word, the entire scheme of the dome [*tout le tracé de l'anse de panier*] was derived from the use of the right-angled triangle that was so famous in Egyptian antiquity, in which the sides related to each other like the numbers 3 : 4 : 5.”<sup>23</sup>

This triangle, which is not the true Egyptian triangle, can be detected in many Persian dome structures.

I would find it interesting to take cognizance of these various proportional systems. Since we have knowledge of the Greek modular system but not of the medieval, Egyptian, or Persian systems, I shall present some examples from the latter group. But as I have already emphasized and cannot repeat too often, such a geometrical basis is only a model and not an end in itself. Since we know that the Greeks used such a system, we may be less inclined to dismiss it as unartistic or to spurn its use. Yet, we must be absolutely clear that a geometrical basis cannot on its own make an artist, for the artistic idea will not be generated by geometry. Nonartists can do nothing with such a system, artists everything—presupposing that they are its master and not its slave. It is like a weapon in the hands of children and adults: in the former situation, it is a danger; in

the latter, a heightened potential for performance. Various studies of medieval architecture have shown that the architects of the Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals made use of mathematics and geometry in determining the proportions, initially to resolve the ground plan and subsequently to determine the elevations. In this process the triangle and square played a major role.

Dr. von Drach, Professor at Marburg University, says the following in *Das Hüttengeheimnis vom gerechten Steinmetzgrund* (The secret of the masons' lodge from the proper point of view of the stone mason):<sup>24</sup>

Two texts by G. Dehio, Professor of Art History at the University of Strasbourg, should be mentioned as evidence for the historical use of triangulation: *Untersuchungen über das gleichseitige Dreieck als Norm gotischer Bauproportionen* (Studies on the equilateral triangle as the standard in Gothic building proportions), Stuttgart 1894, and *Ein Proportionsgesetz der antiken Baukunst und sein Nachleben im Mittelalter und in der Renaissancezeit* (A law of proportions in ancient architecture and its emulation in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance), Strasbourg 1895. The texts show that there is something of substance here, that in medieval times the triangle did indeed serve as a norm for establishing proportions. Further, Cesare Cesariano, the author of the Vitruvius translation (Como, 1521), expounded the concept of *orthographia*, using as an example a floor plan and elevation drawing of the Milan cathedral and pointing out that it is triangulated according to "German," that is, Gothic rules. As you know, Cesariano's account has been rejected unanimously by the younger generation of art and architectural researchers. Feeling themselves bound by the prevailing notion of artistic freedom, they argue that "a true work of art cannot be created without freedom; the Gothic churches are true works of art and consequently cannot be triangulated. Furthermore, Cesariano's description is not credible or at least of no general significance."

This unbelievably superficial and, furthermore, illogical judgment, brought about, as already indicated, by the prevalent belief in the so-called freedom of art, has been destroyed by an entirely authentic document of significant antiquity that came to light in 1875.

Right at the beginning of the construction of the Milan cathedral there was a fierce argument between local architects and those summoned from Germany. Among the experts whose superior powers as arbiters were sought was the Piacentinese Gabriel Stornaloco, "*expertus in arte geometriae*."<sup>25</sup> From him came the supporting drawing in reduced facsimile (after Beltrami<sup>26</sup>), dated 1391. The first story is proportioned according to the scheme of the Cologne cathedral: three equilateral triangles set side by side determine, on the one hand, the total width of the five aisles and, on the other, the height of the first line of springers. Further development followed a different pattern from Cologne but was always strongly triangulated. In the absence of reliable represen-

tation of the section, I am unable say to what extent the actual execution corresponded to Stornaloco's scheme.

A second document is also incontestable. It is an engraving of a plan published in 1592 relating to the construction of San Petronio in Bologna.<sup>27</sup> First preparations were begun in 1388, and the building was intended to be the largest Gothic church not only in Italy but in the world. During the fifteenth century, however, the project came to a standstill, and toward the end of the sixteenth century it was decided, after countless plans had been proposed in vain, to complete the structure, but in a reduced form. In addition to the transept and chancel, which were definitely abandoned, the upper stories and vaulting of the nave were also missing. And on this subject a dispute arose in which the populace was passionately involved. One party demanded that one should adhere to the originally proposed "German" or Gothic rules of triangulation, with the corresponding heights. The other party, led by the chief architect for the project, Perribilia, wanted the vaults to be lower—moved partly by the familiar hatred of Renaissance artists for the Gothic style and partly by quite valid reasons.<sup>28</sup> The latter party prevailed, although at the cost of certain concessions. In our etching the architect Siriano Ambrosino, about whom no more details are known, offers a parallel between the new and the triangulated vaults, which he explains in the commentary.

The commentary also contains the claim that all the old parts were triangulated.

Unfortunately, these three examples, belonging to the period of decline, do not prove that the same rules of triangulation were applied in Germany at the height of the Gothic and leave us unclear as to when and how this method originated or was discovered.

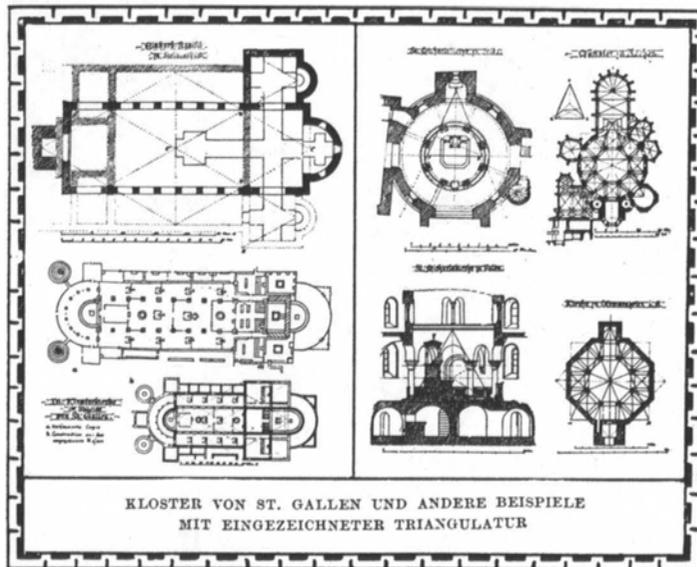
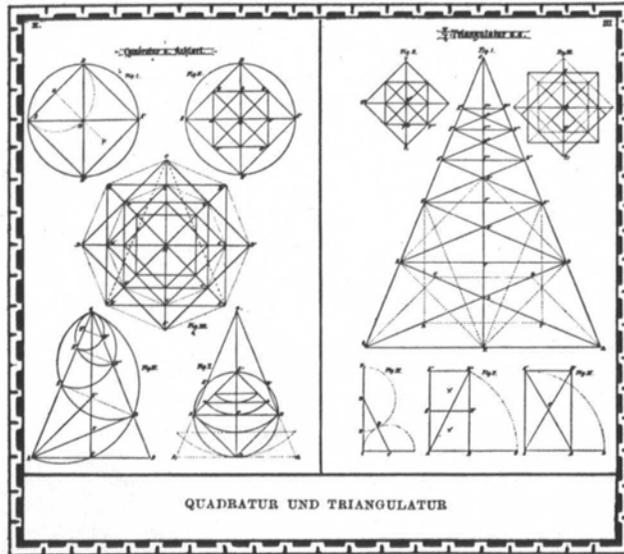
If we now consider the various studies together, it would appear that the so-called triangulation may have been used initially for functional reasons, without any consideration of its aesthetic impact, which was thus discovered later.

This triangulation results directly from the simple practical process of raising a vertical on a level plane, in other words, in constructing a right angle.

From the *Unterweisungen und Lehungen, sein Handwerk desto besser und künstlicher zu vollbringen* (Teaching and instruction for the better and more artistic execution of his craft), penned by the Palatinate architect and limner [*Pixenmeister*] Master Lorenz Lachler in 1516 for his son Moritz, we know the customary practice followed in the late Middle Ages called orientation, which uses the simple construction of a right angle.<sup>29</sup>

From presuppositions like this comes the principle of using the (equilateral) triangle as the norm for laying out the ground plan of a church in a simple and natural way. An equilateral triangle, however, produces a ratio of height to base that is incommensurable, since it is determined by  $\sqrt{3}$ . This shows—and one cannot state this often enough—that in a building in which the vertical dimensions can be measured neither

"Quadrature and Triangulation." [From Alhard von Drach, *Das Hütten-Geheimnis vom Gerechten Steinmetzen-Grund* (Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1897), pls. II, III]



"Monastery of Saint Gall and Other Examples with Superimposed Triangulation."

in whole-number ratios to the unit of measure used in the construction of the ground plan, nor in simple fractional relationships, the proportions have not been reached on an arithmetical basis. This should be obvious. Instead, the construction has been arrived at by geometrical, possibly triangulatory means, using the equilateral triangle. This procedure explains the many discrepancies one can find in medieval buildings.

The combination of two triangles produces the so-called Pythagorean hexagram, and by delineating the vertices in a triangle and joining their base points, we derive the actual triangulation, whereby all the points in this figure are useful for the construction.

By far the most important application of the equilateral triangle in medieval architecture consisted in the creation of triangulated rectangles.

After the triangle, the square must be considered the most important figure, and—as a result of triangulation—quadrature.

In its simple form, quadrature takes the square and joins the center points of each side to produce two series of concentric squares, each half the size of the previous one, which offers little hope for practical usage. Quadrature first gains significance when rotation is employed so that two squares of equal size can be joined as an octagon. But the significance here is not that the two divisions described above are linked on a scale as a geometrical progression with the exponents  $1 : \sqrt{2}$  but rather that an extended isosceles triangle is formed, on which a so-called  $\pi : 4$  triangulation may be based.

In Germany this triangle was first used in Strasbourg, an import of the Gothic style that had been employed almost exclusively in France. In this triangle, too, the joining of the base points of the vertices results in a scheme with a  $\pi : 4$  triangulated figure in which, one suspects, lies an aid to the proportions of the building. The proportions in this figure also exist in a  $1 : \sqrt{2}$  relationship.

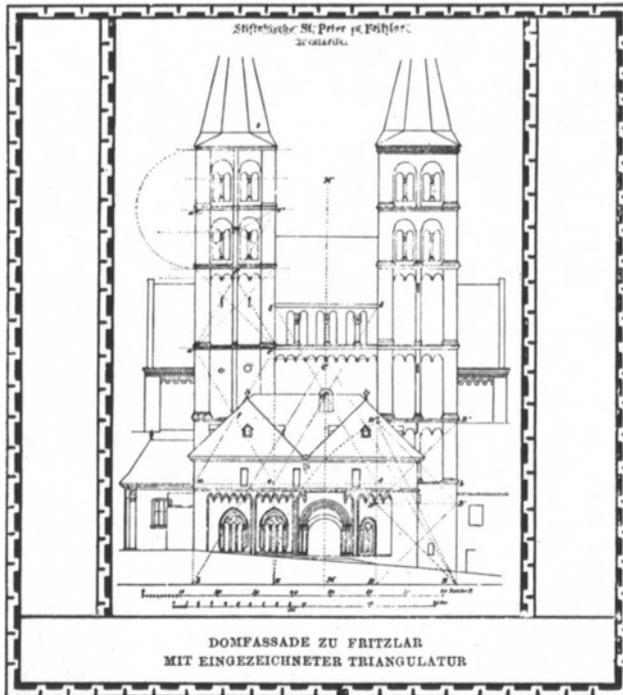
Before triangulation and quadrature had been systematically developed, other methods of construction could sometimes be detected. But there is no evidence of the use of the so-called golden section. To clarify matters further, I will now mention a few examples in which triangulation can be demonstrably found and studied.

The oldest example, and indeed one of the oldest medieval buildings, is the so-called Einhard basilica at Steinbach in the Odenwald from the beginning of the ninth century. It is a faithful copy of an Italian early Christian basilica but not a bland copy: the equilateral triangle system can be inferred from the ground plan.

It cannot yet be shown, however, that a fixed rule has been used both for the internal spaces and for the external walls. A second example from the ninth century, which the master builders did indeed triangulate, is offered by the plan for the monastery of Saint Gall, the original of which still exists.

In his history of German architecture Dohme says, “A parchment speaks in the

“Facade of Fritzlar Cathedral with Superimposed Triangulation.”



place of stones, unique of its kind: the plan that the Abbot Gozbert of Saint Gall sent, around 820, to an architecturally informed friend (the supposition that Einhard was this advisor has long been abandoned).”

And slightly later, “If you draw in various equilateral triangles on a plan made accurately from the building masses, it immediately becomes clear that the creator of the plan of Saint Gall was as well versed in triangulation as Einhard.”<sup>30</sup>

The Sankt Michaelskirche in Fulda provides an example of the so-called  $\pi : 4$ , as does the octagon of the cathedral in Aachen and the church at Ottmarsheim. The first-named example also reveals triangulation in its construction.

An example of the simultaneous use of triangulation and quadrature, actually of a  $\pi : 4$  quadrature, can be identified in the monastery church at Breitenau.

The facade of the collegiate church [*Stiftskirche*] at Königslutter is even built in a way that proves that before the transition to quadrature and to the  $\pi : 4$  triangulation had been effected (in the second half of the thirteenth century), one knew and employed

the  $\pi : 4$  triangle, with the point of intersection on the center line and the divisions on the sides derived from the extended vertices. An implemented  $\pi : 4$  triangulation on the east elevation of this church further justifies this conclusion. The monastery church at Lippoldsberg shows how the method of working with equilateral triangles was gradually abandoned in favor of the  $\pi : 4$  triangulation.

The first important building that allows one to examine the triangulation of its tower front is the collegiate church of Sankt Peter at Fritzlar. This front reveals itself, in both horizontal and vertical divisions, as the product of simple geometrical constructions, based on the same measure.

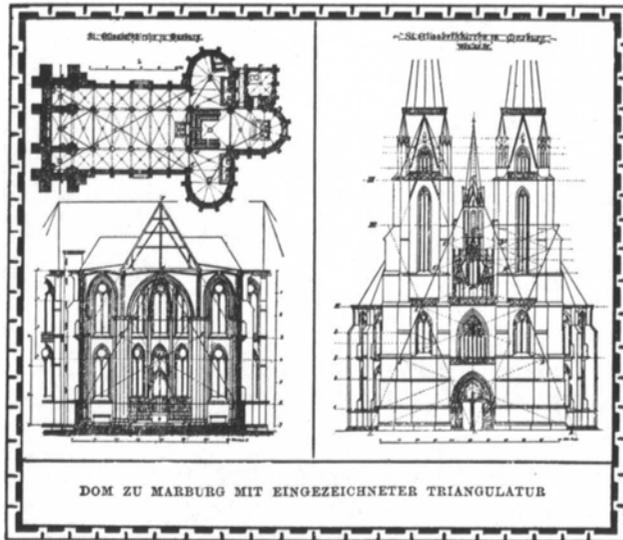
That attempts should have been made to use triangulation on particular areas of the external elevations of churches before a unified implementation of the principle was achieved is, of course, self-evident.

Yet Paderborn cathedral shows that the architects were making efforts, even before the church at Fritzlar, to go a step further in their designs in that they not only used one and the same construction method throughout but also composed the entire elevation according to a basic geometrical figure, in this case a square ( $S \times 2 p$ ), derived from a double triangulation and sustained across the entire width. A very similar method was employed at Lippoldsberg using a network of squares like the one commonly used in setting out the ground plan.

The list of monuments in the administrative district of Kassel describes the Sankt Elisabethkirche in Marburg, begun in 1235, as the oldest purely Gothic structure in Germany after the Liebfrauenkirche in Trier. Considering its long and often interrupted building history, the Sankt Elisabethkirche displays a wonderful unity between plan and construction. Yet, in the context of the building plan the triangulation shows a quite different result, for it reveals that the much-vaunted harmony, according to which the whole appears to have been cast from one mold, does not really stand up to examination. The tower front, on which work began toward the end of the thirteenth century, is composed on the  $\pi : 4$  triangulation that had gained supremacy at that time, whereas in the ground plan and the construction of choir and nave the determining technique was simply a triangulation based on the equilateral triangle. This further proves that the architects of the past were not afraid to work within the spirit of the time, always looking, therefore, to extend their abilities and make use of new knowledge.

This may even have contributed to making the buildings interesting and to improving the appearance of many monuments, which would otherwise have that rather boring and dry quality that inevitably results from an overpedantic enforcement of stylistic unity. Cologne cathedral offers an example in which the architects painstakingly followed the geometrical rules, with the result that the geometrician stifled the artist.

"Marburg Cathedral with Superimposed Triangulation." [From Alhard von Drach, *Das Hütten-Geheimnis vom Gerechten Steinmetzen-Grund* (Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1897), pls. XVI, XVII]



The reduction in building mass, both of the wall and of the supporting piers, made possible by Gothic vault construction and the use of buttresses, expressed itself most obviously in the dissolution of the wall panels into great windows and the adoption of relatively slim supports in the form of pillars or clustered columns. The consequences of this on the ground-plan triangulation was that the axes of the pillars became the determining points, a function assumed for the horizontal articulation by the window spans between the piers.

How often the axes were used in this process is proven at the monastery church at Marienstatt in the Westerwald, directly adjacent to French examples. In the interior arcades, for example, the height of the springing point of the arches is determined by an equilateral triangle set within the spans of the piers, whereas in the upper construction, added later, the  $\pi : 4$  triangulation makes an appearance and establishes the axes of the pillars attached to the walls that in turn determine the column shafts, as had become usual at this time in Germany.

It is questionable whether the combination of triangulation with equilateral triangles and the  $\pi : 4$  triangle that appeared in Romanesque plans and elevations in Germany was used in French architecture of the period. In the great early Gothic cathedrals selected by Dehio for his own purposes, such  $\pi : 4$  triangles were not found, only equilateral ones. The latter are employed in the termination of the choir in a way that was influential for the first German buildings in the new style.

Viollet-le-Duc gives some examples of French cathedrals and produces evidence of how, for example, in the church of Saint-Sernin in Toulouse, the heights of the most prominent points are determined by means of  $45^\circ$  and  $60^\circ$  triangles.<sup>31</sup> The result of this, as he says, is a geometrical relation between the parts and the whole; a certain crystallization of a great harmonic power that produces the church's powerful impression.

Viollet-le-Duc also shows in the beautiful Sainte-Chapelle in Paris how the proportions are determined according to a system of equilateral triangles. He studies not only churches but also profane buildings and recognizes, for example, in the old infirmary at Compiègne from the mid-thirteenth century, how the architect used the Egyptian triangle to proportion the building.

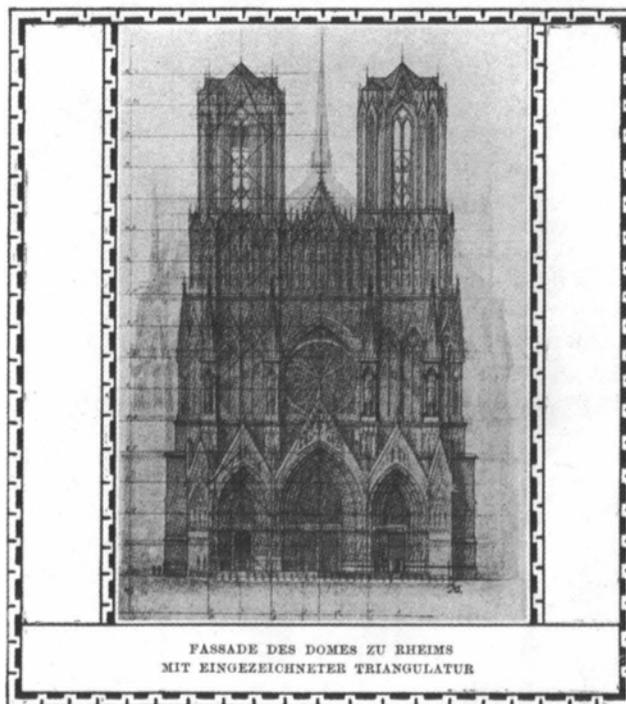
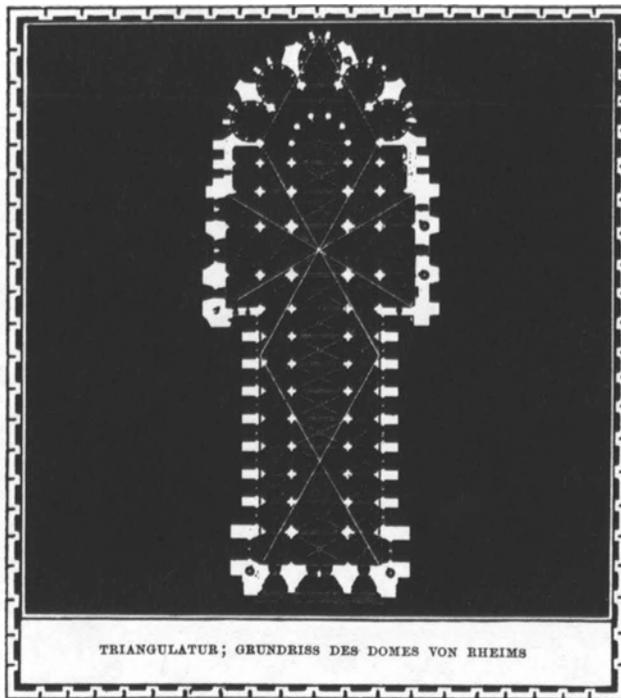
The facade of Rheims cathedral shows an attempt to fix the proportions by using squares set on their diagonal axis. Only recently established, this process offers an interesting insight into the subject. Unfortunately the exterior does not correspond to the interior.

The Sankt Elisabethkirche in Marburg, mentioned above, provides an example of how one might be led to think, when analyzing the triangulation by means of equilateral triangles, that one was dealing with sloppy building practice. But this sloppiness ultimately reveals itself, as a consequence of the great exactitude with which the plan was implemented, as the entirely correct realization of a carefully thought-out plan based on the use of triangulation and equilateral triangles. The cross section of the nave is also built entirely with this triangulation, partly following the triangulation method used in the early French Gothic, which takes the distance between the pier edges as its basis. The equilateral triangle also served, as far as it has been studied to date, as the proportional norm for the site plan.

As already mentioned, this practice was abandoned for the towers and the facades, and the  $\pi : 4$  triangulation was used, as a look at the facades reveals. Of all the windows in the building, only the center fields of the three sexfoils placed in the choir are based on an equilateral triangle. In contrast, all the tracery in the tower and facade windows uses the square or, more precisely, the octagon as its base figure. This, too, shows how the older methods that were dominant at the start of construction were abandoned. The facade is composed according to the  $\pi : 4$  triangulation, although not systematically or according to the developed laws that were subsequently offered in the [*Ge*]rechter Steinmetzgrund [Proper point of view of the stone mason], in which such an organic relationship existed between all the triangles that a single basic measurement could control the whole building.

The successful implementation of this ambition can be seen, although only on a small scale, in the castle chapel [*Schlosskapelle*] at Marburg.

"Triangulation; Plan of Rheims Cathedral."



"Facade of Rheims Cathedral with Superimposed Triangulation."

The essence of the *Gerechter Steinmetzgrund* appeared most clearly, however, in the Pfarrkirche at Frankenberg.

These investigations reveal that the actual  $\pi : 4$  triangulation, on which the secrets of the [Ge]rechter *Steinmetzgrund* were based, was known only to the master masons [Hüttenmeister], while apprentices knew the auxiliary figures and constructional rules but not the significance contained in these figures.

The various points derived from the  $\pi : 4$  triangulation were to be used by the artistically informed mason in his construction, entirely at his discretion and without any loss of artistic freedom. For should the next point not fit into his design, he could always triangulate again within the basic network to create new regulating figures that would satisfy his intentions.

Only in this way, as a means of ensuring a certain harmony in the proportions of the mason's creation, did the *Steinmetzgrund* act as a guide, just as in music the key in which the composer works leaves him complete freedom in the development of melody and harmony.

The proposition that every true work of art, in its very essence, is of a mathematical nature can be illustrated most easily by the creations of architecture [*Baukunst*] and thus most readily conceded. The demand articulated in this sentence must not be satisfied simply by the work in its totality, since the mathematically derived laws must also be perceptible and comprehensible in the various parts. This latter condition is the basis of eurythmy in the Vitruvian sense.

The very first law of eurythmy needs no closer substantiation, for it expresses a universally valid artistic rule.

It says that in a work of architecture, the mathematical laws that control the parts and their relationships must be either exactly those by which the whole building is formed or only such laws whose simple and clear relationship to the overall scheme can be recognized and proven.

In the case of a triangulation with an equilateral triangle, this proportional law will be definitive for the formation of the individual parts.

If, on the other hand, the square and its derivatives are taken as the basis, then all the parts and details must be formed according to this pattern, with the use of octogram and quadrature in those buildings from the period in which the  $\pi : 4$  triangulation was dominant.

In any event, it emerges from this study that the choice of system—or, if I may use musical terms, the key—is unimportant as long as the whole work is formed according to the same system.

Herein, of course, lie the preconditions for stylistic unity. Yet, as individual examples prove, the use of various systems at the same time need not lead to dissonance.

If these studies remove all doubts that in the great epochs of style, architecture was formed according to a certain geometrical basis, then one asks oneself if the time has not come to start again on this basis—the more so since it has been shown that the system was used at its most specific in those styles that were most structural, that is, in the Greek and medieval styles. Indeed, one could ask if these styles were the most structural precisely because of this, and if they therefore show such a great degree of accord, even though they have a totally different formal language and stand at diametrically opposing spiritual and intellectual poles.

But does this not prove that there are eternal laws in art that are the preconditions of all formal beauty and therefore independent of all intellectual currents? Does this not prove that there can be no talk of a stylistically complete architecture without the use of these laws in that architecture would then be the product of pure caprice, in other words, of lawlessness. And this is not true freedom but rather lack of restraint and therefore poverty. Constraint, in contrast, means true freedom and thus riches.

For it is not true that lawlessness promotes the fantasy or the imaginative powers of the divine artistic talent. On the contrary, one can discover the infinity of formal variations only through a previously determined system, just as nature in its endless abundance is yet very sparing in its means.

Do not the Oriental races, whose incredible ornamental fantasy we admire so much, prove the necessity for such a system in that they themselves, as a result of their inventiveness in the creation of geometrical figures, have achieved such amazing results? And would the Arabs have achieved the results that now fill us with wonder if they had not interwoven their ornamental compositions with linear ornament? Without this, would they? Should we not also consider that the Japanese and Chinese possess no monumental architecture, even though their art—especially the Japanese—seems so admirable to us and has developed almost exclusively in the painterly direction, that is, in the direction of free art? Sadly they have now begun to ruin their cities by using bad European models.

The simple fact of knowing that certain methods were employed in the past should be stimulus enough, at least, to work according to some method, especially in an age that prefers, and rightly so, to call itself scientific. Surely we should try, therefore, to proceed somewhat more scientifically in artistic matters, too. As noted already, this in no way implies anything inartistic, for art and science do not stand in opposition to each other; on the contrary, they are both born of the same mother. And architecture is an art that needs science in order to achieve a higher state of development.

Indeed, there is today ever more interaction between the constructional art [*Baukunst*] of the engineer and of the architect—professions that were not previously separated to the same degree as they are now.

In my last lecture concerning the probable development of architecture, held here in Zurich last winter, I took the opportunity to emphasize this by concluding that in the future all buildings (whether a house or a hall, a factory or a temple) will be built by one person—by a cultured person whose professional title will not be called into question.<sup>32</sup>

In general, I wish to call this person a “master builder” [*Baumeister*]. By this I mean to reiterate that in the future art and science will once again complement each other to such a degree that the result will be an architectural work of art.

And I repeat, this architectural work of art should be designed according to a specific geometrical system, a method that most certainly guarantees a higher art form than that normally employed—chance. As Viollet-le-Duc said, “A misfortune today in the arts, and particularly in architecture, is the belief that one can practice this art out of inspiration and pure fantasy, and that one constructs a monument on this very vague basis that people are pleased to call taste, just as one might assemble a lady’s outfit.”<sup>33</sup> And a valid argument can even be derived from the general concept of stylizing [*Stilisieren*].

The stylization of natural forms means their transcription within fixed limits, a determination of form following lines already extant in nature, but ignoring any random features caused by specific conditions.

Does not design according to geometrical rules mean precisely the same thing? And why should it occur only with ornament and not with architectural forms? On the contrary, we can speak of a style-architecture [*Stilarchitektur*] in the true sense of the word only when architecture also appears harmoniously stylized. For ultimately is a facade not an ornamented plane? Is it not a matter of distributing the windows, cornices, sculptures across the facade like an ornament? And is a building not comparable to a crystal, a powerfully stereometric form that occurs in nature; or, rather, is it not comparable to a form composed of crystals but with variations conditioned by the circumstances?

And do we not, therefore, compare with nature in attempting to follow its models—in attempting to perfect our architectural creations, as the Egyptians, Greeks, Byzantines, Romans, and the medieval Europeans have already done in a similar way with varying degrees of seriousness, thus achieving results that we cannot achieve. Does not an Egyptian or a Greek temple seem a sublime creation to us, totally freed from the earthly and the material? And does not a medieval cathedral invariably inspire awe in us in the way it uses its material to free itself from materiality? How loathsomely sober, how infinitely arid, how shamefully spiritless are our modern buildings in contrast—especially those buildings that are supposed to serve the same purpose!

Why?

I will not touch here on the religious aspect, that is to say, the question of the extent to which the more or less vigorous religious disposition influences the character of religious architecture. But it is most probable that when stylistic motifs are applied for their own sake, hung onto buildings like an external shell, the resulting architecture lacks inner spirit, for it is not, as was the case earlier, constructed according to fixed harmonic laws.

People only delude themselves when they believe that they are creating a work in the Gothic style, for example, if they furnish it with so-called Gothic or pointed-arch ornament. But this is only the external shell; the inner core is the construction of the basic forms, derived from geometrical figures.\*

And this is the case not only with churches but with all our modern buildings; for these the degree of religious influence plays no part.

These buildings simply prove how much, or better said, how little use a feeling for beauty is without a closer knowledge of the rules with which the old masters worked. If we are to avoid the caricatures presented by most of our modern Gothic cathedrals, then it is necessary to return to the rules of the old masters and to pick up the threads again at the point where they were broken off in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. No one could become a mason until he had made models according to these rules. Since the rules employed by the masters produced such magnificent results, one must admit that the working method revealed by the masterpieces and master drawings of the masons carries more weight than the modern view of individuals who oppose the idea of a strongly geometrical construction in the design of Gothic architecture as an unbearable constraint. Such critics will not admit that the forms, which should and must, of course, be summoned freely by the artistic instinct, first gain their own firm character, both in themselves and in harmony with the parts to which they belong, through their geometrical foundation. And if an architect today actually ventured to erect a Gothic building without geometrical assistance, he would soon be confronted by the greatest difficulties.

Although it has not yet, as far as I know, been established to what extent profane buildings from earlier epochs of style are formed according to fixed geometrical rules, one can assume that this took place, for the influence of sacred architecture on profane architecture in the Middle Ages was so consistently strong. It is possible that the design laws used for the former were also used to create the various elements in profane build-

\* And as decoration and ornament are absolutely secondary matters in architecture, while the creation of space and the relationships of the masses are the main concerns, it is easy to see where the mistake lies.

ings and probably in the layout of the ground plan as well. The plan is more difficult to resolve, however, since it depends on more complicated practical considerations. In this connection I have already cited an example from Viollet-le-Duc.

Either way I hope I have explained adequately to you that a design following certain rules not only is to be recommended but is essential for the creation of a truly stylistic [*stilvoll*] architecture.

How should this happen? Just as nature itself has laid claim to the simplest geometrical and stereometric figures in creating its crystals, so the architects in earlier epochs of style worked in a similar manner. And ultimately, because these figures have an immutable beauty, it is surely fitting to turn anew for instruction to our universal mother. Just as Hegel has already asserted in his classification of the arts with respect to sensuous material that architecture means crystallization, so this dictum also provides the appropriate stimulus.

As we have seen, the medieval masters preferred to work with the equilateral triangle, the triangulation derived from it, and the triangulated rectangle. This, therefore, is a geometrical system that, in contrast to Greek art, proceeded according to arithmetic principles.

But since geometry and arithmetic are sisters, the principle remains the same. Medieval art arrived at this harmonious procedure by working from the inside out. The Greeks, as passionate admirers of exterior form, did not always follow this practice, although the Romans did in their vaulted buildings and basilicas.

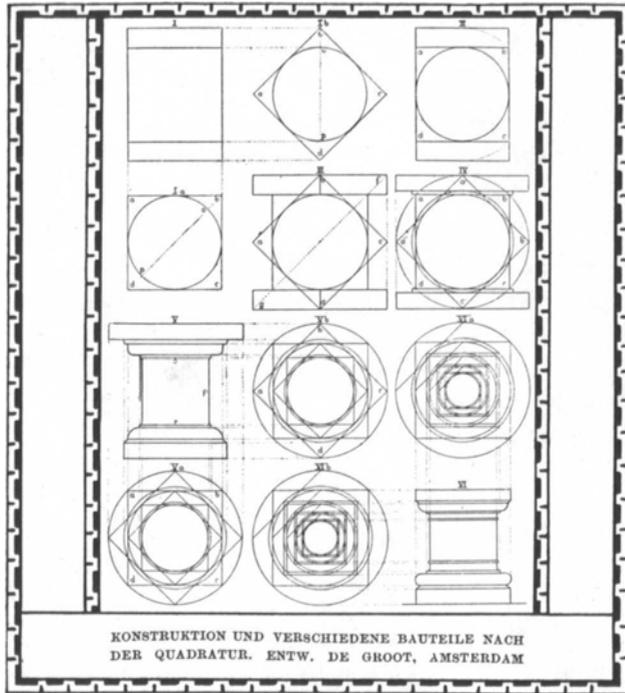
In the Greek temple we can see an external order designed according to a wonderful harmony, but one from which the scale of the internal proportions cannot be derived. In the Middle Ages—and this must be the greatest achievement of this art—the Roman principle comes into play, namely, that the external aspect should be nothing but the encasing of the internal arrangements, and that consequently the internal proportions should also be those of the exterior. The space should be proportioned and display its proportions externally. For the purpose of architecture is to create space, and it should thus proceed from space. And any intention first to make a pretty facade and then to compose the building behind it is absolutely abominable.

To achieve this goal, it is advantageous to use the geometrical method with triangulation and the resulting triangulated rectangle.

One further step brings the so-called quadrature, which results from two squares superimposed one on the other with a rotation of  $45^\circ$ , which produces the  $\pi:4$  triangulation.

In our country an architect by the name of De Groot has taken a fresh interest in the matter.<sup>34</sup> Having read the old documents, namely, Hoffstadt's *Gothisches A.B.C.*,<sup>35</sup> De Groot himself published a small volume that contains interesting contributions to

"Construction of Various Building Elements According to Quadrature.  
Design by De Groot, Amsterdam."



this subject.<sup>36</sup> For this he consulted a text by Dr. Alhan v. Drach, called *Hüttengeheimnis vom rechten Steinmetzengrund*, which came out the previous year.<sup>37</sup> In 1896 De Groot had published another study treating planar ornamentation, entitled *Driehoeken bij het ontwerpen van ornament* (Triangles in the design of ornamentation). Here he shows the endless number of variations that can be achieved in the rhythmic division of flat planes using the customary triangles.

These divisions form, so to speak, the canvas on which the ornamental elements should be applied, and they even in themselves form an ornamental system. But in principle they should serve as a stimulus to decorative design with the truly surprising result that endless ornamental motifs appear as if of their own volition.

This method, therefore, is a reversal of normal practice in that the plane is rhythmically subdivided before the ornamentation is drawn in. Generally, a natural form is first borrowed, and the rhythm or stylization is found later.

Whoever wants to create something may not copy directly. One should allow motifs to develop and do everything necessary for the division of the plane.

This procedure has particular virtues with respect to those ornaments that do not have their models in nature and for that reason represent, in artistic terms, a higher level of development than those derived from nature.

I will discuss this method, for it can serve to make an architectural composition complete.

Although the first examples from *Driehoeken bij het ontwerpen van ornament* correspond to those shown previously from medieval elevations, the subsequent examples are more useful, for they are based on the well-known quadrature and show how the proportions of a body can be derived entirely from such a geometrical figure. By superimposing squares with a rotation of  $45^\circ$  and completing this figure with parallel circles drawn through the points of intersection, a progressive system is achieved with the well-known relationship  $1 : \sqrt{2}$ , from which both plan and elevation can be derived. It follows that plan and elevation can be drawn simultaneously, which, though not necessary, proves that the two elements are interrelated, as it were, within this system and, consequently, that a considerable degree of harmony must exist between the two.

This method especially recommends itself for all freestanding building elements as well as for works of applied art, particularly pottery and tableware. It is also very useful for furniture, as I will demonstrate with a few examples.

First a chair. With a few very minor modifications, the seat of a chair can be constructed as a cube. If one then takes the standard chair height of around 43 cm as the dimension of the cube, then both the width at the front edge and the depth of the seat will be 43 cm. The width at the rear, customarily narrower than at the front, is also produced by the geometrical figure, as are the other fine modifications from the various circles and points that are contained in the figure. For objects higher than the diagonal of the basic square, one can set several squares above each other. In the case of the chair, for example, two squares are adequate.

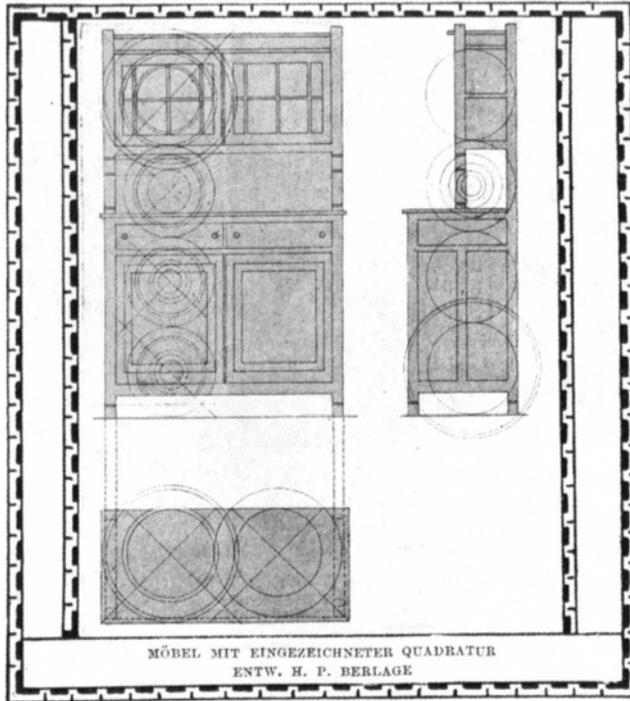
A buffet provides a second example, with two adjacent squares [in plan] and four set on top of each other [in elevation].

Of course, practice and taste are necessary to make correct use of such a figure, and one must gradually discover which points to use and which to ignore.

It will soon become clear what great convenience such a method offers not only for determining the dimensions and proportions but also for the decoration, which emerges spontaneously and logically from the figure. By decoration I mean, of course, the construction of the appropriate lines into which the ornament can be incorporated.

Yet it is quite clear how harmonically the square is divided by the progressive squares and circles, a division that instantly produces a decorative arrangement of the plane. And in that the quadrature exists on the planes of the object, you can use this division for decorative purposes, prompted by personal taste. Only when you use the quadrature

"Furniture with Superimposed Quadrature. Design by H. P. Berlage."



will you see that, rather than being repressed, your imagination will be stimulated to reach solutions that would otherwise never have occurred to you. As already noted, however, this can be achieved only when you fully realize that you should not be the slave of such a system, that is to say, when you know to make use only of those lines that represent your feelings and promote your artistic ability. Such a system, let us say it quite candidly, can succeed only when you know at which point to abandon it, for one's feelings can have motives that are inaccessible to reason. To return once again to the topic, the rhythmic progression proves itself such an extraordinarily convenient and harmonic method of dividing planes that it is ideally suited for two-dimensional patterns—I am thinking of floor and wall tiles, and so on.

As I have already said, a work of architecture comes to have style when not only the large-scale articulation of the masses but also the details are formed according to the same system. This occurred, for example, in the Middle Ages, but only in the middle

and later Gothic periods, whereas in the earlier periods the ornamentation was derived simply by imitating nature. Later, though, there was no leaf decoration that was not, in the manner of tracery, based on a geometrical ground figure. Does one not now sense that within such a method lies the embryo for achieving the “unity in diversity” that is called style? And this precisely because by these means one arrives at a unified basic principle, from which the whole thing can develop according to a fixed progression.

Let us take some further examples from De Groot: a design for a column, in which one can clearly see how the decoration of the capital is already determined in the horizontal section at the base and is thus developed and built up in a logical and stylistically consistent manner.

Another example is a classical columnar order. Although it is not certain, indeed very unlikely, that the masters of the Renaissance worked in any sort of similar way, since they favored classical modular proportions for their own creations, this example still makes it quite clear that here, too, the geometrical method is particularly applicable.

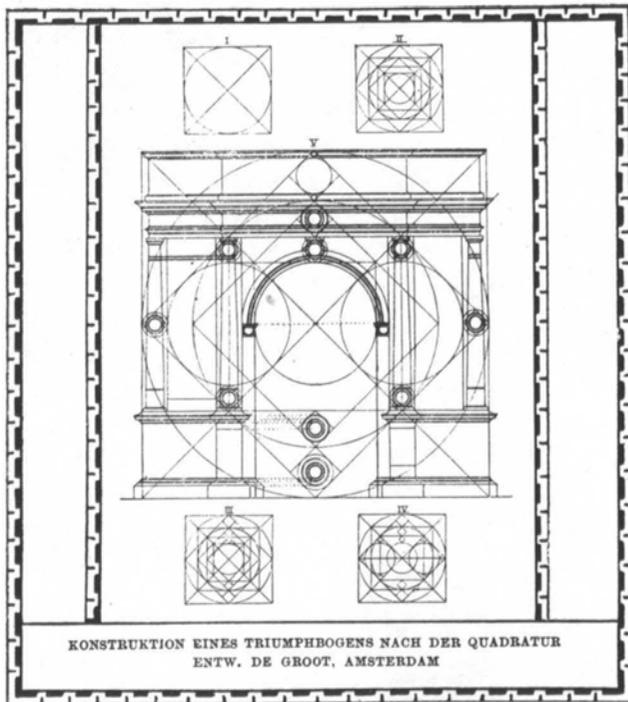
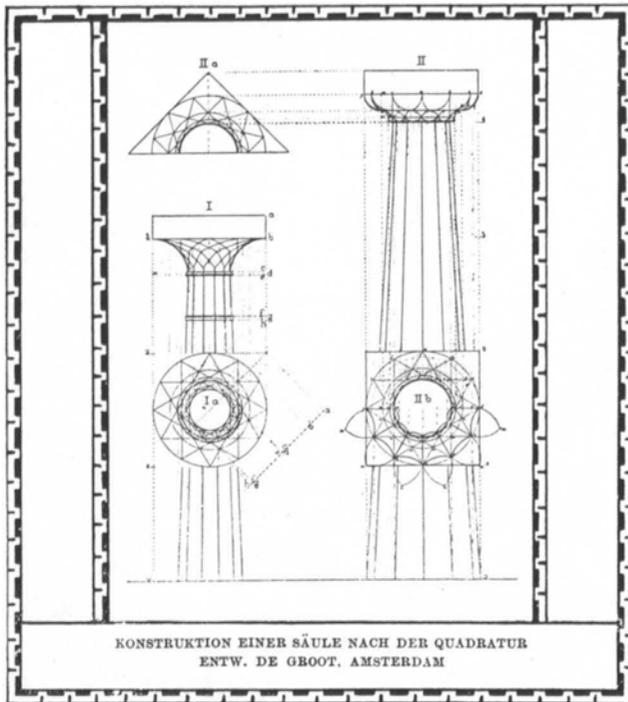
A construction with four columns offers a further example, in which one can directly study their diagonal relation—an extremely effective result, since one does not normally gain this view so easily. Finally, we have a drawing of the method employed on a classical triumphal arch.

Although I have just introduced various examples of ancient monuments to you in which triangulation and quadrature are identifiable, and although there is an authentic Greek law of proportion, displaced columns, irregular openings, and such like still appear in these monuments and can be explained only in terms of personal preference. Nevertheless, it still remains unclear whether there was a firm intention from the outset to form the ancient monuments according to a unified geometrical whole, right down to the smallest details, irrespective of the noted changes that appeared during the long period of construction. But what would be the objection, I ask, if we were to declare that from now on an architectural composition could lay claim to this title only if it were designed right down to the smallest detail according to a unified geometrical system? For I assume that this either has never happened up until now or has happened only in a very imperfect way and then only in eclectic architecture, following the rules of classical modulation.

Speaking as a Dutchman, I know of no examples of this in other countries. Even though I may assume that you are acquainted with much of what I am now saying, I still doubt that you use a similar method for your own compositions.

Should this nevertheless be the case, then may this explanation act all the more as a stimulus to continue in this direction. If not, then may it be a spur to begin in this

"Construction of a Column According to Quadrature. Design by De Groot, Amsterdam."



"Construction of a Triumphal Arch According to Quadrature. Design by De Groot, Amsterdam."

direction. For I repeat: after all that has passed, what objections could there be to using such a method as a means once again?

But I want to stress again—as a means, and only as a means. The general principle should run as follows: just as geometry itself, proceeding from a few basic forms, reveals endless variations and relationships, something already visible in nature, so should each task be solved according to an appropriate pattern, the more so because no system exists that fits each individual case.

This demands study and practice, but also taste.

*Architecture (said Viollet-le-Duc) is not the slave of a hieratic system of proportions. On the contrary, it can modify itself constantly and find ever new applications and proportional relations, just as it finds infinite variations in the laws of geometry; indeed, proportions are the daughters of geometry, in architecture just as in the ordering of inorganic and organic nature.<sup>38</sup>*

Only a means, for Hegel, too, warned against placing too much importance on numerical proportions in art, an observation that I reproduce without commentary. He said:

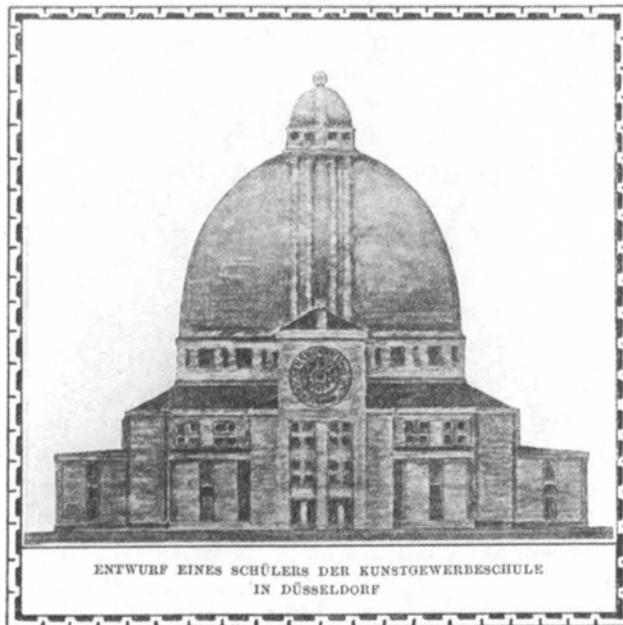
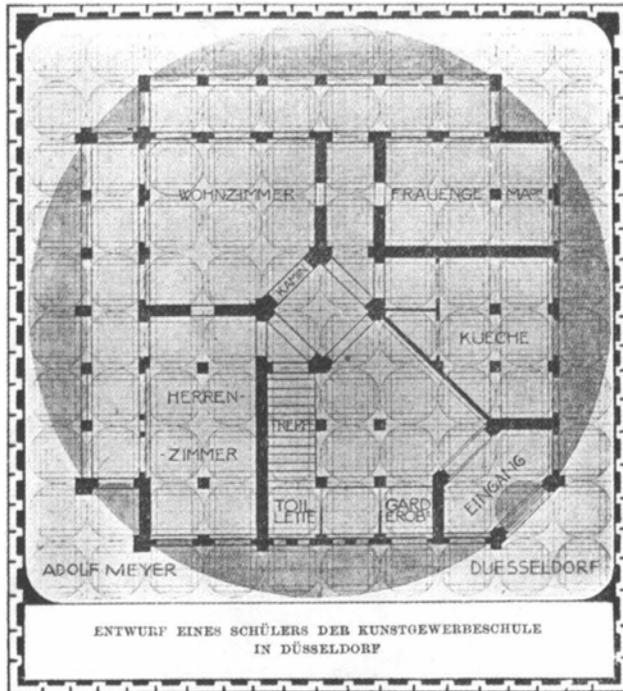
*Of course at the time when Gothic architecture blossomed most beautifully . . . great importance was laid on such numerical symbolism since the still rather dim inkling of reason easily lapsed into external considerations like this; but, by such always more or less arbitrary games of an inferior symbolism, architectural works of art are given neither a deeper meaning nor a more exalted beauty, because their proper significance and spirit is expressed in forms and configurations quite otherwise than in the mystical meaning of numerical differences. We must therefore be very cautious not to go too far in the hunt for such meanings, because to try to be too profound and see a deeper significance everywhere is just as petty and superficial as the blind pedantry which passes over, without grasping it, the profound meaning which is clearly expressed and presented.<sup>39</sup>*

These are golden words.

In conclusion I would add that the geometrical method should remain only a means, for credibility would be lost if one could sense the intention. I have been rather expansive here on purpose because I wished to stir in you the conviction that, regardless of what has occurred in the past, something is now happening in this direction. If the architecture of the future aspires to the great unity of earlier styles, then there is a need for a fundamental method.

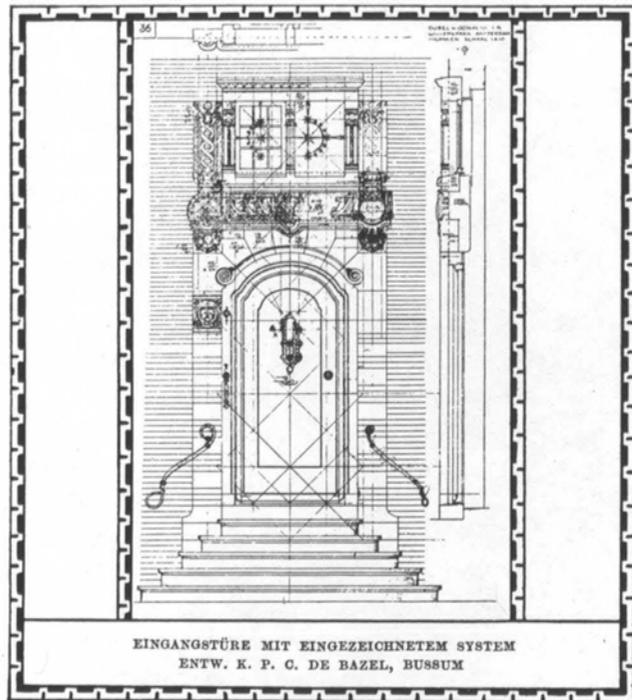
I already mentioned that I do not know whether and to what extent foreign architects

"Design by a Student at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Düsseldorf."



"Design by a Student at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Düsseldorf."

"Front Door with Superimposed System. Design by K. P. C. de Bazel, Bussum."



"Detail of the Front Door with Superimposed System. Design by K. P. C. de Bazel, Bussum."

have already worked in a similar manner, but I can tell you that many modern Dutch architects have been fairly well acquainted with this method for some time. At the Kunstgewerbeschule (School of Arts and Crafts) in Düsseldorf, for example, all the designs are carried out according to a similar but very special method under the guidance of the Dutch teacher J. L. M. Lauweriks.<sup>40</sup> He, however, takes the system to the extreme. I have not yet had sufficient opportunity to study it in order to pass judgment, but I can show you a few pictures of it. I have already presented some pieces of furniture but can show you similar examples in architecture itself.

In ordering the ground plan, it has always proved practical to proceed from the square and therefore to divide the plan into squares.

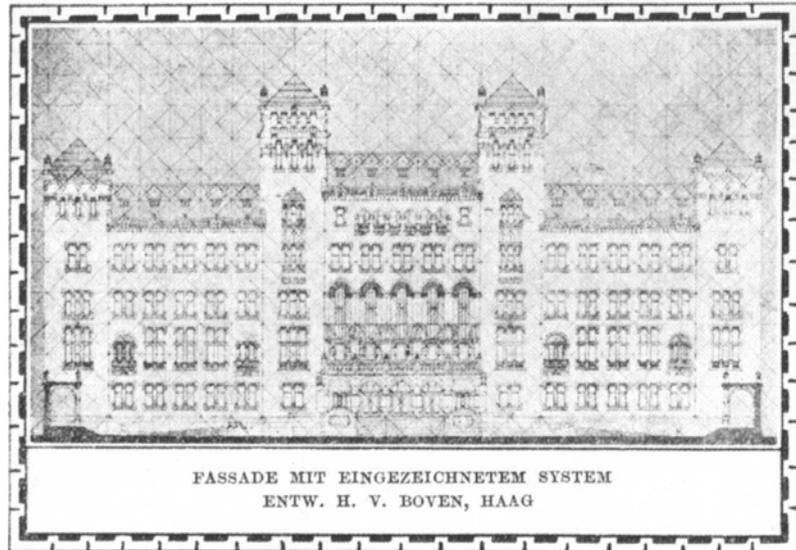
You will ask—does that always work? Of course not; which is to say, not always to the ultimate degree. But as we have seen, this was also true in earlier times. Yet it is truly astonishing, if one really tries, how often such a division is successful. It is simply a matter of choosing the correct unit for the basic square. One can, of course, subdivide when necessary. As far as the elevation is concerned, it soon becomes clear that the so-called four-quadrature cannot be used, since a building is too complex for this. But other systems are available, as has already been shown by the historical examples. There is, for example, the simple triangulation of equilateral triangles, in which the vertical relationships are determined by a system of equilateral triangles or by the octahedron. In this system one divides the elevation into triangles that are determined by the vertical projection of the equilateral triangles. Or one might choose another simple ratio, for example, that of the Egyptian triangle, whose vertical axis forms a ratio of height to base of 5 : 8. Ultimately, any form of triangle can be used, but only if it is implemented in a uniform way. But the simple geometrical and even arithmetical ratios achieve the most beautiful results, in that the trained eye senses and therefore understands this. As already noted, the Greeks knew this fact and put it to use. Moreover, the pleasing effect of simple numerical ratios has been appreciated in all epochs. Once again a model can be found in nature, for it is known that not only the proportions of the human body but also those of various animals can be expressed in simple numbers.

I shall now give some examples to show how this principle can be implemented.

As a final example I show you the Stock Exchange building in Amsterdam, which is entirely proportioned after the Egyptian triangle [see figs. on p. 221]. It consists of a system of built-up pyramids with the ratio of 8 : 5, and can, therefore, be compared with a group of natural crystals. For this the ground plan was divided into squares of 3.80 meters in length, a measure that proved itself the correct one after much searching. It is also the distance between the center axes of the windows.

A look at the drawings will make all this clearer to you than would be possible with a description. A practical result of such a method is that it is desirable to use not the

"Facade with Superimposed System. Design by H. V. Boven, The Hague."



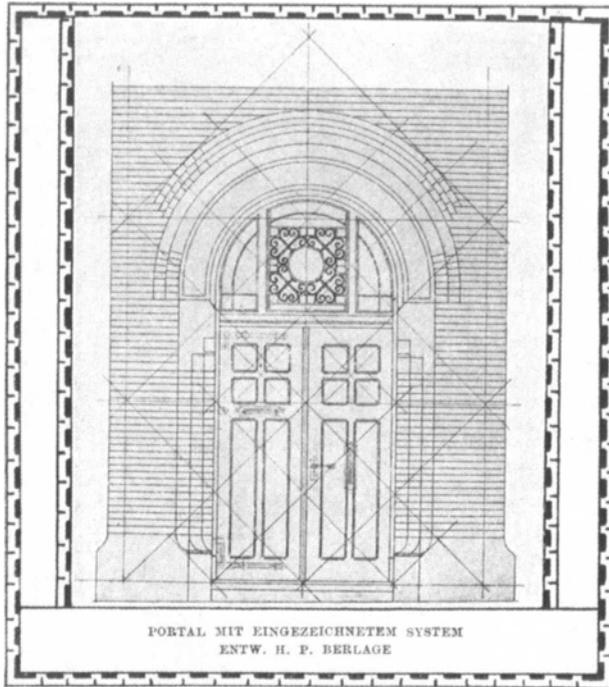
normal set square at  $60^\circ$  and  $45^\circ$ , but rather one set to the relevant ratio, in that this always gives the correct guidelines. In practical terms, one works no differently using the  $60^\circ$  and  $45^\circ$  set square. When the drawings for the Stock Exchange were produced, a set square with a ratio of 5 : 8 was used. And as the guidelines came automatically to hand, and the demand for stylistic unity, as we have seen, made it desirable to employ the same basic system for all the details, these guidelines suggested themselves spontaneously for all the profiles and ornamental compositions. For these same reasons all the ornaments, without exception, are designed following the system of the Egyptian triangle.

Almost all the ornaments are geometrical, although some are vegetal, such as the banded astragals at the top of the pillars in the Produce Exchange, which carry motifs taken from such trading commodities as tobacco, grapes, rice, and so on. These, too, are stylized following the guidelines mentioned above, and the same is true right down to the smallest furniture detail.

But I went even further.

In the building there are also sculptures and wall paintings, which are designed partly following the same system. Only partly, for in today's conditions one cannot win over all the artists to this point of view. The majority of them still profess themselves in favor of "free art" and do, indeed, regard a set pattern or guideline as a net in which

"Portal with Superimposed System. Design by H. P. Berlage."



PORTAL MIT EINGEZEICHNETEM SYSTEM  
ENTW. H. P. BERLAGE

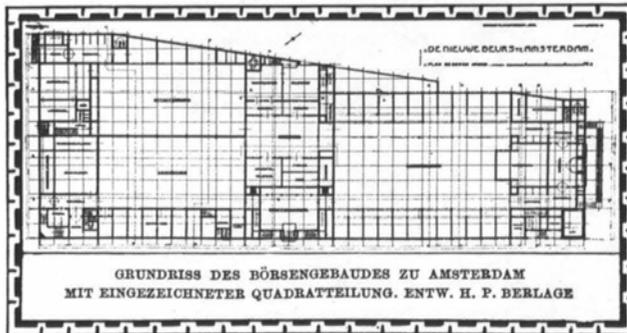
they will entangle themselves. But are not painting and sculpture also decoration? And should not this decoration also be stylized according to the same laws as the architecture that governs it? This does not imply disrespect, truly not, but rather mutual esteem. It is much more the case that easel painting, in other words, free art, regards architecture with disdain.

And this touches on the point that must be seen as one of the principal causes of today's artistically inadequate results.

It is recognized as axiomatic that sculpture and painting should support architecture. But how do we implement this tenet?

Good results are generally achieved in the case of eclectic architecture, where it is always very easy for the architect to find artists who work in the same spirit. But with modern architecture it is not so easy, for in most cases it is not yet possible to reach a firm accord in both intention and ability, for the simple reason that such an accord does not exist. Only tradition is able to achieve this accord, and such a tradition has not yet been created.

"Facade of the Stock Exchange Building in Amsterdam with Superimposed System.  
Design by H. P. Berlage." And "Floor Plan of the Stock Exchange Building in  
Amsterdam with Superimposed Quadrature Division. Design by H. P. Berlage."



"Detail of Columns from the Stock Exchange in Amsterdam. Design by H. P. Berlage."

The modern architect, in consequence, finds himself in the uncomfortable position of having to work out the outlines of the sculpture and painting himself (irrespective of whether or not he has the ability), which condemns the artists in question more or less to slave labor and therefore affects the quality of their work. If the architect relinquishes this preliminary control, as the artists would prefer, then under the current conditions he will quite certainly fail to achieve a unified totality in his architecture, since there is every prospect that the sculptor and painter will not be working in his spirit. This is not the fault of the artist as such but of an artistically immature age. It remains certain, however, that in mature style-architecture<sup>41</sup> there will generally be no place for the salon figure or the easel painting. I say generally, for the type and manner of the framing, the composition, and the coloration are always decisive factors, and these might be of a sort that enables such sculpture and painting to fit in, but carried too far, such a fusion would become awkward. But, quite frankly, why is it that most modern wall paintings obtrude so outrageously—less in their color than in their composition? Why do they fly off the wall? It is precisely because they are treated too much as paintings, that is, because in their delineation they fail to take into account the firm lines of the architecture and therefore always appear restless. The cause lies solely in the fact that easel painting still flows too strongly in the blood of the decorative painters. This is very understandable, for only easel painting is taught at the academies, never decorative painting intended for a particular space.

The decorative painters have not yet been able to break away from this century-old tradition, and even when they enclose their works in ornamental frames, these works still remain paintings—not wall paintings in the earlier, architectonic spirit.

They lack the repose of form and harmony of color that can be achieved only by mutual restraint.

And it is a similar story with sculpture. One understands very well what is meant by architectural sculpture, yet, in spite of this, one sees the conflict between architecture and sculpture when it comes to execution. Like the painters, the sculptors are captivated by the picturesque tendency to such an extent that they cannot free themselves of it in order to achieve the tightly controlled line that would suit the architecture. And how often the scale reveals itself to be totally incorrect. Against this, too, a discipline in the sense described above is excellent, in that the mutual proportions are determined as if by themselves. Here, of course, instinct has the first word and also the last.

And, finally, what are the prospects with the other technical arts, with those things that are so intimately linked to an architectural creation: furniture, lighting, and all the other equipment?

With these designs, too, there is a difficulty.

In the great periods of style it was not, of course, the master builder who had to design these things; that was not his job, but rather, it was the job of the appropriate applied art. And that was correct, for one was then assured that something beautiful and appropriate to the architecture would be designed, for the applied arts had grown up with the traditional scheme of forms. These days the prospects are bad if one desires to achieve once again the longed-for unity. The same cause is at play here as in sculpture and painting; for in the absence of a unified formal style, the architect must do everything himself if he wishes the same spirit to penetrate his work both externally and internally. If he is unable to do this, then he can be certain that the cabinetmaker, who cherishes and cultivates his own little style—assuming he has one—will introduce furniture that contradicts the architecture. And the same thing occurs each time another applied artist enters the room. And this is always presupposing favorable circumstances in which the artists in question are, in their own ways, competent.

For the time being, therefore, the architect must design everything himself or at least prevent the artist in question from working independently. I say for the time being, in that we should attempt even now to allow the work belonging to the applied arts to be done without guidance. But this can happen only when agreement has been reached in the formal sense.

The aim of the entire artistic activity of our age should now be directed at achieving this goal, at reaching this agreement, which signifies the art of space, the true art of architecture.

Only when this condition has been entirely satisfied will one be able to speak of an art of space, and only then will harmony be achieved between the whole and the various parts—unity in diversity.

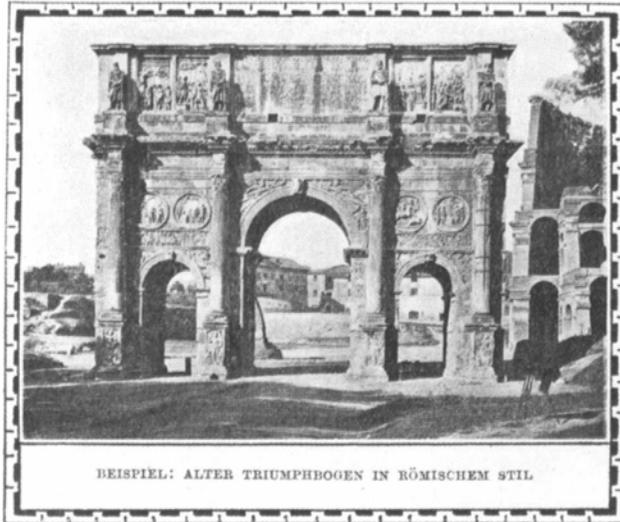
And this is exactly what the nineteenth century forgot: to work from the inside out. It forgot that architecture has the task of creating spaces, “that a building is a necessity enclosed” [*qu’une édifice est une nécessité enveloppée*].

Instead it forgot the interior and threw all the art on the facade—and what a facade!

The nineteenth century worked exactly in reverse, from the outside in, and for that it sacrificed the reality for the appearance.

Now, however, the method described above offers great advantages in every sense. First, for the architect when he is forced to design everything himself. Generally, the fixed geometrical scheme creates a spatial system that is invaluable for the correct placing of the furniture and all the other objects; their position is dictated in a certain way by themselves, and the desired architectural tautness is achieved. This method has special importance for the architect in that it puts in his hand the details of the furnishings and the architectural decoration of the interior spaces as well as their mutual homoge-

"Example: Ancient Triumphal Arch in Roman Style."



neity. With this method, at least, he cannot go too far astray. And when the same guidelines can be used to determine the whole scheme, then one must admit the value of the method.

Second, this method has the advantage, when the architect is unable or unwilling to take the entire matter in hand, of providing the applied artist with the opportunity to work in the same sense as the architect. In matters of detail it enables the applied artist who is working alone to achieve a considerable unity in the details through the relevant geometrical scale and lineation.

If you consider how many technical skills can be incorporated into this method, you will, it is to be hoped, become convinced that, irrespective of the final goal, there is much that can be achieved today in the desired direction, even if under unfavorable, short-term conditions.

I have attempted to make clear to you the method that in my opinion could provide a basis for the preliminary study of modern architecture in particular and of the visual arts in general. It should be established on geometrical principle, which is to say that the masses and forms should exist in a unified relationship to each other, both in the larger context and also in the details.

In doing this, I hope to have convinced you that such a method does not mean something contemptible or unworthy in an artistic sense. On the contrary, it is simply a de-

"Counterexample: Modern Triumphal Arch in Roman Style."



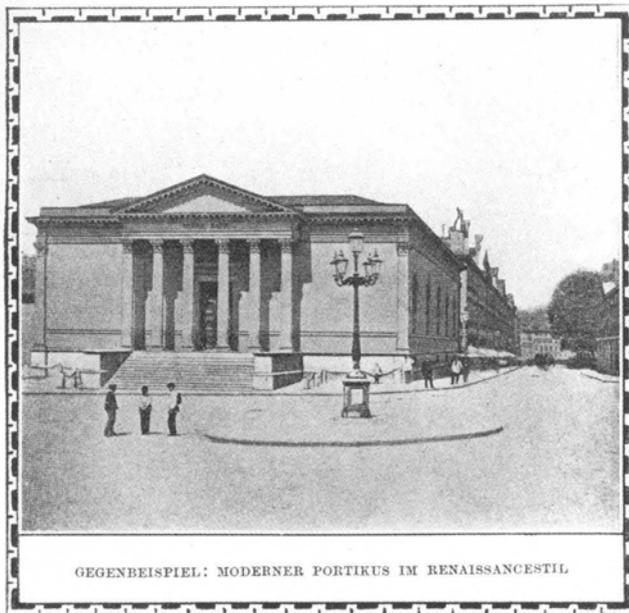
mand for a higher conception, for the artistic imagination will not be destroyed but stimulated by it. If you desire the goal, you will also want the means.

Finally, such a method corresponds exactly to the spirit of our age, which works progressively in this direction. There is a striving in all areas toward organization, which will ultimately lead to a certain kind of culture. For culture is nothing but the correspondence of spiritual and material needs.

Now that we have a basis, a method, we must turn to the construction: but what form should the architecture of the future take?

As already noted, the architecture of the nineteenth century, even the very best, was unable to advance beyond eclecticism, and for this reason it has been much criticized by modernists over the last twenty years. Justly? Yes, certainly, but also unjustly. Justly—and this has been said in every language—since a different epoch demands a different manner of creating form. Of course, one can always counter that the Renaissance did exactly this in adopting the forms of antiquity. But this view, although it has much in its favor, is really too superficial. For an entirely new spirit pervaded the world

"Example: Old Portico in Renaissance Style."



"Counterexample: Modern Portico in Renaissance Style."

"Example: Old Portal in Renaissance Style."



"Counterexample: Modern Portal in Renaissance Style."

at that time, one that regarded antique forms as a means and not as the final goal of artistic creation.

In contrast, our nineteenth-century efforts to achieve style have not gone beyond a particular goal, the goal of employing the enormous knowledge about style collected by archaeologists and professors of art. As Muthesius bitingly puts it: "The aestheticizing professor of art, a new type of the nineteenth century, took up his post and informed, examined, criticized, and systematized art. He was all the more powerful the weaker was the pulse of art, the more withered the natural life of art had become. Thus it is no longer the artist who sits at the source of the arts in the nineteenth century, but the professor of art."<sup>42</sup>

This remark totally characterizes the art of the nineteenth century.

I also refer you to another text on this theme by a Dutch architect, who confirms the opinion stated above and expresses even more strongly his indignation at stylistic eclecticism in architecture.

After a short retrospective glance, he says: "When it was noticed that things had been made earlier that were more beautiful and structurally better than those of today, people began to look at the earlier works and to study their external beauty, but without realizing that this beauty had its origin in love, a love that is now lacking. For this reason people now tell themselves that if they make something that looks like the earlier model, it will also be beautiful."<sup>43</sup>

And it has gone so far that every object made beautiful through the love expended on it can be imitated lovelessly. And there is amazement when someone comes and says that although the imitation looks externally just like the original, one is still beautiful and the other meaningless. For in architecture the notion has been lost that the external form of a work must be the consequence of something inside the creator. Superficial people are astounded when they hear this; they do not understand the difference between real and imitation, between truth and the appearance of truth.

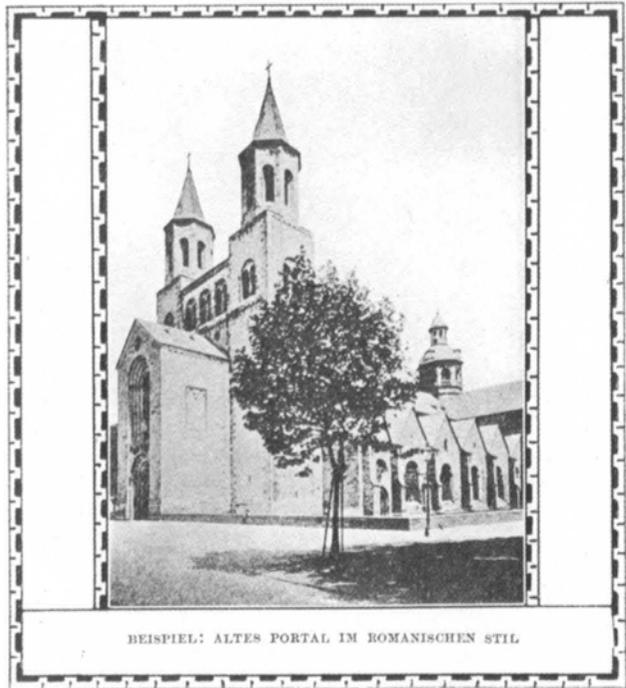
There is, for example, much beauty in a Greek temple as a result of the love invested in the building, a love expressed in constructional ideas. Exactly this is the reason why an imitation Greek temple is not necessarily beautiful.

For we cannot yet possess the constructional spirit with which the Greeks expressed their love. And if we aspire to this love and its related notion of construction, it will necessarily be quite different from that of the Greeks, and its external expression must, in consequence, also take on a different form.

After all our errors, we can still be brought back to the right path. But this will occur neither through the academies of art nor through books on the theory of beauty.

Nor will the academies of art produce it, for in the realm of architecture they are institutions that cling to the beaten track. They are entirely divorced from practical

"Example: Old Portal in Romanesque Style."



"Counterexample: Modern Portal in Romanesque Style."

"Example: Old Street Corner in Renaissance Style."



building and are continually twenty years behind the times; they always teach theory, although the theory of building lies in a good concept of practice.

It will not come about through theories of beauty, since artists hate the philosophy of art.

We artists, who love life and wish to reproduce it, hate all the rules derived by philosophers from their archaeological studies of the works of our predecessors. We know that love has nothing to do with rules and that we can dispense with theories of beauty without running into the danger of rendering our work any less beautiful.

In the wooden roof frame of a hay barn there is more idea of beauty and in a farmhouse more idea of style than a handbook of aesthetics can ever teach us.

The word "aesthetic" can quietly disappear from the world of architecture; for since we know that love and devotion are the sources of beautiful works, we also understand that aesthetic theory cannot increase our love. Books on aesthetics were invented at a time when men had a need to talk about art; because they were no longer able to create art, they wanted to talk their way out of this deficiency. Nothing beautiful has ever been created in the hands of an artist satiated with aesthetic observations. Philosophers have

“Counterexample: Modern Street Corner in Renaissance Style.”



never been able, by philosophizing about beauty, to reach the point at which they could produce something of beauty from their theories.

And is it not an amusing fact that no artist of consequence has ever ventured to write a book on aesthetics? Art history, too, offers us little help.

Whoever is not content with partial erudition and cannot, therefore, be led into foolishness but really looks for the way and the manner in which the particular taste of a certain nation is expressed will learn from his studies and from art history that forms are expressions of these preferences. If he knows that he does not share such preferences, he can have no use for the forms. For whoever has studied even one style—which is something quite different from looking at the external appearance of works in any particular style—knows that no artist expresses himself in forms foreign to his own taste.

But art history also teaches something of very special importance: Forms, like the love that creates them, can change, but construction is eternal and retains its value.

Something that can put us on the correct path is our notion of “being an artist.” An artist is a person who experiences contemporary existence more intensively than others

and thus anticipates the lives of others. An architect is someone who must devote his entire working life to satisfying the needs of his contemporaries and thus strives to give beautiful form to his works by experiencing his own existence correctly and expressing his every feeling, by always endeavoring as intensely as possible to be himself.

*Artists know that anyone who starts building with a little taste and a desire to conform is quite capable of composing a complete project from motifs borrowed from the work of others; a product that in this case does not possess the character of the original works but rather their outward appearance.*

*Artists know the difference between truth and the appearance of truth, between beauty and the illusion of beauty. They know that the architect of illusions is no architect, that he who fabricates styles is not one of their number. The notion of historical styles has filled the heads of many people, who now think that to be called beautiful a building has to be built in a certain style. For this reason it is necessary to say that "it is not the work of an artist to build in any given style," that "building in a certain style has nothing to do with art."*

*Artists have no respect for a painter of illusions, one who works today in the spirit of Holbein, tomorrow in the spirit of Velázquez, and the day after in that of Watteau. Artists have no respect for a sculptor who lives by imitating some famous Greek, or Michelangelo, or Peter Vischer. Artists have no respect for an architect, who, for whatever reason, dresses his creations in copied clothes, thus denying himself and his age.*

*Only someone who does not understand his age and, in consequence, has only superficialities to offer, can design buildings in architectural styles in order to earn money. For eclectic architecture is not an art object, but a commercial object, from the shop of an architect-merchant.*

*Eclectic architecture is not the work of someone who wishes to express his own mind and soul, tried and tested by himself.*

*Eclectic architecture stands as something learned by certain individuals cut off from the people; it is something unnatural in an artist.*

*Eclectic architecture is the pseudoarchitect clutching at art; it is the currency used by the merchant in architectural design to boost his wares.*

*Eclectic architecture stands outside art; it shares only its external appearance with architecture.*

*Eclectic architecture is the lie of a man who desires to be taken for an artist; it is the activity of a dealer who wants to look like an architect.*

*Eclectic architecture, finally, is the manipulation of a man who feigns love; liars and artists are two different kinds of people.*

*Eclectic architecture does not go with being an artist.*

This article dates from 1894, and even though the author would probably no longer wish to endorse all of it, the main argument—his opinion on eclectic architecture—remains unchallenged. Against this opinion, however, one can not only plead mitigating circumstances but even offer a defense. It can be summed up briefly in the idea that the time had not yet come for a revolution. Whichever philosophical approach one might choose to invoke, the fundamental reason for the use of eclectic architecture can be blamed on the spirit of the age or on its immaturity when confronted with artistic ideas that look into the future. This is true both for fatalistic philosophies, which maintain that everything happens as it must, for no one, however strong, can resist the *zeitgeist*, and for idealist approaches, which ultimately feel that we are too comfortable in the earlier styles, and that the art of the native Renaissance offers the most trusted home. Does our age possess the maturity to look to the future? A careful answer is required to this succinctly posed question. One can answer it with “yes,” but then with certain reservations, for one should not expect that the hopes for a new art, that is to say, for a new style, will be satisfied within a few years.

Yet the nineteenth century—marked most clearly by its architecture as the century in which a chaotic jumble of all earlier styles prevailed—achieved at least this result: “A complete devaluation of this style instinct and such a profound conviction of its absurdity that we no longer consider the mere academic use of a historic architectural style to be of merit. Indeed, it hardly elicits our interest. It is now out of the question that any of the readopted old architectural styles could present itself as the contemporary style, or that any could be shown to be vital.”<sup>44</sup> This, once again, from Muthesius. So, despite its efforts, the nineteenth century has only the tragic fate, first, in going so far in exploiting every possible style as to entirely eliminate all interest in the whole matter; and, second, in having shown that none of the historical architectural styles can satisfy our contemporary needs.

This, of course, is a negative result. Is there nothing positive?

I think there is. For no age exists, however confusing, that cannot show some positive results. And hence there must be among the many artistic results of the nineteenth century some that can be singled out as having shown themselves very valuable for the future—namely, the two main directions, Neorenaissance and Neogothic. Yet it cannot be denied that it was reserved principally for medieval art to pave the new way for us. I have already had the opportunity to discuss this view in more detail in a lecture entitled “Thoughts on Style in Architecture,”<sup>45</sup> and in two lectures that I had the pleasure of delivering last winter in Zurich: “Einige kritische Betrachtungen über alte Bau- und Kleinkunst” (Some critical reflections on the architecture and applied art of the past).<sup>46</sup>

In the first lecture I mentioned

*the two great practical aestheticians, Semper and Viollet-le-Duc, and feel that Viollet-le-Duc's contribution should be valued no less than Semper's, since it was his insight that the art of the Middle Ages could, in principle, offer the correct basis for the modern period. For this is an art that not only stands on a purely constructional base but also forms the thread between old and new. We must take up this thread again at the correct point. Therefore classical art—the Italian Renaissance and the whole Neorenaissance movement around the middle of the nineteenth century—was of only passing significance. The revival of an art that itself was not essentially constructional and for that reason degenerated into a purely decorative impulse was questionable from the outset; its apostles soon ran into contradictions, which were not to be avoided. Even Semper, from whom one would have expected a better understanding of the principles of medieval art, was not free from these contradictions.<sup>47</sup>*

That the Renaissance was in principle not constructional and rapidly strayed in a decorative direction was an argument I tried to develop in the Zurich lecture. This I did by stressing the questionable use by the Romans of columns and pilasters—not as freestanding elements but as a decorative means attached to the wall, with such dubious results as severed capitals, fragmented beams, stuck-on gutters, and so on. Here one does not even have to go as far as Hegel, who called half-columns simply repugnant, for two opposing aims stand side by side here and fuse with each other without any inner necessity. In this connection I again call on the authority of Muthesius, who in his text on the “first revolution in the arts”—namely the Renaissance—says:

*There came the time when the antique world, whose spirit forcefully survived even its physical decline, brought new artistic ideals to the north. The age of humanism in the liberal arts—of the Renaissance in the fine arts—ascended, and led to a flowering of the arts, particularly in painting and sculpture. This was not equally true for architecture. Whereas in painting, and in a certain sense also in sculpture, these new influences assisted in bringing an extant youthfulness to maturity, in architecture a fully developed art was rudely broken and a rich artistic tradition was cast aside. What was achieved in Renaissance building-art could be but a pale image of a superior original art—a claim that will be evident to every visitor to Italy who observes how any single antique building (the Roman Colosseum or the Pantheon, for example) eclipses the entire building-art of the Renaissance.<sup>48</sup>*

And if Renaissance architecture achieved no more than a pale replica of the original style, then what are the prospects for Neorenaissance architecture? One thinks here involuntarily of a grog that has been twice diluted by mistake.

A second authority to whom I can appeal in this matter is Karl Scheffler, who sees

the development of art from a more philosophical standpoint and in his book on the *Konventionen der Kunst* (Conventions of art) even calls the Neorenaissance movement an act of desperation, a gifted impotence, an episode.<sup>49</sup>

In addition to Viollet-le-Duc I have referred to Semper as the second brilliant architect and scholar of the arts, who set forth his views on art in his immortal work *Der Stil in den technischen Künsten*.<sup>50</sup>

The argument presented by the former in his *Dictionnaire raisonné* and the *Entretiens sur l'architecture*<sup>51</sup>—perhaps the most beautiful texts that have ever been written on architecture—was developed by the latter in *Der Stil*.

Viollet-le-Duc's starting point is medieval art, which for him represents the quintessence of the purest architectural style, from which he derives that notion of style that for him is the single correct one.

Semper, in contrast, is more of a philosopher. He develops his ideas on style but from this draws no "fixed conclusion," thereby falling into certain errors that are perhaps explicable in part by his education, which from the outset aroused in him a certain sympathy for classical antiquity.

This is natural and in itself no failing. Yet I venture to say quite directly that it has proven itself harmful for nineteenth-century architecture. This opinion truly implies no disrespect for that master, for he remains the highly gifted leader. Sadly he remains one of the many "victims of genius," as Scheffler puts it, "who found no resonance in their own age and then, falling back on old conventions, become conventional." Semper was the greatest general on "the battlefields of art, who, in a stable epoch would have achieved immortal results, equal in their energy to those of any master in the past, but whose impact can remain only episodic."<sup>52</sup>

And here his truly and intrinsically immortal work comes into contact with the general fatalism of all human activity, in that he, too, following Goethe's view, "in his weakness is tied to his age."<sup>53</sup> In *Der Stil in den technischen Künsten* Semper set out to explain the origins of art and its development in terms of natural causes, to damn everything superfluous, all false appearance, and every manifestation that contradicts the nature of the object. He appears in the text in a truly apostolic light and lashes nineteenth-century art humbug with extraordinary intelligence. As already mentioned, it is incomprehensible that the same man could arrive at architectural inconsequentiality.

For unlike Viollet-le-Duc, Semper did not know how to differentiate between Greece and Rome, and with his fatal sympathy for the Italian High Renaissance he became convinced that he could give modern architecture a firm direction. I believe, however, that we have now come far enough to realize that this period could be only transitional. This led me to use the expression "harmful for architecture."

If only Semper, who said things of undying value in *Der Stil*, had drawn the conse-

quences in his architecture, how differently architecture would have developed under his influence in Germany and here in Switzerland. For how magnificent in its conception and fine in its detail was the art of this master! And most important of all, his art would have shown itself to be much more viable, for a conception like this would have had in itself the seed for future development. It is really tragic that we must now recognize Semper's architecture as something of only transient worth. But would it have been too much to ask for such perfection at that time?

Summarizing these observations, we come to the conclusion that of all the nineteenth-century experiments, the two main movements—Neorenaissance and Neogothic—were valuable, but that of these two only the Neogothic was fruitful in that it steered our eyes back to medieval art, which contains in itself the seed for the future.

But why should we now go to medieval art for instruction? To be able to create something for the future? And should we turn at all to earlier styles for instruction when it has already been explained in detail that eclectic architecture was a lover's lie, and furthermore that the Neorenaissance has proved itself a style of no consequence?

Following directly from the above, it would seem that this question must be answered with a resolute no. Let us have no more of what has gone before, no more of all those enfeebled forms. The nineteenth century has entirely soured our love for eclectic architecture; we live in a different age and therefore demand a particular art! Of course, the correct answer to these questions can be offered only with certain reservations, as it is ultimately a question of "how?" You can certainly take instruction if you know why you are taking it. Ultimately you have to take instruction if you cannot do anything else!

What is to be done?

In my above-mentioned lecture "Thoughts on Style in Architecture," I quoted some sentences from Semper's *Der Stil*. You will permit me to repeat them here: "Nature, the great primeval creatress, must obey her own laws, for she can do nothing else but reproduce herself. Throughout everything her archetypes remain the same as those brought forth from her womb throughout the aeons."<sup>54</sup>

This Hegelian view, which Semper adopts as his own, speaks volumes in regard to art. It says no more and no less than the following: consider, you artists, how nature recasts its archetypes. You can only recast the original forms of art in the same way; you cannot create new ones, and if you try to do this, you will become unnatural, which is to say, untrue.

For why should man be able to do more than nature when he himself must obey nature. Indeed, does not all history teach us that human culture repeats itself, that only the formal expression changes while the mutual relationships remain the same? In brief, the basis of culture remains unchanged.

This fact, in relation to art, instantly offers the answer to the question posed above,

namely, “How should you take instruction?” And this answer says: Do not pursue formal issues but only those concerned with the eternal basis! Do not search for the substance but for the spirit! Drawing the correct conclusions on the question of conceiving style, it only remains to tell the artist to recast his forms, not to copy them. Copying is abominable, for you cling to the superficialities and in such a situation can do nothing but give a pale imitation of the original.

The copied forms that are not your own do not issue from your own love!

But follow nature—search for the spirit that abides in the great works of earlier times and remains eternally the same. Recast the formal expression, which is to say, choose different artistic forms, for these will be generated by your own love!

The eclectic architecture of the nineteenth century was capable of nothing apart from adopting the merely formal aspects of earlier styles as its own.

In painstakingly studying these formal aspects, this architecture felt that it had partaken of the spirit of the earlier works but had involved itself only in a merely stylistic reading.

And it was for this reason that the Italian Renaissance paled earlier than the art of classical antiquity, in that it adopted—at least in the realm of architecture—only the formal elements. In this sense Roman art was also questionable, since it reflected only the forms of Greek art and not its spirit. And this spirit is the eternally true, pure, constructional law of building.

This spirit is not the original component of art, for originality depends on formal qualities. Even if you have comprehended the spirit, you still have not done anything original but simply understood an eternal law. If you have only copied the form, you have done nothing at all special. But if you have recast the form, then you have achieved something original. Nature does the same with the simplest of means and is always original as a result.

It follows that in the West only two styles can be called original, the Greek and the medieval, and just these two have been able to surpass by far the art of all other cultural epochs. Muthesius says:

*Since the beginning of history, two luminous periods stand out in Western culture as notably artistic: Greek antiquity and the Nordic Middle Ages. The first denotes an artistic height that the world can hardly hope again to attain; the second, at the very least, embodies that complete artistic independence and that absolute artistic ethnicity that are basic conditions of any artistic era. Greek art was so powerful, so triumphant, and so superior that not only did the entire culture of its homeland stand under its influence, but it also nurtured the mighty Roman Empire—itsself artistically infertile.*

*Gothic art, while not wholly independent of antiquity, is nevertheless a completely inde-*

*pendent cultural manifestation and is the only original art, in addition to the Greek, to develop in the Western cultural world. If the whole of antiquity was dependent on Greek art, Gothic art provides the artistic roots of a new time; it is the art of the Nordic peoples, from which there developed in the first Gothic golden age that glorious early harvest of architecture and its related arts. The Gothic Middle Ages represented the first triumph of an art fundamentally different from classical art, an art fully developed, unified in all its manifestations, infusing every production of the human hand, and, above all, ethnic in the best sense. It was, therefore, in its own way a perfect period of art.*<sup>55</sup>

If we note that it was precisely these two great architectures that evolved from a certain geometrical law and draw again the appropriate conclusions, the question suggests itself: should we not begin again with a geometrical law since we, too, aspire to recapture the same spirit?

I believe this question must be answered affirmatively and, in doing so, we would establish this second point in addition to the already-stated conviction that one should not copy forms from earlier styles. A third point remains, namely, that the geometrical law comprises merely a subordinate part of the true spirit of style and offers only a means with which to illuminate, study, and examine this spirit.

In all the reflections on architecture over recent years there has been a lot of talk about “the constructional” [*das Konstruktive*], and I myself have mentioned it again in these lectures. But this word can very easily lead to misunderstanding. When I maintain to someone who is determined not to understand me that an iron pillar clad with stucco to resemble the form of an antique column is not structural, he will ask: “Why not? The thing provides support; I can give it any form I like, and it will be constructional.”

If I enter a hall with a columnar architecture that is enclosed with plaster vaults above, which is, of course, an empty space terminated by the floor of the level above, I would say to its builder that the hall is not constructional. This would probably make him very angry and prompt him to ask in reply: “Why not?”—adding that this structure has been formed in this way for centuries and asking if I could do it better than a Sangallo or a Peruzzi.<sup>56</sup>

And, finally, if I were to ask the architect of a facade crowned by a tower why in the plan this tower is supported by only a few columns that take the weight of the tower through an iron beam, the architect would probably regard me as mad and even deduce from the plan of a Gothic cathedral that the fourth corner of the tower here rested similarly on a pillar.

I must admit that in such cases I am not ready with a conclusive answer. Nevertheless, I know (however pedantic this may sound) that I am right. I say there is no instant,

conclusive answer, for one must remember how many new constructional techniques are emerging at the moment—industrial inventions aimed at ever more practical building. Yet these inventions are bringing about such a revolution in building technology that an explanation of what is to be understood as a so-called constructional manner of building, based on the use of materials, is not so easy. The discovery of reinforced concrete, for example, is just such a factor that makes this explanation so difficult. I believe that possible misunderstanding is merely a question of language, and, for example, that it would be better to choose the word *sachlich*,<sup>57</sup> which anyway has the advantage of being better understood by the layman.

Yet the word *sachlich* also has the disadvantage of sounding inartistic; a disadvantage that can be overcome simply by resolving not to confuse *sachlich* with commercial [*geschäftlich*]. Thereupon one asks oneself if an art that is *sachlich* can be art? Is it inartistic to ponder ever more meticulously which arrangement is the simplest, which develops most logically? And this refers, of course, to the artistic form, not to the spatial planning of the building, as endeavors of this sort must be regarded as something self-evident.

For there is not only an economic but also an artistic *Sachlichkeit*. Is it inartistic, then, in the design process to think first of a linear scheme [*Linienführung*] that develops as simply as possible out of the primary form rather than of decoration and ornament? Is it inartistic when designing to omit everything superfluous, which is to say, everything unrelated to the building's constructional necessity? Is it inartistic to apply the yardstick of logical consistency, correctly responding to Viollet-le-Duc's conviction "that every form that is not determined by the structure should be rejected"?<sup>58</sup> And just as "restraint first reveals the master," so is it in architecture. For this sentence gives proof of the generally known fact that it is not the more complicated but rather the simpler forms that cause the most difficulty.

And you are artists enough to understand that the border between the prosaic and the simple must be drawn by instinct. This is the difference between nonartists and artists: the work of the true artist, however simple, is never prosaic in appearance.

A *sachlich* art, which is to say, a constructional art is the password. Should there be any doubt about this dictum, you will not hold it against me when I say that the two great styles, the Greek and medieval, were also *sachlich*, in that both answered the demands made above for simple and understandable design. And were these styles the least artistic? On the contrary.

Is not the Doric capital, evolved from the architectonic need for form, the simplest solution imaginable and exactly for that reason the most beautiful imaginable?

And is not the Doric metope frieze, also developed from the basic architectonic form, a decoration that is never boring, eternally beautiful, and yet amazingly simple.

Furthermore, is not a Romanesque portal—something that could hardly be conceived in a more simple form—cut out of the wall with the most delicate artistic sensibility, thereby possessing a beauty of unsurpassable nobility? And is not this rule confirmed by the observation that whenever these forms gradually develop in their richness and their clarity becomes obscured, there is a loss of beauty—even in the presence of the richest display.

It now becomes clear why it was predetermined that the Renaissance, in particular, would produce architecturally unsatisfactory works, since it used the originally lucid scheme of column and pillar as a decorative form. This was a confused usage, not derived from the imperative of architectural necessity. As Goethe already proclaimed: “Guard against using columns improperly; it is their nature to stand freely. Woe to the wretches who have shackled their slim figures to crude walls!”<sup>59</sup>

And as we know, the Romans led the way in this use of the column. The Renaissance masters, as already noted, merely took over this unoriginal formal scheme, which they then invigorated, but did not redeem, with truly original Renaissance ornament. For this reason, a Renaissance building without ornament is the most barren thing of all.

It follows from all this that we must learn from the two great styles—the Greek and the medieval—and in particular from the latter, in which rest the roots of the art of a new age. This is because the medieval style, too, is *sachlich*. As Muthesius says at the end of his book *Stilarchitektur und Baukunst*:

*The unclarified romantic efforts, insofar as they were architecturally expressed, already sought a straightforward [sachlich] art. It was most significant that this Romantic Movement, for the first time in the nineteenth century, returned to those Nordic views of art that were essentially pragmatic [sachlich] and constructional, as was embodied with such great clarity in Gothic art. The great process of reform weakened only because the Neogothic school, like the classicists, degenerated into the superficial and formal, into a mere stylistic conception. Yet despite all the waverings and fermentations in the nineteenth century, it began to mature with increasing consistency: the substitution of the classic ideal of beauty by a new one corresponding to the Nordic-Germanic spirit.*<sup>60</sup>

I said that we should study the spirit of the two earlier styles. We can now see that this spirit exists in *Sachlichkeit*, which proves to be identical with “clear construction.” Quite apart from the eternally valid “laws of building,” it is interesting to note how passionately our age presses for *Sachlichkeit*. I already had the opportunity in my earlier Zurich lectures to stress this fact, pointing out, for example, how easy it is to see that “the development of the age presses for the abandonment of decoration.” In doing so, we place decisive emphasis on the purely functional, a tendency sufficiently confirmed

by an interesting text by Muthesius, “Die Umbildung unserer Anschauungen” (The transformation of our views).<sup>61</sup>

It may, on the one hand, be correct to view this tendency as something provoked by the nineteenth century’s endlessly exaggerated, totally unmotivated mania for decoration. But one cannot deny that the creation of undecorated objects had already begun in the tenth century; that at the outset this development quite naturally provoked sharp criticism; and that today, however, we have come far enough to accept it.

And the complement, if one will, to this tendency is an undecorated architecture, which is to say, a sparingly decorated architecture that appears undecorated in comparison to what has gone before.

I do not, however, draw from these developments the most extreme conclusion, namely, that we are striving for an unadorned culture. On the contrary: these developments indicate that today, in particular, a whole army of decorative artists [*Ornamentisten*] is occupied with modern ornament. For this reason it would seem to me that the art of the future will not be undecorated, for man’s specific inner desire for decoration will ultimately conquer.

The effective guiding spirit of the decoration and ornament, however, in harmony with the characteristics of the larger movement, will once again be *Sachlichkeit*. In other words, the ornament should distinguish itself through the clarity of its delineation and the simplicity of its forms.

From these observations we can reach the following conclusions, which determine the path that we must now adopt, the path that will be valuable for the future, and which will lead us to a new art.

1. A geometrical scheme should once again provide the basis of architectural composition
2. The characteristic forms of earlier styles should not be used
3. Architectural forms should be developed in the spirit of *Sachlichkeit*

As far as the first point is concerned, I attempted at the beginning to show that the two great styles were likewise established on a geometrical basis and for this reason achieved their noble artistic form. And even if geometrical design principles cannot be proven in every case, this should not prevent us from applying these principles universally. For there is no danger of becoming too dogmatic through their use. On the contrary, the nonartist will achieve nothing with this system in any case. In the hands of an artist, however, it becomes a propelling force, for he knows how to control geometrical form, treats the system as a means, and knows when it is appropriate to abandon it. The true artist takes care not to destroy the world for the sake of a principle. Furthermore there are deviations from its use in the work of the architects of antiquity that can be explained only in terms of correct, logical responses to the system. The system thus

offers proof that it guards itself against sterile results and also that it can be abandoned when it threatens to become too pedantic.

The second point speaks for itself, in that exactly here is the realm of dependent creation. It is concerned with the variable characteristic elements, "the altering fashion,"<sup>62</sup> the individual: Everything that makes a style into a style. For when old forms are copied, originality is entirely relinquished.

The third point, finally, contains in a certain way the answer to the second, namely, what forms the new design should take.

This answer, of course, can be given only in part, since one cannot dictate to the individual.

You will ask, then, how it was that in earlier times each Doric master builder, for example, made more or less the same Doric capital? How, despite slight deviations and improvements, the basic form remained essentially the same? And finally how it may be that in all the great architectural epochs one does not see as many sharply individual discrepancies as one does today? You are right! But the answer to this question is immediately apparent. The difference between now and then lies in the fact that the style of a great epoch is the expression of an entire people and is thus founded on a tradition within which the individual disappears. In contrast, an age without a great style is marked by individualization, which means that the individual does not feel spiritually subordinated to the traditions of the people but claims the right to personal distinction and to self-expression. Such an age is one of autonomous schools, onto which the leading master presses his stamp. In the epochs of great style such schools did not exist.

This was the starting point of the Renaissance, for it was humanism—the word says it all—that demanded this worldview. For this reason, the Gothic was indeed the last great style.

The strongest expression today is individualism. Whereas in the Renaissance period one still had a certain tradition, which was rooted in classical antiquity, nowadays we have none. Everyone thinks he knows the answer by himself, and the least important person claims an independent voice. In this case, would it not be better if he were to copy his neighbor regardless? It is amusing to observe, however, that people cannot endure this, and only for the same individualistic reason.

And what havoc this cult of self-expression has caused, for in the absence of a tradition everyone wants to be original, which is far worse than any tradition, however bad. Our modern streets provide, unfortunately, the most hideous proof of this. Artistic anarchy is the cruelest enemy.

Shall we not again achieve a great style until we all work according to the same tradition? Ignoring the question of how far it is possible for all nations with the same level of cultural development to work in the same spirit, one can quite calmly answer this

question with a “no.” For think of what would be necessary for this to happen.

Before giving the final answer, however, I must return again to the third point, namely, that architectural form should develop in the spirit of *Sachlichkeit*. The nonindividual component of this demand can be tied to the first point, to the geometrical basis. It should indeed be connected in this way for the sake of stylistic unity.

I have made you aware of the geometrical basis of the two great styles and shown with the example of a few modern works how a certain system, a uniform mathematical relationship, can be implemented throughout an entire composition.

This relates to the appropriate architectural forms: capitals, cornices, moldings, in brief, to decoration in general.

And it is clear that in the geometrical plan the triangulation or quadrature, respectively, contain the appropriate basis for these details, in other words, the basis for a geometrical ornamentation.

I have already shown you a geometrically designed capital and other geometrical forms. Could not both the great styles equally be called geometrical styles, following the character of their ornamentation?

For does not geometrical ornament take preference over vegetal ornament, and indeed in the early phases almost exclusively?

And is not the vegetal ornament on Doric temples and on Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals relatively insignificant in comparison with the absolutely predominant geometrical ornament?

Is this fact not a sign for us to start once again to form our architectural details geometrically for each composition, each according to a distinctive scheme?

This, incidentally, immediately protects against an overpersonalized, sometimes ugly originality, in that the geometrical forms are not individual and are always intrinsically beautiful.

For the time being you cannot expect more than this suggestion, for it must be left to the individual to work out the details, each according to his manner. For as already noted, there is no unified basic form on which we are agreed. At present there is no system of orders that makes the Doric style the Doric, the Ionic the Ionic, or the Corinthian the Corinthian. And yet it was only a single capital, the one with the acanthus leaf, that gave rise to the revolution in form and lasted for hundreds of years.

But geometry is limitless in its forms: endless variations are possible on a single motif. And if you do not define the boundaries too narrowly to the forms derived from rigidly geometrical lines—among which the spiral must be the most important—and if you do not take the notion of geometry too meticulously, then your vista will instantly widen to such an extent that you will not be able to define the limits of ornamental possibility.

As I said above, you cannot, for the time being, expect more than this suggestion. I hope, however, that you will not misinterpret the word “suggestion” as a directive to limit yourselves to quadratic and triangular ornament. For I cannot repeat often enough how alien this would be, and how geometry is only the means and not the goal. It should remain a means with which to create truly beautiful form, to create that which makes a style into a style.

It follows from this that, even using geometrical ornament, we can today expect nothing but a multitude of individual styles. For although the geometrical system offers a unified basis that precludes the overindividualistic elements, it is still to be expected that each artist will develop each piece of ornament in a different way, according to his personal nature. And there is already proof of this. For is it not strange to observe how the modern decorative artists (and a whole army is engaged in this) are all working more or less with geometrical forms, yet do so in an individual manner? Some work only in squares and triangles, others in freer forms, still others with spirals, and so on. Yet all of them are forced—almost unconsciously—and driven back again, I feel, to the prime source of a correct stylistic principle: to geometrical form.

There are, however, exceptions; there are modern artists who are unable to free themselves from vegetal ornament and who, on the contrary, use it in very free formal treatments. Is ornament like this no longer valid? Of course it is! But only when viewed from a purely individualistic standpoint, which is to say, that it will disappear with its creator. This has been the fate of the linear decoration of certain artists, precisely because it originated in a personal taste and was therefore not in a position to contribute anything significant to the creation of a formal style. It creates only a personal fashion and thus a transient fad. As already mentioned, vegetal forms coexisted with geometrical ornament in all the great styles, to a greater or lesser extent. For it is impossible to deny the enormous stylistic attraction of plants, particularly since a growing love of nature can be felt nowadays.

For this reason plants will also be used in our age in the design of ornament. But these designs will be of value only if they subordinate themselves to the geometrical principle. And the interest of today’s artist is not aroused by a few plants in particular but by the entire plant world—as in the Middle Ages. It would be unthinkable that one plant alone could provide the basic motif for the decoration of a future style, as the palm and the lotus did for the Egyptians and Greeks or the acanthus did for the Romans. And this says nothing of the various individual experiments.

Yet all these experiments, which even employ animal and human forms as ornamentation, lag behind the geometrical experiments with nonrepresentational [*gegenstandlos*] ornament, as van de Velde calls it.

This is not only fitting but also self-evident in that the great “certain something”

is missing at the moment that ultimately makes a style into a style and the love into an ideal.

Summing up, we have the following three points as preconditions for an architectural style:

1. The determination of an architectural composition should be carried out on a geometrical basis
2. The forms of earlier styles should not be copied
3. Architectural forms should also be of a geometrical nature, freely conceived, but developed in the most simple, *sachlich* way, following the same scheme as the ground plan and elevation

I consider in these three sentences the style that we should now pursue. One must, I stipulate again, be an artist, a creative spirit, in order to achieve something of significance within these basic laws. For only an artist is in a position to transcend this law, the eternal truth that is the spirit, and through this law and beyond it to produce a new formal beauty.

The eternal, fundamental truth—the spirit—did not exist in the eclectic architecture of the nineteenth century. It had been lost; one had merely copied the beautiful forms of earlier ages but without this spirit.

Now that the spirit has been found again, we no longer need the formal beauty of earlier styles. On the contrary, we should now begin to recast artistic forms with a new love.

This recasting, with which various artists have already been occupied for some time, can at the moment be only an individual matter, as was the case in the Renaissance. This was why the Renaissance failed to become a great architectural style, and why today it is even less possible to think of a great style. For without a communal tradition there can be no talk of a great style. During the Renaissance there was an extant tradition that survived through the imitation of classical antiquity. These days, however, modern artists work entirely free of tradition, for a new tradition has yet to be created. After much searching and many mistakes the modern artists will finally come together and achieve, so to speak, an artistic consensus. But will this be the birth of the great modern style? I hardly think so, for, as I have already said, one great element is still missing at present—the element that ultimately makes a style into a great style, namely, the love for an ideal.

We could get a long way by agreeing on a beautiful form, an excellent example of which is given, for example, by the acanthus leaf, and with it the Corinthian capital. But since this was only a formal consensus, it could promote a style but not a great style.

For every ideal of beauty is not formal but spiritual in nature, and in the last analysis art is only a reflection of spiritual ideals. “It is certainly the case,” says Hegel, “that art

no longer affords that satisfaction of spiritual needs which earlier ages and nations sought in it, and found in it alone, a satisfaction that, at least on the part of religion, was most intimately linked to art. . . . In all these respects art, considered in its highest vocation, is and remains for us a thing of the past.”<sup>63</sup>

Scheffler, whose text *Konventionen der Kunst* I have already quoted, says that “all art, in as far as it aspires to be the language of the soul, is dependent on convention,” and he continues, “A generally accepted consensus on the basic meaning of life is of great value for the visual arts.”<sup>64</sup>

Here, too, it is stressed that if art should be the language of the soul, it cannot achieve this without agreement. But how can art be the language of the soul when there is no love? And is art really art when it is not the language of the soul? If you check these remarks against what has already been said, then you will begin to understand why great art is lacking at present. It will also become clear why love is missing, and necessarily so, from style-architecture, for a higher love has nothing to do with the reusing of external formulas.

Scheffler’s second sentence goes to the heart of the matter. For even if the artists succeeded in agreeing on a formal measure of beauty, both inwardly and outwardly, if they had arrived at some sort of consensus on beauty, which is to say, a consistently applied system of forms on a geometrical basis, then ultimately there would still be no great architectural style. For still missing would be that great spiritual consensus that promotes accord—an accord that must find its reflection in art. Consensus over questions of form can take us a considerable way toward elevating art into that great source of joy that man needs. Art will then, to some extent, be satisfying, just as the Renaissance was. But it cannot provide that ultimate, immense satisfaction, that inner repose, if spiritual consensus has not also been achieved. And when Scheffler says that a generally accepted consensus on the basic meaning of life is of great value for the visual arts, I would maintain that no great style can develop without this consensus. And I believe that every artist, if he has not allowed himself to be deadened by a superficial vision, on the one hand, or by self-satisfied conceit, on the other, must come to realize this. For if we are striving for grand, ornamental form, are we not powerless when the ideal for such an expression is missing?

We are deceiving ourselves if we believe that religion can offer the basic ideal today as it could before, for the simple reason that here, too, there is no consensus. Nor is such a consensus likely to be achieved in that fragmentation is occurring in both the major Christian churches, and ultimately—whatever one might say—in that the spirit is missing today in the divine service, too. Only the formal beauty, the external form remains.

For it was precisely the Reformation that heralded the Renaissance!

Scheffler comments on this:

*The unanimity of earlier artistic epochs was based almost entirely on the fact that mankind had agreed on a religion, and the fragmentation in contemporary artistic production can equally be explained by the absence of a generally recognized universal idea [Weltidee].*

*Style originates only through limitation. The basis of style is a system, and style, I would insist, is itself a system. The more aware humanity becomes, the greater becomes the demand for such a system, which would answer many doubts and resolve all the contradictions of life.*

*It would be of interest to go into this matter more deeply. For historians, art historians, and also artists the study of philosophical and formal beauty in the context of such a system would be a very rewarding topic. From such a study one might derive an evaluation of the various religions.<sup>65</sup>*

I would hope only that false conclusions will not be drawn from this observation, namely, that the Protestant religion should be seen as inferior because of the continuing inferiority of its artistic expression. One should always guard against confusing cause and effect. Yet, in looking for the cause it still remains a remarkable fact that in this context, too, individual expression can be seen as a related cause in that Protestantism leaves the greatest latitude for individual freedom of thought.

Here is not the place to develop this idea further or even to venture such an attempt. Instead it suffices to note once again that every possible sort of worship was able to achieve the highest artistic expression because man had agreed on a single religion. Consequently it can be stated that, with respect to spiritual love, we live in an age that lies between two religions, that is to say, two spiritual conventions, and for this reason it is unfruitful for the visual arts. As Scheffler says: "Since there is no longer any agreement about the nature of the ideal because commonly understood symbols are not available to the artist, he must, therefore, seek new images from within himself. For this reason he remains misunderstood, for what is symbolic in his perception is not so for others."<sup>66</sup>

This certainly does not seem very promising. It means no more and no less than this: "Whatever we create, however we struggle, the most we can achieve is agreement in matters of formal beauty, the establishment of a formal style. But we shall not attain a style that is the reflection of a spiritual idea, a spiritual ideal. And is that not what we call culture? We lack a culture because culture presupposes a feeling of solidarity; it can develop only on a spiritual basis and is the reflection of this spiritual ideal."

Art lacks a commonly comprehensible symbol, for what appears symbolic to one person is not so to another, and the art remains misunderstood. Even in the last resort if the artists have agreed on some measure of formal beauty, this beauty will lack the spiritual basis—the symbol—and thus the productive idea.

As Scheffler goes on to say:

*The present exists between two conditions, and all manifestations of the new art can be explained, on the one hand, by the lack of religious or philosophical consensus and, on the other, by the longing for this consensus. The artists are part of this dilemma. While some help themselves to old forms, both heathen and Christian, and attempt to accommodate them to new perceptions, others, the so-called practical artists [Nutzkünstler], try most ardently to construct tables and chairs, houses and offices in a rational manner. But these thoughts of function are basically causal ideas, in other words, divine ideas, and can therefore be traced back to undercurrents stirred by religious longing.<sup>67</sup>*

This last sentence must be regarded as the final result.

For if we recapitulate yet again, we come to the following observation. If you desire to create something in the visual arts that has style, the whole project must be based on a mathematical system, with no form derived from pure arbitrariness. The forms of earlier styles should not be used and should, for this reason, be done away with. If you work according to this principle, then you are ultimately working toward a formal style, yet a style that will still lack the spiritual impulse until such time as a universal idea is once more born. For this reason today's Modern Movement is to be seen only as a recasting of form, which had to come after the enervation of the nineteenth century.

But if this Modern Movement works in a rational, constructional form—clearly and *sachlich*, as was done in both great styles—then it is also working in a religious way, with a religious longing, until finally the longing becomes reality and a new universal idea is born.

How will this universal idea announce itself; which spiritual idea will serve as its foundation? Who can answer these questions? Christianity is dead, and the first quiet stirrings of a new type of universal concept derived from scientific research have barely begun to be felt. Yet man demands a certain ethical satisfaction, and from all the recent turmoil surfaces a powerful tendency to regard this as an altruistic battle. It is a question of either one or all. With the denial of morality should the individual alone be protected, or all men, according to the principle of equality?

Once again, this is not the place to analyze the worth or worthlessness of such a principle, but the powerful ethical intention behind the struggle for universal eco-

conomic equality cannot be denied. A consequence will be that all men will become spiritually and intellectually independent and thus able to take advantage of all spiritual and intellectual material. For only then will, on the one hand, the actual conditions be set for the spiritual universal struggle [*Welt-Kampf*], conditions that will stimulate the deployment of the greatest ability, for intellectual results will be regarded more highly than material results are today. On the other hand, these results will reach the highest levels thanks to the mutual intellectual and spiritual accord, whereas today they have sunk to the lowest level due to the enfeebling influence of capitalism and the resulting class struggle.

In my already-cited lecture "Thoughts on Style" I tried to develop the theme of how the struggle against eclectic architecture can be compared with the workers' movement, in that they run as parallel developments: the former spiritual, the latter material. As I say in the lecture, the political initiative must first be implemented before the artistic initiative can achieve a breakthrough, and only from this moment on can work begin on the evolution of a style.

Therefore, if the modern artists work in a *sachlich*, clear way under the preconditions that I have tried to develop, they will be striving toward the modern spiritual ideal, the principle of the economic equality of all men. In doing so, they will breathe life into the formal beauty that has already been developed but which, in the last resort, needs a style in order to rise to new heights. By *sachlich*, clear work I mean a renewed awareness that architecture is the art of spatial enclosure, and, for this reason, prime value, both constructionally and decoratively, should be laid on space. It follows from this that a building should not be essentially an external manifestation.

The art of architecture resides in the creation of spaces, not in the design of facades. A spatial enclosure is produced by walls, and thus the space or the various spaces find external expression in a more or less complex arrangement of walls. It is also important in this sense that the walls should remain flat, for an overarticulated wall loses its intrinsic, wall-like character. By *sachlich*, clear work I mean that the architecture of the wall remains two-dimensional decoration, that the projecting elements are limited to those offered by the construction, such as window supports, water spouts, gutters, single cornices, and so on. It follows from this so-called wall architecture, in which vertical articulation disappears of its own accord, that the vertical supports such as piers and columns are not given projecting capitals, but rather that the development of the transitions are developed within the wall. The windows form the true decoration of the wall plane; they are installed only where necessary, and then in appropriate sizes.

By *sachlich*, clear work I mean work in which the pictorial decorations do not dominate and are employed only in those places that have shown themselves, after the most careful study, to be the correct ones.

Following the principle above, the pictorial decoration should remain surface decoration, in other words, sunk into the wall, and the figures should ultimately form decorated areas of the wall.

Above all, one should once again display the naked wall in all its smooth and simple [*schlicht*] beauty.

By *sachlich*, clear work I mean a work in which all excess is most scrupulously avoided, in which there are no useless cornices and moldings, pedestals and pilasters, shoulder pieces and fixtures—in short, no architecture of a parasitic nature.

By *sachlich*, clear work I mean, finally, an intelligible work that will stimulate interest as only natural simplicity and clarity can, whereas unnatural complexity and ambiguity remain misunderstood. Such complexity startles but does not evoke any interest, which explains why architecture was excluded from the realm of cultural progress in the nineteenth century. The *sachlich*, rational, and therefore clear construction can become the basis of the new art, but only when this principle has penetrated deeply enough and been applied widely enough, will we stand at the door of a new art. And at the same moment the new, universal spirit [*Weltgefühl*]*—the social equality of all men—will be revealed, a spirit whose ideals are located not in the beyond but here on earth, confronting all of us. In the final analysis, however, does this not represent a step nearer to the ultimate goal of all religions, a realization of the Christian idea? Or is it wrong to ascribe the entire Christian doctrine exactly to this principle of human equality—the first condition of an idealist endeavor?*

Then art will once again have the spiritual basis that it needs to reveal itself as the fully conscious expression of this universal spirit, for it will also have its artistic symbols, which the formal style needs as a reflection of the spiritual idea.

Then the work of architectural art will not have a specific, individual character but will be the product of the community, the work of all. As the spiritually [*geistig*] eminent figure, the master builder will lead, but every worker will equally be able to make his spiritual contribution. For although we know that this sort of collaboration did not exist in the periods of great style, with the exception of the Middle Ages, we realize today that the intellectual involvement of the worker in his work is completely missing.

The disappearance of this idea, of the pedantic emotion of the individual in favor of the actual work, seen as an expression not of a person but of a *zeitgeist*, whose interpreter is the leading artist, seems irresistible today. And yet the individual will be pushed into the background in favor not of the community but of the idea, as was the case in earlier times.

For who asks after the name of the master builder of a medieval cathedral or the name of an Egyptian architect? We know only the names of the ruler under whose reign the building was created.

It would even seem that architecture will be the art of the twentieth century, a conviction that I also draw from the social and spiritual manifestations of the present. For with the growth of the workers' movement is evolving the art that man—the entire human race—can least do without; it is the art that is closest to him, and this is architecture.

Architecture will then again assume the first position among the arts, precisely because it is the true art of the people, not the art of the individual, but the art of all, the art of the community, in which the zeitgeist is reflected. For all the practical arts and all the workers are necessary in the creation of a building. It demands a collaboration of all the skills, and these can be employed in a spiritual manner only when all men are economically independent. Architecture is the manifestation of the most developed skills of an entire people. For only in the collaboration of all talents toward an ideal goal can that astonishing perfection be reached that is the secret of the most noble architecture and for this reason unattainable by the individual alone.

If you architects work in this way, then architecture will be the visual art of the twentieth century, just as it last was six hundred years ago. Once again painting and sculpture will stride alongside as servants and, employed in this way, will achieve a higher level of development. In doing so, they will lose their present character as painting and salon figure precisely because these represent in principle a spiritually inferior art and stand, therefore, in the second rank. This prophecy emerges from contemporary social and artistic developments; we can already see how the interest in easel painting and the salon figure is declining each year with the growing interest in applied art. A desire prevails for unity in diversity not only in art but also in the community, for order, for the return of a nobler style. I find it good that we can also speak of style in the community, of culture.

The artists of the present are confronted by the wonderful task of making the formal preparations for the artistic advance, that is, for the great architectural style of this future community. They will gradually join together, even though they now have a sense of loneliness, a feeling characteristic of a religious interregnum. They are abused as bearers of ideas on the arts that stand beyond the broad masses, but which anticipate the coming age.

There is no work more wonderful, for this age will again have a culture and thus set tasks more beautiful than ever before. Spiritually, this age will stand much higher than the medieval age and all that went before, in that its ideal—the social equality of all men—will exist on a higher plane. The artistic reflection of the new age, its architectural monuments, its entire style, will be equally elevated. Those with faith are in no hurry. For even though it is sad to know that we shall see nothing of this age, there remains the consolation of the dream image that we already see dawning on the hori-

zon, and which will transport us once again to that age in which Ulrich von Hutten proclaimed:

*The times are changing,  
The spirits are stirring.  
It is a delight to be alive!*<sup>68</sup>

Source Note: H. P. Berlage, *Grundlagen und Entwicklung der Architektur: Vier Vorträge gehalten im Kunstgewerbemuseum zu Zürich* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse; Berlin: Julius Bard, 1908).

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

1. English in Berlage's text.
2. Thomas Sheraton, *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book* (London: Author, 1793–1794).
3. Charles Karelis, ed., *Hegel's Introduction to Aesthetics: Being the Introduction to the Berlin Aesthetics Lectures of the 1820s*, trans. T. M. Knox (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1979), 16; originally published as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik," in idem, *Werke*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1942), 10.1: 22.
4. English in original text.
5. Gottfried Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Wolfgang Herrmann (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989), 183; originally published as *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten; oder, Praktische Aesthetik*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt: Verlag für Kunst und Wissenschaft, 1860–1863).
6. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Aesthetics*, 2 vols., trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), 1: 13 (emphasis in original); originally published as Hegel, "Vorlesungen" (see note 3), 10.1: 18–19.
7. Although Berlage writes of a "total composition" (*Gesamtkomposition*), he is referring here to a "total work of art" (*Gesamtkunstwerk*) in the sense of a work combining architecture, sculpture, and painting into one, integrated whole.
8. See above, 122–56.
9. See above, 141.
10. Berlage borrowed most of this paragraph from his earlier text *Gedanken über Stil in der Baukunst* (Leipzig: Julius Zeitler, 1905), 32–33 (see above, 141).

11. Rudolf von Eitelberger (1817–1885), Austrian art historian, founded the Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie (Austrian Museum for Art and Industry). See Peter Noever, ed., *Tradition und Experiment: Das Österreichische Museum für angewandte Kunst, Wien* (Salzburg: Residenz-Verlag, 1988).
12. Although August Schlegel may well have referred to architecture as frozen music, the more usual source for the phrase is Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, “Zur Philosophie der Kunst, 1808–1817” (1809), in Manfred Schröter, ed., *Schellings Werke, nach der Originalausgabe in neuer Anordnung*, Supplement, part 3 (Munich: Beck, 1956), 24: “Architektur ist überhaupt die erstarrte Musik” (Architecture is simply frozen music). Goethe also referred to architecture as “eine erstarrte Musik” in his conversations with his secretary, J. P. Eckermann, 23 March 1829.
13. Carl Lemcke (1831–1913) was an aesthetician who wrote extensively on Dutch and Flemish painting and on literary history. His *Populäre Aesthetik* (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann, 1865) reached a fifth edition by 1879. There is mention in the Berlage papers of Lemcke (whose name Berlage usually spells “Lemke”), noting that rhythm is “ein Gesetz, eine Ordnung der Zeitfolge” (a law, an ordering of successive time). See Berlage Papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Dossier 168.
14. Mathias Roriczer, *Das Büchlein von der fialen Gerechtigkeit [ . . . Nach einem alten Drucke aus dem Jahre 1486 in die heutige Mundart übertragen und durch Anmerkungen erläutert]*, mit einem Vorworte von A. Reichensperger (1486; Trier: F. Lintz, 1845). Berlage misspells Reichensperger’s name.
15. Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472); Daniele Barbaro (1513–1570); François Blondel (1618–1686). The name “Brisena” cannot be identified; it may be a misspelling by Berlage.
16. Charles Chipiez, *Le système modulaire et les proportions dans l’architecture Grecque* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1891). Berlage gives the quotation in French.
17. James Fergusson, *A History of Architecture in All Countries, from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, 2 vols. (1865–1867; 2nd ed., New York: Dodd, Mead, 1874), 1: 251–52. The quotation presented here is taken from Fergusson’s publication and thus does not contain the inaccuracies of the English quotation in Berlage’s text.
18. Albrecht Dürer, *Vnderweysung der Messung, mit dem Zirkel vn Richtscheydt, in Linien, Eben vnnd gantzen Corporen* (Nuremberg: n.p., 1525).
19. The unattributed quotation, given in German in Berlage’s text, is found in French in his handwritten notes: “*La clef de tous les proportions, le secret de toute véritable architecture.*” Berlage Papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Dossier 168.
20. The golden section is the division of a length such that the ratio of the smaller part to the greater is the same as the greater to the whole.
21. Hermann Alexander Mueller and Oscar Mothes, *Illustriertes archäologisches Wörterbuch der Kunst des germanischen Altertums, des Mittelalters und der Renaissance, sowie der mit den bildenden Künsten in Verbindung stehenden Ikonographie, Kostümkunde, Waffenkunde, Baukunde, Geräthkunde, Heraldik und Epigraphik*, 2 vols. (Leipzig and Berlin: Otto Spamer, 1877–1878). There is a copy of this extract in the Berlage Papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Dossier 168.

22. William Matthew Flinders Petrie (1853–1942), English Egyptologist, was appointed Professor of Archaeology at University College in London in 1893. His numerous publications on Egyptian archaeology include: *Ten Years' Digging in Egypt* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1892); *A History of Egypt* (London: Methuen, 1894–1905); *Religion and Conscience in Ancient Egypt* (London: Methuen, 1898); *Religion of Ancient Egypt* (London: A. Constable, 1908); and *Arts and Crafts of Ancient Egypt* (Chicago: McClurg, 1910). Berlage's notes from Petrie and from other texts on Pythagorean geometry are in the Berlage Papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Dossier 168. Typographical errors in Berlage's quotation have been corrected here.

23. The quotation, in French in Berlage's text, may be from Marcel-Auguste Dieulafoy, *L'art antique de la Perse: Archéménides, Parthes, Sassanides*, 5 vols. (Paris: Librairie centrale d'architecture, 1884–1889).

24. Carl Alhard von Drach, *Das Hütten-Geheimnis vom Gerechten Steinmetzen-Grund in seiner Entwicklung und Bedeutung für die kirchliche Baukunst des Deutschen Mittelalters dargelegt durch Triangulatur-Studien an Denkmälern aus Hessen und den Nachbargebieten* (Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1897). Berlage pillaged von Drach's text and illustrations on such a grand scale in the present essay that it would be otiose to give chapter and verse. Extended sections of the Berlage text devoted to the history of triangulation, to the Milan cathedral, and to San Petronio, Bologna, are lifted directly from Drach's original. Several of Drach's illustrations also found their way into Berlage's book.

25. Gabriel Stornaloco was a Piacentine mathematician summoned to Milan in 1391 to determine the final dimensions of the Milan cathedral. See Paul Frankl, *The Gothic* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1960), 63–83.

26. On the Beltramie drawing for the Milan cathedral, see Frankl (note 25), 65.

27. The church of San Petronio in Bologna was begun in 1388 to the initial design of Antonio di Vicenzo (circa 1350–1402). Several other hands contributed to the evolving design of San Petronio, which between 1521 and 1600 became a battleground for the warring Gothicist and Renaissance factions in Italian architecture. See Frankl (note 25), 299–313. Asked to give his opinion of San Petronio, Palladio wrote in a letter of 11 January 1578: "The *maniera tedesca* can be called confusion, not architecture" (*ibid.*, 307).

28. By "Perribilia," Berlage is referring to Francesco Morandi, known as "il Terribilia" (d. 1603), who was appointed architect to San Petronio, Bologna, in 1568. His defense of his own design for the church, written in 1589, contains a short treatise on the virtues of triangulation in architectural design. See Frankl (note 25), 305–12.

29. See August Reichensperger, *Vermischte Schriften über christliche Kunst* (Leipzig: T. O. Weigel, 1856), 133–55. On Reichensperger, see Michael J. Lewis, *The Politics of the German Gothic Revival: August Reichensperger* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993).

30. Robert Dohme, *Geschichte der deutschen Baukunst* (Berlin: G. Grote, 1887).

31. Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, "Proportion," in *idem, Le dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française de XI<sup>e</sup> au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 10 vols. (Paris: B. Bance [vols. 1–8], A. Morel [vols. 9–10],

1854–1868), 7: 532–61.

32. See “On the Likely Development of Architecture” (181). It is probable that Berlage delivered a version of this text as a lecture in Zurich in the winter of 1906.

33. The quotation is in French in Berlage’s text.

34. Jan Hessel de Groot (1865–1932) was a teacher and later director of the Quellinus School in Amsterdam and author of several books on geometrical design principles. See A. W. Reinink, *K. P. C. de Bazel—Architect* (1965; 2nd ed., Rotterdam: Uitgeverij 010, 1993), 69–73.

35. Friedrich Hoffstadt, *Gothisches A. B. C. Buch, das ist: Grundregeln des gothischen Styls für Künstler und Werkleute* (Frankfurt a.M.: S. Schmerber, 1840).

36. Jan Hessel de Groot, *Iets over ontwerpen in architectuur* (Maassluis: n.p., 1900).

37. See note 24. Berlage is inaccurate in his rendition of both the name of the author and the title of the book.

38. Viollet-le-Duc (see note 31), 7: 534. The quotation is in French in Berlage’s text.

39. Hegel, *Aesthetics* (see note 6), 2: 691; Hegel, “Vorlesungen” (see note 3), 2: 341.

40. J. L. M. Lauweriks (1864–1932), Dutch architect and teacher at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Düsseldorf. See Gerda Breuer et al., *J. L. M. Lauweriks, Maßsystem und Raumkunst: Das Werk des Architekten, Pädagogen und Raumgestalters*, exh. cat. (Krefeld: Kaiser Wilhelm Museum, 1987).

41. Style-architecture (*Stilarchitektur*) is here used by Berlage in a positive sense to describe the architecture of the future based not on the imitation of historical models but on a geometrical system.

42. Hermann Muthesius, *Style-Architecture and Building-Art*, trans. and ed. Stanford Anderson (Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1994), 62; originally published as *Stilarchitektur und Baukunst* (Mülheim a.d. Ruhr: K. Schimmelpfeng, 1902).

25. Berlage has changed the wording in the last sentence. Muthesius’s text reads, “*So sitzt an der Verwaltungsstelle der Künste des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts nicht mehr der Künstler, sondern der Kunstprofessor*” (Thus the artist no longer rules over the arts of the nineteenth century, but rather the professor of art does).

43. J. E. van der Pek, “Bouwen in Stijl,” *De Amsterdammer* (31 March 1894). Reference from: H. P. Berlage, *Über Architektur und Stil: Aufsätze und Vorträge, 1894–1928*, ed. Bernhard Kohlenbach (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1991), 135.

44. Muthesius (see note 42), 98; German text, 64. Berlage has changed the wording in the first sentence by omitting a sentence of Muthesius’s and interpolating one of his own. Muthesius’s text reads, “*Eine völlige Entwertung dieses Stiltreibens, sodass wir heute bereits dahin gekommen sind, dass die blosse schulmäßige Anwendung eines geschichtlichen Architekturstils nicht mehr als Verdienst gilt*” (A complete devaluation of this style instinct. Today we no longer consider the mere academic use of a historic architectural style to be a merit).

45. See above, 122–56.

46. The lectures to which Berlage refers were in all probability related to the lecture originally

given in Hamburg and subsequently published under the title "Baukunst und Kleinkunst," *Kunstgewerbeblatt* 18 (1907): 183–88, 241–45. A Dutch version of the same text was included in his collection of essays, *Beschouwingen over bouwkunst en hare ontwikkeling* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1911), 19–35.

47. See above, 146.

48. Muthesius (see note 42), 51; German text, 10.

49. Karl Scheffler, *Konventionen der Kunst* (Leipzig: Julius Zeitler, 1904), 15–16. Berlage's loose transcriptions of Scheffler's text are taken from his notes in the Berlage Papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Dossier 163.

50. Semper (see note 5).

51. Viollet-le-Duc (see note 31). Idem, *Entretiens sur l'architecture*, 2 vols. (Paris: A. Morel, 1863–1872).

52. Scheffler (see note 49), 16. Berlage has changed the quotation, which in the original does not refer to Semper, but reads, "Auf den Schlachtfeldern unserer Kunst kämpfen schöne Begabungen, die innerhalb von Epochen, wie die Renaissance oder die Gotik, Unsterbliches leisten würden, die dem Masse der Energieentwicklung nach, hinter keinem Meister der Vergangenheit zurückstehen und deren Wirken doch nur Episode bleiben kann" (Great talents are fighting on the battlefields of our art; talents that in an epoch such as the Renaissance or the Gothic would have achieved immortal results. In terms of their vitality these talents are in no way inferior to the great masters of the past, yet their impact can only be a passing episode).

53. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, "Aus Ottiliens Tagebuche," *Die Wahlverwandschaften*, part 2, chap. 5: "Die größten Menschen hängen immer mit ihrem Jahrhundert durch eine Schwachheit zusammen" (The greatest people are always linked to their century by a weakness).

54. See above, 138.

55. Muthesius (see note 42), 51; German text, 9–10.

56. Antonio da Sangallo the Younger (1483–1546) and Baldassarre Peruzzi (1481–1536), two of the most outstanding architects of High Renaissance Rome, were appointed coadjutors of Saint Peter's after the death of Raphael in 1520. Among Sangallo's works in Rome are the first phase of the Palazzo Farnese (1515?–1546), the wooden model for Saint Peter's (1538–1543), and the Pauline chapel and Sala Regia in the Vatican (1540–1546). Peruzzi's Roman masterpieces are the Villa Farnesina (1505–1511) and the Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne (1533–1536).

57. *Sachlich*—material, objective, down-to-earth, functional, practical, realistic.

58. Viollet-le-Duc, *Entretiens* (see note 51), 1: 305. See above, 139 with n. 17. The quotation is in French in Berlage's text.

59. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, "Von Deutscher Baukunst," in Johann Gottfried Herder, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Paolo Frisi, and Justus Möser, *Von deutscher Art und Kunst* (1773; Stuttgart: Reclam, 1968), 98. Goethe subsequently revised his opinion on seeing the work of Palladio in Vicenza. See Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Italian Journey*, trans. W. H. Auden and Elizabeth Mayer

(Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), 64: "19 September 1786. Palladio was a great man, both in his conceptions and in his power of execution. His major problem was that which confronts all modern architects, namely, how to make proper use of columns in domestic architecture, since a combination of columns and walls must always be a contradiction. How hard he worked at that, how the tangible presence of his creations makes us forget that we are being hypnotized."

60. Muthesius (see note 42), 98–99; German text, 65. Berlage has made some very minor changes in Muthesius's text. The translation presented here is from Muthesius.

61. Hermann Muthesius, "Die moderne Umbildung unserer ästhetischen Anschauungen," *Deutsche Monatsschrift für das gesamte Leben der Gegenwart* 1 (1902): 686–702; included in idem, *Kultur und Kunst: Gesammelte Aufsätze über künstlerische Fragen der Gegenwart* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1904), 39–75.

62. English in Berlage's text.

63. Karelis, ed. (see note 3), 10–11; Hegel, "Vorlesungen" (see note 3), 10.1: 15–16.

64. Scheffler (see note 49), 9, 12.

65. This quotation is only loosely based on fragments taken from Scheffler (see note 49), 12–13, with additions from Berlage himself.

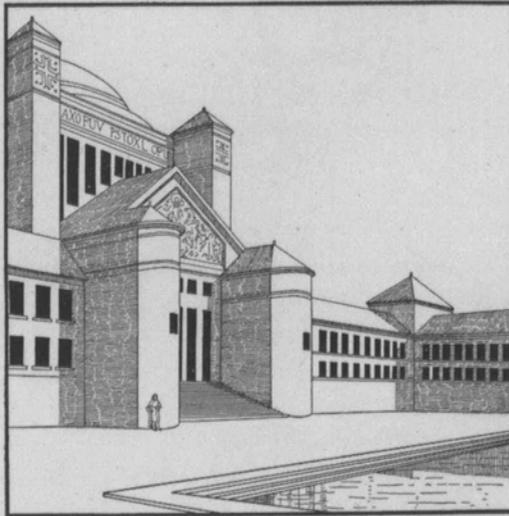
66. Scheffler (see note 49), 14–15. In Scheffler's text, the quotation reads: "*Denn da kein Vertrag über die Art des Ideals dann mehr gilt, ist jeder Künstler nur auf sich gestellt und muss, weil gemeinverständliche Symbole ihm nicht zur Verfügung stehen, seinen Empfindungen aus sich selbst heraus Gleichnisse und diesen entsprechende Kunstformen (sehr oft ist Beides dasselbe) suchen. Was er aber nun für symbolisch, seiner Erkenntnisform nach, hält, ist es nicht für Andere und er bleibt unverstanden*" (As there is no longer a valid consensus on the type of ideal, every artist is on his own and—in the absence of mutually comprehensible symbols—must derive from his own sensibilities the necessary images and the artistic forms appropriate to them [very often the same thing]. That which he regards as symbolic according to his own perceptions may not work for others, and he remains misunderstood).

67. Scheffler (see note 49), 15. In Scheffler's published text the beginning of the quotation actually reads, "*Unsere Zeit lebt in solchem religiösen Interregnum und alle Erscheinungen der neueren Kunst lassen sich einerseits auf das Fehlen der religiös-philosophischen Konvention zurückführen, andererseits auf eine Sehnsucht danach . . .*" (Our age lives in such a religious interregnum, and all appearances of the new art can, on the one hand, be traced to the lack of religious-philosophical conventions and, on the other, to the longing for such conventions . . .). The last sentence, hailed by Berlage in his text as "the final result," is not to be found in Scheffler's published original.

68. Ulrich von Hutten (1488–1523) was a writer, satirist, and advocate of the German Reformation. The eleventh edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1910–1911) deftly characterizes von Hutten as follows: "He was a patriot, whose soul soared to ideal schemes and a grand utopian restoration of his country. . . . He was the Cicero and Ovid of Germany before he became its Lucian." Berlage's quotation is from von Hutten's letter to the German humanist Willibald Pirckheimer, 25 October 1518.

"Reflections on Architecture and Its Development by H. P. Berlage. Illustrated with the author's designs by Johan Briedé. Rotterdam 1911, W.L. & J. Brusse."

BESCHOUWINGEN · OVER  
BOUWKUNST · EN · HARE  
ONTWIKKELING  
DOOR  
H · P · BERLAGE



VERSIERD NAAR ONTWERPEN VANDEN  
SCHRYVER DOOR JOHAN · BRIEDÉ  
ROTTERDAM · MCMXI · WL · J · BRUSSE

# SOME REFLECTIONS ON CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE

(1908)

*Beware of using columns improperly; it is their nature to stand freely. Woe to the wretches who have shackled their slim figures to crude walls.*

—Goethe<sup>1</sup>

The title of this essay might suggest that I am going to give you a technical-historical reflection on Greek and Roman architecture, an illustrated description of a Greek temple and gymnasium, or of Roman triumphal arches and *thermae*. I have decided, however, not to do this, as it seemed to me that for many of my readers such a lecture would amount to carrying

owls to Athens.<sup>2</sup> For although it would have been very appealing to me to describe the splendid architecture of Greece (a splendor that has not yet lost one bit of its glory) or the constructive audacity of the Romans (an audacity that still commands admiration even in our time), I was afraid that if I were to do so, I would not be able to arouse the desired interest; after all, one can assume that you are more or less familiar with both architectural styles.

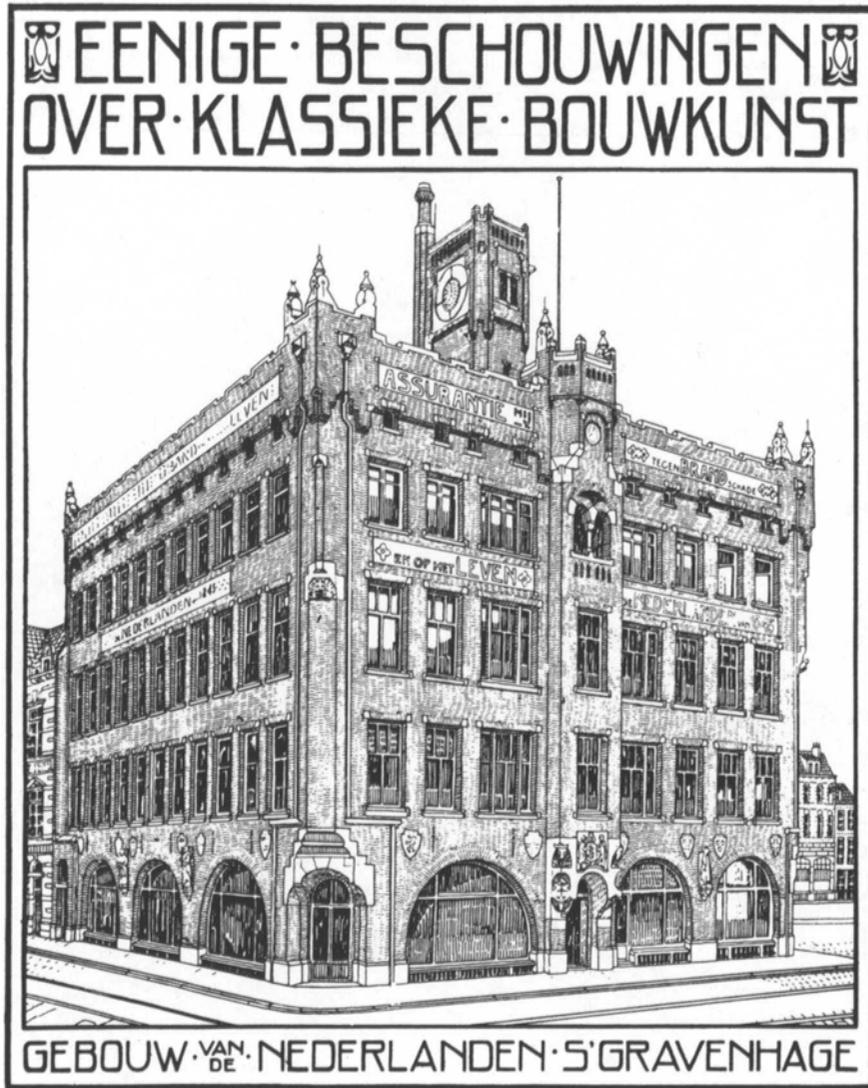
Yet, the characteristics of both styles will come up automatically in the critical reflections I am planning to give you. Through these observations, the value that classical architecture has had for later developments in art will become clear.

The Haarlem Meat Market and the Bolsward City Hall are familiar to you all, if not at first hand, then at least from illustrations: I chose examples from Dutch architecture to facilitate the argument. Now, it seems to me that I can presume, if you are someone who is interested in architecture, that you have looked carefully at these buildings, but not so carefully that you have discovered basic differences between them. You thereby reached an aesthetic judgment about which one can argue because it is based not only on sentimental considerations but on reasoned data.

Only if that is the case, will a judgment about beauty have value, even if personal opinions continue to influence that judgment. Hegel says:

*It remains ever the case that every man apprehends works of art or characters, actions, and events according to the measure of his insight and his feelings; and since the development of taste only touched on what was external and meagre, and besides took its prescriptions likewise for only a narrow range of works of art and a limited training of the intellect and the feelings, its scope was unsatisfactory and incapable of grasping for inner [meaning] and truth [of art] and sharpening the eye for detecting these things.<sup>3</sup>*

"Some Reflections on Classical Architecture. Building for De Nederlanden in The Hague." [Drawing by Johan Briedé, 1911, based on a design by H. P. Berlage for the office building for De Nederlanden van 1845, Kerkplein, after enlargement, 1909]



The basic difference in the architecture of the two buildings results from the columns that are placed between the windows on the facade of the Bolsward City Hall, columns that the Haarlem Meat Market, which is architecturally very similar, does not have.

The architecture is typically Dutch because of its rectangular cross windows, which in Bolsward are no longer the original ones, with relieving arches, a tall roof with gable, and—as far as the materials are concerned—alternating brick and stone.

In a sense, the presence of these columns represents the standard of value for our deliberations about beauty; they define why one building should be considered more beautiful than the other; in other words, the columns constitute the basic difference in beauty, with the result that, although the buildings are aesthetically equivalent to one another, the columns tip the balance. And this balance does not, as you perhaps might expect, turn out to the advantage of the column but rather to its disadvantage. The presence of these columns thus tells us that the architecture of the Bolsward City Hall is not equal to that of the Haarlem Meat Market.

Why?

If the art of building is the art of making a variety of spaces out of a variety of construction materials, arranging these spaces into one ensemble, and trying to do so as honestly as possible—that is, using only those components that are needed for the composition—then all those components that are used only for the purpose of decoration and not for the benefit of construction should be rejected as redundant. Viollet-le-Duc, the well-known French architect and scholar in the field of art, formulated this principle as follows, “Every form that is not determined by the structure should be rejected.”<sup>4</sup> When an architectural composition such as that employed in the Bolsward City Hall is examined with the help of this principle (the correctness of which can hardly be contested), even a layperson can see that the columns of the facade can easily be omitted. Not the column as such, but the manner in which it has been used here—as an ornament, and not as part of the construction—deserves condemnation. As a result, the architecture of the Bolsward City Hall is inferior to that of the Haarlem Meat Market, for the composition of the former is not as pure as that of the latter. And thus we have reached the point of departure for our reflection on classical art, for this manner of using a column has been derived from classical, particularly Roman, examples.

By its very nature, the entire northern Renaissance contains many elements derived from the art of the Middle Ages, specifically the art of the Germanic peoples. Although the Renaissance signified a specialization toward national types, which resulted from the freedom of expression generated by this movement, the basic elements of medieval art still remain visible, despite the fierce reaction of the Renaissance against medieval models.

The rectangular cross windows mentioned above, as well as the gable with the tall roof—in other words, the actual body of Renaissance architecture not only in our country but in all Germanic countries—are medieval in origin; as a consequence, even with the most nationalized building, there is no doubt about its origin.

The big difference between Renaissance art of the northern and southern Europeans is precisely the following: the former preserved the main elements of medieval architecture, whereas the latter broke with it in a brusque manner, which truly signified a reaction, a return to the classical, Roman tradition. And doesn't this at the same time prove that a building style is a product of race and temperament, of a country and people, that a few formal elements can be transferred, but that the spirit of a style is unable to go much further than the territory of its birth?

Yet, this Roman tradition turned out to be so strong that it could give the preeminently classical element—the column—to the north. Thus the column became the characteristic form that connects the north with the south: the uniting characteristic [*le trait d'union*] between the Renaissance on both sides of the Alps. Whatever the character that each nationality decided to give to its Renaissance art, and whatever the shape in which the medieval forms were translated into the new spirit, the Italian column—that is, the Roman and, more specifically, the Tuscan one—continued to be used more or less in its original form, crowned with either a Doric, that is, Tuscan capital, or with an Ionic one. And it is the latter that we find on the facade of the Bolsward City Hall, as well as on the gable of the one in The Hague and on the central portion of the Leiden City Hall.

Thus, one can say in general terms that the true national character survived best during the Renaissance when one did not use columns and pilasters—building elements that, in principle, have the same origin. This is generally the case in an era during which a style emerges, for in such a period the influence of preceding art forms tends to be at its strongest.

I said earlier that a building on which one can see columns is inferior in beauty, not so much because of the presence of the architectural form of the column as such, but because of the manner in which it was used during the time of the Renaissance. Indeed, a lack of good principles results immediately in a decrease in beauty, and thus the architecture of the Italian Renaissance does not deserve as much admiration as that of the northern Renaissance, just as Roman architecture—the mother of the Renaissance—cannot be compared with Greek architecture. As Burckhardt noted already in his *Cicerone*,<sup>5</sup> that sensitively written book about Italian art, “People sometimes deplore the fact that [Filippo] Brunelleschi and [Leon Battista] Alberti did not direct their attention to Greek instead of to Roman buildings.” Yet it was a normal course of things, for, apart from Schinkel's deviation<sup>6</sup> (albeit brilliant), art will naturally develop out of the influ-

ences from her direct surroundings, which, for these artists, was ancient Rome. We should, however, not deplore this but rather the fact that Brunelleschi and Alberti adopted, together with the design scheme, the mistake inherent in this architecture. After all, a column is in principle a structural element, an isolated point of support, and it is used only as such by the Egyptians and the Greeks. Here one should not think of the pseudodipteral temple, a kind of construction that was possible only in an era of decline, or even of the so highly acclaimed monument of Lysicrates,<sup>7</sup> the first monument designed in the Corinthian spirit on which one can see the pilaster—proving that even the Corinthian style is no longer purely Greek. According to Alois Riegl,<sup>8</sup> the column was originally not even intended to support the roof but was a freestanding post, perhaps a post for a tent, just like the Greek stela, which was crowned with a palmette. That is also the reason why the capital was originally no more than a crowning element and nothing but that; its function of mediating between the supporting column and the architrave resting on it occurred to the architectonic mind much later and thus became, in an aesthetic sense, a significant component.

What, then, did the Romans do?

Since this principle was not entirely clear to them, they ultimately used the column only as a means of decoration. They placed it either in front of a wall and on top of a separate pedestal with a detached capital, or—the worst case—they placed it, cut in half, against a wall on a half pedestal, with a cornice that either continues straight or is partly projected.

Fundamentally questionable, even indefensible when one sees how even the beautiful Corinthian capital—Callimachus's brilliant invention—is also mercilessly cut in half, this invention was, however, very practical: it offered a solution to the problem of constructing buildings of more than one story.<sup>9</sup> It allowed for arcade constructions of more than one story (using the arcades in this composition as windows), for this design could be repeated in a simple way, and the motif of the arch could be derived from the triumphal arches, in which the pilaster was used for the first time. This system of construction has undeniably given us some splendid results, even though, as I said before, it is difficult, in principle, to defend this kind of architecture. The Romans, however, were not sensitive artists but rather practical engineers, and their buildings give the impression of utilitarian structures, against which columns were placed when they had to be elevated above the practical level into architectural monuments.

It seems to me, therefore, that Roman architecture should have limited itself to practical solutions, in which case it would have continued to be more beautiful, more grand in expression. I do not know anything more majestic in all of Roman architecture than the long aqueducts that run through the Roman Campagna and connect Rome with

the Alban Hills. How would they have looked if the arcades had been interrupted by pilasters?

And, finally, the Colosseum would probably have been a much grander piece of architecture if its gigantic wall had not been articulated by the series of columns that were placed against it. One can see this clearly when one compares the wall with columns with those sections that are partly ruined and on which there are no columns. It is, therefore, incomprehensible that an architect such as Gottfried Semper did not reach the conclusion that this kind of construction is illogical, since his book *Der Stil in den technischen Künsten* (Style in the technical arts) constitutes one long plea for rational construction and teaches the materialist evolution of art.<sup>10</sup> On the contrary, Semper even defends Roman vault construction used in the large *thermae* and basilica halls, which is supported by columns in the four corners. Here, the columns together with their crowning imposts are placed against the wall without any attempt to connect them organically. And although medieval architecture provided a much purer solution for the problem of how to vault a space, Semper speaks only in the most contemptuous terms about this architecture, which represents for him no more than a “rigid system.”

As Muthesius says about the Renaissance in his excellent book *Baukunst und Architektur*:

*There came the time when the antique world, whose spirit forcefully survived even its physical decline, brought new artistic ideals to the north. The age of humanism in the liberal arts—of the Renaissance in the fine arts—ascended, and led to a flowering of the arts, particularly in painting and sculpture. This was not equally true for architecture. Whereas in painting, and in a certain sense also in sculpture, these new influences assisted in bringing an extant youthfulness to maturity, in architecture a fully developed art was rudely broken and a rich artistic tradition was cast aside. What was achieved in Renaissance building-art could be but a pale image of a superior original art—a claim that will be evident to every visitor to Italy who observes how any single antique building (the Roman Colosseum or the Pantheon, for example) eclipses the entire building-art of the Renaissance.<sup>11</sup>*

That is how it is: the Renaissance broke in a brusque manner with medieval art, with the art that would turn out to be for modern art what Greek art was for [later] antiquity. During the reign of the Renaissance, this basic mistake revealed itself even more strongly than had been the case before. From Benedetto da Maiano, who for the first time placed columns against the beautifully sculpted stone pulpit in the Santa Croce in Florence, to Maderno, the architect of the facade of Saint Peter’s in Rome—in other words, over a period of four centuries—architecture committed this same mistake.<sup>12</sup> And isn’t this mistake also responsible for the separation of painting and sculpture

from architecture during the Renaissance? Through its use of the column, the Renaissance made clear that it was a style in which architecture would no longer be the leader; that, in principle, it gave preference to decoration, started to decorate itself, and therefore did not need the help of the other arts any more.

As I said before, once the pure principle was abandoned, the quality of beauty started to diminish immediately. From the moment the Italian Renaissance placed the first column, hesitatingly, as it were, against the facade, the style weakened instantly; it was completely enfeebled when the surface of the pilaster was also decorated. Added to this was the somewhat injudicious use of the originally open arcade as a window—generally, without any of the special wooden framing used during the Middle Ages—with the result that Renaissance buildings always give the impression that they are more or less neglected.

The harm done by these windows in modern architecture, in other words, through the eclectic application of the old styles, is treated very instructively in Lichtwark's most recent book, *Palastfenster und Flügelthür* (Palace windows and folding doors),<sup>13</sup> in which he sharply criticizes the truly absurd manner in which the impractical round windows and large folding doors are used even in small buildings. Of course, good taste can diminish the mistake, but the style can no longer be salvaged. As a result, when applying the Renaissance style, a more or less successful product is more a matter of taste than of an architectural style. Was not, therefore, the Louis Quinze style the most brilliant of all because it removed the scheme of pilasters and articulated the entire wall with panels.

Let us compare the Palazzo Strozzi with the Palazzo Rucellai in Florence.<sup>14</sup> The former immediately gets the prize for being more pure in style, although the latter shows more refined taste. And every time another story is added to the distortion, the architectural beauty sinks further, ultimately evoking aversion when the ground-floor level is decorated with pilasters. In the end, this disintegration of the large surface of the wall led a creative mind such as Palladio's to the decision not to limit the separate series of classical columns to the different stories, but to take one order and apply it to the entire surface of the facade.<sup>15</sup>

While undoubtedly a brilliant solution, it was not satisfactory, either, for this equally incorrect design principle resulted in the disappearance of the indication of the various stories and the scale of the colonnade being blown up to a gigantic size. It seems to be necessary in each developmental process that a system realize itself completely and that, as Goethe said so strikingly, "even the greatest minds are tied to their time through a weakness."<sup>16</sup> For Palladio was a great mind, and his architecture was predestined to conquer the world.

That was understandable, for with his style one could make the most grandiose de-

signs, yes, even designs of brilliant insanity—genius and insanity are, as you know, very close to each other—an insanity that achieved its culmination in Saint Peter's in Rome, in which not the space but the details make human beings vanish.<sup>17</sup> Yet, it is well known that this kind of architecture does not make a grand impression because one does not perceive the immense dimensions until one starts to take measurements. And in comparison with an architecture whose classical scheme remains within discernible limits—that is, an architecture with a scale calculated in accordance with human proportions—an architecture whose scale is two or three times as big is somewhat repulsive. Gigantic dimensions have always characterized barbarity; it is testimony to a fine sense when an artist is able to draw the exact line between tastefulness and tastelessness, between civility and coarseness. One should be careful in applying this criticism to Saint Peter's and not blame Michelangelo; he, too, was the product (and what a product) of the spirit of his time; he, too, was influenced by his contemporaries and predecessors; he, too, could proceed only on the road indicated by others. Moreover, his greatest strength was not architectural design, even though the dome of Saint Peter's, which can almost be considered to be a separate building, is of an architectural beauty that will at all times provoke admiration.

One becomes convinced that when the Renaissance adopted the column or pilaster scheme from the Romans, it was irrevocably destined to create an inferior architecture. Yes, one even comes to view every pilaster or half column with a certain indifference, although one does not have to agree with Hegel, who calls every half column simply “repugnant.” And isn't the secret of the greatness of oriental art hidden in the absence of any useless building component, so that the large wall surface can be preserved?

It goes without saying that things did not get better during the Baroque, when pilasters were used only at certain spots to support special building volumes, or, in the field of furniture design, when the central column—the supporting motif—was made to hinge together with the cabinet door. It should not come as a surprise that by the nineteenth century the column had become an absolutely sterile motif; that one even went so far as to (and I quote Muthesius) “place classical columns in front of public lavatories.” One could defend the point of view that even the very rational Greek architecture is not without blame in this regard, for the “temple *in antis*” or “prostyle”—in principle the most perfect form of temple—has something unnatural about it. I call this temple the most perfect one because *cella* and *pronaos*, the two spaces of which a temple consists, are most clearly visible on its exterior.

On the basis of these observations one can start to compare the two great classical arts: the Greek and the Roman. Nietzsche says:

*Almost every age and educational level has at some point tried in a state of profound discontent to free itself from the Greeks, in whose presence everything that has been achieved, everything that seems totally original and genuinely praiseworthy, suddenly seems to lose its color and vitality and shrivels into an unsuccessful copy, even into a caricature. And thus breaks out ever anew the passionate wrath against that presumptuous race that ventured to designate all foreigners for all times as barbarian. "Who are those people," one asks, "who, although they had narrowly restricted institutions, only a dubious morality, and were marked by ugly vices, still laid claim to an exceptional status and position among races; who are they that stand out like a genius among the masses?" Sadly, no one has been lucky enough to find the cup of poison that could simply dispose of a being such as this: for all the poison that generates envy, defamation, and wrath does not reach far enough to destroy the self-satisfied excellence. And so we fear and are shamed by the Greeks unless one of us dares to admit the truth—that the Greeks have the reins of our culture and of all others in their hands. Yet, the carriage and the horses are invariably made of a stuff too feeble to do justice to the glory of its drivers, who then consider it a joke to dash such a team into the abyss, which they themselves clear with the leap of Achilles.<sup>18</sup>*

This is, indeed, no small homage to this chosen people, a homage to which architects of all later times happily contribute. For in the twenty centuries that separate us from Greek culture, there has been only one period in Europe that developed completely independently from the Greeks: the Middle Ages. Of course, this is true only insofar as one can speak of independence, of being completely free of all preceding influences. Doesn't the example of medieval art prove precisely that only complete independence can guarantee that one becomes "totally original," that one's efforts are "genuinely praiseworthy," and that there will be "color and vitality"? And might Nietzsche have meant with liberation only an apparent breaking away from the Greek influence, whereas the direct state of dependence remained clear, just as was the case with Rome and Byzantium and, therefore, with all of Renaissance art? But Gothic art, the only independent style after that of the Greeks, is able to bear comparison with Greek art. Not only can it be compared with Greek art on technical and aesthetic grounds, but many people will even consider it to be more versatile and therefore of a higher order. It is certainly able to move us in the same way as, if not more than, Greek art because we better understand its spirit.

Or might Nietzsche really have reached the conclusion that we should again turn directly to the Greeks so that an age like that of Schinkel could repeat itself? This is hard to believe, for recently it has been felt that such a return is even more objectionable

in architecture than in the other arts. The reason for this conclusion is that architecture, the most material of all arts, has to meet more complex demands.

“Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.”<sup>19</sup> That is right. But didn’t the people of the nineteenth century render a great disservice to Greek architecture by paying too literal homage to this truth? In a lecture on the meaning of the temple in Greek religious life, Professor Kuiper showed that a Greek temple pleases our artistic sensitivities through its solemn harmony and the charm of its hall and peristyle but that it hardly ever pleases our religious emotions.<sup>20</sup> He added that no uplifting of the hearts [*sursum corda*] rustles toward us from this temple, like that which descends from the tall vault of the dome of Saint Peter’s, and that no quiet devotion beckons in the same way as do the soaring spires of our Dutch country churches. He did not say this to diminish our appreciation for the ancient temple, but rather to clarify it:

*In every field of ancient art, in both the plastic and literary arts, a certain kind of admiration was in vogue for a long time, which was detrimental for our appreciation of the art itself; I am referring here to imitation. We have gone beyond those ages in which, out of love for antiquity, we copied the Propylaea in our cities. But we should not revert to a mindless contempt for ancient beauty, for every work of art, including architecture, should be appreciated with due regard to the circumstances under which it came into being.*

Yet, despite this seemingly accepted view, one can see in our time a movement that strives to return to the Greeks, not only, as one might expect, to their principles but also to their actual forms. The most extreme example of this movement is a young German architect who for some years now has been working on a design for a temple devoted to Beethoven and who designed this temple in purely Greek forms. Indeed, it is this architect who in his explanation of his design used the Nietzsche quotation that I gave above as a dictum.<sup>21</sup>

His argument is as follows: Apollo, the god of beauty, is the ruler of the Greek world, the cosmos, of which the temple is a symbol. This temple is the grandest communal work of art, the symphony of the visual arts. In the future, Apollo’s spirit will appear again in a classical form through the great musical art of our time, for the symphony is the temple of music. Therefore, only in a grand concert hall, built in the shape of a Greek temple, can the birth of human tragedy be celebrated through “the symphony of joy,” can the command “be embraced, oh, millions” be proclaimed.

Is that really going to happen? Or should this song resound in a temple built in other architectural forms, forms that are not derived from an ancient world but from a new one?

Whatever may be the case, the above should make clear how great is the superiority of Greek architecture, and particularly the temple; it shows that the art of the place of

worship (or, in Christian terms, ecclesiastical art) is not something independent but an intensified use of all means that may give expression to the idea of god.

As I said before, it would seem superfluous to describe to you the structural aspects of the Greek temple. It should suffice to say that the primary characteristics of an architecture with style—rational construction, pure use of materials, and spare decoration—are present in all perfection.

Voltaire describes it most eloquently as follows:

*Simple was its noble architecture.  
Each ornament, arrested in its place,  
Seemed put there by necessity.  
Art hid there looking like nature;  
The satisfied eye embraced its structure,  
never surprised and always enchanted.*<sup>22</sup>

How totally different is the architecture of the Romans.

“Others, I doubt not, shall beat out the breathing bronze with softer lines; shall from marble draw forth the features of life; shall plead their causes better; [with the rod shall trace the paths of heaven and tell the rising of the stars:] remember thou, O Roman, to rule the nations with thy sway.” Thus, Virgil indicated the vocation of the Roman people.<sup>23</sup>

I would not like to go as far as Muthesius, who said that the Romans were unable to create art. But when one compares the art of the Romans with that of the Greeks, it soon becomes apparent that there is an essential difference. From Virgil's quotation it is already evident what the difference is. The power of the Romans lies not in their ideas but in their realistic attitude. Exceptionally practical by nature, they were preeminent in giving a structure to their society and showed a similar quality in art—that of the engineer.

If the Greeks were the architects of antiquity, the Romans were its structural engineers.

We can be proud of our contemporary art of engineering. But when we look at the ruins of the Roman monuments, we do not admire above all their artistic qualities but the way they are constructed, which is of such quality that it stands up to comparison with what we do in our time.

This lecture is not the appropriate place to describe to you the enormous power of mass and space in Roman architecture, which is the result of the use of the vault, or to give a technical description of it but rather to point out that mass and space are the extent of its greatness and that, as said before, it would have been better for Roman

architecture if it had limited itself to these two elements. The enormous Roman bridges and aqueducts are awe-inspiring constructions, but the amphitheaters and *thermae* are unable to move us in quite the same way, since these structures, although sharing the same core techniques of construction with the bridges and aqueducts, were wrapped in a decorative cloak, with the result that construction and decoration did not constitute a harmonious totality. And this cloak was not Roman in origin but either Etruscan or Greek, and most often Greek.

Particularly in the field of monumental public architecture, the Romans took liberties with the principle of pure construction because they were not sensitive to it. They accepted appearance for essence and were happy to do so, for art was for them only a means, whereas for the Greeks it was a goal. That is why the Roman structures that had a purely practical purpose—the utilitarian buildings—were the best, for there was no intention to create works of art.

The artistic cloak of the Romans was composed of a series of columns, but not only that: it also included all the delicate Greek ornament, although somewhat distorted, for the Roman acanthus leaf is not the same as the Greek acanthus leaf, and the Roman Corinthian capital is not the same as the Greek Corinthian capital. These distinctions, however, are no more than modifications and not fundamental differences.

Thus we have arrived at the principal difference between the two great classical arts, which both have had such an enormous impact on the entire later development in art.

Greek architecture was logical in composition because construction and decoration were one; here Viollet-le-Duc's claim concerning a pure architecture, which I mentioned above, functions perfectly. Greek decoration has a strict rhythm, a noble austerity, and thus a grandiose effect. When and where have more noble pieces of sculpture ever been created and more splendid colors been used for illumination?

"Nothing can better demonstrate the clarity of the Greek artistic mind than the rational, logical conception of Greek buildings," said Leliman in a lecture on Greek architecture.<sup>24</sup> "Its simplicity is impressive; its exalted repose finds form in stone; all proportions of dimension and mass are well balanced. Nobility is hidden in its forms, perfect harmony makes all parts resonate in powerful chords."

Greek architecture is in truth classical, and Busken Huet's curious characterization of what should be considered classical in literature is also valid for architecture, "The classical is nothing but beauty itself, stripped of the glitter of fashion and deprived of the support of temporary popularity."<sup>25</sup>

Putting Roman architecture next to it, one can see that it is an art with tremendous power, but it is not logical in its relationship between construction and decoration. Its decoration is pompous and lacks noble reflection, for it was intended to impress. Yet, these same characteristics explain why the Roman style was able to have such an en-

riching impact on later generations and why it can be called preeminently classical in the way Gurlitt defines that word: classical is an art “that satisfies all times because it once gave exhaustive expression to a particular epoch.”<sup>26</sup>

When we finally examine what influence both classical arts had on the development of art in general, we will arrive at the following results: Greek art, indeed, held the reins for all later generations. Just as Homer is one of the greatest poets of all times, so Ictinus is one of the greatest architects.

Greek architecture influenced, above all, Roman architecture. The Romans were able to take advantage of this model, although not in a noble but in a very practical manner. For they used it to dress up the structural core of their own architecture and thus to give it the splendor that it originally had lacked. The Romans’ great adaptability and their exceptionally practical spirit were able to combine these two elements into an architecture that although not purely logical, had a great decorative power. Moreover, it was an architecture that offered an easy solution for every kind of problem.

In this regard, I want to point to the possibility of assembling buildings with an arbitrary number of stories by piling up the various Greek columnar orders, a manner of building that is best represented by the Colosseum. In this way, Greek architecture had an indirect impact on all subsequent developments. It also had a direct influence during the first half of the nineteenth century with the emergence of a Neo-Greek movement, which strove for a direct application of Greek architecture to modern-day problems.

Although this was done with a great deal of talent—the brilliant German architect Schinkel was the great master of this movement—the impulse was doomed to expire relatively soon, despite the Greek narcosis, for an art that is in essence not proper to its time lacks the intense power needed to achieve further development. Hence the tremendous reaction of the Modern Movement against eclectic art in general—for the nineteenth century built not only in the Greek style but in all historical styles—and against the Greek style in particular.

Notwithstanding its inferiority, Roman art had a much larger impact on the subsequent development of architecture. This became especially clear when the great spiritual movement that appeared at the beginning of the fifteenth century as a reaction to the medieval, or Gothic (i.e., barbaric), culture looked to ancient Rome in all fields, including architecture.

It would certainly speak of shortsightedness if we were to deny Renaissance art all power to innovate.<sup>27</sup> But we must acknowledge that regardless of which art could be brought to fruition by the new spiritual movement, architecture profited least from the new impulse. This led architecture gradually to lose its leadership among the visual arts, which in the end resulted in the complete absence of style in the nineteenth cen-

ture. Architecture<sup>29</sup> not only has the right to leadership, it also deserves it, in accordance with its nature and social significance, in a period when all conditions for a great style are present. The last time this happened was during the Middle Ages; the Renaissance signified the beginning of the decline, the beginning of the dissolution of the great unity in style among the arts.

This decline can be seen in Italy in the Palazzo Rucellai when one compares it with the Palazzo Strozzi; one can see it in France in the Château de Chambord when one compares it with the Château de Chenonceau; and in Holland one can see it in the Bolsward City Hall when it is compared with the Haarlem Meat Market.

That brings me back to my point of departure, and I hope that I have given you an adequate survey of the influence of classical architecture<sup>29</sup> on all subsequent architecture and thus of the relationship of [the manifestations of] the Renaissance in the various countries. A minute ago, I spoke of the nineteenth century's lack of style as a result of the fact that architecture had lost its leading role among the arts.

Should we not point to the lack of pure architectural principles as the cause of this phenomenon? For does not a lack of principles signify the beginning of all degeneration in general?

It is self-evident that there were also social circumstances that contributed to this degeneration. But architecture's spiritual decline—with the result that painting and sculpture separated themselves from it, did not serve it any longer, and started an independent development—was certainly the principal cause of the great decline in art during the nineteenth century.

Therefore, our time is still characterized as a time without an architectural style, that is to say, without a style that gives expression to the modern spirit. Yet, one can perceive a movement that indicates that people are urgently looking for this style and are decidedly working in that direction.

Is this style going to be original or eclectic? When we consider the great emotional and intellectual reaction against all earlier forms—a reaction caused by the total exhaustion of these forms during the last one hundred years—an eclectic style is not to be expected, even though one cannot ignore the seriousness of the attempts to achieve a new flourishing architecture, either in the spirit of the late Renaissance or in the spirit of the Greeks. But this is not being done in the spirit of a broader understanding of the concept, which would mean the creation of a beauty of all times; it is done in a narrow manner, which leads directly to an application of earlier forms. Again, it would not fit within the scope of this lecture to explain in detail why we should not expect an eclectic style. But I would like to use this opportunity to point out that social developments suggest that we should expect a greater sense of communal conscience in the near

future, and that precisely this social conscience can be expressed only in forms of its own.

For if we accept that a great style is possible only if it is an expression of a culture, and that culture can be obtained only if there is a harmony between spiritual and material needs, then a great style cannot be expected until the social relationships have been changed so much that this harmony is indeed achieved. Such an age will have an original art, just as was last the case during the Middle Ages.

Are the classical styles able to teach us something for the future? Undoubtedly a great deal to those who have learned to look critically at both styles, that is to say, those who have learned to understand the spirit of both: that of ancient Rome as a result of the greatness of its intentions and that of ancient Greece resulting from the purity of its style.

The Roman *thermae* come to mind and force themselves upon us as a comparison, stripped of their incorrectly used Greek columns, which, in essence, spoiled Roman architecture. After these columns have been taken away, a splendid core is left for us to contemplate, the characteristic feature of its power, of simple greatness, which, in principle, can be seen in the great engineering works of that time as well as ours.

And the buildings of the Greeks also come to mind, much smaller in size but with the pure, ideal form of simple construction and harmonious decoration, which can indeed be called classical, meaning they radiate a beauty that is of all times.

Thus, a joining of the great characteristics of both classical styles will determine the character of future architecture. It can be expected sooner insofar as a collaboration between architect and engineer—the generators of both characters—becomes more and more necessary. At present, their fields of activity are still separated, but in the future, just as before, one and the same person will have command over all.

A joining of the character of both arts will have an impact on future architecture only if critical considerations of the principal differences between both have led to a correct understanding of purity in architecture; for purity is the character of all great styles.

Thus, only an architecture that is developed according to pure principles can and should be the architecture of the future.

*Source Note:* H. P. Berlage, “Eenige beschouwingen over klassieke bouwkunst,” in idem, *Beschouwingen over bouwkunst en hare ontwikkeling* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1911), 3–16. First published in *De Beweging* 4 (August 1908): 115–34.

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

1. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, "Von Deutscher Baukunst," in Johann Gottfried Herder, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Paolo Frisi, and Justus Möser, *Von deutscher Art und Kunst* (1773; Stuttgart: Reclam, 1968), 98.
2. This literal translation of a standard Dutch/German phrase, corresponding to the English phrase "carrying coals to Newcastle," fits in neatly with Berlage's classical theme.
3. Charles Karelis, ed., *Hegel's Introduction to Aesthetics; Being the Introduction to the Berlin Aesthetics Lectures of the 1820s*, trans. T. M. Knox (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1979), 16; originally published as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik," in idem, *Werke*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1942), 10.1: 22.
4. Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *Entretiens sur l'architecture*, 2 vols. (Paris: A. Morel, 1863–1872), 1: 305.
5. Jacob Burckhardt, *Der Cicerone: Eine Anleitung zum Genuss der Kunstwerke Italiens* (Basel: Schweighauser, 1855).
6. By Karl Friedrich Schinkel's "brilliant deviation" Berlage is referring to the German architect's interest in Greek rather than Roman models and to Schinkel's particular admiration for the Doric temples that he saw in Sicily in the winter of 1803–1804. The latter inspired Schinkel's own works, most obviously the Neue Wache on Unter den Linden in Berlin, 1815–1818.
7. The Choragic Monument of Lysicrates in Athens, built in 334 B.C., was a circular, pseudo-peripteral construction: its columns were engaged, not freestanding.
8. The Austrian art historian Alois Riegl (1858–1905) was the author of, among other works, *Stilfragen: Grundlegungen zu einer Geschichte der Ornament* (Berlin: Georg Siemens, 1893); *Die spätromische Kunst-Industrie, nach den Funden in Österreich-Ungarn*, 2 vols. (Vienna: K. K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1901–1923); *Der moderne Denkmalkultus: Sein Wesen und seine Entstehung* (Vienna: W. Braumüller, 1903). On Riegl, see Margaret Iversen, *Alois Riegl: Art History and Theory* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993).
9. According to Vitruvius *De architectura* 4.1, Callimachus invented the Corinthian capital after seeing the grave of a Corinthian girl with a basket over it covered by a tile for protection and surrounded by acanthus leaves, which formed volutes at the angles. See Joseph Rykwert, "The Corinthian Order," in idem, *The Necessity of Artifice* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), 33–43.
10. Gottfried Semper, *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten; oder, Praktische Aesthetik*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt: Verlag für Kunst und Wissenschaft, 1860–1863).
11. Hermann Muthesius, *Style-Architecture and Building-Art*, trans. and ed. Stanford Anderson (Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1994), 51; originally published as *Stilarchitektur und Baukunst* (Mülheim a.d. Ruhr: K. Schimmelpfeng, 1902).
10. Berlage miscites the title of Muthesius's book.
12. Berlage's history is rather shaky here: only 130 years, not four centuries, separate Bene-

detto da Maiano's (1442–1497) pulpit of the church of Santa Croce in Florence, which is usually dated around 1480, and Carlo Maderno's (1556–1629) facade of Saint Peter's in Rome (1607–1612). On the dating of the pulpit, see John Pope-Hennessy, *Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Phaidon, 1971), 291–92.

13. Alfred Lichtwark, *Palastfenster und Flügelthür* (Berlin: Bruno & Paul Cassirer, 1899).

14. Palazzo Strozzi (1489–1490), conception and first model by Giuliano da Sangallo, execution by Benedetto da Maiano and Simone del Pollaiuolo, called Il Cronaca; Palazzo Rucellai (1446–1451), by Leon Battista Alberti.

15. When Andrea Palladio (1508–1580) superimposed two levels of columns in his villas, he adhered to the conventional practice of changing the order: the Palazzo Chiericati and the Villa Pisani, for example, have Ionic above Doric, and the Villa Cornaro has Corinthian above Ionic. Berlage's praise must be directed, therefore, at designs such as the Palazzo Valmarana, whose street front is dominated by a giant order of pilasters running the height of the two principal stories.

16. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, "Aus Ottiliens Tagebuche," in idem, *Die Wahlverwandschaften*, (Zurich: Artemis, 1962), 176, part 2, chap. 5: "Die größten Menschen hängen immer mit ihrem Jahrhundert durch eine Schwachheit zusammen" (The greatest men are always linked to their century by a weakness).

17. In the version of this essay published in 1908 in *De Beweging*, this sentence reads: "That was understandable, for one could achieve a grand, even exalted effect with it [Palladio's style]; but that exalted effect could also easily become ridiculous as the distance between exaltation and the ridiculous is usually not great. This was reached in Saint Peter's in Rome, in which enormous space makes the human being vanish, not because of the space, but because of the details of the forms."

18. Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* (1872), section 15, in idem, *Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972), 3.1: 93–94.

19. Berlage's quotation is in English in the original text.

20. K. Kuiper, "De betekenis van de tempel in het godsdienstige leven der Grieken," *Architectura* 13 (1905): 55, 63, 71.

21. Ernst Haiger, "Der Tempel: Das apollinische Kunstwerk der Zukunft," *Die Musik*, 1907; idem, *Tempel und Symphonie* (Jena: E. Diederichs, 1910). On Haiger's vision and Berlage's response, see Introduction, above, 51. See also Haiger, *Ernst Haiger; mit einer Würdigung von Herman Sörgel* (Munich: G. Hirth, 1930).

22. Voltaire, *Le Temple du Goût* (Amsterdam: Etienne Ledet, 1733), a short work of literary criticism in the form of a prose and verse allegory describing a visit to the Temple of the God of Taste.

23. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.847–51, Loeb Classical Library (1978). Berlage's text omits the bracketed sentence.

24. Johannes Hendrik Willem Leliman (1878–1921), author on architecture, for example: *Bouwstijl-typen* (Delft: J. Waltman, 1901).

25. Coenraad Busken Huet (1826–1886), author of historical fiction, travelogues, and literary fantasies.

26. Cornelius Gurlitt, prolific writer on architecture, whose many publications include *Die deutsche Kunst des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts: Ihre Ziele und Thaten* (Berlin: G. Bondi, 1899).

27. In the version of this essay published in 1908 in *De Beweging*, this sentence reads: “. . . if we were to deny Renaissance art any innovative concept.”

28. The version of this essay published in 1908 in *De Beweging* has “building-art” (*bouwkunst*) for “architecture” (*architectuur*).

29. The version of this essay published in 1908 in *De Beweging* has “architecture” (*architectuur*) for “building-art” (*bouwkunst*).

# ART AND SOCIETY

(1909)

*Our religion is a religion of this earth.*

—Schoenmaekers,

*Het geloof van den nieuwen mensch*<sup>1</sup>

Why is it that nowadays people show such universally great dissatisfaction with social institutions and the situation in which society finds itself; that people are seeking to improve all sorts of existing organizations; and, particularly, that people so desire what gives luster to life, namely, art? Why is it that there is a general endeavor to change so many kinds of things that have not even been in existence for very long; that everything old-fashioned is sharply criticized. Why, indeed, is there no sympathetic appreciation of anything old; and why, in addition to all this, does one hear criticism of everything that the last century has bestowed on us in the field of art?

If there really is enthusiasm for change—and nobody who looks carefully can seriously doubt it—there must be a deeper reason for that longing. This reason must create the awareness of a moral obligation to restore what is wrong; and finally, it should be felt as a sincere loss that the relationship between an ideal intention and the reality of life is thrown off balance.

Art is not a plant without soil, which means that when one kind of art is being rejected and another desired, it is a sure sign that the soil from which the art grows is also being renewed. If it is true that art is the expression of culture, a reflection of spiritual life, and if it is true that an artist is someone able to give a beautiful form to everything he sees around him, a momentous social change must be occurring at this moment. For we now see art develop in a totally different direction than the one it took half a century ago, and we see artists looking for totally new forms or for forms that can be adapted to those of earlier times.

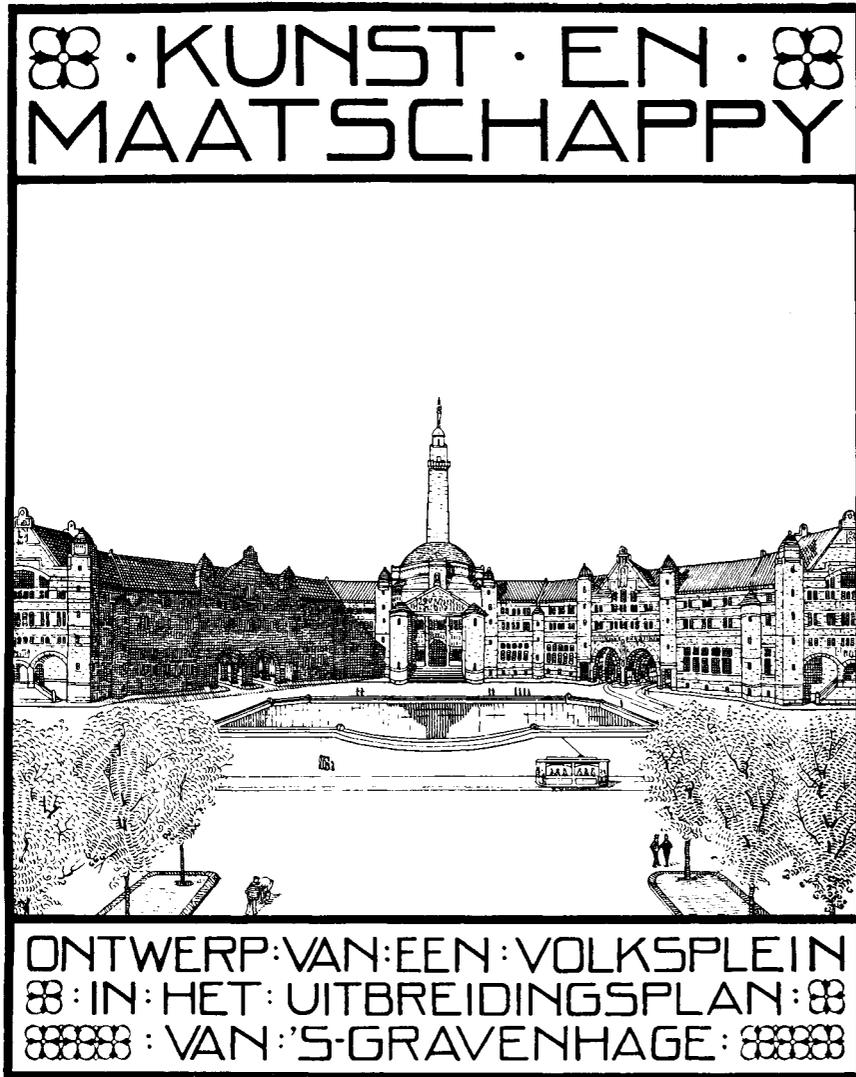
Might it not be possible that the world is now changing from a condition of instability and confusion to one of greater simplicity and security?

Anyone who makes a totally unbiased survey of the development of nineteenth-century society will see how incredibly difficult it is to discover a steady sequence of decision, a clear principle of performance, except maybe for the continuous development of business and industry. However, when we look at the spiritual and social lives of this period, all we see is complexity and confusion—an image that finds no obvious parallel in history.

As Gorter says in his criticism of the literary Movement of the 1880s,

*while relationships among human beings in the classical and feudal societies were clear and transparent, they were not so in the bourgeois societies, and one needs a scientific method to evaluate them. The relationships became increasingly complex and, therefore, more and*

"Art and Society: Design for a Public Square in the Plan for the Extension of The Hague."  
[Drawing by Johan Briedé, 1910, based on a design by H. P. Berlage, 1908]



*more unclear, so that it is more difficult to understand the seventeenth century than the sixteenth, or the eighteenth century than the seventeenth, or the nineteenth century than the eighteenth.*<sup>2</sup>

Consequently, in the art of the last century we can see a hesitation on all sides, a complete lack of any direction except a move toward realism, an art form that, when carried to the extreme, leads to a complete absence of style.

When we travel to see really beautiful things, when we want to go and enjoy art that gives us what we need, why do we go only to places where we can find the remnants of the classical world, either Athens, Rome, or Egypt? And we go also to those sites where the Middle Ages (in other words, the feudal world) erected its monuments and also to the countries with the important art of the Renaissance, starting with Italy, the country of its origin.

So why is it that we do not go to those places where the nineteenth century left large works of art, to the modern cities of Berlin, Vienna, or even Paris and London, cities that after all developed faster in the nineteenth century than any other city had ever done before—not to mention the cities in America, which, as far as creative urge is concerned, certainly surpassed all other cities in the world.

And, finally, why is it that we even prefer the old cities as such, with their narrow crooked streets, their haphazard development, and their irregular layout, to the newer ones, which in every respect better satisfy the demands established by recent thinking on urban planning.

It is because no nineteenth-century work of art arouses the kind of excitement that stirs in us when we look at old works of art. It is because, when we pass by the ruins of old cities, we are overcome by a feeling of powerful grandeur and harmonious majesty—a feeling that no nineteenth-century building can evoke.

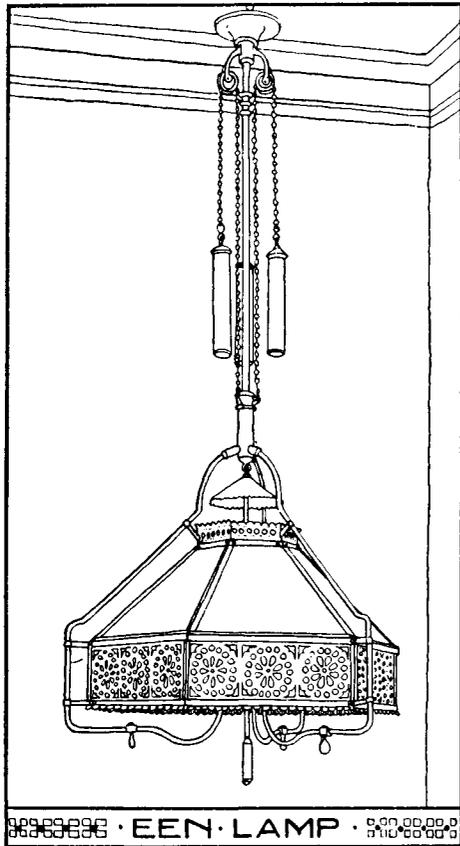
It is because, upon entering a medieval cathedral, we are seized by a sacred solemnity that no interior of a modern church can evoke.

It is because, when looking at a work of art from the Renaissance, we feel intuitively that all later attempts to approximate it have led, inevitably, to an acknowledgment of complete inferiority.

In short, it is because the works of art of the past possess a certain essence that was not the product of a personal idea; it is because there was a spiritual foundation, a universally applicable basis on which the artist could rely and through which his personal vision could appear to full advantage.

When hearing this kind of statement, one is obviously tempted to wonder if in those times the artists were not greater than today. If that were the case, it would be because the people who lived then possessed greater talent than the people of our time.

"A Lamp." [Drawing by Johan Briedé, 1910, based on a design by H. P. Berlage]



It is naturally difficult to answer this question insofar as a talent can only be judged on the basis of its products, in other words, that person's work. Yet the question arises of why great artists have not been produced in every period, although there were always great scholars, politicians, and generals. And why is it that precisely in such a golden age of art, so many artists suddenly emerge at the same time?

Or is an artist such a special individual that his spiritual gifts occur only very rarely and that the life of one, or at the most a few artists working more or less at the same time, would be sufficient to create a significant period in art? Well, no, for thousands of people possess deeper emotions, and the only distinction between these people and an artist is that they lack the gift to express it in tangible form.

The artists—and, let me add, the people are also somewhat responsible for this—

are of course readily inclined to place themselves spiritually above society, above their environment, because in that way they crown themselves with laurels that are certainly not withered.

For it is no small distinction to feel oneself superior to all one's fellow men and to look down on them with disdain. But when we see those same artists doing business, or going through life, do we see such a big difference, either in their sensitivity or in their material desires, from the fellow creatures they despise so much? And isn't this self-aggrandizement often a disguise for ordinary feelings and an empty inner life; isn't the title of "artist" often a license for a false contempt for monetary rewards?

One cannot, therefore, assume that only special periods produced great artists, a notion that is indeed contradicted by history. Wasn't Goethe a great poet, and was he less important than Homer, Dante, or Shakespeare? Judging from his work, we feel that he belonged among the greatest of all. And yet, his era did not produce a great culture; or, rather, had that period indeed been one of great culture, his art would have risen to an even higher level.

Wasn't Beethoven one of those great men who appear so infrequently? And yet, he remained a "solitary figure," one who was not understood, for he, too, lived in that same period of undeveloped culture. And would his art have developed to greater heights and reached more people freely if it had been grounded in a spiritual foundation?

Was Semper a lesser architect than Ictinus, or Steinbach, or Bramante?<sup>3</sup>

Judging from Semper's work, we have every reason to believe that he was among the greatest architects of all time. And yet this same work lacks that certain something—one might call it soul—that is the characteristic of all great art.

In his book *Konventionen der Kunst* (Conventions of art) Scheffler, too, speaks of the great artists who were not born in a period of culture and says, "In as far as it aspires to be the language of the soul, all art is dependent upon conventions; it cannot be otherwise," thus emphasizing that no art is possible without agreement. "Art needs conventions, both for the content and for the form, for what it is saying, and for the means through which it will express an idea."<sup>4</sup> Doesn't this clearly demonstrate that without a firm general principle, high art is impossible?

And then: "Great talents are fighting on the battlefields of art; talents that in a stable epoch such as the Renaissance or even the Gothic, would have achieved immortal results. In terms of their vitality these talents are in no way inferior to the great masters of the past, yet their impact can only be a passing episode."<sup>5</sup>

Scheffler thus reaches the conclusion that in order to produce art the time must be favorable for it, for otherwise all the energy in the world, even that of the most gifted artists, will not be able to create something great. Consequently, all times have produced artists, but it depends on the circumstances whether they can produce great art.

Does this explain sufficiently how tragic it is to work in a transitional period? and where is Nietzsche's superman [*Übermensch*]?

What do we mean by a period of culture?

Generally speaking, there is always culture as long as we mean by it nothing more than civilization and refer to the manners, customs, and fashion of a certain period. Yet more specifically, culture is the harmony between spiritual and material needs, which means that (as Chamberlain, I believe, indicated) there can be a big difference between culture and civilization.<sup>6</sup>

In this way, the various historical periods are put in a new light. Since there can be civilization without culture, and even (although it may sound somewhat paradoxical) culture without civilization, it becomes clear that great artists were born in all periods, but that art cannot flourish in a period without culture, which is a period in which there is no harmony between the two elements mentioned above, in other words, a period in which material needs dominate the spiritual ones. As Muthesius says, "An artistic culture is only conceivable on the basis of a general culture,"<sup>7</sup> which shows that this perceptive observer reaches the same conclusion. In such a period, solitary figures are born and art becomes individualistic, or rather subjectivistic, as there is no convention, no spiritual, and, therefore, of course, also no formal agreement.

In such a period the individual can undoubtedly go a long way; the examples mentioned above are evidence of it. Then such geniuses as Beethoven, Goethe, and Semper can make their great art. Yet this art lags behind one that is developed in a period of culture.

Keeping this explanation in mind, we see that our entire history has produced only two great periods of culture, which rise high above all other periods. Of course, one can see numerous more-or-less powerful movements in history, but when we look at it from a large perspective, which means, guided by firm principles, only the classical and feudal periods can pass for great, that is, as long as we do not include the very important oriental cultures.

It is remarkable that in these two periods, architecture produced its most noble creations and, moreover, that the visual arts were united in it. In these periods, the building was the greatest work of art, from which we can draw the obverse conclusion that there can be no culture when there is no great architecture!

The importance of architecture is, in a sense, the measure of value for the history of culture, for only after architecture has reached its culmination, can we speak of a great culture.

Seen in this light, the great developments in music in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, or even those in literature, do not contradict this thesis, because various arts can develop in interim periods. However, only when the various artists are joined by a

great unanimity, as was the case in the classical and medieval periods, can they achieve this ideal of unity, which only on this higher level can be called style.

In the former case, there is only an individual style, in the latter, there is also unity among the various arts. Or is it farfetched to see a connection between Homer's poems and the architectural forms of the Greek temple; and is it not also true that in the austere, sober rhythm of Greek music (for is not music the original accompaniment of dance and poetry) we can see a reflection of these same forms?

As Scheltema says in his book *De grondslagen eener nieuwe poëzie* (Foundations of a new poetry):

*While we can represent all later dramas through several crossing and intertwining lines that go up and down corresponding to a development, culmination, and denouement, the actions in the Greek drama can only be represented by a straight line without change in direction, without deviation or decoration. That is why such a drama sometimes seems to us to be at once so grand and yet almost naive.*<sup>8</sup>

Does this explanation not reveal to us the unity of character between the Greek drama and the temple?

One certainly cannot contradict the statement that there was complete unity among the creative arts, that there was a perfect stylistic connection between architecture, painting, and sculpture, as well as all the decorative arts. However, architecture led so powerfully that it clearly united all the arts, even though there is always an exchange between architecture and decorative arts; indeed, in most cases artistic forms can be discerned on small objects first.

Can we not see a completely analogous development in the Middle Ages after the fall of the classical world? Then architecture played an even more influential role, the indisputable origin of which was the great power of the church. Is there not a connection between the church and the poetry of Dante, and don't we instinctively feel a similar unity between architecture and medieval music? Indeed, according to Feuerherd, even the form of government was connected with the character of the arts. In his book *Die Entstehung der Stile aus der politischen Ökonomie* (The emergence of styles from the political economy), he says, "Thus the construction of the Doric style of architecture expresses a great simplicity and a powerful regularity that closely resembles the simple essence of the antique state."<sup>9</sup>

Two powerful and conflicting lines of thought seek to explain this relationship. Whereas until recently people still believed that the reason was transcendental, now many followers of Marx's philosophy reduce the origin of all culture to matters of production.

When we look somewhat more closely, however, at the creative products of both cultural eras mentioned above, absolute support for the first opinion becomes evident, and the religion of the Greeks is no exception to this rule.

That is why the house of God is the structure in which the creative efforts were carried to the highest level.

In the classical period, this structure was the temple, the dwelling of the earthly deity; in the feudal period, it was the cathedral, the dwelling of the supernatural deity.

Is there no conscious reason for the emphasis on the horizontal line in the former building, which expresses a striving for earthly blessedness, and for the vertical emphasis in the latter, which reflects a striving for heavenly realms?

Or does one even want to give, as Feuerherd did, a materialistic explanation for the development of the art form as such. He was certainly excessively prosaic when he said:

*Just as the wealth of a land is based not on money but on the product of nature and on the related labor of human society in all its diverse activities, so style does not have its basis in fundamental forms. Although these forms endow it with posterity, the existence of style is based on certain economic relations that determine the notion of beauty and give form to style before it finds expression in artistic productions. Style is never derived from a purely artistic movement, for a look at history teaches us that its origins are always in motifs that are derived from the materials and then translated into ideals, thus producing the notion of beauty that blossoms into a new style through the hand and spirit of the artist.<sup>10</sup>*

Observations of this kind, which go further and even give a materialistic explanation to the development of the base of the Ionic column, make a Marxist's mouth water. But couldn't one say in this regard "that although one senses the intention, the faith is missing"?

Scheffler says, "Religion and architecture together establish a culture,"<sup>11</sup> which means that that thinker, too, concludes that one can only understand a culture through architecture.

Without culture there is no architecture, but without architecture there is no culture; and since art is the visible reflection of spiritual life, one could conclude that culture is unimaginable without religion.

What is religion? This is the point for us to consider.

As I said, in a time of great architecture, in a time of style, architecture was truly the leader among the creative arts. This does not mean that sculpture and painting were inferior in that they could not develop independently, but that they existed for the benefit of architecture. Sculptors and painters worked on the decoration of buildings. That is where they put most of their creative energy. When, by chance, an independent piece

of sculpture had to be made, it was still done in harmony with the architectural environment; and similarly, when a painting was produced, it was not conceived as an individual work of art independent of the wall that needed to be decorated.

Since this work was done with the greatest skill for the temple or the house of the deity, and since, generally speaking, a period of culture is marked by the greatest creations in all the arts, it is self-evident that the artistic forms taken by the temple in symbolizing the religious idea would become the dominant models of the age. Any innovations introduced at the temple were also applied to profane buildings and works of art. In this way the temple became the fountainhead of the entire artistic life of the community.

It goes without saying that a long period of growth had to elapse before this great work of art was created and that all artistic development consists of a period of growth, a golden age, and a period of decline; or, as Hegel originally called these stages: a period of searching, achieving, and exceeding. The first period is characterized by a certain degree of awkwardness in the forms, although there is already a good understanding of style, that is, of the certain degree of unity among the various parts that is the secret of every true art. The second period is characterized by a complete mastery of all problems, a perfection in design, the unity in diversity that is the ultimate goal of all searching. And the third one is characterized by the abandonment of form, a surrender to arbitrariness in the application of stylistic principles, and the decorative degeneration that can be found at the end of each artistic period, as if a law of nature.

It should be pointed out that in order to achieve such a unity, a form has to be improved over and over again according to the same principle, so that it can be made perfect. In other words, a basic form needs to be studied until it has become a convention. After all, the word "convention" that frightens us so much today (because there are also bad conventions) is nothing more than the result of collaboration, or spiritual solidarity, and leads in that sense to the supreme result. However, spiritual solidarity does not exist in this time of anarchistic subjectivism; and yet, only solidarity can create culture!

For, after all, aren't the highest religious feelings also based on conventions? Aren't all religious dogmas, all philosophical systems, conventions entered into by the individual confronted with the eternally impenetrable?

"For all divine revelation occurs in men and through men!"

Having pointed out how all art is based on conventions, even that of Titian, or Velázquez, or Rembrandt, or Donatello, or Michelangelo, Scheffler says in the same article that architecture is especially dependent on conventions.

*Architecture exists legitimately within the realm of conventions. What matters in architecture is an imagination fired by receptiveness to the workings of gravity; the particular reali-*

ties of a depictable natural world are excluded. Talent must here demonstrate its pictorial ability exclusively through purely nonnaturalistic forms. For this reason, flexibility and versatility never dominate in architecture as they do in the painterly and poetic arts. Developments progress only slowly. Because it is the result of a concise perception of forces, the materialization of an abstract conception, and the quintessence of a whole sequence of ideas, each building is a formula embracing the structural fantasy of many people.

Stubborn subjectivism is impossible here, since the individual can never free himself from what has gone before, because his arbitrariness is hemmed in on all sides, and the inventive talent of one individual is not sufficient for this world of abstract form.

Architectural forms come into being only from the unanimous efforts of whole races. For this reason these inventions of fantasy are more durable than any artistic motifs drawn from nature. The architectural forms on which a people has agreed are an essence on which all the visual arts draw. They best survive the passing of the ages and represent something like "eternal beauty."

One thinks of the moldings and the columns of the Greeks, which have passed through two millennia of art history without losing any of their inner strength or logic. They are singularly pure crystallizations of the human concept or legitimation. That we are still able to sympathize so vigorously with these works shows what a harmonious perception of the world must have prevailed at that time, and reveals the great living warmth that must have surrounded the conventions of antiquity. What broad ideas had been invoked in this art, and—one hardly dares say it—what wise ideas, for it was probably not a self-restricting act of will.

Acts of creation that bring forth such works can only proceed on the basis of religious visions of the world, for the works themselves are, in the widest sense, of a religious nature. The architect seeks to comprehend natural laws visually, to understand the forces of nature and their eternally active logic. And his comprehension expresses itself as beautiful form. This explains the slowness with which architectural styles change. For the renewal of the fundamental forms of architecture is only perceived as a necessity when the worldview itself changes. The history of religious beliefs is, at the same time, the history of architecture. What comes into being between the epochs of religiosity is but a meager imitation of values that have been handed down, a passive interval between decisive historical conditions.<sup>12</sup>

From this quotation we may conclude that architectural forms need a very long time to evolve; it is also apparent that all art, but especially architecture, is based on conventions, and that precisely for this reason it is the art of a developed culture.

It is also clear that religion and architecture have the same origin, so that in the end religion is the origin of style, or rather of a style, since each religion has its own architectural vocabulary. As Kuyper says in one of his "Stone" lectures about Calvinism

and art, “Both in the classical and in the so-called Christian art, the absolute and all-embracing work of art emerges first of all through architecture, while all the other arts adapt themselves around the temple and church, and, similarly, around the mosque or pagoda.”<sup>13</sup>

Yet in the rest of his observations Kuyper argues that wherever there is a richer religious development—as in the case of Calvinism—art and religion each have their own spheres of activity, which can hardly be distinguished initially and therefore are intermixed.

In order to prove his point, he quotes Hartmann, who says, “Originally, the worship of God took place in an inseparable unity with art, since at this lower level religion still tends to lose itself in aesthetic appearance.”<sup>14</sup>

From this remark he concludes that one should not expect to see a new style anymore, for until now the history of art has never seen the emergence of an all-embracing style outside a religious context.

So what happened in the fifteenth century with the emergence of the Renaissance, the spiritual movement that is the basis for the modern philosophy of life?

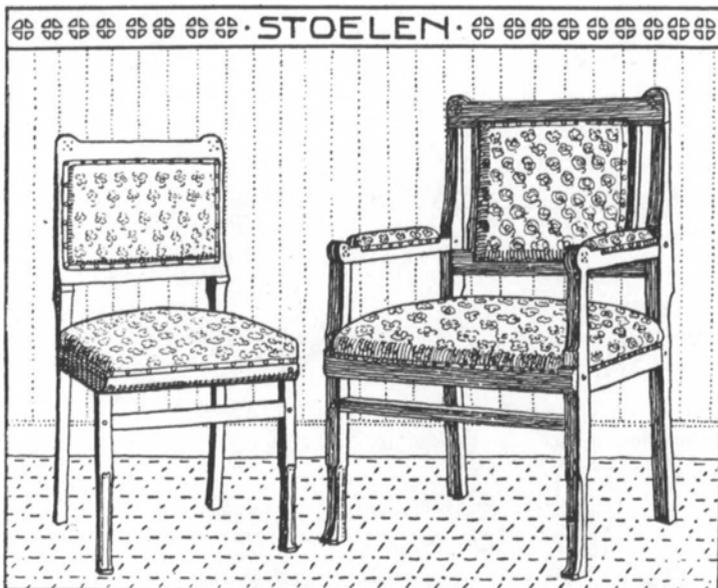
Although it certainly was a revolutionary movement and came into existence rather abruptly, the way in which it reached fruition was, generally speaking, no different from that of other movements. For its first sign could be seen long before the whole revolution had become an accomplished fact. Burckhardt says in his *Cicerone*, “The Renaissance had been waiting for a long time before the gates.”<sup>15</sup> In fact, the new forms had been applied in the visual arts long before the movement is considered to have started.

In essence it meant a liberation from the supremacy of the church, or a reaction against the spiritual life of the Middle Ages. It meant a freedom of expression, which also resulted in the emergence of Protestantism. In art this revolution was to have a similar consequence.

It was certainly no coincidence that this movement originated in Italy and spread from there throughout Europe, nor that it actually aimed at a return to a classical philosophy of art in modern form.

This movement, however, immediately created a spiritual conflict, a fundamental impossibility, which found its strongest expression in literature, since this art, and particularly poetry, controls all spiritual life and is the synthesis of the other arts because it deals with both time and space. Music, by contrast, is limited to time, and painting, sculpture, and architecture are limited to space. But this resolution was to have the most fundamental, stylistically most clearly visible, and therefore most understandable impact on that art that, as we have seen, joins with religion to establish culture: architecture. As Scheffler says, “The spirit of architecture reflects that of religion so precisely

"Chairs." [Drawing by Johan Briedé, 1910, based on a design by H. P. Berlage]



that the schismatic worldview of Renaissance man found an exact reflection in the architectural art of the age."<sup>16</sup>

Also, the other arts had lost their unity but neither literature nor music had suffered a great deal because of that loss, for they are based less on convention. Would it be possible that architecture is based on convention because, according to Hegel, it is a symbolic art (symbolic because its usefulness and, in particular, the weight of its material do not allow the idea to come to full and free expression)?

Which changes do we see occurring in architecture that justify such an observation?

If we subject the various architectural styles to critical review, that is, study how far they conform to a purity of composition (are the basic forms firmly based on principles, and is there a logical decoration related to this composition), we will reach the conclusion that the architecture of the Greeks and the architecture of the Middle Ages meet this requirement best of all. It is certainly no coincidence that these two are those referred to earlier as periods of high culture.

When we speak of classical antiquity, however, we include also the Romans, even though we should keep in mind here that their architecture does not show the same purity of principles as that of the Greeks.

It would go too far to elucidate this distinction in all its details,<sup>17</sup> but we should explain in a few words the fundamental difference between Greek and Roman architec-

ture. The Greek temple in which, as said above, the principle of pure composition was applied in the most perfect way, consists of a *cella* and a portico made of columns, which support the roof and are placed either on the front of the *cella* or completely around it, like a peristyle. In this way, the columns in the most perfect way perform their function as supporting elements.

With the Romans, the temple should no longer be considered the architectonic masterpiece. This can be explained by the fact that for the Romans, in contrast with the Greeks, religion did not determine all of social life but had already given way to a ritual form.

Indeed, the reflection of this religious formality can be seen immediately in their culture, which lags far behind that of the Greeks.

The Romans were principally politicians and engineers; thus, their largest and in that sense most important structures were bridges and aqueducts, fortresses and harbors.

Feuerherd says, "It is a myth that the character of the Romans was innately antagonistic to the visual arts," as is said so often, "but the economic circumstances in Rome were just as unfavorable for the arts as they were in Sparta." And it is as if we are talking about our own time when we hear him say: "The architect was almost forced to succumb to the competition of the building contractors. Vitruvius writes bitterly that in his time people who falsely called themselves architects could pursue their mischief in architecture without punishment."<sup>18</sup>

This utilitarian character also had an impact on Roman monumental architecture, whose structural system consisted of the vault (in other words, the arch), which, although not invented by the Romans, was first used by them on a large scale. The vault was combined with a columnar plan, which was not invented by them either, but adopted from the Greeks.

We should admit that this columnar plan, as far as its detail or decoration was concerned, was adapted by the Romans in a brilliant way. However, it was not applied—as was the case in Greek architecture—purely constructionally, in other words, according to good stylistic principles. In Roman architecture, the column was placed either in front of a wall, or cut in half against a wall so that it no longer had a function as a supporting structural part but, rather, was used simply as decoration. Apparently it performed excellently in this way, because it could also be applied to buildings with several stories by placing the columns on top of each other.

Thus the pure principle was violated and, in consequence, Roman architecture became inferior to that of the Greeks. Yet, first-rate architectural works were created with the help of this Roman scheme—which can be seen in its purest form in the triumphal arch. Because it could be applied in so many practical ways, it conquered the world.

What happened during the Renaissance?

Like other artists, architects, too, turned toward works of antiquity, and in this instance not to the Greeks but to the Romans, whose buildings could be found in the immediate surroundings.

Since architecture more than any other art is based on convention, this return to the Romans was doubly fatal because the convention came naturally: the same Roman architectural scheme, the one with arches and columns.

Yet, one would do Renaissance architects an injustice by calling them imitators or denying them any independent talent; for just as the Romans individualized the Greek columnar plan, so the masters of the Renaissance adapted the Roman plan. We should emphasize, however, that although they were original, testifying to a young, fresh, revolutionary vigor, they were purely ornamental and made no fundamental difference. After all, the basic scheme, the core, the construction, and consequently the distinctive character—in other words, what makes a style into a style—remained the same.

Thus the Roman architects, who incidentally were predominantly Greek, achieved something more important than the architects of the Renaissance. As a consequence of this fundamental weakness of the latter period, architecture gradually lost its role as leader of the visual arts.

Is it coincidence or really a consequence of more liberal religious principles (in other words, of a less conventional culture) that this happened? Who can say? Yet it is remarkable that this relationship exists.

Once it had started in that direction, we can see that architecture sank lower and lower, until, in the nineteenth century, it became a totally meaningless art.

Another important factor also presented itself, undoubtedly as a result of the new way of thinking. The two arts that used to consider it their highest vocation to serve as decoration on a building—sculpture and painting—slowly went their own ways. It was not that they no longer put themselves at the service of architecture, for the increasing use of decoration during the Renaissance provided sculpture and painting with an even larger field of activity in architectural decoration, resulting in a separate sort of ornament, made specifically for that purpose. In addition to these specific applications, however, these arts themselves evolved higher and produced autonomous paintings and pieces of sculpture. Since this independent development reached such great heights, it was bound to have an impact on architecture.

The strict discipline, the style, and the architectural convention that originally restrained painting and sculpture were lost, and, in consequence, architectural decoration took on the character of paintings and pieces of sculpture placed against the wall. This change was taken so far that in the end the wall became almost entirely plain, with the decoration provided by paintings. Holland went farthest in this regard: preferring

a completely plain, whitewashed wall. Did this happen because architecture was never as important in Holland as in other countries, or because its school of painting was perhaps the most important of all?

Unity was lost, and although the last architectural style, the Empire style, marked a brief revival of the old principle, a lasting improvement was impossible because the spiritual foundation was undermined.

Starting with the Renaissance, the actual church was pushed into the background both on a spiritual and on a formal level. The temple was no longer the symbolization of the highest spiritual life, since this spiritual life no longer had a religious foundation as had been the case in the classical world and the Middle Ages. Churches were built, of course (certainly no fewer in number than before), and the construction of Saint Peter's in Rome proved that as far as bold layout and spectacular size were concerned, there was no desire to yield to the medieval cathedrals. This does not yet mean, however, that the achievements matched those of earlier eras.

Certainly, no impression can be compared to that which you get when staring up into the enormous space enclosed by the dome. Yet, the religious feeling is missing, that feeling of being removed from the earth, which you immediately get inside a cathedral.

Architecturally, the church has become of secondary importance from the Renaissance onward. This is revealed in the lack of creative imagination shown in this regard by otherwise highly gifted architects. For, generally speaking, does not all imagination fade when the ideas on which one has to build are obsolete?

And because of this decline of the temple, architecture in general lost importance: even though the temple was still considered the highest expression, the former level of expression could no longer be achieved. Without a doubt, the fundamental return to Roman instead of Greek architecture during the Renaissance was directly related to this, as it was a return to a kind of architecture that remained of secondary importance even in its highest expression—the temple. As Muthesius says in his book *Style-Architecture and Building-Art*, "What was achieved in Renaissance building-art could be but a pale image of a superior original art—a claim that will be evident to every visitor to Italy who observed how any single antique building (the Roman Colosseum or the Pantheon, for example) eclipses the entire building-art of the Renaissance."<sup>19</sup>

Yet, as I said before, it would be extremely biased if, for that reason alone, we would deny Renaissance architecture any merit; after all, the freshness of new artistic life revealed itself here so wonderfully.

Moreover, the freedom of expression signified a growing sense of nationality, which resulted in a great variety of artistic expressions in Europe, the charm of which can still be felt in the monuments left to us by that period. Whereas a very special secular architecture flourished already during the Middle Ages, during the Renaissance this

kind of architecture became even more important because of the character of the movement itself. In addition, the medieval tradition was so powerful and so radical that one did not abandon it immediately. What is more, some medieval elements survived in the northern European Renaissance simply because these elements were indigenous.

The direct influence of the Italian Renaissance made itself felt much later and for the reason mentioned above was doubly fatal for the northern Renaissance.

An ambiguity developed here, which did not affect the Italian Renaissance, for medieval architecture in Italy had never been able to supersede completely the ancient classical tradition; moreover, through its decoration it rejected the whole medieval tradition.

For building techniques in general, it was of great importance that the guilds, this medieval institution, remained in existence. As far as skill in execution was concerned, therefore, the Renaissance works of art were not inferior to those of any of the other great periods. But in a societal sense, the Renaissance signified the gradual disappearance of a precise definition of mutual relationships, which was reflected in art. The result was individualism.

In other words, art developed from something of universal significance to something specialized; for although art in itself is the perfect specialization, its expressions can be multifarious.

And it is exactly this universal significance that intensifies beauty. The beauty of Greek art was so great because it encompassed much more than later art. One may also conclude that the more universal a certain beauty is, the less dispute one can have over taste; after all, since beauty can only be recognized by ourselves, is it a matter of personal taste. Thus, as we ourselves become specialists, so beauty also becomes specialized. According to Spinoza, beauty is a notion that exists only within the human being; it is not a characteristic of given objects.

The reason for this individualism was, of course, the gradually changing position of the artist. Although he was a somewhat distinguished person in classical antiquity and the Middle Ages, he was held in no higher respect than any other people of prominence. While the names of artists from antiquity are still known, we know relatively few from the Middle Ages.

This changed immediately during the Renaissance. The artist became an individual who stood opposed to and partly outside society. Individualism emerged and degenerated into a subjectivism that only knows itself and always promotes the "I" rather than the common cause. Since true individualism is aimed at this common cause, and its work emanates from self-sacrifice, its personal expression can make the artist's nature grow to brilliant proportions and make him, through his ethical work, so mature, so strong, and so satisfied that a great personality reveals itself through it. This is not the

case with subjectivism, which is to individualism as idiosyncrasy is to will. And haven't we known such idiosyncrasies as, for example, Jugendstil?

With the Renaissance, the third period of great culture started, which, insofar as we can judge it now, may be called the one of bourgeois culture.

All kinds of undercurrents or temporary digressions due to various circumstances during the development and growth of that era were naturally bound to occur. The real bourgeoisie came into existence with the French Revolution, which meant that about three centuries were needed to achieve that goal. This is another proof of the slowness with which great spiritual revolutions come about.

As already pointed out, an era of unprecedented prosperity set in thanks to the completely new philosophy of life and the sense of nationality, even though the spiritual unity slackened and the great architectural style was weakened. This happened with those arts, in particular, which are less communal than architecture: literature and music, sculpture and painting.

It is not necessary to enumerate the great poets who, influenced by the spirit of the time, worked in all countries or the scholars who in their writings made zealous propaganda for the new art. In our country, Erasmus can be seen as the great predecessor of the Renaissance. In his *In Praise of Folly*, for example, he depicts a procession that could be an example for a painterly or sculptural decoration in the spirit of the new conception of art.

In a recent text about the "De blijde inkomst der Renaissance in de Nederlanden" (The joyous entry of the Renaissance in the Netherlands) it was said that "one cannot get a better idea of the revolution in the whole mind of the period than through the two most widely read Dutch books: *Stultitiae laus* by Erasmus and *Imitatio Christi* by Thomas à Kempis."<sup>20</sup>

Let it suffice to focus on a person in whom the entire spiritual life of the Renaissance reaches its culminating point, like Homer in the classical world and Dante in the Middle Ages. This would be Shakespeare. He was a dramatist, and since drama is the highest expression of poetry, it unites all the arts in its representation. In Shakespeare's work, the profound distinction between classical and modern drama revealed itself clearly and forever. Scheltema describes this as follows, "In the classical world the solution of a tragic downfall consisted in the fatal realization of something that needed to be done; for the bourgeois drama it was the desperate failure of something that was desired."<sup>21</sup>

It is in the nature of things that the greatest works of art come into existence during an era of growth of a culture, and complacency emerges as soon as the goal is achieved.

This complacency, which also occurs in society at large, has a fatal impact on art. Indeed, it is a characteristic of a genius to sense a coming culture and to incorporate into one's work those qualities that only later will be recognized as characteristic of the art of that age. During the period of evolution and struggle only the greatest artists possess the power to translate the inspiring feelings of times still to come in their work.

This is what happened with Homer, who lived several hundred years before the government of Pericles; and with Dante, who lived long before the Gothic cathedrals were built; and with Shakespeare, who saw the light two centuries before the French Revolution.

I want to return to the two spiritual movements that contest everything that happens in society: the supernatural and the materialistic. In doing so, we can exclude those peripheral movements characterized by doubt, for they recognize neither one principle nor the other.

Politically, these movements express themselves in the clerical and social-democratic parties, whereas the peripheral movements are represented by the liberal, radical, and liberal-democratic parties.<sup>22</sup>

Historical materialism, the philosophy of the social democrats, accounts for everything that happens in society in terms of the relations of production and sees the whole spiritual life—customs, manners, and habits; the social, political, and legal relations; religion, philosophy, and art—as the result of these relations. The economy is the substructure, while human actions and thinking are its superstructure.

“The sublime greatness of Greek art is based on the fact that trade and production, art and science of the Greek state originated from purely economic conditions. Natural gifts alone do not make an artist; they must always coincide with certain conditions of production and a favorable moment in time to create great artists,” says Feuerherd in his book *Die Entstehung der Stile aus der politischen Ökonomie*, from which I have quoted before.<sup>23</sup>

And since culture appears only when material and spiritual needs correspond, we may conclude from the observations outlined above that when the material needs are met, in other words, when the relations of production are such that they satisfy everybody in providing peace and calm, then the spiritual needs or superstructure will automatically gain strength, and thus science, philosophy, and art will flourish.

The big difference between this view and the earlier one is that the production process rather than religion has become the standard for measuring culture.

Recent economic theory teaches us that under the capitalist system, the production process is such that only a few make a profit; the entire working class not only shares none of this profit but receives no more than a minimum wage, which is actually not

enough to survive on. This system satisfies only the smallest segment of the community, causing unrest in society at large. One always has to be extremely careful drawing conclusions from these kinds of fundamental observations, as it is tempting to want to fit everything into one system and force everything into the iron shackles of dogma. But in this context it is certainly remarkable that the modern history of capitalism is considered to have started with the sixteenth century, in other words, more or less at the same time as the Renaissance. Could we not, therefore, draw the conclusion that this observation does indeed have a certain degree of plausibility, especially since the art in which social life is reflected most directly—architecture, the true bearer of culture—sank to a much lower level than the other arts?

Moreover, history teaches us that industry and capitalism grew simultaneously, and that in England, the industrial country par excellence, industrialization started at the end of the eighteenth century, completing the real victory of the bourgeoisie over the last remnants of the feudal era.

The French Revolution took place at the same time and broke with the whole medieval tradition by abolishing the guilds, the same guilds whose end had already been signified by the Renaissance.

The goal of the new spiritual movement—the creation of a bourgeois society and thus the establishment of the modern philosophy of life—was thus achieved, and the end of architecture, that is, of an architectural style, coincided with it.

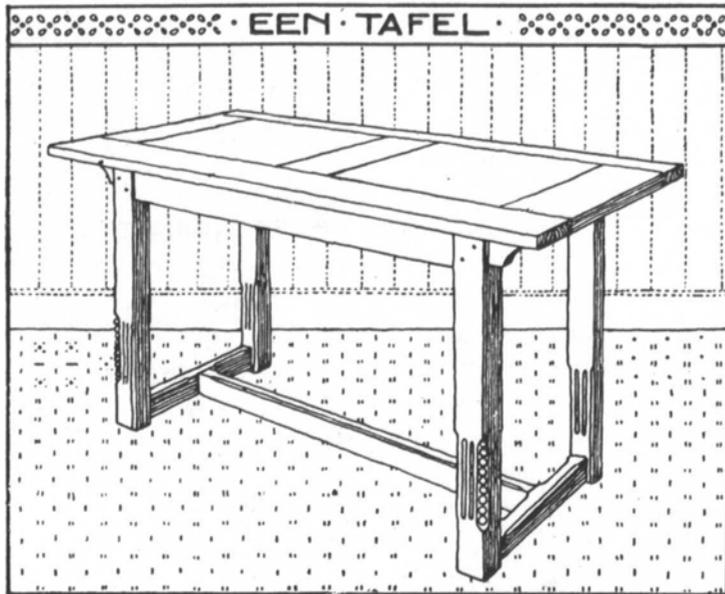
From a cultural perspective, the beginning of the nineteenth century was a sorry spectacle, for capitalism developed strongly and, according to the social-democratic analysis, completely disrupted the production process. In a spiritual sense, too, capitalism could only result in a totally sterile era. Indeed, if one does not take into consideration the extensive research and prodigious results in the field of the sciences—which, by the way, were developed mainly for the benefit of industry—one has to admit that the previous century has produced little that may be called uplifting.

Religion and art, specifically architecture, create culture. So what remained of these two impulses?

It is a delicate thing to speak about religious feelings, but I believe that one can hardly deny that little is left of the old religion, which, in representing the many gods of the classical period and the one mystical God of the Middle Ages, achieved the highest form of art.

It is even more tenuous to judge the results of Protestantism, since the observations outlined above make us wonder if it would not be better, given that religion is also based on conventions, to admit ideas that are not too free or too anarchistic. This does not, however, make it any easier to explain the reformed church.

"A Table." [Drawing by Johan Briedé, 1910, based on a design by H. P. Berlage]



As far as religious life is concerned, we definitely see a drastic reduction in the influence of the church after the Renaissance and a final termination of real influence, though not in appearance, during the French Revolution.

The intentions of Protestantism were so beautiful, perhaps one had expected—because a freer conception of religion would allow for more serious and deeper feelings—that true Christianity was coming, and that the true love of one's fellow men would become reality. And Kuyper doubtless had this in mind when he pointed to a higher dimension of religion. But how we deluded ourselves. For doing away with the stake and the rack is no more than a softening in the degree of tolerance, in other words, a result of civilization that has nothing to do with culture.

Finally, the feeling for charity is apparently not as great as one is happily inclined to believe while calling it a characteristic of this age. Furthermore, charity as a personal virtue has always existed, and the doctrine of love for one's fellow men is not originally Christian, but was already the quintessence of many older religions and philosophies.

"Christianity is dead,"<sup>24</sup> says Scheffler, and whoever has the courage to acknowledge this will be more honest than he who goes to church every Sunday to prove the contrary.

Inspired with the same ideals as all other ramifications of the Renaissance and there-

fore reflected in a special kind of architecture, Protestantism evolved into a separate culture, which, especially in our country with its strict Calvinistic conventions, rose to an admirable level of specialization. It reached a dead point in the nineteenth century; at the same time, the original Christian religion remained loyal to its old traditions and thus also to its architecture, but for the same reasons it also experienced a crisis.

Is it still possible to be religious today as one was before? When antiquated conventions remain the same, religion can only turn pale, and worship can only become a ritual.

*With relentlessly negative and positivistic logic the natural sciences have had a more revolutionary impact than three millennia of philosophy and all systems of speculative epistemology. The divine faith in the heavenly home of all souls, which makes existence so easy and promises eternal life, has lost its vitality and has only survived thanks to a tired tradition. Since no equivalent is to hand, there is a need to win new revelations from the godless heaven, to proclaim new ethical ideals, and to derive from worldly knowledge a great ethical certainty of the divine purpose.<sup>25</sup>*

Thus, according to one doctrine, the great ethical force is the cause for everything; according to the other, it is the materialistic one, because capitalism has disrupted the normal relations of production. And the consequence of all culture—a great art—is indeed absent.

The third great period in world history, that of the bourgeoisie, had the complete absence of culture as its ultimate creation, caused by the lack of a great communal ideal. This disappearance cannot be explained by those who believe in a supernatural cause for everything that happens in society, while those who adhere to the materialistic philosophy do find its explanation in historical materialism.

“Many questions would remain unanswered,” says Feuerherd, “if one were to take only ideals into consideration.”<sup>26</sup>

And do not the results justify this observation? After all, what do art and especially architecture—the ultimate standard for measuring culture—offer?

It was already said before that art can flourish in all ages; the character of the arts varies, however, according to the tightness of the bond that ties them together.

Literature, music, and painting lend themselves best to such a separate development because they are least material in character; sculpture, on the other hand, stands somewhere in between architecture and painting but needs architecture most of all for its development.

Thus, literature and painting flourished in the nineteenth century, with very special talents in both fields.

In the eighteenth century, by contrast, one could still see a last Renaissance flourish, a last exaltation of the idea of unity. This was due to a special spiritual impetus that originated in France and was characterized by a particular kind of architecture and music. Later it also led to an extraordinary revival in German literature, with Goethe as the “driving force” [*führende Kraft*].

These arts already lacked a grand style, which means they were not stylized on the basis of a general belief. They did have style but were not created according to a single conventional principle. A piece of music from this time finds no appropriate building in which it can be performed; a painting from that period cannot serve as a wall decoration because there is no architecture and the works in themselves are too personal in character.

For all art must be creative in the sense that even in the so-called imitative arts—those arts for which nature serves as an example—nature should not be used as a goal but as a means. A poet should work in the same way as a painter, whereas the musician, to whom all original sounds are provided by nature, does so automatically.

The impressionists or naturalists, in other words, those artists whose art reached its high point in the nineteenth century, lack this creative power.

As von Senger says:

*The gaze of the artist is not fixed on the world of appearances, which is for him merely stimulus to his poetry. And this poetry, in contrast, originates in his own way of looking at the world, in a personal philosophy. Does not the basic tone of a work of art correspond to the longing for a lost paradise?*

*And what of the impressionists? The word itself says it: they are receptors. Their work is determined by a philosophy that is a nonphilosophy—namely naturalism. The impressionist paints his pictures not in the studio but in the open air. He does not study nature as Böcklin does, in order to find there expressive means for his poetry, but so that he can bring to his canvas the stimuli that he draws from nature through the focusing lens of his temperament. His painting is an almost reflective activity. Passivity is the particular characteristic of Impressionism, and it reveals its essentially inartistic nature. (We should not, according to Nietzsche, demand of the artist who gives that he should become a woman, that he should receive.)*

*Neoimpressionism goes even further in this direction and in the final analysis is actively antiartistic; it is not only uncreative but positively destructive.<sup>27</sup>*

While admitting considerable individual talent, what do these remarks say except deny any high value to impressionism, precisely because this art was not supported by

a great style, by general architectural principles. The same was the case with literature, as well as sculpture when it developed independently from architecture.

Only music, the most immaterial of all the arts and thus the one most able to position itself outside any stylistic unity, could be elevated to a more important level.

Indeed, it will often seem that personal talent can rise much higher outside general conventions. After all, did not Beethoven achieve the highest expression in art?

Not only did nineteenth-century architecture fail to achieve any vigor, but on a conceptual level—on the only level that is worth dealing with—there was actually no architecture either.

According to Gorter, poetry cannot live on either halfheartedness or eclecticism. No art can do so, I would add, and certainly not architecture, precisely because it is the most material of arts and therefore more tied to its own time, manners, and customs; because more than any other art it is an essential part of society. The simple fact that industry puts numerous new materials on the market, materials that must be used because they are better than the older ones, indicates clearly that the use of older forms can hardly be reconciled with the present time. Anyone who has a feeling for harmony, or stylistic unity, between modern clothing and the style of the spaces through which one moves, must be acutely aware of this aesthetic conflict, for throughout the nineteenth century architecture remained eclectic.

Already during the Napoleonic era, the Old Roman, or Empire, style was in vogue; it had a lasting impact and resulted in a revival of the Greek style, the “Neo-Grec.” And when it became clear that one could not do much with this style because it led to the most ridiculous conflicts, the architects plunged into the native Renaissance and into a Neogothic direction. The latter appears to have had a more effective impact because, as we have explained above, the principles of Gothic architecture were purer than those of the Renaissance. And since renewed application in the nineteenth century had not further refined these principles, the modern Gothic style had the virtue of again drawing attention to an earlier and purer method of building. However, as this art, too, held on to formality, it, too, had no permanent value.

Thus one could see buildings being erected in the Greek and Roman styles, or in the Romanesque and Gothic styles, or in the Renaissance style, drawn from Renaissance models both in Holland and elsewhere. And since this phenomenon was in principle international, the exchange worked both ways, depending on the choice of the client or the judgment and taste of the architect. If one wanted to do something especially smart or bizarre, the Indian style was brought out; I am thinking here of the Parkschouburg in Amsterdam, for example.<sup>28</sup>

This method of building became so much a matter of course that a building could only be built in a classifiable style.

But the worst outcome of this practice was the loss of the notion of architecture, which had become exclusively defined by exterior forms. It was thought that the essence of architecture depended on exterior form, and thus that the understanding of architecture was determined by one's familiarity with these stylistic forms.

It was not considered strange to see all these forms used—forms that were developed hundreds of years ago by totally different people. Nobody asked why they did not make their own forms, or why they were speaking a language that was dead rather than one that was alive. And the architects themselves did not know any better than that the art of building could only be conceived with those specific stylistic forms: they even developed an architecture with and without art. The architects of the past, in contrast, designed their buildings in the traditional forms of their time, probably without thinking of art and certainly without thinking of style. Add to this the fact that the building methods, and especially the production of housing, had gradually taken on the appearance of mass production because of the enormous growth of the cities; that building had become a business, because it had fallen into the hands of all kinds of people except those qualified for the task, who had to apply thrice-revived forms for good measure. By taking all of this into consideration, you will get an idea of the condition of architecture in the nineteenth century.

It would not be fair if we did not acknowledge the great merits of the masters who, against the odds, rescued the architecture of that era [*hinüber gerettet haben*] and the merits of those many people who struggled, on the one hand, against the tide of their time and, on the other, against their own ideas, which had not yet had a chance to take definite shape—a situation that heightened the confusion. Finally, we should also acknowledge those many people whose work could have no more than a limited significance, since their age lacked the culture of earlier eras.

Should one, however, be guided by sentimental considerations when making these kinds of reflections?

It is curious to note just how the growth of industry and the resulting capitalism led to such architecturally confusing, unsatisfactory, and troubled results. We can see how the architecture of the period made our cities into unpalatable accumulations of buildings. Indeed, there is more restlessness in the monotonous linking together of the new streets than in the lively architectural movement of an old city. We can see how this character has even spoiled our landscapes by penetrating into villages and woods; how it even entered our houses and there, too, disturbed the sense of intimacy. But didn't architecture again turn out to be the pure reflection of its time?

In the two great eras, the spiritual ideal, which must be communal in order to be a leading force, was religion, but already during the Renaissance this ideal started to fade.

The Protestant religion and the bourgeois consciousness grew up together with the modern capitalistic production of commodities. In her studies in socialistic aesthetics, Henriette Roland Holst says:

*The old religious philosophy rooted in faith wanes and turns pale; the new, natural philosophy, which is based on science, that is, on a systematic organization of the facts, grows and gains ground. It is the result of real, practical, human development, of the increasing power of mankind over nature; it is nothing more than a reflection of an increasingly powerful consciousness.*<sup>29</sup>

Social development moved from the communal to the individual, from the general to the personal, and finally to subjectivism; and this development was necessarily reflected in the arts. This process was completed in the nineteenth century, which therefore is considered to be the golden age of bourgeois culture. To repeat the question posed at the beginning of this essay: are there not grounds for great dissatisfaction with the products of this golden age?

I think there is; for regardless of how one thinks about history, and assuming an unbiased opinion, one has to acknowledge that the results of the development of capitalism have, indeed, been very unsatisfactory. For not in appearance but in fact everything is being sacrificed for money; everything is considered against the background of money; and all ideals are suffocated by financial ulterior motives. The pretense to the contrary could be maintained all the better as the reality became more striking. (The only reason that idealism has survived is because, just as there are always artists and scholars, so noble spirits continue to be born.) The pretense was maintained best of all in the church where, on penalty of defying what is sacred, one was forced at all costs to hide the truth.

As Kutter, the Swiss minister, says in his pamphlet *Sie müssen* (You must): "The Church does not believe in the spirit of God any more; it believes in Satan. It does business with hell and bargains with sin. It has become a robbers' den and department store. It acknowledges evil and thus has made it into the curse of the people."<sup>30</sup>

In the essay mentioned above Gorter aptly remarked that precisely because good things fail to come about on earth, we think they will happen in heaven. "In the great bourgeois poetry, good occurs in heaven."

So much for religious feelings, which used to be the origin of culture. The result of this society without ideals is, of course, art that matches it.

In an earlier lecture I called the nineteenth century the age of ugliness, and I have good reason to stand by that judgment.<sup>31</sup>

Of course you will counter, as well you might, that music developed to a high level, and that a Wagner could be born whose art created the greatest emotions and who even wanted to realize the ideal of rehabilitating the classical drama; you will note that schools of painters came into existence that showed us works of the highest beauty; that there was a literature with writers of prose and poetry who were certainly no less talented than those of the past.

I agree with all of that, for it seems to me that one can find one serious inconsistency in the otherwise so important book by Scheltema from which I quoted before.

Scheltema reaches the conclusion that the moral world order of today is not a failed realization of what should be but a natural order grown out of today's circumstances. That is also the opinion of the social democrats with regard to history. And just like most social democrats, Scheltema commits the well-known mistake of scorning those people whose acts are a consequence of and not the reason for this world order. He does so, even though holding people personally responsible for all their acts is a characteristic of *bourgeois* ethics. In other words, one should praise social democracy, for it wants to take away the reasons for capitalistic society, but one should not praise the social democrat himself, for oh! a real human being is not influenced by any single system. Or, one should scoff at capitalism but not at the capitalists, and similarly—to remain in Scheltema's field—one should scoff at naturalism and realism in art as a consequence of this world order (which again is the reason for this art), but not scoff at the artists of the 1880s, for they, too, had no choice but to produce the work that they did.

And that is exactly what they did, and in an incomparable way. Like all revolutionary movements, they fought against pretense and tried to reveal the essence of art. But not only that, they also made great works of art that, like the work of Multatuli in the past, all of a sudden brought new perceptions to light.<sup>32</sup> When we take into consideration that all movements must grow and that a great art does not come into existence all at once, there would seem to be a hint of self-exaltation in denouncing all *tachtigers* [members of the Movement of the 1880s] as indolents and dilettantes. Scheltema even scoffs at the poetry of his own political associates, who, regardless of their talent, could do nothing different from what they did, namely, fail to create a so-called proletarian art (a label to which I shall return later).

I concede all of this. But as an alternative to this specialized flourishing of only a few arts, I propose a universal blossoming of all the arts. Instead of an individual kind of music, which certainly was able to provide the highest enjoyment (but whose character is too specialized and whose performance could and should be unique, as Hutschenruyter explained in his piece *Het Beethoven-Huis*<sup>33</sup>), I propose music that is truly related to, thus is a consequence of spiritual life, that is, of the highest ethical feelings of the nation, and which will be performed in halls that are completely restful as far as the

architecture is concerned—a condition needed to enjoy the performance in its true splendor.

Instead of a literature that could achieve the highest levels as long as all that counted was the interpretation of feelings evoking nature and love, as well as making visible the reality of this time, I propose a literature that governs the ethical inner life of a whole nation and represents it in powerful tragedy.

“For democracy sets loose all human passions,” says Feuerherd, “and it presents the soul directly and in a deeply moving manner with examples of human activity at its highest and lowest. Democracy develops drama—which always revives at times when democratic ideals dominate—and irresistibly promotes the spirit of the artist.”<sup>34</sup>

Instead of painting that was able to show us nature through an artistic temperament [*à travers un tempérament*], but which remained limited to the framed painting and was only visible in rooms that are in no way related to this art, I propose a manner of painting that represents the great social achievements and events with all their reasons and consequences. Such paintings should be installed in the traditional manner on the architectural wall.

“For in democratic ages such as this, it would not occur to an artist, or he would not believe it possible, that the representation of an everyday, meaningless action, or of a landscape, some flowers, fruit, jars, weapons, and so on, could comprise a picture. For all these things are so unimportant to him that they can only be the incidentals of a picture.”<sup>35</sup>

Instead of sculpture that allowed us to admire the individual concept of the human being as it presents itself in all its emotions—shaped according to the artist’s temperament while remaining confined to an enclosed space—I propose sculpture that symbolizes in abstract forms the special ideas of the whole nation. These images will act as decoration of and be framed by architecture, once again in the traditional manner.

And finally, instead of architecture, which indeed, depending on the architect’s talent, was able more or less to satisfy us, but which because of its eclectic inclination had completely alienated itself from social life and was not understood by anybody anymore, I propose a differently inspired architecture. For architecture, after all, is communal art at its best, the highest level of a whole nation’s competence, the preeminently cultural art. Yet nothing was left of this art because it lacked any direction. It lacked direction because there was no culture, and there was no culture because the general basis for an idealist social philosophy was missing.

In a society with culture, it would not have been possible for people to live in cities whose ugliness had come to be taken for granted, with people meeting in spaces and living in rooms with a complacency commensurate with the shoddiness of the furniture in them. Complacency is the word that expresses so well the state of mind after

one has achieved one's goal, for having money had become the sole goal and thus signified the standard for this achievement. This complacency became such an uncanny predicate for the bourgeois society.

For where is the building of our time that we admire as we do a cathedral or a temple, with that respectful admiration whose impact still lingers but which does not touch our heart anymore? Should not the Vredespaleis (Palace of peace) have been that kind of a building?<sup>36</sup> Oh! if only the jury of this competition had had an ounce of idealistic feeling, a very special kind of art form and a very special site would have been chosen for this building, so that it could only be approached through a sacred garden, just as one does with the temples of the ancient Orient. Because of land speculation and petty ideas, who knows where it will be located now and what it is going to look like.

And where are the awe-inspiring spaces of the past, which are enclosed by admired facades, spaces that make us automatically uncover our heads when we enter because there is a feeling of devotion in the mystical atmosphere? One cannot find these spaces in our age, for the origin, the great ethical principle, is absent. In classical antiquity, ethical principles were held in such high esteem that Plato in his ideal state would not even allow an artist to make a building, painting, or piece of sculpture should he be unable to express thereby the nobility of a moral idea.

What remains of the modern artists' dogma "art for art's sake" [*l'art pour l'art*]? Doesn't it fade since it is apparently nothing but a farfetched defense of, on the one hand, unimportant and insignificant things and, on the other hand, a separation of art and artists from the community, an escape from the human world, exactly as happens in times of decline?

We should propose another architecture instead of the characterless version of our time; an architecture that elevates both sister arts, painting and sculpture, into a higher unity in order to stylize or give symbolic expression to all aspects of social life. And when architecture has achieved that goal, the other arts will automatically also be accepted in this stylistic interrelationship, for they, too, will draw their inspiration from the same reason.

And now I ask you whether one could not speak of the ugliness of our age, were all of this to become reality?

Finally, one should ask if something like this can indeed be achieved.

Muthesius, that sensitive German architect, says:

*Since the beginning of history, two luminous periods stand out in Western culture as notably artistic: Greek antiquity and the Nordic Middle Ages. The first denotes an artistic height that the world can hardly hope again to attain; the second, at the very least, embodies that*

*complete artistic independence and that artistic ethnicity that are basic conditions of any artistic era.*<sup>37</sup>

Muthesius considers the two periods of culture to stand out high above the rest but says, not very encouragingly, that one should not hope to achieve the level of the first, which was the higher of the two. Is one no longer allowed even to cherish the hope of achieving an ideal? I would like to assure you not only that such a period of culture will be achieved again but that it can and shall surpass even the Greek one!

I now return, therefore, to my assertion that religion and architecture together make a culture, but that the point is to determine what we mean by religion.

We have seen that two spiritual movements—one supernatural, the other materialistic—are at present disputing the source of social development. This debate led to the statement “Marx or Christ”—a profane option to Christian ears.

It would be going too far here to add an explanation of Marxism and to compare with it the most important historical developments. This, by the way, is a job on which historians are still working. But we can acknowledge that, judging from the results—in other words, based on experience—the materialistic philosophy comes nearest to the truth.

Yet, such an acknowledgment does not mean that Marxism should be accepted in all its consequences; indeed, doing so would meet great objections, especially where it applies to explaining the origin of art.

After all, how does the artist's creative urge come into existence?

And how do we explain the action of the human spirit?

But this does not at all detract from the value of Marxism for the simple reason that Marx himself, as is well known, acknowledged paradoxically that he was no Marxist.

As Treslong says in his *Metaphysica der gemeenschap* (Metaphysics of the community), “In any case, the true, lasting merit of Marxism is that it enlightened us with regard to the dark, hidden essence of the many apparent truths exposed in the idealism of the phrase, which wraps faded idols with external beauty of sound and color.”<sup>38</sup>

Would we not achieve most if we were to restrict ourselves to a comparison of substructure and superstructure, which means that, just as each culture needs a good soil for a strong—and in this case spontaneous—development, so social and therefore artistic development needs a good soil.

And it was Marx who pointed us in that direction, an incredible achievement, which in itself explains why Marx has been compared with Christ.

According to Kutter, “the critical revolutions in world history are the prophecies with regard to Israel, the appearance of Jesus, the Reformation, the French Revolution, and social democracy.”<sup>39</sup>

But it seems to me that just as the church fathers wanted to go farther in the Christian doctrine than Christ himself, the Marxists of today are trying to be more Marxist than Marx himself.

Isn't this development once again a descent from the general to the specific, from the natural to the unnatural?

Experience has taught us that, because of the development of capitalism, we have ended up in an era without culture, caused by the way in which the relationships in production are organized, or rather not organized; we have also learned that this condition is the reason for the general dissatisfaction, which clings like a curse to our time, paralyzes all ideal intentions, and most of all impedes the development of a great art.

Therefore I would like to ask, if one recognizes all of this, and if the workers' movement really considers it to be its goal to eliminate the cause of this condition, what in the world could be the reason for those who profess Christianity—a faith that fights preeminently against mammonistic tendencies—to oppose this movement?

Kutter, whom I quoted already, says, "Indeed, there is nothing that illuminates the Christian godlessness so glaringly as the objection Christians have against social democracy."<sup>40</sup>

Moreover, the Christian prejudice against social democracy shows clearly that Christianity pursues only material interests and that it has not the faintest idea of the goals of this movement. Social democracy signifies a much higher spiritual life, for whose achievement the movement itself is only a *means*. That is it, a means and not a goal.

Gorter says, "The proletariat knows better than to preach an eternal, absolute truth, as long as it recognizes that its own thinking is a phase in the development of the human spirit." Is it godless to strive to eliminate this burden, which weighs down massively on our entire social life? Isn't it precisely in the spirit of Christian intent to kill mammon; indeed, isn't it in the spirit of all great religions to do just that?

As [Henriette] Roland Holst says, "Whereas formally it seems to be no more than a battle for individual interests with individual liberation as its goal, the proletariat's class struggle is in fact a struggle for common interests, for the liberation of mankind."<sup>41</sup>

With this fundamental change in social relationships—which in fact would be the last change in our production system, for its realization would guarantee that the whole world with all its products would belong to all its inhabitants instead of just a few—we can see the potential birth of a fourth, or rather a third cultural era. I speak of a third era, for it will be based once again on one great communal idea as a philosophy of life. But people will say this basis is not religious.

Exactly. If one sees religion only as the belief in a world order similar to the one that exists today, an order in which "everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds" [*tout est pour le mieux dans le meilleur des mondes*], while assuming selfishly

that nothing can be changed anyway, one is right. If, however, regardless of what the unknown origin and purpose of the universe may be for all of us, one supports in one's religion the belief that we are all people and that during our life we are all dependent on our world, there cannot be a more exalted ideal than the one that strives for the equality of all people on this earth.

This religion does not postpone its ideal until the hereafter and is, in that sense, not religious.<sup>42</sup> But, isn't the ideal aimed at by this religion the same as the "Peace on earth" that is preached by Christianity?

Thus, as Scheltema says, Christianity and social democracy have taken root in completely different soil out of two philosophies of life that are very antithetical—their essence and even their goals are different at heart. Yet, on the basis of these observations one could ask if, when these goals are achieved, there is not a close relationship between the two movements? Aren't they "the new world visions" of which Scheffler speaks, "for which many today are striving, but which are by no means developed enough for the community at large."<sup>43</sup>

If we accept these ideas, a prospect of such magnitude will present itself that, in comparison, our own age will seem particularly crass. This does not mean that these earlier eras were so enviable as far as their social relations were concerned. Oh no; for it should be said as a consolation that, despite its present shortcomings, civilization has softened the rough aspects of communal life. We can therefore draw comfort from Kutter's assertion that "the history of human suffering is the history of the suffering of human bodies."<sup>44</sup> Yet we have good reason to envy those earlier times, for we lack the great general beauty, the great convention, a style, or better, a culture. The prospect of a new culture presents itself: a new religion, a religion for this world, "a belief in a new mankind."

And this religion will come despite all the fundamental opposition.

Were one to ask when it will come, nobody would be able to answer, for one would have to determine when social democracy will have achieved its goal. We do know that these new ideas have been developing for a long time, that this new religion, the new philosophy of life, has been successfully recruiting followers for a long time and finally, that the consequences have been making themselves felt for a long time. For one can see the development of a spiritual movement going hand in hand with its formal reflection: art. And it is the latter on which we should focus our attention.

I told you before that I would return to the notion of proletarian art, for, in my opinion, there are many confusing ideas about this. It does, however, have a special meaning. Marxist historiography teaches us that because religion and, therefore, art are the results of the relationships of production, spiritual life is determined by social being. Art cannot exist, therefore, until these relationships are organized in a social demo-

cratic, that is, proletarian, spirit. In other words, art will only develop once there is a socialist society. And related to this is the widespread conviction that since such a society will be completely different from any that ever existed before, this art will also be completely different and will bear no relation to any art of the past.

This theory is, if I am not mistaken, based on the important research of Hugo de Vries into so-called saltations.<sup>45</sup> According to these investigations it is assumed that after thousands of years species are in so-called periods of mutation during which by means of saltations new species develop that then remain immutable again. This theory is used to explain, among other things, the origins of the various human races.

This theory runs counter to an assertion made by Leibniz, who pointed out emphatically “that nature makes no leaps,” for the transitions from plants to animals and human beings are infinitely small. It seems to me tempting to use De Vries’s theory to explain a forthcoming abrupt mutation in society and thus a similar one in art, especially since such a conclusion cannot be denied.

One could say, however, that the facts as they present themselves at this moment do indeed deny such a conclusion, although that does not prove anything against De Vries’s theory. After all, it was said already that the socialization of society has been under way for a long time. This means that all the social institutions, laws, and regulations introduced over the last few years are nothing more than the preparation for the total transformation of the relations of production. The fact that such a change into a completely different society does not happen with a leap but develops gradually is, insofar as we are able to judge from history, a recurring phenomenon. For the suddenness of revolutionary transition was apparently moderated by the immediate reaction.

In any case, if we look at the development of art, it becomes clear that there are no sudden transitions, as I pointed out when dealing with the origins of the Renaissance. And if it seemed that we could demonstrate them, upon closer examination it became clear that these transitions were indeed linked to older forms, just as happens in a social revolution. No new forms come into existence without relation to earlier ones.

The German architect Gottfried Semper, a great thinker and a follower of Hegel, says: “Nature, the great primeval creatress, must obey her own laws, for she can do nothing else but reproduce herself. Throughout everything her archetypes remain the same as those brought forth from her womb throughout the aeons.”

And because, according to Scheltema, artistic creation is composing—which is building, which is enclosing space and time, which is stylizing—I stipulate that all beauty, and thus a fortiori art, is a stylized part of the universe.

Couldn’t we conclude that since nature, the universe, always produces the same mo-

tif, a stylized part of it will also always remain the same? The point is that the motif remains constant, whereas the style, the form, changes.

As Semper says:

*Just as nature, with her infinite abundance is very sparse in her motives, repeating continually the same basic forms by modifying them a thousandfold according to the formative stage reached by living beings and their different conditions of existence, shortening some parts and lengthening others, developing parts which are only alluded to in others, just as nature has her history of development within which old motives are discernible in every new formation—in the same way art is also based on a few standard forms and types that stem from the most ancient traditions and that always reappear yet offer an infinite variety and like nature's types have their history. Therefore nothing is arbitrary; everything is conditioned by circumstance and relations.<sup>46</sup>*

Notwithstanding all possible evolutions, the original motifs always remain visible. Just like nature, the universe always produces the same solutions, but in a different way because there is always analogy, similarity of intellect. Similarly, art must always solve the same problems, but also in a different way.

And it is exactly this different way that should be emphasized, for another art form for the future can and must be expected for the simple reason that its origin will be different.

As I said before, it seems probable—and social developments point in that direction—that the society of the future will be completely different from the present one, and that the consequences of the continuously developing ideas concerning one great community are already clearly visible.

By consequences, I mean, of course, art. Since the whole spiritual movement of our age can be compared to that of the Renaissance, which is to say that it is a revolutionary movement, the artistic expressions will naturally show some similarities. In a transitional period aiming at a new goal, the spiritual characteristic of such an art will be aiming, on the one hand, to show the new direction, on the other hand, to caricature the disappearing society. In material terms, it will reveal new and innovative forms while using what is still usable in the existing art.

“In the superstructure the new weaves itself through the old, just as new foliage weaves itself through the old until the whole growth is finally renewed,” says Scheltema.<sup>47</sup> This shows that he, too, acknowledges that transitions go slowly.

In the literary arts, strong propaganda for the new ideas is emerging. In painting, as far as representation is concerned, one can see intentions corresponding to the new

ideas and—because painting also has a formal component—the continuing use of forms taken from existing art. Sculpture shows a similar attitude, whereas architecture struggles to break away gradually from the old traditions, which means that it still uses existing architectural forms next to new ones that proclaim the style of the future.

If we compare these facts with current realities, we can indeed see such a development.

There is literature, even dramatic literature, with a more or less strong new direction; and then there is literature that depicts the decadence of the disappearing bourgeoisie.

Is art with a new direction not art at all, as many contend? Yes, it is. It simply has an unpleasant aftertaste and therefore lacks purity of expression. It is well known that even such a preeminently lyrical poet as Shelley did not consider a new direction to be incompatible with poetry.

There is painting with a very strong new direction, and then there is painting that has declined from naturalism to realism and that lacks any imagination because the decay of the imagination results from or, rather, accompanies the general decline. There is architecture, also with a new direction, with a strong desire to shed all eclectic forms, and then there is a decadent version that still clings to old forms.

And as far as the general artistic development is concerned, it is remarkable that painting is gradually losing in importance, whereas decorative art is gaining significance. Sculpture is again developing toward architectural decoration, whereas architecture itself is again searching for its old position as the leading art.

Can we already speak of proletarian art? According to Marxist theory, certainly not, for such an art can start to develop only when a proletarian society is established. But even if one assumes that there is an evolution, a development of one art out of the other, as one can see from the facts, it is still next to impossible because the direction is still too much dominated by necessity.

And if, finally, one were to force cause and effect into the Marxist dogma, then contemporary art would not be art for the following reason: art was always produced by intellectuals of a certain class, and the intellectuals who are now making so-called proletarian art did not come out of the proletarian classes.

I speak of forcing cause and effect into this Marxist dogma because there is a serious difference of opinion about such an extreme conclusion, as well as about what can actually be called proletarian art.

“There is certainly not a more false or poisonous concoction,” Scheltema exclaims, “no more sneaky phrase than the fainthearted lie that a great art would not be possible at this moment! Not now? Now that all around us the most profoundly moving things are happening?”<sup>48</sup> It is clear; truth does indeed seem to be located in the middle. On

the one hand, art is possible, it is growing and has developed itself strongly in a short time; on the other hand, its full development is being impeded too much because of unfavorable relations in production. In other words, a great art can be expected only shortly before or at the moment that the goal of the workers' movement is achieved.

I am finally returning to architecture. It seems that of all the arts—and I am including the so-called applied arts—architecture has already experienced the greatest changes, which is understandable for the art that is most closely related to industrial development, or capitalism. As already noted, this close relationship brought to architecture both great advantages and considerable disadvantages. For just as the workers' movement, in other words, the opposition to capitalism, resulted from this same capitalism, so architecture's opposition to its industrialization, in other words, to the trash with which building and furniture were surrounded, was the result of this same process of industrialization.

And just as the supremacy of capital was necessary to develop the germ that caused the economic struggle, so the supremacy of pseudo art appeared to be similarly necessary in order to bring out the germ of an artistic reaction—I said this already a few years ago in a lecture. By pseudo art I meant the art of the nineteenth century and an architecture that imitated old styles. This opinion appears still to be valid, but now even more so, for it is clear that they share the same origins. It is clear what changes had to occur, as if spontaneously in architecture, and it is equally clear that the age had produced a new and lasting building type—the combined office and store building, the commercial building [*Geschäftshaus*]. This already marks a milestone on the road to the great department store of the future and offers proof again of how closely related architecture is to society, how it is a direct reflection of culture.

To quote Scheffler again:

*Whereas in the past, architectural forms had invariably been won from ideal buildings, the present age seeks to develop new forms from profane building types, from commercial, functional buildings. But even this development confirms the principle of evolution. For the economically oriented business world is today the only realm in which conventions for the essential conditions of life are being established. Everywhere else, social relations are still in a state of anarchy, or brief compromises, or of dead traditions. Only in the world of business can one detect an independent spirit, free from all those of the past. Thus, here again it is the limiting, strengthening conventions that give art the chance to develop.<sup>49</sup>*

The evolution of new building types also involves, of course, a change in the philosophy of architecture. In the classical period one could see the symbolization of support

and load expressed in column and architrave; in the Middle Ages one could see a certain spiritualization of this same notion expressed through the elimination of the load; in modern architecture the notion of space enclosure will have to be expressed.

*One would imagine that the effect of gravity and the formal comprehension of the way in which a weight is supported or a crossbeam braced could be understood by all men everywhere in only one way. But history proves otherwise; namely, that these conceptions are determined by the temperament of the race or people and by religious conviction. This guarantees endlessly different solutions to the same artistic problems for all eternity. Here, too, nothing is absolute but only relative.<sup>50</sup>*

It is also already a visible and therefore a joyful sign that architecture, as I said before, is again taking the lead among the fine arts and is again drawing its two sister arts within its domain while again enlisting their help and consciously showing the road to the future in communal buildings and department stores.

In her studies on socialist aesthetics [Henriette] Roland Holst says:

*The search for a community's longing for beauty corresponds to the inclination of the proletariat, and in this regard there is a striking analogy with the search for aesthetic pleasure and satisfaction in classical antiquity and in the Middle Ages, which these cultures tried to achieve not so much through the shabby decoration of the individual dwelling as through the communal possession and use of beautiful buildings and objects!<sup>51</sup>*

It seems to me that out of these observations an idea slowly emerges regarding the future of society as well as its reflection: art. In my opinion, this idea is not too fanciful, for whoever is not blind to what is happening in society at present will *have* to reach the same conclusion.

The new society will have a new religion. Irrespective of its ideas regarding our relationship to a transcendental world, this religion will raise life and the value of existence on earth to such a high level that the concentration of all human thoughts on an ethical ideal will direct itself not so much toward the possibility of the existence of a hereafter, but rather to a real existence here on earth. Already in Greek antiquity Protagoras taught us that man is the measure of all things.

This religion will develop from the currently evolving notions about a philosophy of life that is materialistic—a word that horrifies true Christians, if they still exist, but which indeed appears to have a much more exalted meaning than one is prepared to acknowledge at this moment.

The word “material” reminds us of something vile, vulgar, inhuman. Yet we must realize that this “material” deserves the greatest love and admiration. As Kutter says:

*The Church had to be spirit; this has remained its curse to the present day. The material world is not satanic, the love of it—you can console yourselves—is not reprehensible. Delight in it is not sinful, even materialist orgies are only man's reaction to the false claims made by a spirit devoid of God. The material world is only the seat of sin because man despises it. To despise the material world means precisely this—to summon up the sin.*<sup>52</sup>

The religion of the new humanity will also be able to acknowledge a new art, for just as the new economical foundation is developing from the present relations in production, so its art will develop out of the art of today.

The temptation to predict is always commensurate with the difficulty of doing so; yet, it would not seem impossible to create a general outline of the vision of the future.

When we think of an analogous development—Dietzgen says that “social democracy replaces religion by a knowledge of the world”<sup>53</sup>—we are struck by the remarkable similarity in endeavor that exists between the organization of conditions in society and, one could say, those in art.

For, in the great confusion of ideas and opinions of our age, one great intention emerges: that of organization, an attempt to regulate complicated relationships, to simplify them and to put them in a form that is as practical as possible. After all, the goal of social democracy is, in the final analysis, to regulate labor and material production.

At present we have a completely arbitrary division of labor established by a small part of humanity for its own exclusive benefit; it results in—it sounds like a parody—overproduction, from which “the others” do not profit, and all kinds of speculation by a few resulting in an economic crisis from which everybody suffers. Instead of all that, a division of labor by everybody and for everybody is envisaged with no other purpose than to oppose this arbitrariness, which is purely subjective, with a fair system of regulation.

Instead of strong individualistic inclination, it proposes the pursuit of absolute universalization; instead of an unorganized social arrangement, it proposes an organized one, and instead of a social order without style, it proposes a stylized one.

We can see a completely similar development in art, the one that goes from a naturalistic and even realistic (which is a purely personal) arbitrary art to a more organized, stylized art.

There is an effort to achieve simplification in both—for stylization is simplification—in order to achieve order and repose: for stylization means the creation of repose.

Scheltema says, “Art is not passion, or the slogan of individualists; art is mature and stylized emotion—never emotion itself—creation is the transformation of restlessness into rest.”<sup>54</sup>

We can find this rest in all great arts that have style; on the other hand (and here we

see the analogy again), it is a characteristic of naturalism in the broadest sense of its meaning that it was always just as restless as it was styleless. Truly, there is more real movement in the glorious repose of Egyptian and Greek sculpture than in the most brilliant products of modern eras, starting with the Renaissance; there is more movement in the quietly rising white wave of beauty of a Venus de Milo, yes, even more movement in the eternal silence of an Egyptian sphinx than in Rodin's wildest and most passionate designs. The former reveal a rest that is composed of the eternal movement of life or the stylized universalization of movement into repose; the latter are based on the analysis of a temporary, external movement, which is the particularization of random life into restlessness.

In literature the psychological novel with the analysis of purely personal feelings has had its day, and realism can be considered passé. And even in language we can see the replacement of individualistic usage by general convention; literary applied art, as Scheltema calls it, is also in the process of revision, with a similar tendency toward simplification, toward a quieter form.

After having drifted away from dance and poetry, music matured and, detached from the original form, dissolved finally into its counterpart: a wild, discordant harmony. More than any other art, it is still attached to the personal and thus to decadence. One can explain this development by the fact that music is the most ethereal and consequently the most emotional of all arts, and therefore it will have to remain longest in the realm of the subjective emotions.

And what about the visual arts? They are trying to reunite again, both in spirit and in form. Painting with the purpose of creating a work of art as a thing in itself is no longer the only art that dominates the decoration of the wall. The splendid naturalistic and realistic revivals, with all their subjectivist peculiarities in form, have little to do with art, even though they are inadvertently linked to the new spiritual principles. For this reason, Scheffler could propose paradoxically that a pointillist, for example, will never be able to believe in the Christian immortality of the soul. Following these revivals, the artistic level of painting has, generally speaking, declined. There is also the manner of dealing in paintings, which reminds one of the tulip trade—doubtless another result of capitalism—with paintings regarded as a good investment. All this gradually makes clear that a painting cannot be called simply an art object.

The desire for decorative painting is growing, and sculpture is also putting itself at the service of architecture.

And architecture itself? Grand master of all arts, it is making an effort to lift itself out of the marsh of completely faded convention and subjectivism, and in particular to tear itself away from the industrial trash—the result of commercialism and capitalism—from which it suffered more than any other art. How is it making this attempt?

It is beautiful to see how it is striving in particular for simplification—without doubt the necessary reaction against the prevalent stylistic overloading—and moving in the direction of firm principle.

William Morris says, “Indeed, I have a hope that it will be from such necessary, unpretentious buildings that the new and genuine architecture will spring, rather than from our experiments in conscious style.”<sup>55</sup>

Such an evolution in art, just like those in society, does not happen without opposition. There is, therefore, harsh criticism against this development, but it is a scoffing criticism, without any arguments, for the truth is on strong ground. The simple form is no more than the material realization of a principle on the basis of which the new architecture will manifest itself. This is the principle of clarity in the whole concept of plan and elevation, which is order, style.

The most unfair reproach against this endeavor is the demand that it should immediately be the equivalent of the architecture of the past. Good heavens, even without taking into consideration the impeding influences I mentioned above, how long does it take an art to come to fruition? People refer to Islamic art as an example of a particularly quick historical development, yet this development still took a century and a half. So, does one expect a child to be at the same level of development as an adult?

No, that would be unnatural. Slow development is proof of purposeful endeavor and guarantees ultimate success.

I am saying that architecture is again moving into the direction of order, which is style, and it is now clear that this is truly nothing special. The subjective expressions were the specializations, that is, they were personal, without style; the direction in which architecture is moving now, however, is universal, which is to say communal, stylized.

Scheltema says, “Later a line will be drawn from specialization to universalization via those whose art reverted to the community and out of whose work and soul reverberated a new love of mankind.”<sup>56</sup>

Such a development will be the only truthful one, for it is consistent with a growing vision of the world, a vision based on a new philosophy.

Whereas for the Greeks the most important category of their vision of the world was that of “the means and the goal,” and for the Middle Ages “the sign and its effect,” for us the clarifying vision of the world will be “cause and effect.” A new religion is coming forward, a religion of this earth, which will be the life-giving principle for the evolving [*komende*] art.

“Humanity, not God, will be the sun around which socialist art will move, and all human feelings will be considered to rise out of it,” says Gorter.

But, although different in form, isn't this essentially the same?

It is sometimes said that history repeats itself, and the opinion that there is nothing new under the sun is without a doubt based on experience.

When one traces this development and forms a view of the future based on these findings, there appears to be a remarkable similarity with the classical world.

After all, the spiritual basis, the substructure, again has its ideal on earth; the whole spiritual life is now concentrated not in earthly gods but in the human being.

But wasn't man at one with his deity in classical antiquity?

Moreover, there is a revival of the culture of the human body, the body that was despised by Christianity, but which will be revered again for its great beauty by the people of the times to come.

For whatever our ideas may be about the relationship between body and spirit, they cannot be separated during our life on earth. This culture is nothing more than an attempt to restore the lost balance between spirit and body.

As Zarathustra exclaims, "I entreat you, my brothers, remain true to the earth, and do not believe those who speak to you of superterrestrial hopes! They are poisoners, whether they know it or not."<sup>57</sup>

A global idea is growing, resulting from the naturalistic<sup>58</sup> philosophy of life that considers the workers' movement and the class struggle as no more than a means, and that wants it to stay that way in order to achieve a final goal: a new spiritual substructure for the culture of the future.

I speak of "stay that way." "For," and I quote from Treslong's *Civitas: Eene inleiding tot de filosofie der gemeenschap* (Civitas: An introduction to a philosophy of the community), "the general humanistic incentive of socialism suffers from the dogma of the class struggle, which, while neglecting the existence of countless groups that all have their various persuasions, divides society in two camps. The enemies of the humanistic ideal, I would insist, can be found in all groups, among both capitalists and proletarians."<sup>59</sup>

This spiritual substructure will embrace the new religion with its new conventions, the systematic wisdom regarding the world, and the ideology of equality for all people. On this spiritual substructure will rise an art, fully grown, developed out of an art that is already emerging at this moment.

Will that, finally, be proletarian art?

If one believes in names, the answer is "yes," insofar as the art can be considered to be linked to the proletarian movement; the answer, however, is "no" if one thinks that art should be considered a specialized universalization, in other words, something existing outside the general developmental process. For in principle this art will not rank higher than one of the two great eras, the classical and the medieval periods, since the

ideal is relative in nature, and absolute virtue, that is, absolute morality, is only a phrase. But in essence, the new art will have to surpass the two great periods, for culture itself will be at such a much higher spiritual level.

Then, as in the past, drama will have become the synthesis of all the arts again, and the resolution of this drama will not be found in a fatal realization of something one has to do, nor in a desperate failure of something one wants to do, but in the optimistic consciousness of something one will do!

And people will again go up to the religious community building, whose architectural prominence will command respect, and which can only be approached along a triumphal axis.

Its great internal space will again inspire us, not because of a sacredly mystic devotion that makes us long for a transcendental world, but because of a devotion characterized by a reborn Dionysian joy.

Yet, it will be essentially different from the small classical temple space, which was intended to be used only by the deity. For this new space will have to contain the thousands of people who will approach the earthly god in a totally different way, and the god will be present again in this space but only in a spiritual form.

The great acts that lead to the goal will be shown on the walls of the grand hall, and the virtues of the community will be represented in niches and on pedestals.

Orchestral music will sound from the great apse, not accompanying liturgical singing or songs and dance, but accompanying the great choir that in glorious melodies jubilantly sings the hymn of peace.

Will this ideal remain an illusion? Even though the internationalist, cosmopolitan endeavors of social democracy show us a comparable ideal, will this vision of the future seem, as Kuyper thinks, to be a search for the unattainable, an attempt to realize a holy ideal in this sinful world?

No, not only may we hope for it, we can even expect it. For a social order and stylized art have to come again. But both will be greater than ever before, for the times that are coming will be established, both socially and artistically, according to a more perfect idea and employing greater abilities. Both factors will be reflected again in a culture that will be the first of a new era of cultural history, for the convention of the new religion will have determined the equality of all people.

Our religion will be of this earth again, but its doctrine will give peace and satisfaction, just as there was peace in the grand styles of the past, despite the turmoil of the times. Yet, this repose will be a sublime repose, not the repose of death, but of true life.

Source Note: H. P. Berlage, "Kunst en maatschappij," in idem, *Studies over bouwkunst, stijl en samenleving* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1910), 3–44. First published in *De Beweging* 5 (November 1909): 166–86; (December 1909): 229–64.

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

1. Mathieu Hubert Joseph Schoenmaekers, author of *Het geloof van den nieuwen mensch* (The religion of a new mankind), was born in 1875. Trained as a Roman Catholic priest, he sought to combine aspects of Christianity with theosophy. He influenced the theoretical premises of the De Stijl movement through his contacts with Piet Mondrian and Theo van Doesburg, and through his principal publications, *Het nieuwe wereldbeeld* (Bussum: C. A. J. van Dishoeck, 1915) and *Beginselen der beeldende wiskunde* (Bussum: C. A. J. van Dishoeck, 1916). Schoenmaekers was a pallbearer at the funeral of the architect K. P. C. de Bazel.

2. Herman Gorter (1864–1927) studied classics at Amsterdam University, where he submitted his doctoral dissertation on Aeschylus. His literary reputation was made overnight with the publication in 1889 of the long lyrical poem *Mei* (May), which contrasts the transitory sensuous delights of nature and human love with the immortal measures of religious faith and philosophical belief. *Mei* placed Gorter at the very center of the Movement of the 1880s (Beweging van Tachtig) in the Netherlands, and his next major work, *Verzen* (Verses), 1890, was with its experimental syntax and fresh poetic language a typical product of this movement.

Gorter's writing changed direction dramatically after he joined the Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij in 1897. This political awakening was marked by his *Kritiek op de litteraire beweging van 1880 in Holland* (1898–1899, revised 1908–1909), a vigorous attack on the bourgeois values and self-indulgent aestheticism of the Movement of the 1880s. Gorter's second volume of *Verzen* (1903) is specifically socialist in tone, and this ideological bias informed his next major work, *Een klein heldendicht* (A small heroic poem), 1906, based on the railroad strike of 1903. His socialist beliefs found fullest expression in the epic poem *Pan*, 1912 (expanded version 1916), in which he offered a vision of human liberation through socialism. On Gorter and the Movement of the 1880s, see Introduction, above, 22.

3. Ictinus, architect of the Parthenon in Athens (447–432 B.C.). Erwin von Steinbach (d. 1318), architect of the elaborate west facade of the Strasbourg cathedral. Donato Bramante (1444–1514), designer of the basilica of Saint Peter in Rome, among many other buildings.

4. Karl Scheffler, *Konventionen der Kunst* (Leipzig: Julius Zeitler, 1904), 9–10. Berlage paraphrases the same lines in "Thoughts on Style," above, 134.

5. Scheffler (see note 4), 16. This same passage, with minor variations, is also quoted or para-

phrased by Berlage in "Thoughts on Style," above, 134, and in "The Foundations and Development of Architecture," above, 235.

6. The theories of Aryan supremacy of the political philosopher Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855–1927) subsequently influenced the development of the National Socialist ideology in Germany. His most important book, *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1899), reached its twenty-ninth edition in 1944. The book was translated by John Lees under the title *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, 2 vols. (Munich: F. Bruckmann; New York: John Lane, 1911). Chamberlain was married to Richard Wagner's daughter Eva.

7. This quotation is copied in Berlage's own hand among his papers under the heading "Jugendstil. Muthesius." See Berlage Papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Dossier 168.

8. Carel Steven Adama van Scheltema, *De grondslagen eener nieuwe poëzie, proeve tot een maatschappelijke kunstleer tegenover het naturalisme en anarchisme, de tachtigers en hun decadenten* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1907).

9. Franz Feuerherd, *Die Entstehung der Stile aus der politischen Ökonomie: Eine Kunstgeschichte* (Braunschweig and Leipzig: n.p., 1902). A series of handwritten extracts from Feuerherd survives in Berlage's papers, marked "Stil nach de oeconomie." See Berlage Papers, Nederlands Architectuurinstituut, Dossier 168.

10. Feuerherd (see note 9).

11. Scheffler (see note 4), 32.

12. Scheffler (see note 4), 30–32.

13. Abraham Kuyper, *Calvinism: Six Lectures Delivered in the Theological Seminary at Princeton*. The L. P. Stone Lectures for 1898–1899 (New York: F. H. Revell, [1899?]).

14. This is probably a reference to Eduard von Hartmann (1842–1906), a prolific writer on aesthetics, general philosophy, psychology, Darwinism, pessimism, and so on. See his *Asthetik*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: H. Haacke, 1886), and M. Schneidewin, ed., *Lichtstrahlen aus Eduard von Hartmann's sämtlichen Werken* (Berlin: C. Duncker, 1881).

15. Jacob Burckhardt, *Der Cicerone: Eine Anleitung zum Genuss der Kunstwerke Italiens* (Basel: Schweighauser, 1855).

16. Scheffler (see note 4), 32.

17. The version of this essay published in *De Beweging* in 1909 here includes the following, which has been omitted from the version of 1910: "I refer you to an article in *De Beweging* of August 1908 entitled 'Eenige beschouwingen over de klassieke bouwkunst' (Some reflections on classical architecture)."

18. Feuerherd (see note 9).

19. Hermann Muthesius, *Style-Architecture and Building-Art*, trans. and ed. Stanford Anderson (Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1994), 51; originally published under the title *Stilarchitektur und Baukunst* (Mülheim a.d. Ruhr: K. Schimmpfeng, 1902), 10.

20. Christian Leendert van Balen, "De blijde inkomst der Renaissance in de Nederlanden," *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 23, no. 26 (27 June 1903): 269–73; no. 28 (11 July): 291–96; no. 30 (25 July): 317–21; no. 33 (15 August): 356–61; no. 35 (29 August): 381–84; no. 37 (12 September): 409–12; no. 39 (26 September): 433–38; no. 41 (10 October): 459–64. An expanded version was published in book form as *De blijde inkomst der Renaissance in de Nederlanden* (Leiden: A. W. Sijthoff, 1930). Desiderius Erasmus, *Morias encomium; id est, Stultitiae laus* (Praise of folly, 1509), text with commentary by John F. Collins, 2 vols. (Bryn Mawr: Thomas Library, Bryn Mawr College, 1991). Thomas à Kempis, *Imitatio Christi. The Imitation of Christ* (circa 1427), a modern version based on the English translation by Richard Whitford around 1530, ed. with an intro. by Harold C. Gardiner (1955; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976).
21. Scheltema (see note 8).
22. For a good account of the party political context in the Netherlands in the early twentieth century, see E. H. Kossmann, *The Low Countries, 1780–1940* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978).
23. Feuerherd (see note 9).
24. Scheffler (see note 4), 15.
25. Scheffler (see note 4), 22.
26. Feuerherd (see note 9).
27. Berlage may be referring here to Alexander von Senger, who went on to publish books on contemporary architecture in the 1920s, for example, *Krisis der Architektur* (Zurich: Rascher, 1928).
28. The Parkschouwburg (Park theater) was built in 1882/1883 on the Plantage, near Nieuwe Herengracht and the Doklaan, in Amsterdam. It is not known who the architect was. One critic described the outside as "tasteless" and the interior as "Moorish." After lying empty for several years, it was torn down in 1911. (This information was generously supplied by Mariet Willinge.)
29. Henriette Roland Holst, *Socialisme en literatuur*, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam: C. L. G. Veldt, 1900). See also J. P. van Praag, *Henriette Roland Holst: Wezen en werk* (Amsterdam: Contact, [1946]), 174–84.
30. Hermann Kutter, *Sie müssen: Ein offenes Wort and die christliche Gesellschaft* (Berlin: H. Walther, 1906).
31. See "Thoughts on Style in Architecture," above, 126.
32. Multatuli was the pseudonym of the Dutch author Eduard Douwes Dekker (1820–1887), who in his writings satirized the Dutch bourgeoisie and exposed Dutch exploitation of the natives in Indonesia. His most celebrated novel, published in 1860, is *Max Havelaar; or, The Coffee Auctions of the Dutch Trading Company*, trans. Roy Edwards (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1982).
33. Willem Hutschenruyter, *Het Beethoven-Huis* (Amsterdam: S. L. van Looy, 1908).
34. Feuerherd (see note 9).
35. Feuerherd (see note 9).

36. The Palace of Peace in The Hague is the seat of the International Court of Justice and of the Permanent Court of Arbitration. It was funded by the Scottish-born philanthropist Andrew Carnegie and built 1907–1913 to the design of L. M. Cordonnier, following a competition in 1906 to which Berlage also submitted an entry. See Introduction, above, 50.

37. Muthesius (see note 19), 51; German text, 10.

38. H. van Treslong, *Civitas: Eene inleiding tot de filosofie der gemeenschap*, vol. 2, *De meta-physica der gemeenschap* (Rotterdam: W. L. & J. Brusse, 1906).

39. Kutter (see note 30).

40. Kutter (see note 30).

41. Roland Holst (see note 29).

42. In the version of this essay published in *De Beweging* in 1909 this sentence reads: “This religion—and I myself have already said as much in an earlier lecture—does not postpone its ideal until the hereafter and is, in that sense, not religious.”

43. Scheffler (see note 4), 16.

44. Kutter (see note 30).

45. Hugo de Vries (1848–1935) was a Dutch geneticist who, independently of Mendel, studied the laws of inheritance in plants. He was particularly interested in so-called saltations—mutations that create sudden major evolutionary changes. By 1901 he had developed the theory that new inheritable characteristics may appear suddenly, rather than evolve slowly.

46. Gottfried Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, trans. Wolfgang Herrmann and Harry Francis Mallgrave (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989), 183; originally published as *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten; oder, Praktische Aesthetik*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt: Verlag für Kunst und Wissenschaft, 1860–1863), 1: “Prolegomena,” viii.

47. Scheltema (see note 8).

48. Scheltema (see note 8).

49. Scheffler (see note 4), 39.

50. Although this quotation is given in German by Berlage, it is not from the Scheffler text cited here in note 4.

51. Roland Holst (see note 29).

52. Kutter (see note 30).

53. Joseph Dietzgen (1828–1888) was a German socialist who came to the United States after the failed revolution in Germany of 1848. His major work was *Die Religion der Sozialdemokratie* (Berlin: Buchhandlung Vorwärts, 1906).

54. Scheltema (see note 8).

55. William Morris, “An Address Delivered at the Distribution of Prizes to Students at the Birmingham Municipal School of Art on February 21, 1894,” in idem, *The Collected Works of William Morris*, 24 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1910–1915), 22: 429–30. In the version of the present essay published in 1909 in *De Beweging*, Berlage gives this quotation in German, presum-

ably because he had lifted it from Muthesius, *Stilarchitektur* (see note 19), where it appears, in German, as the opening quotation before the first page of text. In the publication of 1910, Berlage changed the quotation to Dutch.

56. Scheltema (see note 8).

57. Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra* (1883–1891), Prologue No. 3.

58. In the version of this essay that was published in 1909 in *De Beweging*, Berlage had “materialistic” for “naturalistic.”

59. See note 38.

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HENDRIK PETRUS BERLAGE:  
THOUGHTS ON STYLE, 1886–1909

Introduction by Iain Boyd Whyte  
Translation by Iain Boyd Whyte and Wim de Wit

Iain Boyd Whyte received his doctorate from Cambridge University with a dissertation on “Bruno Taut and the Architecture of Activism.” His research interests comprise twentieth-century architectural history, particularly in Germany, Austria, and Holland; Anglo-German literary relations from 1700 to the present; twentieth-century German art; and architectural theory, film theory, and aesthetics. His publications include *The Crystal Chain Letters: Architectural Fantasies by Bruno Taut and His Circle* (1985) and *Emil Hoppe, Marcel Kammerer, Otto Schönthal: Three Architects from the Master Class of Otto Wagner* (English and German editions, 1989). Among the many texts he has translated is Tilmann Buddensieg’s *Industriekultur: Peter Behrens and the AEG* (1985). Whyte is currently the director of the Centre for Architectural History and Theory at the University of Edinburgh.

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Looking back to the period around 1910, Mies van der Rohe once commented that there was but a single great architect then working on the European architectural scene, “Berlage was a lone giant.”

In parallel activities as both an architect and an architectural philosopher, H. P. Berlage created a series of buildings that witnessed the gestation and birth of architectural Modernism and a body of writings that probed in depth the problems and possibilities of this new style. But whereas his Stock Exchange in Amsterdam, with its rational mastery of materials and space, has long been celebrated for its seminal influence on the architecture of the new century, Berlage’s passionate writings on architecture, which exerted an equal influence on his contemporaries, have often been neglected.

In his wide-ranging critical introduction, Iain Boyd Whyte convincingly demonstrates that one corpus of work cannot be understood without taking into account the other: Berlage’s writings inform his architecture to the same extent that his buildings reflect his probing aesthetic deliberations. Berlage’s principal texts are here brought together in English translation for the first time. Collectively, they present to the English-language reader a new and vital chapter in the history of European Modernism.

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