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MODERN ARCHITECTURE

OTTO WAGNER

A GUIDEBOOK FOR HIS STUDENTS TO THIS FIELD OF ART

INTRODUCTION AND TRANSLATION BY

□□ HARRY FRANCIS MALLGRAVE □□

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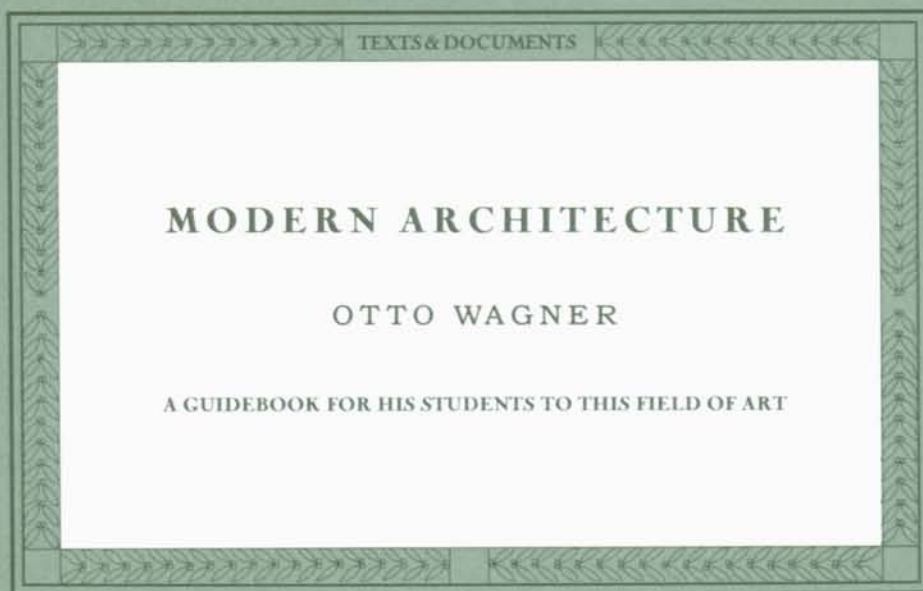
MODERN ARCHITECTURE

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WITH EMENDATIONS MADE TO THE 1896, 1898, AND 1904 EDITIONS

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INTRODUCTION AND TRANSLATION BY
HARRY FRANCIS MALLGRAVE

THE GETTY CENTER PUBLICATION PROGRAMS

Julia Bloomfield, Kurt W. Forster, Thomas F. Reese, *Editors*

TEXTS & DOCUMENTS

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P R E F A C E

Otto Wagner's *Moderne Architektur* appeared in four editions between 1896 and 1914. His textual changes to the second edition of 1898 were slight; in both the third and fourth editions of 1902 and 1914 respectively, they were more extensive. In the fourth edition Wagner also added two new chapters (see Appendix A) and gave the book a new title, *Die Baukunst unserer Zeit* (Architecture of Our Time).

The decision to base the translation on the text of the 1902 edition suggested itself from the beginning. The 1898 and 1914 editions were quickly eliminated: the first because it varies little from the first edition of 1896; the second because by this date the manifesto has lost its historical urgency and importance. The 1896 edition enjoys historical primacy, yet it is still in a stage of conceptual formation, and is aimed principally at a Viennese student audience. The 1902 edition, by contrast, is expanded and mature in its theoretical formulation, reflecting Wagner's experience with the Secession and his growing professional reputation. With its lavish layout of photographs and vignettes (see Appendix C), it is a polished, complete polemical work intended for the international architectural community, and precedes by a few months his designs for the church of St. Leopold Am Steinhof and the Postal Savings Bank. The use of brackets calls attention

to textual variations in the four editions, and at the same time allows the 1902 edition to be read as a composite study.

Wagner was meticulous in his editing of the later editions. Changes varied from the addition or deletion of several pages of text to the most minor syntactic corrections or preferences. The number of these corrections made it impossible to indicate all textual emendations without seriously impairing the readability of the text, therefore changes in meaning became the governing criterion. Thus, for example, modifying “this century” in the 1896 edition to “nineteenth century” in the 1902 edition is not noted, whereas seemingly minor changes that depict a different aesthetic awareness are noted. For instance, in the 1898 edition Wagner deletes the adjective from the phrase “Semper’s immortal design” (1896 edition), thus chronicling Semper’s decline in popularity around 1900. Modifying the order of “English, German, and French periodicals” (1896 and 1898 editions) to “German, English, and French periodicals” (1902 edition) reflects the proliferation of avant-garde journals in Germany and Austria during these years. Deletion of Wagner’s references to the “Secession” in the same third edition indicates he is already distancing himself from this movement. The addition of the term “folk art” (*Heimatkunst*) in the 1914 edition reflects his animosity to this new popular trend. Collectively, the four editions of *Modern Architecture* represent twenty years of evolution in European theory.

I am indebted to many people for assistance in producing this book: Wolfgang Herrmann, for accepting the arduous task of reviewing the translation and whose numerous suggestions immeasurably enriched the final text; Eduard F. Sekler and August Sarnitz for reviewing the introduction, and whose recommendations, both on points of detail and logical structure, appreciably enhanced its value; and Joan Ockman for her thorough editing of all the texts.

The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities was indispensable to the creation of this work. I owe a special debt of gratitude to the Center’s director, Kurt W. Forster, who both suggested the project and energetically followed its progress. I am also especially appreciative of Julia Bloomfield who with great interest and skill guided the text through its design and production phases, and the excellent assistance of the staff at the Getty Center, particularly that of Hadley Soutter and Susan Malkoff.

1. Portrait of Otto Wagner (1841–1918) by Gottlieb Kempf-Hartenkamp, 1896, 144 x 97 cm, pastels. This portrait hung in the renovated billiard room of the Villa Wagner. ©Verwertungsgesellschaft bildender Künstler, Vienna 1988. Collection, Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien.



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INTRODUCTION

HARRY FRANCIS MALLGRAVE

I

“HE TRULY BREEDS A NEW RACE OF ARCHITECTS.”

Ludwig Hevesi (1901)¹

Otto Wagner's *Modern Architecture* is one of a handful of books in the literature of architecture whose appearance not only created a sensation but also presaged a revolution. Part textbook, part professional breviary, part polemical tract, it was published in 1896, and was the first modern writing to make a definitive break with the past, outlining an approach to design that has become synonymous with twentieth-century practice. Historically, however, it may be more accurate to view the work as the culmination of nineteenth-century efforts to create a new style. In any case its author, a fifty-four-year-old architect and professor, was an unlikely revolutionary. Like such predecessors as Leon Battista Alberti and Claude Perrault, Wagner was gifted first by circumstance—the timing of his views—and second, more importantly, by his artistic capacity to realize the promise of a radically new ethic. When he stepped onto the battlefield of art, to use an analogy favored by him and others of this period, the remains of two millennia of tradition lay scattered on the ground. A youthful vanguard fervidly awaited a leader.

The intensity that gave rise to *Modern Architecture* can only be appreciated within the context of the spirited architectural debate of the last two decades of the nineteenth century. One anonymous critic of Wagner's book branded its author “an



artistic experimentalist, a show-off addicted to originality, a worshiper of an affected, brutal, Gallic architectural materialism.”² As if this were not bad enough, the recently exhibited student works of the Wagner school elicited an even greater rage from this nearly hysterical individual: “What brutal license side-by-side with fully conscious degeneration! What disgraceful concessions to an annoying originality and dilettantism! In this wild torrent here and there was a flash of real talent, but no helmsman to steer, no master to take control! This tidal wave gushing forth into the complete untold, unknown, untamed”³

The last accusation was, of course, the rub. If *Modern Architecture* had been simply the work of an architect in private practice, it most likely would not have provoked such a stir, certainly not have prompted immediate denunciation. Yet written by a newly appointed imperial professor of architecture at the conservative Vienna Academy of Fine Arts—one of two pedagogues charged with overseeing the educational program of every architecture student at the academy—the manifesto could be neither ignored nor retired to a bookshelf. Although it is likely that the artistic and governmental officials responsible for naming Wagner in 1894 to the former chair of Karl von Hasenauer anticipated some reform, it is doubtful they envisioned it would be so swift and unyielding.⁴ This quiet yet combative practitioner of a “certain free Renaissance,” as he described himself, would, in less than eighteen months at the academy, publicly disavow the most cherished ideals of Vienna’s Ringstrasse era, those for which Austrian liberalism, as Carl E. Schorske has noted, “built after 1860 its city on the hill, celebrating in stone its victorious values of rational ethical *Recht* and refined aesthetic *Kultur*.”⁵

Critics outside of Vienna were likewise taken aback at how such a radical program could be crafted by someone in such a prominent and influential position. In reviewing the book for the *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, Karl Henrici expressed amazement at the assurance of this “qualified representative and apostle of a new theory” and cautioned his colleagues “to listen very carefully,” if only to draw properly the lines of the pending conflict.⁶ Henrici, a respected architect, city planner, and one of Camillo Sitte’s most vocal supporters, not surprisingly opposed Wagner’s infatuation with “big-city life” and technical achievements, the underlying materialism of his “utility principle,” and, most emphatically, his suppression of the “romantic” and the “painterly”—qualities Henrici felt were deeply rooted in the German soul. Whereas Wagner commended the cosmopolitan spirit of the time, Henrici aspired to a national art. When Wagner touted the virtues of

straight streets and the symmetry of the “academic plan,” Henrici smugly retorted, “we in Germany (except in Berlin) have begun the—rapidly progressing—redemptive work necessary to free ourselves from the yoke of the T-square.”⁷

Wagner’s book, however, also had its exegesists among the critics. The most thoughtful response was Richard Streiter’s impressive study of 1898, “Architektonische Zeitfragen” (Contemporary Architectural Questions), which carried the subtitle, “A Collection and Examination of Different Views with Particular Regard to Professor Otto Wagner’s *Modern Architecture*.”⁸ Even by the high literary standards of the age, Streiter’s 94-page analysis of Wagner’s ideas (the first edition of *Modern Architecture* was only 101 pages) was somewhat unusual, and signaled that a major event had taken place. Streiter’s decision to review Wagner’s book within the conceptual panorama of nineteenth-century theory no doubt added to its credibility and widened its dissemination. Streiter was a lecturer, later a professor at the Munich Polytechnic School, and a promoter of the new developments in Germany. In the mid-1890s he had made the transition from professional practice (he had worked five and one-half years in the office of Paul Wallot) to criticism and teaching by completing his doctoral thesis on Karl Bötticher’s *Die Tektonik der Hellenen*.

What intrigued Streiter about *Modern Architecture* were the similarities he saw in Wagner’s “extremely progressive program” with what he believed to be the most prominent new movement in German architecture—realism. The latter term had enjoyed wide currency in nineteenth-century French literature, where it was applied to the novels of Gustave Flaubert and Emile Zola, and in French painting, where it became associated with the chromatic intensity and sentimental austerity of Gustave Courbet and Jean François Millet, respectively. In French architecture, it was used in the mid-1860s as a term of derision by detractors of Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, Louis-Auguste Boileau, and other proponents of the use of iron.⁹ In German architecture, its use in the 1890s was more complex, varying in its meaning from an anti-academic and anti-romantic return to the demands of modern life, to a verism or ideal striving for truth in art, or to a functionalist acknowledgement of needs and technical demands, dispensing thereby with such formal elements as gables, towers, mansards, oriels, and an abundance of plastic decoration. Wagner himself used the term in *Modern Architecture* and in the preface to the first volume of his *Sketches, Projects and Executed Buildings*, written in October 1889.¹⁰ In the earlier work, he applauded realism’s

triumph as a healthy sign of progress, manifesting itself (exceedingly so) in such works as the Eiffel Tower. For Streiter, the architectural roots of the concept lay in the rationalist teachings of Jean-Louis de Cordemoy and Marc-Antoine Laugier; presently, Streiter saw realism as a means to counteract both classical and romantic tendencies by exalting the objective and scientific spirit of the day. Thinking perhaps of the work of Paul Wallot and Alfred Messel in Berlin, he actually used the term “objectivity” (*Sachlichkeit*) in conjunction with realism to characterize a building’s truthful compliance with the practical demands of purpose, comfort, and health, mediated historically by the sentiments and materials associated with the *genius loci*.¹¹ Both Wagner and Streiter saw realism as a primary attribute of modern life; it presented a means to oppose “untruth and inauthenticity, the false pathos and empty phrase-making” of eclecticism.¹²

“After Schinkel and Semper comes Wagner.”¹³ Written in 1914 by Wagner’s first biographer, Joseph August Lux, this view of Wagner’s standing in nineteenth-century German architecture would still find many supporters today. But whereas Karl Friedrich Schinkel wore the crown of laurel with Hellenic nobility and detachment and Gottfried Semper positively basked in controversy and struggle, Wagner was, as has already been noted, a belated and somewhat unlikely revolutionary. He was born to a family of moderate wealth in Penzing on the outskirts of Vienna on 13 July 1841. Three months later, Schinkel would pass into architectural immortality. Among his contemporaries, Wagner was the same age as Paul Wallot, the architect of the highly regarded Reichstags building in Berlin, and three years younger than Henry Hobson Richardson.

At the age of sixteen Wagner began his architectural studies at the Technical University in Vienna. In 1860 he moved to Berlin to attend the Architectural Academy, but was forced to return home after six months owing to illness. He was taught in Berlin by C. F. Busse, a former assistant to Schinkel, but the shortness of Wagner’s stay no doubt lessened the effect of this experience. Almost certainly he was exposed to the ideas of Bötticher, Berlin’s leading architectural theorist.

After returning to Vienna, Wagner enrolled at the Academy of Fine Arts as a pupil of August von Siccardsburg and Eduard van der Nüll, in a program inclined toward the French Beaux-Arts model. The next three years no doubt provided intensive artistic stimulation, since Siccardsburg and van der Nüll had

just won the commission for the Vienna Opera House, far and away the best of the works that would be built along the recently laid out Ringstrasse. The project, in part prompted by the recent competition for the Paris Opera House, was immense in its technical scope and cultural significance, and not without its detractors. In 1868 van der Nüll committed suicide over its unfavorable reception—perhaps Wagner’s first experience with the rough and sometimes harsh artistic climate of Vienna.

Upon completing his studies at the academy in 1863, Wagner won a competition for the Kursalon, a festive pavilion in the Stadtpark. It was his first of several prize-winning competition entries not to be constructed. In the following year he became involved in building a complex of twelve apartment buildings and a theater. This commenced a mostly speculative architectural practice, which over the next thirty years was remarkable, it has frequently been said, for what it did not portend.

Yet it is best to dispense with the mildly disapproving reserve that historians have generally applied to the first half of Wagner’s career. Although his early practice was centered on the design of urban apartment houses, almost all of which he lived in before building the next one, the various designs that Otto Antonia Graf has recently assembled in two volumes depict a man of encompassing talent and a broad range of interests.¹⁴ His realized nonresidential designs of these years were few: a synagogue in Budapest (1868), festival decorations for the imperial household (1879 and 1881), and the Länderbank (1882). But his competition designs—among them the Vienna Stock Exchange (1863), Berlin Cathedral (1867 and 1893 competitions), Vienna Law Courts (1873), Hamburg City Hall (1876), Berlin Reichstags building (1882), Budapest Parliament (1882), Amsterdam Exchange (1884), and parish church in Esseg (1893)—combine a flair for bold compositional massing and extraordinary delineative skill. His “Artibus” project of 1880, an ideal palatial complex inspired by both Semper’s plan for the Hofburg Forum and Fischer von Erlach’s proposal of 1690 for the Schönbrunn, elicited great delight when exhibited in Munich in 1890, as the work of “a resurrected and more refined Piranesi” (fig. 2).¹⁵

What is missing from Wagner’s work of this period, although this may be due in part to the paucity of historical documentation, is an encompassing vision. That rarified Nietzschean/Wagnerian frenzy that enthralled so many German students,



2. "Artibus" project (1880). ©Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien.

artists, and politicians of this period seems altogether absent from Wagner's personality. He gives the appearance of a withdrawn, determined professional entrepreneur quietly working within the "system"—by English standards, a proper Victorian—encircling, but not quite penetrating the elite group of recognized European masters and monument builders.

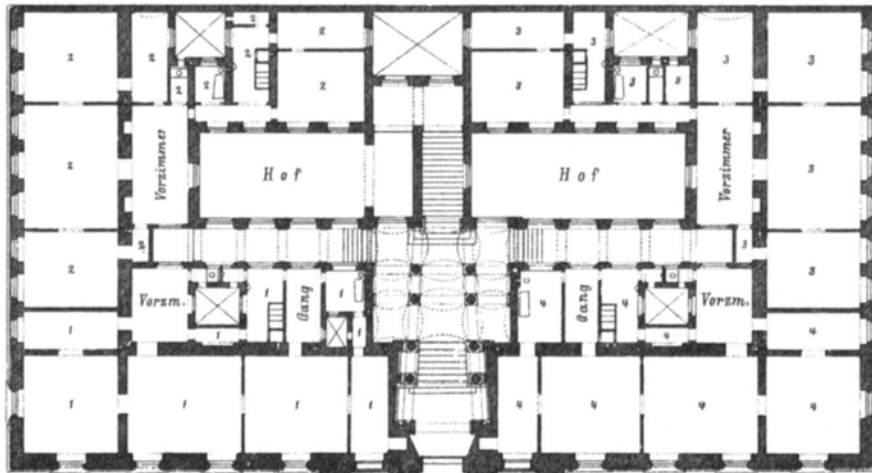
The "system," however, was not without its peculiar Viennese verve. This was the tempestuous era of the Ringstrasse and its many "building barons." The Ringstrasse, literally "Ring Street," was the result of Emperor Franz Josef's decree of 1857 announcing his intention to replace Vienna's old city walls and broad glacis separating the medieval city from the suburbs with a new boulevard, monumental public works, and much-needed housing to accommodate the industrializing and rapidly expanding city. During the 1850s and first half of the 1860s, Hapsburg Austria held to its long-standing vision of reenacting the mythical greatness of the Holy Roman Empire with Vienna at the head of a Pan-Germanic union. These hopes tottered in 1859, when Napoleon III engaged Austria for the liberation of northern Italy, and were dashed altogether by Bismarck in the summer of 1866, when Prussian forces routed the Austrian army at

Sadowa. Over the next five years Prussia would conquer and unite the other German states, defeat France, and emerge as the leading European power. Austria, with its former empire rent in two and excluded from the new Germany, was left with a semifunctioning liberal government and an intense, displaced passion to compete culturally with Berlin.

Thus the proud monuments of the Ringstrasse served, at the same time, as the symbol of a new cultural optimism and lost political greatness. The Votivkirche (1856–1879) and Opera House (1861–1869) preceded the disaster of 1866. The succeeding decade witnessed an unprecedented amount of building: the Museum of Art and Industry (1868–1871), the City Hall (1872–1883), the Art and Natural History Museums (1872–1881), the Parliament (1873–1883), the University (1873–1884), and the Hofburg theater (1874–1888).

Much has been made of the panoply of styles that attired these stately works and the spiritually enervating effect they would have on later architects, but architecture in Vienna and in Europe as a whole was hardly perceived to be in a state of crisis. The age of high eclecticism prevailed, but nowhere perhaps with the intensity of Vienna. The acknowledged Viennese masters, Heinrich von Ferstel, Friedrich von Schmidt, and Theophil Hansen, were joined in the 1870s by von Hasenauer and the great Semper, the last imperially summoned from Zurich. No other European city could vaunt a larger convocation of architectural nobility. The danger, however, was that this retinue of masters would become, through its own excesses, an artistic cortege. Thus the architecture critic August Köstlin, in remarking on Vienna's building activity in the early 1870s, tempered his giddiness with the concern that the pace of development, combined with the material and financial resources at hand, might impel the assembled geniuses to a contest of virtuosity.¹⁶ Similarly, the liberal newspaper *Neue Freie Presse*, on the occasion of christening the new movement the "Viennese Renaissance," expressed the worry that the public-at-large might be induced by all the glitter and pomp to assume false aesthetic values and incline toward an art of empty appearance. The newspaper also questioned whether the pool of artists at hand, the craftsmen who were required to paint, carve, and otherwise execute the grandiose schemes, was sufficient to meet the new demand.¹⁷

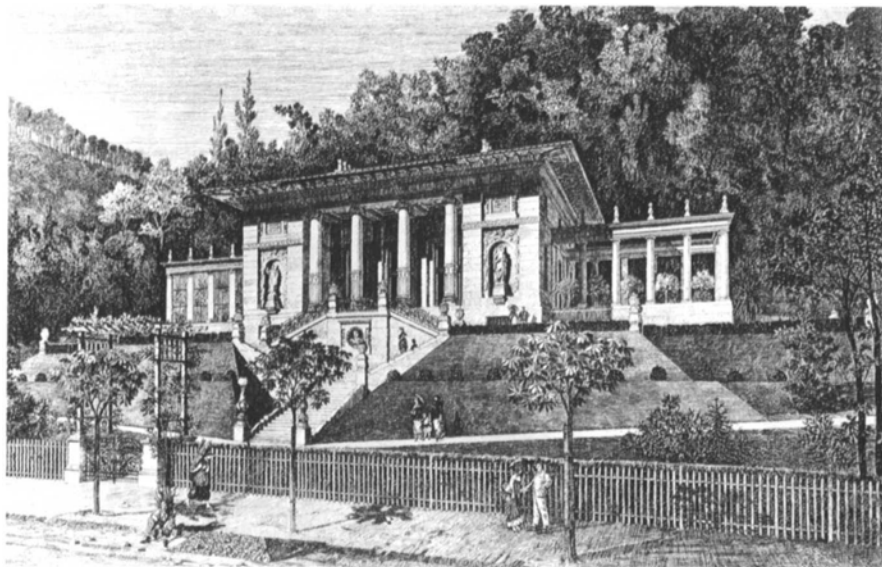
Still, these were relatively mild reservations amid the general approbation for Vienna's role in ushering in a new fifteenth century. Certainly Wagner, who was



3. Apartment House, Stadiongasse 6–8, Vienna (1882). Floor plan showing the converging perspective of the stairway. Reprinted from *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1887, pl. 44 (collection, The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, Santa Monica). ©Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien.

coming to artistic maturity during these years, imbibed the spirit to its fullest; his “*Artibus*” project of 1880 displays optimistic zeal to the point of inebriety (see fig. 2). Other designs of his invoke the same courtly spirit: the entries and circulation areas of his bank projects of the 1880s aspire to high grandeur; his apartment house on the Stadiongasse takes as its principal interior motif the *Scala Regia* of the Vatican (fig. 3); his own villa of 1886, with its massive loggia consuming two-thirds of the front elevation, appears more Palladian in ambition than the works of the master from Vicenza (fig. 4). Thus it is not surprising that in his first published remarks on architecture in 1889 Wagner should assert with considerable intrepidity that “a certain free Renaissance”—that is, a free and inventive use of Renaissance forms and motifs—“that has assimilated our *genius loci* and taken the greatest possible account of all our circumstances and accomplishments in the use of materials and construction is the only correct course for present and future architecture.”¹⁸

Although this statement has an ambiguity in its context that is not immediately apparent, it raises an interesting historical issue. Five years later, in his inaugural address to the Academy of Fine Arts (see Appendix B), Wagner could state



4. Villa Wagner, Hüttelbergstrasse 26, Vienna (1886). ©Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien.

with equal aplomb that “the starting point of every artistic creation must be the need, ability, means, and achievements of *our time*” (italics his).¹⁹ In the preface to the first edition of *Modern Architecture*, written in 1895, he was even more adamant: “One idea inspires this book, namely THAT THE BASIS OF TODAY’S PREDOMINANT VIEWS ON ARCHITECTURE MUST BE SHIFTED, AND WE MUST BECOME FULLY AWARE THAT THE SOLE DEPARTURE POINT FOR OUR ARTISTIC WORK CAN ONLY BE MODERN LIFE” (capitals his).

The apodictic rigor of this later conviction suggests something like an evangelical conversion. Although such an analogy may be overstating the case somewhat, the question still presents itself: what happened during these few years to cause Wagner to renounce the premises of a successful thirty-year practice and enact the first educational program in Europe to downplay, if not reject, the traditional language of this art? Certainly the demand for a style fitted to the ideals and needs of contemporary life was not in itself new. Yet the upheaval in theory that occurred in the 1890s irrevocably transformed the practice of architecture. By the first years of the new century, Wagner’s assertion of 1896 was incontrovertible: “. . . if one

surveys what has been accomplished up to now, then one must be convinced THAT TODAY THE CLEFT BETWEEN THE MODERN MOVEMENT AND THE RENAISSANCE IS ALREADY LARGER THAN THAT BETWEEN THE RENAISSANCE AND ANTIQUITY" (p. 80).

II

"WITH THIS I HAVE REACHED THE GOAL I PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED AND HAVE PUT PUT FORWARD A STRICTLY OBJECTIVE SKELETON FOR THE NEW STYLE, SUFFICIENTLY COMPLETE, I BELIEVE, FOR THE ARTIST TO ENLIVEN WITH HIS OWN INDIVIDUALITY"

Heinrich Hübsch (1828)²⁰

In 1863, the year in which Otto Wagner left the Vienna Academy to begin the practice of architecture, Charles Baudelaire published his famous essay on Constantin Guys, "The Painter of Modern Life." The theme of the essay, a perception that was perhaps unique to the metropolis of Paris at this date, was an old idea that Baudelaire was instilling with new ideological urgency. This was the idea of *modern life*.

"By modernity," the poet wrote, "I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable. Every old master has had his own modernity; the great majority of fine portraits that have come down to us from former generations are clothed in the costume of their own period."²¹ The artistic genius of Guys, Baudelaire went on to argue, was his particular talent to capture the "modern" in everyday affairs, to extract the poetic from the fashionable, to arrest the eternal in the transitory, to present the essential "presentness" of the metropolis. Guys's subjects were not academic ideals espousing deeds or events of the past, but contemporary themes drawn from the bustle of metropolitan life. "His passion and his profession," wrote Baudelaire of Guys, "are to become one flesh with the crowd. For the perfect *flâneur*, for the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude,

amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite. To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the center of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world—such are a few of the slightest pleasures of those independent, passionate, impartial natures which the tongue can but clumsily define.”²²

The great city in itself was not a creation of the nineteenth century, but with its accelerating pace of life, its teeming streets, shops, and arcades, and its tense standoff between bourgeois and proletariat values, the nineteenth-century metropolis came to fulfill a promise of industrialization that had no parallel in history. For Baudelaire, who was himself the enchanted *flâneur* of his literary creation, this upheaval was still young. Life in the great city, full of stark contrasts between commercial excess and poverty, decorum and venality, possessed disorienting novelty and devilish glamor. The great city was electrifying and abounding in imagery, harboring secrets both sinister and sublime.

Forty years later its allure had become less seductive. In his classic essay of 1902, “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” Georg Simmel painted a quite different portrait.²³ According to Simmel, the big city with its “*intensification of nervous stimulation*” (italics his) resulting from the “swift and uninterrupted change of outer and inner stimuli,” posed for the individual the difficult problem of preserving his humanity. With its economy based on money and functional specialization, it objectified the individual’s role in society and made each person dependent on others. At the same time, its continuous rush of impressions conditioned a numbing and more sophisticated level of consciousness, inhibiting personal involvement and reducing every activity to an anonymous transaction. Punctuality, calculability, and exactness became the dominant behavioral attributes of the urban individual; private existence was reduced to impersonal matter-of-factness. This blasé attitude led, in the sociologist’s view, to a cold and calculating behavior in which people were products to be bought, sold, and manipulated.

Another generation later, Walter Benjamin surveyed the metropolis from a still further advanced point in the process of alienation. In his pastiche “Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century,” Baudelaire’s *flâneur* strolls the streets and arcades both aware of his modernity and deferential to his reification, humbly taking his part in a vast, surreal comedy. His every hope and wish has been put on display in the marketplace; art has become almost totally absorbed by mechanization and

divested of its roots in nature and craft. By the end of the nineteenth century, argues Benjamin, architecture has seen its ideology permanently altered:

The development of the forces of production reduced the wish symbols of the previous century to rubble even before the monuments representing them had crumbled. In the nineteenth century this development emancipated constructional forms from art, as in the sixteenth century the sciences freed themselves from philosophy. Architecture makes a start as constructional engineering. The reproduction of nature in photography follows. Fantasy creation prepares itself to become practical as commercial art. Literature is subjected to montage in the *feuilleton*. All these products are on the point of going to market as wares. But they hesitate on the brink. From this epoch stem the arcades and interiors, the exhibitions and panoramas. They are residues of a dream world.²⁴

If one were to isolate within Wagner's architectural development the conceptual starting point of his modern vision, it would be that moment around 1890 when he first realized not only that architecture's continuity with its past was irrevocably fractured, but also that it could only assert its future (as a faint residue of its former wish symbol) by grafting itself onto the rootstock of constructional engineering and planning. "THE MAIN REASON THAT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ARCHITECT HAS NOT BEEN FULLY APPRECIATED," says Wagner in 1896, "LIES IN THE STORE OF FORMS EMPLOYED BY HIM UP TO NOW; THAT IS, IN THE LANGUAGE HE HAS DIRECTED TO THE PUBLIC, WHICH IN MOST CASES IS COMPLETELY UNINTELLIGIBLE" (p. 65). To make the language of architecture again understandable, Wagner urges the student to visit not the south, the treasury of architecture's former values, but the great metropolitan centers of the north—Paris, London, Berlin—"where modern luxury may be found, and there he might train himself completely by observing and perceiving the needs of modern man" (p. 69). A logical consequence of catering to these needs, Wagner argues, is that art and artist are then forced to represent their epoch, to implement its practical tendency, to conform to modern appearances and ideas, even to the point (something for which he was later roundly criticized) of staying in step with fashion. Such an architectural transformation was so momentous that it

could no longer be called, as it was in the 1870s, a renaissance; the creation of the modern architectural style would truly be a *naissance*.

Given its new mandate, architecture's basis was no longer to be symbolic form, but construction and technology. The architect was to train himself first by learning the language of engineers, and second by giving that language and values artistic refinement. In this radical denial of architecture's tradition in craft, Wagner shared none of the anxiety felt by Semper upon visiting the Great Exhibition of 1851—that art's new tools and machines, once they “sew, knit, embroider, paint, carve, and encroach deeply into the field of human art, putting to shame every human skill,” might have negative artistic consequences.²⁵ Semper managed to console himself in 1851 with the belief that eventually this “abundance of means” would sort itself out, once architecture's traditional types (its historical forms) had lost their meaning and been replaced with the aesthetics of the machine.²⁶ For Wagner, however, the straight line and smooth surface conditioned by the latter were already a foregone conclusion, the starting point, in fact, for the architecture of a new democratic society “every day becoming more alike.” In modern housing the public was to be encouraged to accept “such cellular conglomerates” and the principle of simplicity in general. Semper and Wagner, near the beginning and end of the process of German industrialization, also differed in another important respect. What Semper overestimated in his analysis of the industrial age and the marketplace was capitalism's capacity to wipe the slate of history clean; he failed to foresee that capitalism, with its new speculative modes of production, would tend to promote rather than reject historical values and forms.

This problem of gauging the full and often hidden expanse of history's cultural dimension was the subject of Friedrich Nietzsche's incisive study of 1873, “The Use and Abuse of History.”²⁷ Nietzsche argued quite convincingly that the preponderance of history in European culture was the single most debilitating force in contemporary society and the major impediment to progress. European history, the legacy of which had for the first time been established during the nineteenth century, had also, he insisted, enfeebled the individual's ability to act and reduced him to a restless, pathetic spectator unable to forget the past, banished to abstraction under the weight of erudition, and robbed of personality by the mask of culture. This tendency was most pronounced, he felt, in monumental art, where the numerical majority created by democratic suffrage—the new dil-

ettanti—had institutionalized “good taste.” “In their eyes,” said a disdainful Nietzsche, “there is no need nor inclination nor historical authority for the art which is not yet *monumental* because it is contemporary.”²⁸

The phenomenon of nineteenth-century architectural eclecticism is almost wholly explained by this last statement. Its implication for the creation of a “new style”—the *inevitability* of denying architecture its past—must have seemed like a revelation when it occurred to Wagner around 1890, but the need of architecture to shed its historical guise was hardly new to this, the most historical of the arts. History had been the specter haunting the efforts to create a new style throughout the nineteenth century, but only the coming together of the most diverse tendencies in the last two decades of the century exposed to full view the seductive tyranny of the past, thus preparing the way for its denial. It is important once again to emphasize that Wagner was not an innovator in this regard but the heir to an extensive theoretical debate that had been struggling with the issue for nearly seventy years.

The problem, in fact, had first been outlined in 1828 in Heinrich Hübsch’s *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?* (In What Style Should We Build?). The remarkable thing about Hübsch’s study was that even though it preceded the formation of eclecticism in Germany, it neatly set out almost every issue of the eclectic debate. Hübsch had studied philosophy and mathematics at Heidelberg before moving to Karlsruhe in 1815 to become a pupil of Friedrich Weinbrenner. After completing his studies he traveled extensively in Italy and Greece, then returned to Germany in 1824 and began denouncing classical architecture as unsuited to contemporary needs. His first work, *Über griechische Architektur* (1825), specifically opposed the Hellenic dogmatism of Aloys Hirt. He carried this polemic forward in his book of 1828, which professed to the aim of liberating architecture from the “chains of antiquity.”

In the latter work, Hübsch attempted to identify the “objective” principles for the development of a new style based on “need,” which he defined as a double purposiveness (*Zweckmäßigkeit*) of comfort and solidity. A style, he argued, is best defined by its primary elements of roof and supports; the two basic types are trabeated and arcuated systems. Other factors affecting the creation of a style are local and traditional building materials, contemporary “technostatic” influences (the technology arising from the materials), the need for protection and durability

as conditioned by climate, and finally cultural aspirations.²⁹

On the basis of these criteria, Hübsch embarked on a history of architecture evaluating the various styles and their suitability to modern needs. By eliminating all trabeated systems, primarily because of the poor availability of stone in Germany, he was left with a choice between pointed and rounded arched (*Rundbogen*) systems. He decided in favor of the latter for a variety of reasons, among them the fact that he believed it to be both poetic and capable of development (he likened it to “pre-Raphaelite” painting), and because the verticality of Gothic limited the width of wall openings, thus making it inappropriate for contemporary interiors. Although Hübsch’s own approach to architecture in the 1840s would incline toward a literal Romanesque interpretation, his discussion of the *Rundbogen* in 1828 was much more abstract, almost ahistorical in conception. The flat, undecorated, exposed brick facades of his Finance Ministry in Karlsruhe, begun in 1827, underscore the progressiveness of his theory; his Polytechnic School for Karlsruhe (1833–1836), also noted for its material honesty, emulated in its design Friedrich von Gärtner’s State Library in Munich.³⁰

Hübsch was not alone in his attempt to invent a new style for his era. Gärtner and Leo von Klenze made perhaps the most conspicuous efforts in Germany with their various designs along the Ludwigstrasse in Munich—already ridiculed by the youthful Semper by 1834.³¹ In Berlin Schinkel was also absorbed with the question of why his era should not have its own style.³² In a passage from his unfinished theoretical work, he discusses the appeal of a style based simply on utilitarian purpose and construction, but he rejects such a style for its dry and severe result, the absence of “the historic and poetic.” He then outlines the sequence of steps his era should follow in the pursuit of a style able to accommodate history: (1) determine what the era demands of architecture; (2) review history to see what forms have been used for similar purposes and which are suited to the present; (3) determine what modifications to these forms are necessary; and (4) consider how the imagination might produce from these modifications something totally new.³³

The pace of such discussions accelerated in the 1840s as typological eclecticism was consolidated in Germany and the problem of history became more salient. Almost everyone opposed eclecticism, especially those who championed a particular style as the means to future artistic development. The Düsseldorf architect Rudolf Wiegmann, for instance, complained that the present tendency to build

with Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Gothic, and Italian forms reduced architecture to “the viewpoint of fashion,” and depicted an age in which architecture had lost its organic relation with the technological developments and spirit of the time.³⁴ Wiegmann advocated a national style and sided with a modified *Rundbogen*.

His Gothicist antagonist was August Reichensperger, a politician and zealous follower of A. W. N. Pugin. In his book of 1845, *Die christlich-germanische Baukunst und ihr Verhältnis zur Gegenwart* (Christian-Germanic Architecture and Its Relation to the Present), Reichensperger urged his countrymen to return to the path of the Middle Ages to find the new style. Seven years later he sent tremors through the German architecture community by attacking the “heathenish” failings of the Berlin Architectural Academy in an address to the Prussian parliament. Reichensperger exhorted his political colleagues to “return the professorial chairs to the medieval lodges (*Bauhütte*) and buckle the aprons back on the teachers!”³⁵

The medievalism of Wiegmann and Reichensperger was countered in several essays of the 1840s by the Kassel professor J. H. Wolff, who opposed the demand for a national style and advocated instead “the universal and the true”—the classical.³⁶ In an address given to the architectural congress in Gotha in 1846, he backed an earlier proposal by Wilhelm Stier and urged the profession to seek a common foundation for the new style by uniting behind the principle of “truth” in architecture, which he defined as honesty in construction and the use of materials, be they ashlar, brick, wood, or iron.³⁷

This emphasis on material and constructional truth was echoed in several other papers of the 1840s, two of which, in particular, presaged Wagner’s discussion of a half-century later. The first of these essays was certainly known and studied by Wagner, since it was the single theoretical work of his teacher at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, van der Nüll.

Ostensibly, the subject of van der Nüll’s essay of 1845 was form and ornament, but he expanded his theme in the last few pages to address the problem of style and eclecticism in general.³⁸ He calls for an end to Greek and Gothic forms, for the simple reason that the technical means at hand suggest new methods of construction. The attempt to direct these means to the emulation of traditional forms, he feels, has produced a disharmony between intellect and feeling, an inorganic relationship of the age to the practical (*zweckmässig*) fulfillment of its needs.

Van der Nüll applauds the present efforts to transcend historicism with the creation of a new style, which, he argues, should develop from three criteria: (1) the logical use of materials, (2) rational design and construction, and (3) the sensitive artistic ennoblement of constructional form. Each criterion is closely related to the others, because, he believes, the new style will unite form with construction by allowing the latter to become visible, thereby unmasking its historical guises. Hence the culminating thesis of his paper, which will become the centerpiece of Wagner's theory, is that "new methods of construction will always produce a new character" or form.³⁹

The radical implication of the emerging technologies for form was also taken up and considered in an address in 1846 by Bötticher.⁴⁰ Two years earlier this Berlin architect and theorist had published the first volume of *Die Tectonik der Hellenen*, his highly influential study on the symbolism of Greek architectural forms. On the present occasion, the Schinkel Festival in Berlin, he turned his critical eye to the contemporary problem of style. The result was one of the most intellectually engaging works of nineteenth-century theory, one that symmetrically mirrors Wagner's text of fifty years later in importance.

The starting point of Bötticher's analysis may very well have been an article written in 1845 by the Munich architect Eduard Metzger, entitled "Beitrag zur Zeitfrage: In welchem Stil man bauen soll!" (A Contribution to the Contemporary Problem: In What Style One Should Build!).⁴¹ Metzger had considered the stylistic implications of iron trusses with their "finely felt" linear configurations and diagonal bracing and concluded they were most in keeping with the structural principles of the Gothic style, from which (in principle, not in form) the new style would emerge. Bötticher countered with the argument that the Gothic and Greek styles were incapable of further evolution, since both were fully developed "space-covering" systems based on the contrary static principles of trabeated and arcuated construction. For a new style to arise, a new system of space covering must appear, one that would embody a structural principle foreign to stone, be able to satisfy every spatial and functional need, and be lighter and thus reduce the material expended on the supporting walls. This new material was iron; its principle was absolute strength in tension. Such a constructional system, which he believed to be the legacy of his era, would produce a style comparable in greatness to that of the Greek and the Gothic periods.

Bötticher's lecture with its early promotion of iron would be remarkable simply for the fact that Germany at this date was far less industrialized than either France or Great Britain and had carried out few experiments with iron. Yet the lengthy address (portions of which Bötticher was unable to read because of time restrictions) is also of interest because he considered not only the new material and its stylistic implications, but also how and to what extent tradition must first be accommodated if architecture was to have a new style. The main body of the lecture, in fact, was given over not to the question of iron, but to the problem of history.

Bötticher saw contemporary architecture as divided into two competing factions. The first group, the classicists, adhered to a vision of the Greek ideal as the apogee of human tectonic or architectural activity; they viewed the Gothic style as Germanic-barbaric in conception and overlooked its structural and material economy and space-making possibilities. The second camp, the Gothicists, claimed that Greek aesthetic principles were foreign to German needs; perceived them as heathen in spirit and corrupting of German values. Both sides denied architecture's history, Bötticher argued, because the principles of one system could not be penetrated without knowledge of the other. The result, in his view, was the "colossal emptiness" of a culture deprived of its historical footing and forced to take the future as the only possible basis of development. Since intellectual progress, he continued, depended on a knowledge of the existing, he posed three alternatives. The first was to adhere to traditional forms and deviate from them as little as possible—often misusing the forms out of ignorance of their underlying principles. The second was to utilize history by appropriating its spiritual and working relations, delving into its hidden essence, and thus determining correctly what could be used and what should be left behind. The third approach was to try to mediate between the two primary architectural systems by dressing up the Gothic structural framework in the "art-forms" (*Kunstformen*) of the Greeks.

This last alternative was the least attractive to Bötticher, because both styles were perfected systems and any attempt to mimic their forms would only lead to an impoverishment. Having denied architecture the possibility of nonhistorical and eclectic formation, Bötticher sought mediation in a dialectic of principle; that is, the new style was to borrow the spatial possibilities and static principles from the Gothic style, and develop them artistically in the way the Greeks invested their static forms with symbolic meaning. This, he felt, was the true mediation, the

right synthesis of history: "If we have in this way penetrated the essence of tradition and become conscious of the principle of its formation, the law and concept of its forms, dead eclecticism will be denied and the source of original artistic invention is once again open."⁴²

The active debate of the 1840s in Germany gave way in the next two decades to a relative lull in speculation concerning a new style. Various historical reasons can be adduced for this, such as the lack of industrial capacity in Germany and Austria, and the conservative political swing following the social unrest of 1848–1849. Yet history's capacity to confer cultural legitimacy—the growing sense in Germany of a national identity and the desire to support it with sanctioned and identifiable cultural symbols—was certainly a leading factor. The mesmerizing charm of historical authority can be seen in the changing views of Germany's leading architect and theorist of this period, Gottfried Semper. In 1834 Semper had decried the advent of eclecticism for the pleasant delusion of its "extraits de mille fleurs," and proposed instead that "brick should appear as brick, wood as wood, iron as iron, each according to its own stactical laws."⁴³ In the prolegomenon to his major work on style of 1860, however, Semper sarcastically referred to those seeking to invent a new style as "materialists," "purists," "schematists," and "futurists," all of whom, he noted with venom, denied "some of the oldest traditions of architecture that are fully consistent with the logic of building and with artistic creation in general, and that have symbolic values that are older than history and that cannot possibly be represented by something new."⁴⁴ Ten years later, as he was preparing to leave for Vienna to start his Ringstrasse work, Semper concluded his Zurich lecture on style by repeating a comment he had made twenty years earlier: "People reproach us architects for a lack of inventiveness—too harshly, since nowhere has a new world-historical idea pursued with force and consciousness become evident. We are convinced that wherever such an idea will really take the lead, one or the other of our young colleagues will prove himself capable of endowing it with a suitable architectural dress. Until that time comes, however, we must reconcile ourselves to make do as best we can with the old."⁴⁵

The "old," however, was certainly not prominent in the collective artistic consciousness of the 1870s and 1880s, as the Viennese Renaissance blossomed into a full-scale Baroque revival. The profuse plasticity of Semper's second Dresden theater (started in 1870), which replaced the flat, Renaissance-inspired crispness

of his earlier masterpiece destroyed by fire, prompted this trend. Once again old arguments were called forth to justify the new turn of events. The German architect and historian Rudolf Redtenbacher, responding in 1877 to the charge that his generation lacked inventiveness, pointed out that all previous styles had been created by reworking and developing forms from earlier periods; hence his era was simply following the process of history and any attempt to create a new style artificially would be stillborn.⁴⁶ Similarly, in 1885, the Viennese architect Hans Auer defended the new Baroque trend for its ability to meet all spatial needs, its suitability to every method of construction and material, its adaptability, but most importantly its capacity for personal expression and artistic freedom.⁴⁷

Yet just as Auer was so confidently touting the future of this style as the self-aggrandizing symbol of Austria's Hapsburg greatness, a strong countermovement was taking shape. August Köstlin, the editor of the *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* and publisher of Auer's article, accompanied it with an editorial of his own, in which he described the latest Baroque fashion as "an episode! nothing more." Far from seeing the 1880s, as Auer had argued, as having a spiritual affinity with the age of "Leibniz, Voltaire, and Newton," Köstlin noted the democratic, leveling tendencies of the present and broad social participation in public affairs.⁴⁸

Certainly this latest phase of eclecticism was setting the stage for its imminent collapse through the simple exhaustion of historical possibilities, yet there were other more fundamental forces fomenting this course of events. The architectural debate of the 1880s in Germany and Austria differed from that of the 1840s in the positivistic belief that historical change was not only possible, but also inevitable, predicated on the basis of the newly understood laws of history. This change in attitude can be seen clearly in the polemics surrounding the use of iron.

The problem with iron throughout the nineteenth century, as noted by the Gotha architect Ludwig Bohnstedt in 1867, was that it was seen as the material of engineers and was not conducive to architectural expression because of its thinness or lack of visible mass.⁴⁹ Although Hermann Lotze refuted this idea one year later as a perception based simply on habit, it was an argument that died slowly.⁵⁰ It was not until 1878 that a prominent German architect, Constantin Lipsius, dared to accept the challenge of Bötticher, although he was looking to Viollet-le-Duc and experiments with iron in France. Addressing the Union of German Architects and Engineers, Lipsius argued that his era, "so full of intelligence,"

was directing itself toward knowledge, research, and truth, and that these qualities were best exemplified in the aesthetic of engineering, which proceeded solely from the functional (*zweckmässig*), striving for the maximum achievement with the minimum dimension. Longer spans than ever were possible with iron—here was the “world-historical idea” that Semper demanded! “Indeed,” said Lipsius, “I am of the opinion that this material with its invaluable properties and inherent laws of form will and must influence a new architectural style.”⁵¹

Interest in the architectural possibilities of iron picked up sharply in the 1880s, a decade that culminated in the advent of the Chicago skyscraper and the Eiffel Tower. Iron’s leading architectural exponent in Germany was Georg Heuser, who in numerous articles in major journals praised the virtues of stable frames (*Stabilrahmen*) and the latticework style (*Gefachstil*), open frameworks composed of the sectional shapes of iron.⁵² Although Heuser decorated his own exposed frameworks with motifs drawn from various historical periods, he pleaded with his colleagues to become more conversant with the language of engineers and especially with their demand for a harmony of form and purpose. Moreover, he presented his ideas in a way that would have been quite impossible in the 1840s—within the context of a general theory of materialism in art based on Charles Darwin’s theory of natural selection.

Darwinism was but one aspect of what Lipsius had referred to in 1877 as the spirit of “the scrupulous investigation of the factual” that dominated the arts and sciences in Germany in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Germany, even more than Great Britain, had become the center of evolutionary theory in Europe, following a German translation of 1860 of *On the Origin of Species*. By 1875, when a new German edition of Darwin’s collected works had been issued, his theories had been widely applied in German science, politics, and the liberal arts.⁵³

In architecture, Semper had forcefully denied Darwin’s relevance to stylistic development in his Zurich lecture of 1869, yet a few months after his death in 1879 Hans Semper described his father’s theory as “only a step away from Darwin’s line of reasoning—hence evolutionary.”⁵⁴ Heuser was also aware of the elder Semper’s opposition to the application of a theory of natural selection to art, but he, like Hans, believed Semper’s investigations into the origin and transformation of style mirrored perfectly the scientific spirit of Darwin. For Heuser,

Darwin's "world view" epitomized the new materialism of his era and had universal validity in all natural, and human, affairs. Drawing upon the technological theory of Ernst Kapp, which defined the development of human tools and machines as a process of "organ projection,"⁵⁵ Heuser described art as a projection of the mind, also conforming to the evolutionary laws of nature. Changes in architecture come about through a process of natural selection. Initially, new materials and technologies are treated in ways learned from other materials and purposes, yet gradually new variations appear; the more variants or options there were to choose from, the more correct will be the new method of treatment. If the results are unsatisfactory, a process of crossbreeding methods and techniques would take place. Iron's technology with its constant development, Heuser believed, was instilling architecture with a new formal life.⁵⁶

Another example of this scientific spirit, although not Darwinian, was Redtenbacher's efforts in the early 1880s to devise a practical guide to tectonic theory. Redtenbacher, trained under Hermann Nicolai at the Dresden Academy, had concluded his article in the *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* (1877) with a plea to architects to become less biased and more scientific in their selection of forms. In 1881 he published a primer on the principles that should govern the shaping of form; two years later he followed with a book entitled *Die Architektonik der modernen Baukunst* (The Architectonic of Modern Architecture).⁵⁷ Both works were serious efforts to combine the concepts and methodologies of Bötticher and Semper with his own interpretation of a comparative method. In rejecting Semper's emphasis on the "dressing" thesis, Redtenbacher (as Wagner would later claim to do) argued that construction itself, not its symbolic basis, was the starting point for architectural formation. He defined tectonics as the theory of shaping form (*Formgebung*) consistent with its purpose and material. In his effort to be unbiased he even strove to strip form of its historical associations, although his system was thoroughly historical in conception. Several of his aesthetic principles—such as the demand that the purpose be achieved with the simplest means, that the form correspond to this purpose, and that absolute purity be sought in appearance—foreshadow later functionalist manifestos.

The belief that art and the creation of form should be undertaken more critically and scientifically was also shared in Germany by those attempting to define a "science of art" (*Kunstwissenschaft*), initiated in part by Gustav Theodor Fechner's perceptual investigations and Konrad Fiedler's aesthetics of "pure visi-

bility” (intuitive perception without the mediation of content or reason). Most prominent in this regard was Robert Vischer’s theory of empathy (*Einfühlung*), first defined in his essay of 1872 as the aesthetic enjoyment we feel in projecting our psychic feelings or sentiments into artistic objects (abstract or pure forms).⁵⁸ Three works of the second half of the 1880s brought these investigations to the attention of architects and significantly influenced theory.

In 1886 Heinrich Wölfflin opened his doctoral dissertation, “Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur” (Prolegomenon to a Psychology of Architecture), with the question: “How is it possible that architectural forms are able to express spirituality and feeling?”⁵⁹ While not denying the importance of such factors as material, climate, and purpose in the generation of form, Wölfflin argued that they were less influential than the general feeling for form (*Formgefühl*) directing artistic creation, and that it was the task of a psychology of architecture to explain the effect that form evokes in its pure or abstract sense. Citing not only Vischer, but also the psychological studies of Hermann Lotze, Wilhelm Wundt, and Johannes Volkelt, Wölfflin pursued the theme of how form is invested with psychic emotions, affirming that the aim of architecture was to express strong states of feeling arising through the opposition between the material and its “form-strength” (*Formkraft*). He defined ornament in architecture as the expression of excessive form-strength.

What was most important in Wölfflin’s study, in terms of both his own approach to art history and the general development of architectural theory, was the argument that a living architectural style inevitably reflected the postures, attitudes, movements, and even the clothing of contemporary life. Changes in style, therefore, were not initiated by individuals, governments, or technological developments, but emanated from changes in popular sentiments. The few periods in history that created a style were those that were able to experience and understand their collective feelings. Conversely, as sentiments changed within a culture, an existing style underwent a gradual process of alienation and eventually became a lifeless schema propped up by tradition. Wölfflin also suggested, like Semper before him, that the tendency of each age could best be read in the smaller-scale decorative arts.

Wölfflin’s emphasis on the aesthetic value of pure form and his effort to describe the process of stylistic change were also themes considered in Adolf Göller’s two

works of 1887 and 1888, *Zur Aesthetik der Architektur* (Toward an Aesthetics of Architecture) and *Die Entstehung der architektonischen Stilformen* (The Origin of Architectural Style-Forms). These two impressive studies by this Stuttgart professor have almost been lost to architectural theory, yet Göller's ideas were widely read and discussed in his day.⁶⁰ He too drew upon the themes and methodologies of Bötticher and Semper, but departed from them with the premise that the beauty of architectural form lies not so much in its ideal or symbolic content (historical meaning), but more fundamentally in the abstract play of lines, light, and shade. This visual charm has both physiological and psychological explanations. From our past sensory experience we bring to the perception of form certain residues or "memory images" (*Gedächtnisbilder*) that lead us to find pleasure in particular proportions or combinations of form. The sharper this memory image is, the greater the object's charm; however, after a period of time a certain jading or visual fatigue develops with respect to some proportions, causing the artist and his era to seek variation. Hence the perception and appreciation of form constantly undergo change, leading to transformations in architectural style. Each generation also brings to art its own formal ideas, and these are transferred, transformed, and combined with components of the existing forms, causing the style to develop or decline. Every decline in style is always followed by the creation of a new scheme, fresh in its formal charm.

Although Wölfflin criticized Göller in *Renaissance and Baroque* (1888) for his one-sided emphasis on perception and his theory's failure to explain the complexity of the Baroque, the intentions of both men were quite similar.⁶¹ Their emphasis on the aesthetic value of abstract form and stylistic change, however, stopped short in their efforts to address the contemporary architectural debate. Wölfflin chose to focus his psychology of architectural form exclusively on the past. Göller, in the nearly incoherent final chapter of his book of 1888, desperately tried to apply his results to the present, but without much success. On the one hand, he felt the enfeebling grasp of history and the aesthetic exhaustion of its primary forms; on the other hand—notwithstanding his enthusiasm for "naked stereometric surfaces with their play of light and shade"—he doubted if architecture in the near future would undergo a significant transformation.⁶²

Yet the theories of Wölfflin and Göller, whatever their historical limitations, did much to erode support for historicism. In an article prepared for the architectural journal *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, the perspicacious Cornelius Gurlitt was quick to

point out the revolutionary implication of Göller's theory—the possibility of a nonhistorical, abstract art.⁶³ And even though K. E. O. Fritsch, the longtime editor of this journal, opened the decade of the 1890s with a preference for the Richardsonian Romanesque and a consummate analysis of how little had changed in architecture since Bötticher's address of 1846, the revolution that had long ago been predicted was well under way.⁶⁴ The extraordinary interest generated by the experiments of Gustave Eiffel and Victor Contamin at the Paris World Exhibition of 1889, together with a burgeoning awareness of pure form and its artistic possibilities, provided the impetus for the radical consolidation that took place in the next decade.

III

“WE CANNOT TODAY RESIST THE FEELING OF GREATNESS AND GRANDEUR THAT WE EXPERIENCE AT THE SIGHT OF A POWERFUL IRON STRUCTURE. IT IS A FEELING THAT WAS ALMOST FOREIGN TO PREVIOUS GENERATIONS. WE MODERNS MUST ADMIT THAT EVEN THE PANTHEON OR SAINT PETER'S DOME MUST PALE BEFORE THE IMPRESSION THAT IS CALLED FORTH BY THE LOWER GREAT HALL OF THE EIFFEL TOWER OR BY ONE OF ITS POWERFUL PIERS.”

Leopold Bauer (1899)⁶⁵

Otto Wagner appears to have begun his break with eclecticism in 1889, the year in which he wrote the preface to the first volume of *Sketches, Projects and Executed Buildings*. Already two years earlier, in commenting on his apartment house at Stadiongasse 6–8 (his only building to be published in the Viennese journal *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* prior to the Majolica house), he emphasized the simplicity of the facade, “omitting almost all sculptural work and placing importance on grand proportions, larger fenestration, and a simple, clear motif” (see fig. 3).⁶⁶ In his preface of 1889, however, he adopts a strident tone with regard to eclecticism, with its consumption of millennia of styles over the last two decades and its “childish” convention of using specific styles for special purposes. After his somewhat incongruous acceptance of a “certain free Renaissance” as the “only correct course,” Wagner quickly contradicts himself with the claim that the future style will be the “utility style”

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(*Nutz-Stil*) for reasons of the expanded scope of contemporary endeavors and the limited resources of the individual, taxed by the ever-present (Darwinian) struggle for survival. The French, says Wagner, have shown the first signs of this new style with the realism of the Eiffel Tower and *plein air* genre painting. Architecture, too, must reflect its time.

Wagner's polemic, however, was in advance of his artistic practice at this date. His townhouse at Rennweg 3, a work contemporary with the first volume of *Sketches, Projects and Executed Buildings*, displayed the lavish historical trappings of the successful architect and entrepreneur, and nothing that might be confused with a "utility style." The three rooms of the *piano nobile* facing the street, a salon flanked by a boudoir and dining room, were stylistically outfitted in motifs from the Louis XV, Louis XVI, and Renaissance periods respectively. One has to look to the somewhat oversized metal caps on the legs of the period furniture or to the insertion of nickel-plated rosettes and metal strips into the legs (the last to replace the conventional fluting) to find a departure from historical imitation or a portent of his later direction.⁶⁷ Wagner's interiors were to adhere to conventional antecedents up to and beyond his "Empire" renovation of the billiard room in his first villa (1895).⁶⁸

Yet Wagner's theme of modernity continued to develop. In 1892 he started work on an international competition for a master city plan for greater Vienna. In the report of the following year accompanying the set of plans, he argued forcefully that "our realism, our traffic, and modern technology imperatively demand the straight line"; that is, the straight, clean, practical street leading to the destination in the shortest possible time, occasionally interrupted by monumental buildings, squares, meaningful vistas, and parks.⁶⁹ The images of Wagner's modern metropolis were the wide boulevards and squares of Baron Haussmann's Paris, which he illustrated for Vienna with four magnificent perspectives of the new city. Over several pages of the report he ridiculed the "painterly" effects advocated by Karl Henrici and Camillo Sitte, which he countered with his new artistic credo: *Artis sola domina necessitas* (Necessity is art's only mistress).⁷⁰ Obviously impressed, Josef Stübben, in his review of Wagner's winning proposal for the *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, described his defense as "spirited," his four perspectives "of divine imagination," and Wagner himself as "one of the most outstanding" architects in Austria. "He shares with Semper," said Stübben, "the conviction that architecture is called upon and is capable of dressing the recognized modern needs

of the present in the appropriate aesthetic form.”⁷¹

In February 1894, Wagner’s first place showing (*ex aequo*) in the Vienna competition was announced; in April he was selected by the municipal transit commission as architect of the city’s new rail system, the *Stadtbahn*. This would entail over the next six years the design of more than forty stations, bridges, and viaducts, in addition to the Nussdorf lock and its supporting structures. In May, *Neue Freie Presse* reported that the first proposals shown to the commission won unanimous approval. They were designed, the newspaper noted, in simple and restrained forms of the Renaissance and met the requirements of the strictest economy in an aesthetically satisfying way.⁷²

This extraordinary professional year culminated in July, when Wagner was named to succeed Karl von Hasenauer as head of one of the two programs of architecture at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts.⁷³ Others nominated for the position were the Baroque architect Karl König, Alexander Wielemans, Friedrich Schachner, Emil Ritter von Förster, and the Munich architect Friedrich von Thiersch (Bruno Gruber and Camillo Sitte also applied). The jury, which gave Wagner eleven of the fourteen votes, seemed impressed with his energy, initiative, and recent success—and perhaps his pledge to modernity.⁷⁴ His agenda for the school was presented in his inaugural address to the academy in October and received resounding approbation from the student body. Wagner inherited a number of talented students at the academy; in his office next door he amassed a coterie of progressive young designers eager to make their mark.⁷⁵ Professionally secure and no doubt emboldened by his recent success, Wagner began, probably in late 1894, the first manifesto of modern architecture.

There have been suggestions that Wagner may have had the assistance of a colleague, Max Fabiani, in the preparation and writing of *Modern Architecture*.⁷⁶ Fabiani, an Italian architect trained in Vienna and working in Wagner’s office, preempted Wagner at this time in his rejection of historicism. In an article on the Wagner school in the first issue of *Der Architekt* (1895), Fabiani began by praising the master for invoking truth and realism at the school, but concluded with a defense, actually an apology, for Wagner’s use of the “Empire” style—the stylistic period around 1800—as his departure point.⁷⁷ During this period Fabiani also participated in the animated discussions on the future of architecture held by the Siebener Club, an informal gathering of young designers that included Kolo

Moser, Joseph Maria Olbrich, and Josef Hoffmann, many of whom regrouped in 1897 to form the Secession.⁷⁸

Although there can be little doubt that Wagner was bolstered in his efforts and infused with the youthful enthusiasm of his students and apprentices, it is difficult to argue that this determined personality, described by Fabiani and others of this period as a stern and “brutal” taskmaster, relinquished control over his most important artistic credo.⁷⁹ Wagner had just attained the summit of professional and academic recognition and was not only putting his reputation but also to some extent his career in jeopardy. Moreover, *Modern Architecture* is a denticulate and carefully crafted work, meticulously revised, enlarged, or shortened in places over its four editions. Stylistically, it is without question the work of one author.

The charge that Wagner’s style in the mid-1890s took as its starting point the “Empire” of almost a century earlier is an interesting one in light of his revolutionary fervor. Wagner himself, possibly referring to Fabiani’s apology in *Der Architekt*, vehemently denied the imputation in the first (1896) and second (1898) editions of *Modern Architecture* (p. 129, te. 42), but deleted this passage in the third edition (1902). He pointed out that his use of the panel and straight line in wall surfaces responded to modern methods of construction, to new machines and tools, and to the logic of plaster—not to historicist inclinations.

Yet Gurlitt and Hevesi, who both wrote histories of modern art in the late 1890s, described Wagner’s “Empire” style as the transitional stage in his development from historicism to the Secession.⁸⁰ Hevesi saw it as Wagner’s “docking point” during the period of the Stadtbahn designs, in which his work was characterized by a vertical arrangement of the elevational scheme and a panel-like treatment of surfaces, frequently endowed with rich vignettes. Wagner’s building on the Universitätsstrasse of 1889, with its lush modillion and festooned pilasters (compositionally resembling Adler and Sullivan’s Wainwright building of one year later), commences this “Empire” phase. The apartment houses of 1898 on the corner of the Wienzeile and Köstlergasse, dressed in three variations on a secessionist theme, conclude it. The Wienzeile facades dispense with a vertical hierarchy of floors and have a uniform distribution of windows within a large surface. The building on the Köstlergasse, which succeeded the townhouse on Rennweg as Wagner’s city residence, anticipates in its simplicity the so-called Looshaus of a decade later.

The text of *Modern Architecture*, while stylistically always concise and direct, is loosely organized in its headings, polemical rather than scholarly in its intention, and directed principally (in the first edition at least) to a student audience. The frequent repetitions, together with Wagner's use of capitalization to underscore prominent points, produce a certain didactic rhythm that forcefully enhances the text's clarity. The five chapters of the first three editions (1896, 1898, and 1902) appear to have had their genesis in lectures, and could easily have been shifted in order. The opening chapter "The Architect" is little more than a student's introduction to the glories (and agonies) of his chosen profession. The chapter "Style" announces the theme of modernity and contains Wagner's rejection of eclecticism. The next chapter "Composition" is something of a primer of design and concludes with several practical "hints" for the young designer. The chapter "Construction" returns to the polemical language of "Style" and might be described as the heart of Wagner's theory. The final chapter "The Practice of Art" reads as a collage of practical tips and opinions on a range of topics from presentational techniques to hygiene and urban design. The two chapters added to the 1914 edition, "The Promotion of Art" and "The Criticism of Art" (see Appendix A), add nothing of substance to the original text and, in fact, detract from it rhetorically with their embittered tone.

There are three principal themes of *Modern Architecture*: a plea for simplicity in the accommodation of modern needs, the artistic and ethical ruin of eclecticism, and the demand for a new style based on present technologies and methods of construction. All were anticipated by Wagner's earlier writings and inaugural address, but in his manifesto they are given fuller treatment.

The book abounds with demands for the simple and the practical, "the—one might almost say—military approach" to urban architecture. Modern life, with its better, democratic, self-confident approach to everyday affairs, rejects the extravagance of Vienna's "Potemkin's villages," and honors instead the virtues of comfort, cleanliness, and convenience. Internally, urban dwellings are to be bright, well-ventilated, and appointed with simple, functional furnishings, completely in harmony with the "checkered breeches" and leisure wear of the city's modern inhabitants. Richard Streiter in his review of *Modern Architecture* pointed out the similarity of Wagner's emphasis on simplicity to that of Robert Dohme in his book of 1888, *Das englische Haus* (The English House).⁸¹ Dohme was the first in Germany to correlate contemporary English domestic designs with

the production of modern vehicles and ships, and saw the Queen Anne style led by Richard Norman Shaw as superior to German efforts, with its lack of ornamentation, simple elegance, and excellent workmanship. Another English artist held in high esteem in Germany and Austria at this time was Walter Crane, whose book *The Claims of Decorative Art* had been translated into German in 1893 and widely reviewed. The Austrian Museum for Art and Industry had been inclined toward English arts and crafts models even before the anglophile Arthur von Scala took over as director in 1897. An exhibition on Walter Crane was featured by the museum in 1895.⁸²

It is doubtful, however, if Wagner had more than a casual knowledge of or sympathy with English developments. Notwithstanding his praise of the democratic tendencies of modern society, his uncompromisingly technocratic vision of the future was fundamentally opposed to Crane's anticommmercialism and socialism. Crane had argued that the corruption of popular taste was caused by a vulgarization of manufacture and commerce induced by industrialization. Wagner, on the contrary, saw the cause of the decline of taste to be historicism's failure to react quickly enough to the adage "Time is money," thus not allowing the beneficial and expurgating effect of technological improvements to be realized. Streiter, who was himself more in step with English developments, went so far as to characterize Wagner's "naive" faith in capitalist redemption as tantamount to "practical Manchesterism," which, if enacted, would re-create the worst horrors of parvenu taste of the last half of the century.⁸³

It was Wagner's rejection of architectural eclecticism, rather than his political acumen, that gave *Modern Architecture* its historical importance. Wagner was the first European architect to state publicly his break with the past, although his position initially was not entirely unequivocal. In the first edition of 1896 he sometimes professes a willingness to accommodate aspects of the historical language of form, to rework or modify elements of the traditional vocabulary to meet modern demands. By the third edition of 1902, however, he is adamant that a radical break with the past has to be made and a new beginning sought. For example, a reference in the first edition to "furthering our inherited traditions" is deleted in the second edition of 1898 (p. 129, te. 51). In commenting on the new shapes created by modern technology, Wagner says in the first edition, "They all recall the forms of past times . . ."; the second edition reads, "They scarcely recall the forms of past times . . ."; the third edition is emphatic, "They do not recall the forms of

past times . . .” (p. 135, te. 150). Collectively, these changes and others depict to a rather precise degree Wagner’s development during these years.

The main reason that Wagner felt a break with the past was inevitable is that the changes in modern construction methods brought about by the new technical and material means logically dictate, in his view, new formal solutions. The fourth chapter on construction forcefully presents this aspect of his theory, even though he conveys his ideas in a somewhat rudimentary way. Need, purpose, material, and construction, later endowed with the idealism of art, are the primitive “germs” (*Urkeime*) of architectural production. New purposes and new materials give birth to new methods of construction, which in turn gradually acquire artistic value and lead to new art-forms. Every art-form has its genesis in construction. The role of the architect is to acknowledge new technical means arising from needs and interpret them in a way suited to modern sensibility.

Aspects of Wagner’s theory in this chapter, such as his appreciation of iron and its time-saving constructional attributes, suggest affinities with nineteenth-century French rationalist theory, that of Viollet-le-Duc in particular. Certainly Wagner, like every Viennese architect of his generation, paid close attention to the architectural developments in France, but there were also ample German precedents for his ideas. Graf has pointed out the similarity of Wagner’s line of reasoning to van der Nüll’s emphasis on the preeminence of materials and construction in shaping form.⁸⁴ Beyond the question of Wagner’s possible sources, his remarks and terminology in this chapter, by virtue of their grounding in mid-century discussions, have a certain awkwardness in their new theoretical context. To those architects who came to professional maturity in the 1870s and 1880s, who were trained to appreciate architecture’s sensuous and symbolic charm, Wagner’s constructional extremism probably appeared not only vulgar but even old-fashioned. Yet to students taking their training in the 1890s, the ingenuousness of Wagner’s logic no doubt would have been fresh and cogent. In this sense, Wagner’s schooling in the earlier debate probably enhanced his revolutionary appeal.

The framework for Wagner’s distinction between constructional and artistic form derives from Bötticher’s distinction in the 1840s between “core-form” (*Kernform*) and “art-form” (*Kunstform*), which he had used as an analytical tool to explore the symbolic value of Greek architecture.⁸⁵ Bötticher’s theory was based on the premise that the elements of the Greek orders constituted a complex formal lan-

guage in which each part not only expressed its function symbolically, but also alluded to the meaning of the larger scheme. Each part was conceived as having a structural or constructional function (its core-form) that was dressed in a sophisticated artistic veil (its art-form) articulating its purpose. Bötticher further insisted that Greek symbolic forms were indigenous to the Greek spirit and not imported from abroad. Thus the earliest constructional forms contained the artistic germ of their later formal development.

Bötticher's conceptual dichotomy was adapted by Semper in the mid-1850s and incorporated into a general theory of architecture. Semper's theory started from the belief that architecture had its origin in four primeval motives that gave rise to and were fixed in meaning in the industrial arts long before the appearance of monumental architecture. These motives were hearth-gathering (the spiritual center of the dwelling, later associated with ceramics), walling (textiles), the making of a tectonic framework (carpentry), and terracing (originally mounding, later masonry). Semper planned a three-volume work to promulgate his theory in full, yet it was the textile motive and its "dressing" (*Bekleidung*) corollary to which his attention was devoted in almost half of his eleven-hundred-page investigation of style.⁸⁶

On the basis of recent ethnographic studies, he argued that the most primitive walls or spatial dividers were crude mats, composed of grasses and bast fibers, hung vertically between the structural or tectonic framework. These screens led to the invention of textiles; as the need for more solid and durable walls appeared, the textile wall-hangings continued in use as "dressings" that concealed their core-forms underneath, alluding to their earlier spatial role. Eventually, the textile dressing came to be replaced with other surrogate dressings, such as panels of wood, metal, and stone, and in some cases these replacements, as the unearthing in the 1840s of Assyrian bas-reliefs had shown, emulated in style the woven characteristics of their predecessors. Semper further argued that the most sophisticated use of the dressing motif took place in classical Greece, where—in line with his polychrome conception of the Greek temple—paint became the newest and "subtlest, most bodiless coating," not only dressing the temple's appearance, but also "masking" the materiality of stone, thereby letting it become pure form.⁸⁷ Architecture's denial and transcendence of its real or material basis thus became for Semper its highest ideal.

As architecture only acquired its artistic value through a dressing or masking of its material and constructional form, Semper's theory, like Bötticher's, was fundamentally idealistic or symbolic in character. The profuse decorative encrustation of Semper's museums in Vienna of the 1870s exemplified his own interpretation of this ideal. Thus, Heuser and others in the 1880s who sought a forthright display of construction and such new materials as iron were quite correct in viewing Semper's dressing thesis and its dominance in German practice and theory as the most serious obstacle to be overcome.⁸⁸

Otto Wagner takes precisely this point of attack at the beginning of his fourth chapter. After presenting a rather traditional account of architecture as emerging from utility and necessity and subsequently developing artistic form, he couples Darwin and Semper in a sentence and criticizes the latter for lacking the courage to complete his theory from above and below; that is, for making do with a "symbolism of construction" (primordial industrial motives) rather than construction itself as the starting point of architecture (p. 93). In taking such an approach, Wagner interprets Semper's four conceptual motives literally as constructional elements in themselves, whose purpose it would be redundant to symbolize or represent with additional meaning.

This, at least, is how Wagner's fourth chapter was understood in 1898 by Streiter, whose exhaustive critique of the issues raised by Wagner in this chapter is most instructive. Streiter finds the chapter uncritical and disappointing in several respects. First, he argues that Wagner's use of Bötticher's conceptual dichotomy of constructional and artistic form (which again is treated factually by Wagner) was simplistic, and in any case has been rendered outmoded by such new developments as psychological aesthetics, in particular Vischer's theory of empathy (*Einfühlungstheorie*).⁸⁹ Second, Streiter claims that Wagner, by distinguishing so sharply between utilitarian form and art, leaves himself with no means to explain how construction subsequently acquires its aesthetic value. Streiter even likens Wagner's rigorous materialism to those "Semperians" whom Alois Riegl criticizes in the introduction to his *Stilfragen* (1893)—both Streiter and Riegl are distinguishing between Semper's theory and the materialist interpretation of it by his latter-day followers.⁹⁰ The Darwinian or evolutionary basis of Wagner's architectural conception, Streiter charges, leaves him no room for "idealization" in architecture, and he thus is forced to reject entire periods of history. With regard to the Renaissance, which Streiter sees as the synthesis of the Greek columnar principle

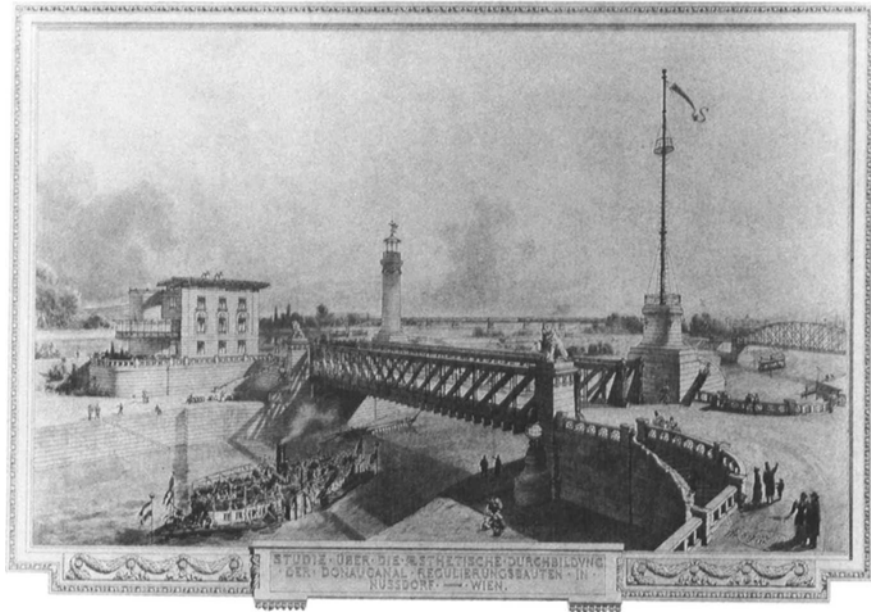
with Roman arcuated mass, he asks,

How does Wagner's principle—the architect always has to develop the art-form out of the construction—stand up to this architectural style? Logically, he must be led to a condemnation of the Renaissance and the Baroque, and to views similar to those we find in Cordemoy and Laugier, also in Hübsch. But Wagner's buildings and designs show no such consistency. They hold to decorative architecture in the sense of the Renaissance; that is, architecture in abundance, in which the actual construction is independent of the building mass. Nowhere does one find that Wagner conceives the relation of construction and art-form differently than his modern architectural colleagues have become accustomed to conceiving it; in fact, it can even be asserted that a number of English, French, American, and German architects take far greater account of the principle—the architect always has to develop the art-form out of the construction—than Wagner does himself.⁹¹

Streiter argues that material and constructional influences, such as iron, will not in themselves create a style, supporting his belief in the “inexhaustible vitality of antique architectural forms” with the examples of Richardson's Romanesque and the classical outfitting of the huge iron buildings at the Chicago Columbian Exposition.⁹² Where new materials and technology do have an effect, he says, is in the creation of large spaces, which in turn alter the collective (Wölfflinian) feeling for form. Such spaces condition a modern world view (*Weltanschauung*) from which a new style can arise.

Streiter was correct, at least, in pointing out the discrepancy in Wagner's theory and practice. Such a discrepancy is a problem not infrequently encountered in architecture, especially when theory proposes a major departure from accepted norms. This issue, however, becomes all the more important to clarify in the case of Wagner, since his historical reputation as a protomodernist (made axiomatic in the first half of this century) was more often than not based on the perception of a radical transformation in his approach to design in the mid-1890s, as articulated by his theory and presumably prompted by his utilitarian projects of this decade. Yet how and to what extent did Wagner attempt to implement the revolutionary

5. Lock, Nussdorf (1894). ©Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien.

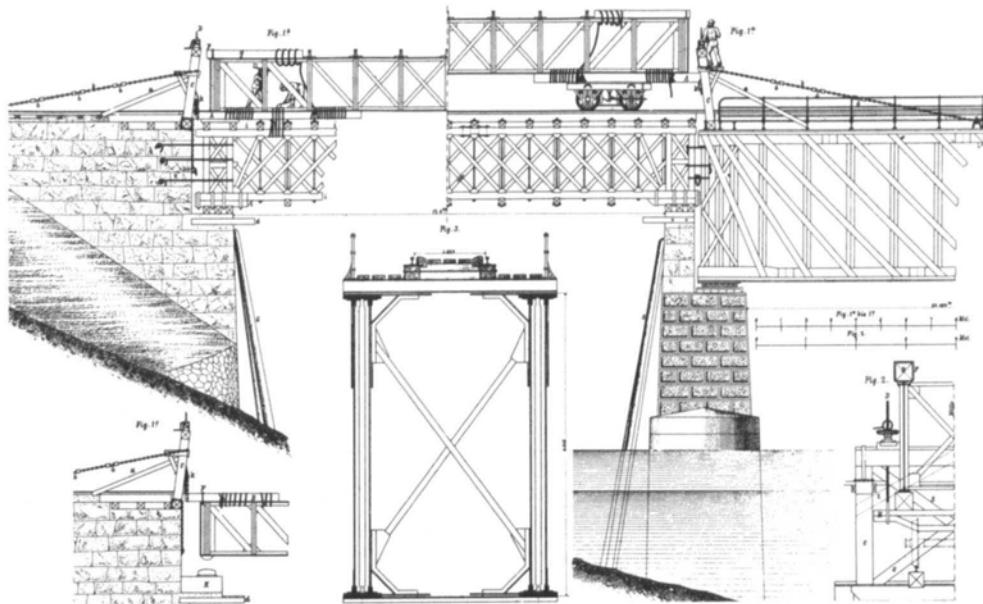


polemics of his 1896 manifesto? In what way did he try to develop artistic form out of construction?

Although the utilitarian scope and purpose of such projects as the Stadtbahn structures and the Nussdorf lock clearly bear out his social theme of modernity, they neither amplify his contention that artistic forms always derive from constructional forms nor depart from accepted practices of the day (fig. 5). These designs are conventional in their engineering and decorative treatment, as well as in their expression of the iron itself. The variation on a Pratt truss used at Nussdorf, for instance, has very prominent precedents in the bridges for the Helsinki-Saint Petersburg railway, extensive drawings for which were published in the *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* in 1889 (fig. 6).⁹³ The majority of his stations and viaducts were correctly described by the *Neue Freie Presse* in 1894 as designed in a restrained or spartan Renaissance style. Moreover, the transit commission dictated strict guidelines for the selection of materials and their treatment. The brick stations were to be finished with a stucco coating, the viaducts built in an exposed “pale yellow” brick with stone allowed in the cornice, plinths, and supporting piers. The bridges were to be executed in exposed iron with the profiling of the

6. Bridge along the Helsinki—St. Petersburg railway. Reprinted from *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1889, pl. 48 (collection, The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, Santa Monica).

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girders and trusses kept to a minimum. All railings were to be open metalwork so as not to hinder the view down from the elevated train.⁹⁴ Although these stations rise far above the norm in terms of the attention and talent lavished on their detailing, even here the motifs are initially classical in inspiration; later they are early Secession.

Modern Architecture only hints at how constructional form becomes artistic form. In his comparative illustration of “Renaissance” and “Modern” building methods (the prototype for the former he identifies in the fourth edition as Semper’s Hofburg theater), Wagner appears to sidestep the issue purposely. The first building method stacks and chisels large blocks of stone in place, exhausting great sums of money, material, time, and labor; the second or modern method sheathes a structural framework (in this case a brick or rubblestone bearing wall) with thin, factory-polished panels of marble, anchored in place with bolts. Yet Wagner reveals nothing of the aesthetic implications of these two methods and materials. After noting the great savings in time and material, he simply intimates that “in this way a number of new artistic motifs will emerge” (p. 96).

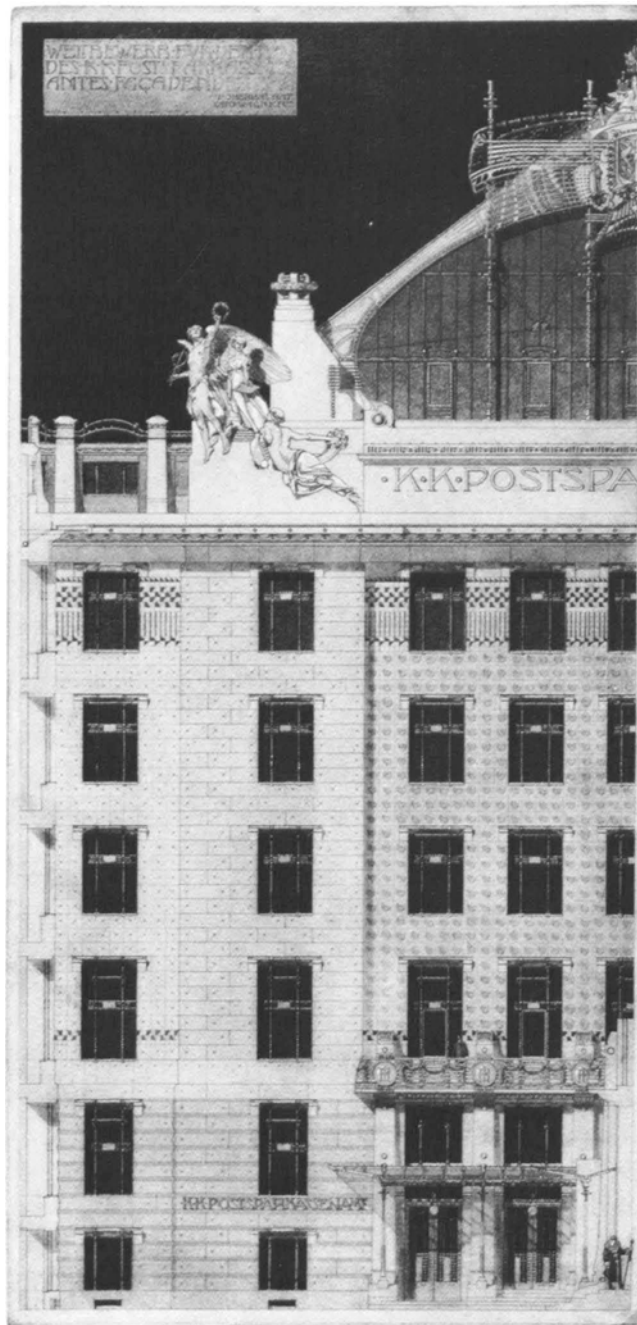
To see what these “new artistic motifs” might be, it is necessary to turn to his

works of the next decade in which he implements this new construction method, in particular, the Church of Saint Leopold Am Steinhof (1904–1907) and the Postal Savings Bank (1904–1906 and 1910–1912) (fig. 7). In both cases brick structures are sheathed or dressed with thin sheets of marble, set in a mortar bed, and seemingly anchored to the wall with metal bolts, themselves capped with aluminum heads. The number and spacing of the bolts in various panels is manipulated. In the center panels of the Postal Savings Bank the heads are enlarged and more densely concentrated (decorative tiles are shown in the competition drawing); at one stage in the design Wagner wanted the anchor caps in the center to be gilded so as to be seen better from the Ringstrasse, one block away. The panels of the bank's lower two stories are also cambered to give the appearance of a heavier, rusticated course. The Church Am Steinhof has two bases of stone: the lower a fieldstone, the upper a random-range ashlar. Still, the smooth cladding panels of both buildings, with their prominently displayed anchoring devices, are the principal elevational motifs employed in this modern way of building.

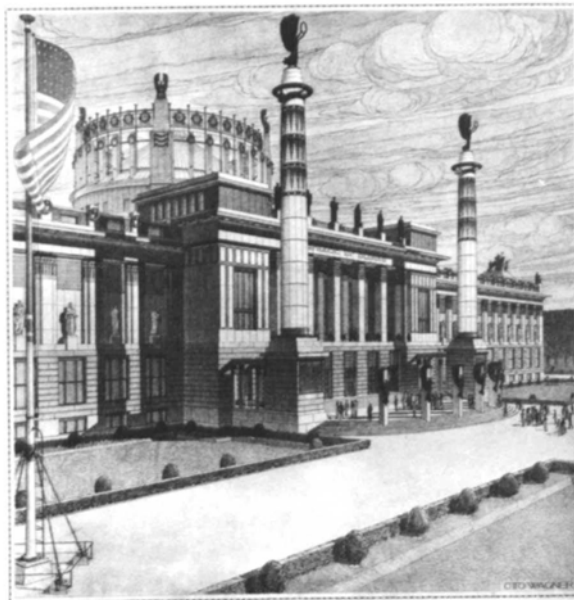
Yet the anchor bolts had only a limited “functional” value. The critics who reviewed these buildings at the time of their completion, as Peter Haiko has noted, were quite aware that the enhanced and articulated bolts only held the panels in place during the first three weeks of construction while the binding mortar bed hardened.⁹⁵ In essence, they were little more than a decoratively treated formwork. Such an ornamental conception, says Haiko, is a clever reversal of traditional logic; the construction is not enriched with ornament expressive of its purpose, but rather the decoration (the bolt heads) is invested with a constructional meaning seemingly inspired by necessity. Haiko has termed this decorative artifice “symbolic functionalism,” in that the bolts represent the technological, economic, and time-saving attributes of this type of construction. It was the appearance, rather than the reality, upon which Wagner's artistic conception was based.

Moreover, it is not just the bolt heads and surface texture that pass beyond a constructional logic. The cambered panels on the first two stories of the Postal Savings Bank, which up close are detailed in such a way as to reveal and emphasize their purpose as appliqué, allude to a bank's classical image of impregnability. The concentration of enlarged bolt heads and the projecting blocks in the upper story (shown in the competition drawing as blue tiles) are abstract residues of a traditional frieze. The building as a whole, like all of Wagner's designs, is centralized in a traditional compositional massing. Everywhere, it seems, Wag-

7. Postal Savings Bank, Vienna (1904–1912). ©Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien.



8. House of Glory, Washington, D. C. or San Francisco (1907). ©Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien.



ner's buildings are more representational than constructional in their conception. The wreath-bearing angels surmounting the Postal Savings Bank and the House of Glory of 1907 (the wreath for Semper was the primeval starting point for art) pay homage to ethereal values far removed from utilitarian necessity (fig. 8). The city of Vienna is guarded at Nussdorf by Wagner's majestically maned lions set atop variations of Egyptian pylons; the early projects for the Vienna Historical Museum (1900–1903) and Palace of Peace (1905) are crowned with a veritable army of figural works.

If *Modern Architecture* says little to elucidate the sublime and subliminal aspects of Wagner's practice, his buildings, at least, shed some light on certain passages of his theory. The smooth wall dressings of many of Wagner's later works find their aesthetic justification in his argument that the "modern eye" has lost its sense for a small and intimate scale and become accustomed to less varied images, to longer straight lines, to more expansive surfaces, and to plainer silhouetting (p. 109). In another passage added to the third edition of 1902, Wagner says that the Modern Movement proceeds "impressionistically" in the use of sculptural and ornamental decoration, employing "only those lines whose definite visual effect can be pre-

dicted” (p. 84–85). References to psychological and physiological principles of perception (in some cases suggesting a familiarity with the propositions of Owen Jones) appear in other passages as well, such as his mention of single and double viewing points, and of the human need to find a point of visual rest or concentration, lest “a painful uncertainty or aesthetic uneasiness occurs” (p. 87).⁹⁶

This attention to the visual impression again underscores the wealth of ocular charm typical of Wagner’s compositions. The image to be perceived, whether a presentational drawing, the paving lines of a square, or the apparent anchoring of exquisitely articulated marble panels, was for Wagner “the alpha and omega” of his architectural conception, and the one constant in his designs throughout his career. The compelling nature of this image also raises the question of Wagner’s relation to Semper and his criticism of Semper’s symbolic basis for architecture. The rationalist or constructional aspects of Wagner’s theory are often said to derive from Semper, based on the old but erroneous assessment of Semper’s theory as materialist in its foundation. Yet even if we accept their basic differences on a theoretical level, does not Wagner’s architectural conception, woven through many surface transformations of his buildings, remain Semperian in its visual or “dressing” formulation? At times, such as with the majolica sheathing on the facade of Linke Wienzeile 40 (fig. 9), Wagner’s wall dressings are specifically textile-like in their conception; after 1900, however, they begin to adapt themselves to a new theme. They invoke not so much their textile-inspired past as spatial dividers, but extol a brave new technological vision of the future, one that is specifically crafted to his image of the modern metropolis. It might even be said that the idea of modernity—that “world-historical idea” that eluded Semper—found its first full realization in Europe in the master’s most devoted disciple.

The six years between the first and third edition of *Modern Architecture*, 1896–1902, were years of rapid artistic development in Europe and the United States, giving rise to both Art Nouveau and the Modern Movement. Art Nouveau, which had been germinating in Europe and Chicago since the late 1880s, burst forth in 1895 with the opening in Paris of Samuel Bing’s shop, *Maison de l’Art Nouveau*. In Vienna, talk of a “secession” from the officially sanctioned and academically controlled Künstlerhaus dated back to the discussions of the Siebener Club in 1894; the first edition of *Modern Architecture* actually contains a reference to a “secessionistic presentation adorned with symbols” (p. 132, te. 107). The Secession, however,

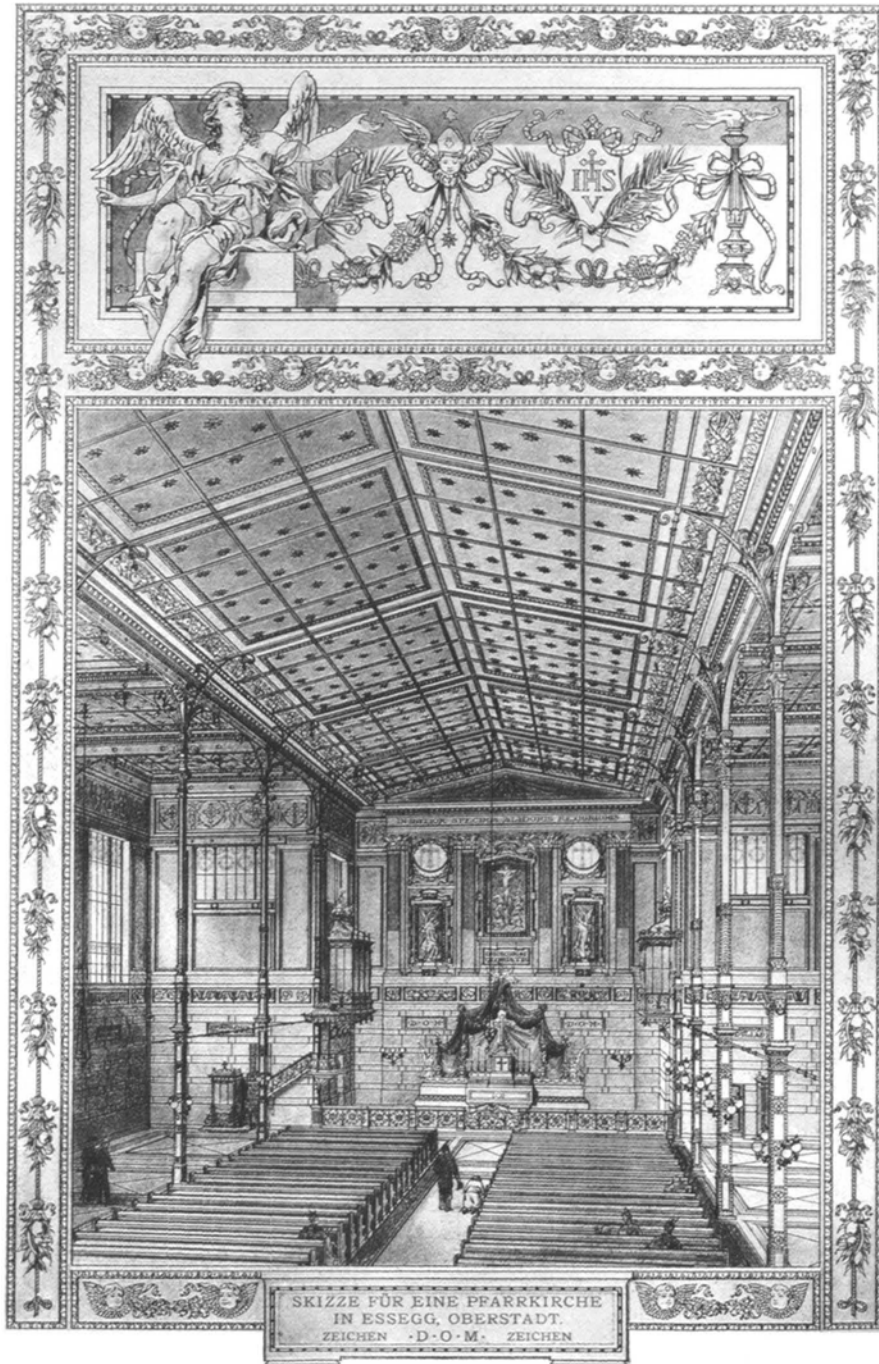


9. Apartment House (Majolica House), Linke Wienzeile 40 (1898). Reprinted from *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1900 (collection, The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, Santa Monica). ©Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien.

did not formally declare itself until 25 May 1897, when a group of nineteen artists, led by Gustav Klimt, Joseph Maria Olbrich, and Josef Hoffmann, walked out of the older association and formed the new alliance. Wagner, who was a great admirer of Klimt as well as of his two apprentices, did not join the Secession until 1899, no doubt because of his long association with the Künstlerhaus and the professional implications such a break entailed. The latter organization, in fact, had nominated him for the Stadtbahn projects.

10. Catholic Parish Church, Esseg, Slavonia (1893). Project. Interior perspective. ©Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien.

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Given Wagner's proclivity for flat, linear masses, one might expect the Art Nouveau influence to have been slight, but it was integral to his development in the 1890s. His proposed use of curved brackets atop interior iron columns for a church in Esseg of 1893 (fig. 10) suggests an awareness of Victor Horta's famous staircase at 6 rue Paul-Emile Janson in Brussels (Wagner vacationed in the 1890s in Ostend, Belgium). The wrought-iron decorative work on many of his Stadtbahn projects is Art Nouveau in character, although this is most likely owing to Olbrich's hand. The culmination of this phase for Wagner's office came in 1898, when the "Empire" motifs originally proposed for the apartment house at Linke Wienziele 40 were replaced with the new, more splendid polychrome scheme executed in majolica tiles. After 1900, however, Wagner distanced himself from the movement; in the third edition of *Modern Architecture* (1902) he deleted his earlier references to the Secession.

Other important developments in practice and theory took place during these years. Late in 1896 Charles Rennie Mackintosh prepared a design for the Glasgow School of Art that dispensed with the use of historical motifs. The interiors of Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald were widely admired in Vienna, by Hoffmann especially, and in 1900 the Scottish couple was brought to Vienna for a special exhibition at the Secession hall.⁹⁷

In Germany Wagner's closest rival was the Berlin architect Alfred Messel, whose Wertheim Department Store with its large open spaces, nearly fully glazed facade, and intricate interior detailing created a sensation when it opened on Christmas Eve, 1897. Alfred Lichtwark, writing for *Pan*, described Berlin's most popular building as indicative of the new "realist" approach in German architecture; its clear and simple accommodation to needs, Lichtwark predicted, would win for modern German architecture a new artistic viewpoint.⁹⁸

Beyond Europe the works of the Chicago School contain many historical parallels and affinities with Vienna. Adolf Loos's three-year tour of the United States between 1893 and 1896 reflects the fascination the new country held for the Viennese during these years. Such an interest intensified shortly before and after World War I with the emigration of two of Wagner's more talented students, Rudolf Schindler and Richard Neutra, the former originally accepting a position in the Chicago office of Ottenheimer, Stern, and Reichert. The attraction between Vienna and Chicago, in fact, was mutual. In the late 1880s, designers such

as John Root, Denkmar Adler, and Frederick Baumann were publicly debating Semper's theory.⁹⁹ In 1901 the first English translation of *Modern Architecture* was prepared by University of Illinois Professor N. Clifford Ricker, a frequent participant in Chicago discussions.¹⁰⁰ The effect Wagner's book had in the United States may be estimated by the fact that Lloyd Wright, son of the famed anti-academic, applied to Wagner's studio at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.¹⁰¹

More prominent, perhaps, was the development of European theory in the wake of *Modern Architecture*. In 1897 the Munich architect August Endell prepared a paper on the possibility and goals of the new architecture, in which he applauded the new trend toward practicality and the truthful expression of construction. Endell, who was an avid student of Wölfflin's psychology of form, defined feeling for form (*Formgefühl*) as the precondition for all architectural creation: "The architect must be a form-artist; only the art of form leads the way to a new architecture."¹⁰² One year later he published another paper exploring the psychological effects (energy and tension) of certain lines and forms. Part of his study was a commentary on a series of flat-roofed, unembellished facades with window patterns that, as Nikolaus Pevsner has noted, anticipated the housing schemes of the 1920s.¹⁰³

Henry van de Velde also closely followed the psychological studies of perception. After his success in designing interiors for Bing's shop in 1895, he moved to Germany, where his ideas, formerly influenced by William Morris, underwent further development over the next few years. His book of 1901, *Die Renaissance im modernen Kunstgewerbe* (The Renaissance in Modern Arts and Crafts), again exalted the trend toward realism as the means by which the artist could return to life and truth. Modern buildings, he argued, have no other meaning than their own purpose; form itself becomes the new ornament and is conditioned by the same laws of economy that guide the engineer.¹⁰⁴ Van de Velde presented a more succinct summary of his principles in the paper of 1902, "Prinzipielle Erklärungen" (Clarification of Principles).¹⁰⁵ The sole criteria for modern design, he argued, are to be found in reason and logic; absolute beauty resides in locomotives, bridges, and glass halls; the essential character of beauty is the perfect accord of the technical means, form, and purpose.

The same year—1902—saw the appearance of another major manifesto to the

Modern Movement, a work that was built in part on the efforts of Wagner and van de Velde, but that carried their arguments to the logical conclusion. In *Stilarchitektur und Baukunst* (Style-Architecture and the Art of Building) Hermann Muthesius, who had been living in London since 1896, praised the work of Wagner and his school in Vienna, but proposed a more rigorous architecture based strictly on “scientific objectivity” (*wissenschaftliche Sachlichkeit*), abstaining from all decoration and unconditionally correlating form and purpose.¹⁰⁶ The later polemics of Muthesius on the machine, standardization, and many ideals of the Deutsche Werkbund were brilliantly nurtured in this forcefully worded condemnation of eclecticism and the Art Nouveau movement. Muthesius even insisted that the German words *moderne* and *Architektur* no longer be used—the former for its linguistic association with the German word *Mode* (fashion), the latter because of its corruption through nineteenth-century efforts at style making. He suggested as an alternative the older German word *Baukunst* (literally “the art of building,” but generally synonymous with architecture). Wagner dutifully complied, and in the next, and last, edition of his book in 1914 changed its title to *Die Baukunst unserer Zeit* (The Architecture of Our Time).

With the publication of Hendrik P. Berlage’s *Gedanken über Stil* (Thoughts on Style) in 1905, modern theory can be said to have consolidated its position in Europe and articulated nearly every issue prominent in the postwar phase. These writings, together with the elegantly presented third edition of *Modern Architecture*, make these few years the first great celebration of the Modern Movement, the period in which the theories of Hübsch, Bötticher, and Semper (not to mention Ruskin, Morris, and Viollet-le-Duc) found their long-awaited historical vindication. “The Modern Movement,” boasted Wagner in the preface to his third edition, “despite all prophecies to the contrary and the most objectionable means on the part of its opponents, has emerged victorious, and ever will remain so.” The Apollonian advocates of a new architecture commemorated their leaner, more rational vision of modernity; the Dionysian phantom of history had—temporarily at least—been thwarted. The modern metropolis of the new century beckoned ever more attractive with its sanguine promise of a meliorist world as the more somber apprehensions of Simmel, too, awaited their grim fulfillment.

NOTES

1. Ludwig Hevesi, "Otto Wagner," *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, XII (Leipzig, 1901): 30.
2. *Moderne Architektur, Prof. Otto Wagner und die Wahrheit über beide* (Vienna, 1897), p. 8.
3. *Ibid.*
4. See Walter Wagner, *Die Geschichte der Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien* (Vienna: Rosenbaum, 1967), p. 252. Walter Wagner suggests that Otto Wagner's commitment to modernity was known to the jury. Given the latter's argument in his report accompanying the Vienna master plan (see below) and his very public appointment and proposals for the Stadtbahn, it is difficult to believe the jury was unaware of his progressive agenda. The *Deutsche Bauzeitung* also seemed to know that Wagner's appointment would lead to changes. In commenting on his promotion it said, "It is our sincere belief that the choice could not have fallen on a more qualified person. We even do not hesitate to expect that with the commencement of Wagner's teaching activity at the academy there will be a more powerful blossoming of the Vienna school than ever was the case earlier. We reserve for later the reasons for this view" (*Deutsche Bauzeitung* [Berlin], 15 August 1894, pp. 399–400). The "reasons for this view" were confirmed by the journal's decision to publish Wagner's inaugural address (*Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 27 October 1894, pp. 529–31).
5. Carl E. Schorske, "Revolt in Vienna," *The New York Review of Books*, 29 May 1986, p. 24.
6. Karl Henrici, review, *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 9 January 1897, pp. 14–20.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
8. Richard Streiter, "Architektonische Zeitfragen"; republished in *idem*, *Ausgewählte Schriften zur Aesthetik und Kunst-Geschichte* (Munich, 1913), pp. 55–149.
9. See Robin Middleton and David Watkin, *Neoclassical and 19th Century Architecture* (New York: Abrams, 1980), p. 372.
10. Otto Wagner, preface, *Sketches, Projects and Executed Buildings by Otto Wagner*, ed. Peter Haiko, trans. Edward Humphrey (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), pp. 17–19.
11. Streiter, "Architektonische Zeitfragen," p. 81.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 149.
13. Joseph August Lux, *Otto Wagner: eine Monographie* (Munich, 1914), p. 8.
14. Otto Antonia Graf, *Otto Wagner*, 2 vols. (Vienna: Hermann Böhlau, 1985). For the only monograph in English to date, see Heinz Geretsegger and Max Peintner, *Otto Wagner, 1841–1918: The Expanding City, The Beginning of Modern Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1979).
15. "Die Architektur auf der Münchener Jahres-Ausstellung," *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 8 October 1890, pp. 490.
16. August Köstlin, "Wien im Dezember 1871," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* (Vienna), 1872, pp. 1–8; see also *idem*, "Wien im Dezember 1872," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1873, pp. 1–6.
17. "Die Renaissance in Wien," republished in *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 11 January 1872, pp. 10–12.
18. Otto Wagner, preface, *Einige Scizzen, Projecte u. ausgeführte Bauwerke* (Vienna, 1890), no pagination. (Excerpt translated by H. F. Mallgrave.)
19. Wagner's inaugural address was published as "Ein baukünstlerisches Lehrprogramm," *Deut-*

- sche *Bauzeitung*, 27 October 1894, pp. 529–31.
20. Heinrich Hübsch, *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?* (Karlsruhe, 1828), p. 51.
21. Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, trans. and ed. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon, 1970), p. 13.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
23. Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Modern Life," in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, trans. and ed. Kurt H. Wolff (New York: Free Press, 1964), pp. 409–24.
24. Walter Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, ed. Peter Demetz, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), p. 161. See also Kurt W. Forster's analysis of Benjamin's ideas, "Walter Benjamin: Residues of a Dream World," in *On the Methodology of Architectural History*, ed. Demetri Porphyrios, A. D. Profile (New York: St. Martins Press, 1981), pp. 68–71.
25. Gottfried Semper, *Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst* (Braunschweig, 1852), p. 10. English translation, "Science, Industry, and Art," in *Gottfried Semper: The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, trans. Wolfgang Herrmann and Harry F. Mallgrave (New York: Cambridge University Press, to be published 1988).
26. Semper, *Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst*, p. 31.
27. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, trans. Adrian Collins (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957). For a comparison of Nietzsche's and Baudelaire's concept of modernity, see Paul de Man, "Literary History and Literary Modernity," in *Blindness and Insight*, 2nd ed. rev. (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1983), pp. 142–86.
28. Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, p. 16.
29. Hübsch, *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?* pp. 2–13.
30. For an excellent analysis of Hübsch's theory and practice, see Wolfgang Herrmann, *Deutsche Baukunst des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Birkhäuser, 1977), pp. 60–68.
31. Gottfried Semper, *Vorläufige Bemerkungen über bemalte Architektur und Plastik bei den Alten* (Altona, 1834), pp. vii–viii. English translation, "Preliminary Remarks on Polychrome Architecture and Sculpture in Antiquity," in *Gottfried Semper: The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings* (in publication).
32. Schinkel's notes for his work on theory contain many references to the future style; perhaps the most appropriate is from his diary, "Every major period has left behind its own style of architecture. Why should we not try to find a style for ourselves?" (*Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Briefe, Tagebücher, Gedanken*, ed. Hans Mackowsky [Berlin, 1922], p. 194).
33. Karl Friedrich Schinkel, *Aus Schinkel's Nachlass*, ed. Alfred Freiherrn von Wolzogen, 4 vols. (Berlin, 1862), 2:211–12.
34. Rudolf Wiegmann, "Gedanken über die Entwicklung eines zeitgemässen nationalen Baustyls," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1841, pp. 207–14.
35. August Reichensperger, "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?" in *Zeitschrift für praktisches Bauwesen*, 1852, p. 296.
36. J. H. Wolff's articles, commentary, and responses to criticism appear frequently in *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1843 thru 1846. See especially, idem, "Entgegnung," *Beilage zur Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1843, pp. 1–5.

37. J. H. Wolff, "Ein Prinzip und keine Parteien!" *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1846, pp. 358–67.
- Wilhelm Stier, address to the architectural congress in Bamberg, "Übersicht bemerkenswerther Bestrebungen und Fragen für die Auffassung der Baukunst," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1843, pp. 296–302.
38. Eduard van der Nüll, "Andeutungen über die kunstgemässe Beziehung des Ornaments zur rohen Form," originally published in *Österreichische Blätter für Literatur und Kunst* 52 and 53 (1845): 401–04, 411–14; recently republished by Otto Antonia Graf in *Die Kunst des Otto Wagner*, ed. Gustav Peichl (Vienna: Akademie der bildenden Künste, 1984), pp. 21–34.
39. Van der Nüll, "Andeutungen," *Die Kunst des Otto Wagner*, p. 34.
40. Karl Bötticher, "Das Prinzip der hellenischen und germanischen Bauweise hinsichtlich der Übertragung in die Bauweise unserer Tage," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1846, pp. 111–25.
41. Eduard Metzger, "Beitrag zur Zeitfrage: In welchem Stil man bauen soll!" *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1845, pp. 169–79.
42. Bötticher, "Das Prinzip der hellenischen und germanischen Bauweise," p. 125.
43. Semper, *Vorläufige Bemerkungen*, p. xi.
44. Gottfried Semper, *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten oder praktische Aesthetik*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt, 1860–63), 1:xx. See also the English translation of the prolegomenon in *Gottfried Semper: The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings* (in publication).
45. Gottfried Semper, *Über Baustyle* (Zurich, 1869), p. 31. See also "On Architectural Styles," in *Gottfried Semper: The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings* (in publication).
46. Rudolf Redtenbacher, "Die Baubestrebungen der Gegenwart," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1885, pp. 61–63, 77–80.
47. Hans Auer, "Moderne Stylfragen," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1885, pp. 19–21, 25–27.
48. August Köstlin, "Das neue Wien," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1885, pp. 1–4.
49. Ludwig Bohnstedt, "Über die Bedeutung des Eisens für die Baukunst," *Wochenblatt des Architekten-Vereins zu Berlin (Deutsche Bauzeitung)*, 21–23 (1867): 201–02, 209–10, 219–20.
50. Hermann Lotze, *Aesthetik in Deutschland* (Munich, 1868), p. 545.
51. Constantin Lipsius, "Über die ästhetische Behandlung des Eisens im Hochbau," *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 7 September 1878, pp. 363–66.
52. Heuser's articles include: "Über Pfeiler von verschiedenseitiger Struktur," *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 30 July 1881, pp. 344–45; "Über Pfeiler von verschiedenseitiger Struktur II," *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 7 October 1882, pp. 468–69; "Über Pfeiler von verschiedenseitiger Struktur III," *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 17 November 1883, pp. 546–50; "Die Stabilrahmen, Strukturformen der Metall-Tektonik und ihre Nachbildung in anderem Rohstoffe," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1884, pp. 97–103; "Die Stabilrahmen, Strukturformen der Metall-Tektonik und ihre Nachbildung in anderem Rohstoffe," *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 10 February 1886, pp. 73–76; "Die Stabilrahmen," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1887, pp. 1–5; "Der Gefachstil," *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 25 March 1893, pp. 149–54; "Das Werden von Stylformen," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1894, pp. 53–54, 63–69.
53. See Alfred Kelly, *The Descent of Darwin: The Popularization of Darwinism* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1981).
54. Hans Semper, *Gottfried Semper: Ein Bild seines Lebens und Wirkens* (Berlin, 1880), p. 4.
55. Ernst Kapp, *Grundlinien einer Philosophie der Technik: Zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Cultur*

- aus neuen Gesichtspunkten (Braunschweig, 1877). See also W. Rauschenberg's lecture "Was ist Kunst?" published in *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 10 and 17 April 1886, pp. 182–87, 189–91.
56. Georg Heuser, "Darwinistisches über Kunst und Technik," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1890, pp. 18–19, 25–27.
57. Rudolf Redtenbacher, *Tectonik, Principien der künstlerischen Gestaltung der Gefüge und Gebilde von Menschenhand, welche den Gebieten der Architektur, der Ingenieurfächer und der Kunstindustrie angehören* (Vienna, 1881); idem, *Die Architektonik der modernen Baukunst* (Berlin, 1883).
58. Robert Vischer, "Über das optische Formgefühl," in *Drei Schriften zum ästhetischen Formproblem* (Halle, 1927), pp. 1–44.
59. Heinrich Wölfflin, "Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur," in *Heinrich Wölfflin: Kleine Schriften* (Basel: Benno Schwabe, 1946), pp. 13–47.
60. For late nineteenth-century discussions of Göller's theories see Cornelius Gurlitt, "Göllers ästhetische Lehre," *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 17 December 1887, pp. 602–04, 606–07; idem, *Die Deutsche Kunst des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts; Ihre Ziele und Thaten* (Berlin, 1899), pp. 491–93; Georg Heuser, "Das Werden von Stylformen," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1894, pp. 53–54; Streiter, "Architektonische Zeitfragen," pp. 147–48.
61. See Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, trans. Kathrin Simon (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), pp. 74–76.
62. For Göller's comments on stereometric surfaces with regard to Roman architecture, see Adolf Göller, *Die Entstehung der architektonischen Stilformen* (Stuttgart, 1888), p. 21; for his remarks on iron, *ibid.*, p. 450.
63. Gurlitt, "Göllers ästhetische Lehre," p. 603. Gurlitt notes the importance of Göller's break with Hegelian aesthetics, but disagrees with Göller's assertion that the beauty of abstract form cannot exist in sculpture and painting.
64. K. E. O. Fritsch, "Stil-Betrachtungen," *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 30 August and 3 September 1890, pp. 417–31, 434–40.
65. Leopold Bauer, *Verschiedene Skizzen, Entwürfe und Studien: eine Beitrag zum Verständnis unserer modernen Bestrebungen in der Baukunst* (Vienna, 1899), quoted from F. Ritter von Feldegg's review, "Philosophie der modernen Baukunst," *Der Architekt* 5 (1899): 22.
66. Otto Wagner, "Wohnhaus, I., Stadiongasse 6 und 8 in Wien," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1887, p. 56.
67. See Iain Boyd Whyte, introduction, *Otto Wagner: Vienna 1841–1918, Designs for Architecture*, exhibition catalog (Oxford: Museum of Modern Art Oxford, 1985).
68. Peter Haiko, "Otto Wagners Interieurs: Vom Glanz der französischen Könige zur Ostentation der 'modernen Zweckmässigkeit'," in Paul Asenbaum and Peter Haiko, *Otto Wagner, Möbel und Innenräume* (Vienna: Residenz, 1984), pp. 11–63.
69. For the "Erläuterungs-Bericht" for the master plan, see Graf, *Otto Wagner*, 1:87–121.
70. Wagner's use of this credo is often said to derive from Semper and represent the latter's "materialist" or "functionalist" influence. In his inaugural address (see Appendix B), Wagner translates the credo by quoting from Semper's *Vorläufige Bemerkungen über bemalte Architektur und Plastik bei den Alten*, "Art knows only one master—the need." *Vorläufige Bemerkungen* (1834), however, is an early work of Semper's, written after his student tour of Italy, Sicily, and Greece, and prior to

starting his practice. This sentence represents the youthful and most “progressive” stage of Semper’s thinking, but not his mature theory. After 1849, Semper’s position on this matter, in fact, reversed itself. In the prolegomenon to *Der Stil* and in other places, Semper adamantly opposed those who tried to reduce architecture to such a criteria. Wagner, perhaps quite sincerely, may have believed he was drawing or receiving support from Semper’s theory by invoking his motto, but his reading of Semper in this instance reveals more of what Alois Riegl referred to in 1893 as the “Semperianism” of the day, rather than the genuine influence of Semper.

71. Josef Stübben, “Der General-Regulierungsplan für Gross-Wien,” *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 10 March 1894, pp. 123–24.

72. An excerpt of the article was republished in *Kunstchronik* 5 (31 May 1894): 438.

73. Hasenauer died in January 1894. The second special school at the Academy was headed by the Gothicist architect Viktor Luntz from 1891 to 1903.

74. The “modern” assertions contained in his Vienna master plan report were in print by this date. See also Walter Wagner, *Die Geschichte der Akademie*, pp. 251–54.

75. Among the students Wagner inherited were Josef Hoffmann, Leopold Bauer, Josef Ludwig, Franz Krásny; the most prominent designers in his office in 1894–95 were Joseph Maria Olbrich and Max Fabiani.

76. See Marco Pozzetto, *Max Fabiani: Ein Architekt der Monarchie* (Vienna: Tusch, 1983), p. 14. See also Franco Borsi and Ezio Godoli, *Vienna 1900: Architecture and Design* (New York: Rizzoli, 1986), p. 157.

77. Max Fabiani, “Aus der Wagner Schule,” *Der Architekt* 1 (1895): 53–56.

78. On the Siebener Club, see Eduard F. Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann: The Architectural Work* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), pp. 15–17. See also H. Ankwitz-Kleehofen, “Die Anfänge der Wiener Secession,” *AUMK* 5 (June–July 1960): 6.

79. The adjective “brutal” was used by Fabiani himself. See Pozzetto, *Max Fabiani*, p. 14. For an analysis of Wagner’s personality, see Robert Oerley, “Otto Wagners Persönlichkeit,” *Der Architekt* 12 (1919): 23–26.

80. Gurlitt, *Die deutsche Kunst*, p. 648; Ludwig Hevesi, *Österreichische Kunst im 19. Jahrhundert*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1903), 2:287.

81. Streiter, “Architektonische Zeitfragen,” pp. 82–84.

82. Review, Walter Crane exhibition, *Kunstchronik* 6 (16 May 1895): 394.

83. Streiter, “Architektonische Zeitfragen,” pp. 138–39.

84. Otto Antonia Graf, “Der Pfeil der Zukunft: Umriss eines Desideratums,” *Die Kunst des Otto Wagner*, pp. 15–18.

85. Karl Bötticher, introduction, *Die Tektonik der Hellenen*, 2 vols. (Potsdam, 1844–52); also published as “Entwicklung der Formen der Hellenik Tektonik,” *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1840, pp. 316–30.

86. Semper, *Der Stil*. His section on the “dressing” motive runs 296 pages in the first volume. For an English translation of the first part of this section, see *Gottfried Semper: The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings* (in publication).

87. See especially Semper, *Der Stil*, 1:444–45.

88. Heuser first criticized Semper’s “dressing” motive in “Die Stabilrahmen,” *Allgemeine*

Bauzeitung, 1887, p. 5. See also Redtenbacher, introduction, *Die Architektonik der modernen Baukunst*, p. 1. As late as 1898 Josef Dahlen pointed out modern architecture's rejection of Semper's "dressing" thesis (Dahlen, "Die alte und die neue Richtung in der Baukunst," *Der Architekt* 4 [1898]: 30–31).

89. Streiter, "Architektonische Zeitfragen," p. 97.

90. *Ibid.*, p. 98. See also Alois Riegl, *Stilfragen: Grundlegungen zu einer Geschichte der Ornamentik*, 2d. ed. (Berlin, 1923 [original ed., 1893]), pp. vi–vii.

91. Streiter, "Architektonische Zeitfragen," pp. 104–05.

92. *Ibid.*, pp. 110–11.

93. *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1889, pls. 40–50.

94. See *Kunstchronik* 5 (31 May 1894): 438.

95. Peter Haiko, "Otto Wagner: Die Postsparkasse und die Kirche Am Steinhof," in *Traum und Wirklichkeit: Wien 1870–1930*, catalog (Vienna: Museen der Stadt Wien, 1985), pp. 88–105.

See also Haiko's discussions on Wagner's "symbolic functionalism" in Haiko, "Otto Wagners Interieurs," p. 11–63, and *idem*, introduction, *Sketches, Projects and Executed Buildings*, p. 5–11.

96. Marco Pozzetto, introduction to his Italian translation of *Moderne Architektur* (Turin: Cortina, 1976), has suggested Wagner's familiarity with Carl Siegel's *Entwicklung der Raumvorstellung des menschlichen Bewusstseins* (Leipzig, 1889).

97. See Eduard F. Sekler, "Mackintosh and Vienna," in *The Anti-Rationalists*, eds. Nikolaus Pevsner and J. M. Richards (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 136–42.

98. Alfred Lichtwark, "Realistische Architektur," *Pan* 4 (1897): 229–34.

99. Root may have initiated the discussions with his English translation of Semper's *Über Baustyle*, see John Root, "On Architectural Styles," *The Inland Architect and News Record*, in sequence, end of 1889–beginning of 1890; see also his accompanying notes on the discussions. For the German influence in Chicago at this date, see Roula Geraniotis, "German Architectural Theory and Practice in Chicago, 1850–1900," *Winterthur Portfolio* 21, no. 4 (1986): 293–306; *idem*, "University of Illinois and German Architectural Education," *Journal of Architectural Education* 38, no. 4 (1985): 15–21.

100. Otto Wagner, *Modern Architecture* (1898 edition), trans. N. Clifford Ricker, *The Brickbuilder* 10 (1901): 124–28, 143–47, 165–71. Republished in book form, *idem*, *Modern Architecture* (Boston: Rogers & Manson, 1902).

101. Lloyd Wright's letter of application exists, but it appears he was denied admission.

102. August Endell, "Möglichkeit und Ziele einer neuen Architektur," *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* 1 (1897–8): 144.

103. August Endell, "Formenschönheit und dekorative Kunst," *Dekorative Kunst* 2 (1898): 119–25. Nikolaus Pevsner, *Pioneers of Modern Design* (Norwich: Penguin, 1968), pp. 194–95.

104. Henry van de Velde, *Die Renaissance im modernen Kunstgewerbe* (Berlin, 1901); see especially the chapter "Das neue Ornament," pp. 97–108.

105. Henry van de Velde, "Prinzipielle Erklärungen," in *Kunstgewerbliche Laienpredigten* (Leipzig, 1902), pp. 137–95.

106. Hermann Muthesius, *Stilarchitektur und Baukunst* (Mülheim and Ruhr: Schimmelpfeng, 1902; reprint, Kraus, 1976), see especially pp. 50–55.

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MODERN ARCHITECTURE

OTTO WAGNER

A GUIDEBOOK FOR HIS STUDENTS TO THIS FIELD OF ART

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

1902

Again this work appears little altered in form and content.

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□ Its success has helped it into a somewhat more expensive dress and has prompted small changes in the contents toward something of a “manifesto” [Denkschriftartigen]. Its origin dates back to 1895.¹

□□□



□ Six very successful years for art have elapsed since this time.

□□□

□ Its once so numerous opponents have grown silent.

□□□

□ It was and is still today a call to young architects to shun the copy and the path of plagiarism and to seek salvation in creative work.

□□□

□ Artists and laymen, inspired by the eruption of the Modern Movement [die Moderne], have participated in the struggle. With artists the opposition could only have been a matter of time, while laymen, in order to consolidate new and very different views, needed models whose production they had to await.

□□□

□ Although good models of useful objects are today already rather numerous, and during this time magnificent paintings have also been produced, such models are almost totally lacking in monumental building. Yet it is just these that would allow laymen to judge the Modern Movement.

□□□

□ Since artists, on the strength of their conviction, are also not resting after

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their victory and with admirable persistence—despite all envy—are having an artistic and educational influence on the general public, one can hope that in this area too strides will soon be taken toward the goal. □□□

□ The Modern Movement, despite all prophecies to the contrary and the most objectionable means on the part of its opponents, has emerged victorious, and ever will remain so. The period of art and the name of the style may vary, but constant will be the change in artistic views. **THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THIS ESSAY IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE RECOGNITION OF THIS ETERNAL BECOMING.** □□□

Vienna, October 1901

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

1898

When I published the present book in October 1895, the convictions that I voiced were greeted with incomprehension and ill will by a large number of my colleagues, and many an unjustified, even foolish word was hurled at me. Like all innovators, I had to learn that one may not tell the world with impunity, "Your views were built on a false premise, you were wrong." □□□

□ Scarcely three years have passed since that time, and more quickly than even I would have thought my words have proven true. Almost everywhere the Modern Movement has marched in victorious. Its opponents thronged into camp as deserters; the opposition's best warriors faltered when they saw that the shield of eclecticism and "intimacy" that they were holding up to the onslaught of the Modern Movement was only made of pasteboard.² □□□

□ An army of art periodicals appeared on the battlefield, and all have opened their columns to the Modern Movement; in word and deed the Modern Movement has been celebrated. The success of the Union of Austrian Artists, the "Secession," convincingly demonstrates that even the public at large has rallied to this youthful cause.³ □□□

□ Surely every fighter must be filled with satisfaction when he can see the victory of his views after many years of struggle. □□□

- ☐ And this victory—it is there! ☐☐☐
- ☐ Who today will still deny that the general public is not only greeting the new art sympathetically, but even receives the long-withheld nourishment with the craving of a starving person? As brilliant as a phoenix, art has arisen again from the ashes of “tradition” as the Modern Movement,⁴ and has displayed its eternal creative power anew. ☐☐☐
- ☐ It was bound to happen! Art could not drag itself along in the well-worn tracks of the copy; no, with proper feeling it had to attain for itself the expression of beauty befitting our century so inundated with intelligence. ☐☐☐
- ☐ With the impetus of the Modern Movement, tradition has been given its true value and lost its overemphasis; archaeology has been reduced to an auxiliary science of art, which, one hopes, it will always remain. ☐☐☐
- ☐ That the struggle had to be full of bitterness is easily explained; the victory of the Modern Movement has deprived numerous former champions of art of the ground on which they had erected the temples of their success. ☐☐☐
- ☐ Naturally it is not surprising that not all blossoms put forth by the Modern Movement have matured into healthy fruit, yet that everything is budding and sprouting is a fact that cannot be appreciated highly enough. ☐☐☐
- ☐ Genius, work, and time will surely transform many of the emerging forms into pure and lasting crystals. ☐☐☐
- ☐ Not everything that is modern is beautiful, yet our senses must tell us that today the truly beautiful can only be modern. EVERY EPOCH OF ART HAS BEEN CRITICAL OF THE EARLIER ONE AND EMBRACED A DIFFERENT IDEAL OF BEAUTY.⁵ ☐☐☐
- ☐ Newborn artistic beauty delights us and rises up like a mountain over everything copied. ☐☐☐
- ☐ Having been asked by my publisher to prepare a second edition of this work, I gladly comply with this request, the more so because it seems to me that but little more energy is needed to be able to claim victory on all fronts.
- ☐ The new edition has only minor changes and is printed in a new typeface previously unavailable. I believe the comprehensibility of the text has been increased with the addition of some photographs of a few of my latest works.⁶ ☐☐☐

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

1896

With constant creative work every man comes to hold a wealth of views that take root in him and,



like theses, influence his future actions!

□□□



□ If his deeds are accompanied by success, then it may be assumed that others too share these views and that they hold didactic value.

□□□

□ This is also true for me.

□□□

□ Called to practice the teaching profession at the premier school of art of the Empire, I feel the duty to set down such theses, to prove and to defend them, and by so doing to further the cause of education.

□□□

□ This and the wish to reduce, at least in part, the awkward and all too frequent repetitiveness in instruction first prompted me to publish these lines.

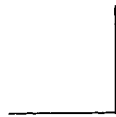
□□

□ I have endeavored in a concise format to include in this book everything that I have acquired and compiled over years of experience in the practice of art, nor have I refrained in this case, as ever, from giving my convictions full expression.

□□□

□ These lines will also serve as something of an explanation for my graphic publications, whose understanding they will certainly promote.

□□□



One idea inspires this book, namely THAT THE BASIS OF TODAY'S PREDOMINANT VIEWS ON ARCHITECTURE MUST BE SHIFTED, AND WE MUST BECOME FULLY AWARE THAT THE SOLE DEPARTURE POINT FOR OUR ARTISTIC WORK CAN ONLY BE MODERN LIFE. ☐☐☐

☐ The idea is no doubt correct, but the form in which it is developed in the following pages may contain many strange and awkward features—in short, it may betray an inexperienced author. The reader will also encounter repetitions, whose justification lies in the importance that I attach to several tenets, and no doubt also in the difficulty of undertaking a precise division of the material according to chapters. ☐☐☐

☐ Numerous are the supporters and opponents of the tendency whose representative I seem to have become. Yet it increasingly gains ground, and I can only take it again as a personal duty to provide this tendency with an early and general efficacy. I am thoroughly convinced that it is the true and only possible way, and that the path down which I am leading my students is the right one. ☐☐☐

☐ Thus I will try to shed light on the life and work of the young architect and to make clear to him the great and sublime aspects of his profession. ☐☐☐

☐ Naturally the *genius loci* had to be taken into account, and for this reason predominantly Viennese conditions are considered. ☐☐☐

☐ If I am successful in bringing a guide into the labyrinth of views and in making understandable the basic principles of modern architecture—then the purpose of this book will be fulfilled. ☐☐☐

Vienna, October 1895

THE ARCHITECT

The architect with his happy combination of idealism and realism has been praised as the crowning glory of modern man. Unfortunately he alone feels the truth of these words, while his contemporaries stand off to the side, little interested. I too, at the risk of being accused of a delusion of grandeur, must join in the song of praise. □□□

□ The lifelong training of the architect, the responsibility connected with his creative work, the great difficulties opposing the realization of his buildings, the indolence and peculiar views of the masses concerning architecture, an unfortunately all too frequent envy, and the diversity of views among his colleagues invariably cover his path of life with thorns, and far too often he looks wistfully at the disciples of the sister arts, who as a rule are carried aloft by mankind along a path strewn with roses.⁷ The praise and criticism that should enrich the career of the artist, as the sun and rain enrich the earth, seldom appear in the architectural sky; the eternal gray of practice and eerie darkness of public indifference veil every free and cheerful prospect. □□□

□ The architect can never count on instant success or immediate ideal remuneration. The hoped-for recognition will perhaps be allotted him after many years when under a load of tribulations he has completed a building, yet the

climax of his artistic ecstasy and joy of creation is at that moment when he sketches what seems to him to be a happy basic idea, however invisible and unintelligible to others. □□□

□ The architect therefore has to seek his reward for the most part in an inner contentment. Nevertheless, he must always keep his work in view with the same love and perseverance, and neither go astray nor tire, even if his financial remuneration, as is unfortunately the rule, amounts to a mere pittance, and the world—as hitherto, so henceforth—should be pleased to pay a female vocalist, for example, as much for an hour of song as Gottfried Semper with all his thriftiness saved during his entire life. □□□

Among the fine arts (as difficult as it is for me to speak of arts, for there is only one art),⁸

architecture alone is truly creative and productive; in fact, it alone is able to make forms that have no model in nature yet appear beautiful to man. Even if these forms have their source in natural structures and their origin in the material, the result is so far removed from the starting point that it must be considered a completely new creation. □□□

□ It therefore cannot be surprising to hear **THAT WE SHOULD SEE IN ARCHITECTURE THE HIGHEST EXPRESSION OF MAN'S ABILITY, BORDERING ON THE DIVINE.**⁹ □□□

□ And rightly so! Proof of this lies in the mysterious and overwhelming power that architectural works have on man, practically forcing him to contemplate. Architecture must therefore be described as the most powerful expression of art.¹⁰ □□□

Every artistic talent consists of two personal qualities: innate ability (predisposition)¹¹ and

acquired conceptual knowledge. The more these two qualities appear and balance one another, the greater will be the value of the work of art they produce. It is scarcely necessary to cite an example for this, yet for the sake of easier understanding it may be noted that Hans Makart, for instance, possessed more innate ability than acquired knowledge, while with Gottfried Semper the reverse was obviously true. Because of the enormous amount of study material that the architect needs to absorb, the Semperian relation in most cases prevails. □□□

□ With painters and sculptors success is conceivable without any acquired knowledge—whereas with the architect this is clearly impossible.¹² □□□

□ Innate ability consists mainly of imagination, taste, and manual skill,¹³ and just these qualities that count so heavily in choosing the career of architect are so much sinned against by those advising students on a career. □□□

□ The student may put his heart and soul into his work, but if imagination, taste, and manual skill are wanting, or if even one of these qualities is missing, then all the effort of training will be in vain. For this reason, one too often finds among architects changes of profession, despondent artists, and the dreary type who has misspent his life.¹⁴ □□□

□ The system that wants to train a man to be an architect only because he wants to become one, without persons in authority having determined whether he is born for it and has or has not the aptitude for it—such a system must finally be broken.¹⁵ □□□

□ It is unnecessary to emphasize that peace of mind and freedom from care, encouragement, and experience must work together to preserve in their entirety the personal qualities mentioned. Whether the creative power of the architect remains active or slackens during the course of his life will also depend on this. □□□

□ On the other hand, it must again be said that the wealth of knowledge to be acquired, the experience, and the successive growth and maturation of young, fresh ideas into their embodiment postpone the age at which the architect fully matures far beyond that at which other artists attain the height of their powers. □□□

□ Surely it is no exaggeration to place the successful practice of the architect beyond the fortieth year. □□□

□ To these difficulties intrinsic to the profession itself is joined yet another set of circumstances that contribute to making his life less rosy. One of the most serious and harmful is the frequent appearance of hermaphrodites of art and vampires of practice. It is therefore incumbent on the architect not only to fight these individuals, but also¹⁶ to recapture and maintain the position that belongs to him absolutely because of his ability and knowledge. □□□

It is appropriate here to speak of the state's protection of architecture. □□□□□□□□

□ Certainly the state receives the greatest advantages from the cultivation of art. In Italy we see today a country in which the artistic achievements of past generations surely form its most important life-nerve, and France likewise owes its wealth in no small part to art. □□□

- This protection can be given in different ways. □□□
- [Thus the creation of a Bureau of Art (Ministry for Art) is urgently needed. When appointing the art faculty, great importance must be given to the opinion of distinguished artists.¹⁷ All public buildings of the Empire should be carried out only by true architects. Particular attention should be given to the buildings in the provinces, because in this way art would be “carried into the country” and have an educational effect on the people. □□□
- All commissions and committees that are charged with the task of judging artistic works or that deal with questions of art should have at least half of their membership composed of noted artists.¹⁸ □□□
- The purchase and use of old apartment houses for public offices has to cease; the viewpoint of mere utility must yield to the artistic-practical; we must avail ourselves of every opportunity for open architectural competitions.
- I wish to take this opportunity to draw attention also to the great results of the Vienna Municipal Improvement Fund.¹⁹ It alone has made it possible to adorn Vienna with a number of monumental buildings that otherwise would certainly not have been built. Yet surely the sums of money at its disposal for such purposes are exceedingly small when compared to what foreign countries allocate for monumental art. A comparison with Paris is out of the question, but even with respect to the situation in Berlin we remain far behind. The fact that for nineteen years in Berlin, between 1871 and 1890, monumental buildings costing around the sum of 250 million marks were put up solely by the state speaks volumes. □□□
- [Our state administration has already taken a step forward in this regard with the creation of the Council of Art. Yet at present its work is still rather illusory because it lacks the most important conditions for life—power and money. Thus its activity has been confined up to now to announcements.²⁰]

The architect himself cannot be spared the blame for having done much to lower his own position and social standing. The attempt to keep up with dishonest competitors by noncompliance with the strict terms of the commission or by a sanguine excess of promises to the client has greatly harmed him. □□□

- A further source of harm can be seen in the inartistic, tasteless, and therefore incorrect way (popular until now) of presenting drawings of his work. A plain and insipid drawing, devoid of any artistic charm, makes less than an attractive impression on professionals and laymen. Later, in the chapter “The

Practice of Art," we shall have the opportunity to come back to this problem in greater detail. □□□

□ Yet the crux of the problem lies deeper. THE MAIN REASON THAT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ARCHITECT HAS NOT BEEN FULLY APPRECIATED LIES IN THE STORE OF FORMS EMPLOYED BY HIM UP TO NOW; THAT IS, IN THE LANGUAGE HE HAS DIRECTED TO THE PUBLIC, WHICH IN MOST CASES IS COMPLETELY UNINTELLIGIBLE.²¹ □□□

□ To explain this problem in detail is the most important purpose of this book.²² □□□

Architects cannot be condemned enough for not willingly and courageously taking up the artistic struggle thrust upon them by mankind, for not knowing how to ward off the indifference of the masses toward architecture, and for simply throwing up their hands.²³ □□□

□ An active, untiring participation in exhibitions, relentless sedulity, and unflagging energy would certainly help to promote a gradual improvement. Participation in competitions, notwithstanding all their inherent deficiencies, cannot be recommended enough, because they are extraordinarily instructive. □□□

□ Although colleagues generally maintain complete silence on exhibited works, everyone knows that one can impress artists only by works, and in the face of them any baseless claim vanishes or even achieves the opposite effect. Through his works the artist shows his ability, his thoughts and feelings—his soul, truth—and the last is always of interest when it is beautiful. All artists are equally receptive to such a truth, and exhibitions and competitions are just the opportunity for showing it. □□□

And now let me say a few words about the title "Architect" [*Architekt*]. It is clear that this designation belongs to the architect [*Baukünstler*] alone, and that it will not do to create architects of different grades, as, for example, architect-entrepreneur, architect-draftsman,²⁴ etc. □□□

□ The designations conferred by the state, such as "state-examined architect," "graduate architect," "civil architect,"²⁵ etc., often constitute as great a misuse of the title as when it is usurped by people who have not the shadow of a claim to it. □□□

□ As already mentioned, it is unfortunately the custom everywhere for parents or guardians to decide the future vocation of their children without taking into account their personal attributes. Yet nowhere is this more inappropriate than in choosing the vocation of architect. □□□

□ The factors influencing the youth counselors in this regard all culminate in the shortsighted view that this or that occupation will be the most lucrative or will provide the best “advancement.”²⁶ Taking the youth’s talents into consideration is already precluded, because the necessary qualities of imagination, taste, and keen thinking only appear later, after the occupational choice has long become a fact and the dice of fortune have thus fallen. A rather early facility in drawing does not by itself justify stamping the youth as a future architect. □□□

□ The normal and proper course of action here would be to refer technically trained candidates, twenty-two to twenty-six years of age, to the master’s studio at²⁷ the Academy of Fine Arts, whose instructors have the authority to decide whether the candidates can or cannot successfully pursue an artistic career. □□□

□ For the instructors this is an easy task. Not only do certificates, drawings, and sketchbooks lie before them for judgment, but they can also let the candidates pursue a trial year of academic studies, and if during this period the required aptitude does not manifest itself, they are then able to make the right decision with absolute certainty and can even correct an earlier judgment. □□□

□ If this were done consistently over many years, it alone would bring about a return to healthy conditions and produce a halfway natural relation between the number of architectural commissions available—and the number of architects.²⁸ □□□

□ It is impossible to leave this subject without giving some thought to our schools in general and to the schools of art in particular. □□□

□ All our schools suffer from the misfortune that the method of instruction is based almost entirely on a single human faculty, namely, memory. The catchphrase “above all, no lowering of educational standards” contributes further to the problem by preventing relevant subjects from being accepted into schools, so as not to disturb the status quo. Awakening the appreciation of art, exercising spatial thinking, considering the personal skills of the individual, and directing the pupils to the proper course of education are never discussed.

The almost universal indolence of the “educated” public with respect to art, the indifferent and foolish judgment that greets even the greatest works of art, our completely inadequate schools of art, the small value that almost all state agencies attach to art, an economically so deplorable drain of the nation’s energy—these and so many other things are the sad results that grow out of our present system of artistic education.²⁹ □□□

□ If the lower and higher schools of art are clearly in need of reorganization, then, in light of our present views on art, such is also surely the case with the art faculty. □□□

□ This need prompted me several years ago to submit to the proper authorities a proposal, which should also be discussed here. □□□

□ The proposal stated that the school administration should appoint art faculty members for the term of five to ten years only, and at the end of this period they should be free to announce a new appointment of any duration.

□ The reasons for my proposal were as follows: the artist attains the zenith of his ability slowly or quickly, but always striding forward. Many fall by the wayside, many topple into the abyss, many get up again to move toward the goal, a few attain the summit. This is the period of development. Whoever reaches the summit seldom stays on top for long; in most cases he does so briefly, then goes downhill again. Since the state, as far as the art faculty is concerned, must surely employ the very best, naturally the question arises: in which period should the state acquire its faculty? During the developmental period, it is uncertain what height the artist will attain, yet if he has already gone beyond his peak then the state will have to deal with a waning force. In all cases there is a certain risk for the state; it runs this risk with every appointment. Another factor to consider is that in most cases the physical health of the artist stands in a very unfavorable relation to the zenith of his ability. The purpose of my proposal, which was chiefly motivated by today’s very different artistic viewpoint as well as the endeavor to prevent the faculty from becoming outdated, was to lessen this risk and to make it possible for the state administration always to have the best faculty.³⁰ □□□

The fact that every architect must also be an engineer has led to a proliferation of official terms, and yet it is clear that one can be a distinguished engineer without having to claim the title “artist.” □□□

□ The examinations introduced by the state are at best suited to determine

whether the candidate seems capable of doing the structural calculations, and whether he is able to produce buildings that are useful for dwelling and other purposes.³¹ Yet whether these buildings are also works of art can only be decided by artists.³² □□□

□ There is something unhealthy in all of these conditions and therefore we must rejoice that artists themselves have begun to tackle the work of reorganization. □□□

□ The Union of Austrian Artists has intervened quite energetically in this regard. The Architects Club, an outgrowth of the Vienna Society of Artists, also has pursued the cause of reform and corresponds to an architectural higher court. The members of these unions are therefore approved as architects by an areopagus of artists. This explains the O.M. (ordinary member) for members of the union, and the C.M. for members of the Club. It can only be most warmly recommended that those in authority recognize the value of such approbation, and that the question of title also finds its resolution in this natural way.³³ □□□

So far we have talked about the architect's first years and the development of his aptitude. Yet the graduating architect, upon leaving school, must also have a number of intellectual qualities that will enable him to practice his profession fully. One of the most important among these I might call the ability to perceive needs. It is well known that contemporary society sets the tasks, and that it is incumbent on the artist to solve these tasks and to find the form for them. □□□

□ There are a thousand things that influence this form, all of which the architect must know if the form created by him is also to be the right one. □□□

□ Styles of living, fashion, etiquette, climate, place, material, the various technologies,³⁴ tools, and finally financial means—all have an important say in the creation of the work of art. To these factors are added every day a score of innovations and inventions, to which the architect must pay attention and of whose value he must be quickly and fully informed. Obviously the study of books and journals, practice, exhibitions,³⁵ and travel play a major role in this. □□□

□ Regarding travel in particular, permit me to say a few words. □□□

The art student, upon completing his studies and leaving the academy, usually sets out on a tour of Italy for a period of one to two years before he turns to practice. □□□

☐ I consider this way of doing things inappropriate. ☐☐☐

☐ It might be said, first of all, that this tour is very traditional and that modern conditions have also substantially altered our viewpoint here. Apart from the fact that today the travel time required for such a trip is much shorter than it once was, modern publications have also prepared us in the best way for everything worth seeing there. These facts alone speak against the hitherto customary two-year stay in Italy, which frequently only leads to idling on the part of the young artist. ☐☐☐

☐ But quite apart from this, I am of the opinion that after a three- or four-year course of studies at the academy, the young architect still does not possess sufficient maturity for a successful tour of Italy—through the treasury of ancient art. Therefore, this kind of tour is always undertaken too early. ☐☐☐

☐ Painterly and lighting effects, well considered proportions, the preparation of views, precisely defined visual distances, silhouettes in correct perspective, the genesis of forms and their justification, and characteristic features [determining the individuality of the masters³⁶] can only be perceived by a practiced, experienced eye. The maturity necessary for this does not yet exist at the age of academic graduation. ☐☐☐

☐ A tour of Italy to record the usual, very wrongly selected architectural works can only be looked on as an exercise in drawing; but to use this (as is frequently the case) for collecting architectural motifs to be employed after one's return on every occasion and *à tout prix* can almost be considered a crime; it is certainly a mistake. ☐☐☐

☐ One reason that has much bearing on undertaking a tour after the completion of studies and the extraordinary amount of work connected with them is a certain longing for freedom and for seeing things, which always appears at this stage of life. ☐☐☐

☐ From this point of view I can only most warmly recommend a study tour; that such a tour should start with Italy [I might even advise.³⁷] ☐☐☐

☐ Yet the objective mentioned here can be fully achieved in [three to five months.³⁸] After about a month's rest, the young artist might then visit the great cities and those places where modern luxury may be found, and there he might train himself completely by observing and perceiving the needs of modern man. ☐☐☐

☐ A further three months would be entirely sufficient to carry out this plan fully,³⁹ and the returning artist, filled with the impressions he has received

and with an undiminished willingness to work, could begin his advanced training in an atelier. He must spend years there learning the “practice of art” with persistence and diligence in order to pass into independent architectural practice around the end of his thirtieth year. Then he has another ten years before his full maturity, during which time he will produce, through his own or outside means, works of art that, incidentally, he will scarcely look back upon in his later days with satisfaction. □□□

One thing that every artist must experience should be mentioned here. This is the fact that ability [*Können*] always lags behind desire [*Wollen*]. This condition surely arises because architectural ability always entails a bringing forth of something new. Thus the architect learns with each new project and is conscious of his progress. This perception and, at the same time, the impossibility of being able to improve what is already built naturally produces a certain artistic depression. □ The creative architect in this respect can take great comfort in the fact that his knowledge, his joy in creating never slackens until very late in life, so long as he remains healthy. Striking examples of this are given by, among many other things, the ages of many great architects who pushed far beyond the usual limits: Bramante, 70; Sansovino, 93; Michelangelo, 89; Maderna, 83; Bernini, 91; Jones, 80; Klenze, 80; Semper, 76; ¹Garnier, 73 years;⁴⁰ etc. □□□

Before passing to the next subject, I must answer a question very frequently asked: why is today’s architect not also a painter or sculptor like the majority of artists of the past? □

□ The main reason for this phenomenon is to be sought in the first place in the fact that the knowledge offered to and digested by today’s architect has achieved a magnitude that already far exceeds normal human powers, while the period of learning and training of the young artist has been lessened in accordance with our economic conditions. This fact alone had to produce “specialists.” Yet joined to it are a number of other factors that fully explain the modern architect. Most will be touched on in this book, but a few in particular may be indicated at this point. □□□

□ Modern social conditions have allowed the type of the “artist-craftsman” to disappear completely and have made a machine out of every worker. □□□

□ A natural consequence of this must be that this entire large domain of art has fallen to the artist, with the principal burden, however, falling to the architect. □□□

□ Thus from two directions ever more demands are placed on the modern architect, since he is also forced to dedicate all of his efforts and energy to his more specialized profession. □□□

□ Finally, we could with equal right raise the question, why are our modern painters and sculptors not architects? Doubtless it is for the same reasons that prevent architects from also being painters and sculptors, [with the qualification that the architect has a greater justification for the reasons cited earlier.⁴¹] □□□

□ So much for the person, training, and “life” of the architect. We should now discuss what is created by him. □□□

□ The subjects to be examined divide themselves into Style, Composition, Construction, and Practice, although a sharp division of them is of course not possible. □□□

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STYLE

An opinion that is unfortunately very prevalent even in professional circles and is accepted, as it



were, as a postulate is that the architect must create a foundation for each of his compositions through the choice of a so-called style. People then expect that he cultivate a special preference for that stylistic tendency for which he shows an aptitude.⁴² □□□



□ The advocates of this theory adhere to the stylistic foundation down to the smallest detail; it becomes a hobbyhorse and is ultimately advanced as the touchstone for judging the created or, more correctly said, the copied⁴³ art-forms. □□□

□ The thoughtful architect is indeed in the greatest of predicaments in deciding where he should apply the lever to pull down such an edifice of lunacy. □□

□ It should first of all be pointed out that the word "style" in the sense indicated above invariably refers to the flowering of the epoch, therefore to the peak of the mountain. But it is always more correct to speak of an epoch of art as not so sharply delimited, and therefore as the mountain itself. I wish to employ the word "style" in this sense. □□□

□ Thus, for example, the Greeks in the formative period of their style were certainly not conscious of a contrast between their style and the Egyptian,

just as little as the Romans were with respect to the Greeks. The Roman style developed gradually from the Greek, and the latter from the Egyptian. Evidence still exists today of the unbroken chain of transitional forms between the flowering of one style and that of the next. □□□

□ Nations developed and improved the individual forms according to their ability, mode of expression, and point of view, until the forms corresponded with the epoch's ideal of beauty. □□□

□ EACH NEW STYLE GRADUALLY EMERGED FROM THE EARLIER ONE WHEN NEW METHODS OF CONSTRUCTION, NEW MATERIALS, NEW HUMAN TASKS AND VIEWPOINTS DEMANDED A CHANGE OR RECONSTITUTION OF EXISTING FORMS.⁴⁴ □□□

□ When earth-shaking events raged through a country, art stood still; when the people through their strength gained authority and respect and finally freedom, art always put forth a new flowering. Great social changes have always given birth to new styles. □□□

□ Thus art and its so-called style was always the complete, apodictic expression of the ideal of beauty of a definite period of time. Artists in every age had the clearly defined task of shaping new forms from those given or handed down to them, which then represented the art-forms of their time. □□□

□ IT MAY BE ACCEPTED AS PROVEN THAT ART AND ARTISTS HAVE ALWAYS REPRESENTED THEIR EPOCH.⁴⁵ □□□

□ That our so turbulent second half of the nineteenth century also sought the expression, the form, for its own view of art is obvious. But the events outpaced every development of art. What was therefore more natural than that "art," in the rush to make up for what it had missed, sought and believed it had found salvation everywhere, and that because of this so many artists⁴⁶ cried "Eureka" and sought and found enthusiastic disciples for the view they represented. □□□

□ The past century's effort to race through every stylistic tendency was the result of this trend. □□□

□ Who does not recall the electric effect that the words "Old German style" produced after the great political events in Germany? □□□

□ If we consider in a calm, impartial way all the stylistic fanfare and philippics of the past fifty years that have tried to steer the world's artistic views down the right paths, we can simply look back on the colossal mistakes of

these apostles of style with a pitiful smile. □□□

□ After the first artistic intoxication had faded, the works created were found to be unfitting and without motivation. It then became clear that all the so-called styles had indeed once been fully justified, and that another expression had to be sought for our modern age. Although these works satisfied us temporarily, because they so beautifully recalled the good old models, the artistic hangover was inevitable; the emerging “works of art” were shown to be merely the fruits of archaeological studies and lacked almost every creative value.⁴⁷ □□□

□ BUT THE TASK OF ART, AND THEREFORE ALSO OF MODERN ART, HAS REMAINED WHAT IT HAS BEEN IN ALL TIMES. MODERN ART MUST OFFER US MODERN FORMS THAT ARE CREATED BY US AND THAT REPRESENT OUR ABILITIES AND ACTIONS. □□□

□ If Michelangelo, Dürer, Rubens, Fischer von Erlach, etc., created a picture, a sculpture, or a building,⁴⁸ the work of art created always bore the original stamp of the master and of the time, and it never occurred to such artists to give their works a definite stylistic foundation or to copy the mode of expression of past centuries.⁴⁹ □□□

□ All too often with today’s artists we find the reverse to be true. They strive to reproduce the old as accurately as possible—even to imitate the changes in the old works produced by the effects of weathering. □□□

□ This cannot possibly be the task of modern art, and it certainly shows an absence of any artistic feeling not to find disturbing the juxtaposition of such “art-forms” with the modern world. □□□

A few pictures of style might serve to illustrate further what has been said. □□□□□□□□

□ A Greek temple painted with bright colors, a grove adorned with colorful statues, a handsome, short-aproned Greek with brown skin, a sacred olive tree harmonious with color, a deep blue sky, a heated, trembling atmosphere, sharply defined shadows—that is such a picture, a symphony. □□□

□ A Gothic church, innocent and pious candlelight shimmering through a colorful window, a crowd flocking to church in dull-colored slit doublets and smocks, incense, a peal of bells, an organ tone, a sky often overcast—again a picture. □□□

□ The French kings from Louis XIII to XVI, their court ladies and courtiers in rich and heavy dresses and perukes, their etiquette, their richly ornate

halls (eventually becoming simpler), their pastoral plays in stylized gardens far away from the common people—a series of pictures. □□□

□ If someone were to try to remove from these pictures even the smallest detail and substitute for it another in a foreign style, it would ring out as a dissonant note. □□□

□ For our present picture to become harmonious, art and its forms must embrace what they absolutely cannot circumvent—man and his appearance, his endeavors. □□□

The pictures of style just evoked logically allow us to perceive the close and hitherto ignored relationship between taste, fashion, and style. □□□

□ Even a slight gift of observation must awaken in us the conviction that outward appearance—man's clothing in its form, color, and accessories—is fully consistent with each period's artistic viewpoints and creations and cannot even be imagined otherwise. □□□

□ No epoch, no style has been an exception to this. This fact is vividly seen in comparing costume designs with contemporary works of architecture, or better still, by inspecting paintings that show both together (Carpaccio, Callot, Bosse, Lepautre, Chodowiecki, Canaletto). □□□

□ The matter can even be pursued so far that we are eventually forced to conclude that the great masters of past centuries failed as soon as they tried to represent figures in the traditional costumes of their ancestors. Their perception and their feeling corresponded only to the forms of their own epoch. What pencil and brush created was always the very own style of its time. □□□

□ How completely different it is today! □□□

□ A hodgepodge of styles, with everything copied, even given a patina—is this supposed to accord with our outward appearance? □□□

□ It is not necessary to be an artist to answer this question with a forceful "No!" □□□

□ Where is the error? What is the source of this discord between fashion and style? □□□

□ Modern man has surely not lost his taste; today he notices more than ever the smallest error of fashion, and certainly fashion is more difficult today than ever before. □□□

□ Our clothing, our fashion, is dictated and deemed proper by the public at large, and this precludes even any hint of error. Since the discord is not to be

sought in that, naturally it must lie in today's works of art. And indeed this is the case. □□□

□ THINGS THAT HAVE THEIR SOURCE IN MODERN VIEWS CORRESPOND PERFECTLY TO OUR APPEARANCE (obviously this can always and only be true for such things that have also ripened into art-forms); THINGS COPIED AND IMITATED FROM OLD MODELS NEVER DO. □□□

□ A man in a modern traveling suit, for example, fits in very well with the waiting room of a train station, with sleeping cars, with all our vehicles; yet would we not stare if we were to see someone dressed in clothing from the Louis XV period using such things? □□□

□ This extraordinary sensitivity of the public with regard to fashion, on the one hand, and this indifference, even dullness, concerning artistic works, on the other hand, find their explanation in the following. □□□

□ First of all, fashion is more obvious, easier to understand and to influence, a precursor of style, whereas style itself represents something more difficult to influence, a rigid and refined taste whose critique demands concentration and understanding. □□□

□ Yet certainly, as already mentioned, the most compelling reason that the masses are so insensitive to most works of art is that the language of art is unintelligible and what is presented is no work of our time. □□□

In searching and groping for the right course, our age, far from expressing ourselves and our viewpoints, has sought salvation in mimicry instead of in new creations and⁵⁰ natural improvements. □□□

□ The artist⁵¹ has been content to dissect the dead with a magnifying glass and lancet, instead of listening to the pulse of those who are living and relieving their pains. □□□

□ The perception that many architectural problems, such as churches, should appear the same today as centuries ago, whereas others should be of the most recent date, has produced great errors. Thus it happens that laymen and unfortunately also many architects are of the opinion that a parliament, for instance, may be in Greek style, but a telegraph office or a telephone exchange may not be built in Gothic, although they demand that a church be built in the latter style exactly. They forget in all of this just one thing, namely that the people who frequent these buildings are all equally modern, and that

it is the custom neither to ride to the parliament bare-legged in an antique triumphal chariot, nor to approach a church or a city hall wearing a slit doublet. □□□

□ All errors that have and are being made in this regard are solely the artist's fault. The only excuse that can carry any weight is the earlier-cited haste in searching for the right course. □□□

□ The striving for a "painterly effect," for a harmony with the existing, has sprouted similarly strange flowers. □□□

□ In one of the most recent competitions for a city hall, the architects as well as the professional and nonprofessional jurors went to great pains to bring the proposed building into harmony with the old "painterly" surroundings. They proceeded, as it were, from the method of theater decoration, yet never considered that the rebuilding of the city hall would have resulted in the renovation of all surrounding houses, so that in the end an "old" city hall would have been encircled by modern houses. □□□

□ In yet another competition for a city hall, fifty-two of the fifty-three entries—fifty-two I say—were designed in Gothic or Old German style. □□□

□ But the writer of these lines has discovered that the authorities in charge here were anything but Gothic or Old German men; they were smart, self-confident, modern Germans, and it was also these qualities that they wished to see expressed artistically in the appearance of the city hall.⁵² □□□

□ Artistic efforts that try to make imitations conform to existing buildings without taking into account other conditions (apart from revealing a certain impoverishment of the spirit and lack of self-confidence) cannot but make an impression similar to that of someone attending a modern ball in the costume of a past century, even rented for the occasion from a masquerade shop.⁵³ □

□ This cannot possibly be the path that modern architecture⁵⁴ has to take; otherwise all creative power would be denied it. □□□

ALL MODERN CREATIONS MUST CORRESPOND TO THE NEW MATERIALS AND DEMANDS OF THE PRESENT IF THEY ARE TO SUIT MODERN MAN; THEY MUST ILLUSTRATE OUR OWN BETTER, DEMOCRATIC, SELF-CONFIDENT, IDEAL NATURE AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT MAN'S COLOSSAL TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS, AS WELL AS HIS THOROUGHLY PRACTICAL TENDENCY—THAT IS SURELY SELF-EVIDENT!⁵⁵ □□□

□ What enormous work is thus reserved for modern art, and with what enthusiasm must we artists jump at the chance to show the world that we have grown equal to the task! □□□

□ If we take the right course, the recognition of man's innate ideal of beauty will be expressed honestly, quite of its own accord; the language of architecture will become understandable and the style representing us will be created. □□□

□ And there is more! □□□

□ 「We find ourselves in the midst of this movement.⁵⁶」 This frequent departure from the broad path of imitation and custom, this ideal striving toward truth in art, 「this longing for freedom⁵⁷」—they are breaking through with enormous power, demolishing everything that obstructs their determined, triumphant advance. □□□

□ As always, art will have the power to show man his own ideal reflection. □□□

□ 「YET SO POWERFUL IS THE UPHEAVAL THAT WE CANNOT SPEAK OF A RENAISSANCE OF THE RENAISSANCE. A COMPLETELY NEW BIRTH, A NAISSANCE, HAS BEEN EMERGING FROM THIS MOVEMENT.⁵⁸」 UNLIKE EARLIER CIVILIZATIONS THAT HAD AVAILABLE ONLY SOME TRADITIONAL MOTIFS AND CONTACT WITH A FEW NEIGHBORING TRIBES, WE HAVE, AS A CONSEQUENCE OF OUR SOCIAL RELATIONS AND THROUGH THE POWER OF OUR MODERN ACHIEVEMENTS, ALL THE ABILITY AND KNOWLEDGE OF MAN AT OUR FREE DISPOSAL. □□□

□ 「THIS NEW STYLE, THE MODERN, IN ORDER TO REPRESENT US AND OUR TIME, MUST CLEARLY EXPRESS A DISTINCT CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS FEELING, AN ALMOST COMPLETE DECLINE OF THE ROMANTIC, AND AN ALMOST ALL-ENCOMPASSING APPEARANCE OF REASON IN ALL OUR WORKS.⁵⁹」 □□□

「THIS NASCENT STYLE, REPRESENTING US AND OUR TIME AND BUILT ON THE FOREGOING BASIS, NEEDS, LIKE ALL PRECEDING STYLES, TIME TO DEVELOP. YET OUR CENTURY WITH ITS RAPID PACE OF LIFE ALSO STRIVES TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL MORE QUICKLY THAN EVER BEFORE, AND FOR THAT REASON THE WORLD, TO ITS OWN SURPRISE, WILL SOON ARRIVE THERE.⁶⁰」 □□□

□ Such views imply that to choose a style as a foundation for a modern architectural creation is out of the question; rather, the architect must try to create new forms or develop those forms that are most easily adapted to modern construction practices and needs, and that therefore best conform to truth. □□□

□ [The architect may dip into the full repository of traditional forms, but he must never copy a selected form; he must adapt it to us and to the purpose by reshaping the form or by finding his intended effect from those produced by existing models.⁶¹] □□□

□ That this development, as already noted, can only take place gradually, that it needs the encouragement and assistance of our contemporaries, is surely obvious. □□□

□ Yet if one looks objectively at how things are stirring everywhere, how artists are struggling to shape new ideals of beauty, and if one surveys what has been accomplished up to now, then one must be convinced **THAT TODAY THE CLEFT BETWEEN THE MODERN MOVEMENT AND THE RENAISSANCE IS ALREADY LARGER THAN THAT BETWEEN THE RENAISSANCE AND ANTIQUITY.** □□□

COMPOSITION

ART [KUNST] IS, AS THE WORD ITSELF SUGGESTS, AN ABILITY [KÖNNEN]. IT IS A CAPABILITY, RAISED TO PERFECTION BY A SELECTED FEW, THAT INVESTS BEAUTY WITH SENSUOUS EXPRESSION. ☐☐☐



☐ IF THIS EXPRESSION IS PERCEIVED BY THE EYE, THEN THIS CAPABILITY CORRESPONDS TO THE CONCEPT OF “FINE ART.” ☐

☐ AMONG THE FINE ARTS, PAINTING AND SCULPTURE ALWAYS TAKE THEIR MODELS FROM NATURE, WHILE ARCHITECTURE HAS ITS BASIS IN HUMAN CREATIVE POWER DIRECTLY AND IS ABLE TO PRESENT THE PRODUCT AS A COMPLETELY NEW FORMATION. ☐☐☐

☐ THE PRIMITIVE GERM OF THIS NEW CREATION HAS ITS FRUCTIFYING SOIL IN HUMAN LIFE; FROM THE LATTER SPRINGS THE TASK THAT ART HAS TO SOLVE THROUGH ARTISTS. ☐☐☐

☐ THIS TASK OF CORRECTLY RECOGNIZING THE NEEDS OF MAN IS THE FIRST PREREQUISITE FOR THE ARCHITECT'S SUCCESSFUL CREATION. ☐☐☐

The beginning of every architectural creation is composition. □□□□□□□□

□ As is well known, there is no recipe for architectural composition, yet in considering what has been said up to now the following may serve as a starting point. □□□

□ Even before taking up a pencil, the artist must conceive and carefully consider a good, expansive idea. Whether it appears like a lightning flash or clarifies itself slowly, whether it needs to be thought through and refined in spirit, whether it appears in its first fixation as a hit or a miss, whether it has to be conceived anew over and over again—none of this matters. Yet it is certain that a happy basic idea and its mature intellectual development carry great weight nowadays, and that they contribute far more to a work's appreciation than the most luxuriant blossoms that can spring from the artist's natural and unconscious ability. □□□

□ A certain practical element with which man is imbued today simply cannot be ignored, and ultimately every artist will have to agree with the following proposition: “SOMETHING IMPRACTICAL CANNOT BE BEAUTIFUL.”⁶² □□□

After the conception of the basic idea, it is proper to define the needs of the building program, to organize them simply and clearly, and thus to produce the skeleton of the work. This organization must coincide with the development of the floor plan, since the latter above all involves creating the clearest and simplest axial solution for a building by shifting the spaces and spatial forms in an empirical way until a so-called academic plan, a building type, emerges. □□□

□ A simple, self-contained disposition of the plan will always be successful; it will result in easy orientation within the building and an always-desirable reduction in the cost of construction. Obviously the external configuration of the work must be in step with this process. □□□

□ This procedure, which is recommended for every architectural design, becomes a prerequisite in any competition that one hopes to win.⁶³ □□□

□ It will always be regarded as a serious error to adapt or, worse, to sacrifice the required interior structure to a favorite exterior motif. The lie is then unavoidable, and this also adversely affects the resulting form. □□□

□ An apartment house that for no reason parades projections, towers, and domes, or that swaggers under the mask of a palace and displays zinc, stone-like keystones that carry nothing⁶⁴—all produce the same foolish effect and are just artistic lies. □□□

Every composition is essentially influenced by the material to be used in the construction and the technology to be employed. This will be discussed later in greater detail, but it may be mentioned here that composition must always conform to the material and to the technology, and not the reverse. Therefore composition must clearly reveal the material of construction and the technology used. This is true whether it concerns the presentation of a monumental building or the design of the smallest decorative object. □□□

Yet composition evidently has to take into account many other factors. The most important are⁶⁵ the financial means available, the geographic location, the consideration of the cardinal points, the expected duration of the building's use, the aesthetic need to harmonize with its surroundings, the consistency between interior structure and exterior appearance, etc. □□□

□ As always, and so also with the cases cited, the striving toward truth must be the guiding star of the architect. Then the character and symbolism of the work will emerge virtually of their own accord: sanctity will be observed in the church, gravity and dignity in the governmental building, gaiety in the amusement establishment, and so on! □□□

More often than not the scale of composition must be extended to include the total picture that will emerge; then the architect has the surely welcome opportunity to use his ability to influence and determine those things that will heighten the effect, prepare the view, create visual resting points, etc. □□□

□ Our modern epoch prefers grand effects, a preference which has its explanation in the demands of the unprecedented concentration of people in large cities and which accounts for a certain grandness that often pervades modern works. It may therefore be said with great satisfaction that in the design of whole layouts, of squares and streets, in the disposition of monuments, and in the establishment of avenues our most recent art (quite apart from the great architectural works that have been made possible by the enormous progress of the engineering sciences) has created things to which nothing from either the Renaissance or antiquity may be compared. □□□

□ **HERE IT IS APPROPRIATE TO SHOUT A LOUD AND ENCOURAGING "FORWARD" TO THE MODERN CREATIVE ARCHITECT AND TO WARN HIM AGAINST AN EXCESSIVE AND HEARTFELT DEVOTION TO THE OLD, SO THAT HE MIGHT REGAIN A (HOWEVER**

MODEST) SELF-CONFIDENCE, WITHOUT WHICH NO GREAT ACT
WHATSOEVER CAN ARISE. □□□

To composition also belongs what one could call the strategy of architecture. By this term I mean the proper collaboration with the sister arts of sculpture and painting. The architect may never lay aside the staff of command in such cases. Whether it is a matter of decorating the exterior or interior of his works, or adorning his garden layouts, streets, and squares with monuments, the architect alone is entitled to retain the leading role, since everything has to be subordinate to his basic idea. □□□

□ Mistakes committed in this regard become rather noticeable in all questions affecting monuments and are almost always the order of the day. Every monument is an integral part of the square on which it is intended to stand, since the square must already exist before the monument is composed; thus the square should never be brought into harmony with the monument, but always the monument with the square.⁶⁶ □□□

□ Mistakes of this kind are always charged to the executing artist and usually have their explanation in the fact that the work was completed before the location was determined, or that the sculptor was of the opinion, unfortunately all too widespread, that his work should be considered individually and by itself, therefore laying claim to a personal altar instead of simply conforming to the spatial requirements of the square, the height of the spatial enclosure, the silhouette, the background, the grouping,⁶⁷ etc. It should also be said that the designer of the square must have the right to pass judgment on such things.⁶⁸ □□□

□ The architect must also place great importance on the relation of the statue to his building, and the statues to each other. It makes no difference in this regard whether these statues sculpturally adorn a square, a building, or a room. □□□

□ The scale of the statues in relation to the total work naturally cannot be determined; it should only be noted that if the scale is too large or too small, it will have an equally adverse effect. The use of two or more scales in the sculptural decoration of a work obviously produces the feeling that we are dealing with giants and dwarfs. A similar correlation exists between ornament and architectural form, where an improper relation can also have a very harmful effect on the total appearance. The Modern Movement proceeds

impressionistically in the use of sculptural and ornamental decoration, and employs only those lines whose definite visual effect can be predicted. As a result, there is in the new style a merging (convergence) of tectonic and sculptural form, a minimal use of sculptural decoration in general, an objection to the arrangement of portrait statues as tectonic building elements, a clarity of ornamental form, and so many other things.⁶⁹ □□□

Composition also entails artistic economy. By this I mean a moderation in the use and treatment of forms handed down to us or newly created that corresponds to modern ideas and extends to everything possible. □□□

□ This is especially true for those forms that are considered high expressions of artistic feeling and monumental exaltation, such as domes, towers, quadrigae, [columns,⁷⁰] etc. Such forms, in any case, should be used only with absolute justification and sparingly, since their overuse always produces the opposite effect. □□□

□ If the work being created is to be a true reflection of our time, the simple, the practical, the—one might almost say—military approach must be fully and completely expressed, [and for this reason alone everything extravagant must be avoided.⁷¹] □□□

□ Not to contradict what has been said but to come closer in feeling to the truth, I must emphasize here that architects in different countries will have to use forms of varying richness to express the *genius loci*. It is therefore only logical, for example, that the southern Germans, the northern Germans, the French, the English, and the Italians have different ideals of beauty, and that composition should go far enough in the pursuit of the proper mode of expression that [place, time, and fashion always appear properly stressed.⁷²] One can still today distinguish with considerable accuracy the place, time, and location of all current works of art. □□□

□ [It is appropriate to point out once again that the most careful consideration of the things influencing composition, which have been suggested in this book, must be made clearly apparent in the created work, for in this way different artistic expressions of an object will arise in different places. Surely the national element will be woven into art only in this natural way. Given the similarity of the modes of expression and styles of living in civilized countries, these differences will never be great and will be determined chiefly by material and climatic conditions. □□□

□ For the reasons mentioned, a stubborn adherence to historical styles for certain projects or the choice of one such style for certain nations must be considered an absurdity, even if, for example, the expression “Old German style” has for years—probably only owing to the name—electrified us Germans. □□□

□ Finally, it remains to be pointed out that today’s much abused words “intimate” and “intimacy” in architecture, which are conditioned by the circumstances of the large city, can be expressed only in interior appointments, for they are no longer justified in anything fronting the street.⁷³ □□□

□ It cannot be the task of this book to elucidate everything related to composition; nor is it always possible to stay strictly within the limits of the heading under which this or that subject is placed. Therefore, much of the preceding and what will follow must be left to the reader to complete. Limiting myself to what is most important, I find a place for the following remarks. □□□

A simple, clear plan in most cases requires the symmetry of the work. In a symmetrical arrangement there is some measure of self-containment, completeness, balance; an impossibility of enlargement; even self-assurance. Gravity and dignity, the constant companions of architecture, also demand symmetry. Only where the shape of the site, [purpose,⁷⁴] means, or reasons of utility in general make compliance with symmetry impossible is an unsymmetrical solution justified.

□ The aping of unsymmetrical buildings or the intentional making of an unsymmetrical composition in order to achieve a supposed painterly effect is totally objectionable. All unsymmetrical ancient models came about only because later generations made spatial changes to a building originally symmetrical, causing the asymmetry. Never, never may this be looked upon as the original intention. □□□

When composing, the architect has to place great importance on the effect of perspective; that is, he must organize the silhouette, the massing, the projections of the cornice, the distortions, the sculptural line of the profile and ornaments in such a way that they appear properly emphasized from a SINGLE VANTAGE POINT. This point will, of course, be that location where the work can be viewed most frequently, most easily, and most naturally. Nearly all monuments show what great value their designers placed on this condition. There are even examples⁷⁵ in which the architect created limited viewing distances in order to

force the viewer to consider the work in just such a way. Buildings on narrow streets, therefore, must be profiled very differently and present flatter ornaments and [a more delicate structure⁷⁶] than buildings on broad streets and squares, or those in which a distant effect is fitting. Sometimes these forms⁷⁷ are so sensitively conceived that they should be considered before widening the street by even one or two meters. □□□

□ There are also works of architecture in which it can be seen quite clearly that they were composed for two viewing distances. Many buildings with domes and towers, triumphal arches, and the like demonstrate this fact. With the exterior of such buildings, therefore, the aim was certainly twofold: the facade with its details was to satisfy the person on the square or the street, while the high, richly silhouetted superstructure was either an integral part of a *veduta* or resonated harmoniously with the cityscape in order to become a characteristic landmark visible from afar. □□□

□ The works of the Baroque are especially graceful in this respect; therefore the study of their perspective effect and their well-measured viewing distance must be most warmly recommended to the young architect. □□□

□ Less sensitive in their situation, but always sensitive enough, are Gothic buildings. The clearing away of buildings around Gothic cathedrals, so popular in recent times, is totally objectionable. Since these buildings were not originally intended to be exposed, all such clearances have always ended in a fiasco. The altered distances for viewing the cathedrals in Paris, Cologne, and Milan speak eloquently to this fact. □□□

One of the attributes peculiar to human perception is that in examining any work of art the eye seeks a point of rest or concentration; otherwise a painful uncertainty or aesthetic uneasiness occurs. This will always prompt the architect to design a focal point where the rays of attention combine or organize themselves. □□□

□ The lack of an emphasis on the center or axis of a square, a large building, or a room, a street perspective that ends in nothing, and all unjustified asymmetries are counted among these errors because they do not meet the foregoing demand. □□□

An important human characteristic having an even stronger influence on the architectural composition is the need and desire to intensify sensuous effects. When these are gratified, a higher contentment is achieved. □□□

- The sensuous apprehension of the impression made by a great monumental design, for example, can perhaps be explained in the following way. First the general image is indistinctly grasped, and only some moments later the eye and impression slowly concentrate on a point, during which time the silhouette, [distribution of color patches,⁷⁸] border, and total arrangement continue to have an effect. □□□
- The resting of the eyes has occurred. □□□
- Only then does the need appear to apprehend the effect of the individual parts and details by constantly shifting the viewpoint. □□□
- The satisfaction of such human demands through artistic creation is to be counted among the most difficult tasks of architecture. Because of the long period of construction and the only gradually maturing appreciation of the general public, the work will not be impartially judged until later on. □□□
- The laws according to which such tasks are to be solved form an integral part of the main idea of the composition and frequently act like a revelation to the creator of such works. They are, as it were, the counterpoint of architecture. □□□
- A few hints may serve to clarify what I have said. They should show, among many other things, where the architect has to direct his attention to achieve artistic solutions for his tasks: □□□
- CONTINUOUS REGARD FOR THE VIEWER'S HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL ANGLES OF VISION, FROM EVERY POSITION. □□□
- GROUPING OF INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS FOR A TOTAL EFFECT [the building silhouette, its massing, the wall of the square, etc.]. □□□
- EFFECT OF SUNLIGHT AND ATMOSPHERIC PRECIPITATION (site in relation to the cardinal points).⁷⁹ □□□
- UTILIZATION OF THE TERRAIN AND SCENIC BACKGROUND. □□
- ADAPTATION TO NEW AND CORRECT EXPLOITATION OF EXISTING *VEDUTAE* AND *VISTAS* BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE. □□
- CONSTANT RESPECT OF THE VISTA IN THE PROJECTION OF THE STREET. □□□
- CORRECT EMPHASIS ON AND APPROPRIATE SITUATION OF THE VISUAL RESTING POINT. □□□
- CORRECT LOCATION AND MARKING OF AXIAL BREAKS BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE. □□□
- [ADEQUATE EMPHASIS ON THE TERMINI OF THE MORE

- SIGNIFICANT STREETS (avenues).⁸⁰ □□□
- PLANNING THE SIZE AND IMPORTANCE OF BUILDINGS AND MONUMENTS IN HARMONY WITH THE IMAGE OF THE CITY, SQUARE, OR STREET.⁸¹ □□□
 - A CLEAR, EASY, AND IMMEDIATELY APPREHENDED EXPRESSION OF THE BUILDING'S CHARACTER.⁸² □□□
 - 'THE MOST COMPLETE FULFILLMENT OF THE PURPOSE OF EVERY WORK. □□□
 - SIMPLE ORIENTATION IN EVERY BUILDING.⁸³ □□□
 - CONSIDERATION OF THE DIMENSIONAL EFFECTS, SEQUENCE, COLOR SCHEME, 'ACOUSTICS, VISUAL QUALITY, AND ADEQUATE LIGHTING OF THE SPACES.⁸⁴ □□□
 - And so many other things. □□□
 - If solutions to architectural works are to satisfy the earlier mentioned human demands and the desire for the intensified effect, visual preparation, visual rest, correct framing of the image—in short, if they are to awaken a feeling of complete satisfaction—then they demand of the architect great ability and careful consideration. □□□
 - The masters of the Renaissance and the Baroque furnish us with excellent examples of these matters, too. Our modern epoch, as already mentioned, is especially fond of all large dimensions and has in this instance, as in many other cases, successfully utilized such suggestions and traditions to create things to which we can point with justifiable pride. □□□
 - Nothing will be comparable in effect, visual preparation, well-balanced borders, silhouette, and visual rest than the view from the proposed central building of the Imperial Palace in Vienna toward Maria Theresien Square once the rear terminations are completed according to 'Semper's design⁸⁵ and the ancient Burgtor is removed. □□□

It scarcely needs to be emphasized that these remarks can influence only the young architect's thinking; without his artistic talent they are completely worthless. □□□

- All the compositional skills that the architect must possess pale in comparison with imagination and taste; these alone are capable of bringing to bloom those magical flowers that are destined to delight and uplift the hearts of men. □□□

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CONSTRUCTION

The need and necessity for protection against inclement weather and against men and animals



was certainly the first cause and the original purpose of building. □□□



□ In building itself lies the germ of every method of construction, whose development advances with the purpose. □□□

□ The creation of such work corresponds to the idea of pure utility. But it could not suffice; the sense of beauty dwelling within man called on art and made her the constant companion of building. □□□

□ Thus arose architecture! □□□

□ The decoration of huts and caves with flowers, boughs, trophies, weapons, and stone tablets certainly elicited the first feeling for imitation, and thus the first art, architecture, called into being her sisters, painting and sculpture. □□

□ Their works are the independent creation of the beautiful. □□□

□ Need, purpose, construction, and ⁸⁶idealism are therefore the primitive germs of artistic life. United in a single idea, they produce a kind of “necessity” in the origin and existence of every work of art, and this is the meaning of the words “ARTIS SOLA DOMINA NECESSITAS.” □□□

□ No less a person than Gottfried Semper first directed our attention to this truth (even if he unfortunately later deviated from it), and by that alone he

quite clearly indicated the path that we must take. □□□

□ Need and construction keep equal pace with the aspirations of man, which art, majestically striding forward, cannot follow. □□□

□ A fear that the pure principle of utility will displace art therefore seems reasonable. Occasionally it has even led to a kind of struggle, founded on the erroneous belief that the differences between realism and idealism are irreconcilable. □□□

□ The error in this view lies in the assumption that utility can displace idealism completely and in the further inference that man can live without art; yet it is only to be supposed that utility and realism precede in order to prepare the deeds that art and idealism have to perform. □□□

Since the beginning of art until today, this process, this development has remained the same. A glance at the past will show this clearly. □□□

□ The first human building form was the roof, the protective covering, surely a substitute for the lack of the cave. ¹The roof preceded the supports, the wall, even the hearth. After the roof came the supports, artificially built of tree trunks and stones, and finally the wickerwork, the partition, the bearing wall.⁸⁷ □□□

□ These building elements received further development in permanent settlements through the use of tools and natural circumstances. After an immeasurably long evolution, traditions (a continuous addition of new purposes and means of production) together with art (born of the human sense of beauty) gradually elevated the basic forms of supports, walls, and rafters to art-forms [*Kunstformen*]. □□□

□ Only in such a way could art have arisen. There can scarcely be any doubt of the correctness of what I have said. □□□

□ Moreover, if one examines all the art-forms from historical periods, an almost unbroken series of gradual developments from the date of their CONSTRUCTIVE origin until today can easily be proven, notwithstanding all the stylistic epochs. □□□

□ Logical thinking must therefore convince us that the following tenet is unshakable: "EVERY ARCHITECTURAL FORM HAS ARISEN IN CONSTRUCTION AND HAS SUCCESSIVELY BECOME AN ART-FORM." This principle withstands all analyses and explains every art-form. □□□

Earlier, in the chapter “Style” and just now, it was emphasized that art-forms undergo change.

Apart from the fact that the form had to correspond to the ideal of beauty of each epoch, these changes arose because the mode of production, the material, the tools, the means available, and the need⁸⁸ were different, and further, forms came to fulfill different purposes in different places. IT IS THEREFORE CERTAIN THAT NEW PURPOSES MUST GIVE BIRTH TO NEW METHODS OF CONSTRUCTION, AND BY THIS REASONING ALSO TO NEW FORMS.⁸⁹ □□□

□ Our modern epoch has, like none earlier, produced the greatest number of such new methods of construction (one need only consider the success of iron).⁹⁰ □□□

□ If today all of these forms have not yet developed into perfect art-forms, it is for the reason indicated earlier—namely, that utility first prepares these forms for art. □□□

□ It might again be emphasized that every shaping of form always proceeds slowly and imperceptibly. □□□

□ It is Semper’s undisputed merit to have referred us to this postulate, to be sure in a somewhat exotic way, in his book *Der Stil*. Like Darwin, however, he lacked the courage to complete his theories from above and below and had to make do with a symbolism of construction, instead of naming construction itself as the primitive cell of architecture. □□□

Construction always precedes, for no art-form can arise without it, and the task of art, which is to idealize the existing, is impossible without the existence of the object. □□□

□ Thus the formation of our very own art-forms, corresponding to modern construction, lies within ourselves; the possibility of creating them is offered and facilitated by the rich legacy that we have inherited. □□□

□ The useful result of this way of looking at things is very simple. □□□

□ “THE ARCHITECT ALWAYS HAS TO DEVELOP THE ART-FORM OUT OF CONSTRUCTION.” Obviously the method of construction must fulfill its intended purpose.⁹¹ □□□

Modern man immediately comprehended the enormous value of construction and assigned his most distinguished representatives to achieve its magnificent perfection. □□□

□ This field has therefore grown so vast that it has naturally led to the division of labor; thus we see today the separate specialties of bridge construc-

tion, railway construction, girder construction, and machine engineering continuing to develop with colossal speed. □□□

□ Yet the basic thought behind every construction is not to be sought in algebraic progressions and structural calculations but in a certain natural ingenuity—it is that which is invented. □□□

□ From this last point of view, however, construction enters the field of art; that is, the architect selects, specifies, perfects, or invents that method of construction that most naturally fits his image of what is to be created and best suits his nascent art-form. □□□

□ The means available and the purpose of the emerging object will always cause him to vacillate between the constraints of pure utility and artistic development; but with due consideration the influence of the architect or the engineer will be resolved. □□□

□ **THE ENGINEER WHO DOES NOT CONSIDER THE NASCENT ART-FORM BUT ONLY THE STRUCTURAL CALCULATION AND THE EXPENSE WILL THEREFORE SPEAK A LANGUAGE UNSYMPATHETIC TO MAN, WHILE ON THE OTHER HAND, THE ARCHITECT'S MODE OF EXPRESSION WILL REMAIN UNINTELLIGIBLE IF IN THE CREATION OF THE ART-FORM HE DOES NOT START FROM CONSTRUCTION.** □□□

□ Both are great errors. □□□

Since the engineer is seldom a born artist and the architect must train himself as a rule to be an engineer, it is safe to assume that art, or rather the architect, will in time succeed in extending his influence into the realm today occupied by the engineer, so that here too legitimate aesthetic demands can be met in a satisfactory way. □□□

□ Thus the sequence mentioned at the start, of utility preparing the way and art developing what has begun, will come to pass in all cases and in time will put an end to the unsatisfactory work of the engineer. □□□

□ In order not to be misunderstood, it should be noted that there can be no question of the artist lowering the status of the engineer, if for no other reason than because the capabilities of both have never been combined in one individual in an outstanding way, and in fact cannot be combined.⁹² □□□

As the developing art-form is influenced by construction, so the latter is in turn influenced by many other factors that will be dealt with later. □□□

□ One of the most important of these that can be taken as a definite demand of our modern epoch may be discussed here. It concerns the time of production and the soundness usually dependent on it. □□□

□ A rather prevalent but, in part, totally false view is that our modern building methods, because they have been sharply accelerated, must also be unsound. The reason for this view is that speculation, which naturally has nothing to do with art and is even its greatest enemy, has a hand in building. □□□

□ If one examines our modern method of construction more closely, however, then one will easily be convinced that precisely the reverse is true, and that modern construction has set for itself the definite task of balancing, whenever possible, these two opposites: time of production and soundness. Modern construction in this regard has shown splendid results. □□□

Through the building methods of all epochs runs a clear tendency to invest the created work with the greatest possible stability and durability in order to comply with one of the most important theses of architecture—"eternal duration." □□□

□ Because our modern conditions have produced a radical change in the time expended on labor while the principle of eternal duration in art has remained the same, construction, whose role it is to solve this task, has had to seize new means in order to comply with this demand. □□□

□ These means have been found for the most part in the use of new materials and in the introduction of machines. □□□

□ Therefore their influence on the art-form must naturally be evident. □□□

□ Because of this, an additional task falls to the artist, who, as already often mentioned, has not only to show the construction clearly in the created art-form, but also to convince the viewer that the material used⁹³ and the time of production are properly expressed in the work. □□□

□ Mistakes of this kind are unfortunately all too numerous. Art-forms in which the time of production is not consistent with the effect or with the material or mode of production always have something false or vexing about them. □□□

□ Consoles and keystones that carry nothing, iron buildings that have the characteristic features of stone forms,⁹⁴ plaster buildings that display a full stone pattern,⁹⁵ numerous exterior details that pretend to be more than they are, and a great many other things fall into this category. □□□

Yet when construction attempts to combine a shorter time of production with the same or greater solidity and with an artistic form of equal value, then it correctly understands its task. □□□

□ An example may serve to illustrate this view. □□□

□ A colonnade with an entablature was designed as the principal architectural motif of the upper story of a prominent monumental building.⁹⁶ The building was constructed in courses of stone and the material was procured with a great expenditure of time and money. Immense stone blocks, reminiscent of the old Roman method of construction, were employed for the lower members of the main cornice; it was even structurally necessary to carve the modillions of the main cornice out of the same stone. The preparation and procurement of these blocks required great temporal and pecuniary sacrifice. □□□

□ This type of production should be called “the Renaissance way of building”⁹⁷ and may be compared next with a “modern way of building.” □□□

□ For the exterior cladding of a building (based, of course, on the same premises) a panel system will be used for the planar surfaces. Since these panels can be assumed to have significantly less cubic volume, they can be designed for a nobler material (for example, Laase marble). They are to be fastened with bronze bolts (rosettes). For the support of the deeply projecting cornice, divided into small courses, iron anchor bolts will be used, which are sheathed in a bronze console-like casing, etc., etc. □□□

□ The result of this comparison might be approximately the following: □□□

□ The cubic volume of the stone will be reduced by from “one-eighth to one-tenth”⁹⁸ of that in the original case; the number of components will be fewer; the monumental effect will be enhanced by the nobler material; the money spent will decrease enormously, and the production time will be reduced to the normal and desired amount. □□□

□ Certainly the advantages are sufficient to prefer the modern way of building in such cases. But the list of advantages is not exhausted; the greatest advantage is that **IN THIS WAY A NUMBER OF NEW ARTISTIC MOTIFS WILL EMERGE**,⁹⁹ whose development the artist not only will find very desirable, but also that which he must seize with alacrity and enthusiasm so as to make genuine progress in art. □□□

□ Results of this kind are not rare; every object without exception will offer them to the creative artist when it is considered in such a way. □□□

It is only natural that modern men, who know how to appreciate the value of time, will also promote those methods of construction that are capable of satisfying their wishes in this regard. This is taking place naturally by the adoption of materials that can be procured quickly and easily, and by the division of labor; that is, by undertaking different parts of the construction at the same time, which results in a quicker assembly of the work. □□□

□ If such a method of assembly is also sound, it will replace the former method, notwithstanding higher costs. Obviously a new way of shaping form will emerge from such a process. □□□

The availability of one or another material varies, of course, in different regions, and therefore its use and the extent of its treatment are also different. As a result, specific building materials predominate in specific regions, a fact that the architect may never overlook, because the desired ideal of beauty also demands a “local character” (fieldstone and ashlar construction,¹⁰⁰ brick construction, plaster construction, wood construction, etc.).¹⁰¹ □□□

One fact that is closely related to a building’s production time must be mentioned here in particular, because most clients are falsely informed about it—unfortunately all too often by the architect himself. It concerns the time allotted the artist for the graphic, artistic, and technical execution of the project. □□□

□ The inception of artistic works in part rests on empirical creation and very often is a function of whim and inspiration. Yet never will such a work, precisely because it arose empirically, be so free of error that the executing artist will not wish (usually when it is too late) to make changes. □□□

□ A generous period of time for the work’s graphic representation is therefore always to its advantage. □□□

□ With our apartment houses, which generally owe their existence simply to the vicissitudes of “capital investment,” the time in which the architect must complete his work is always very scant; often it shrinks to a few days, since the owner, as a rule, starts construction immediately following the artistic commission. □□□

□ With monumental buildings the artist is usually given sufficient time to study and to complete his project, at least so far as to seem to preclude major changes. He often enjoys the insufficiently appreciated advantage of being able to consider everything thoroughly by means of a model before the start

of construction. □□□

□ It therefore seems entirely valid to consider these factors when judging artistic works.¹⁰² □□□

Among the materials that especially influence modern building methods, iron¹⁰³ naturally plays the leading role. Its structural shapes accommodate themselves least to our traditional store of forms. In our rich artistic inheritance, we find almost nothing to assist us in the aesthetic development of iron. □□□

□ If, on the one hand, the result has been a longer than usual dominance of a principle as unsympathetic as that of utility; on the other hand, it cannot be welcomed warmly enough that wherever art has shaped this material completely new forms have in fact appeared. Thus it has provided one of the greatest impulses to the growth of the new style! □□□

□ The properties of iron, however, are indeed so extraordinary that it is able to satisfy almost any demand, and regarding the use of this material, it is really only a question of financial limitations. □□□

□ This, its universality, has also led to its overestimation, which just a few years ago caused its inartistic and rather obtrusive widespread use. The introduction of some other new materials, iron's inadequate or dubious testing, and financial considerations have also had a sobering effect, and have limited its use to those occasions where it is consistent with the artistic viewpoint of modern man. □□□

□ Yet there are so many objects that have been structurally and aesthetically influenced by the use of iron that the latter's existence and the resulting influence on our present building methods can be described as trend-setting. □□□

□ The possibility and facilitation of so many methods of building production, the unlimited choice of room sizes, the realization of a distinct pier construction, the availability of any ceiling form with whatever type of room lighting, the great reduction in wall thickness, the fireproof qualities, the significantly reduced time of construction, and so many other things, we owe solely to the use of this material. □□□

The enormous importance of construction and its decisive influence on modern art has probably been emphasized enough in our discussion, yet it remains for me to recommend its study most urgently to the young architect. □□□

□ WELL-CONCEIVED CONSTRUCTION NOT ONLY IS THE

PREREQUISITE OF EVERY ARCHITECTURAL WORK, BUT ALSO, AND THIS CANNOT BE REPEATED OFTEN ENOUGH, PROVIDES THE MODERN CREATIVE ARCHITECT WITH A NUMBER OF POSITIVE IDEAS FOR CREATING NEW FORMS—IN THE FULLEST MEANING OF THIS WORD.¹⁰⁴ □□□

□ The choice of the type of construction will generally have to be made by the architect himself on the merits of each case. This not only requires a constant pursuit and acceptance of every innovation in the field of construction and its materials, but also demands that the architect (and rightfully so) has a strongly marked natural ingenuity. □□□

□ It is scarcely necessary to add that rich experience should also come together with the application of the construction method; thus the following can be taken as a postulate: WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE OF CONSTRUCTION, THE CONCEPT “ARCHITECT” IS UNTHINKABLE!¹⁰⁵ □□□

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THE PRACTICE OF ART

Repeatedly I have used the expression “the practice of art” and alluded to its later discussion. I mean by this expression a learned, acquired experience in the shaping of form, which is attained by everyone who devotes himself to the artistic profession for a lengthy period of time. I think it is appropriate, therefore, to incorporate into this book the most important of these principles derived from experience.



Before entering into the subject proper, this question should be considered: “How are architectural works to be presented graphically?”

It cannot be denied that very little interest in architectural creations is shown so long as they remain on paper. A picture, a sculpture, a room, a building, or any other artistic object directly affects the senses of the viewer through the eye, thereby greatly facilitating understanding and judgment. Yet the understanding of plans and elevations requires an intellectual concentration for which the viewer usually lacks the desire, more often the capability, thus making judgment more difficult or even impossible. Also, many architects are content to present designs in an unimaginative way, not consistent with the demands of modern taste.¹⁰⁶

□ Since presentational techniques are continually improved by new tricks and inventions and since the taste of authors varies, the “how” cannot be specified in detail and, accordingly, only suggestions can follow here. □□□

□ Beginning with the alpha of architectural drawing, it must first be emphasized that every so-called slick manner is totally objectionable, and that the architect’s task must always be to put his ideas down on paper in the clearest, most distinct, neatest, most purposeful, and most convincing way possible. Every architectural drawing has to document the taste of the artist, and it must never be forgotten that what is to be presented is a **FUTURE**, not an existing work. The craze to offer the most deceptive possible picture of the future is an error, if for no other reason than because it involves a lie. All charming accidents and moods gathered from nature, captured by a good watercolor, and applied to something that does not yet exist are intentional deceptions that are to be rejected for that reason alone. □□□

□ It is more obvious, more correct, and therefore more natural to present the work to the viewer through what we call a personal and impressionistic presentation,¹⁰⁷ one that is filled with ideas and excites interest. The artist in this way has the opportunity to show imagination, taste, intention, and ability, to inspire and captivate the viewer, without deviating from the truth.¹⁰⁸ □□□

□ There is today in modern artistic efforts and publications a youthful tendency that cannot be overestimated; it is seen in the large number of excellent German, English, and French periodicals in which almost everything newly created in art is reproduced.¹⁰⁹ Such publications present the artist with a wealth of ideas. □□□

□ Nevertheless, the artist must be warned against too much of this “medicine.” □□□

□ Here too, a refined taste will guide and assist the artist and will lead him, notwithstanding the rich stimulation, to incorporate into his presentation only things that are worthy of the main theme and that will enhance the viewer’s interest. □□□

□ Naturally he will use only those presentational techniques from which the greatest effect can be expected with the least expenditure of time and which do not preclude an easy and beautiful reproduction. Even the simplest orthogonal projection can be transformed into a work of art worth looking at by the use of flowered borders, labels, details, and by emphasizing the individual conception.¹¹⁰ □□□

□ Architectural presentations that are intended for exhibitions require the elimination of everything disrupting to the surroundings. Floor plans, elevations, and sections that have large white areas of paper can never be placed between paintings and sculptures, since they would surely disrupt the overall view. This is also the reason that architectural works are more often than not treated in a stepmotherly way in exhibitions.¹¹¹ □□□

Yet as important as the “how” of the presentation is, obviously it pales in comparison with “what” is presented, to which we now return after this short digression. □□□

□ As in the other parts of this book, in the chapter “The Practice of Art” we can only deal with the most important of the individual factors that affect modern architecture in particular. □□□

The most modern of the “modern” in architecture today are probably our large cities. Their unprecedented size has given rise to a number of new problems that await an architectural solution. □□□

□ With the recent growth of all large cities, the question of city planning in particular has come to the fore, as in many cases there appears an urgent need to strive for a rational solution to this matter. □□□

□ According to modern views, a harmony of art and purpose is the first condition of a good solution. Although cases often exist in which practicality should give way to the artistic concern, it is naturally to be assumed that a reverse relationship exists in city planning. Surely, for example, the general opinion concerning transportation, which will always be a main issue for the public,¹¹² is that no sum of money is too large; yet for art “nothing” is just about enough. □□□

□ Certainly the practical factor must take precedence in city planning, whereas in art, strictly speaking, one has only to watch that every vandalism is avoided. Art will appear more determined and claim its rights only where its creation is an end in itself. □□□

□ This will result in traffic, economic, and sanitation demands being precisely defined and specified, and the architect exploiting these premises artistically when implementing the city plan.¹¹³ □□□

Every city plan naturally has two parts: the expanding peripheral part, where technology and art can act rather freely, and the compact town center, where the desire for new

form must accommodate itself to the sea of houses, monuments of art, existing facilities, and parks. Both parts are naturally dependent on each other, and many a problem can only be solved by considering the municipal area as a whole. Unfortunately, greater emphasis is always placed on the seemingly more urgent problems of the town center, and the periphery is treated 'as a matter of secondary importance.¹¹⁴ This is quite wrong because new calamities inevitably arise before long, and questions repeatedly crop up that just as urgently demand solution. 'Thus timely attention is needed to forestall such pressure.¹¹⁵ □□□

□ Certainly some things required in the future (roads, parks, food provision, sanitation and snow removal, supplying of materials, funeral processions, the distribution of rail stations, the grouping of buildings, etc.) are easier, more beautiful, and less expensive when the city is planned on a generous scale. 'In fact, by neglecting the periphery, in Vienna especially, great inconvenience has been caused, something that has been so successfully avoided in almost every German city where planning has allowed the individual suburbs to be more habitable, healthier, cleaner, and more beautiful. In Vienna the opposite is the case; the periphery of the city is no better than proverbial Hungarian villages.¹¹⁶ □□□

□ It might also be noted that the always-desirable, broad expansion of a city no doubt has a direct effect on the traffic situation, and that congested traffic always results in a high cost of land, an increase in the number of stories, and a crowding of buildings. A poorly planned city periphery contributes greatly to the aggravation of this inconvenience. □□□

Streets and squares demand the greatest care and attention in the planning of a city. □□□

□ They need to be discussed first. □□□

□ It is unnecessary to prove that the size of a square and the wall of a square should be properly proportioned to each other. The dimensions of a square appear to be arbitrary, yet they find their natural limits in that the possible height of the enclosing wall of the square is rather strictly set. This height, regardless of whether the wall is made of buildings or groups of trees, can scarcely exceed 'twenty-five meters,¹¹⁷ except where individual parts are higher. If the wall of the square of the indicated height is to evoke a sufficiently strong visual impression, then about 120,000 square meters can be designated as the aesthetic limit of an otherwise properly proportioned

square. The Place de la Concorde in Paris has 100,000 square meters (including the Seine).¹¹⁸ □□□

□ Yet for artistic reasons the ground surface of such large squares requires certain visual resting points and very emphatic divisions. □□□

□ These resting points are created by the installation of sculptural and architectural monuments, fountains, etc., whereas (continuous streets,¹¹⁹) rows of lampposts, balustrades, avenues, perrons, trottoirs, etc. act as the visual dividing lines of the surface. □□□

□ As an aesthetic limit for the width of a street with an enclosure height of twenty-five to thirty meters, about eighty meters is standard, but this dimension also needs strongly articulated divisions to make it appear visually pleasant and comprehensible. □□□

□ Experience has suggested that the length of a street should not be less than five times its width, and not exceed fifteen times the same without characteristic interruptions. □□□

□ The minimum size of a square is obviously dependent on the height of its wall and its basic form, while for the street's width, the principle generally accepted is that the height of the enclosure may never exceed the width of the street. □□□

□ (Smaller squares require that the wall of the square be seen as almost continuous, while larger squares permit very emphatic divisions within the walls of the square.¹²⁰) □□□

It is timely here to oppose certain odd views embraced by a large segment of the public, who aim to "adorn" every open square, even the smallest one, with a garden. □□□

□ The supporters of this view inevitably use innumerable bombastic catch-phrases, such as "feast for the eyes," "breathing center," "absorber of nitrogen," etc. These catch-phrases are then dressed in popular slogans and thrown to the masses with every possible hygienic reason being given; whether such plans are also beautiful is never considered. □□□

□ Apart from the fact that such sanitary postulates appear more than questionable in their effect, these miserable vegetational caricatures of gardens are in everyone's way and make impossible one of the most beautiful architectural motifs, namely, the effect of the ground plane with its regulating lines. □□□

□ The charming effect of the Place de la Concorde in Paris, (of Saint Peter's

square in Rome¹²¹] will always be a lasting memory for anyone who has seen them. □□□

□ Gardens on these squares (no one, thank heavens, has yet had the nerve to demand such a thing) would destroy their whole effect. In Vienna, however, one of the largest squares (the Rathausplatz, 80,000 square meters) has been successfully robbed of any artistic effect by an absurd garden and defiled by a monstrous pathway that scorns every practical need. □□□

□ Urban gardens have to take into consideration aesthetic and practical needs (two concepts that are always consistent, according to modern views) and not only respect the hurrying pedestrian by providing a straight, shaded path, but also preserve the powerful effect of the ground plane. □□□

In connection with what has been said, the question of the park quite naturally presents itself, and therefore some words should be directed to it. □□□

□ Parks were originally vast territories that enclosed scenic beauties, prompting their wealthy owners to transform them into country seats. They were laid out, accordingly, with roads and footpaths, connecting in an easily accessible way hillocks, sections of forest, groups of trees, lakes, ponds, rivers, brooks, groups of rocks, and lookouts—setting off their “painterly effect.” At the most beautiful and appropriate points were built palaces, pavilions,¹²² etc. □□□

□ This effect, arising out of the contrast between nature and art, was imitated [by continually reducing the area and by hauling in objects that were consistent with neither the terrain nor the site (see the caricature of the English garden in Vienna, the Stadtpark, and many others).¹²³] As so many examples show, further reduction understandably had to lead to complete absurdity. This was all the more deplorable, since the masters of the Renaissance and particularly of the Baroque left us truly exemplary and unsurpassable models of garden layouts near buildings. They have clearly shown us how the impression of a building and a garden might mutually support and complement one another. □□□

Therefore, the architect’s energetic intervention in this regard cannot be recommended strongly enough, so that he might improve as soon as possible the art of gardening, which now stands, in fact, at its lowest level. □□□

□ Thus it will be incumbent on him not only to develop in a beautiful way the

principal arrangement of such layouts, but also to have knowledge of the flora; then it will be easy in conceiving such a scheme to have the right distribution of tree groupings, borders, arbors, hedges, etc. He should be well versed in the hardiness of plants with respect to local conditions, and should know the exact colors and appearance of the proposed plants. He should be familiar with the effect of the terrain and its artificial grading, the location and arrangement of paths, vistas, and visual resting points; he should have a clear understanding of artistic waterworks, the use and distribution of statues, hothouse plants, decorative plants, the construction of greenhouses, lawn gardening, and the large machines for their maintenance.¹²⁴ □□□

□ He should know exactly which species of trees are suited to avenues and under what circumstances substitutions can be presented by hedges, arbors, etc. He should be able to specify how to treat successfully the withering of street vegetation caused by leaking lamp gas, the seepage of sewage, the vibration of vehicular traffic, or the lack of adequate soil below ground (because of canals, water courses, etc.). □□□

Once again, attention should be drawn to the extraordinary monumental effect of the ground plane. The surfaces of squares can be worked out carpetlike by using different methods of paving with multicolored stones [and by arranging lawns with isolated decorative plants,¹²⁵] thus producing the greatest effects with the aid of regulating lines and a well-positioned display of objects. □□□

□ These things are so closely related to the artistic and monumental appearance of squares and streets that their intensive consideration cannot be sufficiently recommended. □□□

Returning from this digression to the image of squares and streets, it must be emphasized that the architect has to think through the image in yet another way if he is to meet artistic demands. □□□

□ [Unfortunately, the architect has no influence over many questions, since other reasons, as a rule, prevail over aesthetic ones.¹²⁶] □□□

□ The most important of the demands yet to be discussed for achieving an artistic and diversified image is that the appropriate square be chosen for public buildings, and that the absolutely necessary but generally omitted aesthetic terminus be created along the visual axis. □□□

□ Here too, the neglect of such artistic demands, the overemphasized prin-

ciple of utility, the antipathy toward monumental buildings, and the inevitable lack of money for artistic endeavors provide the architect with many a hard nut to crack. These and similar conditions have produced a kind of sham architecture that seeks to cover nakedness with a lie. Falling into this category are the already-mentioned overdone apartment house facades and the recently popular stuck-on type of facade (arcades and housing on the Franz Josefs Quai in Vienna, etc.)—matters therefore of an artistic, not technical tutelage. The deception abounding in such designs recalls Potemkin's villages and cannot be sufficiently condemned. No epoch of art other than our own has exhibited such monstrosities; they present us with a rather sad picture of the artistic conditions of our time. The sole excuse for them may lie, in part, in the fact that taste, having gone astray, struggles toward the desired artistic expression, but modern man denies taste the means to achieve this because the always-increasing number of apartment houses grows in a very unfavorable ratio to the required number of public buildings. □□□

People's living styles are every day becoming more alike, strongly suppressing the individual dwelling; building regulations have gone even a step further, and thus the present uniformity of our apartment houses was bound to occur. □□□

□ In no city other than our own does the modern apartment house play such a large role. □□□

□ While the conditions of land ownership in London have produced a building type for this purpose that can be said to be devoid of almost any artistic contribution, a solution has developed in Paris that has had as its unmistakable starting point the accommodation of servants in the mansard. □□□

□ Berlin has a larger built area than Vienna, and because of this the price of land has never attained those heights under which our so long restricted native city suffers. ¹Thus there never was a need for such a piling-up of stories in apartment houses as is the rule in Vienna. □□□

□ Our apartment houses (rightly called "interest houses") are not infrequently six or seven stories above street level. The same multistory building types, with the owner's larger dwelling on the main story and accentuated on the exterior, are becoming extinct. Department stores and the individual dwelling are excluded from this category.¹²⁷ □□□

□ Conditioned by the economic situation, our present-day apartment houses pursue no other purpose than to achieve the greatest possible yield on in-

vested building capital by the piling-up of small, easily rented dwellings in a single building. □□□

□ In any case, it naturally follows that it no longer makes any sense to distinguish the floors artistically on the exterior, since the rental value of the individual floors has been made almost identical by the installation of elevators. Architectural treatments that seek their motives in the architecture of palaces are completely inappropriate [to such cellular conglomerates,¹²⁸] simply because they contradict the interior structure of the building. □□□

□ In the treatment of the facade of the modern apartment house, the architecture is therefore reduced to a smooth surface interrupted by many windows of equal importance, to which can be added the protecting main cornice and, at most, a crowning frieze and a portal. □□□

□ The principles put forward in this book indicate that it is not art's task to struggle against these economic trends or conceal them with a lie; its task resides in taking into account just such demands. □□□

□ The modern eye has also lost the sense for a small, intimate scale; it has become accustomed to less varied images, to longer straight lines, to more expansive surfaces, to larger masses, and for this reason a greater moderation and a plainer silhouetting of such buildings certainly seems advisable. Accordingly, art will only come into its own where its domain is uncontested and its intervention is natural. □□□

Thus in designing apartment houses, which will always be the principal element in the image of the street, the architect should seek his effects by decorating the surface with contrasting images, using simple and properly chosen details, and clearly emphasizing the construction, but without letting the design, as is unfortunately all too common, degenerate into a game of one-upmanship by the owners. □□

□ With the artistic treatment just indicated, our apartment houses would be the most likely of all building types to merge into an aesthetically pleasing prospect, and would certainly be suited to all those things for which the street is created. □□□

□ It should always be remembered that a great modern city cannot and should not have the appearance of ancient Rome or of old Nuremberg. □□□

¹²⁸But what about the picturesque effect of the street and the use of the straight line or curve?¹²⁹

□ The importance of the straight line in modern architecture has repeatedly

been discussed. Countless reasons clearly and forcefully point to its greatest possible use. Yet with respect to the street alignment, it is justified for the simple reason that the busy man, whenever possible, moves in a straight line, and that the person in a hurry is surely annoyed by the smallest time-consuming detour. The last decades have even carried the banner "Time is money." □

□ The proponents of winding routes have the chance to go and see for themselves how people cross over and wear out the corners of lawns. □□□

□ Even worse things will happen to those designers who create impractical routes, and many an unflattering comment will be hurled at those who lead people up the garden path. □□□

□ Obviously the straight street is not always feasible. Often the curved or polygonal line will be chosen to preserve existing buildings, to achieve better shapes for building sites, etc. Such cases are classed among those things that take care of themselves and that contribute to making the cityscape more varied and, if they are well formed, also more interesting. □□□

□ One thing that should be noted in particular is that the break in the alignment of a street should never be located within the block of buildings itself. □□

If the straight or shortest line of travel is accepted as the best for pedestrians, then it is certainly permissible, on the other hand, to arrange short detours and curves for carriage traffic, but obviously only where these arise out of natural or artistic causes. □□□

□ With regard to carriage traffic itself, the greatest possible protection is offered to the public when streets are sufficiently wide and considerably widened at intersections. □□□

The above-mentioned lack of public buildings, whose larger forms and necessarily richer silhouettes would interrupt the apartment house facades and thus produce through great contrasts an interesting image of the street, must prompt the architect to achieve the desired effect with other means. For this, the most suitable are the introduction of squares, moderate setbacks and projections in building alignments, the creation of front gardens, the arrangement of streets into sections, their bifurcation at monuments and fountains, and finally, the use of those objects that have themselves to be accommodated on the surfaces of streets, such as tree-lined walks, shrubbery, hedges, kiosks, etc. □□□

It hardly needs mentioning that the preservation of our traditional works of art, the invariability of their surroundings with well-considered visual distances, as well as a number of fortuitous elements will provide us with further valuable means to enrich artistically the image of the street. □□□

□ Yet the task of the architect still does not end with the artistic treatment of the city's streets and squares. The most recent times have introduced many institutions and innovations that await artistic treatment. Foremost among these are streetcars, whose influence on the image of the street is all too often disastrous. □□□

□ Apart from all the disturbances to pedestrian traffic that streetcars cause at street level, they almost always disfigure its image, regardless of whether they are horse, steam, or electrically powered. □□□

□ This opinion has already become a fact in the great metropolises. The Parisians, for example, would never permit such a system on the Place de la Concorde or the Champs-Élysées, nor would the Berliners on Unter den Linden. □□□

Trains, with which every great city will have to trouble itself, can be either elevated or subterranean. The choice of one or the other system depends on local and technical conditions. The resulting pros and cons can be summarized in a few main points. □□□

□ The underground train, especially when it is covered, has almost no effect on the image of the street; it is more easily accessible, but is usually more expensive to build and unpleasant for the traveling public. □□□

□ The elevated train at times disfigures a street in a very perceptible way, yet it is less expensive than the subterranean train and affords the passenger much enjoyment with its open and frequently changing view. □□□

□ Therefore, the elevated train will never be well received by inhabitants for whom the preservation of a cityscape of the greatest possible beauty is the primary consideration, and understandably this will always be the viewpoint of the architect. □□□

Law or custom, technology or finance¹³⁰ produce villa, factory, and dwelling districts in every city that are essentially conditioned by the scenic situation of the city and that expand rapidly in periods of economic upswing. □□□

□ Recently there has been a certain tendency to restore the importance of

the detached dwelling and the idealistic premises connected with it in order to make up for what has been neglected. □□□

□ Building speculation has taken over this tendency,¹³¹ out of which has emerged a new urban or street type, the cottage or villa design. □□□

□ Although the streets in such villa districts must be very much welcomed from an aesthetic point of view when they have been laid out on an alternating, contrasting, detached, or enclosed plan with front gardens, internal squares, etc., they have not been very successful so far, chiefly because speculation has dealt this style of building an aesthetic deathblow with its uncontrolled duplication of ONE type. □□□

□ Popular opinion has already pronounced its just but scathing judgment by describing them as “villa cemeteries.” □□□

□ When many similar properties are placed adjacent to one another, whether they are detached houses or rental properties, they tend to deprive each other of any effect and produce an aesthetic boredom that again can only be remedied by great contrasts. Therefore, such villa districts need, at the least, to be traversed by shopping streets (also required economically) having a very different architectural arrangement. □□□

The significant effect that monuments have on the image of the street was stressed in some detail in the chapter “Composition.” All that remains for us here is to break a lance for that stepchild of art, the monumental fountain. □□□

□ Our large squares and streets imperatively require prominent and strongly marked points. ^{[This need, however, cannot be met by monuments, for obvious reasons.¹³²} Thus we must resort to other showpieces, of which monumental fountains are the most important. In addition to the refreshing and enlivening aspects that fountains offer the city dweller, there is the important artistic consideration that they are easily adaptable to the layout of the square by virtue of their form and size. Therefore, in our city especially, their frequent use cannot be recommended warmly enough to people in authority. □□□

The effect of our modern bridges on the ^{[cityscape¹³³} is almost negligible. Iron has replaced stone here, and the money available unmistakably says the rest, so that bridges have been reduced to almost purely utilitarian structures, to simple extensions of the streets. The first brutish appearance of the new material—iron—prompted rather energetic protests by the city’s inhabitants, and this,

at least, has resulted in the fact that today, whenever it is even halfway possible, "construction below" is ordered so as not to destroy the always-beautiful view from the bridge. Here too it is essential for art and the artist to have a major say in such productions, so that the hitherto much-neglected view along the axis of the bridge might be treated artistically and thereby offer the person approaching it the necessary aesthetic preparation. □□□

□ Therefore the artistic treatment of bridges should in most cases display strongly emphasized bridge entry points and richly outfitted bridge railings.

Our great progress in the field of hygiene, the undisputed success of all measures in this regard, the enormous and accelerating population growth of large cities, and finally the fact that artistic effect is inseparable from cleanliness—these factors of themselves point to the need for the scrupulous cleaning of our traffic routes and the impeccable appearance of our public gardens! Beginning with his first designs the architect has to take this more than legitimate demand into consideration through appropriate measures. □□□

□ It cannot be the aim of this book to review everything relevant to the field of hygiene, but it must be emphasized that the architect has to keep fully abreast of this field too, just because these modern achievements demand truly new artistic forms.¹³⁴ □□□

□ The problem of the removal of combustion gases and soot, which is becoming increasingly apparent in the large cities, also belongs to the field of hygiene. Sanitary¹³⁵ measures, such as the compulsory use of coke, the location of factories on the periphery of the city, and devices for the control of smoke, obviously can provide only slight relief, since they do not deal with the vast number of heating units in our apartments and offices. □□□

□ Admittedly, the aesthetic aspect of the cityscape is affected only by the large smokestacks of factories, while smaller chimneys go almost unnoticed. Even if more beautiful forms could be found for the former, there is little hope, with our present level of technical knowledge, of freeing the city of smoke and soot in the near future. □□□

□ Yet smoke and soot are most harmful to our modern works of art. In just a short period of time a mixture of dust, soot, and sediment covers every outdoor work of art, giving it a very altered and certainly unintended appearance. □□□

□ Although we have certainly made attempts to take man's innate sense of

color into account by calling upon the sister arts, all such attempts are frustrated by the aesthetically and chemically destructive effect of the evil just mentioned. When this is combined with our very unfavorable climatic conditions, the result is our blackened facades with their sculptural decorations made unrecognizable by soot. □□□

□ The unsightly color of our bronze monuments, the inviability of all murals on the exterior of our buildings, and the necessary winter encasement of all marble embellishments made for our squares and buildings are the tragic consequences of these factors. □□□

□ They can be prevented only by employing the simplest possible forms and smooth surfaces; by using porcelain and majolica, stone and mosaic pictures; and by systematically cleaning the artworks.¹³⁶ Modern architecture has already shown significant results in this area.¹³⁷ □□□

Political and social conditions, as already mentioned, influence to a large extent urban architectural styles, and these must actually be regarded as the main reason for our very altered building types. Democracy has supplied art with a large number of new tasks, yet it must be said that what art has gained, on one hand, through the power of the new impulses and the possibilities created by modern construction, it has surely forfeited, on the other hand, with the loss of a sovereign will, energy, personal desire for fame, and intimacy. Our colossal structures (exhibition buildings, railway stations, parliaments) are an eloquent testimony to this fact when they are compared to castles and palaces. □

Still to be considered are the economic influences on art. It may seem that art's work only begins where abundance and wealth are present. This is certainly wrong. □□□

□ Surely the simple corresponds best to our present views, which with regard to the cityscape demand at least the artistic-practical. The viewpoints of pure utility and overloaded tastelessness are therefore to be opposed under all circumstances. Even the simplest thing can be artistically treated without increasing the cost.¹³⁸ □□□

□ More than ever the artist is seriously exhorted in such cases to prove his artistic ability by an exact and thorough fulfillment of what is demanded; that is, by the simplest and most appropriate form. WITHOUT DOUBT THE DAY CAN AND MUST COME WHEN NOTHING VISIBLE TO THE EYE IS MADE WITHOUT THE SANCTION OF ART.¹³⁹ It should never

be forgotten THAT A COUNTRY'S ART IS THE MEASURE NOT ONLY OF ITS WELL-BEING, BUT ALSO FIRST AND FOREMOST OF ITS INTELLIGENCE. □□□

□ A general, unyielding adherence to such principles by artists would within a short time endow every city with another appearance and replace that revolting, gingerbreadlike, ornamental jumble of buildings produced by our nonartists.¹⁴⁰ □□□

□ We should at this point also consider the great influence that city representatives and their enforcement agencies have on the formation of the cityscape. All public and private construction comes under their control, and it may be conceded that with the exception of everything artistic they have exercised this control well and very conscientiously. Since these agencies are composed only of engineers and not of artists and, moreover, little or no funds are allocated for artistic commissions or for things that simply would contribute to the neat appearance of the city, it happens that incredible errors are committed against art. □□□

□ If I may again cite our father city as an example, I do it with a high degree of melancholy. To touch on only a few things, I refer to our traditional open markets (Naschmarkt, one-kilometer-long stalls on Mariahilferstrasse, and many others). An outrageous accumulation of rubbish, cultures of bacteria, an unprecedentedly shabby street appearance, the blockage of passageways, and hygienic practices that cannot be sufficiently condemned are but a small part of the grievance. □□□

□ The much too sharply cambered surface of the streets, which greatly narrows the pavement; our unfortunately much-varying levels; the utter "disorder" of our housing alignments; wooden telegraph posts facing every which way; poles for the overhead lines of the electrically powered vehicles arranged completely haphazardly, as is the track system of the same; and the equally confused distribution of gas lamps—all combine with innumerable sheds and other buildings standing on the street to produce a positively chaotic picture. It is therefore high time that the city administration under the leadership of distinguished artists actively intervenes to provide funds and pass a law of expropriation, so that everything visible to the eye can be successfully approved not only by the engineer, but also by the artist.¹⁴¹ □□□

The impact of modern human efforts on the future design of architectural works has been considered at every opportunity. □□□

□ But whereas on our buildings' exteriors there still prevails in many cases a tentativeness, a groping and searching for the right course, in our interiors and in the design of useful objects there can be seen a vigorous and purposeful effort, a very progressive ability to take account of modern trends. □□□

□ The word "comfort" has gained currency in every language, and today everything that contradicts its strict laws is considered imperfect. □□□

□ There are two conditions demanded by modern man that can be considered to be criteria: **THE GREATEST POSSIBLE CONVENIENCE AND THE GREATEST POSSIBLE CLEANLINESS.** □□□

□ All attempts that do not take these postulates into consideration can only lead to something of no value, and all artistic productions that are not consistent with these rules will prove incapable of living. □□□

□ Examples of this are legion. Inconvenient staircases; everything unmanageable, impractical, hard to clean; ¹⁴²everything structurally wrong; all objects that are difficult to manufacture, in which, therefore, the appearance does not correspond to the cost of production;¹⁴² all furnishings insufficiently hygienic, furniture with sharp corners, chairs that do not fit the human form and the specific uses of reading, eating, smoking, or entertaining, all impractical objects of "applied art," even if born of the greatest masters, and so many other things fall into this category. It does not matter in this regard whether these objects are created for the palace or for the simplest middle-class dwelling.¹⁴³ □□□

¹⁴²It has repeatedly been suggested in this book that the art objects produced by artists cannot be divided into classes. Therefore it is only a question of art and never of the arts. Artistic creation means to find the beautiful expression, no matter whether for a small or a large object. □□□

□ The artist is directed down a definite path by predisposition and the pressure of circumstances. In this, progress comes about by experimentation, study, tenacious energy, and enthusiasm. Time and experience bring the envisioned goal closer into view. Always, however, the creative idea in the artist's work remains the touchstone of his achievement, and this idea alone leads him to success. □□□

□ These words should draw attention to the fact that the **Modern Movement**

owes its birth and its growth to a number of artists, who belong to ALL branches of art, and whose association, provoked by the desire for "LIBERATION," has led them to this achievement. □□□

There can be no doubt that the Modern Movement first had to conquer the field lying closest to it—that of industry, in which demands were necessarily concentrated. □□□

□ The public quickly made up its mind to accept those forms offered by the Modern Movement; they found that the forms corresponded to our present feeling better than the stylistic rubbish formerly produced. □□□

□ Archaeology, tradition, and science should not, as they have in past decades, pull art around by its nose. No! Freed of its chains, art has begun to function creatively again. □□□

□ Everywhere artists appear on the scene, again pointing out to industry the right path and thus demonstrating how unspeakably depressing eclecticism was, which lacked any artistic feeling. □□□

□ It is true that the art of plagiarism has made popular the terms "applied art" and "applied art tradesman," but certainly not in the sense of past centuries when every tradesman was also an artist. The pseudotradesman of the last decades was rather conveniently backed by eclecticism, since the production of copies and imitations required not the slightest artistic talent. □□□

□ Only when the artist created new forms and educated the masses did the hollowness of the former pretension become apparent. □□□

□ It had never been clear to tradesmen that the truly good had only been created by artists, just as it still is today. The concepts "art" and "trade" are incompatible according to today's views. The reason for this lies in the object's mode of production. The artist will find his satisfaction only in the beauty of the emerging work,¹⁴⁴ whereas the tradesman will always put his own interest first and by that alone become the antipode to the artist. □□□

□ Therefore the state, notwithstanding all the means it brings to bear, cannot succeed in bringing these concepts together, which behave like oil and vinegar. □□□

That the general demand for new artistic forms for useful objects sprang for the most part from a craze for innovation, not from the artistic needs of the public, is a fact not to be denied. This also explains the eagerness of tradesmen to make the articles now in heavy demand in such a way as to correspond (in their view) to the

proclaimed watchword "Secession." □□□

□ In this way a host of parasites has appeared—likewise in architecture. They dished up their outrageous monstrosities to the world under the above slogan as innovation, and unfortunately it must be said that these products were also bought for this reason. There can be no doubt that the rapid infiltration of art into industry still tends to lead to plenty of dross. If one examines what has been created, then one finds much that is inconsistent with the idea of beauty, much that lacks mature reflection, much that often treats the essential idea in a rather stepmotherly way, much that also leads to mistakes in the choice of the means of execution. For all that, progress in the technology of production, which is achieved only empirically and therefore slowly, has been neglected in many cases by trying to rush artistic creation. □□□

□ The last fact has prompted artists to call for state-run ateliers, or better said, experimental workshops that would be affiliated with artistic ateliers. Yet we should be wary of this institution, if only for the reason of not becoming involved in a rather expensive partnership. Since all of the larger commercial establishments are equipped with such workshops, they could easily be enlisted for experiments, all the more so since the interests of these workshops are closely bound up with the intended purpose.¹⁴⁵ □□□

With regard to the furnishing of our rooms, artists today have already succeeded in influencing the public, at least to the extent of strengthening the idea that **THE APPEARANCE AND OCCUPATION OF THE INHABITANT SHOULD HARMONIZE WITH THE APPEARANCE OF THE ROOM.** It is simply an artistic absurdity that men in evening attire, in lawn tennis or bicycling outfits, in uniform or checkered breeches should spend their life in interiors executed in the styles of past centuries.¹⁴⁶ □□□

□ The room that we inhabit should be as simple as our clothing. This does not mean that the room cannot be richly and elegantly furnished or that works of art may not adorn it. But richness and elegance cannot be expressed by forms that are incongruous with our demands for comfort and with our present feeling for form and color. □□□

□ The interior can admit nearly all types of commercial products and techniques of execution. Since all these products need the assistance of art, the artist's close attention is more than justified. □□□

In order to shape and elevate things to works of art, a mature deliberation and keen sense of observation are (as always) needed. Since I have in this book repeatedly referred to the perception of human needs and demands, a few examples will follow here for a better understanding of this. □□□

□ Among the textile products the carpet plays a principal role and some lines should be devoted to it. □□□

□ The tapestry actually defies discussion because in an artistic respect (form, color, line, pictorial presentation, etc.) it is totally independent. Yet before making practical use of it, one should be warned always to be mindful of its bad properties. It is difficult to clean, difficult to maintain, and tends to take on and give off strong odors (from cigars, fruit, etc.) for a long time, notwithstanding good ventilation. Therefore, the room in which the tapestry is hung must be chosen accordingly. □□□

□ The carpet as a floor covering has first to serve the convenience and the feeling of safety of people walking on it. The muffling of steps, the warmth and comfort that it lends to the room, and the prevention of slipping are the main reasons for its use. Artistically, the carpet makes possible the perfect color harmony of the room. □□□

□ Completely objectionable is every restless and robust line or one that actually makes the form appear three-dimensional, thereby producing uncertainty and uneasiness in use. Also objectionable are the more profuse ornaments and pictures. At most, a line should be restricted to either a "directional" effect or to the accentuation of the carpet's border, in this last regard to attract the attention of the carpet user. A rich *en-plein* ornament will always clash with the fittings of the room. This is also one of the main reasons that the Oriental carpet is not suited to our interiors. For its use in the Orient, where it lies uncovered, encircled by divans, in harmony with the wall ornaments, or at hand for appropriate functions, the Oriental carpet with its often charming color harmony is surely the best solution; however it must be deemed unsuitable for our interiors for these and other reasons. □□□

Sufficient light, a pleasant temperature, and clean air in rooms are very just demands of man.

Whereas these things were considered unattainable just a few decades ago, a number of inventions and improvements have raised the possibility of their complete fulfillment. Thus the electric light, for instance, has made possible the ideal illumination (diffused, free of soot, etc.) of a room while avoiding the

danger of fire. The electric light allows the fulfillment of even the highest expectation of purpose and effect. □□□

Our views have changed completely not only with respect to illumination, but also especially with regard to the room's exposure to natural light. □□□

□ With rental units, the normal window will be around for a rather long time; with the private dwelling, however, there appears everywhere an invaluable effort to adjust the sources of light to the space and its functions. □□□

□ Eclecticism, with its effort to drag in the inappropriate architecture of palaces to solve the problems of profane and monumental building, has had such a long-term stunting effect on the healthy development of the room's natural light that today it can rightly be said that all our buildings, especially the public buildings, are insufficiently lit. Therefore, here too there should be a break with tradition. □□□

Works of art will always constitute the real decoration of our rooms. As with everything, a wise restraint is also appropriate here. The tasteless covering of the whole wall surface, even with the greatest works of art, always produces in the viewer a certain insecurity or sense of uneasiness, dissipating his pleasure, interest, and concentration. Thus it is obvious that wall decoration should only be used where the eye is offered a resting point. Consideration of this fact would soon lead us to curtail the mass production of panel paintings, to strive for a planned, artistically conceived adornment of our rooms, and to restore the unfortunately much-neglected "applied" art to its rightful place. □□□

□ Equally important as the number of pictures in the room are their relative sizes and, lastly, the height at which the works of art are hung. Since the maximum natural angle of vision of the human eye is sixty degrees (thirty degrees upward, thirty degrees downward), one's comfort should also be taken into account in this regard, and works of art should therefore always be hung within this angle of vision. □□□

□ From this condition follows the modern view, indeed fully justified, that ceiling paintings whose viewing requires an unnatural human position are objectionable. □□□

Human clothing is located at the outer limits of the concept "art in industry" and surely no words would need be spent on this subject if artists were not repeatedly making

attempts to conquer this field too, as it were, for art. □□□

□ Since the principles repeatedly expressed hold true with regard to men's clothing and all assaults against them have been completely ineffective, we can really only discuss women's clothing. From the artist's point of view, women's clothing is considered to be decidedly more beautiful than men's. An essential change in both is possible only when art filters down and has a formative effect on the public, so that the impulse for fashion's regeneration springs from the public. It is always reserved for social conditions, however, to play the leading role. □□□

□ Thus fashion or style in clothing can only derive from the public. Since women in this case are the major participants, it could almost be said that, because of their artistic tutelage, the artistic contribution of half of mankind is frustrated—achieving a result that is no doubt unsatisfactory.¹⁴⁷ □□□

It has been stressed several times that in designing the architect should take into account and know thoroughly the techniques associated with the material and its workmanship. □□□

□ Apart from those skilled trade practices (an exhaustive knowledge of which the architect possesses for everyday construction), if we take a glance at the extent of the different technologies (such as stereotomy, textiles, tectonics, ceramics, metal technology with its hundreds of processes), it becomes clear what a treasury of knowledge [and experience¹⁴⁸] the architect has to accumulate if his work is to be successful.¹⁴⁹ □□□

There are thousands and thousands of things that modern culture has devised, and for many of them art today has already found forms—many have even been given a perfect form. [They do not recall the forms of past times;¹⁵⁰] they are completely new because their premises and their essential principle have issued from our very own ambition and perception. □□□

□ [A refreshing breath of air spreads across the formerly parched field of art and luxuriant shoots spring up everywhere. Not everything that germinates and sprouts ripens into fruit, becomes art-form; yet that the new arises (as the natural development of art demands) and that the reign of the castrates in art is finally exposed—this fact makes us glad.¹⁵¹] □□□

□ Art advances slowly and solemnly, gives birth creatively and continuously until it achieves that ideal of beauty best corresponding to our epoch. □□□

- ☐ Naturally man's baser instincts will one day cause art to decline once more, but it will arise time and again when given a new animating impulse. ☐☐☐
- ☐ Thus it was, thus it will always be. ☐☐☐
- ☐ The sacred task of artists is to accompany and not abandon art, even if the path becomes thorny, so that mankind will take pleasure in what art creates through the artist. ☐☐☐
- ☐ These words quite naturally lead us to address a serious admonition to young architects to train themselves in seeing, perceiving, and recognizing human needs, and to apprehend what their perceptions discern as the basis for creating.¹⁵² ☐☐☐
- ☐ If architecture is not rooted in life, in the needs of contemporary man, then it will be lacking in the immediate, the animating, the refreshing, and will sink down to the level of a troublesome consideration—it will just cease to be an art. ☐☐☐
- ☐ The artist must always bear in mind **THAT ART'S CALLING IS TO SERVE MAN; THE PUBLIC DOES NOT LIVE FOR THE SAKE OF ART. CREATIVE POWER SHOULD APPEAR IN EVERY WORK OF ART EVER AGAIN ANEW.**¹⁵³ ☐☐☐

In conclusion, I am prompted to raise the question, "how is artistic property to be protected?"

- ☐ Certainly it is logical and just that the creator of the work of art draws material and artistic profit from his work and that laws protect this, his property. ☐☐☐
- ☐ As simple as this seems, it is as difficult to carry out. With works in which it is only a question of pictorial reproduction, the implementation of such a law works flawlessly. Yet when it is a matter of ideas that have been applied in whole or part to a work, such ideas are open to all. ☐☐☐
- ☐ Nevertheless, the ideas constitute what is creative in a work of art, and no legal means has been found solely for their protection. ☐☐☐
- ☐ Little altered or unchanged in form, ideas are considered readily available and a very welcome haul, and the rightful owner becomes ensnared in a string of unpleasant and costly litigation if he seeks legal protection on this account. ☐☐☐
- ☐ Since the artist is, in fact, called upon to deliver a wealth of ideas, he is most severely affected by such abuses. To a greater than usual extent, it is appropriate for the art faculty to have this talent. If teachers, as is proper, are

to have a productive influence on students as well as on the public, then their mature ideas must be of benefit to the students. That this cannot be legally protected goes without saying, and the question thereby answers itself. It is therefore incumbent on the state to reward the faculty well in compensation for the fact that their creative ideas, which are outside the purview of the law, become the property of the public. Artists who are robbed, however, may find satisfaction in the artistic recognition of their immediate colleagues and may take the law into their own hands; that is, pillory the thief and the receiver of stolen goods whenever possible.¹⁵⁴ □□□

CONCLUDING REMARK

The scope of this book has grown far beyond the original intent, and yet it seems to me to express



my convictions in only the most succinct way. □□□



□ Its contents can be no more than a foundation. The manner and way—how the additional building stones are to be procured, how they are to be laid, and which forms they are to be given—are left to the pencil in the school. □□□

□ There is much I still could convey, yet for this a graphic presentation would be necessary. I wanted to avoid this because in a certain sense my earlier publications illustrate what is said here. They show clearly how the views expressed have ripened in me. □□□

□ I believe I have indicated in this book the path that we must take in order to draw nearer the goal put forth, a modern architecture.¹⁵⁵ □□□

The question “how should we build?” cannot really be answered in a strict sense. YET TODAY

OUR SENSES MUST ALREADY TELL US THAT THE LINES OF LOAD AND SUPPORT,¹⁵⁶ THE PANEL-LIKE TREATMENT OF SURFACES, THE GREATEST SIMPLICITY, AND AN ENERGETIC EMPHASIS ON CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIAL WILL THOROUGHLY DOMINATE THE NEWLY EMERGING ART-FORM OF THE FUTURE. MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND THE MEANS AT OUR COMMAND REQUIRE THIS. □□□

□ THE BEAUTIFUL EXPRESSION THAT ART WILL GIVE TO THE WORKS OF OUR TIME OBVIOUSLY HAS TO HARMONIZE WITH THE VIEWS AND APPEARANCE OF MODERN MAN AND SHOW THE INDIVIDUALITY OF THE ARTIST.¹⁵⁷ □□□

Today there can be no question of dampening ideals or lowering the level of art, and those who have been convinced by these lines or who have been strengthened in their conviction will have to admit that the new and great impulses for which man hourly struggles will, when rightly grasped, certainly make a more powerful contribution to the clarification of today's still very confused views on art than all the best-intentioned and stubbornly defended doctrines on the use of stylistically pure and well-copied forms of past centuries, which no longer have any relation to modern man. □□□

The students who strive for the goals indicated in this book will thus become **WHAT THE ARCHITECTS OF ALL EPOCHS WERE—CHILDREN OF THEIR TIME. THEIR WORKS WILL BEAR THEIR PERSONAL STAMP. THEY WILL FULFILL THEIR TASKS AS EDUCATORS AND BE TRULY CREATIVE. THEIR LANGUAGE WILL BE UNDERSTANDABLE TO MAN. THE WORLD WILL SEE ITS OWN REFLECTION IN THEIR WORKS, AND [THEY WILL BE MARKED¹⁵⁸] WITH THE SELF-ASSURANCE, INDIVIDUALITY, AND CONVICTION THAT HAS BEEN UNIQUE TO ALL ARTISTS OF ALL EPOCHS.** □□□

□ We wish to avoid the mistakes that our forefathers made when they impiously neglected or destroyed the works of their own forefathers; we shall place the works handed down to us in a proper setting, like precious jewels, and thereby preserve them as a vivid illustration of the history of art. □□□

□ The magnificent progress of civilization will show us clearly what we should learn from the ancients, and what we should leave behind, and the correctly taken path will surely lead us to the goal of creating the new, the beautiful. □□□

[May what has been said in this book fall on fertile ground for the well-being of the schools, for the well-being of students; may the thoughts expressed contribute to the awakening of a fresh and pulsating life, to a rich and purposeful development of architecture; so that we shall also see our own ideal of beauty embodied—

MODERN ARCHITECTURE!¹⁵⁹

TEXTUAL EMENDATIONS

The numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 in the notes below refer to the editions of 1896, 1898, 1902, and 1914, respectively.

1. 4: Variation: "Its origin (first edition) dates back to 1894."
2. 2: Variation: "... tradition and intimacy that they were holding up to the onslaught of the 'Modern Movement' was only made of glass."
4: Variation: "... eclecticism, folk art [*Heimatkunst*], 'intimacy', etc., that they were holding up to the onslaught of the Modern Movement was only made of pasteboard."
3. 2: Variation: "The success of the Secession and the architecture of the Vienna Jubilee Exhibition convincingly demonstrates..."
4: Deletion of sentence.
4. 4: Variation: "...art of the time,..." ff.
5. 3, 4: Addition.
6. 4: Deletion of paragraph.
7. 4: Variation and deletion: "... the almost always incorrect assessment of his quality as an artist, and the diversity of views among his colleagues invariably cover his path of life with thorns."
8. 3, 4: Addition.
9. 2, 3, 4: Addition of capitals.
10. 1, 2: Variation: "... of all the arts."
11. 2, 3, 4: Addition.
12. 4: Deletion of sentences.
13. 1, 2: Variation: "... dexterity [*Fertigkeit*]..."
4: Addition: "...[skill], which later combine as a rule with individuality..."
14. 4: Deletion of sentence.
15. 4: Addition: "... a fact that is of great importance to our architectural schools."
16. 1, 2: Variation: "The architect therefore has to summon every means..."
17. 3: Addition.
18. 3: Addition.
19. 3, 4: Deletion: "... [Improvement Fund], an extremely beneficial institution in Austria for art and the industrial arts."
20. 3: Addition of paragraph.
4: Deletion of previous nine paragraphs.
21. 2, 3, 4: Addition of capitals.
22. 4: Addition of paragraph: "A half century of artistic lethargy, the spell of tradition, the blinding flash of the art of our time, the defeat of personalities who until now were looked upon as leaders, the corruption in art, and the sad results of almost every

architectural competition further impede the elevation of art, and with it the position of the architect.”

4: Variation: “[To explain this problem in detail] and to contribute to its solution is a further [purpose of this book.]”

23. 1, 2: Variation: “... [artistic struggle thrust upon them by mankind,] and for simply yielding to the indifference of the masses toward architecture and [throwing up their hands.]”

4: Variation: “... [artistic struggle] between the creative and the copied thrust upon them by the public and nonartists, for not knowing how to ward off the indifference of the masses toward architecture, [and for simply throwing up their hands] or seizing the most dismal means in the struggle for survival.”

24. 4: Addition: “... architect-doctor, ...”

25. 4: Addition: “... architect-doctor, ...”

26. 3, 4: Addition.

27. 3, 4: Addition.

28. 3, 4: Deletion of paragraph: “That this would be linked with a blossoming of architecture and art in general, as well with several advantages to the state, country, and city, needs no further emphasis.”

29. 4: Further addition of eight paragraphs:

“With diligence and memory it is possible to learn every science. Art, however, cannot be learned; as mentioned, the youth dedicating himself to art must possess the innate talent for this profession. It is therefore quite wrong for the state administration to run a school of architecture that has an open admission for ANY student with the necessary technical preparation.

“The Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna has in its statutes the provision that every teacher can refuse to accept a student if he does not show the capabilities required to convince the teacher that the candidate can enter an artistic career with success. This is, of course, true for the academy’s architectural schools, which require, in addition, a technical and art-historical diploma and a minimum age of twenty.

“Yet next door to the schools of architecture at the Academy in Vienna there is now another architectural school at the Polytechnical Institute, which does not have this provision in its statutes.

“Thus the Academy of Fine Arts trains young architects who have the innate disposition for the profession, and the technical college trains young architects who do not have this disposition.

“The Academy of Fine Arts ‘produces’ each year four to eight such artistically inclined, graduating architects (by the way, a more than sufficient number), while the technical college graduates *pro anno* twenty to twenty-five technically trained candidates, among whom it is extremely rare to find someone artistically inclined. Were this practice to continue over many years, naturally a superior minority would be facing an inferior majority. This is shown by the fact that according to the housing register we have in Vienna today 850 architects, while an expert on the situation

would have the greatest difficulty in naming 100 true architects.

“That 100 artists cannot compete with 750 nonartists is clear. It is just as clear that these 750 nonartists have an inartistic, and therefore artistically harmful, effect.

“In this case we are dealing with an institution of the state administration whose goal it is to lower the quality of the architect.

“Simply putting this matter in order would help to eliminate many sad and depressing events in the architect’s life.”

30. 3, 4: Addition.

4: Further addition of three paragraphs:

“Yet another fact should be mentioned here. People in authority who select and appoint the art faculty, especially when it concerns a faculty member who oversees the final training of art students, bring to bear their personal opinion, which in the rarest cases is correct, and thus we hear the catch-phrase ‘Star or teacher, who should be selected?’

“A number of pedagogically dressed-up reasons are bombastically drawn into the discussion, which results in assisting the selection of precisely the wrong person.

“There can be no doubt that a ‘star’ (if by that is meant a great individual artist who has been elevated to this status by those knowledgeable in art) must always be the best teacher. It can be expected from a star that he, more than anyone else, will have an exemplary effect and that certain qualities (such as the cherishing of ideals, the safeguarding of the student’s individuality, the refraining from any business motive or artistic corruption, the willingness to sacrifice for one’s conviction, the loving of truth in art and life, and therefore also impartiality in praise and blame, etc.) will appear more distinctly in him than in the pedagogical artist, because they are simply inseparable from a great artist.”

31. 1: Variation: “... suited for human dwellings and assemblies.”

32. 3, 4: Deletion of paragraph: “Today there is a certain tendency to appoint great artists as adjudicators, and it should be conceded that so long as these men are in command, they will always render correct judgments. But what happens when there are no longer any of these artists? The statute would remain in effect and the door would be open once more to the nonartist.”

33. 1, 2: Variation:

“The Architects Club, an outgrowth of the Vienna Society of Artists, corresponds perfectly to an architectural higher court. It can only be most warmly recommended that officials in authority recognize its value and use its assistance in settling all important and relevant questions.

“It is also to be hoped that the question of the title find its resolution in this natural way.”

4: Deletion of paragraph.

34. 3, 4: Addition: “... the various technologies, ...”

4: Further addition to beginning of sentence: “Characteristics of the thing created, [styles of living]...”

35. 3, 4: Addition.
36. 1, 2: Variation: "... of painting and sculpture ..."
37. 1, 2: Variation: "... I think is obvious."
38. 4: Variation: "... one to two months."
39. 4: Addition: "... [this plan fully.] It is not a question of the traveling young artist taking in the traditional forms, but of raising his level of culture. [The returning student ...]"
40. 3, 4: Addition.
4: Further addition: "Fischer von Erlach, 73 years."
41. 2, 3, 4: Addition.
42. 1, 2: Variation: "... [style] and also always cultivate this tendency with so-called aptitude and a special preference."
3, 4: Deletion of two paragraphs:
"As repugnant as it is for me to speak *pro domo*, I cannot refrain from rejecting here the reproach that I too employ the so-called 'Empire style' or use it as a departure point for further development. The reason for this impertinence might be found in my frequent use in my buildings and designs of a few characteristic motifs of the Empire period—the panel and the straight line.
"In response, I need only point out the significance of the straight line for our modern works. Our present methods of construction, machines, tools, and building practices require it anyhow, whereas plaster construction, long accepted as an art form, almost demands the panel and the panel-like form. It would be a great error to overlook these facts; incidentally, the opportunity will be repeatedly offered in the following pages for me to put forth my views clearly on this subject and thereby to dismiss the reproach noted above."
43. 3, 4: Addition.
44. 1, 2: Variation: "... COMBINED WITH EARLIER CONDITIONS AND THEREBY CREATED NEW FORMS."
45. 2, 3, 4: Addition of capitals.
46. 4: Addition: "... trapped in a traditional style, ..."
47. 2, 3, 4: Addition.
48. 1, 2: Variation: "... a building, a picture, an allegory, or a portrait, ..."
49. 4: Addition of two paragraphs:
"All great architects of the earlier epochs would have thought their patrons insane if these patrons had expressed the wish or command that the constructed building show the stylistic forms of a past epoch.
"In the Piazza and Piazzetta of Venice, for example, do not the Basilica, the Orologio, the Palazzo Ducale, the Biblioteca, the old and new Procuratie—therefore the styles of a millennium—unite into a charming whole? Is it possible that the masters who created such things received a 'style commission'?"
50. 2, 3, 4: Addition.
51. 2, 3, 4: Deletion: "Instead of furthering our inherited traditions, [the artist]..."

52. 4: Addition: "...but they did not find the artist who was able to put their feelings into material form."
53. 2, 3, 4: Addition.
54. 4: Variation: "...the architecture of our time..."
55. 2, 3, 4: Addition of capitals.
4: Variation: "... TRENCHANT NATURE ..." (*SCHARF DENKENDES WESEN*) replaces "... IDEAL NATURE ..."
56. 4: Variation: "We are near the end of this movement."
57. 3, 4: Addition.
58. 1, 2: Variation: "YET SO POWERFUL WILL BE THE UPHEAVAL THAT WE CAN SCARCELY SPEAK OF A RENAISSANCE OF THE RENAISSANCE. A COMPLETELY NEW BIRTH, A NAISSANCE, WILL EMERGE FROM THIS MOVEMENT."
59. 2: Variation and addition: "THIS NEW STYLE, 'THE MODERN', IN ORDER TO REPRESENT US AND OUR TIME, MUST CLEARLY EXPRESS A DISTINCT DECREASE OF FEELING IN ART, AN ALMOST COMPLETE DECLINE OF THE ROMANTIC, AND AN ALMOST ALL-ENCOMPASSING APPEARANCE OF REASON IN ALL OUR ACTS."
60. 2, 3, 4: Addition of capitals.
4: Variation: "...[THE WORLD, TO ITS OWN SURPRISE], HAS ALREADY REACHED THE GOAL."
61. 1, 2: Variation: "The architect may therefore dip into the full repository of traditional form—not to copy a selected form, but to adapt it to his purposes by reshaping the form."
62. 1, 2: Variation: "... SOMETHING IMPRACTICAL CAN NEVER BE BEAUTIFUL."
63. 4: Variation: "...monumental building and in a competition."
64. 1, 2: Variation: "... so-called period furniture on which one sits uncomfortably—[all produce]..."
65. 4: Addition: "...the clear characterization of the building's function,..."
66. 1, 2: Variation: "... is never created for the monument, but always the monument for the square."
67. 3, 4: Addition.
68. 1, 2: Variation: "... the architect will generally decide such things more correctly than the sculptor or painter."
69. 3, 4: Addition of paragraph.
70. 2, 3, 4: Addition.
71. 3, 4: Addition.
72. 1, 2: Variation: "... even the time and fashion are properly stressed."
73. 2, 3, 4: Addition of three paragraphs.
74. 2, 3, 4: Addition.
75. 4: Addition: "... (Chiesa di San Pietro in Montorio by Bramante)..."

76. 1, 2: Variation: "...[and] profiling ..."
77. 4: Addition: "... (Finance Ministry in Vienna, Fischer v. Erlach) ..."
78. 3, 4: Addition.
79. 3, 4: Addition.
80. 4: Deletion.
81. 4: Addition: "... (height of the enclosure)."
82. 4: Addition of paragraph: "CORRECTLY ADAPTING THE SIZE OF THE STATUES TO THE BUILDING PARTS, TO THE VISUAL DISTANCE, AND TO EACH OTHER."
83. 3, 4: Addition.
84. 3, 4: Addition of phrase and addition of capitals for all "hints."
85. 1, 2: Variation: "... Semper's immortal design ..."
86. 4: Variation: "... a sense of beauty ..."
87. 4: Variation: "The roof required the supports, later the wall, finally the hearth. The artificial supports called forth the building materials of wood and stone; the partition [*Wand*] created wickerwork and the bearing wall [*Mauer*]."
88. 4: Addition: "... and the artistic feeling ..."
89. 1, 2: Variation: "THUS A CONSTRUCTIVE REASON ALWAYS INFLUENCES FORM, AND IT IS THEREFORE CERTAIN THAT NEW METHODS OF CONSTRUCTION MUST ALSO GIVE BIRTH TO NEW FORMS."
90. 3, 4: Deletion of paragraph: "Thus what can be more logical than to maintain: WHEN ART IS SUPPLIED WITH SO MANY COMPLETELY NEW METHODS OF CONSTRUCTION, THERE MUST NO DOUBT ARISE FROM THEM A NEW WAY OF SHAPING FORM AND GRADUALLY A NEW STYLE."
4: Addition: "... in reinforced concrete structures)."
91. 3, 4: Addition.
92. 1, 2: Variation: "... probably only seldom been combined in one individual in an outstanding way."
93. 4: Addition: "... the mechanical operation, ..."
94. 3, 4: Deletion: "... [stone forms] or a tectonic appearance ..."
95. 4: Addition: "... zinc sculptures, ..."
96. 4: Addition: "... (Vienna Hofburgtheater)."
97. 4: Variation: "... a mistaken building method ..."
98. 1, 2: Variation: "... one-fifth to one-sixth ..."
4: Variation: "... one-tenth to one-fiftieth ..."
99. 3, 4: Addition of capitals.
100. 3, 4: Addition.
101. 4: Addition of paragraph: "In this sense one can speak of folk art [*Heimatkunst*]."
102. 4: Variation: "... monumental buildings—therefore not be lenient."
103. 4: Addition: "... and concrete ..."
104. 2, 3, 4: Addition of capitals.
105. 3, 4: Addition.

106. 1, 2: Variation: "The reason lies not only in the fact that almost every viewer lacks the desire and the intellectual effort necessary to take in a project, but also because so many architects are content to present the design in an unimaginative way, not consistent with the demands of modern taste."

107. 1, 2: Variation: "... secessionist presentation adorned with symbols..."

108. 3, 4: Addition.

109. 1, 2: Variation: "... English, German, and French periodicals, in which almost everything is presented in a modern, artistic, allegorical, or symbolic way."

110. 4: Deletion: "... by the use of flowered borders, labels, details, and..."

3, 4: Addition: "... by emphasizing the individual conception."

111. 2, 3, 4: Addition of paragraph.

4: Further addition: "The goal of the architect should be directed precisely to that which creates interest and is consonant with the sister arts."

112. 3, 4: Addition.

113. 4: Addition of seven paragraphs:

"The following views represent neither the radicalism of a hothead nor the whining of the historian on the question of city planning, but again proceed from the principle that the most important factor in the solution of any such question is the scrupulous fulfillment of the purpose, and that art in implementing this task must sanction everything created.

"Since our style of living, our actions, and our technical and scientific accomplishments are today very different from what they were a thousand years ago or even a short time ago, and always were and are undergoing continual development, art must express this condition—and in so doing, also our time. Thus art has the task of adapting the cityscape to the man of today.

"The so very popular catch-phrases 'folk art', 'harmonizing with the cityscape', 'heart in the cityscape', in the sense they have been voiced by people who know and judge art only from textbooks, are nothing but empty phrases to which these people cling because they helplessly face the architectural questions of the large city. Only the true architect knows how to weigh and distinguish between the beautiful and old and the merely old, and thinks neither of the wanton destruction of the beautiful nor of copying the existing nor of the unfortunately so popular 'dressing up' of the city. Every architectural licentiousness is foreign to him.

"Our democratic life, into which the public is forced with the cry for inexpensive and healthy dwellings and with the imposed economy of our way of living, has resulted in the uniformity of our residential buildings. This feature will therefore also be strongly expressed in the future cityscape. The single flat of equal cubic volume and floor plan is cheaper in multistory buildings in terms of cost of construction and leasing than in buildings with only a few floors; the cost of land, foundation, roof, etc. are simply computed once. Moreover, the maxim 'Time is money' is heard more than ever today; accordingly, apartment and office buildings are increasing to seven or eight stories in height and even becoming skyscrapers in the inner city.

“Residential buildings are far more prevalent than public buildings in every large city; from their linear arrangement therefore arise long and similar street facades.

“The art of our time has raised this uniformity to a monumentality by broadening streets and knows how to make effective use of this motif by pleasing interruptions. Thus there can be no doubt that when art correctly intervenes in such cases, it is impossible to speak of a ‘city schema’. This problem only arises whenever art has no say in the matter. Unfortunately, the functionally and economically conditioned uniformity of residential buildings has led to a totally objectionable game of mutual one-upmanship in the exterior decor of these utility buildings through the use of such inappropriate elements as projections, towers, gables, columns, ornamentation, etc. It is fortunate that the modern wide street softens such ostentatious absurdities.

“Equally unjustified and artistically objectionable is the intentional and unmotivated curving of streets, and the irregular layouts of streets and squares in order to give supposedly painterly images to the streets. Every large city must have a few curved streets and irregularities; they are artistically acceptable, however, only when they arise from the organization of the streets or traffic, when they are conditioned by the features of the terrain, etc. The characteristic expression of a city arises from its existing beauty and from newly created beauty.”

114. 1, 2: Variation: “... in a rather stepmotherly way.”

115. 3, 4: Addition.

116. 4: Deletion of sentences.

117. 1, 2: Variation: “... thirty meters, ...”

118. 2, 3, 4: Addition.

119. 3, 4: Addition.

120. 3, 4: Addition.

4: Further addition: “The artistically so important silhouette of a city is produced by monumental buildings, towers, domes, and the conditions of the terrain. To these features have been added in the last few decades multistory apartment houses (skyscrapers). Although the problem of such buildings is solvable from an aesthetic point of view and their moderate use does not have an unfavorable effect on the urban silhouette, they undoubtedly deserve to be submitted for approval by the city administration—if only so that they do not disturb adjacent owners. One disturbance, however, is the deprivation of a neighbor’s sunlight. For this reason, approval for their design should be granted only if the shadow of such a skyscraper, which falls from its highest point at a forty-five-degree angle, strikes no neighboring house.”

121. 2, 3, 4: Addition.

4: Further addition: “... of the Piazza in Venice...”

122. 4: Addition: “... observations points, etc.”

123. 1, 2: Variation: “... —to the point of becoming a caricature of the so-called English park—by continually reducing the area and by hauling in objects that were consistent with neither the terrain nor the site (Stadtspark in Vienna, and many others).”

124. 4: Addition: "With respect to the layout of lawns, the fulfillment of the artistic and economic purpose suggests excluding all exotic plants."

125. 2, 3, 4: Addition.

126. 4: Variation: "The architect unfortunately has little influence over many of these questions, and all too often official and governmental measures eliminate any aesthetic influence."

127. 4: Variation: Sentences replaced by "The topography is another reason."

128. 3, 4: Addition.

129. 4: Deletion of sentence.

130. 4: Addition: "... and the prevailing wind direction..."

131. 4: Addition: "... and incorrect planning has taken it a step further..."

132. 1, 2: Variation: "These are not obtainable with monuments, because their required number and size would far surpass the occasion and meaning of their erection."

4: Variation: "This need, however, cannot be met by 'monuments of persons', since the size of our squares is too large for such monuments."

133. 1, 2: Variation: "... image of the street..."

134. 4: Addition: "... (street lavatories, waiting shelters, etc.)."

135. 1, 2: Variation: "... does not belong to the field of hygiene, but is related to it. Hygienic [measures]..."

136. 3, 4: Addition.

137. 3, 4: Deletion of two paragraphs:

"Sufficient light, a pleasant temperature, and clean air in the rooms are surely very just demands of man. Whereas these things were considered unattainable just a few decades ago, a number of inventions and improvements have raised the possibility of their complete fulfillment.

"Thus the electric light, for instance, has made possible the ideal illumination (diffused, free of soot, etc.) of a room while reducing the danger of fire."

138. 4: Addition: "...; some factories in the style of our time splendidly attest to this fact."

139. 2, 3, 4: Addition.

140. 1, 2: Variation: "... eliminate that revolting, gingerbreadlike, ornamental jumble of our suburban buildings."

141. 3, 4: Addition of three paragraphs.

142. 3, 4: Addition.

143. 3, 4: Deletion of paragraphs:

"If our modern creations of this kind, which are consistent with the idea of comfort, are compared with earlier products, even from the most luxurious French periods, the vast difference becomes strikingly apparent, and it must be conceded that both good and completely new things can and already have been created.

"The English were the first to meet these needs, and for decades they have paid homage to this modern trend. Most recently, they have even been successful in over-

coming the lack of taste long prevalent among them with a happy understanding of forms taken directly from nature.

“Earlier, in the chapter on ‘The Architect’, it was pointed out that the modern architect has become a supporter of the arts and crafts. The enormous efforts that the state has made to reunite art and craft have so far met with no appreciable success. [2 only: “The reason for this is that industrial art, the arts and crafts, and the ideas associated with them are empty phrases, and that any convergence of one of these ideas with another is entirely inconceivable under present conditions. Industry and craft naturally press toward factory production, since the lure of wages and money comes from this direction. Yet factory production is incompatible with art.

“This fact will quickly reveal the mistaken—one might almost say obsolete—viewpoint of our school of applied art.] It may therefore be asserted without hesitation that today everything truly good and new in the field of industry and the crafts is created by artists alone.”

144. 4: Variation: “[The artist] will always find his satisfaction only in beauty and in the work arising from a scrupulous fulfillment of the purpose, [whereas]...”

145. 4: Deletion of sentence: “Since all... intended purpose.”

4: Further addition to previous sentence: “... [expensive partnership] and preventing the overcrowding of the applied art schools.”

146. 4: Further addition: “Equally ridiculous is to make villas meant for town dwellers look like farmhouses, and to let them be inhabited by drawing-room peasants and urban women wearing dirndls.”

147. 3, 4: Addition of thirty-two paragraphs.

148. 3, 4: Addition.

149. 4: Addition of paragraph: “Since the architect should know all materials and technologies (though naturally he cannot know everything because these things exceed what man is capable of absorbing), I may add as a practical hint that experience will enable the architect to cope easily with the matters and details that have become highly specialized.”

150. 1: Variation: “They all recall the forms of past times, and yet...”

2: Variation: “They scarcely recall the forms of past times;...”

151. 2, 3, 4: Addition of paragraph.

2: Variation: “(...of art’s demands) and that eventually the foul sewer of the copy will be abandoned—[this fact makes us glad].”

152. 3, 4: Deletion: “...[creating], not to copy the existing, which is unsuited to modern men, nor to serve it up with slight changes as something new and good.”

153. 2, 3, 4: Addition.

2: Further addition: “...[AGAIN ANEW], AND THEY ARE CORRECT WHO PROCLAIM THAT BEAUTIFUL NEW CREATIONS ARE THE SUPREME TOUCHSTONE OF ARTISTIC QUALITY.”

4: Further addition of four paragraphs:

“Though not actually a concern of art, a few short remarks on acoustics belong in

the chapter 'The Practice of Art'.

"Many 'architects' unfortunately still have the view that the acoustics of a space cannot be systematically determined, and that success or failure in this regard must always be enshrouded in a mystical darkness. This is not so. The architect is able to project any space in such a way that its acoustics can be predetermined with apodictic certainty. The theory guiding this determination is quite simple and runs as follows: make the length of the sound waves as equal as possible and avoid all reflections.

"Solving the first part of this law is rather simple and is in any case not all that important. Regarding reflections, however, the architect is in a position to avoid all reflections by immediately dispersing the sound waves striking the enclosing surfaces of the room. With planar surfaces the simplest way to achieve this is to design these surfaces with small undulating or angular profiles or to cover them with fabric. The presence of a crowd of people also has the desired effect. Halls with columns, sharp corners, projections, too much height, etc., will therefore always have acoustic problems.

"A shortening, lengthening, or deflecting of sound waves also takes place through the unequal heating or cooling of a room, from which it follows that the architect has to take the effect of the heating and ventilation of a room into his calculations."

154. 3, 4: Addition of six paragraphs.

155. 4: Variation: "...the style of our time."

4: Addition of paragraphs:

"If I were to summarize what has been said in this book and try to coin in a few words what is essential, in order to show the young architect the shortest and best way to the goal in any kind of work, these words and **THE SEQUENCE OF THEIR APPLICATION** would run approximately as follows:

"I. **A SCRUPULOUSLY EXACT APPREHENSION AND COMPLETE FULFILLMENT OF THE PURPOSE** (down to the smallest detail);

"II. **A HAPPY CHOICE OF THE MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION** (meaning one that is readily available, easily workable, long-lasting, economical);

"III. **SIMPLE AND ECONOMIC CONSTRUCTION**; and only after considering these three main points;

"IV. **THE FORM ARISING FROM THESE PREMISES** (it will flow from the pen as if of its own accord and will always be easily understandable).

"Works of art arising from this 'recipe' will always be in the artistic style of our time."

156. 1, 2: Variation: "[... **THE**] **HORIZONTAL LINES IN THE STYLE OF CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY,...**"

157. 2, 3, 4: Addition.

4: Further addition of paragraph: "(Written twenty years ago, it will remain true forever!)"

158. 1, 2: Variation: "...[**AND**] **THEIR HEARTS WILL BE FILLED...**"

159. 1, 2: Variation: "May what has been said in this book fall on fertile ground for the well-being of art and the artist; may the thoughts expressed contribute to the awakening of a fresh and pulsating life, to a rich and purposeful development of architecture; so that we shall see in the not too distant future our own ideal of beauty embodied—the divined, the hoped-for—MODERN ARCHITECTURE."

4: Variation: "—MODERN ARCHITECTURE" replaced by "—ARCHITECTURE OF OUR TIME!"

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APPENDIXES

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PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

1914

The number of periodicals and books that appear every year with the intention of “informing” the public on art and of raising its certainly very weak feeling for art is quite large. □□□

□ With a few laudable and prominent exceptions, they always achieve the opposite of the intended purpose. □□□

□ This very sad state of affairs finds its explanation in the fact that the authors of these periodicals and books offer approximately the following. □□□

□ They have discovered either a country or a city whose architecture should become a model to this public, or they recommend one stylistic epoch as the only salvation, or they dream of secluded urban squares and winding streets (in the age of motor vehicles, aircraft, *Überdreadnoughts*, cannons with a firing range of sixteen kilometers, armies of millions, etc.), or they bandy such phrases as “folk art” [*Heimatkunst*] or “harmonizing with the cityscape and its preservation,” or they (these same authors) in their thoroughness go so far in the “interest of art” as to discover contemporaries of Vitruvius, etc., etc.

□ But the one thing all of these authors have in common is that they confuse the concept “art” with the concept “archaeology,” and concerning the art of our time, especially the architecture of our time, they publish either nothing

or that which is wrong. □□□

□ Since these periodicals and books unfortunately are bought, and also, which is even worse, read, they are without exception truly attempting to assassinate the art of our time. For this reason every opportunity must be seized to limit their pernicious effect. □□□

□ These and many other things prompted me to consider a fourth edition of my book (twenty years after the first), and to comply with the wish of my publisher, who also informed me that this work has been sold out for years. It appears this time under the title *Die Baukunst unserer Zeit* [Architecture of Our Time]. Hermann Muthesius has drawn attention to the error of the original title in his brilliant book *Baukunst, nicht Stilarchitektur* [The Art of Building, not Style-Architecture].¹ □□□

Vienna, November 1913

Translator's Note

1. *Sic.* The correct title of Hermann Muthesius's book is *Stilarchitektur und Baukunst* (Style-Architecture and The Art of Building) (Mülheim-Ruhr: Verlag von K. Schimmelpfeng, 1902). The literal translation of *Baukunst* is the "art of building," although it is generally rendered as "architecture." Otto Wagner also misspells Muthesius as "Mutesius."

THE PROMOTION OF ART¹

“THE ARTIST SHOULD CREATE WHAT THE WORLD SHOULD LIKE, NOT WHAT THE WORLD WILL LIKE,” said Goethe; again in another passage, “THERE IS NO PAST TO LONG FOR, THERE IS ONLY AN ETERNAL NEWNESS SHAPED BY ELEMENTS EXTENDED FROM THE PAST; AND GENUINE LONGING MUST ALWAYS BE PRODUCTIVE, CREATE SOMETHING NEW AND BETTER.” □□□

□ These words so rich in meaning conform completely with the efforts made toward an art of our time. □□□

□ That art is not only a significant economic factor but also the measure of a nation's culture is an unassailable postulate. □□□

□ Thus there can be no doubt that art, therefore the ART OF OUR TIME, is to be promoted. □□□

□ The promotion of art falls to the administrative bodies of the state, the land, and the town; naturally it should strive to be comprehensive and appropriate. This is unfortunately not the case, and therefore a task of this book is evidently to address in greater detail this deplorable state of affairs. □□□

□ It is no consolation to note here that this condition appears to be quite similar in every country, but it must be encouraging to know that artists al-

most everywhere have been banding together to make a change. □□□

□ Yet an agreement among artists, which would certainly be rather useful in the promotion of art, is now unthinkable, simply because every artist has his own standard for artistic achievements. Artistic judgments will therefore always differ for this reason alone, a fact that naturally makes any agreement impossible. □□□

□ An effective parliamentary representation concerned with the cultivation of art is also unthinkable in today's political climate and in view of the deplorable indolence of the general public in approaching questions of art. □□□

□ Finally, it must still be said that an official or semiofficial art does not and cannot exist, and that art therefore cannot accommodate itself to any rigid system, and even less to legislative and parliamentary hustle and bustle. □□□

□ THE PROMOTION OF ART MEANS TO RECOGNIZE THE GOOD AND TO FACILITATE ITS GROWTH, TO REMOVE ALL OBSTACLES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ART, TO PROTECT THE STRONG, AND TO SUPPRESS EVERYTHING MEDIOCRE AND WEAK. □□□

□ Such a promotion of art demands, above all, a correct and enthusiastic feeling for art and, as its consequence, the promoter's correct judgment. Yet under today's conditions this can only be expected of true artists. □□□

□ A correct and enthusiastic feeling for art, combined with the power to promote art, is unfortunately impossible today, because even though the power has been transferred to the general public, a feeling for art cannot be transferred. In order to combine these forces, which is the only way to achieve success, an apparatus must be created that, when functioning properly, will allow one to hope for a true promotion of art. □□□

□ If the individual wants to intervene here, because he believes himself entitled to do so by his position and experience, the only means he has at his disposal is the pen. □□□

□ A good and detailed criticism of every new work of art by an authoritative party would surely be a rather simple way to promote art. Yet since such criticism can again only come from artists, it is precluded for this reason alone. Explaining the "why" in its particulars is hardly necessary here. As regards so-called professional criticism, by way of illuminating its value, I refer you to the confrontational nature of such criticisms in the book *Gegen Klimt* as a striking example. □□□

□ The means to cultivate and promote the fine arts is roughly divided into

three main groups, which cannot, however, be strictly defined, namely, **THE ARTISTIC EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE, THE REORGANIZATION OF OUR ART SCHOOLS, AND THE ELEVATION OF ARCHITECTURE TO BE THE CONSTANT GUIDE OF ART.** □□□

□ First, with regard to the artistic education of the people, it must be said above all that with only minor reorganization of our existing schools and with an actual though only slight aptitude on the part of pupils, it can be hoped that the public, appropriately instructed, can attain somewhat clearer views and halfway correct judgments of art. Thus we can expect that, in the future, at least not every attempt to create something good and new in art will be met with a lack of understanding, complete indifference, or bitter opposition, as is unfortunately the case today. At any rate, the judgment of the majority of people, when directed in a timely way into the right channels, will mature to a point where it can distinguish the chaff from the wheat. □□□

□ Raising the general level of art criticism will make possible correct judgment of the quality of the artist, with the result that the artist will not be judged, as he often is today, by his social graces, his more or less abrasive nature, or by other, often rather strange criteria. The measure of the quality of the artist is always the quality of his work. Only first-rate artists, of course, are able and qualified to recognize and evaluate the quality of an artist. But the correct assessment of quality must constitute the standard of promotion for the state administration. Obviously I am not talking about material support; this promotion might be shown simply by the assignment of commissions, and indeed in such a way that the quality of the commission corresponds to the quality of the artist. It must also be pointed out that all financial subsidies and philanthropic attitudes toward artists always amount to an impairment of art (this refers only to art, not the artists). □□□

□ In the interest of art, no kind of artistic mediocrity, weakness, or dilettantism can claim any indulgence. As long as weakness and dilettantism experiment, as it were, at their own cost, they may be tolerated out of respect for the love for art; yet as soon as they start to compete with works of art in whatever form, they are to be fought most fiercely. □□□

□ Artistic views of this kind will naturally lead artists to form groups, which in turn will lead to groups arranged according to quality. The quality and quantity of such groups stand in an inverse relationship. Unfortunately, the public always inclines toward the quantitative side, from which arises an in-

correct assessment of the artist and by that a false appraisal of the works created. The self-confidence of the talented artist allows him to steer clear of the multitude and regulations. The higher the quality, the smaller the group. The works of the group of highest quality appear strange and unfamiliar to the public, and are unintelligible to them in the beginning. The assessment of the artist's quality suffers because of this. □□□

□ The more the artist gives of himself, the more he reveals; the more clearly he presents his individuality and style, all the higher ranks his quality, but also all the more uncomfortable is his effect on the public. It is simply his creative spirit that drives him to create the new. □□□

□ Only a few of those called have the talent to offer man true artistic creation.

□ Some of those without talent try to travel this same path. The works "perpetrated" by the latter are repulsive and actually harmful to the appreciation of an art of our time, yet such inartistic acts are always a welcome occasion for the public to show their ill humor and uneasiness toward what is new and good as well. □□□

□ Criticism that is influenced by whatever may be and that specifically aims to satisfy the blind and the malevolent will become impossible with the artistic education of the people; its often harmful effect on art at present will naturally cease with a correct general judgment. □□□

□ Along with the correct judgment and appreciation of the artist's quality goes a general demand that the good and only the good be created, from which it again follows that the commission for the work is tied to a hope for quality and not, as until now, to so many usually not very pure and incidental motives. □□□

□ That only the good is created, that the general public receives only the best models—therein lies the cardinal point of the artistic education of the people, for the good alone has exemplary value and promotes art. □□□

□ Since, as mentioned, it is incumbent on the public administration (the main authority in all artistic promotion) to recognize the good, we can demand that it make a judgment that is emphatic and correct. □□□

□ Yet today public administrators are not in a position to comply with this demand. We must therefore make it possible for them to reach a correct artistic judgment in order to direct the public down the right path. Thus an artistic authority needs to be created, so that the promotion of art and artistic judgments are not undertaken by unqualified people or practiced from totally incorrect views. □□□

☐ To achieve this goal, we can no longer shun the responsibility of creating the badly needed apparatus to support the public administration; the latter must make use of this apparatus in its judgments, and therefore in all questions of art, whether they are commissions, purchases, appointments, or school reorganizations. ☐☐☐

☐ It is clear that such an apparatus must consist of an areopagus composed of the foremost artists currently active. ☐☐☐

☐ Our purely scientific and literary methods of education make it infinitely difficult today for the educated to gain a healthy and true rapport with fine art. The almost universal indolence with respect to questions of art; the dragging of the designation “artist” into other fields; the indifference, even hatred, that greets the most sublime creations (whenever one pretends to be astonished over something that is not conventional practice); the helplessness of the best, even of the common man when facing the new; the thoughtlessness with which everyone answers the questions of art of interest to them; and consequently the slight importance that almost all departments of the state, national, and local administrations ascribe to art—all of this is closely related and again causes an economically deplorable drain of the nation’s energy. Yet the more important it is for the state, national, and municipal administrations to avoid any lowering of the standard of education, the more urgently they need art to assist education; art is the only means at their disposal to add a cultural dimension to the mass of things learned and conveyed to people by scientific instruction, which only culture endows with value. These facts lead to the result that we observe in all fields—the overestimation of knowing [*Wissenden*] and the underestimation of doing [*Könnenden*]. ☐☐☐

☐ It cannot be doubted, as has been emphasized on countless occasions, that architecture was and is the constant guide of art. Since time immemorial and in every age it has been regarded as an expression of ability [*Können*] and the touchstone of a nation’s culture. It knew how to draw the other arts into its sphere of influence and their modes of expression became reflected in it. ☐☐☐

☐ Convinced of the prime importance of monumental architecture for the general development of art, I might refer here to proposals repeatedly made by the author of this book concerning monumental architecture, which were put before the Arts Council in May 1899. Their main motivation, apart from the great importance of creating exemplary works of architecture, was to support the absolutely necessary artistic representation of the state, national,

and municipal administrations under all circumstances. □□□

□ It is impossible always to take into account only the economic interests of the individual departments; it must also be said that the disposal of large public funds imposes certain cultural obligations. The way to discharge these properly will always be to consider the promotion of art. Against the objection that such agencies are mostly concerned with utility, not luxury buildings, stands the observation that the art of our time is far from regarding the inexorable demands of practical life as hindrances, but actually derives from them the strongest and most fruitful suggestions. It must therefore be stated here with apodictic certainty that a true work of art need cost no more than a bad work, that the former is an exemplary work and therefore benefits the people, while the latter leads directly to the decline of art and therefore amounts to an impairment of the public welfare. □□□

Editor's Note

1. The chapter "The Promotion of Art" was added to the fourth edition (1914).

THE CRITICISM OF ART¹

The present work, which has been out of print for years, was prompted by the wish of the publisher for a fourth edition. It has repeatedly been translated in full or part into almost every language. Certainly this gives convincing proof that the views represented herein have found approval and acceptance. As with every innovation, especially in the field of art, this acceptance needed time. It may therefore be mentioned that the first critique of the book was nothing less than appreciative and began with the sentence, "Out of a swamp a bubble has risen."

□□□

□ Criticism of works of art and artistic views, especially for laymen, are rather tricky matters, and all too often change over time into just the opposite view.

□□□

□ The period of transition from eclecticism to the recognition of an "art of our time" drew in the beginning only deprecatory criticism of the latter from the public, almost without exception. The reasons for this phenomenon have been set forth at length in the previous chapter.²

□□□

□ As we have seen, correct criticism, which in architecture and possibly also in sculpture needs to be based on projects, sketches, and models, therefore prior to the start of construction, cannot come from the public, but only from

persons who have a strong and well-developed feeling for art. As a rule, only distinguished, active artists possess this competence. □□□

□ In works of architecture especially, criticism plays an important role before the work is built, since it is criticism that causes the work to come into being. □

□ The leading role in such criticism is assigned to the usually very incorrectly informed, artistically incorrectly thinking, and artistically incorrectly feeling layman. Joining forces with him to make such criticism more inauspicious is the influence of the majority of inferior artists—mercenary artists and apostates—with their excesses and false arguments concerning economic conditions, patronage, politics, and religion, their totally incomprehensible deference to artistic weakness, and finally their all too apparent intention of wanting to shield the creative work from any preliminary criticism. These conditions have almost destroyed the idealistic basis of artistic competitions and have made it possible for us to produce works through competitions that, if they were not built, would be tantamount to a promotion of art. □□□

□ It should once again be said that an official criticism of art cannot exist for the reasons cited. Another fact that should be noted is that criticisms of works of art are all too often in error, thereby dimming and obscuring correct criticism. In the interest of art it should also be said in this chapter that these facts tend to lead to a corruption of art, which can even degenerate into a battue (the case of Klimt, etc.). □□□

□ In the long-standing struggle in art, it is satisfying to note a very slight maturation of proper artistic feeling, and therefore also of public criticism. Despite this maturation, there is today, to cite a striking example of a major artistic event, namely the building of the Berlin Opera, a struggle between artists and laymen that should be mentioned in particular, because in this instance artists are definitely prepared to defend with all their power their most sacred property—art. May the resolution favor the wishes of the artists, to the benefit of the great German people, and may proper criticism become the deciding factor before the work is built. □□□

□ Criticism after the completion of the building scarcely has a purpose, and artists refrain from it as much as possible so as not have the charge “professional jealousy” hurled at them. □□□

□ The author of this book, whose wide experience cannot be denied, is convinced that the views he represents with regard to architecture will outlive him, and will even remain true so long as art exists. To lend further emphasis

to his conviction, he therefore feels justified in criticizing a few characteristic buildings in Vienna by his contemporaries, so that future generations will know how he and a number of other colleagues knowledgeable in art judged these works. The following remarks should show what an enormous difference exists between the judgments of artists and laymen, and what a long time is nearly always required to allow the judgments of laymen to ripen properly. □□□

□ The buildings to be considered divide themselves into two main groups, indeed in such a way that they fall into the periods 1860 to 1890, and 1890 to the present. □□□

□ In assessing the works of the first period, it is to be noted that in the beginning there took place almost everywhere a slow awakening from a deep artistic slumber, and that, furthermore, in view of the great activity in monumental building caused by the expansion of the city, there were too few architects among us to carry out the tasks. □□□

□ The architects of this period relied almost solely on style-architecture; that is, each had, as it were, an appropriate style ready for each building type. Their creations were proudly presented to the astonished public in the most pleasant ways, so that everyone according to his own taste could choose from the “hodgepodge” what seemed right to him, and could adapt his criticism to the work on the spot with ease and “conviction.” □□□

□ To cite straight away a rather drastic example of the laymen’s judgment, I mention the Vienna Opera first and place particular emphasis on its date of origin—1860. □□□

□ That this building is not without mistakes and is unfavorably sited may be conceded. Among its mistakes may be noted its perhaps insufficient splendor, the somewhat mean spatial dimensions with the exception of the auditorium, bringing forward the height of the stage to the main facade, and the excessive use of old artistic forms (chateaux from the Loire). On the other hand, what is not valued highly enough are the keen understanding of functional requirements (acoustics, optics, comfort, ventilation), the distinct tendency toward creative work, and the thorough consideration of the construction and materials, evident throughout the building. These most valuable qualities are quite apparent in the work even today, more than fifty years later, and they therefore place the artists who created it in the first rank of their time. □□□

□ But the effect of contemporary criticism on these artists is seen clearly in

the fact that both men were driven to a voluntary death. The incipient eclecticism of the time, which was actually the reason that the real creative spirit was met with a complete lack of understanding, even by “artists,” contributed to the negative criticism of the Vienna Opera. □□□

□ The stylistic camps that had formed tolerated every kind of easily understood copy, but no kind of new creation. □□□

□ It was a time in which the artistic feeling of the public and also the “artist” culminated in unshakable postulates: churches and city halls could be built only in Gothic, parliaments and museums only in Greek, apartment buildings only in Renaissance style, etc. □□□

□ The City Hall above all and almost every church (therefore also the Votivkirche) owe their origin to this fact. □□□

□ Regarding the City Hall, its criticism should first stress that it lacks every creative impulse; that it has absolutely no natural relation to its administrators, legislators, or visitors, to the cheerful and animated crowd of the festival hall, or to our cultural achievements; and that the practical and artistic factor all too often, and especially in the essentials, was sacrificed to a copied style-architecture. The form of the festival hall, its entrance and decor, the lack of a main entrance, and the placement of the tower clearly prove this fact. A striking lack of taste and inventive talent, incidentally, appears almost everywhere. □□□

□ This building came about by way of a competition. Gottfried Semper, in leaving the room in which the jury, of which he was a member, came to the decision for a Gothic building, made the statement, “I would have to deny my whole life if I were to give my vote to such a project.” □□□

□ The fanatically positive criticism of the building at the time of its completion has been reinforced ever since by the fact that some kind of reference to our “splendid City Hall” has been heard almost daily up to the present day—naturally only among laymen. □□□

□ It cannot be denied that another Gothic building, the Votivkirche, has somewhat more taste. Its forms are altogether a compilation and imitation of existing models. A few artistic judgments, even before it was built, pointed out the inappropriate scale of the building, and for that reason called its construction questionable. □□□

□ The criticism voiced by the public on it, and in part still voiced today, is enthusiastic in praise. The fact that the work is “delicate” Gothic counts heav-

ily in this. Of 1,000 city residents, 999 can immediately recognize the style, a fact that certainly pleases people and therefore favorably influences their criticism; to this is added the easily understood quality of delicacy. The author remembers seeing for years in a confectionery shop a model of the church that aroused the admiration of the crowd, and reading laudatory newspaper accounts of this "model." □□□

□ As with all the church building of this time, the designing architect gave no consideration to functional and technical factors. This architect and other church builders were completely indifferent, for example, to solving such problems as these: Do all visitors to the church see the high altar and pulpit? Is the church hygienic (its holy water fonts, spittoons)? How are its acoustics, its light? Can it be kept clean? Are the structural members that span the space the simplest and most economical? Do these construction methods correspond to our cultural progress? Is it as maintenance-free as possible? Can the church be heated, are the entrances convenient and secure? Are drafts prevented as much as possible? And so on. □□□

□ Yet the public rejected the solution of such problems; it can even be said that they abhorred every innovation and artistic impulse, and that the standard that they applied to the criticism of churches was what it had always been: that the more a church resembled an old existing model, the better it was. Even the simplest village church had to substantiate this view. This was not even the viewpoint of eclecticism, but represented a purely waxworks-like attitude that became the criterion. "Only no thinking, only no artistic feeling, only no creative art"—thus resounded the crowd on the subject of architecture. A wax-figure museum pleased them more than the sculpture gallery of the Vatican. Obviously such things tend to influence criticism, and it is just as obvious, unfortunately, that from such views similar kinds of commissions and designs tend to arise, with the complete destruction of art as a concomitant phenomenon. □□□

□ It remains to be seen whether the Votivkirche today, forty years later, has already reached its age limit and must be rebuilt because of its style and construction. It is a fact that today the main entrances of the church have long wooden protective roofs to protect those who enter from the crumbling stones.

□ The University Building by the same author also gives evidence of a certain artistic taste, yet again it is completely under the spell of eclecticism with regard to its forms. These forms, especially those of the central pavilion, are

too small for the principal masses and visual distance. This building and its opposite across the way, the Parliament, are incorrectly sited on the square, the solution to which is again “adorned” with a so-called English garden that with regard to aesthetics and traffic is totally inappropriate. □□□

□ The Chemistry Laboratory is also by the same author. This building is likewise rooted in tradition, yet its proportions and detailing are so happily chosen that it can be described, relatively speaking, as one of the best of this epoch. □□□

□ In the Parliament building, eclecticism revels in an orgy. Here again, the main entrance, the approach and driveway, the acoustics, the structural development, and the workmanship of the material, among many other things, are sacrificed to eclecticism, therefore to style-architecture. The proportions of the individual architectural forms are too small for the size and visual distance; the piling-up of motifs, which should produce the most intense effect on our senses, is certainly wrong (eight quadrigae on one building). □□□

□ Artistically more pleasing are the Museum buildings (I refer again only to the exterior). Although still strongly rooted in tradition, attempts at spontaneous artistic creation are noticeable. What cannot be praised highly enough from a critical standpoint is the grand idea of a unified arrangement of the square, which, after the removal of the Burgtor, the completion of the Hofburg, and the necessary enclosure of the remaining sides of the square with its three exceedingly well-proportioned monuments, could develop into one of the most beautiful squares in the world. Unfortunately, here too attempts are now being made to destroy forever the very powerful and refined artistic image, which would have fully represented our *genius loci*. □□□

□ The monumental buildings of the first period naturally have been superseded by our changed aesthetic views, our new achievements, the desire for a better and more extensive compliance with the purpose and the materials available, as well as by a constructive regard for the length of time of production, yet even as they were being built many voices could already be heard calling attention to these conditions. □□□

□ One example of the construction time considered acceptable at that time is the Burgtheater, which during its fifteen-year period of construction underwent major changes; to this was added soon after its completion an extensive reconstruction of the auditorium. □□□

□ Although Semper's ideas essentially influenced the main layout of the work, it has since become apparent, for example, that the segmentally shaped foyer, as much as it meets the technical needs of traffic, will always be an aesthetic disappointment. The two staircases of this building are not well proportioned and are unconnected with the lobby and the foyer. □□□

□ It is not without interest to note here that the artistic nadir of this epoch is very apparent not only in its eclecticism, but also in the documented fact that in this period a thorough grasp of the purpose, which is surely the starting point for an "architecture of our time," was altogether ignored; monumental buildings were created that shortly thereafter turned out to be impractical. Even the artists of this period were not in a position to decide the building programs of their own institutional buildings (Academy of Fine Arts, Palazzo Spade, etc.), which after just a short time proved to be completely inappropriate. □□□

□ Between the first and second periods discussed here there was a lull in the construction of monumental buildings, which seems to have been caused in part by economic conditions, in part because the feeling for state representation was almost dead. □□□

□ After what has been said, the critical standard for discussing buildings of the second period must be stricter, because by this time the general views were already showing a certain maturity, even felt among laymen, and the call for liberation from eclecticism had everywhere become loud. □□□

□ With respect to the buildings of the second period, I am sorry to say that almost all are very sad examples of our artistic power, a fact that must seem all the more odd since during this time our fatherland has had at its disposal a number of excellent architects. □□□

□ Of the buildings of the second period, let us first discuss the War Ministry. The selection of the site, the unresolved main axes, the disposition of the floor plan, the lack of any artistic feeling, the use of very inappropriate forms, a tastelessness only too distinctly apparent, and the very incorrectly applied and brutal detailing have aroused almost universal critical disapproval. It should be noted, therefore, that the public rather quickly reached a correct final judgment. Unfortunately, this judgment emerged only after the building's completion and not prior to construction. □□□

□ Another artistic nadir becomes apparent with the building of the Academy of Music, which was christened by the public as a musical "beer hall" in con-

sideration of the birthplace of its style. The building of the Antoniuskirche is also afflicted by a remarkable tastelessness, and in a still more drastic way so is that of the Technical Museum. The latter, with its totally incorrect placement on the site, with its structure (columns) often bordering on the comical, and with its masquerade-like exterior, is almost a prototype for how such a building should not be built. □□□

□ Unfortunately there are still other prospective buildings that will join these monumental “building-disasters.” Taking into account the political conditions which are very detrimental to our art, it cannot be surprising that all criticism of the artistic activities of this period is most unfavorable and that an improvement of artistic conditions can scarcely be expected in the near future.

□ The lay artistic judgment that aids the construction of this or that prospective building has worked and still works toward the destruction of art. □□□

□ That these conditions have led to prominent artists fleeing their fatherland and to a tragic waste of first-rate talent should be emphatically pointed out in a criticism of the art of this period. □□□

□ The unfavorable criticism of a few of our monumental buildings discussed here fully corresponds with the convictions of the author and, as it rightly may be said, all prominent contemporary artists. It is tempered only by the encouraging fact that occasionally a small work of art, or more rarely a good monumental building appears, and by the fact that the success of our applied art elevates criticism to the highest appreciation—a fact owed to the talented individuals who are professionally engaged in it. Because of this, it may again be said that the whole art world concedes that our applied art today is of the first rank. □□□

□ There can be no doubt that the ultimate criticism of works of art falls to the public and, as was emphasized at the start, this abiding ultimate criticism needs time to mature properly. □□□

□ If criticism deals not with the work of art itself but with the quality of the artist, mistakes will invariably be made because the popularity or unpopularity of the artist plays a large role in it, and the artist’s contemporaries only too gladly stress personal matters. □□□

□ In most cases time is too short to assess correctly the qualities of the artist, and thus it happens that one or the other artist is exalted to the disadvantage of his contemporaries. □□□

□ We are not lacking dramatic examples of this either. Thus every true artist

will today correctly maintain that Joseph M. Olbrich, Gottfried Semper, Heinrich Ferstel, and others were artistically a step above Friedrich Schmidt. The incorrect criticism of their contemporaries, however, was successful in erecting a monument to the last, while the first-named artists (listed in order of quality) have gone empty-handed up till now. □□□

□ Let us hope that future generations will take action here also and correct the incorrect criticism. □□□

Editor's Notes

1. The chapter "The Criticism of Art" was added to the fourth edition (1914).
2. "The Promotion of Art," p. 143.

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS TO THE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS¹

Perhaps you have heard from hearsay or have your own view that I am the representative of a certain *practical trend*. My explanation may seem to you rather prosaic at first, or suggest ideas that you associate with a kind of decline of the school or the dampening of your youthful ideals, but this is not the case. If you will follow my train of thought, I believe I can in a few words prove the contrary to be true. □□□

□ The exteriors of almost all modern buildings, whether they are more or less happily arranged, attempt to be as accurate *copies of stylistic trends* as possible. Such good copies of styles, to which as a rule much is sacrificed, are then considered stylistically pure and usually provide the standard of value according to which an architectural work is judged. Certain architectural styles are granted a monopoly for certain purposes, and the public, and unfortunately many artists too, go along with this opinion. The matter has even gone so far that architectural styles almost change like fashions, and works of art are intentionally made "old" in order to give them the appearance of dating from past centuries. Form and style are truly abused in this way, and if the matter were not much too sad it could be looked upon as a kind of architectural comedy. That this cannot possibly be the right approach scarcely

needs further proof. □□□

□ In contrast to this, let us look at the works of art of past centuries. From antiquity to the Renaissance—even to the “Empire” of our century—the work has always been a reflection of its time. □□□

□ And precisely herein lies the secret. Art and artists should and must represent their time. The salvation of the future cannot lie in racing through every stylistic trend, as has happened in the last decades. With skill and taste we can no doubt use and improve all forms handed down to us, whether they are simple supports, towers, or crowns, or have to do with surface treatment. Yet the starting point of every artistic creation must be the need, ability, means, and achievements of *our* time. □□□

□ *Artis sola domina necessitas* (Art knows only one master—the need).² □□

□ Thus, when you are about to solve a task, always ask yourself this: how will this solution relate to modern man, to the assignment, to the *genius loci*, the climatic conditions, the materials at hand, and the financial means? Only thus can you hope to elicit true appreciation, and only then will the works of architecture that today are met for the most part with incomprehension or a certain tentativeness become generally understandable, original, and even popular. □□□

□ Our living conditions and methods of construction must be fully and completely expressed if architecture is not to be reduced to a caricature. The realism of our time must pervade the developing work of art. It will not harm it, nor will any decline of art ensue as a consequence of it; rather it will breathe a new and pulsating life into forms, and in time conquer new fields that today are still devoid of art—for example, that of engineering. Only thus can we speak of a real improvement in art. I would even maintain that we must force ourselves in this way to reach a characteristic style representative of us. □□□

□ You see therefore that I, in proceeding from such principles, do not preach anything like giving up your ideal goals, but, on the contrary, consider it my task to train you to become children of our time, among whom I also count myself. □□□

□ There you have, as it were, my credo. □□□

□ In turning to the school itself, I wish to say that I am inspired with the desire to teach you something, and am convinced that you too are imbued with a devout enthusiasm for your vocation. Unfortunately, the end of our

century tends to require a quick and early way of making a living, and this very fact contrasts sharply with the time needed to educate an architect. Thus after your academic studies you must still spend several years in an atelier, and must educate yourselves further through travel before you can confront on your own the solution of problems. □□□

□ Our path of life is troublesome and full of thorns, but it is also the most beautiful. Someone before me has said that the architect with his happy combination of idealism and realism is the crowning glory of modern man, but I add that his creative and productive nature must elevate him far above the level of the ordinary. □□□

□ Two things must be *innate* to you: taste and imagination. Assiduous study and experience must join these faculties if you are to develop into the architects that the present time demands. To achieve this goal my efforts will not be lacking, but I ask you not to think that I am capable of making each of you an architect. It takes a natural ability, the mastery of preliminary studies, a strong will, a certain independence, and the experience of a lifetime for the sown seed to mature into fruit. □□□

□ Contrary to the view of my immediate predecessors, I am of the opinion that only a few truly talented architects should have the benefit of the training at this school. Architectural hermaphrodites simply cannot be expected to nurture much of a burning desire for architecture. As a teacher, I also have the duty to show everyone the right path, and I hope in this way to reduce in our profession, at least somewhat, the number of dreary types who have mispent their lives. Therefore, do not judge me too harshly when I make a rather meticulous selection among the students presented to me. Rest assured that I am acting solely in the interest of the school, the profession, and art. □□□

□ And thus let us begin our task in God's name. □□□

□ According to our university regulations, three years are specified for students of architecture. For the present I too shall abide by this requirement, and have prepared in this regard the following program. □□□

□ To first-year students I shall assign the problem of solving that which will probably be the first task they will face when they enter into professional life, namely, a simple Viennese apartment house. I intend by this to make you rather proficient, first and foremost, in construction and the understanding of needs. If, as is most likely, enough time is left, you can then proceed to the solution of the "individual dwelling," since our traffic planning will push this

question to the fore, and we can certainly anticipate a corresponding upheaval in our style of living. □□□

□ To second-year students I recommend the design of a public building, with all its complicated interior planning and characteristic exterior organization. I propose that you base it on the future Trade Ministry, the program for which I am in a position to provide. □□□

□ To third-year students I recommend solving a problem that you will probably never face in life, but whose design will help to fan the divine spark of imagination, the bright flame that should glow within you. At the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris students annually try their hand at such exotic problems as a kind of training of the imagination for the budding art student. □□□

□ I can tell you from my own experience that I have on several occasions concerned myself with this type of problem and that the result has always been very useful. I might add that I think it is appropriate to discuss the project with those gentlemen who would dare to tackle such problems, and that I will leave it up to them to choose that vision that best corresponds to their natural talent. I also think it is appropriate that these students arrive at the choice through quick sketches, since even the program itself should be a work of their imagination. □□□

□ This is what I wished to say, and now I ask you to take my words into account. □□□

Editor's and Translator's Notes

1. Otto Wagner delivered his inaugural address on 15 October 1894. It was first published in *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, vol. XXXII, 27 October 1894.

2. Wagner's own rendering from the Latin. He actually rephrases a line from Gottfried Semper's *Vorläufige Bemerkungen über bemalte Architektur und Plastik bei den Alten* (Altona, 1834).

APPENDIX C

OTTO WAGNER, MODERNE ARCHITEKTUR

Four editions: 1896, 1898, 1902, and 1914.

The design of each of the four editions varies. The third edition (1902), translated here, is a particularly beautifully crafted book. In addition to one column of text, each page carries a black and white photograph of a work by Otto Wagner—a building, an object, or a piece of furniture—and is accompanied by a pair of decorative motifs printed in a tan color. The layout of each page is consistent throughout the book.

The following spreads include two facsimile pages (pp. 164–165) and a selection of the combinations of photographs and decorative motifs (pp. 166–177).

Stadtbahn, Viadukt über die Zeile: Detail.



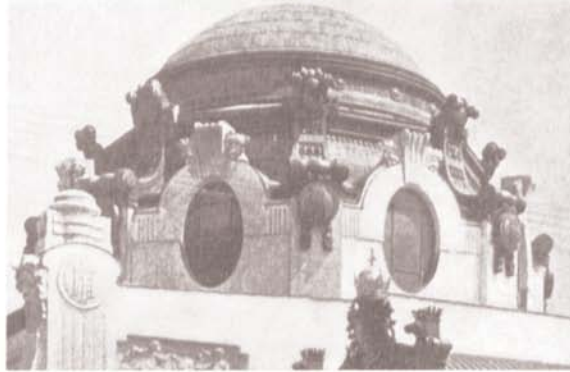
DIE KOMPOSITION.

DIE KUNST IST, WIE SCHON DAS WORT ANDEUTET, EIN KÖNNEN, SIE IST EINE FÄHIGKEIT, WELCHE, VON WENIGEN AUERWÄHLTEN ZUR VOLLENDUNG ERHOBEN, DER SCHÖNHEIT SINNLICHEN AUSDRUCK VERLEIHT. ■■■

■ WIRD DIESER AUSDRUCK DURCH DAS AUGE WAHRGENOMMEN, SO ENTSPRICHT DIESE FÄHIGKEIT DEM BEGRIFFE „BILDENDE KUNST“. ■

■ VON DEN BILDENDEN KÜNSTEN HABEN MALEREI UND BILDNEREI IHRE VORBILDER STETS IN DER NATUR, WÄHREND DIE BAUKUNST DIE MENSCHLICHE SCHAFFENSKRAFT DIREKT ZUR BASIS HAT UND ES VERSTEHT, DAS VERARBEITETE ALS VÖLLIG NEUGESTALTETES ZU BIETEN. ■■■

Stadthain: Hofpavillon, Detail.



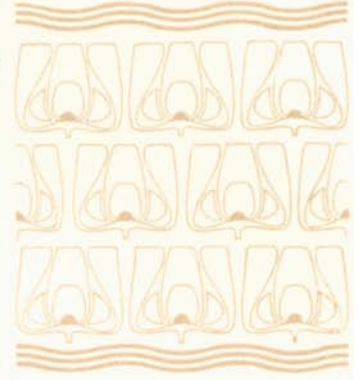
■ DER URKEIM DIESER NEUSCHÖPFUNG HAT SEINEN FRUCHTTREIBENDEN BODEN IM MENSCHENLEBEN; DIESEM ENTPRIESZT DIE AUFGABE, WELCHE DIE KUNST DURCH DIE KÜNSTLER ZU LÖSEN HAT. ■■■

■ DIESE AUFGABE, DIE BEDÜRFNISSE DER MENSCHHEIT RICHTIG ZU ERKENNEN, IST DIE ERSTE GRUNDBEDINGUNG DES ERFOLGREICHEN SCHAFFENS DES ARCHITECTEN. ■■■

Der Beginn jedes baukünstlerischen Schaffens ist die Komposition. ■■

■ Ein Rezept für eine baukünstlerische Komposition gibt es bekanntlich nicht; in Erwägung des bisher Gesagten mag jedoch Nachstehendes als Ausgangspunkt einer Komposition gelten. ■■■

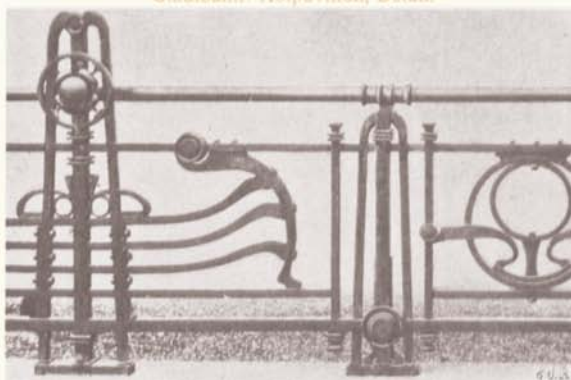
■ Ein guter, großer Gedanke ist noch, bevor der Stift in Tätigkeit tritt, zu fassen und reiflich zu erwägen. Ob sich derselbe



Stadtbahn, Roßauerlände: Detail.



Stadtbahn: Hofpavillon, Detail.

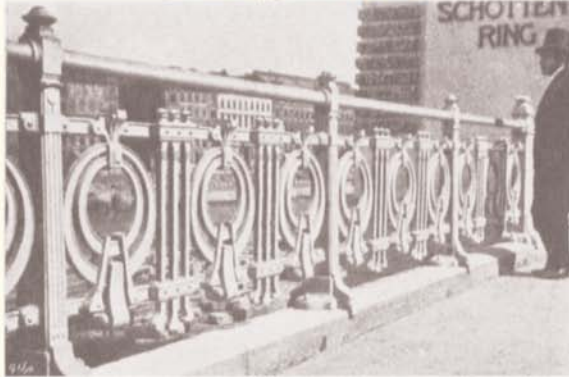


MODERNE ARCHI TEKTUR

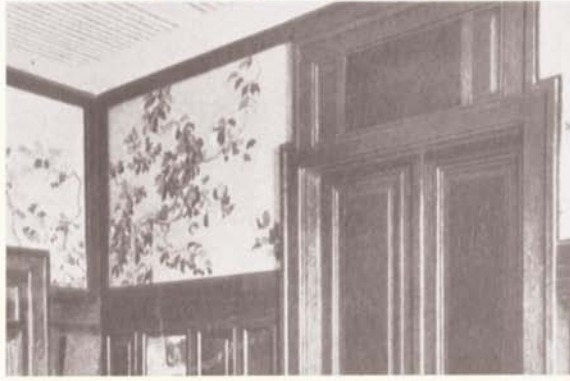
Stadtbahn, Karlsplatz: Detail.



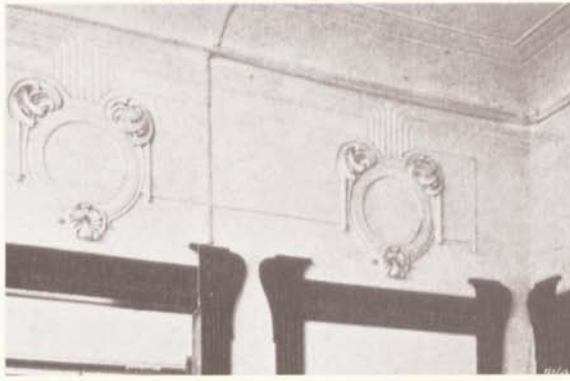
Stadtbahn, Quallinie: Detail.



Partie aus einem Badezimmer.



Stadtbahn, Karlsplatz: Detail.



Ausstellungsobjekt: Applikation der Tischdecken.



Partie aus einem Schlafzimmer.



Stadtbahn, Roßauerlände. Detail.



Ausstellungsobjekt: Applikation der Tischdecken.

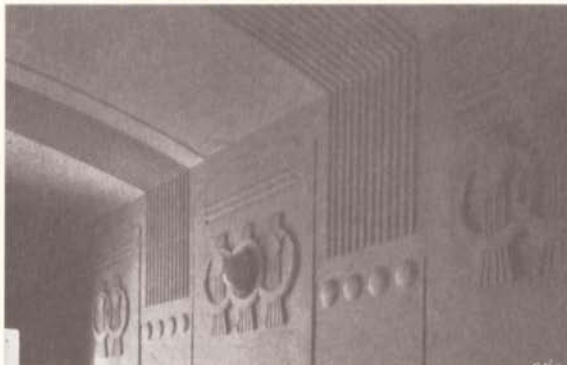


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Möbel aus Schlaf- und Badezimmer.



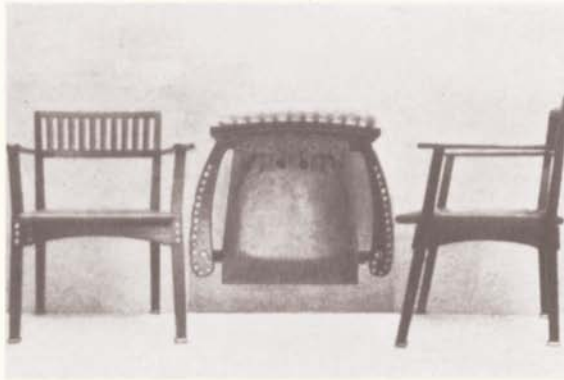
Miethaus, Wienzeile: Vestibüldetail.



Stadtbahn, Hofpavillon: Unterfahrt.



Sessel aus einem Speisezimmer.



Miethaus, Kbstiergasse: Vestibüldetail.



Stadtbahn: Haltestelle Kettenbrückengasse.



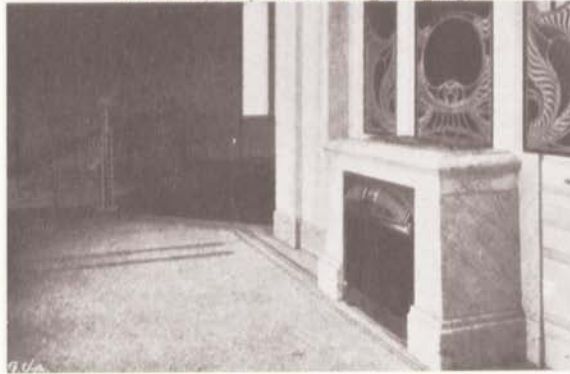
Thee- und Rumglas, Silber getrieben.



Stadtbahn: Haltestelle Gumpendorferstraße.



Stadtbahn, Hofnavillon: Stiegenabgang.



Oberskanne und Theeglas, Silber getrieben.



Stadtbahn: Haltestelle Josefstädterstraße.



Miethaus, Wienzeile: Korridor.

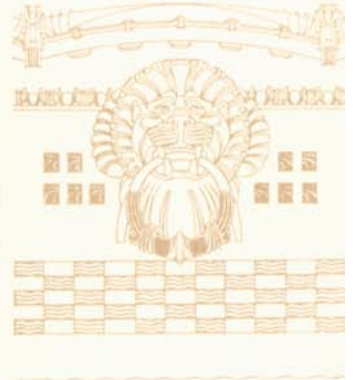
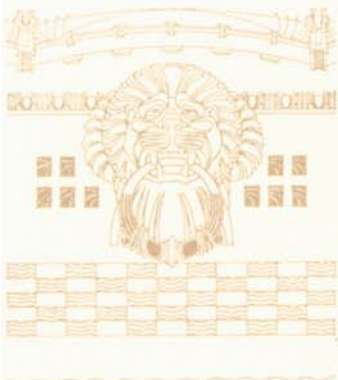


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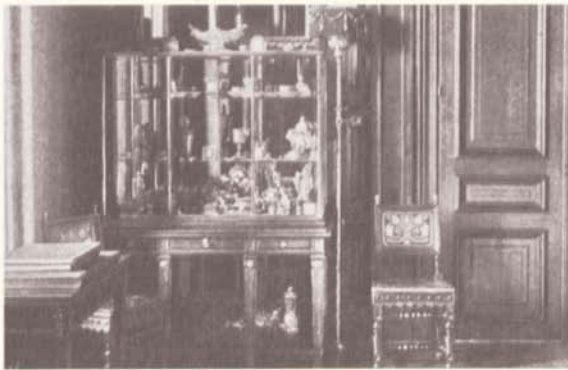
Villa in Hiltfeldorf: Detail.



Station Heiligenstadt: Vestibül.



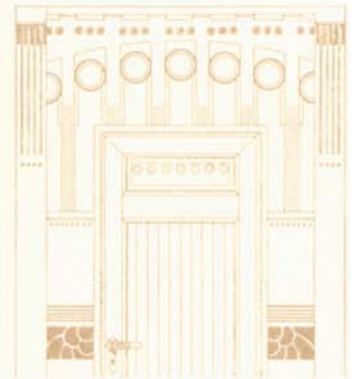
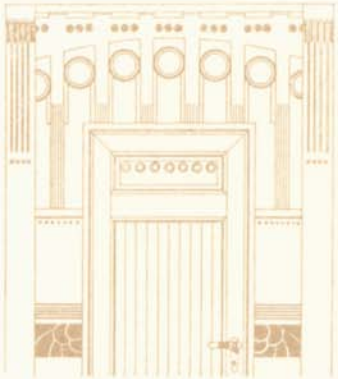
Speisezimmer: Vitrine.



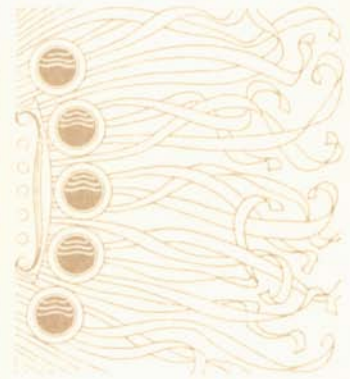
Villa in Hüteldorf: Detail.



Haltestelle Hernalz: Vestibül.



Atelier: Zeitschriftenkasten.



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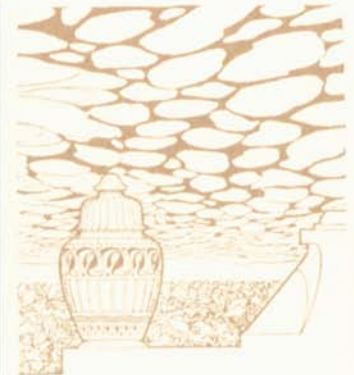
Wandbehang: Applikation.



St. Johanni-Kapelle: Detail.



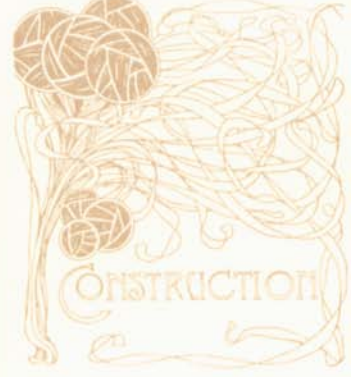
Billardzimmer: Detail.



Schreibtischgarnitur: Silber, Lapis lazuli.



Familiengruft in Hietzing.



Billardzimmer: Detail.



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Italian *Architettura Moderna* (1st ed., 1896). Trans. and intro. Marco Pozzetto. Turin: Libreria Editrice Scientifica Cortina, 1976.

Architettura Moderna e Altri Scritti. Intro. Giuseppe Samona, trans. Giancarlo Bernabei and Hans Winter. Bologna: Zanichelli, 1980, 1984.

Sources for Archival Material

Kupferstichkabinett, Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien
Schillerplatz 3, 1010 Vienna
Approximately 170 drawings by Wagner and a few files containing competition reports and correspondence, mostly from late in his career.

Otto Wagner Archiv, Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien
Döblergasse 4, 1070 Vienna
(The new Wagner Archives is housed in his last residence on Döblergasse.)
Copies and slides of the materials contained in the Academy's Kupferstichkabinett.

Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien, Museen der Stadt Wien
Karlsplatz, 1040 Vienna
Approximately 250 drawings by Wagner and an extensive photographic collection.

Architektur Sammlung, Graphische Sammlung Albertina
Augustinerstrasse 1, Vienna 1
A small number of drawings by Wagner.

Handschriftensammlung, Wiener Stadtbibliothek
Rathaus, 1032 Vienna
Several manuscripts and letters by Wagner.

The Archives of the History of Art
The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities
401 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90401–1455
Approximately 130 letters written to Wagner from colleagues, publishers, and students, 1902–1917.

OTTO WAGNER, 1841-1918 BIOGRAPHIC DATA

The few details known of Otto Wagner's personal life shed some light on his artistic development. Having lost his father at the age of five, Wagner was raised by his mother, described by several biographers as a forceful and stern disciplinarian who left an indelible impression on his life. For his preparatory schooling, Wagner claimed to have attended the prestigious Akademisches Gymnasium in Vienna and the Benedictine Stiftsgymnasium at Kremsmünster, but these facts have recently been challenged. A boyhood friendship with the architect Theophil von Hansen may have steered his interests into architecture. His attendance at the architectural academies in Berlin and Vienna were the requisite steps for anyone aspiring to the upper echelons of the profession.

Wagner's first marriage to Josefine Domhart was anything but a happy one. It ended in divorce in 1880 with a daughter Susanne, and two illegitimate sons born to Sophie von Paupie, neither of whom Wagner adopted. However, the immediate cause of the marriage's dissolution was Wagner's intense affair with his daughter's young governess, Louise Stiffel. Wagner married her in Budapest in 1884, and again in Vienna in 1889; they remained inseparable until her death.

Wagner's relationship with Stiffel, and his mother's death in 1880 may have brought about the turning point of his artistic career. His designs during the 1880s, beginning with the "Artibus" project, disclose a new ambition and concern for international fame. His burgeoning artistic reputation culminated with his appointment to the chair at the Vienna Academy in 1894. By this date, Wagner had well established himself as one of the leading and most influential architects in Austria and Germany.

Wagner's executed works in 1894 consisted of a synagogue in Budapest, two banks, and numerous apartment buildings in Vienna, and his first designs for the many stations and bridges of Vienna's municipal rail system (Stadtbahn). He had participated in several international competitions with some success, and his renderings and sketches for uncommissioned projects had been exhibited and applauded in Berlin and Munich. Yet

the monumental commissions that generally would have followed such a promotion as his academic appointment never materialized. The radically modern program that he introduced at the Academy, together with his resignation from the Künstlerhaus a few years later, fomented a schism or professional disaffection that erupted after 1900 into a rather brutal artistic war. Aligned with the Secession, and with Gustav Klimt in the dispute over the latter's ceiling paintings at the University of Vienna, Wagner also began to encounter bitter opposition to his own designs during these years. His inability between 1900 and 1912 to realize the building of any of his schemes for the city's new historical museum effectively ended his public career and credibility as an architect in Vienna. Increasingly alienated, he withdrew to Louise for solace; after her death in 1915 he retreated into a private artistic world. Wagner died in 1918 in virtual isolation.

H.F.M.

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