Modernism with Style:
History, Culture and the Origins of Modern Architecture in Berlin, 1780-1870

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation traces the continual, but overlooked, impact of Islamic architecture on practicing architects in nineteenth-century Berlin. As such, it examines the origins of Modernism by considering design strategies by architects in post-Schinkel Berlin. The reasons and motivations for this interest in Islamic architecture by German architects are not easily connected to imperial prerogatives. Rather, this dissertation argues that the use and interpretation of Islamic architectural forms by German architects during this period—often characterized as a “crisis of style”—provide insight into Germany’s uncertain path to Modernism in the twentieth century.

Lost within the historiography of style debates during the first half of the century, which sought to establish a new style appropriate for a modern industrial society, existed proposals that rejected both trends of an uncritical eclecticism and pure industrial abstraction. These architects sought a solution to this crisis by challenging the cultural aspects of style. Thus, it was through the study of Islamic architecture that some German architects found an unlikely answer, which differed from those proposed by advocates of design reform in contemporary Britain. For some, Islamic architecture came to be understood as sharing a common ancestry in classical antiquity, yet it was different and abstract enough such that it would not be closely associated with either the Neoclassical or Gothic. As such, Islamic forms were unlikely to be associated with the political, ideological and religious ideas so ingrained in Europe’s architecture.

This dissertation alters traditional understandings of Modernism by demonstrating how this “path,” ultimately not taken, can be used to reconceptualize our understanding of what Modernism is, was, or could have been. Thus, instead of attempting to establish a different type, or “alternative” Modernism, the dissertation challenges the historiography of the modern canon significantly in order to understand Modernism as a global condition, while simultaneously rejecting the inherited limits of the term ‘modern’ as a formal or stylistic category only. By exploring what these architects sought outside of Europe, and studying how they integrated what they found into their work during the rapidly changing nineteenth century, this dissertation significantly challenges Modernism’s established historiography.

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The Modern Movement has not grown from one root.

-Nikolas Pevsner, *Pioneers of Modern Design*
INTRODUCTION

If in the 'twenties German building was the prevalent influence, the English contribution was most noticeable, possibly decisive, in the German architecture of the first decade of the century; and it goes back to Schinkel's visit to England in 1826.

-Julius Posener, From Schinkel to the Bauhaus (1972)

Over sixty percent of Jones's ornamental examples were exotic, that is of Indian, Chinese, Egyptian, Assyrian or Celtic origin, and it was to such sources, all removed from the West, that Sullivan and Wright resorted in their search for an appropriate style in which to embody the New World.

- Kenneth Frampton, Modern Architecture (1980)

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Modernist or Orientalist? Modern Architecture after the Post-colonial

In a 1904 obituary of the famous French academic painter Jean Léon Gérôme (1824-1904) the author negotiates the difficult task of assessing a painter who in his lifetime gained widespread popularity, yet was considered at best second rate by art critics and historians. He describes Gérôme's paintings as "dear rather to the sensation-loving than the nature-loving public," and as such, "savoring more of the pomp and power of man than of the beauties and mysteries of the world." He characterizes Gérôme as "an Orientalist, if not by birth at least by predilection, and in his selection of Eastern themes he found another great element of popularity. Unique scenes from other climes, great stories from history told in line and color—these were his stock and trade and they found an appreciative public." But, he noted, despite the successful choice of popular subject matter "the man's very precision, nicety of finish, and bloodless calculation robbed his work of much of its force, and left it rather a brilliant bit of execution than a canvas to woo or move."² By the second decade of the twentieth century Gérôme had slipped into obscurity due to general agreement over this lack luster assessment. However, eight decades after his death, Gérôme became the focus of an essay by Linda Nochlin, published in Art in America in 1983, who reassessed his work in a very different way. Focusing solely on his work, which has an 'Islamic' or 'Arab' subject matter, she vigorously argued that these paintings were nothing more than "a visual document of nineteenth-century colonialist ideology, an iconic distillation of the Wester ner's notion of the Oriental couched in the language of a would-be transparent naturalism."³ She continued by arguing that it was through this very technique of

intense (photographic) naturalism (previously labeled as “bloodless” and unable to “woo or move”), in combination with his chosen (‘Oriental’) subject matter, that Gérôme was a conscious participant in an imperialist, ideological strategy. This strategy’s ultimate goal was not only to reify the Islamic Orient’s “presumed cultural inferiority”⁴ (i.e. not modern), but also support the “vast control mechanism of colonialism, designed to justify and perpetuate European dominance.”⁵

Considering the significant disparity in these two evaluations of the same artist one cannot help but wonder what happened? Paradoxically, this photographic realist technique, which made him popular, also hindered him,⁶ in that it became the focus and justification for Nochlin, who employed it to condemn him as a colonial agent, imperialist and racist ideologue whose paintings were produced in the service of France’s notorious colonial expansion.⁷ According to Nochlin, Gérôme’s detailed depictions of the “Orient” and its people perpetuated a negative view of the “Orient” by reinforcing popular stereotypes thereby justifying France’s mission civilisatrice.

My intent here is not to explain the cause of this disparity, but rather to demonstrate the complexity of negotiating its effects today when attempting to narrate a history of modern architecture. The example of Gérôme above is indicative of a wider trend of disciplinary anxiety,

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⁴ Edward Said, Orientalism, as cited in Nochlin, 34.
⁵ Ibid.
⁶ For more on the idea that naturalistic painting caters to a popular consumer see: Clement Greenberg’s famous 1939 essay Avant-Garde and Kitsch, which is a central text in the exegesis of the Modern movement.
⁷ For a critique of Nochlin’s essay see: John MacKenzie, Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 43f. However, this challenge to Nochlin is not very strong or convincing, and he mainly criticizes her reductivist and essentializing approach to imperialism. For a more recent response see Ibn Warraq’s unsparing critique entitled “Linda Nochlin and The Imaginary Orient,” The New English Review (June, 2010). (Accessed May 25, 2013).
http://www.newenglishreview.org/Ibn_Warraq/Linda_Nochnlin_and_The_Imaginary_Orient/
which has significantly complicated our understanding of the nature of Modernism. Thus, the central question to be addressed here is understanding how a body of scholarship, formulated within the framework of cultural studies whose primary intent was to expose the wrongs of Western imperialism and give agency to the disenfranchised by challenging the very role, nature and uses of knowledge, has actually had the unintended consequence of inhibiting many potentially rich and constructive historical examples by itself continuing to perpetuate the very East-West binary it sought to dismantle? This has often had the unintended result, in many cases, of othering itself.

While acknowledging the existence of this problem of essentialist thinking, one of the concerns of this dissertation is to address one way in which cultural studies (postcolonial studies) has had unforeseen consequences in the study of architectural history through the construction of a genealogy of the history of modernism. This is particularly appropriate in the German context where it may still be possible to find a balance or productive middle ground, in a debate that has, until recently, favored strict distinctions between colonizer and colonized, West and East, Modern and non-Modern.

Much of the foundational groundwork in the debate outlined above can be attributed to the far reaching influence of the literary critic Edward Said (1935-2003) and his thesis that the West constructed an oriental culture, maintained in the guise of the academic discipline known as Orientalism. Principally, this movement had a significant effect on scholars who studied European figures who had interactions with Muslims, Islam or the ‘Orient’. This is a particularly rich and complicated problem within the context of German studies since the ‘German’ contact

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8 Throughout the rest of the text when the term “Modernism” is used it refers to the “Modern Movement” in architecture.
with Islamic and/or “Islamicate” society was arguably not as politically charged as it was with the French or British due to the latter’s early colonial exploits into areas with large Muslim populations. Equally important in the development of Modernism is the paradoxical way in which the advent of post-colonialism has led, ironically, to a marginalization of the very work some early pioneers of modern architecture produced by categorizing it as *Orientalist* (i.e. in a derogatory sense that assumes a position of reifying the East’s subordinate standing). This phenomenon emerges noticeably in the historiography on many architects working during the period of European expansion and colonization who designed in an “Islamic” or “Moorish” style, whether they were in Europe, Southwest Asia, the “Middle East”, North Africa or elsewhere.

A (double) irony exists here in that architects who designed in such a style were, as a rule, also excluded from the Modernist narrative of architecture due to the perception that anything rendered in such a style was trivial, whimsical or at best a ‘folly’ and, as such, more appropriate for a garden and not serious architecture. In fact, these architects, because of this perception, have either been excluded or their designs undermined in some way within (Western) surveys of architecture – often even with texts having to do with the nineteenth century. For example, in Claude Mignot’s *Architecture of the Nineteenth Century in Europe* (1984), there is a brief appearance of an example of German orientalist architecture, the Villa Wilhelma (1837-41), but the building is quickly categorized under the heading “From Romanticism to Eclecticism” and its Islamic sources are either ignored or denied.

In 1837-41 von Zanth, who accompanied Hittorff on his travels in Sicily, built the Villa Wilhelma near Stuttgart. The outside is remarkable for its vivid structural polychromy,

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which strikes an Italian rather than an antique note with its alternating horizontal bands of white stone and red brick. The inside is remarkable for a suite of Arab salons, which underlies its character as an exotic ‘folly’.  

Aside from demonstrating that he is unfamiliar with the Arab and Norman architecture of the medieval period in Sicily, Mignot leaves us with a Hobson’s choice. Because Zanth toured Sicily, the exterior must either be “Italian” or “antique”, which leaves us with the obvious question of: how? It is therefore not unreasonable when I state that at least some of Zanth’s sources were clearly Islamic, since Sicily is full of examples of Islamic architecture and many appear in his book, which will be discussed later.

Even in discussing John Nash’s famous Royal Pavilion at Brighton, Mignot simply cannot acknowledge the fact that Nash drew upon actual sources of Islamic architecture for his design.

...and Nash, in the Royal Pavilion at Brighton, justified the bizarre proportions of his cast-iron columns by adopting an exotic vocabulary with Indian bases and paliform capitals. But it was not very long before iron architecture was found to have a beauty of its own.

This refusal to engage with the actual antecedents of the building is a lost opportunity since the building and its sources have important stories to tell about global circulation, taste and the history of Islamic architecture in the nineteenth century. Going beyond the examples above Mignot also includes Eduard Knoblauch’s Neue Synagoge (1859-60) in Berlin, which he states is “in keeping with the Berlin tradition but the Romanesque style (Rundbogenstil) here produces oriental overtones for symbolic reasons.” What these reasons are, or how the building is “oriental” we are not told. He also includes the Palais Vaissier by Charles Dupire-Rozan (1892)

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11 Ibid., 109.
in the northern city of Tourcoing and describes it as “An ‘oriental palace’, whose histrionic
classic character contrasts with the Royal Pavilion by John Nash or the Villa Wilhelma”. Of course, no
image of the Brighton Pavilion is provided in the text so the reader has nothing to compare it to,
no doubt because of its “bizarre proportions” or “exotic vocabulary”. But despite these issues
with Mignot’s text, which he claims is unlike most histories of the period in that he does not
frame the architecture of the nineteenth century as “foreshadow[ing] the architecture of today”,
he at least attempts to deal with some ‘non-canonical’ buildings. I am only able to engage with
Mignot at all because he includes these examples, whereas other well-known texts about the
architecture of the nineteenth century do not even mention (much less show) Nash’s Brighton
Pavilion, Zanth’s Wilhelma or any other Islamic or ‘orientalist’ building. And the situation
with regard to buildings built in Islamic styles only worsens when looking at texts that deal with
Modern architecture.

Before the rise of post-colonial studies, architects who designed in an Islamic style were
largely excluded for not only being historicist (from the Modernist point of view), but also for
working with “non-Western” forms. Exceptions to this are significant figures such as John
Nash, whose ‘exotic’ designs are excused as either anomalies in their oeuvre or seen as a
capitulation to a client’s demands, or just simply ignored altogether. After the advent of post-

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12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., 7.
14 Here I refer to Robin Middleton and David Watkin, Architecture of the Nineteenth Century (Milan: Electra, 1980).
15 There are hardly any exceptions to this in architecture, unlike in the visual arts with the example of Japonisme, which mainly surfaced in France after the reopening of trade with the West in 1853. Even then it is difficult to say how seriously these ideas were taken in the formation of modern Art. However, the serious study and implementation of so-called “non-Western” architectural principles (namely from Japan) did not occur in architecture until the twentieth century, most famously with Frank Lloyd Wright. Perhaps more relevant than a comparison to fine art is the example of eighteenth-century music, which provides a rich example of the Western interpretation of “Turkish” musical forms, motifs. But the results were quite different as many of Mozart’s “Turkish” works are well-established parts of the musical canon.
colonial studies many of the architects who worked in these styles were recast as agents in the service of Western colonial empires, perpetuating stereotypes and reinforcing structures of power. As a result these architects were doubly damned. It is precisely because of these assumptions, and inaccurate representations of their work, that many (specifically in this case German) architects do not fit into the traditional modernist or colonial studies model and have subsequently received inadequate attention. Nonetheless, I am in no way suggesting that all architects who moved within colonial or imperial circles (no matter their nationality) should be absolved of their affiliation with colonial regimes. Nor am I implying that post-colonial theory is irrelevant in these cases since it has effectively called attention to these individuals who otherwise would have been ignored. Instead, I am primarily concerned with revealing aspects of the inherent complexity involved in the vast (global) modernization project of the nineteenth century and, instead of treating these architects as a homogenous entity engaged in a shared project, it is much more productive to consider them on a case by case basis.

German Orientalism

The past decade has witnessed a substantial increase in the amount of literature on German Orientalism. Some degree of provocation for the study of Orientalism in a German context, paradoxically, can be linked to Edward Said who famously excluded German orientalist scholarship almost entirely from his famous, and highly controversial, book *Orientalism* (1978) that focused solely on the Anglo-French imperial models. The exclusion of the German role, because they had no actual colonies until 1884 – which is the core of his argument for leaving them out – forms a trope that surfaces repeatedly in introductions to the topic of German
Orientalism due to Said’s tremendous influence in related fields. In Said’s view, the ‘German case’ of Orientalism was to be consigned to the world of fantasies and dreams despite the fact that by the 1850s the “Germans had become the world’s leading orientalists.” Said’s reason for the German exception has now become an oft-cited quotation surfacing throughout the texts of historians of Germany who attempt to validate the Orient’s study. According to an increasing number of scholars, Said’s model, which links Orientalism to the colonial-imperial project, may not be appropriate for German studies considering, at the very least, Said’s refusal to engage the German case, in addition to the fact that he did not read German. Furthermore, because Said’s model relied so much on the Foucauldian knowledge-power relationship, it probably seemed irrelevant to discuss colonialism without colonies. Said’s exceptional attitude toward the

16 See namely the introduction to a themed issue of *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*. Jennifer Jenkins, “German Orientalism: Introduction,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24, No. 2 (2004): 97-100. The specific model I am referring to is that argued by Said, which links “Orientalism” (the scholarly study of the Orient and accumulation of its knowledge, and knowledge about it) with the colonial project (which has the goal of colonizing, dominating and subjugating its land and people).

17 Works that have theorized some of these positions include: Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997). Malte Fuhrmann, *Der Traum vom deutschen Orient: Zwei deutsche Kolonien im Osmanischen Reich 1851-1918* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus), 2006. However, Nina Berman warns that Germany’s relationship with the Middle East cannot be casually consigned to such literary dreams and fantasies in: Nina Berman, *Orientalismus, Kolonialismus und Moderne: Zum Bild des Orients in der deutschsprachigen Kultur um 1900* (Stuttgart: M & P Verlag, 1996), 14f.

18 Suzanne Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 57.

19 I refer here to the quote: “...at no time in German scholarship during the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century could a close partnership have developed between [German] Orientalists and a protracted, sustained national interest in the Orient. There was nothing in Germany to correspond to the Anglo-French presence in India, the Levant, North Africa. Moreover, the German Orient was almost exclusively a scholarly, or at least a classical, Orient: it was made the subject of lyrics, fantasies, and even novels, but it was never actual, the way Egypt and Syria were actual for Chateaubriand, Lane, Lamartine, Burton, Disraeli, or Nerval.” See: Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 19.

‘German case’ is more likely due to his interest in maintaining the validity of this theory than absolving German responsibility of their later colonial sins. Despite the later German role in the colonial project, the majority and sustained intensity of the critique in the decades following Orientalism (1978), which effectively enabled those formerly colonized by the “empire” to “write back,” has been directed overwhelmingly toward the French and British due to the duration, intensity and severity of their colonial empires.

One of the more recent and comprehensive responses to this predominantly Anglo-French critique, and challenge to the Saidian narrative, is Suzanne Marchand’s German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship (2009). The history of German Orientalism, as Marchand demonstrates, is long, varied and much more complex than previously presented; there has been “no comprehensive treatment, in German or English, of modern German orientalism”. Focusing on Orientalist scholars themselves, Marchand traces Orientalism’s historical presence in German culture and reveals a variety of motivations for interest in, and study of, the linguistics and theology that played a significant role in the development of Orientalistik. Marchand argues that one aspect that distinguishes it from the

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21 George Steinmetz, The Devil’s Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). My intent here is to acknowledge the fact that the German colonial project is in no way innocent of the atrocities discussed in Steinmetz’s book (although this is drastically simplifying it), but rather to maintain the idea that the German role was complicated, inconsistent, and that the period I am concerned with does not stretch beyond 1871.


24 Suzanne Marchand, German Orientalism in the Age of Empire, xx.
French and British variants is the relationship of *Orientalistik* to a particular form of Protestantism (*Kulturprotestantismus*), which prioritized biblical exegesis thereby getting around the Roman Church and its official doctrine of ecclesiastical authority.

A key feature of this type of Orientalism is the inability to easily link it to any sort of imperial-colonial endeavor, due to the theological focus and lack of a German empire before 1871. This made it somewhat unique as a primarily linguistic-cultural and scholarly phenomenon. Marchand traces the development of *Orientforschung* from the early nineteenth century until the first third of the twentieth century demonstrating that this phenomenon has little to do with an imperial endeavor, as Said had previously argued with French and British examples. She states that her book “is a critical history of the practice of orientalist scholarship, one that treats the politics of the field, but does so without presuming that those politics were primordially and perpetually defined by imperialist relationships.”

Acknowledging the fact that much time has passed since *Orientalism*’s debut, and the vast amount of work directly influenced by it, Marchand contends that Said, and more so his followers, place too much focus on discourse analysis in order to magnify “individual utterances” into broader historical themes or ideologies. One of her main critiques is that this methodology has been amplified throughout disciplines, resulting in only interpreting the surface of many texts, which reinforces the East-West binary. She writes that discourse analysis utilized in this way is “particularly pernicious, delivering a definition of identity which presumes a primordial, binary distinction between “Europe” and “the Orient.” Dismissing discourse analysis as the primary tool in historical research and inquiry, Marchand directs her focus toward

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25 Ibid.
26 Ibid., xxi.
the (intellectual) history, production and broader effects of German Orientalist scholars and their work throughout the nineteenth century by asserting that the Saidian model, while by no means irrelevant, is simply not universally applicable and, in the German case, not enough to understand or explain these relationships.

The tendency to dismiss Said within German historiography, is not so much about rejecting his ideas altogether (Ibn Warraq, et al.),\textsuperscript{27} discounting his scholarship (Robert Irwin),\textsuperscript{28} or refuting his thesis (Daniel Varisco),\textsuperscript{29} rather that his proposed model is inapplicable to the German experience of Orientalism and its relationship to German culture and empire.\textsuperscript{30} Of course the differences between the German case and the French and British are well known and range from their geographic proximity to the large Muslim populations or Islamic Empires. Indeed, one significant difference in terms of geography had to do with the long shared border between (at different times) the Austrian Habsburg Empire and Kingdom of Hungary with the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{31} This long-term interaction had a substantial effect of German cultural production, including how perceptions of the Ottomans changed from fear to conciliation (through the performance stage and literature etc.) as well as the idea of orientalism as “The Problematic Self”, or orientalism as a “Self-Critique.” Another difference specifically concerns artistic production and is particularly pronounced in painting with the general lack of the ‘erotic’

\textsuperscript{28} Robert Irwin, \textit{For Lust of Knowing: The Orientalists and Their Enemies} (2006).
\textsuperscript{29} Daniel Varisco, \textit{Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid} (2007).
\textsuperscript{30} Other critics include: Bernard Lewis, George Landau et al. And some recent texts, on the subject of Orientalism, do not mention Said at all – either in the text or in the bibliography! See for example: Michael Curtis’ \textit{Orientalism and Islam: European Thinkers on Oriental Despotism in the Middle East and India} (2009).
\textsuperscript{31} This border lasted for hundreds of years since the initial Ottoman Islamic conquest of Eastern Europe in the fifteenth century. The Ottoman invasion was swift and quickly resulted in the defeat of the Kingdom of Hungary by the Ottoman Imperial army in 1526 at the Battle of Mohács. The Ottoman penetration of Eastern Europe would persist throughout their siege of Vienna in 1683 until the Second Battle of Mohács and resulting Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699.
element, including sexual themes, in orientalist painting. An example of this is the Prussian painter Wilhelm Gentz, who practically ignored this entire aspect of the genre. But the German role in a variety of Middle-East modernization efforts has received far less attention. Walking a fine line between being perceived as helpful consultants or colonial agents in the service of the French or British, or worse potential colonizers themselves, Germans in the Middle East have had to negotiate a variety of identities. Indeed, seen as “neither conquerors nor friends,” some Germans preferred the identity of modernizer.

Modern Architecture and the Canon

Once upon a time, literary and art critics used modernism—especially with the orthographic marker of the capital, Modernism, or the intensifying adjective high, as in *High Modernism*—to delineate movements in the arts based in loose affiliations or parallel developments. In contrast, social theorists, historians, and social scientists used modern, modernity, and modernization to refer to historical periods, conditions, and processes. But now, such disciplinary boundaries have ceased to function, as people appropriate all forms of the root concept to serve their different purposes.

Modernism, as conceived in terms of the history of architecture, can mean a variety of things in different contexts. However, Modernism as it will be discussed from this point on (with a capital ‘M’) refers specifically to the historical architectural movement described in the canonical texts, which emerged in the mid-twentieth century to characterize the revolutionary type of architecture that had evolved over the previous century. These texts were comprised largely by scholars such as Sigfried Giedion (1888-1968) (a student of Heinrich Wöfflin) and his *Space, Time &

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33 Suzanne Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 143.

Architecture: the Growth of A New Tradition (1941); Nicholas Pevsner (1902-83) and his An Outline of European Architecture (1943), as well as Pioneers of Modern Design (originally published as Pioneers of the Modern Movement, 1936); Henry Russell Hitchcock (1903-87), and his Modern Architecture: Romanticism and Reintegration (1929); and Kenneth Frampton (b.1930) and his Modern Architecture: A Critical History (1980).35 There are, of course, many others who contributed to this ‘canon’; however, I am concerned with the pedagogical framework of the textbook (including texts that were used as textbooks), which led to the canon. Therefore, I am not including manifestos (e.g. Le Corbusier’s Vers une Architecture) or more complicated theoretical works (e.g. Tafuri’s Sphere and the Labyrinth), despite their influence upon practitioners and the discipline as a whole. In a recent survey that asked 500 practitioners, educators, and students “to identify the books that had been most important to them,” Kenneth Frampton’s Modern Architecture was the only one of the above that made it onto the list.36 Most of the others were either manifestos or case studies and none could be considered comprehensive histories of Modernism.

Unlike its more revolutionarily inclined sister movements (avant-garde groups such as Dada, Surrealism or Neue Sachlichkeit etc.), Modern architecture is in many ways a fundamentally reactionary movement.37 I assert this not only because its main advocates collectively rejected the very idea of history having a role in architectural practice (labeling such

37 With the use of this phrase I do not intend to invoke Jeffrey Herf’s seminal 1984 book, Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich, but rather to highlight the reactive, uncompromising, exclusionary nature of (architectural) Modernism.
a role as *historicism*), attacking the stylistic ‘pluralism’ so characteristic of late nineteenth century architecture, but they also advocated a very specific (exclusionary) aesthetic regime and philosophy. Modernism’s founders sought a new architectural vocabulary based on industrial materials, free from historical references and ornament, questioning all aspects of ‘traditional’ and ‘historical’ artistic influences and practices. As a result, a very specific narrative was crafted in order to undermine much of the previous century and reinforce a dramatic break or “rupture” from the past in much the same way Renaissance historians did by ‘inventing’ the “Gothic” in order to claim a new architecture and thus an artistic ‘rebirth’. Thus, it is no surprise, due to the speed at which the past and its lessons were thrown away, that other productive paths toward a ‘modern’ architecture were lost, overlooked or ultimately—due to the nature of a canon—excluded.

**Modernism and Orientalism: A Catch-22**

What is of particular interest to me is not an ideological proposition that claims an ‘alternate’ Modernity, or even necessarily a plurality of ‘modernisms,’ but rather my intent is to elucidate examples that are integral to the history of the Modern movement, but to a variety of reasons, have been excluded both by historians of Modernism, as well as advocates of Post-colonial

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39 “Modernism was rebellion. Modernism was “make it new.” Modernism was resistance, rupture.” Susan Stanford Friedman, “Definitional Excursions: The Meanings of Modern/Modernity/Modernism,” *Modernism/modernity* 8, No. 3 (September 2001): 493.

theory. The study of German architects, who moved within the circles of other empires, such as British trade routes for example, has been significantly influenced by post-colonial theory such that it is difficult (if not impossible) now to discuss these figures in any other way (i.e. other than orientalists). Indeed, the term “Orientalist” has become so saturated with negative connotations that to ascribe it to a historical figure is to pass an altogether condemning judgment. At the same time I am fully aware of the existence of orientalists who had a range of negative intentions including serving dubious purposes in colonial regime. My assertion with this dissertation is that each of these individuals must be assessed on an individual basis and, therefore, cannot be categorized into a homogenous group with a single intention. Thus, the term orientalist implies too much to be used effectively.

As I have begun to illustrate, many of the architects that form the subject of this dissertation occupy a space “in between,” so to speak. This is because architects that were relegated to being agents of Western imperialism (by postcolonial scholars), were similarly excluded from histories of Modernism (by modernist historians). In order to demonstrate the complexity of this position I have chosen to highlight the case of the Prussian architect Carl von Diebitsch (1819-1869) and his architectural lineage, context and environment. By examining this complex individual within the context of this rapidly changing period, a rich study will emerge to challenge the assumptions I have begun to outline above.

41 This topic of “alternate modernities” has been a discussion at the forefront of Post-colonial studies for some time. Perhaps more relevant here as an example of the attempt to deal with this idea specifically as it relates to “Middle Eastern” architecture and brings up a host of important issues is: Sandy Isenstadt, Kishvar Rizvi, eds. Modernism and the Middle East: Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008). I reviewed this book and discuss this issue in more detail; see: Christian A. Hedrick, “Whose Modernity? Modernism, Modernization, and the Architecture of the Middle East,” Review of Isenstadt, Sandy; Rizvi, Kishvar, eds., Modernism and the Middle East: Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century. H-Levant, H-Net Reviews. November, 2010. URL: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=31452
The Malleable Boundaries of Modernism

One of the guiding themes I wish to explore in this dissertation is the question of how we might extend extant notions of Modernism without losing a sense of its boundaries or by simply creating new varieties of ‘Modernism’ (or by redefining it altogether). In other words, simply proposing the inclusion of a number of buildings into the existing category of “Modern Architecture” is neither productive nor meaningful without a critical interrogation of buildings that have hitherto been considered anything but Modern. Moreover, it is equally unproductive to take buildings that do not fit the rather established definitions of Modernism and simply create a new category of the “modern” for them, instead of dealing with what differentiates them. By this, I mean to move beyond the worn out dichotomies of ‘Modern’ and ‘traditional’. I acknowledge and accept (grosso modo) that there is such a thing as “Modern” architecture with a somewhat specific set of (generally agreed upon) characteristics that have been thoughtfully developed over decades, which has resulted in an amazing abundance of work (the canon). Therefore, I am not proposing to ‘destroy’ this canon, only to challenge it from within with the hopes of expanding, enriching and reconfiguring it.

Carl von Diebitsch: A Modern Architect between Historiographies

It is through the study of the architect Carl von Diebitsch, who proposed what can be considered both ‘modern’ and ‘Islamic’ designs that I intend to reassess in terms of the modernist project. In order to locate this study historiographically it is imperative then that it addresses the prevailing scholarship, not only on the context from which Diebitsch emerged (Berlin architectural traditions and his education at the Bauakademie), but also on the role and function of Islamic architecture’s representation and its relevance to Post-colonial studies. It is through the
architecture at world expos, which has thus far advanced the idea that such representations
(almost always created by Europeans) not only misrepresented a “homogenized” Islamic culture,
but that they perpetuated “a stratified power relationship,” which maintained the perceived
inferiority of Islamic cultures. Complicating this prevailing model, as outlined above, my work
challenges this position through an examination of von Diebitsch, who belonged neither to an
imperial colonizing state, nor worked in the service of one, but nonetheless designed in an
“Islamic” style in order to advance a modernist agenda.

In terms of Diebitsch’s context in the nineteenth century, the evolving situation within
architectural practice, advances in building technology with new methods of iron production and
the advent of mass produced products such as glass expanded architecture’s vocabulary and
allowed for the creation of new forms. Moreover, architects were faced with other demands
associated with change in the nineteenth century: new building programs. Not only were the new
buildings for railway stations, factories and other types of public institutions without any
historical precedent, they often demanded new formal strategies for new programmatic needs.
Furthermore, the nineteenth century witnessed the rise of what could be considered the ‘itinerant
professional architect’. Not only does this imply the birth of the professionalization of
architectural practice, but this is in contradistinction to what could be considered the
‘international’ ‘gentleman’ architect of the early modern period through the eighteenth century
who relied on systems of patronage for support. Professionalization in architecture, however, can
be traced to the Académie royale d’architecture (Royal Academy of Architecture) (known after
1816 as the Académie des beaux-arts), which is typically considered the most important school
of architecture in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century since its model provided a uniquely
“professional” education in that it was directly related to contemporary practice.\textsuperscript{42} It was the first school to replace apprentice-style craft training with an approach that was much more design focused.\textsuperscript{43} Indeed, according to this model, the first obligation of the architect, according to Julien Guadet (1834-1908), was to the client and the building program. As Neil Levine suggested, “the École taught the student to interpret a programme, for his purpose was to serve the client’s needs”.\textsuperscript{44} Challenging this pedagogical model in 1794 was the École Polytechnique, which proposed an architectural education more in line with engineering and the sciences than philosophy, history and aesthetics. It was following this model of education that the famous Berliner Bauakademie was established by David Gilly and others in 1799.

It was here at the Bauakademie, made famous by one of the most prolific architects to ever live, Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841), that our story begins. Quite frequently Modernist narratives link back to the work of this highly productive Prussian architect when discussing the influences of later Modernist icons such as Peter Behrens or Mies van der Rohe. However, the space between Schinkel and Behrens, for example, has focused almost solely on \textit{textual} works of theory (Heinrich Hübsch, Carl Bötticher, Gottfried Semper et al.). What is rarely ever discussed is the role of many practicing architects in post-Schinkel Berlin who continued his ideas after his death in the pursuit of Modern architecture, i.e. the story of those who effectively connect Schinkel to Behrens. For the most part, these architects have remained confined to specialized German language publications and scholarship and the more prolific ones (Ludwig Persius, August Stüler, Eduard Knoblauch, Martin Gropius et al.) have had monographs written about

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.
them. Thus, architectural production in Berlin during the years between Schinkel’s death (1841) and Peter Behrens’ canonical AEG Turbine Factory (1909) do not appear in typical modernist narratives. This is due in part, no doubt, to the historicist nature of their work. In spite of this, or as I will argue because of it, there were important contributions being made during this period to Modernism that have been ignored simply because of either their historicist nature (which was vehemently rejected later by the Modernists) or because the influences behind these proposals were considered to be outside the Western canon, as I have begun to discuss above, i.e. Orientalism, and therefore deemed superfluous, “whimsical” or “exotic” etc. and therefore irrelevant.

In order to challenge this extant historiographical model I have chosen to trace another, different, aspect of Schinkel’s modernist proclivities by examining and recuperating less well-known figures influenced by him at the Bauakademie. However, due to the radical, unpopular, or “confusing” (i.e. misunderstood) nature of their proposals, these individuals have been left out of the story. In particular I intend to reassert the importance of a professor who represents the second generation after Schinkel, Wilhelm Stier (1799-1856) (who studied at the Bauakademie), as well as his student Carl von Diebitsch and the central role Islamic architecture played, not only in their work, but even more significantly in the development of Modern architecture as we understand it today. Key themes undertaken in this project include confronting not only the established histories of Modernism, as well as accounting for the socio-cultural change of a modernizing Prussia and Egypt, the country Diebitsch ultimately moved to in order to carry out his design philosophy. Thus, this study negotiates multiple disciplines: architectural history, German history, the history of Egypt and the ‘Middle East’, Post-colonial studies and nineteenth-century studies. Acknowledging that there is substantial overlap among these disciplinary
boundaries, this project hopes to contribute new perspectives to what has become a series of rather rigid categories through which many scholars approach this material.

In sum, I argue that Diebitsch, while working within a historicist idiom, practiced an "extraordinarily deep synthesis of form and content" entirely unlike the later eclecticism that was to obscure varieties of "historicist" architecture that preceded it. Thus, I found it necessary to ‘unpack’ and critically disaggregate many of his designs and some of his built work in Cairo in order to challenge extant positions regarding Diebitsch and the meaning of his work. In the end I found that Diebitsch’s work implied quite a different attitude toward how forms were thought to have been generated at the time—as compared to the decades following him. Moreover, I have found that by studying figures such as Diebitsch more closely, while at the same time situating them within the broader global currents and trends, many assumptions regarding the architecture in this much-maligned century can be upended quite convincingly such that a series of new meanings emerge with newly considered connections.

45 William Curtis, Modern Architecture Since 1900 (Oxford: Phaidon, 1982), 17
46 Ibid., 16.
CHAPTER ONE

THE IMPERATIVE OF STYLE:
ARCHITECTURE AND THE INTELLECTUAL WORLD
OF KARL FRIEDRICH SCHINKEL, 1780-1815

The fact that he [Schinkel] conscientiously studied Medieval building while in Italy and that he
made several attempts at ecclesiastical and castellated Gothic is significant not so much because
it marks him as the first nineteenth-century writer to develop in part from a knowledge of non-
Classical structure a theoretical system of rationalism. This was later continued and modified by
Semper working largely with High Renaissance forms and according to the dominant eclecticism
of taste of the mid-century. From him the system was passed on to the early men of the New
Tradition. 47

-Henry Russell Hitchcock (1929)

The stylistic form of the ancient world served Schinkel for his museum design, where he adapted
the colonnade of a Greek temple on the exterior and the hollow shape of the rotunda of the
Roman Pantheon in the interior. So too do the buildings of Mies, although the medium of a
modern building takes advantage of glass and steel, nonetheless he is beholden to the idea of the
temple (up to the curvature of the roof entablature). And although Mies wanted a radically new
architecture in the form of a translucent bar, he utilized—in a certain sense—the architectural
forms already developed by Schinkel—that is primarily in his reduction to the Absolute. 48

-Ekhart Berckenhagen (1975)

In short, Schinkel brought Europe and the world to Germany. When he died in 1841, he was
undoubtedly one of the most eloquent ambassadors of Romantic Classicism’s drift towards
historicism - and yet he became the inspirer of modernity. Mies van der Rohe rightly relied on
him, Albert Speer, wrongly, and Hermann Henselmann was nearer him before he fell to socialist
realism. 49

-Märkische Allgemeine (2012)

47 Henry Russell Hitchcock, Modern Architecture: Romanticism and Reintegration (New York: Payson &
 Clarke Ltd., 1929), 28.
48 Ekhart Berckenhagen, ed., Von Schinkel bis Mies van der Rohe: Zeichnerische Entwürfe europäischer
 Baumeister, Raum- und Formgestalter 1789 – 1969, Exhibition Catalog (Berlin: Kunstbibliothek Berlin,
 Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 1974-75), 5.
49 Frank Kallensee, “Kein Name, sondern ein Stil,” Märkische Allgemeine (Sept. 6, 2012) Potsdam.
 http://www.maerkischeallgemeine.de/cms/beitrag/12388114/63369/Im-Berliner-Kulturforum-wird-der-
From September 2012 until January 2013 a substantial exhibition entitled *Karl Friedrich Schinkel – Geschichte und Poesie* (History and Poetry), was organized by the Kupferstichkabinett of the National Museums of Berlin at the Kulturforum in Berlin. The exhibit, which featured four distinct showrooms displaying over three hundred works, was the first in thirty years (since the GDR exhibit celebrating his two hundredth birthday) to recognize the artist and his work in such a comprehensive and ambitious retrospective. This exhibit, along with a related one at the Alte Nationalgalerie, in addition to a symposium and other events such as walking tours of Schinkel’s Berlin buildings, was the culmination of a several-year-long project entitled *Das Erbe Schinkels* (“Schinkel’s Legacy,” 2009-2012). This Internet database project was also a major conservation effort undertaken to preserve and digitize the single largest collection of Schinkel drawings in the world, totaling around 5,500 and held by the National Museums of Berlin under the umbrella organization, the Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz (Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation).

The ultimate goal, now achieved, was to create a comprehensive online catalog of these drawings. It demonstrates the new centrality and unity of Schinkel’s oeuvre both within “Prussian” culture as well as its importance to German cultural history more broadly due to his

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52 The Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz (SPK) was founded in 1957 with a “mission to acquire and preserve the cultural legacy of the former State of Prussia,” which was officially dissolved in 1947. It seeks to preserve and maintain the history of Prussia and its culture and is the parent organization for 27 institutions including the National Museums, National Libraries and other smaller entities. See: http://hv.spk-berlin.de/deutsch/wir_ueber_uns/profil.php?navid=1

53 *Das Erbe Schinkels* can be found here: http://www.smb.museum/schinkel/index.php?lang=de
pervasive influence throughout the country. Schinkel’s nationwide impact was particularly reinforced by the exhibit, which not only featured many of his most famous drawings from the Kupferstichkabinett’s own collection, but items from collections around Germany and the world. According to the museum’s website the exhibit “presents the entire spectrum of the work of this famous artist of German Romanticism and Berlin Neoclassicism.”54 And with all the excitement in Berlin and elsewhere over Schinkel,55 who has been described as a “universal man”56 who “invented Prussian beauty”57 and considered everything from “the pillar-saint of the city [Berlin],”58 and the “most important German architect of all time”59 to “the last great architect,”60 Schinkel remains a significant figure who has been cited as having a direct influence on architects from Peter Behrens and Mies van der Rohe to Albert Speer and James Stirling.61

Schinkel has also been included in some way in nearly all historiographies on Modern architecture. The influence of his vast legacy on the historiography of Modern architecture, despite his position as an “ambassador” from “Romantic classicism to historicism”62 at the turn

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55 I found more than twenty reviews of this exhibit – many in national German newspapers – demonstrating the broader interest throughout the country for this late 18th/early 19th century Prussian architect.
57 Frank Kallensee, “Kein Name, sondern ein Stil,” Märkische Allgemeine, Sept. 6, 2012,
60 Adolf Loos quoted in: Rand Carter, “Karl Friedrich Schinkel, ‘The Last Great Architect’,” in Collection of Architectural Designs including those designs which have been executed and objects whose execution was intended by Karl Friedrich Schinkel (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1989), 27.
62 Frank Kallensee, “Kein Name, sondern ein Stil.”
of the nineteenth century, makes him an important, fascinating and relevant figure from which this dissertation begins.

**Reassessing Schinkel’s Legacy**

In order to provide a context and foundation for this dissertation it is necessary first to establish the historical and theoretical framework from which much of the content of the dissertation stems. Therefore this chapter begins by tracing and establishing the architectural context and lineage in Prussia from its ‘glory days’ under Friedrich the Great through the Napoleonic invasion and occupation and its aftermath in the early nineteenth century. The goal of this chapter is not to establish the significance of Schinkel’s impact upon Prussia (which has already been much discussed), but rather to demonstrate the diverse breadth and significance of his intellectual contribution to those that came after him. Indeed, this intellectual “inheritance,” which was left unresolved after his death, became a divisive subject at the *Bauakademie*. Thus, this inquiry seeks not only to reestablish the centrality of style to Schinkel’s design theory, but to demonstrate the significant effect these styles—which ranged from Gothic and Classical, to Byzantine and “Saracenic”—had on his work in order to reveal the polyvalent nature of his legacy. From the pronounced French presence in Prussia’s architecture in the mid-eighteenth century to the eventual rejection of the French in favor of the search for “German” forms, to the struggles of defining this new architecture amid an influx of ‘foreign’ influences, Schinkel occupies a pivotal moment in the transition from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth.
One cannot speak of a German architecture before that time [1790s] in the same sense that one speaks of a characteristic French or English form of that art.

-Michael J. Lewis (1986)\textsuperscript{63}

Friedrich II ("Friedrich the Great") (1712-86) made a substantial political, economic and cultural impact not only in Prussia, but in much of the rest of Europe during and after his reign from 1740 to 1786. His enthusiasm for French culture began in his youth with his education under French tutors. As a statesman he continued to support French Enlightenment ideas and important personages such as Voltaire, which made him a renowned advocate of Enlightenment culture and its progressive ideas, despite his resolutely absolutist position. During his reign Prussia witnessed his ambitious strategy to unite the disparately connected parts of the weak Prussian empire through successful military campaigns. His aggressive modernization efforts were part of a plan to create one of Europe's strongest economies, despite his particularly oppressive anti-Jewish edicts of 1750 and only moderate tolerance toward Catholics. Indeed, Friedrich II was, and often still is, widely viewed as the hero-reformer responsible for delivering Prussia out of its feudal, backwater status and establishing it as a powerful European player. A noteworthy aspect of his embrace of French Enlightenment ideas, central to this study, was his championing of French culture. This celebration of the a French cultural ethos is evident throughout his reign from his invitation to Voltaire to live with him in Berlin and Potsdam during the philosopher's exile from 1750-53, to the architectural expression of his royal palace at Sanssouci, built in the French

Rococo style. Indeed, his love of French culture was reflected throughout Prussian court life during his reign and remained a significant presence in everything from the music and literature of his court, to its art and architecture.

Since France was Friedrich II’s dominant cultural model, the development of the arts in Prussia, for the most part, followed the dominant stylistic paradigms that emerged from France; however, this French hegemony was not absolute. Britain, who was also a substantial contributor to “Enlightenment” culture and ideas, also made an impression on the king, only to a much lesser degree. Architecturally, the most notable British influence involved the brief appearance of English Palladianism in Prussia due to the personal interest of the king. This more austere variation of the Classical revival was imagined as a return to principles believed to be associated with a time before the excesses of the Baroque and was based on its namesake the great Italian architect Andrea Palladio (1508-80). British Palladians, such as Colen Campbell and Lord Burlington, looked to Palladio’s interpretation of Greek and Roman antiquity, rather than the highly ornate styles of the Baroque and Rococo. The origins of this Palladian revival are credited to Inigo Jones (1573-1652) who famously brought a copy of Palladio’s I quattro libri dell’architettura (1570) back with him from a trip to Italy. The style became formally canonized in English publications like Colen Campbell’s (1676-1729) Vitruvius Britannicus (1715-25), a copy of which King Friedrich II owned. The book had a far-reaching influence on architectural

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64 Friedrich II’s embrace of “Enlightenment values” was also limited in a variety of ways. Most telling was his arrest of Voltaire as he was leaving Prussia due of the publication of Voltaire’s Diatribe du Docteur Akakia (1752), which derided Maupertuis who was at the time the President of the Academy in Berlin. However, Voltaire was only briefly detained in Frankfurt on his way back to France. 


66 David Watkin and Tilman Mellinghoff, German Architecture and the Classical Ideal (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987), 19. Friedrich II also owned copies of later editions of Palladio’s I Quattro Libri, and
practice. However, it was conceived more as a catalogue of projects recalling the Renaissance treatise tradition rather than a text-focused theoretical treatise, such as that penned by the former French Jesuit Marc-Antoine Laugier’s (1713-69) Essai sur l’Architecture (1753). Laugier critiqued interpretations of Greek architecture since the Romans, but focused more attention on Renaissance Classicism and its ‘faults.’ This position differs from the Palladians who also sought to challenge Baroque excess yet Laugier’s text came well after Palladianism was established and did not contain actual “models” to be emulated. The Palladians, by contrast, had a number of didactic texts. In fact it was through the Italian Francesco Algarotti that the connection to English Palladians, such as Lord Burlington (1694-1753), was established. From Lord Burlington King Friedrich II received substantial guidance on architectural taste, as well as some of Burlington’s own drawings. However, it is important to point out that this Palladian phase of Neoclassicism in Prussia was just that and did not last long. During this period, Klassizismus was not yet clearly defined as a movement or concept; nor was it exclusively associated with the stylistic meanings it accrued in the nineteenth century. Writing in 1914, Hermann Schmitz argued that this period of Classical revival in Prussia was simultaneously “rooted” in the Baroque while still containing the “seeds” of the Modern. However, this perspective may have been affected by the fact that he was writing through the contextual lens of the early twentieth century (i.e. in the throes of

Lord Burlington’s Fabbrie Antiche disegnate da Andrea Palladio (1730), as well as Johann Winckelmann’s Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums (1776). Laugier was concerned with grand ideas about architecture and its origins, rather than on reviving ideas about drawing conventions of the sixteenth-century Renaissance treatise. His influential essay sought to reconceptualize Classicism’s origins by theorizing the genesis of Greek architecture. He outlined what he considered to be a new, ‘rational,’ method of understanding this refined version of the ‘ancient style’, which was in direct opposition to the perceived excesses of the Baroque and Rococo styles. Imbued with a desire to seek out a rationalist architect by revisiting the iconic example of Vitruvius’s primitive hut as described in Vitruvius’s Ten Books on Architecture, Book II, Chapter 1.

Modernism), which could suggest a desire to explain the origins of the contemporary situation. However, at this time in the mid-eighteenth century, far from the “taste makers” in Paris and London, it is important to remember, as David Watkin and Tilman Mellinghoff observe, that one cannot consider Neoclassicism (in Prussia at this time) a monolithic entity or “static force between 1740 and 1790.” Rather, the term Klassizismus (“Classicism,” i.e. Neoclassicism), was more polyvalent and included variations on the Classical theme ranging from the Franco-Italian inspired classicism of the French Academy in Rome, the Baroque and Rococo (still present in Germany), to other emerging Neoclassical theorists like Marc-Antoine Laugier (1713-1769) or Giovanni Piranesi (1720-1778).

Classicism’s Multiple Personalities under Friedrich the Great

Neoclassicism’s many variants can best be understood by looking at two structures commissioned by the King within five years of each other. By 1740 Friedrich II was an avid supporter of neo-Palladianism and commissioned his friend the architect Georg Wenzeslaus von Knobelsdorff (1699-1753), whom he had previously sent on a grand tour of Italy from 1736-37, to design a new Hofoper (Court Opera) (1742) (fig. 1). Knobelsdorff, who was the king’s chief architect, was largely considered by his contemporaries to be the “restorer of classicism in Germany.” He was an autodidact and gentleman architect who learned his métier from study trips, publications and consorting with well-known architects of the day. The Opera House, situated on Unter den Linden, was rendered in a thoroughly neo-Palladian style and was most likely based on Colen Campbell’s design for Wanstead House (1715) (fig. 2), which had been published in graphically rich Vitruvius Britannicus published in London in three volumes from

69 David Watkin and Tilman Mellinghoff, German Architecture and the Classical Ideal, 17.
70 Schmitz, Berliner Baumeister, 16.
In terms of the Opera house it was clearly an important structure for the king due to its location on Berlin’s most prominent grand boulevard and close proximity to the royal palace. Its restrained neoclassicism distinguished it from its opposite across the street: the famous Zeughaus (Royal Arsenal, 1695-1730) (fig. 3), whose Baroque details exposed its stylistic obsolescence. The Opera House functioned as a grand and elegant meeting point for Berlin’s elite due to the fact that attendance was based on invitation only (as tickets were not for sale). Because it was designed in the briefly popular neo-Palladian style it can be read as indicative of Friedrich II’s support of the latest and most fashionable trends.

Five years later, however, the king commissioned Knobelsdorff again, but this time he wanted a Rococo palace at his Potsdam residence (Sanssouci, c.1747) (fig. 4). He was very specific about his designs – eventually firing Knobelsdorff in the middle of the project due to a variety of disagreements. The two structures could hardly be more different in that they nearly represent the two ends of the stylistic spectrum at the time. On the one end we find the subdued, tempered interpretation of English Palladianism expressed in an elegant opera house with restrained ornamentation. On the other end, and within five years of each other, an extravagant, lavish and highly ornate Rococo decorative scheme is expressed in the small royal summer palace in Potsdam. Surely style meant something beyond taste to the king and his architect as demonstrated in these two instances.

Style, to which I will return many times throughout this text, had a particular meaning in the examples discussed above. On the one hand its formal appearance contained cultural

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71 Watkin, Mellinghof, German Architecture, 19. Regarding the Vitruvius Britannicus: From the text: “London: Printed and sold by the Author, at his house in Middle Scotland-Yard, White-Hall and by Joseph Smith, at the sign of Inigo Jones’s head ... in the Strand, [1715]-1771.”
referents and denoted ideas such as Friedrich II's sophisticated taste and cultured awareness of these foreign styles. However, the different styles also connoted different meanings. While the extravagance of the Rococo at Sanssouci suggests the more luxurious and ostentatious atmosphere of the French summer palace at Versailles, the English Palladianism of the Opera House suggests not only the refined elegance of attending the opera, but anchors the new institution on the monumental Unter den Linden effectively establishing its gravitas. Prussian architecture under the Friedrich II continued to evolve when, not even a decade later in 1753, after Knobelsdorff's death, the king made a significant appointment to his court. Indeed, this appointment was that of the well-known French architect Jean-Laurent Legeay (ca. 1710-86) as Premier architecte du Roi in 1756. By hiring Legeay, who was widely considered a leader in Neoclassical design, David Watkin and Tilman Mellinghoff suggest that this advanced the international perception of Berlin's status to an unprecedented level.72

Legeay, who is little known today, studied under François Blondel (1705-74) in Paris and was the winner of the French Academy's Grand Prix in 1732. He traveled to Rome, studied its antiquities and was subsequently employed by various German heads of state before arriving at the court of Friedrich II. He never became a "famous" architect in the historiography despite being very influential in his day. Indeed, Allan Braham contends that many contemporaries of Legeay's believed that the "revival of classicism in the eighteenth century" should be attributed to him.73 Watkin and Mellinghoff call Legeay's work in Potsdam to our attention in the design of the Communs, a service wing across from the main structure of the Neues Palais (New Palace) (1763-69) (fig. 5 & fig. 6). They state that it is significant because "it is an imaginative synthesis

72 David Watkin and Tilman Mellinghoff, German Architecture, 22.
of the Baroque ideals of Bernini and Juvarra, the gravity of English Palladianism, and the
columnar sweep of the Franco-Italian classicism of the 1740s."\textsuperscript{74} This "synthesis," and more so its positive reception, exhibits Legeay's thorough command of the various manifestations of Classicism. His appointment as Friedrich II's architect was significant not only because Legeay was French, and therefore continued the French cultural dominance in Prussia, but because it suggested the commitment Prussia was making to Neoclassicism, or the \textit{Goût grec} via France, as it were, in the case of Legeay.

This complete dedication to Neoclassicism in Prussia, whether influenced by the French or British, was only to grow throughout the century in tandem with the evolving development of architectural theory. Indeed, thinkers like the widely read Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-68) and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-81), who advanced ideas relating ancient Greek culture to its formal and stylistic expression, would continue to have a direct and significant impact on those theorizing about architecture, as well as those practicing it. Thus, the pattern throughout Prussia and much of eighteenth-century Europe indicates that with the growth and influence of art and architectural theory, especially considered within the context of changing political forces later in the century, architecture grew increasingly associated with—and affected by—contemporary socio-political ideas and movements rather than fads.

\textbf{Enlightenment Architecture and the Ancients}

Throughout Europe, and particularly in the Germanies, the study of ancient Greece, the conceptual birthplace of Classical architecture, was seen as the only way to gain a proper understanding of this culture and its architecture. This is attested by the efforts of archaeologists,\textsuperscript{74} David Watkin and Tilman Mellinghoff, \textit{German Architecture}, 25.

\textsuperscript{74} David Watkin and Tilman Mellinghoff, \textit{German Architecture}, 25.
architects and historians such as the French architect Julien-David Leroy (1724-1803) and the famous British team of archaeologists James Stuart (1713-88) and Nicholas Revett (1720-1804), who strove to thoroughly document and publish detailed accounts and drawings of the ancient ruins of Greece. In Prussia this Philhellenic fervor was taken up by the ‘archaeologist’, and arguably the first art historian, Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–68). His landmark book *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (The History of the Art of Antiquity) appeared in 1764 and attempted to create the first chronological narrative of the art of the ancient world. It was a unique and remarkable text in that it was the earliest to suggest the notion of an organic development of art, from growth and maturity to decline, linking cultural conditions with artistic production. Winckelmann suggested that the political, social, economic and intellectual environment (i.e. culture and place) deeply affected the artist by associating art and architecture with morality. For Winckelmann the key aspect in artistic production was the unique creativity of the individual artist whose greatness was essentially created by his superior culture to which the above factors contributed. This unique relationship existed for him in ancient Greece, which he characterized as the ideal universal example of society and its artistic culture. This idea that a great people and a great culture naturally yield great art and architecture would become an oft-visited leitmotif in the history of art. However, the influence of Winckelmann in the development of these ideas cannot be understated apart from his significant influence upon many great German thinkers from Lessing and Herder to Schilling, Goethe as well as Wilhelm von

Humboldt, who would put philhellenic theories at the heart of his secondary school reforms in 1809-10.76

This obsession with ancient Greece, as E. M. Butler famously argued in her book, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* (1935), has become a repeated and familiar trope in German studies.77 Suzanne Marchand has responded to the implicit reception of these ideas, established by Butler’s book, by highlighting its limited focus on specific individuals and its failure to include “philhellenism’s humanistic sources and pedagogical and scholarly emanations”.78 Instead, in her book *Down From Olympus: Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970*, Marchand examines the rich and detailed history of archaeology in nineteenth-century German scholarship and the role it played in constructing this inexorable German-Greek relationship. However, for Prussian architects throughout most of the eighteenth century, from Carl Gotthard Langhans to Heinrich Gentz and David and Friedrich Gilly, French theory maintained a prime place, whether it was based strictly on Greek architectural principles or not, and was therefore the guiding influence in Prussia’s architecture culture.

**From France to Germany: Friedrich Gilly’s Neoclassicism**

An observable example of the increasing correlation between the importance of style in terms of its associated meanings appears most poignantly in the thought and work of Friedrich Gilly

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77 This is so much so that many scholars consider it a cliché: Suzanne Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, xviii. And also: Thomas Meaney, “Half-Finished People,” a review of Eliza May Butler’s *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany: A Study of the Influence Exercised by Greek Art and Poetry over the Great German Writers of the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. London Review of Books, 34 No. 19 (October 11, 2012): 14-16.
78 Suzanne Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, xviii.
(1772-1800). His pivotal role in architecture’s history (particularly in terms of his mentorship of Schinkel) has been a feature of architecture’s historiography since his premature death at the age of 28 in 1800 due to a “pulmonary disorder.” Some of the contradictory accolades used to describe him include: “A godlike man,” the founder of Prussian Neoclassicism, the “spiritual progenitor and scholarly founder of the modern brick architecture,” the “master of our master” (with regard to Schinkel), a “forgotten Berlin artist,” and “the first modern architect.” Noteworthy about Gilly is not only his unique approach to, and interpretation of, Classical architectural principles and forms, but the strong impact and lasting legacy he had upon his most famous pupil, Karl Friedrich Schinkel.

In his short life, with an active period of less than a decade, Gilly was able to significantly steer the direction of architectural production by Prussia’s architects through two projects. The first and most celebrated is Gilly’s remarkable design for the monument to Friedrich the Great (1796) (fig. 7). This project, which was a competition entry and ended up in second place to Carl Gotthard Langhan’s submission, resembled an idealized Athenian acropolis. Beyond its obvious formal reference to ancient Greece, primarily expressed in the Doric temple surmounting the project, Gilly acknowledged the monument’s conceptual provenance in his notes about the project. He refers directly to classical antiquity with specific mentions of the

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79 Neumeyer uses this term, but it was probably tuberculosis. Fritz Neumeyer, Friedrich Gilly: Essays on Architecture, 1796-1799 (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center, 1994), 1.
80 In a letter from Wilhelm Wackenroder. Cited in: Fritz Neumeyer, Friedrich Gilly, 2.
temples at Paestum and Nimes. He also refers to the Italian Renaissance with a mention of Andrea Palladio. Gilly describes how closely his design emulates the formal composition of ancient Greek models in the official text he submitted to accompany his drawings for the Akademie der bildenden Künste:

The temple itself, roofed in bronze, is built of a lighter material, to enhance its resplendent effect when seen against the sky. It is an elongated rectangle in the Doric order, and like the ancient Greek temples it is devoid of any frivolous ornament; only a few elements of the columns and some of the architectural ornaments of the entablature are picked out in gilt bronze.

However, of greater interest because of their specificity, are the personal, informal notes he wrote on his sketches. Here Gilly makes reference to specific aspects of the design and their intended meaning as well as other monuments he contemplated in the design. His text leads us through his thought process and suggests a clear preference for ancient Greek restraint and a distaste for what he sees as Roman ostentatiousness that is much in line with Winckelmann's theories of architecture.

To the beholder, all superfluous enrichment of external form is indifferent, if not positively vexatious. Not Corinthian, not rich splendor: The dignity of the subject in itself takes precedence over all other considerations. [...] Climb up to the cela, as at Paestum? Floor at Nîmes. [...] What were the old temples. Not a temple. Heroum. It must be completely open. With no cela. So, not round externally. No example except at Pozzuoli. Roman temples. Pantheon the Universe. Rectangular. Cambray, Palladio, [...] Athens is a model. Acropolis. Not Rome.

A formal analysis of the submission suggests that the design was also largely informed by a robust lineage of more recent Neoclassical theories ranging in inspiration from Piranesi to

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86 Ibid.
87 Friedrich Gilly, “Notes on a Sheet of Sketches for the Friedrichs Denkmal,” (1797) in Fritz Neumeyer, Friedrich Gilly, 135.
French architects like Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (1736-1806) and Étienne-Louis Boullée (1728-99) (a former student of Legeay’s in Paris). In terms of his experience with French architecture, Gilly had travelled with his brother-in-law Heinrich Gentz to Paris in 1797 and made studies of Ledoux’s work. It is likely he knew Boullée’s designs before his trip because they were widely circulated throughout Europe. However, if he had not known them prior to his trip he would have likely encountered them while in Paris due to their popularity.

If we are to compare Gilly’s proposal to Boullée’s design of a Cenotaph for Newton (1784) for example (fig. 8), we see that despite the fact that it simply cannot rival the Cenotaph’s physical size, the Friedrich monument nevertheless attempts to convey the idea of a larger than life scale. Gilly invokes Boullée primarily through his manipulation of scale. He employs horizontally striated levels that lead the visitor hieratically through a dark, heavily rusticated base with battered walls and a hypostyle entrance evoking Pharaonic temple structures. Beyond this point the visitor meanders up through a more refined, oversized stereobate, equally as high as the base below it, topped by the crowning achievement of the refined Greek peripteral temple. The temple was intended to symbolize the personification of ancient Greek wisdom in the figure to whom this temple is dedicated. The overall intent is clearly to overwhelm the visitor through this experience; not only is this apparent graphically, through Gilly’s use of classical conventions, but it is also articulated in his description as indicated above. And while Boullée’s invocation of the sublime, as recently theorized by Burke (1756) and Kant (1764) is immediate, Gilly manages to reduce the scope to a proposal, which is actually buildable without compromising the idea. In

the monument for Friedrich II, certain similarities exist beyond the fact that both projects are funerary in nature and memorialize a person of significant influence. In both designs the subject must traverse through an enclosed space or series of enclosed spaces in order to reach the celebrated sacred chamber at the heart of the project—literally and figuratively emerging from the darkness into light. Boulée’s project celebrates Newton by referring to the limitless knowledge of space symbolized though the perforations in the shell of the sphere that simulate the effect of stars in a heavenly firmament. Gilly, in a similar manner evokes Friedrich’s Enlightenment associations as “Protector” and “Peaceful Ruler” in the rendering of “a diadem of stars” in the large vault above the sarcophagus. Gilly’s project’s monumental scale, synthesized with both Greek antiquity and subsequent interpretations of that antiquity, and based in part on more recent (Neoclassical) French rationalist theory, created a unique project that was to have lasting effects throughout the century.

Gilly’s competition entry was well received in part due to its ability to convey a dramatic and sublime interpretation of this hybrid ‘classical tradition’ through its use of primary archaic forms representing his belief (from Winckelmann) in an integral relationship between culture and its formal (architectural) expression. Jörg Trempler, in his recent biography of Schinkel, suggests that Gilly’s project shattered two boundaries that existed in architectural culture at the time. The first was the project’s scale and scope in that it was truly an urban intervention and that “it is difficult to discern where the work begins and where it ends.” According to Trempler: “the monument and its environment formed a single ensemble” which was a fundamental shift in

91 Of course the Cenotaph—by definition—was never intended to contain Newton’s sarcophagus, unlike Gilly’s proposal, which instead advocated for the interment of Friedrich II within it.

92 Friedrich Gilly, “Note on the Friedrichsdenkmal [Version 1],” 1797; in Fritz Neumeyer, Friedrich Gilly, 129.

scope for a proposal for a monument to an individual.\textsuperscript{94} This is typically a feature not seen in the work of Boullée, who nearly always presented his grand projects by themselves in an abstracted landscape void of other people or structures in order to enhance their intensity. The second boundary Gilly broke, according to Trempler, related to the viewer’s reception and experience of the scale of the monument. It was meant to “overwhelm” the viewer in a way that was not “rational, but emotional and immediate.”\textsuperscript{95} This aspiration to provoke the experience of the sublime is, of course, not unique to Gilly. However, since there is no surviving tangible evidence that proves Gilly was actually familiar with Boullée’s designs, Trempler makes the point that Gilly may have made some of these advancements in drawing conventions and perception himself. Supporting this theory, but by no means ending the debate, is Harry Mallgrave’s observation that there exist no known comments by Gilly about Boullée’s work.\textsuperscript{96} Nonetheless, there remains a consistency among many of these ‘Revolutionary’ projects, which suggests the transmission of texts and continued interaction between French and German architects. Indeed, the impact of French theory was to continue for several years and was embraced by many Prussian architects throughout the 1790s. However, as instability in post-Revolutionary France continued to spread and a French military threat grew, architects throughout the Germanies began to search for inspiration closer to home.

**Friedrich Gilly and Classicism’s ‘Gothic Direction’**

As far as the intellectual and literary movement was concerned the Gothic had already reached a mature state by the time Gilly was born in 1772; the very year Goethe was singing its praises.

\textsuperscript{94} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid.
Appearing in the 1770s with the Sturm und Drang movement (namely with Herder and Goethe) the Gothic, according to Edward Toews “gained a new philosophical, metahistorical significance in the influential writings of Heinrich Wackenroder, Ludwig Tieck, and Friedrich Schlegel.” However, in terms of architecture, the Gothic, for all intents and purposes in mid-eighteenth century Prussia held a status closer to ‘foreign’ styles of architecture such as Chinese and Turkish and largely fulfilled the role of a garden folly. This is despite the fact that, as Christof Baier has recently observed in his article on the Gothic and David and Friedrich Gilly, a “patriotic aspect of [a] type of Gothic worship” existed as early as the Prussian Prize competition of 1776. Indeed, as I will demonstrate, there was little actual building in the style to support this “Gothic worship.”

The first use of the Gothic as a ‘revival’ style in Prussia is generally considered to be with the Nauener Tor of 1755 in Potsdam (fig. 9), which was more or less directly inspired by the English Gothic Revival. Despite the prominence of this structure over a main thoroughfare, the building had no stimulating effect for the style in the area most likely due to the popularity of the Classically oriented Franco-Prussian aesthetic, which still reigned supreme. Another, rather more obscure example of the Gothic in Prussia is found at the royal estate at Paretz, the summer residence of King Frederick William III and Queen Louise. The king commissioned David Gilly to design a palace and a “model village” there in 1797. All of the buildings except for one, the so-called Gotisches Haus is in an austere Neoclassical style. However, this “Gothic House” was effectively another ‘folly’ type of building in the English manner whose function was to house

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the royal blacksmith of the estate. A study produced by David Gilly’s son around the same time would have quite a different effect.

The second important project by Friedrich Gilly that will be examined was a study conducted in the summer of 1794 while Gilly was accompanied his father David on a surveying trip to assess the buildings in newly acquired Prussian territory. Gilly’s investigation of the fourteenth-century castle complex called Marienburg in West Prussia (now Malbork in Poland), has garnered nowhere near the scholarly attention as his Friedrich II Monument (fig. 10 & fig. 11). Gilly came to this region with his father David who had, in addition to the architectural surveys, been commissioned to design the Kammer- and Regierungshaus (local government administrative building) nearby in Marienwerder. Friedrich Gilly’s drawings of these Gothic structures, constructed by the Teutonic order of medieval knights almost entirely out of red brick, was his only foray into medieval architecture yet they still managed to make a significant impact on some of Prussia’s Philhellenes.

Wolfgang Herrmann refers to Gilly’s encounter with the Gothic as “leading the Gothic direction of classicism”\(^9\) and links his interest in the Gothic directly to Goethe’s 1772 paean to Erwin von Steinbach (ca. 1244-1318) the medieval architect credited with the design of Strasbourg Cathedral. Herrmann states that Gilly’s drawings “might show even more clearly than Goethe’s words what the medieval eye observed”\(^10\) and likens them to Piranesi’s “grandiose and fantastical”\(^11\) Carceri published in 1745. Whether Gilly’s interest in Marienburg was inspired or


\(^11\) Ibid.
linked in any way to Goethe’s essay *Von Deutscher Baukunst*, which was published more than
twenty years before, is impossible to say since it is well established that Goethe himself had
already rejected these ideas and the Gothic trend (within literary circles) had mostly faded away
by the 1790s due to a complete shift by his generation toward a belief in the classical ideal.\(^{102}\)

However, Gilly’s fascination with the Gothic should be characterized neither as the
typical patriotic nostalgia associated with the evolving Romantic Movement, nor the fashionable
early *faux* Gothic found in contemporaneous English garden architecture such as the example of
the Nauener Tor. Instead, as Eduard Führ argues, Gilly’s study of Marienburg should be viewed
“not a glorification of Marienburg” but an “Enlightenment endeavor *par excellence*” due
primarily to what he explains as Gilly’s ability to control the viewer’s experience of the image by
the way in which he constructs the perspective of the drawing.\(^{103}\) In one example he argues that
by manipulating drawing conventions, or at least expectations of a drawing, Gilly “deceives” the
viewer and questions the observer’s “perception of truth.”\(^{104}\) Führ argues that the drawing
“spontaneously demystifies the perception of Marienburg both as a hero image and
monument.”\(^{105}\)

Fritz Neumeyer, on the other hand, argues that Gilly’s enthusiasm for the Gothic should
be read within the context of construction and geometry and notes: “The romance of ruins was
put into reverse, and the Gothic was restored to a life of its own through the image of its
construction. The thrill of sublimity that a ruin was supposed to convey to a sensitive soul

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\(^{104}\) Ibid.

\(^{105}\) Ibid. “...sie entzaubert die spontane Wahrnehmung der Marienburg als Bildheld und Monument.”
transformed itself into astonishment at the ‘truly admirable boldness’ of the structure.”¹⁰⁶ Thus, according to Neumeyer, Gilly’s admiration for the Gothic varied from an emotive “wonderment” of mass, light, shadow and structure, to the idea that “the Gothic was indeed no longer ‘the antithesis of classical architecture’ but its ‘confirmation.’”¹⁰⁷ Not only did Gilly’s recording of this monument document a medieval structure (part of which was in ruins), but its presentation too had a dynamic quality in the way in which it was rendered that paid homage to the skillful craftsmen who were able to construct such a massive and sophisticated structure almost entirely out of brick. This admiration for what became considered the “German” Gothic (typically in red brick), which Friedrich Alder (1827-1908) later highlighted as Gilly’s greatest achievement,¹⁰⁸ is largely overlooked in subsequent historiographies due to the exclusive attention devoted to his Friedrich the Great monument submission and its direct effect upon Gilly’s most famous student Karl Friedrich Schinkel.¹⁰⁹ But these themes, ranging from style and technique to nationalism and identity that emerge in the discussion on Gilly and his protégé, as I will demonstrate, only continue and grow in importance over the course of the nineteenth century as a French oriented perspective transitioned to a “German” one. It must also be mentioned that even the Gothic had sustained a significant consideration in France as early as 1706 in the form of Abbé Cordemoy’s book on ecclesiastical architecture *Nouveau traité de toute l’architecture.*¹¹⁰

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¹⁰⁸ Adler calls Gilly: “the spiritual progenitor and scholarly founder of the modern brick architecture” due to his documentation of a number of Teutonic Crusader castles that were constructed in brick - ‘in Fritz Neumeyer’s description of Friedrich Adler’s assessment. Cited in: Fritz Neumeyer, *Friedrich Gilly*, 12.

¹⁰⁹ Watkin & Mellinghoff, *German Architecture*, 86.

discusses the idea that Goethe had read him and that Leo von Klenze’s design for a cathedral was a “paraphrase” of Saint-Sulpice, so he was known in Germany.\(^{111}\) The direct effect of the Gothic upon architects in the Germanies like Gilly is difficult to ascertain, not only because the book does not appear in the list of books in Gilly’s library, but because he does not mention him. And beyond the few examples of Gilly’s Marienburg study, and David Gilly’s Paretz, there is little evidence that Gothic architecture had much impact in late eighteenth-century Prussia.\(^{112}\)


PART II.


If he [Frederick the Great] were alive we wouldn't be here today.

-Attributed to Napoléon (1806) 113

I cannot send you my explanation of the word ‘romantic’ because it would be 125 sheets long.

–Friedrich Schlegel (1793)114

As architects throughout the Germanies were enthusiastically embracing France’s architecture culture throughout most of the century, the new post-revolutionary France of the 1790s was experiencing significant political volatility. This instability was, of course, famously resolved by Napoleon’s coup d’État of November 1799 for which he returned from his Egyptian military campaign. Until Napoleon returned to France, there had been a series of internal as well as peripheral border disputes resulting in the French Revolutionary Wars. These developed into a series of coalition wars ultimately referred to as the Napoleonic Wars, which eventually involved all of Europe including the Germanies.

By 1800 Napoleon had embraced an imperial expansionist policy, reorganized the French military and sent his army east. He quickly defeated the Austrians at Marengo and again at Hohenlinden in 1800. Within five years of his ascendancy he was declared Emperor and the expansion of his new empire continued with a series of wars quickly resulting in another defeat

113 It is said that Napoleon uttered this comment while standing in front of the tomb of Friedrich the Great which he chose to visit on the same day he entered Berlin on 27 October 1806 after he defeated the Prussian army at the battle of Jena-Auerstedt on Oct. 14, 1806. This story is recounted in: Christopher Clark, Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600-1947 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 307.

114 From a 1793 letter to his brother cited in Frederick Beiser, The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 410, n 67.
of Austria, this time allied with Russia, at Austerlitz in 1805 and the occupation of German territory along the Rhine. This occupation promptly sparked responses from other German territories, especially Prussia, worried at the prospect of further invasion. For nearly twenty years Napoleon either controlled or annexed German territory and maintained direct hegemony over the puppet government of the Confederation of the Rhine. But the proverbial ‘nail in the coffin’ of France’s cultural hegemony in Prussia came swiftly as a result of the War of the Fourth Coalition (1806-07). This ended with Napoleon’s nearly complete obliteration of the once famous Prussian army at Auerstedt in October of 1806. This defeat was quickly followed by the embarrassing French capture of Berlin the following month and was effectively the death knell for Prussia, which had, until recently, been considered a great European power.\footnote{Christopher Clark, Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600-1947 (Harvard University Press, 2006), 296 ff.} This so-called “World Spirit on a Horse”,\footnote{„Weltgeist zu Pferde“ Was used by Hegel to describe Napoleon when he saw him in Jena. It is extracted from the letter he sent to his friend Niethammer, October 13th, 1806, after he had finished writing The Phenomenology of Mind: “I saw the Emperor-this soul of the world-go out from the city to survey his reign; it is a truly wonderful sensation to see such an individual, who, concentrating on one point while seated on a horse, stretches over the world and dominates it. ” (Correspondence, T. I, p.114).} as Hegel referred to Napoleon upon witnessing his victorious entry into Jena, continued his megalomaniacal push further east deep into Russia. But for years the effects of the French occupation throughout the German lands had not only significant political, but cultural repercussions as well.

The Romantic Appropriation of the Gothic

The constant vacillation of the Franco-German border, along with its associated violence and political upheaval, had a substantial effect upon the populations of the occupied territories and their artists. This included the renowned author, poet and thinker Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
(1749-1832), who had his own personal experience with advancing French troops in Weimar in 1813.  

Prior to this Napoleonic period in the Germanies Goethe initiated a debate in German-speaking lands in 1772, to which I have only briefly alluded, in the highly polemical essay entitled *Von deutscher Baukunst*, in which he argued for a distinctly *German* architecture, as found in the form of the Gothic style. This resulted in setting a supposedly *German* architecture directly against the prevailing and dominant force of French Neoclassicism. Eventually, through the remarkably influential texts of several German writers, there was a growing interest in a medieval period that purportedly contained within it an authentically German culture free of ‘foreign’ influence. Throughout the period of the 1770s the beginnings of a ‘nationalist’ discourse also arose, which sought to identify, among other things, specific historical styles as belonging to a specific group or culture. Goethe’s essay, written in 1772, indicates precisely this desire to appropriate a specific type of architectural form for ‘cultural’ purposes.

And now I ought not to be angry, holy Erwin, if the German art expert, on the hearsay of envious neighbors, fails to recognize his advantage and belittles your work with that misunderstood word ‘Gothic’. For he should thank God that he can proclaim that this is German architecture, our architecture. For the Italian has none he can call his own, still less the Frenchman.

What had also become a growing trend since the French Revolution, as we saw above, was the increasing association of architecture with ideology. This kind of drive towards the concept of a German ‘Nation’ in contemporary German texts was by no means universal. Some authors did not associate the Gothic with any particular nation at all. The famous world traveler Georg Forster, for example, in his *Ansichten vom Niederrhein* (*Views of the Lower Rhine*, 1790) also

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waxed eloquently about the Gothic. He even described Cologne Cathedral as a “sublime construction” (des Baus als erhaben) that is “awe inspiring, bold and gorgeous in a contrast to classical architecture.” However, even though Goethe highly praised the book, Forster did not locate the Gothic’s origins in German. This is despite the fact that the belief in the Gothic’s German origins would, as W.D. Robson-Scott suggested, “triumph over all evidence to the contrary until well into the nineteenth century.”

The much younger poet and literary scholar Friedrich von Schlegel (1772-1829) on the other hand, was to take up and champion the Gothic like no other. After his Classical period, and before his Indian period, Schlegel followed in the vein of Goethe with his Grundzüge der gotischen Baukunst (Principles of Gothic Architecture, 1804/1805). In the text Schlegel provided an emphatic description of Cologne’s unfinished medieval cathedral and argued that the Gothic instilled a feeling of the sublime in the viewer. And while he did subscribe to the belief that the Gothic originated in Germany, he was less severe in his attribution than Goethe, whose text by then was already over thirty years old, and since rejected by Goethe.

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121 The library either went to Schinkel, David Gilly or directly to the Bauakademie. Either way it eventually ended up in the library of the Bauakademie. This title appears in the list of books in Gilly’s library at the time of his death that was itemized and compiled in 1801 entitled: Verzeichnis der von dem verstorbenen Professor und hof - Bau - Inspektor Gilly hinterlassenen auserlesenen Sammlung von Büchern und Kupferstichen, meist architektonischen, antiquarischen und artistischen Inhaltes, (Berlin, 1801). A facsimile of this list is published in: Fritz Neumeyer, Friedrich Gilly, 215.

122 W.D. Robson-Scott. The Literary Background of the Gothic Revival in Germany, 103. Robson-Scott also suggests that Forster had no knowledge of Von Deutsche Baukunst at the time he wrote and published Ansichten and did in fact have a much more “catholic” view of the Gothic and did not associate it with any particular nation.
Schlegel also began to distinguish the Gothic from other historical periods by dividing ecclesiastical architecture into two “epochs” differentiating the Gothic from what came before it:

The grandeur of this surprising and colossal fragment excites universal wonder and admiration; and one glance at the immense height of the choir fills every beholder with astonishment. [...] Everyone who has any feeling will be conscious of this impression, but it is impossible to define or explain more particularly in what this feeling consists. [...] The symbolism of Gothic architecture is, indeed, of the highest order; that of painting appears feeble in comparison with it, and its allusions to divinity embarrassed and uncertain. Architecture, on the contrary, by its imitation of the beauties of nature, brings the idea of the Divinity palpably before our minds, even without any direct allusion to the mysteries of Christianity. [...] I have already remarked that there are two distinct epochs in ecclesiastical architecture: the earlier, termed Byzantine, from its resemblance to the Greek style; and the latter, peculiarly German, and incomparably more skilful in execution which was spoken of in the description of the cathedral.123

In this passage Schlegel describes Gothic architecture as conveying unique feelings of the sublime, and claims that it alone is the art that alludes to “the mysteries of Christianity.”124 This function of architecture as symbolic receptacle of ideas and conveyer of particular types of feelings, specifically in terms of the Gothic, had become something of a common trope, especially in the Rhineland with its large Roman Catholic population. However, it was to have more extensive permutations in its association with a larger German identity.

As we will see, it was through these poetic writings linking an architectural form to a culture, people or idea that architecture accumulated meaning beyond conveying the mere function of a building or its owner’s status and wealth. More recently, scholars such as Helmut W. Smith have essentially refined and expanded earlier arguments proposed by scholars such as Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson et al., that “Nationalists did not invent nations; they

124 Ibid.
made sense of them in radically different terms. This new understanding involved the shift from the nation as emblem to the nation as identity.  

25 Understood in these terms, German 'culture,' which had in fact never been politically united, began to be theorized and characterized as a definable and understandable identity through the emergence of the highly influential Romantic Movement, born out of the struggle for autonomy against France.

The political and economic uncertainty and instability of the period from 1789 to 1815 laid the foundation for this Romantic Movement, and had consequences for the arts. For the decade after the French invasion architectural production in Berlin, Prussia and elsewhere, was to slow dramatically sending architects to look for work elsewhere, or turn to other related fields in order to make a living. The French occupation, which was accompanied by widespread looting and theft of art, lasted in some areas for nearly two decades until the defeat of the French at Leipzig in 1813 and the establishment of a new German alliance that was the beginning of a more politically autonomous confederation among the German states. But it was not until the definitive defeat of Napoleon by the Anglo-led allied army in June of 1815 at Waterloo and the subsequent Congress of Vienna (1814-15) that attempted to sort out the geopolitical chaos resulting after a quarter of a century of warfare, that Prussia was able to begin to recover its economy and initiate a building campaign.

Romanticism and the Paradox of Nationalism: Defining the ‘Self’ through the ‘Other’

The development and growth of nationalism at this time throughout Germany is well known; however, what is relevant here is a parallel development that occurred in conjunction with the

rise of nationalism. One aspect of this phenomenon, called Bildungsreligion (religion of education), is described by Thomas Nipperdey as a trend that was generally limited to the educated upper classes, but nonetheless significantly affected the relationship between Christianity and modernity for over a century.\textsuperscript{126} I introduce this concept here because Nipperdey describes the new belief as a revised theory of the education of 'Man' adapted to the new epoch. He writes:

\begin{quote}
Man [...] would come to his true self, by ‘educating’ himself and developing his individual personality. And he could do this through the world of culture, through art, science and history. Culture should not be taken for granted. It was a duty, a moral imperative which had to be appropriated and then developed. [...] There was also a pantheistic view of nature and the world, a faith in the immanence of the divine in the world, which was to be worshipped in all its forms. It can be called a religion, because it was concerned with ‘ultimate things’.\textsuperscript{127}
\end{quote}

Accordingly, this “new humanity” embraced an aesthetic view of life and enthusiastically promoted Winckelmann’s model of the ideal in Greek antiquity.\textsuperscript{128} This gradual turn away from Christianity, he argues, brought about a “secular religiosity” where “the poetic became religious, and the religious poetic. Art, especially, and even individual feelings, such as love in the works of Novalis, took on a religious character.”\textsuperscript{129} One of the most recognized enthusiasts of this phenomenon of “de-Christianization,” according to Nipperdey, was Goethe. Nipperdey argues that Goethe was an example of this phenomenon by highlighting his role in overturning a Christian humanism for a supposedly “secular” one.\textsuperscript{130} Nipperdey does not deny the central importance of this obsession with Greek antiquity that epitomizes the Classical paradigm;

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\textsuperscript{127} Nipperdey, \textit{Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck}, 389.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{130} Nipperdey, \textit{Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck}, 390.
\end{flushright}
however, he describes this as a condition, or state of affairs, that is much more indicative of what we might consider a Classical Romanticism when he begins to relate the importance at this time of "individual feelings."\(^\text{131}\)

To many thinkers, according to Isaiah Berlin, Romanticism represents a type of counter force, or counter Enlightenment.\(^\text{132}\) In his work, Tim Blanning credits the Enlightenment for the transition from a medieval oriented "theocentricity" to a rationalist centered "anthropocentricity", which continued, as he argues, to evolve into a revolution in thought and belief in Romantic thought as this anthropocentric turn intensified.\(^\text{133}\) This can also be seen, as Blanning argues, by Hegel, who described Romanticism as: absolute Innerlichkeit ("absolute inwardness").\(^\text{134}\) Understanding the Romantic Movement then, in terms of its evolving and varied relationship to both the Gothic and Classical revivals, is important in understanding the cultural and artistic crises of this period in Germany.

In his critique of the limits of Enlightenment thought Schlegel cleverly honed in on what he saw as the Enlightenment's inadequate purported rational-scientific position by posing the famous question "What can a poem prove?"\(^\text{135}\) Despite this apparent chasm between the two intellectual positions it is often asserted that Goethe features as the kind of "connector" or "mediator" between the two movements.\(^\text{136}\) This is articulated in the idea that it was possible,

\(^{131}\) Ibid.
\(^{134}\) Ibid., xvii.
according to Goethe, for “two hearts to beat in one breast.” And in spite of Goethe’s later description of Romanticism as “diseased,” he nonetheless figures prominently in its development. Schlegel, however, altered his position significantly in that he started off as a dedicated Graecophile, then adopted medievalism, then became and Indophile, and eventually ended up a liberal Catholic defender of the Austrian status quo. However, as Romanticism grew more Christian in its orientation, with medieval Catholicism as its model for some, Goethe grew increasingly hostile toward it (even ending up detesting Schlegel). This position comes through clearly in his vociferous criticism of the Nazarene school of painters who left the academies and strove to emulate medieval monks cloistered in near seclusion in Rome in their pursuit of *ora et labora*.

In her article “Romanticism and Classicism” Jane Brown maintains that by the 1820s the distinction between the two “camps” was established such that individuals often either identified with Goethe and Schiller, or the growing group of individuals who would come to be known as the Romantics. Brown also observes that it was Friedrich Schlegel and his work on literature that first introduced the analogical relationship of Classicism is to Romanticism, as the Classical is to the Modern. This resulted in categorizing two separate historical periods: that of Greco-Roman antiquity as “Classical” and that of the Modern era defined by the “Middle Ages” to the present day. Charles Rosen and Henri Zerner elaborate upon this assertion of Romanticism’s modernity—in their text *Romanticism and Realism: The Mythology of Nineteenth-Century Art*—as the first “truly modern movement in that artists define themselves in terms of ingenuity and

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137 Suzanne Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 53f.
138 Jane Brown, “Romanticism and Classicism,” 120.
139 Ibid., 129.
140 Ibid., 125.
originality, in terms of both the past and the future." Yet, along with the Romantic inspired search for artistic originality, there was a parallel pursuit, which came to have an intimate relationship with Romanticism. This pursuit sought an expression for the idea of a German "nation." As a result an important paradox grew out of the nationalist-Romantic effort to define one's own cultural and linguistic roots. One of the important ironies (to use a favorite term of Schlegel's) about this period and its struggles is that in the process of self-definition a group goes through a process of negation whereby it defines what it is not. This process not only involved defining oneself in European terms (i.e. not French), but also in historical and cultural terms and was often linked with a search for origins. Many of these ideas were theorized by scholars introduced above in the 1970s and 1980s such as Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson and were quickly translated to the nascent field of Postcolonial Studies where they were promptly put to use in theorizing historical encounters and relationships between "Europeans" and "non-Europeans." As problematic as this dichotomy is, it nonetheless persists and characterizes a great deal of the early work in Postcolonial Studies. In fact, one discipline in particular that was involved in exploring the world beyond Europe was orientalism.

"VON FREMDEN LÄNDERN UND MENSCHEN": ORIENTALISM'S ROMANTIC MOMENT

Remember, there are more people in the world than yourself. Be modest! You have not yet invented nor thought anything which others have not thought or invented before. And should you really have done so, consider it a gift of heaven which you are to share with others.


142 I refer specifically to Schlegel's Athenaeum, Fragment 51, as quoted in: Hans Eichner, Friedrich Schlegel, New York, Twayne Publishers, 1970), 71. "Irony, according to Schlegel, is identified through the 'constant alternation of self-creation and self destruction'."

143 Von fremden Ländern und Menschen (Of Foreign Lands and Peoples) Kinderszenen (Scenes from Childhood). Opus 15, by Robert Schumann. A set of thirteen pieces of music for piano written in 1838.
Robert Schumann\textsuperscript{144}

\textit{I cannot send you my explanation of the word ‘romantic’ because it would be 125 sheets long.}

–Friedrich Schlegel\textsuperscript{145}

As Edward Said elaborated in his classic text \textit{Orientalism} (1978), the British and French Empires utilized their Orientalist scholars (those studying the linguistics, history and religions of what was considered to be the Orient) to provide validation for their colonial exploits. By actively transposing Michel Foucault’s power/knowledge model onto the study of imperialism through literary examples, Said concluded that the discipline of Oriental philology was a scholarly pursuit that was not only complicit in colonial crimes committed by European empires, but that this pursuit actually facilitated and validated those crimes. For Said, the discipline of Orientalism and the colonial project of imperialism were inextricably linked. However, Said’s critique is focused primarily on the discipline of Orientalism, in so far as Romanticism affected it since he locates the origins of Orientalism to the writings of French and British scholars of the late eighteenth century, and ultimately as a product of empire.\textsuperscript{146}

Of course studies of the “East” can be found at least as far back as Herodotus in the 6\textsuperscript{th} century BCE, and from there can be traced through a series of studies to Neo-Platonist writings from the second-century BCE, to Romans and early Christians. But with increased interaction, namely through pilgrimages to the Holy Land and the Crusades, the “East” accrued greater

\textsuperscript{145} From a 1793 letter to his brother cited in F. Beiser, \textit{The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism}, 410, n 67.
\textsuperscript{146} Where Said locates the origins of Orientalism is of course debatable; however, the earliest texts he uses as examples and thus the central focus of his study suggests this period of the late 18\textsuperscript{th} century as its origin.
interest in the “West” in the Middle Ages. Even through the Renaissance this interaction was comparatively minimal until Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt in 1798. But whether these early studies were the foundation for this oppositional binary of “East” and “West,” as writers like Thierry Hentsch have asserted, or whether this dichotomy was articulated later in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, or even constructed entirely by Said himself as Robert Irwin has argued, the fact remains that any attempt to essentialize or generalize either of these “groups” is bound to fail due to the vast complexity of their history and interaction.\(^1\) Indeed, the fact of this complexity alone resists Said’s imposed dichotomy, which “presumes a primordial, binary distinction between ‘Europe’ and the ‘Orient.’\(^4\) As Suzanne Marchand has observed the “Orient” “was—like Europe itself—not politically or religiously uniform” and that “Europe” was in fact composed of a diverse group of individuals who “were not cognizant of [or] bound by this reified ‘discourse,’ no matter who these individuals were,” and, therefore, did not define themselves in the terms articulated by Said, but rather through other “sets of distinctions [like]—male and female, Christian and Jew, academic philologist and on-the-spot diplomat, German and Frenchman?”\(^1\) Indeed, Marchand convincingly demonstrates not only the variety of inherent complexities in dealing with orientalism’s “discourse analysis” based historiography, but that what we understand as orientalism—especially in German scholarship—has a much “older, richer and stranger” history than has previously been argued and, as such, it was not a product of modern imperialism.\(^1\)


\(^{148}\) Suzanne Marchand, *German Orientalism*, xxi.

\(^{149}\) Ibid., xxi-xxiii.

\(^{150}\) Ibid., 1.
Insofar as the relationship of orientalism to German Romanticism is concerned, some scholars such as Thierry Hentsch have argued that the German Romantics sought in the Orient an "ideological counterweight to the Rationalism of the Aufklärung."\(^{151}\) In what is framed as yet another binary opposition, Hentsch goes on to argue that "nowhere more than Germany was the Orient so vividly integrated into the imagined world, and into thought, into the Weltanschaunung of poets and philosophers."\(^{152}\) However, in his haste to malign German Romantic writers as malefic orientalists who reduced the Orient to "a stanched source, a dried-up river bed in which nothing but rich silt remained to be stirred through and picked over," he fails to demonstrate what physical effect this "oneiric" orientalism actually had upon German foreign policy at the time or people living in the Middle East.\(^{153}\) Indeed, his almost vindictive critique of how Hegel historicized the Orient and how the German Romantics contemplated it through their literature and poetry is so focused on proving the ill intentions of the authors toward this Orient that the reader is left with the feeling that this was all they wrote, which is certainly not the case. In contrast to this accusatory position, it is possible to view orientalism as merely one modified strand of thought in the diversity of Romantic attitudes that sought to expand the intellectual horizon by thinking beyond Europe as it were. However, by suggesting that we view orientalism in this way I am not suggesting that its actors are entirely innocent either. I am simply arguing that studies and literary ruminations having to do with the "East" are not uniformly orientalist, nor are they uniformly malevolent.

In his study of how German Romanticism characterizes other (foreign) cultures in their production, Carl Niekerk suggests that despite, or possibly because of, the rampant nationalism

\(^{152}\) Ibid.
\(^{153}\) Ibid., 147.
unfolding simultaneously, there is a constantly evolving attitude to the world beyond. With regard to Herder and his advocacy of the concept of "cultural pluralism" Niekerk writes: "Herder’s deliberations can be understood as attempts to understand other cultures as rational; the world outside of Europe is no longer populated by imaginary creatures, but by humans who attempt to be rational in their own ways." Of course, an awareness of these fremde cultures had been common knowledge for some Europeans—from the educated elite, travelers and ambassadors to missionary groups like the Society of Jesus—for a long time. Indeed, the Jesuits had been in sustained contact with cultures all over the world from Mughal India to China, to name just two, since their founding in the sixteenth century.

Surprisingly, Niekerk does not include Goethe, despite his considerable influence on this topic as an intellectual predecessor. But others such as Ian Almond (who consistently authors condemnations of eighteenth-and nineteenth-century German philosophers' views on Islam) highlight Herder’s tendency to "sympathize" with and "idealize" the "Arab" in an effort to characterize the contradictory views many during this period had with respect to foreign cultures and people. Almond explains that these differing views depended on the sources people read. One example is expressed in the English text by Thomas Shaw entitled Travels (1738), which was read by many educated Germans of the day. This source, which described Shaw’s travels around North Africa and Arabia, according to Almond, essentially characterized all Arabs as "thieves." Another widely read source discussed by Almond was Carsten Niebuhr’s Description de l’Arabie d’après les Observations et Recherches Faites dans le Pays Meme

156 Ibid.
(1773). Surprisingly, Almond asserts that Niebuhr’s text “at least allowed for the possibility of
the Eurocentric generalization,” despite the fact that he follows this comment with the following
Niebuhr quote that states “I cannot draw conclusions about the mentality of a whole nation of
from the behavior of a few bad people.” Nevertheless, these sources, Almond explains,
appeared around the same time as Herder’s idealization of the Arab as a kind of idealized
‘primitive’ nomad.

Goethe’s considerable contribution to Romanticism’s views on other cultures is
exemplified by his brief fascination with the Orient. As Yomb May has suggested, in an article
dedicated to Goethe’s collection of poems entitled West-östlicher Divan (West-East Divan, 1814-
19), Goethe intended to “make the intellectual world of the Orient and its culture accessible to
Germans.” However, it appears more likely that Goethe was simply part of the continuing
‘genealogy’ of interest in making the Orient “accessible” that, as I have begun to suggest above,
started many centuries before. Indeed, this accessibility often found expression in the various
published compilations of the 1001 Nights. Also, we must not forget that the Austrian orientalist
and diplomat Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774-1856) brought a sustained interest in the
‘Orient’ and Islamic art and architecture to German-speaking Europe as early as 1809 with his
Fundgruben des Orients. This was one of the earliest journals in Europe that was, at least in part,
dedicated to the study of the modern Orient. It was preceded by eighteenth century journals such
as William Jones’s Asiatick Researches (1788) and Johann David Michaelis’s Commentationes
in Societate Regia Scientiarvm Goettingensi (1762). However, the Fundgruben featured a visual

157 Ibid., 59-60.
158 Yomb May, “Goethe, Islam, and the Orient: The Impetus for and Mode of Intercultural Encounter in
the West-östlicher Divan,” in Encounters with Islam in German Literature and Culture, James Hodkinson
and Jefferey Morrison, eds. (Rochester: Camden House, 2009), 93.
component that included drawings and images unlike previous philologically-oriented studies. Nonetheless, May describes Goethe’s mode of study in this work as a kind of (armchair) “ethnographer” since he never actually visited the places he studied (in contrast to Hammer-Purgstall). May refers us to Goethe’s concept of Weltliteratur, and that the Divan, and his overall engagement with the Orient should read “as pars pro toto for his universal thinking,” which May maintains is “not free of contradictions, [and] is predicated on a call for mutual recognition between cultures and for the overcoming of the intellectual paralysis exhibited by national literatures concerned only with themselves.” Despite Goethe’s striving for a universal humanism and the argument that, according to May, “his discourse did not yet show the signs of Imperialist excesses,” she does not absolve him of European crimes, which happened long after his death. May’s assessment of Goethe’s West-östlicher Divan is that through this process of engaging the Orient it provided for “a long overdue opening, transformation, and renewal of the West.” May argues that renewal, for Goethe, means a “broadening of cultural horizons by transcending conventional prejudices about the Orient.”

159 Maxime Rodinson, Europe and the Mystique of Islam. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1987), 56. Jones’s journal was titled: Asiatick Researches: Or, Transactions of the Society Instituted in Bengal, for Inquiring Into the History and Antiquities, the Arts, Sciences, and Literature, of Asia.
161 Ibid., 103-104.
162 Ibid., 104. She states: “Although his discourse did not yet show the signs of Imperialist excesses exhibited by the literal oriental journeys of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Goethe’s approach is at least partly a function of that form of European Universalism that, fuelled by curiosity, a thirst for knowledge, and a drive toward progress, marked the beginning of European colonization.”
164 Ibid.
variation on the “orientalism as self-critique” theory, which has been the subject of recent thought.\textsuperscript{165}

The idea that ‘oriental themes’ were not present in a work of art in order to perpetuate any kind of imperial or colonial power over the East, but rather used by German artists or authors to critique (themselves), or philosophize about, their own predicament or societal problems is not a new one. Indeed, it can even be seen here in Goethe’s West-östlicher Divan, or his Persian Letters, and arguably even in Herodotus. Katharine Mommsen, whose prodigious and remarkable work on Goethe and his relationship to Islam and the “Arab world”, discusses in detail a variety of aspects of the poem cycle directly relating to Goethe’s own life and experiences. Examples range in the West-östlicher Divan from parallels between Hafez’s experience with Timur and Goethe’s experience with Napoleon and the French in the Book of Timur, to the Book of Displeasure where he comments through this ‘oriental’ setting on the contemporary violence and political strife he observes around him in Europe.\textsuperscript{166} A slight variation on this theme that is relevant nonetheless is found in his celebrated Book of Suleika, a poem that has been set to music by several composers including Franz Schubert and Robert Schumann and is widely known. Todd Kontje describes the Suleika as a “self-conscious exercise in role-playing that fluctuates between self-aggrandizement and self-deprecation.”\textsuperscript{167} Kontje convincingly continues to elaborate on Goethe’s references to his own life and experiences.


\textsuperscript{166} See: Katharina Mommsen, Goethe und die arabische Welt (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1988).

\textsuperscript{167} And specifically: Mommsen’s introduction to: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Poems of the West and East: West-Eastern Divan - West-östliche Divan, (Bern: Peter Lang, 1998), XVI-XIX, XXI-XXIII.

\textsuperscript{167} Todd Kontje, German Orientalisms (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 125.
throughout the *Divan* (as well as other works) such that it is difficult not to see it in this way. But this self-reflection, critique or philosophical meditation in Goethe’s work and beyond is much more layered and complex. Thus my intent here is to suggest how Goethe’s contribution to this theme was part of a longer tradition of studying the East that only accelerated throughout the long nineteenth century. Of course, these themes did not originate with Goethe, but he articulated them in rich and meaningful ways that resonated with a large public.

This kind of egalitarian attitude that I have outlined above toward other cultures made its way into the arts as early as 1779 and continued well into the nineteenth century. An early example can be found in Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s play *Nathan the Wise* (1779). There he depicts Christianity, Judaism and Islam as equal. The characters he chose to represent each religion overcome their differences through friendship.\textsuperscript{168} Examples like these in literature are not hard to find, but tracing even similar ideas like this into architectural discourse, much less architectural practice, is a much greater challenge.

PART III:

KARL FRIEDRICH SCHINKEL,
THE GOTHIC, THE ‘SARACENIC’ AND A DUBIOUS HISTORIOGRAPHY

Jede Hauptzeit hat ihren Style hinterlassen in der Baukunst, warum wollen wir nicht versuchen, ob sich nicht auch für die unsere ein Styl auffinden läßt?

-Karl Friedrich Schinkel\(^{169}\)

As the eighteenth century drew to a close, the relationship between architecture and culture continued to evolve. Paul Rabinow has suggested that it was at this moment that buildings, for the first time, began to be associated with what he has called an “expression of culture.”\(^{170}\) Of course Rabinow is concerned with an entirely different subject matter; however, despite the significantly different context with which I am concerned, this concept is nevertheless a useful one in that it gets at the core of what is at stake in the architectural debates later in the nineteenth century. This includes, namely, the intimate and problematic relationship between culture and architectural form. This relationship is further complicated when the “culture” in question is not only not German, but thought to be not “European.” Indeed, as travelers moved more easily in and around Europe they discovered a fair amount of evidence (both archaeological and architectural) that demonstrated the existence of prolonged periods of a sustained Islamic presence within what had later become “Europe” itself. The discovery of these ‘peripheral’ sites of what had been a well-established Islamic culture in Europe, and the acknowledgement that they had played an integral role in Europe’s development since the early Middle Ages, slowly began to work its way into contemporary thought.

\(^{169}\) “Each age has its main style left in architecture, why do we not want to try and see if we can find a style for our age?” Quoted in: Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Paul Ortwin Rave. *Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Das architektonische Lehrbuch*, vol. 12 (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1939), 146.

The role that culture played in theories about architectural form had, as I have demonstrated, remained largely bound together with Winckelmann’s notions of ideal Greek beauty. One significant thinker who expanded and theorized Winckelmann’s ideas was Aloys Hirt (1759-1837). Hirt attempted to rationalize German architecture in terms of an ancient Greek model. Eventually, his text of 1809, Die Baukunst nach den Grundsätzen der Alten (Architecture According to the Principles of the Ancients), would ask an important question: what were the motivations for generating architecture in the past? By outlining this “ontological problem of Greek classicism for architecture” Hirt posed a series of provocative questions that had to do with the cultural origins of architecture such as “From which people before our own sprang architecture? Where do we find architecture’s cradle?” Of course for Hirt, the answer was always ancient Greece. However, at the same time Romanticism had the effect of re-orienting perspectives on architecture either inward (toward the Gothic) or outward (toward a “Romantic Classicism”).

Romanticism in both its Gothic and Classical forms were, by and large, reactions to the dogmatic rigidity of Neoclassicism. On the one hand there were those that strove to find the existence of an original (Ur) “German” architecture, while others pursued ideas that considered cultures and places beyond what they had previously known. And in some cases, like the quest to understand the origins of the Gothic style, one led to the other. Therefore, because of the continual development and evolution of the Romantic Movement, it is important to briefly examine its effect upon architectural culture at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century through the important figure of Schinkel.

Schinkel has been described as “the most written-about architect in history,” and the scholarship that exists on him as “immense” and “much too vast to summarize.” I will focus his ideas about style, including his exploration of the origins of the Gothic, and his ideas that play a role in the work of his students and their relationship to Prussia’s period of modernization in the nineteenth century. One way in which I have attempted to focus this section is to deal primarily with more recent analyses and interpretations of Schinkel such as publications which have appeared in the last decade or so, as well as the recent exhibition “Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Geschichte und Poesie.” My argument concerning Schinkel is historiographical in that I will demonstrate how aspects of his theory have been either left out or distorted by subsequent interpretations of his writings. It is my contention that Schinkel’s ideas about style have been generally disregarded, particularly in Modernist historiography, in light of his more famous work that is widely viewed to anticipate Modernism. Since modernist historiography has sought to discredit the concept of style, the centrality of style as a necessary concept in Schinkel’s work has largely been downplayed. Furthermore, Schinkel’s influential ideas on the subject made a considerable impression on two generations of students so his ideas reached deep into Prussian architecture culture throughout most of the century. Thus, I propose to challenge extant historiography that either ignores or dismisses this central role style played in Schinkel’s work and to demonstrate that a hitherto unacknowledged line of inquiry emerges through its study that can shed new light on the work of his successors. I will conclude the chapter by discussing ways

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172 Watkin & Mellinghoff, German Architecture, 85.
174 Harry Francis Mallgrave, Modern Architectural Theory, 433.
in which Schinkel’s interest in architecture beyond the Gothic and Classical idioms, namely
Islamic architecture, has been significantly underrepresented and all but ignored in the literature.

**Style and Meaning in Schinkel’s Architectural Oeuvre**

In 1797 in a well-known anecdote, Schinkel, who had recently relocated to Berlin from the small
Brandenburg town of Neuruppin, visited an art exhibition at the Academy of Fine Arts. At this
exhibition the Academy displayed the submissions for a competition it had announced the
previous year to honor Friedrich the Great, who had died ten years earlier. It was there that the
sixteen-year-old Schinkel saw Friedrich Gilly’s legendary submission. As the story goes, it was
his experience of this drawing alone that inspired him to become an architect. He promptly (in
1798) began his studies under Gilly’s father David, who ran a small school that was a forerunner
to the Bauakademie.

Portrayed in the historiography as everything from a ‘Romantic’ classicist, to a ‘rational’
classicist and even proto-Modernist, Schinkel experienced his most prolific building period
between 1815 and the early 1830s. And since most of his architectural production during this
time resulted in the construction of Neoclassical structures, Schinkel is generally characterized as
a Neoclassical architect whose greatest influence came from his mentor and colleague Friedrich
Gilly. Rarely explored are questions that have to do with Schinkel’s interest in the project on a
stylistic level; in other words what did the presentation of these forms from Greek antiquity in
contemporary Berlin mean to Schinkel?

We more or less know what Greek antiquity meant to Winckelmann and Schiller, but in
the case of Schinkel it is not so clear. Christian Scholl has recently demonstrated that Schinkel
did not view ancient Greek architecture as a source for scientific archaeological research that would in turn yield an equally precise result as in a revival. Instead, he argues that Schinkel saw Greek antiquity as something more of an inspirational model to be studied for various ideas such as tectonic logic and stability or uses of light etc. Thus, for Scholl, Schinkel “represents a dynamic understanding of history, in which the architecture of the past will no longer be given a normative position.” One could argue the same thing for Gilly, whose essentially Romantic presentation of a variation on the theme of Classical Greek antiquity—dramatic rendering with pronounced chiaroscuro for example—certainly played a role in the success of the work. However, the style for the project was certainly not arbitrarily chosen and had an equally substantial effect.

What is important here is that Gilly’s Friedrich II Memorial project came just two years after the 1795 Berlin Academy exhibition, for which Gilly submitted the dramatic drawings of the Marienburg castle discussed above. This is important because Gilly’s interest in the Gothic was well under way by the time he designed the Friedrich Memorial, which could largely explain the drama conveyed in the scene. These drawings of Marienburg, which were “among the first recordings of medieval architecture” greatly influenced Schinkel, as well, and are credited with initiating his early interest in the Gothic style. It is this aspect of Schinkel’s interests that centers on the issue of the Gothic, as well as his ideas about how one should interpret the architecture of the past, that I wish to focus on.

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176 Christian Scholl, “Normative Anschaulichkeit versus archäologische Pedantrie: Karl Friedrich Schinkel’sästhetischer Philhellenismus,” in Graecomania: Der europäische Philhellenismus, Gilbert Heß, Elena Agazzi and Elisabeth Décultot, eds. (Berlin; New York: Walter De Gruyter, 2009), 89. One of his examples is Hirt’s critique of Schinkel’s Altes Museum for its lack of faithfulness in its plan to antique Greek architecture. This leads to Schinkel’s intellectual break with Hirt.
177 W. D. Robson-Scott, The Literary Background of the Gothic Revival in Germany, 266.
178 Ibid., 265-266.
Schinkel and the Gothic at the Turn of the Century

After Gilly's death in 1800 his dedicated student Schinkel inherited his drawings including the famous design submission for the Friedrich Monument. He even prominently hung the drawing in his office-studio in the Bauakademie during his tenure there. And while it is certainly reasonable to consider Schinkel a strong advocate for the type of Winckelmannian-Humboldtian classical Humanism so prevalent in Prussia around the turn of the century, and expressed mainly through a philhellenic obsession, it is only part of Schinkel's story. In addition to most of his archive, Schinkel also inherited Gilly's theorxetical tendencies including a dual interest in both the Gothic style as well as the variety of influences in Neoclassicism, from Greek antiquity to its Franco-Prussian expression.

There is no doubt as to the extent to which Schinkel was impressed and inspired by the Neoclassical movement – as this has been discussed and theorized extensively. The fact that a majority of his extant buildings were rendered in a Neoclassical style only validates this belief. In fact, there are only a handful of buildings potentially classifiable as 'non-Classical' in his *Sammlung Architektonischer Entwürfe* (*Collection of Architectural Designs*), originally published in his lifetime from 1819 to 1840. Among those only about four can be considered Gothic despite the fact that he dedicated years of his youth to its study and that it was central to his intellectual formation and remained a consistent influence throughout his life. Indeed, among his most famous paintings are a series of Gothic cathedrals. As a result his relationship to the Gothic is typically only dealt with in more specialized literature and almost completely

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ignored in more generalized survey texts or texts which deal with the foundations of Modernism. Consequently, the Gothic (and its revival) is quite commonly associated throughout the nineteenth century with a reactionary, anti-Modern sentiment, especially in Britain (namely the Ecclesiologists and A.W.N. Pugin who added a moral imperative), and arguably maintains this position in many respects even today since it is largely associated with (medieval) Christianity.

The theme of the Gothic, and in particular its theoretical origins, rediscovery and subsequent revival in the nineteenth century is of fundamental concern to this study for a number of reasons. First of all the Gothic, as a cultural-aesthetic idea, has been typically formulated and presented in architectural historiography as the ultimate ‘anti-classical’ movement. Indeed, as has been convincingly demonstrated by Marvin Trachtenberg over the last decade or so the medieval architectural and cultural expression of the Gothic has suffered a great deal of marginalization within the discourse of architectural history generally. Not only was it slighted and effectively othered by Vasari in order to be clearly differentiated from the new, superior (but still historicist) architecture of the Italian Renaissance, but it sustained pressure on the other side as well from historians who wished to articulate the idea of a clearly defined (also historicist) “Roman-esque” architecture. The most problematic critique for Trachtenberg, however, is the critique from within of scholars on Gothic architecture who, in their efforts to achieve stylistic

purity for the Gothic, engage in what he calls “column avoidance language”\textsuperscript{183} in order to dismiss any classical references that appear in examples of Gothic architecture such as the classically ordered columns flanking most Gothic cathedrals. Instead, Trachtenberg proposes that the Gothic be re-named “medieval modernism”\textsuperscript{184} by referring to the original descriptive terms used by Renaissance writers: ‘Gothic’ and ‘lavori moderni’ which he suggests, if put together, results in a type of architecture that is “both ‘modern’ and ‘anti-classical.”\textsuperscript{185} I highlight this aspect of the historiography on Gothic architecture to call to mind that even the study of the “original” Gothic as a concept itself (as discussed by medievalists and Renaissance historians) remains an unstable category just as much as its revival in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries does.

As a recent and poignant example of what could be called Gothic ‘avoidance language’ in Schinkel historiography we can briefly return to the recent exhibitions in Berlin, and specifically to the corresponding exhibit at the Alte Nationalgalerie. The latter exhibit was entitled \textit{Romantik \& Mittelalter: Architektur und Nature in der Malerei nach Schinkel} (\textit{Romanticism \& The Middle Ages: Architecture and Nature in Painting After Schinkel})\textsuperscript{186} and was conceived as a “complement” to the Schinkel show according to the museum.\textsuperscript{187} Not only does the title

\textsuperscript{185} Ibid., 13.
\textsuperscript{186} I will note here that the museum translates this title into English on their web page as: \textit{"The Romantic Middle Ages..."} and not how I have done so above. This is not a matter of semantics but rather meaning. In this case “Romantic Middle Ages” connotes that it was the Medieval period that was Romantic and this is not the case at all. Instead their title results in a different meaning altogether, which I would argue is not an accurate one since technically “Romantik” is translated as “Romanticism.” See: http://www.smb.museum/smb/kalender/details.php?objID=32751.
\textsuperscript{187} Noted on their website: http://www.smb.museum/smb/kalender/details.php?objID=32751. Accessed Nov. 18, 2013. However, nowhere in the accompanying publication (with the same title) does it refer to
reference Schinkel, but it is dedicated to nineteenth-century representations of the Middle Ages through the paintings of medieval scenes (as in the section “Architectural Landscapes Inspired by Literature”) or medieval ruins around Germany (in the section “Cathedrals, Monasteries, Castles and their Ruins”). Of particular interest is the title that stipulates the paintings in the exhibition come after Schinkel. The vast majority of the works, however, were painted from the late 1810s to the 1830s with several from the early 1840s and only a handful from after Schinkel’s death.\(^{188}\) This suggests that by “after Schinkel” they mean after Schinkel’s obsessive interest in the Gothic (not after his death), which began to fade around 1815. This is supported by the fact that most of Schinkel’s famous Gothic cathedral paintings, travel sketches and drawings of Gothic subjects (if displayed at all) are in the other exhibit at the Kulturforum. One could read from this the suggestion that an interest in the Gothic was admittedly part of Schinkel’s early career, but only insofar as it led him to realize the ultimate superiority of a much more Classically oriented Romanticism. However, if we look at Schinkel’s evolving relationship with the Gothic, it is clear that it is not as simple as this.

**Schinkel and the Plausibility of Gothic Architecture’s ‘Oriental’ Origins**

One aspect of the Gothic debate that formed a fairly significant part of the discourse on the subject was the “Eastern origins” question, or “Saracenic” theory. This was the idea that Gothic architecture—specifically its defining characteristic of the pointed arch—originated in the “East” possibly under the auspices of Islamic culture. This theory, which was developed in mid-eighteenth-century Britain, was fairly well known, yet, by no means accepted and was based on

\(^{188}\) Most works here are dated in the 1820s and 30s, but there are only a few from after Schinkel’s death (including one from 1863, 1871 and 1876).
early fragmentary evidence of arches found in the Middle East which were believed to pre-date those of found in Northern Europe. Since these theories were conceived in Britain they only later came to the Germanies. Indeed, it would take until 1842 for a German to publish his own theory on the subject and even that—Rudolf Wiegmann’s Über den Ursprung des Spitzbogenstils (On the Origins of the Pointed Arch Style) was based heavily on the work of Thomas Warton, John Kendall, Thomas Bell and James Hall. 189

By the turn of the nineteenth century this “Saracenic” origins theory had become something of an international debate, which intensified with the rise of nationalism. However, the possibility that the Gothic originated either in the forests of Germany or the deserts of Arabia is something Paul Frankl observed was quite “ironic” and served to illustrate the range of theories on the topic. Despite all the controversy Schinkel did not seem to be particularly affected by the myriad theories available at the time on the origin of the Gothic, such as James Hall’s famous Essay on the Origin, History, and Principles of Gothic Architecture (ca. 1797), which argued that the Gothic originated from the wickerwork designs he observed being made by French peasants and subsequently grew out of that formal tradition. Closer to home, Schinkel certainly knew Johann Fischer von Erlach’s 1721 book Entwurf Einer Historischen Architectur, which illustrated buildings in the Ottoman and Safavid Empires with pointed arches, yet provided no commentary on their origins. 190 Schinkel also surely knew Johann Georg Sulzer’s encyclopedic Allgemeine Theorie der Schönen Künste (1771) that had an entry on the Gothic since Friedrich Gilly owned a copy of this book. However, Sulzer simply equated everything

190 Sigrid Bertuleit, Gotisch-Orientalische Stilgenese: Englische Theorien zum Ursprung der Gotik und ihr Einfluß in Deutschland um 1800 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1989), 206-07.

A copy of Fischer von Erlach’s text was known to be in Friedrich Gilly’s library.
'Gothic' with bad taste and, interestingly, made no mention of the potential "Saracenic" roots of the Gothic, possibly because he subscribed to the idea that it had German origins? And while well known contemporary scholars such as Oleg Grabar have rejected theories that locate the origins of Gothic vaulting in eleventh century Iran as "untenable", there still remain questions about whether it was developed in Europe separately, or whether the technical knowledge was brought there from somewhere else.  

Among the most famous and widely known figures of an earlier period, prior to any sort of critical analysis to proclaim this "Saracenic" origin theory of the Gothic, was Christopher Wren (1632-1723) who proclaimed in his Parentalia:

What we now vulgarly call the Gothick, ought properly and truly to be named the Saracenick Architecture refined by the Christians; which first of all began in the East after the Fall of the Greek Empire by the prodigious Success of those People that adhered to Mahomet's Doctrine who out of Zeal to their Religion, built Mosques, Caravanserais, and Sepulchers, wherever they came.

Wren's apparent goal with his text was clearly to condemn the Gothic (for any number of reasons). His method was thus to other it completely by locating its origins in the East with the Arabs and "Saracens" and he concludes with this remark:

...and so confound it, that one cannot consider it [the Gothic] with any Steadiness, where to begin or end; taking off from that noble Air and Grandeur, bold and graceful Manner, which the Ancients had so well, and judiciously established: but, in this Sort have they and their Followers ever since filled not

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Europe alone, but Asia and Africa besides, with Mountains of Stone, vast and
gigantick Buildings indeed...193

Because of this, declares Wren, the Gothic is "not worthy [of] the Name of Architecture."194 This
condemnation of the style makes for an interesting etymological side note since apparently the
name "Gothic" (whose name located its origin with the wild Germanic tribes of Europe who
represented the epitome of anti-rational, Classical antiquity) was not effective enough at othering
it by the eighteenth century. Other advocates around this time in England include John Evelyn,
who discussed the Gothic’s potential "Moorish" origins in his Account of architects and
Architecture (1697). Not long after in France Florent le Comte wrote in his Cabinet des
singularitez d'architecture peinture, sculpture et gravure (1699) that the Gothic was strongly
influenced “by those of Spain and other countries of the Arab world.”195 Another French
advocate of this theory was the French archbishop François Fénelon (1651-1715): “This
architecture which we call Gothic came down to us from the Arabs; their type of mind, very
lively and unrestrained by rules or culture, could not do otherwise than plunge into false
subtleties.”196 While this comment also has the effect of othering the Gothic as a derivative of a
foreign style, it also ironically, as Peter Draper observes, recognizes a certain “invention and
innovation” in this so-called architecture of the “Arabs.”197

In a 1968 article John H. Harvey credited the sudden appearance of the pointed arch in
twelfth century Europe to the Crusaders in his “Crusader theory,” which recognized the

193 Ibid., 13.
194 Ibid.
Classicism,” 303.
196 Paul Frankl, The Gothic: Literary Sources and Interpretations through Eight Centuries (Princeton:
197 Peter Draper, “Islam and the West: The Early Use of the Pointed Arch Revisited” Architectural
possibility that returning soldiers brought Eastern construction techniques back with them. However, this theory is less convincing when we acknowledge the existence of the pointed arch in some sixth century Byzantine church examples in Ravenna as well as present day Syria. More recently scholars such as Peter Draper have demonstrated that some of these pointed arch forms did indeed develop independently from one another, but the evidence for these theories is more difficult to uncover. Nonetheless, questions about the pointed arch’s Islamic origins were repeatedly asked by theorists such as the Frankfurt architect Friedrich Hessemer (1800-60) who, in 1842, cited examples such as the mosque of Ibn Tulun in Cairo built in 876 (fig. 12), which was approximately 264 years before Abbot Suger’s work at Saint Denis. But despite all of this speculation, the question remains: what motivated Schinkel to investigate this idea of the Gothic’s origin?

Schinkel had a more open mind when it came to understanding the great varieties of architecture he read about. Whether he was familiar with Wren’s ideas is uncertain, but he was likely familiar with the “Eastern origin” theory due to its prominence in intellectual circles. Schinkel was certainly familiar with representations of the Islamic Mughal architecture of India (ripe with pointed arches, but with later dates) to a certain extent. For example, we know that he read William Hodges’ Select Views of India (1785-88), which was translated into German in

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200 Hessemer states: “this building [Ibn Tulun] is probably the oldest monument upon which this form [the pointed arch] appears.” Friedrich Hessemer, Altitalienische und arabische Bauverzierungen (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1842), 41. (not to mention the pointed arches present in the inner arcade of the Dome of the Rock - the construction of which can be dated to the 680s).
201 The pointed arch was not a feature of Hindu architecture and was brought to India by invading Muslim armies and their rulers.
1789 when he was about eighteen years old, for a meeting of the Privatgesellschaft junger Architekten (Private Association of Young Architects) founded by Gilly.\textsuperscript{202} Schinkel had an even more robust introduction to the architecture of India in the form of the famous publication Oriental Scenery (1795-1801) by the English painters William Daniell and his uncle Thomas Daniell. This work was also to form the basis for the eminent English architect John Nash (1752-1835) in his design for the Brighton Pavilion, which Schinkel visited later in 1826 (fig. 13).\textsuperscript{203} Oriental Scenery featured 144 watercolors of monuments from all over India and was published in several parts from 1795–1808. The watercolors were also considered to be highly accurate representations due to the Daniell’s use of a camera obscura. Schinkel was most likely familiar with the single volume edition of 1816 since there are extant copies of its contents in his hand.\textsuperscript{204} But Schinkel’s awareness and opinions about Islamic architecture and its relationship to Classical and Gothic architecture would be affected quite substantially by his Italian trip.

\section*{Schinkel’s Unconventional Grand Tour}

But there is a benefit to be found in the beautiful architecture of this style that one usually calls Saracenic because it was created by mixing oriental and antique architecture during the time of the migration. One finds in the arrangement of these buildings an extraordinary attention to detail.\textsuperscript{205}

-Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1804)

\textsuperscript{202} Mario Alexander Zadow, \textit{Schinkels Blick nach Indien / Schinkel’s Look towards India} (Stuttgart: Axel Menges, 2013), 8 & 11.
\textsuperscript{203} Patrick Conner notes that there is evidence that Nash was well acquainted with the work since he borrowed four volumes of the text from the royal library at Carlton House. See: Patrick Conner, \textit{Oriental Architecture in the West} (London: Thames & Hudson, 1975), 146.
\textsuperscript{204} Mario Alexander Zadow, \textit{Schinkels Blick nach Indien / Schinkel’s Look towards India} (Stuttgart: Axel Menges, 2013), 12 & 15.
\textsuperscript{205} Schinkel in a letter to David Gilly while on his Italian journey with only December 1804 given as a date. Reprinted in: Georg Friedrich Koch, \textit{Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Die Reisen nach Italien, 1803-1805 und 1824}, Helmut Börsch-Supan und Gottfried Riemann, eds. (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2006), 179.
After his studies were complete in 1803 Schinkel traveled to Italy for the first time. This trip is rarely discussed in any detail outside of specialized literature despite its central importance in Schinkel’s intellectual formation. However, in a recent biography of Schinkel, Jörg Trempler compares Goethe’s journey to Italy with Schinkel’s and suggests that Goethe went to Italy imagining a Gothic world, but discovered a classical one, and that Schinkel went in order to find a Classical world and discovered a Gothic one. This synopsis, as I have demonstrated above, while succinct and appealing, does not paint the entire picture of Schinkel’s prior experience with the Gothic, nor does it portray the accurate status of the Gothic in Prussian culture. By weaving together aspects of a literary and philosophical movement with an architectural one Trempler suggests we can discuss the Gothic and Classical on equal terms. The problem with this proposal is that, as I have outlined previously, the literary world was much further ahead than the architectural world in terms of the popularity of the Gothic as an intellectual movement and ‘revival’—indeed it had already abandoned it in pursuit of the Classical. However, in the arts, one of the more important contributions in terms of what the Gothic looked like came from Friedrich Gilly, who, while not a Gothic enthusiast, nonetheless maintained an interest in the movement and most likely kept up with contemporary debates surrounding it. By 1799 Gilly’s drawings of Marienburg Castle were published as part of Friedrich Frick’s well-known pictorial monograph of aquatint engravings on the castle entitled Schloß Marienburg in Preussen. Nach seinen vorzüglichsten äußern und inner Ansichten dargestellt (Castle Marienburg in Prussia. Represented by its Principal Exterior and Interior Views). This text was unique in that it

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206 Jörg Trempler, Karl Friedrich Schinkel Baumeister Preussens, 41.
207 I am referring here to the contents of Gilly’s library, which is discussed in Fritz Neumeyer, Friedrich Gilly: Essays on Architecture, 1796-1799.
208 They were first published in 1796 in “Über die vom Herrn Oberhof-Bauamts-Kondukteur Gilly im Jahr 1794 aufgenommen Ansichten des Schlosses der deutschen Ritter zu Marienburg in Westpreußen” (From the Office of the Building Director Gilly in 1794: Views of the Castle of the Teutonic Knights at West Prussia)
“presented for the first time the monumental Gothic” to a larger audience and was purportedly the first time a domestic (German) medieval example was ever published.209

Thus, prior to his trip to Italy Schinkel had not seen any actual substantial Gothic examples, since Berlin had very few, and none on a grand scale. It had nothing like the kind of impressive structures he would observe on his way to Rome. In May of 1803 he set out to experience classical art, the architectural ruins of classical antiquity, as well as Renaissance buildings such as those of Andrea Palladio. Indeed, his Gothic fervor only grew when he witnessed the scale and presence of these famous Gothic landmarks and spent dedicated time drawing them.210 As he noted in his journal, he was preoccupied with the idea of finding a “singularly new way of envisioning architecture,”211 as well as bringing back with him “any useful observations or applicable techniques from studying the architecture of these countries.”212 His itinerary took him by way of Prague and Vienna where he quickly discovered in person the beauty and sublimity of medieval architecture, which he carefully recorded in his detailed drawings of their famous Gothic cathedrals (fig. 14 & fig. 15). In Vienna he praised St. Stephen’s Cathedral as “an endlessly rich and bold Gothic work.”213 By the time Schinkel crossed the Alps he had decided to “to explore the origins of the medieval architecture of central

Marienburg in West Prussia), in Denkwürdigkeiten und Tagesgeschichte der Mark Brandenburg 1, J.W.A. Kosmann and Th. Heinsius, eds., (June 1796): 674 [109]. However, they did not gain the circulation or notoriety they did in Frick’s book.


211 Georg Friedrich Koch, “Karl Friedrich Schinkel und die Architektur des Mittelalters,” 177.

212 Ibid., 178.

Europe”, which he believed he would find in Italy.\footnote{Ibid.} Upon his arrival, he was overwhelmed by “the diversity of the architectural past he had seen, and the discovery of architectural monuments in their natural settings.”\footnote{Ibid.} On his way from Trieste to Rome, he revealed in his journal a newfound admiration for medieval architecture and decided to alter his route. Instead of heading straight to Venice he traveled through the Istrian peninsula and later stopped in Aquila noting in his diary that “The style of their architecture lies somewhere between the Saracen-Gothic and Roman, and is thus extremely adventuresome and further intensified by its unfamiliar appearance (fig. 16, 17 & 18).\footnote{Ibid.}

According to Trempler, Schinkel was so “besotted” with what he termed “Saracenic” architecture that he “lingered” for a few days in various towns just 80km outside of Rome in order to study these buildings in greater detail.\footnote{Jörg Trempler, Karl Friedrich Schinkel Baumeister Preussens: eine Biographie, 43.} But despite the prominence of this leitmotif in his journal, the actual role that this “Saracenic” architecture played vis-à-vis the Gothic has been under-explored and therefore less understood, and as I will demonstrate, misunderstood. Therefore, it my intent to not only reexamine Schinkel’s interest in the so-called “Saracenic”—and its relation to Gothic architecture during the turn of the nineteenth century—but to understand ultimately how the turn towards Romanticism in Prussia precipitated the end of these theories on the Gothic’s “Saracenic” origins. However, a brief discussion of what this term \textit{sarazenisch} meant to Schinkel is necessary in order to clarify the later discussion.

The Source of the “Saracenic,” its Meaning and Impact on Schinkel

Both the English term “Saracens” and the German “Sarazenen” derive from the Greek \( \Sigma \alpha \rho \alpha \kappa \kappa \iota \nu \omicron \varsigma \) (\textit{Sarakenoi}), which was likely the term used by the ancient Greeks, and later the Romans (\textit{Saracen}) to describe inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula. The etymology and the meaning of the word is uncertain, but theories range from Arabic origins from the word for \( \textit{shargi} \) (‘eastern,’ ‘oriental,’ \textit{sharg} = \textit{sunrise}) to examples demonstrating that the Greek word \textit{Sarakenoi} is translated as “[those who are] living in tents.” In Medieval Europe the word and descriptive term referred primarily to decedents of Abraham and his wife Sarah: “St. Jerome identifies the Saracens with the \textit{Agareni} (Hagarens, descendants of Hagar) ‘who are now called Saracens, taking to themselves the name of Sara’.”\(^{218}\) Diderot’s \textit{Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers} published from 1751-1772, provides a Roman reference by highlighting Ptolemy’s use of the term in his geographical description of “Arabia Petraea” (the Arabian peninsula), then on the periphery of the Roman Empire. Described as the “Ancient people of Arabia” the \textit{Encyclopédie} also cites Pliny’s description (\textit{Pliny}, I. V. c. xi) as those who dwell in tents “Ce pays est occupé par les Arabes scénites qui nourrissent des chameaux.”\(^{219}\) It appears that the descriptive term “\textit{Saraceni},” as it was used in Europe in the late eighteenth century, carried over from the pre-Islamic period to common parlance in the Middle Ages in order to describe Muslims in general. In other words, despite the varieties in how the word is defined, it is most likely that, as far as Schinkel was concerned, it referred to Muslim Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Muslim identity of


"those originating from the Arabian Peninsula" had been firmly established. Today, of course, the architecture in question fits within the broader category of Islamic Architecture as the term "Saracenic" is obsolete. Thus, we can connect Schinkel’s use of the term "sarazenisch" with "Islamic," or at least having an Islamic aspect or component in terms of a work of art or the formal elements or overall composition of a building.

One motivation for Schinkel to seek out the Gothic, and subsequently the "Saracenic," as John Toews has recently observed, was his "dissatisfaction with rigid symmetries and starkly impersonal forms of late-eighteenth-century neoclassicism."220 As a response to this dissatisfaction, Toews suggests that he “focused his attention on the ways in which public and ecclesiastical construction, especially in eastern and southern Italy, had absorbed strong influences from the Arab Orient into the inherited antique styles and produced a stunning mixed architecture, both imitative of inherited forms and adapted to the needs and consciousness of its own historical period.”221 Thus, for Schinkel, the idea that the Gothic had "Islamic" architectural "ancestors"—potentially transferred to Europe via Sicily—was therefore a plausible scenario that would have fit within his theories on stylistic synthesis. This is because he could read a palimpsest of styles in the buildings he encountered. Thus, it was during this trip that he began to formulate his ideas about stylistic synthesis that would itself be a mixture of ideas and forms from Classical antiquity, the Gothic and other styles he observed and recorded in Sicily.

220 John Edward Toews, Becoming Historical, 121.
221 Ibid.
Schinkel’s Sicilian Sojourn

The cultural overlapping that led to this so-called ‘mixed’ architecture Schinkel was so interested in was exemplified by a series of events over the centuries initiated by the first substantial Islamic conquest of the Sicily. This military conquest began in 827 and ended with the eventual defeat of the Byzantines there in 878, although these dates are by no means indicative of any immediate changes since most of the campaigns on this island occurred over a period of at least several years. This conquest ultimately resulted in the formal creation of an independent Sicilian Emirate in 948 that lasted until the Byzantine initiated re-conquest in 1038 led by Giorgio Maniace. This ‘re-conquest’ involved, in addition to a Byzantine army, the assistance of the famously effective fighting force of the Norman cavalry (mercenaries). These Normans were seen and described as “militaristic” and “avaricious” by the Byzantines and Muslim inhabitants alike. Since their arrival on the island they had been generally respected due to their formidable fighting skills and were referred to by the Arab population as ahl al-dhimma (“people of the pact”) since they were seen as different and of a higher status than the Byzantines.

The Normans inhabited the island for many decades until they eventually took full control themselves under the leadership of King Roger II in 1130. This marked the establishment

222 There were earlier incursions by Muslim armies which began in 652, but they were not able to gain territory on Sicily itself. Instead they won a naval battle against the Byzantines that led to the occupation of Cyprus.
225 Siculo-Norman Art: Islamic Culture in Medieval Sicily, 45.
of Sicily as a completely independent Norman kingdom. Roger II continued his expansion by establishing the so-called "Kingdom of Africa" (Regno d'Africa) by extending his rule over much of what is present day Tunisia from about 1135-1160. Thus, there exists a rich, historical interaction between these geographies and cultural and religious groups, which resulted in an exceptional synthesis of northern, eastern and local influences constructed by a large variety of people from markedly different backgrounds. It is this long and variegated history that has led to the remarkable palimpsest that is Sicily. With its great diversity and abundance of architecture it is no wonder it was such an attraction for Schinkel.

Having likely learned some of this background, which piqued his interest, Schinkel deviated from the traditional Grand Tour route again on his return home from Rome and decided to visit Sicily in 1804. This is also likely due to the significant influence of Goethe. Indeed, after his trip there in 1787 Goethe enthusiastically claimed that "To have seen Italy without having seen Sicily is not to have seen Italy at all, for Sicily is the clue to everything." Spending more than two months on the island Schinkel visited eleven cities and produced over one hundred drawings and watercolors. In his journal he described the city of Monreale as "resplendent with its beautiful Saracenic cathedral" (fig. 19 & fig. 20). In Palermo, Schinkel recorded in his journal that "we received a tour of the Saracenic cathedral - with its beautiful exterior architecture, but new and commonplace interior: [and met with] the canonical writer Rosario

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226 Ibid., 48.
227 Ibid., 50.
Gregorio,\textsuperscript{231} [and saw] Kufic inscriptions and coins, [etc...]. (fig. 21 & fig. 22)\textsuperscript{232} He also recorded in his journal that the Cappella Palatina was "the oldest saracenic styled monument in Sicily" (fig. 23 & fig. 24).\textsuperscript{232} During his return journey he wrote a letter to his mentor's father David Gilly.

You can for the sake of beautiful architecture draw out some benefit from this branch that one typically calls Saracenic, because it was created by mixing oriental and antique architecture during the time of the migration. One finds in the arrangement of these buildings an extraordinary attention to detail while simultaneously, in addition to its beauty, a certain purposefulness [Zweckmäßigkeit] and innocuousness (inoffensiveness) compared to its overall organization, which would do well to find its application with us.\textsuperscript{233}

In letters to his publisher in Berlin, Johann F. G. Unger, Schinkel even outlined his desire to publish a plate volume on all of this 'Saracenic' architecture upon his return.\textsuperscript{234} Unfortunately, Unger died later that year and the project was never completed. However, despite the unfinished project, it is clear from Schinkel's journals that he was quite interested in this so-called sarazenisch architecture whose defining characteristic can best be described as a 'mixed' architecture in that it maintains two concurrent interpretations of antiquity.

Indeed, having been initially motivated by Classical antiquity, Schinkel must have been overwhelmed at the diversity of architecture he found in Sicily. At one point in his trip he wrote

\textsuperscript{231} Probably means that he het him there in the Cathedral. Rosario Gregorio (1753-1809) author of: \textit{Bibliotheca scriptorum qui res in Sicilia gestas sub Aragonum imperio retulere} (1792), \textit{Considerazioni sulla Storia di Sicilia} (1810-1816).

\textsuperscript{232} Koch, \textit{Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Die Reisen nach Italien, 1803-1805 und 1824}, 105.

\textsuperscript{233} Ibid., 179. "Brief An David Gilly" (Dez. 1804) „[...] Doch läßt sich für die schöne Architektur mancher Nutzen aus diesem Stiel ziehn den man gewöhnlich den Sarazenischen nannte, weil er durch die Vermischung morgenländischer und antiquer Architektur in der Zeit der Völkerwanderungen entstand. Man findet in der Anordnung dieser Gebäude eine außerordentliche Vorsicht [in] jedem Detail in dem zugleich neben seiner Schönheit eine gewisse Zweckmäßigkeit und Unschädlichkeit gegen die übrigen verbund, die bei uns garwohl ihre Anwendung findet."

\textsuperscript{234} "Eine Menge Anlagen aus früher Mittelalterzeit selbst aus der der Sarazenenen woran Sizilien vorzüglich reich ist tragen das ware geprägte philosophischen Kunstsins und Chrarakterfülle, ..."
a letter to David Gilly revealing just how much of an influence the great variety of styles had upon him: “For the most part, the monuments of antiquity offer nothing new, for one is acquainted with them from childhood.” By highlighting this comment I do not intend to suggest that Schinkel was abandoning his interest in Classical antiquity altogether, but rather that he was intentionally enriching his knowledge of architecture’s history by acknowledging that there was more to architecture’s history than the Classical antique. However, this is in opposition to some contemporary scholars who maintain that not only was Schinkel motivated by Classical antiquity to travel to Sicily, but that it remained his single most important influence after the trip.

When this ‘Saracenic’ architecture is included in discussions of Schinkel’s trip or his interest in the Gothic, it is typically done so with brevity or described in a manner which either downplays the influence of the ‘style’ upon him, or, more dubiously, attempts to demonstrate that Schinkel misunderstood or misinterpreted what he saw. What exactly happened, then, to Schinkel’s interest in this “Saracenic” architecture he was so excited about on his trip to Italy and about which he wrote many times in his journal? Is it simply a case of Schinkel’s lack of understanding of what the style he saw actually was—or at least what it was called? Or, did he simply lose interest in the subject over a period of time such that it became viewed as redundant in light of his later Classical projects? I think neither is the case and I intend to forward another position with regard to Schinkel’s apparent ‘disappearing’ interest in the ‘Saracenic’ that has as much to do with the reception of the Gothic in turn-of-the-century Prussian culture as it does with architecture’s historiography.

Schinkel in Sicily: A Dubious Historiography

It is important to bear in mind that upon his arrival in Sicily, Schinkel already had a substantial knowledge of architecture’s history due to his education under David Gilly at the Bauakademie. He also had a rather rich vocabulary of descriptive terms for architectural styles, which he used throughout his journal and letters. These included: Egyptian, ancient-Greek, Greek, Roman, Oriental, Saracen, "real Saracen" and “magnificent Gothic Saracen” as well as others.²³⁶ He even provided examples of specific buildings to explain and distinguish styles from one another such as the Venetian palaces, which he corrected as being in the “old Italian style.”²³⁷ Schinkel’s excitement at being in Sicily comes through his letters and in some of his journal entries, the latter of which are more tempered and descriptive. What is important here is to consider the fact that Schinkel was neither naïve or uneducated when he arrived in Sicily. This is important to keep in mind as we consider historiography dedicated to interpreting his Sicilian trip.

A recent book dedicated to the subject of Schinkel in Italy includes an article that attempts to summarize and explain his experience in Sicily.²³⁸ The article, from 2006, describes Schinkel’s itinerary through Sicily by focusing on the ideas and themes he encountered there. One observation made by the author with regard to his travel journal is the repetition of the term “Saracenic.” She notes that Schinkel uses the term frequently and goes as far as to quote him

²³⁶ "ägyptischen, altgriechischen und griechischen, ein römischen, orientalischen, sarazenischen, „echt sarazenischen“ und prächtig Gothisch sarazenischen" See: Hein-Th. Schulze Altcappenberg, Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Die Italienische Reise 1803-1805, Kupferstichkabinett - Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, ed., (Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Munich: Verlag Edition Minerva, 2010), 9. In terms of the medieval architecture he saw in Prague and Vienna etc. he used even more terms like: “Werke der ältesten”, “sehr alten”, “alten Kunst”, “ältesten gothischen” (for the Mosaic in the Cathedral at Prague), also “altgothischen”, which equated to the Romanesque. There was also “neugotischen” and Renaissance as well as Barockklassizismus.


²³⁸ The Time of Schinkel and the Age of Neoclassicism between Palermo and Berlin (2006).
remarking on how ubiquitous this style was. Instead of attempting to discern what characteristics of these buildings he might be talking about, or attempting to understand more fully what he means by the use of this term, the author dismisses the term entirely as if Schinkel is misusing the word as seen in the following passage:

in actual fact, he [Schinkel] is viewing a series of famous Norman fortifications that includes: the Castello di Venere; the Torretta Pepoli; and the Torri del Balio. Throughout his texts, Schinkel refers to a number of buildings as “Saracen”: This is a term that he unwittingly and randomly applies to Saracen, Byzantine, Moorish, Berber, Gothic, or Arab-Norman architecture. While traveling in Northwest Sicily, Schinkel often describes having visited “Saracen” buildings, yet there is no record that he actually drew them, except in the context of town views.

I would challenge this because what Schinkel understood as “Saracenic” is available within his own writing. As such, I would argue that he did in fact draw what he considered to be “Saracenic” buildings based on his definition, which we recall was “Saracenic because it was created by mixing oriental and antique architecture during the time of the migration.” Thus, Schinkel was already drawing buildings he believed reflected a “mixed” character, and he would, I contend, continue to do so throughout his trip.

As a matter of fact, the Siculo-Norman architecture of the eleventh century onward can without difficulty be considered “Saracenic” (if we are to maintain this eighteenth-century

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240 Ibid. (My emphasis)
parlance for the sake of the argument). The reason for this is the evidence of the abundance of Muslim craftsmen employed by the Norman leadership during this period to design and build any number of buildings. Furthermore, it is widely accepted that the Norman court itself embraced multiple representational codes of kingship, including “Islamic” ones. The fact is that there was substantial interaction between warring cultures on the island of Sicily. The still extant result of these interactions can be seen in the physical, stylistic and cultural expressions of its art and architecture. These have been known and documented since the very early nineteenth century. Unfortunately, much of the article I began to discuss above is dedicated to disaggregating Schinkel’s use of the term in an attempt to correct him. In a response to Schinkel’s description of the Villa Butera, which he refers to as “Saracenic”, the author responds quite firmly:

The Villa Butera was not designed in the Saracen style, as Schinkel documented, but rather it was an exceptionally fortified Norman-style villa. Furthermore, it has an

242 To make matters even more confusing in the article the author assigns labels seemingly haphazardly to Schinkel’s use of the term without qualifying any of these descriptions – what architecture is the author referring to exactly when using the term “Berber” and “Moorish” with regard to Sicily? These labels are practically irrelevant in terms of this location (not to mention antiquated and derogatory).

243 As William Tronzo has demonstrated, the architecture of the Cappella Palatina itself for example, was an attempt to create an “original” space for new ceremonies that, despite their Byzantine origins, had to accommodate not only a Byzantine population, but Norman Christians and Muslim Arabs with a Christian king who spoke to them in Arabic. See: William Tronzo, The Cultures of His Kingdom: Roger II and the Cappella Palatina in Palermo (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 122-125.

244 Examples here abound with texts such as: Henry Gally Knight’s (1786-1846) two books: The Normans in Sicily (1838), and Saracenic and Norman remains, to illustrate the Normans in Sicily, (1840), Friedrich Hessemer’s Altitalienische und arabische Bauverzierungen (1840), and Girault de Prangey’s (1804-1892) Essai sur l’architecture des Arabes et des Mores, en Espagne, en Sicile, et en Barbarie (Paris, A. Hauser, 1841). Also see: Dalu Jones’s article “Romanesque, East and West?” in Connoisseur 191 (1976): 280-85. It is noteworthy as well as much of the work of Ernst Gruber in this area, in particular on the Cappella Palatina. For more recent contributions see: Jill Caskey, “Liquid Gothic: Uses of Stucco in Southern Italy” in: Matthew M. Reeve (editor), Reading Gothic Architecture (Turnhout Belgium: Brepolis Publishers, 2008): 111-122.
extremely incongruous composition, as it is a Norman-style villa with a cloister in the courtyard.\textsuperscript{245}

Not only is the author's accuracy in question with regard to her "correction," but she entirely undermines the mixed and heterogeneous nature of the architecture described here. The idea that it could be Norman and "Saracenic" seems to be impossible. Indeed, the likely reason for this "incongruity" in the plan is the result of the influence of the Islamic fortification building type called a Ribat, which often features a courtyard and is found throughout North Africa (fig. 25 & fig. 26). However, the author does not suggest this possibility. Instead the synthetic quality that Schinkel witnessed and described in his drawings has, in this case, been marginalized by style purism. Indeed, it is this desire for stylistic purity throughout the historiography that I believe is a central reason that this entire chapter of Schinkel’s foundational œuvre is passed over.

As I had begun to outline above, with regard to the historiography on the Gothic, the idea of a formal ‘purity’ within accepted styles such as the Gothic remains a substantial presence in the historiography. Thus, the comparison with Marvin Trachtenberg’s concept of "column avoidance language" is relevant.\textsuperscript{246} His work in this area not only reveals the rich variegated nature of Gothic architecture, but more importantly exposes the instability of the term Gothic itself by arguing that definitions of it “cannot be assembled into anything more than an unwieldy and finally self-contradictory interpretive bricolage of mainly nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century criteria."\textsuperscript{247} Similarly, it is precisely in this line of thinking that I believe we can account for the absence of scholarship exploring the role of the “Saracenic” in Schinkel’s

\textsuperscript{245} Susan Peik, “Schinkel in Northwest Sicily,” 29.
\textsuperscript{247} Marvin Trachtenberg, “Desedimenting Time”, 6.
work. However, this reason may only account for the style as it participates in a mixed architecture as a potential source of origin for the Gothic. The question that remains is what happened to the “Saracenic” before its historiographical exclusion? In other words why is the idea of a ‘mixed’ or ‘hybrid’ architecture that includes Islamic influences missing in Schinkel’s later Gothic projects? It is true that there are no obvious references to the “Saracenic” in some of Schinkel’s most famous Gothic works such as the Mausoleum for Queen Louise (1810), or his many famous variations on the Cathedral of the Wars of Liberation (1815). However, the answer, I believe, is already to be found in the above explanation. The reason any potential “Saracenic” influences never appear in any formal way in Schinkel’s Gothic projects into the 1820s is because within a year after his return home to Berlin in 1805 Prussia fell to Napoleon. This occupation by Napoleon only drove the Romantics to define themselves in opposition to the French (as described above), which results in a nearly fanatic embrace of the Gothic as the “authentic” German architecture.

It is during this period of a “nationaleuphorische Gotikbegeisterung” (euphoric national Gothic enthusiasm) in Prussia after 1806—when the Gothic is transformed from a literary idea into an architectural idea—that the Gothic shed any association with the “foreign”. In the wake of the devastating wars with France, the Gothic became “the appropriate architectural form for the expression of an “authentic” German culture, for the culture of a “genuine primal people [wahres Urvolk]” as described by Schinkel himself in 1810 in his description for Queen Louise’s tomb.249 It became, as John Toews has suggested, “the language

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of liberation for the German people, an instrument for cultural self-recognition and self-affirmation that would make possible the assertion of historical autonomy not only vis-à-vis the oppressive weight of the classical heritage but also against French and Italian cultures in the present. Thus in the great push to develop a uniquely “German architecture” the Gothic, which was from this point forward referred to almost exclusively as “German architecture” or “Patriotic architecture,” (or “Vaterländische Baukunst”) could not—by definition—come from somewhere outside of the theorized borders. Indeed, it was necessary for Gothic architecture to shed its origins in any kind of mixed or hybrid styles. Even its potential association with a culture perceived to be “foreign” such as the Islamic building tradition was no longer conceivable because in order for the Gothic to be appropriated as a national ‘German’ style it had to either be rid of any obvious foreign influences or recast any foreign influences that were potentially there as part of the “all-encompassing” nature of a Universal Christian culture.

Indeed, in addition to demonstrating that Schinkel was firmly a product of the eighteenth century, it is also important to point out that despite this strong cultural attitude toward the Gothic and Schinkel’s eventual rejection of it, there were those at the Bauakademie who would approach the Gothic and other styles quite differently, especially after Schinkel’s death.

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250 Toews, *Becoming Historical*, 121.
251 Ibid., 125.
CHAPTER TWO

AFTER SCHINKEL:
THE BERLINER SCHULE AND THE PERSISTENCE OF STYLE

Our new world is actually nothing at all. It consists of nothing more than a yearning for the past and an always uncertain groping for that which is yet to be created.252

- Wilhelm von Humboldt (1805)

When we build an opera house in the Renaissance style, a synagogue in the Egyptian style and a church in the old German style etc., there is no doubt that posterity will acknowledge the fact that we have learned a great deal. However, they will be able to find no standard for our artistic achievements.253

- Andreas Romberg (1845)

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INTRODUCTION

The state of affairs within Germany in the decades after the Wars of Liberation was at best unstable. Within this post-Napoleonic milieu there were a number of key debates or ‘national’ discussions that certainly affected all strata of society. From discussions about what ‘Germany’ and ‘German culture’ was, or should be, to the role and activities of the Grimm brothers in creating that culture, Germans were preoccupied with themselves. However, other important defining factors of this period in the Germanies include a keen interest in the Greek Wars of Independence, concern over the Metternichian ban on liberal nationalism (and its consequences), the founding of the Gymnasien, and the huge expansion of Prussia into the Rhineland.

Beginning with the Karlsbad decrees of 1819, which restricted advocates of governmental reform such as constitutionalists and nationalists, dreams of German unification and attempts to limit the power of the monarchies would eventually evaporate by 1823. The 1820s have been characterized as a “reactionary decade,” one that saw a period of political unrest and the arrest of many members of the Burschenschaftler (student fraternities), sympathetic university professors, and a variety of individuals involved with publishing who may have dipped their pen in this revolutionary ink. These measures only temporarily held back the growing reform movement that saw renewed hope coming from Paris in the form of the short-lived July Revolution in 1830. Several months later, the tone of the decade ahead was set in the Duchy of Braunschweig when, in September of that year, the ducal palace in the capital Braunschweig was burned to the ground by a group of angry handicraft workers in reaction to

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poor treatment by their duke Karl II. This event, however, was only the symbolic foreshadowing of the economic decline yet to come in the 1840s.

In spite of these post-Napoleonic difficulties, the 1820s began to witness more substantial political reform, though not in the larger states like Prussia and Austria. Some reforms however, were adopted in Prussia such as changes to the guild system, unlike Austria, which was more reluctant to change. Indeed, the reform of the guilds in Prussia had a critical impact on its society. This reform involved changing what was basically a medieval guild system that controlled and regulated all craft production across trades. Challenges to this established method of production, or the resulting Gewerbefreiheit ("freedom to pursue a trade"), began under French rule and came to Prussia in 1810. By 1845 in Prussia the guilds had all but lost their monopoly on craft production as well as their control over who was admitted to these trades. The Gewerbefreiheit not only resulted in a significant change in who could pursue what trade, but had an even greater impact on facilitating industrialization. By the 1840s tensions had increased and political unrest was widespread with the situation remaining uncertain due to continued disputes over constitutional questions and agrarian and business reforms. These decades of instability were reflected in German culture and art in a variety of ways, particularly in the formation and evolution of the nationalist movement which would significantly effect Schinkel in the early decades of the century.

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256 Ibid.
257 Ibid.
258 Ibid.
259 Nipperdey, Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck, 187.
The legacy of Schinkel, as maintained through his students and in the institutions he helped to define, remained a significant presence in the decades after his death. This influence eventually began to wane after German unification in 1871. Despite its historicist character, however, his work and influence was never fully dismissed by dedicated modernists. In fact, his reappearance in the discourse in the early twentieth century is largely due to modernists like Peter Behrens who ‘rediscovered’ Schinkel around 1910 and encouraged others to study him. Thus, it was through Behrens’ own early work, which in many respects emulated that of Schinkel, that prompted other modernists such as Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886-1969) to study and revive the work of the great Prussian master in the early twentieth century. In the historiography these comparisons between Schinkel and Modernist architects has taken different forms. For example in Julius Posener’s classic lecture series turned book From Schinkel to the Bauhaus (1972), Posener implies the continuity of thought as he traces Schinkel’s ideas in his work through Muthesius, then back to Germany. Posener does not base his claim that Mies van der Rohe, for example, views Schinkel as an influence (even though Mies does), but rather he implies a connection through his narration of the story of Modernism in Germany, which begins with Schinkel.

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As I have outlined in the preceding chapter, Schinkel drew upon a diverse range of historical precedents in order to create a 'modern' architecture appropriate to his time, one that sought a synthesis of past styles (a synthetic historicism) and of structural symbolism (the tectonic). This idea that architecture consisted of two fundamental components grew out of Schinkel’s theories on architecture. This dual nature of architecture included a symbolic function that simultaneously invoked a formal, historical idiom (style), while simultaneously expressing its interior structural composition on the exterior (tectonic). This idea, which was to occupy theorists for the rest of the century, was championed by different camps within the Bauakademie and ultimately, after Schinkel’s death, became a divisive subject.

The figure that emerges most prominently in the historiography of this post-Schinkel period is Karl Bötticher. His dominance persists only because of the choices made later in constructing the history of the Modern Movement. Therefore, in contrast to what has become the dominant perspective, I would argue that others at the Bauakademie, such as Wilhelm Stier (1799-1856) pursued a different strategy. This position sought to have architecture represent its own contemporary moment by invoking a new historical awareness through the formal expression of architectural style. This latter position represents what we can understand not as an “alternative” path to an “alternative” Modernism, but rather as a “path not taken.” This position is certainly in contrast to the dominant narrative, which privileges the evolution of Bötticher’s tectonics into the spatial discourse that had become so integral to the Modern Movement. Additionally, the role of historicism is undoubtedly important to this discussion. Indeed, this category and the very idea of “historicism,” especially in architectural terms, I believe, is often too carelessly used throughout the historiography as a generally derogatory term meant to condemn any work of architecture that contains formal references to architecture of the past. As
such it is important to address some of these concerns in the space of this chapter. Thus, through
the debates discussed in this chapter, I will re-frame the post-Schinkel era in a way that
demonstrates the richness of one of Modernism’s potential paths that were ultimately not taken,
yet deserve much more attention than they have been given.

SCHINKEL'S STYLISTIC IDEOLOGY AND ITS INTERPRETATION

The drive for a new architectural style, which would take into account new materials, programs
and new modes of production without discarding architecture’s vast and rich history, was to
continue to be central focus for many architects throughout the century. For all those individuals
who pursued ‘the modern’ in a variety of forms, there were just as many who sought either to
maintain a status quo or directly revive specific styles for specific ideological reasons. Even
Schinkel can be regarded as complicit in using architectural style for ideological purposes. This
is particularly evident in his early work, which linked post-War nationalist tendencies to the
concept of a German (Gothic) Architecture. This idealized Gothic expression can be seen in his
designs for the Befreiungsdom (Cathedral Monument to the Wars of Liberation) of 1814-15 (fig.
27), which many have since argued was quite clearly linked to the growing nationalist movement
and the strong influence of Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) over Schinkel. Fichte, in
addition to (and part of) his significant work in transcendental Idealism also wrote and theorized
about the German nation and national identity and was, among other things, particularly well
known for his Addresses to the German Nation (1808) which were a series of speeches given
during the French occupation that sought to define “Germanness” in terms of language, religion
and historical perceptions (i.e. Roman) of the “Germans.”

263 It is well known that the only book Schinkel took on his first trip to Italy was Fichte’s Die Bestimmung
des Menschen (The Vocation of Man) (1800). Barry Bergdoll, Karl Friedrich Schinkel, 19.
However, the degree to which this type of nationalism played a role in the work of Schinkel is by no means certain and very few projects remain (if they were even built) from this Gothic moment in his life. Indeed, one reason I believe Schinkel is commonly described as “Romantic” is precisely because of his interest in the Gothic. The word that most often follows “Romantic” in the case of describing Schinkel’s work is “Classicism” suggesting that his oeuvre be described as “Romantic Classicism.” This phrase, I believe is not only intended to distinguish him from the Gothic movement and its potentially ‘irrational’ associations with the Romantic Movement, but is also intended to reinforce his link to Classicism, which was the only acceptable precedent for twentieth century modernists if any were to be cited at all.264

Nonetheless, Schinkel produced Gothic projects that were primarily concerned with German identity and nationalism. The most prevalent include two designs for Queen Louise of Prussia and a monument to the wars of liberation. The designs for the Queen (who was a vivid symbol of Prussia’s identity during the occupation) included her tomb and a memorial in Gransee. The Gothic design for a Mausoleum for Queen Louise (1810) was ultimately rejected by the king in favor of a Doric styled temple motif designed by Heinrich Gentz (fig. 28). However, Schinkel strongly believed the only style appropriate for the tomb of such a significant national hero was the Gothic. Indeed, from his text accompanying his proposal it becomes

264 Despite Modernism’s general rejection of historical style and ornament other precedents of the Modern Movement’s link to the Classical past never completely dematerialized. It was through the efforts of historians such as Colin Rowe, and his landmark essay The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa (1947), that critically linked the work of Le Corbusier to the famous sixteenth-century Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio maintaining a type of continuity through the (mannerist) historicism of the Renaissance revival. Rowe had his critics such as Alan Colquhoun for example, who rejected this kind of historicism in Le Corbusier’s work. But far prior to this are the descriptions of buildings such as Peter Behrens’s AEG Turbine Factory in Berlin as exhibiting a so-called “Industrial Classicism.” One of the few modernists to even hint at the study of Gothic architecture as a precedent was Louis Kahn (1901-74) and his work on achieving monumentality in architecture, which suggested studying the Gothic in order to understand its spiritual quality. Louis I. Kahn, “Monumentality,” in Paul Zucker, ed., New Architecture and City Planning (New York: Philosophical Library, 1944): 577–588.
evident how strongly he felt. Schinkel says of the mausoleum that he “wants” the visitor to experience a (physical) “well-being,” as well as the “edification” of the “spirit” in order to “strive toward perfection.”

Jörg Trempler suggests that the reason for Schinkel’s emotional description for the design was his deep admiration for the Queen (with whom he was personally acquainted) who had achieved saintly status very soon after her death.

Trempler suggests that Schinkel’s design not only encouraged “each Prussian citizen [to] build and shape their morality,” but “promote[d] the aesthetic education of society.”

Schinkel did eventually have the chance to utilize the Gothic for the Queen in another smaller project in Gransee. This was a cast-iron Memorial to Queen Louise (1811) and included an open iron framework in the Gothic style covering a catafalque also cast in iron (fig. 29). This project, however, foreshadows one of Schinkel’s ultimate projects in the service of nationalism: the Monument to the Wars of Liberation on the Kreuzberg (1821-26) (fig. 30). And while the monument is significant, it had in fact started out as one of Schinkel’s grandest proposals: the Befreiungsdom (Cathedral as Memorial to the Wars of Liberation) (1814-15). This project involved a massive Gothic cathedral, but it was never completed due, in part, to the king’s fear of provoking the public with a monument intended to celebrate the public itself.

The Cathedral was never approved, but the much smaller Kreuzberg project was and it became the culmination of Schinkel’s attachment of the Gothic to the nationalist movement with its overt references to both recent and historical German heroes who fought against French ‘aggression.’

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265 Trempler, Karl Friedrich Schinkel, 77. “Man sollte sich in dieser Halle wohlfühlen, und jedem sollte sie zur Erbauung seines Gemüths offen stehen, - das wollte ich. Ein jeder sollte darin gestimmt werden, side Bilder der Zukunft zu schaffen, durch welche sein Wesen erhöht, und er zum Streben nach Vollendung genöthigt werde.” (My emphasis.)
266 Trempler, Karl Friedrich Schinkel, 78.
267 Ibid.
268 Edward Toews, Becoming Historical, 136-40.
The fact that Schinkel rendered these two nationalist oriented projects in the Gothic style and in cast iron is not a coincidence. Prussia's enthusiasm for cast iron had begun with its identification of the material with the national war effort. This involved either the trading in of one's gold and silver that was needed for the war effort, and instead wearing cast iron jewelry, or simply purchasing new jewelry in cast iron due to the scarceness of more precious metals. As such, it became a prominent feature in Prussian culture as it became associated with the nation's identity in the face of the Napoleonic threat. Cast iron production in Prussia began rather late in comparison to Britain with the opening of the first iron foundry (under royal patronage) in Gleiwitz (Silesia) in 1796 (under an Englishman's supervision no less). 269

In both the Queen Louise Memorial project, as well as the famous Kreuzberg Monument to the Wars of Liberation, Schinkel designed free standing structures that were composed entirely out of cast iron. The Kreuzberg monument reflects Schinkel's primary concern with the exterior appearance—and thus style—of the building. This is apparent when we examine the section, which is composed of an interior of cast iron whose only function is to hold the exterior cast iron non-structural sections in place (fig. 31). There is clearly no attempt here to convey an internal structural logic and the result is decidedly in favor of the expression of meaning on the exterior. After his trip to Britain, however, Schinkel set out to emulate the model he had seen in John Nash's Brighton Pavilion with the design of a two-story cast iron staircase for the

269 Ursula Ilse-Neuman, “Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Berlin Cast Iron, 1810-1841,” in Cast Iron from Central Europe, 1800-1850, Elizabeth Schmuttermeier, ed. (New York/Vienna: Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts/MAK—Austrian Museum of Applied Arts, 1994), 55. The Königlichen Eisengießerei Berlin (Royal Iron Works of Berlin) was founded even later in 1804. Others, not under royal patronage such as Lauchhammer opened somewhat earlier. Lauchhammer was founded in 1725 but was only able to begin casting art objects in 1784. See: Elisabeth Schmuttermeier, “The Central European Cast-Iron Industries,” in Elizabeth Schmuttermeier, ed., Cast Iron from Central Europe, 1800-1850, 75.
Albrechtspalais (1830-32) made up entirely of the new material, which, not surprisingly, resembles Brighton’s quite closely.

By 1830 Schinkel began to take advantage of iron’s simultaneous qualities of delicacy and strength with the creation of patterns in the ‘pierce-work’ that were reflected in the pendentives of arches and elements on the ceiling at the Albrechtspalais.\(^{270}\) In her study of Schinkel’s use of cast iron, Ursula Ilse-Neuman remarks that as the use of cast iron became more widespread, designers in Berlin employed a “broad stylistic range,” which included formal inspiration from “ancient Greek, Roman, and Egyptian to the more contemporary French Empire and English Regency periods.”\(^{271}\) Indeed, the new material opened up possibilities for new forms yet, in the end, the Gothic did not last much longer in Schinkel’s hands except for the Friedrichswerder Kirche (1824-31), which, it has been argued, is much more Classical in its overall form and intention than Gothic.\(^{272}\) Yet Schinkel’s continued use of cast iron until the end of his career was to have a significant impact on the work of his successors, for whom the material only increased in availability and applicability.

Despite Schinkel’s continued legacy, the architectural movement that gained the greatest traction and ‘won out’, so to speak, in the last third of the century, and was to become firmly entrenched in Germany during the Gründerzeit,\(^{273}\) was that of the neo-Renaissance style. This is


\(^{271}\) Ibid., 69.


\(^{273}\) (lit. “foundation period/epoch”) This term is typically used to define a period of economic growth and development in Germany (including Austria) until the great Stock Market crash of 1873 just after unification in 1871. It can generally considered to begin somewhere in the 1840s with increased industrialization, and large population migrations into the cities. This surge of population in the cities then led to great building campaigns to house workers and related institutions etc. For example in Berlin alone.
not to say that other revival styles, such as neo-Baroque and neo-Gothic were completely neglected during this period, but the Renaissance variants were by far the most popular due to their continued association with the growing Bürgertum (Bourgeoisie), which embraced it.\textsuperscript{274} I introduce the idea of the Bürgertum’s tendency to embrace the neo-Renaissance style here because I think its ubiquity and popularity, which is generally not considered “Modern,” by scholars, has obscured the way in which we view the architecture that preceded it. The years after Schinkel’s death in 1841 were a critical time in the Berlin architectural scene with his legacy and intentions subject to interpretation by his successors. These debates were played out, not only at the Bauakademie, but other public forums such as the annual association meetings of architects, as well as a variety of publications. Thus, this professional public sphere quickly became the arena in which many of these debates over the role and meaning of style were debated in their formative years beginning in the 1830s and 40s in the wake of Heinrich Hübsch’s publication of 1828 In welchem Style sollen wir bauen? However, this debate over style had just begun since it would occupy architects and theorists for the rest of the century.

**Historiography After Schinkel: The Period ‘In-between’**

Upon Schinkel’s death in October of 1841 at the age of 60, Prussia lost a man who many have considered to be not only Prussia’s greatest architect, but also “the last great architect.”\textsuperscript{275} There during this period the population quadrupled. According to the “Stand der Bevölkerung in Berlin” published ca. 1918, the population in 1825 was estimated to be around 219,968 and by 1873 the population was 900,348. [Jürgen Paffhausen, “Fortschreibung des Bevölkerungsbestandes,” (Zeitschrift für amtliche Statistik Berlin Brandenburg, 1+2/2012), 89. Accessible online at: https://www.statistik-berlin-brandenburg.de/produkte/zeitschrift/2012/hz_201201.pdf]\textsuperscript{274} Mitchell Schwarzer, *German Architectural Theory and the Search for Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 17-18, 113. And: Helmut Engel, *Berlin auf dem Weg zur Moderne* (Berlin: Jovis Verlag, 1997), 30-35, 47f.\textsuperscript{275} Quote attributed to Adolf Loos in: Rand Carter. "Karl Friedrich Schinkel, The Last Great Architect". Prefatory essay from *Collection of Architectural Designs including those designs which have been*
is no doubt his death left a substantial lacuna in the German architectural world; however, his legacy had already begun to be contested decades before his death. At stake were a range of important issues, trends and precedents begun by him that successive generations of architects believed demanded attention. Questions concerning who would take over his official positions in the public realm, which included appointments such as the Oberbaudeputation (Higher Council of Architecture), were important due to the potential impact a successor’s aesthetic or theoretical proclivities could have on Berlin’s architecture. And despite the fact that Schinkel was not an instructor, in the traditional sense of the word, the question about who would be his successor at the Bauakademie was still important because this position afforded a substantial amount of influence on architectural education. Questions regarding style and the role of technology in an industrializing Prussia were at stake. Since Schinkel’s output was so vast, and his involvement in Prussia’s architectural and political culture so extensive, there were many avenues available to potential ‘heirs’ who wished to continue and expand upon aspects of his legacy. Most important though, was how this historical moment would be considered and written about later.

For the most part, the literature on Berlin architects during the period between 1840 and 1870 is available only in German and, as such, remains limited to German historiography. This period also has the unfortunate problem of following one of the most prolific and famous architects of the late eighteenth-and early nineteenth century. The fact that Modernist historians did not anoint a clear or direct successor to Schinkel within the larger narrative of Modernism has to do with a number of factors. One of these was the shift of focus to France in order to highlight the work of proto-Modernists such as Henri Labrouste (1801-75), or Viollet-le-Duc

executed and objects whose execution was intended by Karl Friedrich Schinkel (Chicago: Exedra Books Incorporated, 1981), 27.
(1814-79). In addition to this, as I have suggested above, the continued use of styles such as the *Rundbogenstil*, by others, from the mid-1830s through the 1860s, as well as the substantial profusion of the neo-Renaissance style later in the century have all contributed to the general exclusion of this period from the historiography of Modernism. One of the few texts in English that has dealt with several of these Berliner Schule architects, in the period from 1840-70, is Kathleen Curran's *The Romanesque Revival: Religion, Politics, and Transnational Exchange*. The book explores the impact of several German architects by placing them in the context of the international Romanesque revival during a period of rapid industrialization and mass migration. By including Britain and the United States in her analysis, she suggests that the growth and spread of the style effectively amounted to an international phenomenon. The scope of the book, however, does not include forwarding the idea that the Romanesque revival anticipated the Modern Movement. Nevertheless, considering the ‘international’ nature of the Rundbogenstil, we can infer that through expanding methods of circulating capital, the spread of the style suggests that Rundbogenstil architecture was now firmly a part of new modes of global interaction and consumption.

For the most part, the group of Schinkel’s successors who worked in and around the Mark Brandenburg in the 1840s-60s produced architecture that could be described as Rundbogenstil. This ‘group’ is commonly referred to as the *Schinkelschule* (Schinkel School), in that they emulated or developed Schinkel’s design philosophy and produced designs, for the most part, in the Rundbogenstil. In fact, this ‘school’ can be considered more as like-minded individuals who shared a stylistic philosophy, rather than a group of individuals working

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276 However, some such as Knoblauch were still considered *Schinkelschüler* despite the fact that the *Rundbogenstil* did not dominate his designs as refer to above.
together. Thus, the eponymic term “Schinkel School” can often refer to either his like-minded students, or to a style that has formal similarities to the Rundbogenstil.

The extent to which the Rundbogenstil actually plays a significant role in the development of modern architecture is not easy to assess. Additionally, it is important to note that there were architects working in Berlin during this period of the first generation, from the mid 1830s to 40s, that did not work predominantly in the Rundbogenstil, and instead chose to work in any number of styles, including what would become the dominant style of neo-Renaissance by the last third of the century. One example of an exception to the Rundbogenstil was Carl Heinrich Eduard Knoblauch (1801-1865), who worked in a style Azra Charbonnier characterizes as “typisch Knoblauchsche Architektursprache” (Knoblauch’s typical architectural language), which she describes as being influenced by Schinkel but incorporating Knoblauch’s idiosyncrasies. Compared to the work dedicated to the theory produced during this time, relatively little has been written about these buildings. Instead, scholarship about this period has generally focused on the significant body of theoretical texts produced by art and architecture critics.

These critics wrote on many subjects, from the role of style and precedent in contemporary architecture, to means and methods of construction, to the role of industrialization in the building arts. Many of these writers on architecture’s theory and history such as Heinrich Hübsch, Karl Bötticher, and of course Gottfried Semper, have been translated and inserted into more recent anthologies, affirming their important role in the development of Modernism. Yet designs produced, and buildings built, during this period are rarely discussed outside of

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specialized German scholarship. In the 1930s Wolfgang Herrmann described the period after Schinkel from 1840 to 1860 throughout Germany as a period of "transitions," and that a "direction toward Semper [and towards Dresden] appeared immediately." Although Hermann characterizes this period as a "stagnation of architectural development," he nonetheless praises the work of the Schinkelschule in and around Berlin as "very tasteful" and notes that the "proportional effects and clear language of the section [Schinkel’s] is still kept alive in the Schinkel school." The first significant attempt after Hermann to deal with this period was Eva Börsch-Supan’s seminal text *Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel, 1840-1870* (1977). As part historical study and part catalogencyclopedia of the architects, trends, and ideas of this period it is an invaluable resource that appears in every bibliography on the subject. It was the first study to call attention to a period that, until then, had no distinct identity. But despite the text’s accomplishment it is nearly forty years old and has recently been called "a meritorious, but methodically and factually outdated study of the Schinkel school." Since the appearance of Börsch-Supan’s text, however, the tendency in the German literature has been to focus either on

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278 Harry Francis Mallgrave, who has translated and published many key German language texts from this period, has accomplished a bulk of this work. Many appear in the Getty Texts & Documents series and include: Winckelmann’s *History of the Art of Antiquity* (with Alex Potts) (Getty, 2006), Semper’s *Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts: or, Practical Aesthetics* (with Michael Robinson) (Getty, 2004), but others have also contributed to the Getty series like Wolfgang Herrmann who introduced and translated Heinrich Hübsch et al. *In What Style Should We Build? The German Debate on Architectural Style* (Getty, 1992). In addition to the translations Mallgrave has also asserted the place of these theorists in the history of modern architecture through their inclusion in anthologies such as his *Modern Architectural Theory: A Historical Survey, 1673-1968* (2009) and his two volume *Architectural Theory: An Anthology from Vitruvius to 1870 and from 1871 to 2005* (2005).

279 Wolfgang Herrmann, *Deutsche Baukunst des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, 18. All in all Semper’s role in architectural practice in the first half of nineteenth-century Berlin has been overstated to a certain extent in that due to the success of his influential writings, his buildings (all rendered in a Neo-Renaissance revival style), have been forgivingly overlooked by many modernist historians due to the admiration so many have had with his writings.


a single architect or a specific building project in order to contribute new, almost redemptive, knowledge about this era. It is only more recently that exceptions have begun to appear. More recent studies often explore other geographic areas within which these architects worked, or they focus on their role in various aspects of royal patronage etc. (some recent examples include: *Wilhelm IV. von Preußen - Von Borneo nach Rom: Sanssouci und die Residenzprojekte 1814-1848* by Rolf Johannsen (2007) and *Historismus und Repräsentation: Die Baupolitik Friedrich Wilhelms IV. in der preußischen Rheinprovinz* by Jan Werquet (2010).

In the last decade or so a number of significant monograph studies have been published about *Schinkelschule* architects signifying the resurgence of interest in this group since the first wave in the 1970s and early 1980s. However, linking these architects to broader international movements of the nineteenth century and interpreting their work in the context of such concepts as modernization, Modernism or global history has been less frequent. As a result, many of these architects remain bound to their immediate time period and location within the historiography. Analyzed in terms of broader nineteenth-century trends such as industrial modernization, however, the contribution of these architects can be reassessed in substantially different terms. In other words, by utilizing strategies that situate these architects within a more ‘international’ context, i.e. by considering Germany’s contemporary position not only in relation to Europe, but the world, such analyses would produce new ways of understanding their contribution to these ‘international’ trends such as Modernism. By studying these individuals in this way we can begin to recognize how inter/trans-national patterns of change affected their architectural practices and designs.

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²⁸² More recent monographic works include dedicated studies on Ludwig Persius, Carl Heinrich Eduard Knoblauch, Carl Scheppig, and Martin Gropius, all of whom studied under Schinkel.
The dominant tendency since the early 1980s, particularly within studies devoted to the development of architectural theory throughout much of the nineteenth century, has been to focus on the internal debates about a building’s structure and its relationship to its exterior (the tectonic). Although this is an oversimplification of the debate, it nonetheless characterizes the essence of what preoccupied so many theorists during the century. This ‘tectonics’ debate not only related to structure and cladding, but implicated style, intent, meaning, history, culture and much more in terms of how architecture’s origins were conceived, as well as to larger ontological questions such as a building purpose or function. A significant aspect of the larger context within which these architects worked is reflected in the key debates they had about architecture and preoccupied both historians and practitioners.

**The Great Debate: Style and Tectonics at the Bauakademie**

This debate was carried out in full force at the Bauakademie and it was made famous through the arguments of two well-known professors: the charismatic Friedrich Ludwig Wilhelm Stier (1799-1856), who advocated a position based on conceptions of style and history, and Karl Gottlieb Wilhelm Bötticher (1806-89), who advocated the “rationalist” system of the “tectonic.” At the risk of a reductivist reading I would submit that, on the whole, Bötticher argued for an internal symbolic that located meaning within the expression of the structural and constructional composition of a building and expressed (by structural logic) on its exterior. Stier, on the other hand, sought an external symbolic that located meaning on the exterior of the building and called upon the history of formal architectural expression in order to convey this meaning. In other words, Stier was not concerned (as Bötticher was) if a building’s structure was represented (symbolically or otherwise) in any way on its exterior. He believed architecture’s purpose was to
utilize the forms from its vast history and diverse range of cultures in order to convey meaning in
the present.

As I have alluded to above, after the advent of the Modernist Movement in the twentieth
century, its theorists constructed a genealogy, which gravitated more towards Bötticher’s theory
of tectonic expression since it enabled them to shed formal (external) historical references and
focus on the self-referential (internal) expression of a building’s constructional and structural
composition (this is despite Bötticher’s own historicism, which was firmly rooted in Greek
antiquity). Wilhelm Stier’s proposals, on the other hand, advocated an approach to architecture
wherein the discipline would be self-referential in an entirely different way, and in the broadest
sense, by representing its own vast and diverse global history of forms in ways he felt
appropriate for a given project.

In all likelihood both Stier and Bötticher believed they were carrying on Schinkel’s
legacy and his ideas about history’s role in contemporary architecture. Stier’s newfound
knowledge about architecture’s history was based on an entirely different notion of history that
dominated the Bauakademie in the form of Greek antiquity, or even the Gothic revival. I believe
Stier’s ideas were based on the rapidly expanding area of travel literature, exploration,
imperialism and continued post-Enlightenment projects like the Encyclopédie and its attempt to
assemble and organize the world’s information. And while these trends were neither new nor
original, transportation to and from distant places became easier as trade and communication
networks continued to evolve. One example of this can be seen in the French invasion of Egypt
in 1798. Napoleon framed the invasion as a liberation of the Egyptian people from the tyrannical
rule of the Mamluks in order to save Egypt. However, his actual intention was to interrupt
Britain’s lucrative transportation route to India since the British occupation of the Dutch Cape of Good Hope had restricted communication with the Indies.283 Thus, in as much as European nations were still vying over political borders at home, they had effectively brought the fight to places well beyond it. As a result of these increased and expanded networks European travelers, diplomats, scholars and explorers only increased their time abroad. Consequently, the number of studies on architecture both within and outside of Europe increased. These studies, as I have already demonstrated in the discussion of Schinkel with regard to the Daniell’s images of India, made their way into the libraries to which both practicing architects and professors in Berlin (such as Stier) had access.

Despite his significant influence at the Bauakademie and in spite of the incredibly rich and understudied drawings he left behind, Stier and his students are largely forgotten. The rest of this chapter, then, will introduce what I argue was an attempt to establish what in contemporary nineteenth-century terms can be described as a new architectural ‘style’ that reflected architecture’s current state in terms of an increasing awareness of its own history. Thus, in order to make sense of Stier’s theory it is important to consider the state of the discipline and Berlin’s architectural culture after Schinkel’s death and the different ways in which his legacy was continued.

A DIVIDED LEGACY: SCHINKEL’S MANY HEIRS

The Successors

Within this post-Schinkel environment I have identified three groups that began to materialize in the decades before his death, but whose theoretical positions grew increasingly clearer and definite afterward. The first group to which I will refer are the Schinkel “successors,” since this group most closely (and literally) assumed Schinkel’s official positions within the State, including royal commissions, and the Bauakademie. In the 1820s and 1830s Schinkel’s role at the Bauakademie put him in close association with a circle of student architects whom he either later directly hired or worked closely with in his practice. The two most famous of these architects include: Friedrich August Stüler (1800-1865) and Friedrich Ludwig Persius (1803-1845). Others in this circle, but not as well known (especially outside of German historiography) include: Carl Friedrich Adolph Scheppig (1803-1885), Carl Heinrich Eduard Knoblauch (1801-1865), and Johann Heinrich Strack (1805-1880), among others.

A number of these individuals stand out in that their association with Schinkel was exceptionally close and they assumed his most important positions. Typically considered Schinkel’s “favorite student,” Ludwig Persius became Baukonduktor (Building Planner) of Potsdam in 1821 and worked closely with Schinkel on many royal commissions there including the Glienicke Palace in Potsdam. He achieved the position of königlicher Hofbauinspektor

(Royal Court Building Inspector) in 1834 and quickly gained notoriety in the year of Schinkel’s death when Friedrich Wilhelm IV (with whom he had an excellent relationship) named him Hofarchitekt (Royal Court Architect), a position which even Schinkel never attained. Persius died suddenly just four years after Schinkel at the age of forty-two and was posthumously honored with the appointment of Oberbaurat (Head (Prussian) Architectural Advisor) from 1843. Despite Persius’s short career he left behind a substantial and significant body of work, which has been the subject of several books.

Another individual who worked closely with Schinkel as well as Persius was August Stüler. Also a student of Schinkel’s in the 1820s, Stüler was a prolific architect who quickly became co-director of the Bauakademie in 1829, then continued both Schinkel and Persius’s work with the royal Hohenzollern family, as well as Prussia’s public institutions in addition to running his own private practice. In 1832 he was appointed Hofbauinspektor (Royal Buildings Inspector), then Hofbaurat (Royal privy councilor for buildings). In 1843 he was appointed Hofarchitekt by Friedrich Wilhelm IV, and in the 1850s he achieved the position of Hofbaumeister in nearby Schwerin.

Both Persius and Stüler produced substantial bodies of work and designs that were predominantly in a classical idiom; however, they diverged from Classicism on a number of occasions, producing projects in styles ranging from early Christian (almost Byzantine) to various medieval and Gothic styles. Persius even designed a steam pump house for the royal

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285 Persius and Stüler each have several books and exhibitions dedicated to them as well as many articles and have been the focus of much literature since the 1970s. More recent monographic works include: Ludwig Persius - Architekt des Königs Baukunst unter Friedrich Wilhelm IV (2003) (edited by the Generaldirektion der Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, Potsdam; Azra Charbonnier’s Carl Heinrich Eduard Knoblauch (1801-1865): Architekt des Bürgertums (2007), Hendrik
retreat at Sanssouci in a “Turkish style” per the request of the king (now often referred to as the “Moschee” [Mosque]). This building, to which I will return, was actually based on forms derived from medieval Islamic architecture. What is important to stress about these architects is that whether they are defined as a “group” of architects or creators of—or participants in the development of—a style (which is a bit more difficult to argue due to their diversity in production), they are often described, as the ‘official’ successors credited with “continuing in his tradition.”

Despite their “official” assumption of Schinkel’s positions, and unfinished projects for that matter, they have (unlike Schinkel) been entirely excluded from any discussion of Modernism. This exclusion suggests that they have been portrayed more as predecessors to eclecticism rather than Modernism despite the general assessment that they produced high quality work, or to use Wolfgang Herrmann’s term “tasteful.” Aside from the prevalence of these individuals who ‘officially’ assumed Schinkel’s positions after his death, there were two other groups that also sought to interpret the master’s grand legacy. Indeed, these individuals concentrated their efforts not in carrying out Schinkel’s unfinished projects and built works for the government, but rather focusing their efforts on expanding upon Schinkel’s theoretical contribution. These individuals can be organized into two further groups, one of which will form a more central part of this dissertation.


See Eva Börsch-Supan (ed.), Ludwig Persius: Das Tagebuch des Architekten Friedrich Wilhelms IV. 1840-1845, Edited and commentary by Eva Börsch-Supan (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1908), 45. According to his diary the King specifically asks that the steam pump machine house be built as a “Turkish mosque with a smokestack as a minaret.”

This comment appears in many general biographies of them such as the Thieme-Becker (De Gruyter) Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon entry on August Stüler and Ludwig Persius.

The Tectonic Heirs

The second group of Schinkel ‘interpreters’ based much of their work on continuing specific theories he explored. They focused on Schinkel’s engagement with the role structure played in architecture’s meaning, utilizing the term ‘tectonic’ for this theoretical approach. These architects and theorists, whom I will refer to as the ‘Tectonic heirs’, were composed of individuals from practicing architects to academicians who chose to work out these ideas primarily through theoretical texts. As such, they did not focus on filling his positions or continuing his actual physical projects, but sought instead to expand and elaborate upon Schinkel’s theoretical ideas.

Without question the most well known figure in this group is the archaeologist, architect, historian and theorist Karl Gottlieb Bötticher (1806-1889). Equally devoted to Schinkel, as well as to the idea of Greek antiquity, Bötticher was a close follower of his at the Bauakademie, and eventually obtained a teaching position at the Gewerbe-Institut (Industrial/Crafts Institute) in 1832. He owed his first job to the founder of the Gewerbe-Institut, Christian Peter Wilhelm Friedrich Beuth (1781-1853). In 1839 he was invited by Schinkel to join the faculty at the Bauakademie and became fully established there as Professor in 1844 after achieving his Baumeisterprüfung (master builder) status. Peter Beuth, under whom Bötticher also studied is such a significant presence in the government and its modernizing, industrial institutions at the time it is necessary to attempt to succinctly explain his unique and fundamental role in “laying

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289 His name appears in the literature in various forms: Karl (Carl) (Gottlieb Wilhelm) Bötticher (Boetticher).

the cornerstone for Prussia’s modern industrial infrastructure.”291 And although I do not consider him as an “heir” of Schinkel’s per se, he had significant influence on many of his successors in the decades before and after Schinkel’s death. As an aggressive reformer, and very close friend of Schinkel’s, Beuth had a significant influence upon Schinkel’s own ideas about technology and industrialization. Beuth was not an architect, despite his influence on the profession. Instead, his focus had always been in the industrial arts and trade and he was interested in architecture only insofar as it became something of an industrialized commodity through new methods of production and materials.

Peter Beuth was a political and economic liberal, as well as an influential ministry official in the Prussian government and member of the State Council since 1810. In 1817 he revived and reorganized the government office Technichen Deputation für Handel und Gewerbe (Technical Department for Trade and Industry), which encouraged the exchange of technological knowledge between the government and industry and within industry itself. In 1819 he became its director. Then in 1821 he founded the Technischen Gewerbeschule (The Technical Institute) on Klosterstraße, which was later changed in 1827 to a “Gewerbe-Institut.” Its purpose was to provide training for “a new generation of culturally refined, technically competent businessmen.”292 Simultaneously, he founded the Verein zur Beförderung des Gewerbefleißes in Preußen (Association for the Promotion of Craft Activity in Prussia) and by the late 1820s he had become one of Berlin’s most influential individuals.293 The formation of these institutions was part of his attempt to have the government take a more active role in financially

292 Eric Dorn Brose, The Politics of Technological Change in Prussia, 10.
293 Ibid.
encouraging, supporting and expanding industrialization, which hitherto had been restricted to private societies in German lands, which were themselves based on English and French models.294

The Gewerbe-Institut became increasingly affiliated with the Bauakademie after Beuth was made director in 1830, indicating the important position industrialization, and its materials and methods, had achieved within an architectural academy.295 Often referred to as the “Father of the advancement of Prussian commercial/industrial craft,” Beuth was acutely aware of Prussia’s distant ranking among industrializing countries, particularly in comparison to Britain, which he visited on a number of occasions, once with Schinkel in 1826.296 He was an advocate of industrial advancement and sought to make Prussia a leader in industrial manufacture and production despite many of the government’s influential figures, such as Chancellor August von Hardenberg (1750-1822), who were fearful of the fast pace of industrialization and instead advocated a pastoral, agrarian based society which looked to ancient Greece as a model to emulate.297 Despite the initial difficulties with what Eric Brose has characterized as the Prussian government’s resistance to industrialization, some who reacted against this conservatism, such as Beuth, are no doubt responsible for what, beginning in the 1830s, was to be a staggeringly...

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294 Barbara Mundt, *Die deutschen Kunstgewerbeschulen im 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1974): 27. Mundt observes that Beuth’s effort in Prussia follows a list of others including: Hamburg (1765), Bremen (1789), Nürnberg (1792), Augsburg (1788), Munich (1815), and Frankfurt (1816), etc.

295 Beuth’s increasing influence at the Bauakademie is noted by Eva Börsch-Supan to be a burden upon Stier who did not approve of Beuth’s leadership or methods. See: Eva Börsch-Supan, *Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel, 1840-1870* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1977), 19. It is also important to acknowledge that a change of name went along with this change of leadership. In 1831 the Bauakademie changed its name to the *Allgemeine Bauschule* (General Building School), but it was changed back in 1849. Despite this I refer to the school throughout the nineteenth century in this document as the *Bauakademie*.


aggressive game of trying to catch up with the pace of Britain’s industrial complex that would result in the eventual out-producing of British steel manufacture between 1890 and 1895.298 Brose reminds us that the support of Beuth would never have happened had Prussia not had the industrially oriented “bourgeois king” Friedrich Wilhelm IV on the throne. This monarch was not only an amateur architect (tutored by Schinkel himself), but also an avid admirer and patron of architecture, not to mention a significant supporter of Schinkel.299

The dual influence of Schinkel and Beuth substantially affected Bötticher as he developed his theoretical position on architecture. However, as Bötticher’s theory developed it also reciprocally affected Schinkel’s own later ideas on the subject.300 After Schinkel’s death Bötticher’s position was most famously articulated in his widely read and influential book entitled Die Tektonik der Hellenen (Architectonics of the Greeks, 1844–52). The text not only contributed substantially to the study of Ancient Greek architecture, but advocated his theory for a Greek Classicism that celebrated the symbolic expression of a building’s structure through the ornamentation on its exterior (yet still maintaining the Greek classical language). His theory, which he saw as a further elaboration of Schinkel’s own ideas on tectonic expression, advocated a formal language for architecture that was firmly rooted in Greek Classicism, yet integrated the important material and structural developments of the medieval period.

Mitchell Schwarzer has characterized Bötticher’s vision as “a medievalist armature of material and structural forces represented by an explanatory language of Greek ornamental

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forms." Along with his "synthetic" approach he advocated the use and even visible expression of more modern materials like iron. In other words, Bötticher advocated the didactic expression of a building’s structure by articulating it symbolically on the exterior. He referred to this correlation between inside and out as an “organic” relationship between what he termed the Kunstform (“artistic form” or “ornament”), which was effectively an erlärende Hülle (explanatory shell) for the internal Kernform (or also Werkform or “form of the work,” i.e. the structure within). As a result, he attempted to articulate a synthesis of the Gothic and Greek that Schinkel could never quite manage, with a result that Caroline van Eck suggests “was part of a strategy of interpretation which gave the forms of styles of the past a new meaning.”

However, van Eck points out that these interpretive strategies are “intimately linked with strategies of invention,” because any “new meanings” also became the foundation for further uses of a given style. Mitchell Schwarzer refers to Bötticher’s theory, which tends toward the self-reflexivity of a building through the symbolic representation of its own structural composition, as the “ontological principle” whereby an architect creates an “artifice out of unformed matter.” He explains Bötticher’s ability to move beyond the “classical understanding of architecture as the passive observation of whole objects” by highlighting his knowledge of recent developments in aesthetic philosophy that coincided with a general trend from the objective to the subjective, and the passive to the active, which are indicative of the

302 Ibid., 267-68.
304 Caroline van Eck, Organicism in Nineteenth-century Architecture: An Inquiry into its Theoretical and Philosophical Background (Amsterdam: Architectura & Natura Press, 1994), 164.
305 Ibid.
306 Mitchell Schwarzer, German Architectural Theory, 267.
larger transformation from a Classical paradigm to a Romantic one. Yet, somewhat incongruously, Bötticher advocated a rather strict Greek Classicism. And although he was prolific, he did not design and build a single building other than reconstructions of archaeological sites such as Olympia. Thus, it is impossible to see his theory expressed in form.

A significant consolidation and interpretation of these ideas came in 1995 with Kenneth Frampton’s influential book *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture* (1995). This text, effectively a response to the post-modern movement, fixes this formulation of the tectonic to the idea of a self-referential modern architecture equally concerned with structure and construction and its fundamental (symbolic) role in architecture’s appearance. In an attempt to reconcile Bötticher’s tectonic Modernism with his historicism, Kai Gutschow has summarized the theorist’s position as such: “the Greeks had perfected a rational system of design--tectonics--analogous to nature’s own creative ways. Tectonics insured that every architectural detail was designed to be a true expression of its own inner structural, functional and material "essence," as well as an integral component of an overall design.” This comment reflects the nineteenth century idea that the Greeks were presumed to be so much in harmony with nature that they were ideal both in their tectonics and in their artistry. Gutschow also describes how Bötticher’s theory became an

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307 Ibid., 267.
important part of the modernist canon. He highlights Kenneth Frampton’s resuscitation of Bötticher’s theory through his own work on the tectonic as a response to the “superficial historicist pastiche of post-Modernism.”

Considering the work of Bötticher and some of his like-minded contemporaries, Mitchell Schwarzer has suggested that through their linking of structural tectonics with Greek forms, they represent an end to the period begun by Winckelmann and Stieglitz. This period, according to Schwarzer, is marked by a transition from a concern over building style to a concern for architectural method and process suggesting that ancient Greek architecture was important because of its “dynamic building system” rather than as a stylistic prototype of Classical antiquity. The moment of this shift from a focus on style to a focus on process and method represents a significant turning point for Modernist historiography. Schwarzer sums up this relationship: “For modern architectural theory, tectonics as a discourse exposes modernity’s repeated attempts to unify ontology and representation.” In other words, what Schwarzer suggests is that Modern architecture seeks only to represent ideas that are internal to itself—i.e. the internal principles of its own construction (tectonics). Thus, Bötticher’s theory and its afterlife, reinforced one of Modernism’s central tenets: insofar as representation is concerned, a Modern building need only represent its own constructional principles. It is the continuing development of this idea of self-reflexivity that succeeds well into the twentieth century and

310 This idea that Bötticher’s ideas on the tectonic were adopted by the Modernists later is also echoed throughout Schwarzer’s text as noted above by this quote “Bötticher’s ideal vision [...] had great significance for the pursuit of a system of architectural knowledge in modern Germany.”
312 Mitchell Schwarzer, German Architectural Theory, 47.
313 Ibid., 268.
comes to define Modern architecture as such. However, even this dogmatic approach has seen countless aberrations.

**The Stylistic Heirs**

I will refer to the members of a third group of Berlin architects as Schinkel’s “Stylistic heirs.” I have chosen the loaded and problematic word “style” over words like “morphological” or “formal” in order to re-assert the prominent and significant role style, as an idea, had during the 1840s and 1850s. This was well before it came under intense scrutiny from later modernists who made its discussion anathema in architectural discourse. Indeed, few concepts in architectural history have received such negative attention despite the profound urgency and central place style, as well as questions about style, had throughout the entire nineteenth century. \(^{314}\) For architects in this group, style, as an idea in and of itself, was inseparable from the architectural endeavor. Not only was it important in how one designed a building, but also in recognizing the fact that there was a great responsibility and power in understanding the many potential uses and meanings of style. The idea that certain styles carried specific meanings in specific contexts was not new of course, and had enjoyed a long history of discussion that began in earnest with attempts in the late eighteenth-century to harness the power of architecture *parlante*. \(^{315}\) And by the turn of the nineteenth century, architectural style had become associated with a variety of ideas and meanings.

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With regard to this last group I am identifying as Schinkel’s “stylistic heirs,” I propose that it was by witnessing Schinkel’s constant struggle to work with, understand and ultimately try to synthesize styles that this group drew its inspiration. Indeed, there were a small number of architects at the Bauakademie who rejected the supposedly “scientific” direction that theories on the tectonic were heading under Bötticher’s guidance. These individuals chose to pursue style for the very reason that it had the possibility to represent ideas beyond status and taste. Indeed, the architects in this group chose to work in a style or styles for particular reasons that had much more to do with history and culture. Style for them was a language through which they could represent architecture’s history in new ways that challenged European assumptions about style, or style could be used to comment on emergent social or cultural conditions of the nineteenth century. However, it must be stressed that this group, just as the ‘tectonic heirs,’ also strove toward the creation of a modern architecture appropriate for a new Prussia. Thus, in order to explain more fully this last position it is necessary to consider the intellectual debates and interactions at the Bauakademie during this period.

**The Crisis of Style: Hübsch, Bötticher, Stier**

...we should not demand what has never existed and never will. We should be content that the formation of the main parts proceeds from objective principles and, for the rest, let the artist’s taste have free rein.

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316 One example of where this idea of a “science” may have originated is in one of Bötticher’s speeches given to honor Schinkel on his annual birthday celebration in March, 1846 where he credits Schinkel’s work on this theme as initiating this “architectural science.” This speech was published as: Karl Bötticher, “Das Prinzip der hellennischen und germanischen Bauweise hinsichtlich der Uebertragung in die Bauweise unserer Tage,” *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* 11 (1846). And is cited in: Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 83.

In addition to the growing challenge to the Classical paradigm, as represented by the swift ascendency of the Gothic, something more substantial with regard to architectural style was brewing in the southern city of Karlsruhe. Indeed, these ideas eventually boiled over in 1828 with the publication of Heinrich Hübsch’s controversial pamphlet entitled *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?* (In What Style Should We Build?). This short and provocatively titled pamphlet gained widespread circulation throughout German lands and beyond. Hübsch was a student of the dedicated Classicist Friedrich Weinbrenner (1766–1826)—who was himself indebted to the famous Berlin architects Carl Langhans and David Gilly. Hübsch, however, not only reacted against both Classical and Gothic idioms, with his advocacy for a “third path” for architecture, but eventually against his own professor as well. Motivated through his study of recent works on theories like scientific materialism, Hübsch sought to divorce ‘style’ from an aesthetic notion and advocated a new type of building. He rejected known styles with existing qualities and meanings and sought out a more technologically oriented solution that was based on the requirements of a building’s local conditions. He adopted the basic round arch as his main structural system and outlined four fundamental factors that should determine style: “material, technical experience, climate and present needs.” What began as a debate apparently about architectural style quickly evolved into a crisis of style when a litany of responses to the dogmatic pamphlet flooded architectural journals.

Because of the impact of Hübsch’s pamphlet, German architectural culture in the 1830s underwent what would later be referred to as a “crisis.” This was due, in part, to the introduction

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318 Watkin & Mellinghof, *German Architecture*, 177.
of yet another challenge to the once irrefragable classical archetype. Hübsch argued that an
arciuated structural system was the most rational approach to contemporary architectural design.
This proposal was basically a variation on the medieval Romanesque, but nonetheless could be
seen as a symptom of the continuing instability of both the Classical and Medieval idioms.
Hübsch explained style as "something general, applicable to all buildings of a nation, whether
intended for divine worship, for public administration, for education, etc." and that there were
essential parts to a building such as the roof, walls and doors etc. and that these "relate to the
most basic task of architecture and must therefore be regarded as elements of style." Hübsch
went on to argue for a reduction of ornament and promoted an architecture that would evolve
primarily out of material and constructional techniques – eventually advocating the so-called
Rundbogenstil (Round-arch style or neo-Romanesque). The debate also revealed the polysemous
nature of style more than thirty years before Gottfried Semper’s publication on the topic in
1861. Indeed, before Hübsch there had been no substantial challenge to the idea of
(architectural) style and he was the first to disaggregate it and challenge its very definition.

In Berlin, Hübsch’s ideas were read and debated. There is no evidence that Schinkel and
Hübsch had any contact, but they were no doubt aware of each other’s work and thought.
Hübsch’s ideas—like those of the far more famous Schinkel—remained present throughout the
century and frequently form part of the discussion of early Modernism due to his proto-
utilitarianism. However, Hübsch’s theory was not completely embraced by many such as the

320 Wolfgang Herrmann, In What Style Should We Build?, 66.
321 Gottfried Semper, Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten oder Praktische Ästhetik
(1861).
Studienbuch, Heim.-Th. Schulze Altcappenberg, Rolf Johannsen and Anna Marie Pfäfflin (eds.) (Berlin:
Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2012), 292. Nägelke even speculates on Hübsch’s influence on Schinkel by
reading into the formal qualities of the Torhäuser project of 1821.
prolific and influential Bötticher in Berlin, who, unlike Hübsch, prioritized the role of tectonic expression in a building by considering the common elements of both Classical and Gothic structural systems, not to mention he preferred the Greek trabeated system to Hübsch’s round arches. Bötticher agreed with Hübsch’s structural rationalism, but disagreed with his dismissal of ornament based on Greek antiquity.

Some years later, in a speech to honor Schinkel on the commemoration of his birthday in 1846, Carl Bötticher outlined some of the central ideas about architecture he had developed during this contentious period. His text was subsequently published as an article entitled “Das Prinzip der hellenischen und germanischen Bauweise hinsichtlich der Übertragung in die Bauweise unserer Tage” (The Principles of the Hellenic and Germanic Ways of Building with Regard to Their Application to our Present Way of Building). In the article, which continues the theoretical thrust of his 1844 Die Tektonik der Hellenen, he praised Schinkel and continued to advocate a theoretical synthesis of styles between the Gothic and Classical as Schinkel had. However, Bötticher’s main interest was the role of the tectonic. In spite of his strong presence and the eventual dominance of his theories, there were other architects and professors at the Bauakademie such as Wilhelm Stier who were working out their own ideas on this “synthesis.”

After a lecture in 1843 for the meeting of architects in Bamberg, Wilhelm Stier published an article entitled “Übersicht bemerkenswerther Bestrebungen und Fragen für die Auffassung der Baukunst in der Gegenwart und jüngsten Vergangenheit” (Overview of the remarkable efforts

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324 Ibid., 270.
326 See: Wolfgang Herrmann, In What Style Should We Build?, 33-34.
and questions regarding the conception of architecture in the present and recent past). After a rather elaborate and abstruse opening, Stier put forward three topics or questions for discussion, which he deemed critical to the future of architecture.\(^{327}\) They were: “the basic principle, the idea of architecture in general,” “on the usual definition and application of symmetry and on the traditional definition of the beauty of proportions.”\(^{328}\) The third and most important question had to do with originality. He asked: “What are the preconditions for an original style?” “How is this element (originality) manifested in present day architecture, and what is the proper manner in which it can be so manifested?”\(^{329}\) The architect, professor of architecture in Kassel, and editor of the *Zeitschrift für Bauwesen* Johann Heinrich Wolff (1792-1869), who attended the lecture, published a response to Stier’s presentation at Bamberg entitled: “Einige Worte über die von Herrn Professor Stier bei der Architektenversammlung zu Bamberg zur Sprache gebrachten architektonischen Fragen” (Remarks on the Architectural Questions Broached by Professor Stier at the Meeting of Architects at Bamberg).\(^{330}\) Wolff argued that the “new artistic age” ushered in by the advent of the Germanic (Gothic, Medieval) style was a response by builders to attempt to “unify the various styles that had arisen out of the degenerate architecture of the Romans”.\(^{331}\) By the latter he meant the early medieval variations on Greek and Roman architecture including the Byzantine. Specifically, Wolff argued that it was through the adaptation of elements from Islamic architecture such as the “the elongated Arabic arch in the form of the pointed arch” in


\(^{328}\) Ibid.

\(^{329}\) Ibid.


\(^{331}\) Johann Heinrich Wolff, 141.
combination with the Roman groin vault etc., that culminated in the “ascending impression that is the hallmark of the Germanic style.” The “German style,” he wrote, “reproduced much that had existed before” and advocated a ‘synthetic’ position of drawing from the best elements of architecture’s history, no matter their origin, by claiming that “they [medieval builders] brought all the efforts of their predecessors to fruition and readied themselves to surpass all that had been done before” and that the only motive behind their effort was to “set up a powerful symbol of their religious aspiration.” He concluded with the observation that “we still cling to the misguided idea that we can succeed in inventing a new style that has never existed before.”

Wolff’s position was yet another variation on the themes outlined thus far. Like Bötticher, he advocated the priority of ancient Greek methods of building and construction, but in contrast to him, he did not oppose the decorative or ornamental system that came with it. While still prioritizing the authority of Greek antiquity, Wolff also “oriented the boundaries of architectural knowledge to the sensual faculties, the properties of the materials, and the preconditions of society.” Wolff’s position is an interesting compromise in that it synthesized ideas from both the dogmatic view that held Greek antiquity to be the ultimate moral authority, while it also prioritized Hübsch’s advocacy for local conditions and materials. At the end of his article Wolff takes the opportunity to directly reply to Stier’s last question “What kind of originality can we expect to find in present day architecture?” He answers it in a way that reveals both his admiration and reliance on Greek antiquity, while still acknowledging the need for the

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332 Ibid., 141-142.
333 Johann Heinrich Wolff, “Einige Worte über die von Herrn Professor Stier bei der Architektenversammlung zu Bamberg zur Sprache gebrachten (und im Jahrgang 1843 dieser Zeitschrift S. 301) architektonischen Fragen,” 142.
334 Ibid., 144.
335 Mitchell Schwarzer, German Architectural Theory and the Search for Modern Identity, 45.
336 Ibid.
originality of invention, ending his comment a hint toward the possibility of a ‘universal’ architecture:

We are called upon to be new only in the sense of modifying and rearranging the architectural elements that naturally evolved in antiquity. This leaves for invention an admittedly finite but still extremely wide field, a terrain whose fertility will never be exhausted. [...] The character and – I am convinced – the merit of our period resides in the fact that art has relinquished the claim to be particular and national in order to become universally valid.\(^{337}\)

This idea of “relinquishing the claim to be particular and national in order to become universally valid” is a theme Stier carried through his design work. There he looked beyond the traditional Greek and Medieval sources for architecture’s forms. Indeed, based on Stier’s design work of the late 1830s and 1840s, as well as various comments throughout his published articles, his position in terms of architecture’s ability to express a “universal” validity takes a markedly different form. The result of Stier’s *aetctic* position, I would argue, was an architecture that depended less on how a building’s structure is represented on the exterior, and more on how a building conveys its own historicity. By this I do not mean a kind of scientific approach that a revival architecture might take, which seeks to validate its ‘reconstruction’ with archaeological evidence. Instead, I believe Stier’s designs are composed of characteristics that indicate an awareness of architecture’s own distinct history. The result is an architecture that reveals a designer’s knowledge of architecture’s historical, cultural and geographical breadth.

Unfortunately, since Stier’s designs were largely composed of historical references—in historical forms—they would certainly fall in the historiography under that condemning Modernist rubric of “historicist architecture.” Because of this, and in order to gain a better understanding of Stier’s design work, a short discussion of historicism in the nineteenth century architecture is required.

\(^{337}\) Wolff, 144.
HISTORICIST ARCHITECTURE IN A GLOBAL NINETEENTH-CENTURY

The nineteenth century, so rich in important works of music and painting, the great age of the novel and of lyric poetry, developed no characteristic art forms in spatial composition and planning. It was an epoch without a building style of its own. Self-confident reliance of the architectural forms of the past concealed an inner uncertainty. The past had become a store-house for hasty resurrections of every style. For the pseudo-Gothic and the neoromantic, for "renaissances of the renaissance" and resuscitations of Baroque and Rococo, to be plundered without restraint and often enough without any comprehension of the circumstances which had given rise to these particular forms.  

-Jürgen Joedicke, 1959

The description of nineteenth-century architecture provided by Jürgen Joedicke above could easily comprise a definition of the word historicism in an imaginary glossary compiled by a Modernist historian. Indeed, historicism as a phenomenon or concept in architectural history, or design for that matter, is the ultimate antithesis of the Modernist movement. Theorized to mean "a tendency in the work of some artists and architects to see their work as part of a general process of cultural development capable of historical analysis," this meaning of the term was introduced in the 1950s by the German art historian Hermann Beenken (1896-1952). The term was, ironically, used by him to differentiate what he argued to be more of a Romantic position in terms of the forms of the past from the rampant revivalism and eclecticism of the late nineteenth century, which he saw as unhistorical. Thus, the intent of the word, as formulated by Beenken, was to differentiate the architecture of Romanticism, which he believed creatively interpreted.

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339 My use of the term historicism throughout my text refers specifically to how it is understood in architectural terms and architectural discourse. I hope to elucidate what I mean in the main text.
and maintained the historical and cultural context of the style to which it was referring while also acknowledging its contemporary situation, from the careless unhistorical attempts that did not. Nicholas Pevsner was one of the first to challenge Beenken on his use of the term, which he understood to be a rather strict revivalism. However, due to the "terminological confusion" that arose out of the debate, the term is typically qualified by adjectives that comprise three categories: Romantic historicism, strict historicism (revivalist) and nationalist historicism. Of course, to many Modernists historians, no matter how you describe it, historicism is still an idea to be viewed with suspicion if not outright hostility. And although historicism is a term fraught with controversy I will take the opportunity to start with Beenken's original idea of the term as a framework in my preparation for approaching the work of Wilhelm Stier in the following chapter.

As I have begun to outline above, by the mid 1830s Neoclassicism's dominance had been thoroughly challenged. There were many reasons as to how and why this occurred, several of which I have already introduced. But beyond the rise of Romanticism and the associated nationalist pursuits with the Gothic—arguably begun by Goethe's "historicist thesis"—and beyond Heinrich Hübsch's challenge to the very idea of what style was, there was a new kind of knowledge emerging in relation to architecture's long history. This particular knowledge was brought on by the continually expanding awareness of the existence of a vast array of contemporary cultures and civilizations outside of Europe. This included not only what presently existed beyond Europe's borders, but historically as well. The existence of lands and peoples

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throughout Africa, Asia, the “Middle East” and North and South America were of course known prior to the nineteenth century—even in the form of architectural representations. In fact we have only to recall Fischer von Erlach’s seminal work *Entwurff einer Historischen Architectur* (1721), or the work of William Hodges (1789) that was read by Schinkel and Gilly to realize these moments of ‘foreign’ exposure were quite common, at least to the educated elite. However, a first hand empirical knowledge of these places had been accessible, for the most part, only to intrepid travelers (travelogues), diplomatic figures (ambassadors etc.), missionary agents (Jesuits et al.), invading armies, or international merchants for the most part. Two of the most famous Germans being Alexander von Humboldt, noted for his studies of South America, and Georg Forster, noted for his travel research completed with Captain Cook’s second voyage of 1772-75 to the Pacific. But written accounts of these places and people, aside from the “New World” and parts of East Asia, had more or less always existed. But as Suzanne Marchand reminds us in her discussion of the Indologist Hermann Brunhufer, most Europeans’ introduction to, and sustained relationship with, the Middle East was through that oldest of books, the Bible. ³⁴⁵ And in terms of how German scholars studied the “Orient,” Marchand traces German Orientalism’s roots back to its pre-Enlightenment origins in Biblical exegesis, but reminds us that studies of the “East” in a variety of forms pre-date even Greek texts such as Herodotus.

In terms of *seeing* any sort of visual representations of these far away places through the eighteenth century one had to either have access to paintings or books for the most part. With the publication of Fischer von Erlach’s text, for the first time there existed an attempt at a comprehensive visual history of the world’s architecture. This unique text set out to illustrate specific architectural examples throughout the world from the biblical era through the early

³⁴⁵ Suzanne Marchand, *German Orientalism*, xvii-xviii.
eighteenth century. It is significant not only because of its scholarly ambition, but also because of its new format. This format departed both from the traditional classical layout, established in the architectural treatise by Serlio, as well as the biographical narrative format made famous by Vasari. It is also particularly remarkable for its inclusion of “non-Western” examples setting a precedent for later German texts. Indicative of the epistemological thrust of its Enlightenment origins the book sought to collect, categorize and represent styles of architecture most Europeans had never before seen despite a wide range in its accuracy (fig. 32). Aside from the Entwurff, which is much more widely known, there were other texts whose influence upon architecture culture has yet to be determined. One such text is Bernard Picart’s Histoire générale de cérémonies moeurs et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde (1741), which has primarily been discussed in terms of its cultural and religious importance. As witnessed in the Fischer von Erlach example above, beginning in 1809, very little was actually known about what Egypt looked like prior to the publication of the Description de l’Égypte. As a result of this publication, to which I will return later, Europe was introduced to a supposedly hitherto unknown culture and place whose main characteristics were most likely gleaned through the study of the Bible. Furthermore, it should be noted that the appearance of this text sparked an Egyptian Revival in many aspects of cultural life including architecture. The Description did this through a format that was presented as a scientific study through its rigorous use of Beaux-Arts drawing conventions and thick descriptions of everything from its buildings and people to its agriculture and natural features.

Architects in early nineteenth-century Berlin, as I have discussed above, read these texts and many gravitated to different historical forms for different reasons. Some chose political or patriotic motivations to work within a given style such as the Gothic (nationalist historicism). Others advocated the deliberate and exact revival of certain distant historical styles that they believed had either ethical and moral implications and that through their revival they would help to reestablish "lost" values or a "lost" morality, as in the case of Greek Neoclassicism (i.e. strict historicism). Still others, as I have alluded to above, sought to integrate a broader understanding of architecture's purpose and role by drawing upon a variety of both geographically and historically "distant" architectural precedents (Romantic historicism). This last strategy was employed by Wilhelm Stier and yielded a rich and diverse architecture that while historicist, was nonetheless replete with invention.

This chapter has shown that in the years after Schinkel's death the practice and pedagogy of architecture as a discipline experienced an instability without Schinkel's leadership. This instability resulted essentially in the splitting of his successors at the Bauakademie into factions. These factions sought to carry on their own interpretation of Schinkel's legacy based on each group's experience with him and understanding of his work. Thus, within this voluminous reservoir that was Schinkel's Nachlass one could fashion out of it what one wanted. I have proposed that three dominant groups emerged. In terms of architecture's historiography, we know that modernist historians chose to construct their genealogy through the tectonic via Bötticher and his interpretation of Schinkel. However, what I have proposed is that were we to follow an alternate "path," such as that I have outlined above through the concept of "style" we would witness what was in fact another path that sought to claim a modern architecture for itself. In sum, I am not arguing that this "alternate path" resulted in a so-called "alternate Modernism,"
rather it should be understood as a parallel development that is, in fact, an equally valid proposal in the search for modern architecture within the nineteenth-century. The figure by which I will demonstrate these ideas and argue this position is the Bauakademie Professor Wilhelm Stier.
CHAPTER THREE

WILHELM STIER:
ROMANTICISM, ARCHITECTURE AND THE UNMOORING OF HISTORY

The early Romantics found in the non-Classical and non-national past only a pleasant flavour of fantastic unreality. But by the last quarter of the nineteenth century the widening of the field of archaeology had made Egyptian, Indian, Islamic and other non-European styles nearly as functionally comprehensible as those of the Classical and Mediæval past. For example Mr. Owen Jones, who also published a universal Grammar of Ornament which ran to many editions. The eclectics of taste made, it is true, less use of exotic styles than the early Romantics. But they were prepared to do so when occasion demanded with at least a certain plausibility not inferior to that of the Classical and Mediæval Revivals.

-Henry Russell Hitchcock (1929)348

INTRODUCTION

The most significant figure and intellectual leader of the second group, which I have described as Schinkel’s “stylistic heirs”, was without a doubt Wilhelm Stier (1799-1856). Like Bötticher who came after him, Stier was in this first generation to be at the Bauakademie while Schinkel was still there. In 1828 (eleven years prior to Bötticher) Stier began teaching at the Bauakademie and in 1832 received his Baumeisterprüfung and a Professorship. And although he was by no means a “successor,” as in the sense of the Schinkelschüler, he was nonetheless impressed by, and greatly admired, the master’s work—particularly his work on the Gothic. Stier’s relationship to Schinkel is described as somewhat “distant and difficult” but also as “without any personal animosity.” Aside from a lack of specific details about the nature of their relationship we know that Stier gave a substantial eulogy at Schinkel’s funeral, indicating his prominent status in the architectural community at that time. Despite being well known as “charismatic,” Stier seems to have had little admiration for, or desire to associate with, the “official” successors of the Schinkel. Indeed, what was probably indifference in his relationships to most of these individuals took on much more of a disputatious quality in his interaction with Carl Bötticher. Bötticher’s “dogmatic Classicism” and indefatigable pursuit of the tectonic were, of course, in direct opposition to Stier’s theories on architecture, itself firmly rooted in historical concepts of style.

349 Eva Börsch-Supan, Berliner Baukunst, 19.
350 Ibid., 20. See also her further elaboration on this topic on page 684.
352 Eva Börsch-Supan, Berliner Baukunst, 684.
ARCHITECTURE BEYOND THE GREEKS AND GOTHs

Described as Bötticher’s “antipode,” Stier was by all accounts a non-conformist who reacted against the emergent paradigm of the tectonic.\textsuperscript{353} It did not help his cause that he had little interaction with the royal family and only ever had one of his designs built, though that is one more than Bötticher, who had none.\textsuperscript{354} These details about Stier, which were probably exacerbated by the fact that he was not a prolific writer (and therefore did not elaborately defend his ideas), have likely led to his exclusion from most historiographies on this period.\textsuperscript{355} Indeed, to research Stier is an exercise in assembling small bits of information from a wide variety of sources, as there is still yet no monograph dedicated to him.\textsuperscript{356} His published articles are also somewhat difficult to understand as they are peppered with language that is more dramatic than was common for its day—even for a Romantic. With regard to his writings, Eva Börsch-Supan suggests that his “essays and lectures on the whole show a confused style, very often confused reasoning, and are often very long-winded and irrelevant.”\textsuperscript{357} While I do not disagree with her latter observation, I do think what she sees as a confusing style of writing is actually the result of

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{353} Ibid., 19.
\item\textsuperscript{354} Ibid., 20. Börsch-Supan states: “He did not belong to the circle of architecture friends to which Stüler et al. belonged. But rather instead to the association "Ellora," over which Frederick Eggers presided, and with whom Theodor Fontane and William Luebke associated. In 1847 the Student Association „Motif“ was founded that had chosen its name after a favorite term of Stier’s, apparently under the spell of his personality.”
\item\textsuperscript{355} In general Stier is portrayed more as an irrelevant romantic whose popularity was brief, but his role as a charismatic and significant figure and influencer at the Bauakademie is often mentioned. His name appears throughout many texts dealing with this period. However, for many reasons, as will be discussed later, it is difficult to define and label him.
\item\textsuperscript{356} In terms of archival sources having to do with Wilhelm Stier the Technische Universität Architekturmuseum in Berlin holds the only known extant manuscripts, which, for the most part are preparatory notes for his lectures and articles. The manuscripts are uncataloged and have yet to be restored. I was also made aware of the existence of this collection at an advanced stage in my research, which made it impossible for me to evaluate it in a thorough and meaningful way prior to the completion of the dissertation. As a result, I have limited myself to his published works and circulated drawings. The other non-graphic archival material will certainly be used for further research.
\item\textsuperscript{357} Eva Börsch-Supan, \textit{Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel, 1840-1870}, 684-85.
\end{itemize}
his difficulty in explaining the complexity of his ideas, which at once seem to strive to represent a history beyond that of Europe, while still relying upon the European architectural tradition he knew so well. His writings are certainly far from lucid and his ideas are not clearly articulated. His drawings are much more didactic than his texts. Indeed, as is often the case, the theory is in the drawings. He did, however, leave a cache of drawings that have a great deal to say on their own, but have continued to remain insufficiently discussed. Indeed, what Stier drew says a great deal more than statements indicated in some of his manuscript notes. I am referring here to a comment by Elke Pflugradt-Abdel that Stier—in an unpublished manuscript entitled “Welcher Baustil wird in der Zukunft die Herrschaft gewinnen?”—states: “He [Stier] considers the Arab style suitable for tasks of a ‘piquant character’ [pikanten Charakters] such as bazaars and bedrooms.” However, as I will demonstrate that Stier integrates a great deal of the so-called “Arab style” in his own work.358

Therefore, in order to properly characterize this third position I have begun to outline, which is concerned with architectural style as a potential path to Modernism, it is necessary first to provide a slightly broader historical framework for Stier’s architecture. I will do this by taking into consideration other significant contemporary developments within the German-speaking architectural world that were migrating to Berlin, namely those ideas coming out of Karlsruhe in Baden in the late 1820s and 30s. The intent is to connect Stier to the contemporary debates that influenced his position in order to provide a clearer picture of Stier’s conception of ‘style’. I will do this primarily by analyzing Stier’s drawings through the all too neglected technique of formal analysis since these are what were submitted, displayed or circulated. Stier was not simply a

“fanciful dreamer” or a romantic historicist, and his work can be theorized as much more than just "romantic eclecticism." Rather, in response to this characterization, I will argue that Stier was a keen observer of a rapidly changing, globalizing world, whose cultural and historical borders were expanding daily and it was through his perspicacity, and his active theorizing through drawing, that he provided us with designs and ideas that were ahead of his time and had one particularly significant impact on one of his students who will be discussed in the next chapter.

Architecture Imported: The Allochthonous Influences on Wilhelm Stier

Well before German unification in 1871 and the hegemony of the neo-Renaissance style, there was a group of scholars and architects who actively pursued a modern architecture, which neither rejected nor simply replicated history. This quest for a new style typically implied the creation of a new type of architecture for a new era. This was not to be done by simply copying extant styles directly, or by rejecting the idea of style altogether by stripping a building down to its structural elements. Rather it was to be done by looking to history and applying it not just as a formal strategy, but as a methodology to understand how new styles developed. Indeed, the very idea of style as something that organized the past into an evolutionary, teleological chronology was, by its very nature, a modern phenomenon.

The plurality and diversity of styles as understood from period to period and culture-to-culture that were being added to the European understanding of architecture’s history confronted

359 Christiane Schütz is quoting the historian Ludwig Dehio (1888-1963) who refers to Stier in this way. (Christiane Schütz, Preussen in Jerusalem, 65. She rejects Dehio’s characterization by saying: “This is an unfair judgment, and it’s well established that Stier must have been a man who cannot be easily characterized.”)
scholars to a degree never before imagined. In a matter of several decades—and with the growth of movements at home such as nationalism and Romanticism to encourage further pursuit of this awareness—the breadth of knowledge about architecture’s history had increased exponentially through publications themselves dependent upon the increasing global interaction facilitated by new forms of capital through trade and imperialism. As a result of this development it is necessary to briefly consider what types of sources, and allochthonous ideas etc., Stier may have had access to in order to arrive at the designs he produced. Indeed, his drawings indicate a substantial breadth of historical study and as any architect knows these sorts of precedent studies often result in what we could diplomatically refer to as an unacknowledged “intertextuality” encouraged by the studio environment since the early days of the Beaux-Arts. Thus, the only way to discern what Stier had seen or been exposed to in terms of architectural history is to “read” his drawings for evidence of these elements. I borrow the term allochthonous from the sciences in order to attempt to characterize the way in which these forms were conceived in early nineteenth-century Berlin. Allochthonous refers to something that is from somewhere else, without the inherited cultural associations that come with the term ‘foreign’ or fremde for example. It derives from: allo-‘other’ + kẖẖōn ‘earth’ + -ous. More importantly it is not just the idea of something originating from somewhere else, but that it is now part of something else.

One of the most interesting examples of the variety of ways in which other types of knowledge made its way through Europe can be found in the grand Napoleonic project of the Description de l’Égypte (published in Paris from 1809-1818), which sought to record and

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361 *Description de l’Égypte, ou Recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l’expédition de l’armée française (Description of Egypt, or the collection of observations and research which were made in Egypt during the expedition of the French Army)*. The first edition (Imperial) was published in Paris from 1809 to 1818.
catalogue textually and graphically everything about Egypt during Napoleon’s three-year military invasion begun in 1798 (fig. 33). This invasion, which has been subject to much discussion in the past decade or so, was a destructive display of French aggression and was designed as a strategic geopolitical military move directed against the British whose trade routes through Egypt to India Napoleon wished to disrupt. However, the resulting texts and their influence on European scholars, architects and the public has been immeasurable. Furthermore, this destabilization created by Napoleon, and his eventual evacuation prompted by a joint British and Ottoman military venture, paved the way for what was to become a new era in Egypt with a new Ottoman viceroy who continued to utilize and expand the institutions established by the French in his efforts to modernize Egypt.362

The circulation of texts such as the Description within Europe was remarkable, but not entirely surprising, due to the limited, but international, royal and aristocratic clientele that sought to purchase them. By the end of 1822 the Description de l’Égypte was already in the libraries of the Austrian Hofbibliothek and Akademie der bildenden Künste St. Anna, Vienna, and by 1835-36 it was in various other private libraries throughout Austria and Germany.363 We also know that the Description formed the basis for Karl Richard Lepsius’ expedition to Egypt in 1842 since the architect Georg Erbkam (1811-76), who was part of the expedition, took copies he made of it with him to Egypt.364 However, the Description was likely already in Berlin

decades before 1840. This text’s importance cannot be exaggerated since it changed what Europeans knew about Egypt from its agriculture to its architecture and introduced readers to a completely new understanding (both through descriptions and stunningly beautiful and detailed Beaux-Arts renderings) of this hitherto relatively unknown land across the Mediterranean.

Another influential text that made its way to Berlin in c.1840 was *Architecture arabe ou monuments du Kaire, mesurés et dessinés de 1818 à 1826* (1837) by the French architect Pascal Coste (1787-1879). Elaborately detailed color engravings that simultaneously accurately represented and idealized the urban monuments of (mostly Mamluk) Cairo, dominated this book (fig. 34). Coste, who was not a Muslim, had to obtain a special firman (a ‘decree’ granting permission) from the viceroy of Egypt, Muhammad ‘Ali, as well as guards to escort him, in order to actually enter the mosques he wished to document; and was allowed extremely rare and privileged access. Evidence that both of these texts were in Berlin/Potsdam by about 1840 is provided by a project that was based on the drawings found within them: Ludwig Persius’ *Dampfmaschinenhaus* (Steam Engine Pump House) in the royal park of Sanssouci, completed in 1843 (fig. 35).

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Vyse, clearly suggesting that Berlin’s libraries were up to date. See also: Mariana Jung, “Die Zeichnung der Lepsius-Expedition,” *Preußen in Ägypten und Ägypten in Preußen*, Ingelore Hafemann, ed. (Berlin: Kulterverlag Kadmos, 2010), 216.


Paper Architecture: Ludwig Persius’ *Dampfmaschinenhaus* at Sanssouci

One of the first texts that was likely consulted by Persius immediately after he was given the commission was Fischer von Erlach’s *Entwurf einer historischen Architectur*, which contained several (surprisingly accurate) drawings depicting some significant Ottoman buildings.\(^{367}\) Both Friedrich Wilhelm IV, who requested the style of the *Dampfmaschinenhaus*, and Persius were certainly aware of such a well-known text. So if Persius had indeed intended to pursue the emulation of an “authentic” “Turkish” architecture he could have readily consulted this or other texts in the royal library or possibly even visited sites in other German territories such as the (no longer extant) Weißensteiner “Moschee” in Wilhelmshöhe (c.1786-87), or the Palace gardens at Schwetzingen outside of Heidelberg, which also had a “Moschee” pavilion (c.1779-83) (fig. 36). Both of these buildings were built in a variation on a Turkish theme set in a garden. The Schwetzingen Moschee, designed by the well-known French architect Nicholas de Pigage (1723-96), was based partly on Fischer von Erlach, but also on William Chambers’ Kew Gardens “Mosque” of 1763.\(^{368}\) Also based on the Kew Gardens example was the *Maurischer Tempel* built in the Neuer Garten in Potsdam by Carl G. Langhans in 1792-94, but this pavilion was a folly *par excellence* and was most likely based on earlier eighteenth century pavilion types rather than anything remotely Islamic (fig. 37). But despite the relatively few texts that depicted Islamic architecture by the end of the eighteenth century the theme was on the rise.


Although Persius' Dampfmachinenhaus was finished in 1843, it was conceived in January of 1841 when the king asked Persius to enclose Prussia’s most technologically advanced Borsig steam engine, with a building in the “Turkish” style. The pump house is a small building built between Louisen Str. (now Breiten Straße) on the banks of the Havel River in Potsdam. From here it drew the water utilized for the fountain near the main palace over 1.5km away. Borsig’s pump generated 80 PS, which was powerful enough to generate a fountain in front of the palace approximately 38m high. The exterior of the building is composed of painted and glazed brick and tile. The elevation that faces the street is composed of two volumes with a slender minaret-like structure rising above them. The central volume is a rectilinear structure in an equal tripartite arrangement with the two flanking sections set back. Rising above the center section is an extended tambour topped by an elongated hemispherical copper paneled dome. The dome structure rests on an octagonal base, which transitions from the rectangular volume below. Set just behind the dome is the smoke stack for the steam pump, the so-called “minaret.”

The overall impression of the building, based on the formal composition of the dome, the minaret and decorative program, is something of a caricature of a medieval Mamluk mosque complex. The exterior is composed of muqarnas, ablaq, a dome with a multilobed metal finial topped by a crescent moon and a variety of abstract geometric patterns and details evoking vegetal motifs. Thus, it was clearly based on details that were only available at this highly

369 Ludwig Persius, *Ludwig Persius: Das Tagebuch des Architekten Friedrich Wilhelms IV. 1840-1845*, Edited and commentary by Eva Börsch-Supan (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1908), 45. According to his diary the King specifically asks that the steam pump machine house be built as a “Turkish mosque with a smokestack as a minaret.” According to Persius: “Das Maschinenhaus soll nach Art der türkischen Moschee mit einem Minaret als Schornst. erbaut werden.”

descriptive level in a published text like Coste's since Perisus himself never traveled to Egypt. Some of these examples include similarities in the dome to the Mosque, Khanqah and Mausoleum complex of Sultan Faraj Ibn Barquq in Cairo (late 14th cen.), to the typical tripartite window motif found around Cairo from the Funerary Complex of Qaytbay to the iconic Mosque and Tomb of Amir Khayrbak in Darb al-Ahmar, Cairo (1502–20) (fig. 38). It is believed that Friedrich Wilhelm IV owned Coste’s text. However, his library was destroyed at some point before it could be recorded. But despite this, we know from Matthias Staschull, who was involved with the restoration of the building in the 1980s, that the Architektenverein (Architect’s Association) had a copy of Coste’s book in their library.

The presence of both the Description and Architecture Arabe in Berlin, is only partly indicative of the material evidence of this fast paced accumulation of knowledge that relied upon the continued and sustained interaction between Europe and the Middle East in the early nineteenth century. In this case in particular, European imperialism was the catalyst that substantially accelerated this “relationship.” Indeed, it was precisely because of the French invasion that European perceptions of Egypt were reborn. Thus, in Europe, “Egypt” experienced

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373 Ibid., 187 (Staschull’s footnote 321).

374 In an article that discusses this building Sabine Bohle-Heintzenberg, in her footnote No. 26 to the building’s formal sources states: “Description de l’Égypte. —Coste, 1837.” This is incorrect as Coste did not author the Description, but rather the aforementioned Architecture Arabe... Perhaps this was an editorial mistake and I do not intend to call out Bohle-Heitzenberg, but regardless of the reason this is exactly the kind of error that reveals the larger problem with any kind of disciplinary project discussed in the introduction to this dissertation. See: Sabine Bohle-Heintzenberg, "Die Dampfkraft in der Parklandschaft." In Ludwig Persius, Architekt des Königs: Baukunst unter Friedrich Wilhelm IV. (Potsdam: SPGS, 2003), 77.
a renaissance of sorts and acquired a newness and immediate popularity that had a significant effect upon European culture. Similarly, in terms of Orientalism, we cannot forget that “European” studies of Egypt can be traced back to ancient Greece. Indeed, as Erik Iverson’s seminal text *The Myth of Egypt and Its Hieroglyphs in European Tradition* (1961) reminds us, the Greeks admired Egyptian culture and emulated many aspects of it much more so than “many modern classicists” are willing to acknowledge. Thus, the *Description*, with its first attempt at “scientific archaeology,” not only set the new standard for archaeological scholarship, but marked the beginning of the Egyptian Revival in the arts. This is particularly true in the Germanies, where “Ägyptomanie” would gain increasing popularity throughout the 1830s and 40s.

However, often lost in the focus upon the *Description*’s great contribution to “Egyptology” some of Egypt’s medieval monuments were also cataloged and described in a section dedicated to “Modern Egypt.” Thus, it was likely this (Islamic) section of the *Description* marks the initial moment of European attempts to understand (and popularize) this medieval Islamic architecture through the spectacle of this voluminous work. The *Description*, then, initiated this later homage to medieval Egyptian-Mamluk architecture that we can see expressed in Coste’s work, and subsequently, later, in the form of the *Dampfmaschinenhaus* project on the banks of the Havel. Thus, it was likely this renewed interest in all things Egyptian that ultimately

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led to the final form of the *Dampfmaschinenhaus*. Furthermore, the explanation that Persius was unable to find Turkish examples is unconvincing due to the fact that German culture had had a much longer history of interaction with the Ottomans and therefore "Turkish" culture and aesthetics were decidedly more familiar. One need only think of the fact that between 1700 and 1810 there were more than 250 plays (Operas etc.) written in Germany alone that featured the "Orient" in some way or another—most of those having Turkish themes. Though this wave of *Ägyptomanie* was focused largely on Egypt’s Pharaonic history—as this was the exact moment of the Karl Richard Lepsius’ (1810-84) expedition to Egypt (1842-45) in order to ‘complete’ the *Description*—an interest in Egypt’s medieval Islamic past was growing.

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380 This trip’s purpose was two fold: First he wished to significantly contribute to the collection of Egyptian antiquities at the Prussian state museum since their earlier collection had been wiped out by Vivant Denon’s removal of Berlin’s Egyptian collection under Napoleonic occupation. The second goal was to complete what Napoleon’s savants had started in Egypt with the *Description*. Its result (aside from archaeological artifacts) was the massive *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien nach den Zeichnungen der von Seiner Majestät dem Koenige von Preussen, Friedrich Wilhelm IV., nach diesen Ländern gesendeten, und in den Jahren 1842–1843 ausgeführten wissenschaftlichen Expedition auf Befehl Seiner Majestät.* 13 vols. Berlin: Nicolaische Buchhandlung, 1849. See: Suzanne Marchand, "The End of Egyptomania: German Scholarship and the Banalization of Egypt, 1830-1914," in Wilfried Seipel, ed., *Ägyptomanie: Europäische Ägyptenimagination von der Antike bis heute* (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum/SKIRA, 2002): 125-134. (esp. 127)
**Islamic Architecture on the Periphery**

Of particular importance in the year prior to Stier’s education and eventual appointment as professor at the Bauakademie, were several books published in different languages documenting the presence of Islamic architecture in areas deemed to be on the “periphery” of Europe. These were considered to be the Iberian Peninsula (Spain, Portugal/“Al-Andalus”), and southern Italy (primarily Sicily). However, acknowledgement of these culturally diverse areas was part of an earlier trend beginning in the late eighteenth century. Studies on these areas and their varied art and architecture most significantly began in 1813 with James Cavanah Murphy’s text *The Arabian Antiquities of Spain* (1813-16). Following this was the French draftsman and photographer Girault de Prangey’s rich analysis of the subject as *Souvenirs de Grenade et de l'Alhambra: monuments arabes et moresques de Cordoue, Séville et Grenade, dessinés et mesurés en 1832 et 1833* (1837). Also focused on the Arabs in Spain were Owen Jones and Jules Goury who published their monumental *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra* in twelve parts from 1836 to 1845, providing rich and colorful views and details of the Alhambra palace printed in the advanced technology of chromolithography. Books on the century-long Islamic Arab presence in Sicily were also being published in the 1830s and 40s. Authors like the British Member of Parliament and antiquarian Henry Gally Knight (1786-1846), who was keen to discover the Islamic origins of the pointed arch, published a series of texts on

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Sicily including *The Normans in Sicily* (1838),\(^{385}\) *Saracenic and Norman remains, to illustrate the Normans in Sicily* (1840), and *Essai sur l'architecture des Arabes et des Mores, en Espagne, en Sicile, et en Barbarie* (1841).

Germans also participated in these efforts to document these lesser-known areas. Of particular note, but largely forgotten, is the Frankfurt architect Friedrich Hessemer’s *Altitalienische und arabische Bauverzierungen* (1836-1842), which was compiled and published after the author’s journey to Italy and Egypt in the 1820s. According to Katharina Bott, Hessemer’s text was not only one of “the first major book projects that was published using the technique of chromolithography (Mehrfarbensteindrucks), but it was also one of the earliest works to deal with Islamic ornament in such detail.”\(^{386}\) It has even been argued that Hessemer’s text actually preceded Jones and Goury’s *Alhambra*.\(^{387}\) Interestingly, despite its publication in Berlin, this important text remains virtually unknown as it is continually overshadowed by Owen Jones’ work and the lasting fame of the *Alhambra*. The content of Hessemer’s text was different in that it was a collection of plates with short descriptions and focused not on a single building, but rather on ornamental patterns from a variety of buildings from southern Italy and Egypt. These patterns range from early Christian and Byzantine to Islamic and Renaissance in their origins and are placed side by side in his text without a context as to how the pattern was used in the building or often even where it was located. The most significant aspect of this text, in my view, is the fact that Hessemer presented the Italian (some were Islamic) patterns and the

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\(^{385}\) The complete title is: *The Normans in Sicily; being a sequel to "An architectural tour in Normandy"* (1838).


\(^{387}\) F.M. Hessemer, *Historic Designs and Patterns in Color from Arabic and Italian Sources* (New York: Dover Publications, 1990), unpaginated – see “Publisher’s Note”.

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Egyptian patterns together in the same text (fig. 39). This further suggests the belief held, at the least by Knight and Hessemer, that there is more than just a historical connection in the distant past that links these two regions and cultures. However, whether they believed that the historical Orient should be part of the broader encompassing history of humanity, or whether they believed the two cultures shared a common past in antiquity that was unexplored, it is difficult to discern.

The intent of this prelude to Stier was to outline the significant amount of material that was available during the early decades of the nineteenth century that visually represented aspects of Islamic architecture and provide a background to his work. However, in an effort to avoid a long descriptive list, the following section will reveal in greater detail the influences that may have inspired Stier. The popularity, availability and international character of these texts made them candidates for the libraries of Berlin, as well as that of the Architektverein. Of central importance in the accumulation of this knowledge was the parallel and interconnected development of Romanticism and its ideological framework. Romanticism, since its development in the eighteenth century, strove for a kind of humanistic universality through interaction and the accumulation of knowledge that could recognize other cultures as equal parts of a greater history of humanity that was shared by all. Indeed, as Suzanne Marchand has observed, the origins of these ideas in the late eighteenth century evolved through the effort of individuals from the Brothers Grimm to Humboldt and Schlegel who sought to construct a "new Germanic destiny." As a result, the "universal histories" these thinkers wrote "could not do without the Orient." However, this Orient they were so keen to include was a historical Orient, not the contemporary one. Consequently, knowledge about the "modern" Orient was not

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388 Suzanne Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 55.
389 Ibid.
widespread among Germans prior to 1820, with the sole example of Hammer Purgstall who represents one of the very few Orientalists who maintained a sustained interest in the modern Orient. But in terms of architecture, my point here was to demonstrate the variety and fairly significant amount of influences available to Wilhelm Stier and architects at the Bauakademie. Additionally, I have sought to demonstrate that Romanticism and its variety of influences were not limited solely to the nationalist cause, but to what Stier, I believe, would consider a universal one: an architecture for all.

**WILHELM STIER AND THE ROMANTIC PATH TOWARD A MODERN ARCHITECTURE**

In the final analysis, national hatred is a peculiar thing. You invariably find it to be strongest and most violent where there is the lowest degree of culture. But there exists a degree wherein it vanishes completely, and wherein a person, to some extent, stands above nations, and feels the well-being or troubles of a neighboring people as if they had happened to his own. This degree of culture conformed to my nature, and I had become strengthened in it long before I reached my sixteenth year.

-J. W. von Goethe, *Conversations with Goethe*, 1830

Wilhelm Stier was born in 1799 in Blonie, in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw and came to Berlin to attend the famous *Gymnasium zum Grauen Kloster* in 1811 (the same Gymnasium Schinkel had attended after his move to Berlin). From 1815 to 1817 he studied at the Berlin *Bauakademie* and afterward practiced architecture in Bonn and Dusseldorf until 1821. He then followed his *Wanderlust* and went to Paris to study architecture under Le Cointre, but left in January of 1822 to travel to the South of France and throughout Northern Italy all the way on foot in the manner

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390 Ibid., 100.
391 Stier was born and grew up an ethnic “Prussian,” but at the time of his birth Blonie was actually under Austrian control. It later became part of Prussia, then fell under French control when it became a satellite state of Napoleonic France. After the Wars of Liberation it returned to Prussia. Now it is part of Poland.
of a "pilgrimage." He then made his way to Rome to study the art and architecture of the ancients and spent five years there. While in Rome he associated with many German Romantic painters and probably met Heinrich Hübsch; however, nothing is known about their encounter except that they were there at the same time, from 1822-24. In 1823 he was hired as a draughtsman by the Cologne architect Jacques Hittorff (1792–1867), who was ethnically German, but is considered French because he grew up in the French occupied Rhineland. Hittorff had partnered with the German (Swabian) architect Ludwig von Zanth (1796–1857) in order to document buildings in Italy to find evidence that would support their claim in the emerging polychrome debate that ancient Greek temples were in fact painted a variety of colors. In 1827, while back in Rome, Stier worked on designs of a building for which he is commonly remembered in the historiography: an ideal Protestant Church with a half circular plan. During his stay in Rome Stier met regularly with Schinkel and the Prussian ambassador to the Vatican Christian Carl Josias von Bunsen (1791-1860). Bunsen was an avid enthusiast of architecture (specifically the Byzantine style), a number of times in order to work out ideas. The goal was to find an ideal architecture in order to complement the Evangelical liturgy.

In October 1828 he returned to Berlin with Bunsen and was promptly appointed to a position at the Bauakademie by Schinkel (whom he had greatly impressed) teaching design and a course on monuments. He then taught a course for which he became famous on the System griechischen Bauornaments (System of Greek Building Ornamentation). It is generally

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392 Wilhelm Stier, Hesperische Blätter: Nachgelassene Schriften (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1857), Sff.
393 Eva Börsch-Supan states that the two met but I cannot find other evidence of this. Kathleen Curran has found the same thing. See Eva Börsch-Supan, Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel, 684; and Kathleen Curran, The Romanesque Revival, 109 (and footnote no. 80).
acknowledged that he was an excellent and charismatic teacher who taught with the “whole fire of his effusive nature”\textsuperscript{395} and whose teaching “exhibited a rich treasure of knowledge,”\textsuperscript{396} such that he garnered wide respect at the Bauakademie. In 1831 he achieved his Nachprüfung als Baumeister (‘Master Builder’ certification) and soon thereafter became a full professor at the Bauakademie with the title “Building Inspector and Professor of Architecture” until his death in 1856.

In terms of Stier’s architectural practice, he left behind only one built building: his own villa in Berlin-Schöneberg (“Stierburg”) (1831). The building has since been destroyed and there exists only one watercolor that I believe in many ways reveals the ambiguity Stier felt with regard to the two dominant architectural styles of the period (fig. 40). The drawing, which was published in the Architektonische Skizzenbuch over twenty years after his death in 1854, depicts a corner bay and a window in differing styles and is labeled “Erker und Fenster an Wilhelm Stier’s Haus auf dem Carlsbade bei Berlin” (Bay window and window on William Stier’s house on the Carlsbade in Berlin).\textsuperscript{397} On the left side is a perspective of an octagonal (were it not for the intersection with the corner) projecting bay window supported by a series of brackets. The projection and the surrounding walls are articulated in such a way that they appear to be paneled – possibly in wood. The style is a variation on the “Profane” Gothic with elements of the English Tudor style. Aside from the paneling, this is indicated by the inclusion of the diagonal leaded window pattern and wooden bracketing, which is reminiscent of those found in Tudor period hammerbeam churches around the fifteenth century.

\textsuperscript{395} Börsch-Supan, Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel, 1840-1870, 20.
\textsuperscript{396} Peter Wallé, “Professor Wilhelm Stier, königl. Baurath (geb. 1799, 19 Sept. 1856)” Der Bär, Illustrierte Berliner Wochenschrift XI, no. 2 (October 11, 1884), 26.
The drawing on the right shows a rather typical Neoclassical design of a bay window that also projects from the surface of the building. It is "Neoclassical" (and not a strict Greek Revival) because although it utilizes "Greek" elements and characteristics, such as trabeated construction, an Ionic column, pilasters and a pediment, the way in which they are composed is not Greek. In other words, elements like the central Ionic column are not only questionably proportioned but their placement in the center (which would be anathema in Greek antiquity) acts more like a medieval trumeau. Overall it is a rectangular biforate window topped by a gently sloping gabled pediment with matching rectilinear pilasters flanking the exterior jambs of the two lights. Within the pediment is a highly ornate floriated vegetal motif (again, not very Greek) and the entire composition is capped at the top with a classical female bust. Upon seeing this print one might ask if these are two separate proposals for bay windows (i.e. one or the other), or do they both exist on the villa, just in different locations? Since there is no more specific information besides the caption "Bay window and window to William Bull's house...", which uses the word "and," the reader is left only with the suggestion that they potentially co-existed on the same building. Also curious is why this particular watercolor of Stier's house was published in the first place over twenty years after the villa was built and two years before his death?

Based on the evidence in the *Skizzen Buch* I would argue that this print could be read as a short theoretical essay, which demonstrates the equally plausible applicability of either of these two "options." On the other hand, I think the juxtaposition of the two images on the same page reveals the potential irrelevancy of the styles proposed here due to the lack of context we are provided. Indeed, the concurrence of the two drawings side by side betrays a certain ambiguity in the relative subjectivity of the two options. Thus, in terms of the relevance of each style to the building's program, they are both equally valid and equally irrelevant in terms of their
applicability to a nineteenth-century villa. This, of course, assumes Stier himself put them together, which is likely since it was published before he died. Another very plausible scenario is that Stier used his villa as an architectural experiment, or site of Erfindungen (a word used several times by him with regard to his work) where he was able to work with a diverse range of styles and details. If this were the case it would surely suggest that, much like Schinkel before him, he sought to experiment with the mixing of styles in order to achieve a new kind of architecture.

In Pursuit of Polychromy: Wilhelm Stier in Sicily

In the manner of Schinkel, whose preoccupation with the Gothic and interest in the “Saracenic” led him in 1803 to undertake his first trip to Italy with the intention to seek out its origins, Stier traveled to Sicily during his Studienreise in Italy. He traveled there while working for Hittorff and Zanth and was no doubt affected by what he saw; much of it shows up in his design work. Very few of his sketches for Sicily survive, and as far as I can tell all reside in the archive of the Technische Universität Berlin, Architekturmuseum in the Universitätsbibliothek (TUBAm). One sketch of the Duomo di Cefalù from this period of Stier’s travels is particularly important (fig. 41) (TUBAm Inv. Nr. 17053). The Cefalù Cathedral, Sicily dates to 1131 and was commissioned by King Roger II who, according to the legend, vowed to build it to glorify the Holy Savior if he would provide him a safe landing in a terrible storm (hence the other name associated with the cathedral Santissimo Salvatore). That landing turned out to be at Cefalù. We know that Schinkel passed through Cefalù; however, no drawings of the Cathedral in his hand are known to exist. But like the other so-called “Saracenic” buildings studied by Schinkel on his trip to Sicily, this

cathedral is another prime example of the 'mixed' style in which Schinkel had such a sustained interest.

Stier’s sketch of the building is of the exterior façade (Westwerk) and is undated; however, it must be from around 1823 since this is the period he was in Sicily working for Hittorff. The sketch depicts a striking tripartite façade composed of two massive towers flanking a central lower portion that is divided horizontally into a portico and a stepped back upper story. The central block is approximately two-thirds the height of the towers and suggests the interior organization of the nave and upper galleries. The upper portion contains two arcades. The upper arcade is a series of identical round arches and the lower is similarly sized intertwined pointed arches, save for a larger pointed arch marking the center. This blind arcade of interlaced pointed arches is a motif found in both Gothic and Islamic architecture and particularly common in the Siculo-Norman/Islamic context. The plan of the building, along with its imposing façade, recalls aspects of French monastic architecture such as those monasteries built by the Benedictine (est. 6th cen.) and Cluniac (est. in France in the early 10th cen.) orders. Another sketch by Stier depicts the rear of the building, which reveals the continuation of the interlaced arch patterns around the projecting bay of the apse (fig. 42) (TUBAm, Inv: 17035). In terms of Islamic architectural elements within and on this building the most obvious feature beyond the interlaced arches are the massive towers of the Westwerk that maintain their cubic form for most of their height. Indeed, the massive stone volumes are only topped by additional, slightly smaller cubic volumes set back from the edge of the ones below and are themselves capped with a segmented conical dome surrounded by crenellations.

One possible reason for the imposing towers is to convey the strength associated with a
fortification in what was at the time a highly contentious and volatile region. This was likely the case since Roger II built the cathedral in order to convey economic, political and religious strength due to his installment of a Bishop’s seat there. Indeed, even the Sicilian Muslim geographer, cartographer and traveler Muhammad al-Idrisi (c.1099–1165/66) who was part of King Roger II’s court, refers to the city of Cefalù as a “fortress granted of all the prerogatives of a city.” In comparison to other buildings on the island (which will be discussed in the following chapters) there is little obvious interior work that is overtly “Islamic.” Instead, I would argue that the exterior towers were most likely constructed either by Muslim masons or, at the very least, conceived within the Islamic building tradition of North Africa due to the fact that this region was the origin of the Muslims who had occupied Sicily prior to the Normans. Indeed, the towers at Celafù bear a striking resemblance to the minaret at the Jami’ Uqba Ibn Nafi’ (the Great Mosque of Kairouan), in Kairouan, Tunisia (c.817-838) (fig. 43).

Like Schinkel, Stier observed the Islamic influences in the architecture that emerged from forms dating to after the Norman Conquest (since most of the actual Islamic buildings—like the Byzantine ones before them—were converted into “Norman” ones. These Norman rulers, as William Tronzo has demonstrated, fostered a unique architectural program through their integration of Arab masons, Greek mosaic specialists, and other various craftsmen as well as building techniques that resulted in a heterogeneity of forms. This type of mixed architecture was rich with possibilities for architects seeking a new style and certainly had a great impact on Stier.

400 Al-Idrisi quoted in: Museums with No Frontiers, ed., Siculo-Norman Art: Islamic Culture in Medieval Sicily, 249.
Stier’s Publications: A Failure to Articulate

Despite his (self) exclusion from the *Schinkelschule* successors, Stier, is nonetheless characterized by Eva Börch-Supan as one of its most important and influential personalities at the Bauakademie. Considered by her, and others, to be the only true “Romantic” there, he has suffered epithets (as previously noted) such as a “fanciful dreamer,” but has been defended and described mostly as someone who is not understood or as “a man who cannot be easily characterized.” In terms of his building proposals Börch-Supan describes them as “rich with invention” and demonstrating a “gigantic historicism.” In comparison to his colleague and “antipode,” Carl Bötticher, Stier did not publish a great deal and his books are either more akin to miscellaneous collections of reminiscences and writings about art, or they are theoretical drawing projects like his design for (the reconstruction of) Pliny’s Villa (a not altogether unusual intellectual exercise of the day). He also published a number of articles in the architectural trade journals and submitted several entries to design competitions. Börch-Supan concludes her assessment of Stier as “an important phenomenon in the development of architecture in Berlin, although he was only able to accomplish this through his teaching and designs, but not with buildings.” And while it is true that he only had one of his designs actually constructed (“Stierburg” – introduced above), there is certainly no doubt his drawings and submissions made a strong impression upon whomever saw them.

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In 1843 Stier published an article responding to the increasingly antagonistic positions on either side of the Greek-Gothic debate entitled “Beiträge zur Feststellung des Principes der Baukunst für das vaterländische Bauwesen der Gegenwart: Architrav und Bogen” (Contributions to the Statement of the Principles of Architecture for the Construction of Patriotic Architecture Today: Architrave and Arch). Contrary to the dominant perception at the time he did not believe that the main difference between the Gothic and Greek styles was a material one (slab/monolith vs. brick/stone). He argued instead that when one studied the two styles in detail one could observe that they actually had many more materials in common than previously assumed. He also did not reduce the argument to structure and, thus, did not follow the ‘tectonic path.’ Instead, he described Greek antiquity’s basic trabeated structure and form as a heathen or pagan (heidnisch) element, and the (pointed) arch as a Christian element that is associated with “religion and patriotism.” This kind of sentiment suggests he was aware of Karl Schaaase’s critical question posed less than a decade earlier in 1834 that queried the appropriateness and relevance of antique Greek forms to a modern Christian society on the basis that they emerged from a pagan culture. The question, itself a reworking of Herder’s ideas articulated decades before even Schaase’s rearticulation, and the ensuing debate was only part of the larger crisis of style.

Some argue that Stier was in fact a greater advocate for Greek antiquity; however, I have found that he argued quite equally that the Gothic style was appropriate for certain situations and it maintains a regular place in his writings and designs. Stier states that “We cannot do without

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406 Herrmann, *In What Style Should We Build?*, 38.
either the architrave or the arch...in many buildings, both structural systems have to be used simultaneously. In terms of the formal qualities that differentiated the Greek from the Gothic, Stier argued that in fact they were made up of basically the same elements and that it was the manner in which they were arranged that produced each style. Depending on the program certain forms were more appropriate than others such as the superior structural vaulting system found in the Gothic for large churches or simple vaults for smaller spaces. Yet while he was careful not to suggest the blatant copying of historical forms, but rather "developing them through skillful adaptation," he nonetheless argued that it was not unreasonable for one to use Greek forms as a model due to the high "degree of general and artistic culture" they achieved "at the greatest period of their existence" and that these forms could be imitated "without hesitation" and "that the architecture of antiquity must remain our base for art." However, in an earlier letter to his father from 1827 Stier criticizes Greek architecture because he thought it was "limited in its applications, and for our times, our constructive techniques, our materials, our climate, customs, our perception and beliefs. [and that] It is a tyrant for which we must give up a thousand comfortable, useful, true, and a thousand noble and beautiful things." Wolfgang Herrmann has observed that the ambiguity in Stier's writings was symptomatic of a "tolerant attitude" due to his wide-ranging personal taste. This approach, I would suggest, was conditioned by an intimate and sustained knowledge of architecture's diverse history. The one style he was unambiguous about, however, was the current trend of the Rundbogenstil whose advocates, he believed, had rejected the great architecture of antiquity and had instead chosen to emulate what he described

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409 Herrmann quoting Stier, In What Style Should We Build?, 38. 319-320.
410 Ibid.
as the “barbaric offspring of the world”. This polarizing stance could be due to Heinrich Hübsch’s later attempts to reconcile the round arch style (associated with antique paganism) with Christianity resulting in the *neuchristlich-classischen Baustyls* (neo-Christian Classical Style).

In a later section of the article Stier begins to exhibit his interest in the evolution of building elements such as the arch that suggests that the meaning of the form changed in different cultural and historical contexts. He writes:

> At first, and totally forgotten, vault construction had most likely come into general use in antiquity at least 600 years before the rise of Christianity [...] such that at the time of the birth of Christ under Emperor Augustus one of the largest and most perfect vaults as construction and form, the Pantheon of Agrippa in Rom, could be attempted and executed without commemorating many other admirable buildings with vaults for the purpose and benefit of the art form (*Kunstform*) in the early imperial period and before.

This statement at once demonstrates the likely pre-antique origins of the arch as well as the significant contribution the Romans made in the attempt to perfect it. He carries this discussion of the evolution of the arch further by briefly dealing with its possible ‘Islamic’ antecedents in the medieval period.

In the section titled “The Construction of Architraves in the Building Arts of the Middle Ages,” Stier provides a loosely chronological narrative on the development of the architrave in the medieval period. He does so while making clear it is known that the arch is actually much older than is commonly believed and has been part of the history of architecture since “pagan

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412 Ibid., 40. (on 336). Herrmann further observes that if it was Stier’s intent to bring a rational end to the classical-Gothic debate by demonstrating that each of their dogmas did not ‘conform to the facts’ then he failed since his own impartiality toward Classicism was too apparent.

413 Silke Walther, “In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?” - *Studien zu den Schriften und Bauten des Architekten Heinrich Hübsch (1795-1863)* (PhD, Diss., University of Stuttgart, 2003), 171ff.

times” as the excerpt above illustrates. He then continues by commenting on the evolution of the arch:

Thus, the arch was already a known building form in the period of pagan antiquity. Then one forgets about the architecture [Baukunst] of the Arabs and the more recent branches like the Turks, Persians and Indians, and how different forms and types of the arch were applied; apart from the horseshoe arch, the semicircle arch, and – what in our case is to be pointed out particularly - even earlier than in the architecture of the Christian peoples of central Europe: the pointed arch. 415

Acknowledging Islamic architecture here as both a forgotten (or ignored) aspect of architecture’s history, and therefore somehow a part of Europe’s tradition he reminds the reader of the allochthonous nature of the pointed arch, and thus the origin of the Gothic. What is most interesting is that there is no apparent agenda in his discussion as there was with Christopher Wren for example.

As I have demonstrated, in terms of the great Classical/Medieval style divide, Stier’s position in this article is difficult to pin down. His failure to articulate exactly what the foundational principles of both construction techniques (arch and architrave, i.e. arcuate/trabeate methods) and their (ontological) significance (so important to Bötticher’s tectonic theory for example), earned him a scathing criticism by Bötticher in the form of an article entitled “Polemisch-Kritisches” (Polemical-Critical)416 in 1845 that took Stier to task for what Bötticher saw as raising the fundamental question but not providing a proposal to answer it. He opens his critique of Stier essentially by mocking him:

415 Ibid. “Demnach war also der Bogen schon in den Zeiten des Heidentumes eine altherkömmliche Bauform. Dann vergißt man der Baukunst der Araber und ihrer jüngsten Zweige bei Türken, Persern und Indern, und wie Bogenformen der verschiedensten Art hier zur Anwendung gekommen sind: neben dem Hufeisen der Halbkreis, und – was für unseren Fall insonderheit bemerkenswerth ist - früher selbst als in der Baukunst der christlichen Völker des mittleren Europa, der Spitzbogen.”
Mr. Stier calls his work only a “test” (*Versuch*), only what can we expect from an experiment in which a man by profession opens up the treasure of his experiences and the results of many years of scientific research? We can expect that he attaches great weight to the rules and views that he puts forth in his “Contributions,” and that surely he had considered all aspects before presenting them to his colleagues, who are specialists in such German (*Vaterländisch*) construction techniques...

In a later section of the article Bötticher accuses Stier specifically of “jumbling everything together to mix the forms according to means and circumstances, fancy and inclination and to use them as well as one was able or according to one’s taste.” Clearly Bötticher had a great deal of difficulty with Stier’s ambiguity and, thus, understanding what he saw as Stier’s shifting position on the issue. However, if we consider Stier’s drawings, and how he understood the translation of these ideas into architectural form, I believe we can gain a more accurate picture of this controversial figure.

In another article published a year later entitled “Das Centralmoment bei der historischen Entwicklung des germanischen Baustiles” (*The Central Moment in the Historical Development of the Germanic Architectural Style*), in *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, Stier continues this line of thought, which suggests that the origins of the “German” style (Gothic) are not solely derived from Classical antiquity. In this article Stier approached the topic of the origins of the Gothic as a matter of fact in that its origins were neither French, nor solely German. Instead, he believed that the Gothic, whose main defining component was the pointed arch, had diverse origins, and that these origins were not necessarily restricted to the Classical or “European” tradition. In an 1844 article titled “Das Centralmoment bei der historischen Entwicklung des germanischen Baustiles”

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417 Ibid., 281.
418 Ibid., 297. Translation of this also provided in Herrmann, *In What Style Should We Build?*, 40.
(The Central Moment in the Historical Development of the German Style”), Stier illustrates a brief evolution of the arch:

Here we have no space to go into the whole history of the pointed arch. I consider it necessary that this important building vault - like those especially in the early Christian centuries in the Orient were used already and must been invented. Thus, the pointed arch was most likely already available to the Arabs. In the construction [Bauwesen] of the Germanic peoples [...] this vault line begins to be gradually generalized, i.e. simultaneously with the cross vault with four lunettes around the middle of the twelfth century. Its first application is in the great vault lines in transverse arches [Gurten] and groin vaults [Gräten (arris)]. Proof that it has been applied in recognition of its constructive excellence over the semicircular line, and not as a mere fashion figure.419

Not only does Stier convey through these articles a thorough knowledge of Greek, Roman and European medieval architectural history, he also demonstrates a keen awareness of the historical presence of ‘extra-European’ architecture. In this case for him it was primarily “Arab” Islamic, since this was the bulk of what he had encountered either through textual sources or on his trip through southern Italy. But most clearly, the impression this architecture made upon him, as I will point out presently, can be read in his actual design proposals. As demonstrated earlier, the ideas about the origins of the pointed arch, which Stier outlined in his lectures and articles are not entirely original.420 However, Stier presents this information as a matter of fact. It is not surprising then that Stier does not acknowledge Christopher Wren’s theory (if he was even aware of it at all) as he would likely have considered it, at the very least, unproductive. Thus, it is little wonder that Stier is a controversial figure during this period. And this is not a single episode:


discussions like this appear in several of his texts; they are also expressed formally in his designs.

**WILHELM STIER'S DESIGN PROPOSALS: A CRITICAL HISTORICISM?**

By the end of the 1830s, in the wake of the crisis of style, Wilhelm Stier began to produce architectural designs for a variety of programs. These drawings have rarely been discussed or theorized in any significant way, much less contextualized. And as I have already suggested it is one thing to characterize Stier based on his opinions in a few published texts and quite another to assess his ideas through his drawings. Part of why Stier's drawings have been overlooked has to do with the way in which drawings like these are described and categorized. Specifically, I mean that designs produced during this period, which were not rendered in a Neoclassical style, had little chance of inclusion in the later Modernist narratives. Assigned the condemning label of "historicist" (or worse, "eclectic") these designs did not fall along the tightrope, which the Modernists historians such as Giedion, Pevsner and Frampton strung from the early twentieth century back to Modern architecture's purported origins in the "Enlightenment." Thus, the Gothic and any other "non-Classical" style was seen ultimately as derivative and not part of the modern imperative. By discounting the contributions to Modernism by these other trends, such as the incredible diversity within what many have so commonly referred to as architectural historicism, we lose the greater context and subtle nuances inherent in the nineteenth century that in fact contributed to the Modern Movement. Thus, I would like to propose characterizing Stier's designs as a critical historicism due to the complexity of thought exhibited by them. As I will
illustrate, his designs are neither haphazard, nor "abstrusen Phantasten" (absurd fantasies), and that by understanding the cultural milieu from which they emerged, they reflect a deliberate and critical thought process. I do not intend to invoke or rely on any prior usage of the term, especially as it has been theorized within literary criticism or in architectural theory in the 1980s as an "oppositional form of postmodernism." Instead, my intent is to differentiate Stier's more critical position from what could be considered an eclectic historicism that deserves to be reexamined.

Despite his professed admiration for Greek antiquity Stier's designs have a substantial theoretical content that has little to do with Classical antiquity. In a majority of his surviving drawings, especially his grand competition submissions, the forms of Greek antiquity are either obscured or entirely absent. Indeed, the drawings are striking in their ability to combine and synthesize historical forms in a way that reveals trends in the nineteenth century that have more to do with the modern subjects' historical and cultural perceptions of his or her place in history and the present, than they do with structural or material expression. Although Stier's texts are not explicit in their pedagogical aim, his insistence on the understanding and appropriate use of historical principles and forms is clearly demonstrated in his designs. In terms of his approach to integrating history into his designs, he does not advocate a Durandian compositional analogy where the elements of building are to architecture (éléments des édifices) as "words are to discourse," or "notes are to music." Instead, as we will see, his approach attempts to synthesize historical forms and principles more in line with Schinkel's work on stylistic

synthesis. Thus, it is not through an assembly of forms toward an architecture that represents its own construction to which Stier's designs aspire. Rather, I am proposing that the designs reveal a rather sophisticated process that relies on the language of style; that is, forms with already established historical and or cultural associations that were then used in such a way as to convey a specific type of modern condition: a condition that acknowledges the constantly vacillating experience of an increasingly interconnected world.

As Frederick Beiser has recently observed with regard to early romantic aesthetics in terms of "its synthesis" of the doctrines of imitation and expression. It holds that in expressing his feelings and desires, in fathoming his own personal depths, the artist also reveals the creative powers of nature that work through him. What the artist produces is indeed the self-production of the absolute through him, for the creative activity of art is the highest organization and development of all the creative powers of nature." Based on this idea I would argue that Stier sought to produce an architecture that not only harnessed the uniqueness of his own artistic abilities, but intended to conflate this artistry with his vast knowledge of architecture’s history and its endless symbolic vocabulary of meaning to produce something new.

Therefore, what his critics suggest is a "confusion" in his writings, and "fantasy" in his designs, I believe is better described as—at worst—revealing an ambiguity toward these two dominant styles, if not an overall disquietude. Indeed, in terms of the preponderance of this inescapable Classical/Gothic debate, I believe Stier turned to (what he knew of) architecture’s own history in order to propose something new and challenge the status quo without compromise.

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424 Frederick Beiser, The Romantic Imperative, 75-76.
(which is how he viewed Hübsch’s proposal). As a result these ideas he struggled to articulate in his writings became expressed more clearly in his design proposals.

The Winter Palace at St. Petersburg (1838)

On December 17, 1837 the winter palace of the Tsar in St. Petersburg, Russia caught fire. As a result a large part of the building was destroyed, but much of the furniture and artwork was saved. Shortly afterward Tsar Nicholas I (1796-1855) (r.1825-55) charged the architects Vasily Stasov and Alexander Briulov with the task of restoring the palace to its original appearance. Stier, however, at the prompting of a competition, took the opportunity to propose an entirely new design for the palace. Rolf Senn states in his dissertation that Stier is responding to a competition call, but does not specify by whom. The only evidence I have found relating to a competition for the building has to do with the material and not for the design itself. However, Eva Börsch-Supan notes that after the palace burned down Berlin architects “were also involved in the competition for a new building, which was not carried out because the Rastrelli facades were available.”

In his proposal for the new Winter Palace, Stier detailed a grand building in five ambitious drawings (fig. 44 & fig. 45). Described as a “great merger between the Russian and

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425 Rolf T. Senn, Orientalisierende Baukunst in Berlin im 19. Jahrhundert (PhD. Diss., Freie Universität Berlin, 1990), 44.
426 Eduard Jermann, Unpolitische Bilder aus St. Petersburg: Skizzen, nach dem Leben gezeichnet (Berlin, 1851), 190. Jermann states that there was a competition (a bid) for the proposed metal roofing: „Nach dem unglücklichen Brande des Winterpalais in St. Petersburg sollte der Neubau mit Eisenblech gedeckt werden. General Kleinmichel, dem die Leitung des Baues übertragen war, schrieb eine Konkurrenz aus; auch Jacobleff meldete sich. Er stellte dem General seinen Preis, der den Kaiser davon unterrichtete, und ihm zur Antwort brachte, daß ein Anderer sich erboten, die Lieferung um einen Kopeken pro Pfund billiger zu übernehmen; wäre auch er hierzu bereit, so wolle er dem Kaiser vorschlagen sie ihm zu übergeben.“
427 Eva Börsch-Supan, Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel, 151. The only other architect she mentions that was involved in this competition was Stüler, but she notes that there is no design by him.
the Oriental,” Stier’s design completely contrasts with the existing palace. In the front elevation the viewer is confronted by a richly rendered large building whose highest points include the top of an enormous central dome and a massive central tower centered above the entry. At first, the presentation may strike the viewer as “fantastic,” an eclectic hybrid indicative of a misunderstood (critical) historicism. The style of the palace is strikingly different than its predecessor; the former palace was an extravagant expression of a Franco-Russian Baroque that radiated the epitome of imperial luxury in the eighteenth century (fig. 46). In contrast to this image, most of Stier’s elevations are dominated by long stretches of repeated fenestrations set within various types of arches. The elevations owe their intensity to a series of repeated details that are articulated by the use of a variety of elements from cusped arches to trefoils and what appear to be decorative brick or tile work. The central tower, which dominates the façade is composed of a variety of details from a mixture of styles. Because of this mixture identifying this prominent element as belonging to one style or another is impossible. It is mostly Gothic in its references with a substantial inclusion of earlier medieval biforate windows contained by lobed, horse-shoe arches typical of North African and by extension Islamic architecture on the Iberian peninsula. Thus, elements such as these evoke a more abstract history of architectural form rather than any sort of specific building per se. A series of arches on the tower is topped by an octagonal segment, which is capped with rose window roundels and Gothic tracery under pediments with gables, all of which recall the Gothic. The ridges of the gables are lined with small cusped finials also evoke the Gothic, but without the use of pointed arches. Also present are rows and layers of corbel tables, which were a popular feature of the day and nearly ubiquitous in examples of Rundbogenstil, but can arguably be traced to early medieval Italian

428 Ibid.
architecture such as the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence of the fourteenth century, and not the
Gothic period.

The design of the dome for the Winter Palace is perhaps the most interesting of all of
Stier's dome designs since it has an outdoor gallery space below the drum, which is a rather rare
feature. This element, surprisingly, can be found on a mausoleum at Sultaniyah in present day
Iran, which is itself a possible antecedent to the now famous Russian bulbous or "onion" dome.
The specific building to which this configuration may refer is the *Gunbad-i Uljaytu* (Tomb of the
Ilkhanid Sultan Uljaytu, r.1280-1316, and descendant of the Mongol rulers) built ca.1302-12,
which also has an octagonal base beneath its dome (fig. 47). It is difficult to prove this
connection directly; however, it is entirely conceivable due to the fact that throughout the early
19th century Europeans—such as James Morier and Charles Texier et al.—were traveling
through Persia and returning with rich descriptions. Curiously, however, the eight minarets that
exist on the Gunbad-i Uljaytu bear a similarity to a unique feature on Stier's *Berliner Dom*
(Berlin Cathedral) project to be discussed presently.

Stier's design for the rebuilding of the 60,000m² Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, Russia
is a proposal for a monumental project. Indeed, his proposal clearly suggests a complete
rebuilding of the palace. Stier's design trumps even the excessive Baroque character of the old
palace designed by the Italian architect Bartolomeo F. Rastrelli (1700-71) whose façade was
already an imposing 250m wide. The most dramatic difference in Stier's design is its height,
which, had it been built, would have dwarfed the existing palace. The palace as it existed before
the fire was about 30m (100ft) high. Whereas Stier's proposal, while not specifically indicative
of the exact height, appears to be at least two and a half times taller than the original (based on
my assessment of the relationship between estimable measurements found in the elevations).

This project is rarely discussed as part of Stier’s oeuvre, and when it is included it is typically
described with phrases like “extravagantly fantastic” which, to be sure, it is. But be that as it
may, the question as to why Stier would propose such a dramatic overhaul on such a palace
remains as well as what he hoped to accomplish by creating such a design. Thus, it is best read as
a theoretical statement of his intentions.

Stier’s ‘Universal’ *Berliner Dom* (1840-42)

In 1840, the year before Schinkel’s death, Stier submitted a proposal to the Prussian government
for a grand building, which could accommodate between 10,000 and 12,500 people. Of the
four versions of this building that he proposed, one design in particular stands out as a
remarkable expression of Stier’s theoretical position with regard to architecture and its history.
The building, which was intended to soar above the ground at 500 Prussian Reichs feet (ca.
152m), had an elaborately detailed, copper and gold-plated dome. This upper section of the
structure, in combination with its 575 (180m) foot tall western tower, could have been the tallest
building in the world (fig. 48). Had it been built in 1840 it would have surpassed the tallest
known structure at the time; the thirteenth-century Cathedral of Strasbourg, which was about
140m. More noticeable than its height, however, was the shape and character of the massive

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edition of the *Zeitschrift für Bauwesen* featured a full page photo of Stier as its frontispiece.
430 Karl-Heinz Klingenburg, *Der Berliner Dom: Bauten, Ideen und Projekte vom 15. Jahrhundert bis zur
Gegenwart* (Berlin: Union Verlag, 1987), 110.
431 The Fuß or (German) ‘Foot’ varied widely throughout the German-speaking world, and changed over
time. In today’s measurements this translates to about 1.03 US ‘Imperial Feet’. So 575 Prussian Reichs
Feet equals approx. 591 US (Imperial feet).
432 Erwin von Steinbach is credited for major contributions from 1277 until his death in 1318.
dome, which recalls a number of architectural traditions from Byzantine Italy to Mughal India and Ilkhanid Central Asia. The dome, whose diameter slightly exceeds its tambour, initially reads as a subtle bulbous or “onion” dome such as those found in Indian or Byzantine or post-Mongol Russian architecture.433 However, its height here does not exceed its width, as is typical in an “onion” dome, making the form more akin to the Islamic variant of Mughal India or Persia. Indeed, as Wolfgang Born has demonstrated, the origins of the bulbous dome can be found “in a stratum of wooden architecture which extended through India, the near East, and Russia.”434 The dome is also covered with a rich decorative and geometric scheme evoking the geometrical articulations of the famous Persian and Mamluk domes of the medieval period. Inscribed within the interior (of which no drawings exist) was a decorative text band ringing the tambour with the repeating text “God with us” in addition to richly embossed carvings.435 The design was Stier’s fourth scheme for the Berliner Dom (Supreme Parish and Cathedral Church of Berlin), effectively the king’s church and highest representative of Protestant Christianity in the Kingdom of Prussia in the first half of the nineteenth century. This proposal, emerging in the early 1840s, raises the question: why would a German architect in Berlin design such an important church with a prominent feature that appears to reference what can be characterized as an allochthonous building tradition that seem to have little to do with Prussian culture of the period?

Indeed, described as “oriental” by Karl Heinz Klingenburg, and purportedly as “Byzantine” by Stier himself, the dome is at the very least and indicator as to Stier’s desire to

At 142 metres (466 feet), it was the world’s tallest building from 1647 to 1874, when it was surpassed by St. Nikolai’s Church, Hamburg. Today it is the sixth-tallest church in the world and the highest still-standing structure built entirely in the Middle Ages.

433 By “bulbous” I mean, according to Wolfgang Born, “a pointed dome which swells, so as to overhand the drum below.” From: Wolfgang Born, “The Origin and the Distribution of the Bulbous Dome,” The Journal for the Society of Architectural Historians 3, No. 4 (October, 1943), 32.

434 Ibid., 48.

move beyond the Classical/Gothic dichotomy. However, there is another aspect to the dome that warrants our attention that may further explain this “oriental” label. Rising from just above the widest dimension of the curving dome there are ten small towers capped by statues of human figures in an arrangement with no clear antecedent (fig. 49). The existence of statues on top of small towers, parapets etc. has a long tradition within European architecture easily traceable to classical antiquity, but perhaps most famously they are found along the parapet of Modeno’s façade facing the square for St. Peter’s Basilica ca. 1614 (fig. 50). However, the circular arrangement of the statues, together with the peculiar location from which the statues project—the widest part of the curve of a discontinuous dome—not only raises questions about structural possibilities, but also complicates the search for a precedent within European architecture. Thus, if we expand our search we can see a somewhat similar configuration on the Gunbad-i Uljaytu mentioned above as a potential antecedent to the Winter Palace. At Uljaytu there were a series of eight minarets ringing the massive dome, which sat upon an octagon. It is also interesting to note here that Stier’s first design proposal for the Berliner Dom was comprised of a massive octagonal tower (approximately the same circumference as the bulbus domes), which rose up to a commanding height at the same location on the plan. The possibility that Stier based his designs on such allochthonous design elements, which were quickly making their way into European culture through printed texts, suggests that his designs may not be so “absurdly fantastical” as critics had assumed them to be.

Stier had already begun designs for a National Cathedral in Berlin two years before January 1842 when the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm IV and his cabinet announced that the Berlin Cathedral (rebuilt by Schinkel earlier in the century) should be razed and a new, larger

436 Karl-Heinz Klingenburg, Der Berliner Dom, 111.
cathedral built in its place. Stier had begun designing the ideal Evangelical church during his time in Italy, but focused his efforts more seriously on Berlin from 1840. There is evidence he was in conversation about the cathedral with the Prussian diplomat Bunsen as well as Schinkel while he was in Italy.\(^{437}\) However, the renderings produced during his time in Italy, some of which were later published in K.E.O. Fritsch’s text on Evangelical churches, were almost solely plans theorizing ideas such as how to best formulate an architectural design that could accommodate an Evangelical Protestant liturgy most effectively.\(^{438}\) Stier stated his vision of the Cathedral in a letter to Bunsen from 1842 that invokes the famous fifteenth century Pope Nicholas V. "Our majesty wants a history of architecture cultivated from all over the world for [our] salvation, like the great [Pope] Nicholas V who ordered Lorenzo [Valla] to translate Homer, Pindar and Herodotus."\(^{439}\) This comment suggests that Stier believed in the reciprocal relationship between architecture and culture and that a building had the ability to reflect the contemporary world of 1840. However, unlike Pope Nikolaus V’s call in the 15\(^{th}\) century, Stier interpreted this modern day “history of architecture” to include more than the Greek world. In other words he proposed his ‘mixed’ architecture, which attempted to reference its own vast and


\(^{439}\) Stier cited in: Carl-Wolfgang Schütmann, Der Berliner Dom im 19. Jahrhundert (Berlin: Mann, 1980), 111-112. Stier is referring here to Pope Nicholas V (1397-1455). Under the generous patronage of Nicholas V, humanism made rapid strides. “The new humanist learning had been hitherto looked on with suspicion in Rome, a possible source of schism and heresy from an unhealthy interest in paganism. For Nicholas V, humanism became a tool for the cultural aggrandizement of the Christian capital, and he sent emissaries to the East to attract Greek scholars after the fall of Constantinople. The pope also employed Lorenzo Valla to translate Greek histories, pagan as well as Christian, into Latin. This industry, coming just before the dawn of printing, contributed enormously to the sudden expansion of the intellectual horizon.”
rich history through indirect references and reflect a particular attitude toward an increasingly global consciousness.

The Hungarian Houses of Parliament, Budapest (1844)

A further example of Stier’s theoretical position, as articulated in his drawings, is his 1844 design submission for the legislative body, or Diet of Hungary (*Magyar Országgyűlésnek* or *Országház*) or “Landhaus in Pesth” (Houses of Parliament) in Budapest facing the Danube. This proposal was theoretical since there was to be no “official” call for a competition for this building until decades after Stier’s death. However, this was a period of great political and social change in Hungary, of which Stier would surely have been aware. Figures such as István Széchenyi and his rival Lajos Kossuth emerged during the 1840s reform era advocating industrial modernization against the Habsburg attempts to thwart industrial advancement. In the three years prior to Stier’s design, according to Miklós Molnár, Kossuth’s “political genius really took off” such that the crucial medium of the national Diet was central in the struggle for a national identity.\(^{440}\) Thus, the idea of an appropriate location for a building to house this emergent Diet was likely a current topic. His design was even rendered two years prior to the famous Hungarian poet Mihály Vörösmarty’s nationalistic call in 1846 that “The nation lacks a home.”\(^{441}\) Even more interesting is the fact that in 1844 Hungary was not even a sovereign nation, but still subject to the Habsburg crown until the Compromise of 1867. One possible reason for Stier’s motivation to take up such a speculative design could have been the rapidly

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expanding nationalist movement sweeping across Hungary at the time in response to centuries of Habsburg rule. Whatever the exact reason for his design, the project remains a telling and significant one due to the way in which he harmonizes the rich diversity of its details with its overall formal expression. This building was intended to house a diverse multi-ethnic representative body including Croats, Serbs and Romanians among others.

In Stier’s perspective drawing we are first presented with a stunning three-quarter frontal perspective (fig. 51). The building is organized into two halves delineated by three architectural masses, the center of which is occupied by a series of stepped back tower segments which changes shape as it inclines from a square base, through an octagonal center, to a smaller square cap covered with arched corbelled tables and cornices of various depths. The façade is dramatically expressed in this rendering by a repetitive series of identical pointed arches whose continuity is only broken in the center by an even larger projecting arch (fig. 52).

The façade with its composition and assembly might include a direct or indirect reference to early developments in eighth-century Persia or ninth-century Cairo (fig. 53). It could also refer to further Persian development as seen potentially in sixteenth- or seventeenth-century Safavid, Iran. The prominence of a grand central arch has been a common architectural motif present throughout the history of Persian Islamic architecture since the eighth century as seen in Iran’s oldest mosque the Masjid-i Tari-Khana (“House of God”), in Damghan (now Iran) (750-89) (fig. 54), which itself has clear Arab and Sassanian influences because of its plan type and construction techniques respectively. More likely precedents from this area are buildings from Isfahan such as the Seljuk then Safavid rendition of the Masjid-i Jami’-i (Friday Mosque of Isfahan) (from 772-1667) (fig. 55), or the later Safavid period Masjid-i Shah (The Shah’s
Mosque) (1612-38) (fig. 56), both of which express these ideas of a linear series of repeated pointed arches framed by larger arches iwans, or more accurately as is the case with Stier’s Parliament building, something more akin to a pishtaq due to its prominent central placement.\textsuperscript{442}

In fact, the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan (1590-1602) (“Image of the World Square”), which is the common space shared by these mosques, exhibits a clear example of this two-story arch motif (fig. 57).\textsuperscript{443} The Seljuk version of the Masjid-i Jami in fact is typically considered to be the best example of a transition from a more enclosed hypostyle plan to the ultimate expression of the Persian mosque embodied in what is known as the four iwan plan type. This plan type, however, is not present in Stier’s design, which is more closely related to plans of contemporary European palaces. When one examines these forms more closely it becomes obvious that if there is a reference to Persian architecture it was only formal since the bays and ceilings of these arcades are not only rendered in Gothic details but they are full of Christian and Hungarian iconography primarily in the form of painting. This allusion to the Gothic, which is the typical categorization of this building found throughout the recent literature which discusses it, is of potential interest here since one of the possible precedents mentioned above, the Tari-Khana Mosque with its pointed arches, predates the presence of the pointed arch in Europe and thus the beginning of the Gothic in France by about 380 years.\textsuperscript{444} The organization and plan of the building is certainly not (medieval) Gothic, but rather refers most likely to the then brand new Palace of Westminster by Charles Barry and A.W. Pugin, which was under construction by 1840 and no doubt a precedent

\textsuperscript{442} Iwan = “A vaulted hall walled on three sides, with one end entirely open.” Pishtaq = Iranian term for a portal projecting from the facade of a building. Source for definitions: Andrew Petersen, Dictionary of Islamic Architecture (London, New York: Routledge, 1996). Also, the Masjid-i Shah is now (post-1979) known as the Masjid-i Imam (Mosque of the Imam).

\textsuperscript{443} The Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan (“Image of the World Square”) has been more commonly known as the Maydan-i Shah. After the revolution it was renamed Maydan-i Iman (Imam Square).

\textsuperscript{444} I am specifically referring here to the canonical starting point of the European Gothic with Abbot Suger’s use of the pointed arch in his ambulatory addition at St. Denis in ca. 1140.
What is clear here is that there is no single influence but rather a mixing of elements drawn from across architecture's history in order to produce a building for a new era. Additionally the central tower of Stier’s plan bears a striking resemblance to Mamluk minarets of Cairo, which were readily available to him in Coste’s book and another likely precedent for him (fig. 59 & fig. 60).

Proving what actual sources were available to Stier is important to the degree that it would help us understand what texts and images were accessible to him at this time and the current state of architecture’s historical research. No doubt the texts on Italian architecture, as well as his travels there made forms in Italy familiar to him, but other sources such as possible Persian examples at Isfahan, or connections to medieval Cairo in his articulation of the central tower, would not have been from direct observation. Instead, he most certainly would have had access to publications such as those I have outlined above. With regard to the specific Persian examples it is difficult to say whether Stier was aware of what these buildings looked like. Of course there were many representations in the West of Persian Islamic architecture, such as the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan at Isfahan (1590-95). Representations of this square and its buildings can be found in texts such as Adam Olearius’s (1599-1671) *Vermehrte Newe Reysebeschreibung* (1656), Fischer von Erlach’s *Entwurf*, and Jean-Baptiste Chardin’s (1643-1717) ten volume *Les Voyages du Chevalier Chardin, en Perse et autre Lieux de l’Orient* (1811) to name a few. Most of the representations of Isfahan, such as Fischer von Erlach’s, include only a single view across the square and depicts the ’Ali Qapu palace (1590-91) and two separate views of the Si-o-seh Pol, or Allahvardi Khan bridge (“Bridge of the Thirty-three arches”) (1602) (fig. 61). Of course there were other earlier sources in addition to those mentioned above such as the Castilian traveler, writer and ambassador of Henry III to the court of Timur, Ruy González de Clavijo (d.
1412), who passed through the northern section of Persia on his way to Samarqand. Others include the Italian Pietro Della Valle (1586-1652) who visited from 1617 to 1629 and was studied by Goethe. Others include Jean-Baptiste Tavernier and his Les six voyages en Turquie, en Perse et aux Indes (Paris, 1679), a copy of which we know was owned by Friedrich Gilly, and Adrien Dupré’s Voyage en Perse fait dans les Années 1807, 1808 et 1809 (Paris, 1819), but how well Stier knew these texts is uncertain. In 1842 Stier produced some further designs for the cathedral, which included the submission with the bulbous dome. Interestingly, in the very same year, two additional texts about Persia were published. The first was by the French historian and Beaux-Arts trained architect F. M. Charles Texier (1802-71) and his Description de l’Arménie la Perse et la Mésopotamie (1842), and the second, entitled Geschichte der Ilchane, das ist der Mongolen in Persien 1200-1350 (1842-43), was authored by the traveler, antiquarian and prolific orientalist Joseph Freiherr von Hammer-Purgstall (1774-1856). Hammer-Purgstall knew Persian (in addition to Turkish and Arabic) even translating poetry by the famous Hafiz and authoring a text on the history of Persian literature. However, despite his Geschichte der Ilchane he never traveled to Persia.

A text that may provide more insight, especially in terms of Stier’s design for the Berliner Dom, was published almost a century after Fischer von Erlach’s and could also have possibly contributed to Stier’s knowledge of Islamic architecture. This text was James Morier’s Journey

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446 See: Pietro della Valle, Reisebeschreibung in Persien und Indien (Hamburg: Maximilian-Gesellschaft, 1981), 9f. This text includes his Reisebeschreibung from the first German edition of 1674 compiled by Friedhelm Kemp and includes Goethe’s essay on Pietro della Valle from the West-östlichen Divan. However, this edition contains no drawings or images.
through Persia (London, 1812), which was translated into German and published, just three years after the original, in 1815. Thus, it was probably accessible to Stier, however, there were very few images within it except for a frontispiece that depicted an aerial view of the Maydan-i Shah including the bulbous dome of the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah (Shaykh Lutfallah mosque) (1617-18) (fig. 62). What Morier’s text does contain was a rather accurate description of the Uljaytu Mausoleum in Sultaniya:

The principal object among the remains of the ancient town is an immense structure, which is called the tomb of Sultan Mohamed Khodabendáh, and is said to be six hundred years old. A cupola rests on an octagonal base, on each angle of which arose a minaret; one only of which is now entire. [...] Nothing, however, intersects the beautiful symmetry of the dome. The interior diameter is thirty-five paces, and on a rough calculation, the height of the dome must be about one hundred feet. [...] Over each gate is a gallery, which extends along the base of the dome, and leads into smaller galleries within, and into others also on the exterior of the building. These are beautifully adorned with the neatest work that I had ever seen; all the cornices of the doors, the segments of the arches, and the various niches are covered with Arabic sentences; which in some places are surmounted in a smaller character by Cufic inscriptions, all either painted in fresco, or raised in plaster. The whole structure looks more like a mosque than a tomb, compared at least with those at Constantinople; but of any description, and in any place, I do not recollect a building which could have surpassed this in its original state.

If Stier had the inclination to study Persian architecture, the sources certainly existed. But the text that was to trump all of those mentioned above, however, at least in terms of its graphic content, was not to appear until well after Stier’s death. This text was Pascal Coste and Eugène Flandin’s Monuments modernes de la Perse mesurés, dessinés et décrits (1867) (fig. 63).

Although Coste and Flandin returned to Paris after their journey through Iran in February 1842, and despite the fact that Coste’s rendering of the Maydan-i Shah etc. was produced in 1839,

447 James Justinian Morier (c.1780-1849), A Journey through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor, to Constantinople, in the years 1808 and 1809 (London: Longman, Hurst, Reese, Orme and Brown, 1812).  
449 James Justinian Morier, A Journey through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor, to Constantinople, in the years 1808 and 1809 (London: Longman, Hurst, Reese, Orme and Brown, 1812), 255-56.
plenty of time before Stier’s design, it is unlikely that Stier ever saw them. However, he may have seen their earlier text *Voyage en Perse*, but this was not published until 1851.

**CONCLUSION**

Stier was no expert on many of these potential references; i.e. he was no “Orientalist” and therefore the depth of his knowledge of these distant sites and buildings was limited and at best second hand. However, he clearly embraced the medium of architectural drawing to experiment and express his ideas about architecture and its history. The Architektenverein and the Akademie der bildenden Künste, Berlin had extensive libraries to which he had access and could thus connect to the world of architectural theory outside of his world at the Bauakademie. From this research it is clear that he exhibited an extensive knowledge of what was known at the time in Germany about architecture’s history. His broader goal was to utilize an inclusive tradition of architecture (as it was known at the time by him) as a source of inspiration for a new architecture that would thoughtfully, but not directly refer to the rich history that came before it.

Through his designs he attempted, as I have indicated, to vastly widen the scope of sources and influences in the search for a new, modern, language of architecture no matter what its origins might be. Thus, from the analysis of these drawings I believe Stier sought to draw on a history of architecture that was open ended and constantly in flux. His work suggests that he saw and understood the complex variety of architecture’s socio-historical origins and that layers of references and multiple details in a given building were never simply ex-nihilo, but that they each came from somewhere. From where exactly they came in his view I would say was of less
concern than representing the idea of this accumulated history in the built form. Thus, Stier’s “modern” architecture uses its own history to represent itself. In all likelihood Stier saw himself on the one hand as a paradigm of the Romantic artist, who, through his creativity, believed he was producing something new. Or in the words of Frederick Beiser: “What the artist produces is indeed the self-production of the absolute through him, for the creative activity of art is the highest organization and development of all the creative powers of nature.” But on the other hand Stier probably, very seriously, considered himself a sort of narrator of an architectural history that was, as he was keenly aware, only partially known. Indeed, his writings, which are far less eloquent than his drawings, reveal the difficulty he had in articulating what could be described as a burden of history. In many respects, he felt he had to unmoor history as it had been understood in order to piece it back together again with the end result of an architecture that acknowledged its diverse past, as opposed to French “modern” styles of the time.

450 Frederick Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative*, 75.
CHAPTER FOUR

FROM NATIONAL STYLE TO GERMAN EXPORT:
CARL VON DIEBITSCH AND ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE IN BERLIN, 1839-1862
INTRODUCTION

By the time of his death in 1856, Wilhelm Stier’s reputation as an erudite, charismatic professor and regular agent provocateur at the Bauakademie had been well established. And, as is commonly the case, the measure of his actual influence and future legacy was in the hands of his students. Among them very few went on to contribute in any substantial way to the evolving literature on architectural history and theory. This is not entirely surprising since we can recall that the purpose of the Bauakademie, which was modeled more on the École Polytechnique than the École des Beaux-Arts, was to produce practitioners of the building arts rather than theorists or historians.451 This point is important to consider in the wake of the substantial body of literature dedicated to German architectural theory of the nineteenth century that has re-emerged (largely in English) since the early 1990s. Texts such as Mitchell Schwarzer’s German Architectural Theory and the Search for Modern Identity (1995), and the considerable contribution of Harry Francis Mallgrave (ranging from collected, edited and translated texts for the Getty Text & Document series to his own studies on modern architecture and Gottfried Semper), have substantially contributed knowledge to the field.452 The availability of these primary sources has played a fundamental role in drawing attention to this often-neglected period that sits in the calm before the storm of twentieth century Modernism. As a result of this critical


need for the translation and inclusion of these primary sources in anthologies, and in order to demonstrate their importance and validate their addition to the Modernist canon, many practitioners of architecture, who were not prolific writers, have been overlooked. This lacuna in the historiography has slowly been filling with monographs and articles on some of the architects discussed in the previous chapter.

However, bringing any of these Berlin architects from this post-Schinkel, pre-Behrens period (with the notable exception of Gottfried Semper and Otto Wagner, neither of whom were from Berlin), out of their "local histories" has been limited. This is not to say that all of these architects should be included in narratives of Modernism. Rather, what I am suggesting is that by and large the scholarship on this period has overwhelmingly emphasized the written work of contemporary theorists. And while this work has contributed significantly to the discipline and history of architecture, it often results in the overlooking of these theorist's architectural contemporaries: the practitioners. By limiting our reading to these texts we have limited our potential quarry. By understudying, underestimating, or even simply dismissing much of the work of this period by categorizing its architects as "historicists" or "eclectics," and its architecture as "confused," we lose sight of many critical aspects that affected the early development of Modernism, which began in full force in the second third of the nineteenth century. This chapter reassesses one of these figures, Carl von Diebitsch, that was a product of

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453 It should be noted here that Gottfried Semper (1803-1879) was not from Berlin. And although he interacted to a certain degree with architects there (and visited Schinkel) and his (theoretical) influence was certainly felt there, he was not an active participant in the architectural community of the Berliner Schule, and thus was not involved in the local business of practicing architecture.

454 Nearly all of the canonical texts begin their narratives of Modernism during this period. This includes, Sigfried Giedeon's *Space, Time and Architecture* (1941), Nicholas Pevsner's *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* (1936) begins with Wm. Morris; Kenneth Frampton's *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (1980), which begins with the establishment of a the cultural context of the European Enlightenment then after discussing advances in engineering and technology he finally begins his narrative with the date of
the Bauakademie and the Schinkelschule, and afterwards actively dedicated himself to putting into practice his ideas during this remarkable period.

As a ‘third generation’ architect after Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Wilhelm Stier, Carl von Diebitsch (1819-1869) inherited a substantial and evolving knowledge and philosophy about architecture, its history and its practice while he was at the Bauakademie. However, while Diebitsch was at the Bauakademie studying under Stier in the early 1840s, Prussia was in the midst of a new accelerated phase of industrialization. It was during Diebitsch’s formative years of education and early practice (1840s and 1850s) that Prussia experienced social and political changes that would end up benefitting him greatly. Until the mid-century reforms including changes to the restrictive policies of the guilds and government bureaucracy, ideas such as entrepreneurship were neither feasible nor encouraged. However, rapidly developing trends and technological achievements made possible by continual advancements in industrialization, as well as the expanding knowledge about the world beyond Europe, continued at a brisk pace. These changes in political and industrial culture affected Diebitsch, his cohorts and Berlin’s architecture culture substantially.

Relying on diverse methods ranging from more traditional approaches of art historical analysis to work in postcolonial studies as well as theoretical work from the evolving field of “global” studies, I will reexamine and reassess Diebitsch’s context, contribution and historical significance. Through an analysis of his work I will illustrate that Diebitsch is a figure of greater importance.
importance than the historiography has hitherto acknowledged. Of particular relevance is how we might be able to understand him as a 'modern' architect more than anything else. It has been previously argued that Diebitsch was a unique example of a nineteenth-century entrepreneur in Egypt and that he advocated the use of “Mudejar architecture” as a universal style as a solution for a “global civilization,” yet there is a pronounced difference between what is either “universal” or “global” and what is “modern.” Indeed, I do not challenge Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz’s contention that Diebitsch intended his architecture for a “global” civilization, however she may define it. Rather my intention is to assert Diebtsch’s role as a modern architect.

I must be clear as to how I understand this term “modern” and why I believe it is relevant in this context. My use of the word “modern” is, for the most part, not different than any textbook about architectural Modernism. When I use the term as a description of Diebitsch I am not referring to an “alternative” Modernism (or alternative “Modernity”) or any other version. What I am referring to specifically is the idea that during this period, until the twentieth century actually, the historiographically determined “path” to the Modern Movement as we know it, was neither established nor known. As such, there were many architects striving toward achieving a “Modern” architecture. And these architects to which I am referring are not using “modern” simply to refer to architecture that is “new.” Moreover, my understanding of the term here implies three further conditions that involve a specific response to, and extension of, ‘modernization’ (including technological innovations and new materials etc.), an ideology in the form of “ideals of progress and standards of comfort,” as well as a strategy of design that


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involves some form of self-reflexivity.\textsuperscript{456} This last point will be elaborated upon later in the text. In addition to these, one of the most interesting ways in which we can define the Modern movement is through its historiographic representation as a canonical narrative. Thus, instead of challenging the extant work on Diebitsch I intend to expand upon it by resituating his oeuvre within a broader context. Prior assertions regarding Diebitsch's work raise the important issue of sources and historiography, which is best briefly dealt with before initiating the more in-depth study.

**Carl von Diebitsch: Historiography & Sources**

The most significant work to date on Diebitsch includes dissertations by Isabella Fehle, Rolf T. Senn and Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz. For the most part, this scholarship has tended not to focus on Diebitsch as an important figure within the nineteenth-century Berlin architectural scene per se, but rather either as an expert on the “Moorish” style, an “entrepreneur” in Egypt who was able to access its difficult market through his original ideas, or as an architect that took advantage of new Prussian technologies in an effort to push his chosen style.\textsuperscript{457} The work that does deal with Diebitsch in Berlin, notably by Rolf Senn, and to a lesser extent Isabella Fehle, tends to focus on either the fact that Diebitsch was part of a nineteenth-century trend of orientalist architecture in and around Berlin, or that his work is important because of his embrace of technology through use of cast iron.


Building critically upon existing theories regarding Diebitsch involves the examination of aspects of his work that have hitherto been ignored or neglected. One example of this is the existence of a large cache of drawings by Diebitsch that has yet to be thoroughly analyzed and interpreted, and has thus far hardly been discussed or reproduced anywhere. Additionally, most scholarship about him focuses on his particular historical moment instead of connecting him to broader trends and movements of the nineteenth century. This work also tends to concentrate focus on his work either in Berlin or Egypt prioritizing one or the other. Part of the reason for this has to do with the background of the individual scholars approaching Diebitsch who more often than not keep him within their disciplinary “comfort zone.”

Much of the complexity involved in how Diebitsch is studied has to do with the fact that he led an unusual life between two countries. Having emerged from his education in Berlin at the Bauakademie with a Prussian cultural worldview, he embarked on a journey south to Italy, which resulted in devoting himself entirely to the study of Islamic architecture. Returning to Berlin after his Studienreise he sought to practice solely in the so-called “Moorish” style with little success until his debut at the 1862 London Exhibition. After the Exhibition he relocated to Egypt in order to practice there for the rest of his short life. In fact, I believe it is Diebitsch’s interest in Islamic architecture and relocation to Egypt, not his lack of built works in Berlin, that is the primary cause of his neglect within the historiography. All too often scholars who know little about the history of Islamic architecture are altogether less willing to deal more substantially with the work of architects who design in this style. This often results in the marginalization of

458 For example, among those who have dealt with Diebitsch even in a brief way from the German perspective come from a variety of backgrounds ranging from: German literature, art history and Egyptology, medieval and Bavarian history, Christian and Classical archaeology, history and some have other focuses such as graphic design. My point is that most of them seem not to have studied Islamic Architectural history or a related subject. From the Egyptian perspective Diebitsch is only mentioned very briefly throughout the few sources.
trans-national figures like Diebitsch due to the fact that they worked with “exotic” forms. Similarly, scholars who know little about nineteenth-century Berlin, and the development of modern architectural theory and practice in Germany, are often too willing to label someone who is seen as an interlocutor to a “non-Western” context such as Egypt in the nineteenth century as an Orientalist. Both of these positions do not allow for a fully robust reading of Diebitsch and have resulted in perpetuating his status either as a “Randfigur” (marginal figure) when it comes to the Schinkelschule, or as a “Schlüsselfigur” (key figure) for the “Moorish revival.”

Another key problem with regard to Diebitsch’s work is that even scholars who have contributed significant work on him do generally not view him as a modern architect. I believe this also has to do with the Islamic character of his work. However, this is one of the reasons I believe his work is modern. As I will demonstrate he utilized modern materials, modern manufacturing processes and modern, global trade practices (shipping materials etc.), in addition to working in a variation of the “Moorish” style. This style not only differentiated him from his contemporaries – i.e. it was neither Classical nor Gothic, but it was by its very nature more abstract due to Islamic architecture’s prolific use of geometrical patterns. Therefore, in order to begin to understand Diebitsch as a modernist instead of an orientalist, he must be seen not only through, but outside of, these two different historiographies.

On the one hand he is seen as a marginal figure in the Berlin architectural scene because of his inability to achieve larger commissions. On the other hand, from the point of view of

nineteenth-century architecture in Egypt, he was limited in achieving success (there) as an architect due to his early death. Indeed, if German or Prussian-Islamic art and architecture were a discipline he would certainly be a central figure. Since this is not the case, it is necessary not only to combine the efforts of these two positions, but look beyond them for other methods that can shed light on this ‘entangled,’ trans-cultural, historical moment. The entrenched methodologies of both narratives, which are Eurocentric, geocentric, or based on specific nation-state models of narrating history, do not easily accommodate figures such as Diebitsch. One intent of this chapter then, in addition to that already described, is to demonstrate that Diebitsch’s experience cannot only contribute to the history on the early formation of international architectural practice (something obviously very common today), but that by studying him we may also find an example of an individual who played an important role in the modernist project by challenging established norms in seeking architectural precedents “outside” of traditional European styles, while advocating their widespread use through the most modern means of production and methods of transportation—the very things that enabled the Modern Movement some seventy years later.

Of course, the greatest challenge in understanding Diebitsch, and asserting his importance, is the fact that he was above all a practitioner and not a writer. I hasten to add that this does not mean he is any less of a theorist. On the contrary, much like his mentor at the Bauakademie, Wilhelm Stier, most of the theory resides in his drawings. With this in mind we must approach his drawings and buildings not as construction drawings or simple orientalist follies, but as historical and theoretical artifacts that reveal the thought processes and overall intent of their creator. My hope is that by revisiting this period, as well as the historiography on Diebitsch, and in light of more recent scholarship, I will be able to draw greater attention to this
crucial moment in the history of architecture that prefigures many aspects of later Modernism. As a result, I will make the case that Carl von Diebitsch belongs to the larger story of modern architecture in terms of how we understand it today.

**UNDER THE INFLUENCE: CARL VON DIEBITSCH AT THE BAUAKADEMIE, 1839-1841**

*Of all the students at the Berlin Bauakademie, Carl von Diebitsch was the most brilliant.*

-Hans-Dieter Nägelke (2011)

Few details are known about Carl von Diebitsch’s time at the Bauakademie and even among those details that are commonly related throughout the literature there are some discrepancies. What is known is that he was born in the East Prussian city of Liegnitz in 1819 to a noble family. He was the nephew of the distinguished Field Marshall Count Hans Karl Friedrich Anton von Diebitsch and Narden (1785-1831). Consequently there were great expectations that he would also distinguish himself with a military career—despite the fact that his father was not a military man. Nevertheless, following in the family tradition at the wish of his father, he received a military education, became a Second Lieutenant and even served a brief time in the army’s Seventh Infantry Regiment where, according to the family chronicle, he was unhappy. In 1838 he left to apprentice as a Feldmesser (Surveyor), then in within a year left to pursue the study of architecture in Berlin. The Diebitsch Family Chronicle records that Diebitsch left the military not only because he did not enjoy it but because by the age of seventeen he began losing his hearing. The family chronicle records Diebitsch’s matriculation at the Bauakademie on March 27, 1839. This places him among the first classes in the newly opened Schinkel-designed Bauakademie,

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the so-called *rote Kasten* (red box), which was completed in 1835.\(^{461}\) In 1840 he was admitted to the *Berliner Architekten Verein* (Berlin Architect’s Association). Several months later, in November of 1840, he was admitted to the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. At the Bauakademie, Diebitsch pursued a typical path of the basic required subjects and became a *Königlicher Baumeister* (on March 9\(^{th}\) 1841).\(^{462}\) He continued to advance his education further, immediately thereafter, by pursuing the advanced-level known as a *Königlicher Landbau-Inspektor* (hereafter *Bau-Inspektor*), eventually achieving that distinction a year later on March 10, 1842. Since he was able to finish his exams and *Aufbaustudium* (other post-graduate professional requirements) in 1844, he must have done exceptionally well, since only those who achieved a passing rating of “superb” (*vorzüglich*) were exempted of one year of their *Aufbaustudium*, which was usually a three-year requirement consisting of five exams in total.\(^{463}\)

During his time at the Bauakademie he developed an admiration for Professor Wilhelm Stier, who, it is said, influenced him significantly.\(^{464}\) The family chronicle states that Diebitsch began his studies in 1841 under the “art-loving, hot headed” (*kunstbegeisterte Feuerkopf*) Wilhelm Stier, who “exercised a deep and lasting impression” on Diebitsch.\(^{465}\) The fact that he would have begun his interaction with Stier only after undertaking the advanced degree of Bau-

\(^{461}\) *Familienchronik von Carl Wilhelm Valentin von Diebitsch*, (unpaginated). [This family chronicle has recorded the events in the life of Carl von Diebitsch and is kept by the family to this day. I am deeply grateful to Frau Karin von Schön-Angerer for allowing me access to this valuable document.]

\(^{462}\) The subjects for this degree were: “Geometrie, Stadtbau, Architektonisches Zeichnen (AdK), Perspektive (AdK), Konstruktion, Das Wissenschaftliche des Feldmessens, Bauverzierungen, Feldmeßkunst, das Auftragen und die Ausarbeitung, Messen und Nivellieren auf dem Felde.” [Geometry, Urban Planning, Architectural Drawing, Perspective, Construction, scientific surveying, building ornamentation, the art of surveying, the application and development (preparation), measuring and leveling (grading) of the soil.]

\(^{463}\) Hans Joachim Wefeld, “Preußens erste Bauschule,” in *1799-1999 Von der Bauakademie zur Technischen Universität Berlin: Geschichte und Zukunft* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 2000), 68.

\(^{464}\) *Familienchronik von Carl Wilhelm Valentin von Diebitsch.*

\(^{465}\) Ibid.
Inspektor is likely considering the information that exists regarding Stier’s teaching there.

According to Eduard Dobbert’s *Chronik Der Königlichen Technischen Hochschule Zu Berlin* (1899) Stier appears to have taught his more theoretically interesting courses to the advanced students in the *Bau-Inspektor* curriculum since most subjects in history and theory were not included in the basic curriculum of *Baumeister*. Theory, in other words, was reserved for the advanced *Bau-Inspektor* students, much to the chagrin of people like Stier who were often at odds with Peter Beuth.\(^4\)\(^6\)\(^6\) This was most likely a result of Beuth’s aggressive reorganization efforts at the Bauakademie that included a merger with his *Gewerbe-Institut* (established in 1827) and Beuth’s assumption of the joint Directorship in 1831. We may recall here that it was Beuth who hired and supported Stier’s “antipode” Carl Bötticher, who was a direct beneficiary of these changes. Thereafter the Bauakademie was referred to as the “Allgemeine Bauschule.”

This is also the period of increasing professionalization when the two training paths of Baumeister and Bau-Inspektor were established, including their subsequent exam requirements. According to Dobbert, Wilhelm Stier taught at least the following courses for all students from 1831 onward: “A Lecture on the Monuments of Antiquity,” “Architectural Drawing,” “Free Hand Drawing,” and “Ornament Drawing.”\(^4\)\(^6\)\(^7\) In studies relating to antiquity, for example, students utilized important and well-known texts such as Stuart and Revett’s famous study of Greek antiquity, *The Antiquities of Athens and Other Monuments of Greece* (1762), which was by then a foundational text in many schools ultimately forming part of the canon of “Western”

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\(^6\) They are listed as: *Vortrag über antike Monumente, Architekturzeichnen, Freies Handzeichnen, Ornamentzeichnen, Vergleichende Geschichte der Baukunst, Formen antiker Baukunst* and what was probably the most interesting of all: *Die wichtigsten Baustile aller Länder und Zeiten*. Eduard Dobbert, *Chronik Der Königlichen Technischen Hochschule Zu Berlin, 1799-1899* (Berlin: Verlag von Wilhelm Ernst & Sohn, 1899), 48-49. Some of this information is reprinted in: Hans Joachim Wefeld, “Preußens erste Bauschule,” in *1799-1999 Von der Bauakademie zur Technischen Universität Berlin: Geschichte und Zukunft* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 2000), 64-74; to whom I owe the knowledge of the Dobbert’s source.
architecture.⁴⁶⁸ For the advanced Bau-Inspektoren students Stier taught courses entitled: “A Comparative History of Architecture,” “Forms of Ancient Architecture,” and “The Main Architectural Styles of All Countries and Times.”⁴⁶⁹ This last class must have been particularly dear to him, as well as of great interest to his students including Diebitsch. This course surely contributed to Diebitsch’s intellectual formation at the Bauakademie, not only because of the likelihood that it introduced aspects relating to the idea of ‘non-European’ cultures and forms of architecture, but it certainly also played a role in the developing their mentor/mentee relationship.

As illustrated throughout the previous chapter this period at the Bauakademie in the 1830s and 1840s was rather unpredictable, divisive and something akin to a Titanomachia – not unlike the tumultuous and uncertain times outside the Academy in the political, economic and social life across the region.⁴⁷⁰ Since Diebitsch was engaged in his studies at the same time Schinkel fell ill and died (1841), there is no doubt that his philosophical presence still dominated the Bauakademie. However, Stier’s effect upon Diebitsch must have been greater, at least according to Stier’s son, Hubert, who describes Diebitsch’s interaction with his father Wilhelm and echoes the sentiments expressed in the family chronicle.⁴⁷¹ But, as we have seen, despite Wilhelm Stier’s reputation as an influential and charismatic leader at the Bauakademie, a surprisingly small number of his students became well known. In view of this, we can conclude

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.
that Diebitsch was an exceptional case being, indeed, one of the "most brilliant" students at the
Bauakademie while he was there.\textsuperscript{472}

FROM AMATEUR TO IDEALIST:
CARL VON DIEBITSCH AND THE EVOLUTION OF AN IDEA (THE EARLY PROJECTS, 1841-1844)

Wilhelm Stier's influence upon Diebitsch is not overtly apparent when examining his early
projects, by which I mean those designed before he left for his Studienreise in 1844 (which will
be the subject of the next section). Instead, his early work is more indicative of a student or
junior architect, as one might expect, who has not found his own design methodology. His work
is also strongly informed by the environment and ideas at the Bauakademie and thus firmly
rooted in the Schinkelschule tradition. As such, his early works range in their stylistic diversity
and were all, almost without exception, submissions to the Monatskonkurrenzen (monthly
design competitions) held by Berlin's professional society for architects, the Architektenverein
(Architects Association), which began them in 1827. The frequency and professional context of
these competitions provided an opportunity for both junior and senior architects to participate in
the public arena of professional practice beyond the limited audience of the Bauakademie.

Early Designs: A Church (1841)

In July of 1841 Diebitsch submitted his first design for a Monatskonkurrenzen. The project was
for a centralized church (fig. 64). The elevation shows a twin tower westwork with Italianate
Gothic details including horizontal corbel tables delineating vertical sections and round arched
biforate windows around the main hall. The two symmetrical towers are topped with subtly

\textsuperscript{472} Hans-Dieter Nägelke, Architekturbilder: 125 Jahre Architekturnuseum der Technischen Universität
Berlin, 64.
curved pyramidal steeples each capped with a cross. Interestingly, the towers are connected by an arched bridge-like structure which links the two towers approximately three-quarters of the way up. This is not a common feature, but it does have some precedents in Italy and at least one in Germany. The likely referent is the late Gothic Marktkirche in the Saxon city of Halle, which contains this same bridge detail (fig. 65).\textsuperscript{473} The plan of Diebitsch’s centralized church is composed of an eight-sided structure with an interior ambulatory that separates an interior ring of fifteen columns echoing the exterior octagonal wall. One column is intentionally missing in order to accommodate the altar that occupies what is presumably the east end of the church simultaneously giving it an axis and subsequently rendering it not centralized (for liturgical purposes anyway). The octagonal nature of the plan of this building happens to be one of the most popular and prominent in architecture’s history. Possible precedents range from Persian and Classical antiquity to the Italian Renaissance and beyond (including its use “outside” of the “West”) such as: Achaemenid (Zoroastrian) fire temples such as that at Atash Kada (the \textit{Atechgau} or “chief fire temple”) near Isfahan (5\textsuperscript{th} century BCE), described in James Morier’s \textit{A Journey Through Persia, Armenia and Asia Minor} (1812),\textsuperscript{474} the famous Tower of the Winds in Athens (ca. 50 BCE), which first appeared in Stuart & Revetts’s \textit{The Antiquities of Athens} (1762), Bramante’s San Pietro in Montorio (The “Tempietto”, ca. 1502) featured as a wood cut in Andrea Palladio’s \textit{Quattro Libri} (1570), as well as a variety of early Medieval Byzantine Churches (e.g. Basilica of San Vitale at Ravenna ca.574.), the Qubbat al-Sakhra (Dome of the Rock) (691-92) and Charlemagne’s Palatine Chapel in Aachen (ca.796), as well as many Mughal

\textsuperscript{473} Eva Börsch-Supan, \textit{Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel}, 762.

\textsuperscript{474} James Justinien Morier, \textit{A Journey Through Persia, Armenia and Asia Minor, to Constantinople, in the Years 1808 and 1809} (London: Longman Hurst, 1812), 234.
examples from Humayun’s Tomb to the Taj Mahal. Evidence of a direct connection to a specific historical building does not exist—as such evidence is unlikely. However, many of these buildings, as discussed above, were certainly part of his precedent training at the Bauakademie.

Despite his obvious education in architectural history and his knowledge of the religious tradition(s) that the plan reveals, the exterior, rather clearly, betrays Diebitsch’s Bauakademie education. By this I mean he evokes a Schinkel-inspired formal attempt to synthesize the Classical and Medieval styles within the structure. Based on the drawing of the section, the interior structure is most likely intended to be wood with the ambulatory exhibiting a double vertical arch system with a round arch below and pointed arch above. Much of what would have been stone infill—were it a stone Gothic church—is depicted as planar wood surfaces perforated by quatrefoils and other carved voids that tend more toward abstracting Gothic forms than directly imitating them. There is a rose window above the altar and the fifteen columns that surround the main hall seem to be drawn as abstracted references to Corinthian columns. The synthesis of styles—while relying heavily on the formal language of Medieval Italy in the composition—as well as the generally Classical lineage of its plan all point to Diebitsch’s association with the dominant Schinkelschule paradigm.

Early Designs: A Church for Jerusalem (1842)

In March of the following year Diebitsch entered another design for another monthly competition. This time it was a church for the German community in Jerusalem (Kirche für Jerusalem, 1842) (fig. 66 & fig. 67). In contrast to his last proposal this design was comprised of

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Footnote:

a much larger Basilica type three-aisle plan composed of Classical Italianate details. One potential factor influencing Diebitsch’s designs has been suggested by Christiane Schütz. These are the recently completed Vorstadtkirchen (suburban churches) designed by Schinkel and erected between 1832 and 1835 in Berlin’s newer suburbs; examples of which include the Nazarethkirche (ca. 1835) in Wedding (fig. 68), and the Johanniskirche in Moabit (ca.1835 – with later additions by August Stüler in the 1840s) (fig. 69). These churches were well known at the time and are generally considered to be critical re-interpretations of the medieval Italianate religious architecture Schinkel studied during his first trip to Italy and Sicily – some of which can be traced to sketches he completed during this time (fig. 70).476 The chosen winner of the competition, Theodor Willweber (1817-1876) (fig. 71 & fig. 72), submitted a design whose plan and facade was “reminiscent of a twelfth century Lombard church,” but also based partly on the “Byzantine” styled St. Peter and Paul Church at Nikolskoe by Stüler and Schadow (ca. 1834-37) (fig. 73).477 According to Eva Börsch-Supan, the intention, or spirit, of this design competition was to consider and accommodate the issues German missionaries were dealing with who were to utilize the structure. That is, the goal was to find a style that could be adapted to the unique character of the place.478 In this particular case it was the historical city of Jerusalem. In her book Preussen in Jerusalem Christiane Schütz briefly discusses Diebitsch’s design in terms of being firmly of its time and place and belonging to this Schinkelian moment in the first half of the

476 These sketches and their examples were discussed previously in chapter one. Citations here referring to comments on the Vorstadtkirchen –See: Christiane Segers-Glocke, Karl Friedrich Schinkel - Die einstigen Berliner Vorstadtkirchen St. Johannes, Nazareth, St. Elisabeth und St. Paul (Große Baudenkämäler, Heft 331) (München/Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1981), 14 & 21-28.
nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{479} It is clear from his proposal that Diebitsch is not adapting his design to negotiate any particular local conditions per se. There is no clear reference to Jerusalem’s Judaic, early Christian or Islamic architectural traditions.\textsuperscript{480} Schütz’s explanation of Diebitsch’s ‘Schinkelschule’ design rests in the identification of particular details. These include the way the bell tower roofs meet the series of round arched windows, which she notes was used previously by Stüler in his Jerusalem mission house project. She also likens the plan of Diebitsch’s proposal and the overall form of the façade to Schinkel precedents such as a Parish Church he designed in 1832, and even the Friedrichswerder Church in Berlin (1824-31) (fig. 74 & fig. 75).\textsuperscript{481} Due to the benefit of hindsight with regard to Diebitsch’s later interest in Islamic architecture, Schütz comments that Diebitsch was a friend of the orientalist painter Wilhelm Gentz (1822-90), and lived and died in Cairo – intimating that this information somehow motivated his work on the competition. However, its relevance is not immediately apparent in this context since Diebitsch’s design is no more “Islamic” than a medieval Italian church. These types of comments, which anachronistically interject his (later) interest in Islamic architecture into a period before he was, in fact, interested in it, are quite common in the literature on Diebitsch. Indeed, his friendship with Gentz (whom he did not meet until at least 1847) occurred much later and has no bearing on his 1841 submission.\textsuperscript{482} This is simply another example of how Diebitsch was orientalized so that this complex figure can be categorized more easily. But it is important that his proposal be

\textsuperscript{479} Christiane Schütz, \textit{Preussen in Jerusalem}, 148. “...steht an einem Punkt ganz klar in der Nähe der Berliner Architektur seine Zeit: Die Türme schließen beinahe flach ab, das Glockengeschoss darunter wird durch rundbogige Fenster bestimmt. Das ist eine Lösung, wie sie Stüler für seinen Jerusalemener Entwurf eines Missionshauses und für die Jacobikirche in der Oranienstraße gefunden hat (1844/45).”

\textsuperscript{480} Except possibly for its basilica plan, which was utilized by early Christians. However, its origins predate Christianity.

\textsuperscript{481} Schütz, \textit{Preussen in Jerusalem}, 149-150.

understood only in terms of his context and experience thus far, and not on the speculation that he was advocating the use of an Islamic style, as the project clearly speaks for itself with a lack of reference to these ideas. Thus, his submission is solely a product of his time at the Berlin Bauakademie reinforcing his intellectual formation within this context, which may or may not have included references to Islamic architecture in Stier’s courses.

**Early Designs: Hunting Lodge and Altar (1842)**

Other small designs the following year demonstrate a slight shift away from the Bauakademie thinking, and even Schinkel’s ‘spiritual’ authority, and instead continue to push the trend of stylistic experimentation. In the monthly competition for May Diebitsch designed an oddly proportioned altar in the Gothic style (fig. 76). The vertically elongated altar contains traditional and recognizable Gothic details, but its organization and conception is more Mannerist than anything else. The overall composition of the altar is exceedingly elongated and is topped by a massive crucifix that makes up at least half of the total height. This design does not follow in the tradition of Gothic altars or altarpieces in its proportions or composition, but signals Diebitsch’s desire to experiment with historical “norms” and familiar forms. In the following month he proposed a design for a *Jagdschlösschen* (hunting lodge). But the hunting lodge itself is a rather meager, not to mention lighthearted, attempt to depict an actual building or idea. It features a somewhat restrained idyllic Tudor style English country manor set within a picturesque wooded landscape. His rendering of the setting is complete with depictions of men on horse back returning from the hunt in the background, while others in the foreground (dressed in colorful tights and fanciful hats à la Robin Hood, no less) enjoy their feathered quarry with their hunting
The hunting lodge itself is composed in the Profane Neugotik ('profane' Gothic revival style) - something akin to a small version of Hampton Court Palace (ca. 1514) - with asymmetrical spatial compositions, crenellated turrets and parapets, and even what appears to be a misplaced donjon flying a massive fictional flag.

Suffice it to say, this entirely ignored design contrasts quite markedly from those discussed above. I have highlighted it here in order to demonstrate Diebitsch's early and experimental thought processes as an architect. In these early projects, Diebitsch was still learning and exploring architecture, its relationship to culture (albeit mostly historical) and its myriad possibilities. His proposals were all rendered in styles that were familiar to his contemporaries. Indeed, there is little scholarly commentary at all on these early designs. It is evident from these proposals that he is drawing not only from the long tradition of European architecture as it had been codified and handed down through the academies and profession, but from the direct result of the dominant Schinkelian paradigm. With regard to all of these designs I would argue that these style choices are indicative not of a careless eclecticism, but rather something much more deliberate and thoughtful, even searching. This deliberateness goes beyond the theory that the purpose of these designs was simply a way for Diebitsch to "loosen up the monotony of Berlin's previous architecture."

His designs, along with those of his mentor Wilhelm Stier, reveal a palimpsest of architecture's history as it was taught and understood in Berlin during this period. Through each design, he investigated different aspects of architecture typically taught to be a necessary element of a successful building's overall design as first

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483 What I am describing here as "English Tudor," due to the fact that it is a more widely known style, is also commonly known in German parlance as the Profane Neugotik (profane Gothic revival style) as opposed to the Sakral Neugotik (sacred Gothic Revival).

484 Eva Börsch-Supan, Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel, 22. "um die 'Eintönigkeit' der bisherigen Berliner Architektur aufzulockern."
proposed in Vitruvius’s triad (*Firmitas, Utilitas et Venustas*). And despite contemporary tendencies in the first third of the nineteenth century to distance oneself from the writings of Vitruvius (beginning with Schinkel), his ideas were still part of the Bauakademie curriculum throughout this period though no longer as “laws” or “rules” by which one was compelled to design.\(^{485}\) Diebitsch’s smaller proposals such as the altar and hunting lodge, suggest his interest in exploring the association of different forms with different programs, yet most likely without directly copying existing precedents. The arrangement and unusual proportions of the altar, which utilized the known architectural vocabulary of the Gothic, as well as the curious and picturesque composition of the hunting lodge, reflect the continuing experimental flexibility and creativity of the (Romantically inclined) architect as artist.

**From Berlin to Berlin: The Monumental Proposal of the Berliner Dom (1844)**

The last proposal Diebitsch submitted before he left on his *Studienreise* was his 1844 design for a new *Berliner Dom* (New Berlin Cathedral\(^ {486}\) or “Supreme Parish Church”). As discussed in previous chapters this project had been on the mind of architects since well before the announcement in January of 1842 by Friedrich Wilhelm IV that mandated the razing of the Berlin Cathedral and called for a new, larger Cathedral to be built in its place. Indeed, the very idea of a Protestant Church for the *nation* has a long and complicated past.\(^ {487}\) To get a sense of the building’s cultural significance and historical importance to the city of Berlin and Kingdom

\(^{485}\) Erik Forssman, “Schinkel und die Architekturtheorie,” in *Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Aspekte seines Werks / Aspects of his Work*, Susan M. Peik, ed. (Stuttgart; London: Axel Menges, 2001), 17. (According to Forsmann the first translation of Vitruvius into German was in 1548).

\(^{486}\) The term “Cathedral” here is only used in a casual sense as it is commonly referred to as a Cathedral or “Dom”. However, it has not been an actual “bishop’s seat” since prior to the Reformation.

\(^{487}\) The *Berliner Dom* has had a long history that is reflected in the historiography mainly by two important histories on the topic: Carl-Wolfgang Schümann’s *Der Berliner Dom im 19. Jahrhundert* (1980), and Karl-Heinz Klingenburg’s *Der Berliner Dom: Bauten, Ideen und Projekte* (1987), upon which most of my discussion about the Cathedral is based.
of Prussia, it is crucial to note that Protestant Evangelicalism (Lutheranism) was accepted early here in the sixteenth century. By 1539, when it was officially adopted, it had become the majority Confession in the region, though the cathedral had been converted to a Reformed Evangelical (Calvinist) Church in 1613. Prussia and Berlin in particular saw the influx of a series of immigrant groups ranging from large numbers of Huguenots in the seventeenth century to Catholics in the eighteenth century. In 1817 the building’s official status changed again with the adoption of a more Lutheran oriented liturgy initiated by Friedrich Wilhelm III. Ultimately the building witnessed the unification of the two faiths (Lutheranism with Calvinism) in the 1820s, which resulted in a united Prussian Protestant Church (Evangelische Kirche in Preußen).

Due to the significance of the program and symbolic importance of the building, not to mention its vast size, potential fame and prestige associated with achieving such a commission, there were many proposals. It is unclear exactly why Diebitsch chose to create his design in 1844, as it does not appear that there was any official call for proposals until 1867. But the lack of a call for proposals did not stop generations of aspiring architects from producing hopeful designs. Certainly ever since Schinkel’s 1820-22 remodeling of the old cathedral designed by Johann Boumann the Elder (ca. 1750), and his subsequent proposals for a new building of 1825-28, architects had been anxiously proposing a replacement.

The history of the planning of the new cathedral is a long and fascinating one that began with Schinkel and did not end until a design by Julius and Otto Raschdorff was chosen to replace

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488 Kathleen Curran, *The Romanesque Revival: Religion, Politics, and Transnational Exchange* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 100f. As a side note Friedrich Gilly’s family had been among these Huguenot immigrants (I thank Dr. Rand Carter for pointing this out to me).

489 Ibid., 101.

it, resulting in the eventual demolition of Boumann and Schinkel’s addition to it in 1893. Along the way August Stüler was tasked with a redesign immediately after the announcement in 1842 that a new Cathedral was to be built, but his design never fully materialized due to the political upheaval of the ensuing revolutionary period, only getting as far as laying some of the foundations. The 1867 design competition, which saw over fifty designs submitted, also did not yield a winner for a variety of political and financial reasons. Therefore, it is likely that Diebitsch created his proposal for the cathedral not only because it was another opportunity to experiment with his ideas, but in order to demonstrate his ambition by entering this arena dominated by Berlin’s architectural elite. Indeed, the fact that Diebitsch went ahead and proposed a design for the cathedral after Friedrich Wilhelm IV had already chosen Stüler signifies his intent to publicly demonstrate his knowledge and theory of architecture. But what does his proposal actually tell us about his theory of design at the time?

If we consider the existing drawings completed by Diebitsch for the Berliner Dom stored at the Architecture Museum of the Technische Universität Berlin, we can observe that there were two proposed variations on a theme. The first design (Inv. 41336) depicts a large octagon for the main space of a centralized church (fig. 78). This is crowned by a circular truncated dome, nearly as large as the supporting octagon, with a large clerestory and a low-pitched roof culminating in a singular group of statuary topped by a cross. The entry to the main hall of the church is a large portal with a round arch centered in a long arcade stretching to the right and left of the front elevation with enormous twin flanking bell towers. Above the entry on the face of the main hall are three identical roundels. The remaining faces of the central octagonal space are largely occupied by tripartite window compositions containing three equally sized, tall and narrow round arches separated by classically ordered engaged columns. The octagon transitions to the large
cylindrical lantern above it with an arcade of small repeated blind round arches. These are topped with a cornice composed of what appear to be Greek acroteria. Above this, and set back from the edge of the main building, the large cylindrical truncated dome rises out of the octagon and is separated from it by a much shorter octagon whose faces reveal a simple pattern. This is rung with an even smaller, almost indistinguishable, arcade made up of another series of blind arches. Topping the lantern, whose circumference is composed entirely of much taller arches each separated by what appears to be a type of classical column, is a parapet device. This repeating detail, which forms a crown to the lantern, appears at first to call to mind more acroteria, but upon closer examination reveals itself to be a series of identical freestanding trefoils.

Additionally, with regard to the overall composition of the plan, I have already alluded to the historical and cultural significance of the octagon, but I find it apropos to at least mention it again here particularly for such a prominent church that saw itself as the Protestant antipode to the Vatican. The fact that the plan was shared with the Palatine Chapel in Aachen built for Charlemagne who, by his death in 814, had united most of western and central Europe is probably not a coincidence. Moreover, many of the other details evoke a potential variety of sources such as the use of roundels, typical in Italian Renaissance architecture, and trefoils, a common element found in varieties of Gothic architecture such as the Venetian Gothic etc. The ubiquity of the round arch throughout the project also suggests motifs ranging from Roman, Byzantine, and medieval Romanesque architecture, not to mention the more recent Rundbogenstil embraced by many of Schinkel’s students.

Diebitsch’s second proposal for the Berliner Dom is likely the one he preferred since it was ultimately rendered as a perspective for what appears to be a presentation format (fig. 79) (Inv.-Nr. 41341). Depicted here is a symmetrical building composed of a large cubic central
space presumably on a square plan. From the drawing, but without the benefit of a plan, the main liturgical space appears to be centralized. In this design Diebitsch has chosen to utilize the octagon for the large cupola instead of employing it in the cathedral’s main plan. This cupola has a slightly pitched, segmented roof and is topped by another much smaller octagonal lantern.

There are a few variations within this design compared to the first one, but the spatial composition remains nearly identical. In a similar way to Stier’s Berliner Dom proposal of 1840-42, the corners of the larger octagonal lantern are defined by small, engaged towers topped with statues of human figures (fig. 80) (Inv. Nr. 41340 at the TU Berlin Architecture Museum). The entry portico below is composed of a round arch supported by thin colonettes and classical capitals. Set within the portico on the wall of the church is a massive double door that echoes two sets of doors with which Diebitsch was certainly familiar. The first are Ghiberti’s famous doors on the Florentine Baptistery (ca.1401-24), which, coincidentally, is also an octagonal building. The second example was much closer to home at the monastery church of St Michael’s in Hildesheim, known as Bernward’s doors, whose origins are also purportedly Italian. Diebitsch’s doors are rendered in a green color suggestive of copper, or possibly a copper alloy, and each door is divided into four panels each, but the panels are devoid of any reliefs unlike the examples outlined above, both of which depict biblical scenes. The doors are framed by a decorative band and the arrangement is topped with a tympanum accommodating a last judgment scene mural recalling the medieval origins of this common motif such as that found in the west tympanum at Autun Cathedral by the twelfth century sculptor Gislebertus and emulated

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491 It is known for example that Bernward Bishop of Hildesheim (ca.960-1022) traveled widely and in particular saw much of Italy and was of the same mind of Otto III (and Charlemagne before them) in that he believed in a “renovatio imperii Romanorum.” It is likely that he saw an example of doors like these in wood since he also recreated a smaller version of Trajan’s column, complete with biblical scenes, as a feature of his new monastery church. See: Bernhard Gallistl, Die Bernwardsäule und die Michaeliskirche zu Hildesheim (Hildesheim; Zürich and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1993), 13-16, 37-39.
throughout the Christian architecture of Europe. Above the portico the front elevation contains many slightly modified traditional elements such as a rose window that has been abstracted to a large flat circle with only minimal tracery around the circumference in a repeating lobed shape. The narrow elongated windows that surround the main interior space take up most of the building’s height and are divided into three equal vertical segments. These are topped by round arches composed of minimal tracery in the form of inverted teardrop shapes further evoking a reference to the Gothic. The main structure of the church is flanked by two buildings with disproportionately large identical bell towers that rise far beyond the height of the central church building. Their bases are comprised of two story buildings themselves whose main feature is an open arcade that contains a large number of wall murals depicting a variety of what we can only assume to be religious scenes. The towers emerge from these flanking buildings as octagonal structures in plan and taper slightly until they are capped by a low-pitched segmented roof topped by a large (unidentifiable) sculpted feature that holds a cross. Along the length of these towers are details such as vertical decorative panels that feature overlapping linear and geometric reliefs each flanked by a (Gothic) quatrefoil motif. Near the top of the tower, large clocks—one on each of the four faces—are depicted just below a bas-relief of repeating quatrefoils, which themselves are beneath a horizontal corbel table made up of small round arches ultimately supporting an observation deck rung by an ornate railing. The upper portion of the tower steps back at this point to allow space for viewers to circumambulate. Well above the observation deck are a series of small, tall and narrow round arched openings that hold up another—this time deeper corbel table—which supports the low pitched segmented roof capped by a large sculptural element topped by a cross. Another version of this design features the same spatial
composition in the main church but carries a slightly different decorative scheme with changes in the flanking towers (fig. 81) (Inv. 41338).492

The overall conceptual thrust of the submission remains the same as his first version described above despite the variety of details, or even the two different geometries proposed for the central prayer space. Indeed, it is clear through this brief analysis that there is a common thesis at work in his design. He situated this most important church within a series of architectural traditions simultaneously. First, there is the long established tradition of the centralized octagonal plan shared by many cultures since its emergence, at least as early as Achaemenid Persia, through its prominent role in medieval Germany in the octagonal plan at Charlemage’s famous Palatine Chapel at Aachen (ca.790-805) (fig. 82). The use of a centralized plan in the case of the Berliner Dom can be linked to Diebitsch’s mentor Wilhelm Stier.

However, much of what led to Stier’s work on the cathedral, which began in the late 1820s, originated with the theoretical studies done by Christian Carl Josias von Bunsen (1791-1860). Bunsen, who was a royal advisor to Friedrich Wilhelm III and IV as well as Prussia’s chief legate to the Vatican (after B. G. Niebuhr), was a central figure in articulating the idea of what was needed for a building of such national importance. This was due, no doubt in large part, to his study of history, modern liturgical form and Christian architecture, particularly in Rome. He also advised the king in matters of the “Orient” since he knew some Arabic, Sanskrit and much Hebrew. Bunsen was eventually considered to be the expert in early Christian Italian

492 In this example the towers emerge from these flanking buildings as octagonal structures in plan, but soon change to hexagonal shafts for the remainder of their height until they are stopped by a low-pitched segmented roof topped by a large sculpted feature that holds a cross. Along the length of these towers are various details such as mini (Gothic) wheel windows, biforate window motifs and a variety of decorative paneling reliefs. Also present are small low-relief corbel tables, which help to break up the towers stunning height, but with regard to the overall scheme these differences are negligible.
architecture by the time he published his book *Die Basiliken des christlichen Roms* (1842-43).\textsuperscript{493}

But his interest in the relationship between architecture and the liturgy began earlier with his proposal to the Prussian king entitled “Twenty-one Theses of Church Building” of c.1826.\textsuperscript{494}

This influential text was developed in the 1820s during which time he met with Schinkel (who was on his second trip to Italy) and Stier (who was there on an extended stay from 1822-27). The three met regularly in October of 1824 to tour and discuss ecclesiastical architecture.\textsuperscript{495} Bunsen ultimately advocated for the implementation of a longitudinal basilica type plan for his ideal Evangelical church such that his two main programmatic features of the *Altarkirche* (altar church) and *Vorkirche* (front church) could be accommodated. Working with Wilhelm Stier, whom Bunsen considered an “architectural genius,” the two came up with a formalized proposal which they presented to the Prussian king in Berlin in 1827.\textsuperscript{496} Although Bunsen enthusiastically supported Stier’s plan, it did not follow the organizational layout of a basilica. Instead, it appeared more centralized than anything else (fig. 83 & fig. 84). Strikingly original in its layout Stier’s design involved distinctly articulating the two main parts of Bunsen’s idea while uniting them in one seamless composition resulting in a plan that suggests a thorough study of San Vitale in Ravenna (ca.547) (fig. 85). This original proposal that was based on Bunsen’s liturgical theory, thoroughly conveys an Evangelical Protestant identity contradistinguished from its strictly hieratic ‘counterpart’ of St. Peter’s Basilica, which, I believe, cannot be dismissed as a coincidence. Additionally, Stier’s plan, which does not employ the octagon, nevertheless contains references to this potential association with the presence of sixteen columns separating the circular prayer space from the surrounding aisle/gallery. The design is replete with a myriad

\textsuperscript{493} Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 105.
\textsuperscript{494} Ibid., 308. Also see Curran’s footnote number 59.
\textsuperscript{496} Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 108.
of additional references to Classical antiquity, Neoclassicism, the Italian Renaissance as well as Gothic architecture, not only with regard to the composition of elements but also many details. In terms of its theoretical thrust a prevalent idea that also governs this proposal is the dominant feature of the 'mixed' nature of the architecture represented. The continued presence and evolution of this Classical-Medieval synthesis, famously initiated by Schinkel, was a strategy believed to have the potential of playing a role in generating a 'modern' architecture.\footnote{In terms of Schinkel's ideas on the synthesis of elements of Classical and Medieval architecture see for example: Norbert Knopp, "Schinkels Idee einer Stilsynthese," \textit{Beiträge zum Problem des Stilpluralismus}, Werner Hager and Norbert Knopp, eds. (München: Prestel, 1977), 245f and 250-51 (for specific example); Mitchell Schwarzer, \textit{German Architectural Theory and the Search for Modern Identity} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 63-64; Alex Potts, "Schinkel's Architectural Theory," in \textit{Karl Friedrich Schinkel: A Universal Man}, Michael Snodin, ed. (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1991), 47f and especially 51-53; and Erik Forsmann, "Schinkel und die Architekturtheorie," in \textit{Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Aspects of his Work/Aspekte seines Werkes}, Susan M. Peik, ed. (Stuttgart; London: Axel Menges, 2001), 11-12, 17.} One element, however, that cannot be left out of this description is the overwhelming scale of the project. The grand scale of the building is exaggerated by the presence of the two massive bell towers flanking the façade. The monumentality of the design and the existence of the rather excessive (and unnecessary) towers, clearly indicates a desire to challenge existing conventions and the very same architectural traditions within which Diebitsch was also fully immersed. And if Stier’s influence is at all present in Diebitsch’s design it is most certainly revealed by the project’s monumentality expressed in those colossal towers as well as its tendency to draw on a variety of architectural traditions within what had become for both of them a shared tradition. It is also likely that the inclusion of these towers in his design (knowing full well that they were excessive) is indicative of the need to move beyond these two architectural traditions that possibly began to bore Diebitsch provoking him to seek inspiration in other examples.
BEYOND THE GRAND TOUR: DIEBITSCH’S STUDIENREISE AND THE SEARCH FOR ARCHITECTURE’S ROOTS, 1844-1848

To have seen Italy without having seen Sicily is not to have seen Italy at all, for Sicily is the clue to everything.

-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1787)498

A man sees in the world what he carries in his heart.

-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Faust: Part One...

In her discussion of Wilhelm Stier and his time at the Bauakademie, Eva Börsch-Supan lists some of the charismatic professor’s more interesting students and their subsequent paths.499 She allots the most space for Diebitsch, whom she describes as an “exception” at the Bauakademie. In her characterization of his career, she writes that he became “the prophet of Moorish architecture” and that it was under Stier’s influence that Diebitsch was drawn to the style.500 She also suggests that Diebtsch was in part interested in the style because of the “monotony” (Eintönigkeit) he found within the state of Berlin’s contemporary architecture. Whether or not Diebitsch’s initial reasons for pursuing the Moorish style were in fact due to something of a cultural malaise, the fact remains that until his death he dedicated himself entirely to understanding and working within this style. Thus, faced with the prospect of a “a dry career in the government” (as a Bau-Inspektor), and intellectually stimulated by Stier’s global-historical

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499 The first one mentioned is Carl Johann Bogislaw Lüdecke (1826-1894) See his Obit: Deutsche Bauzeitung, 28, Nr. 9 (31 January, 1894): 56. Bernhard Kolscher (1834-1868) who designed in the neo-baroque and mannerist style in objection to Stier. August Orth (1828-1901) who designed in the Rundbogenstil, which Stier did not like either. Some were also influenced, in all likelihood by Stier, to go to Sicily such as Max Nohl (1830-63). However, Nohl was apparently looking at it more from a classical point of view and ended up (at least according to what remains of his work) recording very few „Saracenic“ monuments or details. Stier is portrayed by the contemporary critic Wilhelm Lübke as a “significant, yet tragic and unsuccessful artist,” and Börsch-Supan prefers the adjectival phrase “stylistically uncertain” (Stilunsicherheit) when describing his designs.
500 Eva Börsch-Supan, Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel, 150-51.
view of architecture's history, Diebitsch set out on a three-year Grand Tour not only to study the ancients, but also to seek out ideas for a new architecture. 501

_A Berliner in Sicily: from Saracenic to Siculo-Islamic Architecture_

Diebitsch’s Family Chronicle records that it was in Sicily that he was introduced to ‘Arabic art’ for the first time. Continuing in what had by now become something of a Bauakademie tradition, Diebitsch expanded his Italian trip to include the cities of Messina, Monreale and Palermo. 502 Diebitsch’s exploration of the island was most likely encouraged by Stier, who, as discussed in the previous chapter, was first introduced to Sicily on his own Studienreise as a draughtsman hired to accompany Jacques Hittorff for the publication _Architecture Moderne de la Sicile_ (1835), a complement to their controversial first volume _Architecture Antique de la Sicile_ (1827), which set off the great polychrome debate. 503 This text on modern Sicily, which Diebitsch surely knew well, included a variety of monuments featuring many examples of the “Siculo-Arab” or “Siculo-Islamic” style, the result of an amalgamation of Norman patronage and building practices with local Byzantine and Arab craftsmen in the century or so after the Norman Conquest that began in 1060 (resulting in complete control of the island by 1091). However, the formal connection between the architecture of the North African invaders and key aspects of

501 _Family Chronicle_.
502 The only city specifically identified in the Family Chronicle on the island of Sicily is Palermo where it is mentioned that he “sketched a moorish-Gothic Palazzo” that was probably La Zisa. And despite the exclusion of other cities on the island by the Family Chronicle, I have found sketches and watercolors to prove he visited Monreale and Messina (at a minimum). I have not found any evidence to suggest that Diebitsch drew these sketches at a later date, or that he based them on any other artist’s view. From my analysis it is clear that these representations are evidence of on site documentation due to the apparent ‘quickness’ of the sketch, which in varying degrees suggests his limited time in recording his chosen views.
Siculo-Islamic and Siculo-Norman architecture remains certain due to the political and cultural ebbing and flowing which is known to have occurred with each military conquest.

As I began to illustrate in the first chapter, the result of this cultural contact was a mixed architecture that formally integrated the inherited traditions of both the Arab craftsmen on the island with the newly introduced French-Norman architecture that the conquering northerners brought with them. Among the rich examples illustrated in Hittorff and Zanth’s text are measured, black and white line drawings of the Cappella Palatina, Palermo Cathedral, La Zisa (described as a “Châteaux Sarazins Près de Palerme”), the Royal Church of Nuova St. Marie in Monreale and San Giovanni degli Eremiti among others. The inclusion of these buildings, along with their specifically “Islamic” details such as horseshoe arches, pointed, lobed, or cusped arches, hemispherical domes on squinches as well as “one of the most characteristic features of medieval Islamic architecture from Iran to Spain,” that Islamic detail _par excellence_ – the _muqarnas_, all suggest Hittorff and Zanth’s interest in conveying the broader picture of Sicily’s modern story of architecture.

Soon after the publication of _Architecture Moderne de la Sicile_, Henry Gally Knight published his survey of the island’s medieval architecture in his _The Normans in Sicily_ and its graphic counterpart _Saracenic and Norman Remains, to Illustrate the Normans in Sicily_ (both in 1840). The illustrations accompanying the text were rendered in muted color and were often perspectival in composition offering a much more dynamic and less ‘scientific’ point of view. Thus, it is likely Diebitsch knew generally what he would see on his trip to Sicily. However, it is clear that being there inspired him further as the rest of his trip indicates. Unlike Schinkel and

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Stier before him, who largely drew the exteriors of so-called “Saracenic” buildings, Diebitsch documented a number of their interior architectural details. What Schinkel did not have the terminology to describe, Diebitsch sought to understand by capturing in his drawings.

The family chronicle notes that in Sicily Diebitsch only visited Palermo. However, watercolors made accessible to me recently by Diebitsch’s family, and now in the possession of the Staatliche Museum Schwerin, reveal that he also visited Monreale and Messina. Only a very few drawings prove Diebitsch was in Palermo. One of them is a pencil drawing of the palace known as “La Zisa,” now housed at the Architekturmuseum at the Technische Universität Berlin (fig. 86). The palace building dates from 1165-75 and was begun by the Norman King William I (1131-1166) of Sicily as a summer palace and completed by his son. The name Zisa, which is indicated in an Arabic inscription above the entrance, is derived from the Arabic word *al-Azīz*, meaning "dear" or "splendid." And while only a lightly drawn, incomplete exterior view exists, it nonetheless indicates Diebitsch’s interest in the building and suggests that he also probably experienced the interior, which was captured earlier by Henry Gally Knight (fig. 87) in his 1840 text. Knight’s interior, which is a highly idealized reconstruction, depicts the central ground floor room of the palace, which was richly decorated and features niches whose entire upper portion is articulated with muqarnas. The space, as depicted by Knight, is clearly exemplary of this mixed cultural interaction due to the simultaneous presence of mosaics depicting Byzantine imagery ranging from vegetal and zoomorphic representations to human figures and *putti* in ‘Classical’ positions. Leading into the room approximately two-thirds the height of the wall is a calligraphic text band in pseudo-Arabic (it is unintelligible) rendered in a font approaching *naskh* script topped by an abstracted repeating vegetal leaf pattern. The band

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* The actual inscription is real and has a meaning but Knight’s depiction of it is entirely illegible.

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of calligraphy, which praises the king and the building, wraps around the wall and follows an opening into the room crossing above two pairs of flanking Classical columns, which mark the threshold to the room and approximate the Corinthian order. Depicted in the center of the opposite wall is a shadirwan (wall fountain) set within a large niche topped with a muqarnas hood. The space is a reception hall and the shadirwan certainly suggested a pleasant atmosphere with the sound of water rushing over the oblique polychrome marble slab. The shadirwan has a long history as an interior feature in Islamic architecture and is commonly thought to originate with the garden Palaces of the Abbasids in Samarra. However, it has also been found in Seljuk, Mamluk and Ayyubid architecture. The typology and formal expression of the shadirwan varies slightly with geography, but its origin may be related to that of the sabil (salsabīl) a word that appears in the Qur’an and refers to a spring in heaven (fig. 88 & fig. 89). This kind of example further suggests that Muslim craftsmen were working for Norman patrons who clearly wanted a fountain that emulated this established palatial tradition in Islamic architecture. However, despite its clear formal reference to the Islamic feature of the shadirwan, it is possible that it may have functioned as a cooling device as well.

507 The original meaning of shadirwan is “precious curtain or drapery suspended on tents of sovereigns and from balconies of palaces and mansions”. However in this context as an architectural feature it refers to “a wall fountain or its most important element—the inclined and carved marble slab upon which water flows”. See: Nasser Rabbat, "Shadirwan." Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition, Edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. (Brill Online, 2014).
509 The etymological antecedent of sabil (meaning ‘to let fall, or drop’) is the verb sabala (subul, pl.), meaning “way, road, or path.” The origins of sabala can be traced to the Qur’an where it is frequently used. For information on the Sabil see: Saleh Lamei Mostafa, “The Cairene Sabil: Form and Meaning,” Muqarnas 6 (1989): 33- 42.
Other examples of this type of architecture documented by Diebitsch exist, yet they are few because of what happened to his estate over the century after his death. One of the more prominent surviving watercolors includes an interior view of the Room of King Roger, dating from the twelfth century in what was at the time referred to as the Palazzo Reale in Palermo (now often called the Palazzo dei Normanii) (fig. 90). Once again, here we find the side-by-side presentation of pointed arch vaults, a tympanum featuring detailed Byzantine styled mosaics depicting symbolic vegetal and zoomorphic motifs, Corinthian columns and Islamic geometric patterns covering the floor inset in marble. He also rendered pencil and watercolor sketches of views inside of Monreale Cathedral, whose richly decorated mosaic walls and ceilings Schinkel described as a “beautiful” and an “excellent example of genuine Saracenic Architecture.”

One monument that was often on the itinerary of those visiting Palermo was the famous Cappella Palatina begun in ca. 1132. Described as one of the “most unusual monuments of medieval art” by Oleg Grabar, it is very likely Diebitsch visited this famous chapel since it occupied the second floor of the Palazzo Reale where he spent some time rendering the Room of King Roger on the ground floor (discussed above). There are no known drawings of this space by Diebitsch, yet he surely drew it, so it is likely they were either lost or stolen. The chapel is organized on a basilica plan. Rich and luminous Byzantine styled mosaics depicting Christian imagery cover the interior walls of the nave, side aisles and choir-transept. The nave is separated from the side aisles by arcades of pointed arches. The chapel was begun was around 1132 and

was completely finished by April 28, 1140. The fact that these pointed arches slightly precede—or are at the very least simultaneous with—Abbot Suger’s intervention and addition to the ambulatory at St. Denis, Paris (typically assigned the date of 1140) is interesting with regard to theories concerning the origins of the Gothic. These pointed arches rest on hybrid-Corinthian spolia arches. Because it was the royal chapel for the Norman kings, this building and the chapel in particular played a prominent role in the royal life in Sicily. The chapel hosted important ceremonies involving the king and high-level religious figures and can certainly be read as a formal expression in wood and stone of the demographic diversity of the island, especially when these details above are taken into account with the enormous and richly carved and painted muqarnas ceiling covering the main central space. This ceiling and its painting, which was most likely completed before 1143 during the reign of Roger II, is made of carved wooden muqarnas and painted with iconographic scenes. It has gone from an object of curiosity to an object of intense study and was recently the subject of one of Ernst Grube’s last co-authored books entitled The Painted Ceilings of the Cappella Palatina. The existence of such a typically “Islamic” feature in a Christian church reinforces the idea that Arab and Byzantine craftsmen were employed by the Norman kings and directed to create it. Yet the reason the Norman kings sought to acknowledge the Muslim and Byzantine communities on Sicily through the implementation of this unique Islamic feature can be located in the idea that the Normans saw this formal expression less as a reminder of what existed before, than as a visual legitimization of their rule. This included continuing traditions or laws that were previously established on the

island. This idea is plausible since it is well known that Normans, as was even the case with Britain, rarely took large amounts of settlers with them to newly conquered territory. 516 This fact makes their reliance on a cooperative population all the more essential. Despite Oleg Grabar's suggestion that the presence of such a ceiling in this context “reflect[s] the ceremonial practices, taste, and ideological pretenses of two rulers rather than a call to ecumenical values,” the integrative techniques of the Normans are widely known. 517

Indeed, one need not be “ecumenical” in order to dominate or appropriate a conquered indigenous culture. Thus, it is possible that the Normans included these motifs more as a symbolic gesture that acknowledged their awareness as foreigners whose intent was to fully integrate themselves into their new territory while recognizing the population that was already there. Indeed, the Normans typically established themselves as a kind of ruling elite above all sectors of society. In Britain, this resulted in the “unparalleled enrichment of an alien aristocracy.” 518 Thus, they sought to establish political and military power in order to gain wealth with little to no interest in transforming a conquered population through religious conversion or other societal disruptions. In her discussion of Norman Sicily medievalist Rosemary Morris, who describes the “cosmopolitan nature of the kingdom” expressed the intention of Norman rulers in Sicily in the following way: “Rather than impose their own ways, the first generations of Norman settlers assimilated the political and cultural heritage of the regions they conquered.” 519

Even the Muslim chronicler, geographer and traveler Ibn Jubayr (1145-1217), who was in Palermo in 1184 during this transitional period, commented not only on what he considered to be

517 Oleg Grabar, Review of The Painted Ceilings of the Cappella Palatina, 130.
518 Brian Golding, Conquest and Colonisation, 61.
a relatively large number of Muslims he found in the royal court and other governmental posts, but that they “seemed quite free to follow their own faith.”

Interestingly, this gesture of including “Islamic” details was not always acknowledged or understood in later representations of the building. Indeed, Ernst Grube notes that the fact that Muslim craftsmen were at all involved in the creation of the chapel and ceiling was not publicly acknowledged until 1858. The idea that the ceiling was an architectural anomaly can also be seen in the work of the Berlin architect Carl Beckmann (1799-1859), who was also an instructor at the Berlin Academy of Fine Art and a contemporary of Stier. Beckmann traveled to Sicily around 1830. He painted genre scenes set with architectural spaces and produced measured drawings of buildings. However, of central interest here are Beckmann’s detailed drawings of the Cappella Palatina, which are housed at the Architekturmuseum at the Technische Universität Berlin (fig. 91 & fig. 92). His delicate and precise use of watercolors with pencil suggests the rich and haptic quality of the interior space. However, he has omitted two important features of the building. Apparently either completely ignored, or lost entirely within a gray blotch of watercolor paint is the (absent) richly sculpted muqarnas ceiling. Its exclusion, from both the section and interior perspective, whether intentional or not, suggests a reading that questions the argument that there was a kind of deliberate transition and (formal) inclusion of artistic practices in the political shift to Norman rule – or he simply did not understand the ceiling (most likely) or intentionally ignored it. Indeed, there is no acknowledgement that the ceiling or anything Islamic exists as part of this building in his watercolors. Is it possible that Beckmann came to Sicily to

520 Ibid., 200.
521 Ernst J. Grube, “The Painted Ceilings of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo and their Relation to the Artistic Traditions of the Muslim World and the Middle Ages,” 17. He cites: Di Marzo, Belle Arti I (1858), IV.1, 78-84.
522 Recently a painting by Beckmann entitled Monks in a sunny cloister courtyard, dated to 1846 (depicting what is most likely the cloister of the Cathedral church of Monreale) sold on Christie’s.
study Classical and Byzantine monuments and could not accept the fact that these buildings contained Islamic motifs (if he even understood what they were), or is it that the master of perspective was baffled by the presence of muqarnas and could not draw it?523

The above example is relevant because it hints at the old adage that one only sees what one is taught to see. By this I mean Diebitsch came to Sicily already imbued with Stier’s sense of historical awareness with regard to the history of architecture, which he conceived broadly to include “aller Länder und Zeiten” (all regions and epochs).”524 Others, such as Beckmann and even perhaps Schinkel himself, had little idea what they were seeing at the time and as a consequence (giving them the benefit of the doubt) may have overlooked some of these details. In the case of Schinkel, however, there is a clear desire to understand this “Saracenic” architecture in terms of its contribution to the Gothic, which was of particular interest to him during this first trip. What is clear in Diebitsch’s case is that his experience with such cultural “anomalies” inspired him to learn more and prompted him to expand his Studienreise even further by seeking out the origins of this style with which he had only just become acquainted.

Diebitsch’s Search for Origins: North Africa and Spain

Intrigued by the mixed architecture he saw in Sicily, Diebitsch decided to extend his tour further by sailing to Marseille then Algiers in North Africa, which was then a relatively new colony for France (since its invasion in 1830), and thus only recently accessible to European travelers. Indeed, most of the north “Barbary” coast had been previously inaccessible to Europeans due to

rampant piracy and fear of enslavement. Officially part of the Ottoman Empire since the capture of Algiers, followed by the full annexation of most of the surrounding territory by Suleiman the Magnificent in the 1530s, the territories remained largely autonomous since they occupied only peripheral geographies from the point of view of both European and Ottoman empires. Their autonomy and reliance on piracy ended when a joint British and Dutch raid on the port of Algiers in 1816 significantly hampered their activity and ended the Barbary Wars. \(^{525}\) This part of North Africa (only 160km from Sicily), experienced an influx of Islamic rule and culture with the Umayyad conquest in c.670, and Diebitsch believed he would find here the origin of the architecture he had seen in Sicily. He arrived in Algiers and traveled to Morocco purportedly visiting Fez along the way. Little is known about the details of his trip because the journals Diebitsch wrote during this trip as well as some sketchbooks were stolen from his Berlin apartment soon after he died. Claiming that his time in North Africa “yielded poor results” he returned only after a brief time as recorded in a few sketches and watercolors (fig. 93 & fig. 94). \(^{526}\) Exactly what he was looking for is never explained, but it is likely that he expected to see a grand and idealized urban fabric rich with Islamic architecture. However, his negative experience in Algiers may have also been affected by the French colonial administration and their significant urban ‘intervention’ projects that resulted in the tearing down and “ravaging” of


“hundreds of houses” in the “most beautiful indigenous quarters,” which had been underway since the French invasion in 1830.\(^{527}\)

Diebitsch’s drawings from this time include buildings and people; however, only very few images remain. Among them is a striking watercolor depicting a perspectival view of a courtyard of what is probably a palace (fig. 95). It shows an arcade of pointed horseshoe arches upon Classical columns whose upper half is a twisted, or Solomonic column (which appear in a variety of places such as Monreale, Rome etc). The strong contrast in the watercolor sketch between the vivid blue sky and an nearly bleached planar surface of the building depicted evokes some building patterns in North African building histories such as those of the Aghlabids (r.800-909), the first indigenous Islamic dynasty of North Africa, who were known for their “large unadorned expanses of masonry or brickwork,” that were sometimes (later) covered in stucco, as an exterior surface.\(^{528}\) Historically, there was little interest in the region in elaborately articulating exterior surfaces. This is reflected in Diebitsch’s watercolor. Decorative elements and ornamentation at that time in this location was “fully subordinated to architectural forms,”\(^{529}\) especially on facades, so the inability of Diebitsch to access more ornamented or elaborately detailed spaces (not to mention his inability to enter mosques) probably frustrated him.


\(^{528}\) George Michell, “North Africa and Sicily,” in Architecture of the Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning, George Michell, editor (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), 216. Also, it is unlikely (but unknown) whether Diebitsch traveled east along the North African coast and visited the famous Jami’ Uqba Ibn Naft (Great Mosque of Kairouan), located in present day Tunisia, as no drawings of this structure by him are known to exist. The mosque was built by the Aghlabid governor of Kairouan from 817 to 838 on top of another mosque dating to the initial Arab conquest of 670.

A result of this frustration may be reflected not only in the lack of drawings from the region, but more importantly in understanding what he did end up drawing. A sketch labeled “Stadtansicht Kairo” at the TU Architekturmuseum (Inv. Nr. 41661) depicts a scene that does not immediately appear to be set in Cairo—despite the inscription “Kairo” in the upper right corner (fig. 96 & fig. 97). In the foreground on the right a single story building is depicted. Above the door on the left the text “Casern[e?] du Font Bab el oued” is written. Above the door to the right the text “[?]Bit d. Liquers” is inscribed. From the subject matter of the drawing, which includes low, wide domes and minarets that are clearly attributable to North African architectural traditions [i.e. the Maghreb], it is unlikely that this scene depicts Cairo.

Additionally, the existence of the text “Casern[e?] du Font Bab el oued” also suggests the setting to be in the mostly European residential section of Algiers called Bab el-Oued. I believe this sketch is mislabeled and belongs instead to the small collection of images from Diebitsch’s trip to Algiers. This neighborhood was also connected to the casaba and adjacent to a large defensive wall topped with battlements and loopholes – all of which can be seen in Diebitsch’s sketch.

Why he would draw this scene is anyone’s guess as there are no known comments by Diebitsch referring to it, but I suggest (whether intentional or not) that it is indicative of his frustration with Algiers. His inability to access and analyze many of the buildings around him, together with witnessing the major urban renovations that resulted in a great deal of destruction of the area’s “indigenous” architecture probably forced him to inhabit (and document) peripheral spaces like these.\footnote{One reason he may have ended up in the neighborhood Bab el-Oued could have to do with the presence of another German architect named M. Lichtenstein who was hired to plan and design a working class neighborhood here “in the late 1840s” – a period that coincides exactly with Diebitsch’s visit. See: Zeynep Çelik, \textit{Urban Forms and Colonial Confrontations: Algiers Under French Rule} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 61.} However, despite the evidence supporting his visit, it seems that from the family
chronicle and other sources he was not overly enthusiastic about the architecture he found there and returned to Marseille in order to travel to Spain.

Diebitsch probably spent the bulk of his time in Spain since the literature (including the family chronicle) indicates that he visited approximately twelve cities there. He arrived in Granada sometime in 1847 in order to visit the Alhambra. It was here in the Royal Palace that he finally found what he was looking for. Diebitsch believed he had located the height of Islamic architecture culture. He remained there for six months residing in part of the former palace and spent twelve-hour days intently studying and drawing the building. Here he met many travelers and architects interested in the building. It was during his time there that he met the soon to be well-known Prussian painter Wilhelm Gentz with whom he would develop a friendship. He also met the famous novelist and author Theodor Fontane (1819-1898) who acknowledged that while at the Alhambra with Diebitsch he learned about the "efflorescence (Blüte) of Arab architecture." Diebitsch is often portrayed as a purveyor of a "Moorish" style that features as its most prominent aspect details and motifs found in the Alhambra. Yet I have

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533 Irina Rockel, Wilhelm Gentz (Berlin: Stapp Verlag, 1997), 34. Oddly, Rockel states that at the time Gentz met Diebitsch ("in Andalusia") he was "occupied with Norman architecture" ("um sich mit der normannischen Baukust zu beschäftigen." She then states that after he visited the Alhambra Diebitsch went to Algeria, however, I can find no evidence of this. Only that he came to Spain after Algeria.
534 Theodor Fontane, Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg, Vol. 9, in Sämtliche Werke, E. Groß, K. Screinert et al., eds. (Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1959), 140.
found that his earlier study of Islamic architecture in Sicily continued to be a prominent attribute of his later work.

The length of time Diebitsch spent at the Alhambra suggests that there would be a large cache of surviving drawings; however, this is not the case. We do know from other sources such as Franz Kugler and an Exhibition Catalog (both to be discussed below) that Diebitsch painted and presented at least several watercolors of the building. We also know from the family chronicle that some amount of his archive was stolen from his house on Hafenplatz after his death. What exists in the collection of the Architekturmuseum at the TU Berlin, then makes up the bulk of what remains. Most of these are sketches that suggest Diebitsch was interested in how the various muqarnas details worked, i.e. how they were supported, what they were made of and how they could be drawn. One page that contains several quick sketches shows his study of the transition from a square interior space to a dome with the use of squinches (fig. 98) (TUBAm Inv. Nr. 41510). Prioritizing the study over the overall impression of the space or its aesthetic, he drew the plan next to it with what are presumably the sections of the dome above. Below these sketches is a study of a series of muqarnases; first in plan then in perspective. Within these drawings he has articulated various patterns such as stars and in the prespective he has drawn what looks to be a shell motif on the far right. Some sketches are more detailed and demonstrate his obvious interest in the intricacies of vegetal motifs and their appearance in three dimensions (fig. 99) (TUBAm Inv. Nr. 41515), while others seem to suggest he was thinking about theories relating to polychromy and how they may be incorporated in such details due to the inclusion of color in his rendering (fig. 100) (TUBAm Inv. Nr. 41520). The most spectacular of the Alhambra series though is a watercolor cataloged as Blick vom Umgang auf den Löwenbrunnen (View of

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536 See my discussion of this below in a later section.
the Court of Lions) (ca. 1847) (fig. 101) (TUBAm Inv. Nr. 41509). This pencil and oil on cardboard painting hints at the potential quality the missing cache of drawings may have had. Indeed, Kugler's description that Diebitsch's paintings of the Alhambra were created with “superhuman execution” is confirmed with this painting.\(^5\) The painting goes well beyond morerly representing the multiple arcades leading to the court beyond. It is at once tectonic in Diebitsch’s depiction of the columns and the muqarnas, and it is also rendered in various levels of abstraction depending on where an object is in the depth of field. Immediately in the foreground the detailed stucco ornamentation is distinctly articulated along with the muqarnas; however, as the columns recede into the background we increasingly lose detail until the eye reaches the courtyard which is washed with brightly lit sun. The painting not only “records” a part of the building and aspects of the Islamic style that Diebitsch was so interested in, but it studies the building in manner that, for all intents and pursposes, was, as Kugler stated, better than that which was achievable with the daguerreotype and calls to mind similar studies by John Ruskin. What is particularly interesting in this comparision is that Ruskin, who happened to be born the same year as Diebitsch, also happened to be in Italy around this time (just after Diebitsch was in Spain). Indeed, it was during Ruskin’s trip to Venice in 1849 that he rendered similar studies of Venetian Gothic buildings such as the Ca' d'Oro and the Doge’s Palace, or Palazzo Ducale. These carefully rendered watercolors were included in his seminal three-volume work *The Stones of Venice* (1851–53) (fig. 102). It is difficult to assume the type, quality and range of work that may have been completed by Diebtisch; however, this rendering clearly

\(^5\) “[In some paintings of the Alhambra] he was able to produce a wonderful painterly impression through the use of only two or three color tones. In others, which bordered on the superhuman execution of musically designed ceilings, wall patterns and ornament in the most colorful splendor, without disturbing the harmony of the whole, a work which, when compared with what can be achieved by the daguerreotype, surpasses by far.” Franz Kugler, “Akademien und Vereine Berlin,” Kunstblatt 10 (March 8, 1849) (Supplement to Morgenblatt für gebildete Leser): 40.
proves his ability to capture Islamic architecture in a way that was not only didactic but impressionable as well. While it is true that his study of the Alhambra greatly influenced his work, I believe that the “Islamic” architecture he produced is much more nuanced and layered and that his production was by no means limited to a strictly Alhambraesque (“Moorish”) revival. Indeed, his work must be seen as a continuation and further evolution of Schinkel and Stier’s “synthetic” approach to architecture and its history. What was more important to Diebitsch in his own projects was the integration of multiple historical narratives into what he considered to be an acknowledgement of a shared architectural history that recognized the symbolic importance of both Eastern and Western architectural traditions in the architecture of his day.

“Das griechische nicht ohne die Araber entstand” DIEBITSCH’S CHALLENGE TO GERMANY’S GRECOMANIA: THE BERLIN PROJECTS, 1848-1861

Greek culture could not have come into being without the Arabs; this fact was much acclaimed.538

-Carl von Diebitsch (1853)

We should not be ashamed to acknowledge truth from whatever source it comes to us, even if it is brought to us by former generations and foreign peoples. For him who seeks the truth there is nothing of higher value than truth itself.539

-Ya’qub ibn Ishaq al-Kindi (c.801-866)

After his Studienreise Diebitsch returned to Berlin in 1848 via Paris, which was in the throes of the révolution de Février. After nearly four years away he wasted no time in establishing his own

538 Lit.: “das griechische nicht ohne die Araber entstand und dafür vielen Beifall fand” was Carl von Diebitsch’s motto for the Stock Exchange, Berlin. Schinkelwettbewerb (1853). A full discussion and interpretation of this text follows below.

private architectural practice. As a result of his long trip of discoveries he returned with a new perspective on architecture that would be reflected in his work from that point on. In addition to his practice Diebitsch began to give lectures at various art and architectural association meetings. One of these lectures, given in 1849 at the meeting of the wissenschaftlichen Kunstverein, was attended by the renowned art historian Franz Kugler (1808-58). Kugler, coincidentally had himself included—for the first time—an introductory history of Islamic art and architecture in a section (Der Islam) of his Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte (Handbook of Art History) generally considered the first survey to attempt to ambitiously tell a history of the world’s art. In the lecture, an account of which was published by Kugler in the March 1849 edition of the Kunstblatt, Diebitsch recounts his recent travels and his discovery of Islamic architecture in detail. In his summary, Kugler noted that it was there in Sicily “that awoke in him - through the contemplation of Moorish and Arabic building construction - the irresistible longing to seek an even more fertile soil for that architecture.” 540 Kugler goes on to lavish praise on the watercolors Diebitsch presented with phrases such as “superhuman execution” in reference to his rendering of the ceilings and wall patterns - even going so far as to claim that his paintings of the detail and color surpassed even the ability of the daguerreotype “by far.” 541 Kugler also relates a fundamental theme of central importance to Diebitsch in his text by his comment: “But Herr v. D[iebitsch] does not only just have a taste for aesthetic enjoyment, but also works toward practicability.” 542 This statement not only refers to Diebitsch’s belief in the widespread applicability of the “Moorish” style, but suggests his dedication to implementing these ideas into

540 Franz Kugler, “Akademien und Vereine Berlin,” 40. „Hier erwachte durch die Anschauung maurischer und arabischer Bauwerke, die unwiderstehliche Sehnsucht in ihm, einen noch ergiebigeren Boden jener Baukunst aufzusuchen.“
542 Ibid.
his architectural practice. How this may be achieved is only subtly intimated with one of the last comments by Kugler having to do with Diebitsch’s “peculiar method” by which he made casts or impressions (Abklatschungen) of “architectural patterns with moistened paper” and transformed these into interior details made of plaster, which he installed in his own apartment “in the style of the Alhambra.” Again, this description suggests Diebitsch’s enthusiasm for Islamic architecture and his belief in its “universal” applicability, which was in large part the reason he devoted himself to working exclusively in this style.

By 1852 Diebitsch had begun advocating more specifically for the mass production of Islamic details and patterns through the use of less expensive materials more suited to reproducible patterns. For example, in a lecture given at a meeting of German architects and engineers in Braunschweig in May of 1852 he outlined in detail how easy and cost effective it is to render even the most complicated Islamic architectural details in plaster. He suggests that it is as “easy to pour as it is to cut,” and that “without any considerable expense an ordinary house painter with some speed could become accustomed to cutting out the ornaments drawn according to the lead on the plaster lines.” Diebitsch also explained an easy and low cost technique he devised to create muqarnas, which he describes as “the stalactite vaults of the Moorish styles,” which are used as a “rich decoration for the ceiling.” In addition to creating these motifs in plaster he introduces an idea that would occupy a central place in his designs and dominate his

543 Ibid.
546 Ibid.
547 Ibid.
future work. This was the use of cast iron for columns, which he believed was an “excellent” material appropriate for easily casting “Arabic patterns.”

He concluded his compelling appeal by discussing the price: “the square foot cost of such ornaments would only be about 1 Thaler.” and as such is “still preferable to wallpaper and the other murals.” These ideas were to form the core of his architectural practice by making these heretofore-inaccessible Islamic designs available to an expanding middle class public.

Diebitsch likely believed in the future success of his plan to make the style widely available for several reasons. Among them must have been the perceived newness of the “Moorish” style, which not only connoted a sophisticated awareness and acknowledgement of distant places and cultures, but was also a refreshing alternative to the by now (1853) redundant Classical and Gothic styles so common throughout the German lands and Europe. Another potential reason he believed the style would be in demand had to do with the perceived complexity and elaborate ornamentation often found in Islamic art. For centuries the more elaborate an object was ornamented the more valuable the object was perceived to be due to the increased skills, time and other aspects associated with specialized labor. However, with the advent of industry and increased ubiquity of mechanical production techniques in the first half of the nineteenth century, these once difficult and specialized processes became reproducible on a mass scale. The idea that this new market of the middle class sought out elaborately decorated objects, due to the perception that they were more expensive, emerges distinctly with the first Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London in 1851.

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548 Ibid.
549 Ibid.
of the Royal Academy, remarked on the nature of this crisis in a reaction to what he saw at the
exhibition, for which he assigned blame on the new manufacturing methods for

...the ability to produce the florid and overloaded as cheaply as simple forms, and then
to satisfy the larger market for the multitude, who desire quantity, rather than quality, and
value a thing the more it is ornamented.\(^{550}\)

Surely many elaborately ornamented objects were on display at the 1851 fair in order to satisfy
the public's (bad) taste for what amounted to—in Redgrave's eyes—kitsch. Art historian Paul
Greenhalgh has observed that because these ornamented objects "carried the idea of affluence"
both parties of producers and consumers had "symbolic, not aesthetic criteria" by which they
judged the value of objects.\(^{551}\) As a style that was perceived to be 'foreign,' 'exotic' as well as
not well-understood there was a certain cachet associated with it that appealed to the upper class.
Prior to the 1850s accessibility by the general public to "Moorish" styled environments were
largely limited to royal buildings in gardens (if accessible) such as at Schwetzingen in Germany
(1778-95) or Brighton (1823) in England. However, this changed in the 1850s and was
accelerated by the Great Exhibition.\(^{552}\) Diebitsch was a witness to this trend and sought to take
advantage of what he saw as an opportunity to not only work within the style he loved, but also
achieve the recognition he desired.\(^{553}\) Over the next several years, with mixed success, Diebitsch
would constantly strive to refine his designs and methods in order to achieve his goals of making
Islamic architecture more widely accessible. What follows is a brief outline of his work in order
to demonstrate the evolution of his ideas in and around Berlin from 1852 to 1862.


The Berlin Stock Market Building Competition of 1853 and the Unlikely Introduction of the Neo-Islamic Style to Berlin

In 1853 the Architekten-Verein announced that the program for the annual Schinkelkonkurrenz (Schinkel competition) was to be a new Börse (Stock market) building in Berlin. Diebitsch’s proposal for the grand program is considered “his first Moorish design” (fig. 103). It is important to pause here and note that I find the term “neo-Islamic” not just more appropriate, but altogether more precise when discussing his work after 1853. The term “Moorish” (Maurisch) aside from its patina of racism (not to mention vague signified and referent) is at best polysemous, distracting and altogether inaccurate for describing Diebitsch’s work. The term “neo-Islamic,” while having less of a history, is still polysemous and imprecise since it still attempts to encapsulate a number of different cultures and languages with the assumption that there is a cohesive unity through its religious connotation. While this assumption is not

554 For a full description of the program as described by the AV see: Börsch-Supan, Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel, 798-799.
555 Eva Börsch-Supan, Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel, 150.
556 Thus, the term “neo-Islamic” in this context refers to the use of forms that have acquired a meaning from, or an association with, what Marshall Hodgson calls “Islamicate” society or culture when referring to the less religious aspects of these cultures. However, “neo-Islamicate” is simply too awkward and limiting, so from this point forward “neo-Islamic” will be used to describe this work. See: Marshall G. S. Hodgson, The Classical Age of Islam, vol. 1 of The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 57f. He writes: “One can speak of ‘Islamic literature’, of ‘Islamic art’, [etc.] but in such a sequence one is speaking less and less of something that expresses Islam as a faith.”
557 From the entry “Moor” in the Oxford English Dictionary. “1. Originally: a native or inhabitant of ancient Mauretania, a region of North Africa corresponding to parts of present-day Morocco and Algeria. Later usually: a member of a Muslim people of mixed Berber and Arab descent inhabiting north-western Africa (now mainly present-day Mauritania), who in the 8th cent. conquered Spain.” “Etymology: In Old English < classical Latin Maurus (see below); in later use reborrowed < Anglo-Norman and Middle French more inhabitant of (North) Africa and Muslim Spain, (adjective) black, brown (late 13th cent. in Old French, earlier in form mor (late 12th cent.), French maure inhabitant of North Africa (1636) after the classical Latin form) and its etymons classical Latin Maurus (post-classical Latin Morus) [etc. . . .]”
558 For example this variety includes, but is not limited to: “Persia” (Iran, Part of Iraq and Transoxania (Central Asia), which often includes present day India, Pakistan etc. since the Mughals were Afghani/Persianate’; “Arabia” (Egypt, ‘Syria’, Levant & Western Arabia), The “Maghrib” (North Africa (“Ifriqiyya”) Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya & AlAndalus); Anatolia (Seljuks, Ottoman/Turks); and also South East Asia – Indonesia, Malaysia etc.
completely false it is also not true since examples abound that demonstrate that “Islamic architecture” has been emulated, reproduced or utilized in various ways by non-Muslims and that even within Islam art there are differences between Shi’i and Sunni architectural expressions. 559

Since there have been several formal descriptions of Diebitsch’s first formal proposal in the neo-Islamic style,560 I will only briefly refer to the design itself. The symmetrical exterior façade reveals a tripartite organization with a large central building and two flanking smaller buildings. The center is dominated by an eight-sided tower capped with an eight-sided pointed dome that emerges at the top portion of a gabled roof. The exterior organization shares Diebitsch’s understanding of how a large public building in Berlin should be laid out (according to a Bauakademie education), yet it is clearly not an example of what his colleagues are producing. Many of the forms and details found on the façade can be traced back to Islamic and medieval Italian “Saracenic” (referring to Islamic in 18th and 19th century parlance) precedents generally, yet the building is not modeled on a specific historical example. Participating in the language of the Berliner Schule as well as integrating what he learned on his trip, the building hints at its diverse origins incorporating the eight-sided star motif and ablaq so commonly found in Islamic architecture, with Italianate biforate windows and corbel tables etc. The interior, however, is strongly based on the architecture Diebitsch discovered in Granada at the Alhambra (fig. 104). It is replete with Alhambra-esque arcades and patterned motifs and includes a fountain

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559 One of the most obvious and famous examples is the use of “Islamic” art and architectural motifs by the Christian Copts in Egypt who have produced art and architecture in various styles such as the neo-Fatimid for centuries (produced along side a variety of Muslim rulers). In terms of the differing architectural expressions in Shi’i and Sunni architecture I am referring primarily to texts such as: Irene Bierman, Writing Signs: The Fatimid Public Text (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); and Yasser Tabbas, The Transformation of Islamic Art during the Sunni Revival (Publications on the Near East) (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001) esp. 163f.
at the far end, a large chandelier rendered in Islamic motifs, as well as a ceiling that recalls Italian examples he likely saw – yet without the inclusion of muqarnas.

Instead of demonstrating where these forms came from and why he ‘mixed’ them in this project I would, instead, like to draw attention to something that is mentioned by most sources, but not discussed in any substantial way, and that is his chosen motto for the project. Included on an architectural submission to a competition is a motto typically chosen by the architect in order to identify and differentiate one’s proposal while providing character to the project. Diebitsch’s motto for the Börse project was: “das griechische nicht ohne die Araber entstand und dafür vielen Beifall fand,” which roughly translates to: “Greek culture came into being with the help of the Arabs – and therefore found much acclaim.”

Rolf Senn describes the choice of motto as “ironic,” whereas Eva Börsch-Supan writes that he uses the “Arab forms” in a “humorous way” in that he chose the forms due to “their evolutionary significance.” However, if we take the motto apart I believe more meaning can be derived. The noun "das griechische" refers here to the Greek culture as it was theorized and understood in mid-nineteenth century Germany.

However, I believe "die Araber" refers, in this case, to the Arab peoples historically, and in particular the Arabs who interacted with and studied Greek history and culture. He does not use the term “Islam” or any of its variations, but it is now known those Arabs who copied, translated and preserved many Greek texts were Muslims. The translation of Greek texts into Arabic (often through Syriac) occurred for the most part between the eight and tenth centuries and, as Albert

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561 This drawing is kept in the Architekturmuseum, Technische Universität Berlin. Inv. Nr. SW-A 1853-54.
563 Eva Börsch-Supan, Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel, 799.
Hourani notes, was typically carried out with the support of the ‘Abbasid Caliphs.\textsuperscript{564} The word "dafür" (an adverb that literally means “for it” or “in favor of”) refers to the belief that the Arabs had continued (or preserved) Greek culture. "Beifall finden" means literally to “find applause,” which is an impersonal way to say "gefallen" (“to appeal”), because the subject is left out. The result is: \textit{Greek culture came into being with the help of the Arabs and therefore found much acclaim}. However, we are still left with questions about the subject. By whom was it much acclaimed – by “history,” the “public” or by a wider audience? Also, this statement recalls earlier theories described by Jacques I. Hittorff who even alludes to this idea of the role of the Arabs in preserving Greek knowledge in his book \textit{Architecture moderne de la Sicile}.\textsuperscript{565}

Also important for interpreting the drawing is a small sketch Diebitsch drew in the upper left portion of the ground floor plan drawing (Inv: SW-A 1853-04) (fig. 105). Described by Eva Börsch-Supan as “columns as little bearded men” (\textit{säulen als Bartmännchen}),\textsuperscript{566} Diebitsch sketched what appear to be two caryatid-like, Greek Doric columns, each of which has a beard and wears a type of turban. These figures, which we can read as referencing “die Araber” in his motto, inhabit the shape of the Doric column unlike a ‘traditional’ Greek caryatid such as those on the Erechtheion on the Acropolis where they are free-standing figures not shaped like a column at all. I read these figures as a symbolic representation of his motto in that the “Arab” figures are “literally” shown as an integral part of the Greek order supporting the architrave and frieze above. However, metaphorically they are responsible (in the European view) also for

\textsuperscript{566} Eva Börsch-Supan, \textit{Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel}, 799.
“supporting” Greek culture by translating, studying, learning and preserving it throughout the medieval period; not only in texts but also to some degree in architectural principles.

Diebitsch ended up winning second place to Herrmann Spielberg’s design, which was more in line with the *Rundbogenstil* of the Berliner Schule at the time. And despite the recognition and prestige of the award, Stefan Koppelkamm suggests that “exotic” designs like this “violated all the rules” and the use of this style for large, public buildings did not align with expectations for these types of “representative” public projects.\(^5^{67}\) Indeed, the use of this style for such an ambitious and prominent project says a great deal about how serious Diebitsch was about using the style, as prior to this grand proposal the use of Islamic or “Oriental” design motifs in built works had hitherto been restricted to programs like baths, coffee houses, garden buildings, private houses, entertainment venues and seaside resorts where a “liberal use of exotic styles” was encouraged.\(^5^{68}\) Indeed, his courage to design such a prominent building in this style again suggests the influence of Stier. Thus, with this bold proposal and its associated motto, Diebitsch began his career with the neo-Islamic style with a running start. Unfortunately, we have no text from Diebitsch explaining exactly what he means by the motto, or for that matter the details of the project itself. All that exists are the drawings he submitted which I think are substantial evidence for his position which he is just beginning to articulate. However, after his ambitious and idealistic start, the realities of architectural practice soon set in and he found


\(^{568}\) Ibid. Of course, one programmatic building type that challenged this whimsical use of Islamic style was the Synagogue. However, its use in this capacity is a unique phenomenon and is an exception to the use of the style upon which I am focusing. There is a substantial literature on this topic as well. See for example: Harold Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland. Geschichte einer Baugattung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (1780 - 1933) 2 vols. (Hamburger Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Juden, Bd. 8), 1981; Harold Hammer-Schenk, *Die Architektur der Synagoge*, Hans-Peter Schwarz, ed. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1988); as well as Hannelore Künzl, *Islamische Stilelemente im Synagogenbau des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 1984).
himself working on commissions that are less grand. In fact, by looking at his actual complete projects next, we will see that he was constantly learning and improving his methods and techniques all the while remaining dedicated to the style.

**Carl von Diebitsch around the Mark Brandenburg: the Residential Projects**

From 1852-62 Carl von Diebitsch received a number of commissions, many of which were for royal clients, but it was not the kind of work he was looking for. For the most part they were small-scale interior projects, such as a “Turkish bath” or a “Turkish Cabinet.” Upon examination of Diebitsch’s work over these years we can see an evolution in his use of materials. For example his early projects such as the “Turkish Villa” (Park-Café) and entry gate for the *Tempelgarten* in Neuruppin of 1854 are dominated by the use of brick and terracotta indicating his origins and association with the Bauakademie (fig. 106). Of course brick and terracotta were overwhelmingly associated with the Schinkelschüler and Berliner Schule, and ubiquitous in Berlin so much so that no public buildings were erected in stone between Schinkel’s Altes Museum of 1830 and Hitzig’s Stock Exchange of c.1863. As seen in this example of the *Tempelgarten*, Diebitsch employs the use of the pointed horseshoe arch as it was fully developed in examples he likely saw throughout North Africa (cf. Bab el Mahrouk in Fes, Morocco), which also utilized brick as their primary material. Indeed, this connection is rather certain since it is known that he traveled through Fes. However, upon examination of the interior of the Café at Neuruppin we can see Diebitsch’s use of his preferred material: plaster. Based on his lectures, these motifs were formed with the use of a mould (by an average carpenter) and then attached to

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the wall and painted in order to achieve a repetitive and highly patterned interior design scheme (fig. 107). Of course throughout the medieval and early modern periods this kind of work in Islamic territories was carved out of wood or—if it was available—made of stucco (fig. 108). Instead of specifying that workers laboriously carve details and patterns out of wood, he designed and created moulds for poured plaster in order to convincingly render the highly repetitive patterns so characteristic in Islamic architecture with less labor. If needed, a lead stencil was created for workers to cut additional patterns on the moulded plaster.

Another project from the same period was his design of a bath for Prince Albrecht in his new “Villa” (large palace) Albrechtsberg in Dresden (Badezimmer in der Villa des Prinzen Albrecht), which dates from 1854-55 (fig. 109 & fig. 110). Here we can see the almost exclusive use of plaster to cover almost every inch of the exposed surface. The only other element, which begins to make a prominent appearance here, is the use of cast iron columns. Made in a similar way—through the use of a mould—the cast iron columns could be rendered as detailed as he wished since he only had to make one mould. Another project from this period that combines plaster, cast iron (columns) as well as some wood is a “Moorish” Room at Schloß Schwerin.\(^{570}\) As he worked through these ideas his projects grew increasingly more efficient with the use of these early mass production techniques. But despite his efforts, the commissions remained few, small in scope, and only among the wealthy with few of the bourgeois clients he had hoped to attract. In terms of the perception and appearance of his buildings in the historiography, these projects have typically been considered rather unremarkable and have therefore received little attention. Yet, Diebitsch persevered, especially in his own self-commissioned project. Many of

\(^{570}\) Thomas Dann, *Die grossherzoglichen Prunkappartements im Schweriner Schloss: ein Beitrag zur Raumkunst des Historismus in Deutschland* (Schwerin: Landesamt für Kultur und Denkmalpflege, 2007), 194.
these ideas were worked out in his new house and studio that he decided to design and build in the new and rapidly growing section of Berlin on the Hafenplatz. This large building comprised his living spaces and studio as well as apartments to be rented, and was his first large project to be constructed.

**Diebitsch and das Maurische Haus**

In Fontane's 1886 novel *Cécile*, the author refers to a building on the Hafenplatz as "the house with the Alhambra dome." It was one of Diebitsch's most important projects and displayed "Moorish friezes," arabesques, mosaics and was constructed mostly out of the local red brick (*märkischen Backsteinen*) and yellow-white bricks. This building receives a rather detailed formal treatment in an article by art historian Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz. The building, constructed from 1856-57, no longer exists as it was destroyed in the Second World War, and only a handful of drawings and photographs remain (figs. 111 & 112). This is Diebitsch’s most significant project of this period and because he was his own client it is particularly revealing. It was designed by him to be part rentable apartments and part living quarters and studio workshop for his practice.

In 1855 he designed this five-story apartment building. The materials used varied widely as he continued to actively experiment with them. What is clearly discernable on the façade is Diebitsch’s intent to use a neo-Islamic style in a prominent location that was one of the newest

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areas of Berlin. Indeed, it is possible to see the domed structure in an early twentieth century photograph, found in the Berlin Landesarchiv, of this bridge from across the (then new) canal harbor, which was part of the mid-century urban development plan (fig. 113). The location of this building is rarely discussed, yet it plays a crucial role in its understanding. The Hafenplatz (Harbor Square) was the public square adjacent to Berlin’s first harbor, the Schöneberger Hafen. It was dug out in 1852 as a harbor for the Landwehr canal, which linked different parts of the city and, among other things, connected the Potsdamer and Anhalter train stations by water. It was here on this prominent corner of the new section of the city that Diebitsch located his neo-Islamic apartment block. It is not surprising then that this is where Diebitsch experimented with his techniques to develop more efficient ways of producing this ‘mixed’ style. Indeed, in her analysis of the building Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz states that the Diebitsch’s design is “more than a mere compilation of elements borrowed from La Zisa and the Giralda. It not only reflects the importance of his travels between 1842 and 1848, but also embodies his architectural production during the 1850’s and expresses his identity as an artist.”574 This is due to the simultaneous expression of various elements discernable on the façade that are suggestive of various sites on his Studienreise. From the massive corner tower that evokes North African minarets and Sicilian westworks, to the presence of ablaq, horseshoe arches yet also referencing Italian fenestrations all the while keeping in mind the new site in Berlin’s latest neighborhood.

**Conclusion**

Unfortunately, Diebitsch’s modern Islamic architectural showpiece, described by a contemporary as something “quite alien,” and whose “style is something nobody in the city—even in Mark

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574 Ibid., 75.
Brandenburg—has seen,” did not attract the attention that would lead to commissions as he had hoped. The rest of the years from 1857 to 1861 were occupied with even fewer small projects such as a granary (Kornspeicher) and residential tower (Wohnturm) for the superintendent on a large estate for the same Gentz family for whom he worked previously in Neuruppin. Oddly, this project reads more as a regression in Diebitsch’s timeline in that it was almost entirely out of brick and featured few of the ideas he had been working on a few years prior. Indeed, in one recent publication the author claimed that the granary contained “no Moorish or oriental aspects.” Despite the lack of progress (or the yielding to pressure) made with this granary, Diebitsch began to imagine how he could expand his business and create a demand for the product he thought he had all but perfected. The answer to this would come in an unlikely form and was the result of many different circumstances and events, which ranged from Prussia’s industrial development, governmental and financial reform, as well as external pressures from Britain and France. Diebitsch needed a method by which he could access a larger public outside the limited populations of Berlin and Prussia and there was no better place than the stage provided by the Great International Exhibitions – the next of which was to be in London in 1862.

CHAPTER FIVE

FROM LONDON TO PARIS (VIA CAIRO):
CARL VON DIEBITSCH AND THE ORIGINS OF A
MODERN ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE, 1862-1867

It will be difficult to find a successor within his field, and we have not hesitated on this point to pronounce that we are not capable of defending the endeavors pursued by him. However, one will hardly be able to look back on such a life without being deeply moved, and which has been dedicated to purely idealistic goals in such a sober time with so much self-sacrifice.

Although v. Diebitsch was in a lonely position among his professional colleagues, and if he seemed somewhat eccentric and sometimes appeared to be bitter, then what a difference it was to have seen him working in his workshop where he was in his element! Surely the untiring, joyous courage and artistic enthusiasm, the entire reinvigorated personality (of his) will always be remembered.

-Hubert Stier (1869)\textsuperscript{577}

The opposition between Art and Technology is reconciled as soon as it is acknowledged that, to a certain extent, art is itself a technology in the dual perspective of figurative and operative activities.

-Pierre Francastel (1956)\textsuperscript{578}

\textsuperscript{577} Hubert Stier, “Karl von Diebitsch” (Obituary) \textit{Deutsche Bauzeitung} 35 (August 26, 1869): 436.

\textsuperscript{578} Pierre Francastel, \textit{Art & Technology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries}, Randall Cherry, trans., (New York: Zone Books, 2003), 24. [Originally published as: \textit{Art et technique au XIXe et XX siècle}, 1956]
PART I.

INTRODUCTION: DIEBITSCH GOES TO THE FAIR

On May 1st 1862, the third International Exhibition opened in South Kensington, London. Off to a difficult start in a building whose “general characteristic is that of simple ugliness” as declared by *The Penny Guide* in 1862,\(^{579}\) it also suffered due to the marked absence of the royal couple at the opening ceremony. Prince Albert had died the previous December. But despite these setbacks the Exhibition still managed to draw a record number of guests. In fact it drew two million more than its immediate predecessor, the 1855 *Exposition Universelle* in Paris. The architecture of the building—much like the era itself—was full of contradictions. Set on the 23 acre site was Francis Fowke’s (1823-65) French neo-Renaissance building composed of many different materials from brick and timber to iron and glass. Out of this building rose two massive ferro-vitreous dodecahedron domes reminiscent of an updated Brunelleschi’s Duomo in Florence. The domes measured 160 feet in their exterior diameter and, despite the fact that they awkwardly sat upon an octagonal base, they were an impressive structural feat nonetheless.\(^{580}\) The twelve sections of glass separated by exposed iron members simultaneously reified the building’s modernity and called to mind an abstracted architectural past. Thus, the building and its contradictions provide a poignant reminder of this historical moment, as well as an entry point to the discussion about the nature of the industrial exhibitions in the second half of the nineteenth century and their relationship to industrial modernization and the arts. Continuing the theme established at the beginning of this dissertation, I intend to specifically address how we might extend existing

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\(^{579}\) *The Penny Guide to the International Exhibition* of 1862. Also labeled a “wretched shed” by *Art Journal* and a “national disgrace” by *Fraser’s* (periodical).

notions of Modernism without losing a sense of its boundaries. Thus, this chapter will demonstrate just what the revolutionary new means and methods that became available to practicing architects during this historical moment meant to those willing to go the further distance to pursue their ideas.

Divided into four sections, this chapter begins with a discussion of the apparatuses that enabled Carl von Diebitsch to escape from his professional life in Berlin that had become mundane and misdirected. These apparatuses are the third International Exhibition in London of 1862, and the role played there by the remarkable "organization" of the Zollverein (Customs/Toll Union) and its advocates such as Ministry officials like Peter Beuth. I will demonstrate that Diebitsch’s life and work would have been significantly different had these various political and economic policies and International Exhibitions not appeared when they did in order to reflect the rapidly globalizing world. The second part of the chapter examines the result of Diebitsch’s appearance at the exhibition: his invitation to work in Cairo, Egypt as an independent architect. Brought to the incredibly competitive building environment of Egypt, Diebitsch arrived to a rapidly changing metropolis bent on modernization and quickly realized he had to prove himself and deliver his promises without compromising his ideals. The third section sees Diebitsch return to the international stage with his participation in the Exposition Universelle of 1867 in Paris, which reveals that a great deal has changed for him since his last appearance at an international exhibition. Also considerably changed was the public’s perception of Islamic art and architecture, which, along with environmental and political factors, significantly affected how his work was understood. The final section deals with the remaining year and a half of Diebitsch’s life and what could be considered to be his ‘masterpiece,’ the Gezira Palace Pavilion. While striving toward an exegesis, the final section resituates this structure in the history of architecture.
and brings new meaning to it in terms of its relationship to the foundation of Modern architecture.

**THE ZOLLEVEREIN: THE POLITICAL PATH TO THE EXHIBITION**

...the German producer began to have more confidence in his own skill and to be less afraid than formerly of foreign competition.

-John Ward (British diplomat to Germany) (1854)

To-day we are in a better position than the generations before us to see [the Zollverein] in its proper perspective: not as the glorious beginning of a glorious history, but as a system of expedients set up to meet urgent needs.

-Wolfram Fischer (1960)

One of the common themes found throughout the sources on the early exhibitions was the relentless competition among nations, in particular between Great Britain and France. While Britain attempted to maintain and strengthen its industrial standing in “first place,” France, which saw itself as Britain’s greatest challenger, strove to overtake Britain. A venue where this was attempted was the setting of the Expo. This explains, to some degree, why the international exhibitions could not be wrested away from London and Paris until twenty-two years after they began. Yet, while these two “nations” were vying for industrial supremacy, a third entity was rapidly emerging. Described by the English cartographic publisher John Tallis in his *History and Description of the Crystal Palace* of 1851 as occupying “a large portion of the foreign side of the Crystal Palace,” he characterized this group’s presence more as a “policy and not a country” and

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"a mere political designation for a great part of Germany." This section to which he referred was known collectively as the Zollverein, or (German) Customs Union. Technically, this union was an economic—and not a political—one. However, through its unified presentation in an international arena such as the exhibition, it certainly foreshadowed the political unity that was less than a decade away. And as Tallis observed, by the time of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the Zollverein dominated the foreign section from its debut appearance. By the time of the third International Exhibition of 1862 the list of exhibitors associated with the Zollverein and their objects took up over fifty pages in the official catalog. And it was through the exceptional nature of the Zollverein that Diebitsch submitted and displayed what would be his first world’s fair exhibit.

Formally established in 1834 the Zollverein was the first economic union of independent German states that did not involve a political union, allowing individual members to maintain their sovereignty. The agreement enabled participating German territories to overcome a series of economic obstacles by participating in a single tariff zone. This allowed them to compete more effectively against Britain and France on the expanding global economic stage of the mid-nineteenth century, the very stage upon which the world’s fairs were planned and built. Since a lengthy and substantial literature exists on the Zollverein and its domestic history, as well as its complex international relationships, the present discussion is limited to aspects of the Zollverein that pertain to the events and individuals in this dissertation. Its more robust history stretches from 1819 (when the first small principality accepted Prussia’s new custom law) to 1885 (when

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584 Wolfram Fischer, “The German Zollverein: A Case Study in Customs Union,” 75.
585 Eric Dorn Brose, 97.
Bremen was finally brought into play), and is made up of over a hundred small treaties negotiated over decades (fig. 114). During these sixty-six years Germany transitioned from a loose confederation of agrarian based territories to a relatively industrialized and unified economic and political entity. Along the way it allowed for greater ease of material transport and made distant trading partners like the US and Japan accessible to many smaller territories that had previously been unable to reach such remote markets.

As the most powerful state, Prussia dominated the union, and which excluded Austria, exacerbating the already tense Austrian – Prussian economic rivalry, which allowed Prussia to guide the Zollverein’s direction. In addition to facilitating trade within its new borders, the Zollverein enabled many German states to compete more effectively against Austria, its greatest Central European rival, as well as France and Britain. Despite its focus on economic unity, the Zollverein’s pioneer economist Friedrich List (1789-1846) wrote that “the distinguishing characteristic of my system [is] nationality.” This proto-nationalism was detected and noted by the Englishman John Browning in his parliamentary report on the Zollverein to Prime Minister Lord Palmerston in 1839. He wrote:

The commercial league is, in fact, the substantial representative of a sentiment widely, if not universally, spread in Germany—that of national unity. (...) If well directed in its future operation, the Zoll Verein will represent the fusion of German interest in one great alliance.

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587 Ibid., 82.
His report highlighted the dramatic effect already taking place within the new 'economic' borders and observed in his conclusion that:

[The Zoll Verein] has already had a great influence in improving the roads, the canals, the means of travelling, the transport of letters—in a word, in giving additional impulse to inland communications of every sort. [...] On every side beneficial changes are taking place. Railways are being constructed in many parts of the German territory—steamboats are crowding the German ports and coasting along the German shores—everything is transported with greater cheapness and rapidity. 590

At the time Browning submitted his report—in 1839—focus within the Zollverein territories was shifting from reliance upon British industrial imports to boosting its own domestic production. For example, iron production in the German states doubled between 1823 and 1837. 591 And it continued to rise by sixty percent until 1847. 592 In 1841 Krupp had developed a new process for steel manufacture that did not depend on wood (since it was quickly being depleted in the 1820s and 30s), but on coal, instead creating an explosion of factory building near mining centers. 593 In 1839 the renowned Berlin engineer and industrialist August Borsig (1804-1854) built the first “German” locomotive, and in 1854 he built his 500th. 594 By the 1860s Germany was producing over a million tons of iron a year in different forms. 595

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591 Thomas Nipperdey, Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck, 162.
593 Thomas Nipperdey, Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck, 162.
594 Ibid., 164.
PETER BEUTH: THE INTEGRATION OF ART WITH INDUSTRY

No more could 'a humane general, out of an aversion for gunpowder, win battles with bows and arrows' than could 'fantasies about the domestic bliss of the cottage spinner and poetry about the spinning room slow the march of progress or set limits on the spirit of invention.'

- Christian Peter W. Beuth

In terms of the arts and architecture, one of the key figures of the Prussian government was the aggressive reformer Peter Beuth (1781-1853). Known as the “Father of Prussian Industry,” Beuth was acutely aware of Prussia’s still relatively backward status compared to other industrializing countries, particularly with respect to Britain, which he visited on a number of occasions (once with Karl Friedrich Schinkel in 1826). Beuth was part of the early reforms initiated by Chancellor Karl August von Hardenberg (1750-1822) in 1810-11. Beginning as an official in the Finance Ministry then followed by a variety of positions, Beuth was concerned almost exclusively with Prussia’s industry, trade and commerce issues. Although Beuth was a civil servant, and not an architect, he was interested in architecture insofar as it had potential to become an industrialized commodity. He was an aggressive advocate and promoter of commerce and industrial advancement and sought to make Prussia a leader in manufacturing and production.

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597 Christian Peter Beuth quoted in Nipperdey, 159. No reference or year is provided by Nipperdey.
599 Eric Dorn Brose. The Politics of Technological Change in Prussia, 16-17.
I do not wish to paint an idealized picture of Prussia’s industrial reform process, which was certainly far more complex than I have alluded to here. To be sure, there were many serious difficulties with groups in and out of the Prussian government who resisted such reforms having to do with industrialization and agrarian reform. But despite resistance, some who reacted against this still entrenched conservatism like Beuth, were no doubt partly responsible for what, beginning in the 1830s, was to be a staggeringly aggressive game of catch up with Britain’s industrial complex. This would eventually result (by century’s end) in out producing Britain in areas like steel manufacture. The two main factors facilitating what is considered this first phase of the industrial revolution in Germany were the Zollverein and the railroad. However, there were many other key figures advancing this agenda, especially in Prussia, including the so-called “Bourgeois King” Friedrich Wilhelm IV, and an influential group of Prussian civil servants, such as Beuth, who were led by liberals like Hardenberg who—as William O. Henderson notes—devoted their careers to “operating nationalized industries and to giving encouragement to private entrepreneurs to increase the efficiency of their factories.”

In terms of Beuth’s role as advocate and representative of this liberal movement in Prussia it is necessary to briefly recall his background as well as his position on how he intended to implement these reforms in Prussia. With regard to his promotion of commerce in terms of its relationship with architecture and the industrial arts, it is important to note that in 1819 he revived and reorganized the Technical Deputation (Deputation für Gewerbe) that was part of the Business Department (Gewerbedepartment). The department’s basic task was to encourage the

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602 Ibid.
exchange of technological knowledge. In 1821 Beuth opened the Technical Institute in Berlin (Königliches Technisches Institut, renamed the Gewerbe-Institut in 1827). Its purpose was to provide training for “a new generation of culturally refined, technically competent businessmen.” Simultaneously, he founded the Association for the Promotion of Technological Activity in Prussia (Verein zur Beförderung des Gewerbefleißes in Preußen) and by 1830 he had become one of Berlin’s most influential figures. By 1849 there were twenty provincial technical schools in Prussia operating with a variety of curricula. Beuth pushed the government to take a more active role in encouraging and financially supporting and expanding industrialization, which hitherto had been restricted to private organizations in German lands (themselves based on older English (1754) and French (1792) models). However, Beuth did not advocate for full intervention since his ideal business entrepreneur had ambition and was willing to take risks without being fully funded by the state. Beuth, who saw his advancement of industry as a patriotic act, instead offered to procure new and expensive machinery for entrepreneurs if they were willing to use it for productive purposes in order to advance Prussia. Eric Dorn Brose observes that as Beuth became more influential he became increasingly impatient with reluctant factory owners and weavers who refused to update their outdated equipment, and Beuth directed his attention to putting more energy into “bold new

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603 Eric Dorn Brose, The Politics of Technological Change in Prussia, 10.
604 Ibid.
606 Barbara Mundt, Die deutschen Kunstgewerbemuseen im 19. Jahrhundert (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1974): 27. Mundt observes that Beuth’s effort in Prussia follows a list of others including: Hamburg (1765), Bremen (1789), Nürnberg (1792), Augsburg (1788), Munich (1815), and Frankfurt (1816), etc.
607 Ibid., The Politics of Technological Change in Prussia, 100.
entrepreneurs who would advance [Prussia] ‘out of the old rubble.’ Borse concludes that ultimately Beuth “was trying to create and elevate a new bourgeois elite bridging state and society.” Beuth’s Technical Institute became increasingly affiliated with the Bauakademie after he was made director in 1831 indicating the important position industrialization, and new technology including materials and methods, had achieved within the context of an architectural academy.

One manifestation of the success of both the Zollverein policies and the physical growth via the continued expansion of the railway were the domestic exhibitions. Peter Beuth initiated the first industrial exhibition in Berlin in 1822, which drew nearly 200 exhibitors. Through his guidance and support they evolved finally into the great Berlin Industrial Exhibition of 1844 that featured over 3,000 exhibitors and has been described as a “fitting climax to Beuth’s career.”

Possibly more meaningful to Beuth than his Berlin exhibition of 1844, was the presence of Prussia and the Zollverein at the Great Exhibition in London of 1851. I can find no evidence that shows he attended the fair (as he would have been 70 years old), however due to his active interest in industrial expositions it is safe to say that he surely followed it with great interest. The Zollverein beat out not only the Northern German Confederation, but also the Habsburg Empire as the union that would represent “German” interests at the exhibition. As Abigail Green has

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609 Peter Beuth, Quoted in: Brose, 108.
610 Brose, The Politics of Technological Change in Prussia, 108.
611 Beuth’s increasing influence at the Bauakademie is noted by Eva Borsch-Supan to be a burden upon Stier who did not approve of Beuth’s leadership or methods. See: Eva Borsch-Supan, 19.
613 Abigail Green, “The Representation of the German States at the Great Exhibition,” in Die Weltenusstellung von 1851 und ihre Folgen, Franz Bosbach and John R. Davis, eds. (München: Saur, 2002), 267. Eventually two competing organizations were vying for the role to represent ‘German’ interests at the fair: 1. the Prussian-led Erfurt Union (back by 26 of the lesser German states) 2. the
convincingly shown, Prussia not only dominated the Zollverein and its exhibit, but the Zollverein dominated the German presence overall with a staggering 60,000 ft² allocated by the Royal Commission (Bavaria, the second largest, for example only required 1,000 ft²). No doubt this was achieved through Prussia’s persuasive diplomacy and “despite protests from both Saxony and Württemberg.” This strong showing in 1851 set the tone for subsequent exhibitions and established Prussia’s guidance of the Zollverein as well as its presence at successive exhibitions. At the international exhibitions, Prussia insisted that exhibits be organized by product class, rather than by country (or territory etc.) of origin. This emphasis on “one Production zone” ensured that the Zollverein appeared—at least externally—as a unified front in the face of international competition. Thus, it was the apparatus of the Zollverein that enabled Prussia to establish itself as an international economic and industrial power at the world exhibitions. And it was through the persistent and multi-dimensional work of progressive individuals like Peter Beuth, who pushed a modernizing agenda in the arts, that continued to advance Prussia further along in its pursuits of an industrial economy by encouraging and supporting those individuals who best represented this trend toward the modern.

DIEBITSCH IN LONDON AND HIS EXHIBITION SUBMISSION, 1862

We know of no other artist of our time who is able to detect and record the noble forms, charm and fine play of lines in Arabic ornament. And who is able to apply them

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recently constituted German Confederation (backed by Austria, the four German kingdoms of Bavaria, Hanover, Saxony and Württemberg and 6 lesser states).

614 Abigail Green, “The Representation of the German States at the Great Exhibition,” 275.
615 Ibid., 270, 273.
616 August Van der Heydt (the Prussian Minister of Commerce) quoted in: Abigail Green, “The Representation of the German States at the Great Exhibition,” 274.
independently with a steady hand because of his long stay in the south. The vase was awarded a medal for its invention and design.\textsuperscript{617}

- International Exhibition Award Committee (1862)

Since Carl von Diebitsch began his studies at the Bauakademie in 1839, he most certainly encountered Beuth—if not as a direct instructor than certainly as an influential figure there and in Berlin’s architecture community. It was in large part Beuth’s efforts to support aspiring entrepreneurs that enabled architects like Diebitsch to participate in the London Exhibition of 1862. Ultimately, the Zollverein committee selected him to present his manufactures at the exhibition.

Submitted by Diebitsch under “Iron and Metallurgy” in ‘Class 31’ was a zinc vase he had recently designed and had cast.\textsuperscript{618} Unfortunately, no images of the vase are known to exist, yet a description remains providing an insight into its creator’s intent.\textsuperscript{619} There is also a photograph showing Diebitsch with a similar, yet much smaller, metal vase (figs. 115). This vase, based on a series of other vase drawings in the collection of the Technische Universität Berlin Architecture Museum by Diebitsch and similar in appearance to the one in the photograph, suggests that it was not too dissimilar (figs. 116, 117, 118). Standing “not less than 15 feet high,”\textsuperscript{620} this


\textsuperscript{618} The official entry is: “2033 Diebitsch, C. von, 4, Hafenplatz Berlin.—Zinc vases.” International Exhibition 1862, Official Catalogue of the Industrial Department (London: Truscott Son & Simmons, 1862), 280. I believe the description of “two” vases is incorrect as there is no evidence besides this one comment that there were any more than one vase. Also, the vase (like many of his smaller pieces) was probably cast in Berlin at the Ravené foundry. See: Elke Pfugradt—Abdel Aziz, “Orientalism as an Economic Strategy: The Architect Carl von Diebitsch in Cairo,” in Le Caire-Alexandrie architectures européennes, 1850-1950, Mercedes Volait, ed. (Cairo: IFAO, 2001), 6.

\textsuperscript{619} It should be noted here that the official entry in the footnote above states that he submitted two vases. However, based on the other sources it seems more likely that there was only one.

\textsuperscript{620} Die Dioskuren: Deutsche Kunstzeitung 7 (in the Kunst-Chronik) (1862): 132.
“colossal” vase, which took him six weeks to produce, sat upon a pedestal with columns and, so far as can be discerned, represented the artist’s thoughts as a single unified idea. Described in the official report as “polychromatic,” the surface was composed of a variety of different colors from copper-colored matt, to gold leaf. The choice of zinc for the vase was significant due to the beneficial qualities of the material, considered a highly resistant and durable metal ideal for intricate casting. It is also significant that these properties were recognized earlier in Prussia than in Britain, and continued to remain relatively uncommon in the British manufacturing industry due the inability of the English to purify it successfully. By the 1830s Prussia had already compiled a surplus of zinc, which made it inexpensive and readily available. For decades Prussian architects had been taking advantage of the availability and low cost of the

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622 Beyond Diebitsch, there were other Zollverein members that submitted exhibits in cast zinc that won awards. They include: “H. Pohl, “For excellence of workmanship and goodness of design of articles in zinc” [Pohl also included a great deal of other zinc castings for which he did not receive any awards including: “Table of cast zinc with marble top surrounded with small statues and groups of galvanized cast zinc, with 2 figures each five feet high; a harvest-maid and fisher-maid, both galvanized], Fr. Peters, “For excellence in workmanship of Gothic window in zinc”, H. Mulack, also “For excellence in workmanship of Gothic window in zinc”, A. Meves, “For excellence of bronzes and zinc casting exhibited”, and M. Geiss, “For excellence of castings in zinc.” (this Geiss is the elder’s son). Also, the Geiss’s were repeat winners at exhibitions and a renowned foundry in Berlin. Their winnings include: 1844 silver medal; London 1851 prize medal; Munich 1854 medal of honor; Paris 1855 silver medal etc. For the full list of 1862 award winners see: International Exhibition, 1862. Medals and Honourable Mentions awarded by the International Juries with a list of Jurors, and the Report of the Council of Chairmen, second edition (London: Geo. E. Eyre and Wm. Spottiswoode Printers, 1862), 340-41.


624 According to an article in The Builder, an “M. Geiss of Berlin” was casting zinc “for architectural and decorative purposes not hitherto employed amongst us,—namely, cast. It appears that for seventeen years, zinc has thus been used in Berlin for architectural purposes, namely, for all exterior as well as interior ornamental parts of buildings, which, by casting, can be produced in the sharpest forms and are said to be at the same time capable of resisting all influence of weather.” See: “Cast Zinc in Decoration,” The Builder (28 July, 1849): 353.
material, which Schinkel had once advocated as being forty percent cheaper—in some cases—than other materials used for architectural details such as stone or copper.  

Diebitsch’s award-winning vase depicted allegorical representations of the sciences, arts, industry, and agriculture as well as a portrait of Queen Victoria, and the Prussian King Wilhelm I enthroned, with his son the prince and his brothers. Also shown with the king were members of the Ministry and products for display at the exhibition, reinforcing the king’s active role in the arts and industrial commerce and trade. Surrounding the relief of Queen Victoria were representatives of the different categories on display from the sciences and natural exploration. Near this were combined allegories of architecture, sculpture and painting, as well as agriculture and industry, with its special reference to machine engineering. Interconnecting many of these motifs, and central to Diebitsch’s design philosophy, were what one judge in the rewarding committee referred to as his ability to capture “the fine play of lines in Arabic ornament realized with a sure hand in an original way.” Amid these “arabesques” covering the surface were additional reliefs containing references to German cultural history as featured in a portrait frieze of famous Germans—Luther, Frederick II, Goethe, Schiller, Herder et al—a statement of a nascent Germany’s place within the modern world. This frieze may also reveal the vase’s

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625 Channing-Downs discusses the dramatic rise in use of zinc in Berlin in the 1830s and cites Karl Friedrich Schinkel’s description of its benefits: “All ornaments of carved work and projecting members forming perforations, and crowning members are capable of being executed of this metal in the easiest way. At the same time the more important parts of building can be made very cheap and durable. We have recently finished a large restoration of our university, in which about 1,600 feet of cornice, with modillions, have been cast in zinc, which was fastened to an iron framework, and which, instead of 16 dollars per foot if in stone, cost in zinc only 9 dollars, including the iron framework.” So zinc’s potential was certainly known by Diebitsch by this point. For Channing-Downs discussion of this see: Arthur Channing Downs, Jr., “Zinc for Paint and Architectural Use in the 19th Century,” Die Dioskuren: Deutsche Kunstzeitung 7 (in the Kunst-Chronik) (1862): 132.


627 “the fine play of lines in Arabic ornament realized with a sure hand in an original way…” (Amtlicher Bericht cited in Fehle, s.108 – my translation).

628 Die Dioskuren: Deutsche Kunstzeitung 7 (in the Kunst-Chronik) (1862), 132.
intended audience, most likely a western, or perhaps a specifically German, group of buyers.\textsuperscript{629} It is possible also that this detail may have been added in order to acknowledge the support of the Zollverein in terms of its patriotic function and its collective bargaining power, without which Diebitsch would never have had the opportunity to submit his work.

The task of the international jury was to “examine whether the articles exhibited show inventions or discoveries as to economy, increase or perfection of production; regularity of manufactures, combined with excellence of design; novel application of known discoveries; increased utility, combined with novelty and beauty; and excellence of workmanship and quality.”\textsuperscript{630} Since there were many factors by which the jury determined their award it is difficult to say exactly what they saw in Diebitsch’s vase. The official list in the British source, \textit{Medals and Honourable Mentions}, states the rather generic affirmation that he was given the award “For excellence of the zinc vases exhibited”.\textsuperscript{631} However, the Official Report of the Zollverein from the exhibition states: “The invention (\textit{Erfindung}) and design (\textit{Zeichnung}) of this vase was awarded the medal.”\textsuperscript{632} These two descriptions can mean quite different things and which one is more accurate is impossible to know. The British description vaguely refers to the generic “excellence of the zinc vases”, whereas the Zollverein specifically states that “the vase” was awarded a medal for “invention,” implying \textit{originality}, and “design” which, although also vague,


\textsuperscript{632} \textit{Amlichter Bericht über die Industrie- und Kunst- Ausstellung zu London im Jahre 1862}, 340.
refers more specifically not only to Diebitsch’s “originality” as an artist (i.e. he is not just
copying historical forms), but the way in which the object was conceived and fabricated. The
difference is subtle, but nonetheless may speak to the way in which the Zollverein wished itself,
and those it supported, to be perceived. Somewhat surprisingly the same Zollverein report
critiques Diebitsch’s “technical execution of the casting” (technische Ausführung des Gusses),
but then immediately follows with the compliment that “We know of no other artist of our time
who is able to detect and record the noble forms, charm and fine play of lines in Arabic
ornament.” There was no further explanation so the technical ‘issues’ they claim to have seen
remain unknown.

The vases were not the only items Diebitsch submitted for display at the 1862 Exhibition.
Almost never written about are the drawings and paintings he displayed in the Fine Arts
Department. Diebitsch’s drawing exhibit was listed in the *Official Catalogue* of the Fine Art
Department as: “512 Travelling Studies and Architectural Sketches (nine frames).” Although
the catalog does not stipulate the subject matter of the drawings, he most certainly included
sketches and watercolors from his *Studienreise*, such as the Alhambra, and probably some of his
own original designs such as ideas for the displayed vase. Other Prussian architects of the
Berliner and Schinkelschule were also present along side him in the Fine Arts Department
including Friedrich Adler, Carl Bötticher, Friedrich Hitzig, Eduard Knoblauch and Ferdinand
von Quast among others. In terms of the representation of Islamic architecture in this Prussian
group Diebitsch was not entirely alone. Five drawings were submitted by the well-known
architect Eduard Knoblauch (1801-65) for his New Synagogue on Oranienburgerstraße in Berlin

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As the most “prolific” private architect of the Schinkelschule, and co-founder of the Architekten Verein, Knoblauch had been commissioned in the mid-1850s to design a new and larger place of worship to reflect the presence of Berlin’s growing Jewish community. Recently described as the Architekt des Bürgerums (“Architect of the bourgeoisie”) for his characteristic Italianate villas and “late-Classical style,” Knoblauch proposed a grand neo-Islamic building replete with a massive bulbous central dome, two flanking smaller towers with similar domes, all sitting atop a building which, despite its wide range of Islamic details, more than anything else reveals its parentage within the Berliner Schule. Knoblauch never traveled in the Ottoman Empire or even to Spain, so the sources for his design did not originate from his own empirical studies. He did travel through Italy with August Stüler in 1830, but the details of the Synagogue resemble the Ibero-Islamic (i.e. Nasrid Dynasty) architecture of the Alhambra rather than any Siculo-Arab examples.

More importantly than this relatively heavy Islamic presence within the Prussian fine arts section is the fact that Owen Jones (1809-74) attended the fair with a display of his own also in the Fine Arts Department. It is highly likely that this is where and when Jones and Diebitsch met. However, Jones had a relatively substantial number of items on display ranging from “Art Designs” for book covers and illuminations, to at least sixteen different drawings or renderings of projects in the “British Architecture,” section ranging from his various designs for the Crystal Palace at Sydenham to several building facades and elaborate interior wooden ceilings. He also designed a display case for the F. & C. Osler Company's crystal in a neo-Islamic style.

636 Azra Charbonnier, Carl Heinrich Eduard Knoblauch 1801-1865, 16f & 61f.
637 Official Catalogue: Fine Art Department (1862), 131.
638 Ibid., 88.
Exactly, if and when the two met is unknown, however considering the fact of their shared enthusiasm for the same subject, I find it difficult to imagine they did not meet at the exhibition. Owen Jones biographer Carol Flores suggests that the two knew each other while they were in Cairo at a later date. Nothing is known for certain about their interaction at the exhibition or in Cairo. In fact, despite their shared interests it appears that they had little interaction.

Considering the context of Diebitsch’s premiated vase at the exhibition in 1862, the use of an Islamic style must have seemed somewhat unusual due to the overwhelming presence of Classical and Gothic styles. Additionally, Diebitsch’s chosen materials and methods of production, in combination with the iconography on the vase, indicate a specific direction in Diebitsch’s design theory. As we have seen in the previous chapter with regard to his earlier lecture about the use of plaster, lead stencils and common tools, to create Islamic patterns and motifs, Diebitsch believed that these kinds of repeated abstract patterns he found so common in Islamic art and architecture easily lent themselves to reproducibility. Furthermore, he claimed that “without any considerable expense they [carpenters/builders] could make the forms as rich as they wanted.” Moreover, we can see an evolution in his designs since 1848, and his lecture in 1852 that articulated his initial ideas (mostly in plaster), that his oeuvre grew more abstract

640 Sometime after the Gezira Palace was built Carol A. Hrvol Flores asserts that the Khedive hired Owen Jones to design and furnish fifteen interior rooms there. See: Carol A. Hrvol Flores, *Owen Jones: Design, Ornament, Architecture, and Theory in an Age in Transition*, 189. John Kersten Jespersen reiterates this as well. However, it is unknown how much Jones may have interacted with Diebitsch. This will be addressed later when I discuss the building.
642 Ibid.
suggesting its appropriateness for a large public in a modern age.\textsuperscript{643} In addition to the award Diebitsch received for the vase's "invention" and "design" his vase did not go unnoticed. Rather, an unexpected group of individuals was particularly interested in what Diebitsch had to offer.

**Diebitsch's Unexpected Client**

Not surprisingly, exhibits that embodied industrial modernization were of particular interest to "non-European" visitors, as well, who desired to take advantage of the latest ideas for their countries in an effort to keep up with, if not surpass, Europe's industrial hegemony. Among the variety of foreign celebrities and prominent political figures who attended the Exhibition was the Viceroy of Egypt, Muhammad Sa'id Pasha (fig. 122), fourth son of Muhammad 'Ali the so-called "Father of Modern Egypt." Sa'id was in London with his banker Henry Oppenheim, of the famous Cologne banking family, brokering an historic state loan to help fund, among other things, the Suez Canal project after the Egyptian treasury had all but dried up by the end of 1861. Most of the creditors to the Egyptian royal family, and other elites at the time were French bankers who, as a result, had a substantial hold on the market. Sa'id Pasha met Oppenheim after he immigrated to Cairo from living between London and the Levant taking care of commercial transactions for his father.\textsuperscript{644} In 1862 Henry had the opportunity to join his uncle Hermann Oppenheim in a new banking opportunity in Alexandria, the commercial capital of Egypt, and after a letter of introduction by the well-known banker Edouard Dervieu, the Oppenheims were

\textsuperscript{643} This idea that the Islamic style is appropriate for the modern age is conveyed in the records of Diebitsch's lectures described earlier and is also recounted and elaborated upon in: Elke Pflugradt –Abdel Aziz, "Orientalism as an Economic Strategy: The Architect Carl von Diebitsch in Cairo," in *Le Caire-Alexandrie architectures européennes, 1850-1950,* Mercedes Volait, ed. (Cairo: IFAO, 2001), 3-22. Also a contemporary account of this can be seen in: M. Digby Wyatt, "Orientalism in European Industry," *Macmillan's Magazine* 21 (1870): 551-556.

connected to the viceroy. At the time, Sa'id decided to utilize the German banker to broker a deal with the British in what would become the first official public loan taken by an Egyptian government in an attempt to out-maneuver its French creditors.

After meeting Diebitsch, Henry Oppenheim commissioned him to design the interior of his new villa in Cairo, which included a fair amount of iron and plaster work. Oppenheim hired Diebitsch because he had not only demonstrated a convincingly thorough knowledge of Islamic design, which was gaining in popularity in Cairo at the time. Diebitsch also convinced him that he could offer these designs at an architectural scale, in modern materials, at lower costs and in less time than that of traditional building methods utilized in Cairo. These fortuitous meetings led to a series of commissions in Cairo and ultimately Diebitsch's relocation there soon after the Exhibition in the winter of 1862. This surge in business would have otherwise been impossible were it not for the unique conditions created by the London Exhibition and the opportunities for commercial exchange it offered. For the next six years Diebitsch's life was substantially different as he ultimately relocated his practice and family to Cairo where he was able to undertake a moderately successful business.

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646 Ibid., 106-110.
647 This is a rather vague statement to make, but the reality was much more complicated – especially prior to the 1860s. Due to the diverse range of inhabitants and foreigners, including the viceroys themselves, there were many styles. For a more thorough discussion of this see: Mercedes Volait, *Architectes et architectures de l'Égypte moderne (1830-1950): genèse et essor d'une expertise locale* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2005), 157-61.
PART II.

CAIRO IN TRANSITION (1862-1867)

My country is no longer in Africa; we are now part of Europe. It is therefore natural for us to abandon our former ways and to adopt a new system adapted to our social conditions.

-Khedive Isma'il (1879)

Son Altesse a tant fait durant ces cinq dernières années pour embellir cette ville, qui pourrait maintenant être avantageusement comparée à plusieurs capitales européennes.\footnote{649}

-R. Beardsley, US Consul in a letter to the US Secretary of State about Khedive Isma'il (1872)\footnote{650}

Thus, disturbed and composite within, yet proliferating outwardly, decadent and yet rejuvenated, baffled by cosmopolitanism yet affecting modernity, nostalgic for its own past, dislocated yet tough, Cairo strove to become a truly modern capital.

-Jacques Berque (1972)\footnote{651}

Despite the pleonastic nature of Jacques Berque’s claim in the above quotation, the sense of an urban identity crisis with regard to nineteenth-century Cairo pervades the historiography on this subject. Berque’s quote, peppered with dichotomies, positions Cairo in a tenuous spot and comes immediately before the second part of his text, which deals with Egypt’s colonization. This city in flux, to which Diebitsch arrived in the winter of 1862, was on the verge of one of the greatest modernization efforts of the nineteenth century. Indeed, some argue that it was simply too fast—especially after 1863.\footnote{652} Well in advance of British colonization in 1882, the viceroy’s strove to modernize beginning with Muhammad ‘Ali (1769-1849), who, as an Ottoman commander took

\footnote{649} “His Highness has done so much over the last five years to purely beautify this city, which could now be compared advantageously to several European capitals.”

\footnote{650} Georges Guindi and Jacques Tagher, eds., Ismail d’après les documents officiels : avec avant-propos et introduction historique (Cairo: Imprimerie de l’Institut français d’Archéologie orientale, 1946), 146-47.


\footnote{652} Mohamed Scharabi, Kairo: Stadt und Architektur im Zeitalter des europäischen Kolonialismus (Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth Verlag, 1989), 63.
advantage of the power vacuum after the evacuation of Napoleon’s troops around 1805 and ultimately secured himself as wali (governor) of the Ottoman province of Egypt. Among Muhammad ‘Ali’s chief modernization efforts was his increased governmental reforms, military reform—which included the creation of a standing conscription army—as well as bringing industrial manufacture to the country. This introduction of industry involved the creation of Egypt’s own textile industry, which can be marked with the opening of the first wool factory in 1808. Also, the first iron foundry and printing press in Egypt were opened during this period—1820 and 1822 respectively. His successor Ibrahim (1789-1848) continued Muhammad ‘Ali’s policies almost uninterrupted, but his reign only last some eight months due to his death. It is really only with Abbas I (1812-1854) that we see attempts at ‘modernization’ not inextricably linked with “Westernization.” The other successors—to a limited extend—continued Muhammad ‘Ali’s dream of a modern Empire. In terms of relations between Egypt and Europe, Janet Abu-Lughod notes that in 1847 the two “were first becoming acquainted, the first transportation links were being forged, and trade had barely begun.”

Ultimately it is with Isma‘il (1830-1895) that this yearning for a truly “modern” Egypt became an obsession. Caught in this dichotomy the Khedival leadership sought, as Timothy Mitchell has demonstrated in his study of the new Egyptian educational system, tarbiya (education) in two different forms. One form encouraged the growth of the mental faculties of the individual and the other the individual’s relation to their community and their nation. Despite the ultimate meaning or outcome of this Tönniean dichotomy, it is important to note the

Egyptian leadership’s persistent drift away from Ottoman inspired modernization reforms toward European ones (especially after Ism‘ail’s accession). If ‘modernization’—in terms of its cultural location in early nineteenth-century Egypt—was a rather ambiguous theme during the reign of Muhammad ‘Ali, and its roots were more Ottoman than anything else, what are we to make of this shift toward a more European inspired process as enthusiastically embraced by Isma‘il? We must remember that several of Isma‘il’s predecessors relied on the presumed “expertise” of many Europeans (particularly the French) so the idea was not unique. And Khaled Fahmy reminds us that narratives that either overly exaggerate or only include the “Paris along the Nile” model fail to account for the larger arc of Egypt’s process of modernization. This of course raises the eternal question about the distinction between the concepts of “Westernization” and “modernization,” however, this is not intended to be such a discussion. I will only state that in terms of the present discussion I conceive of the idea of an “Egyptian modernization” as a unique phenomenon. Indeed, I believe that “modernization” was understood—especially by Isma‘il—more as “Westernization” or “Europeanization,” in contrast to Ottoman efforts such as the Tanzimat, simply because of the fact that Isma‘il strove for the modern condition (if I might borrow and slightly modify Frederic Jameson’s idea regarding the “Postmodern condition”) he witnessed in Europe, not a version he saw in Istanbul. And it remains to be seen if it is at all possible for “modernization” to be understood at this point in time as not being inextricably linked to Europe, despite the enormous and substantial involvement of countless Egyptians as suggested by Fahmy and others. If, for example, we consider that “modernization” in this case...

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658 Khaled Fahmy, “Modernizing Cairo: A Revisionist Narrative,” 173-199. See also: Nelly Hanna, “The Urban History of Cairo around 1900: A Reinterpretation,” and Khaled Fahmy “An Olfactory Tale of Two...
is comprised of both "the extension of industrialized building processes," and bears an ideology in the form of "ideals of progress and standards of comfort," then the "European origins" argument in this context is quite difficult to challenge.\textsuperscript{659} This is especially important when we consider that the influx of Europeans into Egypt rose from several thousand in 1860 to over one hundred thousand by 1876.\textsuperscript{660} Indeed, one might ask from where else did the push to modernize originate? It becomes increasingly difficult to sustain the Ottoman inspiration argument when one considers the great effort invested by the viceroys to distance themselves from the Porte. This is particularly the case with Isma‘il who "impressed upon the Egyptians that Islamic-Ottoman methods of administration and public organization for the State should from then on be abandoned in favour of European methods."\textsuperscript{661}

The origins of Egypt's modernization are relevant to this study insofar as the Egyptian leadership's "will to modernize" had been a persistent theme from the very beginning of Muhammad ‘Ali’s reign. As such, modernization had not only been supported with varying levels of enthusiasm and implementation thereafter, but exactly how the government went about modernizing the country and what it meant in the Egyptian context were by no means fixed ideas. Eventually modernization efforts were accelerated at such a pace that, by the 1870s, the Khedive—inundated with debt—could simply no longer manage the situation. Throughout the period that Diebitsch was in Egypt, modernization took a variety of forms and manifested itself in a variety of ways from political and religious reforms to urban and spatial ones.

\textsuperscript{659} Sandy Isenstadt, Kishwar Rizvi, eds., \textit{Modernism and the Middle East: Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century} (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 3.
\textsuperscript{661} P.J. Vatikiotis, \textit{The History of Egypt}, 83.
A Slow but Monumental Start: Abbas and Sa'id

The viceroy of Egypt Muhammad Sa'id (1822-1863), who visited the International Exhibition in London and met Carl von Diebitsch in 1862 ascended to the throne in 1854 after the short—but controversial—reign of Abbas I (r.1848-1854) a grandson of Muhammad 'Ali. Abbas, whose appearance in the literature on Egypt during this period is almost uniformly negative, is generally credited with leaving only two (positive) marks on Egypt. Indeed, Abbas’s legacy is detailed in Ehud Toledano’s less biased study, which argued that throughout his reign, and even through much of Sa'id’s, the ruling elite was still very much of an Ottoman provincial mentality, which pursued a policy of “prosperity and security” above any kind of modernizing agenda (including an Ottoman one). Despite the merciless character smears he has endured in the historiography, due in part to his generally anti-European stance, he is generally credited for his decision to work with Britain in order to build Egypt’s first railway. The British “concession,” as it was known, proposed to link the Mediterranean with the Red Sea via a railroad from Alexandria to Suez, in order to facilitate the over land access route to India developed by Thomas Fletcher Waghom (itself replacing the brutal three month sea route around the Cape of Good Hope). However, Abbas famously refused to agree unless the railway linked the 208km/131mi distance from Alexandria to Cairo first, then afterward Cairo to Suez, firmly placing Cairo at the center of the

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662 Ehud R. Toledano’s study spends a great deal of energy on reexamining Abbas’s reign in terms of the creation of an Ottoman-Egyptian ruling elite. He specifically addresses this issue of Abbas’s negative press and traces it, in part, to a series of “disparaging notes by recognized authorities” in the 1930s, which were eventually “canonized in M. Colombe’s article about Abbas, published in 1960 in the new edition of the Encyclopedia of Islam.” See: Ehud R. Toledano, State and Society in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Egypt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 30f.


domestic network. Four years after Abbas’s death the second section opened from Cairo to Suez. The other contribution Abbas is known for is the founding of a small city in the desert (now part of northeast Cairo) called Abbasiyya, which initially was meant for the military, but soon became part of greater Cairo. Yet in terms of his legacy it was the railway that had the most significant impact on life and business in Egypt. One contemporary observer, the Austrian politician, orientalist and traveler Alfred von Kremer (1828-1889), noted that the new railway was a significantly “faster and safer” means of transport than the “lengthy” waterways route travelers had to use previously, thus reducing travel time between the two cities from four days to a few hours. Another important aspect of the project that must be mentioned, especially in terms of Abbas’s character is that, despite its origins in a British appeal (to suit their trade objectives), the railway was completed (1854) with the sole use of Egyptian funds and Egyptian labor. English involvement was limited to the direction and management of the project, which was overseen by the famous English railroad engineer Robert Stephenson. But above all, the rail line was a strategic geopolitical move that would considerably enhance Cairo’s access to international markets and open it up to the world. Indeed, it was “from there,” as Andre Raymond states with regard to the railway terminal Abbas built near Bab al-Hadad in Cairo, that “modernization would enter the old city.”

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669 Ibid.
Sa'id's mark on Egypt—at least during his reign—took a slightly less tangible, yet not unimportant, form. Under Sa'id's reign Egypt experienced (among other things): rapid growth with the addition of several city districts in Cairo, a cotton boom in the early 1860s (as a result of the US Civil War blockades), a series of substantial administrative modernizations within the government such as justice reforms like the introduction of an Egyptian style Tanzimat code whose origins preceded (in some ways) and differed from those of the Ottomans.\(^{672}\) It was even during his reign (1862) that Europe and Africa were first connected via an electric telegraph cable through Constantinople and Malta.\(^{673}\) However, the historiography on Sa'id's rule typically stresses the fact that he was the viceroy who can be credited with the "single most important event of the nineteenth century:” the building of the Suez Canal.\(^{674}\) Although he did not live to see it (like the more than 80,000 native Egyptians that died building it) Sa'id was the one who signed the agreement with the de Lesseps in November of 1854, which, as is well known, significantly affected geopolitical relations at the time and continues to do so today. However, in terms of any actual physical changes to the urban fabric of Cairo, little changed between 1854 and Sa'id's death in 1863.\(^ {675}\) In fact, there were no larger scale projects built by any of the three viceroys that succeeded Muhammad 'Ali until Isma'il ascended to the throne in January 1863.


\(^{673}\) David Landes, *Bankers and Pashas*, 83.


\(^{675}\) Ibid.
Isma'il Pasha: The “Impatient” Modernizer

De tous côtés, on voit des signes d’activité et d’améliorations qui rappellent bien plus l’énergie de l’Occident que les habitudes de l’Orient.

-R. Beardsley, US Consul in a letter to the US Secretary of State about the Khedive Isma'il (Sept. 15, 1873)676

Behind all these efforts stood Ismail’s will to make Egypt an independent kingdom from the Porte, a nation-state, similar perhaps to that established by the Italians. But this was prevented, as it was for Muhammad Ali, by the European powers.

– Mohammed Scharabi (1989)677

The historian P.J. Vatikiotis describes Isma’il as an “impatient Europeanizer.”678 However, I have readapted his title here for the purpose of illustrating Isma’il’s contribution to the modernization of Egypt; whether it be European inspired or not. Because of the complexity and pace of Isma’il’s reign, Egypt’s rapid modernization process in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the disastrous way in which it ultimately ended, there is a vast literature dedicated to this period that cannot be summarized adequately here. This includes the manner and processes by which this occurred, the political, economic, cultural and social changes that came with it, and how it eventually led up to Egypt’s colonization by the British Empire in 1882. In terms of the central figure in all of this it is safe to say that, even when accounting for his predecessors’ achievements, Isma’il is the one to whom overwhelming focus is dedicated in the historiography. Indeed, between the years when Isma’il ascended to the throne in 1863 and his eventual deposition by the British in 1879, Cairo experienced change on an unprecedented scale. From the very beginning of his rule in January 1863, Isma’il was set on modernizing his country through

institutional reform and policies including the creation of new departments such as the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Justice among others. He had been educated in France and studied modern science, engineering and French. He also implemented changes that allowed more native Egyptians greater access to channels of government by including and promoting more of them within the bureaucracy, as well as mandating that the *lingua franca* of governmental correspondence be Arabic (instead of Turkish). In fact, two of the most important figures in the actual implementation of many of Isma'il's reforms were two "native" Egyptians: 'Ali Pasha Mubarak (1824-93) and Shaykh Rifaa Rafi al-Tahtawi (1801-71). Both studied in France and were known for being highly educated "men of languages and letters" as well as having been "technically trained administrator-educator[s]." 'Ali Mubarak (who was simultaneously minister of education and minister of public works after 1868) in particular is considered to have been "the leader of the transfer of modern European technology and its application in Egypt by Egyptians for the common good and in the public interest."

Isma'il also pursued more ambitious projects that would completely change the urban experience, which according to André Raymond "privileged perspective and alignment" that was based on a Western model. He initiated large expansions to the city with new neighborhoods,

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680 André Raymond, *Cairo*, 311.
683 Ibid., 110.
684 André Raymond, *Cairo*, 309. This is not entirely accurate. I do not wish to belabor the point, but must acknowledge here and stress that aligning buildings and creating grand vistas etc., which result in a
and massive infrastructure projects such as the introduction of a municipal water supply. This included the creation of the Cairo Water Company in 1865 eventually pumping water through conduits to much of the city and beyond.\textsuperscript{685} He also created the Cairo Gas Company in 1865, which brought gas and public lighting to the streets of Cairo. Prior to Isma‘il’s rule, Egypt had approximately 155 miles of railway. In 1867, well into his expansion of the existing lines, he issued a statement that said “Transportation is a branch of the administration to which I have always attached great importance,” and that “it is hoped that the benefits outweigh the sacrifices made by the country that are well known to the Company itself.”\textsuperscript{686} The evidence of his attention to the railway network can be seen in the fact that approximately 936 miles of track were added between the years 1863 and 1879, effectively increasing the existing lines by six fold.\textsuperscript{687}

Demonstrating what the General Consul of the United States remarked in a letter was “une énergie rarement vue chez un prince oriental,” Isma‘il transformed the city of Cairo like no other before him. It was this feverish pace of modernization that drew many foreigners to Cairo in the

perceived “privileging of perspective” is by no means a uniquely ‘Western’ phenomenon. So the suggestion that applying some kind of more rigorously ordered, geometrical plan onto a city is a cue from the West does not do justice to the building traditions under question. Of course most of Cairo is not planned in this way so the example of this order naturally seems ‘foreign.’ However, in terms of the history of Islamic architecture broadly: it is in fact a rather common feature. In the thirteenth century after the Mongols invaded China they established their first capital \textit{Kara Khorum}, which was entirely planned on a centralized symmetrical square. Their second capital Dadu (‘Daidu’, later Beijing) was even more geometrically rigorous and ordered and eventually evolved into the Forbidden City etc. As far as Islamic architecture in the modern era is concerned, Mughal and especially Persian building, landscape and urban planning are merely two more examples that comes to mind (esp. Isfahan!).\textsuperscript{683} Nezar AlSayyad, \textit{Cairo}, 205-206. AlSayyad does not mention that by 1891 only 4,200 customers had a water supply leading to their residences, but in anticipation of a critical response I would hasten to add that the point that I am trying to make is that it is not about numbers per se, but about \textit{intention}. And that is the fact that Isma‘il initiated an unprecedented number of life changing projects that did more for Egypt generally than any single specific European effort there during the entire century.


second half of the nineteenth century. And it was at this moment during the leadership transition from a moderate reformer to an aggressive modernizer, that Diebitsch arrived prepared to deliver his modern architecture to his new city.

**DIEBITSCH IN CAIRO: THE EARLY PROJECTS (1862-1867)**

The trip to Egypt described in the following pages was not a pleasure trip.688

The city has no street lights, so everyone is passing through the alleys in the dark and is obliged to carry a lantern; anyone who disagrees runs the risk of being locked up by the police.689

-Carl Ohnesorge (Cairo, 1863)

In Cairo Diebitsch finally had the opportunity to explore the ideas he had been working on since his return from his Studienreise in 1848. There is certainly little doubt that the main reason Diebitsch was hired by Henry Oppenheim was because of the promises regarding cost and efficiency he had made at the exhibition. Carl Ohnesorge was Diebitsch’s assistant and project manager, but was originally a painter who had even worked under Friedrich Hitzig in the past. It is from him that most information regarding Diebitsch’s life in Cairo originates. Ohnesorge lists Diebitsch’s first three commissions in Cairo as a free standing mausoleum for Suleyman Pasha, a “large hall of cast iron” for the Prime Minister Sherif Pasha, and various projects for the villa of “Financier” Henry Oppenheim in the “modernized Moorish style” (modernisiert maurischem

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688 This is the opening line of Carl Ohnesorge’s journal and collection of letters that was published later in his life by his children for his 70th birthday. He was Diebitsch’s assistant while in Egypt and managed a number of his projects. He was initially an artist (painter) but jumped at the chance to accompany Diebitsch on this unique opportunity to live in Egypt. See: Carl Ohnesorge, *Orientalische Skizzen: Unsers Vaters Erinnerungen an sein Arbeiten un Wandern im Orient 1863-65 zu seinem siebzigsten Geburtstage dem 17. Juli 1908.* (Collected and presented by his children) (Magdeburg: A Wohlfeld, 1908), 5.

It is important to observe here that Ohnesorge specifically refers to the style they are working in as “modernized,” which suggests that he does not see them as simply reviving an old style. This is precisely why Diebitsch’s clients are individuals who have, for the most part, been involved in the great push to modernize Egypt. In other words, I am suggesting that those clients who espoused ‘modern’ ideas, whether they were European expatriates, native Egyptians, or the ultimate client—the Khedive himself—identified with what Diebitsch was proposing as the latest and most modern architecture. Among Diebitsch’s clients were: the famous Minister of Public works, and then Prime Minister of Egypt, Nubar Pasha (1825-99), the three time Egyptian Prime Minister Sharif Pasha (1826-87) (the nephew of the illustrious general Suleyman Pasha al-Faransawi [1788-1860]), and his most famous client of all – the Khedive of Egypt, who, no doubt, gave Diebitsch the commission that best represents the apex of his work in Egypt—the Gezira Palace Pavilion. This last project, which comes to fruition in the last two years of his life in Cairo, will be discussed later.

Presently, it is important to examine in greater detail the projects Diebitsch designed and built in Cairo in between the exhibitions of 1862 and 1867. As evidenced in the writings of Ohnesorge, this period for Diebitsch was formative and demanding. Ohnesorge comments on the difficulties of working in such a competitive and demanding environment from time to time acknowledging at one point that “there is no glory in the work here.” By considering both the larger moment of Egypt’s modernization, as well as its international trends in architectural practice and engineering technology, we will begin to see how Diebitsch was in fact more

representative of his transitioning modern era than has previously been illustrated. Indeed, prefabrication and newer materials were only part of what defines his work as Modern. As I will demonstrate, Diebitsch utilized a variety of technologies in his work, yet never lost track of bringing his own original connection to history to his work, thus maintaining those two essential qualities Schinkel held so dear to architecture: “history and poetry.”

The Villa Oppenheim and Diebitsch’s Production Methods (1862-64)

Diebitsch’s first commission, and “surely also the initiator of [his] Egyptian business dealings,” was an interior design commission from Henry Oppenheim. The commission for the villa was initially given to an Italian architect who had already achieved a substantial completion by the time Diebitsch arrived in Cairo. The villa was built on Shubra Alley (Shari' Shubra), a road built by Muhammad ‘Ali during his reign in order to access his country palace (Saray Shubra, 1808) (fig. 123). It stretched from the palace to the northern part of Azbakiyya in Cairo. By 1830 it had become a wide avenue of approximately 90 to 110 feet, lined with sycamore trees and was a fashionable place to be seen (fig. 124). According to Ohnesorge, the project consisted of “the renovation and expansion of a large villa for the financier Mr. von Oppenheim in a modernized Moorish style with some richly furnished lounges and lobbies,

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693 Hein-Th. Schulze Altcappenberg and Christiane Lange, (Forward to the Exhibition Catalog) Karl Friedrich Schinkel – Geschichte und Poesie (Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2012); and also: Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Das architektonische Lehrbuch vol. 12, Goerd Peschenke, ed. (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1979), 117-118.
including all of the furniture, draperies, mirrors and chandeliers, vases, fountains and more.\(^6\)

As it was Diebitsch’s first commission in a foreign country, and in a city that was more than 2,500 miles from his home, his theories on modern production and transportation methods of architecture would be immediately put to the test. Architecturally, the project consisted of installing prefabricated ironwork and plaster details for the villa’s interior. All of the plaster moulds were prefabricated in Diebitsch’s studio on the Hafenplatz in Berlin with the assistance of skilled workers and painters and the iron was cast at the Lauchhammer foundry outside of Dresden in close coordination with the iron engineer Wilhelm Rose.\(^6\)

The primary (and only substantial) source of information on Diebitsch’s dealings with Oppenheim and his villa is Ohnesorge’s account found in journal entries and letters published together in the book Orientalische Skizzen (1909). More recently, however, the art historian Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz has offered a concise synopsis of these events in terms of her arguments relating to Diebitsch’s employment of “Orientalism as an economic strategy” in her characterization of Diebitsch as an “entrepreneur” in Egypt.\(^6\) She concludes that despite the problems he encountered early on, Diebitsch was a successful architect due to his ability to penetrate such a difficult and “cutthroat” market that was hostile to new competition.\(^7\) While I do not dispute her arguments, my intention is quite different in that I seek to critically reassess the greater meaning yet to be found in his work in terms of its importance within a globalizing nineteenth century and the burgeoning Modern movement.

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\(^6\) Carl Ohnesorge, *Orientalische Skizzen*, 5.


As there are no known photographs and only a few legible or didactic drawings of Oppenheim’s villa, and the building has since been demolished, it is difficult to discern the exact nature of the work beyond Ohnesorge’s description of it as a “modernized Moorish style” (figs. 125, 126, 127, 128). Yet, much of their personal interaction with Oppenheim, and their experience with the project can be gleaned from his texts. Shortly after their arrival in Cairo in October of 1863, Diebitsch and Ohnesorge went to the villa to inspect their site. Upon arriving they were surprised to find the “absurd and careless preparatory work by the Italian architect.”

Because of this, Ohnesorge remarks, despite the short schedule some walls had to be torn down and rebuilt in order to receive the prefabricated materials still en route. As Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz suggests, these situations were rather common due to the relentless competition that quite frequently devolved into national rivalries at the building site. Ohnesorge even remarks that the dimensions provided to them ahead of time, and upon which they based their designs, were not accurate once they attempted to verify them in the field. These initial difficulties were compounded by the fact that the shipment of plasterwork arrived “very broken”, which resulted in having to repair them all first before installation (they were of course intended to be easily assembled and installed on site). This process would have been completed faster had Diebitsch anticipated this and brought with him all the plaster moulds. Instead, possibly out of over-confidence, he did not and he had to send for them and move forward with making plaster locally, which Ohnesorge notes was “bad”, most likely due to the difficulty in obtaining the

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701 Carl Ohnesorge, *Orientalische Skizzen*, 16.
necessary ingredients like gypsum, and that it “looked like grey lime and held together poorly.”

Oppenheim, whom Ohnesorge described as “no connoisseur,” and who was “always angry with Diebitsch,” was a difficult client. Diebitsch and Ohnesorge quarreled with him about payment and the promises made regarding the schedule. Ohnesorge relates several stories of their interaction; in one, Diebitsch refused to take a too small payment for a task and threatened to quit. Instead of conceding to their request in the face of this threat, Oppenheim simply responded that if he quit he would either just hire Ohnesorge to finish the project or hire “the French and Italians” (who were already plentiful in the Cairo building industry at the time) to finish the job.

Despite some of the plasterwork’s destruction en route, part of Ohnesorge and Diebitsch’s selling point was the superiority of their craftsmanship. Ohnesorge even referred to the jealous reactions of other workers: “these people, who diminished us from the outset, are mighty envious of us Germans now, which is very natural, but this sad performance, against which we have nothing to fear, brings much honor here to our German work.” In the end it was their pursuit of a high quality product that won Oppenheim over since he eventually expressed satisfaction with the final result. This is despite the fact that the project went well beyond the scheduled completion date and was unable to stay on budget, no doubt because the

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706 Ibid., 44.
707 Ibid., 21.
prefabricated plaster pieces had arrived to the site damaged or broken in some way.\textsuperscript{708} Oppenheim barely, if ever, lived in the villa (which was finally finished in September, 1864); even before it was finished he sold it. This is the reason, according to Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz, that there are no descriptions or photos of the work inside, because the new owner (Halim Pasha) designated it his harem, making it inaccessible to the public.\textsuperscript{709} Then after two years the property was taken by the Khedive, when Halim was forced to cede his property to the state and go in exile. Little is known about what happened to it afterwards.

More important here than the details of the adversity that Diebitsch had to overcome with this project (after all, architect-client disputes came to be a defining trope within the Modernist architectural vocabulary),\textsuperscript{710} is that these descriptions provide a keen insight into Diebitsch’s initial and idealized processes involving the early stages of architectural production, especially in terms of his use of cast iron. Thus, it is necessary to distinguish Diebitsch and his intentions from those of his contemporaries by briefly discussing other seemingly similar contemporary examples that could possibly be brought to bear against my argument.

\textsuperscript{708} Ibid., 13 \& 17.
\textsuperscript{709} Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz, „Der Preußische Palast in Ägypten,“ 74. She states that it was purchased by “Halim Pasha”, however the famous “Halim Pasha” is “Said Halim Pasha” who was born in 1865 so this may instead refer to the family.
\textsuperscript{710} One need only think of three of the most famous Modernist projects of the twentieth century: Le Corbusier’s Villa Savoye (1929) was well over budget and the schedule ran a year behind (not to mention Mrs. Savoye’s series of letters complaining about the water leaks etc. to Le Corbusier), Frank Lloyd Wright’s Kaufmann House (Falling Water) (1935) was plagued with client-architect disputes from disagreement over the site of the building to the clients general distrust of the architect, Mies van der Rohe’s Farnsworth House (1945-51) was nearly 30 percent over budget.
Iron’s Mobility in the Industrial Age: a Précis

Although the use of cast iron in architecture dates back to at least twelfth century China, it was not until Abraham Darby’s discovery in 1709 that coke, instead of charcoal, was a much more efficient fuel in the material’s production, that cast iron production became mechanized. However, its applicability in engineering and architecture did not become an acknowledged success until around 1760, and by then it had developed as a thoroughly British phenomenon. Cast iron structural columns first appear in factories such as the calico mill designed by William Strutt in 1792 and Charles Bage’s flax mill of 1796. In 1796 cast iron beams began to be used in factory buildings in Britain and in 1795 the first cast iron bridge was constructed over the Sever River at Coalbrookdale. By 1800 iron’s use was widespread in the apparatus of Britain’s industrial revolution in a variety of forms and in a diversity of applications from machines and their parts to factory construction. But, as Nikolaus Pevsner tells us, these cast iron building elements did not make their way to the exterior of the building until around 1830 and it was in the United States and not Europe (There are very few examples, and all of them are Neoclassical). It was not until the appearance of the American James Bogardus’ (1800-74) pamphlet Cast Iron Buildings (1856), that cast iron’s potential applicability in modern construction was realized. And it was not until 1865 that Britain had its first building façade.

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712 Arnold Pacey, *Technology in World Civilization*, 111.
713 Ibid., 116.
made entirely of cast iron.\textsuperscript{715} This was the J. and G. Haywood building in Derby, England designed by Owen Jones (since demolished).

In his discussion of cast iron’s migration into mid-nineteenth century building construction, Pevnser also sets the groundwork for Koolhaas’s notion of the “architectural lobotomy” when he observes that the increased use of iron allowed for greater variation in a building’s façade, resulting in the ability to create significantly different environments on the inside as compared to the outside.\textsuperscript{716} After Pevsner outlines the initial architectural uses of cast iron through the early nineteenth century, he remarks that “The buildings so far presented are interesting enough, but it can hardly be maintained that iron in them was regarded as an aesthetic asset. It is hard to decide when this positive attitude first appeared, that is, when designers began to like the look of iron structures.”\textsuperscript{717} As the contentious Pierre Francastel has claimed, designers did not seek a new type of building with their early uses of iron, but rather to replace inferior building products like wood or stone, or to solve specific problems. As such, his claim is that these early iron “[b]uildings were not designed on the basis of new materials.”\textsuperscript{718} His assertion was that because designers were not thinking that iron was capable of its own formal expression (because it could take almost any form), it “could not truly be called industrial mass production” because the “overriding notion was that of replacement,” which he argued was simply the

\textsuperscript{715} Carol A. Hvrol Flores, Owen Jones: Design, Ornament, Architecture, and Theory in an Age of Transition (New York: Rizzoli, 2006), 152.
\textsuperscript{717} Pevsner, Pioneers of Modern Design, 106-107.
\textsuperscript{718} Pierre Francastel, Art & Technology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Randall Cherry, trans., (New York: Zone Books, 2003), 90. [Originally published as: Art et technique au XIXe et XX siècle, 1956]
continuation of Britain’s original motivation for industrializing – the replacement of limited raw materials such as wood and wool.719

After Pevsner’s suggestion that it was through the expanded use of iron bridges that conditioned the public to accept the new material (iron), he argues that iron’s first appearance as a truly intentional architectural feature, meaning a building where iron was treated “deliberately as iron” was in John Nash’s iconic Brighton Pavilion (1815, 1818-21). At Brighton, he claims, was the “first appearance of unmasked iron in connection with royalty.”720 Interestingly, but not altogether surprisingly, Pevsner neglects to mention anything about its Islamic design, instead acknowledging the main interior staircase, which is made of iron, and the iron columns in the kitchen. He only briefly alludes to its appearance with the short phrase “bulbous dome of the pavilion,” but this is by no means a clear indicator.721 In his Modern Architecture: A Critical History, Kenneth Frampton neglects the Pavilion altogether, ignoring the dome and Nash’s remarkable use of cast iron. Siegfried Giedion on the other hand, suggests that the Brighton Pavilion, which he described as “[a] fantastic creation in the Indian style,” embodied the architectural expression of the growing interest in this “new and fascinating material which could not be employed too much.”722 According to Giedion, this was the first time (1818) that cast iron columns were utilized as a noticeable feature within a formal interior environment.723

In 1826, not long after the Pavilion’s completion, Peter Beuth and his travelling companion Karl Friedrich Schinkel toured it during their trip to England. Describing the exterior

719 Pierre Francastel, Art & Technology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, 90.
720 Pevsner, Pioneers of Modern Design, 110.
721 Ibid.
723 Sigfried Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture, 187.
appearance of the Pavilion as that of the “Moorish style of royal tombs in India,” Schinkel nearly accurately identifies the stylistic precedent of the building. The reason for his perspicacity is his familiarity with both Wiliam Hodges’ Select Views of India (1785-88) (translated into German in 1789) and the Daniells publication on India entitled Oriental Scenery (1795–1808). The latter work, which Nash used as his model for the Pavilion, featured 144 watercolors of monuments from all over India. In his journal, Schinkel described the interior of the Brighton Pavilion as “magnificent,” specifically highlighting the cast iron composition of the four columns in the shape of palm trees in the kitchen, the “sheet metal dome,” and the staircase with banisters “in a delicate imitation of bamboo tracery.” This detailed and empirical knowledge of the Brighton Pavilion (as well as many details regarding Britain’s vast industrial complex), was then, transferred directly to Berlin as a result of this trip.

By mid-century the most famous example of the use of iron as an intentional architectural feature was Joseph Paxton’s ‘temporary’ Crystal Palace building for the Great Exhibition in London of 1851. In the wake of the Exhibition the use of iron in building construction grew even more widespread for a variety of reasons, most of which had to do with its durability and tensile strength. However, there were few examples of cast iron buildings designed to be shipped abroad.

725 Mario Alexander Zadow, Schinkels Blick nach Indien / Schinkel’s Look towards India (Stuttgart: Axel Menges, 2013), 8 & 11. Also see my discussion of Schinkel’s encounter with sources on Islamic architecture in section three of chapter one.
726 Patrick Conner notes that there is evidence that Nash was well acquainted with the work since he borrowed four volumes of the text from the royal library at Carlton House. See: Patrick Conner, Oriental Architecture in the West (London: Thames & Hudson, 1975), 146.
728 For the reception of this kind of use of an Islamic style in Prussia please see the fuller discussion of this topic in chapter one.
prior to Carl von Diebitsch. One of the earliest examples even precedes the Crystal Palace and was the so-called ‘Iron Palace’ ordered by King Eyambo of Nigeria in 1843 (fig. 129). It was actually mostly composed of a wooden skeleton frame (due to cost) with cast iron columns and some iron panels on the exterior.729 It was manufactured in England by the English iron merchant William Laycock, put on display in May of 1843, and eventually disassembled and shipped to Nigeria where it was supposedly reassembled.730 Interestingly, examples of these shippable buildings were “non-Western” in style and all of them that I have found were destined for locations beyond Europe’s borders. Indeed, several were planned and never reached their destinations.

One such building was the Bathing Kiosk for the Viceroy of Egypt (1858) (fig. 130).731 This predominantly cast iron building, with an impressively large Mamluk styled dome, was—according to the Illustrated London News—designed by the famous railway engineer Robert Stephenson, who, as noted above, managed the design and construction of the Alexandra—Cairo railway line. After the railway was complete, the Viceroy Sa‘id supposedly commissioned Stephenson to design a “bathing kiosk” for installation on the banks of the Nile at Kafrellais.732 In a contemporary article about the building, the Illustrated London News stated: “The present Viceroy of Egypt has displayed an enlightened liberality and cultivated taste in his patronage of

730 “Ibid., 170-171. Although I can find no evidence to suggest that it actually was constructed in its destination.
732 Mark Crinson, Empire Building: Orientalism & Victorian Architecture (London; New York, Routledge, 175. I have not yet found any evidence of Sa‘id actually ordering such an object except for what appeared in the British press.
European arts and manufactures far in advance of most other Eastern princes." This, taken together with the later comment in the same article: "The style is as near an approach as possible to the Saracenic—that is as near as the materials will admit of," suggests that the Viceroy’s choice of style did not detract from the perceived "enlightened liberality and cultivated taste" that was associated with his choice of firm or material etc. Indeed, there are no negative comments pertaining to the chosen (Islamic) style throughout the article (except for the use of the word "Saracen," which, of course was the common parlance of the day when referring to the Islamic arts). The building was cast and fully assembled in 1858 in London by the Henry D. Grissell Company ("Messrs. Grissell") who had worked closely with Stephenson on all of the iron bridges crossing the Nile, as well as the Egyptian railroad. The kiosk was temporarily constructed on a piece of property Grissell owned on the Isle of Dogs in London for public viewing. It is unknown whether it remained standing long enough for Sa‘id to see it during his visit to the 1862 Exhibition. After 1860, it was disassembled, packed up and shipped to Alexandria. However, according to Grissell’s obituary, the shipment sat unopened for years in Alexandria and was believed to have ended up as parts for a new railway station ordered by his successor.

Another project also constructed almost entirely of cast iron, which was to be shipped to a distant location, was the Iron Kiosk for Bombay (1866), designed by Owen Jones and engineered by William Henry Le Feuvre and Roland Mason Ordish (figs. 131 & 132). This project came three to four years after Diebitsch’s early ironwork in Egypt, and coincidentally,

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734 Ibid.
735 Obituary of Henry Grissell, *1883 Institution of Civil Engineers: Obituaries* Vol. 73. See: http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Henry_Grissell
736 Ibid.
four years after he likely met Diebitsch. This timing is significant in that it could indicate Jones got the idea of expressing Islamic forms in iron from Diebitsch since we know Diebitsch had been working this way since the early 1850s. Jones had also likely seen Stephenson’s Bathing Kiosk of 1858, but I have found no evidence of this. The bathing kiosk, which was to be shipped to Bombay, was cast in England and assembled on grounds near the Horticultural Society’s gardens in Kensington for public viewing.737 This project, however, remained in London and was never shipped to Bombay due to the client’s default on the payment.738 According to an article in The Builder from December of 1866, the kiosk measured 80 ft by 40 ft and was composed entirely of cast iron, which weighed 180 tons and, according to the author, “forms, perhaps, the most remarkable specimen of ornamental ironwork yet erected.”739 The author continues by adding: “The open arabesque work at the sides, as seen in the engraving, shows what may be done in cast iron when well executed.”740 These comments about Jones’s work are apropos here since Diebitsch had already been working in this manner for years. As demonstrated above, a significant amount of cast iron had been in the process of being installed in 1863 at Oppenheim’s villa and Sharif Pasha’s villa. By 1863 he had already secured interior design work with Isma’il Pasha that would lead to the commission for the ironwork at the Gezira palace and its cast iron pavilion. So the fact that Jones’s first cast iron façade was not created until 1865 and his first fully rendered Islamic styled kiosk for export was not completed until 1866 suggests that he could possibly have been influenced by Diebitsch.

737 The Builder 24 (Nov. 10, 1866): 832. The design was by Owen Jones, the contractors were Messrs. Trolley & Sons of Halkin Street West. Messrs. Ordish & Le Feuvre were the engineers and the ironwork was cast etc. for the contractors by Messrs. Handyside & Co., of Derby.
738 Carol A. hrvol Flores, Owen Jones: Design, Ornament, Architecture, and Theory, 153. Flores states that the building was eventually auctioned off but to whom etc. remains unknown.
739 “Iron Kiosk for India,” The Builder (December 1, 1866): 885.
740 Ibid.
What sets Diebitsch’s work apart from these examples is not only the fact that his work was consistently, successfully realized at its destination prior to the others, but that these commissions are both the artistic creation of the architect and part of a client-architect relationship. By this I mean that the client hired Diebitsch for what he could deliver based on his talent and promises and not just a prefabricated building ordered up for a distant colony. Because of this different client-architect dynamic Diebitsch never displayed his buildings ahead of time, and he certainly never framed them as “exotic” pieces. One building that suggests Diebitsch had no interest in the “exotic” (and every intention of honoring his client through architecture) is his design for a mausoleum for an Egyptian general.

The Mausoleum of Süleyman Pasha al-Faransawi (1862-64): A Question of Style?

It is the belief of this writer that the eight-part plan flourished both in the East and in the West because it satisfied the inborn desire for clarity, symmetry and dominance in all things visible to the human eye.

-R. A. Jairazbhoy (1961)\textsuperscript{741}

Süleyman Pasha ‘al-Faransawi’ (‘the Frenchman’) (1788-1860) was one of the most important chief military advisors to Muhammad ‘Ali.\textsuperscript{742} He was born Joseph Anthelme Sève in Lyon and came to Egypt in 1819 after years of service in Napoloeon’s army and after the French defeat in the Napoleonic wars. Often referred to as “Colonel Sève,” he was hired by Muhammad ‘Ali in 1820, converted to Islam, and quickly rose through the ranks to become a top commander of the


\textsuperscript{742} Khaled Fahmy, \textit{All the Pasha's Men: Mehemd Ali, his Army and the Making of Modern Egypt} (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2002), 80.
Egyptian army second only to Ibrahim Pasha (Muhammad ‘Ali’s heir apparent). Thus, he played a fundamentally important role in Egypt’s modernization process, at least in terms of how the viceroy understood it. Upon his death in 1860, his biographer states that, “Egypt wept” and that “ten thousand people” followed his funeral procession, which was made up of “Europeans and natives [alike, who] had mingled their ranks, without distinction of race, religion or country and [were] united in their prayers and pains.”

He concludes by encouraging those who travel to Cairo to make a point to go on a “pilgrimage to the mausoleum erected by his grieving children for whom he was a loving father and to Egypt, a hero.”

In many ways Süleyman Pasha al-Faransawi represents the fascinating complexity and dichotomies of nineteenth-century Egypt. On the one hand he was recruited and promoted for his substantial experience with the French military as an advisor who was familiar with the latest advanced Western military techniques and knowledge. On the other hand, this Frenchman religiously and culturally immersed himself in his new Egyptian culture as a convert to Islam. He married an Egyptian woman and rarely, if ever, spoke French or interacted with Europeans preferring to keep to himself and his occupation, completely forsaking his previous life in France and fully embracing his new Egyptian one.

In 1862 Diebitsch was approached by Süleyman Pasha’s son-in-law, Sharif Pasha (who had already placed orders for his own villa), for a commission to design and build a mausoleum

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743 Ibid. Fahmy notes that it is highly unlikely that Sève achieved the rank of Colonel in the French army before coming to Egypt but he does not prove it.


745 Ibid.

746 Edwin de Leon, “Said Pasha of Egypt,” Harpers XXXIX (June, 1869): 48f. De Leon was the United States General Consul to Egypt in this period. He writes that he knew him well and that “a more thorough Turk in appearance, habits and manner it was impossible to see.”
for the famous general on his estate. This was Diebitsch’s first design for a freestanding structure in Cairo. Ohnesorge records that the commission was for “a mausoleum for the late Soliman Pasha in the garden of the palace at Masr el Atika, an octagonal building with a veranda-like portico of iron, crowned with a dome of zinc, richly ornamented on the inside and out and decorated in various colors and gold.”

The building, which still stands today, was originally set within the garden of Süleyman Pasha’s estate that was adjacent to the Nile across from the southern tip of the Rhoda Island. The configuration of the building can be best described as an octagonal, peripteral, freestanding, domed pavilion (figs. 133, 134, 135, 136, 137). The center is occupied by an octagonal masonry cella, the top of which is capped by a hemispherical dome covered with double curved cast zinc sheets connected with ribs. These fourteen zinc panels are articulated with identical patterns (to which I will return shortly), and the dome is topped by a tapered, metal multi-lobed finial. The eight exterior walls of the cella below alternate between cast iron double doors set within a pointed arch, and masonry panels with blind arches of identical size. Eight slightly engaged cast iron columns mark the exterior corners of the octagon. These columns are echoed by another set of identical columns radiating outward from the center point of the pavilion at a distance equal to the spacing of making up the inner ring. Altogether, the sixteen identical columns support a metal paneled ceiling and roof that creates a covered porch or ‘verandah’ that surrounds the cella. The eight exterior ‘elevations’ are nearly identical, save for a break in the short, delicate balustrade that wraps around the entire porch area at the base of the columns. The entire pavilion sits atop a type of octagonal stone block stereobate, which because of the placement of its single seven step marble staircase, is oriented west-northwest facing the Nile river. The interior of the cella was originally lined with red and blue

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tiles with vegetal motifs and the iron of the ceiling was enameled.\footnote{Gabriel Guémard, “Le Tombeau et les ‘armes parlantes’ de Soliman Pacha,” Bulletin de l’Institut d’Égypte 9 (1927): 72-73.} Each of the eight elevations is composed symmetrically and framed by two columns from which spring a tri-lobed arch, the center of which is pointed and meets the frame separating it from an entablature composed of a type of architrave. This architrave contains a bilaterally symmetrical vertical star or abstracted flower pattern separated above and below by two small hemispherical horizontal bands. Between the frame delineating the arch below and the entablature above is a self-contained panel composed of abstract floriated vegetal motifs including a small, single, five pointed star, all of which occupies about sixty percent of the panel, the rest of which is open air creating an almost diaphanous impression. Above the architrave is a kind of bed mould holding a teardrop form within which another highly abstracted stand alone vegetal motif is repeated. Crowning the entablature is an elaborately perforated parapet with a repetitive pattern containing more variations on the theme of abstracted vegetal motifs. Everything—except the stereobate, the stone cella and its contents comprising a catafalque and the wood supports under the dome—is cast in iron or zinc. These metals were cast in the Ilsenburg foundry in Saxony and, like all of his Cairo projects, were shipped to the site for installation.\footnote{Carl Ohnesorge, Orientalische Skizzen, 6ff.}

This small building may at first appear to be very simple and perhaps even simplistically conceived due to its basic formal geometries and limited materials and size. However, I will argue that this building, which is more sophisticated than previously suggested, and its formal references, would have been equally recognizable to Europeans steeped in their own ‘Western’ architectural traditions, as well as inhabitants of Egypt including both Christians and Muslims, who were familiar with their own architectural history surrounding them.
Beginning her historical analysis of the building with the statement that the mausoleum “instantly reminds the viewer of the graceful “oriental” pavilions in European gardens,” Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz argues that Diebitsch’s design is a product of the eighteenth-century Western garden kiosk tradition. Moreover, she suggests that it is this tradition’s understanding of Islamic architecture that inspired the architect. Citing the idea that monopteral and peripteral masonry buildings, intended as pavilions, were first published in England in 1736, and that “Moorish” temples in a “Classical” pavilion form began to appear in garden literature in the 1760s, the author establishes a convincing architectural genealogy for Diebitsch’s mausoleum. 

She suggests that the pavilion actually has more in common with Chambers’ 1758 “Alhambra” at Kew Gardens as well as a contemporary “Moorish temple” in Potsdam (since demolished) (fig. 138), rather than any specific Islamic building per se. She concludes her analysis with the suggestion that “the memorial to Soliman Pasha in Cairo, however, reveals that the architect looked to European 18th-century models of so-called Islamic architecture.” This argument establishes quite nicely the historical context and relevance this type of building has with respect to “Western” architecture. Furthermore, an aspect upon which her argument relies is the idea that the “Islamic” characteristics of this building are essentially applied in the form of decoration to the structure, and that without this decorative scheme the building belongs squarely within the Western tradition. Thus, she states: “In the matter of decoration, Islamic design formed the basis of the Mausoleum of Soliman Pasha.” This argument, however, does not consider either the vast antecedents available to Diebitsch at the time in terms of the history of Islamic architecture, nor does it consider the full ramifications of local influences. Another secondary source that only...

751 Elke Pflugradt Abdel-Aziz, “The Mausoleum for Soliman Pasha ‘el-Faransawi’ in Cairo,” 210-211.
752 Ibid., 211.
753 Ibid., 212. (My emphasis)
briefly discusses the building is Isabella Fehle’s dissertation. But beyond claiming that the pavilion “fits within the tradition of the Islamic domed tomb building” because of its general formal similarity to the “Caliphal tombs of Cairo,” there is no discussion of exactly how or why it fits. Furthermore, she concludes her comments with the comment: “Rather, Karl von Diebitsch’s tomb looks more open and inviting like a Garden pavilion.” The fact remains, however, when the building and its form are interrogated in terms of Islamic architectural history, this pavilion belongs firmly within its ‘disciplinary’ boundaries. Furthermore, as I will demonstrate, it belongs mutually to both (East and West) architectural “traditions.”

If we begin by considering the plan of Diebitsch’s mausoleum we will notice immediately that it is octagonal. The number eight, along with the octagon and the so-called eight-part plan (and its variations, which often include the use of octagons) are some of the most important architectural forms throughout architecture’s history. As discussed in the previous chapter, the octagon was an architectural motif Diebitsch returned to a number of times in order to generate projects. The octagonal plan is of course a familiar design motif in Western architecture; one need only think of Byzantine architecture such as San Vitale, or a variety of Medieval examples such as the Palatine Chapel in Aachen. However, the octagon and eight-part plan are just as prevalent, if not more so, throughout the history of Islamic architecture.

Indeed, one of the most obvious, significant and earliest of all Islamic buildings is the very

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755 Isabella Fehle, Der Maurische Kiosk in Linderhof von Karl von Diebitsch, 81-82.
756 In case the reader is unfamiliar with why the number eight is significant in Christian theology and architecture it is important to at the very minimum point out that in Christian numerology eight can typically represent a ‘rebirth’ (this is why Christian baptisteries were almost always octagonal). Eight of course follows seven which is considered a ‘perfect’ and holy number due to its association with Jesus Christ (3 represents the trinity and 4 represents humanity) so the number which follows seven then represents this opportunity to begin again—as so commonly associated with the ritual of baptism. There is much more to the number eight but this, at least, should be kept in mind.
octagonal Qubbat al-Sakkra (Dome of the Rock) (691) in Jerusalem (fig. 139 & fig. 140). One of the earliest texts to consolidate and advance the idea of the importance of the number eight in terms of architectural planning was Rafique Ali Jairazbhoy and his 1961 article entitled “The Taj Mahal in the Context of East and West: A Study in the Comparative Method.” This article traced the historical lineage of the eight-part plan, upon which the Taj Mahal (1632-53) in Agra and its predecessor Humayun’s Tomb (1565-72), Delhi, are based (fig. 141 & fig. 142). He traces the use of the eight-part plan back to its possible prototype built under Nebuchadnezzar in a temple at Kish dated to c.595 BCE and its earliest known use as an Achaemenid religious building: the Ayadana (palace of adoration) at Susa (5th cen. BCE). From its origins in ancient Persia he demonstrates a direct transfer to the (pre-Islamic) Nabatean Arabs. He continues to illustrate the evolution and translation of the eight-part plan through a variety of its iterations and sub-types and highlights examples from Syria and the Levant through the “Roman and Hellenic East” (citing the tomb of Servilii c.31 BCE) as well as its famous expression in Byzantine architecture such as its implication in the cruciform plan of the tomb of Theodosius’ daughter Galla Placidia (c.450) and the church of San Vitale (527-48) in Ravenna. From here the use of the eight-part plan, as well as the octagon, are well established in the canonical narrative of (Western) architectural history.

Jairazbhoy continues by demonstrating the “oriental influences” upon the work of well-known architects and planners such as the great Italian Renaissance architect and sculptor

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Antonio Filarete (1400-69) through the experience of his travels as well as others.\textsuperscript{760} He also describes the appearance and popularity of the octagonal garden kiosk in Persia around 1540. Indeed, Jairazbhoy’s article at the very minimum, reveals not only the existence—but the complexity and interconnectedness—of these transcultural influences over hundreds of years certainly complicating any attempt at a linear narrative. Even within Islamic history itself the path is by no means linear. He suggests that the eight-part plan began for Islam in the palatial architecture near Samarra, traveled through Spain and Armenia to appear in Ottoman architecture for the first time in the mosque of Murad I in Bursa (c. 1365).\textsuperscript{761} This type of plan, he argues, then evolves into the “U” shape, which becomes the “standard in the Ottoman madrasa.”\textsuperscript{762} But to return to Jairazbhoy’s ultimate question, which had to do with what led to the plan of the tomb of Humayun, and eventually to the Taj Mahal itself, the author is careful to demonstrate that its origins are many, ranging from literary references and descriptions, to traveler accounts—even noting that Humayun himself traveled through the former Ilkhanid city of Sultaniya and witnessed first hand Uljaytu’s massive mausoleum the Gunbad-i Uljaytu (1302-1312), which is dominated by the octagon, even having a minaret springing from each of the eight corners.\textsuperscript{763}

The number eight is significant in Islamic theology in that, primarily, it alludes to the eight stages of Paradise in the Qur’an. In landscape and garden design in the Persian tradition the concept of the \textit{Hasht-Bihisht} or “eight paradises” is employed. Thus, in Islam the octagon

\textsuperscript{760} Ibid., 70f.
\textsuperscript{761} Ibid., 77.
\textsuperscript{763} With regard to the Gunbad-i Uljaytu in Sultaniya please see my discussion of this building in chapter three as it relates to the drawings of Wilhelm Stier’s designs for the \textit{Berliner Dom}. 303
(muthamman) is primarily associated with tombs due to this allusion. However, the octagon’s first appearance in Islamic architecture is not in a tomb, but in the already mentioned Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem (691). The epitome of this idea of the eight stages of Islamic paradise (or gates of paradise) is conveyed in the eight-part plan of the Taj Mahal, as well as the intricately carved marble screen in the shape of an octagon that surrounds the cenotaphs of Mumtaz Mahal and Emporer Shah Jahan (fig. 143 & fig. 144).

My point with this short historical excursus is simply to demonstrate that the way an observer understands a building like this (the Süleyman Pasha Mausoleum) depends almost entirely on one’s experience with their own architectural traditions or environment. Thus, I return to one of the leitmotifs in the dissertation: the idea of “only seeing what one is taught to see/or learned to see (or wants to see).” If one comes from an entirely “Western” European tradition, the reading of Diebitsch’s mausoleum will probably be considered in this strong lineage of “oriental” garden pavilions. However, if one comes from the context of Islamic architecture, the building will not be unfamiliar because it participates quite enthusiastically in its constructed historical narrative (the discipline of Islamic architecture history). When we consider the double reading of these two ‘traditions’ in this single building there is probably no one more appropriate for such a tomb than a French convert who became a Muslim Egyptian. Thus, I believe Diebitsch was aware of most of what I just outlined and I would submit that it is likely precisely because of Süleyman Pasha’s “dual” cultural identity that Diebitsch chose the forms he

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did. In fact, the octagonal plan that I have highlighted here is only one part of what we can consider its “shared” architectural tradition.

In terms of ‘local’ Cairene references the use of the octagon appears in a variety of mosque and funerary complexes around the city, particularly at the base of domes and in minarets. Taking Isabella Fehle’s suggestion to its conclusion, we can see that most of these examples have octagons as an integral part of their design to some extent such as the urban complex of Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qala'un (the Madrasa wa-Qubbat wa-Bimaristan al-Sultan Qalawun) (1284-1285) with the tambour of its dome rendered as an octagonal clerestory. Also the funerary mosque complex of Sultan al-Ashraf Qaytbay (1472-1474) with the base of its dome and a section of its minaret both eight sided (fig. 145). Indeed, from medieval Mamluk funerary domes and Cairene Ottoman funerary pavilions of the sixteenth century on, to more recent projects such as the pavilion at Shubra by Pascal Coste, the octagon is a ubiquitous feature in Cairo. At Qaytbay, with some ability to be seen from the exterior (fig. 146 & fig. 147), but much more pronounced on the interior looking up into the cupola above the central hall of the mosque, the octagon plays a central role in defining the space. Examples both near and far like this abound with the octagon reaching its most prolific and significant place within the history of Islamic architecture: in India with the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal mausolea.\footnote{Ibid.}

In terms of Diebitsch’s parapet on Süleyman Pasha’s mausoleum there are many similar references in and around Cairo from the one seen on the complex of Qala’un (fig. 148 & fig. 149) to the example on one of Cairo’s earliest mosques Ibn Tulun (fig. 150). Diebitsch not only had on-site experience with these monuments once he arrived in Cairo in 1862, but he also had
previous access to them via the Description de l’Égypt and Pascal Coste’s Architecture Arabe, as well as Friedrich Hessemer’s Arabische und Alt-Italienische Bauverzierungen (1842), which includes a description of the churches and mosques he visited and reproductions of some of their ornamentation. All of these texts, as discussed in earlier chapters, would have been available to Diebitsch well before he left for Cairo. In addition, his mentor was Professor Wilhem Stier, whose designs for the Budapest parliament alone suggest he was at least familiar with some of these octagonal Mamluk minarets and Persian iwans. As elaborated in chapter one, the pointed arch has also been an integral part of Islamic architecture since its early days appearing in pre-Islamic Persia (the Sassanians) well before anywhere in the West. Again, one excellent Persian-Islamic example is the eighth century Abbasid Tarik Khan mosque (Masjid-i Tarik Khana) in Damghan (c.750-89) (fig. 151). Thus, Diebitsch’s use of the pointed arch also becomes a motif with a double (historical) meaning. A variation of the pointed arch appears in the dominant tri-lobed configuration that appears on each of Diebitsch’s eight elevations at the mausoleum. This motif is probably as ubiquitous in Western Gothic architecture as it is in Islamic architecture. In Islamic architecture the motif is quite often found in either of two arrangements. First, it can be used to frame a series of muqarnas vaulting, as in an interior example, such as the fourteenth century Yashbak palace in Cairo. Second, and more notably, it is used on the exterior as in the exterior portal of the Sabil-Kuttab of Sultan Qaytbay, a prominent building in central Cairo occupying a busy place in the city. A rendering of a similar motif can also be found in Pascal Coste’s Architecture Arabe (fig. 152 & fig. 153), again certainly a text seen by Diebtisch.

So far, this discussion has left out what is the only overtly “Islamic” feature of this building, the ornament. Indeed, a common tactic in critiques of nineteenth-century Islamic (or orientalist) architecture is to disassociate a building’s “Islamic” ornament from its structure or...
organization (plan) in order to claim that the former is applied as mere decoration, and thus simply extraneous, unnecessary and historicist. In this case, however, I would point out that the ornament is an integral and necessary aspect to the mausoleum. The function of the ornament, then, is to reify and tie together all of the above elements that could (until now) be interpreted either as an “Islamic” building or not. Thus, the “ornamentation”, which is clearly made up of a diverse variety of vegetal motifs and both geometrical and abstract patterns (‘arabesques’) refers (abstractly) to this tradition in Islamic architecture but is presented in a modern way (as a module) since these patterns do not interconnect as they would in, say, a more elaborate medieval Mamluk dome for example. Yet, as Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz has convincingly argued, Diebitsch rendered details in an original way that synthesized forms without directly copying them, even inventing his own along the way.\[^{766}\] So, in all, with the inclusion of features from the text band in Arabic, the repeating vegetal and other abstracted patterns, however loosely based on Islamic precedents, in addition to the features I have mentioned above—including its pre-fabricated and material aspects—this pavilion resoundingly reads as an example of what we can only consider to be \textit{modern Islamic architecture}.\[^{767}\]

What I hoped to demonstrate with the example above is the continuation of the ideas of synthesis and shared historical traditions within the context of architecture, which have evolved from Schinkel to Stier and finally to Diebitsch. Stier’s ideas, which involved integrating ‘foreign’ elements into his designs, were unfulfilled projects that only saw their conception on paper in competitions and in the classroom. However, these teachings and ideas, although

\[^{766}\] Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz, „Der Preußische Palast in Ägypten,“ 59. Her specific example here is the “arabesque volute capital”, which she argues has no precedent in Islam and was coined by him (\textit{eine Eigenschöpfung}).

\[^{767}\] Like Coste’s mosques before and the almost contemporary Al-Rifa’i mosque next to Sultan Hasan in Cairo.
consistently described as fantastical, surely had an effect upon at least one of his students. Diebitsch’s designs suggest a rather impressive knowledge of both the “Western” and “Islamic” architectural precedent and ‘tradition’, which for us necessitates the question: are these two “separate” “traditions” at all? And if they are, as they have been so canonically delineated since around this very period in the nineteenth century in Germany and Austria, then why is it that when some of these buildings are taken apart through an analysis, they are so similar? What I am suggesting is that Carl von Diebitsch’s work is in direct opposition to the art and architectural historians in the academies in Europe who were at that very moment scientifically delineating each potential “branch” of influence that resulted in notions of stylistic purity. Among the scholars at the forefront of writing these histories that Diebitsch was working with in the field, were of course Karl Schnaase and Franz Kugler. These efforts and their long ranging results are far too complicated to entertain at this point. But, suffice it to say, it is variations and evolutions of theories developed at that time that ultimately led to positions advocated by historians like Sir Bannister Fletcher (fig. 154). Fletcher’s famous “Tree of Architecture” from the 1880s, not only kept Islamic architecture as its own entirely distinct ‘branch’ subject neither to influence or being influential, but considered it a “non-Historical style” that simply ends on its own branch that sprouts just after Roman architecture and leads nowhere.768

Diebitsch, in contrast, was exposed to a different interpretation of the architectural past at the Bauakademie, due to his formation under Stier. This education continued to evolve on his not so traditional Studienreise through Sicily and Spain, and eventually culminated in his pursuit of professionalizing Islamic architecture into a modern style. Diebitsch’s proposals carry with them

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the long and shared 'traditions' of European and Islamic architecture and they are conceived and produced in the latest materials and most recent technologies, all of which were made possible by series of fortunate events. These events include Stier and his travels, but they also include the new opportunities afforded him by the Prussian government and important figures such as Peter Beuth, to the equally important modernizing ambitions of 1860s Egypt. This included not only the progressive characters such as Oppenheim, Sharif Pasha and his other Egyptian clients, that were drawn to this rapidly changing environment, but the clear and focused intentions of the Khedive Isma‘il himself whose vision the Khedive could see in Diebitsch’s work.
PART III.

"THE ORIENTAL PEARL FROM PRUSSIA" and Diebitsch's Dilemma: The 1867 Exposition Universelle and the Orientalization of Islamic Architecture

Now that we are not afraid of Turks, Arabs, and Saracens, the Orient has become for us a sort of hippodrome where grand performances are given... We take the Orient for a theater.

-Le Figaro, 26 June 1867

By the time of the 1867 Exposition Universelle in Paris, Diebitsch had been gainfully employed in Cairo by a variety of clients – all of whom were active participants in Egypt's fast-paced modernization led by Viceroy Isma'il. According to P.J. Vatikiotis, Isma'il prioritized his involvement with the Expo, including his attendance, in an effort to make firm “Egypt’s commitment to an identification with Europe more positive and acute” It was Isma'il's first official trip as Khedive and Egypt's pavilions were the result of a committee headed by his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nubar Pasha. Egypt's display, which was described as containing

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769 Context - just before Expo in April - the Northern German Confederation was formed. Led by Bismarck as chancellor they joined and then dominated the Zollverein. Zollverein then became less about industrial catch up and more about demonstrating their new found political unity/strength. This was on the eve of the Franco Prussian War that began in 1870. Furthermore, just before the Expo began Prussia and Austria had just ended the Prussian-Austria War (Seven-Weeks War) in 1866 – where the German Confed. joined Austria against Prussia – ultimately losing to Prussia. This is why Austria did not attend the 1867 expo. For the comment: “Oriental pearl” See: “Bureau des Vereins deutscher Ingenieure für die allgemeine Ausstellung zu Paris pro 1867,” Deutsch Ausstellungs-Zeitung 44 (July 20, 1867). Cited in: Isabella Fehle, Der Maurische Kiosk in Linderhof von Karl von Diebitsch, 124.


771 N.B.: Isma'il Pasha (1830–95, r.1863-79), was initially the “Viceroy” of Egypt upon his accession to the throne (as were the previous rulers in the same dynasty). The title “Khedive” was bestowed on to him by the Ottoman Sultan through a firman (official decree or royal mandate) dated to 8 June, 1867, which came just a week or so prior to the opening of the Egyptian Pavilion at the 1867 Expo in Paris and his trip there to participate in the celebration to open it. A detailed discussion of this can be found in: Georges Douin, Histoire du règne du khédive Ismaïl (Vol. 1, Les premières années du règne, 1863-1867) (Rome: Nell'Internato poligrafo dello stato per la Reale società di geografia d'Egitto, 1933), 421f & 442 (for the firman itself). “Khedive” (via French from Ottoman Turkish Ḷȅdviv, from Persian Ḷédviv “prince”, variant of Ḷédviv “minor god”, from Ḷédv “god” [From: Oxford Dictionary of English (3 ed.) Edited by Angus Stevenson Oxford University Press, Published Online, 2013]

772 P.J. Vatikiotis, The History of Egypt, 83.
"enormous examples from both ancient and modern Egypt" included a number of pavilions. These were a Pharaonic temple (a copy of the temple of Philae by the French archaeologist Auguste Mariette) with a museum of antiquities, a richly decorated building in the “Arab style” (selamlik) representing the Middle Ages and Arab history of Egypt, an “okel” or covered market featuring the work of artisans and Egypt’s contemporary industry. Additionally there was a pavilion dedicated to the Suez Canal featuring a model of the canal, maps and various displays of information dedicated to explaining the canal’s development and progress, which was nearing completion. It is also important to note here that Egypt was in charge of its own design for the Exposition and was invited by France to participate. Thus, the representation of Egypt was in its leader’s hands and is reflected not only in the choice and style of the buildings (designed by French architects hired to design them), but in its overall layout, which was organized along a linear street. This is in contrast to later representations of Egypt at the World’s Fair, which tended to reflect less agency by ‘Egyptians.’ As a result these later exhibits are made up of dirty and crooked streets and mosque facades that lead into gift shops etc. (viz. the Éxposition Universelle of 1889).

Expressly for the Paris Exposition—and on his own initiative—Diebitsch designed and fabricated the so-called “Moorish Kiosk” (fig. 155 & fig. 156). Given Diebitsch’s prior success at the 1862 Fair, this structure was most likely intended to showcase his work at a larger architectural scale and further his original goal of demonstrating the universal applicability of a modern Islamic style that was a tasteful and economic answer appropriate for the needs of a

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growing middle class (fig. 157). His kiosk, submitted under the class “Materials and methods of civil engineering, public works and architecture,” was set within the Prussian section of “Le Quart Allemand,” an area that was intended to feature small buildings that would exemplify a “nation’s” architecture (fig. 158), part of an expansion of national pavilions anticipating the “Avenue of Nations” at the Paris 1878 International Exhibition. Since the Zollverein was no longer the dominant face of Germany at the fairs, due to Prussia’s continued consolidation of political power on the eve of political unification, presenters were categorized within political entities. 

Therefore, Diebitsch’s kiosk was one of three large structures chosen to represent Prussia at the exhibition. His pavilion was constructed mainly of cast iron with a variety of additional materials, and capped by a gilded copper dome. It is described as a “Kiosque du Bosphore” by the contemporary observer Hypolyte Gautier:

We are surprised to find in this area for northern exposures, an elegant oriental kiosk whose walls are covered with arabesque revetments, surmounted by a gilded copper dome, it is indeed a kiosk for the Bosphorus, but made in Berlin, which has passed through Paris before returning to the soil where it should definitely rise.

The Kiosk was set within a garden environment and is described on the plan of the Exposition as “Jardin et kiosque prussiens” (fig. 159). The appearance of the kiosk was unique within the Prussian program since the style chosen for the exhibit inside the main building was a vivid polychromatic neo-Renaissance (fig. 160). Similarly, the Roman imperial style—complete with Triumphal Arch—was chosen to showcase the Prussian machine gallery (fig. 161). Isabella

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775 It is also relevant to mention the fact that Austria was not represented at the Expo because they had just suffered a significant defeat at the hands of Prussia in the 1866 Austro-Prussian War. 776 This is not to be confused with the other “Pavillon du Bosphore,” which was set within the Ottoman exhibit at the same Expo. 777 Hypolyte Gautier, Les Curiosités de l’Exposition universelle de 1867 (Paris: CH. Delagrave et Cie, 1867), 44. « On est tout étonné de trouver dans cet espace réservé aux expositions septentrionales, un élégant kiosque oriental aux murs revêtus d’éclatantes arabesques, surmontés d’un dôme en cuivre doré ; c’est en effet un kiosque destiné aux rives du Bosphore, mais fabriqué à Berlin, et qui a passé par Paris avant de se rendre sur le sol où il doit définitivement s’éléver. »
Fehle has suggested that the kiosk be interpreted not in a “narrow ethnic sense” that one might have derived from the nearby Etruscan styled schoolhouse, with its overt reference to the development of a renewed education system in Prussia, but instead should be seen in contrast to the other more “temporary” buildings of the expo as its own expression of current ideas in Prussian architecture. Seen in this way, without the distorting lens of historicism, the kiosk displayed an exemplary use of modern materials, durability and portability, and showcased an elaborate and original use of Prussian iron casting that was also domestically produced. In the end, however, what affected Diebitsch’s strategy the most was the problematic nature of its location.

Despite Diebitsch’s favorable standing with Khedive Isma‘il, who insisted that he exhibit his kiosk in the Egyptian section, Diebitsch instead chose Prussia for his venue. This choice not only annoyed the Khedive, but is a clear indicator that Diebitsch did not see his work as only belonging to the specific context of the “Orient.” He still pursued the idea that this style was truly international. As such, he featured his pavilion in the Prussian section in order to reinforce his idea that this style is not limited by geography or religion, but that it is an architecture, which—fashioned in this modern way—is applicable everywhere. But this decision had quite unexpected consequences for the architect. This move angered his most important client the Khedive, who was at the height of his reign and wanted to showcase Diebitsch’s elegant and modern kiosk as a product of his patronage on this important international stage. In fact, this tension was played out in the press who compared Diebitsch’s “delicate” (neo-Islamic)

architecture (representing Prussia) to the “coarse” (neo-Islamic) architecture they saw emerging from the “Islamic countries” (never mind that the Egyptian section was designed by the Frenchman Jacques Drévet). However, this new site in the Prussian section was not without its own problems.

Set within a garden environment, the kiosk was effectively removed from the main industrial sections featuring metals and materials (fig. 162). This remote location surely created a different impression upon visitors so that this “Moorish” kiosk in a garden became effectively decontextualized from its association with Prussia and its modern building industries. Furthermore, the Moorish style had become less exceptional due to a sharp rise in its popularity. This can be linked, to some degree, to the extensive and uncritical reproduction of scientifically measured drawings published in scholarly texts by individuals such as Owen Jones, Jules Goury and Girault de Prangey in the 1830s and 40s. Indeed, what had been approached for years as an area of scholarly research was quickly being appropriated and distorted by popular culture’s exoticisation of Islamic forms. This is evidenced by the growing commodification of Islamic forms for a variety of purposes clearly evident at the 1867 Expo. The increased number of Islamic styled pavilions and kiosks, and more prevalent casual use of the style in general, increased dramatically at the Expo, making Diebitsch’s contribution—and his wissenschaftliche position—less distinct and therefore less of an exemplar of modern design “reform.”

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780 Cornelia Köster and Wolfgang Schwanitz, “Kunsthistoriker, Architekten, Ingenieure und Manager,” 48. Also with regard to the architects of the Egyptian pavilions see: Zeynep Çelik, Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 111. Çelik also associates Drévet with name of another architect she identifies as ‘E. Schmitz’ but she only identifies him by the initial of the individual’s first name and is only mentioned once.
In her influential book, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs* (1992), Zeynep Çelik discusses in detail the presence of Islamic architecture at the 1867 Expo, yet ignores the expo in London of 1862. The reason for this, she explains is that she decided to "focus on those [exhibitions] where the architectural representation of Islam was significant." Because of this, she defines the scope of her study from 1867 to 1900, which, she explains "witnessed turbulent transformations in both the political and the cultural lives of the Islamic nations discussed here." In her book, the sudden interest in the Islamic style that developed between 1851 and 1867 is not reconciled with the fact that the British colonization of India began with the first East Indian Company troops in the early seventeenth century, and French colonization of Africa began in the 1830s. Indeed, within the span of just five years the popularity of Islamic architecture grew, as did its association with leisure and entertainment, but the reasons are not apparent in her text. Çelik's book, along with Gwendolyn Wright's foundational *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (1991), was one of the earliest and most significant attempts to bring post-colonial theory to bear on architectural history. Her argument can best be summarized with the assumption that "architecture can be manipulated to summarize cultures and nations visually; architectural representation is never pure and is always colored by power relations." Moreover, the apparatus by which this happens is Orientalism as reconceptualized and theorized by Edward Said. And while this line of thinking has certainly led to apposite and productive work and theories, at least in its early stages, it has been superseded by work, which has exposed the vast complexities of these "colonial" and or "imperial" relationships as thoroughly entangled.

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781 Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, 3.
782 Ibid., 5.
783 Ibid., 195.
But for our immediate purposes it is only necessary to acknowledge this historical moment and return to the Expo by highlighting the fact that the Ottoman Empire, French Tunisia and Morocco, Iran and Egypt all had substantial displays at the 1867 fair rendered in various Islamic styles. In addition to these were a variety of individual pavilions and kiosks serving purposes from cafés to tobacco pavilions. Thus, I am arguing that as a result of the ubiquity and proliferation of the variety of these Islamic styles at the fair Diebitsch’s kiosk was obscured by the very phenomenon that had led to his all too brief success. Indeed, how could a visitor to Diebitsch’s pavilion—intended to exemplify modern Prussian industry by showcasing the latest ideas of efficiency through modern materials and methods of production—tell the difference between his aim and (fig. 163) that of Alfred Chapon’s elaborate palace pavilion, a copy of the Bardo, for the Bey of Tunis, for example, whose decorative scheme was described as “endlessly luxurious and reminds one of the monuments of Spanish Arabian art of the 14th century”, or the Turkish café for that matter? Indeed, the difference was in their construction, assembly and overall impression. Diebitsch’s pavilion was meant to represent the mobility, flexibility and efficiency of modern building production, whereas the Bardo, with its luxurious and well-known “traditional” materials such as “[b]rilliantly colored tiles sent from Tunisia” and “beautiful carpets and embroideries; gold-painted elements,” represented (intentionally or not) the “static,” “traditional” orient.

In terms of Diebitsch’s two different Exhibition submissions one might assume that the incorporation of an “arabesque” on Diebitsch’s 1862 zinc vase is somehow an unremarkable, or

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785 Zeynep Çelik, Displaying the Orient, 123.
perhaps an ironic, orientalist feature. Or, one could interpret it simply as an anachronism - like its Greek or Gothic Revival counterparts, due to the application of Medieval design motifs on a vase produced in the 1860s. Yet, there remains a certain complexity about the way in which Islamic forms were understood, studied and ultimately utilized by practicing architects in the nineteenth century, certainly prior to the association of these forms with exoticism, entertainment and empire. This inconsistency has been explored, for the most part, in the vast literature produced in the wake of Edward Said, which (among other things) notably linked orientalism with the imperial-colonial project. In this context, the postcolonial critique leaves us with more questions than answers, especially after we leave the realm of the well-studied empires of France and Britain, which have garnered the most critical attention. Therefore, instead of applying theories more applicable to other contexts, I would suggest that, in response to the recent critical and theoretical work on the history of German Orientalism, which has allowed us to seek out alternative approaches to understanding the nature of Orientalism, we regard Diebitsch’s work in a renewed light that situates his work not within an orientalist genre, but within the context of modern architecture. In other words, I am arguing that Diebitsch deserves to be understood as modern architect whose chosen “path” was, in the end, not the one “chosen” by later historians who historicized the later Modern Movement. Thus, he can be seen as having taken the proverbial “path not taken” by the historians of the twentieth century. In this way, without relying on the benefit of hindsight, Diebitsch can be seen as an active participant in the search for modern architecture.
PART IV.

AFTER THE EXPO: DIEBITSCH RETURNS TO CAIRO, 1867-1869

Today is Sunday and I wanted to go to the city in order to buy some necessities. Yet the old man came over and brought me some drawings again. He is to richly decorate a room in the Gezireh palace, but must first put some ideas on paper. If we are to get this first job, then perhaps we will get a larger commission from him, but this is all very much in question because of the strong plotting against the Berlin architect by the French and Italian contractors and adventurers. But we are in good spirits and it will bring honor to German work.  

-Carl Ohnesorge (c.1862)

After the Expo, Khedive Isma‘il returned with a reinvigorated enthusiasm for a modern Egypt, which he would showcase through an ambitious urban renewal strategy in Cairo. Considered a “new chapter” or “new era” by historians, this period after Isma‘il’s return was marked by substantial material transformations of the city of Cairo. This was certainly inspired by his interaction with the renowned Baron Haussmann (1809-91), who had so successfully reorganized the city of Paris with drastic urban transformations such as widening streets and creating grand plazas and boulevards. Haussmann personally arranged much of his trip and gave him personal tours of the renewed Paris. One of Isma‘il’s most significant urban planning projects was his implementation of a plan envisioned originally by Muhammad ‘Ali. This was the creation of the grand, two kilometer long Boulevard Muhammad ‘Ali (Shari‘ Muhammad ‘Ali), which was to cut a straight swath through the city, à la Haussmann, from the Azbakiyya Park to the Mosque of

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787 See: Janet Abu-Lughod, Cairo, 104. Mohamed Scharabi, Kairo, 64.
Sultan Hassan tearing down countless buildings along the way ranging from residential housing to “priceless mosques and monuments.” The straight boulevard was lined with gas lamps and trees for its entire length and it was even said to be swept three times a day. This project, however, was not to be completed until 1873, yet it illustrates quite clearly the Khedive’s tireless ambitions.

But by far the greatest motivating factor for Isma‘il to implement these urban planning changes and ‘clean up’ his city, was the upcoming opening ceremony for the Suez Canal on November 17, 1869. This was to be a grand event for the world to celebrate and Isma‘il wanted to take full advantage of the presence of Europe’s greatest powers that were to attend in order to showcase his updated modern city. However, in order to refashion a city that would better reflect his modern leadership, he had to act quickly. Within the first couple months after returning from the Expo he appointed ‘Ali Pasha Mubarak to be Minister of Public Works, charging him with an incredible array of responsibilities from “supervising the execution of plans for the quarter of Ismailiyah” (a new section of Cairo) and “redeveloping the older and vacant lands peripheral to Azbakiyyah” to “drawing up a master plan for the entire city in accordance with the style of Paris.” In the newly expanded area of Ismailiyah, which extended from the west part of Cairo, the Khedive was so anxious for it to be built up that he offered the land for free if those who agreed would build villas there. Leading up to the Suez celebrations there were staggering improvements to the entire Azbakiyyah Gardens area (namely because of Isma‘il’s decision to import the famous French landscape architect Barillet-Deschamps to complete it), the

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789 Ibid., 113.
790 Ibid., 105.
791 Ibid., 106.
construction and opening of a National Comedy Theater (Jan., 1868), as well as the Cairo Opera House.

Another significant part of his plan was the construction of a new palace on an island in the Nile at Cairo. This island “al-Gezira” was to be comprised of a grand palace and a zoo-like garden complete with a grand kiosk. It was built with the sole intention to house the Khedive’s most illustrious European visitors and became a visible symbol of Egypt’s modernization process. After the Expo Diebitsch returned to Cairo to complete commissions he had already received from the Khedive (since his behavior at the Expo could have possibly cost him future commissions). These included projects for interior rooms at the Gezira palace, exterior iron work for the palace, and what would become his masterpiece, a large kiosk in the garden, which was made almost entirely out of cast iron. Diebitsch’s later work in Cairo, in particular the kiosk project for the Khedive at Gezira, has been under theorized, but it further exemplifies Diebitsch’s modern architecture.

The Gezira Palace

Diebitsch’s first commission from Khedive Isma’il came in December of 1863 while he was hard at work on the Oppenheim villa. Ohnesorge provides us with an account of the visit and explains: “unexpectedly, and all of a sudden, the Viceroy and several other high persons came to

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92 According to a 1988 dissertation by John Kersten Jesperson, Owen Jones designed the Gezira kiosk pavilion for the palace “in the Moorish style” and that “The kiosk or pavilion is one of Jones’s most successful examples of Orientalist architecture.” However, scholarship since then by Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz et al. has disproved this but it is generally believed that Jones designed rooms inside the main palace building. See: Carol A. Hrvol Flores, Owen Jones: Design, Ornament, Architecture, and Theory in an Age in Transition, 189; and John Kresten Jespersen, "Owen Jones and the Conventionalization of Ornament" (PhD Diss.,1988). Library Faculty and Staff Publications. Paper 1. http://digitalcommons.ric.edu/librarypublications/, 70-71.
the villa.” Embarrassed by the “desolate” state of the project at that point, Ohnesorge relates that despite its current incomplete condition the viceroy ended up awarding Diebitsch a small contract for a room at the new palace he had intended for the opening ceremonies. Awarding small jobs to architects, and keeping them on a tight schedule, was Isma‘il’s way of ensuring a competitive environment. However, before any interior work could even be started the island had to be prepared. The island itself, which was approximately 60 feddans (just over 60 acres) was in the flood plain of the Nile and, consequently, was thoroughly flooded each season. Therefore the island had to be raised approximately one and a half meters in order for building to commence. The task of designing the elaborate royal gardens, referred to as the Jardin des Plantes due to the large variety of biologically diverse plants from different regions, was given to Barillet-Deschamps. The design of the palace building itself is attributed to another German architect, Julius Heinrich Franz (1831-1915), who had been Isma‘il’s court architect since his appointment in 1863. In this position Franz had substantial influence and contributed to many projects in Cairo at this time. He played an important role in the formation of modern Egypt’s

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793 Ohnesorge, Orientalische Skizzen, 20.
795 For a fuller description including the animal inhabitants see: Gustave Delchevalerie, Flore Exotique Du Jardin D'acclimatation De Ghéziere Et Des Domaines De S. A. Le Khédive (Cairo: Typographie Français Delbos-Demouret, 1871). 39ff.
796 Also at different points in his life he was referred to differently depending on his title: “Franz Bey” or “Franz Pasha.” This has created considerable confusion in the literature; especially when he is discussed by scholars who are not familiar with these titles. His name is also commonly misspelled as “Frantz” - this is incorrect. It is also quite common to see him described as Austrian, however, this is incorrect as well, since he was from Germany and only educated in Vienna but moved to Graz after he left Cairo. According to Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz – she states quite clearly in an interview that “He always remained a German.” See: Cornelia Köster and Wolfgang Schwanitz, „Kunsthistoriker, Architekten, Ingenieure und Manager: Ein Gespräch mit Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz,” in Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, ed., 125 Jahre Sueskanal: Lauchhammers Eisenguss am Nil (Hildesheim; New York: G. Olms, 1998), 51.
cultural institutions through a variety of positions including technical director of the *Waqf* Ministry, and court architect responsible for designing as well as overseeing a large number of conservation projects. Later he was also a founding member of the Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe (1881), which was established with the intent to preserve Egypt’s historical Islamic architecture. In most of the literature Franz and another “engineer-architect” by the name of Régis De Curel are credited with the overall design of the palace. As previously mentioned Diebitsch was first charged with designing a room, then, as he proved himself, he was awarded a large part of the interior: the entire north wing of the palace. Overall, the interior ended up in a variety of styles such that one could walk through a Neoclassical or even Baroque reception hall into a neo-Islamic drawing room. This was probably much to the dismay of Diebitsch since he probably envisioned the entire palace in a neo-Islamic style in accordance with his theory. Yet an entirely neo-Islamic palace was completely out of his control since Julius Franz was the court architect in charge of the project and the Khedive himself was fairly involved in the design due to his desire to personally impress the Empress Eugenie of France who was to stay as a guest in the palace during the Canal celebrations. Indeed, part of the palace was made as an exact replica of her apartments at the Tuilleries in Paris. However, on the interior Diebitsch was still able to work in his characteristic way by erecting prefabricated cast iron and plaster elements, some of which still exists today (figs. 164, 165 & 166).

While working on the Gezira projects Ohnesorge writes that "Mr. Diebitsch has mustered all his wealth of ornamentation, in order to create an outstanding work, [...] so that a quite

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magnificent (artistic) work will soon be completed." Throughout this process, Ohnesorge worried about whether Diebitsch's design would be accepted and supported by the Khedive, who Ohnesorge (in somewhat more typical European behavior at the time) held for a "philistine" in terms of art (Kunstbanausen). Ohnesorge reveals that the typical formal expectations of their aristocratic clientele in Cairo was for an Islamic style that was "oriented more towards an overblown, pompous and flamboyant (appearance)." Ohnesorge simply hoped that "the chubby money-despot possessed a better eye and feeling (than those around him) in order to distinguish the truly beautiful from the exaggerated, ostentatious, distorted, grotesque and laughable concoctions of our competitors." In the end Isma'il was happy with the work and impressed, despite the criticism of its sponsors who would have preferred the gaudiness proposed by his own French and Italian architects. Ohnesorge even notes that some Italians had to quit so that the Germans could finish their work in the adjoining rooms. It was because of this that Diebitsch was awarded more work at Gezira.

The most significant contribution to the building itself, however, exists on the exterior in the form of quite a large amount of striking cast ironwork, most of which still exists today (fig. 167 & fig. 168). This ironwork has since become a defining characteristic of the building and significantly affects one's experience of the building. It is also quite the contrasting addition to Franz and de Curel's rather mundane three-winged U-shaped palace on the Nile. The plan, which (originally) covers an area of about 85x81x85 meters with a central courtyard only accessible

800 Ohnesorge, Orientalische Skizzen, 45.
801 Ibid., 20f. Perhaps a more accurate translation of this word would be "art ignorant". However, it is rather negative in that ein Banause is technically a "peasant" so it is rather disparaging.
802 Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz, "Der Preußische Palast in Ägypten," 58.
804 Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz, "Der Preußische Palast in Ägypten," 58.
though the palace or from the Nile, is described by Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz as a “Baroque palace” (fig. 169). Since Diebitsch had little to nothing to do with the overall plan and layout I will only briefly address the exterior cast ironwork.

The imposing exterior ironwork at the Gezira palace creates a formidable impression due to its size, imposing formal geometries and material. Here we have so far, Diebitsch’s most aggressive use of large amounts of cast iron fabricated to his specifications in Lauchhammer. The west façade is comprised of three individual porticos, the center of which is the largest. Each portico is composed of three “arches” resting on slender columns with large capitals composed of a series of muqarnas supporting a rectangular volume made of ornamented cast iron panels. It is technically a two-story portico due to the use of shorter, engaged columns between the arches, springing from the capitals of the columns below. Similar to the mausoleum of Süleyman Pasha, Diebitsch conceived of these “arched” bays essentially as panels, which are (ornamentally) self-contained. The ornamentation varies and can be described through a number of motifs. Some are more ‘traditional’ Islamic motifs such as interlaced line patterns, which evoke Kufic style calligraphic script (fig. 170). Among the variety of vegetal motif patterns, there is also the repeated presence of a crescent with a star above it – a reference to the Egyptian royal house. The “arches”, which are simply cast iron formed into arch shapes, are formed into scalloped lines and arranged in varying degrees (widths) of the horseshoe form evoking Islamic architecture from the North African Maghreb to Islamic Spain. There are a variety of other references, some closer to those found at the Alhambra, and some more abstract throughout the ironwork. The overall impression of the porticos is a fine thinness conveyed by the apparent diaphanous quality of the thin but delicate ironwork. This is especially noticable when the sun reveals the fretwork

905 Ibid., 64.
pattern on the wall behind (fig. 171). This could be read as a reference to the prevalent local use of *mashrabiyya*, the typical structures of tightly interlaced and decorated wooden dowels to allow air but not much light into interior spaces (fig. 172). The vegetal patterns in these panels also share a formal similarity to those used during the period under Muhammad ‘Ali, which witnessed a number of buildings that employed this so-called “Baroque” style of vegetal interlacing.

One example of this “Baroque” style can be found in the Sabil-kuttab of Tusun Pasha (1820) in central Cairo built by Muhammad ‘Ali (fig. 173). This small building is dominated by a series of four shallow-set round arches in white, imported Turkish marble, similar ornate Baroque detailing and a dome, and on the whole represents a contrast to the architecture of Cairo prior to his reign. With projecting eaves, depictions of vases with “acanthus-like leaves” and stylized Ottoman floral patterns forming oval rings above and in between the arches, the articulation is purely Ottoman and betrays Muhammad ‘Ali’s European tastes, particularly through the presence of ovals and swag-like details (fig. 174). Of further note on Diebitsch’s ironwork are references to the number eight as demonstrated in the eight pointed star and a small octagonal frame with a short ornate dome emerging from it with a striking similarity to the proportions of the Dome of the Rock (fig. 175). Viewed from a distance the intricate detail of the porticoes begins to blend into abstract patterns, which give way to the dominant tripartite forms so common in Roman architecture and its variations throughout the Neoclassical revival. Yet, the pointed nature and horseshoe form of the arches inhibit an altogether formal similarity to the Roman triumphal arch and instead draw on precedents so well studied by Diebitsch like the

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Alhambra’s courts themselves (fig. 176, 177 & 178). Altogether these porticoes reveal the continued process of formulating a mixed architecture which can simultaneously draw upon multiple ‘traditions’ and convey a variety of (both local and historical) meaning at once.

Most of the research on the architects of the Gezira palace and the nearby kiosk has been conducted by Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz, who also has the most compelling theory about the architectural authorship of the palace and kiosk. While her explanation is more lengthy, her conclusion suggests that despite much of the literature that credits Julius Franz with both projects, Diebitsch had a more significant role than is typically acknowledged. The reason for this, she argues, is not only Franz’s own commentary (written well after Diebitsch’s death), but primarily found in Franz’s obituary authored by the German Egyptologist Ludwig Borchardt (1863-1938), who mentions Diebitsch, but gives him no specific credit. Indeed, after Diebitsch’s death in 1869 most historiography on the palace and its kiosk credited Julius Franz as the only architect (with an occasional mention of de Curel). This became standard in the literature and Diebtisch has only been discussed as co-architect since Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz’s research was published. She concludes that Diebitsch played a much greater role in not only the palace, but more importantly, the kiosk as well. One reason for this is that it was Diebitsch (and not Franz) who had all the connections to Lauchhammer and its engineer Wilhem Rose (who worked on site with these projects as well). There is also some stylistic evidence that she provides, which at the very least demonstrates a link between the interior design we know was completed by Diebitsch and the exterior porticoes – indicating that he most likely designed them.

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806 One example of this (where only Franz is mentioned) is a short piece showcasing the kiosk in: *Anzeiger für Architektur Kunsthändwerk und Bau-Industrie. Beblatt der Blätter für Architektur und Kunsthändwerk.* Jahrgang XI. No. 1 (January, 1908): 3.
809 Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz, „Der Preußische Palast in Ägypten,“ 65.
Franz actually “snatched” Diebitsch’s workers who were by then settled in and had already proven themselves and utilized the cast iron for the exterior of the palace to “revive the dull facades of the palace.” It is fairly clear then that by considering Franz’s oeuvre and Diebitsch’s oeuvre up to that point the exterior ironwork on the palace and most of the kiosk was in fact Diebitsch’s design. It is with this assumption that I move forward with an analysis of the building Baedeker’s considered to be “probably the most beautiful of the modern Arab buildings of Egypt,” the garden kiosk.

The Cast Iron Kiosk at al-Gezira and Modern Architecture

In his discussion of the garden kiosk at al-Gezira, the historian Mark Crinson states:

The kiosk, like the palace, represents a curious coming together of interests. On the one hand they both demonstrate and confirm a western fascination with notions of oriental luxuriance. On the other hand they show a certain hard-headed ability to employ western technical known-how in order to supply, with the kiosk at least, what must have been a relatively cheap and quickly constructed frippery.

This statement, in my view, represents the dominant opinion on buildings like the kiosk. I hope it is clear by now that Diebitsch falls outside of these parameters and constitutes a more complicated, if not productive, case study. First I will address Crinson’s idea of a “western fascination with notions of oriental luxuriance,” i.e. orientalism. Crinson intimates with this statement that the Khedive either had no knowledge of what was being provided for him or that he was altogether complicit or naïve regarding the design and its intent. This not only assumes a limited agency on the part of the Khedive in terms of the project, but that he was dissatisfied and

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810 Ibid., 70.
unhappy with the final product. We of course know by now that neither of these is the case. The fact is that Diebitsch was already working in Cairo and the Khedive sought him out and hired him for a specific reason. This reason, above all others, was the fact that Diebitsch proselytized, advocated and produced Modern architecture. The desire to showcase a modern building for his European guests reflects the Khedive’s mindset and intentions that we have seen in every other aspect of his rule. The fact that this project was begun in order to house the very Europeans the Khedive was trying to impress should suggest its raison d’être. And as seen earlier in Ohnesorge’s comments, he ultimately chose Diebitsch’s restrained modern approach to Islamic architecture, which differed significantly from his competitors. The Khedive may not have been a connoisseur, but he recognized Diebitsch’s Modern architecture.

The second critique by Crinson regarding the architect’s “western know how” that led to this supposed “cheap and quickly constructed frippery” is ironic in that this type of construction is actually what becomes the basis for the Modern movement in Europe, and even more so in the United States. There is the assumption here that these “western architects” would naturally provide inferior products and construction to a “non-European” ruler for a variety of reasons, which Crinson alludes to in the rest of his book (namely, racism). However, in this case, this reductivist approach is simply not accurate. Ohnesorge makes clear that the work they are producing is of a high quality and that, in contrast to their Italian and French peers, their quality brings “honor” to their (German) work. There is simply no evidence to suggest that what Diebitsch provided for his “Egyptian” clients was any different that what he provided for his “Prussian” clients in and around Berlin. Also, to consider this building “cheaply and quickly constructed frippery” is to simply not understand it.
The building is approximately 147 meters long and 12 meters high, the center section is about 30 meters long and that section is created entirely out of 400,000 kg (ca. 440 tons) of cast iron. The entire interior hall is constructed out of prefabricated poured formwork ‘art castings’ (Kunstguß) except the ceiling and roof construction, which is composed of riveted wrought iron components. According to the engineer Wilhlem Rose it cost about 250,000 Francs and was considered by him a work “of colossal dimensions.” All of the ironwork, as we are well aware, was cast and manufactured in the Lauchhammer iron foundry in Saxony near Dresden, according to Diebitsch’s designs, and shipped some 2,500 miles to the site. The Baedekers guide to Egypt of 1877 even tells us that the transport alone cost 2000 pounds Sterling. Surely this is not “frippery.” Its installation was overseen by Rose who painstakingly worked with Diebitsch on site traveling to Egypt four times and staying for months at a time. Thus, this “kiosk” was a rather substantial and formidable piece of architecture and still remains today a part of Lauchhammer’s portfolio of great historical projects. Interestingly, Crinson does not address the kiosk’s actual style, which is what Modernist historians would likely highlight as their reason for its exclusion from the Modern history of architecture. Therefore, it is quite apposite at this point to discuss the kiosk in terms of its style.

If we consider the formal composition of the kiosk built on the grounds of the Gezira palace we can make several observations (fig. 179). As has already been addressed, the process by which this building was created was a thoroughly modern one that anticipates Modernism. The building was composed of architectural forms, motifs and details typically described as

814 Elke Pflugradt-Abdel Aziz, „Der Preußische Palast in Ägypten;“ 69.
815 Anzeiger für Architektur Kunsthandwerk: 3.
“Islamic,” however there is no direct precedent, i.e. it is not a copy of any particular building and therefore not a simulacrum. Yet, in a kind of Baudrillardian way the building occupies a space that is between reflecting a historical precedent (generally), yet simultaneously it bears no relation to that precedent whatsoever. Rather, what is identifiable are many of the individual parts that produce the overall form of an “Islamic” building. Some of these details are traceable to the architecture of Sicily or Andalusia, namely the Alhambra, where Diebitsch spent so much time, however, much of what we see here was no doubt the product of his meticulous work to streamline the production of such patterns and forms into an easily reproducible modern architectural product. Stefan Koppelkamm suggests that “we do not find the model for Diebitsch’s portico in Cairo, but in Granada” and that the kiosk was “reminiscent of the arcade” in the Court of the Myrtles at the Alhambra.\textsuperscript{816} He further suggests that “Diebitsch’s neo-Moorish style” was “more alien than familiar” in Cairo, and accuses Diebitsch of transposing his “imaginary Orient” upon “the real Orient.”\textsuperscript{817} Phrased in these terms one might wonder why Koppelkamm does not consider Granada part of the “real” Orient? The reason Koppelkamm postulates here may have “sprung from the desire to ‘bring back honor’ to the ancient Islamic culture” but he concludes that the result was only a “particularly subtle form of cultural domination.” This interpretation of this building, aside from being purely theoretical, is based less on any critical or interpretive analysis of the building itself, or Diebitsch’s actions, and instead brings theories that have been developed for French and British cases to bear on a building built by a Prussian architect for the client that hired him. As discussed above with the palace itself, the kiosk is often read as a Classically organized pavilion due to its tripartite organization and symmetry etc. Koppelkamm even states that “Both German architects [Franz

\textsuperscript{816} Stefan Koppelkamm, Der imaginäre Orient, 90-95. \\
\textsuperscript{817} Ibid.
and Diebitsch] developed an "Arab" style that was less of a historical revival of traditional
Islamic designs and more like an Arabization of European designs and building types."818 So, what is required here is to understand the building in Islamic architectural terms and try to draw from an analysis of it, what Diebitisch may have been bringing to the project.

In terms of the composition of the building, the overall plan of the kiosk was likely conceived by Franz, and its organization is fairly simple. However, I believe that Diebitisch was able to directly influence a certain amount of the final outcome, which I will address presently. According to a preparatory or “shop drawing” I found in the Lauchhammer archive, it is clear that based on this plan, which shows a detailed layout of the kiosk in terms of its iron content, that the central portico is where there is the most concentration of iron columns (fig. 180). Moreover upon examining the façade, which faces the reflecting pond, we notice that there are twenty columns. Their arrangement seems logical in the overall organization. But upon closer scrutiny it appears that the outer most two on each side are perhaps not particularly necessary for the structural needs of the kiosk. They are crucial; however, if the intent is rather to subtly reference one of the most famous palatial-garden buildings in Islamic architectural history.

The so-called Chihil Sutun Pavilion (lit. “forty columns” Pavilion) in Isfahan was erected in 1647 as a garden pavilion on the grounds of a palace for Shah 'Abbas II (r. 1642-1688) (fig. 181) and was so named probably because of the reflection it gave of the twenty columns it had in the reflecting pool immediately in front of it as part of its central portico.819 This could explain the reason Diebitisch kept it to only twenty columns on the side that directly faced the reflecting

818 Ibid.
pool, but rendered the other side with many more (66) columns. Also apropos with regard to the Chihil Sutun is the idea that the architects, according to Robert Hillenbrand, "play fast and loose with some of the most time-honoured conventions of Persian architecture."\(^{830}\) In some ways, of course, this is what Diebitsch himself is doing. Hillenbrand also calls out the "modular nature of Islamic architecture in Iran" with the Chihil Sutun, also something obvious in Diebitsch's work. Other similarities include formal suggestions to the Islamic use of the hypostyle hall, which can be read in the center, interior portion of the kiosk (fig. 182). The hypostyle hall is one of the oldest mosque styles in Islamic architecture and when viewed from the inside bears a resemblance to many precedents including even an abstract reference to the famous hypostyle hall at Cordoba with its double height interlacing arches (fig. 183).

Another, more subtle—and as we have seen not solely—Islamic reference is the small octagonal lantern on the roof of the central portico. Its function, I believe from analyzing historical photos, is a clerestory permitting light and air to enter. It is likely, due to its diaphanous appearance, that it functions like either a Cairene mashrabiyya (traditionally in wood) or jali screen (traditionally carved from stone). Its placement and form also recall the earlier discussion of the octagonal lantern positioned above the central space at the Funerary Complex of Qala'un in Cairo. Thus, because it was made octagonal it is meaningful, not only in terms of "local" references, but to both architectural "traditions."

In terms of the kiosk's relationship to modern architecture it is important to highlight its inherent abstractness (fig. 184). Indeed, very few actual details were taken directly from antecedents and the result is an iron building that projects abstract patterns. Its tripartite

\(^{830}\) Ibid.
organization refers to Neoclassical design strategies that echo throughout Modern design well into the twentieth century. The choice of round arches versus pointed or even horseshoe arches lends a greater abstract quality to the building while potentially reducing any overt Islamic references. His use of round arches also certainly consciously refers not just to Heinrich Hübsch’s advocacy of the round arch as the Modern choice, but also to the contemporary Rundbogenstil of the Schinkelschüler. The fact that these arches are attenuated is indicative of Diebitsch purposefully contradicting Neoclassical rules of order, but it also calls to mind the irrelevancy of traditional notions of structure; in this case due to the material properties of the cast iron. Indeed, the arches are so high that there is little room left even for the roof. The 400 tons of iron appears rather thin throughout its use in the building (fig. 185).

The thinness and abstractness in tandem with the regular repeated geometries projects a certain flatness. This flatness and lightness caused by the material and repeated patterns pushes the kiosk more and more into the foreground flattening older notions of perspective, anticipating ideas developed in the early twentieth century. Indeed, if the building did not in fact draw on any Islamic historical references (no matter how abstract) and did not employ any patterning (only showing its rivets perhaps?) this building could easily, and perhaps even likely, made it into a book about early Modernism, say next to Frampton’s discussion of Webb’s Red House. However, it did not.

This raises the obvious question then about why Webb’s Red House of almost the same period (ca.1859) is considered appropriate to a narrative of Modern Architecture, and Diebitsch’s kiosk is not. Frampton tells us that the Red House for Webb “established the principles which
were soon to inform the work of his brilliant contemporaries.  

These principles, according to Frampton, are Webb’s “concern for structural integrity and his desire to integrate buildings into their site and into local culture. These aims he achieved through practical design, sensitive site layout and the use of local materials, coupled with a profound respect for traditional building methods,” and he added that he was also “against any excessive use of ornament.” Of course actually defining what is and what is not Modern architecture is fraught with controversy, but in this case it seems to suggest there is more of a cultural component than a formal or aesthetic. In other words, Modernism must first spring from a cultural milieu, which supported and encouraged those design principles outlined above. Even if this was the case it does not explain Diebitsch’s status, since he grew out of one of the most important building traditions in Europe at the time. The most compelling reason I see for his exclusion (aside from Diebitsch’s early death from small pox in 1869), especially the exclusion of this kiosk at Gezira, is that his sources, be they Classical, Gothic or Islamic, were based on a much broader notion of an interconnected, entangled history that was simply not recognized or understood through its mixed, abstracted and poetical expression in his architecture.

Conclusion

This brief narrative about Diebitsch naturally raises a variety of further questions. However, my intention, through my initial question—how we might be able to extend existing notions of Modernism without losing a sense of its boundaries—was to advance the proposition that it is possible to produce a structure in the 1860s that can be considered simultaneously ‘modern’ and

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‘Islamic.’ I have refrained from labeling Diebitsch’s work “orientalist” for the particular reason that not only is it not so easily classifiable, but simply does not do it justice, or tell us anything useful for that matter. His work, when scrutinized in terms of his background, and in terms of the work of his mentor Stier, does not suggest he shares characteristics of those typically labeled “orientalists.” There was no government behind his work except for the support he received in order to get to the Fair. In fact the Prussian representative refused to even assist him on an occasion when he was having money troubles with Oppenheim. On the contrary, Diebitsch, like any other curious and ambitious architect discovered a style of architecture that he quickly became enamored with and chose to pursue and adapt to the modern building industry. Nowhere in contemporary articles about him, or on his lectures etc., is there any suggestion that he saw it as anything else—especially not as an opportunity to impose a “particularly subtle form of cultural domination.” He was neither a subject of a colonial imperial state, nor was he employed by a colonial government. Instead he was an independent “entrepreneur” who met, and was eventually hired by, a sovereign ruler of a country whose only colonial associations at the time was the fact that it was still “technically” itself a province of the Ottoman Porte. And while it is true that there were other foreign nationals in Egypt at the time that employed him also, and he was a foreigner there as well, there is simply no evidence that can link him to any kind of imperial-colonial authority seeking to marginalize a “non-Western” entity. Of course these points can be analyzed more closely and elaborately, but in the end Diebitsch only appears to be an architect who sought to have a successful architectural practice designing in a style he believed was the answer to the most important question in nineteenth century architectural culture: In what style should we build?
Diebitsch’s use of ‘arabesques’ and other ‘Islamic’ motifs therefore should not be seen in a reductivist sense that understands these motifs merely as orientalist whims that potentially reify an imperial worldview. Rather, they should be seen as evidence of a designer employing Islamic design motifs, in combination with new technologies as part of a broader trend of a politically motivated modernization that had a particular meaning in both a German and international context (fig. 186). Diebitsch, who as we have seen, was himself a product of the Berlin architectural tradition and beneficiary of Peter Beuth’s industrial-political advocacy. Over time, he developed a distinctive, more abstract style, which challenged the entrenched Neoclassical and Gothic styles with a different style that he believed was not only ultimately derived from the same sources as the Neoclassical and Gothic, but that lent itself better to new materials and more efficient means of production. Moreover, he recognized and developed the tendency he saw in ‘Islamic’ architecture further toward abstraction by streamlining its details by mass-producing its elements. This significant work by Diebitsch—from his use of modern materials, methods of production, means of transportation and challenge to Europe’s entrenched styles—not only anticipated key features of the Modern movement in architecture, but his work ultimately complicates and challenges our understanding of what is considered “Modern” architecture. But despite his mixed success at the Expo, as well as Khedive Isma’il’s dissatisfaction with the fact that Diebitsch placed his pavilion in the Prussian section (instead of the Egyptian one), Diebitsch nevertheless returned to Cairo afterward to dedicate himself to his most important work that would become the fullest expression of is ideas and, in the end, his legacy.
EPILOGUE:

INTERPRETING ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
If we compare the Egyptian displays at the 1862 and 1867 International Exhibitions a shift in the European attitude toward Islamic architecture, and even culture, begins to emerge. Indeed, Islamic art and architecture had, for the most part from the 1830s through the 1850s in Europe, been associated with scholarly pursuits (albeit still ‘Orientalist’) and was even seen as a potential answer to architecture’s worn out dependence on Classical and Gothic paradigms in the search for a new modern style for the nineteenth century. By 1867, however, this was all to change. The “Moorish” style was no longer associated with Owen Jones’s design reforms that he had outlined in *The Grammar of Ornament* in 1856. Nor was the Moorish seen any longer as a springboard for a modern architecture as once conceived by Carl von Diebitsch who was still in the process of developing in Egypt’s rapidly modernizing city of Cairo. Instead, at the exhibits, we do not find the clear suggestion that Egypt is a modern state in pursuit of a modern, industrial agenda, with a modernizing urban model of Cairo—as much of the evidence on the ground suggests. Rather, we find quite the opposite. Indeed, we find the invention of a “Medieval Cairo”.

This discrepancy is found in the two very different displays representing Egypt at the fairs. In 1862 the Egyptian Court featured a prominent display of Pharaonic artifacts, which were largely on display from the new antiquities museum founded by Viceroy Said who is described overall very positively, despite a minor air of condescension, as one who recognizes the value of ones own cultural heritage.

Instead of destroying the monuments of antiquity, he (Viceroy Said) has done all in his power to preserve them; and, under the care of the accomplished director, M. Auguste Mariette, who acts as his chief commissioner here, a collection is rapidly being formed at

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823 AlSayyad, Nezar, Irene Bierman and Nasser Rabbat (eds.), *Making Cairo Medieval*. 338
Cairo, which, now only two or three years old, is, in some respects, already superior to any of the European museums.\textsuperscript{824}

Cassell limits the description of the Egyptian Court to objects relating to Egypt's antique past with only a minor reference to its modernity at the very end: "Over this very complete illustration of ancient and modern Egypt is fitly placed a fine portrait of Mehmet Ali, the energetic founder of the modern prosperity of the country."\textsuperscript{825} However, other descriptions paint a fuller picture of what the 1862 court contained. One source describes the display as organized into three sections: "the products of modern Egypt, of the Soudan, and the relics of ancient Egypt.\textsuperscript{826} The description of the products of modern Egypt centers on its strong textile industry and compliments the quality, design and colors of the fabrics on display, noting that "the articles shown here, have been bought in the bazaars, and there are hardly any which have been manufactured for the Exhibition", which, it is noted, "the Viceroy himself is the sole exhibitor in the department."\textsuperscript{827} The author continues to praise the quality and craftsmanship of the embroidery and gold filigree work displayed in the Sudan section of the court then moves to a discussion of Egypt's agricultural display and finally to the exhibit of Pharaonic artifacts, which he describes as: "(t)he portion of the Exhibition which will excite most interest.\textsuperscript{828} The fact that the Viceroy was the "sole exhibitor," and therefore responsible for what was on display, reveals the agency the Egyptian government had within the largely European setting of the fair. Clearly Viceroy Said's intent was to give a sample of what goods were being produced in Egypt and its territory the Sudan at the time, as well as demonstrate Egypt's connection to its historical antique

\textsuperscript{824} Cassell's Illustrated Exhibitor, \textit{Illustrations with Descriptions of the International Exhibition of 1862} (London and New York: Cassell, Petter & Galpin ltd., 1862), 182.
\textsuperscript{825} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{826} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{827} "Egypt in the International Exhibition," \textit{The Mercury} (29 Aug 1862), 2. Reprinted from the \textit{London Times}.
\textsuperscript{828} Ibid.
past. However, things were to change substantially in 1867 with the construction of three pavilions within the Egyptian section of the fair – this time under the authority of the new Viceroy Isma‘il.

At the 1867 Exposition Universelle the Egyptian section was comprised of a total of four pavilions, three of which formed their own urban assemblage since a ‘street’ linked them to one another. It was here in the planning of the layout that the architectural historian Zeynep Celik observes that in their design of the buildings “the exposition planners turned to the past, to an image that they considered outdated but that the West associated with Islam.” This is despite the fact that throughout the 1860s Cairo had been undergoing a major revitalization of the existing city through drastic interventions in the city’s urban fabric. This led to sweeping transformations such as projects to link public squares with grand boulevards in the manner of Baron Haussmann that cut giant swaths of space through the dense urban environment. However, the pavilions sharing the ‘street’ at the Expo were a Pharaonic temple (designed by Claude Mariette), a small palace for the Viceroy in which to rest (selamlik), and a covered market or caravanserai (wikala or okel). The latter two were designed in a neo-Mamluk style by the French architect Jacques Drévet and E. Schmitz and were intended to provide a sample of Egypt’s residential (albeit Royal) and commercial architecture.829 Whether the style chosen for these pavilions was the original idea of the European architects hired, or, as Celik argues, Westernized Egyptians who sought to “redefine their self-identity according to Western views,” or other reasons, the fact remains that this was the first time architecture from medieval Cairo’s history was on display at an Exhibition.

829 Zeynep Celik, Displaying the Orient, 111. She lists an “E. Schmitz” but does not give his full name, nor any further information about him.
However, Celik’s somewhat problematic logic with regard to her discussion of the 1867 Egyptian pavilion, which seems to have been based entirely on the assumption that Charles Edmond’s interpretation of the exhibit is actually indeed what the architects were thinking (which is impossible to know since they did not apparently write their ideas down or publish them) then we would be left thinking that those Egyptians who were in charge of the exhibit (ultimately the Khedive) had little to no agency in the design of the exhibit. Rather than allowing these Egyptian officials any agency Çelik accuses the European architects and exhibition planners involved as determining the aesthetic and architectural outcome of the exhibit just as she does in her example of the adjacent Ottoman pavilion of 1867. Her discussion of the Ottoman exhibit is clearer in that she states: “(a)lthough the change appears to have been enforced from the outside, it should be understood within the general framework of Westernizing reforms undertaken by the ruling elite.” Not only does this comment suggest the existence of an ‘Ottoman architecture’ that is itself a monolithic entity, impervious to any outside influence, but it also claims that the changes to it originated from a specific Westernization that was embraced by the Ottoman “ruling elite,” as opposed to what one could possibly interpret as a more neutral concept of modernization.

Continuing her strategy of highlighting the foreign influence of the West that somehow corrupted these “ruling elites” she suggests “French architects initiated and practiced the academic approach, but it was endorsed wholeheartedly by the Ottoman commissioners to the exposition.” Again there appears an attempt to remove the agency of any Ottoman figures (in this case), who remain nameless, in order to demonstrate that the ideas she interprets as negative, all originated in the West, and that the Ottomans who participated in the Expo were victims of

830 Zeynep Celik, 96. My emphasis.
Western deception. This is a persistent strategy throughout the text and obfuscates who is actually responsible for these pavilions and what they look like. She continues with comments such as “the Ottoman Empire was represented at the 1867 fair by an ensemble of buildings-as-objects.” Employing the phrase “was represented,” as if the Ottoman’s had no agency, she neglects to directly acknowledge the fact that it was they themselves under the “meticulous attention given to the design and construction of the Ottoman pavilions” by the Sultan Abdülaziz himself that authored and approved of the way they the Ottoman empire was being represented.

What I wish to highlight here with this example (that had become normalized in postcolonial architectural theory for some time) is an all too often lack of attention to detail with regard to how exhibitions like these are read. For example, amongst all of the arguments that Europe was busy medievalizing the representation of contemporary Egyptians, Celik neglects to mention that in contrast to the Ottoman pavilion there is no mosque in the Egyptian display. What are we to make of this fact? Was it an oversight by these Egyptian elites? Did the European planners and architects dissuade the Egyptians from displaying a mosque in the exhibit for some reason? Was there simply no room? No budget? My point is that it is equally easy to read this Egyptian exhibit not as an example of Europe’s imperial tendencies which mask structures of power, but rather as an attempt by the Egyptians in charge of the display to represent a modern Egyptian identity for themselves (which includes what ‘Egypt’ sees as its own “traditional” “heritage” – as problematic as those ideas are). I propose this for the simple fact that readings like these have had a tendency to close the debate and limit the discourse relating to what are far more complex relationships between “East” and “West”, if we are still to see it in these terms.
In order to challenge these entrenched perspectives, for example, I propose to start with the lack of a mosque at the Egyptian exhibit. This ‘absence’ is perhaps not only indicative of the fact that the Khedive is not a (spiritual) ‘Caliph’ (like the Ottoman Sultan claimed to be), but that the organizers found Egypt’s religious identity (which was, of course, well-known to be famously diverse) unimportant in a display whose purpose was to represent all of Egypt. Is it unreasonable then to assume that this ‘Egyptian elite’ (and the Khedive) had agency and intent as well as their own ideas? Instead of reading the employed style as medievalizing Cairo, we can read the choice of the neo-Mamluk style employed in the Egyptian pavilions for the selamlik and wikala as an attempt to refer back to what is often considered Egypt’s most formidable, powerful and richest historical moment (after the Pharaohs). Perhaps it was this historical moment (prior to the Ottoman take over of Egypt in 1516) that the elites, including the Viceroy himself (who as we should remind ourselves was of Turkic origin), sought to recall? Of course, the Khedive, in actuality, had no ‘real’ connection to this style, which many believed to be somehow ‘indigenous’ to Egypt (or at least not ‘foreign’ in the way Ottoman architecture was perceived to be). Nonetheless, the choice may reflect his desire to embrace the style as representative of his country, which so many foreigners admired.

In terms of these styles we can recall quite the opposite move by Ismail’s grandfather Muhammad ’Ali, the so-called “Father of Modern Egypt,” who, it has been convincingly argued, was still under the influence of the great Ottoman past for much of his reign when he decided to build a congregational mosque atop Cairo’s citadel in the 1830s (The Mosque of Muhammad ’Ali) (fig. 187). Indeed, despite ruling Egypt as a Wali (governor) since 1805, then as its official leader as a Viceroy until his death in 1848, Muhammad ’Ali never once employed the use of the Mamluk style for new structures in his adopted city. Instead, he turned toward an older Ottoman
style more reminiscent of the Ottoman Empire’s classical glory days in his grand architectural expression of the congregational mosque project. We can infer the significance and meaning these styles had to Egypt’s rulers and elites through the example of this important and highly symbolic mosque and through Muhammad 'Ali’s rejection of the French architect Pascal Coste’s (1787-1879) initial design. Coste, who was commissioned by Muhammad 'Ali to design the mosque, and his chief architect from 1817 to 1829, based his design on an extensive survey her carried out of Cairo’s religious architecture. This religious architecture happened to be overwhelmingly Mamluk in style and eventually resulted in his famous text *Architecture Arabe* published in 1837. His proposal for a new mosque for Muhammad 'Ali therefore, not surprisingly, resulted in an updated variation on the theme of Mamluk architecture (fig. 188).

This massive neo-Mamluk mosque was eventually rejected, however, and it is uncertain as to whether the foundations were begun for Coste’s design or not, n the end, Coste was replaced by Yusuf Bushnaq, a Greek from Istanbul. Some believe that the mosque was modeled on the mid-seventeenth century Yeni Mosque (originally the *Valide Sultan Camii*) (fig. 189), while others have argued that it evokes the Sultan Ahmet Mosque in Istanbul, better known as the “Blue Mosque” (1609-1617) (fig. 190) because of its associations with the great Ottoman past before it became seen as ‘decadent’ by Muhammad ‘Ali. In this way the mosque was intended to symbolize a new era of ‘independent,’ yet Turkish-style rule that successfully asserted itself

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within the Arab context of early nineteenth-century Egypt. As such, there is no mistaking it for a Mamluk or “Arab” structure. It is resoundingly Ottoman. Bearing these attitudes toward style in mind, I find it difficult to assume that the groups, or even the European architects of the pavilions, were completely ignorant of these ideas.

Despite this rather specific critique, I feel that is necessary to call attention to these types of issues that have led to what I believe amounts to a shutting down of the debate on these styles and architects in the study of the nineteenth century. Indeed, when the debate becomes ‘personal’ with regard to culture and religion, and woven with what are essentially nationalist interests, it becomes all but impossible to discuss these much maligned figures. Again, I feel that I must emphasize the point that I have made throughout this text and that is I am in no way defending either the imperial or colonial prerogatives of Western nations, nor am I an apologist for the activities of architects who are indeed guilty of malfesance. Instead, the main goal of this work is to recuperate a lost “root” of Modernism that was based in the idea that a modern architecture, in fact, has no single root in an idealized culture of the past, but that it has countless roots informed by a many cultures and many pasts.

833 Ibid.

Figure 2. Sir Colen Campbell, Wanstead House, 1715-22. Source: Nathaniel Spencer, *The Complete English Traveller*, 1771.
Figure 3. Andreas Schlüter et al., Zeughaus (Former Royal Arsenal, 1695-1730; now the Deutsches Historisches Museum). Photo by Author (2010).

Figure 4. Georg Wenzeslaus von Knobelsdorff, Garden Façade (corps de logis) of the Palace at Sanssouci, 1745-47. Photo by Author (2010).
Figure 5. The Neues Palais (New Palace), Johann Gottfried Büring, 1763-69. Photo by Author (2012).

Figure 6. Jean-Laurent Legeay, (c. 1710 - 1786) The Communs (part of the New Palace Ensemble), 1765-69. (Completed by Gontard). Photo by Author (2010).
Figure 7. Friedrich Gilly, Entwurf zu einem Denkmal für Friedrich den Großen auf dem Leipziger Platz in Berlin, Gouache and pen and ink on a sketch with pencil and compass on Papier Vergé. Ident.Nr. SZ Gilly 5 © Foto: Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Reprinted here under license. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Germany License. http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/de/legalcode

Figure 8. Étienne-Louis Boullée, Projet de cénotaphe à Isaac Newton - Vue en élévation (Design for a Cenotaph for Isaac-Newton), 1784. Source : BNF - Base Gallica. Reprinted here per PD-1923.
Figure 9. Nauener Tor, c.1755, Potsdam, Germany. Designed by Johann Gottfried Büring and based on a sketch by Frederick II. Photo by Author (2012).
Source: Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität Berlin in der Universitätsbibliothek, Inv. Nr. 18392
Figure 11. Friedrich Gilly and Johann Friedrich Frick, *Entrance to the Chapter Hall* (1 page from Frick: *Schloss Marienburg in Preussen*, 1803), 1799. Aquatint on paper. Sammlung: Kunstabibliothek | Ornamentstichsammlung. © Photo: Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Reprinted here under license. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Germany License. http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/de/legalcode

Part II.

(No Images)

Part III.
Figure 12. Ibn Tulun Mosque, Cairo, Egypt, ca. 876. Photo by Author (2008).

Figure 14. Left: Karl Friedrich Schinkel, *Der Chor des Veitsdoms in Prag mit Festdekoration* (Choir of St. Veits Church with holiday decorations), Prague, 1803. Grey ink over preliminary drawing in graphite / handmade paper (vélin), Ident.Nr. SM 2.10.


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Figure 16. Karl Friedrich Schinkel, *Der Dom Santa Maria in Aquileia (Cathedral of S. Maria in Aquila)*, brown ink over preliminary drawing in graphite / handmade paper (vergé), 1803. Ident.Nr. SM 3.55. © Photo: Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Reprinted here under license. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Germany License. http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/de/legalcode

Figure 17. Karl Friedrich Schinkel, *Das Innere des Doms von Aquileia (Interior of the Cathedral of S. Maria in Aquila)*, 1803. Pen and brown ink, over preliminary drawing in graphite / handmade paper (verge), Ident.Nr. SM 3.56. © Photo: Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Reprinted here under license. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Germany License. http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/de/legalcode

Figure 20. Monreale Cathedral, Sicily, Italy (1174-1182). © Neil Weightman, https://www.flickr.com/photos/neil_weightman/270170454/in/photostream/. Licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0, https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/legalcode.
Figure 21. Mosaics and Wooden Carved Muqarnas Ceiling of the Cappella Palatina, Sicily, Italy, ca. 1132-1140s). © Jean-Pierre Dalbéra, https://www.flickr.com/photos/dalbera/7027407407/. Licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0, https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/legalcode.
Figure 22. Veneer marble inlaid with polychrome enamels and mosaics in the Cappella Palatina, Sicily, Italy, ca.1132-1140s). © Jean-Pierre Dalbéra, https://www.flickr.com/photos/dalbera/7027407407/. Licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0, https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/legalcode.
Figure 23 Karl Friedrich Schinkel, *View of Palermo from the Palace la Zisa* (1804), Ink over preliminary drawing in graphite / handmade in fabric blue colored paper (vergé) (a page from his Sketchbook) Kupferstichkabinett, Ident.Nr. SM 6b.65.
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Figure 25. Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Altmaurischer Palast des Prinzen Butera auf der Bagaria bei Palermo (Old Moorish Palace of the Butera Princes on the Bagaria near Palermo), 1804. Grey ink, brown wash (sepia?), Over preliminary drawing in graphite / handmade paper (vrgé), Kupferstichkabinett Ident.Nr. SM 6b.75. © Photo: Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Reprinted here under license. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Germany License. http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/de/legalcode

Figure 26. Monastir – Ribat, Tunisia, ca. 796 century. © Ad Meskens (2012) http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ribat_Monastir_03.JPG. Licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0, http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/deed.en
Figure 27. Karl Friedrich Schinkel. *Entwurf zu einem Dom als Denkmal für die Befreiungskriege* (Befreiungsdom) (*Design for a Cathedral as a Monument to the Wars of Liberation*), 1814/1815. Graphite on vellum. © Photo: Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ident.Nr. SM 20a.248. Reprinted here under license. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Germany License. http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/de/legacodelist
Figure 28. Heinrich Gentz (with Schinkel), Mausoleum for Queen Louise (ca.1810) Charlottenburg, Berlin. Above: Exterior; Below: Interior. Undated Postcards. Courtesy of Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University.
Figure 29. Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Queen Louise memorial in Gransee in Brandenburg, Germany, ca. 1811. Photo © Doris Antony, Berlin (2003). Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en
Figure 30. Monument to the Wars of Liberation on the Kreuzberg (1821-26)
Source/Photo: Landesarchiv, Berlin. 250-01 Lfd. Nr. SB006 (Tab. 8)
Right: Photo by Author (2012).
Source/Photo: Landesarchiv, Berlin. 250-01 Lfd. Nr. SB006 (Tab. 8)

Figure 33. Title Page and Plates of Ibn Tulun Mosque and Sultan Hasan Funerary Complex. From: Description de l'Égypte, ou, Recueil de observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l'expédition de l'armée française (1809-) Source: The copy above is owned by the Institut d'Egypt, and it was digitized by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, http://descegy.bibalex.org/index1.html
Figure 34. Frontispiece and Plate showing a view of the funerary complex of Qait Bay in Cairo. Source: Pascal Coste, *Architecture arabe, ou Monuments du Kaire, mesurés et dessinés*, de 1818 à 1826, Paris, 1837. Courtesy of Aga Khan Documentation Center, MIT
Figure 35. Ludwig Persius, *Dampfmaschinenhaus* (Steam pump house) for Sanssouci Park Fountain ("The Mosque") (1841-43). Photo by Author (2010).

Figure 36. Nicholas de Pigage, *The Mosque*, on the grounds of Schwetzingen Palace, 1778-1795. Photo by Author (2012).
Figure 37. Der maurische Tempel (The Moorish Temple at Potsdam), ca. 1830. (Demolished)
Source: Detail image from Plan von Potsdam und Umgegend: mit Benutzung der Gartenpläne des
Königl. Garten = Directors Lenné aufgenommen und gezeichnet von W. v. Möllendorf (1830). Photo:
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Photographs Courtesy of Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University
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hindert nicht, anzuerkennen, dass der junge Architekt — insbesondere an dem

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evangelischen Dom.
Rom 1827.

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