REVIVAL
MEMORIES, IDENTITIES, UTOPIAS

EDITED BY
AYLA LEPINE
MATT LODDER
ROSALIND MCKEVER

COURTAULD
BOOKS
ONLINE

Revival. Memories, Identities, Utopias
Edited by Ayla Lepine, Matt Lodder, and Rosalind McKever

Courtauld Books Online is a series of scholarly books published by The Courtauld Institute of Art. The series includes research publications that emerge from Courtauld Research Forum events and Courtauld projects involving an array of outstanding scholars from art history and conservation across the world. It is an open-access series, freely available to readers to read online and to download without charge. The series has been developed in the context of research priorities of The Courtauld which emphasise the extension of knowledge in the fields of art history and conservation, and the development of new patterns of explanation.

For more information contact booksonline@courtauld.ac.uk
All chapters of this book are available for download at courtauld.ac.uk/research/courtauld-books-online

Designed by Jack Hartnell

Cover Image:
Henri De Braekeleer, *The Man in the Chair*, 1876 (detail).
Oil on canvas, 79 x 63 cm, Koninklijk Museum voor
Schone Kunsten, Antwerp.

THE
COURTAULD
Institute of Art

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

DEBORAH CHERRY is Professor of Art History at the University of the Arts London and The University of Amsterdam (emerita). She has published on nineteenth-century art with *Painting Women: Victorian Women Artists* (Routledge, 1994) and *Beyond the Frame: Feminism and Visual Culture, 1850–1900* (Routledge, 2000). She was Editor of *Art History*, editing *Art: History: Visual: Culture* (Wiley, 2005) and *About Stephen Bann* (Wiley, 2006), as well as *Location* (Wiley, 2007) and *Spectacle and Display* (Wiley, 2008) with Fintan Cullen. *The Afterlives of Monuments* assembled accounts of the histories of monuments in South Asia (*South Asian Studies*, 29:1, 2013 & Routledge, 2014). In 2015 she curated an exhibition of the work of Maud Sulter (1960–2008), an artist and writer of British and Ghanaian heritage, for which she compiled and edited the accompanying publication, *Maud Sulter: Passion* (Altitude Editions, 2015).

WHITNEY DAVIS is George C. and Helen N. Pardee Professor of History & Theory of Ancient & Modern Art, where he has also been Director of the Film Studies Program and of the interdisciplinary Arts Research Center, and Visiting Professor of History of Art at the University of York. He is the author of seven books on prehistoric, ancient, and modern arts, philosophical aesthetics, and art theory, most recently *Queer Beauty: Sexuality and Aesthetics from Winckelmann to Freud and Beyond* (Columbia, 2011) and *A General Theory of Visual Culture* (Princeton, 2011). Recent articles have appeared in *Gay and Lesbian Quarterly*, *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, *Third Text*, and *Art History* and in anthologies on Heidegger and art history and Baxandall and art history. He is currently completing *Visuality and Virtuality: Images and Pictures from Ancient Egypt to New Media*, a companion volume to *A General Theory of Visual Culture*, and *Inquiry in Art History*, a collection of essays on writers who have proposed systematic models of the structure of art history.

JOHN HARVEY is Professor of Art at the School of Art, Aberystwyth University, Wales, UK. He is a historian of art, visual culture, and sound art, and also a sound- and visual-art practitioner. His research field is the visual and sonic culture of religion, principally. Harvey's historical studies, engage the imagery and sonorities of popular piety, the Judaeo-Christian scriptures, supernaturalist traditions, and working-class culture. In his practice, he explores non-iconic attitudes to visualization and sonic articulations of religion through an engagement with visual, textual, and audible sources, theological and cultural ideas, and systemic and audiovisualogical processes.

ALISON HOKANSON is an assistant curator for nineteenth-century painting at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, where she has worked on exhibitions ranging from Pre-Raphaelite art and design in the museum's collection to the drawings of Vincent van Gogh. She earned her MA and Ph.D. as an Erwin Panofsky Fellow at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. Her doctoral thesis examined the interior scenes of little-known Belgian painter Henri De Braekeleer and their role in the development of modern art and identity in the newly-formed nation of Belgium from the 1860s through the 1890s. Having published on topics including French drawings at the Louvre and the studio scenes of Frédéric

Bazille and Auguste Renoir, she is now focusing on the dynamic artistic interactions that galvanized international realism and symbolism at the turn of the twentieth century in England, Belgium, and Germany.

MARTIN HORÁCEK was born in Olomouc (now in the Czech Republic) in 1977. He studied art history (2005 Ph.D.) and now works as an associate professor at the Institute of Architecture, Brno University of Technology, and at the Department of Art Education, Palacký University Olomouc. He is interested in architecture of the eighteenth to twenty-first centuries, heritage conservation, historiography and theory of art, and has given lectures about these topics in Prague, Cracow, London, Lisbon, Chicago, or Notre Dame. He is the author of *Toward a More Beautiful World: Traditionalism in Architecture of the 20th and 21st Centuries* (2013, Czech / English), *The Strict Renaissance in 19th Century Bohemian Architecture and the Contemporary Debates about Style* (2012, Czech with English summary) and co-author of *Great Villas of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia* (2010, English) and *Naprej! Czech Sports Architecture 1567–2012* (2012, English). He co-founded the civic association Za krásnou Olomouc (For Olomouc Beautiful), becoming its first chairman (2008–9).

PHIL JACKS, M.Arch., Ph.D., is Associate Professor in the Department of Fine Arts & Art History at the George Washington University in Washington, DC. He is the author of *The Antiquarian and the Myth of Antiquity* (1993), and editor of *Vasari's Florence: Artists & Literati at the Medici Court* (1999) and *Giorgio Vasari's Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects* (2006). His monograph with William Caferro, *The Spinelli of Florence: Fortunes of a Renaissance Merchant Family* (2001) has recently appeared in Italian translation. He has also written on adaptive reuse of architectural monuments, including the ruins of ancient Rome and post-industrial American cities. His forthcoming monograph, *'To Make it a Grand Entrepôt': Baltimore's Locust Point* explores the urban evolution of the grain elevators, ports of immigration, and the building of the B & O rail terminus.w

MICHELLE JACKSON holds a BA in German Language and Literature from Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität and Saint Joseph's University, and an MA in the History of Design from Parsons School of Design and the Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. She is an adjunct professor of Design History and Visual Culture at the School of Art and Design History and Theory and the School of Constructed Environments at The New School. She has led several archival cataloguing projects at institutions including Bard Graduate Center, the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Neue Galerie New York, and Sotheby's auction house where she specialized in twentieth-century design. Her current research on early twentieth-century European design theory and architectural studies has been published and presented at conferences in both the US and the UK.

AYLA LEPINE is an art and architectural historian. A lecturer at the University of Essex, she specialises in the Gothic Revival c.1850–1950. Following an MA and Ph.D. at the Courtauld Institute of Art, she held an Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship within the Courtauld's

Research Forum and was a Fellow at Yale's Institute of Sacred Music. She has taught at the V&A, King's College London, Mount Holyoke College, Warwick, and Nottingham. Her publications include essays on the Crimean Memorial Church in Istanbul, the intersections of music and visual culture in G.F. Bodley's Cambridge architecture, Kenneth Clark and the Gothic Revival, and the history of Victorian Anglican art and architecture. She is co-editor of Pickering and Chatto's book series *Religion, Architecture and Visual Culture*, a Contributing Historian for the *Architectural Review*, and Arts Editor of the *Marginalia Review of Books*. She is completing a book on medievalism's impact on urban modernity in Britain and America.

MATT LODDER is a lecturer in contemporary art and theory and the Director of American Studies at the University of Essex. In 2010, he completed a doctoral thesis entitled 'Body Art: Body Modification as Artistic Practice', which sought to reconcile the common-place metaphors describing tattooing and similar practices as 'body art' with the lack of art-historical and art-theoretical attention afforded to them. Matt has published and lectured widely on the history of Western tattooing and has lent his expertise to the BBC, Sky, Channel 4 and the National Geographic Channel, and is a regular contributor to *Total Tattoo* magazine. His work has appeared in or been reported on in newspapers and magazines around the world, and he has given invited public lectures on three continents. He is currently writing a history of tattooing as an artistic practice in Britain from 1870 to present.

ROSALIND MCKEVER is an art historian and curator specialising in twentieth-century Italian art. She has taught at the University of Sussex and Kingston University, London. Her doctoral thesis addressed Futurism's relationship with the past, time and the Italian artistic tradition between 1909 and 1919 and was accompanied by a virtual exhibition, *Futurism and the Past* (2012–13), in collaboration with the Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art. Recent articles and chapters have considered the Futurist movement's sculptural classicism, its relationship with the present and interest in the primitive, the Byzantine, and cyclical models of history. Other publications have compared Futurism and Vorticism's temporalities and considered the juxtaposition of historic and contemporary art at the Tate Britain. In 2015–16 she is a fellow in the department of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, developing her research on the sculptures of Umberto Boccioni.

JONATHAN MEKINDA is an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago with a joint appointment in the Department of Art History and the School of Design. His research focuses on the history of architecture and design during the middle decades of the twentieth century, particularly in the United States and Italy. He has received grants from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation and the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, and his writing can be found in journals such as the *Journal of Architectural Education* and *Design Issues*. In 2013, *Chicagoisms*, which he co-edited with Alexander Eisenschmidt, was published by Park Books, and in 2014

they curated a related exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago. In addition to several on-going projects related to Chicago, he is currently at work on his book, *Building the "House of Man": Design and the Modern Home in Milan, 1930–1960.*

ALAN POWERS teaches at New York University, London and writes mainly on twentieth century British architecture, art and design. He was for many years at the University of Greenwich, becoming Professor of Architecture and Cultural History. In 2011–12 he was awarded a Mid-career Fellowship by the British Academy for a study of non-Modernist architecture in Britain in the mid twentieth century. His books include *Serge Chermayeff* (RIBA Publications, 2001), *Britain* in the series Modern Architectures in History (Reaktion, 2007), and *Eric Ravilious, Artist and Designer* (Lund Humphries, 2013). He is currently working on a monograph on the British artist and illustrator *Edward Ardizzone* (Lund Humphries, 2016). As an exhibition curator, he has worked at Design Museum, Imperial War Museum, Kettles Yard, Royal Academy and the De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea. He is a former Chairman of the Twentieth Century Society and currently a Trustee of the Society, active in its events and publications programme.

ALYSON WHARTON completed her PhD at SOAS, University of London, in 2011. The thesis concerned a family of Armenian architects, the Balyan family, who accrued an unusual degree of personal power over the Ottoman sultans' imperial building works in the nineteenth century. She moved to Mardin Artuklu University in S/E Turkey, where she has been working as Assistant Professor in the Department of History of Art for the past three years. Whilst at Mardin, she published her thesis as a book *Architects of Constantinople: The Balyan Family and the History of Ottoman Architecture* (IB Tauris, 2015). She also published book chapters on the works of Armenian architects in the region of Mardin and Upper Mesopotamia. She is now embarking on a new research project in Yerevan on Armenian architects and the creation of public space in the cities of the Caucasus.

NATHANIEL ROBERT WALKER is Assistant Professor of Architectural History at the College of Charleston in the historic heart of Charleston, South Carolina. He earned his Ph.D. at Brown University in the History of Art and Architecture, an MA in Architectural History at the Savannah College of Art and Design, and a BA in History at Belmont University. Nathaniel has focused many of his studies on the relationships between architecture and utopian dreams of progress and futurity that proliferated in nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature, film, advertising, and other media. His research has been published in the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review, Utopian Studies*, a number of edited volumes, and was featured in a David Winton Bell Gallery exhibition entitled *Building Expectation: Past and Present Visions of the Architectural Future*. He is currently transforming his dissertation on the architecture and urbanism of nineteenth-century utopian novels into a book.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE INTERVAL OF REVIVAL

WHITNEY DAVIS

Only in recent years has it become notionally possible to remix the DNA of a Paleo-lithic human being (perhaps someone preserved in ice) into the gene pool of a present-day human population, even though that gene pool has descended from the prehistoric ones in the process of evolution by natural selection. But it has always been possible among human beings—both prehistoric and more modern—to revive their cultural practices, styles, and artifacts, not only as a 'survival of the fittest' (the practices, styles, and artifacts must have withstood the scourings of time and the traumas of society in a material way, if sometimes very faintly) but also as a 'revival of the fitting'. *Revival: Memories, Identities, Utopias* ex-plores the many angles and aspects of this process with particular reference to nineteenth- and twentieth-century arts and visual cultures in a wide range of European, British, and American contexts. For me, its chief lesson is to remind us of the multiple temporalities that must be considered in dealing with revivals as commonly understood by art, design, and architectural historians, namely, as the selective and deliberate re-purposing in the 'present' of a practice, a style, or an artifact recovered (and often persisting) from a 'past'.

In *The Idea of History*, R.G. Collingwood argued that historians of human affairs—un-like geologists, who pursue a 'pseudo-history'—interpret the 'relics' of the human past, such as Hadrian's Wall, in terms of human purposes, 'what the relics were "for"' in a particular situation of making and use. Indeed, he said, the 'agent's purpose is a universal principle of the idea of history itself'.[1] (It goes without saying that these are widespread notions, though Collingwood gave an especially probing and perspicuous account, picked up by Michael Baxandall among others in art history.) But if the 'relics'—the made things —can survive, persisting into futures unimagined by their makers, purposes do not. They are ineluctably context-specific—that is, historical. The historian's activity *as* a historian, then, is to recover purposes by 'rethinking' them—what Collingwood called 're-enacting' them. To re-enact 'what the relic is "for"' is, we could say, to re-purpose it; the historically specific purposeful thought that went into making it is, Collingwood said, 'revived after an interval'.[2] In this sense, and to take one of Collingwood's favorite examples from his own archaeological researches, the present-day historian can come to understand the Ro-man builders' purposes in situating the fort at Ambleside just where they did in the overall system of Hadrian's Wall by re-enacting the 'problem' they faced and their solution to it.[3]

But clearly to 're-purpose' is not only to recover and understand the purposes of histor-ical agents—a task that must involve intricate historical inquiry and description (at least if we are engaging agents' purposes in making such things as works of art), that likely can always only be partial and personal, and that some writers (though not Collingwood) have even doubted would be desirable in principle. To re-purpose is also to pursue a purpose in and to confer a purpose on the re-enacting itself, namely, the 'reviving after an interval,' as distinct from a purpose enacted in the past. In the past, survival, revival, and even re-purposing could have been intended—aspects of what something was 'for'. But they could not have taken the form of the particular way that an actual revival in the future would transpire: purpose in the past necessarily lacked the purposiveness of an actual histori-

cal revival occurring after an interval that could only be in the *future* of the past. We can readily distinguish between retrieving agents' purposes in the past and realizing purposes concerning them in the present in any such re-enactment—in doing such 'history'. Stated most schematically, in revival re-purposing 'after an interval' *is* our purpose, its intentional structure if not its very content, even when—perhaps especially when—we intend only to understand the purpose of agents in the past in the present of its revival.

It would appear, then, that the specificity of a revival relative to its sources, templates, and prototypes in things made and done in the past is determined in the history of purposes *in the interval*: a purpose in 'reviving after an interval' has emerged even as the past purposes of what is revived might have persisted too.

This historical intersection constitutes the complex intentional structure of revivals—never a duplication or even a reduplication but instead a *multiplication* of the past, recreating it in ways that never happened (at least under any particular description of intention in the present) for purposes of resituating it in the purposes *of* the present, producing a partly new and different past for it. Of course, this cannot be read directly out of the morphology of the revival, its visible configuration: the practice, style, or artifact that is revived in the present might *look* exactly the same as its ancestors in the past, especially when it is a material thing persisting from the past now purposefully preserved in a revival. (For the sake of argument, we can set aside the inevitable and inherent material variation—the transformation and decay—that this thing must undergo in the meantime, though it might well be that the present purpose of reviving it is to engage and even to redress that change.) But the 'look' has new likenesses, aspects that have emerged historically in the very fact that different human agents are using it (even if they are the very same people who used it originally in the past) and have coordinated new correspondences for it that have become historically possible in the interval. One of the most basic of these horizons of likeness is that the thing revived is 'like' something in the past (possibly itself) but relates to things that have transpired—have been made and used—in the meantime. To excavate this intentional structure, we move from morphology to analogy, an effort of historical description, 're-enacting' the purposes of the revivalists, in which we reconstruct the ways in which something acquired past-likeness not only because it comes from the past (it might be a material remnant of the past or it might not) but also because people discovered it in the present (where such likeness could only emerge), replicating it purposefully in that light.

In these terms revivals in art and visual culture—practices, styles, and artifacts made to have the appropriate look of a particular past-likeness with purposes in the present—are temporary concretions of the 'ever-moving Now' that has been an object of phenomenology for more than a century.[4] In relation to the Now, they situate themselves *before* it as a purposeful creation of interval leading up to it and, of course, *away* from it too, not least because inevitably they must always be continuously falling further and further back into the past. Should we say, then, that revivals revitalize the Now by giving it a 'present' it has had? Certainly they are an intentional activity of producing the history of Now, that

is, self-reflectively uncovering a particular possibility in the replicatory stratigraphy of human life, an order that is mostly forgotten in the Now as always-the-present.

To be sure, in these terms almost any human practice—any way of making and doing things—could be seen as a revival, or as having certain determinate aspects of revival, just to the extent that it is a purposeful replication of a past-likeness. But there is a difference between doing something because 'that's the way we do it' (being *in* history) and because 'that's a way we *did* it' (history *of* being). And it is not only the difference in the experience of the verbal 'tense' of a practice—the 'doing' and the 'didding'. It is also a difference in the pronominal subject, the agent, of the practice. The 'we' who are doing and the 'we' who were didding are not the same, even if they are the one and the same people; one can often rightly say 'that's a way *they* did it' whether or not the third person applies to oneself. Revivals give visibility and form to this objectification of the self in the Now as historical, creating objects of contemplation standing slightly apart from the Now that are the material correlates in the sensible world of the redirection of thought to itself as it might have been and, equally important, can become again. For this reason they might be taken as aesthetic activities *par excellence*. Stated the other way around, aesthetic activities are always partly in the mode of revival.

Revivals in the arts and culture have often been characterized as ways of constructing identity—individual and collective—by way of historicism. But identity, when purposefully engaged, *is* historicism. What counts in a revival in the ordinary art-historical sense —the 'Celtic revival' that Collingwood described in *Roman Britain*, the 'Gothic revival' addressed in chapters in *Revival*—is the way in which the material objectification of historicized identity partly impels the very identification in question. One was 'Celtic' again after the Roman withdrawal from Britain not only because one Celtically expressed the historical forms, styles, and motifs of indigenous pre-Roman La Tène artisanship. One was 'Celtic' after the Roman withdrawal because in remaking the indigenous arts one could see ways to be Celtic *anew*, even if one was not. In pre-Roman Britain, the Celt made the art; after the Roman interval in Britain, the art made the Celt.[5]

Of course, this chiastic characterization of a dynamic process as a polar inversion has dramatic and heuristic purposes only. It has no real psychological and social correlate. In historical human life—human life *as* historical—both successions are continuously occurring in ever-moving mutual feedbacks in the multiform extensions of the Now. Art historians and archaeologists might have an advantage over psychologists and phenomenologists because they deal with the material precipitates of this history, with real things people have laid down in the world to be looked at in the world in order to revivify 'theirselves'. Here again, something need not *look* like a revival to *be* a revival in this sense. But when a Celtic or a Gothic revival looks its part—a historical possibility we have to discover about the past, reconstruct, because we will never fully see it for ourselves in the present—we can be sure that the full structure of recursion was the object of purposeful reflection in itself: one was looking at theirselves as they did it. Just as *we* are doing in writing and reading such essays as the ones that follow: for surely art historians and archaeologists are the ultimate revivalists.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1.   R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, ed. by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946), pp. 161, 177.

2.   Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, p. 296.

3.   R.G. Collingwood, 'Roman Ambleside', *The Antiquary* NS 11, 3 (March, 1915): pp. 91–6; see also 'The Purpose of the Roman Wall', *Vasculum* 8 (1921): pp. 4–9; 'Hadrian's Wall: A History of the Problem', *Journal of Roman Studies* 11 (1923): pp. 37–66; and 'Roman Signal-Stations on the Cumberland Coast', *Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian Society Transactions* 29 (1929): pp. 138–65. Useful commentary can be found in C.S. Couse, 'Collingwood's Detective Image of the Historian and the Study of Hadrian's Wall', *History and Theory* 29 (1990): pp. 57–77, and P. W. M. Freeland, *The Best Training Ground for Archaeologists: Francis Haverfield and the Invention of Romano-British Archaeology* (Oxford: Oxbow, 2007) (pp. 536–81 deal with Collingwood as a student and follower of Haverfield).

4.   Among other contributions, notably Edmund Husserl's pioneering phenomenology of human time-consciousness as a 'continuum of continua,' Jacques Derrida's precise deconstruction of it in 'Speech and Phenomena', and Francisco Varela's influential revival and critique in 'The Specious Present: A Neurophenomenology of Time Consciousness'. See respectively Jacques Derrida, *Speech and phenomena, and other essays on Husserl's theory of signs*, (trans.) David B. Allison (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), pp. 3–104 and Jean Petitot et al. (eds), *Naturalizing Phenomenology: Issues in Contemporary Phenomenology and Cognitive Science* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 266–329.

5.   See R.G. Collingwood, 'Romano-Celtic Art in Northumbria', *Archaeologia* 80 (1930): pp. 37–58; 'The Bewcastle Cross', *Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian Society Transactions* 35 (1935): pp. 1–29 (for Collingwood, the Cross was the great achievement of the post-Roman Celtic revival); (with J.N.L. Myres) *Roman Britain and the English Settlements* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), pp. 252–60; *Principles of Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), p. 55; *An Autobiography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), pp. 137–45. Collingwood's father, the antiquary W.G. Collingwood, had emphasized that the post-Roman 'Celtic' artisans had been shaped in the interval of 'Romanization' by three centuries of Roman training in Classical style: this was as much their 'inheritance' as being natively Celt, see *Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age* (London: Faber and Faber, 1927), p. 21. In the first edition of *Roman Britain* (1923), Collingwood also emphasized the fusion of classical and Celtic elements, but in the second (1932) he refocused on the 'failure of fusion' in what he had come to regard as the 'superficial veneer of Romanization' (*Roman Britain*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press), pp. 91–2). In the context of British archaeology and art history in the 1920s, where he was one of the most creative theorists, Collingwood came to oppose such essentialist national/racial approaches to Celtic (or any) style as Mortimer Wheeler's, though Wheeler did address contextual considerations, notably the ways in which pre-Roman Celtic ar-

tisans, living in squalor and uncertainty, turned for compensation to an 'unreal world of conventional shapes', see 'The Prehistoric Era in the West', in Edward Eyre (ed.), *European Civilization: Its Origin and Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935), vol. 2, 238–41. According to Wheeler, the aesthetics of post-Roman art in Britain 'was "implicit" in the Celtic temperament and hence revived, always showing the same general spirit, whenever opportunity offered', see 'This Fieldwork', *Antiquity* 6, 21 (1932): pp. 55–9. (Admittedly, Collingwood acknowledged that he himself had sometimes overly depended on the 'occult' entities of artistic temperament and national spirit to explicate the nature and causes of the Celtic revival.) For his part, Wheeler was scornful of Collingwood's intentionalist and expressivist drive to 'interpolate [the] motives' of historical actors, 'a personal and subjective attitude toward History', see his review of *Roman Britain and the English Settlements* in *Journal of Roman Studies* 29, 1 (1939): pp. 87–93. In *Roman Britain and the English Settlements*, Collingwood developed his intriguing theory of survivals/revivals as 'incapsulations,' the possibility that in the specifically expressive history of intentional structures of acting and thinking some things can be *materially* unexpressed for long periods of time. Further remarks on 'incapsulation' can be found in *An Autobiography*.

INTRODUCTION

REVIVAL. MEMORIES, IDENTITIES, UTOPIAS

AYLA LEPINE, MATT LODDER, ROSALIND MCKEVER

Revivalism in art, design and architecture is a fundamental aspect of modernism, though it is often overlooked. This volume seeks to investigate the diverse dimensions of revivalism, exploring its meanings and impacts across cultures and media between c.1850 and 1950. Bringing together case studies that highlight revivalism in fields as diverse as Armenian architecture, German glassware and contemporary tattooing, *Revival: Memories, Identities, Utopias* counteracts the isolation of revivalism as a practice opposed to canonical modernism, instead highlighting its international and interdisciplinary presence in the modernist period. This book complicates our viewpoints on intersections between past and present, offering new perspectives on what makes revivalism a force for innovation and not a mode of conservatism. Revivalism, this collection argues, looks forward into a future inseparable from echoes of history.

The twelve essays in this volume represent leading research in art history across multiple fields. Authors' ideas were first developed in a series of events at the Courtauld Institute of Art in 2012. The conference from which these essays stem—*Revival: Utopia, Identity, Memory* held at the Courtauld in November 2012—was just one part of the Research Forum flagship project for that year. The initiative brought together a group of twenty-five scholars with expertise in how revivals, retro, nostalgia, and historicism operate in art, architecture, and design worldwide from c.1800 to the present. In preparation for the conference the participants collaborated in a workshop to explore the themes of revivalism and compiled an illustrated 'flexicon', a collaboratively authored glossary of terms relevant to revival studies which allows sophisticated conversation to flourish regarding language, research, and the arts. The list of terms is as organic as their learned, pithy, quirky, and diverse definitions. The accompanying images, chosen by the project participants, reflect numerous aspects of the flexicon texts and as such they provide a picture-essay exploring many facets of revivalism. More information on the Revival project can be found here.

The flexicon has inspired the inclusion in this volume of three interventions written by the co-editors which interrogate three pillars of revivalism as broadly conceived: nostalgia, historicism, and anachronism. These deconstructions of supposed antonyms to modernism offer an intellectual framework to support the reinterpretation of revivalism presented within the case studies. The trio of short explications of these key terms are interspersed between the three sections of the book.

These sections reflect three temporalities within revivalism: the past of memories, the present of identities and the future of utopias. These temporal groupings serve to highlight crossovers between disparate projects and also serve to demonstrate revivalism's importance to and variety within modern art, design and architecture. The book's sections broadly trace core issues in an emerging and dynamic field: revivalism studies. By attending to memories, identities and utopias as significant conceptual epicentres, the nature of revivalism itself acting upon diverse material becomes more apparent under critical investigation.

MEMORIES

One of the case studies in Oliver Sacks' famous compendium of strange neuropsychological disorders, *The Man who Mistook His Wife for A Hat* is 'The Lost Mariner'. The mariner, called Jimmie G, presents at Sacks' clinic in 1975 as 'charming, intelligent, memoryless', convinced, even though he is a greying man of nearly 50, that he is a young marine, aged 19 and living in 1945, buoyed by Truman's recent victory over the Axis powers. Afflicted by severe amnesia (Korsakov's syndrome), Jimmie is unable to form new memories, with every moment of his life up to 1945 clear and vivid, and every moment after it simply vanished. Jimmie lives perpetually both in the past, confused momentarily when shown photos of the moon landings, or a periodic table with the newly-discovered transuranic elements included, but also in the immediate present—nothing but the preceding few seconds holds fast long enough in his brain to help dislodge his confusions. 'He is, as it were,' Sacks writes, 'isolated in a single moment of being, with a moat or lacuna of forgetting all round him ... He is man without a past (or future), stuck in a constantly changing, meaningless moment.' Though Jimmie is affable and calm, Sacks movingly describes his case as profoundly sad, heartbreaking, and absurd. 'What sort of a life (if any), what sort of a world, what sort of a self, can be preserved in a man who has lost the greater part of his memory and, with this, his past, and his moorings in time?'[1]

What cases of extreme amnesia like Jimmie's show us is that our memories, our moorings in time, are not just convenient chronologies, but absolutely foundational to our sense of self. Without a memory, without a sense of one's own history and one's place in the collective history of those around us, it is impossible to form new relationships, learn new things, amend past wrongs. Jimmie is so condemned to the present that he cannot even remember he is being hypnotised long enough for that mode of treatment to begin to work; so confined by the shallowness of his existence that, though seemingly happy, he confesses to barely feeling alive at all. Memory, then, is not the dim recollection of things past, but the very bedrock upon which our sense of the present is constructed. Acts of cultural remembering, the purposive act of artistic revival, must thus be seen as more than the simple or dreary recycling of the past.

The essays in this first section of our collection all deal, in some way, with the implications of memories, and the complexities of forgetting and re-remembering. Deborah Cherry's piece is about Maud Sulter, an artist of Scottish and Ghanaian heritage whose photomontage works reconstruct a story of cultural and visual amnesias of black people. Through the persuasive, Derridean metaphor of the ghost, she writes of Sulter's work on marginalised histories of, for example, black people's experience during the Holocaust, arguing that in presenting and representing stories, people and lives which have only ever been faintly visible in visual and cultural histories, new shape and solidity is given to the past. The spectres of the past are ever present, haunting, disconcerting and awful, but they must be confronted, reckoned with, and if not revived, then certainly remembered.

A different problem of memory is present in Alan Powers' study of Victorian revivalisms. Rather than aiming to remember the forgotten, Powers argues that the constant and continuous revival of the aesthetics of the nineteenth century is driven by the re-purposing of the familiar tropes of Victorian visual culture for deliberate ends. In this instance, the process of revival does not aim to restore to our consciousness something previously forgotten or ignored entirely, but instead to use the filter of historical time and the performative and constructive components of memory to allow the past to serve a particular purpose for the present. The visual culture and public discourses around the 1937 centenary of Queen Victoria's ascension to the throne make visible a national mood of nostalgia, an attitude to the past (and to the process of remembering) that is by definition sanitising, sentimental, and stripped of nuance and complexity, even as certain artists sought to subvert this cloying cultural remembrance by juxtaposition with the oppositional forces of Modernism. For Powers, Victorianism's contrast of past and present would always favour a selectively viewed and understood past.

As historians, our sense of the past is only as complete as the cache of materials to which we have access, and the presences and absences of paperwork, objects and ephemera in libraries, archives and storage cupboards inevitably shape our accounts and understandings of the periods we study. Academic memory is a process constrained by objects and artefacts. In John Harvey's case, a chance discovery of a strange relic—a wax cylinder bearing the traces of a recording of the voice Evan Roberts, an evangelical revivalist pastor from early twentieth century Wales—breathes new life into the stories and histories of a key figure in the significant Christian reparation in Britain around the turn of the century. Harvey's account is as much about the technological, methodological and epistemological repercussions of rediscovering (and literally rebuilding) this man's voice after a century as it is about Roberts' revivalist preaching itself. Using the rediscovery of Robert's stilted sermon as a metaphor for the revivalist movement's own impetuses and failures, as well as taking it as the source material for his own sound-art project, Harvey shows that the acts of revival and remembrance involve deliberate and inevitably distorting decisions, and through anagrammatic remixing of the already fractured liturgy, not only makes visible these distortions, but makes powerful, analytic and critical use of them.

In the fittingly final essay of this section, Martin Horáček discusses a death wish. As both modernist and postmodernist theorists have argued since the 1970s, it feels as if modernism has died, and with it the clarion expression of style as a defining feature of both art and architecture. If everything is permissible, then as Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* memorably argued, avant-gardes can hardly be said to have a style. As Horáček explains, this seems to be a particular problem for buildings, as their potentially long periods of construction place them far beyond the fashionable impulses of the moment of their conception, and we are left with the paradox of, for example, Antoni Gaudí's resolutely art-nouveau Sagrada Família finally being completed a century after its supposed style ceased to be the dominant one. As with Harvey's essay, then, Horáček asks us

as historians to consider the impact of this simple chronological truth on our intellectual superstructures of history and historiography, to which we all make some professional claim. The process of intellectual, scholarly consensus through which cultural memory is partially constructed and reconstructed is by this account fundamentally flawed, as it fails to account for the simple persistence of objects (particularly buildings) over time, and the perpetual present of the historical method.

Like Jimmie G, we are all in some ways, encircled by a moat of forgetfulness, condemned to a perpetual present. The lesson we must learn from his strange experience as historians is that, unlike him, we must be acutely aware of the murky gap between ourselves and the past we wish to interrogate, and be aware of the dangerous currents and strange beasts that swim with in it.

IDENTITIES

A passion for all things medieval gripped the globe in the mid-nineteenth century and this devotion to the Middle Ages lasted well into the twentieth. Michael Alexander evocatively describes this period of imperial controversy and prosperity in which 'crenellations were constructed, disused armour was polished and displayed, and family coats of arms were carved on walls and installed in stained glass windows'.[2] In 1839, while the architect A.W.N. Pugin's Gothic pinnacles of the new Houses of Parliament were climbing skyward in Westminster, the Earl of Eglinton was planning an enormous jousting tournament. Thousands of people attended, the logistics were chaotic, the weather was abysmal. Victorian 'knights' in gleaming armour put up their umbrellas and slogged through the mud. One participant remarked he had never seen 'the disagreeable and the ridiculous so completely mixed together'.[3] In 1843, however, Edmund Cotterill designed a monumental silver trophy upon which the earl and the Knight Marshall of the Tournament are joined by the Queen of Beauty in a delicate highly polished Gothic dream. The legacy of this strange chivalric party was coated in splendour and luxury, with a fusion of seriousness and playfulness worthy of Susan Sontag's 'Notes on Camp'.[4] What were these chivalric revivalist Victorians doing? Art historian Michael Hatt suggests that these figures and their jousting tournament aimed for an idyllic return to valour and the social order emanating from a loosely updated feudalism. Hatt notes that the figures picked out in silver adorning this trophy 'are not just picturesque details of a historical pageant, they represent the social fabric of the desired, organic world'.[5]

Revival is never merely repetition, even when an anachronistic framework adheres around a work of art or architecture with the high fidelity of a copy. Repetition is rarely 'mere' in artistic practice. New and old are never truly opposing categories; tradition and repetition are closely linked, and genealogies of practice are as strongly interwoven as those of style. Revivalist tendencies often emerge in relation to sophisticated discourses

of authenticity, cultural or countercultural memory, and the reshaping of the self in relation to a known or an unknown other. Identity and revivalism are inextricably bound, and temporality itself is often marshalled in relation to style as a mark of solidarity or a mark of resistance. As individuals who are inherently relational, pasts are always invested in our present. As Christine Ross neatly put it in her recent book on the 'temporal turn' in contemporary art, 'the past is the present; it's the future too'.[6]

Appropriation, selective blending of aesthetic and period references, and a reworking of a motif within diverse scales and materials, all express a pulsating dynamic between fixed and mutable meanings. Selective anachronism can be marshalled to both build and interrogate what it is to self-fashion. Whether in relation to echoing and haunting, expressions of collaborative and corporate identity, or a radical revision of historical precedents and practices to set the self apart, a process of revival in the arts is always a process of interrogating and claiming identities. In each of the four essays that comprise the Identity section, the construction of meaning through selective and innovative instances of repetition questions, asserts, and projects strong identities across a surprising array of cultural thresholds.

In Matt Lodder's exploration of the new, the old, the local, and the legendary in Euro-American tattoo culture, the tattooer and the tattooed body emerge as intertwined actors in a feedback loop of artful performance of historical precedents. Artists train as apprentices and hone their practice by developing new material alongside meticulous needlework that responds to 'the old style'. Artists' anxiety regarding what clients want their bodies to declare through ink placed permanently just beneath the surface of the skin is expressed as a kind of nostalgic yearning to keep a tattoo iconography perpetually in play. Lodder's essay focuses on the tattooer Ed Hardy's enthusiasm for what he perceives as a revival of the 'heritage' of Western tattooing's 'short history', suggestively offering a trajectory in which looking back is looking forward, and the future of working with ink, needles, and bodies can be connected to reviving and reworking a rich regional past. Can something be ever-new and pretty old? An image remains, its meanings can shift wildly. What makes a design a classic, whose practices define them as 'old masters' and why does this tattoo canon get transmitted from one set of bodies to another? Hardy's position as artist and historian makes his perspective a foundational and productive source for Lodder's formation of a revivalist understanding of tattoo culture in America and beyond from the mid-twentieth century to the present.

For Michelle Jackson, the transmission of classic detail into a new set of practices underpins her exploration of glassware designed by modernist architects Peter Behrens and Jan Kotěra. Both the northern European and the Italian Renaissance were refashioned and blended together with materials and details that denoted a new machine aesthetic for the twentieth century. In Jackson's chapter, architecture and design were interlaced by cultural figures that insisted the past, the present and the future were by no means oppositional

categories. Jackson's deft research into delicate, elegant glassware and its exhibitions at numerous World's Fairs clearly shows that there are multiple modernisms. The quest to formulate a cluster of viable characteristics for a brave new domestic realm reflecting modernist vitality began with bold anachronistic turns that could be refined through a fresh look at medium, market, and the interplay between objects and architecture. Local and international viewpoints are articulated in animated debates on the brink of the twentieth century within artistic circles across Europe which refused to oppose a culture of craft and a cult of the machine.

In nineteenth-century Antwerp, modernity was reworked and critiqued somewhat differently. As Alison Hokanson's prescient research describes, the painter Henri De Braekeleer composed works with connotations far deeper and broader than have been previously acknowledged. Within a Belgian discourse that was 'deeply in thrall to the notion of the revitalising fragment', relics of a glorious golden age Renaissance past were highly prized. Hokanson's interpretation of De Braekeleer's *The Man in the Chair*—an image of an elderly figure whose glassy stare interrupts a seamless depiction of an idealised sixteenth-century interior—suggests a profound critique of a proud Belgian determination to excavate the past in order to animate the future. Can a fragment of history be deployed as a catalyst or talisman to rejuvenate a culture and point the way from malaise towards reinvigoration? Hokanson's explication of nineteenth-century painting offers tantalising possibilities regarding a new formulation of culturally critical revivalism that refuses to look back upon past triumphs with an easy historicist pleasure.

The Balyan family of Armenian architects approached pedagogy, genealogy and style with a boldness that transformed the built environment in Turkey, Egypt, and beyond. Classicism was deployed as a marker of esteemed training. As Alyson Wharton demonstrates, the invocation of classical French Beaux-Arts traditions within Armenian designs by Hugo on Nigoğos Balyan marked out these architects as figures with a close kinship to Eugène Viollet-le-Duc and Henri Labrouste. This did not, however, constitute an uncritical assimilation of methods and motifs. Wharton exposes the swirling atmosphere of competing styles in Europe by extending the well known narratives of Beaux-Arts values into Armenian territory, connecting it with the composite flexibility of *l'art turc*, a style of styles that consumed and processed a wealth of non-Western cultural references: Arab, Persian, 'Hindu' and the catch-all 'Islamic' could be moulded to fit any number of edifices. In Wharton's view, this stylistic amalgam's diversity must be put in play alongside Armenian architectural development in order to demonstrate its character in the midst of the sweeping impact of the French-educated Balyan family and their own approach to interlaced architectural temporality and geography. Throughout these four chapters in *Revival* that focus intently on how assertions of modernity are always assertions of identity, the past jousts valiantly with the present with a firm and stimulating tenacity.

UTOPIAS

Ezra Pound's mantra of 'make it new'[7] and the Futurists' belligerent rhetoric about the negative effects of Italy's obsession with the past on its present have tended to provide a monolithic temporality for modernism, one in which progress towards the future requires not only disinterest in, but an outright attack on the past. Engagement with the past during the early twentieth century has not been denied: for example the art of Pablo Picasso and Giorgio de Chirico, and other artists featured in Tate's seminal exhibition *On Classic Ground: Picasso, Leger, De Chirico and the New Classicism 1910–1930* in 1990.[8] However, the label of antimodernism, used by T.J. Jackson Lears, amongst others, has established a binary opposition between those infatuated with the future, and those yearning for the past.[9]

More recent scholarship on modernism's complex temporality of has shown it to have a multifarious approach to time, and as such, to the past, present and future.[10] Crucially this has been done in terms familiar to modernism, using the two modernist principles of collage and phenomenological temporalities to blur the boundaries between modernisms and antimodernisms. Collage is a medium which inherently combines temporally distant fragments: old newspaper clippings reporting past events can be juxtaposed with newly applied paint. Layers of date-stamped moments and are exposed and concealed by the more durational application of glue and pigment. The questioning of the nature of time, related to the implementation of World Standard Time in 1883 is found in fin-de-siècle science, philosophy and arts, most famously, that of Albert Einstein, Henri Bergson and James Joyce. The resulting lack of distinction between the past, present and future, and the preference for each of these is particularly relevant to the concept of utopia.

A utopia, an imagined and idealized other place, has no inherent temporality. The desire to return to an idealized past is as utopian as the wish to create an idealized future. However, this third section of *Revival* is concerned with how nostalgia for a past is harnessed to create a better future. This recalls Friedrich Nietzsche's 'On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life' in which he emphasised that history should seek out the useful elements of the past, and actively forget the useless, in order to improve the present, and by implication, the future.[11]

The chapters in our third section share this utopian aspect of revivalism in modern architecture. They also demonstrate the variety of pasts that can be utilized in designs for modernity and visions of the future. These pasts can be researched or imagined, wholesale or fragmented, distant or recent, native or foreign, terrestrial or celestial. The utopias they create can be realized or fantasised, purist or hybrid, nationalist or exotic, although in every case these possibilities are realised as sliding scales rather than binary oppositions. Revivals tell us as much about their present, what was missing which made necessary the return of anachronistic elements, as the pasts these architects, writers and designers wished to revive.

The first architect considered is Franklin Webster Smith who, as Philip Jacks explains, combined a revivalist architectural trend with material innovation through his use of fer-

ro-concrete in homes, hotels, department stores and museums across the United States. Smith drew on a variety of historic architectural elements of both the Occident and the Orient; he revived elements of the Alhambra and Pompeii in Florida, the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak in Washington, and designed a National Gallery of History and Art for the same city combining the Ancient Roman and the Baroque. Concrete was an ancient and modern material befitting the stylistic pluralism and the complex temporality of Smith's utopian and revivalist search for an American vernacular architecture.

Concrete returns in a 'Late Gothic' guise in London's Middlesex Guildhall, one of the buildings addressed in Ayla Lepine's chapter. The Guildhall and St Thomas Church in New York, a structure produced with more traditional materials and techniques, are the focus in a consideration of how twentieth-century medievalism looked to celestial and ter-restrial utopias envisioned by these structures. Lepine uses the temporal layering identi-fied in these buildings—built in a timeframe far shorter than the Gothic Cathedrals which they emulate—to question the temporal pigeonholing of 'Late Gothic' and disregard for twentieth-century Gothic revivalism in general, in the context of the complex temporality of modernity.

Jonathan Mekinda's chapter turns our attention to Milan, home to both Italian mod-ernism and a spectacular Gothic Duomo. The most established example of the city's pe-culiar temporal and stylistic position, the comparison of the Pirelli tower and the Torre Velasca, offers a starting point for Mekinda's exploration of Milanese architecture from 1930 to 1960. The chapter highlights how, in a country only created in 1861, the struggle to reconcile modernist concerns with a national identity befitting the peninsula's pasts was active and continuing through the Fascist period and into the post-war reconstruction. Whereas earlier chapters in *Revival* address the combination of modern materials with historic formal elements, the use of technical and material revivals found in twentieth-century Italy demonstrate an attempt to imbue the very fabric of a utopian Italian future with the successes of its past.

A far more hybrid approach is found in Nathaniel Walker's consideration of the use of oriental architecture in utopian architectural programmes, both literary and actual, in Britain, France and the United States in the nineteenth century. His chapter takes its name from Albert Bleunard's 1888 illustrated science-fiction novel and charts the field from Welsh industrialist and social reformer Robert Owen's plans for the factory village of New Harmony, to the Irish-born feminist Amelia Garland Mears' 1895 novel *Mercia, the Astronomer Royal*. Walker's research also questions numerous modern chauvinistic tenden-cies towards the status of non-Western cultures with regard to time, positioning these as an advanced rather than pastoral ideal.

Just as this selection of revivalist utopias tells us about a range of presents, and the pasts they wished to evoke, our retrospective reactions to these layers of former presents, be they real or imagined, are instructive in understanding the nature of our own present, and our own approaches to our pasts and futures.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1.   Oliver Sacks, *The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat* (London: Picador, 1986), Chapter 2.

2.   Michael Alexander, *Medievalism: The Middle Ages In Modern England* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 109.

3.   Quoted in Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 102.

4.   Susan Sontag, 'Notes on "Camp"', 1964, accessed 3 June, 2015, http://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/Sontag-NotesOnCamp-1964.html.

5.   Michael Hatt, 'Sculpture and Natural History', in *Sculpture Victorious: Art in an Age of Invention, 1837-1901* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 151.

6.   Christine Ross, *The Past is the Present; It's the Future Too* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

7.   On the complex genesis and historiography of this mantra see Michael North, *Novelty: A History of the New* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), pp. 161–71.

8.   Elizabeth Cowling and Jennifer Mundy, *On Classic Ground: Picasso, Léger, De Chirico and the New Classicism 1910–1930* (London: Tate Publishing, 1990).

9.   T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

10.   Modernism's temporality was explored at the conference *Time and Temporality in European Modernism 1900–1950* at the University of Leuven, September 2013 a resulting publication is forthcoming (Peeters, 2015). See also, for example, François Hartog, *Régimes D'historicité: Présentisme et Expériences Du Temps* (Paris: Seuil, 2003) and Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880–1918* (London: Harvard University Press, 2003).

11.   Friedrich Nietzsche, 'On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life', in *Untimely Meditations*, ed. by Daniel Breazeale, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 59–123.

MEMORIES

NOSTALGIA

MATT LODDER

Nostalgia, the melancholy fondness for the past which seems to characterize much material and cultural revival, was once thought to be pathological—a literal disease, or psychiatric disorder. Swiss soldiers fighting as mercenaries abroad in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were frequently afflicted with bouts of weeping, anorexia and suicidal thoughts, and several physicians sought to explain their malaise through a diagnosis of something approaching homesickness, a severe longing for the familiar. Though initially thought confined to the Swiss (and thought to have been caused, in one account at least, by damage inflicted on the brain by either the difference in atmospheric pressures between Switzerland and the lower countries, or by the constant clanging of cowbells in the Alps!), further studies found nostalgic melancholia in soldiers in the French army and in participants of the American Civil War.[1]

Into the twentieth century, the symptoms of nostalgia-homesickness broadened to include anxiety, sadness, sleeplessness and fever, and even in the latter years of the millennium accounts of nostalgia as a psychological disorder persisted, diagnosed as a variant of depression primarily amongst the military, immigrants, and first-year university students. However, as Constantine Sedikides, Tim Wildschut and Denise Baden have explained, our contemporary conception now seems to see nostalgia as divergent from homesickness; a 'yearning for aspects of one's past, a yearning that may include but is not limited to one's homeland … a universal experience, present and prevalent across the lifespan'.[2] Crucially for our discussions here, Sedikides et al. also, in common with other psychologists, characterize nostalgia as a positive emotion, 'an existential exercise in search for identity and meaning, a weapon in internal confrontations with existential dilemmas, and a mechanism for reconnecting with important others'. By this definition, nostalgia becomes a way through which the past becomes a tool for existential self-creation.

This move from dislocated homesickness to active tool of identity creation through revival is at work today in East Berlin. In the former GDR, active recuperation of communist architecture and visual and material culture has coalesced into a recognizable cultural phenomenon of *Ostalgie*—Nostalgia for the East. Tumultuously thrust into the capitalist cultures of the West following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent, painful reunification process, residents of East Germany commonly flocked to use their newly-acquired purchasing power on consumer goods, furniture and clothing from the West. By the first decade of the twenty-first century, however, reminiscences of daily life under the Communist government were softened by the passing of time (and, frankly, as historical discourse on quotidian experience in the East became necessarily more nuanced as the politically-charged rush of the end of the Cold War abated). A culture of revival of the familiar artefacts, brands and comfort foods of the East began to take hold, including in the establishment of hotels such as the Ostel. At the Ostel, housed in a prefabricated concrete apartment block typical of East Berlin, the aesthetics of Communist culture become ironized, romanticized, and nostalgized. As anthropologist Petra Rethmann writes:

> The collection of stationery, panty hose, bottles of shampoo and laundry detergent, wrapped soap bars, matchboxes, biscuit tins, household cleaners, toothpaste, sauce bottles, Rotkäppchen sparkling wine bottles, chocolate bars

and doorknobs displayed behind the glass of shelves and cupboards through-
out the hotel looks like a still life in the genre of socialist—if not realism, then
jouissance. The glass of the display cases renders the objects as an exhibit,
a spectacle to be admired. In the commodity romance image of the GDR,
history is severed from memory and objects are lifted into the realm of the
aesthetic and fantastic.[3]

This severance of history from memory, politics from aesthetics in *Ostalgie* should trouble
us. Though life in East Berlin was not unremittingly bleak (as its visual culture reveals),
Ostalgie must necessarily elide the horrors and brutalities of life behind the Wall, includ-
ing the murders of those fleeing to the West. The contemporary psychological account of
nostalgia contends that yearning for the familiar 'generates positive affect, elevates self-
esteem, fosters social connectedness, and alleviates existential threat', but there are risks
in revival.[4] In March 2015, in another German example, the Coca-Cola corporation caused
uproar when it released an advert to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the launch of
its orange soda brand, Fanta, promoting a limited run of the drink nostalgically formulated
to its old recipe and packaged in an appropriately retro bottle. Whilst this kind of soft-
tinted revival has become fairly common recently among brands seeking to anchor their
identities to simpler, apparently more authentic moments in their histories, in Coca Cola's
case, the moment in question happened to be the necessity to find new product lines that
were not hampered by trade embargoes during the period of Nazi rule. Worse, the chirpy,
whimsical advert explicitly claimed to be bringing *die gute alte Zeit zurück*—reviving the
good old days of Germany, 1940.[5]

As styles, objects, moods and aesthetics are revived and reproduced, this positive
warmth of the nostalgic affect elides the complexities of historical time, context and cir-
cumstance. Nostalgia is no longer an illness of dislocation; the longing for the past is not
a sickness. Nevertheless, acts of aesthetic revival are always political, even as they may
disavow their politics.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are
hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click
on the reference number in the body of the
text. To return back to the main text, click on
the number at the beginning of the footnote.

---

1. Constantine Sedikides, Tim Wildschut and Den-
ise Baden, 'Nostalgia: Conceptual Issues and Existen-
tial Functions' in Jeff Greenberg, Sander L. Koole, Tom
Pyszczynski (eds.), *Handbook of Experimental Existential
Psychology* (New York: Guildford Publications, 2004)

2. Sedikides et. al., 'Nostalgia: Conceptual Issues', pp.
200–14.

3. Petra Rethmann, 'Post-Communist Ironies in an East
German Hotel', *Anthropology Today* 25:1, (February 2009):
pp. 21–3.

4. Constantine Sedikides, Tim Wildschut, Jamie Arndt
and Clay Routledge, 'Nostalgia: Past, Present, and Fu-
ture', *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 17:6 (2008):
pp. 304–7.

5. Jessica Chasmar, 'Coca-Cola pulls ad suggesting Nazi
Germany was 'Good Old Times', *The Washington Times*,
3 March 2015, accessed 3 July, 2015, http://www.wash-
ingtontimes.com/news/2015/mar/3/coca-cola-pulls-ad-
suggesting-nazi-germany-was-goo/.

CHAPTER 1

THE GHOST BEGINS BY COMING BACK. REVENANTS AND RETURNS IN MAUD SULTER'S PHOTOMONTAGES

DEBORAH CHERRY

Revival has many meanings, possibilities and strategies. It can encompass the return to a style, the re-appearance of a specific form or medium, the survival of an object, the political investment of a form of production such as craft, passionately advocated to initiate social change in Britain by William Morris, and by Mahatma Gandhi in the long campaigns for the independence of India. This chapter departs from definitions of revival as living again or bringing to life to consider revenants, figures who return from the past. My thinking draws on Jacques Derrida's proposals that revenants are recalled to the present 'in the name of *justice*', and whose return has an ethical purpose.[1] I focus on Maud Sulter

(1960–2008), an award-winning artist of Scottish and Ghanaian heritage best known for photographs which, with their sensual splendour and inventive image-construction, dramatically reinvented the visual imagery of Black women.

Maud Sulter's *Syrcas* (1993) (figs 1.1–1.5, 1.7) is a major series of images that addresses the presence of people of African descent in Europe during the 1930s and 1940s and highlights the missing histories of Black people during the Holocaust. It is a complex work that reflects on violence and genocide, on the disappeared and the unseen, on perceptions of minorities, on the longevity of the west African diaspora in northern Europe, and the intensity and complexity of cross-cultural contact between the global south and the global north. Its production is contemporaneous with Jacques Derrida's *Spectres de Marx: L'Etat de la dette, le travail du deuil et la nouvelle Internationale* of 1993, lectures translated into English the following year. Both the artist and the philosopher contributed to the discussions of history, memory and trauma that dominated critical debates in the 1990s. This essay explores their shared interests in spectral figures who return from the past to haunt the present and challenge the future. For Derrida, the ghost is predicated on return and repetition, on coming back, on coming again to haunt places and people. It is he explains: 'A question of repetition: a specter is always a *revenant*. One cannot control its comings and goings because it *begins by coming back*'.[2] He emphasizes the necessity of a 'politics of memory, of inheritance, and of generations' that impels the present to learn to 'live with' ghosts, and to live with them justly. Similar concerns were voiced by the artist who testified of *Syrcas*, the artwork at the centre of this essay: 'Echoes of genocide come down to us in the present, witnessing as we are another wave of ethnic cleansing flood across Europe'.[3] She explained: 'In a way it's a testimony to the black experience within the Holocaust and it's also hopefully functioning in the present as a reminder of individual responsibility'.[4]

The revenant poses a problem for representation: how can the disappeared re-cross the threshold of visibility and in what forms can spectral figures become perceptible? Maud Sulter spoke often of her enduring interest in disappearance and the disappeared:

> This whole notion of the disappeared, I think, is something that runs through my work. I'm very interested in absence and presence in the way that particularly black women's experience and black women's contribution to culture is so often erased and marginalised. So that it's important for me as an individual, and obviously as a black woman artist, to put black women back in the centre of the frame — both literally within the photographic image, but also within the cultural institutions where our work operates.[5]

In *Zabat* (1989, Victoria and Albert Museum London), the series that brought her international renown, Sulter re-stages the muses taking as her models contemporary Black women writers, artists, musicians and strategists. These sumptuous, densely layered and strikingly beautiful images are presented in ornate gold frames, in a presentational format

1.2
Maud Sulter, *Duval et Dumas: Duval,* from *Syrcas,* 1993. Colour photographic print, 101.6 x 152.4 cm, The Estate of Maud Sulter.

1.3
Maud Sulter, *Hélas l'héroine: Quelques instants plus tard, Monique cherchait sa brosse à cheveux* [*Alas the heroine: A little later Monique looked for her hairbrush*], from *Syrcas,* 1993. Colour photographic print, 152.4 x 101.6 cm, The Estate of Maud Sulter.

designed for museum display. *Hysteria* (1991) re-imagines the life and artistic circles of Edmonia Lewis. This installation of photographs, sculptures, sound, a film-script and a compact disk 'tells the tale of a nineteenth-century Blackwoman artist who sails from the Americas to Europe to seek fame and fortune as a sculptor. Having achieved a successful career she disappears …' .[6] In *Zabat*, *Hysteria* and throughout her long-standing address to Jeanne Duval,[7] Sulter 'put black women back in the centre of the frame', while emphasizing the fragmentary and scattered remnants of Blackwomen's history. *Syrcas* is concerned with haunting, with conjuring three figures, none of whom are visually represented. They return from the past as invisible yet palpable revenants to demand an ethical responsibility by the present for the future.

    Syrcas thus advances Sulter's investigations into the problematic of representation of the Black subject. The series deconstructs and reassembles the overlapping and contradictory images, histories, discourses and conditions in which Black subjects are constituted, and multiple and diverse uses of those representations. Maria Lind rightly pinpoints its 'forensic archaeology'.[8] Sixteen large-scale photographic prints were exhibited with Sulter's prose poem 'Blood Money'. The text tells the story of Monique, 'a woman of African and European descent' who was born in Cameroon, migrated to Europe, and became a circus performer in the 1930s and 1940s. Monique meets her partner Kwesi, and they have a daughter Helga. (see Appendix, 'Blood Money'). Sulter's protagonists are imagined as among the 'Other Germans' and African diaspora peoples persecuted and murdered during the Holocaust.[9] *Syrcas* addresses ethical questions prompted by Holocaust representation and the long-standing debates prompted by Theodor Adorno's concern that 'After Auschwitz it is barbaric to continue writing poetry',[10] by creating a scrap-book—its pages are the photomontages—that purportedly belonged to a Black child growing up in the Third Reich. *Syrcas* thus confronts the Holocaust, not through testimony, historical evidence, or direct representation, but through what Ernst van Alphen has identified as 'Holocaust effects', created by artistic practices that summon the Holocaust in their wider frames of reference. Writing of Christian Boltanski's *Inventories*, archival installations of clothing or objects, van Alphen explains: 'they simply show someone's belongings, not the person herself. And strangely enough, they seem to succeed in referring to the person to whom they allegedly belonged'.[11] Whereas *Zabat* and *Hysteria* decisively affirm the presence of Black women, in *Syrcas* Monique and her family elude visual representation, and what is presented is the trace of their presence, the scrap-book that points simultaneously to their existence and disappearance.

    With *Syrcas* Sulter returns to photomontage, a visual form with avant-garde and modernist precedents and acknowledged political purpose, for a work through which she offers a powerful reflection on violence, persecution and genocide alongside an incisive dismantling of European modernity. The artist created small-scale photomontages which she stated comprise the pages of an album of diverse visual materials that might have been compiled by a young Black girl growing up in Germany in the 1930s. The artist explains:

> I felt that the piece should resemble something more like a diary. I'd been
> to see Anne Frank's house and liked the diary idea, but I wanted something
> more direct, more visual, and, ultimately, more personal. Then I remembered
> sticking pictures into a scrap-book as a child, and I saw that this was the per-
> fect way of juxtaposing images to present the historical problems surround-
> ing the presence of black people in Germany.[12]

Sulter came across an album into which had been mounted large-format vintage post-
cards of Alpine scenery with views of lakes, forests, mountains, villages, chalets. She in-
dicates:

> The work uses a series of landscape postcards from sort of unspecified Euro-
> pean Alpine-type scenes, montaged onto which are African masks, African
> objects. Essentially what it does is create a child's scrap-book of experience
> which echoes back to the present and forward to the past in many ways.[13]

Some of the postcards provided the ground for montage, notably in the set *Noir et Blanc*
(fig. 1.1). On other occasions the postcards were removed, leaving the blue-grey card as the
surface. Thus an album, assembled by someone from the past, perhaps to commemorate
a journey or sojourn, is transformed by the artist into a series of photomontages which
are, in turn, enlarged to exhibition-size prints.[14] *Syrcas* was commissioned by the curator
Martin Barlow and first shown at the Wrexham Library Arts Centre; in the catalogue the
series is divided into five sets. The whole series, as well as individual works, have been
widely exhibited in Britain and Europe, and *Syrcas* was selected by the British Council
to represent Britain at *Africus*, the Johannesburg biennale of 1995. Most reviewers com-
mented favourably on the 'unpretentious form of an intimate, diary-like scrap-book'.[15]

Syrcas extracts and sutures images from European art and photography, modern print
cultures, and publications on African art. Images of African masks and art objects, with a
preference for those used for initiation, for fertility, and in funerary and ancestor rites, are
laid onto and beside a range of European images selected in full or in part. These include
vintage postcards of Alpine landscapes, paintings dating from the sixteenth to eighteenth
centuries, photographic portraits, slips of twentieth-century travel imagery, excerpted
hands, devices and decorative motifs (all snipped out of textbooks, catalogues, magazines).
Four images of European art were excerpted from a catalogue of works for sale at the
Heim Gallery in London (figs 1.3–1.5).[16] The catalogue's admission that the exhibition
is 'an attempt to understand the casualness and fragility of artistic survival … a step to-
wards valuing the seemingly unimportant, the minor, everything except the conventional
masterpiece'[17] has much in common with Sulter's preoccupation with historical precarity.

The size of the photomontages was determined by the vintage album and the excerpted
print images. The artist's selection highlights the eclectic range of African masks and
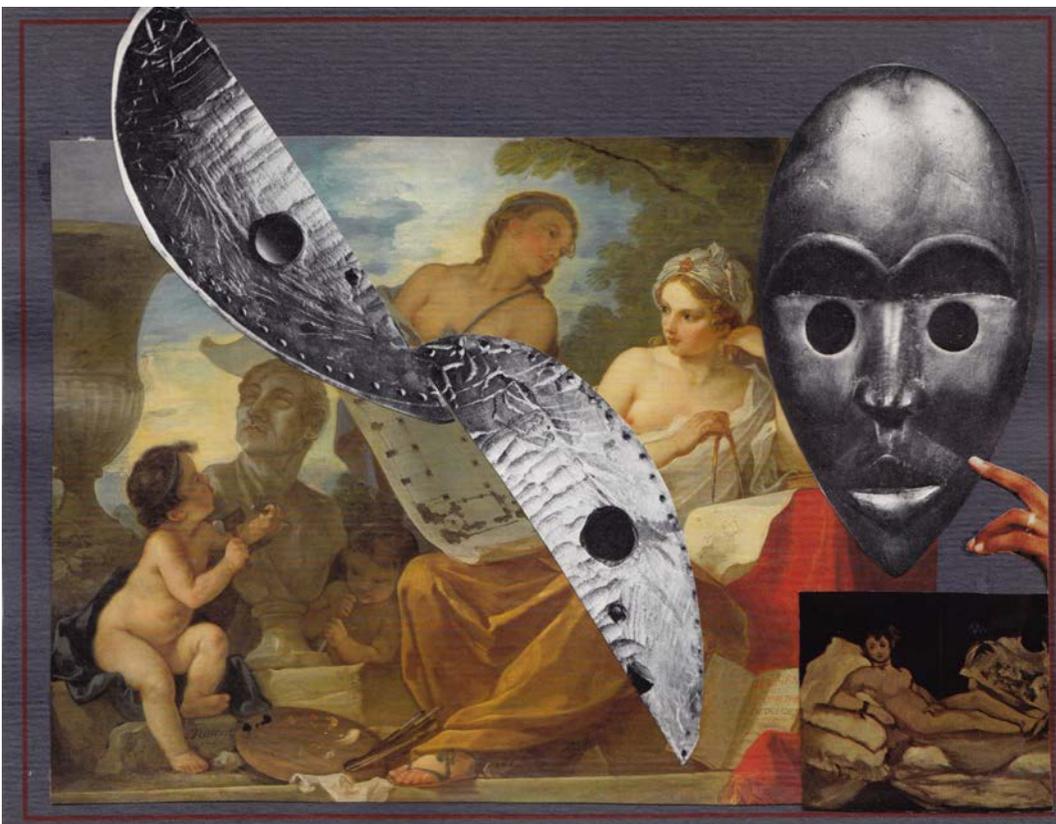
1.4
Maud Sulter,
*Malheureusement:
Malheureusement, parce
que tu parlais d'anges*
[*Unfortunately:
Unfortunately, because
you spoke of angels*],
from Syrcas, 1993.
Colour photographic
print, 101.6 x 152.4 cm,
The Estate of Maud
Sulter.

1.5
Maud Sulter,
*Malheureusement:
Malheureusement,
comme d'habitude je
comparais la couleur de
mon rouge à lèvres et
celle de mon foulard…*
[*Unfortunately:
Unfortunately, as usual
I compared the colour
of my lipstick to that of
my scarf...*], from Syrcas,
1993. Colour
photographic print,
101.6 x 152.4 cm, The
Estate of Maud Sulter.

sculptures assembled in the major museum collections of Britain, continental Europe, west and central Africa.[18] The disjointedness of the assemblies draws attention to the dislocation of these artworks, forcibly removed by war, stealth and theft. Sulter's photomontages take up the common photographic idiom in which African art appears in scholarly and popular studies: each object is photographed close up, on a plain ground, extracted from its contexts to comprise a singular image. Throughout the African art images are roughly excised, sometimes removing internal spaces, sometimes not, occasionally trimming the image to fit its new purpose. Printed in greyscale, the images are readily identifiable as removed from publications, carrying in many cases the slight sheen of the print paper.[19]

In the first set, *Noir et Blanc* (fig. 1.1) African masks float over the landscapes, dominating, at times obscuring the Alpine scenes beneath.[20] There is a profound sense of disjunction, of colliding scales as well as colliding cultures. Sulter emphasizes the acute solitariness of the African artwork in Europe. The masks hover over, mask and conceal the vistas of the transnational mountain range at the heart of Europe. This sequence sets the scene in twentieth-century Europe. The vintage landscape postcards recall the significance of forests and rural scenery in Nazi ideologies of Volk, hygiene and racial purity and the resurgence of interest in Albrecht Altdorfer's landscapes during the Third Reich.[21] The re-purposing of the European vistas also announces a major theme of *Syrcas* — Africa's cultural significance to European culture, alongside alternative histories and counter-narratives discernable in Helga's passionate interest in the visual cultures of her heritage.

The second set, *Duval et Dumas* (fig. 1.2), is a multi-layered diptych assembling the multiple African and European histories of two historical figures, Jeanne Duval and Alexander Dumas. Sparkling tourist views, taken from the vintage postcards, become the ground for the montage which in both cases includes photographs by Gaspard Félix Tournachon, invariably known by his adopted name of 'Nadar'. In *Dumas*, Nadar's photograph of the novelist is overlaid with an excised print image of the head and trunk of an African elephant. For *Duval*, Sulter selected another photograph by Nadar, now titled 'unknown woman' which she both tentatively identified and questioned as an image of Jeanne Duval:

> Well, I don't agree that it is *the* photograph of Jeanne Duval. The problem of identifying a photograph of Jeanne Duval … Well, how is it the *Unknown Woman*? Have you checked the archives? It is recorded as the *Unknown Woman* in one particular book, and then being recorded as the *Unknown Woman* repeatedly, it has become history itself. It is like Edmonia Lewis disappearing. The texts repeat themselves that Edmonia Lewis has disappeared'.[22]

The image of Duval and the postcard are overlaid with a colour photograph taken at a performance by Ishan men in Ibadan of a 'traditional acrobatic dance *Ikhien-ani-mhin'*, where the dancers are accompanied by a figure wearing an Ibibio mask from the region of Ikot Ekpene in Nigeria.[23] This is shows a mask worn by a dancer in active contempo-

rary use, by contrast to more frequent textbook images of isolated masks. The assemblies of this diptych emphasize the dual heritage of two active participants in the art world of nineteenth-century France, their African connections, and the long-standing reciprocities between Africa and Europe.

The third and fifth sets shift the ground to the history of European art, forging connections between the global north and global south. Across set three, *Hélas l'heroine*, African masks replace the heads of the figures in European paintings and photographs. Sulter selected Nadar's photograph of Georges Sand for *Mme Laura est chez elle*, concealing the sitter's head with an Ogbodo mask of the Igala.[24] In *Quelques instants plus tard, Monique cherchait sa brosse à cheveux*, a white-faced mask of the Punu region of Africa is superimposed onto a reproduction from the Heim Gallery catalogue of Angelica Kauffmann's 1789 *Portrait of Countess Catherine Skawronska* (fig. 1.3).[25] *Vous parliez de moi?* presents Sir Joshua Reynolds' 1756 portrait of Robert Shafto with the figure now holding a Fanti doll, while his head is overlaid with an image of one of several terracotta heads 'excavated by Dr Oliver Davis at Ahinsan, southern Ashanti … [that] date from the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and appear to be ancestral in their artistic conventions'.[26] In this series, African masks are returned to the human head, though they are returned not to use.

Malheureusement, set five, contains the most complex assemblies, combining European figure paintings, snippets of photographs, complete and partially excerpted images of African art with varied levels of intervention and layering. *Malheureusement, pendant que nous discutions…* also includes terracotta heads, this time superimposed over those of the figures in *Concert instrumental en plein air*, an Italian concert group, c. 1500, depicting three women and a man making music together in the open air.[27] *Malheureusement parce que tu parlais d'anges* takes an eighteenth-century French painting, Jean-Baptiste-Marie Pierre's *Jupiter et Io*, its subject taken from Ovid's *Metamophoses*, which tells of Jupiter's disguise as a cloud for his seduction of Io (fig. 1.4).[28] To this is added a slice of a black and white photograph, an image of an elephant's foot and a dung pile, and a wooden sculpture of a standing full-length wooden reliquary figure made by the Mangbetu peoples of central Africa.[29] Charles-Joseph Natoire's 1751 *An Allegory of the Fine Arts* forms the ground for *Malheureusement comme d'habitude je comparais la couleur de mon rouge à lèvres et celle de mon foulard…* (fig. 1.5). This depiction of the European arts of painting, sculpture and architecture is overlaid with multiple elements including a small study for Eduoard Manet's *Olympia*, and excised images of a Dan mask from west Africa, seen whole in its exterior view, its interior view divided in half, spanning the photomontage.[30] These are dizzyingly disruptive compilations, in which roughly excised scraps of images from Africa and Europe—archival photography, art reproductions, print images, each with its own spirals of reference—are scattered across the surface, abutting and colliding with one another in cascading themes of desire, remembrance, and inheritance, alongside interrogations of the purpose of the arts and the making of art, traditions and modernities.

Hands feature prominently in Sulter's photomontages, throughout *Hélas l'héroine*, from *Malheureusement comme d'habitude…* (fig. 1.5) to *J'étais en train de choisir une cravate pour*

1.6.
Maud Sulter, *Untitled*, 1993. Photomontage on paper, 18.5 x 13.2 cm. Reproduced on the back cover of Syrcas: *Maud Sulter*, 1994, The Estate of Maud Sulter.

sortir avec ma femme from the *Voyager* set, where a long black arm and hand reach out to grasp a white marble (neo-)classical bust. A hand and arm and arrows cut across and into the photomontage reproduced on the back cover of the catalogue, its inserted images juxtaposing the courtly beauties of European art with a roughly-drawn head laid onto a photograph by August Sander, which was the prompt for the whole series (fig. 1.6). Hands are indicative: they signal direction, highlight connection. They mimic the hands of popular modern graphics, often accompanied by a text 'Enquire within', acting perhaps as a prompt to an investigative gaze by the viewer, an alertness to the 'clues' and traces presented in the works. Hands in *Syrcas*, as in the series *Jeanne: A Melodrama* (1994, private collection), draw attention to the corporeality of photomontage, pointing to the hand of the artist who cuts, excises, assembles, glues in place.

The titles for individual works are in French, apparently taken from a set of Lingua-phone recordings for learning French and perhaps referring to one of the imperial lan-

guages of Cameroon. Some, such as 'Mme Laura est chez elle', are short sentences in the present tense of the kind readily found at a preliminary level of language teaching, also marked by the numbers 1 to 5. Others are more intricate constructions: *J'étais en train de choisir une cravate pour sortir avec ma femme.* Or *Malheureusement, comme d'habitude je comparais la couleur de mon rouge à lèvres et celle de mon foulard….* The titles become longer, more arbitrary, estranging images equally estranged by their enlargement. Some titles were undoubtedly written by the artist herself, as for instance, *Je me rappelle que tu brossais ta perruque un peu avant le coup de téléphone de M. Fasciste* (fig. 1.7). Neither historical art nor vintage postcards fill the ground of the grey-blue card of the found album. Beneath a cloudy sky are two bands of colour, perhaps sea and shore, on which are three print images: a modern motor car, a railway restaurant car, and a 'Skin-covered headpiece, with metal teeth, collected by Governor Beecroft before 1854 at Old Calabar'.[31] In this terrifying image the African art object and the title repurpose the car and train. The set's title *Voyager* points less to carefree European travel between the wars, summoned in the vintage postcards, than to the enforced movement of the Holocaust. *Je lui parlais du film que nous allons voir lorsque le téléphone sonne* includes both a face indicative of the black soldiers who liberated the death camps, and a cut-out of a modern laced shoe, by this date a recognisable and well circulated sign in Holocaust representation. *Je lui parlais…* precedes *Je me rappelle …* and together they hint at a narrative of trauma and potential survival, recounting perhaps a shared experience in which one figure remembers chatting about a film when the telephone rang, while the other, perhaps an orthodox Jewish woman, was brushing her wig. Across the series, the titles move from the impersonal numerical sequence of *Noir et Blanc*,

to the intimacies of exchange suggested in 'nous' and 'tu', reversing the brutal deprivation of individual humanity in the Holocaust.

Syrcas slips through languages, weaving connections between *Syrcas* and *Zircus*, the Welsh and German words for circus. As a writer Sulter was intrigued by language and words, and her poetry shows a keen interest in dialect, Scottish vernacular and local usage.[32] The exhibition publication for *Syrcas* is bilingual in Welsh and English. The set titles are opaquely allusive: *Noir et Blanc* also points to the almost universal monochrome imagery of African art in print. *Duval et Dumas* identifies two key figures. *Hélas l'héröine* (Alas the heroine) at once conjures the protagonist and marks her disappearance: one of the titles, *Quelques instants plus tard, Monique cherchait sa brosse à cheveux*, uniquely names her. *Voyager* hints at spatial and temporal disjunction. *Malheureusement* (unfortunately, unhappily) underlines the series' engagement with trauma, grief, and loss.

Lubaina Himid affirms that: 'The inspiration for SYRCAS has haunted Maud Sulter for many years. Politically the power of fascism in the 20th century, spiritually the rememory of the holocaust of slavery for the African diaspora, and personally the Holocaust of the 1930s and 1940s…' .[33] One starting point was Sulter's discovery of people of African descent in photographs by Sander in his *Zircus* or circus series included in *The City*, the penultimate volume in his extensive visual mapping of *People of the Twentieth Century* (*Menschen des 20. Jahrhundert*).[34] From Sander too, came the proposal of the circus, to highlight lives lived, as Maria Lind puts it, 'in the Margin of Margins'.[35] One photograph, taken at Barum's circus American Caravan Menagerie (*Amerikanische Karawanen-Menagerie*), between 1926 and 1932, was certainly known to Sulter, who used it in her photomontage for the back cover of the *Syrcas* catalogue (fig. 1.6). Outside the circus tent, a Black man and a white woman are seated beside a table laid with a cloth.[36] Sulter had written often of photography's tainted histories, its uses in 'categorising "the other"'.[37] Works by Sander and by Hannah Höch registered the presence of and conflicts over Black people in Germany.[38] Insistent hands, arrows and decorative motifs embellish and slice through Sander's photograph to problematize documentary as potentially insufficient, unreadable, undecidable. Does this photograph capture a shared inter-cultural moment? Does it register racial difference, and/or anxieties over inter-racial contact post 1918 when, with the occupation of the Rhineland, the numbers of Black people in Germany increased and colonial campaigns accompanied national concerns over the loss of empire?

The artist was certainly familiar with Maud Lavin's absorbing study of Höch, published in 1993 and she owned several books on this artist.[39] Some of the hybrid figures of *Syrcas* come close to those in Höch's *In an Ethnographic Museum* (c. 1924–34) and, like Höch, Sulter returned to a particular image several times. Recent scholarship has debated Höch's approach to the rich collections of African art in Europe.[40] Sulter insists on western modernity's indebtedness to African art, culture and peoples. Her photomontages are contact zones for staging proximities and exchange. *Syrcas* offers a radical deconstruction of western modernist perspectives on African art: its decontextualization and aestheticization in museums, modernist displays and print media; modernist juxtapositions of white bodies

and African masks; the formative and foundational presence of African art and culture in the making of western modernism. By the early 1990s there was a substantial literature on the African art in collections of modernist artists such as Maurice Vlaminck, André Derain, and Pablo Picasso. At least one of the objects included in *Syrcas*, a reliquary figure in the British Museum (fig. 1.1), was copied in cardboard by Juan Gris.[41]

For Sulter, 'the actual practices of cutting and pasting pieces together, it has west African roots to it'. She adopted the cut and paste method of photomontage at a 'time of contemplation, rest, being in one place that made the "working around the kitchen table" an interesting thing to do'.[42] Her 'kitchen table' reference points to Black women's activism and publishing, to Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, started in 1980 by writer Barbara Smith,[43] as well as to Carrie Mae Weems' renowned *Kitchen Table* series of photographs (1990).

Some of Sulter's earliest art works, shown in exhibitions of Black art in the 1980s, were photomontages and collages. *Poetry In Motion* (1985/6, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery), a series of three paper collages, was included in the landmark exhibition, *The Thin Black Line* at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London in 1986. *State of Emergency*, another triptych, was selected for *Testimony: Three Blackwomen Photographers*, also curated by Lubaina Himid (fig. 1.8).[44] In the catalogue Sulter wrote: '*State of Emergency* identifies child abuse, police/institutional racism, sexism, violence, and the exploitation of images of women. The final panel identifies the solution. Pan-africanism'.[45] The central panel re-situates a poster for a missing black child, Barry Lewis, who disappeared in September 1986. Picking up on the police description of Barry Lewis as 'half-caste' Sulter extends the range of racist terms countering them with the response 'We name ourself Black'. Dealing with immediate political and social concerns, these early works are characterized by a raw urgency, a fierce riposte to racism. *Syrcas* offers awkward tensions, unpredictable collisions, incommensurate confrontations. The images become enigmatic puzzles as Sulter gathered and reused objects, images, fragments and c(l)ues which had migrated and mutated across times and spaces, alert to what Jane Beckett has called, the 'precariousness of historical survival, as well as the pluralities and insecurities entailed in the processes of historical interpretation'.[46] The artist often quoted Alice Walker's statement: 'As a black person and a woman I don't read history for facts, I read it for clues'.[47] Concluding an outstanding analysis of the multiple referentialities of *Syrcas*, Sujanne Choi-Park sums up the elusiveness of Sulter's project: 'The scattered clues embark on the mysterious search for Monique in the tracks of history'.[48]

In photomontage images are cut out of books or journals, ripped from one frame and forcibly reset into another. The scissors and knife cut and separate, excise and remove; images cannot be returned; books and magazines are forever despoiled. Maud Lavin has drawn attention to 'the formal violence of cutting and superimposing images implicit in all photomontage.[49] If there is a level of violence in extraction, there is equally in the assembly where displaced fragments, disjointed images and incomplete slivers abut each other. This is most conspicuous in the *Malheuresement* series; the very proximity of the

figural elements in *Malheureusement, parce que tu parlais d'anges* (fig. 1.4) conjures a ruthless and brutal force that has invaded, pillaged, stolen, murdered, traduced. Throughout, the constituent images jostle for position and attention, overlay and underlay, submerge and superimpose one another in a manner akin to Derrida's logic of the supplement. Alluding to the double meaning in French of *supplément* as addition and replacement, in a passage full of references to breaking and entering, stealth and robbery Derrida proposes supplementarity to be disruptive and dangerous: 'Its sliding [or slipperiness, slithering] slips it out of the simple alternative of presence and absence. That is the danger'.[50] This dangerous supplement, he contends, 'breaks into the very thing that it would have liked to do without it, and which allows itself to be simultaneously cut into, violated, filled and replaced, completed by the very trace through which the present augments itself in the act of disappearing into it'.[51] In Sulter's hands the artistic practice of photomontage signals a destructive ferocity that is at the heart of *Syrcas*, a violence that casts a long shadow from past to present into the future. The artist testified to *Syrcas'* contemporary relevance: 'In the light of the current and increasing racial attacks and the horror of 'ethnic cleansing' in Bosnia and Rwanda, I felt compelled to look back to Germany's hidden history—the 'ethnic cleansing' of the Holocaust'.[52] Monique returns as a revenant to warn of contemporary and continuing persecution.

For Sulter as for Derrida, the revenant disjoints time, disassembles temporal continuity, retraces inheritance and indebtedness. *Syrcas* reconfigures the cultural genealogies of western modernity, investigating the state of the debt by dissecting the indebtedness of western modernity to the creativity of African peoples and objects.

Sulter's art and writings shared an awareness that Europe in the early 1990s was at a key moment of change. Analysts of the discourses of the 'new Europe' have written of the forces of exclusion that shaped legislation and policies on migration and asylum while attempting to deal with ethnic, religious and national differences in Europe. By turn of the millennium exclusionary strategies had strengthened into what has become known as 'fortress Europe', a state of affairs very much in play in the new century. Writing in the early 1990s, Derrida conceptualizes the revenant at the outset of *Spectres* as those who 'begin by coming back'. By the end of his text, he has reconsidered, proposing '*revenants* who would no longer be *revenants* but as other *arrivants* to whom a hospitable memory or promise must offer welcome—… out of a concern for *justice*'.[53] In *Syrcas*, Monique, Kwesi and Helga are nowhere to be seen, yet they are palpably present, close by. As 'Blood Money' reminds us, 'Monique may be near you right now'. These revenants are summoned to remind the present of its ethical responsibilities for the past and the future. In Sulter's hauntology, the revenant is not a revival, in the sense of reanimation or revivification; nor is spectral invocation attended by melancholic nostalgia, ghostly frisson, or utopian longing. *Syrcas* conjures ghosts who demand attention. As Derrida puts it: '*one must* reckon with them. One cannot not have to, one must not not be able to reckon with them'.[54] These artistic and philosophical reflections shape a broader call for European and global societies to co-exist hospitably, to welcome arrivants, and to 'live with' difference.

BLOOD MONEY

Maud Sulter, from *Syrcas*, exhibition catalogue, Wrexham Library Arts Centre, 1994.

Monique ran away to join the circus in 1926. She was twelve years old. In Cameroon where she was born there lived a sailor by the name of Stephan-ja. He captained a boar by the name of Cristale on which Monique stowed away and sailed to France. On arrival she joined the circus of Monsieur Perot. Monique walked the tightrope and swung high on the trapeze.

In Hamburg she met a man that she loved. Kwesi. He was an African too, but German. They had a daughter called Helga, who dreamt one day of being a healer of wounds. She was good with things metal, like scalpels and scissors and made pretty pictures to hang on the walls of their pretty home. Close your eyes and imagine a German.

When the war came Kwesi was made to wear a red star for being a Communist and an inverted black triangle—the signifier of a race-biology categorisation. Monique could have escaped to France and back to Cameroon but she would have had to leave her husband and child. Would you? For the child of the circus there would be no reparation for a sterilized womb, family torn apart. Incarcerated, Enforced labour. Concentration camp internment leading for Kwesi to death with the gypsies and jews and gays and the others. Close your eyes and imagine a German.

The negro soldiers from the U.S. who cleaned up the camps (and have since become African-Americans) don't often speak of what they saw. They tend to talk of the passion of Paris. I've heard them. The cafes, the bars, the art and the parties. But then, would you? Dachau for instance was no picnic. Helga lost her mother a year after the liberation. So now as an orphan she had to make herself over. With no help from the state who used the research from the thirties and forties to problematize the race mixed (*sic*) strangers (*sic*) in their midst. Close your eyes and imagine a German.

Of course if you do not recognise the constant black presence in Germany since the 15th century then you owe them no debt. Even when their family members have been murdered and sterilised and raped and worked to death. A 20th century Holocaust, one of many in history. Think of the witchcraze, the progroms, the slave trade. And what of the fate of the war babies? (Remember the Vietnamese boxer on T.V. who only wanted to meet his father. Had dreams of America. There are thousands of them, Black Vietnamese (they have them in Ireland too).) There's no way I can make this poem rhyme. Would you?

Monique may be near you right now. She haunts me. Now, close your eyes and imagine a German. Close your eyes and imagine, a Belgian, a Muslim, a Protestant, a Croat, a Celt, a Bosnian, a Jew, a Slave, a Pole, a Canadian, a Catholic, don't stop, the list is as endless as the human race …

I am indebted to Ayla Lepine for the invitation to participate in the conference and this collection. My warmest thanks to Marcia Michael for meticulous research assistance, David Dibosa, Katy Scott, Ingrid Pollard, Steve Cross, Wiebke Leister, Esther Teichmann, and Paul Tebbs. This chapter is related to a collaborative research project on the art of Maud Sulter, generously supported by Arts Council England, Autograph - Association of Black Photographers, Street Level Photoworks Glasgow, and TrAIN, the University of the Arts London research centre, resulting in *Maud Sulter: Passion*, an exhibition at Street Level in 2015 and accompanying publication, *Maud Sulter: Passion* (London: Altitude Editions, 2015).

1.   Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, The Work of Mourning & the New International*, (trans.) Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. xix, Derrida's italics. Sulter's art differs from works considered in T.J. Demos, *Return to the Post-Colony: Spectres of Colonialism in Contemporary Art* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2013) which offers insightful readings of colonial hauntings in contemporary art.

2.   Derrida, *Specters*, p. 11, Derrida's italics. Gayatri C. Spivak's 'Ghostwriting', *Diacritics* 25:2 (1995): p. 70, warns against indiscriminate conjuring of ghosts, emphasising 'the ethical relation with history as such, ancestors real and imagined'.

3.   Sulter quoted in Press release, Wrexham Library Arts Centre, 1994.

4.   Artist's statement, text adapted from spoken dialogue, accessed 27 July, 2009, no longer online. Captured February, 2007:   https://web.archive.org/web/20070630030950/http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/microsites/photography/story.php?storyid=ph052&row=7.

5.   Artist's statement, text adapted from spoken dialogue,   www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/microsites/photography, accessed 27 July, 2009, no longer online. Captured February, 2007:   https://web.archive.org/web/20070630030950/http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/microsites/photography/story.php?storyid=ph052&row=7.

6.   *Maud Sulter: Photoworks* (London: Royal Festival Hall, 1992), n.p.

7.   Maud Sulter, *Jeanne Duval: A Melodrama* (Edinburgh: Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 2003). Deborah Cherry, 'Image-Making with Jeanne Duval in Mind: Photoworks by Maud Sulter, 1989–2002', in Marsha Meskimmon and Dorothy C. Rowe (eds), *Women, the Arts and Globalization: Eccentric Experience* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), pp. 145–68.

8.   Maria Lind, 'In The Margin of Margins: *Syrcas* By Maud Sulter', *Portfolio* 19 (1994): pp. 42–3.

9.   Tina Campt, *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender, and Memory in the Third Reich* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004). Clarence Lusane, *Hitler's Black Victims: The Historical Experiences of European Blacks, Africans and African Americans During the Nazi Era* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

10.   Quoted in Ernst van Alphen, *Caught by History: Holocaust Effects in Contemporary Art, Literature and Theory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), p. 17. See also, Berel Lang, *Holocaust Representation: Art within the Limits of History and Ethics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

11.   Van Alphen, *Caught by History*, p. 115.

12.   Maud Sulter quoted in Jane Richards, 'Photography: A Cut Above The Rest: For All Its Colour, Maud Sulter's Scrapbook-Style 'Syrcas' Recalls Dark Days of Persecution', *Independent*, 23 August, 1994.

13.   Artist's statement, text adapted from spoken dialogue, accessed 27 July, 2009, no longer online, http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/microsites/photography/story.php?storyid=ph052&row=6.

14.   The photographs were available in two sizes: 762 x 1016 mm (30 x 40 in) or 1016 x 1524 mm (40 x 60 in), framed in raw oak.

15.   Maria Lind, 'In the Margin', pp. 42–3.

16.   This is noted by Sujanne Choi-Park, who may have been so informed by the artist, Choi-Park, 'Maud Sulter's Syrcas: The Space of Archives' (MA diss., University of Sussex, 1999), pp. 35–7, 42–4. Michael Bellamy (ed.), *Towards a New Taste: Summer Exhibition of Old Master Paintings* (London: Heim Gallery/Trefoil Publications, 1989).

17.   Richard Herner, 'Towards a New Taste', in Bellamy, *Towards a New Taste*, n.p.

18.   Sulter's concern with reproduction contrasts to artists such as Fred Wilson who have restaged ethnographic collections. See Jennifer A. González, *Subject to Display: Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008).

19.   Sulter mostly excised images from Frank Willett, *African Art: An Introduction*, rev. edn (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1993).

20.   *Noir et Blanc: Un* deploys a wooden Afo 'ngorongoro' seated female figure suckling a child, made by the Yoruba people, Nigeria, now in the Horniman Museum, London, 31.42, with thanks to the Horniman Museum; Willett, *African Art*, plate 131, p. 142. *Deux* takes a Kota reliquary figure covered in decorative metal work, Willett plate 183, p. 183. *Trois* excises a Sowei mask made for the Sande Society in Sierra Leone, donated in 1952 by Ethel and Jane Less to the Manchester Museum, 0.8284, with thanks Dr Campbell Price of the Manchester Museum; Willett, *African Art*, plate 54, p. 81. *Quatre* features an Ikpelikpa mask of the Igala, National Museum Lagos; Willett, *African Art*, plate 79, p.97. *Cinq* employs a Suku mask, now in the Rietberg Museum Zürich, RAF 506, collection Eduard von der Heydt, Willett, *African Art*, plate 146.

21.   Choi-Park, 'Maud Sulter's *Syrcas*', pp. 30–1. Jenifer Chao, *Sensible Interventions: Cultural Resistance Post-9/11* (PhD diss., University of Amsterdam), 2013 discusses the global circulation of scenes of Swiss landscapes and chalets.

22.   Maud Sulter in conversation with Sujanne Choi-Park, in 'Maud Sulter's Syrcas', p. 53.

23.   Willett, *African Art*, plate 191, p. 203, photograph by Willett.

24.   Willett, *African Art*, plate 78, p. 97, National Museum, Lagos.

25.   Willett, *African Art*, plate 182, p. 189, Rietberg Museum, Zürich, RAF 901, collection Eduard von der Heydt, with thanks to Dr Michaela Oberhofer, Curator, African and Oceanic Art, Museum Rietberg. See also Valentine Plisnier, *Le Primitivisme dans la photographie: l'impact des arts extra-européens sur la modernité photographique de 1918 à nos jours* (Paris: Trocadéro, 2012), pp. 44–5. Kauffmann portrait, now Germanishces Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg; Heim, *Towards A New Taste*, no. 11, pp. 32–3.

26.   Willett, *African Art*, plate 103, p. 102, Linden Museum, Stuttgart; plate 102, p. 113, University of Ghana. Bellamy, *Towards A New Taste*, no. 31, pp. 72-73.

27.   Willett, *African Art*, plate 102, p. 113. The composite plate shows six heads; four are used here, the top three and one bottom left. The painting (Bourges, Musée de l'hôtel Lallemant) is cropped to fit the available space.

28.   Bellamy, *Towards A New Taste*, no. 17, pp. 44–5, identifies it as a small painting shown at the Salon in 1745, one of a pair for the French royal collection.

29.   Willett, *African Art*, plate 181, p. 187, British Museum, London; Bellamy, *Towards A New Taste*, no. 2, pp. 14–15.

30.   Willett, *African Art*, plates 174 (exterior) and 175 (interior), p. 185; Bellamy, *Towards A New Taste*, pp. 14–15.

31.   Willett, *African Art*, plate 66, p. 88, National Museum, Lagos.

32.   Jim Mabon, 'Europe's African Heritage in the Creative Work of Maud Sulter', *Research in African Literatures*, 29:4 (1998): pp. 147–54.

33.   Lubaina Himid, 'The Magical World of Maud Sulter', *Syrcas: Maud Sulter* (Wrexham: Wrexham Library Arts Centre, 1994), p. 33.

34.   Himid, 'The Magical World', p. 33.

35.   Lind, 'In the Margin', p. 42.

36.   At http://www.moma.org/collection/object.php?object_id=52298, the man is identified as Indian. The bib-

liography to *Syrcas* lists John von Hartz, *August Sander* (New York: Aperture/London: Gordon Fraser, London, 1977), Gunther Sander (ed.), *August Sander: Citizens of the Twentieth Century: Portrait Photographs, 1892-1952* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), and Dawn Ades, *Photomontage* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976).

37.   Maud Sulter, 'The Nature of Photography: Black Notes from the Underground', *Feminist Arts News* 3.2 (1989): p. 14.

38.   Maria Makela, 'By Design: The Early Work of Hannah Höch in Context', in Maria Makele and Peter Boswell (eds), *The Photomontages of Hannah Höch* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Centre, 1997), pp. 44–79.

39.   Maud Lavin, *Cut with the Kitchen Knife: The Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Höch* (London and New Haven: Yale, 1993); Campt, *Other Germans*.

40.   Dawn Ades, Emily Butler and Daniel F. Hermann (eds), *Hannah Höch: Works on Paper* (London: Prestel, 2014).

41.   Willett, *African Art*, caption to plate 183, p. 183, used for *Noir et Blanc Deux*.

42.   Maud Sulter in conversation with Sujanne Choi-Park, in 'Maud Sulter's Syrcas', pp. 57, 54–5.

43.   Barbara Smith, 'A Press of Our Own. Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press', *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 10:3 (1989): pp. 11–13.

44.   *Testimony*, Pavilion Leeds, 1986 and Camerawork, London, 1987.

45.   Maud Sulter, *Testimony*, 1986, p. 10.

46.   J. Beckett, 'History (Maybe)', in *History: The MAG Collection. Image-Based Art in Britain in the Late Twentieth Century* (Hull: Ferens Art Gallery, 1997), pp. 139–41.

47.   Maud Sulter, 'Clio', *Zabat: Narratives* (Hebden Bridge: Urban Fox Press, 1989), n.p.

48.   Choi-Park, 'Maud Sulter's *Syrcas*', p. 45.

49.   Lavin, *Cut with the Kitchen Knife*, p. 6.

50.   Jacques Derrida, *La dissémination* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1972), p.124, author's translation.

51.   Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, (trans.) Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 126.

52.   Maud Sulter quoted in Richards, 'Photography: A cut above the rest'.

53.   Derrida, *Specters*, p. 175.

54.   Derrida, *Specters*, p. xx.

CHAPTER 2

1937 AND THE VICTORIAN REVIVAL

ALAN POWERS

THE DRAWING-ROOM, 23A, BRUTON STREET.
Furnished for the purpose of the Exhibition of Victorian Art.

Shortly before the beginning of 1937, the centenary of Queen Victoria's accession, two events occurred that could not have been predicted. The destruction by fire of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham on the night of 30 November 1936, and the announcement of the abdication of King Edward VIII on 11 December. These made 1937 a significant year in the longer arc of reassessing the meaning and value of the Victorian period, especially in respect of the symbolic role of its art, architecture and design. The combination of these events brought a renewed focus to the relationship between Modernism, as an artistic phenomenon of the twentieth century, and modernity, as the creation of the nineteenth, not only in respect of art and design, but across a wide range of social and cultural attitudes.

The reassessment of the Victorian period is a multiple phenomenon. It is normal to suppose that the path to Modernism in England lay in rejecting everything the Victorians had stood for, apart from the work of a few exceptional individuals who were pioneers of

2.1
The Drawing Room,
23A Bruton Street,
Furnished for the
Exhibition of Victorian
Art, 1931.

the new movement, yet even the process of trying to disengage from this powerful past involved some negotiation with it. In the essay 'The Antimacassar Restored', Alexandra Harris identifies the 1930s as a transitional period between rejection and the later more wholehearted embrace of everything Victorian. It effectively outlines the responses of different generations and taste cultures—Bloomsbury, the Sitwells, and the former Oxford undergraduates of the 1920s, including Kenneth Clark, Evelyn Waugh and John Betjeman, whose affection for Victorian things and the culture that they evoked appears to have begun as a *blague*, before becoming the basis of a lifelong opposition towards Modernism and modern life.[1] Taken as a whole, Victorian revival is a rich subject whose significance, while recognized, has tended to be seen as marginal.[2] Harris and other writers have tended to emphasize the oppositional character of the revival and its location among a small elite of tastemakers. The significance of 1937 is, in part, that the events of the year showed how rapidly this private joke, albeit one frequently performed in the spotlight of media attention, became more deeply integrated in the definition of national identity through the crown and national institutions. As the architectural critic, P. Morton Shand, wrote in the *TLS* in 1951, after the phase of mockery had passed, 'many who rushed in to mock returned to pray when it became evident that a second war was impending. Their numbers have been swelling ever since; they are now the majority'.[3]

Victorian revival had similar characteristics to earlier revivals of interest in historic styles, especially the successive phases in which Georgian art and architecture were revalued from the late nineteenth into the early twentieth centuries, with a dateline rolling forward in time, pushed by pioneering tastemakers and scholars, and an increasingly broad public following at a distance behind. As the speed of successive revivals of historic periods appeared to accelerate in the twentieth century, the phenomenon of revival itself became a subject of interest. This usually began with private collecting, followed by institutional collecting, scholarship, exhibitions and publications, completing entry into the historical canon. Partly owing to the length of the original Victorian period, this was a protracted process, extending into the 1960s and still arguably incomplete in some areas.

As Harold Child wrote in *The Times* in 1922, 'the elders jibe at the Georgians, the youngsters at the Victorians', but this perception—based no doubt primarily on the reputation of Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians*—was already becoming outdated.[4] As Jules Lubbock has recognized, there was a first wave of revival of crinoline shapes in Parisian fashion at the end of the First World War, leading Walter Sickert, himself a figure bridging between Victorian and Modern, to comment in 1923, 'Of course we are all "crinoline" nowadays. But that is another question'.[5] Already it was becoming possible to mock and at the same time genuinely admire at least some aspects of Victorian high art. In 1921, *The Times* commented on Max Beerbohm's cartoons of the Pre-Raphaelites, 'This interest of his makes him smile and us laugh; but it is also intense and admiring. In fact he himself is half a Pre-Raphaelite, with the Pre-Raphaelites for subject'.[6] Beerbohm set the tone for much of the Victorian revaluation, for it seemed almost impossible not to treat the period

as a joke, while the more subtle commentators could proceed to suggest that some aspects of it might, in fact, be taken seriously, thus indicating that if accepted, this reversal would offer membership of an elite group.

In 'The Ottoman and the Whatnot', an essay in the *Atheneaum* of 1919, collected in *Vision and Design* in 1920, Roger Fry provided an analysis of the cycle of recuperation.[7] He was commenting on a new taste for early Victorian objects as a compensation for the rule of utility and good taste among the intelligentsia, including Fry's associates in the Bloomsbury Group and predicted that the pattern would be rolled forward as the repulsion of living memory gave way to an imaginary reconstruction of the past. When *Vision and Design* was reissued as a Pelican book in 1937, this had been accomplished in relation to the early Victorian period, although the shift from early to later Victorian that Fry predicted had barely begun to take place, and was delayed for up to twenty years from that date. However, in the longer term, Fry's prediction was accurate. He recognized that this early stage of Victorian revival was an appreciation of kitsch objects as 'amusing' evocations of a fantasy of history, harmless provided it did not take them seriously as art. For much of the interwar period, the cultural level of appreciation for Victorian things was concerned with minor and decorative art, and expressed in the relatively ephemeral productions of print-ing and illustration. So far as actual contemporary creativity was concerned, such as the example of Mr. Plant in Evelyn Waugh's *Work Suspended* of 1943, a neo-Victorian realist painter in the manner of W.P. Frith cited by Harris, there was never, despite an engage-ment with the Pre-Raphaelites on the part of 1930s artists, any corresponding figure in real life.

There were therefore several modes of revival at work, and a feature of the period is the diversity of actors and audiences involved in its creation. The modes could be described as the satirical, the sentimental, and the serious, tending to proceed in sequence. How they engaged specialists and a broader public seems to have been determined partly by genera-tion, so that Fry could accept the 1840s as amusing but not the 1870s of his own youth, although he realized that younger people would come to see it differently. The broader public probably never passed through the satirical phase, starting and finishing with the sentimental, which by 1937 was becoming a powerful thread in a mainstream response to the changing situation in the world. Theatre and film, much more than fine art or art his-tory, played the key role in recalling a generally sweetened version of the Victorian past, with the popular musicals by Noël Coward such as *Bitter Sweet* of 1929 and *Cavalcade* of 1931, both of which were subsequently filmed. Each moved between the nineteenth cen-tury and the present, incorporating old music hall songs with new numbers by Coward, thus reinforcing or reconstructing popular memory. *Cavalcade* used a fictional family to tell the history of the years from 1899 to 1929, reinforcing a sense of 'the good old days'.

The principal difference between the early stage of Victorian revival of the 1920s and the position in the late 1930s was that the British art public had undergone a process of

instruction through print and broadcasting about art in general, and in particular the various aspects of Modernism. In most of these, the nineteenth century became shared property of a wide range of interest groups. Victorian interiors were reconstructed at Wembley in 1924 (by Harry Stuart Goodhart-Rendel, the final part of a historical series), and then in 1931, a Victorian exhibition was presented in a house in Mayfair as a series of period interiors to raise funds for St. Bartholomew's Hospital, including loans from the Victoria and Albert Museum (fig. 2.1).[8] Goodhart-Rendel was also involved in this, although his interests, especially in the linguistics of architectural style during the period, went deeper than these displays of decorative objects would have suggested. His emergence as an expert on Victorian churches began in 1918 with articles on the churches of Brighton in the *Architectural Review*. Kenneth Clark acknowledged the significance of his 'short but suggestive essay' (actually the text of a lecture), on 'English Gothic Architecture of the Nineteenth Century' in 1924, one of the first from a younger generation to take the subject seriously.[9]

Goodhart-Rendel's impact is hard to judge. According to John Summerson, 'it was well known that Victorian architecture was either bad or screamingly funny or both. Rendel begged to differ, but what really stunned his audiences was that he knew, and knew in great detail, what he was talking about'.[10] His manner of delivery encouraged his audiences to be amused by Victorian architecture, but he dissected the mass of buildings with a critical mind, and applied consistent standards of judgment to it. His book on the period, *English Architecture since the Regency*, originated as a series of Slade lectures at Oxford, was only published in 1953.[11] By then, its terminal date around 1934 was already part of an outmoded past, although its opposition to the fundamental tenets of Modernism was still capable of drawing forth a sharp rebuke from Nikolaus Pevsner.[12]

Dudley Harbron, an architect based in Hull, was the author of *Amphion; or the Nineteenth Century* of 1930, the first attempt to treat architecture of the Victorian period as a whole in book form, but, as the TLS reviewer described it, 'a fitting swan-song' to the satirical phase of 'making boisterous fun of our grandfathers'.[13] In writing *The Gothic Revival*, published in 1928, Kenneth Clark had already begun to supersede this tone, deepening in its later chapters to become a more serious engagement with the theory underpinning the buildings.[14] As Clark's 'A Letter to Michael Sadleir' in the 1950 revised edition of *The Gothic Revival* indicates, it was Gothic above all other Victorian styles that initially seemed impossible to rehabilitate, thus providing Clark with a challenge that had defeated his sponsor in the project, C.F. Bell. Ambiguities of tone were found in the writing of John Betjeman as a popularizer, while John Summerson, still establishing himself as an expert on earlier periods, began a lifetime of shifting in and out of the Victorian subject area, with a particular interest in the house building industry. Both, however, discovered that there was an audience for these topics. Between Clark's first and second editions of *The Gothic Revival* came Basil Clarke's *Church Builders of the Nineteenth Century*, 1938, a book that stands out as a non-ironic reconstruction of the narrative of the Gothic Revival that in its later reprinting in 1969, in a much altered climate of opinion, required little authorial apology.[15]
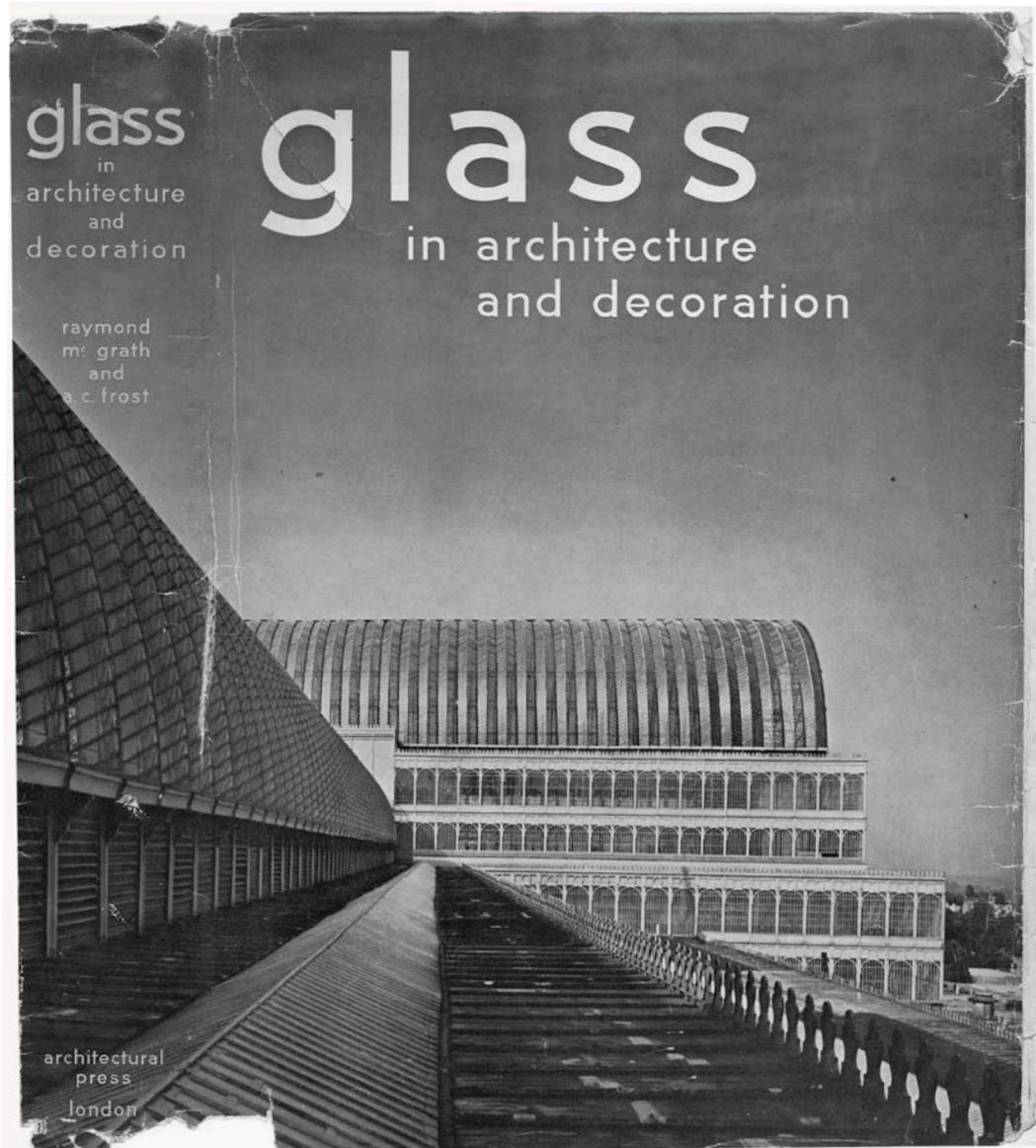
2.2
The Crystal Palace , photograph by Dell and Wainwright, 1936, on the dust jacket of Raymond McGrath and A.C. Frost, *Glass in Architecture and Decoration* (London: Architectural Press, 1937).

In architecture, however, it was the Crystal Palace rather than the Gothic Revival that by broad consent self-evidently represented a lost opportunity for the British to shorten the passage to Modernism in architecture, as characterized by industrial construction based on iron and glass. Its significance as a road not taken was emphasized in several ways on the eve of its destruction. A magnificent photograph—taken by the *Architectural Review*'s favourite depicters of Modernist buildings, Dell and Wainwright—appeared on the jacket of the architect Raymond MacGrath's book, *Glass in Architecture and Decoration*, lavishly supported by Pilkington glass and published by the Architectural Press (fig. 2.2). In his text, McGrath emphasized the aesthetic as well as the technical relevance of the building to his own time, writing, 'there was more poetry in the Crystal Palace than in all the works of the Gothic Revivalists lumped together'.[16] In 1949, Summerson commented acidly in a broadcast on the way that the building had become a cliché of proto-modernism:

> It used, you remember, to be the fashion to consider the Crystal Palace as ugly and ridiculous. Then, about 1935, a German architect came over here and praised it, after which, obedient sheep that we are, we ennobled it as a grand prototype of prefabricated modular design.[17]

The German architect referred to was, presumably, Walter Gropius, who came to live in London in October 1934. In 1937, the *Architectural Review* included in its obituary for

the building a valedictory tribute by Le Corbusier, who wrote 'when, two years ago, I saw the Crystal Palace for the last time, I could not tear my eyes away from the spectacle of its triumphant harmony'.[18] This interpretation was reiterated following the fire, acting as a reproof to the actual direction taken in the form of eclecticism that was still dominant in 1937, as a much criticized survey exhibition of contemporary architecture at the Royal Academy early in the year revealed. By contrast, a photograph of the ruins of the Crystal Palace after the fire was positioned at the entry to the exhibition, *Modern Architecture in England*, held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in February 1937, and used as the frontispiece for the catalogue, in which Henry-Russell Hitchcock asserted that 'England leads the world in modern architectural activity'.[19] The lesson was clear that what 1851 began, 1937 had brought to a successful fruition. Whatever interpretations of the historical path towards modernism were used, either the Crystal Palace and engineering route favoured by Hitchcock, or the Arts and Crafts route of Pevsner's *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* in 1936, it was becoming clear that a journey back to the previous century was needed in order to find the root of the problem of Britain's tardy adoption of the new architecture and, in doing so, to redirect the stream.

At the time of the fire, the Crystal Palace company was facing bankruptcy and the building was in poor condition, but *The Times* leader on the morning after the fire noted how the Palace had 'outgrown all serious objections to it. There it stood, becoming steadily more historical and symbolic as the years passed, and as living memories faded of its original purpose and pristine splendor'.[20] The Crystal Palace fire was linked by *The Times* both to the end of something Victorian: 'to the philosophic eye the flames, which were seen from great distances, symbolized the final disappearance of Victorianism'; but also to the revival of interest in its period in a different register, relating less to the building itself than its contents:

> In the present state of Victorian studies, and on the eve of the show of Winterhalters, its destruction is like that of a cherished and venerated historical document. Certainly there are feebler Victorian survivals that could have been spared for it.[21]

The contents of the Crystal Palace, in contrast to the building, had the appeal of kitsch. Christopher Hobhouse's book *1851 and the Crystal Palace* was published by John Murray early in 1937, so its inception predated the fire, which however provided a poetic conclusion and a dramatic rear endpaper and back cover (figs 2.3–2.4). The authorial tone favoured mockery of the more laughable exhibits over admiration for the structure, and this tone was reproved in a review by the biographer of predominantly royal subjects, Roger Fulford in the *TLS*.[22] The front jacket was a cartoon by Osbert Lancaster, who was already making a reputation for affectionate satire of Victorian architecture. Murray was a leading
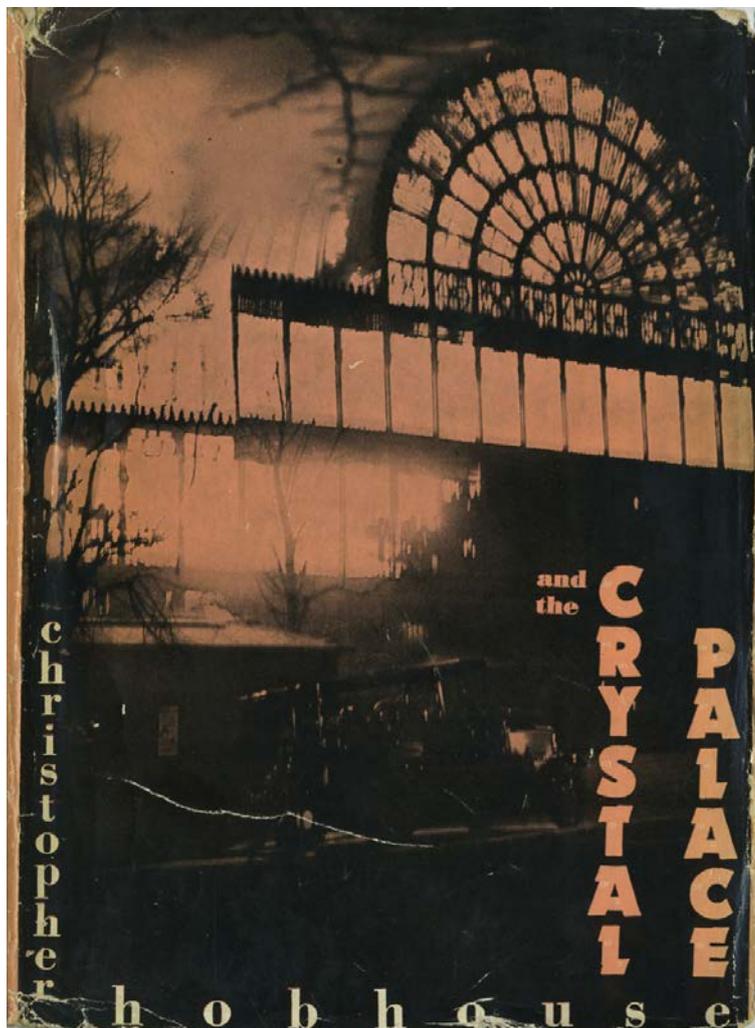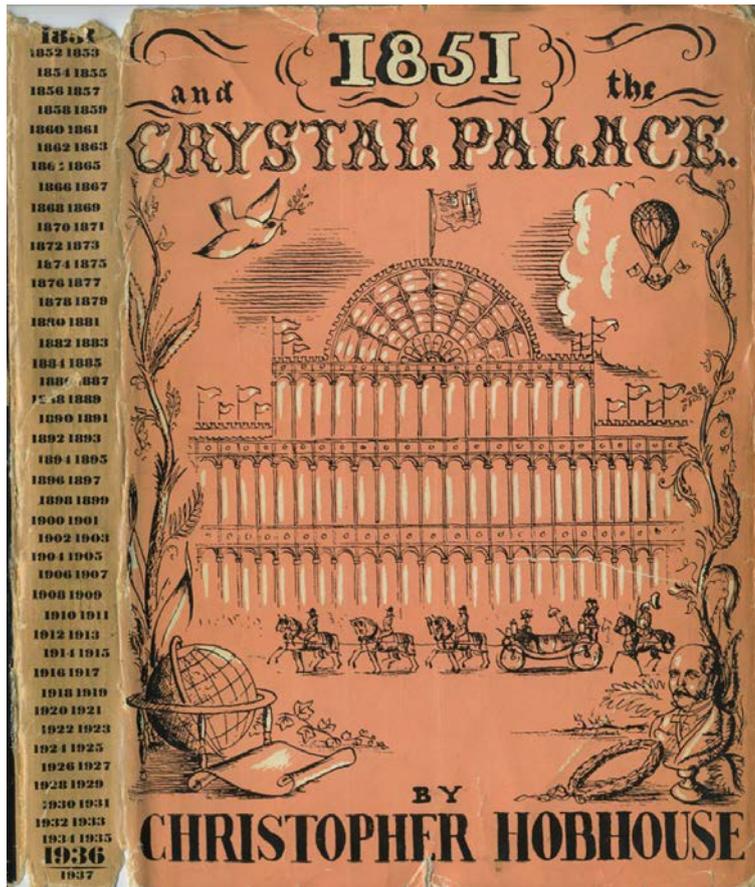
2.3 and 2.4
Dust jacket of
Christopher Hobhouse,
*1851 and the Crystal
Palace* (London: John
Murray, 1937) with
drawings by Osbert
Lancaster and photo-
graph of the fire.

publisher in Victorian revival themes, the young successor in the venerable firm, John Grey Murray, having been an Oxford contemporary of the group around Harold Acton, Evelyn Waugh (whose biography of Dante Gabriel Rossetti in 1928 was one of the first serious reassessments by his generation), Robert Byron and Brian Howard who pioneered the camp revival of Victoriana in the 1920s but in several cases went on to study it more seriously. Hobhouse, Fulford, Lancaster and Betjeman were other Oxford contemporaries, although only the last two are normally linked to the group that planned the notorious '1840s exhibition' in 1924.[23] The focus of this group from Oxford onwards was primarily on the early Victorian period, perhaps up to the death of Prince Albert in 1861. For most beginners, this was the easy way in, following on from the acceptance of Regency, and may account for the popularity of centenary celebrations in 1937.

Victorian history books in 1936 and 1937 also included Edith Sitwell's *Queen Victoria* and Margaret Lambert's 'scrapbook', *When Victoria began to Reign*, both published by Faber & Faber. Sitwell was one of the older generation fêted by the Oxford fraternity, while Lambert, a graduate of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, was a younger historian (of contemporary Germany) and collector who, with her friend Enid Marx, went on to promote the cause of 'popular art' after the war. The three Sitwells contributed in different ways to the Victorian revival, focusing on small details of its material culture while moralizing the wider meaning of the period. Their contribution, and Lambert's, was largely a continuation of the 'Ottoman and Whatnot' phase of appreciation, although broadened in the second case by an agenda of 'history from below'.

In a different vein was Peter Quennell's *Victorian Panorama*, published by Batsford in 1937, a pretext for reproducing Victorian photographs. These were a new field of discovery, pioneered by the curator C. H. Gibbs-Smith at the V&A, who in 1939 mounted an exhibition of them.[24] In contradiction to the 'amusing' cover and frontispiece by Lancaster, the book emphasized the closeness rather than the distance of the Victorians as a kind of *memento mori* and a comment on the present. Quennell wrote in the foreword:

> ... it is hoped that the reader will supply his own bridge, that he will allow his imagination to wander at will across a past which, although to-day it may seem stuffy, ridiculous and superannuated, was once disturbing, exciting and troublesome as the present century. Too often we are inclined to think of the Victorian epoch as having monopolized all the prejudice, self-complacency and fatuous contentment of preceding and succeeding eras. Quite the reverse is true.[25]

This passage resembles Walter Benjamin's discovery in the same years that the Modern age was still, to a large extent, locked into its nineteenth-century parentage and should look there for the solution to its own crises.[26]

Although Benjamin's writing was entirely unknown in Britain during his lifetime, the critically Modernist perspective on the nineteenth century that he represented had some correlatives, such as the documentary anthology project of Humphrey Jennings that became the book, *Pandaemonium*, also long delayed and posthumously published.[27] However, there was much activity in print that contributed to establishing a visual character of Victorian borrowings in the 1930s, while the destabilizing and provocative nature of the Victorian period in relation to the search for a self-contained and history-free doctrine of Modernism became a constant thread in the *Architectural Review* in the 1930s. Betjeman joined the staff of this lavishly produced monthly as assistant editor in 1930 and stayed for five years. Part of his contribution was to reassess the Arts and Crafts movement, making contact with its survivors and also with John Ninian Comper, a living representative of High-Church Gothic architects, on whom he published the first ever article in 1939.[28] Thus, while many aesthetes started at the beginning of the Victorian period and worked forwards, Betjeman had the unusual distinction of starting at the end and the beginning simultaneously. Besides these formal contributions, Betjeman established a graphic tradition of inserting facetious and informal comment columns at the end of each issue, often illustrated by reproductions from Victorian engravings and dealing with Victorian themes, as if this were an enjoyably guilty secret barely concealed by the rectitude of the previous pages. It was not long before the Victorians broke out all over the magazine, remaining an important part of its character into the 1970s.

These manifestations of Victorian Revival depended on a sense of camp appreciation nurtured by the Oxford fraternity and their wider circle, for whom Shand's quip, that they came to mock but stayed to worship, is especially appropriate, given the religious conversions undergone by Waugh and Betjeman. The uses of Victorian style for confronting the conformity of the present were widespread, partly, it seems because, they allowed for a wide variation in emotional tone, combined with a satisfying ability to shock. Osbert Lancaster's *Homes Sweet Homes*, first published by Murray in 1939, offered a comic visual and verbal history of British interiors, to which in 1953 Lancaster added the latest contrasting styles, 'Jungle-Jungle' (American-influenced organic Modernism) and 'Neo-Victorian' (fig. 2.5). The text for the latter explains the phenomenon as partially accidental, owing to the availability of cheap Victorian furniture, but also readily blended with aspects of contemporary neo-Romantic art by Henry Moore and Graham Sutherland. Male fashion, as depicted by the inhabitant of the room, had by this time added a strand not yet present in 1937, 'with the vogue for curly brimmed bowlers, stove-pipe trousers and embroidered waistcoats'. He might also have mentioned the Dior 'New Look' for women of 1947 that reintroduced tight waists and full skirts. 'Not the least enjoyable result of this latest development', Lancaster concluded, 'has been the forcing of the older generation, corduroy-clad, *New Statesman* reading, Freud-reared, into a position of Barrett-like reaction'.[29]

2.5
Osbert Lancaster, 'Neo-Victorian' from *Homes Sweet Homes*, 2nd edn (London: John Murray, 1953)

2.6.
Le Corbusier, Charles Bestegui apartment roof garden, Avenue des Champs Elysées, Paris, France, 1930.
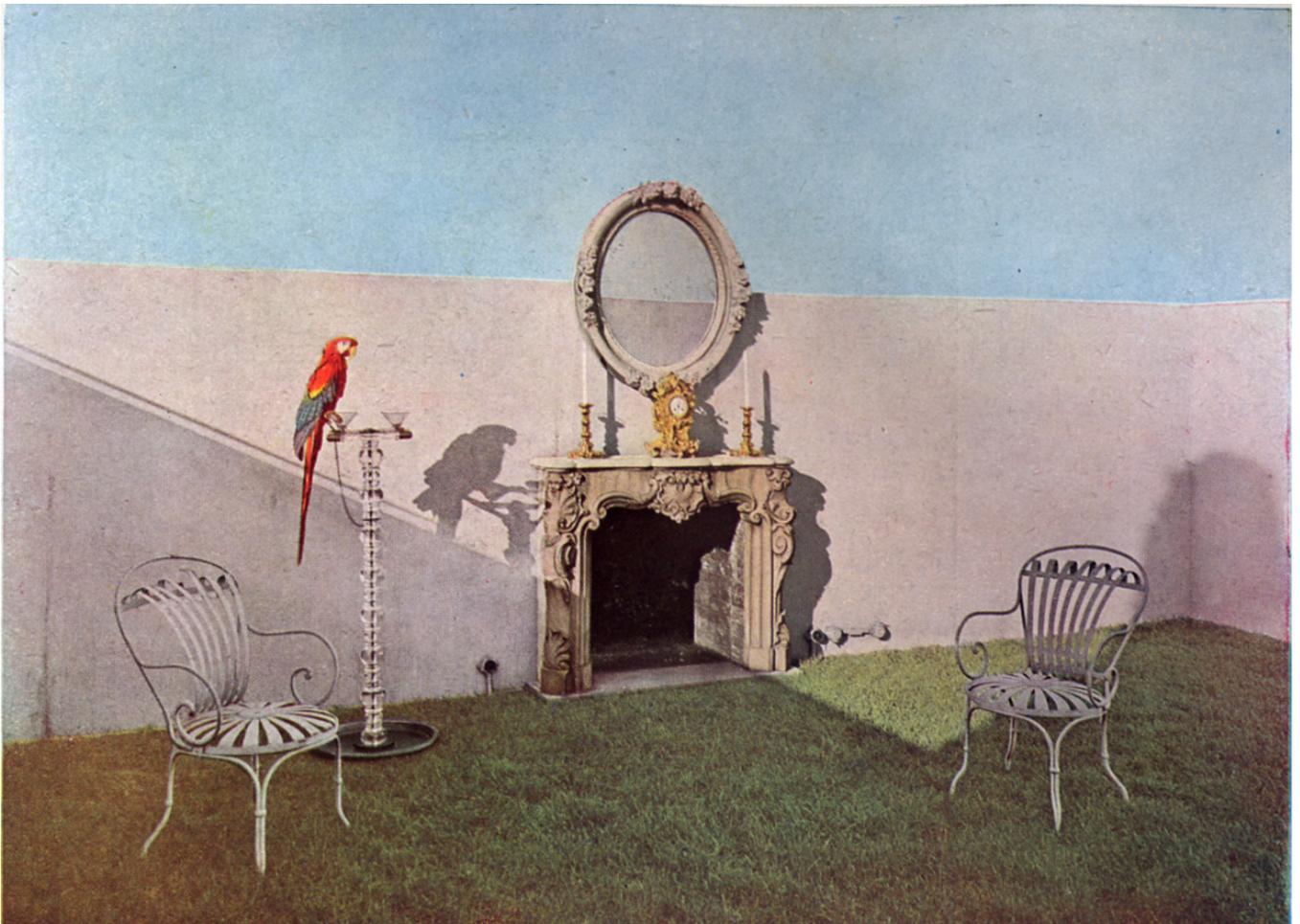
Such reactions no doubt took place with gratifying effect, but equally significant was the infiltration of conventional neo-Georgian or Modernist interiors performed by the Victorian period, 'like a faint touch of garlic', as Lancaster described it.[30] In the mind of Betjeman, and of his employer at the *Architectural Review*, Hubert de Cronin Hastings, the commitment to Modernism in architecture would benefit from an alliance with this apparently antithetical style. Their common enemy was the 'ghastly good taste' (to take the title of Betjeman's 1933 tract on architecture) of Neo-Georgian that was the dominant style of the period, as well as a conviction that Modernistic or Art Deco was an inferior form of decoration to Victorian.[31]

This campaign against mediocrity was not only a paper exercise. Modernist architects of unquestionable seriousness discovered subversive ways of using ornament, often in the surrealist vein of the found and framed texture or object. Le Corbusier was the most obvious source for a return to textured materials. In this respect, Harris' characterization of the conflict between Victorian Revival and Modernism lacks nuance, for by 1930 the author of the slogan 'the house is a machine for living in' was taking pleasure in collaging 'found objects' as quasi-Cubist or Surreal *objets à réaction poétique* into some of his interiors. When Corbusier installed a Rococo false fireplace in Bestegui roof garden in Paris of 1930, it produced the same shock-effect as Max Ernst collages made from nineteenth-century wood engravings (fig. 2.6). After 1935, similar effects began to be found in English Modernism, not just at the fringes, but in the very heart of the movement. Denys Lasdun's house at 52 Newton Road for the painter F.J. Conway, 1937–8, included a salvaged fireplace of similar character for which the young architect offered an ingenuous justification.[32] More subtly, architectural lettering began to follow the trend in typography towards early nineteenth-century revivals, admired for their energy in contrast to the weak Trajan and Sanserif styles of the early 1930s. In 1938, Nicolette Gray, a young advocate of abstract art, published *Nineteenth Century Ornamented Types and Title Pages*, in which type design is referenced throughout to architecture and interiors of the period, extending to 1890. In synchrony rather than by direct effect, Finsbury Health Centre by Lubetkin and Tecton (with whom Lasdun had been working), completed in 1938, carried shadowed Egyptian lettering derived from Thorne Shaded, a face designed in 1810 that had been re-released by the Stephenson-Blake foundry in 1938, and rapidly re-established itself in contemporary book-jackets and advertising.[33] The plaster cast caryatids that Berthold Lubetkin controversially included to support the entrance canopy at his Highpoint 2 flats, also of 1938, were not specifically Victorian, although the casual use of reproductions of such revered iconic figures surely was.[34] Benjamin Pollock's prints on one of the walls of Lubetkin's own apartment, on the other hand, may have been inspired by the use of this material for Di-

aghilev's ballet production, *The Triumph of Neptune* of 1926, and a subsequent celebration of toy theatre as an authentic aspect of English popular art (fig. 2.7).[35]

By the late 1930s, graphic art—including typography, book covers and illustration—had moved firmly into a Victorian mode in tandem with the popularity of Victorian film and fiction, to the extent that Punch published a skit by E.M. Delafield in its 1937 Christmas number about the predictable clichés of the genre.[36] John Piper's *Brighton Aquatints*, published by Duckworth in a limited edition in 1939, was one of a number of artists' illustrated editions at the end of the decade that used archaic or obsolescent image-making techniques in a self-conscious way to match Victorian period subject matter. Others in 1939 included John Farleigh's lithographs to Sacheverell Sitwell's *Old Fashioned Flowers* and Edward Ardizzone's for Maurice Gorham's book, *The Local*, celebrating the ornate pub interiors that were gaining a wide appeal. Piper demonstrates best how the neo-Victorian could grow out of Modernism. He had been an abstract painter in the middle years of the decade, his paintings and constructions included in the small avant-garde group shows of the period alongside Ben Nicholson, Henry Moore and László Moholy-Nagy. Then his style began to change rapidly, leading him back to the depiction of buildings and places that became his special subject from then on, and has subsequently made him the figure-head of a movement—as contemporaries were, indeed, prepared to view him. As writer, photographer and illustrator, Piper was a contributor to the *Architectural Review* from 1936 and a friend of its editor, J.M. Richards, with whom he developed the appreciation of what later acquired the name of 'The Functional Tradition', the plain nineteenth-century indus-

trial buildings that were seen as the antecedents of Modernism, as well as the camp frivol-
ity of engraved pub glass, bold lettering and the beginning of an appreciation of Gothic
Revival, developed in company with John Betjeman.

In *Brighton Aquatints*, it is the pictorial quality of architecture and its contribution to
the spirit of place that dominated and was mirrored in the physical presentation of the
book in marbled boards with a label printed in Figgins Shaded, a face dating from 1815
and, like the similar Thorne Shaded, revived in 1937 (fig. 2.8). This period piece of pro-
duction offset the semi-abstraction of the twelve illustrations, which were hand-coloured
for a special edition. As well as the increasingly popular Regency terraces, the subjects
included Victorian buildings, such as the Metropole Hotel by Alfred Waterhouse and St.
Bartholomew's Church by Edmund Scott, both at the time beyond the limits of acceptable
taste. Reviving the spirit of the 1890s, the Foreword was contributed by Betjeman's friend,
Lord Alfred Douglas, a reminder of how many Victorians were still living at the time.[37]

As a freelance writer and broadcaster after 1935, Betjeman became the most widely
known explainer and defender of Victorian buildings, but it was a gradual development
from sending up the Victorians to cherishing them. He expected his audiences to find the
Victorians amusing, but also played up the sentimental. In a manner unlike any previous
commentator, Betjeman was able to make despised and overlooked buildings and places
into holders of memories for the nation. Many of them had Victorian associations, and
while Betjeman was not necessarily the prime mover in the foundation of the Victorian
Society in 1958, it became strongly associated with him. The idea of campaigning for Vic-
torian buildings was a pre-war one, however, for when its precursor, the Georgian Group
was created in 1937, it stated that 'The word Georgian was adopted for convenience only,
and good Victorian buildings would come within the scope of its activities'.[38]

Victorian architecture was explored very largely in the printed work and image rather
than in the design of actual buildings, in complete contrast to the appreciation of Geor-

2.9
H.S. Goodhart-Rendel,
Entrance to St Mary,
Bourne Street, SW1,
London, United
Kingdom, added to the
original 1874 church by
R.J. Withers in 1925-8.

gian and Regency architecture, which continued to provide models for emulation up to and beyond the Second World War. In this sense, there was no effective 'Victorian revival' in architecture other than on paper, apart from the small thread of continuity in church design that was sustained by Comper until his death in 1960 and by his few successors, most notably Stephen Dykes Bower, who never acknowledged the necessity for any break between the nineteenth and mid twentieth centuries.[39] Other than this, the idea of using Victorian architecture as a basis for development was limited to Goodhart-Rendel, who in addition to his role as a writer, established an architectural practice before the First World War and continued to work as a an architect until his death in 1959.

Goodhart-Rendel's serious engagement with Victorian Gothic as a design style began when he added to the 1870s brick church of St Mary's, Bourne Street, in 1925–8, he virtually reproduced the original style, although with telling variations of detail (fig. 2.9). After his engagement with aspects of Modernism at Hay's Wharf in 1930, Goodhart-Rendel continued his experiment with a few steel-framed buildings to which he added cladding

2.10.
H.S. Goodhart-Rendel,
Prince's House, North
Street, Brighton, United
Kingdom, 1936.

2.11. London County
Council (E.P. Wheeler
and H.F.T. Cooper),
former St. Martin's
School of Art, Charing
Cross Road, London,
United Kingdom, 1939,
refurbished as Foyles
Bookshop and
apartments by
Liftschutz Davidson
Sandilands, 2014.

in what could be described as a Victorian manner. Examples include the remarkable yet largely neglected Prince's House in North Street, Brighton of 1936, where the treatment of the frame and the brick spandrel panels reflect the patterned brickwork of William Butterfield (fig. 2.10). The resulting combination of Victorian and Modern is not unlike the former St Martin's School of Art building in Charing Cross Road by E. P. Wheeler of the London County Council architects 1939, which shows a similar alternative outcome to Modernism developed from its Gothic Revival roots in the form of decorated rationalism (fig. 2.11).[40] These last two buildings sit close in date to 1937 but are essentially serious endeavours, avoiding sentimentality or pastiche, although Goodhart-Rendel could re-enact historical styles very effectively on other occasions. As an architect who found Modernism simplistic, the Crystal Palace was to him largely irrelevant to understanding the Victorian legacy and its applicability to the present. Goodhart-Rendel's influence on Kenneth Clark's view of the Gothic Revival has already been noted. His unconventional ideas also had an impact on Betjeman and Summerson, but not, it seems, on many other practising architects. It probably encouraged these young writers to take a critical approach towards the orthodox interpretations of the previous hundred years then taking root – those of Pevsner's *Pioneers of the Modern Movement*, 1936, and Hitchcock's *Modern Architecture, Romanticism and Reintegration*, 1929, both of which built up a teleological pathway towards the dominance of Modernism, although neither Betjeman nor Summerson ever offered a competing interpretation. For Summerson, the problem of the Victorians remained fascinating but elusive. Assuming that he was the author of a review of Basil Clarke's book in the *Architect and Building News*, for which he was an assistant editor, we find him already in 1938 identifying William Butterfield as the crux around which the interpretation of the Victorians must revolve, writing:

> It remains, perhaps, for an aesthetician to explain Butterfield: to probe the antithesis between his blatant use of frankly hideous "copy-book" elements and his inspired handling of proportion.[41]

It was exactly this study that Summerson went on to write in the *Architectural Review* in 1945.[42]

The Victorians, especially their architecture, appealed to the young of the Modernist period, such as Summerson, Betjeman and Lancaster, because of their challenge to the glib slogans of functionalism that accompanied the Modern Movement and the permission it apparently gave to individuals in society to abdicate from seeing for themselves and making independent judgments. This democratic appeal to the individual was at the heart of Betjeman's lecture 'Antiquarian Prejudice' which came with the imprimatur of the left-wing Group Theatre, where it was delivered in 1937, and of the Woolfs' Hogarth Press, who published it in 1939. The Group Theatre's most famous author, W.H. Auden, wrote in 1937, 'Preserve me from the Shape of Things to Be', going on to celebrate 'the chiaroscuro

of the railway-station' as preferable to an air-conditioned future.[43] Even Noel Carrington, one of the more earnest advocates of modern design, toyed with Victorian nostalgia in a photographic book, *This Man's Father*, in 1935.

Summerson, writing in the *Architect and Building News* in 1936, caricatured the aim of the Modernist in product design as 'Escape from ornament at all cost. Eliminate every suggestion of character, every vestige of articulated taste. Press on towards the unknown which lies beyond negation'. Fitness, the watchword of good design, was, in his view, 'merely a peg on which to hang objective criticism' and symptomatic of a negative approach in all the arts. 'We shrink desperately from the positive', he continued. 'Reluctant to formulate opinions on politics or morality, we prefer to hold no views, and to speculate, with cynical detachment, upon the impotence of those who do'.[44] Such yearning for stimulus, however vulgar, linked the Victorians to the Surrealists as fellow conspirators against the denial of the subconscious. Another commentary in the *Architect and Building News* in 1938 linked the deeply upholstered royal railway carriage of the 1840s, a picture of which was then showing at the London Gallery, Cork Street, with 'the quilted wheel-barrow seen in a surrealist exhibition in London last year'.[45]

This sense of a lack of richness of detail and imagination in Modernism was the subject of a series of articles and lectures by Kenneth Clark, who felt that it represented 'the measuring mind' and was therefore a stultifying dead end from which a new form of ornamented architecture could emerge.[46] This proposal linked the rise of interest in the Victorian period to a wider questioning about the development of Modernism from within the movement, relating to its lack of popular appeal or regional inflection.

Without prompting from intellectuals, the public had for some time displayed its openness to Victorian style and the associations that came with it. The centenary of the 1837 accession, matching the unfolding of a new period of royal consolidation after the Abdication, provided a stimulus for theatre and film. In this case, the Establishment had to move in order to keep up with popular demand. Laurence Housman, the pacifist and pro-suffragette brother of A.E. Housman, whose name is perpetuated in the radical bookshop he founded, now in Caledonian Road, wrote a set of one-act plays about Queen Victoria and her reign that were published in book form in 1934 as *Victoria Regina*, and made popular with illustrations by E.H. Shepherd, but the first performance took place in New York in 1936, owing to a ban on the depiction of members of the royal family on stage in Britain before three generations had elapsed.

The production then launched in Paris on 6 May 1937, six days prior to the Coronation, shortly after which the Lord Chamberlain's Regulations were changed. The success of the production in London, with the actress Pamela Stanley in the title role, was equally great, with a new version of sets and costumes by Rex Whistler, first seen in New York, to add their charm. It was the sexy, feminine side of the period that audiences enjoyed as a relief from modern life. Laurence Whistler, the artist's brother and biographer, described the de-
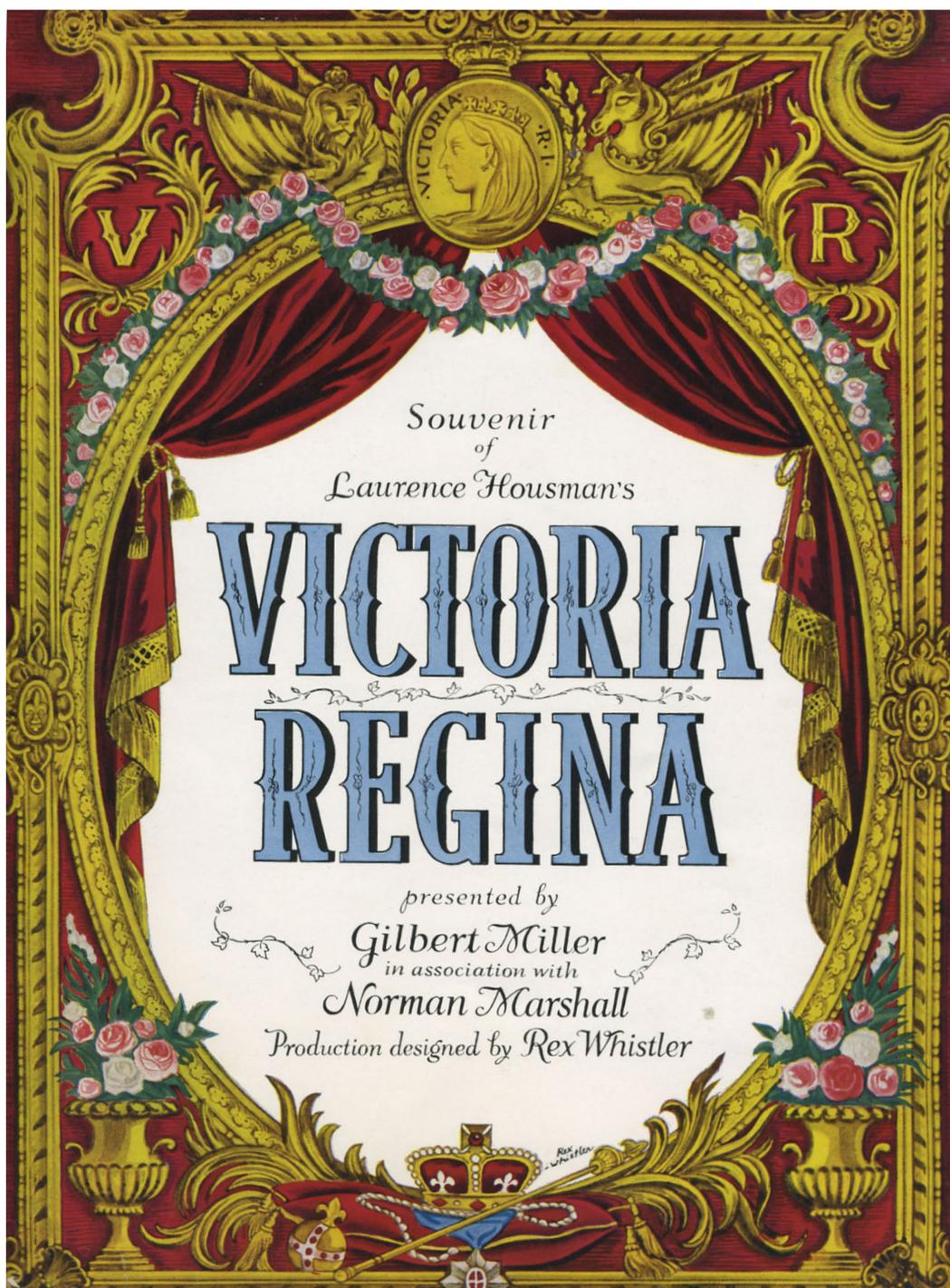
2.12
Rex Whistler, cover of
Souvenir Programme
for *Victoria Regina* by
Laurence Housman,
1937.

signs, 'Here was not the Victorian age of popular fancy, staid, reticent, demure. Here were silks, tartans, tentings, flowered wall-papers, full-blooded colours of a church at Harvest Festival—and all controlled by scholarship that had researched in books, fashion plates and paintings' (fig. 2.12).[47]

Whistler was one of a group of London artists and designers, mostly gay, who had nurtured their own Victorian revival since student days in parallel with the Oxford aesthetes. The new Queen was their close contemporary in age, and adopted them, together with the couturier Norman Hartnell, who, at the King's suggestion, based the designs for the 'white wardrobe', worn on the diplomatically critical state visit to Paris in 1938, on 1840s paintings of Victoria and her family by Felix Winterhalter in the Royal Collection. The French public was enchanted by the unexpected turn towards femininity and nostalgia of these full Victorian-shaped dresses, and Cecil Beaton captured them in photographs against the ornate decoration of the state rooms of Buckingham Palace.

Perhaps such camp and always slightly tongue-in-cheek Victorianism could have been anticipated by Strachey, who did not live to see them. Dressing up and performing the Victorians, as with Virginia Woolf's play *Freshwater*, 1923–35, could be considered a way of controlling them. In April 1937, production began for a film version of the play, *Victoria the Great*, originally intended for foreign audiences, with Anna Neagle as the Queen. The crux of the drama was the relationship between Victoria and Prince Albert, played by the Austrian actor Anton Walbrook, showing the process of their falling in love but also scenes of domestic discord. The narrative included a synopsis of political and social change during the course of Victoria's reign, but it also provided a modern sense of intimacy with the formerly distant figures of royalty, showing them in youth rather than age and contributing to the tendency of the monarchy to present itself as simply another English family, with obvious contemporary connotations.

Behind the scenes of the royal household, the sense of distance was maintained. Rex Whistler stayed that summer with the King and Queen at Balmoral, which formed one of the settings for the action, where the new Queen had insisted that the décor be preserved as a period piece. The film was screened, and Whistler wrote that 'the castle staff bellowed with laughter at the way Hollywood supposed royal servants to behave'.[48] It was very popular in America, however, and so successful that it led to a Technicolor version continuing the story, *Sixty Glorious Years* in 1938, again with Anna Neagle playing the Queen.

The vogue for Victorian period films, plays and novels fostered an uncritical nostalgia, but it was also a means of shifting the focus of Victorian revival towards the urban lower and working classes. *Gas Light*, 1938, a play by Patrick Hamilton, filmed in 1944 by Ealing Studios, was made in the same year as their *Champagne Charlie*, a semi-documentary reconstruction of the London music halls between the 1860s and 1880s that reflected a growing cult of music hall revival, based on the scholarly researches of Harold Scott, who provided material in the 1920s for Elsa Lanchester's cabaret performances.

The lesson of the Victorian Revival of 1937 to the historian is that it contained so many different intentions and audiences, both elite and popular, and may even have served as an instrument of social cohesion around shared memories. It was largely nostalgic, and thus followed in a long series of reprises of historical periods, for which the Victorians themselves were largely responsible. If it idealized the past for purposes of entertainment, it also engaged the attention of an older historian, G.M. Young, who was more concerned with drawing lessons from the moral commitment of the period and understanding its paradoxes than with its visual culture. Young became a friend of Robert Byron at a time when, as a critic, Byron had moved beyond the frivolous Victoriana of his Oxford days, and was actively concerned with architectural preservation, although admittedly of Georgian rather than Victorian architecture. Byron appeared to Young as the antithesis of the Stracheyism that, as Young admitted, first stimulated him to go back and find out more about the previous two generations.[49] Born in 1882, Young was unusual in his generation in his

willingness to embrace the Victorians, and his polished miniature *Portrait of an Age* paved the way for later, more professional historians.[50]

Among art writers, there was as yet no equivalent, even in Clark, to the absence of the sentimental and the satirical in Young's approach. With the Festival of Britain in 1951, Victorian manifestations, while less prevalent than popular memory might suggest, were once again predominantly sentimental in character. The historical and critical task of understanding this long and complex tract of time was in fact still waiting to begin, but as the evidence presented here, and many further instances indicate, the popular sentiment for Victorian things had become widely recognized and harnessed by many art forms in a mixture of emotional registers, aimed at a diverse range of publics. It was to a large extent through the modern media of film and broadcasting that a widespread and strong sense of twentieth-century identification with the early Victorian period was firmly established as a counterpart to the present, through which the contrasts of continuity and change across a century could be interpreted and shared.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1.   Alexandra Harris, 'The Antimacassar Restored: Victorian Taste in the Early Twentieth Century', in Francesca Orestano and Francesca Frigerio (eds.), *Strange Sisters: Literature and Aesthetics in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), pp. 255–272. Further material on Victorian Revival is found in the same author's *Romantic Moderns* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2010).

2.   See Jules Lubbock, 'Victorian Revival', *Architectural Review* CXLIII (March 1978), pp. 161–7; Anthony Burton, 'The Revival of Interest in Victorian Decorative Art and the Victoria and Albert Museum' in Miles Taylor and Michael Wolff (eds.), *The Victorians since 1901: Histories, representations and revisions* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 121–137.

3.   [P. Morton Shand], 'The Art of Book Illustration', *TLS*, 24 August, 1951: p. 540.

4.   Harold Child, 'Forsytism, Mr Galsworthy's Saga', *The Times*, 30 May, 1922: p. 16.

5.   See Lubbock, 'Victorian Revival'; Walter Sickert, 'Wood-Cuts of the Sixties at the Tate', *Burlington Magazine* 42:240 (1923): p. 150.

6.   'Mr. Beerbohm and Rossetti, The Leicester Galleries', *The Times*, 16 September, 1921: p. 11.

7.   Roger Fry, 'The Ottoman and the Whatnot', in *Vision and Design* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1920), pp. 26–30.

8.   For the Wembley Room, see *Illustrated Souvenir of the Palace of the Arts*, pp. 140–1; Burton, 'The Revival of Interest in Victorian Decorative Art', p. 127.

9.   Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival*, 2nd edn (London: John Murray, 1950), p. viii; H.S. Goodhart-Rendel in *RIBA Journal* XXXI (5 April 1924), pp. 321–344. Clark confusingly dates it to 1925.

10.   John Summerson, RIBA Gold Medal address, *RIBA Journal* (1979), p. 494.

11.   Harry Stuart Goodhart-Rendel, *English Architecture since the Regency* (London: Constable, 1953).

12.   Nikolaus Pevsner, 'Originality', *Architectural Review* CXLV, June, 1954, pp. 367–9.

13.   'Architecture', *TLS* 23 October, 1930, p. 867.

14.   See Ayla Lepine, 'The Persistence of Medievalism: Kenneth Clark and the Gothic Revival', *Architectural History* LVII (2014): pp. 323–56.

15.   Basil F.L. Clarke, 'Preface to the 1969 Edition', *Church Builders of the Nineteenth Century* (Newton Abbott: David & Charles Reprints, 1969).

16.   Raymond McGrath and A. C. Frost, *Glass in Architecture and Decoration* (London, The Architectural Press, 1937) p. 126.

17.   John Summerson, '1851–a New Age, a New Style', in *Ideas and Beliefs of the Victorians* (London: Sylvan Press, 1949), p. 65.

18.   'A Tribute by Le Corbusier', *Architectural Review* LXXXI (February 1937): p. 72.

19.   Henry-Russell Hitchcock Jr., 'Modern Architecture in England', in *Modern Architecture in England* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1937), p. 25; See Alan Powers, 'Exhibition 58: *Modern Architecture in England* at MoMA, 1937', *Architectural History* LVI (2013): pp. 277–98.

20.   'The Burning of the Crystal Palace', *The Times*, 1 December, 1936, p. 17. See also Douglas Murphy, *The Architecture of Failure* (London: Zero Books, 2010) pp. 24–43, and J.R. Piggott, *Palace of the People: The Crystal Palace at Sydenham 1854-1936* (London: Hurst & Co., 2004).

21.   'Review of the Year 1936', *The Times*, 1 January, 1937, p. 25; 'The Burning of the Crystal Palace', *The Times*, 1 December, 1936, p. 17. The Winterhalter loan exhibition at Knoedler's in New Bond Street opened on 10 December 1937.

22.   '"A Glorious Show": The Crystal Palace in 1851', *TLS*, 27 March, 1937, p. 233. The column beside the review contained an advertisement for Hutchinson publishers for ten 'APPROVED and AUTHENTIC books for the CORONATION' on royal subjects. See also obituary tributes to Hobhouse by John Grey Murray and Osbert Lancaster in *The Times*, 2 September, 1940, p. 7.

23.   See Martin Green, *Children of the Sun: a narrative of 'decadence' in England after 1918* (London: Constable, 1977).

24.   See Burton, 'The Revival of Interest in Victorian Decorative Art'. Noel Carrington and Jocelyn Rae, *This Man's Father: Victorian Days and Modern Ways* (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), was an earlier book using photographs to make parallels between the Victorian past and the present.

25.   Peter Quennell, 'Foreword', in *Victorian Panorama* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1937), p .vi.

26.   E.g. the texts gathered in Walter Benjamin, Charles Baudelaire, *A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1976). These were only published in German in the 1950s and therefore not known to an English readership before the war.

27.   Humphrey Jennings, *Pandaemonium, The coming of the machine as seen by contemporary observers* (London: André Deutsch, 1985).

28.   John Betjeman, 'A Note on J. N, Comper, the heir to Butterfield and Bodley', *Architectural Review* LXXXV (1939).

29.   Osbert Lancaster, *Homes Sweet Homes*, 2nd edn (London: John Murray, 1953), p. 82. The Barrett reference is probably to the play (1930) and film (1934) *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, about the courtship of the poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

30.   Lancaster, *Homes Sweet Homes*, p. 82.

31.   John Betjeman, *Ghastly Good Taste* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1933).

32.   *Architectural Review* LXXXV (1939): pp. 119–32.

33.   See Alan Powers, 'The Reconditioned Eye: artists and architects in English Modernism', *AA Files* 25 (1993): pp. 54–62.

34.   Lubetkin issued an explanation of the caryatids at the time that deliberately avoided any complex theory. A number of commentators were duly shocked. See John Allan, 'Rediscovering Lubetkin' in *Twentieth Century Architecture* 8 (2007): pp. 89–104.

35.   A.E. Wilson's book *A Penny Plain and Twopence Coloured*, the first history of toy theatre, was published by Harrap in 1932. The Sitwells were admirers of this material and Sacheverell Sitwell was responsible for introducing Diaghilev to it.

36.   E.M.D.[elafield], 'Victorian Nowell', *Punch*, 22 December, 1937, p. 674.

37.   *Brighton Aquatints* was published by Gerald Duckworth Ltd. in November 1939.

38.   'Georgian Buildings', *The Times*, 31 August, 1937.

39.   Anthony Symondson, *Stephen Dykes Bower* (London: RIBA Publications, 2012).

40.   See Alan Powers, John Summerson et al., *H.S. Goodhart-Rendel* (London, Architectural Association, 1987).

41.   'The Gothic Revival', unsigned review, *Architect and Building News* CLIX (18 August, 1939): p. 186.

42.   John Summerson, 'William Butterfield', *Architectural Review* (November 1945): pp. 166–75, reprinted as 'William Butterfield or the Glory of Ugliness' in *Heavenly Mansions* (London, Cresset Press, 1949).

43.   W.H. Auden, 'Letter to Lord Byron', in Auden and Louis MacNeice, *Letters from Iceland* (London: Faber & Faber, 1937), p. 51.

44.   'The burden of Aesthetic Choice', unsigned editorial, *Architect and Building News* CXLV (21 February 1936): p. 237.

45.   'Surrealism on Wheels', *Architect and Building News* 155 (8 July, 1938): p. 30.

46.   Kenneth Clark, 'Ornament in Modern Architecture', *RIBA Journal* 42 (8 December 1934): pp. 167–9; 'Ornament in Modern Architecture' [a different text], *Architectural Review* 94 (1943): pp. 147–50.

47.   Laurence Whistler, *The Laughter and the Urn* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1985), p. 197.

48.   Whistler, *The Laughter and the Urn*, p. 217.

49.   G.M. Young, 'Robert Byron: A Broadcast delivered 30 December 1946', in *To-day and Yesterday* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1948), pp. 9–15. See also Miles Taylor, 'G.M. Young and the Early Victorian Revival' in Taylor and Wolff, *The Victorians since 1901*, pp. 77–89.

50.   G.M. Young, *Portrait of an Age* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936).

CHAPTER 3

THE RETRIEVAL OF REVIVAL: RECOLLECTING AND REVISING THE EVAN ROBERTS WAX CYLINDER

JOHN HARVEY

In 2002, two years before the centenary of the 1904 Welsh Revival, the National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales (NSSAW), based at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, received a phonographic cylinder which, it was claimed, was a recording of Evan Roberts (1878–1951), the charismatic leader of the Welsh religious revival of 1904–5.[1] This essay examines the recording, restoration, and afterlife of a wax cylinder and its status as an index to the identity of both the revivalist and his cause. The cylinder is situated in the context of early sound-recording processes, technology and modernity, metaphors of ruin and fracture, Roberts' preaching, and the promotion of religious idealism. This interrogation informs the core discussion about how sound art, specifically the $R\,R\,B\,V\,E\,\exists\,T\,N\,\mathcal{S}\,O\,A$ $A\,O\,\mathcal{S}\,N\,T\,E\,V\,B\,R\,R$ project, can serve as a medium and process of invention, interpretation, and historical enquiry.[2]

3.1
Cylinder of 'Revival address By E Roberts Jan. 18 1905 (ER)'. Carnauba wax, National Screen & Sound Archives of Wales, Aberystwyth.

EVAN ROBERTS' WAX WORK

The cylinder of Nabonidus (reigned 555–539BCE), the last king of Babylon, was produced in the sixth century BCE at the close of the Babylonian empire and the beginning of the Persian one. The shattered remains were discovered in the Temple of Shamash at the ancient city of Sippar, near Baghdad. The cylinder is made of clay and its text is written in cuneiform with a stylus.[3] Some of the wedge-shaped symbols, like the letters that make up the Roman alphabet, are logophonetic, that is, they stand for sounds rather than concepts. The text is, in this sense, an encoded speech; one that is made audible only when the reader turns the cylinder and speaks the words aloud. In part, the writing tells a story about revival and restoration: an angry god who has abandoned his shrine is reconciled with his people, and orders a king to repair the temples so that the gods may return to their abodes.

Two and a half thousand years later, in 2002, the shattered remains of the cylinder of Evan Roberts, the figurehead of the most significant reparation of the Christian religion in the twentieth century (fig. 3.1), were discovered among a collection of recordings owned by a historian from Tredegar, Gwent.[4] This cylinder is made of wax. As upon the Nabonidus cylinder, the 'text' is recorded using a stylus in the form of an inscribed sound. (The two cylinders are, therefore, phonographic, in the sense that they are each, in different ways, a speech-sound drawing.) And, likewise, the content of Roberts' cylinder can be heard only when its surface is rotated and read audibly (only in this case by a stylus, again). The recording also tells a story about revival and restoration: a holy God who, having been abandoned by his people, seeks reconciliation; he orders them to repair their spiritual lives so that he may once again dwell in their midst. This is, in essence, the concept of revival in the Christian tradition: the renewal of the professing church's spiritual ardour and power.

The revival was manifest in what were claimed to be extraordinary operations of God leading to (on the part of the unconverted) a powerful conviction of sin, repentance, confession of faith, and mass conversion, and (on the part of the converted) personal, spiritual reformation and various forms of activism, such as missionary endeavour, evangelistic preaching, and witness.[5] Historically, the revival of 1904–5 was the largest awakening of religious realism in Wales, as well as the most documented. (The Welsh newspapers ran daily accounts of its progress for over a year).[6] The revival centred on the coalmining towns in the south, and claimed over 100,000 converts in Wales, principally to the Baptist, Congregational, and Methodist denominations, and an estimated million converts in the United Kingdom as a whole. As such, the corporate identity, cause, and cultural vigour of Welsh Nonconformity were enhanced beyond measure. While the phenomenon was local, its reach was global, spawning in the following decade revivals in places as far flung as Africa and influencing the birth of Pentecostalism in America in 1906.[7] For a brief period, Wales was the centre of Christendom.

3.2
'Mr Evan Roberts
Smiles while Preaching',
c.1904. Picture postcard.
Rotary Photo.

Roberts, a 26-year-old coal worker with no ministerial training, was elevated to the position of the revival's leader and a national hero (fig. 3.2). He claimed to possess visionary and prophetic gifts and to be a divinely inspired preacher.[8] His view of the revival was utopian in relation to both the past and the future. Roberts believed that the present revival would return the churches in Wales, and eventually throughout the world, to that primitive state of supernaturalism and influence associated with the apostolic age. The Welsh Revival represented the prospective culmination of biblical history: the begin-

ning of the final ingathering of the elect before the last judgement and second coming of Christ.[9] More mundanely, the revival had a profound effect on the moral behaviour of the Welsh working class. The crime rate dropped and the judiciary became idle, drunkards were reformed, and public houses lost trade.

Both the Nabonidus and Evan Roberts cylinders embody and transcend their historical moment. Both are products of specific linguistic, material, and technological cultures, and are inactive and unintelligible until the appropriate apparatus for reading are brought to them. Both are material memories that have been recovered from oblivion and restored for posterity. Both are presently incomplete, part forgotten. Nevertheless, both sets of remains are sufficient to provide an insight into the values, beliefs, and capabilities of the persons and cultures that produced them.

Archaeologists argue that reconstruction, if based primarily on excavated evidence, is a creative act. Moreover, the reconstructed object or site must be considered a new object— one that is shaped not only by logic and a knowledge of how the extant pieces should fit together, but also by an imaginative, aesthetic, and intuitive judgement where there are gaps to be filled in one or all of these respects. My engagement with Roberts' wax cylinder takes the form of a reverse archaeology—a dismantlement of what has been put back together. This is in order, first, to create new sound artefacts that subject the cylinder's content to a variety of reconfigurations and interrogations; secondly, to excavate meanings that are undisclosed or unintended at source; and, finally, to offer insight into the values, beliefs, and capabilities of the persons and cultures that produced it.

RESTORING THE REVIVAL

The recording offered the tantalizing possibility of a more rounded profile of the revival's figurehead. We knew what he looked like from photographs and what his ideas were from what he wrote and was reported as saying. But we did not know what he sounded like—his vocal signature: the tone, enunciation, pronunciation, grammar, and personality of the voice that had captivated thousands of people during the religious awakening. However, this audible relic could no more surrender its content than a shattered mirror return a faithful image.

The cylinder was broken into pieces, at least one of which was missing. Like the fragments of the Nabonidus cylinder, its parts needed to be reconciled. They were transported to Michael Khanchalian, a Pasadenan dentist and acknowledged master of wax-cylinder restoration techniques (fig. 3.3).[10] Adapting the same skills and tools used to reconstruct and fill teeth, Khanchalian melded the shards together.[11] The recording was replayed on an Edison phonograph initially, and afterwards on a non-contact device that scans the surface with a laser, in the same way as the content of a CD or DVD is read. The advantage of the optical method is that, unlike a stylus, the laser does not wear away the cylinder's groove.[12] (Ordinarily, a wax cylinder will exhibit signs of audio degradation after only

twenty plays.) A digital transfer of the original recording was produced by both methods. And it is only by courtesy of this digitized version that my project could be realized. The digital surrogate is a clone or duplicate that preserves only the content of the original artefact. It constitutes a new recording. And this is the source of the material I have used for my project.

On playback, the sound of the cylinder reveals a great deal of surface noise. This is the result of accumulated static, wear and tear, and several corruptions: the cylinder is a vulnerable object, one that is dying slowly. Over the course of time, the wax has recrystal-lized and cracked.[13] When a cylinder has been disused for long periods, a crust of mould and fungus eats away at the wax, contributing a pink random noise.[14] In this example, the cylinder also suffers from major cracks and missing and unrestorable sections. These have been replaced with a red infill on which no sound is recorded (fig. 3.4). The voices are sometimes subsumed beneath the surface interference; on occasion, Roberts' words and the choir's singing move from sense to incoherence, from speech to noise.

The relationship of the speed at which the sound was recorded and at which it is played back is problematic in relation to early wax-cylinder technology. Unlike gramophone re-

3.3
Cylinder of 'Revival address By E Roberts Jan. 18 1905 (ER)', in fragments prior to restoration, 1905/2002. National Screen & Sound Archives of Wales, Aberystwyth.

3.4
Detail of 3.1 showing surface corruptions, 1905/2002. National Screen & Sound Archives of Wales, Aberystwyth.

cords, which would rotate at a constant 78, 45, or 33 1/3 rpm, a cylinder could be played at anything between 9 and 185 rpm. On an Edison phonograph, the cylinder rotates at between 120 and 160 rpm (depending on how fast you crank the handle). In all likelihood, given the type of cylinder used to capture Roberts and the choir, and its available recording time (approximately 2 minutes), it was recorded at around 144 rpm.[15]

RECORDING THE REVIVAL

In the process of recording, sound passes to the stylus through a horn, which acts as the microphone and is positioned very close to the source. Roberts and his companions would have huddled around the horn's orifice in something approaching a scrum formation. On playback, the horn also serves as the amplifier and speaker. The stylus, vibrated by the sound waves, inscribes in a helical or screw-like path across the surface. During playback, the stylus retraces the grove it has cut. Because of the limitations of the technology, it would not have been possible to capture Roberts preaching 'live' from the pulpit in a chapel service. The recording is, in this sense, a token of, or surrogate for, the real—a knowing pretence on the part of both Roberts and the audient.

The recording was made on a very cold, snow-strewn Wednesday on 18 January 1905 when Roberts and his team of revivalists were at Hirwaun, three miles north of Aberdare, Mid Glamorgan. That day he preached at a morning service in Tabernacle (Independent) Chapel and at Ramoth (Baptist) Chapel in the evening.[16] The later engagement, as Roberts later confessed, proved to be the most emotionally and spiritually draining that he had experienced to date. It is unlikely, therefore, that Roberts would have recovered sufficient poise and energy to commit his thoughts to wax immediately afterwards. In all probability, the cylinder was cut sometime before the first or second service. The recording took as long to make as it does to hear. It re-presents a 2 minute 21 second sound bite from a 'soundtrack' that lasted nearly a year. We hear Roberts, as it were, drawing breath either before a chapel service or between two services, preaching what was possibly his shortest sermon on the hardest day of the revival to date. The cylinder encapsulates a mixture of fractured thoughts and clunky theatricality, measured earnestness and faux spontaneity, preaching and imprecation, singing and response. In this respect, the recording is itself a sample of the revival *in toto*.

By the middle of January 1904, according to *The Times*, the Welsh Revival had become newsworthy on a national scale.[17] It was also the month in which there was a discernible intensification of certain phenomena associated with the awakening. On the day of the recording, the *Caernavon Herald* reported that, at a morning revival service held towards

Transcription of 'Revival address By E Roberts Jan. 18 1905 (ER)'.

ER: [unintelligible].

Choir: (Tune: 'Dymuniad' ['Desire'])
O God the only mercy,
O Lamb that gave us glory.

ER: Do you believe that, brethren?
Do you believe that?

Choir: We do! We do!

ER: Sing it again that you believe.

Choir: (Tune: 'Dymuniad' ['Desire'])
O God the only mercy,
O Lamb that gave us glory.

ER: You can tell some people stories in five minutes.
Here is one who rises for his gloriously.
All eternity will not suffice.
He was brought naked.
What can we give God in return?
The needs of our valuables – only a copper.
God takest [and he leaves].
God took up his cause; man cannot do less.

God spoke through prophets; he now speaking in tongues.
And his tongues say: 'I am the way'.
A way to what?
To everything except destruction.
Hear my brethren, he gave of himself.
[unintelligible], Jesus comes out of the grave.
[unintelligible].

Men must keep their promise.
God will come unto them.

Give him all, all lands [unintelligible],
and stir up a few friends to serve God [unintelligible].
He will need thousands of friends in Wales.

Choir: Ha-ha-ha-ha!

ER/Choir: Do you not hear?

ER: Do you love Jesus?
Do resolve you: he's the way to be free?

Choir: (Tune: 'Cwmnêdd' ['Neath Valley'])
O the Lamb, the bleeding Lamb,
The Lamb on Calvary.
The Lamb that givest all away.
[unintelligible].

the end of the previous week, the Rev. W.E. Williams decided not to preach and instead allowed the meeting to take its own course. At the same chapel in the evening, another man tried to preach but was silenced by the paroxysm of religious fervour: 'there being singing, praying and speaking proceeding at the same time. Some people laughed, others danced, and others seemed to be in fits of terror or of intense and overpowering emotion'.[18]

Two days before the recording, the Welsh daily newspaper the *Evening Express* published a cartoon that attempted to rationalize this behaviour. 'An Empty Pulpit?' was accompanied by a biblical reference to John 12:32: 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me'.[19] The text implies that in the awakening the role of the preacher was made redundant by the Holy Spirit's direct appeal to the congregations.

Roberts' comparatively sedate, polite, and somewhat mechanistic articulation of revivalism on the cylinder thus represents the calm eye of the gathering storm both on the day of the recording and during this period in the revival's progress. Similarly, his restrained delivery is in marked contrast to the outbursts that sometimes characterized what little preaching he did in the chapels at this time.[20] For example, at meetings held at Aberdare, in the same month, Roberts made a vociferous all-out attack on the congregation, accusing them of insincerity and hypocrisy in their worship. The revivalist customarily addressed his congregations (who were often in a state of excitement and commotion) in a spontaneous and untrammelled manner, with little regard for time, believing himself to be directly inspired and controlled by the Holy Spirit.[21] To a large extent, the limits imposed by the medium emasculated his style and presuppositions. Wax cylinders could accommodate approximately either 2 or 4 minutes of recording time. Therefore, Roberts would have needed to script his homily and interactions with the choir in order to fit that tight frame. As a result, his delivery is rather stilted and contrived. The interrogatory style of the sermon (asking questions of the choir who, like a Greek chorus, comment on his discourse) reflects a practice, which he had introduced into his preaching a month earlier, of challenging and confronting congregations about their beliefs and actions. It is noteworthy that the choir on the recording is male. (Roberts was usually backed by a group of female singers during the revival services.) The recording confirms one other characteristic of his preaching. Roberts was, in his own view and that of many others, not a gifted orator.[22] At times, his address betrays a faulty coherence and an idiosyncratic syntax. Ideas are drawn to, and out of, one another by a process of loose association—as though his thoughts are occurring at the moment they are spoken.

The phonographic recording bestows on Roberts a conditional resurrection; his voice is reanimated technologically. But whatever timbre or resonance it had in life is greatly diminished in its representation. The sound from the cylinder is brittle, dry, and rasping, and its frequency range narrowly compressed: there is very little either below 170Hz or above 6000Hz. Consequently, no bass frequencies or upper harmonics are audible. Nor does the recording capture the ambience or reverberation of the physical space in which it was made. (In all likelihood, this is a field recording made wherever the revivalist was at

the time, rather than in a studio, so the conditions were not ideal.) Consequently, the attack and decay of each vocal sound is negligible: the volume hits a peak almost immediately and falls away abruptly.

These voices have travelled in this capsule through time for over a hundred years. They have been dormant in their casket since the cylinder was last played, until they could be played again post-restoration. Roberts and his assistants speak and sing as though to us, and yet not to us but, rather, to an anonymous audience of listeners composed of followers, converts, the curious, and those who needed to be challenged in 1904. Today, we overhear the long dead speaking to the long dead. It would not have entered Roberts' head that this artefact would endure so long. (Indeed, he believed that the 1904 revival would usher in the end time and the final judgement).[23]

The cylinder represents an embodied sound: Roberts' voice, and along with it the evidence of his anima, have been embalmed in wax. The voice resides within this fragile container, recalling the apostle Paul's metaphor for the soul's habitation of the body as a treasure within an earthen vessel (2 Cor. 4:7). The digital re-recording separates soul and body by extracting the sound from its original medium and re-embodying it in binary. The transmigrated soul is then 'cleaned' by a process of re-equalization, that is, the limiting of those frequencies associated with the surface noise of the cylinder and enhancing of the frequency range within which the vocal material resides.

There is much about the Roberts cylinder that has yet to be recovered besides the missing pieces. For example, the purpose of the recording remains unknown. The cylinder appears to be unique, rather than one of a number of copies made from a metal master. So it is unlikely that it was intended for public distribution in the manner of commercial phonographs at the time. We also do not know who made the recording. However, the number on the canister's lid, if it is an index, would suggest that the cylinder belonged to a substantial collection. Lady Ruth Herbert Lewis (1858–1946), an amateur ethnomusicologist and advocate of Welsh cultural life, was travelling around Wales at this time recording folk songs.[24] Her endeavour was in response to another and concurrent revival, this time of national consciousness, which had begun in the late nineteenth century and aimed to assemble and study the riches of Wales' cultural heritage. If she was responsible for recording the Roberts cylinder, her intent may have been to capture the hymns sung by the choir as much as the revivalist preaching. More than likely, the hymn tunes (both written by Welshmen) were preserved only in manuscript form at the time. Alternatively, the recording could have been a trial run on Roberts' part with a view to using audio reproduction as a means of disseminating his preaching and mission more widely in the future. The phonograph and wax cylinder are, from our contemporary perspective, antiquities. But, for Roberts, they were new technology and media. (The famous Italian tenor Enrico Caruso (1873–1921) began recording wax cylinders seriously only a year before Roberts made his debut.) Two months earlier, he had made a vague enquiry to the London Electrotype Agency asking whether it would be possible to produce picture postcards of the revival.[25]

Evidently, Roberts was not afraid to requisition the paraphernalia of the age of modernity and uncertainty to communicate a timeless message about conviction.

REVISING THE REVIVAL: *R R B V E Ǝ T N S O A*

Often it is difficult to discern the mental processes that gave rise to an artwork. Sometimes, as in this case, the seed was an idea that arose spontaneously. My engagement with the cylinder began with a consideration of its objectness, and in particular with the artefact's material nature and history: its manufacture, the calamity, and its subsequent restoration and conservation. On hearing about the repaired wax cylinder, two questions occurred to me straightaway: What might the cylinder have sounded like if it could have been played in its fractured condition? And in how many different ways could the cylinder have been reassembled? In the material realm both interrogations are entirely redundant, for one cannot play a broken wax cylinder and its parts can fit back together in only one way. Nevertheless, these questions ignited a desire to engage with the artefact in its state of ruin. Ruins have an aesthetic, dynamic, and narrative indeterminacy quite unlike that of whole things. The shards of ancient pottery, for example, have a distinctive sensuality, vitality, and enigma, as well as a conditional invisibility (we may not know what the vessels looked like before they were broken or how they might appear after restoration). Ruins, too, are associated with the vestiges of civilizations and epochs, a catastrophic moment, and a consequent change of state—the dissolution of the material substance of a thing and separation from its habitual appearance and utility.[26]

My objective was to create new unities out of the cylinder's pre-glued disorder that explore the audio aesthetic and the artefact's openness to possibility in a state of fragmentariness. This task was impossible in the material realm; but it is entirely feasible in the digital realm. Using sound-editing software, the re-recording can be chopped into hundreds of pieces, played separately, in sequence, or on top of each other, and reordered. The expectation was that the engagement would liberate ideas and significance that are not immediately evident when the recording is heard intact. The manipulation of the source material was determined, as far as possible, by its intrinsic characteristics and extrinsic circumstances. Accordingly, the processes and rules of the game that underlie my intervention with the cylinder arise from the content of the medium, the nature of the medium, and the context and culture of its creation—and those things alone.

The title of the artwork, *R R B V E Ǝ T N S O A*, is derived from the revivalist's name. The words are broken up and the letters' sequence and orientation disrupted to create a textual analogue for the disordered pieces of the once intact cylinder. The name of the artwork is unpronounceable, just as the sound of the cylinder in its state of fragmentation is unlistenable. The work is divided into as many parts as there are possible extant fragments:

First Piece: Abort Nerves
Second Piece: Servant Robe
Third Piece: Braver Tones
Fourth Piece: Braver Notes
Fifth Piece: Breves on Art
Sixth Piece: Rest on a Verb
Seventh Piece: Art Orb Seven
Eighth Piece: Reborn Stave
Ninth Piece: Ornate Verbs
Tenth Piece: Obverse Rant
Eleventh Piece: Verbose Rant
Twelfth Piece

3.5
John Harvey, electroacoustic drawing board, 2011. MDF, chrome, aluminium, microphone, and preamplifier.

3.6
Silhouette of fragment for John Harvey, 'First Piece: Abort Nerves', *R R B V E Ǝ T N Ƨ O A*, 2015.

Each part's title is, again, a disarticulation of the words 'Evan' and 'Roberts' in the form of an anagram. Collectively, the designations are abstractions that fortuitously resemble proper words with musical, literary, and art associations. They are variously commands and encouragements, criticisms and descriptions, references to Roberts' life and personality, and allusions to phenomena associated with the revival itself. The notional twelfth piece has no title. It stands, like a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, for all the pieces that remained unrecoverable when the cylinder was broken. Each sound piece begins, visually, with the shape of one of the eleven extant fragments. A silhouette of the fragment is traced manually with a drawing implement while fixed to an electroacoustic drawing board — a bespoke box-chamber containing a microphone (figs 3.5 and 3.6). The sound sample is then recorded, passed through a feedback filter, sampled and looped, and, finally, modified tonally through an effects filter in order to give it the same sonic character as a wax-cylinder recording. The cyclical nature of the sound-drawing's reiteration mimics the revolution of the wax cylinder.

For the purposes of the project, the digital 'cylinder' is broken not into twelve but into hundreds of discrete sonic samples. They consist of sections edited and dislocated from the digital version of cylinder's audio content: single words, phrases, and sentences taken from Roberts' homily and the choir's singing. (The distribution and ratio of speech and singing throughout the source recording is illustrated in fig. 3.7). The compositions also include the sound of relative silence—that is, those parts of the recording when Roberts and the choir are quiet, and one can hear only the surface noise. The voice samples are variously looped, reversed, slowed down, speeded up, cut up and spliced, reordered, and filtered. The length of each piece is determined by the maximum timespan of a wax cylinder: approxi-

mately 4 minutes.[27] As Roberts discovered, in order to operate effectively within such a narrow window it is necessary to maintain a firm grip on the compositional framework. (The redistribution of samples of speech and song from the source recording resulting from the recomposition of 'First Piece: Abort Nerves' can be seen in fig. 3.8).
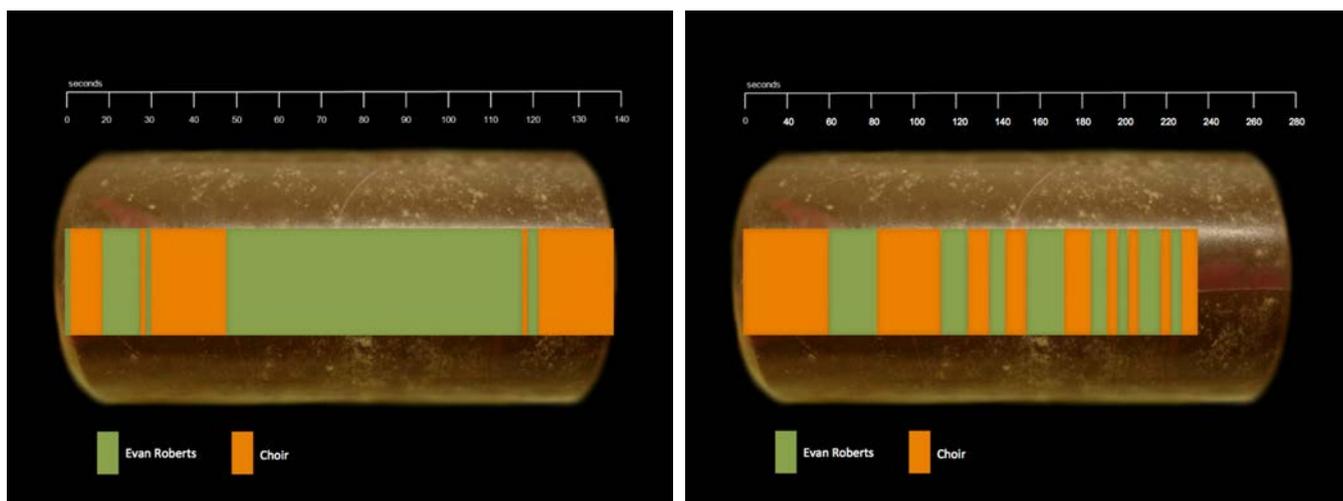
FORM AND THEME, PROCESS AND CONTENT

While the suite of pieces is not intended to be programmatic music, strictly speaking, nevertheless compositional decisions are informed not only by the internal logic of sound collage but also, in some cases, by events and ideas associated with the revival and Roberts' life during that period. For example, some of the sections of cylinder used as sound samples in the first piece were heavily corrupted by scratches and cracks. When looped, they generate percussive rhythms that resemble African drumming. The association is fortuitous but not unrelated. On the day of the recording, an African man spoke at the morning service in Tabernacle, Hirwaun. According to D.M. Philips, Roberts' biographer, he 'related how he had come to England to be trained for missionary work … [T]he Welsh Revival caught him, and now he was resolved to … go back to preach to his own nation the eternal gospel'. During the period from 1904 to the end of the decade, more progress was made by indigenous and foreign missionaries in terms of impact and conversion in Africa than at any other time previously, so much so that there was talk of a 'Welsh revival in Africa'.[28]

The theme of the second piece is to a large extent determined by the title, 'Servant Robe'. It alludes to Roberts' crisis of consecration. In September 1904 he experienced what he termed the 'baptism in the spirit', which he received under the solemn imprecations of the preacher during a meeting at Blaenanerch Chapel, Cardiganshire. In a moment of religious rapture Roberts cried out 'Bend me, O Lord!' It was then, he believed, that God marked him out as his chosen instrument, and the Welsh Revival began.[29] Accordingly, the intelligible text of 'Second Piece: Servant Robe' is made up of the phrases 'Bend me, O Lord!' and 'God brought revival'. Both phrases are spoken by Roberts in the context of the sound artefact, but neither can be heard on the original recording. The phrases are collages derived from individual words and sounds found within the cylinder's acoustic content. For example, the word 'bend' is made up of a 'buh' taken from the word 'believe', while 'end' is a single syllabic sound that is audible only when the recording is played in reverse. Similarly, 'me' consists of the 'muh' taken from 'men' and the 'ee' extracted from 'believe'. The construction of the phrase 'God brought revival' was more straightforward. Roberts says the word 'God' several times and 'brought' once, but never together. The word 'revival' cannot be heard. However, the partial word '…vival' is faintly audible at the beginning of the homily: it is the remnant of the introductory and descriptive announcement that was

3.7
Source recording: distribution and ratio of speech and song of 'Revival address By E Roberts Jan. 18 1905 (ER)'.

3.8
Distribution and ratio of speech and song of John Harvey, 'First Piece: Abort Nerves', *R R B V E Ǝ T N ƧO A*, 2015.

either lost along with the missing pieces of the cylinder or severely corrupted. In the context of the whole phrase 'God brought revival' the audient hears not '…vival' but 'revival'. This is caused by an auditory illusion called *apophenia*, whereby the listener anticipates and makes patterns or sense where none is found. In 'Third Piece: Braver Tones', Roberts repeats the phrase 'I will have the spirit' which, again, is not uttered on the source recording but, rather, collaged from words that are. He asserted that determination (inwardly) when he was thirteen years old, in anticipation of the revival some ten years later.[30]

On occasion, the theme is not prescribed but, rather, 'postscribed'—after the composition is complete—as an act of associative recognition. The soundscape of 'Fourth Piece: Braver Notes' was strongly suggestive of relentless industrial machines—the noise of steam-driven pistons, grinding metal, riveting and hammering, reverberant chambers, and hooters—and the doleful voices of the distressed. That and the general tenor of despondency that permeated the composition prompted in me thoughts of the sinking of the *Titanic*, which occurred seven years after the revival. The two events are connected through the pioneer journalist W.T. Stead (1849–1912), who perished in the disaster. Stead was attracted to the Welsh Revival's claims to supernatural phenomena and their effects, which he personally observed and described in several influential booklets at the time.[31]

The prolonged drones underlying the 'Fourth Piece: Braver Notes' are an element common to several other pieces in the suite, such as 'Eighth Piece: Reborn Stave' and 'Tenth Piece: Obverse Rant'. They serve as one of the principle mood carriers and evoke a serious, sinister, and oppressive temper. This temper is not informed by the source recording—which is characterized by a rather flat, perfunctory earnestness sweetened with a little humour towards the close—but, rather, by Roberts' emotional condition during the revival. He was prone to dark, despondent moods, and subject (in his mind) to direct satanic oppression (which he articulated to himself in the form of visions) and to powerful feelings of anxiety over the condition of his own and others' souls. Such feelings were shared by others, who were similarly vexed by a profound sense of spiritual conflict.

Roberts appears to have suffered from what today would be diagnosed as a bipolar disorder. His biographies and the daily newspaper report that during this period Roberts' moods oscillated between depression and ebullience, crippling inertia and ecstasy.[32] Likewise, the emotional tenor of the revival meetings that he and others conducted could swing from a mood of gloom and dejection to one of frenzied optimism, as preachers pressed upon their congregations a sense of deep conviction of sin and judgement, and then relieved them with the rapturous knowledge of forgiveness and redemption, which led in turn to a profound individual and collective spiritual confidence. The more upbeat and manic compositions, such as 'Seventh Piece: Art Orb Seven' and 'Eleventh Piece: Verbose Rant', which are driven forward by an insistent and somewhat dance-oriented rhythm, together with the rather tribal, foot-stomping triumphalism of the latter and of 'Fifth Piece: Breves on Art' and the frenetic conclusion of 'First Piece: Abort Nerves', articulate this other extreme of the revival's complex emotional profile. Dance was a feature of some of the services. Women, in particular, rose spontaneously and left their pews to

gyrate and prostrate themselves in the aisles of the chapel, it was supposed under the influence of the Holy Spirit.[33]

One other operation of the Holy Spirit on the margins of the revival was the phenomenon of tongues-speaking (glossolalia). The 'gift' is understood to be the faculty to speak foreign and unknown or heavenly languages fluently without having undergone the drudgery of learning them, which gift was manifested among the disciples on the day of Pentecost.[34] Typically, tongues-speaking involves the repetition of the same basic sounds—a perceived reiteration of patterns of intonations, stresses, and the same sounds or group of sounds, like a recurring phrase. Analogies can be drawn between some of the formal characteristics and procedures of the sound compositions and glossolalia. The use of reverse speech (which is usually read as a signifier of demonism) and singing is, here, representative of an unintelligibility that is, rather, of God. Likewise, the patterns of reiteration and looping that recur throughout the suite serve not only as a compositional device but also to connote the air of supernaturalism that pervaded the revival, and Roberts' experience in particular.

The cylinder, at some point in its history, suffered a catastrophic moment: it was smashed. That event is as much a part of its history as the sounds cut into its surface. The disaster is commemorated by the sonic character of some of the compositions' finales (the first two pieces, for example), which is either blunt or jagged like the fragment itself.

A further feature of a number of pieces is the incorporation of sustained notes. Like the phrases Roberts utters, these notes are not audible when the wax cylinder is played normally. They are derived from a very small fragment (a 'grain') of the digital surrogate by slowing down the recording.[35] (Fig. 3.9 shows the waveform display of the surrogate version of the Roberts recording. It shows the duration of the piece (on the x-axis) and its loudness (on the y-axis).) On further magnification/deceleration, the waveform visualization reveals that these spikes consist of blocks or steps of sound (fig. 3.10). It is possible to isolate a single sample block (which may be of only a few milliseconds' duration) and repeat it in a sequence to form a continuous note. In compositions such as 'Fourth Piece: Braver Notes' and 'Second Piece: Servant Robe', the sampled tone is a tiny fraction of one note sung by the choir slowed down 100 times. The note is copied and its pitch changed digi-

3.10
Enlargement of
frequency graphic of
the digital surrogate of
'Revival address By E
Roberts Jan. 18 1905
(ER)'.
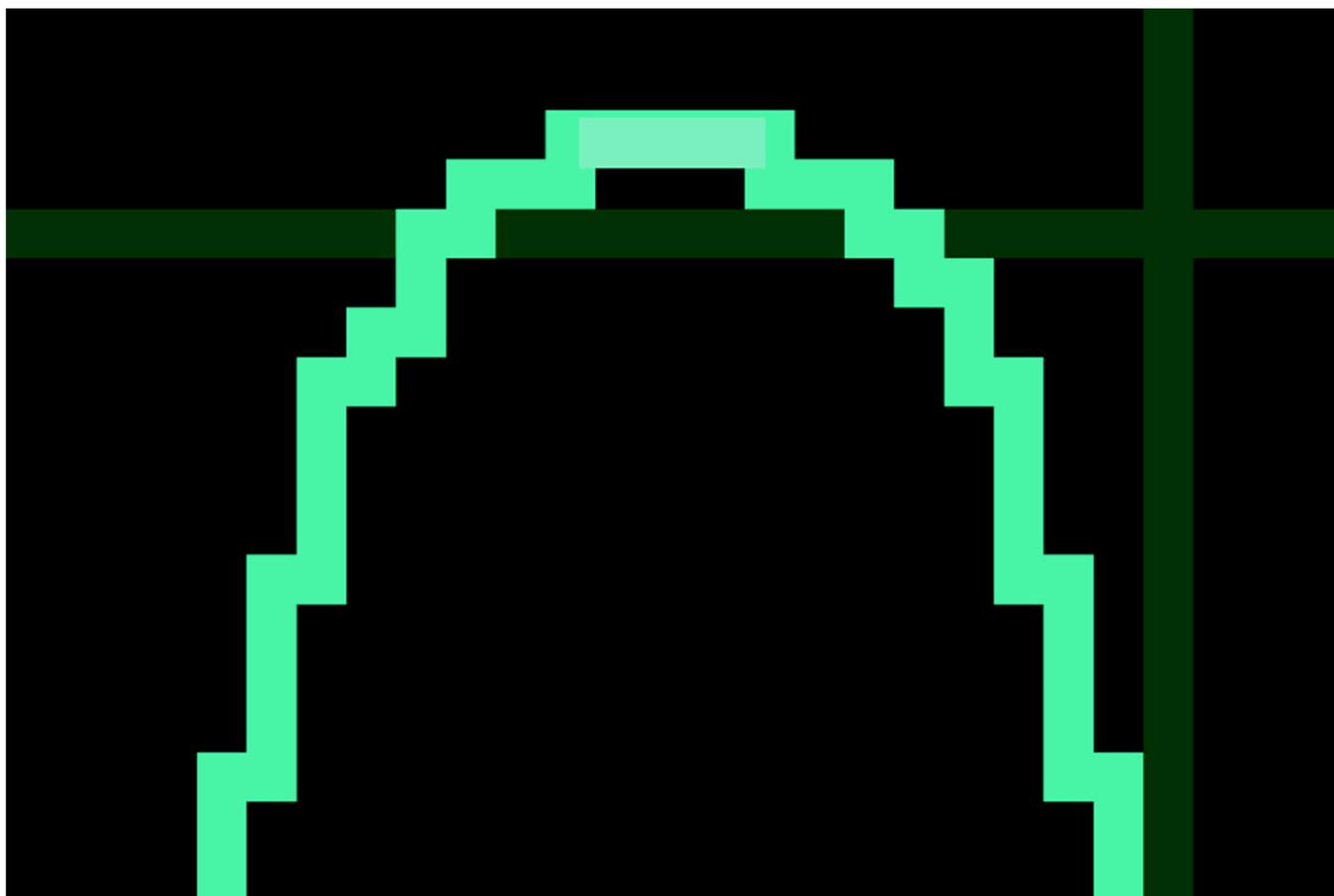
tally in order to create parallel lines of sustained harmony. In 'Ninth Piece: Ornate Verbs', a granulated passage of several tones is extracted and looped. The sample is dropped twelve tones to create a bass figure that plays against a set of decelerating samples of the source played in reverse.

Roberts' oration, too, has pronounced tonal characteristics and patterns which one can hear all the more when the digital version of the recording is either looped or reversed.[36] His speech melody, together with the choir's hymn singing, provide much of the musical material for all eleven recompositions. Hymns had been a prominent characteristic of earlier revivals as a means of expressing religious zeal and devotion.[37] In the 1904 revival they were a dominant feature.[38] A verse from a hymn, wrote one commentator, would be 'repeated and repeated in triumph, and the genius of the people seems to give newness even to the seventieth repetition'.[39] In effect, the congregations were sampling hymns and looping those samples. (This cultural precedent in the tradition of Welsh Nonconformist hymn singing finds its analogy in the repetition and looping of samples used in the sound-artworks.) Roberts' homily is book-ended by a verse from each of two hymns in praise of Christ as the Lamb of God. (The transcription of the vocal composition for 'First Piece: Abort Nerves', below, indicates some of the ways in which the original samples have been repeated, reversed, revised, edited, excised, and extended). The samples of the choir's singing that I have used are derived directly from the recording played at normal speed, edited and, in many instances, reversed and in some cases, for example 'Second Piece: Servant Robe' and 'Sixth Piece: Rest on a Verb'. In this way, the composition generates new melodic lines—new Welsh hymn tunes.

POSTSCRIPT

Historians of religion tend to privilege the study of words over that of objects. But, beyond the context of speech and song, words and objects are always intimately bound

Transcription of the vocal composition of John Harvey, 'First Piece: Abort Nerves', *R R B V E Ǝ T N Ƨ O A* (2015).

Choir: [unintelligible]. [4 times]
The Lamb that givest all away [reverse]. [2 times].

[unintelligible] [4 times].
The Lamb that givest all away [reverse]. [2 times]

Glory! [4 times]
[unintelligible]. [4 times]
The Lamb that givest all away [reverse]. [2 times]

ER: All eternity will not suffice. [4 times]

Choir: Glory! [4 times]
[unintelligible]. [4 times]

ER: Sing it again that you believe. [2 times]

Choir: O the Lamb, the bleeding Lamb [reversed].

ER: God took up his cause.

Choir: O the Lamb, the bleeding Lamb.

ER: Man cannot do less.
A way to what?
A way to what?
To everything except destruction.
Do you believe that?

Choir: We do!

ER: Do you believe that?

Choir: We do!
Glory! [4 times]
[unintelligible] [4 times]

ER: A way to all eternity.

Choir: The Lamb that givest all away.

Choir/ER: We do believe that!

Choir: The Lamb on Calvary.

ER: A way will not suffice.

Choir: Ha-ha-ha-ha! Ha-ha-ha-ha!

ER: What do you believe?

Choir: Ha-ha-ha-ha! Ha-ha-ha-ha! Ha-ha-ha-ha!
Ha-ha-ha-ha! Etc.

together, as, for example, the print in a book or an inscription or incision in stone, wax, or clay. Words are often mediated materially and technologically. And, as has been observed in the case of the Roberts cylinder, the carrier object exerts an influence on the words—on the speakers' composition, the hearers' comprehension, and the physical conservation of what is spoken and sung. We hear the apparatus too. Cylinders of this period sometimes captured the noise of the phonograph too: the rumble of the cog-wheels and spring as the machine was cranked. The characteristics of the phonograph's means of recording and playback—the horn, diaphragm, and stylus, together with the size of the cylinder—also contribute to the overall sonic character of what we hear. We hear the voice *through* the technology: the voice along *with* the technology. Indeed, the voice *is* the technology: a series of vibrations inscribed as a continuous groove into wax. We hear, too, the patina of surface noise caused by ageing and corrosion, the sound of the sum of defects—the voices and something else. The recording's process, limits, and ritual deforms voices, and determines the participants' actions and interaction by constraining time, temperament, and impulse in ways that were inimical to the revivalists' real-world performance. So, in examining the material culture of revival, we need to deal with words, sounds, and their host objects interdependently.

The wax cylinder is hollow (open at both ends)—a conduit rather than a container, through which past and present, reality and its revisions, course and confluence. Accordingly, the suite of works is a contemporary and imaginative response to historical data—a series of conjectural counterfactual reconstructions or fictive extensions of the sonically encoded fact. I am, quite literally, making up history (which is of the essence of revivalism, religious or otherwise). The sound works adapt the audible content, the characteristics of the recording process, and the physical condition of the cylinder as a means of making and conflating, acoustically, aspects of Roberts' biography and the revival's history. Through this process, the sound artefacts evoke associated experiences, events, emotions, critiques, and significances that are otherwise either inaccessible to, or inexpressible through, textual documentation.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1.   The inscription at the base of the can reads 'Revival address By E Roberts Jan. 18 1905 (ER)'.

2.   Further information about, and recordings of, the *R R B V E Ǝ T N Ƨ O A* project are available at http://evan-roberts.johnharvey.org.uk (accessed 2 March, 2014) and on CD: John Harvey, *R R B V E Ǝ T N Ƨ O A*, The Aural Bible I [CD, 14 tracks] (National Screen & Sound Archive of Wales; Sian Records, 2015), GENCD 8002.

3.   George R. Law, *The Identification of Darius the Mede* (Pfafftown, NC: Ready Scribe Press, 2010), pp. 209, 218–20; British Museum, 'Cylinder of Nabonidus', accessed 21 March, 2014, http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/c/cylinder_of_nabonidus.aspx.

4.   National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales, 'Evan Roberts' [sound recording] (1905), transfer to CD (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 2002), Cell E123 3622; 'The Voice of Evan Roberts', accessed 21 March, 2014, http://digidol.llgc.org.uk/METS/XDY00001/arddcyflthema?locale=en&ID=XDYdmd75%20XDYdmd75a.

5.   *South Wales Daily News*, 23 November, 1904, p. 6; 19 December, 1904, p. 6.

6.   See W.T. Stead, *The Revival of 1905*, 4th edn (London: Review of Reviews Office, 1905); Eifion Evans, *The Welsh Revival of 1904* (Bridgend: Evangelical Movement of Wales, 1981).

7.   *Riches of Grace/Cyfoeth Gras* 1:3 (January, 1933): p. 109; O.C. Bowen, 'The Revival in Wales 1904–5', *Riches of Grace* 8:3 (November 1984): pp. 164–5; Nils Bloch-Hoell, *The Pentecostal Movement* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget; London: Allen & Unwin, 1964), 33–43.

8.   H. Elvert Lewis, *With Christ among the Miners* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1906), p. 80.

9.   'Awstin', 'The Religious Revival in Wales', *Western Mail*, pamphlet no. 1 (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1904), p. 27.

10.   Randye Hoder, 'Antique Recordings Turn Dentist's Home into a Wax Museum', *Los Angeles Times*, 18 Apr. 1990, accessed 4 March, 2015, http://articles.latimes.com/1990-04-18/news/ga-1237_1_wax-record.

11.   Cylinders at the beginning of the twentieth century were made from carnauba wax, which today is used in the manufacture of dental floss.

12.   See Helen H. Roberts et al., 'The Re-recording of Wax Cylinders', *Zeitschrift für Vergleischende Musikwissenschaft* 3:3–4 (1935): pp. 75–83; Toshiaki Iwai et al., 'Reproduction of Sound from Old Wax Cylinders Using Laser-Beam Reflection Method', *Applied Optics: Application-Centred Research in Optics* 25:5 (1986): pp. 597–604.

13.   'Cylinder Preservation and Digitization Project', Department of Special Collections, Donald C. Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, accessed 4 March, 2015, http://cylinders.library.ucsb.edu/index.php; Robert J. Hodge and James Meade, 'Care and Handling of Historic Sound Recordings', Surface: Syracuse University Libraries, 2012, 5, accessed March 4, 2015, http://surface.syr.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=pres_treatment.

14.   'Pink' is a technical term for a type of noise that contains all the frequencies that are audible to humans—20Hz to 20,000Hz—but distributes those frequencies at different volumes.

15.   Greg Milner, *Perfecting Sound Forever: The Story of Recorded Music* (New York: Faber & Faber; London: Granta, 2009), pp. 22–9.

16.   *Western Mail*, 18 January, 1905, p. 3.

17.   *The Times*, 15 January, 1905, p. 9.

18.   C.B. Turner, 'Religious Revivalism and Welsh Industrial Society: Aberdare in 1859', *Llafur* 4:1 (1984): pp. 4–13, 11.

19.   *Evening Express*, 16 January, 1905, p. 2.

20.   *Aberdare Leader*, 16 November, 1904, p. 7; *North Wales Chronicle*, 28 April, 1905, p. 8.

21.   John Harvey, *Image of the Invisible: The Visualization of Religion in the Welsh Nonconformist Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999), pp. 59–62.

22.   D.M. Phillips, *Evan Roberts, the Great Revivalist and his Work*, 2nd edn (London: Marshall Brothers, 1906), pp. 312–13.

23.   'Awstin', pamphlet no. 1, p. 27.

24.   E. Wyn James, 'An "English" Lady among Welsh Folk: Ruth Herbert Lewis and the Welsh Folk Society', in Ian Russell and David Atkinson (eds.), *Folk Song: Tradition, Revival, and Re-creation* (Aberdeen: Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, 2004), pp. 266–83.

25.   Evans, *The Welsh Revival of 1904*, p. 198.

26.   The condition of the Roberts cylinder is, in one sense, a metaphor for the state of the very movement that had given rise to him. In the period immediately following the revival, Welsh Nonconformity was disintegrated and disabled, and in need of another restoration. The catastrophic event that led to the denominations' rupture, some scholars believe, was the revival itself. Once the religious enthusiasm dissipated, the spiritual essence vacated the premises. The chapels became hollow, dried-out husks and the congregations void of vision (Glanmor Williams, *Religion, Language, and Nationality in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1979), pp. 245–6).

27.   In this respect, I have allowed myself a degree of latitude. Strictly speaking, wax cylinders around 1904 could only accommodate nominally 2 minutes of recording. However, this proved too brief a timespan in which to develop satisfactory compositions. Thomas Edison introduced a wax cylinder that could play for up to 4 minutes in 1909.

28.   J. Edwin Orr, *The Outpouring of the Spirit of Revival and Awakening and its Issues in Church Growth* (British Church Growth Association, 2003), accessed 2 February, 2015, http://www.churchmodel.org.uk/Orr%20HS%20 BOOKLET%20A4.pdf.

29.   Lewis, *With Christ among the Miners*, p. 23.

30.   D.M. Phillips, *Evans Roberts a'i Waith* (Dolgellau: E.W. Evans, 1912), p. 64.

31.   W.T. Stead, *The Coming Revival: What I have Seen, and Hope to See* (London, 1905).

32.   'Awstin', pamphlet no. 4, 3.

33.   'Awstin', pamphlet no. 6, 58.

34.   C.G. Williams, 'A Study in Pentecostal Glossolalia and Related Phenomenon' (PhD diss.; University College Cardiff, 1978), pp. 278–9.

35.   To explain the method by which the tones are processed from the digital source, it is useful to shift from the audible to the visual and address a rudimentary characteristic of digital images called pixilation. A pixel is the smallest addressable and controllable element of a digital image. For example, a digital rendering of a photographic portrait of Roberts is composed of thousands of pixels. Ordinarily, one is not aware of them until the image is greatly enlarged. Each pixel is a block of colour or tone allied to other blocks in a grid formation, as though the whole image were a very complex and minuscule mosaic. To see and hear the equivalent of pixels or 'grains' in sound, one also has to enlarge the source.

36.   When reversed, Roberts' voice does not exhibit the characteristic changes in dynamics and timbre associated with an inversion of the attach and decay envelope—the note gradually increasing to a maximum and then bluntly tapering off. This is because of the absence of any significant audible decay when the source is played forwards, which, in turn, is caused by the inability of the recording equipment to render low volume and pitch levels as sounds fall away. Interestingly, Roberts sounds as though he might be speaking in Welsh (his mother tongue) when the recording is played backwards.

37.   'Awstin', pamphlet no. 1, [p. ii].

38.   *Evening Express*, 14 December, 1904, p. 3.

39.   Awstin', pamphlet no. 6, p. 2.

CHAPTER 4

THE PROBLEM OF EXPIRATION OF STYLE AND THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF ARCHITECTURE

MARTIN HORÁČEK

I.

On Sunday 7 November 2010, the Church of the Sagrada Família in Barcelona was consecrated by Pope Benedict XVI. The ceremony was the culmination of the most important stage in the construction of the church, namely the erection and vaulting of the five naves. If the pace of construction is kept and the plans are not frustrated by unexpected problems, the largest, most original, most complicated and undoubtedly most important Art Nouveau building will be completed in 2026, one hundred years after the death of the designer Antoni Gaudí, 144 years after the start of construction and 143 years from the moment when Gaudí became a church architect and fundamentally reworked the design and style of the original project.

4.1
Antoni Gaudí and others, the Sagrada Família Church, Barcelona, Spain, under construction since 1882 The five-nave vault was completed in 2010.

The disturbing fact here is that this most important Art Nouveau building will be completed in 2026, well over a century after the Art Nouveau style went out of fashion in all centres where it had previously been intensively cultivated. How is the discipline of History of Architecture to grapple with this fact? Will the Sagrada Família church be presented as a belatedly realized representative of the architecture of the early twentieth century, or as a representative of the architecture of the third decade of the twenty-first century? Will its Art Nouveau style be treated as 'contemporary', or will it be classified (or should it be classified) as 'anachronism'? Will the Sagrada Família be seen as a creation in the Art Nouveau style or in the Art Nouveau revival—with the term 'revival' expressing the idea of the resuscitation of something that once lived and then ceased to exist?

Such troubling questions point to a problem in our discussion of architectural styles. We are able to determine their start, usually at the time of the first occurrence of the most characteristic formal motive or group of motives, but can we tell when they came to an end—or when they perhaps should end?

These issues will be discussed in the following. For the Barcelona masterpiece is obviously not the only building that gives rise to similar thoughts. From our point of view, the uniqueness of the building lies in its impact on the history of its stylistic idiom. Never before in the history of architecture (as far as the West is concerned) have we encountered the most important exemplum of an architectural formal language appearing on the scene at a time when this idiom has been out of use for several generations (fig. 4.1).

II.

Historiographers of twentieth-century art coped with 'anachronistic' stylistic phenomena with marked uneasiness. The customary approach has been to distinguish between two fundamental types of such phenomena, usually described as 'traditionalism' and 'historicism', standing semantically close to another conceptual pair: 'survival' and 'revival'. Traditionalism and survival refer to idioms or activities that survive, by force of habit or through inertia, in spite of the fact that in the cultural centres other idioms or activities have become fashionable in the meantime. The protagonists of survival are often not even aware of these changes or are not interested in them. The terms historicism and revival, on the other hand, are used for deliberate returns. The artist or the customer are aware that the style has gone out of use in its cultural context, and with that in mind they strive for its second lease of life. Usually, their choice is not motivated only by purely artistic reasons: by using an outdated idiom, some kind of affection may be manifested for other aspects of life at the time when the particular idiom was still in use (a typical example is the relationship between the Renaissance and antiquity). In large churches, built over longer time, there are often elements that belong to both categories, together with elements that have an ambivalent character and cannot be clearly assigned to either revival or survival group—as in the case of the Barcelona Church of the Sagrada Família. For example, the highest church tower in the world, the bell tower of the cathedral of

Ulm in southern Germany (161.5 m), dates back to the years 1880–90. Its construction was led by the architect August Beyer, who based it on the plan of Matthäus Böblinger from the end of the fifteenth century. The builders of the tower wanted to finish the construction of the temple in its original form (closer to 'survival'), while they associated the Gothic style with Catholicism and the German creative spirit (closer to 'revival'). The architectural elements and details of the last stages of construction of the St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague (chief architect Kamil Hilbert, 1899–1929) are basically Gothic in order to follow the medieval design properly. Nevertheless, they are not simply either 'survived' or 'revived', since they are marked by Art Nouveau features, absent from the stylistic vocabulary of the Middle Ages.

A significant role in the motives for the intervention of the kind described above is played by reverence—reverence for the antiquity of a building or set of buildings whose impression should not be weakened by a new form. For architects like Beyer or Hilbert or their employers, the completion or repair in the 'original' style or a style that is close to the original, did not represent any historical problem. They said they were building in the 'old' or in the 'Gothic' style, regardless of the fact that most other structures emerging simultaneously were following other languages that were closer to the general taste of the period. Likewise, they considered it as natural when style gained an individual patina according to the specific talent and experience of a particular architect. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Nicholas Hawksmoor in England and Jan Santini in Bohemia treated the Gothic style just as masterfully and creatively as the classical language. In both languages, they completed and repaired old buildings and built new buildings as well.[1] The above-mentioned Hilbert applied a Gothic style in the construction of apartment buildings in Czech towns with a type of layout which did not exist in the Middle Ages (fig. 4.2). The last Gothic cathedral was consecrated in Europe in 1993 (Santa María la Real de la Almudena in Madrid, construction from 1883) (fig. 4.3) and the largest Gothic cathedral in the world has not been finished yet (St. John the Divine in New York, construction from 1892). Preservationists' sentiments play an insignificant role in these cases — the Gothic style is sought after mainly because it seems to fulfill the selected task better than any other style. Style is understood in these considerations as a language of forms, a set of elements and rules for their merging, with a certain degree of flexibility, just as with spoken languages.

As indicated above, old styles, despite the fact that their lack of newness is generally known, are used for their functional advantages. Admittedly, we understand the notion 'function' here broadly. The functional advantage means that the client and the architect consider the chosen style to be the best for the given job in terms of construction, user traffic, and emotional response (*firmitas, utilitas, venustas*).

Classification of these styles into survival and revival or into traditionalism and historicism, has an auxiliary character, in addition to distinguishing them from 'contemporary' styles. True, it does not fully cover the colourful reality of human interaction with architecture. On the other hand, such classification proves useful when translation of that
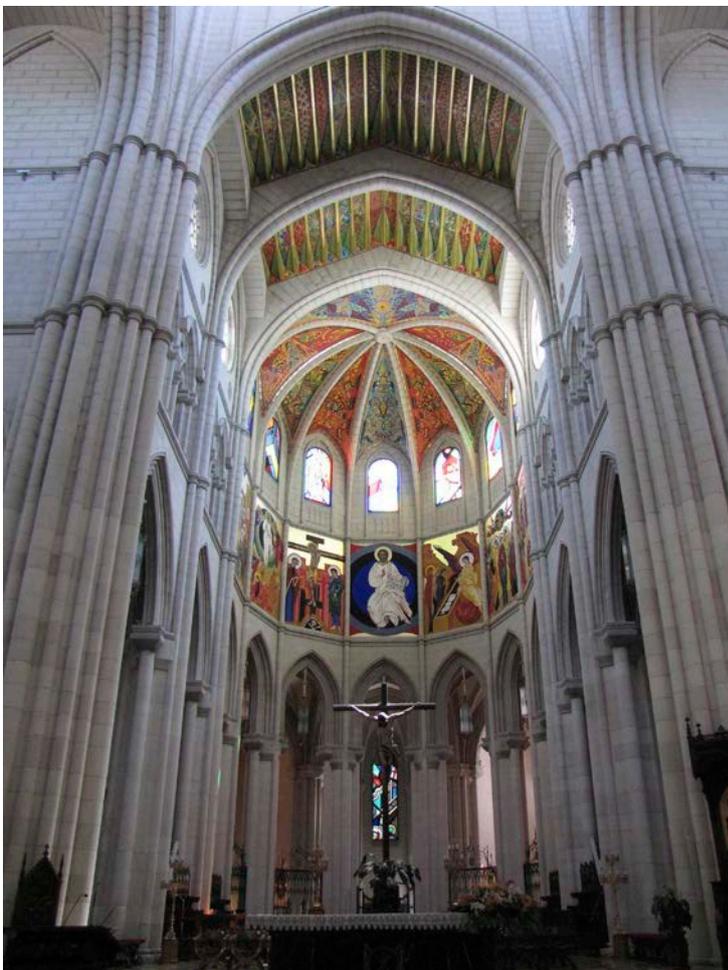
4.2
Kamil Hilbert, house U
Bezděků, Plzeň, Czech
Republic, 1906–7.

4.3
Francisco de Cubas and
others, Church of Santa
María la Real de la
Almudena, Madrid,
Spain, 1883–1993.

interaction into verbal statement is needed; it is intelligible, as it corresponds with the tendency of the human mind to classify various phenomena into opposing binary structures. The awareness of cognitive stereotypes, conceptual categories and intellectual operations, which people employ when translating their perception of reality into a rational verbal debate, may also help to understand the fortunes of a style in architectural history and its historiographical discourse. So when and why might a style expire?

III.

Scholars have devoted much of their attention to the origins of styles: when and how were the Gothic, Renaissance or geometrical abstraction born? Which artists invented them, and which clients commissioned them? What motives led to them, and what circumstances influenced them? The dates of the consecration of the choir of the Cathedral of Saint-Denis, the competition for the second door of the Florentine Baptistery or the publication of the essay *Ornament and Crime* by Adolf Loos became turning points in art history. If the exact date or name of the originator cannot be determined, researchers seek to reconstruct the events through indirect evidence. Like detectives, they combine comparative visual analysis with the analysis of archive documents and with tests on the age and origin of materials. Thus the birth of the Doric style or the origins of Byzantine cupola architecture are considered some of the most intriguing problems of art historiography.

This preoccupation with the origins or the primacy is easy to understand. It results from natural human competitiveness and the need of the historians for distinct landmarks on a timeline. Surprisingly, much less research has been devoted to the opposite end of the story of a style—its termination or expiration. No serious scholar has ever claimed that the Gothic style ended on the date when the first building with round arches for its arcades instead of a pointed archivolt appeared. Still, the history of art is widely understood as a sequence of styles, replacing one another: the Gothic style follows after the Romanesque and the Renaissance after the Gothic, etc. To explain the fact of overlapping nature, or of parallelism of stylistic idioms, or of the pre-historicist stylistic pluralism seems not to be easy. As information theory instructs us, the brain likes to work with closed units: what has a beginning should also have an end. In principle, boundaries cannot be seen as permeable. If the history of art is understood primarily as a historiographical debate, then such expectations are justified. Historical periods are expected to begin and end: World War II began in 1939 and ended in 1945, communism in Czechoslovakia lasted from 1948 to 1989. Architectural styles are expected to follow the same logic: the Gothic style began with the consecration of the choir of Saint-Denis in 1144 and ended ... well, when exactly?

There are not very many hypotheses that have attempted to explain the termination of a style. With some simplification, we can find three basic and standard ones:

(1) The first hypothesis believes in a parallel between the life of a style and the life of an organism. A style is born, reaches its peak, stabilizes itself, then shrivels up or goes

4.4
Benedikt Ried, three-
nave vault at the Church
of St. Barbara, Kutná
Hora, Czech Republic,
1512–48.

wild (becomes Baroque), then dies and from its ashes a new style is 'inevitably' born. This theory stood at the root of modern art historiography and was typical for scholars like Giorgio Vasari (1511–74) and Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–68).[2] Metamorphoses of a style, according to this hypothesis, are largely predictable and individual performances almost interchangeable.

(2) The second hypothesis complements the first one. It also believes in objective laws, but adds a geographic dimension to the time dimension. A style can migrate. Its life cycle begins in one place and finishes elsewhere. The Czech art historian Vojtěch Birnbaum (1877–1934) coined for it the term 'the law of transgression'. In the study *A Supplement to Developmental Law?* from 1932, this phenomenon was demonstrated, *inter alia*, on the Gothic style, which according to Birnbaum began in the twelfth century near Paris in France and ended as 'Late Gothic' in the fifteenth or sixteenth century in Central Europe (fig. 4.4). Birnbaum explained such migration by the confrontations of limited forces of

a cultural community with the objective necessity that every stylistic development be closed and all its possibilities realized:

> The development … does not want its fortune to depend on the spiritual potency of the nation in which it was conceived, does not want to be prematurely terminated and remain a torso just because the energy of the nation was not sufficient to carry it through to its end. Therefore, it migrates elsewhere, where there is enough creative ability and fresh vigour for its continuation.[3]

It does not mean that the style in the place of its origin completely ceases to be cultivated, only that it is no longer cultivated creatively in a way that enriches its development.

(3) Whereas the previous two hypotheses apply biological and logical laws to a style as an objective entity, the third hypothesis refers to the psychology of the observer. Its originator was the German architect and protagonist of the psychology of empathy Adolf Göller (1846–1902). In the essay *Was ist die Ursache der immerwährenden Stilveränderung in der Architektur?* (*What is the Cause of Perpetual Style Change in Architecture?*), printed in 1887, he stated:

> Our pleasure in the beauty of a meaningless form diminishes when its image becomes too clear and complete in our memory. It is this far-reaching psychological law of "jading" [or fatigue–*Ermüdung*] of the sense of form, which imposes perpetual style change on architecture.[4]

No matter how beautiful the forms are, all become victims of the law of fatigue. Therefore, according to Göller, we cannot be surprised that even the best classical feats were replaced by those that were less valuable. Architects try to prevent the fatigue by innovative combinations of parts and by intensifying effects. The fate of style, nonetheless, does not depend on their efforts as much as it does on the consent of the public whose judgment is shaped by place-related experience, i.e. by accumulated images stored in people's memories.

IV.

Let us now test the three hypotheses. In order to be able to apply the first and second hypothesis, the style would have to reflect a collective feeling, ideally shared by all members of a certain cultural community. Vasari considers Florence, and by extension of the whole of Italy, as a taste monolith, while Winckelmann applies this model to the whole of Europe. They both allow for differences in individual preferences within a period; however, such differences take place within the confines of one style. A cultivated contempo-

rary of Vasari could legitimately choose between a Raphael and a Michelangelo, but not between the Renaissance and Gothic style, as the former is seen as historically justified due to developmental laws, while the latter is not. If the latter one is still practiced, it is because of ignorant people, or owing to peoples with less refined taste (for example Germans, according to Vasari).

It is interesting to see how the experience of the pluralistic, multicultural world of the twenty-first century helps to reveal the instrumentality of this reasoning. In the modern totalitarian societies, such as Nazi Germany or communist Czechoslovakia, the belief in the uniformity of period style and homogeneity of population was hardly ever questioned. An exception was the stylistic pluralism of the liberal nineteenth century, which, according to the regime scholars, represented a 'missing worldview order'.[5] There is hardly any doubt that art history, in such a conception, serves as a strategy to promote the scholar's own aesthetic preferences. Undesirable styles are branded as historically inappropriate and with the aid of parallels with the life of the organism, the need for their necessary expiration is demonstrated. One of the motives for the birth and cultivation of art history, certainly for Vasari or Winckelmann, was thus a personal wish to inhume the previous style—in order for Renaissance to live, Gothic must die, for Classicism to live, Rococo must be terminated.

Defending the inevitability of stylistic change actually provides ready ammunition to all those who profess to have discovered a true artistic expression of the epoch and want enough room for it, both in the artistic world, and in historiographical presentations. The proclamative announcements of the due expiration of a style have not vanished with further development and refinement of art historical knowledge. For example, a hundred years ago the leading Czech art historian Antonín Matějček (1889–1950) proclaimed the domestic rural vernacular (so-called 'folk art') a 'dried-up spring'.[6] In 1977, the American architect and architectural theorist Charles Jencks announced the departure of modernism with the demolition of the US Pruitt-Igoe housing development in St. Louis, Missouri, in order to clear the field for postmodernism, uttering the later famous sentence: 'Modern architecture died in St Louis, Missouri on July 15, 1972, at 3.32 pm (or thereabouts)'.[7] The Czech historian and architecture critic Rostislav Švácha retaliated at a distance when, in 1996, in a leading Czech contemporary architecture journal he stated: 'Above all, we can be sure of the fact that as an architectural movement, postmodernism already passed away several years ago and may now exist only as a subject of historical research'.[8] According to Švácha, postmodernists were replaced by a new generation of architects, represented by names such as Steven Holl and Rem Koolhaas.

However, when we observe the global architectural scene, neither the death of modernism nor the interment of postmodernism can be confirmed. The typical postmodernist way of mixing technology achievements with formal quotations and evocations, including Jencks' interpretive guidelines ('reading', 'double coding'), has become very popular in the last two decades, at least in Russia, China and the Middle East (Moscow, Astana,

Shanghai, Dubai, etc.).[9] Even the pioneers of postmodernism such as Robert Stern have not said their last word yet.[10]

This partially confirms and partially challenges the validity of the second hypothesis, the law of transgression. Indeed, if a style is adopted by a new community, these people may breathe new dynamics into it and can even work with it more inventively than the original community. This happened in the case of radical Baroque in Bohemia and Bavaria and in the case of Renaissance and functionalism in the United States (American Renaissance, International Style). It is difficult, however, to posit it as a rule. The ideas and inventions of Soviet Constructivists with their technological poetics are still superior to almost anything else that came nearly half a century later in connection with Western High-tech architectural movement. Some significant stylistic forms have polycentric origin (segmented columns, biomorphic Art Nouveau decor) and to establish a single life sequence of the whole style is simply not possible. The interpretative trick with defining the so-called neo-styles is not of much help either. There is an equally long or longer time lapse between the choir of Saint-Denis (1144) and the Gothic vaults by Benedikt Ried in the church of St. Barbara in Kutná Hora in Bohemia (1512–48) than between Ried in Kutná Hora and Hilbert's new parts of St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague (1869–1933). It is very difficult to find a palpable break in the practice of the classical idiom, beginning with the first Doric temples and up to the present. Even where older geometry of shapes and use of colours are very accurately reproduced (as in the case of re-built monuments), it is difficult to deny the creative contribution of the authors (and therefore their contribution to evolution of a particular style, if that is the concern), for at least three reasons:

(1) Mastering a pre-modern style is usually more difficult than mastering some currently fashionable idiom, on account, among other things, of a lack of textbooks and teachers.

(2) The volume of the new building always enters a differently shaped surrounding space, compared to building in the same style built hundreds of years ago. From such a holistic perspective, the building is novel; there is no such thing as passive reproduction.

(3) In addition, the new buildings are adapted to the up-to-date technical standards and requirements for user comfort. The new Frauenkirche in Dresden, unlike the original church, had to have electrical wiring, fire protection and wheelchair access. The 'developmental' contribution of the new Frauenkirche to the genesis of the Baroque style lies among other things in solving the problem of integrating the modern technical solutions so as not to interfere with the compositional harmony of the Baroque idiom (fig. 4.5).

It seems that Göller's psychological approach is the most feasible one. It respects the individual attitude, it does not build upon fictitious metaphysical (Zeitgeist) or collectivist (national) constructs, and when it formulates laws, it does not do so through artificial parallels to organic life, but with reference to hard-wired mechanisms of human thought. In the 1990s, Göller's study was rediscovered by Anglo-American historians of architecture Harry Francis Mallgrave and John Onians. With the development of Neuroarthistory and World Art Studies, the professional attention has been directed not only to Göller's conceptions but also to the theory of empathy in general.[11]

4.5
Frauenkirche and
Neumarkt, Dresden.
Architect of the original
building Georg Bähr
(1726–43),
reconstruction IPRO
Dresden, 1992–2005.

4.6
Demetri Porphyrios /
Porphyrios Associates,
Interamerican
Headquarters, Athens,
2000–2.

V.

We can conclude so far that a style cannot really die out, the way dinosaurs or mammoths did. Admittedly, a style can disappear from an individual memory or that of a certain community, because it ceases to be popular or because it is prohibited by powers that be, due to inducing undesirable associations, and architects avoid using it and eventually forget how to use it. However, as long as a single document, a single building, a sample book or an image in the mind of the architect or craftsman exists, then the style is potentially still available and ready to be employed and satisfy a demand, should it appear. Its development as to its innovative potential is never brought to an end—although some styles may withstand and allow more than others. Some innovations may be adopted hesitatingly even by the fans of the respective style, for example, prefabricated modernist apartment blocks, or classicist glass and steel permutations of the architect Demetri Porphyrios (fig. 4.6). Nevertheless, it is necessary once again to accept that innovations proceed through an individual effort: the method is that of trial and error and the results depend on the stylistic sense—the artistry—of each author.

A different matter is the termination of a style required by discourse, in other words who preaches the end of this or that style and for what reason, who wants its transformation into 'a subject of historical research'. Certainly, as we have seen, statements like this may be a part of a 'battle of styles'. Yet, I believe that behind such manipulation lies a deeper cause than just a pragmatic need to exclude competitors from the game. A significant role is played by the above-mentioned argument of information theory that the brain requires each item of processed information to have its beginning and end. In the early twentieth century, the German philosopher Oswald Spengler wrote that space and time are not understood in the same way by all people thus contradicting the Enlightenment theory of Immanuel Kant. In particular, Spengler considered the obsession with time, with the measurement of time periods to be a provable specific of modern Western civilization.[12] Incomplete, unfinished phenomena worry us. Historians announcing the end of a style do so because they conceive of styles as historical events born out of unique historical conditions and circumstances that, sooner or later, cease to be the agencies that brought the style into existence.

However, did those whose creations these historians classified as stylistically 'revivalist' reason in the same way as the historians themselves? Did the architect Edwin Lutyens (to name one of the celebrated non-modernists in twentieth-century architecture) consider himself a 'revivalist'—or did he rather feel he worked within traditional (non-modernist) styles conceived of as living idioms, and seen as optimal tools for solving a given task?[13]

The efforts of avant-garde artists and intellectuals to distinguish 'new' from 'old' in visual expression is paradoxically based on a much more intense experience of their own historical situation than was typical for those, whose art was labelled as 'obsolete', 'anach-

4.7
Guzè D'Amato, the
Church of Our Lady of
Mount Carmel, Valletta,
Malta, 1958–81.

ronistic' or 'revivalist'. 'The antihistoricist practice ... is based on philosophically histori-
cist assumptions', stated the American historian Donald J. Olsen in 1986, in his highly
regarded analysis of the artistic development of cities in the nineteenth century.[14] Let us
also notice how difficult it is to explain the issue of stylistic 'revivals' of architecture to
lay public and even to first-year students. A standard query (for example on a field trip)
is: how do we know whether the building is 'Baroque' or 'Neo-baroque' when the archi-
tectural elements seem to be 'exactly the same' in both cases? (fig. 4.7) Laymen, at least in
the perception of architecture, tend to see as primary what they perceive and immediately
experience rather than what they additionally hear from historians and theorists. This
suggests that laymen perceive all existing buildings as equally 'contemporary', regardless
of whether their style was launched thousands of years ago or last year.[15]

It is by now confirmed, that this kind of 'a-historical', i.e. less speculative and more
'physical' approach to architectural styles, has its roots in the constitution of the human
brain and the way the brain is biologically set to interpret and respond to external stimu-
li.[16] This inclination may collide with the tendency to subordinate the styles to closed pe-
riods of time. Despite that, historians' understanding of styles should resonate more with
the understanding of those who demand, create and use the styles.[17] Instead of conceiving
of styles as expressions of specific historical circumstances, it may be more fitting to see
them as 'inventions', i.e. as adaptive solutions to aesthetic problems (making the visual
side of buildings more gratifying), in a way similar to perceiving the wheel as something
that solves a technical problem (facilitating transport). As inventions the styles can be
employed far beyond the place and time of their origin, and in ways its originators may
not have even imagined.

4.8
The town of Hvar, the
island of Hvar, Croatia,
13th–21st centuries.

The idea of never-ending styles, of stylistic idioms without expiration dates, no doubt brings a certain confusion into the art historical narrative, if widely accepted. Antoni Gaudí would be a great hero of the architecture of the early twentieth century as well as of the early twenty-first century, and the architects recently involved in the design of the vaults of the Sagrada Família may be considered great masters of Art Nouveau. Nevertheless, art historiography will not suffer a devaluation because of this. In addition to its other contributions, the discipline may now keep both the public and the artists aware of these never-ending stylistic idioms and prevent them from falling into oblivion. Accepting that styles have no expiration dates may help historians of architecture to focus, metaphorically speaking, less on 'history' and more on 'art'. In any case, this kind of approach has been common in the research of non-Western architecture, as well as of vernacular architecture in general (fig. 4.8).[18]

1.   Vaughan Hart, *Nicholas Hawksmoor: Rebuilding Ancient Wonders* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007). Viktor Kotrba, *Česká barokní gotika* (Prague: Academia, 1976).

2.   Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists*, (trans.) Julia Condaway Bondanella and Peter Bondanella (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991). Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *History of the Art of Antiquity*, (trans.) Harry Francis Mallgrave (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2006).

3.   Vojtěch Birnbaum, 'Doplněk k vývojovým zákonům?' in Ivo Hlobil (ed.), *Vývojové zákonitosti v umění* (Prague: Odeon, 1987), pp. 47–50.

4.   Quoted from John Onians, *Neuroarthistory: From Aristotle and Pliny to Baxandall and Zeki* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2007), p. 110.

5.   Georg Schorer, *Deutsche Kunstbetrachtung* (Munich: Deutscher Volksverlag, 1941), p. 140. Compare to B. P. Michailov, 'Architektura', in Sergei Vavilov (ed.), *Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya* III (Moscow: Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya 1950), pp. 190–221.

6.   Antonín Matějček, 'O vyschlém prameni', *Národ* I/V (1917): pp. 660–2, 693–4.

7.   Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli 1977).

8.   Rostislav Švácha, 'Limity postmodernistické architektury', *Architekt* 42, 11 (1996): pp. 42–4.

9.   Bart Goldhoorn and Philipp Meuser, *Capitalist Realism: New Architecture in Russia / Neue Architektur in Russland* (Berlin: DOM Publishers, 2006). Anne Warr, *Shanghai Architecture* (Sydney: The Watermark Press, 2007). Simone Voigt, *Contemporary Architecture in Eurasia* (Berlin: DOM Publishers, 2009).

10.   Peter Morris Dixon (ed.), *Robert A. M. Stern: Buildings and Towns* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2007).

11.   'I agree with many of the authors in their opinion, explicit or not, that world art studies is the only plausible general frame for art history on the global stage in the next fifteen years or so.' Whitney Davis, 'Comment: World without Art', *Art History* 33 (2010): pp. 710–16, quoted p. 711.

12.   Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, (trans.) Charles Francis Atkinson (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927).

13.   Martin Horáček, *Za krásnější svět: Tradicionalismus v architektuře 20. a 21. století / Toward a More Beautiful World: Traditionalism in Architecture of the 20th and 21st Centuries* (Brno: Barrister & Principal and VUTIUM, 2013).

14.   Donald J. Olsen, *The City as Work of Art: London, Paris, Vienna* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 308. Martin Horáček, 'Museum of Art versus the City as a Work of Art: A Case of the New Acropolis Museum in Athens', *Archnet-IJAR* 8:2 (2014): pp. 47–61, accessed 22 November 2014, http://archnet-ijar.net/index.php/IJAR/article/view/428/348.

15.   Jan Michl, 'A Case Against the Modernist Regime in Design Education', *Archnet-IJAR* 8:2 (2014): pp. 36–46, accessed 22 November 2014, http://janmichl.com/eng.apartheid-ijar.pdf. Jan Michl, 'Taking Down the Bauhaus Wall: Towards Living Design History as a Tool for Better Design', *The Design Journal* 17:3 (2014): pp. 445–54, accessed 22 November 2014, http://janmichl.com/eng.livingdesign.pdf.

16.   Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Architecture and Embodiment: The Implications of the New Sciences and Humanities for Design* (London and New York: Routledge 2013).

17.   Nikos Salingaros, *A Theory of Architecture* (Solingen: Umbau-Verlag, 2006).

18.   Paul Oliver (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

IDENTITIES

HISTORICISM

AYLA LEPINE

In *The Nick of Time*, Elizabeth Grosz interacts with ideas put forward by Charles Darwin, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Henri Bergson in order to discern how we might understand time at work in history and within ourselves in a new and politically productive manner. She believes that 'We can think [of time] only when we are jarred out of our immersion in its continuity, when something untimely disrupts our expectations'.[1] These ruptures of the untimely and their surprising impacts are described by Grosz as 'nick' and 'cut'—these are instances of temporal strangeness that should be valued because of their power to stimulate new understanding. From the vantage point of the rupture, we might glimpse 'our temporal location as beings who straddle the past and the future without the security of a stable and abiding present'. This state opens a vista in which 'transformation becomes possible'.[2]

Grosz's engagement with Nietzsche and Bergson reveals an attractive path towards understanding historicism and revivalism in relation to identity, memory and utopia. Grosz observes that Nietzsche's 1873 essay 'On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life' is an attempt to 'refigure history itself, making history a mode of affirmation of the present and future in which the value of the past can be addressed'.[3] Asserting that we need history for life-affirming action and not for 'easy withdrawal', Nietzsche argues that 'we only wish to serve history to the extent that it serves life' acknowledging that 'there is a way of practicing history in which life atrophies and degenerates'.[4] How can history be marshalled into the present moment in order to craft a future of connected temporality, prompted into life-affirming action by seizing on moments in which time is 'nicked' and 'cut'? Grosz explains that 'the present contains not only what is active in real terms; it also musters the virtual action that encompasses past and future in continuous movement'.[5] We are always becoming, always striving, and always impacted by the infiltration of the past within our mutable, shifting present. Grosz suggests that historicism has the power to make a better world: 'Only if the present presents itself as fractured, cracked by the interventions of the past and the promise of the future, can the new be invented, welcomed, and affirmed'.[6]

Rather than a loose system of tradition-driven complacency or sour resistance to a threatening avant-garde, revivalism is both innovative and demanding. In his 1967 essay 'On the Historian's Task', Wilhelm von Humboldt asserts that the true task of a historian is 'to present what actually happened'. How can we possibly do this? As von Humboldt explains, 'the manifestations of an event are scattered, disjointed, isolated; what it is that gives unity to this patchwork, puts the isolated fragment into its proper perspective, and gives shape to the whole, remains removed from direct observation'.[7] Selectively mining the past to weave together a new future is a process—indeed a never-ending quest—that implies a knowledge of history sufficiently thorough to manipulate or creatively (mis)use it. The creative misuses and misreadings of historically powerful source material drive the literary theory developed by Harold Bloom in *The Anxiety of Influence*, in which several types of relationships between poets and their precursors are identified and charted in order to claim a new framework for understanding creative productivity. Art is made, Bloom argues, by struggling simultaneously within and against the powerful forces of history.[8] In 2009, the Tate exhibition curated by David Solkin, *Turner and the Masters*,

demonstrated how effective this thinking could be for an elegant explication of art histori-cal phenomena. It is not enough to talk of influence, borrowing, or points of reference. One must address the layers of distortion—rich as they are—in concocting a new future by allowing the past to be a vital source rather than an inert mass.

Cultural memory is activated through historicist art and architecture as much as it is distorted or erased. Some might suggest that activation and distortion are one and the same. W.G. Sebald's *The Rings of Saturn* suggests the singular humility of glancing backward with a knowingly clouded view: 'This then, I thought, as I looked about me, is the representation of history. It requires a falsification of perspective. We, the survivors, see everything from above, see everything at once, and still we do not know how it was'.[9] Revivalism, via its generative and infinitely combinative tactics of historicism, offers a way out — a new way of seeing, making, even being - by producing and inviting a plethora of ways *in*. Our escape route from the malaise, confusion, and indeed injustice that sur-rounds us is not going to reveal itself by vainly attempting to disentangle ourselves from the binding threads of history. Rather, our solutions, however small, may be found in examining these threads, their points of convergence, their impacts and effects, and most of all, their intricate knots. In *Creative Evolution*, Henri Bergson explained succinctly that 'adapting is not repeating, but replying'.[10] Historicism is the strategy and the shape of that cultural reply, always in a state of becoming and unfolding, and always dense with layers of past meaning, present action, and future possibility.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1.   Elizabeth Grosz, *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution and the Untimely* (London and Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), p. 5.

2.   Grosz, *The Nick of Time*, p. 14.

3.   Grosz, *The Nick of Time*, p. 115.

4.   Friedrich Nietzsche, 'On the Utility and Liability of History for Life [1874]', in Keith Ansell Pearson and Dun-can Large (eds.), *The Nietzsche Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), p. 85.

5.   Grosz, *The Nick of Time*, p. 115.

6.   Grosz, *The Nick of Time*, p. 261.

7.   Wilhelm Von Humboldt, 'On the Historian's Task', *History and Theory* 6:1 (1967): pp. 57-71

8.   Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

9.   W.G. Sebald, *The Rings of Saturn* (London: Harvill, 1998).

10.   Keith Ansell Pearson and John Mullarkey (eds.), *Henri Bergson: Key Writings, Creative Evolution* [1907] (London: Continuum, 2002), p. 195.

CHAPTER 5

THE NEW OLD STYLE: TRADITION, ARCHETYPE AND RHETORIC IN CONTEMPORARY WESTERN TATTOOING

MATT LODDER

A letter from influential San Francisco-based tattoo artist Ed Hardy to a homonymous counterpart in London, Lal Hardy, dated 5th March 1990, reads:

> I would like to get together and visit next time I'm in England. I'm very keen on the old time stuff as you know, and a few of the current artists. I do think the new old style is what will be happening in the '90s, mixed in with the stuff that's been popular over the last 20 years.[1]

The very idea of a 'new old style' of tattoo art is clearly oxymoronic. And yet Hardy's letter was prescient. Over the course of the 1990s and 2000s, after a period in the 1970s and 80s when tattooing in the West became ever more eclectic and experimental, an overwhelming number of tattoo artists in Europe and America returned to this stylistic genre of

tattooing which still characterises and caricatures tattooing in the popular imagination. This genre of Western tattooing has come to be known as 'traditional' or 'old-school': a limited palette of instantly recognisable tattoo designs—nautical, military, parodically hyper-masculine—from across the centuries-long history of Western tattoo practice are reproduced in thick, black lines and heavy blocks of colour with a reverent fidelity on twenty-first century bodies.[2]

This essay seeks to understand the consequences of this return to 'traditional' Western tattoo aesthetics in the contexts of Hardy's framing of them as the 'new old style'. What might it mean for a style to be simultaneously both old and new? Moreover, in tracing the roots of this return by documenting not only the lineages of the various iconographic traditions which make up contemporary Western tattooing's idea of the 'traditional', but also the complex layers of rhetoric which bolster these designs and those who make them, I set out to examine the very concept of tradition. The slippages between the actual histories of particular design trends, and the nostalgic lens through which many contemporary Western tattoo artists and collectors view them, turn out to offer broader insights into what it might mean to call an artistic practice or style 'traditional' in the first place.

FLASH FROM THE PAST

It is difficult to unpick the extent to which Hardy predicted the trend to revive older styles of Western tattooing and to what extent he helped drive it: as one of most important single figures in twentieth-century tattooing, whose scholarly-minded publications of tattoo art, culture and history did more than perhaps any other force during the 80s and 90s to bring tattooing's oral and academic histories to a global audience, it is clear that the generations of tattoo artists who have followed him have directly or indirectly absorbed much from the stylistic and self-identificatory cues he has been so successful at circulating.[3] As early as 1983, barely a few months after the publication of the first issue of his ground-breaking journal *Tattootime* he had already noticed that its particular stylistic thrust—a loose, novel fusion of anthropologically-inspired blackwork tattooing and contemporary graphic design he jokingly dubbed in the subtitle to the volume 'New Tribalism'—was apparent on the skin of convention goers. As he remembers telling his friend and collaborator Leo Zulueta: 'We've invented an art movement!'[4]

In the editorial heading up issue five of *Tattootime*, subtitled 'Art from the Heart', which was in production at the time of his letter to Lal, Hardy explains that by 1991:

> so many colors and technical effects have been conquered [that] the large per-
> centage of contemporary tattooing is like any art-form: self-conscious, vapid,
> or kitsch that takes itself too seriously... There are some "new looks" I find
> very exciting, especially the interest in bold work cropping up, which like
> most things is a rework of something that went before. Tattooing is begin-
> ning to revamp images from its brief historical past in the west, which is

a refreshing tide, along with images adapted from remote "exotic" cultures. Discovering the exotic or power elements in our own visual heritage can be rewarding.[5]

What, then, is being reworked in late twentieth century American tattooing? And what is being discovered in this safari into the exotic terrains of the past? Hardy's interest in the history of Western tattooing led in 1994 to an exhibition at the Hertzberg Circus Museum in Texas called *Flash from the Past*, and a book by the same name which compiled design sheets from the early decades of the twentieth century. Whilst the response to *New Tribalism* amongst a large proportion of other artists and collectors had been the swift adoption of the blackwork designs which make up a large proportion of the issue's contents, articles on Norman 'Sailor Jerry' Collins (who had died in 1973), 77-year old Paul Rogers, on professional ethics in tattooing (urging respect for the 'older masters of the trade') and the deceptive complexity of tattooing lettering (in which several of the greatest Western exponents are named), did not seem to have the same immediate, widespread and considered impact on the kind of work being produced. After a decade in which many tattoo artists had undertaken a studied adherence to non-Western styles following the publication of *New Tribalism*, Hardy clearly longed for a new breed of artists and collectors to pay similar attention to the Western masters he had also championed in the early issues of *Tattootime*, and for a shift in dominant tattoo aesthetics towards a practice as interested in the visual power and symbolic resonance of Western tattoo history as in the appropriation of non-Western styles into the American tattoo vernacular.

An almost contemporaneous interview in V. Vale and Andrea Juno's *Modern Primitives* quotes Hardy as laying out his 'credentials as an old-school tattooer', explaining that he is 'part of that tradition' of Western tattooing.[6] Western tattooing is basically predicated on copying and reproduction; indeed, very overt reproduction and recycling of prior forms is the very fabric of the art form. In her account of the history of American tattooing, Margo DeMello explains in a broad overview of the early decades of professional tattoo artists, from 'the Civil War through the Korean War', that 'typically, tattoo customers would select designs from sheets called flash hanging on the walls of the tattoo shop'. These designs were highly formulaic, and would include 'pinup-style images of women, military insignia, ships, jokes, cartoons, fierce animals, knives and skulls'. While tattooists did sign their own flash sheets, she explains that:

> ...once a new design reached a tattooist he simply copied it, altering it slightly, and called it his own. For this reason it is difficult to determine the origins of most tattoo designs. Acetate stencils, cut from the sheet of flash, were originally used to transfer the design to the body. The customer would typically have a limited number of designs to choose from, and customized work was rare. Because of the highly standardized nature of the designs, and because the choice of designs was so limited, many tattoos became classics, worn by a majority of tattooees in a particular social group. These tattoos, like other

fads, changed with the times, but certain classics, like the rose, remain popular today. … In the early days, before flash was mass marketed and what was being sold was often poor quality work, some tattooists would copy especially nice or new designs from customers' bodies and add these to their own design collection.[7]

In the first decades of the twentieth century, a roaring trade developed of these flash designs, which could be ordered by mail—and a small number of suppliers quickly cornered the market, ensuring that the type of work popular in that period resonates through the ages. The tattoos in these flash sheets *look* like tattoos are so often imagined to be—though in several ways tattooing is an artistic medium like any other, its particular histories and material characteristics anchor it (in the mind if not entirely in reality) with romantic imaginations of travel, of bawdiness, of freedom, of self-expression and of transgression—notions connected, as the archetypal representations demonstrate, as much with the aesthetics as the technology of marking the skin. As Hardy himself points out, 'the most cliché tattoo in Western society (especially to a non-tattooed person) is a "heart with Mom" … the barbaric practice of marking the flesh with needles and pigment manifested as a literal statement of our emotional roots'.[8]

SOMETHING OLD

Though flash sheets perpetuated the narrow iconographic range in twentieth-century tattooing, the fundamental motifs of the most archetypal of images can be traced back much further in history. Solid but sporadic evidence exists of tattooing in Europe back to the Roman Empire and into pre-history, and an unbroken chain of textual evidence attests to tattooing in Europe back to the 1500s.[9] The earliest surviving pictorial representations of tattoos on Westerners in the early modern period, found primarily in accounts of pilgrimages to the Holy Lands during the seventeenth century, almost exclusively feature designs which are strongly religious in character—the Jerusalem Cross, images of the Christ, large representations of religious architecture, and Coptic images of Mary and the Saints, though written accounts from the same period suggest a recognisably modern set of designs in wider populations.[10] By the time of the Napoleonic wars, seamen's records attest to an iconography of tattooing amongst the Georgian fleets which certainly prefigures much of the list DeMello describes in early flash.

By the early years of the nineteenth century, Royal Navy Captain Edward Rotheram surveyed sailors aboard the ships under his command in the Georgian fleets, and recorded that a quarter of the enlisted men he recorded bore tattoos. Designs still recognised as archetypal tattoo motifs today—suns, moons, crucifixes, anchors and mermaids—made up the bulk of tattoos recorded.[11] Tattoo Historian Ira Dye's systematic analysis of the seamen's records of the American navies between 1796 and 1818 revealed that tattoo designs of the period broadly fall into categories including 'Things of the Sea', 'Things of Love', 'Patriotic Symbols', 'Animals' and 'Flowers', and his sketched reproductions of some

of these designs include hearts which echo the heart that would become so clichéd by the 1980s (fig. 5.1).[12] Other tattoo aesthetics have, by association, taken on some of these resonances, but these traditional motifs carry these significations most powerfully. (A secondary reason is simply tattooing's permanence—unlike trendy items in many other modes of art making, a tattoo cannot easily be stacked at the back of a cupboard until it comes back into vogue, thus ensuring design motifs having a much longer half-life than might be expected in other media. As one mid-century supply catalogue has it: 'Tattooing is 'as ancient as time, as modern as tomorrow').[13]

At the birth of a recognisably modern tattoo industry at the end of the nineteenth century—the first moment in history where Western tattooing resembles other commercial arts with shops and clients, and when tattoos are acquired in exchange for money—designs were already archetypal, and copying was fundamental. Technologically, designs usually had to be drawn on paper before being transferred to skin; technically, tattooing did not always attract the most skilled draughtsmen and thus its exponents often relied on using other artists' designs; culturally, tattooing was, in many instances, used to signal and reinforce group allegiances and thus designs were shared amongst groups and copied onto multiple bodies.[14] Moreover, in DeMello's account of this period, American tattooing in the early decades of the professional era is overwhelmingly characterised as being a subversive and therefore ineffably romantic practice; a solidly working-class industry with a clientele of rogues, ruffians, romantics and ne'er-do-wells united by a shared disdain of societal norms and an insistence on individual or sub-cultural identity in the face of normalizing power (particularly in the de-individualising contexts of the military and the prison system). In these contexts, the act of copying designs served an affective purpose beyond its technical ones—by bearing an instantly recognisable mark on your body, it became possible to signal one's outsider status. Paradoxically, by aligning oneself through shared styles and symbologies, it became possible to express individual disdain for hegemonic forces, or, as Dick Hebdige puts it so eloquently: 'Style in subculture … is pregnant with significance'.[15]

This characterisation of tattooing as uniquely a marginalised practice is hyperbolic, as the cultural history of tattooing is much more multifaceted and complex than these oversimplified conceptions suggest.[16] Nevertheless, despite the truth of a varied clientele of lower, middle and upper class people of both genders—plenty of ruffians, but plenty of the refined too—since the establishment of the tattoo industry in the 1880s this has at least been the general public's most prevalent understanding of tattooing. Indeed, it is the myth which is most interesting for the purposes of the present discussion: as DeMello references this lineage exclusively to sources reliant on the direct and indirect published and oral accounts of tattoo artists, her characterisation of the period becomes less a factual account than a valuable insight into the sense of Western tattooing's history from inside the industry. Tattooists themselves seem to perceive a characterisation of the history of their profession which is occasionally slightly at odds with what the historical record seems to reveal, but it is of course through tattooists and their lineages of apprenticeships that styles and
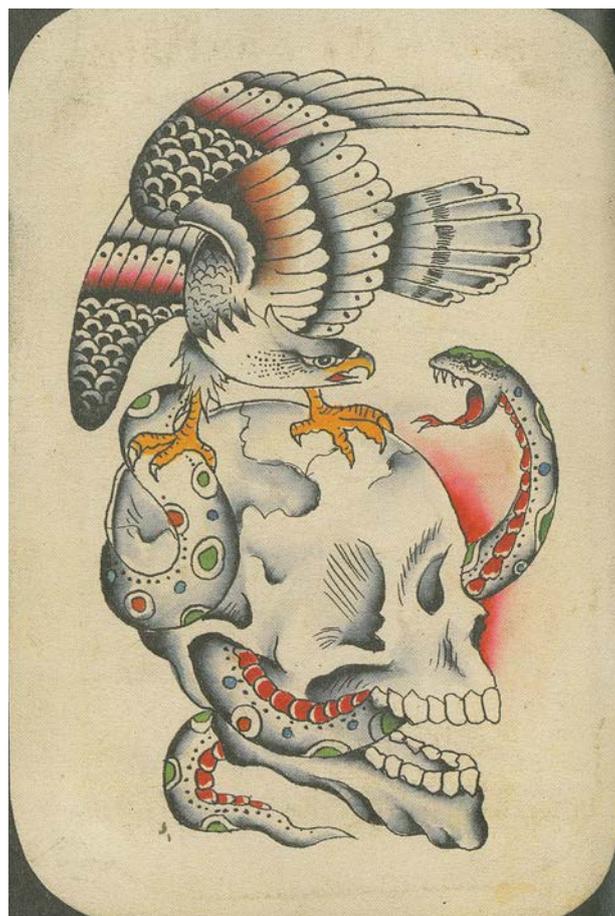
traditions are perpetuated. This is the 'old style' to which Ed Hardy refers—not only the vernacular design inventory of roses, ships and skulls that had been the mainstay of quotidian tattooing for the preceding decades even as the repertoire of tattooing broadened to finer lines and more disparate subject matter, but also the cultural rhetorics at the time of this nascent professionalization, and the associations these designs carry when produced in a particular way (as Hardy has it, 'bold').

SOMETHING NEW

What, then, of the 'new'? What, precisely, is new in this new, old style? By the end of the 1980s, Ed Hardy had noticed not only the resurgence and renewed popularity of traditional tattoo designs (which had never completely vanished), but also their fusion with another set of historic subcultural iconographies popular in Southern California at the time: the graphic culture of 1950s and '60s hotrod, 'weirdo' and 'lowbrow' art and small-press or self-published 'comix'. Like tattooing, the mid-century underground graphic art of Californian artists such as Ed Roth, Von Dutch and Robert Williams is characterised by heavy black outlines, giving it an illustrative, cartoon-like appearance, and both its formal qualities and its subcultural significance make it ideal source material for tattooing into the skin.[17] Moreover, lowbrow art is itself citational (Hardy has admiringly called Robert Williams 'an aesthetic pirate'), feasting bountifully on the raw material of mass culture in the service of its ebullient, sardonic ends, with mass-produced cars, cartoons and comic books sliced, mutilated and mutated into grotesque and parodic new forms.[18] A piece of Hardy's flash from the period, *Back in the Saddle* (1990, fig. 5.2), shows precisely his focus of interest at the time: an eagle and a snake battling fiercely around a mad, monocular skull, a long tongue drooling acid-yellow spit.[19] When compared to a the work on the same theme by celebrated Norwegian-American tattoo artist Amund Dietzel (fig. 5.3), who be-

5.2
Don Ed Hardy, Back in the Saddle, 1991. Ink and watercolour on paper, Private collection.

5.3
Amund Dietzel, flash design, c.1916. Ink and watercolour on paper, Private collection.

gan tattooing seriously in 1907 whilst taking art classes at Yale, the points of similarity and departure become apparent.[20]

Dietzel's flash design, from a 1916 travel book, compiles a vanitas, its muscular eagle a nationalistic allusion to American power. It is prepared with a fine detail it would have been difficult to reproduce well in the skin even for a tattooist of Dietzel's quality. Though rough on the heavy paperstock on which it has been painted with ink washes, each stroke belies a meticulous hand, carefully filling in small lines and blended shadows. The skull, fixed with a rictus grin, is long dead. The design communicates its message of struggle against death and maleficence with careful, fluid compositional poise. Hardy's, by contrast, is bolder, louder, wilder—its lines thicker, heavier and more sparse; fine detail gives way to luminous strokes of oranges, yellows and blues—and yet is, essentially, the same formal composition: an eagle, perched atop a skull which has been encoiled by a hissing snake. Hardy's skull is animated, psychedelic and comically gruesome, made live by flecks of spit and a popping eyeball seemingly ripped directly from the iconic motif of 1960s hotrod pin-striper Von Dutch (fig. 5.4);[21] the entire ensemble at once instantly recognisable as a classic tattoo motif whose components are basically stable in the same traditional tattoo

form as they had appeared in flash back to the turn of the century, and as a warped exemplar of this contemporary hybridisation of two distinct but interrelated past styles. Twice old, completely new.

This perseverance of tattoo designs through time is not a mere stylistic affectation. Tattooing is primarily taught by way of apprenticeship, with techniques and attitudes carefully and studiously passed down from old hand to fresh blood (it is irresponsible at best and impossible at worst to learn to tattoo well without the guidance of a careful mentor), and learning to tattoo by way of a hands-on apprenticeship with a well-respected tattoo artist necessarily remains a matter of pride in the industry. As such, design tropes (as well as flash and tattoo machines) are passed from master to apprentice. Hardy, having declined an artistic fellowship at Yale in 1966, was initially trained to tattoo by an Oakland-based tattoo artist and undercover-academic by the name of Samuel Steward, who tattooed under the alias of Phil Sparrow, and who had actually learned how to tattoo from Dietzel, 'one of the great champion tattooers in America, a grand old man who worked in a tie, a vest, and sleeve garters'.[22] Hardy describes in his autobiography that some of Dietzel's flash hung on the walls of Steward's shop, and though it seems unlikely that his cyclopean skull was referenced directly from the Dietzel design, the fact that the similarities between the luminous retrospective piece from the 1990s and its muted, ink-washed antecedent from the early part of the century can be traced through a direct line of training and influence serves as a neat illustration of the broader cultures of patronage which are at play in the tattoo industry generally, and the fact that these symbols and their compositions are archetypal.

A section of *Art from the Heart* is dedicated to showcasing the principal exponents of the hybrid style of late 1980s traditional tattooing and mid-century lowbrow including Dan Higgs, Eddy Deutsche and Dave Lum, though Hardy explains that one artist stands out amongst this crowd.

> The preeminent American master of this outlook in our time is Los Angeles tattooer Bob Roberts. Bold outlines, skilful heavy shading, crackpot humor and a clear composition have been the basis of his work. His apprenticeship in solid tattoo style with Bob Shaw and Bill Todd, fused with a rock and roll Southern California upbringing has made him the torch bearer of this redefined classicism over the past 15 years. Now a generation of tattooers, most not even born when hotrod art and underground comix first surfaced, are embracing the old styles with a vengeance. For them and their customers the look is timeless, and what tattooing is all about. Rejecting the excessive detail and avalanche of technical glitter that gluts contemporary tattooing, they're breaking out with heat, raw power and soul. It's bringing it all back home, with tattoos that look like Sailor Jerry on acid.[23]

Though the issue does not include any images of Roberts' work, many of Hardy's readers would have been familiar with his work due to its frequent appearances in earlier issues of *Tattootime*, and through comparison to the work of his apprentice Jill Jordan, to whom Hardy dedicates a full page.[24] In his enthusiastic explanations of Roberts' work, every characteristic of his 'new, old style' becomes visible in a single paragraph: lineage: 'classicism', 'timeless'; formal qualities: 'bold outlines … heavy shading … clear composition'; rhetorical force: 'raw power, soul'; reproduction: 'embracing the old styles'. Crucially, the crescendo of this tribute makes direct comparison of Roberts with Sailor Jerry, the most iconic of contemporary tattooers, a tattoo artist active in Hawaii between the 1930s and 1970s whose flash designs continue to be known the world over for their era-defining combination of iconographic imagery and perfect execution on the page and the skin (fig. 5.5).[25] This comparison is not insignificant: in the very first issue of *Tattootime* in 1982, in an article responsible for solidifying Norman 'Sailor Jerry' Collins' reputation as the archetypal tattoo artist, Ed Hardy explained that 'Collins was a classic tattoo artist: opinionated, mysterious and fiercely independent. But through focussing his humor, tremendous appetite for life and unswerving dedication to excellence upon the art he loved, he created a new synthesis that left a lasting mark on the world'.[26]

By aligning not only Roberts' art to that of Sailor Jerry, but also his character and attitude to his artistic practice, and by tracing his status as an artist by connecting Roberts' radical new work with the by then already legendary work of his tutors Bob Shaw and Bill Todd, Hardy reveals the strands of authenticity and authority which anchor even these radical returns and remixes to the long, storied tradition of generations of tattooers past. It is perhaps more than a coincidence therefore that the issue of *Tattootime* in which these 'Weirdo Art & American Classics' are revealed by way of Roberts, also features a lengthy first-hand of the life and work of his mentor, Shaw, who, the article explains at its outset,

can trace his own lineage by way of an apprenticeship back to St Louis' Bert Grimm, 'one of the influential tattooers of the mid-twentieth century'.[27] As in Renaissance Italy, this genealogy of master and apprentice not only ensures skills, technologies, flash sheets and methods are passed down and preserved, but also acts to bolster rhetorical claims about an artists' work, lends each artist (due) credibility in the eyes of his or her peer group, and allows even radically new iterations of old styles to maintain a thread to the source material for contemporary practice back through several generations.

Hardy's interview with Bob Shaw, profiling Shaw's time tattooing across America from the late 1940s until the 1970s, is fascinating not only because it connects Roberts' wild experiments in Californian custom tattooing in the 1980s to the period of tattooing in America after World War II, but also for what it reveals about Shaw's own thoughts on novelty and revival in his own tattoo practice on the bodies on enlisted airmen at the Lackland Airforce Base in Texas back during the early 1950s. Recalling a conversation with a colleague some forty years previously, Shaw recounts to Hardy that even at the time from which contemporary tattoo artists were now plundering, there was some concern about preservation of past designs and the potential faddishness of tattoo tastes: 'They don't get the old stuff much any more, do they?', Shaw recalls being asked by a colleague, Painless Jack, in reference to designs penned in the 1920s and 30s by William Grimshaw, Percy Wagner and other now-legendary names in American tattoo history from the preceding generation (including Lew Alberts, credited by many as popularising the use of flash designs in the first place).[28] Painless Jack, who according to Shaw could not paint at all, 'had stuff with blue outlines and brown outlines, oil-painted stuff … he had cowgirls, and girls standing on globes with big fat butts and flags draped around them … real old time. Now who's gonna pick something like that?', he asked Hardy. 'Not an 18 year old boy in the Air Force'.[29] Already by the 1950s, tattooists were bemoaning the fickle trends of young tattoo collectors and wishing they had selected older designs from well-respected old masters of the business.

Though Shaw was clearly a talented artist and able to adapt to the changing demands of his clientele, in acknowledging these young men drafted into the Navy wanted tattoo designs different from those of their fathers he revealed a crucial feature of what would become Hardy's 'new old style' some four decades later. Revivals never simply repeat what has gone before; logically, they cannot. Instead, in the process of reviving and repeating they add successive new layers to the multi-leaved strata of the histories to which they refer. At the same time, the old style, of course, was once new, itself a rejection, recapitulation and repetition of successive revivals before it. The militaristic, patriotic vernaculars of the 1950s from which late twentieth century tattoo artists like Roberts were drawing so much inspiration—the elements to which Hardy was referring in Roberts' work when praising its classicism and tradition—were in some ways divergent from the 'old time stuff' from the 1920s and 30s which had preceded it, even if these new designs were not radical departures.

Delightfully, though certainly unsurprisingly, even this generation of tattooers from the 1920s longed for the days when their modish clients had been more discerning. In 1926, at a time about decade after the tail-end of the last mass middle- and upper-class tattoo craze which had begun in the 1880s and whose key stylistic palettes were primarily oriental in character, an article in *Vanity Fair* magazine announced that tattooing was again all the rage. Entitled 'Modern Fashions in Tattooing', it stated: 'Tattooing has passed from the savage to the sailor, from the sailor to the landsman. It has since percolated through the entire social stratum; tattooing has received its credentials, and may now be found beneath many a tailored shirt'.[30] The article is particularly fascinating, as in the middle of accounts of this new boom it features quotes from an aged tattooist by the name of Professor Sharkey, who harks for the olden days of good times past:

> There are those of the old order whose memory lingers fondly over the days when tattooing was a thing of beauty and a joy forever. Such a disciple of art for its own sake is Professor Sharkey, proprietor of a little known tattoo parlor at the rear of a barber shop near the New York side of Brooklyn Bridge. … He's tattooed all the crowned heads of Europe and it was always him they called for! "Times ain't what they was"… His eyes wander over to the old prints gathering dust in the corners of the room —rare Burmese symbols, birds and strange fishes which he has gathered during his lifetime; serpents and mythological centaurs that are creations of true beauty. The best of them are jammed loosely in a stack on his desk, unappreciated by his patrons. "It is too bad to have to tattoo diving girls and Venus rising from the sea, when you have it in you to do things like these, ain't it? But I've got to live.[31]

This layering of novelty, while not exactly a problem for rhetorics of authenticity, certainly complicates any discussions of what the very word 'traditional' might mean in contemporary discussions of tattoo aesthetics; the very diving girls which Professor Sharkey held in such contempt seem just the kind of motif Painless Jack would be wistfully remembering twenty years later, and which would form, alongside both the militaristic designs of the 1950s and the serpents and centaurs of the 1890s, just part of the stylistic arsenal of Hardy's new old style in the 1990s. Layers of artistic source material are rejected and rediscovered like geological strata through the bedrock of history. Every previous rejection and rediscovery has compounded, leaving rich seams of style and meaning to be mined and recast in a shell of 'tradition'. The very recent past becomes unfashionable, it seems, just as the work of a generation past is rediscovered.

SOMETHING BORROWED

These acts of rediscovery are never simple, naïve repetitions. In his critique of traditional accounts of originality and representation, *Difference and Repetition*, Gilles Deleuze presents a compelling account of creativity predicated on a positive assessment of reproduction and repetition in which the (inevitable) act of making use of prior ideas is understood to enable new possibilities, potentials and powers. Repetition is productive. In his preface, Deleuze cites as indicative of this thesis the archetypal postmodern act of literary repetition, Jorge Luis Borges' *Pierre Menard—Author of the Quixote*, in which Borges famously imagines a contemporary French writer producing at a word-for-word replica of Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. As Deleuze cites directly, the 'text of Cervantes and that of Menard are verbally identical, but the second is almost infinitely richer'[32]—in the act of taking Cervantes out of time, and in the very act of repetition itself, something interesting and critical has occurred, and the anachronistic and citational move which Menard reveals something very fundamental about both our relationship as readers with texts, and as authors and artists with the texts we produce. In copying something, particularly something iconic, we create new relationships with the aesthetics of the work itself and make visible new possibilities of its formal qualities. Even though Menard's *Quixote* is exactly the same in form as Cervantes', it simply cannot be identical in its historical contexts or in its status, and in those differences lie rich and deep revelations that resonate at the most fundamental levels of a our engagement with cultural production — 'the heart is the amorous organ of repetition'.[33] By Deleuze's account, then, repetition is a critical act. 'Each art', he concludes, 'has its interrelated techniques or repetitions, the critical and revolutionary power of which may attain the highest degree and lead us from the sad repetitions of habit to the profound repetitions of memory, and then to the ultimate repetitions of death in which our freedom is played out'.[34] When applied to tattooing, Deleuze's model elucidates why the reproduction of old designs is so pervasive. When a twenty-first century urban tattoo collector acquires a design taken from the flash sheet of an artist working in a military town in the 1940s, it is not a simple repetition of habit, but an act which directly and purposively conjures such a profound repetition of memory—a memory, like all memories, which is comforting, unreliable and clouded by preconceptions and experiences in the intervening period, but profound nonetheless. 'To compose *Don Quixote* in the seventeenth century', Borges writes, 'was a reasonable, necessary and perhaps inevitable undertaking; at the beginning of the twentieth century, it is almost impossible'.[35] To tattoo a tall ship on a sailor in 1920 was a reasonable, and perhaps inevitable undertaking; to tattoo such a ship on a millennial suburbanite is, like Menard's *Quixote*, 'almost infinitely richer'; though identical in form it is buoyed by several centuries of accumulated cultural resonance, to which the very act of repetition only adds.

These resonances are heightened by the careful technical affectations used by the best exponents of traditional tattooing currently working. Shaw explained to Hardy that 'What

5.6
Marina Inoue, tattoo,
2012.

I didn't like about [Dietzel's style in the 1940s] was that on a cannon, or an eagle's wings, where you would like to see the shading smooth out, it would be choppy; he'd fill the cannon in blue to compensate for it, but the eagle's wings would be real dark'.[36] In the 1940s and 50s, it seems that this choppy shading was something tattooers were actively striving to avoid, and even some of the best artists, like Dietzel, did not have the technical abilities to fully do justice to their designs. In contemporary tattoo practice, however, artists who dedicate themselves to working with traditional designs and who base most, if not all, their tattooing on old flash frequently employ a technique known as whip shading, in which the type of (bad) shading Shaw so disliked in the 1950s is deliberately and carefully reproduced. With contemporary tattoo equipment, it is possible to achieve smooth shades and blends that replicate almost exactly the type of effects achievable with paint or pencils, but a significant number of artists choose to deliberately make their tattoos look rough and choppy, such is their reverence to the aesthetics (of old tattooing and its associations of authenticity and history). In the work of artists such as Marina Inoue (fig. 5.6), the visibly

stippled lines of shading, showing the tracks of the tattoo needles as they have punctured the skin, reinforce the connection of these modern tattoo artists with the histories to which they refer, further emphasising the lineages of the designs and the deep respect and love for every line and mark they make.

The new old style Hardy recognised, championed and evangelised in the 1990s shows little sign of slowing down, though over the course of the 1990s and 2000s, the wildest inputs from the 1960s gave way to a much more straightforward focus on the older periods of influence. Though other styles of tattoos have risen and fallen in popularity over the past twenty years (including blackwork, black & grey, Japanese, and realism), it is the archetypal Western tattoo vernacular which has defined, and which continues to define tattooing from within and outside of the industry. In 2014, a group of tattoo artists publishing a book on early American tattoo-equipment and flash-design dealer Milton Zeis (entitled *Tattooing as You Like It*) opened their collection by explaining that he had 'helped solidify and perpetuate the legacy of this pictorial language: images for the turn of the century that spoke of American pride, honor and tradition'. Moreover, they clearly establish their conception of their own practice and that of their peers in direct relationship to the continued relevance of the work of this colossus of tattooing, and commit themselves firmly to promoting and propagating his legacy, explaining that the 'impact that he had registered in his own lifetime and has continued to be recognized in this generation; it will continue to blossom in the next'.[37]

Perhaps most illustrative of the impact Hardy has had in bringing the historical art he loved to the attention of the wider tattoo industry is the 2007 book *Revisited*, published by a group of tattoo artists from New York. Predictably, Hardy's revival has been revived. *Revisited* includes contributions of flash sheets from tattoo artists from around the world, each one a copy (to varying degrees of fidelity) of a sheet of the early twentieth-century designs from 1994's *Flash from the Past*. Hardy himself contributes the foreword to the book, writing delightedly that the new old style still resonates, articulating that traditional tattoo designs were now more popular than at any previous points in history, and acknowledging that *Revisited*'s replication of his book is a fitting move, given tattooing's particular history:

> The enthusiasm and sophisticated artistry of the people in this volume re-
> animate these old favourites. They continue tattooing's crucial tradition of
> copying, replicating and transforming a powerful image bank that arises from
> roots culture. It is keeping a strong language alive.[38]

The paradox at the heart of Hardy's simple stylistic description thus turns out to be the paradox at the heart of all traditions. Traditions, of course, have a time dimension which is only retrospective. One cannot set out to establish a tradition for the future; traditions can only be demarcated around existing practices from a point in the future

looking backwards. As such, they are necessarily fantasies and constructions; stories made by omissions and commissions; tools which turn the past into something useful for the present. Moreover, traditions are cumulative—traditions can exist only by repetition, and counter to the aims of those who perpetuate them, in each repetition a tradition grows and changes. In each iteration, a tradition is made stronger by its continued survival but altered by the messy leakages between past and present, simultaneously both old and new.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1. Don Ed Hardy to Lal Hardy, March 5, 1990. Personal archive of Lal Hardy, Freiern Barnet, London.

2. Don Ed Hardy, 'Foreword', in Stephen Boltz, Bert Krak and Michael Kruse, *Revisited: A Tribute to Flash from the Past* (Preoria, AZ: Revenant, 2007), n.p.

3. Margo DeMello, *Bodies of Inscription* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), p. 74; Clinton Sanders, *Customizing the Body: The Art & Culture of Tattooing* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), p. 34.

4. Don Ed Hardy (ed.), *Tattootime 1: New Tribalism* (Honolulu: Hardy Marks, 1982); Don Ed Hardy with Joel Selvin, *Wear Your Dreams* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2013), p. 209.

5. Don Ed Hardy, *Tattootime 5: Art from the Heart* (Honolulu: Hardy Marks, 1991), p. 7.

6. V. Vale and Andrea Juno, *Modern Primitives* (San Francisco: RE/Search, 1989), p. 60.

7. DeMello, *Bodies of Inscription*, p. 52. DeMello is not quite clear enough in establishing when flash became standard practice for tattooists, which seems to be in the early years of the twentieth century, although its certain that standard designs were circulating as early as the 1870s (see, for example, an early example of a flash collection republished as C.H. Fellowes, *The Tattoo Book* (Princeton, NJ: Pyne Press, 1971)) and that before the widespread adoption of mass-produced commercial flash tattooists would work from 'pattern books', likely fine art images sourced from primary and secondary collections. (See, for example, Eugene P.F. Wright, 'Modern Fashions in Tattooing', *Vanity Fair*, January 1926, p. 110.)

8. Don Ed Hardy, 'The Name Game' in Hardy, *New Tribalism*.

9. Mordechai Lewy, 'Jerusalem unter den Haut: Zur Geschichte der Jerusalemer Pilgertätowierung', in *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 55:1 (2003): pp. 1–39; Anna Friedman, 'Tattooed Transculturites: Western Expatriates Among Amerindian and Pacific Islander Societies, 1500–1900', (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2013); Jane Caplan (ed.), *Written on the Body: The Tattoo in European and American History* (London: Reaktion, 2000).

10. See for example, William Lithgow, *The total Discourse of the rare Adventures and painefull Peregrinations*, (London: J. Oakes, 1640), p. 217; Friedman, *Tattooed Transculturite*s, p. 25.

11. Roy Adkins & Lesley Adkins, *Jack Tar: Life in Nelson's Navy* (London: Little Brown, 2009), p. 7.

12. Ira Dye, 'The Tattoos of Early American Seafarers, 1796-1818', in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 133:4 (1989): pp. 520–54.

13. Milton Zeis Studio Catalog 15, reproduced in Andrew Stickler, *Tattooing as You Like It: The Legacy of Milton Zeis* (Colorado Springs: Yellow Beak Press, 2012), p. 19.

14. One of Milton Zeis' adverts from approximately the early 1950s proclaims that 'If you can write or trace, we guarantee that you will be able to do good tattooing with this tattoo outfit'. Stickler, *Tattooing as You Like It*, p. 22.

15. Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Methuen, 1979), p. 18.

16. Lawrence Cawley, 'People always say the same things about tattoos', *BBC News Magazine* 3 February 2014, accessed 3 February, 2014, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-25330947.

17. Matt Dukes Jordan, *Weirdo Deluxe: The Wild World of Pop-Surrealism & Lowbrow Art* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2005), p. 11.

18. Don Ed Hardy, 'The Thrill is Not Gone' in *Conceptual Realism: In the Service of the Hypothetical* (Seattle: Fantagraphics, 2009), p. 6. See also: Tom Wolfe, 'The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby', in *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby* (New York: Picador, 2009), pp. 75–104.

19. *Back in the Saddle* (1990) reproduced in Alan Govenar, *Ed Hardy: Art for Life* (Kempen: teNeues, 2009), p. 82.

20. Jon Reiter, *These Old Blue Arms: The Life and Work of Amund Dietzel* (Milwaukee: Solid State, 2010), p. 15,

21. Pat Ganahl, *Von Dutch. The Art, The Myth, The Legend* (North Branch, MN: Cartech, 2005).

22. Hardy, *Wear Your Dreams*, p. 47. See also: Justin Spring, *Secret Historian: The Life and Times of Samuel Steward, Professor, Tattoo Artist and Sexual Renegade* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2010).

23. Hardy, *Art from the Heart*, p. 74.

24. See, for example, Bob Roberts, 'Tattoos and Music' in Don Ed Hardy (ed.), *Tattootime 3: Music and Sea Tattoos* (Honolulu: Hardy Marks, 1985), pp. 83–88; Hardy, *Art from the Heart*, p. 76.

25. Erich Weiss (ed.), *Homeward Bound: The Life and Times of Hori Smoku Sailor Jerry* (Philadelphia: Sailor Jerry, 2010).

26. Hardy, *Tattootime: New Tribalism*, p. 31. Elsewhere, Hardy calls Collins 'The Cezanne of Tattooing'; see Don Ed Hardy, *Forever Yes* (Honolulu: Hardy Marks, 1992), p. 6.

27. Hardy, *Art from the Heart*, p. 9.

28. DeMello, *Bodies of Inscription*, p. 52.

29.   Hardy, *Art from the Heart*, p. 24.

30.   See, for example James Bradley, 'Body Commodification? Class and Tattoos in Victorian Britain', in Jane Caplan (ed.) *Written on the Body*, pp. 136–155.; Noboru Koyama, 'Japanese Tattooists and the British Royal Family during the Meiji Period', in Hugh Cortazzi (ed.), *Britain and Japan: Biographical Portraits, Vol. VI* (Leiden: Global Oriental), 2007, pp. 71–80; R.J. Stephen, *Tattooed Royalty: Queer Stories of a Queer Craze* in *The Harmsworth Monthly Pictorial Magazine* (1898): pp. 471–5.

31.   Wright, 'Modern Fashions in Tattooing', pp. 43, 110.

32.   Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (London: Continuum, 2004), p. xx; Jorge Luis Borges, 'Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote', in *Ficciones*, trans. Emecé Editiores S.A. (New York: Everyman's Library, 1993), p. 35.

33.   Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 2.

34.   Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 366.

35.   Jorge Luis Borges, 'Pierre Menard', p. 35.

36.   Hardy, *Art from the Heart*, p. 19.

37.   Andrew Stickler, *Tattooing as You Like It: The Legacy of Milton Zeis* (Colorado Springs: Yellow Beak Press, 2012), p. 7.

38.   Don Ed Hardy, 'Foreword', in Boltz, Krak and Kruse, *Revisited*, n.p.

CHAPTER 6

LONGING FOR PAST AND FUTURE: CULTURAL IDENTITY AND CENTRAL EUROPEAN REVIVALIST GLASSWARE DESIGNS

MICHELLE JACKSON

6.1
Peter Behrens, Tafelgläser und Likorgläser [Goldband and Aegir Services], designed 1900–4. Blown glass with cut and applied decoration, illustrated in *Die Kunst: Monatshefte für Freie und Angewandte Kunst* 12:8 (1905): 381–424.

6.2
Jan Kotěra, Punch Bowl Set with Six Glasses, designed 1904–10, executed 1996. Glass, Punch Bowl: 29.9 x 25.5 cm, Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, NY.
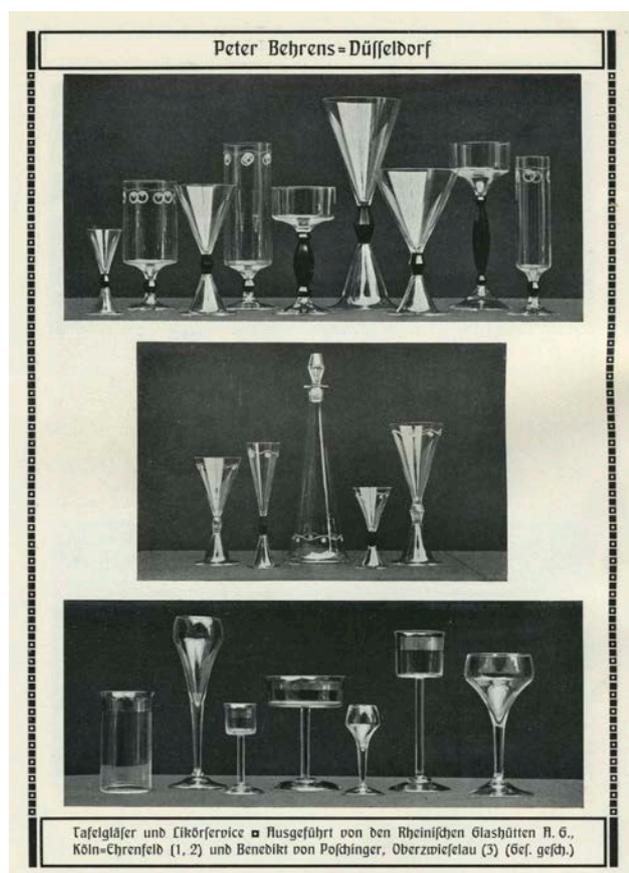
Commodity designs, often overlooked actors in the analysis of art and architectural history, play a central role in this essay's re-evaluation of the relationships between revivalism and modernism in Central Europe during the early twentieth century. Through analysis of both physical objects and written discourse, I will focus on a specific case study of two Central European architects that demonstrates the nuanced relationship between twentieth-century modernism and its supposed counterpart, revivalism, addressing the repeated use of historical styles in design. This relationship is inherently connected to notions of both cultural and national identity in this period; the historical context of nationalistic movements in the Czech and Hungarian regions as well as sustained nationalistic fervour in Germany highlights a broader interest in developing not only discrete political agency, but also a unifying aesthetic identity. By looking at examples of commodity and luxury glassware designed by the modernist architects Peter Behrens and Jan Kotěra, the inclusion of historical styles in avant-garde modernist designs clearly delineates a perspective that looks toward the past to project utopian desires onto the future. In order to analyze the overarching cultural implications of this study, it is important to first explore

the cultural relationship between Northern Europe and Italy, especially the reverberating effects and reinterpretations of the Italian Renaissance and classical antiquity in the Northern idiom. Three main examples of glass services, two designed by Behrens and one designed by Kotěra are the basis for a re-examination of the conventional dichotomy held between modernism and historicism, and an attempt to examine glass objects as signifiers of both location and identity (figs 6.1 and 6.2).

The longstanding Northern European interest in Italian Renaissance culture reaches back to the eighteenth century and the Grand Tour experience of young aristocrats traveling through the ruins of antiquity and learning from broad collections of art and artefacts.[1] In particular, the German interest in Italian and Roman culture was famously epitomized by prominent cultural figures Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Johann Joachim Winckelmann in the late eighteenth century, notably Goethe's *Italienische Reise* (*Italian Journey*), a well-circulated document of his travels from 1786–8 (first published in 1816–7). Winckelmann's dedication to this area of study in the eighteenth century encompassed both Greek and Roman spheres, with a notable early publication in 1755 regarding the use of historical styles in contemporaneous fine arts, *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* (*Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture*).[2]

This cultural study of the Renaissance is often described as *Italiensehnsucht*, literally a 'longing' for Italy.[3] For figures like Goethe in the eighteenth century, this longing implied an unrealized desire to both intellectually command and emulate this regional cultural flourishing in Southern Europe. From the perspective of German artists and architects working nearly 200 hundred years later at the turn of the twentieth century, this desire to emulate Renaissance culture also extends to its re-possession of these ideologies and achievements to grasp the Italian Renaissance as a mode for approaching twentieth-century Modernism in a distinctly Germanic way. Period texts published by and about Jan Kotěra and Peter Behrens demonstrate a didactic sociopolitical stance, with an emphasis on re-defining cultural identity in Central Europe via classical precedents. At a time of unprecedented insecurities and changes in national and regional identity leading up to the political and economic upheaval of World War I, the embodiment of these ideals often is executed via design: commodity objects especially held the ability to bear layered meanings related to personal taste, technique, and feats of technical innovation during this period.

Contemporary historians and cultural critics have theorized *Italiensehnsucht* and its reverberations in period discourses most often as a strict dichotomy between Northern and Southern Europe. German Sociologist Norbert Elias notably applies this concept in his study of this cross-cultural influence by delineating the terms *Zivilization* and *Kultur*, or 'Civilization' and 'Culture'.[4] These terms present a cross-cultural interpretation of historicism, and they begin my discussion of objects as bearers of cultural identity by delineating the nuances of the relationships behind Renaissance culture and modernist design and practice. *Kultur* encompasses the realm of vernacular, folk, or that which may

be interpreted as inherently 'German,' while *Zivilization* is considered foreign, sophisticated, and sometimes artificial.[5] The translation of *Kultur* is closely related to its adjective, *kulturell*, that is, describing the 'value and character of particular human products rather than the intrinsic value of a person'.[6] Put simply, these terms are also accorded regional distinctions: *Zivilization* is connected to Southern Europe (Italy) and *Kultur/Kulturell* society associated with the north: Germany.[7] This desire to encompass both *Zivilization* and *Kultur* was actualized through the design and production of glass objects in this region, known internationally for its expertise in crafting and manufacturing industrial materials, commodity wares and art pieces in glass. Behrens and Kotěra, both well-known practitioners of Northern European architecture and design, sought to embody these aspects of the historical and classical idiom in their burgeoning concepts of modern and distinctly regional designs.

While not direct collaborators, both Behrens and Kotěra were at the forefront of both a distinctly Central European and a distinctly modern architectural movement during the early twentieth century. They both famously participated in commodity design commissions: Behrens' work for the Darmstadt artist's colony in 1904 was widely reviewed and published, including a thorough review by the art critic and editor Julius Meier-Graefe in *Die Kunst*, and Kotěra's service for the 1904 World's Fair in Saint Louis won a gold medal in design of that category. The architectonic concepts espoused by these designers were published notably in *Die Kunst*, as well as in a 1901 Stuttgart newsletter of the Verein für Dekorative Kunst und Kunstgewerbe, including Kotěra's treatise *Neue Kunst: Einige Thesen von Architektur und Angewandte Künste* (*New Art: Several Theses Regarding Architecture and the Applied Arts*), which underscored the importance of looking toward the past for an informed and enriched vision of the future in both architecture and design.[8] Both commissions were related to demonstrating a level of expertise in design from a distinctly Central European lens, either as exemplar types for international exhibition or as actors in a utopian artist's community. In addition to their work in architecture and design, both Kotěra and Behrens were educators in the field, demonstrating a dual engagement with didactics as well as the physical designs associated with avant-garde modernism.[9]

Much of Peter Behrens' early work at the turn of the century as a designer of utilitarian housewares is eclipsed by his later work as an architect and designer for the Allgemeine-Elektricitäts-Gesellschaft starting in 1907. However, the marked lack of analysis surrounding Behrens' earlier work involving glass designs overlooks an important moment in his career as a modern designer, as well as the larger implications of a new mediation between modernist design and the appropriation of historical styles in early twentieth-century Germany. The line of mutual exclusivity often associated with these two production realms becomes blurred when exploring the formal characteristics and production methods of two glassware services from 1902 and 1905 respectively, the 'Goldband' service made by Poschinger Glasmanufaktur and the 'Aegir' service by Rheinische Glashütten (fig. 6.1). These services as well as later tableware services executed in the Venetian Revival style and produced by the Vereinigte Deutsche Werkstätten demonstrate

an overlap of machine aesthetics and revivalist forms in relation to traditional styles and fabrication processes of the glassware industry.

The 'Goldband' service is as a stimulating basis for a discussion on the intersection of industrial-influenced design and traditional glassmaking craft as embodied by the series' form and decoration. The service is prominently illustrated in *Die Kunst*, including two types of wine glasses, champagne and liqueur glasses as well as beer and water glasses. A distinctive cylindrical bowl, long stem, and rounded foot characterize the overall form of each glass, and all vessels display a band of gold leaf decoration surrounding the upper register of each bowl. The flat-bottomed cylindrical bowls range in size from one to five inches in height, all with proportionately even diameters ranging from one to three inches. The scale of each glass in the exhibited set is relatively small, measuring roughly 20 cm tall for the largest piece (the red wine glass), and 7.5 cm for the smallest (the liqueur glass).

The varying heights of the glasses give the effect of asymmetry in the set, and suggest a sense of rhythm as the eye moves over the arrangement of cascading forms. With the addition of the two extra tumblers in the set, there is a more accentuated suggestion of machine-like movement as the tumblers' cylindrical bodies evoke the form of a piston. Here, it is as though the stems of the vessels signify a trajectory of oscillation—a pulsating verticality that is emphasized by a contrast with the imposing barrel shape of each tumbler. This verticality is both a product of the straight lines in the stem and body of each glass, as well as the placement of the glasses together as a complete set—a display that in turn suggests a visual metaphor for the inner workings of a mechanized apparatus as distilled by the individual forms of the vessels.

Delicately thin and light, the glass displays a high refractive quality and is colourless as well as flawlessly transparent. Even the gold leaf decoration is thin enough to be semi-transparent under bright illumination—an effect that underscores fine craftsmanship on the part of the glassmaker (as opposed to the more industrialized products of pressed glass). The foot of each vessel is circular with a folded rim to create an elegant arc that leads the eye from the base to the stem. A circular, flattened avolio (the small glass element that adjoins each goblet's foot to its stem) gives a gently sloping, double-tiered form to the base overall. The unornamented surface of the gold leaf is strikingly minimal in its lack of engraved or etched decoration, and is similar to the use of gold or brass in industrialized domestic glassware later in the twentieth century, adding another layer to the tension between Behrens' balance between decoration and utility. The machine-like evocation of the set denotes an interest in industry and the machine as a motif in designed objects, however the luxury hand-made glassmaking process underscores an industrial aesthetic coexisting within a highly traditional craft setting. The evenly shaped barrel cylinder of each goblet's form involved great expertise in both the cold and hotworking processes so that the form would not shatter during the annealing, or cooling process. Behrens' design unravels the commonly presumed binary of craft and the machine during this period: in the realm of glassmaking, both highly skilled traditional craft techniques as well as innovative technologies in fabrication were integral to achieving the machine aesthetic seen in Behrens' design.

6.3
Goblet, Venetian, 17th
century. Blown glass, 13
x 7.9 x 7.5 cm, Bequest
of Jerome Strauss,
Corning Museum of
Glass, Corning, NY.

These simplified forms are echoed in Behrens' second example, the 'Aegir' service, comprising approximately six to eight vessels composed of colourless glass and cased ruby glass. In this set, the larger goblets for wine, beer, and champagne are essentially two conical vessels fused at the base, with a cut knop separating the goblet's foot from the body. The decorative shape of the knop is cut into a gem-like form with sixteen sides, and alternates from colourless to red depending on the surface decoration of each vessel. This variation in form was fully illustrated in the design's original advertisement in *Die Kunst* (fig. 6.1).

This design borrows directly from traditional Venetian glassblowing forms, especially the flared conical shape of the body and the central placement of the knop, which is clearly exhibited by an example from the seventeenth century in the collection of the Corning Museum of Glass (fig. 6.3). This connection to Mediterranean styles is further theorized in the aforementioned article written for *Die Kunst* by Meier-Graefe, where he discusses the role of a German cultural renaissance in relation to the contemporaneous architecture designed by Behrens at Darmstadt:

> I sense that we are facing a new Renaissance; everything that has been
> achieved by the many active architects of our time is only a prelude. A renais-
> sance that has been achieved so far in real values, which today consists more
> of theoretical consideration to solve effective forms. In this small timespan
> that we've seen so far, already there are some similarities with the modest
> nature of the great Italian movement that ushered in the modern era.[10]

VEREINIGTE DEUTSCHE WERKSTÄTTEN FÜR HANDWERKSKUNST

ADELBERT NIEMEYER-MÜNCHEN   WANDLEUCHTER (EISEN UND MESSING)

GEORG VON MENDELSOHN-MÜNCHEN   SCHALEN AUS SCHMIEDEEISEN

VENETIANISCHE GLÄSER AUS DEN VEREINIGTEN DEUTSCHEN WERKSTÄTTEN G. M. B. H., MÜNCHEN

446

6.4
Vereinigte Deutsche Werkstätten Für Handwerkskunst, Venetianische Gläser aus den Vereinigten Deutschen Werkstätten G.M.B.H., München [Venetian Glasses by the United German Workshops, G.M.B.H., Munich], 1905. Blown glass, Illustrated in *Die Kunst: Monatshefte für Freie und Angewandte Kunst* 12:8 (1905): 446.

Here, Meier-Graefe notably compares the cultural climate of twentieth-century Germany to that of Italy during the Renaissance, connecting—in a positive light—a historical precedent to the ideological reinterpretation of forms espoused by modernist designers like Behrens. Meier-Graefe's emphasis on the theoretical aspect of the architectural developments in Darmstadt can help to analyze how fin-de-siècle German glass design retains layers of meaning signified through form, colour, and material.

The reductive forms of the 'Aegir' service are perhaps more aptly analyzed in comparison to some Venetian-style vessels produced by the Vereinigte Deutsche Werkstätten in 1909 (fig. 6.4). The presence of historically-influenced forms in advertisements from *Die Kunst* show that even progressive organizations like the Deutsche Werkstätten were

operating with a particular aesthetic and practicality in mind. By recreating versions of Venetian goblets, they aligned themselves with the artisanal quality associated with the glassblowers of Murano while also maintaining a distinct sense of German quality through the slight alteration of forms: double-knops, pressed knops, surface engraving, and a cylindrical *tazza* vessel.

These themes of nationalistic technical innovation in Behrens' glassware sets can also be extended to a national discourse on mysticism at the turn of the century in Germany. This conscientious reuse of historical forms presents an interesting convergence of modern glassmaking processes and traditional models, and underscores aspects of contextual nationalism inherent in the design. The ruby-toned glass used for the 'Aegir' knop, for example, while produced using industrialist techniques, traditionally references to the use of gold chloride in creating ruby glass in the seventeenth century (known as *Goldrubin* in German).[11] This discovery was led by Johann Kunckel, a chemist working in Potsdam in the late seventeenth century, who is credited with perfecting this procedure while experimenting with alchemical processes.[12] The luxury inherent in this process speaks not only of elitism, but also a sense of nationalism often associated with technical innovations, especially in the glassmaking industry. The ubiquitous use of ruby glass in liturgical glassware and decorative glass lanterns throughout Germany suggests that Behrens was aware of its cultural significance, as a technical—and distinctly German—innovation. Viewed from this perspective, the form and decoration of the 'Aegir' vessels take on layered meaning: they embody historical precedents set in Venice while also manipulating these same precedents to achieve a Germanic reinterpretation of the design. The desire to affiliate a German aesthetic culture with aspects of the Italian Renaissance therefore is rooted firmly in the ability of the commodity to embody both the greatness of the classical past and the promise of the modern German future — specifically, the importance of crafting a German national identity, at least in part, via objects. This desire for creating both the past and the future concretely demonstrates one actualization of *Italiensehnsucht*, especially through revival styles used in design as a method of reinforcing nationalistic connotations associated with physical objects.

These nationalistic connotations attached to form and style are also aptly applied to the materiality of glass itself. The interest in the physical landscape of Central Europe as well as crystalline theory at the turn of the twentieth century has a literal application in the examination of Behrens' glassware. The connection of colourless glass to naturally found crystal presents an interesting interpretation of Behrens' two glassware sets as embodiments of the discourse surrounding mysticism—an indispensible element of Behrens' own artistic philosophy as a modern architect. Spirituality was often associated with crystals and the philosophy of alchemy involving the transformation of base metals into prized materials like gold or silver, deepens the interpretation of the glass fabrication process for Behrens' sets. Rosemarie Haag Bletter's analysis of crystal and glass metaphors in relation

AUSSTELLUNG MODERNER WOHNUNGS-KUNST BEI A. WERTHEIM—BERLIN.
SPEISE-ZIMMER VON PROFESSOR PETER BEHRENS—DARMSTADT.

6.5
Peter Behrens, *Speisezimmer von Professor Peter Behrens—Darmstadt* [Dining Room Designed by Professor Peter Behrens, Darmstadt]. Illustrated in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration: Illustrierte Monatshefte für moderne Malerei, Plastik, Architektur, Wohnungskunst und künstlerisches Frauen-Arbeiten XI* (October 1902–March 1903): 291.

to Expressionist art is particularly applicable to the Behrens' pieces. While Haag Bletter does mention Behrens' graphic works in terms of 'das Zeichen' or 'the Sign' from Friedrich Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*,[13] and how he reused this motif in the Darmstadt Colony Festival of 1901, her analysis ignores Behrens' glassware designs, which would have been executed and on display in his house at Darmstadt, as well as published in *Die Kunst* by this time (fig. 6.5).

The colourless glass used for the 'Goldband' and 'Aegir' services visually signals a connection to the crystal imagery so clearly expressed in his graphic works and interiors, especially in the repetitive, crystalline structure of the Darmstadt dining room interior's light fixtures, carpet motifs, and wall frieze. For Haag Bletter, the importance of Behrens' use of the crystal symbol is:

> ... the fact that [he] reintegrates the image of the philosopher's stone with its
> older chemical substance, crystal (something Nietzsche had not done). This
> points to the eclectic and historicist approach of Behrens. He gives the [mys-
> tical] tradition a slightly new direction: crystal stands for the metamorphosis
> of everyday life into a heightened artistic experience.[14]

This concept of metamorphosis is literally inherent in the construction of Behrens' glass objects, because of their chemical structure involving balanced levels of a flux, a former, and a stabilizing agent, in addition to the inclusion of gold chloride for the ruby glass and gold leaf for the surface decoration on the 'Goldband' pieces.

The transformation of chemical agents and basic elements into a highly crafted, usable drinking vessel can also be translated to Haag Bletter's interpretation of the artistic experience, and how the total design of Behrens' interiors place these glass objects as actors in a larger living experience, namely the concept of *Lebenskunst*. In order to fully consider the formal analysis of Behrens' glassware services, it is also important to analyze the theoretical context that underpins his design practice at the turn of the century, that is, aspects of mysticism and *Lebenskunst* (literally, 'the art of living') and the parallel concept of Synthetism. The importance of the transformative process associated with art, and how it can shape and colour the mundaneness of a quotidian existence is paralleled in the glass-working process itself. The very process by which glass is made shows an integration of basic materials like ash, silica, and lime that are then fused by heat—a physical transformation of ordinary compounds into the extra-ordinary that can be viewed an essential form of transcendence. As it is described in a treatise from 1856, *Lebenskunst* has a 'nourishing,' sustaining quality,[15] or the ability to enhance both intellectual and corporeal experiences. For Behrens as a self-described artist of life, rather than specifically an artist, architect, or designer, this interpretation of *Lebenskunst* underscores the purpose of his glassware as physically useful yet aesthetically complex pieces that combine handworked glassmaking within a distinctly manufactory setting.[16] It should be stressed that the high level of crafts-manship required to produce these thinly blown forms delineates these sets as luxury items, and are utilitarian insofar as they contribute to an overall aesthetic of delicacy and unified motifs as seen in Behrens' dining room at Darmstadt as well as maintaining literal functionality.

Mark Jarzombek's analysis of *Lebenskunst* in cultural aesthetics leading up to the founding of the Deutsche Werkbund sheds light on the tendency to appropriate historical styles in commodity designs of the period. Jarzombek's reliance on Hermann Muthesius' contention that the superiority of German culture and art partially stands in contrast to other European cultures who continually maintain historicist styles in their production of wares, such as in France.[17] In relation to Venetian glassware produced by the Vereinigte Deutsche

Werkstätten in Munich, it is clear that Germany was not exempt from historicist trends even in 1909—to the contrary, the historicist tendencies are often coupled with technical innovations in mass production, luxury manufacturing, as well as the incorporation of reduced yet visually complex forms evocative of machine-made objects. The underscoring element here is an interest in creating commodity glass objects that ultimately contribute to a utopian domestic atmosphere—one not freed from historical styles, but rather enhanced by them. This trend is also present in many other Central European countries neighbouring Germany, including regions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire where the architect Jan Kotěra was based.

Kotěra was a prominent participant in this atmosphere of artistic discourse through his professorship at the Academy of Applied Arts in Prague. Primarily an architect, Kotěra studied under Otto Wagner at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, where he placed a focus on the importance of form, function, and optical effects using minimalist modes of decoration in architecture. He also became an architecture critic and theorist and was influential as a member of the Manés Union of Fine Arts, and founder of the Artel group of artists and designers in 1908.[18] Artel artists and designers often employed Kotěra's theories regarding architecture and interior design when they began to design glassware in the cubist style in the early 1900s. Often associated with the avant-garde, international styles of modern painting and architecture noted for a geometric simplicity and planar construction involving ahistorical forms, the cubist motifs of the glassmaking industry in early-twentieth-century Bohemia signal a nuanced vision of modernist design, notably underscoring the glassmaking industry's rich cultural heritage of craft in this region, as well as its modernized production and technological innovations. This early cubist style in glassmaking focuses on expertise in cut decoration—a traditional and intricate technique that was highly refined in the Czech regions in the early nineteenth century with the rise in demand of an international market for cut glassware during this period. This use of cut glass in the column and dome construction of Kotěra's punchbowl service from 1904–10 is emblematic of the convergence of traditional craftsmanship and avant-garde decorative motifs as an expression of nationalist affiliation and pride (fig. 6.2). Made for the Universal Exposition of Saint Louis in 1904, this set is composed of facetted and cut colourless glass. It was produced in series following the exhibition and various design museums worldwide own the set today.[19] The rotund shape of the punchbowl and fluted decoration on the glasses are evocative of classical columns and domes, placing the design in two camps: it is modern for its use of minimal cut decoration and lack of enameling, but also historicist through its echoing of past architectural forms. It is simultaneously considered a prescient piece that 'helped to usher in the modern style of Czech glass-making' while also embodying past historical styles through iconic antique architectural forms.[20]

Kotěra contributed to the discourse surrounding modern art and architecture at the turn of the century as an editor and writer for the important Czech art journal *Volné Smery*.

A notable quote from his 1900 essay 'On New Art' underscores the major points of his design philosophy, namely that 'The creation of space and construction, not shape and decoration, must be the purpose of the new movement,' and that 'any movement whose point of departure is not in purpose, construction, and place, but arises from form, is utopian.'[21] This statement is particularly well-suited to the punch bowl example considering its architectonic composition that emphasizes the volume of the piece rather than its surface—this form resembles dome structures of Roman antiquity and suggests a solid stability, as though it is a constructed building in miniature. The domed form and use of colourless glass is ostensibly without a designated time period at first glance, and adheres to Kotěra's view of both architecture and commodity design as areas ripe with utopian possibility. The use of antique references in the punchbowl service aligns with Peter Behrens' own methodology of incorporating historical styles and motifs as a mode of departure for modernist design—ultimately with the desire to create a superior product with distinctly Central European foundations.

The rise of art glass and industrial commodities within the Central European glass industry underscores the significance of glassmaking practices in this region. Period discourses on art and design at the turn of the twentieth century directly relate to the concept of regional identity in Bohemia, and go so far as to define the Czech style in art, almost twenty years before sovereignty was granted to the former Czechoslovakian nation in 1918.[22] These interpretations of 'Czechness' are especially useful to further evaluate cultural identity embodied by specific styles of historicist and modernist glass objects produced in the Bohemian spa region.

The question of national identity was frequently theorized during the early twentieth century by art and design critics in both Czech and German regions, including the German Meier-Graefe and the prominent Czech Milos Jiranek, as well as the noted German sociologist Georg Simmel in his deconstruction of typification in European applied arts.[23] As discussed in the introduction of this project, the close proximity and frequent overlap of Germanic and Slavic cultures in Central Europe, and Bohemia especially, shows a melding of languages, traditions, and cultural memories. During the nineteenth century, this convergence is best shown through the numerous German names given to Czech-speaking cities, such as Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary) and Marienbad (Mariánské Lázně). Because language and textual practices are key factors in the propagation of a collective identity, the predominant use of the German language in this area presents a complicated view of what a proposed national identity could be in an originally Slavic-based culture during the early twentieth century. In the nineteenth century, Bohemia's position within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, coupled with its close proximity to Northwestern Germany (and its capital state Brandenburg), placed the region in a liminal state of political identification.

The public desire for separate Czech and Slovak nations during the nineteenth and

early twentieth centuries was heightened by political events in Central Europe, especially the fragmentation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire's holdings into sovereign states and the consequent rise in the public interest for self-definition via culture. This cultural re-identification is especially present in period discourses on literature, art, and design, with particular focus on revivalism not only as a mode of drawing inspiration from historical styles, but also as a form of rebirth on a national level. While the manifestation of regional identity in the glassmaking sphere is significantly more vocal later in the twentieth century, the same concepts are nevertheless present and thriving in the century's first twenty years. The overarching question of nationality and identity is inherently connected to a larger context of cultural and collective memory theories.

Jan Assmann's interpretation of cultural memory and identity hinges on what art historian Aby Warburg originally called the 'mnemonic energy' attached to such cultural artifacts as posters, postcards, and souvenir ephemera.[24] This mnemonic energy is imparted through both visual and textual modes of communication, thus lending itself well to a discussion of physical objects, and period discourses on art and design. In a treatise from the turn of the century, Jiranek described the notion of 'Czechness' by name in a 1900 article for the art and literary journal *Radikální listy*:

> The Czechness of our art will be self-evident: when we have a number of distinctive characteristics that can be artistically expressed, it will be what we share as a race that… will be the Czech quality of our art. … [The Czech artist of tomorrow] will use not only external forms from the past—for example folk embroidery or ornaments—but its real substance, the visual sense Czech art inherited from old women of Slovak Moravia who decorated their porches with amazing instinct; he will use all the achievements of modern culture to create a strong sense of self and to apply forces inherent to his race, that beautiful race that survives in full strength because and as long as it is Slavic.[25]

Jiranek's description of regional pride in art is both figurative and concrete, and is a textual example of how cultural identity can be attached to physical objects both literally and figuratively inherited from the past. While he specifically invokes the past styles of traditional handcraft associated with Czech folklore and the women of Slovak Moravia, Jiranek nevertheless omits any concrete characteristics of new Czech art, deliberately leaving the question open-ended in terms of form and content. Just as Kotěra's own treatise states, the symbolic powers of form, tradition, and regional identity are integral to Jiranek's definition of Czechness, and demonstrate how a collective notion of the self in the political sphere also extends to the spheres of art and design, leading to a new concept of a utopian future.

The prominent Czech literary critic and theorist Frantisek Xaver Šalda wrote on the relationships between artistic creation, metaphysics and semiotics in his theory of Synthetism, namely that:

> when applied to artistic creation… [Synthetism] would be limitless: it would not exclude any objects, ideas, concepts, types, formulations of emotions, and psychical elements… The only important thing was to discern in each object its inner meaning, its "soul". This "interior" was to be unified with the "exterior" in artistic expression in order to constitute a psychical sign.[26]

Šalda was partially influenced by the *Gesamtkunstwerk* philosophical view of art as all-encompassing, but added to this an interpretation of art as specifically significant of an essence, or energy. This denotes an understanding of objects as purveyors of an essential meaning—especially in the context of the Czech National Reawakening movement, this essence would undoubtedly be related to the communication of locality, that is, a physical emblem of aesthetic and technological practices viewed as inherently Czech or Bohemian. This interest in portraying and embodying a regional identity without aesthetic boundaries demonstrates the ability to incorporate elements of the past into a Synthetist vision of a potential utopian future. Šalda's theory of Synthetism encouraged the architect and the designer to look to both past and present as sources of inspiration, in order to craft a modern utopia where art and the architectural space were fully integrated into the everyday experience.

Šalda was influential to Kotěra's own work, and this philosophical view of art as all-encompassing denotes an understanding of objects as purveyors of an essential meaning.

The notion of local identity has a symmetrical application in the German discussion of *Sachlichkeit*, a concept with many different abstract meanings that literally translates simply to 'thingness' but is often translated to the more English-minded approximation 'objectivity,' denoting, importantly, both its literal and figurative meaning.[27] As discussed above in relation to Venetian glassware produced by the Vereinigte Deutsche Werkstätten, Germany and Central Europe willfully engaged with historicist trends at the turn of the century while still harbouring rich quotients of what is traditionally viewed as modernist avant-garde artist groups. In this way, the glassware designed by Behrens and Kotěra can be analyzed as dependent on an ostensibly contradictory conceptual pairings, that is, the use of historicist and modern reductive forms to create a successful composition. Both glassware examples amplify the importance of construction by referencing traditional methods of the glassmaking process in their surface decoration. This interest in the traditional craft points to a broader embodiment of period-specific trends in spirituality and mysticism that are visualized through the commodity. It can be argued that the essential or *sachlich* quality of the juxtaposition of varied and dynamic, yet functional forms speaks to a melding of two different realms of the period—historicism and modernism—and can

actually signal their eventual rapport in the field of modern design. The glass sets therefore become an example of a complex convergence of traditional glass design and more modern production techniques, and, through a larger perspective, the handmade with the manufactured.

Behrens and Kotěra are both indebted to the past either aesthetically or conceptually, and the philosophical theories inherently woven around their glass designs look toward the future—an image of the future tempered with what Czech literary critic Oleg Sus has termed a 'presentism: the past read with the eyes of the present'.[28] When interpreted through this theoretical lens, the Behrens and Kotěra designs are dependent on ostensibly contradictory conceptual pairings, that is, handcrafted quality and modern mass production, and historicist and modern reductive forms to create both successful compositions and marketable wares. Through variety in height, geometric and organic line, and similarity in form, texture, minimal surface decoration, and construction, the formal analysis for each service highlights aspects of tradition in the piecemeal glassblowing fabrication process, while pointing to a broader embodiment of local interest in the metaphysics of artistic creation, visualized through the commodity. It can be argued that the essential or *sachlich* quality of the juxtaposition of varied and dynamic, yet functional forms speaks to a melding of two different realms of the period—that of traditional craft and the machine—and can actually signal their eventual rapport in the field of modern design. These central European glassware designs subtly encompass the seemingly disparate realms of historicism, tradition, regional culture, and theoretical discourse. Rather than limit these design examples to mass-produced, minimalistic styles as are often expected—and assumed—of modernist design, this perspective highlights the nuances of the modern commodity as a pluralistic entity that is deeply evocative of time, place, and historical roots.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1.   See Wilhelm Waetzoldt, *Das Klassische Land: Wandlungen der Italiensehnsucht*, (Leipzig: Seemann, 1927).

2.   See Katherine Harloe, *Winckelmann and the Invention of Antiquity: History and Aesthetics in the Age of Altertumswissenschaft* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

3.   See Hildegard Wiegel, *Italiensehnsucht: Kunsthistorische Aspekte eines Topos* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2004).

4.   Norbert Elias, 'Sociogenesis of the Antithesis between *Kultur* and *Zivilization* in German Usage', in *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations* (New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000), p. 6.

5.   Hubertus Kohle, 'Orte der Sehnsucht: Mit Künstlern auf Reisen' (lecture, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Institut für Kunstwissenschaften, Munich, Germany, Fall 2009); Freyja Hartzell, 'The *Gründerzeit* and the Aesthetic of "Germanness"' (lecture, Parsons The New School for Design/Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, New York, NY, 9 September, 2011).

6.   Norbert Elias, '*Kultur* and *Zivilization*', pp. 6–8.

7.   Waetzoldt, *Das Klassische Land: Wandlungen der Italiensehnsucht*, pp. 231–35.

8.   Jan Kotĕra, 'Neue Kunst: Einige Thesen von Architektur und Angewandte Künste', *Mitteilung des Vereins für Dekorative Kunst und Kunstgewerbe* 1 (1901): pp. 61–2.

9.   Alan Windsor, *Peter Behrens: Architect and Designer* (London: Architectural Press, 1981), pp. 10–15.

10.   Julius Meier-Graefe, 'Peter Behrens: Düsseldorf', *Die Kunst: Monatshefte für Freie und Angewandte Kunst* 12:8 (1905): p. 387.

11.   Dedo von Kerssenbrock-Krosigk (ed.), *Glass of the Alchemists: Lead Crystal – Gold Ruby, 1650–1750* (Corning, NY: Corning Museum of Glass, 2008), pp. 123–5.

12.   Peter Rath, *Lobmeyr 1823: Helles Glas und Klares Licht* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1998), p. 209.

13.   Rosemarie Haag Bletter, 'The Interpretation of the Glass Dream: Expressionist Architecture and the History of the Crystal Metaphor', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 40:1 (March 1981): p. 31.

14.   Haag Bletter, 'The Glass Dream', p. 32.

15.   Carl Gustav Carus, *Über Lebenskunst* (Wurzen: Verlags-Comptoir, 1856), p. 5.

16.   Windsor, *Peter Behrens*, p. 25.

17.   Mark Jarzombek, 'The Kunstgewerbe, The Werkbund, and The Aesthetics of Culture in the Wilhelmine Period', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 53:1 (March 1994): p. 11.

18.   Vera Behal, 'Artel: Das Atelier für Kunstgewerbe in Prag' *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 50:1 (1987): pp. 116–30.

19.   Corning Museum of Glass, 'Punch Bowl Set with Six Glasses, 97.3.37', Corning Museum of Glass Online Collection Search, accessed 15 December, 2013, http://www.cmog.org/artwork/punch-bowl-set-6-glasses.

20.   Sylva Petrová and Jen-Luc Olivé, *Bohemian Glass 1400–1989* (New York: Abrams, 1989), p. 98.

21.   Vladimir Slapeta, 'Cubism in Architecture', in Alexander von Vegesack (ed.), *Czech Cubism: Architecture, Furniture, and Decorative Arts, 1910–1925* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), p. 34.

22.   Milos Jiranek, 'The Czechness of our Art', in William R. Hackman (ed.), *Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes, 1910–1930* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), pp. 56–7.

23.   Georg Simmel, 'Der Henkel', *Philosophische Kultur. Gesammelte Essays* [1911], trans. Rudolph H. Weingartner, 2nd edn (Leipzig: Alfred Kröner, 1919), p. 269.

24.   See Aby Warburg, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, ed. Martin Warnke (Berlin: Akademie, 2000).

25.   Jiranek, 'The Czechness of our Art', p. 57.

26.   Oleg Sus, *From the Pre-History of Czech Structuralism: F.X. Šalda, T.G. Masaryk, and the Genesis of Symbolist Aesthetics and Poetics in Bohemia*, vol. 8 of *Linguistic & Literary Studies in Eastern Europe: The Structures of the Literary Process*, eds. Peter Steiner, Miroslav Červenka, and Ronald Vroon, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), p. 567.

27.   This loose translation of *Sachlichkeit* stems partially from the prevalent translation of the Weimar-era art movement known as *Neue Sachlichkeit*, to 'New Objectivity'. The ubiquitous use of 'objectivity' in English is most often as a purely philosophical concept linking truth and perception with reality, resulting in distanced, unbiased observation. My analysis seeks to re-examine the term *Sachlichkeit* from its basic connotation, i.e., to apply this word in reference to the literal physicality—the essence—of an object. This heightened meaning is embedded in the German *Sachlichkeit* and in the root of its literal English translation. However, this alternate meaning is often obscured by the traditional translation, thus I offer 'thingness' as a simplified, but evocative synonym for the concept. This interpretation is indebted to the research and writing that I completed while studying with Freyja Hartzell at the Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum.

28.   Sus, *From the Pre-History of Czech Structuralism*, p. 565.

CHAPTER 7

HENRI DE BRAEKELEER AND BELGIUM'S NINETEENTH-CENTURY REVIVALIST MOVEMENT

ALISON HOKANSON

Although largely unknown today, Henri De Braekeleer (1840–88) was one of the foremost figures in Belgian art during the second half of the nineteenth century. Beginning in the mid-1860s, his interior scenes of antiquated lower-and-middle-class houses and grand historic landmarks in his birthplace of Antwerp defined a novel type of subject matter in tune with the progressive principles of Realism: forthright images of the spaces that structured contemporary Flemish life. The vivid specificity, effervescent luminosity, and quiet melancholy of De Braekeleer's paintings entranced audiences at home and abroad, most notably the later-nineteenth-century Belgian avant-garde. He was hailed as one of Belgium's first modern artists, no minor status in a nation that emerged as an independent entity in 1830, just a decade before De Braekeleer was born.[1]

Throughout De Braekeleer's career Belgium was in flux, torn between modernity and tradition, and uncertain of its own identity. The newly constituted state embraced the ideals of industrial and cultural progress, while simultaneously striving to assert a distinctive, authentically 'Belgian' history.[2] Such a society, inclined both forward and backward, was primed to appreciate De Braekeleer's portrayal of a district known as Old Antwerp. This area—comprised mainly of the historic buildings clustered in the town center along the Scheldt River—was considered in De Braekeleer's era to be a bastion of genuine Flemish culture. Period commentaries reveal that his paintings reinforced the mythology of a quaint, custom-bound city, offering his contemporaries an appealing counterpoint to the modernization occurring in Antwerp and the rest of Belgium.[3] His images gave vital expression to a deep-seated strain of nostalgia which turned to interiors as sites of communion with the uplifting essence of another age.

Specifically, De Braekeleer's depictions of revivalist and conserved interiors recreated the conditions that nineteenth-century visitors found conducive to an imaginative re-en-

actment of the past, bringing viewers into contact with historic objects and thereby evoking memories and feelings associated with bygone days.[4] He was hardly the only Belgian artist to cater to the longing for an idealized, earlier era; but his paintings offer unique insight into the role that buildings and furnishings played in keeping alive a cherished history.

Yet De Braekeleer's scenes of Old Antwerp are riven by ambivalence about his Flemish heritage. Although his paintings might seem to satisfy nostalgia for yesteryear, they also raise the spectre of inertia and decline. This contradictory portrayal challenged one of the foundations of nineteenth-century Belgian society: a belief in the past, and particularly the 'Golden Age' of Flemish artistic and economic eminence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as a source of succor and guidance.[5] It also struck a chord with the emerging Belgian avant-garde in the 1880s and 1890s, a group of artists and writers similarly seduced and repelled by tradition.[6] More precisely, De Braekeleer's paintings prompted critics to voice anxieties about the physical and mental decrepitude of Belgium's old-fashioned, provincial population. His pictures were thus early, and influential, articulations of discontent with the Flemish cultural patrimony, and among the first European artworks to broach the subject of social degeneration. Fusing the fantasy of a perfect, eternal heritage with an awareness of the burdens of history, De Braekeleer's interior scenes powerfully convey the doubts that beleaguered an artist, and a nation, in a moment of transition when neither the past nor the present seemed tenable.

Although De Braekeleer's paintings are intensely national in their focus, their significance extends beyond their immediate context. What the artist captured was, in fact, a local manifestation of a much wider phenomenon: the tensions that circulated around the relationship between the past and the present in Belgium shaped cultural life throughout nineteenth-century Europe, as countries struggled to come to terms with the developments of modern society. De Braekeleer's paintings and period responses to them shed light on the complexities of historicism, nostalgia, and revival, which scholars of our day are only beginning to explore. Examined closely, his work reveals much about the visual and tactile dimensions of revival; the imaginative appeal of artefacts; and, perhaps most importantly, the dark underside of tradition, a subject rarely depicted in art of the period.

In De Braekeleer's time, regret for, and a concomitant desire to return to, an idyllic, pre-industrial way of life was common in Belgium. The country was scarcely the only European nation that responded to modernity with a flood of yearning for a supposedly more harmonious era; but Belgium's lack of a clearly defined and autonomous history lent special urgency to acts of commemoration. In the absence of a 'readymade' past and the crucial sense of identity that went with it, historicism and nostalgia acquired the importance of nation-building exercises.[7]

The Belgian government and intellectual elite leapt to fill their country's historical void by promoting the regional heritage as a source of national cohesion and a paradigm for a new Belgian society. In particular, they attempted to align the Flemish Golden Age

with the ambitions of contemporary Belgium. The analogy was heavily emphasized, particularly in the arts; revival—the notion of recreating the Flemish heyday in a modern context—became a guiding principle of national life.[8] Antwerp's status as the center of Golden Age Flanders made it especially inclined toward revivalist ambitions: a ceaseless flow of artworks, writings, and events sought to recover the city's past.[9]

Much of the historicist fervor in Belgium centered on the nation's built heritage. This was with good reason: during the second half of the nineteenth century, its two major cities, Brussels and Antwerp, embarked on campaigns of renovation and expansion comparable to baron Haussmann's contemporaneous modernization of Paris.[10] The new boulevards, lined with rows of uniform, Beaux-Arts style buildings, were seen as erasing Belgium's picturesque urban fabric, widely viewed as a vital repository of cultural memory.

The Belgian elite sought to counteract a sense of loss by championing their architectural patrimony.[11] One important manifestation of this impulse was the regional Neo-Flemish Renaissance revival style, which enjoyed great popularity in upper-class and bourgeois homes from about 1875 to 1900. Champions of *le style flamand* (or *Vlaamse stijl*) looked to the buildings of the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries (the late Gothic and Renaissance eras), with their steep, scrolled gables, polychrome brick-and-stone façades, and elaborately ornamented silhouettes, as the basis for authentic contemporary Belgian design. It was hoped that reinstating these regional traditions would restore Belgium to the greatness of the Flemish Golden Age, inspiring patriotic sentiment, encouraging moral virtue, and offering a homegrown alternative to the dictates of imported French Neoclassicism. Over time, the style came to symbolize the privileged classes' identification with the prosperous, enlightened burghers of sixteenth-and-seventeenth century Flanders.[12]

The heart of the Neo-Flemish Renaissance revival was indisputably Antwerp, with its strong sense of Flemish cultural identity.[13] One of its most notable manifestations was a building project involving De Braekeleer's uncle and mentor, baron Henri Leys (1815–69), himself a highly successful painter famed for genre scenes set in Golden Age Antwerp. In the late 1850s, when De Braekeleer was finishing his training, Leys constructed a dining room in his home in a Neo-Flemish Renaissance mode. The house, located on the Barend Van Orleystraat in Antwerp (now the Leysstraat), was by all accounts an extraordinary building: in addition to the dining room, it featured a sitting room with Asian decor, known as the Chinese Salon; a studio and library designed to resemble a Swiss chalet; and a greenhouse. This ensemble allowed the residence's inhabitants and visitors to travel from one exotic locale to another without setting foot outside the home. So marvelous was the building that after Leys' death it became a tourist destination.[14]

One of the main attractions was the dining room, with its rich Neo-Gothic and Neo-Renaissance decor. The highlight was a wall mural, painted by Leys between 1858 and 1860, which depicted early-sixteenth-century Antwerp at Christmastime (fig. 7.1).[15] At five feet tall, wrapping around the room above eye level, the frieze enveloped viewers in a panoramic vista of life in a Renaissance city. As Stephen Bann has noted, during the first part of the nineteenth century this sort of representation was considered the height of his-

toric recreation; it surrounded audiences in a three-dimensional, illusionistic enactment of another era, producing a sensational effect of realism, as if one had traveled back in time.[16] Leys heightened the impression of returning to an earlier epoch by inserting himself and his family into the mural, wearing nineteenth-century dress.

When Pierre Génard (1830–99), Antwerp's future city archivist, viewed the not-yet-completed mural in 1859, he remarked on the effectiveness of the frieze format in facilitating a persuasive portrayal of a Renaissance milieu. 'We are in the sixteenth century,' he declared, and went on to describe a rich sensorial experience: the sight of Antwerp's citizens going to and fro; the sound of music, bells, and voices; the snappy winter cold; even the taste of Christmas wine and cake.[17]

De Braekeleer's painting *The Dining Room of Henri Leys*, made for the dealer Gustave Coûteaux (1815–73) shortly after Leys' death in 1869, pays homage to the revivalist ethos that Leys espoused in his art and home (fig. 7.2). In composition and style, the painting reflects the mechanisms by which the actual dining room induced a magical resuscitation of Renaissance Antwerp. De Braekeleer employed a sweeping perspective that places viewers inside the room, with an almost comprehensive outlook that takes in the floor, ceiling, and three walls. This configuration evokes the feeling of being immersed in a Flemish Renaissance milieu, a sensation heightened by the artist's painstaking description of the old-fashioned furnishings. His choice of dark, saturated colours also plays a part. Even though the dining room was only about fifteen years old when De Braekeleer painted it, his depiction of the interior exudes the mellow gleam of age.

7.2
Henri De Braekeleer, *The Dining Room of Henri Leys*, 1869. Oil on canvas, 67 x 84 cm, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp.

De Braekeleer's choice of detail also encourages the sort of imaginative play that undergirded nostalgic fantasies of resurrecting earlier eras. One can note, for example, the artist's attentiveness to the trompe l'oeil effects through which Leys blurred the boundaries between his mural and the space that housed it. In the middle of the right-hand side of the room, Leys depicted a woman lifting up her skirts as she walks over the cabinet. This sort of vignette collapsed the distinction between 'real' and 'unreal,' and between 'present' and 'past,' bringing the citizens of Renaissance Antwerp within a few fictive steps of nineteenth-century spectators. De Braekeleer carefully incorporated this detail into his painting, as if seeking to replicate its effect.

Even more important was De Braekeleer's evocative staging of the room's decor. The theme of communal celebration established in the holiday mural is strongly implied by the rest of the furnishings, from the table with its many chairs to the cupboards with dishes. But this conviviality is only implied. Despite Coûteaux's stipulation that the painting include figures,[18] the room is empty of people, and indeed in a state of apparent disuse. The tabletop is almost clear, the chairs are pushed against the walls, and the sideboard is bare. This emptiness, pregnant as it is with suggested sociability, spurs the imagination, providing an arena for viewers to envision their own narratives.[19] Given that *The Dining Room of Henri Leys* was painted shortly after the death of the room's owner, the interior—soberly sheathed in paneling, devoid of action, and shut off from the outside world—may be interpreted as a tomb, enshrining the spirit of the departed Leys.[20] But the interior may also be seen along the lines of the artist's greenhouse. Just as a hothouse provides a secure environment that allows plants to thrive in a climate that is not their own, so the dining room in De Braekeleer's picture offers a space where the Renaissance remains alive, even in the midst of modern life.

The impact of this portrayal on contemporary audiences is indicated by an article published shortly after De Braekeleer's death in 1888. Art historian and critic Pol de Mont recalled seeing the picture on exhibit, writing:

> No human figure, no animal, not even a flower graced the canvas … And yet, were hundreds of viewers not moved, riveted again and again by this handiwork, seemingly treated *con amore*? Why? I can assure you that we were attracted by something more than mere *colour*! Out of all the inanimate objects a soul spoke to us, the soul of things condemned to loneliness, mourning in the dark, but shining in a ray of sunlight; one imagined oneself with the painter in this stately, silent place; one followed the golden particles of dust that fell in the prism of the lights; drank the silence in with both ears, floating round each object in all the corners.[21]

De Mont interacted with De Braekeleer's painting as if it was the dining room itself, picturing himself moving through the space and engaging with the decor. Like Génard, he found the chamber to be rich in memories and emotions, although what he remembered was not the denizens of a far-away era, but the recently deceased Leys (presumably the

person 'mourned in the dark'.) In other words, De Braekeleer's composition elicited a sensorial engagement, and a cascade of reminiscence, in much the same manner as the actual interior.

The historicist impulse in Belgian architecture and design found an outlet not only in revivalist styles, but also in the conservation movement. Like 'neo' Gothic and Renaissance styles, the drive to conserve the built heritage was rooted in the conviction that the spirit of an age was embodied in (and could be reconstructed through) material objects.[22] Conservationists accordingly sought to protect historic structures and decor 'through rationalized documentation, restoration, and preservation'.[23] By the time De Braekeleer took up the subject of conserved buildings in the mid-1870s, conservation was embedded in Belgium's national dialogue, and, increasingly, in the topography of its cities.[24]

Underlying conservation efforts, and particularly attempts at preservation, was a belief that old age was beautiful and honourable. Dating back to at least the Romantic era, writers and artists across Europe esteemed the marks of time and human use as tangible, deeply personal records of, and connections to, history. This sensibility generated a veritable cult of the relic, which treated the physical remnants of earlier eras as keys to resurrecting the past in its totality. Dog-eared objects—locks scratched by centuries of careless keys, or armrests left threadbare by hundreds of elbows—were granted the capacity to arouse memories, emotions, and spiritual states associated with bygone days.[25] Antwerp, with its rich architectural heritage, was deeply in thrall to the notion of the revitalizing fragment. Travelers' literature promoted the city as a doorway to the past, full of artifacts that could conjure other epochs for receptive visitors. As one guidebook put it, 'for the tourist, amateur of secular constructions, veritable relics of art, a promenade through Old Antwerp offers … a very particular interest … Under [the right] conditions, a promenade [through the city] is a veritable excursion into the midst of the sixteenth century'.[26]

The totemic power of relics finds distinctive expression in De Braekeleer's paintings. Whereas his fellow Belgian artists attempted to reconstitute earlier eras wholesale (like Leys), or blended symbols of Flemish tradition with the trappings of modernity to depict an undying heritage, De Braekeleer portrayed Old Antwerp as his contemporaries saw it: run-down and retrograde. He mustered his skill with light, colour, and composition to conjure the city's past through its tattered remnants. One of the most compelling aspects of this enterprise is his portrayal of the Plantin-Moretus House on Antwerp's Vrijdagmarkt. The Plantin-Moretus family, which owned one of the most important humanist printing works in Renaissance Europe, was famous for its wealth, erudition, and art patronage. Their house, constructed and furnished during the height of the city's eminence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, contained workshops, offices, and a splendid residence. The complex remained remarkably intact over the following centuries, with even its typesetting racks preserved. The site's merits were clear to De Braekeleer's contemporaries; in 1876, the city of Antwerp acquired the building from one of the Moretus descendants, and the following year opened it to the public as one of the first historic house museums in Belgium.[27] The agenda behind the institution is made clear in the promotional literature that accompanied its debut. The museum's first curator, Max Rooses (1839–1914), intended

to present a paradigm of cultured Flemish prosperity, for the inspiration and edification of nineteenth-century audiences.[28]

The novelist and art critic Camille Lemonnier encapsulated the experience of visiting the Plantin-Moretus House in travelogues from 1875 and 1882. Except for some signs of organic deterioration, it seemed to Lemonnier that nothing had changed from three centuries ago. The building retained 'the aspect that it had when it was in full swing,' with the paraphernalia of daily life lying about in casual disarray.[29] This 'magnificent ensemble of the most intriguing relics,' bearing signs of long and devoted use, powerfully evoked the complex's former inhabitants.[30] Lemonnier compared the sensation to standing before a scene of Christ's Resurrection—a revealing comparison, for the writer attributed the Plantin-Moretus House with the ability to raise the dead. As he wonderingly described it:

> a commencement of life, in which one discerns the concentrated gestures and bent attitudes of the [type] correctors, seems to animate the dust whirling underfoot, and this life, still vague like the prelude to a song, like the tremble of a carillon that is going to ring, grows by the minute, and becomes the accompaniment to your own life, or rather, absorbs it in its ghostly movement.[31]

Like Génard visiting Leys' dining room, Lemonnier relived the past with all his senses: sounds filled the air, people went about their business, and the printing presses sprang into action.[32] The Renaissance became compellingly real.

Among De Braekeleer's paintings of the Plantin-Moretus complex, the picture that most clearly reflects the site's ability to resurrect bygone eras is *A Bedroom in the Plantin-Moretus House*. In many respects, De Braekeleer's depiction of the room dovetails with Lemonnier's characterization. The decor is antiquated in style and timeworn: scuffed, faded, and cracked. As in *The Dining Room of Henri Leys*, the space does not seem properly lived in. The furniture stands against the walls, the cabinet by the window is largely bare, and residents are nowhere to be seen. An air of stillness reigns. Yet at the same time, the interior is not moribund. Light pools over the cabinet and glints on the coverlet, bringing vitality (Lemonnier's 'commencement of life') to the scene.

De Braekeleer's picture also works to induce the type of historicist reverie that Lemonnier experienced. To begin with, a bedroom is a personal, familiar space, easy for viewers to identify with. The eyes, and the imagination, are drawn into this interior by the row of doorways stretching back on the left, with a sunlit window beckoning at the end. This visual trajectory incorporates several props arranged so as to imply a human presence: the rumpled counterpane lying casually over the bed, the warming pan propped against the wall, the open window, and the door left ajar. It is tempting to envision that the room's sixteenth-century occupants have recently stepped out, much as Lemonnier described.

A Bedroom in the Plantin-Moretus House epitomizes De Braekeleer's unique approach to the myth of Antwerp as a kind of historic artifact, which made Flanders' heritage so tangible that visitors could almost literally step into the past. As one critic wrote, De Braekeleer

7.3
Henri De Braekeleer,
Head of a Woman,
date unknown.
Pencil, dimensions
unknown, Stedelijk
Prentenkabinet,
Antwerp.

portrayed 'the surviving witnesses of [bygone] days, given over to sombre decline and radiant with time, memories, and the dead, whose exalted presence they perpetuate in our midst'.[33] His interior scenes might appear to wholeheartedly affirm the idealization of Old Antwerp as a haven of Flemish custom. Yet certain aspects of De Braekeleer's pictures contradict a rosy view of Flanders' cultural patrimony by suggesting that old-fashioned life, seemingly so serene and secure, carried a burden of stagnation and deterioration.[34] From this perspective, the past was not a source of vitality, but a cause of atrophy.

Ambivalence about the role of the past in contemporary Belgian life was amply reflected in avant-garde reviews of De Braekeleer's paintings. Most frequently, uncertainties about the benign nature of tradition were expressed in criticisms of the artist's old-fashioned sitters, who were characterized as lethargic, mindless, and even deformed (fig. 7.3). One of the first and most notable authors to employ such language was Camille Lemonnier. Beginning in 1873, he described De Braekeleer's figures in terms of ossification and

petrification.[35] The writer amplified this loosely scientific rhetoric in his first extended analysis of De Braekeleer's work in 1881, identifying 'a doltish and stunted people, shoulders and chests wizened, legs swollen, flesh slack, as if gangrened by the vice of their ancestors,' and a:

> slow, drowsy people, attached to outdated customs, with a sickly and stupid appearance, eyes glaucous and dreary, ashen-faced, heavy head dragging the body behind it, a race apart from the incessant transformation and tumultuous movement of the other population [of Antwerp], which keeps busy with its gold, trades with the Indies, and lives in veritable palaces.[36]

Lemonnier's interpretation of De Braekeleer's figures owes much to theories of racial degeneration then current in Europe, which broadly held that humanity was biologically condemned to an inevitable decline that would manifest itself in increasing physical and moral ugliness, a condition thought to be already visible in such benighted groups as the poor, the insane, criminals, and alcoholics.[37] Lemonnier understood the formal characteristics of De Braekeleer's sitters—their lack of motion, their absence of expression, and their bowed and pallid bodies—as signs of this inherent pathology. Deformed and sick, De Braekeleer's figures attested to the brutish state to which Lemonnier believed the inhabitants of Old Antwerp had descended. They were in essence a lower form of human being, condemned to a rudimentary existence in the darkest corners of the city. For the critic, the antiquated interiors of Antwerp (ironically, of much the sort that he praised in his writings on the Plantin-Moretus House) were profoundly implicated in the abject condition of the city's population. As he put it, there was a 'concordance of habitation and inhabitant,' a fundamental correlation between the 'sombre interiors of the humble people, rarely splashed with sunlight' and the decrepit humanity that dwelled within them.[38] According to Lemonnier, living among the relics of the past was not necessarily a path to salvation; rather, it could be both cause and symptom of social collapse.

Lemonnier's application of the pungent rhetoric of degeneration to De Braekeleer's paintings was not happenstance. Fears of racial deterioration became widespread in Europe at precisely the time that Lemonnier was penning his analysis of De Braekeleer's figures in 1881;[39] in fact, the subject was a driving theme of Lemonnier's first novel, *A Male*, published the same year. The writer had also clearly been contemplating the spectre of Belgium's social disintegration for some time; his book *Our Flemings*, a collection of essays published in 1869, argued that the Belgian people had been brought to the brink of physical and spiritual ruin by a centuries-long capitulation to their debauched French neighbours. Particularly relevant to the critic's interpretation of De Braekeleer's paintings are the essays *Rubens' Models* and *Lions and Lapdogs*, in which Lemonnier contrasted the strong, fecund, noble figures in Rubens' paintings with the weak, infertile, louche character of nineteenth-century Belgians. The author described a 'gangrened race' of pale and sickly people, their bodies puny and soft, walking bent under the weight of terrible preoc-

cupations, and worn down to a mean existence by greed and moral cowardice—much like his subsequent descriptions of De Braekeleer's sitters.[40]

Degeneration was not the sole scientific concept to surface in Lemonnier's evaluation of De Braekeleer's paintings. If the critic saw the artist's figures as representative of a people nearing the end of their life cycle, he also saw the same figures as evoking the rude, early stages of human development. His description of the men and women in De Braekeleer's paintings as hunched and slow, with their heads hanging low and far in front of their bodies, strongly recalls period depictions of Neanderthal man. This choice of referent was not surprising, particularly for a critic eager to be in the intellectual vanguard. The subject of prehistoric mankind had recently come to prominence in the art world with the exhibition of Fernand Cormon's *Cain* (Musée d'Orsay, Paris) at the Paris Salon of 1880, a painting whose deliberately repugnant portrayal of Neanderthal physiognomies and unmistakable allusions to human evolution excited a fury of controversy in the French press.[41]

Like the degenerate physique, with which it shared a typology, the Neanderthal body indicated a bestial nature that lacked the intelligence to rise above its own base instincts.[42] As Martha Lucy has argued, the hulking figure of early man elicited fear and disgust in nineteenth-century audiences.[43] It revealed the animal essence of humankind and, even more frighteningly, the mutability of human form, previously thought to be flawless and inviolate. For many writers, the Neanderthal was thus, much like the degenerate, a manifestation of the breakdown of social and biological order. In invoking the appearance of this primordial ancestor, Lemonnier reinforced his characterization of De Braekeleer's sitters as inferior and perhaps even monstrous.

The image of the Neanderthal was particularly appropriate to the invocation of a premodern realm in De Braekeleer's work. It must be remembered that Lemonnier and other writers saw Old Antwerp as a retrograde locale, left behind in the headlong plunge into a progressive age. In subtly likening De Braekeleer's sitters to prehistoric man, Lemonnier underlined their status as an earlier iteration of mankind's development. Like Neanderthals, the people of Old Antwerp belonged to a more basic, bygone era. They were, like prehistoric man, consigned to an increasingly distant and rather distasteful history.

The characterization of Old Antwerp as a quasi-primeval realm was carried forward in the writings of Lemonnier and other critics in the 1880s and 1890s, who described De Braekeleer's interiors and their inhabitants as if they were, like Neanderthals, the objects of paleontological study, using terms like 'archeological,' 'petrified,' and 'fossilized'.[44] But for all that period viewers seem to have been convinced of the essential inferiority of De Braekeleer's figures, the degree to which they manifest the characteristics of morbid heredity is open to debate, as is the extent to which the artist consciously sought to portray a decrepit or lowly humanity.

In this context, it is worth noting that the catalogue for Henri Leys' estate sale in 1893 (which included books purchased by his family following his death) featured French translations of Charles Darwin's *Physiology of Taste* (1839), as well as the author's *Origin of the Species* (1862) and *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* (1871–72); Sir Charles Ly-

7.4
Henri De Braekeleer,
The Man in the Chair,
1876. Oil on canvas,
79 x 63 cm, Koninklijk
Museum voor Schone
Kunsten, Antwerp.

ell's *The Geological Evidence of the Antiquity of Man* (1870); Alfred Russell Wallace's *Natural Selection* (1872); Sir John Lubbock's *The Origins of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man* (1873); and Ernst Haeckel's *The History of Creation According to the Laws of Natural Selection* (1874).[45] This was a sizable assemblage of books on physiognomy, evolution, and prehistoric man, and implies more than a passing interest in the subjects. Granted that the collection was not De Braekeleer's personal library, it was still certainly one to which he had ample access; even after Leys' death, De Braekeleer appears to have enjoyed a close relationship with the painter's son Julien.[46] At the very least, the contents of the Leys family's bookshelves indicate the sort of intellectual milieu in which De Braekeleer moved, and thus the sort of ideas with which he might have been familiar. And there is no mistaking De Braekeleer's preference for sitters with careworn, rather unattractive features, so easy for period commentators to perceive as signs of a languishing society.

Perhaps no painting in De Braekeleer's oeuvre portrays the breakdown between past and present as compellingly as *The Man in the Chair* (fig. 7.4). The setting was one of De

Braekeleer's favorites: the Council Chamber of the Brouwershuis on the Adriaan Brouw-erstraat in Antwerp. Constructed in the sixteenth century, the building was the seat of the city's brewer's guild and home to a local engineering feat, a giant water pump supply-ing the surrounding breweries. The Council Chamber was richly decorated with ornate, gilded leather wall paneling; an enormous mantelpiece with marble columns; an intricately carved oak table and chairs; and paintings, sculpture, and other objects representing the brewer's craft. Much like the Plantin-Moretus House, the Brouwershuis symbolized the marriage of commerce, science, and art in the Flemish Renaissance, which nineteenth-century Belgians sought to emulate.[47]

The outstanding feature of *The Man in the Chair* however, is not the splendid setting, but the title figure, an old man in rumpled nineteenth-century clothing seated in one of the guildhall chairs. This small, modestly dressed personage, with his drawn features and disaffected air, is palpably at odds with his august milieu. In fact, he appears almost oppressed by the fine decor, slouching underneath the artwork as if under a weight.[48] His heritage is seemingly not a source of balm, but of tedium and inertia.

As an embodiment of the relation between the Flemish Renaissance and contemporary Antwerp, the man is a troubling presence. His most disconcerting aspect is unquestion-ably his demeanor (fig. 7.6). Expressionless, he gazes outward with a steely fixity that the critic Eugène Demolder compared to the glare of a bird of prey.[49] This thousand-yard stare is all the more striking for being unavoidable. De Braekeleer situated the man's face just to the right of where the composition's leading lines intersect, making it impossible to avoid or ignore his glance. The artist rarely staged such a direct, and contentious, interac-tion between sitter and viewer. It has the notable effect of radically disrupting the nostal-gic atmosphere of the picture. Under the man's unswerving regard, the process of slowly looking at, and fantasizing about, the interior becomes self-conscious and unsatisfying. An imaginative immersion in the scene, so central to historicist reverie, is difficult to sustain.

The man's look, intelligent and aware, also compels viewers to contend with him as a thinking, feeling individual, which in turn necessitates acknowledgement of everything that is wrong about him in relation to his environment: his coarseness, his frailty, and his half-angry resignation. Period critics were quick to note the sitter's enervated aspect, and some writers even remarked on the contrast between the figure and the great history evoked by his surroundings. As one commentator put it, 'amid the resuscitated splendor [of the Brouwershuis], [sits] an old man, leaning, his head bowed … with his tired clothing and his gray felt hat, he seems like a ghost, a wan and feeble phantom of long-gone days'.[50] In this disjunction lies a stark assertion of an unbridgeable gulf between Antwerp as it once was, and as it existed in De Braekeleer's era. The city's population appears unwilling and/or unable to assume the mantle of a heritage grown alien and constraining.

It is perhaps a measure of the challenge to cultural orthodoxy posed by *The Man in the Chair* that, aside from Demolder, period critics refused to acknowledge the sitter's gaze. They described the man as asleep and daydreaming, characterizations that defused the

implications of his expression and restored the painting's capacity to facilitate a meditative immersion in the past.[51] This reaction is not surprising. Nineteenth-century Belgium defined itself in relation to its newly claimed history and customs. In this context, it was perhaps unthinkable that an artist would portray the communal heritage as incommensurate with contemporary life. Such a portrayal would mean that the nation's worst fears were realized: Belgium was adrift in modernity without a spiritual and moral compass. *The Man in the Chair* challenged the central fiction of Belgian nationalism—a flawless and ever-vital heritage.

De Braekeleer's representation of Flemish tradition was thus profoundly conflicted. In some of his paintings, the past appears as a source of inspiration and consolation, but in others a breach emerges between nineteenth-century Belgium and the historic patrimony it sought to claim. His figures appear indifferent or unequal to the magic of the beautiful relics that surround them. It is as if the artist was unable to resist the fantasy of reviving Antwerp's Golden Age, but was at the same time acutely sensitive to the impossibilities of attaining the dream. The blend of nostalgia and anxiety present in his work resonated deeply with the uncertainties felt within Belgian society, and voiced by some of its leading writers. In our own time, his paintings serve as compelling examples of the intricacy, and sheer potency, of the concept of revival in nineteenth-century Europe.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

This essay is adapted from my dissertation: Alison Hokanson, 'The Soul of Solemn Places: The Interior Scenes of Henri De Braekeleer (1840–1888)' (PhD diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 2013), chap. 3 and 4.

1.   On the artist see Herwig Todts, *Henri De Braekeleer (1840–1888)* (Antwerp: Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, 1988).

2.   Amy F. Ogata, *Art Nouveau and the Social Vision of Modern Living. Belgian Artists in a European Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 8–20.

3.   Hokanson, 'The Soul of Solemn Places', chap. 3.

4.   De Braekeleer's core patrons were a mix of upper-middle-class professionals and cutting-edge critics. He worked on contract for the dealer Gustave Coûteaux (1815–73) and his family from 1869 until 1876, the period in which several of the paintings discussed in this essay were made. Although the extent of De Braekeleer's control over his subject matter during this period is debated, I interpret the evidence as indicating a good degree of creative freedom. See Hokanson, 'The Soul of Solemn Places', pp. 7–8.

5.   Alfred Edward Willis, 'Flemish Renaissance Revival in Belgian Architecture (1830–1930)' (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1984), pp. 109–10, 155–7; 373–4; Paul Verbraeken et al., *Après & d'après Van Dyck. La récupération romantique au XIXe siècle* (Antwerp: Hessenhuis, 1999), pp. 17–67; Jan Dirk Baetens, '(In) the Spirit of the Time: Imitation of Epochal Style in Nineteenth-Century French and Belgian Art', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 33:3 (2011).

6.   Ogata, *Art Nouveau*, pp. 2–5.

7.   Ogata, *Art Nouveau*, pp. 8–20.

8.   See note 7.

9.   Lut Pil, 'The Metropolis Reviewed: The Creation of a Golden Age', in Jan Van der Stock (ed.), *Antwerp, Story of A Metropolis. 16th-17th Century* (Ghent: Snoeck-Ducaju & Zoon, 1993), pp. 129–37; Stephen Goddard, 'Investigating and Celebrating the 'Golden Age' in Nineteenth-Century Antwerp: 1854–1894', in Laurinda S. Dixon (ed.), *In Detail: New Studies of Northern Renaissance Art in Honor of Walter S. Gibson*, (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1998), pp. 151–64.

10.   Ogata, *Art Nouveau*, p. 1; Inge Bertels, 'Building the City: Antwerp 1819–1880' (PhD diss., Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven, Belgium, 2008).

11.   Hokanson, 'The Soul of Solemn Places', pp. 188–9, 206–7.

12.   Willis, 'Flemish Renaissance', pp. 18–20, 74–6, 95–6, 155–7; Jos Vandenbreeden and Françoise Dierkens-Aubry, *The 19th Century in Belgium: Architecture and Interior Design* (Tielt, Belgium: Lannoo, 1994), pp. 121–46.

13.   Willis, 'Flemish Renaissance', pp. 42–5, 70–3; Lode Wils, 'The Capital of the Flemish Movement', in Karel van Isacker and Raymond van Uytven (eds.), *Antwerp: Twelve Centuries of History and Culture* (Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 1986), pp. 314–21.

14.   Pierre Génard, 'De Wooning des Heeren H. Leys', *De Vlaamsche School* (1859): pp. 81–2; Todts, *Henri De Braekeleer*, pp. 104–5. The house was demolished in 1894.

15.   Willis, 'Flemish Renaissance', pp. 42–5; Vandenbreeden and Dierkens-Aubry, *19th Century*, p. 190. Although the dining room was actually a mish-mash of period styles, Willis argues that the overarching mode was that of sixteenth-century revival.

16.   Stephen Bann, *The Clothing of Clio* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 26–7, 56–7.

17.   Génard, 'De Wooning', p. 82.

18.   Todts, *Henri De Braekeleer*, p. 104.

19.   Frans Grijzenhout, 'Empty Places: Historic Houses and National Memory', in Rosanna Pavoni (ed.), *Historic House Museums as Witnesses of National and Local Identities* (Paris: ICOM, 2003), p. 28, argues that uninhabited historic interiors offer a clean slate for the projection of memories and fantasies.

20.   Walther Vanbeselaere, 'Henri De Braekeleer', *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerpen* (1941): p. 110.

21.   Pol de Mont, 'Hendrik de Braekeleer', *De Portefeuille* 10 (28 July 1888): p. 61.

22.   See Baetens, '(In) the Spirit of the Time'.

23.   John H. Stubbs and Emily G. Makas, *Architecture Conservation in Europe and the Americas* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), p. xv.

24.   Thomas Coomans, 'Restauration et Conservation', in Anne van Loo (ed.), *Dictionnaire de l'architecture en Belgique de 1830 à nos jours* (Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 2003), pp. 274–81; Stubbs and Makas, *Architecture Conservation*, pp. 112–15.

25.   Camille Lemonnier, 'La Belgique. Anvers', *Le Tour du Monde* 64 (1882): pp. 158–9; Bann, *Clothing*, chap. 3–4; David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 148–159, 164–82, 244–8, 391–406.

26.   J.B. van Mol, *Anvers (Guide)* (Antwerp: Van Mol, 1874), p. 231; see also Lemonnier, 'La Belgique', pp. 156–60.

27.   Francine De Nave and Els Otte, *Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerpen* (Antwerp: Openbaar Kunstbezit in Vlaanderen, n.d.), pp. 34–5.

28.   Léon Degeorge, *La maison Plantin à Anvers* (Brussels: Callewaert, 1877), p. ii; Lode Declercq, 'Max Rooses als inspirator van de Neo-Vlaamse Renaissance', *Bulletin voor de Antwerpse Vereniging voor Bodem- en Grotonderzoek* 2 (April–May 1990): p. 38.

29.   Lemonnier, 'La Belgique', 1882, p. 157.

30.   Camille Lemonnier, 'Belgique. Quelques Heures à Anvers. Le Musée du Steen. L'Hôtel Moretus', *L'Art universel* 2 (January 15, 1875): p. 299.

31.   Lemonnier, 'La Belgique', 1882, p. 158.

32.   Lemonnier, 'La Belgique', 1882, p. 160.

33.   Arnold Goffin, 'Salons d'Art: L'Exposition Leys-De Braekeleer', *Revue Générale* 41 (September 1905): p. 343.

34.   Maurice Gilliams, 'Inleiding tot de idee Henri De Braekeleer (1936–1939)', in *Vita Brevis: Verzamelde Werken*, vol. 3 (Antwerp: C. de Vries-Brouwers, 1958), pp. 197–8; Paul Haesaerts, *Henri De Braekeleer* (Brussels: Editions du Cercle d'Art, 1943), pp. 18–23.

35.   Camille Lemonnier, 'Un coin du Salon d'Anvers', *L'Art universel* 1 (15 September 1873): p. 128.

36.   Camille Lemonnier, *Histoire des Beaux-Arts en Belgique* (Brussels: M. Weissenbruch, 1881), pp. 209–10.

37.   Richard G. Olson, *Science and Scientism in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008), chap. 10.

38.   Lemonnier, *Histoire*, p. 209.

39.   Douglas Druick, 'Framing the Little Dancer Aged Fourteen', in Richard Kendall, Douglas Druick, and Arthur Beale, *Degas and the Little Dancer* (Omaha, NE: Joslyn Art Museum, 1998), pp. 77–96.

40.   Camille Lemonnier, *Nos flamands* (Brussels: Rozez, 1869), pp. 2–5, quotation from p. 3.

41.   Martha Lucy, 'Cormon's *Cain* and the Problem of the Prehistoric Body', *Oxford Art Journal* 25 (2002): pp. 107–26.

42.   Druick, 'Framing', p. 86; Lucy, 'Cormon's *Cain*', p. 115.

43.   Lucy, 'Cormon's *Cain*', pp. 113–19.

44.   Hokanson, 'The Soul of Solemn Places', p. 280.

45.   *Catalogue de la Fresque et des Tableaux, Esquisses, Aquarelles, Dessins composant L'Atelier Leys, December 19–23, 1893* (Brussels: J. et A. Le Roy, Frères, 1893), under 'Livres, Gravures, Eaux-fortes'.

46.   Mark-Edo Tralbaut, *De Braekeleeriana* (Antwerp: Gemeentebestuur van de Stad Antwerpen, 1972), pp. 166–9, 197–8.

47.   Lemonnier, 'La Belgique', 1882, p. 144; Frans Smekens, *La Maison des Brasseurs*, 2nd edn (Antwerp: Musées d'Archaéologie, 1983), esp. pp. 33–40.

48.   An eighteenth-century statue of Saint Arnold, patron saint of beer makers, and a sketch for Antonio Pelligrini's *The Four Elements of the Brewers* (c. 1716).

49.   Eugène Demolder, *Trois Contemporains: Henri de Braekeleer [sic], Constantin Meunier, Félicien Rops* (Brussels: Edmond Deman, 1901), p. 28.

50.   Goffin, 'Salons d'Art', p. 346. See also Ernest Verlant, 'Henri De Braekeleer', *La Jeune Belgique* 11 (February 1892), pp. 110–11; Demolder, *Trois Contemporains*, pp. 27–8. Demolder perceived a discrepancy between the sitter and his surroundings but concluded that the 'magic of the decor and the glorious daylight' endowed the man with 'the majesty of an oriental emperor meditating on his throne'.

51.   Hokanson, 'The Soul of Solemn Places', p. 289.

CHAPTER 8

ARMENIAN ARCHITECTS AND 'OTHER' REVIVALISM

ALYSON WHARTON

Nineteenth and early-twentieth century architecture was dominated by the 'battle of the styles'.[1] Styles were determined by their ornament: John Ruskin wrote ornament 'is the principal part of architecture' and the Gothic was chosen by George Gilbert Scott because of its principle 'to decorate construction'.[2] Modernists such as Nikolaus Pevsner saw this as a negative development, he described works as: 'crude, vulgar and overloaded with ornament'.[3] Recent studies have been more positive, drawing attention to revivalism as an exploration of the way that architecture conveys meaning and how Romantic Rationalists like Henri Labrouste and Léon Vaudoyer 'understood polychromy as a clothing of a structural skeleton with objects, inscriptions, and scenes communicating the building's social function and history'.[4] Revivalism in non-western contexts continues to be described as the importation of western modes: in the Ottoman Empire 'architectural pluralism' and 'orientalist' styles.[5] The complexity of the experience that lay behind this revivalism and its local meaning has been ignored. This essay looks to Armenian architects who participated in revivalism, refashioning it to Constantinople, the Diaspora or Soviet Yerevan. It puts forward the notion that their revivalism was the reflection of two factors. First, they were exposed to a European education which gave them practical and intellectual tools. Second, they were part of cosmopolitan networks that extended from the Empire to Europe, through which ideas were circulated.

The architects that are the focus of this study: Nigoǧos and Serkis Balyan, Léon Nafilyan, and Léon Gurekian, although all born in Constantinople, worked in different times and settings. The Balyan family were architects to the sultans in the nineteenth century. Nafilyan spent most of his working life in the 1920s and 30s in Paris. Gurekian moved to Italy in the early twentieth century. Despite disparate environments, these architects developed revivalism using similar methods and approaches. Their styles referenced historical models that depended on their setting, but were united in their syncretic nature. The persistence of this approach, uniting architects across time, stands in contrast to national styles, whose development has been emphasized. Instead the methodology of these architects reflects their attachment to cosmopolitan networks, despite rising national affiliations.

Circulation of foreign peoples and objects led to openness to others and other cultures.[6] This movement of foreign nonhumans and humans converged to create a transnational public.[7] Cosmopolitanism was a mindset, enabling people to think past their identities and activities and to cross boundaries to participate in those of others.[8] It was an antidote to Nationalism because it did not view identity as defined by national borders.[9]

Movements of people and things between Europe and Constantinople were documented by the foreign language press, which mentions arrivals of Europeans to the city and travel of Ottomans to Europe.[10] Advertisements sold European goods, announced theatre performances and publicised learned societies. Constantinople was, by mid century, a cosmopolitan world of shops, cafes, intellectuals, expansion of the printing press, artists and salons, with an expanded European presence.[11] Armenian architects were amongst the most mobile figures in society: the Balyans supported the theatre, travelled to Europe, and received guests such as Russian painter Ivan Ayvazovsky.[12]

The cosmopolitanism of these architects was cemented by their stays in Europe. Connections to European networks, techniques and ideas that they developed were then used in their architecture, for instance the importation of foreign goods and peoples organized for Dolmabahçe Palace (1856), the team for which was described as a 'Babel's Tower'.[13]

Openness to foreign people and things was accompanied by impenetrability. The Balyan family and Léon Nafilyan worked alongside Armenian assistants. The Balyans employed mainly local Armenian craftsmen and suppliers. Private architects such as Nafilyan received commissions from majority Armenian patrons.[14]

Nafilyan and Gurekian turned to Armenian subjects in works from the early twentieth century. Instead of showing the inevitable rise of Nationalism shattering the cosmopolitan ideal, this essay argues that these Armenian references were a continuation of the pragmatic approach, refashioning European methodology to social settings and patron's wishes.

Revivalism in architecture had two types. The first was 'Pluralism', which incorporated eclectic references.[15] Pluralism was disparaged by theorists such as Eugène Viollet-le-

Duc, who complained about 'superficially adopting certain forms without analysing them or recurring to their causes'.[16] A.W.N. Pugin expressed related views stating:

> We have Swiss cottages in a flat country; Italian villas in the coldest situations; a Turkish kremlin for a royal residence...It is hardly possible to conceive that a person, who had made the art of Architecture the least part of their study, could have committed such enormities.[17]

Viollet-le-Duc advocated the 'spirit of method', including study of historic architecture and its principles; he upheld the Gothic as his ideal.[18] He linked the Gothic with the French nation: the land of Descartes, scientific and engineering discoveries.[19] His 'national specificity in architecture' was influenced by the racist theories of Comte Arthur Gobineau.[20] In Britain, Pugin also viewed the Gothic as endowed with religious and social meaning.[21]

Revivalist architecture became part of 'imagining the nation', or the process through which a community was made to feel bonds to a territory, as opposed to religious or dynastic leadership.[22] This gave nations their own identity, fostered through traditions, museums, monuments and ceremonies.[23] The nation evolved out of modern, industrial society.[24] Nationalism began as an elite culture, spread by intellectuals and professionals.[25] It became a tool that was used by nation states. The invention of traditions was practiced by nations on a mass scale in the thirty years before the First World War; these were created in order to produce new forms of loyalty and obedience as well as defend the state's legitimacy.[26] Architecture was one tool used to foster national identity. In revivalism 'A single historical period—increasingly specific in its definition—was claimed to be the only one capable of providing models grounded in national traditions, institutions and values'.[27] This focus on the connection between architecture and nation-building remains strong for non-western geographies.

The Serbo-Byzantine movement originating from the 1840s has been read as detached from the preoccupations with aesthetics of European revivalism and mired in local political and social conditions and the desire to communicate national character.[28] The rise of a national style was a reaction against westernization.[29] This was led by intellectuals, such as archaeologist Mihailo Valtrovi, who carried out research on Serbian medieval architecture and argued that it expressed the spirit of the nation.[30] Building Byzantine-style churches in 1882–94 developed into a state-led policy, controlled by the Ministry for Building.[31] The Byzantine style was tied to the golden age of Orthodoxy, with which the state wished to be associated.[32]

A similar trajectory has been applied to the Ottoman Empire. Constantinople was flooded with European 'architectural pluralism', including an 'orientalist' style, which created 'a deep seated anxiety' among Turkish intellectuals and complaints were voiced in a text produced for the 1873 Vienna Exposition: *Usul-u Mimari-i Osmani* (The Rules of Ottoman Architecture).[33] Ottoman documents also complained of 'opening the way for a style that was neither Turkish, nor Arabic, nor Gothic'.[34] The *Usul* was the turning point

for the renewal of traditional architecture that followed. Intellectuals played the key role in producing this text, and subsequent styles were proto-national ones, conceived by Turkish architects.[35] Pre-1873 architecture, constructed by Armenians, was 'orientalist', 'pseudo-Islamic', and carried out by 'men of practice'.[36]

Looking to the educational experiences of Armenian architects can correct this impression of the dominance of 'architectural pluralism' and 'orientalist' architecture followed by the rise of nationalism. Instead the cosmopolitan movement of these architects through styles shows how architecture was characterized by 'competing visions' despite political fragmentation.[37] These architects adopted European academic techniques for building and architectural communication. Chief amongst these was revivalism. However, this was not manipulated to express national identity through archaeologically—correct historicism. Instead, a syncretic revivalism was adapted to different settings.

The Balyan family controlled Ottoman imperial works since the turn of the century, and their monopoly grew under Karapet (1800–66). His sons, Nigoğos (1826–58) and Serkis (1831–99), were educated in Paris at the Collège Sainte-Barbe, Écoles des Beaux-Arts, and Serkis entered the École Centrale. Léon Nafilyan (1870–1937) came from the generation after the Balyans. He too attended the Sainte-Barbe and graduated from the Beaux-Arts in 1905. After this he worked as a private architect in Constantinople, then Egypt and from 1917 in Paris. His works include Armenian churches, apartment blocks and institutional buildings.[38]

Léon Gurekian (1871–1950) had links not to France but to Italy; after attending the Mekhitarist (an Armenian Catholic Order) college in Venice, he was trained in Rome at the Institute of Fine Arts in 1889, graduating from the Royal School of Engineers in 1895. He left Constantinople for Bulgaria, where he lived between 1896 and 1898, and then moved back to Constantinople, finally resettling in Italy in 1907.[39] Gurekian's commissions include theatres, residences, Armenian churches, tombs and an exposition pavilion.[40]

These Armenians shared characteristics that defined their approach to architecture. They were born in Constantinople in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Within this milieu, they came from wealthy Armenian families: Nafilyan's father was doctor to Abdülhamid II, and Gurekian had connections to the Catholic Church hierarchy.[41]

A second shared characteristic is their intellectual engagement. Many of them had political involvements. Nigoğos Balyan formed the Young Armenians (or Ararat Society) in Paris with Krikor Odian and Nahapet Rusinian, who wrote the 1863 Armenian constitution. Serkis was linked to the Armenian revolutionary Hunchak Party. Gurekian worked as a journalist in Constantinople and was politically active in the Diaspora.[42]

Several of these architects were involved in the study of historical architecture. Agop Balyan toured Venice and Karapet travelled to the medieval Armenian city of Ani. A younger member of the family, Garo, wrote an architectural history.[43] Between 1910 and 1913 Gurekian travelled around archaeological sites in Italy, with a focus on Byzantine and Romanesque works, producing notebooks of drawings with the intention of studying the influence of Armenian architecture on Romanesque.[44]

Nafilyan's library shows his intellectual leanings.[45] It contained Orientalist tomes, including books on Arab, Persian, and Turkish architecture written by European authors such as Émile Prisse D'Avennes.[46] Another preoccupation was with academic and archaeological study, as shown through the works of Charles Diehl and Ernest Renan, as well as formalists Rudolf Meyer Riefstahl and Josef Strzgowky. The work of Ernest Sellière on the Comte de Gobineau and historic Aryanism, alongside the multi-volume world history, UNIVERS' *Histoire de Description de Tous Les Peuples* of 1835–60 (published in Paris, by F. Didot frères), show his interest in anthropology. This intellectual engagement shows how new ideas were circulating within this class about politics (liberalism and separatism), about archaeology (the theories of the Romanesque), anthropology and orientalism, as well as their application to art and architectural practice. The leanings of this elite were transformed by their education in Paris.

The Collège Sainte-Barbe was a private school in Paris; Nigoǧos and Serkis Balyan attended in the 1840s.[47] During this time, the school was reformed by its director Alexandre Labrouste.[48] It focused on professional preparatory classes for pupils who wished to attend governmental schools and became a popular location for Ottoman elites.[49]

The *École Préparatoire* was governed by 'the force of the scientific education', led by Labrouste and Alphonse Blanchet. Teachers were members of the Institut de France and the Polytechnique. Serkis was exposed to key elements of this scientific education; he attended the prep class for students intending to go to the Centrale, which centred on elementary mathematics (and descriptive geometry). There were also classes that gave a humanistic education: French composition, Latin translation, history, geography, German and English, and drawing.[50]

Of central importance was the drawing course. It followed the 'cours de dessin' rooted in copying antique sculptures and old master drawings and life drawing but also included architectural structures.[51] Drawing teachers during Serkis' attendance included painter Jules Ernest Panis who was teacher of Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot and friend of Tournachon Nadar (photographer to the Impressionists and Romantics), as well as student of painter Henri Lehman (student of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres and teacher of Georges Seurat and Camille Pissarro).[52]

Exposure to elite networks was a well known trait of the Sainte-Barbe: the Labrouste brothers met Léon Vaudoyer there, whose father (A-L-T Vaudoyer)'s atelier they joined and who gave them their recommendation to the Beaux-Arts.[53] Armenian-Ottomans at Sainte-Barbe included intellectuals such as Istepan Oskanyan, and diplomat Artin Dadyan.[54] In the same year as Serkis there was a Labrouste, and in 1850–1, Gustave Eiffel.[55] The guardians of Léon (the son of Nigoǧos) included M. Donon (a relative of Théophile Gautier).[56]

Exposure to the milieu of Sainte-Barbe meant some degree of contact with a key figure of Romantic architecture: Henri Labrouste (1801–75).[57] Armenian sources indicate that

Nigoğos Balyan had found favour with the Labroustes. One states: 'Baron Labrouste, the Head Master of the school, with great pride, remembers until today, his best-loved student'.[58] Others record Nigoğos travelling to Paris to learn architecture 'by attending the classes of the French architect Baron Labrouste, who was the director of the Imperial School of Fine Arts'.[59]

An obituary of Nigoğos written by his best friend Krikor Odian hints at the influence of the Labroustes on an intellectual level. It states that Nigoğos was a follower of 'the architectural school of revival/renaissance' and that he created in his works 'a very clear horizon where his beautiful imagination could fly freely'.[60] Odian adds that this was a freedom based on Rationalism and the philosophy of Descartes, which was imported into literature by Victor Hugo.[61]

The influence of Sainte-Barbe and the romanticism of the 1840s can be recognized in Nigoğos' works, such as Dolmabahçe Palace of 1856 (fig. 8.1) in Constantinople, which was built for Sultan Abdülmecid. Niğogos applied heavy carved ornament (neo-Renaissance, neo-Classical, neo-Baroque and Empire-style) to the regularized façade of this work in order to communicate the plenty of the Ottoman Empire under the reign of this reforming sultan—his imagination flying free on that clear horizon. However, Nigoğos' use of ornament was allied with a traditional Ottoman structure: the *sofa* plan of residential architecture.[62] Moreover, the ornament was gathered under the sultan's *tuğra*, his imperial monogram (fig. 8.2), signifying his sovereignty over these riches, according to Ottoman traditions for displaying power.

For Léon Nafilyan, who attended Sainte-Barbe from 1898, the school provided an important arena for entry into the Beaux-Arts. Networks had already played a part in his attendance. He was recommended by connections of his tutor at the school of St Gregory the Illuminator in Pera (Constantinople), Garabed Effendi Caracache with the publisher Charles Delagrave.[63] Nafilyan entered the Sainte-Barbe École Préparatoire in the section for students destined for the École des Beaux-Arts (and specifically the section for Architecture).[64] At the Sainte-Barbe he worked on his drawing technique, and was presented at the Beaux-Arts in 1899 by 'J. Gillet', head of the atelier.[65]

The intellectual effects of the training of the École des Beaux-Arts are easier to determine, both for Serkis Balyan, who attended *Architectes Aspirants* as a student of Rebout (this could have been either Juls or Charles Mercier, the first name is not given) and *Construction Générale* under Louis-Jules André in the 1860s,[66] and for Nafilyan, who graduated with a diploma in 1905.[67] These two Armenians assimilated the educational approach to differing degrees. Serkis Balyan gained building technique from his experience at the École Centrale in 1850. Rebout's and André's courses at the Beaux-Arts both taught skills such as descriptive geometry and building in carpentry, masonry and metalwork. However the distinction of Beaux-Arts pedagogy was its formal emphasis on the design of ornament.[68]

The backbone of the Beaux-Arts was the atelier system.[69] Students worked on drawing projects that were entered into *concours* or competitions. The Academy chose a subject (private architecture, public or religious), candidates would produce *esquisse* (sketches), and *projets rendus* (rendered projects), and these would be judged.[70] Competitions were intended to develop the 'grand art' of composition.[71] The pinnacle was the Grand Prix de Rome, for which students created work that corresponded to 'des commandes théoriques de grande échelle' (i.e. ambassadorial residences, *palais d'exposition*, operas or museums).[72]

Works by Serkis Balyan such as Beylerbeyi Palace (figs 8.3–8.5) built for Sultan Abdül-aziz in 1864 reflect the attention to drawing projects that was an integral part of Beaux-Arts education. Following on from the ornamental coating of Dolmabahçe, Beylerbeyi Palace showed intricate attention to detail that had not been seen on Ottoman architecture, which had incorporated ornament to stress the structure and was determined by rules of decorum.[73] Instead the ornamental coating of the Parisian *renouvellement décorative* can be seen.[74] Nurtured through ateliers and competitions, works such as Beylerbeyi Palace relied on ornament to win the attention of the public. This ornament communicated meanings through carved exterior surfaces and interiors with monumental paintings.[75] One key difference between Dolmabahçe and Beylerbeyi that reflects the Beaux-Arts experience (of the 1860s onwards) was a change from European-referencing ornament to a stress on medieval styles; Beylerbeyi included Moorish and Arab decoration.

In 1863–4 the Beaux-Arts *Cours Spéciaux* included theory of architecture taught by Leseueur, history of architecture taught by Lebas, and history and antiquities given by Heuzey. Amongst *Cours de L'Exercice* in 1864 was history of art taught by Viollet-le-Duc,
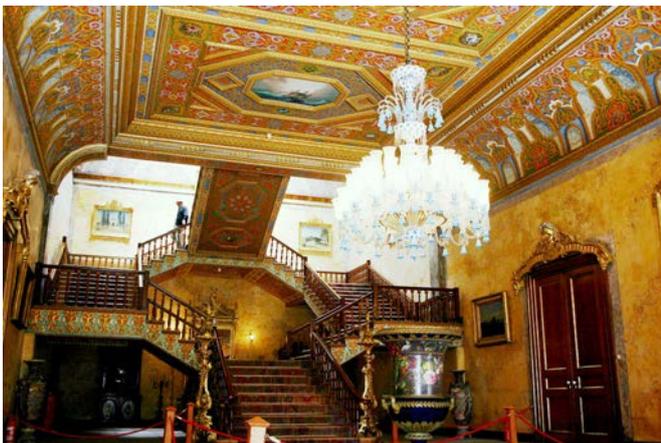
8.3
Entrance façade,
Serkis and Agop Balyan,
Beylerbeyi Palace,
Istanbul, Turkey, 1864.

8.4 and 8.5
Interior, Serkis
and Agop Balyan,
Beylerbeyi Palace,
Istanbul, Turkey, 1864.

and history and archaeology by Heuzey.[76] This move away from classical orders towards historic styles was an important shift, which characterized teaching at the time of Balyan's enrolment.

Viollet-le-Duc's course on history of art and aesthetics stemmed from his belief in the importance of archaeological discoveries, which enabled architects to see 'the points which these styles have in common, [and] how they start from the same principles'.[77] This change was met with antagonism from teachers and students and he resigned.[78] Despite this, his ideas became influential and his presence cannot have failed to make an impression.

Lucien Magne, who was successor to Viollet-le-Duc, taught a course on 'modern architecture', which included Latin, Byzantine, Gothic, Renaissance, Monastic architecture and Arab architecture as well as of China, Mexico and Peru, showing the expansion into world styles.[79] These styles were viewed in an essentialist way: on Arab architecture, Magne's outline states that 'it is byzantine [in] origin, modified by the oriental imagination, characterised by the use of the trefoil arch'.[80]

Beylerbeyi Palace, a summer palace on the Bosphorus constructed to coincide with the visit of Empress Eugenie in 1868, shows a reconfigured Ottoman identity under Abdülaziz, expressed through historical ornament. Interior rooms had painted walls in Arab and Moorish patterns, resembling designs by Owen Jones.[81] These patterns, referencing a romantic Islamic golden age (of the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates), took the place of the Renaissance, Baroque and Neoclassical references of Dolmabahçe. These patterns were accompanied by Ottoman calligraphic panels, which communicated a new Islamic emphasis: inscriptions referred to the just governance of the sultan as Caliph, and the sultan as protected and directed by God, some referred to victory and stated that the sultan 'enlightened the land like the sun'.[82]

This was not an exclusively neo-Islamic vision: naval paintings by Polish painter Stanisław Chlebowski and Ayvazovsky adorned ceilings; river-side kiosks were picturesque; an Orangery occupied the garden alongside animal sculptures and a mounted statue of Abdülaziz;[83] an indoor fountain used cutting-edge engineering techniques; and the exterior façades of the palace followed Italian Renaissance models. Furthermore, as at Dolmabahçe, the Ottoman *sofa* plan was used and the sultan's *tuğra* displayed his sovereign power.

The decoration seen in the works of Serkis Balyan for Abdülaziz, not only Beylerbeyi Palace but also Pertevniyal Valide Sultan Mosque of 1872 (figs 8.6–8.7) and Çırağan Palace of 1871 were an adaptation of the approach to 'other' historic styles taught at the Beaux-Arts. These buildings incorporated references to varied Islamic styles in one building: Moorish, Arab, Mughal, Seljuk and Ottoman. Islamic modes were used alongside Gothic and European, showing the confluence of traditions. The meaning of this ornament, although related to the thought of Magne and Viollet-le-Duc, reflected notions circulated in Constantinople.

8.6
Exterior, Serkis
and Agop Balyan,
Pertevniyal Valide
Sultan Mosque,
Istanbul, Turkey, 1872.

8.7
Interior, Serkis
and Agop Balyan,
Pertevniyal Valide
Sultan Mosque,
Istanbul, 1872.
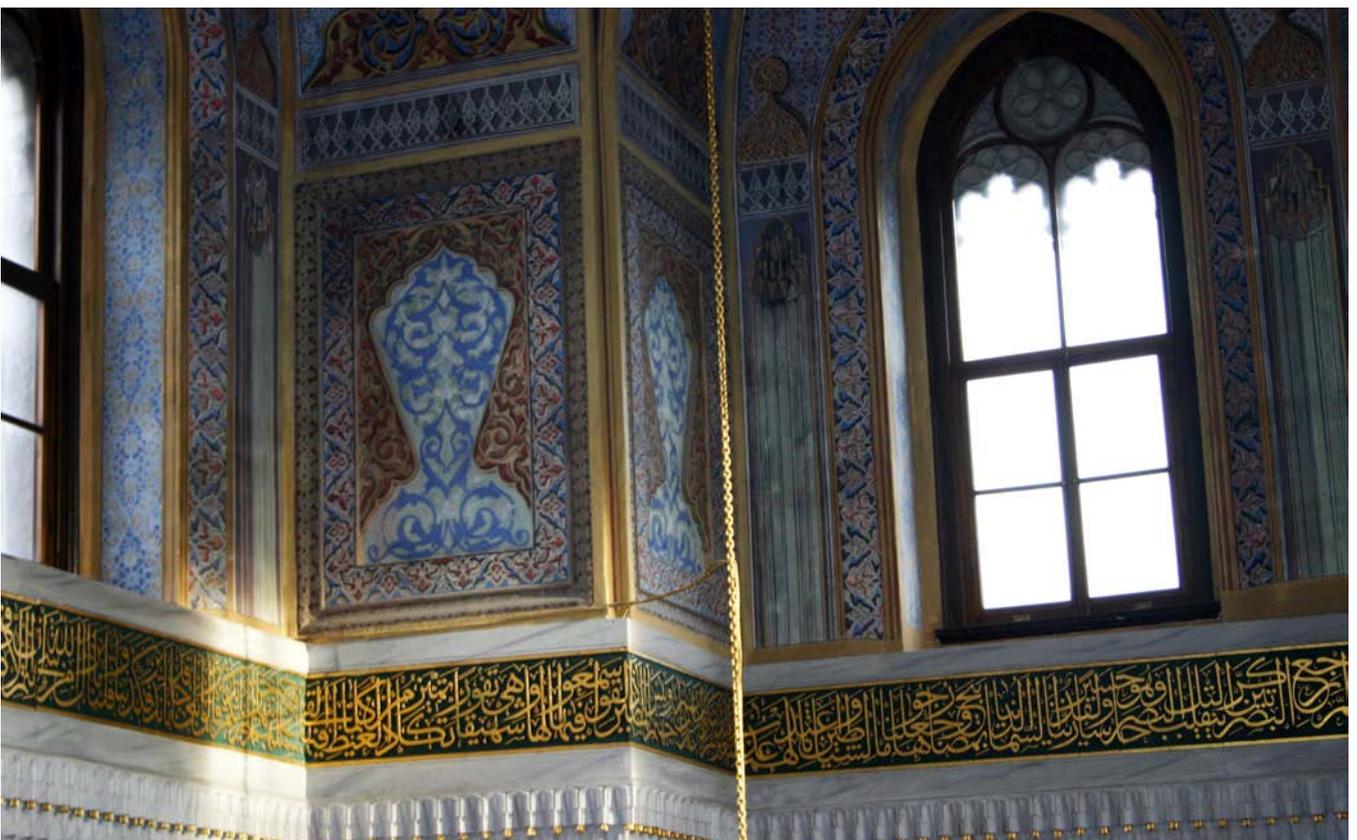
A text written by French architect-decorator Léon Parvillée—who worked on repairs to the first Ottoman capital of Bursa, contributed to the Ottoman delegations to universal expositions and to projects of the Balyan family such as Dolmabahçe Palace—sheds light on local perceptions of architecture.[84] Parvillée was a disciple of Viollet-le-Duc, who wrote the preface to the book. In this, Viollet-le-Duc argued that 'l'art turc' was in continuity with Gothic and Crusader architecture,[85] and that there was a common source of Islamic and medieval European works. The style of 'l'art turc' adopted whatever was at its disposal and was a mixture of Arab, Persian, and 'Hindu'.[86] Parvillée himself wrote that Ottoman Architecture was representative of 'mêlée aux conquérants' and the Green Mosque of Bursa was proof that Sultan Mehmed I was deserving of the title 'le gentilhomme' because Bursa resembled the pluralistic conditions of the present-day empire.[87]

Sopon Bezirdjian (1841–1915), who worked as a decorator on palaces of the Balyans, published an album of oriental designs in 1889 that further elucidates local meanings of styles.[88] He notes of the passion of Abdülaziz for palaces in 'true Oriental style' and his love for Turkish, Persian and Arabian styles. But, at the same time, Bezirdjian encourages an academic approach to Oriental Art. Bezirdjian's views are both a participation in and reaction against the inaccurate representations of the Europeans. He writes that he became aware 'during my experience in Europe' that 'when we desire to have a thorough knowledge of a nation, past or present...it is of the utmost importance...to closely examine with unprejudiced wide open eyes, and to have some familiar intercourse with the natives themselves... '.[89]

The development of an Ottoman revivalist style was fostered through international expositions of the 1860s and 70s. The Ottoman pavilion for the Torino Exposition of 1911 built by Léon Gurekian shows a neo-Ottoman mode.[90] However, it does not resemble any one Ottoman building but instead, like Parvillée's Pavillon du Bosphore for the Paris 1867 exposition, it combines features from Ottoman works in a new way.[91] The eaves are reminiscent of the pavilions of the Topkapı Palace but they crown a two-storied edifice, raised on steps; the crenulations, *mihrab*s (prayer niches) and cartouches with arabesque decoration were all seen on interior decoration but here they are on the exterior. The plan of the pavilion, in common with Parvillée's and Balyan works, follows the *sofa*. Traditional elements are revived through their unusual placement and combination with non-Ottoman elements.

Despite their eclectic approach, the architects of these pavilions sought authenticity. Parvillée aimed to mimic Ottoman architecture in his 1867 pavilion, which included a mosque and a *hamam* and was based on fieldwork in Bursa.[92] In the setting of the international expositions, the Ottoman Empire trumpeted its Islamic heritage and local traditions: Selaheddin Bey in 1867 likened Abdülaziz's visit to the exposition to Harun al-Rashid sending presents to the 'greatest monarch of the Occident'. The 1873 delegation to the Vienna Exposition included books on Ottoman costumes and architecture, promoting

local goods and indigenous traditions.[93] Yet, at the same time, participation in these expositions was a bid to 'present a respectable profile' and a 'civilised profile' on the international stage.[94] The pavilion by Gurekian corresponds to a codification of the 'Oriental' (Ottoman-Islamic) and 'modern' through revivalism.

In private commissions, Gurekian built in a range of styles: a Mannerist Church, Neo-Ottoman *yalı* (seaside residence), Swiss chalet villa, Empire-style guardhouse, Renaissance palazzo, and Art Nouveau apartment block, to name a few examples. Style was likely to reflect the demands of patrons; Armenian works could be in a Neo-Armenian style, for example the Aidinian funerary chapel, but they could also be eclectic, as seen in the Yeranuhi Kütçeyan (Keutcheyan) family tomb.

Nafilyan's works also show a confusing degree of variety. Many have a sparse Art Deco aesthetic, such as 21–25 Rue Rayonard, Paris, built 1931–4, and the Coutzi brothers' apartment in Damascus in 1937. Works that exhibit more ornament include Maison Passega on rue de Lisbonne, Paris. Nafilyan built a number of works in an Armenian historicist style. For the funerary chapel of the Kanjounzeff in Père Lachaise of 1923 (fig. 8.8) and the Church of Gregory the Illuminator in Heliopolis, Cairo (1924–7), this style, harking back to medieval Armenian models, was chosen. The Heliopolis Church implemented features of the Mother Church at Etchmiadzin, including the conical dome and distinctive bell tower. The domed hexagon of the Kanjounzeff funerary chapel incorporated medieval Armenian decorative details such as the blind arcading of Ani Cathedral and frieze of grapes from Zvartnots.

Maison Arménienne, of 1928–34, (fig. 8.9), built with the patronage of Boğos Nubar Pasha (1851–1930) also made reference to medieval Armenian churches. The carved stone provided parallels with the blind arcading of Ani, animals in roundels adorn a frieze similar to Akhtamar Holy Cross Church, and the stepped motif from Noravank can be seen.

The Armenian historicism of Nafilyan reflects two different circumstances: first, the building's function and context and second, his Beaux-Arts education. Regarding the former, the *maison* was built to encourage the growth of an Armenian intellectual class in France following the Genocide of 1915 and the Soviet Occupation of Armenia in 1920. Study of Armenian culture expanded due to excavations at Ani beginning in 1892 and Zvartnots from 1905. There was a growth in cataloguing Armenian buildings; Armenian architect Toros Toramanian asserted that Armenian architecture looked to the prototype

8.8
Exterior, Léon Nafilyan, Kanjounzeff Funerary Chapel, Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris, France, 1923.

8.9
Exterior, Léon Nafilyan, Maison Arménienne, Cité Universitaire, Paris, France, 1928–34.

of Etchmiadzin and its distinctive dome, whereas Josef Strzygowski argued that it was an Aryan style of Persian descent and the Armenian Urform.[95]

Nafilyan's choice of a historicist style looking back to the golden age of Armenian architecture should be seen in these contexts. However, his use of the domed basilica, a form despised by Strzygowski as a Mediterranean influence, indicates that he did not blindly follow the Urform.[96] Indeed, his library did not contain the work of Strzygowski, nor other books on Armenian architecture.

Instead Nafilyan's *maison* shows a syncretic approach to historical references. Tall façades with casement windows give the *maison* the regularized appearance of Beaux-Arts planning, but these windows are placed within Armenian blind arcading, which would, in medieval works, be filled with slit openings. As in the chapel and Cairo church, details of the carved decoration refer to medieval Armenian works, but, alongside these are Art Nouveau elements, such as the typeface (seen too in the Kanjounzeff chapel) of Guimard.

Turning to the role of Nafilyan's Beaux-Arts education in determining his historicism, Nafilyan graduated with a diploma in architecture in 1905 and he was thus exposed to a detailed technical education, drawing courses, projects, learning about the history of architecture and he competed in the *concours*.[97] Two of Nafilyan's projects were a French ambassadorial residence in a foreign country, and a colonial museum, showing how he had gained experience in making compositions to express identities.[98] Nafilyan was able to manipulate Beaux-Arts planning and use of historical ornament to convey meaning in Maison Arménienne, but he did not express a bombastic nationalistic identity, rather a romantic evocation of a lost age.

In contrast with the syncretic approach to revivalism of the Balyans, Gurekian and Nafilyan was the architecture of Soviet Yerevan by Alexandre Tamanyan (1878–1936). Tamanyan's works were, like the Maison Arménienne, built in a style making reference to medieval Armenian monuments like Ani and Akhtamar, but in Yerevan these were on a monumental scale that created 'a cult of patrimonial historicism'.[99] The difference in approach is highlighted by Nafilyan's sole work in Yerevan: his ophthalmology clinic built in 1930 with the patronage of Nubar Pasha (fig. 8.10). Set back from Abovyan Street, Nafilyan's clinic is modest and ornamented with small details such as Art Deco geometric window surrounds, traces of rustication and a central pediment. Sadly, the few remaining pre-Tamanyan works are being destroyed in Yerevan to make room for a new round of bombastic neo-Armenian creations, this time financed by US diasporans.

This essay has shown how Armenian architects born in Constantinople and educated in Europe adapted revivalist styles over the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They were skilled draughtsmen, polymaths who amassed libraries and carried out fieldwork in order to deepen knowledge of their craft and its academic underpinnings. However, they refashioned what they had learnt in Europe to their contexts: whether in Dolmabahçe Palace heralding the age of plenty of Abdülmecid, in Beylerbeyi Palace repo-

sitioning Abdülaziz as a ruler with rich Islamic genealogy, in the Torino pavilion asserting the value of Ottoman traditions, or in the Maison Arménienne connecting intellectuals of the Diaspora with the golden age of Armenian architecture.

This creation of architecture that spoke meaning was not commandeered into communicating a monolithic political message. Although many of these architects were politically engaged, they did not manipulate revivalism in the service of Nationalism. Even the more explicitly 'Armenian' works, such as the Maison Arménienne of Nafilyan, or the Villa Ararat of Gurekian, can be regarded not as a rally cry but as a picturesque recalling of a lost ideal.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1.   David Van Zanten, 'Architectural Composition At The Ecole Des Beaux-Arts From Charles Percier to Charles Garnier', in Arthur Drexler (ed.), *The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts* (New York; Cambridge, MA: Museum of Modern Art / distributed by MIT Press: 1977), p. 115.

2.   Nikolaus Pevsner, *Pioneers of Modern Design* (London and New York: Penguin, 1936/1991), p. 19. Pevsner cites John Ruskin, *Architecture and Painting* (London: George Allen, 1904), xii, p.83 and *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (New York: J. Wiley, 1849), p.7; and Sir George Gilbert Scott, *Remarks on Secular and Domestic Architecture* (London: John Murray, 1857), p. 221.

3.   Pevsner, *Pioneers of Modern Design*, pp.19–21.

4.   David Van Zanten, 'Architectural Polychromy: Life in Architecture', in Robin Middleton (ed.), *The Beaux-Arts and Nineteenth-Century French Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1982), p. 200. On architecture conveying meaning see Barry Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750-1890* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 140.

5.   Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul. Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1986/1993), p. 149.

6.   Ulrich Beck, *The Cosmopolitan Vision* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006).

7.   Hiro Saito, 'An Actor-Network Theory of Cosmopolitanism', *Sociological Theory* 29:2 (2011): pp. 124–149, p. 125.

8.   Ulrich Beck, 'Cosmopolitan Realism: On the Distinction Between Cosmopolitanism in Philosophy and the Social Sciences', *Global Networks* 4:2 (2004): pp. 131–56, p.153.

9.   Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995); Saito: 'An Actor-Network Theory', p. 126.

10.   Baron Haussmann met with the Ottoman Grand Vizier in 1873, *Levant Herald*, 14 February, 1873. Armenian notable Ohannes Dadyan departed to Belgium to research industry, *Journal de Constantinople*, 21 January, 1848.

11.   Sami Zubaida, 'Middle Eastern Experiences of Cosmopolitanism', in Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen (eds.), *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context and Practice* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 36–7.

12.   Pars Tuğlacı, *Ayvazovski Turkiye'de* (Istanbul: Inkılâp ve Aka 1983), pp. 53–4. On the Balyan's support of the theatre see Emre Arac, *Naum Tiyatrosu 19. Yüzyıl Istanbulu'nun Italyan Operası* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi, 2010), pp. 354–5.

13.   Miyuki Aoki, 'Leon Parvillée: Osmanlı Modernleşmesinin Eşiğinde Bir Fransız Sanatçı' (PhD diss., Istanbul Technical University, 2001), p. 119; Charles Guillaume Hornig, *Séjours et promenades à Constantinople 1860–1861* (Paris: impr. de E. Blot, 1867), p. 109.

14.   On the workforce of the Balyans see: Alyson Wharton, *Architects of Constantinople: The Balyan Family and the History of Ottoman Architecture* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), Chapter 6. On Nafilyan see: Sabine Vazieux, 'Léon Nafilyan, architecte, 1877–1937' (Université Paris IV, 1995, 2 vol. Mémoire de matrisse).

15.   Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750-1890*, pp. 140–1.

16.   Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, *Lectures on Architecture*, trans. Benjamin Bucknall (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington Crown Buildings, 1877), p. 447.

17.   Rosemary Hill, *God's Architect: Pugin and the Building of Romantic Britain* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), p. 157. Hill cites A.W.N. Pugin, *Contrasts* (Salisbury: UK: A.W.N. Pugin (self published) , 1836) pp. 301.

18.   Viollet-le-Duc: *Lectures on Architecture*, pp. 448–9. Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750–1890*, p. 225. From Viollet-le-Duc, 'Style', *Dictionnaire raisonné*, vol. 8, (1858) as translated in Barry Bergdoll (ed.), *Viollet-le-Duc: The Foundations of Architecture* (New York: G. Braziller, 1990), p. 240.

19.   Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750–1890*, p. 225. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire raisonné*, vol. 2, p. 385.

20.   Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750–1890*, p. 230.

21.   Hill, *God's Architect*, p. 116.

22.   Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983).

23.   Jessica Evans, 'Introduction', in David Boswell and Jessica Evans (eds.), *Representing the Nation: A Reader. Histories, Heritage and Museums* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 2.

24.   Anthony D. Smith, 'History and Modernity. Reflections on the theory of nationalism' in Boswell and Evans (eds), *Representing the Nation*, p. 45.

25.   Smith, 'History and Modernity', p. 57.

26.   Eric Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Traditions. Europe 1870–1914' in Boswell and Evans (eds.), *Representing the Nation*, p. 61.

27.   Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750-1890*, p. 141.

28.   Bratislav Pantelic, 'Nationalism and Architecture: The Creation of a National Style in Serbian Architecture

and its Political Implications', *Journal for the Society of Architectural Historians* 56, 1 (March 1997): pp.16-41.

29. Pantelic, 'Nationalism and Architecture', p. 19.

30. Pantelic, 'Nationalism and Architecture', p. 2.

31. Pantelic, 'Nationalism and Architecture', pp. 21–2.

32. Pantelic, 'Nationalism and Architecture', p. 23.

33. Turgut Saner, *19 Yüzyıl Istanbul Mimarlığında "Oryantalizm"* (Istanbul: Pera Turizm Yayınları, 1998). Çelik, *The Remaking*, p.149.

34. Çelik, *The Remaking*, p.150.

35. Ahmet Ersoy, 'On the Sources of the "Ottoman Renaissance": Architectural Revival and its Discourse During the Abdülaziz Era (1861–76)' (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2000); Sibel Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic* (Washington: University of Washington Press, 2001), p. 23, and pp. 27–8.

36. Bozdoğan, *Modernism*, pp. 27-8. Ersoy 'On the Sources', p.312 footnote.

37. Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750–1890*, pp.167–70.

38. *Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Centre d'archives d'architecture du XXe siècle/IFA*, Fonds Nafilyan, Léon (1877–1937). 193 Ifa, accessed 1 March, 2014, http://archiwebture.citechaillot.fr.

39. Armen Gurekian, *Léon Gurekian Architetto* (Treviso: G. S. Stampa di Asolo), 2010), p. 9.

40. Gurekian, *Léon Gurekian*, p. 10.

41. Aristakes Azarian (1821–97), the grandfather of Gurekian's wife Miriamik, was head of the Chamber of Commerce, other relatives were Armenian Catholic Patriarch and Mekhitarist Archbishop. Gurekian, *Léon Gurekian*, p. 6 and p. 10.

42. Gurekian, *Léon Gurekian*, p.9.

43. Garo Balyan, *Yekibdos yev Arapagan Jardarabedoutiun/ L'Egypte et l'architecture arabe* (Le Caire: Z. Berberian, 1915).

44. Gurekian, *Léon Gurekian*, pps. 4, 10 and 83.

45. Hotel Drouot, *Bibliothèque Léon Nafilyan*, *Proche-Orient* (Paris: Drouot, 2000).

46. These include the two books written on Ottoman architecture in the 1870s (*L'Architecture Ottomane* (the French translation of the *Usul*) by Marie de Launay, and Léon Parvillée's *Architecture et décorations turques* of 1874).

47. Teotik, *Teotik Amenun Daretsuytsi* (Istanbul, 1921), pp. 256–67. 'Ballian' is listed in a register from 1848–49, which was Serkis, who travelled to Paris in 1848 (Nigoğos returned to Constantinople in 1845 or 1846). Archives de Paris, D.50Z, article no. 385, 1848–9.

48. J. Quicherat, *Histoire De Sainte-Barbe. Collège, Communauté, Institution* (Paris: Librairie de L. Hachette Et Cie, 1864), vol. 3, p. 241.

49. Quicherat, *Histoire De Sainte-Barbe*, vol. 3, p. 298.

50. Archives de Paris, D.50Z/107, booklet dated Nov 15, 1845.

51. Brigitte Lainé, *Dessins d'élèves du collège Sainte-Barbe, 1849–1855* (Paris: Archives de Paris, 2007).

52. Archives de Paris, D.11J/130, c.1850.

53. Marc Le Coeur, 'An Architect of Silence' in Barry Bergdoll et al (eds.), *Henri Labrouste: Structure Brought to Light* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2013), p. 44.

54. Edouard Nouvel, *Le Collège Sainte-Barbe, La Vie d'un Collège Parisien de Charles VII à nos jours* (Paris: Le Collège Sainte-Barbe, 1948), p. 93.

55. Archives de Paris, D.50Z/385, 1848–49. David Harvie, *Eiffel, the Genius who Reinvented Himself* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton, 2006), p. 7.

56. Archives de Paris, D50Z/6. Dated 25 and 26 October, 23 November, 23 December, 1873.

57. Louis Thérèse and David Penanrun, *Les Architectes Elèves De L'Ecole des Beaux Arts 1793–1907 Pars David De Penanrun Roux Et Delaire Architectes, Anciens Elèves, Préface De Charles Garnier* (Paris: Imprimerie Chaix, 1895/1907), p. 183.

58. *Meğu*, March 10 1858, Special Issue on Nigoğos Balyan by Krikor Odian, p. 5.

59. *Masis* 1858 issue 319.

60. *Meğu*, March 10 1858, p. 4.

61. *Meğu*, March 10 1858, p. 4.

62. The *sofa* plan was a central space with jutting side spaces (known as *iwan*). Sedat Hakkı Eldem, *Türk Evi Plan Tipleri* (Istanbul: Istanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, Mimarlık Fakültesi, 1954).

63. Archives de Paris, D50Z/81 Student dossier of Léon Nafilyan.

64. Archives de Paris, D50Z/81

65. Archives Nationales, AJ 52*409 dossier d'élèves

1901–1910 p. 4. no. 5153 du registre matricule, feuille de renseignements, section d'architecture, Léon Nafilyan.

66.   Armenian sources state that Serkis Balyan attended the Beaux-Arts. Rahip Yeprem Boğosyan, *Balyan Kertasdanı* (Vienna: Mekhitaryan Tparan, 1981), p. 178. Serkis applied to the Beaux-Arts in 1849 and then later registered in some classes. Archives Nationales, AJ/52/917, 1849. Archives Nationales, AJ/52/161 contains the classes from 1860 and 1864.

67.   Archives Nationales, AJ/52*/171 Diplômes d'architecture procès verbaux des séances de la commission d'examen.

68.   Archives Nationales, AJ/52/161.

69.   Richard Chafee, 'The Teaching of Architecture at the Ecole Des Beaux-Arts', in Drexler (ed.), *The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts* p. 82.

70.   Annie Jacques, 'Introduction', in Annie Jacques and Riichi Miyaké, *Les Dessins D'Architecture De L'Ecole Des Beaux-Arts* (Paris: Arthaud, 1988), p. 8.

71.   Jacques, 'Introduction', p. 7.

72.   Jacques, 'Introduction', p. 8.

73.   Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (London: Reaktion, 2005), pp. 115–24.

74.   François Loyer, *Histoire de l'Architecture Française. De la Révolution à nos jours* (Paris: Mengès/Editions du patrimoine, 1999), p. 119.

75.   David Van Zanth, *Building Paris. Architectural Institutions and the Transformation of the French Capital 1830–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 105.

76.   Archives Nationales, AJ/52/39, Prospectus for 1863–64.

77.   Viollet-le-Duc, *Lectures*, p. 388.

78.   Riichi Miyaké, 'L'ideologie des Beaux-Arts' in Annie Jacques and Riichi Miyaké, *Les Dessins D'Architecture*, p. 14.

79.   Magne's course, 1900, Archives Nationales, AJ/52/41.

80.   Archives Nationales, AJ/52/41.

81.   Turgut Saner, *19. Yüzyıl Istanbul Mimarlığında 'Oryantalizm'* (Istanbul: Pera Turizm Yayınları, 1998); Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu,'Continuity and Change in Nineteenth-Century Istanbul: Sultan Abdülaziz and the Beylerbeyi Palace', in Doris Behrens Abouseif and Stephen Vernoit (eds.), *Islamic Art in the Nineteenth Century: Tradition, Innovation and Eclecticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 57–89.

82.   Yenişehirlioğlu, 'Continuity and Change', p. 75.

83.   Klaus Kreiser, 'Public Monuments in Turkey and Egypt 1840-1916', *Muqarnas* 14 (1997): p.108.

84.   Léon Parvillée, *L'Architecture et Decorations Turques* (Paris: Ve A. Morel, 1874), p.15. See also Miyuki Aoki-Girardelli, 'A Parisian in Istanbul: Ambivalent Perceptions of Leon Parvillée', in Géza Dávid and Ibolya Gerelyes (eds), *Thirteenth International Congress of Turkish Art* (Budapest: Hungarian National Museum, 2009), p. 84

85.   Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, 'Preface', in Léon Parvillée, p.iii.

86.   Viollet-le-Duc, 'Preface', p. iii.

87.   Parvillée, *L'Architecture*, p. 9

88.   Sopon Bezirdjian, *Albert fine art album containing finely coloured plates of original high class oriental designs, expressly designed for ornamental fine art decoration, accompanied by short notes, remarks and reflections* (London: John Heywood, 1889). See Garo Kürkman, *Osmanlı Imparatorluğunda Ermeni Ressamlar 1600-1923* (Istanbul: Matusalem Yayınları, 2004), vol. 1, pp.244-5; Kevork Pamukciyan, 'Bezirciyan (Sepon)', *Istanbul Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 5, p.2729.

89.   Bezirdjian, *Albert fine art album*, pp.1–8.

90.   For an image of the pavilion see: http://www.italyworldsfairs.org/wf_database/sources/public/249?layout=brief, accessed 1 March, 2014.

91.   For images of the pavilions of Parvillée see Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 96–108.

92.   Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, p. 107.

93.   Salaheddin Bey, *La Turquie à l'Exposition universelle de 1867* (Paris: Hachette, 1867) from Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, p. 39. Osman Hamdi and Marie DeLaunay, *Les costumes populaires de la Turquie en 1873/Elbise-i Osmaniyye* (Istanbul: The Levant Times and Shipping Gazette Press, 1873); Marie De Launay, Pietro Montani, Edhem Pasha, *L'Architecture Ottomane/Usul-u Mimari-i Osmani* (Constantinople: Imprimerie et Lithographie Centrales, 1873) .

94.   Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1909* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1998), p.154.

95.   Christina Maranci, *Medieval Armenian Architecture. Constructions of Race and Nation* (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), p. 54; p. 85–6.

96.   Maranci, *Medieval Armenian Architecture*, p. 117.

97.   Archives Nationales, AJ/52*/171 Diplômes d'ar-

chitecture procès verbaux des séances de la commission d'examen.

98. Archives Nationales, AJ/52*/409, dossier d'élèves 1901–1910, no 5153.

99. Taline Ter Minassian, 'Architecture et patrimoine à Erevan: De l'identité nationale à « l'héritage » soviétique ?', *Histoire Urbaine* 2 (2009): pp.15–48; Sébastien Jacquot, 'Monumentalités, destructions, dispositifs de remémoration en Arménie: de l'ex-territorial a Erevan', Maria Gravari-Barbas et Ioana Iosa (eds.), *Monumentalité(s) urbaine(s) aux XIXe et XXe siècles: sens, formes et enjeux* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011), pp. 80–2.

UTOPIAS

ANACHRONISM

ROSALIND MCKEVER

To revive is to raise the dead. It is by definition not a passive survival, an aspect of the past preserved in the present or tradition handed down, but an active and deliberate reanimation. To revive is to choose the dead over the living, past over present, to be willingly anachronistic. Pejorative connotations around the principles and practices of revival stem from its anachronism, its untimeliness. To be not of the present is an insult to one's contemporaries. Moreover, a lack of anchorage to just one date or era is a thorn in the historian's side, an obstacle to contextualisation, the period eye and historic narrative. However, on closer analysis, the temporalities of works of art, design and architecture are more complex than this historicist insistence upon chronology acknowledges. Indeed, embracing anachronism, or more specifically, forsaking chronology to recognize the reciprocal impact of the reviver and the revived, can reveal the timeliness of revivalism.

Those wishing to avoid anachronism's negative associations have sought alternatives in recent years, Jacques Rancière preferring '*anachronie*' and Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood using 'anachronic'.[1] Nagel and Wood's application of anachronic to the European Renaissance, so called, has been with the wider aim of identifying the anachrony of the art object in general, its projection backwards to an earlier event, image or object, and projection forwards to a later moment of viewing and interpretation; in their words: 'The work of art is a message whose sender and destination are constantly shifting'.[2] While some of Nagel and Wood's arguments rest on certain Renaissance-specific conventions about the production and reception of art, their basic principle can be adopted to overrule the tendency to associate works of art, design and architecture with a singular date, and bestow upon them a more complex, plural temporality. For the artwork that enacts a revival, therefore, it is not its anachrony that distinguishes it, but what it does with its rich temporal layers. In revival the past is not simply reproduced or repeated, it is given new life; in short, the process of revival changes that which it revives.

The effect is reciprocal and irreversible; according to Mieke Bal's concept of 'preposterous history', the act of quotation affects the interpretation of the chronologically earlier work as much as the later one, and the earlier work can never be seen again as it was before said quotation.[3] Bal's argument for the 'coevalness' of the contemporary and the historical subject overrides chronology. Bal refers to T.S. Eliot's 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' in the coinage of 'preposterous history'; Eliot's insistence of the simultaneity of artistic and literary production—that is the falsity of any perceived historical distance between a creator and their predecessors—strikes another blow against chronology, and thus for anachronism, from modernism's own present.[4]

Revivalism's timeliness, its contemporariness (to its own present) should not be underestimated. Just as the style and content of historical writing reveal the concerns of its authors, the manner in which artists, designers and architects revive the past, and indeed the past they select, are as much a reflection of their present as an attempt to connect with a different time. This gives cause to dispute the accusation that a revival is untimely or anachronistic (in a negative sense). Giorgio Agamben, drawing on the work of Roland Barthes, Walter Benjamin and Friedrich Nietzsche, has argued that contemporariness requires both proximity to and distance from the present, a 'relationship with time that adheres to it through a disjunction and an anachronism'.[5] In other words, to be timely ne-

cessitates an element of untimeliness. While, as discussed above, all artworks could be seen as disconnected from their present, as evident in this volume, revivalist works of art, design and architecture offer particularly interesting cases in the on-going project of nuancing the understanding of modernism.

It should not be forgotten that the chapters' reflection upon modernist works of art, design or architecture, and those revived, is coloured by our present interpretation of these multiple pasts. It is retroactive as well as retrospective, re-coding our understandings of these works according to contemporary concerns. In a sense, this book could be considered a revival of revivals, and thus anachronistic; but it is also timely, the recent scholarly attention to the anachronic and curatorial trend for juxtaposing the modern and contemporary with older art and architecture is wholly appropriate to the contemporary culture of *Mad Men*, vintage fashion, Lomography and ersatz speakeasies.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1.   Jacques Rancière, 'Le concept d'anachronisme et la verité de l'historien', *L'inactuel: Psyschoanalyse & Culture* 6 (1996), pp. 53–68 (pp. 63–4). Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010).

2.   Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, p. 9.

3.   Mieke Bal, *Quoting Caravaggio: Contemporary Art, Preposterous History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), see in particular pp. 1–25.

4.   T.S. Eliot, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' (1919), reprinted in *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*, (London: Methuen, 1920), pp. 42–53 (p. 44).

5.   Giorgio Agamben, 'What Is the Contemporary?', in *What Is an Apparatus? and Other Essays* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 39–54 (p. 41).

CHAPTER 9

FERRO-CONCRETE AND THE SEARCH FOR STYLE IN THE 'AMERICAN RENAISSANCE': THE CASE OF FRANKLIN WEBSTER SMITH

PHIL JACKS

9.1
Franklin Webster Smith, Villa Zorayda, St. Augustine, FL, United States of America, 1882–3. Stereoscopic photograph c. 1895, Courtesy: Robert N. Dennis Collection, New York Public Library.

Revivalism in America, long before its manifestation in architectural taste, had its roots in the religious communities of New England and in the sermons of Methodist and Baptist preachers. A.W.N. Pugin, and to a lesser extent John Ruskin, laced their predilection for Gothic style with moralistic underpinnings, and this added to the appeal of their publications across the Atlantic. The difference was that unlike their European counterparts, architectural critics in the United States could not point toward any indigenous traditions as a style worthy of revival. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the prominent architect and educator Russell Sturgis, singled out as:

> some of the most thoughtful buildings … those inspired by the semi-Spanish
> style … the missions of California and New Mexico. Inspired by those bless-
> ings of a temperate region, a steady warmth, a brilliant sun, they are most

assuredly: and yet there is originality, so much as to cause the student almost to forget the origin of their design in such work of the not very famous past. Such buildings are the hotels built in Saint Augustine about 1885 — the Ponce de Leon, in which the architecture of old Spain has been studied more carefully, the Alcazar, where the simpler appliances of Western America are more in evidence.[1]

That this should have been considered as the first glimmer of originality in American architecture is remarkable in itself. And it is hardly incidental that the figure who had indirectly set in motion this 'renaissance', Franklin Webster Smith, was a fellow Bostonian aesthete and close associate of Sturgis. His extraordinary career, which at various moments drew national attention, is today all but obscure. Indeed, his legacy is measured less by the few buildings to his credit than by his ambitious vision for the cultural efflorescence of America at the dawn of the modern era.

Born in 1826 to affluent parents in Beacon Hill and the great-grandson of a president of Harvard College, Smith soon abandoned his Brahmin upbringing.[2] Indeed, it could be said that his professional career began with one plea and ended with another. The first, a plea of 'not guilty,' took place in front of a military tribunal in the closing months of the Civil War. Although a civilian, Smith held lucrative contracts as a marine hardware supplier to the U.S. Navy, for which he had been convicted on charges of corruption and sentenced to court martial in June 1864. A delegation of influential friends in the Massachusetts congress, Charles Sumner chief among them, came to his defence and appealed directly to Abraham Lincoln. Throwing out the charges summarily, the president vowed to seek retribution on those who had perpetrated the inquest.[3] Ironically, less than a month later it was Smith himself, as one of the organizers of the Republican party in Boston, who delivered an empassioned eulogy for the slain president on the steps of Tremont Baptist Church, where he served as superintendent of the Sunday school.[4]

So began Smith's long and beleaguered encounters with the federal government. The second plea occurred on the floor of the U. S. Senate thirty-five years later. There, in 1900, Smith presented—more accurately, re-presented—his project for a complex of 'National Galleries of History and Art' to be built in Washington overlooking the Potomac. Smith had debuted the *Design and Prospectus* nine years earlier. After four trips to Europe and a second tour of Egypt in the intervening decade, he had considerably amplified the scale of the original programme. Nonetheless, on this occasion Smith's petition was quietly dismissed. His visionary plans never got beyond the drawing board, despite a tireless schedule of public lecturing around the country to drum up support. Smith died in poverty on a New Hampshire farm eleven years later. Only one small part of his grand scheme for Washington ever materialized, but that, too, met the wrecking ball in 1926. The story of

Smith's appeal for the 'aggrandizement' of the nation's capital has always been regarded as a curious interlude on the eve of the McMillan Commission and the City Beautiful movement. Likewise, his accomplishments as an early abolitionist and founder of the YMCA in Massachusetts have been largely eclipsed by the folly of his last years. Short of rescuing Smith's place in history, my interest here is to offer a different view of this architectural autodidact within the broader context of his time. On the one hand, Smith regarded the lessons of history almost as a moral imperative, one guided by the nostalgia of revivalism. On the other, his views as a social progressive and the desire to push the limits of conventional building technology were two sides of the same coin. These coincided at a critical moment, as the new material of concrete would soon change fundamentally the language of architectural form.

It was a tour through Europe in 1851, highlighted by a visit to Paxton's Crystal Palace in Kensington, that first kindled Smith's passion for architecture. 'Returning home,' he writes, 'impressions of places and objects revived with covetous yearnings for their more substantial resemblance than poor pictures of the time'.[5] So he set to making wooden models 'in the intervals of leisure from mercantile life'. It would be another thirty years before that hobby turned to full-scale buildings. Self-trained, Smith saw himself more as a reformer than revivalist. One underlying goal drove all his efforts—to bring America on par with Europe in cultural and economic terms. It was a propitious moment: by the late 1880s the fashion for Gothic Revival and Richardsonian Romanesque had reached its crest. American architecture was beginning to sink into a stylistic pluralism, or what Richard Longstreth has called an 'academic eclecticism'.[6]

At turn of the century, innovations in building technology were largely the purview of engineering journals and technical manuals. Cement and armored-concrete, under intense development on both sides of the Atlantic since the 1840s, offered a seemingly limitless potential for formal expression. Until the mid-1880s, however, it was confined for the most part to industrial purposes. We might assume that ferro-concrete came about as the solution to functional exigencies—chief among them, fireproof construction—and that the expense of labor-intensive formwork would have necessitated a streamlining of architectural forms. Yet this argument does not really hold true in those early pioneering years. Nor does it explain why the use of concrete in imitation of historical styles caught on in certain regions and not in others. This begs the question how traditions of vernacular building might have played a part in its reception.

That story begins in the 1870s during the period of post-bellum Reconstruction. Smith had recently returned from a tour of England and recruited a group of his colleagues, including Russell Sturgis, to form the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership. Manufacturing jobs had gone the way of automation. Unemployment in cities across New England was

rife. For Smith, the solution was to relocate and retool workers into what he called 'Tillage of the Earth—the Basis of All Industries'. In a series of articles printed in the *Boston Advertizer* in 1877, Smith laid out a simple business model based on a land-grant system for citizen-farmers. Noting Americans' special genius for migration, Smith cited three cities as success stories in colonization: Anaheim, California; Vineland, New Jersey and Greeley, Colorado. He was assured that the opening of the Southern Pacific railroad would yield 'a hundred repetitions of Anaheim all along the San Joaquin valley'. Already private investors were scoping sites for a large colony in Florida to commence planting of potatoes. The Board staked its futures on the southeast—'to the attractions of climate and soil, and to other advantages inviting immigration to Florida, as the future Italy of America'.[7] The following year, Smith and his Board, with the aid of Sturgis and another business associate, Cyrus Clarke, set their sights on the Cumberland Plateau in eastern Tennessee and began construction on the picturesque town of Rugby as a destination for Northern tourists.[8]

Fast-forward five years to November 1882. Smith was travelling through Andalusia when the idea came upon him of constructing a second home to escape the harsh New England winters. The location was to be St. Augustine, with its stark landscape suggestive of southern Spain. There was just one problem. 'An oriental house of wood would be an anachronism,' he recalled, 'yet there was no stone in Florida,' certainly none durable enough for masonry construction.[9] Smith was on his way through Montreux on Lake Geneva when the solution presented itself. At Vevay he observed a chateau where workers were erecting walls of rubble and bricks aggregated with cement and set into wooden forms. They were casting Grecian balusters of fine sand and cement in iron molds. By December 1883 Smith had recruited a Boston mason down to Florida to begin experimenting with a mixture of Portland cement and coquina, the local sedimentary stone of oyster-shell. Crushed to a gravel consistency, the concrete slurry was poured between ten-inch planks to form walls, each course needing a full day before pouring the next. Arches were reinforced using iron railroad bars embedded in the exterior wall the full length of the façade (20 metres). With no false modesty, Smith could proclaim: 'I saw henceforth an age of stone for St. Augustine instead of pitch-pine wood'.

St. Augustine seemed the unlikeliest of places for a building boom—a sleepy outpost of some 1500 inhabitants. A visitor in 1860 described the town as 'sadly deficient in the picturesque'.[10] By the late 1870s, however, politicians and developers were promoting St. Augustine as the 'Ancient City,' the jewel in the crown of the 'New South, … an enchanting destination that embodied the chivalry and romance of a defeated colonial Spain'.[11] Smith's novel methods showed the way to reinventing St. Augustine as an architectural showcase, what tourism brochures were touting as the Newport of the South. 'The famous and extensive constructions of concrete in this city followed,' he later recalled, 'and now it is in universal use, not only for first-class and rich buildings, but for fenceposts, sidewalks, chimney flues … and the piers beneath the poor man's cottage, formerly built of bricks

9.2
Franklin Webster
Smith, Court of Lions
from the Villa Zorayda,
St. Augustine, FL,
United States of
America, 1882–3.

from the North at double the cost'.[12] Apart from accommodating his family, he entertained visitors to the Villa Zorayda from far and wide (figs 9.1 and 9.2). Smith replicated the arabesque ornament on the walls of the Alhambra from specimens traced at the South Kensington Museum in London. Iron balustrades were copied from a Mozarabic palace in Cairo. Over the doorway read the words 'God is the only conqueror,' the motto of Mohammed Aben Alahmas, founder of the Alhambra. One critic wrote: 'the taste of the ancient Orientals has been scrupulously considered'. Another claimed the design derived from a spurious Zorayda tower in Spain. Rather the name was inspired more loosely by the Tower of the Three Princesses in Washington Irving's *Tales of the Alhambra* from 1851. Zorayda was the middle daughter of the Moorish king, El Hayzari. Thanks to the lavish volumes published by Jules Goury and Owen Jones in 1841 decorative motives from the Alhambra soon filled parlours and smoking rooms across Europe. No sooner completed, Villa Zorayda was featured in *One Hundred Artistic Homes of America* as 'the only Moorish house in America'.[13] This was a stretch by any measure. Iranistan, the home of circus impresario P.T. Barnum in Bridgeport, Connecticut, was far grander in size, though its construction
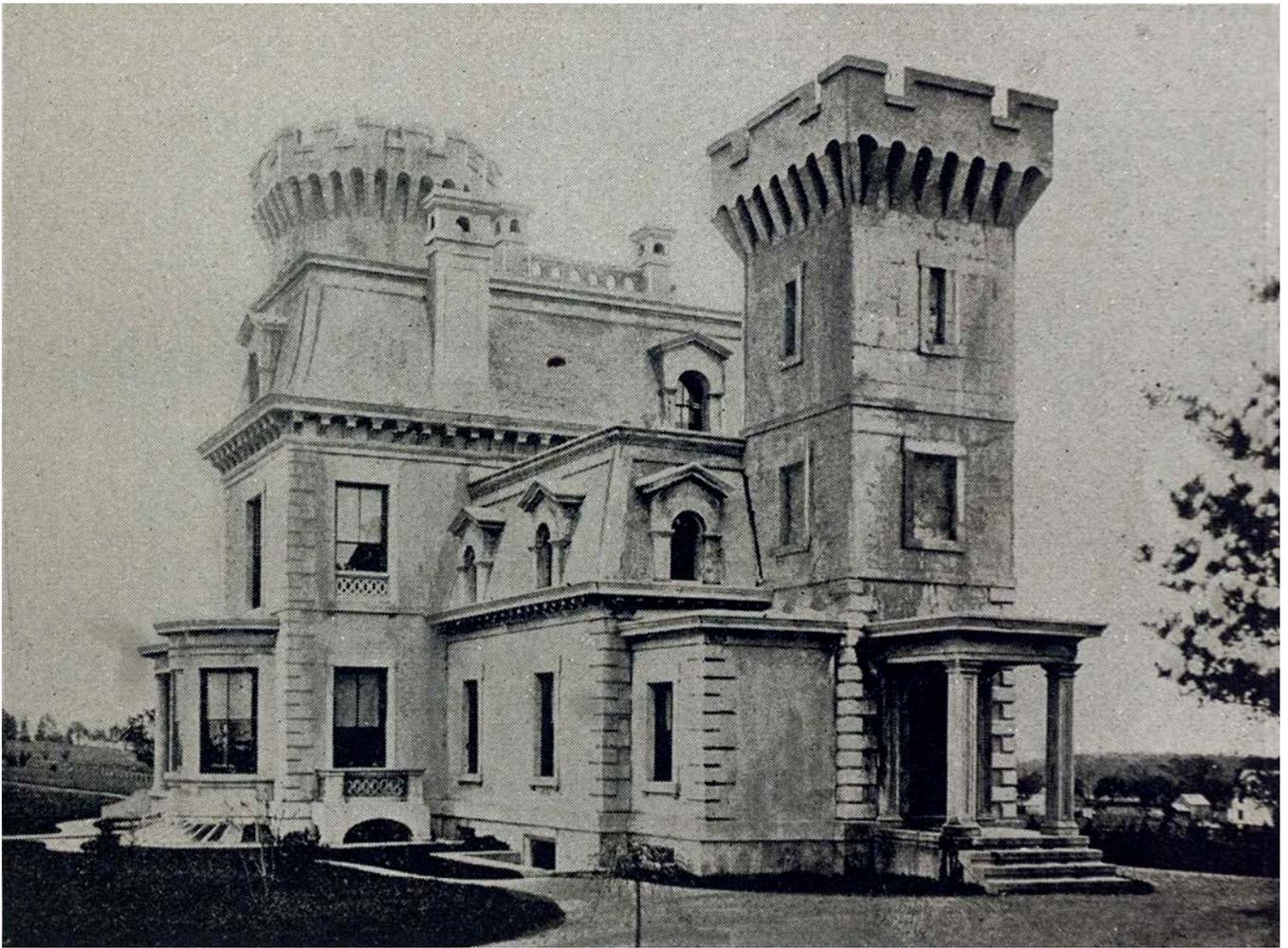
thoroughly false. It was the creation of Prague-born architect Leopold Eidlitz. Barnum had gotten the idea for this mish-mash of Moorish, Byzantine and Ottoman elements from John Nash's pavilion designed for George IV at Brighton. Erected in 1847, Iranistan lasted only ten years before it burnt to the ground. More austere, though equally exotic, was Richard Morris Hunt's Scroll and Keys at Yale University from 1869. Russell Sturgis had apprenticed in Eidlitz's New York office and would have crossed paths with Hunt at Yale, where he designed two dormitories, as well as Battell Chapel, in 1877.

There had been earlier experiments in concrete in the United States—in Cincinnati, just after the Civil War, a series of houses were constructed in courses of cement block. 'These crude structures,' noted one reporter, 'built not upon architectural lines, but upon sound constructive principles, have withstood storm and time and are still as solid as they were the day they were built'.[14] Their builder was was purportedly a Frenchman and familiar with the newest experiments of François Coignet, who in 1853 had patented a system for iron-reinforced concrete and erected a house in Paris near his family's cement plant to demonstrate the so-called Coignet-system. In America, the first concrete home of any architectural pretension was William Ward's Second-Empire mansion near Port Chester, New York, completed in 1874 (fig. 9.3). Ward, a mechanical engineer, along with the architect, Robert Mook, poured the entire building—including quoins, dormers and Mansard roof—using concrete and light iron-bar reinforcement. In 1883 Ward presented his findings to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers meeting in Cleveland. The published *Transactions* proved invaluable to Smith, who years later solicited Ward's endorsement for the National Gallery project.

9.3
Residence of William E. Ward, Port Chester, New York, United States of America, 1873–7. Photograph from Franklin Webster Smith, *A Design and Prospectus for a National Gallery of History and Art* (self-published, printed by Gibson Bros., Washington, DC: 1891).

The originality of the Villa Zorayda lay not in its formal language but in how Smith applied the new technology to a long-standing practice of vernacular building in northern Florida. Since the early eighteenth century, Spanish colonists had quarried *coquina* off Anastasia Island, crushing and mixing it with sand and clay.[15] Using wood forms they shaped the new material into adobe blocks and called it tabby, after the Spanish word *tapia*, meaning 'mud wall'. At first reserved for slave quarters and forts, tabby was eventually used for elegant private buildings, of which the Gamble Plantation in Ellenton, Florida, is one of the few surviving examples. Built in 1844, it featured 60cm thick walls composed of red brick and tabby (concrete mixture of water, oyster-shell and limestone) form the insulating skin around the mansion. Even the exterior load-bearing columns on brick footings were cast from piece-moulds.

In St. Augustine, Smith had no difficulty finding adherents to his cause—most immediately, millionaire Henry Morrison Flagler, one of the founders of Standard Oil. Flagler had first explored the city in 1878 for his convalescing wife, who soon afterward died of chronic bronchitis. He returned in 1883, this time with a young new bride, determined to transform St. Augustine into a premiere resort, the 'American Riviera'. On first encountering Smith, Flagler was taken aback by his over-zealous air—'eccentricities' he called them—but he was at once captivated by the Villa Zorayda, whose warm colors and textures seemed ideally suited to the décor of the old city. It was at that moment Flagler decided to build what would become the most luxurious hotel in America—calling it the Ponce de Leon, after the founder of St. Augustine—and to do it in concrete (fig. 9.4). Years later, Harry Harkness Flagler recalled that his father had been won over by Smith in the choice of materials.[16] He retained Smith as 'technical consultant,' while hiring two young draftsmen formerly in the employ of McKim, Mead, White. John Merven Carrère and Thomas Hastings had just returned from a stint in Europe, 'waiting until something might come our way'. Flagler requested only a 'pretty picture,' as Hastings later recalled, assuming his contractors would take it from there. Unfortunately the firm hired by Flagler, James A. McGuire and Joseph A. McDonald, had experience for the most part in shipbuilding. Carrère and Hastings carried on for three years, forced over and over to revise their working drawings as the forms were poured.[17] Although Flagler's preference was for Spanish

9.5
Franklin Webster
Smith, Casa Monica
(Hotel Cordova), St.
Augustine, FL, United
States of America,
1886–8.

Renaissance, the design can best be described as a mélange of Moorish, Italian and even French elements in a Beaux-Arts plan. For the young architects, it was a nightmare from beginning to end. Flagler, looking back years later, saw his greatest challenge in 'how to build a hotel to meet the requirements of nineteenth-century America and have it in keeping with the character of the place'.[18] Smith hadn't to worry over matters of style. He was entirely caught up in technical details, bending Flagler's ear that 'the boys' were adding too much water, the wrong aggregate or had too low a slump in the concrete.[19] Shortly after completion of the Ponce de Leon, the architects released a brochure pointing to the novelty of its construction:

> Before entering the court we must notice that the building is a monolith. A mile away, on Anastasia Island, there are quantities of tiny broken shells that you can run like sand through your fingers. Thousands of carloads of this shell deposit or coquina were brought over and then mixed with cement, six parts of shell to one of cement, the whole forming an indestructible composite. It is not exact to say that the hotel was *built*; it was *cast*. For there is not a joint in the building; the material was made on the spot, poured in [wooden forms] while still soft and rammed down three inches at a time. Thus the great building conforms in its very material to the natural conditions of the place. The coquina, found almost on the spot, was a suggestion of nature not to be overlooked, and the hotel seems far more at home than it would were it built of brown stone from Ohio.[20]

Meanwhile Smith had broken ground on his own hotel, the Casa Monica, located next to the Ponce de Leon along King Street (fig. 9.5). The exterior deferred to Flagler's pre-

dilection for Spanish Renaissance. On the west façade, the graceful combination of round and mixtilinear arcades would have brought to mind Plateresque monuments of Castille, such as the monastic cloister of San Tomás at Ávila. The construction in Roman concrete was sound enough, but financially the Casa Monica was a complete fiasco. The day it opened in 1888, only three guests were registered. Five years later Flagler took over management under the new name of Hotel Cordova, but even he couldn't turn a profit. After his death, it was eventually converted as a municipal prison.

Flagler rewarded Carrère and Hastings with two other commissions before leaving St. Augustine for good: the Alcazar and Grace Episcopal Church, both constructed in concrete and both designed loosely in Spanish Renaissance revival. Of more particular interest, as regards Smith, was the rebuilding of the cathedral after a disastrous fire. This was also almost certainly at Flagler's behest, as no one else could have commanded so prominent an architect for the job, namely, James Renwick Jr., who had come to vacation in St. Augustine with his wife as guests of the Ponce de Leon. His design of the bell-tower marked the first and only time Renwick would venture into a Renaissance idiom. Its classical massing draws on Italian precedents, such as Michele Sanmicheli's campanile for the Duomo of Verona.

In 1888 Smith embarked on a tour of the ruins at Pompeii and Herculaneum, which was to be the inspiration for a new summer home, the Pompeia in Saratoga Springs, completed the following year. As a young man he had visited the Pompeian Court of Sir Digby Wyatt at the Crystal Palace, which in retrospect seemed to him 'unworthy even of the name'. The Pompeia was purported a replica of the House of Pansa, though the architecture borrowed liberally from various Pompeian houses (fig. 9.6). The exterior walls, pavement and interior columns were poured-in-place concrete, all the rest stucco and plaster.[21] Classical busts, vases, even a bronze tripod filled each of the rooms. Smith had meticulous reproductions made of furniture and statues after plaster casts of statues in the Museo Archeologico in Naples, while dispatching from Paris the classically-trained painters, Pascal and Bernard, to copy Pompeian murals on site (fig. 9.7). Although the Pompeia could hardly be considered a faithful replica of an ancient *domus*, it more than fulfilled Smith's ambition to introduce, or rather inculcate, the religious and social mores of the Romans to American audiences. The Pompeia opened its doors during winter months, attracting some 24,000 in the first year alone, including a delegation of 'young ladies of Vassar College, with their zealous professors' to be edified for the day. On another occasion, a group of Presbyterians indulged in a lavish repast, lounging on couches in the triclinium to imagine how the apostles and Christ would have dined at the Last Supper.[22]

In fact, this was just the prologue to a more far-reaching scheme Smith had been contemplating over many years. In April 1890 Renwick attended a lecture by Smith in St. Augustine for the planning of a national museum on the outskirts of Washington. Renwick

9.6
Franklin Webster
Smith, Pompeia,
Saratoga Springs,
NY, United States of
America, 1887–8.

9.7
Franklin Webster
Smith, Atrium of the
Pompeia, Saratoga
Springs, NY, United
States of America,
1887–8.
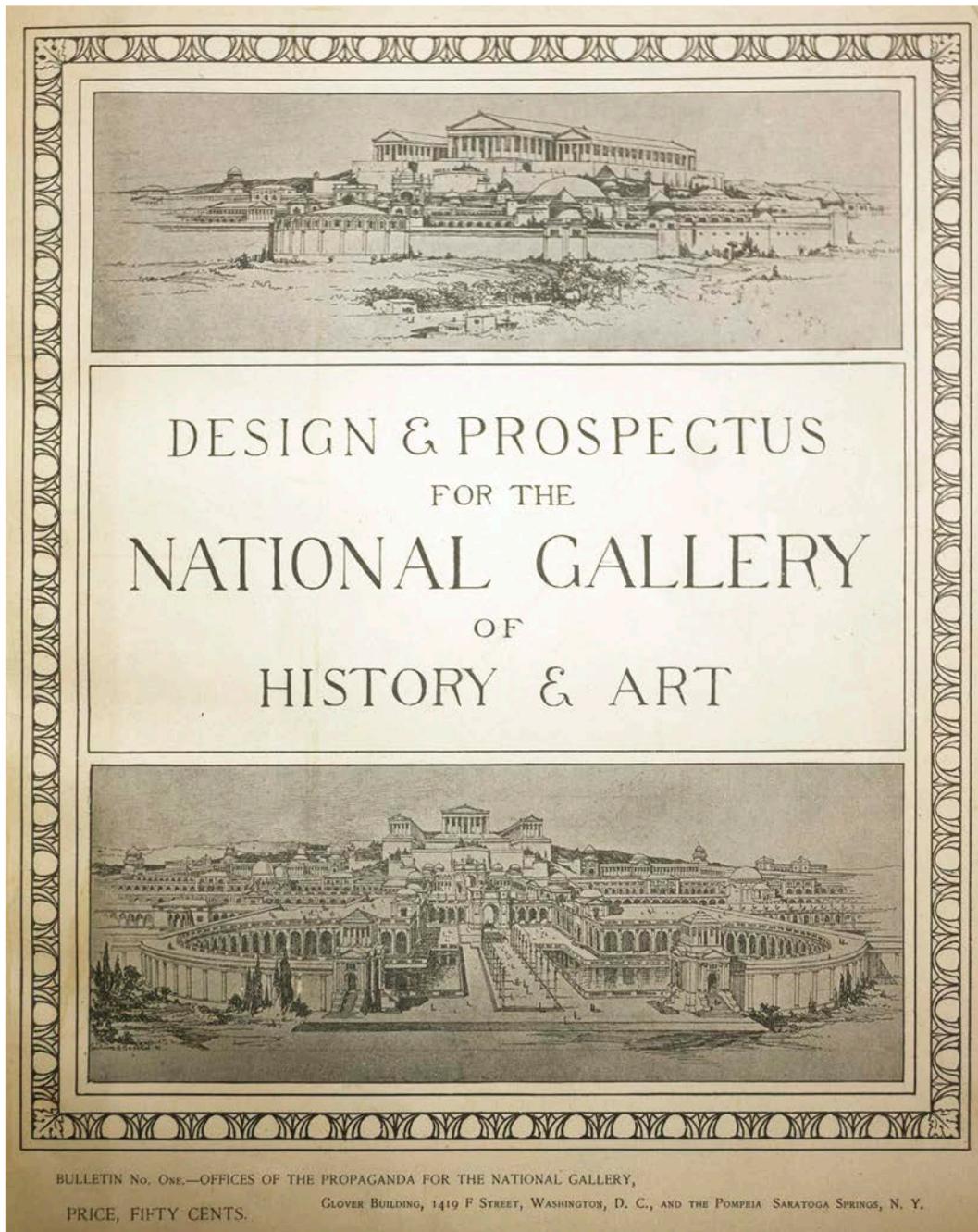
9.8
Franklin Webster
Smith, Frontispiece for
*A Design & Prospectus
for the National Gallery
of History & Art* (self-
published, printed by
Gibson Bros., Washing-
ton, DC: 1891).

listened 'with a responsive interest' and was sufficiently persuaded of the project's merits
that he placed the New York office of Renwick, Aspinwall, Russell at Smith's disposal—all
gratis.[23] In a short six months, they produced plans and perspectives from his specifica-
tions. Smith first aired his proposal in a briefing before the Congressional Press Corre-
spondents in December 1890. To his surprise, the secretary of the Washington Board of
Trade proposed the grounds of the Naval Observatory as the optimal site for the proposed
museum. This same real estate, it so happens, had been under discussion since 1888 for
Washington's bid to host the upcoming Columbian Exposition. Smith's book, *A Design
and Prospectus for a National Gallery of History and Art*, appeared in May 1891 (fig. 9.8). No
small wonder, given the circumstances, that Smith chose to place a Monument to Colum-
bus at the summit of the museum complex. Bertram Goodhue, then a young apprentice in
Renwick's office, rendered the frontispiece. Smith claimed his inspiration was the Temple
of Jupiter Capitolinus in Rome with its terraced substructures, but there was no mistaking
the source for the immense atrium in the foreground—Gian Lorenzo Bernini's colonnades

of St. Peter's, widely popularized through the panoramic *vedute* of Giovanni Battista Piranesi and Luigi Rossini.

Among the notables Smith enlisted to his cause was William Story, an expatriate sculptor assigned as U. S. Commissioner to the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1878. His report was a stinging indictment of America's cultural impoverishment: 'How can we expect to take rank with the great nations of Europe when neither our nation itself nor any State or city in the Union possesses a gallery of art of which any second-rate government in Europe would not be ashamed?'[24] Ironically most Washingtonians at the turn of the century seemed to prefer the natural expanses of the Mall to the cluster of monuments filling in around Renwick's Castle. In the desire for thrift, it was generally felt that Congress had created an architecture wanting in grandeur. The Department of Agriculture building, designed by Adolf Cluss in 1868, had few admirers. His Arts & Industry Building, similarly clad in brick, was approved by Congress in 1879 to serve as the National Museum. According to one critic, its design 'was only to be excused on the ground of its likeness in organizational character to the Smithsonian, a biscuit-toss away'.[25] As Smith argued, most if not all the great museums of Europe had been built of marble or limestone. Recognizing that cost would be a prohibitive factor, Smith hoped to quell his detractors by showing the practicality of his design and its economy of means: 'The Galleries are to be of sand-concrete, tested in the great hotels of St. Augustine, the Stanford Museum, and the House of Pansa at Saratoga, in which concrete has cost less than ordinary brickwork'. According to Renwick's estimates, construction in concrete, at $5.94 per cubic yard, would come out at nearly half the cost of brick, at $9.72. A total budget in concrete, at approximately $10 million, compared to four times that amount for marble or granite.[26] Apart from 'cheapness' there was the advantage of permanence. In San Francisco, Ernest Ransome had demonstrated the structural flexion of reinforced concrete, not just for the university museum at Stanford, but also for residential buildings, notably Sequoia Hall.[27] Renwick enthusiastically lent his endorsement to concrete, noting how he had used Béton Coignet for all the interior walls of St. Patrick's Cathedral. William Ward replied to Smith's inquiries that concrete was the only viable solution for the immense vaults, and wondered 'after the complete success of my big experiment [at Port Chester], [why] the building public are slow in adopting it more generally?'[28]

To garner supporters, Smith disseminated the *Prospectus* to members of Congress while soliciting orders from across the country. A tireless promoter, Smith proffered his plan before the Boston Art Club, the Maryland Institute of Baltimore and the Drexel Institute, culminating in December 1892 with a lecture in Washington under the patronage of Bishop Henry C. Potter, joined by other notable clerics and plutocrats, including J. Pierpont Morgan. 'Mr. Smith has a most practical and convincing address,' noted one correspondent, 'and it is doubtful if there was any one among his hearers last night who did not go away fully impressed with the feasibility of the speaker's plans, notwithstanding the stupendousness of the undertaking'.[29] By this time, as fate would have it, Washington had

No. 124.—The Roman Annex to the Halls of the Ancients, 1312, 1314, 1316, 1318 New York avenue, Washington,
The Taberna (store) displays exact replica of beautiful Greek vases and other art models for schools.

THE HALLS OF THE ANCIENTS.

Nos. 1312-14-16-18 New York Avenue, Washington.

FRANKLIN W. SMITH, ARCHITECT.   W. F. WAGNER PINXIT.
Albany Engraving Co., N. Y.

DESIGN OF THE PORTAL.

It is a reconstruction, full size, of a section of the Hypostyle Hall of Karnak,
with columns 70 feet high, 12 feet diameter.

been passed over for Chicago to host the World's Fair. Interest in Smith's project quickly faded. With little chance of government funding, he eventually found a private Maecenas in the person of Samuel Walter Woodward, who had launched a thriving department store in the Carlisle building at 10th and F Streets. Woodward gave financial backing and, more importantly, a building lot on New York Avenue, where Smith broke ground on his Hall of Ancients in 1895. The façade and vestibule were reconstructions of the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak—replete with mural paintings in neo-Egyptian style (fig. 9.9). An unexecuted design for the annex—the National Society for the Aggrandizement of Washington—took the form of ancient Roman *tabernae* (fig. 9.10). The Hall of Ancients opened its doors in 1899. Those dignitaries attending the reception included John Long, Secretary of the Navy, who was again on hand a year later, on 10 February 1900, when Smith stood on the floor of the U.S. Senate to plead his case one last time. Renwick had been dead five years. Smith brought on as advisory architects Paul Pelz, dismissed in 1892 before completion of his design for the Library of Congress, and Henry Ives Cobb, who had relocated from Washington to Chicago in 1897. That same year Woodward doubled the size of his department store and hired Cobb to redesign the façade along G Street. In place of Goodhue, Smith selected Chicago architect, Harry Dodge Jenkins, to render the frontispiece (fig. 9.11). The overall effect is more unified with a rigid linear order imposed on the site. At the summit, occupying the high ground of 24th Street, now stood an American Acropolis, with a Memorial Temple inspired by the Parthenon and dedicated to the nation's presidents and statesmen. No one could have missed the Teutonic inspiration — Leo von Klenze's Valhalla overlooking the Danube near Regensburg, commissioned by King Ludwig of Bavaria.[30]

There was again a long list of testimonials, one of which is worth noting in particular. George Oakley Totten, Jr., a Washington architect, had contributed to the Columbian Exposition in Chicago and saw the writing on the wall. To Smith he confessed: 'I believe that the day is not far distant when we shall use no materials in their natural state in the construction and ornamentation of our buildings. Natural materials were given man to use

9.9
W.F. Wagner, Elevation of the front portal of Franklin W. Smith's Hall of the Ancients on New York Avenue, Washington, DC, United States of America. From *A Design & Prospectus for the National Gallery of History & Art* (self-published, printed by Gibson Bros., Washington, DC: 1891).

9.10 Franklin Webster Smith, Elevation of the Roman Annex to the Hall of the Ancients as the 'National Society for the Aggrandizement of Washington'. From *A Design & Prospectus for the National Gallery of History & Art* (self-published, printed by Gibson Bros., Washington, DC: 1891).

until by his science and his learning he should be able to evolve something new and better. Although that day has not yet arrived the scientific use of Concrete is one of the first steps in that direction'.[31] Smith, for his part, would have conceded that the galleries were not to be judged on their architectural merit per se, but on their effectiveness as edifices. In his words: 'They are not intended for high technical art, but to create a National Educational Institution'. If concrete now offered a universal medium—one that liberated the architect from the burden of truth to materials, then it could also be seen as leading the way for America to at last express something uniquely its own. Smith could not have envisioned how this would look. But the fact that so many architects were sympathetic to his *Petition* reflected a widespread anxiety about the future of the profession.

In the years to follow, Smith's schemes languished for lack of investors. In 1905 the Hall of the Ancients faced foreclosure and in 1926 was demolished. In its place rose another monument of sorts—the Capital Garage, designed by Arthur B. Heaton as the largest parking garage in the country.[32] As for Flagler, the potential for concrete seemed limitless. He went on to lay a concrete railway viaduct spanning 154 miles from Miami to Key West. The experiments of St. Augustine, however, were never repeated for any of the grand hotels and mansions Flagler built across southern Florida—largely, it would seem, for the lack of a vernacular tradition to lend it historical context.

The lead in concrete technology had shifted to the industrial Midwest. By 1908 Chicago could boast, in the Montgomery Ward towers, the largest reinforced-concrete office building in the world. But bigness did not necessarily translate to art. In that same year Chicago's own H. Webster Tomlinson, who had briefly partnered with Frank Lloyd Wright, made this assessment. 'For the "other" medium of expression—the structure that is molded—the plastic mass—soon to become the monolith,' there was but one place to look for inspiration:

> In the California mission type we have a style that appeals to us because of the feeling shown for mass and proportion of openings to wall surface and the exquisite balance maintained in accentuating carefully molded ornament, with its play of light and shade, by being contrasted with blank wall. But this Spanish mission type is charming because it is true to its purpose—and suitable to the land of bright and excessive sunshine.[33]

These sentiments were echoed by Alfred Oscar Elzner, whose Ingalls Building in Cincinnati, when erected in 1903, was the first reinforced-concrete skyscraper in the world. In his essay, 'The Artistic Expression of Concrete', Elzner admitted that high-rises in concrete 'do not [of themselves] alter the status of our art, but leave it just what is has been from the beginning, a gravity architecture….' In the rush to a new era of concrete, it was unrealistic 'to expect designers to throw aside all tradition and make for a new style'. And

DESIGN FOR NATIONAL GALLERIES

OF HISTORY AND ART IN WASHINGTON.

PAUL J. PELZ,
HENRY IVES COBB, } ADVISORY ARCHITECTS.   FRANKLIN WEBSTER SMITH, ARCHITECT.   HARRY DODGE JENKINS PINXIT.
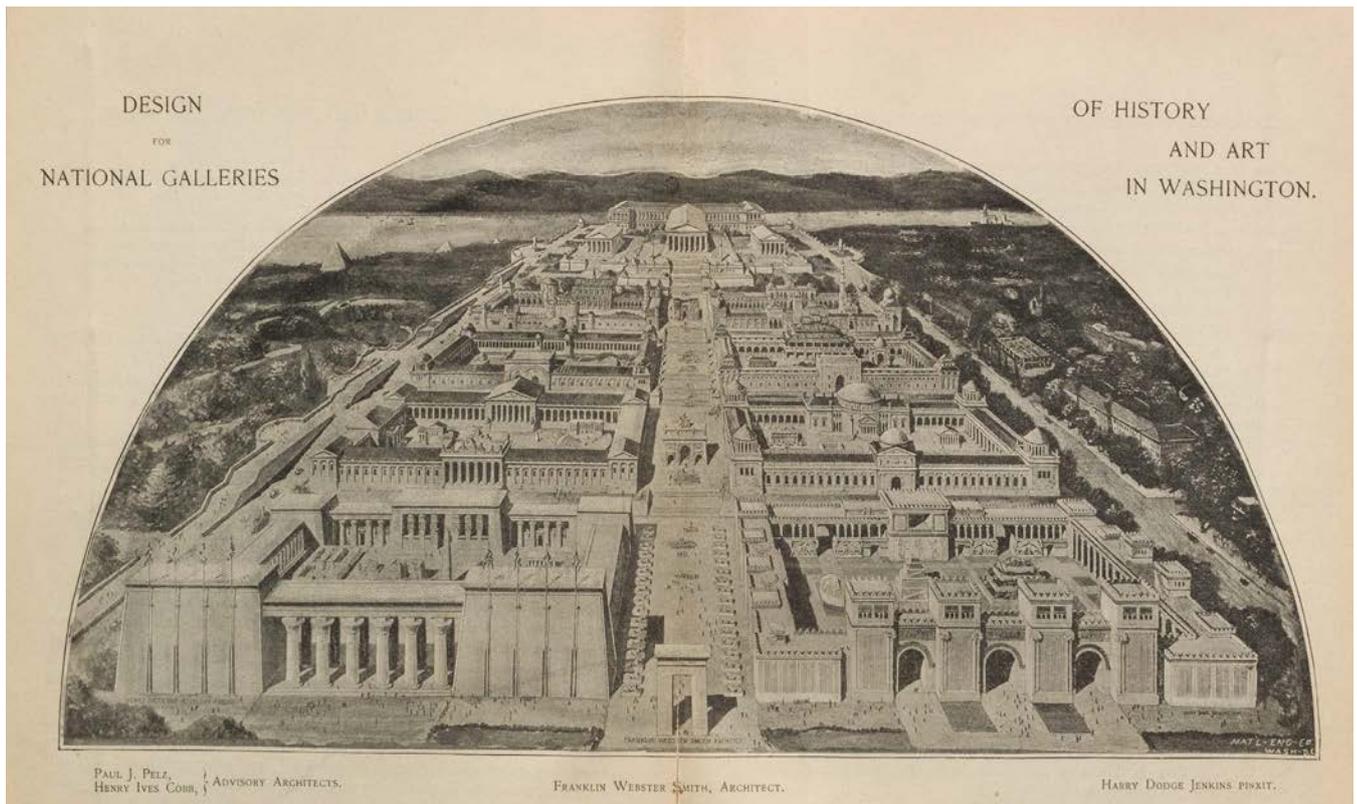
he too looked to the West. 'We cannot well resist the inspiration of the charming Spanish missions of the Pacific coast countries'.[34] Elzner found it inexplicable that even after the successes of Carrère and Hastings in St. Augustine, 'the country was so very slow to take up concrete' for domestic architecture.

Smith might have looked to southern California for the future of concrete as an artistic form. He was well acquainted with the pioneering experiments of Ransome and in 1899 had delivered a memorable lecture—in the dark, with lantern slides no less!—at the Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. The local chapter of the American Institute of Architects avidly supported his National Gallery project. But I do not want to overstate his influence on the generation of Arthur Benton, Irving Gill and Myron Hunt, who introduced the medium of concrete to their modern interpretation of mission architecture in southern California. Much as in Florida, this was a regional phenomenon. And it was as much a confection as a revival in that few colonial Spanish missions still existed in the area.[35] Even these were simpler and more sedate than the taste of the times demanded. In the case of Glenwood Mission Inn, begun in 1902, Benton and Hunt applied the ornate language of Churiguerresque Baroque to the handling of decorative elements; and it probably mattered little in principle that they had employed concrete to replace the original construction in adobe.[36] At least in Benton's mind, the essential goal was not to transcend style by forging a new method of construction but simply to preserve a part of history. In the case of Gill, however, the very nature of concrete as a new, untried medium allowed the architect to transcend the adherence to any historical style. To the critic Bertha Smith, writing in 1914, Gill had 'chosen concrete as his medium of expression. One of the oldest of building materials, used in Babylonia, Egypt and Rome, concrete is also the newest and apparently destined to universal use'.[37] The goal was nothing less than an American vernacular, something Franklin Webster Smith never could have envisioned, but one to which he contributed the first faltering steps.

9.11
Harry Dodge Jenkins, Perspective view of the National Galleries after design by Henry Ives Cobb and Franklin Webster Smith. From *Petition of Franklin Webster Smith for the Site of the Old Naval Observatory for the National Galleries of History and Art* (Washington, Government Printing Office: 1900).

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1.   Russell Sturgis, *How to Judge Architecture: A Popular Guide to the Appreciation of Buildings* (New York: The Baker & Taylor Co., 1903), pp. 209–10.

2.   Curtis Dahl, 'From Old North End to water side of Beacon: Four Boston houses of Franklin Webster Smith', *Drumlin* 2:1–2 (1977): pp. 4–7.

3.   Smith was indicted on charges of 'fraud upon the United States' and 'wilful neglect of duty as a contractor'. His pardon came in March 1865, just weeks before Lincoln's assassination. The self-authored *The Conspiracy in rhe U. S. Navy Department Against Franklin W. Smith of Boston, 1861–1865* (Boston, 1892), iii, was to record his 'memories of a personal experience during the War of the Rebellion—the full history of which was prepared more than twenty years ago to be issued in the event of my decease'.

4.   Smith, *The Conspiracy*, 95: 'The front of the platform [in Tremont Temple] was draped in mourning, and the American flag, also draped, was thrown over the pulpit. A fine portrait of President Lincoln was also placed in front of the pulpit. Franklin W. Smith, Esq. was called to preside.'

5.   *A Design & Prospectus for a National Gallery of History & Art*, self-published, printed by Gibson Bros., Washington, DC (1891), pp. 11–12.

6.   Richard W. Longstreth, 'Academic Eclecticism in American Architecture', *Winterthur Portfolio* 17:1 (1982): pp. 77–80.

7.   Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times. Agricultural Development, the True Remedy* (Boston: James R. Osgood & Co., 1877), p. 94.

8.   See Benita J. Howell, 'Franklin Webster Smith of Boston: Architect of Tourism in Rugby, Tennessee,' *Border States. Journal of the Kentucky-Tennessee American Studies Association* 14 (2003): pp. 13–18.

9.   Smith, *A Design & Prospectus*, pp. 43–4.

10.   Frederic A. Scharf, 'St. Augustine: city of artists, 1883–1885', *Antiques* 90:2 (August 1966): p. 220.

11.   Reiko Hillyer, 'The New South in the Ancient City: Flagler's St. Augustine Hotels and Sectional Reconciliation', *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 25 (2005): p. 111ff.

12.   Smith, *A Design & Prospectus*, p. 45.

13.   Charles Ledyard Norton, *A Handbook of Florida* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1891), p. 167.

14.   'Oldest Concrete Buildings', *The Cement Era* V:6 (1907): p. 172. These experimental buildings were quite likely inspired by those of François Coignet in Paris several years before: 'The owner and constructor, yet alive, is a Frenchman over 80 years old. He says he built the first one (in Cincinnati) shortly after the Civil War and that the modern cement block is the outgrowth of his idea, taken from these houses while he was busy building the second house. He claims he can remember distinctly when a party of men came to him while he was at work and inquired as to how he was making the stones for his houses'.

15.   Albert Manucy, *The Houses of St. Augustine* (St. Augustine Historical Society, 1962), p. 62, notes two types of tabby employed in the eighteenth century: *ripio* and *ostión*, both using oyster-shell concrete blocks without wood framing.

16.   In 1949, Flagler's son, Harry Harkness, wrote to Smith's daughter, Nina Smith Duryea, to acknowledge that 'my father became interested in the use of concrete with coquina for the construction of the Ponce de Leon because your father had used it with such success in building the Villa Zorayda'. Letter cited in David Nolan, Historic Properties Inventory Form, St. Augustine Preservation Board, p. 4.

17.   'A Letter from Thomas Hastings, F.A.I.A., reminiscent of the early work of Messrs. Carrère and Hastings, Architects,' *The American Architect* 60 (7 July, 1909): p. 3.

18.   Interview from 1909, cited in David Leon Chandler, *Henry Flagler—The Astonishing Life and Times of the Visionary Robber Baron Who Founded Florida* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986), p. 250. On Flagler's other projects in St. Augustine, see Thomas Graham, *Flagler's St. Augustine Hotels: The Ponce de Leon, the Alcazar, and the Casa Monica* (Sarasota: Pineapple Press, 2003).

19.   Laurie Ossman and Heather Ewing, *Carrère and Hastings: the Masterworks*, photography by Steven Brooke (New York: Rizzoli, 2011), p. 28.

20.   John M. Carrère and Thomas Hastings, *Florida The American Riviera, St. Augustine The Winter Newport: The Ponce de Leon, The Alcazar, The Casa Monica* (New York: The Art Age Press, 1887), p. 24. Thomas Graham, National Historic Landmark Nomination (1986), p. 7, notes a correspondence from McGuire to Carrère and Hastings during summer of 1885 reporting that his experimentation with concrete bricks to test their tensile and compressive strength. For a fuller discussion of the techniques employed on the Ponce de Leon, see Rafael Agapito Crespo, *Florida's First Spanish Renaissance Revival* (PhD. diss., Harvard University, 1987), 161ff.

21.   Curtis Dahl, 'A Quartet of Pompeian Pastiches', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 14:3 (1955): pp. 6–7.

22.   Franklin W. Smith, *Catalogue of The Pompeia: A Reproduction of the House of Pansa at Pompeii; buried by Vesuvius, AD 79* (New York: American Publishing, 1890).

23.   Letter from Villa Zorayda, 13 April, 1891, in Smith, *A Design and Prospectus*, p. 10.

24.   'Extracts from the Report of the U.S. Commissioner W. W. Story, Resident at Rome, on the French Exposition of 1878', in Smith, *A Design & Prospectus*, pp. 19–20.

25.   *The Washington Evening Star*, 3 March 1900, quoted in *Petition of Franklin Webster Smith for the Site of the Old Naval Observatory for the National Galleries of History and* Art (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1900), p. 161.

26.   Smith, *A Design & Prospectus*, p. 47.

27.   Ruth Todd, 'Sequoia Hall: from Dorm to Demolition', *Sandstone & Tile* 20:4 (Fall 1996): p. 6. Further, see Carl W. Condit, *American Building - Materials and Techniques from the First Colonial Settlements to the Present* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

28.   Letter of William Ward to Franklin Webster Smith, 3 Februarym 1891, in Smith, *A Design & Prospectus*, p. 43.

29.   'For a National Gallery: Outline of Franklin W. Smith's Stupendous Scheme', *The New York Times*, 17 December, 1892.

30.   For a complete description of the project, see Curtis Dahl, 'Mr. Smith's American Acropolis', *American Heritage* 7:4 (1956): p. 38ff.

31.   Letter of 2 January, 1899, in *Petition of Franklin Webster Smith*, p. 69.

32.   The only photograph of the Halls of the Ancients appeared in *The Washington Times*, 26 May, 1907 (Sports-Real Estate), p. 8. Paul Kelsey Williams, 'Scenes from the Past', *The InTowner* (December, 2004). The Capital Garage was, in turn, torn down in 1974 for the Daon Building of Skidmore, Owings, Merrill.

33.   H. Webster Tomlinson, 'The Architectural Possibilities of Concrete', *The Cement Age* VI:1 (January 1908): p. 20.

34.   A.O. Elzner, 'The Artistic Expression of Concrete', *The Cement Era* VI:4 (April 1908): p. 69. As for why the work of Carrère and Hastings in St. Augustine had little following, he notes 'it is not altogether unlikely that the boldness of this departure, together with the practical difficulties of construction, and possibly the unusual delicacy of the detail in this work, were the cause of deterring architects…'.

35.   Longstreth, 'Academic Eclecticism in American Architecture', pp. 77–80.

36.   Rolf R. Newman, 'A Review of the Development in the Construction of Concrete Houses - 1907 to 1914,' *Concrete-Cement Age* IV:4 (April 1914): pp. 169–170. Other early forays in concrete include: Riverside County Courthouse (Franklin P. Burnham, 1903), First Congregational Church (Myron Hunt, 1913), Riverside Municipal Auditorium (Arthur S. Benton and G. Stanley Wilson, 1929).

37.   Bertha H. Smith, 'Creating an American Style of Architecture', *House and Garden* 26 (1914): p. 19.

CHAPTER 10

ECHOES OF MANHATTAN IN PARLIAMENT SQUARE: TRANSATLANTIC MEDIEVALISM FOR THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

AYLA LEPINE
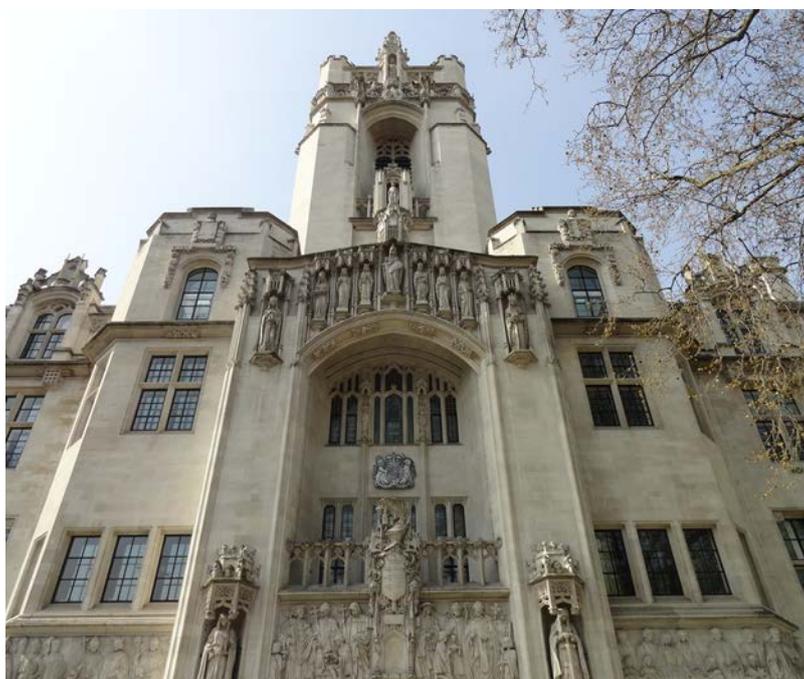
In Alfred Tennyson's poem *Idylls of the King*, published in 1872, knights become uneasy about the fragile and uncanny quality of their surroundings as they ride towards Camelot: 'Lord there is no such city anywhere, but all vision' they remark. At the threshold of this dream-city is a guarded gate. Here, they find that 'new things and old co-twisted, as if Time were nothing, so inveterately that men were giddy'.[1] The powerful magician Merlin keeps these giddy beholders at bay as a blast of sound fills the air. The medieval dream, Merlin explains, is perpetual and elusive.[2] For those seeking it and marvelling at its spatial ambiguities, the city itself is the quest. It is sustained by an ineffable holiness, and it consti-tutes an ultimately unreachable yet nearly attainable goal. As Merlin explains, concealing as much as he reveals in Tennyson's deliberately poetic and languidly opaque text:

> They are building still, seeing the city is built
> To music, therefore never built at all,
> And therefore built forever.[3]

This essay considers the elusive, entrancing search for an architecture in which time could be co-twisted to build a city of the future by looking keenly to the dream-cities and material remains of many layered pasts. Homing in on this revivalist phenomenon, my research explores three ideas that connect two modern Gothic Revival buildings. The me-dievalist sites situated within metropolitan centres are St Thomas Church at Fifth Avenue

10.1
Ralph Adams Cram and Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, St Thomas Church, New York City, United States, 1907–16.

10.2
James S. Gibson and Frank Peyton Skipwith, Middlesex Guildhall (now the Supreme Court), London, United Kingdom, 1911–13.

and 53rd Street in New York City's Manhattan, and the Middlesex Guildhall—which is now the Supreme Court—on the north side of Parliament Square in Westminster, London. Both buildings were prominent projects in globally significant and rapidly changing cities, produced at a time when the Gothic style was no longer an obvious choice for civic or religious buildings on either side of the Atlantic. Both projects used medievalist forms and ideas to integrate past and present, deploying sculpture and architectural motifs to tell an old story of governance, leadership, and faith in a new way.

St Thomas Church was designed by the prominent American firm of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson in 1906 and consecrated in April 1916 (fig. 10.1). Its building process was arduous, complex, and highly publicized. Westminster Guildhall had a shorter gestation period and a less famous architect. Designed by James Gibson with his partner Frank Peyton Skipwith, the building was planned in 1911 and opened in December 1913 (fig. 10.2).

The three ideas that cohere into a framework for a comparative interpretation of these structures concern style, temporality, and identity. Additionally, Marvin Trachtenberg's recent explication of time as an architectural tool and what he has identified as the pressing obstacle of 'chronophobia' in modern architectural design and discourse are marshaled in relation to key structures in London and New York. Both of the buildings could be dismissed as late and eccentrically conservative fruits of a gnarled tree that grew up as the young sapling of the optimistic and ecclesiastically powered Gothic Revival in the nineteenth century. By the twentieth century, as Kenneth Clark put it in his history of the Gothic Revival, published in 1928, the style was lifeless. Clark put this conviction vividly: 'Its fruits are stale and have turned to dust in our mouths. The words conjure up the vision … of an age too recently dead'.[4]

Not everyone felt this way, however. The architect and critic Harry Stuart Goodhart-Rendel gave a lecture at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in 1924 in which he asserted, 'That the Gothic style in England has ever become a corpse I will not allow'.[5] At the height of the Gothic Revival in Victorian Britain and its empire, the use of later Gothic motifs from the fourteenth, fifteenth and even sixteenth centuries was often seen as anathema. By the late Victorian period, architects like G.F. Bodley, George Gilbert Scott Jr, and a new generation including J.D. Sedding and John Ninian Comper saw the Gothic world differently.[6] Later Gothic forms were not only embraced, but they were also blended with classical architectural language, expanding medievalism's possibilities and blurring its definitions, particularly in relation to the rise of the Arts and Crafts movement with the arrival of C.R. Ashbee and W.R. Lethaby at the turn of the twentieth century.[7] Indeed, Lethaby wrote about architecture of the Middle Ages not so much as a style but a language or ethos of building.[8]

The relationship between the Arts and Crafts ideology, the Gothic Revival, and transatlantic dialogue regarding architecture and architectural sculpture offers rich possibilities for further research, as much of the exploration of these cultural phenomena has been done in a relatively nationalistic, monographic, or stylistically narrow way.[9] Moreover, in light of the recent challenges to periodization raised in art and architectural history and the increasing attention paid to the values and meanings of layered and interlacing anachronisms, 'late' seems somewhat facile in its devotion to stylistic and temporal linearity. Moreover, without recourse to major strides in recent critical theory, there is the simple

evidence that the Gothic style carried on well into the twentieth century and the manner in which designers manipulated Gothic forms had its own distinctive and vital character. One of the most important factors in a new interpretation of these two buildings and others constructed in the twentieth century is that they are products not of a single revivalist impulse, but of multiple interlacing revivalist strands. For architects like Goodhue and Gibson, source material from the Middle Ages was co-twisted with later Gothic Revival reworkings of the medieval world. In their twentieth-century designs, Goodhue, Cram and Gibson produced multiple revivalist iterations in a single plan, crafting neo-neo-neo Gothic forms.

In Trachtenberg's 2010 book, *Building-in-Time*, the architectural historian gives next to no attention to the nineteenth century's rampant historicism and stylistic skirmishes. Instead he focuses on reconfiguring histories of late medieval and early Renaissance Italian architecture in relation to time as a tool for architects, allowing complex sites to be built up cumulatively and sophisticatedly over many decades and generations. Trachtenberg compares this with 'modern oblivion', the modernist architectural culture dominant since the dawn of the twentieth century but with roots in the Renaissance and Leon Battista Alberti, in which time itself has become the enemy of architecture because of its threatening promise of decay and erosion. Building in a Gothic mode in a modern period is, to take up Trachtenberg's position and reframe it to question patterns of architectural revivalism, an opportunity to harness temporality and re-invest it into the built environment, at least conceptually and aesthetically. Relative to a medieval cathedral, the buildings under consideration were built swiftly and under the guidance of a single architectural firm rather than multiple guiding minds and hands across numerous generations. I would argue that particularly in the Gothic motifs and structures employed at the Middlesex Guildhall in London and St Thomas Church in New York—and many others from this period around and after 1900—the Gothic dream was a series of spaces in which time's layers undulated and mingled with the sinuous simultaneity of multiple sites bound together in a single resonant place. Transatlantic modern Gothic sites are resonating chambers for historical interplay, in which the building speaks with multiple histories at once, activated primarily through architectural sculpture adorning interior and exterior surfaces. The New York and London studies reflect upon the formulation of architectural histories themselves, asserting how the Gothic style makes meaning and declares identity in the twentieth century.

Architects for these projects were distinctly different in their approaches to their commissions. Indeed, the Scottish architect James Gibson who took the lead on his firm's design for the Middlesex Guildhall was as at ease with classicism and the popular forms of the Renaissance and the Baroque as he was working in the Gothic mode. Ralph Adams Cram and Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue were less inclined towards this degree of stylistic experimentation, at least in the period of the St Thomas project in New York. They were committed and even zealous medievalists. In 1913, Goodhue would go on to set up his own practice in New York, and split from Cram's headquarters in Boston. From c.1910, Goodhue became increasingly drawn to streamline curves, Byzantine ornament, the nascent Art Deco style, and the stylistic vocabulary of a range of architectural forms from Latin

America's colonial history to the new materials and clean lines of Modernism. Goodhue also continued to design with a Gothic framework, and his 1920s work for the Rockefeller Chapel at the University of Chicago is a characteristic and bold essay in his bespoke kind of Gothic Deco.

Ralph Adams Cram was the most prominent advocate for the Gothic Revival in twentieth-century America.[10] His work includes All Saints Church, Ashmont (1892), designs for the Cathedral of St John the Divine in New York (1912), Princeton University Chapel (1928) and Rice University in Texas (1910–16). From 1915 until 1922 he was head of the architecture school at MIT. Cram's practice began in Boston and though his career was based there across his long career, his projects spanned the US. Together with his partner Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, Cram worked to further the cause of what he called 'the Gothic Quest', often figuring himself as a knight or prophet preaching in the American modern architectural wilderness. For Cram, modern Gothicists should 'go back to the 16th century not to endeavour to build churches that shall pretend to have been built in that century' but to 'work steadily and seriously towards something more consistent with our temper and the times in which we live'.[11] Inspired by Victorian Gothic Revival architects Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812–52) and George Frederick Bodley's (1827–1907) approaches to the medieval world, Cram's Gothic was an American translation of late Victorian visual culture. Significantly, this particular iteration of the Gothic Revival was a revived revival—a neo-neo Gothic—that he perceived as passed to him from earlier British exponents. Like numerous architects, including Gibson at the Middlesex Guildhall in London—Cram's unique interpretation of the Gothic style was not drawn entirely from the Middle Ages or from a single source. Rather it was an amalgam of medieval and nineteenth-century examples of the Gothic Revival. Gothic itself was a language charged with sacred meaning. Cram's rhetoric regarding the future of architecture in America as a Gothic future is telling in its transatlantic energy: 'On this strong stock would be grafted all the beauty that could be gathered from the world … through the whole marvellous growth … the vigorous vital principle of Christian and English civilization'.[12] Cram's Christian Gothic Revival quest was delivered repeatedly in his writing and lectures couched in Arthurian language and inspired by Victorian struggles for a new architecture and a new world. Envisioning architectural radicals like a band of knights in pursuit of divine knowledge, Cram enthused:

> They rode in search of Beauty and Truth, and these are attributes of God, not of man, and not to be perceived by eyes of flesh and blood. Yet, as with the grail, the hopeless quest brought marvellous adventure, and more, for it established forever a type of beauty … and they brought back a wonderful thing, the mystical knowledge of Art. This was the Gothic Quest, and if we think of it as an historical episode … we think foolishly.[13]

As the architectural historian Phoebe Stanton's research on mid-nineteenth-century American architecture shows, A.W.N. Pugin and the Ecclesiological Society in England

had an enormous impact on American Gothic Revival architecture from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. The relationship between progress, professionalization and the Gothic Revival was a particularly tight one in the United States. Richard Upjohn, whose Gothic Revival Trinity Church, constructed in Midtown Manhattan in the 1840s, was closely based on Pugin's designs for the Roman Catholic cathedral at Southwark in London.[14] Upjohn was also the founder and first President of the American Institute of Architects, hosting the inaugural meeting at his New York City office amongst designs for Gothic Revival churches.[15] Perhaps Cram was at his most Puginian and most polemical when railing against stylistic eclecticism in American architecture, envisioning stylistic choice as akin to a bit of shopping in a vast department store:

> College buildings? You will find a complete line of Greco-Georgian articles down the alley to the right. Post offices? Certainly. Guaranteed real Renaissance. No madam, we do not carry any chateauesque Fifth Avenue palaces just now. No need for them. An office building? Fitted while you wait, take the elevator to the 32nd floor. Church? Yes sir, we cater especially to the Cloth, all real Gothic and twenty yards high, 13th, 14th, 15th century … take the subway to the medieval annexe.[16]

For Cram as for Pugin, Christian and Gothic were interchangeable terms. Cram and Goodhue's beliefs in the endurance of Christianity through the perpetuation of a Gothic architectural legacy were articulated at St Thomas, but the project began with destruction.

The Gothic Revival architect Richard Upjohn designed the previous St Thomas in the mid-1860s and it was completed in 1870. Cram and Goodhue's design, with its block-harnessing corner tower and dynamic asymmetry, was in truth a weighty homage to Upjohn's previous building. The specific history of the site made St Thomas a revival of a revival, with Cram and Goodhue's design responsive not only to European Gothic architecture's potential in modern America, but also to Upjohn's design from the previous generation of the Gothic Revivalists in the US. The Upjohn building's interior included a reredos of angels adoring the Cross, designed by Augustus St Gaudens. Upjohn's building was destroyed by fire in 1905, and little survived. After the fire, the church's vicar Ernest Stires wrote, 'We shall have a church which, for its beauty and reverent appropriateness will be almost as worthy of visiting and of thoughtful study, as the famous parish churches of England'.[17] The parish approved new designs in 1907. Notably, these were published by the Merrymount Press, a Boston-based publishing firm directly inspired by William Morris' 1890s Kelmscott Press. When Bertram Goodhue designed the reredos for the new St Thomas', which would be carved by the eminent sculptor Lee Lawrie, the vast interconnected system of sculpted figures was positioned around a central image: a replication of the form of the earlier St Gaudens altarpiece destroyed in the previous church.

The rector Ernest Stires wrote a description of the reredos soon after its completion, charting its figures and their significance from Old Testament imagery through to prominent politicians and clerics in the history of the Church of England and the Episcopalian traditions in America. Adam and Eve took their place alongside presidents and prime ministers. Stires listed:
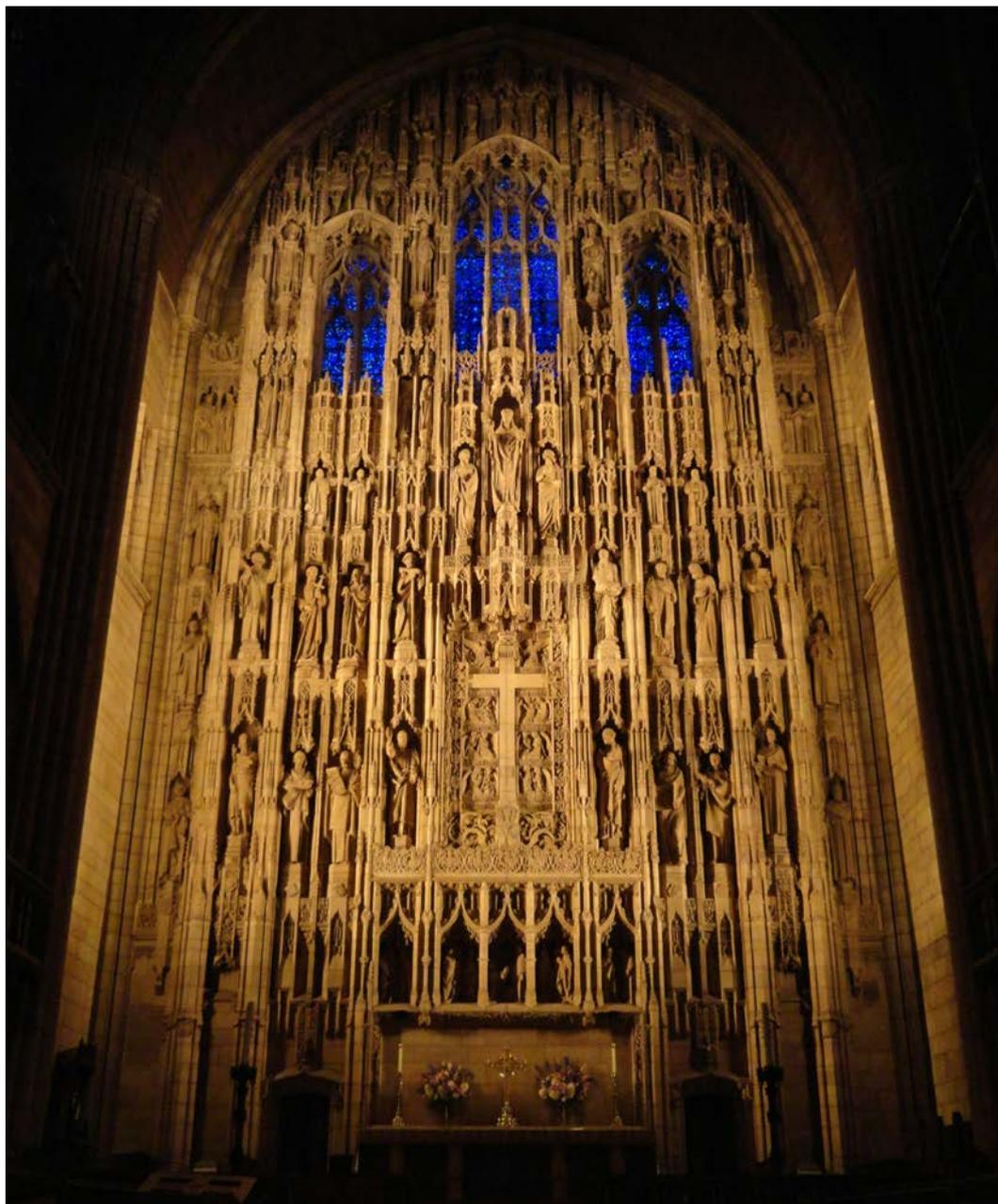
10.3
Bertram Grosvenor
Goodhue and Lee
Lawrie, reredos, St
Thomas Church, New
York City, United
States, 1913.

Richard Hooker and Bishop Butler. Beneath them is … Liddon, the great dean and preacher of St Paul's, London. And the last of this line is Gladstone, England's great layman. Leaving the British line, and coming over now to the extreme right, we come to the American line. At the top are Bishop Seabury and Bishop White, the first bishops of our American Church. They have in their hands the first American Prayer Book. Just beneath them is a great layman of the American Church, George Washington. … This row of figures concludes with one who was living when this statue was placed there—dear beloved Bishop Tuttle … Presiding Bishop of the Church for many years.[18]

From the first man and woman to an Episcopalian cleric living in America in the first years of the twentieth century, the political and theological history of Anglicanism and Anglophilia ranges across the wall. The reredos within Cram and Goodhue's St Thomas is a memorial to a previous building (fig. 10.3). It is also a declaration of Anglican identity across times and places between Britain and America and through empire's missionary context stretching further into India and New Zealand. Medieval style sustained and gave shape to modern religion.

10.4
Childe Hassam, *Allies Day, May 1917*, 1917. Oil on canvas, 92.7 x 76.8 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

In his essay on St Thomas in *Scribner's* in December 1913, the architectural critic Montgomery Schulyer singled out this new church as 'one of the chief architectural ornaments of New York', highlighting its sculptural and assertive Gothic bulk as an asset in the changing architectural landscape of Midtown Manhattan.[19] St Thomas' bulk, its sinuously traceried rose window, and its proliferation of sculpture inside and out made it a recognisable monument in Manhattan that swiftly gained as much notoriety as Richard Upjohn's Trinity Church had more than half a century earlier. In 1917 Frederick Childe Hassam painted *Allies Day, May 1917*, an image within his 'flag series', which he begun three years before at the start of the first world war (fig. 10.4). The impressionistic painting presents us with insistent images of identity, nationalism and patriotism and the mutable fluttering objects of territories and allegiances gain a solidity through their prominent, painterly rendering. Fifth Avenue became known as the Avenue of the Allies and its significance as an urban thoroughfare which was also a symbol of expected triumph sign of conflict elsewhere with major implications at home was not lost on Hassam. In the spring of 1917 America burst into action and the atmosphere Hassam captures is simultaneously resolute

and celebratory, anticipating victory. Arrangements of the French tricolour, British union flag and the American flag ran sequentially along the wide, bustling street. As C.S. Burchell has noted:

> More than simply the playground of the rich, the Avenue was a focus for many events important in the history of the country. A precedent was long established … By the last decades of the nineteenth century, the great parades of national groups were underway as well … Fifth Ave had watched innumerable other marching men, too—American soldiers and sailors and marines returning in victory from faraway battles.[20]

A transnational argument can be made that links war alliances to a very different kind of allegiance. The section of Fifth Avenue Hassam selected for this red, white and blue image is significant. At the start of the war, a complex sculptural surface was being installed, figure by figure, over a ten-month period. It too was a symbol of allegiances—old and new—and it formed an iconography of American Episcopal identity and cultural memory in an unprecedented manner. This sculpture group was the reredos for St Thomas, the church that can be seen in Hassam's image sandwiched between two commercial buildings on the left. Hassam's image offers a streetscape in which St Thomas stands integrated and set apart, declaring a wider identity framework in the midst of American culture's exponential development and growth in New York in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Unlike Ralph Adams Cram, James S. Gibson was neither a monumental force for the ideology of modern medievalism, nor did he have such a high profile or such a prolific career. Gibson began practicing architecture in Dundee with Ireland and Maclaren. He moved to London and began independent practice in the late 1880s. With his partner S.B. Russell, he won numerous competitions including the London County Council Hostel in Drury Lane in 1891, and the West Riding County Offices in Wakefield in 1894.[21] The Scottish architect James Maclaren's stylistic lessons were taken to heart in Gibson's firm. Sheer bulk, diagonally intersecting surfaces, and the light yet insistent application of Gothic detail can all be seen in Middlesex Guildhall as well as in Maclaren's earlier work, such as the new wing and observatory tower at Stirling High School of 1887–89 and No. 22 Avonmore Road, a domestic commission in West Kensington that Maclaren completed in 1889.[22]

That said, the Middlesex Guildhall was something of a departure for both Gibson and his architectural sculptors. When it opened in 1913, at the same time that the reredos at St Thomas was being constructed, *The Times* reported that Middlesex Guildhall 'looks as if it had been designed and built with some enjoyment, and as if its absurdities expressed a genuine taste and were not merely sentimental imitations of the absurdities of the past'.[23] In his report on the building as part of a SAVE Britain's Heritage campaign to preserve its interiors, the architectural historian Gavin Stamp observed that there were aesthetic simi-

larities between Gibson's design and the distinctive modern Gothic of Cram and Goodhue.[24] Middlesex Guildhall is situated between Broad Sanctuary, Little George Street, and Parliament Square in London. Built of brown Portland stone, with a similar patina to portions of neighbouring Westminster Abbey, the Guildhall's architect James Gibson anticipated that it would look better as it weathered.[25] Describing the building as 'a dainty piece of ornament', Gibson went on to explain how Gothic forms enlivened the structure:

> The detail employed, while preserving many of the features and mouldings of the later Gothic, has been imbued with a modern spirit of freshness in precisely the same way as the original Gothic must have been kept virile by the introduction of new detail.[26]

'Dainty piece of ornament' is a strange way to describe a major building of national civic importance in such a key location. Gibson seemed to suggest two things with this unsettling phrase: first, that the building was a kind of ornamentation of the Abbey and Parliament nearby and therefore reliant on their stylistic cues; and second, that the building design's strength was in its delicate surface treatment. Akin to the art historian David Peters Corbett's suggestion that Edward Burne-Jones' 1869 painting *Laus Veneris* is powerful because its attention to ornament complicates negotiation between surface and depth, the sculpture within and without is the Middlesex Guildhall's most arresting and complex feature.[27] With Westminster Abbey and the New Palace of Westminster as neighbours, could the building have been anything other than Gothic? Nikolaus Pevsner thought that the building's style was a case of 'necessity'.[28] With the Classical pomp of Whitehall expanding through the Edwardian period, and Aston Webb's monumentalization of Westminster in the 'Wrenaissance' style, was the choice of Gothic truly an obvious and necessary one?[29]

Moreover, not everyone was convinced about the building's Gothic style, suggesting that there were many paths the architect could have chosen and that proximity to the Houses of Parliament and the Abbey would need not determine the building's form so dominantly. *The Builder*'s comments are worth quoting at length:

> We are told that a Gothic design was decided upon on account of the proximity of the new Guildhall to the Abbey. Would it not therefore follow that any new building in proximity to the Guildhall should also be designed in the Gothic manner, and what about building in proximity to the latter? Arguments as to the sustainability or otherwise of a particular style would, according to such methods of reasoning, always be decided by their relative position to some other building. … we are afraid the result might prejudice the future of architectural development if we are to get ahead at last. Rather, we believe, we should honestly try to work in the style which is most characteristic of our times.[30]

What precisely was the architecture of the time meant to be, however? The future was uncertain, and the present offered few clear paths towards architectural and ideological coherence.

Two months after its anxious discussion of style and contextual locality in relation to Middlesex Guildhall, *The Builder* ran a further large feature on the project, in which it made much of its modern construction techniques. In New York, the Gothic evangelist Ralph Adams Cram tended to avoid reinforced steel and concrete. Not so for James Gibson in London: the Guildhall featured 'load-bearing outer walls with internal steel frame. … concrete footings constructed by the Concrete Steel Company Ltd. … the roof over Council Chamber was carried by two steel trusses supporting rolled-steel purlins'. As the architectural historian Jeremy Musson explains, the building's 'homages to the massive structural timber in Westminster Hall are, then, entirely decorative'.[31] Medievalism and new building techniques went hand in hand: reputedly the first use of reinforced concrete in the UK was John Dando Sedding's Holy Trinity Sloane Square.[32] According to architectural historians Murray Fraser and Joe Kerr, new building techniques such as reinforced steel framing was a particularly American concept brought into British architecture to enliven it, especially in projects like Richard D'Oyly Carte's Savoy Hotel and those undertaken by American patrons like William Waldorf Astor.[33] When Astor arrived in London from the United States in 1891, he was one of the world's wealthiest people. His eclectically styled Neo-Gothic-Neo-Renaissance mansion on the Embankment was completed by 1895 and designed by the Gothic Revival architect John Loughborough Pearson with stained glass by Clayton and Bell and an interior teeming with sculpture.[34] American capitalism, architecturally progressive techniques, and the Gothic Revival, were closely intertwined in the heart of London in the final years of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth.

As historian and curator Peter Cormack has written, the sculptural programme at Middlesex Guildhall is intriguing and complex, ranging across a multitude of allegorical and narrative themes.[35] There are, indeed, vestiges of the allegorical scheme designed by George Gilbert Scott for the Albert Memorial nearly fifty years before the Guildhall's completion.[36] Representations of the arts and industry were popular architectural sculptural features in both the Gothic and the Classical style, but while Classical buildings in the Victorian period focused primarily on historical figures as architectural embellishment, Gothic Revival buildings were opportunities for a plethora of symbolic figurative ornament which could combine to offer a coherent and often didactic image of specific cultural values. Like the Albert Memorial, Middlesex Guildhall's surfaces incorporated both sculptural modes. At Scott's Albert Memorial, the gleaming golden body of the Prince Consort was surrounded by sculptural groups representing everything from Agriculture and Chemistry to Painting and Music. At the Middlesex Guildhall, this practice continued, albeit with different stylistic and grouping nuances. The play between friezes of interactive figures presenting historical narratives and the grouped allegories was itself an

element of revivalist strategy that Gibson, Skipwith, and their sculptors Henry Fehr and Carlo Magnoni deployed.

Allegorical figures holding attributes associated with Industry take their place along those representing winds, human attributes, cultural concepts, and the arts. Cormack refers to these figures as 'Fehr maidens', playing on the sculptor's name to get the point across that these figures are a fusion of Edwardian faces and medievalist form. On the west side of the building to the right of the main entrance are sculptures representing Dance, Communications, Astronomy, Mechanics, Engineering, Painting, Classical Architecture, and Gothic Architecture (fig. 10.5). On the building's eastern façade, the figures represent maritime industries—fishing and ship building—and agricultural industries: fruit farming and sheep rearing. The building's north side, which is tucked out of the way down a small side alley, features two representations of learning: a monk and a scholar. A figure of Justice, flanked by figures representing Law, crowns the northwest door. The only two pairs of allegorical figures that represent a single concept—as opposed to figures which reiterate the same concept, such as those representing Law—are Architecture and Learning. In both cases, medievalism takes a prominent role. Architecture is represented by both the Classical and the Gothic style, and learning pairs the serenity of monastic study with a more furtive looking scholar.

On the building's south façade, sculptures designed by Fehr populate the south elevation with full-length historical and allegorical figures, which flank an isolated and lightly carved architectural detail (fig. 10.6). Figures representing Wisdom, Architecture, Literature, Government, Sculpture, Britannia, Music, Truth, Law, Shipping, Education are situated above the main entrance. The western side of the façade features King John and the Magna Carta at Runnymede. The eastern side depicts Jane Grey at Syon House. Both these historical acts—fusions of monarchy and wide-reaching politics with major national consequences—took place within the county of Middlesex. The life of the nation and region was embedded within the building's purpose as a guild hall—a meeting place that is in itself a medieval concept. In the central sculptural group, Fehr represented King Henry III granting the Charter to Westminster Abbey, in a sculptural programme that oscil-

10.5
F.C. Fehr, Gothic Architecture, Middlesex Guildhall, London, United Kingdom, 1912–13.
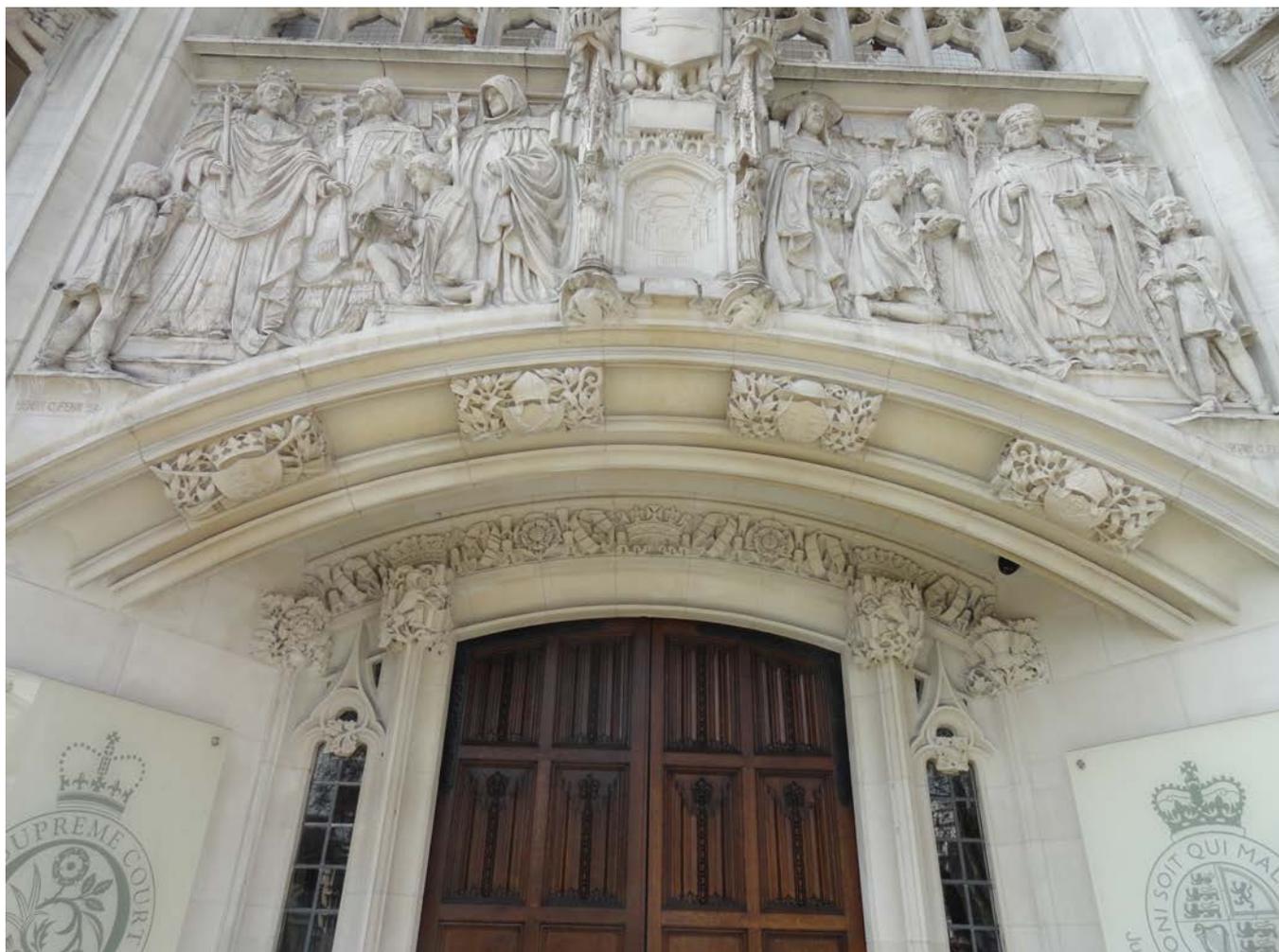
lates between Middlesex places and the historical fabric of the Guildhall's location. In the centre of the tripartite frieze, beneath the Middlesex arms, is an echo of another building. This is the great hall at Hampton Court, also within the county and also a late Gothic building whose status, style, site, and sustained inspiration for Victorian and Edwardian architects indicate potential reasons for its placement here, above the entrance amidst medieval and Tudor histories of British law and religion. Sculpture and medieval forms define Middlesex's identity for twentieth-century viewers, law-makers, and even criminals imprisoned in the basement cells.

If there is indeed a traceable modern transatlantic Gothic impulse sustaining and producing innovative architecture in the early twentieth century, one of its most fascinating outcomes is not in New York or in London, but in Chicago. The Chicago Tribune Tower, designed by Howells and Hood in 1923, includes a foyer in which ornamental text dominates every surface. The building speaks and educates. Surrounded by bon mots from presidents, philosophers, and politicians, a circle of Gothic letters sits on the floor. The quotation is from John Ruskin's 'Lamp of Memory', a chapter within his 1849 *Seven Lamps of Architecture*. It is a powerful notion, which the architectural historian Adrian Forty also quotes in full in his essay on memory and architecture in his influential study, *Words and Buildings*.[37] Ruskin's imperative to modern architects who looked to the past with more than a mere nostalgic romanticism enlivens the sense of purpose of the Tribune Tower's function and its style:

> When we build let us think we build forever. Let it not be for present delight
> nor for present use alone. Let it be such work that our descendants will thank

10.6
F.C. Fehr and Carlo Magnoni, south façade sculpture, Middlesex Guildhall, London, United Kingdom, 1912–13.

us for, and let us think, as we lay stone upon stone, that a time is to come
when these stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them,
and that men will say, as they look upon the labour and wrought substance of
them, 'See! This our fathers did for us.[38]

The Gothic spiritual exercise of imagining that a building could be eternal and express
qualities of eternity, even in the midst of decay and change, was a concept that sustained
modern American architecture, positioned at the core of one of the most prominent and
technically innovative skyscrapers of its time. Transatlantic Gothic was a significant force
in shaping the modern city; this is a completely different architectural historical trajectory
from the rather insular British one that tends to claim buildings like Middlesex Guildhall
as outliers and anomalies, determined only by the buildings around them, and clinging
onto a dying style for the sake of its immediate neighbours. Alternatively, I argue that
Gothic dreaming in the early twentieth century offered a progressive architectural mode,
and informed much that was to come after it. In Marvin Trachtenberg's view of the chal-
lenging and rewarding position of temporality in pre-modern and modern design, 'time
itself—especially when of long duration—was made a vital asset in the creation of highly
complex, multidimensional works of art'.[39] He believes that this impulse was all but lost
following the Renaissance—and was a crisis moment in the dawn of modernity—and that
we are now in a period of so-called 'modern oblivion'. Revivalism resists this oblivion. It
is the sense of temporality's stretch, rich intersection, and layering that the progressive
Gothic style of the Guildhall, St Thomas, and indeed the Tribune Tower were seeking to
reclaim through ornament that sinuously bound past to present.

In the debates surrounding how modern architectural projects might be fuelled by
traditional styles and ornament, there were numerous positions and options. Then as now,
temporality's place in architecture and its signals in ornament in particular, was vigor-
ously contested. Medievalism continued to offer fresh points of engagement for new ar-
chitecture well into the first decades of the twentieth century, and the loss of ornament in
general in much architecture from the 1930s onwards was not welcomed unanimously or
unproblematically. In 1942 Clark, who was then director of the National Gallery, wrote a
lengthy, witty, and angry article on ornament and its detractors for the *Architectural Re-
view*. For Clark, the absence of ornament could be ominously read as a sign of the depar-
ture or suppression of a rich and flourishing culture. In his pointed text, he asked, 'Why
are modern buildings without ornament? Is it a reaction? After the debauches of the nine-
teenth century our architects have such indigestion that they are condemned to a diet of
Ryvita and Vichy water'. No, he concluded: 'the complete absence of ornament in modern
architecture is something far more radical than that'.[40] In emphatic rhetoric not dissimilar
to Cram's, Clark ties the loss of ornament to a loss of coherence in the arts and widespread
cultural fragmentation. 'The unpleasant question crosses our minds,' Clark concluded. 'Do
we believe any more in the dignity of man and the harmony of the universe? … We shall

have no ceremony in life and no ornament in architecture, until some new and more promising faith reintegrates our lives'.[41]

Returning to Trachtenberg's view may offer a further depth of perspective to Clark's concerns in the 1940s. For Trachtenberg, 'time itself—especially when of long duration—was made a vital asset in the creation of highly complex, multidimensional works of art'.[42] In the nineteenth century, historicism was a method of legitimation for architecture, but this never created an obvious path without obstacles, despite the establishment of what Trachtenberg calls the nineteenth century's 'comprehensive system of knowledge and practice' based on historical precedent and its reworking through revivalist selectivity.[43] As historicism was increasingly overturned by the rising tide of Modernism, the persistence of historicism constituted no less than a threat to an increasingly dominant system of architectural writing and design. In Timothy Brittain-Catlin's view, this architectural problem produced an architectural history in which the use of ornament and historical precedent was a sign of failure.[44] Trachtenberg has a different but not uncomplementary view, in which 'chronocide' is an outcome of 'chronophobia', particularly the fear of decay, dissolution, and change over time. The inevitability of change was both an innate condition and anathema within architectural practice and theory. This fear—above anything else—characterises modernity's architectural production. Architects in the early twentieth century like James Gibson, Ralph Adams Cram, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, Edwin Lutyens and E.S. Prior, whose work anticipated and welcomed the patina of age on their buildings' façades were, unwittingly or consciously, resisting an increasingly powerful chronophobic stance.

In 1900, Prior wrote *The History of Gothic Art in England*, asserting that 'The first symptom of decline is the birth of artistic individuality… the making of art of a personal rather than a collective ambition'.[45] The so-called 'chronophobic syndrome' Trachtenberg has identified is an essential component in reassessing the meanings and impacts of Gothic Revival buildings in the twentieth century. The consequences of chronophobia upon architectural history are obvious once one begins to look, and it explains the limited attention buildings like the Middlesex Guildhall have received. If Trachtenberg is correct, then the horror of historicism has caused 'large blocks of the architecture of the past to be overlooked or undervalued, and often it forces historical works whose importance is recognised to be misinterpreted and distorted'.[46]

Henry Adams, the American writer whose paean to the Middle Ages, *Mont St Michel and Chartres* included an introductory essay by Cram in the popular second edition, invented the word 'dynamo' and spent much of his career arguing for a fusion of medieval histories with the radical newness of an oncoming machine age. As the architectural historian Michael Clark elucidates, Adams saw the Middle Ages as a prefiguration of the modern American experience they saw around them.[47] In Adams' view the Middle Ages were times of dynamic civilisation and the relentless pursuit of change and progress. A typical Adams analogy reads, 'the nineteenth century moved fast and furious, so that one

who moved in it felt sometimes giddy, watching it spin … but the eleventh moved faster and more furiously still'.[48] If buildings machines that generate and express meaning, then there is always a great deal at stake in the deployment of stylistic language, particularly when the chosen language is disruptive, controversial, or threatening. In the early twentieth century, perhaps more than ever before, a cluster of architects wielded style and historicism as a sustaining recovery operation, blending it with new materials and techniques.

For Prior, as for Cram, Gothic was a combination of style and ethos, and though both were important perhaps the ethos was the most fundamental and desirable aspect of medieval architecture to be preserved. Ornament and Gothic form were important, but a Gothic spirit, elusive and spurring the 'Gothic quest' was a foundational component of architectural history that was essential to uncover, utilise, and maintain. In 1900 Prior wrote, 'It is hard to justify any special admiration for Gothic architecture, if its forms be separated from the great truth of Gothic life … We conclude that the art of the medieval ages was not architectural dress, but something underneath it'.[49] This intimation persisted and continued to drive architectural innovation in both Britain and America well into the twentieth century. Style, temporality and identity were inextricably linked to one another in many iterations of medievalism, even when their expression was less aesthetically overt in an architect's practice. In his 1932 essay, 'The Disappearing City', Frank Lloyd Wright wrote that Gothic forms were key source material for modern architects because 'the medieval spirit was nearest the communal, democratic spirit of anything we know'.[50] In a framework of gargoyles and reinforced concrete where 'new and old co-twisted, as if Time were nothing', time itself is the meaning the building makes. Beyond the last visible gargoyle, tradition could be studied, absorbed and intuited, and the Gothic, as Ruskin and Prior hoped it would be, could be spiritualised and could remain as a perpetual echo. As the twentieth century pressed on, it was the continued pressures and mounting sense of temporality's capacity to stretch, overlap, and layer that the progressive Gothic style of the Middlesex Guildhall, St Thomas, and indeed the Tribune Tower were seeking to reclaim. They did this by accessing and deploying a Gothic style that sinuously bound past to present.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1.   Alfred Tennyson, *The Idylls of the King* (London, 1872), accessed 1 March, 2014, http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/610.

2.   For an extensive discussion of Tennyson, mysticism and medievalism, see Cornelia D.J. Pearsall, *Tennyson's Rapture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

3.   Pearsall, *Tennyson's Rapture.*

4.   London, Tate Archives, 8812.1.3.367, 'Rewrite' to *The Gothic Revival*, undated, c.1928.

5.   H.S. Goodhart-Rendel, 'English Gothic Architecture of the Nineteenth Century', *RIBA Journal* 31 (1924), p. 321.

6.   Michael Hall, *George Frederick Bodley and the Later Victorian Gothic Revival in Britain and America* (London: Yale University Press, 2014).

7.   Alan Crawford, *C.R. Ashbee: Architect, Designer and Romantic Socialist* (London: Yale University Press, 2005).

8.   W.R. Lethaby, *Medieval Art: From the Peace of the Church to the Eve of the Renaissance, 312-1350* (London: C. Scribner's Sons, 1912).

9.   Thoughtful publications on both sides of the Atlantic in relation to major exhibitions have productively questioned these divisions. See, for instance, Wendy Kaplan (ed.), *'The Art that is Life': The Arts and Crafts Movement in America, 1875-1920* (Boston: Bulfinch, 1998); Karen Livingstone and Linda Parry (eds), *International Arts and Crafts* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2005).

10.   For an overview of Cram's work, see Douglass Shand-Tucci, *Ralph Adams Cram: An Architect's Four Quests: Medieval, Modernist, American, Ecumenical* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005).

11.   Ralph Adams Cram, quoted in Douglass Shand-Tucci, *Ralph Adams Cram: American Medievalist*, (Boston: Boston Public Library, 1975), p. 17.

12.   Ralph Adams Cram, *Church Building* (Boston: Marshall Jones Co., 1899).

13.   Ralph Adams Cram, *The Gothic Quest* (New York: Baker and Taylor Co., 1907), pp. 8–9.

14.   Phoebe Stanton, *The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste, 1840–1856*, 2nd edn (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins, 1997), p. 61.

15.   Murray Fraser and Joe Kerr, *Architecture and the 'Special Relationship': the American influence on post-war British architecture* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 43.

16.   Cram, *The Gothic Quest*, p. 195.

17.   Ernest Stires, 'Year Book for St Thomas', 1905, quoted in J. Robert Wright, *St Thomas' Church, New York* (New York: St Thomas, 2001), p. 126.

18.   Wright, *St Thomas'*, p. 148.

19.   Montgomery Schulyer, 'The New St Thomas' Church, New York', *Scribner's Magazine* 54 (1913): pp. 791–4.

20.   Quoted in Donelson Hoopes, *Childe Hassam*, (New York: Watson-Guptil, 1979), p. 82.

21.   A. Stuart Gray, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary* (London: Duckworth, 1986), p. 188.

22.   For further material on James Maclaren, see A. Stuart Gray and Alistair Service's surveys of Edwardian architecture, especially Service, *Edwardian Architecture: A Handbook to Building Design in Britain, 1890–1914* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), p. 109.

23.   *The Times*, quoted in Peter Cormack, 'Gothic "with a difference": Sculpture and Decorative Arts at the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom', in Chris Miele (ed.), *The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom: History, Art, Architecture* (London: Merrell, 2010), p. 101.

24.   Gavin Stamp quoted in Marcus Binney (ed.), 'The Guildhall Testimonial: Stop This Folly' (London: SAVE Britain's Heritage, 2006), accessed 1 September, 2014, http://www.savebritainsheritage.org/docs/articles/middlesex_guildhall_sm.pdf.

25.   James Gibson, 'A Description of the Building', *Guildhall opening order of ceremonies*, (London, 1913), p. 9.

26.   Gibson, 'A Description', p. 12

27.   David Peters Corbett, 'Visuality and Unmediation in Burne-Jones' *Laus Veneris*', *Art History* 24 (2001): p. 92.

28.   Simon Bradley and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: London 6, Westminster* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 271–2.

29.   For a discussion of Whitehall and Aston Webb's Classical architecture, see David Crellin and Ian Dungavell (eds.), *Architecture and Englishness* (London: Victorian Society, 2006). For a discussion of contemporary Gothic Revival unbuilt designs, see Alex Bremner, 'Imperial Monumental Halls and Tower: Westminster Abbey and the Commemoration of Empire, 1854–1904', *Architectural History* 47 (2004): pp. 251–82.

30.   *The Builder*, 19 Sept, 1913, p. 287.

31.   Jeremy Musson, 'A Dainty Piece of Ornament', in Miele (ed.), *The Supreme Court*, p. 92.

32.   Cyndy Manton, *Henry Wilson: Practical Idealist*, (Cambridge: Lutterworth, 2009), p.22.

33.   Fraser and Kerr, *Architecture and the 'Special Relationship'*, p. 83.

34.   For a full account of the architectural history of Two Temple Place, see Barbara Bryant, *Two Temple Place* (London: Bulldog Trust, 2013).

35.   Cormack, 'Gothic "with a difference"', pp. 98–137.

36.   For a discussion of the Gothic style and the production of meaning through iconography within the Albert Memorial, see Chris Brooks (ed.), *The Albert Memorial* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

37.   Adrian Forty *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004), p. 211.

38.   John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (London, 1849), accessed 1 March, 2014, http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/35898.

39.   Trachtenberg, *Building in Time*, p. xxi.

40.   Kenneth Clark, 'Ornament in Modern Architecture', *Architectural Review* 563 (1943): p. 148.

41.   Clark, 'Ornament', p. 150.

42.   Trachtenberg, *Building-in-Time*, p. xxi.

43.   Trachtenberg, *Building-in-Time*, p. 4.

44.   Timothy Brittain-Catlin, *Bleak Houses* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014).

45.   E.S. Prior, *Gothic Art*, quoted in David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History* (London: Architectural Press, 1983), p. 107.

46.   Trachtenberg, *Building-in-Time*, p. 21.

47.   Michael Clark, 'Ralph Adams Cram and the Americanisation of the Middle Ages', *Journal of American Studies* 23:2 (August 1989): pp. 195–213.

48.   Henry Adams, *Mont St Michel and Chartres* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1913), p. 37.

49.   Prior quoted in Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History*, p. 108.

50.   Frank Lloyd Wright, 'The Disappearing City', in H.F. Mallgrave and C. Contandriopoulos (eds.), *Architectural Theory*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), p. 258.

CHAPTER 11

THE 'INTIMATE VALUE' OF CULTURE: MODERNITY AND REVIVAL IN MILAN, 1930–1960

JONATHAN MEKINDA

11.1
Giò Ponti, Antonio Fornaroli, and Alberto Rosselli with Giuseppe Valtolina, Egidio dell'Orto, Arturo Danusso, and Pier Luigi Nervi, Pirelli tower, Milan, Italy, 1955–60.

The years between 1955 and 1965 witnessed a profound transformation of Milan. An early centre of industrialization in Italy, the city grew again rapidly during those years as industry flourished, the population ballooned with immigrants from across the country, and the urban fabric was transformed by both post-war reconstruction and new construction intended to meet the changing needs of the city. Two buildings in particular stand as emblems of this remarkable epoch: the Pirelli tower and the Torre Velasca (figs 11.1 and 11.2). Both constructed in areas of the city newly renovated to repair wartime damage, the two buildings also aimed to address the recent growth of the city as an administrative and financial centre; as high-rise towers they embodied the new political, economic, and social forces that were then transforming the city.

Designed by two of the best-established architecture practices in the city, the towers also mark the final stages of several decades of experimentation and debate by Milan's architectural community over the definition of 'modern architecture'. For that generation of architects who came of age professionally under Fascism, including Franco Albini, Giò Ponti, and Ernesto Rogers, the Pirelli tower and Torre Velasca were among the most visible products of their efforts to re-shape the city in response to the demands and the possibilities of industrialization. And yet, for all that they share in terms of their sites, the timing of their construction, and their designers' commitment to modern architecture, the two towers seem to embody dramatically different attitudes toward the industrial metropolis and the new rhythms of life that it brought into being.

THE MODERN AND THE REVIVAL

Standing 127 metres tall with thirty-two stories, the Pirelli building sits on the Piazza Duc d'Aosta, approximately three kilometres north of the historic centre of Milan. Designed between 1955 and 1960 by a team of architects and engineers led by Ponti, the building was commissioned by the Pirelli company, a manufacturer of rubber products that had been established in Milan in the late nineteenth century.[1] One of the primary agents in Italy's entry into the international markets that emerged in the wake of World War II, the firm is very much emblematic of the economic and social transformations that began in Milan, and Italy more broadly, during the 1950s as part of the so-called '*Miracolo Economico*'.[2]

The location Pirelli chose for its new headquarters was also symbolic of the transformations then occurring in Milan and the company's ambition to play a leading role in them.[3] Occupying an irregular site directly across from the Stazione Centrale, the tower sits at one end of a broad corridor, stretching from the Piazza Repubblica in the southwest, which had been badly damaged during the war and re-developed as a new commercial and administrative centre for the city.[4] The centrepiece of this new development, the Pirelli tower was seen by observers and critics within Italy and without as a symbol of the company and the city's new course of development and growing stature in the global marketplace. For the international architectural press, the tower also signalled a decisive embrace of modern architecture. Indeed, with its innovative structural system, extensive use of modern materials such as glass and reinforced concrete, and simple, unified form, the Pirelli tower is a potent example of modern architecture at mid-century.

Standing 106 metres tall with twenty-eight stories, the Torre Velasca was designed between 1950 and 1958 by the firm BBPR, named after its four founding principles Gian Luigi Banfi, Ludovico Belgiojoso, Enrico Peressutti, and Ernesto Rogers.[5] The firm be-

11.2
Ludovico Belgiojoso,
Enrico Peressutti, and
Ernesto Rogers, Torre
Velasca, Milan, Italy,
1950–8.

gan work on the project with a commission from Ricostruzione Comparti Edilizi S.p.A, a corporation established to direct the reconstruction of an approximately 9000-square-metre area around the Piazza Velasca that had been badly damaged during the war. While the plan of the tower is a simple rectangle, the top eight stories of the building are larger than the floors below and extend beyond them on all four sides with the support of massive struts. As a result of the tower's proximity to the historic centre of Milan, this distinctive design resonates with historical allusions: constructed in the heart of the city, the Torre Velasca stands a mere half-kilometre from the Duomo, the spires of which closely share the skyline with the tower.

While the formal sympathy between the tower and the surrounding urban fabric largely produced favourable opinions toward the Torre Velasca among *milanesi*, the international architectural community was far more critical in its assessment of the tower. In particular, many architects and critics believed that the distinctive form of the building too directly referenced the *campanili* and watch-towers typical of historic Italian towns. This line of attack was most forcefully articulated by the Dutch architect Jacob Bakema, who argued that 'form is a communication about life, and I don't recognize in this building a communication about life in our time'; the architects, he concluded, were 'resisting contemporary life'.[6] For Bakema and other prominent critics of the tower such as Reyner Banham and Alison and Peter Smithson, the Torre Velasca, with its projecting upper stories, roughly articulated structure, uneven surface, and mottled colouring, rejected not only the essential qualities of modern architecture, but even modern life itself.[7]

In this light, the criticism of the Torre Velasca can easily be re-phrased as an accusation of revivalism. Indeed, for many in the international architectural community the two towers in Milan offered a stark demonstration of the profound divide between architecture that engaged the possibilities of contemporary life—modern architecture—and architecture that turned its back on those possibilities. On one hand, the sleek form of the Pirelli tower seems to embody a refusal of tradition and point decisively to the future; on the other, the familiar shape of the Torre Velasca appears as a literal burst of the past into the present. With its forceful distinction between the modern and the revival, this reading has been widely accepted by architects, critics, and scholars considering the two towers in relation to contemporaneous international trends.

Examined in relation to the specific strands of research and experimentation that Milanese architects pursued across the middle decades of the twentieth century, however, the Pirelli tower and the Torre Velasca point to a different conclusion: that they are equally products of a sustained effort to design buildings that would simultaneously embrace the potential of industry to transform the functions, forms, and techniques of architecture and engage a society characterized by wide variation in its experiences of modernity. In their pursuit of this goal, architects in Milan devised a range of strategies—material, formal, technical, and organizational—to articulate precise channels of connectivity between the present and the past that would, where necessary and possible, accommodate and even strengthen the established rhythms and rituals of everyday life. The concept of revival — as opposed to revivalism — is useful to describe this cluster of related strategies and techniques. In particular, it captures the ambition to renew certain conventions and tradi-

tions through adaptation and reconfiguration without constituting a unified aesthetic or specifying a particular antecedent for each project. Rather than reinforcing the conventional opposition between the modern and the revival then, the Pirelli tower and Torre Velasca signal the need to acknowledge significant variation in the relationship between the present and the past at the core of modern architecture as it developed during the middle decades of the twentieth century.[8]

THE 1936 TRIENNALE

Boasting a rapidly expanding periphery, an exploding working-class, and the most advanced infrastructure, Milan in the early twentieth century exemplified the new realities of life in the industrial metropolis. It is not surprising then that the city fostered a cadre of young designers who, from the mid-1920s, advocated aggressively for a new, distinctively modern approach to architecture; it was there, after all, that the effects of modernity in Italy were most evident and the distance from the traditional rhythms of everyday life greatest. Italian architects had followed the various efforts in northern Europe to define modern architecture since the early 1920s, but in 1926 a group of recent architecture graduates from the Politecnico di Milano calling themselves the Gruppo Sette were the first to call for Italians to embrace those efforts; soon architects across Italy joined the movement to advance what came to be called *'architettura razionale'* or *'razionalismo'*.[9] The character and value of this new architecture also quickly became a subject of passionate debate as architects, artists, and cultural commentators rushed to stake out a position on the issue in relation to the policies and ambitions of the Fascist regime.

Among the major venues for that debate was the Triennale di Milano, a triennial exhibition of architecture and design first held in 1933. That initial exhibition followed four earlier exhibitions of decorative art in Monza, a small city just north of Milan that was an important centre of small-scale, artisanal manufacturing.[10] The 1936 Triennale, the sixth in the series begun in Monza, was from its conception planned as a major international event and a substantial expansion of the previous exhibition. Organized by architect Giuseppe Pagano and painter Mario Sironi, the exhibition included the usual displays of decorative arts from Italy and abroad in the Palazzo dell'Arte, the seat of the Triennale in the Parco Sempione, as well as an expansive series of displays devoted to modern architecture and design, which were presented in a new, purpose-built pavilion designed by Pagano.[11]

From the frescoes by Sironi and the Sala della Vittoria by Marcello Nizzoli and others to the displays of modern architecture and design, the 1936 Triennale advocated for an Italian approach to art, architecture, and design that was decisively modern and near absolute in its rejection of historical styling.[12] At the same time, however, the various displays at the Triennale illustrated a widespread commitment among Italian artists, architects, and designers to identifying and reinforcing precise points of connection with the past via the revival of specific traditions.[13] Two displays in particular exemplified this commitment: the photography exhibition *Funzionalità della Casa Rurale* (*Functionality of the Rural House*) and the display of products from the *Ente Nazionale per l'Artigianato e le Piccole Industrie* or ENAPI (*National Agency for Small Industries and Handicraft*).

Funzionalità della Casa Rurale presented photographs of rural houses across Italy taken by the architects Giuseppe Pagano and Guarniero (Werner) Daniel.[14] Printed in a square format, the photographs were mounted in a dense grid, four photographs tall by three photographs wide, on large panels arranged along one wall of the gallery and in pairs projecting perpendicularly from that wall (fig. 11.3). On the other long wall of the gallery, a narrower band of maps and photographs provided information about the areas surveyed in the exhibition. The photographs themselves are stark images that focus attention on the formal, material, and structural qualities of the houses that they depict (fig. 11.4). Some photographs present the buildings within the surrounding landscape while others frame the buildings quite closely, but in almost every case the sense of human activity is muted; the dominant effect is a documentary mode that resists both aestheticizing the buildings and celebrating them as individual homes.

Short statements in large, white text printed over some of the photographs conveyed the formal, structural, and developmental principles that the organizers deduced from their travels and studies. These statements not only articulated Pagano and Daniel's conception of function, which included geographic, topographical and environmental parameters as well as human use, but also explained how the forms of the buildings embody their functionality.[15] With such instructions the viewer learned to recognize the functional component of architectural elements such as the shape of the roof, the arrangement of windows and doors, and the detailing of mouldings and railings. The combined effect of photographs and text was to assert the essentially functional nature of the rural house and thereby frame it as a useful model for contemporary architects.

In celebrating the rural house in this fashion, Pagano and Daniel offered a stern rebuke to their peers debating the nature of *architettura razionale*. Italian proponents of modern architecture, the exhibition argued, did not need to look to either industry or foreign developments to support their argument that function was the fundamental source of architecture; instead, there was a deeply-rooted native precedent.[16] The exhibition also countered the idea that expression was the central aim of architecture as it celebrated the rural house for its naked functionality, not its aesthetic refinement. From this perspective, all those debating the validity of *architettura razionale* as Fascist architecture were engaged in only a

11.3
View of '*Funzionalità della Casa Rurale*' at the 1936 Triennale di Milano.

11.4
'Casa rurale presso Gandino in Val Seriana' in *Architettura Rurale Italiana* (Milan: Ulrico Hoepli Editore, 1936), p. 124.

superficial discussion. By concentrating on the monumental civic projects favoured by the regime, rationalists and classicists alike preoccupied themselves only with architectural expression and ignored the substantive work of architecture in the world.

Funzionalità della Casa Rurale effectively argued that certain conventions of Italian domestic architecture should form the basis for present-day efforts to address the acute need for good-quality, low-cost housing; as such, it offered the rural house as a vital model for contemporary practices. The display of works sponsored by the *Ente Nazionale per l'Artigianato e le Piccole Industrie* (ENAPI) at that Triennale demonstrated a similar attitude toward Italian craft traditions. Founded in 1925, the *Ente Nazionale per le Piccole Industrie* (National Agency for Small Industries, ENPI) was established in order to foster collaboration between artists and architects on the one hand, and artisans, craftspeople, and small-scale manufacturers on the other.[17] In 1927, with a slightly expanded name and acronym, the agency organized its first display at the Monza exhibition of decorative arts, and it continued to participate in the exhibition series when it was re-organized as the Triennale di Milano.

At the 1936 Triennale, ENAPI occupied a substantial room on the second floor of the Palazzo as part of the *Galleria delle Arti Decorative e Industriali* (fig. 11.5). The display comprised a selection of domestic objects, ranging from furniture and ceramics to textiles and metalwork, produced by the manufacturers that collaborated with the agency.[18] As the view of the room shows, the work encompassed a range of decorative styles and approaches but was generally characterized by a simplicity of form, the absence of ornate detail, and an emphasis on materiality; the rugs in particular illustrate these qualities nicely.

In order to accomplish its goal of strengthening and promoting artisanal and small-scale production in Italy, ENAPI developed a program that paired artists and architects

with manufacturers and craftspeople. Described in the catalogue accompanying the exhibition as *artisti ideatori* (artist-creators) the artists and architects collaborating with ENAPI were charged with developing new models for the manufacturers to put into production that would more closely reflect contemporary tastes than their existing product lines. With this structure, ENAPI worked to foster a new relationship between artistic creativity and manufacturing know-how that would transform small-scale manufacturing and yield a synthesis of traditional craftsmanship with modern materials and forms in order to satisfy contemporary demands, both aesthetic and functional.

The nature of this synthesis is explored in more detail in the catalogue published in conjunction with the larger design exhibition of which the ENAPI display was a part. Discussing the artists and architects who collaborated with ENAPI, the exhibition organizer Carlo Felice simultaneously asserted their embrace of modernity and distanced them from the focus on the machine that characterized so much modern architecture and design: "'La casa macchina da abitare": è l'eresia che ancóra, a ogni piè sospinto, gli avversari rinfacciano ai "novecentisti"'.[19] With the term *novecentisti* (literally 'of the nine-hundreds,' or twentieth century), Felice characterized all of the participating artists and architects as of their time, as modern. At the same time, with an unmistakable reference to Le Corbusier, he distinguished them from those who embraced the machine as the defining feature of modern life and conceived the home as a *macchina da abitare* (a machine for living). As this statement makes clear, ENAPI aimed to foster design practices that modulated the impact of industrialization on traditional crafts and skilled labour through the creation of new languages of form.

Given its commitment to moderating industrialization, it is perhaps surprising that the agency enlisted artists and architects working with such a diverse range of aims and ideals for its program. Among the ninety-three *artisti ideatori* involved in the 1936 display were not only several current and former Futurists such as Enrico Prampolini and Gino Severini, but also a significant number of the most passionate advocates for modern architecture, including several members of the Gruppo Sette as well as Pagano, Ponti, and the partners of BBPR. That so many artists and architects contributed to the ENAPI program demonstrates how widespread was the commitment to reviving craft and manufacturing traditions through a synthesis with modern forms and materials. In this light, ENAPI must be understood as a program motivated not by nostalgia for lost traditions, but rather by the desire to transform existing customs in order to make them viable in and productive for the contemporary world.

Indeed, *Funzionalità della Casa Rurale* and the ENAPI display at the 1936 Triennale aimed to introduce visitors to the value of the past by presenting Italian traditions not as distant phenomena, distinct from the present and appreciable only in aesthetic or historical terms, but as mechanisms for improving the experience of the present. There were two interrelated forces that motivated and shaped this effort. The first was Fascism itself, which was committed to constructing a culture and a society that would foster an essential Italian character and thereby activate the full potential of industrialization.[20] From the mid-1930s, coinciding with the invasion of Ethiopia and the declaration of empire, the regime promoted cultural policies and activities that celebrated this vision of society more aggressively, and the 1936 Triennale was very much a part of that effort.

The second factor was the unevenness of Italian modernity. Despite the efforts of the Fascist regime, Italy remained a country with deep regional divisions articulated by sharp differences in degrees of industrialization as much as by language and customs.[21] With vast areas of the country still following rural customs and even many aspects of urban life, housing especially, largely unchanged for centuries, few Italians experienced modernity as a uniformly industrialized way of life. Inspired by the close physical proximity of the past to the present inherent in this condition and evident in innumerable ways such as the narrow boundary between the urban and the rural at the periphery of Milan, many Italian artists, architects, and designers experimented with strategies to articulate productive connections between traditional practices and modern materials, forms, and needs.

The two exhibitions at the 1936 Triennale illustrate just two such strategies—studying the rural home and adapting craft traditions—that Italian architects deployed to construct modern architecture that would effectively engage the potentials of industrialization and at the same time reinforce the established rituals of everyday life that continued to play such a prominent role in Italian culture.[22] While ENAPI's promotion of traditional craftsmanship would be dismissed as revivalism in most accounts of modern architecture by virtue of its reverence for the past, through the lens of revival it appears instead as a constituent component of Italian efforts to construct a modern world in which the past was still present. Similarly, the celebration of rural housing offered by *Funzionalità della Casa Rurale* must be understood not as a rejection of modern architecture, but as a proposal for an alternative foundation for it, one that incorporated long-established native conventions alongside the principles of modern industry. Together, the exhibitions point to the wide range of practices and strategies that architects in Milan explored as they debated the nature of modern architecture for a culture and a society in which the present and the past remained in such close proximity. That revival rather than revivalism was their goal is evidenced by their cultivation of only certain traditions, which were selected carefully for adaptation to contemporary purposes. Against revivalism, which asserts the formal and functional consistency of the historical referent, revival acknowledges the separation of function from form in the historical referent and thereby facilitates the productive redeployment of conventional forms, materials, techniques, and even planning models.

TWO TOWERS

Designed two decades after the 1936 Triennale, the Pirelli tower and the Torre Velasca would seem to have little connection to the issues, debates, and displays at the earlier exhibition; in scale and function alone, the two towers seem far from the domestic objects at the ENAPI display and the rural homes celebrated by *Funzionalità della Casa Rurale*. The ambition to bring past and present into explicit and productive engagement with one another evidenced at the Triennale, however, offers an analytical framework with which to approach the two towers so as to sidestep the simplistic opposition between the modern and the revival that has typically been used to assess them. Indeed, considering the Pirelli

11.6
Ludovico Belgiojoso,
Enrico Peressutti, and
Ernesto Rogers, Torre
Velasca, Milan, Italy,
1950–8.

tower and the Torre Velasca in light of the experiments of the 1930s reveals them to be products of the same distinctive conception of modern architecture, in which the unevenness of Italian modernity was to be accommodated and engaged rather than corrected or refuted.

In their initial proposals for the Torre Velasca, BBPR envisioned a tower with a rectangular plan and projecting upper floors similar to those in the final design but with a prominent steel structural frame. The cost of steel, however, proved prohibitive, and the architects soon re-worked the design using reinforced concrete. This shift impacted not only the structure of the building, but also the exterior treatment as the reinforced-concrete structure has a far greater sense of mass than the relatively lighter steel frame would ever have had. In fact, beside the projecting upper block, the engaged vertical piers are the most distinctive feature of the tower: substantial rectangular blocks at ground level, they taper as they move up the building to slide slowly into the façade, eventually merging with it fully at the roofline (fig. 11.6).

The massive trusses that support the projecting upper block are the only interruption to the vertical stretch of the piers. These trusses emerge from the piers three floors below the upper block and stretch toward it with the support of horizontal members that join the trusses just below the upper block. This precise treatment of these prominent structural elements allows the vertical piers to drop below the upper block to join with the trusses and thereby stand briefly as isolated elements. This effect generates a pronounced tension between the revelation of structural elements and the subordination of such elements to the highly textured surface of the façade. The piers are clad with the same masonry panels used for the in-fill while the exposed concrete of the horizontal members is reddish-brown to match the masonry; the cumulative effect is of an almost monolithic mass of masonry. This quality is heightened by the glazing system. The windows and in-fill panels at the Torre Velasca are prominently recessed with respect to the structural piers, and this treatment yields a strongly textured façade that is further articulated by the thick sills projecting from each window and the prominent vertical members separating adjacent window units.

In contrast to the pronounced texture of the Torre Velasca, the Pirelli tower is uniformly smooth and its most distinctive feature is its unified form: in plan, the building consists of a stretched, laterally-symmetrical hexagon that tapers dramatically at both ends. (Oriented NE-SW on its trapezoidal site, the building presents its main façade to the Piazza Duc d'Aosta.) The unusual shape of the building is heightened by the gaps between the walls at the tapered ends, which are closed with deeply inset glazing. And as at the Torre Velasca, the treatment of the façade of the Pirelli tower also reinforces the distinctive plan of the building as the long sides of the building are clad almost entirely with a glazing system that minimizes the difference between the windows and in-fill panels, while the narrow walls at each end are clad in solid concrete panels (fig. 11.7).

The exterior treatment celebrates the unique structure of the building too. That structure comprises eight, narrow, reinforced concrete piers connected so as to form four, centrally-located pairs from which the floor plates are cantilevered. The glazed gaps at either end of the building effectively disrupt the apparent solidity of the end walls, while thin concrete piers on the long façades stretch the height of the building, tapering toward the top. The taper gracefully expresses the decreasing load carried by the piers nearer the top of the building and generates a remarkable quality of lightness at the upper stories, which are fully glazed and capped with a thin-edged roof that sits clear of the walls.

It is exactly the pronounced difference between the rough texture and irregular shape of the Torre Velasca on the one hand, and the smooth skin and unified form of the Pirelli Tower on the other that explains the divide in the conventional assessments of the two towers. Other points of comparison, however, yield more nuanced insight into the relationship between the two buildings. At ground level, for instance, the Pirelli tower rises from a tall, broad plinth that houses services spaces and parking whereas the Torre Velasca sits directly at street grade, with two service floors and a parking garage buried beneath it.[23] As a result, the pronounced textures that define the Torre Velasca can be experienced directly by pedestrians working their way around the tower base to peer into shop win-

11.7
Giò Ponti, Antonio Fornaroli, and
Alberto Rosselli with
Giuseppe Valtolina,
Egidio dell'Orto, Arturo
Danusso, and Pier Luigi
Nervi, Pirelli tower,
Milan, Italy, 1955–60.

dows, while the Pirelli tower keeps pedestrians at a distance, its smooth façade a seamless barrier separating inside and outside. Also, rather than climbing to the entryway as at the Pirelli tower, the occupants of the Torre Velasca enter the building through an attached two-story pavilion at street level. No doubt the differing functions of the two buildings are partly responsible for these very different entrances—occupied by a single company, the Pirelli tower required strictly-controlled access, while the mixed-use Torre Velasca needed to accommodate a variety of visitors—but the entrances reinforce the buildings' respective sensibilities of isolation from and connection to the surrounding city.

As high-rise buildings, the Pirelli tower and Torre Velasca stood out from the rest of the city when they were constructed; even today, the towers are distinctive presences on the Milan skyline. And yet, both towers display a remarkable degree of consideration for the contexts in which they sit: with its smooth, sleek, unified form, the Pirelli tower separates itself from the distant city centre and celebrates its contribution to the construction of a new business district. In contrast, the Torre Velasca engages Milan's historic core, and the Duomo in particular, with its prominent materiality, heavily articulated structure, and distinctive, variegated form. In taking up these conventions of the site and adapting them to the scale and function of a skyscraper, the architects of the Torre Velasca adopted strategies of revival in order to achieve an effect of connectedness rather than rupture between the tower and the city around it. Ernesto Rogers eloquently described this impulse at work: 'Our main purpose was to give this building the intimate value of our culture. … It is at Milan's very historical centre and we found it necessary that our building breathe the atmosphere of the place and even intensify it'.[24] Despite the profound differences in the architectural treatment of the two towers, the same effort to connect to the 'atmosphere of the place' is evident in the Pirelli tower. Indeed, the differences between the towers embody the very different roles that they play within the city: the Torre Velasca a symbol of reconstruction, constructing continuity within the historic core, and the Pirelli tower an icon of modern development, resolutely affirming the future of the city.

It is clear that the Pirelli tower and Torre Velasca share a powerful commitment to communicating not only their own structure and function but also something of the present, past, and future life of the city as revealed in the neighbourhoods around them. From this perspective, the apparent opposition between the two towers reflects their respective positions within the city rather than any profound differences in their attitudes toward modernity. Rather than reinforcing the opposition between the modern and the revival—between the industrialized present and the pre-industrial past—that typically defines modern architecture, the Pirelli tower and the Torre Velasca point to the need to recognize modern architecture as constituted by the complexity and irregularity of both the processes and experiences of industrialization as much as by their idealization. The concept of revival outlined here in relation to the two towers and the 1936 Triennale serves not only to explain why architects in Milan devised a wide range of strategies to forge connections between the past and the present, but also to expand the terms with which such work is evaluated to include a more diverse set of technical processes, organizational
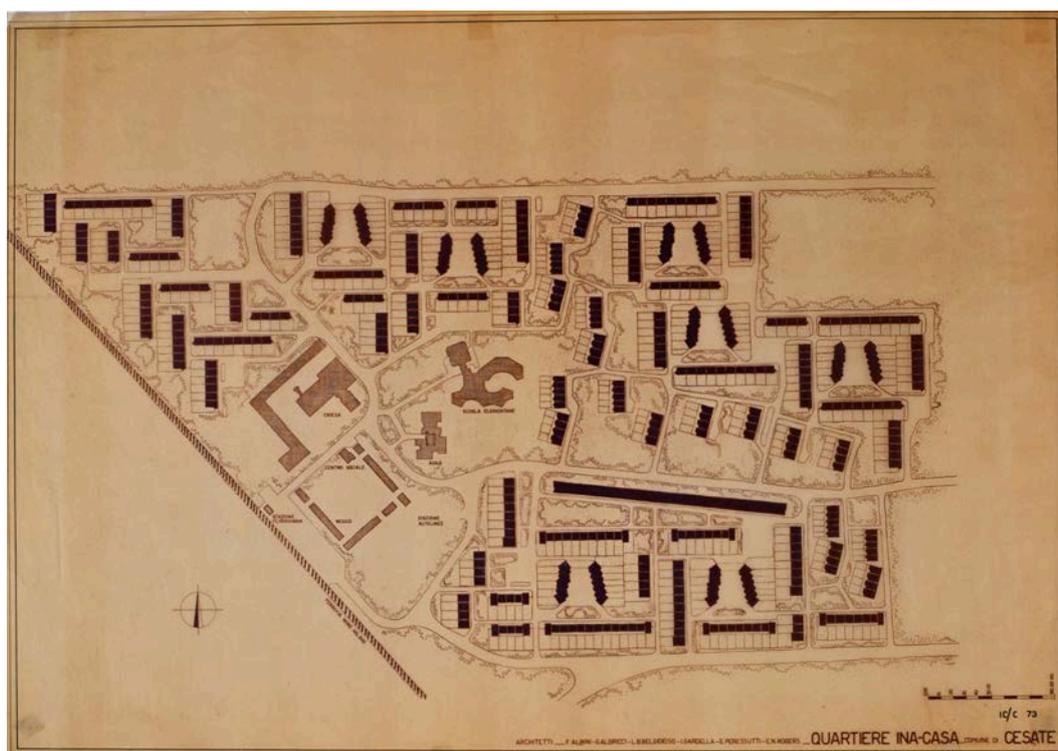
11.8
Franco Albini, Gianni Albricci, Ignazio Gardella, and Ludovico Belgiojoso, Enrico Peressutti, and Ernesto Rogers, Plan of the Cesate quarter, Cesate, Italy, c. 1956.

principles, and formal and material choices than is typically considered in relation to modern architecture.

REVIVAL, NEOREALISM, AND THE LANGUAGE OF CRITICISM

One final project further illustrates the limitations of the conventional opposition between the modern and the revival as well as the varied language that architects, critics, and scholars have developed to describe that opposition. Designed between 1950 and 1954, and constructed between 1954 and 1956, the Cesate quarter is a residential project located on the northwest periphery of Milan, approximately fifteen kilometres from the city centre. Housing approximately 6000 individuals in single-family row homes and one, four-story apartment block, the quarter was constructed under the auspices of the *Piano INA-Casa* (INA-Casa plan), a national plan to boost employment through the construction of affordable housing that ran from 1949 to 1963.[25]

In its program, the Cesate quarter is fairly typical of INA-Casa projects, which range in size from single apartment buildings to large *quartieri* with up to 20,000 residents and can be found across Italy. Construction of the quarter was directed by the local housing agency—in this case the *Istituto Autonomo della Casa Popolare di Milano* (Autonomous Institute for Popular Housing of Milan)—and its design was prepared by a large team of architects, including Franco Albini, Gianni Albricci, Ignazio Gardella, and BBPR. Its location on the urban periphery is also typical of INA-Casa projects as the plan failed to provide any mechanism for acquiring land, and inner-city property in the major Italian cities quickly became too expensive due to speculation. Although it is a relatively short ride to the city centre on the Milano Nord railroad, the tracks of which run along the western edge of the quarter, the Cesate quarter was designed as a self-sufficient community.

In particular, the architects deployed a range of techniques to realize a quarter that would stimulate social engagement and interaction among the residents and avoid the monotonous repetition and uniformity typical of housing projects constructed *ex nihilo*. The overall plan of the project was their primary means of achieving these aims, and they divided the quarter into a number of smaller zones or neighbourhoods, each of which demarcates an open space at its centre intended to foster the kind of community life typical of a traditional piazza (fig. 11.8). Although these spaces do not boast a familiar shape, their

articulation by the surrounding buildings clearly echoes the nature of the piazza, which is defined as an urban space chiefly by the boundary structures rather than any features inherent to itself.

The architects' ambition for these spaces is evidenced by the working drawings for the quarter. In their initial plans, they envisioned an irregular, gridded array of uniform two- and four-story residential blocks that would have assured ample public space between the rectangular blocks. Such space, however, would have been largely undifferentiated, much as the arrangement of buildings itself did not articulate any functional or social order within the quarter. Soon thereafter the architects began to cultivate the idea of discrete residential clusters, what they called nuclei. In the earliest drawings showing this impulse, these clusters are indicated by circles, a simple form that effectively expresses the desire for cohesion and community that motivated the architects to devise the strategy.[26] In the final plan, any formal evidence of circles is absent but the concept of the cluster and nucleus remains, constructed instead with rectangular blocks of row houses that the architects arranged tightly around an unusual, V-shaped configuration of row houses defining a compact piazza.

With this plan, the architects revived a traditional element of Italian towns—the piazza—using a distinctively modern configuration to perform the same function within the community. Other aspects of the quarter demonstrate the architects' deployment of a range of strategies of revival in their efforts to construct a project that would simultaneously provide the amenities of modern housing and foster the community life typical of historic neighbourhoods despite its location on the new urban periphery. Architects, critics, and scholars have come to describe the interest in vernacular architectural traditions and local building conventions among Italian architects after the war as Neorealism, a term initially popularized to describe the contemporaneous tendency in cinema and literature to reject the heroic narratives celebrated by the Fascist regime in favour of stories that engaged the everyday life of ordinary Italians.[27] First deployed in reference to architecture in the mid-1950s, the term also serves to demarcate post-war architecture decisively from pre-war architecture; as such, it obscures lines of research and experimentation pursued across the middle of the twentieth century in favour of emphasizing the ways in which Italian architects re-oriented their practices in the wake of fascism and the war.[28]

Like the Pirelli tower and the Torre Velasca, however, the Cesate quarter is the product of a decades-long effort to define and construct modern architecture that would embrace the potential for industrialization to transform everyday life, and at the same time renew and reinforce certain customs and traditions. While the products of this long and continuously evolving project display a significant variety of formal and material qualities, they all embody a relationship between the present and the past that celebrates continuity rather than rupture, connectedness rather than fragmentation. Just as closer examination of the Pirelli tower and the Torre Velasca revealed the limits of the critical language typically used to assess them, this analysis of the Cesate quarter calls into question the explanatory value of Neorealism. But like revival, Neorealism offers other critical possibilities.

Indeed, recent scholarship on post-war Italian cinema shows how the concept can be reoriented to offer a productive framework with which to examine architectural practices that developed across the middle decades of the twentieth century.[29] In relation to film, scholars now deploy Neorealism as a framework with which to explain a precise set of intentions that flourished after the war and the related but varied formal and technical strategies that filmmakers devised to achieve those intentions. Furthermore, it is now understood that many of those formal and technical strategies were first developed during the 1930s, so scholars have shifted Neorealism from its initial incarnation as a celebration of anti-Fascist practices and redeployed it to examine how such practices came to be aligned so deeply with post-war culture despite their origins in pre-war debates. In this way, Neorealism offers a productive model for thinking about post-war architectural production in relation to pre-war practices and debates, and particularly the potential to reorient established critical languages so that they highlight historical connections rather than foreclosing certain lines of inquiry. The value of such reorientations is effectively double: first, pointing to a connection that was assumed not to exist, and second, reversing the significance of the critical term initially established to deny that connection.

Approaching modern architecture in Milan through the lens of revival acknowledges as central to the phenomenon the commitment to constructing points of connection between the present and the past evidenced at the 1936 Triennale. Such an analysis also examines the wide variety of forms and techniques deployed by architects in relationship to the underlying ambitions rather than a set of aesthetic criteria devised in another context. At both the Pirelli tower and the Torre Velasca, as at the Cesate quarter, strategies of revival conceived long before are apparent alongside the most modern materials, techniques, and forms; indeed, they rely on them. In this light, reoriented concepts of Neorealism and revival supersede the conventional dichotomies between pre-war and post-war and modern and revival in order to describe and conceptualize the full range of practices devised, debated, and deployed in Milan in the effort to construct modern architecture during the middle decades of the twentieth century.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1.   The design team for the Pirelli tower comprised Giò Ponti, Antonio Fornaroli, Alberto Rosselli, Giuseppe Valtolina, and Egidio Dell'Orto, with Arturo Danusso and Pier Luigi Nervi serving as structural engineers.

2.   The term *Miracolo Economico* (Economic Miracle) refers to a period of rapid economic growth between the mid-1950s and the mid-1960s. The *Miracolo* impacted all of western Europe, but it was especially strong in Italy, which developed as one of the largest economies in the world during those years. For a useful introduction to the causes and effects of the *Miracolo* see Paul Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics, 1943–1988* (London: Penguin Books, 1990). For the particular impact of the *Miracolo* in Milan see John Foot, *Milan since the Miracle: City, Culture and Identity* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2001).

3.   For more on the Pirelli company's ambitions for its new building see Carlo Vinti, *Gli Anni dello Stile Industriale, 1948–1965: Immagine e Politica Culturale nella Grande Impresa Italiana* (Venice: IUAV and Marsilio, 2007).

4.   In the planning terminology of the time, this kind of development was called a *centro direzionale* (directional centre). For more on this development see Maurizio Grandi and Attilio Pracchi, *Milano: Guida all'Architettura Moderna* (Milan: Lampi di Stampa, 2008).

5.   The four principles of BBPR met while students at the Politecnico di Milano and formed the firm shortly after their graduation in 1932. For more on BBPR see Ezio Bonfanti and Marco Porta, *Città, Museo e Architettura: Il Gruppo BBPR nella Cultura Architettonica Italiana 1932–1970* (Milan: Editore Ulrico Hoepli, 1973).

6.   Jacob Bakema quoted in Oscar Newman, *New Frontiers in Architecture: CIAM '59 in Otterlo* (New York: Universe Books, 1961), p. 97.

7.   The Smithsons were as critical of the project as Bakema, while Banham saw the tower as symptomatic of a broader 'retreat from modern architecture' among Italian architects. See his essay 'Neoliberty: The Italian Retreat from Modern Architecture', *Architectural Review* 125:747 (1959): pp. 231–235.

8.   I use 'modern architecture' to refer to the diverse efforts to develop an architecture wholly rooted in the present that flourished across Europe throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Architects, critics, and scholars typically define these efforts by the rejection of history as a source of organizational logic, technical knowledge, and formal inspiration, and have variously described them as the International Style, the Modern Movement, modernist architecture, and architectural modernism. I have adopted 'modern architecture' here because it conveys the ambitions of the people and work under discussion in the simplest terms.

9.   The *Gruppo Sette* comprised Ubaldo Castagnoli (quickly replaced by Adalberto Libera), Luigi Figini, Guido Frette, Sebastiano Larco, Gino Pollini, Carlo Enrico Rava, and Giuseppe Terragni. They published their first statement, entitled simply 'Architecture', in 1926. Adalberto Libera was the first to advance the term *razionalismo* in his essay 'Arte e Razionalismo' of 1928. The bibliography on the *Gruppo Sette* and the history of modern architecture in Italy is voluminous. For a very useful recent volume in English see David Rifkind, *The Battle for Modernism:* Quadrante *and the Politicization of Architecture in Fascist Italy* (Venice: Marsilio, 2012). For the *Gruppo Sette* and Libera's essays see Michele Cennamo (ed.), *Materiali per l'Analisi dell'Architettura Moderna. La Prima Esposizione Italiana di Architettura Razionale* (Naples: Fausto Fiorentino Editore, 1973).

10.   Now known simply as the Triennale, this exhibition began as a biannual exhibition of decorative arts in 1923 organized in conjunction with the Università delle Arti Decorative (later re-named the Istituto Superiore di Industrie Artistiche) in Monza. The exhibition series was transferred to Milan as part of its expansion and incorporation into an official calendar of international exhibitions sponsored by the Fascist regime that included the Venice biennale and a quadrennial art exhibition in Rome. The creation of this structure illustrates the ways in which the regime worked to articulate and disseminate Italian culture along popular lines. For an introduction to the cultural policies of the regime see Victoria de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass Organization of Leisure in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); and Marla Susan Stone, *The Patron State: Culture & Politics in Fascist Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998). For more on the exhibitions in Monza and the Triennale in Milan see Anty Pansera, *Storia e Cronaca della Triennale* (Milan: Longanesi & C., 1978); and Elena Dellapiana and Daniela N. Prina, 'Craft, Industry and Art: ISIA (1922–1943) and the Roots of Italian Design Education,' in Grace Lees-Maffei and Kjetil Fallan (eds.), *Made in Italy: Rethinking a Century of Italian Design* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

11.   The *Palazzo dell'Arte* was designed by Giovanni Muzio specifically to house the exhibition upon its move to Milan. The so-called 'Pavilion in the Park' at the 1936 exhibition was designed by Giuseppe Pagano. For more information see Pansera, *Storia e Cronaca della Triennale.*

12.   The *Sala della Vittoria* was designed by Marcello Nizzoli, Giancarlo Palanti, and Edoardo Persico with Lucio Fontana.

13.   Art Historian Emily Braun has explored this issue in depth with respect to the painter Mario Sironi. See Emily Braun, *Mario Sironi and Italian Modernism: Art and Politics under Fascism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

14.   The photographs were also published in a book produced in conjunction with the exhibition: Giuseppe Pagano and Guarniero Daniel, *Architettura Rurale Italiana* (Milan: Ulrico Hoepli Editore, 1936).

15.   One such statement reads: 'Nelle zone di precipitazioni abbondanti la forma semplice di pagliaio non è sufficiente a proteggere la raccolta risulta necessaria una copertura: il tetto. Forma primitiva: a cono. Forma evoluta: a quattro spioventi. Nasce così la capanna'. From Pagano and Daniel, *Architettura Rurale Italiana*, p. 9. Translation: 'In zones of abundant precipitation, the simple form of the haystack is not sufficient to protect the harvest necessarily resulting in a cover: the roof. Primitive form: the cone. Evolved form: with four slopes. This is how the cabana is born'.

16.   An additional benefit of the photographs is that they also showed how Italians' concern with functionality in earlier ages had yielded buildings with formal and structural configurations similar to those popular among modern architects such as the *brises soleil* promoted by Le Corbusier.

17.   The ENPI was established as part of a broader effort to regulate and promote artisanal labor and craftsmanship that was in some ways similar to the syndicates that were set up for other professions. For more on ENPI see Dellapiana and Prina, 'Craft, Industry and Art: ISIA (1922–1943) and the Roots of Italian Design Education'; and Andrea Colli and Michelangelo Vasta (eds), *Forms of Enterprise in 20th Century Italy* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2010).

18.   In total, 201 manufacturers and 93 artists and architects contributed to the exhibition. The complete list of participating manufacturers and designers is available in catalogue produced for the exhibition: Ente Nazionale per l'Artigianato e le Piccole Industrie, *L'Artigianato d'Italia alla Sesta Triennale di Milano, Maggio – Ottobre 1936 – IV* (Rome: ENAPI, 1936).

19.   '"The house, machine for living": it is the heresy that still, at every step, the opponents throw back at the "novecentisti".' Carlo A. Felice, *Arti Industriale d'Oggi* (Milan: Ulrico Hoepli Editore, 1936), p. 14.

20.   For an excellent overview of this issue see Mark Antliff, 'Fascism, Modernism, Modernity', *Art Bulletin* 84:1 (2002): pp. 148–169.

21.   For a compelling introduction to this topic see Carlo Levi, *Cristo si è Fermato a Eboli* (Turin: Einaudi, 1945).

22.   Michelangelo Sabatino has explored another such strategy in his book *Pride in Modesty: Modern Architecture and the Vernacular Tradition in Italy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).

23.   Somewhat surprisingly, this was also a point raised by Bakema, who faulted the Torre Velasca for not sufficiently communicating the presence of cars beneath it. See Newman, *New Frontiers in Architecture*, p. 97.

24.   Ernesto Rogers quoted in Newman, *New Frontiers in Architecture*, p. 93

25.   The Italian literature on the *Piano INA-Casa*, or *Piano Fanfani* as it is often called after the Minister, Amintore Fanfani, who sponsored it, is substantial. An excellent starting point is Paola Di Biagi (ed.), *La Grande Ricostruzione: Il Piano INA-Casa e l'Italia degli Anni Cinquanta* (Rome: Donzelli Editore, 2001). A recent overview in English is Stephanie Zeier Pilat, *Reconstructing Italy: The Ina-Casa neighborhoods of the Postwar Era* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2014).

26.   These circles are not a conventional symbol in architectural drawings, but their meaning is clear within the context of the evolution of the plan. Furthermore, the caption for a similar plan of the quarter published in *Urbanistica* in 1957 describes the circles as 'nuclei residenziali'.

27.   Literary Neorealism is exemplified by authors such as Italo Calvino, whose 1947 novel *Il Sentiero dei Nidi di Ragno (The Path to the Spiders' Nests)* is widely considered the first work of Neorealist literature. Films such as *I Ladri di Biciclette* (*The Bicycle Thieves*) and *Roma, Città Aperta* (*Rome, Open City*) by Vittorio De Sica and Roberto Rossellini respectively exemplify cinematic Neorealism.

28.   Aldo Rossi and Guido Cannella, in the mid-1950s, were the first to describe the architecture of the immediate post-war period as Neorealist, but it soon became commonplace. Ludovico Quaroni, for instance, made the connection in his brief reflection on the Tiburtino Quarter in Rome, one of the earliest post-war housing projects; see Ludovico Quaroni, 'Il paese dei barocchi', *Casabella continuità* 215 (1957), p. 24. Since then, critics and scholars have continued to use the term Neorealism to characterize Italian post-war architecture. For examples, see: Bruno Reichlin, 'Figures of Neorealism in Italian Architecture, Part 1,' *Grey Room* 5 (Fall 2001): pp. 78–101 and 'Figures of Neorealism in Italian Architecture, Part 2', *Grey Room* 6 (Winter 2002): pp. 110–133, as well as Maristella Casciato, 'Neorealism in Italian Architecture,' in Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault (eds.), *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000) and ''L'invenzione della realtà': Realismo e neo-realismo nell'Italia degli anni cinquanta', in Di Biagi (ed.), *La Grande Ricostruzione*. Manfredo Tafuri's essay 'Realismo,' in Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (ed.), *L'Avventura delle Idee nell'Architettura 1750–1980* (Milan: Electa, 1985) is another important document in this historiographical trend.

29.   The work of film scholars such as Peter Bondanella and Millicent Marcus on cinematic Neorealism from the 1970s and 1980s is useful, but the more recent work of Noa Steimatsky and John David Rhodes is particularly important for this discussion. See John David Rhodes, *Stupendous Miserable City: Pasolini's Rome* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); and Noa Steimatsky, *Italian Locations: Reinhabiting the Past in Postwar Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

CHAPTER 12

BABYLON ELECTRIFIED: ORIENTAL HYBRIDITY AS FUTURISM IN VICTORIAN UTOPIAN ARCHITECTURE

NATHANIEL ROBERT WALKER

12.1
Robert Owen and Thomas Stedman Whitwell, design for New Harmony, published in *The Co-operative Magazine and Monthly Herald*, January 1826.
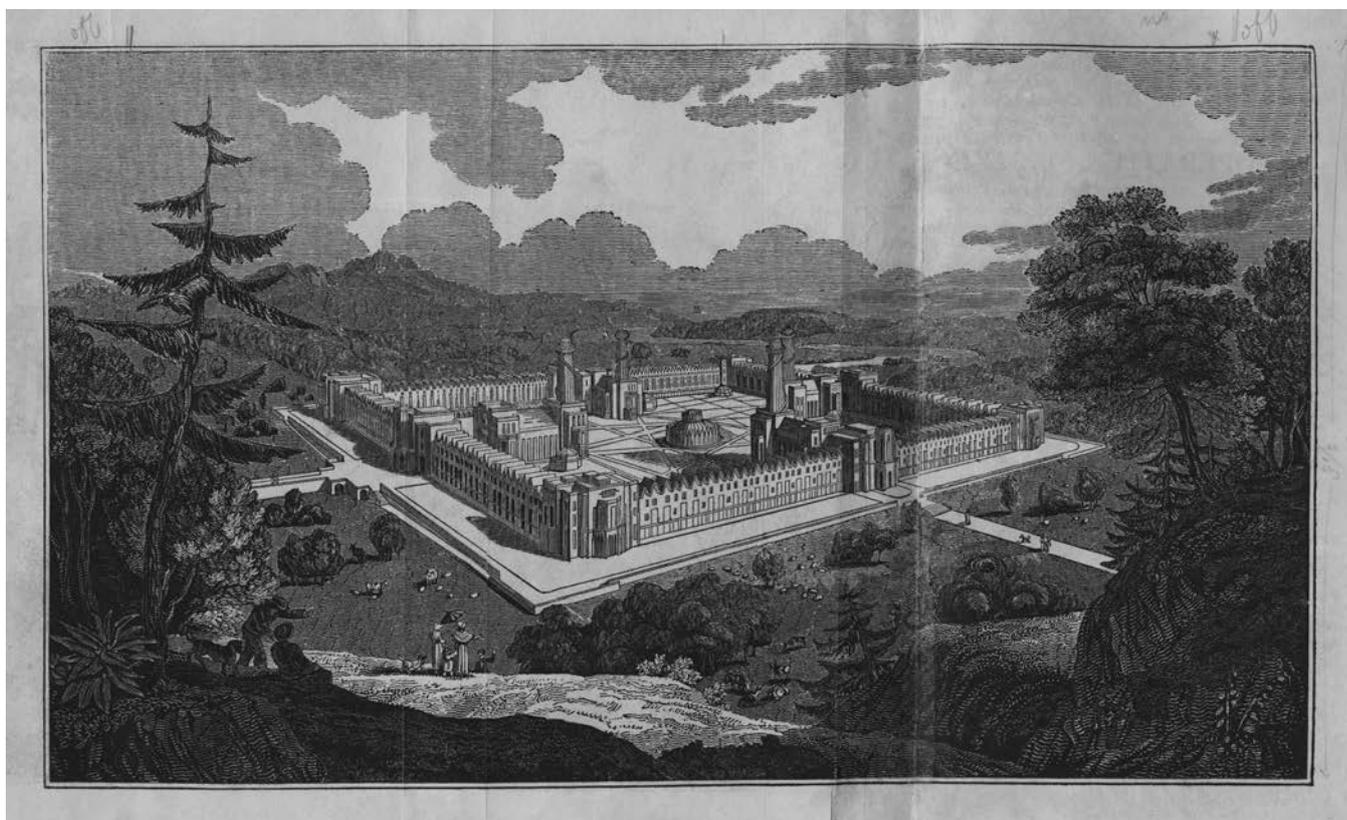
It is no secret that one of the main polemical strategies adopted by early-twentieth century advocates of Modernist architecture was the insistence that traditional architecture had become decoupled from cultural evolution and was therefore incapable of serving modernity. Walter Gropius (1883–1969) declared in 1935 that industrialism had 'so preoccupied humanity that, instead of pressing forward to tackle the new problems of design … we have remained content to borrow our styles from antiquity and perpetuate historical prototypes in decoration'.[1] With this one statement he condemned as superficial and illegitimate every traditional style of architecture, and suggested implicitly that such 'borrowed' styles could not long be used. Other young agitators for a new architecture not only denounced traditional styles but also attacked stylistic pluralism itself. They insisted that the mixture of historical forms in nineteenth-century revivalist design culture was a clear sign that all architectural traditions had become inherently meaningless, regulated not by legitimate cultural imperatives or the 'spirit of the times,' but rather by caprice and whimsy. In 1914, the Italian Futurists famously declared:

Since the eighteenth century there has been no more architecture. What is called modern architecture is a stupid mixture of the most varied stylistic elements used to mask the modern skeleton. The new beauty of concrete and iron is profaned by the superimposition of carnival decorative incrustations justified neither by structural necessity nor by taste, and having their origins in Egyptian, Indian or Byzantine antiquity or in that astounding outburst of idiocies and impotence known as 'neo-classicism'.[2]

For the Futurists, the 'impotence' of traditional architecture was, of course, the self-same impotence of the conservative bourgeoisie, who reacted in vain against the social and political imperatives of the modern age.[3] Traditional styles were, they argued, inherently backward-looking, and the 'stupid mixture' of multiple traditions revealed that contemporary architects did not even know, or perhaps care, which backwards cultural moment they were trying to resuscitate—their only objective was to 'mask' the emerging industrial future with a thin skin of comforting, nostalgic nonsense.

In the many decades that have passed since these condemnations of architectural 'borrowing,' a number of scholars have demonstrated that nineteenth-century revivalist eclecticism was, in fact, often deliberately crafted not as hodgepodge escapism, but rather as part of a progressive search for a definitively modern—if obviously not Modernist—architecture. Richard A. Etlin, for example, has recounted how a number of architects throughout the 1800s made it clear that their efforts to fuse multiple cultural and historical design traditions were motivated by a belief in a 'universal … world history' of architecture.[4] Locating 'principles common to all styles' could enable architects to transcend tradition and history—or, alternatively, architects might express of the transient flow of history by combining seemingly contrary aesthetic qualities or historical associations 'in a dialectical manner,' creating a unique architecture of flux that spoke to history's ongoing processes.[5] Of course, revivalism had its aesthetic and historical purists, such as A.W.N. Pugin and John Ruskin, who insisted on archaeologically engaged strains of the Gothic during their crusades on behalf of the pre-industrial past, but eclectic revivalists in search of 'universal history' were less concerned with period or cultural accuracy precisely because they were not attempting to recapture the lost spirit of a particular place in a particular age. Their work not only defied the historicists, it even threatened them, precisely because eclecticism has the power to undermine theories of an idealized past of social or religious unity and, instead, can propose an ideal, even utopian, future of cultural exchange, expansion, and transformation.[6]

A number of utopian visions published in the 1800s in Britain, the United States, and France make it clear that many nineteenth-century progressives believed a future defined by global synthesis would be made possible, and indeed inevitable, by scientific modernity. Taking their cues from Henri de Saint-Simon, Charles Darwin, and other theorists of historical development, they understood the future not as an abrogation of the past, but as its

culmination. They attempted in various ways to imagine and describe an architecture that would convey the utopian rhetoric of reform and progress via historical and cultural amalgamation, combining old styles from many different places into new hybrid styles. Chief among the architectures they fused with Western styles were those of the East: Byzantine, Arabic, Turkish, Mughal, Hindu, Chinese, and other Oriental architectural traditions, or conventionalized stereotypes of them. In texts and in illustrations, these were imaginatively interwoven with Western cities, landscapes, and buildings to produce a picture of the world evolved.

Of course, there were different agencies imagined as guiding and benefiting from these mixtures—sometimes, the merging of Oriental and Occidental architecture was gleefully presented as an imperial appropriation of the former by the latter, but there are also examples in which the combined architectures were imagined as the fruit of real cultural exchange and, ultimately, a globalized, ecumenical human unity. In either case, these hybrid architectures were calculated not, as the Futurists asserted, to 'mask' the unsettling uncertainties of modernity with a tawdry confectioner's glaze, but rather to express the tantalizing possibilities inherent in a world that was shrinking due to the proliferation of space- and time-annihilating technologies and ever-increasing bodies and systems of knowledge. Considering these visions offers a glimpse into the true complexity of nineteenth-century architectural revivalisms. It also requires a confrontation with Orientalism — the problematic, though clearly very diverse, body of perspectives adopted by the West on the Eastern 'Other'. Edward Said's pioneering study on the imperialist, reductionist casting of the Orient in the role of a backwards, irrational, deliciously inferior counterpart to the West is both supported and complicated by a consideration of the architectural visionaries who imagined the East as the first stop on the road to the future.[7]

FRAGMENTS OF A RAINBOW

It should be briefly acknowledged that long before the rise of capitalist industry or modern colonial empires, proposals of architectural collision and mixture between East and West were put forward by European thinkers in search of a new and ideal way of building. The roots of these concepts stretch back to biblical prophecies of earthly renewal springing from the New Jerusalem. During the Renaissance, a number of influential architects and writers, including Filarete, Francesco Colonna, Francis Bacon, and others, created abstract utopian visions fusing East and West into magnificent, exemplary hybridities that were explicitly presented as progressive and, often, scientific.[8]

By the start of the 1800s, the ideal humanism that propelled such quests for universal and timeless architecture had been joined, of course, by Enlightenment beliefs in cultural and historical relativity. Hybrid architectures could serve this new concept of history by offering an encyclopedic taxonomy of cultural and temporal styles that exposed history's

ongoing developmental processes. At the dawn of the nineteenth century, Richard Payne Knight (1750–1824), the prominent expounder of Picturesque aesthetic theory, argued for just such an architectural aesthetic, and held up as an example his own Downton Castle (1774–78), which was romantic Gothic on the exterior but rational Greek on the interior.[9] In a popular 1808 essay, he explained the philosophy guiding the design of his house and admonished other designers to likewise 'maintain the character of the age and country' and avoid pretending to live in 'a remote period or distant country,' insisting that 'professedly miscellaneous' and indeed 'promiscuous' mixed styles were the safest to use because they were immune to such 'deceit or imposture'.[10] It is important to note that Knight accounted for the differences between Classical and Gothic architecture by citing the influence of Islamic architecture, which ultimately positioned his blend of the Gothic and the Greek as a transcultural synthesis that stretched far beyond the shores of Europe.[11]

As the nineteenth century began to unfold there was, of course, explosive growth in actual contact between Europe and the East, driven both by trade and conquest. Raymond Schwab's landmark volume *The Oriental Renaissance* provides a detailed account of the ways in which growing knowledge of Eastern societies, their deep histories, and their complex traditions had productively destabilizing effects on European concepts of their own history, and consequently on their unfolding future.[12] In the words of Said, Schwab asserted that, 'whereas the classical Renaissance immured European man within the confines of a self-sufficient Greco-Latin terrain, this later Renaissance deposited the whole world before him'.[13] As the above reference to pre-Enlightenment utopian texts demonstrates, this is something of an over-simplification, but there can be no doubt that increasing exposure to Egypt, India, China, and other Eastern locales was transformative for Western understandings of the past, present, and possible future of the planet. The new knowledge forever altered scientific and historical discourses and seized romantic and utopian imaginations. The world had been 'multiplied,' as Schwab explained, even as developments in archaeology, geology, palaeontology and especially linguistics demonstrated profound links between the distant continents.[14] As Mark Crinson discussed in *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture*, the response to this multiplying world by architects was very diverse, but for certain figures such as Owen Jones and James Wild, the design traditions of the East offered opportunities to create an 'eclectic amalgam' that could 'conjure up an image of exotic newness, even perhaps modernity'.[15] For progressives whose thirst for reform inclined them towards utopian speculation on the future, the exotic newness and modernity of global eclecticism was perhaps its chief attraction.

The first half of the 1800s saw the advent of a number of influential utopian visions in which hybrid architectures were crafted to illustrate aspirations for a global scientific future. One sprang from the mind of Robert Owen (1771–1858), the famous Welsh industrialist and social reformer who demanded that a new world order of paternal state socialism replace the unjust and unstable system of factory capitalism. Owen believed humanity should discard the traditional family and institutionalized religion, but he nonetheless appropriated the eschatological word 'Millennium' to describe his radiant future. His New

Jerusalem, as it were, was to be the factory village of New Harmony, a modular cell of utopian urbanism that could be replicated in standardized perfection across 'all parts of the world', manufacturing not only every product desirable to humanity but also a scientifically perfected strain of humanity itself.[16] Owen's initial design for New Harmony, created together with the architect Thomas Stedman Whitwell (1784–1840), was a distinctly Gothic, even monastic quadrangle (fig. 12.1). It was scheduled for construction in 1825 on the North American frontier in southern Indiana, but the failure of that venture prompted Owen to recycle the design for 'home colonies' back in Britain. The most striking iteration includes an overlay of Mughal architectural forms (fig. 12.2). No recorded account of this design change has been found, but the best explanation probably lies in its patron's vision for the future: a land 'flowing with milk and honey' thrown open to 'all classes of all nations' by the reformed order of industrial science.[17] In Owen's vision, the factory smokestacks and botanical conservatory of the scientific future are synthesized with the walled paradise garden of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic religious past, and the cumulative architectural language of both East and West reveals that this a not a local experiment, but rather a utopian empire of global, and indeed Millennial, proportions.

In further support of such an interpretation is a work of architectural theory published not by Robert Owen, but rather by his son and ardent follower, Robert Dale Owen (1801–77), who ultimately settled permanently in the United States and became a successful politician. In 1849 he published a book entitled *Hints on Public Architecture* to explain the design of the Smithsonian Institution—which he had been instrumental in establishing—and issue a broad call for an American architecture of the 'Future'.[18] He explained that this ideal architecture should be like that prescribed fourteen years earlier by the British design aficionado Thomas Hope (1769–1831) in a survey of global building traditions, *An Historical Essay on Architecture*. Hope concluded that epic work by criticizing selective revivals and begging for a progressive synthesis of every style:

> No one seems yet to have conceived the smallest wish or idea of only borrow-
> ing of every former style of architecture whatever it might present of useful

> or ornamental, of scientific or tasteful; of adding thereto whatever other
> new dispositions or forms might afford conveniences or elegancies not yet
> possessed … and thus composing an architecture which, born in our country
> … at once elegant, appropriate, and original, should truly deserve the appella-
> tion of "Our Own".[19]

Robert Dale Owen reprinted this passage in its entirety and called upon Americans to draw, as Hope had drawn, from 'Egyptian and Grecian and Italian and Moorish and Persian and Gothic artists,' distilling them all into a modern style by 'penetrating into the very spirit of the past' for the sake of progress.[20] Of course, Owen's particular view of progress was of a decidedly utopian flavour, given his past and ongoing support of his father's scheme for a global scientific revolution.

In 1840, the Frenchman Étienne Cabet (1788–1856), a disciple of both Robert Owen and Charles Fourier, published another vision of a scientific future that made special use of Oriental architecture. His novel *Voyage en Icarie* told the story of a marvelous socialist nation with an ideal capital city called 'Icara'. Thanks to its industrial zoning and meticu-lously designed infrastructure, Icara is a rationalized metropolis of hygiene and perfect order, woven together with a spectacular array of grooved boulevards, glass-covered side-walks, and garden pathways.[21] For Icara's housing, Cabet conjured up a global ensemble of architectural styles, casting Icara as a permanent *exposition universelle* long before such events had fully developed in London or Paris. 'There are sixty neighborhoods in the city', Cabet wrote, and each:

> neighborhood is named after one of the sixty major cities of the ancient
> and modern worlds and represents … the architecture of one of the sixty
> principle nations. Here you will see neighborhoods of Peking, Jerusalem, and
> Constantinople, as well as those of Rome, Paris, and London, so that Icara is,
> in fact, a model of the terrestrial universe.[22]

In order to ensure that his vision did not represent simply another imperfect phase of human history, but rather was the final and perfect one, Cabet invested his architecture with the cumulative histories of the whole earth. The result is an encyclopaedic, immersive panorama that places history at the fingertips of the city's inhabitants: 'Here you would imagine yourself in Rome, in Greece, in Egypt, in India, everywhere'.[23]

A number of French science-fiction stories would echo this theme over the coming decades. Probably in 1860, Joseph Méry (1797–1866) published 'What We Shall See', a splendid, if somewhat tongue-in-cheek, vision of the globe-spanning French Empire in the year 3845. Algiers, 'chief city of the Mediterranean département', has earned the nick-name 'Heavenly City' with the 'magnificence of its seaside palaces, crowned by gardens overshadowed by forests of palms', a 'great bazaar', and a 'bridge of leviathans' connecting it to Marseille.[24] Meanwhile, Paris has spread westward along the Champs-Élysées, which

is peaceably thronged by self-propelled vehicles and lined with arcaded walks.[25] Much of Paris is still Classical in form, but along the Rue de l'Océan, which connects the city centre to a new inland port, 'the architecture of the buildings changes completely'. In place of 'elegant and classic symmetry', one:

> sees unfolding on both sides a succession of Asiatic edifices of marvelous effect: pagodas, Chinese towers, verandas, chatirams, minarets and pavilions; all the fantasies of that painted, sculpted, decorated architecture, which seems to be laughing at the sky and launching from the earth to play with the radiance of the heavens.[26]

Here the world empire is truly given a centre—Algiers is heavenly, but Paris is the *métropole*.

In 1883, a very different vision for a metropolis of the future was published by an author known only by the pseudonym Comte Didier de Chousy. His or her book, entitled *Ignis*, offers a mixture of optimistic utopia and satirical dystopia. The story hinges upon a group of European industrialists who bind together in Ulster to dig a wide hole to the centre of the earth, where they can tap the unlimited energy of the planet's molten core. Above this hellish chasm they construct a new city called Industria. It is corrupt and will eventually perish, but for its upper-class residents it is nothing less than a luminous, verdant, technological paradise. Seen from the air, it appears like 'an Oriental city deposited in Ireland along with its sky, its climate, its palaces in lacy stone: a city of scattered villas, white and shady, mounted like daisies in a lawn'.[27] Most of the houses are, in fact, composed not of stone, but of pure, tempered glass.[28] This contributes to their Eastern splendour:

> The most elegant private dwellings are Oriental in style, in muslin-glass that is transparent or opaque, according to the owner's mood. When the solar spectrum impregnates these translucent walls, as iridescent as soap bubbles, one might think them fragments of a rainbow. This is charming by day, but the nights are enchanted in that city, illuminated by all its houses, which light up like lamps within their globes.[29]

Industria has become heir to the world's wealth through the power of a multinational corporation that literally occupies the centre of the planet. The city's radiance is short-lived, but before it is destroyed, it offers both tantalizing and horrifying glimpses of the scientific, technological future, and nowhere more poetically than in the luminous glow of its luxurious, sparkling, and decadent Oriental glass palaces.

While late-nineteenth century France was enjoying the fruit of its 'Oriental Renaissance,' Britain was also publishing visions of utopian architecture combining Western and Eastern traditions. Edward Bulwer-Lytton's (1803–73) hugely successful 1871 novel *The*

Coming Race describes a subterranean people that is both deeply ancient and incredibly advanced. Linguistically the 'Vril-ya' are Indo-European, but they appear Egyptian.[30] Their architecture also has evident roots in Egypt, including interiors 'fitted up with Oriental splendour,' with sparkling mosaics and an abundance of 'cushions and divans'.[31] But the presence of robotic servants, elevators, and mechanically operated windows belie any suggestion of primitivism—indeed, their homes have 'a character, if strange in detail, still familiar, as a whole, to modern notions of luxury'.[32] The protagonist of the novel eventually learns that the Vril-ya had long ago evolved past the urban, industrial capitalist phase of history currently engrossing the West, and is now so technologically advanced that they could, if they desired, colonize the surface world. In short, the Vril-ya represent the culmination of human evolution, 'Oriental splendour' and all. Their lineage of unbroken continuity with deep Eastern antiquity serves to enhance their status as the forerunners of human civilization and heirs to its destiny—they make Western Europeans look not only primitive, but also provincial. Similar Eastern forms pervade the futuristic architectures of many other British utopian novels from the late 1800s, from the mosaics and minarets of the Millennial Martian city of Montalluyah in Benjamin Lumley's 1873 *Another World*, to the crystalline 'world metropolis' of Constantinople in Andrew Blair's 1874 *Annals of the Twenty-Ninth Century*.[33] In the latter, the encyclopaedic wealth of Constantinople's transnational architecture is compared to the ruins of London, Oxford, and Cambridge, which had been destroyed as divine retribution for Britain's imperial hubris and cruelty.[34]

Europe was not the only continent to produce such visions. Two of the most remarkable concepts of a hybrid, transcultural architecture were, perhaps appropriately, imagined by immigrants to America. Scotsman John Macnie (1836–1909) was a polymath of sorts, educated in Glasgow before relocating to America to teach classics, mathematics, English, French, and German. In 1883 he anonymously published a pioneering science-fiction novel entitled *The Diothas, or, A Far Look Ahead*. In it he described the twenty-ninth century as a just, perfectly ordered, and supremely happy time, in which rational spelling reform has transformed the name of 'New York' to 'Nuiork' and architectural reform has transformed the city itself into a huge central business district surrounded by tranquil garden suburbs. The architecture of both the commercial downtown and the sprawling villa districts is composed of stacks of metal colonnades 'of a style … utterly unknown' to Victorians, combining 'lightness and solidity' to create aesthetic effect. The columns are covered by delicate, airy, exuberant details, rivalling the 'far-famed wonders of the Alhambra'.[35] In many ways, the architecture reads like the Crystal Palace, or perhaps the great gallery in Edinburgh's 1860s Museum of Science and Art (now the National Museum), with an extra Islamic touch of the sort Owen Jones might himself have added. Interestingly, Macnie also describes the happy, noble people of the twenty-ninth century as 'a new race': tall, beautiful, 'sun-browned', and with dark eyes and hair.[36] He never explicitly says that the people of his future global society are an amalgamation of all the world's ethnicities, but there are anecdotal reasons to think this is the case—one character from Timbuktu, for example, is described as being of both Spanish and Moorish lineage.[37] In the utopia of *The Diothas*,
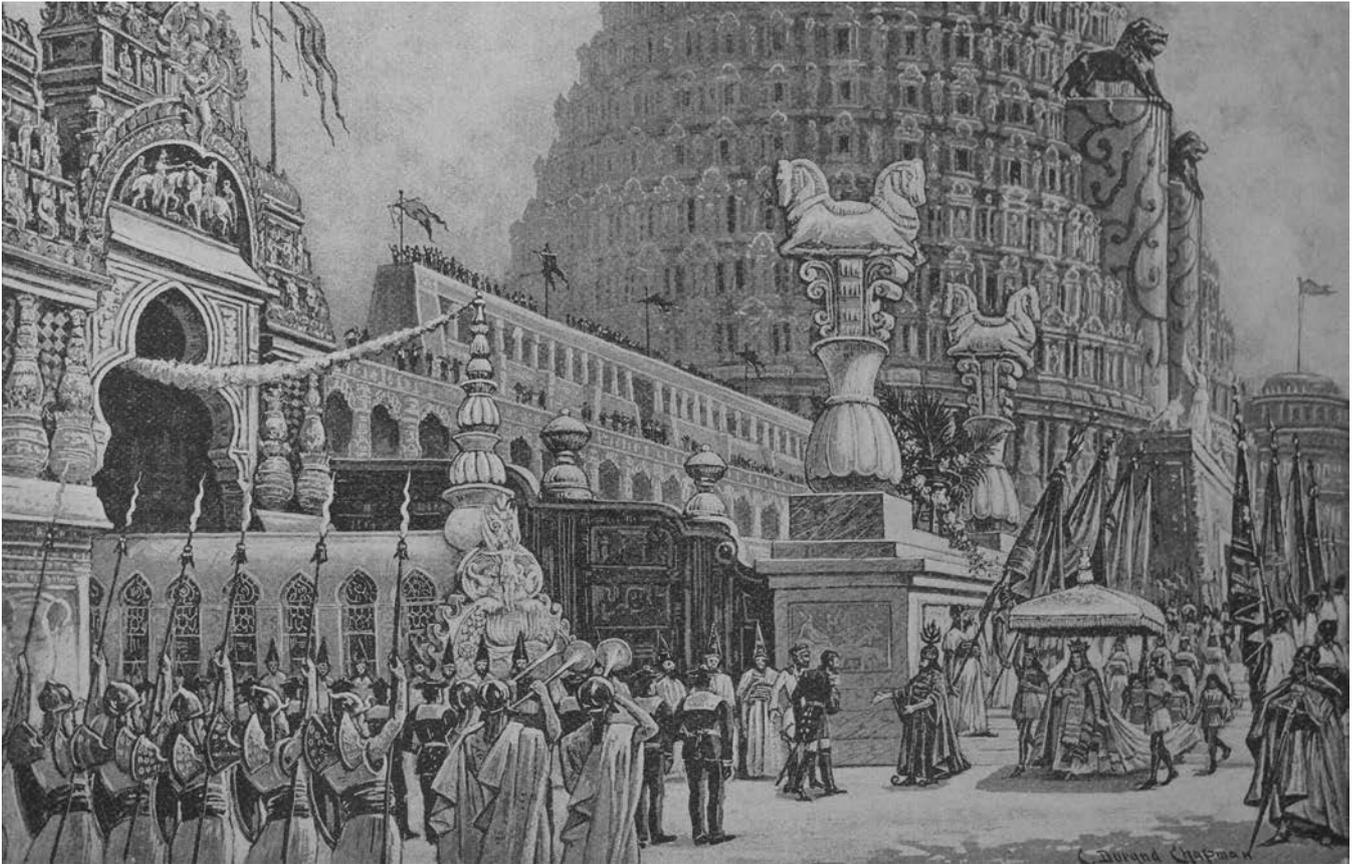
both the architecture and the people themselves seem to indicate that a future of equitable globalized synthesis will produce beautiful results.

The Irish-born New Yorker William Bradshaw (1851–1927) also produced a vision of exemplary hybridity that spoke to cultural expansion and fusion. Bradshaw was a professional writer and animal rights activist who served as president of the New York Anti-Vivisection Society.[38] In 1892, he published *The Goddess of Atvatabar* describing a brilliantly evolved urban society in the centre of the planet. If the nation of Atvatabar has a problem, it is perhaps that it is too modern—indeed, that it is religiously modern—and the main purpose of the novel's American protagonist is to conquer and revivify its asexual culture with a swashbuckling, machismo assertion of romantic derring-do. Bradshaw made it clear that the book was not written as mere fantasy, but rather to illuminate 'the science which is and that which is to be'.[39] It is a utopian vision of the high-tech, cosmopolitan, and progressive—but also humane and romantic—society that Bradshaw hoped to see emerge from global modernity. The people who inhabit the monumental cities, ride the sacred locomotives, and worship in the electrified temples of Atvatabar are sum totals of the planet's historic cultures: they have 'a Greek perfection of body, as well as a Gothic intensity of soul,' while their 'style of architecture was an absolutely new order. It was neither Hindoo, Egyptian, Greek, nor Gothic, but there was a flavour of all four styles'.[40] The book's profuse illustrations attest to this splendid hybridity, and include formal references to many cultures not mentioned in the text (fig. 12.3). Bicephalic equestrian capitals are clearly taken from Persepolis, while a long colonnaded pavilion appears both Egyptian and Mayan. An enormous Tower of Babel rises as a testament to the fact that this is a utopia of holistic unity for more than just architectural styles—or at least, it will be after the American navy officer slaps a little sentiment into its stodgy scientific elite.

The same time that the *Goddess of Atvatabar* was being hailed as 'wild' and 'stimulating' by the American press, two London-based illustrators were hired by *The Pall Mall Magazine* to produce a series of nine futuristic drawings entitled 'Guesses at Futurity'.[41] Eight of these were drawn by Fred T. Jane (1865–1916), an artist and writer who would
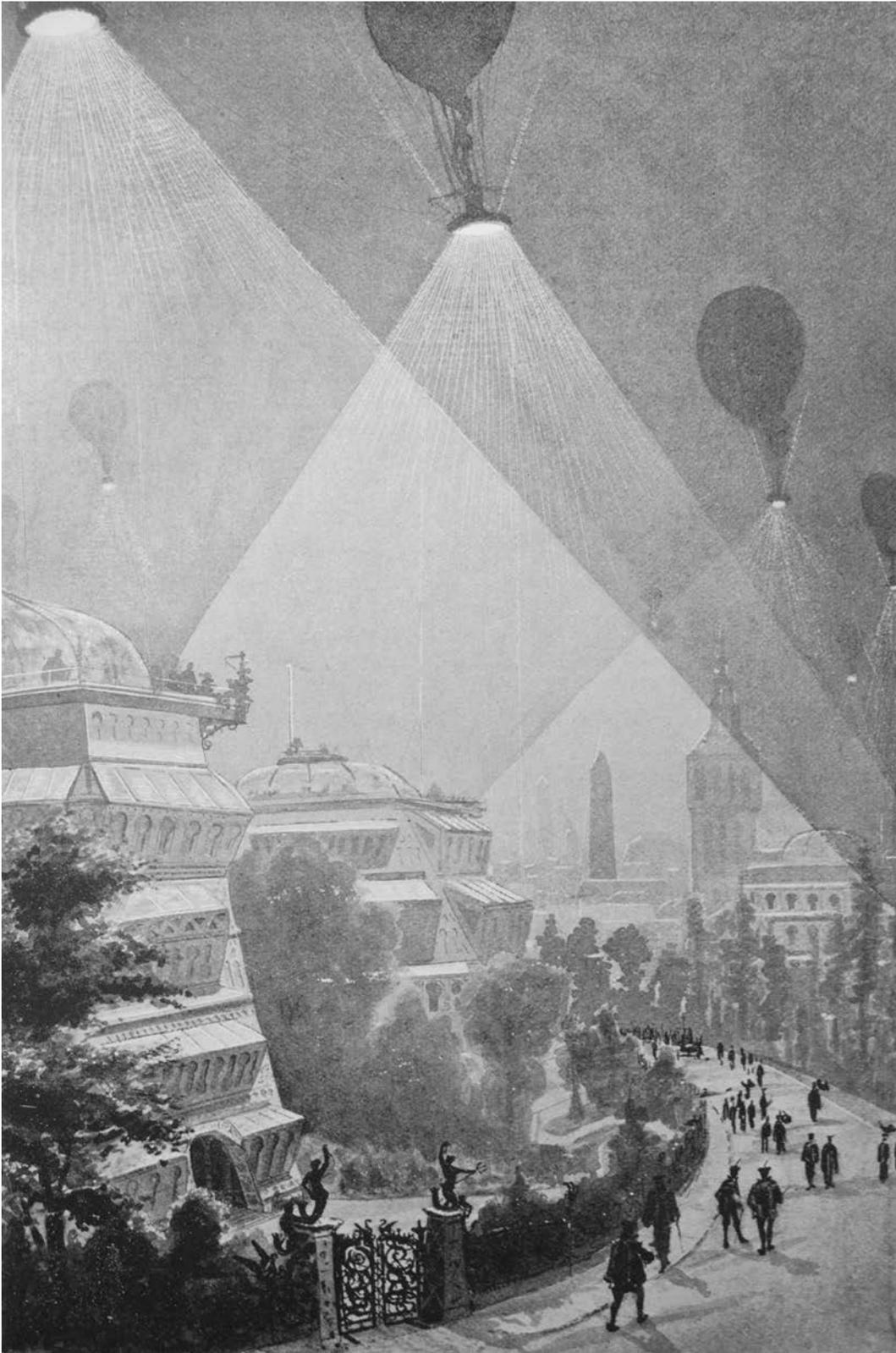
12.4
Fred T. Jane, 'Guesses at Futurity. — No. 3: Street Lighting, Anno Domini 2000', *The Pall Mall Magazine*, 1894.

later become famous for his illustrated books of military watercraft. Jane's illustrations were published one at a time and in no particular order, but taken together they offer a detailed glimpse of life in an imaginary city of tomorrow. Interplanetary transportation brings the viewer from a mining colony on the moon down to a glowing metropolis. The streets of the city are lit from above by hovering spotlights, and its palatial apartment blocks are a very strange combination of stacked ziggurat and conservatory dome, punctuated by Moorish Revival horseshoe-arches and banks of skylights (fig. 12.4). Jane presents the interior of one of these palaces, where a glazed dome has created a tropical
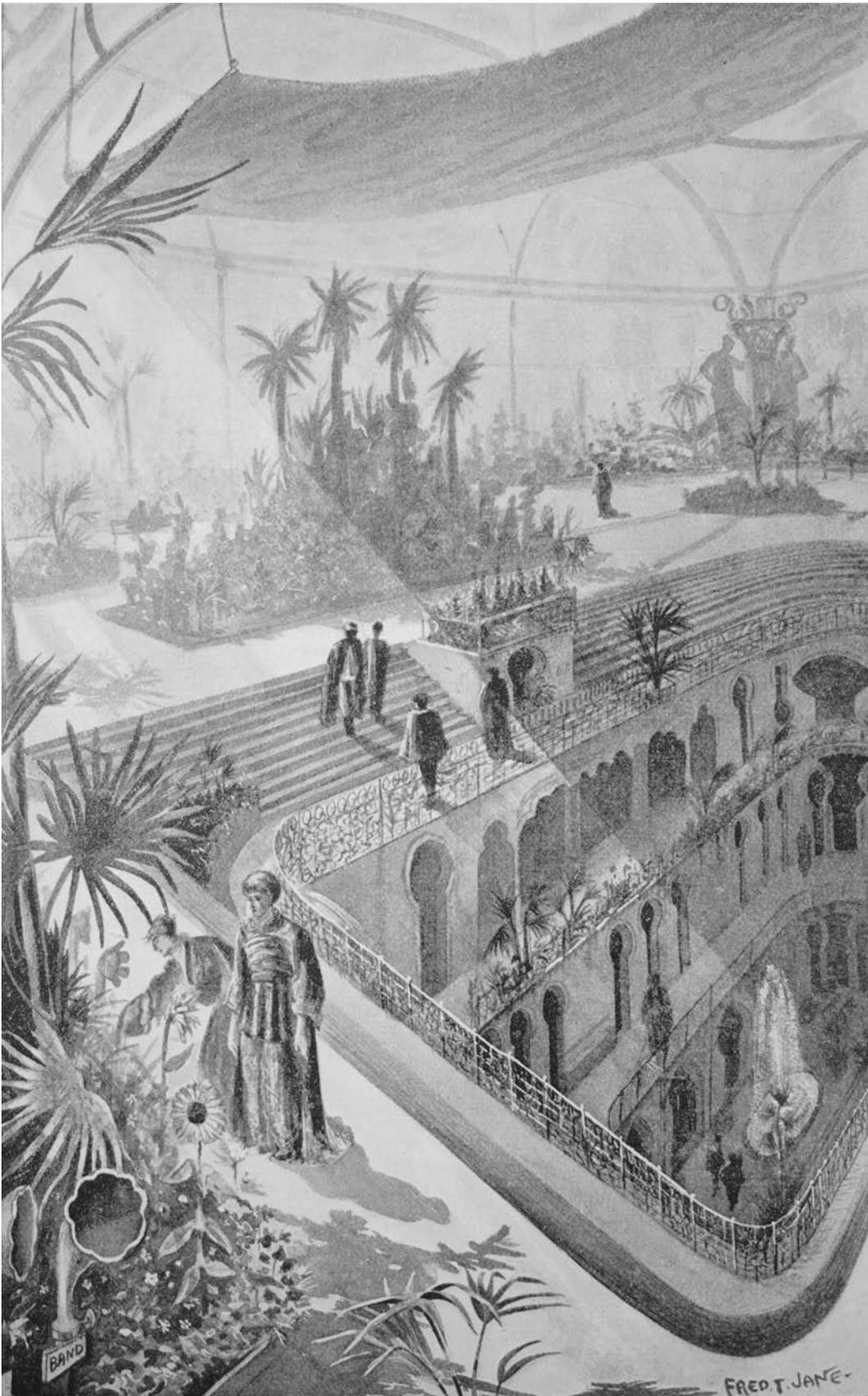
12.5
Fred T. Jane, 'Guesses
at Futurity. — No. 2:
The Housetop Garden',
*The Pall Mall
Magazine*, 1894.

interior climate (fig. 12.5). The architectural details and indeed the clothing of the build-
ing's inhabitants confirm that this is, indeed, a modern incarnation of the Mediterranean
courtyard house. Music is piped into the garden via a phonograph horn, while a fountain
on the floor of the verdant courtyard below evokes the *hortus conclusus*—the walled garden
of paradise. Walls cannot restrict this home's inhabitants, however, because modern audio-
visual technology enables them to gather in a plush, futuristic Ottoman *hareem* and project
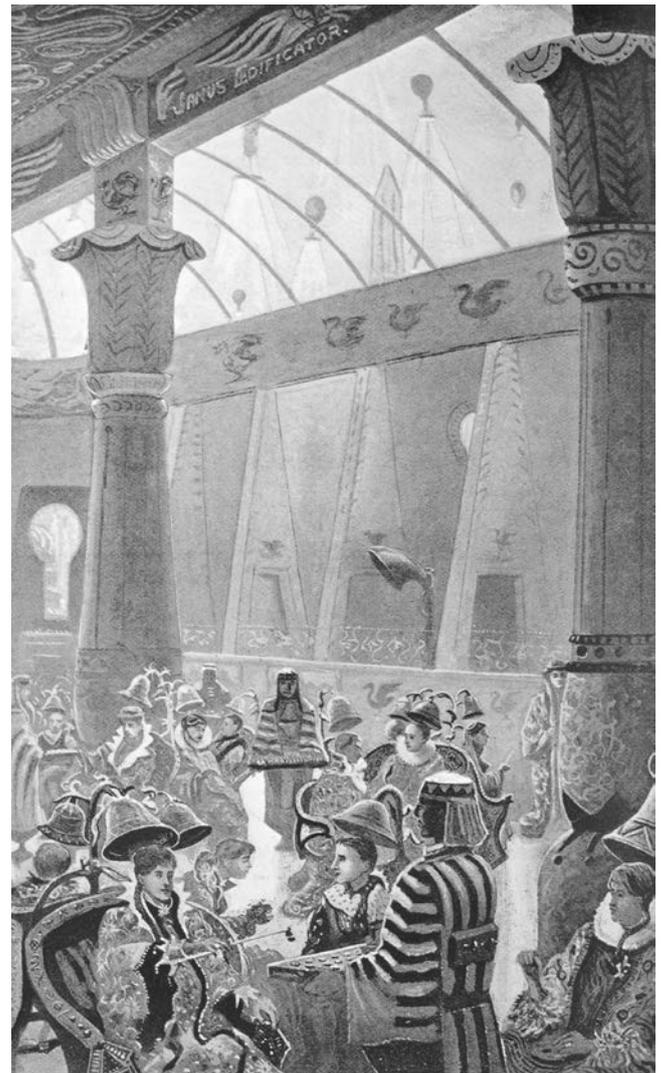
their minds across the world, educating and entertaining themselves with mechanically delivered magazines, newspapers, and even television documentaries revealing simpler, more provincial architecture and fashion from bygone eras, namely the late nineteenth century (fig. 12.6). When the people of the future become peckish, they gather under the skylights and palm columns of an Egyptian Revival dining hall, where 'native' servants placidly distribute miniscule chemical meals to a distinctly European elite (fig. 12.7). Here, Jane placed a poetic signature that may contain a hint for decoding his Oriental futurism. On the lintel is an inscription reading 'Janus Edificator', below a winged, double-faced head. This Janus is Jane, but it is also the Classical double-faced god of doorways, windows, and, appropriately, of time. Janus sees forward and backward, past and future simultaneously. He is the patron deity of the hybrid futures published in *Pall Mall*, the modernity of which stems not only from the new and the novel, but also from a unifying, evolutionary synthesis of all time and space.

12.6
Fred T. Jane, 'Guesses at Futurity. — No. 1: Home Life in Anno Domini 2000', *The Pall Mall Magazine*, 1894.

12.7
Fred T. Jane, 'Guesses at Futurity.—No. 8: A Dinner Party A.D. 2000. Menu of Chemical Foods', *The Pall Mall Magazine*, 1895.

APPROPRIATION VERSUS UNIFICATION

As the socio-racial component of Jane's final image suggests, the double-faced god Janus may not only evoke historical synthesis, but also the imperial, white supremacist gaze of total appropriation. Stereotypes of the primitive, indigent, sensual Orient were in fact published in the same run of magazines as the 'Guesses at Futurity,' and, as Said has shown, such representations cast the East not as part of a shared global future, but rather as an irrational, decrepit 'Other' that is relegated to the past. A number of scientific

utopian texts reinforced this bigoted view, proving that architectural hybridity could be called upon to express many different visions of modernity, some more ecumenical and humanistic than others.

In 1888, Albert Bleunard (1852–1905) published the illustrated science-fiction novel *Le Babylone Électrique*, and over the next two years it was republished in both the United States and the United Kingdom as *Babylon Electrified: The History of an Expedition Undertaken to Restore Ancient Babylon by the Power of Electricity and How it Resulted.*[42] As the title suggests, the book tells of a group of European adventurers who embark upon a mission to restore the glory of ancient Mesopotamia—a glory lost in large part due to its 'weakened people'.[43] They prophesy a lush, green future filled with 'sumptuous cities' and 'magnificent palaces towering towards the sky,' starting in the Fertile Crescent but eventually covering 'the surface of the globe'.[44] Establishing a settlement on the site of Babylon, the Europeans immediately appropriate its ruins to build their electric works.[45] Their industrial buildings are fortified because one 'must never trust the Arabs,' although the new city of 'Liberty' is explicitly constructed as a synthesis of European and Oriental traditions (fig. 12.8):

> Liberty had a wholly original character: the regularity of the plan, the arrangement of the streets, the care expended on the smallest details of everything that might insure cleanliness and health to the town, proclaimed the European city. But all the arrangements required by climate, and which the builders had had the good sense and the good taste to retain, the terrace-like roofs, the numerous gardens irrigated by brooks of running water, the covered galleries, the squares adorned with fountains, over which immense awnings of canvas were spread … all this was preserved for it its characteristics of an oriental town.[46]

The architecture is a hybrid, but the fusion is clearly one-sided—the only 'good sense' and 'good taste' in play is that of the Europeans, who appropriate Eastern functional and aesthetic design traditions in precisely the same way they have appropriated the land, resources, and even the antiquity of Mesopotamia. Furthermore, the overall urban order is European, while Eastern elements are limited to details—a recipe conveying an unequivocal hierarchy of intellectual power. Here, eclecticism speaks not to cultural unity, but to European triumph over the 'weakened peoples' that stand between them and their global destiny. At the conclusion of *Babylon Electrified*, the local people rise up and destroy the colonial project—not, however, in defence of their property and dignity, but rather because they are seized by irrational religious fanaticism.[47]

Perhaps the most extreme example of one-sided hybridity is found in the work of David Goodman Croly (1829–1889), a famous New York journalist and advocate of Positivist social science. His 1888 book *Glimpses of the Future* contains the prediction that there will never be any future 'American' architecture because the world had grown too small. 'We are the heirs of all the ages', he wrote, and modern design would draw from 'all pre-existing forms of architecture, sacred and secular'.[48] While Croly does not explicitly say that those forms would be blended exclusively by the hands of white Americans, other chapters of the book are filled with vehement racism and anti-Semitism, and indeed during the American Civil War he was the lead author of an insidious pro-slavery propaganda pamphlet which coined the word 'miscegenation'.[49] Clearly he had a very specific group of people in mind as 'the heirs of all the ages', and was opposed to their 'mixing' of anything but architecture.

On the other hand, there is the 1895 novel *Mercia, the Astronomer Royal*, by the Irish-born feminist Amelia Garland Mears (c.1842–1920).[50] It contains an eclectic architecture specifically drafted to frame a narrative about growing social and political justice, as well as racial unity. The story takes place in the year 2002, after women have finally achieved 'political, social, and marital equality'.[51] The main character is a brilliant, strong-willed, and virtuous English scientist named Mercia. As the chief astronomer in the Anglo-Germanic Teutonic Empire, she is desirable to a whole host of suitors, including her Emperor. He is, however, vile. Mercia loves, and in the end she marries, an Anglo-Indian named Dayanand Swami. As an ascetic fortune-teller, at first glance Swami seems like an Orientalist stereotype, but he is no primitive shaman—his power is a rational spiritualism based on hard science, and his home is a magnificent combination of Oriental splendour and modern materials and forms, all set in the heart of London:

> [T]he great door would be folded back, revealing a courtyard arranged in the style of true Eastern magnificence. The floor was formed of mosaics of elegant design cut from costly marbles. Shrubs, flowers, and trees of exotic birth filled convenient parterres … The tiny humming-bird … basked in the sunshine of this artificial Eastern clime; for the whole was covered with a

> high dome of glass of considerable area, which was supported by graceful
> pillars of manufactured marbles erected in regular succession.[52]

Here, the Easterner has appropriated the land and scientific building materials of the West, and fused them with ancient Oriental design traditions as he saw fit. The result is a distinctively modern structure that speaks at least as much to the creative agency of an Indian as it does to the cosmopolitism of the imperial capital. Swami not only earns the trust and love of Mercia in his marvellous townhouse, he also defies the humiliated Emperor in doing so, all while heralding the birth of a fully independent Indian nation over which Mercia, his wife and soul-mate, will preside.

Clearly, the meanings found in these eclectic, utopian revivalist architectures are enormously diverse. Some hybrid architectures evoked conquest and exploitation, while others expressed a desire for increased human exchange and harmony. Often, it seems, they did both, for even the most democratic visions rarely debated the question of who would ultimately initiate and direct transcultural exchange—European science would draw the terms of the future order, 'all classes of all nations' not withstanding. The electrification of Babylon, even when well-meaningly conceived as a step towards a universal humanist future, easily decays into heavy-handed appropriation when the electrifiers cast themselves in the role of demi-gods heralding an ideal modernity to Easterners, who are in turn expected to gratefully yield their past, present, and future to a building project they neither commissioned nor had a leading hand in designing. What such utopian Victorian eclecticism most certainly was not, however, was a conservative veneer designed to stall or sugar-coat the immanent industrial future. If anything, perhaps the Italian Futurists and other anti-eclectic, anti-traditional Modernist agitators were attempting to hide the messy, tangled realities of an increasingly global world with a 'mask' of their own, the unidirectional vision of which makes Janus look nothing if not open-minded.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1. Walter Gropius, *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus*, (trans.) P. Morton Shand (London: Faber and Faber, 1935), p. 24.

2. Antonio Sant'Elia and Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, 'Futurist Architecture,' in Ulrich Conrad (ed.), *Programs and Manifestoes on Twentieth-Century Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971), p. 34.

3. The political histories of the Italian Futurists are, of course, very complicated, but for a summary of the socialist and anarchist political backgrounds of Sant'Elia and the Futurist architecture circle, see Esther da Costa Meyer, *The Work of Antonio Sant'Elia: Retreat into the Future* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 167.

4. Richard A. Etlin, *Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier: The Romantic Legacy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp. 150–164; see also the discussion of progressive arguments contained within Pierre Leroux's 1839 book *Réfutation de l'eclectisme* in Barry Bergdoll, *Léon Vaudoyer: Historicism in the Age of Industry* (New York and Cambridge, MA: The Architectural History Foundation and MIT Press, 1994), pp. 117–9.

5. Etlin, *Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier*, p. 152.

6. Etlin, *Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier*, p. 152; for an account of how Viollet-le-Duc 'decried' the deliberately eclectic architecture of Léon Vaudoyer's Marseille Cathedral, with its dynamic synthesis of Oriental and Occidental traditions, see Bergdoll, *Léon Vaudoyer*, p. 254.

7. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

8. See Berthold Hub, 'Filarete and the East: The Renaissance of a *Prisca Architectura*,' *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 70:1 (March 2011): pp. 18–37; for Oriental and Occidental hybrid literary utopias published in the Renaissance, see Francesco Colonna, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: The Strife of Love in a Dream*, (trans.) Joscelyn Godwin (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1999); Francis Bacon, *New Atlantis*, in *Three Early Modern Utopias: Utopia, New Atlantis, The Isle of Pines* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 161; R.H. Esquire, *New Atlantis, Begun by the Lord Verulam, Viscount St. Albans, and Continued by R.H. Esquire* (London: John Crooke, 1660), pp. 84–8, 91–2; Samuel Gott, *Nova Solyma, The Ideal City, or, Jerusalem Regained*, (trans.; intro.) Walter Begley (London: J. Murray, 1902), p. 79; M. Heliogenes De L'Epy, *A Voyage into Tartary* (London: T. Hodgkin, 1689), pp. 115–122.

9. S. Lang, 'Richard Payne Knight and the Idea of Modernity,' in John Summerson (ed.), *Concerning Architecture: Essays on Architectural Writers and Writing Presented to Nikolaus Pevsner* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968), pp. 85–97.

10. Richard Payne Knight, *An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*, 4th edn (London: T. Payne and J. White, 1808), pp. 223–5.

11. Knight, *An Analytical Inquiry*, p. 165.

12. Raymond Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East, 1680-1880*, (trans.) Gene Patterson-Black and Victor Reinking (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984).

13. Edward W. Said, 'Foreword,' in Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance*, p. viii.

14. Said, 'Foreword', p. xvii.

15. Mark Crinson, *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 97.

16. Owen's most detailed plan for this community was 'Dedicated to the Governments of Great Britain, Austria, Russia, France, Prussia, and the United States of America,' which he believed should unite 'all parts of the world' and embrace a millennial future made possible by his discoveries of the 'Science of Human Nature' and the 'Science of Society'. See Robert Owen, *A Developement of the Principles and Plans on which to Establish Self-Supporting Home Colonies* (London: The Home Colonization Society, 1841), pp. v–vi, 32.

17. Edward Royle, *Robert Owen and the Commencement of the Millennium* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 122.

18. Robert Dale Owen, *Hints on Public Architecture* (New York: George P. Putnam, 1849), p. 6.

19. Thomas Hope, *An Historical Essay on Architecture* (London: John Murray, 1835), p. 561.

20. Hope, *An Historical Essay*, pp. 6–7.

21. Étienne Cabet, *Travels in Icaria*, (trans.) Leslie J. Roberts (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2003), pp. 17–44.

22. Cabet, *Travels in Icaria*, p. 20.

23. Cabet, *Travels in Icaria*, p. 41.

24. Joseph Méry, 'What We Shall See,' in *The Tower of Destiny and Other Stories*, Brian Stableford (ed. and trans.), (Encino, California: Black Coat Press, 2012), p. 40.

25. Méry, 'What We Shall See', pp. 47, 60–61.

26. Méry, 'What We Shall See', p. 63.

27. Comte Dider de Chousy, *Ignis: The Central Fire*, (trans.) Brian Stableford (Encino, California: Black Coat Press, 2009), pp. 174–5.

28. de Chousy, *Ignis*, pp. 182, 185.

29. de Chousy, *Ignis*, p. 186.

30.   Edward Bulwer-Lytton, *The Coming Race* (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1873), pp. 100–1, 21.

31.   Bulwer-Lytton, *The Coming Race*, pp. 14, 21, 25.

32.   Bulwer-Lytton, *The Coming Race*, pp. 45.

33.   Benjamin Lumley, *Another World, Or, Fragments from the Star City of Montalluyah* (London: Samuel Tinsley, 1873), pp. 18, 40–1; Andrew Blair, *Annals of the Twenty-Ninth Century, Or, The Autobiography of the Tenth President of the World-Republic*, vol. 1 (London: Samuel Tinsley, 1874), pp. 7, 10–11.

34.   Blair, *Annals*, pp. 38–42, 45.

35.   John Macnie, *The Diothas, or, A Far Look Ahead* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1883), pp. 5, 37.

36.   Macnie, *The Diothas*, pp. 10, 18.

37.   Macnie, *The Diothas*, pp. 227–8.

38.   'William R. Bradshaw Dies,' *New York Times*, 20 July, 1927, p. 23.

39.   B.O. Flower, 'The Goddess of Atvatabar,' *The Arena* xxxiii (August 1892): p. xlvi.

40.   William Bradshaw, *The Goddess of Atvatabar, Being a History of the Discovery of the Interior World and the Conquest of Atvatabar* (New York: J.F. Douthitt, 1892), pp. 152, 79.

41.   For reviews of *The Goddess of Atvatabar*, see 'Current Literature,' *Daily American*, 8 May, 1892, p. 9; Flower, 'The Goddess of Atvatabar,' pp. xlv–xlvi; 'Among the Books,' *Outing, an Illustrated Monthly Magazine of Recreation*, July 1892, p. 24; for the 'Guesses at Futurity,' see *The Pall Mall Magazine* iv (September–December 1894): pp. 289, 515, 701; v (January-April 1895), facing page 161, pp. 342, 502, facing page 619; vi (May–August 1895), pp. 97, 278.

42.   A. Bleunard, *La Babylone Électrique* (Paris: Maison Quantin, 1888); A. Bleunard, *Babylon Electrified: The History of an Expedition Undertaken to Restore Ancient Babylon by the Power of Electricity and How it Resulted*, (trans.) Frank Weitenkampf (Philadelphia: Gebbie, 1889); A. Bleunard, *Babylon Electrified: The History of an Expedition Undertaken to Restore Ancient Babylon by the Power of Electricity and How it Resulted*, (trans.) Frank Weitenkampf (London: Chapman and Hall, 1890).

43.   A. Bleunard, *Babylon Electrified* (Philadelphia: Gebbie, 1889), pp. 11–12.

44.   Bleunard, *Babylon Electrified*, pp. 11–12.

45.   Bleunard, *Babylon Electrified*, p. 82.

46.   Bleunard, *Babylon Electrified*, pp. 163, 165; for a description of an actual Arab settlement, see pp. 89–90.

47.   Bleunard, *Babylon Electrified*, pp. 231, 266–267, 292–294, 302–303.

48.   David Goodman Croly, *Glimpses of the Future: Suggestions as the Drift of Things* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, The Knickerbocker Press, 1888), p. 92.

49.   Sydney Kaplan, 'The Miscegenation Issue in the Election of 1864,' *The Journal of Negro History* 34, 3 (July 1949), pp. 274–343.

50.   A. Garland Mears, *Mercia, the Astronomer Royal: A Romance* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, and Co., 1895).

51.   Mears, *Mercia*, p. 3.

52.   Mears, *Mercia*, p. 201.

PHOTOGRAPH CREDITS