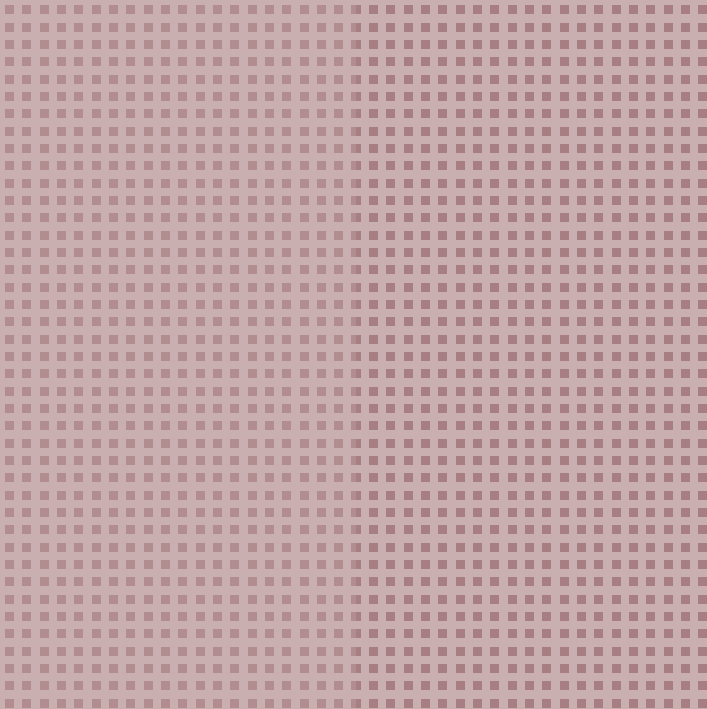


Hartmut Frank [Guest Editor]

ISSUE 6

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# Fritz Schumacher & Heinrich Tessenow Architecture, an Art or a Craft?



Inaugural Speeches and Other Studies  
in the Built Environment



Schumacher & Tessenow

TU Delft 2022

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Hartmut Frank [Guest Editor]

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Fritz Schumacher &  
Heinrich Tessenow  
Architecture, an  
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Inaugural Speeches and Other Studies  
in the Built Environment

## **Inaugural Speeches and Other Studies in the Built Environment**

Series Editors: Herman van Bergeijk and Carola Hein  
[Chair History of Architecture and Urban Planning, TU Delft]

ISSUE 6

### **Fritz Schumacher & Heinrich Tessenow**

Architecture, an Art or a Craft?

Guest Editor: Hartmut Frank

Translation of the Speeches of Schumacher and Tessenow: David H. Haney

Design: Véro Crickx, Sirene Ontwerpers

*This booklet contains the inaugural lectures of Fritz Schumacher and Heinrich Tessenow given on the occasion of their appointment respectively as professors at the Technical University in Dresden and The Art Academy in Dresden.*

*The lectures provide novel insights into their understanding of architecture and into their proposals for reform of architectural education. they are preceded by an introductory essay of the guest editor architectural historian Hartmut Frank.*

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# Inaugural Lectures and Other Studies in the Built Environment

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This series includes both Inaugural Speeches and other studies that deal with the built environment and that have a strong historical point of departure. The Chair of History is the driving force behind the series.

Inaugural speeches have long been unique moments in the careers of academics in many countries: As an important moment in the career they offer a moment to pause, to reflect, and to envision new approaches. Planners and architects in particular have used such speeches to tie together insights into design work and education and to offer a programmatic view on their own operating within the academic community. Prepared with great care for a university and general audience, inaugural lectures also offer later researchers insight into the thoughts of these scholars at a specific moment in time. Material gathered for and notes written on the occasion of these lectures can help such researchers understand the work habits and thought processes of their authors, perhaps even their relationships with colleagues and students. This series offers inaugural lectures - translated into English and contextualized with scholarly introductions - and other seminal studies to unlock information for comparative research and set the stage for new investigations. The expanded series continues with the inaugural speeches of the German architects Fritz Schumacher and Heinrich Tessenow. Although they were held at different institutions, both speeches were given at Dresden. For Schumacher it was, more

or less, the beginning of an interesting career, for Tessenow it meant the return to Germany after that he had taught some years in Austria. Both had made a name for themselves. Especially Schumacher was a well-known figure in the Dutch architectural world due to the exhibition of his work that was held in the Hague in 1922. He was in contact with many Dutch colleagues and visited J.J.P. Oud in Rotterdam. Also Tessenow came to the Netherlands and was shown the Hoek van Holland complex of J.J.P. Oud by the architect himself. The speeches are introduced by an essay of Hartmut Frank.

Herman van Bergeijk and Carola Hein



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# Contents

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Hartmut Frank

Architecture, an Art or a Craft?

The inaugural lectures of Fritz Schumacher and  
Heinrich Tessenow in Dresden: 1901 and 1921 9

Fritz Schumacher

The Building Craft of the Present Time  
and Historical Tradition 83

Heinrich Tessenow

The Land in the Middle 105

List of figures 131

On the Editors 133

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Hartmut Frank

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# Architecture as an Art or a Craft. The inaugural lectures of Fritz Schumacher and Heinrich Tessenow in Dresden: 1901 and 1921

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## § 1

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It is a difficult task to compare two personalities as different as Fritz Schumacher and Heinrich Tessenow and even more difficult to compare the inaugural lectures they gave in Dresden a century ago and twenty years apart from each other. A popular proverb suggests you should not compare pears and apples. But is this sound advice? After all, the informational value of any comparison depends on the criteria applied. In the case of the two newly appointed professors of architecture, it is possible to obtain meaningful results if we trace their position in the architectural discourse of their time—around 1901 and 1921 respectively—and analyse their statements in relation to their previous life and work. A juxtaposition of their two positions point by point would be unhelpful because of their dissimilar intellectual and professional backgrounds, their very different manner of expression, and the time difference between the two lectures and their publication

dates. But an analysis and interpretation from our present perspective may help us understand their respective impact on the radically changing teaching methods in these years between the turn of the century and the time immediately after the First World War. It might inspire us to reflect on whether some of their arguments are still meaningful in light of current thinking about architecture and architectural education.

Our task is facilitated by the fact that both architects belong to the same cultural realm of the early modern movement, and both received a chair at a school of architecture, not in the same university but in the same city, in Dresden: Schumacher<sup>1</sup> in 1901 at the Technische Hochschule<sup>2</sup>, and Tessenow<sup>3</sup> in 1920 at the Akademie der Künste<sup>4</sup>. Aside from the stark differences in the educational backgrounds and professional curriculum of the two

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- 1 Fritz Schumacher, born 4.11.1869 in Bremen, died 5.11.1947 in Hamburg. Fritz Schumacher, *Stufen des Lebens. Erinnerungen eines Baumeisters*. Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt Stuttgart, Berlin 1935; same: *Rundblicke. Ein Buch der Reisen und Erinnerungen*. Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart/Berlin 1936; same: *Selbstgespräche. Erinnerungen und Betrachtungen*. Axel Springer Verlag, Hamburg 1948. Werner Kayser, *Fritz Schumacher. Architekt und Städtebauer. Eine Bibliographie*, (comprehensive bibliography), Hans Christians Verlag, Hamburg 1984; Hartmut Frank (Ed.), *Fritz Schumacher. Reformkultur und Moderne*. Verlag Gerd Hatje, Stuttgart 1994; Hartmut Frank, *Fritz Schumacher, Ellert&Richter, Hamburg 2020*.
  - 2 The History of the Königliche Sächsische Technische Hochschule Dresden (royal polytechnic school, today Technical University Dresden) goes back to the Technische Bildungsanstalt of 1828. In 1871 it became a royal polytechnic school.
  - 3 Heinrich Tessenow, born 7.4.1876 in Rostock, died 1.11.1950 in Berlin. Lit.: Gerda Wangerin-Gerhard Weiss, *Heinrich Tessenow. Ein Baumeister 1876 - 1950, Leben-Lehre-Werk*, Verlag Gerhard Bacht, Essen 1976; Marco De Michelis, *Heinrich Tessenow 1876 - 1950. Das Gesamtwerk*, Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Stuttgart 1991; Theodor Böll (ed.), *Heinrich Tessenow Gesamtausgabe*, (Complete edition of the writings, published so far: 4 volumes), vol, I-III Edition m, Weimar & Rostock 2008-2013, vol.IV Grünberg, Weimar & Rostock 2017.
  - 4 Since 1918, the *Staatliche Akademie der bildenden Künste Dresden* (State Academy of Fine Arts) was the continuation of the Royal Academy, whose origins can be traced back to the Dresden School of Drawing and Painting of 1680. Since 1764 it also had classes for architecture (Baukunst).

professors, our comparison is probably somewhat complicated by a murderous and disastrous war, which by November 1918 in Germany had led to an attempted revolution and the establishment of a new social and political order. In terms of age, Schumacher and Tessenow were only seven years apart—Schumacher born in 1869 and Tessenow in 1876—but their paths in life were so different that nearly fifteen years separated the moments when they began to receive professional recognition.

Fritz Schumacher gave his talk the 10th of May 1901. It was immediately published by Eugen Diederichs in Leipzig and received a second edition six years later<sup>5</sup>. The first one had the somewhat clumsy title *Das Bauschaffen der Jetztzeit und historische Überlieferung* (Architectural production of present time and historical tradition) and was dedicated to the Young Offspring in Architecture (dem jungen Nachwuchs der Baukunst). Schumacher had designed the cover-title and the layout of the booklet. [Fig. 1] In 1907 the lecture was published again in an anthology, *Streifzüge eines Architekten* (Ramblings of an Architect). The text remained unchanged but received the new heading *Tradition und Neuschaffen* (Tradition and Creating Anew). This time the layout of the book was not by Schumacher and the typeface had changed from Eckmann's Jugendstil font to a modern sans serif.

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<sup>5</sup> Fritz Schumacher, *Das Bauschaffen der Jetztzeit und historische Überlieferung*. Verlag von Eugen Diederichs, Leipzig, First edition 1901, 2nd edition with new title: *Tradition und Neuschaffen* in: Fritz Schumacher, *Streifzüge eines Architekten*, Verlag von Eugen Diederichs, Jena 1907.

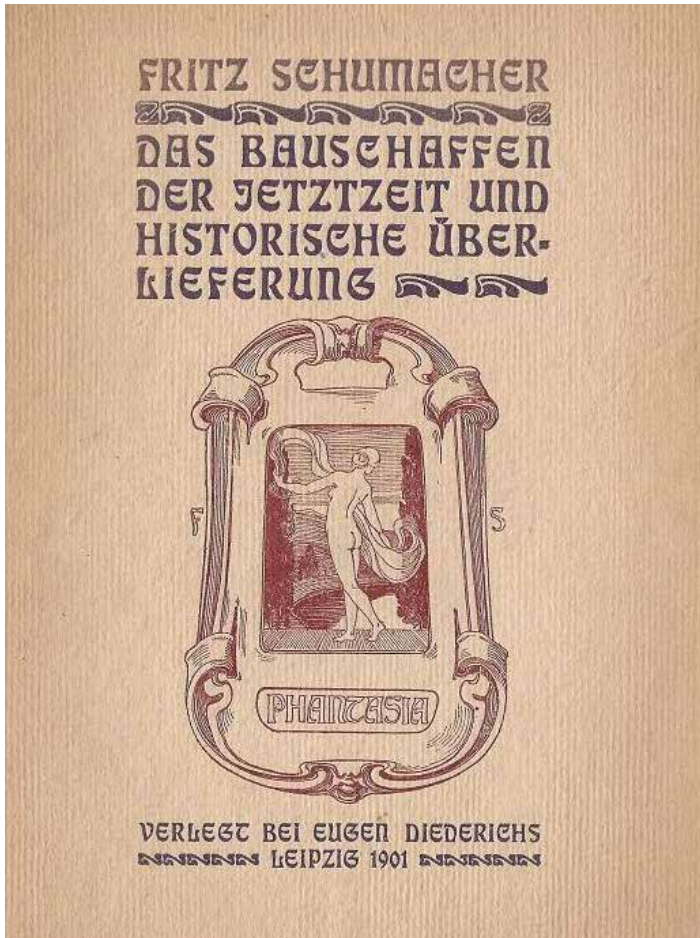


FIG. 1 Fritz Schumacher, Title cover of *Das Bauschaffen der Jetztzeit und historische Überlieferung*, 1901 (Title cover design and layout by the author)

Schumacher was appointed associate professor of the Königlich Sächsische Technische Hochschule Dresden (Royal Saxon Polytechnic School) in 1899 at the age of thirty. But he could not begin teaching Stilkunde (history of building styles) before 1901 because he was still employed by Hugo Licht, the City-architect of Leipzig<sup>6</sup> and was engaged in numerous side activities. The Royal Saxon Polytechnic School, established in 1871, was relatively new and still striving for academic recognition. Its architecture department, founded in 1875, took pride to have the right to award doctorates to architects since 1900. Due to his successful teaching of design and his theoretical lectures, Schumacher became full professor only two years after starting his teaching activities. Then, in 1909, to everyone's surprise he left this position and moved to Hamburg, becoming a less prestigious Stadtbaurat and head of the city's Hochbauamt (building construction office). Schumacher's career took a different course than that of most of his contemporaries. Neither his schooling, nor his studies or the beginning of his professional life were straightforward in the usual way. Throughout his life he had many other interests besides architecture. As the second son of a well-to-do patrician and senatorial family of Bremen he spent his early years in Bogota and New York, where his father was active in the new diplomatic service of the just founded Second German Empire. Fritz and his elder brother Hermann<sup>7</sup> were shaped for the rest of their lives by their privileged youth in New York. In his memoirs, Schumacher recalls the story of their numerous handicraft activities working

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6 Hugo Licht (1841-1923), architect, from 1896 until 1906 City-architect (Stadtbaudirektor) of Leipzig, editor of the magazines *Architektur des XX. Jahrhunderts* and *Der Profanbau*.

7 Hermann Schumacher (1868-1952) studied law and economics, travelled in Asia and became an important professor and leading member of the *Verein für Socialpolitik*, an association gathering the so-called *Kathedersozialisten*, a group of liberal social scientists strongly interested in social reform. He founded the ordo-liberal economic movement, which later will become influential in the Federal Republic.

with paper and wood and of their first enterprise in the American Way, a small printing shop, where they made office stationary and published a couple of booklets.<sup>8</sup> In 1883 their unconventional and unregulated life in New York came to an end and the brothers had to integrate themselves into the standard school system of the most prestigious grammar school of Bremen, the Altes Gymnasium, in order to obtain the Abitur, an indispensable qualification for admission to a German university.

Hermann Schumacher became a well-known economist in the liberal circles around Friedrich Naumann<sup>9</sup> and Werner Sombart<sup>10</sup>. He remained a central discussant and counsellor for his brother throughout his life. In 1889, after the Abitur, Fritz followed Hermann to Munich and began studying natural history at the university before switching to architecture at the Technische Hochschule<sup>11</sup>. Early on he began earning part of his living writing articles about cultural events for major newspapers and art magazines.<sup>12</sup> One of his first articles dealt with the sensational new staging of Shakespeare in Josza Savits' production of King Lear in Munich<sup>13</sup>. Only in one of these articles did he touch on questions

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8 Schumann Brothers Book and Job Printers New York. See: Fritz Schumacher, *Stufen des Lebens*, op.cit. p.47 ff.

9 Friedrich Naumann (1860–1919), protestant theologian, leading politician of the German left-wing liberal movement and co-founder of the *Deutscher Werkbund*.

10 Werner Sombart (1863–1941), Economist, historian and sociologist, critic of modern capitalism, with Gustav Schmoller a leading scholar in the *Verein für Socialpolitik*.

11 The Polytechnic School of Munich of 1868 in 1870 became together with its architecture department the *Königlich Bayerische Technische Hochschule* (Royal Bavarian Polytechnic School, since 1970 Technical University of Munich). In addition, Munich also had an architecture class at the *Akademie der Bildenden Künste* (Academy of Fine Arts), whose history goes back to the 18th century.

12 Among other publications, Schumacher wrote for *Pester Lloyd*, *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung*, *Weser-Zeitung*, *Die Gegenwart*. see: *Stufen des Lebens*, op.cit., p. 114.

13 Josza Savits (1847 – 1915), actor and theatre director. In 1889 introduced a German stage reform with his production of Shakespeare's King Lear at the Munich Court Theatre.



of architecture, in a review of Camillo Sitte's seminal book *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*<sup>14</sup>. For the rest of his life Schumacher continued writing articles, lecturing, curating exhibitions, and publishing books, alongside his extensive and prolific architectural and urban planning practice.

In the last decades of the 19th century, Munich was at its heyday as a cultural centre of Germany and the city formed Schumacher's later role as one of the leading theorists in the German architectural culture of the first half of the 20th century. For a time, authors like Jacob Burckhardt or John Ruskin (about whom Schumacher was one of the first in Germany to write articles) fostered his intention to become an architectural historian and to study intensely the architecture of the Italian Renaissance. To counterbalance the many publications on Renaissance painting and sculpture, he planned a series of monographs about the most important Renaissance architects; ultimately only one booklet on Leon Battista Alberti<sup>15</sup> was printed in 1898, while a second on Filippo Brunelleschi remained an unpublished fragment. [Fig. 2] Towards the end of this period of study, he decided to pursue a career as an architect, although he never completely abandoned his interest in history.

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<sup>14</sup> Camillo Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen* (City Planning according to Artistic Principles) Verlag von Carl Graeser, Vienna 1889.

<sup>15</sup> Fritz Schumacher, *Leon Battista Alberti und seine Bauten*, Die Baukunst, 1. Heft, 2. Serie, Verlag Spemann Berlin und Stuttgart 1899.



He interrupted his studies in Munich for a year to go to the Technische Hochschule Charlottenburg<sup>16</sup> in Berlin, but he still passed his diploma exams in Munich in the shortest possible time. Despite all his interests in art and architectural history, he did not intend to write a doctoral thesis at the university, nor did he enter a traineeship to take the additional exams to qualify as a government architect<sup>17</sup>, but instead started as an employee in the office of Gabriel Seidl<sup>18</sup>, who needed a renderer for his entry to the competition for the Bavarian National Museum in Munich. In Seidl's office he met Theodor Fischer,<sup>19</sup> who strongly influenced his understanding of urban planning and with whom he remained in contact throughout his life. It was quite unexpected when immediately after receiving his diploma he got his first commission as an architect. He had met the then-successful art dealer and collector Alexander Günther,<sup>20</sup> who was fascinated by this brilliant young man and let him reconstruct the ruinous castle Prösels in

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- 16 The *Königliche Technische Hochschule Charlottenburg* was the successor of the *Königliche Bauakademie Berlin*, which was founded in 1799. It became TH in 1879 after merging with the *Königliche Gewerbeakademie*. In 1899 it was granted the right to award doctorates in all engineering disciplines, including architecture. In 1946 it was re-founded as Technische Universität Berlin.
- 17 In Germany the professional title of an architect has been protected only since the second half of the 20th century. The standard training of a Baumeister took place in a *Baugewerkschule* (building trade school). An architect acquired the grade of *Diplom-Ingenieur* at a *Technische Hochschule* (polytechnical university), to which he could add the title of *Regierungs-Baumeister* (government architect) after another two years training in civil service. This title was obligatory for the public service but was much sought-after also for the liberal profession because it encouraged the confidence of private clients.
- 18 Gabriel Seidl, since 1900 von Seidl (1848 - 1913) was the Munich architect with the strongest influence on Schumacher, although he had mainly studied with Friedrich Thiersch, since 1897 von Thiersch (1852-1921).
- 19 Theodor Fischer (1862–1938), architect and urban planner in München, was professor in Stuttgart beginning in 1901 and in Munich beginning in 1908; he was co-founder of the German Werkbund.
- 20 Alexander Günther (1838–1926) was an art collector and dealer who exclusively advised the Rothschildt family in art matters.

South Tyrol as his private residence and as a location to exhibit his art collection. [Fig. 3] Schumacher could only complete a very small part of his ambitious project because Günther sold the property the following year and moved to Gardone at the Garda Lake in Northern Italy. Schumacher continued to work with Seidl and from Munich designed several conversion projects for Günther at Gardone. These projects offered him a fantastic opportunity to deal with the problematic reuse of historical buildings containing a mixture of styles from different periods. A central argument of his inaugural lecture in Dresden can be traced back to this work.

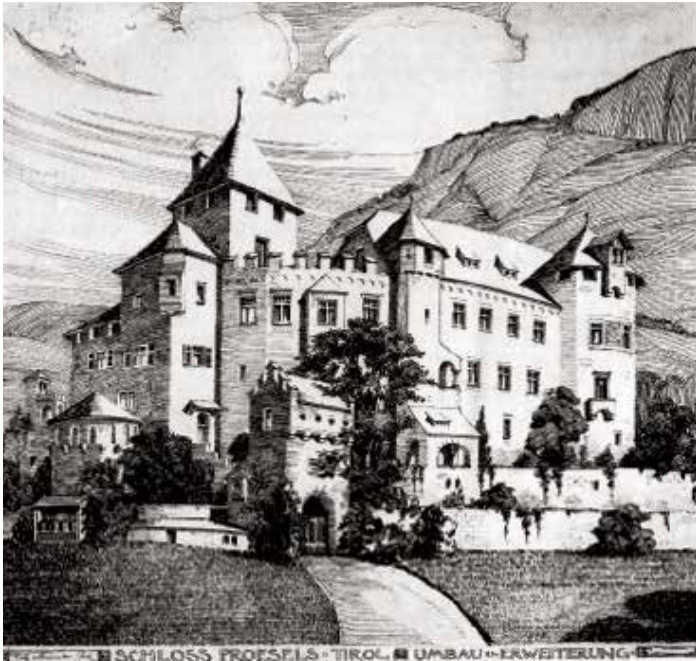


FIG. 3 Fritz Schumacher, Project for the Reconstruction and the Transformation of Schloss Prösels, South Tyrol, 1893

In 1895 Hugo Licht, the city-architect of Leipzig, needed a collaborator and renderer for his competition design of a New City Hall. Schumacher enjoyed excellent working conditions and soon became responsible for several of Licht's public projects, mostly interior design tasks. His first experiences with urban planning problems date from this period. His contract allowed him three months leave per year and he used it for long journeys to England, Belgium and Italy as well as for his extensive artistic and literary activities. He also was able to continue his private building activity and to realize a series of private residences for wealthy clients all over Germany. These were not historicist buildings but modern ones in the sense of the English Arts-and-Craft movement enhanced with elements of German vernacular and Jugendstil-architecture. [Fig. 3] But domestic architecture did not satisfy him. He dreamed of a modern monumental architecture for which he had not yet received commissions. He had to pursue this ambition on the smallest scale by designing private funerary monuments, supporting them with articles on a renewed burial culture.<sup>21</sup> For these family graves he tested the tectonic possibilities of form, volume, proportions and stylization, which he intended to apply on a novel monumentality for large public buildings. A practical field of application for this would not open up to him until 1909 when he left Dresden for the rich and growing port city of Hamburg. There he would take over responsibility for the entire public buildings sector and would be able to design a large number of schools, administration buildings, hospitals and the like.

His longing for a contemporary monumental architecture led him during his Leipzig years to produce a series of charcoal drawings of architectural fantasies. For these he was inspired

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21 See: Fritz Schumacher, 'Grabmalkunst' in: *Dekorative Kunst* I, 1898.

by recently finished monumental buildings elsewhere, like the palace of justice in Brussels by Joseph Poelart, the Reichstag, the new German parliament in Berlin by Paul Wallot, and the giant theatrical monuments by Bruno Schmitz in honour of Wilhelm I which arose on scenic spots all over Germany', but most of all - as he himself stated - by four volumes of architectural phantasies by Otto Rieth, a long-time assistant and collaborator of Paul Wallot.<sup>22</sup> In his circles at this time these volumes were much discussed. Schumacher's drawings were less fanciful and rich in imagery and more abstract and tectonic than Rieth's. But they also were very well received. They were positively reviewed and shown in a travelling exhibition in several German cities. In 1899 he published twenty lithographs after these charcoal drawings in a portfolio entitled *Studien* (studies)<sup>23</sup> with the same publisher as Rieth and with his explicit consent. On the first panel he featured the sketch of a memorial to Friedrich Nietzsche [Fig. 4], followed by several grail-like castles on mountain tops, a series of monuments for Bismarck, Wilhelm I, Richard Wagner and others, and in the midst of all this, the nightly entrance front of an electrically illuminated metropolitan department store. It was not with the department store but with the Nietzsche memorial that he attracted the interest of proponents of modernity on the threshold of the 20th century. The conception was entirely in their spirit and met the zeitgeist. This pure fantasy sketch, far from being a serious project proposal, brought him an

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<sup>22</sup> Otto Rieth, *Skizzen. Architektonische und dekorative Studien und Entwürfe*. 4 vol., Baumgärtner's Buchhandlung, Leipzig 1891-1899, dedicated to „Paul Wallot, dem Architekten des Deutschen Reichstagshauses“ (the architect of the German Reichstag Building). Otto Rieth (1858-1911), architect and artist, worked with Wallot in Frankfurt and Berlin, taught as professor at the *Unterrichtsanstalt des Kunstgewerbemuseums Berlin* (Berlin school of applied arts).

<sup>23</sup> Fritz Schumacher, *Studien. 20 Kohlezeichnungen*. Baumgärtner's Buchhandlung, Leipzig 1899.

invitation to Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche<sup>24</sup> and to the deathbed of the moribund philosopher in Weimar and gave him access to culturally influential circles meeting in the Nietzsche-Archive.



FIG. 4 Fritz Schumacher, Villa Grüber, Dresden-Plauen, 1903

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<sup>24</sup> Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche (1846-1935) cared for her mentally ill brother, the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) during his last years and looked after his legacy in the Nietzsche Archive in Weimar, founded in 1897. The circle around the archive included, among others, the Harry Graf Kessler and Henry van de Velde.

In his Leipzig years, Schumacher was active in the nascent art and culture scene of this city of merchants. He cultivated contacts with artists and galleries, took part in music and theatre activities, was a member of literary circles, was befriended by the directors of museums and theatres and above all by the numerous publishers of this German centre of book printing and editing. He worked as an architect and wrote articles and books, he designed book layouts, furniture, household appliances, grave monuments. He published a selection of his *Studien* and a first anthology with essays on cultural reform.<sup>25</sup> [Fig. 5]

The most surprising among these activities was his encounter with the world of the theatre, for which he not only created stage designs but also wrote a play in whose successful performance he had a major part. Together with Richard Graul,<sup>26</sup> the director of the Museum of Applied Arts, he developed the idea of this *Festspiel* (pageant play) to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of the museum. Their aim was to encourage the greatest possible public participation and to stimulate the interest of influential circles of the city in the museum and in the reform movement of the applied arts. Schumacher wrote the programmatic play in rhyme *Phantasien in Auerbachs Keller* (Phantasies in Auerbach's cellar) dealing with the development of design culture over several centuries up to the debate about modernity and tradition that was ongoing at the turn of the century.<sup>27</sup> [Fig. 6]

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<sup>25</sup> Fritz Schumacher, *Im Kampfe um die Kunst, Beiträge zu architektonischen Zeitfragen*. Series: Ueber Kunst der Neuzeit, Verlag J.H.Ed.Heitz, Straßburg 1899.

<sup>26</sup> Richard Graul (1862-1944) was an art historian and, beginning in 1896, director of the Leipzig Museum of Decorative Arts, today Grassimuseum. He was a co-founder of the *Deutscher Werkbund*.

<sup>27</sup> Fritz Schumacher, *Phantasien in Auerbachs Keller. Festspiel zur Feier des fünfundzwanzigjährigen Bestehens des Kunstgewerbemuseums zu Leipzig* (Museum of Decorative Arts). Druck und Verlag von J.J. Weber, Leipzig 1899.





FIG. 5 Fritz Schumacher, Phantasy of a Monument for Friedrich Nietzsche (lithograph after a charcoal drawing, from Fritz Schumacher, *Studien*, 1899)



FIG. 6 Fritz Schumacher, *Phantasien in Auerbachs Keller*, 1899 (Title cover designed by the author)

The story was inspired by Goethe's *Faust*. Like in this drama Faust and Mephistopheles visit the pub of Auerbach's Cellar in Leipzig where they encounter a group of artisans and artists discussing the latest questions of art, design and style. They intervene by conjuring up living pictures after famous paintings from different periods on the wall, for which purpose the upper part of the divided stage would reopen for each new picture. In a highlight

towards the end a group of young ladies from Leipzig's upper-class families re-enacted Edward Burn-Jones' painting the Golden Stairs.<sup>28</sup> Thus the Arts and Craft movement was presented as the latest development of contemporary art and design and as herald of modern culture. The final scene showed the future world with a round of dancers in flowing robes designed by famous contemporary German painters.

The entire play and its staging was obviously inspired by a performance of the English Art Workers Guild, entitled *Beauty's Awakening* a masque of winter and of spring<sup>29</sup>, which Schumacher or Graul had seen on stage in the Guildhall of London or had read it in *The Studio*, where it had been published in full length. In contrast to the London masque play, where members of the Art Workers Guild under the direction of Walter Crane<sup>30</sup> had designed all costumes and scenery and acted on stage themselves, the Leipzig play was a collaboration of professional and amateur actors, of local and foreign designers, of theatre and opera directors and museum curators. Schumacher wrote the play, had a big part in the general staging, was responsible in detail for the scene with the Golden Stairs and the final round dance, and produced the layout and design of the program and the text booklet.

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- 28 Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898) was a leading painter in the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. He was one of William Morris's most important collaborators and a central figure in the English Arts and Craft movement. He painted *The Golden Stairs* between 1876 and 1880 (today Tate Britain, London).
- 29 *Beauty's Awakening. A Masque of Winter and of Spring* (presented by the members of the Art Workers Guild). *The Studio*. Summer Number, London 1899.
- 30 Walter Crane (1845-1915) was an illustrator and designer who worked closely with William Morris (1834 - 1896) in the Arts and Crafts movement and in the Socialist movement.

The London play had been symbolically advocating a renaissance and beautification of London before an audience of politicians and representatives of the city administration. Schumacher's play, on the other hand, was conceived more generally as a kind of public education. It directly served to promote the Leipzig Museum of Applied Arts, but beyond that aimed to propagate a new culture for a better modern society. The play was performed three times with great success and introduced Schumacher to the world of the theatre. After this pageant he became entrusted with several stage-settings for plays by Shakespeare, Goethe, Byron and others on major theatres in Leipzig, Dresden and Hamburg. He developed his own ideas about stylization of performance and for a reformed stage similar to those attempted by Edward Gordon Craig<sup>31</sup> or Adolphe Appia<sup>32</sup>, whom he would soon meet both in Dresden. It is impossible to ignore the importance of these stage works for a better understanding of his space concept for interiors, buildings, parks and urban ensembles.

It was Cornelius Gurlitt<sup>33</sup> who in 1899, immediately after the success of Schumacher's programmatic play *Phantasien in Auerbachs Keller*, proposed him for a teaching position at the faculty of Architecture at the TH Dresden. Schumacher was by that time known beyond circles of architects as an inspiring artist and theorist. He had even been introduced to the King of Saxony and his wife when they came to

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31 Edward Gordon Craig (1873 – 1966), before 1893 Edward Henry Gordon Godwin, was an actor, theatre director and stage designer in England, Germany, Russia and France. A project planned in 1906 in Dresden together with Schumacher for a stage with life-size puppets was not realized.

32 Adolphe Appia (1862 – 1928) was a Swiss stage designer and theatre theorist who became known because of his demand for a completely abstract Wagner stage. Together with Jacques Dalcroze, Wolf Dohrn and Heinrich Tessenow, he developed the project of the *Festspielhaus* in Dresden-Hellerau.

33 Cornelius Gurlitt (1850 - 1893), architect, monument conservator, art historian and urban planning theorist, served as professor for the history of technology at the TH Dresden beginning in 1893.

Leipzig to see the last performance of the Festspiel. It was apparently not difficult to move the appointment of the thirty-year-old artist through the Saxon cultural bureaucracy. In order to underline its newly acquired status as a teaching institution on an equal level with the universities, the Technische Hochschule expected not only a full professor but even an associate professor to give an inaugural lecture. As mentioned, the new professor of Stilkunde (architectural styles) gave his ceremonial lecture on 10 May 1901 about the relationship of contemporary architecture to building tradition. He dedicated the publication of his speech not to the faculty but to the students. The title of his chair revealed the intention of the faculty to integrate him into the usual teaching programme based on historical building styles. But the title of his lecture already indicated that he doubted this practice and wanted to question the familiar role of architectural history for contemporary architecture. The title “Das Bauschaffen der Jetztzeit und historische Überlieferung” (the building craft of the present time and historical tradition) does not promise statements on Stilkunde but at best reflections on the relevance of architectural history for the architecture of the time.

Fully aware he could disappoint the faculty, he declared himself a partisan of the modern movement and began to discuss different views on the role of history in the current architectural discourse. He complained about the misuse of architectural history by most of the 19th century architects as a reservoir of motifs and forms. This resulted in the total recoil of the pendulum in the concepts of many of his contemporaries who rejected historical styles as useless for architecture, which instead should truly reflect only its construction and function. For him too this seemed to be adequate and reasonable in the case of architecture with modern “social” purposes like train stations, covered markets or industrial buildings. Because these new tasks have no history, they should be built with new materials like steel and glass and required new formal languages. But in the case of monumental architecture and housing, which for centuries had

been built in natural stone, this refusal of traditional building types he thought not justified and something that should be rejected. In this case, he argued that a good knowledge of historical solutions and the experience of former generations remained essential and inevitable. He therefore concluded that the search for a uniform contemporary style that would be valid for all building tasks was pointless and could not be accepted. He argued instead for the coexistence of different approaches according to the building task and construction material. But he did not consider the study of architectural history to be superfluous. Even if it did not help modern architects find a solution for every contemporary task it would enable them to better understand the logic and organic principles of architecture in general. Consequently, he believed the study of architectural history was still justified.



FIG. 7 Fritz Schumacher, Title cover of *Im Kampfe um die Kunst*, 1899 (Title cover designed by the author)

In his lecture Schumacher did not formulate ideas that he had not previously developed in his articles. Since he had no experience of university teaching other than his own as a student, he avoided making statements about his future teaching and stuck to generalities. His statements on a style of modernity followed the argument of his articles like those collected in his reader, *Im Kampfe um die Kunst* (Fighting for the Arts) of 1899. [Fig. 7] These articles were strongly influenced by Anglo-Saxon debates. But we should not overlook the fact that he himself was also an active participant in the simultaneous German reform efforts, which undoubtedly were to a large degree influenced by the Arts and Craft movement, but also by recent Art Nouveau developments in Paris and Brussels and by the Viennese Secession. In addition they borrowed from German debates about social reform and popular education. He was in permanent exchange with many protagonists of reform associations like *Dürerbund*<sup>34</sup> or *Deutscher Bund Heimatschutz*<sup>35</sup>. He was member of the *Deutsche Gartenstadt Gesellschaft* (German Garden City Society)<sup>36</sup> and met many of them again in the *Deutscher Werkbund*, of which he was one of the decisive organizers. At the founding meeting in Munich, in October 1907 in place of the first chairman Hermann Muthesius, who was unable to attend, he gave the keynote speech with the programmatic title of *Die Wiedereroberung harmonischer Kultur* (The Reconquest of Harmonious Culture)<sup>37</sup>.

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34 *Dürerbund* was an educational association founded in 1902 by Ferdinand Avenarius and Paul Schumann in Dresden with close ties to the *Deutscher Bund Heimatschutz* and the *Deutscher Werkbund*.

35 The *Deutscher Bund Heimatschutz* (German Federation for the Protection of Cultural Heritage) was founded in 1904 by Paul Schultze-Naumburg together with the composer and music professor Ernst Rudorff (1849-1916). Rudorff coined the term *Heimatschutz* with a publication of the same name in 1897.

36 The *Deutsche Gartenstadt Gesellschaft* (German Garden City Society) was founded in 1902 on the English model.

37 Fritz Schumacher, 'Die Wiedereroberung harmonischer Kultur', in: *Der Kunstwart*, vol. 21, 1907/08 (2nd quarter), p.135-138

Soon after his appointment in Dresden, Schumacher redesigned the interior of an apartment he had rented for himself. The general line of this design also was influenced by the English Arts and Crafts movement, which he had promoted in Germany with early articles on Ruskin and Morris. He published the new interior proudly in the magazine *Dekorative Kunst* presenting it as the appropriate ambience for a bourgeois intellectual to live a modern life<sup>38</sup>. He had designed everything himself down to the smallest detail: the furniture, the wallpaper, the floor coverings, the lamps, the freestanding clock, even the container for the writing utensils and the inkwell. Most of all his writing desk reveals in addition to the Arts and Crafts also a certain influence of art nouveau and of van de Velde. Nevertheless, in his inaugural lecture he fiercely criticised van de Velde and his radical rejection of the architectural tradition as a necessary prerequisite for true modernity, accusing him of a one-sided, utilitarian understanding of architecture.

A photo of this writing desk unveils something about the intellectual realm of the young professor. [Fig. 8] The general arrangement and the objects on and around this piece of furniture allow a small insight into his world of artistic taste and thinking. The blank top of the desk with only a flowerpot in the left corner and a closed round box on the right do not give the impression of a workplace in use. We see a flokati carpet, a goatskin or some other kind of fur on the floor; but no office chair or any other seat. From the ceiling hangs an electric suspended lamp and, on the wall behind, we see three pictures arranged around a face mask with a laurel wreath.

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<sup>38</sup> *Dekorative Kunst* 11, 1903, p. 281-307





FIG. 8 Fritz Schumacher, Writing desk in his own Apartment in Dresden, 1902

Above this mask, we recognise the *Isle of the Dead* by Hans Boecklin<sup>39</sup>, in an engraved version from 1890 by Max Klinger<sup>40</sup>. The picture to the left of the masque shows another engraving by Klinger, the plate *Zeit und Ruhm* (Time and Fame) of his series *Vom Tode II* (From Death II) published in 1898. It shows before a landscape by the sea a grim-looking medusa (time) in a winning pose, shouldering a heavy hammer and setting one foot on a naked beauty (fame) lying on the ground in front of her. The picture on the right has not precisely been identified. It may be by Feuerbach<sup>41</sup> or by Klinger. The mask probably is a reworked life-mask of Goethe,<sup>42</sup> whom Schumacher adored.<sup>43</sup>

Obviously, this photo does not show a real working place of an architect, at least not in 1903 when it was shot. This rather is a place of worship or the private altar of a young German intellectual enchanted by specific ingredients of the contemporary art world around 1900. His ideal world seems to be centred around Goethe, who is surrounded by references to works of the German-Roman school, revisited by works of Max Klinger, one of the shooting stars in

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<sup>39</sup> Hans Boecklin, Swiss painter, lived and worked mainly in Italy, where from 1880 to 1885 he painted five versions of the *Island of the Dead*, his most famous work.

<sup>40</sup> Max Klinger (1857 - 1920) sculptor, painter and engraver, lived from 1887 on in Leipzig, his hometown, and in Italy. The cycle of engravings *Vom Tode I* was created in Rome in 1889.

<sup>41</sup> Anselm Feuerbach (1829 -1880), a German painter, became a member of the German Artists' Association in Rome in 1857. Schumacher's sponsor Alexander Günther was the main dealer of Boecklin and Feuerbach.

<sup>42</sup> There are two face masks of Goethe known, which were created during his lifetime, a half mask, made by Martin Gottlieb Klauer in 1778 and a full mask, which Karl Gottlob Weißer (1780-1815) took off in 1807 and reworked into a portrait bust. In 1832 Friedrich Preller the Elder drew Goethe on his deathbed and then added a laurel wreath, similar to the mask in Schumacher's possession. Goethe had forbidden the making of a mask after his death.

<sup>43</sup> Schumacher published several lectures on Goethe and architecture (1905, 1932, 1943) and in 1937, when on his 70th birthday, he was awarded the State Prize of the Goethe Medal for Art and Science.

the European art scene at the turn of the century whom he admired and with whom he was on friendly terms in the Leipzig years. What is surprising, however, is the absence of Friedrich Nietzsche and of any architectural hero. But neither Nietzsche's nor Goethe's better-known busts by Klinger had been finished at this time, which may explain their absence. One could expect Alberti or Brunelleschi as architectural hero, but wouldn't they arouse the suspicion that he might be close to any of the common revival architectures? We know that Schumacher was sympathetic to the monumentality of Paul Wallot and Bruno Schmitz, but he also criticized their overcharged pomp and their complete lack of stylizing abstraction.

When Schumacher came to Dresden, the teaching program of the architecture faculty of the TH still consisted of many independent subjects and paid little attention to creative architectural design – the same as at most other polytechnic schools in Europe at this time. Architecture was considered more a technical discipline than an art. Years later in his memoir, Schumacher offered a detailed description of this situation and his efforts to change it. In his inaugural speech, on the other hand, he did not criticise or even mention this regrettable state of affairs. Nevertheless, it remains clearly noticeable as a subtext. He had to teach the following three subjects: 'history of building styles', 'freehand and ornament drawing', and 'interior design'. This we know from the recently published course schemes of the later renowned expressionist painter Ernst Ludwig Kirchner<sup>44</sup>, who studied architecture at the Dresden TH from 1901 until 1905. He had chosen Schumacher as tutor of his diploma thesis, for which he

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<sup>44</sup> Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880-1938), architect and painter, studied architecture at the TH Dresden from 1901 to 1905. In 1905, together with his study mates Erich Heckel, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff and Fritz Bleyl, he founded the artists' group *Die Brücke*, which became a leading influence in Expressionism after the group moved to Berlin in 1911.

submitted the design of a large monumental cemetery.<sup>45</sup> There was no such subject as ‘project design’ or ‘urban planning’ in the program and Schumacher had to teach such topics in his drawing and interior design classes.

Of particular importance for Schumacher’s future success in Dresden was his collaboration with Cornelius Gurlitt, without question the leading personality of the Dresden architecture faculty at the time. Gurlitt had studied architecture at the Bauakademie in Berlin but never graduated. He was an autodidact in art history but became a renowned scholar of baroque architecture and author of the many volumes of the Saxon inventory of monuments. He was proud to have made his personal career without a university degree. But he used this new right of the TH Dresden to award doctorates<sup>46</sup> systematically to enhance the scientific reputation of his faculty. One of those he promoted, Hermann Muthesius<sup>47</sup>, became one of the first German holders of a PhD in architecture, and several others, often already successful architects, followed. When Gurlitt was rector of the TH, even his colleague Paul Wallot<sup>48</sup> received a PhD honoris causa. Schumacher supervised dissertations and participated in several doctoral

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<sup>45</sup> Ralf Beil / Katharina Siegmann (ed.), *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner als Architekt*. Hirmer Verlag, München 2011.

<sup>46</sup> The TH Dresden received this right in 1900, one year after the TH Charlottenburg.

<sup>47</sup> Hermann Muthesius (1861-1927, architect, architecture and design theorist, Prussian civil servant, worked from 1887 - 1891 in Tokyo at Ende & Böckmann, then joined the Prussian civil service, where he served from 1896 - 1903, and he became attaché at the German Embassy in London, where he wrote the extremely influential three-volume work *Das Englische Haus* (The English House). His Dresden dissertation from 1902 is entitled: *Kirchenbau der englischen Secten* (Church building of the English sects). In 1907 he became the first president of the *Deutscher Werkbund*.

<sup>48</sup> Paul Wallot (1841-1912), architect, built the *Reichstag* in Berlin 1884-1918 and the Saxon *Ständehaus* in Dresden (1901 -1906. From 1895 to 1911 he was a professor at both the TH Dresden and the Akademie der Künste in Dresden.

procedures but never wrote a doctoral thesis himself. He was not convinced that such an academic qualification was relevant for an architect who designed projects, as he explained on several occasions.<sup>49</sup> Eventually, he received three honorary doctorates, which he proudly listed on his letterhead.<sup>50</sup>

Gurlitt's teaching departed significantly from the traditional teaching of architectural history. His lectures always covered a wide range of questions and problems. They avoided the rather philological argumentation of most art historians and instead tried to take into account the visual and haptic preferences of architecture students. Famous and popular were his hand drawings extemporized on the blackboard in the auditorium. Schumacher would later advocate such a teaching method in architectural education and no doubt he made it his own very quickly in Dresden, once he was no longer bound to his minor subjects and as full professor was allowed to teach architectural design. In 1902 Gurlitt introduced the first lecture series in urban planning and Schumacher worked closely with him on this. Under the influence of this collaboration and the specific questions they addressed in urban planning, his architectural aesthetics, which until then had been understood in a rather aesthetic and predominantly artistic way, underwent a noticeable shift towards a more social orientation.

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49 Fritz Schumacher. *Grundlagen der Baukunst. Studien zum Beruf des Architekten*, Verlag von Georg D. W. Callwey, München 1918. p 47.

50 Dr. med. University of Cologne, Dr. tech. TH Berlin, Dr. ing. TH Braunschweig.

In 1903 Schumacher and Gurlitt were involved in the organization of the Erste Deutsche Städteausstellung (First German Cities Exhibition).<sup>51</sup> They belonged to the exhibition committee and were responsible for setting up sections in which design issues played a role, in contrast to those dominated by engineering projects. Schumacher and Gurlitt could not choose the exhibits themselves, but received them from the participating cities. However, in the series of lectures organized in parallel, they made use of the opportunity to express disapproval of the exhibition concept in the way that they talked about topics that were not likely to be seen in the exhibition. Gurlitt spoke about Der deutsche Städtebau (urban planning in Germany) and Schumacher about Die Architektonischen Aufgaben der Städte (The architectural tasks of cities). In this lecture Schumacher for the first time shared his dream that an architect gifted with great artistic capacities should become the omnipotent urban planner of a modern metropolis like Hamburg – precisely what he later became himself in an exemplary way.<sup>52</sup>

At that time, social scientists were beginning to debate the problems of the metropolis but their concerns had not yet reached practical urban planning and local politics. Gurlitt and Schumacher's lectures had not received much response, nor had Georg Simmel's on Die Großstadt und das Geistesleben (The Big City and Intellectual Life), which later became so well-known. Simmel had given his lecture at another conference in the run-up to this exhibition and it had

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51 Robert Wuttke (ed.), *Die deutschen Städte. Geschildert nach den Ergebnissen der ersten deutschen Städteausstellung*, (The German cities. Described after the results of the first German city exhibition) vol. 1: lectures, vol. 2: catalogue. Verlag Friedrich Brandstetter, Leipzig 1904.

52 Fritz Schumacher, 'Die Architektonischen Aufgaben der Städte' (The architectural tasks of the cities), in: Wuttke, op.cit., vol. I, p.63.

met with general incomprehension.<sup>53</sup> Ultimately, the exhibition encouraged Gurlitt and Schumacher in their efforts to integrate urban planning as a subject in its own right in the teaching programme of their faculty. It also led to the founding of the Deutscher Städtetag (German Association of Cities), which subsequently became increasingly involved in urban planning issues all over Germany.

Three years after the 1903 exhibition, Schumacher was more successful with his participation in the planning and realization of the Dritte Deutsche Kunstgewerbeausstellung (Third German Arts and Crafts Exhibition). He had begun planning this event immediately after the city exhibition and after a failure to organize the exhibition in Munich. Besides Gurlitt and Schumacher, this time Germany's leading architects and designers such as Hans Poelzig, Hermann Muthesius, Peter Behrens, Wilhelm Kreis and others were involved in the preparations. Schumacher was commissioned to curate the large department of Kirchliche Kunst und Raumkunst (ecclesiastical and spatial art) in the central wing of the exhibition palace.<sup>54</sup> His Protestant church room [Fig. 9] dominated the entrance area and he was given the opportunity to present further works in the second large exhibition area, in the Saxon House built by Wilhelm Kreis<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>53</sup> Georg Simmel, 'Die Großstadt und das Geistesleben' (The big city and intellectual life), in: Gehe Stiftung zu Dresden (ed.), *Die Großstadt. Vorträge und Aufsätze zur Städteausstellung*, V. Zahn & Jaensch Dresden 1903. p.185-206.

<sup>54</sup> See the plans of the exhibition in: *Direktorium der Ausstellung* (ed.), *Das Deutsche Kunstgewerbe 1906*. III. Deutsche Kunstgewerbeausstellung, Dresden 1906. Verlagsanstalt F. Bruckmann A.-G., München 1906., p. 54-56.

<sup>55</sup> Wilhelm Kreis (1873 -1955), won the competition of 1896 for the Völkerschlachtendenkmal (Monument to the Battle of the Nations) in Leipzig, worked at the same time as Schumacher for Hugo Licht in Leipzig, became assistant to Paul Wallot in Dresden in 1898, 1902 - 1908 professor for Raumkunst (spatial art) at the Kunstgewerbeschule (School of Arts and Crafts) Dresden, then director of the Düsseldorf School of Arts and Crafts, 1926 he became professor at the Dresden Academy of Art as successor to Tessenow.

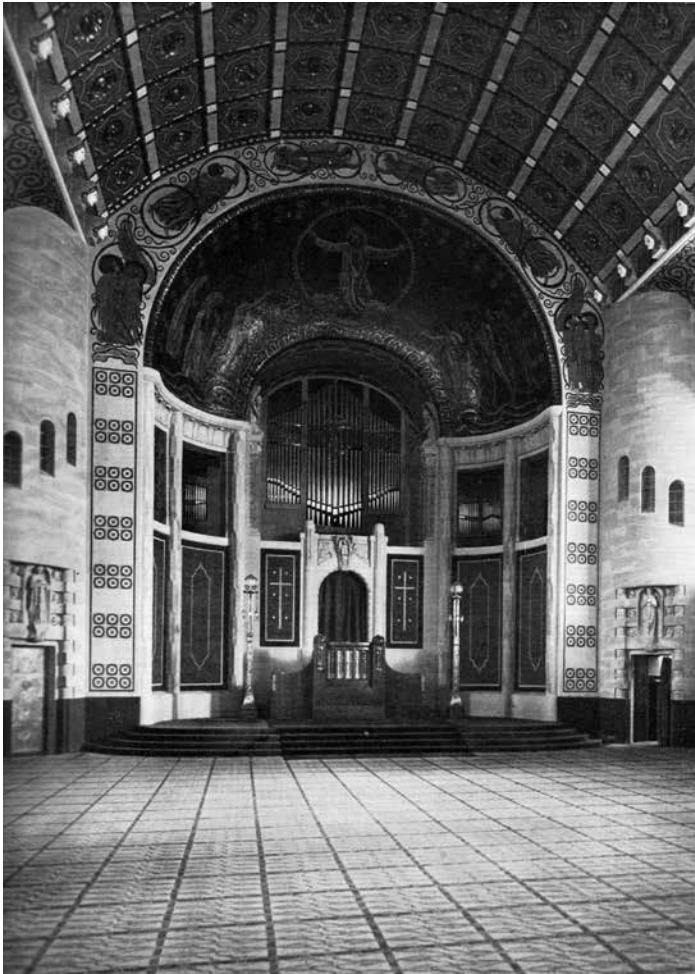


FIG. 9 Fritz Schumacher, Pulpit altar and apse of a Protestant Church in the entrance hall of the 'Third Arts and Craft Exhibition', Dresden 1906



In the context of this exhibition, two highly important follow-up events took on concrete form: the Garden City of Hellerau and the German Werkbund. Karl Schmidt<sup>56</sup>, Richard Riemerschmidt<sup>57</sup> and Wolf Dohrn<sup>58</sup> found broad support for their project of the first German garden city in Hellerau, a northern suburb of Dresden, which was supposed to be built according to the specifications of the German Garden City Association. Riemerschmidt, who already was building a new furniture factory there for the Deutsche Werkstätten of Karl Schmidt, was commissioned to plan this garden city too. He was supervised by a Bau- und Künstlerkommission (building and artists' commission), which was given far-reaching planning and aesthetic control functions by the city. Schumacher was appointed to the commission along with six others.<sup>59</sup>

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- 56 Karl Schmidt (1873-1948), from 1938 Schmidt-Hellerau, apprenticed carpenter, founded the *Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst* in 1898, which in 1907 became *Deutsche Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst Dresden und München* and employed renowned artists from Germany, Austria, England, Belgium as designers. He was one of the initiators of the 3rd German Arts and Crafts Exhibition in 1906 and the German Werkbund in 1907. In 1908 he founded together with Wolf Dohrn the *Gartenstadtgesellschaft Hellerau GmbH* and the *Baugesellschaft Hellerau*.
- 57 Richard Riemerschmidt (1868-1957), painter, furniture designer and architect, in 1898 became co-founder of *Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk München und Bremen*, in 1902 of the *German Garden City Society*, in 1907 of the German Werkbund. He worked closely with Karl Schmidt's *Deutsche Werkstätten*, for which in 1906 he designed the successful programme of *Maschinenmöbel* (machine made furniture). In 1907 he was commissioned by Schmidt and Dohrn the master-plan of the garden-city of Hellerau.
- 58 Wolf Dohrn (1878-1914), after studying philology in Munich, Leipzig and Berlin, became the general secretary of the *Deutsche Werkstätten* in 1907, took part in the founding of the *Deutscher Werkbund* and became the main promoter of the garden city of Hellerau alongside Schmidt. In 1910 he founded the *Bildungsanstalt für rhythmische Gymnastik* (educational institution for rhythmic gymnastics) with Jacques Dalcroze and engaged Heinrich Tessenow for the construction of the *Festspielhaus Hellerau*.
- 59 Members of this so-called *Siebenerkommission* (commission of seven) were the five architects: Richard Riemerschmidt, Theodor Fischer, Hermann Muthesius, Hans Poelzig, Fritz Schumacher, and two artists: the sculptor Adolf Hildebrand and the painter Otto Gussmann. See: Schumacher, *Stufen des Lebens*, op.cit., p.263

The other - probably even more momentous - consequence of the 1906 exhibition was the bringing together of 12 artists and 12 arts and crafts entrepreneurs and industry representatives to form a cultural-political association, which was then formally founded the following year in Munich under the name of Deutscher Werkbund.

Before the founding of the Werkbund, Schumacher had already published his anthology *Streifzüge eines Architekten* (Ramblings of an Architect), in which he reprinted both his inaugural lecture of 1901 and his speech at the 1903 city exhibition<sup>60</sup>. [Fig. 10] At the end of this volume, we find his interpretation of the aims of the 3rd German Arts and Crafts Exhibition of 1906<sup>61</sup>, in which it becomes clear that all his reform efforts had a common cultural-political goal, as the Deutscher Werkbund would then also pursue: to bring about a higher culture of life for all through educational measures in the broadest sense and with the support of better-designed living environments and equipment. For this purpose, he does not simply want to train better qualified architects, but also more conscious ones; he wants not simply to build more beautiful cities, but those with a higher quality of life. He does not want to improve the quality of arts and crafts for the sake of export and profit, but to raise the level of everyday culture of the population. At this time, Schumacher broke away from his earlier mainly arts-and-crafts-influenced aesthetic views and was already mentally preparing his departure from academic teaching into the urban planning practice of a modern metropolis like Hamburg, which would take place on his 40th birthday in 1909.

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<sup>60</sup> Fritz Schumacher, *Tradition und Neuschaffen* (Tradition and Creating Anew), and Fritz Schumacher, 'Architektonische Aufgaben der Städte' (The architectural tasks of cities), in: *Streifzüge eines Architekten*, Verlag von Eugen Diederichs, Jena 1907

<sup>61</sup> Fritz Schumacher, 'Die Ziele der III. deutschen Kunstgewerbeausstellung' (The aims of the Third German Arts and Crafts Exhibition), in: *Streifzüge... ibidem*

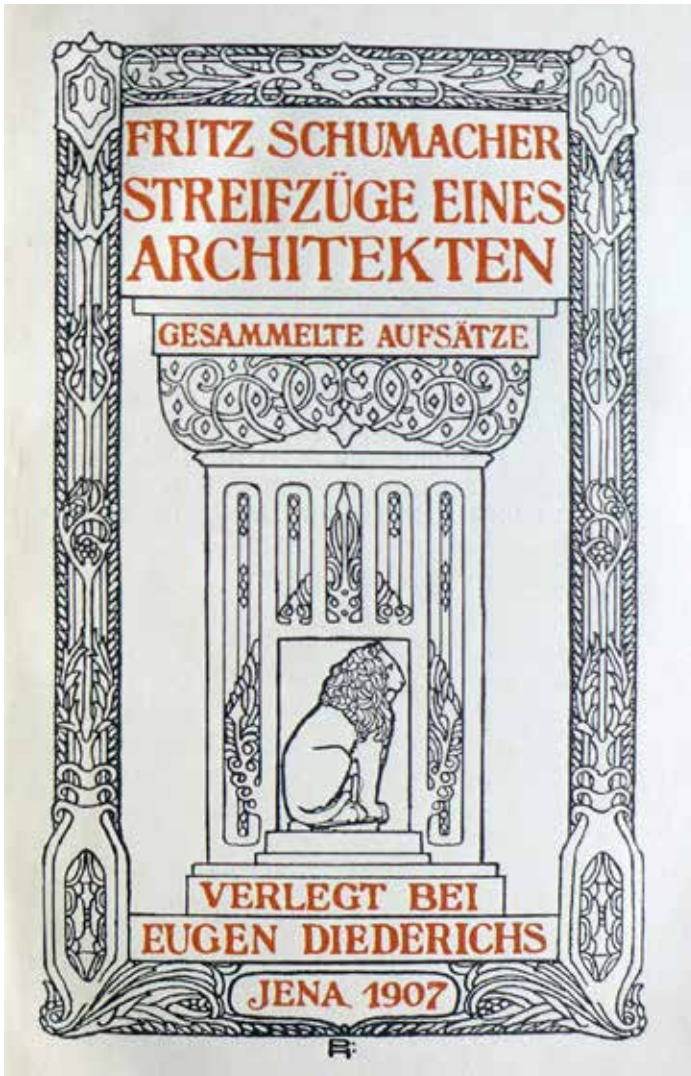


FIG. 10 Fritz Schumacher, *Streifzüge eines Architekten*, 1907 (Title cover by D.H.)

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It was in 1904 when Schumacher first encountered Heinrich Tessenow. In an essay written during the war on the relationship between talent and formal qualification in professional advancement, Schumacher recalled a characteristic incident that described the stubborn state of affairs at German universities in the pre-war period.<sup>62</sup> A young colleague, who was just about to gain a reputation in the circles of the reform movement, had written to him and expressed a desire to enrol in the TH Dresden in order to obtain an university degree, which he lacked. Schumacher, who had heard about the qualification of this colleague, thought it an excellent idea to have an already experienced and reform-enthusiastic architect among his students and tried everything to make his application a success. He failed. Despite the support of the faculty this enrolment was rejected categorically by the responsible Saxon Ministry of Culture because the candidate did not have the obligatory high school diploma, the Abitur. In 1935, in a note in his memoirs *Stufen des Lebens*<sup>63</sup>, Schumacher reveals that this applicant was none other than Heinrich Tessenow, whom he held in high esteem, and then he smugly recounts how he and his colleagues were able to undermine the decision a few years later because no Abitur certificate was required for teaching assistants. Without any problem the faculty could hire both Oswin Hempel<sup>64</sup> as assistant to Schumacher and Heinrich Tessenow to

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62 Fritz Schumacher, *Die Reform der kunsttechnischen Erziehung. Ein Beitrag zum Aufstieg der Begabten.* (The reform of the art-technical education. A contribution to the rise of the gifted.) Schriften des Deutschen Ausschuss für Erziehung und Unterricht No. 3, Quelle und Meyer, Leipzig 1918.

63 Fritz Schumacher, *Stufen des Lebens*, op.cit., note 1, p.263 and p.422 (note 140a).

64 Oswin Hempel (1876-1965) studied architecture at the Dresden Academy of Arts under Paul Wallot. In 1904 he became assistant to Fritz Schumacher at the TH Dresden, later his successor at the chair of Raumkunst (spatial art) and honorary doctor of the TH Dresden.

the just appointed new professor Martin Dülfer<sup>65</sup>. Schumacher was a friend and colleague of Dülfer since his own years in Munich and he had supported the appointment of Dülfer to a chair at TH Dresden in 1907. Dülfer knew Tessenow well because he had been working as a draughtsman in his studio in Munich while for three semesters he was a guest student with “kleiner Matrikel”<sup>66</sup> and without the authorization to take exams at the architecture faculty of the TH Munich. Schumacher then adds to his anecdote that Hempel could become not only his assistant without holding an Abitur but even his own successor, after German Bestelmeyer<sup>67</sup> left the chair already after a few months and preferred the more prestigious succession of Paul Wallot at the Academy of Dresden. Schumacher used this example to point out the absurd obstacles in the university system that blocked the careers of gifted people.

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<sup>65</sup> Martin Dülfer (1859-1942) studied architecture at the TH Hanover, TH Stuttgart and TH Munich, in 1906 became professor at the TH Dresden. He built numerous theatres (one with Tessenow in Dortmund) and became a famous architect of the *Jugendstil*.

<sup>66</sup> “Kleine Matrikel” was the status designation for part-time students and guest students at universities who did not have the necessary entry requirements such as the Abitur. They were not allowed to obtain academic degrees.

<sup>67</sup> German Bestelmeyer (1874-1942) was a Munich architect who became famous by winning the competition for the extension of Munich University. In 1910 he was appointed to the Technical University of Dresden as Schumacher’s successor, but instead took over the less labour-intensive master class of Paul Wallot at the Dresden Academy of Arts.

While Tessenow was writing to Schumacher, he was employed in Paul Schultze-Naumburg's Saalecker Werkstätten<sup>68</sup>. He worked on Schultze-Naumburg's and his own architecture projects and taught in the attached school until, in 1905, on the recommendation of Hermann Muthesius and Schultze-Naumburg, he became lecturer at the Handwerker- und Kunstgewerbeschule Trier<sup>69</sup> with the aim of establishing a training programme for architects. He stayed there until 1909 and came to Dresden a few months before Schumacher left for Hamburg. In Trier he had been very prolific: he taught, built private houses and worker settlements and published two books. *Zimmermannsarbeiten* came out in 1907 and was republished in 1921. [Fig. 11] In four fascicles it contained a selection of projects by several architects, including one by Schumacher, but most were by himself.<sup>70</sup> Literally the title meant 'works of a carpenter' or just 'carpentry', which might seem initially misleading, because the publication was rather a miscellaneous presentation of architecture examples, where wood played a certain role in the design, than a handbook of carpentry in the proper sense. In his introduction, Tessenow explicitly excluded the constructional problems of roofing in order to put his focus

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68 The Saalecker Werkstätten originated in 1904 from the Schulwerkstätten Saaleck (Saaleck School Workshops), which Paul Schultze-Naumburg had set up in 1901 on a site he had purchased below the mediaeval Saaleck Castle in Bad Kösen. In contrast to his private drawing and painting school, which he had previously run in Berlin, these workshops not only trained artists, but increasingly took on commissions for furniture and interior designs. The workshops successfully extended this field of activity to architecture and garden design and, like the Deutsche Werkstätten, participated as a company in the founding of the Werkbund in 1907. This company existed until 1934.

69 Since 1823, *Baugewerkschulen* (building trade schools) have been established in all German states for the training of civil engineers and architects. The *Handwerker und Kunstgewerbeschule Trier* (School of Craftsmen and Applied Arts) was a municipal institution, where Tessenow was to set up an architecture department at the suggestion of Muthesius.

70 Heinrich Tessenow, *Zimmermannsarbeiten*, 4 deliveries, Verlag Paul Waetzel, Freiburg/Breisgau 1907.

on questions of design. But since he himself was an apprenticed carpenter, we may read the title of his book as a reference to himself as this particular kind of craftsman. Throughout his life, Tessenow proudly emphasized being a carpenter before anything else and that he did not hold a degree from a college or university. He was born in Rostock as the son of a carpenter and also was apprenticed in this profession after finishing elementary school. He then began training as an elementary school teacher before continuing his education in construction technology at vocational schools. As mentioned, he studied for several semesters at the TH Munich and worked at Dülfer's before he began to teach at various vocational schools and to work as an architect. In his introduction to the first and the second fascicle of *Zimmermannsarbeiten*, he wrote about selecting building materials and makes an argument very similar to the one Schumacher made, in his 1901 inaugural lecture, about the use of modern and traditional building materials.



FIG. 11 Heinrich Tessenow, *Zimmermannsarbeiten*, 1907

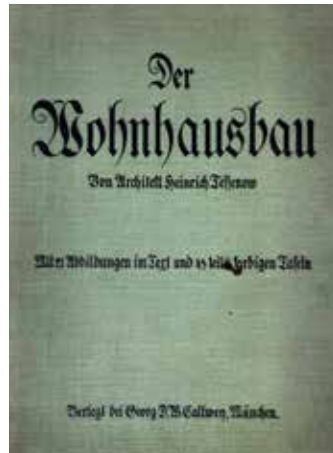


FIG. 12 Heinrich Tessenow, *Wohnhausbau*, 1909

Tessenow's second book *Der Wohnhausbau* (Building Dwelling Houses) came out just before he moved to Dresden in the spring of 1909.<sup>71</sup> Like the previous publication, it consisted of unbound plates showing dwellings for worker and petty bourgeois families. This volume exclusively presented his hand drawings and plans of his own projects. It was published by Callwey, the editor of Schultze-Naumburg's *Kulturarbeiten*<sup>72</sup>, and from the outside, with the same green cover, appeared as a publication aligned with Saaleck and *Kulturarbeiten*. [Fig. 12] In fact, it was created in Trier completely independently of Saaleck and Schultze-Naumburg and demonstrated Tessenow's individual search for simplification and abstraction, for a new ostentatiously modest architecture in clear contrast with Schultze-Naumburg's neo vernacular Biedermeier.

Before teaching in Saaleck and in Trier, Tessenow for some years had taught in small building trade schools in Sternberg and in Lüchow.<sup>73</sup> There he had studied the local architecture in the perspective of the Heimatschutz movement and the *Kulturarbeiten*<sup>74</sup> but his first modest private houses were already breaking away from neo-vernacular tendencies. [Fig. 13] In professional circles, with these early works he gained more of a reputation for his delicate drawings than for his architecture.

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71 Heinrich Tessenow, *Der Wohnhausbau*, D.W.Callwey München 1909.

72 Paul Schultze-Naumburg, *Kulturarbeiten herausgegeben vom Kunstwart*, all together 11 volumes, D.W.Callwey Munich, 1897 - 1917, Volume I *Hausbau*, first edition 1897, second edition 1904, the subsequent volumes 1904 -1910, a third heavily revised new edition in four volumes, vol. I-III *Die Gestaltung der Landschaft durch den Menschen* (The Design of the Landscape by Man) 1928, vol. IV *Das Gesicht des deutschen Hauses* (The Face of the German House) 1929.

73 In 1902 Tessenow became a subject teacher at the *städtische Baugewerkschule* (municipal building trade school) in Sternberg in Mecklenburg in 1902 and in 1903 at a similar school in Lüchow in the Hanoverian Wendland

74 Heinrich Tessenow, 'Das Bauerndorf im Hannoverschen Wendland' (The rural village in the Hanoverian Wendland), in: *Der Bauezeichner*, 1906, vol. 8, no.11, p.85-88.





FIG. 13 Heinrich Tessenow, New country house near an old farm on the river Ruhr, 1906

Thus, he was asked by professional journals to make similar drawings as a correction or alternative to building projects submitted for review.<sup>75</sup> We have no information about his teaching at these vocational schools. It probably corresponded to what he himself had experienced after his apprenticeship. In Trier, on the other hand, he was the only teacher of architecture and therefore was forced to break new ground. He had to integrate as many subsidiary subjects as possible into his project design classes to prepare his students for future work as construction managers or master craftsmen. In Dresden, he had no authority to decide on the teaching programmes. That was Dülfer's job, and he was just his

<sup>75</sup> Tessenow worked for *Bautechnische Zeitschrift*, Weimar; *Deutsche Bauhütte*, Hannover; *Der Bauzeichner*, Lübeck; *Neudeutsche Bauzeitung*, Leipzig.

assistant. Nor was he involved in Dülfer's contemporary projects, like the major commission to build a new architecture faculty and other buildings of the TH. However, he was increasingly busy with a growing number of commissions of his own, such as those he soon received for the garden city of Hellerau. Tessenow had come to Dresden at the right moment. Hellerau was just becoming a major showcase of the recently founded Werkbund. The personalities involved in its realisation were the cream of the German reform movement. Their dense network offered ideal support for the launching of the next decisive phase of his professional career.

The initial ideas for a Garden City in Hellerau date back to the years between the founding of the German Garden-City Society in 1902 and the Exhibition of Applied Arts in Dresden in 1906 and the subsequent founding of the Werkbund. They were brought forward by the cultivated furniture manufacturer Karl Schmidt, by his colleague who would become his brother-in-law—the painter, interior-designer and architect Richard Riemerschmidt and by the rich intellectual and cultural patron Wolf Dohrn, who was simultaneously public relations manager of the Deutsche Werkstätten and the first secretary of the Werkbund. In 1908 Schmidt and Dohrn jointly founded and financed the Gartenstadt Gesellschaft Hellerau and the Baugesellschaft Hellerau, which then commissioned Riemerschmidt with the overall planning and the construction of the first housing quarter. They also invited other architects like Hermann Muthesius, Kurt Frick<sup>76</sup> and Heinrich Tessenow to realize housing projects. Schmidt was the owner of

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<sup>76</sup> Kurt Frick (1884-1963) was an architect in Dresden and Königsberg. After an apprenticeship as a bricklayer, he attended the building trade school in Königsberg, then worked for Hermann Muthesius in Berlin, who brought him to Hellerau. During World War I he became district architect in the reconstruction of war-damaged East Prussia. he practiced as an architect, later became professor at the Königsberg Art Academy.

the building site in Hellerau adjacent to the new premises of his factory, the Deutsche Werkstätten, designed by Riemerschmidt and under construction. From the very beginning, Dohrn successfully spread the message that Hellerau was not one of the usual company housing estates but a project with far-reaching cultural and socio-political aspirations. According to the will of its initiators, Hellerau was to become a pilot project for the Werkbund concept of “Durchgeistigung der deutschen Arbeit”<sup>77</sup> (Spiritualization of German Labour) and not less than the cradle of the new modern man. The residents of the garden city were to be brought together in an owners’ cooperative, which was also to organise joint cultural projects. Part of this plan from the beginning was the construction of a Volkshaus as a community centre.

Dohrn had become enthusiastic about the work of Jacques Dalcroze<sup>78</sup>, who had organised rhythmic gymnastics courses in Geneva and had revolutionary ideas for the reform of stage and theatre, which he developed in close collaboration with Adolphe Appia, and about the impact of these reforms on art and education in general. Dohrn quickly saw far-reaching possibilities for Hellerau and wanted to apply Dalcroze’s ideas by combining a folk house for popular activities with a cultural institution at the highest artistic level. He convinced Dalcroze to come to Dresden with the promise of financing and establishing his long-awaited school of rhythmic dance and gymnastics. Dohrn immediately began searching for a suitable

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<sup>77</sup> DWB (Deutscher Werkbund), *Die Durchgeistigung der Deutschen Arbeit. Wege und Ziele im Zusammenhang von Industrie/Handwerk und Kunst* (The spiritualization of German labour. Ways and goals in the context of industry/crafts and art), Eugen Diederichs in Jena 1912, (yearbook of the German Werkbund 1912).

<sup>78</sup> Jacques Dalcroze (1865-1950) was a Swiss musician, composer and educator who developed a comprehensive teaching method based on rhythm and dance. He began working with Adolphe Appia in 1906, ran the Educational Institute for Music and Rhythm with Wolf Dohrn at the Festspielhaus Hellerau from 1911 to 1914 and the Dalcroze Institute Geneva beginning in 1915.

architect for such an unparalleled building project. Riemerschmidt naturally offered himself for this purpose. Dohrn thought instead of Peter Behrens, the flagship designer of the Deutscher Werkbund, but Behrens did not show much interest. Riemerschmidt seemed to him unsuitable for such a monumental task, given the somewhat romantic first rowhouse projects Am grünen Zipfel in Hellerau and the factory buildings for the Deutsche Werkstätten, which looked more like large agricultural buildings than modern industry. However, since Tessenow's fresh and unconventional design for workers' houses at the Schänkenberg in Hellerau [Fig. 14] had made a big impression on him, he commissioned him rather than any of the well-known star architects with design proposals for the Festspielhaus.

He involved Tessenow very early on in the discussions with Dalcroze, Appia and von Salzmann<sup>79</sup> about the general concept and the theatre and lighting details of the hall for the dance and music performances. These discussions left clear traces in the final design.

Tessenow's first projects, the terraced houses for workers and several free-standing one-family houses of different sizes for foremen, had been surprising. He created a completely independent architecture of provocative minimalism. He developed a new economical construction system, the Patentwand (a standardized wooden frame to be filled with brickwork) and applied for a patent for it.<sup>80</sup> His architecture was neither influenced by the Jugendstil of Dülfer, nor by the neo-vernacular romanticism of Richard Riemerschmidt.

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<sup>79</sup> Alexander von Salzmann (1874 - 1934), a "Caucasian German" from Tiflis/ Georgia, studied painting in Moscow and Munich, worked as a caricaturist and textile designer, and beginning in 1906 worked also for the Deutsche Werkstätten in Hellerau. He developed the spectacular electric lighting system for the Festspielhaus in cooperation with Appia and Tessenow. In 1917 he returned to Tiflis and later worked successfully as a stage designer in Paris.

<sup>80</sup> Patentschrift Nr. 239 961, Klasse 37a, Gruppe 3/28, gültig ab 1.8.1909 (after Wangerin, op.cit. p.70 note 73).

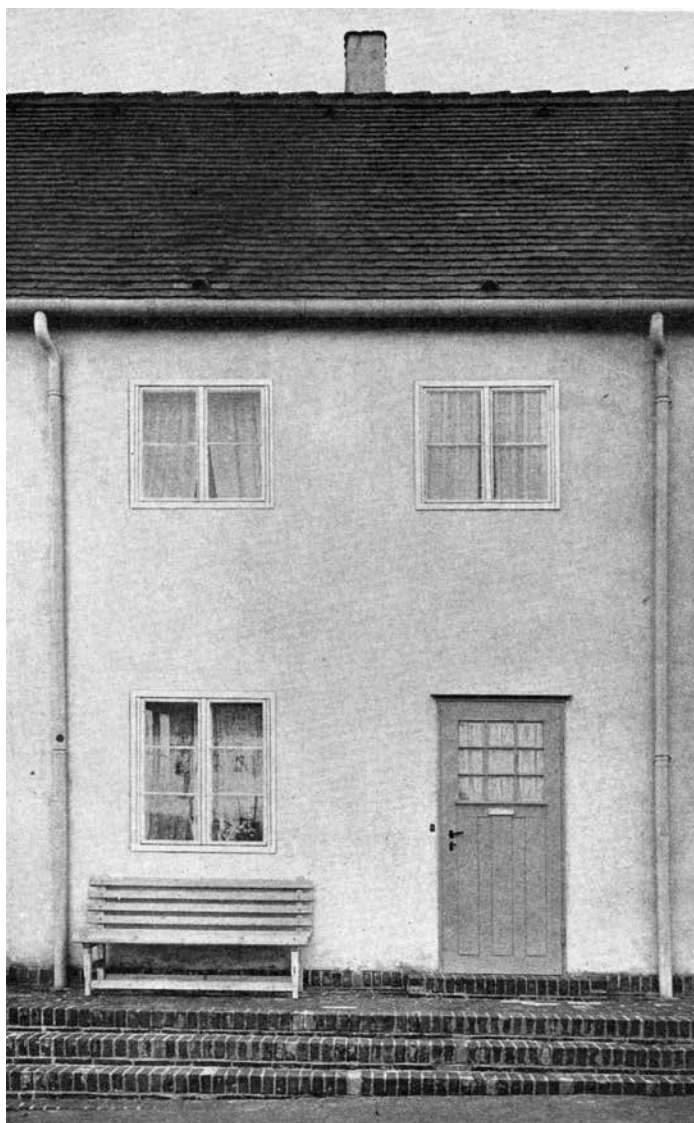


FIG. 14 Heinrich Tessenow, One Family Row House on Schänkenberg, Hellerau-Dresden 1910

He was nearer to the *Sachlichkeit* (objectiveness) of Hermann Muthesius, the second main planner of Hellerau, strongly influenced by recent English reform tendencies, and to Kurt Frick, a former assistant of Muthesius also involved with housing in Hellerau, but much more radical and abstract than either of them. Dohrn had immediately understood that Tessenow would be the appropriate designer in dialogue with Dalcroze, Appia, and von Salzmann, who proposed similar radical innovations in their areas of expertise. And perhaps he assumed that he could develop understanding and sympathy for the somewhat esoteric goals that resonated with Dalcroze's teaching of rhythmic gymnastics in the Festspielhaus.

The latter was the point, which, in addition to financial issues, led to a conflict between Schmidt and Dohrn. The Festspielhaus became more and more Dohrn's sole project. Therefore, its location in the garden city was moved from a central to an increasingly peripheral position and Tessenow had to present a total of three very different designs, each of which was negotiated in the building and artists' commission. With the strong support of Schumacher, who came from Hamburg to take part in important meetings, the commission finally decided to implement Tessenow's proposal. This was not to be taken for granted, because it brought Schumacher in opposition to his dear friend Theodor Fischer. Fischer was supporting his Munich friend and colleague Riemerschmidt, who had protested vigorously against Tessenow's project, whose monumentality he considered completely inappropriate for the planned garden city idyll. Under protest Riemerschmidt resigned from the commission and finally withdrew completely from the Hellerau project.



FIG. 15 Heinrich Tessenow, Festspielhaus, Hellerau-Dresden, 1911

The success of the Festspielhaus was overwhelming. [Fig. 15] The performances of Dalcroze, the stage designs of Appia, the never-before seen lighting effects of von Salzmann and the first performances attracted culturally interested intellectuals from all over Europe and made Hellerau an international place one must visit and get to know. The outbreak of war interrupted the hype and at the end of 1914 Dalcroze left Hellerau for good. The building had more than fulfilled the expectations of the initiators and fascinated visitors with its sublime calm and self-evident monumentality. It launched its author into the top league of German architects. Many critics either praise the Festspielhaus as a temple of art, glorifying the entrance front as a fortunate further development of classicist architecture, others deriding it as undesirable historicism. In most cases they overlook the fact that Tessenow did not build an antique or neoclassical columned front. In the interior and exterior design of the building he was instead guided by Appia's radically abstract proposals for the reform of

the Wagner stage. There are smooth, unadorned pylons but no column orders. The Festspielhaus is naked like the minimalist workers' houses a few streets away. Both are monumental when you look at them that way. The influential critic Karl Scheffler<sup>81</sup>, in his highly acclaimed book *Die Architektur der Großstadt* (The Architecture of the Big City), put Tessenow in the same league as Alfred Messel, Peter Behrens and Hermann Muthesius and considers him to be one of the leading heads of architecture, who in Hellerau realized the architecture of the future for the first time.<sup>82</sup> Like Tessenow, Scheffler came from a family of craftsmen and had no university degrees, and he also was a close friend of Dohrn's. He would continue to follow Tessenow's path, publish his works and support him with his resources as a journalist.

He soon had an opportunity to do so when Tessenow in 1913 needed letters of recommendation to support his appointment as professor at the Vienna School of Applied Arts<sup>83</sup>. Josef Hoffmann<sup>84</sup>,

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- 81 Karl Scheffler (1869 -1951), after an apprenticeship as a housepainter in Hamburg, studied at the Berlin School of Applied Arts. As an autodidact art historian, he became an important art journalist and from 1906 to 1933 served as editor-in-chief of the journal *Kunst und Künstler*.
- 82 See: Karl Scheffler, Heinrich Tessenow in: Scheffler: *Die Architektur der Großstadt* (The architecture of the big city), Bruno Cassirer Verlag, Berlin 1913, p.164 - 173, and Karl Scheffler: *Die fetten und die mageren Jahre* (The fat and the lean years), Paul List Verlag Munich/Leipzig 1938, p.47-51.
- 83 The *Kunstgewerbeschule Wien* was founded in 1867 by the *Museum für Angewandte Kunst* (Museum of Applied Arts) and received its own premises next to the museum on the Ringstrasse. Students did not need a high school diploma (Abitur), but had to take an entrance examination and to complete a three-year preliminary course before they could enter one of the specialised classes. In addition, they had to take a prescribed number of auxiliary subjects.
- 84 Josef Hoffmann (1870-1956) studied architecture at the Trade School in Brünn/Brno and the Academy of Arts in Vienna. In 1897 he founded the *Vienna Secession* together with Joseph Maria Olbrich, in 1903 the *Wiener Werkstätten* together with Koloman Moser, and in 1899 he took over one of the architecture classes at the Vienna School of Applied Arts. In 1907 he became co-founder of the German Werkbund and in 1912 of the Austrian Werkbund.



who was a professor there, but as a founding member of the German Werkbund also had excellent contacts to Dresden, had suggested him as a suitable successor to Hermann Herdtle<sup>85</sup>, who had had little success in Otto Wagner's tradition-laden chair. It seems that Tessenow was the sole candidate and the director of the school, Alfred Roller<sup>86</sup>, had no easy task in enforcing the unico loco list in the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. He therefore added to his request letter an impressive compilation of positive statements about Tessenow and enthusiastic reviews of his work, among others by Paul Schultze-Naumburg, Hermann Muthesius, Martin Dülfer and even the writer Hermann Hesse.<sup>87</sup>

In October 1913 Tessenow became full professor at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Vienna with architecture as a main subject and Baukonstruktion (building construction) as a minor subject. He joined Josef Hoffmann and Oskar Strnad<sup>88</sup> as the third teacher of architecture. He did not leave Dresden completely because his wife and daughter continued to live in the house he had built in Hellerau until they moved into the house he had renovated in Neubrandenburg. During his six years in Vienna until his retreat from the Kunstgewerbeschule early in 1919 he

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- <sup>85</sup> Hermann Herdtle (1848 - 1926), was a German architect, who after studying at the TH Stuttgart, worked in Vienna. He taught from 1876-1913 as professor at the Vienna School of Applied Arts and was predecessor of Heinrich Tessenow.
- <sup>86</sup> Alfred Roller (1864 - 1935), Austrian painter, graphic artist and stage designer, was co-founder of the Vienna Secession in 1897 and was appointed to the Vienna School of Applied Arts in 1899. From 1903 to 1909 he created numerous stage designs for the Vienna Opera House and from 1909 to 1934 he was director of the Vienna School of Applied Arts.
- <sup>87</sup> Archiv der Universität für Angewandte Kunst Wien, ad 18968/fasz.1158 ex 1913m ad P.Z. 69 Beilage 2.
- <sup>88</sup> Oskar Strnad (1879-1935) studied architecture at the Technical University of Vienna and received his doctorate there in 1904. He worked as an architect and stage designer, later in an office partnership with Oskar Wlach and Josef Frank. From 1909-1935, he taught at the Vienna School of Applied Arts and beginning in 1912 he headed an architecture class.

maintained intensive contact with the brothers Dohrn<sup>89</sup>, the housing reformer Percival Booth<sup>90</sup>, the editor Jacob Hegner<sup>91</sup> and many other members of the Hellerau colony of intellectuals and artists. Immediately after his start in Vienna, he was invited to participate in the design of the Austrian Pavilion, which Josef Hoffmann was erecting for the short-lived Cologne Werkbund Exhibition in 1914. Due to the outbreak of war, it closed just one month after the opening. Tessenow became curator of the rooms for the Vienna School of Arts and Crafts and provided an ambience that seemed already strongly tainted by the Vienna Secession.<sup>92</sup>

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- 89 Harald Dohrn (1885-1945), the youngest of the four sons of Anton Dohrn, the director of the Naples Marine Zoological Station, took over the management of the Festspielhaus Hellerau in 1912 together with his brother Wolf, who was seven years older (see note 59). After his brother's death he was solely responsible for managing it. In 1935 he gave up his position in Hellerau and became director of a sanatorium in Bavaria. A few days before the end of the Second World War on 29.4.1945, SS members shot him while he was distributing anti-Nazi leaflets.
- 90 Percival Booth, a social reformer, in 1916 initiated the planning of the *Kriegersiedlung Rähnitz* in the community neighbouring Hellerau, for which he himself and Tessenow designed different types of small houses. He was a protagonist of the *Kriegerheimstätten-Bewegung*, after 1918 the *Reichsheimstätten-Bewegung*, a parallel movement to the English Homes for Heroes and the American Warrior Homes, which also arose during the war. Dates of his birth and death have not been confirmed.
- 91 Jacob Hegner (1882-1962), publisher and translator, was born in Vienna and studied philosophy in Leipzig. He founded the publishing house *Jacques Hegner Verlag* in Berlin in 1903, moved to Hellerau in 1910 and founded the *Hellerauer Verlag Jakob Hegner* in 1912 and the *Hellerauer Druckerei* in 1918, both of which went bankrupt in 1930. He emigrated to Austria in 1936 and to England in 1938, then went to Switzerland in 1946, where he founded *Summa Verlag* in Olten and *Bachem Verlag* in Cologne in 1948.
- 92 see: *Deutsche Form im Kriegsjahr*, Jahrbuch des Deutschen Werkbundes 1915, Verlag F. Bruckmann A.G. München 1915, p.10.

This promising beginning has no continuation. With the outbreak of war, he arrived in Vienna at an inauspicious moment. He would have very few students and even fewer projects to build. Of Tessenow's later students, Grete Lihotzky<sup>93</sup> and Franz Schuster<sup>94</sup> become the most famous. After his extraordinarily productive time in Dresden, this situation must have been discouraging for him. Maybe the main advantage he had in obtaining his prestigious position in Vienna was that he was not drafted into the German army because of his activities in an allied foreign country. However, he had to apply for this exemption every year anew, never failing to mention that he was a member of the Austrian Commission for War Graves and Monuments. That he was not entirely uninvolved in the work of this commission is shown by his design for a war memorial, which is pleasantly different from the jingoistic, patriotic horror monuments made elsewhere.<sup>95</sup> [Fig. 16]

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- <sup>93</sup> Grete Lihotzky (1897-2000), after 1928 Schütte-Lihotzky, was one of the first self-employed female architects in Europe. She studied at the Vienna School of Applied Arts under Oskar Strnad and Heinrich Tessenow from 1915-1919, worked in the Vienna settlers' movement and beginning work in 1926 under Ernst May in Frankfurt/Main. From 1930-1937 she was in the Soviet Union, then in Turkey, before being sentenced to life imprisonment in 1942 for participation in the anti-fascist resistance in Vienna. She was liberated in 1945 and worked as an architect in Sophia/Bulgaria and in Vienna despite being discriminated against as a communist. She declared several times that she had achieved more than the Frankfurt Kitchen.
- <sup>94</sup> Franz Schuster (1892-1972) studied architecture at the Vienna School of Applied Arts under Strnad and Tessenow and in 1920 as Tessenow's assistant in Dresden and worked with Tessenow on the construction of residential buildings in Hellerau and Pößneck/Thuringia. Beginning in 1924 he worked in Vienna at the Settlement Office and in 1927 began collaborating with Ernst May on the construction of the New Frankfurt. He returned to Vienna in 1933 and in 1937 he took over a class on architecture at the *Hochschule für Angewandte Kunst* (University of Applied Arts) the former *Kunstgewerbeschule*, and he became professor there in 1950.
- <sup>95</sup> He is also considered to be the author of the memorandum on war graves submitted by the Commission of War Graves. See: 'Denkschrift über Kriegsgräberanlagen', in: *Der Architekt*, Vienna 1915.

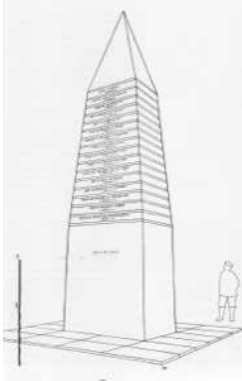


FIG. 16 Heinrich Tessenow, Design of a War Monument for a Small City, 1917



FIG. 17 Heinrich Tessenow, Böhler-House, Oberalpina near St. Moritz, 1916

Tessenow made several designs for larger, somewhat palatial manor houses in Hungary and in northern Germany, which remained unrealized because of the war. He also proposed, in vain, a total of three extension projects to the existing building of the Kunstgewerbeschule by Heinrich Ferstel on Stubenring. The fate of his proposals fitted well into the long series of un-built projects before and after, whereby his designs, unlike the others mentioned, were strictly related to the needs of the school and avoided any apparent representative design. The main project he could realize during the Vienna years was the Böhler house in Oberalpina near St. Moritz in Switzerland, which was one of the few cases in Tessenow's work where he attempted to fit his architecture organically into a mountain landscape and with which he wanted to prove that large or small, bent or straight, angular or curved are not design criteria for his architecture. [Fig. 17] Unfortunately, in the 1970s this outstanding work was destroyed senselessly despite international protest. Its new owners, the brewer family Heineken, arrogantly refused to acknowledge its extraordinary value and erected a pompous showpiece instead of a unique landmark.



FIG. 18 Heinrich Tessenow, *Hausbau und dergleichen*, 1916



FIG. 19 Heinrich Tessenow, *Handwerk und Kleinstadt*, 1919

He was able to continue building a small settlement project in Hohensalza (today Inowroclaw) in the Prussian Province of Posen and make initial designs for Kriegerheimstätten (warrior-homes) in Ränitz in the vicinity of Hellerau in cooperation with his Hellerau neighbour Percival Booth. Besides these he had no opportunities to further develop his interest in small housing construction, which was so dear to him. His only housing settlement in Vienna would not be realized until 1922 in Schwechat-Rennersdorf, after he had returned to Hellerau. [Fig. 18]

Certainly, the most important achievement of his time in Vienna was his book *Hausbau und dergleichen* (House-building and such Things) published in 1916.<sup>96</sup> [Fig. 19] Whereas in the introduction

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<sup>96</sup> Heinrich Tessenow, *Hausbau und dergleichen*, Verlag Bruno Cassirer Berlin 1916, English: 'House-building and such Things', in: 9H, No.8, 1989 p. 9-33.

to the first edition of *Wohnhausbau*<sup>97</sup> in 1909 he had declared that initially he did not intend to write any commentary for this collection of plans and renderings, which he thought should speak for themselves, this time we have both his words and his fascinating drawings. He dedicated this book to the memory of his friend and supporter Wolf Dohrn, who in 1914 had been killed in a skiing accident. The text is neither a direct comment on the many examples of his work presented nor a pedagogical or systematic textbook of any kind for his students. It is an account of some of the central and recurrent topics of his worldview, combined with reflections about specific aspects of project design, about the vocation of an architect and the role of craftsmanship in society. It is not a theory of architecture in the academic sense, but rather an architect's confession about his own ethical design principles and their relation to social conditions. For this very reason, however, it is still suitable as compulsory reading for students of architecture.

In 1918 he pursued some of these arguments in a small booklet entitled *Handwerk und Kleinstadt* (crafts and small city)<sup>98</sup>, which in 1919 like *Hausbau und dergleichen* had been published by Cassirer just before he returned to Hellerau.<sup>99</sup> This book is surprising compared to the previous one. Architectural examples are totally absent, as well as own works or works of others. The only images are some enigmatic diagrams illustrating a rather individual interpretation of Plato's globe metaphor. It is not a book about

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<sup>97</sup> He reprinted *Der Wohnhausbau* in 1914 and in 1927 published a substantially modified and revised third edition. All with Georg D. W. Callwey München.

<sup>98</sup> Heinrich Tessenow, *Handwerk und Kleinstadt*, (Crafts and small town) Verlag Bruno Cassirer Berlin 1919.

<sup>99</sup> A previous, less well-known edition had the title: *Handwerk und Kleinstadt. Auch das Fundament der Kriegersiedlungen* (Crafts and small town. Also the foundation of the warrior settlements). In: *Mecklenburg im Kriege*, Schwerin 1918, reprinted in: Heinrich Tessenow *Das Land in der Mitte*, Theodor Böll (ed.), Heinrich Tessenow complete writings, vol. 4, Grünberg Verlag, Weimar & Rostock 2017, p. 113-126.

architecture but about what he understands as the conceptual basis of his work and of contemporary architecture in general, on what he calls “groß-gesellschaftlich” (concerning society in its entity). It is not easy to read or to understand hastily.

It may seem to be the somehow naïve doctrine of a carpenter who has become by chance a professor of architecture, the thoughts of the “holy carpenter” as his Berlin students teasingly referred to him<sup>100</sup>. But his language is not naïve or silly, just as his architecture is not simple or primitive. In his words as well as in his drawings, he is stylizing and emblemizing his concept of the importance of the craftsman, the small city, and the petit-bourgeois which as the class in the middle have to recreate coherence in a society actually fractured and broken. He seeks a compromise between upper class and proletariat, between village and big city, between industry and manufacture. He is interested in the in-between as the only way to overcome the contradictions of a world that has lost its centre and is waging wars on all levels unable to find harmony in life. He dedicates the booklet to his friend the director-general Alex. Cassinone<sup>101</sup>, a well-known entrepreneur in Vienna, an aviation pioneer and bon vivant, with whom he had been exchanging ideas about world and society as he had previously with Wolf Dohrn about architecture, garden-city and rhythmic. For Cassinone’s daughter Marianne, who had married Alfred Conte Doret in 1916, Tessenow designed the stately Doret estate in Czomaháza in Hungary in 1918, which was never built. In 1931 he would realize the grave monument for this close friend, which became his second work in Vienna. Certainly,

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<sup>100</sup> Julius Posener reports in his lectures that during his time as student at the TH Berlin, Tessenow was nicknamed “the Holy Carpenter” by his fellow students. Julius Posener, *Lectures on the History of New Architecture II*, arch+ 53, Aachen 2013

<sup>101</sup> Alexander Cassinone, (1868 -1931), was a mechanical engineer born in Karlsruhe, had become general manager of the Vienna branch of Körting-Werke in 1898. During the war he was successful with the construction of aircraft and submarine engines and was a well-known aviation pioneer.

neither Dohrn, nor Cassinone nor he himself or his circle of friends in Hellerau represented the ideal humble artisan who in Tessenow's theory would become the fountainhead for a better future society.

In January 1919 Tessenow submitted his resignation from his position in Vienna, citing private family circumstances. In private letters to friends and colleagues, he complained about the general situation in Vienna after the war and the deconstruction of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It certainly was true that he was bothered by the situation, but it was not the only reason for his resignation. Throughout the war he had kept contacts in Hellerau, where he continued to discuss architecture and society in a circle of friends who lived there permanently. After the death of Wolf Dohrn, his younger brother Harald had taken over the projects and financial charges of the defunct. There was Percival Booth living next door to Tessenow, an activist of housing reform and Kriegerheimstätten movement (warrior homes). Booth had published on the housing question and had developed typologies for minimal houses. During the war beginning in 1916 with Tessenow he planned a larger Kriegersiedlung (warriors' settlement) in Ränitz adjacent to Hellerau of which only some pilot projects could be realized. Tessenow mentioned these activities in his yearly activity reports to the Kunstgewerbeschule. Last but not least, there was the writer Hertha König,<sup>102</sup> a wealthy woman, who was a close friend of the Dohrn family. She was impressed by Tessenow's ideas about Handwerk und Kleinstadt and made a donation to finance the creation of a Handwerkergemeinde, a community of craftsmen in keeping with Tessenow's ideas. In addition

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102 Hertha König (1884-1976), writer and patron of the arts, lived at Gut Bröckel near Herford and from 1921-1923 at Einödhof Aich near Pruttig. She was the heiress of the "Russian sugar king" and businessman Leopold König. From 1910-1913 she was married to the literary scholar Roman Woerner, and became friends with Rainer Maria Rilke in 1915. During the war she trained as a nurse. She supported several settlement projects besides Tessenow's craftsmen's community in Hellerau.



to her foundation, Hertha König also granted Tessenow a private loan in 1919 for the purchase of a house in Neubrandenburg, to which his family moved shortly afterwards, while he remained in Hellerau.

While he taught in Vienna Tessenow had not been completely absent from Germany nor was he forgotten. In 1919 he was even awarded an honorary doctorate in his hometown of Rostock on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the university. He maintained friendly contacts with Adolf Otto<sup>103</sup>, the general secretary of the Garden City Society, for whom in 1912 he had built his house in Bruno Taut's garden city of Berlin-Falkenberg, as to a relative of Otto, the free-socialist Gustav Landauer<sup>104</sup>, who in 1918 gave a talk in Hellerau and later, as a leader of the short-lived Bavarian soviet republic, offered Tessenow the position of minister of housing.<sup>105</sup> And finally he was offered a master class in architecture at the Dresden Academy of Art, which had been held by Hans Poelzig<sup>106</sup> in addition to his work as a city architect before moving to the TH Berlin in 1920.

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- 103 Adolf Otto (1872-1942), social reformer and economist, was influenced by Franz Oppenheimer, Bernhard Kampffmeyer, Gustav Landauer, Rudolf Eberstadt and others. He was an advocate of the cooperative movement and housing reform and in 1902 co-founded the German Garden City Society, for which he served as the first chairman beginning in 1911. In the garden city of Falkenberg in Berlin, built by Bruno Taut, he lived in the only house built there by Tessenow for him in 1912.
- 104 Gustav Landauer (1870 -1919) was an anarcho-pacifist writer influenced by Bakunin and Kropotkin, who belonged to the *Friedrichshagener Dichterkreis*, a circle of famous poets and writers in Berlin. He was co-editor of the journal *Der Sozialist*, the organ of the independent socialists. He became commissioner of the Munich soviet republic in 1919 and after its downfall he was murdered in prison by members of the anti-revolutionary free corps.
- 105 Marco De Michelis reports this offer, which was mentioned in a letter of Bruno Taut to Karl Ernst Osthaus. See: De Michelis, op.cit., p.80, note 34.
- 106 Hans Poelzig (1869-1936) was an architect, film and stage designer. In 1903 he became director of the *Königliche Akademie für Bau- und Kunstgewerbe* (Royal Academy for Building and Applied Arts) in Breslau and in 1916 *Stadtbaurat* in Dresden (city building councilor). He taught at both the TH and the academy. In 1920 he accepted a call to the TH Berlin and Tessenow became his successor at the academy in Dresden.



FIG. 20 Heinrich Tessenow, *Das Land in der Mitte*, 1921

The exact date of Tessenow's inaugural lecture is still unknown. In the printed version of this speech entitled *Das Land in der Mitte* (the land in the middle)<sup>107</sup>, the date given is 'winter semester 1920/1921'. The editor of the small brochure was Jakob Hegner, who had lived in Hellerau since 1910, and in 1912 opened a publishing house there, the Hellerauer Verlag Jakob Hegner, and in 1918, a printing workshop. [Fig. 20] Hegner belonged to Tessenow's inner circle of discussion partners, and later became his occasional opponent.

In his speech to the students and members of the Akademie der Künste, Tessenow not even once drops the word *Architektur* nor *Baukunst* (the art of building). In earlier publications, he had repeatedly stated that he preferred *Baukunst* to the former, because he considered current social conditions to be incapable of creating high architecture. For the time being, one had to be satisfied with building and at best with *Baukunst* (the art of building). Nevertheless, he strikes the right note and there are several participants who later will report that many in the auditorium had been touched to the utmost by his very general lecture, even though he made very few points that would be new to those who had read his book *Handwerk und Kleinstadt*. The positive reaction to his special mixture of realistic description of the situation and utopian dream was undoubtedly due to the mood of the time immediately after the lost war in a situation that was hopeless economically and more than confused politically. It also was perhaps a result of his modest and cautious, nearly shy manner of speaking.

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<sup>107</sup> Heinrich Tessenow, *Das Land in der Mitte* (The country in the middle), Hellerauer Verlag Jakob Hegner, Dresden-Hellerau 1921.

His speech was characterized by a certain indecisiveness that left many points open and avoided clear assertions. Like in *Handwerk und Kleinstadt*, he spoke about craftsmen as the decisive stratum within the middle class, between proletariat and bourgeoisie, and about the small city as a preferable place, between village and big city. In his eyes, the village was underdeveloped and culturally backward and the big city a nervous excess of modern industry and decadent culture, the hearth of all kinds of contradictions and struggle. He does not mention Hellerau directly, but remarks that a garden city, with its mix of proletarian industrial workers and intellectuals seeking refuge from the big city, should not be regarded as the realization of his ideal small city. It lacks independent craftsmen as the leading social group.

A new argument in this lecture was his interpretation of Germany as “the land in between” where Germans played a role similar to unspectacular craftsmen and the middle class, which he had placed in the centre of his social utopia. This land in the middle has a special role in the relationship with neighbouring countries, who for their part had less complex responsibilities. If Germany is not able to perform its task of mediator resulting from this situation or fails in this role, it will lose its right to exist and one day may even disappear from the map of Europe. From this special role of the country and its position in the centre of Europe, he goes on to discuss Germany’s internal class and settlement structure and thus returns to his understanding of the craftsman and the small city.

In his lecture, Tessenow did not talk about his upcoming teaching at the academy, instead focusing on the background to his parallel activity at the moment, the founding of the *Handwerkergemeinde* (literally: community of craftsmen) in Hellerau, which was to realize his true educational ideals. The training of a small group of selected students completing postgraduate studies at the academy

in a master class could not fulfil his ambitions. They could be better achieved with genuine apprenticeships in craft workshops of the Handwerkergemeinde supplemented by seminars taught by himself. In the long term, he imagined the programme going considerably further. He thought it should have an educational effect on the entire society and ultimately bring about a new form of settlement as well as of living. He imagined the new middle class with strong craftsmanship as its backbone as the guarantor of such an outcome.

The population of Hellerau had a mix of industrial workers from Schmidt's furniture factory and intellectuals who had fled from Dresden and gathered in the neighbourhood of the Festspielhaus. Thus, a healthy community life, in Tessenow's view, could not develop. To replace the failed cooperative of house owners, something different and more meaningful had to be built, that is, a free community of self-employed craftsmen under the leadership of an educated but also manual working master who lived together with his journeymen, apprentices and his family. The formal establishment of such a craftsmen's community in Hellerau had already taken place in 1918, just before the end of the war. It was made possible by a generous donation from Hertha König and it had been additionally supported by the Garden Society of Hellerau, which Harald Dohrn was managing alone since the death of his brother and the resignation of Karl Schmidt. Dohrn provided the necessary rooms for the Handwerkergemeinde in the side wings of the Festspielhaus, which stood empty since Dalcroze and his school had gone. Tessenow was appointed administrator of the foundation's assets and was practically the director, although he always denied such a management role.

By the autumn of 1919 Tessenow had written something like a programme, in which he summarised the aims and the state of the craftsmen's community after its first year. This paper was printed

by Hegner in a small brochure<sup>108</sup> and published without change a second time the following year in *Die Volkswohnung*<sup>109</sup>, the organ of the housing and settlement reformers edited by W. C. Behrendt<sup>110</sup>. Right at the beginning, Tessenow names the seven founders, except himself: Harald Dohrn, Jakob Hegner, Hertha König, Karl Scheffler, Roman Woerner<sup>111</sup> and Gustav Wyneken<sup>112</sup>. Although Hegner expanded his publishing house in the same year and added a printing shop, he can hardly be called a craftsman, not any more than the others. However, he declared that he intended to pass a master's examination. At least Tessenow and Scheffler had completed their apprenticeship as craftsmen, but they were not masters. The philologists predominated: Dohrn was an economist and philosopher, Koenig a writer, Woerner, her former husband, was a university professor of literature, Wyneken a pedagogue and director of a well-known Landschulheim, a boarding school in which the pupils receive practical training parallel to their

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- 108 Heinrich Tessenow, *Erste Mitteilungen über eine Handwerker-Gemeinde in Hellerau* (First reports about a community of craftsmen in Hellerau ), Verlag Jakob Hegner, Hellerau 1919.
- 109 Heinrich Tessenow, 'Eine Handwerker-Gemeinde in Hellerau' (A Community of Craftsmen in Hellerau), in: *Die Volkswohnung*. vol.II, 1920, p140-141 (with a distancing comment by Walter Curt Behrendt, the editor of the journal)
- 110 Walter Curt Behrendt (1884-1845) studied architecture in Berlin, Munich and Dresden, received his doctorate in 1911 with a thesis on urban development issues and began work in 1912 in the Prussian Ministry for Public Works. From 1919 to 1924 he was editor of the magazine *Die Volkswohnung*. He emigrated to the US in 1933, where he taught urban planning at Dartmouth College and the University of Buffalo.
- 111 Roman Woerner (1863-1945) was a literary scholar and translator as well as a professor in Freiburg im Breisgau in 1901 and in Würzburg in 1925. He was married to Hertha König from 1910 to 1913, but remained friends with her throughout his life.
- 112 Gustav Wyneken (1875-1964), after studying theology and philosophy, worked as a reform pedagogue, founded the arts-oriented free school community of Weikersdorf and participated in the meeting of the youth movement on the Hohe Meißner in 1913. He had to leave Weikersdorf on the accusation of having sexually abused two pupils. The foundation of the craftsmen's community of Hellerau coincides with the time of his trial. After his conviction, Wyneken fought for the legalization of homosexuality.

secondary education. Incidentally, Hegner never passed a master's examination as a printer and, as Franz Schuster recalled, he never integrated his printing shop into the community of craftsmen as was planned at the time of its foundation, but always had it run nearby as an independent business for his publishing house<sup>113</sup>.

Until the end of the Handwerkergemeinde, the list of intellectual supporters was longer than the list of the participating master craftsmen and workshops. The search for suitable craftsmen who were sufficiently educated and convinced of the founding ideals would remain a central problem. Tessenow was fully aware of this from the beginning. In 1919 he wrote in his founding paper that it was urgent to find masters for at least four more workshops, because otherwise the range of trades would not be sufficient for the community to flourish. Of the intended dozen trades, by 1919 only two carpenters, a printer and a silversmith were present. Carpentry and bricklaying were the last on the wishlist and there was no mention of architecture at all. In fact, distant similarities to Gropius' Bauhaus manifesto are discernible: workshops form the basis in each case, but in Weimar it is linked to artistic practice and in Hellerau at best one can equate it with the idea of non-alienated work in the arts and crafts. Architecture did not exist at either, apart from the profession of the two directors. This is not a random occurrence. On the one hand, Gropius and Tessenow exchanged views about training issues on several occasions during the war, and on the other, these issues and similar concepts had been en vogue in reform circles at least since the founding of the Werkbund.

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<sup>113</sup> Tessenow's assistant Franz Schuster makes this statement in a short memoir of his time in Hellerau: Franz Schuster, *Erinnerungen an Aufenthalt in Hellerau* (Memories of a stay in Hellerau), typescript from 1966 in the Tessenow Archive of the Kunstbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin.

A particular influence on this debate in Germany has been exerted by the Arts and Crafts movement in Great Britain, which influenced the formation of self-determined and economically independent cooperatives and guilds of craftsmen, each with their own craft and artistic training programmes. An example is Charles Robert Ashbee's commune of craftsmen and school for applied arts, which was founded in London and in 1902 moved to Chipping Camden in the idyllic Cotswolds<sup>114</sup>. In Germany, a number of comparable attempts were made, like Otto Bartning's 1921 Gildenhall near Neuruppin<sup>115</sup>. Gildenhall even set up its own sales organisation for its products similar to the Bauhaus. As a cooperative, however, it was much more economically based than the Handwerkergemeinde, which was extraordinarily idealistic.

All the reform proposals of this kind were about regaining creativity and quality of life through non-alienated work, a discussion that goes back far into the 19th century and intensifies in two waves after 1900 and again after the world war. It was an essential motor of educational and life reform related to the criticism of the working and living conditions in modern industrial

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114 Charles Robert Ashbee (1863-1942), architect and craft artist, founded the Guild and School of Handicraft in London in 1888 based on the ideas of John Ruskin and William Morris. He moved this cooperative of artists and craftsmen to Chipping Camden in Gloucestershire in 1912. After 1900 Ashbee had contact with German reform culture because of family connections to Hamburg, his design work for the Grand Duke of Hesse in Darmstadt and his participation in the Vienna Secession exhibitions.

115 Otto Bartning (1883-1959) studied architecture at the TH Charlottenburg, made a long trip around the world and broke off further studies in Karlsruhe without graduating. He successfully devoted himself to Protestant church construction until the end of his life. In 1921, together with W. C. Behrendt, he supported the foundation of the artists' cooperative Gildenhall near Neuruppin in Brandenburg, which Georg Heyer had planned in 1925 as a "Freiland-Siedlung", and in 1925 he drew up a modified development plan. After the Bauhaus moved to Dessau, he served as director of the successor institution Staatliche Bauhochschule Weimar from 1926 to 1930. After 1945 he was one of the most important German architectural theorists.



society and of class antagonisms and the power relations based on them. In the case under consideration here, it was ignited by the one-sided orientation of schools and universities towards ideals of education that are alien to life and by the unbridgeable separation of university, artistic and craft training courses. All reform proposals therefore aimed, in one form or another, at promoting the artistic, creative and manual skills of the pupils and a mutual permeability between parallel educational paths after compulsory primary school.

The Hellerau community of craftsmen never worked as expected. There was no shortage of people interested in training - demobilized soldiers, high school graduates with no academic career prospects and the like - but there was a lack of suitable master craftsmen, despite the subsidies initially offered thanks to Mrs. König's foundation. With the onset of hyperinflation in Germany, the foundation capital evaporated very quickly. In addition to the idealistic concept, the economic distress of society as a whole was certainly a major reason for the gradual decline of the community, which Tessenow dissolved in 1926 when he accepted the call to the TH Berlin and left Dresden.

During and after the war, Tessenow never received the same number of commissions as in Hellerau before he went to Vienna. From 1916 on there was a halt on any buildings not important to the war effort and in the first years after the war the economic and political chaos was such that few architects could continue their work. Neither in Vienna nor in Rähnitz could Tessenow realize a relevant part of the large number of minimal houses and housing settlements that he planned at that time. His largest commission was the planning and building of three small housing quarters in Pössneck in Thuringia.[Fig. 21]



FIG. 21 Heinrich Tessenow, One family Row Houses at Rennersdorf near Vienna, 1921

It goes without saying that Tessenow's teaching at the Dresden Academy shares much with the courses he taught for craftsmen and their journeymen in Hellerau. From Vienna he brought his former student Franz Schuster as his assistant and he worked with him at the academy and also in Hellerau. Some of the master students would have had a similar experience. All of them were expected to have a previous training in a craft, as they were usually accepted into the academy without Abitur after an artistic entrance examination. Their number was limited to 10 to 12 per master class and they worked independently on monthly tasks set by the teacher of the class. In the craftsmen's community, the masters were responsible for orders themselves and had to decide on the tasks performed by their apprentices, but there were joint discussion groups that took place weekly or fortnightly, often in the Waldschänke, the pub on the main square in Hellerau. The discussions were usually supplemented by lectures by Tessenow.

Konrad Wachsmann<sup>116</sup> describes in his memoirs very vividly how his entrance examination to the Dresden Academy took place in 1922.<sup>117</sup> He had broken off his studies at the Berlin School of Arts and Crafts under Bruno Paul<sup>118</sup> and decided instead to study in Dresden under Tessenow, whose writings he was familiar with. He knew that, like himself, Tessenow had completed an apprenticeship as a carpenter and had no higher education. Tessenow responded positively to his application, brought him to Hellerau to the carpentry workshop of the craftsmen's community and had him build a chair of his own design. The result convinced Tessenow of Wachsmann's talent and he accepted him into his master class at the academy.

Wachsmann did not remain in Dresden for long and unfortunately he did not give any further details about his studies in Dresden. But we do have two publications on the work of Tessenow and his

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- 116 Konrad Wachsmann (1901-1980), after an apprenticeship as a carpenter in Frankfurt/Oder, studied architecture with Bruno Paul at the Berlin School of Arts and Crafts and with Heinrich Tessenow at the Dresden Academy of Art. Beginning in 1926 he worked as chief architect of the leading German producer of prefabricated wooden houses, Christoph & Unmack in Niesky, and in 1929 he built a holiday home for Albert Einstein in Caputh near Berlin. From 1932 -1938 he lived in Italy and then until 1942 in France, where, with the help of Einstein, he was able to emigrate to the US. Together with Walter Gropius he founded the company Package House System for prefabricated wooden houses and developed new construction systems for self-supporting hangars for the United States Air Force.
- 117 Konrad Wachsmann, 'Studium bei Tessenow', in: Michael Grüning, *Der Architekt Konrad Wachsmann. Erinnerungen und Selbstauskünfte*, (The architect Konrad Wachsmann. Memories and self-reports) Löcker Verlag Wien 1986, p-115-125
- 118 Bruno Paul (1874 - 1968), Furniture designer and architect, studied at the art academies in Dresden and Munich, became known for his caricatures for *Simplizissimus* and *Jugend*. In 1897 he co-founded the Munich *Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst und Handwerk* and in 1907 the *Deutscher Werkbund*. In 1907 he began work as a teacher at the *Unterrichtsanstalt des Kunstgewerbemuseums Berlin* and in 1926 became director of the *Vereinigte Staatsschulen für freie und angewandte Kunst* (United State Schools of Fine and Applied Arts). Since 1911 he was a designer for the *Deutsche Werkstätten Hellerau*.

students in Dresden, which Werner Hegemann<sup>119</sup> published a little later in Wasmuth's *Monatshefte* with very laudatory comments.<sup>120</sup> Hegemann was impressed by the relatively uniform design of these works, he even speaks of a "Tessenow school". However, he also does not describe specific aspects of Tessenow's teaching. We have such reports only about his work in Trier and then again in Berlin.<sup>121</sup> From these, it can be deduced that in Dresden, too, he preferred to discuss built examples of architecture skilfully drawn by himself on a blackboard rather than theoretically prescribing design principles, and that the teaching mainly consisted of discussing, critiquing, and correcting individual student works in the presence of all the students in the class.

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119 Werner Hegemann (1881-1936), social scientist, urban planner and architecture critic, organized the International Urban Development Exhibitions in Berlin in 1910 and in Düsseldorf in 1912. During the First World War he worked as an urban planner in the US. In 1924 he became editor-in-chief of *Der Städtebau* and of Wasmuth's *Monatshefte für Baukunst*. In 1933 he emigrated from Germany and lived in New York, where he taught at Columbia University.

120 Werner Hegemann, 'Arbeiten von Heinrich Tessenow und seinen Schülern' (works by Heinrich Tessenow and his pupils) with text quotations from Hausbau und dergleichen, in *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst*, vol. IX, no.5, 1925, p.365-383 and: 'Neue Arbeiten aus der Werkstatt Hermann Tessenows' (New works from the workshop of Hermann Tessenow), *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst*, vol.X, no. 2, 1926 p. 41- 43.

121 See: Report from Karl Skomal, Director of the Trier School of Arts and Crafts to Alfred Roller Vienna about Tessenow's teaching in Trier, Archive of the University of Applied Arts Vienna, op. cit. Note 102 (Skomal was a pupil of Tessenow's Viennese predecessor Hermann Herdtle at the Vienna School of Arts and Crafts). About Tessenow's teaching in Berlin see: Wolfgang Jungermann, record of a student of architecture at the TH Berlin in the years 1929-1932, unpublished typescript in the Tessenow Archiv Kunstbibliothek Berlin, from which Albert Speer quoted in 1970 in an interview by Giovanni Klaus König and Bruno Reichlin about his studies with Tessenow. See: Bruno Reichlin, 'Heinrich Tessenow negli appunti di uno studente berlinese, 1929 -1932', *Casabella* 349(1970).

In October of 1923 Tessenow finally published in the magazine *Die Volkswohnung* an article about the question of architectural education.<sup>122</sup> He starts his argumentation in his usual way, writing about the necessity of integrating educational problems into a general perspective of society. He goes on to demand better coordination of the different educational systems and a more practical orientation of primary and secondary schools as well as universities. The influence of Wyneken's theories for a general reform of the school system is clearly visible. But he also writes about the role of architectural education in academies of art. He complains about the dwindling influence of these academies vis-à-vis the larger technical universities, underlining the advantage of teaching in small groups at the academy and the possibility of contact and cooperation with other disciplines. In this context he demands that students be trained by carrying out actual tasks made possible by direct commissions for public buildings awarded to the academy by the municipalities. He would never achieve this goal, either in Dresden or in Berlin, where he would play an important role in the educational reform of the TH alongside (and sometimes in contrast to) Hans Poelzig.

Among many of his admirers as well as his critics, a myth became firmly established during this period that Tessenow was the architect of the little house and humble apartment, a master of modesty and smallness. Due to the absence of commissions other than for housing, he was unable to pursue his fame as the architect of modern monumentality that he had begun with the *Festspielhaus*. However, the largely representative tasks he gave his students in Dresden - a people's house, the reception hall of a train station in a large city, a crematorium with annexes, the

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<sup>122</sup> Heinrich Tessenow, 'Zur Frage der Architektenerziehung' (On the question of the education of architects) in: *Die Volkswohnung* vol. V, 1923, p.237-240.

town centre of a small town, a large hospital - clearly underline not only his marked interest in the big form and in monumental architecture, but also in the social demands of architecture. For Tessenow, the social was not limited to housing, but also included what Fritz Schumacher used to call “the social monuments” on which the latter had directed his attention in his Hamburg building practice. Tessenow could test himself only occasionally in projects like the Saxon state school Klotzsche, which was completed in 1926 [Fig. 22], the Malvida-von-Meyenburg school in Kassel from 1927 - 1930 and then, above all, in 1931 with the conversion of Schinkel’s Neue Wache into a memorial for the victims of the First World War.



FIG. 22 Heinrich Tessenow, Saxon Landesschule at Klotzsche near Dresden, 1927

Tessenow's 1923 article on the education of architects differs in its almost pragmatic dryness from his inaugural lecture two years earlier. That lecture was devoted to his reflections on saving society as a whole and Germany in particular and addressed neither his actual work as an architect nor what he expected of the artisan community. But this time he spoke of the need to put the whole of our social life in order before starting to think about improving architectural education and tackling reforms. He deemed the education of architects both at the building trade schools and the technical colleges as well as at the academies as relatively okay, at least under the given conditions. But the education system as a whole was not what it could be. He called for three very specific measures: The existing primary schools should be transformed into *Einheitsschulen* (unified primary and secondary schools). The degrees given from *Fachhochschulen* (universities of applied sciences), as the building trade schools meanwhile were mainly called, should entitle students to enter universities, and the universities should be organised in network systems that also allow horizontal transitions and mixing. Academies, technical colleges and universities should no longer be separated from each other as if they were training different types of architects. He also wondered whether architects could be trained like craftsmen in workshops directly in architectural offices, performing concrete practical tasks and in a permanent exchange with the master architect, whom the state could then perhaps reward with occasional public contracts for carrying out the instructional work.

In Schumacher's writings, one would search in vain to find such a suggestion that architectural work be treated as a craft like carpentry. In his inaugural speech in Dresden, he was primarily concerned with the architect's relationship to history and art. But after moving to Hamburg and during the war he was involved in tasks other than teaching at the university. But he made several public statements about educational issues in lectures and publications that came surprisingly close to Tessenow's 1923 proposal. In 1916 he had published *Ausblicke für die kunsttechnische Erziehung unsere Volkes* (Perspectives for the technical art education of our people)<sup>123</sup> and in 1918, even before the end of the war, *Die Reform der Kunsttechnischen Erziehung. Ein Beitrag zum Aufstieg der Begabten* (The Reform of Technical Art Education. A contribution to the rise of the gifted)<sup>124</sup>, where, as mentioned, he made Tessenow's being denied admission to study at a university the starting point for a whole set of interrelated reform proposals.

Like Tessenow, Schumacher starts out from the overall social situation and tries to locate the architect's social responsibility. However, he does not expect him, like Tessenow does, to build a better life in a small town within a cooperative social structure based on craftsmen, but rather expects to reshape the modern metropolis for a better life for a majority of the population. He takes up the cause of teaching drawing and manual skills in primary schools, so that the reform of the schools of arts and crafts and the technical colleges can be tackled on a basis other than the humanities alone. He then reflects in more detail on such reforms in the second paper,

123 Fritz Schumacher, *Ausblicke für die kunsttechnische Erziehung unsere Volkes* (Prospects for the Artistic-Technical Education of our Nation), Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag, Weimar 1916.

124 Fritz Schumacher, *Die Reform ...*, op.cit. note 63.



which culminates in the demand for a “Hochschule der Gestaltung” (University of Art and Design), a training institution whose demands regarding the combination of craft, artistic, technical and scientific work go far beyond the concepts of the Vereinigten Staatsschulen für freie und angewandte Kunst in Berlin (United State Schools of Fine and Applied Arts) or the Bauhaus in Weimar.

A more detailed presentation of the latter writings can unfortunately not be given here; it would be far beyond my mandate to locate the two inaugural lectures in Dresden by Schumacher and Tessenow in their respective works and their time and, if possible, to compare them with each other.

I cannot but assert the diametrical approach and the totally differing language of the two authors, Schumacher’s clear rationality versus Tessenow’s indecisiveness, the analytic and logical deduction of an intellectual scholar in contrast to the emotional narrative of a craftsman and autodidactic architect. One is not better or worse; both have their advantages and fulfilled their task perfectly in the given situation. In his inaugural lecture, Schumacher does not leave the realm of the architectural discipline. In his, Tessenow does not even touch it. Tessenow leaves architecture, or Baukunst as he prefers to call it, hidden somewhere in the background as a subtext and the audience is left to draw its own conclusions. But there are also similar tendencies in both arguments. Both are searching for harmony and balance: Schumacher in the stylistic quarrels of the architects about their relation to history, Tessenow on a more general level by defining himself as a craftsman and exposing the idealized role of craftsmen as a particular social group in a fragmented society.

Tessenow’s and Schumacher’s paths crossed several times and often they were fighting for similar goals. This became evident in the years when Tessenow was Dülfer’s assistant and alongside

his work at the TH started to build his famous minimalist houses in Hellerau. Schumacher took part in the Kunstkommission (the commission of the seven), which had to supervise the aesthetic aspects of the garden city Hellerau. His vote for Tessenow's project of the Festspielhaus was decisive in the quarrel with Riemerschmidt and thus Tessenow could build his first masterpiece, which opened the eyes of many contemporaries to a new modern monumentality. Schumacher was one of the founders of the Werkbund of which Tessenow too became a member in 1910. Both were, throughout their later practice, partisans of the ideology of this organization, which intended to harness art and modern society for the common goal of creating a better culture. They appreciated their work mutually despite their different orientations: Schumacher the planner and theorist of the modern big city and Tessenow the protagonist of an unspectacular architecture for the lower middle-class who dreamed of a new small city that he would never build. Both wanted to avoid the excesses of a self-declared vanguard culture at the same time as they rejected a historicist approach.

They were both committed teachers, who wanted to see their educational visions not restricted to universities, but in service to the whole society. Above all, they saw a different society as the long-term goal of their educational efforts. For Schumacher, this society could reach a higher cultural level thanks to the creative efforts of architects and urban planners, which should then guarantee a new, more cultivated and therefore more harmonious human being. For Tessenow, it was more complicated. First a new society had to be built that would eliminate the separation between manual labour and intellectual work, between town and country, between high and low culture. Only then could the art of building reach a stage where it would be capable of producing high architecture and contributing to cultural progress.





FIG. 23 Fritz Schumacher ca.1910

Fritz Schumacher

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# The Building Craft of the Present Time and Historical Tradition

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*The following treatise is comprised of the content of the inaugural speech that the author gave on acceptance of a professorship at the Royal Technical College in Dresden on the 10th of May, 1901. It is dedicated to young entrants in the field of architecture. Dresden, May, 1901*

If we have the opportunity to observe the image of German cultural life in the mirror of the judgement of foreign nations, then in most cases we will find that Germans are predominately celebrated as theorists and historians. We ourselves are proud of this side of our intellectual life, we see ourselves here as being justified in our self-assurance as the leaders. But with the growing force of urgent challenges in practice and action, at the same time we may see a feeling of superiority slipping into the platonic admirations of our neighbours' judgements, especially from those across the water. This feeling more or less means: you serious people, yes, you grapple with the fundamentals of a thing; we brave people, we grasp hold of the thing and create something new.

In fact in recent times we may clearly observe, undoubtedly under the influence of these reflections coming from abroad, a certain mistrust in respect to the emphasis placed on the historic aspect of a discipline. This comes up in some fields. Architecture has pointedly argued that for it, on one side the power of the historical reveals itself unusually clearly, while on the other, every archaism effectively perceived as such, exerts a strong presence.

Goethe's saying, that it counts as a 'blessed fortune of the Greeks', 'that they were not led into confusion by any precedents', has often been cited today. Some have attempted to play this as a trump card in the struggle against historical tradition. It is almost the same with some of Goethe's sayings as it is with citations from the Bible: we may select many sayings from different contexts and juxtapose these to others of the most contrasting hue. But we certainly do not want to attempt that here, for there is no question that the core of this saying suggests a true danger. But we must be clear from the beginning, that this saying does not just mean that 'precedents' (and naturally good precedents are intended), 'must lead to confusion', but rather that it simply means that 'precedents may lead to confusion'. And who would deny this? Who could deny, that it dulls creative joy when one is continuously warned of how mature mastery, in a manner of speaking, supersedes that which one struggles to realise. And who would deny that it may lead to confusion, if when bravely approaching a work one is surrounded by a thousand design possibilities frenetically evoked by earlier styles. And who has not experienced it, when one stands before the power of historic forms in all revered awe, and yet doesn't know how to behave decorously within the fixed confines of sanctioned principles, other than as if closely following ceremonial formalities. And where one would not dare to say anything without being coerced, because one cannot determine what on the one hand may be allowed, nor on the other hand what might arouse justifiable shock.

There will always be people who will succumb to the danger of mechanically imitating ritual customs, so to speak, thus never arriving at their own religious convictions. But the question remains of whether it would have helped these people, if they had been freely trained from the beginning with the teachings of historic dogma kept far away from them. However, due to a lack of positivity such personalities are readily inclined to develop

purely destructive tendencies, which are not then a matter of indifference, for these become dangerous.

We thus come to a point within our query that doesn't really touch upon the artistic core of the matter, but which indeed from a more or less tactical standpoint in respect to the overall level of art, is of great importance. Therefore, we will address this in advance.

If today we speak entirely in general terms, and not of the personal private application of a single principle of architectural education, we must always bear in mind that among the creative spirits there are not only those who are truly able to create something original. For in fact, the greater number of them are not at all qualified to produce individual values, but who in spite of this are qualified, and this is the most important point, to work artistically. Thus it is not true, that in the arts only the phenomena have the right to exist, which like a great explorer open up a piece of territory for us. In the wide realm of the arts, there is also space for all of the more modest livelihoods that certainly do not open up new territory. But in terms of form, they are able to perceive things and pass these on to others in an unusual way, through extensive engagement with the charms of a region, which we would otherwise pass by unknowingly. And when such phenomena are granted a small place in the 'higher' arts by gracious perceptive sympathisers, in most instances this is in the area of applied art, in the art that grows together with daily need and that should ennoble this modest daily need.

Even today there are many judges of architectonic work, who through an understandable if somewhat insecure appreciation of individualistic works completely overlook this quieter aspect of our creativity. However from a cultural standpoint, facilitating the beneficial engagement of someone who can be won over to art through outside help, is indeed a particularly important task.

Naturally then, their work will have significance for an especially broad, inclusive segment within the spectrum of taste.

I would like to emphasise: this has nothing to do with a cultural work, that is, one that is later referred to within the art historical development of an era. Art history inattentively passes over the great mass of good work, and follows a thread from one superior work to another. And thus we may conclude from these so-called 'higher' points of view, that concern for this secondary garnish to artistic development is truly irrelevant.

In fact, for those judging our literature it is truly irrelevant if in addition to the masterworks of our era, only a few or a great number of penny paperbacks and bestsellers are written. In the same way, for modern painting it is in fact relatively unimportant, if only a few or a great number of sentimental painters exist. But in architecture it is another matter! One does not have to read a book and a picture can be turned against the wall, but if the pseudo-art of a built work stands on our high street, then we have to appreciate it whether we want to or not. And such a work endlessly echoes in the lives of thousands like a bad melody that one is unavoidably exposed to. While one may not achieve very much through stupidity, dullness, or baseness in the face of higher standards in literature and painting, that which there ends up in the dustbin of time as a matter of self-regulation, in architecture becomes a sin, an hourly sin against the beauty of God's nature. Like a poisonous plant, like a vile creature that suddenly implants an evil force in a patch of pure soil, it is capable of exerting all manner of destructive stimuli on future generations.

Everyone, once they have realized this, then comprehends just how much the architect must exercise strict, ascetic self-discipline, in contrast to the irreproachable, joyfully experimental painter, or poet or applied artist, for he does not only carry responsibility



for himself and his client, but rather is responsible for a piece of the world. And therefore, the cultural responsibility of which we speak is so important, for even those who are not able to make their own laws will later have to answer for this piece of the world.

Following this line of thinking, it becomes self-evident that even if historic influences may have a retarding effect on the innovator, an understanding of historical style must never become a dispensable element within our vital architectural activity. Then for the empathetic artist there remains no other choice than to connect to the manner of some noted contemporary artistic personality, or to connect to threads that lead from the manner of an historical time period into our present days. The first path leads only too easily to trends, such as we today see originating with the followers of our typical cutting-edge artist. The second leads to designs that are perhaps more modest and some would even say: more boring. But these in any case may be healthier, because they come about more organically and freely of themselves, than is probably the case through devotion to an individual and his random traits. I say that there is no other choice, because we must be clear with ourselves, that in this connection architecture stands in a different position than the other arts.

We appreciate the value of the empathetic artist in the 'fine' arts, for example in painting, according to the degree that he maintains feeling for nature. A painter 'of the second rank' is able to evoke a mood in us, when a hint of the experience of nature is captured within his modest work, and is communicable to us. This connection with nature that is able to give the weaker ones in the arts a certain artistic power and justification for their existence, is denied to the architect. He may well be able to provide ornamental accoutrements that are more natural or more schematic, but the actual essence of architectural creation does not enter in here. Architecture is the embodiment of abstract principles, it is the

one among the arts that stands in the least direct connection to nature as a source of inner strength. And therein lies the difficulty: the unusually high standards that are unique to architectural design, in comparison with the other arts. The most productive, the most appreciated and the never-failing source of renewal for all arts, by itself alone isn't directly beneficial here. Rather it must come from within itself, within a sphere of artistic and formal abstraction, cultivating its life and its emerging sprouts in a struggle with reality.

We must not forget this, for this above all places us in the correct position to appreciate knowledge of historic architecture. The organic development of ideas revealed to us through the history of architectural evolution, the manner in which we for example see architectural systems crystallising in the antique or medieval with an inner harmony, appears to us as though there had been no assistance from the talents of individual people, as though it was an organism that evolved as if by itself. These are moments that give another character to the historical aspect of architecture, in a similar manner to the line of development in the other arts. Within such architectonic systems, individuals with their random characteristics retreat far in the background, in the face of an inner fundamental principle that gradually emerges as something impersonal. In brief, something underlies the evolution of architecture that is comparable to the consequential power of nature, such that one might state exaggeratedly: what nature is to the painter as the foundation of his creative measure, for the architect, who lacks this measure, this must be historical evolution. Let it be understood: not random features, not the lyrical decorative forms of historic periods, but rather all fundamental principles that slowly evolved in the centuries-long uninterrupted genesis of architectural vocabulary.

And from this one may then further conclude, that everything that has naturally evolved in architecture can never be dismissed, but rather must form the indispensable foundation for all, even the most individualistic future development.

This sounds wholly self-evident. Will this then be contested in any case? Yes indeed, it will be contested. Today there is an important, and one may safely say an interesting party, who despite historic architectural tradition, view it with great hostility and want to conceive of all architecture from the naïve, primitive instinct of the artist. They want the creator to see his tasks, one may say: à la Robinson [Crusoe]. That is, as if he was called for the first time in the world to discover the architectural needs that lie within a task. From out of this naïve perspective his means and his form should develop. Only in this way, so it is believed, does the best that the artist possesses come to light: his personality. And thus the new stimuli that will further lead our art to new stylistic formations only arise through the unimpaired originality of the personality.

According to this interpretation an independent, creative personality is the prerequisite. In this way the rightful group of followers will be immediately limited. But for us this interpretation leads to a new aspect of our question of the meaning of historic tradition for the architectural creation of the current time. Up to this point, we have attempted to argue that architecture isn't able to do without the solid, secure line of historical tradition, because not every builder can be a Prometheus. And indeed, every architectural effort carries within it a permanent artistic responsibility for the surrounding environment to an extraordinary degree. And we have thus seen that in architecture the conditions for free creation are configured in a particularly difficult manner, because the architect must dispense with nature as an assistant.

Therefore, we may think: historic tradition is a necessary evil, for tactical reasons we cannot do without it. But this has nothing to do with the higher artistically framed question, of the meaning of these elements for those called to independent creative work, the talented ones today who have the Promethean sparks.

This question is difficult to answer. It goes far beyond the boundaries of clearly defined pedagogical considerations. And in the face of this, we can only establish a position through an understanding that we generally derive from the essence of the architectural evolutionary process, and from the demands of a living art.

It is not only the anxious concern about the uninfluenced originality of creation that 'no precedents have confused', which becomes a weapon against historic tradition. Rather, we encounter positive reasons alongside these negative aspects, so to speak.

It is said that a novel aesthetic conception has developed out of the unique creative circumstances of our time. An aesthetic conception, with a central focal point that is no longer based on the earlier formal principle of beauty, rather on the concept of an inner beauty, the concept of functionalism and its realisation through the constructive. The aesthetic value of a tectonic type of work, so it goes, is the same as with a machine, in that it expresses its functional purposes: constructed as perfectly as possible, as logically as possible, as economically as possible. The first requirement is the absolute honesty of a work. Its aesthetic formal possibilities develop from this, as though following a law drawn from constructive functions.

Above all, it is the new Belgians who start with these principles. And their main figure [Henry] van de Velde attempts with the fervour of a born fanatic to formulate a new doctrine from these, a doctrine which, by the way, would condemn half of his own work.

In addition to truthfulness, that is indeed put forth by all aestheticians as a requirement (if indeed they want to understand many different things under 'truth'), he emphasises a concept within this that may be referred to as a kind of artistic fatalism. When definite preconditions for a task exist, then he sees preconditions of function, type and material along with internally existing logical design consequences with the definite irreversibility of fate, which are independent from the creative free will of a personality. From this it follows that each task, if one understands it be totally soluble, has only one single possibility for its realisation, with no second possibility. He assumes that only works of such a strict logical spirit will please the properly educated modern person of the future. The concept of beauty, incorrectly held to be a quality for it only expresses the effect of an object on the observer, will be completely reformulated in this sense, when it touches upon anything technological.

These theoretical realisations foretell a gradual transformation of all of our conceptions through the powerful concepts of technology. These would be totally feasible, because they operate with many undeniable symptoms of our time, if there may truly be a state where there is an art, but indeed no artistic phantasy. Van de Velde's theories mean the negation of phantasy\*, they tend towards an artificial artistic asceticism that replaces individual creativity with the calculated example of rational considerations. Why this asceticism? Is phantasy then just a lie? Must everything be thoroughly unconstructive, that does not bear the heavily underlined stamp of construction on its body?

These caricatured products of a correctly perceived aesthetic principle derive from the narrowly defined concept of how construction is expressed aesthetically in architecture. Honesty in architecture isn't merely a matter of allowing construction to manifest itself nakedly, that would be a primitive view of art.

No, in fact the artistic essence of architecture is based upon finding the symbolic expression through architectural form for the constructive function. The requirement for truth relates to this symbolic expression, which within certain boundaries can be endlessly diverse and variable, and which for each material and its unique constructive treatment naturally must differ. In this way, poetic invention and phantasy are restored to their rightful place. But the true core of every requirement remains, even within this altered conception: to bring the formal expression of each creation into full inner harmony with its special requirements.

\*The above references to Van de Velde's concepts are based on his lectures and selected essays. In the meantime, in his book, *Renaissance and Applied Art*, he has summarised his views in detail. It would be necessary to approach these points much more closely than it is possible for us to do in this context.

And this requirement is the actual healthy content of this programme, that the modern [die Modernen] contrasts to tradition. But from within this programme, most of them primarily engage in the struggle against historic tradition.

We acknowledge this programme. What we would like to observe more closely, is the relationship to historic tradition that results.

The unclarities and widely diverse confusions in relation to modern stylistic requirements primarily arise from our obsession with schematising. This obsession is so great, that for example, one transfers the aesthetic characteristics of the applied arts onto architecture in the form of requirements, without any further qualification. And actually one always is inclined to set up aesthetic principles that were tried out on some striking singular architectural work as a guideline for all of architecture, without further ado. I don't really want to criticise the first case

any further. What one does not observe in the latter case, is this: that our architectural activity in the latter half of the previous century differentiated itself so enormously, beyond any historical comparison, that one must make distinctions in reference to the problem of stylistic character as well as typical building categories, in similar way that the applied arts separate weaving and ceramics, joinery and metalworking. In the applied arts as well, great general principles are valid for all of these fields collectively, but each one itself has its own specially developed unique aesthetic.

While not exactly the same, something indeed somewhat comparable has materialised within the architecture of our time. Here we juxtapose typical tasks, which are so varied in their inner and outer requirements, that individual styles must be expected and required within circumscribed areas.

Today we can follow two principle contrasting streams within our architectural tendencies. One stream shows a clearly social character in its tasks, and is determined to imprint this tendency on its architectural results. The market hall, the train station, the warehouse, buildings of this kind belong within this stream. They are born from the new social requirements, and they must logically express this in their overall character. But on the other side we find a directly opposed stream, a stream that leads to the anti-social, to the most extreme refinement of the individual. And its most intense expression of the modern derives from the most refined individual needs of the bespoke villa. We are aware of this opposition between the social and the individual. Wherever we look in our cultural life we confront it. Within intellectual fields it is also a criterium of our era, and almost all modern signs of the times correlate with this. No wonder, if this opposition is even becoming a stylistic criteria in the arts of our time!

But everywhere there are systematic aestheticians, who feel that this a weakness of our architecture, and cry for a single style from periods when this kind of division was not yet known. But a heterogenous stylistic expression must develop from such oppositions, or one must deny that architecture has any capability towards the characteristic.

But what is of particular note, is that this inner opposition between social and individual character in general runs parallel with a broadly grasped distinction: distinction according to material character.

Those building types that have arisen from the changed conditions of our transportation, of our communal enterprises, of our financial institutions, collectively stand in close relationship to iron construction. One may say that these are predestined for iron, even if today in most cases they still only cautiously venture upon it. In all of the other groups, where the tendency towards satisfaction of the physical and spiritual needs of the individual prevails, there is consistently no relationship with iron.

This inner opposition expresses itself in architecture at the same time through the external, and this intensifies the conflict.

It is obvious that iron requires other architectonic principles than stone. It demands a fundamentally different aesthetic economy, it demands a fundamentally different technical treatment. To construct and to build, to span and to layer: these terms succinctly denote the fundamental differences. Differences that are proven above all through artistic ornament. For with stone, ornament is obtained from the mass, while with iron it must be added to the mass. We stand here in a realm of building construction facing two completely different worlds connected by one common goal: the cladding of space.



We are still only at the beginning of this task, of making the newer one of these worlds serviceable not only to practice but also to art. There have been architects who believed that the aesthetic tasks at hand here should be forced, for they diligently attempted to disguise the stark newness of the problem. Orders of pilasters in a Renaissance-like fashion were counterfeited in iron. Domes that act as if they were direct relations of stone domes are seen everywhere.

Here we reach the point at which the superficial hold on historical tradition clearly led on *ad absurdum*, where one then attempted to overturn the authority of tradition. Certainly, in this case an act of disengagement must consistently take place. For if the forms of architecture truly form a symbolic language, expressed through the structural and technical functions of a building element, then it is self-evident that the symbolic content of a form is nullified as soon as it concerns another material with other structural qualities, than the one from which this form developed. It is self-evident, even if easier to require than to carry out, that a new material must develop its own stylistic language and that each trite recollection of a tradition related to something completely different has a detrimental effect. One cannot even try to develop something further, that was never there in the first place. But rather just the opposite, one is in fact forced by iron to freely and uncompromisingly follow their own paths, as if one was Robinson [Crusoe] on an uninhabited island and dependent on themselves alone. Only when one attempts in this way to comprehend the aesthetic essence of iron in practical terms, will one discover an approach towards a synthetic effect between the iron and the stone, in order to begin without feeble compromises.

From this simple, and one might almost say banal realisation, that through the introduction of iron a new aspect of architectonic design arises, for which we dispense with tradition and as a result cannot even concern ourselves with traditions of other kinds, is indeed a truly odd conclusion to have drawn.

Some have demanded that the aesthetic results emerging from the engagement with new materials and their construction, which naturally appear to be something especially new and modern, must be decisive for the entire creative output of architecture, even when the requirements of the new materials don't come into play. This did not happen in this direct, easily refutable form, but rather as we have already mentioned, along an indirect route. The roll that iron plays not only in architecture, but also in the form of machines of all kinds in our collective life and in the world of our imagination, has gradually coloured our aesthetic concepts in a particular way. We have learned to appreciate the elegance of a constructive line, we have begun to admire the unique curved parts of a machine, of an elegant auto, of a sailboat. In sum, an awareness of the unusual oscillating curves of all metal construction has been awoken, and this is doubtlessly closely connected with what today is called the cult of the line, with all of its caricatures.

We have absolutely no reason to regret this phenomena. The engagement with the technical has fertilised and broadened our aesthetic modes of expression, in other fields as well. However, it must be regretted, if we try to see these phenomenon as something other than they are: if we don't regard these as a special addition to that which exists, but rather as the core of a new, revolutionary world of beauty.

What has developed fully logically from iron and its needs, in itself still has nothing to do with architectural requirements that remained untouched by the spirit of iron. Stone construction, whether it appears as monolithic monumental art or in its more modest form as domestic house construction, may follow totally different paths, without thus becoming disengaged with the spirit of the age.

Here we will never be able to conceal new external appearances of a decorative nature through a connection with inherited basic forms. And we probably would not so fearfully flee from this connection, if we had not become apprehensive of tradition in the face of the most superficial, shameless manner in which we attempted to randomly exploit the treasures of previous epochs in the raw age of the imitation of styles. And further, if we had not learned to see historic heritage as something petrified and dead, rather than as a delicately organised living thing.

And in the end, it was understandable that the recognition of the fact that for certain modern tasks there are no historic traditions, was used as an occasion to jettison all such traditions. Some believed themselves to be truly strong, and thought it to be of little consequence, if the great stream of architectural tasks where the new problems are to be solved by the new means, were separated from the other great stream, where a wholly organic development utilising the experiences of earlier times can lead to new fruits. And where it would signify a barbaric act of violence, if they tried to suddenly hack off the roots of the past with an axe, in order to make room for their own small cuttings that they undertake to plant.

Thus we see, that it is not only the cultural-political regard for average achievements that we spoke about in the beginning that gives enduring meaning to the study of history in our art. Rather, for every creative person in the fields once dealt with by the architecture of earlier times, the overview of historical development provides an initial starting point from which they can approach their own work. One must not only know their grammar before beginning to write in their only style. No, one must have grasped the historic spirit of the language. And only then, when one really understands it and has it in hand, can one try to use it as a model. This is especially true for architecture,

where the creative act is so unusually closely associated with problems that only indirectly belong to the artistic side. Here, inspiration and mystic-artistic feeling are insignificant, when they aren't continuously led in parallel with the purely rational lines of the task.

Everyone who approaches practical work, must learn that phantasy can all too quickly lead to a swinging tightrope, if they do not continually grasp the balancing pole of experience for aid. But everyone is not able to gain this experience themselves, given our short lifespan and the limited patience of our fellow men. This took centuries to achieve.

And thus one can qualify the statement from the 'Precedents', which in this case causes confusion, to read as follows: it is not the fault of the precedents if they truly mislead, but rather of our incorrect attitude towards them. It is not historical knowledge, but rather the elusiveness of this knowledge. Here, one should not confuse knowledge with historical impressions. These indeed cause confusion, specifically when these are only impressions that one receives as the result of some kind of unknown power, so that one cannot see an overview. Here an old truth proves itself, which remains ever new: everything that one truly knows, only serves to clarify, while all half-knowledge does not, so to speak, represent half of the attainments of all knowledge, rather it turns into a negative factor, into a curse.

From this is it completely clear as to how historic knowledge must be passed on to those destined to create. It is not a matter of training him in the mannerisms of an earlier era, nor a matter of enabling him to be able to imitate as far as possible the exact style of forms. Rather, it is a matter of learning about the essence of a historic development, the intrinsic artistic principles, and through this understand how these principles also are re-enacted

and reverberate in individual forms. Once one has grasped this, then one will be naturally safeguarded from the arbitrary, even in the case of a unique form. However, on the other hand one will not only recognise where the dead branches of an historic epoch lie, but also where the hidden buds lie, which can be brought again into full blossom.

We already noted in the beginning, that this conception will lead to a kind of eclecticism among those who are not qualified. For us this appears to be more or less the surest means towards a respectable average taste, because it does not draw upon the spirit of a single creation, but upon the spirit of an age. One could perhaps conclude that this conception in any case must always lead to artistic eclecticism.

And we dispute this. Looking at other epochs, a cursory glance appears to show a leap made from an old world into a new one – on closer inspection, a slow development from the seeds at hand.

We need only to look at modern England. A modern artistic vocabulary in England was not attained through revolution, but through threads from their Gothic, newly spun by Morris, interwoven with threads from the English bourgeois Baroque, picked up by Norman Shaw and his followers. The result was, however, not a hybrid of Gothic and Queen Anne, rather it naturally became in the hands of artists something of their own, alive, maintaining only one characteristic from those sources, that of true Englishness.

And this leads us to an essential principle, that one should never forget, when one begins with historic stimuli: preserving the native [heimischen] spirit.

We have a fine instinct for this aspect of a creation, an instinct that allows us to perceive the truly native as something warm, even in other areas that we are not able to judge at all. Today this is what gives such a pleasant appearance to the current civic architecture in Munich, for example. That was also the secret at last year's Paris Exhibition, where the presence of the Nordic peoples with their powerful traditional [volkstümlichen], and yet modern and useful, products made such a sensation. Through an irony of fate, this great undertaking dedicated to international cultural refinement became a kind of triumph of folk art.

Does this not give us something to ponder? Should we also not ask ourselves, if we would not find a better solution to our social needs, if we attempted to revive and re-cultivate the dormant seed of our folk art, which is capable of further development, rather than expecting endless inspiration from hyper-cultivated reformers from outside?

In the applied arts, in weaving, in ceramics and in cabinetry, we see a start being made on different points. And we clearly see here that this effort does not appear to us as something old, rather as something thoroughly 'modern'. This is an important observation, further confirmed by each northern nation. One indeed sees that folk art instinctively grasped, and to some extent retained, the stylistic methods that the high artist eventually reached via an indirect route through all the stylistic byroads of our century, with ever increasing refinement. And if in the meantime the expressive potentials of this folk language are still not very diverse, then the good lies precisely in primitive forms, that allow for further development through thousands of new combinations.

Thus, in the end our observations lead us back into the small, confined region of our very own world as a source of strength. But it is just the same, as if one toured every country and eventually travelled

back to the old work in his spot of homeland. One is a Philistine if one says: of what use is all of this wandering about abroad; after all, he starts over again, where he should have stayed. No, if he's not a bungler, he doesn't begin again there, even if it may appear so. First the knowledge of all the foreign, of the foreign in time and place, gives him the right and the power to create with assurance in his own little narrow world. Whether he wants to admit it or not: that which he saw that was useful, percolates into the old way of doing things. It should be the same for us: neither the foreign nor the old arbitrarily keep one's view to their own, narrow road, nor do they keep them from wandering about everywhere, from acquiring knowledge of everything, nor indeed from returning to their own narrow road. Only self-reliance has lasting value, achieved through struggles with foreign powers. There is something magical in these struggles for when one emerges victorious, then the enemy who one had fought suddenly becomes an ally.

We have come to the end. What we have attempted to sketch, is a kind of regulation of the border between the sphere of power of healthy tradition and the sphere of power of new influences. In a time when so many lay people, at least lay people in relation to our own art, attempt to theoretically influence our work, then it is perhaps not entirely useless to attempt to become clearer as to where the boundaries lie between that which applies to other artistic fields but not to our own, and between that which is important for one aspect of our work, but which doesn't directly concern the other.

We must take care, that the soil cast upon one side of our garden, where we begin to plant anew, does not fall upon the beautiful, living cultures that do not require re-planting, but only careful further cultivation. We must take care not to plough up the garden from corner to corner in an overeager fury.

This work of setting out boundaries has been necessary in every art from time to time, and it always required many, until the regulation was correct. But all of this work only has any practical value, when the one who takes this on says from the beginning: praise be to God, that there is ploughing and new tilling! Then he can only carry out his duty, when he doesn't act to limit new life as far as possible, rather only when he acts to invigorate new life and to assist concentrated development, because it doesn't need to be torn apart through his actions.

But in addition, correct knowledge of the historic is indispensable.







FIG. 24 Heinrich Tessenow, ca. 1916

Heinrich Tessenow

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# The Land in the Middle

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*The following statements were made in the inaugural speech delivered before the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts in the Winter Semester, 1920/21.*

When I accepted a teaching position in Architecture here in the Art Academy last autumn, the administration of our school warmly invited me to give an inaugural speech here during the course of this semester, possibly as my inaugural speech. Today I am taking up this invitation with great pleasure.

Our current era has so many problems or urgent questions, that it warrants the use of every appropriate occasion for us to attempt to collectively answer at least a few of the most important questions within our larger community.

Indeed, these days we clearly define ourselves through mass society, although the degree to which this is difficult or even seldom achievable, is as great as it is important.

When we strive today to collectively deal with more serious living or working issues in an appropriately serious manner, it is often as though each of us has a different language.

We feel that it is almost the same for us as it was for those building the Tower of Babel. After a period of intensive work and after a time of wildly ambitious plans, everyone sees themselves as if suddenly in the most amazing and divisive state of confusion.

Even if in this case we initially want to ignore the greater political or large-scale social upheavals, which form a very threatening and bewildering background to all of our lives and activities, nevertheless, everywhere there is disturbing insecurity and nervous failures also remain the order of the day.

For example, in the greater field of the fine arts, almost any kind of recognisable direction is lacking, and in academic fields the most time-honoured principles are being threatened, rejected, or eliminated.

And thus, if we have a look wherever we please, then we can well say: it is all truly 'dada'.

And one may well speak with reason of the demise of Europe, while also referring to the necessity for a fundamental new beginning.

Indeed, in the face of these or similar observations we are again at a loss, and of course disunified: great masses of people, or ourselves personally, have numerous reasons for rejecting all theories or assertions of the demise of Europe or of a fundamental new beginning as being false or exaggerated. They further brush aside all facts that appear to point to a collapse, emphasising that in very many important respects, actually everything remains as it was, and everything continues as it did before. This means that we also have again here the opposing answers for great and immediately significant questions.

Everywhere the sharpest contrasts stand harshly and antagonistically side by side, and almost nothing could bring harmony to these contrasts or bring them together productively. And as far as any significant remedy exists, it would take great effort to find it. In any case where we sought it previously, it is scarcely present; or in the meantime, everything must be going very well for us.

We haven't looked for it for the past few years, rather we already knew long before the war, that the greater whole is strikingly inferior. We can say more or less: that from a cultural perspective, nine-tenths of all of our European labour value of recent decades stands on a very low, if not even the lowest level. And just as with our work, it is indeed also the case for our entire way of living.

We have known all of this for some time, and for about the same length of time we sought, very earnestly and sincerely, to improve the greater whole, but it has not even improved, certainly not easily perceptibly improved.

And thus in the end there is not much left, but to recognise and admit that we sought an essential remedy there, where it could not be easily recognisable nor be suitable for mass society.

Where did we look, or from where did we expect this remedy to come? Well, we expressly expected something from academia, from industry, from the schools, from politics, from newspapers and books, etc.

And certainly there also can be no doubt, that overall certain possibly remedies exist for us, which in a certain sense can generally be helpful for us, or as it is said: 'All is well'; but all is indeed not well.

That truly falls under the category of a so-called bromide, but it is even more astonishing to observe the unconditional trust instilled by some of these fields, or how truly unconditionally we glorify these over and over again.

Let's take politics for example: it is certainly the case that by far the greatest portion of all grown and half-grown Europeans, when it comes down to it, emphasise every fundamental improvement of the greater whole, and actually expect this from politics with pathetic seriousness.

Naturally this is politics, meaning: naturally the external conditions, material connections or actions of mass society are always important things to observe, and we may say that without politics nothing goes.

But moderation is above all the most important task. And our interest in politics is always justifiable up to a certain line, and as soon as this line is crossed, then every political position runs towards the absurd. We may recognise this particularly well today, since we have all gone far over this line already. More specifically, while today the entire world is wholly without question for politics, politics on the one side will enthusiastically tear down just that which should be enthusiastically built by the other.

And thus one could justifiably think, particularly in respect to our current social conditions, that it must be extraordinarily easy to recognise this absurdity lying within: that we trust politics without any reservations. But no, our trust in politics is unshakeable; one may still attempt to declaim against politics by the following means. One could say more or less: you believe so intensely in politics, and the more you do so the more you stress that politics on the left side is really ugly, and is also really ugly on the right side, and what lies behind, is even uglier. Yes alright, but then may one perhaps ask: is not all of politics a real beast? 'O no, pardon', so the line goes, 'look once over here, at this one side, it is really very nice'. This means: all evidence given against politics is of no use at all here.

And in a similar manner to how it goes with politics, so it is for us with the previously mentioned important individual fields: with industry, academia, print media etc.

Here, everywhere our trust is solid as a rock, and the more solid it becomes, the more unfortunate are at the same time the collective achievements of these individual fields. But through rational considerations or above all through rationality in the face of this, there is actually nothing more to change. Here, the only immediate or significant or decisive help – may we say – actually comes from dear God, or the deepest essence of all things. For there, where we humans no longer master things, the things themselves self-destruct.

This kind of self-destruction is very clearly recognisable in many of the aforementioned fields, once we have a careful look. Certainly, because such destruction very often has a strong negative effect on us personally, it is natural that we look away from all signs of destruction, but this kind of half-hearted avoidance will not really help us.

And all of the above is more or less valid for all European peoples, but is particularly true for us Germans. Let us think for example of our previous military power, of the earlier international standing of our trade and transport, of the former reverence for our intellectual production etc., meaning that in our case greater or lesser assets have sunken in comparison to anywhere else, even more than in Russia itself, for example.

And as far as this enormous international collapse presents major new international tasks, in the first instance it is a matter of German responsibilities.

To the extent that we may speak of European problems or tasks (and we could well have done that for several centuries, and we may do that even more so today than before), we Germans are above all always the first to be called upon or required to solve such problems.

Let us assume for example that some kind of economic or intellectually decisive upheavals in France may also be transmitted to Russia, and so it is. In this way most paths from France to Russia will pass through Germany, also more or less the case in reverse, and when we replace France with Scandinavia, and then instead of Russia use Italy, then it is the same. This means that so far as the affairs of individual European nations may in fact be transmitted to other nations, thus becoming more or less European affairs, in an immediate and practical sense Germany will be affected the most, simply because of its geographic location. This is because the spatially juxtaposed people living adjacent, for example the Scandinavians and the Italians, are of similar spirit only very generally, while the very south of Germany in its thinking and being is very closely related or at least very similar to Italy. And in the other direction, there is no great difference between the thinking and desires of the Scandinavians and the extreme northern German population.

Therefore, we may describe Germany within Europe not only geographically or spatially, but also intellectually as the people who are best situated to connect or intermediate. In Europe more than any other we stand in the middle, in the centre. Thus, where it concerns the central, main, or core questions for Europe, without any particular or special factors, in most cases these are German affairs.

We as a people overall have had the same responsibilities in Europe, which in earlier history groups of different Mediterranean peoples in very centrally located Greece and later in Italy had, even if we typically don't want to compare ourselves further with the Greeks or Romans. But for the most part, in those times they had great international ambitions that they could determine and realise practically, in a similar manner that for centuries Germans first and foremost have had for Europe. Not we Germans alone, but we above all.



We have in Europe many great social concepts and institutions, which other nations have realised and developed with greater cleverness and consequence than we Germans; but in the past few centuries the most important things for Europe have been realised by Germans.

We Germans always treat ourselves unfairly, when we compare our great acts, or allow these to be compared, with the great acts of humankind overall. When such comparisons are to be valid, then indeed we must stand back somewhat from our deeds.

But human history is not European history, and as soon as we try to position ourselves more in this respect, then the extraordinary significance of our people becomes immediately apparent.

Here it is important to observe, that the great cultures of very early history have almost nothing to do with Europe as such. Rather, here we may speak approximately of European-coastal cultures, and in the main only of Mediterranean cultures. These gradually spread along the coastlines of Spain, France, England and Holland, and in the last two countries (mentioned in passing) they met Germanic peoples to immediate and great effect. Therefore, we Germans are fully justified in identifying the earlier great deeds of the English, and more particularly those of the Dutch as our own assets. For example, is Rembrandt really conceivable without his German blood?

A notable connection among the collective European peoples or a notable community of European peoples first dates back to the fifteenth century. Up until that point, it was more or less only neighbouring Germanic countries that were strongly orientated towards this kind of idea of greater community, and only in about the fifteenth century do we find this idea spreading across Europe to a greater or lesser extent.

Now all of Europe is beginning to become restless in a similar manner. Everywhere is seething, old cultures are falling apart or are in final flower, everywhere is death, unrest and renewal, and the great new reality that is just coming into being, is Europe with Germany as its focal point.

Now the hardest tasks are beginning for Germany, now this means for Germany: either the greatest power or an even deeper darkness than before. And for the other nations this means: Germany is in the middle. And either Germany above all incorporates us into one of the greatest and most powerful unities, with incomparably high goals and works, or we will remain as a secondary people, more or less alone, at most with particular cultural centres. But these are unimportant for the greater whole, and we fall out of the rank, almost in the same way that Greece once fell irretrievably.

The responsibilities gained by Germany at that time were never really explicitly formulated, and were therefore always easily overlooked, in particular by us Germans. But this doesn't change anything about the fact that these responsibilities have existed for centuries for us, and that we partly and in whole have truly resolved these daunting problems.

The great glory and power of the German late medieval communal order and work, the deeply resonant and powerful manner of the German early Renaissance, as well as the German Baroque, and above all the efforts of our greater German community to fully know or understand the cultures of all peoples on the edges of Europe, in order to permanently enhance the values of these various cultures. These and other similar things are essential for us to observe, for in this way through our German people truly outstanding values in fact were formed.

Albrecht Dürer, Martin Luther, Grünewald, and as already mentioned, Rembrandt, then for example Goethe, Beethoven, Kant etc. are the greatest personal representatives of our strength and are more or less even for all of Europe the greatest representatives of higher, if not even the highest, humanity.

Let us take these and similar Germans as our proponents and then compare, always in respect to the last centuries, our Germany with the lands surrounding it, and then it is clear just what we were for self-contained Europe.

But in spite of this, we have not done enough, or despite our widely recognised great acts, in respect to Europe we have continued to fail, because up to now we have not applied our intellectual and worldly power, which would have beneficially incorporated all European peoples into a unity of very similar spiritual and secular orientation.

This kind of transnational European unity is indeed an inexorable requirement, and in the main this requirement is now directed towards us Germans. Either we soon succeed in fulfilling this requirement for the most part, which also means by providing an example for all peoples around us through a simple and thus compelling model of a great society promising an economic and intellectual recovery for Europe, or we will be more or less driven from Germany. This means, driven from the territory, by those coming from the various peoples who are most readily unified. Then in our place, other peoples will attempt to solve the greatest problems, which we generally still are unable to solve.

In all probability this then means for Europe and particularly for its central territories a centuries-long period of war, which for Germany above all will inevitably result in the most incredible devastation.

But this doesn't help anything at all: this horrible possibility stands today before the gates of Germany, and cannons and hand grenades and the like are of little use against this spectre.

We Germans have only been able to live in central Europe for the past centuries because during this time it was not difficult to recognise that we were able to create the greatest or most exemplary works in Europe. And in the meantime, our position has been so extraordinarily endangered, because for centuries we have totally overlooked the enormity and difficulty of our special national responsibility. We have not only carefully studied other peoples, which is absolutely necessary for us to do, but we have also taken the lives and activities of the other nations as exemplary, to a very great degree. But our national task is truly much greater and more difficult than the tasks of other nations. As nations their geographic position is much less difficult than ours, and if we continually and emphatically follow them, then by necessity we will certainly fail overall.

In general, we Germans hold it as entirely self-evident that we live in Germany, but that is in fact by no means self-evident.

Just as our outstanding German acts of greatness of the last centuries are by no means self-evident, likewise the possibility that we might be driven from Germany has existed for us for centuries. And the possibility of this expulsion remains before us, and in fact is particularly threatening at present.

If we do not succeed, that is if over the coming decades we Germans do not fundamentally re-orientate our greater society intellectually and economically, in the sense that we more or less become the models for all European nations in the most outstanding manner, then it is in fact easy to predict that we Germans will have nothing more to say in Germany. And in

greater and greater masses we must emigrate in humiliation, and more and more be strewn in every cardinal direction, in a totally restless and perhaps centuries-long exodus, perhaps in a similar manner to how the Jewish people became fugitive and wandered for thousands of years humiliated through the whole world, and who today still must make the greatest effort to become permanently settled.

Already before the war, and even more clearly perhaps during the war, we were among all nations the nation of the most interest, and we are today even more so, not because we want it that way, but because we stand in the middle of other nations.

When France looks towards the north, there is England more or less, in the west follows a lot of water, and then comes America, to the south lies Spain, and to the east lies Germany. When Russia looks to the north, there is an unpleasant cold wilderness, in the east there is Japan, in the south there is, may we say, overheated confusion, and in the west is Germany again.

And thus in general, the individual European nations cannot be prudent if they do not look at Germany by necessity, and the nations of Europe collectively cannot be prudent if by necessity we Germans are not observed most of all.

This means: we Germans, as long as we still inhabit Germany, are for Europe the most notable or most important people, because we stand here in the middle.

That which stands most prominently in the middle is always and overall the most important or decisive, such as for example (when such an example is allowed here) on the table between the soup and fruit, the roast is the most important or the most decisive. And in approximately the same manner, as we are the most central

people for all of Europe who are the most decisive or in fact the most important people, then within our own nation the segment of the population that is the most important, we commonly call the social middle class, or simply the bourgeoisie [Bürgerstand].

Just as we as an entire nation are essentially the internationally binding element among the various and opposing European nations, so must our social middle class bring together the most socially contrasting people, interests or forces.

Not only our middle class has this essential task, in all nations this is a matter for the middle class, which fulfils this more or less everywhere. It is the most important segment of the population in all nations, but only for us is it of utmost importance to observe this fact and to validate it in a systematic manner.

Just as little as the outer fringe nations, such as England, France, Russia etc. can understand or answer the contemporary primary and core European questions, are the main questions for which Germany is responsible understood or answered by the classes that stand on the edges of our society. That is, by the classes who are not in the middle position, such as the great agriculturalists, the financial elite or the proletariat.

And just as Europe cannot recover without first having a recovered German land, Germany also cannot recover, without first having its basic middle class on the highest level.

For as long as the hard right or the hard left governs us, will our German government in itself necessarily be inferior in the most important respects.

However, it is always the middle class that has the most difficulty in taking action. It has the most inhibitions, it wants this and it

wants that, it wants it this way and it also wants it that way, etc. And this dithering, this lack of unity at first makes the middle class the weakest in practical terms. But in these deliberations also lies the roots of the strength of the middle class. It turns simultaneously to the left and to the right, to the front and to the back, etc. And it must always search in a particularly restless manner for the new persuasive words, until finally the words are found, that ring with resonance and thus have power in the greater world.

As a particular class, the middle class is always extremely difficult to categorise or understand. Among the most varied social classes it is the given class with the least clarity, or the least sharply defined. Its most important interests or tasks, or strengths etc. are very difficult to state plainly. For example, it is about as pro or con industry as it is art, social cohesion or extreme personal independence. It has a totally active relationship with real estate, without however, having the means of achieving actual material wealth.

This means that within the bourgeois or middle class there always lies the most profuse confusion, or a lot of toing and froing. It is continuously captivated by or interested in the most diverse positions, but in this way it is indeed the most multi-faceted or the most inhibited.

And with this continual unclarity of character, it is particularly the bourgeois or middle class among all of the social classes, with the same character in all countries, which has a very strong similarity to the general geographic position of Germany in the middle.

It is the least unified or clear. It has the most difficulty saying what it actually wants and what it doesn't want. And therefore, it is also in a certain superficial political sense the least able to exert itself or to defend itself verbally.

And just as difficult as it always is everywhere to believe in the middle position, is it also just about as difficult to believe in Germany. Germany rises and falls with the rising and falling esteem that the middle class in Europe has.

All particular virtues or vices that we as an entire nation have, are incorporated side by side within our middle class, and this is more or less the same case within the middles classes of all nations.

For example, if it may be said that we Germans are politically unclear or inept, then this particular political incapability must also exist within the bourgeois or middle classes of all countries.

And in fact the non-middle class segments of society, those of great wealth as well as those with nothing, are arguably the most politically focussed or capable.

Or when one points out that we Germans always like to look abroad, here again we have an essential characteristic of the middle classes. Because of our position in the middle we must look everywhere, or know or understand everything on all sides as much as possible, since we would not be able to interconnect the periphery, meaning the extremes, in a highly effective manner.

It is the middle class that stands in about the middle of the oppositions. This means in the middle of the interests or forces or realities, which always tend to fight with one another, and be mutually destructive.

If we pour water on its extreme opposite, fire, then either the water will extinguish the fire, or if the fire is the stronger element, then the fire will evaporate the water. This means that here through direct contact of two oppositions, by simple analogy, the one or the other will be destroyed. But when we pour water into



a pot and then place this over the fire, then in this way, through combining two extreme opposites of fire and water, we thus achieve something that perhaps could serve us superbly.

But here, when trying to draw a conclusion, it is not particularly easy to say whether the fire, or the water or the pot is more important for us.

This means, that here it simply is difficult to decide if it is more about the opposing elements of fire and water, or more about the pot, that is, more about the element that connects the oppositions for us in a serviceable manner.

And just as it is here, so is it more or less the same for us in all cases. Without further qualifications it remains difficult to decide whether it is more important for us, that many extreme oppositions exist and as such are legitimated, or if it is more important for us that the connective elements should be plentiful and strong in the world. But here a factor of great significance comes to the fore, and it is decisive. Namely, oppositions are continuously formed everywhere, almost without our assistance. And so far as this is to be useful for us, such as with the fire and water above, it is only of particular importance for us, if we appreciate, validate and facilitate it. But the necessary connective element, such as the pot above, does not form itself, rather it must always be created by humans as an extraordinary task.

Therefore, the connective or mediative element between the oppositions is doubtlessly always the most important or privileged component for our functional and indeed our artistic planning or actions, etc.

It is not always the case, that we can make a fire and that we have water at hand. Therefore, we must also actively strive for the oppositions.

But in general it indeed will be much easier for us to be able to make a fire or collect water, than to make a waterproof pot, that is to connect these oppositions usefully.

This means, that on the whole it is not only more important but also more difficult to form the connector or practical mediator, as it is the oppositional.

And the connector is twice as difficult to form or to follow, because it is the plainer or less beautiful on the surface. For example, the fire as well as the water are in themselves much more beautiful or captivating than the pot.

Thus, on the whole the connector is not only the most important and the most difficult, it is also the least interesting in appearance.

And in general it is much easier or much more tempting to do something for the oppositions or that which is to be connected, than the connector.

And thus it is, for example, also generally much more pleasant or tempting to dream of countries like France, or England, or of Scandinavia, or Russia, or Italy, than of Germany, which stands in the geographic middle of all of these European peripheral countries. It is therefore compelled to be the mediator or connector.

As a result of this accentuated middle position the German nation, taken externally or superficially (somewhat like the pot between fire and water) is really unquestionably or truly by necessity the most unlovable people among all of the European nations. One could also say: from a superficial standpoint everything is indeed more unlovable, the more important it is.

Or for example we may take an academic, meaning a person who primarily or for the most part does intellectual work, and place next to him the complete opposite personality, the modern artist, who primarily or for the most part works from intuition. Thus we have two people who, as adjudged above, are both highly interesting just as the fire and the water.

And between these two we place an old-fashioned master craftsman of usual ability, meaning a person with a simple, healthy understanding or with a practical, workaday way of thinking and knowing, but also with five healthy senses. Meaning, with a simple, correct mode of living, that is a person who is not at all an intellectual nor an aesthetic person, but who indeed has a truly living relationship to the world of the one, as well as to the world of the other, and thus stands approximately in the middle between the one and the other.

Thus then, of these three people as noted above, our master craftsman is by all means the plainest. Here he is perhaps as uninteresting as the pot, but in fact between the fire and water he is the most important.

Well, as to this conclusion, according to which the master craftsman should be more important than the learned person or the modern artist, do we today indeed not believe this at first glance?

No, we don't believe it, and the others don't believe it either.

In this case, we and the others believe in the first place in the academic and the artist, and then after a long while we believe in nothing at all, and only in the end do we also believe in the master craftsman.

And likewise we and the others believe in the first place in the big cities and in the loneliest villages, but probably not at all in the small or middle-sized cities that stand in between.

We believe in everything, as long as it is not the middle class or mediator.

And thus, neither we nor the others believe in Germany.

We believe in England, and Russia, and America etc.

Yes indeed, if need be, we thus believe in the South Sea islanders, and in the Eskimos, but we only believe in Germany in the very last instance. Or no, we also believe in Germany, we believe in the noisiest factories, and in the most isolated German ateliers, we believe in the German nobility and in the German proletariat etc. But not in the most important, in the middle class or in a mediating Germany, and we believe even less in actual representative of the middle class, the independent master craftsman.

Yet it is indeed decisive: here and there the middle class fails, and in this way first we Germans are done for, and then the other nations follow suit.

It is on the whole and for all nations, the actual decisive or most important element, but it is always particularly important for Germany, because it is the most central element, most closely aligned with the essentially central location of Germany.

And it was never so important for Germany as it is in the present, because here everything is polarised or fragmented in a most unprecedented manner. It is fully disintegrated and antagonistic within itself, much like fire and water. And almost everywhere the actual mediative or connective is lacking, and thus by absolute

necessity there is war or a warlike atmosphere everywhere, and the whole threatens to become a monumental pile of rubbish.

The most notable connections, that are still available at all, are almost all of a purely political nature and therefore, again more or less expressly warlike. Common admiration of these is only understandable in respect to the fact that Europe is more and more oriented towards outer appearances or superficiality to the greatest degree. To the extent, that it often appears as if more profound ideas or interests will have no more space at all. The governments of contemporary Europe are similar, almost all profound ideas or higher principles are immediately objectionable, and in fact these contemporary conditions are almost exclusively governed or maintained following totally superficial principles.

But in the same way, just as we believe in these governments or conditions, we could just as well insist that in fact in Europe only status-seeking, profiteering, and cinemas etc. and only the deepest intellectual and material poverty exists. And in fact all of these things exist, and indeed in the greatest masses, but likewise is there in fact also solace or even all kinds of other things, that are truly different?

Ladies and Gentlemen, when need is truly great, it is very difficult to remain calm or to stand quietly reflective before these realities. But there is an ever greater need, that suddenly makes us cold-blooded, and such a great need has arrived for us Germans. Certainly not for us all, but for the greater number of us. And it indeed fully pertains to us now, that we for the most part confront the more important events or conditions today dispassionately. On the assumption that we generally are prepared to this end, I would like to discuss some more things, even if rather briefly, that are particularly relevant for our society.

However, I would like first and foremost to kindly ask that my remarks not be misunderstood, they should not by any means especially criticise the life and work that we have as artists and friends of the arts. Academics and other various fields do not do things better than we do. But it is fully proper here, in as much as it concerns an observation of our general circumstances, that we in the first case think of ourselves or look at ourselves.

And aside from that, here on this occasion a discussion on our artistic life and work is particularly enlightening, because in general we reveal ourselves much more openly or clearly, than the others do.

And so here I would like to make particularly reference to our modern arthouse exhibitions. Here we have very many beautiful things harmoniously coming together, that are able to explain to us the how and why of our mass social conditions. Or here we may readily arrive at all manner of thoughts, of great benefit to mass society.

Well then, in one of the larger exhibitions of modern art, we may indeed think in a beautifully quiet and reflective manner, that almost all of these works were created with the greatest seriousness and to some extent the greatest ability, with the greatest effort and in part under the most materially deprived conditions, by the kind of people who generally must be considered to be the most creative, or most worthwhile and highly ambitious.

And then we ask ourselves individually in respect to this endless amount of work, in the most dispassionate way possible:

What value does all of this in fact have for our everyday life on the whole? Or to what extent will the life and work of our nation be improved by all of this, when here an improvement is indeed so urgently needed? That is, an immediate, tangible contribution by the greatest working talent or the best people overall.

Ladies and gentlemen, for me it is of the greatest importance that my statements do not somehow offend. I hold it as more than self-evident that many have a great love for art, and that it must always be appreciated and supported. And in the end I consider myself to be an artist as well.

We do not want an everyday existence without the love of art. Just the opposite, it should rarefy our daily life, our everyday, that means not our salons. Our love of art should stand in immediate contact with our everyday work world, it should accompany it, but it should not be positioned so that art has to be framed in a special way.

It is a matter of this immediate connection of the so-called simplest and generally most important everyday work to the love of art. It is a matter of this connection, not only today but always and overall.

It may be said that where the picture frames and pedestals begin, that is generally not where the truly essential belongs.

Let us think carefully for a time about the fact that during the last decades the overwhelming greater portion of our most hopeful and best youth came to the universities, to the polytechnics, or to the art academies etc., in general to be trained as leaders in society and the working world. And thus in consequence we have more work leaders of great skill everywhere and, if we may say so, wholly unskilled workers everywhere. Even our better vocational secondary schools, for example our schools of applied art, have reached the point that they do not actually train people as ordinary workers or craftsmen as such, but as work leaders, or as the kind of people who direct the work on paper. But the real work is left to others, as far as possible.

Thus more and more, all hammers and chisels, all screws and nails, all stone and wood blocks, etc., meaning on the whole all the tools and materials that in fact serve to give form to our entire everyday world, generally are given over to the hands of those who for the most part have the least training. And the more educated we others become, all the more soft our hands become, all the more light and pointed our tools become, and naturally all the more we work on the surface alone.

In a manner of speaking, we apply cosmetics to a deathly ill Germany, and then think to ourselves: well, somehow it will heal itself, through the quack medicine that we give Germany.

How can the greater whole within which we live be healthy and worthwhile, if we only are able to direct the bulk of our most urgent everyday working tasks almost entirely to this kind of people whom we consider, directly or indirectly, quite rightly to be third and fourth class workers.

A simple, solid, upstanding, well executed work is almost disdained by our mass society.

People with calloused hands, with bent backs, and large, beautifully expressive heads have become a rarity, and stand at the lowest social rank.

And thus more and more we generally have degraded work in a way that is unprecedented, and as a result about a half of all our interests and energies lie in trade and management, etc., meaning that these are not considered at all in relation to hand production. Therefore it is totally justifiable if we as an entire nation are poor, or if the greater whole of our national life and work exhibits the poorest, lowest or shoddy quality possible.



Somehow all manner of pre-Christian ideas, of masters and slavery, are still alive within us. But when it comes down to it, we indeed want neither one nor the other. Rather, we in general want people with basic rights, or rights easily understood in the context of greater society, with easily understood obligations to greater society.

Understood in this way then, the master craftsman is in his own workshop together with journeymen and apprentices, working following his own or personal thoughts and goals, but nevertheless always working for the satisfaction of overall commonly understood requirements, doubtlessly the highest ideal of greater society.

Having said this, to the extent that from here on we will be required to re-orientate ourselves to some extent, to learn how to re-evaluate the different occupations in some way etc., this will not happen through our insights alone.

Our insights are of practically no use, when they don't assist external realities or come to the aid of material hardships. But these indeed also help us to great effect today, however unpleasant such help may be to us. If we observe this correctly, then let us today see handwork as something truly appealing, not only on the basis of our insights, but rather out of general economic necessity.

However, to a great extent here we are totally bound up within unfortunate old prejudices, and so far as that is the case, we must indeed bear our personal fate. But this then is still not unquestionably the fate of our German nation. We may say that this matter is still strongly embedded in the everyday world.

For example, our so-called youth movement as unclear as its ideas may or may not be, or as many individual people who may have been bewildered by it, via this movement go a large number of our best youths with great enthusiasm and enduring seriousness

down a path that leads almost directly to the workshop. And of those who strive to develop further there through hard work in the dust, more or less all of them will be compelled, inwardly and outwardly, to stay on these paths.

Today everywhere in Germany we have doubtlessly the most intense societal drive towards handwork, which to a certain extent fully justifies the greatest hopes among us.

But of course we cannot all become craftsmen tomorrow without further ado. To aim for that certainly would be a total overreaction.

It may be sufficient, if we at first fully recognise and openly admit that we as a whole have been confused by our mass society's underappreciation of handwork. And that we have allowed independent handwork to wither away, not out of necessity, but because we are so strongly orientated towards superficial and cheap results. And then all kinds of peculiar things are intensively and seriously worked on, that in the end are only of tangential importance.

Aside from that, so far as we want handwork, the paths that sooner or later may effectively lead us back to handwork are truly varied, just as the working interests and potentials of handwork are varied.

And here we don't want to overlook the fact that the term 'handwork' at first glance is something completely unclear. Under the term 'master craftsman' we certainly might still understand things of very different types or with very different values.

Thus without anything further or immediately practical, we cannot have independent, so-called basic handwork as an overall goal. But being truly the most centrally located within the greater whole,

it is fully necessary to maintain this goal, where we seriously and selflessly try to find the middle point, or the central, or the most important things in life, and particularly to cultivate it.

And so I would like to conclude:

Strong, thriving, and socially respectable handwork, meaning handwork with stimulating mental training, with the best technical, and most of all the best working facilities, of modest appearance but with the highest ideals: something like this could well be the future of our German Reich.

But none of this is possible, particularly if the greatest numbers of our youth do not decide on independent handwork. But they will willingly do this, as surely as can be, if we are in our deepest need, and as surely as it makes sense, that we Germans still believe in Germany.



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# List of figures

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- FIG. 1 Fritz Schumacher, Title cover of *Das Bauschaffen der Jetztzeit und historische Überlieferung*, 1901 12
- FIG. 2 Fritz Schumacher, *Leon Battista Alberti und seine Bauten*, 1899 16
- FIG. 3 Fritz Schumacher, Project for the Extension and the Transformation of Schloss Prösels, South Tyrol, 1893 18
- FIG. 4 Fritz Schumacher, *Villa Grübler*, Dresden-Plauen, 1903 21
- FIG. 5 Fritz Schumacher, Phantasy sketch of a Monument for Friedrich Nietzsche, 1898 23
- FIG. 6 Fritz Schumacher, Title cover for the pageant *Phantasien in Auerbachs Keller*, 1899 24
- FIG. 7 Fritz Schumacher, Title cover of *Im Kampfe um die Kunst*, 1899 28
- FIG. 8 The writing desk of Fritz Schumacher in Dresden, 1902 31
- FIG. 9 Fritz Schumacher, Interior of a Protestant Church at the Third Arts and Craft Exhibition, Dresden 1906 38
- FIG. 10 Fritz Schumacher, Title cover of *Streifzüge eines Architekten*, 1907 41
- FIG. 11 Heinrich Tessenow, *Zimmermannsarbeiten*, 1907 45
- FIG. 12 Heinrich Tessenow, *Wohnhausbau*, 1909 45
- FIG. 13 Heinrich Tessenow, Design of a country house near an old farmhouse on the river Ruhr, 1906 47
- FIG. 14 Heinrich Tessenow, One Family Row House on Schänkenberg, Hellerau-Dresden 1910 51
- FIG. 15 Heinrich Tessenow, *Festspielhaus*, Hellerau-Dresden, 1911 53
- FIG. 16 Heinrich Tessenow, Design of a War Monument for a Small City, 1917 58
- FIG. 17 Heinrich Tessenow, *Böhler-House*, Oberalpina near St. Moritz, 1916 58

FIG. 18 Heinrich Tessenow, Hausbau und dergleichen, 1916 59

FIG. 19 Heinrich Tessenow, Handwerk und Kleinstadt, 1919 59

FIG. 20 Heinrich Tessenow, Das Land in der Mitte, 1921 64

FIG. 21 Heinrich Tessenow, Housing at Rennersdorf near Vienna 1921 72

FIG. 22 Heinrich Tessenow, Saxon Landesschule at Klotzsche near Dresden, 1927 76

FIG. 23 Fritz Schumacher, ca.1910 82

FIG. 24 Heinrich Tessenow, ca. 1916 104

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# On the Editors

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We present here, for the first time in English, the inaugural lectures of two of the most influential architects of the first half of the twentieth century in Germany. Fritz Schumacher delivered his lecture in 1901 for his appointment at the Technical University in Dresden. Heinrich Tessenow gave his in winter semester 1920/21 to students of the Art Academy in Dresden. Both Schumacher and Tessenow were members of the German Werkbund and were involved in many architectural debates about the most urgent questions of their time, including those related to housing and the extension of cities. As architects, their production was considerable. They were also prolific and well-respected writers. Whereas Schumacher has become known internationally for his work planning the cities of Hamburg and Cologne, Tessenow became famous for his books on the construction of the simple house and the relationship between craftsmanship and the small village. The lectures are preceded by a scholarly essay by Hartmut Frank.