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# **Stanford Anderson**

## **The Legacy of German Neoclassicism and Biedermeier: Behrens, Tessenow, Loos, and Mies**

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Around 1900 cultural critics and producers alike commonly willed to reestablish a harmoniously unified society, whether by innovation or revival. After the dimming of the hopes and enthusiasms entailed in those movements we know as art nouveau, it became common to look for a model in the past. It is the frequent resolution of that search in the period of neoclassicism that links significant central European architects of the early twentieth century — Peter Behrens, Heinrich Tessenow, Adolf Loos, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, for example — with the architecture of 1800.

The evocation of neoclassical precedent for architects of such stature immediately invites attention to the greatest of the German architects of the early nineteenth century — many would say the greatest of German architects — Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Indeed, we could easily and correctly relate the work of all four of the cited twentieth-century architects with that of Schinkel. Nevertheless, an inquiry into the significant precedents for these architects is little aided by a focus on Schinkel, precisely due to his excellence and the consequent almost universal affirmation of his work. Paradoxically, attention to the production of the entire period in which Schinkel worked establishes a challenge more specific than that of a reference to Schinkel alone. Assertion of the general precedent raises the question of why Behrens, Tessenow, Loos, Mies, and many other German-speaking critics and architects honored not just, or even particularly, the master, Schinkel, but rather, the production of his era. They looked not just to high art,

1. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe,  
United States Courthouse and  
Office Building, Federal Center,  
Chicago, 1964





2. F. G. Kersting, *Caspar David Friedrich in his Studio*, 1810



3. *Auf dem Büchel, Aachen*, published in Paul Mebes, *Um 1800*, 1908



4. Peter Behrens, *Behrens House, Darmstadt Artists' Colony*, 1900–1901

as suggested by the term “neoclassicism,” but also to the wide range of often anonymous, *bürgerlich* production — the so-called Biedermeier — like that of Caspar David Friedrich’s studio or the street architecture of Mies’s native city of Aachen. This generalized relationship, this thoughtful reawakening of interest in the entire culture of 1800, is what I wish to explore through the work of Behrens, Tessenow, Loos, and Mies.

The bridge thrown across most of the decades of the nineteenth century — disavowing the late nineteenth century while seeking to link the time around 1800 with that of the early twentieth century — was the construction of many people. Yet important differences of program and of architecture exist within this shared sense of precedent. Is it, then, what is common or what is different that invites the discussion of the four architects proposed for our study: Peter Behrens (1868–1940), Heinrich Tessenow (1876–1950), Adolf Loos (1870–1933), and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886–1969)? The grouping is plausible but not necessarily obvious. The affirmation of neoclassical precedent, taken in its inclusiveness, readily encompasses all these architects, yet their works are easily distinguishable. At a personal level, Mies had no close or sustained relationship with Loos or Tessenow such as he had with Behrens. Mies stands apart from all three architects in that his major achievements, in thought and in work, came after World War I, while the others made their most distinctive contributions around 1910.

In a programmatic essay, Aldo Rossi links his own thought and work with that of Loos, Mies, and Tessenow.<sup>1</sup> He emphasizes the distinction of art as opposed to handicraft, quoting Loos: “ ‘Architecture is not an art: only a small part of architecture belongs to art.’ ”<sup>2</sup> What is obscured in Rossi’s exposition is that Loos’s observation was not a lament but rather central to his polemic against both traditional and modernist artist-architects who would seek to subsume all of production under a single style, whether personal or collective. Rossi finds that “the dilemma involved in this separation of art and craft [was] unknown to artists until the eighteenth century (at least until . . . the multifarious activities of Schinkel). If Adolf Loos showed himself to be the keenest supporter of this division, others — such as the Germans Heinrich Tessenow and Mies van



5. Engraving of Goethe's house, Weimar, by Ludwig Schütze, after a drawing by Otto Wagner of 1827

der Rohe — were close behind him.”<sup>3</sup> From Loos's assertions separating art from craft, art from architecture, Rossi formulates what he describes as the crucial issue facing modern architects: the no longer reconcilable division between art and the profession of architecture.<sup>4</sup> Here again, we must recall that Loos's program was directed precisely against those who would reconcile this division, whether from “above” or “below,” from the side of art or of the profession. As we will observe later, Loos insisted on the appropriateness of distinctions within a cultural system. In any case, I believe Rossi's “principal problem” must be seen within a larger problem that these masters and others also shared: the problem of tradition. Rossi hints at this concern when he likens Mies and Tessenow to Loos, saying all “were familiar with the history of architecture. They knew that they were part of that history and judged it by the evolution of the present.”<sup>5</sup> We must enlarge upon Rossi's hint if we are to understand both the commonalities and the differences among these architects.

Even as I choose to include consideration of Mies van der Rohe's mentor Behrens, it remains possible to ascertain a level at which these architects share a common problem, even a common discourse. All these architects reflected, negatively, on the civilization that had emerged under industrial capitalism and within the metropolitanization of the German lands in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Among them, only Behrens — perhaps Tessenow to



6. Goethe's study, Weimar

a very slight extent — had been tinged by the enthusiasms of Jugendstil or the Secession, the Germanic versions of art nouveau. But by the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century, Behrens as much as the others perceived a willful and destructive individualism in the formal inventions of Jugendstil. In losing or denying this turn-of-the-century ambition to define wholly innovative formal systems, these architects characteristically turned to simple geometries or reductively transformed precedents. By either route they tended toward classicism. Observing both the derived but rootless art forms of the established bourgeois culture and the assertively proclaimed modernist innovations of the aesthetic reformers, they joined many other commentators in recognizing the absence of a vital tradition — not just within architecture but of architecture as part of a harmoniously unified society. Distressed at this void, each of these architects sought responsible ways in which to address the loss. All of them shared in a widespread agreement as to when such a culture, developing with and through a living tradition, had last existed in Europe: the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth century — the period of German neoclassicism and Biedermeier.<sup>6</sup>

Many sources fed this desire for a unified culture and the recall of its last flowering, not least of which would be what appears, still today, to be the unassailable stature of figures such as Goethe, Fichte, von Humboldt, and,

again, Schinkel. There were, however, more immediate and prosaic, though powerful, sources. From its publication in 1890, there was the remarkable success of Julius Langbehn's *Rembrandt als Erzieher* (Rembrandt as teacher), an impassioned plea for the recovery of a pan-German aesthetic culture.<sup>7</sup> Langbehn's thought was anti-classical and anti-intellectual; but, not unreasonably, he found more than classicism and intellectualism in the thought of Goethe's period. In this time, different from but in dialectic with the time of Rembrandt, Langbehn saw the sources for a renewed German culture. The success of his book surely owed much to the far more astute critique of nineteenth-century German culture effected by Friedrich Nietzsche. Nonetheless, Langbehn's book was influential on phenomena as diverse as the populist German Youth Movement and the sophisticated publishing programs devoted to the advocacy of an "artistic culture."<sup>8</sup> Ferdinand Avenarius, publisher of an important cultural journal, *Der Kunstwart*, in 1902 founded the Dürerbund, an organization for the furtherance of aesthetic culture and life.<sup>9</sup> In 1903 the Dürerbund held a conference on architecture in Erfurt. From this conference came the Deutscher Ausschuss für gesundes Bauen in Stadt und Land (German Commission for Sound Urban and Rural Building) under the presidency of the architect and author Paul Schultze-Naumburg, with whom Tessenow was to be associated. By the following year, the same actors transformed the Deutscher Ausschuss into what became the enormously successful Bund für Heimatschutz, an association devoted to the preservation of the natural and built landscape in town and country.<sup>10</sup> In 1907 the Deutscher Werkbund was founded under the guidance of the politician Friedrich Naumann, the architect and Prussian bureaucrat Hermann Muthesius, and a group of artists and architects that included Fritz Schumacher, Behrens, and Schultze-Naumburg. At the core of the Werkbund program was the unification of art and technique within a higher German culture.<sup>11</sup>

Dürer, Rembrandt, Goethe: these are heroes who are not easily assimilated one to another and yet are invoked in this dizzying array of persons and institutions. For orientation we must return to our basic theme, the common quest for the renewal of a unified German culture. This



7. Friedrich Gilly, engraving of the refectory, Marienburg, after a drawing of 1794



8. Strasbourg Cathedral, engraving from Goethe's collection

culture, one that assertedly could only exist within a real and living tradition, had last blossomed, it was said, in the time of Goethe and Schinkel; but neither this culture nor these heroes could be subsumed under some dry notion of classicism. The great classicists of 1800 were also those who awakened appreciation of indigenous medieval architecture. Recall Friedrich Gilly and Schinkel's devotion to the Marienburg and the Marienwerder.<sup>12</sup> Recall, too, the young Goethe's eloquent evocation of Meister Erwin von Steinbach and Strasbourg Cathedral.<sup>13</sup> In the early twentieth century this inclusiveness could be appreciated, and yet it is also characteristic that Goethe could be criticized for eulogizing Erwin at the expense of the collective achievement of Gothic times. In 1907 Karl Scheffler argued that while giants like Michelangelo and Rembrandt might reshape painting in their individualistic manner, in architecture the situation was reversed, even for masters like Erwin or Bramante. To quote Scheffler, "Confronted by the work of Erwin von Steinbach, one thinks of the Spirit of the Gothic, of history, of the effect of architecture [*Baukunst*] in general, but hardly of a particular man." "The young Goethe," Scheffler continued, "lapsed into a completely modern error when he ascribed all the magnificence of the Gothic, all the sublime mastery of this convention, to an individual, as if the master, with a highly motivated spirit, had freely created the cathedral of Strasbourg out of nothing."<sup>14</sup>

The emphasis on convention over individual performance and the differentiation of architecture as against art are also characteristic of the understanding of architectural classicism in these years. In 1908 Paul Mebes published a book that was to be highly influential in the perception of architecture and townscape until well after World War I. The title *Um 1800* (Around 1800) is simple and decorous, like the buildings and handicraft within (see figures 3, 9, 16). It is the subtitle that reveals the true thrust of the book and the point I wish to stress about this entire cultural phenomenon: *Architecture and Crafts in the Last Century of Their Traditional Development*.<sup>15</sup> Mebes saw the eighteenth century as the last moment that architecture and the crafts had been set within a unified culture and a living tradition that could foster their development as integral parts of that culture. His book mentions the great Berlin



9. Furniture, Karlsruhe, after 1800, published in Mebes, *Um 1800*

10. Behrens, AEG Pavilion, Shipbuilding Exhibition, Berlin, 1908, Kaiser Wilhelm at the inauguration of the pavilion



architects Schlüter and Schinkel once each, in agate type in captions. All other buildings are presented anonymously, though not all are anonymous. In a foreword written in 1914 for the second edition of *Um 1800*, Mebes ascribed the success of the book to the wide recognition that the quality of these valued environments of town and country owed more to the “characteristic,” to the numerous buildings of everyday bourgeois use, than to the monuments of high art. Both the images of the book and the response to them were evidence of the “importance of a unified, popular, and national [*volkstümlichen*] manner of building that rests on traditional principles.”<sup>16</sup> It was important, then, that the style *um 1800* had not been solely the creation of epochal monuments by great masters. On the contrary, the test of its genuineness and its reality was the familiar environment of the bourgeois towns and city sectors — the creation of the frame of everyday life. Indeed, this commonality extended to the buildings of the countryside as well, to the country houses, the farmsteads, and even the humble vernacular buildings that were Biedermeier counterparts of the townscape. There was a perceived unity between the vernacular and the classical.

Another facet of these same arguments was the belief that both the historicizing stylistic revivals and eclecticism of the late nineteenth century as well as the innovative movements of art nouveau were marked by the self-conscious, willful imposition of style. The conviction was now abroad that style depended for its existence on a genuinely traditional development of art within society: thus style, extinct since the time around 1800, would not revive without the restoration of such a unified traditional culture.

We should not rush to the conclusion that constellations of beliefs such as those just presented necessarily entail the unalloyed conservatism we may be tempted to assign to them. The movements that shared these beliefs were, after all, rebelling against the dominant, bourgeois, historicizing culture of the late nineteenth century. If they wished to reestablish a genuine tradition within Germanic culture, if they saw the model in the society of one hundred years earlier, they were also committed to a thorough reassessment of cultural potentials under the conditions of the early twentieth century. It is well known that a major fac-

tion of the Deutscher Werkbund, notably represented in the work of Peter Behrens for the AEG, sought to unify the most advanced forms of industrial technology within their cultural ambitions.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, they were open to criticism for inverting this relationship — subsuming their cultural vision within the asserted hard realities of modern industrial capitalism. On the other hand, Christian Otto makes a persuasive case that even the Bund für Heimatschutz, the organization devoted to preservation of the natural and cultural landscape, was possessed of a sophisticated program with modernist elements.<sup>18</sup> The Bund was critical of intrusive interventions in the natural or built environment, but it was not programmatically opposed to development, to industry, or to modern materials. Its members did not seek a revival. The Bund shared with the Werkbund and others the search for a means to interpret and control modern conditions within a revived tradition.

The reestablishment of a harmonious culture on a genuinely traditional basis is a radically challenging thought. It can hardly be a surprise, then, if we find the work of these architects diverging as they sought to be effective while acting upon their shared recognition. This differentiation



appears around a number of key issues. Let us begin where Rossi began in his consideration of Loos: with the distinction between art and craft and the position of architecture relative to that dissociation. According to Loos, only rare architectural works of a purely monumental nature even approach the realm of art; architectural work, characteristically, is close to craft. For Loos, these distinctions were not value judgments; he had the highest respect for the artist as well as for the craftsman. Familiar as the frequent aggrandizement of the architect is, it may appear that Loos was diminishing the architect. But Loos, in fact, simply placed the architect within a field of material and cultural production, giving the architect a place deserving of respect just as he would the artist and the craftsman.<sup>19</sup>

We will return to Loos, but first note the radically different view of Peter Behrens. He, too, would distinguish craft and engineering from art. For Behrens, however, this was a value judgment of the greatest importance. He held that craft and engineering are matters of the material world and cannot participate, unmediated, in the world of culture. It is the artist who provides this mediation, and the architect is preeminent among artists. Behrens already held this elitist view of the artist-architect in the Jugendstil environment of the Darmstadt Artists' Colony, taking part in a program that sought innovative forms for an aristocratically hierarchic society. After his participation in the exposition of decorative arts in Turin in 1902, Behrens shared in the disavowal of art nouveau innovations. In the years immediately following, as Behrens both directed the school of arts and crafts in Düsseldorf and continued his self-education in architecture, he sought unified forms through simple geometries of space and bounding planes. Increasingly, he relied on reductions of the already geometrically abstract, classicizing buildings of periods as various as the Carolingian empire, Tuscan Romanesque, and German neoclassicism. With Behrens's maintenance of the elite role of the artist-architect, we can anticipate that his vision of the reconstruction of German culture under modern conditions would assume a distinctive character even while sharing in the increasingly intense call for the renewal of a genuine tradition. The search for a harmonious culture and the model of German neoclassicism converge, but in Behrens's hands these traits are subsumed under a radical

historical determinism in which the architect serves as form giver for the new realities of industrial capitalism in close alliance with the state.<sup>20</sup>

This historical determinism involves both a necessary course of history and the acceptance of culture as an efflorescence of that necessity. This efflorescence, however, is revealed through the agency of the artist-architects. According to Behrens, architecture, the most elevated art form, has always been in the service of the dominant power of any period. Architecture provides the form for its representative places and buildings: the temples of the Greeks, the cathedrals of medieval Christianity, the palaces of the absolute monarchs, the town houses and villas of the enlightened bourgeoisie around 1800. Yes, the tradition decayed with the cultureless nouveau riche of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism. Yes, we live in a period when the engineer's technique, industrial production, and the metropolis deny us the humane harmonies of 1800. Nonetheless, the artist can bring form, even adaptations of the form of these earlier revered periods, to the new locus of power. This ambition is strongly evoked in the image of Kaiser Wilhelm opening the AEG pavilion — the first of Behrens's many architectural works for this large electrical corporation — at the Berlin Schiffbauausstellung (Shipbuilding Exhibition) of 1908. Corporation and emperor find common cause in the engines of commercial and military imperialism, while the architect celebrates even this ephemeral locus and occasion with a pavilion that employs the revered precedent of octagonal shrines — a form traditionally reserved for baptistries, mausolea, and palace chapels, including the chapel of the first German emperor, Charlemagne, at Aachen.

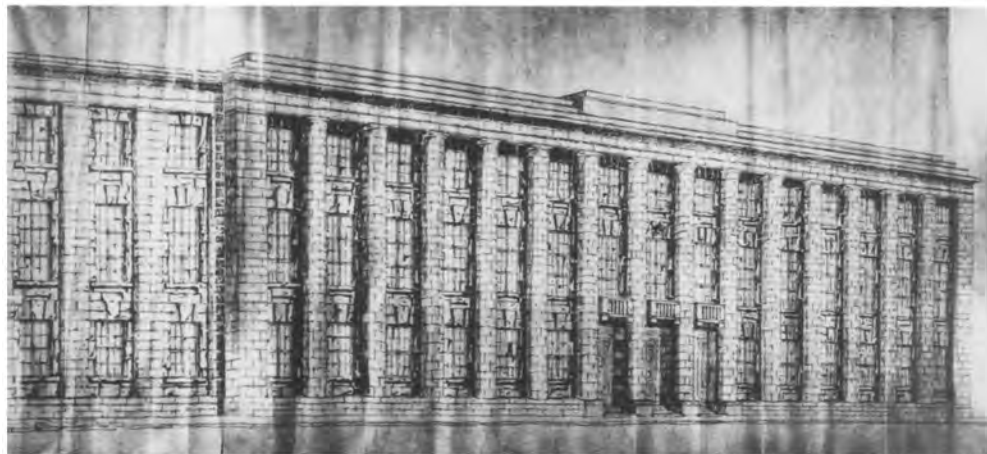
The writings and work of Behrens may hint of nostalgia for 1800, but what is distinct is his fatalistic resignation in the face of modern civilization. However burdened with the pathos of this resignation, the spirit of the time must be served. Behrens asserts that the emergent power in the modern era is the great industrial corporation, the principal source of production and wealth, increasingly in alliance with the state. The touchstone buildings of modern times, then, will be those characteristic of industrial capitalism: the office building and the factory. The modern



11. Behrens, AEG Turbine Factory, Berlin, 1909, view of two principal façades



12. AEG Turbine Factory, model showing the elevation toward the factory complex



13. Behrens, German Embassy, St. Petersburg (Leningrad), drawing, ca. 1911



14. Behrens, AEG Small Motors Factory, Berlin, 1910–13, street elevation

15. Behrens, Wiegand House, Berlin, 1911–12



architect's chief responsibility is to conceive the types of the office building and the factory and to give to these the compelling form that their status in society deserves.

Behrens's best known work is the Turbine Factory for the AEG in Berlin. The image of the Turbine Factory that has become almost universal, quite rightly relative to Behrens's program, is the angle view afforded on the approach from central Berlin: the great pylon and pediment façade flanked by the long, imposing colonnade of the side elevation. The artifice of this compound, yet convincing, temple image is demonstrable through a more careful examination of the entire building. No intrinsic feature of the factory — neither its structure, nor its space, nor its operations — possesses the symmetries of the temple front. The mighty pylons are of concrete, but only rigidify the metal frame and bracing within. Counterintuitively, the apparently light mullions of the central glazing are structural, the surface elements of a trussed frame that carries the pediment above. The "colonnade" of the side elevation is also achieved against the conditions of the construction. Structurally, what reads as a column is the first segment of a three-pinned arch. The physicality of the "columns" is owing to the architect's depression of the glass and employment of solid metal sections for the externally exposed parts of the arches, which internally are built of an open lattice of small elements. The opposite side elevation, toward the factory yard, reveals how the engineer, Karl Bernhard, would have detailed such a construction: glass set flush in a straightforward metal frame with functional elements disposed as need suggests.<sup>21</sup> We need not defend the engineer's sensibility and must recognize that Behrens achieved exactly what his program demanded: the imposition of artistic will over mere material conditions in the realization of an iconographic architecture that is, in turn, in service to the locus of power. Furthermore, critics and viewers "read" the Turbine Factory to Behrens's dictates from the outset, often to the point of misreading the physical facts of the building.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, as architect and artistic advisor to the great electrical corporation AEG, Behrens does not turn to the factory as a humble building type through which the architect can extend the traditional reach of the profession. Quite the

opposite. He raises the factory to what he insists is the traditional production of the artist-architect: the site of power, in this case, the emblematic factory, under the rubric of the temple. And as the touchstone building for our society and our architecture, this economic/productive entity, the factory, will set the scale and rhythms of our cities.

The embassy built for the German nation in St. Petersburg also reflects these modern realities as Behrens saw them, even if the embassy — as a representative building of the modern, industrially based but still imperial central state — avoids "modern" materials and preserves familiar signs of its hierarchic position. The classicism of the embassy seems evident, yet it is denatured through several modernizing strategies. The "columns," stout Doric in their reference, are elongated far beyond any classical order; they are devoid of all entasis or other subtleties of detail. Any vestige of the column as an independent tectonic element left by these transformations is obliterated as the columns are laid up of stones that are not drums but, rather, ashlar blocks continuous with the courses of the wall. Every organic or tectonic reference of the orders as composed of independent though interactive members Behrens systematically eradicates. The scale of the building and its marshalled piers brings the embassy in consonance with another of Behrens's touchstone factories, the AEG Small Motors Factory in Berlin. While the embassy still seemingly participates in the classic tradition of representative buildings, its references are subservient to the modernisms of serial production and the authoritarian, bureaucratic state.

In a dwelling for a privileged member of society, such as that of the noted archaeologist Dr. Theodor Wiegand, the severity of Behrens's classicism is eased, but the house remains an austere, representative building. According to Behrens's theory, this continuum that descends from the



16. Palais Bretzenheim, Mannheim, 1782–88, published in Mebes, *Um 1800*

touchstone buildings of the new political reality could extend to commonplace buildings and to workers' housing — the harmony of this new style built on the genius of the artist in service to the most powerful of institutions. Behrens is not distinguished by the fact that a unified style and a harmonious culture were his goals. He was, however, the outspoken advocate of the architect as artist performing at a transcendent level as the key to realizing such a style and culture. What is sacrificed in Behrens's conception is the traditionally recognized, materially and socially based cultural continuity that was the prime concern of many of his contemporaries.

Such a form of cultural continuity was what Mebes desired and sought to exemplify in *Um 1800*. It is not surprising to find that Schultze-Naumburg, president of the Bund für Heimatschutz, is among those whom Mebes thanks for assistance in compiling his book. The Werkbund, too, had its members who were less open than Behrens to the reconstruction of German culture under the exigencies of modern civilization.

While Behrens's production for the AEG is rightly seen as characteristic of what was unique about the Werkbund, production by other Werkbund members was often closer to the goals of the Bund für Heimatschutz. That Schultze-Naumburg was a founding member of both organizations is a symbol of the ability of the Bund and the Werkbund to find common ground. At the Werkbund exhibition in Cologne in 1914, Hermann Muthesius, president of the Werkbund, presented his famous theses for its direction. The central issue of the theses was the call for the organization's endorsement of what Muthesius claimed was already happening: production according to types. "Architecture, and with it the entire creative activity of the Werkbund, strives toward the development of types [*Typisierung*]. Only in this way can architecture attain again the general significance that was characteristic of it in times of harmonious culture."<sup>23</sup> For architecture, the significance of Muthesius's plea can be gauged by his own work at the exhibition, the pavilion for the Hamburg-Amerika Line. It is an adaptation of an established architectural type, the model again framed within the conventions last shared in that "time of harmonious culture"



17. Hermann Muthesius,  
Hamburg-Amerika Line  
Pavilion, Deutscher Werkbund  
Exhibition, Cologne, 1914



18. Oswin Hempel, arcaded  
street, Deutscher Werkbund  
Exhibition, 1914

around 1800. Important parts of the Werkbund exhibition proclaimed this allegiance to renewed but familiar conventions, including the arcaded street by Oswin Hempel and the model housing by Georg Metzendorf, specifically conceived as appropriate to the region of Cologne.

If Behrens's work for a great industrial concern represents the acceptance of a historically enforced modernity, such hieratic modernism would be the aspect of the Werkbund that the Bund für Heimatschutz eventually could not assimilate — even if, as with Behrens, this modernism was cloaked in forms that carried the authority of earlier hierarchies.

Reversing our view, if one architect would forcefully develop the Heimatschutz pole, it was Heinrich Tessenow. The qualifier “forcefully” is important. Obviously, Heimatschutz was a notion that could easily, and eventually did, retreat into a wholly preservationist position, endorsing only a nostalgic and conservative representation of German culture. Tessenow was determinedly conservative, but his work continues to elicit interest for at least two reasons: first, his conservative society was not one of revival, but a fabrication addressed to his own time; and, second, his unique aestheticism aggrandizes his principal subject, the small, carefully crafted worker's house. Behrens would not have turned to the factory as the locus of architecture had he not constructed a historical and architectural discourse that made it such. Similarly, Tessenow did not turn to the worker's house merely as a newly available extension of architectural practice. The small house was the touchstone of his historical, political, and architectural discourse.<sup>24</sup>

Tessenow was obsessed with the decisive role that middle elements must play in turning polar extremes to mutual benefit.<sup>25</sup> He used a metaphor of fire and water, one extinguishing the other unless mediated by a vessel. Fire and water are dramatic, the pot ordinary. Fire and water are available, the pot requires human artifice. It is to the pot, then, that we must direct our energies, for it is what makes valuable the opposed forces of fire and water. Germany Tessenow saw as “the land in the middle.” Since the fifteenth century the gravitational center of Europe, it must play the unglamorous but internationally decisive role of mediating between France and Russia, Scandinavia and

Italy. This could only be achieved were the German people to provide the model of a finely balanced society, uniting extremes in a properly controlled environment.<sup>26</sup> Tessenow extended the fire and water metaphor to the mediation of polarities internal to Germany: large city (*Grossstadt*) and village, scientist and artist, upper and lower classes, political left and right. From all these polar factions would come nothing without the intercession of the lower middle classes — “den gesellschaftlichen Mittelstand oder den einfachen Bürgerstand” — the most important of the Germans.<sup>27</sup>

Tessenow criticized the metropolis of modern industrial production with its increasingly agitated and alienating life of tertiary employment and entertainment.<sup>28</sup> He also criticized the village, both for its too-primitive level of human association and for its condition as a pendant to the great city. The locus of Tessenow’s idealized alternative system of production would be the small city of no less than twenty thousand inhabitants and no more than sixty thousand.<sup>29</sup> The natural citizens of such a city were the husbandmen burghers who made the countryside productive (*Ackerbürger*) and, especially, the artisans (*Handwerker*).<sup>30</sup> These were the whole people, of the middle class and *in the middle*, standing between the unproductive upper classes and the proletariat, partaking of and uniting the best of scientist and artist even if not exemplifying their ultimate capacities. The shops of the independent artisans would be neither too large nor too small (employing between three and twelve workers). Such an environment, free also of political extremes, would assure the revitalization of Germanic culture and tradition, of which Tessenow’s architecture was an integral part.

Hellerau, a garden city near Dresden, approximated this ideal community.<sup>31</sup> There the architect Richard Riemerschmid built the factory of the Deutsche Werkstätten, a major furniture manufacturer affiliated with the Werkbund. There, too, Tessenow built houses and the Jacques Dalcroze School (an institute for the culture of rhythmic gymnastics, or eurhythmics). In an unexecuted design for the building that was the focus of the spiritual aspirations of the city, the performance center of the Dalcroze School, the monumental façade with the near classical pitch of its

pediment is a modernist reduction of the ancient temple. The executed design is more modest, but by that very fact relates the performance center to the houses of the teachers and students and thus unstintingly returns the monumental building of the community to the shared typology of house and temple. It is the type of the small house that holds Tessenow’s attention, a typology that unites vernacular and high art, house and temple. Typological abstraction also facilitates the pursuit of an architectural purism, so economically revealed in his spare line drawings. With a similarly careful reduction of craft, Tessenow contrived to realize this purism in actual buildings. These purified houses with their rain barrels, arbors, and productive gardens are the necessary locus of the correct Germans of the *Mittelstand*, the *Handworkers* of the *Kleinstadt*. From such a firm place we can reascend the hierarchic structure of Tessenow’s vision of Germany’s destiny for Europe. The title of an essay by Michael Hays puts the issue succinctly: “Tessenow’s Architecture as National Allegory: Critique of Capitalism or Protofascism?” In a more careful exposition of Tessenow than I can attempt here, Hays concludes:

We can see that Tessenow’s operation is not so much the continuation of a rooted, traditional culture as it is the invention and presentation of a new, conciliatory and compensatory system of communication that, by affiliating itself with the canons of classicism and a popular vernacular, attempts to reinstate vestiges of the kind of hegemony associated in the past with the traditional order. This new order surreptitiously reproduces the closed and tightly knit hierarchies by which a truly rooted culture legitimates, differentiates, or interdicts, in an effort to provide what Edward Said has called a *restored authority*.<sup>32</sup>

Tessenow is in many ways an inversion of Behrens, the opposite side of the same coin. Though by different routes, they both offer a transcendent art in the service of a holistically unified modern state — one celebrating central authority, the other a hegemony achieved through the order of the people.

Consider again the position taken by Rossi. In dismissing the Secession and the Bauhaus for their assimilation of craft and technique under artistically controlled “industrial design,” he implicitly places Behrens and the Werkbund in opposition to his “trio of masters”: Loos, Tessenow, and Mies. Loos had indeed identified this opposition early —





23. Behrens, Behrens House, Darmstadt, 1900–1901, music room

and acted upon it. But in my claim that Behrens and Tessenow are reverse sides of the same coin, I must either join Behrens to Rossi's trio or else draw the crucial line of that opposition differently. To anticipate my argument, I see Adolf Loos as holding a distinctive position that separates him from Behrens and Tessenow and Mies.<sup>33</sup>

Thus far I have spoken of one significant way in which Loos *can* be grouped with Behrens, Tessenow, and Mies — the shared belief that the time around 1800 was the last moment of a harmonious culture based on a vital tradition. Loos committed himself to this position overtly, but he also revealed his commitment in other ways.<sup>34</sup> Loos, as did the others, revered Schinkel.<sup>35</sup> With as much fervor as the members of the Bund für Heimatschutz, Loos would argue for the appropriateness of vernacular construction in the countryside and ridicule the willfully individualistic interventions of form-giving architects in such a setting.<sup>36</sup> Loos shared, then, the recognition of the loss of a vital tradition and the assessment of when this had taken place. The important difference, though, is that he would not attempt to retrieve a whole culture through the programmatic imposition of an aesthetic.

Thus, contrary to the claims of the ambitious artists of the Secession or of the Deutscher Werkbund, Loos believed that art should *not* dictate to the crafts or to the entire spectrum of building. Similarly, he held that appropriate distinctions were to be made in the continuum from the public to the private, from the urban to the rural, and from the monumental to the vernacular. He drew these distinctions neither to identify good and bad, right and wrong, nor to polarize issues. Rather, Loos was constructing a complex cultural field and arguing the need to locate oneself and one's work within this field — the exigencies of each piece of work necessitating a different location.

Loos's vision of a complex history of disciplines and conventions — not fully coordinated and sometimes competing with one another — ruled out holistic interpretations of society as well as demands for action based on the presumption of such wholes. Consider the utopian ambitions of the Darmstadt Artists' Colony or the motto of the Viennese Secession, "For the time its art. For art its freedom."<sup>37</sup> In his early resistance to the art nouveau, Loos



24. Otto Wagner, Hofpavillon, Vienna, 1894–95



25. Wagner, Majolikahaus, Vienna, 1898–99



strenuously attacked its imposed formalisms. In such debates, he honed his position on the distinction of art from craft and on the location of architecture within the field of cultural production. Once formulated, these positions made Loos resistant not only to art nouveau, but even to important ideas that developed in opposition to art nouveau. Early and assertedly, Loos argued against the tenets of the Werkbund because it sought to control industrial production within a modern aesthetic defined by the elite artist-architect.<sup>38</sup>

The matter cannot be argued fully here, but this need to locate oneself and one's work in a cultural field is what Karl Kraus advocated when he wished to explain the contribution that he and Loos had made:

Adolf Loos and I . . . have done nothing more than to show that there is a difference between a [monumental] urn and a chamber pot. It is in this difference that culture is given a space to play itself out. The others, those with [claims to] positive knowledge, however, divide themselves between those who would use the urn as a chamber pot and those who would use the chamber pot as an urn.<sup>39</sup>

For Loos there are no absolutes — from either natural law or canon — but, rather, conventions that can only be understood historically. For each discipline (art, science, craft, or vernacular production) has its own extension in time. To quote Loos, “Tradition is no more the enemy of development than the mother is an enemy of the child. Tradition is a reservoir of strength from countless generations, and the firm foundation for a healthy future.”<sup>40</sup>

At the same time, Loos also recognized that change asserts itself. He was a modernist in the sense that he believed the modern already surrounded him and his contemporaries, concealed behind ornament or proffered in those works of craft and engineering unclaimed for aesthetic culture.<sup>41</sup> In this spirit, he could observe the Hofpavillon, a station built on the Vienna city railway by Otto Wagner, emphasizing not the architecture of the station but the modern systems associated with it: the water control system, the passenger platforms, and the railway itself, with its radical restructuring of accessibility throughout the greater city. At Wagner's Majolikahaus he could ignore the elaborate tile patterns in order to stress the grid of identical windows that, in turn,

reflects the regularity of the apartments and their access by elevator. To Loos, these modernisms had to be addressed. This presence of modernism reveals the incompleteness of past models, but equally, he argued, it obviates the need to invent the future or forms to serve this imagined future.<sup>42</sup>

Though the exterior of Loos's Steiner House has often been seen as anticipatory of later modernist reductionism, for Loos this simple exterior referenced his argument that the private house neither owed nor should demand a representative role within the city. We comport ourselves decorously in public, and for the private person this means with utmost simplicity. Within, however, the Steiner House reveals a richly varied life incorporating the past and the associations of a family in complex and changing relationships. In the same year as the Steiner house, Loos also built the commercial building on the Michaelerplatz, with its Tuscan columns in monolithic marble. Loos recognized that this building is semipublic and, still more important, located in the old, capital city of Vienna, on a major place, opposite one of the entrances to the imperial palace. Here decorum dictates acceptance — with transformations — of the vocabulary of the palace and the city. But within, the Haus on the Michaelerplatz is a modern clothing store, uninhibited either by the traditional domesticities of the home or the formalities of the urban public space. In this building Loos explored the potentials of level changes and abstract space within a modern structure. In both the house and the commercial building there is a seeming disparity of interior and exterior, modern and traditional. Yet the several facets of each building, and both buildings together, are understandable as responses to distinctive positions within a cultural field.<sup>43</sup>

Loos's understanding of tradition acknowledges conflict, inconsistencies, and contradictions within the cultural setting, and consequently, the need to act critically, to criticize the operative conventions, embracing what I have termed a critical conventionalism. Change occurs in the relations among the multilineal histories — conceptually, technically, and in the way in which life is lived. Points of intervention must be identified and superior production sought. Yet only superior production should replace earlier production. With Loos, the ancient Egyptian stool



26. Adolf Loos, Steiner House, Vienna, 1910, exterior from garden



27. Loos, Steiner House, 1910, living room



28. Loos, Haus on the Michaelerplatz, Vienna, 1910, exterior



29. Loos, Haus on the Michaelerplatz, mezzanine

30. Behrens, Cuno House, Hagen, 1909–10



should continue to be produced because it has not been superseded. Likewise, the development of the piano is secure in the hands of musicians and piano makers; it does not require artistic intervention. Beyond these issues, Loos spoke of “the three-dimensional character of architecture,” pointing to the autonomy of the architectural discipline while also demanding “that the inhabitants of a building should be able to live the cultural life of their generation successfully.”<sup>44</sup> Loos thus proposed the *relative* autonomy of architecture without making of it a reified “middle.”<sup>45</sup> “To live the cultural life of their generation” entails attention to use, but in a soundly nonutilitarian manner. The same phrase also directs attention to the demands of the present, temporally yet selectively and critically located, devoid of revivalism, traditionalism, or futurism.

Loos would not totalize his production, would not subsume all in a heroic act of form giving — not even in a single design. As I have acknowledged, Loos, too, believed that the last harmonious culture was more than a hundred years old. But while we can learn from these sources, he argued, we can neither reinvest nor invent a harmonious culture and its architecture. Loos would rather mark the complexity and ambivalences of modern society, not with irony or despair, but as the most rational and liberating avenue available to us. In this he was truer to the spirits of 1800 than were the totalizers. Goethe and Schinkel were, after all, full of complexities.

What then of Mies? Most observers, following in the footsteps of Philip Johnson, find that virtually the whole of Mies’s architecture can be related to German neoclassicism. Comparing Schinkel and Mies, in 1961 Johnson went so far as to claim that the “similarities are more today than the differences.”<sup>46</sup> We can surely recognize Mies’s neoclassicism in the symmetries, simple volumes, clean surfaces, and carefully cut apertures of the Perls House. The neoclassicism of the furniture he designed prior to World War I is unmistakable. His early domestic commissions fall readily within the context of the work of his two mentors, Bruno Paul and Peter Behrens.<sup>47</sup> Quite evidently, Mies was, in these years, in the early stages of a career developed in apprenticeships. These early works reveal his acceptance of the then common respect for German neo-



31. Mies, Perls House, Berlin, 1910–11



32. Mies, Werner House, Berlin, dining room, 1913

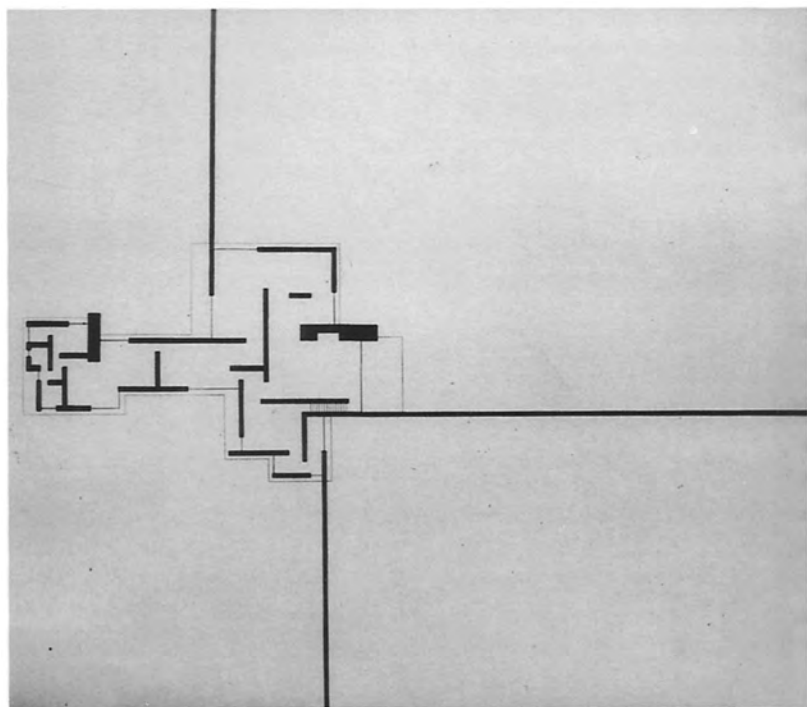
classicism and, at most, a reflection of the position articulated by Behrens. Only hindsight can lead us to the slightest anticipation of what Mies would shortly achieve.

Mies's justly renowned works of the years immediately following World War I, the so-called Five Projects — the Friedrichstrasse Office Building, the Glass Skyscraper, the Concrete Office Building, the Brick Country House, and the Concrete Country House — prelate formal invention and, secondarily, new materials over any form of continuity. In the models and renderings of the skyscraper projects of 1921–22, Mies forcefully pit his vision against the architectural and urban density of a Berlin characterized by its proliferation of heavy masonry, “rental barracks” from the decades around the turn of the century. Mies thus shared in the rejection of such eclectically burdened buildings in the service of an economically justified metropolitanization; but as an alternative, he turned from the idealization of the past to a possible architecture and city as had been evoked by Paul Scheerbart and Bruno Taut.<sup>48</sup> The common reference to Mies's skyscraper projects as expressionist works may overemphasize fantasy as against his proclaimed attention to the problem of the steel skeleton, yet it cannot be denied that these skyscrapers break radically with the precedents accepted by Mies in his prewar works.<sup>49</sup> The country house projects of 1923–24 reveal his assimilation of other avant-garde aesthetic programs, particularly the *de Stijl* movement propagandized by Theo van Doesburg.<sup>50</sup>

I would agree with many observers in the assessment that these projects of the early twenties are the most significant of Mies's career. That they yield, at most, only tangentially to the theme of this essay is an indication of his contribution to a radically altered architectural discourse of the immediate postwar years. Acknowledging, even acclaiming, the inventions of this period of Mies's career, we may nonetheless see in one of the Five Projects, the Concrete Office Building of 1923, a work that provides continuity both back to neoclassicism and forward to Mies's American career. Unlike the renderings of the skyscrapers, in the perspective of the Concrete Office Building the surrounding buildings of the city may be read as context as much as contrast. In this as in other ways, Mies's office building



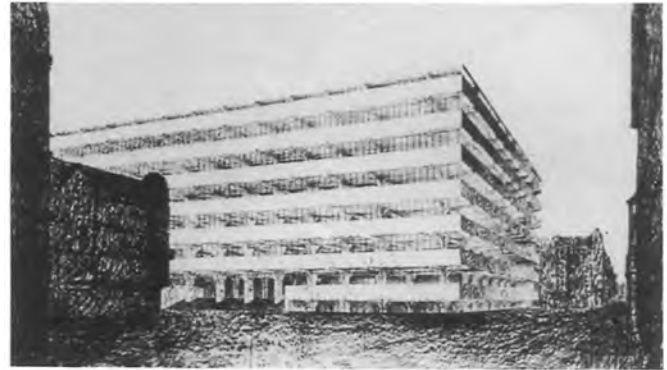
33. Mies, Glass Skyscraper, project, Berlin, 1922, model



34. Mies, Brick Country House, project, 1923, plan (gift of Mies van der Rohe to the Museum of Modern Art, New York)

and its presentation invite comparison with Schinkel's project for the Kaufhaus on Unter den Linden in Berlin. Both projects resolve the enlarged scale of a new program by lateral extension rather than height. While the masonry supports of Schinkel's commercial building yield more traditional vertically proportioned fenestration as compared to the strip windows of Mies's cantilevered construction, both projects provide generous windows within notably emphatic structural frames. Mies's office building, simple as it seems — indeed, in its simplicity — shares the traits of many neoclassical buildings. There is the prismatic form and the simple skyline. The entrance is via a broad monumental stair ascending to freestanding columns. The tops of the columns are shaped to mediate the forces of the beams above and thus yield a reading of shaft and capital. The projection of the cantilever beams below the slab and extended to its perimeter together with the recess of the windows yield a grid of structural points and an articulation of the glazing that correlate façade and structure. The upstand of the slabs gives the building a visual weight not dictated by structure, conservatively declining to exploit the potential of transparency celebrated in Mies's skyscrapers. The thinness of the slabs is revealed only in the roof, where, with the alteration of the height of the windows, the effect is created of a cornice. The very differences of the projects of Schinkel and Mies stem from similar commitments within classical decorum of accommodating the form of a nonrepresentative building to the conditions of its making and use.

Particularly in his American career, Mies returned to the issues of neoclassicism and modernity, making of these tensions, as already in the Concrete Office Building, something other than did the generation of his mentors. Mies's work for the Illinois Institute of Technology, from the grid of the campus plan to the often nonstructural steel details, suggests relations to neoclassicism. The corner detail of Alumni Memorial Hall is commonly compared to the rear corner detail of Schinkel's Altes Museum in Berlin. But it is more than a matter of details. When Johnson perceived Mies's work to be increasingly similar to that of Schinkel, he would have had in mind major projects of the 1950s, including the Farnsworth House, the Lake Shore Drive



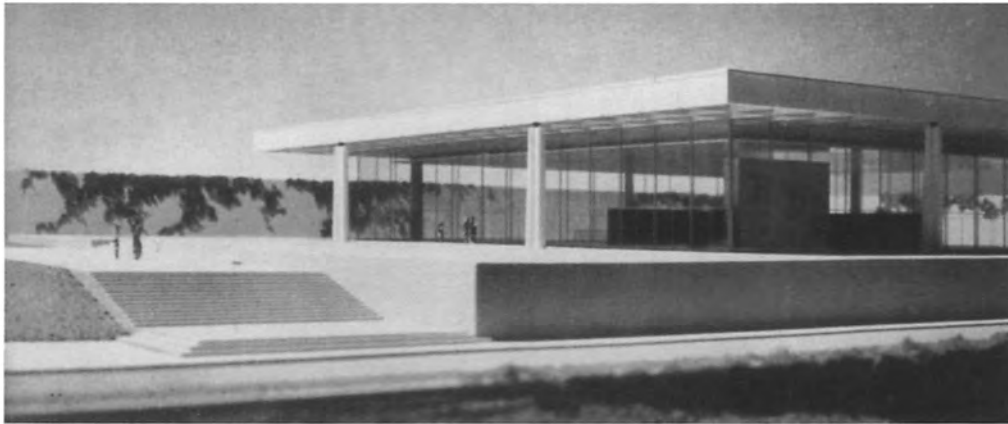
35. Mies, Concrete Office Building, project, 1923, perspective



36. Karl Friedrich von Schinkel, Kaufhaus on Unter den Linden, Berlin, project, 1827



37. Mies, Crown Hall, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, 1956



38. Mies, Bacardi Office Building, Santiago de Cuba, project, 1957

apartment towers, Crown Hall at IIT, the Seagram Building, and the Bacardi Office Building. In all these projects there are simple grids, clear columnar structures, symmetries, evident façades with horizontal skylines, precise details, love of fine materials and craftsmanship, and a draughtsmanly neoclassical restraint.

Yet there is more. Friedrich Gilly and Schinkel searched architectural precedent to discover how they might, in their time, build in a manner that would idealize the cultural ambitions of their prince and their nation. Such sensitive and creative designers were well aware of the gulf between the ideal and the real. The challenge was to narrow the gulf, but there was always the concomitant, wise and not wholly unwelcome, pathos of the distance that remained. Neoclassical teaching urged German architects not just to gauge aesthetic or formal demands — the relations of part to part and part to whole, the niceties of proportion and detail, and the subtleties of visual accommodation — but rather to put all such care in the

service of an architectural mimesis that saw the building metaphorically. The *Tektonik* of the Schinkel-follower Karl Bötticher relied on the understanding of perceived organic relations among the parts and between the parts and the whole of a building.<sup>51</sup> This organic tectonics was the source not only of the authority of classical building but particularly of its affective qualities. So, too, Mies sought to bring timeless ideals to the conditions of modern production and patronage. His works often and increasingly convey a further heightened pathos, a pity experienced from Olympian and thus quite disengaged heights, the result, perhaps, of both an increasing gulf between classical ideals and modern society and a related personal and professional isolation. So the refinements of Mies's buildings entail a metaphysics that echoes his neoclassical masters while revealing the conditions of his own time. There could be a school of Mies that learned his details, but it is such deeper issues of classicism as idealism and mimesis that more precisely characterize the master's work and do not so readily lend themselves to emulation.

Mies was always diffident about any indebtedness to either Schinkel or Behrens.<sup>52</sup> When I, for the purpose of writing on Behrens, gained an interview with him, it was Jan Grata-ma's elegantly bound monograph on the Dutch proto-modernist architect Hendrik Petrus Berlage that dominated Mies's nearly empty desk.<sup>53</sup> It was Berlage about whom Mies preferred to speak. Berlage was committed to the rationalism of theorists such as Viollet-le-Duc and Gottfried Semper; under such commitments, he built well, with an immediate and correct grasp of actual materials. This devotion to the art of building was what earned Mies's respect. Mies appears, then, to be suspended between a self-avowed Berlagian image of master builder and an externally perceived avowal of the artistic demands of neoclassicism. It has also been claimed that Mies himself "was aware that his work was uneasily suspended between the radical thrust of the avant-garde and the retar-dataire restraint of tradition."<sup>54</sup> The material of the present essay is persuasive, I think, for the view that such suspensions were not unusual and that the "uneasiness" was a deliberate response to a perceived condition.

Mies, in accord with his respect for Berlage, often built well. So, too, however, had Schinkel and Behrens. To my mind, Mies's forms of building well — whether, as in the project for the Bismarck Monument, in substantial masonry or, as was more common in his later buildings, pursuing an elegant mimesis in steel and glass that contrasts with a realist commitment to tangible building — continued to owe more to his precedent classicists than to the rationalist Berlage. Mies does owe a debt to his master Behrens, even though it may also be argued that he came closer to being the Schinkel of the twentieth century. As opposed to Loos's denials and Tessenow's inversions, architecture remained for Mies, even more than for Behrens, a lofty and strict discipline. Though an advocate of the primacy of the artist-architect, Behrens historicized architecture and adjusted his design to the patron. Mies held more fully to an architectural autonomy that might serve, even if less genially than it had in the hands of Schinkel, in the idealization of a culture.

Mebes's book about the built environment of 1800, as we have noted, bore a subtitle that proclaims the issue of tra-



39. Mies, Bismarck Monument, Bingen, project, 1910

dition and cultural recall widely shared in Germany at the beginning of this century: *Architecture and Crafts in the Last Century of Their Traditional Development*. How did each of the architects we have considered come to terms with the shared perception that the eighteenth century was the last time that architecture and the crafts had been set within a unified culture and a living tradition that could foster the development of architecture as an integral part of its culture?

Behrens used classicism for representative or expressive ends — to carry the message of a resigned commitment to, and aestheticization of, industrial/state capitalism as the current stage of a determined course of history. His innovative use of traditional architectural elements in a designedly iconographic architecture was in the service of the current centers of political and economic power. Within an acceptance of modern conditions, Behrens restored architecture to what he conceived to have been its traditional place in society and culture; but this was a social role that undermined the autonomous aspect of architecture.

Tessenow projected a new society made whole through its reawakening of values akin to those admired in what was taken to be the integrated life of town and country around 1800. Handwork and the small city would be the productive framework that was both facilitated and concretized in the idealized artisanal environment Tessenow so artfully imagined. Among these architects, Tessenow remained closest to the conservative core of the cultural phenomenon under consideration. This conservatism is revealed, too, in Tessenow's fidelity to the vernacular house and its aesthetic intensification through typological reductionism.

Loos's endorsement of the classic in general, and of Germanic neoclassicism more particularly, recognized a now weak but enduring thread of Western tradition. It also offered one system of forms that inhibited individualistic imposition and consumption of arbitrary forms. Loos, however, also employed forms and objects from vernacular environments, from craft or industrial production or from pure abstraction. His work was critical in its resistance to what he identified as past error or false modernism. It was critical, as well, in its assessment of what could still be affirmed from the past or be newly affirmed in the present. But he refused to tolerate a false unification of this complex of criticisms under an imposed aesthetic. Loos exhibited an unusual professional alloy, mixing critical resistance and aesthetic reticence with a tolerance for modern discontinuities. He still recognized an autonomy within architecture, but it, like the society within which it is practiced, involves change and criticism as well as continuity. This nuanced critical professionalism sets Loos apart from the other three architects.

Mies can be observed to share many of the interests common to the circles under discussion, though his early works understandably do not break ground as did the contemporary works of Behrens, Tessenow, and Loos. Maturing just after World War I, Mies then confronted important new aspects of modernism more directly than the older masters. Some of the best of his work of the early twenties — the Brick Country House, for example — remain to be fully explored but escape the theme of this essay. Yet it is in the great body of his post-World War I work that Mies reveals his use of classicism to be the deepest and most abstract of the four masters. If so, Mies's achievement must be seen in the light of rejected alternatives: Behrens's historical determinism, Tessenow's assimilation of the vernacular to the ideal in social as well as architectural matters, and Loos's critical stance.

Advancing Loos's critical professionalism in contrast to Mies's underlying classicism, I stop short of denying the possibility of an interpretation of Mies's work recently advanced by Michael Hays. Indeed, what I have referred to as the deeply embedded idealism and mimesis of his work may be integral to what Hays claims for Mies. In

brief, Hays's claim is this: Mies's work is exemplary as a critical architecture, critical in that it neither provides an "efficient representation of preexisting cultural values" nor does it retreat into "the wholly detached autonomy of an abstract formal system."<sup>55</sup> Hays makes his argument persuasively, and is, I believe, supported by the fact that Mies's designs normally resist received notions of representation. In this, they are radically different from the factories, office buildings, and villas of Behrens. Yet in the very stillness of Mies's world, I find a recurrence of the pathos, the willed implication of the viewer's affective sensibilities, that Behrens flaunted. Mies also echoes Behrens in his historicist acceptance of the civilization in which he finds himself. If Hays is right to locate a sophisticated critical resistance in the work of Mies, the seeds were also there of its easy assimilation in the service of the post-World War II corporate world. Even if Loos may look more complicit, with him no tissue of classical fiction is thrown across a building to unify its purpose and its making. Loos's targeted criticisms and his aesthetic reticence are more adaptable to the moment and yet more resistant to cooptation.

#### Notes

This essay was developed from a lecture given on 5 March 1986 in a series associated with the Mies van der Rohe exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

1. Aldo Rossi, "The Architecture of Adolf Loos," in Benedetto Gravagnuolo, *Adolf Loos: Theory and Works*, trans. C. H. Evans (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), 11–15; this essay appeared slightly earlier, in an abbreviated but also better translated version, as "Modernism's Trajectory: Rossi on Loos," *Skyline* (April 1982): 18–21.
2. Rossi, "The Architecture of Adolf Loos," 11.
3. *Ibid.* Note that Schinkel worked within the old dispensation that permitted the simultaneity of art and architecture.

4. Rossi indicates that Loos accepted the division of art and profession, while Tessenow and Mies sought to heal the breach. If Rossi is right that the division "is no longer reconcilable," then Tessenow and Mies must have failed in their attempts.

5. Rossi, "The Architecture of Adolf Loos," 11.

6. That Mies van der Rohe, though younger than the other masters, participated in this reassertion of the neoclassical is duly noted in Philip Johnson's monograph of 1947 (see Johnson et al., eds., *Mies van der Rohe*, 3d ed. [New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1978], 12). Johnson also recognizes the more conventional neoclassicism of Mies's Riehl House of 1907: "Designed in the then popular traditional eighteenth-century



style with steep roofs, gables and dormer windows, it was distinguishable from its contemporaries only by fine proportions and careful execution" (p. 10).

7. Julius Langbehn, *Rembrandt als Erzieher* (n.p., 1890). The book was first published anonymously. On Langbehn, see Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961).

8. On the German Youth Movement, begun in 1897 in Berlin by Karl Fischer, an advocate of the cause of the *Rembrandtdeutsche*, see Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair*, 223–27. On the promotion of an artistic culture, see Albert Dresdner, "Zur künstlerischen Kultur," in *Eugen Diederichs Verlagskatalog* (Jena: Diederichs, n.d.), 65–66. Dresdner states that the German interest in the achievement of an artistic culture was awakened by the appearance of Langbehn's *Rembrandt als Erzieher* during Christmas 1890. Dresdner's short essay is part of a catalogue in which the publisher himself, Eugen Diederichs, affirms the programmatic nature of his press: founded in Florence in 1896, its true spiritual birthplace the Tempio Malatestiano in Rimini where Christian teaching is transformed through humanism into a cult of beauty and love. The Diederichs press included authors from the architectural and cultural circles considered here: Ferdinand Avenarius (founder of the *Dürerbund*), Peter Behrens, Hermann Muthesius, Hermann Obrist, Paul Schultze-Naumburg, Fritz Schumacher, and E. R. Weiss. In scholarship and letters, the authors included Friedrich Schiller, John Ruskin, Hippolyte Taine, Walter Pater, Maurice Maeterlinck, Renate Stendhal, Anton Chekhov, Leo

Tolstoy, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Walt Whitman.

9. Gerhard Kratsch, *Kunstwart und Dürerbund: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Gebildeten im Zeitalter des Imperialismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1969).

10. On the *Dürerbund* and the Bund für Heimatschutz, see Christian Otto, "Modern Environment and Historical Continuity: The Heimatschutz Discourse in Germany," *Art Journal* 43 (Summer 1983): 148–57.

11. On the Deutscher Werkbund, see Joan Campbell, *The German Werkbund: The Politics of Reform in the Applied Arts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), and Lucius Burckhardt, ed., *The Werkbund: History and Ideology 1907–1933* (New York: Barron's, 1980).

12. See Alfred Reitdorf, *Gilly: Wiedergeburt der Architektur* (Berlin: Hans von Hugo, 1940).

13. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Von Deutscher Baukunst: D. M. Erwini a Steinbach* (Frankfurt, 1772). See Paul Frankl, *The Gothic: Literary Sources and Interpretations through Eight Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), 417.

14. Karl Scheffler, *Der Architekt* (Frankfurt am Main, 1907), 19.

15. Paul Mebes, *Um 1800: Architektur und Handwerk im letzten Jahrhundert ihrer traditionellen Entwicklung* (Munich: F. Brückmann, 1908).

16. Paul Mebes, *Um 1800*, 3d ed. (Munich: F. Brückmann, 1920), xiii.

17. See Stanford Anderson, "Peter Behrens and the New Architecture of Germany," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1968. The chapters

on Behrens's work for the AEG are published as "Modern Architecture and Industry" in three articles:

"Peter Behrens and the Cultural Policy of Historical Determinism," *Oppositions* 11 (Winter 1977): 52–71; "Peter Behrens, the AEG, and Industrial Design," *Oppositions* 21 (Summer 1980): 78–97; and "Peter Behrens and the AEG Factories," *Oppositions* 23 (Winter 1981): 52–83. See also Tilmann Buddensieg in collaboration with Henning Rogge, *Industriekultur: Peter Behrens and the AEG: 1907 — 1914*, trans. Iain Boyd Whyte (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1984).

18. Otto, "Modern Environment and Historical Continuity," 149.

19. See Adolf Loos, "Architektur" (1910), in *Sämtliche Schriften* (Vienna: Herold, 1962), 1:314.

20. See Anderson, "Peter Behrens, the AEG, and Industrial Design," and idem, "Peter Behrens and the AEG Factories."

21. See Karl Bernhard, "Die neue Halle für die Turbinenfabrik der Allgemeinen Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft in Berlin," *Zeitschrift des Vereines deutscher Ingenieure* 55 (30 September 1911): 1625–31, and 55 (7 October 1911): 1673–82.

22. See Anderson, "Peter Behrens and the AEG Factories."

23. From the first of Muthesius's *Leitsätze*, circulated among members of the *Werkbund* shortly before its convention at the exhibition (author's translation). For a discussion, see Anderson, "Peter Behrens and the New Architecture of Germany," 376ff. Muthesius's theses were the source of fierce controversy, formalized in ten counter-theses by Henry van de Velde. The German texts can be found in Julius Posener, *Anfänge des Funktionalismus: Von Arts and Crafts*

*zum Deutschen Werkbund* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1970), 205–7, and idem, *Zwischen Kunst und Industrie: Der Deutsche Werkbund* (Munich: Die Neue Sammlung, 1975), 96–99; an English translation appears in Ulrich Conrads, ed., *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th-century Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1970), 28–31. *Typisierung* is usually translated as "standardization" and is often interpreted, in many languages, as a plea by Muthesius for standardized industrial production. Van de Velde, by contrast, saw Muthesius as seeking to establish a "canon or a *Typisierung*. . . . [The artist] will never subordinate himself to a discipline that imposes upon him a type, a canon." In turn, it has been argued that van de Velde intentionally misread Muthesius in order to challenge his leadership of the *Werkbund* (Campbell, *The German Werkbund*, 63, citing Posener, *Anfänge des Funktionalismus*, 204). I accept van de Velde's reading, which need not include his animus, for several reasons. Muthesius's first thesis, quoted in the text, is directed to "architecture and the entire area of the *Werkbund*'s activity," which would include craft production as well as industrial production. Both "type" and "canon" apply to this wide range of production, while "standardization" — especially in 1914 — does not readily apply to either architecture or craft production. Muthesius's last two theses call for production by large business concerns, but this is stated in such a way as to include rationalized craft production based on types (the *Deutsche Werkstätten* in Hellerau would be an example) as much as serial production based on standardization. "Standardization" can be read into certain of Muthesius's theses, but only as a special case of the more general

notion covered by *Typisierung*. Finally, the architecture of the Werkbund exhibition that responded to Muthesius's impetus, including his own work, fits the concepts of "canon" and "type" but not that of "standardization."

24. See Heinrich Tessenow, *Hausbau und dergleichen*, 4th ed. (Baden-Baden: Woldemar Klein, 1953; originally published in Berlin: Cassirer, 1916); idem, *Handwerk und Kleinstadt*, 2d ed. (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1972; originally published in Berlin: Cassirer, 1919); and idem, *Das Land in der Mitte: Ein Vortrag* (Hellerau: Hegner, 1921).

25. The text of this paragraph is based on Tessenow, *Das Land in der Mitte*, 34.

26. At times, England and Holland ("*germanische Volksrassen*") also dominated from the periphery, and from these countries Tessenow believed Germany could learn, revealing his (unacknowledged) Langbehn-inspired pan-Germanism: "so zum Beispiel ist Rembrandt ohne deutsches Blut doch wohl überhaupt zu denken?" (*Das Land in der Mitte*, 21). Tessenow also extolled the youth movement (in *Jugendbewegung* and *Das Land in der Mitte*, 49).

27. Tessenow, *Das Land in der Mitte*, 28.

28. The text of this paragraph is based on Tessenow, *Handwerk und Kleinstadt*, *passim*.

29. See *ibid.*, 51. Tessenow accepts for the garden city Ebenezer Howard's ideal population of thirty thousand and turns the reader's attention to the Deutsche Gartensiedlungsgesellschaft in Grünau-Berlin. But he advocates that his ideal small cities be developed from existing cores, which would provide an

indigenous base of middle-class populace and enterprises in contrast to the *Grossstadt* conditions encouraged by new towns (*ibid.*, 53).

30. See *ibid.*, 40, where Tessenow also commends Gustav Landauer's translation of Kropotkin's *Landwirtschaft: Industrie und Handwerk* (2d ed. [Leipzig: Renaissance-Verlag, 1910]).

31. See Tessenow, *Hausbau und dergleichen*, 104.

32. Michael Hays, "Tessenow's Architecture as National Allegory: Critique of Capitalism or Protofascism?" *Assemblage* 8 (1989): 122.

33. In "The Architecture of Adolf Loos," Rossi makes a distinction within modern architecture between its "cunning and aggressive side" that incorporates the Secession and the Bauhaus, resulting in "industrial design," and its "more genial and honest side" that recognizes and seeks to come to terms with the separation of art and technique. In this latter group, he includes, but also astutely differentiates, Loos, Tessenow, and Mies. If, however, we consider the political and social aspects of their programs and the role assigned to art within these programs, Rossi's gross distinction between "sides" cannot be maintained. I would agree that to add Behrens to Rossi's "three masters" would do violence to Loos, although I think it is correct to associate Behrens and Tessenow. On the other hand, to assimilate the industrial design of Behrens with the Secession would be incorrect. Even within this limited set of references, we require at least three groupings, if not a matrix of possibilities.

34. "I must connect there [the time around 1800] where the chain of development had been broken"

(Loos, "Architektur," 312, author's translation).

35. "But each time that architecture [*Baukunst*] is distanced from its great models by the minor figures, the ornamentalists, there comes the great architect who leads it back to the antique. Fischer von Erlach in the south, Schlüter in the north were rightly the great masters of the eighteenth century. And on the threshold of the nineteenth century stood Schinkel. We have forgotten him. May the light of this towering figure fall on the coming generation of architects [*Baukünstler*]" (Loos, "Architektur," 318, author's translation of final paragraph).

36. *Ibid.*, 302.

37. See Anderson, "Peter Behrens and the New Architecture of Germany," chap. 2, and idem, "Peter Behrens' Changing Concept of Life as Art," *Architectural Design* 39 (February 1969): 72–78.

38. For two of Loos's attacks on the Werkbund, both from 1908 (the year after the Werkbund was founded), see "Die Überflüssigen" and "Kulturentartung," in *Sämtliche Schriften* 1:267–75.

39. Karl Kraus, in *Adolf Loos: Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag* (Vienna, 1930), 27, author's translation. For further discussion, see Stanford Anderson, "Critical Conventionalism in Architecture," *Assemblage* 1 (1986): 6–23.

40. Cited in Heinrich Kulka, "Adolf Loos," *Architects' Yearbook* 9 (1960): 11.

41. Loos, "Architektur," 310.

42. Loos imagines that the harlequinade of contemporary architecture might have been played out in clothing. Among the crowd of people in outmoded, historicizing clothing, he spots "a pair of droll

moderns with violet *escarpin* [pumps] and apple-green silk jerkins with appliqué by Professor Walter Scherbel [*Scherbel* means 'fragment,' 'debris']," treating the latter Secessionist modernism and the false revivalism as equally reprehensible (*ibid.*, 313).

43. See Anderson, "Critical Conventionalism in Architecture," and idem, "Critical Conventionalism: The History of Architecture," *Midgård* 1, no. 1 (1987): 33–47.

44. Loos, paraphrased by Kulka, "Adolf Loos," 10.

45. I assign great importance to the issue of relative autonomy, which I have discussed in various contexts under the term "quasi-autonomy." See, for example, Stanford Anderson, "The Plan of Savannah and Changes of Occupancy during its Early Years: City Plan as Resource," *Harvard Architecture Review* 2 (1981): 60–67.

46. Philip Johnson, "Schinkel and Mies," in *Writings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 165.

47. See Franz Schulze, *Mies van der Rohe: A Critical Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), chap. 2.

48. Paul Scheerbart, *Glasarchitektur* (Berlin: Verlag der Sturm [Herwarth Walden], 1914). Bruno Taut's early evocation of a glass architecture was the Ostram pavilion at the exhibition of the Deutscher Werkbund in Cologne in 1914. On Taut, see Rosemarie Haag Bletter, "Bruno Taut and Paul Scheerbart's Vision," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1973, and Ian Boyd White, *The Crystal Chain Letters: Architectural Fantasies by Bruno Taut and His Circle* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985).

49. It was in Bruno Taut's journal

*Frühlicht* that Mies published his skyscrapers, insisting that "new problems must not be solved with traditional forms" (*Frühlicht* 4 [Summer 1922]: 212–14).

50. See H. L. C. Jaffé, *De Stijl 1917–1931* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986), and Carel Blotkamp, *De Stijl: The Formative Years, 1917–1922* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1986).

51. See Karl Bötticher, *Die Tektonik der Hellenen* (Potsdam: F. Riegel, 1852).

52. See Johnson et al., "Epilogue: Thirty Years After," in *Mies van der Rohe*, 205–11.

53. Stanford Anderson, interview with Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Chicago, 27 June 1961.

54. Kenneth Frampton, "Notes on Classical and Modern Themes in the Architecture of Mies van der Rohe and Auguste Perret," in *Classical Tradition and the Modern Movement*, ed. Asko Salokorpi (Helsinki: Museum of Finnish Architecture, 1985), 23.

55. K. Michael Hays, "Critical Architecture: Between Culture and Form," *Perspecta* 21 (1984): 15.

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3, 9, 16. Paul Mebes, *Um 1800*, 3d ed. (Munich: F. Brückmann, 1920).

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5. Rudolf K. Goldschmit-Jentner, *Goethe: Eine Bildbiographie* (Munich: Kindler, 1957).

6. Photograph by Kenneth Kaiser.

7. Alfred Rietdorf, *Gilly: Wiedergeburt der Architektur* (Berlin: Hans von Hugo, 1940).

8. Erhard Bunkowsky, *Goethe: Ein Almanach als Beitrag zum Gedächtnisjahr 1949* (Dresden: Dresdener Verlag, [1948]).

10, 14. AEG-Berlin TV 20885/1362, 13553/1357.

11, 15, 33, 37. Rotch Visual Collection, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

12. Robert Breuer, "Eine Bilanz des deutschen Stiles," in *Deutschland's Raumkunst . . . Brüssel 1910* (Stuttgart: J. Hoffman, 1910).

13. Foreign Office, Bonn.

17–19. Deutscher Werkbund, *Jahrbuch 1915* (Jena: Diederichs, 1915).

20–22. Heinrich Tessenow, *Hausbau und dergleichen* (Baden-Baden: W. Klein, 1953).

24. Heinz Geretsegger and Max Peintner, *Otto Wagner 1841–1918* (Salzburg: Residenz Verlag, 1979).

26. Heinrich Kulka, *Adolf Loos* (Vienna: A. Schroll, 1931).

27, 39. L. Münz and G. Künstler, *Der Architekt Adolf Loos* (Vienna: A. Schroll, 1964).

29. Bernhard Rukschcio and Roland L. Schachel, *Adolf Loos: Leben und Werk* (Vienna: Residenz Verlag, 1982).

30. Foto Marburg 615015.

31, 32, 33. Franz Schulze, *Mies van der Rohe: A Critical Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

34. Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

36. Fritz Schumacher, *Strömungen in Deutscher Baukunst seit 1800* (Cologne: E. A. Seemann, [1955]).

38. *Architectural Forum* 110 (February 1959).