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THE ANTI-MEDITERRANEAN IN THE LITERATURE OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE

Paul Schultz-Neumburg's Kulturarbeiten

Kai K. Gutschow

In the heated battles to define modern architecture in Germany at the beginning of the twentieth century, well-chosen propaganda images played a vital role in shaping public opinion as well as the profession. Architects on all sides of the debates used the nascent media culture of the day to make their often complex arguments memorable and easily understood. Many of the most potent images were created in the wake of Stuttgart's large Weissenhof housing exhibition of 1927, designed by an all-star cast of modern architects from around Europe. Walter Curt Behrendt's well-known book from the same year, for example, used a heroic, flag-waving view of the Weissenhof Siedlung to pronounce the "victory of the new building style." Similar images were strategically placed on the covers and title pages of books by Ludwig Hilberseimer, Adolf Behne, and the German Werkbund to celebrate the arrival of modern architecture.

Although less well known, German adversaries of the new style of architecture were just as effective in promoting their opposing messages, often with similar images, though in very different contexts. In his popular book, Das Gesetz des deutschen Hauses (The Face of the German House, 1929), for example, the German architect and critic Paul Schultz-Neumburg contrasted a view of the Weissenhof Siedlung with a picturesque view of a seaside village on the Greek island of Santorini. For readers in search of the Mediterranean ideal in modern architecture, the images offer evidence of how closely related the whitewashed, asymmetrical, stilted, flat-roofed, rectangular prisms of modern architecture in Germany were to timeless forms of the Mediterranean vernacular. Similar comparisons with Italian vernacular architecture were later used by Italian modernists such as Giovanni Michelucci to demonstrate the Mediterranean roots and timeless values of their forms.

But the context of Schultz-Neumburg's illustrations produced a very different reading. He offered the comparative photographic images as proof of the "foreign" and stylized forms of modern architecture. The new architecture, he argued, was "un-German" in its physiognomy, and incompatible with the rainy, snowy, and cold northern climate. He claimed that the flat roofs and simple cubic forms had been developed in the "Orient," in the heat of the Mediterranean, and that they were culturally inappropriate and functionally unfit for the hills of Stuttgart. The parallels of modern architecture to foreign forms were, for Schultz-Neumburg, signs of a "disruption" or "desertification" of the natural evolution of good German architecture, and perhaps even indications of the "demise" of the soul of the German Volk. His critique aligned with other conservative critics who lambasted the modernist housing development as an "Arab Village" or a "Little Jerusalem," or as "Bolshevism"
spirit. A famous photo montage sold as a postcard made visible these critiques, showing an "Arab" street market, complete with camels and lions, in the streets of the Weissenhof development.

These and other anti-Mediterranean critiques of modern architecture were but part of a long-running media campaign that Schultz-Neumburg had been mounting both individually and in union with some of the most influential cultural reform organizations. As will be discussed in this essay, the origins of these attacks, both the content and the graphic techniques, go back to the nineteenth-century discussions about German identity and national character, and in the case of Schultz-Neumburg, to the start of his career as an Art and Crafts artist. What began as an attempt to work against the eclecticism and "soulless" design in the 1890s, soon took on profound implications for shaping the development of modern architecture in Germany. The attacks against foreign influences, and the associated propaganda techniques, became even more harrowing and polarizing after 1932, as the seemingly alien modern architecture and design gained foothold in Germany, not just with the avant-garde, but with municipal governments, non-profit housing associations, worker-clubs, and the general public. Although often framed in the modernist arguments about form and function, protests against the "New Building" (Neues Bauen) increasingly revealed a deep-seated nationalism, racism, and anti-Semitism, even where there were no overt Jewish or Mediterranean connections.

Just a few months before the Weissenhof exhibition, for example, the populist journal Der Stürmer commissioned Schultz-Neumburg and Walter Gropius to debate their different positions on modern architecture in the article "Who is Right? Traditional building art or building in new forms?" Schultz-Neumburg claimed that German architects had divided into two camps: those that consciously rejected their "Nordic" heritage for exotic precedents, and those that sought to reproduce time-tested German building conventions. The two positions were clearly illustrated in the comparative images throughout the article, pitting the "New Building" of Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, and Karl Schneider against some of Schultz-Neumburg's own country-house designs. In his text, Schultz-Neumburg expressed frustration at seeing how many German architects "did not feel drawn through their bloodlines, to the Nordic family of forms," and that so many modern houses around him were based on what he felt were "East Asian, Indian, or Negro" precedents. The many modernist architects and artists inspired by cultures from the Orient, from the Far and Near East, and from the Mediterranean basin, only confirmed Schultz-Neumburg's opposition to the new architecture and bias against the Mediterranean.

Instead, Schultz-Neumburg implored Germans to reconnect to their own Nordic traditions. But what was "German" or "Nordic" architecture? The question has a long, complicated history, and is one of the key — but now overlooked — questions that helped define the development of modern architecture in Germany. Since Goethe had promoted the Gothic as homegrown and suitably Nordic in character, the movement revived in the twentieth century by Expressionist artists, Gropius's early Bauhaus, and others. But Schultz-Neumburg conceded that Germans had always had a fascination with foreign cultures, and even a special penchant for assimilating aspects of foreign and exotic cultures, beginning with classicism in the Renaissance. He himself favored a simplified, bourgeois classicism, which he claimed had, over time, been "made German." His single-minded attempt to revive local vernacular conventions for a modern German architecture caused him to overlook the fact that other critics saw classicism as a "Southern" import, not unlike Sanctorius. The Jewish modernist architect Erich Mendelsohn, who came under increasing attack by conservatives, later chided Schultz-Neumburg for conveniently "overlooking" the fact that the Mediterranean was the basis for all Western culture.

The Search for a Modern Architecture

Schultz-Neumburg's indictment of Mediterranean architecture arose from a host of interrelated theoretical and personal beliefs. During the first decades of the newly established German Reich, a pervasive romantic nationalism led many artists and intellectuals such as Schultz-Neumburg to "invent" traditions for the new country. As a leader in the German Arts and Crafts movement, and the director of an important regional applied arts workshop, he also had a cultural and business interest in promoting local craft traditions. In a rapidly globalizing world, organizations such as the German Werkbund and the German Heimatschutzband (Homeland Protection Association) — both of which he helped found — sought to define the hallmarks of what it meant to be "Made in Germany." This trend eventually overlapped with a rising interest in cultural anthropology as well as eugenics as a way of sorting out what was "local" and "authentic."
At the heart of Schultze-Naumburg's early campaign to define a modern architecture lay his multi-volume Kulturarbeit (Cultural Works) books, begun in 1900, and which opened with the following statement:

The purpose of these books is to work against the terrible devastation of our country in all areas of visible culture. Through a constant repetition of good and bad examples, the books are to force even the most untrained eyes to compare and to think. Furthermore, they are to reawaken an awareness of the good work done before the mid-nineteenth century, and in such a way help to re-connect and to continue the clear working methods of tradition.2

For Schultze-Naumburg, the way to a modern German house could be found by using local traditions as a guide, and not images from abroad, as he proposed modern architects had done at the Weißenhof. Others for continuing traditions were to be found in the most recent "healthy" epoch of German architecture, the vernacular architecture from "around 1800," before the onset of eclectic styles in the mid-nineteenth century.

He made his point more forcefully with a graphic and didactic comparison of two ordinary houses. In considering an older residence near his own home in Saaleck, in central Thuringia, he wrote:

The one is a simple garden house, with no architectural masterpiece, just a plain, friendly house as was completely natural in the eighteenth century (when it was built). But what grace, what presence, what a truthful expression throughout, from the door to the topmost roofline ... (The roof's silhouette) is the complete reflection of its function, the bearer of a lofty, airy chamber from which to look out over river and valley beyond.3

7.3 Cover page of the article "Who Is Right?" by Schultze-Naumburg and Groplus comparing the Neues Bauen to a more traditional country house.


Schultze-Naumburg's own attempt to define a German modern architecture began just before the turn of the century, when as a 29-year-old German painter, designer, and critic he complained, "We have no modern house."4 By modern he meant "realistic...[in tune with] the ideals of our own time."5 In contrast to the sham architecture of the mid-to-late nineteenth century, which he felt too often merely copied historical architecture, he sought modern (from the Latin modius meaning "of the day") buildings that were functional, clear, contemporary, and local. Set on his mission, Schultze-Naumburg launched a thirty-year propaganda campaign to create a reformed architecture specific to, and appropriate for, modern Germany.

He began with the premise that good art and architecture grew naturally out of a specific combination of place, culture, and time. He speculated that over a long period of time, generations of anonymous designers, craftsmen, and end-users defined a vernacular tradition that derived from the most fundamental physical as well as spiritual ideals and needs of the local people (Volk). Where architectural elements could not be tied to specifically German traditions, Schultze-Naumburg postulated affinities to a broader "Nordic" race, culture, and climate that included England, Scandinavia, and greater Germany. In the course of this natural evolution, specific forms were adapted constantly to changing needs and conditions, but the overall essence resisted the swings of style, fashion, and the willful manipulation by individuals. Functional and material needs of the moment were always met, he proclaimed, balanced with the immaterial qualities necessary to create an appropriate home.

7.4 The first didactic comparison from Schultze-Naumburg's Kulturarbeit, showing a garden house from "around 1800" that Schultze-Naumburg admired on the left, and a suburban villa from the outskirts of Berlin that he abhorred on the right.

He admired the straightforward, honest craftsmanship, the functional forms, the fit and the sitting relation to the surrounding German landscape, and what he considered the timelessness of beauty. His analysis of the house covered every detail of which, always in a praiseworthy tone, thus the reader has to trust the inherent goodness of the older, local vernacular architecture of central Germany. He was careful to point out that the two-paned-foil windows painted on the upper floor were unfortunate, though characteristically, late nineteenth-century additions.

In comparing the older garden house with a typical villa recently built in one of the fashionable suburbs of metropolitan Berlin, he declared:

And now the other. Why do we laugh so? It’s not funny, but terribly sad. . . . It is the type of house that is visible everywhere, dozens and hundreds of them ruthlessly wiping out the ruins of the finest, most interesting house. Yes, it is this “elite,” little house that can be found in the suburbs of Berlin and nearly everywhere else today.  

He proceed to criticize its abundant and “useless” ornament, rebuke the mixture of “foreign” classical styles that had been “painted on” by the greedy speculative builder, and also condemned the smaller, less expensive, and, less functional rooms inside. He commented on a lack of Schachtel, straightforwardness in the design, by which he meant that the ideas of clarity and common-sense function had not been rigorously applied in determining the form of the house. He criticized the siting of the house: the one rooted in the German landscape, the other part of a carelessly organized architecture peters out.

This leading contribution introduced the major architectural themes and propaganda methods that Schultz-Naumburg promoted throughout the populist and polemical Kulturkampf, which he published between 1909 and 1922. His critical view of the international architectural profession, his advocacy of local craft and tradition to combat contemporary architecural ills, and his proselytizing manner have led some historians to see him as a precursor to the vernacular classicism of the nineteenth century to postmodernism and the present. Other authors praised the books for helping draw public attention to the beauty of ordinary, vernacular cultural landscapes, as well as the environment. Schultz-Naumburg’s writings were also influential in the formation of some of the earliest grassroots national historic preservation movements as well as Heimatschutz (homeland protection) organizations supporting the conservation and rehabilitation of man-made and natural environments.

Most often, however, the Kulturkampf contributions were in the dark light of the Schultz-Naumburg’s later, more ideologically motivated writings that made him one of the most rabidly conservative and influential ideologues of Nazi art and architecture. Historians see these early books either as the last gasps of a romantic, backward-looking nineteenth-century historicism or as proto-Nazi keystone of German anti-modernism, suffering from what Fritz Semb has called the “pathology of cultural despair.” Standard histories of modern architecture point to late Kulturkampf’s entire life work, even the early Kulturkampf work, and some have argued that such thought led him to a deterministic manner to Nazi architectural ideology.

As part of an effort to trace the anti-Mediterranean sentiments in Schultz-Naumburg’s later works, I will argue against interpreting the Kulturkampf deterministically as cases of “cultural despair” or as Nazi architecture avant-garde. Although the Kulturkampf were without doubt important precedents to the Nazi ideology that Schultz-Naumburg later helped formulate, their content and format set the stage for a whole range of modern architects and critics who worked during the heyday of the Weimar Republic and the early years of the Nazi regime. They illustrate perfectly one of the paradoxes of this period in Germany: that reformers who maintained very similar architectural theories in the turn of the century went on to espouse radically different ideological and architectural positions by 1933. The one dividing line of modern architecture from the conservative, reactionary, backward-looking line, was not nearly as neat as historians working under the specter of Fascism, Stalinism, and the Cold War have at times led us to believe.

By focusing on Schultz-Naumburg’s earlier written works, rather than his traditionalist architectural designs or the modern context of his late eugenic writings, this essay relocates his embrace of local culture and anti-Mediterranean attitude within the turn-of-the-century debates about modern architectural reform in Germany, in the cross between tradition and progress that led not only to a conservative nationalism, but also to a functionalist modernist architecture after World War I. It demonstrates how Schultz-Naumburg’s theories developed out of, and in the long run were instrumental in shaping, a trend in German modern architecture away from foreign traditions and eclecticism and towards a valuation of region and place as an important determinant of modern architecture. It forms part of a growing body of literature that questions the dominant narrative of modern architecture as based primarily on “functionalism” and “internationalism,” and reinforces the revisionist thinking that has begun to realize the importance of place and the vernacular in the formation of modern architecture.

I will focus on three themes to make this point. The first is Schultz-Naumburg’s concept of the criticism of the modern built environment, which he saw as contaminated by foreign elements and equated with a weakened national psyche. The second theme involves the identification of a set of timeless ideals and a healthy national tradition within the German Heimat (homeland) upon which to graft further development. Third is the need to harness the plastic advances, modified in order to create a new sense of regional identity. And finally, timelessness, German tradition, and culture, and to embrace the modern, contemporary world.

Criticism in the Kulturkampf

Schultz-Naumburg shared with contemporary advocates of a realist and sachlich architecture, as well as with later modernist architects and propagandists, a disgust of late nineteenth-century architecture and design. The Kulturkampf combined three interrelated developments through a concerted effort of criticism and negation. First and foremost, they worked against the stylistic historicism, ornamental eclecticism, and foreign influences that reached its high point in Germany during the building boom of the Gründerzeit (founders’ times), the prosperous years that followed the German unification in 1873. As a new country, itself a mix of many cultural groups, he felt Germans were particularly susceptible to being enervated and influenced by foreign ideas.

Instead of imitating the Gothic or the Renaissance styles of the distant past or distant shores, Schultz-Naumburg advocated adopting “realistic” ideals in
the Mediterranean, such attempts to separate the Germanic "North" from the lazy "South," and the active and artistically passionate "West" from the "primitive" and passive "East," were common in the writings of reformers of the day, although often reversed in terms of their biases.

Such early physiognomical conceptions of visual culture and national identity implicated not only aesthetic, but also social values. Schultz-Naumburg took his cues from German cultural critics such as Ferdinand Tönnies and Julius Langbehn, as well as English Arts and Crafts writers such as Augustus W. N. John Ruskin, and William Morris, whose writings were widely translated in Germany. He equated the ravaged built environment with a weak national character and failed national destiny. He deplored the decline in the German landscape on a whole array of societal forces: the unproductive greed of building speculators, the rampant modernization associated with industrialization and laissez-faire capitalism, bureaucratic building and planning officials, over academic architectural schooling, and the importation of styles from the South, particularly the Renaissance. He attacked the rise of a soulless and alienating Gesellschaft (society) and materialistic Zivilisation, and blamed them for the destruction of an organic Gemeinschaft (community) and harmonious Kultur that had characterized the old German Heimat he so cherished.

The Um 1800 Vornach

Seeking more timeless, cultured principles in contrast to the deplorable eclecticism and over-ornamentation of the materialistic late nineteenth century, Schultz-Naumburg insisted in 1905 that:

true architectural design must be possible without ornament. The worth and significance of our buildings is totally independent of the ornament applied. The only important points are the layout of the overall building complex, proper use of good materials, and simplicity and honesty of expression.

Anticipating some of the aesthetic asceticism and functionality of later modern architecture, he aspired to an architecture that was unornamented and straighforward. Much like the contemporary ideas of Adolf Loos and museum director Alfred Lichtwark, he sought a "realist" and "schlicht" (objective) architecture that would act as a "seed" for the development of "modern design."

He found such a seed in the simple, tectonic forms and distilled classicism of the vernacular architecture of the late eighteenth century Baroque or Biedermeier period still visible in the landscape all around them. Building on the nostalgic concepts of Heimat first developed by Romantic writers such as W. H. Schel, and the Grimm brothers in the late eighteenth century, he felt that traditions from the period between 1780 and 1840 provided the most recent, and therefore most accessible, example of timeless way of building that was truthful and German, pure and functional. With clear nationalist undertones, Schultz-Naumburg claimed that German Biedermeier traditions from this period around 1810 as also natural, integral, and the foundation of the common culture, and more accessible to the ordinary citizen than contemporary architecture.

Perhaps the single most widely referenced example of vernacular classicism from the period around 1810 was Goethe's abandoned but culturally resonant garden house in Weimar, just up the river from Schultz-Naumburg's own
towards more uniform and international ideals, borrowing freely from England, the United States, as well as ancient Egypt. This bias towards the local and ordinary was visible in all of Schultz-Naumburg’s early work. The domestic reform movement and grassroots *Heimatpflege* organizations that he helped found sought to revive a German culture from the bottom up. They recognized the need to reach beyond the small circle of cultivated professionals who already understood these ideas and to convert the ordinary Volk. In line with his content, Schultz-Naumburg targeted the common man, and wrote:

> Our wish is also to win over the people — the townsmen, the farmer, the workers, ... from the street pavements, to the old lady who cultivates flowers on her window ledge ... all those that work most closely in shaping the face of our nation.

Although Goethe’s house was seen as a prototypical example of the German Biedermeier, Schultz-Naumburg focused primarily on more anonymous, vernacular examples in order to arrive at general principles, not individual expressions. He sought the typical, not the extraordinary. He avoided “those art historically catalogued monuments that have not been recognized as the pinnacle of higher artistic development” in favor of the “inconspicuous and daily fare used by the Volk.”

Schultz-Naumburg’s contemporary, Adolf Loos, had a similar distaste for “fashionable” design and maintained a reverence for, and trust in, the timeless traditions and styles of the ordinary craftsman over the willful styles of any artist or architect. Both reformers felt that a modern house would arise not through the experimentation of high-style architects, but rather by connecting to a simple, tectonic building tradition that was completely connected to the common culture. Where Schultz-Naumburg focused on local German culture, however, Loos professed culture to be evolving...
More so than the German Werkbund he later helped found, Schulze-Naumberg sought to reach beyond training consumers and reforming high art and industrial production. He insisted that true cultural reform begins at the grassroots level, with the design of ordinary houses, "the only object on which the average person is artistically engaged." Far from being merely private matters, the vernacular houses and interiors of the Heimat were the ultimate embodiment of a nation's culture.

The anonymous, domesticated classicism from around 1800 that Schultze-Naumberg promoted and helped reintroduce in his Kulturbücher soon became a standard reference in a flood of publications by designers, critics, and reformers throughout Germany. Hermann Muthesius, in his important book "Style, Architecture, and Building Art from 1902, concluded that the architecture from around 1800 "could serve as a model for contemporary conditions." The movement received a name and a tremendous popularity boost with the publication of Paul Mebes's 1908 picture book "Um 1800. Architektur und Handwerk im letzten Jahrhundert ihrer traditionellen Entwicklung (Around 1800: Architecture and Craft in the Last Century of Their Traditional Development), which illustrated vernacular and high-style architecture from this period. Like Schultze-Naumberg, Mebes intended his book as a didactic tool to help contemporary architects "re-connect" to the spirit of simple, honest architecture around 1800. He cited the Karlsbaderaner as one of the central forces that brought this period of architectural history back into contemporary consciousness, and he republished several of Schultze-Naumberg's photographs.

The "Um 1800" vernacular that Schultze-Naumberg helped reintroduce was part of a more generalized "call to order" coursing throughout Europe in all the arts before and after World War I, and key to the development of modern architecture. But Schultze-Naumberg's far-reaching influence on these developments is unmistakable. Heinrich Tessenow, who began his architectural career working in Schultze-Naumberg's Saarbrücken Werkstätten workshops in 1904, was one of the first to implement what Stanford Anderson has called a "covert classicism." Tessenow's drawings, including many of Goethe's garden house, his popular book "Der Wohnhausbau (House Building)" of 1909, and actual built works such as those in the garden city of Hellerup, helped set the tone for the reformed, modern classicism that dominated the work of architects as diverse as Peter Behrens, Paul Schmitthenner, Bruno Taut, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and others in the Werkbund before and after World War I. The similarity of their early work is astounding in light of the divergent paths these architects took in the 1920s.

In an early appraisal of this "Um 1800" architecture, Walter Curt Behrendt praised Schultze-Naumberg and the movement; he helped spawn. This unity of architects working towards a common goal, Behrendt observed, was the first step towards a new, modern style for Germany. Moreover, the logic and rationality of this simple classicism provided basic rules of proportion, tacticons, and construction techniques that were easily followed, especially by many of the artistic reformers who were not architects by profession such as Henri Van de Velde, Behrens, and even Schultze-Naumberg himself.

For Behrendt, although the "Um 1800" architecture had close connections to Goethe and the rise of German nationalism, it was at its core a foreign "import," from the Mediterranean "South." He complained that Classicism had become a meaningless "international style," a "world language," reaching beyond all borders, even to the colonial style of America. As a result, he saw the Heimatstil and "Um 1800" classicism as signs of the unfortunate "cosmopolitan" and "internationalizing" tendencies growing in Germany. Echoing Schultze-Naumberg's "Kulturstil," he lamented that local, regional, and national identities were being destroyed in favor of this "Großstil," and that "inspicuous, folk traditions of art are no longer tenable," no longer "able to uphold long-standing national art traditions." He lamented that in the hands of inferior, academically trained architects, the classicism inspired by "Um 1800" was often too easily a meaningless simplification of nineteenth-century styles, a "lessened reaction to eclecticism but not a model appropriate for the modern world.

To justify his taste for the Biedermeier in the face of such critiques, Schultze-Naumberg provided a complicated argument that classicism had been "Germanized" by the great Prussian architects Gilly and later Schinkel. In the resulting "Prussian Style," as it was later christened in a book by Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, the classicism of the ancient Greeks was appropriated, fused with indigenous forms and ideals, and converted to a German ideal. Nordic simplicity and power had been combined with classical rule and proportion. Such a translation from a "Southern" to a German style was possible, according to the author, since all truly great cultural developments evolved out of the combination of opposite principles, "as when father and mother combine to produce a child."
Although there are formal similarities, the principles outlined in the *Kulturarbeiten* differed on some key points from much of the 1880s and much of the *Heimatsstil* architecture actually built, including by Schlutze-Naumburg himself. He was adamant that his books not be thought of as promoting "antiquarian ideals" or as pattern books of examples to be copied. Instead, he hoped that his readers would study the pictures and comparisons and derive from them an appreciation of the rich *Heimat* tradition. Through the photographs of the German *Heimat* in the *Kulturarbeiten*, he attempted to recapture an older spirit or method, and transfer its vitality in the creation of a renewed modern architecture. Both Mebes and Schlutze-Naumburg, at least in their rhetoric, insisted on the approach and conventions of such buildings from 1880, not on the borrowing of forms or styles. Although Schlutze-Naumburg eventually became fervently anti-modernist, and his architecture was revivalist, contemporary ideas of the earlier *Kulturarbeiten* demonstrated a clear embrace of contemporary ideas. They were not advertising another revival or a historicist application of traditional details, but rather a sympathetic, evolving continuation of known local building traditions and national types.

**Progress, Type, and Modernity**

Although the *Kulturarbeiten* did react to and draw attention to many of the negative developments of modernity and the perceived loss of German bourgeois *Kultur*, they were not wholly anti-modern or merely reactionary. Despite his love for tradition, Schlutze-Naumburg often turned to the modern world for design answers and inspiration. In the preface of *Hansbau* from 1903, for example, he wrote poetically of the technological sublime he saw in the railroad locomotive:

"Is there a truer or more powerful expression of energy functionally harnessed than the train? When this monstrosity approaches with glowing eyes, when it shoots through the large curve in the track, and later in the station sits coughing and all out of breath as it takes on the additional loads... is this not beautiful? Beauty is everywhere that powerful function is forced totally into existence."

These words recall the fascination with trains by the Impressionists a few years earlier, but also anticipate the glorification of speed and power by the Italian Futurists and the rest of the machine aesthetic of the avant-garde that coalesced a decade later.

Schlutze-Naumburg's admiration for modern technology translated to his personal life as well. He outfitted his houses with all the most modern electronics, and was one of the first people to own an automobile in Germany, replacing it regularly with the newest model. Living not far from Jena, he was a great fan of Zeiss cameras and lenses, the most modern in the world. One critic even hypothesized that some day Schlutze-Naumburg would be the first artist to travel in his own airplane. These new industrial products satisfied his demands of Sachlichkeit: they achieved a perfect fit of form, function, and beauty.

His admiration of functional, technological products is fundamental to understanding the primary purpose of the *Kulturarbeiten* to determine and establish a specifically German cultural heritage built on tradition that might serve as a basis for a similar sense of modern design in architecture.
and to codify the various national houses in order to counter foreign influences and the anonymity of mass production through regional differentiation. As Francesco Passanti has shown, this idea of an anonymous vernacular type had profound implications for the development of modern architecture. Muthesius's turn-of-the-century analysis of the English house and his call for the development of a specifically German house were part of this same effort as Schultze-Naumburg's. A few years later, the idea of the "type" would become central to Muthesius and other Werkbund reformers in their attempts to influence German design towards a modern, exportable standard. After being adopted by the Werkbund, an institution Schultze-Naumburg helped found, it was transformed slightly by Muthesius into an active rather than a passive process, whereby architects purposefully created conventional types. It was in part Le Corbusier's familiarity with these German architectural ideas, including Schultze-Naumburg's, that led him and others to reject the elitism of high art in favor of anonymous, collective production as the basis upon which to theorize the object type and modern architecture more generally. Indeed, this need to determine a modern, national architecture was behind much architectural reform in Germany until well into the 1920s.

Although he gave credit to William Morris and the English Arts and Crafts movement for starting international reform efforts towards simpler, more vernacular forms in domestic architecture, Schultze-Naumburg demanded as early as 1893 that the Germans develop their own national house and architecture. The Kulturarbeiten advocated picking up where such honest, German Heimat buildings had left off in 1890, appropriating the advances wrought by industry since then, and continuing the German traditions. Where functions had not radically changed, as was the case with the "German house," he felt the basic type should be maintained. This was the case with one of the few positive examples of contemporary architecture illustrated in the early Kulturarbeiten, Richard Riemerschmid's own house near Munich. Schultze-Naumburg praises how this "good modern house... fits perfectly into the Heimst conditions, develops old traditions but with new forms in which the old traditions have been updated for new conditions."

When new building types had to be invented, Schultze-Naumburg insisted that care should be taken to express their functions fully, simply, and objectively. This had been the case, he claimed, with the concrete grain silo, a relatively new building type, at least with this massive scale and new material. Much as he admired the modern locomotive, Schultze-Naumburg praised the modern industrial vernacular of concrete silos as early as 1908, well before Gropius, Le Corbusier, or even the populist illustrious Zeitung heralded the Sachlichkeit of these simple, functional volumes. By the time Schultze-Naumburg published the last volume of the original Kulturarbeiten series in 1923, and certainly by the time the last editions were released in 1924, he announced that the architectural situation had begun to improve in Germany. Influenced by the nationalism and technological pride of a country at war and the modern developments of Wilhelmshaven Germany, the
Schultze-Naumburg illustrated the concrete silos, Behrens' AEG Turbine Factory, and several Krupp industrial works as exemplars of a new, praiseworthy architecture. In these situations, he argued, Germany had been forced by a competitive world market to rid itself of the historicist straightjacket and to build simple functional buildings. He praised Behrens and other designers for helping elevate these designs beyond the merely functional, turning them into valued artifacts of Kultur, rather than merely products of Zivilisation. For Schultze-Naumburg, true design and the creation of authentic architecture was not the domain of overly rational engineers and purveyors of Zivilisation, but rather in the realm of Kultur. An effort by cultured architects and the entire German nation was now necessary to develop the same purity and simple functionalism in a modern German house and the rest of the German landscape.

Schultze-Naumburg's fascination with modern technology is key to understanding his contribution to the development of modern architecture. His love of vernacular architecture, both new and old, industrial and domestic, is part of a long architectural tradition that stretches back to Schinkel's trips to England and Italy, and Adolf Menzel's paintings of Industrial Berlin, and extends forward to Josef Hoffmann's trip to Capri and Le Corbusier's "Voyage d'Orient." But Schultze-Naumburg fundamentally changed the lessons to be taken from the vernacular. In the past, architects had absorbed primarily aesthetic lessons such as the informal, varied massing of Italian hill towns, or the unadorned structural rationalism of Manchester factories. Schultze-Naumburg, however, focused on process and the development of authentic architecture that continued the architectural typologies and culture of the Heimat, rather than on mere form. It was this lesson that Le Corbusier and the modern would take from him.

The emphasis on process over form in Schultze-Naumburg challenges some of the dichotomies that several scholars have proposed to understand the pre-war period's difficult mix of modernity and tradition. Passanti, for example, has differentiated the "vernacular modernism" of Muthesius and the Helmstidt, from the "modern vernacular" of Le Corbusier and the modern movement. The former, he claims, sought to update strictly local conventions and typologies to accommodate modern lifestyles, but for the most part retained the formal model of the local vernacular. In contrast, the latter rejected the forms of the local vernacular, but sought to emulate their evolutionary process to create a new, modern vernacular, a family of functional forms that were constantly updated and built on each other. In the context of the essays in this volume, the former sought to continue German and Nordic formal traditions as the path to modern architecture, while the latter took their lessons from the Mediterranean and Southern vernaculars and applied them more abstractly to generate an "international" architecture. Although Schultze-Naumburg's conservative architectural designs, as well as the photos of Ufa stock architecture that fill the Kulturarchitekten, identify him as part of the Muthesius circle, his fascination with modern technology and the associated forms clearly also aligns him with aspects of Le Corbusier's "modern vernacular."

In his insightful studies of the subtle variations in the use of tradition and convention in pre-World War I architecture, Stanford Anderson has created a similar dichotomy between the ideas of Schultze-Naumburg and Muthesius, and modern architects such as Loos and Le Corbusier. He contrasted Schultze-Naumburg's embrace of only a single cultural patrimony — and with it the rejection of foreign influences — with Loos's more critical approach that he calls "critical conventionalism," which embraces elements of multiple traditions and conventions according to modern needs. Although Schultze-Naumburg was clearly more conservative and less catholic in his studies of precedents than the dominant architects of the International avant-garde, the fundamental lessons he drew from the vernacular and modern technological products were nearly identical. Schultze-Naumburg's admonishment against copying the past, or even the neighbors, and against the arbitrary and willfully new fashions of much modern design, even foreshadow critiques expressed only much later by modernists such as Adolf Behne and Le Corbusier, as the fascination with the machine started to blend with interests in the natural and the local.
Aligning Medium and Message

Arguably the most modern aspect of the Kulturarbeit was the feature that had the most influence on the development of modern architecture was the publication format. These books were not typical nineteenth-century treaties, historical discourses, or theoretical essays for architectural professionals or elite art lovers. They were propaganda: inexpensive picture books, mass media with some populist shock value, intended to make simple points to a very large audience. The handy, octavo-sized books were available in either soft or hard cover, purchased through subscription or at news stands. More like cheap novels than traditional architectural texts, they enjoyed almost instant success and set an important precedent for modern architectural titles of its day.

In order to secure a large readership for his ideas, Schultz-Naumburg published the first sections of the Kulturarbeit books in serialized format in the popular magazine Der Kunstwart (Warde of the Arts), where he himself served as art editor. Foundationed in 1887 by Ferdinand Avenarius, this magazine's nationalist edge assured a sympathetic audience, as it was similarly dedicated to “all the important questions and dilemmas concerning the arts of the day,” and tried to combat “all that was false, artificial, and spurious in German art.” It was part of a late-nineteenth-century explosion of bourgeois art and cultural magazines throughout Europe that provided key fora in the fights for the renewal of culture and insured the eventual success of modern art and architecture in Germany.95 These journals were the direct antecedents to the many avant-garde architectural publications that helped promote modern architecture after World War I.96

The Kulturarbeit and Der Kunstwart, in turn, were built upon two larger group of interrelated publications and periodicals that circulated Schultz-Naumburg's ideas. As a founding member and leading ideologue of many of the important pre-war reform organizations such as the Dörnburg, the Heimatschutzbund, the Munich Secession, the Deutsche Gartenstadt Gesellschaft (German Garden City Association), and the Werkbund. He was in a key position to disseminate his message as widely as possible.97

As part of his widespread, grassroots campaign to save the German cultural landscape and establish a modern house, Schultz-Naumburg announced in 1905: “the main emphasis of our work in the future is to be propagating, to ensure a better understanding and vision.” His propaganda educated a broad public about his ideas, maligning opposing views, and countered allegedly false “counter-propaganda.” He waged real press wars, published with a bellicose vocabulary, which featured “campaigns,” “firefighters,” “enemies,” and “strikes” against contemporary architecture and forces such as the tax-rupturing manufacturers, who opposed his calls for more aesthetic roof shapes and roofing materials.
known through Muthesius and a general interest by German reformers in the English Arts and Crafts movement, contains both similar graphic comparisons and an ideology of nostalgia for a more wholesome past. But Schultze-Naumburg did not look back exclusively to a pre-industrial past as did Pugin, and his plethora of real-life photographs drove home the points much more realistically than Pugin's pen and ink fantasies.

The philosophical dichotomy of Kultur/Zivilisierung and Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft that Schultze-Naumburg delineated also made comparisons a natural tool. The influence of the art historian Heinrich Wölffin, who was developing the comparative method of art historical research used to determine the development of formal stylistic traits during these same years, cannot be discounted.45

In her analysis of the contemporary architectural and cultural historians Josef Strzygowski, Wilhelm Worringer, and Oswald Spengler, the historian Ulysses Gault-Johnson has even suggested that the comparative method was indispensable to any critical discussion of architecture during this period.46

Martin Warnke has suggested even more broadly that most architecture through history has been built in "competition" or "ideological opposition" to other buildings, making comparisons fundamental to the design process, and to interpretation.47

Schultze-Naumburg and Modern Architecture

In the heated ideological battles to redefine German culture and promote distinct visions of modern architecture, architects and writers of all classes increasingly resorted to simple juxtaposed photographs and eventually the related technique of photo-collage to reinforce their architectural ideas.48

The techniques reached their most provocative extremes in the late 1930s and early 1950s. Popular illustrated magazines such as Der Uhu as well as professional journals such as Werner Hagemann's Wasmuths Monatshefte ignited public opinion and fanned the flames of these battles.49

response to the Heimatstutz campaigns, for example, the progressive architect Bruno Taut edited an aerial of his own housing development to "highlight where the enemy camp lay. The critics Adolf Behne and Sigfried Giedion used similar techniques. The more conservative Stuttgart architect Schultze-Naumburg also adopted Hans Scharoun's mechanistic "machine for living" at the Weissenhof housing exhibit, and compared it unfavorably to Goethe's beloved garden house.50

As Schultze-Naumburg's message and technique of reform began to take hold after the first decade of the century, however, he held on tenaciously to such straightforward visual comparisons.51

As his colleague Ferdinand Avenarius wrote, the "crass technique" which "had been necessary to open people's eyes," was by then no longer quite as essential because of the changes that had already begun to effect.52

In the greatly revised and reshaped edition of the last three volumes of the Kunsthistoriker from 1935, for example, Schultze-Naumburg juxtaposed the Weissenhof with Santorini, or Ernst May's and Bruno Taut's housing developments with old prisons and more "schematic" developments. Rather than good-bad comparisons, these pairs operated through guilt by association – both were seen as negative. The book's cover, however, still contrasted Le Corbusier's "foreign" looking Weissenhof duplex with a grand old house from the Heimat. Either way, his antipathy towards the stylized Neue Bauhaus was obvious.

It was, in part, in reaction to the effectiveness of Schultze-Naumburg's publicity effort that many modern architects launched their own campaigns. More than just promoting certain reforms, I contend that his early use of photographic comparisons and partisan arguments played a decisive role in recruiting German architects into the opposing and increasingly polarized camps described in his 1926 Der Uhu article. Modern architects of all persuasions mined his propaganda for disparate causes. Conservatives clung to the romantic, nationalist, and anti-Mediterranean spirit recalled by the early nineteenth century, to the values of handicraft and artisanship, and to the forms of older German architecture as the pitched roof. More progressive architects valued the emphasis on international trends, tectonic construction, the lack of ornament, and simple functional forms, but also the vernacular's tendency constantly to update itself to accommodate new conditions, even industrialization.

Eventually, the German architecture from "round 1800" represented for both camps not just an aesthetically and symbolically appropriate past, but the basis for a homegrown, modern German architectural aesthetic that no longer relied on history and a classical, Mediterranean precedent. In rebuttal to Schultze-Naumburg's article in Der Uhu, for example, the young modernist Hug Hüning sought to claim the mantle of "homegrown" for modern architects. He even stooped to the same kind of racist arguments, but now in reverse. He proclaimed that Schultze-Naumburg's Lim 1800 classicism represented an intrusion into Nordic culture, "a foreign element, derived from the Orient, Greece, and Rome," and thus "more closely associated with Mongo led and Negro blood," than the architecture of the New Building. Hüning complained that traditional house builders were in fact the purveyors of a "Greek and Latin heritage, and as a result were "outfitting the Nordic landscape with an architecture of Mediterranean peoples" that did not belong in "our Nordic cultural landscape." The "purity" and purity of modern architecture was thus closely associated with cultural and even racial purity. Both camps, modernists and traditionalists, were increasingly anti-Mediterranean.
Although Schultz-Naumburg's propagandistic techniques and the rejection of the stylishly modern and the Mediterranean in 1929 were similar to the messages in the _Kulturarbeiten_ from 1900, the message of later books such as _Das Geist des deutschen Hauses_ had begun to change dramatically. Eventually growing xenophobia, outright racism, and blatant anti-Semitism led Schultz-Naumburg to condemn diversity and all foreign ideas in favor of Germanic "purity." His pre-war writings did refer to a German nationalist architecture and a common Nordic spirit, and did make connections between architecture and bourgeois nationalist politics in the Um 1800 period. But, as we have seen by looking occasionally at the work of Muthesius and Loos, similar ideas could be found in a broad spectrum of reformers of the day. After World War I, Schultz-Naumburg's ever greater politically motivated conflation of architecture, physiognomy, and national identity began to alter not only the tone of his writings, but his target audience. He found increasing ideological support in popular theories of eugenics that were circulating all over the world, and financial and political support in the right-wing factions that were blooming in Germany. These eventually led him to close personal associations with Adolf Hitler, Alfred Rosenberg, and the top Nazi ideologues. His writings changed from focusing on architectural and cultural reform, to promoting specific political and racial agendas.

But even with the dogmatic adherence to German traditional rural forms and an extremely racist and nationalist ideology in his late writings and in his architectural designs, attempts to bind his turn-of-the-century reform efforts to the Nazi ideology that actually crystallized only decades later can be greatly misleading. Mark Jarzombek, for example, awkwardly sidesteps the well-documented progressive influence of the Werkbund and publications such as the _Kulturarbeiten_ on modern architecture, when he implicates the reformers in a carefully scripted bourgeois plot to find a suitable nationalist identity for modern Germany through the applied arts. The attention to quality, craft, and a harmonious design culture promoted by the Werkbund, Jarzombek claims, helped set in place and legitimate highly stereotypical ideas about art, architecture, and an aesthetic culture which, in the decades after World War I, were exploited by reactionary cultural critics such as Schultz-Naumburg and other Nazis. Here Muthesius and Behrens are analyzed alongside Schultz-Naumburg as examples of Stern's "cultural despair." Similarly, by labeling Tessenow's earliest pre-World War I ideas "proto-fascist" rather than simply a popular and romantic "critique of capitalism," K. Michael Hays risks making his history more operant than factual. Such arguments are easily tainted by anachronisms and teleological arguments. They overlook changing political and cultural contexts, and minimize the role of changing contexts and audiences.

Schultz-Naumburg's nationalist rhetoric and polarizing use of stark contrasts in the _Kulturarbeiten_ helped set the tone and direction for subsequent architectural polemics in modern Germany. By focusing his critiques exclusively on Germany and denigrating foreign imports, especially those from the Orient and the Mediterranean, Schultz-Naumburg's _Kulturarbeiten_ were instrumental in shaping a trend for much of German modern architecture away from classical and foreign traditions and eclectic styles—many of which were associated with the Mediterranean. Instead German architects increasingly valued regional authenticity and place as prime determinants of modern architecture. Although clearly influenced by precedents and developments from abroad, the development of modern architecture in Germany remained at its core a nationalist and anti-Mediterranean one.

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7.13 Adolf Behne's comparison of a stuffy Wilhelmine-era parlor and women's fashion, the functionally furnished "Co-op Zimmer" by Hannes Meyer, and the "Now Man" in sporty tennis outfit.

Source: Adolf Behne, Else Steinbrück-Architektur, 1932.
MODERN ARCHITECTURE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

Vernacular Dialogues and Contested Identities

Edited by Jean-François Lejeune and Michelangelo Sabatino

Like the best cultural history of our day, this book follows people and forms, ideals and myths, across distances large and small. I have no doubt that this will quickly become a key book among architectural historians, as well as geographers and cultural historians. It will also have great appeal for present-day architects and landscape architects, all of whom are grappling with these themes.

Gwendolyn Wright, Professor of Architecture, Columbia University

This extensively-illustrated collection, which ranges across well-known and little-known cases (from Le Corbusier, Dimitri Pikionis and Louis Kahn, to Luigi Figini, Aris Konstantinidis or Sedad Eldem), summarizes existing research and opens new avenues, thereby establishing itself as a critical reference point not just for the architectural notion of the Mediterranean, but for modernist architecture in general.

J.K. Birksted, The Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London
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