

Franz Kugler

Review of:

Michel Espagne, Bénédicte Savoy, Céline Trautmann-Waller, *Franz Theodor Kugler. Deutscher Kunsthistoriker und Berliner Dichter*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin, 2010, ISBN 978-3-05-004645-7, ix + 251 pp, 35 black/white images.

This slim volume brings together recent scholarship on one of the most important cultural figures of the nineteenth century, Franz Kugler (1808-1858), whose principal spheres of activity are indicated by the subtitle, 'German art historian and Berlin poet'. The essays assembled represent a welcome surge of new interest in Kugler. Although his significance has long been recognized in Germany, the existing literature is surprisingly sparse, dispersed across disciplines and focused studies of particular aspects of his brief but prolific career. Among English-language scholars he remains little known outside the literature on Jacob Burckhardt (1818-1897), his most prominent student and collaborator, and highly specialized studies in areas where he made important early contributions, such as medieval manuscripts, architectural history, and Renaissance painting. His texts are mostly unavailable in English, aside from nineteenth-century translations of his immensely popular *Geschichte Friedrichs des Grossen* (Leipzig, 1840; *Life of Frederick the Great*, London, 1844 and subsequent editions) and his *Handbuch der Geschichte der Malerei von Constantin dem Grossen bis auf die neuere Zeit* (Berlin, 1837; *Handbook of the History of Painting*, London, 1842, and many revised editions to 1911). His *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte* (Handbook of Art History, Stuttgart, 1842), arguably the first global survey text, was not translated, although the atlas of illustrations published to accompany it (Stuttgart, 1851-56) appeared with English text in New York in the 1880s. Both handbooks constitute early, if not quite the first, surveys of their respective subjects, yet their roles in shaping English-language art history have received only scant attention.

The essays in this volume are expanded versions of talks delivered at a public conference sponsored by the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences in December 2008, marking the anniversaries of Kugler's birth and death. As stated by the editors, the goal was to restore Kugler to his rightful place in the history of *Kunstwissenschaft*, to commemorate his role in the urban culture of Berlin, and to illuminate points of connection between art history and cultural history (p. viii). Like the earlier Kugler scholarship, these essays are drawn from a number of fields and written from different viewpoints, and they make only occasional reference to each other or to work on Kugler across fields. The brief introduction (barely three pages) offers no synthesis, only a cursory overview of the essays to follow. Kugler's prominent place in the history of the study of art is thus confirmed, but the specific nature of that place remains indistinct.

The different perspectives adopted by the individual authors, even those working within a single discipline, reflect both the richness of scholarship on the early nineteenth century and the extent to which many key issues remain open to debate. The differences

are most notable among the art historians, and, in turn, these reflect the still rudimentary, and somewhat contentious, state of scholarship on art history in Germany in this period. Among several open questions is the role played by the philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) in the formative early years of the discipline before about 1840. As a student in the late 1820s, Kugler heard Hegel lecture, yet scholars differ on the extent to which his work was informed, if at all, by Hegelian ideas. Some of the essays in this volume provide significant advances on this and other questions, yet the need remains for a systematic examination of Kugler's initial training and intellectual formation.¹

Although Kugler himself worked in a period when modern disciplinary boundaries were only just beginning to take shape, these essays mostly approach him from within those boundaries. His work in art history is examined by the art historians Heinrich Dilly, Johannes Rößler, Hubert Locher, and Henrik Karge, with an additional essay contributed by the interdisciplinary scholar Michèle Espagne. Kugler's writings on the art of his own time are considered by another group of art historians, Adrian von Buttlar, Hubertus Kohle, Andrea Meyer, and Killian Heck, with further contributions by the historian Leonore Koschnick and the *Germanist* Céline Trautmann-Waller. Koschnick and another historian, Bärbel Holtz, cover Kugler's work as an official in the Ministry of Culture, while the literary scholars Anike Rössig, Roland Berbig, and Rainer Hillenbrand examine his active role in the literary life of Berlin.

Heinrich Dilly, author of a still-foundational text in the historiography of art history,² provides valuable insight into a number of specific issues in his essay, 'Kunsthistorische Studien, "weniger mit der Schreibfeder als mit dem Zeichenstift gemacht", Franz Kuglers Zeichenkunst' (Art-historical studies, 'made less with the writing quill than the drawing pencil', Franz Kugler as draughtsman). In a brief initial consideration of Kugler's portrait drawings, he gives a close reading of the well-known image of Hegel at the lectern (*Hegel am Katheder*) that challenges the recent a-historical over-reading by Dan Karlholm.³ Dilly rejects both the common assumption that the image shows Hegel pausing during a lecture to consult his notes and another that the three students standing before the lectern are waiting for Hegel to sign their proof of attendance documents. Instead, Dilly sees it as representing, and gently critiquing, Hegel's adherence to the old test format of the disputation and thus consistent with Kugler's oft-cited rejection of philosophical speculation. While the reading as a disputation requires more documentation, Dilly is surely correct that the image

¹ For Kugler's training see my essay in this issue, 'Art history in the university: Toelken – Hotho – Kugler'.

² *Kunstgeschichte als Institution. Studien zur Geschichte einer Disziplin*, Frankfurt am Main, Surhkamp, 1979.

³ Lithograph, 1828; Goethe-Museum, Frankfurt; Goethe-Museum, Düsseldorf; and Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach. Dan Karlholm, *The Art of Illusion. The Representation of Art History in Nineteenth-century Germany and Beyond*, Bern, 2004, 17-24, takes the drawing as a sign of Kugler's rejection of philosophy/text as the basis of art history in favor of the specifically visual.

functioned as a memento for Kugler's three friends to include in friendship-albums commemorating their student days.

Dilly also provides a sensitive and nuanced overview of Kugler's use of images in his publications, concisely situating this in the history of book production and reproductive technologies. Despite his own claim that his art-historical studies were 'made less with the writing quill than the drawing pencil',⁴ Kugler was consistently concerned, Dilly argues, to strike a balance between text and image in his scholarly publications, with each fulfilling a different role. In a brief examination of Kugler's drawings preserved in the Kunstbibliothek der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, Dilly expands on the role that drawings played in Kugler's work as an art historian. Tracings from books and prints, as well as small prints themselves (some cut from books), were combined to provide an overview of different views and details; Dilly speculates that Kugler took these along on his travels to check against his own observations. Many of Kugler's tracings are either partial views, which Dilly calls 'graphical excerpts' (*zeichnerische Excerpte*), or reductions made with the aid of a pantograph. Likewise, many of the drawings made on site are small, often minute, studies of ornamental details or profiles of architectural elements. The discussion closes with a suggestive but enlightening comparison of Kugler's approach to drawing with that of other art historians, principally Burckhardt and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle (1819-1897).

In his examination of Kugler as an architectural historian, Johannes Rößler extends the insights offered by Dilly and does much to illuminate Kugler's intellectual profile and thus his particular contribution to the formation of art history.⁵ Rößler argues that the study of architecture was not just a major element in Kugler's work as an art historian (he published regularly on architecture throughout his life), but that it provided the epistemological structure for that work, for Kugler's formal-morphological approach to art history would not have been possible without the terminological and developmental models provided by the history of architecture. The originality of Rößler's argument derives in large part from his consideration of two elements in Kugler's training thus far overlooked. As Kugler himself later recounted, it was the German philologist Friedrich Heinrich von der Hagen (1780-1856), one of his first professors in Berlin, who showed him how 'differences in style and their historical sequence' (*Styl-Unterschiede und deren geschichtliche Folge*) allow for the recognition of a regular development (*gesetzliche Entwicklung*) within a multiplicity of examples.⁶ Although it is fairly well known that Kugler also took courses at the Berlin Bauakademie with the architect Wilhelm Stier (1799-1856), Rößler is the first to give serious consideration to Kugler's notes from Stier's lectures preserved in the Kunstbibliothek. The notes show Stier to have been a primary source for Kugler's focus on the function of individual elements within larger architectural systems and a reinforcement of von der Hagen's derivation of

⁴ *Kleine Schriften und Studien zur Kunstgeschichte*, 3 volumes, Stuttgart, 1853-54, 1 (1853): v.

⁵ Rößler recently published an important study of German art history in the period 1850-1900: *Poetik der Kunstgeschichte. Anton Springer, Carl Justi und die ästhetische Konzeption der deutschen Kunstwissenschaft*, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 2009.

⁶ Kugler, *Kleine Schriften*, 1 (1853): 101.

developmental laws from the observation of historical sequences. Through discussion of specific issues, such as domes and round arches in ancient architecture, Rößler demonstrates how Kugler departed from the pragmatic, additive histories of immediate predecessors like Aloys Hirt (1759-1837). Examining the same cache of drawings as Dilly, Rößler comes to similar conclusions, demonstrating how Kugler used tracings, 'graphical excerpts', reductions, and detail studies (on site and from prints) to assemble visual material for analysis and comparison. Kugler's use of drawings for close visual analysis marked a significant departure from the picturesque renderings of his Romantic contemporaries. Rößler then connects this empirical study back to Kugler's early training in philology, drawing a brief connection between Kugler's art-historical method and descriptive, comparative, and anti-normative linguistic theories as formulated in Jacob Grimm's *Deutsche Grammatik* (1819). While this connection needs further development, it is a highly salutary corrective to the still somewhat common tendency to see Kugler as following Hegelian models. Rößler shows quite clearly that Kugler's thought is neither dialectical nor based in reflection theory, and that it is more properly to be situated in the parallel stream of historical thought associated with Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768-1834), Friedrich Carl von Savigny (1779-1861) and Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886).

Michel Espagne's essay, 'Kugler and Burckhardt', also seeks to situate Kugler's thought outside the Hegelian orbit, and it, too, points to further avenues of investigation. After a chronological overview of Burckhardt's training and early career as Kugler's student and then colleague, Espagne demonstrates that the revision of Kugler's two handbooks in the later 1840s, usually seen as Burckhardt's work under Kugler's direction, was actually a collaboration. In these revisions, Espagne emphasizes two key elements, the initial 'discovery' of the Renaissance as a distinct period and a turn away from a deductive, Hegelian approach to finding the internal, developmental laws of art toward an inductive-empirical method and a broader conception of art as an integral element in the larger culture of its time. The contribution of Espagne's essay lies in his suggestive, if somewhat schematic, argument for placing this decisive shift toward an empirical cultural history in the years between the publication of the *Handbook of the History of Painting* in 1837 and the *Handbook of Art History* in 1842, that is roughly in the first years that Kugler and Burckhardt worked together. (Burckhardt attended Kugler's lectures on the history of architecture in winter 1839/40, and they very soon established a close mentor-student relationship.) As evidence, Espagne offers brief comparisons of the painting handbook with both the general handbook and lesser known publications of this period, including the small book on the Schlosskirche at Quedlinburg (1838) and the *Pommersche Kunstgeschichte* (1840).⁷ He sees these texts as bringing together the appreciation of art (*Kunstbetrachtung*) with historical method (*historische Methode*), developing lessons learned from von der Hagen (he cites the same passage from the

⁷ Kugler's co-author for the Quedlinburg text was Carl Ferdinand Ranke (1802-1876), director of the Gymnasium in Göttingen, not, as Espagne states, 'Kugler's Berlin colleague' and Carl Ferdinand's brother, the historian Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886).

Kleine Schriften as Rößler) and from the *Italienische Forschungen* (1827-31) of Karl Friedrich von Rumohr (1745-1843), already cited by Kugler as a methodological model in the painting handbook. Espagne concludes that Burckhardt's own cultural history should be investigated not as an expansion or overcoming, but rather as the continuation of what he inherited, and jointly created, with Kugler. In this he is surely right, and much remains to be done as well to situate Kugler as himself continuing the work of his own teachers.

In his essay 'Franz Kugler und Karl Schnaase – zwei Projekte zur Etablierung der "Allgemeinen Kunstgeschichte"' (Franz Kugler and Karl Schnaase – two projects for the establishment of 'universal art history'), the Schnaase scholar Henrik Karge presents a concise and very readable overview of the relationship between these two central figures. Drawing on the available manuscript and printed sources, he demonstrates the mutual respect they shared and their minimal personal contact up to the time of Schnaase's (1798-1875) move to Berlin in 1848. In keeping with one of the volume's themes, Karge contributes an account of their respective roles in the cultural life of Berlin down to Kugler's death in 1858. Another focus of the essay is a comparison of Kugler's art history survey, published in 1842, with Schnaase's multi-volume survey, the first volume of which appeared in 1843 with a dedication to Kugler. Karge takes as his starting point Burckhardt's observation from 1845 that where Kugler's goal was to be as comprehensive as possible and to provide a morphological ordering, Schnaase's was to provide a philosophical (*geschichtsphilosophisch*) grounding for artistic styles and historical processes. Rejecting the later view that these approaches are opposing, rather than complementary as Burckhardt had argued, Karge demonstrates differences and shared foundations. Common to both is a striving for totality in the conception and analysis of the object of study of the emerging discipline, including attempts to include non-European art. Karge rightly attributes this expansion beyond Europe to more than just the fascination with newly discovered 'exotic' cultures, briefly but suggestively noting a parallel with comprehensive surveys in other disciplines in the 1830s and 1840s. As a particularly relevant example, he cites the Hegel student Karl Rosenkranz (1805-1879), who argued for a bringing together of the empirical and the speculative as in his handbook of the history of literature (*Handbuch einer allgemeinen Geschichte der Poesie*, 1832-33). Noting the close connection between Rosenkranz and Kugler, Karge observes that the latter's adoption of Hegel's period concepts 'classic' and 'romantic' is more than merely incidental.

Still, like Rößler, Karge finds Kugler's approach to be fundamentally different from the dialectical models of Hegel and Schnaase. He grounds Kugler's comprehensive morphological ordering of the history of art with a passing reference to the rationalist models of French architectural history (citing only one example) and a superficial connection to morphological models from the natural sciences, specifically the already out-dated taxonomical models of the eighteenth century exemplified by Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778). He thus finds Kugler's method deficient in its attention only to external factors (drawing only on a Foucauldian reading of Linnaeus in the secondary literature) at the expense of historical context. In contrast, he finds Schnaase's dialectical model more complex and more modern in its consideration of deep structures and the interaction of

art and culture. As Karge himself observes, the need remains for a thorough comparison of Kugler and Schnaase and for investigation into the as yet virtually unstudied early historiography of the history of style.

Hubert Locher, author of a significant art-historiographic survey,⁸ examines one particular aspect of Kugler's art-historical work in his essay 'Vorbild und Gegenbild – Franz Kuglers Darstellung von Italien und Frankreich in den Handbüchern der Kunstgeschichte' (Precedent and Contrast – Franz Kugler on Italy and France in the Handbooks of art history). Locher situates Kugler's two surveys, of the history of painting and of the history of art, as addressed to the expanding middle-class interest in art and as active participants in the construction of national identity. Alongside an unsupported reference to Hegel's 'historically grounded philosophy of art' (*historisch begründete Kunstphilosophie*), Locher convincingly if concisely demonstrates Kugler's debt to the cyclical models of historical development found in the works of Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768) and especially Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574). He then shows how Kugler placed Germany in relation to Italy and France in the historical development traced in national schools of painting and in the still-geographically organized general survey. This placement supported the culminating argument in the latter, in the chapter on art of the present, that placed Germany between Italy as guiding historical exemplar (*Leitbild*) and reference point and France as its modern opposite and envied model (*Vorbild*) (p. 81). Locher concludes by briefly showing how Kugler's work set the terms in which German-language art history, well into the twentieth century, continued to situate Germany within the general overview of European art since the middle ages.

The five essays on Kugler's engagement with the art of his own time each focus on specific topics. While all have something new to say on the questions they engage, some make a greater contribution than others to the broader historiographic question of Kugler's place in the history of the study of art. One of these is Adrian von Buttlar's essay, 'Kuglers Schinkel – eine Relektüre' (Kugler's Schinkel – a new reading), which examines Kugler's thrice-published text on the architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841).⁹ Noting that all modern Schinkel scholarship must make reference to this foundational work, von Buttlar undertakes to provide a more detailed and consequential reading of it in light of the last major study of Kugler, Leonore Koschnik's dissertation from 1985.¹⁰ Although there is little direct reference to Koschnik's work, the essay does offer a detailed and highly informative reading of Kugler's text, providing a concise but critical overview of its contents; positioning it as modeled on Vasari's lives, and thus in effect constituting a monograph that brings together life, work, and critical evaluation; and situating Kugler's specific concerns and conceptual apparatus within contemporary architectural debates. Consequently the primary focus falls on questions pertinent to architectural history and its historiography, leaving undeveloped the quickly drawn relation between what von

⁸ *Kunstgeschichte als historische Theorie der Kunst, 1750-1950*, Munich, Wilhelm Fink, 2001.

⁹ First published in the *Hallesche Jahrbücher* in 1838, it appeared, slightly revised, as a book in 1842. This was included, nearly unaltered, in the third volume of Kugler's *Kleine Schriften* (1854).

¹⁰ Leonore Koschnik, *Franz Kugler (1808-1858) als Kunstkritiker und Kulturpolitiker*, Dissertation, Freie Universität, Berlin, 1985.

Buttlar calls Kugler's blurring of observation and interest (*Erkenntnis und Interesse*) and contemporary art history in Berlin, which he describes as a self-acknowledged instrument of a bourgeois-democratic politics of art and culture.

Céline Trautmann-Waller identifies a common concern in Kugler's art history and art criticism in her essay, 'Kugler, Eggers und das Deutsche Kunstblatt oder die problematische "Verortung" der Kunst' (Kugler, Eggers, and the *Deutsche Kunstblatt*, or the problematic 'placing' of art). This commonality lies in Kugler's belief that both history and criticism must investigate the historical and geographic context of art and pay close attention to the actual conditions under which it exists in any given time and place. The essay focuses mainly on articles published in the *Deutsche Kunstblatt* (1850-1858), a joint project of Kugler and his younger colleague Friedrich Eggers (1819-1872). Trautmann-Waller demonstrates that, like Burckhardt, Eggers followed the lead of his mentor, such that the journal largely reflects Kugler's views (as seen in his writings of the 1830s), even if Eggers served as editor and produced more of the content.

The journal presented itself as the organ of the German art societies (*Kunstvereine*), and many of its articles examined the varied activities of those societies as the context for the production and reception of art under the changing conditions of modernity. Trautmann-Waller pays particular attention to the art societies as charitable organizations for the support of artists and to the new modalities they offered for exhibitions and for the dissemination of reproductions. She also demonstrates the mediating position of Kugler and Eggers in debates about whether art properly belonged in the public sphere, as monuments and decoration of public buildings, or in the private sphere, as part of daily life in bourgeois homes. In their considerations of the new mobility of art (through modern transport, more diverse exhibition venues, and reproductions) she finds that Kugler, Eggers, and their contemporaries took up several of the ideas considered by Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) in his well-known essay, 'The work of art in the age of its technical reproducibility' (published in 1936), albeit in slightly different terms and with greater attention to historical context. Where some bemoaned a loss of something like the 'aura', Kugler and Eggers, following their usual middle path, showed a willingness to grant the benefits of innovations (e.g. photography) tempered by an awareness of their sometimes 'perverting' effects. Trautmann-Waller concludes the essay with a survey of Eggers's articles on artists' studios as a move to return artworks to their place of origin and somehow restore their 'aura'. While the link to Benjamin remains somewhat forced, the overview of Eggers's articles indicates their significance as constructions of artistic identity in the period, especially since they oscillate between a concrete concern for artistic production and the mythologizing of the artist as creative genius.

The remaining three essays are more narrowly focused. Two consider Kugler's views on history painting, a hotly contested and much debated topic in art theory and criticism in the 1830s to 1850s. In 'Der Begriff der Historie bei Franz Kugler' (Franz Kugler's concept of history) Andrea Meyer examines Kugler's generally positive evaluation of Horace Vernet's (1789-1863) scenes from the French campaigns in Algeria in

his lecture of 1846 on the historical museum at Versailles.¹¹ Drawing on the earlier literature on Kugler, on Vernet's paintings, on the reconfiguration of history painting in the early to mid-nineteenth century, and on modes of viewing addressed to a wider public (e.g. dioramas and panoramas), she offers new observations on Kugler's concern with the paintings' effect on the viewer. Hubertus Kohle, author of a book on Adolph Menzel's (1815-1905) later paintings of scenes from the life of Frederick the Great, demonstrates that, after their collaboration on the *Geschichte Friedrich des Grossen*, the artist and the art historian traveled in the same circles but did not remain close. Available sources suggest that Menzel found Kugler's over-assiduous pursuit of culture (*Bildungsbeflissenheit*) unbearable and that Kugler did not appreciate Menzel's sense of humor and sometimes satirical take on the classical tradition. Kugler also faulted Menzel's earlier history pictures for distorting the balance between the real and the ideal and for departing too much from academic norms of composition and historicizing costume. Although direct statements are lacking, Kohle convincingly shows that Kugler most likely had the same negative opinion of Menzel's well known scenes from Friedrich's life painted in the 1850s. A similar concern for the proper balance between aesthetic manipulation and the replication of the real is examined in Killian Heck's essay, 'Das Bild als Dokument oder als Kunstdatur? Franz Kuglers Zeitschrift *Museum* und die darin rezensierten Gemälde Carl Blechens' (Image as document or artificial nature? Franz Kugler's journal *Museum* and the paintings by Carl Blechen reviewed therein).

Kugler's journalistic activities are conveniently surveyed in Leonore Koschnik's essay, 'Kugler as chronist der Kunst und preußischer Kulturpolitiker' (Kugler as chronicler of art and Prussian promoter of culture), drawing largely on the foundational work of her dissertation (also cited by nearly every author in this volume). Here Koschnik's survey of Kugler's work in the Prussian ministry for spiritual, educational, and medical affairs focuses on his reform plans for the academy of arts. In 'Franz Kuglers Amtspraxis' (Franz Kugler's bureaucratic practice) Bärbel Holtz, a historian who has published extensively on the ministry, provides many new insights by examining in detail Kugler's qualifications (and partial lack thereof) for his bureaucratic position, his status and responsibilities within the ministry as an official assigned to matters of art, and how he discharged his duties on a daily basis. As she notes, her research confirms the still indisputable forwardness of Kugler's thinking on state support for the arts but demonstrates that he often lacked the capacity or will to implement his visionary ideas. It also shows that here, as in so many other aspects of his life, he never quite resolved the conflicts inherent in the many roles he filled, in this case between those of bureaucrat and artist.

Finally, three essays consider different aspects of Kugler's active participation in the literary life of the Prussian capital. In 'Lessing oder Literatur und Künste. Franz Kugler im (literarisch-) kulturellen Vereinsleben Berlins' (Lessing or Literature and Arts. Franz Kugler in the literary and cultural life of Berlin societies), Anike Rössig gives a very

¹¹ 'Vorlesung über das historische Museum in Versailles und die Darstellung historischer Ereignisse in der Malerei (1846). Reprinted in *Kleine Schriften*, volume 3 (1854).

useful overview of Kugler's membership in the many societies (*Vereine*) that were such an important part of German urban culture in the early to mid-nineteenth century. She provides a detailed account of his participation (from 1849) in the literary society, *Tunnel über der Spree*, where he adopted the name 'Lessing', a reference to the eighteenth-century theorist and dramatist Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781). This was appropriate given Kugler's interest in both the visual arts, which he brought in to the activities of the *Tunnel* in various ways, and writing for the stage, which he did with some success in the 1840s and 1850s. Roland Berbig's essay, 'Ein glückliches Maklertalent. Franz Kugler als literarischer Förderer' (A fortunately talented literary middleman. Franz Kugler as promoter of literature) critically surveys Kugler's efforts to advance the careers of others across the many fields where he was active. Berbig comes to the somewhat surprising conclusion that in the literary arena those efforts were more limited, focused on three individuals, Paul Heyse (1830-1914), Emanuel Geibel (1815-1884), and Theodore Fontane (1819-1898).

Although placed next to last, Rainer Hillenbrand's essay, 'Poetischer Realismus und idealistische Realpolitik. Franz Kuglers Verknüpfung von Poesie und Politik im Vormärz' (Poetic realism and idealist *Realpolitik*. Franz Kugler's joining of poetry and politics in the *Vormärz*), affords a sort of conclusion to the volume, for it takes up and helps to sort out some of the key issues raised in the other essays. Editor of Kugler's letters to the young poet Geibel,¹² Hillenbrand starts from Kugler's critique of Geibel's poem, *An Georg Herwegh* (1842), written in praise of the then-topical revolutionary poet (1817-1875). From this, he develops a thoughtful, nuanced consideration of how Kugler's political views were congruent with his aesthetic views (primarily in literature but including the visual arts). Politically, he argues, Kugler in the 1840s rejected both radical revolution and reactionary stasis in favor of a middle position in support of measured reforms and sensible change (and thus constitutional monarchy). Just as he rejected political idealism and impractical romantic longing for battle in favor of concrete *Realpolitik*, so, too, did Kugler seek in the arts a balance between the abstract and the concrete, between the ideal and the real, between the universal and the particular. From this basis, and following Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), Kugler rejected overtly political poetry, like that of Herwegh, in favor of poetry (and art in general) that remained true to itself as art and effected social change through its organic relationship to culture as a whole. It is here that Hillenbrand offers his most widely useful insight, arguing that the contradiction between Kugler's commitment to detailed empirical research and his claims to encompass the whole is only apparent, because for Kugler every individual points to the whole (*jede Einzelheit verweist auf das Ganze*, p. 226). In a footnote (note 11), Hillenbrand sensibly counters the objection raised by some art historians at the conference that Kugler's survey texts dissolved the whole in a mass of morphological details and thus contained nothing of cultural history. He rightly observes that Kugler's concern was not, in fact, to provide examples of the later vogue for *Kulturgeschichte*. While this observation counsels a more careful use of the term, it should not distract from

¹² Rainer Hillenbrand, *Kugler's Briefe an Emanuel Geibel*, Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 2001.

recognizing how Hillenbrand's argument supports and partially extends that offered by Espagne. Hillenbrand points out that Kugler, like Burckhardt, effectively separated detail-oriented, inductive art-historical work from the writing of larger, more general histories and avoided the systematic thought of Hegel, with its interpretation of individual phenomena by deduction from general principles. Throughout the essay, Hillenbrand draws brief but well-founded links between Kugler's thought and both romantic and classical aesthetics, looking for specific points of comparison and wisely (and in the spirit of Kugler himself) avoiding easy labels and unfounded generalizations.

In conclusion, this collection of essays should prove both frustrating and exciting to scholars who work on the history of art, literature, and culture in early nineteenth-century Germany. Frustration arises from the brief but restricted scope of the essays with their beginnings in conference papers, which logically prevents the authors from developing their new insights and following potentially fruitful avenues of investigation. Frustrating, too, is the way in which now-current disciplinary boundaries still impede the truly interdisciplinary work necessary for following those new avenues in the period when such boundaries were still in formation. Excitement arises, however, from many of the same factors, in that these essays as a group indicate just how much work remains to be done on Kugler without fully, or restrictively, describing where such work needs to begin.

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