

## Towards an 'exakte Kunstwissenschaft'(?)\*

A report on some recent German books on the progress of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century art history.

Part I: Work by German art historians on nineteenth Century art-historiography since 2000:

Review of:

Wojciech Bałus and Joanna Wolańska, eds., *Die Etablierung und Entwicklung der Kunstgeschichte in Deutschland, Polen und Mitteleuropa* (establishing and developing the history of art in Germany, Poland and Central Europe; also a Polish title), Warsaw: Instytut Sztuki PAN 2010

Gabriele Bickendorf, 'Die Berliner Schule ...', in: Pfisterer, *Klassiker*, vol. 1, 2007, 46-61

Gabriele Bickendorf, 'Die ersten Überblickwerke zur Kunstgeschichte (the first survey works on the history of art). D'Agincourt, Lanzi, Fiorillo, Cicognara', in Pfisterer, *Klassiker*, vol. 1, 2007, 20-45

*In der Mitte Berlins* (in the Centre of Berlin). *200 Jahre Kunstgeschichte an der Humboldt-Universität*, Horst Bredekamp and Adam S. Labuda, eds., Berlin: Mann, 2010

Franz Theodor Kugler, *Deutscher Kunsthistoriker und Berliner Dichter* (poet), Michel Espagne and Bénédicte Savoy, Céline Trautmann-Waller, eds. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2010<sup>1</sup>

Karin Hellwig, *Von der Vita zur Künstlerbiographie* (from the vita to the artist's biography), Berlin Akademie Verlag 2005

Henrik Karge, 'Carl Schnaase. Die Entfaltung der wissenschaftlichen Kunstgeschichte in 19. Jahrhundert' (the development of scientific art history in the 19th century), *Kunsthistorische Arbeitsblätter*, 2001, 7/8, 87 –100

Henrik Karge, 'Zwischen Naturwissenschaft und Kunstgeschichte. Die Entfaltung des Systems der Epochenstile im 18. Und frühen 19. Jahrhundert' (between the natural sciences and art history; the development of the system of style-labels /labels tied to/ epochs in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries), in Bruno Klein and Bruno Boerner, *Stilfragen zur Kunst des Mittelalters. Eine Einführung*, Berlin: Reimer 2006, 39-60

The author wishes to thank the Library of The Warburg Institute in London and the Kunstsbibliothek in Berlin for their unfailing help. The title is a paraphrase of Locher's characterisation of Rumohr's work as 'einer exakt und empirisch arbeitenden [working] historischen Wissenschaft', Locher, 228.

<sup>1</sup> See also the review by Eric Garberson in *Journal of Art Historiography* no. 5, 2011 and Michel Espagne, *Dictionnaire des historiens d'art allemands 1750-1950*, Paris: CNRS 2010.

- Henrik Karge, 'Franz Kugler und Carl Schnaase. Zwei Projekte zur Etablierung der "Allgemeinen (general) Kunstgeschichte"' in Michel Espagne, *Kugler*, 2010, 83-104
- Henrik Karge, Stilgeschichte versus Kulturgeschichte Zur Entfaltung der kunsthistorischen Methodik in den Jahrzehnten ab 1850 (history of style versus history of culture. The development of art historical methods in the decades form 1850), in Balus, Wolanska, *Etablierung*, 2010, 41-60
- Henrik Karge, 'Einleitung' to reprint of Carl Schnaase, *Niederländische Briefe* (Stuttgart und Tübingen: Cotta 1834), Hildesheim: Olms-Weidmann 2010
- Hubert Locher, *Kunstgeschichte als historische Theorie der Kunst, 1750-1950*, Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2001 (new ed. 2010)
- Katharina Krause and Klaus Niehr, eds, *Kunstwerk-Abbild-Buch. Das illustrierte Kunstbuch von 1730-1939* (work of art, representation, book. The illustrated art book), Munich, Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2007
- Ulrich Pfisterer, ed., *Klassiker der Kunstgeschichte. Vol. 1, Von Winckelmann bis Warburg*, Munich: Beck 2007
- Regine Prange, *Die Geburt der Kunstgeschichte. Philosophische Ästhetik und empirische Wissenschaft*, (The birth of art history. Philosophical aesthetics and empirical science), Cologne: Deubner, 2004
- Johannes Rößler, *Poetik der Kunstgeschichte. Anton Springer, Carl Justi und die ästhetische Konzeption der deutschen Kunstwissenschaft* (poetics of art history, Anton Springer, Carl Justi an the aesthetic conception of German science of art), Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2009
- Andrea Schütte, *Stilräume. Jacob Burckhardt und die ästhetische Anordnung im 19. Jahrhundert* (Spaces for Style, Jacob Burckhardt and the Dispositions of the Aesthetic in the 19th Century), Bielefeld: Aisthesis 2004
- Christine Tauber, *Jacob Burckhardts 'Cicerone'. Eine Aufgabe zu Genießen* (a task to enjoy), Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2000

## Introduction

In the last dozen or so years German-speaking art history has built up a substantial body of work dealing with itself, with its own history. The investigations range widely from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, but a great many of them concentrate on the decades which are held to mark the introduction of the history of art as a 'proper' *Wissenschaft* - a fully recognised academic study - during the decades 1820-1880. The exact choice of words, '*Kunstgeschichte*', '*Kunstwissenschaft*', or '*die universitäre Kunstgeschichtsschreibung*', '*academic art historiography*', is therefore, of little significance. Their use is almost synonymous in most works on the subject.

As a result of their comprehensiveness, it was felt that the works by Hubert Locher, Regine Prange and Johannes Rößler should take pride of place. Together - that is, taken one by one - they make up Part I of the report. The other authors are

principally dealt with in Part II, which acts as a kind summary, being divided into issues. For the sake of overall clarity, however, and in order to provide a temporal continuity, some of the work by the other authors, notably that of Gabriele Bickendorf, Henrik Karge and Andrea Schütte, is mentioned in Part I as well. A somewhat awkward result of these divisions is that the thoughts about the major protagonists, such as Karl Schnaase or Anton Springer, occur several times, within each of the accounts of the major books.

The chief purpose here is to try to provide a summary; hence this article is being called a report, rather than a review. The more modest-sounding term has also been chosen out of respect for the wealth of thought these new writings contain; for their interdisciplinary breadth and philosophical depth. A significant limitation of this report is that it only occasionally mentions the Vienna School of Art History, reflecting a kind of tacit separation between the art histories of Austria and Germany.

Once again, the issue at stake is the 'founding of the discipline', that is, the origin and contents of art history as a self-contained subject of the highest academic rank. The concepts established during the nineteenth century have been the accepted wisdom for all Western art historians trained until at least the 1980s. It is important to note that this awareness of innovation - one must call it a historical awareness - was present from the very beginning; it drove the efforts of the chief protagonists themselves, of Carl Freiherr von Rumohr, Franz Kugler, Schnaase, Springer, Carl Justi, of Rudolf Eitelberger and Moriz Thausing in Austria, and of Jacob Burckhardt in Switzerland. The last mentioned remained a household name during the whole of the twentieth century, while the others continued to be cited with respect. It must furthermore be stressed that the main concern here is for the generation that preceded the best known names in late nineteenth and early twentieth century art history, such as Heinrich Wölfflin, Alois Riegl and Aby Warburg. Their best known contributions are their methodological innovations; however in a broader sense their academic pursuits rested firmly on the achievements and innovations of the previous mid-century generation. It is the latter who are here considered the founders, those who established a separate academic framework for art history of the kind that had not existed before. The training for Warburg, Wölfflin, Riegl and all of their colleagues was in art history, or principally so. For the previous generation no such thing was available.

To begin with we must note two factors which are so general that one rarely reflects on them as such: Germanicity, institutionalisation, and the actual nature of the text, the style of writing. Firstly, it appears that only Gabriele Bickendorf - who had previously worked extensively on Italian art history writing of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries - points to the astounding phenomenon that: 'since 1820 art history became Germanised', though Locher's book must be noted for its inclusion of much non-Germanic matter.<sup>2</sup> In no way does this mean that German art historians centred their work on German-speaking countries - the question of a national German art was then a subsidiary issue and will be mentioned in Part II. Germanisation here means that any Western art, such as Italian art, was discussed

<sup>2</sup> 'Seit 1820 wurde die Kunstgeschichte germanisiert', Gabriele Bickendorf, *Die Historisierung der italienischen Kunstbetrachtung im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Berlin: Mann, 1989, 12.

by Germans with Germans. Secondly, it would seem impossible to discuss the origin and development of a *Wissenschaft* without paying attention to its institutional framework. Some decades ago Heinrich Dilly devoted a pioneering study exclusively to this issue. The 1850s-1870s were indeed the period in which the universities of the German-speaking lands instituted the first chairs in the subject, long before such as thing could be found in almost any other country.<sup>3</sup> However, in the newer investigations dealt with here, the structures of institutionalisation receive much less attention. Arguably, for many of the earlier protagonists, such as Rumohr, Kugler or Schnaase, their actual job (if they had one), was not yet a significant factor as regards their intellectual development. In the case of Springer, Justi and Burckhardt, their new positions in the universities are here taken for granted.

The studies dealt with in this report concentrate on the written works, but not simply by paraphrasing what they contain and by putting those summaries together to form a string of ideas, as one finds it in the older histories of art history (Kultermann etc.), but by probing more deeply into their underlying thought processes. Firstly, in terms of a diversity of academic and mundane contexts (Locher). Secondly, in terms of the 'professional' philosophy of the day (Prange). Thirdly, and lastly, a more recent, and not yet taken for granted approach foregrounds not only the intellectual contexts but also deals with the history of the actual style of writing and of the literary genres with which the art historical books are linked, such as biography (Rößler). What then arises from the contributions of Prange and Rößler, and to a slightly lesser extent from Locher is, in the end rather surprising: the stress on an exact *Wissenschaft* cannot be maintained any more in any straightforward, factual sense, or, to use philosophical terms, as a positivistic, or empiricist one. On the contrary, the new art history appears deeply tied in with metaphysics and with literary conventions, however much its protagonists, such as Kugler, Burckhardt or Springer, tried to emphasise the strictly empiricist line. This also means that all claims of self-sufficiency and 'purity', of the subject's complete individuality as regards methods need to be challenged. The new art history was deeply enmeshed with many other academic fields. Part II will return to these very basic issues.

### The early 'Berliner Schule'

There is here a double beginning: by long-standing consent, the 'new art history' started in Berlin and it so happens that this Berlin circle formed the subject of a major early instance of a new kind of critical examination in the work of Gabriele Bickendorf.<sup>4</sup> Most useful is her summary in Ulrich Pfisterer's first volume of *Klassiker*. The crucial early writings are those by Gustav Friedrich Waagen and Carl Freiherr von Rumohr. Waagen's dissertation of 1822 on the van Eyck brothers first

<sup>3</sup> Heinrich Dilly, *Kunstgeschichte als Institution. Studien zur Geschichte einer Disziplin*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1979.

<sup>4</sup> It began with Gabriele Bickendorf, *Der Beginn der Kunstgeschichtsschreibung unter dem Paradigma 'Geschichte'*, Worms: Wernersche, 1985. For Rumohr cf. Alexander Bastek and Aschatz von Müller, eds., *Kunst, Küche und Kalkül. Carl Friedrich von Rumohr und die Entdeckung der Kulturgeschichte*. (Kat. Exh. Behnhaus Lübeck 2010), Petersberg: Imhof, 2010.

of all owes something to the new enthusiasm for the Northern European schools of painting generated by the Schlegels and the Boisserée brothers with their collection. Waagen leads the attention away from the long-standing legends of the van Eycks as inventors of oil painting. Instead he sets, in Bickendorf's words, their 'oeuvre into a [...] greater context of European art history' as well as stressing the artists' 'Naturalismus and the narrative qualities linked to that'.<sup>5</sup> Rumohr's great contribution, in his long study of Italian painting from the Byzantine mode up to Raphael (1827-1831), lay in the way he dispensed with the Vasarian teleology of the victorious Renaissance and replaced it with a view of 'a continuous succession of formal changes', based on changes – here Bickendorf quotes Rumohr himself, in the artists' "'künstlerischen Wollen'", the 'artistic volition'.<sup>6</sup>

The key characterisation of Waagen's and Rumohr's procedure was 'historisch'; theirs was the 'historical method'. This entailed a more critical use of all kinds of sources and a new kind of objectivity, a stress on the avoidance of normative judgments; for the new species of the Medievalist this principally meant the rejection of the Classical norms of art. In this respect the new art history aligned itself with the new Berlin 'critical history' (the '*Berliner Historische Schule*') of Leopold von Ranke and the new 'exact' philology of Georg Berthold Niebuhr.<sup>7</sup> Waagen subsequently considerably broadened his scope. In fact, through his travels he became the foremost authority on old master painting in the whole of Europe.

The major innovator in Berlin from the late 1830s into the 1850s was Franz Kugler. Here the rejection of art philosophy was stronger and the emphasis on historical accuracy took on models from the natural sciences, that is, mainly from the way biologists could order enormous masses of factual evidence. Kugler applied this to his vast surveys of the art of all periods and all nations on earth, establishing the genre of the universal art historical handbook.<sup>8</sup> It must be stressed that while Kugler's and most subsequent handbooks which were classified as art history, included Classical Antiquity, this subject had in fact just been split off from art history. German classical archaeologists henceforth practiced their own kind of art history.<sup>9</sup>

The next major figure who has been counted into the Berlin group was Carl Schnaase, although he never occupied an academic position and only settled in the city in 1848. Schnaase's first book, *Niederländische Briefe* of 1834 - recently republished with an incisive introduction by Henrik Karge - presented a highly

<sup>5</sup> 'Das oeuvre [...] im grossen Kontext der europäischen Kunstgeschichte'; 'Naturalismus und die damit verbundenen erzählerischen Qualitäten', Bickendorf in Pfisterer, 49, 50.

<sup>6</sup> Bickendorf in Pfisterer, 50.

<sup>7</sup> Gabriele Bickendorf, 'Visualität und Narrativität: Rumohrs Italienische Forschungen in einem methodischen Spannungsfeld', in: *Geschichte und Ästhetik. Festschrift für Werner Busch zum 60. Geburtstag*, Thomas Kirchner and Hubertus Kohle, eds, Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2005, 362-375.

<sup>8</sup> Franz Theodor Kugler. *Deutscher Kunsthistoriker und Berliner Dichter*, Michel Espagne & oth. eds, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2010.

<sup>9</sup> See also Marc Schalenberg, "'Berliner Schule": Kontexte und Konstituierung der Kunstgeschichte ca. 1820-1860', in: *Die Etablierung und Entwicklung der Kunstgeschichte in Deutschland, Polen und Mitteleuropa* (also a Polish title), Wojciech Bałus and Joanna Wolańska, eds., Warsaw: Instytut Sztuki PAN 2010, 105 – 116; cf. Eric Garberson, 'Art History in The University II: Toelken - Hotho – Kugler', *Journal of Art Historiography*, no 5, Dec. 2011; Eric Garberson, 'Art History in The University: Ernst Guhl', *Journal of Art Historiography*, no 7, Dec. 2012.

idiosyncratic mixture of trenchant analyses of artefacts, art-philosophical and general art historical reflections. With his eight volume work, *Geschichte der bildenden Künste* (1843-1879), Schnaase shared with Kugler the ambition to deal with all peoples and all periods, though his work was never completed, breaking off at the end of the Middle Ages. But Schnaase aimed 'higher' than Kugler. The discussion of art should rest on the fundamentals of a comprehensive history of politics and all cultural manifestations and Schnaase devoted long chapters purely to these matters, before he came to the discussion of monuments. All this was framed with incisive comments on the historian's general procedure which earned Schnaase such an important place in Michael Podro's sequence of the 'critical historians' of art.<sup>10</sup> More recently Henrik Karge has undertaken extensive analyses of Schnaase's work. Significantly, Karge sees a lack of connection between Schnaase's *Kulturgechichte* and his *Kunstgeschichte*. But he also stresses the new sophistication Schnaase showed in the discussion of the actual works, for instance in the case of the co-presence of late Romanesque and Early Gothic styles of architecture, which far surpasses the usual stylistic pigeon-holing and simple succession of styles of other contemporary handbooks.<sup>11</sup> Here one should point to the way in which all chapters in Schnaase are peppered with remarks on diverse specific 'Volkscharakter', sets of immensely strong stereotypes which according to him do have a direct influence on art, at least as regards the presence or absences of genres; for instance in the case the Poles, whose nobility, according to Schnaase, still essentially live on their horses and are therefore unable to excel in the field of architecture.<sup>12</sup> The Berlin art historians' work will be discussed again in the section on Prange.

Is the term 'School' in 'Berliner Schule der Kunstgeschichte' justified? Hardly, if we take it in its narrowest sense, as with the Wiener Schule der Kunstgeschichte, in the sense of the subject's self-contained existence, serving research and teaching in academe. Although there was some teaching of art history at the new Berlin University, the situation in this respect from the 1820s-1870s remained very unclear. The first 'ordentliche' professor, Herman Grimm – to be mentioned again much later on – was only installed in 1873. The key institution in Berlin was the new museum, of which Waagen became the first director (of the collection of paintings). This new environment guaranteed a high degree of connoisseurial exactitude and a high academic probity. A basic notion of state support and state recognition for 'Bildung', for the furtherance of cultural education also characterised all efforts in Berlin in those decades and the museum to be a place for the education of the broader public; Kugler likewise saw his task as such a double one. In more strictly methodological terms, Bickendorf does not want to come out with any sharp conclusion either for the Berlin 'school'. Hegel's influence whose lectures on aesthetics in the 1820s could be considered a quasi universal art history, she considers negligible. Rather, she stresses the impact of Herder's theory

<sup>10</sup> Michael Podro, *The Critical Historians of Art*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983.

<sup>11</sup> Karge most recently: 'Stilgeschichte versus Kulturgeschichte: Zur Entfaltung der kunsthistorischen Methodik in den Jahrzehnten ab 1830', in: *Die Etablierung und Entwicklung der Kunstgeschichte in Deutschland, Polen und Mitteleuropa* (also a Polish title), Wojciech Bałus and Joanna Wolańska, eds., Warsaw: Instytut Sztuki PAN, 2010, 52-59.

<sup>12</sup> Carl Schnaase, *Geschichte der bildenden Künste*, vol. 7 (that is, *Geschichte der bildenden Künste im Mittelalter*, vol. 5), Düsseldorf: Julius Budeus, 1876, 526 (already in the 1<sup>st</sup> edition, vol. 5, 1864, 659-61).

of the 'Volkscharakter', evident from the early work of Waagen onwards.<sup>13</sup> The more strictly philosophical angle taken by Prange will reveal further trends for Berlin.

### A multitude of continuities and innovations (Locher)

Hubert Locher's is the longest and the most wide-ranging of the three major works dealt with here. It covers aspects of art history from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, but much of it is devoted to the crucial period dealt with in this report.

In Locher's at first somewhat puzzling title: 'The History of Art as a historical Theory of Art' the key word has to be 'theory'. However, the book does not come across as a work of theory, ordered by one stringent formula; instead it is a discursive work in which theories are constantly mixed with more mundane matters and contexts of many kinds. A better idea of the book's slant is given by the title of the introductory section: '*Kunstgeschichte als Wissenschaft der Kunst*', art history as the science / academic study of art. Here Locher addresses the central issue of the years 1820-1880, already indicated in this report, the attempts to establish the study of the history of art as a bona-fide *Wissenschaft*, based on the principle of verifiability. In a key section, Locher homes in on the problems of evaluation. He refers to two programmatic articles by Moriz Thausing and Anton Springer of the 1870s and 1880s in which these two principal members of the brand-new profession argue for the radical separation of art history from art criticism as well as from any kind of involvements with the artists of the day, because their judgments are always subjective and could never fit in with the art historians' anti-normativity. Locher cites Thausing's often repeated contention 'I can think of the best art history in which the word beautiful does not occur at all.' Locher, however, also stresses at this point that art historians do habitually make judgements of art value, when sifting through what is or was important, or what was innovative, or just to determine 'authenticity'. On these occasions, Locher contends, a critical discussion of the notion of 'art' does not occur; rather the term is taken for granted. There is a continuing notion of a timeless 'contents' of art, comprising the present, as well.<sup>14</sup> What has also never really been clarified, in respect of value judgments, is the art historian's frequent uneasiness vis-à-vis contemporary art. At this point members of the profession contend that their judgements about past art are legitimised by the historical distance. Yet Locher holds that 'the commonplace of a historical distance being the precondition for an objective judgment in actual fact only serves as an excuse to shirk from providing a reason for making a judgment.'<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Bickendorf in Pfisterer, 53.

<sup>14</sup> 'Weiterhin geht man von einem überzeitlichen Inhalt der Kunst aus'. Cf. Anton Springer, 'Kunstkenner und Kunsthistoriker', *Im Neuen Reich*, vol. 11, no. 46 1881, 737-758, also in Anton Springer, *Bilder aus der neueren Kunstgeschichte*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Bonn: A.Marcus 1886, 377-404. 'Ich kann mir die beste Kunstgeschichte denken, in der das Wort schön gar nicht vorkommt'; Moritz Thausing, 'Die Stellung der Kunstgeschichte als Wissenschaft'. ...Antrittsvorlesung (inaugural lecture) ...' 1873, also in Moritz Thausing, *Wiener Kunstbriefe*, Leipzig: Seemann 1884 1-20 (article newly published in *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, XXXVI, 1983, 140-150), See also translation and commentary by Karl Johns, *Journal of Art Historiography*, 1 2009. Locher, 52-55.

<sup>15</sup> 'Der Gemeinplatz einer notwendigen historischen Distanz als Voraussetzung für ein objektives Urteil ist allerdings nur eine Ausrede, um sich von der Begründung einer Wertung zu drücken'. Locher, 55.

What Locher is principally aiming to say in his long section on das *Kunsturteil*, on value judgements in art, is that the new *Verwissenschaftlichung*, the new scientification of German-language art history around 1870 'cannot really be interpreted as a gain in objectivity'.<sup>16</sup> This is somewhat reminiscent of a recent British investigation in the continuing use of *ekphrasis* in art history by Jaś Elsner.<sup>17</sup>

In a wide-ranging section Locher then deals with early to mid twentieth century art historians who did reflect on the relationship of the art of their own time - largely meaning modernist art - to the art of the past.<sup>18</sup> A great number of journals throughout the century addressed both contemporary and ancient art. Although not all would share the simple view of an early editorial in the *Burlington Magazine*, stating that 'the study of ancient art has a practical end, namely the improvement of modern art, and is, in our opinion, the only means by which this end can be achieved'.<sup>19</sup> Locher finally states that, just like art, art history can also have the function of positing a harmonious world: 'Kunstwissenschaft finally may, just as art [itself] be conceived as and conducted as a harmonised world which is opposed to disharmonious reality'.<sup>20</sup>

The other three quarters of the book excel in their diversity. Well into the first section, and quite en passant, Locher declares the fundamentals of his own procedure. 'In the way in which several historical problems [*Problemgeschichten*] are laid out, one can avoid a new "grand narrative"'.<sup>21</sup> A series of 'small narratives' are better suited to tie the factors of art history into their varied contexts.

One of the great strengths of the book is the way it spans both the spheres of high academe and high theory as well as mundane factors down to the 'popular' end of the discipline and that both aspects are suitably interwoven, both in Central and in Western Europe. Whether an overall narrative can be entirely avoided may be disputable; in any case, Locher's very broadly chronological procedure does help with the comprehension of the whole.

The first complex is on the search for the national identity factor and the way national identifications appeared as an essential grounding for the new *Kunstgeschichte*. In this most wide-ranging section Locher goes back as far as the seventeenth century, to Claude Perrault, then moves on to Voltaire and Montesquieu and the emergence of the 'recognition of different national ways of designing'.<sup>22</sup> Winckelmann is introduced with: 'A people's "way of thinking" became visible'.<sup>23</sup> Soon after that the new Medievalism greatly strengthened the national concept, whether with Alexandre Lenoir, the Boisserée brothers or Walter Scott, or in Neo-Gothic architecture and Nazarene painting. Locher then widens the frame and considers manners of travelling, with the various grand tours now in the

<sup>16</sup> 'Kann daher nicht eigentlich als Objektivitätsgewinn interpretiert werden.' Locher, 54.

<sup>17</sup> Jaś Elsner, 'Art History and Ekphrasis', *Art History*, vol. 33 no 1, Feb. 2010, 11-26.

<sup>18</sup> Josef Strzygowski, Hanz Tietze and others, Locher 55 ff.

<sup>19</sup> 'Editorial Article', *The Burlington Magazine*, 1 1903, 148.

<sup>20</sup> 'Kunstwissenschaft schliesslich kann ebenso wie Kunst als harmonisierte Gegenwelt zur disharmonischen Realität konzipiert and betrieben werden.' Locher, 95.

<sup>21</sup> 'Indem mehrere Problemgeschichten dargelegt werden, soll eine neue "grosse Erzählung" vermieden werden'. Locher, 25.

<sup>22</sup> 'Anerkennung unterschiedlicher nationaler Gestaltungsweisen'. Locher, 107.

<sup>23</sup> 'Die sichtbare gewordene "Art zu Denken" eines Voikes', Locher, 109.

service of sampling the diversity of cultures, for instance when Germans travelled to Britain. Vital - and here Locher reaches the Berlin art historians - was 'one's own ocular observation'.<sup>24</sup> He ends, suitably, bearing in mind what was said at the beginning about absolute value judgments, by stressing that 'to supply the proof that the homeland originated a valid / genuine art is a principal aim of romantic art history'<sup>25</sup> - a wording which also covers much of early twentieth century *Kunstgeographie*.

The next section is entitled 'The Art of the World – in Books',<sup>26</sup> which must be taken literally, dealing with the various types of publications and sketching out their varied messages as related to those types and formats. It begins with the new trends to create comprehensiveness, coupled with the crusade for accuracy, with or without illustrations. The issue of pictorial works in art history will be touched on in the second part of this report. A continuing question was whether to choose a division according to time or to types of art. Kugler made the beginning with his *Handbücher*; the high point then came with the 'philosophisch-epische' type of treatise, the work of Schnaase and Springer, followed by the more factual kinds of texts. From the 1850s Wilhelm Lübke took over the genre from Kugler, achieving enormous success especially with his *Grundriss der Kunstgeschichte* of 1860 spurring half a dozen translations and going through many editions, each time suitably 'updated'.<sup>27</sup>

However, already by the 1870s, striving towards comprehensiveness was being devalued; proper academic work was predominantly concerned with investigating the particular. Locher's section ends with the way in which such handbooks turn into travel guides, serving as 'introductions to aesthetic judgments'.<sup>28</sup> One remembers Jacob Burckhardt's *Der Cicerone: eine Anleitung zum Genuss der Kunstwerke in Italien*, of 1855, which translates something like 'Directions for receiving [delicious] pleasure from the works of art in Italy'. One just wonders whether Thausing's convictions (art historians do not need the word beauty) were strong enough to resist. Earlier on, Christine Tauber, in her *Jacob Burckhardts Cicerone. Eine Aufgabe zum Genießen*, provided careful analyses of the ways in which Burckhardt arrived at his descriptions and evaluations. A key discussion deals with Burckhardt's concerns with subjectivity and the assessment, in each case, of the artist's free intentionality vis-à-vis the pressures exercised upon him by the commission. We shall return to Burckhardt in the section on Prange.

Locher's third section is devoted to the term which became fore grounded more and more in the later nineteenth century: 'form'. He first takes the term at its most literal, discussing the beginnings of abstract-formal décor in the applied arts from about 1800 onwards in Paris and Berlin, proceeding to the incisive theories of decoration of the mid-century and from there to Semper, Hildebrand and Wölfflin,

<sup>24</sup> 'Der eigene Augenschein', Locher, 192.

<sup>25</sup> 'Den Beweis anzutreten, dass in der Heimat echte Kunst entstanden ist, ist ein Hauptziel der romantischen Kunstgeschichte', Locher, 199.

<sup>26</sup> 'Die Kunst der Welt – im Buch' 202 ff..

<sup>27</sup> Cf. earlier Dan Karlholm, *Handbokernas konsthistoria. Om skapandet allmän konsthistoria I Tyskland under 1800 talet*, Stockholm: Brutus Östling, 1996; Dan Karlholm, *The Representation of Art History in Nineteenth Century Germany and Beyond*, Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2004.

<sup>28</sup> 'Anleitung zum ästhetischen Urteil', Locher, 254 ff..

ending with Kandinsky's and Hölzel's theories of abstract form. Locher's last chapter rounds it all off with the title 'At the end of the "Grand Narrative"'.<sup>29</sup> First of all, under the heading '*die Einheit der Kunst*', 'the unity of art', he picks up the discussions at the beginning, postulating that the new late nineteenth century formalist understanding of style was also helping with Modernism's self-understanding. At the same time the older way of understanding 'style', namely as a tool for geographical classification, was, by the early twentieth century, developing into a new instrument which helped to classify and emphasise '*Volk*' and '*Rasse*' as '*kollektive Subjekte der Stilgeschichte*'.<sup>30</sup> The real end of the "grand narrative" is finally marked by the turn towards 'interpretation', by which Locher principally means iconology.

### The metaphysical underpinning (Prange)

As reported, the belief in a 'historical distance' which renders the art historian's evaluations of the art of the past 'objective', was, according to Locher, a fallacy, used in order to escape from supplying a proper grounding for any kinds of judgements. He concludes: 'This grounding can only be a metaphysical one, if the timeless concept is maintained'.<sup>31</sup> It was Locher's principal message that normativity did not get phased out in the new art history of the middle of the nineteenth century, nor, for that matter, any time later, in spite of all the statements postulating the arrival of an exact, objective *Kunstwissenschaft*. The explanation of metaphysics and of the postulates of the timelessness of art is the exact topic of Regine Prange's book. The placing of 'empirical' into the subtitle marks it out as the subsidiary topic. Prange deals with the sequence of major art historians from Fiorillo to Dvořák, with due emphasis on the main period of the formulation of the new art history from the 1820s-1880s. With only a slight exaggeration one might call Prange's a philosophical work, definitely it is a theoretical one, and a compact, concentrated one at that. One might also classify it as using the history of ideas approach in which the occasional socio-political statement plays only a very subordinate role. Titles of such kinds of books have a demanding task of conveying the essential content; it is a sign of how much the German art historical fraternity takes for granted what Prange's title does not say, and even the blurb hardly says, namely that nineteenth century art history is an all-German story.

Only a crude summary can be supplied in this report. Prange prefaces the history of nineteenth century art history with a section of almost equal length on the philosophy of art since the Renaissance, from Alberti onwards, leading, via Leibniz and Winckelmann, to the full formulation of a philosophical aesthetics in the work of Baumgarten and Kant and then of Schelling and Hegel in the early nineteenth century. 'Only with the systematic inclusion of the art philosophical traditions it becomes clear in which fundamental ways art history has continued the idealism of

<sup>29</sup> 'Am Ende der "grossen Erzählung"' Locher, 419 ff..

<sup>30</sup> Locher, 439 ff .

<sup>31</sup> 'Diese Begründung kann nur metaphysisch sein, wenn der überzeitliche Begriff nicht aufgegeben wird.' Locher, 55.

the early modern period.<sup>32</sup> From the normative theories of art Prange switches to the new eighteenth century connoisseurship and antiquarianism which concentrated the attention on the individual old object and which led to a new kind of historical evaluation, linking diverse art works to diverse histories and geographies, and to the emergence of a new kind of devotee to art and history, somebody who was neither an artist nor a theorist.

The principal contribution of the later eighteenth century was, to put it at its most basic, a new generalised notion of 'art', as an entity and value in itself, which stood 'above' the knowledge of the individual arts (*die Künste*), above the rules of their practices, which went beyond their specialised terminologies of judgement and which heightened the esteem and *ekphrasis* so far conveyed in the artists' individual biographies. Winckelmann's contribution fitted in precisely into the beginnings of a new thinking of a 'pure art' and coincided with the beginnings of the new aesthetics of Baumgarten and Kant, the new *Wissenschaft des Schoenen* which was at the same time a *Wissenschaft* of the perception of beauty.<sup>33</sup> The new aesthetic 'emancipated the sensuous capability to an intellectual capability'.<sup>34</sup> It all resulted in the comprehensive notion of a secularised and autonomous value of art, which according to enlightenment thinking, was not subjected to ecclesiastical and political powers but emanated from the individual artist who was now celebrated through the notion of an agency of complete independence, that of the 'genius'.

The next sections, on two philosophers of the school of German idealism, Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling and Georg Wilhelm Hegel, can be seen as the heart of Prange's book. Of particular importance was the former who had so far hardly been mentioned in the histories of art history.<sup>35</sup> Around 1800 Schelling was a member of the Jena circle of early German Romanticism, which, besides Hegel included the Schlegel brothers and which was also closely placed to the Weimar circle of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Schiller. In those years, aesthetics rose to become the dominant theme in Schelling's thinking. At some point he even tended towards a radical aestheticism when he valued the aesthetic intuition over and above the philosopher's discursive reasoning. Schelling expanded the cognitive and judgmental issues presented in Kant into the sphere of production, thus returning to elements of the older philosophies of art. Schelling always viewed aesthetics as both a specialised field of inquiry and as a comprehensive and culturally accessible form of philosophical meta-theory<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> 'Nur durch die systematische Einbeziehung der kunstphilosophischen Traditionen wird jedoch deutlich, in welcher prinzipieller Weise die Kunstgeschichte den Idealismus [...] der Vormoderne [...] fortgesetzt hat', Prange, 12.

<sup>33</sup> Prange, 36.

<sup>34</sup> 'Emanzipiert[e] die Ästhetik das Sinnliche zu einem intellektuellen Vermögen', Prange, 93.

<sup>35</sup> Only marginally in Udo Kultermann, *Geschichte der Kunstgeschichte*, Vienna: Econ 1966 and in Locher, very briefly in Georg Kauffmann, *Die Entwicklung der Kunstgeschichte im 19. Jahrhundert, Vortrag ...*, publ. by G.Henkel Stiftung, Düsseldorf: Westdeutscher Verlag 1992, 12, and not at all in Michael Podro, *The Critical Historians of Art*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1983. Prange's references to Schelling's philosophy of art are from his: 'Über das Verhältnis der bildenden Künste zu der Natur', 1807, in *Schelling's sämtliche Werke*, Augsburg: Cotta, 1856-1861, and from *Philosophie der Kunst* (1802/30) in: *Werke* 1/5.

<sup>36</sup> Prange, 59-64. ,

Under the impact of Wackenroder's *Herzensergiessungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders* ('outpourings from the heart of an art-loving monk'),<sup>37</sup> Schelling departed from the enlightenment's aesthetic utopia of complete freedom and rationality and began to see artistic creativity as well as the appreciation of art as species of deep religious devotion, of the state of 'being deeply touched'. It was through this way of appreciating art that the sense of loss of the mythical past could be bridged.<sup>38</sup>

The new religious absolutism of art formed part of Schelling's great comprehensive philosophical system, his *Identitätsphilosophie*.<sup>39</sup> Here, Schelling aimed to establish a new metaphysics of absolute harmony which overcomes all contingencies and all dichotomies and conflicts, of freedom vs. necessity, of the conscious and the unconscious, and above all it bridges the gap between nature and spirit [*Geist*] or culture. It meant a return to the 'absolute free spirit', cancelling out the fall from grace, caused by reflection.<sup>40</sup> The artist-genius finds his or her place by paralleling nature's creativity, creating, like nature, unconsciously. Works of art are to be understood according to the laws of the eternal works of nature.<sup>41</sup> In short, art, in all its genres, mirrors the absolute according to the identity system ... in which 'everything is united'.<sup>42</sup> Within the absolute universe, art, like philosophy, belongs to the ideal world.<sup>43</sup> This must also be understood 'as the unity of all works of art as the revelation of the divine'.<sup>44</sup> '*Kunst als Offenbarung*'. Art makes the absolute real. 'Art as revelation', is Prange's heading for this chapter. Most importantly, Prange stresses here the way in which Schelling restores 'the old metaphysical idea of artistic creation'.<sup>45</sup>

Furthermore, within the new philosophical aesthetics what applies to the creation of art also applies to its appreciation. One has to get away from all shallow connoisseurship. Quoting Schelling himself on this function of the new philosophy of art: at a time 'when such an age of happiness and of pure production has passed, at that point reflection enters and with it a general alienation / disunity [*Entzweiung*]. [...] Only philosophy can [...] open up again the primary sources [*Urquellen*] for the reflection which for production had largely dried up'.<sup>46</sup> An 'enthusiastic researcher [*begeisterter Forscher*]' is needed. Schelling, according to

<sup>37</sup> Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, *Herzensergiessungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders*, first publ. 1797 (co-author Ludwig Tieck), in: *Wackenroder: Werke und Briefe*, Gerda Heinrich, ed., Berlin: Union 1984.

<sup>38</sup> 'Rührung und tiefe Ehrfurcht', Prange, 60.

<sup>39</sup> 'Religiöse [...] Zielsetzung', Prange, 60.

<sup>40</sup> 'Absolut freien Geistes', Prange, 61.

<sup>41</sup> Prange, 65.

<sup>42</sup> 'Kunst in allen ihren Gattungen wird als Spiegelbild des Absoluten im Sinne des Identitätssystems dargetellt', Prange, 63.

<sup>43</sup> 'Innerhalb des absoluten Universums gehört die Kunst wie die Philosophie der idealen Welt an', Prange, 64.

<sup>44</sup> 'Kunst [ist die] Einheit aller Kunstwerke. Offenbarung des Göttlichen', Prange, 64.

<sup>45</sup> Prange, 65.

<sup>46</sup> 'Wenn ein solches Zeitalter des Glücks und der reinen Produktion vorbei ist, so tritt die Reflexion und mit ihr die allgemeine Entzweiung ein [...] Nur die Philosophie kann die für die Produktion grössenteils versiegten Urquellen der Kunst für die Reflexion wieder öffnen', quoted after Prange, 64 (Friedrich Wilhelm Josef Schelling, *Schellings sämtliche Werke*, Stuttgart: Cotta 1856-61, vol. 1 / 5 360 ff.).

Prange, makes renewed use here of Baumgarten's interpretation of Plato's notion of enthusiasm.<sup>47</sup>

With regard to the ideal of nature, a problem lay with the fact that normally its works are initially characterised by 'hard forms and impenetrability'.<sup>48</sup> They have therefore to be brought 'to perfection, transformed to softer and more complex formations, to beauty'.<sup>49</sup> Here Schelling stayed close to Winckelmann's preferences and the whole idealist tradition, for whom antique Classical sculpture was understood as the perfect combination of nature and the idea. But with the new turn towards Christian mysticism among the Romantics, towards the 'soul' as the locus of religious revelation, the ideal of the 'sculpturally precise' could be supplemented with the ideal of the 'soulful soft'.<sup>50</sup> This also meant a turn from sculpture to painting as a carrier of the highest qualities in art. As Prange emphasises, Schelling here adopted a historical perspective, namely that of antiquity followed by the equally valuable art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It was Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder who had expanded the classical canon and who had shifted the emphasis onto the Christian art of Raphael, praising the way the latter balanced the 'divine' with the 'human'.<sup>51</sup> In the same vein one may read in Schelling on Guido Reni's *Assunta*, his favourite painting (now in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich) where he sees the picture as a kind of personification of art, 'as if growing upwards from the depth of nature [...] lifts itself with certainty and clearly contoured [*Begrenzung*], develops inner infinity and plenitude, finally transfigured to grace, and at last reaches the soul [...]'.<sup>52</sup>

The years around 1800 saw the foregrounding of another chapter of the history of art. It had again been initiated by Wackenroder, in the way he introduced Dürer as the 'friend' of Raphael and Michelangelo. At the same time there were lively discussions as to what forms a specific art for the present in Germany should take. Schelling now takes a distinct historical and geographical turn, towards the German fatherland of the sixteenth century. As Prange explains, and it sounds quite surprising: 'Schelling's renewed reading of Winckelmann from the standpoint of his philosophy of nature actually resulted in a shift of the normative category of ideal beauty to the idea of the nation'.<sup>53</sup> The national idea takes the place of the classical ideal. 'Patriotic enthusiasm [...] is held to be the Ur- force of a future living art'.<sup>54</sup> It also now leads Schelling to a historicist statement: one may understand the impossibility of reviving Classical art by realising that 'different ages take part in a

<sup>47</sup> Prange, 65.

<sup>48</sup> 'Harter Form und Verslossenheit' (quoting Schelling), Prange, 65.

<sup>49</sup> 'Das Ideal der Vollendung ...zu weicheren, komplexen Gestalten, zum Schönen', Prange, 65.

<sup>50</sup> 'Plastisch bestimmten zum Seelisch -Weichen', Prange, 71.

<sup>51</sup> 'Gleichgewicht des Göttlichen und Menschlichen', Prange, quoting Schelling, Prange, 67.

<sup>52</sup> 'Wie aus der Tiefe der Natur ...emporwachend mit Bestimmtheit und Begrenzung anhebt, innere Unendlichkeit und Fülle entfaltend, endlich zur Anmut sich verkläert, zuletzt zur Seele gelangt', quoted by Prange, Friedrich Wilhelm Josef Schelling, *Schellings sämtliche Werke*, Stuttgart: Cotta 1856-61, vol. 1 / 5 322ff, Prange, 69.

<sup>53</sup> 'Schelling's Relektüre Winckelmanns aus dem Geist seiner romantischen Naturphilosophie resultierte nämlich in einer Verlagerung der normativen Kategorie des Idealschönen auf die Idee der Nation', Prange, 70.

<sup>54</sup> 'Der vaterländische Enthusiasmus ...gilt somit als Urkraft einer zukünftigen lebendigen Kunst', Prange 71.

different enthusiasm.<sup>55</sup> Which in turn leads Prange to state that 'with Schelling an appreciation of art became possible which did not have to use the term beauty, and yet did not have to forego the metaphysical concept of representation [i.e. of showing forth the absolute]<sup>56</sup> – a fundamental statement indeed in the context of Thausing's contention of 1873, cited above, where he maintained that the term beauty is not needed in art history. In view of the new *exakte Wissenschaft* to come, one may see Schelling, according to Prange's interpretation, as supporting both mysticism and historicism.

Prange entitles her section on Hegel, as one might expect: 'The end of fine art and the beginning of modern art history'.<sup>57</sup> She begins by stressing that the former assertion was shared by his early colleagues, the Romantics, who held that 'the great achievements of an ideal art all belonged to a mythical past'.<sup>58</sup> However, rather than giving up hope, like his poet friend Hölderlin, who ended up with a darkened mind, or, like Schelling, who tried to construct a super-unity of the real and the ideal, of natural and human creativity, Hegel, Prange argues, 'placed the relationality of subject and object, of spirit and nature onto a completely new basis, namely a dialectical one. He understands them in the movement of contradictions and not, like Schelling, as a unity of opposites'.<sup>59</sup> Thus art cannot be united with nature's innocence; Hegel places the *Kunstschöne* above the incomplete beauty of nature.<sup>60</sup> In her examination of the chapters on art in the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* of 1807 Prange stresses that Hegel held all such constructions of 'unity' to be empty formulae.<sup>61</sup> Instead, Hegel postulates an 'awareness/ consciousness of the history of human culture'.<sup>62</sup> Hegel, too, adheres to a notion of the absolute, but it should not to be understood as a 'pre-reflexive concept of unity',<sup>63</sup> as with Kant and Schelling, but in the 'developmental dynamic of its sequences'.<sup>64</sup> For an understanding of art one needs to consider the agencies of work, human power and the changes man wrought on nature, and one should leave behind the famous Kantian notion of disinterested pleasure - *interesseloses Wohlgefallen*'.<sup>65</sup> In Hegel's system, art is assigned - in the context of religion, politics and philosophy - its role in the development of human consciousness, more precisely, in the progression towards the ultimate aim, self-consciousness; art marks the phase in which its creator, the human being, becomes conscious of himself or herself through his or her product.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>55</sup> 'Verschiedenen "Zeitaltern [...] eine verschiedene Begeisterung zu Teil" werde', Prange quoting Schelling, Prange, 70.

<sup>56</sup> 'Durch Schelling wurde so eine Betrachtung der Kunst möglich, die ohne den Begriff des Schönen auskam, aber nicht auf den metaphysischen Sinn der Repräsentation verzichten musste', Prange, 71.

<sup>57</sup> 'Das Ende der schönen Künste und der Beginn moderner Kunstgeschichte', Prange, 71.

<sup>58</sup> 'Die grossen Leistungen der idealen Kunst einer mythischen Vergangenheit angegehören ...', Prange, 71.

<sup>59</sup> 'Hegel teilte die Verhältnisbestimmung von Subject und Object, Geist und -Natur auf eine ganz neue, nämlich dialektische Grundlage. Er fasst sie in der Bewegung des Widerspruchs und nicht wie Schelling als Einheit der Gegensätze ...', Prange, 72.

<sup>60</sup> Prange, 79.

<sup>61</sup> Prange, 73.

<sup>62</sup> 'Bewusstsein der Geschichte der menschlichen Kultur', Prange, 73.

<sup>63</sup> 'Präreflexive Einheitsvorstellung', Prange, 79.

<sup>64</sup> 'Entwicklungsgeschichtliche Dynamik ihres Aufeinanderfolgens', Prange, 82.

<sup>65</sup> Prange, 79.

<sup>66</sup> Prange, 81.

Prange then provides much detail of Hegel's *Ästhetik* (first published in 1835, but given as lectures at Berlin University from 1820 to 1829), entitling her section 'History of the categories of the fine arts and the system of genres', dealing with the complex constructions of dialectic progression. (The three categories of art / *Kunstformen* being, in historical order, the symbolic, the classic, and the romantic; the three genres or media / *Kunstgattungen* (genres) are architecture, sculpture and painting, in a parallel historical order with the categories).<sup>67</sup> Of the greatest importance is the transition from Classical to Romantic. Once again comes the praise of the universally appreciated work of Classical Greek sculpture. For Christian art the dominant art form is now painting. Here religious content dominates over form.<sup>68</sup> Hegel had come to know major medieval works in the collection of the Boisserée brothers. A stronger opposition was now postulated between *Klassik* and *Romantik*. The latter was characterised above all, in the spirit of Wackenroder and Schelling, by a strong subjectivity, by the 'inner feeling / *Innerlichkeit*' of love.<sup>69</sup> Here, too, Raphael represented the peak. The last period for which Hegel had something positive to say was seventeenth century Dutch painting.

The ideal of art was understood by Hegel both as a norm and as belonging to a certain historical phase, or step, of the development of mankind. As is well known, Hegel assigned literature and music a 'higher' state in the development of the human spirit, following on from the visual arts, all of them to be superseded, finally, by philosophy. However, this did not mean that the fine arts should be devalued as such. In a crucial passage Prange again traces the steps of Hegel's system and its implications:

Art is the first "immediate self-gratification of the absolute spirit", in the form of sensuous perception. In this phase art has its highest ranking. This religion of art is followed by the religion of the spirit, Christianity. The absolute is being transferred "from the objecthood [Gegenständlichkeit] of art into the interiority [Innerlichkeit] of the subject". The medium of truth is no longer its sensuous perception but its imagination [Vorstellung], so that art loses its absolute importance. This was already contained in the *Phänomenlogie*. The question what was to become to art after the ending of its highest destination, was answered by Hegel only in his *Ästhetik*, and in this introduction of an anti-classical pole of art lay his most influential innovation. Christian devotion no longer addressed itself to art as such, Hegel concludes, but to the heartfelt feeling [innig empfundenen] for contents which has been called in by the imagination [Vorstellung]. Philosophy finally intensifies the interiorisation [Innerlichkeit] of knowledge further to a form of free thinking which unites the truth-content of art and religion on the level of the idea and renders it real / factual [verwirklicht]. Hegel hereby also identifies the position of a *Wissenschaft* of

<sup>67</sup> 'Geschichte der Kunstformen und Systematik der Gattungen', Prange, 86.

<sup>68</sup> Prange, 83.

<sup>69</sup> 'Innigkeit der Empfindung', Hegel, quoted by Prange, 92.

art which is possible only when a point beyond sensuous perception and subjective imagination [Vorstellung] has been reached.<sup>70</sup>

It is important to note here that, as with Schelling, it was the break with of the absolute authority of Classical art and the placing of another major conception of art alongside it, namely (Christian) religious art, which also instituted a new kind of intellectually independent *Wissenschaft* of art. Whatever was to happen to art itself, the philosophers postulated a new valid concern for it, the possibility of valid scientific research, both as regards continuing investigations into aesthetic theory and as regards art's history. Art history became a separate subject, although - and that is Prange's principal thesis - not as separate as most art historians would maintain. In the immediate aftermath of this step, however, the perceptions of the two philosophers diverged. While Schelling showed some belief in there being at least the promise of a new national art, Hegel's position vis-à-vis the art of his time seemed to lack such a consideration. Hegel applied vague criticisms, such as maintaining that genre painting of his own time, compared with seventeenth century Dutch painting, was lacking depth; and he chose not to take note of other producers at all.<sup>71</sup> Should one search here for the beginning of what Locher calls the futile notion of a 'historical distance'?

Prange's summary of the philosophical part of her book is given here in full:

The concept of an autonomous art which today has again become a subject of discussion originated in the eighteenth century. It resulted from a new science of perception and of the beautiful which Baumgarten introduced as a new discipline of philosophy and which he called "*Ästhetik*". While the sciences of Classical Antiquity and of the Early Modern period had always given unequivocal priority to rational experience / cognition [Erkenntnis] and knowledge [Wissen], aesthetics emancipated sensuous capabilities to an intellectual capability, whose function was also to lead to human betterment. Aesthetic experience thus began to take the place of religion, art and *Bildung* [upbringing in the sense of acquiring cultural knowledge] were elevated to exemplary cultural bourgeois values. Essentially these

<sup>70</sup> Kunst ist die erste „unmittelbare Selbstbefriedigung des absolute Geistes“ in der Form der sinnlichen Anschauung. Hier hat sie ihren höchsten Stellenwert. Auf die Religion der Kunst folgt die Religion des Geistes, das Christentum. Das Absolute wird „aus der Gegenständlichkeit der Kunst auf die Innerlichkeit des Subjekts“ verlagert. Nicht mehr die sinnliche Anschauung, sondern die Vortstellung ist Medium der Wahrheit, so dass die Kunst ihre absolute Bedeutung verliert. Das war schon in der Phänomenologie ausgeführt worden. Auf die Frage, was aus der Kunst nach dem Ende ihrer höchsten Bestimmung wird, antwortet Hegel erst in seiner *Ästhetik*, und in dieser Einführung eines antiklassischen Pols der Kunst liegt seine wirksamste Neuerung. Nicht mehr der Kunst selbst gilt die christliche Andacht, folgert Hegel, sondern dem von der Vorstellung aufgerufenen und innig empfundenen religiösen Inhalt. Die Philosophie schliesslich steigert diese Innerlichkeit des Wissens noch weiter zur Form des freien Denkens, das die Wahrheit der Kunst auf der Ebeneder Idee vereinigt und versachlicht. Damit benennt Hegel auch die Position einer Wissenschaft der Kunst, die erst jenseits der sinnlichen Anschauung und der subjektiven Vorstellung möglich wird.

Prange, 82-83.

<sup>71</sup> Prange, 77, 83, 93.

were established by Kant with his theory of the judgment of taste and his concept of the genius. The autonomy of the "*schönen Künste*" [fine art(s)] is the outcome of his Critique of Judgement. Schelling' and Hegel's comprehensive idealist philosophies of art gave art a high value as a form of knowledge [Erkenntnis] and related their historical and genre-specific differentiation [gattungsmässige Differenzierung] to the constitution of culture and its progress. Against the background of the decline of the old metaphysics, where art was losing its living function in religious cults, these two philosophers opened up two avenues into the modern discussion of art, at opposites to each other, which until this day mark its decisive impulses. The alternative is, to put it briefly, "nature" or "history". Schelling's philosophy of art continues the moralism of Kant's concept [Ansatz] in an intensified religious sense. The artist-genius proceeds / works like nature, he restores in his products the original unity of subject and object and renders in his works the absolute perceptible [anschaulich]. The work of art is thus an apparition / anticipation [Vorschein] of a better reality, in which the old unity of subject and object would be restored. Hegel, by contrast, says goodbye to the idea that the mythical age could be restored through art. His system of the past [Vergangenheitslehre] historicises art. Art is, according to his philosophy of history, only one phase in the (development of) the human spirit and is to be superseded by the higher-level philosophical understanding [Begriff]. Art history thus follows after the metaphysically determined "autonomous" art had ended; the consistently developed historical interpretation of art and its genres constitutes the basis of the development of the subject which was now starting. And yet, it is rather Schellings "construction of a universe for art" that has an effect of the self-assurance / self confidence [Selbstbewusstsein] of art history, which in the spirit of Romanticism resisted Hegel's verdict of the end of art.<sup>72</sup>

A search for these two principal names in the rest of the book would have provided a good initial orientation, but unfortunately the book suffers from that regrettably frequent German habit of not supplying an index. Hegel and Schelling probably come neck and neck, but the winner is clearly the latter.

In the following 120 pages Prange sets out in her clear and concise way, in chronological succession, the course of German-language art history over the next one hundred years, contributing substantial insights to the incredibly varied work of each of the writers. The angle of her evaluation remains consistent throughout; as in the section is entitled, 'the theoretical Foundation of Art History as a scientific Discipline'<sup>73</sup> which Prange introduces as follows:

The subject of art history established itself, as in the case of literature and musicology through the institutional and methodological splitting away from philosophical aesthetics. Deliberations about beauty and the ideal are

<sup>72</sup> Prange 93-94. German version in Appendix.

<sup>73</sup> Prange, 95.

being replaced by an analysis of artistic artefacts which saw itself as strictly [streng] historical, based on connoisseurial and source-critical methods. However, the notion of art [Kunstbegriff] of philosophical aesthetics was linked to these empirical procedures. Without this *Kunstbegriff* and its normative implications art history as a *wissenschaftliche* discipline could not have constituted itself.<sup>74</sup>

The last sentence may be taken as the lynchpin of the whole book. One must see it as a result on the massive stress of the first component, the *Kunstbegriff*, that the second component, scientificness, both with regards to the source-critical methods and the connoisseurship, which together are headed under empiricism, receives much less attention.

Key terms at the outset are historicism [Historismus] and Romanticism. As a *Wissenschafts*-paradigm historicism was based on Hegel's 'basic historical-philosophical tenet: the historical changeability of the idea and the nature of art',<sup>75</sup> while the idealist 'philosophy of history' enabled all historians to claim 'an objective knowledge [Erkenntnis] of the historical totality'.<sup>76</sup> However, the dominant mode of general history writing after 1820, most closely associated with Leopold von Ranke, in no way adhered to Hegel's notion of a dialectical progression, but rather to its opposite, to the self-sufficiency / self-reliance / independence [Eigenständigkeit] of historic individualities, be they persons, nations or epochs'.<sup>77</sup> Crucially, Ranke's historicism entailed the belief in the possibility of value-free scientific objectivity, based on the non-commitment / *Interesselosigkeit* position of the researcher.<sup>78</sup>

This, however, would not suffice for the new pursuit of art history. One may cite the well-known contention that we always bring our own preconceptions to bear on what we say about the past, or, as Prange asks, is it at all possible to completely remove the gap between past and present?<sup>79</sup> She then contends that objectivity was actually not the principal desire of the historicists. Theirs was in fact an attempt to 'appropriate' the historic objects: using 'an aesthetic method of a pictorial and narrative way of bringing the past up to the present' [Vergegenwärtigung], to create 'a picture' of the old times.<sup>80</sup> Winckelmann's reception by the Romantics, Johann Herder and Friedrich Schlegel, is fore grounded here, rather than Hegel's. Prange stresses again the fundamentals of Romanticism: 'If formerly the metaphysic of beauty was tied onto rules, it is now being transformed into an ideology of the movements of the soul which, as a unison of

<sup>74</sup> Prange 95.

<sup>75</sup> 'Geschichtsphilosophische Kernaussage: die 'historische Veränderlichkeit von Idee und Begriff der Kunst', Prange, 95.

<sup>76</sup> 'Von der idealistischen Geschichtsphilosophie übernahm er den Anspruch auf die objektive Erkenntnis der geschichtlichen Totalität', 96.

<sup>77</sup> Prange, 96, also 129.

<sup>78</sup> 'Wertfreie wissenschaftliche Objektivität', Prange, 97.

<sup>79</sup> Prange, 97.

<sup>80</sup> 'Ein ästhetisches Verfahren der bildlichen und narrativen Vergegenwärtigung des Historischen', Prange, 98.

production and reception, is propagated as a "sensual recreation", experienced by, for instance, the museum visitor.<sup>81</sup>

The first test case regarding new art history's metaphysical underpinning comes with the group from Berlin, with Rumohr and his writings on Italian painting. 'Not just the ability to read and critically evaluate sources, which for the older research established his fame as the founder of the *wissenschaftliche* art history [...], but also the conservative synthesis, [...]the reconciliation of modern empiricism with the metaphysical traditions of the older art theory à la Winckelmann and Schelling' needs to be considered.<sup>82</sup> Prange points to Rumohr's detailed notes on Schelling.<sup>83</sup> She quotes Rumohr to the effect that he realises that there must be some 'penetrating / thoroughgoing / all-pervading laws' but he wants to pass them by so as to 'observe this spirit in its activity and application'.<sup>84</sup> Prange goes on quoting Rumohr's intent: not to present just a 'series of dispersed investigations' but 'to comprehend art history as a coherent, as it were, organic whole'.<sup>85</sup> Like Bickendorf, Prange points to Rumohr's concept of the '*künstlerisches Wollen*' which Rumohr wants to see as congruent with the entire life of the people and she sees in this again the celebration of a holistic character of art.<sup>86</sup> Once again all this is interpreted as going against Hegel, and Rumohr, too, is seen as somebody who adheres to the romantic idea that the essence of art is unchangeable.<sup>87</sup>

In the case of the other 'Berliner', Waagen, and his book on the van Eyck brothers, Prange points to the completeness and well-ordered nature of this monograph. Here, too, she stresses the presence of the idea of an autonomous art. She offers a somewhat daring argument, using a quote from one of Waagen's conclusions. Citing Waagen: '[With Jan van Eyck] art has come of age and speaks predominantly in its own language. Only a few artists could enjoy such a position, to express themselves in their subjectivity to such a degree, to be so purely objective, as J.v.Eyck.' Here Prange concludes: 'This passage makes clear once again, that the idea of an autonomous art is definitely upheld in historical – critical research'.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>81</sup> 'War die Metaphysik des Schönen einst in Regeln festgelegt, wurde sie nun transformiert in eine Ideologie der seelischen Bewegung, die als Gleichklang von Produktion und Rezeption des Kunstwerks durch den Galeriebesucher als sein "empfindendes Nachschaffen" propagiert wird'. Prange, 105.

<sup>82</sup> 'Nicht allein in der Fähigkeit zur Quellenlektüre und -kritik, die für die ältere Forschung seinen Ruhm als Begründer der wissenschaftlichen Kunstgeschichtsschreibung ausmachte [...] sondern in der konservativen Synthese [...] [der] Versöhnung des modernen Empirismus mit den metaphysischen Traditionen der älteren Kunsttheorie à la Winckelmann und Schelling.[...], Prange, 111.

<sup>83</sup> Prange, 113.

<sup>84</sup> '... irgend einem durchwaltendem Gesetz gehorchen müssen', '... diesen Geist in seiner Tätigkeit und Anwendung betrachten', Prange, 112.

<sup>85</sup> 'Eine Reihe abgerissener Abhandlungen [...] sondern als ein zusammenhängendes, gleichsam organisches Ganzes aufzufassen', Prange, 113.

<sup>86</sup> Prange, 118.

<sup>87</sup> Prange, 119.

<sup>88</sup> 'Die Kunst ist bei ihm mündig geworden und redet vornehmlich in ihrer eigenen Sprache. Nur wenigen Künstlern ist es vergönnt gewesen, sich in dem Grade ihrer Subjektivität zu äussern, so rein objektiv zu sein, als dem J.v.Eyck'. Prange: 'Diese Passage macht noch einmal deutlich, dass die Idee der autonomen Kunst in der historisch-kritischen Forschung durchaus aufrechterhalten wird.' Prange, 128.

With Franz Kugler and his long books, entitled *Handbuch*, one arrives finally at the real, the pronounced attempts to be strictly objective. Such has been the assessment in all twentieth century investigations in art historiography and it was backed up by Kugler's own statements when he sees himself as a 'Praktiker' rather than a 'Theoretiker'.<sup>89</sup> However, in his attempts to cover art of all periods and all countries of the world, with his *Weltkunstgeschichte*, one may see something of a Hegelian notion of completeness. Prange argues that here, too, 'a reasoning that has been called in which is meant to put together the mass of details as an organic whole, and does not derive the laws of art history from the phenomena themselves but constructs them on the basis of a purported higher nature.'<sup>90</sup>

In Schnaase's case the comparison with the philosophers can be expected to be more complex, as Schnaase himself, where he does not actually describe works of art, courts a wider cultural-philosophical kind of framework. As Prange points out, Schnaase's way of analysing the whole of history and art history as running parallel to the development of a generalised human spirit owes much to Hegel. However, Hegel's contention that art at some point ceased to be the highest expression of society could hardly be accepted by the art historian. Prange stresses that for Schnaase the principal carrier of the idea of art was the *Volksgeist*, and the history of art and its categories is an array of the diverse kinds of *Volksgeist*.<sup>91</sup> Prange finds some hints of Schelling in Schnaase, too, in the idea of 'a force analogous to nature' with which the artist operates and which 'redeems him from all contingency',<sup>92</sup> all of which she characterises as adhering to 'Schelling's a-historical idea of the creative genius'.<sup>93</sup>

In Prange's pantheon Kugler is followed by Anton Springer. More so than Kugler and Schnaase, Springer distanced himself from Hegel, claiming himself that he tried hard 'to throw down the speculative coat as much as it was still loosely hanging around my shoulders'.<sup>94</sup> From the 1860s Springer gave up the effort to write comprehensive art histories. The individual work of art, or the individual artistic personality is now foregrounded and a new aim was the tracing of the details of the genesis of a work. Prange then briefly points to Springer's new ways of dealing with issues of iconography, where she notes his precursorship to Panofsky, something to come back to in Rößler's account of Springer. Although Prange admits that Springer, unlike Schnaase, tended to bypass any questions about 'das Ganze', 'the whole' of history, she still finds holistic statements such as the claim for the need for '... the historical investigation / revelation of the laws of artistic activities',<sup>95</sup> and she points to the way in which the iconographer Springer tried to explain motifs by investigating a broader cultural world.

<sup>89</sup> Quoted by Prange, 145.

<sup>90</sup> '... der aufgerufene kombinierende Verstand, der die Masse der Einzelheiten zum organischen Ganzen zusammenfügen soll, erschliesst die Gesetze der Kunstgeschichte nicht aus den Phänomenen selbst, er konstituiert sie auf der Basis einer angenommenen höheren Natur [...]', Prange, 147.

<sup>91</sup> Prange, 138 – 142.

<sup>92</sup> 'Naturanaloge Kraft ... von aller Kontingenz zu erlösen scheint', Prange, 137.

<sup>93</sup> 'Ahistorische Vorstellung vom Genieschaffen', Prange, 143.

<sup>94</sup> 'Den spekulativen Mantel, soweit er noch auf meinen Schultern lose hing [...] völlig abzuwerfen', quoted in Prange, 148.

<sup>95</sup> 'historische Erschliessung der „Gesetze künstlerischer Tätigkeit"', quoted by Prange, 149.

Jacob Burckhardt is cited here first of all with his anti-philosophical comments; the way he tried to deny any 'a priori' standpoint.<sup>96</sup> His principal method, he claimed, was that of *Anschauung*, or autopsy, learning through looking, concentrating on what is external. That however, contends Prange, does contain an a priori: 'Burckhardt's very trust in the principle of looking as the means to gain knowledge is nourished by a religious frame of mind which had found its systematic foundation in Schelling's philosophy of art'.<sup>97</sup> As regards Hegel, a nadir appears to have been reached: not only was his spirit lost entirely, Burckhardt never really linked up his writings on the history of culture with his writings on art. There is the well-known way in which he stressed in history the quasi accidental occurrence of the 'great personality' which, as Prange points out, also included some surprising anti-democratic rhetoric.<sup>98</sup>

At exactly the same time as Prange, the German studies scholar Andrea Schütte presented her work *Stilräume. Jacob Burckhardt und die ästhetische Anordnung im 19. Jahrhundert*, roughly translated as 'Spaces for Style, Jacob Burckhardt and the Dispositions of the Aesthetic in the 19th Century'. At first reading this title gives little away about what amounts to a highly original book which takes the study of Burckhardt's work into quite unexpected directions.<sup>99</sup> Very basically, Schütte's framework is the same as Prange's. It, too, takes philosophy as the starting point, but in this case it is Burckhardt's 'denial' of philosophy, or, more generally, his reluctance to proceed systematically that forms the basis of the argument. However, this is not, as with Prange, seen to be just hiding common philosophical theorems, but is now being placed within an epistemology, to be precise, within the epistemology of uncertainty. First of all, Schütte's account is peppered by quotes from the master, which restate again and again that in any of his historical investigations he does not know how to define the beginning and that one may start 'just somewhere', or 'anywhere', that it is difficult to perceive any totalities or linearities; Burckhardt holds that his writing proceeds 'ruckweise', or 'sprung- und stossweise', that is, in a 'jerking fashion', 'by jumping and pushing', in other words: it is proceeding in fits and starts.<sup>100</sup> One attraction of Schütte's approach is that it makes any quote from the old authors sound entertaining. She then greatly elaborates on the problems of history writing, the issues of objectivity and subjectivity, to which Part II of this report will briefly return. Her conclusion, and according to her interpretation, also Burckhardt's conclusion, is that there is no firm dividing line between history writing and fiction. Using a touch of poetry, or at least allegory herself, she ends with: 'Clio, Muse der Geschichte, ist Kalliope, Muse der

<sup>96</sup> Quoted in Prange, 153.

<sup>97</sup> 'Burckhardt's Vertrauen auf die Anschauung als Erkenntnisinstrument zehrt von religiösen Denkhaltungen, die in Schellings Kunstphilosophie ihre systematische Grundlage gefunden haben'. Prange, 153.

<sup>98</sup> Prange, 160.

<sup>99</sup> See the Review by Iris Benner in *art historicum net*, 2005, nr. 5. Cf. Also Dieter Jähmig, *Massstäbe der Kunst- und Geschichtsbetrachtung Jacob Burckhardts*, Basle: Schwabe / Munich: Beck, 2006. Urs Breitenstein & oth., eds., "Unerschöpflichkeit der Quellen". *Burckhardt neu editiert. Burckhardt neu-entdeckt*, Basle: Schwabe / Munich: Beck 2007.

<sup>100</sup> Schütte, Introduction, Schütte 105; Jacob Burckhardt, *Weltgeschichtliche Betrachtungen* (1905), J. Burckhardt, *Werke*, Basel: Schwabe vol. 4 1956, 180, 138.

Dichtkunst (poetry).<sup>101</sup> In this sense Schütte prefigures Rößler's 'textwissenschaftliche' approach to the writings of Burckhardt's contemporaries Springer and Justi to which we shall come.

After the long general epistemological section, Schütte at last brings in the visual arts. Searching for links, for the ways of mixing or linking the divergent elements, an author's 'Fugungsvorstellungen', his or her concepts of jointing (as in putting together the bricks for a wall) is needed.<sup>102</sup> And here an obvious means is offered by the picture, the painting, where everything is placed next to everything else. Schütte now provides extensive discussions of a number of theories of representation, including perspective. On the whole she wishes to stress again the accidental, the way in which pictures can show links, but also breaks, a 'heterogene Konstellation von heterogenen Komponenten.'<sup>103</sup> 'Dense description' is her characterisation of Burckhardt's approach.<sup>104</sup> A parallel function to the *Bild* she sees in the displays of paintings in the new late eighteenth and nineteenth century kind of art museum, which, in Schütte's analysis, showed 'an aimless, confusing arrangement'.<sup>105</sup> The author also branches out into anthropology by analysing the natural history dioramas of the taxidermists and finally turns to the notion of 'Typos' as an ordering instrument. Her claim that the display in the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, from 1851 onwards, constitutes the first museum which is 'typologisch arrangiert',<sup>106</sup> can only be mentioned here. Schütte ends with an extensive history of the term style to which we shall also return in part II.

Returning to Prange after this long digression – though it was hardly an un-topical one – the stress on the high-profile persona brings one to the next group, again to Anton Springer, then to Herman Grimm and Carl Justi. With Grimm's writings a new stronger heroisation had set in, especially in his celebrated biographies of Michelangelo and Raphael. The same applied in more subtle ways to Justi's book on Velazquez, to which this report will return. Springer criticised Grimm's Michelangelo for carelessness and inaccuracy in its details, no doubt comparing it with the scrupulosity of his own double-biography paralleling Raphael and Michelangelo. For Prange all these biographies manifest the continuing attempts to deal with the general 'problem of freedom vs. necessity as well as with the idealist-romantic attempts to solve it by constructing the genius-personality, whose subjectivity may also claim objective communality.'<sup>107</sup> As regards the interpretations of Velazquez, according to Prange, Justi stresses more the painter's ties with the taste of the period than his originality. Justi's interpretation of *Las Meninas* concludes with his contention that its real 'author and patron' is the King.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Schütte, 61.

<sup>102</sup> Schütte, 9.

<sup>103</sup> Schütte, 175, 204.

<sup>104</sup> 'Dichte Beschreibung', Schütte, 255.

<sup>105</sup> 'Ziellos unübersichtliche Anordnung', Schütte, 234.

<sup>106</sup> Schütte, 263.

<sup>107</sup> 'das Problem von Freiheit und Notwendigkeit als auch sein idealistisch-romantischer Lösungsversuch durch die Konstruktion einer idealen Persönlichkeit, deren Subjektivität zugleich objektive Allgemeinheit beanspruchen darf', Prange, 169.

<sup>108</sup> Prange, 172- 173.

In the early 1870s the Holbein-Streit, the dispute about a Madonna by Hans Holbein appeared as a turning point towards the new scientific art history. A choice had to be made between the version in Darmstadt and the version in Dresden. Now the promoters of advanced observation, meaning those who practised the more exacting kind of observation of details, won over those who were still in awe of a general Classical smoothness, which they saw in the Dresden version; the others however denounced that version as a seventeenth century copy and pleaded for the Darmstadt version which looks a little harsher. To this day Holbein's masterpiece goes under the name Darmstädter Madonna. Soon the attention to detail took a new turn in the work of Morelli. Did his way of telling artists apart by examining the way they painted differently small details, such as ears and hands, constitute an empirical- scientific method par excellence? Not necessarily, argues Prange:

The enthusiasm for the national idea and the eye for what is characteristic in a work of art links him to Schelling, even though at first sight the 'Morelli' "experimental method" appears distant from philosophical aesthetics. Morelli even more effectively realised the concepts of Rumohr or Waagen, in the way he mediated the premise of an unconscious drive for art with the idea that the manifestations of this drive can be deciphered with precision in each case, like an individual artistic grammar.<sup>109</sup>

Prange also points out that Morelli had studied the writings of the Romantics and Schelling's philosophy of nature in particular and her contention is at this point not that far away from what Rößler was to say about the significance of Morelli's theory as helping to establish the notion of individual artistic autonomy.<sup>110</sup>

Prange's last chapters are of lesser interest in the context here. In her investigation of new theories in the decorative art, she characterises Owen Jones's theories as the 'romantic derivation of beauty in art from beauty in nature'.<sup>111</sup> Semper's 'raising of nature and necessity to principles which determine art is owed to the romantic turn of Winckelmann's ideas.'<sup>112</sup> In Riegl's work, Prange traces his concept of the 'quasi natural' *Kunstwollen* back to Schelling and reminds of the use of a similar term in Rumohr.<sup>113</sup> Via Wöllflin's formalism the book arrives at Dvořak's '*Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte*', where, according to Prange, 'the *Wissenschaft* revives earlier romantic ways of thinking, the ways in which Friedrich Schlegel had

<sup>109</sup> 'Die Begeisterung für die nationale Idee und der Blick auf das charakteristische eines Kunstwerkes verbinden ihn mit Schelling, so weit auf den ersten Blick die Morellische Experimentiermethode von philosophischer Ästhetik entfernt zu sein scheint. Morelli realisierte sogar noch effektiver als Rumohr und Waagen Schellings Auffassungen, indem er nämlich die Prämisse eines unbewusst tätigen Kunstriebes mit der Idee vermittelte, die Äusserungen dieses Tribes seien wie eine jeweils individuelle künstlerische Grammatik exakt zu entziffern.' Prange, 176.

<sup>110</sup> Rößler, 218.

<sup>111</sup> 'Romantische Ableitung des Kunstschönen aus dem Naturschönen, Prange, 182.

<sup>112</sup> 'Die Überhöhung von Natur und Bedürfnis zu kunstbestimmenden Prinzipien ist der romantischen Wendung Winkelammanscher Ideale verpflichtet, Prange, 184.

<sup>113</sup> Prange, 190.

been 'rejecting the formal criteria of academic appreciation so as to return to a religiously deepened language of art'.<sup>114</sup>

### Prange under the spotlight

Prange's book was destined to create serious attention and controversy. An incisive review by Henrik Karge mixes general praise with strong reservations in detail. 'The history of art history has seldom been analysed on such a level of reflection and with such incisive and original arguments', although at times, Karge writes, the reader could feel that complex developments may have been sacrificed for the 'unity of the thought-construction.' In particular, Prange's continuous stress on Romanticism does not go unchallenged. It could have the effect of obscuring the very different '*couleurs*' of scholars like Kugler, Schnaase, Burckhardt, Springer, Semper and Riegl and more generally it may prevent the recognition of the momentous changes in the mentality of the nineteenth century. As far as Karge's 'own' author, Schnaase, is concerned, he rejects Prange's attempt to place him close to 'Schelling's ahistorical idea of the genius's creativity' and her attempts 'to fix art to idealised constants in nature, in Schelling's and Rumohr's way,' Karge finds 'completely misleading'.<sup>115</sup>

Locher's book, as was stressed above, must be seen as broadly agreeing with Prange in many important respects. In the afterword of his new edition he briefly refers to Prange, though he remains ambivalent. One feels that he is fending off an attack on his work for not delving enough into the philosophy of art, stating that in his book 'this connection was intentionally kept in the background in favour of focusing on the special kind of the aesthetic judgement in art history'.<sup>116</sup>

In the Introduction to the next book to be reported here, Johannes Rößler also devotes a paragraph to Prange's book and gave it a thoroughly mixed reception: 'Prange rightly criticises history of science-specific points of view which polarise between philosophical aesthetics and empirical procedures'. However, he concludes that the mono-causal tracing of the *Kunstwissenschaft* back to a 'Romantik-Paradigma' results in an underrating of the 'inherent dynamics and the innovative potential of the later formations of theory'.<sup>117</sup> Quite a harsh judgement, considering

<sup>114</sup> 'Kehrte die Wissenschaft zu den romantischen Grundsätzen einer religiös vertieften Sprache der Kunst zurück'. 'Wie einst Friedrich Schlegel die formalen Kriterien akademischer Kunstbetrachtung ablehnte, [...] um sich romantischen Grundsätzen einer religiös vertieften Sprache der Kunst zuzuwenden', Prange, 215.

<sup>115</sup> Karge: 'Selten ist bisher die Geschichte der Knstgeschichte auf derart gedanklichem Niveau und in derart prägnanter und eigenständiger Argumentation durchdrungen worden'; 'Geschlossenheit des Gedankengebäudes'; 'ahistorische[r] Vorstellung vom Genieschaffen'; Schnaase's Fixierung der Kunst auf idealisierende Naturkonstanten im Sinne Schellings und Rumohrs'; 'radikale Verdrehung'. Henrik Karge, Rezension von Regine Prange, *Die Geburt der Kunstgeschichte* ..., 2004, in: <http://www.sehepunkte.de/2007/05/8083.html>

<sup>116</sup> 'War diese Verbindung absichtsvoll in den Hingteregrund belassen, zugunsten der Fokussierung auf die eigensinnige Art des ästhetischen Urteils in der Kunstgeschichteä', Locher, 528.

<sup>117</sup> Prange kritisiert zu Recht wissenschaftshistorische Sichtweisen, die zwischen philosophischer Ästhetik und Empirie polarisieren [...], Rößler, 5. 'Die monokausale Herleitung der Kunstwissenschaft aus einem "Romantik-Paradigma" bedingt, dass die Eigendynamik und das innovative Potential späterer Theoriebildung unterschätzt werden.' Rößler, 5.

that Prange's analysis of the writings of Justi, in particular, had prepared the ground for Rößler at least in a few respects. However, Rößler's critique gives a good hint as to how he wants to see things himself.

### How to write the New Art History (Rößler)

Rößler's title 'The poetics of art history' first of all comes as a hefty provocation. It would probably have sounded deeply disturbing to at least one of Rößler's two protagonists, Anton Springer, who was considered the pioneering arch-empiricist among his colleagues. As has just been stressed again, the starting point of all the three books is the rejection of a categorical kind of division between 'aesthetics' and 'history' - of the attempts to play them off against each other. Locher's proposal - reported at the beginning as setting the tone of this report - was that absolute value-freedom was never actually achieved. Rößler takes a further step in this direction: 'The crossing point between historicisation and aesthetics finds its place in the art historian's ways of presenting his or her material and findings.'<sup>118</sup> Here 'presentational method' actually refers to a broader notion of writing, anything that concerns methods in general history writing and even in fictional writing. A key literary term is 'the organisation of the text'.<sup>119</sup> Rößler thus blurs the borders between history, including art history, and fiction in a way reminiscent of the work of Hayden White. Rößler's subtitle: 'Anton Springer, Carl Justi und die ästhetische Konzeption der deutschen Kunstwissenschaft' can thus be taken to deal with both philosophical aesthetics and with the literary nature of the writings, that is with the 'presentational [*darstellungsaesthetisch[en]*] qualities', with the literary-aesthetic qualities of art historical text as such. Here, one may cite Prange who indicates a similar kind of thinking where she refers to Hegel who uses 'pictorial and narrative kinds of aesthetic methods to bring the past up to the present'.<sup>120</sup>

Rößler's book comes as a double monograph, or biography. A further mighty contemporary figure, Herman Grimm, the new *Ordinarius*, or full professor in Berlin from 1873, chiefly known as the writer of powerful biographies of Michelangelo and Raphael, is partly dealt with by Rößler here. Suffice it to mention Grimm's desire to attain literary grandeur, seemingly to the detriment of factual precision, for which some of his colleagues, including Springer, would not forgive him.<sup>121</sup>

The first, more important and more multifaceted figure is Anton Springer. While always being mentioned with respect in the older histories of art history, Springer was never given the ranking of Rumohr, Schnaase or Burckhardt, thus he is missing from Pfisterer's choice of 2007, too. Partly this was due to way in which there appeared little to say about his assumed strict empiricism; empiricism was treated as a methodological virtue but not as a genuine methodological innovation,

<sup>118</sup> 'Die Schnittstelle zwischen Historisierung und Ästhetik [...] findet ihren Ort in den Darstellungskonzeptionen der Kunsthistoriker'. Rößler, 6.

<sup>119</sup> 'Textorganisatorisch', Rößler, 111.

<sup>120</sup> 'Ein ästhetisches Verfahren der bildlichen und narrativen Vergegenwärtigung des Historischen', Prange, 98.

<sup>121</sup> For Grimm see also Johannes Rößler, 'Erlebnisbegriff und Skioptikon: Herman Grimm und die Geisteswissenschaften and der Berliner Universität', in Bredekamp / Labuda 2010, 69-90.

a point to come back to in Part II of this report. The same can also be said about the other factor in Springer's biography, the institutional one, Springer having been the inaugurator of the first three proper teaching posts, i.e. chairs, in Germany: Bonn in 1860, Strasbourg in 1872 and Leipzig in 1873. The large number of his pupils made up much of the next generation of art historians.

Art history had now become a science conducted in its proper departments in the universities, led by bona-fide specialist in their fields. It was the special methodological statements which occurred only from the 1890s onwards that caught the attention of all later historians of art history. For Rößler, such a scenario appears simplistic. The decades before 1890 were intellectually as challenging as any other. One paradox was that these 'first' proper art historians could hardly be seen as specialists at all; Springer's background as well as his continuing activities outside the field were particularly rich and diverse. His links with other academic fields were always at the highest level. Rößler takes this diversity as an opportunity to delve into those complex intellectual backgrounds wherever he can, combining philosophy, the philosophy of history, aesthetics, literary theory and much else. It is a very discursive history of ideas which differs from the more usual procedures, whereby one takes a single statement, preferably a programmatic-sounding one, and then searches through other statements to locate any follow-ups, something that would particularly suit the subsequent 'mature' art history, such as Wölfflin's, who pronounced on its distinct methods, its rules and how everybody should proceed. For Rößler any statement of his protagonists contains interesting aspects, and that, most importantly, includes all their descriptions and analyses of the actual works themselves.

By way of introduction a slightly shortened table of contents of the section on Springer might be helpful to gage the scope of Rößler's work:

'Anton Springer: Realistic Classicism. Methodology and Presentation in Anton Springer.

One: [introductory] Between *Wissenschaft*, politics and aesthetics ...

Two: Realist Criteria of art appreciation (*Kunstbetrachtung*)

From the aesthetics of the period of Revolution to realism (1845-1858)

Empirical art history and dialectical conception I:

Raphael and Michelangelo as exponents of stylistic synthesis

Empirical art history and dialectical conception II:

About the relationship between photography and the aesthetics of production

Three: *Idealrealistische Wissenschaft*:

The *Stanza della Segnatura* and a new Iconography

After-effects of the critique of allegory

Springer's critique of Passavant and J.W.J. Braun

Realism and iconography

Art history according to texts: Ways of describing and concepts of presentation (*Darstellung* ...), 1867, 1878 and 1883, rhetorical, narrative, hermeneutical

## Summary

## Four: The reform of writing art history:

Anton Springer and poetological thinking after 1848

Liberalist historiography and programmatic realism

'Written from our shared ways of thinking'

The cultural-historical "tableau" ["Bild"] as a structural model in the work of Gustav Freytag and Otto Jahn

Springer's *Bilder aus der neueren Kunstgeschichte* (1867): Work [used here as political term] and [national-political] tendency

## Five: Anton Springer: the Historiographer:

Aesthetic presentation (Darstellung) in the magnum opus:

*Raffael und Michelangelo*

Reconciled contrast.

The concept of the Renaissance in the parallel biography.

Springer and the realist reflection of presentation

(*Darstellung*) to 1878

The evidence of life: About the discussion of biography in the *Grenzboten* [journal] - circle

Springer vs. Grimm:

Dramatic vs. symbolic narrative configuration:

Dramatic narrative configuration in the parallel biography

Symbolic narrative configuration in the *Life of Michelangelo* by Herman Grimm

## Conclusion:

Narrated history of culture: *Soll und Haben* [novel by Gustav Freytag] as a formal model.<sup>122</sup>

There appeared to be no room for an actual biographical chapter on Springer but the important factors of his career emerge throughout. A native of Prague, Springer migrated early to Germany. In Tübingen he obtained his doctorate under a philosopher who specialised in aesthetics, the Hegel-adherent Friedrich Theodor Fischer (Springer's topic being Hegel's philosophy of history). At the same time he had become a left-liberal journalist, even agitator, which led him to denounce Catholic romanticism and medievalism. After 1848 Springer turned, like so many of his fellow rebels, towards a more stolid 'national-liberal' conservatism. He now kept close contacts with Gustav Freytag, then Germany's most popular writer of historical fiction, and a fairly right-wing one at that. Probably the most important factor that Springer brought to art history from his other activities was the quality of his writing. From the 1850s onwards it frequently received high praise. Very recently Michel Espagne, in his *Histoire de l'art comme transfert culturel. L'itinéraire d'Anton Springer*, has provided a great deal more detail about Springer's life and environment.<sup>123</sup>

One of the characteristics of Rößler's discursive approach vis-à-vis the ideas and thought processes is that it is hard to single out and neatly outline any one

<sup>122</sup> German version in Appendix.

<sup>123</sup> Paris: Belin 2009; see review by Rößler, *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 74, 4, 2011 582-587.

concept. A most important procedure and value is empiricism. Springer's own statements in this respect do not appear to be of too much help. In his usual manner of the elegant phrase he claimed to occupy the 'right middle ground between shameless construction and raw empiricism'. Rößler claims that the term positivism, which is sometimes attached to Springer's outlook, is not suitable, as Springer seems to have studied neither Taine nor Mill. What does come under empiricism for Rößler is the way in which Springer uses a new method of explaining a work by way of tracing its genesis through a succession of preliminary drawings. The historian conducts an 'empirical survey' (Rößler) of the genesis of the work whereby the aesthetic experience is no longer that of a work which appears removed into timelessness, but the experience of an artistic process of creation which is verifiable with its chronological sequence and through its materials (sketches etc.). However, Rößler holds that Springer does not, when dealing with a sequence of drawings, go for a 'simple description' as it was demanded in contemporary science, or for a sense of linear 'progression', but he adopts a more complex 'dialectical process' of going backwards and forwards so as to achieve a new sense of intensification.<sup>124</sup>

Only a few complexes of Springer's contribution may be briefly singled out here: the issue of realism, the changes in the analyses of works by Raphael, the definition of iconography and the category of biography. Rößler makes much use of the terms 'Idealrealismus' and 'realistischer Klassizismus'. The former has much to do with a combination of world views prevalent in the 1840s, a synthesis of Feuerbach's materialism, Hegel's dialectics and Schelling's philosophy of nature.<sup>125</sup> Springer also admired the new kind of realist history painting of the 1840s, and was especially impressed by its tendency of rendering 'full, sensuous personages'.<sup>126</sup> Yet from the 1850s Springer stressed that 'naked naturalism' or colour for its own sake had to be tempered with idealism, even Classicist idealism.<sup>127</sup> From the 1850s Springer contributed frequently to the middle-brow journal *Grenzbote*, such as his 'Bilder aus der neueren Kunstgeschichte', containing diverse chapters on Italian Renaissance art.<sup>128</sup> The title indicates the closeness of his approach to that of his literary colleagues and their 'kulturgeschichtliche Bilder'.<sup>129</sup> While based on a careful use of all sources, in their actual presentation these texts might well incorporate elements of the 'accidental' in the selection of the facts, in effect the art historian's writing might here border on fictionality.<sup>130</sup>

Springer's most important single investigations were devoted to the paintings of Raphael and Michelangelo. Rößler's term 'realistischer Klassizismus' marks out the continuing veneration of Raphael, to be found in so much German art history throughout the nineteenth century. The sense of the Italian High Renaissance as a norm, as 'the status of absolute perfection' persisted,<sup>131</sup> exemplified in Springer's most important book, *Raffael und Michelangelo*. It seems that Springer

<sup>124</sup> Rößler, 43, 46.

<sup>125</sup> Rößler, 22.

<sup>126</sup> 'Volle sinnliche Gestalten', Rößler, 31.

<sup>127</sup> Rößler, 32, 50.

<sup>128</sup> Eg. 'L. B. Alberti', 'Raffael's Disputa', or 'der gothische Schneider von Bologna'.

<sup>129</sup> Rößler, 112, 116, cf. Gustav Freytag's tales *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit*, 1867-.

<sup>130</sup> Rößler, 111.

<sup>131</sup> 'Status der absoluten Vollendung', Rößler, 38.

kept on condemning the Catholic Medievalists, the Nazarenes and especially their recreations of Raphael, as in the later work of Friedrich Overbeck, who showed an 'un-involved abstraction, a lifeless inwardness and a sense of personal nothingness'.<sup>132</sup>

Of great importance is the way Springer kept developing his investigation of Raphael's *Disputa* in the three successive times he dealt with it; it serves to underline the richness of the methodological spectrum of the time. In 1867 he supplied a detailed factual description of the scene, emphasising lively action, which was combined with a strong *ekphrasis*. In 1878 he dealt fully with iconography which he broadens out into a wider cultural history. He also concentrated on Raphael's preparatory drawings. Springer was the fortunate owner of a copy of the pioneering photographic publication of the drawings in the British Royal Collections, initiated by Prince Albert.<sup>133</sup> The interpretation of 1883 finally - Rößler calls it the 'hermeneutische Konzeption'<sup>134</sup> - concerns itself with the effects of colour and 'the effects of the picture as a whole', as the rendering of a lively scene of action,<sup>135</sup> without paying notice to the 'literal' identification of the contents of the scene any more.

At this point Rößler goes on to construct a comprehensive scheme of interpretation which he likens closely to the famous three-tier scheme of iconography proposed by Panofsky some sixty years later. Stage one is the pre-iconographic identification based on the purely practical observations of the beholder, say, on observing how a person moves etc. The second stage is the specialised iconographic identification, especially important in religious and mythological painting. Throughout, Springer remained sceptical of the Nazarene-influenced insistence on identifying a painting's contents as an array of symbols and allegories and on taking this as the final word.<sup>136</sup> Thus he sees the great necessity for the third step, investigating the broadest background of meanings, such as the various systems of philosophy and the arguments between them, or the popular myths which to him explained much about Christian symbolism; in other words, the level of meaning that Panofsky was to call iconology. The crucial factor is of course that these steps can be seen both separately and as interrelated.<sup>137</sup>

The last major issue is the biography of the individual artist. At this point Rößler could use the recent work by Karin Hellwig, *Von der Vita zur Künstlerbiographie* which traces the genre from the eighteenth to the mid nineteenth century, to which this report will return briefly in Part II.<sup>138</sup> By 1870 the genre rose afresh, in the context of intensified methodological and 'textorganisatorisch' thinking about the use of the various genres of art historical writing.<sup>139</sup> On the one hand there was the proliferation of the widest-ranging kinds of handbooks. Springer had

<sup>132</sup> 'teilnahmslose Abstraktion', 'fleischlose Innerlichkeit', 'Gefühl persönlicher Nichtigkeit', Rößler, 57.

<sup>133</sup> Rößler, 40.

<sup>134</sup> Rößler, 84 ff..

<sup>135</sup> 'Wirkungsästhetische Kriterien', Rößler, 86.

<sup>136</sup> Rößler, 90.

<sup>137</sup> Rößler, 86 ff.

<sup>138</sup> Karin Hellwig, *Von der Vita zur Künstlerbiographie* (From the Vita to the Artist's Biography), Berlin: Akademie Verlag 2006.

<sup>139</sup> Rößler, 111.

himself written one of the most successful ones, but the academic ranking of this genre and their overall intellectual usefulness was already being cast into doubt. The definitive trend was towards the individual specialised investigation, be it part of the life of an artist, or, most likely homing in on one or a group of objects, invariably published as articles in the new specialised periodicals.<sup>140</sup> Quoting Springer himself: 'Do not generalise but individualise'.<sup>141</sup>

A dominant issue for the biography is the Romantic stress on individual genius and the psychological aspect of the actual creative act. With regard to the former, Springer stated that 'without the cult of hero there is no writing of history'.<sup>142</sup> With regard to the creative act Springer had provided a model of a more empirical kind of investigation with his minute observations of the sequence of Raphael's drawings. Furthermore, the work of art can be elevated to the expression of human potential generally<sup>143</sup> and the creative act, as a *process*, becomes a 'metaphysicum'.<sup>144</sup> But while the artist is seen as an agent who is able to react to the adversities of contingency,<sup>145</sup> one may also stress that a biography provided the opportunity for a different kind of thinking, kind of thinking, one which places the individual into a wider cultural and historical context, combining the particular with the general. Lastly, there is the pure literary merit of the genre. Springer himself maintained that an art historical biography is a 'created work of art'.<sup>146</sup> Springer's *Raffael und Michelangelo*, a highly complex work of two intertwined biographies was held by many to be his best work.<sup>147</sup> Such a modern artistic biography needed quite specific new narrative techniques.<sup>148</sup> It had to use the principles of 'Kausalnexus' and it had to be free of the anecdotal and aphoristic.<sup>149</sup> Again Springer followed his literary friend Freytag who declared his realist cultural history-oriented fiction as close to *Sachtexte* – to non fictional texts.<sup>150</sup> In reference to recent literary research Rößler comes out with the seemingly paradoxical postulate: 'The [realistic] novel as paradigm of the modern concept of reality'.<sup>151</sup> Rößler undertook a counting of action verbs in Springer's Raphael – Michelangelo biography, where their relative frequency evokes a continual movement in space and time, which brings this text close to the dynamic ideal of narrative in the 'realklassizistischen' novels.<sup>152</sup> As a distant parallel one is reminded here of the way in which so many later nineteenth century history books are illustrated, regardless

<sup>140</sup> Rößler, 8.

<sup>141</sup> 'Nicht generalisieren sondern [...] individualisieren muss man [...]', quoted in Rößler, 78.

<sup>142</sup> 'Ohne Heroenkultus gibt es keine Geschichtsschreibung', quoted in Rößler, 127.

<sup>143</sup> 'Das Kunstwerk zum Ausdruck des menschlichen Vermögens zu erheben', Rößler, 94.

<sup>144</sup> 'Der schöpferisch Akt wird damit als *Prozess* zum Metaphysikum', Rößler, 94.

<sup>145</sup> 'Die Fähigkeit des Künstlers als reaktionsfähiges Subjekt die Widrigkeiten der Kontingenz in den schöpferischen Akt zu integrieren', Rößler, 94.

<sup>146</sup> 'Kunstschöpfung', Rößler, 142, 170, 171.

<sup>147</sup> Rößler, 125.

<sup>148</sup> Rößler, 162.

<sup>149</sup> Rößler, 136 139.

<sup>150</sup> Rößler, 107, 122 162.

<sup>151</sup> 'Der Roman als Paradigma der modernen Wirklichkeitsauffassung', Rößler, 171.

<sup>152</sup> 'In der Parallelhandlung die kontunuirliche Bewegung von Raum und Zeit evoziert, die dem dynamischen Erzählideal der realklassizistischen Prosa nahekommmt', Rößler, 140.

of the period they are dealing with, by the nineteenth century painters' interpretation of the events.

The second part of Rößler's book deals with Carl Justi and here is the table of contents, greatly shortened:

Justi: "the translator of art".

Beyond Hegel. The concept of individuality and the history of art.

Inverted Theology. *Winckelmann and his Contemporaries*.

The Controversies over Morelli.

Herman Grimm: *Goethe's importance in our Times*.

Goethe and Justi. Justi's fictions. Plato and the pessimistic history (*Las Meninas* etc). From contemplation to presentation / principles of description: Hermeneutics and essayistics.

Image and history.

Rhetoric, intertextuality and aesthetics.

Hippology and aesthetics.

Ironic historicism.<sup>153</sup>

Slightly younger than Springer, Justi followed him on the chair at Bonn in 1872. In terms of the much smaller number of publications and because of the lack of a circle of pupils, Justi ranges far behind his predecessor.<sup>154</sup> On the other hand Justi's *Velazquez und sein Jahrhundert* (Velazquez and his century) of 1888 reached a degree of fame that very few other art historical books of the nineteenth century could equal. The issues it raises in terms of methodology are more complex and reach deeper than Springer's. Only a very brief and rudimentary overview can be attempted here.

What follows refers less to programmatic statements by Justi himself, but principally to Rößler's extremely wide-ranging and discursive treatment, tying together issues of description and *ekphrasis* with aesthetics, epistemology, antique philosophy, theology and literature. While Rößler has to state that Justi himself 'negated any kind of theoretical slant, this anti-programmatic attitude hides an epistemological awareness which can be put into the context of philosophical and theological traditions and which at the same time accommodates history-of-science / *wissenschaftshistorische* trends of the time'.<sup>155</sup> A key issue is again the nature of the biography, including the relationship between the biographical subject and the writer. Here, Rößler introduces the philosophy of the theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher, whose 'recipe of self-reflexion and the way it is made practical use

<sup>153</sup> "'Der Dolmetsch der Kunst": Jenseits von Hegel. Individualitätsgedanke und Kunstgeschichte. Invertierte Theologie. *Winckelmann und seine Zeitgenossen*. Der Morelli Streit. Herman Grimms *Goethe im Dienste unserer Zeit*. Goethe und Justi. Justis Fiktionen. Platonismus und Geschichtspessimismus. Von der Anschauung zur Darstellung / Prinzipien der Bildbeschreibung: Hermeneutik und Essayistik, Bild und Geschichte. Rhetorik, Intertextualität und Ästhetik, Hippologie und Ästhetik. Ironischer Historismus.

<sup>154</sup> Rößler, 185.

<sup>155</sup> 'Obwohl Justi offiziell jede theoretische Voreingenommenheit negiert, verbirgt sich hinter dieser Anti-Programmatik ein erkenntnistheoretisches Problembewusstsein, das philosophischen und theologischen Traditionen zugeordnet werden kann und zugleich auf wissenschaftshistorische Zeitströmungen reagiert', Rößler, 188.

of within what one has recognised as the aims of life, can be made use of in historical research, too'.<sup>156</sup>

Justi's Velazquez is a book of extreme length and comprehensiveness and yet it is also eminently readable. Thus it has endured through much of the twentieth century and the number of its translations, among art historical books, were only matched by Jacob Burckhardt's *Cicerone*.<sup>157</sup> On the whole Justi's task was a far more demanding one than Burckhardt's, exploring the art of a country that was, in contrast to Italy, quite unknown. Justi's work is astonishingly inclusive, dealing with all aspects of politics and culture, as well as with the details of patronage and the content of the works in general terms, into which the artist's life and the individual works are carefully embedded. As with Burckhardt and Springer, everything, or almost everything, is scrupulously sourced, not only in Spain, but internationally. A special interest is created by the fact that Justi's enthusiasm about Velazquez coincided with the sudden Parisian interest in his work, though Justi only commented on it later.<sup>158</sup>

Like Springer, Justi carefully worked out the interaction between broader cultural factors and the artist's style, but his conviction was rather different and more extreme: while Springer looked for a synthesis of art and milieu and tried to identify the meaning of images with people's beliefs; subject matter for Justi was about the artist's 'spontaneous pictorial invention'.<sup>159</sup> Justi was a follower of Arthur Schopenhauer. It is the individual who wills reality and a historical account is 'an enquiry into individuals'.<sup>160</sup> All this has an added relevance here because in seventeenth century Spain the great art the country produced did not coincide with the happiest period of its history. On the contrary, politics and society appeared in a state of rapid decline. For Justi, a man of sceptical and even pessimistic leanings this made the story all the more interesting.

All this comes to a head in the analysis of Velazquez's last paintings which are highly unusual in that they depart from the religious and the usual courtly-stately subject matter. In a section: 'The description of *nunc stans* [the eternal now]: Las Meninas as an aesthetic concept',<sup>161</sup> Rößler summarises Justi's interpretation of Las Meninas as 'a gladdening/enchanting product of an accidental happening'.<sup>162</sup> The chief problem is the relationship between the ordinary world that is shown and the *ekphrasis* of the work of art, the 'characterisation of the work as the revelation of beauty within the real world of the palace'.<sup>163</sup> Rößler tries to explain this by bringing in Schopenhauer again, whom, he says, Justi 'uses' implicitly, namely when he writes that the artist, in order to 'see' the ordinary world, must act like a stranger;<sup>164</sup> or, as Schopenhauer maintained, the world painted by the artist must be turned into

<sup>156</sup> 'Die Anleitung zur Selbsterkenntnis und zur praktischen Umsetzung des erkannten Lebensentwurfs auf die historische Forschung übertragen lässt', Rößler, 208.

<sup>157</sup> Rößler, 185.

<sup>158</sup> Rößler, 296.

<sup>159</sup> 'Das Spontane im Bildfindungsprozess', Rößler, 340.

<sup>160</sup> "'Eine Wissenschaft von Individuen'", citing Schopenhauer, Rößler, 273.

<sup>161</sup> 'Die Beschreibung des *nunc stans*: Las Meninas als ästhetisches Concept', Rößler, 277.

<sup>162</sup> 'Beglückendes Produkt des Zufalls', Rößler, 277.

<sup>163</sup> 'Die Beschreibung des Bildes als epiphanes Moment des Schönen in der realen Welt des Palastes', Rossler, 278.

<sup>164</sup> Rößler, 280.

an 'object of contemplation'.<sup>165</sup> Rößler underpins this further with Schopenhauer's claims that 'the subjectivity of the spirit dissolves itself through its complete objectivisation in contemplation',<sup>166</sup> in effect uniting subject and object, and this applies to both the creator and the beholder. In such a way the revelation of the idea of beauty<sup>167</sup> is achieved as well as a depiction of the scene in the atelier in a 'pure and objective way'.<sup>168</sup>

A special nugget in Justi's Velasquez book, which could be - according to one's standpoint - most disturbing, when applying the principles of a truth-telling *Wissenschaft*, or tantalisingly interesting when judging the book as a work of literature: firstly there is the 'Dialogue on Painting',<sup>169</sup> in which a number of Roman painters discuss approaches to art and, secondly, further on in Justi's book, one finds a long letter which the artist wrote back to his family from Rome.<sup>170</sup> Both these sections are totally Justi's own inventions, though he does not acknowledge this fact. Neither did any of his early readers seem to have discovered it. Finally Justi confessed and was duly accused of having damaged the integrity of German *Wissenschaft*.<sup>171</sup>

But why not? In twenty pages Rößler provides a complex analysis of these texts, using epistemological arguments and those derived from literary presentational techniques. While admitting that what Justi did would not have been allowed in any professional writing after 1900,<sup>172</sup> in the context of the basic outlook shared by all three books reported here, by Locher and by Prange, too, namely that one should not, and cannot, insist on too rigid a separation between fictional and objective-scientific texts, one may begin to accept Justi's fictions as a kind of 'literarisation', serving the understanding of at least some of the overall arguments in the historical discussions on art. Rößler's conclusion about the fakes is here given in full:

#### Conclusion:

If one returns once again to the starting point of the methodological controversies of 1880, one realises that the fictional sources inserted into the biography of Velazquez, may, last but not least, be understood when diagnosing them against the background of the time. Justi's ideas of presenting the issues gained their contours in the immediate proximity of the dispute about the right connoisseurial procedure, whose protagonist was Giovanni Morelli. While Morelli, with the help of the fiction of a "Russian" and through openly ridiculing the adversary brought about a polarising constellation, Justi included the polemical impulse into his

<sup>165</sup> "'Gegenstand der Contmplation'", Rößler, after Schopenhauer, 280.

<sup>166</sup> '... hebt sich die Subjektivität des Geistes durch seine vollkommene Objektivierung in der Anschauung auf', Rößler, 284.

<sup>167</sup> 'Die Offenbarung der Idee des Schönen', Rößler, 285.

<sup>168</sup> 'Rein und objektiv', Rößler, 285.

<sup>169</sup> 'Intermezzo: Dialog über die Malerei, in: 'Erstes Buch'.

<sup>170</sup> In: 'Drittes Buch', 'Rom im Jahre 1630'.

<sup>171</sup> 'Die Ehre deutscher Wissenschaft', Rößler, 233.

<sup>172</sup> Rößler, 233.

presentation by reflecting, in his fictional history, on his rejection [Ablehnung] of the search for influences, the rejection of compilation and of the busy search for documents: Velasquez met neither a Poussin, nor a Bernini, nor a Pietra da Cortona in Rome, not even an aged modish painter, such as the Cavalliere d'Arpino. The picture which, for reasons of conducting a dialogue, is central in the dialogue, the Guadalupe de Ynsausti, is of little art historical significance, as are, in the letter, the miniature carvings of Sigmund Laire or the lost comedies of Sancho de Paz. What really lends explanatory force to the two passages is the fact that Justi lent them a double-coding. They fulfil in a strategic academic [wissenschaftliche] way the function of safeguarding the research-achievement against unauthorised appropriation/invasion [Zugriff] from outside. By fictionalising contingent and relegated [ausgeschiedenes] material the historical principles of source-critique were ironised, so that any form of adaptation would be directed against the person who adapted them. On the other hand, the fictionalisation had in fact become, for Justi, a necessity which resulted from a qualitative, internal criterion of presentation, in the way it became a part of the representational [darstellerischen] strategy for the conquering of contingency. The occasionalistic [okkasionalistisch]-biographical linking of the individual substance and the accidental causes [äusseren Gelegenheitsrursachen], which for epistemological reasons could not be identified, could, in the last instance, only brought to a complete and plausible comprehension / re-enactment [Nachvollzug], by giving the accidental happening [Zufall] the place which it was denied by strictly scientific standards: that of fiction.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Rößler, 254. German Version In Appendix

**Appendix:**

Prange pp 94-5

Zusammenfassung

Der heutzutage wieder zur Diskussion gestellte autonome Kunstbegriff entstand im 18. Jahrhundert. Er war das Ergebnis einer neuen Wissenschaft der Wahrnehmung und des Schönen, die Baumgarten als neue Disziplin der Philosophie einfuhrte und >Ästhetik< nannte. Hatte die antike und neuzeitliche Wissenschaftslehre dem rationalen Erkennen und Wissen stets eindeutig Vorrang vor der sinnlichen Erfahrung verliehen, emanzipiert die Ästhetik das Sinnliche zu einem intellektuellen Vermögen, das zugleich den Menschen sittlich >bessern< sollte. Die ästhetische Erfahrung begann damit die Stelle der Religion einzunehmen; Kunst und Bildung wurden zu exemplarischen bürgerlichen Werten erhoben. Im wesentlichen hat sie Kant mit seiner Theorie des Geschmacksurteils und des Genies philosophisch begründet. Die Autonomie der >schönen Kunst< ist ein Ergebnis seiner >Kritik der Urteilskraft<. Schellings und Hegels idealistische Kunstphilosophien entwickelten auf dieser Grundlage systematische Gesamtdarstellungen, die der Kunst als einer Form der Erkenntnis hohen Wert zumessen und ihre historische und gattungsmäßige Differenzierung auf die Konstitution der Kultur und ihren Fortschritt beziehen. Vor dem Hintergrund des Zerfalls der alten Metaphysik, mit dem auch die Kunst ihre lebendige Funktion im Kult verloren hatte, eröffneten diese beiden Philosophen zwei konträr angelegte Wege in die moderne Kunstdiskussion, die bis heute noch ihre entscheidenden Impulse beschreiben. Die Alternative heißt verkürzt gesagt >Natur< oder >Geschichte<: Schellings romantische Kunstphilosophie führt den moralistischen Ansatz der Kantischen Ästhetik in einem verstärkt religiösen Sinne fort. Das künstlerische Genie arbeitet >.wie die Natur<; es stellt in seinen Produkten eine ursprünglich vorhandene Einheit von Subjekt und Objekt wieder her und macht in seinen Werken das Absolute der Anschauung zugänglich. Das Kunstwerk ist somit Vorschein einer besseren Wirklichkeit, in der die alte Einheit von Subjekt und Welt wiederhergestellt sein würde. Hegel dagegen verabschiedet sich von der romantischen Idee, das mythische Zeitalter sei in der Kunst zu erneuern. Seine Vergangenheitslehre historisiert die Kunst. Sie ist gemäß seiner Geschichtsphilosophie nur eine Etappe des menschlichen Geistes, die durch die höhere Stufe des philosophischen Begriffs abgelöst werde. Kunstwissenschaft folgt somit aus dem Ende der metaphysisch bestimmten >autonomen< Kunst. Hegels konsequent-geschichtliche Interpretation der Kunst und ihrer Gattungen bildet die Grundlage der nun einsetzenden Entwicklung des Faches. Dennoch wird eher Schelling's >Konstruktion des Universums in der Kunst< für das Selbstbewusstsein der Kunstgeschichte wirksam, die sich im Geist der Romantik gegen das Hegelsche Verdikt vom >Ende der Kunst< stemmt.

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Rößler

c) Conclusio, p 254

Kehrt man nochmals zu dem Ausgangspunkt der methodischen Kontroversen von 1880 zurück, wird erkennbar, daß die in der Velazquez-Monographie eingefügten Quellenfiktionen nicht zuletzt vor einem zeitdiagnostischen Hintergrund zu verstehen sind. Justis Darstellungsauffassung konturierte sich in unmittelbarer Nähe zu den useinandersetzungen um das richtige kennerschaftliche Verfahren, deren Protagonist Giovanni Morelli war. Während dieser mit der Fiktion des "Russen" und der offenen Verhöhnung des Gegners eine polarisierende Konstellation herbeiführte, nahm Justi den polemischen Impuls in seine Darstellungsauffassung auf, indem er seine Ablehnung von Einflußforschung, Kompilatorenturn und Dokumentensucherei in der Geschichtsfiktion reflektierte: Velasquez trifft in Rom keinen Poussin, keinen Bernini, keinen Pietro da Cortona, nicht einmal einen in die Jahre gekommenen Modemaler wie den Cavaliere d'Arpino; das dialogtechnisch zentrale Bild der Guadalupe de Ynsausti war so wenig von kunsthistorischem Belang wie im Brief die Miniaturschnitzereien des Sigmund Laire oder die verschollenen Komödien des Sancho de Paz. Was deshalb beide Passagen so aussagefähig macht, ist das Faktum, daß ihnen Justi eine doppelte Codierung widerfahren ließ: einmal erfüllten sie wissenschaftsstrategisch die Funktion, die Forschungsleistung gegen den unbefugten Zugriff von außen abzusichern; mit der Fiktionalisierung von kontingentem und ausgeschiedenem Material wurden die historistischen Prinzipien der Quellenkritik ironisiert, sodaß jede Form der Adaption sich gegen den Adaptor selbst richten mußte. Zum anderen aber war die Fiktionalisierung für Justi schon aus einem qualitativen, internen Darstellungskriterium zur Notwendigkeit geworden, indem sie Teil einer darstellerischen Strategie der Kontingenzbewältigung wurde: Der okkasionalistisch-biographische Konnex von der individuellen Substanz und den aus erkenntnistheoretischen Gründen nicht identifizierbaren äußeren Gelegenheitsursachen konnte letztendlich nur dadurch zum vollständigen und plausiblen Nachvollzug gebracht werden, daß der Zufall als bewegende Kraft jenen Raum erhielt, der ihm nach streng wissenschaftlichen Maßstäben versagt blieb: Den der Fiktion.'