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Michael Snodin, editor, *Karl Friedrich Schinkel: A Universal Man.* New Haven and London, Yale University Press in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum, 1991, 218 pp., cloth and paper editions

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The final section of the book, Part Three, follows the more conventional format for a museum publication. The authors focus on a selection of 69 paintings from the Early Renaissance collection. These works are provided with detailed commentaries explaining dating, physical characteristics, as well as iconographic and stylistic factors. Virtually every entry is accompanied by lavish colour photographs, as well as clear black-and-white (or occasional colour) illustrations, which either reconstruct works that are now fragmentary or offer important comparative material. Again, everything is designed to facilitate the general reader's comprehension of a sometimes difficult and inaccessible period in the history of art. The book also contains much useful information for students, such as maps, a chronological table, a glossary, a list of systems of measurement and coinage and an extensive bibliography.

This volume will not prove to be the definitive book on Early Renaissance painting, but it will certainly form a new starting- point for a discussion of the continuities and disjunctions in European artistic practices. The technical section alone will make this essential reading in undergraduate courses. The authors and joint publishing houses are to be congratulated on this useful and handsome contribution to Early Renaissance studies.

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1 For a complete list of the National Gallery's catalogues, see *Giotto to Durer*, 391.

2 For example, D. Bomford, J. Dunkerton, D. Gordon, A. Roy, *Art in the Making: Italian Painting Before 1400* (London, 1989).

3 As discussed by M. Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (Yale, 1980).

4 For a recent overview of this problem, see L. Silver, "The State of Research in Northern European Art of the Renaissance Era," *Art Bulletin*, XVIII (1986), 518-35.

5 For this I had to turn to M. Wilson, *A Short Guide to the Sainsbury Wing* (London, 1991), 28-32.

6 As recounted by D. Robertson, *Sir Charles Eastlake and the Victorian Art World* (Princeton, 1978). I am grateful to Carol Gibson-Wood for this reference.

7 For a recent re-appraisal of this problem by a group of historians, see R. Porter and M. Teich, eds., *The Renaissance in National Context* (Cambridge, 1992).

Michael Snodin, editor, *Karl Friedrich Schinkel: A Universal Man*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum, 1991, 218 pp., cloth and paper editions.

The appearance of a major publication in English on Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841), widely considered the most influential German architect of the nineteenth century, is an important and welcome event. Traditionalists esteem him, and modernists have looked on him as a "pioneer of modern design" (though he was too early to figure in Nikolaus Pevsner's book of that name). Yet remarkably little has appeared on him in English, even despite a flurry of attention to him in the early 1980s at the bicentennial of his birth. A chapter in David Watkin's *German Architecture and the Classical Ideal* (London, 1987), an extended essay by Barry Bergdoll in the *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects* (vol. 3), and Hermann Pundt's now somewhat dated *Schinkel's Berlin* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972) are most of what we have, since he has never been the subject of a monograph in English. This new book is not one, either; instead, it is a book based on a major exhibition of his work, which includes a catalogue of the show and seven essays on aspects of his career. As a major addition to the literature on Schinkel, it raises high hopes, but the hopes are not entirely fulfilled.

The book and the exhibition (at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, in 1991) had considerable corporate sponsorship and were hailed as an example of the sort of cultural exchange now possible between Britain and the "new" Germany. The importance of Britain to Schinkel was noted — he visited in 1826 — and objects not seen outside Germany before, many practically inaccessible to Westerners until 1989, were exhibited. Accordingly, the book is large and impressive: less than an inch thick, but heavy, bound in a square format suitable for plates, and lavishly illustrated. The illustrations include superb ink-line drawings made by Schinkel as a basis for published engravings in editions of his work (*Sammlung Architektonischer Entwürfe*) and elsewhere, dozens of coloured drawings by him, painted views of his buildings (the best, those by Carl Daniel Freydanck), and photographs of the buildings and their interiors, most taken before World War Two, with its heavy destruction.

The catalogue, written by many hands, is generally informative and useful, and problems with the book lie mainly in the essays. The first, with the same title as the book, is by Peter Betthausen; it is an overview of Schinkel's career, character and reputation. An exceptionally talented youth, he could have turned his hand to almost any art, but for the accident in 1797 of seeing Friedrich Gilly's design for a temple-monument to Frederick the Great, which induced

him to seek out and become the pupil of the Prussian architect. This settled the direction of his career. Entering government service in 1810, he rose quickly through the ranks of official builders to the top and in 1830 became head of the *Oberbaudeputation*, responsible for all royal building in Prussia. His designs for royal and public buildings, concentrated around Berlin and Potsdam, won him an international reputation and membership in academies throughout Europe, though this is not made clear. Besides ample talent, he had prodigious energy, tact (a useful virtue in the king's service) and implicit faith in the Enlightenment doctrine of human perfectibility. He had the reform spirit in abundance. But, worn out by overwork and the intensity of his Prussian sense of duty, he collapsed and died in 1841, mourned by all and honoured as a folk-hero.

Betthausen's essay is valuable, but it ought to have come second. What is needed at the outset is a general introduction to the history, culture and administration of the Prussia in which Schinkel was so tightly enmeshed. Extensive knowledge of these cannot be assumed in an English-speaking audience and has indeed been positively repressed. Yet he was so much part of his place and time that one could say that, had he not appeared, he would have to have been invented. But how many readers are familiar with the Prussia that fostered him? How had it originated and grown in size and influence in the eighteenth century? What role did learning and the arts play in statecraft? What did classical antiquity mean to Prussian intellectuals, and how was it related to the prevailing idealist philosophy? How was the state architectural bureaucracy organized? To what extent was someone like Schinkel a builder or contractor, and to what extent an architect? Without some introduction to these matters, it is hard to know where to place him. More urgently, relatively few readers will know Berlin and its surroundings, which have been more or less off-limits since 1933. Yet nowhere do we have a clear map of the city or of Prussia, something one would think basic. A map of Berlin in 1835 appears in the catalogue (at no. 41, on p. 118), but as an exhibited item, shown here at too small a scale to be read. What we need is a large, simplified map of the city — and another, or an inset, of Potsdam (and perhaps a third, of the whole state) — on which Schinkel's buildings, projects and other interventions are clearly marked and labelled. Pundt has several excellent ones in his book. As to dates, the chronology on pages 208-13 is most helpful, but the lack of other factual data bedevils the reader throughout.

More than a pedagogical problem, this extends to the book's contents, indeed to its very heart, which is the celebration of Schinkel as a universal genius. No one will fail to be impressed by his achievement and the range and depth of his gifts, but genius — especially German genius — is another thing. Schinkel's genius (if the term may even be used today) is not self-evident. Pevsner, for example, thought him "the best architect of his generation in Europe," but not a genius; rather, one who "took altogether a very conscientious and Prussian view of his duties" (*Studies in Art, Architecture and Design*, London, 1968, 195). The difference of opinion is significant, especially considering what political and cultural resonance Schinkel may have in today's newly reunited Germany. All in all, one would prefer to see him played straight, so to speak, and depicted against the background of his times.

This is related to a second problem: a lack of connection and consistency between the essays. They range widely in tone and type, and so apparently do their authors. The result is a sort of scatter-shot, rather than a fusillade of controlled force, which Schinkel deserves.

An essay by Helmut Börsch-Supan concerns "Schinkel the Artist," especially the painter. During the interruption to building caused by Napoleon's occupation of Berlin in 1806-08 and the Wars of Liberation that followed (until 1815), Schinkel concentrated on painting, specializing in panoramas and "optical perspective pictures," visionary types well suited to the Enlightenment and the Prussian hope of national renewal. His designs for stage-sets, especially those for a production of Mozart's *Magic Flute* in 1815, made him a popular hero, for opera, drama and music were national passions. They also won him his first really conspicuous building commission, the reconstruction of the national theatre, the Schauspielhaus, after a fire in 1817. The essay also includes a provocative discussion of his affinity for the Gothic or "Early German" style between about 1810 and 1817, when Prussia was at its most beleaguered.

Gottfried Riemann's essay, "Schinkel's Buildings and Plans for Berlin," is a troubled piece. Perhaps subtlety has been lost in the translation. Without footnotes and larded with platitudes and generalities — "his own unmistakable style turned almost every [building] into a masterpiece" (p. 16); "he felt profoundly linked with the medieval style" (p. 17) — the essay functions as little more than a set of verbal road-signs pointing to entries in the catalogue. This is sad, given that the royal buildings and projects in Berlin are those for which the architect is best known. Like Haussmann in Paris, later, Schinkel found Berlin a patchwork of eighteenth-century improvements laid over a city stitched together from several medieval towns. He developed one master-plan after another for the city and did what he could, within severe financial constraints, to implement them. Working east from the existing Platz am Zeughaus (which

he embellished with a guardhouse, the Neue Wache), at the east end of the promenade of Unter den Linden, he shaped a new, royal centre on the Schlossinsel in the Spree, the Lustgarten, to which he gave a formal treatment and a frame of new buildings (including the Altes Museum) and additions to older ones. He linked this new focus to the older one by a ceremonial bridge, the Schlossbrücke, giving Berlin an integrated formal axis stretching all the way to Langhans's Brandenburg Gate, at the far west end of Unter den Linden. He also opened up several quarters with new avenues and churches — the Gothic Friedrich-Werdersche Kirche was one — and with modern public or semi-public buildings, including a customhouse (the Neue Packhof) behind the Altes Museum and an architectural school, the Bauakademie. His successors Persius and Stüler continued his work, building the capital city that Hitler eventually inherited and destroyed.

Schinkel's achievement will readily be acknowledged, but did he act alone, heeding a solitary muse, or was his work part of an overarching strategy and system of values? One would like more precise answers to questions such as: What exactly were his duties and how did he interpret them? Did they change over time? How did he persuade the parsimonious King Friedrich Wilhelm III to loosen the purse-strings as much as he did? What might have been achieved if they had been looser? To what extent was his success a result of his relationship with the more artistic and free-spending Crown Prince (later Friedrich Wilhelm IV)? Even tentative answers to these would make the case for Schinkel more convincing and interesting. Moreover, the international context is almost totally ignored. The work of Percier and Fontaine in Paris and Nash in London must surely have been models for Schinkel, but they are not considered: it is as though his schemes fell straight from a Teutonic heaven.

On the other hand, Martin Goalen's "Schinkel and Durand: the Case of the Altes Museum" is arguably the best essay in the book. Noting the paradox that, while Schinkel's designs are usually said to have derived from those of J.-N.-L. Durand, they sparkle with life whereas Durand's modular layouts are dull and mechanical, Goalen compares in detail the design of the Altes Museum to Durand's published type-designs, showing how Schinkel inflected his to achieve elasticity. He also analyses the architect's thoughtful borrowings from newly published or excavated Greek temples, especially the Parthenon and the Temple of Apollo at Didyma. In his own words, Schinkel sought to bring "the principles of Greek architecture . . . to terms with the conditions of the epoch," and Goalen's study (which one hopes is only part of something larger) is a valuable addition to literature on the Greek Revival.

Alex Potts contributes a useful essay on "Schinkel's Architectural Theory," informed by historical and philosophical insight. Despite his crushing workload, the architect found time to pursue theoretical interests and make notes toward an "Architectural Textbook" (*Lehrbuch*), which sadly he never finished. He criticized his contemporaries for ransacking history for styles and sought with Prussian rigour to put the business of style on a firmer footing. Steering clear of extremes (save for a brief period during the Wars of Liberation), he tried to reconcile functionalism and tectonics with a search for ideal Beauty, in which he believed. He sought what Potts calls "a kind of functional constructivism" (p. 50) which would still leave room for Beauty. The search led eventually to his late manner, a spare, astylar "modernizing classicism" (p. 53).

This "constructional style" gets a section in the catalogue, on pages 172-84. His adoption of it, especially in the designs of the Neue Packhof and the Bauakademie, has generally been connected with the trip to Britain in 1826, when his fancy was caught, not by Palladian houses nor even by Nash's recent improvements to London, but by works of engineering — factories, warehouses, iron bridges and the like. Much of his subsequent work was an attempt to combine the directness of design he had seen in these with traditional aesthetic modes, an achievement for which modernists have honoured him with a niche in their pantheon.

His contribution to improving the design of industrial objects is the topic of the last essay, by Angelika Wesenberg. Collaborating with the administrator and technocrat peter Beuth (who probably suggested the trip to Britain) in making and publishing designs for everything from glassware to metal furniture, he can be seen as a bridge between the incipient industrial-design movement in Britain and the Arts and Crafts movement that coalesced later in the century. This is a good essay, but, again, cultural and political background gets short shrift: a section on the topic tacked onto the end should have come first.

There is also an essay by H.-J. Giersberg on Schinkel's many projects to build or renovate princely villas (*Schloss*, "castle," was the preferred term) in the lake country of Potsdam, southwest of Berlin. His collaborator in most of these was the landscape designer Peter Joseph Lenné. Though the projects are well described and illustrated, and Lenné gets his due, they and their sites are complicated and confusing; again, a simplified map would have been worth a thousand words. Like some of his urban programmes, the villas brought out the simplifier in Schinkel and invited the use of sleek, stripped classicism. The key example is the Neue Pavillon (now a museum, the Schinkel-Pavillon) of

Schloss Charlottenburg, of 1824-25. On occasion he would also evoke the rustic air of an Italian villa: the Court Gardener's House at Charlottenhof, of the 1830s, is the best example. Here, too, I think, too little is made of Nash (and Repton) as a source of models — yet another instance of dowplaying context.

No book can do everything, but I cannot help wishing this one had ended with an essay exploring Schinkel's influence on later architecture, which was enormous. Early twentieth-century architects like Peter Behrens, Otto Wagner and the young Mies van der Rohe owed him a huge debt, and they knew it. Non-Germans should also be encouraged to re-examine his contribution and example. This is particularly necessary in the case of American architecture, which was affected in important ways by German models and systems of training in the nineteenth century. One cannot, for example, see Eduard Gaertner's stunning perspective of the Bauakademie (p. 179) without being struck by its resemblance to office and department-store buildings of the 1850s and 1860s in New York, which were themselves sources of the "Chicago style." And British historians might wonder if their mid-century commercial styles, such as the "Bristol Byzantine," owed a debt to Schinkel. In industrial design, his contribution must have been substantial. What did it mean to the vigorous movement of the kind that arose in Germany in the early twentieth century, which spawned the Bauhaus? Such questions cannot be left without comment, at least.

In the absence of such a concluding essay and an opening one of the type I suggest, Schinkel is presented like a book without covers or a picture out of its frame. What remains is a strikingly beautiful book on an important — more than important — architect, which performs a great service by making him and his works accessible to English readers but falls short of being the penetrating, contextually rich study he deserves.

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HILDE ZALOSCER, *Zur Genese der koptischen Kunst: Ikonographische Beiträge*. Vienna, Böhlau Verlag, 1991, 128 pp., 16 black-and-white illus., DM 42,50.

This collection of essays by Hilde Zaloscer is significant beyond the immediate scope of the topic for its essential insights into the character of an art which has long been misunderstood. Christian art in Egypt between the third and seventh centuries, between the culmination of Hellenism and the Islamic conquest, was for many years an area that did not appear to be worthy of serious research. It was only after the pioneering results by major figures of the Vienna School of art history around 1900 that previously neglected periods in world art took on new importance. The work of Josef Strzygowski, in particular, provocatively transcended the horizon of art history, as he did not focus exclusively on the culture of the Mediterranean but also included Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Strzygowski was also one of the first art historians devoted to a serious investigation of Coptic Art.[1]

Hilde Zaloscer was born in 1903 in Bosnia and studied with Strzygowski in Vienna. In 1936 she emigrated to Egypt, and it was there that she was challenged by the phenomenon of Coptic art, which was first explored by her teacher.[2] It was personal circumstances that brought Zaloscer to Alexandria in 1936 and political reasons that kept her there. She taught art history at the University of Alexandria from 1947 to 1968. Teaching at the university in this cosmopolitan city, which in those years was made famous by the somewhat decadent social atmosphere depicted in Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*, was marked by many obstacles, one being the lack of scientific facilities for research.[3] In 1970 Hilde Zaloscer emigrated to Canada where she lived until 1974, teaching at Carleton University in Ottawa. Since 1974 she has been living in Vienna.

During her years in Alexandria, and without contacts with the major centres of research, she produced basic studies on Coptic churches and works of art, relying only on their physical existence. Her research resulted in new and revolutionary insights, which had not been achieved before, in the evaluation of this important period. Zaloscer turned the disadvantages of not having the necessary facilities into an advantage by applying a direct intuitive method that was new to the evaluation of Coptic documents. She valued the environment in which she lived, as she realized that essentially the same culture of the past still existed in contemporary rural Egypt. She described this in an essay entitled "Vom Vorteil des Nachteils. Forschungsarbeit ohne Wissenschaftlichen Apparat."[4] She published the results of her research in books such as *Portraits aus dem Wüstensand* (Vienna, 1961) and *Vom Mumienbildnis zur Ikone* (Wiesbaden, 1969), as well as in journal articles. The book under review offers a new theory regarding the origins and social implications of Coptic art in Egypt, uniting a number of articles previously published in Egypt and Canada, among them "Eine Jagdszene auf einem Architrav im Koptischen Museum" (1942), "Zur Entwicklung des Koptischen Kapitells" (1945), "Immanenz der Koptischen