

**An Examination of
the Potential Influence of Karl Friedrich Schinkel
on the Work of
Alexander 'Greek' Thomson**

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Introduction

Time and again, people question the use of examining potentially influential relationships between architects. Their criticism usually aims at the frequently speculative nature of such undertaking and the lack of practical value of its findings. The less is known and recorded of a possible link between the work of two different architectural designers the easier claims of this kind are labelled far-fetched and their relevance to the achievement of a particular artist is doubted.

The one discipline in the realm of art where such criticism seems to be most justified is architecture. For in architecture, there is always the one big issue that understandably overshadows all artistic concerns: the art work's utility, i.e. to what extent does the architect's design finally serve the purpose of the building commissioned. As architecture, however, is not mere utilitarian engineering, it must be allowed to ask questions about *the* important aspect that stands behind the evolution of all art and by which non-utilitarian art is mainly measured, the aspect of originality. Indeed, all art is bound to draw upon earlier cultural achievements to a certain extent and, thus, inevitably continues tradition. Yet, it is the new momentum they added to the already existing that made artists the protagonists of art history.

The extent to which their works of art displayed the integration of a new idea that did not seem to have a direct precedent determined their rank. As in the past, this aspect still strongly influences the evaluation of an artist, with judgements ranging from 'mere copyist' to 'ingeniously original mind'. How strongly, however, the question of originality is linked to potential influences that an artist may have received from the work of some other artist, be it a contemporary or someone from the distant past, does not require further explanation.

To carry out research on such a potential and possibly influential relationship between two neo-classical architects like the Prussian Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841) and the Scotsman Alexander Thomson (1817-1875) may at first sight seem a little absurd. For in their case, a certain lack of originality unavoidably is inherent in the works of both of them. Being neo-classicists neither of them left any doubt about the great source of inspiration which they drew on for almost all their designs: the art and architecture of the ancient classical world. Their buildings seem to prove this as we find numerous details derived from ancient Greek, Roman or other precedents, and their theory in general justifies and even strongly demands this turning towards the distant past.

Yet, it requires a closer look in order to see what distinguishes these two architects from quite a large number of their contemporaries that would fit the description above without too much injustice done to them. Despite their frank and clearly visible favour of classical architecture as a model for their own designs both, Schinkel and Thomson rejected the manner in which design had frequently been approached so far. In British Greek Revival as well as in German neo-classical architecture, design often mainly consisted of accurately copying from the variety of ancient classical details that were available through a fairly limited number of publications on the subject¹.

What Schinkel and Thomson, however, demanded from architecture of their day could at first sight seem to be a logical contradiction to any revival architecture, namely the aforementioned originality in design. For in their respective understandings of architecture, merely copying a stylistic precedent simply could not create good architecture, because it did not exceed the state of reassembling 'spare parts' to an inconsistent whole that lacked structural coherence.

This distinction of architectural thinking, which -though to a different extent- we can find expressed in Schinkel's as well as Thomson's buildings, is one of the main reasons why the work of these two architects has regained an increasing interest in our century. It is also the aspect about their work that should make it worthwhile examining a potential relationship. Although architectural history has never forgotten about either of them, such a research project has not yet been undertaken on a broader scale. In the case of Schinkel, an interest in his work has grown even in the English-speaking world over the past few decades, while Thomson's work, currently attracting a hitherto unachieved national attention, may be one of the future discoveries of architectural historians beyond the shores of Britain.

1) The question of originality in the designs of Alexander Thomson has led quite a number of writers to comparing Thomson's work to that of Karl Friedrich Schinkel. In architectural writing, we find documents of an almost half-a-century-long history of books, articles and reviews that, in strongly differing depth, link Thomson's designs to those of Schinkel. The diversity of these accounts ranges from one-sentence notes in overall-histories of Scottish architecture to quite explicit passages in full-length studies

¹ One of the most widely-spread examples are the authoritative volumes of *The Antiquities of Athens* by James Stuart and Nicholas Revett. The illustrations of ancient monuments contained in these were not only studied by architects in Britain but were also well known among their continental counterparts. The publication of two posthumous volumes in 1816 and 1830, edited by Charles Robert Cockerell, demonstrate the enduring interest of Greek Revivalists in these books. It will also have brought them to an even wider attention.
cf. Revett, Nicholas; Stuart, James. *The Antiquities of Athens*, vol. I-IV. London, 1762, 1787 and 1794.

of Thomson's work as well as essays solely dealing with the relation between Thomson and German neo-classicism.

Having been mentioned for the first time in written form in Henry-Russell Hitchcock's letters to the Edinburgh architect Graham Law in 1950, the claim of an influential relationship between Schinkel and Thomson has been repeated time and again². Almost fifty years ago, Hitchcock was the first to suggest that Thomson knew about a visit Harvey Lonsdale Elmes was then believed to have paid to Schinkel's Berlin. The argument was that Thomson's admiration of Elmes's work and the knowledge of his German travels "should have called Thomson's own attention to Schinkel". The most recent claim is made by Gavin Stamp stating that Thomson's "design of the Caledonia Road Church (...) can only be explained in terms of Schinkel.," whose designs, according to Stamp, Thomson "certainly knew."

In the meantime, hardly anyone writing on 'Greek ' Thomson and his architectural achievements has left out at least to mention the name of the Prussian architect in a way that suggests some relation between the work of these two men. However, it would be surprising if, in what has meanwhile become a kind of historiographical tradition of linkage between the two, there would not be any objecting voices. We do find these as well, following the trail of the traditional link but finally arriving at a conclusion that firmly denies any influence of Schinkel's work on that of Alexander Thomson.

Considering all this diversity, it becomes obvious that in approaching this thesis first, it is required to gather all relevant sources that make such a claim of relationship and then to explore and analyse them in order to connect up with the course of architectural writing on the subject. The first chapter of this thesis, therefore, provides such an exploration of the gathered relevant material. It, furthermore, presents the results in a way that structures the large number of statements into distinguishable categories, which refer to specific points of comparison. In addition to that, it also gives an impression of the chronological development of these categorised arguments over the past decades. This not only brings this work up to date with the historiographical discourse but also provides the substantial basis to depart from in the subsequent chapters. For the analysis of previous claims linking Thomson and Schinkel shows the path to follow in examining the biographical possibilities of Thomson encountering Schinkel's work. Moreover, result of such an analysis makes

² The unpublished Hitchcock letter is the first written evidence of such a suggestion. The first time similar thinking appeared in print was in an article by Graham Law that is dealt with later.

clear which aspects of Thomson's practical and theoretical work are most fruitfully to be compared with its Schinkel counterparts.

Of course, the analysed material will not neglect links that, like the aforementioned one by Hitchcock, establish a connection between Alexander Thomson and Karl Friedrich Schinkel through intermediary figures, such as H. L. Elmes.

2) A look at the respective biographical dates should be enough to see how unlikely it is that Alexander 'Greek' Thomson ever met his alleged idol, Karl Friedrich Schinkel, in persona. The well reported fact that Thomson himself never left the shores of Britain makes any such claim even more doubtful. The other option, having met Schinkel in Britain, has to be dropped, too. For, at the time Schinkel came over, Thomson was not any older than nine years of age. So the question remains of how, if at all, Alexander Thomson could have got into contact with any of Schinkel's work. It is documented that Thomson, late in his career, possessed a copy of Schinkel's Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe, in which most of the relevant Schinkel buildings were published in drawings. Yet, no-one knows when this book came into Thomson's possession. Thus, any thought about its potential influence has to remain speculation.

Furthermore, only the very basics of Alexander Thomson's architectural education are known. His employers and mentors may have acquainted him with published designs of Schinkel's buildings early in his professional career. The same applies to family connections that were established by his marriage with Jane Nicholson. For she was from a traditional and well-informed family of architectural professionals and publishers.

The other option that should attract our attention has to do with Schinkel's extensive journey through Britain in the mid-1820s. Given this fact, the question of him having left some sort of influential legacy during this tour is generally well justified, especially as Schinkel came up to Scotland and even to Glasgow. Fortunately, in his case, a fairly explicit travel diary documents this trip quite well.

Figures from Thomson's artistic environment that are claimed to have mediated knowledge of Schinkel's work further on to Thomson must be looked at, too. How justified do these claims appear in the light of their respective biographical circumstances, and how likely is it that such knowledge could have been handed on to Thomson at all.

All these issues have to be dealt with in the second part of this thesis. In it, the complex interrelations of the variety of facts and the protagonists' biographies will be sketched out comprehensively so that at least a substantiated judgement can be

drawn from it of how likely any knowledge of Thomson's about the architecture of Karl Friedrich Schinkel could have been. That in this picture of relevant biographical dates there will be included an account of the education of both, Schinkel and Thomson, is due to their theoretical work. For by knowing the influences they were facing during their formative years of education, we can find out if there is any chance of both having drawn inspiration from identical sources, be they ancient or rather contemporary.

Of course, we should not be misled into thinking that any kind of relation can be proven by such a collection and arrangement of biographical facts. Yet, as in other disciplines of history, so in architectural history, this method has to be applied where a lack of documents does not allow more reliable relationships to be established; and not too rarely results of such speculation precede future knowledge based on more reliable evidence.

3) The comparative analysis of the actual output of Thomson and Schinkel begins with their theoretical work as it is necessary to know the architecture-philosophical attitude of both of them in order to be able to carry out a profound comparison of their design work. The last category of results in chapter one deals with those claims of a similarity between Schinkel's and Thomson's work which not solely refer to any visible designs but rather to the theoretical background. For, in order to find an answer to the question of originality versus potential influence, the level of mere visual comparison has to be exceeded. With the question having been asked if Thomson and Schinkel could not have arrived at the same solution to architectural problems independently, the only answer can be found within the theoretical framework that guided them towards these solutions.

Fortunately, the evidence of such a theoretical background that has survived from their days is in both cases comparatively substantial in size. Furthermore, it is particularly interesting and instructive due to the elaboration of thought in both architects' writing.

On closer inspection, both architects appear to have been well-read in the realm of aesthetic philosophy and, of course, their professional home ground, architecture. Furthermore, both Schinkel and Thomson seem to have spent a lot of their intellectual energy on developing an ideal vision to guide them through their professional lives. They, however, tried to blend with the every-day needs of architectural tasks they were confronted with.

Yet, the difference between the two is that Schinkel, being almost forty years older than Thomson, worked on his version of adapting the classical to the architecture earlier in the period. In Schinkel's days, the revival of the classical ideal in Germany was reaching its apex in the wake of the Prussian victory in the Wars of Liberation. Whereas Alexander Thomson emerged as the spearhead of the classical faction at a time when the British Greek Revival was in its dying moments and had widely been substituted as the 'appropriate' style by an adoption of its medieval rival, the Gothic. The fact that in Scotland the end of neo-classicism came later than in England did help Thomson's case; yet, only to a limited extent as Thomson's outrage about the Gothic design for Glasgow's new university buildings in 1866 shows.

In the actual writings, we find Schinkel and Thomson drawing up a very complex ideology of how to bring a total harmony back into architecture and thereby back to mankind; a harmony that would re-establish a link of man's earthly presence with a universal authority. What they undoubtedly have in common is the belief that this link could be re-created only if one could find a way to take up the historical precedent of ancient classical culture and synthesise it into a new classicism that would not neglect the historical evolution that separated the nineteenth century from their ideal.

It becomes clear how much a similarity in approaching a common goal, namely the qualitative improvement of architecture, may have lead Schinkel and Thomson to a visually perceivable similarity in design. As this in most instances is restricted to certain concepts and arrangements that are not particularly dominant at first sight, it is even more important to be familiar with the theoretical attitude of both architects. Only this allows us to assess to what extent some design concepts like the square-columned colonnade are a vital key feature in an overall approach or if they are rather a fortuitous result of minor importance.

To have a concrete idea about the architectural thinking of the two architects at issue is also necessary for pointing out the difference of attitude. Some designs that have been regarded very close over the years do with such knowledge appear in a quite different light when taking a second look. With building types like the picturesque villas, for instance, the immediate optical similarity appears to be much stronger than that of the underlying concept. Yet, the difference in theory can provide a helpful support for the understanding of such issues.

4) After having identified particular buildings by both architects that are claimed to illustrate some sort of influential relationship as well as other alternative sources of inspiration, chapter four deals with these identified examples. It is the indispensable

complement and logical continuation of the chapters one to three. Chapter one identifies and selects from the oeuvre of Schinkel and Thomson those examples of similarity which are the major argument in the discussion of any potential influence. Subsequently, part two, in complement to that, applies a similar selective structure to the biographies of the two architects at issue. Chapter three also draws on the results of chapter one as it provides the theoretical background for the architectural issues identified in the first chapter.

While the analysis of the assembled facts directly follows their presentation in the second chapter, chapter four can be regarded as providing this necessary analytical part for the results of the first chapter. The character of chapter three is a more intermediary one as it both complements chapter one and provides the necessary preparation for chapter four. That things are dealt with in this order is, however, due to the fact that the exploration of the respective biographical circumstances of Schinkel's and Thomson's professional development has provided additional examples of architecture that are potential alternative explanations to actual designs by Alexander Thomson. These, of course, have to be included into the analysis of chapter four.

The presentation and analysis of relevant biographical facts can help forming an opinion of how likely it is that Thomson knew of any Schinkel designs at all. Comparing their theoretical approaches to tasks of design and construction can provide an important alternative explanation to a perceivable closeness. Yet, only a comparative analysis of their practical legacy can lead to a final evaluation of the general question at issue. Potentially alternative sources of inspiration from an environment closer to Thomson are not additionally considered in order to cast any more doubt onto Thomson's architectural originality. Yet, in the case of these sources appearing highly relevant for Thomson, the relevance of Schinkel's work would automatically become less and a final answer would become more profound.

As the claims of an influential relationship between Thomson and Schinkel are generally not based on the similarity of two respective buildings as a whole unit but rather on that of particular design concepts and features, chapter four follows the structure that evolves from the structuring selection of these features in the first chapter. This means that at first the use of square piers in repetitive horizontal colonnades is looked at in buildings by Thomson and those potentially influential in such respect by Schinkel. In addition, buildings by other architects that display the same feature and that Thomson, according to the results of chapter two, is like to have been familiar with are considered, too. The same analytical pattern is applied to

the aspect of blending the picturesque with classical Greek and to the curious method of direct glazing that is such a distinctive feature of many of Thomson's buildings.

Other Thomson buildings that have been linked to Schinkel without any reference to these or other features as a basis are compared to the allegedly similar building in order to find out if it can be sensibly compared in some way. If so, an analysis subsequently follows.

5) It has already been explained why an examination of the theoretical background of Schinkel and Thomson is of great importance. Of course, neither Schinkel nor Thomson developed their respective ideology independently of contemporary trends of thought. The circumstances of their lives which are explored in chapter two strongly suggest that both architects absorbed in their own creations some of the ideology that surrounded them. Schinkel was strongly embedded in a circle of artists and thinkers who all tried to achieve a very similar goal in their respective disciplines, while the well-read Thomson rather drew on literary sources. In both cases, the result was an extraordinary familiarity with the theories of contemporary thinking. Both, Schinkel and Thomson complemented their knowledge on ancient classical culture with thorough studies of contemporary aesthetics.

As much as their concrete interpretation of architecture was mainly a result of their respective originality, the theoretical framework they drew on was derived from inspirational sources surrounding them. The notion of a fragmentation of man's earthly presence and the desire to recreate a harmonious state of unity was by no means something solely felt by Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Alexander Thomson. Similar applies to other attitudes apparent from the theories of Thomson and Schinkel, such as the notion of evolutionary development.

As the attempt to sketch out a complete picture of the theoretical influences that both architects received would clearly go beyond the scope of this work, two examples are chosen that can be regarded exemplary for the inspirational relation that existed between the two architects and the thought of their time. The examples are, on the one hand, the Irish philosopher Edmund Burke and, on the other, the German theological philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher. While especially Burke's ideas on the sublime and the beautiful left a strong mark on aestheticist theory way beyond his lifetime, Schleiermacher's the perception of man's unity with the Infinite is increasingly acknowledged as a decisive influence on the theories of German idealism.

What makes the choice of these two particularly interesting is that both seem to have reached an audience far beyond their home countries' boundaries. Hence, we

find traces of Burke's thought in Schinkel's theory and ideas of Schleiermacher's absorbed in the writing of Alexander Thomson. Even if neither Thomson nor Schinkel are too likely to have personally known of these theories, the essence seems to have reached them in some way. Considering that Anglo-German relations were at their closest around the middle of the nineteenth century, one can see why cultural 'produces' such as aestheticist philosophy were no longer available only to compatriots. The lively cultural exchange of xenophile artists of all disciplines on both sides of the Channel that is touched upon in chapter two caused a mutual awareness of each others spiritual achievements that has not been met since. Thus, finding traces of Schleiermacher and Burke in the theory of both, Thomson and Schinkel does not appear too extraordinary but rather as one example of many similar cases. With regard to the question of personal originality in Thomson's designs versus architectural influence from Schinkel such an alternative explanation to the phenomenon of similarity is indispensable to explore.

While the second chapter gives us an idea of how contemporaries may have enacted spiritual influence on Schinkel and Thomson, the third shows where these two are close in their thinking. The fifth chapter then provides a link between the former two by illustrating how the spiritual proximity of both architects' mother countries may have lead to a common orientation at identical theoretical sources. The similarities perceived in Thomson's and Schinkel's architecture may be a visual demonstration of how close in general Britons and Germans were at that time in thought and work.

Chapter 1

The Previous Claims of an Influential Relationship

The person who for the first time in the history of architectural writing linked designs of Alexander Thomson to ones of Karl Friedrich Schinkel was no less a man than the great American art historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock (1903-87). Although he was not the first to do so in print, there is unquestionable evidence that the idea originates from him. For it was he who, in his response to an enquiry by the British architect Graham Law (1923-96), put forward an argument that pointed out what "should have called Thomson's own attention to Schinkel." According to Hitchcock, this was the fact that "he [Thomson] probably knew that Elmes went to Germany to see Schinkel's work."³

Although the aspect of a possible mediated transfer of knowledge on Schinkel's work will be referred to later, this first establishment of the Thomson-Schinkel link has to be mentioned briefly here. It belongs to a much more instructive complex of communicative exchange and actual writing by both, Hitchcock and Law. During its course most of the argumentative categories under which the links of the past decades can be grouped were already established.

The research Law and Hitchcock were carrying out in the early 1950s appears to have been independently parallel as well as mutually influenced. While Henry-Russell Hitchcock was obviously undertaking research for the two 1950s books in which he devoted some of his attention to Alexander Thomson⁴, Graham Law's interest in the Glasgow architect was due to a third-year Cambridge dissertation on 'Greek' Thomson. It was published as an article in The Architectural Review in 1954 and formed the basis for another article he wrote in the same year for the Glasgow Herald.

In the latter Law very clearly describes an architectural feature that he regards similar in Thomson's and Schinkel's work and which since then has become the example most architectural writers have pointed to when comparing the two. Referring to Thomson's design for Walmer Crescent terraces of 1857-62 [ill. 1], he notes that

³ The architect Henry-Russell Hitchcock brings into play here is the designer of St. George's Hall in Liverpool, Harvey Lonsdale Elmes (1814-49). Hitchcock was aware of Thomson's admiration for Elmes and his architectural masterpiece. Hitchcock himself thought that Elmes had been to Berlin during his short life and believed Alexander Thomson thought alike. cf. a letter from Henry-Russell Hitchcock to Graham Law, 13 March 1950 (*unpublished*). p. 2

⁴ these are:
Hitchcock, Henry-Russell. Early Victorian Architecture in Britain, vol. I. London / New Haven, 1954
Hitchcock, Henry-Russell. Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. Hamondsworth / Baltimore / Mitcham, 1958

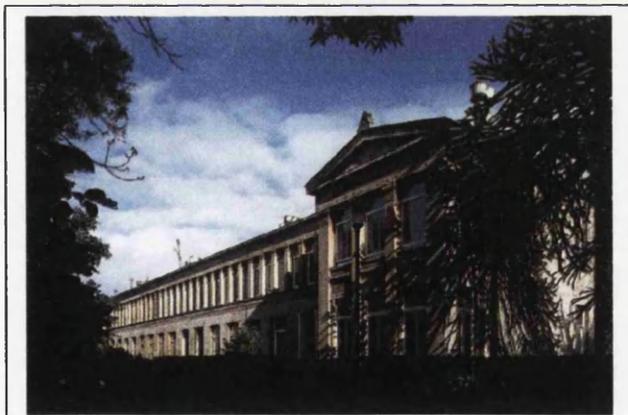
"[t]he top floor windows form a continuous colonnade of stone posts, reminiscent of Schinkel and the Greek Revival in Germany." Carrying on, he also connects up this



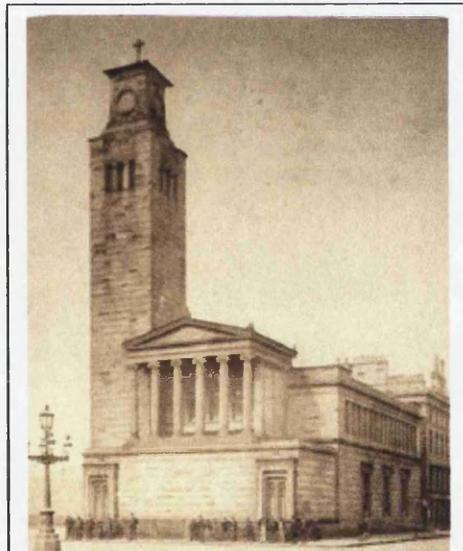
ill. 1: Alexander Thomson: front façade of Walmer Crescent, Glasgow. 1857-62

design feature with the Thomson building that is hardly ever omitted when the possibility of a Schinkel-Thomson relation is discussed, the Caledonia Road Church (1856-57), where this "type of fenestration (...) had already been used"⁵ [ill. 2]. Law also draws our attention to a

Thomson building that displays the image of "an unbroken colonnade of square stone posts"⁶ perhaps best, his two-storey terrace in Moray Place of 1859-61 [ill. 3]. Furthermore, it is also Graham Law who, first in this context, goes more into detail about the architectural concept of the colonnade and the effect its use creates.⁷



ill. 3: Alexander Thomson: front façade of Moray Place, Strathbungo. 1859-61



ill. 2: Alexander Thomson: south-east view of Caledonia Road Church, Glasgow. 1856-57

It is Caledonia Road Church, too, through which Henry-Russell Hitchcock establishes the Schinkel-Thomson link. Also in 1954, in his Early Victorian Architecture in Britain, he leaves no doubt about his opinion saying that "[s]pecifically, of course, Thomson owed a great deal in this church to Schinkel, not only to

⁵ Law, Graham. 'Greek Thomson'. in: The Architectural Review, vol. 114. May 1954. p. 313

The newspaper article was fittingly entitled 'Colonnades and Temples: Greek Thomson's Style'.

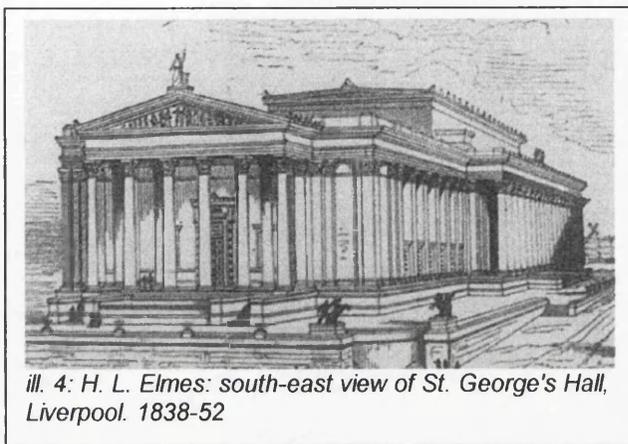
Law, Graham. 'Colonnades and Temples: Greek Thomson's Style'. in: Glasgow Herald. 8 June 1954

⁶ Law, Graham. 'Greek Thomson'. in: The Architectural Review, vol. 114. May 1954. p. 314

⁷ This will, however, be dealt with in more detail in the subsequent part dealing with an analysis of the relevant buildings.

Schinkel's Berlin churches but also to his secular buildings ". Touching upon the issue of a possible source of concrete knowledge on Schinkel, Hitchcock adds that all of these "were accessible for study in the great monograph on his [Schinkel's] work."⁸

As in the letter to Law, Hitchcock brings into play the figure of H. L. Elmes. It is in this comparison that Hitchcock also refers to the issue of the colonnade. While at Elmes's St. George's Hall he explicitly notes the "[r]anges of square pilasters"⁹ [ill. 4], connecting up to Thomson, he states that "[t]he curious screens of square piers provided a theme much elaborated at smaller scale by 'Greek' Thomson in the late 50s and 60s." Yet, it is not only the actual architectural



ill. 4: H. L. Elmes: south-east view of St. George's Hall, Liverpool. 1838-52

features Hitchcock talks about. For continuing the sentence, he once again briefly mentions how Thomson could have been inspired in his design of this particular feature. For "his source may well have been the work of Schinkel rather than St. George's Hall since the former was more readily available in published form."¹⁰

In the context from which the statements are taken that have been quoted so far, Henry-Russell Hitchcock only deals with Alexander Thomson marginally. In a little more depth Hitchcock deals with Thomson's different kinds of housing, amongst the examples of which we also find the aforementioned Moray Place terrace in Strathbungo. Although dispensing with explicitly pointing out any relation to Schinkel, Hitchcock underscores this building's most Schinkelesque feature, "a range of antae" that "forms a continuous 'colonnade' " on first-floor level.¹¹

Four years later, in his authoritative Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Henry-Russell Hitchcock repeats his previous claim, this time adding to it the use of the Picturesque. Again the chosen example is Thomson's first church design, that of Caledonia Road Church. In his view, "[e]xternally Thomson detailed the trabeated masonry with the purity of a Schinkel and the originality of a Soane."¹² Although Hitchcock does not specifically mention the clerestory zone of the church in

⁸ Hitchcock, Henry-Russell. Early Victorian Architecture in Britain, vol. I. London / New Haven, 1954. p. 160

⁹ *ibid.* p. 311

¹⁰ *ibid.* p. 312

¹¹ *ibid.* p. 489

¹² Hitchcock, Henry-Russell. Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. Harmondsworth / Baltimore / Mitcham, 1958. p. 62

this context, from his earlier statements it can be concluded that, here, he is referring to this feature again.

One should assume that the reason why neither Law nor Hitchcock mention a particular Schinkel building that could have served as a model for Thomson's use of the colonnade is that they regarded it unnecessary and to be obvious which designs by Schinkel they had in mind. The next to generally pick up the topic of a relation in general and to refer to the feature of the colonnade, however, do provide this accuracy. In their 1968 record of the Architecture of Glasgow, Andor Gomme and David Walker devoted a whole chapter on the architecture of Alexander Thomson, which at a size of thirty pages provided the most extensive study of Thomson's architecture so far. In it, the two authors suggest that Schinkel, whom they regard as "one important influence on Thomson's work", does "seem to have been almost the first to have used the horizontally linked bands of windows of which Thomson was so fond. (see the Berlin Schauspielhaus, 1819)"; [ill. 5].



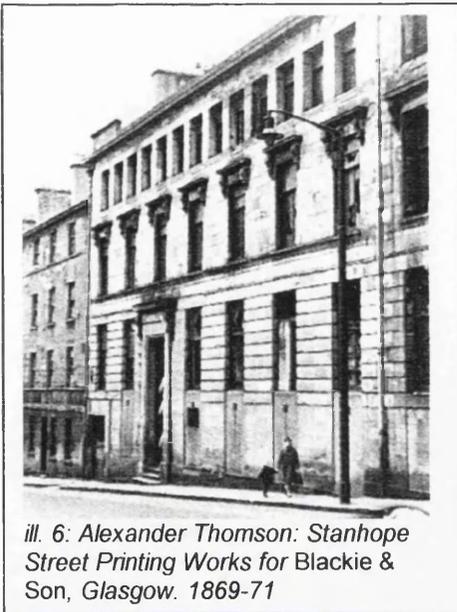
ill. 5: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: front view of Schauspielhaus, Berlin. 1819-21

Other creations of Thomson's that Gomme and Walker compare to the same Schinkel feature are the two familiar terraces, to which they add a third one as well as a commercial building. In their view, "Walmer Crescent or the printing works in Stanhope Street (...) must be held to owe some detailed inspiration to Schinkel"¹³, whereas they find that, at Moray Place, "[t]he unbroken row of square stone mullions on the upper may (...) described as a colonnade (and thus echoes a similar usage in Schinkel)."¹⁴ To these two is added the terrace Thomson built shortly after the other two. Of Northpark Terrace, a fairly plain, three-storey terrace that was built near the south bank of the River Kelvin between 1863-65, Andor Gomme and David Walker say that "[t]he general effect of this terrace is Schinkelesque, though no single detail seems to derive from it."¹⁵ The commercial design of the Stanhope Street printing works [ill. 6] for *Blackie & Son* (1869-71), however, is not mentioned again.

¹³ Gomme, Andor; Walker, David. *Architecture of Glasgow*, (2nd revised edition). London, 1987. p. 124-25

¹⁴ *ibid.* p. 138

¹⁵ Although the statement itself rather denies a relevant link to any of Schinkel's designs, it is the very feature of the top-storey colonnade that requires special attention and which, therefore, will be dealt with later. *ibid.* p. 140

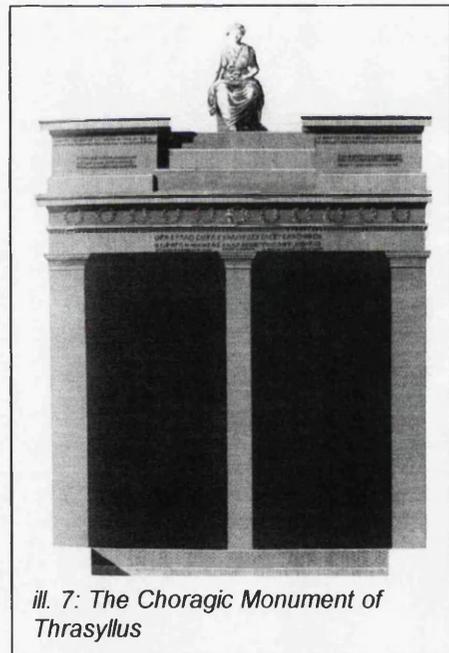


ill. 6: Alexander Thomson: Stanhope Street Printing Works for Blackie & Son, Glasgow. 1869-71

It took another decade until a full-length study on 'Greek' Thomson was published at last, which, of course, would deal with the aspect of a then already familiar claim of a Schinkel relation to Thomson's designs. In his 1979 The Life and Work of Alexander Thomson, which was developed from a Ph.D. thesis at Sheffield University of five years earlier, Ronald McFadzean clearly targeted as one of his goals "to discover what Thomson achieved and to relate it to the sources and conditions which may have influenced him."¹⁶ Although there does not

necessarily have to be a causal coherence it is interesting to see that the first book-sized monograph on Thomson also was the first piece of writing on him to firmly deny an influential relationship between the two architects at issue.

McFadzean does not deny that "[t]he upper colonnade of square piers at the Schauspielhaus is very like that at the Caledonia Road Church". Yet, for two reasons he doubts Schinkel's responsibility for this feature in Thomson's work. These are first, that others, such as Leo von Klenze have used this feature, too, and secondly, that it may just be a result of Thomson's own blend of two styles he favoured, the Italian Romanesque and the classical Greek. Thus, McFadzean suggests "that he [Thomson] arrived at this design independently and that it owed little or nothing to Schinkel."¹⁷



ill. 7: The Choragic Monument of Thrasyllos

Referring to the same aspect later on, Ronald McFadzean argues the case for an independent arrival at the design of a "colonnade of piers or square columns" even stronger. To him, "[h]owever, there is nothing original in square columns" as "[t]hey occur frequently in ancient Greek work." One example that McFadzean particularly favours in this context is the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllos [ill. 7]. For he regards

¹⁶ McFadzean, Ronald. The Life and Work of Alexander Thomson. London, 1979. p. xiv

¹⁷ *ibid.* p. 79-80

the basic structure of the Caledonia Road Church's clerestorey zone [ill. 8] and the wall above "identical in all its parts" to the former, which makes Thomson appear to



ill. 8 Alexander Thomson: north-east view of Caledonia Road Church, Glasgow. 1856-57

have taken "the Thrasyllus theme and simply extended it to form the colonnade of the Caledonia Road Church." The likeliness of this ancient model having provided the main inspiration for Thomson is heightened by Ronald McFadzean saying that "[i]t seems most unlikely that he [Thomson] could have gained the idea from any British architect" and again asking "but is it not possible that he could have arrived at the idea independently?"

The final statement McFadzean's study provides on the whole issue, though still moderately put, is almost as strong a denial of a potential influence as one could imagine:

"It is unwise, therefore, to assume that Schinkel's great colonnades at the Schauspielhaus provided inspiration for Thomson. In view of the alternative sources available and the strong case that can be presented for the Thrasyllus Monument, it seems most unlikely that Schinkel had any influence on Thomson."¹⁸

Once again, it took architectural history another fifteen years until the next book fully devoted to Thomson appeared on the market. In it, Sam McKinstry's and Gavin Stamps essay collection 'Greek' Thomson of 1994, we even find one essay solely focusing on the issue of 'The German Connection' in Alexander Thomson's work. David Watkin, in this work, displays a very thorough and careful approach to the topic in general. Besides this approach being made from Thomson's theoretical background, Watkin also refers to the handling of trabeation in the Glaswegian's designs and its relation to precedents in Schinkel buildings, especially the Schauspielhaus. Although Watkin makes much lesser a statement of this than Ronald McFadzean had done before him, he follows the main points of the former's argumentation. Without directly drawing any conclusion from it, David Watkin gives a more observing account, writing that "[t]he trabeated form which dominates Schinkel's Schauspielhaus constantly recurs in Thomson's work, for example in his Caledonia

¹⁸ *ibid.* p. 220

Road Church and Oakfield Avenue."¹⁹ Thereby, he adds another Thomson building to the list of the ones regarded relevant in the context of this specific comparison of detail [ill. 9].



ill. 9: Alexander Thomson: south-west view of Eton Terrace, Oakfield Avenue, Glasgow. 1862-64

The closeness to McFadzean's suggestions, however, consists of including as alternative sources of inspiration the buildings of Leo von Klenze on the one hand (Watkin particularly singles out the 1846 Propylaea in Munich; [ill. 10], and the well-known illustrations of the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus on the other. Indicating the source of the widespread familiarity with the latter, Watkin regards it as "[a] key Greek building which for many architects, including Thomson and Schinkel, seemed



ill. 10: Leo von Klenze: Propylaea, Munich. 1846

the perfect expression of the rational trabeated architecture of the Greeks."²⁰

Summing up his profound analysis, David Watkin does not exceed the statement of us knowing that Thomson "was aware of Schinkel's work" ,while he stresses

¹⁹ Watkin, David. 'The German Connection'. in: McKinstry, Sam; Stamp, Gavin (eds.). *'Greek' Thomson*. Edinburgh, 1994. p. 193

Thomson's development of a "personal language."²¹ Others, however, speak out more decidedly in favour of an influence of Schinkel on Thomson. In A History of Scottish Architecture, a recent publication by Miles Glendinning, Ranald MacInnes and Aonghus McKechnie, we find almost marginally mentioned in the briefness Thomson is dealt with that "his evocations of piled-up temples and colonnades were also clearly influenced by (...) the repetitive pilastrades of Schinkel."²²

The latest statement referring to this particular aspect of relating these two architects is to be found in the most recent book on Alexander 'Greek' Thomson, which accompanies the Glasgow 1999 exhibition 'The Unknown Genius'. In it, its author, Gavin Stamp, does not deal with the issue in much detail, but puts forward a clearly determined view on it. What is of specific relevance to him unsurprisingly is once again the Caledonia Road Church's "clerestorey consisting of a long row of square columns", which, as Stamp suggests, "owes much to the influence of Schinkel and German architecture."²³ In an earlier passage we find the same opinion expressed with even less doubt about its validity as Stamp here claims that "the design of the Caledonia Road Church (...) can only be explained in terms of Schinkel and Berlin."²⁴

Another passage from the aforementioned article by Graham Law provides a good transition from the colonnade issue to the other aspect in Thomson's work that, in architectural writing, has repeatedly been compared to similar features in Schinkel's designs. Referring to Alexander Thomson's designs, Law writes:

"Schinkel's work undoubtedly had a profound influence, not only in such details as fenestration, where Thomson adopted the same ribbon of rectangular stone posts as Schinkel used in his Theatre in Berlin, but in such designs as the Monument to Frederick the Great, in the Platz der alten Hofapotheke, Berlin, where a 'temple' rides above a colonnade, and the sprawling villa of Charlottenhof, with its horizontal, spreading roofs and its loose asymmetry - Holmwood seems to have retained more than a hint of this picturesque classicism."²⁵

²⁰ *ibid.* p. 191-92

²¹ *ibid.* p. 195-96

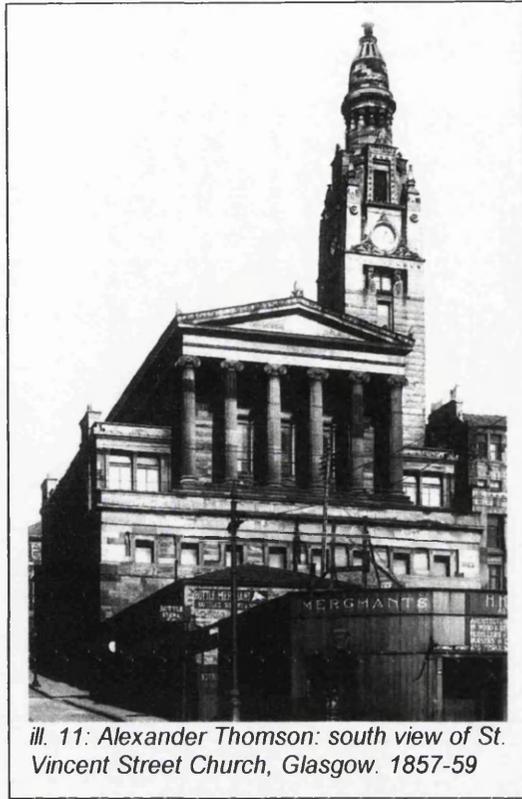
²² The other source of 'clear influence' mentioned here, "the apocalyptic paintings of John Martin", will be mentioned later on, along with other more indirect links between Thomson and Schinkel. Glendinning, Miles; MacInnes, Ranald; McKechnie, Aonghus. A History of Scottish Architecture. From the Renaissance to the Present Day. Edinburgh, 1996. p. 252-53.

²³ Stamp, Gavin. Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. London, 1999. p. 127

²⁴ *ibid.* p. 18

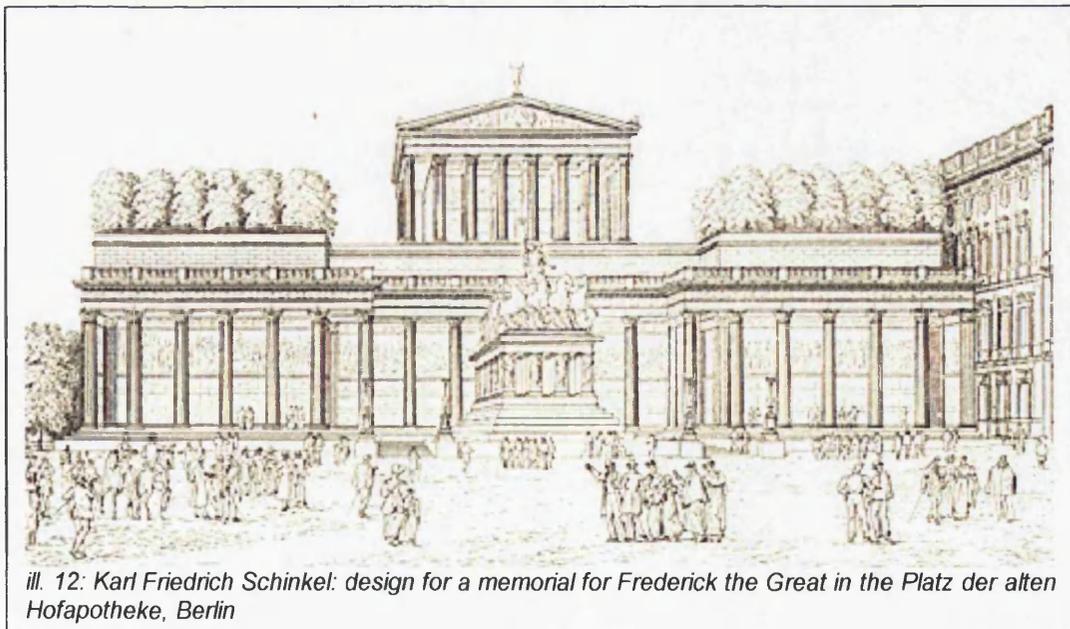
²⁵ Law, Graham. 'Greek Thomson'. in: The Architectural Review, vol. 114. May 1954. p. 316

Although Graham Law does not indicate which of Thomson's designs he is referring to when speaking of the elevated 'temple', a short look at Thomson's oeuvre is enough to see that it must be the designs of Caledonia Road Church and St. Vincent Street Church [ill. 11] which he regards relevant for comparison to Schinkel's monument [ill. 12]. The more interesting aspect, however, is the one he is more precise about, Thomson's blend of the classical Greek with the Picturesque. For this is another aspect that over the years has found a considerable number of writers pursuing it when tracing links between Thomson and Schinkel. This is especially true in connection with the



ill. 11: Alexander Thomson: south view of St. Vincent Street Church, Glasgow. 1857-59

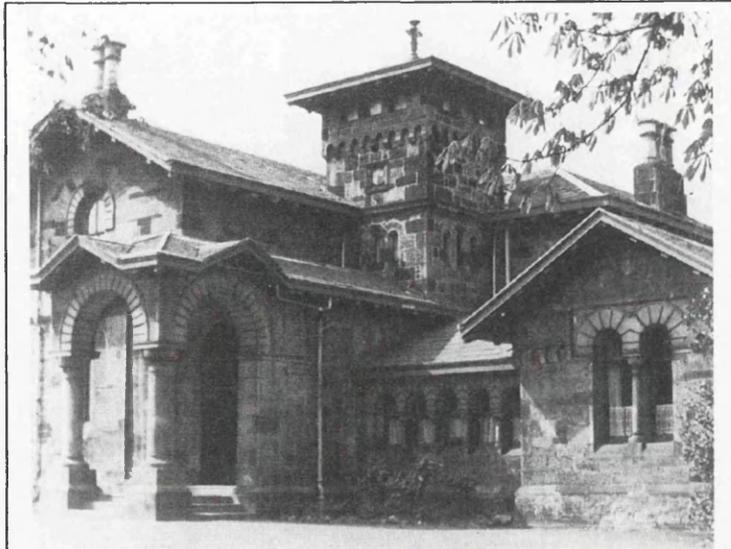
growing attention that has been drawn to Thomson's villa designs of the 1850s, which found its temporary climax in the discussion that accompanied the recent restoration of the building Graham Law mentions in this context, Holmwood House.



ill. 12: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: design for a memorial for Frederick the Great in the Platz der alten Hofapotheke, Berlin

On the whole, however, this way of linking the two architects has become as widespread in architectural historiography as the aspect we have looked at before.

Gomme and Walker, for instance, do mention Schinkel in the context of Thomson's villa designs, but they do not go further than stating that "he [Thomson] early favoured the *Rundbogenstil* also used by Schinkel for his villas, with small, round-headed windows with deep reveals, arches and flattish roofs and gables." Despite giving an



ill. 13: Alexander Thomson: north-east view of The Knowe, Pollockshields. 1852

example of Thomson's for this, the Pollockshields villa The Knowe of 1852 [ill. 13], they do not refer to any particular design by Schinkel, neither do they establish the link between Holmwood and Schinkel.²⁶

John McKean's 1986 contribution to the *Architects' Journal's* 'Masters of Building' series in the form of an article dedicated to Alexander takes the opposite approach. While generally writing on Thomson's Double Villa (1856-57), in the specific context of a potential Schinkel-Thomson link, he does not specify his point of reference in

Thomson's oeuvre. He is more precise, though, about which of Schinkel's buildings he deems important, which is the building "best known as the Court Gardener's House".²⁷ His description of this building, of which he admits that it "emphasises elements which Thomson later developed in his own way," reads as follows [ill. 14]:



ill. 14: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Court Gardener's House, Potsdam. 1829-40

²⁶ It remains to be examined to what extent Gomme and Walker justifiably ignored this increasingly claimed relationship.

Gomme; Walker. 1987. p. 134-35

²⁷ McKean, John. 'Masters of Building: "Greek" Thomson's Double Villa'. in: *Architects' Journal*, vol. 183. February 1986. p. 39-40

"It is a complex and delicately picturesque grouping, with simple, shallow pitched roofs sailing over masonry to the base. This becomes more solid towards the base, which in part consists of cyclopean plinth with an asymmetrically placed tower and simple monolithic square porticoes."

Underscoring the assumption that "Thomson knew this design from his copy of Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe", McKean simply concludes that "the link [to Schinkel] requires no special pleading."²⁸

Of course, David Watkin in his 'German Connection' essay does not miss to deal with this aspect either. He, too, mentions Holmwood saying that it "is close to Schinkel's Court Gardener's House and Roman Baths complex at Schloß Charlottenhof."²⁹ Watkin also establishes a link to Leo von Klenze, whom he feels reminded of when considering that "[t]he Picturesque element in Thomson's villas relates to a softening of the Greek tradition." Yet, at the same time, he denies this link the strength of the Schinkel one by qualifying the argument. For, according to him, Klenze, in this respect, "made a greater compromise than Thomson ever did."

As in Watkin's case, one can also expect to find Gavin Stamp dealing with a possible link between Thomson and Schinkel as far the picturesque element in their classical villas is concerned. Preceding his recent book on Alexander Thomson, Stamp wrote an extensive article on Holmwood for the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians in 1998. As, in it, he tries to track down all sorts of influences that could have affected Thomson in designing this "at once classic and picturesque"³⁰ suburban villa, it is not surprising to see Holmwood related to Schinkel within the first few sentences. "In European terms", Stamp writes, "the asymmetry of Holmwood can be related to published designs for villas by K.F. Schinkel, which Thomson certainly knew: in particular to the design for the Court Gardener's House and the Roman baths at Potsdam."³¹

Quite like in John McKean's argumentation, the substantiation for such a claim can be found in a description of "Schinkel's design for the Court Gardener's House at Potsdam, with its low-pitched roofs with wide eaves, picturesque arrangement of both Greek and Italianate elements, and marked horizontality." For the similarity to the designs of Thomson's 1850s villas is obvious. Stamp also points out that the aforementioned Schinkel design "had first been published in 1840 and therefore may well have influenced Thomson's own villas". To Gavin Stamp "[i]t is clear that

²⁸ *ibid.* p. 40

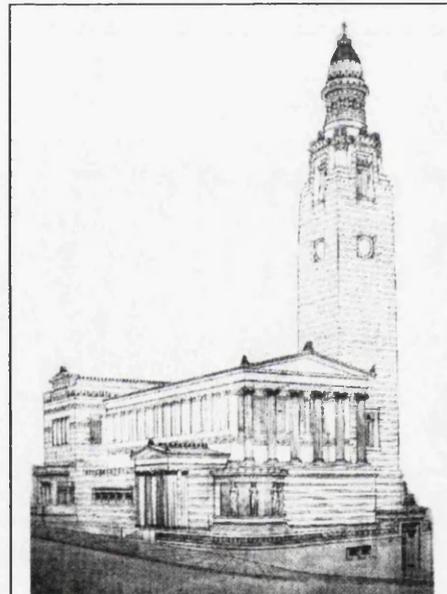
²⁹ Watkin. 1994. p. 194

³⁰ Stamp chose this quotation from an article by the Glasgow architect and Thomson admirer Thomas Gildard as the title of his own article.

Thomson studied the published plates of Schinkel's work." Referring to the proven fact that Alexander Thomson in 1863 gave a copy of Schinkel's Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe to the *Glasgow Architectural Society* Stamp even claims that "Thomson's debt to Schinkel would surely be self-evident even if we did not know" about this present of his.

In his 1999 book on 'Greek' Thomson, although only very briefly dealing with this aspect, Stamp is not any less reassuring, for, there, he unmistakably states that "he [Thomson] certainly knew Schinkel's designs for the asymmetrical Court Gardener's House at Potsdam."³² Interestingly, however, this time we find Gavin Stamp qualifying the relevance of Schinkel's Potsdam villa to the design of Holmwood by adding that "this [the Court Gardener's House] was as much rustic Italian as Greek."

Although John McKean was not the first at all to write on the quite special manner in which Thomson integrated glazing into his vision of architecture, he eventually is the first one who linked this approach of Thomson's to a similar one to be found in Karl Friedrich Schinkel's designs. John McKean's essay 'Trabeated Essence and Frosted Glass' was published in the catalogue that accompanied the first Thomson exhibition in 1984. As the title suggests, in it, McKean takes a closer look at the way Thomson used a quite direct glazing method in order to support his architectural vision of purest possible trabeation. In this context, he establishes a link to Schinkel's design project of a palace at Orianda, overlooking the Crimean Black Sea coast (1838).



ill. 15: Alexander Thomson: perspective drawing of the unexecuted design for St. Mary's Free Church, Edinburgh. c. 1858

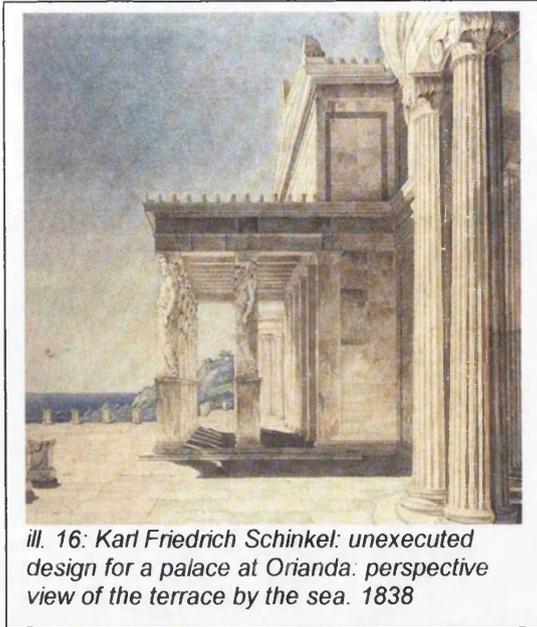
The Thomson building he regards relevant to this issue, however, is not the Caledonia Road Church, where Thomson used direct glazing at a time when this was still an "extremely rare" feature. As, to McKean, "technical novelty is irrelevant", his attention is rather drawn to Thomson's unexecuted design for St. Mary's Free Church in Edinburgh of 1858 [ill. 15].³³ The part of

³¹ Stamp, Gavin. 'At Once Classic and Picturesque... Alexander Thomson's Holmwood'. in: *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 57, no. 1. March 1998. p. 46

³² Stamp. 1999. p. 31

³³ McKean, John. 'Trabeated Essence and Frosted Glass'. in: Baines, Mark; MacMillan, Andy; McKean, John. *Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. Architect 1817-1875*. London, 1984. p. 32

Schinkel's vast palace complex that McKean is particularly interested in is one having become famous through a coloured drawing that Schinkel himself produced and which, along with other views of this project, was reproduced as a lithograph and published in a folder [ill. 16]. This view of the sea-side terrace shows "a pair of semi-

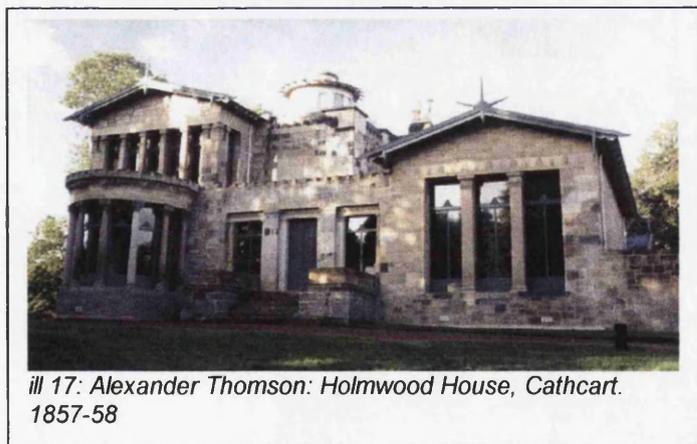


ill. 16: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: unexecuted design for a palace at Orianda: perspective view of the terrace by the sea. 1838

circular bays flanking a portico on caryatids", where "glass is held between the columns as if in neoprene gaskets." The reason that we get this detailed description is that, in McKean's view, "[t]his Schinkel scheme is most interesting" for, here, "its detail is most close to the spirit of Thomson."

The only other person to mention St. Mary's Church in a context of comparison to Schinkel to date is once again David Watkin in the already quoted essay. He

describes the same features in Schinkel's Orianda palace as John McKean did, the "square portico of caryatids as well as two curved Ionic porticoes where the space between columns was replaced by glass". He links this feature to Thomson by saying that "[s]uch a dissolution of the wall mass through the handling of glazing was a key feature of Thomson's own architectural thinking and practice." Apart from references to two "further curved glazed porticoes" at Thomson's Holmwood [ill. 17] and Busby House [ill. 18]³⁴, Watkin mentions St. Mary's Church, which, however, is used as an



ill 17: Alexander Thomson: Holmwood House, Cathcart. 1857-58

example that strongly suggests some sort of inspiration through Schinkel's coloured

As Gavin Stamp could recently reveal, the design that for years had been believed to be Thomson's entry to the competition of St. George's Free Church, Edinburgh, must actually have been designed as his entry for the St. Mary's Free Church competition in the same city.

cf. Stamp. 1999. p. 130

³⁴ At Busby House, Thomson only designed some extending features (1856-57) to an already existing, fairly plain house, which like Holmwood stood on the banks of the River Cart. The particular part that should be of interest for us is the curved bay



ill. 18: Alexander Thomson: extension of Busby House, Busby. 1856-57

illustrations. This unexecuted design with its "open curved portico in which caryatids took the place of columns" to Watkin is "a synthesis of various features on the sea-front of the unexecuted palace at Orianda."³⁵

So far we have dealt with quotations which refer to a closeness of Thomson designs to the ones of Schinkel that these statements claim to be detectable in some particular features and concepts. Now we also have to take a look at more general statements, which, though varying in strength, still suggest a relationship. In

addition to that, some of them bring into play other buildings or specific features that could be relevant to the question at issue.

One good example is another quote from the aforementioned correspondence between Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Graham Law. For, in his first letter, Hitchcock added a short, hand-written note to the typed text. Talking about the "works of Schinkel, as published by him and therefore accessible in Thomson's time" the little note adds that "[t]he Berlin suburban church + church projects are especially relevant."³⁶ That it was to some extent important to Henry-Russell Hitchcock to make this remark can be detected from the fact that he repeated it in print. According to this, the Caledonia Road Church "owes a great deal to Schinkel's suburban Berlin churches, which Thomson must have known through the Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe."³⁷

The first task here is to identify the particular buildings and designs Hitchcock refers to before there relevance to any Schinkel-Thomson relationship can be assessed. Taking into account that Hitchcock particularly stresses about these Schinkel designs their 'Berlin suburban' setting and, on the other hand, their availability through publications, it can be assumed the actual buildings he had in mind are the ones recent literature refers to as Schinkel's 'Vorstadtkirchen' (suburban churches). The projects Hitchcock mentions are very likely to be the five different

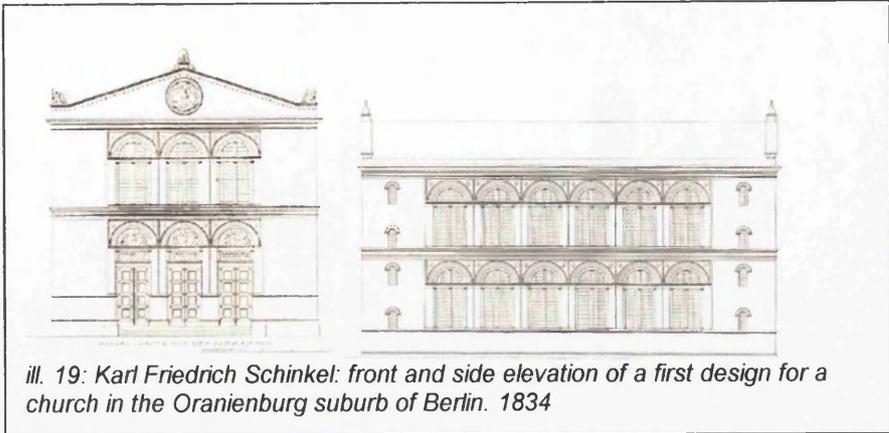
window that Thomson added to the houses library. It is important to notice that despite all basic similarity to Holmwood's parlour bay window, the one at Busby House has square piers instead of the circular columns at Holmwood.

³⁵ Watkin. 1994. p. 193

³⁶ in a letter from Henry-Russell Hitchcock to Graham Law, 13 March 1950 (*unpublished*). p. 2

³⁷ Hitchcock. 1954. p. 61

'designs for a church in the Oranienburg suburb'³⁸, as Schinkel himself called these in his *Sammlung* [ill. 19, 20]. The executed designs consist of four churches all built in



ill. 19: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: front and side elevation of a first design for a church in the Oranienburg suburb of Berlin. 1834



ill. 20: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: front and side elevation of a second design for a church in the Oranienburg suburb of Berlin. 1834



ill. 21: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: St. Elisabeth, Berlin. 1834



ill. 22: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Nazareth Church, Wedding. 1834

the northern suburbs of Berlin within one year, 1834: St. Elisabeth in the former Rosenthal suburb [ill. 21], the Nazareth church in Wedding [ill. 22], St. Johannis in Alt-Moabit [ill. 23] and St. Paul in Gesundbrunnen [ill. 24].

³⁸ On inspection, it immediately becomes clear that it only makes sense to consider the first two of these designs as the others do not offer any kind of similarity to designs by Alexander Thomson.

Another quote from Andor Gomme's and David Walker's 'The Individual Contribution of Alexander Thomson' also refers to church architecture, this time to that of Thomson. It leads us back to a topic already touched upon by Graham Law saying



ill. 23: Karl Friedrich Schinkel:
St. Johannis, Alt-Moabit. 1834



ill. 24: Karl Friedrich Schinkel:
St. Paul, Gesundbrunnen.
1834

that "the combination, in the churches [of Thomson], of classical portico and horizontal bands of windows punched deep into the wall suggest quite close study [of Schinkel's work]."³⁹ Again, the relevant churches doubtlessly are Caledonia Road Church and St. Vincent Street Church. For together with the unexecuted design for St. Mary's, Edinburgh, they are the only churches Thomson designed to feature both characteristics named by Gomme and Walker, the classical portico and the horizontal band of windows. Queen's Park Church (1868-69) provides neither of the features any clearly as the other three designs.

The two following quotes can be regarded as examples of the fact that even the briefest mentioning of Alexander Thomson frequently is accompanied by claiming a debt of his to Schinkel's designs. Although not having dealt with Alexander Thomson in large extent, we find Robert Middleton and David Watkin establish the Schinkel link in their 1977 Neoclassical and Nineteenth-Century Architecture. Without referring to any examples they state that Thomson "worked in an impressive and original style that reflected and developed the manner of K. F. Schinkel in Germany."⁴⁰

Even when Thomson is only very briefly referred to, like in comparison to other architects, we can find him related to Schinkel. So we can in David Walker writing about 'The Glasgow Years' of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Obviously, without doubt about the content of his claim he writes:

"In the 1850s and 1840s, Charles Wilson had followed the German architects Leo von Klenze and Friedrich von Gärtner, and Alexander Thomson had followed Karl Friedrich Schinkel rather than Charles Barry or other London luminaries."⁴¹

³⁹ Gomme; Walker. 1987. p. 125

⁴⁰ Middleton, Robert; Watkin, David. Neoclassical and Nineteenth-Century Architecture. New York, 1977. p. 253

⁴¹ Walker, David. 'The Glasgow Years'. in: Kaplan, Wendy (ed.). Charles Rennie Mackintosh. New York, 1996. p. 115

This is additionally stressed by speaking of "Alexander Thomson's Schinkel-based neo-Greek idiom" in reference to the latter's architectural style.⁴²

Two other aspects that are of a special interest, too, have also been mentioned time and again by writers drawing on the Schinkel issue; that is first, the one of home inspiration to Thomson as at least a partial alternative to the Schinkel thesis and secondly, the one of indirect influence on Thomson through figures who in some way could have mediated knowledge on Schinkel's designs.

Referring to the former, Joseph-Mordaunt Crook wrote in his 1972 The Greek Revival that Thomson's "gods were Hamilton, Playfair, Schinkel and Klenze. His masters were local men like John Baird and Charles Wilson. His mind was his own." The same view of Alexander Thomson as an architect inspired by British models as much as by Germans but finally one of highly individual originality is expressed in David M. Walker's essay contribution to the aforementioned 'Greek' Thomson book. Setting out to explore 'The Scottish Background' of Thomson's stylistic development Watkin, right at the beginning, states " however much of Thomson's inspiration came from German sources, and in particular from Schinkel's Sammlung, at least some of his ideas were developed from the work of architects much nearer home."⁴³

Two quotes may, however, represent that an additional explanatory approach to Thomson's oeuvre has not been completely neglected even though it is not mentioned very often either. This is the possibility that both, Schinkel and Thomson independently arrived at fairly similar design results because they had followed similar ways of designing, inspired by identical sources on classical architecture. In order to express this idea Crook uses an original quote of Schinkel's and applies it to Thomson. For he says that Thomson's "ambition was the same as Schinkel's: to build not as the Greeks built, but as they would have built had they lived now."

While giving more details about potential classical models that could have made ancient designs interesting to the two architects, another quote from David Watkin follows a very similar line as Crook's. He suggests that in a source available to both of them, they could have found represented the same principle, which in turn influenced their own respective attitude." The example Watkin mentions again is the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus, in which, according to him, "Schinkel and Thomson saw (...)

⁴² *ibid.* p. 118

⁴³ Walker, David M. 'The Development of Thomson's Style. The Scottish Background'. in: McKinstry, Stamp. 1994. p. 23

a clear demonstration of the post-and-lintel construction of the Greeks in which the inert mass of the wall was abolished."

The last category of claims contains suggestions of mediated influence of Schinkel on Thomson. Two figures of the nineteenth-century British art scene keep recurring in different sources. Once again, it is in the Henry-Russell Hitchcock letter that we find both of them mentioned first in the relevant context. One is the already mentioned H. L. Elmes and the other is the painter John Martin (1789-1854), creator of a number of apocalyptic paintings, in which he visualised architectural visions of a very impressive kind, "the ultimate painter of the Sublime"⁴⁴, as Gavin Stamp called him once.

As we have learned earlier, to Hitchcock, Elmes was the one 'that should have called Thomson's attention to Schinkel'. As many other architectural writers after him, Hitchcock based this suggestion on the assumption that around the time Elmes was designing his masterpiece, St. George's Hall in Liverpool, he had been to Germany in order to study Schinkel in Berlin. In addition to this believed "firsthand study of Schinkel's buildings in Berlin", Hitchcock later mentioned that the plates in "[t]he successive parts of the Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe of Schinkel (...) seem to have influenced Elmes"⁴⁵ when designing St. George's Hall, the building of which Hitchcock points out that "Thomson particularly admired" it.⁴⁶

Not surprisingly, Graham Law, of course, picked up this aspect in his work on Thomson, too. Yet, he does not go any further than Hitchcock suggested to him.⁴⁷ The possible link between H. L. Elmes and Thomson and Schinkel is not omitted by Gomme and Walker either. While talking about the model character St. George's Hall could have had to Thomson, they unmistakably state that "H. L. Elmes was also strongly influenced by Schinkel. Unlike Thomson he went to Berlin to study his work directly while working on the Liverpool designs."⁴⁸ That the possibility of such a link has not lost any interest of the architectural world is shown by the fact that in the latest publication on Thomson, Gavin Stamp repeats the same assumptions. Though he only puts the facts next to each other, leaving the linking of them to our imagination.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Stamp, Gavin. 'A View From the Bay Window'. in: McKinsty; Stamp. 1994. p. 235

⁴⁵ Hitchcock. 1954. p. 310

⁴⁶ Hitchcock. 1950. p. 2

⁴⁷ Law, Graham. 'Greek Thomson'. in: The Architectural Review, vol. 114. May 1954. p. 314

⁴⁸ Gomme; Walker. 1969. p. n131

⁴⁹ "one architect who certainly did know about German architecture was Harvey Lonsdale Elmes, who travelled to Berlin to see Schinkel's work when designing his masterpiece, St. George's Hall. This great Corinthian pile in Liverpool was one of what Thomson considered were 'unquestionably the two finest buildings in the kingdom.'" Stamp. 1999. p. 18

The link between Alexander Thomson and the paintings of John Martin has a history as old any of the links to Schinkel have and it has been mentioned next to the latter almost everywhere it appeared.⁵⁰ Yet, it has taken until recent years that people explicitly compared this aspect of Thomson's potential inspiration to Karl Friedrich Schinkel. This is most clearly expressed once again in David Watkin's 1994 essay. To him, "Thomson also resembled Schinkel in finding inspiration in paintings of imaginative architectural panoramas." The respectively relevant paintings he brings closer together by saying about



ill. 25: John Martin: print of 'Belshazzar's Feast'. 1845

Martin's 'Belshazzar's Feast' (1820) [ill. 25] that "[t]he composition is close to stage sets by Schinkel, such as his 'Temple of the Sun' for *The Magic Flute* of 1815." Although Watkin does not go to the length of claiming that Schinkel influenced Martin, the fact that he also includes William Turner into his round of candidates of potential influence on Thomson, does not make such a suggestion appear too far-fetched. For of the latter it is well-known that he went to Germany seeking inspiration for his art. The one who finally does not hesitate to make this claim is Sir John Summerson in his foreword-like chapter to the same book. He simply puts it: "Martin got something from Schinkel, something from Turner and something perhaps from J. M. Gandy. Thomson, a generation younger than Martin, took these forms and (...) *made them work*."⁵¹

Summing up the results of the selection above, a number of important aspects concerning our topic become clear. The main argument of a claimed relationship is Thomson's closeness to Schinkel in his use of what Ranald MacInnes called the 'pilastrade'. Although it is by far not the only design into which Schinkel incorporated this feature, Schinkel's *Schauspielhaus* is *the* example writers refer to in this context. At the same, time a differing number of Thomson's buildings are compared to it, with the *Caledonia Road Church* never being omitted. Through the mentioning of the

⁵⁰ see: Hitchcock. 1950. p. 2

⁵¹ Summerson, John. 'On Discovering 'Greek' Thomson'. in: McKinstry; Stamp. 1994. p. 3

Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus the whole issue is also connected up to the other realm that needs looking at, the fund of ancient classical models, from which inspiration could have been derived.

The examples for a detailed examination in the context of the second main issue, the blend of classical Greek and picturesque architecture, have clearly been singled out, too: Thomson's Holmwood and Karl Friedrich Schinkel's Court Gardener's House. Other relevant ones will, however, also require a brief discussion.

As far as the issue of direct glazing in Thomson's as well as Schinkel's work is concerned it was one of Schinkel's illustrations for the unexecuted Orianda palace that caught a special interest being, compared to Thomson's handling of glazing in a number of different bay windows. Though the fenestration in his church designs as well as some of the commercial designs, such as Egyptian Halls, require similar attention.

Furthermore, we have found a small number of rather unspecified hints that do not indicate the very point of closeness while pointing to particular designs of the two architects. One example is the reference to Schinkel's suburban churches in Berlin. Nevertheless, they well deserve an examination of their instructive potential as to our main question.

Finally, some names of both, Thomson's and Schinkel's spiritual environment appeared that in some way could prove to be a likely link between the two. Foremost, these are H. L. Elmes and John Martin on Thomson's side and Leo von Klenze on Schinkel's. Their artistic products need to be examined in relation to their claimed mediating character as well as their personal biographies require investigating. For in their case it is important to get an idea of how they could have got into contact with any of Schinkel's work. In the claims quoted above, we can find a number of quite promising hints on this issue.

In all categories of these claims, we time and again find suggestions of how Thomson could have learned of Schinkel as well as indications of the possibility that both could have developed similar attitudes and designs from common sources. This also makes it necessary to explore and sketch out their respective biographies in order to detect possible links.

Chapter 2

An Exploration of the Individual Backgrounds of Thomson and Schinkel

At first sight, the biographical circumstances of Karl Friedrich Schinkel are fairly different from those of Alexander Thomson, with the former being almost forty years senior to Thomson and from a Prussian background. It is the closer look at details and events in the life of Karl Friedrich Schinkel that makes one understand that there was a curious similarity in the way both, Thomson and Schinkel executed their profession as well as there was a distinct difference between the two.

Being born in the Brandenburg town of Neuruppin in 1821, some sixty miles north-west of Berlin, Schinkel was of Prussian origin by birth.⁵² It was not within his own power that his widowed mother and his siblings moved to Berlin when he was thirteen, but to take the opportunity which this step had provided for him owed a lot to his own determination. For against the will of his mother Schinkel decided to leave the Gymnasium prematurely and to become apprenticed to an architect. The central figure of this event, in all respects, was the architectural visionary Friedrich Gilly (1772-1800). For it was his well-known design entry for a competition to design a monument for Frederick the Great that inspired Schinkel to take this daring step. Other participants in this competition were people who in different ways would be influential on Schinkel's development as an architect, such as the art historian and

archaeologist Aloys Hirt (1759-1834) and the architects Carl Gotthard Langhans (1733-1808) and Heinrich Gentz (1766-1811). Yet, when all the proposed designs were exhibited in the Akademie der Künste in



ill. 26: Friedrich Gilly: water-colour perspective of a design for a monument to Frederick the Great, Berlin. 1797

September 1797, it was the design by Friedrich Gilly, especially the unusually brilliant, panoramic water-colour illustration of it [ill. 26], which filled the young Schinkel with so much enthusiasm that, by all means, he wanted to become a disciple of its creator.

⁵² The roots of the Schinkel family in the Prussian Mark Brandenburg were deep as Schinkel's father continued the family tradition of being a clergyman within the boundaries of that region in the fourth generation. cf. Büchel, Wolfgang. *Karl Friedrich Schinkel*. Reinbek, 1994. p. 9

It is instructive as to Schinkel's idealistic side to know that this architectural vision, crowned by a gleaming Doric temple overriding its massive substructure, sparked off his missionary zeal to produce beautiful architecture. The earliest surviving drawing by Schinkel (1795) shows a ruined temple, and one can easily imagine that to this adolescent schoolboy who was still in search of which professional direction to take, Gilly's painting "had to seem to be the goal *par excellence*." For, as Wolfgang Büchel points out, it connected up the glorious past with the present time of Schinkel's own lifetime. It was "no piece of art history, it was the expression of an artist who lived in the same city, who was close and present."⁵³

In the course of the events of 1798 Schinkel was to get even much closer to his admired idol than he will have imagined before. Schinkel became an apprentice to Friedrich's father, David Gilly (1748-1808) in March 1798, while the former was still on an eighteen-month study trip through France, England and southern Germany. His relationship with the Gillys got even closer when, on the return of Friedrich in December of the same year, Schinkel moved into the house of the Gilly family to live with both, father and the much admired son. One can hardly overestimate how crucial these formative years will have been for Schinkel, being exposed to the "tension between the considerably more artistic and progressive son and the by far more pragmatic father, who was always more willing to compromise."⁵⁴ Judging retrospectively, we can see that Schinkel got something important from both of these poles as far as constructional reason and artistic vision is concerned.

Yet, with the focus on similarities to Thomson, our interest should be drawn to the orientation towards a classical ideal in art and architecture that was fostered by Schinkel's mentors. This was achieved by an interplay of making Schinkel familiar with their own respective ideals as well as introducing him to other thinkers that were at the forefront of architecture. At the time Schinkel joined David Gilly, the latter had already established his name as an architect and teacher in the state of Prussia. Holding the position of a Geheimer Oberbaurat, the one Schinkel was promoted to in 1815, he had been running an architecture school for fifteen years. The one he had opened in

⁵³ "...dieses fast anderthalb Meter lange Aquarell, das ihm wie das Ziel schlechthin erscheinen mußte."
"...kein Werk der Kunstgeschichte; es war die Äußerung eines Künstlers, der in der selben Stadt lebte, nah und gegenwärtig war."

ibid. p. 17
⁵⁴ "Die Spannung zwischen dem wesentlich künstlerischer und progressiver orientierten Sohn und dem weitaus pragmatischeren und stets kompromißbereiten Vater..."
ibid. p. 22

Berlin, was the one Schinkel went to and which was to become the Bauakademie Schinkel should later lead.⁵⁵

Gilly was as much involved in practising architecture as in teaching and research. He enjoyed royal patronage on various projects -one of which was the landscape gardening of the Lustgarten, the big square in front of the royal palace which should later provide the scenic stage for Schinkel's museum- and was the editor of one of the first architectural journals in German language. As David Watkin and Tilman Mellinghoff remark in their account of German Architecture and the Classical Ideal, David Gilly's Sammlung nützlicher Aufsätze und Nachrichten, die Baukunst betreffend was "[t]he most ambitious architectural magazine of its day, (...) full of the sense of mission and the hard-headedness of the men who wanted to turn provincial Berlin into a capital city which could vie in cultural importance with London and Paris."⁵⁶

One topic this journal recurrently drew on was archaeological reports on excursion findings by architects and art historians. These even included a report on Robert Smirke's tour of the ancient sites in Greece and Sicily of 1805. What, however, must be noted is that, in the person of David Gilly, Schinkel did not find a man solely orientated towards the glorious past of classical culture but someone who was as much interested in the current affairs of architecture, the new that emerged around him. This seems to have influenced Schinkel from an early stage in his career onwards, and it can be assumed at least one of the sources by which his quest was inspired to reconcile the classical ideal and the contemporary needs.

One important instrument for introducing Schinkel to a variety of architectural topics was the Privatgesellschaft junger Architekten (Private Society of Young Architects). This group of seven young architects had been set up by Friedrich Gilly on his return in late 1798 and, apart from Schinkel and amongst others, included the likes of Heinrich Gentz and Karl Ferdinand Langhans (1782-1869), son of the designer of the Brandenburg Gate. The overall aim of this forum was what Barry Bergdoll so poignantly describes as "elevating architecture to the level of philosophical debate".⁵⁷ Allowing these seven people access to his library and engravings, Gilly provided them with a highly valuable source of visual and mental stimulation; especially as in regular meetings texts on questions of architecture, aesthetics and art history were read out and in discussed by the group.

⁵⁵ David Gilly had opened the first architecture school in the Pomeranian town of Stettin, whereas the second one was opened in Berlin in 1793.

⁵⁶ Mellinghoff, Tilman; Watkin, David. German Architecture and the Classical Ideal. 1740-1840. London, 1987. p. 65

⁵⁷ Bergdoll, Barry. Karl Friedrich Schinkel. An Architecture for Prussia. New York, 1994. p. 16

This must have been an almost ideal complement to the lessons Schinkel attended at David Gilly's school, i.e. the Bauakademie. There Schinkel was not only taught in the unusually quite technical subjects of building and architecture but also in the history of art and architecture, something very progressive at that time. One of his teachers in the latter subject was the aforementioned Aloys Hirt, who belonged to the number of German architects and scholars who during the 1780s had gained first-hand experience of classical architecture from travelling Italy and living and writing in Rome. Hirt can be regarded as having provided Schinkel with a very thorough knowledge on "antique architecture and society", which he regarded as "the embodiments of aesthetic ideals"⁵⁸. According to Watkin and Mellinghoff, Hirt's theory "hailed the Greek Doric order for its elevated expression of stability and permanence which it derived from its tectonic completeness."⁵⁹ It is very interesting to see how close this sort of thinking is to Schinkel's quest for visual stability in his own later theory and to Thomson's idea of permanence expressed through architecture.

However, developing this observation in classical architecture into his personal ideal, Schinkel owed to Friedrich Gilly rather than to Hirt. For Gilly, who illustrated Hirt's authoritative work on classical architecture, Die Baukunst nach den Grundsätzen der Alten (Building according to the Principles of the Ancients), was the one mostly responsible for introducing Schinkel to past and contemporary aesthetic theory. In the Gilly's house, he was the theoretician being responsible for his father's interest in art historical and aesthetic issues as much as he was for teaching the young Schinkel how to improve his illustrative skills; something that was to become such a remarkable feature of the designs of Schinkel's later works.

Having got into close contact with the revolutionary designs of Étienne-Louis Boullée and Claude-Nicolas Ledoux during his visit to France, Friedrich Gilly himself was more a creator of architectural fantasy.⁶⁰ Hardly any of his often uncompromising designs were executed and, apart from teaching optics, perspective, drawing, theatre and stage design at the *Bauakademie*, his strongest legacy for the following generation were his impressively illustrated designs. Considering these areas of architecture, in which Gilly was a master, one will notice that they provide all necessary means to design and illustrate architecture that, through manipulation of its perception, expresses higher symbolical meanings, just as Schinkel demanded it for

⁵⁸ *ibid.* p. 15

⁵⁹ Mellinghoff; Watkin. 1987. p. 60

⁶⁰ A design he proposed for a new Nationaltheater on the Gendarmenmarkt –exactly the spot where Schinkel's masterpiece, the Schauspielhaus, was to stand some twenty years later- in 1799 would have included a transformation of the adjacent French and German Dorn to an extent that was unthinkable to find approval.

his architecture when writing his Architektonisches Lehrbuch later in his career. Many of Schinkel's later postulates for 'beautiful architecture' seem to have their origin in the realm to which Friedrich Gilly had introduced him.

In a fairly short time, the relation of master and apprentice grew into "the most intimate friendship", which according to Schinkel's own account, meant for both of them engaging "in wonderful artistic activity and in ever more instructive communion."⁶¹ This fruitful relationship came to a quite unexpected and premature end when Friedrich Gilly died in the summer of 1800. Yet, by that time, Schinkel had already gained sufficient insight into the current affairs in contemporary Prussian as well as international and ancient architecture to keep him pursuing an interest in these areas without the guidance of his mentor friend. During his time with the Gillys, Schinkel had also had the possibility to see and experience the structures of civil service that the state was increasingly setting up to administer architecture in Prussia; as far as the more theoretical aspects are concerned, an experience that should influence his whole attitude for the rest of his life.

David Watkin and Tilmann Mellinghoff tell us that "Friedrich Gilly regarded Schinkel as his heir" because Schinkel inherited all of Gilly's precious drawings.⁶² Yet, this label seems to be even more appropriate if one considers the general mental approach of design Schinkel inherited from Friedrich Gilly. If for Gilly Architecture had been inseparable from considerations of aesthetic philosophy, the same can be said of Schinkel. Schinkel never abandoned the habit of regularly discussing these things and kept steadily working on them in his manuscript for an architectural textbook. Schinkel left the house of David Gilly in 1805 after having finished at the Bauakademie in 1802 and on his return from a two-year study trip to Italy.

Someone who played a key role in Schinkel's intellectual development was the philosopher and childhood friend of Schinkel's Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand Solger (1780-1819). He must be regarded as an important figure in Schinkel's development for two reasons. Both aspects are of special relevance to the question of similarity to Thomson's thinking, too. First, Solger continued deepening Schinkel's knowledge on aesthetic philosophy, and secondly, he provided a counterpole to Schinkel's increasing affection for the upcoming romantic idealism. Schinkel was constantly exposed to Solger's preference of the ancient Greek in regular meetings where they discussed aesthetic topics and read out classical drama to each other. Solger, who became a lecturer on aesthetics at Berlin University in 1811, can be expected to have

⁶¹ Mackowsky, Hans (ed.). Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Briefe, Tagebücher, Gedanken. Berlin, 1922. p. 25

⁶² Mellinghoff; Watkin. 1987. p. 86

been very well familiar with aesthetic theories of all kinds and origins. Among these will most surely have been Edmund Burke's ideas about the beautiful and the sublime, which are known to have had an impact on German aesthetic philosophy. Amongst the ones who picked up Burke's ideas was, for instance, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), the towering figure of aestheticist thought in Schinkel's time. About Solger's familiarity with another influential theory there can hardly be any doubt at all. This is the theory about the developmental character in religion and the subconscious appeal of the latter to human emotions by Friedrich Schleiermacher(1768-1834). These ideas were mainly published in Schleiermacher's Reden über die Religion an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern (On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers), which were written in Berlin between 1798 and 1800. As these theories tried to provide a bridge between theology and philosophy, their relevance will also have made them a topic of discussion among philosophically orientated people like Solger; especially as Schleiermacher, too, taught at Berlin University and, thus, was a colleague of Solger's.⁶³

Although Solger personally had "little experience in fine arts and architecture and rather thought of poetry"⁶⁴, one can easily imagine that discussions between this keen supporter of classicism and Schinkel will have involved all disciplines of art; especially as, with Schinkel, Solger's counterpart was not one limited to only one of these disciplines. Although Schinkel had received his first commission even before his Italian journey, during the years of Napoleonic occupation and economic depression, he earned his living as a painter of panoramas and romantic paintings before entering the Prussian civil service as Geheimer Oberbau-Assessor and Fachreferent für Ästhetik at the Technische Oberbaudeputation in 1810.

As early as during his first Italian journey, Schinkel started working on plans to publish a textbook "of partially teaching character."⁶⁵ For material reasons he had to abandon these until he got into the position mentioned above. Although the plan was never completely realised Schinkel had kept working on it all through his life. He constantly kept changing the texts and adjusting them to his changing stylistic preference. The first version of these manuscripts, the so-called 'romantic scripts', were written during the years that saw drastic political changes ranging from foreign occupation, exile government to war and finally liberation of Prussia from Napoleonic

⁶³ Schleiermacher actually strongly supported Wilhelm von Humboldt when the latter founded Berlin University in 1810. Schleiermacher subsequently became Professor of Theology and first Dean of the Theological Faculty in the same year.

⁶⁴ "Solger hatte von Architektur und bildender Kunst wenig Erfahrung und dachte eigentlich an Dichtkunst"

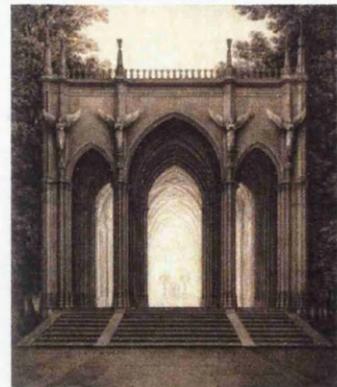
Forssmann, Erik. Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Bauwerke und Baugedanken. Munich / Zürich, 1981. p. 62

⁶⁵ Peschken, Goerd. Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Das architektonische Lehrbuch. Munich / Berlin, 1979. p. 11

rule. Thus, it is not surprising to find it expressing the Gothic spirit of national unity and longing for liberation that is so evident in Schinkel's paintings [ill. 27] and architectural projects of this time [ill. 28].



ill. 27: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: 'A Medieval City on a River', oil painting. 1815



ill 28: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: front perspective of a design for a mausoleum for Queen Luise. 1810

While in the case of the Queen Luise mausoleum, however, he was urged to return to the classical Greek by his royal patron, in his stage designs of a little later one can find Schinkel rediscovering his interest in the monuments of ancient classical architecture, like in his Magic Flute design, which includes his vision of long Egyptian



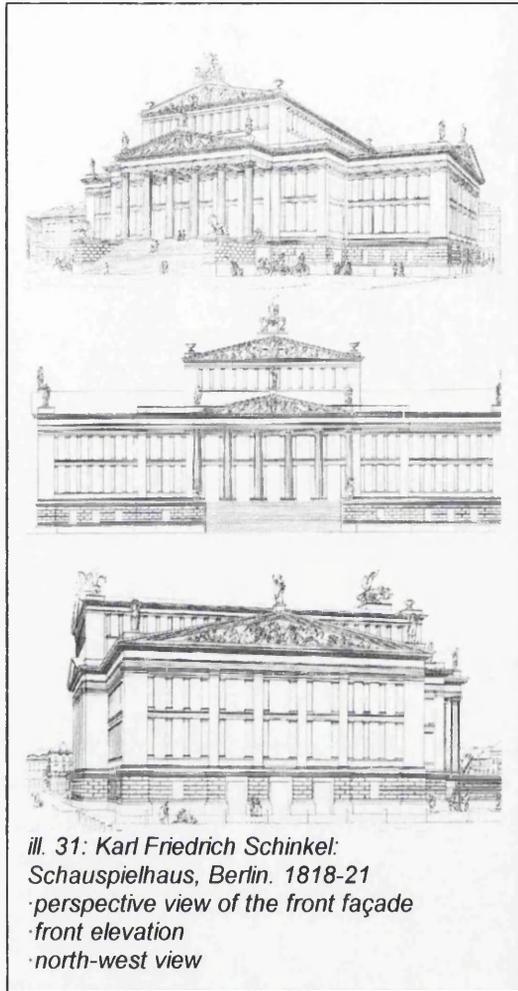
ill. 29: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Stage design for the 'Magic Flute', the inner Court of the Temple of the Sun. 1815



ill. 30: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Neue Wache, Berlin. 1817-18

colonnades as one of the main features of the Temple of the Sun [ill. 29]. The commission to produce a design for a new guard house in Unter den Linden, which was to become known as the Neue Wache, is of about the same time as his stage designs. It was to be the first building that with Schinkel's full approval was of a purely classical style [ill. 30]. Schinkel started changing the manuscripts for the planned Architektonisches Lehrbuch accordingly into 'the classicist version' and further confirmed his return to the classical style with the design of the new Schauspielhaus on the Gendarmenmarkt (1818-21).

One of the most interesting projects of this period as far as the potential inspiration for Thomson is concerned is the publication of the first issues of Schinkel's Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe. The first of twenty-eight individual issues appeared on the market in 1819, containing prints of three different projects, amongst them the Neue Wache. In the year the Schauspielhaus was completed, the second issue was published with six plates showing the Schauspielhaus in it. Apart from a section, a ground plan and a detailed illustration of the pediment relief and other features, these six plates contained the three main illustrations of the exterior of the Schauspielhaus [ill. 31]. It is striking how all three of these display the impressive effect of the rows of square columns Schinkel used all around the exterior of the building. Be it the perspectives or the front elevation, the effect is almost stronger than it is at sight of the real building.



ill. 31: Karl Friedrich Schinkel:
Schauspielhaus, Berlin. 1818-21
· perspective view of the front façade
· front elevation
· north-west view

A design included in the fourth issue (1824) is particularly remarkable in the same respect. In this issue, two plates show the Schloßchen Tegel, as Schinkel himself called it; Actually, it is more of a large country house. It was a conversion of a seventeenth-century house Schinkel had carried out for his close friend Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), who after the disappointing failure of his proposed political reforms and his subsequent retirement had turned to arts and humanistic education in a classical sense. Humboldt must be regarded as one of the most influential figures in Schinkel's life as he recurrently supported Schinkel in his career personally as well as he was massively influential on the creation of a high-quality cultural scene in post-Napoleonic Berlin.

Schinkel first met Wilhelm von Humboldt on his Italian journey in 1804, when Humboldt was German Ambassador in Rome. His stay in Italy provided close contact

with the relics of ancient classicism there, which for Humboldt himself provided a thorough experience on which to base his own idealistic aspirations.⁶⁶

"Antiquity for Humboldt was not a form of nostalgia but of fostering a modern civil society which could equal that of the ancients without abandoning anything of Christian spirituality or modern scientific progress."⁶⁷ One major goal Humboldt pursued in this process of cultivation was the humanistic idea of Bildung, an education of all members of the public that used classical Greek culture as a corrective.

This notion of Humboldt's had a huge impact on the restructuring of general education in Prussia that was carried out during his short spell as director of the Ministry of the Interior from 1808-10. One of the most highly influential acts while holding this position was the foundation of a university in Berlin in 1809. The first Humboldt appointed rector of this institution was the philosophical writer Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814), one of the leading influential figures in German idealistic philosophy. The significance of this duo's work to the whole neo-classical movement in Berlin is summed up by Barry Bergdoll:

"Humboldt and Fichte brought a whole generation of philosophers and scientists to Berlin who were to alter intellectual life in the capital profoundly and who shared their faith in the exemplary power of classical Greek culture."⁶⁸

One of the scientist to leave their mark on the movement was Wilhelm von Humboldt's younger brother Alexander (1769-1859). Although the latter left Berlin early in his professional career and did not return to live in Berlin permanently before 1830, his family relations proved to have a significant influence. Alexander von Humboldt studied and carried out research in all disciplines of natural sciences, which he based on expeditions to the American continents and Asia. It is, therefore, not surprising to find him having influenced his brother in his attitudes towards the historical development of man and his technological achievements, a part of which was architecture. Here we can find the origins of Humboldt's idea of Architecture "to speak of the evolution of man's thoughts about nature,"⁶⁹ something that in turn appears to have had a profound influence on Schinkel's view of the development of architecture.

The other decisive influence Wilhelm von Humboldt had on the career of Karl Friedrich Schinkel is the fact that he helped Schinkel to his first position in the Prussian civil service in 1810, the step in Schinkel's life that obviously was extremely

⁶⁶ Humboldt had already shown a strong interest in the significance of ancient classicism to his humanistic aspirations before he came to Rome. In 1793, for instance, he had written the essay 'Concerning the Study of Antiquity'.

⁶⁷ Bergdoll. 1994. p. 47

⁶⁸ *ibid.* p. 46

important to Schinkel's subsequent rise and one without which Schinkel would hardly have achieved an equal influence on the architectural world in general.

Another aspect of Wilhelm von Humboldt's life, however, must be regarded interesting to our case, too. This is the fact that Humboldt also personally represents the Anglo-German cultural link that increasingly gained strength during the nineteenth century. For in 1817, von Humboldt stayed in London for a year as Prussian Legate and made use there of the chance to become familiar with the achievements of the English Greek Revival. Others followed and thereby contributed to a cultural exchange between Germany and Britain. The result was a growing mutual interest and awareness of each other's cultural achievements that must be regarded a vital key factor in the debate about any potential influence of Karl Friedrich Schinkel on Alexander Thomson.

In April 1826 Karl Friedrich Schinkel set out for his personal British journey. It was a four-month tour that gave him the chance to see quite a lot of towns and cities in central Europe but that was planned to get him to Britain in the first place. Of these four months Schinkel spent about two and a half in Britain (24 May to 5 August) and even made it to Scotland for a trip around of almost two weeks. It is not surprising that this also led him to Glasgow and to Edinburgh, of course.

Schinkel's intentions for the whole journey were predominantly focused on architectural matters as "[h]e needed an external stimulus" for a vast number of commissions he was confronted with in Berlin.⁷⁰ Thus, one could expect Schinkel to have met architects of some interest to him in the large number of places he went to see. Maybe even in Glasgow he could have met people from the architectural world, and a possible legacy of his visit may have been left. Unfortunately, as far as the British part of Schinkel's tour is concerned, this is not the case; for its Scottish part even less than for the English one. David Bindman quite clearly points out the difference to Schinkel's days in France: "In Paris he was received as a celebrity in his own right (...). He was invited to present his work to the Institute (...). In England, on the other hand, he had many fewer acquaintances, and he seems to have had no special entrée into the London architectural world."⁷¹ Bindman furthermore mentions Schinkel's failed attempts to meet John Nash and Charles Robert Cockerell. The only architect Schinkel appears to have actually met during these ten weeks in Britain, is

⁶⁹ *ibid.* p. 65

⁷⁰ Riemann, Gottfried. 'The 1826 Journey and It's Place in Schinkel's Career'. in: Bindman, David; Riemann, Gottfried (eds.). Karl Friedrich Schinkel. The English Journey. Journal of a Visit to France and Britain in 1826. New Haven / London, 1993. p.

1

⁷¹ Bindmann, David. 'Schinkel and Britain in 1826'. in: *ibid.* p. 12

the city architect John Foster of Liverpool (on July 19th in Liverpool). We are so accurately informed about the course of this journey because Schinkel himself kept quite an explicit diary which, complemented by letters, provides a highly reliable record of this trip. He mentions all interesting buildings and places he visited and apparently all people he in some way regarded interesting to have met. If there had been any more architects than the comparatively unknown Mr. Foster, we could expect Schinkel to have noted it down.

As far as his almost two weeks in Scotland are concerned, they must even to a lesser extent be regarded as a visit of a Prussian state architect on duty. "The extension of the journey to include Scotland had not at first been envisaged." Gottfried Riemann leaves no doubt about the purpose of this little side-trip in the first place; it "was a holiday."⁷² Of course, while in Edinburgh and Glasgow, Schinkel saw the two cities with the eyes of an architect noticing and noting down things about architecture that he found worth mentioning. Both in Edinburgh and Glasgow, he was impressed with the "[s]plendid new wide streets"⁷³ and, obviously informed about the lack of raised funds, already expressed concern about the completion of the National Monument on Calton Hill.

However, the kind of access he enjoyed in both places do not appear to have been much different from that of any well-off tourist. The people Schinkel recorded to have met in Scotland are a "Consul Thompson" in Edinburgh, identified by David Bindman as the Prussian Consul in Edinburgh, James Gibson Thompson, and a "Mr Todt" in Glasgow, who appears to have been a Hutchesontown merchant called Charles Todd.⁷⁴ There is not the slightest hint at any meeting with some Scottish representative of Schinkel's profession, not to mention any formal reception of the Prussian architect, where he could have given a talk on his own work, for instance. The presence of Karl Friedrich Schinkel in Scotland in the summer of 1826 would have gone completely unnoticed, if it was not for his entry in the Hunterian museum's visitor book for July 7th, the only day he completely spent in Glasgow.⁷⁵

Other famous examples of this curiosity about Britain are the writers Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853), a key figure in the renaissance of Shakespeare plays in Germany, Hermann Fürst von Pückler-Muskau (1785-1871), who spent years in Britain and Ireland exploring the realms of architecture and landscape gardening and Theodor Fontane (1819-98), who in Thomson's days extensively travelled through England and

⁷² Riemann. 1993. p. 8

⁷³ Schinkel, Karl Friedrich. 'The English Journey (diary)'. in: *ibid.* p. 148

⁷⁴ cf. *ibid.* p. 150 and p. 158

⁷⁵ cf. *ibid.* p. n158

Scotland and who for several years tried to make a living as a journalist in London.⁷⁶ These three are only a few prominent examples of a wide range of artists that followed the likes of Wilhelm von Humboldt and Schinkel in exploring the technically advanced England and the highly romanticised Scotland. That a very similar attraction worked in the opposite direction becomes clear when we take a look at relevant cases from the surroundings of Alexander Thomson.

Returning to the architecture of Karl Friedrich Schinkel and its publication, we find other designs that could be of interest to our case. Some of these, which followed in later issues of the Sammlung, are: the designs for the unbuilt Oranienburg suburban churches in 1829, the Museum at the Lustgarten in 1831 and the Court Gardener's House and the Berlin suburban churches in one issue in 1835. The only 'complete' edition of the Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe ever to be published before Schinkel's death in 1841 appeared in 1828, twelve years before the last individual issue was published and, thus, not really a complete one. During the years between Schinkel's death and the year for which we have proof of Alexander Thomson possessing a copy (1863), six different editions were published. Two of them (1841-43 and 1843-47) only contained a reduced number of the original 174 plates, but still all the relevant ones mentioned above; whereas an edition of 1853 only contained 60 plates, probably a selection of all engravings.

On the whole, a few things need to be pointed out clearly about Schinkel's life, which are of special relevance to the question at issue. First, Schinkel received a very thorough architectural education that to an unusual extent included the study of ancient classical architecture. This was based on books in the libraries of his teachers, such as the authoritative Antiquities of Athens, as well as on first-hand knowledge on ancient buildings of those who taught him. Secondly, from the earliest stages of his professional education onwards, Schinkel was encouraged to and supported in broadening his mind towards the philosophical realm of aesthetics, and he was introduced to a wide number of representatives of neo-classicism in all different disciplines of art. He personally knew the royal family as well as Johann Wolfgang Goethe, and was never short of mental stimuli from artistic disciplines other than his own. Finally, it has to be stressed that it is very unlikely that Schinkel left any legacy of his work while being in Britain, not to mention Scotland. The very interesting illustrations of his most important buildings, however, were available from quite an early date onwards; but it must be very much doubted if Schinkel himself to any extent

⁷⁶ It is an instructive fact that Fontane eventually had big problems to find a vacant job as a teacher of German in London, not because of a lack of demand but because of the overwhelming offer of his kind in 1850s London.

contributed to their spreading in the architectural world of Great Britain, to which he eventually did not find any significant access.

Alexander Thomson entered the architectural profession in 1834 at the age of seventeen, at a time when Karl Friedrich Schinkel, being thirty-six years senior to Thomson, had already reached the apex of his career. By that time, Schinkel had been in the position of Prussia's Geheimer Oberbaurat (Privy Counsellor for Public Works) for more than two decades with most of his important designs already realised and with illustrations of many of them available in published form.

Thomson became an apprentice at the office of the Glaswegian architect Robert Foote († 1854)⁷⁷ after the latter had rescued his talent from a writer's office where Thomson had been employed previously.⁷⁸ On the occasion of a visit to this office, Foote had been impressed by Thomson's drawing skills,⁷⁹ a talent that was to develop into a very sophisticated means of illustration in Thomson's later career. Although Thomson did not stay in Foote's office for more than two years, leaving in 1836 when Foote had to retire early because of ill health, there are a number of facts that make Foote appear to have had an "immense influence" on Thomson.⁸⁰

This is chiefly due to some interesting facts from the life of Robert Foote. It can be assumed that Thomson during the formative time of these first two years in the profession, was very keen to learn everything about architecture and the examples of it that surrounded him as well as being open to any kind of influence as far as a stylistic preference is concerned. The only written evidence of the relation between Thomson and Foote that we have today is an account of it in A Memoir of George Thomson, written by J. E. H. Thomson (a nephew of Alexander's) a few years after Alexander's death. As this piece of writing mainly focuses on the person of Alexander's brother and later partner George, its accuracy on matters from Alexander's early professional life, should not be overestimated. Even so, a quotation like the following is still an important illustration of the influential potential that lay in this relationship between master and apprentice:

⁷⁷ Foote's exact date of birth is not known. In a recent article that brought some light into the fairly unknown life of Robert Foote, Dominic d'Angelo suggests that "Robert may have been born any time between 1786 and 1808."
from: d'Angelo, Dominic. 'Friends indeed: Robert Foote and Charles Hutcheson'. in: The Alexander Thomson Society Newsletter, no. 24. May 1999. p. 7

⁷⁸ cf. Stamp. 1999. p. 20

⁷⁹ cf. McFadzean. 1979. p. 6

⁸⁰ McFadzean even more clearly claims that "[t]here can be no doubt of the immense influence Foote had on Alexander Thomson."
from: McFadzean. 1979. p. 7

"Mr. Foote was one of those rare men to whom architecture is a profession, and not a mere business. Nothing is so fitted to fire young men as enthusiasm; so the enthusiastic master soon had an equally enthusiastic and apt pupil. Like other enthusiasts, Alexander was continually bent on making converts; he strove to impress everybody with the correctness of his own and his master's view of art generally and of architecture in particular. His brother George was his first convert, and was soon infected by the desire to be an architect."⁸¹

According to this source, there is actually a number of aspects about Thomson's view on architecture of which the foundations had been laid during these two years. This not only refers to the enthusiasm with which Thomson was to keep arguing his case for the classical Greek against a life-long majority of opponents but also to the total approach to architectural design, including art in general as well as 'architecture in particular'. The latter aspect is of particular relevance to our topic; especially as there are facts suggesting that Thomson's master was not unaware of Schinkel's designs.

Unfortunately, there have not been any decisive revelations about Foote's life that would require updating Graham Law's statement of 1954. To him, the reason why "[i]t is not possible to tell what influence Foote had on his apprentice" is that "we do not know what books he had in his library, what countries he had visited on his travels, or what the plaster collection in his basement was like."⁸² Despite the small number of reliable facts known about his life, like Law, all sources referring to Foote stress the fact that, at a certain point of his life, he undertook some fairly unusual amount of travelling abroad. While Thomson's early biographer, Thomas Gildard, describes Foote as "travelled and of refined taste"⁸³, Ronald McFadzean claims that Foote's "father must have been fairly well off because we know that his son was able to travel fairly extensively on the Continent and especially in Italy and Greece." McFadzean believes that is was there "he came into contact with the works of antiquity."⁸⁴

There is not much more detail that can be added to this issue. However, Dominic d'Angelo's recent research seems to confirm Foote's financial potency required for a Grand Tour, as his father's architect and plasterer's business kept expanding over the years. D'Angelo suggests that "[p]erhaps Foote senior had taken the line that if his son was going to do something other than merely follow his own footsteps, he might as well train for it in proper fashion."⁸⁵ Wherever Robert travelled, he must have done

⁸¹ Thomson, Rev. J. E. H. *A Memoir of George Thomson*. Edinburgh, 1881.
quoted from: McFadzean. 1979. p. 7

⁸² Law. 1954. p. 307

⁸³ Gildard, Thomas. 'Greek Thomson'. in: *Proceedings of the Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow*, vol. xxviii. p. 112
quoted from: Law. 1954. p. 307

⁸⁴ McFadzean. 1979. p. 6-7

The fact that, in his article on Foote, d'Angelo quotes McFadzean saying that Foote travelled "Italy and Germany" is obviously due to a printing error.

⁸⁵ d'Angelo. 1999. p. 6

it by 1827 the latest. For in that year, Foote took over his father's business following the latter's death.

It is hard to say if in the year following Schinkel's brief visit to Glasgow, Foote made the effort of going to Berlin, where he could already have seen such buildings as Schinkel's *Neue Wache* and the *Schauspielhaus*. However, one thing is clear, irrespectable of the destination of Foote's travels Thomson must have been the one to profit from them significantly. For among practising architects in Scotland, there was hardly anyone to be found that had gained any first-hand knowledge of the relics of ancient classical architecture, not to mention personal experience of its neo-classical processing in continental Europe. Thomson, however, could not only profit from being taught by such an exceptionally experienced man but also had the opportunity to benefit from being "privileged to listen to conversations on classical architecture between Foote and his friend Charles Hutchinson."⁸⁶ The latter is believed to have joined Robert Foote on his travels.⁸⁷

In addition to this experience, we know about a "considerable collection of casts of antique mouldings" in Foote's possession, which for Thomson will have provided unusually good illustrative material of the ancient vocabulary of forms. Given these relatively extraordinary circumstances, another clarifying revelation only contributes to the picture of a well-informed apprentice Alexander Thomson. James Macaulay could recently confirm Ronald McFadzean's presumption that it was at Robert Foote's office that Thomson first got access to the authoritative source on the classical architecture of distant Greece, the aforementioned *Antiquities of Athens*.⁸⁸

Considering all these circumstances, one will readily agree on McFadzean's conclusion that for Foote, Thomson's apprenticeship "was not merely a question of drilling him in the scholarly reproduction of the classical style but, rather, in intellectually exploring how the finest achievements of the past could be adopted to modern use."⁸⁹ If we also agree on assuming that "at this stage in his development Thomson would study as many architectural books and publications as he could find," we can take it as a presupposition for the continuing argument. That is that Thomson

It is important in this context to point out that David Foote, Robert's father, had taken up architecture late in his professional career, only adding it to his original profession as a plasterer.

⁸⁶ McFadzean. 1979. p. 7

⁸⁷ Details available on Charles Hutcheson (as d'Angelo points out, the orthography of both names, Hutcheson and Foote varies in the *Glasgow Directory*) are even rarer than the ones on Foote. Neither his date of birth, nor his date of death are known. It is, however, believed that he was about the same age as Foote. Furthermore, he, too, seems to have been in the position to be able to tour Europe with his father being a fairly successful merchant and warehouse owner.

⁸⁸ In his essay on 'Thomson's Literary and Pictorial sources', Macaulay mentions the name of Robert Foote as a subscriber to the publication's fourth volume, along with a number of other Scottish architects, such as Thomas Hamilton and John Baird, Thomson's second employer.

cf. Macaulay, James. 'Greek Thomson's Literary and Pictorial Sources'. in: McKinstry; Stamp. 1994. p. 55-56

was widely familiar with British Greek Revival architecture, even very well probably with its fairly late Scottish examples in Edinburgh and especially in Glasgow. It is very hard to imagine that in the office of a man who went to the length of travelling abroad in order to gain some first-hand knowledge on architectural creations, there would not be enough attention paid to the designs of his compatriots like Thomas Hamilton, William Henry Playfair or David Hamilton; all of them creators of designs that, even if not in their general approach, seem to have partially influenced Thomson in a number of details.

There is one architect amongst this group that Thomson is likely to have come across at the same time. Though then, he could not have known yet that he was to become a member of this very architect's family in the not too distant future. The man at issue here is the Englishman Peter Nicholson (1765-1844), who during an eight-year spell in Glasgow (1800-08) among other buildings designed the impressive Carlton Place Terrace (1802) on the Clyde's south bank. Yet, it is not his architectural achievements that should make him interesting to our case, but rather the fact that, at the same time, he was a writer of voluminous publications on architecture, such as his Architectural Dictionary of 1819.

Alexander Thomson got into this family by marriage. On the 21 September 1847, he married Jane Nicholson, grand-daughter of Peter and daughter of the latter's son Michael Angelo Nicholson (1796-1841), who was also an architect. Although the early death of Michael Angelo meant that Thomson eventually neither ever met Peter nor Michael Angelo, there are reasons to assume that their legacy still had an influence on Thomson.

For Jane Nicholson is believed to have had a keen interest in her father's and grand-father's work, a characteristic of hers she also stuck to as far as her husband's work was concerned.⁸⁹ David Walker, in his essay on 'The Scottish Background' of Thomson's work mentions some interesting examples of architectural co-operation between father and son in the Nicholson family.⁹¹ The relevance of these illustrations in architectural textbooks to later designs by Thomson is visibly obvious but will be dealt with in a later context.

If we assume that Thomson was well introduced to the theoretical side of an architect's life during his time with Robert Foote, his experience with his next master could be called the opposite. When Robert Foote was urged to retire from business by his ill health in 1836, he transferred Thomson's apprenticeship to the office of John

⁸⁹ McFadzean. 1979. p. 7

⁹⁰ cf. McFadzean. 1979. p. 17

Baird I (1798-1859)⁹², "one of the leading Glasgow architects at the time."⁹³ There, according to David Walker, "Thomson's experience is more likely to have been practical than theoretical."⁹⁴ This seems to be supported by the fact that Baird himself did not enjoy too much of a thorough training when he was apprenticed to the fairly young John Shepherd. However, due to the latter's premature death in 1818, Baird had to take full responsibility of the business himself at the age of barely twenty and even without having completed his apprenticeship.

Even so, Baird managed to become one of the big names in Glasgow's architectural scene from the 1820s onwards. Graham Law describes him as "an eclectic revivalist and one of the most prominent architects in Glasgow."⁹⁵ The question of eclecticism in Baird's oeuvre is an interesting one as it is important to the influence, be it positive or negative, Baird could have had on Thomson's quite free use of classical architecture as an inspirational source. Luckily, on the buildings of John Baird's we have enough surviving material to judge his style and are, therefore, in a position to answer this question. Thomson himself, in his later lectures, even refers to one of these buildings, Baird's "first significant building commission"⁹⁶, Greyfriar's United Presbyterian Church in Albion Street of 1821. While David Walker regards the fact that Thomson does mention this church as a hint that "Thomson evidently thought well of it"⁹⁷, the way the text is continued clearly lets it appear in a more critical context. Thomson calls the front of the church a "considerably enlarged" copy of the "small temple on Illisus" and criticises the limitation of copying concrete classical precedents as failing to "see through the material into the laws upon which that architecture rested."⁹⁸

However critically Alexander Thomson saw the designs of his second master, the latter definitely provided him with close encounters of different approaches towards neo-classical design, which later were to mark Thomson's own way in the same discipline. Baird's buildings included, "a combination of arcuated and trabeated construction", the characteristic feature of Thomson's early designs, as well as designs of pure Greek trabeation. What makes Baird's buildings appear so very different from

⁹¹ Walker, David M. 'The Development of Thomson's Style. The Scottish Background'. in: McKinstry; Stamp. 1994. p. 26-27

⁹² Following publications of recent years, this master of Thomson's will be referred to as John Baird I, whereas his later partner with identical name will be referred to as John Baird II.

⁹³ McFadzean. 1979. p. 9

⁹⁴ Walker. 1994. p. 29

⁹⁵ Law. 1954. p. 307

⁹⁶ d'Angelo, Dominic. 'The first John Baird: architect and mentor'. in: The Alexander Thomson Society Newsletter, no. 24. May 1999. p. 14

⁹⁷ Walker. 1994. p. 29

⁹⁸ Thomson, Alexander. 'The Haldane Lectures. No. III. Greek Architecture (1874)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. The Lectures of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. Architect. 1817-1875. Glasgow, 1999. p. 147

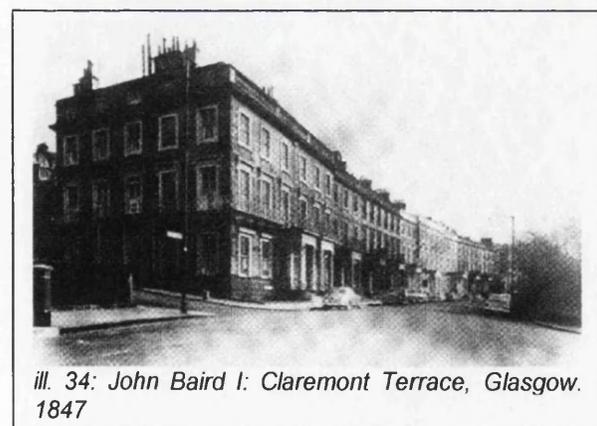
Thomson's typical trabeated designs is something that obviously found Thomson's criticism, too, their lack of imaginative originality and their too strict following the 'picture-book classicism'.

Yet, there is one thing many of Baird's designs have in common, which is well described by Ronald McFadzean: "All his [Baird's] buildings were characterised by restraint, good proportions and a fine sense of scale coupled with the controlled use of decoration."⁹⁹ Good examples are two more of his churches, his Wellington Street United Presbyterian Church of 1825 [ill. 32] and his 1839 Anderston United Presbyterian Church [ill. 33], as well as his 1842 Claremont House and its extension into Claremont Terrace in 1847 [ill. 34]. A factor that may have supported Baird's restraint towards decoration

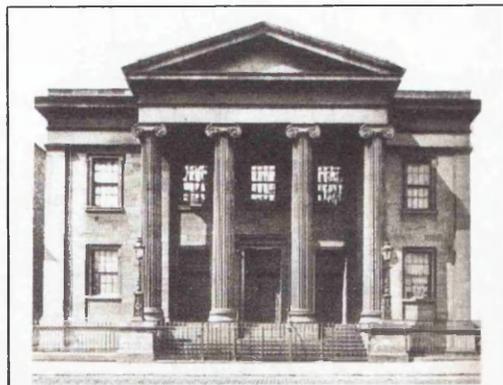
and formal variety could be his progressively constructional orientation towards design as demonstrated in the Argyle Arcade on Argyle Street (1827), "certainly one of the

first, if not the first, in this country to be built entirely of iron."¹⁰⁰

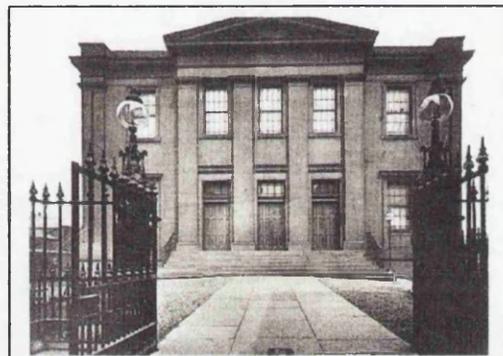
Trying to pin-point the influence that John Baird I had on his disciple, one can agree with the general opinion that it was not a strong one. What can be attributed in Thomson's work to the influence of Baird is the general approach of design rather



than any concrete formal language. For Thomson actually does seem to have absorbed Baird's "simple 'no nonsense' approach and his appreciation of simple geometrical forms, combined with a subtle sense of scale and refined proportions."¹⁰¹



ill. 32: John Baird I: Wellington Street United Presbyterian Church, Glasgow. 1825



ill. 33: John Baird I: Anderston United Presbyterian Church, Glasgow. 1839

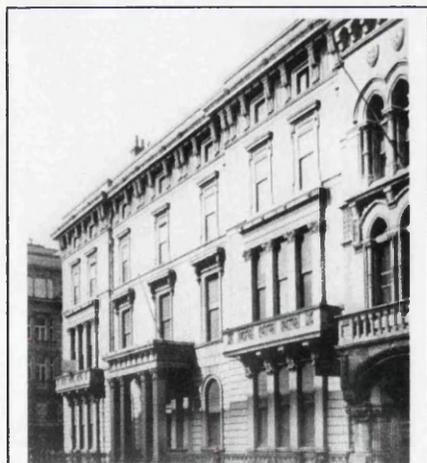
⁹⁹ McFadzean. 1979. p. 12

¹⁰⁰ Gomme; Walker. 1987. n114

¹⁰¹ McFadzean. 1979. p. 12

Something that should attract some special attention in the light of the Thomson-Schinkel link to be examined here, are two things. First, if it is claimed that it is Thomson's early villa designs in an Italianate style or Rundbogenstil which are closest to Schinkel's, it must also be noticed that Thomson will have come into close contact with the 'combination of arcuated and trabeated construction' in Baird's office; much closer than any illustration in a portfolio could provide it. Secondly, as far as the use 'simple geometrical forms' is concerned, the application of Doric pilasters in two of Baird's church designs should be of special relevance to the aspect of potential sources of inspiration to Thomson. Baird already used these in his first major design, the Wellington Street United Presbyterian Church. A much more impressive use of this device, however, we find displayed at Anderston United Presbyterian Church, where their severe lines replace the more playful Ionic columns of the former church. Completed in 1839, Thomson will have been strongly involved in the design work that preceded its erection.¹⁰² Even if this did not exceed the mere drawing job involved, it would have been enough to make Thomson well familiar with the design.

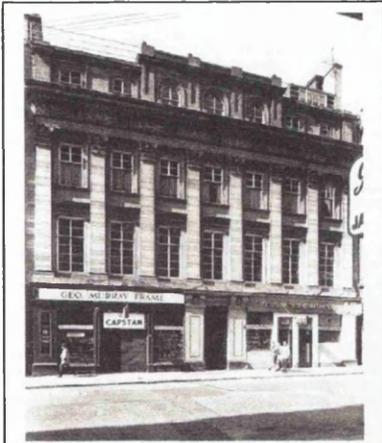
At the same time, working for John Baird I, who by that time had "built up a practice second only to that of David Hamilton", will have provided Thomson with a quite informative closeness to other big names of his contemporary Glasgow and Scotland. In England, the Greek Revival had already given way to a Gothic that was regarded much more representative as far as the national character was concerned. Despite tendencies to follow the London line, however, in Scotland, even some of the big names still stuck to the Greek as a formal model when Thomson was in his years of apprenticeship. Local examples show that this was not confined to the 'Athens of the North', as Edinburgh was called in those days. The aforementioned David Hamilton (1768-1843) provided some of these. Thereby, he also provided a big potential for influencing the still inexperienced Alexander Thomson in his formal orientation, which had already been geared towards the Greek by his first master. It is beyond any doubt that Thomson would have been very well familiar



ill. 35: David Hamilton: Western Club, Glasgow. 1839-43

¹⁰² Apart from an architectural interest in the church buildings Thomson's bonds to the United Presbyterian Church were strong. He was brought up very religiously and remained strongly linked to the Presbyterian Church for the rest of his life. During his career, he not only designed three of their church buildings in Glasgow but he was also "a sometime elder of the Caledonia Road Church."

Stamp, Gavin. 'Introduction'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). *The Light of Truth and Beauty. The Lectures of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. Architect. 1817-1875.* Glasgow, 1999. p. 5

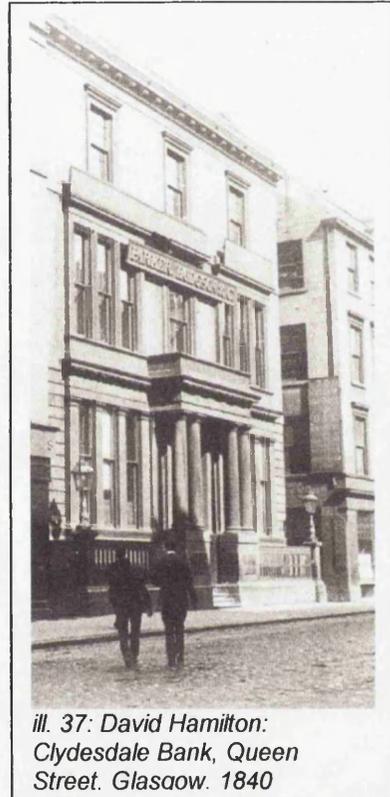


ill. 36: David Hamilton: warehouse on Queen Street, Glasgow. 1834

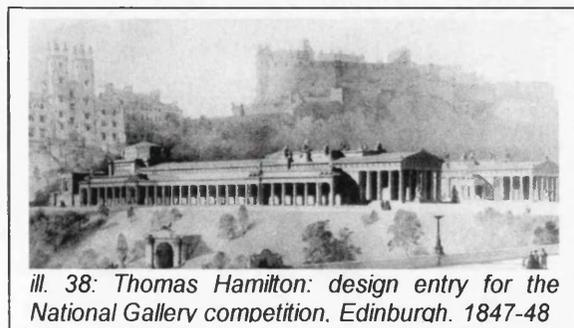
with buildings by David Hamilton that in those years went up around the corner from where his second master lived.¹⁰³ To be noted among these is the Western Club of 1839-43 on Buchanan Street [ill. 35] as well as the ones a block down the road on Queen Street. The latter are his conversion of the Cunninghane mansions into the Royal Exchange, executed between 1827 and 1829, the warehouse of 1834 [ill. 36] and his 1840 Clydesdale Bank [ill. 37].

Beyond this locally confined knowledge it

can be well assumed that in an office of the position of John Baird one will have been well informed on other leading architects in the country, too, such as Thomson's Edinburgh 'idol' Thomas Hamilton (1784-1858) or William Henry Playfair (1790-1857). Of these architects' designs the following should be explicitly mentioned due to their relevance to the general topic. Through one of his lectures, it is known that Thomson admired Thomas Hamilton's Royal High School in Edinburgh (1825-29), a building in which there are definitely details to be found that would later integrate into his own style. As relevant in this respect is Hamilton's entry for the tedious National Gallery competition of 1847-48 [ill. 38]. One of the early



ill. 37: David Hamilton: Clydesdale Bank, Queen Street. Glasgow. 1840



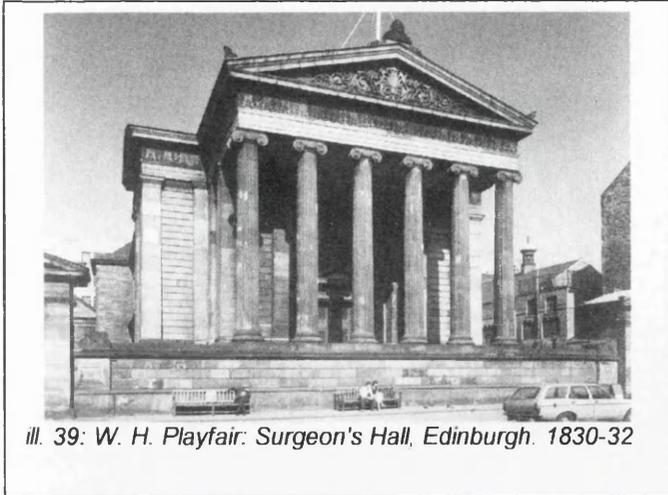
ill. 38: Thomas Hamilton: design entry for the National Gallery competition. Edinburgh. 1847-48

schemes by the architect whose design was finally realised is of interest, too, Playfair's design of 1850, which still differs significantly from his final design. Other Edinburgh designs by the same architect, to which relevance to Thomson's development has been attributed, had long been completed by the 1840s and would therefore be well

¹⁰³ We know that Baird "and his young family had moved to 5 Buchanan street" by 1838; but we do not know if his office was there, too.

from: d'Angelo, Dominic. The first John Baird: architect and mentor'. in: The Alexander Thomson Society Newsletter, no. 24. May 1999. p. 14

known to the Glasgow's architectural scene of Thomson's days, too. These include,

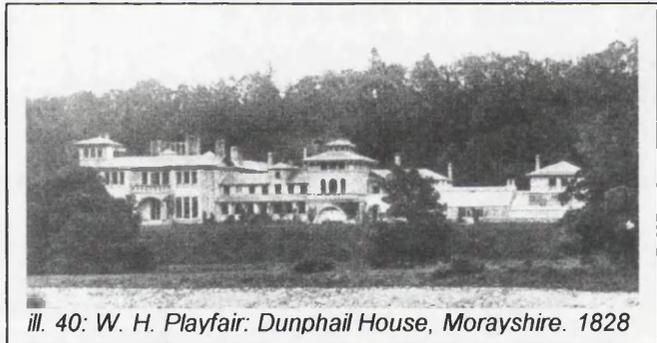


for instance, his Surgeon's Hall of 1830-32 [ill. 39] and his Royal Institution building (1831-36).

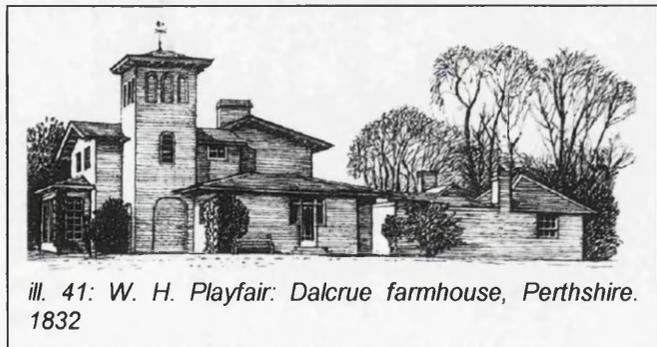
When David Walker points out that "Thomson is likely to have seen" at least one of Playfair's country houses, too, it is very likely that this also happened during his time in Baird's office. For this one

design, as well as others Walker regards relevant to Thomson's work, dates from around 1830. What is particularly interesting about this date is that this is exactly the time when Schinkel designed his Court Gardener's House, which is so often referred to as having provided a model for Thomson's villa designs. Playfair's buildings, however, could be found as close as Perthshire, Morayshire or the suburbs of Edinburgh. Even if coverage of

these buildings in English architectural journals suffered from the certain amount of neglect all Scottish architects of this time suffered from, the sheer topographical proximity makes the availability of illustrations, especially to an architect, much more likely than of ones of any continental architect. Belmont in Corstorphine on the outskirts of Edinburgh is the one Watkin regards to have been directly known to Thomson while the



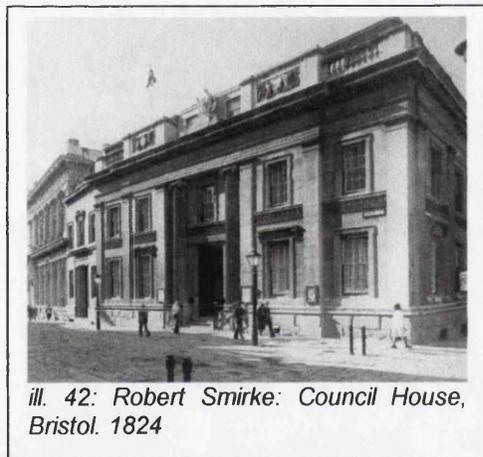
ill. 40: W. H. Playfair: Dunphail House, Morayshire. 1828



ill. 41: W. H. Playfair: Dalcrue farmhouse, Perthshire. 1832

others mentioned are Dunphail House in Morayshire [ill. 40] and Dalcrue farmhouse in Perthshire [ill. 41]. One of the examples is to be found a little further away but still comparatively within reach, Playfair's Drumbanagher in County Armagh, Northern Ireland.

Of course, the list of buildings and architects that in one or the other way could have inspired Alexander Thomson during the years when he began to set out to find an own personal style of expression could be extended into huge numbers. The general assumption that one should make, however, is that Thomson through contact with his masters and other architects will have had a substantial knowledge of the designs of the most prominent architects in and around Glasgow; whereas English architectural journals will have provided Thomson with reports on and illustrations of designs by at least the main representatives of the architectural world south of the border. David Walker, for instance, draws our attention to some buildings by the Englishman Robert Smirke (1781-1867), whose major design, the British Museum in London, was already in the process of being built when Schinkel visited the capital. By the time it was completed in 1847, Thomson had been chief assistant of John Baird I for two years. Yet, despite the museum being a strong plea for the Greek, the examples of Smirke's architecture that Walker regards relevant are ones of about the same time building had commenced at the museum. Among these are the Royal College of Physicians in London (1822-25) and the Council House in Bristol of 1824 [ill. 42]. Once again, it is the treatment of pilasters that is the reason to link these designs to Alexander Thomson and which makes them relevant for our case. For, to Walker, the pilastrades and pilaster strips "suggest that he [Smirke] was familiar with Schinkel's published designs for the Berlin Schauspielhaus of 1819."



ill. 42: Robert Smirke: Council House, Bristol. 1824

The other figure in architectural history that is traditionally linked with both, Schinkel and Thomson is the aforementioned Harvey Lonsdale Elmes. He actually even appears to be the first British architect to be linked to German neo-classicism at all. It was no less a man than Sir Albert Richardson (1880-1964) who first established this link in his authoritative Monumental Classic Architecture of 1914. He tells us about Elmes's attraction to "reports of Schinkel's monumental buildings at Berlin and those of Leo von Klenze at Munich."¹⁰⁴ Dealing with Alexander Thomson some pages later, however, he does not mention Germany once.

While in this book, however, Richardson does not go further than saying that Elmes "extended his studies to Germany", in his 1934 Early Victorian England, he

¹⁰⁴ Richardson, Albert E. Monumental Classic Architecture in Britain and Ireland During the Eighteenth & Nineteenth Centuries. London, 1914. p. 85

adds a fact that, in connection with any potential inspiration for Thomson, has lead people to jump to a wrong conclusion. Giving an account of the life of H. L. Elmes, Richardson writes that "[a] short interval followed, during which he studied various classical works in London, and finally he visited Germany to examine the new buildings designed by Schinkel and Leo von Klenze." Adding that "[i]n April 1840 Elmes succeeded in obtaining the first premium for the new Assize Courts at Liverpool"¹⁰⁵ Richardson makes one believe that Elmes's trip to Germany took place before 1840; i.e. at a time when he was still working on his design for St. George's Hall and the Assize Courts.

As we have seen earlier, this notion has obviously been taken up by many architectural historians for about the past five decades. For Henry-Russell Hitchcock's 1950 claim that Thomson "probably knew that Elmes went to Germany to see Schinkel's work"¹⁰⁶ is as unmistakable as Gavin Stamp's of this year, which states that H. L. Elmes "had travelled to Berlin to see Schinkel's work when he was designing his masterpiece, St. George's Hall."¹⁰⁷ It is a curious fact, however, that in pieces of architectural writing solely dealing with Elmes and his masterpiece, we find the Schinkel link much more carefully suggested. Clive Aslet, in an article on St. George's Hall of 1985, only speaks of an "affinity (...) with Schinkel's Schauspielhaus and Altes Museum in Berlin, which Elmes might have known through illustrations".¹⁰⁸ John Olley a year later, in his extensive two-part article on the Liverpool building, does not establish any direct link to Schinkel or Berlin at all, but only to Munich. Without any comment he mentions that the library of the building's Corporation Surveyor included some 23 books with works of Schinkel and von Klenze amongst them.¹⁰⁹ Some pages earlier, he refers to a Jesuit church in Munich, saying that Elmes had visited it in 1842.¹¹⁰

To Gavin Stamp again I owe the very recent and revealing hint that finally lead to proving the carefulness of the statements above justified. For, according to a contemporary report by a Mr. William Earle, H. L. Elmes did not travel to Germany before 1842 at all, nor did he ever go to Berlin but only, as Olley correctly reports, to

¹⁰⁵ Richardson, Albert E. Early Victorian England. 1830-1865. London, 1934. p. 192

¹⁰⁶ cf. n43

¹⁰⁷ cf. n46

¹⁰⁸ Aslet, Clive. ' "The World's Finest Building" in Danger. What Future for St. George's Hall, Liverpool?'. in: Country Life, vol. 177, no. 4577. 9 May 1985. p. 1251

¹⁰⁹ Olley, John. 'St. George's Hall, Liverpool. pt. 2' in: Architects' Journal, vol. 183, no. 26. 25 June 1986. p. 41

¹¹⁰ *ibid.* p. 38

There is no mentioning of any German connection in the article's first part.

cf. Olley, John. 'St. George's Hall, Liverpool. pt. 1' in: Architects' Journal, vol. 183, no. 25. 18 June 1986. pp. 36-57

Munich.¹¹¹ This in effect means that Richardson was wrong to suggest that Elmes saw 'the new buildings designed by Schinkel' and that only the second part of this suggestion can be confirmed, namely that Elmes had first-hand experience of the work of Leo von Klenze. For the latter's works were as much confined to Munich and Bavaria as the former's mainly were to Berlin and its surroundings.

Even so, the correction of this misunderstanding does not completely deny any influence of Schinkel's designs on that of St. George's Hall. As the existence of a Schinkel publication in the vicinity of this building seems to confirm, "[b]oth Cockerell and Elmes were not above learning from their brilliant German contemporary Schinkel."¹¹² As we learn from John Olley, the group of architect friends around Elmes's father "could provide a wealth of insight and experience of the Continent" in order to make up for the young Elmes's lacking experience of a Grand Tour.¹¹³ So, we see that, through publications or through personal report, there are plenty of possibilities of Elmes having become familiar with Schinkel's designs before and during the design phase of St. George's Hall. These circumstances are interesting to point out as they appear to support Richardson's notion that "[a]t this juncture the counter-influence of German classic on the Victorian school was strong,"¹¹⁴ a situation that could have affected Thomson as much as H. L. Elmes. For Thomson himself it will not have been a problem to get hold of plenty of information on St. George's Hall, and even illustrations were around in good quality in his days.¹¹⁵ The lack of any direct link between Elmes and Karl Friedrich Schinkel, however, makes it even more

¹¹¹ The entry on H. L. Elmes in Howard Colvin's Biographical Dictionary of British Architects recommends a consultation of the RIBA Sessional Papers of 1863-64 for detailed information on Elmes's travels. There we are told of the existence of a very instructive letter written by a friend of Elmes, a copy of which was printed in the Sessional Papers. From the writer, a Mr. William Earle, of this letter, who eventually accompanied H. L. Elmes on his trip to the continent, we learn that the trip only took them straight through Belgium and via Frankfurt to Munich. They also saw parts of Austria and south-west Germany, but they definitely did not travel to Berlin or elsewhere in the more northern parts of Germany. The fact that Earle wrote "so much in detail" about all kinds of circumstances connected with the building of St. George's Hall and that he appears to have been well informed on the life of H. L. Elmes, makes it very unlikely that he would have missed out on mentioning another previous trip of Elmes's to Germany.

cf. Earle, William. letter to T.L. Donaldson, chairman of the RIBA, from 9 December 1863. in: RIBA Sessional Papers, vol. XI. 1863-64. pp. xi-xii

reference from: Colvin, Howard. A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects. 1600-1840, (3rd ed.). New Haven / London, 1995

¹¹² Richardson. 1914. p. 108

Being a friend of Elmes's father, James, C.R. Cockerell was familiar with the design processes of St. George's Hall from the very beginning and finally took over responsibility for its completion in 1851 after Harvey's premature death in 1847.

¹¹³ The friends of James Elmes's that Olley names are John Soane, Joseph Gwilt and the aforementioned C.R. Cockerell.

Olley, John. 'St. George's Hall, Liverpool. pt. 1' in: Architects' Journal, vol. 183, no. 25. 18 June 1986. p. 47

¹¹⁴ Richardson. 1934. p. 192

¹¹⁵ The London-based periodical The Builder extensively covered St. George's Hall. Long articles appeared in 1849 (vol.7), 1854 (vol. 12) and 1855 (vol. 13). Only the last of these was illustrated, but only with a plan and an internal view. However, in D.B. Reid's Illustrations of the Theory and Practice of Ventilation (1843), which covered the Liverpool building because of its interesting ventilation technique, we find the frontispiece showing a very impressive view of St. George's Hall, integrated into a whole ensemble of neo-classical buildings that Elmes had originally intended to add to St. George's Hall. In other engravings of 1852, for instance, the striking impression of the colonnades is conveyed in an equally strong manner.

important to analyse and compare his masterpiece to the relevant examples created by his Glaswegian admirer.

In the first chapter, we learned that Thomson is claimed to have drawn inspiration from the world of painting, too, in a way that has occasionally been compared to Schinkel's relation to his own imaginative architectural paintings. In this context, the name of J.W.M. Turner (1755-1851) keeps appearing along with that of Turner's professional colleague John Martin. While, as far as Martin is concerned, there is already a long tradition of bringing him into the Thomson-Schinkel debate, there is no such link involving William Turner. Though in the case of the latter, the evidence of both, his first-hand knowledge on Schinkel buildings and his work's appreciation by Alexander Thomson exist in black and white. Together with paintings by his compatriot David Roberts (1796-1864), Alexander Thomson mentions Turner's as an example of visualising the aspect of horizontality that creates a link to infinity.¹¹⁶ Thomson does not indicate a particular painting of Turner's that he could refer to in his lecture, but it is interesting to see that it is "the mysterious power of horizontal elements" which attracts his attention in them. For this is exactly the aspect that is claimed to have attracted his interest in Schinkel's designs with their long pilastrades.

Of William Turner we do surely know that he saw a lot of Germany, including Berlin and quite a number of Schinkel's then brand-new buildings. As Cecilia Powell remarks, "[b]etween 1817 and 1844 Turner travelled the length and breadth of Germany, from the Baltic to the Alps, from Aachen in the west to Dresden in the east."¹¹⁷ On his northern German tour of 1835 Turner stopped at the Prussian capital on his way from Copenhagen to Dresden. He stayed in Berlin for a couple of days in mid-September that year.¹¹⁸

As "[i]t was always Turner's practice to walk extensively in and around any city he visited" and as he furthermore "could not see any fine building or monument without committing a record to paper", it is not all surprising to find quite a number of Schinkel's Berlin buildings drawn in Turner's sketchbook.¹¹⁹ Repeatedly strolling along Unter den Linden, the main boulevard of the city, Turner "made many fine sketches of the grand buildings that lay -and in most cases still lie- at its heart." Altogether, Turner produced around fifty sketches of views and buildings from all over Berlin, while mainly focusing on the emerging new heart of the city.

¹¹⁶ cf. Thomson, Alexander. 'An Inquiry into the Appropriateness of the Gothic Style for the Proposed Buildings for the University of Glasgow, with Some Remarks upon Mr. Scott's Plans (1866)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. The Lectures of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. Architect. 1817-1875. Glasgow, 1999. p. 72

¹¹⁷ Powell, Cecilia. Turner in Germany. London, 1995. p. 9

¹¹⁸ cf. *ibid.* 51

¹¹⁹ *ibid.* p. 51-52

Considering that this happened in the heyday of Schinkel's building activity in Berlin, it is only logical that we find the fairly new classical buildings extensively covered, such as Schinkel's Neue Wache (1819) [ill. 43], his Schauspielhaus (1821) [ill. 44] and the Museum at the Lustgarten (1830) [ill. 45] as well as his Gothic war monument on the Kreuzberg (1818-21). Although it is generally true that Turner's



ill. 43: J. W. M. Turner: sketch of Schinkel's Neue Wache, Berlin. 1835

aim in producing these sketches seems to have been "to capture complete panoramic environments rather than recording details", the drawings still well document the building's features most interesting to the Thomson case.¹²⁰



ill. 44: J. W. M. Turner: sketch of Schinkel's Schauspielhaus, Berlin. 1835

William Turner also went to see the other of the two German capitals that in his time "were transformed into magnificent new cities, filled with neo-classical architecture."¹²¹ When, in 1833, he travelled along the Danube to Vienna and further on to Venice, he stopped to pause in Munich. From the "many fine buildings and monuments



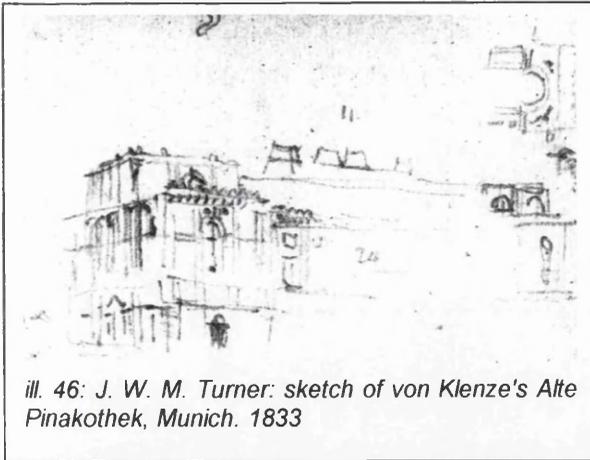
ill. 45: J. W. M. Turner: sketch of Schinkel's Museum at the Lustgarten. Berlin. 1835

in neo-classical style"¹²² that he found there, he chose to produce sketches of quite a lot, including the latest works of the aforementioned Leo von Klenze. These include, for instance, the Glyptothek sculpture gallery with its wide, pedimented Ionic portico, finished in the same year Schinkel's museum was; another example is the slightly later Alte Pinakothek art gallery. Although the latter was still under construction when Turner saw it, he could already sketch its incomplete exterior and thereby record the main feature of this long-stretching Renaissance building, its twenty-four bays of repetitive, arcuated windows separated by a long row of Ionic half columns [ill. 46].

¹²⁰ Note the intriguingly simple but effective visualisation of the bands of windows at the Schauspielhaus

¹²¹ *ibid.* p. 11

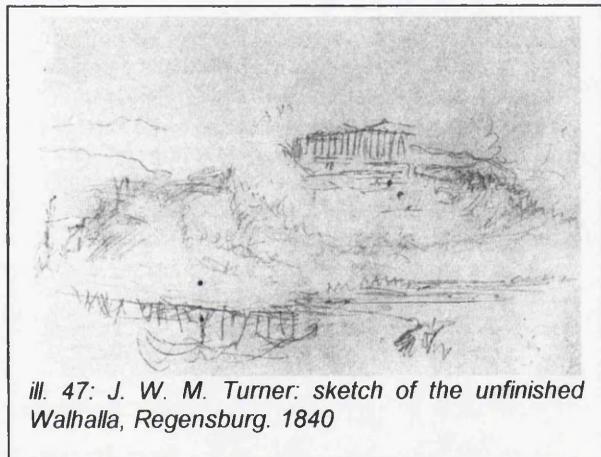
¹²² *ibid.* p. 38



ill. 46: J. W. M. Turner: sketch of von Klenze's Alte Pinakothek, Munich. 1833

record this building. He went to see it in mid-September of 1840 on his way back home from another stay in Venice. Although this building, too, "was still unfinished, (...) he was able to make swift records of all its essential features", the most striking of which is undoubtedly the long Doric colonnade surrounding the whole exterior of this elevated temple [ill. 47].

The sketches of the Walhalla are the only of the ones mentioned here that Turner ever used for further elaboration into a painting. In 1842, he completed the scenic oil painting 'The Opening of the Walhalla', which was first exhibited at the Royal Academy in



ill. 47: J. W. M. Turner: sketch of the unfinished Walhalla, Regensburg. 1840

London a year later. We do not know who ever got to see William Turner's records of German neo-classical architecture, which were so well kept in his sketchbooks. It is, however, not too unlikely that with Turner, as an educated draughtsman, originally belonging to the architectural profession himself, architects got to see them; especially as Turner had partially close contact to important representatives of the English Greek Revival, such as Soane, Cockerell and Nash. It appears to be quite unlikely that Alexander Thomson ever saw any of them. For we do not have any evidence of correspondence between the two, not to mention personal acquaintance. Still, this aspect is worth considering as remains an interesting question if Turner may have absorbed some of his thorough first-hand experience of German neo-classicism in the paintings that Thomson found so mysteriously striking.

In the same lecture in which Thomson refers to Turner, he also mentions someone who knew Turner and who, despite a situation of professional rivalry, "was on friendly

terms"¹²³ with him. Thomson mentions his name in the same context of talking about the effectfulness "of the horizontal element in carrying the mind away into space."¹²⁴ He refers to the "magnificent architectural compositions of the late John Martin" as a means of illustrating his thoughts. This quite frank admiration leaves no doubt that Thomson, to some extent, was familiar with Martin's pictures. We do not know in which form this was the case, i.e. if Thomson ever saw an original of Martin's impressive canvases. There is no record of Thomson personally knowing Martin either, nor any hint at such a relation.

Yet, as Gavin Stamp rightly stresses, there is no need for such evidence in order to assess the importance of Martin's pictorial compositions to the ones actually built by Thomson. For "[t]he means by which Martin's architectural images reached a wide audience were through prints."¹²⁵ Following the successful exhibition of 'Belshazzar's Feast' at the British Institution in 1821, Martin tried to take over the complete production and marketing of engravings of his paintings himself. As we learn from Michael J. Campbell, with the success of critical acclaim of his Paradise Lost engravings in the years of 1825-26, Martin reapprached 'Belshazzar's Feast'. It "was completed and published in 1826 and was an unqualified success."¹²⁶ Considering that Campbell describes this engraving as "immensely profitable", one can imagine how well publicised it had got. Thus, it will not have required much effort for Thomson to get hold of prints of this and other works of Martin.

Taking into account that, according to John Summerson, 'Martin got something from Schinkel'¹²⁷, the question has to be asked how he got it. Other than in Thomson's case, of John Martin we have a biographical account that was produced by a close relative, his son. Of any travels to Germany it does not mention a word, nor does any other source suggest such a thing. Eventually, there is nothing but the art works themselves that would suggest a link to the Prussian painter and architect. However, the fact that, unlike Thomson, Martin lived and worked in London brought him physically much nearer to the centre of Anglo-German relations and to other members of the artistic profession who either had personally experienced Schinkel's architecture or who at least possessed published illustrations of it.

¹²³ Finberg, A.J. The Life of J.M.W. Turner, RA. Oxford, 1939. p. 376

¹²⁴ Thomson, Alexander. 'An Inquiry into the Appropriateness of the Gothic Style for the Proposed Buildings for the University of Glasgow, with Some Remarks upon Mr. Scott's Plans (1866)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. The Lectures of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. Architect. 1817-1875. Glasgow, 1999. p. 72

¹²⁵ Stamp, Gavin. 'A View from the Bay Window'. in: McKinsty; Stamp. 1994. p. 236

¹²⁶ Campbell, Michael J. John Martin - Visionary Printmaker. York, 1992. p. 2

¹²⁷ cf. n48

Returning the focus back onto our main figure, Alexander Thomson, we find similar questions asked about biographical facts from his life answered even more disappointingly. It is widely assumed an undoubted fact that Alexander Thomson never left Britain; that he even rarely travelled, thus, spent most of his life in Glasgow. Because of a lack of evidence for this self-imposed motional reluctance, there have been raised doubts occasionally about it being true. The last example of such doubts in written form has been provided by Hugh Fergusson's Glasgow School of Art: The History, in which the opposite position is taken by saying that "there is no reason why Thomson could not have visited Greece, or why any such visit should have been recorded." Fergusson points out that "there were no passports required in Thomson's day" and that "it was possible to sail from Glasgow to Piraeus in little over a week."¹²⁸ Such suggestion, however, was met with instant and strong rejection by *The Alexander Thomson Society*, who in their Newsletter called it "simply preposterous" to come up with "the idea that Thomson could have secretly sloped off to Greece for a couple of weeks without professional colleagues noticing."¹²⁹

Finally, it cannot be proven if Thomson ever went abroad or not. Yet, it seems more logical to assume that the lack of any record of such undertaking suggests it simply did not happen rather than to suggest its opposite.

As already briefly mentioned earlier, we do, however, know that at a certain point in his life Thomson possessed a copy of a publication on Schinkel's works. From the information on this that we have available the conclusion must be drawn that Thomson possessed the 1857-58 edition of the Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe published by *Ernst und Korn* publishers in Berlin. For the two sources indicating what exactly Thomson could have possessed clearly state that there were two volumes of the Schinkel publication that existed in this context.

Ronald McFadzean, who was first to report on this incident, tells us that "Thomson gifted a set [of the Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe] to the *Glasgow Architectural Society* in 1863"¹³⁰ while Gavin Stamp recently revealed the more exact circumstances of this gift.¹³¹ According to the surviving minutes of the *Glasgow Architectural Society*, on 19 October 1863, "the thanks of the Society were awarded

¹²⁸ Fergusson, Hugh. Glasgow School of Art: The History. Glasgow, 1995
quoted from: 'Impossible'. in: The Alexander Thomson Society Newsletter, no. 14. December 1995. p. 12

¹²⁹ *ibid.*

see also: Stamp, Gavin. 'Introduction'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. The Lectures of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. Architect. 1817-1875. Glasgow, 1999. n30, p. 23

¹³⁰ McFadzean. 1979. p. 218

¹³¹ cf. Stamp, Gavin. 'The Library of the Architectural Section'. in: The Alexander Thomson Society Newsletter, no. 23. February 1999. p. 6

to Messrs A. & G. Thomson (...) for their valuable subscription to the library in the shape of Schinkel's Works in two volumes."¹³²

As the 1857-58 edition of the Sammlung was the only that was published in more than one volume,¹³³ there is little doubt that this is the edition Thomson and his brother and then business partner, George, gave away.

The other source available on this issue is the Catalogue of Books in the Library of the Philosophical Society of Glasgow, to which is added Catalogue of Books in the Library of the Architectural Section of 1883. Some details from the history of the Glasgow Architectural Society are required to understand why behind this lengthy title there is to be found a clue to what kind of Schinkel publication Thomson once had in his possession. For what the Catalogue refers to as 'the Library of the Architectural Section' still consisted largely of what used to be the library of the *Glasgow Architectural Society*, the organisation to which the Thomson brothers gave the Schinkel volumes. The reason for this is that, in 1870, the latter formed a union with the *Philosophical Society of Glasgow* "as one of its Sections".¹³⁴ In the course of this union the G.A.S "brought into the Society a large and valuable collection of books on architecture", which, at the time this record was established, still occupied a separate room.

In the Catalogue, finally, we find the entry "Schinkel, Carl. F. Architektonische Entwürfe. 2nd vol.", which, thus, can be regarded as another proof that the aforementioned two Schinkel volumes existed in the earlier library of the G.A.S.¹³⁵ The fact that this record only gives evidence of the existence of a second volume may well be attributed to the fact that books had gone missing during the thirteen years between the union and the publication of the Catalogue. For, as Stamp shows, by that time there were also other books missing in the collection of which there is proof that they originally belonged to it.¹³⁶ There is, however, good reason to assume that the '2nd vol.' mentioned in the Catalogue is one of the two that Thomson once possessed.

The circumstances that surround the legacy of personal belongings of Alexander Thomson are very unfortunate. While of other architects there exist posthumous sales

¹³² quoted from: *ibid.*

¹³³ cf. list of 'Editions: 1826-1981' of the Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe in: Hazlett, Kenneth S.; O'Malley, Stephen; Rudolph, Christopher (eds.). Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Collection of Architectural Designs. Chicago, 1981. p. 10

¹³⁴ in: the minutes of the Glasgow Architectural Society quoted from: Stamp, Gavin. 'The Library of the Architectural Section'. in: The Alexander Thomson Society Newsletter, no. 23. February 1999. p. 7

¹³⁵ In the Catalogue, we also find listed a copy of "Klenze, L. Von. Architektonische Entwürfe. Stuttgart, 1830." *ibid.* p. 10

catalogues, of Thomson's personal and professional library there is nothing like that. The fact that Thomson was so well familiar with the designs of the ancient world strongly suggests that there will have been a remarkable collection of books in his possession; but at the end of the day we are left with nothing else than mere speculation.

As far as the link to Schinkel is concerned, the situation is not much better. Yet, what we have evidence of is what appears to be the most likely constellation, i.e. that Thomson had some knowledge on Schinkel through publications he had available. There is nothing suggesting that Thomson did not get into contact with any of Schinkel's work quite early in his life; but it may also have been the case that he never saw a single illustration of any Schinkel building before getting hold of the 1857-58 edition of the Sammlung.

¹³⁶ cf. *ibid.* p. 10

Chapter 3

A Comparative Analysis of the Architectural Ideologies of Schinkel and Thomson

If we consider how much of Thomson's personal material is gone, we have to regard the legacy of theoretical texts that survived in number and quite instructive indeed as far as their relevance for the direction of Thomson's architectural ideology is concerned. All of the surviving texts are well-composed essays, not only because Thomson was an eloquent writer but also because these texts without exception were written in order to be read out as lectures. Not all of these lectures survived in full length, some were only recorded in shorter versions. Most of them Thomson gave to the *Glasgow Architectural Society*, whereas the last four he gave as a series to the *The Haldane Academy of Fine Arts* at the *Glasgow School of Art*, hence, known as the Haldane Lectures. Although most of these texts have been accessible in contemporary architectural journals or Glasgow's archives in the past, it has taken until this year for a book to appear on the market that presents all these texts in one.¹³⁷

As far as Schinkel is concerned, the situation is significantly different. Although the sheer mass of written text may finally equal that of Alexander Thomson, the structural and linguistic quality is lacking in most cases as well as the overall coherence of argumentation. This is due to the fact that Schinkel never actually brought any of his writings to a final state that would have allowed their immediate publication; nor do we have any complete manuscripts of principle talks he gave. What we do have, however, is three categories of personal writings, which have continued to be published for roughly a century from twenty years after the architect's death onwards.

First, there are the numerous letters that survived from Schinkel's high activity of intellectual exchange with all kinds of thinkers of his time, and secondly, the accounts of his extensive travels in his travel diaries. Both of these were published quite early by Alfred Freiherr von Wolzogen in four massive volumes from 1862 to 1864. Although quite a lot of Schinkel's distinctive ideas about architecture are already referred to in these, the most instructive and coherent of his writings was not published before 1979. It was only then that someone targeted the massive legacy of manuscripts Schinkel had been drawing up for his life-long aim of publishing an

¹³⁷ This is the aforementioned *The Light of Truth and Beauty*, which was published by *The Alexander Thomson Society* in the summer of 1999. All of the texts are annotated and the book is edited and introduced by Gavin Stamp.

architectural textbook. Despite the fact that this goal was never accomplished, these manuscripts provide an invaluable insight into Schinkel's basic thoughts about architecture as well as into their development over the three decades during which he pursued this project (1810-40).

The part of Schinkel's textbook that appears to be most instructive in a comparison to Thomson's theoretical output is the classicist version of around 1825.¹³⁸ At a time when Schinkel had just completed his clear architectural statements in favour of a trabeated classical style, such as the Neue Wache, Schloß Tegel and the Schauspielhaus, we can also find his theoretical writing promoting this stylistic choice most strongly. However, it is important to consider the earlier versions, too, as they already show the basic attitude of Schinkel's towards elementary points in his theory, such as the role of history in architectural development. Furthermore, it has to be pointed out that Schinkel's attitude towards an uncompromising advocacy of trabeated classical architecture began to be qualified through the late addition of another chapter to this classicist textbook version.

Something Schinkel and Thomson have in common is the motivation for developing their respective architectural ideology as being partially fuelled by a mixture of both, admiration and rejection of the architecture they found surrounding themselves. In Schinkel's own writing, we find carefully expressed what Gottfried Riemann described as Schinkel being "clearly dismayed by the uniformity of recent Classical buildings in provincial towns."¹³⁹ Criticising such an unsatisfying reworking of ancient models, Schinkel states:

"[W]hat in its primitive manifestation in an ancient work produced a highly gratifying effect was often positively disagreeable to me when employed in new works of the present day. It became particularly clear to me that the source of the lack of character and style from which so many new buildings seem to suffer is to be found in such arbitrariness in the use [of past forms]."¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ "Die klassizistische Fassung des architektonischen Lehrbuchs, gegen 1825"

The first editor of Schinkel's textbook manuscripts, Goerd Peschken, introduced this terminology, thus, applying a chronological structure to the different developmental stages of the textbook. Like the classicist version, the others also reflect Schinkel's changing stylistic preferences during his career. Of these other versions the one before the classicist, the romantic version, and the one after it, the technical version, are most strongly linked to the classicist version, hence, are most relevant to our case.

in: Peschken, Goerd. *Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Das architektonische Lehrbuch*. Munich / Berlin, 1979. p. 38

¹³⁹ Although Riemann here refers to Schinkel's encounter of provincial architecture on his trip around England, the same dislike can be assumed for similar buildings Schinkel had to deal with as head of the Prussian *Oberbaudeputation*.

Riemann, Gottfried. 'The 1826 Journey and Its Place in Schinkel's Career'. in: Bindman; Riemann, 1993. p. 8

¹⁴⁰ "...daß was mir aber in seinem primitiven Erscheinen an alten werken eine höchst erfreuliche Wirkung erzeugte, bei seiner neuen Anwendung an Werken unserer Tage oft durchaus widerstand. Besonders ward mir klar, daß in dieser Willkürlichkeit des Gebrauchs der Grund großer Characterlosigkeit und Stylllosigkeit zu finden sey, woran so viele neue Gebäude zu leiden schienen."

in: Peschken. 1979. p. 150

Schinkel strongly opposed the contemporary habit of the archaeological branch of classical revivalists; to add precise copies of architectural details taken from ancient monuments to their own designs, arbitrary to the building's structure and purpose. As early as in 1809, Schinkel speaks of the 'self-humiliation' of 'mean imitations' and calls the creators of such 'copied architecture' "slaves of imitation." Already expressing his evolutionary view on architectural history, we find him regarding such imitation "utterly unworthy of mankind's high destination of eternal progress." He clearly points out that "the same building of the ancients cannot fit for us."¹⁴¹ However Schinkel also left no doubt about his expectations of when a perfect state could be achieved in this development. For, according to him, "the perfection of architecture as a whole may well be precipitated in the endless succession of time." A prime target of his harsh criticism is the use of historical architectural precedents as following a certain trend of fashion. For in Schinkel's opinion, "fashion is an unreasonable idea, a sign of a lack of freedom and education, a sign of barbarity, depravation of the nations, means to an empty luxury."¹⁴² In this polemic statement from his early textbook manuscripts, we find already included the main key words ('reason', 'education', 'freedom' and 'nation') that constantly recur in and dominate his whole architectural ideology. Once again criticising the state of architecture in his time, in which "confusion about or a complete lack of principles as far as style is concerned have gained prevalence", Schinkel formulates the following "main principle" of his architectural thinking:

"Architecture is construction. In architecture, everything must be true, any masking or hiding of the construction is an error. The actual task here is to design every part of the construction beautifully in its character."¹⁴³

Considering that, in the same context, Schinkel says that "to design beautifully the constructionally necessary is the principle of Greek architecture and has to remain it

translation quoted from: Potts, Alex. 'Schinkel's Architectural Theory'. in: Snodin, Michael (ed.). Karl Friedrich Schinkel. A Universal Man. New Haven / London, 1991. p. 47

¹⁴¹ "...wird Sklave der Nachahmung welches der hohen Bestimmung einer ewigen Fortentwicklung des Menschengeschlechts höchst unwürdig ist."

"Dasselbe Gebäude der Alten kann nicht für uns passen."

"...die Vollendung der Baukunst im Ganzen mögte wohl in die unendliche Zeitreihe hinausfallen."

Peschken, 1979. p. 28-30

¹⁴² "Mode ist ein unvernünftiger Einfall, Zeichen von Mangel an Freiheit und Bildung, Zeichen von Barbarei, Verderbung der Nationen, Mittel zu leerem Luxus:"

Peschken, 1979. p. 26

¹⁴³ "...in dem weiten Felde der Architectur unserer Zeit (...), wo die Verworrenheit oder der gänzliche Mangel an Principien in Beziehung auf Styl überhand genommen..."

"...spreche ich folgenden Hauptgrundsatz aus: Architectur ist Construction. In der Architectur muß alles wahr sein, jedes Maskiren, Verstecken der Construction ist ein Fehler. Die eigentliche Aufgabe ist hier jeden Theil der Construction in seinem Charakter schön auszubilden."

for its continuation", may suggest jumping to the conclusion that Schinkel was a kind of functionally honest historicist. Taking a closer look at the quoted passage, however, makes clear that constructional truth is only one important aspect Schinkel demands to be accounted for in architectural design. The other, at least equally important is to express a building's character and to do it beautifully.

Having already touched upon the issue of historical precedents of style, it is interesting to see how Schinkel's appreciation of these changed during his career both, in his designs and in his writing. We also find this strongly interlinked with the way Schinkel recommends how to achieve beauty in architecture. During his romantic phase (1810-15) around the Wars of Liberation, Schinkel clearly favoured and supported the Gothic as an originally German style, which he not only regarded serving the idea of German national unity but also that of "characterising a free idea". At the same time, he criticised the Ancients for drawing on the "pure category of reason", with "the physical aspect" being "more prominent".¹⁴⁴

"[T]he motivation remains hidden" for "Schinkel's turning away from Romanticism towards conventional classicism", and it is regarded as "the deepest caesura in his artistic development, the only break in it."¹⁴⁵ Yet, despite his decided abandonment of the patrial ('vaterländisch') style, he did not abandon his advocacy of ideals such as constructional purity and the freedom of design. What he did was trying to integrate them into a more complex architectural ideology. This, however, still draws on Schinkel's evolutionary kind of view on the development of architecture, which we have already come across earlier.

It is hardly surprising that in a view that is directed at an indefinite point in future,¹⁴⁶ the goal of achieving the creation of perfect architecture is interlinked with transcendental dimensions. In the case of Schinkel's thought, we find the strong demand for architecture to be created out of a thorough understanding of "certain higher laws"¹⁴⁷, so that it will pleasingly integrate into the universal world order governed by these very laws. For Schinkel, only the fulfilment of this prerequisite would allow man to create architectural beauty, as to him "beauty of form is the inner, visualised reason of nature."¹⁴⁸ The understanding of nature that stands behind this

Peschken, 1979. p. 115

¹⁴⁴ Peschken, 1979. p. 36

¹⁴⁵ "...ihre Motive sind verdeckt. (...) ...ist Schinkel's Wendung von der Romantik zum konventionellen Klassizismus der tiefste Einschnitt in seiner künstlerischen Entwicklung gewesen, der einzige Bruch darin."

Peschken, Goerd. 'Die klassizistische Fassung des architektonischen Lehrbuchs, gegen 1825'. in: Peschken, 1979. p. 38

¹⁴⁶ cf. n128

¹⁴⁷ "Architectonische Formen bedingt (...) durch gewisse höhere Gesetze."

Peschken, 1979. p. 46

¹⁴⁸ "...die Schönheit der Form ist die innere, sichtbar gewordene Vernunft der Natur."

approach is not meant to be one that takes nature as a formal model architecture should be directly copied from. It rather sees the elemental natural laws to underlie the whole existence of the universe, and it demands these elemental laws to be studied and taught in order to apply them to a general tectonic order, which itself is a derivative of these very laws. On the whole, Schinkel's ideal aims at regaining a totality of human existence that appears to have been lost, at achieving a harmonious existence of men within a world that, through art in general, tries to capture a sensation of this ideal higher state of being.

This train of thought is well expressed in a reflection of Schinkel's, which clearly demonstrates the mood of contemporary idealist thinking among German classicists:

"What is the vocation of art? The various mechanical, chemical, organic forces of nature are intimately connected not only among themselves but also with the spontaneous forces that constitute the realm of freedom; and to that extent they shape totality. Every human being without exception has a more or less clear premonition of this totality. The compulsion aroused by this totality to investigate the interrelationships of a given number of phenomena has produced science; the compulsion aroused by the same premonition to contemplate in context as large a group of phenomena as possible has produced art. Therefore, the vocation of art is a representation of its object in a manner that makes evident as many of its connections as possible."¹⁴⁹

The questions still remaining are first, which precisely are the 'higher laws' architecture has to abide in order to represent beauty and secondly, which historical precedent provides a qualitatively sufficient example to benefit from? Answering the first of these questions makes clear why the answer to the second cannot be different to the one Schinkel gives. As "[f]or Schinkel, the inherent equilibrium and stillness (*Ruhe*) of classical architecture were preconditions for the contemplation of beauty",¹⁵⁰ one should not be surprised to find Schinkel most strongly favouring the simple tectonics of pure Greek trabeation. In his writing Schinkel leaves no doubt about 'Ruhe' being the main precondition of beautiful architecture, whereas the meaning of the term itself spans from motionless stillness to easing repose:

"Repose is the main condition of beauty. (...) With its urgent business of the individual's existence the modern time does not get to the state of reflection and indulges in anxious hustle and bustle. Architecture in the first place demands repose. (...) The most reposeful is the construction of the column and the architrave."¹⁵¹

Zadow. p. 135

¹⁴⁹ in: Wolzogen, Alfred Freiherr von (ed.). Aus Schinkel's Nachlaß: Reisetagebücher, Briefe und Aphorismen..., vol. II. Berlin, 1862-64. p. 207

translation from: Bergdoll, Barry. Karl Friedrich Schinkel. An Architecture for Prussia. New York, 1994. p. 86

¹⁵⁰ Bergdoll, 1994. p. 58

¹⁵¹ "Ruhe Hauptbedingung zum Schönen. (...) Die moderne Zeit kommt bei den dringenden Geschäften für die Existenz des Individuums nicht zur Reflexion und geht in geängstigtem Treiben auf. - Die Baukunst fordert vor allem Ruhe. (...) Das

Pointing out in the following which constructions do not convey this sense of repose clearly narrows Schinkel's focus to classical architecture, as for him "the arch already introduces disturbance", although he admits that it "finally leads back to repose", whereas "the pointed arch, making the working forces visible (...), contains utter unrest." Denying the same qualities to the characteristic constructions of Gothic architecture as he did to the trabeated ones, it is only logical that Schinkel sees ancient Greece as a time "acknowledged for its harmonious development" and thus, as "a reference point and point of departure, from which an artistic culture of consequence could be continued."¹⁵²

Although Schinkel kept regarding classical Greece as a cultural point of reference in general, towards the end of his classicist phase, he clearly abandoned the exclusiveness with which he advocated pure Greek trabeation. In his 'Added chapter: Combination of Arcuated and Trabeated Construction' at the end of the classicist textbook version, Schinkel unmistakably states that "horizontal architraves, carried by columns, can be integrated into the same building as arcuated constructions."¹⁵³ This, stylistically speaking, rather synthetic approach, foreshadows Schinkel's intention of around 1830 "to commence on a more technological textbook, in which questions of construction and material should be dealt with independently of an adherence to a certain architectural style."¹⁵⁴ The return to arcuated constructions, thus, does not mean rejecting trabeation but rather qualifying its exclusive use and allowing a constructionally acceptable blend of both.

During his classicist phase, however, aesthetic concerns undoubtedly overrode constructional possibilities, and the expression of repose was one of the main tasks to be fulfilled by a building. In a passage dealing with the physical cause of repose/stillness more explicitly, Schinkel also touches upon a psychological dimension of perceiving this repose, which in its result appears to be quite influential on Schinkel's actual manner of design.

ruhigste ist der Bau der Säule u Architrav. (...) Der Halbkreisbogen bringt schon Beunruhigung hinein, führt aber zur Ruhe zurück. Der Spitzbogen behält, weil er die streitenden Kräfte sichtbar macht (...), völlige Unruhe."

Peschken, 1979. p. 70-71

¹⁵² "...in Beziehung harmonischer Entwicklung anerkannten Vorzeit (Griechenland) aufzusuchen und einen Anhalts- oder Anfangspunkt wiederzufinden, an dem ein consequentes Kunstleben anzuknüpfen ist."

Peschken, 1979. p. 58

¹⁵³ "Horizontale Architraven von Säulen unterstützt können mit Bogenstellungen in ein u demselben Gebäude angebracht werden..."

Peschken. 1979. p. 81

¹⁵⁴ "... ein mehr technologisches Lehrbuch zu beginnen, in dem Fragen der Konstruktion und des Materials unabhängig von einer Bindung an einen bestimmten Baustil behandelt werden sollten."

"Only where, following the laws of gravity in the simplest manner, a movement is obstructed by a mass that is founded on the mass of the whole globe (...), we feel complete repose. Wherever forces appear that work into other directions (e.g. pressure to the sides) and where the obstructing force has to be created artificially by masses which in the direction of their working do not have the full support of the globe's mass, but which border on air and can therefore be pushed out into the latter if these masses are not powerful enough; then for our imagination there will always remain a certain amount of action, movement and so on, no complete repose. This is the difference between vaults and trabeated constructions."¹⁵⁵

What Schinkel introduces here, is what in English Arts and Crafts architecture later came to be known as the super-constructural requirement of visual stability, demanded by people like Philip Webb. In Schinkel's view, an architectural construction not only has to *be* safe, but it also has to *look* safe, so that a brief view cast onto it would serve the perception of actual stability without knowing the exact statics, i.e. the physical proof of its stability. Once again dismissing the pointed arch as potentially useful but "not beautiful", Schinkel explains this psychological necessity for perceptual manipulation:

"There has to be a certain excess of security in the mass of a building so that no anxious characterisation of individual parts is necessary; but all this has to be moderate in order to be included into the realm of beauty."¹⁵⁶

Although Schinkel in general was a keen promoter of functionalism and constructional truth, here he undoubtedly asks for a more of constructional stability even if physically not required. In addition to simply meeting the constructional requirements for keeping a construction up, that, the design of a building should display reposeful stability in a rather symbolical manner. This symbolic stability, however, has to blend in satisfyingly with the symbolic representation of a building's character¹⁵⁷. Altogether, this constitutes the architect's freedom over and above utilitarian needs, which Schinkel regarded so vital to the creation of architectural beauty. Linking up his architectural philosophy with the realm of ethics he wrote:

Forssmann. 1981. p. 211

¹⁵⁵ "Nur da wo nach dem auf die einfachste Weise wirkenden Gesetze der Schwere eine Bewegung gehemmt wird durch eine Masse die auf die Masse des ganzen Erdballs gründet (...), ist unserm Gefühl nach vollkommene Ruhe. Überall wo andre Richtungen wirkender Kraft z. B.: der Seitendruck, eintreten und die hemmende Kraft künstlich erzeugt werden muß durch Massen die eben in dieser Richtung nicht die ganze Erdmasse zur Hülfe haben sondern an die Luft grenzen u gegen diese hinausgepreßt werden können, wenn sie nicht mächtig genug sind, da bleibt immer für unsre Vorstellungsart eine gewisse Handlung Bewegung pp keine vollkommene Ruhe. Hierin liegt der Unterschied zwischen Gewölb u geradgedeckten Constructionen."

Peschken, 1979. p. 59

¹⁵⁶ "Es muß ein gewisses Übermaß der Sicherheit da seyn in der Masse eines Bauwerks, damit ein zu ängstliches Characterisieren der einzelnen ConstructionsTheile nicht nöthig ist, sondern all dies muß gemäßigt seyn um ins Reich des Schönen aufgenommen werden zu können."

Peschken, 1979. p. 71

¹⁵⁷ see: note 5

"Freedom is to be found at the top of all ethical feelings: to submit oneself freely to a higher law on the basis of reason or poetic feeling is something sublime and beautiful."

The link to ethics finally leads us to the ultimate goal of all of Schinkel's philosophy of art and architecture, the "flourishing of a new mode of behaviour in the world"¹⁵⁸, based on a moral inspired by the ancient Greeks and brought into his contemporary world by art and architecture respectively. For from his first writings onward Schinkel had been convinced that "beautiful art takes its effect back onto the moral" and that "without beautiful art in every relation of existence he [man] remains a lower creature, devoid of a higher and happier existence."¹⁵⁹

As we saw at the beginning, Schinkel was clearly opposed to a fashionable copying of the ancient Greek precedent of artistic and cultural life. For him, as Alex Potts puts it, "[t]he point was not to copy the particular forms of Greek art, but to fashion a modern equivalent to the Greek achievement."¹⁶⁰ For once again, freedom was the vital issue, as Schinkel also regarded freedom over the concrete historical precedent as vital to a satisfying creation. He did clearly favour taking the classical Greek ideal as something to refer to, a period in which harmony with the higher laws of the universe had been achieved; but equally clearly he regarded it as something to depart from, i.e. to come closer to his own time without losing the guiding inspiration of the classical ideal.

Instead of adoption he demanded adaptation, the latter requiring the addition of something new to an already existing concept. Schinkel himself put it as follows: "[T]he only true historical act is one that introduces in some way an extra, a new element into the world, from which a new history is produced and hatched forth." Only when producing this 'extra', i.e. taking evolution another step forward men can gradually get closer to Schinkel's overall goal, "the ennoblement of all human relationships"¹⁶¹.

Applied to Schinkel's contemporary social order, this goal ought to be approached from two sides. On the one hand, the educated artists of the state were to produce the beauty in art and architecture that would in turn effect the elevation of the people's

¹⁵⁸ "...Blüte einer neuen Handlungsweise der Welt..."

Peschken, 1979. p. 71

¹⁵⁹ "Die schöne Kunst wirkt zurück auf das Moralische. (...) Ohne schöne Kunst in jedem Lebensverhältniß bleibt er ein niedriges Wesen u entbehrt einer höheren u glücklichem Existenz."

Peschken, 1979. p. 27

¹⁶⁰ Potts, Alex. 'Schinkel's Architectural Theory'. in: Snodin, Michael (ed.). Karl Friedrich Schinkel. A Universal Man. New Haven / London, 1991. p. 51

¹⁶¹ quoted from: Bergdoll, Barry; Lipstadt, Hélène. 'Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Architecture as Alchemy'. in: Progressive Architecture, vol. 62, no. 10. October 1981. p. 73

mind. On the other hand, however, Schinkel saw the task lying in the hands of the state, too; namely to support and foster such possibilities wherever it could.

"Only comprehension of the nature of things and of the ideals truly elevate and produce a higher state of being, which to foster is the true duty and must be the principle of the educated state. For, at the same time, from this grows higher felicity."¹⁶²

So the elevation of the public mind not only had to be caused by symbolic representation of the higher laws of the universe, but the actual understanding of these had to be effected among as many people as possible. As a result, there would be a next generation of knowledgeable, who then could create their bit of an extra on the general way towards the ideal.

With this turning to matters of state and education ('Bildung' is the keyword in this context) we find Schinkel strongly linked to the efforts of many of his contemporary intellectuals, who, often being in close contact with Schinkel, concentrated their efforts on achieving the same classical idea in different disciplines, such as education, literature and fine arts. That Schinkel himself, however, also managed to contribute to the whole movement through theoretical writing and not only through his built work, is an extraordinary achievement for someone who in the first place was fully occupied by his job as Prussian state architect. One can only agree, that "his writing on architecture can be seen as part of this larger rethinking of the relation between aesthetics and history, and its problematising of the role of the antique as an exemplary model for modern artistic practice."¹⁶³

As already mentioned at the beginning, one of the main driving forces behind the development of Alexander Thomson's ideology about architecture was his strong dissatisfaction with recent trends in Scottish and British Architecture at the time he entered the profession. While, like Schinkel, he showed little regard for the archaeologist architecture of the Greek Revival, his passionate dislike was reserved for the medieval Gothic and its nineteenth-century revival.

Thomson obviously shared Schinkel's dismissal of anything to do with fashion. In his 1869 lecture on the 'Obstacles and Aids to Architectural Progress' Thomson said that "[f]ashion is another serious hindrance to progress, Its demands are imperative,

¹⁶² "Die Einsicht in die Natur der Dinge u die Ideale erheben erst wahrhaft und erzeugen einen höheren Zustand, weil dadurch höheres Glück zugleich erwächst. Dies muß Princip des gebildeten Staats seyn."
Peschken, 1979. p. 27

¹⁶³ Potts, 1991. p. 47

and quite independent of, and unassailable by reason."¹⁶⁴ With criticising architecture that lacks a reasonable foundation Thomson referred to Greek Revivalist copying as well as to reviving the Gothic, which he regarded a style "essentially romantic."¹⁶⁵ On the occasion of the University of Glasgow having chosen George Gilbert Scott's Gothic design for their new buildings, Alexander Thomson dedicated a whole lecture to his criticism of the Gothic while pointing out the superiority of the classical Greek. In this lecture, which Nikolaus Pevsner regarded as "the most comprehensive contribution to the battle of the Styles"¹⁶⁶, Thomson not only explicitly laid out the weaknesses and disadvantages of the Gothic but also explained all important aspects of his personal ideology of architecture¹⁶⁷.

In contrast to Schinkel, Thomson completely denied the Middle Ages to have made any useful contribution to the evolution of man. Quite polemically he said that "we might be chronicling events and heading our letters with the figures 866 instead of 1866, and be a thousand years nearer the truth."¹⁶⁸ Mentioning truth, Thomson draws attention to one of the central ideas underlying both, his criticism and his architectural vision. Unmistakably criticising other fellow architects Thomson left no doubt about his point of view on this issue:

"Some people imagine that the rules of architecture are arbitrary, that they have been invented by certain pedantic people in old times, and that it becomes men of an independent turn of mind to set them at nought; but the fact is that the laws which govern the universe, whether aesthetical or physical, are the same which govern architecture. We do not contrive rules; we discover laws. There is such thing as architectural truth."¹⁶⁹

Very much like his Prussian counterpart, Alexander Thomson believed in the existence of universal laws of eternal validity, which have existed in the world from the very beginning. He widely shared Schinkel's view of a gradual development of architecture towards its perfection by discovering and increasingly obeying the rules that govern architecture as well as the rest of the universe. Step by step, according to

¹⁶⁴ Thomson, Alexander. 'Obstacles and Aids to Architectural Progress (1869)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. Glasgow, 1999. p. 93

¹⁶⁵ Thomson, Alexander. 'An inquiry into the appropriateness of the Gothic style for the proposed buildings for the University of Glasgow, with some remarks upon Mr. Scott's plans (1866)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. Glasgow, 1999. p. 69

¹⁶⁶ Pevsner, Nikolaus. Some Architectural Writers of the Nineteenth Century. Oxford, 1972. p. 188

¹⁶⁷ As far as a seeming contradiction to Thomson's early Gothic villa designs is concerned, one has to take in account that these theoretical writings were produced at a considerably later stage of his career when Thomson's architectural attitude had become much more consolidated.

¹⁶⁸ Thomson, Alexander. 'An inquiry into the appropriateness of the Gothic style for the proposed buildings for the University of Glasgow, with some remarks upon Mr. Scott's plans (1866)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. Glasgow, 1999. p. 65

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.* p.68

Thomson, a process of continued purification would bring a construction that was initially meant "to embody an idea in form," closer to perfection until all utilitarian and proportional problems would have been solved, so it could become "for all time a typical form - a perfectly realised idea."

For Thomson, this development had begun "with the dawn of the human intellect" and via the high cultures of Central America, India, Syria and Egypt already reached its apex in the architecture of the ancient Greek, "on the Acropolis of Athens."¹⁷⁰ Although Schinkel saw the Greeks only having reached a first climax, rather than having achieved ultimate harmony with the universe, both saw in the classical Greek culture the 'reference point' that their respective period should use for general orientation.¹⁷¹ Thomson thought that "certainly no people, either before or since, have achieved such a splendid series of triumphs in every department of human effort (...); and he continues that "[t]he Greeks aimed at perfection, and all they did bears evidence of the earnestness and ability with which they sought to realise their idea."¹⁷²

In his lecture on 'Greek Architecture', Thomson refers to a question brought up by the architectural writer James Fergusson (1808-1886), namely that of the possibility of the Greeks having copied the so-called proto-Doric architecture of the Egyptians. The reason why Thomson takes up this historiographical controversy is that he uses it to illustrate how a culture can generally adopt the ideals of a preceding one and apply these to their contemporary tasks without "merely copying what has already been done." For that would never create what the Greeks achieved, excellence and -very close to Schinkel's view of the 'historical deed'- originality. When Thomson describes how the Greeks might have absorbed any earlier knowledge of the Egyptians, he does not have to literally refer to his contemporary situation in order to make clear that he recommends his profession to follow the same line.

"The more probable course for them [the Greeks] to pursue would be to carefully observe the operation and development of those laws by which certain results were produced, and, when they had thoroughly comprehended them, to direct their efforts to a still higher reach of attainment."¹⁷³

In a manner that definitely shows the influence of Alexander Thomson's Presbyterian background on his ideology, in an earlier lecture, he describes the motivation of the

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁷¹ A more detailed look at the implications of the difference in their respective attitudes on the role of history in the development of architecture will be taken at the end of this chapter.

¹⁷² Thomson, Alexander. 'The Haldane Lectures. No. III. Greek Architecture (1874)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. Glasgow, 1999. p. 142-43

demanding quest for unveiling the truth in architecture as a kind of divine task given by God to his creation:

"[W]e must feel that the Creator has not clothed with beauty the world which he has given us for a habitation, or filled the Heavens over our heads with glory, without also imposing on us the duty of pondering over these things and laying them to heart."¹⁷⁴

The leading role in this process Thomson attributed to the artist. For he should accept the duty "to separate what is beautiful and rare from the crude and common elements" in order "to restore to pristine purity of form and colour that which has become obscured by external influences."¹⁷⁵ The cognitive-empirical mechanism Thomson saw behind the processing of the universal laws and their resultative application to art and architecture, i.e. the production of beauty once again displays how strongly his thinking was embedded in religious imagery. "The aesthetic faculty appears to serve three purposes", Thomson begins to explain, "the perceptive, the selective, and the creative."¹⁷⁶

Of these three human endowments the first, the perceptive, would act "as a sort of appetite which recognises and enjoys the beautiful in a general and almost passive way", i.e. the observing mind could recognise beauty without coherently comprehending the circumstances of its existence. The second faculty, the selective, would act "like a palate or conscience, distinguishing and discriminating between what is truly and purely beautiful from what is not so", necessitating a comprehensive processing of the perceived at least to a certain degree. The most important step, however, the creative, would lead man beyond empirically experiencing the existing as this would truly require his imagination. To create something that has not been there before, something original, in Thomson's view elevates man to an almost divine level. It makes him "a fellow-worker with God, (...) a co-Creator."¹⁷⁷

Here, Alexander Thomson also points out which role nature plays in this creative process. For according to him, the creation of architecture as well as music is proving wrong the attitude "that man can never get beyond his experience" as "[t]here is nothing in Nature like either." Again, very close to the attitude of Schinkel, Thomson denied architecture the status of a model to be copied directly, but rather of a concept in which to observe and from which to learn the laws of the universe, the Creator.

¹⁷³ *ibid.* p. 143

¹⁷⁴ Thomson, Alexander. 'The Haldane Lectures. Art and Architecture: A Course of Four Lectures. No. I. Introductory (1874)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). *The Light of Truth and Beauty*. Glasgow, 1999. p. 116

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.* p. 115-16

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.* p. 122

¹⁷⁷ *ibid.* p. 123

Thomson's famous quotation "Architecture in its highest forms does not bear the least resemblance to anything in nature" must not be misunderstood; especially as the following sentence already makes clear that Thomson does not dismiss nature per se but underline the peculiarity of its artificial counterpart. It says that "it [architecture] is peculiarly and exclusively a human work."¹⁷⁸ In an earlier talk he described the model role of nature by demanding the task for the architect to be set "to search the whole world of nature and art for modes of expression", not in order to "quote them entire and unchanged" but to learn "from them something of the nature and meaning of lines, of forms, of proportion, of light and shade, and of colour."¹⁷⁹

Taking all this into consideration, we cannot be too surprised to find Thomson preferring the typical features of Greek Architecture over those of the Gothic as only the former were constructed following the higher laws of architecture. While "the principle of the arch" finds his strong distaste because it displays its "violent conflict of forces", the "simple unsophisticated stone lintel contains every element of strength." The effect that these two structures convey upon their observer, to Thomson, makes the big difference as he only sees the trabeated structure incorporating the qualities of "beauty of form, delicacy of manipulation, and repose in composition"¹⁸⁰; yet another time the qualities Karl Friedrich Schinkel demanded from good architecture predominantly.

The demand of 'delicacy of manipulation' and the person of Schinkel bring us to the last important point in Thomson's ideology. While Schinkel wanted a building to 'deceive' in order to symbolise an excessive stability, Thomson in the first place wanted structural manipulation to serve his aim of linking architecture with a sense of eternity. The architecture that displayed this best was for him that of ancient Egypt. According to Thomson, "striving after the permanent seems to be the soul of Egyptian art." The Egyptians had made the "endeavour to realise the idea of eternity."¹⁸¹ In their architecture he admired "the splendour of its colonnades of massive columns" sophisticatedly employing the effect of "the principle of repetition."¹⁸² This "power of

¹⁷⁸ Thomson, Alexander. 'How is it that there is no modern style of architecture? (1871)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. Glasgow, 1999. p. 101

¹⁷⁹ Thomson, Alexander. 'The Mission of The Glasgow Architectural Society (1861)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. Glasgow, 1999. p. 50

¹⁸⁰ Thomson, Alexander. 'An inquiry into the appropriateness of the Gothic style for the proposed buildings for the University of Glasgow, with some remarks upon Mr. Scott's plans (1866)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. Glasgow, 1999. p. 72

¹⁸¹ Thomson, Alexander. 'The Haldane Lectures. No. II. The Development of Architecture: - The Spirit of the Egyptian Style (1874)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. Glasgow, 1999. p. 131

¹⁸² *ibid.* p. 136

the horizontal element", for Thomson, was supposed to serve the purpose of "carrying the mind away into space, and into speculations upon infinity."¹⁸³

Once more, Thomson's motivation seems to have stronger bonds with the realm of religion than Schinkel's does. Yet, the idea of finding a superior truth in a relatively undefined transcendental concept, in order to create an architecture that illustrates its state of harmony with this truth, is essentially identical.

A significant difference of attitude, however, has already been touched upon in this chapter. This is the view on development in architectural history and its implications as to the general achievability of the overall goal of both architects.

The differences in the respective views need pointing out more clearly in order to understand the extent to which Schinkel's and Thomson's architecture displays a spiritual proximity and why Schinkel's later buildings appear to be rather distant from Thomson's.

We have seen that both architects shared a kind of evolutionary view of architectural progress, during which they believed architecture to have undergone a constant 'purification' of forms. For Thomson, this finally led to the 'perfectly realised idea.' In his view, this process was at work during the development of architecture in the ancient world, "beginning with the dawn of human intellect," while he saw its perfection realised in ancient Greece.¹⁸⁴

What makes Thomson's view different from Schinkel's is that Thomson regarded a state of perfection already reached by the ancient Greeks, while Schinkel thought that the achievement of such a goal 'may well be precipitated by the endless succession of time.' The Greeks, in his view, had only reached a temporary climax. Very much like in the evolution of mankind, perfection to him was a guiding idea rather than a realistic goal.

As we already learned earlier, to neither of the two choosing classical Greece as a 'point of reference' would have justified "to cling to the ancient and repeat it". For, to Schinkel, through such acting "history would be ruined,"¹⁸⁵ and it was the creation of something new he regarded a necessity for any historical progress. In his criticism of his contemporaries, we find Thomson disqualifying "all imitations as compared with any true embodiment of living thought" as "utterly worth less and heart contracting."

¹⁸³ Thomson, Alexander. 'An inquiry into the appropriateness of the Gothic style for the proposed buildings for the University of Glasgow, with some remarks upon Mr. Scott's plans (1866)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). *The Light of Truth and Beauty*. Glasgow, 1999. p. 72

¹⁸⁴ *ibid.* p. 68

¹⁸⁵ "Historisch ist nicht das Alte allein festzuhalten oder zu wiederholen, dadurch würde die Historie zu Grunde gehen..." Peschken. 1979. p. 71

His resulting demand is to "value the suggestions of progress", which he saw "leading upwards into the light of the future."¹⁸⁶

For both, the consequence was an adaptation of classical architecture to contemporary needs out of a thorough understanding of its underlying principles. Although this was far from the copyist adoption of ready-made designs, it determined the stylistic choice. This, however, was enlarged in its variety in the later stages of Schinkel's career, while Thomson never made any concessions to other styles after he had found his personal interpretation of classical trabeation. The reasons for this difference can be found in the different attitudes quoted above. Thomson attributed all perfect qualities to the columnar principle which he regarded the result of a "perfect development". The column, to him, was made as beautiful as the imagination of man can conceive (...) - a form of ideal perfection."¹⁸⁷ Thus it is only logical that Thomson tried to achieve his architectural goal by creating designs that skilfully integrated and exploited this perfect principle of construction.

As Schinkel, however, saw in Greek architecture full perfection not yet realised anyway, his conclusive choice did not have to be such an ultimate one as Thomson's. Increasingly willing to compromise, Schinkel developed the idea of "the usefulness of all available results of architectural history", that would help "to demonstrate the character of process in architectural development."¹⁸⁸ This, for instance, allowed Schinkel the reintegration of the arch as a constructional part into his designs towards the end of his career.

Although Thomson, of course, did not stick to a purely Greek vocabulary in his designs either, he appears to have constantly tried to avoid a similar concession. His vocabulary enclosed forms from a wide number of different styles of ancient architecture, but the closest he ever got to the use of the arch after he had abandoned it early in his career was in the domes he put on top of some towers.¹⁸⁹

Otherwise, his architecture time and again is a model example of how to translate non-Grecian features into a trabeated system.

¹⁸⁶ Thomson, Alexander. 'Obstacles and Aids to Architectural Progress. (1869)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. Glasgow, 1999. p. 98

¹⁸⁷ Thomson, Alexander. 'The Haldane Lectures. No. IV. Roman Architecture. (1874)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. Glasgow, 1999. p. 171

¹⁸⁸ "... erblickte er eine günstige Gelegenheit, den Prozeßcharakter der Architektur zu verdeutlichen."
Dolgener, Dieter. 'Karl Friedrich Schinkel's Bemühungen um eine Synthese von Klassizismus und Romantik, von antiker und mittelalterlicher Bauform'. in: Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Ernst-Moritz-Armdt Universität Greifswald, vol. 31, no. 2-3. 1981. p. 17

¹⁸⁹ The relevant buildings to be referred to here would be Thomson's St. Vincent Street Church and Queen's Park Church as well as his design for the Albert Memorial in London. The vertical slots penetrating these dome features, however, make them convey more of a trabeated impression than an arcuated one. The domes seem to consist of bend columns, which refer to the ring of columns below the domes.

Chapter 4

A Comparative Analysis of Thomson's and Schinkel's Relevant Buildings

Graham Law has given a very brief but precise description of one of the main features in Thomson's architecture to be continually linked to Schinkel: "the top floor windows form a continuous colonnade of stone posts."¹⁹⁰ In this particular case as well as in all subsequent ones, the Thomson building that is referred to in this context is the Caledonia Road Church (1856-57). As we could also see in the same chapter, Law regarded this architectural feature "reminiscent of Schinkel and the Greek Revival in Germany", while leaving the indication of a concrete German example of reference to others. The one subsequently evolving as the German building referred to most was Schinkel's Schauspielhaus (1818-21) in Berlin.

The reason that, beside a varying number of other buildings by both architects, these two buildings are named most frequently is probably due to their exposed position in the oeuvre of the respective architects, both being an early masterpiece in the career of their creators. Yet, as far as the Schauspielhaus is concerned, it actually is the best building of Schinkel's when it comes to the application of the feature at issue, the colonnade of stone posts. For the main feature of its general exterior design is that "[t]he wall is dissolved in a grid-like way and forms a system of vertical square columns and horizontal trabeation."¹⁹¹

The plain Tuscan square column dominates the façades all around the building, with the exception of the main façade where, crowning the flight of steps, an Ionic portico attracts the main attention. As far as the use of these square columns is concerned, the whole volume of the building can be divided into two parts. The lower one is defined by the two-storey pilasters that cover the corners all around this lower part of the building. With little exception all wall surfaces of these two stories are penetrated by repetitive window openings which are created by the use of varyingly long rows of square columns.¹⁹² An architrave that runs around the whole building cuts the fenestrated lower storeys in two with the a row each of identical square

¹⁹⁰ Law, Graham. 'Greek Thomson'. in: *The Architectural Review*, vol. 114. May 1954. p. 313

The newspaper article was fittingly entitled 'Colonnades and Temples: Greek Thomson's Style'.

Law, Graham. 'Colonnades and Temples: Greek Thomson's Style'. in: *Glasgow Herald*. 8 June 1954

¹⁹¹ "Die Wand ist gerüsthafte aufgelöst und bildet ein System von vertikalen Pfosten und horizontalem Gebälk."

Dolgener, Dieter. *Klassizismus*. Leipzig, 1991. p. 153

¹⁹² To a small extent on the entrance façade and to a greater on the rear one, Schinkel used blind windows where lighting was not intended in order to keep the repetitive rhythm.

columns above and below it. The only part of the building where the architrave's effect of structuring separation is superseded is on the pedimented side elevations, where two-storey Giant pilasters cut across the architrave and unite the two storeys below the pediment. Here, we also find the regular rhythm of fenestration abandoned in favour of three larger window openings between the four Giant pilasters, but still all of them flanked by the same kind of square columns. A quite similar structure is applied to the wall surface behind the pentastyle portico, with four Giant pilasters cutting across the architrave and enlarged window spaces between them.

The part of the building, however, where the same sort of square columns produce the most interesting effect of horizontality is the one storey of the main block that



ill. 48: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: south-west view of the Schauspielhaus's top storey, Berlin. 1821

sticks out of the whole building's mass, pedimented to the front and the rear. Its unifying character is stressed by a continuous band of square columns that runs around all four sides of this elevated part, only interrupted by massive corners of masonry. Seen from a similar angle as in Schinkel's Sammlung, through

these colonnades the top storey of the Schauspielhaus leaves a strong impression of horizontality in two different ways [ill. 48]. The colonnade to the front complements the horizontal effect created by the low-pitched pedimented gable above. A strong support is the alternation of bright stone posts and dark recessed windows, skilfully exploiting the potential of juxtaposing light and shadow. The band running along the sides, however, is the one that, especially from this angle, demonstrates the potential of repetitive rows of columns to create a strong feeling of depth. While the starting point of this colonnade is clearly visible, its end is left to the spectator's imagination. Due to the principle of exact repetition, this end, however, can easily be imagined far deeper in the distance than the actual, concealed one is to be found on walking around the building.



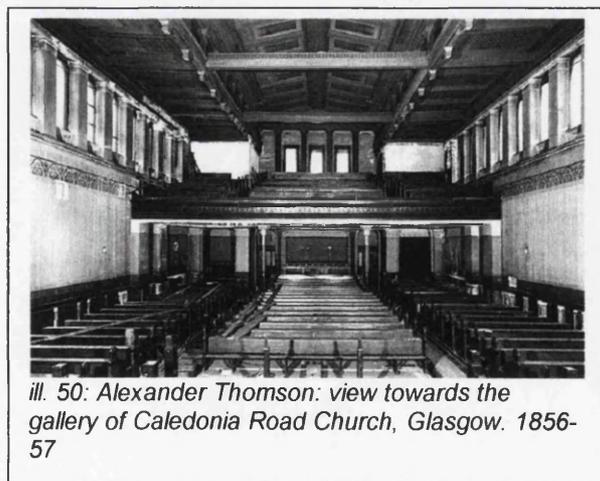
ill. 49: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: south-west view of the Schauspielhaus's top storey, Berlin. 1821

An indication that Schinkel was intentionally striving for this effect is the fact that, on the sides, he alternately filled the gaps between the columns with real windows and blind windows. He obviously did not want as much light inside the building as filling each gap with a window would have created, but he did not want to abandon the system of dissolving the wall mass into a rhythm of pillar and hole [ill. 49] . Had he only punched holes into the wall where the windows are, the amount of plane masonry would have outweighed that of the recessed openings, and the overall effect of the wall would have been more planar and limited within boundaries.

What is particularly interesting about this feature of the Schauspielhaus as far as Alexander Thomson is concerned, is the way it appears in the image of the building that Thomson is most likely to have known, if he did at all: the plates in the Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe. Of the six plates that appeared in the second individual volume of this publication in 1821 three show the exterior, and all three strongly convey the sense of depth and horizontality that the colonnades create. While the perspectives support the impression of the columns soaring away into the depth of space, the elevational view of the main façade displays a broad horizontality even stronger than the original by fusing the all columns to the front into one two-dimensional plane. In both cases, the effect is helped by the monochromatic appearance of the engraving causing the masonry's lack of distinctness from the recessed openings.

Ronald McFadzean's juxtaposition of the former engraving from Schinkel's Sammlung and a photograph of the Caledonia Road Church very well illustrates the relationship between the two buildings that has been established time and time again.

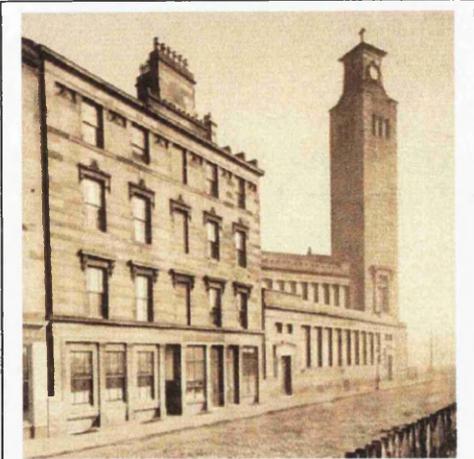
The view of Thomson's church is from north-west, showing the east façade of the main body of the building while emphasising its most striking feature, the long colonnade of repetitive square columns that runs along the clerestorey zone of this elevation. The emphasis on the colonnade in this picture is even stressed by the two usual main



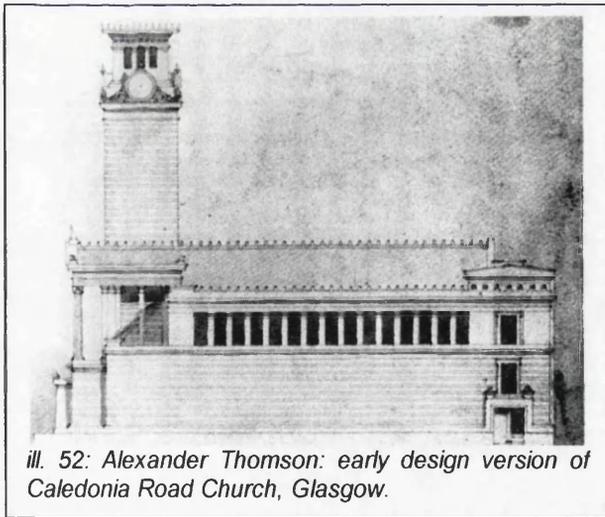
ill. 50: Alexander Thomson: view towards the gallery of Caledonia Road Church, Glasgow. 1856-57

features of the building receding into the background, respectively not appearing at all, the tall campanile tower and the raised Ionic portico.

In Thomson's design, the same feature appears on the opposite side of the church's main body, thus, creating two parallel rows of identical square columns, between which inserted window panes provide the main lighting for the nave [ill. 50]. On this side of the building, the same colonnade appears again on ground floor level, opening up the church hall that fills the tapering site towards the adjacent street [ill. 51]. Thomson's pillars differ from the ones Schinkel used at the Schauspielhaus by having no base although being similarly plain otherwise. Such creation of a square column that unites the Tuscan planarity with the typically Doric omission of a base can actually be interpreted as a symbolic blend of the Italianate with classical Greek. This little characteristic was to become a trademark of Thomson's and can be detected almost everywhere Thomson used square columns. The visual effect it has is to integrate the columns even more into the wall's surface and thereby strengthen the contrast between the latter and the recessed opening.



ill. 51: Alexander Thomson: north-west view of Caledonia Road Church, Glasgow. 1856-57



ill. 52: Alexander Thomson: early design version of Caledonia Road Church, Glasgow.

posts in black, very much unlike Schinkel in his illustrations.

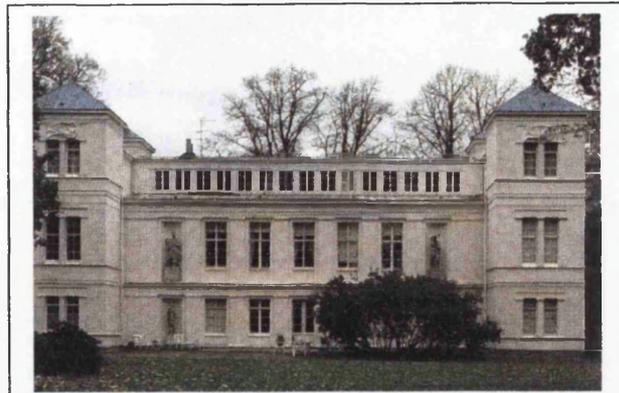
There is one building by Schinkel, also of the early 1820s, that has never been related to Thomson's work although it displays much of the same "notion of clear tectonic visual order for architecture" that the Schauspielhaus does¹⁹³. This is Schloß Tegel in a northern suburb of Berlin [ill. 53]. Although this building was the result of a conversion and extension by Schinkel, these changes subsequently became the

How much Thomson was striving for this contrasting effect of light and shadow is suggested by a drawing that shows an earlier design alternative for the Caledonia Road Church [ill. 52]. Despite significant differences in the overall design, in it, the colonnade is integrated in the very same manner. Here, Thomson stressed the effect of contrast by filling the gaps between the stone

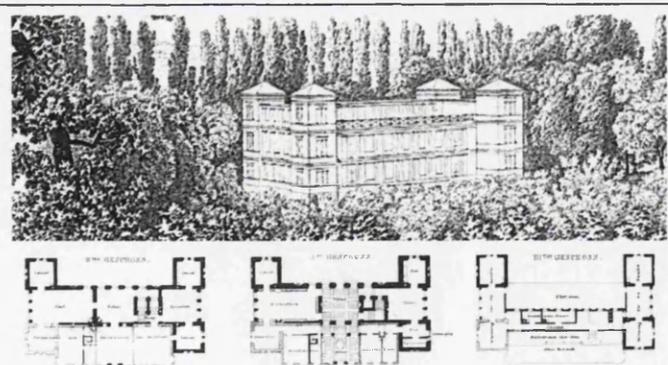
predominant features of the building. For Schinkel again applied a whole grid of trabeation to almost all façades. While the four towers, one placed at each corner of the building, appear more solid, with only one square column separating two windows on each level, it is at the main body of the building that "Schinkel uses a system of pillars, the intercolumniations of which are almost completely occupied by windows."¹⁹⁴

The most remarkable row of columns stretches between the two towers to the front of the building. The view the window spaces between these columns allow, however, is directed towards the spacious garden area. Consisting of fifteen identical rectangular windows, the colonnade is the only source of light for this long corridor part that, towards the garden side, projects over the first two storeys of the building's centre part. For, to the entrance front of the building, the third storey only consists of a roof sloping down to second-floor level. Thus, a maximum of lighting for the interior is as much an advantage provided by this colonnade as is the effect of opening up the building to the garden side. That the building was supposed to be mainly seen from this side is suggested by the fact that the two illustrations of it Schinkel included in the *Sammlung* show it from there.

Although, similarly to the Caledonia Road Church, a maximum provision of light was clearly required, the use of a repetitive colonnade did not fully reflect the spatial organisation behind it. For Schinkel actually made out of this long room that connects the two side wings four rooms by inserting two servant's rooms and one tiny room that served as a sort of vestibule to the family's rooms in the respective side wing. The arrangement of these rooms' walls are made subservient to the alternating position of the square columns [ill. 54].



ill. 53: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: garden view of Schloß Tegel, Berlin. 1820-24



ill. 54: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: birds-eye view and plans of Schloß Tegel, Berlin. 1820-24

¹⁹³ Bergdoll. 1994. p. 64

¹⁹⁴ "ein System von Pfeilern benutzt, deren Interkolumnien fast ganz von Fenstern eingenommen werden."

This seems to contradict the postulation of constructional honesty that we encountered in Schinkel's theory earlier on. However, as already pointed out there, the necessity for a building to display beauty in a sense that it expresses harmony with the universal laws overrides the rules of constructional honesty. Although it is a bit of a hidden treasure among Schinkel's works, Schloß Tegel can be regarded as one of the buildings displaying best the way its creator thought contemporary architecture should use the classical ideal as a point of orientation. As Erik Forssmann clearly says, "the house is devoid of the usual character trademarks which classicism has linked with the species of villas: the portico, the perron, the pediment."¹⁹⁵ It is curious how the building still conveys the notion of a villa in the classical style without the shadow of a doubt.

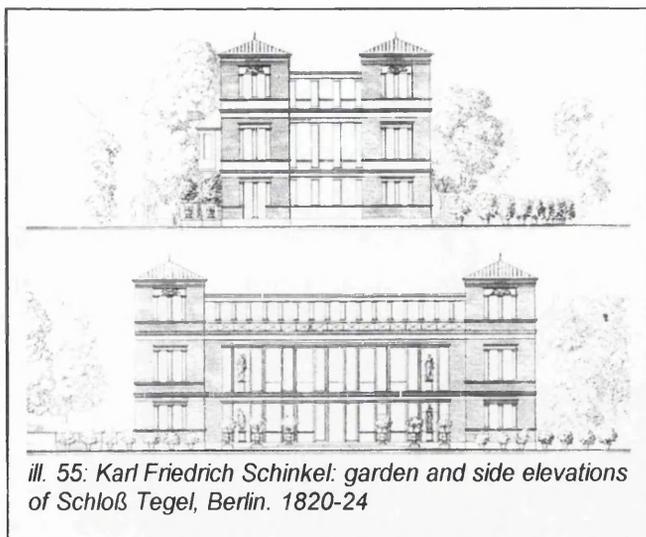
This is primarily due to its two main features, both results of Schinkel's changes: the overall symmetry of the design and the uncompromising adherence to the use of simple Greek trabeation¹⁹⁶. In both respects the top-floor colonnade plays an important part. The consistent alternation of square column and window is required to maintain the axial symmetry, and at the same time it is the strongest visualisation of the post-and-lintel system as it does not consist of anything else. Thus, Schloß Tegel can be regarded as achieving what Schinkel regarded necessary for beautiful architecture. It visualises the universal laws of harmony, displaying the reposeful 'construction of the column and the architrave', and by adapting this classical language to contemporary needs Schinkel created the 'extra', the 'new element' that to him was so vital in designing original and good architecture.

As in the case of the Schauspielhaus, it is interesting to compare the actual building with the engravings in the Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe that show its design. Both, the birds-view perspective and the two elevations convey a strength of trabeation that actually does not exist when looking at the real building. The former makes the villa appear as a three-storey building which, in a different way, is dominated by horizontal soaring rows of verticals and contained by massive towers at each end. The latter engraving, however, makes every single column stand out against the wall surface by leaving them white while the walls are rendered in a darker, shady colour [ill. 55].

Forssmann. 1981. p. 175

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.* p. 175

¹⁹⁶ In its original sixteenth-century design, the building had consisted of the front part of the main block, two storeys high and with one tower asymmetrically attached to its left.

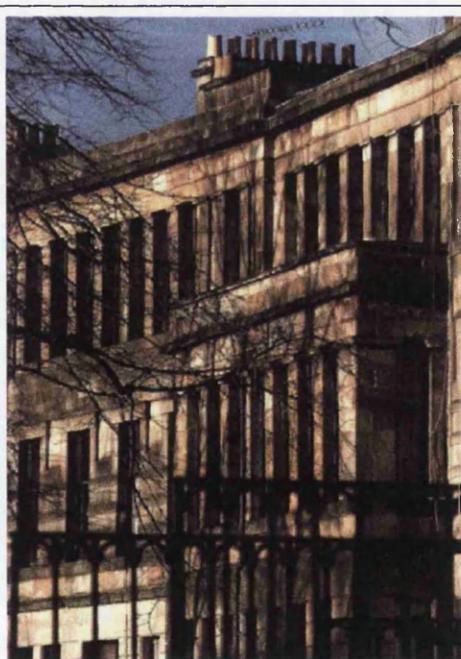


ill. 55: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: garden and side elevations of Schloß Tegel, Berlin. 1820-24

Like Schloß Tegel, there are also two designs by Alexander Thomson that have not received the attention yet that, with regard to any possible Thomson-Schinkel link, they and the circumstances of their evolution do deserve. Incidentally, both of them were designed closely around the time by which we can be certain that Alexander Thomson had seen

Schinkel's designs as illustrated in the copy of the Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe that he gave away in 1863.

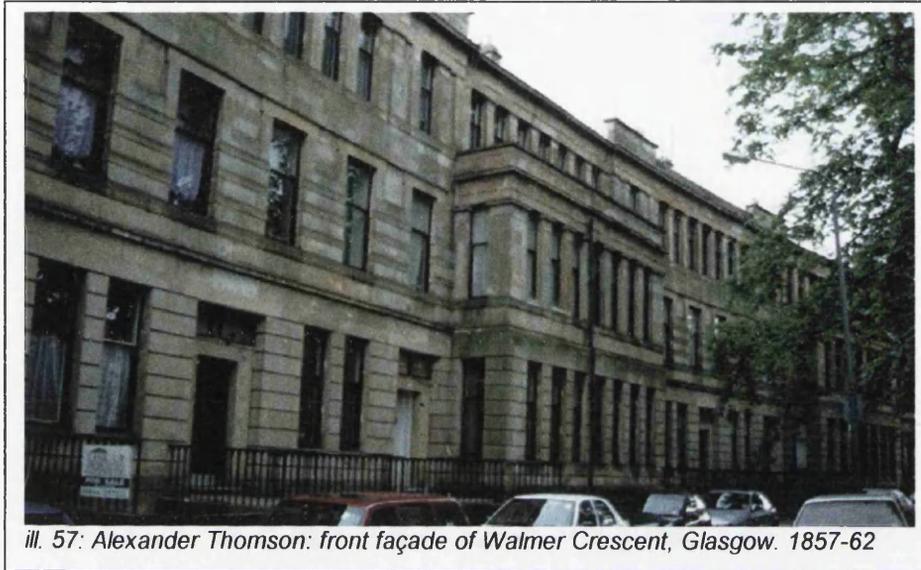
Walmer Crescent was designed shortly before that date, between 1857 and 1862, and Northpark Terrace shortly afterwards (1863-65). Although Andor Gomme does not go into detail about what exactly he regards to owe inspiration to Schinkel, a first look at the design of Walmer Crescent already tells a lot. Being the Thomson building with the smallest amount of decorative ornamentation applied, it leaves a very strong impression of pure repetitive trabeation [ill. 56]. The way Thomson makes use of his typical tripartite structure, which he so often applied to tenements and terraces most strikingly illustrates the paradox effect the repetitive use of vertical elements can create. The feature that binds all three clearly separated storeys together is the tall and narrow window that recedes into the façade. As Ronald McFadzean points out, this effect is even stressed by all windows slightly narrowing towards the top.¹⁹⁷



ill. 56: Alexander Thomson: part of front façade of Walmer Crescent, Glasgow. 1857-62

¹⁹⁷ McFadzean. 1979. p. 88

By exploiting "the play between vertical square columns and the raised horizontal banding of the stonework,"¹⁹⁸ Thomson achieves one predominant effect: a marked horizontality that is conveyed to the observer on a rather subconscious level as it seems to contradict the prevalence of almost exclusively vertical elements [ill. 57]. On ground-floor level, where the order of vertical door and window openings is not repetitive enough to effect an imaginative horizontal line, such an effect is helped by a



ill. 57: Alexander Thomson: front façade of Walmer Crescent, Glasgow. 1857-62

thin horizontal banding. Incised into the surface, it covers planar wall surfaces as well as the slender stone posts between pairs of windows and a unit of seven of them at the bays respectively. Thereby, and also helped by a continuous entablature above, all parts of the wall surface are horizontally united, with an imaginative set of horizontal lines even drawn across the vertical openings.

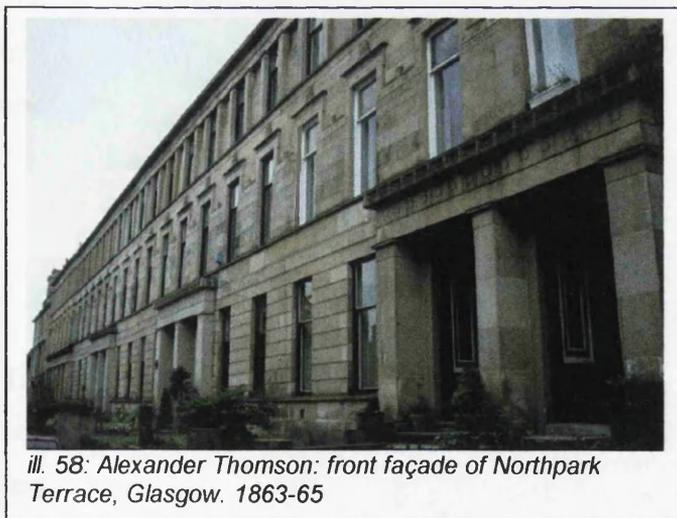
On the level above, regular repetition is a much stronger characteristic and the stressing of the horizontal clearer. While, on this level, the design of the bays is the same as on top level, i.e. a simple continuous band of windows between a tall baseless Tuscan colonnade, the wall spaces in between are dominated by another effectful feature. Looking like a synthesis of the Greek key pattern and the late Gothic hood-moulding, it is a band that consists of three different parts: of the lintel above the windows, of the top one of three slightly projecting horizontal bands that, at the height of the windows' partition, run across the wall surface and of a continuation of these bands to each side of the windows, which vertically connects the two horizontal elements. Effectively, this continuous band has more horizontal parts than vertical ones and, thus, provides a good counter-balance to each single vertical window opening that it surmounts.

¹⁹⁸ Stamp. 1999. p. 89

The comparatively short monolithic rows of columns at the projecting bays direct the view up to the top floor, where the 'detailed inspiration to Schinkel' becomes most apparent. Stretching between the two cubic end blocks along the concave body of the building, we find in operation a system that Mark Baines describes as a "further reduction of the separating mass of the intervening wall." The product is "the colonnaded screen." The description of the resulting effect of this "colonnaded band of windows" can also easily be observed at Walmer Crescent, namely "giving the impression of a seemingly inexorable horizontal thrust, demanding containment but with the potential of infinite extension."¹⁹⁹

Although different in proportion and executed in different detail, the idea of putting such a powerful horizontal element on top of a centre piece, between two containing end pieces, seems to have guided the design of Schloß Tegel, too. If intended or not, the effect is also well illustrated in Schinkel's engravings. It is hard to tell if any thought similar to Thomson's fascination with the horizontal guided Schinkel when designing or illustrating this building. Even if that was not the case at all, the potential of inspiring such a reception of it makes this building a very interesting piece as far as a link between Thomson and Schinkel is concerned.

That Thomson not only wrote about the 'the power of the horizontal element', 'the principle of repetition' and 'the delicacy of manipulation' is even more evident in the



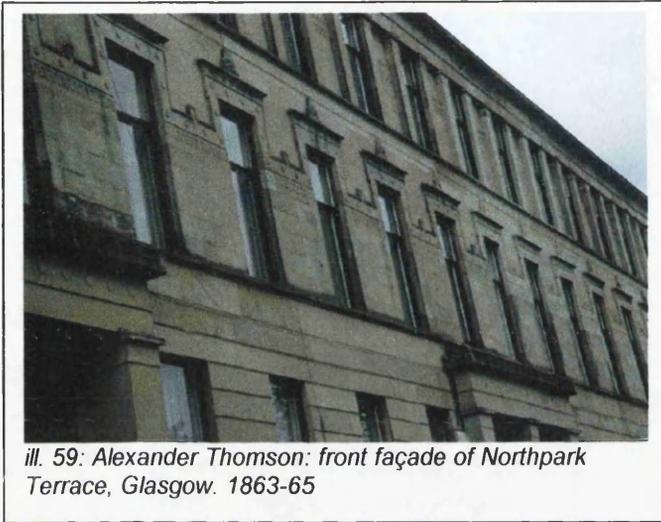
other terrace mentioned before. At Northpark Terrace, where building began in the very year Thomson presented his Schinkel copy to the GAS, Thomson illustrated the power of the horizontal line perhaps most clearly of all his executed designs. Here, he took advantage of the absolutely straight front line of the site by

having the terrace run along it, but otherwise he created a design very close to that of Walmer Crescent. The main difference apart from the shape of the street frontage is that there are no projecting bays but only very modest porticoes in front of the respective entrance doors [ill. 58]. Confined to the bottom floor, the porticoes are carried by Tuscan square columns that are not standing entirely free of the wall, and

¹⁹⁹ Baines, Mark. 'Form, Façade and Rhythm'. in: Baines, MacMillan; McKean. 1984. p. 14

altogether they do only slightly project from the wall. At both ends of the terrace, Thomson used the porticoes as an indicator of containment of the spreading horizontals by making the two end porticoes pentastyle ones.

They, however, remain the only feature that indicates the end of the soaring façade. On first-floor level, we find very much the same system of structure applied to the wall that is applied to the same level of Walmer Crescent. The only difference is



ill. 59: Alexander Thomson: front façade of Northpark Terrace, Glasgow. 1863-65

that, here, the zigzag band around the upper parts of the windows are decorated with some of Thomson's typical ornamentation; the main stress, however, once again on the horizontal elements [ill. 59]. While on this level, the severe omission of any interruption of the repetitive structure inevitably makes our view move towards

the slightly obscure end of this line, this effect is even much stronger on the level above. In a statement from Mark Baines, we find an explanation of the mechanism Thomson applied in order to create the effect that he desired so much to be the result of perceiving his architecture, 'carrying the mind away into space, and into speculations upon infinity':

"The intervening masonry was (...) relegated to a recessed plane and thereby acknowledged as a construction skin contained between points of support, encouraging the implication that it should read as a void, becoming rhythmically engaged, like its glazed counterpart, through light and shadow."²⁰⁰

The implied "equalisation of the dimensional relationship of solid and void" is supported, thus, appears even more intentional through the combination of two other features. A horizontal band of a slightly altered key pattern together with an entablature above runs all along the recessed blind windows at exactly the same height as we find the windows separated by the horizontal line of the transom. Another seemingly infinite horizontal line appears to be interrupted only by the almost endless row of vertical columns, which themselves create yet another horizontal element.

²⁰⁰ Baines. 1984. p. 14

The similarity of the top-floor part of the façade at Northpark Terrace to that of the top-floor zone at the sides of Schinkel's Schauspielhaus is obvious and striking at the same time. Although the square columns Thomson used are taller than the ones we find at the Schinkel building, both are executed in plain Tuscan order with the difference in detail that has been pointed out earlier. The alternating use of real and blind windows is identical.

Though there is one thing that should be kept in mind when looking at this issue from today's point of view. We today compare photographs of the respective buildings, which give us very exact information about a wide number of details and, thus, make our mediated experience of such a building almost equivalent to what can be observed personally. As we have seen before, it is, however, to be assumed that Thomson did not know any other illustration of Schinkel's buildings than the ones we still find in front of us today when opening a copy of the Sammlung architektonischer Entwürfe; and in these, there is not any use of blind windows at the Schauspielhaus to be noticed. As mentioned before, Schinkel drew his square columns in a way almost undistinguished from the intercolumnar voids, not to speak of any distinction between real windows and blind ones. The only thing in these engravings that could have helped Thomson identify such an alternation of real void and implicated void would have been a plan of this storey. This, however, appears absent from the plates although one of them contains plans of all levels below.²⁰¹

The three Thomson buildings mentioned are by far not the only ones into the design of which the architect integrated the Schinkelesque feature of a row of plain square columns. There is quite a number of different building types that display almost the same feature, and also on top-floor level. Some of these have been linked to Schinkel in the past, such as the Blackie & Son Printing Works or Eaton Terrace. Others would definitely deserve to be, like the office building in West Nile Street of 1857-59 or the Norfolk Street tenement block of 1874-75. Yet, the one building that clearly stands out of all of them as far as the use of a long colonnade is concerned, is the terrace Thomson designed under the special circumstances of moving into one of the houses himself after completion. At Moray Place in Strathbungo, which was built between 1859 and 1861, the most remarkable feature by far is the "unbroken colonnade of stone posts" that stretches between two pedimented end pavilions once again on top-floor level.²⁰² Most certainly this feature "may (...) be described as a

²⁰¹ Hazlett; O'Malley; Rudolph. 1981. pt. 9

²⁰² Law, Graham. 'Greek Thomson'. in: The Architectural Review, vol. 114. May 1954. p. 314
The total number of these stone posts amounts to an impressive fifty-two.

colonnade" and, as Andor Gomme suggests, "thus echoes a similar usage in Schinkel."²⁰³

Something that also recalls 'similar usage' in one of Schinkel's designs are the Giant pilasters at the end pavilions, running from ground-floor level straight up to the entablature. We find similar ones applied to the side wings of the Schauspielhaus. A difference between the pilasters and square columns at Moray Place and the ones Schinkel used is that the former ones, other than in the case of the Thomson buildings described earlier, carry ornamentation as a sort of substitute for a capital. An incised band of Thomson's version of the Greek key pattern runs along the top of the square columns while at the pilasters there is another band of Thomson's typical acroterion ornament added. Apart from details like this, however, the general outline of the design, with two projecting blocks at the ends containing an unbroken colonnade on top-floor, does definitely bare some strong resemblance to Schinkel's Schloß Tegel.

The figure of Harvey Lonsdale Elmes has already been dealt with in the first two chapters. Despite having learned that he was wrongly believed to have carried out some personal 'firsthand study of Schinkel's buildings in Berlin', the significance of his St. George's Hall to the Schinkel issue remains. This is not only because we know from Thomson's lectures that to him this building was one of "the two finest buildings in the kingdom."²⁰⁴ It is rather because of the link Henry-Russell Hitchcock establishes by means of the 'screens of square piers' at St. George's Hall which, in his view, are to be found 'much elaborated at a smaller scale' in Thomson's designs. Regardless of how justified it is to ascribe some of the design of St. George's Hall to the influence of Schinkel, this means that Thomson may well have received inspiration from British compatriots when creating his curious colonnades of stone posts.

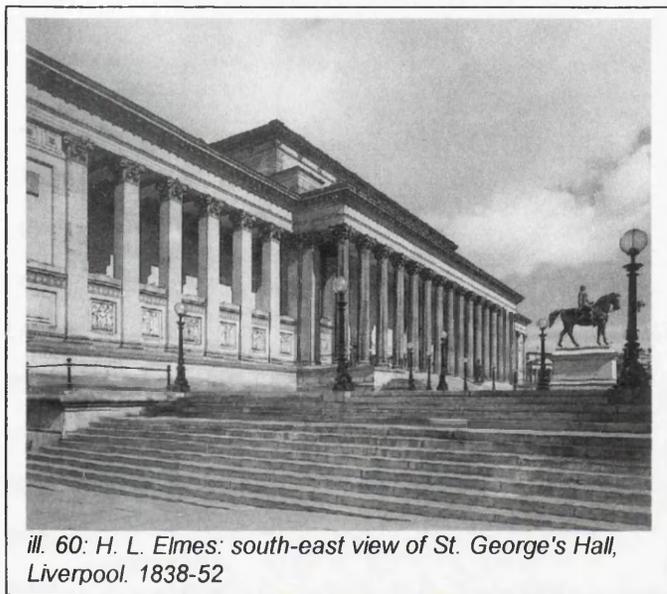
We do not exactly know what Alexander Thomson particularly liked about St. George's Hall, but it should be mentioned that he put it in such a very elevated position by referring to it in a situation in which he tried to bring forward all qualities of classical Greek. This was on the occasion of holding the aforementioned polemic lecture in which he criticised George Gilbert Scott's university designs in Glasgow. It has to be noticed that this is the same lecture that contains Thomson's general outline of architectural philosophy. In it, we find laid out his quest for 'architectural truth' through obedience of the 'universal laws' that 'govern architecture', through the strong

²⁰³ Gomme; Walker. 1987. p. 138

²⁰⁴ The other building Thomson refers to here is Thomas Hamilton's Royal High School in Edinburgh.
Thomson, Alexander. 'An Inquiry into the Appropriateness of the Gothic Style for the Proposed Buildings for the University of Glasgow, with Some Remarks upon Mr. Scott's Plans (1866)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. The Lectures of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. Architect. 1817-1875. Glasgow, 1999. p. 76

disapproval of the instable 'principle of the arch' as opposed to the appreciation of the 'simple unsophisticated stone lintel' and its 'element of strength', and finally through Thomson's adoration of 'the mysterious power of horizontal element in carrying the mind away into space.'²⁰⁵

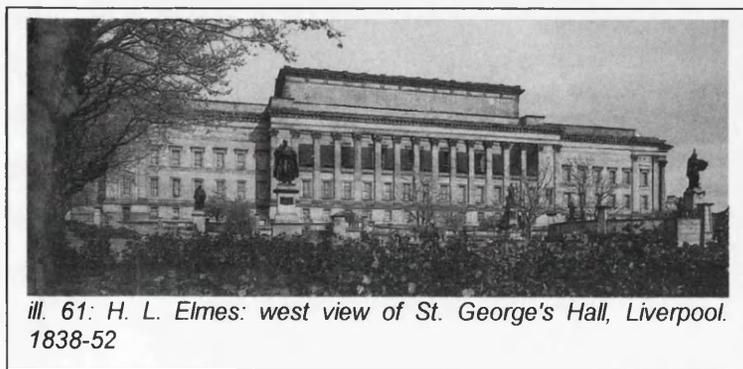
The way H. L. Elmes integrated the post-and-lintel principle into his Liverpool masterpiece and how he thereby visualised the power of the horizontal element is distinctly different from the way either Schinkel or Thomson did it in their designs. Still, there is a resemblance that cannot be overlooked. We find square piers at to different parts of St. George's Hall. Known best through the often favoured south-eastern view



ill. 60: H. L. Elmes: south-east view of St. George's Hall, Liverpool. 1838-52

of the building is probably the row of piers flanking the massive Ionic portico that dominates the east façade [ill. 60]. Other than at the Schauspielhaus, the piers here are of the same height as the columns of both porticoes, the long one along the east façade and the pedimented one to the front. The main difference is that, at St. George's Hall, the tall colonnades do not fulfil the

purpose of providing a frame for glazing that is somehow inserted between them; but, for two thirds of their height, they are completely opened up to the side as well as roofless to the top. The horizontal line that they cut across is lowered down to one third of their height. Up to that line the space between the square columns is filled by



ill. 61: H. L. Elmes: west view of St. George's Hall, Liverpool. 1838-52

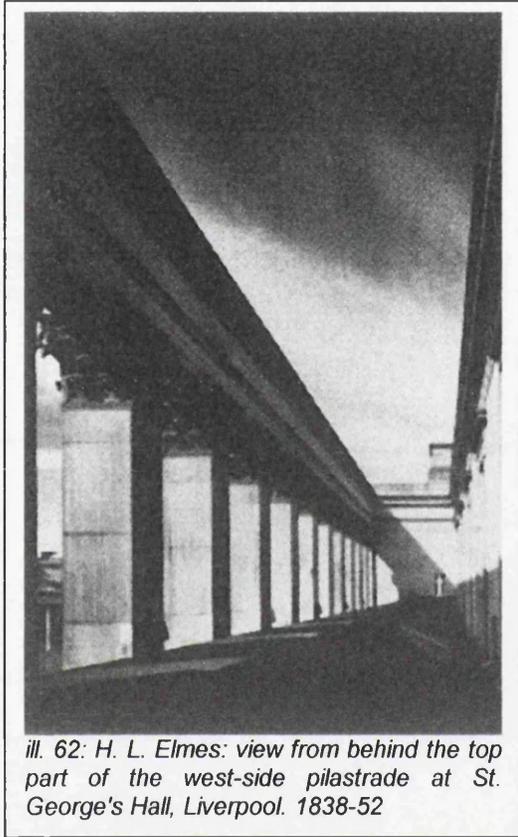
sculptured relief panels and covered over by a passable roof, thereby creating diverse service rooms that were required by the building's original use as a court house.

A similar colonnaded structure is applied to the west façade. Here, a row of square columns takes the place of the Ionic portico on the east façade while being flanked by a more ordinary

²⁰⁵ cf. *ibid.*

fenestrated wall surfaces [ill. 61]. The same sort of windows are to be found in the intercolumniations of the square-column portico with their height reaching up half the columns here.

A clear difference to the treatment of square columns in a colonnade to the way we have encountered it in Schinkel's and Thomson's work is the use of the much richer Corinthian capital as a finish to these columns. The difference this application makes is that it definitely takes away some of the notion of the unsophisticated strength of simple trabeation, which Thomson was so impressed with. The display of this effect is also reduced by the intercolumnar fillings. Thus, the whole structure appears more playful and elaborate. A picture taken from a position behind one of the east-façade colonnades, however, shows how much of that very effect of simple and strong trabeation can still be conveyed by this structure if seen from a certain angle; especially as the absence of a roof eventually reduces the constituents of this construction to post and lintel [ill. 62].



The general similarity between Elmes on the one hand, and Schinkel and Thomson on the other, is that they approached architectural tasks by interpreting the chosen classical precedent and adapting its rules and structures to buildings of modern purpose and size. What John Olley says of H. L. Elmes is as true of Alexander Thomson and Karl Friedrich Schinkel: "Elmes used Classicism, not with the sterility, but as a stimulus for invention."²⁰⁶

The square columns at his St. George's Hall design are a good example for that. Ronald McFadzean is absolutely right to point to the fact that "there is nothing original in square columns"²⁰⁷ while it is also true that, in the early nineteenth century, "[t]he use of square columns was unusual."²⁰⁸ Both writers, however, refer to the ancient past in this respect underscoring the existence of square columns in a number of classical Greek designs. The one Olley quotes as an inspirational source for H. L.

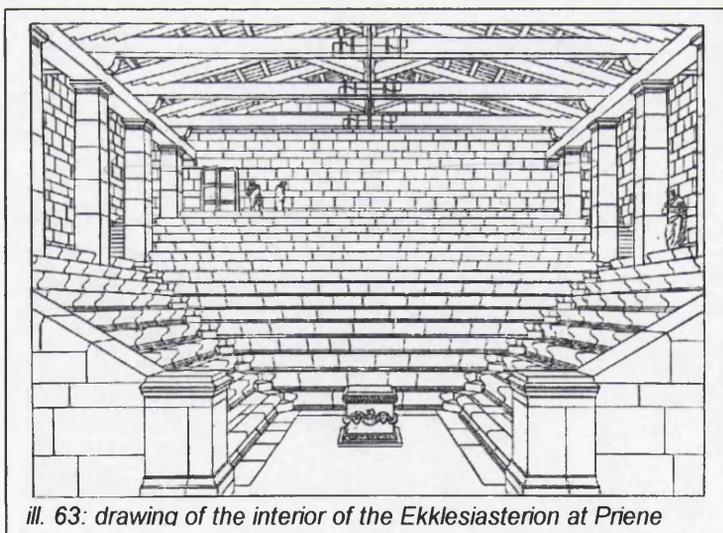
²⁰⁶ Olley. 1986. p. 55

²⁰⁷ McFadzean. 1979. p. 219

Elmes is the same that time and again appears in the same context in writings on Thomson, the earlier mentioned Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus.

The reason why to this ancient monument there has been attributed so much importance is that it not only undoubtedly had square columns integrated into its design, but also that this fact was well illustrated and widely accessible to nineteenth-century architects by being included in Stuart and Revett's Antiquities of Athens of 1789. The difference to the way square columns had been used in the examples mentioned above is as obvious as the similarity of that constructional part itself. Of course, we do not find anything like the impressive horizontal lines of Thomson, Schinkel or Elmes in the Thrasyllus design. Actually, it is only one real column we find in this illustration, a single pier set into the centre of an entrance in antis. Curiously, we do not find a base on which the column rests, just as in so many of Thomson's designs. The capital that crowns this square column as well as the flanking corner pilasters appear slightly more elaborate than we are used to from the simple abacus-covered pillars in Schinkel's and Thomson's designs. On the other hand, one has to agree that this image of a central square column is "a most powerful architectural image".²⁰⁹ It can justifiably be said that the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus is the visualisation of the unsophisticated post-and-lintel trabeation that was so much admired by Thomson because all the attention is drawn to the central piece of construction.

There were also other ancient classical buildings in which quite simple square piers had been used, even much more in a way forming a row than the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus could ever inspire. In the Ekklesiasterion at Priene,



ill. 63: drawing of the interior of the Ekklesiasterion at Priene

for instance, we find square columns running along the sides of the auditorium carrying the roof construction above [ill. 63]. Similar usage is referred to by McFadzean mentioning the House of Hermes at Delos and another example from

²⁰⁸ Olley. 1986. p. 53

²⁰⁹ Stamp. 1999. p. 15

Priene, the Bouleuterion.²¹⁰ Still, the difference to the horizontal colonnade is apparent and there is hardly something to notice of the infinite thrust that Thomson and Schinkel were able to evoke in their creations.

The argument, though, that Alexander Thomson drew on these classical precedents is substantiated by Ronald McFadzean once again. Just like the omission of a base under the square columns, McFadzean observed a feature in one of Thomson's designs that seems to be clearly inspired by the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllos. This is the treatment of the zone above the clerestory colonnade at Caledonia Road Church, "where Thomson continued the wall up as an entablature forming a parapet with end blocking concealing the roof and gutters." A comparative look at the engraving from the Antiquities of Athens inevitably makes one agree that "[t]his is identical in all parts to the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllos."²¹¹

We have already touched upon the issue of doubt about the justification of any link between Thomson and the designs of Schinkel in chapter one. McFadzean, here, uses the same observation to stress his argument that 'it seems most unlikely that Schinkel had any influence on Thomson.' The apparent difference he mentions is that Schinkel at the Schauspielhaus "used an overhanging cornice above the colonnade" as opposed to Thomson's treatment that has been described above.

What has become clear from the facts presented so far is that there are differences as well as similarities in the way Thomson and Schinkel used square columns, with the same applying to the questionable mediator Harvey Lonsdale Elmes. All of them are very likely to have known ancient classical precedents in which the simple feature of the square column was to be found in one or the other way. Yet, none of these archaeological examples provided the same arrangement of this constructional piece as a long horizontal colonnade. Thus, the creation of such an arrangement appears to be "highly original" indeed.²¹² If this originality was confined to the mind of Karl Friedrich Schinkel while others only copied from his idea, cannot even surely be proven by an examination of the relevant works.

The repeated reference to the Munich-based architect Leo von Klenze does not appear to be any more instructive to the question at issue here. It is true that we can find ranges of square columns running around the top of his Propyläen towers of 1848-60. It may also be true that H. L. Elmes got the respective inspiration from him rather than from any design by Schinkel. Yet, as far as originality is concerned, there

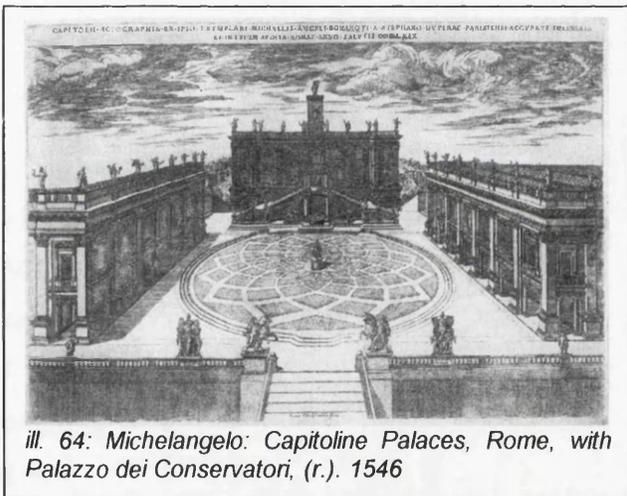
²¹⁰ cf. McFadzean. 1979. pp. 219-20

²¹¹ *ibid.*

²¹² *ibid.*

is no doubt that Schinkel developed the idea earlier and with much more emphasis on the thrust of the colonnade.

That Alexander Thomson will have had sufficient inspiration in this respect from much nearer home and apart from the oft-mentioned St. George's Hall, is very well demonstrated in an essay by David Walker. In his contribution to the 1994 essay collection on 'Greek' Thomson, Walker presents us with a huge number of buildings, mainly in Scotland, that in some way display the square-column feature as well and, therefore, could have been the inspiring source for Thomson as much as the more famous Prussian examples. Many of these designs do not include actual square columns but rather quite strongly projecting square pilasters instead. Of these designs, however, the most have the pilasters arranged in a way that is much more comparable to the colonnade as known from Schinkel and Thomson than to the mentioned examples from the realm of classical precedents are.



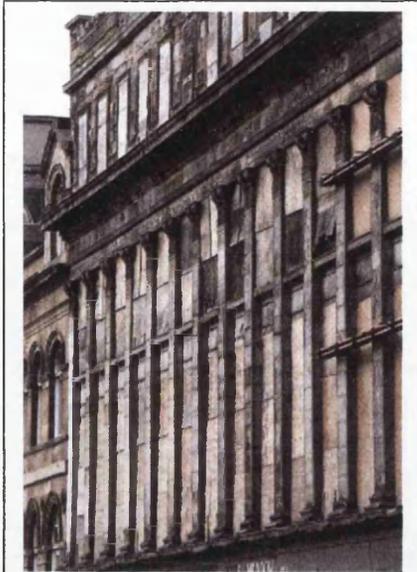
ill. 64: Michelangelo: Capitoline Palaces, Rome, with Palazzo dei Conservatori, (r.). 1546

Two interesting sources from outside Britain that are suggested by Walker may even easily have inspired Schinkel in some of his designs. These are the two Renaissance Italians Michelangelo (1475-1564) and Andrea Palladio (1508-80). The architectural examples chosen are Michelangelo's palaces on the

capitoline piazza in Rome and Palladio's Palazzo Valmarana in Vicenza. Of the former the Palazzo dei Conservatori should be of particular interest, which was built in 1568 to Michelangelo's designs of 1546 [ill. 64] Clearly showing his preference for the structuring components in architecture, Michelangelo here uses eight massive square pilasters to structure the main façade of the building. Although this building is far from being purely Greek in its overall appearance, the massive entablature that the pilasters seem to carry conveys a strong impression of simple trabeation as well as the regular row of repetitive pilasters stresses the horizontal element.

On comparison to Thomson's designs, this rather evokes drawing parallels to his larger commercial projects. The Watson Street Warehouses (probably executed to Thomson's design in 1876, a year after his death) may come closest to it [ill. 65] With their Giant pilasters cutting across the two centre storeys and a curious translation of

the Corinthian capital into Thomson's personal ornamental language they display "[t]rabeation with style."²¹³



ill. 65: Alexander Thomson: front façade of Watson Street Warehouse, Glasgow. 1876



ill. 66: Andrea Palladio: front façade of the Palazzo Valmarana, Vicenza. 1565-66

The other Italian example that Walker gives appears even much closer to Thomson. The Palazzo Valmarana by Palladio (1565-66) may well have provided some inspiration for Thomson's warehouse designs as far as the treatment of square columns is concerned [ill. 66]. Very much like a description of the Vicenza palace we find that, in Watson Street, Thomson used "giant pilasters and put them on a high base."²¹⁴ In Thomson's Dunlop Street Warehouse design, it appears that even "the smaller pilasters are confined to the first story" while contrasting with the taller ones that are two storeys high [ill. 67].

Considering these two examples from Italy, which themselves represent a mediated and, of course, significantly individualised version of ancient classicism, the range of pilasters at St. George's Hall again seems to be very close to the Renaissance palazzos; definitely closer than to Schinkel's Schauspielhaus. This, however, suggests that any potential influence from Schinkel is unlikely to have



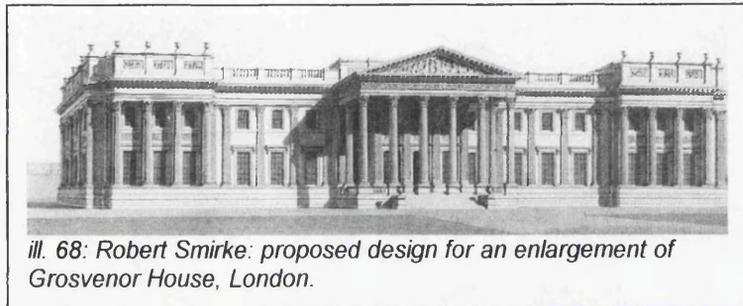
ill. 67: Alexander Thomson: Dunlop Street Warehouse, Glasgow. 1859

²¹³ Stamp. 1999. p. 118

²¹⁴ Hope Reed, Henry. *Palladio's Architecture and Its Influence*. New York, 1980. p. 61

reached Alexander Thomson via the design of Elmes's St. George's Hall; and again, all these possible interrelationships show that the number of sources of completely different times and cultural backgrounds that could have provided inspiration for the use of square columns is big.

Some British examples David Watkin mentions in his essay show that Thomson could also have gained almost the same inspiration from contemporary or slightly earlier architects as he could have from the Italians mentioned above. Of these, Robert Smirke's proposed design for an enlargement of Grosvenor House, London, [ill. 68]



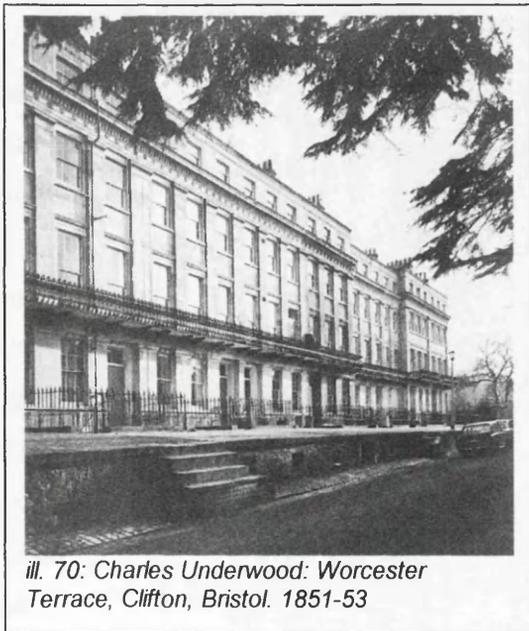
ill. 68: Robert Smirke: proposed design for an enlargement of Grosvenor House, London.

and his Normanby Park (1825-30; [ill. 69]) can be regarded as some of the rather few examples from south of the border where square pilasters were used by Greek Revivalists in order to structure façades horizontally. Another



ill. 69: Robert Smirke: Normanby Park, Licolnshire. 1825-30

example even more appropriately suggested by Walker is Worcester Terrace in Clifton, Bristol, by Charles Underwood (1791-1883) of 1851-53. Here much more than in Smirke's designs, we not only find the clear stress on the plain vertical pilaster that is superimposed on the rest of the façade's structure but also a more original step towards the uninterrupted repetition of this element across the whole width of the façade [ill. 70].



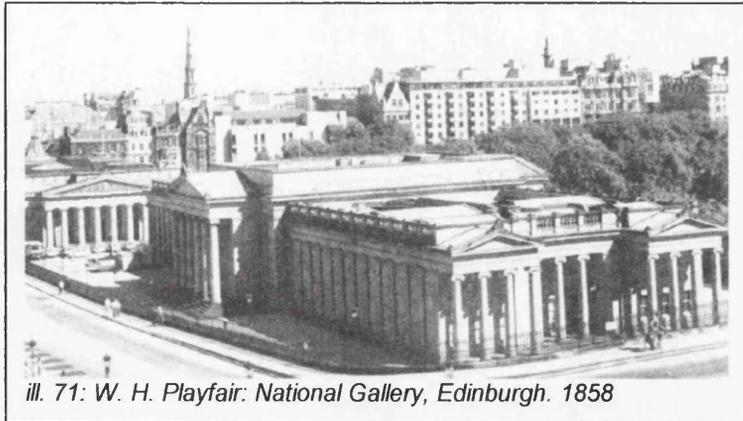
ill. 70: Charles Underwood: Worcester Terrace, Clifton, Bristol. 1851-53

Yet, it is important to point out that the situation in Scotland was fairly different. Here, where the Greek Revival was destined to have a considerably longer life, buildings similar to the English examples just mentioned were not unusual. One that

unquestionably will have been well known to Alexander Thomson is the National

Gallery in Edinburgh. Even though it was not completed before 1858, Thomson will have been familiar with the history of prepared and rejected designs by the likes of Thomas Hamilton and William Henry Playfair as much as the rest of the architectural world in Scotland was. Along the sides of the finally realised design by Playfair [ill. 71]

an impressively long row of full-height square pilasters is only interrupted by a projecting pedimented portico on Ionic columns. This pilastrated wall is fairly different from what has been discussed so far in that it does not include



ill. 71: W. H. Playfair: National Gallery, Edinburgh. 1858

any openings, like fenestration or other. The walls are evenly closed and the pilasters only provide a structural rhythm while carrying an entablature. That, however, in turn helps laying emphasis on the horizontal row, which is not even completely interrupted by the portico as the columns to a certain extent continue the line.

For Thomson it was not even necessary to turn to Edinburgh for inspiration of this kind as similar designs were to be found in Glasgow, too. The most significant ones were produced by the leading Glasgow architect before Thomson emerged, David Hamilton. His 1834 warehouse in Queen Street is dominated by a row of eight square Giant pilasters soaring up from above ground floor to carry the massive entablature that separates the top storey from the second below. Very close to Palladio's Palazzo Valmarana, these Composite pilasters are superimposed onto an architrave that structures this two-storey space horizontally. The way Hamilton picked up the idea of juxtaposing smaller pilasters with the taller ones below this architrave is very much the same as Thomson did it in Dunlop Street.

More significant to Thomson's square column colonnade, however, is a more modest demonstration of simple trabeation in the design that Hamilton and his son James created in 1840 for the Clydesdale Bank also in Queen Street. The square columns used here are by far not as dominant as the pilasters of the warehouse; but the way they are used behind the Tuscan entrance portico is much closer to the manner in which similar columns appear in Thomson's designs of Caledonia Road Church or Walmer Crescent. On ground-floor level, the very shallow bays to each side of the central entrance consist of four Tuscan pilasters that in regular distance to each other hold three equally sized window frames. The fact that "[t]hese tripartite bays

differed from conventional late Georgian tripartite windows in having lights of equal width"²¹⁵ may suggest that Hamilton and son were already aiming at a sort of horizontal stress by arranging their miniature colonnade in an unusually repetitive way. By abolishing all wall mass between the pilasters, the central ones rather become square columns, thus, the step towards Thomson's glazed colonnades is more or less already taken. Similar can be said of David Hamilton's Western Club in Buchanan Street of a year later (1841), where even the entrance portico is now carried by two sets of square columns. These as well as the ones in the flanking bays on first floor, however, are Corinthian and, thus, lack the strength of the ones in the Clydesdale Bank design.

It becomes obvious that there was no shortage of inspirational sources for Thomson to draw on as far as the use of square columns is concerned. What, however, still remains fairly original about the way Thomson used this constructional component is how he made them form a long uninterrupted colonnade. As far as this rather special use is concerned, no direct model of inspirational value could be found yet in Glasgow or anywhere relatively near to Thomson. Yet, what has to be kept in mind is Thomson's permanent readiness to translate known forms of construction into his own concept of architecture and to combine two existing separate features in order to form one new. In this respect, there are some pictorial sources that could well have inspired Thomson to create the horizontally soaring rows of columns.

The design entry Thomas Hamilton had produced for the National Gallery project (1847-49), for instance, should be of special interest in that respect. In it, the horizontal thrust through repetitive vertical elements is created by a real colonnade without any intervening wall mass or fenestration. The columns, though, are not square but Doric. Still, they convey even a more striking horizontality than Playfair's design for the same project, which is due to them almost not being interrupted at all. The dominance of the horizontal element in this feature is not disturbed by the four only very slightly projecting porticoes on square columns.

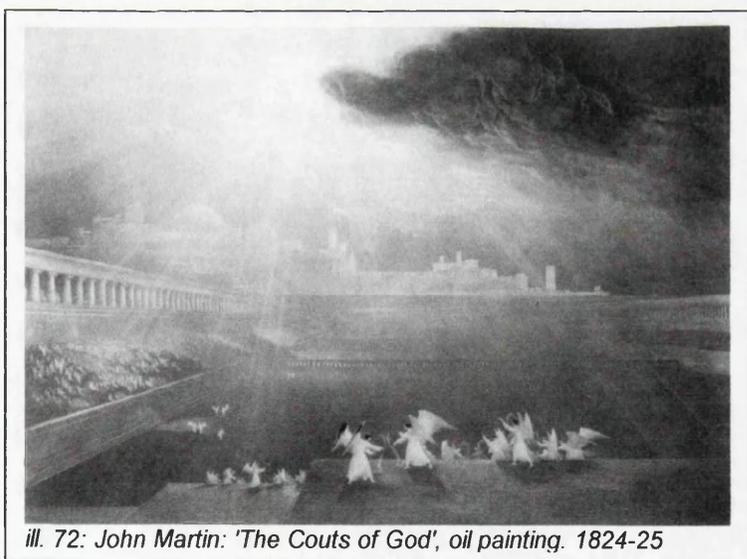
It is instructive to take a look at the only design in which Thomson appears to have created a colonnade of the magnificence to clearly demonstrate his idea of using this feature as a link to infinity. This design, tellingly unexecuted, was Thomson's entry to the competition for the South Kensington Museum in London (1864). While the general massing and the build up of the front are closer to Hamilton's Royal High School, Edinburgh, (1825), the impressively long-stretching side wings look much more similar to the ones in Hamilton's National Gallery project. In no other Thomson

²¹⁵ Walker. 1994. p. 33

design, we find a row of square columns of such "awesome length."²¹⁶ It is a curious fact that, in this design, Thomson chose the simpler Doric column for his crowning temple structures and the side-wing porticoes. Thus, the whole complex becomes an incredibly massive but simple demonstration of the trabeated principle with ornamental decoration very much reduced to comparatively few statues and simple bands of dotted ornament.

Although Hamilton's water-colour illustration of his design depicted a building that had been designed in order to be actually built, its manner of architectural representation links up with the fantastic architecture creations we find in the paintings of John Martin and David Roberts, as well as the opera stage designs of Karl Friedrich Schinkel.

It is in Martin's apocalyptic compositions in particular that time and again colonnades of all different kinds and in different numbers of layers and directions constitute an important part of the fantastic architectural compositions that he used as a backdrop for his biblical and mythical scenes. Although generally "a simple exercise in architectural perspective,"²¹⁷ Martin's engraving 'The Courts of God' (1824-25) can be regarded as a good example for the manner in which John Martin could have been an inspiration to Thomson [ill. 72]. Despite other works by Martin usually being



ill. 72: John Martin: 'The Courts of God', oil painting. 1824-25

preferred to this one, it most clearly displays the "colonnades receding into the distance where can be discerned further astonishing structures and towers."²¹⁸

Martin was no architect and, despite being familiar with some archeological research into ancient

architecture, he was not too concerned about stylistic correctness. Yet, most of the compositions he created bear a noticeable resemblance to Egyptian models, like the once depicted in the fairly authentic paintings of Martin's contemporary David

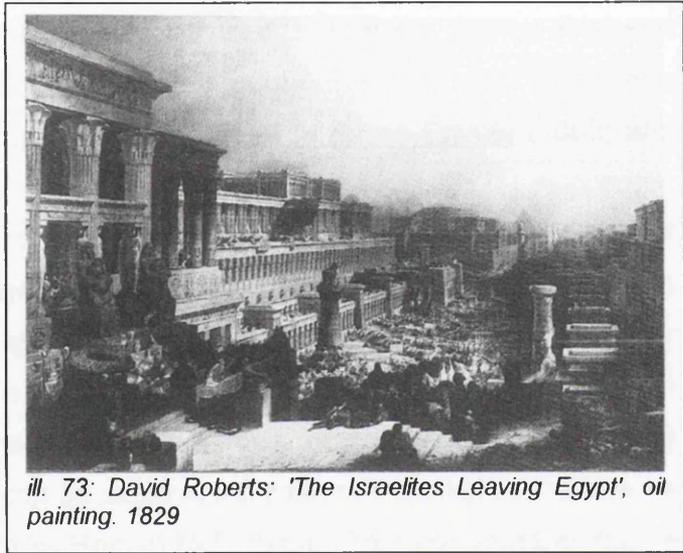
²¹⁶ Stamp. 1999. p. 153

²¹⁷ Campbell, Michael J. John Martin. Visionary Printmaker. York, 1992. p. 48

²¹⁸ Stamp. 1994. p. 235

Roberts.²¹⁹ In none of his paintings or engravings, however, we find a colonnade consisting of something close to Thomson's or Schinkel's square columns. What provides the strong link between Thomson and Martin is the seemingly endless length of the colonnades depicted, curiously the characteristic Thomson ascribed to Egyptian architecture. As seen in his theory, Thomson regarded this seemingly unlimited extension into space to be responsible for making us 'speculate upon infinity', while spacious unlimitedness, in his view, was strongly tied to timely unlimitedness, hence, eternity.

A painting by the aforementioned David Roberts that has been linked to Thomson's architecture is 'The Israelites Leaving Egypt' of 1829 [ill. 73]. It was finished long before Roberts actually went to see the Near East with his own eyes. Hence, it is not surprising that its representation of Egypt is much more dominated by the impressive architectural sublimity of John Martin's pictures than by the much more archaeological experience that he personally



ill. 73: David Roberts: 'The Israelites Leaving Egypt', oil painting, 1829

made and which is so evident in his lithographs resulting from his trip to the Near East.²²⁰ The reason why "several reviewers compared Roberts's grand conception with the work of John Martin" is obvious. The description of the architectural effect in Martin's pictures that was quoted above fits Roberts's painting as appropriately.

What is even more interesting about the contemporary reception of 'The Israelites Leaving Egypt' is that the same reviewers also "referred to his early training in the theatre,"²²¹ in the realm of which Roberts had earned his living as a scenic painter between 1816 and 1830.²²² For this links his architectural compositions to similar ones we can find in stage backdrops Karl Friedrich Schinkel produced so numerous during the early part of his career. The most interesting to us should be the twelfth set

²¹⁹ Such an affinity in Martin's work is also apparent through the fact that he repeatedly depicted motifs that by their title he related to the Egyptian city of Nineveh.

²²⁰ A huge number of lithographs resulted from his journey in 1838-39 and were published as *The Holy Land, Syria, Idumea, Arabia, Egypt & Nubia*. In these, colonnades still appear but convey much more of the situation Roberts must have found on visiting the ruined sites; thus, completely lack the sublime quality of uninterrupted and seemingly endless repetition.

²²¹ Guiterman, Helen; Llewellyn, Briony. *David Roberts*. Oxford, 1986. 112

of the 1816 production of The Magic Flute at the Berlin Schauspielhaus.²²³ In this depiction of 'The Inner Court of the Temple of the Sun with the Statue of Osiris', again, we find two soaring colonnades along the sides of a centrally-viewed court yard. Being interrupted in the middle and not at all of the same length as the ones in Martin's or Roberts's paintings, the effect is more moderate. Still, these colonnades carry away our view into the depth of space, where their individuality becomes blurred and the principle of repetition makes them appear more numerous than they actually are.

The similarity of the architectural style they chose is very likely to be due to identical sources. For Schinkel used the same books illustrating the unknown architecture of Egypt as Roberts, for instance, used before he gained firsthand experience. The most important and authoritative throughout Europe were Dominique Vivant Denon's travel journals Voyage dans la Haute et la Basse Egypte (1802) and Description de l'Egypte (1809-13).²²⁴

As with John Martin, we do not find square columns in any of Schinkel's set designs or David Roberts's paintings. However, considering that, both Schinkel and Thomson were architects of a highly original kind and always ready to adapt inspirational forms to their own ideas, one conclusion suggests itself to be drawn from the fact that, in both architect's work, repetitive rows of square columns appear repeatedly. The explanation to this can be same in the case of Schinkel as the one we already saw suggested for Thomson by Ronald McFadzean: "is it not possible that he [Thomson] arrived at the idea independently?" The question nobody has asked in this context so far is: How did Schinkel arrive at this design solution? We know that he was as familiar with the available information on classical architecture as Thomson and will therefore have known the Choragic Monument of Thrasylus, too; and we know that, during his classicist phase, he clearly favoured the simple post-and-lintel construction over the arch. So why should he not have taken the example of the square column from the illustration of it in the Antiquities of Athens and then blended it with his repetitive rows of his stage sets into the actual architectural feature we find at the Schauspielhaus or Schloß Tegel?

In designs from as early as 1801 and 1802, Schinkel shows a clear interest in repetitive alternation of fenestration and considerably narrow intervening wall mass in

²²² The list of theatres for which Robert produced paintings contains the Theatre Royal in Glasgow as well as Edinburgh and others in Dublin and London.

²²³ Schinkel's sets did not remain unpublished. Between 1819 and 1824 they were published together with other designs in five volumes as Decorationen auf den königlichen Hoftheatern zu Berlin (Set Designs for Royal Court Theatres in Berlin).

²²⁴ cf. Snodin. 1991. p. 110
Guiterman; Llewellyn. 1986. p. 73

quite long rows. Such a structure actually dominates his first independently executed design, the service wing to Schloß Neu-Hardenberg of 1801 [ill. 74]. Although quite unpretentious in appearance, it already shows the basic principle at



ill. 74: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: service wing at Schloß Neu-Hardenberg. 1801

work that underlies his later colonnades. The wall immediately below the narrow and tall windows recedes a bit while slightly clumsy, block-like projections at the bottom end of the intervening wall mass let this structural part appear as a sort of column. There is no emphasis given to such an appearance at the top, but the fact that the strips of wall are smaller than the windows they frame supports the reading as a columnar structure. A very similar structure on a much more impressive scale can be found in the unexecuted design for Schloß Köstritz in Thuringia (1802). Only here, a certain depth created by the horizontal element of this 'arcuated colonnade' is far better expressed in the architect's perspective [ill. 75]. From there, the step towards the substitution of the arcuated top by a simple lintel is a small one.



ill. 75: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: unexecuted design for Schloß Köstritz, Thuringia. 1802

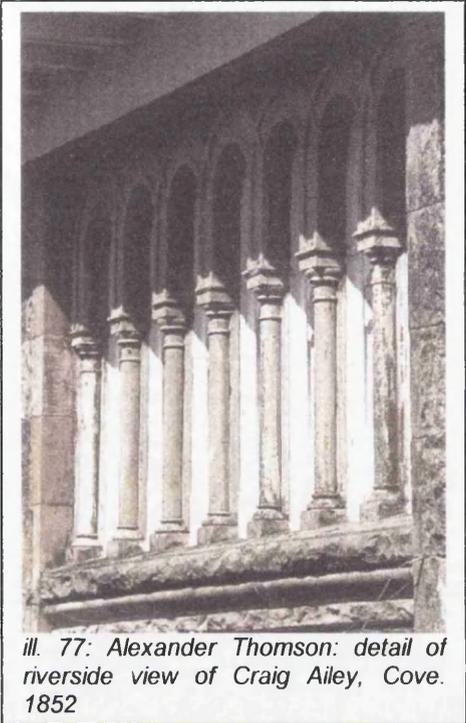
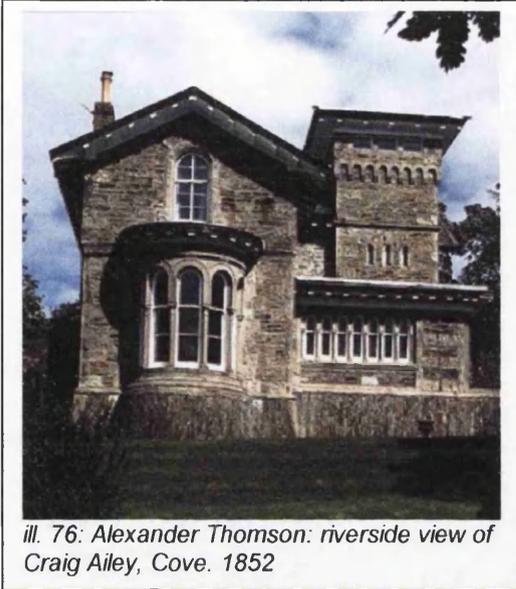
Not only the argumentation in the case of Alexander Thomson can easily be the same; the actual evidence is there, too. McFadzean speaks of Thomson's "preoccupation with the Italian Romanesque style"²²⁵, something very well

documented in his early villa design at Cove, Craig Ailey (1852). Here, we find a wide number of details that explain "why this house was also known as The Italian Villa."²²⁶ These do not only include the picturesque massing of the building, the arched windows and the arcuated corbel course around the tower but also a little colonnade of Tuscan columns that structures the panorama fenestration towards the idyllic view onto the Firth of Clyde [ill. 76]. Of course, this 'colonnade' is comparatively short and the style it is derived from is obviously Romanesque, with Tuscan columns carrying a superstructure of tall interlinked arches [ill. 77]. Yet, the way Thomson exploits the

²²⁵ McFadzean. 1979. p. 80

²²⁶ Stamp. 1999. p. 39

potential of solid and void by reducing the solid wall mass to the minimum of a slender column, juxtaposed with the repetitive alternation of fenestration, actually does provide the perfect point of departure for "his method of translating it [the Italian Romanesque] into trabeated construction."²²⁷



The pictorial inspiration he may have needed in order to extend this comparatively tiny colonnade into the monumental scale of the South Kensington Museum design, he could not have gained from anyone better than from the imaginative painters mentioned above.²²⁸ The situation of inspirational sources that were available to Thomson was good enough for him to take 'these apocalyptic forms and (...) make them work'; but in a concrete stylistic manner that suited his uncompromising attitude towards plain and simple trabeation in the first place.

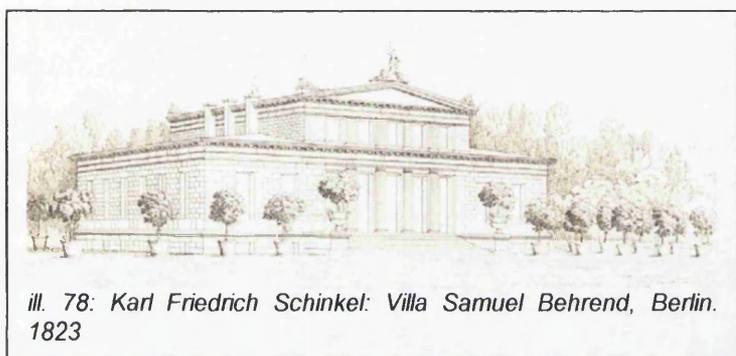
The aspect of Thomson's readiness to adapt Italianate models of inspiration to his preferred Greek style also dominates the other big issue of the traditional Thomson-Schinkel link. The main aspect, here, is Thomson's quite original manner of blending picturesque massing, which was so typical of the Italianate style or Rundbogenstil, with the simple, typically Greek post-and-lintel trabeation. Although for both, Thomson and Schinkel the most representative buildings in this category have already been named in chapter one, a brief look at examples preceding these two in both architect's oeuvre is quite instructive.

²²⁷ McFadzean. 1979. p. 80

²²⁸ Again, the potential of inspiration designs by Leo von Klenze could have provided pale beside options like the Martin paintings. Von Klenze's Alte Pinakothek (1826-36), definitely does display an impressive row of columns. The fact that Turner, in his sketch of the building, substituted the real image of twenty-four columns with the cipher '24' stresses its massiveness. Still, if Thomson ever got to know of this building, it will not have served as more than an assertion that phantasies like Martin's can be translated into actual building.

In Schinkel's case, for instance, this look helps understanding why something that Graham Law calls 'picturesque classicism' was such an extraordinary development; especially in the domestic sector. During the early years of the 1820s, when Schinkel had just manifested his purely classical orientation through the designs of the Neue Wache and the Schauspielhaus, Schinkel also created some interesting designs for comparatively modest country houses. Of these the country house for the banker Samuel Behrend, designed and built in 1823, is the most interesting.²²⁹ It is highly representative of Schinkel's domestic style at that time and his then-strong preference of Greek classicism in general.

A short glimpse at the design [ill. 78] is enough to see that it is based "on the tectonic grid of the Schauspielhaus."²³⁰ Thus, it is not surprising to find it displaying "a



rigorous exterior geometric order" as well as "strict symmetry" in its general massing. This strongly contrasts with the predominantly picturesque arrangement of the Court Gardener's House although

the Behrend villa, too, is set in fairly natural surroundings.²³¹ At that point of Schinkel's career, the idea of basing his massing on picturesque principles seems to have been not yet existing in the architect's imagination. For the design of a pavilion that was to be used as a "modest private dwelling" by King Friedrich Wilhelm II (1824-25)²³² stresses symmetry and compactness even stronger [ill. 79].



If there is any design in Schinkel's oeuvre that documents a kind of transitory stage between the symmetrical Greek appearance of the Behrend villa and

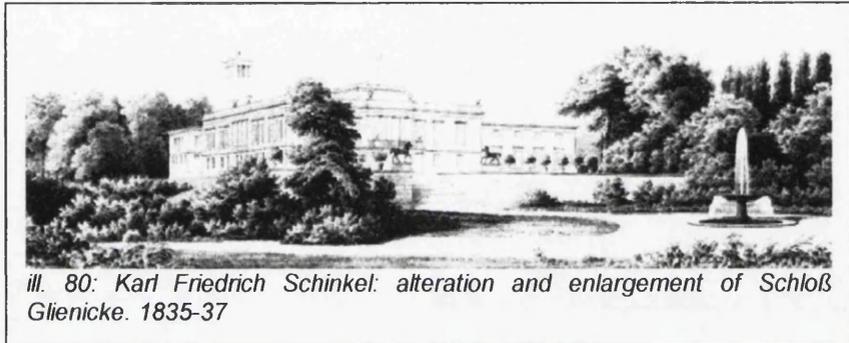
²²⁹ The circumstances under which Schinkel came to design these houses are actually quite close to the ones determining the villa boom on the outskirts of Glasgow, from which Alexander Thomson so much profited. For the main reason for Schinkel receiving these commissions was the reviving economy of liberated Prussia during the 1820s, with most of the commissioners being wealthy manufacturers and merchants. The project preceding the Behrend villa, for instance, was that of a more modest country house for the textile manufacturer G.A. Gabain in 1822. While the latter was never executed, the Behrend villa survived until demolition in 1905.

²³⁰ Bergdoll. 1994. p. 108

²³¹ According to Barry Bergdoll, the setting was "in the leafy streets south of the Charlottenburg Palace to the west of Berlin." *ibid.* p. 108

the picturesque asymmetry of the Court Gardener's House this would be Schloß Glienicke, which Schinkel considerably altered and enlarged for Prince Karl of Prussia from the mid-1820s onwards right into the 1830s²³³. In this design, one can at least detect a basic approach of combining classical Greek characteristics with those of the picturesque. While the various parts of the complex still display the strictness of Schinkel's previous villas and country houses, the overall appearance is decidedly asymmetrical and picturesquely integrated into the beauties of the surrounding countryside [ill. 80].

The main front, for instance, displays the classical tripartite structure of the façade, while a very shallow tetrastyle



ill. 80: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: alteration and enlargement of Schloß Glienicke. 1835-37

portico on plain Doric square columns and with a projecting balcony below clearly stresses the axial symmetry of this part [ill. 81]. This local symmetry is



ill. 81: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: main front of Schloß Glienicke. 1835-37

counterbalanced with the generally asymmetrical layout of the plan, which finds its strongest expression in the asymmetrically placed tower that was added in 1832. This feature in itself again illustrates the contrast between the Greek and the picturesque. Being a feature borrowed from the vocabulary of picturesque architecture, at Schloß Glienicke, it is executed in a way that clearly demonstrates

the simplicity of Greek trabeation. Not unlike the tower of the Caledonia Road Church, its rises up as a stack of unpenetrated masonry until towards the top rectangular opening all four sides are cut through by two square columns each [ill. 82].²³⁴ The finishing of the tower with a very shallow-pitched roof, however, is markedly picturesque once again.

²³² *ibid.* p. 108

²³³ Only the plans for this project were produced by Schinkel himself. In charge of their execution was Ludwig Persius.

²³⁴ The contrast between vertical thrust and horizontal banding is very close to Caledonia Road Church, too.

Although the intention to blend classical Greek and picturesque characteristics to some extent seems to be evident in the design of Schloß Glienicke, it nowhere gets to the clarity of such approach as we can find it in Thomson's villas. Moreover, this appears to be the only example in Schinkel's oeuvre, as opposed to quite a number in Thomson's; and by 1835 Schinkel had obviously almost abandoned the classical Greek in his domestic



ill. 82: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: view of the garden court at Schloß Glienicke. 1835-37

designs. The Court Gardener's House, that has so often been named as an inspirational source for Thomson, is mostly dominated by the Rundbogenstil while references to the classical Greek are only to be found at second sight, being attached to the surrounding extensions. The features that apart from the asymmetrical layout

make this building appear so markedly Italianate are the same that can be found in Thomson's villa designs that precede Holmwood: 'small, round-headed windows with deep



ill. 83: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Court Gardener's House, Potsdam. 1829-40

reveals, arches and flattish roofs and gables' [ill. 83].

These features can be found at Thomson's "best early villas", both built in 1852: the earlier mentioned Craig Ailey and The Knowe in Glasgow's south-bank suburb of Pollockshields.²³⁵ In their general appearance these two villas fit well into the pattern that appears to have governed the design of early nineteenth-century villas and cottages right until the 1850s: "if a villa was to be picturesque and therefore asymmetrical, it would be treated in the Italian, Tudor or cottage orné styles." The continuation of this definition shows that in Britain the alternative to picturesque villa design would have been very close to what we encountered in Schinkel's earlier designs of this kind, like the Behrend villa. For, according to it, " 'Grecian' villas were invariably symmetrical."²³⁶

²³⁵ Stamp. 1999. p. 31

²³⁶ Horrocks, Hilary. *The National Trust for Scotland. Holmwood House*. Edinburgh, 1998. p. 4
cf. Stamp. 1998. p. 49

The exceptions from this rule were few, which is the reason why to Holmwood there has been attributed this quite elevated position in mid-1850s villa design in Britain. For with it "Thomson designed a house in a modern, abstracted version of the architectural language of the Greeks while making the composition asymmetrical and picturesque." Although this qualification of Holmwood is hardly something to be doubted, the link to Schinkel that is established subsequently seems to be too strong. With the text continuing that in order to find precedents for such a design treatment of a villa "one must look abroad - in the buildings designed in Potsdam for the royal family by Karl Friedrich Schinkel."²³⁷

One has to go more into detail when comparing Holmwood to the Court Gardener's House than just listing the obvious similarities in detail, the 'complex and delicately picturesque grouping, with simple, shallow pitched roofs sailing over masonry to the base' and 'with an asymmetrically placed tower and simple monolithic square porticoes.' Of course, one has to agree that these features appear in the design of the Potsdam villa as well as in that of its Glaswegian counterpart, but that gives a slightly wrong impression of the closeness of these two buildings. For, apart from the 'monolithic square porticoes', Thomson would not have needed to turn to Schinkel in order to find a model piece with the same characteristics as these were quite common in Italianate picturesque architecture.

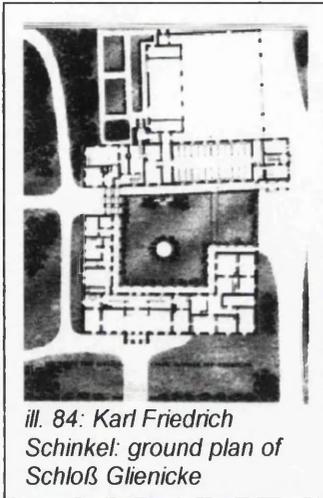
The point where Thomson really seems to have derived inspiration from the Court Gardener's House is well illustrated by Gavin Stamp putting Thomson in a line that links "the royal villas of Schinkel to the suburban prairie houses of [Frank Lloyd] Wright."²³⁸ In his descriptions of Thomson's and Schinkel's villas, Stamp stresses the "horizontal emphasis" at Holmwood as well as the "marked horizontality" of the Court Gardener's House.²³⁹ The manner in which this is created becomes most apparent when taking a comparative look at Craig Ailey, for instance. The reason why, there, no-one would notice any remarkable horizontality is not mainly due to the roofs being higher-pitched ones. The main reason is that, other than Holmwood and the Court Gardener's House, it is one compact bulk of interpenetrating masses. The latter two, however, are more complex designs with more loosely organised individual members that are interlinked across open spaces by comparatively simple, horizontally expanding structures.

A comparative look at the two site plans shows that both layouts have the whole complex structured around a square open space that is opened up towards the rear of

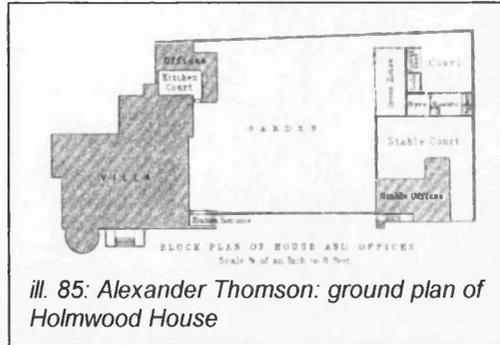
²³⁷ *ibid.*

²³⁸ Stamp. 1998. p. 56

the site [ill. 84, 85]. Schinkel connects the Italianate main house and its tall tower²⁴⁰ with the strictly Greek tea pavilion by means of a vine-covered trellis that consist of a



ill. 84: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: ground plan of Schloß Glienicke



ill. 85: Alexander Thomson: ground plan of Holmwood House

most simple trabeated system [ill. 86]. Thomson, however, links the bulk of the main house and the kitchen at Holmwood with the coach house to its right through a plain wall that stretches along the front of the complex and that protects the garden behind.

Both linking devices have their horizontal projection structured by vertical elements. While at the Court Gardener's House, it is the repetitive piers of the trellis, carrying the long beam that produce the effect



ill. 86: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: view from the garden at the Court Gardener's House. 1829-40

of horizontality, in Holmwood's garden wall, the alignment of very narrow vertical slots, which lend a structuring texture to the wall's surface, follow the same basic principle.

The contrast of individual verticality versus an overall spreading into a horizontal dimension is the general theme explored in both buildings. Although, at Holmwood, we do not find an equally tall tower, the fully glazed cupola fulfils the same function of being a "pivot" around which the rest of the complex is grouped.²⁴¹ From this vertical dominant all other parts project in an increasingly shallow manner, an effect subtly helped by the low-pitched roofs and overhanging eaves. The way, however, in which this general motif of contrasting vertical elements in a horizontal layout is absolutely

²³⁹ *ibid.* p. 46 and 51

²⁴⁰ This part fulfilled the most important functions as it housed the court gardener on ground-floor level as well as providing accommodation for such high-ranking guests, such as Alexander von Humboldt.

²⁴¹ cf. Snodin. p. 153

dominant in every single part of the complex is what makes Holmwood so clearly different from Schinkel's villa. It makes Holmwood, despite its picturesque arrangement, such an impressive demonstration "of an expressive trabeated language rooted in antiquity."²⁴²

While the main house of the Potsdam complex, with its clear preference of the Rundbogenstil, evokes an interesting contrast with the trabeated pergola and the temple-like tea pavilion, the system of clear trabeation pervades every structure on the exterior of Holmwood. This difference in the treatment of trabeated orders has been pointed out by Gavin Stamp saying that "Thomson, in contrast [to Schinkel], develops the logic of those abstracted orders and extends them beyond the building, (...) occasionally, as walls that project into the landscape."²⁴³ At the Court Gardener's House, however, we do not have such a structural continuity binding together the projecting trellises and the main house.

After all, the reason for such a difference is not too hard to find. For both buildings quite clearly illustrate the theoretical attitude towards architecture that dominated the two architects' manner of design. This is strongly linked to the binding character both of them attributed to classical architecture as a point of reference for their own contemporary way of building. While Thomson despised the architectural developments subsequent to the classical Greek (i.e. the classical Roman and the medieval), Schinkel never completely disregarded these. "The complex [of the Court Gardener's House] belongs to a time when, through gradual extension and reference to contemporary needs and opportunities, Schinkel had already overcome his dogmatic classicism "²⁴⁴

As we have already seen in chapter three, from the early days of his career on, Schinkel saw architecture as a 'continued development' that may never reach the point of perfection, thus, symbolising men's constant struggle for improvement and beauty. On his way to the more synthetic style of his Bauakademie (finished in 1836), for instance, with the Court Gardener's House Schinkel created a design in which "the progression [of architecture] is materialised as well as symbolised."²⁴⁵ The whole complex can be read as one all-including illustration of an architectural textbook. It visualises the development of construction from the most simple trabeated system of the trellises -that vine-covered as it is, even appears almost natural- to the more

²⁴² Stamp. 1998. p. 56

²⁴³ Stamp. 1994. p. 233

²⁴⁴ "Diese Anlage gehört in ihrem Entwurf einer Zeit an, in der Schinkel den dogmatischen Klassizismus durch schrittweise Erweiterung und Rückführung auf die zeitgenössischen Bedürfnisse und Möglichkeiten bereits überwunden hatte."

Dolgener. 1991. p. 155

²⁴⁵ Bergdoll; Lipstadt, 1981. p. 77

sophisticated Doric columns along the great arbour at the front and finally to the arcuated construction of the window openings in the main buildings. With reference to Schinkel's statement that 'architecture is the continuation of nature in her constructive activity' it appears to be justified to see the Court Gardener's House complex as symbolising the "transition from nature to architecture."²⁴⁶ However, this, one has to keep in mind, would be architecture as a product of the 'continued development', as Erik Forssmann puts it: "architecture, that will never be completed."²⁴⁷

Taking all this into account, one must say that Thomson's Holmwood does display some kind of basic closeness to Schinkel's Court Gardener's House, but at the same time there can be found profound differences in the concepts that underlie both buildings. For, despite Schinkel having potentially inspired the creation of a complex picturesque grouping with a strong horizontal emphasis, Thomson clearly continues his villa style that he had begun with his Rockland villa at Helensburgh (1854), "Thomson's first picturesque villa in his Grecian manner"²⁴⁸ and that had already dominated the design of Tor House on the Isle of Bute (1855). It is as true of Holmwood as it is of Tor House to call it "an accomplished essay in his [Thomson's] mature trabeated style."²⁴⁹ Yet, what makes Holmwood such an example of architectural originality is the very skilful blending of these strictly classical qualities with the kind of picturesque horizontality that is described above.

The question remains: Is Holmwood really the result of 'Thomson's debt to Schinkel' and, indeed, that 'close to Schinkel's Court Gardener's House?' As earlier mentioned, Gavin Stamp has carried out the most extensive research on alternative sources of inspiration that could have inspired Thomson instead of Schinkel's villa. Other examples of that kind are suggested by David Walker in his aforementioned essay on the Scottish background of Thomson's work. We have already learned that, before Thomson, villas were usually either Grecian and symmetrical or picturesque and anything but Grecian. As Stamp, however, points out, there "were surely exceptions that prove the rule."²⁵⁰

One example that surely has to be regarded as such curiously appeared in the context of research on Schinkel's works way before it was referred to as a potential inspiration for Thomson. Erik Forssmann, in his 1981 monograph on Karl Friedrich Schinkel, introduces us to an Italianate villa design by J.B. Papworth (1775-1847), that

²⁴⁶ Bergdoll. 1994. p. 160

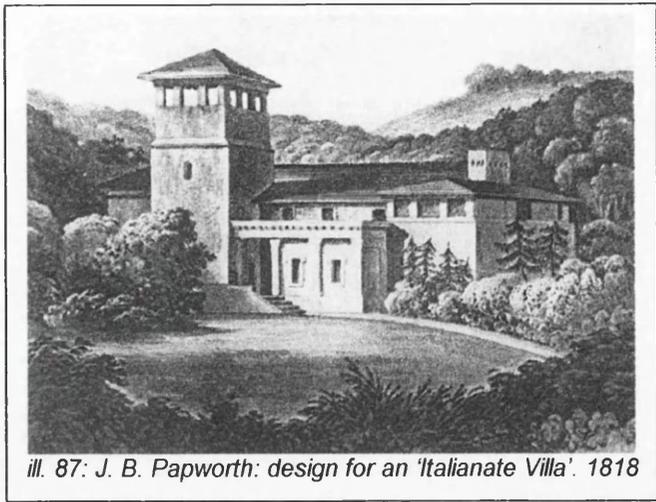
²⁴⁷ "Architektur, die nie fertig wird."
Forssmann. 1981. p. 190

²⁴⁸ Stamp. 1999. p. 180

²⁴⁹ Stamp. 1998. p. 54

²⁵⁰ Stamp. 1998. p. 49

he regards "exemplifying -even if in a simplified manner- the elements that were also to be authoritative for Schinkel's and the Crown Prince's Gardener's House."²⁵¹ This is a design published as 'Italianate Villa' in Papworth's Rural Residences of 1818 [ill. 87]. As David Watkin mentions, around the same time a



ill. 87: J. B. Papworth: design for an 'Italianate Villa'. 1818

version of it was executed at Deepdene in Surrey. This example is taken up by Watkin in his essay on Thomson's German Connection in order to illustrate that "German architects were themselves inspired by English picturesque practice."²⁵² Finally, it was Gavin Stamp again who first pointed out the particular importance of this design to Thomson's villas as it "was vaguely Grecian and self-consciously picturesque."²⁵³

The careful termination seems appropriate as the Papworth villa is not Grecian in a way we are used to from Thomson's designs. It does, however, not dispense with any kind of arcuated construction but also clearly appears to be restricted to pure trabeation. It does this with even much more clarity than one could ever find it in the Court Gardener's House design. The prominent features of the potential model from England that Forssmann describes underscore the striking similarities with the Schinkel villa: "the free asymmetrical grouping of spaces in the plan, the little extensions and additions, the outdoor stairs, the belvedere tower and tent roof."²⁵⁴

The question that has to be asked in view of this is why Alexander Thomson would have needed to draw inspiration from Prussia if he could have got it from England. Furthermore, these similarities prove that the much more interesting aspect about the Court Gardener's House as to any influence on Thomson is the horizontal projection into the landscape and its firm rooting to the ground. Considering this, however, there is one particular reason why "the relevance of Playfair's work to Thomson's lies not so much in his great public buildings as in" what David Walker calls "the Germanic classical-Italianate houses he designed in 1828-29 (...) and the Italianate villa of

²⁵¹ "...kommt eine Villa vor, die, wenn auch in vereinfachter Form, die Elemente exemplifiziert, die auch für Schinkel's und des Kronprinzen 'Gärtnerhaus' maßgebend wurden."

Forssmann. 1981. p. 190

²⁵² Watkin. 1994. p. 193

²⁵³ Stamp. 1998. p. 49

²⁵⁴ "die freie unsymmetrische Gruppierung der Räume im Grundriß, die kleinen Aus- und Anbauten, die Treppen im Freien, der Turm mit Belvedere und Zeltdach."

Dalcrue farmhouse (...), designed in 1832.²⁵⁵ While the latter has a strong inspirational quality as an Italianate picturesque design in general, the one that may have provided the more unusual inspiration for Thomson is Dunphail House in Morayshire, designed by William H. Playfair in 1828. For although it did not strictly follow any style -if any, it was definitely not the Grecian-, it appears to display the same horizontal qualities that we can find at Holmwood and the Court Gardener's House, calmly projecting into the landscape while the bulk of the complex's masses gradually shallows from its pivotal tower feature.

There were other buildings in Britain that in one or the other way were 'exceptions that proved the rule.' The ones mentioned above, however, should convey a sufficient impression of the kind of inspirational potential that should have been at least as easily accessible to Thomson as the plates of Schinkel's Sammlung. Once again, one must accept the possibility that Thomson drew on these for his villa designs of the 1850s. Yet, the version of a combined Greek and picturesque style that he introduced to the architectural world could have been as well inspired by sources other than Schinkel. Furthermore, as with the use of the colonnade, one should not forget Thomson's talent for translating Italianate concepts into his favourite Greek style, which itself constantly provided a helpful source of his originality.

In chapter one, we learned that the issue of glazing has been another point of discussion in the debate about Thomson's originality and the possibility of influence from Schinkel. The two designs most strongly related to each other in this context are Alexander Thomson's unexecuted design for St. Mary's Church in Edinburgh and the equally unrealised project for a Crimean palace by Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Of the latter the illustration showing a view of the terrace by the sea is the one of particular interest to us. It shows a central rectangular portico that is supported by caryatids, projecting from a small pedimented front that itself projects slightly from the line of the wall. Also clear to see in the coloured illustration are the two semicircular bays on Ionic columns that flank this central portico. The reason why these have attracted so much attention in the Thomson discussion is that they seem to suggest a very original way of direct glazing. While John McKean's interpretation is that, in these bays, 'glass is held between the columns as if in neoprene gaskets,' Michael Snodin reveals that "the semicircular side bays (...) are filled with plate glass in bronze frames."²⁵⁶

Forssmann. 1981. p. 190

²⁵⁵ Walker. 1994. p. 40

²⁵⁶ Snodin. 1991. p. 206

The feature in Thomson's Edinburgh church design to which David Watkin relates this is quite obviously the circular porch that projects at one corner of the temple front with its use of caryatids instead of the Ionic columns we find at Schinkel's bays. According to John McKean, the Schinkel design is an example where "[t]he parallel with Thomson (...) is beyond coincidence." However, giving credit to Thomson's originality, he concedes that "[t]he technical solution" that Thomson presents in his way of glazing "stems nevertheless from his stubborn thinking through of a pictorial problem", adding that this was "possible for Thomson in a way it couldn't have been so few years earlier for Schinkel."²⁵⁷

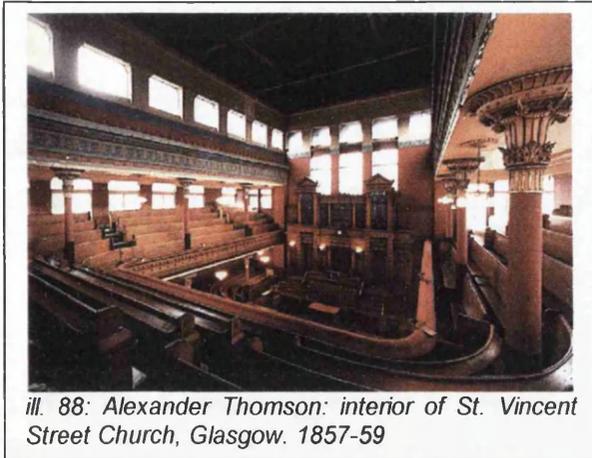
Despite all similarity at first sight, the chosen example from Thomson's œuvre is a fairly insufficient basis on which to discuss the potential inspiration Thomson may have derived from the Schinkel lithograph for his quite idiosyncratic way of handling lighting. For, due to the incompleteness of the surviving material, we do not know how Thomson wanted the glazing of the caryatid bay to be executed. It is a curious fact that Thomson used two features in combination both of which we can find in the view of Schinkel's palace, but it could as easily be mere coincidence.

As far as the combination of these two elements (circular bay and caryatids) is concerned, Thomson could have received the same information from other sources that he more surely will have known. The caryatids carrying a rectangular portico are a feature well known from the Erechtheion on the Acropolis and even better to Britons since the Inwood's copy of this classical precedent in his design for St. Pancras Church, London (1819-22). The projecting circular bay, at the same time, is no feature particularly rare in Greek Revival designs, and Thomson's pseudo-apsidal use of it suggests another source of inspiration itself.

It is more interesting to compare Schinkel's demonstration of direct glazing to similar examples we know of among Thomson's designs. The one chosen by John McKean in order to illustrate Thomson's attitude provides a perfect example. At St. Vincent Street Church [ill. 88], we still exactly find in executed form what McKean so well describes:²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ *ibid.*

²⁵⁸ Eventually, McKean applies this description to a more or less identical design, that could be found at Caledonia Road Church prior to its destruction.
McKean. 1984. p. 31



"The moulded stone profile directly confronts a pane of glass. There is no junction; no compromise of a window frame confuses the distinction. The stone form vanishes into the opaque glass. Inside the building, the same detail and impression are repeated in reverse. For although it cannot be perceived through the translucent but clouded pane, the profile of the wall moulding continues through the screen."

ill. 88: Alexander Thomson: interior of St. Vincent Street Church, Glasgow. 1857-59

The method of directly putting glass between columns, which is so clearly indicated in Schinkel's illustration, is actually very similar to the manner in which Thomson inserted his glazing into masonry. While for Schinkel we are left with speculations why he did it, in the case of Alexander Thomson, we helpfully have his personal opinion on the problem. What we find Thomson saying in his last lecture of the Haldane series, explains how the rumor evolved that "Thomson had a horror of openings."²⁵⁹ For, to Thomson, the rise of the window was inseparably linked to the decline of the colonnade. It is not surprising to find him blaming this on the Romans and subsequent architectural developments as "they were the first to use the arch in this way"; by which Thomson means what he despisefully calls "fenestrated or windowed architecture."²⁶⁰ His objection to the substitution of the 'columnar principle' by "fully adopting fenestration" can be found strongly opposed in almost all of his buildings. He constantly tried to integrate the necessity of lighting into some form of columnar structure, be it a straight colonnade or a bay.

Wherever Thomson did this he made sure that the column would not lose any of "the extreme delicacy of its outlines and its perfect harmony with the surrounding parts of the structure."²⁶¹ He did it by either consequently avoiding the use of window frames or by separating them from the columnar structure in front of them. While the former is the system applied at St. Vincent Street Church, where plain glass and clear cut masonry meet directly, the latter can be found in a number of Thomson's commercial designs, such as the top-storey colonnade at Grecian Buildings (1867-68) in Sauchiehall Street [ill. 89].

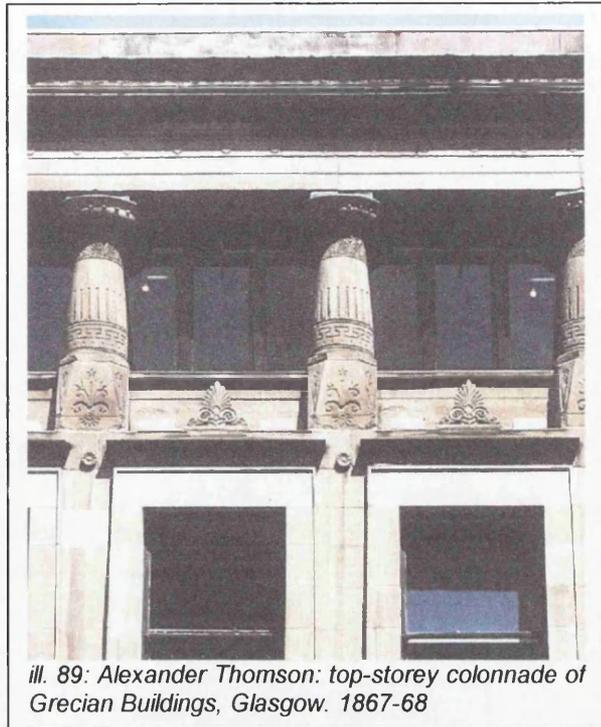
²⁵⁹ *ibid.* p. 33

²⁶⁰ Thomson, Alexander. 'The Haldane Lectures. No. IV. Roman Architecture (1874)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). *The Light of Truth and Beauty. The Lectures of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. Architect. 1817-1875.* Glasgow, 1999. p. 170

²⁶¹ *ibid.* p. 171

Here, the required lighting is sufficiently provided without any voids distracting our attention from the solid by penetrating the wall mass. Typical of Thomson, he put a completely free-standing colonnade in front of an independent screen of window frames and glass plates. Thus, the column could still embody "a form of ideal perfection", undisturbed by any interfering glazing devices.

It is important to see that Alexander Thomson was not primarily concerned with the mere technical task of maximising the amount of light inside a



ill. 89: Alexander Thomson: top-storey colonnade of Grecian Buildings, Glasgow. 1867-68

building while minimising the efforts required by statics. Such functionalist thinking was definitely secondary to his ultimate goal of promoting the structure that, in his view, "had been growing all through the early ages of the world down to its perfect development on the Acropolis of Athens," the column. John McKean poignantly calls the reason for Thomson's use of fenestration to provide protection "from the inclement Glaswegian weather."²⁶² As Thomson had chosen an ideal that was originally designed to suit conditions in which humidity and cold are two of the minor problems, "[t]he adaptation of this vision to the condition of nineteenth-century urban Scotland was to be for him a major task."²⁶³

It is hard to say if Karl Friedrich Schinkel had anything similar to Thomson's thoughts on his mind when designing the Orianda palace. The fact that he never used a similar technique elsewhere, and especially not in domestic designs as Thomson did, may suggest that he reserved it for a design of such "grandiose and largely functionless structures"²⁶⁴ like his Crimean dream project. The motivation to use it there may have been the same as Thomson's, not to disturb the subtle beauty displayed by columnar orders. The fact that, as well as at the semicircular bays, Schinkel wanted to use "large-scale glass panes set into the fluting of the Ionic columns of the belvedere-temple"²⁶⁵ at Orianda suggests that he regarded such an

²⁶² McKean. 1984. p. 31

²⁶³ *ibid.* p. 33

²⁶⁴ Edwards, Brian. 'Backward in Going Forward'. in: *Building Design*, no. 1371. 30 October 1998. p. 10

²⁶⁵ Bergdoll. 1994. p. 224

immaculate display of classical beauty appropriate to meet the requirements of palatial representativeness. As we have seen earlier, however, Schinkel was far from Thomson's uncompromising 'crusade' in the name of Greek trabeation. Therefore, to solve this technical problem was not a task comparable in its importance to what it posed to Thomson.

The question of potential influence Schinkel could have enacted on Thomson here, is connected to the same circumstances as in the other two previous cases. The pictorial source is there and, in this particular case again, it was available in published form.²⁶⁶ Yet, the case is also similar because, with glazing as much as with the picturesque-Greek blend and the square-columned colonnade, the architectural ideology that guided Alexander Thomson in his designs could as easily have been a sufficient drive for finding a solution to the problem that confronted him. This view may be confirmed by the fact that with the designs in which he separated colonnade and glass screen Thomson created an effective alternative to Schinkel's idea. That this technique first appeared in domestic designs, such as Holmwood or the Double Villa, indicates that Thomson was willing and able to meet the challenge to integrate glazed colonnades into domestic designs, where direct glazing as suggested by Schinkel would have been impossible for reasons of practicality. Motivation for this particular novelty Thomson would have drawn sufficiently from his Greek vision; the concrete idea is nowhere present in Schinkel's publications. It has to be agreed that Thomson in the first place owed this discovery to 'his stubborn thinking through of a pictorial problem.'

As far as the remarks on similarities between church designs of Karl Friedrich Schinkel and those of Alexander Thomson are concerned that were made by Henry-Russell Hitchcock, the examples of Schinkel's 'Berlin suburban churches and church designs' that appear to have a recognisable influential potential are limited to two of the actually executed designs and one of the five versions of the Oranienburg projects. The Thomson church to be compared is named by Hitchcock as the Caledonia Road Church.

The most significant difference between the Schinkel designs and that of Caledonia Road Church is that none of the Berlin examples originally featured a tower

²⁶⁶ Together with a similarly gigantic and equally unexecuted 'dream palace' designed to be erected on the Acropolis for Prince Otto of Bavaria (1834), the Orianda project was published as a portfolio of lithographs, called Werke der Höheren Baukunst (Works of Higher Architecture), between 1840 and 1848.

or anything similar.²⁶⁷ What they all have in common is a mutual proximity of their front elevation structure. All of them, in some way, exploit the pedimented temple motif. While at St. Elisabeth and in the second version of the Oranienburg designs, a quite solid pedimented entrance façade is fronted by a pentastyle portico, pedimented itself and set in antis, St. Paul is devoid of a portico but is structured by four Doric pilasters with quite individual interpretations of Corinthian capitals.

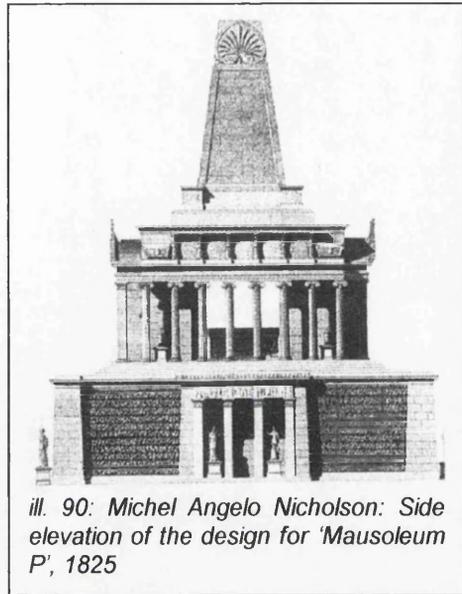
Although St. Elisabeth and the Oranienburg design are largely identical, an important difference is that the latter features four Ionic columns in the centre of its portico with a square column each at the sides. In the executed version at St. Elisabeth, however, all six columns are identically square. Yet, all three of them have in common, that behind the portico, i.e. between the pilasters, there are three doors of equal size and of plain rectangular shape. This is, in combination with the pentastyle, almost entirely Ionic portico, is definitely one of the strongest resemblances of the Caledonia Road Church that one can find in any of these designs. For there we also find a portico on Ionic columns fronting a wall behind that is penetrated by three vertically rectangular openings of equal size, in this case windows. Even the Corinthian square columns appear in Thomson's design. They close the gap between the front of the portico and the wall behind on the side opposite of the tower.

The rhythm of repetitively grouped vertical elements that these three columns initiate can be argued to be continued by the long clerestorey colonnade at about the same height of the building. In this respect, the repetitive pilaster structure along the sides of St. Paul could have played an inspirational part. As far as the ground-floor zone of the Caledonia Road Church's nave is concerned, the row of three identical windows, framed by pylon-like mouldings and punched into a comparatively plain wall, looks relatively close to the fenestration along the sides of the other two Schinkel churches.

Something that decidedly qualifies the relevance of the three Schinkel designs for the design of Thomson's church is the fact that the portico that fronts the Schauspielhaus is the one known better and actually closer to those we find at Caledonia Road Church, St. Vincent Street Church and in the Edinburgh St. Mary's Church design. For it entirely consists of Ionic columns and, perhaps more importantly, is raised high above ground-floor level. The Schauspielhaus is also the perfect example for the combination that Gomme and Walker referred to, that 'of classical portico and horizontal bands of windows punched deep into the wall.'

²⁶⁷ The campanile-like tower next to the nave of St. Paul is a later addition of the 1880s and does not appear in the respective engraving in Schinkel's *Sammlung*. As Hitchcock appears to have been well familiar with the plates in this publication, it is

If in this context, however, one wants to attribute particular relevance to the Schauspielhaus, it has to be for the combination of these two features. For the pentastyle Ionic portico alone was not a rare feature in Greek Revival architecture. One example that, in its proportions, is even much closer to the Thomson churches is the portico of William Playfair's Surgeons' Hall in Edinburgh (1830-32) , which also stands on an elevating plinth. Furthermore, Thomson could even have found a source of similar inspiration within his own family. For it was no less a man than his father-in-law, Michel Angelo Nicholson, who used the elevated Ionic portico in one of his designs [ill. 90]. As the engraving of the unexecuted



ill. 90: Michel Angelo Nicholson: Side elevation of the design for 'Mausoleum P', 1825

design for 'Mausoleum P' (1825) shows, Nicholson even uses the horizontal banding for structuring the massive plinth that raises the heptastyle Ionic portico.

Wherever Thomson got the number of details from, it is definitely justified to say that the combination of all the different details mentioned above in designs that he created to house churches was something very original in Thomson's days, something that in such a way Schinkel himself never did.

unlikely that he regarded it as a part of the original design, thus, hinting at a similarity with the Caledonia Road Church tower.

Chapter 5

A Reference to the Cultural Backgrounds of Schinkel's and Thomson's Architectural Ideologies

Considering the biographical facts, any influence of Schinkel's theoretical work on the writings of 'Greek' Thomson has to be ruled out; especially as the most important pieces of Schinkel's writing were not even published in German before the later decades of our century. A lot of the facts presented in the previous chapters, however, seem to suggest that in the nineteenth century there must have been a spiritual closeness in thinking among Germans and Britons that could have allowed representatives of both nations to develop very similar ideas independently of each other. In chapter two we learned about the Anglo-German cultural exchange in the form of all kinds of artists travelling abroad in those years. It seems to prove such an assumption of mutual interest and awareness.

It is two concrete examples -one from Germany, one from Britain- that appear to substantiate the relevance of this international closeness to the case of Thomson and Schinkel. In both cases, the theoretical writings not only seem to have had an impact on the architectural theory of the respective 'home architect' but also on that of the person on the other side of the Channel. That such export of thought appears to have happened indirectly shows that the respective ideas not only reached Schinkel and Thomson but became more widely absorbed in their home cultures.

The two examples that will be referred to subsequently are the largely influential theories of the Irish philosopher and statesman Edmund Burke (1729-1797) and the German theologian Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768-1834). The ideas of both of these are known to have had an influence that doubtlessly reached beyond the borders of their home countries. In the view on the classical ideal that Schinkel and Thomson widely shared, we find striking parallels to these theories of Schleiermacher and Burke.

While Friedrich Schleiermacher was one of the most important theoreticians of Protestant theology in the nineteenth century, similar can be said of Edmund Burke for the realm of philosophy, especially its aesthetic branch. We know that Thomson's attitudes were deeply anchored in Presbyterian culture, in which he was strongly involved throughout his life. The distribution of Schleiermacher's theories in the circles of this Church, especially in Scotland, can be safely assumed. Edmund Burke's theories on aesthetics, at the same time, were equally wide-spread in philosophical

circles in Britain, and via German philosophers of the early nineteenth century his thought may well have reached Karl Friedrich Schinkel.

We have already seen that up to a certain point Schinkel and Thomson shared the basic view on the development of architecture as a constant process of refinement of an absolute ideal. Thomson used the terminology of 'purification' in order to illustrate the process that he regarded to go on "from generation to generation" until perfection is reached.²⁶⁸ Thanks to Sam McKinstry and Jane Plenderleith, we are aware that a very similar idea appears in the writings of Friedrich Schleiermacher, only here applied to the development of religion. In their essay 'Thomson and Schleiermacher', the two authors point out that Schleiermacher draws on a very similar idea of purifying the impure.²⁶⁹ Just like Thomson did not deny the pre-Greek cultures a developmental value in architecture, Schleiermacher conceded an "inherent value" to all non-Christian religions as in all of them there is "more or less of the true nature of religion."²⁷⁰ It is only that Schleiermacher saw "the original intuition of Christianity" to be "more sublime" than the others.²⁷¹

In Schleiermacher's view, all religions attempt to convey a sensation of the a transcendental authority, the Infinite. It is what he calls 'intuition' that makes his view on religion so important in a comparison to Thomson and Schinkel. The term can be explained as "the supremacy of human religious experience, and feeling over reason,"²⁷² i.e. religion managing to appeal to the senses prior to reason and thereby conveying a sensation of the Infinite. This is also the reason why Schleiermacher regarded Christianity to be the most sublime of all religions. For in the figure of Jesus Christ, to him, it most strongly represents "the reconciliation of the finite and worldly with the Infinite."²⁷³ Thus, it brings the worldly believers the closest to the transcendental authority they believe in. This idea can be reduced to the simple statement that religious belief must be felt not understood; a believer must feel to be part of "the whole Universe"²⁷⁴, he cannot understand it without having felt it first.

²⁶⁸ Thomson, Alexander. 'An Inquiry into the Appropriateness of the Gothic Style for the Proposed Buildings for the University of Glasgow, with Some Remarks upon Mr. Scott's Plans (1866)'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). The Light of Truth and Beauty. The Lectures of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. Architect. 1817-1875. Glasgow, 1999. p. 68

²⁶⁹ McKinstry, Sam; Plenderleith, Jane. 'Thomson and Schleiermacher'. in: McKinstry; Stamp. 1994. p. 76

²⁷⁰ Schleiermacher, Friedrich. On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers, (translated by John Oman). New York, 1958. p. 216

²⁷¹ *ibid.* 241

²⁷² McKinstry; Plenderleith. 1994. p. 74

²⁷³ *ibid.*

²⁷⁴ Schleiermacher uses the term 'the whole Universe' in one of his Speeches. Schleiermacher. 1958. p. 241

The parallels to the architectural theory of Alexander Thomson and Karl Friedrich Schinkel are obvious. The transcendental authority in architecture is represented by the universal laws, according to which the world was created and which constitute the basis for the creation of beauty. Thus, beauty is a symbol of harmony with the order of the universe, the order of the Infinite, the order of God. In order to convey a sensation of the sublime nature of the Infinite people have to be given the opportunity to experience beauty. They would not necessarily have to understand the laws at work behind the creation of it, but they would feel the unity with the authority that 'passed' these laws. As we have seen in one of Schinkel's statements earlier on, he believed that such experience of 'totality' can make man 'investigate the interrelationships' of the phenomenon of beauty and, thus, lead from an emotional sensation of it to a reasonable understanding.

That Schinkel was fully aware of the whole idea about architecture representing the Infinite on the basis of an understanding of higher laws becomes apparent from the following. Erik Forssmann reports that Schinkel noted down a passage from the writings of his life-long and very close friend Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand Solger, the Berlin philosopher and aestheticist:

"Religion is the act of the involuntary unification of the finite with the Infinite; a bright spark of the finite's awareness of its relation to the Infinite. This is not philosophy. For philosophy is the ambition by means of freedom to unite the finite with the Infinite. And it is not art; for art is the ambition by means of freedom to represent the Infinite within the finite."²⁷⁵

The definition of religion recalls strongly the way Schleiermacher thought religion to appeal to man. According to him, "the fundamental intuition of a religion must be some intuition of the Infinite in the finite."²⁷⁶ The 'supremacy of feeling over reason' is caused by man being 'involuntarily united' with God by religion.²⁷⁷ The notion of freedom Solger introduces here seems to be the opposite of 'involuntary' acting, hence, acting based on reason. Therefore, philosophy tries to link the infinite world with the transcendental Infinite through reason. One way to do so is trying to translate the laws behind the Infinite into a finite category from our world, i.e. draw up a theory

²⁷⁵ "Religion ist der Act der unwillkürlichen Vereinigung des Endlichen als Endliches mit dem Ewigen, ein leuchtender Funke des Bewußtseyns eines Endlichen von seinem Verhältnis zum Ewigen. Dieses ist nicht Philosophie. Denn diese ist das Bestreben, auf dem Wege der Freiheit das Endliche mit dem Unendlichen zu vereinigen, und nicht Kunst, denn diese ist das Bestreben, mit Freiheit das Ewige im Endlichen darzustellen."

According to Forssmann, Schinkel noted down this passage into his diary in 1803.
quoted from: Forssmann. 1981. p. 62

²⁷⁶ Schleiermacher. 1958. p. 237

²⁷⁷ 'Unwillkürlich' here does not mean against the will of someone but rather without him necessarily contributing to it. The connotation of 'involuntary' that suggest something is done against the will, thus, has to be ignored here.

that is expressed in language. Applied to architecture this would be to search for the higher laws of the Infinite and their expression within a theory.

Architecture also provides a good example for the last sentence of the Solger quote. Apparently, the author of these lines thought similarly. For Barry Bergdoll points out that "Solger viewed architecture as the most readily accessible of all art forms by the very fact that it manipulated the material of the real world and of real life in order to transcend them."²⁷⁸ With architecture being the discipline that by its utilitarian nature is the closest to the finite world, it best links up our human presence to the Infinite if it displays a reasonable understanding of the laws of the Infinite. Here, the closeness to the ideas of Schinkel as well as Thomson is beyond any doubt.

However, considering Solger's "belief that it was the duty of the artist to make the ideal knowable through manipulation of the phenomenal"²⁷⁹ establishes a link to another important figure in this area, Edmund Burke. For the call for manipulation can most strongly be found in his aesthetical theories on The Sublime and the Beautiful.²⁸⁰ The fact that Solger, towards the end of his life, held the position of a lecturer on aesthetics in the philosophical faculty of Berlin University makes it safe to assume that he will have been familiar with Schleiermacher's writings as well as with those of Burke. We have already learned earlier on that Schinkel and Solger met weekly for conversation on aesthetics. Schinkel's familiarity with the basics aspects of these theories, therefore, can well be assumed without to much speculation. Thomson, however, even leaves no doubt about his awareness of Burke's theories by quoting him as a source of inspiration in one of his lectures Edmund Burke dedicated a little section of his aforementioned book to the idea of infinity. In the first sentence there, he names infinity as a "source of the sublime,"²⁸¹ while the sublime is defined by him in a fairly abstract and non-religious way. However, he, too, defines it as something affecting the recipient to feel "astonishment" without processing the perceived by reason.²⁸² Even if we do not read this as a link to God, it is still the link to a superior power that causes astonishment in the recipient of this sublime sensation, thus, the finite human being sensing his unity with the Infinite.

²⁷⁸ Bergdoll. 1994. p. 48

²⁷⁹ *ibid.*

²⁸⁰ The full original title was A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful, first published in 1759.

²⁸¹ Boulton, James Thomson. (ed.). Edmund Burke. A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful. London, 1967. p. 73

²⁸² *ibid.* p. 57

It is, moreover, the manner in which Burke suggests to deal with the problem of conveying an infinite sensation that makes him so interesting to our case. The problem that he sees in this is that "[t]here are scarce any things which can become objects of our senses that are really, and in their own nature infinite." His solution to the problem proves Sam McKinstry's point that "[e]ven if he [Thomson] had not mentioned his [Burke's] name in the lecture," similarities in their thinking would make "it obvious that Thomson was deeply influenced by Edmund Burke."²⁸³ Burke continues:

"But the eye not being able to perceive the bounds of many things, they seem to be infinite, and they produce the same effect as if they were really so. We are deceived in the like manner, if parts of some long objects are so continued to any indefinite number, that the imagination meets no check which may hinder its extending at pleasure."

Yet, in a later section, the link between Burke's theory and the architectural practice we are concerned with becomes even clearer. Under 'The effects of SUCCESSION in visual objects explained', Burke describes the effect one can so frequently observe in the colonnades of Thomson and Schinkel and which both of them seem to have exploited effectively by integrating into their designs deceiving manipulations such as the effectful blind windows:

"let us set before our eyes a colonnade of uniform pillars planted in a right line; let us take our stand, in such a manner, that the eye may shoot along this colonnade (...). it is plain, that the rays from the first round pillar will cause in the eye a vibration of that species; an image of the pillar itself. The pillar immediately succeeding increases it; that which follows renews and increases the impression; each in its order as it succeeds, repeats impulse after impulse, and stroke after stroke, until the eye long exercised in one particular way cannot lose that object immediately; and being violently roused by this continued agitation, it presents the mind with a grand or sublime conception."²⁸⁴

What we finally find Edmund Burke advocating here is what Thomson called 'the delicacy of manipulation', applied to the reasonable procession of a visual perception. The deeper the colonnade soars into depth the lesser reason can process the repetitive structure as consisting of single parts. Our imagination takes over and is not hindered by reason anymore to extend the succession of single parts into infinity. We are deceived. And Burke was fully aware of such manipulation of reason; he even advocated it saying that "no work of art can be great, but as it deceives."

²⁸³ McKinstry. 1994. p. 66

²⁸⁴ Boulton. 1967. p. 141

Again, the closeness to Thomson and Schinkel is remarkable. Both, Schinkel and Thomson regarded it necessary to employ deception in their designs to heighten the effect they wanted to achieve. In order to be able to do so they demanded freedom over the sheer utilitarian needs of a building's fitness. Even this aspect can be found in Burke's writing, however, referring to the beautiful in this case. The title of another section already leaves no doubt about his attitude: 'FITNESS not the cause of BEAUTY'. In it, he concludes:

"It is true, that the infinitely wise and good Creator has (...) frequently joined beauty to those things which he has made useful to us; but this does not prove that an idea of use and beauty are the same thing, or that they are any way dependent on each other."²⁸⁵

At this point, it is necessary to point at a difficult difference in the terminology used by the writers at issue. Edmund Burke clearly distinguishes between the sublime and the beautiful. Schinkel, however, almost exclusively uses 'beauty' as the term to describe his overall aim. That Schinkel's perception of beauty is incongruent with that of Edmund Burke becomes clear when we look at Burke's definitions of what he regards not to be the cause of beauty. Burke dedicates a section each to explaining that neither proportion, nor fitness, nor perfection are the cause of beauty; but he ascribes it to characteristics rather irrelevant to the attitudes of Schinkel and Thomson, such as smallness, smoothness, delicacy and fragility. Schinkel's idea of beauty, however, seems to be closer to Thomson's goal of perfection, while both do include Burke's demand for deception in their theories.

At this stage, one must acknowledge that the closeness of theories reaches its limits. The similarities clearly are the goal to create something that links up an earthly presence with a transcendental authority of infinity, and that such a goal can not be accomplished by simply conveying to reason a sensation of appropriateness as far as proportion, fitness, etc. is concerned. One way to help to achieve that is perceptive manipulation addresses the observer emotionally. Thus, both, Schinkel and Thomson seem to be the closest in their ultimate goal to what Burke calls the sublime.

It would be vain trying to establish a link between any of the two philosophers and the two architects in a manner as directly as to expect full congruence of their ideas. This could hardly have happened as neither Schleiermacher's nor Burke's ideas were *the* one single influence on Thomson and Schinkel during their career, but rather one amongst many. Furthermore, knowledge on the respective theories is most

²⁸⁵ *ibid.* p. 104-06

likely to have reached the architects mediated by others that picked up the original thoughts and blended them with their own.

Sam McKinstry, for instance, points out "that Thomson was well aware of the developments in aesthetic theory that had succeeded Burke's book," and Thomson himself proves this by referring to one of Burke's followers and successors, Archibald Alison, as another source of inspiration. Although Alison's theories were not too different from Burke's, at certain points he had developed them further. Thus, Thomson may well have absorbed a personal synthesis of them.

The same applies to Karl Friedrich Schinkel. His knowledge of Burke's aesthetics he will have achieved through philosopher friends like Solger introducing him to such theories. We know that Solger constantly encouraged Schinkel to make himself familiar with the contemporary discourse on aesthetic matters and that both discussed such matters in different rounds frequently. Yet, Burke's ideas may also have reached Schinkel rather indirectly. His aesthetics found wide-spread acclaim amongst German thinkers of the early nineteenth century. Even the authoritative figure of Immanuel Kant is known to have been influenced by Burke's theories and to have absorbed them in his own aesthetic theories.

As to the link between Friedrich Schleiermacher and Karl Friedrich Schinkel, the situation is similar. There is no evidence suggesting any concrete knowledge of Schinkel's on Schleiermacher's theories. Yet, the latter's influence on the zeitgeist in general is undoubted, especially in a state so strongly associated with Protestantism as Prussia. With Schinkel having been a high-ranking representative of this state, we can assume that the essence of such thinking will have been detectable in manifold theories and attitudes in the Prussian world of thought.

In Thomson's case, for instance, a more direct link can even be established. For we can learn from the article of Sam McKinstry and Jane Plenderleith, that within the Scottish Presbyterian Church there were strong links to Germany.²⁸⁶ Two ministers are named -one from Glasgow, one from Edinburgh- who are known to have studied German theology in Germany; one of them even at the same university at which Schleiermacher taught before being called to Berlin.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ In his introduction to *The Light of Truth and Beauty*, Gavin Stamp remarks that "the United Presbyterian Church was profoundly interested in modern German philosophy."

Stamp, Gavin. 'Introduction'. in: Stamp, Gavin (ed.). *The Light of Truth and Beauty. The Lectures of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. Architect. 1817-1875*. Glasgow, 1999. p. 5

²⁸⁷ cf. McKinstry; Plenderleith. 1994. pp. 77-78

Of course, there are a number of alternative sources that for both architects could have provided influence similar to that Burke and Schleiermacher have to offer.

We know that Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory, published in his 1859 On the Origin of Species, had gained a significance reaching far beyond the realm of biological science by the time Thomson lectured on this issue. The idea of purifying development, therefore, could have been inspired by Darwin as well. Similar applies to the idea of artistic freedom. It will not have been an absolute necessity for Schinkel, for instance, to gain such ideas from the writings of Edmund Burke. For it was a pervasive idea that could be found in all disciplines of art in the period of German idealism, and writers like Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) were keen promoters of such thinking. The situation in Britain was not much different as far this aspect was concerned.

Still, even if many of these ideas were 'in the air' around the time Schinkel and Thomson appear to have been influenced by them, it only shows more clearly how close in thinking British and German culture were at that time and that all kinds of intercultural similarities were not at all extraordinary or unusual. The feeling of a lost unity between man and his Creator as a result mainly of the Enlightenment and constantly increasing industrialisation was neither confined within the borders of Britain nor Germany. The diverse attempts to recreate a totality, which many saw epitomised in classical culture and its potential to compensate the felt loss, by their nature had to be similar. For they were based on the same notion of idealistic disorientation.

Conclusion

Considering what has been presented in this work so far, it will not come as a surprise that there is no definite answer to the question whether or not Karl Friedrich Schinkel influenced the architectural designs of Alexander Thomson in any way. One has to agree to the statement that we find in the footnotes of Ronald McFadzean's Thomson monograph. In the previous chapters, we have seen indeed that "[t]he question of possible Schinkel influence on Thomson is a very debatable point," and it seems as if McFadzean's final judgement that "[t]he case for Schinkel remains unproven" will still hold in many years to come.

If we, however, look at what can be drawn from the research that was carried out here, the answer that can be given is not less interesting. After a selection and categorisation of all previous claims in chapter one, we were shown in chapter two that the possibilities for Alexander Thomson to receive influential pictorial inspiration were numerous and of a broad variety. This can be applied to ancient classical model buildings as well as to those of contemporary, neo-classical origin. Examples from the latter period comprise German neo-classicism as well as the British Greek Revival.

We have seen that, from 1863 the latest, Thomson had concrete pictorial knowledge of Schinkel's work but that, on the other hand, neither Thomson himself nor anyone from his closer surroundings is known to have seen Schinkel's work with their own eyes. We were also shown that there are possibilities of some of these people having been to Germany on architectural missions. Thus, it can by no means be ruled out that first-hand experience of Schinkel's architecture was passed on to Thomson by people like Robert Foote, the man who discovered the Glaswegian talent.

Yet, we also learned that, during his career, there were many opportunities for Thomson to experience a wide range of buildings that, on the whole, contained an inspirational potential very similar to that of Karl Friedrich Schinkel's architecture.

The concrete conclusion that is suggested to be drawn from this by the subsequent chapters is the following: there is a strong likelihood of Thomson having drawn on Schinkel's designs way before 1863, but the influence that Thomson, at first sight, so clearly seems to have received from Schinkel he could also have received from sources that were much more readily available to him because of their topographical proximity.

Another conclusion to support the notion of Thomson's independence of Karl Friedrich Schinkel is also suggested by the results presented in chapter two. For,

there, we learned of a number of contemporary theories that, in one way or the other, seem to have influenced both architects in developing their own attitudes on architecture.

In the third chapter, it was shown that these attitudes show some striking similarities in what the two architects demanded and which means they regarded appropriate for achieving their goals. We learned that both, Schinkel and Thomson clearly had in common the belief in the existence of a transcendental authority, whose ordering laws should be respected and obeyed in the process of creating architecture. The historical precedent Schinkel and Thomson mostly turned to for inspiration was something they had in common, too. It was the trabeated architecture of ancient Greece, which so well illustrated Schinkel's and Thomson's preference of the simple post-and-lintel construction.

The main difference between Schinkel and Thomson as far as their theoretical attitudes are concerned is their respective view on the continuity of architectural development and its potential stage of perfection. As we were shown earlier on, Schinkel rather saw the perfection of architecture as a kind of 'guiding star' in a process of constant refinement, while, in Thomson's view, such a perfect stage had already been reached by the ancient Greeks. These differences in thinking explain the difference in style that increases between both architects' creations the closer we come to Schinkel's late designs.

This aspect in general provides another alternative explanation to architectural similarities within the *œuvres* of Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Alexander Thomson. For, with both of them, there appears to be a strong consistency between the theoretical outlines of architectural design that is manifested in their writings, on the one hand, and the concrete architecture they created on the other. Thus, a similarity in thinking provides a very plausible explanation to perceivable similarities in building. The fact that the differences in their thinking is reflected in their actual architecture, too, proves this coherence of theory and practice.

In dealing with selected examples of designs from both architects' *œuvres*, chapter four provided the complement to two issues that had arisen from the previous chapters. Its analysis showed the concrete aspects of similarity in Schinkel's and Thomson's buildings, and a similar one was applied to the alternative sources of pictorial inspiration that were mentioned in the second chapter.

In this context, the closest and most obvious similarity appeared to be detected in the use of square columns in order to form repetitive colonnades of a striking horizontal emphasis. Yet, a number of British examples that could also have provided inspiration for Thomson buildings like the Caledonia Road Church cast doubt on the necessity of Thomson having drawn on Schinkel designs like the Schauspielhaus, for example.

In the case of blending Greek trabeation with picturesque grouping in domestic architecture, the analysis resulted in weakening the link even more. For the main similarity between designs like Schinkel's Court Gardener's House and Thomson's Holmwood, their horizontal emphasis through interpenetrating components spreading into the site, was found in examples of well-known Scottish architects as much as they could be found in those of Schinkel. Thomson's strict adherence to the use of Greek trabeation made an influential relation to Schinkel's Italianate villa even more unlikely.

As far as the claimed similarity in the use of direct glazing is concerned, the link does not appear any stronger. For, there, we have on the one hand the lack of concreteness in the potentially influential Schinkel design, the Orianda palace project, and Thomson's ingenious originality on the other. As an inspirational source Thomson's own theoretical ideals should be favoured over Schinkel's designs, hence, Thomson's creative independence from Schinkel be stressed. The significance of theoretical attitudes to the creative act of producing actual designs was made clear in the analytical part of chapter four for Thomson as well as for Schinkel. Together with the alternative sources of pictorial inspiration the similarity within this theoretical realm makes an influential relationship between Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Alexander Thomson appear unnecessary, though not unlikely.

The findings from chapter five support such a view as they show that, in the days of Schinkel and Thomson, Germany and Britain were close enough in the world of arts and philosophy for two architects from both national backgrounds to develop similar ideas from a basis of common thought.

The examples mentioned there were the ideas of 'evolutionary' development in the theological theories of Friedrich Schleiermacher and the theories on the Beautiful and the Sublime in the aesthetics of Edmund Burke. A number of main aspects of these two theories appear in the writing of both, Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Alexander Thomson. Even if that does not necessarily mean that both derived these ideas from the sources named above, it shows that general thinking in Germany and Britain had

in common significant points of view that dominate the theories of Schinkel and Thomson. The stronger the general closeness appears to be, however, the lesser Thomson needs to have derived ideas particularly from Karl Friedrich Schinkel.

A final conclusion to this work must be that many similarities that, at first sight, seem to suggest a fairly obvious link between some of the architectural designs of Alexander Thomson and Karl Friedrich Schinkel lose a lot of their argumentative potential when looked upon in a more detailed context. An influential relationship between the two architects could not be proven here, neither could it be refuted.

This work, however, has shown that there is considerable evidence for arguing that Thomson could as easily have arrived at his designs without any knowledge on Schinkel's architecture at all as he could in case he did know it well. Such a relationship is not unlikely, but in order to explain Thomson's oeuvre it is unnecessary.

The answer to the initial question that preceded all this research cannot be a simple one. It inevitably becomes ever more complex with every additional aspect taken into consideration. However, it is a much more valuable statement to refuse a clear-cut answer on grounds of a number of qualitatively equal alternatives than to give a straightforward one that in the first place satisfies our natural demand for unambiguous explanations.

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