

The Aesthetic Implications of Fichte on Feeling



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Abstract: The article discusses the connection between art and emotion in Fichte's work and its contemporary reception by the architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel. For the latter, not only selected architectural theoretical studies but also Schinkel's ideal architectural designs are consulted. Schinkel knew Fichte personally and held him in high esteem. This is evidenced by some of Schinkel's verbatim references to various forms of the *Wissenschaftslehre* and its sub-disciplines, as well as his extremely precise transcripts of lectures around the Berlin versions of the *Wissenschaftslehre* (around 1800). Schinkel was not only interested in the political and religious implications of Fichte's theory of a cultural history of humankind, but his engagement with Fichte is also characterized above all by the theory of consciousness. This aspect plays a central role in the article. In recourse to the aesthetic emotion of the mind, a main concern of Fichte's philosophy is to be placed in the horizon of architecture, which manifests itself in these questions: how does one convey a realisation in such a way that the recipient reconstructs it almost independently and it becomes a practical value for him as a criterion for his orientation in life? And furthermore – related to the research discourse on Fichte, which has only recently taken note of his aesthetic position and in particular his comments on architecture – how can this model of cognition be applied in his work from an architect's point of view? In the investigation part on Fichte for this, first the feeling is reconstructed within the framework of the scientific-systematic philosophy as the reason of consciousness, in order to show with it the instance of the question relevant for Schinkel about the pedagogical effectiveness of a life-practical cultivating architecture. In the examination section on Schinkel, it is shown how Schinkel, in the horizon of Fichte, undertakes a determination of the relationship between feeling and ratio, with which he, for his part, establishes architecture as an instrument of cultivation.

Keywords: Johann Gottlieb Fichte; Karl Friedrich Schinkel; aesthetic education; aesthetic stirring of the mind; architecture; awareness; esthetic implications of Fichte's conception of feeling.

I. Art and Emotion as Mediations between Philosophy and Architecture

“The fact that I start with art when plotting my life is so deeply rooted in my nature and in my intentions that perhaps only I can understand the underlying reason” (see Tempel's reference to Friedrich Schlegel, Tempel 1901, 143), wrote Fichte on 10 February 1794. If we consider that, to Fichte, the role of the *Wissenschaftslehre* is “to know life”

(Fichte, GA II/5, 112)¹ and the design of life starts with art (on the large scope of Fichte's concept of art see Lohmann 2005, 113–132), art is of fundamental importance for the explication of the *Wissenschaftslehre* as a representation of the system of the human mind. For Fichte, feeling is in turn fundamental to reality, to the certainty of the deductive and speculative genesis of his system, and to its actual, propaedeutic application in life. Fichte did not develop a form of aesthetics as a sub-discipline of the *Wissenschaftslehre*. However, early references to the connection between art and feeling in his youthful writings and many later, albeit rather fragmentary, references to aesthetic feeling clearly show that aesthetic implications on feeling are to Fichte a practical and speculative introduction to self-objectification based on the criterion of feeling.

I would like to demonstrate this connection between art and feeling in the work of Fichte and its reception at the time by the architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel in selected studies of architectural theory and conceptual architectural designs. Schinkel was personally acquainted with Fichte and valued him highly, as evidenced by literal borrowings from various forms of the *Wissenschaftslehre* and its sub-disciplines, and extremely precise excerpts from lectures relating to the Berlin *Wissenschaftslehre*. For example, we can see that Schinkel adopted Fichte's concept of self-awareness and its explanation in a multi-stage theory of society [*Stufenlehre der Gesellschaft*] as well as the theorem of the modification of nature according to laws of reason almost to the letter. While I have tried to prove this in earlier papers (cf. Lohmann 2020, 145–159; Lohmann 2015, 301–318; for detailed source see Schinkel 2010), I would like here, with reference to the aesthetic implications on feeling, to discuss one key focus of Fichte's philosophy that is raised in the following questions: how is it possible to convey knowledge in such a way that the recipient reconstructs it almost independently, and it becomes a practical value; a criterion that shapes how he lives his life? Moreover – in the light of the research discourse, which has only recently recognised Fichte's aesthetic position and, in particular, his comments on architecture (cf. Traub 2014, 305–391) – how can this model of cognition mediation and self-acting cognition formation applied to an architect's work from an architect's perspective?

II. Fichte's Concept of Feeling and His Model of the Aesthetic Stirring of the Mind

To answer these questions, we first outline Fichte's theory of feeling as the basis of all awareness of reality and its practical application using the educational model of the aesthetic implications on feeling. The paper then goes on to present Schinkel's reception of Fichte's concept of feeling and explore how that was translated in detail on the basis of

1 All further citations from Fichte's works in this article will be made according to the edition of J. G. Fichte, Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (1964– ; abb. GA).

two architectural creations.

II.1 Fichte's doctrine of feeling

“The recognition of feeling as an organ that helps man to engage with the world is one of the great achievements of the enlightenment” (Emmel & Rücker 1974, col. 90). It is reflected in numerous perspectives that revolve around the problem of emancipation, in other words the critical approach to the authority of traditions and institutions that was typical of this era. This was the context in which Johann Gottlieb Fichte developed an extensive spectrum of meaning for the concept of feeling (cf. Lohmann 2004, chap. 2 and 3). According to Heinz Heimsoeth, that spectrum not only does justice to the “modern ethos of the self-aware and autonomous personality” (Heimsoeth 1962, 1) but also makes it possible to address the problem of the asceticism of feeling posed by the Enlightenment’s one-sided emphasis on reason, a problem strongly criticized by Karl Heinrich Heydenreich (1978). It does so by defining feeling as an independent organ of knowledge in itself rather than rationalising feeling as an aspect of awareness at the service of theoretical knowledge.

The recognition of feeling, expressed at its most significant as a catalyst and central element of the *Wissenschaftslehre* – understood as the doctrine of the emergence of an awareness of reality – runs through all of Fichte’s work. In works from very different periods of his life and covering very different topics from his early writings all the way through to his late philosophy, he refers to the importance of feeling to the awareness of reality. The key lines in this development of the concept of feeling are its practical and propaedeutic, and scientific and systematic aspects, which are reflected on the one hand in the popular education of man in cultural skills to discover his own individual and intersubjective reality through the aesthetic and moral elucidation of feeling, and on the other in the establishment of a scientific theory of feeling, in which feeling is shown to be essential to any awareness of reality, including the knowledge of the Absolute, love and truth as well as the question of the significance of feeling in the communication of philosophy and of life or of direct experience and speculative exploration of reality. This frame of reference in which the concept of feeling is discussed in the context of the Fichtean awareness of reality is so large that only one of the above aspects can be explored here (cf. Oesterreich & Traub 2006, part II, sections 3 and 4). The aspect we will look at below is the scientific and systematic dimension of feeling, with which feeling is to be shown to be the basis of our awareness of reality and thus also as an authority in the educational model of the affection of the mind.

The explication of this aspect is aimed first at highlighting, in systematic research, the various principles, the structures and the methods involved in the concept of feeling with regard to the development of an awareness of reality in the sense understood above. We start with an introduction to Fichte’s complexly structured theory of feeling

by defining the thematic scope of his concept of feeling in terms of the development of an awareness of reality and its various functions for awareness of reality in practice. We take account of the philosophical perspective from which he develops his concept of feeling, and through which the inspiration for his engagement with feeling and the significance of that concept in his theory of awareness of reality are revealed. The central works here are the *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre* [Foundations of the entire science of knowledge] (1794) and the *Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo* (1796/7).

As far as the above objective is concerned, we will see that for Fichte, awareness of reality is not possible without feeling. He explores ontological, anthropological and capability-related, epistemological, aesthetic, moral and religious, educational, normative and disciplinary aspects of feeling and thus awareness of reality (cf. on the “basic effect[s] of life and their connection to the stage theory of consciousness” and the remarks on the “theory of fivefoldness”: Oesterreich & Traub 2006, 50 and 190). To Fichte, every form of awareness or life is founded on the combination of certain feelings. Fichte believes that feelings are always an expression of an original self-relation, which he first developed on the basis of the manuscript of the *Practische Philosophie* [Practical Philosophy] (1794) and further developed in a condensed form in 1794 in the *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre* in the context of the reconstruction of the self-objectification of the subject, which is fundamental to all later *Wissenschaftslehren*. This reconstruction is based on several successive stages in the development of the subject, starting from a sensuous, pre-conscious state determined by inclinations and desires, and culminating in the complete independence and self-determination of reason.

These individual steps in development manifest themselves in a hierarchic sequence of feelings that reflects an increasingly strong element of reason. The sequence can be divided into two stages: the I as the principle of life and the I as the principle of awareness. The first stage covers the base sensuous feelings of coercion and power. The second stage covers the next level of sensory and rational aesthetic feelings of the beautiful and the sublime, and the higher rational feelings of longing and self, and hence also the theoretical feelings of approval and disapproval, and the practical, moral feeling of perfection which, in its religious form, is called conscience and truth and goodness. In the genesis of self-objectification of the subject, the above feelings are arranged in such a way that the next-highest form supersedes the previous form in Hegelian terms or preserves and develops it. On the one hand, the lowest feeling already contains the germ of the highest expression of the feeling in general, i.e., love, and on the other hand, all other expressions of the feeling, such as compulsion, power and self, manifest themselves in love, however, in the way of the moral agreement of the I with itself. Pairs of feelings and their objects also complement each other. For example, the feeling of coercion caused by the influence of the sensory world is only possible in the face of the feeling of force, as the power to reach beyond the bounds of the sensory world manifests itself. For the subject, the distinction between the inner and outer world is drawn through self-feeling

[*Selbstgefühl*] and longing, which ensure self-relation and object-relation. Self-feeling and the feeling of force mark the difference between the physical and spiritual and the merely physical life. The feelings of approval or disapproval and that of perfection and its above aspects indicate the difference between the theoretical truth of the idea of a real object in the sensory world and the aesthetic, moral and religious truth of a purpose with a merely possible object; an object that is created by imagination and through which we transcend the sensory sphere and enter the intelligible sphere of duty and eternal truth and that connects the individual, empirical subject to the plurality of Is in a synthesis of the spiritual world, and to God (Lohmann 2006, 111–136). In Summary: feeling establishes the relation of the I to the world in its function as the ground of all reality consciousness, which takes place within the reconstruction of the self-objectification of the subject and within this reconstruction certain stages have to be connected, such as the “Principle of All Life” (GA I/2, 406) and “Principle of Life and Consciousness” (Fichte, GA I/2, 406). Between these individual stages, the feeling acts in each case in a further concretion as a hinge and accordingly also mediates. In popular philosophy it also has a mediating effect. This, however, in its manifestation as a sense of truth, i.e., as a feeling for truth and certainty, through which the contents of science are made accessible to those who do not know science. In the *Rückerinnerungen, Antworten, Fragen* [Reminders, answers, questions] (Fichte 1799), Fichte speaks in this respect of “two different point[s] of view[s] of thinking” (GA II/5, 111), which – this is the thesis here – can be mediated by feeling.

Fichte defines the sequence of the above feelings as “belief” [*Glaube*] (GA I/2, 429) on the one hand on the basis of his early theological works (Traub 2020, 23 and 539) and on the other hand in his critical approach to Jacobi², and he develops this sequence in the *Wissenschaftslehre* as a reconstruction of the self-enlightenment and self-determination of man in all his fields of action. Feelings here not only represent the content and the degree of this self-cultivation, but also guarantee the necessary conditions for the achievement of this goal, functioning as the driving force, criterion and medium. As direct expressions of life, i.e., not distorted by reflection or thought, they are unconditioned drivers of self-cultivation. They are manifestations of the increasing degree of reason involved in the process and act as immediately accessible guides to and measures of the subject’s actions, and an inherent indication of his stage of development which immanently indicate to him the respective state of his development from a natural-preconscious to a reason-guided life. Feelings are also communicative authorities that connect man’s sensory and intellectual faculties, and link the individual stages of self-enlightenment, thus guaranteeing the feasibility, continuity and organic unity of the process as a whole.

² Cf. to Jacobis Sendschreiben to Fichte from March 30th 1799 and Jacobi’s letter to von Dahm from December 13th 1797 as well as to Fichte’s ideal-realistic determination of the object world (see Schüßler 1972).

The increasingly self-determined free life that manifests itself in the sequence of feelings is at the centre of the subject's self-interpretation, which, in the *Wissenschaftslehre*, takes place on the "path of profound reflection on knowledge and awareness toward one's own inner source" (Heimsoeth 1962, 1). The starting point from which Fichte develops the types, classifications, and functions of the concept of feeling is initially the philosophy of the absolute I, which is significant for Schinkel, as is shown by his treatment of Fichte's theorem of the modification of nature according to laws of reason. The extent to which Schinkel follows the transformation of the I as an image and absolute knowledge, which is preceded by an imperishable and eternal absolute that reveals itself in him in the feeling of being bound, that emerges in the *Anweisung zum seligen Leben* [The way towards the blessed life] (Fichte 1806) and in the later *Wissenschaftslehren*, cannot be proven in his fragments of architectural theory. For the starting point known to Schinkel are: Its key drivers are the questions of the unity of consciousness, its principalization through absolute freedom, and the applied representation of freedom in practice. As we know, Fichte describes the *Wissenschaftslehre* in his correspondence with Reinhold as the "first system of freedom" (GA III/2, 298). This system is to be understood as an explication of an urge for freedom expressed in immediate life; an urge that the *Wissenschaftslehre* seeks to reconstruct in its individual components in the aforementioned sequence of feelings, and to show as a conceptually presentable and as a necessary and fundamental determinant of the human spirit. Fichte therefore defines "knowing life" (GA II/5, 112) as the object of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, and as feelings to him represent the clear process of life's self-manifestation, he believes that the role of philosophy is not to create "new objects of natural thought through the power [of] syllogisms" (GA II/5, 112). Instead, his philosophy is focused in such a way that "life, the system of feelings and desire are the most important elements of all and knowledge is merely observed" (GA II/5, 137).

II.2 Fichtean implications on feeling

The educational implications of the theorem of feeling as the grounds for all awareness of reality can be illustrated in Fichte's work in an "experiment" (GA I/8, 222) that he conducts in the *Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters* [The characteristics of the present age] (1804). The experiment is based on a rhetorically sophisticated description of reasonable life, i.e., life in accordance with the principles of practical reason, which, in turn, is intended to cause emotion in the recipient that triggers the process of self-cultivation to achieve a reasonable life and that accompanies all stages of reflection in that process. The purpose of the experiment is to show that the recipient forms from the consciousness of the affect a concept of the reasonable purpose of his existence of his own accord.

I wish to conduct an experiment on your mind and evoke a certain emotion within you, but by no means surprise you and not simply to stimulate your mind (...), but rather your own sharp, clear awareness, so that that emotion becomes visible to you and you are not simply touched by its mere existence but take note of that existence and draw upon it (Fichte, GA I/8, 222).³

For Fichte, the process of the recipient's self-acting recognition of the reasonable purpose of his existence is achieved in educational practice as follows: firstly, the recipient is called upon to consider his life in the sensory world and to focus in particular on how he perceives himself in his self-feeling. According to Fichte's theory of feeling, the recipient should feel both confirmation and coercion in his life force i.e., his causality. The recipient is then asked to reflect on the coercion in particular. Coercion is explained to him not only as a lack of causality but also as a danger that threatens his inner equilibrium, as the lack of causality stems from the influence of sensory diversity on his mind, a diversity that creates unreasonable tendencies and desires within him that are in conflict with morality, which functions as the principle of his awareness. This danger could cause nothing less than a loss of self-awareness. For Fichte, the way out of this danger is the experience of intelligible feelings that indicate to the recipient what he can and should be as a rational being. Fichte strives for an awareness of these higher feelings through a sophisticated rhetorical description of a rational life that "reveals and sheds light upon" moments for the recipient that "transcend the sensory" and that are supposed to awaken in him the feelings of "being pleased" (Traub 1997, 92), "approval, esteem and reverence" (GA I/8, 224). Fichte explains the awareness of these feelings to the recipient as the previously "misunderstood expression of one's own rationality," a rationality that is in these feelings self-referential and is communicated through the image of the description of a rational life. As feeling is typically self-relational, the recipient can develop "a perspective on life" in which "the object of recognition" is transferred to "one's own individual existence" with the aim of elevating the latter to the "object of 'pleasure' and 'respect' founded in reason" (Traub 1997, 93).

The success of this experiment depends largely on a balanced interaction between feeling and awareness. Fichte explored the methodological and educational prerequisites for this interaction in his work. The origins of the debate go back to the *Valediktionsrede* [Valedictory speech] (1780). In Fichte's work, the aforementioned conditions based on the intense, inductive and deductive dialogue reminiscent of Socrates, and the art of rhetoric with its domains of action "ethos," "pathos" and "movere" (production of inner emotions,

³ Some longer selected quotations are given below in the footnotes in the original German version for better understanding:

„Ein Experiment will ich an Ihrem Gemüthe anstellen, sonach allerdings einen gewissen Affekt in ihnen erregen; aber keineswegs Sie überraschend, und lediglich deswegen, damit erregt sey (...), sondern mit Ihrem eignen hellen, klaren Bewußtseyn, und daß er Ihnen sichtbar werde, und daß er nicht durch seine bloße Existenz wirke, sondern damit er in dieser seiner Existenz bemerkt, und aus derselben weiter geschlossen werde“ (Fichte, GA I/8, 222).

arousal of passion and affection) (for the *Valediktionsrede* cf. Wildfeuer 1999, 119; Bacon 2008, 111; Traub 2020, 111, 243, 503 and 509). The objective of education is to achieve the reasonable maturity of the recipient. Fichte explains what he understands by an educationally relevant interaction between emotion and reason in a critical examination of rationalist learning theories. He explores those theories in his *Valediktionsrede* not only in reference both to Christian Fürchtegott Gellert, whose work he examines in the context of aesthetics and the question of the correct application of the rules of rhetoric and poetry (Fichte, GA II/1, 6), and to experiences from his own school days (GA II/1, 20), but also and above all using the example of a “religious and educational excursus” (Preul 1969, 22). The learning objective of this excursus is for the child to realize practically that “in this world dwells a supreme being that surpasses all of us by far in perfection and virtue and that has produced all of this” (GA II/1, 20) i.e., the world. The child is to form a “concept” of this being and feel “love” and “reverence” for it. In abstract terms, this can initially happen in two ways:

All things that are as yet unknown to us and that we perceive and grasp with our intellect seem to me to be acquired primarily in two ways. They can be communicated to us in such a way that they appear to have been brought into our soul from the outside (...), that is, in such a way that we in turn immediately perceive the whole matter as it is; or (...) we think that we have seen through and discovered the matter ourselves with our own reason, although only the master-scholar sees this and guides us so that we too can find it (Fichte, GA II/1, 20).⁴

Fichte evaluates these two teaching methods with regard to the focus of the excursus as follows: he criticizes purely reason-based teaching that completely disregards feeling for the fact that it relies on a primarily passive/receptive learning process with its mere definition of the concept of God and does not take into account the insight into the reasons or the genesis of the material to be learned. The negative consequences of this approach are an unquestioning acceptance of and agreement with the material because of a “lack of proof to the contrary,” a lack of inner participation, and indifference. Therefore, for Fichte, knowledge communicated using the understanding-based method is dead knowledge that is passed from one generation of pupils to the next through the memorization of the catechism, and is not of value for shaping pupils’ life-practice [*Lebenspraxis*]. A pupil taught according to this method will at best learn to “expatiate” a little on what he “force upon themselves and others through syllogisms” (GA II/5, 122). Fichte believes that genuine conviction is completely impossible in such cases. A lack of motivation to put into practice the material that the pupil has not understood, i.e., the recognition of

4 As in original:

„Alle Dinge, die, bisher uns unbekannt, wir aufnehmen und mit dem Intellekt erfassen, scheinen mir vornehmlich auf zweierlei Weisen angeeignet werden zu können. Sie können uns nämlich übermittelt werden auf die Weise, daß sie von außerhalb her (...) in unsere Seele hineingetragen zu sein scheinen, das heißt, daß wir von anderweit sogleich die ganze Sache, wie sie ist, perzipieren, oder (...) daß wir die Sache mit unserer eigenen Vernunft selbst durchschaut und aufgefunden zu haben meinen, indem nur der Meister-Gelehrte dies schaut, damit er uns in die Wege leite, daß auch wir dies finden können“ (Runze 1919, 58; Fichte, GA II/1, 20).

God as the reason for his life, is one of the serious consequences of such a method. The other is that this teaching with its “logical compulsion to think in a certain way” (GA I/5, 351), rule-obsessed indifferentism and habitual thought (GA II/1, 87; GA II/5, 177) leads to complete lack of independence, as by merely repeating the catechism composed by supposed authorities one no longer has to “think, research and seek for oneself” but can instead let “others think on one’s behalf” (GA II/1, 90). Creative spontaneity that shapes life for the future is destroyed before it has a chance to develop. Fichte argues that the same applies to love and reverence towards God. He believes that it is impossible to love and revere something that does not concern oneself.

In contrast to this rationalist teaching method, Fichte outlines his own. Hartmut Traub was able to prove that the sources for this can be found in Pietist teaching and educational methods, according to which religious instruction took place in Rammenau (Traub 2020, 73). Fichte’s method works by the affectation of feeling combined with intuition and imagery and is aimed at stimulating the intellectual self-activity of the pupil. “I will direct his mind so that he may conceive that there is someone who created all this, and that he on his own, of his own accord, seeks to learn from me whether there is a God” (GA II/1, 20). Fichte works on the basis that a child who observes a gardener at work will himself draw the analogy with God as the gardener of the world, i.e., the Creator, in dialogue with the teacher. According to Fichte, the awareness conveyed by the image and by the feeling-emotions [*Gefühlsaffektionen*] it evokes that God holds in his hand the cycle of life, of becoming and of passing (like plants growing and withering) and cares for this cycle (like a gardener caring for plants) will awaken in the child the feelings of reverence and love for God.

Against this background, he takes the view that knowledge is not a one-off act, but instead something to be achieved in constant engagement and confrontation with oneself. Fichte sees knowledge as the result of a “spontaneous act” (Preul 1969, 14) that originally “consists of intellectual (...) clarity and emotion in feeling” (Preul 1969, 17) and is based primarily on “the improvement in these two qualities continuing at an equal pace” (GA II/1, 88). Feeling in the Fichtean theory of feeling as the basis for awareness of reality acts as a direct expression of the life force of man. It represents the active process of learning and engaging with content that arises from one’s own impulses. Feeling guarantees the “*propria deliberatio*” or the “*ipse per me rem (...) intellexi*” (GA II/1, 21) and certainty on the morally correct way of dealing with the object of knowledge.

Fichte argues that the objects of the teaching methods outlined and their impact on the recipient are to be determined. The following transition from the method to the aesthetic object is justified with regard to Schinkel foresighted by the fact that the object, i.e., the architecture in the figurative sense itself becomes the described teaching method. We will see that for Schinkel architecture evokes the emotion of the mind. Since Fichte did not formulate a coherent aesthetic theory, one is forced to develop one’s own interpretive approach to determining the relationship of the emotion of the mind to the aesthetic object

from recurring thoughts in disparate works. Fichte's view on the correct and incorrect form of the educational object can be explained in the light of its significance for Schinkel as an artist using the example of the aesthetic object, i.e., the work of art, for which Fichte defines the following requirement in *Ueber Geist und Buchstab in der Philosophie* [On the spirit and letter in philosophy] with regard to the relationship between emotion and reason: the work of art that merely complies with the rules and corresponds to the object of rationalist teaching theory "leaves us cold and without interest, or may even repulse us; another;" i.e., the work of the one who, in accordance with Fichte's own theory of learning, relies on the creative spontaneity of genius, "attracts us, invites us to dwell upon it and to lose ourselves in it (...) and to think and explore with the [artist]." Fichte believes that the latter type of work will "stimulate, enliven and strengthen our sense even of its subject." It will also promote our "gifts and talents," so that "our understanding, or (...) our imagination, both thinks and writes with the artist of its own accord" (Fichte, GA I/6, 335–336). In terms of aesthetic quality, a work of art that meets these requirements must comply with the following aesthetic rule formulated by Fichte in "Practical Philosophy": touch "by your visible desire not to [touch]. The closer an aesthetic product came to this law, the more beautiful it would be" (GA II/3, 215). Fichte agrees with Schiller that whoever, like the author of "common courtly romances," (GA I/6, 358) "aims at emotion, fails to stir it" (GA I/3, 315), but rather creates a "powerlessness" that is confused with the right power, i.e., the "power held through the fullness of power" (GA I/6, 358). This results in works that are "common and base" and that direct the imagination into the wrong, i.e., unreasonable, purely sensuous directions and that disdain any leaning towards the sacred (Fichte, GA I/6, 258 and GA I/8, 9). Works that, on the other hand, comply with the aesthetic rule inspire the creative imagination of the recipient in such a way that he, by virtue of his own reason, comes up with images "not as they are at all but as they should be according to the need for [spontaneity of the spirit]" (GA I/6, 352). Such works "revive, exalt and develop the spirit" (GA I/8, 266). If we are to apply the aesthetic rule to achieve this goal, the artist, as in the image of the gardener from the "excursus on religion and education," must only provide the inspiration to act the idea and not fully define the idea as a whole, by creating his work as a "metaphor" (GA I/8, 277) for the idea. This means that he should neither represent a "certain face in this world," nor should he directly "drive one to a specific act." Instead, he should, through his works, raise the recipient's sensitivity to the determinability of his existence and engage the recipient's imagination with the idea of the supersensory world (GA II/12, 330 and 351). Fichte sets out these requirements for the aesthetic object in his letter to the architect Ludwig Friedrich Catel in a way that fits perfectly with the concept of the monument, a concept which was also of central importance to Schinkel. According to Fichte, a monument is based on a concept of space aimed not at working or living but at the mere presentation of the idea. The cultivating effect of the monument is to Fichte, in accordance with how the idea is perceived, that it does

not express, but stimulates ideas (...) This difference is crucial. Whoever paints a seriously thinking, moved man expresses seriousness and emotion: whoever shuts me in a lonely place in the shadow of dark trees and displays images of transience before my eyes does not express seriousness and emotion objectively at all (Fichte, GA III/8, 8),⁵

but is instead trying to “elicit them in me subjectively with embellishments” so that, as feeling is affected, the “imagination is unleashed and engages the recipient in an easy game” (GA III/8, 9); only then can one independently grasp and genuinely become convinced of the idea.

II.3 Schinkel's theoretical reception of Fichte's theory of feeling

Fichte's theory of feeling as the basis of all awareness of reality enables Schinkel to conceive of feelings as the phenomena that underlie experience and perception and that represent the original source and nature of the recipient's talents in relation to his theoretical and practical abilities, i.e., the basic forces of ambition, want and imagination. Fichte provides Schinkel with the theoretical basis for feelings influencing our entire existence as constant states of mind. Feelings also represent a form of filter through which interpersonal relationships and external factors, including works of art such as those in architecture, appeal to the recipient and acquire their own specific values. In this context, Fichte gives Schinkel the necessary range and hierarchy of feelings. Each feeling is different in terms of quality, responsiveness, depth and persistence, and each shapes the nature and life-world of the recipient in a specific way and mood. However, according to Fichte, feelings have a hierarchy and for each person clearly culminate in the moral and religious feeling of perfection. Using Fichte's theory of feelings as his starting point, Schinkel can therefore distinguish between sensory, physical feelings – and the organ feelings [*Organgefühle*] of the articulated body and its spatial and temporal experiences must surely play a part here for him as an architect – feelings close to instincts such as longing, and ultimately also the great spiritual feelings such as those of conscience and love, which in the transcendental doctrine of feelings are shown to be authorities on moral perfection inherent in the subject and independent of all external authorities, and at which Schinkel aims in his architecture as a symbol of a blessed life.

Schinkel and Fichte take a similar approach to the educational requirements for cultivation. Both understand the objects, art and philosophy, as instruments for the self-cultivation of the recipient. Both also formulate similar requirements for the object in question. This is done in the context of a series of dualisms, which are in Schinkel's case stylistic and in Fichte's case rhetorical.

⁵ ... “Ideen (...) nicht ausdrück[t], aber anreg[t] (...) Auf diesen Unterschied kommt Alles an. Wer einen ernst nachdenkenden gerührten Mann mahlt, drückt Ernst und Rührung aus: wer in einen einsamen, von düsteren Bäumen beschatteten Raum mich einschließt, und die Bilder der Vergänglichkeit mir vor Augen stellt, drückt Ernst und Rührung gar nicht objektiv aus” (Fichte, GA III/8, 8).

The first dualism relates to the author of the work: the author's creative spontaneity is juxtaposed with conformity, tradition and habit. While both Fichte and Schinkel count themselves among the first category, each claiming to have developed a new principle in architecture and philosophy respectively, Schinkel cites Aloys Hirt and Fichte Friedrich Nicolai and Ernst Platner as examples of the latter category. The second dualism relates to the living, active nature of the object itself. Both oppose the completed, finished nature of the object in favour of openness. Schinkel denies that "art is a finished object (...) that is exhausted in time" and that "from now on one no longer needs to think for oneself as everything has already been done" (Peschken 1979, 29). Art is never simply "inherited" (idem, 28) and is never fully complete. Hirt's assumption that the "Greeks and the Romans exhausted everything required for the perfection of this art" (idem, 29) would, according to Schinkel, pursue the "progressive process of (...) culture" (idem, 29) ad absurdum. Similarly, it is a basic assumption of Fichte's philosophy that the role of man is only ever fulfilled in the endless, and that the knowledge of that role must therefore constantly be deepened and developed further. It is in this context that we must understand the diverse forms of his *Wissenschaftslehre* (Fichte 1794), on which he worked until his death. Moreover, the sustainability that Schinkel and Fichte associate with their objects demands that "each new idea (...) reinvents the rules for its representation" (Peschken 1979, 29). The third dualism – in which the previous two dualisms culminate – is for both Schinkel and Fichte anthropological. They juxtapose cold understanding with the truth of the heart; the passionlessness with inspiring imagination; the transparency of clarity and logic with the semi-darkness of moral and religious feeling, and the mere external, superficial and factual with the internal and the possible.

In the following we will explore these dualisms in Schinkel's work before demonstrating how close the underlying concepts are to Fichte, using the following texts: Schinkel's *Hirt-Polemik* [Hirt polemic] (undated, ca. 1810–1815); fragments from the legitimist phase, and Fichte's *Valediktionsrede* [Valedictory speech] (1780), *Practische Philosophie* [Practical philosophy] (1794) and *Ueber Geist und Buchstab in der Philosophie* [On the spirit and letter in philosophy] (1800). While Schinkel could not have been familiar with Fichte's *Valediktionsrede* as it was only published later, he was definitely – as explained above – familiar with the *Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters* [The characteristics of the present age] (1804). Since Fichte applies the educational model from the *Valediktionsrede* in this text, and the model was the subject of a highly public debate between Fichte and Schiller in *Ueber Geist und Buchstab in der Philosophie* in the context of the *Horenstreit* [Horen dispute], it is reasonable to assume that Schinkel could also have been aware of the example of the application of the educational model presented in these works. This assumption is based on many almost word-for-word borrowings by Schinkel from Fichte.

The comments on Schinkel are based on his educational motto, which is as follows:

architecture should “inspire life just as architecture itself has life through ideas. It must therefore not work from concepts for this is death” and “has no inner life” (Peschken 1979, 31). This educational significance of the work poses several requirements. Firstly, stylistic requirements that he considers in the context of the Gothic-Classicism debate, explored here from the point of view of educational theory rather than that of art history. He also defines requirements relating to the material and the relationship between the building complex and the physicalness of the recipient, or the relationship between the dynamic power of the building and the affective condition of the recipient. The final requirement relates to the originality of the work: the work should be an expression of the greatest vitality. In line with the processual nature of life and its focus on the future, Schinkel rules out compliance with the rules and “imitation” (Peschken 1979, 28).

The above requirements can be developed as follows: the relationship between feeling and reason concerns the knowledge and practice of the idea conveyed by the architectural work. Feeling represents self-activity in grasping the idea. That self-activity is based on architectural tools aimed at stirring the soul in order to touch the recipient in a whole range of ways. Feeling ensures that the recipient is affected by the work of art; that he engages with it independently and does not merely follow an artistic authority; that he recognises the result of that engagement as an independently formed judgement and extends that judgement beyond the mere limits of understanding, i.e., the factual, to include the level of faith, and that, from that level, applies the knowledge in practice in everyday life. The Mausoleum for Queen Luise [*Grabmal für die Königin Luise*] and Monument for the Liberation Wars [*Denkmal der Befreiungskriege*] are examples of this relationship between feeling and reason. Schinkel’s aim in both designs is to stimulate the recipient’s emotions in such a way that he is literally driven to moral, religious action. This approach is based on an understanding of architecture according to which the “religious building” is “not a service building” like that of the “bee” that could be understood in terms of its use alone, but should instead satisfy the educational imperative of self-cultivation: “everyone, in their inner being, is completed here and is only inspired to do so by direct contemplation of the divine in beautiful art” (Peschken 1979, 32). The work should put the recipient “in a position that inspires activity, in essence by forcing a certain relationship, comparison, a back and forth, and allows the recipient to enter into the essence of the objects that, in this specific relationship, must inspire that same activity for all eternity” (idem, 33). The work should inspire the recipient to grasp the infinite idea of the finite form. The process that relies on perceiving feeling as an organ of knowledge and a sign of autonomy takes place in “semi-darkness.” For the architect and the design of his work, this means that the architect should not look purely at reason and carry “an excess of idle,” i.e., traditional “knowledge around in his head and teach it in professorial language” (idem, 115). In other words, he should not create a work that is “simply learned by heart” (idem, 33) and “gradually, through terms and concepts, be grasped by the recipient in all its superficiality” (idem, 55) in instruction based on moral laws and “duty” (idem, 32).

Instead, the work should be a symbol of life that can itself only be grasped in an active process of learning. To this end, the architect must “create completely new tools” (idem, 34). For Schinkel, this includes reflecting on the conditions of form through which the power of the emotions and spirit of the recipient can be affected. The starting point here is an understanding of architecture as a physical art that in turn touches the body and spirit of the recipient.

Schinkel is concerned with the “transmission” of emotions, which he considers in terms of the force of the substance and form of the building and the balance of centripetal and centrifugal forces of the body-soul dualism. The organic analogy that he presents is less an “image” (Neumeyer 2003, 275) of the bodies and more an analogy of architectural shapes and expressions of the human mind. Schinkel thus differs from the Vitruvian figure in the square and, according to which architectural bodies are a likeness of the human body itself. Schinkel’s understanding of the analogy is close to a position defined a good century later, namely that of Siegfried Giedion, who in his 1927 work *Bauen in Frankreich, Eisen, Eisenbeton* [Building in France, building in iron, building in ferroconcrete] speaks of “construction as the subconscious of architecture” (Georgiadis & Giedion 1989, 171). Schinkel anticipated this approach, coining the instructive phrase “architecture is construction exalted by aesthetic feeling” (Neumeyer 2003, 273). For Schinkel’s theory of education, this “also makes sense vice versa: aesthetic feeling can also be elevated and thus changed by construction. Each construction also has its own aesthetic dimension” (Neumeyer 2003, 274). It “reveals, as a substitute, that truth that cannot appear of itself” (idem, 280). This capacity “lies not in the structure itself as technical reality, but rather in the picture of the structure” (idem, 274) that the recipient forms on the basis of his sensory, physical experience. Such a definition of structures or construction indicates that reason can only “enter the realm of meaning” (idem, 273) if connected with feeling. The organisation of the mind is the form or shape within which the recipient grasps everything physical. In Schinkel’s work, architectural forms are an expression of a spiritual life and a state of mind. They affect the recipient as an “impression” that he understands “as an expression of the object” (Wölfflin 1943, 7). Schinkel’s position places him at the beginnings of the theory of empathy, which assumes that the recipient is “driven” to “animate” the things that surround him, i.e., to attach the “image of himself (...) to all phenomena.” The recipient considers the “physical world with those categories (...) that [he] shares with it” (Worringer 1996, 10). The fundamental material elements of architecture, “material and form, weight and force,” are determined by the “experiences of the recipient himself” (idem, 15). To Schinkel, these elements are the framework in which the recipient is able to reach a qualitative, aesthetic awareness of his physical condition. Architecture is therefore judged according to the physical state that the recipient enters during reception; as Goethe found, “one ought to experience the effect of a beautiful room even if led through it blindfolded”. This corresponds to Schinkel’s idea that the architectural impression, far from being a “reckoning by the eye” (Wölfflin 1943, 12;

cf. by Schinkel; see Wolzogen 1981, 374), is based primarily on an immediate physical sensation. Schinkel discusses the stylistic prerequisites for this affection caused by the construction in the context of the Classicism-Gothic debate. To Schinkel in his Romantic phase, the architecture of the Classical period led primarily to impersonal, monotonous, cold, transparent and mundane construction. In his “Gothic-fantastic” phase, construction gained “its own dominance, with much higher objectives than merely the appearance of stability and balance between load and support – also drawing the emotional and visual under its spell” (Sörgel 1998, 176).

II.4 Schinkel's Architectural fantasies as an aesthetic transformation of Fichte's theory of feeling

Schinkel and his architectural fantasies achieve a process of emotional internalisation that leads from aesthetic awareness to intelligent consciousness. His “***Luisenmausoleum***” [Mausoleum for Queen Louise] (no date/1810) (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2) seems to have been designed for only one perspective, namely the front view of the entrance. The exterior is designed on the basis of and is less important than the interior. The interior, open to the front, gives a direct view of the grave of Queen Louise. She is presented as a holy martyr. Her grave, surrounded by angels, takes the place of the altar. Schinkel’s aim was to produce an atmospheric and significant space using natural symbolism. His architecture creates a path that ends at the Queen’s “resting place.” This path, formed primarily using the light, leads the visitor out of the darkness of the woods and the shaded entranceway into the “rosy half-light,” where he is supposed to “feel at peace” (V, 27–28) and his mind be uplifted. With the light, the geniuses, the roses, the lilies and the palm branches, which are traditional symbols of grace, endless life and resurrection (Lurker 1991, 434 and 550), the space around the resting place represents paradise. The way out of the garden into the funeral chapel is through the eerie entranceway, which, in the tradition of “an old eschatological pattern” of the “gates of death,” marks the transition “from this world to another world beyond” (Traeger 1984, 121). Schinkel forces the observer to turn from the earthly to the intelligible certainty of resurrection through the aesthetically exaggerated relationship between architecture and nature, an intention not only reflected in his use of the term “resting place” [*Ruhelager*] instead of “death bed” [*Totenbett*], but that he also renders immediately and emotionally tangible through his architectural approach to certain natural aspects such as the light and the plants. Schinkel sees the aesthetic “spiritual glow” in the interior of the hall, created by using architecture to harness light, as a challenge or invitation: “people should feel at peace in this space, and should be open to it that their minds may be uplifted.”⁶

“***Befreiungsdom***” (no date) (Fig. 3). A characteristic aspect of the cathedral’s

⁶ Catalogue of those works of art which are publicly exhibited by the Royal Academy of Arts in the halls of the Academy building in the New Town on September 23 and the following days from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Berlin 1810, No. 189, p. 27), abb. V.

style is its composition, which is designed to provide an aesthetic illustration of divine creative power as the source of all life. As with the *“Luisenmausoleum”*, Schinkel strives to express this power using the natural symbols of plants and light; however, he has not just focused on creating a bright and contemplative atmosphere as for the mausoleum. In this case, Schinkel is also seeking to touch the recipient through style and design in such a way that he is literally driven to take a moral and religious position (Peschken 1979, 32). Schinkel believes that this can be achieved by rapid, electrifying architectural forms that illustrate the path away from the earth and up towards the heavens. He uses narrow vertical proportions and repetitive, upwardly tapering forms. These represent a swift, breathless, upwards surge; consuming tension, and increased speed, as, for example, suggested in the *“narrow towers rising up to the skies”* (idem, 32) at the entrance to the building as seen from the outside. Form appears here to express a move to escape the weight of the foundations and the desire to split and raise the walls higher and higher in an unstoppable ascent to the heavenly and divine until they disappear entirely. The balance of forces and the levels visible from the outside continue in the interior. Here too, the visual representation of action is also the defining concept: *“striving, growing, crystallising, leaping, pushing, splitting, joining, pressing, bending, supporting, placing, nesting, connecting, holding, lying and resting”* (idem, 32). Schinkel stresses that what is important is not *“being united”* (idem, 32) or *“coalescing,”* but the *“action of striving”* for *“unification”* (idem, 32). He achieves this through the aesthetic representation of a gradual transition from the simple on the ground to the sophisticated at height, i.e., from the *“substructure”* (Schinkel 1941, 199), through which *“the earth is presented in its crystallization,”* or from the rough stone, to the mysterious and astonishing plants of the vaults, in which *“heavenly images”* appear between *“interwoven branches.”* This creates the impression of *“an infinitely diverse nature eternally striving to unite”* as a manifestation of the divine life force in the *“universe”*. *“The outer halls all around the round building are lower – and one climbs higher with every step towards the centre. Only the central hall is illuminated, and from here, the outer halls shall receive only a very dim light and in the outermost there shall be a kind of darkness. This is where the seats are fitted with suspended lamps with a burning light,”* which is in *“contrast”* to the *“heavenly light (...) in the centre”* (Peschken 1979, 32).

III. Architecture and Science

In response to the research objectives outlined at the beginning, this analysis was designed to show that Fichte’s theory of feeling can be used not only to demonstrate

fundamental principles of his envisaged, but not fully developed, theory of aesthetics, but also to reconstruct links to architecture in his philosophy that have to date been largely overlooked. In the German-speaking world, architectural theory around 1800 “is subject to extremely heterogeneous influences. Philosophy and aesthetics deliver their views on architecture with unprecedented decisiveness and have an impact on theory” (Kruft 2004, 331). Key drivers in the influence of philosophy on contemporary architectural theory come from the Berlin *Bauakademie*. The *Bauakademie* was the most important school for prospective architects in the German-speaking world. Its leading figure was Friedrich Gilly, who was Schinkel’s teacher for optics and perspective. Gilly’s father, David Gilly, founded the *Bauakademie* in 1799. He was interested mainly in the technical and structural aspects of architecture and was therefore closer to the *École Polytechnique* in Paris than to the *École des Beaux-Arts* with its focus on aesthetics.

Friedrich Gilly’s essay *Einige Gedanken über die Nothwendigkeit, die verschiedenen Theile der Baukunst, in wissenschaftlicher und praktischer Hinsicht, möglichst zu vereinigen* [Some thoughts on the necessity of combining, as far as possible, the different aspects of architecture in scientific and practical terms] (1799) (Gilly 1997, 178–187), was a subtle criticism of the *Bauakademie*’s one-sided functional focus under his father, whose teaching was based largely on Prussian functional public buildings [*Kameralbau*] and thus hardly suitable for conceptual architecture. Friedrich Gilly advocated comprehensive architectural training that included both technical and aesthetic aspects and, referring to the philosopher Karl Heinrich Heydenreich, cited early, foundational moments in architecture to define the field as an independent art form necessary for the aesthetic cultivation of man. He argued that this required first and foremost that architecture be fully incorporated into the system of the fine arts. Architecture was only granted this status up to a point as a result of its specific mechanical and functional character. The antithesis of architecture was poetry, for there are no limits on the power of imagination in the sphere of the conceptually possible. Poetry therefore usually occupied the highest position in the system of the arts at the time.

Friedrich Gilly argued against this in his essay with the following quote from Karl Heinrich Heydenreich’s *Neuer Begriff der Baukunst als schoener Kunst* [The new concept of architecture as a fine art] (Heydenreich 1798). Heydenreich writes that the architect is restricted by the ‘physical’ and ‘reasonable’ purpose of the building, but not to the extent that “there would not remain for his genius a free sphere for invention within which he could choose the forms according to his feelings” (Heydenreich 1798, 162–164). If he “succeeds in giving his building such forms that thoughts of the physical purpose disappear entirely and the observer is immediately uplifted by the sight (...) and inspired to act freely under images that relate to him, then his work is a work of fine art” and “the creative architect finds himself in almost the same mood as the creative poet” (Heydenreich 1798, 162–164). Heydenreich thus raises architecture not only to the status of fine art but even

to a degree of equivalence with poetry, and this led to a hugely positive revaluation of architecture and its recognition as an instrument of aesthetic cultivation.

Gilly's architectural position reflected not only a new self-confidence on the part of architects within the artistic community but also a new self-confidence on the part of the arts in general in their relationship with science. According to Peter Burke, the period around 1800 was "like a magic moment of equilibrium" (Burke 2009, 29) between these two cultures. In the background here is, among other things, the view of "knowledge (...) as an organism" (idem, 23). The work *Der Organismus menschlicher Wissenschaft und Kunst* [The organism of human science and art] by Karl Friedrich Burdach is one example of this attitude. This link between art and science can also be found in the founding charter of the *Münchener Akademie der schönen Künste* [Munich Academy of Fine Arts], of which Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling was the first general secretary. The charter states that art is "scientific" and a "powerful educational tool" (Schelling 1977, 314). This is a clear indication of how art was increasingly claiming its place in the system of knowledge, a system that was itself changing. That change was reflected primarily in two trends: on the one hand in the combination of vocational training and humanist education sought by Friedrich Immanuel Niethammer and on the other in Friedrich Meinecke's focus on time. Larry Shiner talks of the "invention of art" (Shiner 2001); art was on the one hand becoming increasingly separate and independent through art criticism (salon culture), but also saw itself as an integral part of the overall process of sociocultural development.

The reasons behind the references by the aforementioned architects to philosophy in this context range from the definition of construction requirements according to a principle of architectural theory to the justification of an individual, practical viewpoint within the eclectic schools of early historicism. The most important reasons are, however, the establishment of architecture as a science and the definition of an aesthetic world view to be achieved with the help of architecture. Two perspectives are relevant here, namely practical and propaedeutic, and scientific and systematic. The practical, propaedeutic perspective relates to the ethical education of the architect and his ethos as the author of works that influence the aesthetic cultivation of man. The focus here is on the cultivation of a position. From the scientific, systematic perspective, the focus is on epistemological, aesthetic and religious and philosophical evidence of the concept of architecture, which in turn serves as justification for aesthetic design. The two perspectives complement each other. Philosophy thus acts as the overall basis for the justification of architectural designs.

In keeping with this powerful, cultivating sense of architecture, as expressed, for example, in Schinkel's designs for the *Stockwerkmonument* (Fig. 4), which reflect Fichte's multi-stage theory of society, the motto he chooses for his family is borrowed almost word-for-word from Fichte's *Anweisung zum seligen Leben* [The way towards the blessed life]: "Our spirit is not free if it is not master of its ideas; freedom of the spirit appears each

time we overcome our own barriers, each time we resist external temptation, each time we perform our duty, each time we strive for something better and each time we remove an obstacle to achieving that goal. Every free moment is a blessing” (Wolzogen 1982, Vol. I, p. XXII).⁷

Figures and Figure Captions



Fig. 1, 2: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: *Interior design for the Luisenmausoleum*. Drawing/watercolor and opaque colors/ink in gray, watercolor (without year). 72 x 52 cm. Bpk / Kupferstichkabinett, SMB / J. P. Anders. Inventory no. SM 54.4. © Kupferstichkabinett. Staatliche Museen Berlin. Fig. 2: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: *Exterior design for the Luisenmausoleum*. Drawing / Brush in gray, wash and watercolor (1810). 71,5 x 54,3 c. Bpk / Kupferstichkabinett, SMB / R. Saczewski. Inventory no. SM 54.3. © Kupferstichkabinett. Staatliche Museen Berlin.

⁷ “Unser Geist ist nicht frei, wenn er nicht Herr seiner Vorstellungen ist; dagegen erscheint die Freiheit des Geistes bei jeder Selbstüberwindung, bei jedem Widerstande gegen äußere Lockung, bei jeder Pflichterfüllung, bei jedem Streben nach dem Besseren und bei jeder Wegräumung eines Hindernisses zu diesem Zweck. Jeder freie Moment ist ein seliger” (Wolzogen 1982, Vol. I, p. XXIII).

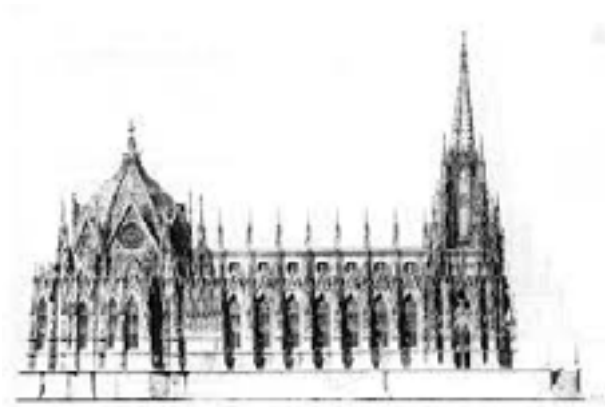


Fig. 3: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Liberation Cathedral – view from the north. Collotype (without year). Collotype after a design by Karl Friedrich Schinkel for a cathedral as a monument to the wars of liberation (1815). Original in pen lost in war. Bpk / Kupferstichkabinett, SMB / Jörg P. Anders. Inventory no.: SM 23.1. © Kupferstichkabinett. Staatliche Museen Berlin.



Fig. 4: Karl Friedrich Schinkel: *Allegorical representation of science and religion as blessings of peace*. Drawing/ Pen/Ink (without year). 282 x 197 mm. Bpk / Kupferstichkabinett, SMB / Jörg P. Anders. Inventory no.: SM 20b. 75. © Kupferstichkabinett. Staatliche Museen Berlin.

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